# Is it Time for an Online Makeover?

You might need a makeover to improve your chances of getting into college - a social media makeover!  A recent survey found that most college officials and students think examining applicants' social media accounts is "fair game". The impression you give online is as important as the one you give in person, whether it is for college or looking for a job.

Here are some steps to get you started:

1. **Lock down your visibility settings.** Exactly what that looks like for the apps you use at the time you read this will be hard to say. Here is a link to a thorough guide from the University of Texas IDWise program.

2. **Email**. Your email address will be an important point of contact with colleges. If you are still using cuteypie1001@hotmail.com  stop.  Please.  Get a real email address with your name to use for all your college contacts.

3. **Photos:** Counselors and employers will scan photos before they read posts. Clean them up. Untag yourself from any of your friend's photos that look like problems.  Delete any photos that show you in a bad light.  Change your settings so you must approve new tagging before the photos are posted.

4. **Profiles:** Change your profile pictures and descriptions so they give a good impression.  If you were going to send in a photo with your college application, this should be the one you use.

5. **Privacy:** Take your privacy seriously. Stop letting large companies (like Google and Facebook) make a profit off of your information without compensating you. Act as though you really are in control of your data. Here are concrete steps you can take to regain control.

Think before you post! There have been stories of college admissions officers being alerted to controversial social media postings by others competing for the same spot in the incoming class. While those are surely rare, you don't want to be the one that gets turned down because of rage posts.