# WHAT IS DATA PRIVACY?

Data privacy prioritizes individuals' rights, as well as how and why data is collected, processed, shared, stored, and deleted per regional or industry regulations. It also encompasses end user privacy preferences and how organizations govern personal information.

In this context, personal information refers to any data elements that, alone or in combination, can be used to identify an individual. This can include someone's name, address, contact information, and any data connected to real-world or online conduct such as social media likes and shares and financial transactions.

# WHY IS DATA PRIVACY IMPORTANT?

In many countries, data privacy is considered a fundamental right and often protected by either regional or industry-specific regulations, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in the European Union or the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) for residents of California, United States. Organizations that enact strong, transparent data privacy practices can build trust with customers based on how they process, store, and share user data.
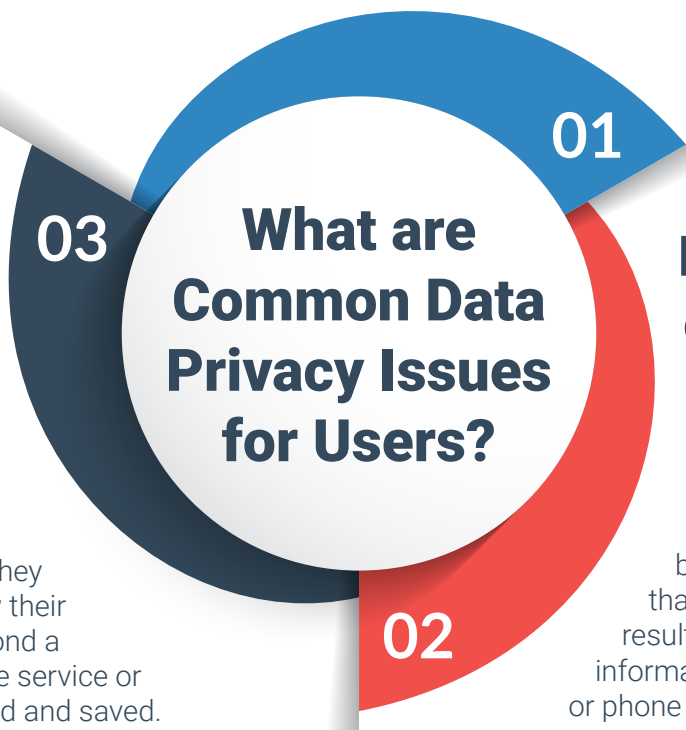
**If sensitive data isn't secured or if users can't control how their information is utilized, personal information can be sold to advertisers without their consent. Worse still, data can be exposed in a data breach and used by hackers to commit malicious activity.**

## Online tracking or monitoring

An individual's online activity is regularly tracked, most often using cookies, which record what a user does in their internet browser. Many countries legally require organizations to alert users of any cookie usage and prompt them to accept that level of data tracking. However, online tracking can also severely limit freedom of expression.

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## What are Common Data Privacy Issues for Users?

## Loss of Data Control

A lack of transparent policy communication can translate to users having little to no control over their personal data or the right to be left alone. They may not have a say in how their information is shared beyond a particular website or online service or how their data is processed and saved.

## Lack of Transparent Privacy Policies

Despite being readily available to users in most websites or apps, data privacy policies can be filled with dense language that's difficult to grasp. As a result, users who provide personal information like an email address or phone number to access an online service may not clearly understand how their data is collected, used, stored, or shared by the organization.

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