Data Sovereignty Action Checklist

Take back control of your personal data — step by step

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Work through each section at your own pace. The **Quick Wins** section should take under an hour and covers the most impactful actions. Check each box as you complete it.

1 Quick Wins — Do These This Week

■ START HERE

- [ ] Delete TikTok, Temu, CapCut, and Shein apps from your phone
  Use a browser if needed — you lose convenience, they lose device access
- [ ] Download Signal and use it for sensitive conversations
  Work, finances, health, family logistics — anything that matters
- [ ] Set up Bitwarden (free) and change your email & banking passwords
  bitwarden.com — open source, independently audited
- [ ] Freeze your credit at all three bureaus (free, takes ~15 min)
  equifax.com · experian.com/freeze · transunion.com/credit-freeze
- [ ] Check haveibeenpwned.com for your email address
  Change passwords for any accounts that appear in breaches first

2 Switch Your Daily Defaults

■ 1–2 HOURS

- [ ] Switch search engine to Brave Search or DuckDuckGo
- [ ] Switch browser to Firefox or Brave
  Both block trackers by default that Chrome allows
- [ ] Set up Proton Mail for a privacy-respecting email account
  Switzerland-based, end-to-end encrypted, no ad model
- [ ] Change DNS resolver to Quad9 (9.9.9.9) or NextDNS in router settings
  Router admin panel → WAN / Internet settings → DNS fields

3 Passwords & Two-Factor Authentication

■ 1–2 HOURS

- [ ] Install a password manager — Bitwarden (free) or 1Password
  Give every account a unique password

- [ ] Enable 2FA on email, banking, and work accounts
- [ ] Upgrade SMS-based 2FA to an authenticator app
  Aegis (Android) · 2FAS or Ente Auth (iOS/Android) — all open source
- [ ] Consider a YubiKey hardware key for highest-value accounts
  ~$50 — nearly impossible to phish, requires physical possession

4 Secure Your Home Network

■ 30 MIN

- [ ] Change the default admin username and password on your router
- [ ] Update your router's firmware via the admin panel
- [ ] Check your router brand — consider replacing TP-Link
  Safer alternatives: Asus, Netgear, or a pfSense-based setup

5 Cloud Storage & Sensitive Files

■ ONGOING

- [ ] Move sensitive files to Proton Drive or Tresorit
  End-to-end encrypted — the provider cannot read your files
- [ ] Or use Veracrypt to encrypt a container before uploading to any cloud
- [ ] Note: Google Drive, Dropbox, and OneDrive can access and hand over your files

6 VPN — Choose It Carefully

■ OPTIONAL

- [ ] Avoid all free VPNs — many are data collection operations
- [ ] Sign up for Mullvad or ProtonVPN
  Both independently audited, verified no-log policies
- [ ] Mullvad doesn't require an email address to sign up

7 Remove Yourself from Data Brokers

■ ONGOING

- [ ] Opt out of Spokeo → spokeo.com/optout
- [ ] Opt out of WhitePages → whitepages.com/suppression-requests
- [ ] Opt out of BeenVerified → beenverified.com/opt-out

- [ ] Opt out of Intelius → intelius.com/opt-out
- [ ] Opt out of MyLife → send a direct email request to the company
- [ ] Consider DeleteMe ($129/yr) or Kanary for automated ongoing removal
  CA, VA, CO, and TX residents have additional legal rights to demand deletion

8 Lock Down Your Phone

■ 10 MIN

- [ ] iPhone: Settings → Privacy & Security — review each permission category
- [ ] Android: Settings → Privacy → Permission Manager — audit all apps
- [ ] Revoke permissions that don't make sense (weather app ≠ contacts)
- [ ] iPhone: Settings → Privacy & Security → Tracking → turn off Allow Apps to Request to Track
- [ ] Android: Settings → Privacy → Ads → delete your advertising ID