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## How to go incognito in all web browsers (Chrome, Firefox, Opera, Edge, Internet Explorer)

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A useful tool that any decent web browser offers is private browsing. This feature has a different name, depending on the browser that you are using. Google Chrome calls it *Incognito*, Internet Explorer and Microsoft Edge name it *InPrivate*, Firefox calls it *Private Browsing with Tracking Protection*, while Opera names it *Private browsing*. In this article we show you how to enable private browsing in all the major web browsers and how to check if you are browsing privately or not:

### About InPrivate, Incognito or Private Browsing -What is this mode of browsing the web?

This feature mostly does the same thing: allows users to browse the web without saving data like cache, history, passwords or cookies. However, this is done <u>locally</u>, meaning that only people using your computer will not be able to find out what websites you have visited. The websites you visited, your ISP (Internet Service Provider) and, in fact, every server your requests pass through, know what you visited.

However, some browsers offer more features for their private browsing mode. For example, Opera allows you to enable VPN when browsing privately, so that your ISP cannot track the websites that you visit. Another positive example is Firefox, which blocks trackers from collecting information about your browsing behavior.

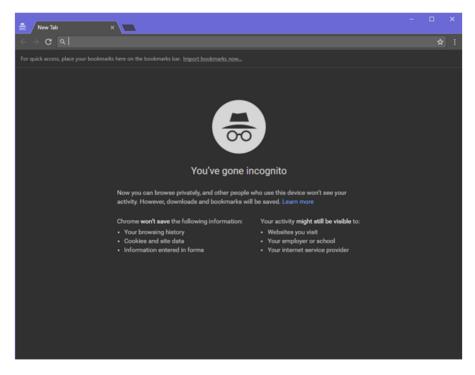
If you need a shortcut for opening your favorite browser in private browsing, read this article: How to create shortcuts to start your web browser InPrivate or Incognito <https://www.digitalcitizen.life/create-shortcuts-start-any-browser-private-or-incognito-browsing>.

## How to start Google Chrome Incognito (CTRL+SHIFT+N)

Google calls private browsing *Incognito*. To open a new *Incognito* window, you have to press the *"Customize and control Google Chrome"* button in the top right corner of the browser window. It looks like three dots. Then, click or tap *"New incognito window"*.



A new window is opened, explaining what incognito browsing means: Google Chrome will not save your browsing history, cookies and site data, and the information entered in forms (e.g. addresses, passwords, etc). Any files you download or bookmarks you create are kept.



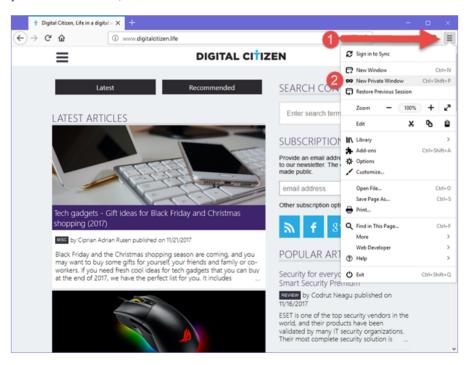
Lastly, you should know that *Incognito* disables extensions. You can manually enable them to work in this mode too. For fans of keyboard shortcuts, you should know that the shortcut for browsing *Incognito* in Google Chrome is *CTRL+SHIFT+N*.

In Google Chrome you can recognize an *Incognito* window by its logo in the top-left corner: an image of a person in disguise (raincoat, hat, and dark glasses).



# How to start Mozilla Firefox in Private Browsing with Tracking Protection (CTRL+SHIFT+P)

To enable *Private Browsing* in Mozilla Firefox, click or tap the "Open menu" button in the top right side of the browser window. It has the shape of three parallel lines. Then, choose "New Private Window."

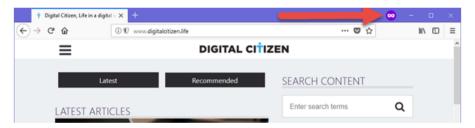


A new private window is opened with tracking protection. Firefox explains that when browsing in private mode, it will not keep your browsing history, search history, download history, web form history, cookies, or temporary internet files. However, the files you download and the bookmarks you make are saved. One important difference between Firefox and other browsers is that it explicitly warns you that your ISP (Internet Service Provider) or employer can still track the pages you visit. Another difference is that it enables by default tracking protection, so that online trackers do not collect information about your browsing behavior.

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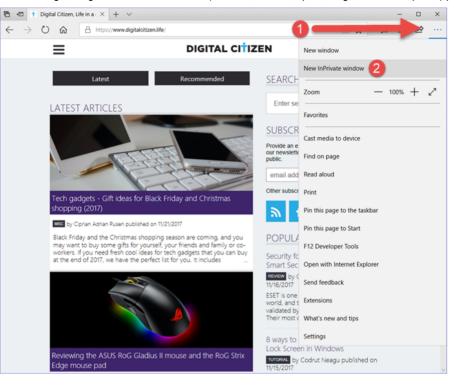
For keyboard users, you should know that the shortcut for *Private Browsing* in Mozilla Firefox, is *CTRL+SHIFT+N*.

To check if the current Mozilla Firefox window has *Private Browsing* enabled, look for the purple mask icon in the top right corner of the browser window. It is there, you are using this browsing mode.



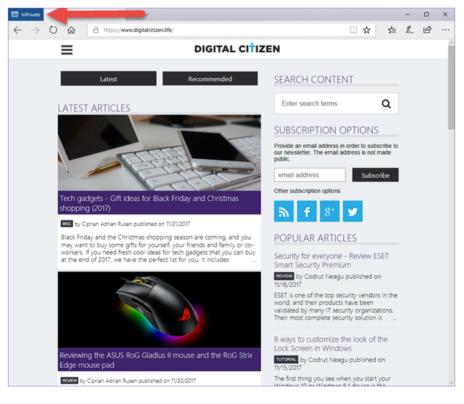
### How to Microsoft Edge in InPrivate browsing

Microsoft Edge shares the same name for its private browsing mode as the old Internet Explorer: *InPrivate* browsing. To start a new browser window in this mode, click or tap the "*Settings and more*" button in the top-right corner. It looks like three dots. In the menu that is shown, choose "*New InPrivate window*."



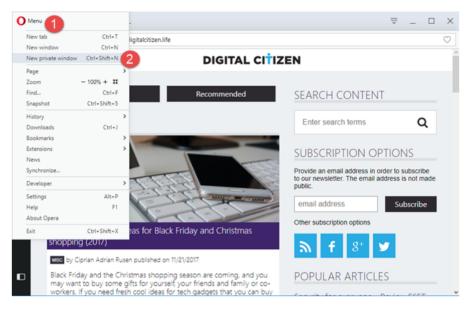
Unlike in other web browsers, *InPrivate* for Microsoft Edge does not have a keyboard shortcut.

You can tell that you are using *InPrivate* browsing in Microsoft Edge by looking in the top-left corner of the app window. There, you will see the *InPrivate* label in a blue square.



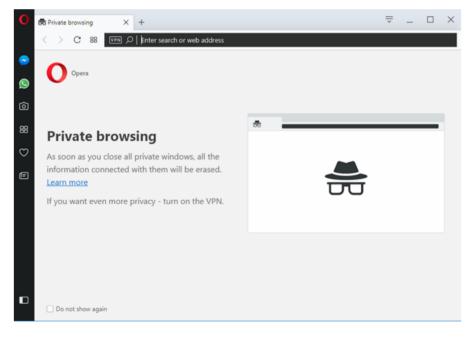
### How to start Opera in Private Browsing (CTRL+SHIFT+N)

To open a private browsing window in Opera, you have to click or tap the "*Customize and control Opera*" button found on the top left side of the browser window. Then, click or tap "*New private window*."



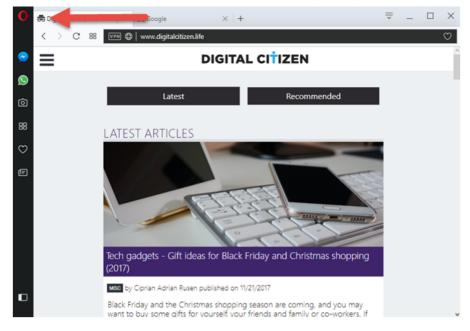
A new *Private Browsing* window opens, giving you brief information about this browsing mode.

You are also informed that you can turn on the built-in VPN for more privacy. This button is found on the left side of the address bar.



The keyboard shortcut to open a *Private Browsing* window in Opera, is *CTRL+SHIFT+N*.

To check if you are *Private Browsing* in Opera, watch for the sunglasses logo on the left side of the tab you are on.

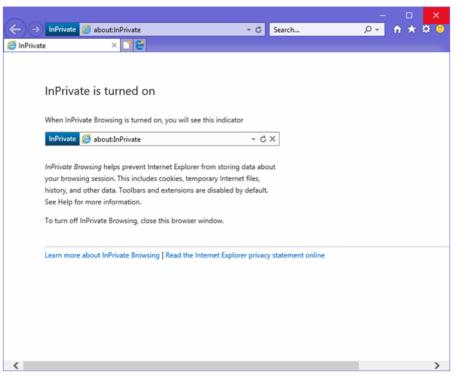


## How to start **Internet Explorer in InPrivate browsing (CTRL+SHIFT+P)**

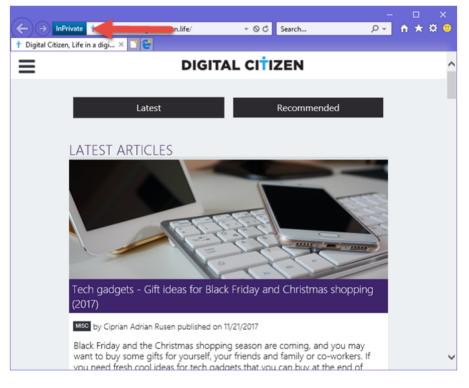
Microsoft uses the term *InPrivate* for private browsing in Internet Explorer. In the desktop version of Internet Explorer, to enable this mode, you have to open the *Tools* menu by clicking the little gear icon on the top-right. Then, hover over *Safety* to open the corresponding submenu and click *InPrivate Browsing*.



Internet Explorer opens a new browser window, where the following notification is displayed: "InPrivate is turned on. InPrivate Browsing helps prevent Internet Explorer from storing data about your browsing session." The browser will not store cookies, temporary Internet files, the browsing history and other data. By default, it also disables extra toolbars and extensions you normally have installed in Internet Explorer. For keyboard users, the shortcut for InPrivate browsing is CTRL+SHIFT+P.



You can check if you are using *InPrivate* browsing, by looking in the left side of the address bar. If you see the logo highlighted below, *InPrivate* browsing is turned on in Internet Explorer.



# How to start the Internet Explorer app from Windows 8.1, in InPrivate browsing

The Internet Explorer app for Windows 8.1 is a touch oriented version of this old web browser. Luckily, enabling *InPrivate* browsing is simpler than in the desktop version. To enable *InPrivate* browsing, tap the *"Tab tools"* button, represented by the three dots, found on the right side of the list with opened tabs. Then, tap the *"New InPrivate tab"* link in the menu that is shown.



A new *InPrivate* tab is opened, which informs you that "*InPrivate Browsing* helps prevent Internet Explorer from storing data about your browsing session. This includes cookies, temporary Internet files, history, and other data."

If you want to use keyboard shortcuts for opening an *InPrivate* tab, press CTRL+SHIFT+P.

## InPrivate is turned on

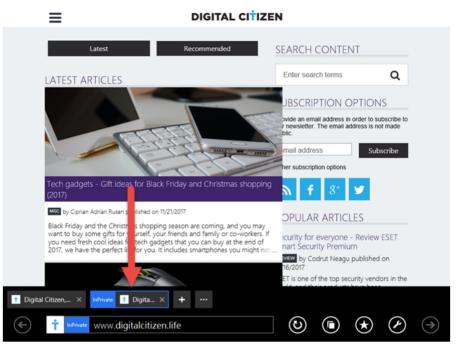
InPrivate Browsing helps prevent Internet Explorer from storing data about your browsing session. This includes cookies, temporary Internet files, history and other data.

To turn off InPrivate Browsing, close this browser tab.

Read the Internet Explorer privacy statement online



To check if you are using an *InPrivate* tab, look at the left side of the address bar. You will notice that *InPrivate* tabs have the corresponding blue tag on the left side of their name.



## Which private browsing mode do you like best?

Private browsing is especially useful when you are on a public computer and you do not want your browsing history to be accessible by the next person using that computer. However, you may also have other reasons to use it on the computers and devices that you work on. Try this browsing mode in all your favorite browsers and then share with us which private browsing mode you prefer and in what browser. Do you think that Mozilla Firefox offers the best privacy? Or is it Opera? What about Google Chrome?

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