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Google Keeps Tracking You Even When You Specifically Tell It Not To

Google has admitted that its option to "pause" the gathering of your location data doesn't apply to its Maps and Search apps – which will continue to track you even when you specifically choose to halt such monitoring. Researchers at Princeton University in the US this week confirmed on both Android handholds and iPhones that even if you go into your smartphone's settings and turn off "location history", Google continues to snoop on your whereabouts and save it to your personal profile. "There are a number of different ways that Google may use location to improve people's experience, including: Location History, Web and App Activity, and through device-level Location Services," the giant online ad company told AP, adding: "We provide clear descriptions of these tools, and robust controls so people can turn them on or off, and delete their histories at any time." The mistake people make is wrongly assuming that turning off an option called "location" actually turns off the gathering of location data – which is obviously ridiculous because if people really wanted Google not to know where they are every second of every day, they would of course go to "Web and App Activity" and "pause" all activity there, even though it makes no mention of location data. Google is entirely upfront when it says, in the second paragraph: "This setting does not affect other location services on your device, like Google Location Services and Find My Device. Some location data may be saved as part of your activity on other Google services, like Search and Maps." Of course by "may be saved" Google means "will be saved" and it forgets to tell you that "Web and App Activity" is where you need to go to stop Search and Maps from storing your location.

data. And if you want to turn off web and app activity, you need to go to Google settings - although where precisely it's not clear.