Digital Security at Protests

Useful resources:

- EFF's surveillance self defence site ssd.eff.org

- privacytools.io have good advice on various privacy tools

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1. Device

- a burner phone is a good idea so that protest activities are not linked to daily life

- the simplest phone that can install a messenger and browser is best

It's important to understand that your phone and those of the protesters around you are powerful surveillance devices. A simple burner phone minimises the amount of information you can leak.

Carry a phone that you're happy to lose/throw at a moment's notice. If that happens, have a way to let your friends know you're ok - pick a designated time/place to meet.

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2. Anonymity
when browsing online

- Use Tor browser. It hides your location by routing your internet queries through several locations. Tor is generally what you need if you think you need a VPN.

- VPN does not keep your browsing anonymous. When using a VPN, you just move your trust from your normal internet provider, to the VPN provider. VPN also often has a money trail that can be linked back to you. If you insist you need a VPN to gain a little privacy from only your internet provider, use Wirecutter.

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3. Messaging Apps

Always use an encrypted messaging app.

- **Signal is good.**

  It has pretty good security, and many people use it now, so you are likely to find everyone you need there.

- **Telegram, LINE, Viber, Whatsapp, and SMS are bad.**

  There are various reasons why these are bad, but most notably, they are not always free and open source - we can't check what's going on inside which makes it hard to trust them.

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4. Social Media

Twitter and Facebook are very useful for gaining and following information but are becoming increasingly censored and less reliable.

- **Mastadon**

  is gaining popularity as the best twitter alternative. It's free and open source. You can set up your own server, or join a trusted instance to make sure no censorship or tracking can happen.

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5. Location hiding

It is really hard to hide your location if you have a smartphone but there are some things that help.

- Search online how to disable location tracking on your phone.

- Delete all apps (except messaging/browser) from your phone during protest times.

- Pay cash if you need to buy something

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6. Nothing to hide
is not gonna cut it anymore

In a protest situation, security depends on everyone doing their best.

Your lack of security can leak a lot of information about you and those around you. It's as important to protect your fellow protesters as it is to protect yourself.

- Avoid using Google/Facebook apps

- Avoid taking photos of protester's faces

- Dress discreetly

- Stay aware that you're walking around with a powerful surveillance device in your hand. Use it wisely.