



# These apps can help you catch a cheating spouse

By Quentin Fottrell, Marketwatch  
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Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt

Photo: Getty Images

Big Brother is watching your every move — **and so is your spouse**. As global positioning systems improve, so do the apps that track your movements, and that's making it tougher than ever to keep a low profile.

Americans have good reason to wonder if there is such a thing as privacy anymore. Last year, two baseball fans reportedly **busted a woman for "sexting" a man who was not her husband**. After former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden revealed in 2013 that the US government monitors calls, emails and texts, many people might think twice about what they share online. But that same technology is being used for another purpose: "There are a growing number of apps that will spy on your husband or wife and keep tabs on your kids," says Theodore Claypoole, privacy attorney and co-author of "Privacy in the Age of Big Data: Recognizing Threats, Defending Your Rights, and Protecting Your Family."

These apps may raise moral and legal questions, too. The most invasive can be downloaded onto a phone and will quietly forward emails, calls and texts. It's a criminal offense under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1965 to access a computer — including modern computers like tablets and smartphones — without authorization. But if ownership of the smartphone in question is under someone else's name — say, a spouse, a parent or an employer — it's a legal gray area, Claypoole says. "That raises the question of whether the user has a reasonable expectation of privacy," he says. "If you own your husband or wife's smartphone and you're paying your child's phone bill, it could be a moral issue rather than a legal one."

Apps regularly pop up in divorce cases, experts say. Over 80 percent of US divorce attorneys say they've seen a rise in the number of cases using social networking, according to the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, and more than a third of divorce filings contained the word Facebook, according to a 2011 UK survey by Divorce Online, a legal services firm. Gary Traystman, a divorce attorney in New London, Conn., says 80 percent of contested divorce cases involve smartphones and/or computers.

Of course, many tracking apps are designed to serve an innocent purpose: to keep tabs on an ailing parent, to keep children safe from a potential predator, or even to help find a lost or stolen phone, says Adam Levin, co-founder of online security company Identity Theft 911. Trouble is, "people store way too much personal data in their smartphones," he says. For people who fear snoops, there are apps for that too. **Vault Stocks** (\$9.99 on Google's Android) and **Best Secret Folder** (free on Apple's iOS) hide pictures and videos in a secret online vault. "The moral of the story is to lock your phone," says Rick Singer, CEO of **GreatApps.com**, an app marketing company.

With that in mind, here are five apps that allow you to legally keep track of your friends and family:

## Connect

**This app** for iPhone or iPad can follow your husband, wife, children and even your friends on sites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google Contacts and LinkedIn. Most social contacts are jumbled and split up across multiple devices, platforms and apps, but this app collects them in one place, says Ryan Allis, chairman and co-founder of the app. "Your Connect map has hundreds of your friends on it the first time you use the app," Allis says. Unlike similar apps like Foursquare, it doesn't use virtual check-ins, which can prompt users to activate their location settings (many people don't realize that when they turn on location settings on their phone, location information can be embedded in shared photographs and status updates too). What's more, the other person doesn't need to have Connect installed or to accept an invitation from the app.

## Find My Friends

**Find My Friends** for iPhone and Android allows you to keep up to speed on when your spouse leaves work, your child leaves school or even when a visiting friend arrives at the airport. "Friends who share their locations with you appear on a map so you can quickly see where they are and what they're up to," according to the app's official site. The app syncs with phone contacts and maps on the iPhone. Users can also select what other Find My Friends users they want to interact with on their network. Not to be confused with **Find My iPhone** (free on iOS), which will give the location of a lost or stolen phone via Apple Maps on a map and also works for iPod and iPad Touch.

### Trick or Tracker 3.0

Many parents want to keep track of their kids — and not just on Halloween. Wayne Irving, a father of four and the president and CEO of Laguna Niguel, Calif.-based technology company Iconosys, has a novel solution. **Trick or Tracker** can be used by up to seven family members at one time. The app must be downloaded on both parties' smartphones — with their permission, of course. It can send text alerts when a child has traveled out of a previously agreed area, and it has a latchkey-kid feature that can ping a parent when a child arrives home. It tracks the phone using the geolocation data contained in text messages and sends the person's location every 15 minutes. Irving says it could also be used to track a child in the unlikely event of an abduction, although some online reviewers have complained about its accuracy. Originally \$4.99 when launched in 2013, it's now free.

### Phone Tracker

**Phone Tracker** is marketed to families with busy schedules and employers who want to track employees during work hours. It combines mapping and GPS technology to let you track your phone plus one other for free on Android and iPhone (follow 10 users with a 99-cent upgrade). The app doesn't have to be open to work, and it can locate another person's movement within the previous 24 hours and within 30 feet (10 meters). It can be programmed to log locations every two to 60 minutes. To follow another person, they must use the app too. A similar app — **Glympse**, free on Android and iOS — shares estimated arrival times and even the speed your spouse is traveling at. While the app is free, it has also received mixed reviews on the iTunes store.

### AccuTracking

Pitched for GPS vehicle tracking for companies and as a way for parents to keep tabs on their children, **AccuTracking** has been around for over a decade even before the advent of Google Maps. "Our vision is to provide low-cost and simple to use applications that enable the tracking of any number of targets wherever and whenever the user chooses," the company states. "Knowing where your vehicles, employees and physical assets are in real-time on your desktop computer is a valuable management and cost-control tool." It costs \$5.99 a month. The app is downloadable through the phone's web browsers. Singer advises caution when downloading software onto your phone that is not approved; Apple's App Store does not support AccuTracking. "Apple has done an exceptional job protecting its phones," he says. "Once you jailbreak the phone, all bets are off."

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