

How we are being watched



Information is being gathered on almost everything we do.

Everything from shopping tags to mobile phones to where we drive our cars.

Britain is turning into a 'Surveillance Society' and it really does seem that Big Brother is watching our every move!

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CCTV Cameras



There are over 4 million CCTV cameras in Britain – about one for every 14 people.

You are viewed up to 300 times a day whilst you are going about your normal everyday life.

Britain is one of the most watched places on earth!

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CCTV Cameras



- CCTV cameras in stores monitor shoplifters
- Those in cash machines keep a record of every transaction. If you tell a bank that money was stolen from your account they can look at the video footage and see whether it was actually you who took out the cash.
- CCTV systems can be used with face recognition software to look for criminal suspects amongst crowds

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Automatic Number Plate Recognition



Cameras that can recognise the registration plates on a car are being used for:

- Speed cameras
- Traffic enforcement cameras
- London congestion charging

It is possible to build up a picture of exactly where you have been driving in your car each day

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Mobile Phone Triangulation



Whilst your mobile phone is switched on, it constantly sends out a signal to the mobile company's masts.

This signal is picked up and can be used to pinpoint your exact whereabouts to within a couple of metres.

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Mobile Phone Triangulation



Police can use this information to track criminals or to prove where suspects actually were when a crime was committed.

This tracking technology is also becoming available to parents who might want to check if their children are where they are supposed to be.

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Credit Card Transactions



Every time we buy something and pay by credit or debit card an electronic record is created which tells the company exactly where you are and what you bought.

Information can be gathered on our spending patterns. This can be used to trigger a warning if some unusual spending takes place e.g. a large amount of money at once or being in a different city to normal.

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Satellites



No-one outside the military and intelligence community really has any idea of the level of monitoring that takes place from the skies.

But the popularity of Google Earth would suggest that the military has something a whole lot better. The chances are that they can zoom in and focus on almost every part of the earth and monitor what is going on.

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SkyPlus



Services such as SkyPlus offer a unique type of surveillance – they watch what you want to watch.

The machine monitors your viewing habits and data can be collected by the company to analyse what you watch and what you like to record.

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Worker Call Monitoring



It is common practice to record telephone calls made by workers.

In call centres, the recordings are made for 'training purposes'. What this often means is that managers listen to the calls to make sure that the workers are saying what they are supposed to say and are not wasting their time chit-chatting to customers or friends.

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Key Logging



Many businesses want to keep a record of what employees are actually doing whilst on their computer.

They can do this by using key logging software. This records every single keystroke pressed by the user.

Data collected in this way can be used to prove that some employees might be wasting time or that they could be doing something they shouldn't be doing.

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Cookies



Cookies are small packets of data that are used to communicate between websites and your computer.

They are used to set your preferences when you visit a website for a second time.

They also help the company to track what you look at so that they can send you special offers for similar products.

If you want to shop online then you just have to accept that you are being watched.

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Phone database



No decision has been taken yet whether to go ahead and create a huge database containing details of all phone calls, numbers dialled, e-mails and websites visited by every person in the UK.

Would this be an example of surveillance gone too far?

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