BILL'S HOME TECH
Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

BILL'S COMPLETE MANUALS

Pinterest

Saving recipes, crafts and home ideas on boards — explained in plain English, one step at a time

A plain-English guide for seniors and families

Take your time — you can't break it

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For the Pinterest app and pinterest.com · facts current November 2026

What's Inside

This is your guide to Pinterest: the free app and website where people collect ideas — recipes, craft projects, garden plans, home fix-ups, holiday decorating — and keep them neatly on boards. It's written for newcomers and for the family members who help them. Read it in any order and at your own pace. Every feature comes with what it actually does *for you*, plus slow, step-by-step directions. Pinterest moves its buttons around from time to time, so where a menu might look a little different on your screen, this guide tells you what to look for.

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PART 1

Getting Started

What Pinterest is, how to open an account safely, and how to find your way around the app. Start here, even if someone has already set Pinterest up for you.

CHAPTER 1

A Note from Bill

Hello, and welcome. Maybe a friend showed you a casserole recipe she found "on Pinterest," or a grandchild planned a whole birthday party on it. Maybe you've been cutting recipes out of the newspaper for years and the folder is overflowing. Pinterest is a tidy, free place to collect those ideas — and this guide is for **you**, and for the family member who's been asked to "set up that Pinterest thing."

I'm Bill. I've spent more than 30 years working with technology, and these days I help folks here in Portage County feel at home with theirs. I wrote this guide the way I'd explain Pinterest sitting at your kitchen table: patiently, in plain English, and without trying to sell you anything. When a word like "Pin" or "board" comes up, I'll stop and explain it right then.

What this guide will do for you

- Explain what Pinterest is, what it costs (nothing), and how it makes its money (ads).
- Help you open an account safely and find your way around the app.
- Show you how to search for recipes, crafts, home projects and garden ideas.
- Walk you through saving ideas and keeping them organized on boards, including private ones.
- Explain shopping links and ads, so you know when something is trying to sell to you.
- Cover privacy, passwords, the flood of emails, and the scams to watch for.

The big promise: you can't break it

You can't hurt anything by looking around Pinterest. Saving a Pin to the wrong board? Move it. Made a board you don't want? Delete it. Even a deleted board can usually be brought back for a few days. The only things that call for real care are buying from a shop you don't know, and your password — and I'll mark those clearly.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why this matters

Pinterest turns a messy pile of clippings, bookmarks and screenshots into neat, labeled collections you can find again in seconds — on your phone at the grocery store, or on the computer at home.

And I'm only a phone call away

If anything in this guide leaves you unsure, call me at **(330) 200-8042**. There's no such thing as a silly question.

So let's start with the simplest question: what *is* Pinterest?

— Bill

CHAPTER 2

What Pinterest Is (and Isn't)

Pinterest is a free app and website for finding and saving ideas. Think of it as a giant picture catalog of other people's recipes, projects and plans, plus a set of folders where you keep the ones you like. It works on a phone, a tablet or a computer at **pinterest.com**, and your saved ideas show up on all of them.

The words you'll see, in plain English

Word	What it means
Pin	One idea: a picture with a short description, usually linked to the website it came from — a recipe blog, a garden center, a craft site.
Save	Keeping a copy of a Pin for yourself. Pinterest's word for bookmarking.
Board	A folder of Pins you've saved, with a name you choose: "Soups," "Garden 2027," "Christmas Crafts."
Section	A smaller folder inside a board: "Soups" could have sections for "Chicken" and "Bean."
Secret board	A board only you (and anyone you invite) can see.
Group board	A board you share with family or friends, so everyone can add ideas.
Home feed	The endless page of ideas Pinterest picks for you, based on what you search and save.
Follow	Choosing to see more from a person or board you like.
Promoted / ad	A Pin a company paid to show you.

What Pinterest isn't

- **It isn't a store.** Many Pins link to shops, but Pinterest itself mostly sends you to other websites. Whether that website is trustworthy is a separate question (Chapter 24).
- **It isn't Facebook.** There's far less chatter. Most people use Pinterest quietly, for themselves, and never post a thing.
- **It isn't a cookbook you own.** A Pin points to someone else's web page. If that page is taken down, the recipe can disappear. Chapter 6 shows how to keep a copy of the ones you love.

GOOD TO KNOW

How a free service pays its bills

Pinterest doesn't charge you. It earns money by showing ads among the ideas, and it uses what you search and save to choose what to show you. That's a fair trade for most people, and Chapters 17 to 20 show you how to keep it on your terms.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Once you know the handful of words above — Pin, save, board, home feed — the rest of Pinterest stops feeling like a maze. Every other chapter in this guide builds on them.

CHAPTER 3

Creating Your Account Safely

Opening a Pinterest account is free and takes about five minutes. You can do it in the Pinterest app on a phone or tablet, or on a computer. Pinterest asks for an email address, a password and your birth date. You must be at least 13 to have an account.

Getting the real app

1. On an iPhone or iPad, open the **App Store**. On an Android phone, open **Google Play**.
2. Search for **Pinterest**. The real app is made by **Pinterest** and has a white letter P on a red circle.
3. Tap **Get** or **Install**. The app is free; you won't be asked to pay.
4. On a computer, type **pinterest.com** into the address bar yourself instead of clicking an ad.

Signing up, step by step

1. Open the app or the website and choose to **sign up**.
2. Enter an email address you check often. Pinterest sends password resets and security notices there, so this matters more than it seems.
3. Create a password you don't use anywhere else. Write it in your password book or save it in your phone's password manager.
4. Enter your birth date.
5. Pinterest may ask what you're interested in — cooking, gardening, home decor and so on. Pick a few. This only shapes the ideas you see first; you can change it any time.

TIP

Signing up with Google or Apple

You may also see buttons to continue with a Google or Apple account instead of making a new password. That's fine, and it can make getting back in easier later. Just remember which one you used — Pinterest's own help for people who can't sign in suggests trying the Google or Apple button first.

HEADS UP

One account per person

It's tempting for a helpful family member to set Pinterest up in their own name. Don't. Use the account owner's email and phone, so password resets and security codes go to the right person.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A few minutes of care now — the right email, a password of its own — is what lets you get back in on a new phone years from now, without a fuss.

CHAPTER 4

Finding Your Way Around

When you first open Pinterest, you land on your **home feed**: a wall of pictures in columns. You can scroll up and down forever; it never really ends. Don't let that overwhelm you. You only need four buttons, and they live along the bottom of the app (or the side and top on a computer).

The four buttons that matter

Button	What it does
Home (a little house)	Your home feed — ideas Pinterest has picked for you.
Search (a magnifying glass)	Where you type what you're looking for: "meatloaf," "raised garden bed."
Create (a plus sign)	Make a new board, or a Pin of your own.
Your profile picture	Your saved Pins and boards, plus the way into Settings.

The exact look shifts a little between iPhone, Android and the computer, and Pinterest rearranges things now and then. If a button has moved, look for the same little picture nearby.

Opening one Pin

1. Tap any picture in your home feed. It opens bigger. This is called the Pin's **close-up**.
2. Read the short description under the picture.
3. Look for the red **Save** button — that's how you keep it (Chapter 9).
4. Tap the picture itself, or a **Visit** button if you see one, to open the website the idea came from. That's where the full recipe or instructions live.
5. Tap the back arrow at the top to return to where you were.

Finding Settings

Most of the settings in this guide start the same way: tap your **profile picture**, then tap the small **settings** icon (it can look like a gear or a nut) near the top right. On a computer, click your profile picture or the small down arrow at the top right and choose **Settings**.

TIP

The three dots

Almost everywhere in Pinterest you'll see three little dots (Pinterest calls this the **ellipsis** icon). Tapping it opens the "more options" menu: hide, report, edit, download. When in doubt, try the three dots.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Home, Search, Create and your profile — once those four feel familiar, you'll never be lost in Pinterest. You can always tap Home to start fresh.

PART 2

Finding Ideas

Searching for recipes, crafts, home projects and garden ideas — and reading a recipe without wading through pop-ups and ads.

CHAPTER 5

Searching for Ideas

Search is the heart of Pinterest. Type what you want, and Pinterest shows a page full of pictures that match. Unlike a regular web search, you see the result before you click — a photo of the finished pie, the painted dresser, the porch planter.

Your first search

1. Tap the **Search** button (the magnifying glass).
2. Tap the search bar at the top and type a few words, such as **easy chicken soup**.
3. As you type, Pinterest suggests popular searches underneath. Tap one, or tap **Search** on your keyboard.
4. Scroll through the pictures. Tap any one to see it bigger.
5. Under the search bar you may see small buttons with extra words, such as "crockpot" or "healthy." Tap one to narrow the results.

Words that get better results

Instead of	Try
soup	easy chicken noodle soup crockpot
garden	raised bed vegetable garden for beginners
crafts	christmas crafts for grandkids
bathroom	small bathroom storage ideas
dessert	diabetic friendly dessert recipes

TIP

Add the word that matters to you

Words like "easy," "for beginners," "small space," "budget," "for two" or "no bake" do a lot of work. If a result isn't right, add one more word rather than starting over.

Finding your own saved Pins again

Search also helps with things you've already saved. Tap your **profile picture** to see your boards, and look for a search box there to search only your own Pins. It's the fastest way to find "that pumpkin bread" from last fall.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A good search turns "what should I make for supper?" into a page of pictures you can choose from at a glance — no flipping through cookbooks.

CHAPTER 6

Recipes on Pinterest (Without the Clutter)

Recipes are one of the most popular things on Pinterest. Here's the one thing to understand: the Pin is usually just the photo and a title. The full recipe lives on the cook's own website, and you get there by tapping the picture or the **Visit** button.

Why recipe websites feel so cluttered

Many recipe websites pay their bills with ads, so you may scroll past a long story, several ads and a pop-up asking for your email before you reach the ingredients. That's annoying, but it's normal and usually harmless. A few habits make it much easier.

Getting to the recipe quickly

1. Open the recipe website from the Pin.
2. Look near the top for a button that says **Jump to Recipe**. Many recipe sites have one. Tap it to skip the story.
3. If a box pops up asking for your email or to "allow notifications," look for a small **X** or "No thanks" to close it. You don't have to sign up for anything.
4. Look for a **Print** button on the recipe card. Even if you don't print, it often opens a clean page with just the ingredients and steps.

> TIP
>
> **Try your browser's reading view**
>
> Most web browsers on phones and computers have a simplified reading view that strips out ads and boxes and shows just the words and pictures. On many phones it appears as an icon in the address bar. If you'd like help finding it on your own phone, that's a quick thing to show you.

Keeping a copy you can always find

- **Save the Pin to a board** (Chapter 9), so you can always find your way back.
- **Write the favorites on a recipe card** or into a notes app. Websites do go away sometimes, and the Pin goes blank with them.
- **Take a screenshot** of the ingredient list if you'll be cooking with spotty internet.

HEADS UP

"Click here to continue"

A real recipe page never needs you to install anything, enter a credit card or "verify you're human" by downloading a file. If a page asks for any of that, close it and pick a different Pin.

STAY SAFE

Food safety still applies

Anyone can post a recipe. For canning, preserving, or cooking for someone on a special diet, cross-check the method with a trusted source — a tested cookbook, your county extension office or your doctor or dietitian — before relying on a Pin.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

With "Jump to Recipe" and a board for each kind of dish, you get the recipe box you always wanted: searchable, with a photo of every dish, and it never gets splattered.

CHAPTER 7

Crafts, Home Projects and Gardening

Beyond the kitchen, Pinterest shines for anything you can picture: a quilt pattern, a fall wreath, a painted kitchen, a shade garden, a raised bed, a sensory bin for the grandkids. People save these ideas for inspiration, then follow the link for instructions.

Good searches to try

Interest	Example searches
Crafts	easy quilt patterns for beginners · mason jar crafts · crafts for grandkids
Home projects	small kitchen makeover on a budget · porch decorating ideas · closet organization
Gardening	perennials for my zone · shade garden ideas · container tomatoes
Holidays	thanksgiving table ideas · christmas cookie boxes · easter crafts for kids
Getting organized	pantry organization · garage storage ideas · medicine cabinet organization

GOOD TO KNOW

Your growing zone

Garden ideas come from all over the country. Adding your USDA plant hardiness zone to a search (you can look yours up by ZIP code on the USDA's hardiness zone map) helps weed out plants that won't make it through a northeast Ohio winter.

Telling a good how-to from a pretty picture

- **Open the link** before you buy supplies. Some Pins are just a lovely photo with no instructions behind them.
- **Look for real steps** — a supply list, measurements and photos of the work in progress.
- **Read the comments** on the website if there are any. Others often mention what went wrong.
- **Be wary of results that look too perfect.** Some images on Pinterest are made by computer ("AI-generated") and show things that can't really be built or grown. Chapter 19 shows how to see fewer of them.

STAY SAFE

Some projects need a professional

Pinterest is wonderful for ideas, but electrical wiring, gas lines, roof work and anything structural are jobs for a licensed pro, whatever a Pin makes it look like. Use the Pin to show the contractor what you want.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A board of saved ideas makes it easy to show a contractor, a garden center or a family helper exactly what you have in mind — just hand them your phone.

CHAPTER 8

Searching with a Photo (Pinterest Lens)

Sometimes you don't know the words. What's that plant in the neighbor's yard? What could I cook with this squash? **Pinterest Lens** lets you search with a picture instead of words: point your phone's camera at something, or choose a photo you've already taken, and Pinterest shows similar ideas.

Searching with your camera

1. Tap **Search** (the magnifying glass).
2. In the search bar, tap the small **camera** icon.
3. If your phone asks whether Pinterest may use the camera, tap **Allow**. You can change this later in your phone's settings.
4. Point the camera at the thing — a plant, a dish, a chair — and take the picture. Or choose a photo from your phone's photo library.
5. Scroll through the ideas Pinterest finds. Save any you like.

TIP

What it does best

Lens works best on things with a clear shape or look: food, furniture, decor, clothing and plants. Fill the frame with the object and use good light.

HEADS UP

It's a helper, not an expert

Lens shows pictures that *look* similar. Never rely on it to tell you whether a wild plant or mushroom is safe to eat, or whether a plant is poisonous to pets.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

No more "I don't know what it's called." A quick photo of an ingredient can turn into supper ideas, and a photo of a lamp you like can help you find similar styles.

PART 3

Saving Pins & Organizing Boards

Keeping the ideas you love, sorting them onto boards and sections, and tidying up — including what to do if you deleted something by mistake.

CHAPTER 9

Saving a Pin

Saving is how you keep an idea. A saved Pin goes onto one of your **boards**, where you can find it again any time, on any device where you're signed in. Saving is private to you unless the board is public — more on that in Chapter 14.

Saving on a phone or tablet

1. Tap a Pin to open its close-up.
2. Tap the red **Save** button.
3. Pinterest shows a list of your boards. Tap the board you want.
4. No board fits? Tap the option to **create a board** (usually a plus sign), type a name and finish. The Pin goes straight onto the new board.

Saving on a computer

1. Click a Pin to open its close-up.
2. Click the small arrow next to **Save** to choose a board from the list.
3. Or click **Save** itself to put it on the board shown next to the button.
4. To start a new board from here, use the plus option at the bottom of the list.

TIP

Don't overthink the board

Pick the closest board and keep going. You can move any Pin later in a few taps (Chapter 12). Getting the idea saved is what matters.

Where your saved Pins live

Tap your **profile picture**. You'll see your boards, each showing a few pictures from inside it. Tap a board to open it and see every Pin you saved there. Tap a Pin to open the website it came from.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

One tap on Save, and an idea you'd otherwise lose in a sea of pictures is filed away where you can find it — whether that's next week or next Thanksgiving.

CHAPTER 10

Making a Board

A **board** is a named collection of Pins — your digital recipe box, project folder or garden notebook. You can have as many boards as you like, and naming them well is the secret to finding things later.

Creating a board, step by step

1. Tap the **Create** button (the plus sign). On a computer, look for the plus sign near your profile or at the top of the page.
2. Choose **Board**.
3. Type a name, such as **Weeknight Suppers**.
4. If you want only yourself to see it, turn on the switch that says **Keep this board secret** (Chapter 14).
5. If you'd like family to add to it too, you can add collaborators now or later (Chapter 15).
6. Tap **Create**. Your new, empty board is ready for Pins.

Naming boards so you can find things

Too broad	Better
Food	Soups & Stews · Holiday Baking · Sunday Dinners
House	Kitchen Ideas · Porch & Patio · Closet Organizing
Stuff	Gift Ideas for the Grandkids · Things to Fix
Garden	Vegetable Garden · Shade Plants · Bird-Friendly Yard

TIP

A board for "Try Next"

Many people keep one board called "Try Next" for ideas they actually plan to do soon, and move them to the main board once they've tried them. It keeps the "someday" pile from crowding out "this week."

Changing a board's name

1. Open the board.
2. Tap the three dots (the ellipsis icon) near the board's name and choose **Edit board**.
3. Change the name, or any other details shown there.
4. Tap **Done**.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Well-named boards mean you go straight to "Holiday Baking" in December instead of scrolling past four hundred pictures looking for one cookie.

CHAPTER 11

Board Sections: Folders Inside a Board

When a board gets big, **sections** help. A section is a smaller group inside a board. Your "Holiday Baking" board could have sections for Cookies, Pies and Breads. Everything stays on one board, but it's sorted.

Adding a section

1. Open the board.
2. Tap the **plus** icon on the board.
3. Choose **Section** (it may say **Add section**).
4. Type a name, such as **Cookies**, and finish.

Moving Pins into a section

1. Open the board and tap **Organize**.
2. Tap each Pin you want to move. A check mark or highlight appears on each one.
3. Tap **Move**.
4. Choose the section. The Pins move together.

TIP

When to use a section and when to use a new board

If you'd look in the same place for both things, use sections on one board. If they're really different ("Soups" and "Garden Plans"), make separate boards.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Sections let a big board stay tidy without making you hunt across a dozen small boards. It's the difference between a recipe box with dividers and one without.

CHAPTER 12

Moving, Editing and Deleting Pins

Pinterest makes it easy to rearrange. Saved something to the wrong board? Want to clear out ideas you won't use? A few taps does it.

Moving one Pin

1. Open the Pin from one of your boards.
2. Tap the three dots (the ellipsis icon) and choose **Edit Pin**.
3. Tap the name of the board it's on now.
4. Choose a new board or section.
5. Tap **Done** (or **Save** on a computer).

Moving many Pins at once

1. Open the board and tap **Organize**.
2. Select the Pins you want to move.
3. Tap **Move** and pick the board or section.

Deleting a Pin

1. Open the Pin and tap the three dots, then **Edit Pin**.
2. Choose **Delete** and confirm.

HEADS UP

Deleting a Pin is for good

Deleting removes the Pin from your board. If it was someone else's idea, you can usually find it again with a search, but there's no undo button. If you're unsure, move it to a board called "Maybe" instead.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Pruning old Pins and moving the good ones keeps your boards useful. A board of fifty ideas you love beats one of five hundred you've forgotten.

CHAPTER 13

Archiving or Deleting a Board (and Getting One Back)

When you're finished with a board — last year's wedding plans, a project that's done — you have two choices. **Archive** tucks it away but keeps everything. **Delete** removes the board and every Pin on it. Archiving is the gentler choice.

Archiving a board

1. Open the board.
2. Tap the three dots next to the board's name.
3. Choose **Archive** and confirm.
4. The board is set aside from your main boards, with its Pins kept safe. You can unarchive it any time.

Deleting a board

1. Open the board and tap the three dots next to its name.
2. Choose **Edit board**.
3. Tap **Delete** (on a computer it's at the bottom left).
4. Pinterest asks you to confirm. Tap **Delete forever** only if you're sure.

HEADS UP

Every Pin on the board goes too

When you delete a board, all the Pins on it are deleted as well. Move any you want to keep to another board first (Chapter 12).

Deleted a board by mistake?

Don't panic. Pinterest gives you **seven days** to restore a deleted board from the **Recently deleted** area. Restoring works on a computer (at pinterest.com) or in the Android app; if you only have an iPhone or iPad, sign in at pinterest.com in the web browser to do it.

1. Sign in at **pinterest.com** on a computer, or open the Android app.
2. Go to your profile and look for **Recently deleted**.
3. Find the board and choose to restore it.

TIP

Not sure? Archive.

If there's any chance you'll want those ideas again — next spring, next holiday — archive rather than delete. It costs nothing and keeps your profile tidy.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing about archive and the seven-day restore means one slip of the finger can't wipe out years of saved recipes.

PART 4

Private Boards, Shared Boards & Following

Keeping some boards just for you, planning together with family, and following the people whose ideas you enjoy.

CHAPTER 14

Secret Boards: Keeping a Board Private

Normally, boards are **public**: anyone on Pinterest can see them, and they can even turn up in a Google search. A **secret board** is visible only to you and anyone you deliberately invite. It's perfect for gift ideas, surprise party plans, health-related recipes, or anything you'd simply rather keep to yourself.

Making a new board secret

1. Tap **Create** (the plus sign) and choose **Board**.
2. Type a name.
3. Turn on the switch that says **Keep this board secret**.
4. Tap **Create**.

Making an existing board secret

1. Open the board.
2. Tap the three dots next to the board name and choose **Edit board**.
3. Scroll down and turn on **Keep this board secret**.
4. Tap **Done**.

To make it public again, follow the same steps and turn the switch off. The wording on the switch can differ slightly between the app and the website; look for the one about keeping the board secret or private.

HEADS UP

Secret doesn't mean secret from everyone

Anyone you invite to a secret board as a collaborator can see it and everything on it. Check who's invited before you save something personal there.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A secret board lets you plan a grandchild's birthday present or save recipes for a new diet without the whole world — or the birthday girl — seeing.

CHAPTER 15

Group Boards: Planning Together

A **group board** is a board you share with other people, who are called **collaborators**. Everyone can add Pins to it. It's a lovely way for a family to plan a holiday dinner, a reunion, a kitchen remodel or a garden — the grandkids in another state can add ideas right alongside you.

Inviting someone to a board

1. Open the board you want to share. (You can also invite people while creating a new board.)
2. Tap the **invite** button near the board name — on a phone it looks like a plus sign in a circle.
3. Search for the person by name, Pinterest username or email address, and tap **Invite**.
4. Or tap **Copy link** and send the link to family by text or email.

The person gets an invitation and has to accept it. They need their own Pinterest account.

Choosing what collaborators can do

As the board's owner, you decide. In the board's collaborator settings you'll find choices along these lines:

Permission	What it allows
Save and comment	Collaborators can save and organize Pins on the board, comment and react.
Invite other people	Collaborators can invite more people to join.

For a family board, letting everyone save and comment is usually right. You may prefer to keep inviting new people to yourself.

Removing someone

You can remove collaborators from any board you created. Open the board, go to the list of collaborators, and choose to remove the person. If you joined someone else's board and no longer want to be part of it, look in that board's options for a way to leave.

HEADS UP

Only invite people you know

Strangers sometimes ask to join group boards so they can post advertising. Only accept or send invitations to people you actually know.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Instead of a dozen texts of "what about this one?", everyone's ideas land in one place, with pictures, ready to look at together on the phone or around the table.

CHAPTER 16

Following People and Boards

When you find someone whose ideas you love — a favorite recipe blogger, a gardening club, a quilting shop — you can **follow** them. Their new Pins will show up more in your home feed. Following is free, and they don't get access to anything of yours.

Following someone

1. Tap the name or picture of the person who made a Pin. Their profile opens.
2. Tap **Follow**.

Seeing and trimming who you follow

1. Tap your **profile picture**.
2. Tap **Following** under your name.
3. To stop following someone, tap **Unfollow** next to their name.

Your followers

Other people may follow you, too. That just means your *public* boards appear in their feed. They can't see your secret boards. If someone you don't want following you does, you can remove them as a follower, or block them (Chapter 25).

TIP

Follow the source, not just the Pin

If several of your favorite recipes come from the same cook, follow that cook. You'll see more of what you actually like, and less of what Pinterest guesses.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Following a handful of trusted sources turns your home feed from random pictures into a steady stream of ideas you're actually likely to use.

PART 5

Shopping, Ads & Your Home Feed

Knowing when a Pin is trying to sell you something, shopping carefully, and teaching Pinterest to show you more of what you like.

CHAPTER 17

Shopping Links and Product Pins

Some Pins are for things you can buy: a lamp, a sweater, a set of planters. These are called **product Pins** or shopping Pins. They usually show a price and the store's name, and tapping through takes you to that store's website to buy.

How buying works

- Pinterest shows the product, but in most cases **you buy on the store's own website**, not on Pinterest.
- That means the store — not Pinterest — handles your payment, shipping and any returns.
- So the most important question is always: **do I trust this store?**

Before you buy from a Pin

1. Look at the web address at the top of the screen after you tap through. Is it a store you know, spelled correctly?
2. If it's a shop you've never heard of, search its name in a separate window with the words **reviews** or **scam**.
3. Check the return policy and who pays for return shipping.
4. Pay with a **credit card**, which gives you strong rights to dispute a charge if things go wrong. Never pay with gift cards, wire transfers, payment apps or cryptocurrency.

TIP

Save it, sleep on it

You don't have to buy now. Save the product Pin to a "Wish List" board and come back tomorrow. "Only 2 left!" pressure is one of the oldest sales tricks.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Pinterest is a fine way to discover products. Treat it like a catalog that someone handed you — enjoy browsing, and do your homework on the store before you hand over a card.

CHAPTER 18

Ads on Pinterest (Promoted Pins)

Pinterest is free because companies pay to show you their Pins. These ads look almost exactly like regular Pins, mixed right into your home feed and search results. The difference is a small label marking it as paid for — look for a word like **Promoted** near the picture.

Spotting an ad

- Look for the word **Promoted**, **Sponsored** or **Ad** near the Pin.
- Ads often have a shopping button or price, and a company name instead of a person's name.
- An ad isn't automatically bad — but someone paid to put it in front of you.

Hiding an ad you don't want

1. Tap the three dots (the ellipsis icon) on or under the ad.
2. Choose the option to **hide** the ad.
3. Pinterest may ask why. Pick a reason if you like; it uses that to choose better ads for you.

GOOD TO KNOW

Hiding isn't the same as turning ads off

There's no switch to remove ads altogether. Hiding the ones you don't care for, and the privacy settings in Chapter 20, are how you keep them reasonable.

SCAM ALERT

Ads can be fakes, too

Scammers sometimes buy ads or post Pins for "stores" selling famous brands at impossible prices. A Pin being on Pinterest doesn't mean Pinterest checked the shop. If an offer looks too good to be true, it is. Chapter 24 has the warning signs.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Once you can spot the little "Promoted" label, you'll always know when you're looking at an idea and when you're looking at a sales pitch.

CHAPTER 19

Tuning Your Home Feed

Your home feed is Pinterest's guess at what you'd like, based on what you save, search and look at. If it's full of things you don't care about — or too many computer-made pictures — you can steer it.

One Pin at a time

1. In your home feed, tap the three dots (the ellipsis icon) at the bottom right of a Pin.
2. Choose **See more like this** or **See fewer like this**.

The home feed tuner

For bigger changes, Pinterest has a home feed tuner in Settings. Look in Settings for **Tune your home feed** (it may be under a heading about your home feed or recommendations). It's organized into tabs, which may include:

Tab	What it's for
Activity	Turn off recommendations based on Pins you've looked at.
AI content	See fewer computer-made (AI) Pins in certain categories.
Interests	Adjust the topics Pinterest thinks you're into.
Boards	Stop recommendations based on a particular board — handy after a one-time project.
Following	Adjust recommendations that come from the people and boards you follow.

GOOD TO KNOW

Ads are separate

Turning recommendations on or off in the tuner doesn't change the ads in your home feed. Hide ads one at a time instead (Chapter 18).

TIP

Planned a wedding? Remodeled a kitchen?

After a big one-time project, Pinterest can keep showing it to you for months. Archive the board (Chapter 13) and turn that board off in the tuner's Boards tab.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A few minutes in the tuner makes your home feed feel like it was made for you — more garden and suppers, less of whatever you looked at once by accident.

PART 6

Privacy, Security & Notifications

Choosing who sees what, protecting your account, getting back in when you're locked out, and cutting down the emails and alerts.

CHAPTER 20

Privacy Settings Worth Checking

Pinterest is fairly quiet as social apps go, but a few settings are worth a look, especially if you'd rather your boards didn't show up when someone searches your name on Google.

Keeping your profile out of Google (search privacy)

Search engines such as Google, Bing and Yahoo may show your Pinterest profile and boards in their results. **Search privacy** asks them not to.

1. Open the Pinterest app and tap your **profile picture**.
2. Tap the **settings** icon at the top right.
3. Tap **Profile visibility**.
4. Turn on the switch next to **Search privacy**.

Pinterest adds the "please don't list this" tag right away, but anything search engines already picked up can take some time to drop out of their results. You must be at least 18 to change this setting. If your profile is set to private, search privacy is turned on automatically.

How Pinterest uses your information

In Settings you'll find a **Privacy and data** section. Depending on where you live and your account, it can include switches such as:

Setting	What it means
Ads personalization	Check boxes about whether Pinterest may use your activity on other websites, and information from its advertising partners, to choose ads. The exact wording varies.
Generative AI (GenAI)	A switch such as **Use your data to train Pinterest Canvas**. Turn it off to opt out of Pinterest using the Pins you save or upload to train its picture-making AI. Accounts for people under 18 are opted out automatically.

Turning these off doesn't remove ads, but the ads and ideas will be based on less information about you. Read each one and choose what you're comfortable with.

Taking a break, or leaving for good

- **Deactivate** pauses your account. Your profile and boards are hidden until you sign back in. Find it in Settings under **Account management**, then **Deactivate account**.
- **Delete** removes your account and personal data for good. It's in the same place, labeled **Delete your data and account** in the app (or **Delete account** on the website). Pinterest emails you to confirm, and the account is permanently deleted after 7 days.

HEADS UP

Save what you love before deleting

Deleting your account takes every board and Pin with it. Write down or screenshot any favorite recipes first.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Five minutes here means your hobbies stay your business, and Pinterest uses only as much about you as you're comfortable with.

CHAPTER 21

Your Password and Two-Factor Authentication

Your Pinterest account may not hold your bank details, but it holds your email address and years of saved ideas, and a stolen account can be used to post spam in your name. A good password and two-factor authentication keep it yours.

A password of its own

- Use a password you don't use anywhere else — especially not your email's password.
- Longer is stronger. Three or four unrelated words strung together are easy to remember and hard to guess.
- Keep it in a password book at home or your phone's password manager.

Turning on two-factor authentication

Two-factor authentication (sometimes called two-step verification) means that signing in takes your password *plus* a code texted to your phone. A thief with only your password can't get in.

1. On a computer, sign in at pinterest.com and open **Settings**. In the app, tap your profile picture, then the settings icon.
2. Open **Security** (it may read **Security and logins**).
3. Under **Two-factor authentication**, check the box or turn on the switch for **Require code at login**.
4. Enter your password when asked, choose your country code and type your cell phone number.
5. Pinterest texts you a code. Type it in. Your setting is saved.

HEADS UP

Write down your backup code

When you turn on two-factor authentication, Pinterest gives you a backup code. Write it down and keep it with your passwords. It's your way in if you lose or replace your phone.

GOOD TO KNOW

One phone number, one account

A phone number can be linked to only one Pinterest account for two-factor codes. If you and a spouse share a phone number, only one of you can use it this way.

SCAM ALERT

Never read a code to anyone

If someone calls, texts or messages asking you to read back a Pinterest code, it's a scam — no matter who they say they are. The code is only for you to type in yourself.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

With two-factor authentication on, a leaked password from some other website isn't enough for anyone to take over your Pinterest.

CHAPTER 22

Forgot Your Password or Locked Out

It happens to everyone: a new phone, a password that "should have worked," a sign-in screen that won't budge. Take a breath. Here's the order to try things.

Resetting a forgotten password

1. On the Pinterest sign-in screen, tap **Forgot your password?**
2. Enter the email address on your account.
3. Check that email inbox — and the spam or junk folder — for a message from Pinterest.
4. Tap the link in the email and choose a new password.

You'll need access to that email account to reset your password this way.

If you're not sure which email you used

Go to **pinterest.com/password/reset** and search for your name or Pinterest username. Pinterest can show a hint of the email address on the account.

If you signed up with Google or Apple

Try the **Continue with Google** or **Continue with Apple** button instead of typing a password. If that's how you joined, there may be no separate Pinterest password at all.

If the reset email never arrives

Check spam and junk first, and give it a little while. If it still hasn't come, request a new reset email, and use the newest one. Older reset links may stop working.

"Suspicious activity" or a blocked sign-in

If Pinterest blocks you for suspicious activity, wait about thirty minutes before trying to sign in or save Pins again. Trying over and over can make it last longer.

If you think someone else got in

1. If you can still sign in, change your Pinterest password right away, and your email password too if it was the same.
2. Turn on two-factor authentication (Chapter 21).
3. Look over your boards for Pins you didn't save, and delete them.
4. If you can't get in at all, go to **help.pinterest.com**, typing the address yourself, and use the contact options there to report a hacked account.

SCAM ALERT

Watch out for "recovery" helpers

People who answer your post or comment offering to "recover" your account for a fee are scammers. Pinterest's help is free, and it's reached only through help.pinterest.com.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing the order — forgot-password link, the email hint, the Google or Apple button, then the Help Center — turns a locked-out panic into a ten-minute chore.

CHAPTER 23

Taming Emails and Notifications

Out of the box, Pinterest can be chatty: emails about ideas you might like, phone alerts about boards and follows. If your inbox is filling up with Pinterest messages, you can turn most of them off.

Changing what Pinterest sends you

1. Open **Settings** (tap your profile picture, then the settings icon; on a computer, use the menu at the top right).
2. Choose **Notifications**.
3. You'll see the kinds of notices Pinterest sends, grouped by how they reach you: **Email**, **Push** (the alerts that pop up on your phone) and **In-app**. On some screens these read **By email**, **By push notification** and **On Pinterest**.
4. Open the email group and turn off the kinds of email you don't want. Do the same for push notifications.
5. Your changes save automatically.

TIP

Still getting emails?

Turning off the main switch may not stop every kind of email. Go through each type one by one, or use the **unsubscribe** link at the bottom of a real Pinterest email. Pinterest will still send important account and security messages, and that's a good thing.

Turning phone alerts on or off completely

1. Open your phone's own **Settings** app.
2. Tap **Notifications** (on Android it may be under **Apps**), then find **Pinterest**.
3. Turn **Allow Notifications** off to silence Pinterest entirely, or on if you want alerts.

SCAM ALERT

Make sure it's really Pinterest

Fake emails dressed up as Pinterest sometimes say your account will be closed or someone signed in. Don't tap the links. Open the Pinterest app or type pinterest.com yourself and check there. Chapter 24 has more.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A quieter inbox, and a phone that buzzes only when you want it to — while the important security emails still get through.

PART 7

Scams, Blocking & Leaving

The tricks to watch for, how to block and report people, and how to pause or close your account the right way.

CHAPTER 24

Scams on Pinterest: The Warning Signs

Most of Pinterest is just what it looks like: recipes, crafts and pretty kitchens. But wherever people gather, scammers follow. On Pinterest the tricks come in four main flavors. Once you know them, they're easy to spot.

1. Fake stores behind product Pins and ads

A Pin shows a famous-brand handbag, a garden bench or a quilt at a price that seems too good. Tap through, and the "store" is a website that takes your money and sends nothing, or sends a cheap copy.

- The price is far below what other stores charge.
- The web address is misspelled, oddly long, or not the store's real name.
- There's a countdown clock or "only 2 left!" to rush you.
- The site asks you to pay by gift card, wire transfer, a payment app or cryptocurrency.
- You can't find the store's name anywhere else, or searching it with the word **scam** turns up complaints.

Pay with a credit card, which gives you the right to dispute the charge if the item never comes. If you've been cheated, contact the store first, then your card company, and report it at **ReportFraud.ftc.gov**.

2. Fake "Pinterest" emails and texts

These say your account is locked, will be closed, or needs to be "verified," and give you a link. The link leads to a fake sign-in page that steals your password.

1. Don't tap the link or reply.
2. Open the Pinterest app, or type **pinterest.com** yourself.
3. If something really is wrong with your account, you'll see it there.
4. Delete the message.

SCAM ALERT

Pinterest won't phone you for your password

No real Pinterest employee will call, text or message you to ask for your password or a sign-in code, or to take control of your computer. Anyone who does is a scammer, however official they sound.

3. Fake "support" and "account recovery" helpers

If you search the web for "Pinterest phone number" you may find ads and pages listing numbers that aren't Pinterest at all. The people who answer may ask for payment, gift cards or remote access to "fix" your account. Pinterest's help is reached through **help.pinterest.com**, typed in yourself. The same goes for strangers who reply to your comments offering to recover a hacked account for a fee.

SCAM ALERT

Gift cards are a giveaway

No real company asks you to pay for support or a refund with gift cards. If anyone asks, stop, hang up, and call a family member or Bill.

4. Too-good-to-be-true Pins and strangers' messages

- Pins promising easy money from home, miracle health cures or free prizes usually lead to sites that want your card number or personal details.
- A stranger who messages you out of the blue, is very friendly, and soon asks you to move to another app such as WhatsApp — or asks for money — is following a well-worn scam script.
- "You've won!" messages for a contest you never entered are never real.

TIP

The two-minute pause

When a Pin or message makes you feel rushed, excited or scared, put the phone down for two minutes. Scams depend on hurry. Real offers will still be there.

If you think you were taken in

1. Gave a card number? Call the number on the back of your card and tell them.
2. Gave your Pinterest password? Change it right away and turn on two-factor authentication (Chapters 21 and 22). If you use that password anywhere else, change it there too.
3. Let someone onto your computer? Turn it off, and get it checked before you use it for banking.
4. Report the Pin or profile to Pinterest (Chapter 25), and report the scam at ReportFraud.ftc.gov.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing the four flavors of Pinterest scams means you can enjoy browsing and shopping without that nagging worry, and you'll know exactly what to do if something feels off.

CHAPTER 25

Blocking and Reporting

If someone bothers you on Pinterest — rude comments, unwanted messages, spam on your Pins — you don't have to put up with it. Blocking keeps them away from you, and reporting tells Pinterest about it.

Blocking someone

1. Go to the person's profile (tap their name or picture).
2. Tap the three dots (the ellipsis icon) at the top of their profile.
3. Tap **Block**, then confirm.

Once blocked, that person can't follow you, message you or interact with your Pins. You can unblock them later from the same menu if you change your mind.

Reporting a Pin

1. Open the Pin.
2. Tap the three dots (ellipsis icon).
3. Tap **Report Pin**.
4. Choose the reason that fits best — for example spam, or something misleading — and confirm.

Reporting a profile

1. Go to the person's profile.
2. Tap the three dots at the top right.
3. Tap **Report**, choose a reason, and confirm.

If someone has made a fake account pretending to be you, Pinterest has a separate impersonation report on its Help Center at help.pinterest.com.

Reporting a message

In a conversation from someone you don't know, look for the three dots or a **Report** option at the top of the conversation. You can report and block from there. You don't need to reply first.

GOOD TO KNOW

Reporting just asks Pinterest to look

You don't have to be sure a Pin breaks the rules. Reporting simply asks Pinterest to review it, and it's helpful even when you're unsure.

TIP

Hiding is gentler than blocking

If a Pin is simply not to your taste, you don't need to report it. Use the three dots and choose to hide it (Chapter 19). Save reporting for spam, scams and anything harmful.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A few taps make a pest disappear from your Pinterest for good — and each report helps keep scams away from the next person, too.

CHAPTER 26

Taking a Break or Leaving Pinterest

Maybe you're spending more time on Pinterest than you'd like, or you've simply stopped using it. You have two choices: **deactivate**, which pauses your account, or **delete**, which closes it for good. Before either one, it's worth saving a copy of what's there.

First: save a copy of your data

Pinterest will send you a file of your account information, including your boards and Pins.

1. On a computer, sign in at pinterest.com and open **Settings**. In the app, tap your profile picture, then the settings icon.
2. Choose **Privacy and data**.
3. Under **Request your data**, click or tap **Start request**.
4. Pinterest checks that it's really you, then emails a download link to the address on your account. It can take up to 48 hours. The email comes through a company Pinterest uses called **SendSafely**, so don't be surprised by that name.

> TIP
>
> **For the recipes you really love**
>
> The data file is fine for safekeeping, but it isn't a cookbook. For the handful of recipes you make again and again, print them or keep a copy as Chapter 6 describes.

Pausing: deactivate your account

1. Open **Settings**, then **Account management**.
2. Choose **Deactivate account** and follow the prompts.

Your profile and boards are hidden while the account is paused. Nothing is thrown away. When you're ready to come back, simply sign in again and everything returns. That also means signing in, even by accident on an old tablet, wakes the account back up.

Leaving for good: delete your account

1. Open **Settings**, then **Account management**.
2. Choose **Delete account** (in the app it may read **Delete your data and account**) and follow the prompts.

3. Pinterest sends an email to confirm.

Your profile is hidden right away. Your account and personal data are permanently deleted after 7 days. If you change your mind within those 7 days, you can sign back in to keep the account. (People in California may need to contact Pinterest first to reactivate.)

HEADS UP

Deleted means deleted

After the 7 days, your boards, Pins and followers are gone, and Pinterest can't bring them back. If you're not sure, deactivate instead.

GOOD TO KNOW

Deleting the app isn't deleting the account

Removing the Pinterest app from your phone doesn't close your account, and it doesn't stop Pinterest emails. Use the steps above, or turn off emails as Chapter 23 explains.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

You stay in charge: a break when you want one, a clean exit if you're done, and a copy of your ideas either way.

PART 8

Helping Family, When to Call Bill & Your Cheat-Sheet

Setting Pinterest up for a parent or grandparent, an honest word about when a hand is worth it, and a one-page summary to keep by the phone.

CHAPTER 27

Helping a Parent or Grandparent with Pinterest

If you're the family member who's been asked to "set up that Pinterest thing," this chapter is for you. A little care at the start saves a lot of phone calls later. Go slowly, let them do the tapping, and write things down as you go.

Setting it up the right way

1. Use **their** email address and phone number, not yours, so password resets and codes reach them (Chapter 3).
2. Pick a password together, and write it in their password book or save it in their phone's password manager.
3. Turn on two-factor authentication with their cell phone, and write down the backup code (Chapter 21).
4. Make two or three boards for things they already love — "Soups," "Garden," "Grandkids' Birthday Ideas" — so the first Pins have a home (Chapter 10).
5. Save a few Pins together, so they see how it works.

Make it calm, not chatty

- Turn off most email and push notifications (Chapter 23). A quiet Pinterest is a friendlier Pinterest.
- Turn on search privacy if they'd rather their boards not show up on Google (Chapter 20).
- Make personal boards, such as health recipes or gift ideas, secret (Chapter 14).

A shared board keeps you connected

Start a group board together (Chapter 15) — a holiday menu, a garden plan, a list of recipes to cook together. It gives them a reason to open Pinterest, and you can see their ideas from wherever you live.

Teach the scam rules early

- Pinterest will never call, text or message for a password or code.
- Never pay a stranger, a store or "support" with gift cards, wire transfers or payment apps.
- Before buying from a Pin, check the store (Chapter 17), and when in doubt, call you first.

HEADS UP

Help, don't take over

It's tempting to sign in as them from your own phone "just in case." Better to leave the account on their devices and help in person or on a call. It keeps their account secure and their confidence up.

TIP

Leave a short list

Fill in the "Write it down once" section of Chapter 29 together and keep it near their phone or computer.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

An hour spent setting things up well means fewer worried calls, less risk of scams, and a shared hobby you can enjoy together, even from far away.

CHAPTER 28

When to Call Bill

Most of what's in this guide you can do yourself, at your own pace. But part of being helpful is being honest about when a hand saves you time and worry. Here's my straight advice, with no pressure.

Times it's well worth a call

- **Getting started** — setting up the account, a strong password, two-factor authentication and your first boards, all on the phone or computer you'll actually use.
- **Locked out** — the reset email isn't arriving, you're not sure which email you used, or the codes are going to an old phone.
- **Something feels off** — a strange email, a Pin that led to a store that took your money, or a worry that someone got into your account.
- **Too many emails** — Pinterest messages are filling your inbox and you want them quieted for good.
- **Organizing years of Pins** — sorting a big jumble into boards and sections you can actually find things in.
- **Setting up a parent** — doing Chapter 27 together, so the whole family knows it's done right.
- **Leaving Pinterest** — saving your data and closing the account without losing what matters.

What I don't do

I can't get into a Pinterest account for you that Pinterest itself has locked, undo a deletion after the 7 days are up, or get your money back from a fake store — though I can show you how to contact your card company. I'll tell you honestly when something is out of anyone's hands. I also never need your passwords written down for me or your sign-in codes read to me; you'll type those yourself while I guide you.

What working with me is like

I work at your pace, explain what I'm doing in plain words, and never talk down to anyone. I've been doing this kind of work for more than 30 years, and I serve Portage County, Ohio, in person, and folks farther away by remote help. A remote session always starts with *you* calling me — I never message you out of the blue on Pinterest or anywhere else.

FROM BILL

How to reach me

Call **(330) 200-8042** or book a time at **billshometech.com/book**. My help is **$49 remote · $99 in your home**. This guide is yours to keep for free; if you'd like a hand, I'm only a phone call away.

GOOD TO KNOW

You may meet Sophie first

When you call or visit billshometech.com, you might be greeted by **Sophie**, my AI receptionist. She can answer quick questions and help you book a time. A real person — me — does the actual help.

Thank you for taking the time to learn this. Every recipe you save and every board you build is one less clipping to lose. Take it one step at a time.

— Bill

CHAPTER 29

Your Pinterest Cheat-Sheet

Keep this near the computer or with your phone. The whole guide, boiled down.

The essentials

Topic	Remember
Cost	Free. Pinterest makes its money from ads (**Promoted** Pins).
Save an idea	Open the Pin, tap **Save**, pick a board.
Make a board	Tap **Create** (the plus sign), then **Board**. Name it, and choose secret if you like.
Find your saves	Tap your profile picture, then open a board.
Deleted a board?	**Recently deleted** keeps it 7 days. Restore on a computer or Android.
Private board	Edit the board and turn on **Keep this board secret**.
Too many emails	**Settings** > **Notifications**, turn off what you don't want.
Forgot password	**Forgot your password?** on the sign-in screen, or pinterest.com/password/reset.
Two-factor	**Settings** > **Security** > **Require code at login**. Keep the backup code.
Block or report	Three dots on the profile or Pin, then **Block** or **Report**.
Pause or leave	**Settings** > **Account management**. Deletion is final after 7 days.
Real help	help.pinterest.com, typed in yourself. Report scams at ReportFraud.ftc.gov.

Write it down once

Keep handy	
Email address on my Pinterest account	_____
I sign in with (password / Google / Apple)	_____
Where my password is safely kept	_____
Phone that gets my codes	_____
Two-factor backup code kept at	_____
My Pinterest username	_____
Family member who shares my boards	_____

When something's wrong, in order

1. Can't find a Pin? Tap your profile picture and search your own saves (Chapter 5).
2. Deleted a board by mistake? Check **Recently deleted** within 7 days (Chapter 13).
3. Recipe page gone? The website removed it. Search the recipe name for a copy (Chapter 6).
4. Can't sign in? Try **Forgot your password?**, then the Google or Apple button (Chapter 22).
5. Too many emails? Turn them off in **Notifications** (Chapter 23).
6. Email saying your account is locked? Don't tap. Open the app yourself (Chapter 24).
7. Someone bothering you? Block and report (Chapter 25).
8. Paid a store that never shipped? Call your card company, then ReportFraud.ftc.gov.
9. Still stuck? Call Bill at (330) 200-8042.