

Google accused of tracking Incognito mode data, facing class action lawsuit

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A plaintiff in the District Court of Northern California is attempted to file a class action against Google.

The class action alleges that Google doesn't disclose that it is tracking users in Incognito mode.

Google does have a [page](#) explaining what Incognito mode does and doesn't do, and it mentions that personal data is shown to websites.

A class action lawsuit against Google was filed on Tuesday. The plaintiffs are upset that the company is allegedly tracking their browsing habits during private browsing sessions in Incognito mode.

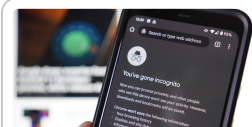
The class action, which was filed in the District Court of Northern California, accused Google of tracking and collecting browsing history without gaining permission from users, as reported by [ZDNet](#).

The class action against Google

The suit cites explicitly the company tracking users while they're browsing in [Incognito mode](#). It claims "millions of individuals" are affected by Google tracking them without their knowledge.

Google is accused of collecting browsing data and other information through services like Google Analytics, Google Ad Manager, and other places. The Google Sign-In button for websites is also mentioned in the class action against Google.

The suit alleges that anyone who visits a webpage or opens an app that uses Google's services sends personal information to Google's servers. The plaintiffs also claim that Google doesn't require websites to disclose that this is happening, whether the user is using private browsing or not.



EDITOR'S PICK

Incognito mode unmasked: What it does and what it doesn't do



“Google’s practices infringe upon users’ privacy; intentionally deceive consumers; give Google and its employees power to learn intimate details about individuals’ lives, interests, and internet usage; and make Google ‘one stop shopping’ for any government, private, or criminal actor who wants to undermine individuals’ privacy, security, or freedom,” the class action reads.

The plaintiffs are seeking a rather large sum of \$5,000 or three times the actual damages, whichever is greater, per user.

Anyone with an [Android device](#) that viewed a website page containing Google Analytics or Ad Manager in private browsing mode on that device will be eligible to take part in the class action lawsuit. Additionally, the users with a Google account who accessed a website with those services on non-Android devices in private browsing mode will be able to participate.

An issue the suit will likely face is that Google never actually claims that there’s no tracking in Incognito mode. In fact, [Google's Incognito mode support page](#) reads, “Your activity isn’t hidden from websites you visit, your employer or school, or your internet service provider.” There’s an [entire page](#) that breaks it all down, and it makes it quite clear web service, website, search engine, or provider may be able to see personal information, which means this class action may be in for a tough fight.