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YouTube videos you just shouldn't miss

Using a fluffy brush and deadpan humour, Addie W — an Austrian-American artist, vlogger and hacktivist — blends beauty and cyber security.

by Rachel Lopez



You know what women have enough of? People telling them how to look better. YouTube alone has lakhs of beauty videos: unboxings, first impressions, reviews, tutorials, wear tests, shopping hauls, flash photo tests, exaggerations, collaborations, underhand endorsements and eventual teary confessionals.

You know what women don't have enough of? Tech and cyber-security tips. There just isn't enough handholding for a woman navigating the internet and social media. No DIYs on securing your email from an ex-boyfriend or mass-blocking trolls. Little help with operations security, two-factor authentication and hypothetical data breaches.

And you know what we have absolutely none of? YouTube videos that make sense of both.

Enter Addie Wagenknecht. The anti-disciplinary, experimental Austrian-American artist works in the fields of emerging media, open source, pop culture and hacktivism. Her YouTube channel, Addie W, offers (in hilarious, acerbic, two-minute videos) tips on self-care and cyber security.



She's six videos old, with barely 400 subscribers and a few thousand views. Your algorithm will do its best to redirect you to a more popular vlogger. But click back and stick with it. It's unscripted, unexpected viewing. Addie has no forced chirpiness, no gushy PR spiel, and no truisms about free radi-

cals and cool undertones. She doesn't even smile. But she has solid tips on protecting your virtual life "from Russia or just a nosey boyfriend".



Slapping on an aloe vera sheet mask ("This mask is green because green means healthy") she discusses password management. "If you're thinking about passwords, you should be thinking about pass phrases. If your password is Fluffy1985, and you've posted your pet's name and birthdate all over Facebook, it's guessable. But 'MyBoyFriendsACrazyMoFo' THAT'S a good passphrase." The mask seems pretty hydrating too. It gets a "3 out of 5 Bitcoins" rating.

Watch her carefully apply concealer with her ring finger, just like the self-taught pros do. But also listen for why you should set a screen-lock on your laptop after one minute.

Addie doesn't take herself too seriously. In her second video, she's wearing a hoodie while testing a moisturising treatment. "I got complaints that I didn't look hacker enough," she says by way of explanation. But the tech talk is spot on.

You'll learn why OTPs (one-time passwords, beloved on Indian digital payment systems) aren't fool-proof. You'll wonder why no one told you about Google Voice's secondary service number (which forwards calls to your number so you never have to give it out). You'll ask yourself what you need to protect, why it's worthwhile and how much you're willing to do to secure it.

There are beauty videos all over YouTube. Women and men of all ages, races, budgets and skin concerns guide those who are still struggling. None of them has described a blush colour like Addie does: "I'm using the shade Modern Mercury, which probably means I'm going to die from it." It's quite a luminous pink.