

The internet is amazing. Children can play, learn, create and connect - opening up a whole world of exciting possibilities. But with the digital world changing all the time, how can you make sure your child's staying safe online?

Set up Parental Control

- Setting up the right controls and privacy settings are important ways to keep your child safe online.
- They can be used to block upsetting or harmful content, control in-app purchases or manage how long your child spends online.
- 'Internet Matters' have created over 70 parental control step-by-step guides for major networks, devices and services in your home.
- Go to www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls for simple and straightforward instructions on how to set parental controls and privacy settings.

Have an open conversation

Communication is key to online safety, and it's something which you should discuss with your child, even from a young age. Have regular conversations together about what you can do to stay safe online.

Make sure your child knows that they can talk to you about anything that's bothering them and they can talk to you if they see or experience anything online that worries them, upsets them, or doesn't feel quite right.

Online safety tips for parents of primary school children 6-10 Year Olds

Checklist

✓ Put yourself in control

Make use of the parental controls on your home broadband and any internet-enabled devices. You can find out how at your broadband provider's website or by visiting internetmatters.org.

✓ Search safely

Use safe search engines such as swiggle.org.uk or kids-search.com. Safe search settings can also be activated on Google and other search engines as well as YouTube. You can find out more at google.co.uk/safetycentre.

✓ Agree boundaries

Be clear what your child can and can't do online - where they can use the internet, how much time they can spend online, the sites they can visit and the type of information they can share. Agree with your child when they can have a mobile phone or tablet.

Over 65 % of parents are most concerned about their 6-10 viewing inappropriate content online*



✓ Explore together

The best way to find out what your child is doing online is to ask them to tell you about it. Encourage them to use devices in communal areas so you can see what sites they're visiting and share with them.

✓ Check if it's suitable

The age ratings that come with games, apps, films and social networks are a good guide to whether they're suitable for your child. The minimum age limit is 13 for several social networking sites, including Facebook and Instagram.

Know this stuff matters, but don't know where to turn?

Internet Matters is a free online resource for every parent in the UK. We'll show you the best ways to protect your children online - with information, advice and support on all the big e-safety issues.

internetmatters.org

Online Gaming Safety

Online gaming is now more popular than ever before. The most popular online games include the ability to chat with others, including strangers. Read on to see how to disable chat for 3 of the most popular games. If you don't want to disable chat altogether, the other option is to make sure your child is playing without a headset, somewhere where you can hear the conversations going on and step in if necessary.

Fortnite (PEGI rating 12+) - Fortnite contains voice and text chat systems. You can turn the voice chat off but not the text chat. To turn chat off, go to Settings, Audio and switch voice chat to off.

Minecraft (PEGI rating 7+) - In multiplayer mode children can chat with other people. To turn chat off, click 'options', select multiplayer settings and click on chat choose shown, hidden or commands only.

Roblox (PEGI rating 7+) - For users aged 12 and under, Roblox automatically enforce more restricted settings so they can only directly message other friends (that they've accepted) but does your child know all their 'friends' on Roblox? Are they signed up with their right age? To adjust the chat and interaction settings of your child's account, click on the gear icon in the upper right corner and click Settings, click the Privacy option and adjust the Contact Settings and Other Settings.

For instructions on how to change Chat settings for other games, visit the Parentzone website - www.parentzone.org.uk/advice/parent-guides

Concerned by the amount of time your child spends online?

You are not alone. Research from Internet Matters, found that 47% of parents were concerned about the amount of time their children spend online. Games such as Fortnite can be addictive. The competitive nature of the game may make it difficult for children to stop playing halfway through as their position in the game could be affected.

It may be worth imposing a limit on the amount of battles they can play rather than a time limit.

Simply telling children that they're spending too much time online or to turn off their phone can lead to arguments. Instead, you could talk to your children about the dangers of too much screen time.

Kids who understand that 'It's not healthy to spend too long looking at a screen' are less likely to try and break the rules compared to kids who think, 'I can't go online because my parents are mean'.

Looking for a new game or app to try?

The **LEGO Life** app is suitable for 5+ and offers a safe environment for younger children to build and share their Lego creations. It introduces children to the positive elements of social platforms, such as being able to share with family and friends and comment (all moderated) and like other people's creations.