KCOM

Internet safety for kids
A guide for parents

kcomhome.com

Contents

Introduction

We know you'd do anything to keep your child out of harm's way but, because the internet is always changing, it's not always clear how best to keep them safe online.

This guide sums up the very broad, ever-changing topic of child-focused internet safety, using easy-to-understand language. Rest assured, there's no confusing technical talk here.

What are the key online risks?

In order to make sure your child stays safe while using the internet, first you need to understand the dangers you're trying to protect them from. Learning the four Cs of e-safety together is a great way to do this.

CONTENT

Age-inappropriate or unreliable content can be available to children.

CONTACT

Children can be contacted by bullies or people who groom or seek to abuse them.

CONDUCT

Children may be at risk because of their own behaviour, for example, by sharing too much information.

COMMERCIALISM

Young people can be unaware of hidden costs and advertising in apps, games and websites.

Advice for you and your child

Follow Childnet International's five SMART rules, which should mean your child's less likely to have a bad online experience.

Top tip #1
Pick a safe, child- friendly website as your homepage. Your child is more likely to stay on this website than explore unsupervised.

SMART rules for kids

SAFE	Keep safe by being careful not to give out personal information when chatting or posting online, including your name, address, email address, school, phone number and passwords.
MEETING	Meeting someone you've only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Only do so with your parent's or carers' permission and even then only when they can be present at the meeting.
ACCEPTING	Accepting emails, chat messages, or opening files, pictures or texts from people you don't know or trust can lead to problems – they may contain viruses or nasty messages.
RELIABLE	Someone online might lie about who they are. If you're chatting online it's best to only chat to your real-world friends and family. Information on the internet may not be true. Always check information with other websites, books or someone who knows.
TELL	Tell a parent, carer or trusted adult if someone, or something, makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, or if you or someone you know is being bullied online.

Visit kcomhome.com/help

Parental controls

As a KCOM customer you can restrict your child's internet access so they can't visit inappropriate websites and only access age-appropriate content.

You can do this and more by visiting **kcomhome.com/account**

Although your child's unlikely to run into problems while using the internet, using parental controls gives you the peace of mind that they're protected online.

Other points of using KCOM parental controls

> They're free.

> They're easy to apply.

> You can select different age profiles (1–6, 7–11, 12–15 or 16–18) according to your needs.

> You can select individual websites to block or allow access to.

Virus protection software

Some websites can damage your computer with viruses so it's important to install up-to-date software to keep them at bay.

Software updates

They can be time-consuming and pop up when you're in the middle of doing something important but it's vital that you keep devices up to date to make sure they're as secure as possible.

There are flaws in any software system and it's only a matter of time before someone discovers them - so if your security software is not up to date your devices could be vulnerable to hackers.

Using social media safely

According to a BBC survey more than three quarters of younger children between 10 and 12 years old are using at least one social media channel.

Here's a list explaining how old you have to be to use the most well-known social media sites.

Minimum age requirements

13

Facebook, YouTube*, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, Reddit, Pinterest, SnapChat**

16

WhatsApp

18

Tinder

* Parents can download the YouTube Kids app, which only offers age-appropriate content and a flagging system for parents if any unsuitable videos slip through the filters.

** Anyone attempting to download SnapChat under 13 is redirected to SnapKidz.

If your children are aged under 13 then the following kid-specific social networking sites are available.
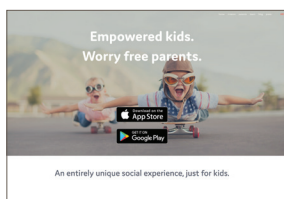
6 - 10 years
Kudos
Playkids Talk
Chatfoss



11 - 13 years
Kidsworld
Popjam
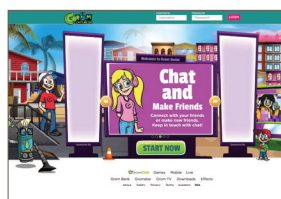
14 years +
Gromsocial

Facebook privacy settings

Facebook has built-in tools to help protect your child's privacy so it's wise to take a few minutes to set them up and secure their account.

1. Click on the settings icon on the top right-hand side of your child's Facebook page.
2. Click on the Privacy Checkup option.
3. Under your activity make sure only friends can see their posts.
4. In the 'How can people find and contact you' section you'll see who can send friend requests?
5. Change 'Who can send me friend requests?' option from 'Everyone' to Friends of Friends'.
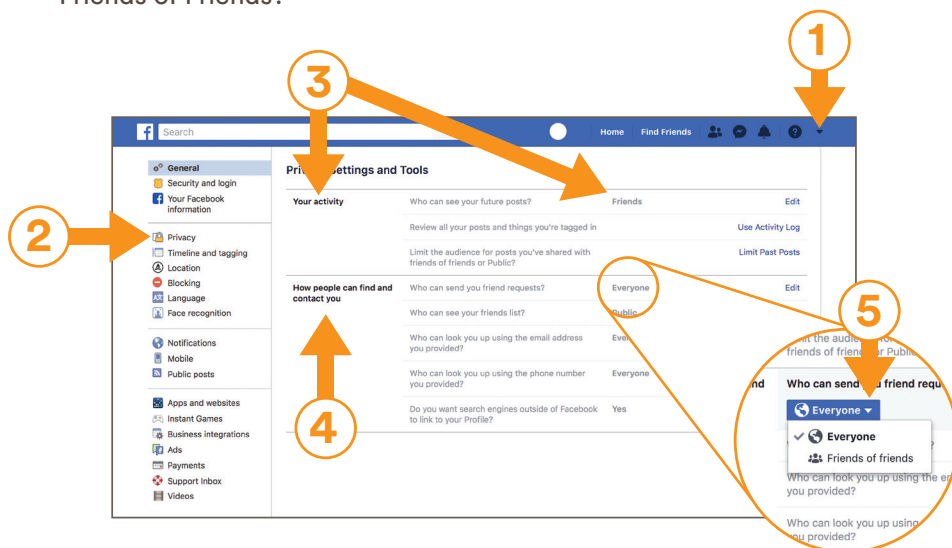
It's a good idea to stop them receiving friend request from strangers.

Remember...

> Your child can easily change their privacy settings themselves so it's important to explain why they should restrict who can see their profile.

> Make sure your child knows where to go for support if they're victims of online harassment or abuse. Kidscape and Bullying UK can help if you ever need advice.

Did you know? Almost a third of children play online against people they haven't met in person.

Gaming

Your child is unlikely to come to any harm while playing computer games in the comfort of your home, but it's important to remember that these devices connect to the internet so you should be careful.

Some points to consider:

> Many online games are free to play but with games where users have to pay for items such as extra lives or new levels, children can accidentally run up big bills. To avoid this remove and saved data (such as debit/ credit card or iTunes login details) from the device before you allow your child to use it.

> Some games let children play and chat with anyone. They could come across offensive language and not everyone online is who they say they are.

> It's a good idea to familiarise yourself with PEGI, Europe's video game content rating system, which is displayed on the game packaging. Visit the PEGI website (pegi.info) for a comprehensive list of ratings.

PEGI ratings

3 www.pegi.info — The content of games given this rating is considered suitable for all age groups. A very mild form of violence in a comical content is acceptable. No bad language.

7 www.pegi.info — Game content with scenes or sounds that can be possibly frightening to younger children. Very mild forms of violence.

12 www.pegi.info — Games that show violence of a slightly more graphic nature towards fantasy character and/or non-graphic violence towards human characters or animals. Some mild nudity and bad language acceptable.

16 www.pegi.info — Applied once depiction of violence (or sexual activity) reaches a stage that looks the same as real life. More extreme bad language and tobacco/drug use in context of criminal activity allowed.

18 www.pegi.info — Applied when the level of violence reaches a stage where it becomes a depiction of gross violence and/or includes elements of specific types of violence.

Content labels

BAD LANGUAGE

DISCRIMINATION

DRUGS

FEAR

GAMBLING

SEX

VIOLENCE

ONLINE

How does your child's favourite game rate?

FIFA 19	Fortnite	Call of Duty: Black Ops IIII	Red Dead Redemption 2
PEGI 3 www.pegi.info ONLINE	PEGI 12 www.pegi.info VIOLENCE	PEGI 18 www.pegi.info ONLINE · VIOLENCE · BAD LANGUAGE	PEGI 18 www.pegi.info VIOLENCE · BAD LANGUAGE · GAMBLING

Some points to consider:

There are often many different age-classification versions of the same game. For example, The SIMS game series offers PEGI 3, 7 and 12 versions.

Before you hand a gaming console over to your child make sure that relevant, up-to-date parental controls have been activated.

Be sure to update these controls on a regular basis and think very carefully about linking a payment card to the device. Make sure the card's password-protected if you decide to link one.

The good news is todays game consoles offer easy-to-use parental controls so mums, dads and grandparents can keep of the games their child is playing and how long for. Just remember that, like all gadgets, this software will need updating from time to time.

Thanks for taking the time to read this booklet, which provides a brief overview about child-focused internet safety.

Here are some websites that you might find helpful:

KCOM customer-help internet guides: www.kcomhome.com/helpguides
Child Internet Safety: www.childinternetsafety.co.uk
Get Safe Online: www.getsafeonline.org
NSPCC: www.nspcc.org.uk
Internet Matters: www.internetmatters.org
Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk
Bullying UK: www.bullying.co.uk
KidzSearch: www.kidzsearch.com
Swiggle: www.swiggle.org.uk
Mumsnet: www.mumsnet.com
Safer Internet Day: www.saferinternet.org.uk
PEGI rating games search: www.pegi.info
Childline: www.childline.org.uk
Thinkuknow: www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents
Childnet: www.childnet.com

Need some help?

Our Technical Support team will be happy to help if you're having any internet-related issues. Give them a call on 01482 606101.

Our MyTech experts are available for in-store services such as PC health checks, system reinstalls, data back-ups and smartphone and tablet set-ups. You can visit them in our shop on Carr Lane.
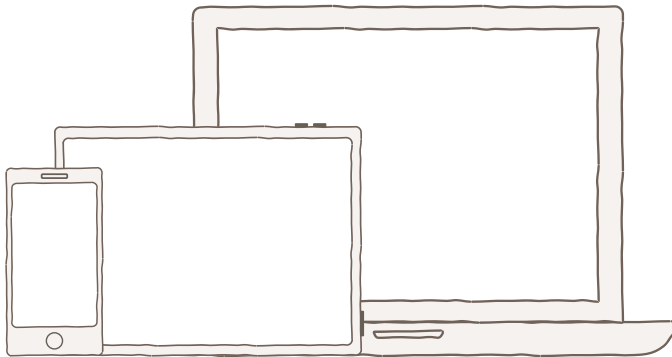
KCOM

Technical Support: 01482 606101
Customer Services: 01482 602555
kcomhome.com