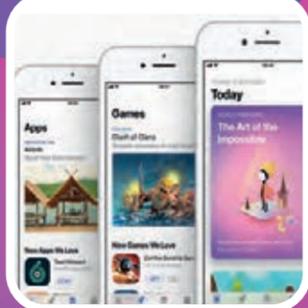




'Apps' are designed to run on certain devices and are written for a specific operating system, such as Apple iOS, Windows, or Android. The official store for the Apple iOS operating system is known as the 'App Store' and it's where you can browse and download more than 2 million apps and games to use on the iPad, iPhone, iPod Touch and other Apple devices. When your children are using the app store, you need to be aware of the risks...



# What parents need to know about The App Store

## IS YOUR CHILD 13+?

To download and buy apps from the App Store, your child will need an Apple ID. If they have used other Apple services, such as iCloud, they can sign into the App Store with the same Apple ID. If they are aged 13 and under, they cannot sign up for an Apple ID on their own, but an adult can create an Apple ID for a child.

## IN-APP PURCHASES

Apps are either free, paid-for or free with in-app purchases. In-app purchases are optional transactions that can unlock extra functionality, virtual goods or unique content. Unless you change the settings, once your child has entered a password to make an in-app purchase, they can make additional purchases for 15 minutes without re-entering a password. This makes it extremely easy for children to accidentally run up huge bills.

## LOOKALIKE APPS

Some developers release apps that copy the functionality, user interface and even product names and branding of popular apps, in an attempt to trick unsuspecting users to install them. By downloading an app from an unknown developer, your child could find their device compromised. Experts warn that through app permissions, hackers can potentially take photos using the camera and access media remotely, track your child's location, record any passwords they enter for other accounts, and send text messages from phones.

## INAPPROPRIATE APPS

Some apps and games have content that is unsuitable for younger children – even the most popular or innocuous looking apps may feature adult-themed content, violence or cruelty to other people or animals, unmoderated chat, pornographic or sexual content.

## THIRD-PARTY APP STORES

Because the official Apple App Store has a very stringent policy about what apps it approves, children may look elsewhere for apps and games they've heard about from friends. As well as the Apple App Store for iOS, there are hundreds of other third-party app stores, but the danger is they may not apply the same level of scrutiny toward the apps they allow to be listed. There's a higher chance of apps that infect devices with malicious codes or put user privacy at risk by extracting sensitive information.

# Top Tips for Parents

## CREATE YOUR CHILD'S ACCOUNT

You can create an Apple ID for a child under 13 and add them to your family group to keep an eye on their activity. Go to Settings > [your name] > Family Sharing > Add Family Member > Create a Child Account > Next. Enter your child's birthday and tap Next. Review the Parent Privacy Disclosure and tap Agree. With Family Sharing, you can add up to six family members to share App Store purchases, as well as iTunes and Apple Books.

## SWITCH ON 'ASK TO BUY'

If you have a child that is over 13 years of age and has their own Apple account, make sure that you only allow them to make purchases with gift cards. You can also activate the 'Ask to Buy' feature if you are using Family Sharing, so that whenever a family member who isn't an adult initiates a new purchase, a request goes to the account organiser. You can also limit what content your child can access on the devices they use.

## RESTRICT IN-APP PURCHASES

You can restrict your child's ability to make in-app purchases. On an iOS device, open Settings, tap General and then Restrictions. Tap 'Enable Restrictions.' You can put a limitation that requires a password every time there is a purchase made in the App Store or iTunes Store.

## BROWSE APPS BY AGE

To find apps and games that are right for your children, check the age ratings. On an iPhone or iPod Touch, this can be found in the information section on an app's product page, and on an iPad or desktop, the age range is near the Buy button. On the Kids page, you can find apps for age ranges, including 5 and under, 6 to 8, and 9 to 11.

## AVOID OTHER APP STORES

Put a rule in place that your child can only use the official App Store to download apps and games. Explain why it is wise to only install applications from a trusted source to ensure their device is not affected by security issues or virus attacks.

## HOW TO KNOW AN APP IS SAFE TO INSTALL

Advise your child that just because they're downloading an app from an official store, it doesn't make it safe. Fake or copycat apps will often include misspelt words and poor grammar, so always read the app description, and double check the developer name and title for warning signs. Be wary of apps that come with a long list of permission requests. Check the app's reviews and ratings – one star, one-line reviews complaining that an app didn't work on a certain device, or that there was a billing issue, is not a good indication.

## SPOT FAKE REVIEWS

When checking the customer reviews within the app store, make sure they aren't vague and generic, or overly effusive, as some developers will try to manipulate their apps' positions by posting fake ratings and reviews. Check the number of downloads the app claims to have – the higher the number, the more likely it is to be safe. Your child can also check on a company's website to see if the app is available on there.



National  
Online  
Safety

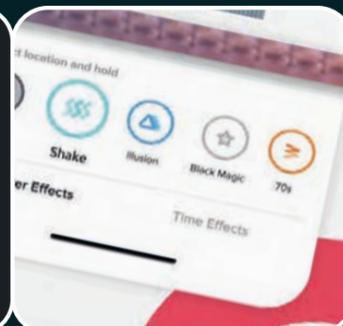
A whole school community approach to online safety  
[www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com)

Email us at [hello@nationalonlinesafety.com](mailto:hello@nationalonlinesafety.com) or call us on 0800 368 8061

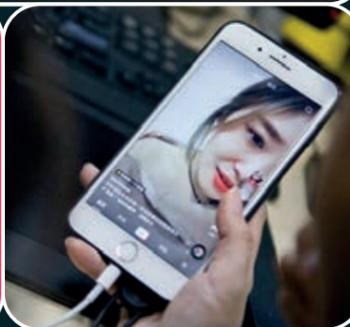
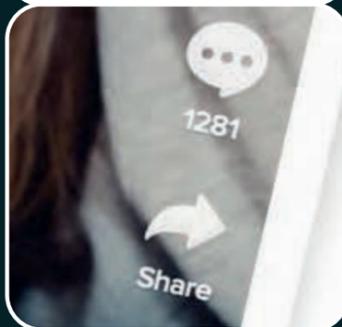




TikTok is a global video community where users create, share and discover 'funny and memorable moments' via short video clips – typically about 15 seconds long. Videos can be 'spiced up' with special effect filters, stickers, music and sound clips. Currently one of the world's most popular apps, TikTok was formerly known as Musical.ly, before it was rebranded by the Chinese company that acquired it in November 2017. If your child had previously had a Musical.ly account, all of their videos and personal settings will have automatically been moved to TikTok.



AGE RESTRICTION  
**13+**



# What parents need to know about **TikTok**

ON AIR

## BEING INFLUENCED

More than one third of children aged 6-17 consider 'social media stars' to be among their top role models. There are millions of creators on TikTok, showcasing their 'talents, moments and knowledge', from singing to dancing to stunts and comedy skits, which receive thousands of likes and comments from around the world, quickly turning people into 'stars'. There is the danger that children may develop unrealistic expectations of how they should look and behave on the app in order to become the next 'star'. They may have feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem or become swayed by certain opinions.

## INAPPROPRIATE SONG LYRICS

TikTok lets users lip-sync to their favourite songs and produce their own music videos. Some of the music choices contain swear words or sexual themes. So not only can children be exposed to potentially inappropriate content but they can broadcast themselves miming or singing these lyrics.

## CONCERNING CONTENT

Some of the outfits and dance moves in videos can be overtly sexual and provocative. There have also been reports of some users sharing concerning content, such as videos that promote anorexia, porn, self-harm and violence.

## DANGEROUS TRENDS & CHALLENGES

On TikTok, there are always 'trending challenges' and hashtags that users can copy or build upon, and sometimes, these challenges can pose risks to young people.

## STRANGERS CAN FOLLOW YOUR CHILDREN

If your child's profile is open, strangers can use the app to comment on your child's videos. While this isn't always sinister, it gives potential predators the ability to contact your child through the platform.

## IN-APP PURCHASES

Of course, as with many apps, there's a paid element to TikTok. Users can buy virtual coins to be exchanged for virtual gifts – for example, if they like a specific video, your child can use coins to purchase emojis to show approval. These can be expensive and easily purchased – there is the option to buy 10,000 coins for £97.99 with a one-click buy button.

## ANYONE CAN SEE YOUR CHILD'S CREATIONS

TikTok encourages users to 'share their passion and creative expression through their videos' and while something may seem fun at the time, videos can get in the wrong hands and cause embarrassment in the future. If posted publicly, anyone in the world can see your child's homemade music video and potentially cause bullying within personal friendship groups or even online.



**National Online Safety**

# Top Tips for Parents



## TALK ABOUT THE PITFALLS OF OVERSHARING

Encourage your kids to always think before they do, say, like or post anything online, explaining that their 'digital footprint' can shape their online reputation and the way that other people see them. Something they may find funny and entertaining now may impact them in the future. Talk about how to deal with peer pressure and how doing something they think will impress others could affect them.

## HANDLING CRITICISM

While it's fantastic to see your child being creative and expressive and bonding with people with similar interests, they need to be aware that not everyone will be supportive online. Comments can be negative or even cruel. Make sure they know how to comment respectfully and handle negative feedback. In the app's Privacy and Safety settings, your child can decide who can react to their videos, who can comment, and who can send them private chat messages. We suggest using these settings so only their friends can interact with their posts.

## SIGNING UP WITH THE CORRECT AGE

When signing up to TikTok, you are prompted to input your birth date. If your child inputs their age as 'under 13', the app will not allow them to sign up and will be locked for 24 hours. The app is intended for users aged 13+, so explain that the rating is there for a reason; to keep them protected from online dangers. It is actually possible to watch TikTok videos without even creating an account, so it's important to check if your underage child has downloaded the app to their devices.

## USE THE 'DIGITAL WELLBEING' SETTING

If you're concerned about the amount of time your child is spending on TikTok, in the app's setting, you can switch on a feature called Digital Wellbeing. This includes 'Screen Management' to limit the amount of time your child spends on the app.

## SET THE ACCOUNT TO PRIVATE

This means that only people who you and your child approve of can see their creations. To make an account private, tap the three dots at the top right of the screen to access settings. Click 'Privacy and Safety'. Scroll down until you find 'Private Account' and turn this setting on.

## REPORT INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

If you or your child see something on TikTok that appears to be inappropriate, they can report content in different ways within the app. They can report an account, video, comment or chat conversation by simply tapping 'Report'. In the app's 'Digital Wellbeing' feature, there is also an 'Enhanced Restricted Mode', which limits the appearance of videos that may not be appropriate for all audiences.

## AVOID IDENTIFIABLE OBJECTS

To ensure that there's no way of anyone tracking your child's location or identity, make it clear to them that they should never film a video in their school uniform or near a landmark that gives away where they live.

## DISCUSS IN-APP PURCHASES

To lower the risk of your child making accidental in-app purchases, teach them exactly what in-app purchases are and the risks of making them without permission. Tell them that they are not essential to enjoy the app and that if they want to make a purchase, they should always ask you beforehand. In the app's 'Digital Wellbeing' feature, there is the option to disable the function of purchasing coins and sending gifts.

SOURCES: [mediapost.com/publications/article/319720/social-media-stars-influence-kids-but-parents-still.html](https://mediapost.com/publications/article/319720/social-media-stars-influence-kids-but-parents-still.html), [commonsensemedia.org/blog/parents-ultimate-guide-to-musically#metro.co.uk/2017/03/17/musical-ly-everything-you-need-to-know-about-the-app-your-children-are-obsessed-with-6516068/](https://commonsensemedia.org/blog/parents-ultimate-guide-to-musically/#metro.co.uk/2017/03/17/musical-ly-everything-you-need-to-know-about-the-app-your-children-are-obsessed-with-6516068/), [youtube.com/watch?v=aNO6s4FcdUs](https://youtube.com/watch?v=aNO6s4FcdUs), [youtube.com/watch?v=YVGZ1ZQ4JqM](https://youtube.com/watch?v=YVGZ1ZQ4JqM), [static.muscdn.com/website/pdf/creatorPlaybook.pdf](https://static.muscdn.com/website/pdf/creatorPlaybook.pdf), [youtube.com/watch?v=8TaiQCCntaM](https://youtube.com/watch?v=8TaiQCCntaM), [support.musical.ly/knowledge-base/community-guidelines](https://support.musical.ly/knowledge-base/community-guidelines)



AGE RESTRICTION  
**13+**  
with parental permission

# What parents need to know

# Twitch



Twitch is a gaming-focused live-streaming service, owned by Amazon, where you can watch others play games live and listen to commentary as they play. It has 15 million daily active users and more than three million people live broadcast video game streams and other content on Twitch, with channels dedicated to just about every popular video game imaginable – both modern and retro. There are also shows that feature gaming competitions, professional tournaments, game-related chat and news. Plus, numerous non-gaming channels covering everything from cookery and music to art and travel. But Twitch is not just about watching other people's shows – anyone can broadcast their own gaming action.



## Top Tips for Parents

### THE RISK - IT'S LIVE & UNCENSORED

As gamers get engrossed in their games, it is very common to hear rather choice words, so the chance of your child encountering swear words and bad language is extremely high. There is not only the language of the person running the stream that you need to consider, but also the language of other Twitch users in the text-based chat that accompanies streams.

#### What parents can do

There's not much you can do to reduce exposure to bad language on Twitch, but if there are any troublesome users, it is possible to block them. It is a good idea to spend a little time with your child as they explore different channels on the platform, as this will give you an idea of the sort of content they are being exposed to. As Twitch does not offer any parental control options, this is the best way to police what your child is doing. If your child is overwhelmed or disturbed by comments that are being posted in the stream chat, it is possible to hide it from view by clicking the little arrow to the right of the Subscribe button.

### THE RISK - VIOLENT GAMES & ADULT CONTENT

Like so many websites, Twitch does not allow children under the age of 13 to create an account, but in practice, there's nothing to stop anyone signing up by simply entering a false date of birth. In addition to swearing, commentary provided by other Twitch users may well contain adult content, and the games themselves can be rather violent. Bear in mind that many of the games on the market these days have an age rating of 18, and this is indicative of the bad language, sexual content and violence that they may contain.

#### What parents can do

There is nothing that can be done to prevent your child from accessing whatever channel they want – short of using your router settings or parental control software to block access to the site completely. One of the problems with Twitch is that while there is plenty of child-friendly content out there, it is not at all easy to quickly identify what might not be suitable. Spend some time working with your child to help identify channels that will be appropriate for them. While it may be hard to ensure they stick to these channels, it is useful for them to know that there is content available that is not overtly adult in nature.

### THE RISK - POTENTIAL COSTS

By default, Twitch is ad-supported, but there is a monthly subscription option – called Twitch Turbo – that offers an ad-free experience. On top of this, it is possible to subscribe to individual channels, and each one is chargeable individually. There's also Twitch Prime, a premium experience included with the Amazon Prime and Prime Video subscription memberships, which offers bonus games and exclusive in-game content and Twitch Merch – an online store offering merchandise, such as T-shirts and hoodies. Twitch Bits is a virtual currency that gives your child the power to encourage and show support for streamers – through 'cheers' – and get attention in chat through animated emoticons. Bits cost real money and there's one option to buy 25,000 Bits for £288. It's easy to see how costs could very quickly mount up the more involved your child gets into Twitch.

#### What parents can do

Take steps to restrict access to your credit/debit card, as well as your PayPal account, to avoid getting hit by a large bill. If you are able to access your child's Twitch account, it is possible to check their purchase history, so you can see if they are spending too much money on subscriptions or donations. Explain to your child that subscribing to channels and purchasing Bits for cheers is optional, and that they can watch and enjoy a stream without doing either.

### THE RISK - UNWANTED CONTACT FROM OTHER USERS

Just like any website or platform with a social element to it, there is the risk that your child will not only come into contact with the sort of people you might rather they didn't, but also that they could be harassed, groomed or bullied online.

#### What parents can do

Within Twitch settings, in the Security and Privacy section, it is possible to block messages – known as 'whispers' – from strangers. It's worth noting that this option only blocks messages by those who are not 'your friend, someone you follow, someone you subscribe to, one of your mods, or one of your editors'. Taking things further, it is possible to completely block users who become problematic. Show your child how to make use of this option by clicking on a user's name and in the little pop-up that appears, click the icon that looks like a little speech bubble to block them. If your child wishes to report the user to Twitch, click the three dots button beneath the block option and click Report.



### THE RISK - WEBCAM SHARING

As well as seeing streaming footage of games, Twitch also lets users share their webcam, so people can see them.

This gives yet another way for people to share inappropriate content, and it also gives another way for streamers to subject your child to advertising, sponsored content and product placement.

#### What parents can do

Getting involved in your child's use of Twitch is the best way to keep an eye on the sort of content they are consuming and intervene if anything inappropriate crops up. As part of your conversations with your child about what is appropriate to share online, try to educate them about careful use of their own webcam if they choose to stream their own gaming. As well as ensuring they are not encouraged into doing anything inappropriate on camera, it is also important to check that anything that can be used to identify them is not included in shot.

### THE RISK - TWITCH EMOTES

Twitch's interactive chat feature is littered with emoticons or 'emotes', which for first time users will be completely bewildering. They typically feature faces of notable streamers, Twitch employees or fictional characters, such as a grey-scale photograph of a game developer known as Kappa, which is often used in Twitch chat as a symbol of sarcasm or mockery. Your child may be upset or sensitive if they are the target of negative emotes while chatting with other gamers, or they may find some emoticons offensive.

#### What parents can do

Chat to your child about how they use Twitch and show an interest in understanding how it works. There are lots of online guides to Twitch emotes if you really want to get clued up on what your child is talking about in chats. Twitch's terms of service dictate that emotes must not be used for harassment – defined by 'targeted insults, defamation, intimidation, and threats of any nature'. If your child finds an emoticon that violates guidelines, they can report it via the 'User Report' tool. Channel owners can also add specific emotes to their 'Channel Banned Words' list.

SOURCES:  
<https://www.twitch.tv/>



National Online Safety

A whole school community approach to online safety

[www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com)

Email us at [hello@nationalonlinesafety.com](mailto:hello@nationalonlinesafety.com) or call us on 0800 368 8061

