

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a blue and white striped shirt, is leaning over a table and smiling at a young girl. The girl has blonde hair tied back with a white bow and is wearing a dark blue hoodie. She is also smiling and looking at a laptop screen. The background is a warm, out-of-focus indoor setting.

KCOM

**Internet safety for kids**  
A guide for parents



[kcomhome.com](http://kcomhome.com)



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## 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.

Did you know?  
9 in 10 children  
under 10 go online.

## 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

There are no hard and fast rules to parenting and the same goes for remaining safe while using the internet - what works for one parent might not work for another.

But, by sticking to Childnet International's five SMART rules, 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 parents' 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 a trusted adult if someone, or something, makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, or if you or someone you know is being bullied online.



**Top tip #2**  
Spend time exploring the internet with your child. You could even introduce a rule whereby all devices are kept in the living room so you can keep a closer eye on what they're doing online.

### As a parent, you might find these tips useful too...

- An adult should always closely supervise a young child's internet access.
- Talk to your child about how they use the internet and encourage them to show you what they like to do online.
- Regularly set aside some time with your child to use the internet safely and together.
- Research and use the various safety tools on social networks and other online services such as YouTube.
- Use search engines designed specifically to protect children, like KidzSearch or Swiggle.
- Set some ground rules for using the internet at home (you might want to consider how long for and limiting their access to communal rooms only).
- Encourage them to treat others online how they would like to be treated – behaving in a polite and friendly manner.
- Remember that the benefits of the internet outweigh the drawbacks.

## Using social media safely

Although Facebook guidelines state that no-one under the age of 13 is allowed to set up a profile, lots of under-age people could use it and other social networking sites they aren't old enough for.

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

**Top tip #3**  
If your child uses social networking, make sure their privacy settings are set to strict and teach them to ignore strangers.

## Minimum age requirements

**13**

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

**16**

WhatsApp

**17**

Vine

**18**

Tinder

**No age restriction**

Twitter\*\*\*

\* 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.

\*\*\* Twitter states that its services are not directed to persons under 13 and will take steps to remove such information and terminate the child's account.

If your children are aged under 13 then there are kid-specific social networking sites that you might find more suitable.

Sites like Kimingo, Club Penguin and Whyville offer learning, games, chat features and more in a super-safe environment for children as young as six.



**clubpenguin.com**  
6 - 14 years old



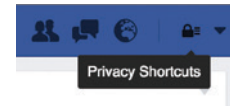
**kimingo.com**  
6 - 18 years old



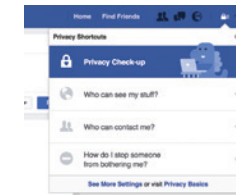
**whyville.net**  
8 - 15 years old

## Facebook privacy settings

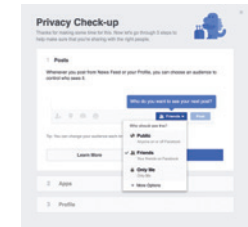
Facebook has built-in tools to help protect your child's privacy so it's wise to take a few minutes to set them up and secure their account.



Click on the Privacy Shortcuts icon on the top right-hand side of your child's Facebook page.

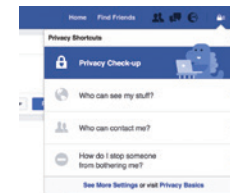


Click on the Privacy Checkup option.

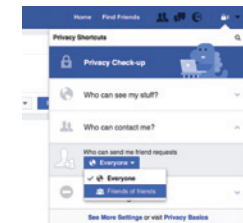


Use the drop-down menu to adjust who sees your child's posts to 'Friends'.

It's a good idea to stop them receiving friend requests from strangers.



Click on Privacy Shortcuts and then click 'Who can contact me?'



Change 'Who can send me friend requests?' option from 'Everyone' to 'Friends of Friends'.

## 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 any 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 ([www.pegi.info](http://www.pegi.info)) for a comprehensive list of ratings.

## PEGI ratings



The content of games given this rating is considered suitable for all age groups. Some violence in a comical context acceptable. No bad language.



Any game that would normally be rated at PEGI 3 but contains some possibly frightening scenes or sounds may be considered suitable in this category.



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.



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.



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.







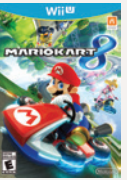




















This label was created specifically for online games. When a small online game displays the PEGI OK label it means the game is suitable for people of all ages.

## Content labels





## How does your child's favourite game rate?

					
World of Warcraft	Grand Theft Auto V	Call of Duty: Black Ops III	FIFA 16	Mario Kart 8	Minecraft
					
 	  	  			  

### 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 games 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 that today's game consoles offer easy-to-use parental controls so mums, dads and grandparents can keep track 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.

### Further reading:

A link to a comprehensive guide to parental controls for the most popular devices can be found at the back of this booklet.



## 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/controlpanel](http://kcomhome.com/controlpanel).

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 benefits of using KCOM parental controls

- They're free.
- They're easy to apply.
- You can select different age profiles (1+, 7+, 12+ or 16+) according to your needs.
- You can select individual websites to block or allow access to.

### Remember...

If you block a website that has multiple pages you'll need to add all website addresses to the blocked list, rather than just the home page. For example, if you added [bbc.co.uk](http://bbc.co.uk) to the blocked list you or your children might still be able to access [bbc.co.uk/weather](http://bbc.co.uk/weather).

KCOM's parental controls will only work on devices connected to your KCOM broadband – so they won't be active when your child is using their device on a mobile network or public Wi-Fi hotspot.

Controls can be activated on individual devices (visit the manufacturers' website, or see the link at the back of this booklet) but, with most households now home to numerous PCs, laptops, tablets and mobile phones, it might make sense for you to invest in parental control software to retain control across all devices.

Here are just some of the products available which allow parents to monitor and control your child's online activity, wherever they may be:



Net Nanny



Qustodio



My Mobile  
Watchdog



PureSight



Mobile-Spy

**Did you know?**  
Your child can use Wi-Fi in public places. All KCOM Wi-Fi hotspots have inappropriate material blocked.



These products provide some or all of these features:

Internet usage  
limit controls

Calls and SMS  
monitoring

Remote control  
access

Alerts and  
reports

App and game  
blocking

Panic button

Chat and IM  
monitoring

Location  
tracking

Multi-device  
monitoring

Social media  
monitoring

Internet  
filtering

## 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.

We offer Kaspersky anti-virus software as part of a KCOM Care package. If you'd like more information about this software call our Customer Services team on 01482 602555.

## 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.





## This is Steve...

Our Head of Cyber Risk, Steve Southern, regularly visits schools to talk to parents and teachers about the many different aspects of child-related internet safety.

He says: “Child internet safety is important for many reasons. The speed of access and diversity of online content mean that our children can often be just one mouse click away from accessing potentially very harmful words or images, and we don’t know what kind of lasting damage such exposure might have.

“Children deserve to benefit from a positive internet experience, but can only do so with our guidance, support, and supervision.”

Email Steve ([stephen.southern@kcom.com](mailto:stephen.southern@kcom.com)) to see if he can visit your child’s school.



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**  
[kcomhome.com/helpguides](http://kcomhome.com/helpguides)

**Child Internet Safety**  
[childinternetsafety.co.uk](http://childinternetsafety.co.uk)

**Get Safe Online**  
[getsafeonline.org](http://getsafeonline.org)

**NSPCC**  
[nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety](http://nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety)

**Parental controls (for devices)**  
[internetmatters.org/parental-controls/devices-computers](http://internetmatters.org/parental-controls/devices-computers)

**Kidscape**  
[kidscape.org.uk](http://kidscape.org.uk)

**Bullying UK**  
[bullying.co.uk](http://bullying.co.uk)

**KidzSearch**  
[kidzsearch.com](http://kidzsearch.com)

**Swiggle**  
[swiggle.org.uk](http://swiggle.org.uk)

**Mumsnet**  
[mumsnet.com/internet-safety](http://mumsnet.com/internet-safety)

**Safer Internet Day**  
[saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/2016](http://saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/2016)

**PEGI rating games search**  
[pegi.info/en/index/global\\_id/509](http://pegi.info/en/index/global_id/509)

**Childline**  
[childline.org.uk](http://childline.org.uk)

**Thinkuknow**  
[thinkuknow.co.uk/parents](http://thinkuknow.co.uk/parents)

**Childnet**  
[childnet.com](http://childnet.com)



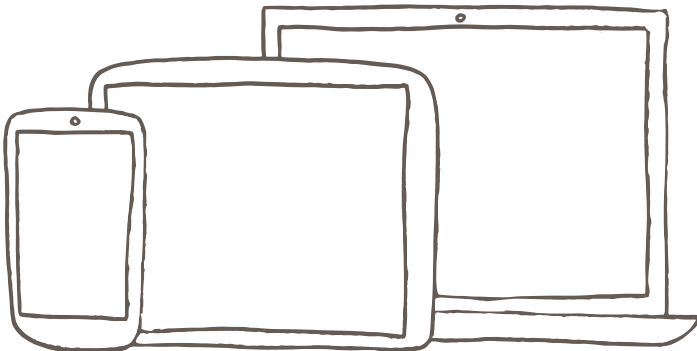
## Need some help?

Our Technical Support team will be happy to help if you're having any internet-related issues.

They can also arrange a home visit to check your in-home configuration. Give us a call on **01482 606101**, if you want to arrange an in-home visit.

Our MyTech experts are available on **0800 915 5116** for in-store services such as PC health checks, system reinstalls, data back-ups and smartphone and tablet set-ups.

Technical Support: **01482 606101**  
Customer Services: **01482 602555**  
[kcomhome.com](http://kcomhome.com)



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