

Advice if your child is under 5 years old

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- Start setting some boundaries, even at this early age ... it's never too early to do things like setting limits for the amount of time they can spend on the computer.
- Make sure devices like your mobile, [tablet](#) or laptop are out of reach. Set up passwords/PINs and make sure you keep these details to yourself.
- On computers and any other devices your child has access to, set the parental controls to the appropriate age, and enabling access to only appropriate content.
- Buy or [download](#) parental control software, switch it on and keep it updated. There are many versions on the market, which work in different ways and available at a range of prices, starting at free.
- The big four Internet Service Providers (ISPs) give their customers free parental controls which can be activated at any time. Check them out and take advantage of them.
- Buy or [download](#) only apps, games, online TV and films which have age ratings, which you should check before allowing your child to play with or watch them.
- Share your technology rules with grandparents, babysitters and your child's friends' parents so that they know what to do when looking after your child.
- When using public [WiFi](#) – for example in cafés or hotels – remember that it might not include parental controls. Innocently letting your child play with your mobile or [tablet](#) while you're enjoying a latte may result in them accessing inappropriate content or revealing personal information.
- If you have a family computer or [tablet](#), set the homepage to an appropriate website such as Cbeebies

If your child is aged 6 to 9 years old

- On computers and any other devices your child has access to, set the parental controls to the appropriate age, and enabling access to only appropriate content.
- Buy or [download](#) parental control software, switch it on and keep it updated. There are many versions on the market, which work in different ways and available at a range of prices, starting at free.
- The big four Internet Service Providers (ISPs) give their customers free parental controls which can be activated at any time. Check them out and take advantage of them.
- Agree a list of websites your child is allowed to visit and the kind of personal information they shouldn't reveal about themselves online, such as the name of their school or their home address.
- Set time limits for activities such as using the internet and games consoles.
- Make sure your child is accessing only age-appropriate content by checking out the age ratings on games, online TV, films and apps.
- Discuss with your older children what they should or shouldn't be showing their younger siblings on the internet, mobile devices, games consoles and other devices.
- Discuss with other parents subjects such as what age to buy children devices that connect to the internet.
- Don't be pressured by your child into letting them use certain technologies or view certain online content, if you don't think they are old enough or mature enough... no matter how much they pester you or what their friends' parents allow.

Advice if your child is aged 10 to 12

- Set some boundaries for your child before they get their first ‘connected device’ (mobile, [tablet](#), laptop or games console). Once they have it, it can be more difficult to change the way they use it or the settings.
- Tell your child that it’s very important to keep phones and other devices secure and well-hidden when they’re not at home, to minimise the risk of theft or loss.
- Discuss with your child what is safe and appropriate to post and share online. Written comments, photos and videos all form part of their ‘digital footprint’ and could be seen by anyone and available on the internet forever, even if it is subsequently deleted.
- Talk to your child about the kind of content they see online. They might be looking for information about their changing bodies and exploring relationships. They also need to understand the importance of not sending other people - whoever they are - pictures of themselves naked.
- Remember that services like Facebook and YouTube have a minimum age limit of 13 for a reason. Don’t bow to pressure, talk to other parents and their school to make sure everyone is in agreement.
- Explain to your child that being online doesn’t give them anonymity or protection, and that they shouldn’t do anything online that they wouldn’t do face-to-face.