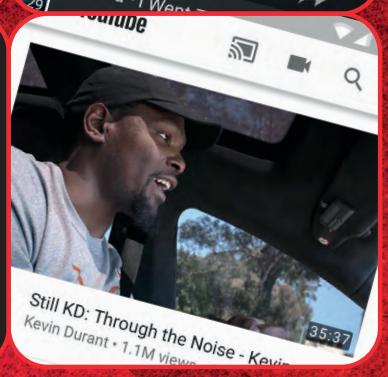
YouTube

YouTube is a video sharing site/application that enables you to upload, view, rate, share and comment on a wide variety of videos. Consisting of a huge resource of information, advice and entertainment, YouTube now has 1.9 billion logged-in monthly users who watch a billion hours of video daily. Most of the content on Google-owned YouTube is uploaded by individuals, but organisations and media companies also offer some of their content via this platform.

AGE RESTRICTION 13+



What parents need to know about YouTube

SPENDING A PREMIUM

YouTube Premium (formerly YouTube Red) is a new paid streaming subscription service in the UK, offering a three-month free trial to tempt viewers into a £12-per-month plan. This includes the ability to download videos, stream videos with the app in the background, gives exclusive access to original content and a separate music streaming service and gaming app.

DANGEROUS 'CHALLENGE' & VIRAL VIDEOS

On YouTube, 'challenge videos' are shared quickly and can be very dangerous. One person may post a video of themselves doing something unusual like eating a hot chilli or jumping in a river and before you know it, the video goes viral and everyone wants to join in and share their videos. The speed in which challenge videos spread across the Internet makes it difficult to keep up with the latest ones.

SHARING VIDEOS

As well as watching videos, many children are keen to share their own videos online, emulating their YouTube heroes, such as Stampy or DanTDM. However, if they post something on YouTube, they may later regret it or feel embarrassed about what they have shared. There is also a risk that they will receive hurtful or negative comments regarding not only their content, but also their appearance. YouTube's comment section is infamous for being one of the most opinionated on the Internet.

IN-APP MESSAGING

When your child is logged into their Google account and browsing the YouTube website, they can share and talk about videos with their friends using the chat bubble. This can be found at the top right of the desktop site or through in-app messaging on their mobile or tablet. When they tap on the 'Friends' icon, they have a list of suggested people from their contacts – which can be any contact they've had on Google or somebody who has sent them an invite link.

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE VIDEOS

As YouTube is the biggest video sharing website in the world, there is content available for all ages, meaning that some content will not be appropriate for your child. If you think that content is unsuitable, there is a flagging feature to submit it for review by YouTube staff, but you will need to be aware that just because video is not appropriate for a younger audience, it may not violate YouTube's policies. YouTube has mechanisms in place to automatically remove explicit and harmful content, yet offensive content may still slip through.

National Online Safety

Top Tips for Parents

TURN ON 'RESTRICTED' MODE

'Restricted Mode' is an optional setting you can use to help screen out potentially mature content you may prefer your child not to see. Restricted Mode works on the browser or device level, so must be turned on for each browser or device your child uses. To do this, follow these steps:

Desktop:
- Go to the bottom of any YouTube page and switch 'Restricted Mode' to 'ON.'
- To make it more difficult for this to be turned off, you will be given the option to lock restricted mode onto your browser.

Mobile:
- Tap the three vertical dots at the top-right on the screen and press, 'Settings.'
- Click on 'Restricted mode filtering.'
- Press 'Restrict.'

Please note that you can't 'lock' restricted mode on a phone in the same way that you can on a desktop. You will need to turn this on each time your child uses it.

CREATE A FAMILY GOOGLE ACCOUNT

By having a shared family Google account, checking the history will enable you to see exactly what your child is watching and sharing on YouTube. To see the history on a computer, on the right hand menu under the library section, click 'History.' On mobiles, the viewing history can be found by clicking on the 'Library' tab.

BLOCKING ACCOUNTS

When using YouTube, there may be instances where your child receives negative comments. If somebody's giving your child a difficult time, here's how to block them and prevent future comments and replies:

- Go to their channel/account by clicking on their name.
- Click on 'About.'
- Tap the dropdown box with an image of a flag on it.
- Press 'Block user.'
- Tap 'Submit.'

MONITOR WHAT YOUR CHILD IS WATCHING/POSTING

The only way to truly know what your child may have been watching is to regularly monitor them. You can do this by checking their viewing history. YouTube videos can also be easily downloaded, so it is important that your child understands the associated dangers of content they are uploading and that it could harm their online reputation in the future. Show them how to set their videos to private or choose a small network of YouTubers to share with. To get started, your child can use YouTube Studio which offers learning modules on creating a YouTube channel, however, you should encourage them not to use their real name.

NEW FEATURES

DIGITAL WELLBEING

YouTube has launched a tool called 'Time Watched' that allows you to see how long has been spent on the platform. Once you have discovered how much time has been spent on the app, there is the option to set a time limit. Once the limit is reached, a reminder will pop up on the screen. You can also disable sounds and vibrations to help resist the urge to check for notifications.

OPT FOR A FAMILY PREMIUM PLAN

A YouTube family Premium plan may be a cost-effective option if you have more than one child. For £17.99 a month, it allows you to share a YouTube paid membership with up to five other family members – aged 13 and older – living in the same household. As the account holder, or family manager, you must create a Google family account.

MANAGING IN-APP MESSAGES

If your child is accessing YouTube via your account, bear in mind that they may be contacted by Google contacts who are complete strangers to them. You can remove someone from the suggested contacts list by pressing and holding the person's name and tapping on the red 'x.'

POPULAR YOUTUBE GAMERS

There are hundreds of YouTube accounts which show other people playing and commenting on games. These are called 'Let's Play' videos. While YouTube can be a great resource for hints, tips and news for games, it is a good idea for parents to keep a close eye on what YouTuber's are posting. Often, the games they are playing will contain strong language and violence. A few examples of popular YouTube gamers for you to have a look at are:

- Stampy
- Yogscast Lewis & Simon
- PewDiePie
- EthanGamer
- Markiplier
- PopularMMOs
- Captainsparklez
- Jacksepticeye
- LtCorbis
- Dan TDM

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This is not a definitive guide. Please always check with the app's support information to see if your security and privacy concerns are addressed.