

The logo for Internet Matters, featuring the text "internet matters.org" in white lowercase letters on a solid green rectangular background.

internet  
matters.org



# Steam Parental Controls

## Controls & settings guide

Set up parental controls on Steam by creating a Steam Family. Enabling parental controls can help you manage your child's experience across SteamOS products, including the Steam Deck and Steam Machine.

1

## How to set up Family Management on Steam

Family Management is a parental controls tool available within the Steam client. You can add up to 6 members (including yourself) to a Family as either an adult or child.

### To set up Family Management:

**Step 1** – Make sure both you and your child have Steam accounts with accurate birthdays. Then open up the Steam client with **your account**.

**Step 2** – Click **Steam** in the top left corner and then **Settings**.

**Step 3** – Click **Family** and then **Create or Join a Steam Family**.

**Step 4** – Click **CREATE A FAMILY** and then **enter a name** to represent your family.

**Note:** If you have not made any purchases on Steam, you might see a message about having a **limited account**, which disallows you from creating a Family. If this happens, a quick fix is to [add some money to your account](#).

2

## Adding a child to your Steam Family

To customise the games your child can play, manage their screen time and restrict inappropriate content, you must add your child to your Family on Steam.

### To add your child's account:

**Step 1** – [Make sure your child is on your Friends list](#). Once you've created your Family, click **Invite a Member**.

**Step 2** – Click **Search friend list** and then search for **your child's Steam account** name. Then select **Invite as Child > Invite**.

**Step 3** – You or your child will need to **check their Steam account** and email to confirm the request.

You'll then be able to customise parental controls.

## 3 How to add your child as a Friend

You must have your child added as a Friend on your Steam account to add them to your Family on Steam.

### To add your child as a Friend:

**Step 1** – Using your **child's account**, open their Steam client. Click **Friends** in the top menu > **Add a Friend...**

**Step 2** – Make note of the number under **Your Friend Code** (or copy it). Then go to **Add a Friend...** on **your Steam client and account**.

**Step 3** – Enter your **child's Friend Code** in the space below your own code. **Confirm** that the correct username comes up, then click **Send Invite**. Have your child **accept the invite on their account**.

You're now connected as Friends.

## 4 How to turn on Steam's parental controls

Once you've added your child to your Steam Family, you can start customising their parental controls.

### To turn on parental controls:

**Step 1** – Within **your Steam account** and client, click **Steam** > **Settings** in the top menu.

**Step 2** – Click **Family** and then **Manage your Steam Family**.

**Step 3** – Click the **arrows** next to your child's information. Next, **click the toggle** next to **Enable parental controls for this user** so that it's blue.

Your parental controls are now on. See further steps to make sure you customise their account settings.

## 5 Where to block inappropriate games

Once you have parental controls set up for your child's Steam account, you can choose which games they can play.

Note that this only impacts games that your child accesses directly through Steam. For other game launchers, you'll need to customise settings separately. [Find another parental controls guide here.](#)

## To block inappropriate games on Steam:

**Step 1** – Once you've turned on parental controls on the **Family Management** page, you'll see a list of games that your child has on their Steam account. **Click** the ones you're happy for them to play.

Note that some games on this list are suggested rather than those actually on your child's account.

**Step 2** – In the **search bar**, find the names of other games you're happy for them to play. **Click** on them to add them to the Allowed games.

Adding Allowed games does not download the games. It just gives your child access to download them. If they search for a disallowed game, they won't have the option to download it.

## 6 How to manage screen time on Steam

If you've enabled parental controls, you can set playtime limits to help manage your child's screen time. Remember that these settings only apply to Steam.

We recommend exploring [Google Family Link](#), [Apple Screen Time](#) or [Microsoft Family Safety](#) if you'd like to set screen time limits across multiple apps.

## To set playtime limits:

**Step 1** – On the **Family Management** screen, click **your child's profile** and scroll to **Set playtime limits**. Click the **toggle to blue** to turn playtime limits on.

**Step 2** – Click on **any day of the week** to edit limits. First, next to **Time Limit**, select **how much time** you'd like to limit their gameplay on Steam each day. This applies to all games within Steam.

**Step 3** – Next, **modify the times** that you allow them to play games on Steam. Any

block that is **highlighted blue** represents time they can play. Any grey block shows when playtime is not allowed.

While you cannot customise playtimes for each day, you can set multiple 'windows' of playtime throughout the day.

Click **Confirm** when you're done.

**Step 4** – Scroll back up and click **PLAYTIME** in the Family Management menu. **Select your child** in the dropdown menu to review how much time they spend playing games throughout the week. This can help you review playtime limits on an ongoing basis.

## 7 Where to restrict inappropriate content

In addition to disallowing certain games on Steam, you can customise what kind of content your child can and cannot come across in the Steam Store and Steam Community.

While no filter is 100% effective, customising these restrictions can improve your child's safety.

### To restrict inappropriate content:

**Step 1** – In the **Family Management** menu, click **your child** and scroll just **below the Allowed Games** parental controls. Here, you can **customise** which permissions you wish to give your child. By default, they are all off.

**Step 2** – Scroll down **below the screen time settings**. Here, you can manage which content you're okay with your child seeing. **Untick all boxes** to keep your child from seeing violent, sexual or otherwise mature content.

## 8 How to add money on Steam

Steam's parental controls let you limit access to your child's account. However, if you would like to give your child an allowance instead, you can add it directly to their account.

You might also need to add money to your own account to set up a Steam Family.

## To add money on an account:

**Step 1** – Click the user's **account name** in the top right corner and select **View my wallet**.

If you do not see this option on your child's account, review the parental controls you've set.

**Step 2** – **Select the amount** you wish to add and **follow the instructions** to enter your payment details.

If on your child's account, you might need to give permission on your account, so it's a good idea to use separate devices.

**Step 3** – From the same **drop down menu** in Step 1, select **Account details**.

**Step 4** – If adding money on your child's account, double **check that your card is not saved** to the account. It should say **Add a payment method to this account** if no card is saved.