

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

internet
matters.org



Google Family Link Guide

Controls & settings guide

Google Family Link is a free way to set parental controls across devices. You can manage app access, set screen time and add a device bedtime remotely to help children build good online safety habits.

1 How to set up Google Family Link

To being using Google Family Link, you must have a Google account, which [you can create here](#). It's also useful to create your child's account using the same link, but you can do this with the Family Link app as well.

To best make use of Family Link, install the app on your device by searching for it in your app store.

To set up Family Link:

Step 1 – On your child's Android device, go to the **Settings** screen. Scroll to **Google > All services > Parental controls**.

If your child's device is already connected to a Google Account, you will instead tap their **name > All services > Parental controls**.

Step 2 – Tap **Let's do this**. You'll then be able to add your child's account or create a new one. Tap **Supervise account**.

Step 3 - Follow the prompts and read through the information that comes up on the next couple of screens.

You'll need to **enter your own email and password** to become an admin. You'll also need to **confirm your child's password** to complete setup.

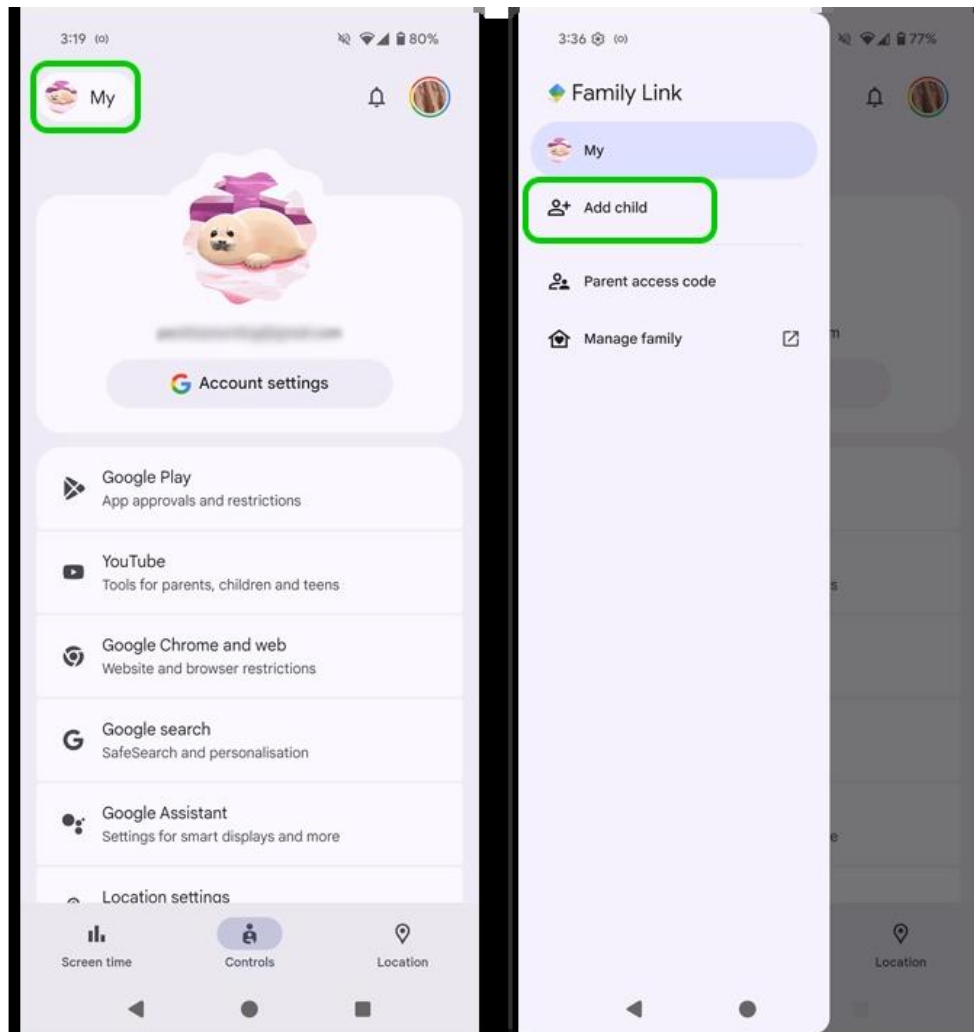
You can now edit your child's permissions on Google Family Link on your device.

2 How to add a child to Family Link

If you have multiple children, you can add them to the Family Link app as well. Once you add a child to Google Family Link, they automatically become a part of your Family Group.

To add another child:

Step 1 – Open your Google Family Link app and click your existing **child's icon** in the top left corner. Tap **Add child**.



Step 2 - If your child has a Google account, tap **Yes**. Follow the instructions from [How to set up Google Family Link](#) to connect your child's device.

If you need to create a Google account for your child, tap No to set one up and jump to [Creating a child's Google account](#).

Step 3 - Once your child's account is connected to your Google Family Link account, return to your own device and tap **Done**. You can now access all added children's profiles in the **top left menu**.

3 Creating a child's Google account

When setting up Google Family Link, the app will ask you if your child has an account. If you select 'No', the app will take you through setup.

You can also [create a child's account here](#).

To create a child's account with Google Family Link:

Step 1 – When adding a child, the app will ask you if your child has an account. Select **No** if they do not. Follow the instructions to add a **first name** and **date of birth**.

Tap **Next** to move forward.

Step 2 – **Choose an email address** for them along with a **password** when prompted. We recommend choosing an email that they can continue using as they grow. Use a password manager to create a strong password. Tap **Next**.

You will then see a couple of screens of information. **Read through them fully**. This will help you better understand Family Link.

Step 3 - Choose how you would like to proceed. For a quicker process, select **Choose in fewer steps**. You can change these settings later.

Read through the documents explaining how your child's data is managed and which settings are impacted. Tap **Confirm**.

You will now be able to customise your child's account and set restrictions.

4 How to limit screen time

With Google Family Link's parental controls, you can monitor and manage screen time on your child's device without needing direct access. With Family Link, you can:

[View device and app usage](#);

[Set 'School time'](#) to keep children off device during school hours;

[Set time limits](#) per day or week and for specific apps;

[Schedule downtimes](#) to support better sleep.

To view device and app usage:

Open the Google Family Link app and tap **Screen time** on the bottom left. Tap the **top box**, which shows device usage.

Here, you can see how long they've spent on their device and in particular apps.

To set up School time:

Step 1 - Go to **Screen time** in the Family Link app and tap **Schedules**. Scroll to School time and **tap the toggle** to turn it on.

Step 2 - Tap **Weekly schedule**. Tap the **time next to Mon** and **choose the time range** for school time.

You can choose to set a **Break** and tick the box next to **Apply Monday-Friday** if the same hours work for each day. Tap **Done**.

Now, when your child tries to use their device during school time, they will see a full screen that says school time is active.

Step 3 - Under **Allowed apps**, make sure **Unlimited apps is off**. The toggle circle should be to the left for off.

Note: On **their device**, your child can tap **Disable for today**. You will then need to enter your parent password or **parent access code**. You can share the parent access code with your child as it will expire after 30 minutes. Do not share your password with your child.

To get the parent access code, **open Family Link on your device**, tap on **your child's profile image** in the top left and select **Parent access code**.

To set daily or weekly limits:

Step 1 - From the **Screen time** option in the Family Link app, tap **Time limits**. Tap the toggle to **turn limits on**.

Step 2 - Tap **Weekly schedule**. For each day of the week, **set a limit**. Consider school work, responsibilities and needs when making these decisions.

You can set limits on specific apps in the next step, which will also be affected by the overall daily limit.

Step 3 - Back on the **Time limits screen**, select **App limits**. You will see a list of all apps installed on your child's device. Tap the **app you wish to limit**. **Set a limit** and tap **Done**.

You can also tap the toggle next to Allowed to keep your child from accessing the

app.

To set downtime for bed:

Step 1 - From the **Screen time** screen, select **Schedules**. Tap the **toggle next to Downtime** to turn it on.

Step 2 - Tap **Weekly schedule**. Choose a **day** and **set the hours** for your child's bedtime. This can include time to wind down before bed.

You can apply to all days of the week and edit the weekends if applicable.

Step 3 - On the **Schedules** screen, under **Downtime**, tap **Allowed apps** and make sure **Unlimited apps is turned off** (the toggle background should be white, not purple).

5

How to restrict content with Google Family Link

To help protect your child from seeing inappropriate content, Google Family Link helps you set restrictions for:

[Google Play](#)

[Chrome and web](#)

[Google search](#)

Note: Google Family Link cannot restrict content within non-Google products. You will need to explore in-app parental controls for specific apps if you wish to do this.

To restrict content on Google Play with Family Link:

Step 1 – On your child's Family Link profile page, tap **Controls** in the centre of the bottom menu. Tap **Google Play**.

Step 2 – Under **Content restrictions**, choose **Apps & games**, **Films**, **TV** or **Books**. Then, select the **level of restriction** you'd like to add. [Learn more about age ratings for games here.](#)

You can also decide which apps to block here, but this can be done in the [Screen time controls menu](#) as well.

To restrict content on Google Chrome and web:

Step 1 – On the **Controls** screen, select **Google Chrome and web**. Choose **Try to block explicit sites**.

Step 2 – If you don't want your child to access specific websites, go to **0 blocked sites** under **Manage sites**. Manually **add which websites** you don't want your child to visit.

Step 3 – Alternatively, if you've selected **Only allow approved sites**, tap **0 approved sites** under **Manage sites**. You will need to **manually add the sites** you're happy for your child to visit.

To restrict inappropriate content on Google search:

From the **Controls** screen, select **Google search**. Ensure that **Filter** is selected to limit results with explicit images, text and links.

6 How to track your child's location

You can use Google Family Link to track your child's location (or find their device) and get alerts about when they arrive to or leave certain places.

To turn on location tracking with Google Family Link:

Step 1 – In your Family Link app, tap **Location** in the bottom menu > **Set up location**.

Step 2 – **Choose which child(ren)** you'd like to turn on Location Sharing for. This will only work with Android devices or Fitbit Ace LTE.

Tap **Next**. Read through the information and tap **Turn on**.

Step 3 - To further customise your child's location settings, go to the **Controls** menu and tap **Location settings**. Tap on **their device** under **Device location settings** and read through/set the options.

To find your child's device:

Option 1 – If the device is likely nearby, go to the **Screen time menu** and select **their device**. Tap **Play sound** and listen for its location.

Option 2 – If the device is unlikely to be nearby, select **Location** in the bottom menu. Tap on **your child** to see the location of their device. You might need to refresh the location.

To add arrival and leaving alerts:

Step 1 – Go to **Location** using the bottom menu. Select **Family places > New place**.

Step 2 – Enter the **address of the location** such as your home address or their school. **Name** the location and **when** you'd like to get alerts (Arrives and/or Leaves). Tap **Save**.

Now, as long as your child has their device, you can see when they arrive or leave each location. You can adjust the size of this area if multiple addresses are close to each other to create a 'zone' instead.

Step 3 – To adjust the size of a location, select the **location**. Use the **slider** below the map to **increase the zone**.

You will then receive notifications if your child leaves this zone with their device.

7 How to add a new device

Family Link lets you add multiple devices to one child account. However, this only works with the following types of devices:

Android smartphone or tablet (with Android 5.0 or newer)

Fitbit Ace LTE

Chromebook (with ChromeOS versions 71 or newer). Location tracking is not available on Chromebook.

To add a new device to Google Family Link:

Step 1 – On the device you wish to add, **sign into your child's Google account**. Follow the instructions within **Step 1** of [How to set up Google Family Link](#) for more

guidance on how to do this.

Step 2 – In Google Family Link on your device, go to the **Controls** menu and select **Signed-in devices**. You should now see any device registered to your child's email.

If you can't tap on them, they may not be one of the devices listed above. You will need to use different parental controls outside of Google Family Link.

8 Manage spending limits

You can set spending restrictions within the Google Play Store via Google Family Link. This includes paid-for apps and in-app purchases.

To set up spending limits on Google:

From the **Controls** menu, tap **Google Play**. Under **Purchases and download approvals**, tap **Require approval for** and choose the level of restriction you'd like to set.

All content: You must approve every download from Google Play.

Paid content only: You must approve any download or in-game purchase, but they can download and use free apps without approval.

In-app purchases only: You must approve any in-game purchase but do not need to approve app downloads.

Never: You do not need to approve any download or purchase.

We recommend choosing **All content**, especially for younger children, to ensure they aren't using unsafe apps.

If you let your child use Google Wallet, you must customise settings in the app directly. [See how here](#).