

# Say it right

## A parent's guide to reporting & banning in online games

Learn about community guidelines, how to explain them to your neurodivergent child and what to do if they get banned because of the language they use.



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## Understanding in-game rules

Neurodivergent children can benefit a lot from playing online games. It's a way for them to connect with others, strengthen communication skills, self-regulate and have fun.

However, just like any other online space, there are **community guidelines** they must follow. Sometimes, neurodivergent children might find these rules challenging. The rules might feel **too ambiguous** or rely on understanding social interactions in the same way as everyone else. As such, **a ban can seem like it comes out of nowhere.**

Most platforms do not have direct rules like 'no cheating' and often have social rules around behaviour between players. These grey areas can make it **more difficult for neurodivergent children to fully follow the rules.**



# Additional challenges for neurodivergent children

## Taking language literally

Some neurodivergent children think in **very literal terms**. So rules like 'no dangerous activities' can feel **unclear**, especially if the game includes battles or violence, which some might consider 'dangerous'.

## Impulsive response during play

A neurodivergent child might get caught up in the excitement of a game and **do or say things without thinking** which break the rules, such as spamming or using language against the rules.

## Emotional dysregulation

If a child plays online games as a way to unwind or regulate themselves, another user interrupting their peace or gameplay can make it **easy for them to say something in anger**. If they're banned, they might also feel **emotionally overwhelmed** by losing that safe space.

## Targeting vulnerabilities

If a harmful person knows that your child is vulnerable or quick to anger, they might **trick them** into triggering automatic moderation features (such as warning against spam) or **bully them** through targeted 'reporting' attacks intended to **upset your child with a warning or ban**.

## Repeating messages or actions

Repetitive behaviours, such as **sending the same message more than once** or repeatedly inviting someone to play, might be **flagged as spam** by automated moderation tools.

## A strong sense of fairness

Some children may repeatedly **call out cheating or unfair play** because they want the rules followed. However, **messaging someone multiple times** or following them between games can be seen by platforms as **spam or harassment**.

## Parroting others' jokes

Some neurodivergent children might **repeat jokes or funny phrases** they heard elsewhere. Maybe it got a laugh at school or among a group your child admires. Not understanding social cues or context, they might then say the same joke or phrase in their favourite online game, which then ends up **breaking the rules** and can be **hard for them to understand**.



# Common types of in-game bans

To help your child avoid getting banned, it's important to talk to them about positive behaviour online.

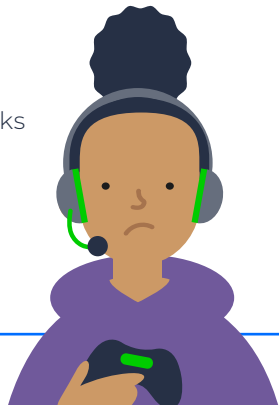
Below are some examples of behaviours which have led young people to being banned in online games. Use them to start discussions which can help your child follow the in-game rules.



## Standing up for someone else

### What happens

- A child sees someone being bullied or targeted in some way.
  - ▶ They want to help.
  - ▶ They tell the perpetrator to stop, possibly starting an argument.
  - ▶ Heat of the moment makes it easy to say or do something that breaks the game rules, even when they're just trying to help.



### What you can do

- Encourage your child to report anyone targeting others directly to the platform rather than publicly calling them out.
- Take screenshots and give evidence so the platform can ban the right person.
- In the public chat, your child can also support the target. For example, 'don't listen to them' and 'I support you'.
- However, encourage them not to get involved in the argument as this could put their own account at risk.

## Sharing off-platform details

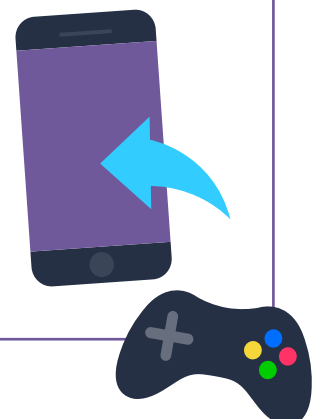
### What happens

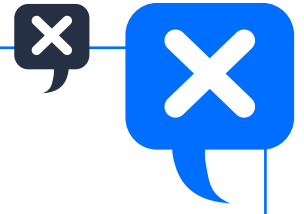
- A child uses multiple platforms to keep in contact with friends.
  - ▶ In one game, they ask a friend if they use another platform.
  - ▶ To connect on that platform, the child shares their username.
  - ▶ They get banned for directing users off-platform.

Many platforms automatically block or ban this behaviour because they cannot moderate conversations once they move outside the game.

### What you can do

- Encourage your child not to mention other platforms or share usernames for other platforms.
- Make sure they know to never share these details with users they meet online.
- If they share these details with friends, they should do so in-person or through other communication they might already have with their friend, such as text messaging.





## Using banned words

### What happens

- A child uses slang or a word that they think is harmless.
  - ▶ However, it might be on a list of banned words due to people misusing it as a slur or insult against others.
  - ▶ Generally, your child can appeal these types of bans if the context around how they used the word is clear. This won't work for harmful words they've used without knowing the meaning or if they've repeatedly used the word after being warned.

### What you can do

- Make sure your child uses polite language whenever they're online.
- If they do get a warning or ban because they used a disallowed word without bad intent, talk to them about it and explain the reasons behind it being disallowed.
- Reassure them that they didn't know then but to know now so shouldn't do it again.
- Look into how to appeal the ban.

## Using in-game currency bought from an untrusted source

### What happens

- Various websites exist which offer users the option to buy in-game currency for a reduced price.
  - ▶ In many cases, these websites scam users because the currency is not allowed to be purchased in that way.
  - ▶ If a child tries to redeem this currency in the actual game, they could receive a warning or ban for cheating.

### What you can do

- Ensure that you/your child/your family only buy in-game currency and in-game items from the platform itself.
- Using third-party platforms means your purchases are not protected.
- The game cannot help you if something goes wrong or if your child gets banned.



## False reporting and targeting

### What happens

- As an act of bullying, different users might target one person (e.g. your child) by reporting their messages or avatar repeatedly.
  - ▶ This flags the AI moderator to automatically suspend or ban your child.
  - ▶ In most cases, you will be able to appeal the ban, especially if it doesn't make sense. For example, if your child is banned for profanity but has chat disabled, you should be able to appeal it.
  - ▶ If your child is banned rather than just warned, it's likely because they've done this on multiple separate occasions.

### What you can do

- Regularly talk with your child about online interactions and what it might look like if someone is targeting them.
- If they do get banned, encourage them to take calming breaths and to tell you so that you can look at it together.
- If the game allows it, you might want to set up a private server which only your child and trusted friends can use.



## Spamming

### What happens

- A child sends a series of similar messages over a short amount of time and gets reported for spam.
  - ▶ In some cases, another user might have encouraged them to do it in exchange for an item; in other cases, another user might have not responded immediately (or at all) to your child. Some neurodivergent children might also repeat words or phrases because it feels comfortable.
  - ▶ But even simple words can result in a warning if used repeatedly.
  - ▶ If your child is banned rather than just warned, it's likely because they've done this on multiple separate occasions.

### What you can do

- Talk to your child about spamming, including what it is and why it's a problem (e.g. can clog up the chat, make them seem like a bot or annoy other users).
- Encourage them to ignore other people who tell them to say repetitive phrases and to report anyone bothering them.



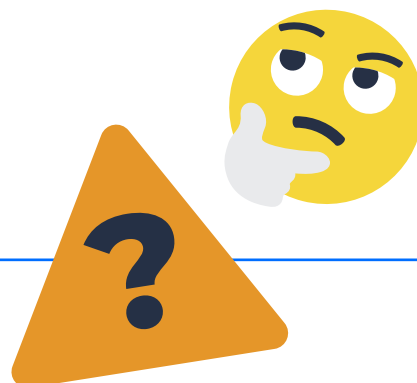
## 'No reason'

### What happens

- A child might receive a ban with little or confusing information about the reason behind it.
  - ▶ In many cases, it will relate to a warning or suspension from potentially months earlier.
  - ▶ It might also mean that your child has repeated the behaviour, possibly without knowing.
  - ▶ Online games use both automated moderation and human moderation. In some cases, the report related to the banning offence needed to be reviewed by human moderators, which meant the ban took a bit longer.
  - ▶ Human moderators may also review behaviour over time rather than actioning a report right away.


### What you can do

- If the option is available, you can appeal the ban. However, appeals might not always be available, depending on the severity of the rule-breaking.
- Your child might say they didn't do anything wrong, but you might be able to reach out to the platform via their support or contact page for more context.
- Regardless, it's a good time to [review with your child the community guidelines and explain what they mean.](#)



# What to do if your child is banned

If your child gets banned from their favourite online game or platform, it can feel like their world has been cut off. Follow these steps to help your child deal with the ban and appeal it if it's possible.



## Step 1: Stay calm and reassure your child

If your child cannot access their game, they might feel panicked, anxious, angry or sad. Let them know:

- Mistakes can happen online;
- This doesn't mean they are in trouble at home;
- You can work through what happened together;
- Help them find a way to regulate the emotions they might be feeling.



## Step 2: Investigate

Alongside your child, review the ban message. Is it a temporary ban or a permanent ban ('perma ban')? Or is it just a warning?

- Explore the reason given for the ban.
- Ask your child what they think happened or to explain the context around any messages they sent which led to the ban.
- If you don't have enough information as their parent, you might be able to contact the game's moderation or support team.

▶ [Roblox Support](#)

▶ [Fortnite Support](#)

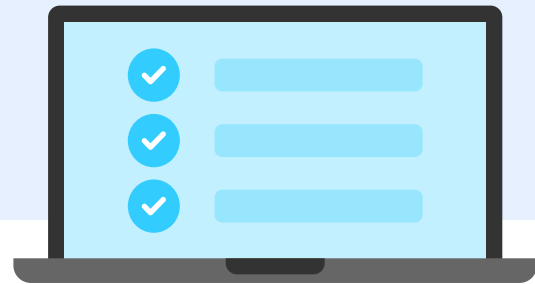
▶ [Minecraft Support](#)



### Step 3: Talk about it

If your child broke the community guidelines or rules, take the time to go through the rules together. This will help them to avoid these mistakes in the future.

If you don't think that your child has broken any rules, you may be able to appeal the ban or request a review. However, this won't always be successful. Talk to your child about how they're feeling and explore alternatives they might enjoy.



### Step 4: Agree next steps

If you've successfully appealed your child's ban, make sure you use the moment to review community guidelines and rules. Return to the guidelines regularly or 'test' them occasionally to help reinforce their understanding.

If you could not appeal the ban, your child might want to create a new account. If you're happy for them to do this, make sure you connect your parent account to theirs so you have an overview and talk with them about the game rules.

**Note:** In some cases, your child will not be allowed to create a new account. Some games will block specific devices or IP addresses so banned users can't create different accounts. In this case, research alternatives together.

### Step 5: Check in

Whether your child is on the same platform or a new one, remember to check in.

- Review community guidelines;
- Ask about their experiences;
- Discuss what to do if things go wrong.

Regular check-ins can make it easier for your child to get help before things go too far.



# How to help your child avoid warnings and bans

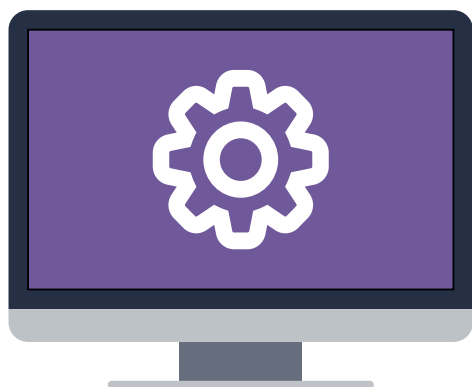
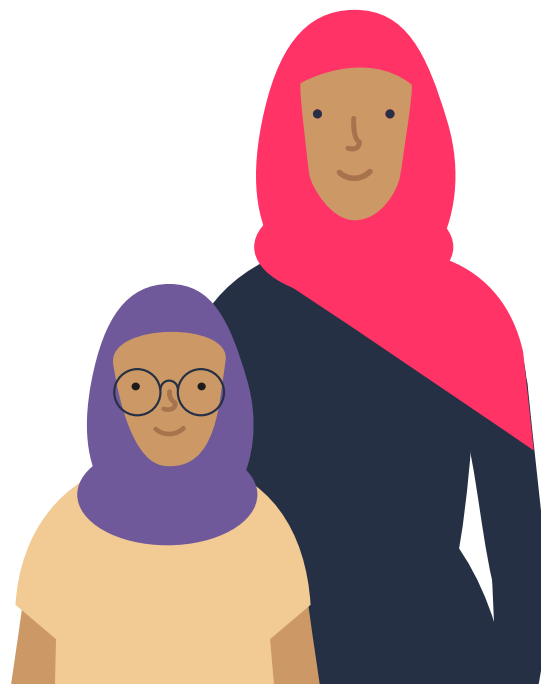
Neurodivergent children can experience online communication and game rules in different ways.

With the right support and clear guidance, you can help your child understand community guidelines and avoid bans from their favourite games.



## Go through the rules together

Go through community guidelines, standards or rules together. 'Translate' difficult rules into terms they understand and consider having them write the rules somewhere visual in those easier terms. [See the Roblox's Youth Guide to Community Standards for an example.](#)



## Create private spaces

Consider setting your child up on private servers where they can only play with friends you know offline. With your parent account, **limit communication to 'Friends Only'** (or similar). There might also be settings where you have to **approve new friends**.

## Practise in-game scenarios

Using the [Common types of in-game bans guide](#), ask your child what they could do in different scenarios to avoid a ban. For example, "someone says they'll give you an item if you say 'please' 4 times. What do you do?"

Scenarios can help your child learn to **recognise patterns of behaviour** and understand when **using reporting or blocking tools** might be required.



## Talk about 'hard to read' language



Discuss what to do if someone tells them to **say something or uses language they don't understand**. They shouldn't do what others tell them or repeat things they don't know the meaning of. You can explore some common terms used in online games with [this dictionary of terms in online games](#).

Explain that **some words will be used when the opposite is meant**. For example, if GG (good game) is said to someone who has just lost a game, it might actually be a mean comment. **If your child is not sure** about whether something is nice or mean, **they shouldn't comment at all**.

## Explore reporting tools

Encourage your child to **use reporting tools** rather than responding to harmful people. Instead of calling someone out on harmful behaviour in the public chat, for example, they should report the user to the platform.

Ask them to **show you where reporting and blocking tools are** (for users and games). If they're not sure, show them and test them later. Encourage them to use these tools whenever someone sends them **messages they don't like** or they see **content which they think is unsafe**. [Explore step-by-step guides to learn where you can find these tools](#).

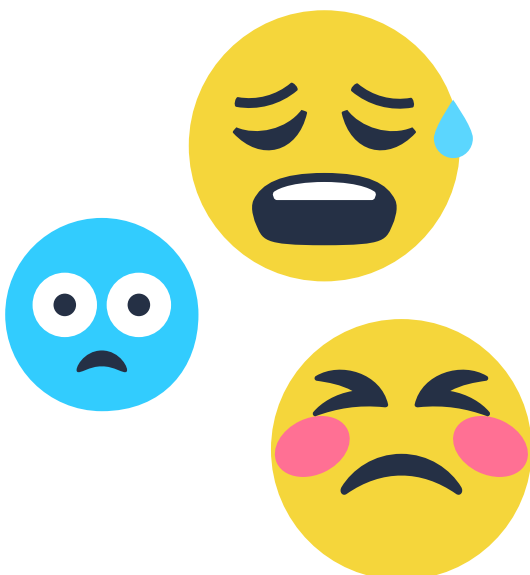


## Talk about the signs of frustration

Encourage your child to practise being **mindful of their triggers** and what it feels like when they're **getting frustrated**. Maybe it's feeling hot, a racing heart or feeling like they want to scream.

Once they start to feel these things happening, then it's **time to take a break** from the game and **come back when they're calm**. Decide what 'cooling down' looks like (you might already have something that you use for offline regulation).

**Remind them of these tools each time they play** their game so it's at the front of their mind.



# Understand bans on Roblox

Roblox is one of the most popular online games platforms among neurodivergent children.

With so many different experiences and the option to create their own games, Roblox offers a lot of variety for young people, which can keep it interesting. If your child uses Roblox, explore the next few pages in this guide to help support your understanding of the banning and appeals process on Roblox.

## What to do if your child is banned from Roblox

Because some neurodivergent children might not realise that they've broken a rule, it can be hard to come to terms with a ban. If Roblox is a place that supports their learning, mental health and regulation, this can be even more difficult.

Prevention by **discussing Roblox's Community Standards** can help keep this from happening. [Use the Youth Guide to Community Standards](#) to help.

However, if your child is banned, and you don't think they did break any rules, you can try:



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### Appealing the ban:

- In the message your child receives which notifies them of their ban, **there may be an 'appeal' option.**
- Go through the process of **providing evidence, explanation** and **context** to prove that your child didn't break the rules.
- Use **calm and polite language** for the best experience.

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### Contacting Roblox Support:

- Some parents **report getting in touch with Roblox Support** for additional help if an appeal is not successful.
- Generally, if an appeal has been denied, there **isn't much else you can do.**
- But if you have **additional questions or concerns**, you could try contacting the Support team **within the specific game or on Roblox in general.**



### Helpful resources for parents

- [Roblox Community Standards](#)
- [Roblox Youth Guide to Community Standards](#)
- [Roblox Parental controls](#)
- [Roblox Safety](#)



# Reporting and bans process

## What you and your child can expect

In many cases where your child is banned from Roblox, it's because their account has been flagged for breaking the Community Standards multiple times. See the roadmap below for what typically happens.

Note that not every case is the same and that this is only a reference to help you understand the reporting process.

