

Protecting children aged 5 & under online

internet
matters.org

How young is too young?

If your child is using any kind of device, including a **smart TV, tablet, games console or your smartphone**, it's time to start addressing online safety.

This is a great time to start building **positive screen time habits** and **encouraging mindful use**. These are skills they can take with them as they grow.



Top 5 online safety tips for under-5s



1

Put yourself in control

Add **parental controls** to every device your child uses. This can include creating child accounts on those devices (or in specific apps).

It can also include setting **screen time limits**, **curating content** or **deleting apps** you don't want them to access.

Consider setting up [Apple Family Sharing](#) or [Google Family Link](#) to put yourself in control of their online safety.

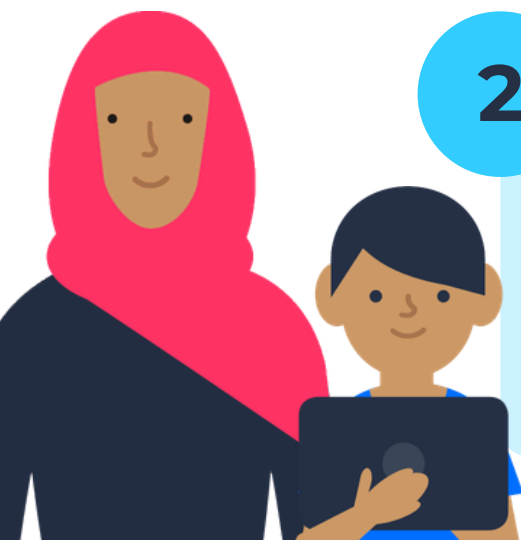


2

Explore together

Children love doing things with their family! Use that as an opportunity to **watch videos together**, **play age-appropriate games** and **learn new skills**.

Doing this with your child also gives you a chance to **show positive screen use** and **talk through safe actions** they can take if they are worried, scared or upset.



3

Set whole-family boundaries

Set rules for the family to follow such as **where devices can be used and for how long**. Leading by example and getting older siblings involved **helps young children learn by watching**.

You can create a [digital family agreement](#), which lists out the rules and which everyone can sign. Hang this somewhere in the home as a reminder.



4

Find development-appropriate content

Children under 5 might want to watch or play the same content as an older sibling. However, they are at an important developmental stage. So, [prioritise videos, games and apps which help them learn](#).

[YouTube Kids](#) can help your child avoid adult content, but it's important to curate what they watch to make sure it supports their learning. [CBeebies](#) is a safe source for educational content.



5

Start talking about online safety

Early conversations with your child about their online safety can build a foundation that **supports them as they grow**.

Talk about **how they feel** after watching a video or playing a game. Ask them **if their eyes are tired** and need a screen time break. Ask them about **the story they're watching, what they like about a game or if they'd like to try something new**.

As they grow, these chats and check-ins will feel like a **normal** part of their everyday life. And this can **help keep their online experiences positive**.



For more guidance to support your child aged 5 or under, [click or scan the QR code](#).

