Online Safety Newsletter September 2022

Instagram



Instagram is used to post photos and videos. Users can also DM (direct message), send disappearing messages, add to their stories (these disappear after 24 hours) and broadcast live. **You should be over 13 years of age to set up an account.** To create an account, you must enter a date of birth (but this is not verified).

Account Privacy

When you set up your account, it is automatically **set as public**. This means that anybody can see what you share. We would recommend changing this to private so only those your child approves to follow them can see their content. *To change a profile to private go to profile, tap Settings, tap Privacy, then under Account Privacy, tap to toggle Private Account on.*

IMPORTANT: Even if your child has set their Instagram profile to private, your child's bio (at the top of their profile) can still be seen by **everyone.** Check they have not included any personal information in their photo and bio info (e.g. they should not be wearing their school uniform in their photo).

Other additional privacy settings include:

- Story control – you can choose to allow message replies from 'your followers', 'followers you follow back' or turn off.
- Sharing – you can choose whether followers can share your photos and videos from your story in a message.
- Hidden words – turn this option on to hide comments that may be offensive in a separate section.
- Activity status – if switched on, other accounts you follow and anyone you message can see when you were last active or if you are currently on.

Make sure your child understands that there is a risk that content they upload can never be removed (other users can screenshot it for example) so they must only share content that they are comfortable with others seeing.

New Supervision features

You can now supervise your child's Instagram accounts. This gives you the ability to see who they follow and who follows them, see how much time they are spending on Instagram, set daily time limits and schedule breaks. Your child can also easily share when they have made any reports to Instagram with you. Learn more here: https://familycenter.instagram.com/our-products/family-center/

Safety Features

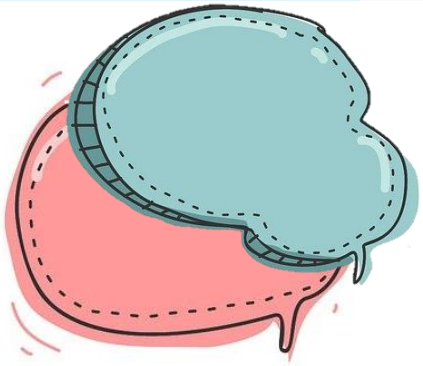
Ensure your child knows how to report posts and people as well as how to unfollow and block people, delete and turn off comments. View here: https://help.instagram.com/269765046710559/?helpref=hc_fnav

More information

Visit the family centre to learn more about the features available: https://familycenter.instagram.com/

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date released 1.09.22.

Talking to younger children



According to the latest research from Ofcom, nearly half of all 3-4 year olds have their own tablet (Children and parents: media use and attitudes report 2022) so it is never too early to start chatting to our children about how to stay safe online. But how can we do this? Here are some of our suggestions:

Use books to spark conversations

Childnet have created a collection of five 'Digiduck' stories to help you educate your child (aimed at aged 3–7) about online safety. The stories are available here: https://www.childnet.com/resources/digiduck-stories/. In addition, Childnet have created a learning-to-read book for children aged 4 and above titled 'On the internet.' The book also includes puzzles to encourage conversations. The book can be downloaded here: https://www.childnet.com/resources/a-learning-to-read-book/

Watch Jessie & Friends together

ThinkuKnow have created three different animations for three age groups between 4 – 7 years. ThinkuKnow also provide some useful guidance and advice on what else you can do to keep your child safer online, such as setting up appropriate parental controls. You can find out more here: https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/jessie-and-friends/

Is your child under 5?

This article is specifically aimed at those with children under the age of 5 and discusses the benefits of being online as well as how to create a safer online environment. You can read the article here: https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/keeping-your-under-five-safe-online/

Online games

Is your child playing or watching others play games online? Your child could be using Twitch, Steam, Roblox, YouTube etc to access games or watch others play. We need to make sure that what they are viewing is appropriate for them. It is important to talk to your child to see what they are interested in so you can have a look first to see if they are appropriate. For example, there are games that may appear to be appropriate but are actually horror/ survival games and characters can turn more sinister as the game progresses. It is important to remember that children may be playing the game, watching videos of it on sites such as YouTube or playing replicated versions on Roblox for example.

More information

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-games/

Learning Times Tables?

10 Minutes a Day Times Tables by DK is an Apple app (works best on an iPad) and provides a fun way to learn times tables! Made for ages 6 – 8, your child will practice their times tables whilst racing against another car.

https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/10-minutes-a-day-times-tables/id775904110

Omegle

You must be 18+ to use or 13+ with parental permission. Omegle is a social networking/chat website that **connects two strangers** together for either a text or a video chat. Chats are anonymous unless a user provides this information. Omegle states that "Omegle video chat is moderated. However, moderation is not perfect. You may still encounter people who misbehave."

What should I be aware of?

- No registration is required to access Omegle (therefore no age verification) and there are no reporting facilities.
- Users are given an option to save the chat's log and share the link. It is also possible for other users to take screenshots of text and video chats.

We recommend that Omegle is not used by children due to the potential imagery shared and language used which can be explicit.

You can find out more information from Internet Matters, including ways of keeping your child safe:

https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/news-blogs/what-is-omegle-what-parents-need-to-know/