

# TOP TIPS FOR SAFE ONLINE GAMING

Working with police forces countrywide, Get Safe Online, the UK's national internet security awareness initiative, has prepared the below "Tips" to help you keep your kids safe online:

- ✓ **Have an open and honest talk with your kids about online gaming and the risks involved.**
- ✓ **Tell them never to reveal private information like their real name, email address, home address, family members or financial details.**
- ✓ **Explain that not everybody is who they seem or claim to be, and their motives may be suspicious.**
- ✓ **Tell them not to respond to bullying or other abuse, and to tell you straight away if it happens.**
- ✓ **Join in with their gaming sometimes, to get an idea of the games and who they're connecting with.**
- ✓ **Set and monitor limits for the amount of daily or weekly time your kids spend online gaming.**
- ✓ **Check age ratings of games to ensure your kids aren't accessing inappropriate content.**
- ✓ **Never give your child your payment card details as extras can be very costly.**

They have also compiled some simple checklists according to your child's age group. Visit [www.getsafeonline.org/safeguarding-children](http://www.getsafeonline.org/safeguarding-children) and click on your child's age group to find out more.

For free expert advice about online safety and security, visit [www.getsafeonline.org](http://www.getsafeonline.org)



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Get Safe Online  
Free expert advice

## BE A SWITCHED-ON PARENT: SAFE ONLINE GAMING

Love it or hate it, chances are your child will be online gaming this summer. If you're like most parents, you'll have children who play games online, whether on a tablet, mobile, computer or console.

In most cases, online gaming is fun, social and harm-free. But we need to be realistic, and parents are right to be concerned about a world they may not be familiar with themselves. The risks range from downloading a computer virus, to bullying or even being targeted by a predator with sinister motives.

As parents, it's impossible to know what your children are doing all of the time, particularly when it comes to online gaming. In the same way you would warn your kids about the risks of riding a bike or crossing a road, it's important to educate them to online security dangers early on so you can feel comfortable knowing they are playing safely and know when to alert someone to anything suspicious.

Parents need to be switched on and have an open and honest conversation with their children, ensuring they are mature enough to game online in the first place, and are aware of the threats and safe gaming practices from the off. There are minimal restrictions when it comes to online gaming, so anyone with access to a gaming account from anywhere in the world can potentially make contact with other players of that game. Unfortunately, some people playing these games are not who they say they are, so young people should be on their guard against random friend requests and ensure they don't share private information which could put themselves at risk.

While it can be hard to enforce such advice and encourage safe online behaviour, fortunately, there are tools that can help. Parental control software can help establish and enforce the framework for what's acceptable online and which websites can be accessed. It can even be set to control how much time children can spend playing online games, allowing parents to create profiles to suit individual children at varying levels of maturity.