PARENT FACTSHEET – JULY 2024

Keep your child safe on Minecraft



What is it?

A game where children explore an online world. They can use 'building blocks' to customise the world and create new parts to it.

What potential risks should I be aware of?

Minecraft can be a good way for children to be creative and try out new things, but there are some risks you should be aware of too.

- **Inappropriate content**: Minecraft has a PEGI rating of 7, but there may be violent content, or content that might not be age-appropriate for your child. Users can generate their own content – for example, when the TV show 'Squid Game' (rated 15) was popular, some users recreated it in Minecraft, meaning other users could see its violent contents without watching the show
- **Contact:** strangers might try to talk to your child using in-game chat functions. This could be harmless, but some adults could use platforms like Minecraft to contact children, build relationships with them and later cause them harm. Your child might also download Discord (which has its own age rating) to voice and video chat with others while playing
- **Bullying and griefing**: other children (or adults) could use chat functions to exclude, bully, or intentionally ruin the game in multiplayer mode for others (known as 'griefing')
- **In-game purchases**: children can use 'Minecoins' to make purchases in the game. These are bought through the app store on the user's device

Key terms children might use when talking about Minecraft include 'realms' (an online server players can use through paying a subscription), and 'whispers' (a private chat function).

6 steps to keep your child safe

1. Limit in-game communication and content for your child (e.g. to friends only)

Xbox

First, set up a family group under your Microsoft account: https://help.minecraft.net/hc/en-us/articles/4408968616077-How-to-Manage-Parental-Consent-Family-Settings-and-Realms-Multiplayer-Access-for-a-Child-Account

Scroll down to 'manage a member's online safety and privacy settings' here, and follow the instructions: https://support.xbox.com/en-US/help/family-online-safety/online-safety/manage-online-safety-and-privacy-settings-xbox-one

PlayStation (PS)

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First, set up accounts for your family members – make sure adults have either 'family manager' or 'parent/guardian' status, and create a 'child' account for your child: https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/get-help/help-library/my-account/parental-controls/family-management/

Then, restrict chat and messaging features:

- **PS4 and PS5**: https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/support/account/ps5-parental-controls-spending-limits/#restrict

Nintendo

First, set up a family group and create a 'child' account: https://www.nintendo.co.uk/Support/Nintendo-Switch/How-to-Add-Members-to-a-Family-Group-1406409.html

Restrict communications through the Nintendo Switch Parental Controls app, or through the console: https://www.nintendo.com/en-gb/Support/Nintendo-Switch/How-to-Set-Up-or-Adjust-Nintendo-Switch-Parental-Controls-1494771.html

2. Tell your child to be careful about talking to people they don't know

Anyone can pretend to be a child online, so they should be careful about what they share. Tell them not to share personal information like their phone number or what school they go to.

3. Make sure your child knows how to mute or block players

- **Xbox**: https://support.xbox.com/en-GB/help/friends-social-activity/friends-groups/block-or-mute-other-player
- **PlayStation**: https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/support/account/block-players-psn/
- **Nintendo**: https://www.nintendo.co.uk/Support/Nintendo-Switch/How-to-Block-Users-You-Have-Played-With-Online-1661030.html

4. Set spending limits or require approval for purchases

- **Xbox**: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/account-billing/spending-limits-in-family-safety-f30d6801-165d-9f86-3fe7-063245c0449b
- **PS4 and PS5 (scroll to your child's model)**: https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/support/account/ps5-parental-controls-spending-limits/#limit
- **Nintendo**: https://www.nintendo.co.uk/Support/Nintendo-Switch/How-to-Set-Nintendo-eShop-Restrictions-1406403.html

5. Talk regularly with your child about what they're doing online

Make this an ongoing conversation – this means they're more likely to talk to you if something goes wrong or upsets them. See tips from the NSPCC on talking to your child about online safety: https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/talking-child-online-safety/

6. Know where to go for help

Tell our school about any bullying your child experiences. If it involves other children in our school, we can follow our anti-bullying procedures. And even if it doesn't, knowing about it will help us to look out for your child.

Sources

- Minecraft help centre
  help.minecraft.net/hc/en-us
- Online games, NSPCC
  https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-games/

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