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Parents' handbook for a kids' first gadget





What should I do before giving a gadget to a kid?

- Set up a child account on the device. Useful tips on how to do it are available [here](#).
- Prohibit the purchase of paid apps in the settings.
- Install all the basic apps that your kid may need to communicate and learn (messengers, educational games, etc.)
- Configure privacy settings for each app. Learn how to do it in our [Privacy Checker](#).
- Install an [effective digital parenting app](#).
- Define the age rating of the device's content in by selecting age restrictions.
- Enable the blocking feature to prohibit incoming calls from unknown numbers.



How do I introduce a new gadget into my kid's life properly?

- Develop a set of family rules. Learn more about useful digital habits [here](#).
- Designate specific areas and times that are tech-free.
- Engage with common activities that do not rely on technology .
- Limit your kid's phone usage during:
 - 🍽️ meals,
 - 🕒 bedtime,
 - 👨👩👧 family gatherings and outings,
 - 📖 homework and studying,
 - 🏠 hosting social gatherings,
 - 🏃 engaging in outdoor activities,
 - 💧 morning routines.



What online safety rules should my kid know?

- Set clear ground rules about what they can and can't do online.
- Teach kids privacy basics and tell them about the risks of oversharing.
- Emphasize that they should never share their address, geolocation, or login credentials/password online.
- Advise kids to create user IDs that do not include their real names.



What are the main risks I should tell my kid about?

- Explain what phishing scams are and why they can be dangerous.
- Warn about the risks of downloading games from unauthorized and non-reliable sources.
- Encourage ignoring sites with [intrusive adverts, survey calls, and lotteries](#). Modern security solutions [can](#) detect these pages and block them.
- Teach them to think twice before clicking on suspicious links or opening unknown email attachments. Reliable security solutions also can [detect and block](#) any malicious files and programs.
- Encourage them to ask for help if they feel uncomfortable or suspicious about something online.
- Help your kid choose a unique password and aim to change it periodically. [Reliable Password manager](#) can be a good helper in this task.



I'm afraid that strangers will start texting my kid. What do I need to tell my kid to prevent this from happening?

- Teach kids to avoid accepting friend requests from people they do not know in real life.
- Explain that if a stranger is trying to find out personal information about them or their parents, they should tell you immediately.
- Build trust by communicating with your kid regularly about their online experience.



My kid is constantly playing online games. Are there risks there too? How can I avoid them?

- Allow your kid to play games only people they know – at least in the beginning.
- Make sure your kid can create a private game or server.
- Teach them to download games only from official app stores with positive reviews and a high number of downloads.
- Encourage them to ignore links shared in chat rooms and never follow them.
- [Consider](#) installing a modern security solution, which has a special 'gaming mode' and can detect any phishing pages or malicious programs.
- Emphasize the importance of never sharing their passwords, even with friends.



My kid is being bullied on the Internet. What do I need to do?

- Stay calm, let your kid share their feelings and the details of the incident without interruption.
- Ensure the kid feels understood and safe.
- Before deleting messages or blocking the bully, take screenshots of all harmful content.
- Advise your kid to refrain from responding in a negative manner or retaliating.
- Discuss updating privacy settings, changing passwords, and blocking or reporting the bully.
- Report the incident to the school administration.
- If your kid shows signs of stress-related symptoms, consider seeking help from counselors or therapists.



My kid is bullying others online. What do I need to do?

- Stay calm, gather evidence and understand the full context.
- Discuss the situation with your kid to get their side of the story .
- Help them understand their impact. Ask them how they would feel if they were in the victim's place.
- Encourage your kid to apologize to the victim, either directly or through mediated channels.
- Monitor tech use. Without being overly invasive, keep tabs on your kid's online interactions. [Modern digital parenting apps](#) can let you monitor search history.
- Re-educate your kid about digital citizenship: ensure your kid understands the importance of responsible online behavior.
- Involve a school counselor, psychologist, or therapist to check if there are underlying issues or stressors leading to this behavior.



What questions should I ask my kid to ensure their online experience is safe?

- What was the most interesting thing you saw or read online today?
- Have you come across anything confusing or something you didn't understand while online?
- Do you ever chat or play games with people you haven't met in person? What's that like?
- How do you decide what to share and what to keep private online?
- Has anything ever made you feel uncomfortable while browsing or interacting online?
- Are there any new apps or websites that you've discovered and enjoy using? Let's try them together!
- Do you know what to do if someone sends you a message or a request that feels off, strange or inappropriate?
- What do you think about screen time limits? Do you ever feel like you need a break from your devices?
- Have you ever witnessed someone being unkind online? How did you feel, and what did you do?



How do I need to monitor the actions of my kid online, without invading their privacy?

- Talk with your kid about their online experience on a regular basis.
- Spend time online together. Watch videos, play games, or explore new apps with your kid.
- Use digital parenting apps focusing primarily on safety.
- Explain to kids why certain controls are in place.
- As they grow up, transit from strict monitoring to a mentoring approach, guiding them to behave responsibly online.
- Stay up to date with the latest digital trends and threats. Share this information with your kid in a way they'd understand.



What are some signs that my kid may be experiencing negative effects from their gadget use?

- A decline in academic performance.
- Reduced physical or social activity.
- Physical symptoms like eye strain, sleep disturbances, poor posture.
- Behavioral changes like increased irritability, withdrawal from friends and family.
- Neglect of responsibilities and loss of interest in previously enjoyed hobbies.
- Emotional indicators like mood swings, increased anxiety, signs of depression, low self-esteem, body image issues, low motivation.
- Cognitive concerns like decreased attention span, trouble with memory.

