

Keep your child safe on TikTok



What is it?

A video-sharing app that's huge with children and teenagers right now. You lip-sync to music or do comedy sketches, and can add effects to your videos. You can also gain followers ('fans') and watch other people's videos.

The age recommendation is **13 and above**, but it's easy for younger children to sign up too.

What are the concerns?

On the surface, not many (so far). But, there are a few things to watch out for, like:

- User profiles talking about 'trading' or swapping pictures or videos
- Emojis that are seen as sexually suggestive, like the aubergine
- Hashtags, like #tradefortrade, which suggest the user is looking to trade illicit content
- Sexual lyrics and swearing in songs

Users can't share images and videos with TikTok's in-app messaging, but once they've made contact, they can easily switch to another app, like Snapchat, to do this.

6 steps to keep your child safe

1. Set account to private and limit profile information

If your account is public, anyone (even people without an account) can watch your TikTok videos.

Tell your child to only accept requests from people they know in real life as well, as this will keep them safer.

Even with a private account, anyone can see your child's profile information. Tell them not to share personal information publicly, like their full name or where they go to school.

To make the account private, simply go to your child's profile > Settings (the 3 dots in the top right) > Privacy and Safety > turn on 'Private Account'.

2. Restrict interactions like direct messages and 'duets'

Duets are where users reply to one person's video with another video and then share it all. The videos appear together, side by side. Having a private account automatically means you can't do duets, and stops people who aren't your friends sending you messages.

For accounts that aren't private, go to Settings > Privacy and Safety > 'Who can send me messages' / 'Who can Duet with Me' > set to 'Off' or 'Friends'.

3. Restrict in-app purchases to block spending

On iPhones, if you already have Screen Time turned on, go to Settings > Content and Privacy Restrictions > enter your passcode if asked > turn on Content and Privacy > tap iTunes and App Store Purchases > In-app Purchases > set to Don't Allow.

If you don't already have Screen Time turned on, go to Settings > Screen Time > tap to turn it on > choose whether it's your device or your child's device > follow the steps to set up a passcode. Then just follow the steps above to block in-app purchases.

On Android, open Play Store, tap the menu button in the top left > scroll to Settings > Require Authentication for purchases > Select 'For all purchases through Google Play on this device'.

Keep an eye on your bank statements for in-app purchases to make sure your child isn't getting round your parental controls.

4. Set age limits so your child doesn't see inappropriate content

Go to your child's profile > Settings > Digital wellbeing > Restricted mode > follow the steps in the app.

5. Consider setting a time limit on use

TikTok can be hard to put down – help your child rein in their use with a time limit. Go to the Digital wellbeing section (see above), then tap screen time management, and follow the steps in the app.

6. Make sure your child knows how to report content and users

Filters aren't perfect, so make sure your child knows how to report harmful or upsetting content or users. Make sure you both know the rules too – TikTok bans sexually explicit content, bullying, graphic content and hate speech.

There are a few different steps to know here, so bear with us.

You **report other users** through their profile. Go to their profile > Settings > Report > follow the steps in the app

To **delete a fan**, your child should go to their Profile > Followers > tap the follower they want to remove > tap the 3 dots icon > tap Block.

To **block users** altogether, go to their profile > Settings > Block > follow the steps in the app

You report specific content through the video, comment or message itself.

To **report a video** or **message**: open it, then tap Share > Report > follow the steps in the app.

To **report a comment**: tap the comment > Report > follow the steps in the app.

Sources

This factsheet was produced by [Safeguarding Training Centre from The Key](https://www.thekeysupport.com/safeguarding): www.thekeysupport.com/safeguarding

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