

Parents' Guide to Technology

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers/parents-guide-technology>

Phones

What can you use them for?

Phones can send and receive calls and messages, browse the internet and take photos and videos. There are also a huge amount of apps that can be downloaded that let the user do a variety of different tasks such as watch videos, connect with friend on social media, make video calls, play games, get news updates, and much more.

Phones are very useful and entertaining, giving young people a way to keep in touch with their friends and families. However, it is important to be aware of what phones can do and to help your child use this technology in a safe and positive way.

If you only do 3 things:

1. Talk with your child about responsible use of their phone - what is okay and not okay to use it for? What are the risks?
2. Tell your child what they should do if something upsetting or unusual happens while using it. Phones are designed to be easily taken around with us so you may not be there when something happens. Remind them to stop and tell an adult they trust as soon as they can.
3. Explore appropriate parental controls, either on the phone, your home Wi-Fi or both. Open conversation with your child is the most important thing, but parental controls can be a good back up.

Conversations starters for talking with your child about phones:

- Why do you want to get a phone? / What do you like about your phone?
- What do young people your age use their phone for?
- What is your favourite app / game?
- What can we do as a family to help you use it safely?

- What would you do if something worrying or upsetting happened on your phone?
- (If there is a problem) Can you explain to me how it happened so we can fix it together?

Tablets:

What can you use them for?

Just like PCs and laptops, tablets can be used to browse the internet, for e-mails and to type up documents.

Tablets can also be used in the same way as a phone with many of the same features, like a built-in camera to take photos and record videos with. There are also lots of apps that can be downloaded that let the user do a variety of different tasks such as watch videos, connect over social media, make video calls, play games, plan journeys, get news updates, help with schoolwork, and much more.

Tablets can be a helpful and entertaining device and give young people a way to keep in touch with their friends and families. However, it is important to be aware of what tablets can do and how you can talk with your child to help them to use this technology in a safe and positive way.

If you only do 3 things:

1. Talk with your child about responsible use of their tablet - what is okay and not okay to use it for? What are the risks? Tell your child what they should do if something goes wrong while using it. This could be to take a step away from the tablet and tell an adult.
2. Explore parental controls that are available on the tablet, your home Wi-Fi or both. It is a good idea to talk through these controls with your child too. An open conversation with your child is the most important thing, but parental controls can also be a helpful tool to manage your family's use of technology.
3. Think about the location of the tablet. Will it be used in a shared family space (best for younger children) or in a bedroom? If it is to be used in a

bedroom, think about: setting time limits on when and for how long they can use it; reminding them about the risks of people that they do not know online and encouraging them to come to you with any worries.

Conversations starters for talking with your child about tablets:

- Why do you want to get a tablet? / What do you like about your tablet?
- What do young people your age use their tablets for?
- What is your favourite app / game?
- How can we use the tablet safely as a family?
- What would you do if something worrying or upsetting happened on your tablet?
- (If there is a problem) Can you explain to me how it happened so we can fix it together?

Game console

What is it?

A video games console, or games console, is a computer device used to play virtual, or 'video' games, on a screen. Some connect to a television; others are handheld with the screens built into them. Games are either inserted into the device as a disc or card, or downloaded directly onto the device via the internet and the device's online store.

At the moment, the main consoles available are: PlayStation 4, PlayStation 5, XBOX One, XBOX Series X and XBOX Series S (home video game consoles); the Nintendo 3DS/2DS (a handheld console); and the Nintendo Switch (which has features of both a home console and a handheld console).

Previous consoles include the Playstation 3, the XBOX 360 and the Nintendo Wii/Wii U. Although they are no longer produced, you may still be able to get hold of them second-hand and find games for them online.

What can you use them for?

The main use of a games console is to play video games, either by yourself or with other people. Playing with others can be done either in person using more than one game controller, or remotely using an internet connection.

For some young people, gaming is a big part of their social lives and video games provide a virtual space where they can hang out with friends and spend time together.

Other uses of games consoles include:

- chatting and connecting with friends
- playing DVDs / Blu-ray discs
- connecting to streaming video services, such as Netflix and Disney+
- connecting to streaming music services, such as Spotify
- browsing the internet as you would on a computer
- accessing and playing personal photos, music and video files on a TV that is connected to your console
- editing and sharing online footage of your gameplay
- streaming or downloading games via subscription services

If you only do 3 things:

1. Talk with your child about responsible use of their games console - what is okay and not okay to use it for? What are the risks? Tell your child what they should do if something goes wrong while using it. This could be to take a step away from the console and tell an adult.
2. Explore parental controls that are available on the console, your home WiFi, or both. It's a good idea to talk through these controls with your child too. An open conversation with your child is the most important thing, but parental controls can also be a helpful tool to manage your family's use of technology.
3. Think about the location of the console. Will it be in a shared family space (best for younger children) or in a bedroom? If it is to be in a bedroom, think about: setting time limits on when and for how long they can use it; reminding them about the risks of other players; and encouraging them to come to you with any worries.

Conversation starters for talking with your child about games consoles:

- Why do you want to get a games console? / What do you like about your games console?

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- What is your favourite game? / What game do you really want to play?
 - How do young people your age use their games console?
 - What can we do as a family to help you use it safely?
 - Do you need some help to manage the time you spend on games independently?
 - What would you do if something worrying or upsetting happened on your games console?
 - (If there is a problem) Can you explain to me how it happened so we can fix it together?