

# Online Safety November 2024

## Top tips for parental controls on new devices

In children's eagerness to start enjoying new digital gadgets immediately, it can be easy to overlook setting up the type of parental controls that can help to protect them. If you don't sort those out from the very start, it can be an uphill battle both technologically and psychologically to impose such controls later.

Here's what to look for when setting up the various internet-enabled devices that might be gifted at this time of year.

**Top Tips for SETTING UP PARENTAL CONTROLS ON NEW DEVICES**

In children's eagerness to start enjoying new digital gadgets immediately, it can be easy to overlook setting up the type of parental controls that can help to protect them. If you don't sort these out from the very start, it can be an uphill battle - technologically and psychologically - to impose such controls later. Here's our rundown of what to look for when setting up the various internet-enabled devices that might be lurking under the tree at this time of year.

- IPHONE**  
If your child's lucky enough to be getting their own iPhone, parental controls can help avoid issues like screen addiction and unsuitable content. Go into the settings and scroll down to 'Screen Time'. From here you can customise important settings including time limits on using the device, communication restrictions and content blockers. You can also lock your changes behind a passcode.
- NINTENDO SWITCH**  
Download the Nintendo Parental Controls app on your phone, and you'll be able to see what your child is playing on their console. Once you've set up the app, you can set up a PIN to prevent your child from changing the console from the app to enable them to play.
- ANDROID**  
With Android devices, Google's Family Link app is your friend. If you've set a Google account - and a separate one for your child, which you should use when first setting up the device. Then, in Family Link on your own device, select 'Add Child' and enter their account details. This will help you manage their device, including setting screen time, app restrictions and more.
- PLAYSTATION**  
You can prep for a PlayStation before it's even unwrapped. At my.account.sony.com, create an account, then go to Account Management > Family Management > Add Family Member to set up your child's account, which you'll use to sign in on the console. You can restrict the age ratings of the games they can play and who they can talk to. On the PS5, you can make exceptions for any games you think are acceptable despite their high age rating.
- IPAD**  
If your child's lucky enough to be getting their own iPad, parental controls can help avoid issues like screen addiction and unsuitable content. Go into the settings and scroll down to 'Screen Time'. From here you can customise important settings including time limits on using the device, communication restrictions and content blockers. You can also lock your changes behind a passcode.
- WINDOWS 11 PCs**  
On Windows 11, you can use the Windows Family Safety app to manage your child's account. Go to Settings > Accounts > Family Safety and create your child's account. It will help you manage their device, including setting screen time, app restrictions and more.
- CHROMEBOOKS**  
Chromebooks generally come with parental controls built in. Go to Settings > Accounts > Family Safety and create your child's account. It will help you manage their device, including setting screen time, app restrictions and more.
- MACS**  
Like iPhones, parental controls for Macs are managed via the Screen Time app. Go to Settings > Accounts > Family Safety and create your child's account. It will help you manage their device, including setting screen time, app restrictions and more.
- SMART TVs**  
Smart TVs typically have their own parental controls. Go to Settings > Accounts > Family Safety and create your child's account. It will help you manage their device, including setting screen time, app restrictions and more.

**Meet Our Expert**  
David Smith, National Online Safety Expert, is a former police officer and has worked for the Home Office, the Metropolitan Police and the National Crime Agency. He is also a former member of the National Crime Agency's Cyber Security Unit.

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### I-PHONE

If someone in your house is lucky enough to be getting their own iPhone, parental controls can help avoid issues like screen addiction and unsuitable content. Go into the settings and scroll down to 'Screen Time'. From here you can customise important settings including time limits on using the device, communication restrictions and content blockers. You can also lock your changes behind a passcode.

### ANDROID PHONE

With Android devices, Google's Family Link app is your friend.

You'll need a Google account — and a separate one for your child, which you should use when first setting up the device. Then, in Family Link on your own device, select 'Add Child' and enter their account details. This lets you specify limits on daily usage, restrict certain apps, block particular content and more.

### PLAYSTATION

You can prep for a PlayStation before it's even unwrapped. At my.account.sony.com, create an account, then go to Account Management > Family Management > Add Family Member to set up your child's account, which you'll use to sign in on the console. You can restrict the age ratings of the games they can play and who they can talk to. On the PS5, you can make exceptions for any games you think are acceptable despite their high age rating.

### XBOX

The Xbox Family Settings app helps you manage which games your child can play (and when). You'll need to set up the console with your own account and then add a child profile. Make sure your account's password protected, so your child can't alter your choices later. You'll be walked through the functions at setup, but you can also reach them manually via Settings > Account > Family Settings.

## **NINTENDO SWITCH**

Download the Nintendo Switch Parental Controls app on your phone, and you'll be shown how to link it to the console. Once that's done, you can limit how long your child can play each day, decide what age ratings are permitted and more. You'll also get weekly updates on how often they've used the device. These controls are accessible through the console itself, but the app is usually easier.



## **IPAD**

iPad parental controls are identical to those on iPhones. However, if you've got a shared family iPad and want to ensure your children aren't seeing anything age-inappropriate after you hand them the device, there's a feature called Guided Access (under Settings > Accessibility > Guided Access). With this switched on, young ones can only use the app that's currently open.

## **SMART TVS**

Smart TVs typically have their own individual parental controls. One of the most popular brands is Samsung TVs, you can control the content available to your child. In the Settings menu, under 'Broadcasting', you can lock channels and restrict content by its age rating. Even this isn't fool proof, however: some apps (like YouTube) might still let children access unsuitable material.

## **WINDOWS PC**

On Windows 11, account management is key. Set up the device with your own account as the admin. Then go to Settings > Accounts > Family and Other Users and create your child's account (if you've already done this on a previous PC, just log in with those details). Microsoft Family Safety (either the app or the site) then lets you control screen time, what content children can view and more.



## **CHROMEBOOK**

Chromebooks' parental controls are managed via the Family Link app. Unlike an Android device, however, you need set up the Chromebook with your own account first, then add your child's. Go to Settings > People > Add Person and input your child's Google account details (or create a new account). Your child can then log in, and you can monitor what they're up to via Family Link.

## **MAC**

Like iPhones, parental controls for Macs are managed via the Screen Time settings. Again, the crux here is to set yourself up as the administrator before adding any child accounts. In the settings, look for Users & Groups to create your child's account, then — while on their profile — use the screen time options to place any boundaries around apps, usage and who your child can communicate with (and vice versa).