INTERNET SAFETY CONCEPTS
— EDUCATE. EMPOWER. PROTECT. —

Empowering Smart Online Choices

A Parent and Educator Guide to TikTok

Understand the benefits. Recognize the risks. Support safe and responsible use.



What is TikTok?

TikTok is a short-form video platform where people can create, watch, and share videos on a wide range of topics such as entertainment, music, trends, education, hobbies, and more. It is especially popular with teens and offers creative tools, a large community, and a personalized For You feed that recommends content based on interests.

Positive Aspects

- Creativity and self-expression through short videos.
- Opportunities to learn new skills and explore interests.
- Connection with friends and communities.
- Educational content and diverse perspectives.
- A platform for advocacy, awareness, and positive change.

Minimum Age

Users must be at least **13 years old** to create a TikTok account.

TikTok also offers a separate, restricted TikTok experience for users under 13 in the U.S. with additional protections and limited features.

Potential Risks

- Exposure to inappropriate or harmful content.
- Online predators and scams.
- Misinformation and false trends.
- Cyberbullying and negative comments.
- Harmful or dangerous challenges.
- Privacy concerns and oversharing.
- Excessive screen time.
- Impact on mental health and self-esteem.

What Parents and Caregivers Can Do

Have Open Conversations

Talk regularly about online experiences, both the positive and negative.

Set Clear Expectations

Discuss appropriate content, screen time limits, and who they can interact with.

Use Parental Controls

Set up Family Pairing to manage settings, monitor activity, and adjust content controls.

Encourage Healthy Habits

Balance screen time with school, activities, sleep, and face-to-face relationships.

Stay Informed

Keep learning about new trends, features, and changes so you can have meaningful conversations.

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Privacy Settings
Control Who Can See You

- Set your account to Private.
- Choose who can follow you.
- Control who can comment on your videos.
- Turn off the option for others to duet or stitch your content.
- Manage who can send you direct messages (DMs).
- Adjust personalization and ad settings.
- Review and adjust your privacy settings regularly.

Account Security
Keeps Your Account Safe

- Use a strong, unique password.
- Turn on two-factor authentication when available.
- Keep your recovery information up to date.
- Be cautious of suspicious links, giveaways, and account takeovers.
- Log out from shared devices.
- Review your account security settings regularly.

Good to Know

- TikTok has additional protections for users under 18, including more restrictive content settings and default privacy settings.
- Direct messaging is not available for users ages 13–15.
- Safety tools and features may change over time, so check current settings regularly.

Practical Tips for Using TikTok Safely



1 Think Before You Post

- Consider how a video might be viewed now and in the future.
- Once it's online, it can be shared and saved.
- Protect your personal information.



2 Manage Who Can Interact

- Choose who can comment, send messages, or duet and stitch your videos.
- For users ages 13–15, direct messages are not available.



3 Use Content Filters

- Enable Restricted Mode to help limit exposure to mature or complex content.
- Report content that violates TikTok's Community Guidelines.



4 Be Cautious with Trends and Challenges

- Not all trends are safe. Research and discuss trends before participating.
- Some challenges can be dangerous or encourage unhealthy behavior.



5 Watch for Scams and Misinformation

- Be skeptical of giveaways, "easy money" schemes, and suspicious links.
- Check information from trusted sources before believing or sharing it.



6 Use Family Pairing

- Parents can link their account to their teen's account to set screen time limits, filter content, and manage privacy and interaction settings.

Official TikTok Resources

TikTok Safety Center
Guides, tools, and resources for a safer experience.
https://www.tiktok.com/safety/en/

Guardian's Guide
Information and resources for parents and caregivers.
https://www.tiktok.com/safety/guardians-guide/

Restricted Mode
Steps to enable and manage Restricted Mode.
https://support.tiktok.com/en/safety-hc/account-and-user-safety/restricted-mode

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