



Online Safety Newsletter

January 2026

Instagram Teen Accounts - update

You must be over 13 years of age to set up an account. Instagram is used to post photos and videos as well as send direct messages, make voice/video calls, and send disappearing messages.

Teen accounts are automatically set up for users aged 13 – 17. Instagram have announced that teens will now see content similar to content that they would see in a PG-13 movie.

Instagram have also updated their policies around content to include “hiding or not recommending posts with strong language, certain risky stunts, and additional content that could encourage potentially harmful behaviors”

Finally, for parents who would like to apply more stringent settings, Instagram are also introducing a new, stricter setting called ‘Limited Content.’ This setting will mean your child is not able to see, leave, or receive comments under posts as well.

You can read about the updates here: <https://about.instagram.com/blog/announcements/instagram-teen-content-safety-pg-13>



Playing games online

Does your child play games online? We have outlined some risks that you should consider:



Chatting to strangers / risk of inappropriate language

Some games will allow communication via text chat, direct messages or chatting. Some games do offer the ability to switch communication off and/or the option to restrict bad language, so make sure settings appropriate to your child are applied. If your child is playing online with strangers, then you need to be aware that there is a risk of grooming. Some games do allow you to restrict communication to ‘friends only,’ however you would need to monitor that their online friends are real life friends. It can be difficult to moderate online chat so ensure your child knows how to block and report other players.

Cyberbullying

It can be very easy online for children to behave in a way that they would not if they were face to face. Talk to your child about how they speak to others online and encourage them to talk to people online with respect. Other forms of cyberbullying whilst playing games could be excluding others, criticising the ability of other players and ganging up on others.

In app purchases

Many games include the option to purchase additional items/ subscriptions so ensure you do not have payment cards saved or set up restrictions/ a password to approve purchases.

What can I do?

- **Set up parental controls** - as well as setting up appropriate parental controls through the game’s settings, ensure you have set them up on the console/device your child is playing on.
- **Check age ratings** - before buying the game, check that your child is old enough to play it. All games will either have a PEGI rating or be rated by the App Store/Google Play.
- **Chat to your child regularly** about the risks above so that they are aware of what can happen online and remind them to always talk to you or a trusted adult if they have any concerns

Further information

CEOP provides further guidance and support regarding this topic: <https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/articles/gaming/>