

E-Safety



1 What is online gaming?



2 Things to consider with your child

3 What are the risks?

1

Online gaming describes any video game that offers online interactions with other players. Video games used to be classified by an Online Content PEGI descriptor to signify whether they were online or not. However, as most games now provide online interactions this distinction is no longer used.

Things to consider if your child games online:

- age ratings of games they play
- messaging and contact functions on the games
- in-game purchases
- trolling, griefing and scams
- how to report problems
- where they can get further support.

2

For top tips about keeping safe on games, see- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-games/>



3

Being bullied

Children can be bullied for not playing a specific game, or have FOMO. They may be deliberately excluded from a game by their friends, or criticised for how they play. Other players may swear or use abusive language over voice chat, and this can be upsetting for your child.

If your child is experiencing bullying in online games, tell them they can talk to you or contact Childline and show them the blocking and reporting functions in a game, so they can prevent bullies from contacting them.

Trolling, griefing and scams

Griefers are gamers who deliberately try to ruin the game for other players. This can also be called trolling. Players may also try to trick or scam young people into giving up 'skins' or other in-game items by offering them money or by hacking their account. Skins are a cosmetic feature that let players personalise their character and in-game items, they can be extremely rare and valuable so losing them can be upsetting for a child.

In-game purchases

Some games cost money to download, or players need to buy credits or items so they can keep playing. Many free games are designed to make the player want to continue but need payments to make this possible, which can be very frustrating. We suggest not storing payment card details on devices or in apps, to prevent charges building up.