

Child safety on Fortnite



What is Fortnite?

Fortnite is an online video game where players compete to be the last person standing in a post-apocalyptic world. It sees up to 100 players pitted against each other to stay alive on an island. Players can build and demolish structures, and collect weapons, supplies and armour to help them along the way.

Players shoot each other using a range of lethal weapons, but the brightly-coloured, cartoon-style graphics and lack of bloodshed mean it doesn't feel too gory or graphic.

To play, the age recommendation is **12 and above** due to 'mild violence', although you don't have to provide your age when creating an account, so younger children can still log on easily. While we would encourage parents not to allow their child to access this game until they reach the age limit, we want to make sure for those that do that the risks are minimized.

What are the main concerns for child safety?

- **Communication between players:** the chat function allows players to talk to each other over a headset and children will often be matched against teenagers and adults. They will regularly hear expletives, racist and misogynistic language that will end up becoming normalised to them. If they are playing the game out of sight, parents might be completely unaware of the language they are being exposed to.
- **In-app purchases:** players can build up large bills on their parents' accounts by buying cosmetic items like outfits for your character and better-looking weapons (otherwise known as 'skins')
- **Addictive nature of the game:** As with any video game, it is designed to keep the players attention for as long as possible. The result being they will prioritise the game over other hobbies or even going out with friends.

What safety options are available?

- **Turn off the voice chat feature:** this can be done by open the settings menu, select the 'audio' tab. From there there are a few options, but option 3 or 4 is the best choice.
 1. **Everyone:** you can hear everyone and also talk to them by using a microphone
 2. **Friends & Teammates:** you can hear friends and teammates and also talk to them by using a microphone
 3. **Friends:** you can hear friends and also talk to them by using a microphone
 4. **Nobody:** voice chat is disabled
- **Use the parental controls on the gaming device:** most devices allow you to set time limits on game play, set age limits for content, and restrict in-app purchases.
- Make sure your child knows they can talk you to if they come across something they are uncomfortable with. Take a supportive and open approach with them.