

Staying Safe Online

8 Tips For Learners/Parents/Carers

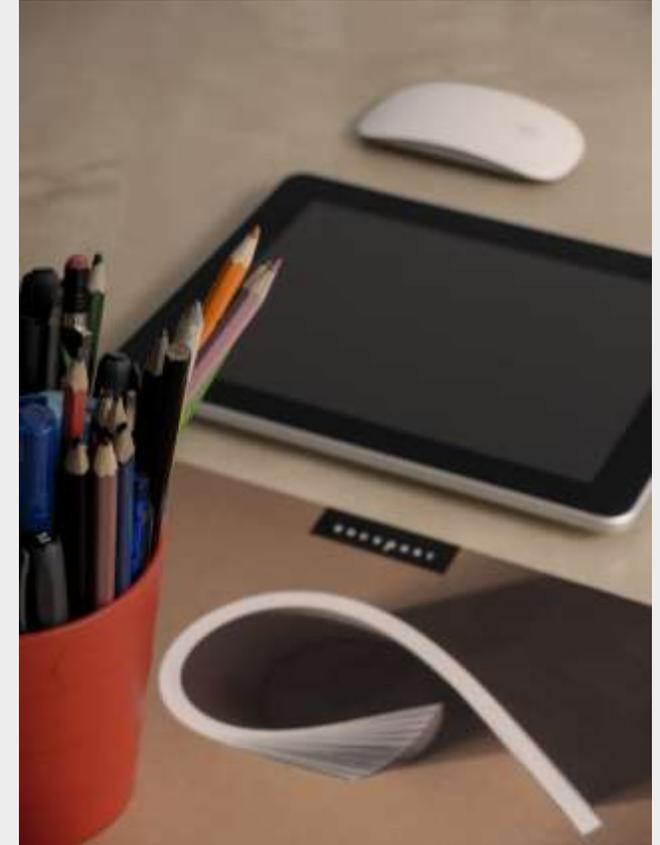


Introduction

The internet is an amazing place to be creative, chat with friends and find interesting fun stuff. You may spend a lot of time online, so it's important to make the most of it and enjoy it whilst also being safe, sensible and respectful to others too. Here's our guide to being smart about who you meet and what you do online.

Taken from:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/findoutmore/help-me-out-staying-safe-online>



Online Friendships

Try to think of your online world as an extension of your offline friendships. Include friends in your activities, it can feel just as hurtful to be left out of online games or chat as offline ones. Be careful how you word things too, sometimes the written word can be misinterpreted. So whether it's emails, texts or posts, be considerate to how they may come across. Save your important conversations, like resolving conflicts, for face to face meetings.



Be Respectful

Be respectful of your friends on social media. Don't post photos of them they might find embarrassing without asking first – and take them down straight away if someone asks you to. Try to be mindful of how your posts will make people feel before you put them up. You'll care about what other people post about you – so be courteous to others too.



Be Aware Of Your Digital Footprint

Every time you go online you leave what's called a digital footprint which shows others where you are and what you have been doing. So while posting pictures and videos is great for sharing with friends and being creative, always remember that once an image or file is online it's likely to stay there forever. Don't post anything you wouldn't want your grandmother to see.



Think Before You Post

Social media and some websites are great for airing your opinions and making the world a better place. However, be wary of writing negative posts. Ranting on the spur of the moment might feel good at the time but you may regret it later. Instead, try to put your point across in a positive or neutral way, it'll have more impact and shouldn't cause offence. Always remember that when you respond to something someone's said, there's a person at the other end who has feelings, just like you do.



BEFORE YOU POST...
THINK!

- T** - is it true?
- H** - is it hurtful?
- I** - is it illegal?
- N** - is it necessary?
- K** - is it kind?

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Protect Your Identity

When using the internet never give out personal information, such as your number, where you live or what school you go to – it's a big no-no. If you are using social media check your privacy settings and make sure only friends can see your posts.



It's Not Always Real Life

Always bear in mind that photos and posts can exaggerate real life. Think about it - we usually select the prettiest, happiest pictures (you rarely see posts about going to the supermarket with your mum or photos of a massive spot). Images of other people's (carefully chosen) perfect lives can leave you feeling low, but they don't tell the whole story, so try not to compare yourself.



Keep A Healthy Balance



The internet is a fantastic resource for research and schoolwork, but make sure you take regular breaks away from the screen. If you find yourself spending a lot of time online and even thinking about it when you're offline (instead of spending time with friends or family) then maybe it's time to back off a bit. There's a whole world out there – and while the internet can be fun, creative and social, you could be missing out on real life, like hanging out with your real mates. It's all about striking a good balance.



Other Useful Websites

<https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/6-10/>

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

