



A Parent's Guide to Instagram



This guide can be used to learn more about Instagram. It provides a detailed look at how your child uses the app, the potential risks they might encounter, the platform's safety features, and what you can do to help keep them safe.

What is Instagram?

Instagram is a free social media app **that lets you share photos and videos with your followers.** You can post permanent content to your profile, share photos and videos that disappear after 24 hours. To join, you must be **at least 13 years old.**



Key Features of Instagram

- **Followers:** Users who are allowed to see your posts.
- **Following:** Users whose content is visible to you.
- **Stories:** Users can post a photo or video that remains visible to their followers for 24 hours.
- **Close Friends:** A private story that only the user's selected friends can see.
- **Explore Page:** A page that suggests content from other users, tailored to your interests.
- **Reels:** Videos suggested to you based on your interests.
- **Shopping:** A shopping page where you can buy items from various stores on the app.
- **Likes:** A feature that allows you to like or react to a post.
- **Comments:** A feature that allows you to comment on a post.



How does Instagram Keep Your Child Safe?



Apps are **ever-changing** and so are their features! Please remember to check your or your child's settings regularly to stay aware of **any updates** to **in-app safety features**.



Private Teen Accounts by Default

For Instagram users **under 18**, accounts are **automatically set to private**. For users under 16, they can only change this default setting with help from a parent or guardian. **Other restrictive settings by default** includes:

- **Restrictive Interactions:** preventing them from being messaged or tagged by people they don't follow.
- **Sensitive Content Controls:** limiting their exposure to potentially mature topics like cosmetic procedures or violence in feeds like Explore and Reels.

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Parent Supervision Tools

These tools allow you to **set time limits**, **view who your child messages**, and **receive notifications about their activity**.

Q Where can I find this feature? ×

Tap **your profile picture** > tap the **menu** > **scroll down** to select **Family Center**.

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How does Instagram Keep Your Child Safe?

➤ Time Management

Instagram helps your child manage their time through **automatic default settings**, like **Daily Time Nudges** and **Sleep Mode**, as well as **optional tools** that users can customize, such as **Daily Time Limits**.

🔍 Where can I find this feature? ✕

For the optional tools:

Tap your **profile picture** > tap the **menu** > tap **How you use Instagram** > tap **Time management**.

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➤ Reporting, Blocking, Restricting, and Muting

These tools allow your child to **report harmful content or accounts** and **block, restrict, or mute users** to control your experience and safety.

🔍 Where can I find this feature? ✕

Tap the **profile picture** > tap the **three dots** > select **report/block/restrict/mute**.

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What are the Risks of Instagram?



Risk #1: Scammers/Predators

> Warning Signs

Friend requests/DMs from strangers, conversations becoming personal quickly, requests for secrecy, pressure to move to other apps, and offers of gifts.

> What You Can Do

Adjust your child's settings to limit friend requests and direct messages. Talk with them about online safety, like recognizing grooming tactics and knowing what personal information to avoid sharing. Remind them to always block and report suspicious users.



Risk #2: Inappropriate Content

> Warning Signs

Using new or adult language you haven't heard them use before, sharing or mimicking risky challenges or trends, comparing themselves excessively to influencers.

> What You Can Do

Encourage open judgement-free conversations about mimicking dangerous behavior online and consuming such content. Implement familial controls to avoid exposure to such content.



Risk #3: Cyberbullying

> Warning Signs

Changes in their mood, such as increased sadness or anxiety, or shifts in their behavior like avoiding friends, declining school performance, or changes in their sleep and eating habits.

> What You Can Do

Have regular, low-pressure conversations about their online experiences. Show them how to use Snapchat's safety tools. Remind them they deserve respect online, and seek professional help if their well-being is at risk.