

Online safety



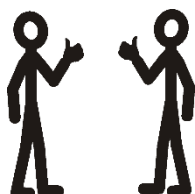
This easy read tells you about online safety.
Online safety means staying safe when you
are using the internet.



The internet is a good place to do lots of
different things, including:



- Keeping in touch with friends.



- Making new friends.



- Finding and sharing information.



- Finding things to do.



- Shopping.



But some people use the internet for bad things.



The information in this easy read will tell you how you can stay safe when using the internet.

Passwords



Many internet and social media sites will ask you to create a password.



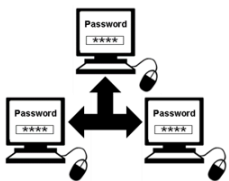
Passwords help to keep you and your information safe.



A password should be hard for someone else to guess.



Never use your name, address, date of birth or other personal information as a password.



You should use a different password for each website or social media site.



You must never tell anyone your passwords.



To make a good password you should:



- Use 3 words that are **random**. Random means 3 words that wouldn't normally be put together and wouldn't make sense to other people.

ABC
abc

- Use upper and lower case letters in your password.

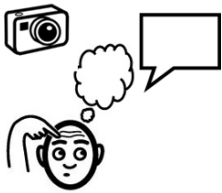
1234
5678

- Have numbers in your password.

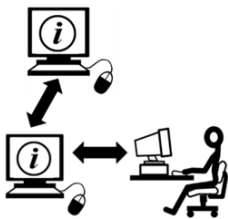
@#?!
+%*&

- Have special characters in your password. Special characters are symbols like # * & @ + %

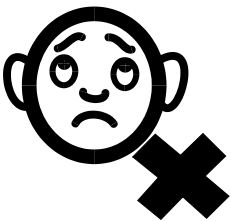
Being careful about what you share



Think carefully before you post any messages or pictures on the internet.



Remember your friends could share your messages and pictures with their friends.



People you don't know could see your messages and pictures.



If you are not sure about something, show a family member, friend or support worker and ask them what they think.



Never tell anyone your address, phone number or bank details.

Privacy settings



Privacy settings are settings on your computer, tablet or phone that help protect your information.



Different social media sites have different settings.



These can be found under 'settings' or 'options'.



It is best to set your privacy settings to 'friends' or 'followers'.



You should only be 'friends' online with people you know well in real life and can trust.



Check your 'friends' list on social media on a regular basis and keep it up to date.



People might pretend to be someone else to try to trick you.



People may ask you to do things you don't want to do.



If you have any worries or someone is asking you to do something you don't want to do, you should talk to a family member, friend or support worker you trust and ask them what they think.

Meeting people in real life



Someone you talk to online might ask to meet you.



Be very careful before you agree to meet up.



Always arrange to meet in a busy public place, such as a café.



Always take steps to help make sure you are safe. Always tell someone:



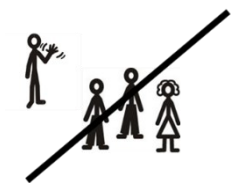
- **Who** you are meeting.



- **When** you are meeting.



- **Where** you are meeting.



Never meet anyone if you do not want to.

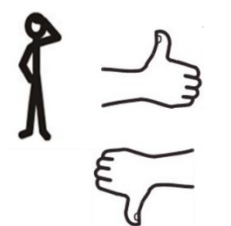


Always ask someone you trust to help you if you feel uncomfortable or worried.

Avoiding online scams



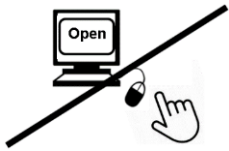
A scam is when people are dishonest or pretend to be someone who they are not to trick you.



It can be hard to know if something is genuine or not.



If you are not sure about something, ask a family member, friend, or support worker you trust to tell you what they think.

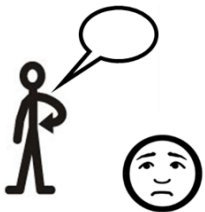


Never click on or open a link if you get an email or message you are not expecting, even if it looks okay.



Banks, or other trusted organisations will never try to pressure or push you into doing anything with your money online.

Respect and be kind to other people



Your comments and what you say online can make people feel sad.

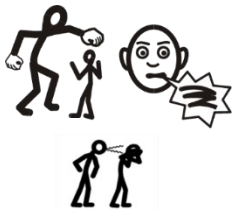


Only write kind words in the things you post online.



Do not say anything online that you would not say to someone's face.

Telling someone about issues or worries



Never accept being abused, bullied or harassed online.

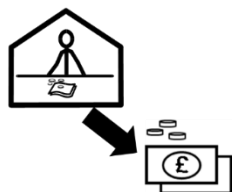


It is never okay.



Always tell a friend, family member or support worker you trust if you are worried about anything online.

Banks



If someone saying they are from your bank asks you to transfer (move) money or make a payment, you should phone the Stop Scams UK phoneline.



You can phone Stop Scams on 159.

159



When you phone, you should use a different phone so that you know you are talking to someone from Stop Scams.



Someone at Stop Scams will check the person is really from the bank and safe to talk to.

Abuse



Abusing someone online is a criminal offence. This means it is against the law.



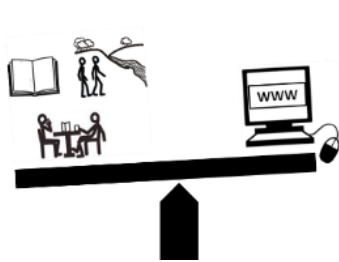
You can report online abuse to the police by using the 101 phone number.

Emails



Emails that seem suspicious or that you are worried about can be sent to report@phishing.gov.uk.

Keeping a healthy balance



Make sure you have other hobbies and do other activities away from the computer and phone screen.



Remember, it is okay to say “no, thank you.”



If you are not sure, worried or upset about anything online, ask a trusted friend, family member or support worker what they think.

This easy read was first published February 2024.
This information was last updated 20 July 2026.