

Understanding Tech

Family Rules for Online Chat — Calm, Clear, and Practical

This printable guide helps families set simple, fair chat rules that work across games and apps (Roblox, Fortnite, WhatsApp, Snapchat, etc.). Use it to agree boundaries, practise responses, and know what to do if things go wrong.

The Core Rules (post on the fridge)

- Private by default: accounts are private; only add real-life friends you both recognise.
- Kind chat only: no insults, pressure, dares, or sharing other people's pictures.
- No personal info: no full name, school, address, phone or live location in chats or profiles.
- Ask before adding: new friends are checked with a parent first.
- Money is adult-only: don't accept gifts, links, or trades; no clicking payment links.
- Tell me if you're unsure: we solve problems together – no trouble for asking.

Quick Scripts Kids Can Use

- Leaving a pushy chat: "I'm logging off now – bye." (then leave chat / block)
- Saying no to adding: "I keep my game friends to people I know in real life."
- Responding to dares/pressure: "Not my thing." (then change game/party)
- If someone asks for pics: "I don't share photos. That breaks my family rules."

Set Up Chat Safely (10-minute checklist)

- Roblox: Settings → Privacy → enable 'Account Restrictions'; limit chat to friends or disable. Review 'Who can message me / chat with me / invite me to private servers'.
- Fortnite: Settings → Audio/Account & Privacy → set Voice Chat to 'Friends' or 'Nobody'; disable 'Text Chat' if needed; set Party Privacy to 'Friends' or 'Private'.
- PlayStation/Xbox/Nintendo: Use family accounts to limit who can chat and to require friend approvals. Set spending and play-time limits.
- WhatsApp/Snapchat/Instagram: Private accounts; limit who can contact; disable location sharing; hide stories from non-friends.
- YouTube: Use 'Restricted Mode'; turn off comments for child-run channels; supervise via Family Link/Screen Time where appropriate.

Teach the Red Flags

- Pressure to keep secrets, move to another app, or talk late at night.
- Asking for photos, gifts, or personal details (name, school, postcode).
- Someone older acting like a peer; inconsistent stories; love-bombing.
- Links to “free Robux/V-Bucks” or prizes; requests to screen-share.

If Something Goes Wrong (do this together)

- Pause and breathe. You’re not in trouble for telling me.
- Keep evidence (screenshots, usernames, links).
- Block and report in-app. Then adjust privacy settings for next time.
- If sexual messages/images were involved, report to CEOP.
- If money/scams were involved, contact the bank and report to Action Fraud.

Reporting & Support

- [CEOP Safety Centre \(report exploitation\)](#)
- [NSPCC Online Safety & Helpline](#)
- [Childline \(support for young people\)](#)
- [Internet Matters \(setup guides\)](#)
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)
- [Action Fraud \(financial scams\)](#)
- [NCMEC CyberTipline \(US/international\)](#)

Family Chat Agreement (sign together)

- We keep accounts private and only add real-life friends.
- We use kind language and leave any chat that feels uncomfortable.
- We never share personal info or photos in chat.
- We ask for help if we're unsure - no one is in trouble for telling.
- We keep bedtimes and homework times free from chat.

Child signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Carer signature: _____ Date: _____

[Understanding Tech — Calm, practical guidance for safer families online.](#)