

Parents' Guide to Snapchat



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Section 1: Getting Started

What is Snapchat?

Snapchat is a fun ephemeral messaging application for sharing moments through pictures, short videos, messages and video chat.

Users can take a photo or a video, add a caption, and send it to a friend or add it to their Story to share with some or all of their friends. Friends can view Snaps for up to 10 seconds, and then it disappears from the screen- unless they decide to keep it, such as with a screenshot or separate camera.

Creating a Snapchat Account

After downloading and installing Snapchat from the Google Play (Android) or Apple AppStore marketplaces, users must provide an email address and select a password to create an account. Passwords must be at least 8 characters in length and should not contain a user's name, username, phone number, birthday or other personal information.

For more details on what information is collected and how it may be used, look at their Privacy Policy (www.snapchat.com/privacy).

Who is Snapchat for?

Snapchat is directed towards teens and adults. Snapchat is not intended for children under the age of 13. But there is a younger alternative, called "Snapkidz,"

What is "SNAPKIDZ"?

It is similar to Snapchat, but it does not include messaging capabilities or the collection or transmission of personal information. A Snapkidz user's email address, password and age are only stored locally on the user's mobile device and are not transmitted to Snapchat. The only information transmitted to Snapchat is certain device information needed to operate and support the application. Snapkidz allows younger users to take photos and videos, add captions and drawings, and save them locally on their mobile device. However, they are not able to create a Snapchat account until they are 13, and cannot add friends or send and receive messages.

How does Snapchat work?

To message someone on Snapchat, add them to your "My Friends" list. Snapchat's "Find Friends" feature allows users to look up their friends' usernames by uploading the phone numbers in their device's address book and searching for accounts that match those numbers. Users only may be found through "Find Friends" after they themselves use "Find Friends" or tap the icon to "Allow my friends to find me." To opt out of "Find Friends," go to Snapchat Settings, tap "Mobile #" and tap the icon next to "Allow my friends to find me."

Section 2: Snapchat Privacy

Controlling “My Friends”

You can configure Snapchat to only accept messages from users on your “My Friends” list. To change this, go to the Snapchat Settings menu; select “*Who Can... Send Me Snaps*” then select “*My Friends*” instead of “*Everyone*.” To change Story privacy settings, go to “*Who Can... View My Story*.” Here, you can select from three privacy options: ‘Everyone’ ‘My Friends’ or ‘Custom.’

To block a user, go to the “*My Friends*” screen, tap the user’s name, press the gear icon, then press “*Block*”. If you would like to delete a friend from your contacts, press “*Delete*.”

Controlling the images sent

Although some Snapchat messages are designed to disappear from the app in 10 seconds or less, a recipient can save any message by using tools not provided by the app (such as by taking a screenshot or by taking a picture with a separate camera). Also, the app itself allows Chat messages to be saved within the app by either party. Snapchat attempts to detect when recipients take a screenshot and sends a notification to the sender, when possible.

As with any online service, one should always “think before you send” and consider the trustworthiness of the intended recipient(s) before choosing to share an image, video, or message with them—if it’s too sensitive to risk someone else seeing it, then it shouldn’t be sent!

WHAT CAN I DO IF MY TEEN HAS RECEIVED AN INAPPROPRIATE OR UNWANTED MESSAGE?

If you receive a bullying, abusive or otherwise unwanted message, do not respond to it—responding may encourage further messages. Instead, you should block the user and/or change your privacy settings to prevent future contact from the individual, inform Snapchat of the incident by going to <https://support.snapchat.com/co/inappropriate> or by sending an email to safety@snapchat.com. Be sure to include:

- The nature of the message
- Time and date the message was sent
- Sender’s username
- Sender’s approximate age (if known)
- Username of your child’s account that received the message
- Age of the child that received the message

Cyber Bullying

As with any social network, whether virtual or real, bullying is something to be on the look-out for. As a parent ensure you monitor your child’s Snapchat use.

Good sources of guidance and help

The Child Exploitation Online Protection Unit (CEOP) www.ceop.gov.uk

If you are under 18 use the "Your Chance to Talk" form on the "Child Power" section of the ASA website: <http://www.swimming.org/u16/child-power-your-voice>

Childline 0800 1111 www.childnet.org.uk- An NSPCC support service for young people.

There4me - Another support service provided by the NSPCC is There 4 Me. Using this website, children can talk confidentially to NSPCC advisors online about any issues or problems they may be experiencing, using an application similar to Instant Messenger (IM). WWW.there4me.com

Stop it Now freephone 0808 1000 900

The local police or Children Services – their number appears in the phone book.

The NSPCC helpline 0800 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk

The Internet Watch Foundation www.iwf.org.uk