

### Digital Tips

**Think before you post.** Before you post or comment, think about how the things you say online will make others feel - and the impression you're leaving of yourself.

**Remember that the online world isn't real life.** Remember that things online aren't always what they seem. Spend time with friends offline; everything will feel more real.

**Make your settings private.** Whenever you join a new social network, online game, or app, choose settings to keep certain details about yourself (including your location) private. Check the default privacy settings.

**Don't over-share.** It can be tempting to share personal details with your networks. But it's not just your friends who will see what you share. If you want to talk about an event or activity, you can share after it happens, so people you don't know won't know where you'll be at a certain time.

**Get help when you need it.** If something happens online that makes you feel hurt, uncomfortable, or unsure what to do, talk to someone! Find an adult you trust who can offer advice.



**Create strong, safe passwords.** When you make a new password, don't reuse it or share it. Try not to use things in your password that can be figured out from social media. The best passwords use a mix of lowercase and capital letters, numbers, and symbols.

**Avoid questionable links and downloads.** The best way to protect your computer from malware is to be careful when clicking links or downloading. If you don't know the person who sent you a link, don't click on it. Never download anything from sites offering free things that should cost money.

**Don't give apps too much access.** The best way to prevent too much access to your personal information is not to share it. Always check your privacy settings. If you're not sure, ask an adult.





**Find a good balance.** There are lots of ways to manage your online time. You can plan your offline activities first. Then you can save your online time for after you've finished. You can set a timer or use an app to remind you to get up and take a break. You should also try to make in-person plans with friends regularly!

**Avoid online distractions.** Online distractions can be hard to ignore. But you can control your online time. Turn off all your devices at least half an hour before you go to bed. Change your notification settings. Put your phone in another room or on silent when you need to concentrate or are hanging out with friends.

**Understand how you can use content.** Generally, it's best to assume you can't use creative content in posts, or to create something new, unless you know it's in the public domain, it's clearly "fair use" (such as for a school paper), or there are permissions for use (which might mean you need to give credit).

**Respect your relationships.** Before you post or share images, videos, or other content of other people, ask if it's okay. If they don't want it shared, keep it to yourself. That means not sharing it on social media but it also means not sharing it over text.

**Ask for help if you need it.** If you get comments or feedback that upset you, if someone you don't know tries to get information about you, or if your computer is acting funny, tell an adult right away. If you're not sure whether you can use creative content, ask an adult you trust (like a teacher or librarian).

**Pay attention to your searches.** When you search for information online, many search engines will list ads or sponsored content at the top. Try to find sources without personal interest or bias. Remember to check multiple sources.

**Check credentials.** When you read something online (or offline), you should check the author's credentials. A good author tells you where they got their information or sources so you can check it out yourself.

**Do your research.** The Internet gives you instant access to all kinds of information, but to know what information you can trust, you need to do your own research. If you're not sure, ask your teacher or librarian.

