PARENT FACTSHEET – NOVEMBER 2024

Keep your child safe on Fortnite

- Fortnite is an online video game made by Epic Games, where players play together in different ways. Some modes involve shooting and competition, but others are more relaxed and non-violent. Fortnite includes player-made content
- Although (in some modes) players shoot each other using a range of lethal weapons, the brightly coloured and cartoon-style graphics, as well as the lack of bloodshed, mean Fortnite doesn't feel too gory or graphic
- Fortnite has a PEGI age recommendation of **12 and above** (some modes do have lower recommended age ratings, like LEGO Fortnite and Rocket Racing). However, you don't have to provide your age when creating an account, so younger children can do this easily
- Fortnite **is free to download** on PC/Mac, Xbox, PlayStation, Nintendo Switch and Android devices (you currently can't download it on Apple devices in the UK)

What are the concerns?

You may have seen news reports or heard concerns raised about:

- **Communication between players:** they can talk to each other via messaging or a headset and microphone. Children could speak to strangers or be at risk of cyber-bullying
- **In-app purchases:** children can build up large bills on their parents' accounts by buying cosmetic items, like outfits and weapons for their character (known as 'skins')
- **Player-made experiences:** these are activities and games made by other users, called 'islands'. Epic Games moderates these, but they aren't made by the people who make Fortnite itself
- **Inappropriate content**
    - Players can wear skins of characters from pop culture that might not be age-appropriate for them, such as horror movie characters
    - Music in Fortnite can include songs already censored for explicit content (like swear words), but that may still be inappropriate for your child
- **The game's addictive nature:** some children might have a hard time putting the game down, especially if they're on a winning streak or having fun with their friends

3 steps to take to keep your child safe

1. Use the parental controls on your gaming device

- Most devices allow you to **set time limits** on game play, **set age limits** for content, and **restrict in-app purchases.** Go to the website below for links to instructions on your child's device – it covers Fortnite, as well as devices like Nintendo Switch, PlayStation and Xbox:
    - Ask About Games – *https://www.askaboutgames.com/get-started/setup-parental-controls/*

© The Key Support Services Ltd | For terms of use, visit thekeysupport.com/terms

- Fortnite has its own parental controls, allowing you to set age limits for content and time limits

2. Turn off the voice chat feature

Speak to your child to make sure they understand how to use this feature safely. Encourage them to follow the steps below if they meet someone who is offensive or inappropriate in the game.

To **disable the in-game voice chat function**:

- Select the profile icon (the circular picture of your child's character in the top-right), then the 'cog' icon to get to the settings
- Select the 'audio' tab (represented by a speaker icon)
- Tap the arrows next to 'voice chat' until it says 'off'

To **'mute' individual players**:

- Pause the game
- Select the player you wish to mute, select 'more options' and then select the mute button (a loudspeaker icon)

3. Make sure your child knows how to report inappropriate behaviour

To **report** players or player-made experiences that make your child feel uncomfortable:

- Select the profile icon, then the 3 horizontal lines icon
- Select 'Reporting'
- Select 'Report a bug, player, or island'
- For reporting **players**, select the player you'd like to report, then the reason for reporting them
- For reporting **islands**, select the island you'd like to report, then the reason for reporting it
- On the 'Submit' tab, select 'Accept' to send the report
- Select 'Send report'

What else can I do?

- Download and play the game to help you understand it
- Look at the parental controls page on Epic Games' website
- Talk to your child about what they're doing online, and make sure they know they can talk to you about anything that has upset them. See more guidance from the NSPCC about talking to your child about online safety
- Check your bank statements and gaming system account balance regularly for in-app purchases you're not happy with, and to make sure your child isn't getting around any passwords you've set up

© The Key Support Services Ltd | For terms of use, visit thekeysupport.com/terms

Sources

This factsheet was produced by The Key Safeguarding: thekeysupport.com/safeguarding

- Fortnite, Epic Games
  https://www.fortnite.com/?lang=en-UK
- 'Fortnite chat raises stranger danger fears from NSPCC, BBC News, 3 May 2018
  https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-43988210

© The Key Support Services Ltd | For terms of use, visit thekeysupport.com/terms