



android

Android Smartphone Parental Controls

Controls & settings guide

Android smartphones have parental controls built-in to devices that let you set screen time limits, restrict apps and limit inappropriate content.

1

How to activate parental controls on Android

Android released built-in parental controls in December 2025. Your child's device will need the latest system update for these settings to appear separately from Digital Wellbeing.

Once you turn on parental controls, you can PIN-protect settings for screen time, content and more on your child's device.

To turn on parental controls:

Step 1 – On **your child's Android phone**, swipe down from the top of the screen twice and tap the **gear icon** that appears at the bottom of the screen.

Step 2 – Start typing '**parental controls**' and click on the **Parental controls** option.

***Note:** If you only see Digital Wellbeing and parental controls, you will need to update your child's operating system. Search 'update' instead and then try these steps again.*

Step 3 – Tap the **toggle** next to '**Controls for this phone**' so that you see a **tick**. Follow the instructions to set up a **PIN** and **recovery email** (your parent email).

You will now be able to edit parental controls on your child's Android phone.

***Note:** If your child has multiple profiles on their smartphone, you might need to delete them to set these controls. You will receive a notification that disallows parental controls if this is the case.*

2

How to set screen time limits

You can set daily screen time limits on Android phones within the 'Parental controls' settings. This is the total time your child can use their device each day. You may wish to consider more allowance at the weekends, based on your child's interests and needs.

You can also set limits for specific apps to help your child balance how they spend their device time. Downtime limits can also lock the device during important hours (such as when they should be sleeping).

Choose a section to jump to, or follow each step below:

[Daily limits](#)

[App limits](#)

[Downtime](#)

To set daily limits:

Step 1 – Within the Android **Parental controls** settings on your child's phone, tap **Daily limit**. You may need to re-enter your parent **PIN**, so have it handy.

Step 2 – Next to **Use daily limit**, tap the **toggle** so the **tick** appears. Enter **PIN** if prompted.

Step 3 – Either leave the **default of 2 hours** or **customise** to your child's needs. You can also set a **different limit for each day** if necessary.

Your child's device will now lock when they reach the time limit you've set.

To set screen time limits on apps:

Step 1 – From the **Parental controls** menu on your child's Android phone, select **App limits**.

Here, you will see a list of apps installed on your child's device along with how long they've spent to help guide the limits you set.

Step 2 – Select **each app** you'd like to manage. Untick the **toggle** next to **Allow app** on any app you **don't want them accessing**.

Step 3 – Tap **Set time limit** to customise how much time your child can spend on the app.

Remember that this limit will be **within the over all daily limit** you set. So, if you've set 2 hours for the daily limit, think about how an app might contribute to that and adjust accordingly.

To set downtime:

Step 1 – From the **Parental controls** menu on your child's Android phone, select **Downtime**.

Step 2 – Tap the **toggle** next to **Use downtime** until you see the tick to turn it on.

Step 3 – Customise the **Downtime hours** (or use the default) by **day** or **overall**.

Your child's device will lock during Downtime with only calls allowed. Your parent **PIN** will be required to access the device during this time.

3 How to filter inappropriate content

Android parental controls let you restrict web content on Google apps.

If you'd like to restrict content within other apps, either use the [App limits](#) setting so your child can't access those apps, or explore the settings available within each app. You can also find more filters for Google products like YouTube with [Google Family Link](#).

To restrict web content:

Step 1 – From the **Parental controls** menu on your child's device, tap **Website content filters**. You may need to enter your **PIN** again for these settings, so have it ready.

Step 2 – Next to **Block explicit sites**, tap the **toggle** to show the **tick**. Next to **Filter our explicit search results**, tap the **toggle** to show the **tick**.

***Note:** These settings only apply to Google Chrome, the Google app and Google Search within these apps. If your child uses a different browser, you will need to apply settings within that browser app or block them from accessing it within [App Limits](#).*

4 Other settings to customise on Android

Android parental controls cannot restrict everything, so it's important to also review the apps your child uses to add additional customisation where needed.

App downloads: Customise settings within the [Play Store](#)

Spending: Customise settings within the [Play Store](#) or [individual apps](#)

Contact from strangers: Customise settings within the individual apps. [Find additional parental control guides to help you.](#)

Remember: Parental controls are only a safety net and are not 100% reliable.
Regular conversations with your child about online safety and their digital interests
will help develop their digital resilience and skills to protect themselves
independently.