

Pokémon Go – Guide to Safe Use

Introduction

Pokémon Go is a game where you collect and trade cute creatures called Pokémon (Pocket Monsters).

It's one of the first popular games to use "augmented reality" - a kind of cross between real life and an online world. The game makes it look like Pokémon appear in real life places by using the GPS and camera on your phone.

Pokémon (Pocket Monsters) are little creatures that can be captured by Pokémon Trainers using a small spherical device called a Poké Ball. There are different types of Pokémon, with different moves, abilities and stats. The aim of the game is to capture as many Pokémon and to win as many 'gyms' as you can to become the Pokémon Master.

The risks

There are loads of good things about the game, and there's a reason it's become so popular. But it's important to learn the risks involved:

Meeting people they don't know face-to-face

The game is designed to bring people together. Usually strangers. So you never know who they might meet.

There's a physical risk

It's easy to forget to look where you're going with this game, but they need to be careful of where they end up. There are already stories of people being lured to places that aren't safe for children.

It can cost a lot of money

There are in-app purchases and other incentives which can cost up to £79.99 (14,500 Pokécoins). Make sure the app's set up without payment options.

Access to personal data

Pokémon Go asks for personal information like your child's birth date and email address, which they're asked to enter or receive through social media accounts. Parents have the right to contact the creators to stop them from using their personal information.



Top Tips for Staying safe

With younger children, you might want to play the game together, and explore how it works. Older children may want to play alone but it's important to let them know the risks.

Set some ground rules

Talk to your children about the risks of meeting strangers and ending up in areas they don't know. Set some boundaries such as:

- take a battery pack, the game drains phone battery and this will avoid them getting lost without a phone
- stay with friends
- watch out for others - people can get competitive!
- establish where they'll be playing.

Turn off in-app purchasing

To avoid unexpected bills, check that your child's app permissions are set correctly.

Apple products:

Set up Family Sharing and Ask to Buy, which allows your child to request to purchase before it comes to you for approval.

Find this on: Settings > iCloud > Family and tap your family member's name, before tapping Ask to Buy.

Andriod:

Set up a family group which includes adding a payment method with your chosen payee.

Protect your child's personal data

In order to sign up, your child has to enter their date of birth and their email address.

However, parents can request that these details are kept safe. Details on how to do this are on their privacy policy.

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