

Top 10 cyber safety tips

By eSmart in News

1. **Use tech to make life better**

We can use technology to learn things, create things, connect with friends and family, reach out to people who are having a hard time, enjoy great entertainment, and even boost our fitness and mental health. Or we can use tech to make ourselves and other people feel lousy. Which would you rather do?

2. **Keep your balance**

Technology is incredible. Gaming, networking, apps ... online shopping! But relying too much on tech can mess with your sleep and make you feel exhausted, stressed or lonely. Make time for the other things that matter to you: family meals, playing with pets, kicking a ball around, reading, cooking, art or just sitting out in the sunshine.

3. **Boundaries, people**

Sure, you're fascinating, but you don't need the world watching your every move. Regularly check your privacy settings on apps and social media, and make sure people can't track your location. Don't share passwords (no, not even with your best friend), and always think before you post. Photos that show your school uniform or the outside of your house might make you a little too easy to find.

4. **Respect others**

Before taking and sharing photos or videos of other people, always ask first if it's OK with them. And before you talk about someone online, stop to think: how might this make them feel? It's not all about you, amiright?

5. **Keep everything updated**

Any idea what causes the most security breaches on the internet? Software that isn't up-to-date. Seems crazy simple, but it's true! Be vigilant about updating software, including apps, anti-virus and even the humble browser.

6. **Spam, Spam, Spam, Spammidy-spam**

Even with the best anti-spam and malware software – that's up-to-date – spam is the modern version of junk mail. It's everywhere! Beware of emails and messages from people you don't know, especially if they are misspelled, say weird things, or urge you to click on hyperlinks or open files.

7. **Keep your cool**

When someone's behaving badly online, the temptation is to shoot back something equally harsh – but is that really how you want to spend your time? If it's an annoying one-off, you might decide to let it go and do something fun instead. But if someone's behaviour online is making you scared, anxious or miserable, it's time to talk to someone you trust and block or report whoever is bothering you.

8. **Keep your friends close and strangers at arm's length**

Do you know how many true friends most people have? Three. Yup, those four thousand and fifty-two social media 'friends' are a combination of acquaintances, people-you-met-once, people-you-can't-remember-meeting-once and, probably, some 'randoms'. How much do you want them to know about you? And if someone you don't know contacts you asking for photos, videos or personal info, or if they ask you to meet them in private or keep your conversations a secret – red flag! Tell a trusted adult straight away.

9. **Be the hero**

Have you seen someone being bullied or treated badly online? You have a chance to change the story. Think about reaching out to them and saying something kind and supportive, reminding them that they deserve to be treated with respect, and encouraging them to report abusive behaviour to the website, the [eSafety Commissioner](#), or a caring adult.

10. **Ask for help if you need it**

Online dramas getting you down? Talk to someone you trust, like a friend, family member, teacher or mentor. Abusive behaviour online can also be reported to the eSafety Commissioner. And remember: you can chat for free to counselors at [Kids Helpline](#), [ehelpspace](#), [Beyond Blue](#) or [Lifeline](#). They are open 24/7 and offer web and text counselling, as well as over the phone.