Step-by-Step Tips to Set Up Your Kid's iPhone

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You've done all the hemming and hawing about whether or not to get your kid an iPhone and you've decided to take the plunge. Now what? There's so much to figure out, from Safari to iMessage, not to mention the Wild West of the App Store, where kids have access to everything from Candy Crush to Tinder. How can you possibly keep them safe, out of trouble, and away from content that's too intense for them?

It's possible. And it might be easier than you think. Apple devices have some super-useful settings and features that help parents shape their kids' experiences and block access to things that they might not be ready for. Though no tech-based solutions can ever replace the ongoing conversation we need to have with our kids about using devices and media responsibly, the built-in parent controls can point you in the right direction, start a conversation, and help you set limits that work for your family. We'll walk you through the essential questions every parent has about managing their kids' iPhones and explain, step by step, how to do it.

Q. Before I hand over the phone, how do I make sure I have some control?

A. Set a passcode.

Here's why you want to:

- Gives you control of the device.
- Lets you block or limit apps.
- Kids can't get around it.

Watch the video: How to Control What Your Kid Can Do on the iPhone

The first thing you want to do before you give a kid their own device (or hand over yours) is to create a passcode to enable restrictions. This passcode is different from the one you use to unlock your phone. Instead, it's a code you set so that kids can't change the settings. Remember to write down the passcode in a safe place because it's a real pain if you lose it. And don't share it with your kids.

1. Tap Settings.
2. Tap General.
3. Tap Restrictions.
4. Tap Enable Restrictions.
5. Set a code.
6. Re-enter the code.

Q. How do I share media such as music and movies?

A. Set up Family Sharing.

Here's why you want to:

- Lets you share media between family members.
- Gives your kid an Apple ID for additional privileges.

Extra trick:

- Lets families share a calendar to stay organized.

Watch the video: How to Share Downloads and Purchases on the iPhone

You can use Family Sharing to gain a bit more control over your kid's device. Family Sharing also creates a kind of network among family devices. You can include up to six people in your "family," so you could let a babysitter or a relative approve purchases, see your family calendar, and share content such as music, movies, and games.

1. On your own phone, tap Settings and tap your name (where it says Apple ID, iCloud, etc.).
2. Tap Family Sharing and Get Started. Confirm that you're the organizer.
3. Tap "Create an Apple ID for a child" (at bottom).
4. Add your kid's birthday.
5. Enter the security code for your credit card.
6. Enter your kid's name, select a username, and create a password and answers to security questions you can both remember. Your email address is the "rescue" account if you both forget.

7. Follow these steps to share media with your family, and hide what you don't want to share:

- To download family content, go to the iTunes store on your phone, Tap More (three dots), then Purchased.
- Tap the name of the family member to see their purchases and download.
- To hide apps, go to the App Store > Updates > Purchased > My Purchases on your phone.
- Swipe left, and choose Hide.
- Open the iTunes Store on a Mac or PC to hide content other than apps.
- Go to Account > Family Purchases and scroll over what you want to hide.
- Click the "X" in the upper-left corner.
- To unhide, go to the iTunes store on your Mac or PC (View my account > Manage hidden purchases).

8. Use the Calendar app to access your Family Calendar and add events you all can see.
9. Share pictures through the Photos app under Shared.

Q. How do I make sure my kids get my permission before downloading and purchasing content?

A. Set up Ask to Buy in Family Sharing.

Here's why you want to:

- You'll get a message when your kid wants to buy or download something, and you can either approve it or not.

Watch the video: How to Limit What Kids Download on the iPhone

By default, kids under 13 have to ask to buy or download if they're part of Family Sharing. Parents have the option to set up Ask to Buy for kids under 18.

1. Follow the steps to set up Family Sharing.
2. Tap your kid's name, then Ask to Buy.

Q. How do I manage mature content, purchases, and access to the web?

A. Set restrictions.

Here's why you want to:

- Gives you control over specific apps and actions.
- Lets you restrict access to mature content.

Extra trick:

- Lets you shut down multiplayer games and game features.

Watch the video: How to Restrict Mature Content, Games, and More on the iPhone

If you've set your passcode, you're ready to go through all of the limits you can set. From in-app purchases to Game Center, you can decide what your kid is and is not ready for. Restrictions are divided into several categories, so we'll walk you through each:

1. On your kid's phone, tap Settings > General > Restrictions.
2. Enter your passcode.
3. Allow access to individual apps and actions:

- Toggle on and off access to apps like Safari, Siri, and FaceTime.
- Control the ability to install apps, delete them, or make in-app purchases.

4. Set age ratings/limits for different media to block access to mature content:

- Choose to limit adult content on websites or select specific websites that device can access.
- Set access to mature content for various media like music, movies, books, TV shows, and apps.

5. Set privacy settings and allow or don't allow changes:

- Turn on and off location services and location sharing (toggle "Don't Allow Changes" if you want that preference locked).
- Choose apps that have access to photos and microphone.

6. Allow or don't allow changes to settings:

- Volume, accounts, and data use.

7. Control access to Game Center options:

- Allow or don't allow access to multiplayer games.
- Allow or don't allow adding friends and screen recording.

Q. Let's say I want to let my kid use her phone to listen to music in the evening, but I don't want her doing anything else. How do I only allow access to one app at a time?

A. Use Guided Access.

Here's why you want to:

- Keeps your kid on a safe, approved app.
- Prevents multitasking.

Watch the video: How to Prevent Kids from Clicking Out of an App on the iPhone

If you need to limit your kid's access to a single app, you can use Guided Access, which essentially locks down a phone except for one application.

1. On your kid's phone tap Settings > General > Accessibility > Guided Access.
2. Set a passcode (you can use the same one you set for Restrictions).
3. Open the app you want your kid to use.
4. Triple-click the Home button and enable any options you'd like:

- Set a time limit.

- Disable the volume controls, motion controls, and keyboards.

- Circle an area of the screen you don't want your kid to use.

5. To turn it off, triple-click again and enter your code or use Touch ID.

Q. Is there a way to see where my kid is or find her device if it's lost?

A. Use Family Sharing to Share Location.

Here's why you want to:

- If your kid loses her device, you can use Find My Phone to track it down.

- You can see where your kid is on a map (if they have their device with them).

- You can share your location with everyone in your Family Sharing group when you're trying to meet somewhere.

Note: Location services don't work if the phone is off or runs out of juice. Certain apps use location, so make sure to set your preferences for your kid's device for individual apps like Facebook and Twitter in Restrictions.

- Follow the steps to set up Family Sharing.

- Go to Settings > Privacy > Location Services.

- Turn on Location Services and choose to Share My Location either on your own device or your kid's.

- Check Find My iPhone to see where your family devices are, and use Find My Friends to see where individual members are.

Note: These instructions apply to iOS 10.3.1. Features and steps may vary with iOS updates.