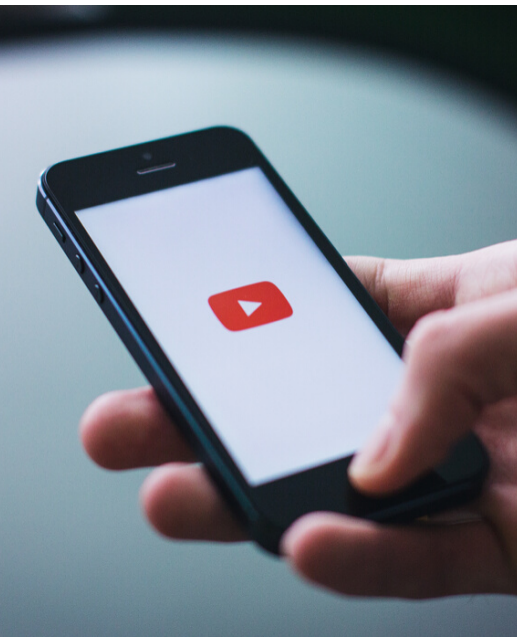
SAFFRON PRESENTS

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO TECHNOLOGY



Hi, we're here to help!

Confused about your kids' online world? You're not alone. It can be hard to understand what all the new games, apps and social media platforms are used for. That's where this guide comes in.

This guide will help to explain what popular apps and games are, what your kids use them for, each platforms' different features, and what to look out for when it comes to safety.

We hope that this guide can help you to understand what your kids are up to online. Of course, with the pace of technology, this guide won't stay relevant forever.

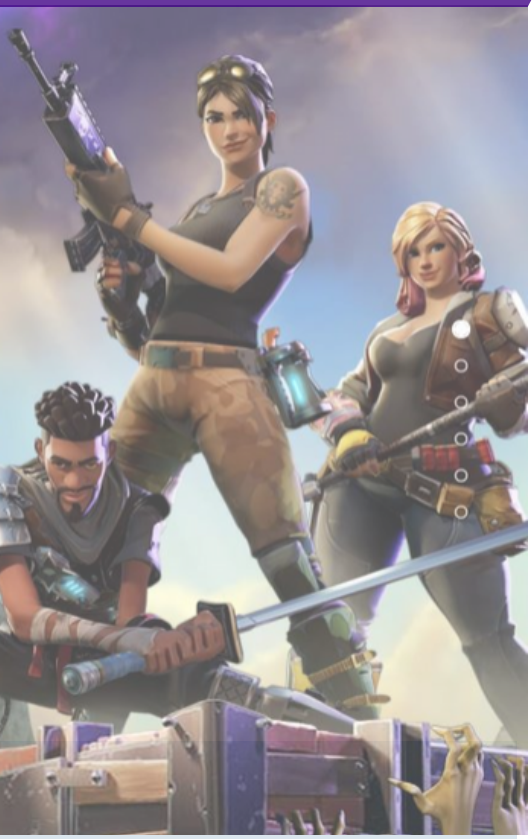
We have included links to websites that are constantly updated, as well as sites that are overall technology guides for parents so that you are able to stay up to date!

Did you know...

The minimum age required to have an account on ANY of the apps or games we mention is thirteen!

780-449-0900 | @saffroncentre | info@saffroncentre.com

PART 1: GAMING



SAFETY TIPS

Turning off voice chat so that your kids can't have conversations with strangers is the best way to keep them safe while playing Fortnite!

Open the Settings menu in the top right of the main Fortnite page by selecting the three bars, then the cog icon. Choose the Audio tab at the top of the screen. Turn the Voice Chat setting from on to off by tapping the arrows. Note that text chat, however, cannot be turned off and there are no filters enabled on it either.

Ensuring that they are not spending too much time playing Fortnite is also important. Consider setting time limits, potentially through a parent-controls app, or making that a part of rules you already have about screen time.

FORTNITE: BATTLE ROYALE

In Fortnite: Battle Royale, up to 100 people participate in a match together. Players are dropped onto the game map and must compete to be the last one standing by killing every other player in the game.

During the game, players collect weapons, build safe structures, and try to avoid the Storm that damages all players outside of a safe zone.

There are three modes of play in Battle Royale: Solo, Duo, and Squad. In Solo mode, you're dropped into the game alone. In Duo, you're dropped in with a partner. In Squad mode, you play on a team of four.

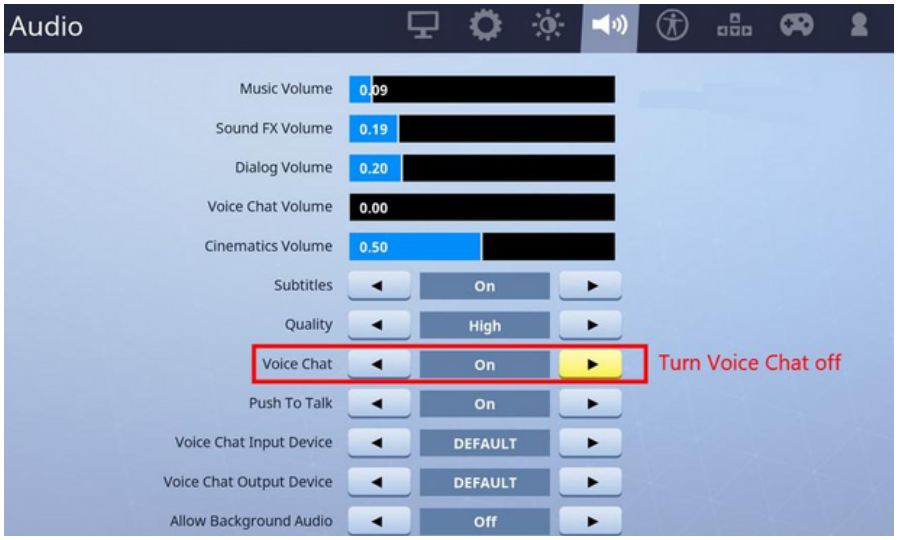
Duos and Squads can either be friends choosing to play together or randomly matched players.

The game's online chat feature can potentially expose players to bullying, harassment or inappropriate content from friends OR strangers.

We recommending having chat disabled for any games, but overall; with parent supervision and clear rules about appropriate conduct, Fortnite is a good alternative to more violent video games.

Did you know...

Although it's free to play, Fortnite made $2.5 billion in 2018 from in-game purchases. [2]



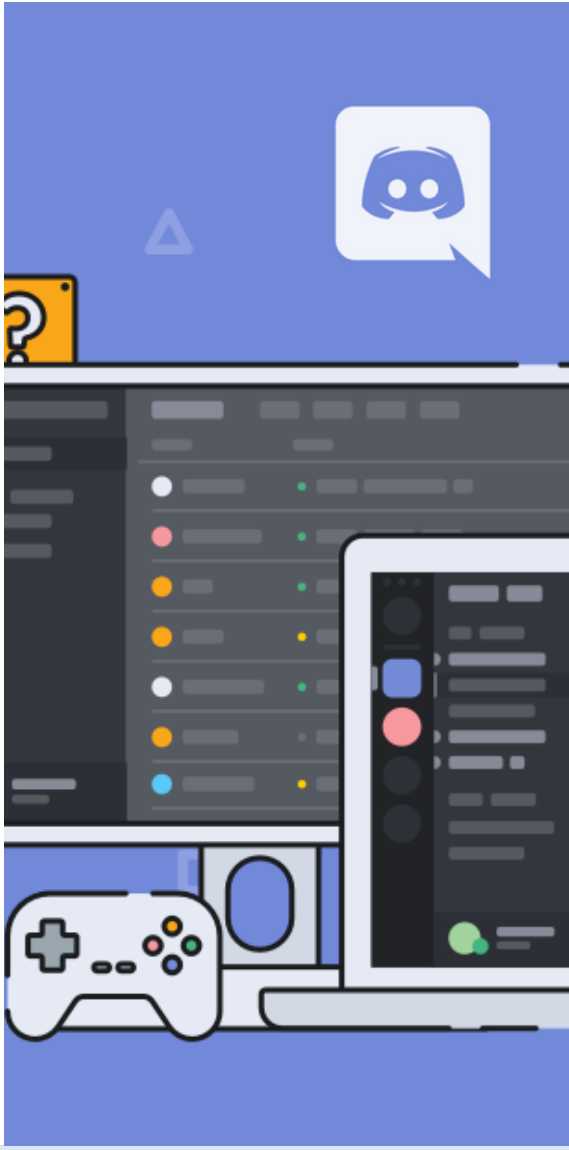
DISCORD

Discord is a voice, text and video chat service that's used by gamers to communicate with others while they are playing together.

The chatrooms on Discord are called servers, and they can be private or public. (Public servers are often centered around topics, e.g. Fortnite). Users can join a chat they've been invited to or they can create private servers and invite their friends to play and discuss games.

Issues with Discord are often around the topic of discussion in servers. Discord has faced criticism for having their public servers host chats about white nationalism, hate groups, violent pornography, etc. Even private chatrooms can potentially contain bullying or harassment.

However, it should be noted that this kind of behaviour can happen on **any** social media or gaming platform and is something always be aware of.



SAFETY TIPS

There are a number of features of Discord that make it safer for kids. Private servers or channels can be restricted to users with an invitation code, and users need to have the username and a 4-digit tag number of another user in order to become "friends" on the service.

All chatrooms are opt-in, so anyone not interested in chatting has a number of tools at their disposal. E.g. unwanted or inappropriate users can be blocked and muted, which stops them from talking to your children.

There are also parental controls that will help you set up your child's account so they are only chatting with friends and not strangers.

To block unwanted messages and friend requests:

On Discord, go to User Settings → Privacy & Safety → Turn off the "Allow direct messages from server members" option.
In this same menu, under "Who can add you as a friend," deselect "everyone" and "server members."

To set up the Explicit Content Filter:

User Settings → Privacy and Safety → Check the "Keep Me Safe" box.

Also, talk to your child about how to safely use Discord! E.g., don't share any personal information with strangers (including your friend's friends that you have never met).

GAMING IN GENERAL: WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

- **Be aware of emotions** – cyberbullying and harassment are a growing problem online. Pay attention to how they seem when they are on and offline (e.g. withdrawn, angry, sad, etc.)

- **Stay informed** – search the internet for popular new games, and any issues that have been reported with those games. And stay up to date on the kinds of games **your** kids are playing so you know what to look out for!

- **Play with them** – this may not be something you want to do, but getting involved in their gameplay ensures you approve of what they play and you can get a glimpse into what gaming is like for them

- **Stranger danger** – the main problem with games is communication with strangers in the game. Cautioning against talking to strangers, encouraging only playing with friends and muting others and themselves will all help to keep them safe.

- **Open communication** – and as with all things, we stress open communication! Do your best to make sure your kids feel comfortable coming to you if they run into any inappropriate behaviour.

Top 10 Most Popular Video Games of 2019

1) Minecraft

2) Fortnite

3) Grand Theft Auto V

4) Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six Seige

5) Super Smash Bros: Ultimate

6) Red Dead Redemption II

7) Overwatch

8) Rocket League

9) Roblox

10) League of Legends (LoL)

How many of these games did you know about? It's important to be aware of new and popular games. Use the internet to your advantage; Google it! Adding in the terms 'parent's guide" + Fortnite, for example, will bring up a lot of useful websites for you to check out.

Source: https://www.ranker.com/list/most-popular-video-games-today/ranker-games

SNAPCHAT

On SnapChat, users can send photos or short videos called 'Snaps' to each other, which can be edited with filters, stickers, sound effects, etc. After being opened by the recipient(s), they cannot look at the photos again. However, you can screenshot any image sent to you and have it saved permanently that way.

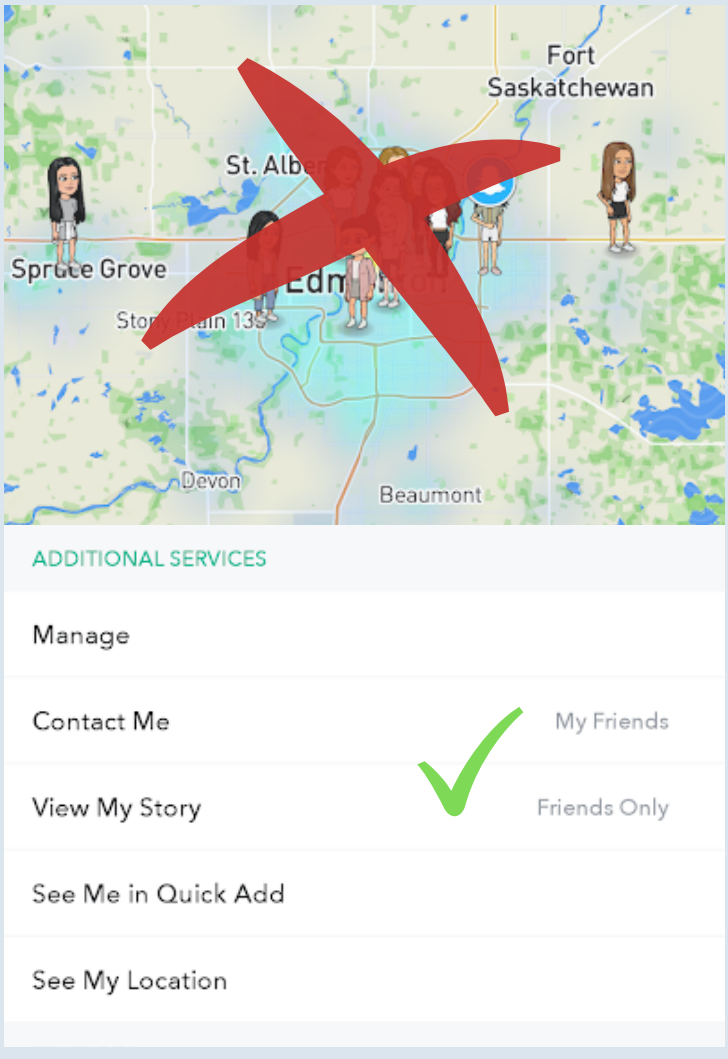
Streaks: If you and a friend send each other at least one 'Snap' per day for a minimum of 3 days, you will have a streak. Kids often give away login info to their friends if they are going somewhere without wifi or data so they can maintain their Streaks by having their friend send Snaps for them.

Stories: while the pictures and videos that are sent between two people or a group "disappear", Stories are posts that are available for 24 hours and can be seen by anyone they have added on Snapchat.

Discover: Snapchat offers daily/weekly video posts from Youtubers, news sites (NBC, CBC, CNN), popular magazines (Seventeen, Vogue), as well as posts from users that may contain adult content.

Snap Map: Shows the current location of every friend that has Snap Map enabled. This is constantly updated when your kids move around!

There are also **Public Stories** that kids can upload their own videos to. These videos can be seen by ANYONE who has a Snapchat account. The topics of these public stories include topics like Body Mods (piercings, tats), Makeup Destruction, Best of High School, etc. and have to be accepted by moderators before being shared publicly.



SAFETY TIPS

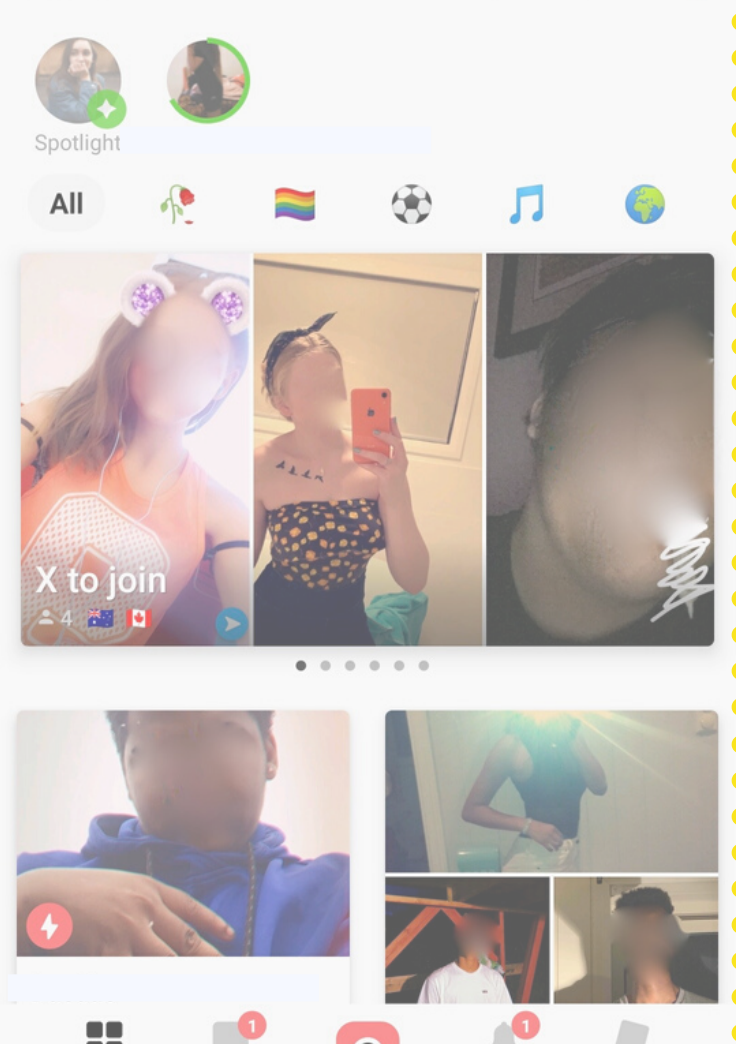
DO NOT have Snap Map enabled!
(The best way to disable the map is to turn off Location Services for Snapchat. Detailed steps on how to do that are on the last two pages of this guide.)

Only add friends on Snapchat.

Don't post or send inappropriate content.

Focus on privacy settings. Like the picture on the left, ensure that only friends can contact them or view their story, and that no one can see them in Quick Add or see their Location.

Parents... pay attention to how they use the app: are they looking for pornographic content through SnapChat?



YUBO

Yubo (formerly 'Yellow') is essentially a dating app for teens; although it's marketed itself as a way to 'make new friends'.

This app allows people to connect with others based on their location, with users 'swipe' to accept or decline to talk to someone based on their profile picture. It also includes a live group video chat feature, where anyone can join and see them. The city they live in will be shown on their profile unless they choose to hide it.

There are two age brackets in Yubo. One for teens, 13-17, and one for those 17+. However, it's easy for users to lie about their age when setting up their profile. (In fact, when I set up a profile to get the screenshot to the left, I easily put my age in as 16). This goes both ways. Kids can lie to get into the older age group, and adults can lie to meet your child.

SAFETY TIPS

For most kids and teens, I wouldn't recommend letting them use this app at all, because the potential for being contacted by predators or even other teens with inappropriate requests is high. (As you can clearly see in the screenshot to the right.)

For older teens, that may be a different conversation, but it is up to you. If they are allowed to have it; it is important that they know how to block users, hide their city, etc.

Did you know...

Yubo has been dubbed "Tinder for Teens" because of the similarity between the two apps.

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TIKTOK

Formerly known as Musical.ly

TikTok is a social media app that lets you watch, create and share videos – often set to pop music. Lip-syncing to songs is very popular and it also has fun editing features, trends that users can try to recreate, and interaction that can allow people to gain lots of followers or views for their content.

Because of TikTok's emphasis on pop music, many videos include swearing and sexual lyrics, so it may not be age-appropriate for some kids. Your child's TikTok videos can become the target of bullying from friends or inappropriate remarks from strangers if privacy settings aren't enabled.

SAFETY TIPS

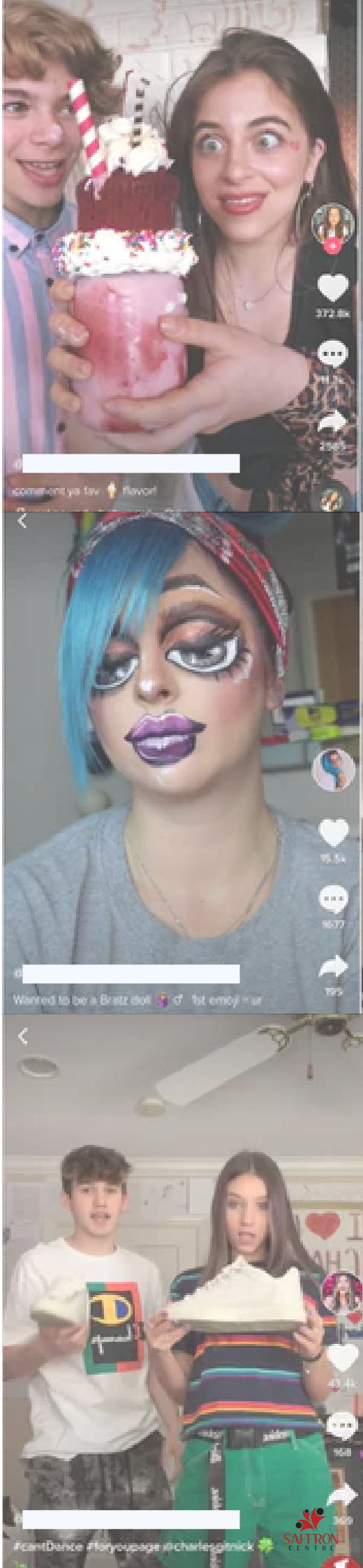
Parents should make sure to turn on all privacy settings for accounts kids are using, so only people you know can interact with your videos or message you on the app.

To make an account private, go to your profile page and select the three-dot icon in the top-right corner. Select Privacy and Safety. There, toggle the switch for "Private Account." You can also select who can send you comments and direct messages, and who can do a duet with you. Using the "Friends" setting or turning those features off completely limits contact with strangers.

To delete a TikTok video: select the video you want to delete from your profile. From there, tap the "..." icon in the bottom-right corner and select Delete or the trash can icon. You will be asked if you are sure you want to delete the video. Then it will be removed from your profile.

Did you know...

TikTok boasts 500 million active monthly users, making it one of the most popular apps right now.



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INSTAGRAM

Instagram is an app used to share photos, videos and messages. You can follow people and let people follow you.

Profile: Their profile is where the user can post photos or videos that will remain there until they are deleted by the user. It also includes a short bio. If their profile is private, only their main profile picture and bio is visible.

Direct: users can send direct messages to other accounts, with groups of up to 15. If they have a private account, and someone who doesn't follow them sends a message, they have to approve it before opening it.
Instagram also has a new feature where if it detects inappropriate content in the message being sent out (e.g. rude language, a nude photo) it will be blurred out.

Stories: Users can also share via Instagram Stories where their post or live video can be seen by their followers for up to 24 hours. Stories can also be accessed from their Profile.

Live and Video Chat: Users can go live to share with their followers in real time.

Explore: is where users will see photos and videos from accounts and tags they might be interested in. Explore is different for everyone – the content changes depending on accounts and hashtags the user follows.

SAFETY TIPS

Ensure they have a private account

Make sure they know how to block users, and how to report inappropriate behaviour

**To filter comments: Go to your profile and tap ☰.
Then Tap Settings > Privacy > Comments.
Tap next to Hide Offensive Comments to turn it on.**

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YOUTUBE

YouTube is a website and app used for video sharing. It's very popular among kids and teens due to the popularity of "YouTubers"; content creators that upload a variety of different entertaining videos, e.g. makeup tutorials, gaming videos, etc.

One big issue with YouTube is how many kids/teens want to become “YouTube stars”, which requires creating their own videos. The danger is that these videos might be seen by strangers, users may post inappropriate comments on them, personal information might be shared, etc.

Have a conversation with your kids about the dangers of posting videos online!
If they do post, you can prescreen their videos or even make them private so that only people with the link can see them.

YOUTUBE KIDS

Unfortunately, since you don't need an account to access YouTube, there aren't many privacy settings at parents' disposal. However if you have younger children, we recommend using YouTube Kids as an extra layer of security.

While it isn't 100% perfect at keeping out inappropriate content, it has more safety features than YouTube. Features include blocking certain videos, setting up a timer, and search control, that help keeps children safer online.

Did you know...

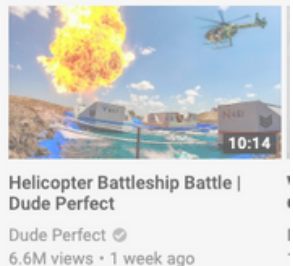
300 hours of content are uploaded to YouTube per MINUTE.

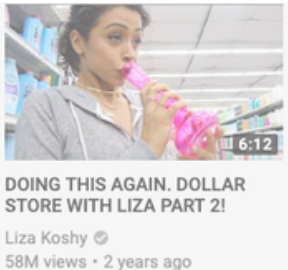
5

POPULAR YOUTUBE CHANNELS*

*I tried to make this list as varied as possible to reflect what your kids might be watching.
The numbers note how many subscribers they have, in the millions.

1. PewDiePie (101M) - stars Felix Kjellberg mostly playing video games (he has faced criticism for making racist and anti-Semitic remarks on his channel)
2. DudePerfect (45.8M) - features 4 guys completing trick shots and stunts
3. Kids Diana Show (34.5M) - stars 5-year-old Diana playing with new toys
4. Ryan ToysReview (21.5M) - features toy and game reviews by 7-year-old Ryan
5. Jenna Marbles (19.9M) - known for humorous content and comedy skits
6. Liza Koshy (17.2M) - features comedy as well as tackling more serious issues like her struggle with anxiety
7. SSSniperWolf (16.9M)- stars Lia who posts gaming and reaction videos
8. NikkieTutorials (12.2M) - features Nikkie, a makeup artist and beauty vlogger





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PARENTAL CONTROL APPS

FamilyLink offers many different ways to monitor your child's phone (and it's free to use!)

- You can view your kids' activity, and see how much time they spend on their favourite apps.
- They have notifications to let you approve or block apps your child wants to download, and you can manage in-app purchases or hide specific apps on their device.
- It lets you set time limits and a bedtime for their device, so you can help them find a good balance.
- You can also remotely lock a device whenever it's time to take a break.
- It's also helpful to be able to find your child when they're on the go. You can use Family Link to help locate them as long as they're carrying their device.

To learn more:
https://families.google.com/familylink/

The Bark app is another excellent way to monitor your child's device, but it does have a cost ($9/month).

Bark covers text messaging, YouTube, email, and social media platforms and apps -- 4x more than any other child monitoring app. You'll get automatic alerts to signs of cyberbullying, depression, online predators, adult content, and more.

Bark looks for activity that may indicate online predators, adult content, sexting, cyberbullying, drug use, suicidal thoughts, and more.

You will get automatic alerts when Bark detects potential issues, along with expert recommendations from child psychologists for addressing them.

To learn more:
https://www.bark.us/#how

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Feeling overwhelmed? Don't worry.

Sometimes we can end up terrifying parents with all this information, because it can be shocking to learn all the things that can go wrong on the internet.

One of the goals of this guide was to help relieve fears by teaching you more about apps and games, and letting you know about safety features you can enable.

Most of the time, the internet is used in a safe, fun way by children and teens. By enabling safety features, learning more about apps and games, and providing you with some tools you can use to monitor your children, we hope you start to feel more comfortable about their online world!

Online Resources

https://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/parents-ultimate-guide-to-fortnite

https://blog.discordapp.com/parents-guide-to-discord-c77d91793e9c

https://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/parents-ultimate-guide-to-snapchat

https://leahnieman.com/parents-guide-to-yubo/

https://tinyurl.com/ParentsGuidetoInstagram

https://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/parents-ultimate-guide-to-youtube

https://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/parents-ultimate-guide-to-youtube-kids

https://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/parents-ultimate-guide-to-musically

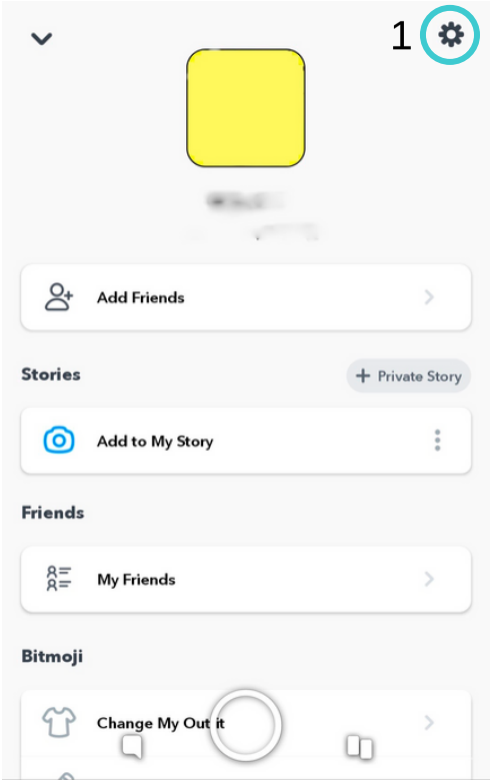
MediaSmarts.ca
HighTechDad.com
KidsHealth.org
TheCyberSafetyLady.com.au

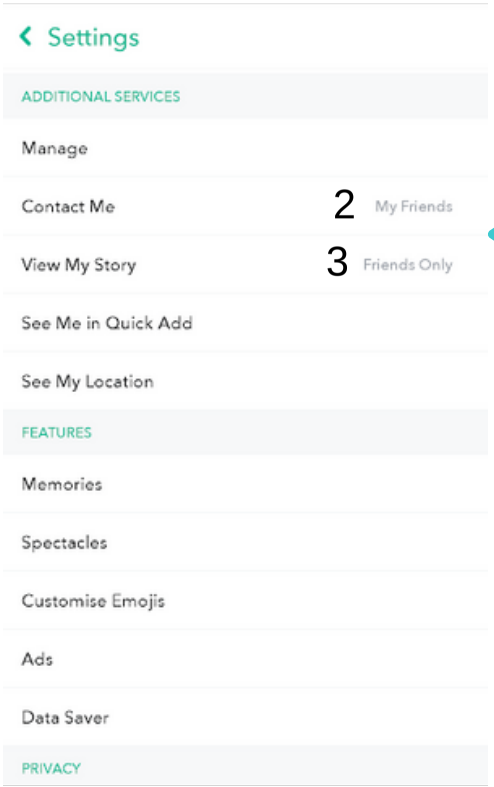
SAFFRON CENTRE

How-To: Privacy Settings

The blue circle (◯) means tap here!

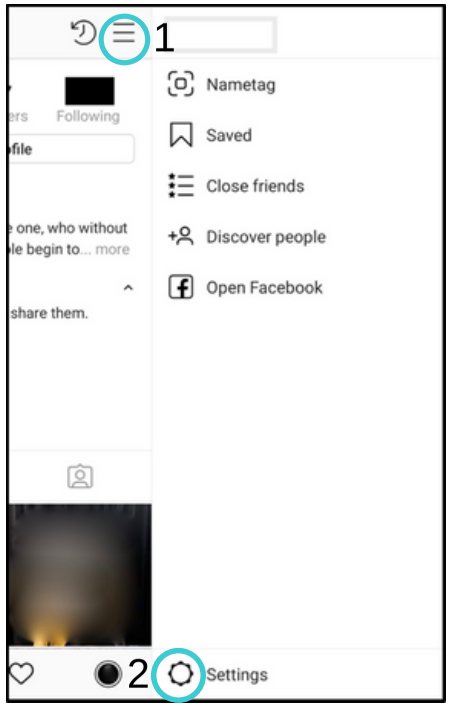
Snapchat

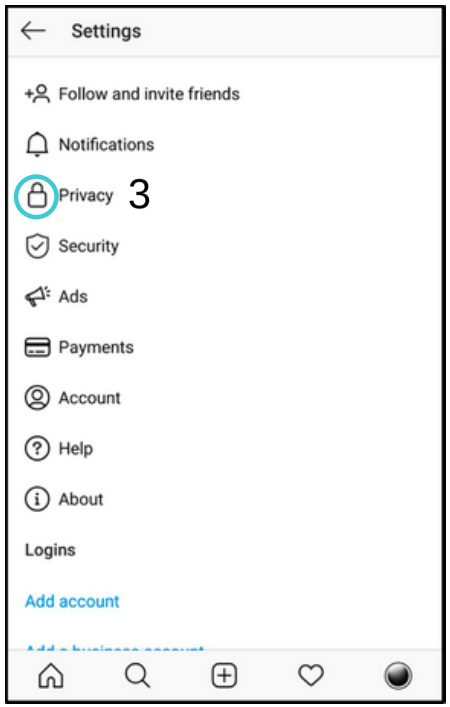


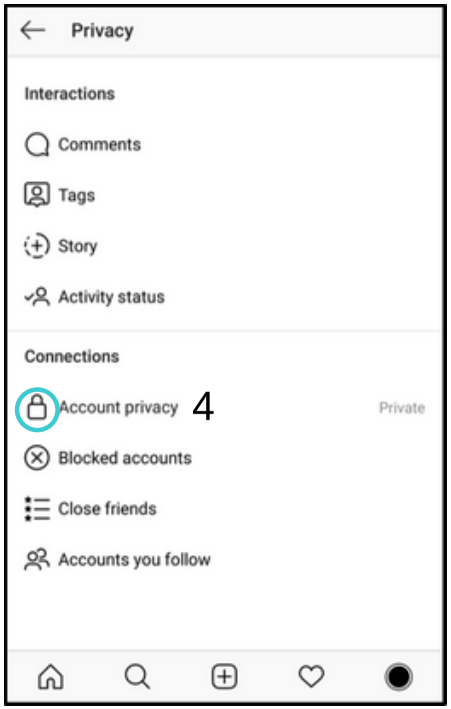


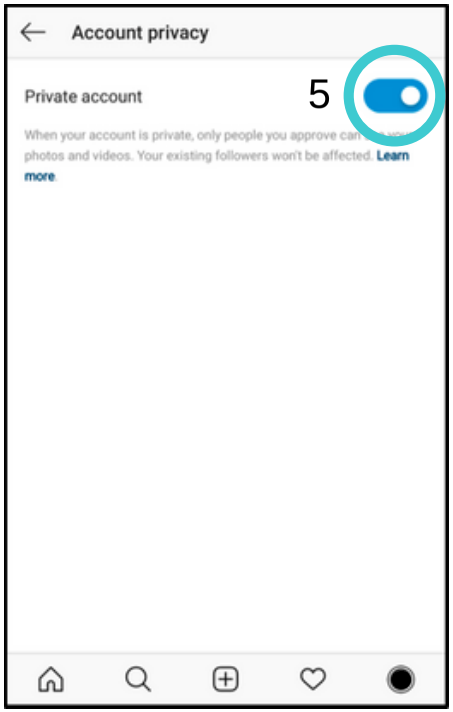
Make sure that it says My Friends next to Contact Me and Friends Only next to View My Story

Instagram



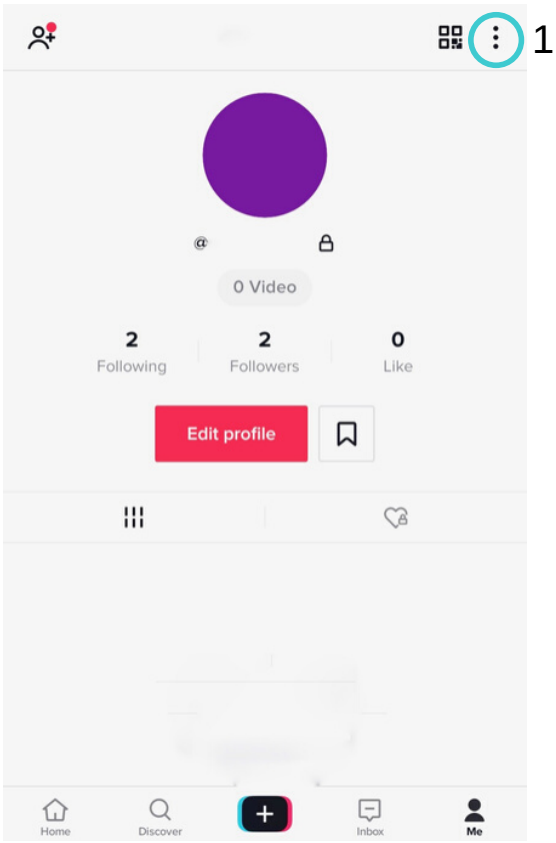


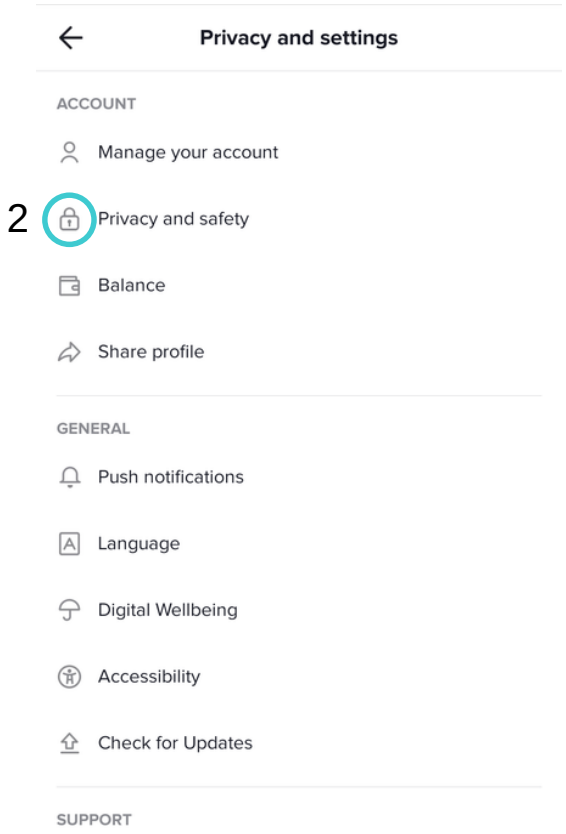


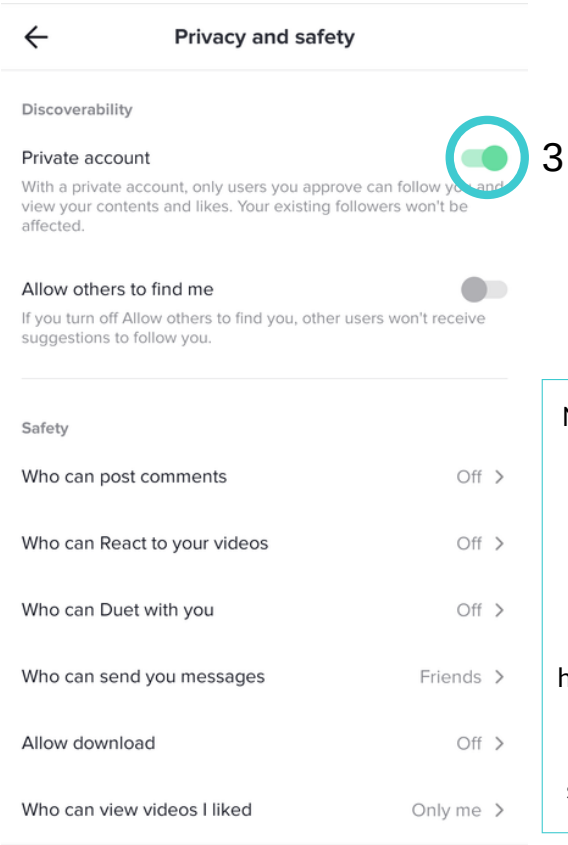


How-To: Privacy Settings The blue circle (◯) means tap here!

TikTok







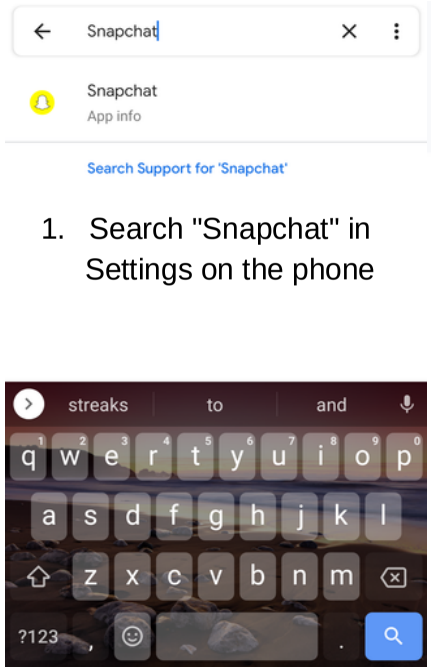
Not only should you turn on the private account, look at the other settings as well.

The safest way to have an account is to have settings that match this screenshot exactly.

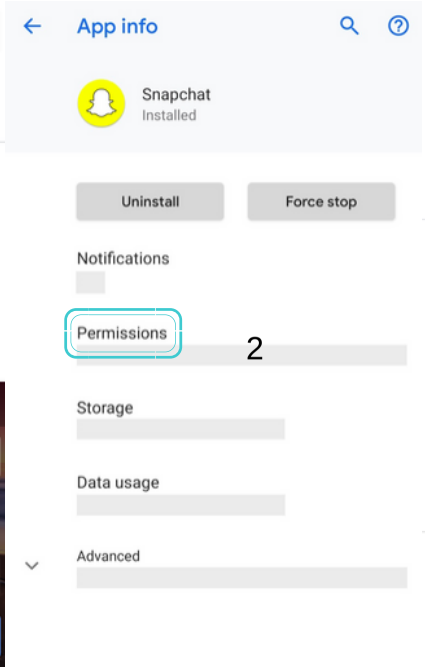
How to Turn Off Location Settings

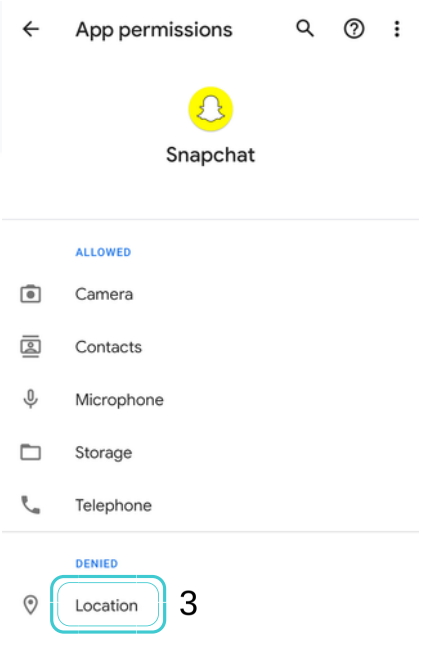
For SnapChat and Instagram on an Android

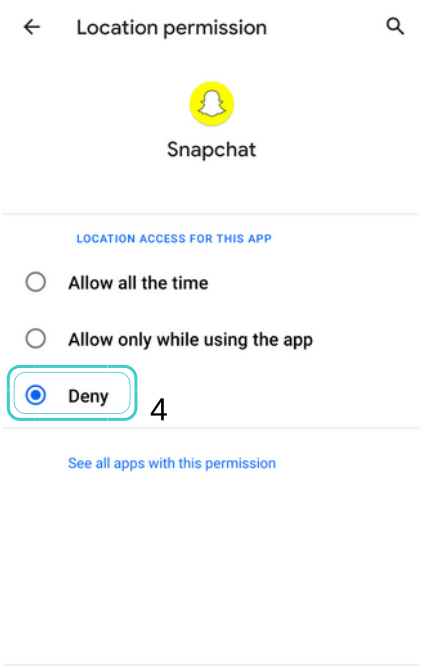
The blue rectangle ( ) means tap here!

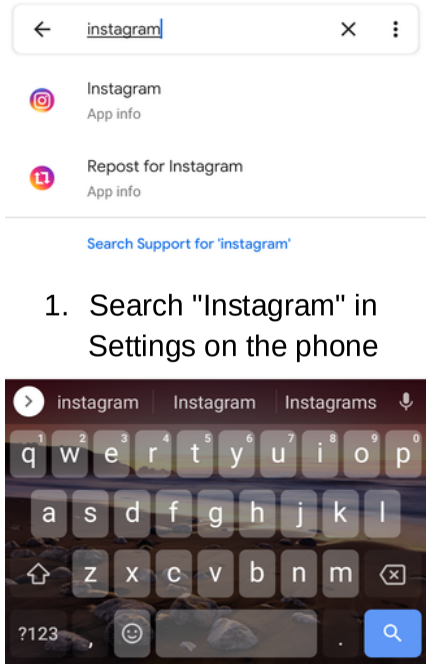


1. Search "Snapchat" in Settings on the phone

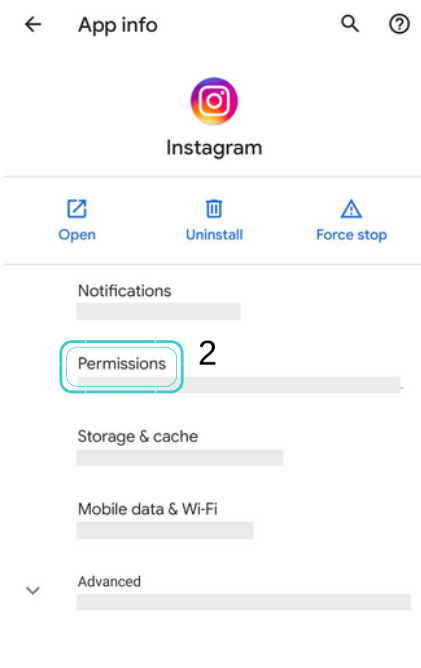


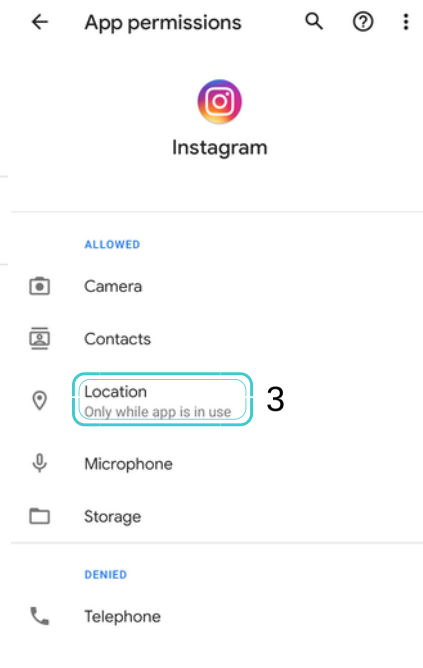


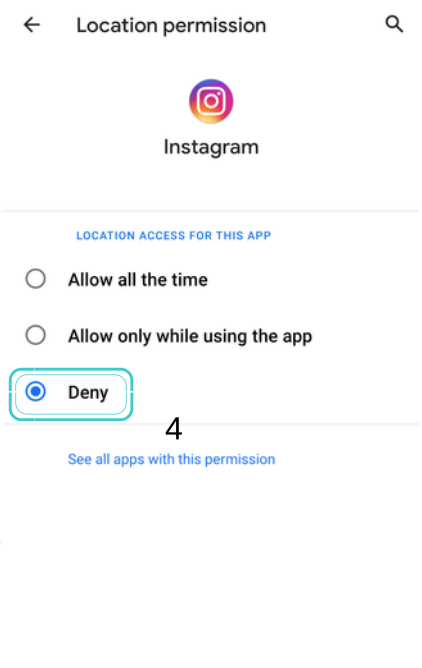




1. Search "Instagram" in Settings on the phone



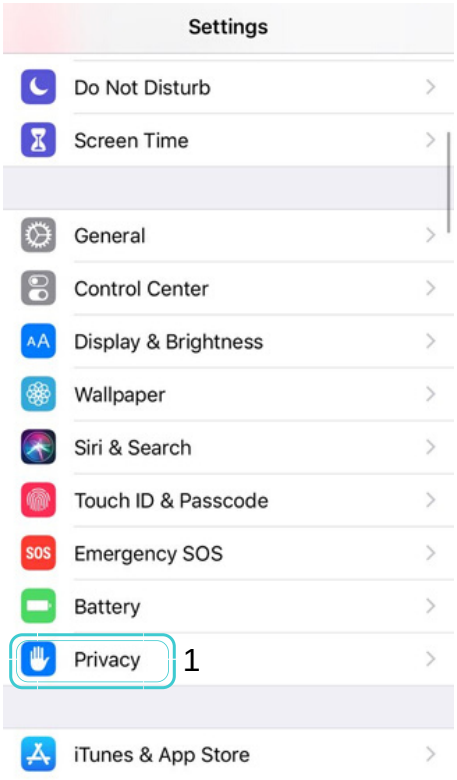


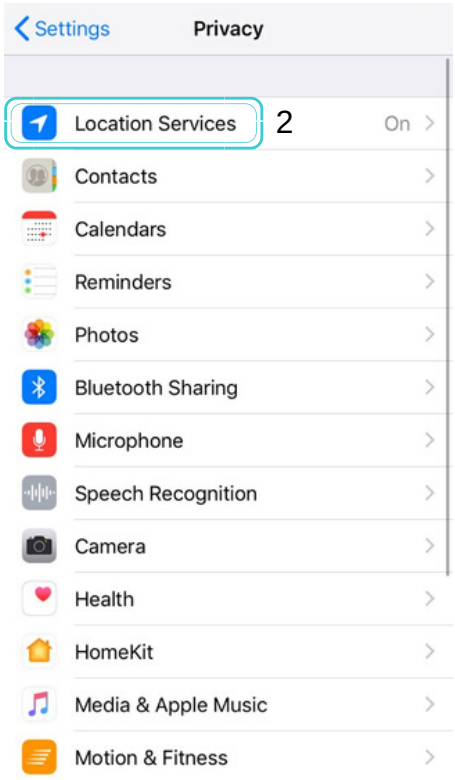


If location is currently allowed on Snapchat or Instagram, "Location" will be listed under the Allowed category.

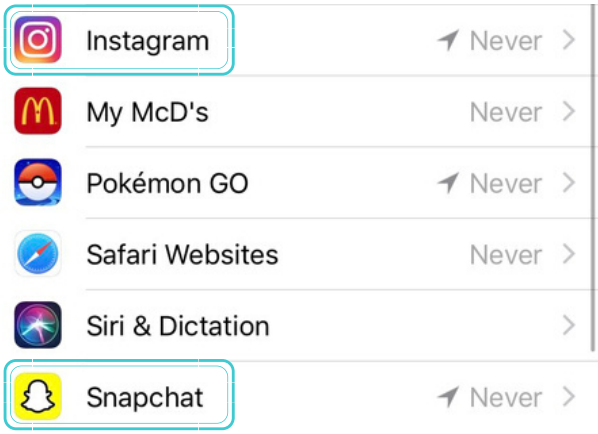
How to Turn Off Location Settings

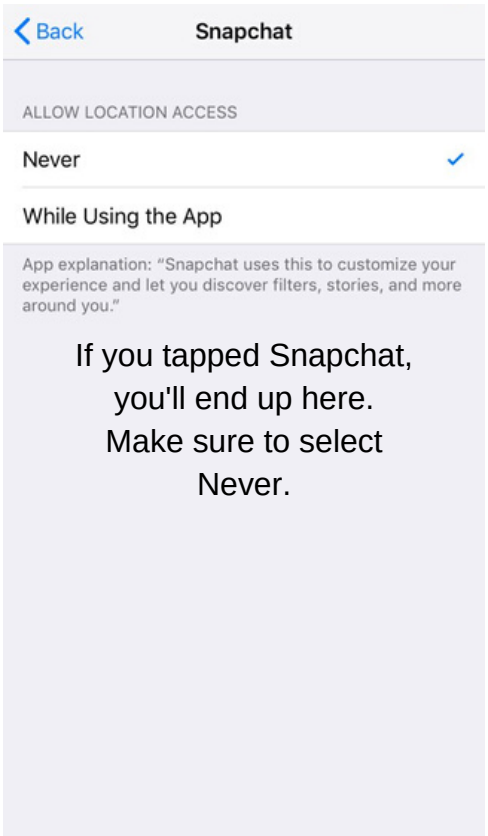
For SnapChat and Instagram on an iPhone





3. From here, you can choose Instagram OR Snapchat





If you tapped Snapchat, you'll end up here. Make sure to select Never.

If you tapped Instagram, you'll end up here. Make sure to select Never.

The blue rectangle ( ) means tap here!

SAFFRON CENTRE