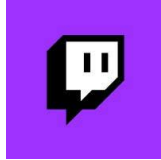


# Twitch



## What is Twitch?

Twitch is a worldwide, live-streaming platform with many millions of daily active users, owned by Amazon. It is primarily used by gamers to live stream their game play, while offering a commentary and interacting with others.

Viewers can either watch for free or pay extra to subscribe to particular channels. If subscribed they can use the chat function to converse with the streamer or with other viewers. Twitch also allows its users to make private streams, which are invite-only.

## What you should Know:

**Age:** Twitch requires users to be at least 13 years old, however, there is no age verification. Many of the games played on the platform have 18+ ratings.

**Content:** Twitch has moderators, platform rules about content, and a list of globally banned words and phrases that it automatically deletes before other users can see them, however, the nature of live-streaming means that it is difficult to prevent all inappropriate language or content. Even if a child has not subscribed, they may see chat messages sent by others as these can be hidden but not turned off.

**Contact:** Private messages called “whispers” can be sent by other users. This option can be limited to prevent contact from strangers.

**Other platforms:** Many streamers link their Twitch account to other social media platforms such as Snapchat, Instagram YouTube and Discord. This can expose children to age-inappropriate messaging if they follow popular streamers on other platforms.

**Advertising:** Twitch hosts advertising including mature movie and game ads.

**Costs:** There is a Twitch currency called “Bits” which can be used to send to streamers during a video. Streamers earn \$0.01 per Bit and some streamers actively solicit donations or paid subscriptions, sometimes using inappropriate encouragements such as skimpy clothing.

**Privacy:** If your child decides to stream their own content, be aware that anyone could be watching and able to leave comments.

Live streaming risk revealing personal information about themselves including their name, age, appearance, contact details and location. This can happen through chat but also by details shown in the background of live streams or via screen sharing.

**Controls:** Twitch does not offer parental controls.

## What you should do:

- ★ Try the platform out for yourself to check whether it is suitable for your child.
- ★ Watch some of the content with your child to get a better understanding of how the platform works. Familiarise yourself with the channels they are interested in and the people that run them.
- ★ Talk about some of the issues that can arise with live-streaming.
- ★ Demonstrate how if someone in the chat room is offensive, it is possible to mute them by hovering over their name and clicking the “Ignore” button.
- ★ Agree some ground rules about which games and channels they can follow.
- ★ Be aware of who they chat with and which friends are using Twitch. Use the “Block Whispers from Strangers” setting to restrict who can send them private messages, known as ‘whispers’.
- ★ Remind them not to share personal information online and to be alert to anyone asking personal questions or encouraging them to communicate on other platforms.
- ★ Talk about subscriptions and any rules you wish to set around spending on the platform.
- ★ Show them how to report other users and block inappropriate messages directly in the app by selecting the three dots in the right-hand corner.
- ★ Assure your child that you will always be there for them and let them know they can talk to you about anything that happens online.
- ★ If you have discussed and agreed to your child becoming a streamer on the platform, set some ground rules together to help establish a safe, rewarding experience. Consider limiting your child to private invitation-only streams with friends. If streaming publicly there are tools to control the types of messages that they will allow viewers to post.

## Privacy and Reporting:

### Blocking Strangers:

**The Block Whispers from Strangers** setting will prevent strangers from initiating Whisper conversations with a user and can also prevent spam and harassing messages.

**Blocking:** To block a user, click on their username and then the 3 Vertical Dots menu icon. Select “Block” (Username).

**Filters:** In Chat Settings you can hide unwanted messages in chats with Chat Filters. There are settings for Discrimination, Sexually Explicit Language, Hostility, and Profanity.

**Report to Moderators:** Use the 3 vertical dots icon and select “Report” to file details of the problem.

**Reporting a Whisper:** Use the cog icon in the Whisper window and “Report” a particular user, giving details of the issue.