



CANADA'S CENTRE
FOR DIGITAL AND
MEDIA LITERACY

Internet Safety Tips by Age: 5-7

Five- to seven-year-old children have a positive outlook and an accepting nature. They take pride in their new reading and counting skills and love to converse and share ideas. They are eager to behave well; they are trusting; and they don't question authority.

Kids at this age may be very capable at using computers, i.e. following commands, using the mouse, and playing online games and apps. They are, however, highly dependent on adults or older children to help them find games, videos and websites, interpret online information or communicate with others.

5- to 7-year-olds:

- will accept media content at face value
- don't have the critical thinking skills to be online alone
- may be frightened by both real and fictional media images
- may be frightened by realistic portrayals of violence, threats or dangers
- are vulnerable to online marketers who encourage them to give out personal information through surveys, contests and registration forms
- may be troubled by behaviours they encounter while playing in virtual worlds
- risk moving from appropriate to inappropriate sites and content through hyperlinks
- may be exposed to search results that link to inappropriate websites

Safety Tips

General Supervision

- Always sit with children at this age when they are online.
- Investigate Internet-filtering tools as a complement — not a replacement — for parental supervision.
- Protect your children from offensive "pop-ups" by setting your browser to block popups, disabling Java on your computer and/or using blocking software. Ad blockers such as Adblock can also keep kids from seeing banner ads with inappropriate content.
- Keep online activities – whether on laptops, tablets or family computers – in common family areas where you can easily monitor what your kids are doing.



Managing Online Spaces

- Create a personalized online environment by limiting children to a list of favourite or "bookmarked" sites.
- Use kid-friendly search engines or ones with parental controls.
- Stick to age-appropriate sites for kids that have strong safety and privacy features.
- Talk to older siblings about making sure that younger brothers and sisters aren't around if they are participating in online activities that are intended for older youth.

Building Safety Skills

- Start conversations about respecting privacy online. Tell your kids not to share information about themselves or their family without asking permission from you first.
- Have children use an online nickname if a site encourages them to submit their names to "personalize" the Web content.
- Although children ages 5-7 are not likely to be using social networking platforms, they are likely to be playing in virtual worlds that permit socializing between players. This is a good time to start talking to your children about the importance of treating others online with kindness and respect.
- Encourage your kids to come to you if they encounter anything online that makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened. (Stay calm. If you "freak out" they won't turn to you for help when they need it.)

