Thinkuknow Parents and Carers Guide to Facebook

Facebook is the most popular social media network globally, with 1.28 billion active users each month. Thinkuknow has created a guide for parents and carers to help you to understand more about Facebook and its features.

We endeavour to keep our parents guides as up-to-date as possible, however due to the changing nature of social media, the information and advice in this guide may date over time. The information within this guide is correct as of June 2017.

What is Facebook?

Facebook is a social network. Each Facebook user has their own 'timeline' in which they can upload images and write their 'status' (Facebook describe a status as a user posting about 'what's on their mind'). Users become 'friends' and can then see each other's posts, information, images and videos. A user can see the activity of their friends on their 'News Feed' (a live update on Facebook). Each user's news feed is different dependent on their contacts. Users can 'like' what they see by pressing this icon .

For all phone types and tablets, Facebook is free to download. Facebook uses an Internet connection using 3G/4G or Wi-Fi to send and receive messages and images and post content. As long as the user hasn't exceeded the data limit or is connected to a free Wi-Fi network, messaging over Facebook is free.

Does Facebook have age restrictions?

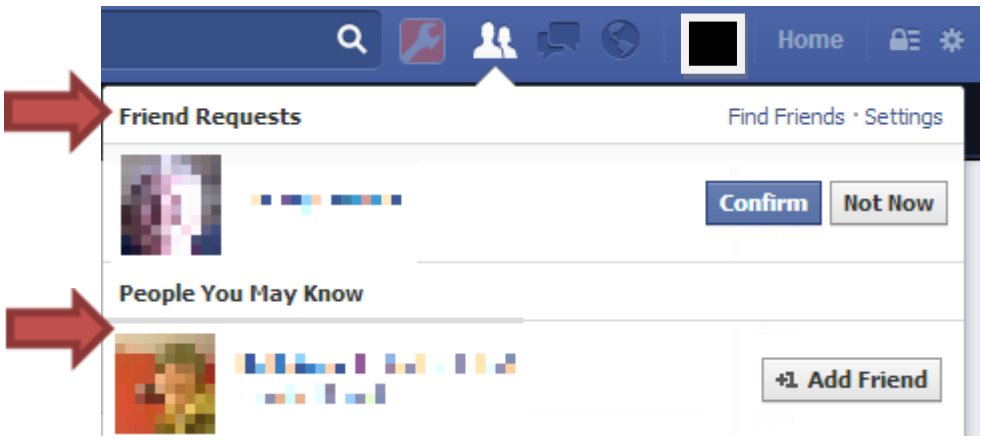
Facebook's Terms of Service state that young people under 13 years old are not permitted to create an account. The user is asked to enter their date of birth when creating an account and if this indicates the user is below the age of 13 they will not be able to create an account. However, children under the age of 13 could potentially sign up for an account by giving a false date of birth. Currently there is no age verification in place when signing up.

If you allow your child to use Facebook when they are under the age of 13, consider that Facebook's settings - for example their advertising and marketplace features (see page 3) - will change as the user ages (for example when they reach 16 and 18), and if their original date of birth indicates they are older than they are, they may view things that are inappropriate for their age.

What are the features of Facebook?

1. **Friends**

Users may request others to be 'friends' on Facebook. Users can search for potential 'friends' using their name, email address or phone number (a profile can only be found using an email or phone number if this feature is enabled, see page 7 for more information) or by using Facebook's feature of 'mutual friends' (where Facebook suggests friends). A user can choose to accept or decline a "friend request" from another user. If accepted, both users will be "friends" and appear in one another's friends list. Friends can then see each other's information, posts, photos and videos, and can also wrote on each other's timeline and instant message one another.



Facebook users may also form "groups". Groups are created by one user who can add others to the group. Each group has its own timeline, friends and images. There are three types of group on Facebook:

Public- Anyone can join or be added to the group by another member. Any user on Facebook can choose to search for the group and see all its content.

Closed- Users can be added or request to be added to the group. Anyone on Facebook can see who is member of the group, and can search for the group. However, only members can see what is posted within the group.

Secret- Users can only be invited to this group and cannot ask to be added. This group will not show up when searched by users who are not part of the group.

2. Images/videos

Users can share images and videos on their timeline and are able to 'tag' friends within images as well as their location. Tagged images will appear on that user's timeline. There is also the option to create a 'shared album'. This is where an individual allows their friends to add images or videos to *their* album. The creator of a shared album can choose who is able to contribute to the album and can change this at any time. Friends are able to comment on each other's photos.

As with all image sharing platforms, once an image has been posted, other users are able to copy, share or download images.

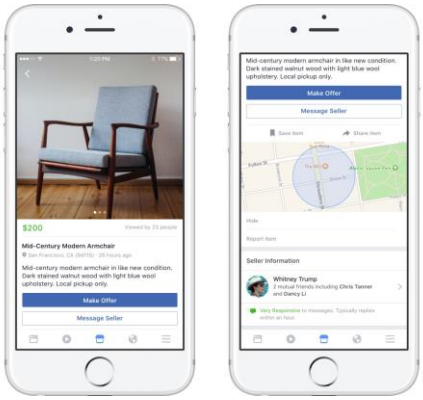
3. Facebook Live

Facebook Live is the live streaming feature attached to Facebook. Users can film and upload videos in real time. If a user's Facebook profile is *public*, any other user can search for their live video and view it by searching for key words within the title or location tags. If their profile is *private*, only their friends will be able to view their live video. Live videos can last as long as 4 hours and remain on Facebook until they are deleted by the user.

As with images, users can mark their location and tag friends in their live video. They also have the option to apply filters to their videos to alter their appearance. When watching a live video, viewers can leave live comments whilst the video is playing. This creates a comments thread underneath the playing video and will remain there when the video has ended. Users can also choose to 'like' or react to a video using a range of symbols/emojis. These are seen by the user as they are filming.

4. Facebook marketplace community

Users can create adverts to buy and sell goods in their local community. Facebook uses geo-location data from a user's phone to find adverts that have been posted in the local area. Facebook state that this is an approximate location and users precise location is not shared. Payment is decided by the buyer and seller and can take place online or offline. Facebook Marketplace is only available for users over 18.



5. Facebook messenger:

Facebook users can send private messages to their Facebook friends. They can also send and receive messages from people who are not their friend on Facebook, these will appear in a separate list under 'message requests'. Facebook messenger is available as an app or can be accessed via the Facebook website.

6. Advertising:

Facebook make much of their revenue from advertising. Companies pay Facebook to host their adverts on users' News Feeds. Adverts vary and can depend on the websites that a person has visited online. Facebook analyse this information to tailor adverts to different users.

Should I be concerned about Facebook as a parent or carer?

The features of Facebook can present risks to young people:

- Sharing images and personal information
- Communicating with strangers online and fake accounts
- Location based data
- Live streaming

Facebook encourages users to share details about themselves on their profile including schools and location. For example, Facebook allows users to 'check-in' online by tagging themselves in specific locations, and this information will then appear on their profile and their friends will be able to see their exact location. Have a conversation with your child about what they post, who can view it and what they may do with this information. Talk about their privacy settings and the risks of sharing things such as their location in real time.

Facebook suggests users who could be potential 'friends' on the network based on 'mutual friends'. The concept of mutual friends on Facebook has led children to accept friend requests from people they believe to 'friends of friends' when in fact they are strangers. This may be due to a real friend accepting a friend request from a stranger to, for example, increase their friendship count online. Have a conversation with your child about whether they know who they are friends with, and not to assume someone is a safe person just because they have lots of mutual friends.

As with any social network, it's possible for any individual to create an account, or multiple accounts, portraying to be a different person. These accounts may assume the identity of a young person (this could be details of a genuine young person where the user pretends to be them, or details that are fake) or the account may even pretend to be a celebrity. There are instructions on how to report 'imposter' accounts to Facebook on page 5.

Facebook includes live streaming (Facebook Live, see page 2). Live streaming means that young people are not able to edit/review their video content before it is uploaded. Live streaming can be both unpredictable and hard to moderate which is understandably worrying for parents and carers. In some instances, it can lead to young people accidently sharing more information than they intended, or being tricked into doing this. Exchanges take place in real time and there could be a tendency for users to be easily influenced and share something without thinking of the consequences. As always, it is important to talk to your child about the risks of sharing too much information online and that they should never feel pressured to do something online that they don't want to do. In rare circumstances live streaming has also been used to broadcast abusive behaviour, which can lead to young people viewing harmful and upsetting content that they weren't expecting to see. It is important to maintain an open dialogue with young people about the things they see online and what to do if

they see something that worries them online. Facebook enables users to report inappropriate content (see below).

Reporting to Facebook

Facebook has Community Standards outlined here https://en-gb.facebook.com/communitystandards. These state that images, comments or posts that show nudity, hate speech or violence violate these standards and can be reported to Facebook.

To report a **profile**:

1. Go to the profile you wish to report
2. In the bottom right of the cover photo, press and select **Report**
3. Follow the on-screen instructions to select the reason for reporting.

To report a **post**:

1. Click in the top right corner of the post
2. Click **Report post** or **Report photo**
3. Select the option that best describes the issue and follow the on-screen instructions.

To report a **photo or video**:

1. Click on the photo or video to expand it
2. Hover over the photo or video and click **Options** in the bottom-right corner
3. Click **Report Photo** for photos or **Report Video** for videos
4. Select the option that best describes the issue and follow the on-screen instructions.

Facebook users can also create a report via the Facebook website if they do not have the Facebook app at https://en-gb.facebook.com/help/contact/274459462613911.

Imposter Accounts

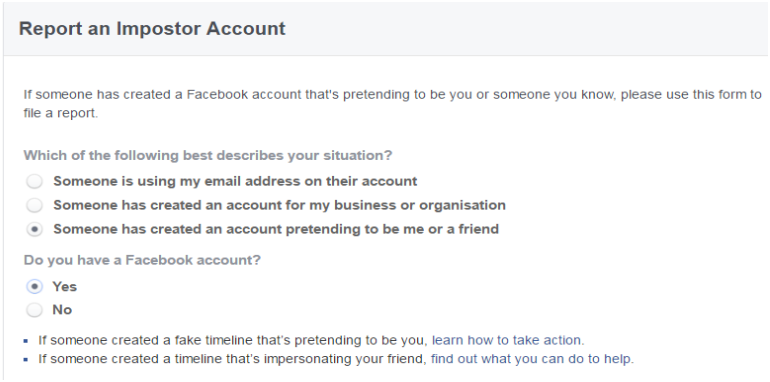
It is possible for anyone to create a Facebook account under any name. If you experience a user creating an 'Imposter' account, follow the instructions below.

1. If you don't have a Facebook account, visit https://engb.facebook.com/help/contact/169486816475808
2. Follow the instructions to report the account.

To report imposter accounts if you have a Facebook profile

1. Go to the profile

2. Click ••• on the cover photo on the profile and select **Report**
3. Follow the on-screen instructions to complete the report to Facebook



Blocking

Blocking someone prevents them from seeing what you post. When you block a user they will no longer:

- Appear in your friends list
- See things you post on your profile
- Tag you in posts, comments or photos
- Invite you to events or groups
- Start a conversation with you
- Add you as a friend

If you and the person you block are later added to a group conversation together, you will be notified before you enter the conversation. If you choose to enter a group conversation with the person you blocked, you'll able to see their messages and they'll be able to see yours within that conversation.

To block a user's Facebook profile:

1. Got to the users profile
2. Click on the ••• on their cover photo
3. Select 'Block'

To remove a user as a friend:

Removing a friend (also known as 'unfriending'), means that another user will no longer be able to see your posts or images. Unlike blocking, they are able to send you a friend request after they have been removed as a friend.

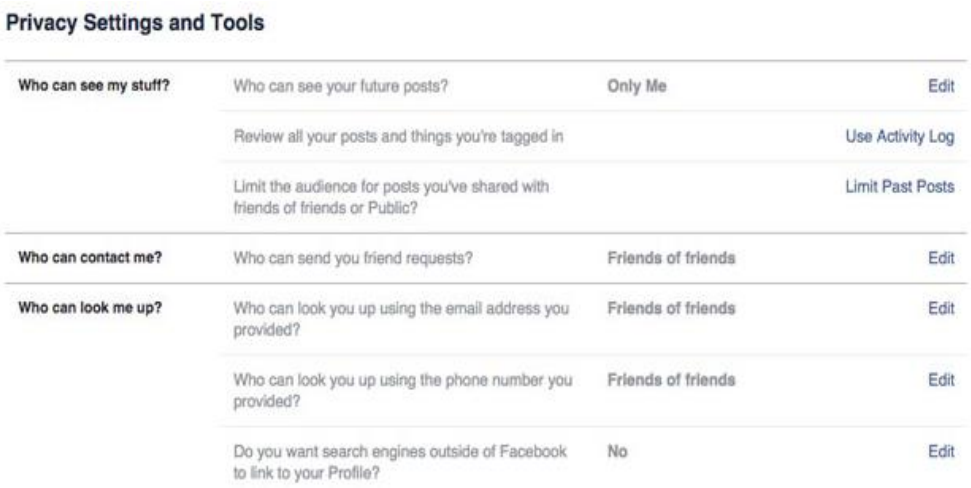
1. Go to the users profile
2. Hover over the word '**Friends'**

3. Click on

4. Select '**Unfriend'**

How do privacy settings work on Facebook?

Users can customize their privacy settings and choose who is able to see their posts, send friend requests and search for their profile (see image below).



To alter privacy setting on the Facebook app:

1. Go to your profile
2. Tap the settings symbol ☰ the bottom of the page
3. Scroll to the bottom of the list and choose 'Privacy'
4. Choose the privacy settings you require.

To alter privacy settings on the Facebook website:

1. Click t n the top right-hand corner of the screen
2. Choose the privacy settings you require.

Reporting to CEOP

If you have any concerns about grooming, sexual abuse or exploitation on Facebook or on any online app or site, report to CEOP at www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre.