

TikTok APP Guidance for Parents

Sourced from UK Safer Internet Centre:

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/what-tiktok-looking-latest-lip-syncing-app>



TikTok is very popular among young people as it allows them to become content creators and to design their own videos to the songs that they love.

What features does TikTok have?

On TikTok users can create their own videos where they lip-sync along to popular songs and audio clips. To do this users select the song they want to use and then create their own video. Once their video is created users can then share it with their followers or all other users on the app.

In the changeover from Musical.ly to TikTok there have been some new features released, these include new creative filters that can be put on videos and a 'for you' section on the homepage where users can discover, react to and interact with others people videos. Users also caption their videos using hashtag to help others to find their content, and also to find content that has been created by others.

On TikTok there is also the ability to livestream via [LiveMe - Live Video Chat](#), where users can directly interact with online audiences through chat and live video. The app puts some focus on themed challenges, encouraging users to make videos of themselves doing things like editing two videos together or performing trending dance moves.

There are also Tikok 'celebrities' who regularly get over 100,000 views on their videos. These 'celebrities' can start new challenges or trends on the app, and for some users it may be aspirational to gain a similar level of fame and influence.


Things to be aware of

Because the app allows users to create videos using current and popular music, some of the songs contain explicit swearing, sexual content and references that may be inappropriate for younger users.


As users create their own content some videos posted in the app can contain inappropriate clothing or gestures. According to reviews on [Common Sense Media](#) some parents have also reported seeing videos containing sexually suggestive or even explicit material.

Users also have the ability to interact and chat to other users of the app through the comment section under videos and the private messaging function. Private messages can only be sent between users who are follow each other or are 'friends' and the messaging function can also be turned off entirely.

Making a report

To report a user you need to visit their profile page, click on the three dots at the top right , click report, and fill out the reporting forms.

The reasons that you are able to give for the report are: self-injury, harassment or bullying, nudity or pornography, violence or harm. You can also block a user by clicking on the three dots at the top of their profile.

To report a video you need to click on the share icon  on the right hand side, then select the report option and fill out the reporting forms.

As above, the reasons that you able to give for the report are: self-injury, harassment or bullying, nudity or pornography, violence or harm.

To report a comment you need to double tap on the comment you wish to report, click on report and select the reason that you are making the report.

Privacy settings

There are a number of privacy settings available in TikTok. Profiles are automatically set to public, so that any content you post can be seen by anyone within the app. You can select the privacy settings most applicable to you and your child by going to the settings part of the user page and clicking on the three dots at the top of your profile, then clicking on 'privacy and safety'.

Once here you will be able to select who can find your profile, comment on your posts, react to your videos and also who can send you direct messages.

It is important to remember that setting an account to private does nothing to delete or restrict users who have already followed your account. To delete a follower or 'fan' you need to:

1. Go to your profile page
2. Tap on "Fans"
3. Choose the fan you wish to remove and go to user's profile page
4. Tap on the top right corner of the profile page
5. Select "Block"

Parental controls in the app

TikTok have recently launched a new setting called 'Digital Well-Being' which allows parents to set screen time limits with the app (which is then password locked).

There is also a Restricted Mode which can help to filter out inappropriate content. By turning on restricted mode, TikTok say that the app will limit the appearance of videos that 'may not be appropriate for all audiences'. This feature also disable the user from being able to start their own live streams.

However, it is important to remember that no filter is ever 100% effective on its own and any controls should only be used if they work for you and your family.

Age requirements on TikTok

TikTok has a minimum user age of 13, and requires users to declare their date of birth and confirm a phone number upon installing the app. Any users that previously had a Musical.ly account would have had their accounts automatically transferred into a TikTok account, which means any detail they had put about themselves whilst setting up their account will remain the same.

Although TikTok is very popular among a lot of younger users, there are also a large number of adult users who also create videos on the app, and who engage and interact with the videos that others share publically.