



Parents Guide To Whatsapp



What is WhatsApp and what can it do?

WhatsApp is a free messaging app that lets you make video and voice calls, send text messages, share images and documents all with just a Wi-Fi connection. WhatsApp is especially popular among friends and family who live in different countries and want to stay in touch. WhatsApp may be used mostly as a text messaging app, but here is a description of its uses:

- Voice and video calls: As well as voice calls you can do video calls one to one or in a group. You can have up to eight people on one call.
- Voice messaging: You can record and send voice messages to individual chats or group chats.
- Secure messaging: WhatsApp uses end-to-end encryption which means messages are secure and only the people who are messaging can read the messages.
- Photos and video sharing: You can send videos and photos.
- Document sharing: WhatsApp lets you send all kinds of documents, such as PDFs, spreadsheets, and slideshows easily.
- Desktop access: you can use this app on your computer as well as your phone.
- WhatsApp Business: You can have a WhatsApp business account for businesses to showcase their products and connect with their customers.

To add a friend on the chats page you tap the icon in the top right hand corner and then select new contact. You enter the information for the person and save.

The settings for WhatsApp can be found in the cog icon on the bottom right corner.

What features can be seen as a security risk?

WhatsApp uses personal information such as phone number, name, contacts, billing and mobile device information. This could be a risk if the information is not used correctly. If activated whatsapp can also show your location which is a big security risk.

The age restriction of 16 helps ensure that the app is being used by responsible users. Permission has to be given when downloading this app to access this information. There are no age verification or parental controls available on the app. To register you're only required to share a mobile number so it would be easy for a child with a phone to sign up for an account without permission. If permission is not given to allow access to contacts the app functions could not be used fully. In the privacy section parents can alter the settings to keep their children safe. You can turn off live location so that people are not aware of your location.

How do parents keep their children safe when using whatsapp?

- Make sure your child is the correct age to use the app.
- Do not let them share their profile picture
- Turn the live location off
- Teach your child how to use the app correctly and discuss the information they should not be sharing with others