

Our Rights Online



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Navigating Our Digital World

Have you ever had a puzzling question you could not figure out? Someone may have told you to “look it up online!” The online world is also known as the internet. The internet is a network of devices across the world. It connects billions of computers. This network allows information to zoom from device to device. Information can move at superspeed online. If you can **access** the internet, a ton of **data** is at your fingertips.

The internet does not just have answers to our questions. People can use the internet to find dinner recipes. Funny cat videos may catch their eye online. People can read newspapers from around the globe. The internet can connect people worldwide. Many people use online messaging services. They can connect with other people almost anywhere. This includes people who live in countries very far away—even across oceans.





The internet has many uses. So, it is important to know how to use this digital world. Every person has rights. Every person also has responsibilities. This is also true online! Let's learn how to explore our digital world safely.

Online Popularity

There are nearly 8 billion people on Earth. In 2020, almost 4.5 billion of them had access to the internet.

Jump into
Fiction

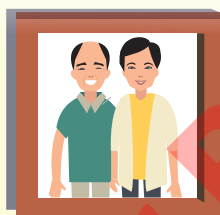


Online Ready

It was a Tuesday afternoon, and I'd just gotten home from school. My sister Lucy was on a break from college. I found her curled up on the family sofa. I greeted her by crossing my eyes, and she laughed. Secretly, I was over-the-moon happy to see her back home. My older sister was definitely a responsible adult, but she always made time for me.

"Lizzie-bean, you've got to see this hilarious video," she said.

I plopped down beside her, and she held out her phone, a video lighting up the screen. In it, a cute puppy leapt up—over and over—to catch biscuits, but he kept missing. We giggled at the pup's commitment to catch treats. I asked, "Is this a video on Instagram?"





Lucy nodded, her eyes still glued to her screen.

“Can you show me what you do on there?” I prodded.

Lucy looked over, a puzzled expression on her face, but then nodded in understanding. “Oh right, I forgot you’re not old enough to be on this yet, huh?”

“Amma and Appa* say I have to be 13 before I can set up a profile,” I answered. “And we’re going to have a ‘talk’ before that happens.”

“Well, that actually makes a lot of sense to me,” Lucy replied, a thoughtful expression on her face. “Instagram can be a bit complicated.”



**Amma and Appa are Korean for Mom and Dad.*

Lucy handed me her phone. “This is my profile, and it’s basically where I share photos and videos from my life. See, I’ve got pictures from my birthday last weekend.”

I kept scrolling through her profile, noticing it was mostly pictures of her goofing around with friends. “But—this is all completely safe, right, Lucy? Amma makes such a big deal about me not being on social media until I’m older.”





Lucy frowned, deep in thought. “I think there are danger zones with everything. Think about when we go hiking in Yosemite. It’s safe, but we have to stay on the marked trails and keep an eye out for anything dangerous, like uneven paths or bears. I think the internet is like that—it’s a pretty cool place as long as you go through it carefully.”

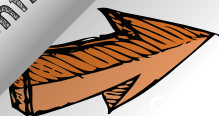
“How do you do that?” I asked.

“Well, for example, my Instagram profile is private. I only add people I know, so only my friends see my pictures. I also never talk to strangers online. You just need to trust your gut, you know? If something feels off or kind of scary, back away and ask for help from Amma or Appa.” Lucy smiled widely at me. “You’ll figure it all out—and you always have me as a support system when you’re old enough to join the world of social media.”

She looped her arm over my shoulder, and I grinned back at her.



Back to
Nonfiction



Our Rights Online

The internet has many uses. People can message friends across the world, research viewpoints, or watch silly cat videos. The internet is a big digital world—and people need to know their way around it. Everyone has rights and responsibilities. This is also true online! Let's learn how to be active and responsible digital citizens.

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