

E-safety online gaming advice and guidance for parents and carers

Online gaming is hugely popular with children and young people. Games can provide a fun and social form of entertainment often encouraging teamwork and cooperation when played with others. They can have educational benefits, and be used, for example, to develop skills and understanding. Traditionally, games could be bought from shops, often in the form of a disk for use on a PC or console. Now, games can also be downloaded online. Games are played on many platforms, with those bought in shops often having an online component to them. Internet connectivity in a game adds a new opportunity for gamers as it allows players to find and play against, or with, other players from around the world (in a multi-player game). There are many ways for users to play games online. This includes free games found on the internet, games on mobile phones and handheld consoles, as well as downloadable and boxed games on PCs and consoles such as the PlayStation, Nintendo Wii or Xbox. Internet safety advice is directly applicable to the gaming environment because of the risks that are present.

Gaming labels, symbols and guidance explained

Taken from the website <http://www.pegi.info/en/index>

About PEGI? What do the labels mean?

The PEGI labels appear on front and back of the packaging indicating one of the following age levels: 3, 7, 12, 16 and 18. They provide a reliable indication of the suitability of the game content in terms of protection of minors. The age rating does not take into account the difficulty level or skills required to play a game.



PEGI 3

The content of games given this rating is considered suitable for all age groups. Some violence in a comical context (typically Bugs Bunny or Tom & Jerry cartoon-like forms of violence) is acceptable. The child should not be able to associate the character on the screen with real life characters, they should be totally fantasy. The game should not contain any sounds or pictures that are likely to scare or frighten young children. No bad language should be heard.



PEGI 7

Any game that would normally be rated at 3 but contains some possibly frightening scenes or sounds may be considered suitable in this category.



PEGI 12

Videogames that show violence of a slightly more graphic nature towards fantasy character and/or non graphic violence towards human-looking characters or recognisable animals, as well as videogames that show nudity of a slightly more graphic nature would fall in this age category. Any bad language in this category must be mild and fall short of sexual expletives.



PEGI 16

This rating is applied once the depiction of violence (or sexual activity) reaches a stage that looks the same as would be expected in real life. More extreme bad language, the concept of the use of tobacco and drugs and the depiction of criminal activities can be content of games that are rated 16.



PEGI 18

The adult classification is applied when the level of violence reaches a stage where it becomes a depiction of gross violence and/or includes elements of specific types of violence. Gross violence is the most difficult to define since it can be very subjective in many cases, but in general terms it can be classed as the depictions of violence that would make the viewer feel a sense of revulsion.

Descriptors shown on the back of the packaging indicate the main reasons why a game has received a particular age rating. There are eight such descriptors: violence, bad language, fear, drugs, sexual, discrimination, gambling and online gameplay with other people.

What other symbols should I look out for?



Bad Language

Game contains bad language



Discrimination

Game contains depictions of, or material which may encourage, discrimination



Drugs

Game refers to or depicts the use of drugs



Fear

Game may be frightening or scary for young children



Gambling

Games that encourage or teach gambling



Sex

Game depicts nudity and/or sexual behaviour or sexual references



Violence

Game contains depictions of violence



Online gameplay

Game can be played online