



What do you like to do online?

Watch videos? Post pictures? Play games?

Whatever you like doing, if you use the internet you might have met people online who want to chat.

They might leave comments on your posts or request to be your friend on a site. Maybe they say they live near you or like the same music as you.

With over two billion people on the internet there are plenty of people to meet. It can be fun chatting to people who are interested in the same stuff as us. Some people online will genuinely just want to chat or be friends. However, not everyone you chat to online will be who they say they are.

It's easy to lie online

Even if you have been chatting to the same person for ages and you feel like you know them, you need to remember it is very easy to lie on the internet. There is no way of knowing if someone is telling the truth.

It's a fact that there are some people who use the internet to chat to young people because they want to hurt them or make them to do things they don't want to.

So, if you are going to chat to people you meet online here are some tips to help you do it safely.

REMEMBER – if someone makes you feel uncomfortable, worried or even frightened online you should tell an adult you trust, or report to [CEOP](#). Whatever may have happened you won't be in trouble.

5 things to look out for

It is impossible to know if someone you meet online is genuine or a fake. Here are 5 warning signs.

1. **Too good to be true?**

Do they like all the same things as you and give you loads of attention? Are they really nice about things you post like photos? We all like attention and it's great to meet people who like similar things but remember some people use the internet to make friends with young people and then abuse their trust. If you think someone might not be who they say they are tell an adult you trust or report to [CEOP](#).

2. **Giving presents and making promises.**

Do they make promises or offer you gifts if you will do things for them? Giving gifts and making promises can be a way of putting pressure on you. If you feel under pressure to do something you don't want to do, you might be chatting to someone unsafe and should talk to an adult you trust.

3. **Putting you under pressure.**

Do they try to talk about things you're not comfortable with, like sex? Do they ask for pictures of you that you wouldn't share with your mum or your teacher? It's wrong for anyone to put pressure on you to do things you would be embarrassed about or don't want to do. If anyone puts any pressure on you or makes you feel uncomfortable you should tell an adult you trust or report to [CEOP](#).

4. **Leaving public places.**

Have they asked to 'private message' or to add you on a social network or mobile app? Ask yourself, why do they need to chat in private? Games, chatrooms or forums are usually 'public places' where other people can see your conversations. Sometimes they will have 'moderators' who can look out for anything dodgy. You should keep your chat in a 'public place' to stop anyone from saying or doing anything weird.

If you do private chat with people you meet online be very careful not to reveal any information which could help them identify you in the real world like your full name, photos or your email address.

5. **'Just our little secret'.**

Do they tell you to keep your chat secret? Do they say you will be in trouble if you don't? If they ask you to keep secrets they might be trying to stop you from getting help if things get weird or you feel uncomfortable. You shouldn't keep secrets for people you meet online. If a secret is making you worried or anxious tell an adult you trust or call [ChildLine](#) on **0800 1111**.

Worried about someone you've been chatting to online?

Have you met someone online and you're not sure they are who they say they are? Is an online relationship moving too fast? Is someone trying to take things further by showing you porn or asking you to do sexual stuff on webcam? If you are doing things you don't want to do it's never too late to get help. You won't be in trouble.

Talk to an adult you trust, like a parent, carer, teacher or youth worker. If you don't want to speak to someone you know there are organisations who can help.

Report it

[CEOP](#) helps young people who are being sexually abused or are worried that someone they have met is trying to abuse them.

If you have met someone online, or face to face, and they are putting you under pressure to have sex or making you feel uncomfortable you should report to CEOP.

This might be someone:

- Making you have sex when you don't want to
- Chatting about sex online
- Asking you to meet up face to face if you have only met them online

- Asking you to do sexual things on webcam
- Asking for sexual pictures of you
- Making you feel worried, anxious or unsafe

If this is happening to you, or you're worried that it might be, you can report this to CEOP