

Supporting neurodivergent children to play safely online

Parent's screen time guide

Learn to manage screen time and ensure healthy gaming habits, with device and Roblox-specific controls.

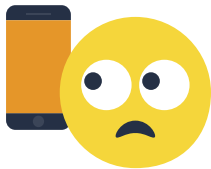
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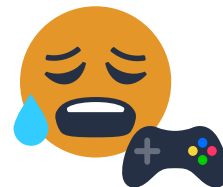
Key challenges to consider

While online gaming has its benefits, managing screen time can come with challenges – especially for neurodivergent children, who may find it harder to switch off or self-regulate.



Difficulty with transitions

Neurodivergent children may find it challenging to shift attention away from highly engaging games.



Hyperfocus

Extended play sessions can lead to overexposure, affecting sleep, physical activity and daily routines.



Overstimulation

The fast-paced game environment may become overwhelming without structured breaks.



Getting the balance right between online and offline activities

Maintaining a healthy mix of digital and real-world experiences is essential.

Ways to establish clear screen time boundaries

According to the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, tailored screen time limits and clear rules are key to healthy screen habits. Here are some strategies to consider.



1. Set clear game play limits

- **Collaborate:** Let your child help set playtime around their schedule.
- **Use visuals:** Use charts, timers or calendars to remember the rules.
- **Discuss balance:** Talk about why limits matter, with questions like:
 - *What do you like to do on online, and how does it feel? Happy? Tired?*
 - *How does your body feel after playing a lot on screens? What makes you feel better?*
 - *What if we used screens all night instead of sleep?*
 - *Let's plan our day: screens, play, and sleep.*
 - *What is a fun screen-free activity for today? - give options*
- Use [our digital family agreement](#) to set clear rules together, so everyone knows what to expect.



2. Use visual timers & cues:

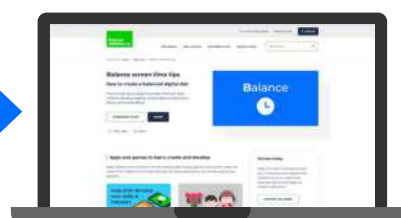
Clear signals help children manage game time and transitions. Try:

- **Countdown timers** – Use a kitchen timer, phone app or visual timer.
- **Traffic light system** – Green: Play, Yellow: 5 mins left, Red: Time's up.
- **Built-in tools** – Use Google Family Link and Apple Screen Time (iOS only) to set time limits across platforms or built-in parental controls on games consoles to set schedules and downtimes.

3. Create a transition routine:

- **Develop a consistent routine** such as a short stretching session or quiet reading time to help your child wind down after gaming.
- **Try playing games together** that focus on relaxation and creativity, rather than intense competition or social interactions, to help with balance and emotional wellbeing.

Resource spotlight: [How to create a balanced digital diet](#)



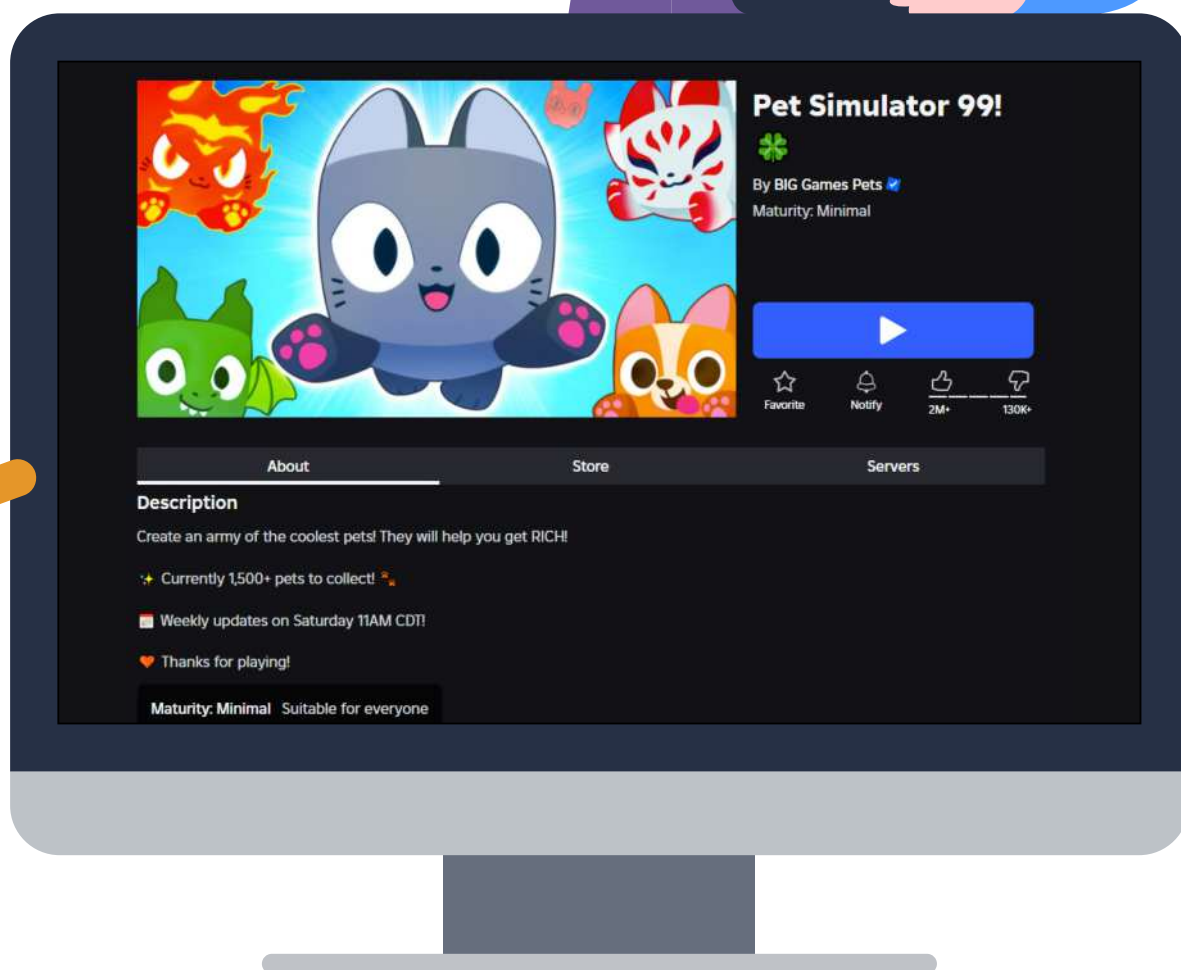
Choosing games & adjusting age ratings

While it's important to manage how long children play online, what games they play matters just as much.

Here are things to consider when choosing online games to play:

- **Pick games together** – Choose age-appropriate games with your child based on their interests and family rules created together.
- **Set age ratings** – Use age rating filters and parental controls to block mature content.
- **Check game content and reviews** – Review the game's themes, gameplay and any social features to ensure they're safe.

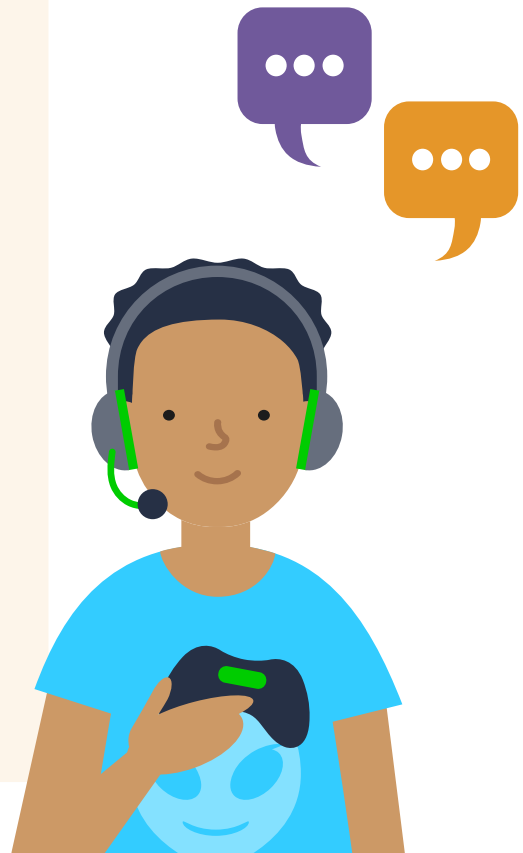
All games on Roblox have review and information pages to learn more about them.



Strategies to balance screen time on online gaming platforms

New to playing games online? Here are some starter tips:

- **Explore together** – Start with short, supervised sessions to learn the basics of the platform as a team.
- **Check parental controls** – Go through the platform's safety settings and screen time tools to understand how they work.
- **Set time limits** – Begin with shorter play sessions to help your child learn self-control. Encourage breaks every 30–45 minutes to avoid eye strain.
- **Create a routine** – Agree on a daily schedule with clear start and stop times to keep playtime balanced.
- **Join the fun** – Play with your child to understand the games they love while also reinforcing safe habits.



Okay with the basics? Here are more things you can do:

- **Increase playtime gradually** – Allow longer sessions over time but keep regular breaks in place.
- **Encourage self-monitoring** – Use timers or digital wellbeing apps to help your child track their own screen time.
- **Keep a balanced routine** – Give them more flexibility while making sure offline activities stay a priority.
- **Check & adjust settings regularly** – Take advantage of any built-in screen time settings and your device's parental controls to set limits and track playtime automatically. Update these settings as your child's habits and maturity change.
- **Talk about their online activities** – Have open chats about game time, challenges of extended play and ways to stay balanced.



Using device-level screen time controls

For extra oversight, we recommend using your device's parental controls to help manage your child's screen time.



For iOS devices:

1. Open **Settings** and tap **Screen Time**.
2. Set a Screen Time passcode.
3. Add App Limits for the online gaming platform under **App Limits** and configure downtime hours.

[See full Apple device guide](#)

For Android devices:

1. Open **Settings** and navigate to **Digital Wellbeing & Parental Controls**.
2. Set an App Timer for the online gaming platform, or use the Google Family Link app to monitor usage.

[See full Digital Wellbeing guide](#)

For Windows devices:

1. Log in to your Microsoft Family account.
2. Set playtime limits under the **Screen Time** section and review reports online.

[See full Microsoft Family guide](#)

For Xbox:

1. Sign in with your parent account on the Xbox Family Settings app, Microsoft Family app or online.
2. Select your child's profile and go to Screen time.
3. Choose Xbox as the platform to set limits for.
4. Set daily screen time limits for the console.

[See full Xbox family guide](#)

For Nintendo Switch:

1. Open the Nintendo Switch Parental Controls app and connect your child's Switch.
2. Go to Settings in the top menu.
3. Tap on Play Time Limit.
4. Set daily time limits for gaming.

[See full Nintendo Switch guide](#)

For PlayStation:

1. Sign in with your parent account on the **PlayStation website**.
2. Go to **Family Management** in settings.
3. Select your child's profile and click Edit next to **Playtime Settings**.
4. Set daily screen time limits for the console.

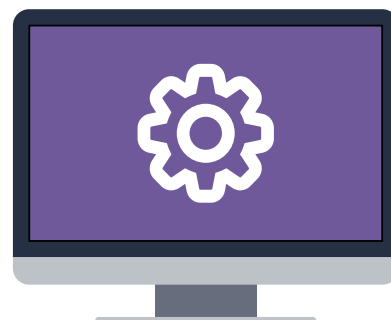
[See full PlayStation guide](#)

How to use Roblox screen time Controls

Roblox has built-in screen time tools that help parents manage play sessions directly on the platform. You can also use your device's parental controls for extra support.

Here's a step-by-step guide to using Roblox's screen time settings.

First, **create a parent account** and link it to your child's account. For step-by-step instructions, check out the full [Roblox parental controls guide](#).



1. How to log in and access settings

- Sign in to your Parent Roblox account on a supported device.
- Go to settings – **on desktop** find the gear icon on the top right of the screen; **on mobile** tap 'more' at the bottom of the screen and find the gear icon in the list.
- Under settings – go to **'Parental controls'**. If you have more than one child account linked, select the account you want to update.
- Go to screen time and click on **'Manage'** above the chart



2. Set Daily Limits

- Click the drop down under 'Daily limit'. You will see a list of set times that you can set for your child in increments of 15 minutes. Once you choose the time, it will apply as a daily limit

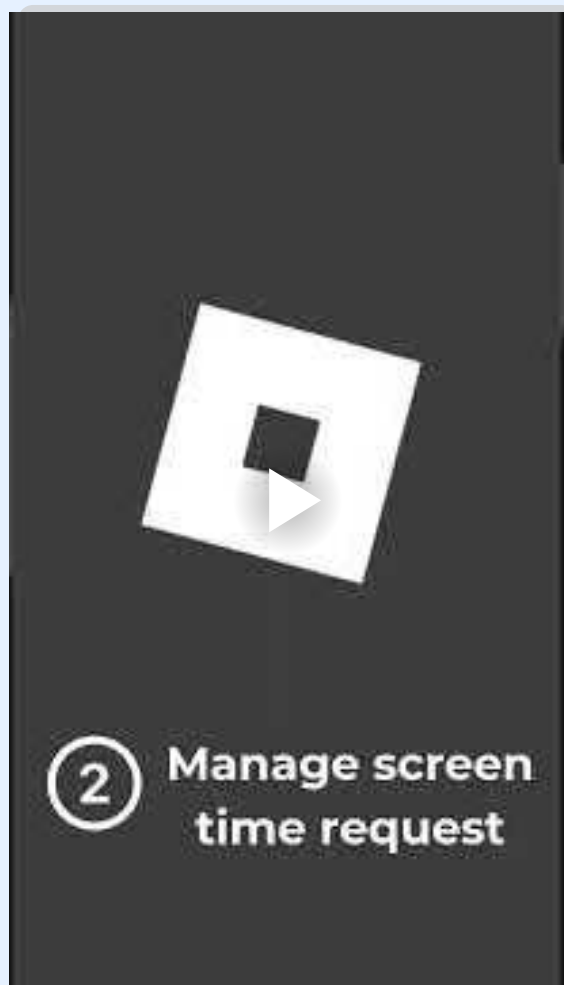


3. Monitor Usage:

- You can login to see usage reports and adjust the playtime limits to ensure it works for you and your child.

4. Requesting more screen time

- If a child runs out of time, they can also make a request for more time.
 - **To make a request, children can follow these steps:**
 - Log into their account
 - Tap 'More' and select 'Settings'
 - Go to 'Privacy and Content Maturity'
 - Choose 'Screen Time'
 - Select 'Daily Limit' and choose from the available times
 - Tap 'Ask my parent' to send the request
 - **Once the request has been made, an email will be sent to the linked parent account from Roblox to approve or deny the request. To review it:**
 - Log into your parent account
 - Go to 'Parental Controls' in Settings
 - Select 'Pending Requests'
 - Approve or deny the request
 - **As soon as it's approved or denied, a notification will be sent to the child account in the app.**
- These requests will show under 'Pending Requests' and you can approve or deny them in this section.



Resource spotlight - See the full [Roblox parental controls guide](#) to set up other safety features and create a parental controls account to manage children's accounts. For advice on other platforms please visit our [video games, consoles & platforms parental controls guides](#).

Screen time advice from parents

Here are tips from parents of neurodivergent children.

Setting boundaries

"We talk about what boundaries there are in place and how you need to be in control of your online viewing, and you need to set yourself boundaries." *Helen, mum of two boys*

"...there's no devices in the bedrooms or upstairs. And this means then we can keep an eye on it, on them, what they're saying, what games they're playing." *Anna, mum of two boys*



Types of tools parents use

Google Family Link and Microsoft Family

"...these apps can be used to sort of control that, but also they prompt those conversations again, about online safety or just online behaviour." *Helen, mum of two boys*

Dealing with challenges

"When situations do arise, we try to not shout at them when they've done stuff wrong or what we would perceive as being wrong. Talking through it and having a safe space to be able to discuss that has been really important and really helpful whilst we're kind of teaching them how to be good online citizens."

Anna, mum of two

