



ZEPETO

Zepeto has an age rating of over 13. Users create their own avatars and can design rooms. ZEPETO is a social networking app and therefore users can chat with others. Due to the communication option, there are the usual risks, such as your child seeing inappropriate content or online bullying. In-App purchases are also available on this platform.

Parental controls are not available, but a user can change some settings within privacy and content settings, for example to change who can direct message you.

Zepeto have published a Guardian's guide here:

<https://support.zepeto.me/hc/en-us/articles/900005874946-ZEPETO-Guardian-s-Guide>

Snapchat can now be accessed via your Apple Watch

Users of Snapchat can now preview text notifications and reply to new messages via their Apple Watch. Wayne Denner discusses this new feature further and outlines what you can do:

<https://www.waynedenner.com/snapch>



Nintendo Switch 2

The Nintendo Switch 2 was released last month and has a new communication feature that you should be aware of.

GameChat – NEW

GameChat is included within a Nintendo Switch Online membership and allows up to 12 people to chat while playing games. Players can share their screen, even if they are playing different games, chat with the built-in microphone and as the Nintendo Switch 2 allows cameras to be connected (sold separately), even video chat. If your child is using this feature, then ensure they know how to report other users.

You can find out more here: <https://www.nintendo.com/en-gb/Hardware/Nintendo-Switch-2/GameChat/Nintendo-Switch-2-GameChat-2785625.html>

Parental Controls

There is a free Nintendo Switch Parental Controls app that can be linked with your Nintendo Switch to monitor what your child is playing. The app creates a report so you can see which video games your child is playing and for how long. It also allows you to set which games your child can play, based on the PEGI age rating and restricts your child from sending or receiving messages from other users. GameChat settings can also be adjusted. Children under the age of 15 can only use GameChat if allowed by you through the app. They can then only use GameChat with people that you approve. Find out more here: <https://www.nintendo.com/en-gb/Support/Nintendo-Switch-2/How-to-Set-Up-Adjust-or-Remove-Parental-Controls-on-Nintendo-Switch-2-2843839.html>

Check age ratings

PEGI provides age classifications for video games. PEGI considers the age suitability of a game, not the level of difficulty. It is important to note that PEGI do not take into consideration user generated content within games (such as on Roblox) and chat facilities within games. <https://pegi.info/>



Further information

<https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/articles/gaming/>

Have a Wonderful and Safe Summer Holidays

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about NINTENDO SWITCH 2

Nintendo launched its Switch 2 games console in early June 2025 – its first new console in eight years. While it builds on the original's success by remaining compatible with certain existing games, it also adds powerful hardware and new features like GameChat and a USB-C camera. As more children look to upgrade, it's important to understand how this new console might affect their play and safety.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

EASIER TO ACCESS MATURE CONTENT

18
CENSORED

Despite Nintendo's reputation for family-friendly titles, mature games like *Cyberpunk 2077* and *Hitman* have been released onto the platform. With the Switch 2's improved performance, developers will be able to port even more mature-rated games. These may appeal to children due to their popularity, but they contain content that is highly unsuitable for young audiences.

IN-APP & GAME STORE PURCHASES

The Nintendo eShop enables purchases with just a few taps. If payment details are saved and PIN protection is disabled, children may unknowingly make costly purchases – including game add-ons, cosmetic items or entire new releases – without parental approval.

UNRESTRICTED ONLINE PLAY IN SOME GAMES

While GameChat is one feature, Switch 2 also connects to the broader Nintendo Switch Online service. Many free-to-play titles like *Fortnite* or *Splatoon 3* allow voice or text chat with strangers unless chat settings are adjusted, meaning children could encounter inappropriate language or unwanted contact.

GAMECHAT & REAL-TIME VOICE COMMUNICATION

GameChat enables live chatting with up to 12 people, even across different games, with optional video and screen-sharing. Though children under 16 are restricted to chatting only with approved friends, the sheer interactivity could raise privacy concerns or create pressure to remain online longer.

CAMERA COMPATIBILITY & PRIVACY CONCERNS

The optional USB-C camera supports video calling and facial overlays in games; however, this also raises the risk of cyberbullying or the unwanted sharing of personal images. The camera can be disabled, removed or covered, and parental controls are essential to manage how and when it is used.

POWERFUL PULL OF FAMILIAR CHARACTERS

Nintendo's mascot, Mario – along with Pikachu, Donkey Kong and others – remains hugely appealing to younger audiences, especially after the success of the recent film, *The Super Mario Bros. Movie* (2023). These beloved icons are central to Nintendo's branding and often feature in merchandising, adverts and in-game promotions, creating strong emotional attachments in children and a sense of urgency to keep up with their peers.

Advice for Parents & Educators

CHECK RATINGS & USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Every Switch and Switch 2 game comes with a PEGI age rating. Before buying one, ensure the content matches your child's age. Use the Nintendo Parental Controls app to monitor gameplay, set screen-time limits and manage friend requests.

REVIEW FRIEND LISTS AND CHAT PERMISSIONS

Child profiles are restricted to chatting with approved friends only, but it's good practice to regularly check their friend list and communication settings. Use the Parental Controls app to switch off voice or video chat if necessary.

REMOVE OR RESTRICT PAYMENT METHODS

Avoid accidental spending by unlinking credit cards from the device. Instead, consider adding funds via prepaid eShop cards or requiring a PIN for purchases. Some banking apps can also be set to approve transactions manually.

ENCOURAGE OPEN CONVERSATIONS

Teach children how to block, report and capture any behaviour or content that makes them uncomfortable. The console's built-in tools allow them to create screenshots and video clips, which can aid in reporting any issues. Keeping an open dialogue helps children feel supported and safe.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is the Games Editor of Daily Star and has been working in the gaming and tech industry for five years. A regular visitor to the App Store to try out new tools, he's also a parent and understands the importance of online safety. He's also a tech and fitness writer and has been published on sites including IGN, TechRadar, and plenty more.



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