



How to...

DID YOU KNOW?

More than 1.4 billion smartphones were sold worldwide in 2021.



Use a smartphone wisely

These tips and ideas can help you be prepared to navigate the digital world.

Whether you already have a smartphone or not, it's important to learn how to safely use one, including texting with others and being on the internet. "There are so many incredible things you can do with a phone," said Catherine Pearlman, PhD, author of *First Phone: A Child's Guide to Digital Responsibility, Safety, and Etiquette*. "However, it's important to understand the power of owning a phone so you can learn to be smart in a digital environment." Here is some advice to follow.

Ask for help

If a website or app is asking you to set a password, ask a trusted adult for help. Or if you'd like to create a group chat with your grandparents, you may need help setting that up. Apps and websites often get updates, which means the user experience may unexpectedly change. If that happens, tell an adult. If you click on a website that you regret, a trusted adult will understand and help you solve any issues that arise. "We all make mistakes and that's how we learn for the future," said Pearlman.

Set some limits

Screen time can be fun and entertaining, but it will be more enjoyable if you don't overdo it. Setting limitations on your phone, like how much time a day you can spend texting on it, can help you focus when

you need to. Setting limits can also make time for you to discover other interests and hobbies in your life. Try setting an alarm to remind you when to power down your phone. At night, charge any screens, including a phone, outside your bedroom. Keeping a phone in your room can lead to fewer hours of sleep and a lower quality of sleep, Pearlman said.

Keep personal information private

There are some users and websites that try to trick people into giving out personal or private information, said Pearlman. Before visiting a new website, ask a trusted adult if it's OK for you to do so. If you get an email from an unknown person, show it to an adult before opening or replying to it. Trust your instincts, said Pearlman. "If something feels off, it probably is."



Think before you share.

Check in with yourself

It may seem strange that a smartphone could make us feel anything but happy. However, research has shown that having access to social media and viewing other people's photos and comments can make people feel sad or upset. It's perfectly normal to have those feelings, but it's best not to keep them to yourself. Tell a parent. Or, if being in a group chat is making you feel stressed or anxious, speak up. An adult can help you decide if you should take a break.

5 common phone terms to know

Some words come up often when emailing, texting, and being online. Here are some useful definitions.

Block

This is a user's ability to remove an account from following, contacting, or commenting on their social media account. You can also block certain numbers from texting or calling your phone.



Clickbait

This term refers to catchy, often misleading, inaccurate phrases used to get a person to click on a site or article.



Digital footprint

Any personal data and information a user shares on social media or a website is referred to as their digital footprint. The more personal details shared, the larger the digital footprint can be.



Group chats

A group chat is when more than two users communicate in the same text chain. The chats can also be named. Some families create group chats so family members can quickly send information to one another.



Push notifications

Push notifications are when apps or websites send pop-up messages to a user's phone. The messages may alert a user to news or updates that the app or website wants them to know about. Users can decline push notifications.

