

TikTok for Parents

TikTok is a social networking app that has captured the hearts of teenagers globally. It gives users the ability to watch, create and share short videos of up to 60 seconds. Young people lip-sync and dance to their favourite songs or music videos, and participate in viral challenges. Collaboration is a major feature, incentivising duets with other users with endless likes, comments and shares. TikTok is also known for its viral challenges. While many are intended to be fun, others have caused significant harm and embarrassment, like the #skullbreaker challenge. Any social platform that allows users to broadcast their content to a potential audience of millions can put users at risk of humiliation during a search to be #tiktokfamous.

TikTok's mission is to "inspire creativity and bring joy" and due to its capabilities for creating and sharing original content and facilitating an addictive aesthetic, it does just that. Celebrities, music stars and brands are flocking to the site, so chances are your child has or is thinking about getting a TikTok account. If your child is over 13 years of age they are legally able to create an account, but it's important to remember that others on the platform can be much older and invite you to see or participate in content that is for older teens or adults.

This guide provides practical tips on how to:

- Start the conversation
- Set accounts to private
- Turn off DMs
- Restrict duets
- Remove followers and block accounts
- Report inappropriate contact



How to start the conversation

If your child is over 13 years and wants to set up an account, you could start by looking at TikTok's Terms of Service and Community Guidelines together. The Community Guidelines have a series of "DO NOTs" around posting harmful or dangerous content; graphic or shocking content; discrimination or hate speech; nudity or sexual activity; child safety infringement; harassment or cyberbullying; impersonation; spam, scams, or other misleading content.

One of the ways to introduce this concept to your child is to ask them questions such as:

- "What sort of posts do you like on TikTok? What makes it funny?"

- "Why might you want to try doing something that you saw?"
- "Would this be OK for gran to see" is a good way to start talking about whether content is appropriate.
- "If your profile is public, anyone can look at your posts, photos, profile information, and interact with you. Let's change your profile to private so only people you know can see this about you." You could also try, "what might happen if someone you don't know got hold of your personal information?"
- "Sometimes people can send images or say things that are mean or upsetting. Let's have a look at how to block people."

Setting your account to private



TikTok Settings

Privacy and Security

Private account

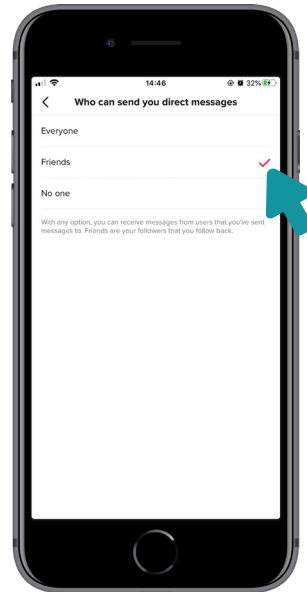
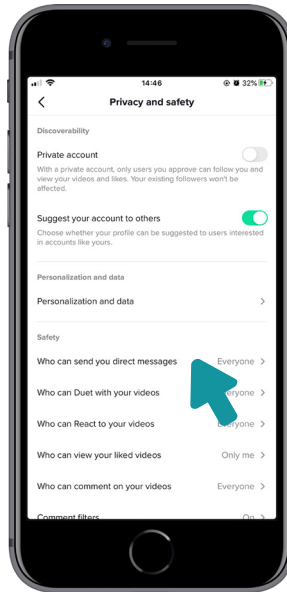
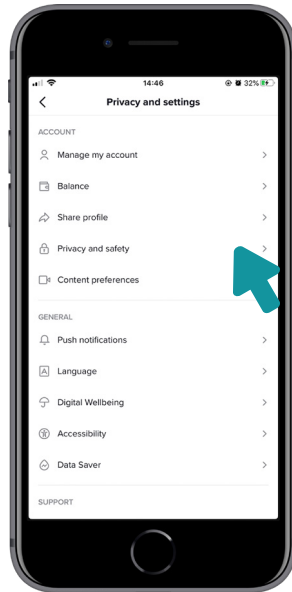
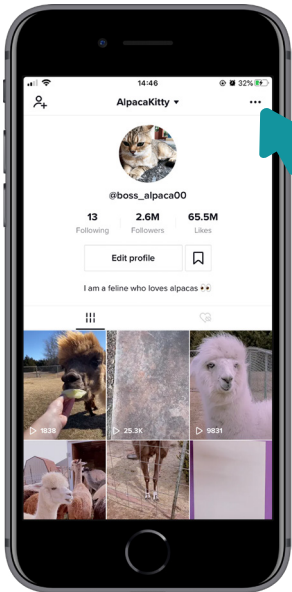
Allow others to find me

When you create an account on TikTok it is automatically made public so it is your responsibility to engage all safety settings on your profile.

To ensure that you are uncontactable by strangers and/or predators, follow these steps:

Turning off Direct Messengers

1. Go to your profile
2. Tap the three dots in the top right corner
3. Tap "Privacy and safety"
4. Tap "Who can send you messages"
5. Choose the setting you prefer (Everyone, Friends, or Off)

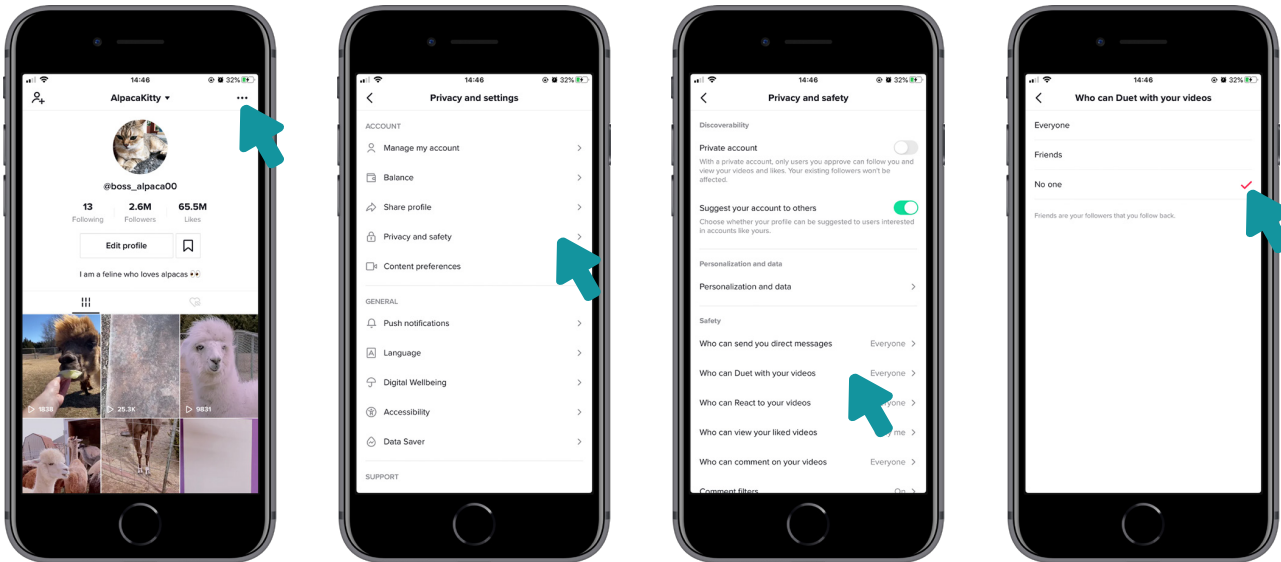


Restricting duets

Duets are a way to create videos with another user. This can be lots of fun but it could mean that predators are able to directly interact with your child, and produce (and publish) new content featuring both parties. It is possible to restrict duets to only your child's friends list, or disable the feature entirely.

To enable restrictions on who can create duet videos with you:

1. From your profile, open the Privacy and Safety settings
2. Tap "Who Can Duet With Me"
3. Choose the setting you prefer (Everyone, Friends, or Off)



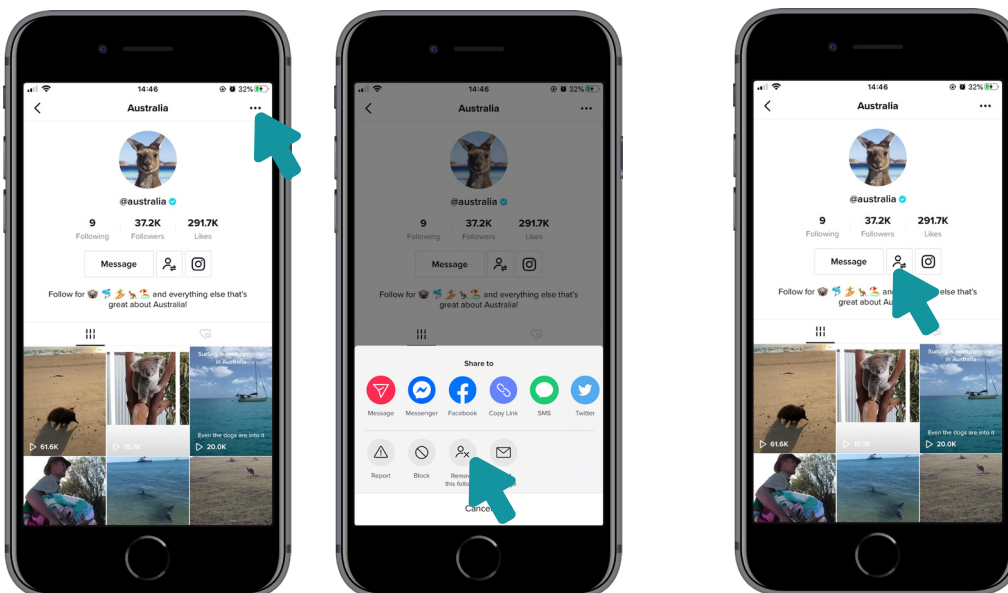
Removing followers and blocking an account

Removing followers

1. Go to the profile of the follower you want to remove
2. Tap three dots in the top right corner or the Settings icon
3. Tap 'Remove this follower'

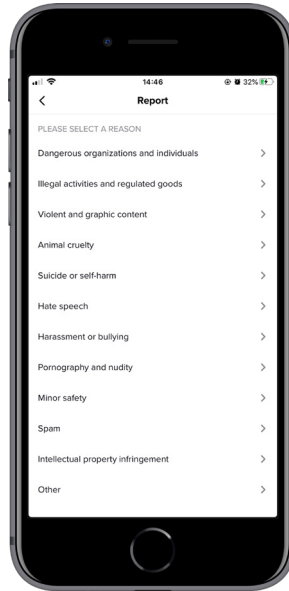
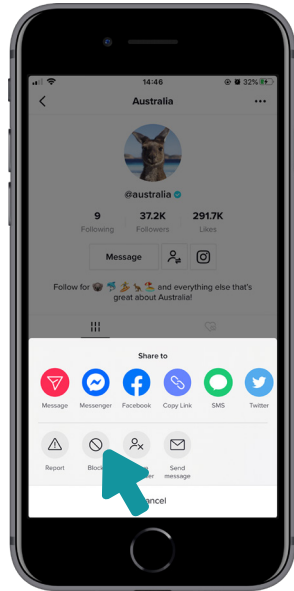
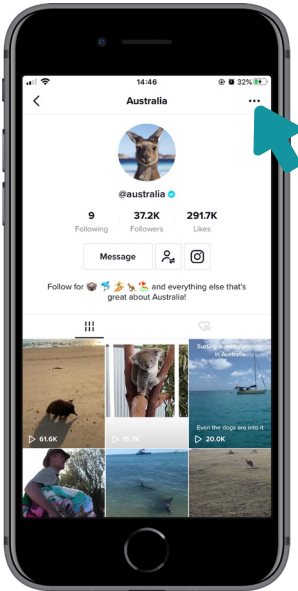
Unfollow other users

1. Go to that user's profile
2. Tap the "Following" icon - seen below - next to "Message"



Block an account

1. Go to the profile of the account you want to block
2. Tap three dots in the top right corner or the Settings icon
3. Tap Block and follow the steps in the app

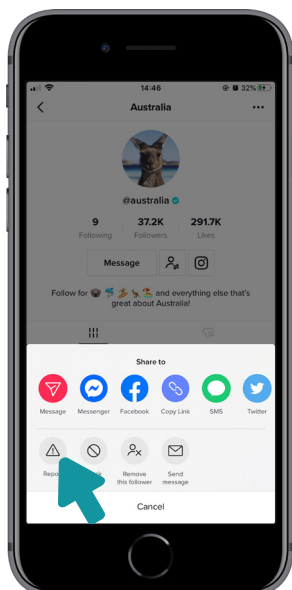
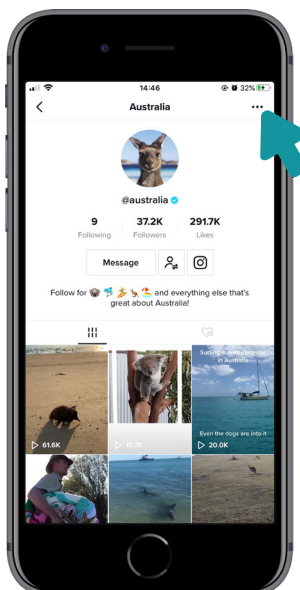


How to report inappropriate content

TikTok includes a reporting tool and its Community Guidelines has rules regarding inappropriate content. You can report a particular profile (user), video, comment or message by following the steps below.

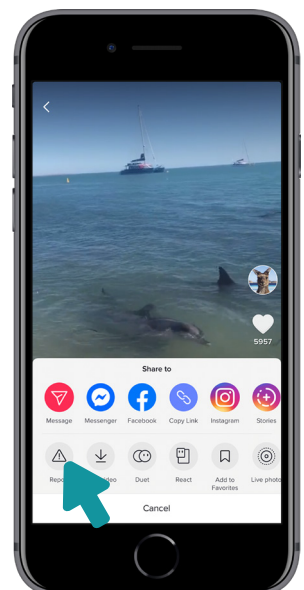
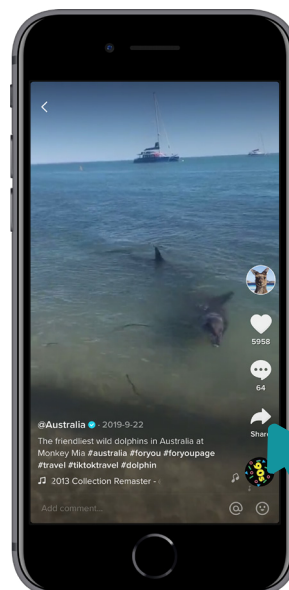
Reporting an account

1. Go to the profile of the account you want to report
2. Tap three dots in the top right corner or the Settings icon
3. Tap Report and follow the steps in the app



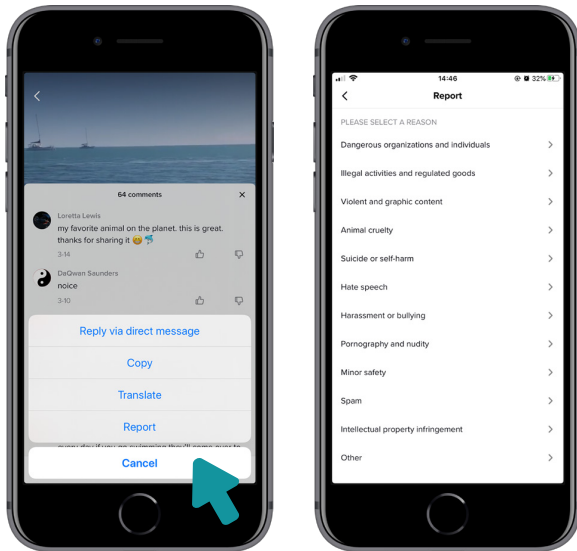
Reporting a video

1. Open the video and tap the Share icon
2. Tap Report and follow the steps in the app



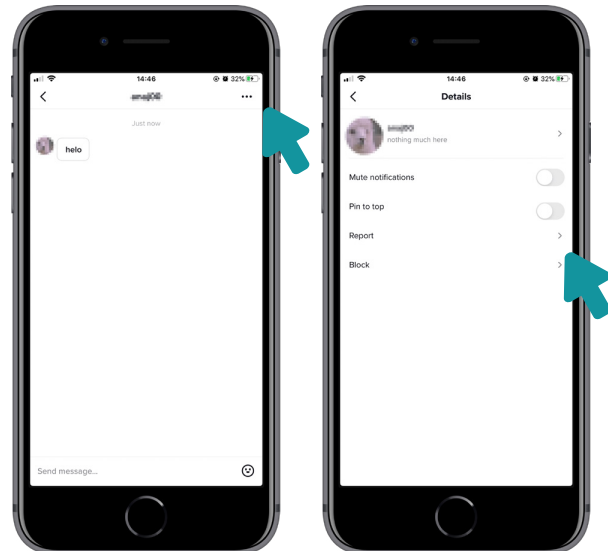
Report a comment

1. Tap the comment you'd like to report
2. Tap Report and follow the steps in the app



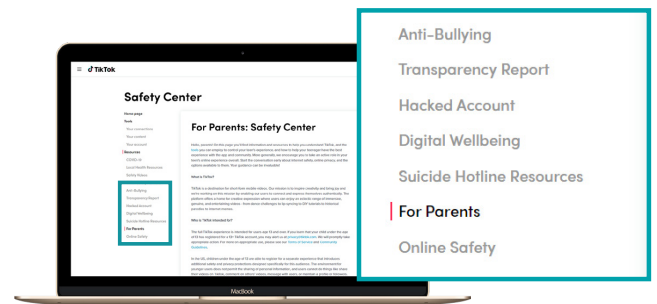
Report a message

1. Tap three dots in the top right corner or the Settings icon
2. Tap Report and follow the steps in the app



How to find TikTok's dedicated safety section for parents

TikTok has a range of guides and tips for parents, including a dedicated Safety Centre. This, and the Community Guidelines can be accessed via the Support Centre (<https://www.tiktok.com/safety/resources/for-parents>).



How to report inappropriate content

The eSafety Commissioner is Australia's national independent regulator for online safety. The Office of the eSafety Commissioner has developed an **eSafety Guide** with reporting links and information for a range of social media services, games, apps and sites. Reporting of inappropriate images, content, and cyberbullying can also be made directly to <https://www.esafety.gov.au/report>

What to do if you need more help

If your child ever sees or receives anything online that makes them uncomfortable, they should feel supported in discussing it with you or their friends or teachers. Alternatively, they can call Kids Helpline, Australia's only free, private and confidential 24/7 phone and online counselling service for 5 to 25 year olds. **1800 55 1800 kidshelpline.com.au**

About Optus Digital Thumbprint

Optus Digital Thumbprint is a free and award-winning educational program that supports young people and families to be safe, responsible and positive online.

Since 2013, we've delivered workshops and developed digital tools that have educated more than 320,000 primary and secondary school students across Australia.

