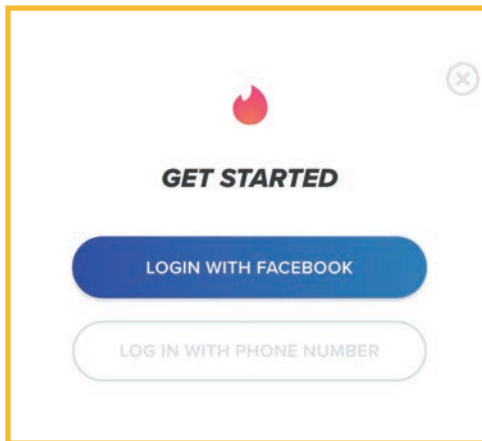




What is Tinder?

Tinder is a location-based social search mobile app that offers a 'fun way to connect with new and interesting people around you'. The app, used by more than 50 million people worldwide, alerts you to other Tinder users who fall within a specified age range and gender and are within a certain distance of your location, and it lets you know whether you have any mutual friends via its connection with Facebook. If you like someone you can 'swipe right' or 'swipe left' if you dislike them. If both users 'swipe right' then you have the option to chat to them. The Tinder app is available for iOS and Android, or there is Tinder for Web.

What does it look like?



Main Concerns for Parents

tinder

AGE RESTRICTION
18+

Tinder is not aimed at children

When Tinder first launched in 2014, it was described as a 'social discovery' app, rather than a dating app, and was available for anyone aged 13 and over with a Facebook account or mobile number. But in 2016, Tinder announced it would block any users under the age of 18 from using the app. Despite these clearly stated age restrictions, there are concerns that young teenagers are still using the app without or even with parents knowing about it.

Stranger danger

Any app that allows strangers to easily and instantly send photos and chat with each other is worrying. It also suggests to children that it is appropriate to form a relationship with someone based on a photo and a few exchanges of text. Not everyone using Tinder will have good intentions and your child may be at risk of grooming and sexual exploitation by chatting or arranging to meet someone they don't really know.

Sexting and inappropriate content

Sexting is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others or sends sexually explicit messages. Your child may be exposed to content that is inappropriate for their age, such as sexually explicit images, or be encouraged to share images of themselves in that way.

Risk of catfishing

'Catfishing' is when someone creates fake profiles on social media sites to trick people into thinking they are somebody else. Teenagers are at risk of being duped into trusting someone with a false identity, or they may be the one who has their personal photos stolen and used by someone that isn't them.

Sharing too much information

Children often do not understand the risks involved in giving out too much personal information on the internet. They may also be less protective of personal details, such as their address. The app makes face-to-face meetings easy, due to how locations are revealed.



Remove someone from a group

If your child wants to remove someone from a group, they should click on 'Members', hover over the member they want to remove and click 'Remove' in the web version. In the app, tap on the person they want to remove, then select 'Remove from <group name>'. To remove multiple members at one time, select the three dots icon and tap 'Remove members', then select the members to remove and tap 'Remove'. When someone is removed from a group they will not be able to re-join the group unless someone invites them back in.

Know the age limit

Your teenager may say they only want to use networking apps, such as Tinder, to find new real-life or online friends, but be mindful that Tinder has an age requirement for a reason and that anyone they speak to is likely to be an adult. Tinder relies on someone's Facebook information for age verification, so under-18s who have an incorrect age listed on Facebook may still be able to sign up. If your child is prepared to lie about their age to use Tinder, they need to understand that others can also lie about their birth dates to appear younger than they are. Suggest an alternative app or website that is aimed at a younger audience.

Set Discovery preferences

Discovery is the part of Tinder where you get to swipe other users. You can turn Discovery off so that a profile won't be shown to anyone in Discovery. Even with Discovery off, you can still see and chat with matches already made. To turn Discovery on or off, tap the profile icon at the top of the main screen > Settings > Discovery. Tinder offers filters based on location, distance, age and gender.

Don't meet strangers

Many teens say they use Tinder for fun and have no intention of meeting up with a potential match. But it is important to remind your children that it is very dangerous to organise face-to-face meetings with somebody they have only chatted to online and that they should be just as worried about meeting somebody on Tinder as meeting anyone anywhere else.

Facebook connection

If someone signs in to Tinder with Facebook, their mutual friends and shared interests will be displayed. However, when looking at a profile, other users will only be able to see friends and interests they have in common, not every single friend or page they've liked on Facebook.

Meet safely

If your child is old enough to use Tinder and has met someone they want to meet offline, make sure that they only meet for the first time in a populated, public place – never in a private or remote location, and never at a home or hotel.

Know how to report people

Show your child how they can report anyone behaving suspiciously or inappropriately that are either matched with or haven't matched with. To report someone, go to his/her profile > tap the menu icon (ellipses icon) > Report. If someone has created a Tinder profile using your child's photos or other personal information, or they know someone's profile is fake, they must notify Tinder at www.gotinder.com/help.

Be security conscious

Encourage your child not to share personal information with anyone until they are sure about those they are communicating with. Never give personal information, such as bank information or their home address. Remember that Tinder will never send an email asking for a username or password information.

Stop uncomfortable chats

Let your child know that they should immediately stop all communication with anyone who attempts to pressurise them into something they are not comfortable with.

Encourage communication

Explain to your child that if they see something disturbing, pornographic, deviant or otherwise troubling, that you always be there to help them if they need it and if they start acting differently to normal, calmly ask them why.

Handling rejections

A lack of success on Tinder can lower someone's self-esteem and leave them upset about how they look. Research studies have also found that developmental changes might make teenagers ultra-sensitive to the gaze and reaction of other people. It's important not to trivialise your child's feelings but to be present and available to your child during this sensitive time in their development, offering perspective on a situation.

