

Safe online searching

There is lots of information available online. A search engine helps you to find what you are looking for. Not everything on the internet is accurate. This topic explores searching online and child friendly search options.

What is a search engine?

A search engine uses key words to find information on the internet. You or your child might use a search engine to find the answer to a question, research an interesting topic or find a video that teaches you a new skill. They are simple to use and can be a fast way to find lots of information about a topic.

Some popular search engines are:

- Google | [google.com](https://www.google.com)
- Yahoo | [yahoo.com](https://www.yahoo.com)
- Bing | [bing.com](https://www.bing.com)
- DuckDuckGo | [duckduckgo.com](https://www.duckduckgo.com)

Check your search results

When using a search engine, decide which results are the best for you.

When searching, look out for the end of the website address, also known as the URL.

- .gov.au means it is an Australian Government website
- .tas.gov.au means it is a Tasmanian Government website
- .edu means it is an education institution
- .org means it is an organisation, usually by not-for-profits

You will see other endings on website addresses. These might also be reliable, but take a closer look by checking:

- **The beginning of the website address for 'https://'**. The 'S' in the first section is used on websites that protect your personal information.
- **For paid advertisements.** Some companies pay to have their website show at the top of search results. These paid results have the word "Ad" or "Sponsored" included.
- **If results match your search.** The more specific your search words are, the more accurate the search results will be. Read through the information displayed in the results to see if it is relevant to your search.
- **More than one search result.** Open more than one result to check if the information is consistent.

Searching with Google

Open [Google.com](https://www.google.com) and practise searching online.

Search activity – Let’s search for information about Tasmania!

1. In the search bar type: ‘What is the temperature in Tasmania’
NOTE: You don’t need to use punctuation with a search engine.
2. Look through the search results and see if you can find an Australian Government website.
NOTE: Most search engines will give you suggested or related search words. You can click on any of these suggestions to search for those words instead. These suggestions are usually more specific than your original search.
3. Now search for something you are interested in.

Check a website with Norton

You can check if any website is safe by using the Norton Safe Web website. This is a website that will check any web address and tell you whether it is trusted and safe. Visit the [Norton Safe Web website](#) and practise checking different websites.

Searching for different types of information

Search engines have extra settings to help find what you are looking for online. If you know what format of information you are looking for, select that before searching.

You can choose to only see images, videos or news articles by selecting that filter option before searching.

Safe search settings

You can turn on the ‘Safe Search’ settings on your search engine to limit the number of inappropriate results you get. The ‘Safe Search’ setting is in a different place for

each search engine ,but can usually be found by looking at the menu.

Let’s open [Bing.com](#) and set the Safe Search Settings before completing another search.

1. Go to the three lines at the top right-hand side of the page.
2. Click on the three lines and look for ‘Safe Search Settings.’
3. Set the safe search settings to strict. This will reduce the adult content that could come in a search result.
4. Go to the bottom of the page and click ‘save.’
5. Type your search into the search bar.
6. Check which results you think are trustworthy.

Suggested searching and prompts.

As technology improves so do search engines. Most search engines will provide you with the information they ‘think’ you are looking for. This might include suggested to search words to refine your searching. These prompts and extra information are there to help you continue your online searching. Remember to keep safety in the back of your mind, and if you are unsure take a look closer first.

Child-friendly search engines

Child-friendly search engines can help your child search the internet without showing adult content. Child-friendly search engines block explicit language, violence, and inappropriate topics. There are many different child-friendly search engines. They all limit inappropriate content but are not perfect.

Every search engine has advertisements. On child-friendly search engines, the advertisements are usually bright, colourful and attractive to children using the search engine. When you and your child are using a search engine, keep an eye out for advertisements.

If you accidentally click on an advertisement, can click on the 'X' to close the browser, or click on the 'back arrow' and return to the previous webpage.

Below are three child-friendly search engines to explore:

- www.kiddle.co
- www.kidzsearch.com
- www.alarms.org/kidrex

Resources

- [GCF Global: Using Search Engines](#)
- [eSafety Commissioner: Web browsers](#)
- [Be Connected: How to search like a pro](#)
- [Google Search Help: How to search on Google](#)
- [Google Families: Make technology work for your family](#)

For the latest
information,
scan the QR code.

