

# Image-based abuse quick guide



**Image-based abuse is when someone shares, or threatens to share, an intimate image or video of a person without their consent. It also includes a type of blackmail known as ‘sexual extortion’ and sharing images of someone without clothing of religious or cultural significance they normally wear in public.**

Image-based abuse can make you feel scared, anxious, betrayed, angry or humiliated. It can impact your sense of safety, trust and self-esteem, and affect your health and relationships.

Image-based abuse can happen to anyone. It’s not your fault – and you’re not alone.

eSafety can help get the image or video taken down or stop the threats if you live in Australia. We can also help you if the person who has shared (or threatened to share) the content lives in Australia or overseas.

## About the eSafety Commissioner

The eSafety Commissioner (eSafety) is Australia’s independent regulator for online safety.

We provide education on how to have safer, more positive online experiences. We also protect Australians from online harms through our reporting, investigation and notification schemes. This includes helping people who have experienced image-based abuse.

## What is an ‘intimate’ image or video?

**An intimate image or video is one that shows, or appears to show:**

- you naked or partly naked – such as a naked or topless photo (sometimes called ‘nudes’) if you identify as female or non-binary
- your genitals, bottom or breasts – even if you have underwear on (this includes upskirt shots)
- you during a private activity – such as undressing, using the toilet, showering, having a bath or getting sexual
- you without clothing of religious or cultural significance, if you normally wear it in public, such as a hijab or turban (if you haven’t always worn religious clothing in the past, please be aware that images of you from that period may not be considered ‘intimate’).



### The image or video can be:

- real
- altered or faked to look like you
- shared in a way that makes people think it's you, even when it's not (such as an intimate photo of someone else tagged with your name).

### The image or video can be sent, posted or shared using:

- an online platform or service (such as a social media feed, online game or other app)
- a website, such as an image board or porn site
- a direct message, text message, chat service, email or file transfer (such as AirDrop or Nearby Share).

## What should I do?

Before you do anything else, reach out for support. If someone has shared or threatened to share your intimate image or video it can be stressful and upsetting. You don't have to cope on your own. It's a good idea to tell someone you trust, so they can help you deal with the situation.

Then follow these steps:



### 1. Collect evidence

Taking screenshots, photos or recordings of your device's screen is a quick and easy way to collect evidence. But don't save or share intimate images or videos of anyone under 18 or any other illegal content.

#### Keep a record of:

- all contact from the person who shared or threatened to share the intimate content, including their username, handle or platform ID
- where they contacted you – for example, their Snapchat username, Facebook, Instagram or TikTok URL (web address) or the dating app account name they used
- any reports you made to the online platform or service, or to police.



## 2. Report it

### Report it to eSafety

Reports made to eSafety are confidential.

**If you're not being blackmailed, but your intimate image or video has been shared or someone is threatening to share them**, report it to eSafety at [eSafety.gov.au/report/forms](https://esafety.gov.au/report/forms). You can ask someone you trust to fill out the report for you.

We will contact you as soon as possible – usually in one or two business days. We will check how you are doing first, to make sure you have the emotional support you need. We will talk with you about **your options**. We can work with the online platform or service used to share the intimate image or video, to get it removed or stop the threats. This may include removal of the account the other person used. **We will never involve others or take action without your consent.**

- If the police are involved, we may need to contact them to check that any evidence needed for your case has been preserved, before the image, video or user is removed.
- Sometimes we can also take action against the other person, if you want. For example, they may be fined or directed to do something specific to prevent them keeping or sharing your intimate image or video.

If the image-based abuse is part of domestic, family or sexual violence, you can get support from 1800RESPECT by calling 1800 737 732, or visiting the website at [1800respect.org.au](https://1800respect.org.au) for online chat and video call services. They can help you create a safety plan before you get the intimate image, video or user removed.

**If you're being blackmailed, do not pay the blackmailer or give them more money or intimate content.** This is a type of image-based abuse called 'sexual extortion' (or 'sextortion').

- **If you're under 18**, the best way to get help is to report it to the Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation (ACCCE) at [accce.gov.au](https://accce.gov.au).
- **If you're 18 or older**, report it to any platforms or services where the blackmailer contacted you. If your intimate image or video is shared, or if the platform doesn't help, you can report it to eSafety at [eSafety.gov.au/report/forms](https://esafety.gov.au/report/forms).

### Ask someone to make the report for you

If you don't think you can make a report on your own, you can ask someone to make the report for you. You will need to make a declaration that you have given them permission to report on your behalf. eSafety will work with the person making the complaint and the person shown in the image or video to confirm that the person making the complaint is authorised to do so.

### Report it to the police

You can also report image-based abuse to the police. They may be able to charge the person responsible and help protect you. This is very important if someone is threatening to hurt you, or your family or friends.





### 3. Stop further contact, tighten security and prevent sharing

**Stop all contact** with the person who shared your intimate image or video or threatened you:

- **Use in-app functions** or your device settings to ignore, hide or mute the other person's posts or comments. After collecting evidence you can also block them, to take away their power to harass you.
- **Update your privacy** settings to limit who can contact you.

You can find advice on key online safety and reporting functions for many online services, including social media, online games and other apps, in The eSafety Guide at [eSafety.gov.au/esafety-guide](https://esafety.gov.au/esafety-guide).

#### Prevent the image or video being shared

You can block your intimate image or video from being uploaded to specific platforms. You need a copy of the image or video, but you don't need to send it to the platform – they will create a digital 'fingerprint' (or 'hash') instead.

- **If you're under 18**, you can use [takeitdown.ncmcc.org](https://takeitdown.ncmcc.org) – a free online tool that prevents your image or video being shared on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Yubo, OnlyFans and Pornhub.
- **If you're 18 or older**, you can use [StopNCII.org](https://stopncii.org) – a free online tool that prevents your image or video being shared on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Bumble, OnlyFans and Reddit.



### 4. Get more help

What you're going through is not easy. Even when it's over you may need more support.

You can contact a confidential counselling and support service for help.

#### Stay safe

**Emergency help in Australia, any time of the day or night:**

If your life or safety is at risk and you need urgent help call **Triple Zero (000)**.

If you're having thoughts about suicide or self-harm call Lifeline on **13 11 14** or the Suicide Call Back Service on **1300 659 467**.

## Counselling and support services

### 1800RESPECT

1800 737 732 (Call)

0458 737 732 (Text)

[1800respect.org.au](https://1800respect.org.au)

If you or someone you know is experiencing, or at risk of experiencing domestic, family or sexual violence, you can get support by calling or texting, or visiting the website for online chat and video call services.

### Kids Helpline

1800 55 1800

[kidshelpline.com.au](https://kidshelpline.com.au)

Kids Helpline is available to 5 to 25-year-olds for all issues. Confidential phone counselling and online chat support is available all day, every day.

### QLife

1800 184 527

[qlife.org.au](https://qlife.org.au)

QLife offers counselling and referrals for people of all ages who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer and/or intersex. Phone counselling is available from 3pm to 12am, every day. Online chat is available 3pm to 12am, every day.

### 13YARN

13 92 76

[13yarn.org.au](https://13yarn.org.au)

13YARN offers a confidential, culturally safe crisis support line for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Available all day, every day.

## Support in your language

Call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450 and ask them to contact one of the helplines or you, or to assist with making a report to eSafety. Or visit the website at [tisnational.gov.au](https://tisnational.gov.au).

## Support for hearing or speech impairment

Call the National Relay Service on 133 677 for a teletypewriter (TTY) and voice calls and ask them to contact one of the helplines for you. Or visit the website at [accesshub.gov.au/about-the-nrs](https://accesshub.gov.au/about-the-nrs).