

Social media minimum age

Fact sheet

The Australian Government has taken world-leading action to reduce online harms experienced by young Australians by introducing a minimum age to access social media.

Social media platforms now need to take reasonable steps to prevent Australians under 16 from having a social media account. Importantly, the responsibility is on the social media platforms, not parents or young people, to follow this law.

Delaying access to social media will help protect the health and wellbeing of young people and give them extra time to develop real world connections and digital literacy skills before they join global platforms.

Why do we have a social media minimum age?

There are many benefits to being online—from education to social connection. But for too many young Australians, the addictive algorithm has exposed them to harmful content.

Over 7 in 10 young Australians have seen content they shouldn't be exposed to online, including sexist, misogynistic or hateful content, content depicting dangerous online challenges or fight videos, or content that encourages unhealthy eating or exercise habits.

Keeping young people safer online is a top priority for the Australian Government. That's why we've delivered a world-leading social media minimum age—to give under 16s a break from the pull of social media and give parents peace of mind.

How does it work?

Age-restricted social media platforms include: **Facebook, Instagram, Kick, Reddit, Snapchat, Threads, TikTok, Twitch, X and YouTube**. This means they need to take reasonable steps to prevent under 16s from having an account.

Under 16s continue to have access to messaging apps (such as WhatsApp and Messenger), online gaming, professional networking and professional development services, and services that are primarily for the purposes of education and health support.

eSafety will continue to update the list of platforms it considers age-restricted. Check the **eSafety website** (www.eSafety.gov.au/social-media-age-restrictions-hub) for the latest advice.

How do platforms know who is under 16?

There are lots of technologies that help social media companies figure out how old people are.

There are 3 types of age assurance technology that social media platforms can use to identify if a person is under 16:

- **Age inference:** social media platforms can use the data they already hold to infer a person's age. This could include how long they've had an account, their interests and networks.
- **Age estimation:** social media platforms can analyse a person's characteristics like their facial features, voice and language they use.
- **Age verification:** a person can choose to provide social media platforms with existing documents that prove their age.