

Social Media Minimum Age

Fact sheet

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

From 10 December 2025, social media platforms will need to take reasonable steps to prevent Australians under 16 from having a social media account. Importantly, the responsibility will be on the social media platforms, not parents, carers or children, 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 has a social media minimum age been introduced?

There are many benefits to being online—from education to social connection. But for too many young Australians, the addictive algorithm can expose young people 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 and carers peace of mind.

How will it work?

From 10 December, some social media platforms will need to take reasonable steps to prevent under 16s from having an account. The law is intended to capture social media platforms like **TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, X, Facebook** and **YouTube**.

Under 16s will continue to have access to messaging services, online gaming, professional networking and development services that are primarily for the purposes of education and health support.

How will platforms know who is under 16?

There are lots of technologies out there that help social media companies figure out how old people on their platform 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:** 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:** 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.

Platforms are encouraged to take a layered approach, and no Australian will be forced to use government ID to prove their age online. Social media platforms must comply with Australian law to protect the data provided to assure a person's age.

Won't young people be able to circumvent the law?

We understand that some people will try to get around the law. Much like laws that restrict the sale of alcohol or cigarettes or mandate the use of car seat belts, raising the minimum age to access social media is about changing cultural norms. We understand the law is not infallible. The responsibility will be on the platforms, not parents or carers, to prevent circumvention.

Platforms have tools at their disposal to prevent access to certain content for commercial purposes, including detecting VPNs. We expect social media platforms to use that same technology to keep young Australians safe.

Preparing for the change

To help prepare for the change, parents, carers, educators and young people can:

- Have a conversation about the social media minimum age, including what they think and feel about its benefits and impacts. **Headspace** (headspace.org.au) has a helpful conversation guide.
- Make plans to connect with friends and family in other ways, such as in-person or via online games or messaging services.
- Download data, photos and videos from existing social media accounts before 10 December 2025. The major platforms provide instructions on how to do this, or you can find links on the **eSafety website** ([eSafety.gov.au/eSafetyguide](https://esafety.gov.au/eSafetyguide)).

Useful resources

If a young person in your life needs help dealing with the change, they can contact:

ehedspace: 1800 650 890 or ehedspace.org.au

- A phone and online service for young people aged 12 and over and family seeking support to help a young person (aged 12–25). Available 3pm – 10pm every day.

Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800 or kidshelpline.com.au

- Free and confidential online and phone counselling service.
- Available 24/7 (all ages).
- You can also join **My Circle** (kidshelpline.com.au/my-circle), a private, safe and confidential social platform for 12–25 year olds across Australia, run by Kids Helpline.

ReachOut: au.reachout.com

- A safe space for young people aged 12–25 to chat anonymously, get support and feel better.

13YARN: 13 92 76 or 13yarn.org.au

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander crisis support line.
- Available 24/7 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

For more information about the social media minimum age, scan the QR code below.

