Hackers can be a real problem in any online game, including Minecraft. Some individuals can access other people’s games to disrupt their play time, or even worse, access private details about players such as their names, email addresses, dates of birth and so on. It would be incredibly rare and unfortunate to encounter a player like this, but it does happen and must be taken as a serious risk.

What parents need to know about MINECRAFT

OPEN TO HACKING
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CONTACT WITH STRANGERS
Most players aged 7 and over will be able to play the game comfortably and, whilst creating an account does ask you to input your date of birth for verification, there’s no way to check if the player behind the screen is a child. It’s possible for someone to use false information to access the game and be interacting with your child.

REPRESENT AT HACKING
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‘SCARY’ CHARACTERS FOR YOUNGER GAMERS
For the most part, Minecraft is not a scary game. Despite this, there are certain characters in the game that younger children in particular may find frightening. Creepers, zombies and various other ‘bad’ characters can be commonplace in some parts of the game and young minds may find it difficult to dissociate them from real life once they switch off the game.

Safety Tips for Parents

LEARN FROM YOUTUBERS / TWITCH STREAMERS
There are a lot of Minecraft-focused YouTubers and Twitch Streamers that offer a huge variety of fun, engaging content. Many of them focus on making videos specifically for your age group, which don’t include bad language or anything scary. If you’re unsure about the game, check out some of the biggest streamers and more importantly, ask who your children like. This will help you to understand what the game is about and also make sure that your children are watching age-appropriate content online.

MONITOR GAME TIME
Being able to play on a wide variety of platforms can be beneficial however it can also make it more difficult to put the game down. Play time should be balanced and a good idea to talk to your child if you feel they are playing too much time on the game or showing signs of addictive behaviour.

CREATE A PRIVATE SERVER
The best way to avoid unwanted strangers or griefers in a server is to simply create your own. Private servers do exactly what they say on the tin by offering a safe, secure place for children to play and create with their friends, free from outside interference. They (and you) control who is allowed in the server and what kind of things they can do in it; making it the closest thing Minecraft offers to parental controls.

CREATE SERVER WHITELISTS
Users names you know to be safe, like your child’s friends or relatives, can have their accounts whitelisted as safe. Essentially, this means that server moderators can create a community made up of people they know to be friendly and children will only be playing alongside people they both you and your child know, reducing any risk of contact with strangers or experiencing griefing.

Meet our expert

Mark Foster has worked in the gaming industry for 5 years as a writer, editor and presenter. He is the current gaming editor of two of the biggest gaming news sites in the world, UNILAD Gaming and GameInMirror. Starting gaming from a young age, with his siblings, he has a passion for understanding how games and tech work, but more importantly, how to make them safe and fun.