



Omegle: what you need to know

Launched in March 2009, Omegle has recently become popular again. This 'virtual chat room' offers random users unmoderated or moderated chats with one another from anywhere in the world.



What is Omegle?

Omegle is one of the more popular video chat sites available online. It pairs random users identified as 'You' and 'Stranger' to chat online via 'Text', 'Video' or both. A user can also choose to add their interests, and Omegle will try to pair a user with someone who has similar interests. If not, you could meet anyone. Chats are anonymous unless the user states who they are. It's free and no account sign up is required.

Who uses Omegle?

Like most social media sites, Omegle has a minimum age rating of 13 years with parental permission. Without parental permission, users must be 18 years or older. Omegle is particularly popular in the US, UK, India, and Mexico. It is also extremely popular among children and young people because a lot of social media influencers use and post about it. For example, the #omegle hashtag has approximately 5 billion views on TikTok.

Is Omegle safe?

Omegle does not appear to have powerful moderation. It also does not require registration or have age verification, which makes young people a potential target for abuse online. Its site states "predators have been known to use Omegle, so please be careful."

Children and young people may be asked by strangers to share their name, age, and location. So, it is also important to talk to your child about sharing personal information online with strangers.

Lack of moderation on video chat

The video chat has an adult, moderated and unmoderated option that can be easily accessible by underage users. Clicking the button, the users will be directly on live video and text chat, without warning which unfortunately allows for children to be easily exposed to potential risks in a matter of seconds. Additionally, the video chat opens the possibility for footage to be recorded and distributed without the user's consent.

Type of chat options

- Adult – anyone can access this, which contains heavily explicit content and sexual acts. The user only needs to confirm by clicking a button then they are redirected to an external site
- Moderated chat – according to Omegle's disclaimer, they moderate chats and say "... moderation is not perfect. You may still encounter people who misbehave." However, they do not state how it does this effectively or how frequently
- Unmoderated chat – this option comes with a warning box advising the user they need to be 18+ but an underage user can easily click 'OK' and they are allowed in. Users are highly likely to encounter risks such as online grooming along with sexually explicit and violent content

Does Omegle have parent controls?

Although there are prompts to encourage the safe use of the platform, Omegle does not have any parental controls. According to Omegle, they monitor conversations, but despite stating 'video is monitored, keep it clean', children and young people visiting this section are likely to encounter numerous other users engaging in sexually explicit chat and activity putting them at risk.

There are no instructions on how a user can report other users or content, even though Omegle's disclaimer advises that users can. There is also no block or mute feature either nor is there a robust enough system of monitoring or filtering video/text chats, so it's important to enable parental controls on their phone and/or your home broadband.

Ways of keeping children safe online

- Having regular conversations with your child's online life is an important way to keep them safe online – such as [chatting to strangers online](#)
- Set up parental controls – you can enable filters, block certain websites and much more. Head over to our [Parental Controls hub](#) for more information
- Report it! If you suspect a child is a victim of online sexual abuse, report it immediately to [CEOP](#) or contact the police