Roblox – A parent's guide to Roblox

Is Roblox safe for children? How does it work? And what on Earth are Robux?

What is Roblox?

Roblox is an online gaming platform where you can play games designed by other users and create and share your own games using Roblox's proprietary game-developing tool. Once you sign up, you can play an infinite number of games, build and share creations, and chat with other users -- all for free. If your children are serious about Roblox, though, they'll need Robux, and they'll probably want to subscribe to the Builders Club, which provides additional features for a membership fee.

How does Roblox work?

Roblox offers two equally compelling modes: playing games and creating them. After registering, you have unrestricted access to both modes (however, most children are just there to play). You can choose from a never-ending and continually evolving supply of creative and fun challenges in various categories, from shooters to murder mysteries to sports to fighting games. (Frustratingly, you can't sort games by genre, so finding ones you like is often a process of trial and error.)

Or you can download Roblox Studio and work on building your own games. Gameplay can be uneven, but good creators tend to rise to the top of the feed. Some amateur developers use Roblox as a kind of portfolio to showcase their work for potential employers. For children who are interested in creating their own games, Roblox offers a lot of instructions, a wiki, and a helpful player community. Creators can monetize their games to earn revenue, both by charging people to play their games and by offering pay-as-you-go in-game purchases -- usually needed to get ahead in the game.

What age is Roblox for?

Roblox doesn't specify a minimum age. Users of any age can create and join groups, chat, and interact with others. The company's commitment to the theory of "constructivism," which promotes the educational benefits of curiosity, designing, and building, is -- in theory -- appropriate for anyone who can navigate through a game. In practice, though, such an open approach can pose some risks to children, especially younger ones. And though Roblox has some safety precautions in place, it remains a target of people with less-than-good intentions. Still, because of the learning potential Roblox offers, CCHSG rates it OK for users age 10+. We urge parents to help children protect themselves by enabling privacy settings, teaching them how to recognise the methods that online predators use to win children' trust and exploit them, and showing children how to report bad behaviour and block users.

What are Robux?

Robux are Roblox's in-game currency. You use them for a range of things, including special outfits or animations for your avatar, unique abilities in games, weapons, and other objects. There are different ways to get Robux: You can buy them, get them as part of your subscription, trade for them, or have someone donate some to you. You can also earn them by charging Roblox users to play games you've created and by charging for items in your games.

How much does Roblox cost?

Roblox uses a freemium/premium model. You can do a lot on Roblox for free, including play tons of games and use the Roblox Studio game builder. But doing anything beyond the basics, such as animating your avatar or buying and trading weapons, requires Robux. The company offers a range of subscription models

in its Builders Club membership program: The "Classic" costs £3.99 per month or £39.99 annually; "Turbo" is £8.99 per month or £79.99 annually; and "Outrageous" is the priciest at £14.99 per month or £99.99 annually. You get a certain number of Robux daily depending on your subscription level.

Are there parental controls for Roblox?

Roblox offers account controls that let parents restrict how children can interact on the site. You can control whether children can be contacted, who can message them, and who can chat with them, and do a few other things in the contact settings. To enable these settings, you add your email address to your child's account and create a PIN that prevents children from changing the settings back. The account controls are optional; children of any age can create an account on Roblox with no parental restrictions. On accounts of children under 13, Roblox automatically defaults to stricter settings, but a child could change these if there's no parent PIN.

Can you make real money from Roblox?

Yes, you can make real money on Roblox. In fact, dedicated creators can earn major bucks. Roblox offers a few different revenue-generating models, including charging others for access to games you create, charging incremental fees within your game, and trading rare items that other players are willing to pay for. To earn money, you have to be over 13, a member of the Outrageous Builders Club, and have at least 100,000 Robux in your account. Then you can trade the Robux in to the company for real money. 100,000 Robux is worth £280.

Is there chat on Roblox, and is it safe?

Roblox encourages users to interact through its Chat & Party function. All chat is filtered, which means inappropriate language is replaced by hashtag symbols. Chatting in accounts of children under 13 is more heavily filtered. Roblox also employs human monitors who keep an eye out for inappropriate language and content.

What are "ODers" in Roblox?

"OD" stands for "online dater." These are folks who join social networks, including gaming sites like Roblox, to find romantic partners. Games on Roblox can even be designed expressly for ODers. Roblox doesn't explicitly forbid ODers, and ODers aren't necessarily preying on children. (They may be solely looking for other ODers.) Roblox's monitors look out for inappropriate conversations and content. And its community rules prohibit chat that's sexual in nature. If your child wants to use Roblox, it's critical that you review online safety, such as how to identify potential predators, how to report and block users, and how to spot "grooming" behavior, which predators use to get their victims to trust them.

How do children find out about Roblox?

If your child likes Roblox, he or she can find lots of Roblox-related videos on popular gaming platforms such as Twitch, Miniclip, and YouTube Gaming. There are Let's Plays -- where gamers livestream themselves playing Roblox games -- as well as how-tos, news, and analysis by Roblox fanatics. Some of these videos have off-color language, so check out our YouTube guide for tips on keeping children from overexposure to age-inappropriate content.

Are sexual predators a big problem on Roblox?

There are predators on Roblox, as there are on many extremely popular social networks. Predators take advantage of Roblox's easily accessible chat to target their victims. (All you have to do is sign up for Roblox

to start chatting, and the Chat & Party window is featured on nearly every page of the site.) Roblox uses human monitors as well as technology to weed out the bad guys, but they still crop up occasionally. To avoid being contacted by a predator, and to play as safely as possible, children should enable the most restrictive contact settings (found on the Privacy Settings page). You can prevent anyone from contacting you by turning off chat entirely or limiting interactions to only friends. You should coach your children to not chat with people they don't know (unless they can verify they're actually a friend, or a friend of a friend, in real life) and to not accept private messages (PMs) from anyone they don't know. Make sure they know never to give away personal information, trust their instincts if someone makes them uncomfortable, and never move a conversation to a different platform (a tell-tale predator red flag).

Information on this page has been adapted from:

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