

# Cyber Safety: Teaching Internet Rules for School-Age Kids

The internet is a big part of life for 5–10-year-olds, from school projects to cartoons on tablets. In Pakistan, where kids often share devices, teaching cyber safety is key. Here’s how to keep them safe online.

## Why Cyber Safety Matters

Kids can stumble on harmful content, share personal info, or face cyberbullying. Clear rules protect them while they explore.

## Key Internet Rules

1. **Never Share Personal Info:**
  - Teach: “Don’t tell anyone online your name, address, or school.”
  - Practice: “If a game asks for your phone number, say no and tell Ammi.”
2. **Stick to Safe Sites:**
  - Say: “Only use websites or apps we approve, like Khan Academy Kids or Islamic rhyme apps.”
  - Set parental controls on browsers or YouTube Kids.
3. **No Talking to Strangers:**
  - Explain: “If someone messages you, don’t reply. Show me.”
  - Compare to real life: “It’s like not talking to a stranger at the bazaar.”
4. **Be Kind Online:**
  - Teach: “Don’t say mean things in games or chats. Treat others like you want to be treated.”
  - Discuss: “How would you feel if someone teased you online?”
5. **Limit Screen Time:**
  - Rule: 1–2 hours daily max, no screens before bed.
  - Say: “After 30 minutes of games, let’s play cricket outside.”

## How to Teach

- **Use stories:** Share a tale of a kid who stayed safe by not sharing their name online.
- **Role-play:** Pretend to be a “stranger” in a game and practice saying, “I don’t talk to you.”
- **Set up together:** Show them how to use safe apps and explain why you block certain sites.
- **Praise smart choices:** “Great job telling me about that pop-up ad!”
- **Desi hack:** Compare online safety to locking the gate at home.

## Pakistani Context

- **Shared devices:** Teach kids not to use Chachu’s phone without permission—passwords can be exposed.
- **Cultural apps:** Use Islamic learning apps like Noorani Qaida for safe content.
- **Data limits:** With costly internet plans, teach kids to avoid downloading unknown apps.

## Challenges

- **Curiosity:** Kids may click risky links. Check browsing history weekly.
- **Peer pressure:** If friends share passwords, explain why it’s unsafe.
- **Sneaking screens:** Set clear consequences, like no tablet for a day.

## When to Worry

If your child hides their online activity, seems upset after using devices, or talks about “new online friends,” investigate and talk to a counselor if needed.

Cyber safety rules let kids enjoy the internet without risks. Start with a “no sharing” talk today!