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# Pornhub Just Purged All Unverified Content From the Platform

After changing its policies to ban unverified uploaders and Mastercard and Visa's decision to drop the platform entirely, Pornhub has removed millions of videos.



By [Samantha Cole](#)

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Pornhub is removing all videos on its site that weren't uploaded by official content partners or members of its model program, a fundamental shift in the way one of the largest porn sites in the world operates. This means a significant portion of its videos will disappear.


"As part of our policy to ban unverified uploaders, we have now also suspended all previously uploaded content that was not created by content partners or members of the Model Program," according to [Pornhub's announcement](#). "This means every piece of Pornhub content is from verified uploaders, a requirement that platforms like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, Snapchat and Twitter have yet to institute."

Pornhub said the videos will be removed pending verification and review, and the verification process will begin in the new year. Prior to this change, anyone could create an account on Pornhub and upload any video they wanted to, since the platform's launch in 2007.

piece in the *New York Times* Opinion section that followed the lives of child sexual abuse victims whose videos were uploaded to the platform, Mastercard and Visa began an investigation into unlawful material on Pornhub.

Pornhub made the policy change on Tuesday to ban all unverified users from uploading or downloading content to the site, and said it would expand its moderation efforts. But by Thursday, Mastercard and Visa announced that they'd both stop processing payments with the site altogether. Visa's announcement specifically stated it would drop all of the Mindgeek network, which includes a number of adult sites, including Redtube, Youporn, XTube, and Brazzers.

Videos that are suspended are displaying a notice that says it has been flagged for verification “in accordance with our trust and safety policy.”



**Video has been flagged for verification in accordance with our trust and safety policy**

Before the content purge on Sunday evening, Pornhub hosted around 13.5 million videos according to the number displayed on the site's search bar, a large number of them from unverified accounts. On Monday morning as of 9 a.m., that search bar is showing only 4.7 million videos, meaning Pornhub removed most of the videos on

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moment it's unclear how many videos will be removed.

Verified users, according to the site, are those who have submitted a selfie of themselves holding a piece of paper with their username and pornhub.com (or the Mindgeek site they're signing up for) handwritten on it. Pornhub told Motherboard that this process will be more thorough in the new year, but didn't provide specifics about what that will involve. Verification makes users eligible to join the ModelHub program which allows them to monetize their videos.

A lot of unverified videos on Pornhub aren't even porn. People uploaded pirated full-length movies to Pornhub, as well as memes and jokes. Last year, users uploaded more than 6.83 million new videos to Pornhub, according to the platform's 2019 year in review.

After the Mastercard and Visa announcements, porn performers who use the platform as a source of income told Motherboard that the change would seriously damage their livelihoods. The change to banning unverified users from uploading or downloading, however, was a shift that models on the site have been asking the company to act on for years, both to prevent abuse and stop content piracy. Following the credit card companies' decision to dump Pornhub, some sex workers fear not just a blow to their income, but to the adult industry as a whole if payment processors target smaller platforms next.

Pornhub's announcement also cites a report by third-party Internet Watch Foundation, which found 118 instances of child sexual abuse material on Pornhub in the last three years, and notes that in the same period, Facebook's own transparency report found 84 million instances of child sexual abuse material on the social media platform.

are an adult content platform," the announcement stated.

"The two groups that have spearheaded the campaign against our company are the National Center on Sexual Exploitation (formerly known as Morality in Media) and Exodus

Cry/TraffickingHub. These are organizations dedicated to abolishing pornography, banning material they claim is

obscene, and shutting down commercial sex work. These are the same forces that have spent 50 years demonizing Playboy, the National Endowment for the Arts, sex education, LGBTQ rights, women's rights, and even the American Library Association. Today, it happens to be Pornhub."

### **Will Stop Processing Payments to Pornhub**

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Motherboard investigated Traffickinghub in September, and its parent organization, the conservative anti-trafficking group Exodus Cry. Sex workers say that Exodus Cry's roots in anti-pornography and anti-sex work causes, as well as its current lobbying for Pornhub to be shut down completely, only work to put them more at risk.

While Pornhub's decision to stop unverified users from sharing videos on its site could greatly reduce abuse on its platform, it's not a guaranteed method to stop all abuse. Pornhub continued to host Girls Do Porn and even promoted it as a "Pornhub Content Partner" while it was being sued by 22 of the women for fraud, emotional distress damages, and misappropriation of their likeness, and after a Motherboard investigation showed Pornhub was being used to dox and harass the women in the videos. Pornhub only removed Girls Do Porn's official channel after Girls Do Porn's owners were charged with federal sex trafficking counts. Other Girls Do Porn videos remained on the site via unverified uploaders who slipped by Pornhub's faulty moderation.

"In today's world, all social media platforms share the responsibility to combat illegal material. Solutions must be driven by real facts and real experts," Pornhub's

**Update:** this story was updated with the number of videos Pornhub removed.

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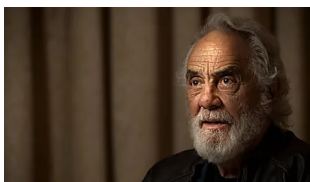
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