

AGE RESTRICTION  
**16+**

PLAYERUNKNOWN'S  
**BATTLEGROUNDS**

'PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds,' known as PUBG for short, is an online multiplayer gaming experience, and one of the most popular games in the world. Inspired by the Japanese thriller film 'Battle Royale,' in which a group of students are forced to fight to the death by the government, it sees 100 players being dropped on to the island, before searching for useful items such as backpacks, body armour and guns, and then trying to kill each other. The last player standing wins; similar to the game 'Fortnite: Battle Royale.' Items are randomly placed around the map in hundreds of deserted buildings. The game can be purchased and downloaded to Xbox, mobiles and tablets and PC via popular gaming platform, Steam.



What parents need to know about

# PUBG (PLAYER UNKNOWN'S BATTLEGROUNDS)

## WEAPONS AND VIOLENCE

PEGI has rated the game 16+, due to 'frequent moderate violence towards human characters and encouragement of drug use.' The game is based on fighting for survival, so the inclusion of weapons, such as assault rifles, machine guns, grenades and bow & arrows; violence and death, is inevitable. Although some reviewers have downplayed the gameplay as involving 'just little puffs of non-graphic blood,' there's no taking away from the inherently violent nature of the game.

## OFFENSIVE LANGUAGE

The game's rules of conduct warn against using 'extremely foul language,' which suggests some element of foul language still occurs. Some players have complained that a lot of the bad language occurs during the loading zone and on the plane via the in-game chat feature. There are also players who use rude/offensive words as part of their usernames and, because it is a live game, it is very difficult to stop users from using bad language and hurtful words.

## TROLLING ENEMIES

Players do whatever they can to aggravate the opposition. Honking virtual car horns, watching a live stream to determine a player's location in a game and other tactics are rife in PUBG. Further to this, the live chat function allows all players to communicate with each other during gameplay which opens up the opportunity for trolling. On occasion the conversation may transition from light-humour to serious harassment.

## HACKERS AND CHEATS

Earlier in 2018, PUBG developer, Bluehole, announced that 15 people had been arrested on suspicion of developing hacking/cheating software as part of an ongoing investigation with 'multiple partners and judicial authorities' in China. Hackers have also been suspected of using viruses to control a game player's PC, scan their data and illegally extract information.

## MICRO TRANSACTIONS

Players are offered the opportunity to buy new weapon skins and cosmetics. These items are updated regularly, and they are available to buy using in-game currency known as 'Battle Points.' These are earned through killing people, having a higher survival time and inflicting damage on other players. However, for players who don't want to wait, there are 'keys' that open crates to weapons, skins and cosmetics. All keys cost real money and can be purchased through the Steam marketplace.

## IT CAN BE ADDICTIVE

Games like PUBG and Fortnite have become a huge distraction in schools and owing to their competitive nature, children are finding it difficult to stop playing the game part way through. Some teachers say children try to find different ways to continue to play the game during class. Parents have also reported that their children have become aggressive and argumentative when they can't play the game.

# Top Tips for Parents

## TALK TO YOUR CHILD

Always have frequent conversations with your child about their online activity. It's important that they trust you and feel confident to talk about their online experiences, especially if they hear or read something they believe is inappropriate, offensive or makes them feel uncomfortable.

## LIMIT GAMING SESSIONS

Games such as this can be highly addictive. Take notice of how much time your child spends on their devices and have a conversation with them about how long you would like them to spend playing games. As it can be difficult to take them away from a game mid-play, it may be easier to restrict the amount of games they play rather than setting a specific time-limit.

## AGE LIMIT

Always check both the age ratings and also the game itself before letting a young child play it. Remember that 'PlayerUnknown's Battleground' is rated PEGI 16, so no matter how used to gaming your child is, it doesn't mean that this game will necessarily be appropriate for them.

## UNDERSTAND WHY THEY PLAY

Online multiplayer games usually do not have an ending. Gamers enjoy creating and building relationships with other players, which can provide a community feeling and an escape from reality. Explain to your child that you understand why they enjoy playing, but tell them how easy it is to become dependent on online games.

## REVIEW PAYMENT METHODS

You don't need to pay to play PUBG on your mobile device (you do have to pay on Steam and Xbox) so ensure you have an agreement in place that requires children and teens to ask for parental permission before buying a product. There are also additional in-game purchases - so, if you do not want your child to make payments, ensure that your card is not associated with their account. There is a payment option called Paysafecard, which allows you to make payments online without the use of a bank account or credit card. As you can top up balances, this makes it easy to control spending.

## REPORT ISSUES

If your child has seen or heard anything inappropriate, it's important that they know how to report it. You can report a user in the settings within the game, or you can report users within the community section of the Steam platform. The in-game report system is the fastest way to report a user directly to the 'PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds' team. Make sure your child knows how to do this if someone in the game upsets them or makes them feel uncomfortable. Anyone who does not follow the rules of conduct will be suspended.

## PROTECT PERSONAL INFO

Your child may unknowingly give away personal information during a game, including their location. Talk to them about what constitutes 'personal information' and make sure they do not disclose anything to anyone, even to their friends. If they are live streaming themselves playing a game, advise them to remove any items (school uniform, street name etc) which could potentially expose their location or personal information.



**National Online Safety**

A whole school community approach to online safety

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