

CLASH OF CLANS: A Parent's Guide

What is Clash of Clans?

Clash of Clans is a popular mobile gaming app, developed by Supercell, set in a fantasy world where the player is the chief of a village. The combat strategy game, available for free on iTunes and Android, challenges players to build and defend their own village with thousands of gamers across the world taking part. The game is aimed at those aged 13 and over.

What does it look like?



Main Concerns for Parents



Expensive extras

While the game is free to play, there are optional 'in-app purchases' that enhance some elements of gameplay - these vary in price and start from 79p. The purchasing process is completed directly from within the app so unless you change your settings so that any purchase requires a password, there is the danger of your child running up huge bills.

Encourages violence

Although some believe Clash of the Clans promotes teamwork, communication, and philanthropy, two years ago Iran put limits on who could play the game - citing a report from psychologists, who said it encouraged violence and tribal conflict.

Online chat concerns

The Clash of Clans game comes with an online chat function which allows users to communicate with fellow players from across the world, whether they know them or not. Anyone can join a clan so there's nothing to stop an adult interacting with your child.

Grooming problems

Experts have warned that predators are using Clash of Clans to groom young children. With online gaming, predators will most likely start off a conversation with an innocent question and then, after contact has been initiated, they may try to convince the child to take the conversation over to another messaging app, such as WhatsApp.

Children find it addictive

Children love building up their village, strengthening their army and battling other players, as well as encouraging friends to join their clan. But there is the danger of children taking the game too seriously and not always knowing when to stop playing. They may neglect hobbies or homework when enraptured with Clash of the Clans.

CLASH OF CLANS: Tips for Parents



Report fraudulent activity

If your child mentions strange problems while playing Clash of Clans, or if you suspect that there's been fraudulent transaction activity on your account, then contact Apple (for iOS devices) or Google (for Android devices), who control the transaction process.

Avoid third-party websites

There are some websites that are not associated officially with Supercell and its game that promise you enhancements for games, such as 'free gems'. These sites may collect your personal information, money, or both, and often never deliver the promised in-game products.

Be wary in online chats

Discuss with your kids about being careful not to share any personal information in a chat forum, especially when they don't really know to whom they are talking to. Explain to children that even if they frequently talk to someone through a game, this person is still a stranger and should not be trusted with personal details.



Avoid the scammers

Every now and then, members may offer free Gems, Legendary Cards, and accessories. Remind children that they must never share personal information, such as their email account and password, and that people may offer gifts without being honest about their intentions.

Watch the language

If your child is going to use the multi-player option of the game unsupervised, be aware that they may come across adults and bad language. In Settings, accessible via the 'cog' icon that appears on the right-hand side of the screen, children can 'Filter Clan Chat' – this changes swear words to asterisks.



Turn off in-app purchases

Smartphone apps often operate on a system where the initial download is free but various add-ons will then be offered to you in exchange for money. This usually takes the form of in-game credits or 'currency' to help secure game upgrades, unlockable content or extra features with the application. But there are options to turn off in-app purchases off on different systems.

Don't divulge private data

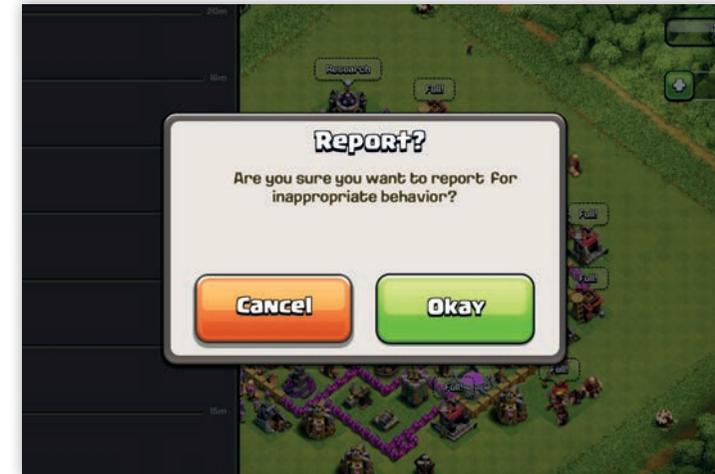
Explain to your children that they should not share their passwords or any other personal information with anyone because doing so may compromise accounts. If they receive any suspicious emails relating to their game or relevant accounts, Supercell advises you to report the player in question. Supercell employees will never ask for any login details or passwords.

Share information on bullying

Some players can be abusive towards others, try to exclude them from the game, or even try to destroy their virtual possessions. This is an upsetting experience for children, so it is important to show that they can trust you and that you understand.

Help children set boundaries

Children are usually quick to learn what behaviour works and which ones are not acceptable. If your child encounters a player who is offensive in chat, they can use the automated reporting tool by tapping on the offending message and choosing 'Report'.



Don't be tempted to 'buy' a game account

Sometimes gamers may be offered someone else's game account, but according to Supersell it is impossible to prevent the seller from accessing the village that they created, which means your child may lose money AND the account as scammers take their money and then you never hear from them again.

Sources: <https://clashofclans.com/parents-guide>
<https://www.teensafe.com/blog/predators-groom-children-gaming-online/>
<https://supercell.helpshift.com/a/clash-of-clans/?p=web&s=hot-topics>