

GAMING online

You've probably found that when you are playing online games you meet up with other players who could be anywhere. Even in other countries. When playing these it is exciting to be able to 'chat' and 'meet' other people. But of course, just as in the offline world, you need to be careful when playing with people you do not actually know. They may be dodgy or be trying to make friends with young people for bad reasons.

5 things to look out for when gaming

(adapted from Thinkuknow)

It's easy to lie online or hide your real identity and age. Some of these people, who want you to think they are 'friends' in your online game, may actually want to harm you in some way. So to be on your guard, what should you watch for?

1. They will try to gain your trust and 'make friends' with you.

They build this trust by making you think they like the same things as you do – such as hobbies, music or the game that you're playing with them.

2. They might try to get you to do things,

Like asking you to: add them as a friend on a social network; give them your phone number; send them photos or chat on webcam. This can get very difficult if they talk about things which make you uncomfortable or ask you to do things you don't want to do. They might threaten you.

3. They might offer to tell you 'cheats' to help you out with a game.

Think about why they are doing this - are they a 'real' friend or trying to build your trust – what do they want to get out of this? Be Alert!

4. Remember, if they share a link with you it could be a computer virus or spyware.

This tells the person your personal information without you knowing - be careful and don't click on links from people you don't know!

5. They may encourage you to tell them personal information

such as where you live and what school you go to. This is part of their attempt to get your trust and will tell them how to find you in the real world.

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