



Family settings for your child's Android phone

Google's free Family Link app does the job on a child's phone. Here is the whole setup, in order. Tick each step as you go. It takes about fifteen minutes.

Before you start

- ☐ You have a Google Account, you're 18 or older, and you live in the same country as your child.
- ☐ Your phone is Android (6.0 or later), an iPhone or iPad (iOS 16 or later) or a Chromebook.
- ☐ Your child's device is Android or a Chromebook. Family Link can't supervise an iPhone or iPad; use Apple's Screen Time for those.
- ☐ Download **Family Link** on your phone, then create a Google Account for your child or add supervision to the one they already have.

1 Set a daily limit

- ☐ Open the **Family Link** app and select your child at the top left.
- ☐ Tap **Screen time**, then **Time limits**.
- ☐ Turn on **Daily limit**.
- ☐ Tap **Weekly schedule**, choose a day and enter the amount of time.
- ☐ Tap **Apply to all days of the week** if you want the same every day, then **Done**.

The limit covers all of your child's Android and ChromeOS devices together.

2 Set Downtime for nights and School time for the day

- ☐ In Family Link, select your child and tap **Screen time**, then **Schedules**.
- ☐ Turn on **Downtime** or **School time**.
- ☐ Tap **Weekly schedule**, choose the days, then the start and end times, and tap **Done**.

During School time notifications are silenced, but your child can still call and text. You can add a break for lunch, and choose which apps stay available under Allowed Apps.

3 Limit or block individual apps

- ☐ In Family Link, select your child and tap **Screen time**, then **Time limits**, then **App limits**.
- ☐ Choose the app.
- ☐ Tap **Set limit**, pick the hours and minutes, and tap **Done**.

From the same screen you can block an app completely or give it unlimited time, which suits things like a school reading app. System apps can't be limited.

App limits, the lock button, and your own phone

4 Know where the lock button is

- ☐ In Family Link, under **Screen time**, tap **Lock** below the device name to lock the phone straight away.
- ☐ Tap **Bonus time** to add extra minutes for today only. It is the better tool for “five more minutes” than changing the limit itself.

5 For your own phone, or an older teen: Digital Wellbeing

These settings live on the phone itself. Nobody else controls them, which suits adults and teens who are managing themselves.

- ☐ **App timers.** **Settings > Digital Wellbeing > App timers**, tap **Set timer** next to an app. When the time is up the app closes. Timers reset at midnight.
- ☐ **Bedtime mode with grayscale.** **Digital Wellbeing > Bedtime mode > Bedtime routine**, choose a schedule, then under **Screen options at bedtime** choose Grayscale. The screen goes black and white at night.
- ☐ **Focus mode.** **Digital Wellbeing > Focus mode**, choose the apps to pause, tap **Turn on now**.

Three mistakes I see most

- **Bonus time every night.** If “five more minutes” happens daily, the real limit is five minutes longer. Decide the number once, when nobody is upset, and stick to it.
- **One number for every day.** School days and weekends are different. The weekly schedule lets you set each day separately.
- **Limits without a conversation.** Tell them what you've set and why. Controls work best as a house rule the phone happens to enforce.

What we set

Write it down so both parents, and the child, know what the phone will do.

CHILD	DAILY LIMIT (SCHOOL DAYS / WEEKENDS)	DOWNTIME	APP LIMITS

Set on _____ Review on _____

Not sure what numbers to choose? See the guidelines by age at junomarlow.com/screen-time-by-age, and agree the house rules first with the free Family Media Plan at junomarlow.com/family-media-plan. Child on an iPhone instead? junomarlow.com/iphone-parental-controls

Sources. Google For Families Help: “Get started with Family Link”, “Manage your child's screen time”, “Set a schedule on your child's device”, “Set app time limits on your child's device” (support.google.com/families). Android Help: “Manage how you spend time on your Android phone with Digital Wellbeing” (support.google.com/android). Last checked 2 October 2026.

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