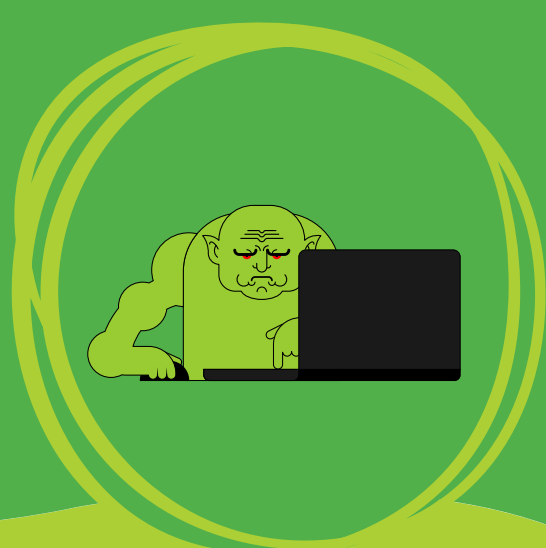


eSafety Guidelines

TROLLS

The advice on this page is for young people under 18. Advice is also available for over 18s, who may be experiencing adult cyber abuse.



Trolling is when someone post or comments online to deliberately upset others.

In short:

- Trolling is when someone deliberately tries to upset others online.
- Trolling can lead to a pile on, when others join in the attack.
- Don't feed the trolls - responding is likely to make things worse. Report the abuse instead.

Trolling is when someone posts or comments online to 'bait' people, which means deliberately provoking an argument or emotional reaction. In some cases they say things they don't even believe, just to cause drama. In other cases, they may not agree with the views of another person or group online, so they try to discredit, humiliate or punish them. This may include online hate - personal attacks that target someone because of their race, culture, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. The troll may also encourage mob mentality, urging others to join in the attack so it becomes a pile on.

Trolls often post under a fake name or anonymously, so they can say things without being held responsible. This can make them feel more powerful and less cautious than they would be if they were talking to someone 'IRL' or in person. This makes it difficult to identify who actually left the post or comment.

Trolls also often try to downplay the impact of their behaviour, claiming anyone who's upset by their posts or comments is overreacting. They may say it was just a joke, or the person who they targeted needs to toughen up. This can make the person who was trolled feel even worse.

Don't feed the trolls

Resist the urge to respond - it's not possible to reason with a troll. As tempting as it may be, getting involved in an online argument just gives them the reaction they want, so they are likely to step up the attack.

Collect evidence, report and block

Online services and platforms have a responsibility to ensure people can use them safely. If the trolling is starting to feel harmful, collect evidence so you have proof - this can include screenshots or recordings of the abusive comments. Then you can report and block the troll in-app - you can find how to do this on common platforms in The eSafety Guide. If they don't help within 48 hours and your experience meets the legal threshold of serious cyberbullying (for under 18s) or adult cyber abuse (for 18+), you can make a report to eSafety and we will help remove the harmful content.

Get more help

If you're feeling bad about what's been happening while you're online, make sure to talk about it with someone you trust. You could show a close friend or family member this information and ask them to help you decide what to do if you're being trolled. You could also contact [Kids Helpline](#) (for 5 to 25 year-olds) or another confidential [counselling or support service](#) - they have people who are ready to listen and help.