

Kid-friendly streaming

A world of content and parental control



My kids will never know the agony of waiting until Saturday morning to watch their favorite cartoons. Nor will they ever need to adjust the “rabbit ears” to make the screen a little less snowy. Thanks to DVRs, streaming and high definition, my kids have access to their favorite shows every day of the week in crystal-clear quality.

For those of you who are curious, streaming has nothing to do with water in a creek. It’s all about watching videos over the internet. Some people prefer this method of TV, as it allows them to watch the shows they want when they want, without having to sit through lots of commercials. I must admit, I love that there are fewer commercials during kids shows as it reduces the amount of “Mom, I want THAT” I typically hear when the kids see their favorite shows. So how do you “stream”? There are three key things you need:

1 A high-speed internet connection, preferably a broadband connection for the best signal. A 10 Mbps connection would be enough speed if you only have one or

two devices connected to your internet. However, you will probably want at least a 25 Mbps connection if you plan on using the internet for other things while you stream a show. If you want to stream on several devices at once, you’ll need an even faster connection.

2 A device with streaming apps installed, such as a smartphone, tablet, computer, or a streaming stick attached to your TV such as Roku, Amazon Fire TV Stick or Apple TV.

3 A streaming app that has the content you want to view. There are several different streaming apps available, with Netflix being one of the most popular.

If you already subscribe to Netflix for your own viewing, you can set up profiles for different members of your household. You can assign a “teen,” “big kid” or “little kid” status to your children’s profile. This keeps them from viewing shows that may be inappropriate. However, if you are looking to just stream content for kids, there are many other free options out there that would be just as good, if not better than what Netflix offers for kids. 📺

Here are some streaming apps I recommend for kids:

- **YouTube Kids** – A good option for bigger kids who know how to search for the types of shows they enjoy.
- **WATCH Disney** or **WATCH Disney Junior** depending on the age of your kids – Includes episodes of all your kids’ favorite Disney Channel shows.
- **PBS Kids** – Has all your kids’ favorite PBS shows including “Sesame Street” and “Curious George.”
- **PlayKids** – A good option for entertaining preschool-aged children.

As I’ve mentioned before, screen time should just be a small part of your kid’s day. By choosing how your child watches their shows and how they access them, you maintain a little more control over what they are seeing and learning.



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Parenting
Tip

Need help setting limits for your kids’ screen time?

Healthychildren.org has an interactive Family Media Planner that can help you establish guidelines for when it’s OK and not OK for your children to use their electronics.