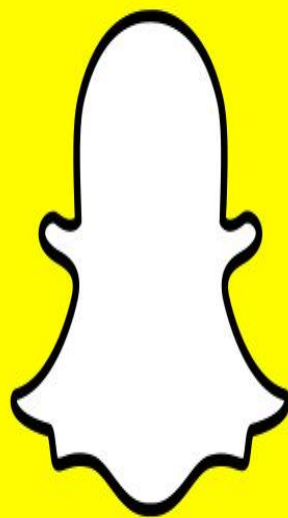


Snapchat: everything you need to know about the social media platform



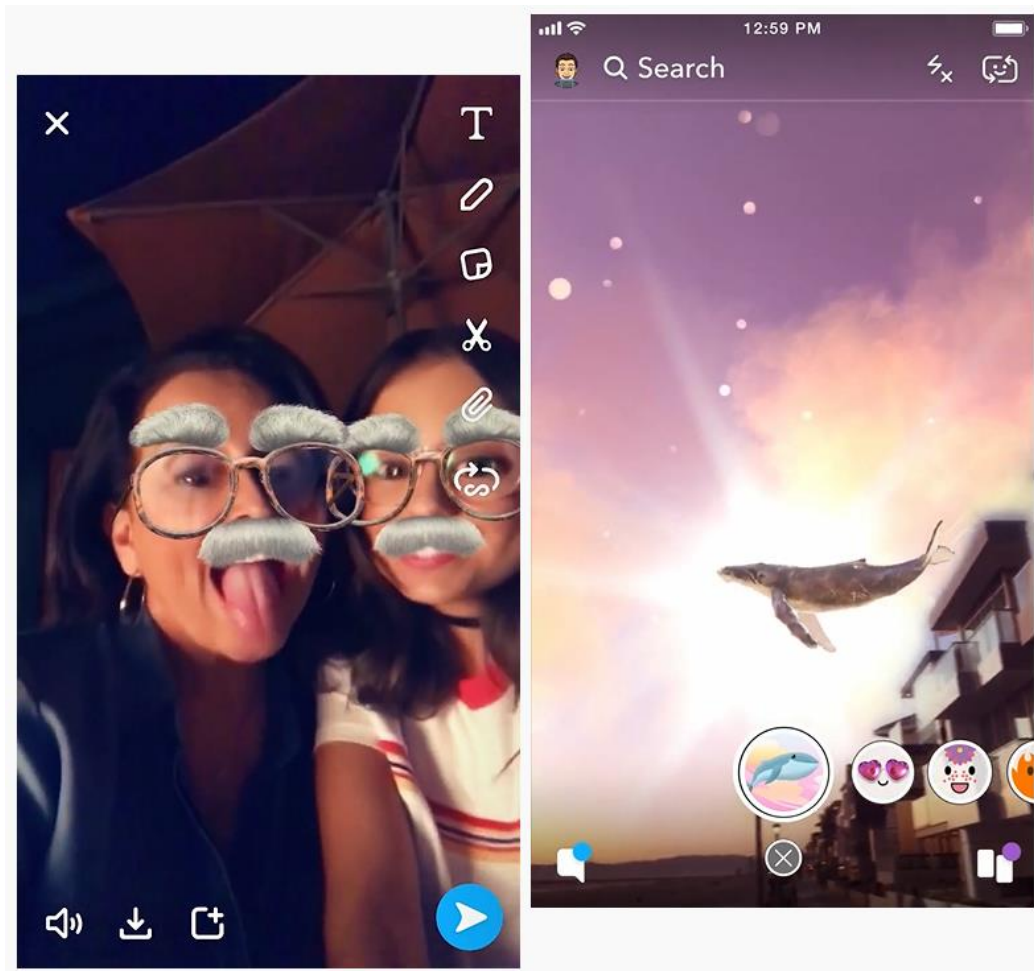
What is Snapchat?

Snapchat is a popular photo-messaging app that allows users to take photos, record videos, add drawings and send them to their friends. A message on Snapchat only appears for a few seconds, but once you click away or the time limit expires, its gone permanently. Snapchat's tagline is 'the fastest way to share a moment' - the speed of communication is Snapchat's selling point.

Why is it popular?

Snapchat has 191 million daily active users, and young people are particularly prominent among its userbase. Its popularity among teenagers can be explained by its fun, visual nature and the immediacy it offers in interactions between young people.

snapchat.PNG



What are Snapchat's main features?

Stories

Snapchat stories are images or videos that users share with their followers. Stories disappear after 24 hrs. Whilst watching a friend's story a user can send a private message to the person who created the story. Users can control who sees their story in privacy settings.

Live stories

Live stories allow users to create a story with other Snapchat based on their geographic location. The story is compiled by Snapchat and can only be created when a user's geo-location is enabled.

Memories

Snapchat memories is essentially a personal archive within the app that enables users to store their favourite images and videos. Memories can only be accessed and viewed by the account holder.

Snap Maps

A visual alternative to a geo-tag on Instagram. The app shares your location every time you log in. You can turn on 'ghost mode' to hide your location, by clicking on the top right settings icon and select it from the options.

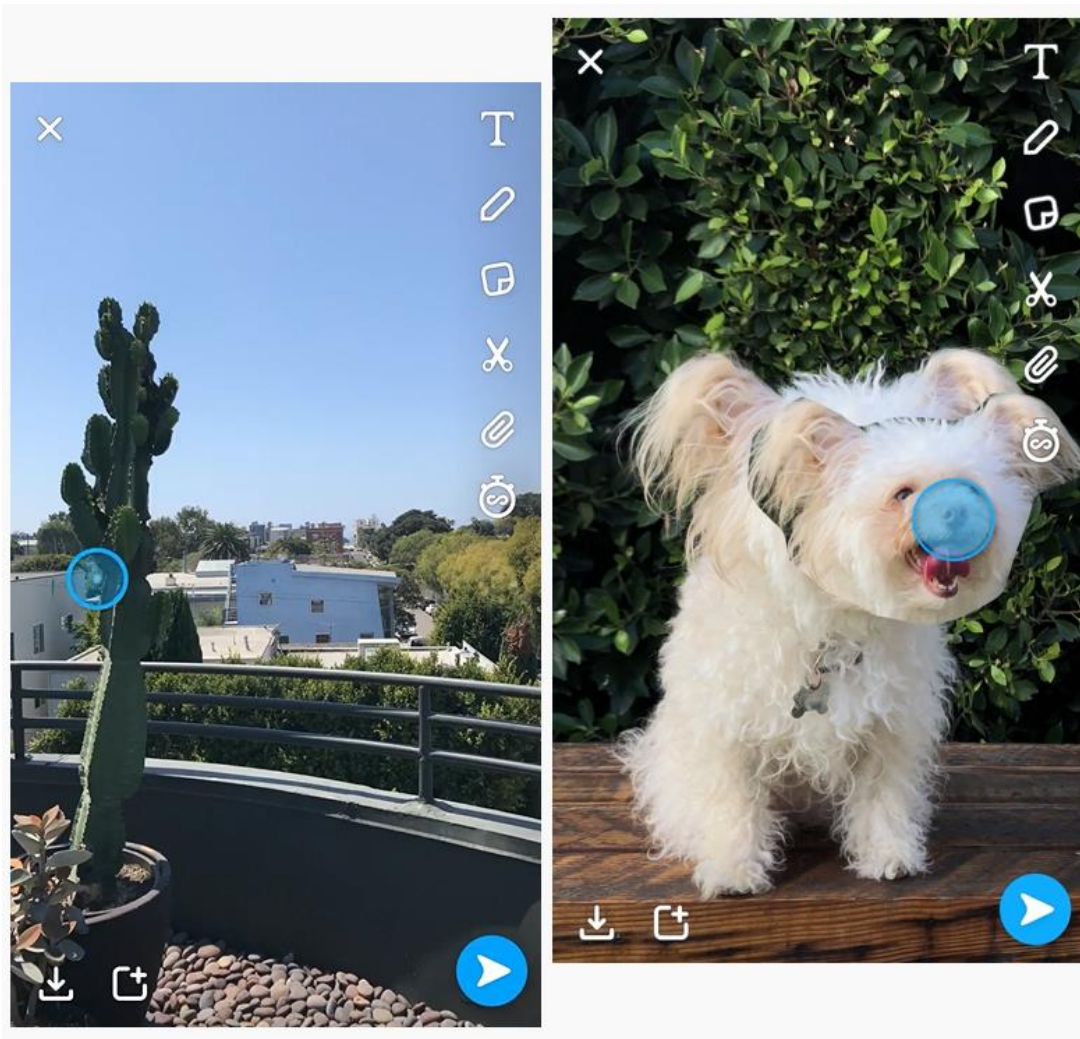
Streaks

A Snapchat streak is when you send direct snaps back and forth between a friend for several consecutive days. The longer you go without breaking the chain of communication, the longer your streak is. Snapchat rewards longer streaks with special emojis.

Filters

Filters on Snapchat transform users' selfies with accessories and special effects, using augmented reality. It's a defining feature of the Snapchat experience. Snapchat have also created Geofilters, based on your location.

snapchat 2.PNG



What parents need to know...

Are there any age restrictions?

Snapchat states that young people under the age of 13 years are not able to create an account. However, there is no age verification in place when signing up to the app, allowing underage children to sign up by giving a false date of birth.

Can you change privacy settings?

By default, only 'Friends' can make direct contact or view a user's story. This can be changed to a public profile, which means anyone can view a user's stories and Snapchat users you haven't added will be able to send you images and messages.

Are there any risks to using Snapchat?

Because of the 'disappearing' effect of images, Snapchat has been used for sexting. The momentary nature of Snapchat can mean that young people may be more inclined to take images on impulse that they might later regret. Images can be screenshotted or recorded with another device, meaning they become permanent, perhaps against the wishes of the sender.

Like many other apps, there is a concern that strangers can contact young people directly by sending images and requesting to become 'friends'. You can set your privacy settings so that you only receive Snapchats from 'friends' rather than 'Everyone'.

Snap Maps allows snapchat 'friends' to see where your child is. The locations are quite accurate, even revealing the street you're on. It is advisable that your child's geo-location should be kept private by disabling location for Snapchat in settings or switching on 'ghost mode'.

How can I report any concerns?

You can report users that breach the Community Guidelines by [contacting Snapchat directly](#). If you have any concerns about grooming, sexual abuse or exploitation on Snapchat, report to [CEOP](#).