

NINTENDO SWITCH

Time limits and parental controls, step by step

This pairs the free Nintendo Switch Parental Controls app with your child's console, then walks you through play-time limits, a bedtime, age-appropriate content, and turning off chat with strangers, one tap at a time. About ten minutes. You need the console in your hands for the first four steps; after that, everything happens on your phone.

BEFORE YOU START

Do this with your child, not behind their back. Tell them what you are setting up and why; the settings hold far longer when the child understands the reason. In the phone pictures, the pink box shows exactly where to tap. The PIN you create at the end is what keeps all of it in place, so pick one your kids will not guess, and keep it to yourself.

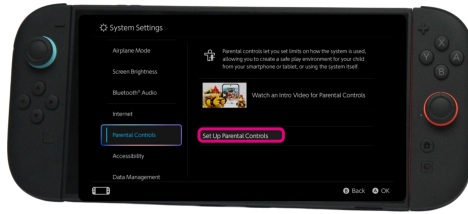
Layer 1 of the Castle Model, the controls inside each game and console.

PAIR THE FREE APP



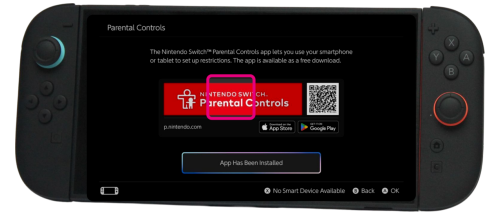
STEP 1

On the Switch, open System Settings from the HOME menu.



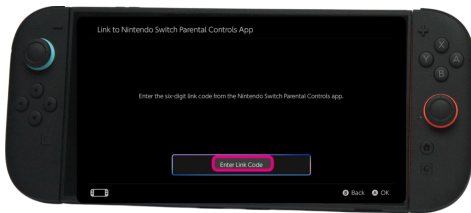
STEP 2

Scroll to Parental Controls, then choose Set Up Parental Controls.



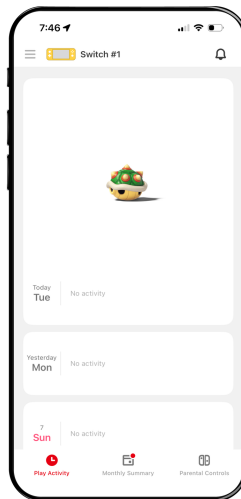
STEP 3

Download the free Nintendo Switch Parental Controls app on your phone. The console shows a QR code that takes you straight to it.



STEP 4

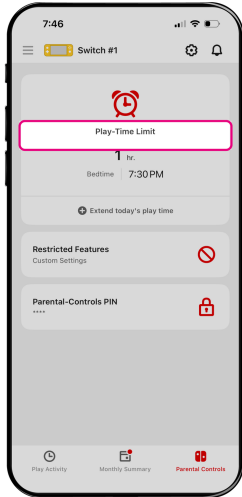
The app gives you a six digit link code. Enter it on the console and they are paired.



STEP 5

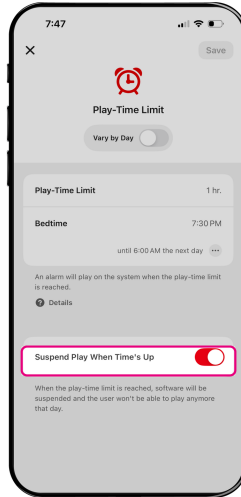
That is it. The app now shows you what was played and for how long, every day.

SET PLAY TIME LIMITS



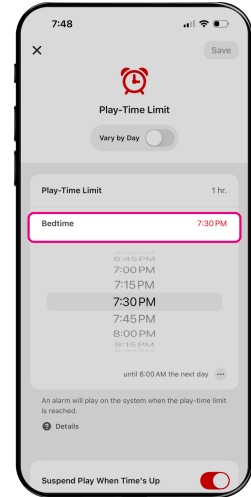
STEP 6

Tap Parental Controls. Play time, bedtime, and restrictions all live on this one screen.



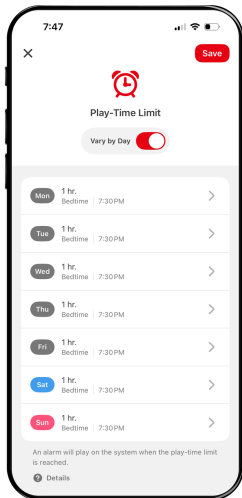
STEP 7

Tap Play-Time Limit. Set the daily amount, and turn on Suspend Play When Time's Up so the console pauses instead of just reminding.



STEP 8

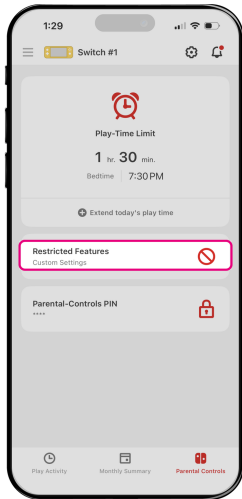
Set a Bedtime. From that time until 6:00 AM the next day, games will not start.



STEP 9

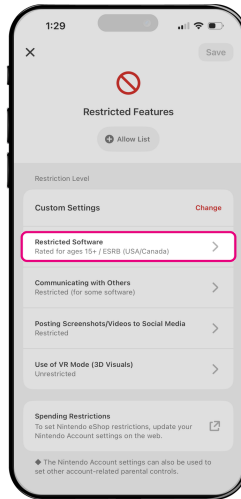
Want weekends different? Turn on Vary by Day and give each day its own limit. Tap Save.

LOCK DOWN CONTENT AND CHAT



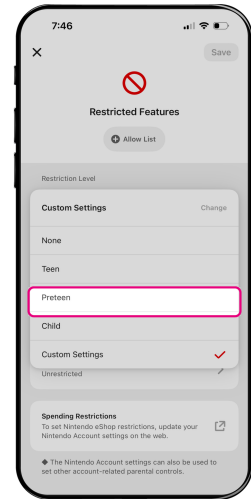
STEP 10

On the Parental Controls screen, tap Restricted Features.



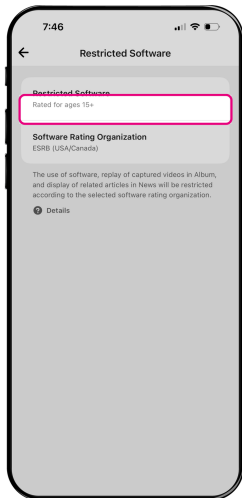
STEP 11

On the Restricted Features screen, tap Restricted Software.



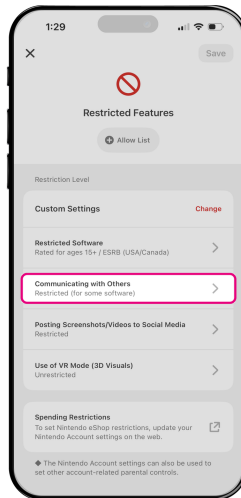
STEP 12

Pick the level that matches your child: Child, Preteen, or Teen. Games rated above that age are blocked automatically.



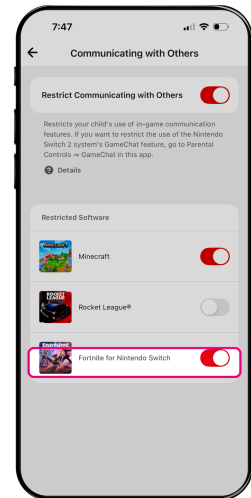
STEP 13

The level you picked blocks games rated above your child's age automatically.



STEP 14

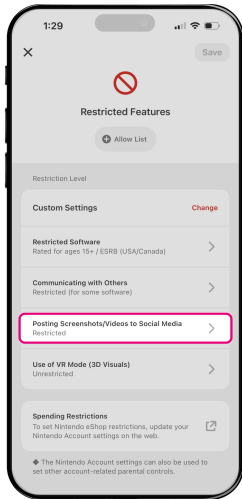
Back on Restricted Features, tap Communicating with Others.



STEP 15

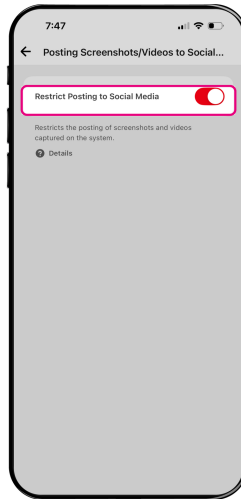
This is the big one: set chat with other players to Restricted, game by game. Fortnite and Minecraft are on this list.

LOCK DOWN CONTENT AND CHAT (CONTINUED)



STEP 16

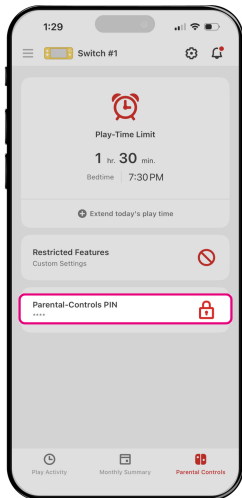
Back on Restricted Features, tap Posting Screenshots/Videos to Social Media.



STEP 17

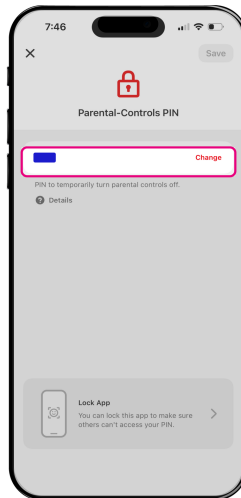
Restrict Posting to Social Media, so screenshots and videos from the console never go public.

KEEP IT LOCKED



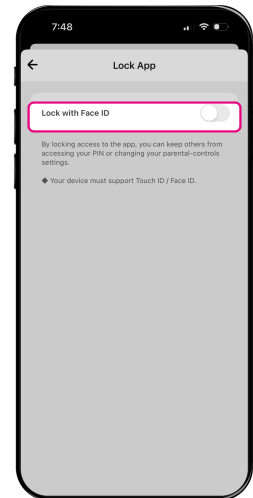
STEP 18

On the Parental Controls screen, tap Parental-Controls PIN.



STEP 19

Tap Change to set a PIN only you know. This PIN is what turns the controls off, so keep it to yourself.



STEP 20

Then tap Lock App and turn on Lock with Face ID, so even your phone side needs you to open it.

That is the Switch done. Time limits with real teeth, a bedtime the console enforces, age-appropriate games only, and stranger chat off, all run from your phone.

WHAT THIS CATCHES, AND WHAT IT DOES NOT

The app controls this console: play time, bedtime, game ratings, chat game by game, and posting to social media. It does not follow your child onto other devices or a friend's console. Fortnite keeps its own chat settings on top of Nintendo's, set both, our Fortnite guide covers it. And eShop spending limits live in your Nintendo Account on the web, not in this app.

CHECK IT WORKED

Let the play-time limit run out: the game should pause, not just chime. That is the Suspend Play toggle doing its job. Then try to change a setting on the console itself, it should ask for the PIN that only you know.

KEEP GOING

This is one layer of five. The same ten minutes locks down Roblox and Fortnite, ask us for those guides. And put the Safe Family Internet decal in your window so other families know they are not doing this alone.