

4chan Parent Guide

A quick guide to what you need to know

Age Rating: 18+



What is it?

4chan is an anonymous **online image-board website**. It contains **sexually explicit, politically sensitive and discriminatory content**. 4channel is a version of the site that doesn't contain the kinds of content mentioned above and is moderated more regularly.

4chan contains **forums and threads covering hundreds of topics**. Threads begin with someone posting an image about a specific topic which other users then comment on.

Threads are regularly deleted by 4chan's moderating software, sometimes after as little as a few hours. There is **no way of accessing deleted content**, as it is removed from 4chan's servers.

You **don't need to create an account**, just click 'agree' to 4chan's terms and conditions. There is no age verification process, and many users are teens.

What are the risks?

While most use 4chan as an online community, there has been a noticeable crossover between 4chan and **alt-right conspiracy theories** on 4chan's 'politically incorrect' (/pol/) board.

4chan has also been associated with 'incel' (involuntary celibate) culture. 'Incels' are usually **young men who feel unable to find romantic partners**. The culture is characterised by **resentment** and **misogyny**.

The platform contains a lot of violent and misogynistic content, including **pornography**. There are reports of sexually explicit images of people being **posted without permission**.

It also has a 'random' (/b/) board, on which any kind of content is allowed, even if it's abusive or disturbing.

Cyberbullying has been an issue, as has 'doxxing' – **releasing a person's personal information** – resulting in people receiving graphic hate mail.

What safety features are there?

You can **report a post to 4chan moderators** if it violates the site's rules or contains illegal content. Users who breach these rules can be **permanently banned**. 4chan won't remove anything from /b/.

What else should I do?

4chan can be great for finding interest-based online communities, but there are plenty of people using the sites with bad intentions. If your child is using either site, discuss with them why – and **outline that it is 18+ for a reason**.

Explain that there is **little to protect them** from witnessing content that could be distressing.

Encourage them to **always think critically** about political content and arguments they see online. Remind them that **anonymity doesn't excuse** posting abusive or demeaning content.

The more supported and confident your child feels both at home and online, the less vulnerable they'll be to sites like 4chan.