

Teaching Tools @ Home Three

One of the questions that keeps being asked lately is about how to stop children from accessing inappropriate material or stopping access to the iTunes Store from an iOS device.



Access all areas... or Not...

Restricting Access

All iOS devices (iPhone, iPod Touch & iPad) have a very useful feature that many are not aware of. This feature called 'Restrictions' can be found in the 'Settings - General' tab of your iOS device. On an iPad it looks a little like this.



As you can probably tell from the above screenshot, there are some pretty handy features for keeping your children away from certain things. It is all password protected, so as long as you don't tell little Johnnie what that password is, the settings cannot be changed.

While I would encourage parents to always supervise their child while they are using a device such as an iPad, it is nice to know that there will be no surprise app purchases when you get your credit card bill!

You may also use this to limit the amount of potential 'distractions' available to your child. Some of these may include Safari internet browser access, YouTube video access and the built-in camera. All of these can be turned off by using restrictions.

Be Aware

Many apps are aimed at young children who are developing particular age-appropriate skills. A major concern that I have with some of the developers of these apps is that they place 'in-app purchases' within their app. In other words, there may be a nice attractive, brightly coloured animal that your child can click on while they are using an app that you have already purchased. Clicking on this seemingly innocent object can often lead to an option to purchase something.

An example might be a link to another app that the developer is selling. It is possible that your child (or you) may inadvertently purchase another app, or some sort of token to use in the existing app, with real money.

In Restrictions you have the option to restrict, or turn off, in-app purchases.

Money, Money, Money

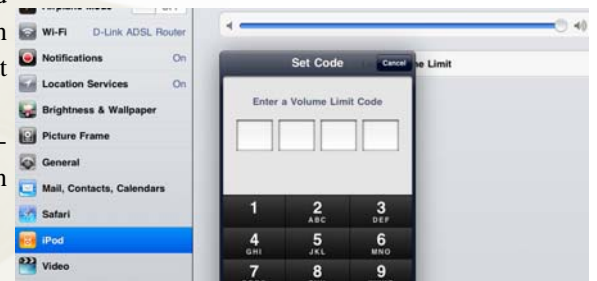


Perhaps the simplest method of ensuring that you don't end up with a large credit card bill, is to use iTunes Gift Cards rather than a credit card linked to your account.

These are available pretty much anywhere. Some sellers occasionally discount these cards. For example they may sell 2 x \$20 Gift Cards for \$30.

Sound Level Limit

Another built-in feature that many are not aware of, let-alone use, is the ability to limit the output volume of the audio. This means that as a parent, you can set the maximum volume that your child's iOS device can play music.



Be warned though - it is not fool-proof. Different headphones will be louder or softer than the level that you set due to their design. There are also some after-market headphone amplifiers that your child may get their hands on to overcome the volume limit. Best approach is to attempt to talk to them about what sort of damage they are most likely doing to their ears. Lose your hearing and it won't come back!

Interesting note on the topic of sound limiting, France has made it law that mp3 players (and iOS devices) MUST be limited to a 'safe' level.

So now you have some sort of idea as to how you can regain some sort of control and set boundaries by using the built-in options found in all iOS devices.

Enjoy learning with your children!