

What parents & carers need to know about...

CALL OF DUTY
BLACK OPS
COLD WAR



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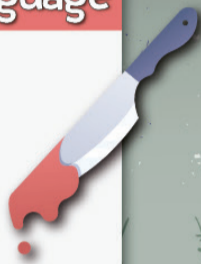


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Call of Duty: Black Ops Cold War (CoD) is an online first-person shooter. It's available on PC, PlayStation and Xbox. CoD allows players to select from different game modes including campaign, multiplayer and 'Zombies'. Players can customise their character and weapons in the game.

Graphic Violence & Language

A story of covert warfare and ruthless operatives, Black Ops Cold War features extreme violence: players harm and kill enemies in brutal and graphic ways. Several scenes depict intense interrogation and torture. Unsurprisingly, there's a strong horror element in 'Zombies' mode. The language used is unsuitable for under 18s.



In-game Payments

Players can gain an advantage over other users by spending money on new characters and attributes. The currency in the game is known as CoD points. They can't be earned by playing the game - only purchased in the online store. CoD point packs range from £1.79 to £84.99.



Online Multiplayer

Most modes of Black Ops Cold War require an internet connection so that the player can battle against other users online: the game has integration into the existing 'Warzone' battle royale mode. A multiplayer round usually lasts between 10 and 30 minutes. Because of the game's immersive nature, it can be difficult for children to recognise their limits and know when to stop playing.



Chatting to Strangers

During a multiplayer game, if your child's PC or console has a microphone, it's possible for them to talk to any other player around the world. As it's an adult game, the language used in these chats may often be inappropriate for young children. Due to the competitive nature of gaming and the fact that conversations are not moderated, your child could be at risk of cyberbullying.



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Safety Tips for Parents & Carers

Discuss Time Limits

It's not possible to pause a multiplayer game of CoD, so it's a good idea to agree with your child a limit of matches they can play in one session. In 2018, the World Health Organisation recognised 'gaming disorder' as health condition, so it's important to monitor how long your child spends on the game.



Remove Violence & Profanity

At the beginning of the game, players are given the chance to disable the graphic content. You also have the option to do this in the game's settings. You can change the profanity setting in the content filters tab, so that the bad language doesn't appear in the game. In addition, there's an option to change the zombies mode to a more cartoonish rendering, making this mode slightly less frightening.



Disable Communication Features

It's important to talk to your child regularly about who they're interacting with online. If you have serious concerns, you can disable the voice chat function in the game's audio settings and disable the text chat function in the content filters section too.



Monitor & Limit Spending

To avoid your child incurring hefty CoD point costs, it's best not to link their device to your bank account. Alternatively, you could allow limited access by setting up parental controls on their console. To keep a rein on spending, it's a good idea to use a gift voucher or a Paysafe card (if they're using an Xbox or PlayStation).



Block Unsuitable Content...and Users

You can prevent your child from viewing any user-generated content by changing the settings via the in-game options menu, so unsuitable content won't show on screen when your child is playing. If your child feels that they've experienced cyberbullying in the game, there is a facility within the game to report offensive behaviour.



Encourage Alternate Activities

Players are given incentives during the game to reward more time spent playing. They can also earn rewards by watching influencers playing the game via Twitch. This presents a risk that your child could want to spend even more time in front of a screen. Make sure you talk to your child regularly about the importance of alternative activities away from their device - such as physical exercise or pursuing a creative interest.



Meet our expert

Mark Foster has worked in the gaming industry for five years as a writer, editor and presenter. He is the gaming editor of two of the biggest gaming news sites in the world, UNILAD Gaming and GAMINGbible. Starting gaming from a young age with his siblings, he has a passion for understanding how games and tech work, but more importantly, how to make them safe and fun.



SOURCES: <https://www.who.int/features/qa/gaming-disorder/en/>, <https://www.paysafecard.com/en-gb/use/games/>, <https://www.callofduty.com/blog/2020/11/Black-ops-Cold-War-Controls-and-Settings-PlayStation>, <https://support.activision.com/uk/en/black-ops-cold-war/articles/call-of-duty-black-ops-cold-war-editions-faq>, <https://support.activision.com/uk/en/black-ops-cold-war/articles/black-ops-cold-war-twitch-rewards>, <https://www.taminggaming.com/game/Call+of+Duty+Black+Ops+Cold+War>