

Using Parental Controls

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What You'll Need

- A computer running Windows Vista® (Home Premium or Ultimate versions for Windows Media Center)
- Family Safety for Windows Live OneCare™—available as a [free download](#)

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Windows Vista Parental Controls

Worried about your kids' computer use—or what they may encounter online? You can set boundaries on what your kids can do on the PC to give them a safer experience, using the centralized Parental Controls in Windows Vista. You can restrict games and Web sites based on your family's values, and even limit what can be viewed in Windows Media Center.

Plus, with Windows Live OneCare, your kids can be protected while they surf the Internet. And you can easily filter content and monitor online activity reports.

The Parental Controls built into Windows Vista are designed to help parents manage many important aspects of what their children can do on the computer. You can use parental controls to do the following:

- Set up Web restrictions
- Set program limits
- Set up which games your children can play
- Set time limits for computer use

Parental Controls, part of the User Accounts and Family Safety Control Panel, centralizes all of the key settings of the Windows Vista Parental Controls.

From this one location, you can configure the parental controls for your computer and applications, setting appropriate limits on your children's game playing, Web browsing, and overall computer use.

You can review activity reports that show how your children have been using the computer. Monitoring your children's computer behavior not only makes it easy for you to keep track of what they are seeing, hearing, and doing, but it also enables you to refine and modify parental controls based on actual feedback. For your children, the Parental Controls icon in the system tray is always visible to let them know that the Parental Controls feature is on.

SET UP PARENTAL CONTROLS IN WINDOWS VISTA

To help ensure family safety with Windows Vista, you need to turn on the Parental Controls feature for your child's account.

You can only apply Parental Controls to standard user accounts, so first make sure that each child has a standard user account. To set up Parental Controls for your child, you'll need to log on to your computer with an administrator account. This is the account that is created when you set up Windows, and most changes to your computer will need to be done from this account.

Windows Vista Parental Controls *(continued)*

Turn on Parental Controls

1. Open Parental Controls by clicking the Windows logo, clicking **Control Panel**, and then, under **User Accounts**, clicking **Set up parental controls for any user**.
2. If you see the yellow box with the exclamation point symbol in it (see Figure 1) asking you to set up a password for the Administrator, click on the box, add a password and continue. If you don't see it, click on the name of the account for which you want to set Parental Controls.

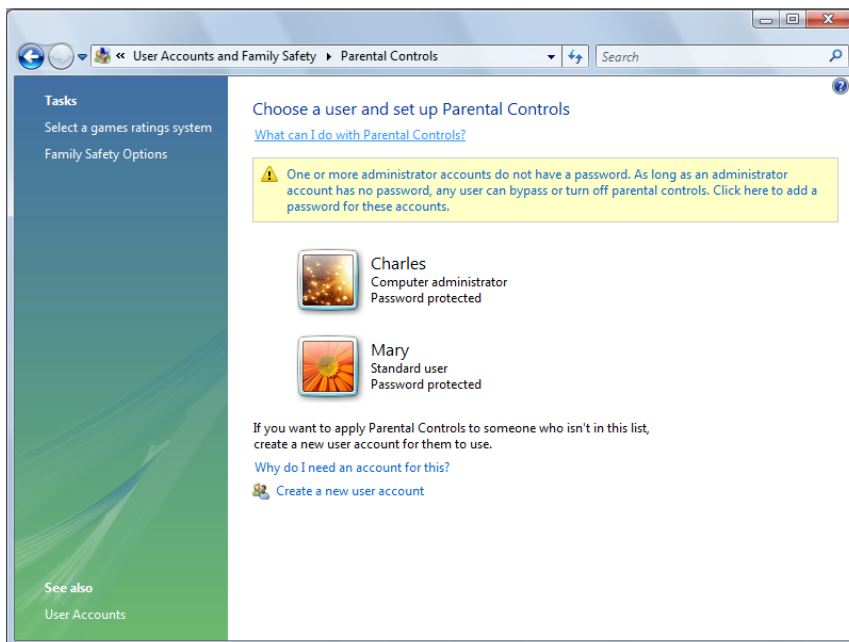


Figure 1—If you have to add an Administrator password before you can continue, you'll see this yellow box

Windows Vista Parental Controls *(continued)*

3. Click **On, enforce current settings**, and then click **OK**.

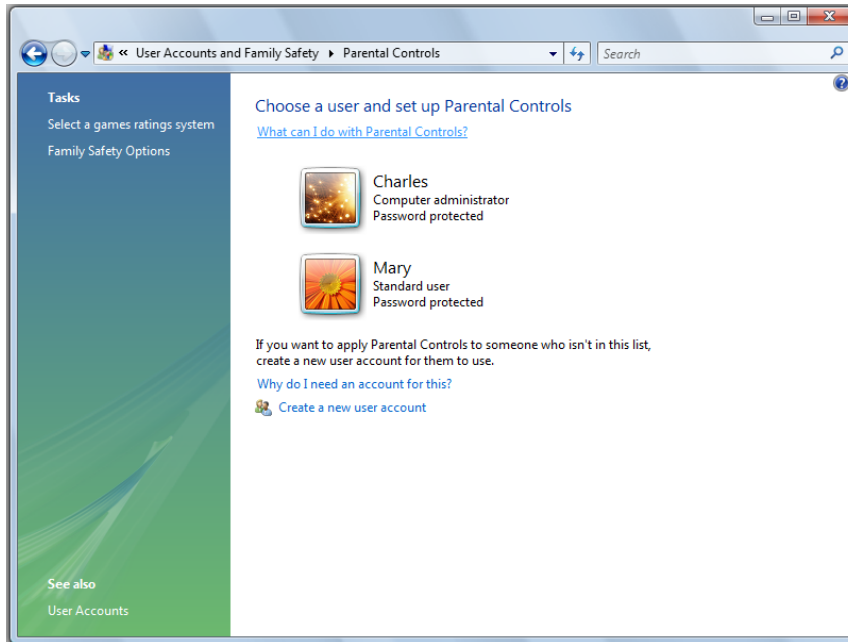


Figure 2—If you don't have to add an Administrator password, Parental Controls will look the same, but without the yellow box, like this

If the person you want to restrict doesn't have their own account, you can set up a separate account first and then set its restrictions.

1. Click **Create a new user account**.
2. Type the name of the account.
3. Click **Create account**.

Windows Vista Parental Controls *(continued)*

Now select the account and set up Parental Controls.

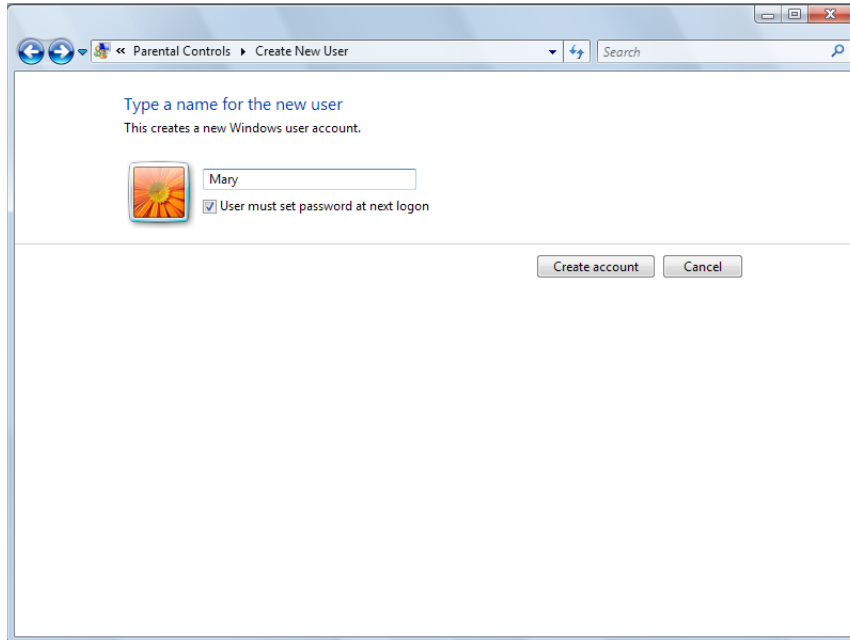


Figure 3—Set up a new account if needed

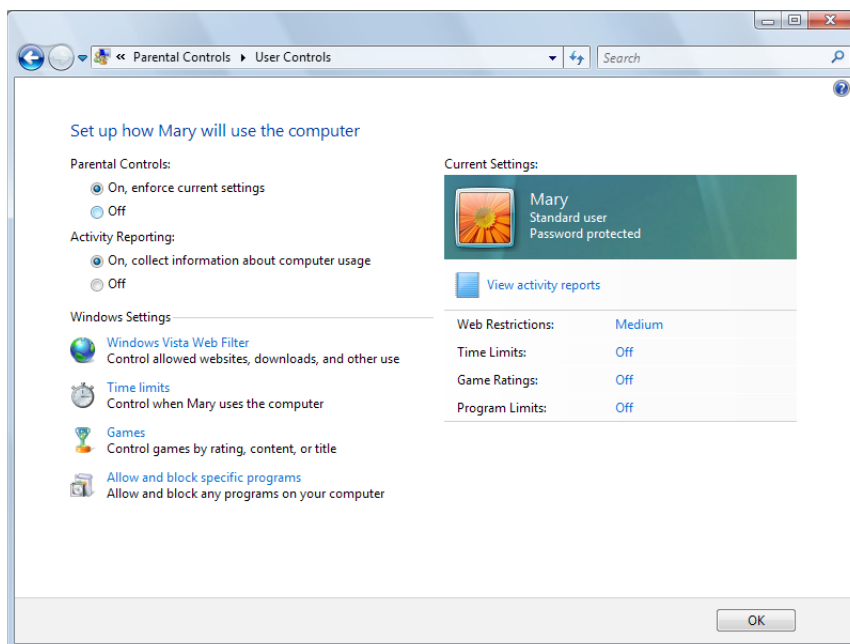


Figure 4—After you've created and selected, or just selected the account (as needed) you want to restrict, you can set those restrictions

Windows Vista Parental Controls *(continued)*

Now that Parental Controls are on for your child's account, you can set activity reporting, Web filtering, time limits, and gaming and program restrictions.

SET UP WEB RESTRICTIONS

To control which Web sites your children can access and which programs they can download, under **Windows Settings**, click **Windows Vista Web Filter**.

With Web restrictions, you can do the following:

- Choose **Block some websites or content** to block specific Web sites.
- Choose **Only allow websites which are on the allow list** to block all Web sites except those you specifically allow.
- Use the built-in filter to automatically block Web content based on ratings. You can adjust the restriction level under **Block web content automatically**.
- Block all file downloads.

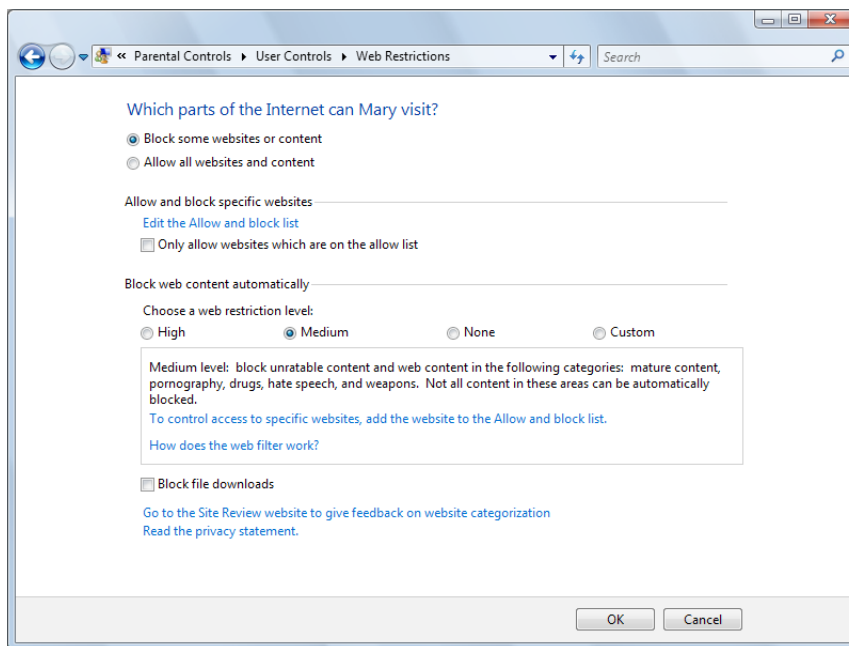


Figure 5—Block Web content

You can choose which level of restriction to apply to each individual user account on the PC.

Windows Vista Parental Controls *(continued)*

More Information

- What is a user account?: <http://windowshelp.microsoft.com/Windows/en-US/Help/5d82b9b6-0a55-4199-b5d1-5b25b6b106cb1033.mspx>

SET PROGRAM LIMITS

You can use Parental Controls to determine which specific programs your child can use. For example, if you use a program to keep track of your finances, you can prevent your child from opening it and viewing your financial information.

1. To open Parental Controls, click the Windows logo in the bottom left corner of your display, then **Control Panel**, and then, under **User Accounts**, click **Set up Parental Controls**.

If you are prompted for an administrator password or confirmation, type the password or provide confirmation.

2. Click the name of the account you want to prevent from using specific programs.
3. Under **Parental Controls**, click **On**.
4. Click **Block specific programs**.
5. Click **[Account name] can only use the programs I allow in this list**.

Windows Vista Parental Controls *(continued)*

6. Select the programs that you want to allow. If the program you want doesn't appear in the list, click **Browse** to locate the program.

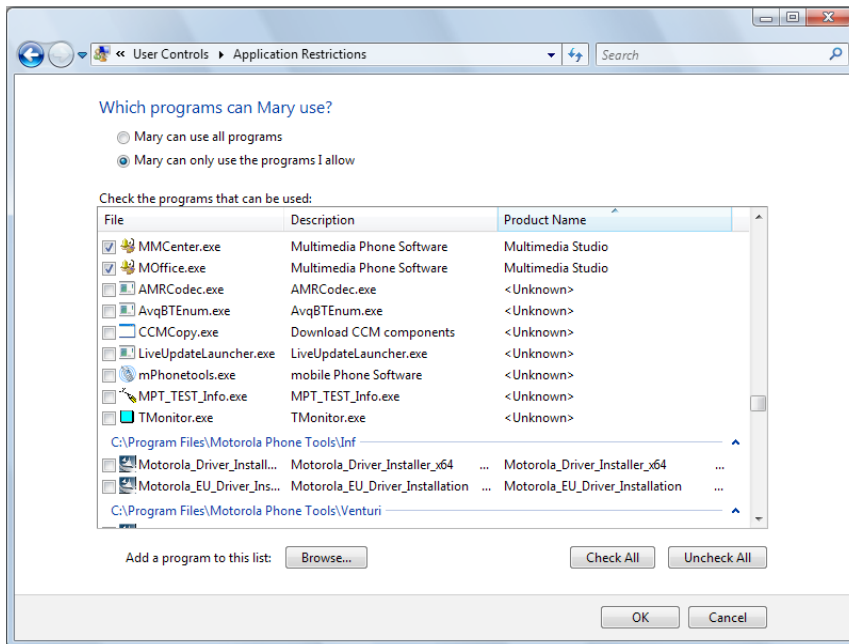


Figure 6—Block some or all programs



Make sure that you select all of the programs that you want your child to be able to run. Parental Controls will block any program not selected in the list.

Windows Vista Parental Controls *(continued)*

SET UP WHICH GAMES YOUR CHILD CAN PLAY

You can allow or block games based on its rating, or you can allow or block specific games.

Check game ratings

If you have the game box, the game's rating can be found on the front, with the content descriptors located on the back. If you don't have the box, but the game is installed on the computer, you can check the game's rating and content descriptors in the Games folder.

1. Open the Games folder by clicking the Windows logo, and then clicking **Games**.
2. Select the game in the list by clicking on it.
3. The rating and content descriptors appear at the bottom right of the window.

Block games by official game ratings or content

1. To open Parental Controls, click on the Windows logo, then **Control Panel**, and then, under **User Accounts**, click **Set up Parental Controls**.

If you are prompted for an administrator password or confirmation, type the password or provide confirmation.

2. Click the account you want to prevent from playing games.
3. Under **Parental Controls**, click **On**.
4. Under **Can [person's name] play games?**, click **Yes**.
5. Under **Block (or allow) games by rating and content types**, click **Set game ratings**.
6. Under **Which ratings are ok for person's name to play?**, click a ratings level.

Windows Vista Parental Controls *(continued)*

With Game Restrictions you can also block certain types of content, such as violent content, or drug references.

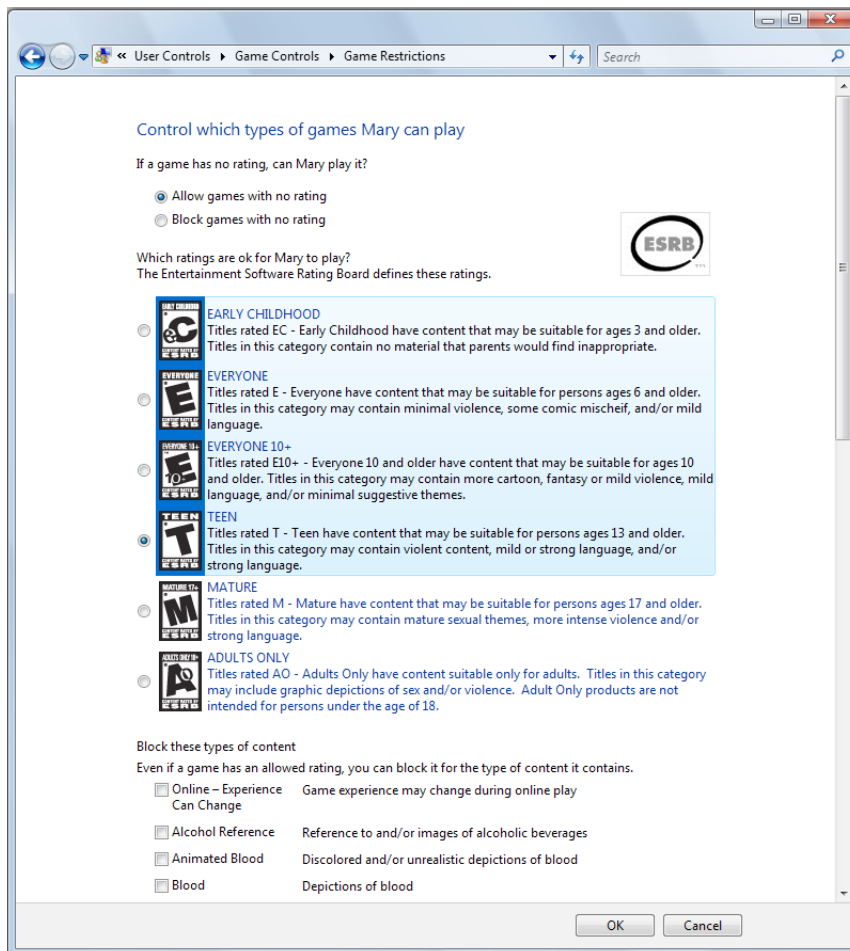


Figure 7—You can block just some games, or all

Windows Vista Parental Controls *(continued)*

Block specific games

1. Open Parental Controls by clicking the Windows logo, clicking **Control Panel**, and then, under **User Accounts**, clicking **Set up Parental Controls**.

If you are prompted for an administrator password or confirmation, type the password or provide confirmation.

2. Click the name of the person you want to prevent from playing games.
3. Under **Parental Controls**, click **On**.
4. Under **Can [person's name] play games?**, click **Yes**.
5. Under **Block (or allow) any game on your computer by name**, click **Block or allow specific games**.
6. In the alphabetical list of games, click the game that you want to block, and then click **Always block**.

More Information

- Entertainment Software Ratings Board (ESRB): <http://www.xbox.com/en-US/support/familysettings/gameratinginformation.htm>

Windows Vista Parental Controls *(continued)*

SET TIME LIMITS

You can set up the days of the week and hours of the day your children are allowed to use the computer with an easy-to-use grid. You can even view activity reports to see how much each person uses the computer.

1. Open Parental Controls by clicking the Windows logo, clicking **Control Panel**, and then, under **User Accounts**, clicking **Set up Parental Controls**.

If you are prompted for an administrator password or confirmation, type the password or provide confirmation.

2. Click the account for which you want to set time limits.
3. Under **Parental Controls**, click **On**.
4. Click **Time limits**.
5. In the grid, click and drag your mouse to block out hours.

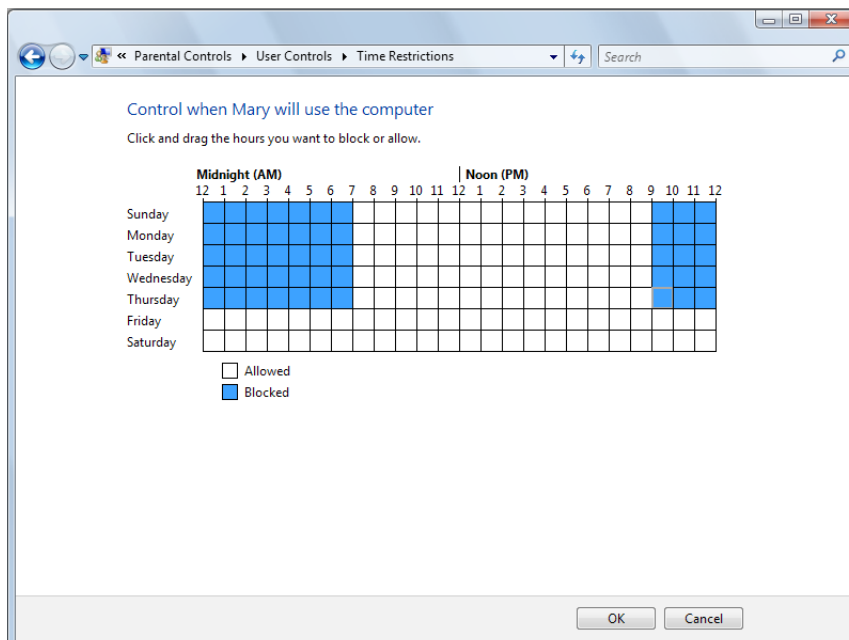


Figure 8—You can set restrictions on when the account is able to use the computer

Use Family Safety for Windows Live OneCare

OneCare Family Safety—Make your family's online adventures safer with Web site and contact filters you create and manage. Family Safety combines a downloadable product with Web access from anywhere. Once you download it to the computers your children use, you can quickly check into their online activities using the Family Safety Web site.



Figure 9—Windows Live OneCare overview

Now you can determine how your kids experience the Internet. Family Safety helps you filter information based on each child's age to help protect them from stuff you don't want them to see. You can also limit searches, block or allow certain Web sites, and monitor where they are going online. Below, is a list of what you can do with Windows Live OneCare:

- **Content filtering.** Create a safer browsing experience for your kids by filtering Web sites you don't want them to visit. Create different controls for each child according to their age and interests. Get advice on safer surfing from experts at the American Academy of Pediatrics and other trusted sources.

Use Family Safety for Windows Live OneCare *(continued)*

- **Contact management.** Family Safety's new built-in contact approval helps you know who your kids are talking to on IM, e-mail, or their blogs. You can approve or reject each new contact for their Windows Live Messenger, Hotmail, and Spaces.
- **Safer searching, safer learning.** Family Safety works with Live Search to help block inappropriate search results, and with MSN Encarta to help deliver information that's age-appropriate.
- **Change permissions by request.** If your child wants to see a site blocked by Family Safety, they can ask you for permission to view it. The request shows up in the program, making it easy for you to see. Then you can review the site and decide to let them see it, or keep blocking it.
- **Online activity reports.** Activity reports give you detailed information about the Web sites your children visit or attempt to visit, and whether a site was allowed or blocked, or whether a warning was issued to your child.
- **Account access from most computers.** Even if you're at work or out of town, you can change your kids' accounts and settings—and view online activity reports—from almost any Web-connected computer.

More Information

- Windows Live OneCare Family Safety: <http://www.microsoft.com/protect/products/family/onecarefamilysafety.msp>



SITES MENTIONED IN THIS GUIDE

Entertainment Software Ratings Board (ESRB): <http://www.xbox.com/en-US/support/familysettings/gameratinginformation.htm>

What is a user account?: <http://windowshelp.microsoft.com/Windows/en-US/Help/5d82b9b6-0a55-4199-b5d1-5b25b6b106cb1033.mspx>

Family Safety for Windows Live OneCare: <http://get.live.com/familysafety/overview>

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