Circle Home Plus & Circle Parental Controls App

User Guide

Meet Circle®

Thanks for joining the Circle community.

We're here to help families like yours find balance in today's digital world. This guide has been designed to guide you along the way in using Circle to manage content and time spent online.

If you run into questions or issues, don't hesitate to reach out. We're here to help!

— The Circle team
support.meetcircle.com
help@meetcircle.com

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Getting familiar with Circle

Feature

Description

Pause the Internet® ▶
Pause the Internet® with the push of a button

Unpause
Resuming Internet access after being paused

Location ▶
Keep track of your family and their mobile devices. See where your family's mobile devices are at a point in time with the tap of a button. Kids get notified when you request their location.

Rewards ▶
Provide extra online time for your family

Usage ▶
Compare online time for each profile across all devices

Popular Apps & Websites
A popular online service made up of sites and apps

Site
An individual source of online content

Category
Collection of sites/platforms sharing a common purpose

History ▶
Detailed breakdown of every site visited by a profile across all devices

Feature	Description
Bedtime ▶	Schedule overnight offline time for each family member to make late-night scrolling a thing of the past
Filter ▶	Ability to match each family member's age and interests with age-appropriate online content
	Manage Based on a set of pre-determined rules, network traffic is controlled
	Unmanage Online content can be freely accessed, and it won't contribute to daily Time Limits or appear in Usage & History
	Allowed Content is tracked and managed by Circle
	Not Allowed Content from this source is blocked by Circle
Time Limits ▶	Limit daily online time for platforms, categories, and total online time across all devices
Focus Time ▶	Preset time offline for the important moments like homework or dinner with the family

Term	Description
Device	Any Internet-connected equipment (smartphone, tablet, laptop, gaming console, etc.); plus smart home appliances ("IoT" devices): smart TVs, Wi-Fi speakers, and thermostats
	Kid device Any Internet-connected device that you manage with the Circle App, not just your kids' devices
	Unassigned device Devices not assigned to a profile are automatically unmanaged by Circle
Profiles	Circle settings are shared across all devices assigned to a family member profile
Network	Wi-Fi, ethernet, or cellular data source used to access the Internet
Router	Device that distributes Internet to multiple devices, usually over Wi-Fi

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Getting started

The Circle App

Install the Circle Parental Controls App

Apple iOS 12 or newer

Android 6.0 (Marshmallow) or newer

To find the app, search **Circle Parental Controls** in the App Store (iOS) or Google Play (Android)
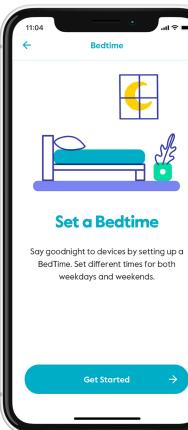
Download on the **App Store**

GET IT ON **Google Play**

Follow the in-app instructions to continue

I, Create your Circle Account
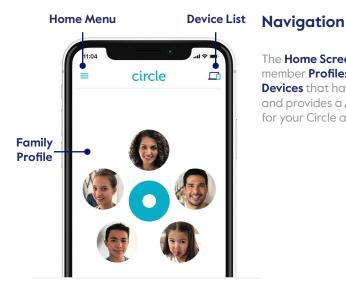
2. Set up the App
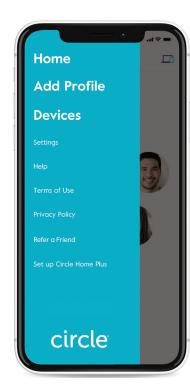
3. Set up Circle Home Plus

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Using the Circle App

The Home Screen

Home Menu   **Device List**

Family Profile

Navigation

The **Home Screen** lets you see the family member **Profiles** you have set up, the **Devices** that have been added to Circle, and provides a **Menu** with more options for your Circle account.

Menu

The **Menu** provides quick access to additional account **Settings** for your Circle login and hardware, access to **Legal** and **Help** resources, and the opportunity to tell your friends and family about Circle through our **Refer a Friend** program.

Profiles

Create profiles for every family member, so their Circle settings are shared across all devices.

To view a profile

Tap on a profile from the home screen. From here you can see their name, photo, and a summary of their Circle settings.

Tap **edit** in the top right corner of the screen to change the name or picture.
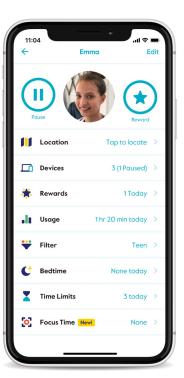
> You can also delete the profile from here.

> Tap **done** to save changes or **cancel** to go back without saving your changes.

Profile features

To view or makes changes to the profile settings, tap any of the features displayed in the profile.

To learn about the features listed on the profile screen, continue to the next section.

To add a mobile device to the profile, tap on Devices and then add a mobile device.

Devices

From the home screen, you can find a list of all Circle devices by tapping the **devices** icon in the top right portion of the screen. From the profile screen, you can find a list of all assigned devices by selecting **devices.**

Tap on any device from the device list to see the device settings, where you'll find:

The assigned profile (edit by tapping the text)

The device name (edit by tapping the text)

The manufacturer and device ID — which can help you identify the device if you can't figure out which is which

If it's a kid device (with the Circle App installed and configured), you'll see the VPN status.

The option to **remove device,** which deletes this device from Circle

If you don't want to manage this device with Circle, set it to unmanaged.

A pause button, just for this single device

Dashboard

The dashboard is where your family can check their online time for the day, and find other helpful information.

Finding the dashboard

If you've assigned a family member's device to a profile, they can use the dashboard from the Circle App or a web browser by visiting dashboard.meetcircle.com.

What's on the dashboard

On the dashboard, you'll see information for the various Circle features you've enabled for that family member. There's also a general profile card, where you can see the device name associated with Circle. Finding the device name can be helpful for identifying devices if you're not sure which is which.

Dashboard push notifications

Push notifications let your family members know about changes to their Internet access throughout the day from Circle. They'll be notified about Circle features like Pause, Time Limits, Focus Times, Bedtimes, and more.

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Features

Parental controls, right at your fingertips

Simplify how you manage your family's online screen time. Circle's features let you set limits, filter content, and keep tabs on every connected device.

Filter

Set online content filters that match each family member's age and interests. When setting a filter, you first must select a filter level as a starting place, which you can always customize to be the right fit for each family member.

To edit a family member's filter, tap on their profile, then select **filter.**

Filter levels

Kid

Grants access to kid-safe experiences, like the education category, but filters out content not appropriate for children (most restrictive level)
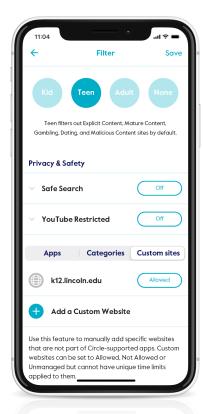
Teen

Grants access to most general-use platforms and categories, without mature or adult-oriented content

Adult

Grants access to nearly all platforms, categories, and apps, though explicit content is filtered out by default

None

Means that Circle won't filter content, track usage or history, or limit time online for any assigned devices

Filter settings

After you select a filter level, you can customize it by setting content to **allowed, not allowed,** or **unmanaged** by tapping the text-box across from the platform or category name.

Allowed	Content from this source is available and tracked by Circle
Not allowed	Content is restricted by the filter
Unmanaged	Internet traffic is allowed to freely come and go from this site, even if Circle is set on Pause, Bedtime, or Focus Time. Traffic to any unmanaged site does not count toward Time Limits.
Custom Sites	Tapping the **Custom Sites** section on the right lets you create a filter setting for an individual site. Follow the steps to type in the name of the site and pick a filter setting for it.

Privacy & safety

Safe search	Filters sexually-explicit content from search results in Google, Bing and DuckDuckGo.
YouTube restricted	When enabled, enforces an optional YouTube setting to filter out potentially mature videos and livestreaming.

Filter

Categories

Category descriptions are intended to describe the types of content Circle will filter.

Entertainment

Arts & Entertainment
Visual arts, literature, humor, film, arts venues, and more

Music
Audio streaming and downloading, artist sites, and more

Online Games
Video games and board game sites

Sports & Recreation
Sports media, professional teams, and recreation

Video
Video streaming and downloading

School & work

Business
Employment, job postings, finance, and industry services

Education
Instructional content, teaching, educational institutions, and career prep

Science & Technology
Physical and social sciences as well as computers and artificial intelligence

Social

Chat & Forums
Messaging services, online chat, bulletin boards, and forums

Social Media
Personal and professional networking communities

Services

App Stores & Downloads
Digital software distribution for apps, programs, and more

Email
Electronic mail providers

Lifestyle

Blogs & Personal Sites
Blogging platforms and sites with personal content

Government & Politics
Government services, politics, lobbying, and military

Health
Personal health and fitness

Home & Family
Cooking, parenting, home-decorating, and more

Issues & Lifestyles
Social issues, philosophy, religion, and more

News
Journalism, commentary, and other reporting

Online Shopping
Ecommerce retailers and classified ads

Travel
Maps, travel, and tourism

Photo
Photography information and sharing

Adult

Dating
Online dating and match-making

Explicit Content
Graphic and explicit adult content

Gambling
Betting sites, lotteries, casinos, racetracks and more

Mature
Adult-specific content (age 18+ or 21+)

VPNs & Proxies
Internet privacy and network routing services

Certain categories are not allowed by default based on the filter level set. For a full list of apps and sites that Circle covers, please read more.

View Full List

Time Limits

Limit online time for individual apps, sites, or categories. You can set limits by day, category of content or for individual apps and sites.

To set Time Limits

Tap on a profile from the home screen, then select **Time Limits** from the feature list.

Turn Time Limits on by tapping the **enable** switch in the top right.

Set an all-day cap by tapping **Daily Time Limit** at the top of the list.

Set an all-day cap by tapping the selector beneath the profile picture.

Create an alternate schedule for certain days of the week by tapping the **add weekend icon** at the top of the screen.

Manage time as a reward instead of giving a set limit every day by selecting by **reward** only for a **Time Limit**.

Bedtime

Make late-night scrolling a thing of the past. Bedtime shuts off Internet access for every device assigned to a profile through the night, so everybody in your family can get the sleep they need without distraction. You can even set a separate weekend Bedtime!

When setting Bedtime, the day of the week represents the night a Bedtime begins. Typical weekday Bedtime spans Sunday to Thursday, with weekend nights on Friday and Saturday.

To set a Bedtime

Tap on a profile from the home screen, then select **Bedtime** from the feature list.

Turn Bedtime on by tapping the **enable** switch in the top right.

Set the Bedtime by tapping on the days to toggle them on or off, and tap **Bedtime** and **Awake** times to set the clock.

Tap **add weekend** to set an alternate Bedtime for certain days of the week.

Press **save** to finish.

Focus Time

Create a customized screen time schedule that benefits everyone in your family. Preset time offline for the important moments like practicing piano or dinner with the family.
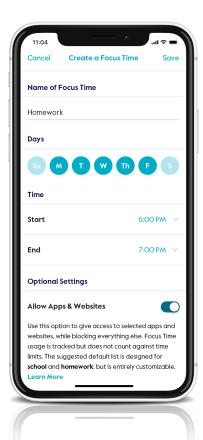
To set an Focus Time

Tap on a profile from the home screen, then select **Focus Time** from the feature list.

Tap the "**+**" or select from your existing Focus Time below.

Set the Focus Time by typing in a name for the Focus Time, selecting which days you'd like to activate, and scroll through the **start** and **end** times to set the clock.

Press **done** to finish, then **save** to keep all your changes for this profile.

Pause the Internet®

Pause the Internet® with the tap of a button for individual family members or the whole house. Tapping again will unpause to resume Internet. Unmanaged devices will always maintain Internet access.

Home Pause

To pause all Circle devices at once, press the pause button on the home screen, then confirm. Press the same button again to unpause.

Profile Pause

To pause a family member, tap on their profile from the home screen, then tap the pause button in the top-left corner of the screen. Press the same button again to unpause.

Device Pause

To pause a single device, tap the devices icon in the top-right of the home screen, then tap on a device from the list, then press the pause button on the bottom of the screen. Press the same button again to unpause.

Location

Find the current location for a family member's mobile devices. To use **Location**, the devices you want to locate must have the Circle App and VPN installed with location services enabled. Notification services must also be enabled on the parents' and kids' devices. Additionally, Location will only work once the mobile device is assigned to the kid's profile that you wish to location.

To locate a family member's device

Tap on a profile from the home screen, then select **location** from the feature list.

You might have to pick from a list of devices to locate.

Wait for Circle to locate the device (this may take a minute or two).

When the device has been found, you'll see a marker on the map.

At the bottom of the screen, you'll see the time when the location was received.

Tap **refresh** to see their location again.

Locating a device will only work if location services are enabled on the device you are locating, and Circle will notify you if this is the reason a device cannot be located.

Circle does not store a history of previous locations.

History

History displays a chronological list of sites viewed by a profile. Toggle between **Filtered** and **Visited** to see which sites were prevented or accessed.

To see a family member's History

Tap on a profile from the home screen, then select **History** in the feature list.

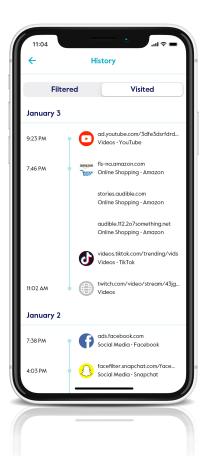Select **visited** to see sites that a family member accessed.

Toggle over to **filtered** to see sites that Circle blocked because of a family member's filter settings.

To take action on a History entry, tap on it and select from the following options

Visit website, which opens your web browser and takes you to the home page of the site (not all sites support this feature).

> Set as allowed
> Set as not allowed
> Set as unmanaged

You can edit any of these custom filters by selecting **Filter** from the profile features list, then tapping **custom filter** on the bottom of the screen.

Usage

Compare time online today, last week, or months past while viewing the total time spent online per category and platform.

See a list of sites and platforms by tapping on a category. A pop-up menu will allow you to take action on a particular category that contributed total online time.

You may notice total online time does not always match the sum of usage from visible categories. This is because each platform's algorithm is unique and may contribute differently to active screen time versus background traffic.

To see a family member's Usage

To see a family member's Usage, Select **Usage** in the feature list.

At the top of the screen, you can select between usage by day, week, or month.
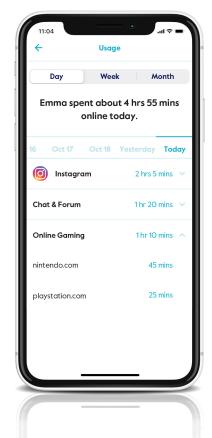
Next, you'll see a summary of total time.

Below that, you can scroll from the current period and into past usage.

Take action on a Usage entry by following the same steps outlined above for History.

In addition to the popular apps and websites visible by default, Circle can help you manage 100s more through Usage.

Learn more about hidden apps and websites.

11:04

← Usage

| Day | Week | Month |

Emma spent about 4 hrs 55 mins online today.

16   Oct 17   Oct 18   Yesterday   **Today**

Instagram   2 hrs 5 mins   ⌄

Chat & Forum   1 hr 20 mins   ⌄

Online Gaming   1 hr 10 mins   ⌃

nintendo.com   45 mins

playstation.com   25 mins

Rewards

Rewards are an easy way to send family members extra online time for an individual day. Rewards expire at midnight, so original time limits are reset the following day.

To send a Reward

Tap on a profile from the home screen, then tap the star in the top right corner, or select **Rewards** from the feature list.

Pick from three types of rewards: Extend Time Limit, Late Bedtime, or Disable Focus Time.

Set the Reward based on the existing settings, and press **send** to finish.

Types of Rewards

Extend Time Limit to add additional time to an existing Time Limit

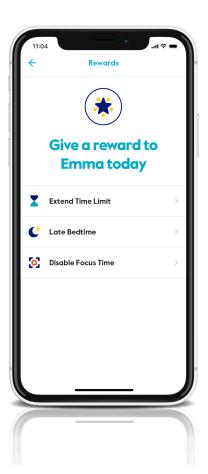**Late Bedtime** to set a new start time for that night's Bedtime

Disable Focus Time to remove a regularly scheduled Focus Time

To edit or cancel a Reward

Tap on a profile from the home screen and select **Rewards** from the feature list.

To edit a Reward, tap the **edit existing rewards** button to make the appropriate changes.

To cancel a Reward, tap the **edit existing rewards** button and swipe to delete it from the list.

11:04

← Rewards

Give a reward to Emma today

⧖ Extend Time Limit   ›

☾ Late Bedtime   ›

⊡ Disable Focus Time   ›

05

Circle Home Plus device

Wi-Fi devices & Circle Home Plus

Circle Home Plus pairs directly with your router and inspects all the non-encrypted Internet traffic coming through your home network. You won't need to install software or adjust settings on your devices to manage them.

LED	**Solid light** On & paired	**Slowly blinking** On, but not paired
	Solid off Off	**Quickly blinking** Resetting, low battery or other internal error
	Double blink Not paired correctly, usually needs a reboot	
Power Button	**To power on** Press once	**To power off** Hold for ten seconds, or until LED turns off
Battery	Internal battery keeps Home Plus online when USB power is unavailable	

Wi-Fi devices & Circle Home Plus

When you set up Circle Home Plus, you'll have access to a whole new group of connected devices to mange with Circle: your family's Wi-Fi devices.

New devices joining Wi-Fi

Circle Home Plus will discover new Wi-Fi devices when they join your network. You can choose if these devices are set to the Home profile or left as Unmanaged.

The home profile

The home profile is where all shared family devices live. You set a baseline filter, plus any Focus Times of Bedtimes to apply to all these devices. You can use this home profile any way you'd like by assigning the devices that make sense for your home.

Network gear & smart home devices

Leave all network gear and smart home devices unmanaged. Any interference with Circle Hone Plus may cause unexpeted issues with these utilities and services. Make sure mesh Wi-Fi extenders and network fabric, as well as Internet of Things ("IoT") devices, like smart appliances, are never assigned to a profile.

Troubleshooting Circle Home Plus

If you don't have a Circle Home Plus, open the Circle App and press **get Circle Home Plus** from the home screen menu.

If Circle Home Plus isn't pairing with your network via ethernet, make sure the mobile device with the Circle App (most likely your smartphone) is connected to the network created by your router. This way, Circle can verify that the Circle Home Plus you've plugged in is associated with your Circle account.

If you don't have a spare ethernet port in your router, just skip ethernet pairing by tapping **pair with Wi-Fi instead** during setup.

If you skip ethernet pairing, you'll have to connect your phone to the Circle Home Plus hotspot. Follow the instructions in the app, and make sure that you stay connected to the Circle Home Plus hotspot, even though you won't have an Internet connection on your phone for the moment.

If Circle Home Plus isn't pairing with your network via Wi-Fi, make sure that you've connected to the Circle Home Plus hotspot (if the app required you to do so) before continuing, or that you've correctly entered your Wi-Fi password credentials into the Circle App.

If you paired Circle Home Plus over ethernet but don't use Wi-Fi, or you're unable to pair wirelessly, just tap **skip Wi-Fi pairing** during setup.

If your Circle Home Plus seems to be creating problems for your home network, try temporarily disabling it from the settings screen (found by tapping the menu button in the top-left corner of the home screen, then **settings**, then **disable Circle Home Plus**).

If Circle Home Plus is offline or not working, try rebooting your router and Circle. Set up again by opening the **menu** and select **Remove Circle Home Plus** then **Resetting Circle**.

If the problem goes away after you've disabled Circle Home Plus, check to make sure that all networking equipment (like a mesh network extender or other network fabric) and smart home devices (like smart thermostats and light bulbs) are set to unmanaged.

Helpful resources to get the most from Circle:

FAQs

Feature Guides

Networking & Compatibility

Troubleshooting Resources

circle®