

# Augmented reality

## Parent Guide

Everything you need to know about augmented reality technology

### What is it?

Augmented reality is the process of **enhancing the everyday world** with sensory technology.

Whereas **virtual reality (VR)** completely replaces your world with a simulated one, **augmented reality (AR)** adds to your everyday experience.

**It's the difference** between putting on a VR headset and having your room **become a fantasy forest**, and looking through AR glasses at your **regular room but seeing fantasy creatures overlaid onto it**.

AR can be used **through lots of different devices**. The technology works through a smartphone, but some headsets and glasses offer **a more detailed experience**.

### What is AR used for?

AR is hugely popular in the **gaming industry**.

One of the games that started the trend is **Pokémon Go**, a game that encourages children to get outside in search of Pokémon overlaid onto their real-world surroundings.

AR technology is also used on **Snapchat** and **other social media platforms**. This lets you take a photo and **overlay an effect over it**, making the subject look like a cat, alien, Father Christmas and many more.

AR technology also has lots of other uses, for example in medicine, translation and sports broadcasting.

### What are the risks of AR?

AR is an exciting development but there are **some risks to keep in mind**. When Pokémon Go was first released, there were lots of news stories about **children walking into traffic** because they were so focused on finding Pokémon.

In reality, **these instances were very rare** – but make sure your child understands the importance of **staying alert** when they're using AR technology.

Seeing **Instagram or Snapchat** posts use AR filters can lead to some young people feeling insecure about their own appearance. Remind your child that AR technology can **dramatically change a person's appearance** and that what they're seeing isn't always real.

### What else should I do?

Your child may already be interested in AR technology and anxious to get a headset or download a new AR app, and this is **something to encourage**.

Try to **explore the different kinds of tech or games available with them**, and make sure you offer a **supportive space** for them to come to with any questions or worries.