

Online Grooming

Know the signs

Protect yourself

What Is Online Grooming?

Online grooming is when someone, usually an adult, pretends to be friendly or romantic to gain your trust, then slowly pressures you into doing sexual things, like sending photos or videos, or even meeting in real life.

Groomers might:

- ➔ Say “You’re so mature” or “You really get me”
- ➔ Ask you to keep your chats a secret
- ➔ Offer gifts or attention
- ➔ Ask for nudes or push sexual talk
- ➔ Make you feel guilty or scared if you say no

**It’s not flirting. It’s not love.
It’s a crime.**

They are using control and manipulation. You have done nothing wrong, even if you said yes or shared something. Groomers make victims feel trapped or ashamed, so they won’t speak out. That’s how they stay in control.

“Even if you feel close to them, if they’re asking you to do something that makes you uncomfortable, it’s grooming.”

- ThinkUKnow / CEOP

How to Spot a Groomer

Be alert if someone:

- Gets very close to you very quickly
- Starts talking about sex or relationships early
- Sends you pictures or asks for photos
- Wants to move to private chats or video calls fast
- Tries to make you feel sorry for them or guilt-trips you

What you can do

Don't share pics or vids – even if you trust them

Block & report them – use app tools or go to www.ceop.police.

Talk to someone you trust – a teacher, parent, school nurse, or helpline

Save evidence – messages or screenshots can help stop them hurting

Know you are never alone – thousands of young people have been through this and got support

If You've Already Shared Something...

Please don't panic. **You are not to blame.** Groomers are experts at getting what they want by lying, pressuring, or pretending.

It's never too late to tell someone and get help.

Support services that get it.

CEOP (Report Exploitation) – www.ceop.police.uk
Childline – 0800 1111 – Talk online or by phone, anytime
The Mix – www.themix.org.uk – Advice for under 25s

The Cyber Helpline – www.thecyberhelpline.com – Especially if you're being blackmailed

Are You Pressuring Others Online?

If you're:

- Asking for nudes
- Threatening to expose photos
- Pretending to be someone you're not

"Some people think it's just a joke. Others say 'everyone does it.' But sexual communication with a minor is a criminal offence."

- CEOP / NCA

You are breaking the law.

You could face a police investigation, criminal record, and life-changing consequences.

It's never too late to change how you treat others online. Get support. Learn. Apologise. Choose to do better.