BILL'S HOME TECH
Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

BILL'S COMPLETE MANUALS

Kids' Tablets

Fire Kids, iPad and Android tablets for children — profiles, limits, cases and gifts, explained in plain English

A plain-English guide for parents and grandparents

Take your time — you can't break it

Written for you by Bill — Bill's Home Tech

(330) 200-8042 · BillsHomeTech.com

For Amazon Fire Kids, iPad & Android tablets · facts current November 2026

What's Inside

This is your guide to a tablet for a child: choosing one, setting it up safely, sharing your own with a grandchild, and keeping little ears, screens and wallets protected. Read it in any order and at your own pace — there is no test. Every setting comes with what it actually does *for you*, and slow, step-by-step directions. Tablet menus change with updates, so when a button has moved, look for the same words nearby.

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PART 1

Getting Started

The three kinds of kids' tablets, the handful of words you'll see on every box and screen, and the one question to settle before you buy: whose account will it be?

CHAPTER 1

A Note from Bill

Hello, and welcome. A tablet is one of the most popular gifts a child can get, and very often it's a grandparent doing the giving. It's a wonderful present: books, drawing, music, video calls with Grandpa. It also comes with questions. Which one? Whose account? How do I stop the YouTube marathons and the surprise charges? This guide answers those questions, one step at a time.

I'm Bill. I've spent more than 30 years working with technology, and these days I help families here in Portage County feel at home with theirs. I wrote this guide the way I'd explain it at your kitchen table: patiently, in plain English, and without trying to sell you anything.

What this guide will do for you

- Help you choose between an Amazon Fire Kids tablet, an iPad and an Android tablet.
- Walk you through setting each one up so a child gets their own safe space.
- Show you how to set time limits, a bedtime, age filters and purchase approvals.
- Explain Amazon Kids+ and the Fire Kids worry-free guarantee honestly, including the costs.
- Cover the practical bits: cases, screen protectors, charging and headphones that protect hearing.
- Help grandparents give a tablet as a gift without stepping on the parents' toes, and share their own tablet with a grandchild safely.

The big promise: you can't break anything

Every setting in this guide can be changed back. A time limit that's too strict can be loosened. A profile set up for the wrong age can be edited. The worst that usually happens is a child who can't open a game for a few minutes — and they'll certainly let you know.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why this matters

An hour spent setting a tablet up properly saves months of arguments, accidental purchases and worry. Once the rules are in the tablet, the tablet does the remembering for you.

GOOD TO KNOW

This guide's neighbors

Bill's separate guides on the **Amazon Fire Tablet** and the **Android Tablet** cover those devices for grown-ups: the home screen, apps, email and so on. This guide sticks to the child's side of things.

And I'm only a phone call away

If anything here leaves you unsure, call me at **(330) 200-8042**. There's no such thing as a silly question.

Let's start by sorting out which kind of tablet fits your child.

— Bill

CHAPTER 2

Which Kids' Tablet Fits?

Almost every children's tablet in a store falls into one of three families. Each has a different idea of what a child needs, and a very different price.

Amazon Fire Kids and Fire Kids Pro

A regular Fire tablet sold with a chunky protective case, a two-year replacement guarantee, and a period of **Amazon Kids+** — a library of kids' books, shows, games and apps — included. The plain **Fire Kids** models are aimed at ages 3 to 7; **Fire Kids Pro** models at ages 6 to 12. They are usually the least expensive choice.

Amazon Kids Tablet 8 and 11 (new in October 2026)

Amazon's newest children's tablets drop the Fire name. They run Android with the Google Play store (downloads need a parent's approval), come in an ages 3+ and an ages 6+ version, include a case and a year of Amazon Kids+, and cost more than the older Fire Kids models. Chapter 5 compares them.

iPad

Apple's tablet, the same one adults use. It has no special kids' edition: you make it a child's tablet with a **child Apple Account** and **Screen Time**. It costs much more, lasts many years and gets updates for a long time. It's a natural fit if the parents already use iPhones.

Android tablets

Tablets from Samsung, Lenovo, Google and others. A child gets their own supervised Google Account, managed by a parent with the free **Google Family Link** app. A good middle road, especially if the parents use Android phones.

	Amazon kids' tablets	iPad	Android
Who it's aimed at	Ages 3–7 / 6–12 (Fire); 3+ / 6+ (Kids Tablet)	Any age, with controls	Any age, with controls
Kids' content	Amazon Kids+ included for a while	App Store, with approval	Play Store, with approval
Protective case	Included	Buy separately	Buy separately

	Amazon kids' tablets	iPad	Android
Breakage cover	Two-year guarantee (Fire Kids); one-year warranty (Kids Tablet)	Optional AppleCare	Varies by maker
Parent controls in	Amazon Parent Dashboard	Screen Time (parent's iPhone or iPad)	Family Link app
Cost	Lowest	Highest	In between

TIP

Match the family's phones

The parents will be the ones approving apps and adjusting limits, usually from their own phone. An iPad is easiest to manage from an iPhone, an Android tablet from an Android phone, and a Fire tablet from either, using Amazon's Parent Dashboard.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing the three families means you can walk into a store, or browse online, and rule out two thirds of the shelf in a minute.

CHAPTER 3

The Words You'll See

Kids' tablets come with their own little vocabulary. Here it is in plain English. You don't have to memorize it — come back here whenever a word puzzles you.

Word	What it means
Profile	A separate space on one tablet for one person, with its own apps, books and rules.
Amazon Kids	The free child-profile feature on Fire tablets (it used to be called FreeTime).
Amazon Kids+	Amazon's paid library of kids' books, videos, games and apps. A period is included with Fire Kids tablets; after that it renews for a fee unless you cancel.
Parent Dashboard	Amazon's free website and app where parents set limits and see activity for each child profile.
Worry-free guarantee	Amazon's two-year replacement promise on Fire Kids and Kids Pro tablets.
Amazon Kids Tablet	Amazon's newer (October 2026) children's tablets, running Android with Google Play and Amazon's parent controls.
Apple Account	The sign-in for an iPad (it used to be called an Apple ID).
Family Sharing	Apple's way of linking up to six family members, so a parent can manage a child's account.
Screen Time	Apple's built-in time limits and content controls.
Ask to Buy	Apple's setting that sends a child's purchase requests to a parent for approval.
Guided Access	An iPad setting that locks the screen to one app, handy when lending yours.
Family Link	Google's free app for supervising a child's Android tablet.

GOOD TO KNOW

Same idea, three companies

Amazon says **child profile**, Apple says **child account**, Google says **supervised account**. They all mean the same thing: the child's own space, with a grown-up holding the keys.

CHAPTER 4

Before You Buy: Whose Account Will It Be?

This is the one question that saves the most trouble later. Every tablet is tied to a grown-up's account: an Amazon account, an Apple Account or a Google Account. That grown-up is the one who pays for things, approves requests and resets forgotten PINs. Decide who it is before the box is opened.

The usual choices

- **The parents' account.** Best in most cases. The parents set the rules, approve purchases from their own phones, and any books or apps already bought in their account are available.
- **The grandparent's account.** Fine if the tablet will live at Grandma's house, or if the grandparents are the main caregivers. Remember: you'll be the one getting the approval requests.
- **A brand-new account just for the tablet.** Usually a mistake. Nobody remembers the password, and it can't share anything the family already owns.

Questions to ask the parents first

1. Do you already use iPhones, Android phones, or Amazon Echo and Fire devices? (Chapter 2.)
2. Do you have a Prime membership or Family Sharing already set up?
3. Would you rather I set it up, or hand it over in the box?
4. What rules do you want — a daily limit, a bedtime, no web browser?

FROM BILL

My honest advice

If you're a grandparent buying the tablet, buy it, wrap it, and let the parents set it up with their own account — or set it up *together*. Chapter 21 walks through the gift side step by step.

HEADS UP

Amazon devices can arrive linked to the buyer

A tablet ordered on your Amazon account may already be connected to *your* account when it arrives. If it's meant for another family's account, mark the order as a gift at checkout, or remove the tablet from your account afterward (Chapter 21).

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Settling the account question up front means the right person gets the purchase requests, the right person can fix a forgotten PIN, and nobody has to start over in a month.

PART 2

Amazon Fire Kids & Kids Tablets

Amazon's tablets made for children: Fire Kids, Kids Pro and the new Kids Tablets, setting one up, what Amazon Kids+ really costs, and the two-year worry-free guarantee.

CHAPTER 5

Fire Kids, Kids Pro or the New Kids Tablet?

Amazon has long sold two kinds of children's Fire tablet, and in October 2026 it added a third family, the **Amazon Kids Tablet**. Inside the Fire models are ordinary Fire tablets; the difference is in the case, the screens the child sees, and how much freedom they get.

Fire Kids — for ages 3 to 7

- Comes in a thick, colorful **Kid-Proof Case** with a big bumper and a fold-out stand.
- Bright, picture-heavy screens designed for children who are just learning to read.
- Sizes: **Fire 7 Kids**, **Fire HD 8 Kids** and **Fire HD 10 Kids** (some stores list it as Fire 10 Kids) — the number is roughly the screen size in inches.

Fire Kids Pro — for ages 6 to 12

- A slimmer, more grown-up-looking case.
- A built-in web browser with filters to help block grown-up sites.
- A kids' app store where the child can browse and **request** apps; a parent approves them.
- Sizes: **Fire HD 8 Kids Pro** and **Fire HD 10 Kids Pro**.

Amazon Kids Tablet 8 and Kids Tablet 11 — new in October 2026

- An **8.7-inch** and an **11-inch** size, each in an **ages 3+** and an **ages 6+** version with a case to match.
- They run Android with the **Google Play** store. Parents decide what can be downloaded, using Amazon's **Parent Dashboard**, which comes preinstalled.
- A year of **Amazon Kids+** included.
- A **one-year limited warranty** — not the two-year worry-free guarantee of the Fire Kids models (Chapter 8).
- Prices start at **$229.99** for the Kids Tablet 8 and **$329.99** for the Kids Tablet 11 (Amazon's launch prices, as of November 2026).

What the Fire Kids models include

- A period of **Amazon Kids+** (Chapter 7). Listings say 6 months on some models and a year on others, so read the box.
- The two-year **worry-free guarantee** (Chapter 8).
- No ads in the child's profile, and full parent controls through the **Parent Dashboard** (Chapters 9 to 11).

What they cost

Fire Kids tablets go on sale often, so their price changes from week to week; they generally cost well under the new Kids Tablets. If you're not in a hurry, waiting for a sale is perfectly reasonable. Check the price on the day, and check which model you're actually getting.

TIP

Fire Kids or the new Kids Tablet?

The new Kids Tablets are faster, bigger and open up Google Play, which matters to an older child who wants particular apps. The Fire Kids models cost less and carry the two-year replacement guarantee, which matters a great deal for a young child. For a preschooler, the guarantee usually wins.

TIP

Which size?

The 8-inch is the popular middle choice: big enough for picture books and video calls, light enough for small hands. The 10-inch is nicer for reading and watching, and heavier. The 7-inch is the budget pick, with a smaller, less sharp screen.

HEADS UP

A Pro case is less forgiving

Fire Kids Pro cases are slimmer than the chunky Fire Kids bumper. For a toddler who throws things, the younger model's case gives more protection, even if the child is close to 6.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Picking the right version means the child gets screens that suit their age, and you don't pay for freedoms they aren't ready for — or hold back an older child who is.

CHAPTER 6

Setting Up a New Fire Kids Tablet

The tablet is set up first as a grown-up's tablet, signed in to a grown-up's Amazon account, and then a child profile is added. Allow half an hour and do it before the child is in the room.

Step by step

1. Charge the tablet fully with the cable in the box. Some models don't include a wall plug (Chapter 19).
2. Hold the power button until the screen lights up. Choose your language.
3. Join your home Wi-Fi. Have the Wi-Fi password handy.
4. Sign in with the **grown-up's Amazon account** — the one you settled on in Chapter 4.
5. When asked, set a **PIN or password** for the grown-up side of the tablet. This is what keeps the child from wandering out of their own profile. Write it down.
6. When the tablet offers to add a child profile, say yes. Enter the child's first name and birthdate, or import a child profile the family already has on its Amazon account.
7. Let the tablet download any updates. It may restart once or twice.
8. Hand it over — or, better, explore the child's profile together first.

If you skipped the child profile

1. On the grown-up side, swipe down from the top and tap **Settings** (the gear).
2. Look for **Profiles & Family Library** (the wording can shift a little with updates).
3. Choose to add a child profile, enter the details, and save.

GOOD TO KNOW

Up to four children

One Amazon family can have up to four child profiles, and they work across that family's compatible Amazon devices — Fire tablets, Echo speakers, Kindles and Fire TV.

HEADS UP

Use the real birthdate

The birthdate decides which books, videos and apps appear. A made-up age means the wrong things show up, in either direction.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Twenty minutes of setup gives the child a space of their own, with no ads, no store, and no way into the grown-up side — and you can set the rest of the rules from your own phone afterward.

CHAPTER 7

Amazon Kids+: What It Is & What It Costs

Amazon Kids+ is a subscription library of thousands of children's books, audiobooks, videos, games and apps, chosen for age. Fire Kids tablets come with a period of it included. When that runs out, it renews automatically for a fee unless someone cancels.

What the child gets

- A large, rotating library sorted by age, with no ads and no in-app purchases inside the Kids+ titles.
- Content for up to four child profiles on the family's account.
- Use on Fire tablets, and on Amazon's Fire TV, Echo and Kindle devices.

What it costs

Prime members pay less than everyone else. Amazon's October 2026 announcement lists ongoing subscriptions starting at **$7.99 a month for Prime members** and **$8.99 a month** for others (as of November 2026). Prices have changed several times over the years, so check the current price in the Parent Dashboard before the included period ends. Amazon also offers yearly plans.

Pausing or canceling

1. On a computer, open the **Parent Dashboard** website (Chapter 9).
2. Choose **More**, then **Amazon Kids+ Subscription**, and pick the cancel option. Follow the prompts to confirm.
3. Or, on Amazon's website, go to **Your Memberships & Subscriptions**, choose Amazon Kids+, and cancel there.
4. The subscription keeps working until the end of the period you've already paid for.

GOOD TO KNOW

Can't cancel from the phone app

Amazon says canceling isn't possible from the Parent Dashboard *mobile app*. Use the website, or Your Memberships & Subscriptions.

HEADS UP

Kids+ is made for Amazon's own devices

Kids+ is designed around Amazon's tablets, Kindles, Echo speakers and Fire TV, and its app is no longer offered in Apple's App Store. If the child will have an iPad, Kids+ isn't the subscription for them.

TIP

Put a reminder on the calendar

When you set up the tablet, put a note on your calendar a week before the included Kids+ period ends. Then decide calmly whether it's worth keeping, instead of finding out from a charge.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Kids+ means you don't have to hunt for, judge and pay for every book and game. When the child outgrows it, you know exactly how to stop paying.

CHAPTER 8

The Worry-Free Guarantee

Children drop things. Amazon knows it, and backs its Fire Kids and Fire Kids Pro tablets with a **two-year worry-free guarantee**: if the tablet breaks, return it and Amazon will replace it.

How it compares

Tablet	Cover from Amazon
Fire Kids / Fire Kids Pro	Two-year worry-free guarantee: if it breaks, Amazon replaces it
Amazon Kids Tablet 8 / 11 (2026)	One-year limited warranty
Regular Fire tablets	A shorter limited warranty, which varies by model

HEADS UP

The new Kids Tablets are different

The October 2026 Amazon Kids Tablet 8 and 11 come with a one-year limited warranty, not the two-year worry-free guarantee. If replacement cover matters most, a Fire Kids model, or a separate protection plan, is the way to get it. Read the product page before you buy.

If it breaks

1. Sign in to the Amazon account the tablet was bought on.
2. Find the order in **Your Orders**, or contact Amazon's device support through the website.
3. Say it's a Fire Kids tablet covered by the worry-free guarantee, and describe what happened.
4. Follow Amazon's instructions for returning the broken tablet and getting a replacement.

TIP

Keep the order handy

The guarantee is tied to the purchase. If a grandparent bought the tablet, the grandparent's Amazon account holds the order. Write the order date down in the cheat-sheet (Chapter 27).

GOOD TO KNOW

Bought somewhere other than Amazon?

Fire Kids tablets bought at Target, Best Buy and other stores still come with the guarantee in the box, but keep the receipt. Amazon may ask for proof of purchase.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

For two years, a cracked screen is an inconvenience, not the price of a new tablet. That alone is a good reason to pick a Fire Kids model over a plain Fire tablet for a young child.

PART 3

Amazon's Parent Controls

The free Parent Dashboard, daily time limits and a bedtime, learning goals, age filters, and approving the apps a child asks for — all from your own phone or computer.

CHAPTER 9

The Amazon Parent Dashboard

The **Parent Dashboard** is Amazon's free control center for child profiles. It works for Fire Kids tablets, the new Amazon Kids Tablets, and child profiles on any Fire tablet. You can use it from a phone, a computer or the tablet itself, so the rules can be changed without taking the tablet away from the child.

Three ways in

- **On a computer:** go to **parents.amazon.com** and sign in with the grown-up's Amazon account.
- **On your phone:** install the free **Amazon Parent Dashboard** app (iPhone or Android) and sign in the same way.
- **On the tablet:** it comes preinstalled on the Amazon Kids Tablets. On Fire tablets, look for Amazon Kids or the Parent Dashboard on the grown-up side.

What you'll find there

- A list of each child's profiles. Tap a child to see their settings.
- **Activity**: which books, videos and apps the child has used, and for how long.
- **Time limits**, a bedtime and learning goals (Chapter 10).
- **Content and age filters**, and app requests to approve (Chapter 11).
- Things the child has made in apps such as Art Studio and Stories with Alexa.
- The **Amazon Kids+ Subscription** settings, under **More** (Chapter 7).

TIP

Use the activity view to start conversations

Rather than checking up, use the activity list to ask about what the child enjoyed: "I see you read the dinosaur book three times — what was the best part?" It turns monitoring into interest.

GOOD TO KNOW

Settings are per child

If two grandchildren share one tablet, each has their own profile and their own rules. Set each one up separately.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

You can adjust a bedtime from the grocery store, approve an app from the couch, and see how the week went, without a tug-of-war over the tablet.

CHAPTER 10

Time Limits, Bedtime & Learning Goals

This is the feature most families want first: a tablet that politely stops on its own. On Amazon's kids' tablets you can set a daily amount of screen time, a bedtime when the tablet won't open, and learning goals to meet each day.

Set a daily limit and a bedtime

1. Open the **Parent Dashboard** (Chapter 9) and choose the child.
2. Open that child's settings (often a gear icon) and find **Daily Goals & Time Limits**, or similar wording.
3. Set a **Bedtime**: the hours when the tablet can't be used, for example 7:30 p.m. to 7 a.m.
4. Set the **Total Screen Time** allowed per day. You can choose different amounts for school days and weekends.
5. Save. The new rules reach the tablet the next time it's on Wi-Fi.

Learning goals

You can also set **educational goals** — for example, 20 minutes of reading a day. Amazon's settings can hold back games and videos until the learning goal for the day is met, so reading comes first and cartoons come after. The exact wording of these settings changes with updates, so look for words like **goals** or **learn first**.

TIP

Start generous, then adjust

A limit that feels fair is one the child will accept. Start a little more generous than you think, watch the activity for a week, and tighten it gradually.

HEADS UP

The limits live in the profile

Time limits and the bedtime apply to the child's profile. If a child knows the grown-up PIN and switches to the grown-up side, none of the limits apply. Keep that PIN private (Chapter 6).

GOOD TO KNOW

"My tablet stopped working!"

When a limit or bedtime is reached, the profile simply locks until the next allowed time. Nothing is broken. You can add a little time for today from the Parent Dashboard if there's a good reason.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

The tablet becomes the one who says "time's up," so you don't have to. Bedtime arrives on time every night, even at Grandma's.

CHAPTER 11

Age Filters, Apps & the Web on Amazon Tablets

Amazon decides what a child sees in Kids+ by their age. You can nudge that age range up or down, add books and apps you already own, and approve the apps a child asks for.

Adjust the age filter

1. In the **Parent Dashboard**, choose the child and open their settings.
2. Find the **Amazon Kids+** content or age filter setting.
3. Widen or narrow the age range. A cautious child, or one who is easily frightened, may be happier with a younger range.

HEADS UP

What the age filter doesn't do

Amazon says the age filter controls only **Amazon Kids+** titles. It doesn't filter books or apps you add to the profile yourself, and it doesn't control apps from outside companies, which have their own settings.

Add things you already own

Books, apps and videos already bought on the family's Amazon account can be shared into a child's profile. In the Parent Dashboard, look for the option to **add content** for that child, pick the titles, and they'll appear on the tablet.

Approve app requests

On Fire Kids Pro and the Amazon Kids Tablets, a child can browse a store and **ask** for an app. Amazon sends the parent a notification, and nothing downloads until a parent approves it. Parents can also open up a wider selection of apps and games, such as Netflix, Zoom or Minecraft — those still need approval one by one. On the new Kids Tablets, the same approval covers downloads from Google Play.

The web browser

Fire Kids Pro and the Kids Tablets include a kids' web browser with filters that try to block grown-up websites. No filter is perfect. For a young child, many families simply leave the browser off, or allow only websites the parent has added.

TIP

Look before you approve

When an app request arrives, read what the app is, its age rating, and whether it has in-app purchases or chat with strangers. It's fine to say "let's look at it together first."

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

The child gets a little independence — they can find things they want — while you keep the final say on every download.

PART 4

An iPad for a Child

A child Apple Account in the family, Screen Time limits set from a parent's iPhone, Ask to Buy for every purchase, and Guided Access for lending your own iPad.

CHAPTER 12

Creating a Child Apple Account

An iPad becomes a child's iPad when it's signed in to a **child Apple Account** that belongs to a **Family Sharing** group. A parent in that group then manages the iPad from their own iPhone or iPad. Apple requires a child account for children under 13 in the U.S. (the age varies by country).

Who can create it

Only the family's **organizer** (the adult who started Family Sharing) or an adult marked as a **parent or guardian** can create a child account. Usually that's Mom or Dad, on their own iPhone.

Step by step, on the parent's iPhone or iPad

1. Open **Settings** and tap **Family**. (If Family Sharing isn't set up yet, the iPhone will offer to start it.)
2. Tap **Add Member**, then **Create Child Account**.
3. Enter the child's name and **real birth date**, and follow the prompts.
4. Choose the child's sign-in: an email address, a new @icloud.com address, or a Game Center nickname.
5. Accept the child-protection settings Apple offers. They're a good starting point.

Then sign in on the iPad

1. Turn on the new iPad and follow the setup screens.
2. When asked to sign in, use the **child's** Apple Account, not the parent's.
3. If the parent's iPhone is nearby, it may offer to help set up the iPad for the child. Accept it.

HEADS UP

Birth dates can't be fudged

The birth date decides which protections are on. Apple now lets a parent correct a wrong age on a child account, but it's better to get it right the first time.

GOOD TO KNOW

Apple ID is now Apple Account

Older instructions and boxes say "Apple ID." It's the same thing, renamed.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

The child gets their own iPad space, and the parent gets the controls — on their own phone, wherever they are.

CHAPTER 13

Screen Time on a Child's iPad

Screen Time is Apple's built-in set of limits and content controls. For a child account, a parent manages it from their own device. With iPadOS 27 and iOS 27, Apple added simpler controls, including time allowances by type of app and suggested limits based on the child's age.

Open the child's Screen Time

1. On the parent's iPhone, open **Settings** > **Family**, and tap the child's name.
2. Tap **Screen Time**. The first time, the iPhone walks you through setup and asks you to create a **Screen Time passcode**. Make it different from the iPad's unlock code.
3. Make sure the child's iPad and the parent's iPhone are both updated, so every new control appears.

The main controls

Setting	What it does
Downtime / schedules	Hours when only allowed apps and calls work — a bedtime, or school hours.
Time allowances / app limits	A daily amount of time for categories such as Games, Entertainment or Social Media, or for one app.
Content & Privacy Restrictions	Age ratings for apps, movies and books; web filtering; whether settings can be changed.
Communication limits	Who the child can call, FaceTime or message. Emergency numbers always work.
Ask to Buy	Purchase and download approval (Chapter 14).

TIP

Requests come to the parent's phone

When the child hits a limit, they can ask for more time. The request pops up on the parent's iPhone, where it can be approved or declined.

HEADS UP

Forgot the Screen Time passcode?

The family organizer can change it from their own device: **Settings** > **Screen Time**, choose the child, then **Change Screen Time Passcode**.

GOOD TO KNOW

More detail elsewhere

Bill's separate **Apple Screen Time & Family Sharing** guide goes through every one of these settings in depth.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

The rules follow the child's account, so they apply on the iPad whether it's at home, in the car or at Grandpa's.

CHAPTER 14

Ask to Buy: No Surprise Charges

With **Ask to Buy** turned on, a child who wants to buy or download something — even a free app — sends a request to the parent instead. Nothing happens until the parent says yes. Apple turns it on automatically for children under 13.

Check that it's on

1. On the organizer's or parent's iPhone, open **Settings** > **Family**.
2. Tap the child's name, then **Ask to Buy**.
3. Make sure it's turned on.

Answering a request

- Requests arrive as a notification and in Messages on the parent's device.
- Tap the request to see the item, its price and its age rating, then **Approve** or **Decline**.
- A request that isn't answered expires after 24 hours; the child can ask again.
- Ask to Buy doesn't cover re-downloading things already bought, updates, or redeeming a gift-card code.

HEADS UP

Gift cards get around it

If a child redeems an App Store gift card, that balance can be spent without a request. Grandparents: talk to the parents before giving an App Store card to a young child.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

No more "how did we spend $90 on gems?" Every purchase passes through a grown-up first.

CHAPTER 15

Guided Access: Lending Your Own iPad

Most grandparents' iPads aren't set up for children, and an iPad can't have separate profiles. **Guided Access** solves that for a visit: it locks the iPad to one app — a game, a video, a drawing app — so a child can't wander into your email, photos or shopping.

Turn it on once

1. Open **Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Guided Access**, and turn it on.
2. Tap **Passcode Settings** and set a **Guided Access passcode**. Choose one the child doesn't know.
3. If you like, turn on **Time Limit** options, such as an alarm sound when time is up.

Use it each time

1. Open the app the child will use.
2. **Triple-click** the top button (or the Home button on older iPads).
3. Optionally circle parts of the screen to disable them, such as an ads banner or a store button.
4. Tap **Options** to set a time limit if you want one, then tap **Start**.
5. To finish, triple-click the button again, enter your Guided Access passcode, and tap **End**.

TIP

A gentle way to end the session

With a time limit set, the iPad shows a "Time Expired" screen when time is up. It's the iPad saying "all done," not you.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

You can hand over your iPad for a story or a game and relax, knowing your messages, photos and bank app are out of reach.

PART 5

Android Tablets & Sharing Your Own

Supervising a child's Android tablet with Google Family Link, and giving a grandchild a safe space on a tablet that's really yours.

CHAPTER 16

Android Tablets with Google Family Link

Samsung Galaxy Tab, Lenovo, Google Pixel Tablet and other Android tablets don't come in special kids' editions. A child uses one through a **supervised Google Account**, and a parent manages it with the free **Google Family Link** app on their own phone.

What you need

- A parent with their own Google Account, living in the same country as the child.
- The free **Family Link** app on the parent's phone. It runs on Android phones and on iPhones.
- The child's tablet, signed in with the child's own supervised Google Account.

Getting started

1. On the parent's phone, install **Google Family Link** and open it.
2. Follow the steps to create a Google Account for the child, or to supervise one they already have.
3. On the tablet, sign in with the **child's** account and accept supervision when asked.
4. Back in Family Link, choose the child and set the rules.

The main controls

Setting	What it does
Daily limit	**Screen time** > **Time limits**: a daily amount, different by day of the week.
Downtime	Hours when the tablet locks, such as a bedtime.
App limits	Time limits on one app, or block it.
Bonus time	Extra time for today only, from the parent's phone.
Play Store approvals	Downloads and purchases need a parent's OK.

HEADS UP

Family Link can't supervise an iPhone or iPad

Family Link works on Android devices and Chromebooks. For an iPad, use Apple's Screen Time (Chapter 13).

GOOD TO KNOW

More detail elsewhere

Bill's separate **Google Family Link** and **Android Tablet** guides go deeper. This chapter is only the kids'-tablet essentials.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

An Android tablet can be every bit as safe as a kids' edition, and the parents manage it from the phone already in their pocket.

CHAPTER 17

A Kid Profile on a Grandparent's Tablet

Many grandparents don't buy a second tablet at all — they share their own when the grandchildren visit. That works well, as long as the child gets their own safe space and can't wander into yours. How you do it depends on the tablet.

On your Fire tablet: add a child profile

1. Make sure your own profile has a **PIN or password**. Without one, the child can just switch to your side.
2. Add a child profile for the grandchild (Chapter 6). Use their real first name and birth date.
3. Set a daily limit and bedtime in the **Parent Dashboard** (Chapter 10).
4. When the visit is over, the child's profile simply waits until next time.

On your iPad: use Guided Access

iPads have one owner each and no separate profiles. For a visit, lock the iPad to one app with **Guided Access** (Chapter 15). If the grandchild has their own iPad, bring that one along instead — the parents' rules come with it.

On your Android tablet: add a user

Some Android tablets allow more than one user, each with a separate space. A grandchild can have their own user, signed in to their own supervised Google Account, so the parents' Family Link rules apply there too.

1. Open **Settings** and look for **Multiple users** (on a Pixel Tablet it's under **System**).
2. Turn on **Allow multiple users**, then add the child.
3. Sign in with the child's supervised account, with a parent nearby to approve.
4. Put a **PIN or password** on your own user so the child can't switch to it.

HEADS UP

Menus differ between makers

Samsung, Lenovo and others arrange these settings a little differently, and not every Android tablet allows multiple users. If you can't find it, search Settings for "users."

TIP

Ask the parents first

A supervised child account belongs to the parents. Adding it to your tablet means the parents will manage the rules — which is usually exactly what everyone wants. Just tell them first.

STAY SAFE

Lock your own side

Whatever the tablet, put a PIN or password on your own account. It's what keeps a curious child out of your email, your banking app and your Amazon shopping.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

One tablet, two worlds: yours stays private and the grandchild's stays safe, with no extra device to buy.

PART 6

Cases, Charging & Little Ears

The practical side: protecting the tablet from drops and spills, charging it safely, and headphones that look after a child's hearing.

CHAPTER 18

Cases & Screen Protectors

A tablet in a child's hands will be dropped, sat on and handled with sticky fingers. A good case is the cheapest insurance there is.

What comes in the box

- **Fire Kids:** a thick, soft bumper case with a stand.
- **Fire Kids Pro:** a slimmer case.
- **Amazon Kids Tablet 8 and 11:** the ages 3+ version has a soft bumper case; the ages 6+ version a slimmer hard case.
- **iPad and Android tablets:** no case. Buy one separately, before the tablet is handed over.

Choosing a case for an iPad or Android tablet

- Match the **exact model and year**. iPad cases that look alike often don't fit; check the model name in **Settings** > **General** > **About**.
- For young children, choose a thick foam bumper with a handle. For older children, a rugged case with raised edges around the screen.
- A built-in stand is handy for video calls and watching.

Screen protectors

A thin sheet of tempered glass or plastic that goes over the screen. If it cracks, you replace the protector instead of the screen. They're inexpensive, but must match the exact tablet model.

1. Wash your hands and work in a clean, dust-free spot (a steamy bathroom helps settle dust).
2. Clean the screen with the wipe included in the pack, then the dust sticker.
3. Line up the protector with the edges and camera, and lower it gently from one side.
4. Push any bubbles out toward the edge with the card supplied.

> **TIP**
> **Not good at fiddly jobs?**
> Many phone and electronics shops will fit a screen protector for you. There's no shame in it.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A case and a protector together mean most drops end in a shrug instead of a repair bill.

CHAPTER 19

Charging & Battery Habits

A flat tablet is a disappointed child. A few simple habits keep it charged, and keep charging safe.

What you need

- Most current tablets charge through a **USB-C** port — the small oval one. Older Fire tablets may use a different, older plug; use the cable that came with it.
- Not every tablet comes with a wall plug. Some newer models include only the cable, so check the box and buy a plug from a reputable brand if needed.
- A spare cable for Grandma's house saves the "we forgot the charger" phone call.

Good habits

1. Charge in a **common area** — the kitchen counter, not the bedroom. It also makes bedtime easier.
2. Plug in at the same time every day, for example right after bedtime.
3. Use the tablet maker's charger or a well-known brand. Avoid bargain no-name chargers.
4. Charge on a hard surface. Never under a pillow, on a bed or under blankets.
5. Teach children to unplug by holding the plug, not yanking the cable.

STAY SAFE

Signs a tablet or charger needs attention

If a tablet or charger gets very hot, the battery looks swollen (the screen or back bulges), or the cable is frayed, stop using it, unplug it and contact the maker. Don't keep charging a swollen battery.

TIP

Bedtime and charging, together

Having the tablet "go to sleep" on the kitchen charger at bedtime solves two problems at once: it's full in the morning, and it isn't under the covers at midnight.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A charging routine means fewer flat batteries, fewer arguments at bedtime, and less to worry about.

CHAPTER 20

Headphones That Protect Little Ears

Headphones keep car rides and waiting rooms peaceful. But children's ears are easily damaged by loud sound over time, and hearing loss from noise doesn't come back. Two things help: volume-limiting headphones, and a volume cap on the tablet itself.

Volume-limiting headphones

Kids' headphones are often sold as "volume-limited," usually meaning they're designed not to go above about **85 decibels**. The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (part of the NIH) points out that independent testing found many such headphones went above their limit, and that some limits could be bypassed. They help — but grown-ups should still keep an ear on the volume.

Choosing a pair

- Over-the-ear headphones sized for children are more comfortable than earbuds for small ears.
- **Wired** headphones need a headphone jack or an adapter; many new tablets have only USB-C. **Bluetooth** (wireless) headphones need charging too.
- A padded headband and a sturdy, bendable frame survive being stuffed in a bag.

Cap the volume on an iPad

1. Open **Settings** > **Sounds** > **Headphone Safety**.
2. Turn on **Reduce Loud Audio** (some versions call it Reduce Loud Sounds) and drag the slider to a lower level, such as 75 or 80 decibels.
3. To stop a child changing it, open Screen Time's **Content & Privacy Restrictions**, find **Reduce Loud Audio**, and choose **Don't Allow**.

Apple notes the measurement is most accurate with Apple or Beats headphones. Android tablets and Fire tablets have their own volume and hearing settings that differ by model; look in **Settings** under **Sound**.

> TIP
> **The arm's-length test**
> If you can hear the child's headphones from an arm's length away, it's too loud.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Quiet car trips today, and good hearing for the rest of their life.

PART 7

Gifts, Grandparents & Family Rules

Giving a tablet without stepping on anyone's toes, agreeing on rules as a family, and what to do when a child outgrows their kids' tablet.

CHAPTER 21

Giving a Tablet as a Gift

A tablet is a generous gift, and a little planning keeps it a happy one. The two questions that matter most are **who sets it up** and **whose account it uses** (Chapter 4).

Before you buy

1. **Ask the parents** — quietly, before the birthday. Do they want the child to have a tablet yet? Which kind fits their phones (Chapter 2)?
2. Agree **whose account** it will use. In most families, it should be the parents'.
3. Agree **who will set it up**: the parents, you, or all of you together.
4. Ask whether they already pay for anything — Amazon Kids+, Prime, Apple Family Sharing — so you don't double up.

Ordering an Amazon tablet for someone else

- When you order, look for the option to mark the order as a **gift**. That helps keep the tablet from being linked to your own Amazon account.
- If it arrives linked to your account anyway, remove it: on Amazon's website, go to **Manage Your Content and Devices**, choose **Devices**, pick the tablet and **Deregister** it. The parents then sign in with their own account.
- Keep the order confirmation. The worry-free guarantee on a Fire Kids tablet follows the purchase (Chapter 8).

Giving an iPad or Android tablet

- Give it sealed in the box, so the parents can sign it in to the child's own account.
- If you set it up first yourself, sign out and erase it before giving it. Otherwise it may stay tied to *your* Apple or Google account.
- Add a case and screen protector to the gift (Chapter 18). They're easy to forget and cheap to add.

FROM BILL

A gift that's ready on the day

A tablet gift is at its happiest when it works the moment the paper comes off — charged, in a case, with the parents' rules already in place. If you can set it up together with the parents before the big day, do.

HEADS UP

Gift cards for kids' tablets

App Store and Google Play gift cards spend without a parent's approval once redeemed (Chapter 14). Ask the parents before including one.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A gift that pleases the child and the parents, with nobody having to unpick the setup later.

CHAPTER 22

Family Rules & a Media Plan

Settings do the enforcing, but the rules work best when the whole family has talked them through — and grandparents' house follows roughly the same ones as home.

What the pediatricians suggest

The **American Academy of Pediatrics** encourages families to think less about a single magic number of minutes and more about *what* children watch and play, *who* they do it with, and what screens push aside — sleep, play outdoors, reading and time together. For the very youngest children, the AAP's guidance is to avoid screens except video calls with family.

The AAP offers a free **Family Media Plan** tool at **healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan** where you can choose screen-free times and places, a device bedtime and other house rules for each child.

Simple rules that work for many families

- Tablets charge in the kitchen overnight, not in bedrooms (Chapter 19).
- No tablets at meals.
- Ask before downloading anything — even if it's free.
- If something online is scary or upsetting, tell a grown-up. Nobody will be in trouble for telling.
- Video calls with family are always welcome.

TIP

Grandparents and parents on the same page

Children notice when the rules change between houses. A two-minute chat — "what's the bedtime, and which apps are fine?" — saves a lot of "but Mom lets me."

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Clear, shared rules mean fewer arguments, and the tablet settings simply back up what everyone has already agreed.

CHAPTER 23

Outgrowing a Kids' Tablet

Children grow faster than tablets wear out. A tablet that was perfect at five may feel babyish at nine. You don't always need a new one — often you just change the settings.

Amazon tablets

- Update the child's age filter in the Parent Dashboard so older titles appear (Chapter 11).
- Loosen the time limits and allow more apps, one at a time.
- Fire Kids is aimed at ages 3 to 7 and Fire Kids Pro at 6 to 12. For a child who wants a full app store, the new Amazon Kids Tablets include Google Play with parent approval (Chapter 5).

iPad

- Screen Time settings can be relaxed gradually as the child shows they're ready.
- Apple's child-account rules change as children reach their teens, and Ask to Buy can stay on until 18. Check Apple's current rules before a 13th birthday.

Android

- Family Link supervision can be adjusted as the child grows. Google gives teens more say over their own account; check the current rules in Family Link before a 13th birthday.

TIP

Hand-me-downs

Passing a tablet to a younger sibling? Remove the older child's profile or account first, then set up the younger child fresh. On an iPad or Android tablet, erase it and start again.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A tablet that grows with the child can last for years, and the rules keep pace with the child's maturity.

PART 8

Safety, Fixes, Help & Your Cheat-Sheet

The scams that target families with kids' tablets, quick fixes for the common problems, an honest word about when a hand is worth it, and a one-page summary.

CHAPTER 24

Scams & Safety Around Kids' Tablets

Children's tablets attract their own set of tricks, aimed at the child or at the grown-up who pays. Here's what to watch for.

SCAM ALERT

Fake subscription emails

An email or text says your Amazon Kids+ or Apple subscription "couldn't renew" and asks you to click a link to update your card. Don't click. Open the Parent Dashboard, Amazon's website or your iPhone's Settings yourself and check there.

SCAM ALERT

"Free coins" and "free gems" offers

Websites and videos promise free game money if the child signs in or enters a parent's password. They steal accounts. Teach children: real games never ask for your password outside the game.

SCAM ALERT

Gift-card requests

Someone in a game, chat or message asks a child — or a grandparent — to buy a gift card and read out the numbers. Nobody legitimate asks for payment in gift cards. It's always a scam.

SCAM ALERT

Fake support numbers

A pop-up or search ad claims the tablet is infected or locked and gives a number to call. Amazon, Apple and Google don't contact you that way. Close it, and if you're worried, use the help pages in the official app or website.

SCAM ALERT

Purchase requests you don't recognize

Before approving an Ask to Buy or Amazon request, read what it is and what it costs. If it's unexpected, ask the child about it before tapping Approve.

Safety beyond scams

- Keep games with open chat or friend requests off young children's tablets, or turn chat off in the game's settings.
- Teach children never to share their full name, school, address or photos with someone they met online.
- Keep the tablet in shared rooms for young children, where a grown-up is nearby.

STAY SAFE

If a child may be in danger

If someone online is threatening a child or asking for photos, keep the messages, don't confront the person, and contact the police. Call 911 if a child is at immediate risk.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing the common tricks means you'll recognize them on sight, and so will the children you teach.

CHAPTER 25

When Something Goes Wrong

Most kids'-tablet problems are a setting doing exactly what it was told. Here are the common ones and what to try.

What happened	What to try
"It won't let me play!"	A time limit or bedtime has been reached (Chapters 10, 13, 16). Add a little time from the parent's phone, or wait until tomorrow.
An app or book is missing	It may not be approved or added to the child's profile, or is outside the age filter (Chapter 11).
Forgot the Fire parental PIN	Look for a forgot-PIN option on the tablet; it usually asks for the grown-up's Amazon account password.
Forgot the Screen Time passcode	The organizer resets it from their own device (Chapter 13).
Forgot the Family Link code	The parent's Family Link app can show a parent access code.
Requests aren't arriving	Check that notifications are on for the Parent Dashboard, Family Link or Messages on the parent's phone.
It won't charge	Try another cable and plug, and clean lint from the port gently (Chapter 19).
It's frozen	Hold the power button until the tablet restarts; on an iPad, follow Apple's restart steps for your model.

TIP

Restart first

Before anything else, turn the tablet off and on again. It fixes a surprising number of puzzles.

HEADS UP

Don't reset in a hurry

Erasing a tablet (a factory reset) deletes everything on it and may take the parental controls with it. Try the steps above, or call for help, before resetting.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Most problems take two minutes to solve, once you know it's a limit doing its job and not a broken tablet.

CHAPTER 26

When to Call Bill

Most of what's in this guide you can do yourself, at your own pace. But part of being helpful is being honest about when a hand saves you time and worry. Here's my straight advice, with no pressure.

Times it's well worth a call

- **Choosing between tablets** for a particular child, with no sales pitch.
- **Setting up a gift before the big day** — charged, in its case, the child's account created, limits and a bedtime set, and the parents shown how to manage it.
- **Setting up Family Sharing or Family Link** when nobody's quite sure whose account is whose.
- **Sharing your own tablet** with grandchildren safely, with your side locked.
- **The rules aren't sticking** — limits that don't apply, requests that never arrive, or a child who has found a way around them.
- **Passing a tablet down** to a younger child and starting fresh.

What working with me is like

I work at your pace, explain what I'm doing in plain words, and never talk down to anyone. I'll tell you honestly when something isn't worth your money, and I don't sell tablets or subscriptions. I've been doing this kind of work for more than 30 years, and I serve Portage County, Ohio, in person, and folks farther away by remote help.

FROM BILL

How to reach me

Call **(330) 200-8042** or book a time at **billshometech.com/book**. My help is **$49 remote · $99 in your home**. This guide is yours to keep for free; if you'd like a hand, I'm only a phone call away.

GOOD TO KNOW

You may meet Sophie first

When you call or visit billshometech.com, you might be greeted by **Sophie**, my AI receptionist. She can answer quick questions and help you book a time. A real person — me — does the actual help.

Thank you for taking the time to set things up thoughtfully for the children in your life. Take it one step at a time, and enjoy the stories and video calls.

— Bill

CHAPTER 27

Your Kids' Tablet Cheat-Sheet

Keep this handy. The whole guide, boiled down.

The essentials

Topic	Remember
Fire Kids / Kids Pro	Ages 3–7 / 6–12. Case, Kids+ period and two-year worry-free guarantee.
Amazon Kids Tablet 8 / 11	Android with Google Play, ages 3+ or 6+, a year of Kids+, one-year warranty. From $229.99 / $329.99.
Amazon controls	Parent Dashboard: parents.amazon.com or the free app.
Amazon Kids+	From $7.99 a month with Prime, $8.99 without (as of November 2026). Cancel on the website, not the app.
iPad	Child Apple Account in Family Sharing. Parent's iPhone: Settings > Family > child.
Ask to Buy	Settings > Family > child > Ask to Buy. On by default under 13.
Lending your iPad	Guided Access: triple-click the top button.
Android	Google Family Link app on the parent's phone.
Headphones	Volume-limited (about 85 dB), plus the tablet's own volume cap.

Write it down once

Keep handy	
Tablet model	_____
Account it's signed in to	_____
Who approves requests	_____
Where the parental PIN / passcode is kept	_____
Daily limit & bedtime	_____
Kids+ or other subscription renewal date	_____
Order date & where bought (for the guarantee)	_____

When something's wrong, in order

1. Is it a time limit or bedtime doing its job?
2. Is the child in their own profile or account?
3. Is the tablet on Wi-Fi, so new rules and approvals can reach it?
4. Restart the tablet.
5. Check the Parent Dashboard, Screen Time or Family Link from the parent's phone.
6. Still stuck? Call Bill at (330) 200-8042.

> **STAY SAFE**
>
> **If a child may be in danger**
>
> Keep any messages, don't confront the other person, and call 911 if a child is at risk.