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Ready, set, game: Learn how to keep video gaming safe and fun

10 tips for dealing with game cyberbullies and grievers

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Known as *griefers*, snerts, cheese players, twinks, or just plain cyberbullies, chances are that a kid near you has been bothered by one of these ne'er-do-wells at least once while playing online multiplayer video games such as *Halo 2*, *EverQuest*, *The Sims Online*, *SOCOM*, and *Star Wars Galaxies*. **Griefers** are the Internet equivalent of playground bullies, who find fun in embarrassing and pushing around

others.

What griefers do

Typical griever behavior includes: taunting others, especially beginners (also known as *newbies*); thwarting fellow teammates in the game; using inappropriate language; cheating; forming roving gangs with other griefers; blocking entryways; luring monsters toward unsuspecting players; or otherwise using the game merely to annoy a convenient target or to harass a particular player who has reacted to their ill will.

Although they are only a small percentage of the video-gaming community, griefers have some gaming companies concerned about losing subscribers. As a result, many game sites and providers are becoming less tolerant of griefers and are employing new methods to police for them and otherwise limit their impact.

The best way to deal with griefers is to educate yourself and prepare your kids on how to deal with them on their own terms. Here are ten tips to help you handle griefers.

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10 tips for dealing with griefers

1. **Ignore them.** If your child doesn't react to them, most griefers will eventually get bored and go away.
2. **Change game options.** Have your kids play games with changeable rules or options that prevent certain griever tactics, such as eliminating teammates.
3. **Create a private game.** Most newer, multiplayer video games and related sites allow players to form their own exclusive games that permit only their friends to play.
4. **Play on sites with strict rules.** Play on game sites with enforceable codes of conduct or terms of service and live game administrators who can ban serial griefers.

In This Article

- [Tips for parents to help kids play it safe with online games](#)
- 10 tips for dealing with game cyberbullies and griefers

Related Links


- [Confessions of a griever, on Xbox.com](#)
- [Learn more about Halo 2 for Xbox](#)
- [Family-friendly Xbox games](#)
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5. **Do something else.** If a griefer won't stop bothering your child, have them try a different game, or take a break and come back later.
6. **Report game glitches.** Work with your child to identify exploitable glitches in the game or new methods of cheating. Report these to the game site administrator.
7. **Play games that limit grievers.** Suggest playing newer games that provide specific resources for dealing with grievers, such as reporting offenders to game administrators, message blocking or muting, and being able to vote grievers off.
8. **Don't fight fire with fire.** Make sure your child isn't using grievers' own tactics against them, as this will likely encourage more bad behavior, or worse, label your child as a griefer.
9. **Avoid using provocative names.** Preempt any problems by having your child avoid screen names or nicknames (often referred to as *gamertags*) that could encourage griefer behavior.
10. **Don't give out personal information.** Grievers (or anyone else) can use real names, phone numbers, and home or e-mail addresses, to further harass your child or cause other problems.

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