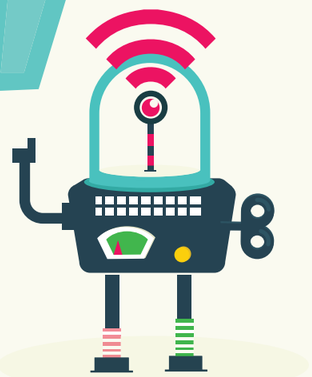
FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT CONNECTED TOYS GO TO:

MEDIAWIJSHEID.NL/CONNECTEDTOYS

(DUTCH)



7 ARE THERE ANY ADDITIONAL COSTS?

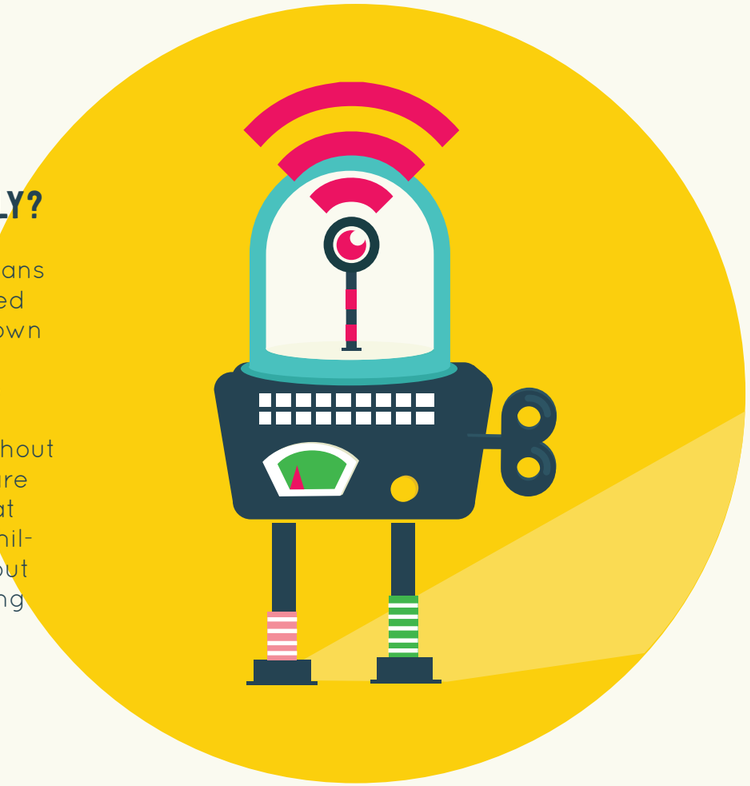
Some connected toys will involve recurring additional costs if your child wishes to continue to play with them. Check the packaging of the toy or the manufacturer's website for more information about this. Parent forums can also be a good source of information. Information about in-app purchases or advertising should be comprehensible for parents and remain out of the child's sight.

8 CAN THE TOY BE SHARED?

Children enjoy playing together. But is this always possible with connected toys? Can you create multiple accounts or can you only play using one account? This may mean that the toy can only be used by one child. For example, can brothers and sisters play using the same account? Again, there may be information on the packaging or manufacturer's website, or you could contact the toy maker directly to find out.

9 CAN THE CHILD PLAY FREELY AND CREATIVELY?

Allowing a child to play freely means allowing them to do so unobserved from time to time, using his/her own creativity. So be aware that your children have the freedom to use their imagination when they are playing with a connected toy, without feeling pressured because they are doing something different to what the manufacturer had in mind. Children should be able to play without manufacturers or parents following their every move online



10 IS THERE A 'USE-BY' DATE?

Connected toys rely on special software. If the toy maker stops updating or supporting that software, it may become difficult or unsafe to use the toy. Check whether the manufacturer has any information about this and whether this support will continue into the distant future. Also check whether your child can use their data for future versions of the game, or whether this data will be deleted.

THE INTERNET OF TOYS

10 POINTS TO CONSIDER FOR PARENTS

mediawijzer.net

ECP Platform voor de InformatieSamenleving

npo

BEELD EN GELUID

KB Koninklijke Bibliotheek Nationale bibliotheek van Nederland

Kennisnet

ONTWERP & ILLUSTRATIE: BREIN BOERDEREI

THE WAY OUR CHILDREN PLAY IS CHANGING RAPIDLY. ONE OF THE MOST STRIKING NEW DEVELOPMENTS IS THE GROWING NUMBER OF TOYS THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THE INTERNET: THE INTERNET OF TOYS. TO HELP PARENTS COPE WITH THE CHALLENGES OF THIS NEW CONNECTED PLAY ENVIRONMENT, MEDIAWIJZER.NET HAS COMPILED A CHECKLIST OF TEN POINTS TO CONSIDER WHEN IT COMES TO SAFETY AND CHILDREN'S PLAY.

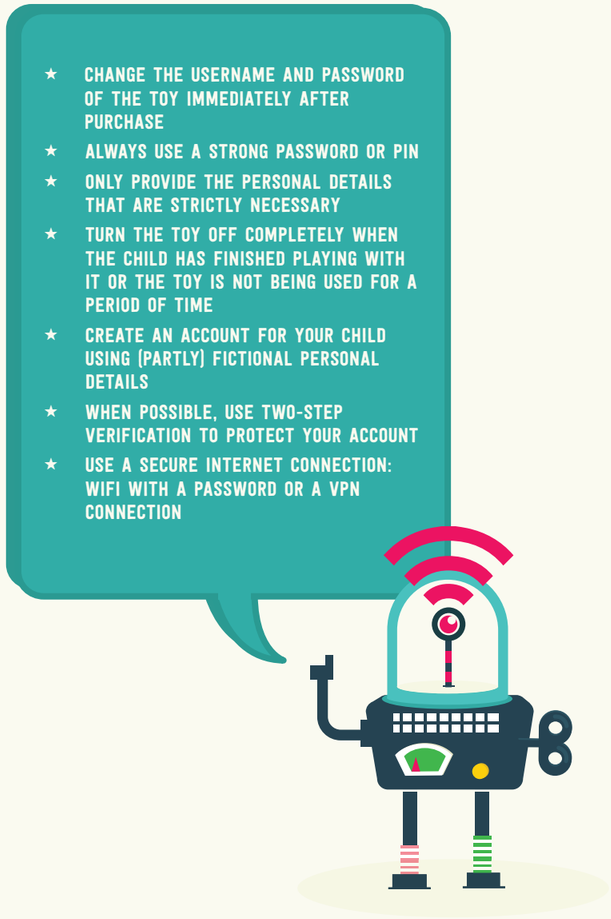
1 IS AN INTERNET CONNECTION CLEARLY REQUIRED?

Sometimes the description on the packaging or in the web shop does not make it completely clear that the toy has been designed for use with a wireless connection with WiFi and/or Bluetooth. Sometimes you will need such a connection in order to activate the toy. And sometimes the toy will need an internet connection whenever it is being used.

2 WHO HAS ACCESS TO THE DATA?

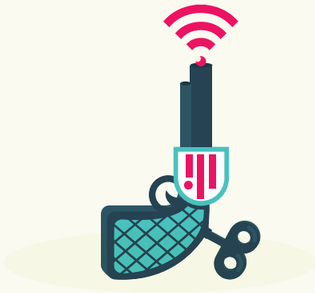
It is not always clear to users what happens to their online data, even though certain personal details need to be provided in order to use the toy. A privacy guarantee for connected toys, indicating which laws and regulations the toy complies with, would be a great idea. Parents can also take their own steps to reduce the risk of hacking and data intrusion:

- CHANGE THE USERNAME AND PASSWORD OF THE TOY IMMEDIATELY AFTER PURCHASE
- ALWAYS USE A STRONG PASSWORD OR PIN
- ONLY PROVIDE THE PERSONAL DETAILS THAT ARE STRICTLY NECESSARY
- TURN THE TOY OFF COMPLETELY WHEN THE CHILD HAS FINISHED PLAYING WITH IT OR THE TOY IS NOT BEING USED FOR A PERIOD OF TIME
- CREATE AN ACCOUNT FOR YOUR CHILD USING (PARTLY) FICTIONAL PERSONAL DETAILS
- WHEN POSSIBLE, USE TWO-STEP VERIFICATION TO PROTECT YOUR ACCOUNT
- USE A SECURE INTERNET CONNECTION: WIFI WITH A PASSWORD OR A VPN CONNECTION



3 WHO CAN YOU TURN TO IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS?

It is difficult for parents to ascertain exactly which standards and requirements the manufacturer must comply with. This is because not all the legal requirements need to be included on the packaging. Try to find out whether the toy receives regular (security) updates. Visit the manufacturer's website to see if there is a helpdesk that you can contact. And check review websites or forums for common problems and solutions.



4 DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR CHILD IS ACTUALLY PLAYING WITH?

Watch or play with your child when they first start to use the toy, and continue to look out for any effects that the connected toy may be having on your child. Is this consistent with your own values and ideas as a parent? For example, does the toy promote certain ideas about how boys and girls should behave? Ask yourself as a parent whether you can accept the aspects of the toy that encourage certain behaviours, and how strong that influence is.

5 IS THE TOY APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR CHILD'S AGE?

Not every connected toy is suitable for every age group. In some cases, they can even be harmful. The age range indicated is simply a manufacturer's recommendation. The question of which age range a toy is suitable for relates not only to possible risks, but also to the development and interests of the child: is your child really ready for this toy?

6 HOW EDUCATIONAL IS THE TOY?

When toys are marketed as 'educational', this does not necessarily mean that it is true. Toys are designed primarily for enjoyment and the claims of educational value made by some toy manufacturers are rarely justified. So don't be misled by the term 'educational'. You may also want to check whether the toy is consistent with the teaching methods used at your child's school.