

Kaspersky Safe Kids: Parental Control Certification Test 2021

A test was commissioned by Kaspersky and performed by AV-TEST GmbH. Date of the report: February 25th, 2022

Executive Summary

In December 2021, AV-TEST performed a feature and website blocking test on the Kaspersky Safe Kids Parental Control application for Windows, Android and Apples iOS. The test focused on website blocking, showing how well the user of Kaspersky Safe Kids is protected from categories of websites like “Adult Content”, “Gambling” or “Gaming”. Also included is a feature review, which evaluates how well the product provides guardians with tools to keep their wards safe when using modern technologies independently and unobserved.

There are currently over 200 million active websites. Many of these are unsuitable for kids and teenagers. Parents' and guardians' anxiety about access to this content is understandable and justified. Kaspersky Safe Kids offers 14 different categories in 15 languages: Arab, Danish, German, English, Spanish, French, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Dutch, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Swedish and Chinese. In this assessment we examined 13 categories in 6 languages: English, Spanish, French, Italian, German and Portuguese. Webpages in these categories can be blocked and filtered, which prevents access to material that can be seen as unfit for kids of any age.

This is the 6th consecutive participation of Kaspersky's products in Parental Control testing, and each time Kaspersky technologies meet certification criteria and earn certifications¹. In 2021 a total of 8500 URLs were included in the test, Kaspersky Safe Kids manages to block an overall average of 90% in Windows and 85% in Android for potentially inappropriate websites tested. In particular the most undesirable category “Adult Content” is blocked with a perfect 100% detection rate in Windows. The danger of over-blocking by falsely detecting unsuitable content is good at 6% down from last year's already good 9%.



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2020 - https://www.av-test.org/fileadmin/pdf/reports/AV-TEST_Kaspersky_Parental_Control_Test_June_2020.pdf

2018 - <https://www.av-test.org/en/news/test-parental-control-software-for-desktops-with-windows-10-macos/>

2017 - <https://www.av-test.org/en/news/16-parental-control-apps-for-android-apple-ios/>

2016 - <https://www.av-test.org/en/news/parental-control-software-for-windows-put-to-the-test/>

2015 - <https://www.av-test.org/en/news/test-parental-control-software-for-windows-and-mac-os-x/>

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This feature review shows that Kaspersky Safe Kids provides numerous features sufficient to provide extensive and complete protection on all major operating systems. Covering all required areas such as harmful website blockage; Social Media control and Search Engine monitoring, to ensure only appropriate content can be accessed online; Time and schedule restrictions to foster a balanced amount of device use; Application Control, to restrict usage of unsuitable apps; Reporting, to help guardians understand the children's device interaction; Geo-fencing and locating of the child's mobile device; Device battery monitoring and low-battery alerts; Security and Tamper Protection, providing security and in digital environment securing devices and improving privacy.

Kaspersky Safe Kids also features a YouTube Safe Search feature blocking search results by requests referring to prohibited categories like "Adult Content" or "Alcohol, tobacco, narcotics".

Methodology

Feature Review

The Feature review is performed on Windows 10, Android 11 and iOS 14.0.1.

For the feature test, Kaspersky Safe Kids for all three operating systems are evaluated for the availability of the listed features. They all are tested for availability in the product only.

Website Blockage

The following 13 categories available in Kaspersky Safe Kids “Restriction for website categories” have been enabled for blockage for this test.

- Adult content
- Alcohol, tobacco, narcotics
- Anonymous access systems
- Video games
- E-tailers, banks, and payment systems
- Gambling, lotteries, sweepstakes
- Internet communication
- Job search
- News media
- Religions, religious associations
- Software, audio, video
- Violence
- Weapons, explosives, pyrotechnics

Each website is validated up to three times to accommodate changing website content. A website is considered blocked when either the entire website or the unsuitable content is blocked.

Website Samples

Close to 8,500 websites were collected before the test, representing the most current live pages for the categories and languages. 6,000 websites are used to evaluate how well the product blocks the defined categories. Just over 1,500 websites are used to cross-check the detection and determine the rate of possible over-blocking by the product. There are six languages represented in the website test set: English, German, French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese.

Feature Test

The Feature test provides an overview of the basic functionality required for a complete parental control application, providing all options for managing a device and its user interaction. This may vary between different operating systems. Kaspersky Safe Kids for some operating systems provide more options for control than others do.

| FEATURE REVIEW | Windows 10 | Android 11 | iOS 14.0.1 |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Search Engine Monitoring | + ¹ | + ¹ | + ¹ |
| Time and Usage Duration Restriction | + | + | + |
| Application Control | + ² | + ² | + ⁴ |
| Social Media control | + ³ | + ³ | + ³ |
| Security - Tamper Protection | + | + | + |
| Security - Supervision and Control from another Device | + | + | + |
| Reporting - Central user interface | + | + | + |
| Reporting - Incidents Overview | + | + | + |

¹ Bing, Google, Mail.ru, Yahoo!, and Yandex

² Choose apps yourself or by application categories

³ Facebook and VK

⁴ By age restrictions (available for iOS in the app version 1.38.0.14 and later)

Kaspersky Safe Kids provides all the important features to be expected in a modern-day Parental Control application.

Search Engine Monitoring supports the major search engines Google, Bing, Yahoo and the popular Russian sites Mail.ru and Yandex. Website featuring the following themes are filtered from the search enquiries: Adult Content; Alcohol, Tobacco, Narcotics; Profanity, Obscenity; Extremism, Racism

Limiting screentime can be done by either limiting the duration of overall screentime or by setting the hours in which a device may be used. This can be set for the hours as well as specific weekdays.

One of the outstanding features of the Kaspersky parental control is the possibility to block apps on Windows and Android devices by category and iOS by appropriate age as set in the app store. If the guardian decides to block for example all social media apps, then he can do that, they can also block a specific app or limit the time the app is used.

Social Media control is also included for Facebook and VK. Both the biggest social media network in the world and the Russian Federation respectively. This feature provides a report for the public profile of the child supervised.

To obstruct accidental or purposely circumventing the parental control application, Kaspersky implemented extensive tamper protections. The settings management is done through a web interface or through the Kaspersky Safe Kids app on the parents' android device, to provide access for the guardian at any location and time not requiring direct access to the supervised devices.

Finally, Kaspersky Safe Kids provides a comprehensive reporting feature. Showing in details search results and social media activities as well as web content visited among other details as well as any attempt to evade the parental control features application.

Website protection

The website protection by a Parental Control application displays how well an application is capable of restricting access to age-inappropriate websites. This is most often done by blocking pre-defined categories. The definition and scope of these categories vary by product and the focus set by the vendor.

The table below shows how well Kaspersky Safe Kids blocks the provided categories and includes a cross-site reference for webpages, which did not fit into the provided categories and therefore should not be blocked.

| Categories of Age inappropriate Webpages | Windows | Android |
|--|---------|---------|
| Adult content | 100.00% | 97.17% |
| Alcohol, tobacco, narcotics | 98.14% | 96.83% |
| Anonymous access systems | 72.73% | 69.32% |
| Video games | 92.37% | 89.08% |
| E-tailers, banks, and payment systems | 90.10% | 84.29% |
| Gambling, lotteries, sweepstakes | 96.60% | 90.02% |
| Internet communication | 87.87% | 80.54% |
| Job search | 82.16% | 76.77% |
| News media | 78.40% | 73.65% |
| Religions, religious associations | 80.37% | 77.07% |
| Software, audio, video | 93.61% | 90.18% |
| Violence | 94.68% | 86.17% |
| Weapons, explosives, pyrotechnics | 93.93% | 91.70% |
| Average | 89.30% | 84.83% |
| | | |
| Falsely detected | 6.68% | 6.12% |

Kaspersky Safe Kids provides 14 different block categories to choose from. Detailed definitions for each category and what they entail are provided on the Kaspersky webpage².

The overall average for the tested categories is a very respectable 89% in Windows which is an increase to last year's test³ by almost 3% and 84% in Android the results are slightly up from last

² <https://support.kaspersky.com/12264>

³ https://www.av-test.org/fileadmin/pdf/reports/AV-TEST_Kaspersky_Parental_Control_Test_June_2020.pdf

year's results by 2%. The over-blocking detection rate is around 6.7% and 6% for Windows and Android respectively, which is a significant improvement to last year.

There are some differences between the results of the two tested operating systems, which is due to varying technologies used and to some degree the difference in desktop to mobile content. The difference is a few percentages only.

Notably is the block rate in the "Adult content" category, which is the highest of all tested categories and achieved a 100% block rate in Windows. That means not a single webpage could be accessed on those devices in this category. The category is mostly associated with pornography, which likely is the category most parents and guardians are concerned about.

For most categories, Kaspersky Safe Kids blocked more than 90% of tested web pages in Windows and Android such as "Alcohol, tobacco, narcotics", "Gambling, lotteries, sweepstakes", "Software, audio, video", which doesn't just include video and audio streaming and software downloads, but also websites with potentially illegal content such as torrent indexes and "Weapons, explosives, pyrotechnics", which includes everything related to weapons from sales over depiction to construction and their display.

Additionally, the following categories have 90% or more pages blocked when tested in Windows and only a few percentages missing to this mark in Android: "Video games", "E-tailers, banks, and payment systems" and "Violence", such as amateur violence and generally distasteful videos and also legal sports considered violent such as mixed martial arts.

For the three categories "Internet communication", "Job search" and "Religions, religious associations" close to 80% or more pages are blocked.

The remaining two categories just missed the 80% block rate. Those are "News media" and "Anonymous access systems", which include websites aimed at hiding internet presence and anonymizing access to internet content.

The rate of false detection for web content has been reduced to around 6% for both tested operating systems.

Certificate: APPROVED Parental Control Software



Criteria

The parental control products by Kaspersky for the three different operating systems were reviewed for features as well as the general ability to block categories as advertised in Windows and Android. The iOS system has not been tested for webpage blocking due to technical limitations but is bound to have similar block rates to Android and Windows.

To receive the AV-TEST APPROVED Parental Control SOFTWARE certificate it is necessary to fulfil all the feature requirements as well as achieve adequate blocking results without over-blocking non-affected content websites.

Awarded

Kaspersky Safe Kids is awarded the AV-TEST APPROVED Parental Control Software certificate in 2021 for all three operating systems.

Conclusion

Kaspersky Safe Kids provides all features necessary to protect kids across all their devices regardless of the operating systems. It supports multiple languages.

Some notable features are the Application Control which allows blocking not just individual applications but all applications belonging to a rule set of categories and the time management which is well implemented and can be applied to all devices used by a child.

Detection of website categories and managing access to them works extremely well and Kaspersky Safe Kids proves it doesn't have to be at the cost of over-blocking non-dangerous websites.

Independently from the device, the web-based management system and the mobile app allow access from anywhere. A reliable website restriction of inappropriate websites provides as save internet use.

For those reasons, Kaspersky Safe Kids for Windows, iOS and Android achieved an APPROVED Parental Control Software certificate in December 2021.