



UNITED AGAINST ONLINE ABUSE

COALITION TO STOP HATE SPEECH IN SPORT

SAFEGUARDING GUIDE

WHAT TO DO IF YOU EXPERIENCE ONLINE ABUSE

The internet can be an incredible hub of community and support, but when experiencing abuse it can feel isolating. You should enjoy an online environment where you can communicate, interact, and engage in a respectful, positive and safe manner.

When utilising online platforms, remember that every user deserves the right to a safe online environment, and if you are experiencing online abuse, you are not alone in this battle.

You can refer to this Guide to find out some ways on how to respond and take control of your online safety.



1. COLLECT EVIDENCE

- There are multiple ways to document relevant evidence; some examples are that you may choose to take a screenshot, a screen recording, save messages or record the URL as appropriate. Be mindful not to circulate the offending material.
- Once collected, you may choose to review immediately or later, when you are in a better headspace.

How to take a screenshot on mobile: [Apple Device](#) and [Android Device](#)

How to take a screen recording on mobile: [Apple Device](#) and [Android Device](#)

How to take a screenshot on PC: [Windows 11 Device](#) and [Mac Device](#)

If your device or operating software is missing from the above, it should be possible to search "how to take a [screen shot / screen recording] on [device name]" for relevant information



2. ASSESS THE THREAT

- Sometimes it can be challenging to differentiate between online abuse or a difference of opinion or what is sometimes described as freedom of expression.
- Hate and abusive speech often target individuals or groups of people due to their actual or perceived innate characteristics.
- These attributes and protected characteristics may include race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.
- Common types of online abuse include: trolling, image-based abuse, impersonation accounts, doxing, deepfakes and defamatory comments. These hostile narratives can be spread through many types of media including videos, images, and text.

You should always escalate to your relevant local authorities if you feel there is a threat to your safety.



3. BLOCK AND REPORT THE BEHAVIOUR

- You should report online abuse to the social media or other platform hosting the content. Drawing attention to this toxicity contributes to holding platforms accountable also in the fight against hostile environments.
- On many platforms you can now block an account and any related supplementary accounts they may generate; it is good practice to select this option to avoid a resurgence of abusive comments or posts by repeat offenders.

Learn how to report to social media platforms at the end of this guide.



4. CHECK-IN WITH YOUR OWN WELLBEING

- Your mental and emotional well-being are paramount. Online abuse can be overwhelming, and if left unchecked, it can manifest itself emotionally through changes in wellbeing and esteem or indeed physically such as through panic attacks, stomachache, and tension headaches...(Stevens, Nurse and Arief, 2021).
- Whether you experience online abuse for the first time, or for the 10th time, each experience is unacceptable. Acknowledge your feelings and seek help when you need support; this may be from your family or friends or close community, trusted officials, support groups, teachers, counsellors, or therapists.

Here are some examples of how you can prioritise your well-being:

1. Set boundaries with your screen time and online community engagement.
2. Try a digital detox - taking a break from a hostile environment can help reset your experience.
3. Alleviate stress and anxiety by practicing daily mindfulness, deep breathing or meditation activities.
4. Practice resilience - online abusers tend to thrive off reactions, developing resilience against their activities can help diminish their impact.
5. Encourage a positive self-image by focusing on balancing your online presence with your offline world – journal things you are grateful for and things you are proud you have achieved, this may be your sporting, academic or personal accomplishments.



5. REVIEW YOUR PRIVACY AND SAFETY SETTINGS

- It is good practice to check your privacy and security settings on your social media platforms and devices.
- On many platforms you have the ability to control who engages with your content: this can involve turning off comments, closing direct messages, disabling sharing, or limiting who may reply to content.
- Additionally, enabling two-factor authentication offers extra layers of security and protection against users who may attempt to target your account(s).
- If online abuse is becoming more prevalent on your social media profile(s), you may consider using third-party tools that can filter out abusive content.
- Having a social media presence can be part of modern life and may be seen as important in gaining support and recognition in the sporting or wider community. Toxicity on platforms should not deter engagement - you can maintain a public account whilst at the same time protecting your safety. However, if at any point such an online environment is not conducive to your health or safety you should seek professional assistance.



6. FEEL EMPOWERED

- Remember, your story can inspire others, the more we unite as an ecosystem, the stronger we can stand against online-trolls. Be proud of yourself and your journey, your voice is your most powerful asset **#unitedagainstoneabuse**.





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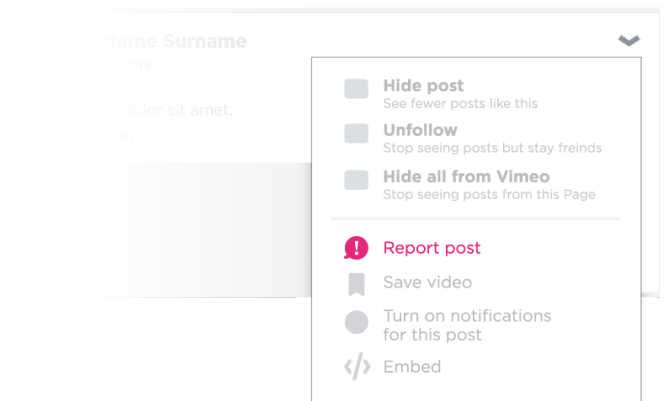
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REPORTING ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS


This is a quick guide explaining in outline, what to do if you experience online abuse by reporting hate speech and cyberbullying on the most prominent social media platforms, within each section there is a link to a more comprehensive guide.

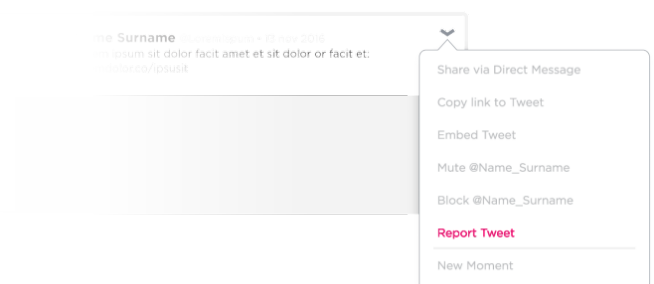
FACEBOOK

- On all Facebook posts, videos, pages or messages there is a drop down menu which looks like this  or this ; within this menu there is an option to "Report Post".
- When reporting you can choose to add additional information if desired.
- If you do not have a Facebook account, but have witnessed online abuse, you can report content using this [online form](#).
- [For more information click here](#).





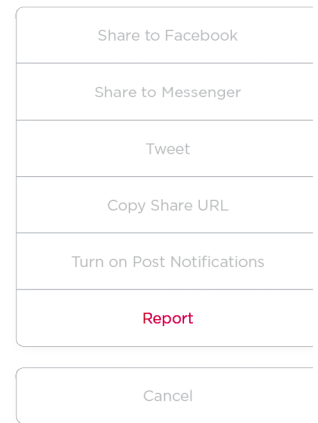
TWITTER / X

- On Twitter/X you can report tweets, profiles, communities and messages by clicking the  which will display a dropdown menu showing the option to "Report Content".
- Twitter/X will prompt you to answer a few questions to understand the context of the report.
- [For more information click here](#).





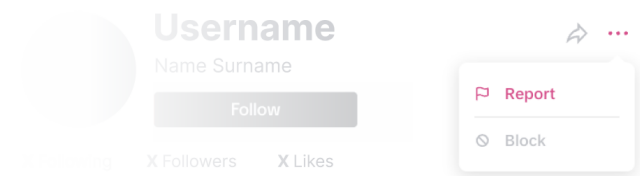
📷 INSTAGRAM

- On all Instagram posts, videos, pages or messages there is a dropdown menu which looks like this  or this ; within this menu there is an option to "Report Post".
- Instagram will prompt you to answer a few questions to understand the context of the report.
- If you do not have an Instagram account, but have witnessed online abuse, you can report content using this [online form](#).
- [For more information click here](#).



🎵 TIKTOK

- To report a video or comment, press and hold the screen until an option menu displays along the bottom bar, select "Report".
- To report a profile, click the arrow  or the  in the top right hand corner of the screen, an option menu will display along the bottom of your screen, select "Report".
- [For more information click here](#).



As a reminder, you should always escalate to your relevant local authorities if you feel there is a threat to your safety.

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