

13+ Language Standards

Summary

This guide outlines language expectations suitable for communities open to users aged 13 and above. It draws on the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) 12/12A rating principles and common online moderation standards. The focus is on respectful communication, age-appropriate language, and awareness of tone and context.

Key Points

- Mild language (e.g. *"hell"*, *"crap"*, *"damn"*) may be acceptable in non-aggressive contexts.
 - Strong or explicit language should be avoided entirely.
 - Sexualised, violent, or hateful language is never acceptable.
 - Context and tone determine how words are received — respect others and think before you speak.
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Detailed Guidance

1. Acceptable Language (Generally Permitted)

- Mild exclamations or frustration words that are not directed at anyone (e.g. *"What the heck?"*, *"That was a crap day."*).
- Casual, non-insulting slang that avoids sensitive or explicit meanings.
- Occasional use of informal or humorous tone if clearly friendly.

2. Caution Language (Use Carefully)

- Words that could be considered rude or disrespectful if repeated or directed at someone.
- Expressions of frustration that might sound aggressive depending on tone or context.
- Language referencing violence or harm metaphorically (*"That level killed me"*) is fine when not literal or threatening.

3. Unacceptable Language (Do Not Use)

- Any sexual or explicit references, including insults based on body parts or sexual behaviour.
- Strong swear words or variations of them, even with letters replaced by symbols.
- Hateful or discriminatory remarks about race, gender, sexuality, disability, religion, or appearance.
- Threats, intimidation, or language encouraging harm — even jokingly.

4. Context and Tone

- Tone affects interpretation: even mild words can feel harsh if used to mock or attack.
- Written communication lacks vocal tone and facial cues; assume good intent, but phrase clearly.
- If unsure whether something is appropriate, use a neutral or friendly alternative.

5. Good Practice

- Keep discussions age-appropriate and inclusive.
 - Focus on what you mean, not on shock value or exaggeration.
 - If someone says a term makes them uncomfortable, respect that boundary.
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Purpose

This document is for informational guidance only. It provides general language standards appropriate for users aged 13 and above, reflecting UK cultural and legal expectations for moderated online spaces.