

Google's Approach to Age Assurance



At Google and YouTube, we remain focused on the safety and wellbeing of our youngest users. We've implemented industry-leading protections for minors and built age-appropriate experiences across our products and services like FamilyLink, YouTube Kids and YouTube Supervised Experiences.

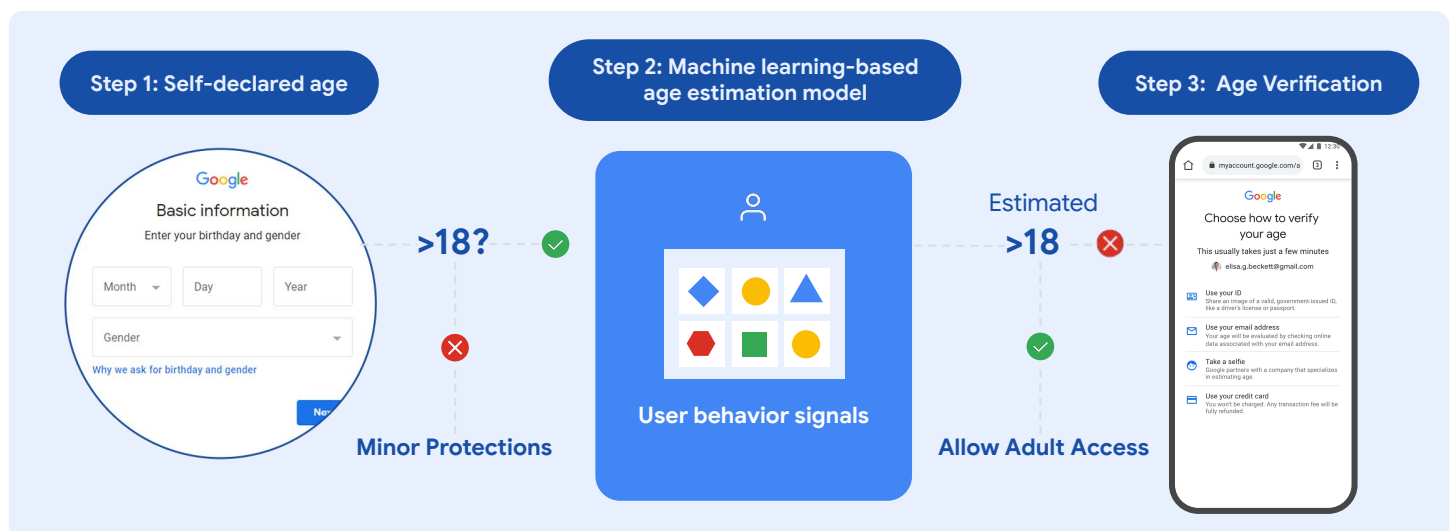
1 Baseline protections for all users include

- **CSAM detection & removal:** Hash matching and AI classifiers, warning box for CSAM-seeking queries on Search.
- **Content policy:** Filtering and blurring of explicit results on Search; enforcement of policies on YouTube and Google Play that prohibit sexually explicit content; reporting mechanisms.
- **Protection against bad actors:** Ability to block contacts across products.

2 For minors (under 18), we provide additional age-appropriate protections

- **Family Link parental controls** allow parents to set downtime and school time restrictions, control which apps are downloaded, locate a child's device
- **Support access to age-appropriate content** with SafeSearch filters, Play adult-only app restrictions, Ads age-sensitive categories blocked
- **Tailored experiences for younger kids** like YouTube Kids and Play Teacher Approved apps
- **YouTube digital wellbeing tools** on by default - take-a- break & bedtime reminders; upload default to private
- **Ads personalization disabled**

3 Across our services, age assurance helps us implement the right protections for the right users, so we can treat minors like minors and adults like adults



We ask users their age when they sign up for new accounts. This helps begin to identify users who may need additional protections, including through supervised Google Accounts.

We implement age estimation technology, in addition to self-declared age, to help us better protect minors across our services. We do not collect additional user data for age inference.

We enable users to verify their age. If we incorrectly estimate a user to be under age 18, the user has the option to correct their age, including by uploading a photo of their government ID or a selfie

How does our machine learning age estimation model work?

- Our machine learning-based age estimation model leverages existing signals (e.g., activity history, account longevity) to understand the user's age. We've found these data to be effective at discerning usage patterns between adults and users under 18 years old.
- Our model estimates whether a user is over or under 18; it does not predict specific ages.
- This model does not collect any new user information beyond what's already associated with the account
- We prioritize taking the necessary time to produce a confident age estimate.
- Even in the absence of a confident age estimate, we apply baseline protections like blocking access to age-restricted content on YouTube and Play.

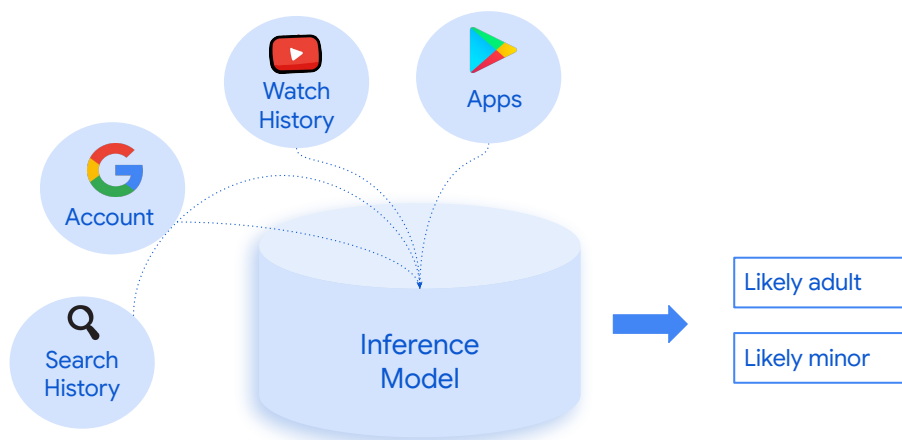
How do we ensure we develop and sustain a best-in-class model?

- 1 Training and ground truth data**

The model's testing and evaluation relies on "ground truth" data that is deliberately kept separate from the data used to train the model. This approach is fundamental for the efficacy of any model.
- 2 Continuous Testing**

We continuously test the outcome and result of this estimation model, relying on a large dataset of signed-in users. This assists in the accuracy and fairness of our model.
- 3 A phased rollout**

Learnings from each market directly inform subsequent deployments, marking every step as a critical milestone for continuous improvement and helping ensure the model's efficacy.



We believe in a responsible age assurance approach

1 Be measured and ethical

- Embed privacy and ethical considerations at the heart of age assurance.
- While high-risk services (e.g., pornography, gambling, alcohol) may justify requiring hard IDs, developers of lower risk services should have the flexibility to use age estimation and verification methods best suited to their services.

2 Preserve users' access to information and services

- Avoid treating all users like children.
- Avoid unnecessarily impinging on the ability of adults or children to access age-appropriate products, services, and information.

3 Respect users' privacy

- Keep users in control of age sharing with third parties.
- Preserve options for anonymous or pseudonymous experiences.
- Avoid requiring collection or processing of additional personal information