Before the phone goes under the tree

8 things to decide first



- [ ] Where it sleeps at night
- [ ] When it's off on school nights
- [ ] Which apps it starts with
- [ ] Who says yes to the next app
- [ ] What it's for: calls, maps, camera, music
- [ ] The plan for sleepovers and trips
- [ ] The date you'll look at all this again
- [ ] What you'll say when you hand it over

Set it up before you wrap it.

Set up a hand-me-down iPhone for your kid

iOS 27, in this order

1. **Erase it.**
   Settings › General › Transfer or Reset iPhone › Erase All Content and Settings

2. **Make them their own Apple Account.**
   On your phone: Settings › Family › Add Member › Create Child Account. Use their real birthday.

3. **Set it up with Quick Start.**
   Hold your phone near theirs and choose your child.

4. **Switch on the new parental controls.**
   After updating the family's devices: Settings › Family › Get Started

5. **Lock Screen Time with its own passcode.**
   One they have never watched you type.

6. **Turn on Ask to Buy and Ask to Browse.**
   Settings › Family › your child › Apps & Websites › Restrictions

7. **Set a Screen Time Schedule.**
   Settings › Family › your child › Screen Time Schedule

Paths from Apple Support, October 2026

Skip the contract.

6 rules the phone can keep for you



1. **One charging spot everyone can see.**
   A shelf in the kitchen beats a promise about the bedroom.

2. **A schedule for school and bedtime.**
   A Screen Time Schedule turns apps off on time without you.

3. **Autoplay off.**
   In every app that lets you turn it off.

4. **New apps get a yes first.**
   Ask to Buy sends the request to your phone.

5. **One date when something loosens.**
   Their birthday works. Tell them in advance.

6. **Their messages stay theirs.**
   Say it out loud, so they know where the line is.