



What is Musical.ly?

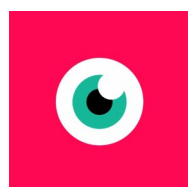
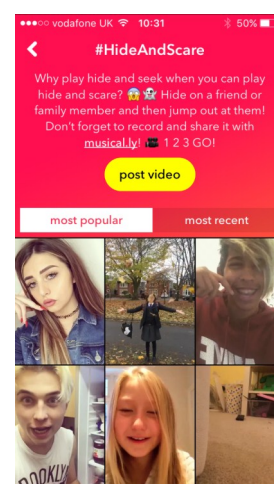
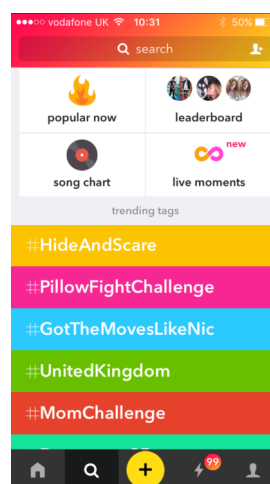
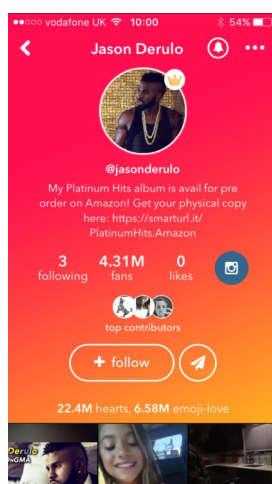
Musical.ly is an online social network, available for phones and tablets, which will let users share 15 second video using popular chart songs as background audio. Users (or Musers as they are known) can lip synch, dance or create short funny skits which are then shared with their followers or, depending on privacy settings, other users of the site.



You can comment on other user's videos, and they can comment on yours. You can show your appreciation by giving 'Hearts' – similar to 'Liking' on Facebook and Instagram.

You can also use #Hashtags when you post a video to join in with challenges or to share a 'Musical' around a theme.

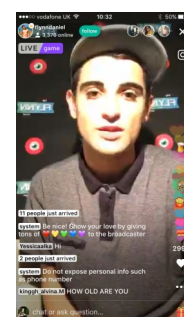
Musical.ly also comes with a Direct Messaging service, allow users to communicate privately with their 'Followers'



Live.ly

Musical.ly has also recently included a live streaming service, called Live.ly, where users can broadcast what they are doing live to other Musical.ly users. The live stream appears automatically in your Musical.ly feed. To live stream you will need to download the Live.ly app and sign in with your Musical.ly account.

You can chat and ask questions during the live stream, send virtual gifts and give 'Hearts'. You also have the ability to take a screenshot of the stream and easily share it to another service like Instagram.



Do age restrictions apply?

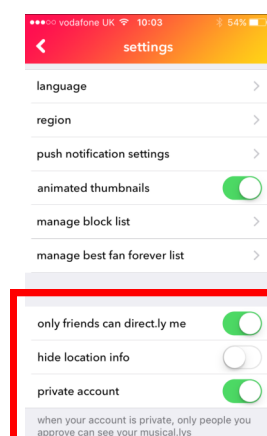
As Musical.ly collects and shares personal information, the same rules apply when it comes to age – you need to be over 13 to create an account – although the terms and conditions do state that by creating an account you confirm that you are over the age of 18!

Musical.ly allows users to report under age users which enables them to delete the account of under 13's. The same age requirement applies to Live.ly as well.

Are there any privacy settings/controls?

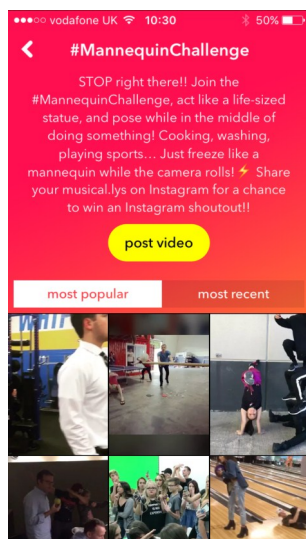
As Musical.ly allows users to share videos, amass followers and chat directly, you are given the ability to create a private account. This will stop users from following you unless you approve and will keep your Musicals within your friend group. By default, your account will be PUBLIC.

There are also features in the app which allow you to share your Musicals on other social networks like Facebook and Instagram – Musical.ly privacy settings do not apply, it will depend on how private you have set your other accounts.





Things to think about



Privacy

Always make sure you understand who can see your Musicals and follow the usual rules for posting things online – no phone numbers, emails or addresses. It's also important to remember that the app can be used in bedrooms and there have been a number of users who have posted videos wearing their school uniform. Set some basic rules around what can and what can't be shared online.

If you stream a video live through Live.ly – there are no privacy settings currently to manage your audience. The live video you record will also appear on your profile, it won't just disappear afterwards.

It's also worth knowing that there is no feature in Musical.ly which allows you to delete your account, although they have assured users they are working on one. The only way to remove the content is to either delete it all manually or to report the user as underage. There is no other option so once an account has been created, it's going to be there for a long time.

Not everything is appropriate

Some of the criticism around Musical.ly is that some of the song lyrics are not appropriate for children, many feature explicit lyrics, offensive words and can sometimes be of a sexual nature. There have also been concerns over the type of content that others have posted. Although Musical.ly has rules against pornography and other graphic content, they do not check videos before they are uploaded and as a result, some children have seen highly inappropriate pictures and videos shared by adults. If you see something inappropriate it can be reported to Musical.ly directly, allowing them to remove the content and reprimand the user.

It works like other social networks

Musical.ly and Live.ly are designed to share your information with as many people as they can, but you are still in control of who you accept as a friend. This also means that if you don't want someone to see your content, or they have sent abusive or inappropriate messages you can BLOCK them. Make sure that all users know how to block BEFORE they start using the app, that way they will know what to do to stay safe if anything happens.

Want to learn more?

A Parents Guide to Musical.ly from Parent Info:
<http://parentinfo.org/article/a-parents-guide-to-musically>

Musical.ly official parent guide:
<http://musicallyapp.tumblr.com/parents>

If you have concerns about the immediate safety of a child, you can call Lincolnshire Police on 101 or, in an emergency, dial 999