



# Playful by Design Tool

## About

This Playful by Design Tool has been created by the Digital Futures Commission, an exciting research collaboration of unique organisations that invites innovators, policy makers, regulators, academics and civil society to work together to unlock digital innovation in the interests of children and young people.

It has been created to support designers in improving children's opportunities for free play in a digital world, and to tackle the challenges in developing digital products and services that respect children's rights. It includes a range of resources to provoke reflection, discussion and fresh ideas.

It was developed iteratively through development workshops with small, medium and large companies. It is freely available for anyone involved in creating digital products used by children. It can be used by product developers and designers, whatever their experience or responsibilities, working in group settings or individually.





## What's on offer?

The Playful by Design Tool can be used at any stage of the design process. It includes three components: principle cards, prompt cards and playboards. These resources can be accessed in four ways from <https://digitalfuturescommission.org.uk/playful-by-design-toolkit>:

- We can send you a full pack of cards if you provide us with your details.
- You can download the cards and print them yourself.
- You can download the image files and use them on your computer.
- You can clone the Playful by Design Miro board and use this online.

The **principle cards** set out design considerations to embed children's rights into digital products and services. Use these in your design and development process to meet your objectives.





The **prompt cards** present questions to guide your design thinking. These are matched to the principle cards (check the icon on the cards). There are four types of prompts:

- **WHY?** cards prompt you to focus your attention on player experiences.
- **WHAT IF...?** cards prompt you to consider design alternatives.
- **HOW?** cards prompt you to identify design options and translate your ideas into actions.
- **WILD CARDS** need to be paired with a prompt card. Pick one at random to uncover a new approach to tackling the prompt question.

The **playboards** support you to use the cards in flexible ways, whether with your design team or by yourself.





## How do I use the Playful by Design Tool?

Choose any of the playboards to start using the Playful by Design Tool for the first time. There are five playboards to meet designers' requirements at the time of use:

### Playboard 1: The Knotty Web



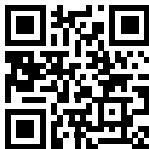
**Aim:** Identify which Playful by Design principles relate to your current challenges to inspire design concepts.

Designing a product or service aligned with children's rights can be a complex process. The issues that arise are often knotty and require careful consideration. How do the challenges you face map onto the Playful by Design principles?

*Watch the  
animated guide*



*Read the  
instructions*





## Playboard 2: Check It

**Aim:** Identify which design principles are already embedded into your product design and which need more attention.

You might think you've got everything sorted, and that you've already embedded ethical and child rights-respecting principles into your design. But let's see if some Playful by Design principles could be developed further to improve a child's experience of your product.

*Watch the  
animated guide*



*Read the  
instructions*





### **Playboard 3: Mix It Up!**

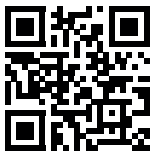
**Aim:** Identify which Playful by Design principles are in focus for you at this moment in time, and reflect on your current priorities.

Although all the Playful by Design principles are important, some might be at the forefront of your mind at the moment. This may be for many reasons. But still, you could ask yourself: is it time to shift your focus?

*Watch the  
animated guide*



*Read the  
instructions*





## Playboard 4: Friction

**Aim:** Articulate a challenging question that can refresh your design aims.

It's not always easy to achieve designs that respect children's rights. You will have many competing priorities and aims, and while some Playful by Design principles may align with your product and processes, you may experience friction and challenges. What tensions arise when you try to embed multiple Playful by Design principles into your product development?

*Watch the  
animated guide*



*Read the  
instructions*



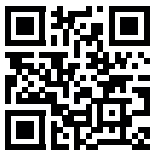


## Playboard 5: Q&A

**Aim:** Get the conversation going and generate debate. Remember, the best questions and answers often lead to more questions!

Throughout the design process, we ask ourselves and our teams lots of questions to improve our products – Why? What if? How? Still, it can be useful for someone *outside* our context to challenge us to reflect on children's experiences, consider new approaches or identify the next steps. So how might a Q&A session help you to improve your products?

*Watch the  
animated guide*



*Read the  
instructions*

