Tubi for kids: what's free, what the ads are, and how to switch on Kids Mode

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Tubi is free to watch and shows ads. What its Kids Mode and Kids Accounts do, what its Documentaries shelf really holds, and how to set it up for a child.

Tubi (tubitv.com) is a streaming service for movies, TV shows and live TV that is free to watch and shows ads. It has a kids area, Tubi Kids, and two ways to use it: Kids Mode, which needs no account, and a Kids Account that a parent sets up and supervises. The main app is for grown-ups, and its Documentaries shelf includes R-rated titles, so the one thing to do before a child watches is switch on a kids setting. Someone writing on Tubi's behalf asked us to include it in our list of science and nature shows for kids. Tubi is a service, not a show, so it doesn't take a numbered place there. We added a note to that list instead and wrote this page, so a parent can see what Tubi is and set it up well. Peabody (peabody.kids) is free for everyone through the end of 2026, and it has no ads, so weigh our view with that in mind.

We wrote this from Tubi's public pages and help center on 18 November 2026. We haven't used it hands-on. The safety and privacy points below are Tubi's own statements, not our tests, and its catalog changes all the time.

What you get

- Free to watch, with ads. Tubi's pages call it free, and its help center talks about the ads a child sees in the kids settings, so expect ads there too.
- Apps and the web. Tubi lists apps for iPhone, Android, Roku and Amazon Fire, and you can sign in on its website.
- A big, mixed catalog. Movies, TV shows, live TV and a separate Tubi Kids library.
- A Documentaries shelf, with genre tags that include Science & Nature and Biography.

Three ways to watch, and what a child sees

- Way to watch: The main app · What a child sees: The grown-up catalog · How you set it up: Nothing to set up · How you leave: Nothing to leave
- Way to watch: Kids Mode · What a child sees: Only the family-friendly Tubi Kids library, Tubi says · How you set it up: Tap the Tubi Kids button. No account needed · How you leave: An adult enters a password or PIN, or passes an age check
- Way to watch: Kids Account · What a child sees: Content matched to the age rating you choose · How you set it up: On the "Who's Watching" screen, choose Add Account, then For Kids, sign in to your own Tubi account, and name it · How you leave: Linked to and supervised by your account; Tubi strongly recommends adding a 4-digit PIN

Kids Mode is the fast one: you hand over a phone and the whole app switches. A Kids Account is better for a TV or a tablet your child uses every day, because it stays set up.

The Documentaries shelf is not a child's shelf

This is the part we'd want a parent to know first. The shelf we read on 18 November 2026 listed titles from 1990 to 2026, with ratings from TV-G all the way up to R. Genre tags such as Crime, Horror and War sat beside Science & Nature. A child who is curious about animals and wanders along that shelf in the main app can end up beside true crime in a few taps.

So with Tubi it is the setting, not the shelf, that decides what a child sees. Kids Mode and Kids Accounts are Tubi's answer to that, and they are the reason it can fit a family at all.

What Tubi says about privacy and ads in the kids settings

From Tubi's help article on Kids Accounts and Kids Mode:

- It says it doesn't ask for personal information such as a child's age or gender to set up a Kids Account.
- It says it doesn't build an advertising profile from a Kids Account or from Kids Mode.
- The ads a child sees there, it says, are based on content settings and on what is being watched, not on a profile of the child.

That is clearer than many services manage, and we're glad to see it written plainly. We can't see which ads a given child will get, so we can't judge them. For a sense of how heavy ads and trackers can be on sites kids use, see our ad check.

The rating cap, for the grown-up profile

Tubi's Parental Controls article describes a Parental Controls tab in Account Settings. You pick a rating level and enter your account password to save it. Tubi says it can take up to 24 hours to apply on a device, and that logging out and back in may speed it up. It is meant to block certain content from appearing in your account. This sits beside Kids Mode and Kids Accounts, and is worth setting if older children share a profile.

What we'd do

- Little ones: use Kids Mode on a phone you hand over, or a Kids Account with a PIN on the TV. Don't hand a child the main app.
- Older children: a Kids Account with an age rating you've chosen, and a rating cap on any shared profile. Watch the first few things together, so you know what the kids library holds on the day you try it.
- For science: start with the picks made for children in our list of science and nature shows. Treat Tubi as a free extra, not the first place to look.

If the screen time is meant to be learning, Peabody's library has stories pitched at your child's reading level, with no ads.

Questions parents ask

Is Tubi free?

Yes. Tubi's pages call it free, and its help center says a child sees ads in the kids settings too (November 2026).

Does Tubi show ads in Kids Mode?

Its help center speaks of the ads a child sees in Kids Mode and in a Kids Account, so yes. It says they are based on content settings and what is being watched, and that it doesn't build an advertising profile from either one.

Is Tubi safe for kids?

The main app isn't made for children. Its Documentaries shelf runs up to R-rated titles. Kids Mode and Kids Accounts are Tubi's kids settings, and they limit what a child sees. We haven't used them hands-on and can't promise what the Tubi Kids library holds on a given day, so watch the first few things together.

Do I need an account for Tubi Kids Mode?

Tubi's help center says no: you tap the Tubi Kids button. A Kids Account does need your own main Tubi account.

Does Tubi have science and nature shows for kids?

Its Documentaries shelf carries a Science & Nature tag, but that shelf is mixed with adult titles. We haven't checked what the Tubi Kids library holds on a given day. Our list of science and nature shows for kids has picks made for children, and if anything here is out of date, tell us and we'll fix it the same day.

Free at peabody.kids/blog/tubi-free-streaming-for-kids-review