

Your Grandkids' Generation: Gen Alpha Explained

A plain-English guide to children growing up with tablets, short-form video, voice assistants, and artificial intelligence

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Who Is Generation Alpha?

Generation Alpha generally refers to children born during the 2010s and after. The oldest members are now entering their teenage years. They are the first children to grow up in a world where tablets, streaming video, smart speakers, and always-available internet access feel ordinary.

Because this generation is still young, any description of it is only an early preview. There is much less long-term information about their jobs, spending, voting, and adult behavior than there is for Millennials or Generation Z.

Why Does This Generation Feel So Different?

Every generation is shaped by the world it inherits. Generation Alpha's childhood has included the COVID-19 pandemic, frequent discussion of climate change, and rapid growth in artificial intelligence.

Older generations learned to use search engines as a new tool. Many Generation Alpha children are learning to expect software that can answer in conversation, create pictures, adjust explanations, and respond personally.

Early Patterns Worth Watching

Researchers and educators are watching several early trends:

- Screen use often begins at a very young age and is tailored to each child through tablets, apps, and recommendation systems.
- Environmental concerns may appear early because recycling, weather extremes, and climate change are common topics at school and in the media.
- Voice assistants and AI chat tools may feel natural rather than something that must be deliberately learned.
- Short-form videos may be changing how children expect information to be presented and how long they remain focused on one item.
- Greater racial, cultural, and family diversity is often treated as an ordinary part of daily life rather than a special topic.

These patterns are not automatically good or bad. They simply show that the basic surroundings of childhood are changing.

What Does This Mean for Grandparents?

A grandparent does not need to learn every app, game, or online trend. A more useful role is to provide stability, attention, judgment, and genuine curiosity while the child's technology changes quickly.

Try this: Ask a young grandchild or great-grandchild to show you a favorite app or game. Watch for ten minutes without correcting or judging. Ask what they enjoy and how it works.

How Technology Fits Into the Picture

Technology is not merely one influence on Generation Alpha; it is part of the environment in which they are growing up. They may not remember a time before AI tools could answer homework questions, explain ideas in different ways, or generate pictures and text.

This could widen the technology gap between children and older adults. It also creates a new opportunity. Grandparents who become comfortable with basic AI tools will have more shared experiences and better questions to discuss with younger family members.

What Comes After Generation Alpha?

The name Generation Beta is already being used for children born beginning around 2025. It is too early to know what will define them, but the general pattern will continue: each generation is shaped by the major technologies, events, and problems present during childhood.

What Should We Remember?

- Do not assume that unfamiliar technology means children are careless or incapable.
- Do not assume that being comfortable with technology means children understand every risk.
- Older adults still provide experience, patience, perspective, and judgment that technology cannot replace.
- Curiosity creates a better connection than criticism.
- Learning a few modern tools can make conversations across generations easier.

Discussion Questions

- What technology did not exist when you were a child but now feels ordinary?
- What advantages do children gain from growing up with tablets and AI?
- What problems or risks might come with constant access to personalized screens?
- What could a grandchild teach a grandparent about technology?
- What could a grandparent teach a child that technology cannot?

*Source: “Across Generations Week 5: Your Grandkids’ Generation: Gen Alpha Explained,” The Senior Techie.
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