

Using Text to Communicate with Others

Texting is often the go-to method for communicating with others. Texting can be tricky sometimes because it cannot convey tone of voice, body language, gestures, etc. Following some common texting rules can help avoid hurt feelings and misunderstandings.



Tip #1: When Is Texting Not Appropriate?

There are times when you should not communicate by text message. Here are some of those times:

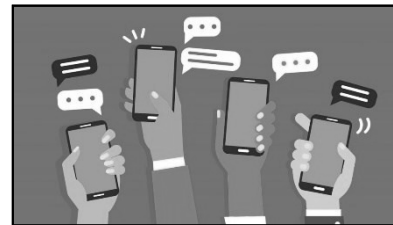
- Telling someone that a person close to them has died
- Ending a relationship with someone
- In the middle of the night when someone is sleeping
- When you are not in the right frame of mind (i.e., mad, sleepy, tired, upset, under the influence)
- When you need to tell someone bad news
- At the movies, plays or concerts
- During funerals or church services
- While driving
- When you need to share private or confidential information

- In the middle of a personal conversation with someone
- In an emergency unless it is the only way to reach someone



Tip #2: Replying to Text Messages

One of the benefits of texting is that it does not always require that you respond immediately. However, it is polite to text back in a reasonable time frame to texts that require a response. Sending an “Okay” or “Let me get back to you” message to the person, lets them know you saw the text message. If you would not reply in conversation, then your text may not need a reply.



Tip #3: Sending Text Messages

Text messages were created to be short messages to others. When texting, keep in mind the following:

- Keep the messages short
- Be careful with emojis as all smart phones do not use the same emojis

Tips for Youth

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- Check your spelling and grammar before sending
- Reread your text for auto correct errors and tone
- Double-check to whom you are sending the text message
- Do not overuse abbreviations, especially those that are not that commonly used
- If you are texting someone who may not have your number saved, be sure to state who you are so they know
- Avoid sarcasm or witty remarks as texting has no tone or body language to let people know that you were being sarcastic or trying to be funny
- Do not text in all capital letters as it seems like you are angry and shouting
- Do not send multiple texts if they do not respond to you the first time
- Have patience as you wait for a response because the person could be busy and not able to respond immediately



Tip #4: Texting with Professionals

Texting with professionals such as employers, health care providers, and educators is different than texting with friends and family. Here are some tips for communicating with professionals:

- Do not text at times other than weekday business hours unless they tell you that it is okay
- Respond in a timely manner so they know you have seen and read the text
- Avoid the use of emojis and abbreviations in professional texts
- Double or triple-check your spelling, punctuation, and grammar
- Keep text messages brief
- When the text conversation is complete, close with a clear end to the conversation, such as thank you or a promise to follow up
- Text messages should never be the first contact with a professional
- Be clear and to the point with what you need to say