

Texting Etiquette - Everyone Should Know These Rules of Texting

By [Karen Anise](#) |

While texting is a common form of communication these days, it still requires that we maintain a level of basic etiquette. And while this may sound simple enough, often good manners are ignored. When this happens, texting can turn sensible people into rude and thoughtless people.

Here are a few items to remember.

- Texting is casual communication to be used in combination with face to face and other verbal methods.
- Spell all words, eliminate confusion.
- Never use all CAPS, it is the equivalent to yelling.
- Texting doesn't require a response.
- There is always a time and place for it. Not anytime and anyplace.
- Texting while dining with friends or family is rude.
- Never text to someone while you are driving a car. It is very stupid because it is very dangerous.

In today's world, high tech has replaced high touch in many instances. We are geared to multi-task. We are self-absorbed and don't realize many our communications are simply sound bites. This is especially true for texting. Text messaging transmissions are limited to 140 characters per text. Any more than that becomes multiple texts. If the original text or response is more than 140 characters, it probably should be an email or verbal instead. Voice and face to face communications are imperative for any relationship.

Be aware of it becoming a habit. The tendency today is to text although it is just as easy to pick up the phone and call. Communication, according to dictionary.com is defined as "the imparting or interchange of thoughts, opinions, or information by speech, writing, or signs". The operative word is interchange. Texting etiquette sometimes fails at this. In a text, the sender is not necessarily looking for a response. If you want a response, then you should ask for it in the text.

Texting is casual. It can minimize the strength and meaning of your communication. Think about the message you are sending and consider how your words might affect other people. For example, sarcasm is extremely difficult to communicate in a text. Spell all words out instead of abbreviating. This will keep your message clear and alleviate miscommunication, confusion and often time's annoyance. It is also important to distinguish between casual or more formal methods of communicating. For example, invitations to planned events are formal and wouldn't be appropriate in text form.

Texting while dining is completely out of line. Whether home or in a restaurant, it's rude to the people around you. And if everyone at the table is texting, why are you together? The same goes for movies. Yes, it's rude, but you also do yourself an injustice. You miss key features and nuances of the movie and the light from your phone is probably distracting others in the theater.

Texting is a tool that requires the sender to be cognizant of his or her surroundings. It requires us to focus on the words we are saying and make sure that we are succinct and clear in our messages. It is important to follow these basic rules of etiquette and support the high tech human world we live in.

Seven Ways to Text with Graciousness and Savvy

By: Maralee McKee

Texting etiquette hasn't reached the heights of the tsunami of texts we send every day because no other technological form of communication has caught on so quickly. It's easy to see why many have become so smitten.

1. Think of texts as preludes or follow-ups to conversation, not the conversation itself. Keep them short. More than 160 characters means that a phone call or e-mail is the better way to deliver your message.
2. It's super easy for your tone to be misunderstood in a text, even more so than an in e-mail. That's why texts are best left for mundane messages like, "I'm home safely!" or, "See you at 8:00 PM at your house."
3. Texting while you're with others is as rude as getting up and leaving them in mid-sentence. Just don't do it! Also, don't text in movies, church, meetings, class, or while at someone's house. Even if your friends have left the area for a moment, or the movie, business meeting, or church service hasn't started yet, be tuned in to the place you're at as soon as you enter the area, even in the quiet moments and down time.
4. Texting is the most informal form of communicating. Usually, you don't want to represent your business or organization or to relay important family news (unless everyone has agreed in advance) in a text message. Call or e-mail instead.
5. Don't use text lingo and shorthand unless you're positive (It's really hard to be positive.) the recipient is fluent in the constantly emerging language of texting. One techno-savvy twenty-something wrongly assumed "LOL" meant "lots of love." Poor girl, she was heartbroken and embarrassed when she found out the guy on the other end was being rude by "laughing out loud." He wasn't sending his love at all.
6. Don't leave them guessing. If the recipient likely doesn't have your cell phone number stored in their phone, make sure to let them know who you are before composing the rest of your text. For example: "Hi, Everly! This is Sarah (Kim's mom from school)..."
7. Don't send texts (or e-mails that go to smart phones) after bedtime. If the recipient forgot to turn their phone to silent before turning in for the night (like my husband has done twice in the last week!), you'll wake people up at midnight by the beep of their phone alerting them they have a new message.
8. OK, I know, I said "7 Tips" but this one just has to be said again. Please, please, please, don't ever text, or read a text while driving! Maybe you haven't hurt yourself or anyone yet; but this just could be the time! Don't do it, ever! Ever. Ever.