What is netiquette?

Netiquette is a made-up word from the words **net** and **etiquette**. Netiquette thus describes the **rules of conduct for respectful and appropriate communication on the internet.**

The rules of netiquette vary depending on the platform and its participants. Generally, it is up to the operator of a website or communication app to specify the type and scope of netiquette. It is also their responsibility to monitor compliance with these basic rules and to penalize violations of them.

Netiquette: General rules of conduct

1. Stick to the rules of conduct online that you follow in real life

Refrain from insulting, provoking, threatening, or insulting others. **Respect** the opinions of your chat counterparts and express **constructive criticism**. Remember that **you can be prosecuted for insulting people online.**

2. Netiquette: Think of the person

You are not communicating with a machine, but with real people. Also, consider **what** and **how** you write. Because the internet doesn't forget anything! A screenshot or a copy of your messages is quickly made and still exists even if you delete your messages afterward.

3. Present your best side online

Remain **friendly** and r**espectful**, even if you **disagree**. Good netiquette is characterized by respect, politeness, and professionalism.

A tip: You should generally **refrain from writing messages or individual words entirely in capital letters** – even if you want to give these sections more expression.

After all, capital letters on the internet mean shouting and are generally considered impolite.

4. Read first, then ask

Do you have a question about something? Then take the time to carefully read the answers in the previous discussion posts first. If you write an answer similar to someone else's, it shows the other chat participants that you have paid little attention to the conversation so far.

5. Netiquette: Pay attention to grammar and punctuation

Take time to read through your answers again. **Check** them for **grammar**, **punctuation**, and **correct spelling**. It can be very frustrating for the other person if they have to decipher poorly written sentences to understand the meaning behind them. In addition, faulty grammar distracts from the goal of your message.

If you have a **weakness in grammar** and **spelling, don't be discouraged**. Use spelling aids before you send messages.

Another tip: When composing emails, always remember to use the appropriate salutation and parting formula as well. These are also part of netiquette.

6. Respect the privacy of others

Do not forward information that has been sent to you without first obtaining permission from the original sender. When sending private emails to multiple recipients, use BCC (blind carbon copy) instead of CC (carbon copy).

This rule on the internet also applies to uploading and sharing photos or videos that show other people. Before circulating such private files, be sure to check with the people concerned before doing so.

7. Respect the time and bandwidth (data transfer rate) of others

Information can be sent to different people around the world in a matter of seconds. Nevertheless, the bandwidth is limited. Think of this limited receptivity of information when you send messages to your friends, colleagues, or superiors.

8. Forgive the mistakes of others

Everyone who goes online to forums and networks was once a beginner. As in any other field, you can make mistakes as a beginner. In online communication, this can be a lack of etiquette or manners.

Often these are spelling mistakes, superfluous questions, or answers that are too long. With this in mind, it's important to forgive your counterparts' mistakes.

A tip: Sarcasm in written form is not always recognizable to everyone on the internet. It is therefore better to remain objective.

9. Netiquette: Don't abuse your power

On the internet, as in real life, some people have more power than others. Moderators in a forum, experts in companies, or system administrators. If you have more power than others, you do not have the right to exploit this power.

10. Help keep flame wars under control

Flame wars are messages that contain aggressive personal criticism or attacks on a person. In group chats, heated discussions often degenerate into so-called flame wars. If you get into such a discussion, you should stay out of it. **Always remember that you should treat others as you would like to be treated.**

Also, remember that **insults and threats on the internet can have legal consequences** for you.

11. Know where you are in cyberspace

Netiquette is interpreted differently in different places on the internet. For example, it is perfectly normal to spread gossip in a TV discussion group. However, if you do this in a serious discussion group, you will quickly make yourself unpopular

12. Hate speech and netiquette

So-called hate speech on the internet is an increasing problem, especially in social media. It is often found in offensive comments under photos or posts.

What can you do against hate speech? If you come across such statements on the internet, you should report them to the provider of the website. Often you will find the option to report a post directly underneath it on social media. The providers are legally obliged to delete content which is evidently illegal within 24 hours.

13. Do not give out personal information

Under no circumstances should you share passwords or personal information such as name, address, or telephone number online. The name of the school or clubs should also be kept secret.

14. Use a neutral nickname

A neutral nickname ensures that other people do not feel insulted or ridiculed.

15. Keep it short and clear

Posts, answers, and even questions should be kept as short and clear as possible. No one wants to read an unnecessary amount of text that does not contribute to answering the issue.

https://www.kaspersky.com/resource-center/preemptive-safety/what-is-netiquette,

retrieved 27 October 2022