Your Literally Ausome Netiquette Guide - Online and Social Media Rules

The rules, or etiquette, are just as important in cyberspace as they are in the real world. In cyberspace, we call it Netiquette! I need to always remember that those I interact with online are real people with real feelings and real reactions.

General Rules:

- If I won't say something to someone's face, then I won't say it online.
- If I don't share it in public, I won't share it online.
- I'll treat others the way I want to be treated. (People will be mean to people online because you can't see or feel the other person's reaction).
- I won't use ALL CAPS when messaging someone or making my font too big. This means I am shouting at the person I am sending my message to. If I need to emphasise something or make sure the person's sees it:

I can bold the words or put it on a separate line

- I won't use too many emojis or too much punctuation!!!!!!!!!!! It's really distracting and annoying.
- I'll remember that people are busy and not always online, so won't always reply straight away.
- I'll respect everyone's privacy. I won't post pictures of anyone else to my timeline/page/account without checking with them first. I will also need to check if they want to be 'tagged'. (My privacy settings may not be set up the same as my friends, which means these posts and images might be seen by people I don't know or people I don't want to see).
- I will respect everyone's privacy by not sharing any of my friends personal information with ANYONE, unless I have their permission.
- If I'm unsure of how to respond to an email/private message, I won't ignore it. I can reply saying that it's a difficult question or I'm unsure and they might be better off asking someone else.
- I will be aware of the rules for each website/online forum I visit. I will take some time to look around to see how others are responding and what tone they're using. This will help me decide if I want to participate and if so, how to do so properly.
- I will not exclude my friends - if I have a joke with a friend, I will only share it with them or in a small group. I can also just private message my friend who it relates to.
- I won't send huge files as they might crash or slow down the internet of the person I send it to.
- I will never troll anyone ever. This means that I will not post anything ever just to cause a reaction or hurt the poster. If I disagree with someone's post, I can use the thumb down reaction or ignore it. I will not respond in a way that I know will hurt or anger the original poster.

Social Media

- I won't send huge files as they might crash or slow down the internet of the person I send it to.
- The same friendship rules that are in real life apply to social media. Not everyone is my best friend or close friend. Some people are just my acquaintances.
- 'I won't 'friend' and then 'unfriend' people - if I don't want to be friends with someone online, I don't have to.
- The number of friends or followers I have on social media does not equal how awesome I am, or how 'popular' I am, in real life . I would rather have close friends and followers in my accounts than try to make out to be super popular. It will also be obvious to others that this is what I'm doing and they might unfriend me as they don't want to just be 'another number'.
- I need to assume that anything I ever write can be misused or misunderstood. If I think this is likely when messaging something important, I need to consider just talking to the person instead.
- I need to be careful about 'oversharing' or 'TMI' (Too Much Information). This is when I might share too much information or details about something that no one other than me cares about. I need to ask myself, 'if someone else posted this, would I care'? If the answer is no, then don't post it.
- I won't post personal messages on someone's public timeline, for example making arrangements with only them. This is a public post and will make others feel excluded.
- I don't have to comment on everything a friend posts. At first this is ok, but after a while, this will annoy my friend and they might unfriend me or block me from seeing their posts.
- I need to keep the amount of contact when messaging (and emailing) balanced. I also need to be mindful of two-way rules. I need to ask myself if I'm contacting the person more than they're contacting me. I need to stop if I am messaging them too much.
- I won't correct people I think have posted something incorrect publicly. I can private message them, or think about the size of this problem and whether I should move on and ignore it.
- If I want to acknowledge my friend's post, I can use the 'reaction' buttons instead of commenting or posting an emoji in the comments section.
- I will not repost or share anything unless I have checked the facts first. E.g. 'This cream will get rid of your pimples instantly and forever'.
- If I get something that says, 'forward this on to 10 people and you'll get good luck', I will NOT forward it. These messages are called 'spam' and are annoying to receive. If I do this a lot my friends may 'unfriend' me as they don't want these types of messages. This applies to emails also. (This is also called 'spam'. See more on page 5).
- If I'm included in a group chat (whether it's happening at the time, or I have to catch up on the conversation) and want to reply, I need to read the whole conversation from the top so I understand exactly what the conversation is about and to help me respond the most appropriate and accurate way.
- In group chats also, I can let the other group members know I have read their comments by giving their comments a reaction emoji.

Email

- If I get an email that asks me to respond as soon as possible, I will not ignore this. I will respond once I have thought about the answer or worked out if I can attend (if it's an invitation) or how I would like to answer the request. Within one day (or 24 hours since receiving the email) is an appropriate time limit to reply.
- I will respect a person's need to have an answer. I might not agree with their reasons for this, but I won't ignore it.
- I need to make sure I answer all the questions asked of me and if I am unable to, I need to say that I will reply when I am able to about that particular point.
- I need to stay on track when replying to emails and get to the point.
- I need to check my spelling and punctuation before sending or replying to emails.
- If sending a group email to people that don't know one another, I will use the Bcc button.
- If I get an email and see that a lot of people have also received it, I will only 'reply all' IF my answer needs to be seen by everyone. Otherwise, I will click on 'reply' so the sender gets my reply only.
- I need to ask for clarification about what details or information someone needs from me. For example, if someone asks for 'all the information', I need to make sure they don't mean to provide literally everything I have about it and need to ask them to send me a list of exactly what they need.
- I won't send too many emails to one person as this can appear creepy or make the person feel overwhelmed. I'll need to keep my email to only one and use dot points to help keep things brief and on-topic. If I forget something in my one email, I can send another email saying something like, 'sorry I forgot to include/mention/provide/attach' and then provide the information I forgot.
- I need to say what I mean in emails. I need to be clear and not clever as this can lead to people misunderstanding my message and even getting offended or upset if they misread it i.e. them using the wrong tone and being upset by something I wrote, when it was intended to be funny.
- It's rude to use a professional's (doctor etc) personal email or mobile during non-work times. Nothing is that urgent. If I feel something is urgent, I will make a plan with them on another way/s of contacting them when they're not working or at work.
- I won't text (or email) messages that are very serious and are better suited to talk directly to the person about. (You can email/message them an 'agenda', e.g. 'when I see you next, I need to talk to you about X'. This helps prepare both you and them about a topic that you/them might feel uncomfortable/anxious about).

Text/Private Messages

- I need to remind myself that texting/messaging is not a personal form of communication. This means, it's ok to send a message to my friend to save me a seat or to order me a coffee if I'm running late, but it's not ok to break up with someone or share important information (like something exciting or frightening that's happened to me). The replies I get from important information are likely to upset me as they will seem uncaring. I need to talk to people and tell them my news if I would like to see and feel their responses.

What is Spam?

Spam is anything I get from anyone who I'm not friends with or signed up to. Spam is very annoying so I won't contribute to it.

E.g. if I get a joke email, I can share it with my friends that appreciate it. If I'm not sure, I won't send it. I won't send or forward anything like this to everyone as people usually don't enjoy receiving them and I will annoy them.

What is cyberbullying?

This is online bullying which means my behaviour is considered pestering (harassment), disrespectful, insulting or causing someone else to be humiliated by something I say or do online to anyone.

What is a 'digital footprint'?

A digital footprint is a trail of data I'll be creating when I use the Internet. It includes the websites I've visited, emails I've sent and information I submit to online services.

I'll add footprints each time I publish a blog, post anything on my social media accounts like Facebook/Instagram. The more time I spend on social networking websites, the larger my digital footprint will be. Even "liking" a page or a Facebook post adds to my digital footprint as this information is saved on Facebook's servers

Before posting anything, I will THINK!

T = Is it True?

H = Is it Helpful?

I = Is it Inspiring?

N = Is it Necessary?

K = Is it Kind?