

Global Wellness Monthly

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Mind Your Cell Phone Manners

From texting while driving to talking loudly in public space, we have all been irked by these behaviors at one point in time. In fact, a recent survey conducted by Ipsos and sponsored by Intel Corporation to uncover the current state of mobile etiquette in the United States, found nine out of ten American adults claim they have seen people misuse mobile technology. Of those surveyed, 75 percent say mobile manners are becoming worse compared to just 1 year ago.

How can you avoid being a mobile manners offender? Anna Post of the Emily Post Institute reminds us that, "Whether we are talking about mobile etiquette technology or not, etiquette is, at its very core, about considerate interactions with others." Here are a few tips to consider as you practice respectful mobile manners:

Be safe and don't endanger the safety of others.

- Do not text, email, or talk on the phone while driving. According to the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, distracted driving contributes to up to 8,000 crashes every single day and using a cell phone while driving quadruples your risk of crashing. Most calls and messages can wait, but if it can't, pull over to a safe location to place or return a call or send a message.
- Use caution when walking and using mobile technology. Watch your step!
- Do not stop in a busy walkway or doorway to make a call. Blocking walkways causes distractions and forces others to accommodate you.

Respect the privacy and comfort of others.

- Refrain from making or taking calls at the theatre, at a concert, or other places where your conversation, phone ring, or screen light may negatively impact the experience of those around you whose attention is focused on a performance or event.
- Proactively turn off your phone or silence your ring tone based on your environment. Even if you opt to not take a call or respond to a message, your ring tone or message alert is still potentially disruptive to others. Give special consideration at those places and events that, culturally, require additional reverence, such as weddings, funerals, courthouses, doctor's offices, and places of worship.
- If you need to text, email, or make a call in public, consider how your actions might impact others. You might opt to wait, move to another location where you'll be less disruptive, or at the very least, talk in lowered voice and keep your call brief.
- Consider your space. If you're on a crowded train or other small enclosed space, no matter how discreet you may try to be, others will be forced to listen to your conversation, and it is not likely that many will appreciate it.
- Consider the volume of your location. If it is so loud that you have to yell to be heard, it is not the best place to take a call.

At a glance

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- When College Kids Surf the Web in Class, Grades Fall
- If You Can't Stay Off Social Media, Maybe It's in Your Genes

- While everyone will have different interpretations of phone etiquette, screaming, cussing or cursing, or airing private information is almost universally considered poor cell phone etiquette.
- Some places should stay private. Do not use a mobile device while using a restroom.



Be present.

- Give your attention to those you are with, whether in a meeting, eating dinner with your family, or having coffee with a friend. Giving your full attention to those you are with shows them they matter and are important to you. Interrupting your face-to-face time can give the impression to your companions, friends, colleagues, and family members that they are not as important as your calls, texts, or emails.
- If you are anticipating a truly urgent call, explain to your companion the circumstances beforehand. Providing this proactive explanation may help to avoid any hurt feelings.

Follow the Golden Rule.

- If you find yourself offended by others bad mobile behavior, do not engage in it yourself.
- Talk with your family and friends about their preferences and expectations for mobile use when you're together. You may want to develop ground rules based on what you learn.

By utilizing these suggestions for mobile manners, you can practice being a respectful and considerate cell phone user and make the use of technology more enjoyable for all.



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