

# Learning Resource Center Online Study Skills Handout

## Etiquette Guidelines every Online Student Needs to Know

Proper internet etiquette (also referred to as netiquette), is nothing new for most people. You grew up with your parents constantly telling you to mind your manners. But in a digital age where the unwritten online “rules” are constantly changing, proper netiquette may seem a bit mystifying.

In the atmosphere of an online classroom, the proper etiquette guidelines don’t seem as easy as a simple “please” and “thank you.” Netiquette are essential rules and norms for interacting with others on the internet in a considerate, and respectful way.

### Here Are Some Guidelines:

**1. NO YELLING, PLEASE.** In cyberspace TYPING IN ALL CAPS IS INAPPROPRIATE. Most readers tend to perceive it as shouting and, no matter how intelligent your response may be will, they may have a hard time taking what you say seriously. If you have vision issues, there are [ways to adjust how text displays](#) so you can still see without coming across as angry.

**2. Sarcasm can (and will) backfire.** Sarcasm has been the source of plenty of misguided arguments online, as it can be incredibly difficult to understand the commenter’s intent. What may seem like an obvious joke to you could come across as off-putting or rude to those who don’t know you personally. As a rule of thumb, it’s best to avoid sarcasm altogether in an online classroom. Instead, lean toward being polite and direct in the way you communicate to avoid these issues.

**3. Don’t abuse the chat box.** Chat boxes are incorporated into many online classes as a place for students to share ideas and ask questions related to the lesson. It can be a helpful resource *or* a major distraction—it all depends on how well students know their classroom etiquette. Instead of asking course related questions, some students may use this forum to voice unrelated issues. The class chat box is meant to be a learning tool, and not an instant messenger.

**4. Stop ... grammar time!** Always make an effort to use proper punctuation, spelling and grammar. Trying to decipher a string of misspelled words with erratic punctuation frustrates the reader and distracts from the point of your message.

On the other hand, it’s important to be reasonable about others’ grammar mistakes. Nobody likes the grammar police, and scolding a classmate because he or she used “your” instead of “you’re” isn’t practicing proper online etiquette.

**5. Set a respectful tone.** Always remember that any correspondence with faculty and staff is not the same as chatting with your friends.

Every day may feel like casual Friday in an online classroom where you don’t see anyone in person, but a certain level of formality is still expected in your communication with instructors. In addition to proper punctuation and spelling, it’s good etiquette to use respectful greetings and signatures, full sentences and even the same old “please” and “thank you” you use, or should be using in real life.

**6. Submit files the right way.** You won't be printing assignments and handing them to your teacher in person, so knowing how to properly submit your work online is key to your success as an online student. Online course instructors often establish ground rules for file assignment submissions like naming conventions that help them keep things organized. This includes, using acceptable file formats, like double spacing your research papers, using 12 font size, and either Times Roman, Arial, or Calibri style for text, and submitted each work in the correct assigned toolbox online. Not all work goes on the Discussion Board, Term papers are submitted in a separate area where it can be checked for plagiarism.

When a student submits assignments that does not adhere to the format that is clearly stated in the syllabus, it means the student is not paying attention. Students who do not follow instructions are putting themselves at risk of not only losing grade points, but of their professor not finding their assignments. Therefore, save yourself and your instructor the unnecessary headache by reading their instructions carefully before work submissions.

**7. Read first.** Take some time to read through each of the previous discussion post responses before writing your own response. If the original post asked a specific question, there's a good chance someone has already answered it. Submitting an answer that is eerily similar to a classmate's indicates to the instructor that you haven't paid attention to the conversation thus far.

Remember, discussions can move fairly quickly so it's important to absorb all of the information before crafting your reply. Building upon a classmate's thought or attempting to add something new to the conversation will show your instructor you've been paying attention.

**8. Think before you type.** A passing comment spoken in class can be forgotten a few minutes later, but what you share in an online classroom is part of a permanent digital record. "Whether or not privacy settings are in place, the internet has a tendency to house things forever, and what you say privately can easily become public," advises [etiquette expert](#) Devoreaux Walton.

Not only is it good practice to be guarded when it comes to personal information, you always want to be just as respectful toward others as you would be if you were sitting in the same room together. Zink says a good rule of thumb to follow is if you're comfortable standing up in front of a classroom and saying your message, then it's most likely okay to share.

**9. Attempt to find your own answer.** If you're confused or stuck on an assignment, your first instinct may be to immediately ask a question. But before you ask, take the time to try to figure it out on your own.

For questions related to class structure, such as due dates or policies, refer to your syllabus and course FAQ. Attempt to find the answers to any other questions on your own using a search engine. If your questions remain unanswered after a bit of effort, feel free to bring them up with your instructor.

**10. Be kind and professional.** Online communication comes with a level of anonymity that doesn't exist when you're talking to someone face-to-face. Sometimes this leads people to behave rudely when they disagree with one another. Online students probably don't have the complete anonymity that comes with using a screen name, but you could still fall prey to treating someone poorly because of the distance between screens. Make a point to be kind and respectful in your comments—even if you disagree with someone. After all, an online classroom is in actuality still a classroom. So be respectful, be polite, and post like the well-mannered student we know you are.

See video below: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d72NtV4I\\_p0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d72NtV4I_p0)



REFERENCE:

<https://www.rasmussen.edu/student-experience/college-life/netiquette-guidelines-every-online-student-needs-to-know/>

THE BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE.