



## NETIQUETTE

Gill Bridle writes a guideline for e-mail use.

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Just as we have Etiquette in playing golf so we need Netiquette in using e-mails and the internet.

### Content

- ⌘ DO check the content before you send an email and use a “spell check”
- ⌘ DO try to be concise and to the point. Avoid having to clarify your e-mail by telephone.
- ⌘ DO use normal capitalisation. Separate your paragraphs with blank lines. Make your message inviting to your potential readers.
- ⌘ DON'T betray confidences. It's all too easy to mistakenly send an email to a group or as a reply to a group
- ⌘ DON'T send lines longer than 70 characters. Mail a message to yourself to see what it looks like as some mail editors either truncate extra characters or seem to insert line breaks for you!
- ⌘ DO treat every post as though you were sending a copy to your boss/Chairman/Club Captain, and your worst enemy.
- ⌘ DON'T make statements that can be interpreted as official positions of your organisation.

### Addressing your e-mail

- ⌘ DO use a relevant “subject” line.
- ⌘ DON'T send a ‘reply’ to large e-mails. Send a new e-mail saying ‘thank-you’ rather than resending a huge file.
- ⌘ DO read the ‘To’ and ‘Cc’ lines in your message before you send it. Are you sure you want the message to go there?

### Be polite

- ⌘ DON'T rely on the ability of your reader to tell the difference between serious statements and satire or sarcasm. Be careful with humour and irony as they can also be misinterpreted.
- ⌘ DO remember that no one can hear the tone of your voice.
- ⌘ DON'T reply to an e-mail when you are angry. You won't be able to undo it and will probably regret it later.

- ⌘ DO remember that typing CAPITALS is considered e-mail SHOUTING and is rude. Also it is harder to read than lowercase or mixed-case messages.
- ⌘ DON'T mark e-mails urgent or priority unless they really are.

## Confidentiality

- ⌘ DO remember most software will keep a copy on your hard drive. If your e-mail is confidential delete it from both your "sent" folder and your "deleted/trash" folder if necessary.
- ⌘ DO keep other people's e-mail addresses confidential, use "bcc" (blind carbon copy) instead of "cc" when mailing a large group.

## Attachments

- ⌘ DO remember to tell recipients the format of any attachments.
- ⌘ DO check with the recipient before sending large attachments. These may slow their computer and have a cost implication if they have a dial-up connection.
- ⌘ DON'T forget to attach your attachments!

## Finally

- ⌘ DO exercise some restraint.
- ⌘ DO recall you are not obliged to reply to everything you read.

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