

Email Etiquette

Email is a great computer aid that allows us to communicate easily with family and friends. Unfortunately it is easy to fall into some bad habits that can irritate your recipients. Let's review some of them.

TYPING IN ALL CAPS. Yes it is easier than having to use the shift key for proper punctuation, but do you know it is considered very rude, is harder to read and is the on-line equivalent of SHOUTING? So my advice is learn to type properly.

Be mindful of what you include in your responses. Just highlight the segment of the email you are responding to and then only that part and the sender's name will be included in your reply. It gets rid of all the headers and other clutter.

Use small size for attachments. It's nice to send on photos to family but be careful to always select the small size. Many email servers will reject messages over 1-2 megs, and it takes a long time to download them on all but the fastest Internet connections. Apple Mail makes this easy by selecting the smallest size as the default when you attempt to send a large photo. You can always increase the size in the lower right corner of your message with the dropdown box if your recipient requests it (for example, printing).

Always consider your subject line. Many people get loads of emails daily and you want your important messages to stand out – otherwise they may not open it promptly. Try labeling them (example: JOKE – 'The Blue Nun' / or PHOTOS of our Vacation).

Be sensitive about forwarding jokes and commentary. Not everyone agrees with your politics or appreciates your humor. Ask your friends in person about whether they want to get your daily jokes or not – and then respect their privacy.

Don't forward sensational emails without checking whether they are true. It seems we get daily warnings about the latest computer virus or political threat. Do your friends a favor and don't pass them on till you can confirm they are real. Use FactCheck.org, TruthorFiction.com or Snopes.com to see whether in fact you are just spreading rumors.

Use BCC. When you send a message out to multiple recipients, use BCC instead of putting everyone's email address in the TO or CC line. Folks don't appreciate their email address being sent to multiple people they don't know or perhaps picked up by junk mail spammers. To show the BCC line, click the Customize Button on the left side on a new message (or forwarded message) window.