

What is Proper TTY Etiquette?

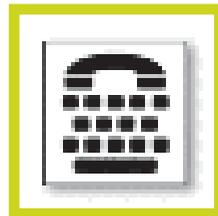
Unlike a standard telephone conversation, you cannot interrupt when the other person is typing as only one person can “talk” at a time. Typing over the other person’s conversation will result in a garbled message. Knowing a few important points of TTY etiquette will make your TTY experience worthwhile.

- **GA** means, “go ahead” and is used at the end of a thought to signal the other party to begin typing.
- **GA to SK** means you are ready to complete the call. The person at the other end would decide to continue with the conversation by ending their message with GA or end their message with SK.
- **SK** means, “stop keying” and is used at the end of the conversation to complete the call. Proper etiquette requires both parties to conclude with goodbyes and SK before hanging up.
- **XXX** means you made a typing mistake and you are retyping the correct word (for example, IT WAS GRAT XXX GREAT TO SEE YOU).

Understandably, text communication presents a unique set of circumstances. Callers should immediately identify themselves. Commonly, TTY users will answer the telephone this way:

- Hello, Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission, this is Jane GA
- Hi Jane... This is John and I would like to speak with Dale if he is available QQ GA
- I am sorry John, Dale is not in the office right now, can I take a message? GA
- No I will call back later....Thank you...bye GA to SK
- Alright...Thank you for calling IDHHC bye SK

The use of proper capitalization and punctuation is permitted but not required.



connection may be bad and you should hang up and try your call again.

How to Type E-mail Addresses

When typing an e-mail address, use the following format: “JOHN AT AOL.COM” or “JOHN AT AOL DOT COM

TTY Tips

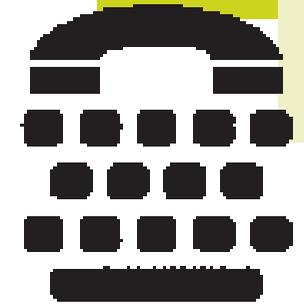
Keep in mind when using a TTY for the first time that all thoughts must be expressed in text and will consequently take some getting used to. TTY conversations may last four times the length of a voice call. Using patience will reduce any potential frustration. The user on the other end of the line will certainly understand your inexperience, and appreciate your willingness to use this method of telecommunication.

To expedite the communication process, abbreviations are often used. Remembering a few simple abbreviations will assist users in communicating via TTY. Here are a few selected common TTY abbreviations:

- Because: CUZ
- Could: CLD, CUD
- Center: CTR
- Hold: HD
- Meeting: MTG
- Number: NBR
- Oh, I see: OIC
- Operator: OPR
- You: U
- Question: QQ, ?
- Should: SHUD
- Your: UR
- Would: WUD
- Please: PLS

Anyone who uses Email is, undoubtedly, accustomed to using words such as smiles, frown, oops, wow, etc. to interject emotion into their dialogue. Feel free to express yourself using TTY as freely as with spoken conversation.

HOW TO USE A TTY



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Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Commission

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Have you ever wondered...

whether deaf individuals are able to communicate with one another using a telephone? Or, how a hard of hearing person might call a friend if she can't hear the voice on the other end of the line? If so, you are understandably curious about the technology available to assist telephone users who are unable to hear spoken words, speak clearly themselves, or perhaps both. This brochure is intended to familiarize you with using a teletypewriter also known as TTY.

What is TTY?

A TTY is a small teletypewriter with a keyboard and a screen that is connected to a telephone line. TTY allows deaf and hard of hearing individuals to use the telephone by typing a visual message not requiring the use of auditory senses. Oftentimes, TTY callers use a telephone relay service (TRS) to communicate with voice telephone users. Relay utilizes a third party operator, called a communications assistant, to act as an intermediary, voicing incoming text communication, and conversely, transmitting spoken communication received to the TTY user. This brochure describes TTY-to-TTY communication. A detailed explanation on using relay service is available in a separate brochure in this series and can be obtained through the Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission.

Many brands and models of TTY's are commercially available. TTY's have been incorporated for use with pay phones, cellular phones, answering machines, and even computers. The most commonly used TTY's remain small, desktop models and are the focus of this publication. Similarities exist among all the models which allow the following general explanation of their use. Specific instructions are contained in the user's manual furnished with the purchase of a new TTY.

Do Not Assume

Some TTY callers may appear not to use proper English. It should not be in anyway considered as a lack of intelligence on the part of the caller. It is due to their typing style, limited proficiency in English or other cultural issues. TTY calls should be given the same courtesy as given to voice calls.

What to do when the text is Garbled

Sometimes the message can become garbled with numbers, characters or both. Press the spacebar or return key to see if it will clear up the message. If the message does not clear up, when the person on the other end stops typing, you type, "MESSAGE GARBLED, PLEASE TYPE AGAIN". If the message continues to be garbled, it means the

How Do I Use a TTY?

All TTY's require either a direct phone line connection or many models feature an acoustic coupler for use with a standard telephone handset. If using a handset coupler, simply place the handset facedown, oriented for alignment of the earpiece and mouthpiece to rest in their respective positions astride the TTY (for correct receiver placement, look for a picture, notch or the word "cord" on the TTY).

Once the handset is in place or the telephone line is open, place a call in the same manner as usual, dialing the TTY telephone number of the person whom you wish to contact. A common feature on many TTY's is a power and status indicator. When the power light is on, it means the TTY is on. If the power light is flickering, it means it is not charged or connected to the power source. The status or signal indicator gives a visual indication that the TTY is receiving sounds - a dial tone, the telephone line ringing, a busy signal, or the acoustic sounds of the TTY on the other end of the line. After using a TTY several times, you will quickly recognize a steady light on means there is a dial tone, regularly repeating steady illumination to indicate ringing, short fast bursts of the status light to be a busy signal, and steady flickering accompanied by displayed text means the person is typing their end of the conversation. Keep in mind when placing a call using TTY, you may have to allow 10, 15, or 20 rings. Deaf and hard of hearing individuals often rely on a flashing lamp connected to their phone to visually indicate the phone "ringing," and may not immediately notice your call.

Remember, the TTY operates using audible signals, so as you type, the TTY will be transmitting a series of beeps through your handset to be "heard", translated, and displayed by the opposing TTY.

Many TTY's are capable of printing a record of the conversation. In print, each party is identified by alternating upper- and lower-case text, respectively. As tape recording a voice telephone conversation is considered improper (and, perhaps illegal), the record of a TTY conversation should only be reviewed for content and destroyed upon completion of the conversation. It is also polite to inform your caller when others are reading the conversation on your end.

How to Recognize TTY Calls

If your phone is used for both TTY and voice calls, make sure you are able to recognize TTY calls. Newer TTY models will have a synthesized voice announcement that voices, "this is a TTY call". Most TTY's make a high-pitched electronic beeping sound which can easily be misunderstood for a fax machine. Sometimes, you hear no sound at all which should be treated as a TTY call.