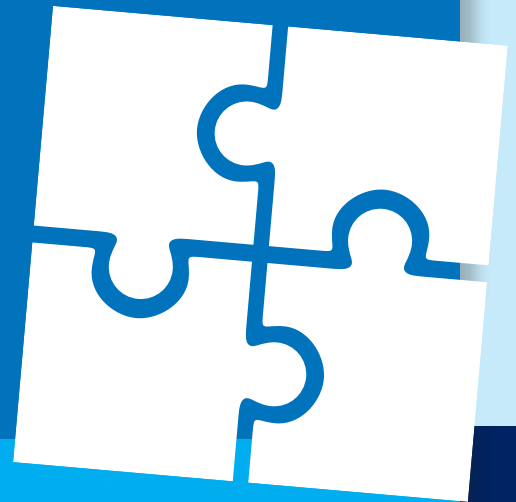


Cyber Ethics and Wellness

Responsibility, Identity, and Psychology

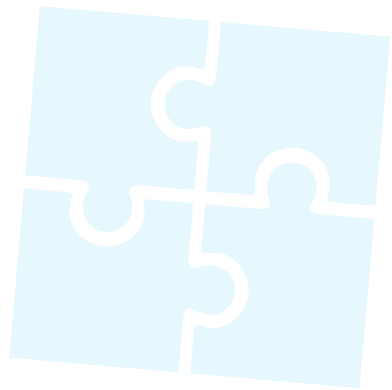
Summary

Learning to be polite, responsible, and ethical while surfing the Web enables you to make smart choices and to build a positive online identity. You can become a well-rounded citizen of cyberspace if you develop healthy online relationships, build a positive digital trail, and understand the consequences of overusing technology.



Unit Contents

Chapter 11	Netiquette and Cyber Ethics	149
Chapter 12	Who Am I? Establishing an Online Identity	163
Chapter 13	Finding Friendship: Online Communities	175
Chapter 14	Digital Trails: What You Leave Behind	187
Chapter 15	Exploring Cyber Psychology	201



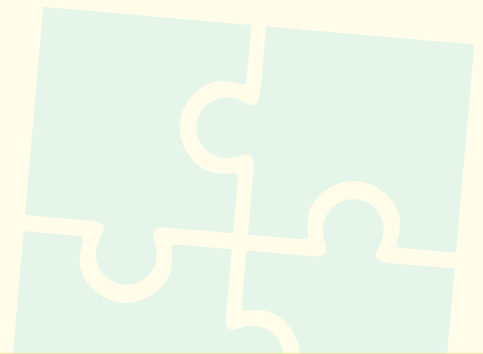
Chapter 11

Netiquette and Cyber Ethics



Overview

How do you behave when you are online? Do you strive to always do the right thing? In this chapter, you will learn about the moral principles called cyber ethics, which include avoiding plagiarism and respecting the intellectual property rights of writers, artists, and other creators of content. A discussion of the dos and don'ts of netiquette, or online etiquette, rounds out the chapter.



Key Terms

- Ethics
- Cyber ethics
- Netiquette
- Ethical responsibilities
- Intellectual property rights
- Copyright laws
- Fair use
- Emoticons
- Trolling



Where Else Can
You Learn About...

Netiquette?

Use the following websites to learn more about netiquette:

- www.bpl.org/kids/learn/netiquette-for-kids/
- career-advice.monster.com/job-search/getting-started/job-search-netiquette-tips/article.aspx
- www.attorneygeneral.gov/kid_site/documents/middleschool/InternetSafetyTips.pdf
- www.library.illinois.edu/uni/computerlit/netiquette.html

In our daily lives, we hold to a shared moral code of conduct, which we call ethics.

Ethics, Cyber Ethics, and Netiquette

In our daily lives, we hold to a shared moral code of conduct. Some of our morals are enshrined in law; for example, stealing is wrong, and it is also illegal. Some of our morals are not enforceable by law. We know, for instance, that it is a good thing to be kind to other people, but it is not illegal for us to be unkind. The principles we live by—both those that are enforceable by law and those that are not—also hold true in the cyberworld. The moral principles we follow as citizens are called **ethics**. We use ethics to make choices every day. If we see a crime happening online, for example, we would report it, just as we would in the real world.

Online ethics are called **cyber ethics**, and they include following proper online etiquette, or **netiquette** (“net” etiquette). Netiquette refers to ethical and appropriate online behavior, including posting respectfully on message boards, sending appropriate emails and texts to teachers and other adults, and being responsible about what you post online. When we practice netiquette and adhere to other cyber ethics guidelines, we act in a socially responsible way online.





Ethical Responsibilities on the Web

Think back to what you learned about cyber citizenship in Chapter 1. What moral and social responsibilities do we have as citizens of the cyberworld? What obligations do we have as members of a worldwide digital community? If we witness illegal, hurtful, or threatening situations online, we have an ethical responsibility as cyber citizens to report the incident to a trusted adult, just as we would in real life.

The term **ethical responsibilities** refers to our behaviors and actions in the cyberworld, which mirror who we are in the real world. When we use the Internet, we also make ethical choices about the language we use, the information we share, and the ways in which we show respect for others.

As a student, one ethical responsibility that you should take very seriously is avoiding plagiarism. As you learned in Chapter 7, plagiarism is taking someone else's words and using them as your own without giving credit to the person who wrote them. Although plagiarism is not illegal, those who plagiarize often find themselves violating copyright law. (See Legal Responsibilities on the Web on page 152.) **Even if you don't get in trouble with the law, plagiarizing someone's work can have serious consequences, such as those shown below:**

- **Failing** a school assignment
- Being placed on academic **probation**
- Getting **expelled** from school
- **Losing** one's job
- **Damaging** one's reputation



Your work should
always be 100% yours.



Fact!



Did You Know?

In the United States, downloading copyrighted music from the Internet for free is illegal and is considered stealing, unless the creator of the music has given permission for free downloading.

Source: Recording Industry Association of America

Fact!



Did You Know?

In 2009, a college student was fined \$675,000 for infringing on the copyright of 30 songs by illegally downloading and distributing them. That means he paid \$22,500 for each song he illegally downloaded.

Source: The Boston Globe

Legal Responsibilities on the Web

In order to be a responsible cyber citizen, there are several legal factors we should take into account while online. One legal factor is **intellectual property rights**, which are the protections legally given to people who invent, write, design, or create something. Intellectual property rights ensure that creators can benefit financially from their creations. These protections have different names for different products, but they all function in the same way: For a set number of years, they give the creator of a work exclusive rights over the work. While *patents* protect inventions and *trademarks* protect distinctive symbols, **copyright laws** protect the creations of writers and artists, among others. Copyright is the intellectual property right that many people surfing the Web must take into consideration most often, especially if they are music fans or students.

Because the Internet makes people feel anonymous, often people think they can get away with downloading whatever they want for free, including music. In reality, due to copyright laws, downloading even one song illegally can carry a heavy fine. The same goes for e-books, or electronic versions of printed books. Violating a copyright is also considered highly unethical.

Reasons for Copyright Laws

- **To Protect**
Copyright laws protect everyone who worked on the item in question, including songs, movies, and computer applications (such as Microsoft Word).
- **To Compensate**
Copyright laws ensure that everyone involved with a project gets compensated for all of his or her hard work.



This is a copyright symbol.

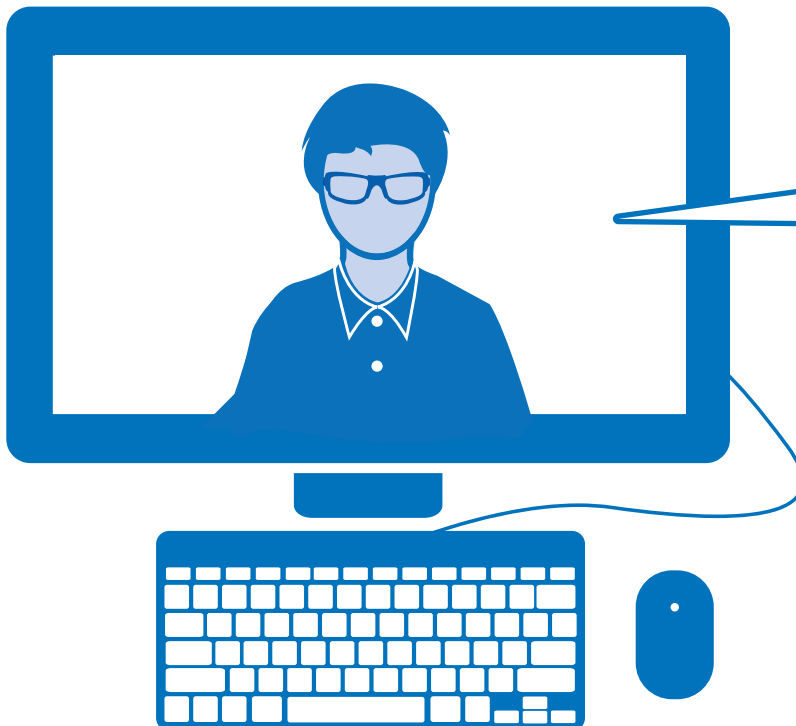


Another legal factor that cyber citizens should keep in mind is the doctrine of **fair use**, which provides for some uses of copyrighted material. **Under the doctrine of fair use, material under copyright can be used without the permission of its creator, provided that the user abides by certain guidelines, shown below:**

- The user must use **only a portion** of the original source.
- The user must use the information for the purposes of **teaching, research, scholarship, news reporting, criticism or comment, or parody.**

So, for instance, a podcast critic who is reviewing a musician's latest album can play a short excerpt of a song from the album in order to illustrate her critique. A student who is writing a paper about a novel can use quotes from the novel in his paper. A comedian who is doing a parody of a movie can reenact a scene from the movie during her show.

The doctrine of fair use is open to interpretation. Court rulings have set some ground rules, but many instances in which fair use is claimed are decided on a case-by-case basis. If you want to use copyrighted material, get permission from its creator if possible. If it's not possible to get permission, then abide by the guidelines shown above. In addition, cite the creator of the copyrighted material.



Remember:
Copyright laws protect everyone who worked on the item in question, which could be a song, movie, computer application, or something else.

Netiquette Rules

As you learned earlier in this chapter, when people use proper netiquette, they act in ethical and appropriate ways while communicating with others online and through mobile devices. Why is it vital to learn proper netiquette? **Four important reasons are listed below. Can you think of any others?**

- To **communicate** effectively
- To avoid **misunderstandings**
- To represent ourselves in a **professional** and thoughtful way
- To respectfully **engage and interact** with other online users

One of the most common venues for exercising proper netiquette is through email. Whether you are exchanging emails with a fellow student about an upcoming student council election or contacting a counselor about a sports camp, there are some basic rules for communicating effectively online. These rules are shown on the next page in **Table 11.1**.

Be aware that humor can look like sarcasm or criticism in online communications.

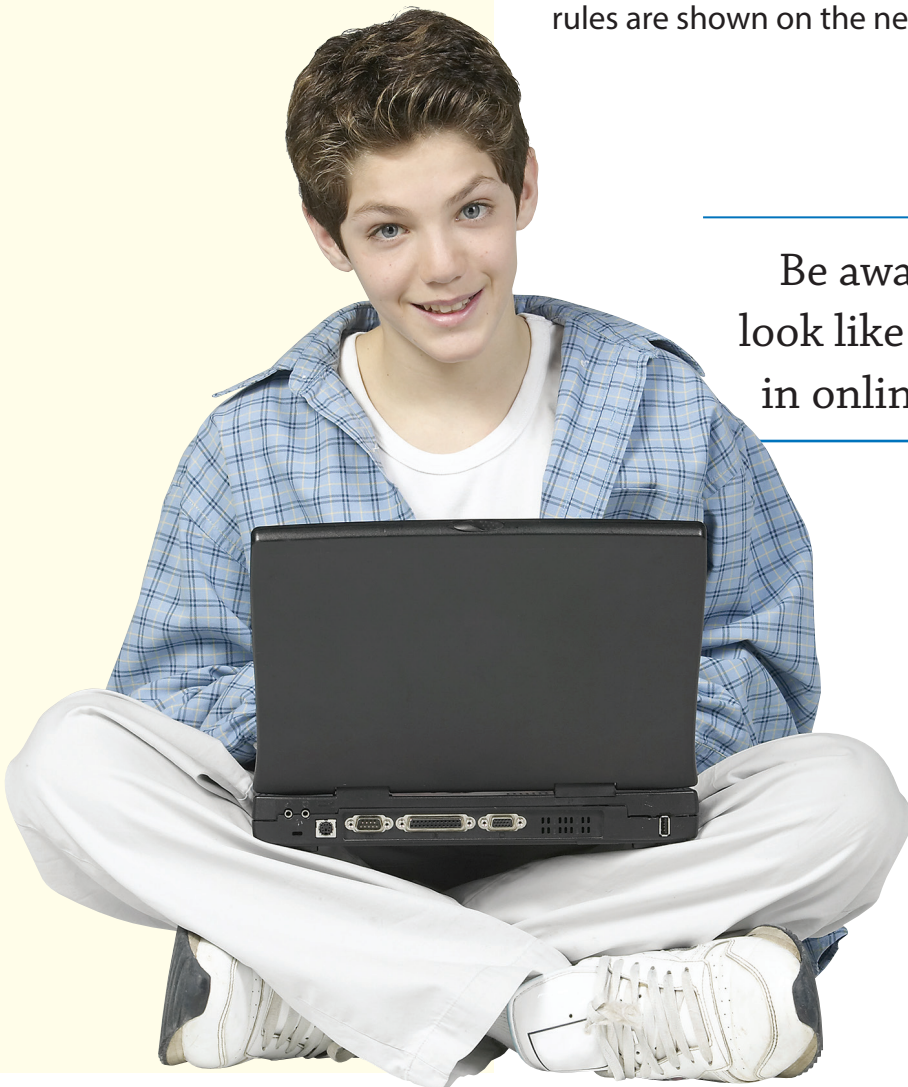




Table 11.1

Basic Netiquette Rules for Emails

Dos	Don'ts
<p>Do be respectful to teachers, coaches, and adults in emails. A message to your teacher should focus on a question you have about class or an assignment, not about your favorite food or movie.</p>	<p>Don't use informal language or texting slang in emails that require a professional tone. TYPING IN ALL CAPS is considered shouting, and using texting lingo such as "wan 2 txt?" is appropriate only for friends.</p>
<p>Do use caution when forwarding emails. <i>Forwarding</i> is when someone receives an email and passes it along to other contacts. It can be acceptable, but it shouldn't be done often. You should not forward messages to contacts that don't like to receive them; for instance, not everyone is interested in the latest "lol cat."</p>	<p>Don't forward spam. Spam is Internet "junk mail" and shouldn't be forwarded to anyone.</p>
<p>Do use a salutation and a complimentary close. Always begin emails with a salutation such as "Dear Mrs. Smith" or "Hi Mr. Jackson." Emails should end with a complimentary close, such as "sincerely" or "thank you."</p>	<p>Don't hit <i>reply all</i> in a group communication when you want to address a comment to just one person. It can be very embarrassing—not to mention damaging to your education or career—if a comment meant for one person is broadcast to your entire class or company. Plus, people receive enough email as it is. If people don't need to know the information, spare them the extra email.</p>
<p>Do include a relevant subject line. If you are emailing a teacher about a homework assignment, the subject line should say more than just "Hi" or "Help." Instead try, "I have a question about my paper topic."</p>	<p>Don't give your email password to anyone else. Giving out your password, even to a trusted friend, can be risky. emails could be sent from your account, and personal information can be seen. It's better not to risk it. Keep your password to yourself.</p>
<p>Do be aware that humor can look like sarcasm or criticism in online communications. Because the person you're communicating with is not there with you, he or she can't hear the tone of your voice, see the look on your face, or read your body language. Without these visual cues, a message that you meant to be funny may appear to be just plain mean. Although some people dislike emoticons—"facial expressions" formed with keyboard characters—you may want to use them to make the tone of your message clear.</p>	<p>Don't be a "flamer" or a "troll." Often, during discussions of controversial topics, people forget that they are communicating with real people, not with faceless machines. They send extremely rude emails or post inflammatory comments on websites, a practice known as flaming. Sometimes people deliberately post rude, off-topic comments just to upset others, a practice known as trolling. Don't be a flamer or a troll; communicate respectfully online as you would face to face.</p>

Consequences of Exercising Poor Netiquette

Poor netiquette can have far-reaching consequences emotionally, physically, legally, and socially:

- If you communicate in an unprofessional way, **people will think that you are unprofessional**. This perception can harm your reputation, both in school and in your career, and it might keep others from offering you opportunities.
- When others cannot decipher the tone of your emails or texts, they may **misunderstand you and take offense** at something you did not mean to be offensive. These sorts of misunderstandings can damage your relationships, both personal and professional.
- If you regularly engage in cyberbullying, flaming, and/or trolling, you will **generate a lot of ill will**. You may be blocked from emailing or texting people, “unfriended” on Facebook, or banned from participating in online communities.

People often feel that they are anonymous online, but individuals can still be held accountable for their actions. All online users have ethical and legal responsibilities, including using proper netiquette. Remember that your experiences online will be much more pleasant if you act responsibly.



If you regularly engage in cyberbullying, flaming, and/or trolling, you will generate a lot of ill will.



Chapter 11 Assessment



What Do You Think?

- 1 Write a paragraph that reflects on a time when you acted ethically online. **For example, you might have declined to download a song illegally, or you might have worked hard to make sure you were not plagiarizing a source while writing a paper.** Describe what happened and the positive consequences of acting ethically online. If you can't think of a personal example, cite an incident involving a friend or relative or do research online to find an example of ethical online behavior.
- 2 Write another paragraph that reflects on a time when you witnessed netiquette being broken, whether the incident happened in your own life or was something you saw on television or in a movie. Describe what happened and the negative consequences of the poor netiquette. If you can't think of a personal example, do research on the Web to find a case of poor netiquette.

Challenge: What Would You Do?

Below is a scenario based on a true story. After reading Lily's case, write one paragraph explaining why Lily's actions were illegal. What laws did she break? Then, write a second paragraph, explaining how you would react if you witnessed a friend downloading movies illegally as Lily did. What would you do? Why?

Scenario:

Lily, a college student in Minnesota, didn't think much about ethical and legal consequences when her friend told her about a website where she could download the latest movies for free.

Over the course of a year, Lily downloaded 25 movies, some of which were so new they were still being shown in theaters. She loved the easy access to the movies. However, what she didn't realize was that she was breaking the law and practicing unethical behavior. Eventually, she was taken to court and fined for downloading movies illegally. She was ordered to pay \$2 million, which means that she received a fine of \$80,000 for each of the 25 movies she illegally downloaded online.



Extension Activities

Activity 1

Good vs. Bad Netiquette and Ethical vs. Unethical Online Behavior

Read each of the situations below and determine if they are examples of good or bad netiquette or ethical or unethical online behavior. Use what you have learned in this chapter to justify your answers, and write one paragraph of five complete sentences for each situation.

Situation 1

Suzi wrote this short email to her soccer coach the day before the big game: "plz can I play 4ward 2morrow."

Is this good or bad netiquette? Why? What is another way to write this email?

Situation 2

David signed onto his Facebook account and noticed a new group page called "I hate Jim." The page was about one of his classmates. David immediately signed off and told his parents about the site. The next day, he also told his teacher.

Is this good or bad netiquette? Why?

Situation 3

Jodi was writing a paper about Congress. She found a great source that one of her Twitter followers posted to his feed. She went directly to the original website and, when she finished her paper, gave the author credit on her Works Cited page for the portion she used in her assignment.

Is this ethical or unethical behavior? Why?

Situation 4

Ethan loves music. He just discovered a website that lets him download all of his favorite songs for free. He downloaded at least 50 songs last week, and he shared the songs and the website with his friends so they can get free music, too.

Is this ethical or unethical behavior? Why?



Activity 2 Key Terms

For each term, write a definition in your own words.

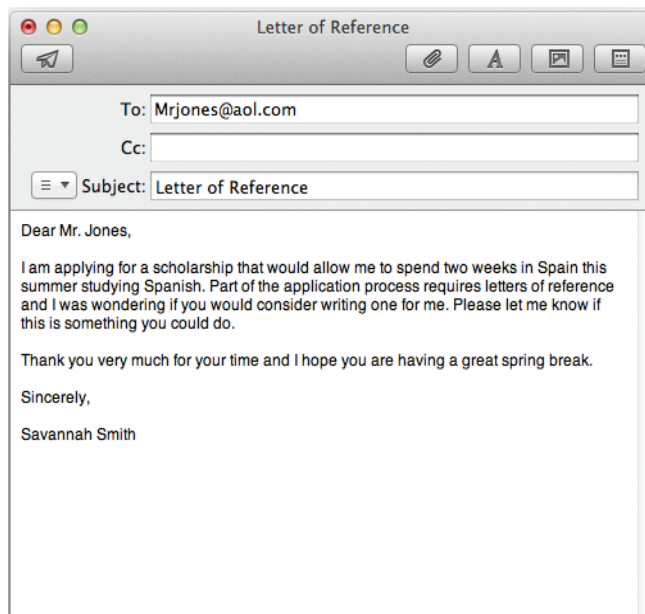
Netiquette	Fair use	Copyright laws
Intellectual property rights	Emoticons	

Activity 3 Email Netiquette

You are studying Spanish in school, and you have applied for a scholarship that will allow you to spend two weeks in Spain taking language classes and exploring the country. The application requires a reference letter from a teacher, but since it is currently spring break, you will have to ask for the letter via email. Write an email to your Spanish teacher requesting the letter you need.

The email should include a clear subject line, a salutation and a complimentary close, and appropriate body text (which should include at least three complete sentences). See **Figure 11.1** for a sample email.

Figure 11.1





Hands-On

Netiquette Tips

Create a poster featuring the top five netiquette tips you think are most important for Internet users to know. Organize your list in a table with three columns labeled “Tip,” “Explanation,” and “Example.” (Use **Table 11.2** as an example.) Write each netiquette tip in the “Tip” column, write a complete sentence explaining the importance of the tip in the “Explanation” column, and write an example of the tip in the “Example” column. The poster can also include dos and don’ts of netiquette.

Check with your teacher to see if you should use a software program to create your poster or if you should use other materials such as paper, markers, and colored pencils.

Table 11.2

Netiquette Tips Sample			
	Tip	Explanation	Example
1.	Use appropriate language when emailing adults.	Using appropriate language when emailing an adult shows respect.	Dear Mrs. Smith, Please help me with question two.
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			