Netiquette Resources

Definition of Netiquette, excerpted from http://www.dictionary.com: The rules of etiquette that apply when communicating over computer networks, especially the Internet.

"The most important rule of netiquette is "Think before you post.""

1. **Avoid Offending Classmates**

2. **Keep Your Voice Down**

USING ALL CAPITAL LETTERS online is the equivalent of yelling. Instead, use HTML to **bold** or *italicize* text in your postings, or use *asterisks* around the text to be emphasized.

3. **Avoid Sarcasm and Subtleties**

Hearing spoken words, seeing people's faces and bodies while they talk, and reading dialogue on your computer screen can convey substantially different impressions. Keeping this in mind may help you realize that it's sometimes easier to sound insensitive and hurt someone's feelings or have them miss the point when you're communicating through text only. To avoid this, be clear and straightforward with your language.

4. **Just Wait**

Assume any comment you read that sounds abrasive wasn't proofread for tone, and wasn't meant to offend. If you're upset, you might wait a little before posting a too-hasty reply that you'll regret later. Unless the author specifically says they're angry, assume otherwise and ask for clarification of their intent.

5. **Make the Extra Effort to Be Courteous**

6. **Make it Personal**

At the end of each posting, sign your name. It also adds a personal feel when responding to an individual if you address him or her by name.

7. **Be Positive**

It's good to express your opinions in discussions, but don't make disagreements personal. Agree to disagree in your exchanges of information and opinions. Keep your interactions with others friendly, especially when you're getting to know each other.

8. **Be Aware of Culture**

Be aware of cultural differences. If you suspect classmates might be from other cultures, avoid unexplained references that may not be understood or cause feelings of exclusion.

9. **Use Emoticons**

These little icons can be quite effective in supplying primitive facial expressions to supplement your words. If you prefer, use other more direct ways of being sure your intentions are known, for example, by adding phrasing like "just kidding," "no offense intended," or "this is my opinion." Here are just a few examples of emoticons:

:-)   - basic smile
;-)   - wink
:-D   - big smile
:-(- frown
:-o   - oh, no!
:-P   - tongue out

10. **Write for Readability**

11. **Change the Subject**

Always enter a new subject for each of your postings, even if you are making an additional comment on the same subject as those above yours. Leaving the default subject tells readers nothing about your particular topic. Unique subjects allow classmates to understand the flow of conversations and relocate particular postings without having to open every one.

12. **Not Too Little, Not Too Much**

One word or single phrase responses can seem curt and rude. Use complete sentences and clearly communicate your meaning. On the other hand, overly lengthy postings of text can be overwhelming to read online. Compose offline, edit your musings, and consider making bullet points to aid classmates in getting to your point.

13. **What It's About**

When replying to a posting, quote the part of the original posting to which you are replying to help classmates understand the context.

14. **Spell It Out**

With spellcheckers now available as add-ins for most popular Web browsers, there's no excuse for inadvertent typos. Also remember that trendy abbreviated spellings are best left outside of online classrooms.

15. **One Final Look**

After you compose a posting, take a moment to reread your text before submitting. If it's possible, reading out loud can be especially helpful. One final once-over can identify typos, misstatements, lack of clarity, or an unintended tone.

16. **What's Written is Recorded**

Remember that everything you post is recorded in most asynchronous online discussions.

17. **Additional Resource (not required)**

For more tips on online communicating, read "Following Netiquette Guidelines" (Web site) at
http://www.emcp.com/college_resource_centers/listonline.php?GroupID=6168