

## **Calling All Cell Phone Users - Show Proper Etiquette**

Don't be mad at cell phones, it's not their fault they interrupt your dinners, movies and business meetings. It's their owners that need to take a quick lesson on how to treat them. With the advancements of today's technology it seems like they are showing up everywhere and everyone, young and old, has a cell phone. Many people are confused on when and where are appropriate times for cell phone use. Here are a few courtesy ideas to show others before dialing those digits or answering those vibrations or rings.

If you are in an enclosed area, try to keep your voice down or keep off the phone altogether. Why should the person next to you have to listen to your conversation? Always be aware of your surroundings and consider that others may want some quiet time and find the details of your conversation interrupting.

Get in the habit of checking to see that your phone is turned off, on vibrate or silent mode before going into that sales pitch, classroom, restaurant or theater. Although everyone is aware of this rule, people continue to ignore it. If you forget to turn off your cell and it does ring, turn it off instantly. Act as quickly and discreetly as possible as not to disrupt others.

Keep your phone out of site while driving so you will not be tempted to pick it up and make a call. Do not risk your safety or other people's safety on the road. Most conversations can wait until you have arrived at your destination. Even hands free phones are distracting. If it is a crucial call that just can't wait, pull over at the next available stop before making it.

When on a cell phone, there is no need to talk any louder than you would on a regular land line. When signals cut in and out, shouting will not allow the person to better hear you. If the line is that bad, call back later or find a payphone.

Don't come to rely too heavily on your cell. Although cell phones can be a real lifesaver, don't get so attached to it that you freak out if you forget to take it along with you. Remember when you had to wait until you got home before you could check your messages?

Keep all calls concise and to the point. Not only can this help decrease your bill, but it eliminates your chances of becoming one of those people who talk on the phone while they are in the company of others. This conveys to others that you care more about talking to other people than you do with them. Never talk on the phone while someone is trying to take your order in a restaurant, verifying your hotel or plane reservation or while returning an item at the store. When at work, always attend to face-to-face business first and ask the one on the line to hold or call back later. Continuing to use the phone while nodding and signaling to the person in front of you is bad-mannered.

Some people, for whatever reasons, think using a cell phone is impressive, but it is so common now for everyone to own one. Eliminate phone calls that are solely made to showcase your cell. If a call must be made, politely excuse yourself and ask if your company minds holding on a moment.

Although most of us know these rules already, they are continually broken each day. Try to be more conscious of how you use your cell. These simple courtesies will make the people around you happier and keep your reputation as a mannered individual in tact.

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