

Should I Call or text?

Read the situations and decide which you would rather use: a phone call or a text. Talk with a partner about your answers.



1. Tell a friend you are running late to lunch: Call or Text
2. Tell a co-worker you are running late to work: Call or Text
3. Your teenage son/daughter is out with friends. Ask when he/she will be home: Call or Text
4. Wish your parents/children a happy New Year: Call or Text
5. Wish your friend a happy New Year. Call or Text
6. Wish your mother-in-law or father-in-law a happy birthday. Call or Text
7. Vote for your favorite song on the radio: Call or Text
8. Communicate a minor problem at work to your boss who is away: Call or Text
9. Communicate with a co-worker who is on vacation: Call or Text
10. Communicate a minor problem with a co-worker who is on vacation: Call or Text
11. Get reminder to pay your monthly credit card or tuition bill: Call or Text
12. Get a reminder from the pharmacy when your medication arrives: Call or Text
13. Get notified about normal test results from a doctor: Call or Text
14. Get notified about your child's test scores at school, even if they are poor: Call or Text
15. Get notified only about your child's test scores at school: Call or Text

Think About It: Grammar

Look at the verbs **was sent** and **are sent**. How are they used?

Call vs. Text

Paragraph 1

In 1992, the first text message **was sent** by a 22 year-old, Neil Papworth, then a software engineer with the company, Vodaphone. **Since then**, everything has changed.¹ Today, 6.1 trillion texts **are sent**, and today approximately 193,000 SMS texts **are sent** per second. This number doesn't include other MMS, or MultiMedia Message, which handles text, photo, and video messages.² As with any new technology, the etiquette associated with texting remains a bit **murky**; *there's no definitive "best" method because it all depends on the situation and people involved.*

Since then signals a specific verb tense: underline the verbs in the sentence

What does **murky** mean? Does the sentence after it help you understand?

Dating Etiquette and Texting

Paragraph 2

The decision to call or text can speak volumes, each having both *pros* and *cons*. There are decided *advantages* to sending a text message. They're brief, yet are still able to get the point across. They can also be proofread before sending; a phone conversation can easily become unnecessarily long and uncomfortable, especially when the caller is nervous about the prospect of being turned down. The text message also has the added *benefit* of providing the person being asked the opportunity to quickly -- and remotely -- turn down the request. Rejection is tough for both sexes, but it seems to be a preference by gender.

Paragraph 3

Although the text is decidedly more comfortable, it's this very quality that is also a *disadvantage* in the minds of some people. Included in simply sending a text is another message -- that the sender is something of a *coward*. A phone call certainly does inherently contain much more risk of discomfort and awkwardness, but because of this, calling is a courageous act -- you certainly wouldn't want to text your boss asking for a raise!

Why some prefer texting

Paragraph 4

Why do some people prefer texting to voice calls? There are some relative *advantages* of texting. First, privacy: it's far less likely that an SMS conversation *could be* overheard. Also, text messaging provides greater accessibility, not just for people with hearing impairments but also to compensate for ambient noise, weak cell network connections, or the poor quality of microphones and speakers of many cell phones.

But perhaps the main reasons why many people prefer getting text messages

¹ <http://health.howstuffworks.com/relationships/dating/text-or-call.htm/printable>

² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Short_Message_Service

Paragraph 5

over voice calls are related to time. Typically, text messaging encourages briefer, more efficient exchanges of information. Even "social grooming" chitchat often gets abbreviated so it's quicker to type and read -- although in the context of texting culture, this isn't necessarily viewed as colder or less socially or emotionally significant.

Paragraph 6

Similarly, there's less psychological or social pressure to respond immediately to texts. So you can take a moment to finish a task at hand (such as parking your car) or to consider what you want to say before responding to a text message. Text messaging also can reduce the discomfort or impatience some people experience with pauses in real-time voice conversations -- or the chance that they may instantly blurt a response that they'd later regret.³

Discussion Questions

1. In your opinion, in what situations is sending a text better?
2. When do you think is it better to call?
3. In what social situations is it better to text?
4. In what social situations is it better to call?
5. How is sending a text socially different from making a phone call? Why are these differences important?
6. Do you prefer to text or call in English? In your native language?

Grammar Activity

1. Since 1992, people _____ (send) texts.
2. Since 1992, texts _____
(send) by people.
3. In 2012, 6.1 trillion texts _____ (send).
4. In 2012, people _____ (send) 6.1 trillion texts.
5. It's less likely that a SMS conversation _____
(can, overhear) by someone.

³ http://articles.cnn.com/2011-09-22/tech/tech_mobile_americans-prefer-text-messages_1_text-messaging-cell-voice?_s=PM:TECH

Grammar Connection:

Passive Voice

- 1) People send text messages. (active)
- 2) Text messages **are** sent by people. (passive)

The second sentence is called a “passive voice” sentence. Passive voice changes the subject and object, and also adds the verb “to be.”

Present Perfect with “Since then”

Since then means “from then until now.” Here are some example sentences:

I arrived in the USA in 2001. Since then, I **have worked** as a cashier.

Or

I arrived in the USA in 2001. Since then, I **have been working** as a cashier.

You must use a special verb tense with this time word, the present perfect.

The present perfect = has/have + third verb

Vocabulary

Murky means “unclear, difficult to see through.” The second sentence helps you understand the meaning of murky.

Answers, pg 2

Grammar Activity, pg.3

1. Since 1992, people **have sent** texts.
2. Since 1992, texts **have been sent** by people.
3. In 2012, 6.1 trillion texts **were sent**.
4. In 2012, people **sent** 6.1 trillion texts.
5. It's less likely that a SMS conversation **can be overheard** by someone.