

“The ABC’s of Posting in the Digital Age”

By Giselle Ates (written in August 2012; revised in June 2014)

- A**lways be present—put down your devices when you’re with people or driving—posting and texting can wait!
- B**e positive. No one needs or wants to read your rants or whining.
- C**ommunicate using your best typing and writing skills; correct your own errors, but ignore other people’s mistakes.
- D**on’t troll and don’t be rude. Never tag or post pictures or comments that will embarrass or anger others.
- E**verything comes back to you—everything! Police, journalists, employers, and potential employers research online activity including Facebook and other social media.
- F**riend cautiously. If you’re going to add friends that you don’t know, limit the types of postings and information they can access.
- G**ames and groups can be fun and even beneficial, but limit who sees your gaming and group posts.
- H**umility is a virtue. Don’t use social media to brag or give people a moment-to-moment update of your daily activities.
- I**nvitations are not mandatory. Use the “skip” or “continue” buttons to keep from annoying your friends with quiz and game application invites.
- J**ust say no. You do not have to accept or acknowledge friend requests or game invitations. If they persist, use the block button.
- K**indness matters—respect others. Avoid profanity, insults, racism, and other slurs.
- L**imit your online chatting. If you want to chat more than one or two lines, pick up the phone and schedule some face-to-face time.
- M**ore is not always better. Keep your statuses short, and no more than one or two per day.
- N**ever post private comments on walls or newsfeeds—send private messages instead to avoid embarrassment and confusion.
- OMG**—do not overuse abbreviations.
- P**rofiles are for people while pages are for businesses and organizations.
- Q**uit stalking! If you visit someone’s blog, Facebook page, or enjoy a post or comment, hit like or leave a message.
- R**esist poking unless you know the person enjoys it.
- S**ingle profiles only—multiple accounts are against their policy (so delete duplicates) and sharing an account between more than more one person is confusing to others.
- T**herapy is for doctors—don’t use social media to give or receive psychiatric counseling.
- U**ntag and Unfriend as needed. Untag yourself from any photos or comments that don’t portray the digital image you want to project and send a private message to the person who posted it asking them to remove it. Unfriend people who consistently misuse social media (or at least hide/block their comments from your friends and public searches).
- V**anity searches are not vain! They are necessary to protect your name and digital image, so Google yourself regularly.
- W**hen in doubt, leave it out!
- X**-rated content is always inappropriate!
- Y**our mother, your boss, and your ex, along with countless others, may eventually be able to see your posts; so, if it goes on the internet, it needs to be something that won’t ever embarrass you!
- Z**zzzz—get some! Don’t spend your life on the Internet!