

What Is Messaging?

Messaging is a way of communicating with other people, often in a written form. This can also include sending pictures, short sound recordings, or videos to other people. There are lots of different ways of messaging that use technology.

Emails

Emails are a form of messaging that are sent digitally. In order to send or receive emails you need an email address. These always follow a pattern which includes letters and numbers followed by an @ symbol, more letters, a full stop and some more letters. For example Sarah.Jones@myemail.co.uk. Often companies will send emails rather than post letters to people. There are lots of places you can go to get your own email address. Hotmail, Gmail and Yahoo mail are popular. Information about how to set up an email address and use it can be found on their websites.



SMS Messages

SMS messages, also known as text messages, are messages that are sent between mobile phones. These are often short messages because it isn't always easy to write a long message out on a small telephone keyboard. SMS messages usually cost around 10p to send from a phone, but if media such as sounds or pictures are included this cost can increase to around 40p. They are usually free to receive. To send SMS messages you need to have a mobile telephone. A mobile telephone number in the UK will always begin with 07. If you have a mobile telephone with a contract you will have a specified number of SMS messages a month. If you use 'pay as you go' you will need to make sure you have available credit to send an SMS message. You don't need to have WiFi connectivity to send SMS messages.



WhatsApp

WhatsApp is a tool that works on smart telephones (smartphone for short). It means you can send SMS messages, including ones that contain sound, photos, or videos to other WhatsApp users for free instead of having to pay for each one. To do this you need a smartphone that can access either WiFi or mobile connectivity (such as 3G or 4G). WhatsApp also allows you to have group messages, so for example you can have a chat set up with family members so you can all send messages to one another. You can also use WhatsApp to make and send voice recorded messages to people, or to make voice or video calls to other WhatsApp users.



Facebook Messenger

Facebook Messenger is similar to WhatsApp. You need to have access to a smartphone, tablet or computer, but unlike WhatsApp you do not need to have a mobile telephone number. You will need a Facebook Account to join Messenger. When setting up an account you have a choice of using either a mobile telephone number, or an email address. Messenger allows you to communicate with one person, or to set up or join a group with other people you know.

Checklist ✓ X

Follow our simple Do and Don't checklist

Do

- **Get yourself an email address. Having an email address makes it much easier to access lots of different content online**
- **Speak to your friends and family and ask them which method of messaging they use. Each messaging tool needs both users to use the same method if they want to communicate with each other**
- **Think about cost. Some types of messaging, such as SMS might carry a cost per message, whereas others may be free to access but might need you to have WiFi or mobile connectivity.**
- **Think about what device you are using. Some messaging tools are better suited to different devices. For example, a mobile phone is the only device for SMS or WhatsApp, but emails and Facebook messenger will work on a computer, tablet or smartphone.**

Don't

- **Give your email or mobile telephone number out to people who you don't want to connect with. Your email, or mobile telephone number work in a similar way to your address or home phone number for receiving letters, messages or calls.**
- **Open, or click on attachments on emails if you aren't sure where they have come from. Sometimes people might receive malicious attachments that could damage your device. If you're unsure it's best not to open them.**
- **Be afraid to use technology to keep in touch with your friends and family. Group messages especially can be a brilliant way of seeing what people are up to, and sharing experiences with your loved ones.**