

Mobile Phones

How old were you when you got a mobile? Everybody knows that teenagers love their phones. Here are some mobile phone facts.

- Two-thirds of 12-15-year-olds in the UK have a smartphone.
- People in the UK send 50 text messages a week on average.
- British 12-15-year-olds send an average of 200 messages a week.
- British girls aged between 12 and 15 text more than boys of the same age group. Girls send 221 messages a week!

Parents

Parents want their kids to be safe. Are teenagers safer with a mobile phone or without? Many parents want their children to have a phone so that they can be in contact at any time or in any place. On the other hand, for lots of parents a phone is a source of possible danger. Parents worry that their child may meet the wrong kind of 'friends' on social networking sites or that they might receive cruel messages from school bullies. Some parents have rules about their children's mobile phone and internet usage and bad behaviour can result in removal of mobile privileges.

*The great thing about my kids having mobile phones is that I can keep in touch with them. The worst thing about teenagers having phones is that some young people use them to send offensive messages to each other. **William, from Coventry. William is a parent of two teenagers.***

*A teenager feels lost without a phone. If my daughters behave badly, I confiscate their phones and their behaviour quickly improves. **Kiera, mother of 15-year-old twins.***

School

Mobile phones are permitted at school in the UK but pupils are not allowed to use them in class and they must be on silent during lessons. Teachers can take away phones if these rules are broken. School students can use their phones at break time and at lunchtime. Some teachers in British schools complain that pupils don't always follow the rules and that lessons are disrupted by people texting, making and receiving calls, looking at social networking sites, watching videos and even making videos in the class.

*My mum is scared that I'm going to lose my phone or that someone is going to steal it. She won't buy me the really cool phone that I want. I've got this rubbish one that doesn't do much. I suppose that makes sense but it's not fair that everyone else has a smartphone and I don't. **Tam, 14, from Wrexham.***

*I know that some people want mobiles to be banned at school but as a language teacher I find that phones can be pretty useful in class ... for educational purposes of course. For example, the students write a dialogue in French, they record it on a phone, then they listen to the recording and try to correct any mistakes or improve pronunciation. They love it! **Stan, from Chester. Stan is a French teacher.***

Messaging

A mobile phone contract in the UK usually comes with a number of text messages included in the price. Of course lots of people send messages completely free of charge using an app that's also free to download. If you want to send text messages in English you need to know some abbreviations. Here are some to get you started:

LOL = laugh out loud

POS = parent over shoulder

BRB = be right back

TYVM = thank you very much

BCNU = be seeing you (meaning 'goodbye')

ASAP = as soon as possible

OIC = oh I see (means 'I understand')

TTFN = Ta ta for now (means 'goodbye')

BFFL = best friends for life

TYVM 4 reading this article. BCNU!

1. Match the vocabulary with the correct definition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1 cruel | a. to communicate with somebody |
| 2 a contract | b. unkind, mean |
| 3 allowed to do something | c. the ability to do something special or fun |
| 4 a privilege | d. to punish somebody by taking away something that belongs to them |
| 5 to confiscate something | e. able and permitted to do something |
| 6 to be in contact with somebody | f. a short form of a long word or phrase |
| 7 disrupted | g. an agreement between a buyer and a seller |
| 8 an abbreviation | h. interrupted; stopped from going smoothly |

2. Circle True or False for these sentences.

1. British girls send more text messages than boys.
2. Some parents think that mobile phones are dangerous.
3. Kiera takes away her daughters' phones if they behave badly.
4. Mobile phones are not allowed at school in Britain.
5. Tam is happy with her mobile phone.
6. Some teachers use mobiles phones to help their students learn.

3. Complete the sentences with a word.

soon you laugh shoulder friends see now much

1. LOL means '_____ out loud'.
2. POS means 'parent over _____'.
3. TYVM means 'Thank you very _____'.
4. BCNU means 'be seeing _____'.
5. ASAP means 'as _____ as possible'.
6. OIC means 'oh I _____'.
7. TTFN means 'ta ta for _____'.
8. BFFL means 'best _____ for life'.

4. Circle the best preposition to complete these sentences.

1. Many parents want their children to have a phone so that they can be in / on / at contact at any time.
2. On / Of / To the other hand, for lots of parents a phone is a source of possible danger.
3. Some young people use mobile phones to send offensive messages at / on / to each other.
4. Mobile phones are permitted on / to / at school in the UK.
5. School students can use their phones of / at / on break time.
6. Some teachers complain that lessons are disrupted by people looking in / at / to social networking sites.
7. They record the dialogue at / on / in the phone.
8. Then they listen to / of / at the recording.