

# The Boundary Script Cheat Sheet

## 25 Ways to Say "No" Without Over-Explaining

When the guilt hits, don't JADE (Justify, Argue, Defend, Explain). Use these firm, kind, and professional scripts instead.

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### In the Workplace

- "I'm at capacity right now and won't be able to take that on."
- "I can help with X, but I'll need to deprioritize Y to make it happen. Which should I focus on?"
- "I'm not available for meetings during my deep-work hours."
- "That isn't a task I can commit to at this time."
- "I've reviewed my schedule and I don't have the bandwidth for this."

### With Family & Close Friends

- "I love you, but I'm not available to host visitors this weekend."
- "I'm not comfortable discussing that topic, but I'd love to hear about [New Subject]."
- "I appreciate the invite, but I'm choosing to have a quiet night in."
- "I need some space right now. I'll reach out when I'm ready to talk."
- "I can't lend you money, but I'm happy to help you look for other solutions."

### On Social Media & Digital Spaces

- "I'm taking a digital detox, so I'll be slower to respond than usual."
- "I don't discuss [Political/Personal Topic] in my comments section."
- "I appreciate the message, but I'm not accepting new collaboration requests."
- "I'm keeping my group chats muted for my mental health. I'll check in when I can."
- "I'm not able to give free advice right now, but here is a link to my services."

### Soft But Firm Refusals

- "It sounds like a great opportunity, but it's not a fit for me right now."
- "I'll have to pass this time, but thanks for thinking of me!"
- "I'm not the best person for this. Have you tried [Alternative]?"
- "No, thank you." (The classic)
- "I wish I could, but I simply can't."

### The "Broken Record" (When they push back)

- "I hear you, and my answer is still no."

- "I understand why this is important to you, but I'm not available."
- "As I mentioned, I don't have the capacity for this."
- "I've given you my answer and I'm not going to discuss it further."
- "No is a complete sentence."

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### How to use this:

1. **Don't apologize.** Using "I'm sorry" implies you've done something wrong. You haven't.
2. **The 3-Second Rule:** After you say your script, wait 3 seconds in silence. Let the boundary land.
3. **Process the Hangover:** Remind yourself that their reaction is *their* responsibility, not yours.