

Netiquette or “net etiquette” refers to ethical code of conduct regarding communication using the Internet. Good netiquette involves respecting the privacy of others, not doing anything online that will disturb or frustrate other people, and not abusing computing resources of the college including, but not limited to, e-mail, online chat, online discussion, and web posting. The following netiquette guidelines are suggested practice for success in your online learning environment at the Wenatchee Valley College district.

Strategy: *Show professionalism and courtesy by exhibiting the same professional respect in the online class as you would in the face-to-face classroom or workplace.*

Procedures:

1. **Hardware and software usage:** Course management infrastructure, student computer laboratories, e-mail, and web-servers are property of Wenatchee Valley College district. The Internet communication tools including email, online chat, discussion boards, or college’s web site services are used for academic discourse. The use for personal gain or gain on behalf of other individuals, not for profit organizations or businesses is prohibited. In other words, no selling stuff or soliciting money using the college’s resources.
2. **Use correct spelling and grammar rules:** It is a good practice to compose your message in a word processing program where you can check your spelling and grammar prior to sending. Avoid typing in all capital letters, as this is considered to be shouting and is considered rude. A word or two in caps is fine. Avoid the use of emoticons (emotion icons), abbreviations and informal language. Remember to refer to your course guidelines and/or ask your instructor for guidance.
3. **Be respectful to others:** Whether a person is receiving or sending an email, or participating in an online discussion it is important to be courteous and respectful of others. Remember that you are communicating with other people, with feelings, sensitivity and opinion. Keep personal beliefs, including politics and religion out of classroom discussion unless the instructor has invited such contribution. People from other cultures may be participating in the online conversation, language barriers may be an issue, and different personalities may react differently to your message.
4. **Maintain a positive tone:** If you think you might be too emotional, don’t send the message: save it and review it later, then decide if it’s appropriate to send it. When composing a message, ask yourself: “Would I say this to the person face-to-face?” Remember that the ease and speed of the Internet makes it easy to say something you may regret later. Irony and sarcasm doesn’t always translate in non-face-to-face communication. It may come across rude or snarky. If you are upset by what you read posted on the web by your classmates, acknowledge that they are in the process of learning like you. For example, forgive bad spelling.
5. **Don’t respond to personal attacks:** Contact your instructor for action and referral.
6. **Be brief and respectful of other’s time:** If your message is short and to the point, people will be more likely to read it. Avoid sending an email to the entire class, unless you feel that everyone must read it. Use a descriptive subject line for email messages and discussion board postings. Check the syllabus and course policies stated by your instructor to know what to expect about the response time of your instructor.
7. **Keep personal information private:** Posting private information in the wrong location can have serious consequences. Remember that divulging too much information could give those with bad intentions valuable information they can use to harm you.
8. **If you are new to online learning:** It may help to observe how people communicate with each other before you jump into online discussions, chat rooms, or post information on course web space.