

Commonly Used Abbreviations and other Tips

GA	Go Ahead (your turn to type)
SK	Stop Keying (ending conversation)
HD	Hold
UR	Your
R	Are
OIC	Oh, I understand
PLS	Please
Q	Question
SMILE	To show appreciation
U	You
THX	Thank You
MSG	Message
RPT	Repeat
GA to SK	completing all messages and ready to hang up

If you make a mistake in spelling, you can either type "xxx" and then retype the correct spelling or use the Backspace key to delete the misspelled word(s).

To type numbers on some TTY's, you may have to use the Shift key. Consult your TTY manual for specific operating instructions.

The message of some TTY callers may appear to be in nonstandard English. Please do not mistake this as a lack of intelligence on the part of the caller. Instead, it may be due to differences between hearing and deaf cultures or the use of TTY terminology. Extend the same patience and courtesy to TTY callers as you do to all others.

TTY's should be placed near a telephone so there is minimal delay in answering TTY calls.

Adding "V/TTY" to any listing of your office phone informs Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals that the phone is accessible via a TTY.



For more information, contact:

Tennessee Relay Services
<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/trs.html>

Telecommunications for the Deaf, Inc.
(TDI)
www.tdi-online.org

***information compiled by University of Tennessee Disability Services offices at UTK & UTC.

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Using a TTY: Making and Receiving a Call and Common Etiquette



Office for Students with Disabilities
110 Frist Hall, Dept. #2953
Chattanooga, TN 37403
www.utc.edu/osd

Tel: 423-425-4006 (V/TTY)
Fax: 423-425-2288

What is a TTY?

The teletypewriter (or TTY) is a device that allows deaf and hearing people to type back and forth using regular phone lines. You may encounter three different terms for this device. TTY is the historical term, which is a remnant of the days when access to the telephone was first provided for Deaf individuals by the use of the Western Union Teletypewriter, originally used for provision of telegraph service. Many Deaf people still prefer to use the term "TTY" because of its expression of heritage and because it is easier to pronounce, fingerspell, and speech-read. However, the more recent term "TDD" (Telecommunication Device for the Deaf), which is fairly self-explanatory, is often used. A still newer term, "Text Telephone," began to appear with the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, but has yet to gain widespread acceptance because its application was never standardized.



How to make a TTY call

1. Place the handset of the phone in the acoustic coupler of the TTY and turn on the power. Two small lights will come on. Only the power light will stay on. The phone light waits to respond to any sounds picked up by the coupler.
2. Dial the number and watch the phone light, which shows the dial tone, busy signal, or ringing by corresponding light patterns. The light remains on for the length of the sound and goes off when there is no sound. For example, the light flashes rapidly for a busy signal.
3. People answering the phone will respond with their names and a short message, followed by "GA," which means "Go ahead, your turn to talk."
4. Start typing, making sure to identify yourself at the beginning of the TTY call.
5. To end a turn in the conversation, type "GA" and the other person will begin typing again. Each person is expected to take a turn only after receiving a "GA" from the other party.
6. When you have completed the conversation, type "GA to SK," meaning "Go ahead and stop keying" which means you are done with your part of the conversation and ready to hang up if the other party is done as well.

How to receive a TTY call

Be sure the person who answers your phone by voice knows how to recognize and answer a TTY call.

1. Usually a TTY call can be identified by a high-pitched, electronic, beeping sound. However, some TTY's do not make the beeping sound, or the person calling may forget to tap the space bar to produce it. Therefore, if you hear no voice, assume it is a TTY call.
2. Place the phone receiver in the acoustic coupler (for correct placement of the phone receiver, check for a graphic on the TTY) of your TTY adapter and turn your TTY on.
3. The person who answers the call is the first to type. Type your agency name and your name. Then type "GA."
4. Continue taking turns and ending with "GA." At the end of the call, remember to type "GA to SK."



TTY Etiquette

1. When calling TTY users, let the phone ring at least 10 or more times before hanging up. Many deaf and hard of hearing TTY users rely on flashing lights to alert them to ringing phones. Flashers can take longer than sound to attract attention.
2. Callers should identify themselves (i.e. *This is June* or *This is Parking Services, June here*) at the beginning of calls.
3. Callers should use standard abbreviations to shorten the length of the call (see list).
4. Always tell TTY users when calls are going to be put on "hold" or transferred.
5. When TTY users type *Can you read me?* they want to know if the message is clear and without garbled letters and numbers. If the message is garbled, you should strike the space bar and see if the message clears up. If not, when the person stops typing, you should say, *Message all garbled, please repeat*. If the garbled messages continue, this may mean that one of the TTY's is not working properly or that you have a bad connection. In this case you should say something like, *Let's hang up and you call me back or I'll call you back*.
6. Punctuation marks are not commonly used during TTY conversations. Simply skip a couple of spaces between sentences.

Relay Service

A person with a TTY can call another person without a TTY (i.e. a campus office), by calling through Relay Service. The caller with a TTY dials 711 (a toll free number) to reach a communication assistant (CA) with Relay Service who has a telephone and a TTY. The caller gives the CA the number to call, and the CA then calls the other person by voice and exchanges messages, voice and text, between the TTY caller and the voice receiver. Anyone can reach the relay service by dialing 711. The same type of shortcuts (i.e. "GA" and "SK") are used through relay services.