

Chapter 1

Your New Phone Is Totally Awesome: But It Comes with Buts

Sometimes it's great to be last. The last person to be kidnapped by aliens! The last person to be eaten by zombies!

But other times it stinks to be last—literally. Have you ever been last in line at camp to use the bathroom? Remember that smell? Not so delightful.

And maybe you felt like you were the last person on Earth to get your own phone. Maybe you thought all that waiting really stunk. Well, you're not waiting anymore. That's because . . .

You finally got a phone!

Now you can text your friends! You can chat in apps, record music videos, and play games! You can grow your list of followers! You can watch videos about three-toed sloths and impress your friends with your amazing new knowledge!

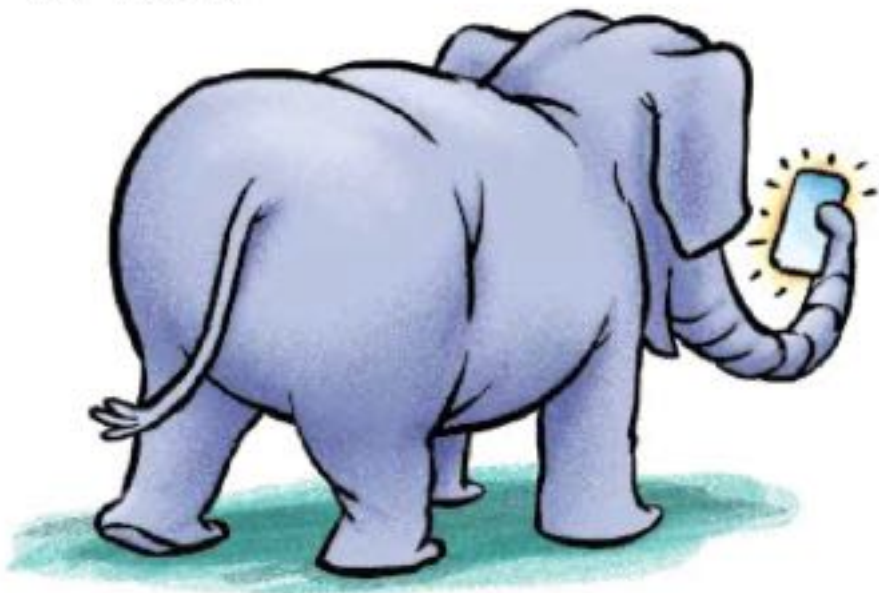


You can take RI-DIC-U-LOUS pictures and send them. A picture of your dog wearing a tutu and barrettes. A picture of your sister sleeping in the car with drool running down her chin. A picture of you and your friends (and your cat) using all kinds of Insta-filters. You can listen to music, follow your favorite athletes, research nuclear submarines, learn how to fix your bike, and lots more. The world is literally at your fingertips. That's because . . .



Big BUTs

Even if you didn't wait long or you didn't feel like you were last, it's still pretty exciting. However, when it comes to phones, that excitement comes with a few butts—*big butts*.



Your new phone is super fun, BUT . . .

Some kids find that their phone can suck all their time and attention, kind of like a super-sucky digital black hole. Their phones are so intensely interesting that these kids have

a hard time keeping up with other things like chores, homework, playing with pets, and hanging out with friends and family.



Your phone is really convenient, BUT . . .

Sometimes it can cause problems. Friends can misunderstand each other or get mad about something that probably wouldn't be a big deal in person. Sometimes it seems like the wrong emoji can start the next world war.



Your phone is an incredibly creative tool, BUT . . .

It can be easy to make mistakes that end up hurting someone else—or yourself. Sometimes you share a photo you shouldn't have, or you say something you later regret.



Your phone is amazingly useful, BUT . . .

You pay for that usefulness by giving up some of your privacy. This can be a big deal, so it's smart to learn something about it.

Rules and Phone Phreedom

Your parent *, or whoever gave you your phone, might have talked to you about the rules for using it. Maybe you signed a contract or agreement promising to follow those rules. Rules can be tough, like overcooked chicken. But having the DOs and DON'Ts laid out can be really helpful. That way you know what's okay and what's not. You know when you can use your phone, and for how long. You stay out of trouble and keep your freedom—your Phone Phreedom, that is.

* When you see *parent* or *parents* in this book, think of the person or people who take care of you. That might be a mom, a dad, a foster parent or stepparent, a grandparent, another family adult, or someone else. Think of the person who is the most responsible for you and who probably gave you that fancy phone.



If your parent hasn't talked to you about this yet, the next page has six guidelines you can follow on your own. Consider them the basic rules for phone behavior. Following these can (a) help keep you safe online with a healthy life balance; (b) keep your parents cool, calm, and collected; and (c) ensure that you get to keep using your awesome new phone.



You Can't Ride Your Phone, BUT...

It turns out that getting a phone is like getting a bike: It's something you have to learn to use.

What's that you say? You're shocked? You've been using phones, tablets, computers, and other devices forever. What's there to learn about?

Well, learning helps you avoid problems and stay out of trouble. Learning can also help you get the most out of your phone, so you can truly enjoy its awesome powers. That's what this book is all about. And lucky for you, learning does not have to be boring. If you've ever watched a grown-up learn to snowboard, you know it can be *hilarious*.



FASCINATING FACT

Did you know your phone is a more powerful computer than the Apollo computer that first put people on the moon way back in 1969? In fact, it has about 100,000 times the processing power—all in the palm of your hand.

Okay, so chances are you won't be helping people land on the moon. But you probably will be doing some pretty critical communication. Maybe something like Jane and Jamal here.



The chapters of this book are all designed to help you learn to be in control of your phone, not the other way around.

Also, there's some weird stuff about flying pie . . . you'll see.

6 BASIC PHONE RULES



Whatever conditions your parents put on using the phone, accept them. Don't argue, even if the rules seem unfair or too strict. After you've shown your parents how responsible you can be, you can consider asking to change things.



Homework first, chores second, and screens third . . . maybe. If your parent says it's okay. Doing your homework and chores shows your parent that you're responsible enough to have a phone.



If your parent calls or texts, answer them. That's just basic respect. (If you can't answer right away, like because you're in a movie theater or class, get back to them as soon as you can.)



Remember that your smartphone is connected to the internet, which means you need to be careful. Don't go to websites you know you shouldn't go to. Don't click on a link that says you get a prize for being the 100th visitor to the site. Strangers who say they want to make you a model or a star are not telling the truth. There is no prince desperate to share his money with you. Don't worry, though. A little common sense is all you need. Reading this book will help.



Be kind. Remember that those are humans on the other end of your communications, and they have feelings.



Finally, remember that the person who pays for the phone is the person who actually owns it. That's . . . let's see . . . probably not you. Which means your parent might read your texts or check your history sometimes. That's their right, and they're not doing it to be nosy. (Well, maybe a little.) They're doing it to help keep you healthy and safe. In the meantime, **you get to use that awesome phone!** And that's pretty great.