

# Keep your English up to date

## Text

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'Text' is one of these new words that have come into English as a result of the internet revolution and especially, this time, the cell phone revolution. Cell phones didn't exist well, 5, 10 years ago, they weren't around and as soon as they came along, people started using them to send messages to each other. So, first as a noun, you had the noun 'text' and now you have the verb 'to text', which is to send a written message using a mobile phone or a cell phone if you use that expression instead.

It isn't new actually. Although the verb 'to text' is a modern feature of today's English, you can actually trace it back to the 16th century when 'to text', in those days, was to write something in very large letters, in capital letters, in 'text hand'. And, if you look it up in a big dictionary these days, you'll often be told "this verbal use is now rather rare". Well it was rare until about 4 or 5 years ago. Since then of course, everybody's been using it, and it's produced a whole new family of words.

You can now 'text' somebody of course, but you can be engaged in the noun 'texting'. And then you've got 'text messaging' which is a fuller form of the idea of texting somebody. And the people who send messages to each other are called 'texters', and the whole language of abbreviated communication that you can use - introducing abbreviated forms into your text message, in order to make it as succinct and as quick to send as possible. Well, what's the name for that? There isn't an agreed name at the moment - but I call it 'text speak'.



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