



**Text**

**Effects**

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# The Simplest Solution

Imagine you want your friends to meet up, perhaps to see a movie. There are several ways that you can **convey** this message. You could use a phone



Ⓐ A cell phone's address book

to call each friend, but that would take a while. Each call would have to be separate. You also could email them, but that often requires you and everyone else to be near a computer. You want to save time but get the job done. You wonder what the quickest, most **efficient** way to ask them would be. The simplest solution is to send your friends a short text message using a cell phone.



Texting is great because you can send a message to many people at once. It will reach them almost immediately, no matter where they are! If you have your friends' numbers saved in your phone, it's even easier. You can just add each one as a **recipient**. If you don't have their information saved, you just need to type in the ten **digits** of their phone number. That's still easier than **keying in** a whole email address. Then you just have to type your message and send it. It's really just that simple!

Ⓐ A boy texting

# Texting Upgrades

It's hard to believe that text messaging, which is so widespread today, is a fairly new **technology**. It was only in December 1992 that the first message appeared on a cell phone's display. The message, "Merry Christmas," was very fitting. The ability to send phone-to-phone text communications has been a gift to the world.

Funnily enough, many people thought texting wouldn't appeal to the public. They believed typing on a phone was clumsy, so people would prefer to just call. This is partly because texting began awkwardly. The first message had to be typed on a computer keyboard. Inventors hadn't yet figured out how to use a phone's keypad to type messages easily. Can you picture hooking up a keyboard to your phone just to text your friends?

Eventually, **predictive** text was applied to cell phones. This feature predicts what word you want to write from the first few letters you type. Once it predicts the right word, you can click on it, instead of typing out the whole word. Suddenly it wasn't so hard to text using the number keys on a phone. Later, some devices were **outfitted** with tiny keyboards just for typing out text messages.



⌚ Early tools for texting

# From Cell to Cell



⤴ A cell tower



⤴ Communicating around the world

Have you ever wondered what happens when you press the Send button after you write a text message? The phone changes the **data** to radio waves that are sent to a nearby cell tower. The cell tower then shoots them along to one or more towers. Finally, they reach the person you're texting. The reason they are so fast is that radio waves move with great speed. The **rapidity** of texting is definitely part of its appeal.

Texting is not only fast, though. Its convenience and **versatility** have also made it a natural part of our lives. Billions of texts bounce around the world every day, connecting people with their friends. Texts can also be used to send pictures, vote for celebrities, retrieve listings for people and businesses, and to receive alerts about bad weather and your bank account. Moreover, because the capability to write text messages is a part of your cell phone, you can send and receive them almost anywhere.

It's no surprise that texting has become wildly popular. It's fast and easy and links you to your friends. So the next time you're trying to organize a trip to the movies, you know the best way!

# Glossary

**convey:** to communicate something.

**data:** information.

**digit:** number between 0 and 9.

**efficient:** able to perform well without wasting time or effort.

**key in:** to type or enter information into a device using a keyboard or keypad.

**outfit:** to provide with necessary equipment.

**predictive:** able to predict.

**rapidity:** speed.

**recipient:** someone who receives something.

**technology:** collection of devices and machines built to make tasks easier for people.

**versatility:** ability to be used in many different ways.