

- They're helping themselves to food at a buffet, or a church carry-in dinner
- You're trying to watch a movie in the theater
- They're sitting on the toilet in a public restroom
- They're the instructor behind the podium in the middle of an electronics training session



Why do I [despise mobile phones](#)? They perpetuate the rude and irresponsible behavior of their owners. Some of my reasons include:

1. You will probably forget to turn it off when you're supposed to.
2. I don't want to hear your conversation. It distracts from the legitimate one I'm trying to have. Besides, there are TV soap operas that are more entertaining—hearing only one side of a conversation is very distracting.
3. I might think you're talking to me because it's not always easy to see that you're wearing a headset.
4. They extend the grasp of [Leeches](#).
5. Many people believe that because of them, they have a legitimate reason to talk anytime, anywhere, and about anything.
6. Texting has become so pervasive that it unnecessarily precludes normal—and often necessary—interaction with people. Some teens/pre-teens no longer talk *even on* the mobile phone, choosing rather to just "text." How does this help relationships and interaction with others? Some young people are admitting that because they have used a mobile phone for so long, they no longer know how to have a normal conversation with others.



Can they be helpful? Of course—after all, they have saved lives. However, it would be interesting to compare statistics on how many lives they have saved versus how many deaths they have caused, because like guns and alcohol, they can—and do—take innocent lives in the hands of irresponsible people.

Are they helpful? Sure, but only when used by someone who:

- If possible, pulls over to the side of the road before answering
- Leaves their phone set to "vibrate" so it doesn't disrupt with an obnoxious noise
- Promptly walks to a remote location before speaking, so they minimize disturbing others
- If possible, sits at the back of the room so they can quickly and quietly leave
- Keeps their voice down as much as possible when talking in a public area, and keeps the conversation to a minimum

Few people will dispute that *when used responsibly*, mobile phones are capable of saving time, money, and again—lives. However, irresponsible use disrupts, distracts, and annoys. Jackie Chan's phone, for example, went off while he was filming a movie. From my experience, the majority of mobile phone owners neither use them responsibly, nor show any desire to. Until that changes, mobile phones will remain both a real nuisance and a potential danger.

[Texting](#) (and [sexting](#)) is even more dangerous, as it typically requires both hands **and eyes** in order to compose and send a phrase or sentence. Seeing someone pass you in the opposite lane 'driving' with their arms/elbows (not their hands!) on the steering wheel while they're looking down at their phone texting with both hands is a very sobering and chilling experience. Accidents and death from texting while driving is an ongoing problem.

I challenge the notion that texting (a.k.a. "lazy English") does not affect English skills (let alone improve them), as has been suggested by an [Australian high school student \(PDF\)](#). Seeing that his own post contains several spelling and grammatical mistakes, he does at least correctly note that either schools are no longer teaching English writing skills as they should, or students themselves aren't [paying attention](#).

To be fair, the adages "practice makes perfect" and "use it or lose it" reinforce what we should all be aware of with technology: that its extended reach and increased use comes with a big price tag. Our handwriting, English skills, and even basic math skills suffer the greater our addiction and reliant we become.

Most importantly, by texting (and other forms of electronic communication) we are increasingly allowing the erosion of our ability to [relate and interact](#) with each other.

Smokers

Also known as "dragons" or "volcanoes." In short, people who are intent on dying an early death, and taking others with them. It is a [medical fact](#) that second-hand smoke is significantly more deadly than what smokers themselves inhale through their cigarette's filter. They also create a choking stench, leave messes others usually have to clean up, ruin the experience of food, threatening others—and their own—health. There's a reason it's known as a "cancer stick."

Leeches

Not to be confused with [Lychees](#) (a tasty, juicy fruit), these are people who call you a "friend," but use you like a handout. They have no qualms in taking advantage of you and asking for personal favors even when they've made no attempt to compensate you or prove their request(s) are actually reasonable in the first place. They are notorious for showing little—if any—gratitude for the favor or help they've received.

How do you spot a leech? If someone:

- Makes little or no effort to do something themselves first; i.e. "it's easier for me if *you* do it."
- Expects or demands favors of you, and/or tries to make you feel guilty if you deny their request (often dropping tactless hints that *you* are the one being unreasonable).

Body language?

Cousins to the leeches, these are people who typically dominate conversations or go out of their way to engage in nothing more than small talk—having no idea (or just not caring) how disruptive and annoying they are to others. Similar in fashion to the leeches, they often feed on the kind and gracious natures of others and seem to insist on testing the limits of their patience. They neither know, nor practice, manners or consideration of others.



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It would seem they either have no work to do, or are just 'taking a break.' If you have encountered these people, you've noticed that they:

- Just want to chat for the sake of chatting, without legitimate reason or purpose.
- Rarely initiate mutually interesting conversation.
- Cannot tell from your irritation, fidgeting, yawns, and sheer lack of interest that they need to leave.
- Stand behind you and ask obvious questions while you're trying to get work done.

- Speak before they think, and make no apology for hurting others when (by their definition) it's "just part of my personality."
- Have no problem wasting your time when you're busy and they want to talk, but show agitation and lack of patience when you have something legitimate to ask them, and they're busy.

Some of these people show additional traits such as: being nosy, inconsiderate, insensitive, tactless, pushy, or needlessly confrontational. Some will create problems and make others look bad through their complete lack of planning or timing: i.e. "Lack of planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on my part." Sadly, being gracious toward these people is like trying to pet a porcupine.

Mood matchers

Blood brothers to those who cannot read body language (or simply don't bother), these are people who are convinced that everyone around them should feel *exactly* as they do, and take it as a personal insult if you don't. They feel it is their responsibility to make you feel the same way. If they're a morning person, *you should be too*. It's interesting that [Proverbs 27:14](#) actually talks about this:

"He who blesses his friend with a loud voice early in the morning, it will be reckoned a curse to him."

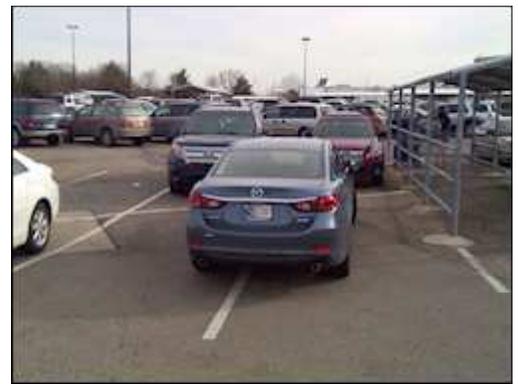
Now, I'm not referring to people who are simply polite in greeting you or who are happy themselves—there's certainly nothing wrong with that, but rather those who seemingly go out of their way (read: border on being obnoxious) to try and make you match their mood.



please leave your whipped cream
in the checkout aisle drink cooler



Somehow it's just not litter if you leave it
standing up in the middle of a parking lot



After all, who really needs
that extra parking spot?

Downright rude and lazy

These are people who:

- Never bother to put items back where they belong (e.g. leaving meat from the supermarket butchery on a shelf in the snacks aisle, resulting in it being thrown away because it spoiled).
- Refuse to park straight so that they absorb two parking spots instead of one; sometimes forcing you to park next to them—risking damage to both vehicles.
- Could care less about using trash cans, and leave trash in the way of others.
- Take pleasure in spitting on public walkways and in parking lots, making a mess others have to try and avoid.
- Not taking a mere 60 seconds to return a shopping cart where it belongs so it doesn't wander across the parking lot or block parking spaces.
- Don't wash their hands after using the restroom, helping spread flu and other illnesses.
- Leave faucets running in rest rooms.
- Never clean up their own mess, such as after shaking water from their hands all over the restroom mirror.

- "Borrow"—without returning—shopping carts from a store and abandon it a block or more away, making someone else have to find and return it.

Patronizers

These are people—typically waitresses, but can be anyone—who for some obscure reason address you via falsely endearing terms such as "Sweetie," "Honey/Hon," or "Darling." Now, I understand that they probably do it without thinking and don't mean anything by it, but that doesn't make it any less awkward, nor does it become any more acceptable—it's simply not respectful nor appropriate for a restaurant setting. I am an adult customer that they have no relationship with. That language should be reserved for their husband or 2-year-old child—if not, what *do* they call them? It's also a double-standard. How many male waiters do you know who call their female customers "Sweetie?" If *I* called them "Sweetie" or "Hon,", at best I would probably be given a cold stare, but could potentially be sued for sexual harassment, or (if present) maybe even given a black eye by their boyfriend or husband. I respectfully call them "Ma'am," so they can respectfully call me "Sir." If you want a tip, give me a reason to leave one.

Unsolicited 'advice'

Has it ever bothered you when someone gave some 'helpful' advice or suggestions without your asking for it? Having been the recipient of this in the past, I trust I'm learning to *never* do it to someone else. Telling someone "You need to..." and "I think you should..." are two of the fastest ways to insert distance between any friendship, especially when speculation and a judging spirit are the only things the 'advice' is based on. A lack of genuine compassion and understanding doesn't help, either.

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