



**Introduction**

A Telecommunication Device for the Deaf is a typewriter-like equipment that deaf people use to make phone calls. The two common acronyms are TTY and TDD, but TTY will be used throughout this handbook.

Typing speed varies by caller. Because only one caller can talk at a time, the conversation pace is slowed down. To speed up, many TTY callers will omit punctuation marks and type in fragmented sentences.

The purpose of this handout is to increase awareness of TTY use and its convenience, and to promote understanding of the cultural differences between deaf and hearing people.

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**Number of Rings**

With TTY callers, it is common for the caller hang up after 10 or more rings. The difference between deaf and hearing callers is in how they know there is a call for them. Flashing light systems alert deaf people to a phone call. This means that when there is bright lighting, the call may go unnoticed by the deaf person, even though the person may be in the same room as the flashing light.

**Answering**

With hearing people, introductions are often skipped because the voices are familiar. Because TTY callers cannot identify each other as easily, it is common for both callers to give their names right away. In business, it is helpful to add some information, such as one's position at work.

**Signals**

In taking turns, a TTY caller will type "GA" for "go ahead," prompting the other end to take his/her turn. To hang up, the signal "SK" is used to mean "stop keying." If a caller types SK twice, he or she is signing off. In some cases, repeated SK's such as four in a row may mean anger or the equivalent of slamming down the phone.

If there is a typo, the TTY caller often will backspace then retype. Sometimes the TTY caller will type a few x's then give the correct spelling or simply ignore the typo. An example acknowledging a typo is "Please order for xxx four pizzas for me." An example of not self-correcting is "Do you have paper for me?"

If you need to put someone on hold, simply type "HD." If you need to hold for longer than expected, it is appropriate to get back with another "HD" such as typing, "I'm looking, pls hd... (after two minutes) still looking, hd pls."

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**CONTACT US FOR TTY AWARENESS TRAINING**

Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing: 1400 W. Washington #126, Phoenix 85007 • [www.acdhh.org](http://www.acdhh.org)  
602-542-3323 V/TTY • 602-364-0990 TTY • 602-542-3383 V • 800-352-8161 V/TTY • 602-542-3380 FAX • [info@acdhh.state.az.us](mailto:info@acdhh.state.az.us)

### Interrupting

It is impolite to interrupt while the TTY caller is typing because that interferes with the display of the message, making it unreadable. It is best to wait for the other party to finish before proceeding.

If the message comes out garbled, you may try to interrupt so the other person doesn't go on for too long. Once you get the attention of the other person, say that the text came through garbled and you would like for him or her to repeat what was said from a particular point in the conversation.

### Paper Printout

TTY callers usually keep the printout of their TTY conversations, throwing it away after a re-reading. Because TTY printouts can easily be falsified, they should not be treated as formal documentation.

### General

Callers new to the TTY often type slowly, mildly annoying deaf TTY users who are usually fast typists. As a result, often they probably will try to keep the conversation short, maybe offering alternatives such as email or fax.

In a TTY conversation, the callers' facial expression and tone of voice are not easily shown. For that reason, TTY callers may try to show emotion by typing down cues such as "HAHAHA," "SMILE," "GRRR," "WWOWWW," or "HMMM."

General telephone etiquette applies to TTY calls. If you have to cut a conversation short or take a message, inform the other caller why. If there is someone with you listening/watching in, notify the other caller. If you intend to hold a long conversation, check with the other caller if the time is good.

### Abbreviations

TTY callers often use abbreviations to speed up the pace. The following are examples, but TTY callers may also use abbreviations not listed here.

<b>Abt</b> .....About	<b>Lv</b> .....Leave	<b>PM</b> .....Afternoon, evening
<b>AM</b> .....Morning	<b>Min</b> .....Minute	<b>Q, QQ</b> .....Question
<b>Ans</b> .....Answer	<b>Msg</b> .....Message	<b>Rec</b> .....Receive
<b>Bec</b> .....Because	<b>Mtg</b> .....Meeting	<b>SK</b> .....Stop keying
<b>Cud</b> .....Could	<b>Nbr</b> .....Number	<b>Tks, Thx</b> ....Thank you
<b>Cuz</b> .....Because	<b>Nite</b> .....Night	<b>Thru</b> .....Through
<b>GA</b> .....Go ahead	<b>NP/no plm</b> ...No problem	<b>TY</b> .....Thank you
<b>Govt</b> .....Government	<b>OIC</b> .....Oh I see	<b>Tmw, tmr</b> ...Tomorrow
<b>Hd/hld</b> .....Hold	<b>Opr</b> .....Operator	<b>U</b> .....You
<b>Info</b> .....Information	<b>Oxoxo</b> .....Hugs & kisses	<b>Ur</b> .....Your
<b>Ltr</b> .....Letter	<b>Pls</b> .....Please	<b>XX</b> .....Error

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