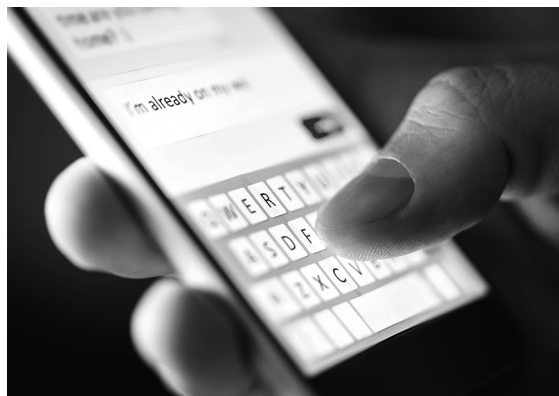


Young people don't trust anyone who uses a full stop

adapted from an article by Hanna Frishberg

- 1 While older texters may consider the period an innocent symbol that a sentence has ended, digital natives consider it a triggering form of aggression. The punctuation problem ignited over social media recently, with Gen Z and millennials agreeing that ending a sentence with a period is overly hostile and, worse yet, extremely uncool.



- 2 "Only old people or troubled souls put periods at the end of every sentence," wrote digital culture journalist Victoria Turk in her book on digital etiquette, *Kill Reply All*. "The thing is, in a messaging conversation, a period is simply not necessary," she explained. "It's clear when you've finished your thought already, so what function does the period fulfill? 39, using a period in messaging now looks rather emphatic, and can come across as if you're quite cross or annoyed."
- 3 *Guardian* columnist Rhiannon Lucy Cosslett started a public discussion on the issue. "Older people — do you realize that ending a sentence with a full stop comes across as sort of abrupt and unfriendly to younger people in an email/chat? Genuinely curious," she asked on Twitter. Although the tweet was met with cries of ageism, her argument has a point: In a 2015 study of 126 undergraduates, researchers at Binghamton University found that texts containing periods were also perceived as insincere.
- 4 The period's new, aggressive interpretation can also be used 40, for comedic effect. "While periods at the end of sentences might be on a downward slope, they can find themselves redistributed elsewhere, where they can be placed very deliberately in order to add emphasis," Turk wrote. This includes putting a period between every word, as in the example she gives: "Just. Look. How. Emphatic. This. Is."

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