https://www.teachermagazine.com.au/articles/mobile-phones-in-the-classroom-what-does-the-research-say

Mobile phones in the classroom – what does the research say?

*In a recent*[**Teacher**](https://www.teachermagazine.com.au/articles/controlling-smartphone-use-in-schools)*article, two schools discussed their differing policies on mobile phone use during school hours. Here, we look at a range of studies that have explored the positives and negatives of allowing mobile phones to be used in class.*

As Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) programs become more widespread, questions are being raised about the benefits of allowing students to actively use mobile phones as learning devices in school. Over the past decade, several studies have taken a closer look at student and educator perspectives on the issue.

One comparative study was undertaken across two schools in England in 2012, and details how students from each school use their devices during class time. One school allows the use of mobile devices and one doesn’t.

[**The study**](https://journal.alt.ac.uk/index.php/rlt/article/view/1471) titled *“I don’t think I would be where I am right now.” Pupil perspectives on using mobile devices for learning* conducted student surveys. The results show that 43 per cent of students attending the school where devices are banned are still using them to help with learning despite the ban. Meanwhile, 74 per cent of students at the school which allow them, use the devices to aid learning.

Most respondents in this study say they use their device for Google and calendars during the school day. As for learning at home, most students also rely on their device.

‘A few days ago, my friend didn’t understand one of the questions on the Science homework, so he Facetimed me, and I showed him my answer and I explained how I got that answer to him ...’ one student says.

The research shows that students rely mostly on their devices to keep them organised. The calendar, alarms and camera (usually to take photos of a teacher’s notes) are features constantly used by students, the report notes. ‘One pupil said his device was essential for “remembering things” and without he would “forget to take homework in a lot”.’

Overall, this study proposes that mobile devices are a suitable learning tool for the classroom.

‘There is clear evidence that many pupils feel that they are deriving educational benefit from the use of their devices,’ the report says. ‘They are using many of the features of their devices and often finding creative ways to employ these features in their schoolwork, both at home and at school.’

**Students with concerns**

A study conducted in the US reveals concerns held by some students about the risks involved with allowing mobile phones to be used freely at school. The research, *Hold the phone! High School Students’ Perceptions of Mobile Phone Integration in the Classroom*, which was published in 2016, found that although seven out of 10 of students interviewed think mobile phones support learning, serious concerns still exist among 30 per cent of respondents, who feel the negative effects of smartphones justifies a school-wide ban.

Across the 628 students surveyed, worries range from general distraction (for example, phones ringing during class) to fears about other students using smartphones to cheat, sext and cyberbully.

Despite this, the study also found that 90.7 per cent of the students surveyed were using their mobile phones for school-related work.

The authors of this study say that school policy makers should consider these findings and ‘develop clear policies on appropriate classroom mobile phone use as well as consequences for their misuse … expecting schools to completely eliminate the problems associated with mobile phone integration, however, is unrealistic; therefore, school stakeholders must carefully consider the benefits and barriers identified by students in determining policy.’

**Mobile phone use – a teacher’s perspective**

As for what teachers think about including the use of mobile phones in their lessons, one US study looked at nine teachers’ attempts to incorporate various technology devices in their lessons.

[**The study**](http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11528-015-0869-3), *Teaching and learning with mobile computing devices* from 2015 details the experiences of one Mathematics teacher, Steven, who uses an iPhone in class.

‘Steve used his own iPhone to document students’ work and attendance,’ the study says. ‘He uploaded scanned tests, quizzes, assignments, and photographs into a web-based software application called Evernote. Each of his students [primarily 9th and 10th graders] had a file in this program … this was helpful to Steven when conducting formal and informal parent-teacher conferences and also when discussing with other teachers and administration.

‘Steven enjoyed the flexibility of mobile devices by holding class in locations other than his classroom, such as the auditorium and outside … [and] he could use his iPhone to “pull up every document [he’s] ever scanned in and get a much bigger, much more accurate picture” of a student’s progress.’

Although participants in this study say using a mobile device in the classroom involved the need for exploration and a lot of personal research, the authors suggest that with the growing trend of BYOD, schools should consider integrating mobile devices into lesson plans.

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https://www.oxfordlearning.com/should-cell-phones-be-allowed-classrooms/

# CELL PHONES IN THE CLASSROOM: LEARNING TOOL OR DISTRACTION

 Dec 22, 2017 • [**ATTENTION & FOCUS**](https://www.oxfordlearning.com/category/attention-focus/), [**TECHNOLOGY**](https://www.oxfordlearning.com/category/technology/)

These days, more and more students are bringing cell phones to class. Even elementary school-aged students have cell phones in their pockets and backpacks.

But should students have cell phones in school?

It’s a debate that many parents and teachers (and even students) have on a regular basis.

## **CELL PHONE USE IN THE CLASSROOM**

Students check their phones in the classroom an average of more than 11 times a day. That can add up to a lot of time spent distracted from schoolwork. And when students are distracted, it’s a recipe for extra stress, frustration, and catch-up time for everyone.

With students spending up to 20% of their in-class time texting, emailing, and checking social media, it’s no wonder the debate about cell phones in the classroom is alive and well.

https://www.oxfordlearning.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/twitter-icon.pngStudents check their cell phones in the classroom more than 11 times a day.  
[[**Tweet this**](https://ctt.ec/8bp7a)]

Many teachers and parents are left wondering: **can cell phones ever really benefit students in class, or are they best left tucked away?**

Learn more about the pros and cons of students bringing their cell phones into the classroom.

## **HOW CELL PHONES CAN BE USED EFFECTIVELY IN THE CLASSROOM**

If properly managed, cell phones can be used as tools to help children learn in the classroom:

1. Using educational learning apps

Cell phones give students access to tools and apps that can help them complete and stay on top of their class work. These tools can also teach students to develop better study habits, like time management and organization skills.

1. Incorporating digital platforms into lessons

Using social media can keep students interested in class and encourage them to participate in the discussion. Some teachers create twitter hashtags or message boards students can use during class discussions to share thoughts and ideas. This can be especially helpful for students who might not be comfortable speaking in class.

1. Supplementing lessons with digital materials

Teachers can take advantage of cell phones by providing students with resources to find more information about a topic. This can include videos, news stories, online discussion groups, and more. Allowing students to access these resources in class can help encourage participation and discussions.

1. Providing easy access to more information

Cell phones can give students access to more information, letting them research more about a topic while having class discussions. This is especially true for current events that have not yet been covered in school textbooks.

## **THE DRAWBACKS OF ALLOWING CELL PHONES IN CLASSROOMS**

While cell phones can be used as learning tools, it is a challenge to make sure students are using them for school-related tasks. A cell phone can easily turn from “classroom learning tool” into “classroom disruption”.

Cons of allowing cell phones in school include:

1. Distractions and interruptions

When students use their cell phones to check social media and text their friends in class, it leads to distractions for those students as well as for their peers. This can cause disruptions in class, particularly if the teacher is constantly telling students to turn their devices off.

1. Cyberbullying

Cell phones can also lead to increased problems with bullying on the schoolground. Cyberbullying can be harder to see than other forms of bullying, making it difficult for teachers to identify and stop when it is happening.

1. Cheating

Cell phones can be a helpful learning tool in class. But they can also be used by students to access information while taking a test, leading to cheating. Even if a student isn’t caught, this can lead to him or her having a poor understanding of the material in the future, and is unfair to students who studied hard to do well.

1. Disconnection from face-to-face activities

While cell phones can help encourage participation by offering different channels, this can also lead to less in-person discussion and fewer learning opportunities. Learning to work together with others is an important part of students’ education, and can be lost with too much dependence on cell phones and other digital technology.

## **THE BOTTOM LINE: SHOULD STUDENTS HAVE CELL PHONES IN SCHOOL?**

Clearly, there are both pros and cons to students having cell phones in school. Although they can be used as a learning tool in the classroom, this only works as long as students use them effectively.

This means for teachers who decide to use cell phones (or any other digital device) as part of their lessons, it’s important to set ground rules and keep a close eye on how they are being used.

Where do you stand on the cell phone debate? Let us know by tweeting [**@oxfordlearning**](https://twitter.com/oxfordlearning)on Twitter!

## **RELATED RESOURCES:**

[**Is Multitasking Bad For Students?**](https://www.oxfordlearning.com/multitasking-while-doing-homework-studying/)  
[**How To Study Without Being Distracted**](https://www.oxfordlearning.com/study-without-getting-distracted-tips/)

https://psychlopaedia.org/learning-and-development/mobile-phones-in-the-classroom-a-helpful-or-harmful-hindrance/

# Mobile phones in the classroom: A helpful or harmful hindrance?

#### BY [KELLY ALLEN MAPS FCEDP](https://psychlopaedia.org/author/kelly-allen/)**EDUCATIONAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGIST**

Smartphones are proving useful educational tools - but psychological research highlights the risk of their presence in the classroom

My three year-old daughter has rarely seen an old-school phone without a screen. Nevertheless, she still places any vaguely telephone-shaped object, such as a shoe, to her ear with a passionate, “HELLO”. Somehow, I find this more comforting than her blankly staring into the sole of the shoe numbly thudding away at pretend buttons in imitation of the way she’s mostly seen a phone used.

If she was using her shoe as a smartphone, I might start to feel the first prickles of discomfort. Not a discomfort born from nostalgia for retro telecommunications devices, but from unease at my daughter’s early acquisition of our facile smartphone obsession. Virtually no modern setting is too sacred to escape the mobile telephone’s remorseless cacophony. Including schools. This is an issue because most adults have skills that help them balance their phone habits with the nuances of socialising and the need to prioritise their time. However, in young people – particularly in secondary and tertiary settings – we are seeing concerning trends related to phone use.

One study that followed the impact of schools banning mobile phones found that [mobile phones can have a negative impact on learning through distraction](http://cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download/dp1350.pdf) and that their removal from the classroom can yield an improvement in student performance, especially for the most vulnerable. In a tertiary setting, Kuznekoff and Titsworth found that [students who did not use smartphones](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03634523.2013.767917?journalCode=rced20) while participating in a lecture wrote 62 per cent more information in their notes and were able to recall more information than their phone-using counterparts. A subsequent study by the same authors found [similar results](http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03634523.2015.1038727). This time, students who did not use their mobile phones, or used them for class-related content, earned higher grades and scored higher on information recall than students who used their phone for unrelated purposes.

Interviews with [628 high school students](https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1110299) on their perceptions of mobile phones in the classroom revealed that, not only were the vast majority of them already using their phones at school, but also their views as a group were largely discrepant. Most students (70 per cent) could identify benefits associated with mobile phones in the classroom, such as increased engagement, motivation for learning, creativity and productivity. However, almost a third of the cohort reported concerns regarding disruption and misuse of mobile phones – particularly under exam conditions – and harmful activities such as cyber bullying and sexting. As for teacher attitudes towards mobile phone use, the research has been mixed, with [some researchers](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2015.02.010.) demonstrating [positive support for mobile phones](http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.csu.edu.au/10.1080/07380569.2017.1347454) in the classroom  and others suggesting they [should be left at home](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2016.11.007)).

Anecdotal reports also reveal successful phone integration in the classroom. Today’s smartphones are microcomputers with the capacity to provide many of the advantages that technology can afford in terms of accessing a broad, deep and meaningful education. A plethora of phone apps have been encouraged by schools, particularly those that support wellbeing by building on relaxation skills and offering help seeking resources. Smartphones have endless possibilities as educational tools, which is why some schools tolerate them. Others ban them, or at least, attempt to do so.

Then there is the small matter of social skills. While smartphones do offer opportunities to connect with others and facilitate a sense of belonging and community, there is a time and place. I recently overheard a small child ask her mother why Daddy had an angry face. A subtle glance over at the next table revealed that “Daddy” was on his smartphone. There was no angry face, but rather a serious, engrossed-reading-face summoned from the undecorated monotropic concentration needed to focus on reading small font in a noisy cafe. These scenarios make me question whether smartphone use is helping or hindering the social development of children (not to mention the social abilities of the smartphone users themselves).

**So what is the solution for schools and parents?**

Ultimately, good sense must prevail as we harness the strengths of the technology and practice everything in moderation. Smartphone use will remain an ongoing issue for parents and schools, particularly in terms of content and what is considered suitable, and also how it should be managed. There will always be misuse as we have seen recently with students bring mobile phones into examination settings. Schools should be at the forefront of ensuring their mobile phone use policies and practice match current telecommunication technologies.

With problematic phone use now considered a risk behaviour alongside alcohol, tobacco and marijuana use, schools should ensure they are addressing the [psychological, social and health issues associated with technology](https://doi-org.ezproxy.csu.edu.au/10.1093/eurpub/ckv175.127) (e.g. a lack of sleep from late night phone use, cyber bullying, sexting) . By building some of the health-related implications of technology into the curriculum, we may be able to mitigate potential harm and promote the safe, controlled and productive use of mobile phones.

Both schools and parents have a role to play in boundary setting, providing guidance with appropriate and inappropriate phone use, and teaching self-regulation and self-control skills. Parents can and should serve as appropriate role models for telephone use. That’s not to say that parents should only use their smartphones in private but they should try to employ the same phone etiquette they are trying to teach their children.

Ultimately, school is a microcosm of wider society. Just as using a smartphone may be unacceptable during a job interview, neither is it in the middle of a classroom. Knowing that certain behaviour is acceptable in some places, but not in others is at the crux of how young people can better use mobile phones responsibly and fruitfully at school.

 http://www.teachhub.com/how-use-cell-phones-learning-tools

# How to Use Cell Phones as Learning Tools

By: [Meg Ormiston](http://www.teachhub.com/how-use-cell-phones-learning-tools)

 Does your staff need [Educational Technology training](http://www.k12teachertraining.com/topics-et.html)? The K-12 Teachers Alliance can help you plan your [in-service professional development](http://www.k12teachertraining.com/index.html) at no additional cost.

Regardless of your school’s cell phone policy, the reality in most schools is that students have phones in their pockets, purses, or hoodies. Why not get these tools out in plain sight and use them for good and not evil?

Here are some easy to use strategies to use cell phones in the classrooms.

**Related Articles**

A few teaching strategies guaranteed to keep your students engaged.

[**Teaching Strategies to Keep Students Engaged in Learning**](http://www.teachhub.com/teaching-strategies-keep-students-engaged-learning)

A few teaching strategies guaranteed to keep your students engaged.

October is Dyslexia Awareness Month. Here’s how technology in the classroom can help you address this condition. 

[**Technology in the Classroom to Accommodate Dyslexia**](http://www.teachhub.com/technology-classroom-accommodate-dyslexia)

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A few tips on how you can work better when you collaborate with your colleagues...

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[**5 Classroom Management Mistakes to Avoid**](http://www.teachhub.com/5-classroom-management-mistakes-avoid)

The top five most common classroom management mistakes that you don’t want to...

A few simple classroom management ideas for how rubrics can be used. 

[**Classroom Management to Make Rubrics More Effective**](http://www.teachhub.com/classroom-management-make-rubrics-more-effective)

A few simple classroom management ideas for how rubrics can be used.

## Why Use Cell Phones as Learning Tools

Cell phones are different from a computer lab filled with computers or a cart of netbooks because the cell phone is personal technology. Most students have invested a great deal of time learning about the features of the cell phone, how to navigate and the limitations of the phone. The other reason to really rethink the cell phone debate is because learning on the cell phone can extend beyond the walls of the school or the confines of a class period.

Some people may want to ban cell phones from classrooms, but I disagree. We didn’t ban pens in our schools because students can pass notes during class. The pencils have also survived even though you could poke someone in the eye. And the amount of paper that is generated in most schools is almost criminal. This is a new time in education and with dwindling budgets , so we need to rethink possibilities, stretching every dollar. These mini computers are walking through the doors each day, let’s put them to work.

Before you consider trying any of these ideas, make sure you understand the policies that are in place and your have checked with your administrator.

## Cell Phone Learning Strategies

**Recording Lectures: The “Flipped" Classroom**  
Many teachers are structuring their lessons in what is being coined “Flipped Classroom”. These teachers are recording their “lectures” using video or audio and students are listening to that outside of class as the homework and in class they are completing the practice and the teacher serves as a guide, re-teaching as needed. On most cell phones with a data plan students can watch a video of a previous lesson of an appropriate clip on [You Tube](http://www.youtube.com/).

**Use Cell Phones as Your Student Response System**  
Using [www.polleverywhere.com](http://www.polleverywhere.com/) and your students’ cell phones, you can track instant answers from all your students. It’s free for classrooms of 30 people or less.

Gina Hartman an eMINTS Instructional Specialist at Francis Howell School District in Missouri shared a fantastic new Web 2.0 site named [http://wiffiti.com](http://wiffiti.com/). The teacher creates a wiffiti screen and students can text in their opinions.

One teacher used this to summarize Act 1, Scene 1 from Romeo and Juliet. They texted in the short summary and it showed up on the screen. In another classroom the students had think about the time period that Andrew Johnson was in office and text something into the wiffiti screen that would have been something he would have tweeted back then. I love this example, talk about engaging students.

**Delivering Materials**  
As more curriculum materials are delivered digitally creative teachers are delivering materials directly to students on their personal cell phones. One such platform is [School Town](http://www.schooltown.net/). This learning platform makes it possible for teachers and students to collaborate in discussion areas and chat with each other making blended learning a real possibility.

**Awesome Teacher Apps**

[Dropbox](http://www.dropbox.com/): One of my most beloved apps is dropbox. Dropbox allows all my computers and my phone to interact together. So the photo I take on my cell phone can be put in my Dropbox app and now it is available on all my devices, love it!

[Evernote](http://www.evernote.com/): Next in line of cool apps for the classroom is Evernote. This handy app lets you type a text note, or clip a web page. If your phone has a camera you can snap a photo, and now you can also grab a screenshot. Like dropbox it doesn’t matter what device you are on, they all sync together.

## Solving Common Problems Using Cell Phones in Class

**Students without Cell Phones / Smart Phones**  
Other issues arise because not every student has a cell phone. The easiest way to work around this is to have students working in groups, collaborating and solving problems together. Now we only need one cell phone to report out the group work. If we get creative, any problem can be solved.

**Wireless Access**  
Wireless access might be another problem. Smart phone users will usually try and find a wireless network instead of going through the provider signal. With all these added devices your network may be burdened. Also cell phone reception is an issue in many schools. If this is the case, you may want to focus more of the group work or homework-related cell phone strategies.

**Keeping Cell Phone Use Appropriate**  
Thinking about using cell phone in the classroom we need to make sure we involve our students in the conversation. Let them teach us about how to reduce the fear of theft or inappropriate use. Every student should be reminded every day about appropriate technology use, and what to do if the rules are broken. We need to help students understand the ramifications of things like cyberbullying , sexting and posting things to social networking sites.

**Where do you stand on the cell phone in class debate? Share your thoughts or your creative ways to use cell phones in school in the comments section!**

How to use mobiles in language learning / teaching?

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ914893.pdf>

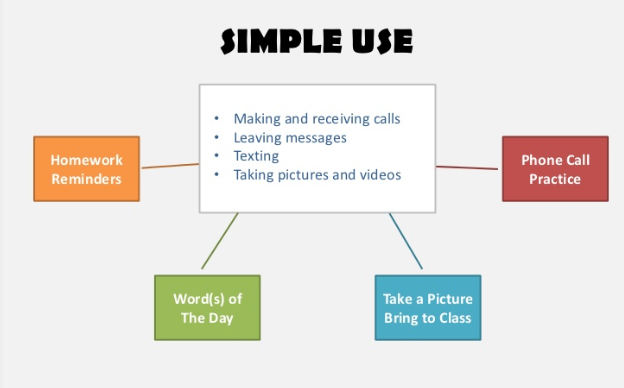
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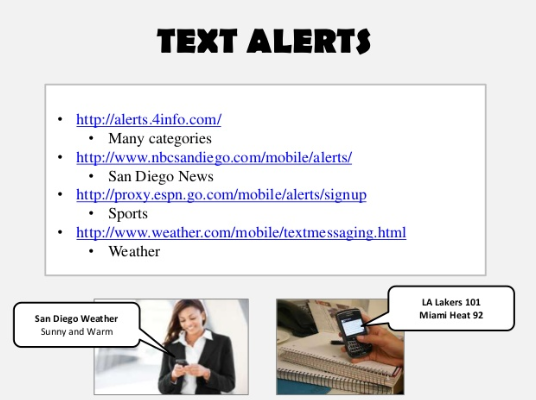
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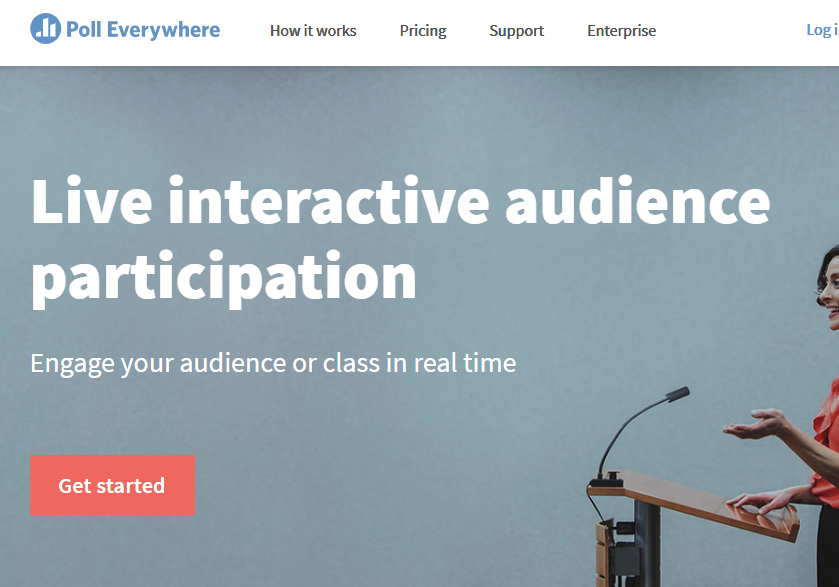
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<https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/teaching-tips-how-students-can-use-mobiles-to-learn-english>





[www.polleverywhere.com](http://www.polleverywhere.com)



.2 Why Use Mobile Devices For Learning?

Most mobile devices are useful in education as administration, organization and teaching aids for practitioners,

and also as learning support tools for learners. Here are some of the main benefits:

• Learners can interact with each other and with the practitioner instead of hiding behind large monitors.

• It's much easier to accommodate several mobile devices in a classroom than several desktop computers.

• PDAs or tablets holding notes and e-books are lighter and less bulky than bags full of files, paper and

textbooks, or even laptops.

• Handwriting with the stylus pen is more intuitive than using keyboard and mouse.

• It's possible to share assignments and work collaboratively; learners and practitioners can e-mail, cut, copy

and paste text, pass the device around a group, or 'beam'? the work to each other using the infrared function of a

PDA or a wireless network such as Bluetooth.

• Mobile devices can be used anywhere, anytime, including at home, on the train, in hotels - this is

invaluable for work-based training.

• These devices engage learners - young people who may have lost interest in education - like mobile

phones, gadgets and games devices such as Nintendo DS or Playstation Portable.

• This technology may contribute to combating the digital divide, as this equipment (for example PDAs) is

generally cheaper than desktop computers.

However, you may also need to consider the following potential disadvantages:

• Small mobile and PDA screens limit the amount and type of information that can be displayed.

• There are limited storage capacities for mobiles and PDAs.

• Batteries have to be charged regularly, and data can be lost if this is not done correctly.

• They can be much less robust than desktops (although tablet PCs are beginning to tackle this problem).

• It's difficult to use moving graphics, especially with mobile phones, although 3G and 4G will eventually

allow this.

• It's a fast-moving market, especially for mobile phones, so devices can become out of date very quickly.

• Bandwidth may degrade with a larger number of users when using wireless networks.

What can we do with m-learning?

1. Access documets or document libraries

2. Access quizes and self-assessment as question or games

3. Prticipate in lessons and tutorials

4. Receive lectures archived or broacasted live

5. Access to video clip or audio libraries

6. Read asynchronous postings

7. Exhibit student work

8. Participate in virtual learning communities on the go

*(PDF) Using Mobile Phones in Language Learning/Teaching*. Available from: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/251713901_Using_Mobile_Phones_in_Language_LearningTeaching> [accessed Oct 03 2018].

https://www.thoughtco.com/using-a-smartphone-in-class-1211775

**by**

[Kenneth Beare](https://www.thoughtco.com/kenneth-beare-1208921)

**Updated March 06, 2017**

Smartphones are here to stay. For English teachers, that means we need to either ban iPhones, Androids, Blackberries and whatever next flavor arrives - or - we have to learn how to incorporate the use of smartphones into our routine. I've discovered that just ignoring their use in class doesn't help. After all, I am an English teacher trying to encourage my students to communicate in the English language. Students who sit in class and use their iPhone or Android are missing out. That's a simple fact. However, it's also true that students are going to use their smart phones if they haven't been taken away. At least that's the way it is where I teach English.

So, what's a dedicated English teacher to do? Here are ten tips on how to constructively allow the use of smartphones in class. Admittedly, some of the exercises are just variations on traditional classroom activities. However, encouraging students to use smart phones to complete these activities will help them learn to use these power-packed, hand-held computers to actively improve their English skills. Finally, it's important to insist that smart phone or tablet use is OK, but only as a tool during a specific activity. In this way, students can continue with their obsessive, addictive behavior. However, they won't be tempted to use their smartphones for other, non-English learning tasks during class.

**1. Use smartphones for vocabulary exercises with Google image search.**

A picture is worth a thousand words. I like to use my smartphone, or have students use their smartphone to look up specific nouns on Google images or another search engine. You've all seen how [a visual dictionary can greatly improve vocabulary retention](https://www.thoughtco.com/visual-dictionary-professionals-4123252). With smartphones, we have visual dictionaries on steroids.

**2. Use smartphones for translation, but only at a specific time.**

I try to encourage students to read using three phases. 1) [Read for gist](https://www.thoughtco.com/improve-reading-skills-1210402) - no stopping! 2) [Read for context](https://www.thoughtco.com/reading-lesson-using-context-reading-literacy-1212011) - How can the words surrounding unknown words help with understanding? 3) Read for precision - explore new vocabulary using a smart phone or dictionary. Only in the third phase do I allow smartphone use. Students are pleased because they can look up words. However, they're developing good reading skills by not immediately translating every word they do not understand.

**3. Use smartphones for communicative activities using apps.**

We all communicate with our smartphones in different ways depending on different apps. In other words, [texting with a messaging app](https://www.thoughtco.com/abcs-song-listening-1211757) is bound to be different than writing an email on your computer. Take advantage of this and promote activities that are specific to a given context. One example might be to have students text each other to complete a given task.

**4. Use smartphones for help with pronunciation.**

This is one of my favorite uses of smart phones in class. Model pronunciation for them. For example, focus on suggestions. Ask students to open a recording app. Read five different ways to make a suggestion aloud. Pause between each suggestion. Have students go home and practice mimicking your pronunciation in the pause between each suggestion. There are many, many variations on this theme.

Another great use for pronunciation is to have students change the language to English and try to dictate an email. They'll have to work really hard at word level pronunciation in order to get the desired results.

**5. Use smartphones instead of a thesaurus.**

Have students search on the phrase "words like ..." and a host of online offerings will appear. Encourage students to use their smart phones during writing class in this manner while focusing on developing a wider range of vocabulary. For example, take a simple sentence such as "The people spoke about politics." Ask students to come up with a number of versions using their smartphones to find substitutes for the verb "speak."

**6. Use smartphones to play games.**

Yes, yes, I know. This is something we shouldn't encourage in class. However, you might encourage students to write down phrases they experience while playing games to bring into class to discuss in more detail. There are also a number of word games such as Scrabble or word search puzzles that are actually instructive as well as fun. You can make room for this in your class as a "reward" for completing a task, just make sure to tie it to some sort of report back to the class.

**7. Encourage students to use smartphones to keep track of vocabulary.**

There are a wide variety of MindMapping apps available, as well as a myriad of flash card apps. You can even create your own flash cards and have students download your set of cards to practice in class.

**8. Use smartphones for writing practice.**

[Have students write emails](https://www.thoughtco.com/how-to-write-a-business-report-1210164) to each other in order to complete a specific task. Change up the tasks to practice different types of register. For example, one student might write a product inquiry with another student replying to the inquiry with a follow-up email. This is nothing new. However, just using their smartphones can help motivate the students to complete the task.

**9. Use smartphones to create a narration.**

This is a variation on writing emails. Have students choose photos they have taken and write a short story describing the photos they have chosen. I find that by making in personal in this manner, students engage more deeply with the task.

**10. Use smartphones to keep a journal.**

One more writing exercise for the smart phone. Have students keep a journal and share it with the class. Students can take photos, write descriptions in English, as well as describe their day.

**CITE**

Whether you are preparing for an exam or learning for fun, your mobile phone is a great tool to help you improve your English. If you have a smartphone, you probably know about [all the apps you can download](http://www.cambridgemobileapps.com/), but you can also use your phone in lots of other interesting ways.

### 1.    Change your settings

Change your smartphone settings to English. This will give you instant daily reading practice. Watch films, stream a movie or TV programme onto your phone. Make sure you watch it in English – with or without subtitles. Try it – you’ll be surprised how quickly you will pick up new vocabulary.

### 2.    Taking pictures

To help you learn the English vocabulary of the world around you, take pictures of items, objects and actions that you see on the street. Then when you go home you can review the pictures you took and you can use dictionaries or the internet to find out how to describe them in English. If you have English lessons, you can also ask your teacher.

### 3.    Recording pronunciation

When you find words that are difficult to pronounce, make a list and then ask your teacher or a friend with good English to say them for you. You can record their pronunciation on your phone and can practise and repeat the words in your free time.

### 4.    Making lesson notes

Sometimes in your lessons there is a lot of writing on the board. Instead of copying it down in class, why not ask your teacher if you can take a photo? Then you can copy it from the photo and into your notebook when you get home. This is a very useful way to help review the lesson content.

### 5.    Be social

Use social media in English. Find a page on a topic you are interested in and comment in English. You can practise your writing skills, your reading skills and be part of a global community all at the same time.

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Useful links

-       For a fun English language community, join us on [Facebook](https://coursefinders.com/Users/Lena/AppData/Local/Temp/Temp1_cambridgeenglisharticlesfortheblog.zip/facebook.com/CambridgeEnglish)

-       [Free online activities](https://coursefinders.com/Users/Lena/AppData/Local/Temp/Temp1_cambridgeenglisharticlesfortheblog.zip/cambridgeenglish.org/learning-english/) to practise for each of the Cambridge English exam skills

-       [Learning English Apps](https://coursefinders.com/Users/Lena/AppData/Local/Temp/Temp1_cambridgeenglisharticlesfortheblog.zip/cambridgemobileapps.com/)