

Top tips for great active listening

Active listening is about really listening to the other person, not just listening to a small part, then switching off to form your response.

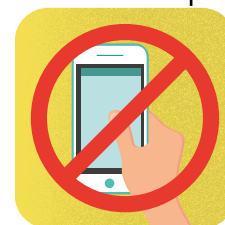
Active listening helps us to improve our understanding of others, build relationships and develop our problem solving ability. It's a great skill to have at work and in your personal life.

It's normally obvious when the person you're talking to is listening actively or whether their mind is elsewhere. Here are five ways to practise active listening:

1

Pay attention

- Look at the person you're speaking to, preferably giving them eye contact where possible.
- Look out for non-verbal language like their tone of voice or body language.
- Don't look at your phone while they're talking to you.



2

Show you're listening

- Nod and react to what they're saying with your facial expressions.
- While they're talking, use one or two words like 'yeah' or 'that's terrible!'.
- When they've finished talking, summarise their feelings. For example, "I can see how happy you are about this!"





3

Don't jump to conclusions

- Allow the other person to finish before responding (don't interrupt).
- Ask questions to get a better understanding.
- Form your thoughts and opinions once you've heard everything the person has to say.



4

Check your understanding

- Paraphrase what the person's said and ask if you've understood correctly.
- Be aware of how your own beliefs and experiences could misinterpret what they're saying.
- Be open to their perspective of a situation.



5

Respond appropriately

- Always show respect in your response.
- Demonstrate that you understood what they were telling you.
- Be open and honest.

