

From telling your mum you'll tidy your bedroom to swearing to keep a friend's secret, you probably make promises quite often. Do you ever go back on your word?



#### IS IT EVER OK TO BREAK A PROMISE?

##### What you need to know

- Promises are made in all areas of life, including in friendships, families, politics and business. They can be agreed in many different ways, from just saying "I promise" to signing a legal document.
- Research in 2010 in the UK found that when people were breaking a promise the emotion part of their brains showed much greater activity than normal.

Last year sports presenter Gary Lineker was so sure that Leicester City football team would NOT win the Premier League that he sent a tweet saying that if they did, he would present the TV sports show (Match of the Day) in his underwear, well Leicester did win the league and Mr. Lineker kept his word by presenting the show in his underpants!

We all make promises every day, even if we do not always use the word "promise." Politicians promise to solve problems in society, friends promise to keep each other's secrets and chil-

dren swear they will do their homework and tidy their rooms. We make these promises for all sorts of different reasons, for example, to help people, to make them happy, to make them like us or even to get something we want. However, we don't always stick to our word.

##### A promise is a promise

When you break a promise to someone you are giving them the message that they are not important to you. If you tell someone else their secret or don't turn up to their party, the person may feel let down, hurt or angry. It could damage your friendship as they may find it hard to trust you in the future. You may get a reputation for being untrustworthy among other friends, too. Going back on a promise is inconsiderate because it means other people may have to change their plans. For example, if you say you will play in a sports game but then don't, it may mean there are too few players for it to go ahead. We all need to keep the promises we make so that everyone can make plans and be organised.

##### Promises can be broken

It would be impossible to keep all the promises you make. Sometimes a situation can be out of your control – for example if you said you would help a friend with their homework but then you were ill, or that you would call your grandparents or parents when you were out but then found that there was no mobile reception. If you promised your sibling that you wouldn't tell anyone that he was going to play in the park but then discovered he was going to play with fireworks, going back on your word would be the right thing to do. Sometimes it can happen that you may break a promise just because you forgot about it or you ran out of time. That's life and, as long as it doesn't happen too often and you are honest about it, people will understand.

##### 3 reasons why you should never break a promise

- Breaking a promise to someone makes it seem like you do not value or respect them.
- It can damage relationships because it is hurtful when someone breaks a promise and may stop people trusting you or depending on you.

- If everyone broke promises, it would be hard to plan our lives – doing what you say you will do helps keep things organised.

##### 3 reasons why it's sometimes OK to break a promise

- Situations can change so that you might not always do what you promised – people have to be flexible and understanding.
- You may have to break a promise in order to protect someone – safety is more important than a promise.
- Sometimes you may just forget that you made a promise – you're only human!

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