When someone has given you a gift or done something special to make your life a little easier, the thank-you note is an easy way to acknowledge the time and effort he has expended on your behalf.

**Remember To...**

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Write a thank-you note when you get a present and the giver is not there to receive your thanks in person (someone sends you a gift in the mail or asks someone else to bring it to you). Your thank-you note tells the person the gift arrived and how much you appreciate it.

- Write a thank-you note when you have been a houseguest at someone's home.

Exception: Sometimes you just go for an overnight to your best friend's house. You don't need to write a thank-you for that, but if you stay more than one night or travel to a friend's house out of town for a special event, you should write a thank-you note to your hosts.

- Send a thank-you as quickly as possible, within a day or two of receiving the gift or returning home from the visit. If that's impossible, write it as soon as you can.

**Why Handwrite When I Can Email?**

Question: My aunt sent me a great shirt for my birthday. Can I e-mail her a thank-you note?

Answer: Even though e-mail is easier, the nicest way to thank your aunt is with an old-fashioned handwritten thank-you note. If you know that your aunt checks her e-mail regularly, send her a quick e-mail letting her know that the gift arrived and you're enjoying it. Then take the time to write her a thank-you note with pen and paper. After all, she took the time to pick out the shirt, wrap it, and mail it. The e-mail will let her know her present arrived; the thank-you note will show your appreciation and respect.

## Not Required But Nice

- Write a thank-you note even if you've thanked the giver in person - especially if it was given at a big party and your personal thanks might have been lost in the excitement.
- Write a thank-you note when someone has done something special for you, say when your uncle spent the afternoon explaining the advanced math you've been having so much trouble with.

## Don't Even Think About...

- *Not* writing a thank-you note because it's late. So what if it's been two weeks? It will still show your appreciation.
- Using preprinted thank-you notes where you just have to fill in the blanks. The impersonal look of those cards takes away from the thought you might have put into the thank-you.