How to Apologize

Apologizing means expressing regret for something you did. A sincere apology involves reflecting on your actions, taking responsibility for them, and making changes to improve things in the future. Giving an apology can help repair a damaged relationship while showing care and respect for the other person.

Reflect on your Actions

Think about how your actions contributed to a problem, even if they were not the sole cause.

Even if someone else also contributed to the problem, what was *my* role?	Try taking the other person's perspective. How do my actions look from their side?	As a result of my actions, how might the other person feel?

Take Responsibility

Say "I'm sorry" (or some version of this phrase) and show regret for your actions. It's important to speak clearly and sincerely. In most cases, it helps to identify the actions you are apologizing for.

Example: "I'm sorry for the language I used during our argument. It was disrespectful, and it was wrong."

I'm sorry for…	I apologize for…	I take responsibility for…
It was wrong of me to…	I feel terrible. I shouldn't have…	This was my fault. I should have…

⚠ Never make excuses or try to justify your behavior (e.g. "I'm sorry, but I was tired!").

Listen and Improve

Give the other person a chance to respond without interruption. Forgiveness may take time and is not guaranteed. Be prepared to discuss changes you will make to avoid repeating the problem.

Myths vs. Reality

Myth: Love means never having to say you're sorry.

Reality: Apologies can be particularly important when you love someone. An apology communicates you care about the other person and want them to feel better.

Myth: Apologizing is as simple as saying "I'm sorry."

Reality: Merely saying the words "I'm sorry" is not a complete apology. An apology requires remorse, an attempt to right the wrong, and taking steps to make sure the problem is not repeated.

Myth: Apologizing will make me look weak.

Reality: An apology shows you are secure enough to admit when you've done something wrong. It also shows you have respect for yourself and the other person.