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Mobile Africa - Textalonica: The World of Text Messages (SMS)

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TOP POLYPHONIC RINGTONES

Textalonica: The World of Text Messages (SMS) by *Felix Adebayo*

2005-10-15 00:00:00

Imagine living in an odd world where the only means of telecommunication is by sending SMS (Short Message Service) to each other. No voice call, no email, no fax, just text messages. How are you going to cope? Will you be able to communicate at all or you will just give up in despair? Welcome to Textalonica, the world of mobile text messages.



Sending and receiving SMS has become part of our mobile lifestyle. It is especially common among the youths or students. Even in business circles, SMS is widely deployed by companies to pass information to their staff or clients. In a situation where a company wants to pass the same information to several GSM lines, an SMS gateway is employed to send the text message to all the lines at once. With almost all networks offering free SMS, it will do your pocket well if you master the art of sending text messages from your cell phones.

An SMS is generally much cheaper than a voice call, and can achieve the same effect if sent at the right time. Think of SMS as the equivalent of sending email message from your computer. The only difference here is that the size of a single SMS is limited to 160 characters and you cannot send attachments. Of course, most cell phones allowed you to type a text message that is longer than 160 characters; it will simply treat it as two or more SMS depending on the size. As an individual, you may have to consider SMS seriously if some of the conditions below apply to you:

- You are on a budget and don't want to exceed certain amounts to re-charge your phone
- You like just getting in touch with friends, families and colleagues
- You like sending jokes and funny messages
- Your job involves sending reminders for appointments to others

Making the Best Use of SMS

To make the best use of SMS, you need to do the following:

- Make sure your network operator is SMS friendly. This can be a lower tariff for SMS or free intra or inter-networks SMS.
- Your cell phone must also be SMS friendly
- You have learnt how to use the T9 language.

Features of an SMS Friendly Phone

- Allows sending a single text message to multiple contacts at the same time
 - Ability to do a delivery status report
 - Ability to save a text message after sending
 - Full QWERTY keyboard or handwriting recognition.
 - Minimum display screen of 176 x 208 pixels for reading texts.
 - Large internal memory or memory card slot for storing messages
 - A USB or bluetooth connection to upload text files into your phone from your PC
- Generally speaking, all PDAs and smartphones are SMS friendly.

T9 Feature

For those who delight in sending SMS, learning the T9 language is the best way to get started. Almost all cell phones support SMS, but not all of them supports the T9 language. The T9 language helps you to type regular English words on your phones without pressing a key twice to type a letter. Instead, you simply just type out the words on the keypads as if you are using a regular keyboard and the word you are typing will be displayed at the end. If the correct word is not displayed, you use the option key to toggle the other words that matched the characters that you typed. You can also add words of your own, which may not be regular English words to the T9 database on your phone. However, the T9 feature may not be available in the case where you have a full QWERTY keyboard as in the Nokia communicators.

Examples of SMS Friendly Phones

Sony Ericsson P900/P910

- Large screen of 208 x 320 pixels
- Handwriting recognition
- Large internal memory of 64MB
- A Memory Stick Duo of 32-64MB expandable
- USB, bluetooth & infrared support.

Sendo X

- Good screen size of 176 x 220 pixels
- Foldable pocketsize QWERTY keyboard
- 64MB internal memory with 32MB available for users
- Multimedia memory card (MMC) expansion slot
- USB, bluetooth & infrared support.

Nokia N-Gage

- Good screen size of 176 x 208 pixels
- T9 Support
- Memory card 32MB MMC expandable
- USB & bluetooth support.

Sony Ericsson W800/K750i

- Good screen size of 176 x 220 pixels
- T9 support
- 38MB internal memory
- A Memory Stick Duo of 512MB for W800 (expandable)

Nokia 9300/9500

- Wide screen display of 640 x 200 pixels
- Full QWERTY keyboard
- 80MB internal user memory
- Memory card of 128MB for MMC expandable
- USB, bluetooth & infrared support.

I-Mate PDA2k/XDA II/Treo 650 Pocket PC

- Large screen display of 240 x 320 pixels
- Built-in full QWERTY keyboard

- Handwriting recognition
- Between 23-44MB internal memory
- Multimedia memory card (MMC) expansion slot
- USB & bluetooth support

The list is endless. The above is just to give you an idea of what features should be available in a typical SMS friendly phone.

SMS Tips

If you send SMS regularly, (I send from 10 to 15 daily) then the following tips will greatly assist you.

- Save or archive all-important SMS and back them up to your PC regularly
- Prepare customised messages or templates with Notepad (text files) on your PC and transfer them to a folder on your phone for quick access.
- If you will be sending several SMS to different people, then it is faster to prepare each SMS as text file on your PC, transfer to your phone through USB or bluetooth and send. This option is good if your phone lacks full QWERTY keyboard or handwriting recognition.

A Note of Caution

The same rules that apply with sending emails also apply to SMS. As emails can be documented, so also SMS can be saved on the phone to be retrieved when desired.

- Never send a stinker through SMS.
- Never threaten someone through SMS
- Do not send through SMS something you will wish you never sent in the first place.

A friend of mine threatened his business associate through SMS, after a raw business deal between them. A few days later, the other guy's car was hit by an armed robber's bullet late in the night. Luckily, he escaped unhurt. He tendered my friend's SMS to the police in the course of their investigation. My friend had a hard time explaining to the Police that he did not sent assassins to his associate.



Mr **Felix Adebayo** blogs from Lagos, Nigeria about mobile phones and is the author of **Phonerism.com**

[Read more of his write-ups at www.phonerism.com](http://www.phonerism.com)

The article has been read **272** times.

Comments

Thanks for the endorsement!

"Thanks for your comments about T9. We at Tegic (the makers of T9) are thrilled to hear about people across the globe adopt and use our products. For your information, Tegic will be releasing 3 new languages for the Nigerian market: Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo. These should be available to handset manufacturers starting early 2007, and hopefully will be available in Nigeria some time later that year. We plan to release further languages for Africa (and elsewhere) on an ongoing basis. Thanks for your support! Best regards, Bob Heddle Technical Director Tegic Communications."

Bob Heddle from Seattle, USA

text messages

"i have been visiting your site and i love it. so pls i will appericiate if you can be sending me love,jokes,friendly text messages through my mailbox."

ukpong victor from lagos, nigeria

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