

**Online communication is preferable to face-to-face communication. Discuss.**

In today's world we find ourselves communicating more and more through online channels such as messaging, social media and video calls, often at the expense of face-to-face dialogue. There are certain situations where online communication is unavoidable but others where we opt for virtual over real-life conversation. Which begs the question: is online communication preferable in today's world?

To begin with, I'd like to outline the advantages of online communication. One of the main arguments in its favour is that it opens up the possibility of communicating with people in different places around the globe. This has considerable benefits in the workplace as meetings can take place via videoconferencing between Stockholm, San Francisco and Shanghai without the need for time-consuming, exhausting, long-haul business trips. Furthermore, it provides opportunities for long-distance families and friends to keep in touch on a daily basis. Another point is that written online communication gives us the option of responding either immediately or at a time that suits us as well as allowing us to edit and polish our message.

On the other hand, there are several significant drawbacks to over-reliance on online communication. Some experts are concerned that a lack of face-to-face interaction impedes the development of vital social skills such as empathising and reacting to situations in real time. Also, the very nature of conversation is different in the virtual world. If short snippets of dialogue embellished with emoticons replace longer stretches of direct conversation with emotions expressed on real faces, we're running the risk of losing the art of real conversation.

On balance, I believe that online communication brings an overall advantage in today's fast-paced, global society. However, we should take care not to overlook the benefits of engaging in face-to-face dialogue.

**Top Tips for writing**

1. Use the correct structure: introduction, key points for, key points against, conclusion.
2. Be objective. Give a balanced argument and make your overall opinion clear in the conclusion.
3. Use neutral or formal language. Don't use emotional or informal language.
4. Use suitable words or expressions to introduce, add, contrast and link ideas.
5. Include examples to illustrate ideas.