

Staying in Touch With Friends and Family Abroad

In the past, if we wanted to get in touch with a friend or relative in a different country we would have sent a letter. Several weeks later it would arrive, and we'd then have to wait for a reply to wing its way back to us.

The telephone made getting in touch much easier and also instant – although it used to be prohibitively expensive, and can still cost you some cash today, depending on where in the world you are phoning. Fortunately the advent of the internet has made speaking to friends and family living or staying abroad much easier – and it can also be free of charge.

The beauty of this kind of communication is that it is easily accessible, so it makes staying in touch much easier to do. Just imagine, your child could be enjoying a gap year in America, and missing home more than they thought they would. All you need to do is get your time zones right and give them a call via your computer. You'll be able to enjoy speaking to them without worrying about how long you've been on the phone.

Making [long distance calls](#) is where you will really see the benefits of using your computer, especially if you and the person you are calling are both using the same system. When someone goes abroad for a longer period of time, it can be difficult not being able to talk to friends and family as much as they normally would at home. Because phoning via your computer is so easy, it can help enormously with minimising the effects homesickness can have on people, as you can call them every day if you wish.

It's also good to swap news and events during the conversation, especially if the person you are speaking to is abroad on their own – perhaps on business or on their gap year. It will certainly help them to keep in touch with what is going on at home.

Of course, friends and relatives don't always go abroad for a short visit. Sometimes they will emigrate to live in another country permanently, and when this happens it's always good to know they can still get in touch with you, and vice versa. Some people in this situation make regular weekly calls to each other, but if you are getting in contact by calling from your computer you will have the luxury of being able to get in touch more often if you wish.

Even if you aren't going to be able to see someone for a length of time, it's good to know your computer can keep those connections alive, and provide a much needed form of support for both of you, even though you are in separate countries.

About the Author

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