

How to Set Boundaries - State What You Want

1. Identify your boundaries

If you're not clear where your boundaries are, start with our [Visualizing Your Boundaries](#) worksheet. This will help you identify people and situations that make you uncomfortable and where you need to practice boundary setting skills.

2. Identify your personal values

Boundaries are based on your unique personal values, in other words, knowing what is most important to you. If you are not clear about your personal priorities, try our [Personal Values](#) worksheet. List the life domains that are most important to you.

3. Practice stating what you want

Sometimes it's difficult to state what we want and need, especially when dealing with someone in authority or in a difficult situation or relationship.

Stating what we want is an essential skill for setting healthy boundaries. No further explanation is required when stating your preferences and needs. They can stand alone.

Try using these phrases to practice ways of saying what you want confidently and respectfully. You can roleplay these with a therapist or counselor first, or use them the next time you need to state what you want—either in person, by email, or by text message.

- “I'd like to ...”
- “I'd prefer to...”
- “I'd rather...”
- “I want to...”
- “..... works for me.”
- “I'm more comfortable with... “
- “I've decided that...”
- “I can only do this/meet/ talk on.... “
- “This is what's best for me...”

4. Reflect on how this made you feel

When we're not used to stating what we want from certain people or in specific situations, we might feel anxious or guilty about doing so. Discomfort is normal when we are making changes to our behavior. Try leaning into any uncomfortable feelings and accepting them just as they are.

Our [Radical Acceptance Calming Mantras](#) worksheet offers extra help.