

Conversation Scripts For Protecting Your Boundaries

Quick, calm responses you can use to protect your boundaries this holiday season.

Declining Alcohol

Short, steady, and low-explanation.

- 💬 "I'm good with this, thanks."
- 💬 "I'm driving tonight."
- 💬 "I'm taking a break from drinking and feeling great for it."
- 💬 "I'm skipping drinks tonight, but thanks."
- 💬 "It's okay to be curious, but can we talk about it another time?"

Leaving an Event Early

Exit calmly and confidently.

- 💬 "Thanks so much for having me. I'm going to head off now."
- 💬 "I'm calling it a night, but it was lovely to see you."

Redirecting Triggering Topics

Keep the tone friendly and move on.

- 💬 "I'd rather not talk about that - how's your summer been otherwise?"
- 💬 "That's something really important for us to talk about. But today isn't the right time. Can we arrange a catch up another time?"
- 💬 "I appreciate you asking, but I'm not going into that today."

Saying No to an Invitation

Warm but firm.

- 💬 "I'm keeping things low-key this year. I'll celebrate with you another time."
- 💬 "I won't make it this time, but I hope you have a great night."
- 💬 "I really value time with you - can we plan something before or after instead?"

Personal Space or Physical Boundaries

Simple and direct.

- 💬 "Please knock before coming in."
- 💬 "I need a bit more space, thanks."

Time & Energy Boundaries

Protect your capacity.

- 💬 "Please call before dropping by."
- 💬 "I can't commit to that this week."
- 💬 "Please check with me before making plans for me."

Financial Boundaries

Neutral, no explanation needed.

- 💬 "Let's split the bill evenly."
- 💬 "That's not in my budget right now."

Work & Privacy Boundaries

Protect your downtime and personal life.

- 💬 “I don’t check emails outside work hours.”
- 💬 “I’m keeping that private, but thanks for understanding.”
- 💬 “I’d rather not talk about my relationship at work.”

Social Media Boundaries

Clear and non-awkward.

- 💬 “Please don’t post photos of me without asking.”
- 💬 “I’m keeping things offline at the moment.”

Quick reminders:

- ✓ You don’t owe anyone an explanation.
- ✓ Short statements are often the most effective.
- ✓ A respectful “no” is a full sentence.
- ✓ Other people’s reactions don’t mean your boundary is wrong.
- ✓ Practicing lines ahead of time makes them feel natural.