

Fifty Ways to Say No

It can be hard to say no. Here is a list for you to look at to see all the different ways you can say no. You can add your own at the end or just circle the ones that you like and want to try.

MATTER-OF-FACT NO:

- 1) I can't do that.
- 2) I have a conflict.
- 3) I'll be *out of town* (or *out of the country*, or *checked out*, or *out of range*, etc.).
- 4) I never even considered that.
- 5) I'm not planning on it.
- 6) I have no intention of doing that.
- 7) It's not part of my agenda for *today* (or *this week*, or *this month*, or *this lifetime*, etc.).
- 8) I'm unavailable.
- 9) I'm not interested.
- 10) It's not my thing.
- 11) It's not a priority for me.
- 12) No.
- 13) I'm just not good at that.
- 14) I don't have room in my life for that right now.

SAYING NO WITHOUT SAYING NO:

- 15) Listen, I have to get going but thanks for asking.
- 16) I'll be sure to let you know if it's looking likely. (For the times when we just don't know for sure if something is likely to happen.)
- 17) You go ahead. Let me know how it goes.
- 18) I promised my _____ some quality time. Insert "family", "special someone", etc. in the blank.
- 19) The last time I did that, I didn't love it.
- 20) Been there, done that.
- 21) I'll call you when I'm ready to do that.
- 22) My schedule's up in the air.
- 23) I'm focusing on other things right now.
- 24) My spouse wouldn't approve. (For more drama, *My spouse would divorce me.*)
- 25) I need some alone time right now.
- 26) If I agreed to this, it would be extremely low priority.

PHILOSOPHICAL NO (ALSO APPLIES TO THOSE WITH COMMITMENT PHOBIA):

- 27) It's my policy to be more discriminating about what I commit to now that I'm older (or "wiser", "experienced", etc.).
- 28) Life is too short to commit to things and people we don't love.
- 29) I have commitment issues.

CURRENTLY NO THAT LEAVES ROOM FOR A YES:

- 30) Let me check my calendar.

- 31) I'll have to check with my family.
- 32) I'll see if I can get a babysitter.
- 33) I need more information.
- 34) I'll have to think about it.

PASSING THE BUCK NO:

- 35) It's out of my hands.
- 36) My jurisdiction doesn't cover that.
- 37) I love the cause, but I'm not the best person to execute.
- 38) I'm afraid I'm not the right person for it.
- 39) I'm slammed right now but let me recommend _____ who would be excellent at that.
- 40) I don't want to hold you up so feel free to ask someone else.
- 41) I bet you'll find someone who can do a better job than I can.
- 42) I'll have to check with the powers that be.
- 43) My mother taught me not to say *yes* to everything.

CONSIDERATE AND GENTLE NO:

- 44) Sounds tempting but I'll have to pass.
- 45) I wish I could but I simply can't.
- 46) I better pass. I don't want to make anybody sick.

VERY FIRM NO:

- 47) Absolutely not.
- 48) For the last time, no.
- 49) Talk to my lawyer.

REALITY CHECK NO:

- 50) What would you like me to not get done in order to do this right now?

Which do you like?

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Any other ideas?

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About the author ~ Kristine is a Registered Psychologist who runs a private practice in Southwest Edmonton. She specializes in the treatment of perinatal mood disorders.

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