

# TALK • ABOUT • IT

Communication can take many forms. Here are some unusual languages used to stay in touch.



**Whistling:** This rare language is found in several places around the world, including in Turkey, Mexico and some Inuit communities. Those who use a whistling language aren't whistling a tune, though. They "speak" in whistles that are based on their spoken language.

**Yodeling:** You've probably heard yodeling at some point. It's a form of singing in which the singer repeatedly switches between their regular voice and a higher pitch. But from at least the 1500s, this lyrical language was used to communicate in the Swiss Alps. Farmers yodeled in the mountains to round up their cows and goats.



**Textese:** You might "speak" this language. It first appeared on the scene in the late 1990s. And it's a written language—typed language may be more accurate—that's used for sending messages on smartphones. Textese allows a speaker to abbreviate, or shorten, words in their message. For instance, in English you might type *4ever* instead of *forever*. Or you might include an *LOL* in your message rather than typing *laugh out loud*.

**Parentese:** Parents speak to their babies in a special way that's different from how they speak to adults. They're not just *goo-goo*, *gaa-gaa* sounds. This language, called parentese, has an almost musical and exaggerated tone that sounds higher than the mom's or dad's regular speaking voice. Researchers believe this style of speech is a good thing for babies. It gets their attention and also helps improve a baby's language skills.



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