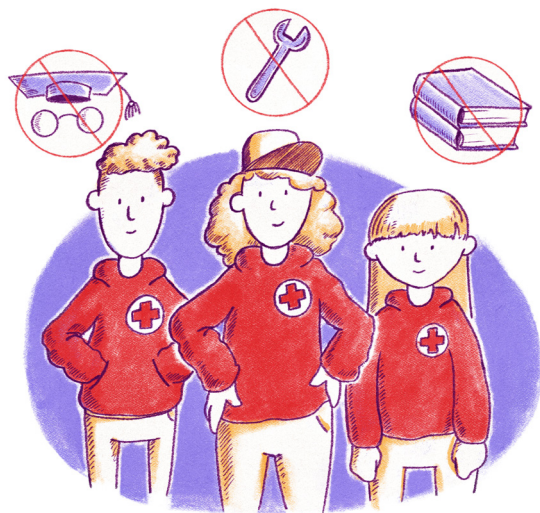


# Rules of online friend activities



## Doable with the skills of ordinary people

Online friend is just like any ordinary person and acts using the skills of ordinary people. Volunteer online friend does not need to have professional skills or qualifications, and the relationship should not include features of social or health care services.



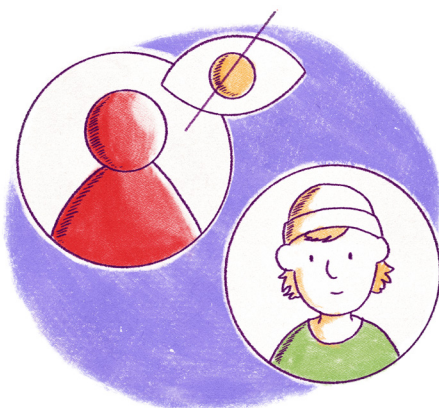
## Unpaid and voluntary

The voluntary service that online friends provide needs to be respected. Volunteers are not paid, and they work according to their personal capacity and schedules. Communication takes place at agreed upon times, for example every two weeks. However, a volunteer may need to give up their role as an online friend, for example because of a change in their personal circumstances.



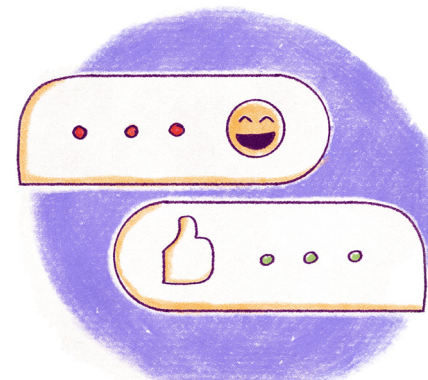
## Reliability

In online friend activities, both parties are mutually reliable and bound by confidentiality. You are not allowed to share your online friend's matters or show your discussions to outsiders without their permission. However, volunteer online friend has the right to receive confidential work support to process possible problematic situations as needed. Volunteer online friend also has the right to request help should his/her friend or some other person face severe threat to health or life.



## Safety

To ensure the safety of both parties, we recommend acting anonymously, i.e. do not share your personal and contact information, at least right away. You can either use an anonymous email address or a chat application with a nickname. It is although possible to use an email address with your own name. Face-to-face encounters and meetings are not included in the online friend activities. If you encounter behaviour that you feel is inappropriate, you are entitled to contact the friend service in order to clarify the matter.



## Equal and respectful encounters

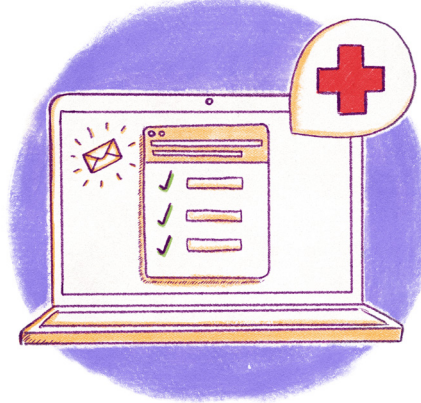
Online friendships are like any other friendships. In order to work, a friendship takes commitment, reciprocity and respect from both parties. Honour the messaging times that you have agreed to and do not hesitate to bring up things that are on your mind.

# How online friend activities work



1. Request an online friend electronically at [www.re-dcross.fi/onlinefriend](http://www.re-dcross.fi/onlinefriend)

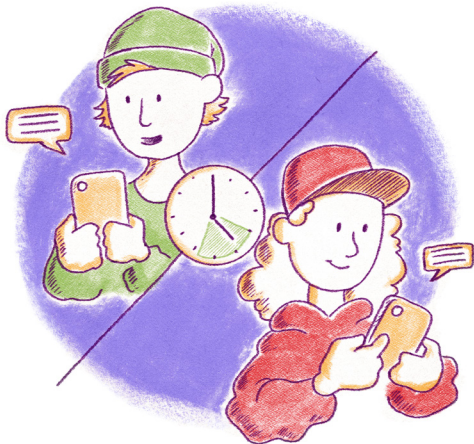
Choose the language you prefer. Please provide as detailed information about yourself, your interests and life situation as possible in order to make it easier for the voluntary friend service to find you a suitable friend.



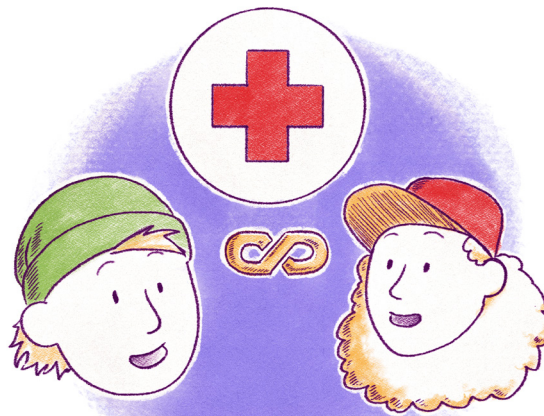
2. The rules of the activity will be sent to you via email. Read through them carefully and then reply to the email message by stating that you have read and understood the rules. This also means that you agree to act according to the rules. If you decide that you do not want to initiate an online friendship after all, please let the voluntary friend service know. The service's email address is [verk-koystava@redcross.fi](mailto:verk-koystava@redcross.fi)



3. Within the next few months, you will receive a friend proposal via email. You can accept it or wait for a more suitable online friend.



4. Once a suitable friend has been found, your contact details will be sent to your volunteer friend. You may use an anonymous email address or nickname. The volunteer will send the first message. Please agree on the frequency that you expect to be contacting one another in your first messages.



5. The friendship pairs will contact each other at agreed upon times. The voluntary friend service does not take part in their communication. We ask both parties to commit to the activity for 3–6 months.



6. Once you have been in contact with each other for 3–6 months, you can continue your online friendship if you want. If you do so, you do not need to notify the service. However, if you decide to end your friendship, you must tell the service. You may also receive a new online friend.