

HOW TO SAY SORRY AND REALLY MEAN IT (PROBABLY)

איך אומרים סליחה ובעצמת מתכוונים לה

Okay, let's be honest. Apologizing feels weird. Like trying to pat your head and rub your tummy while singing backwards. Your mouth feels like it is wearing a backpack. Your feet suddenly become extremely interesting. Your brain says, "Maybe if I become a lamp, nobody will notice me."

Nobody is good at this. Adults are not good at this either. The only difference is that adults have had more practice being bad at it.

But a good apology is like a secret superpower. It can fix friendships, un-break your brother's favorite LEGO spaceship (well, almost), and stop your grandma from giving you The Look.

Bad news: lamps cannot fix friendships.

Good news: you can.

Here's how to do it without turning into a puddle of awkward.

You got this!

HOW TO START



Find the person.

Try: "Can I talk to you for a minute?" If they say "not now," that counts. Come back later. Apologies are not sneak attacks.

WHAT ACTUALLY WORKS

1

"Say what you did."

Out loud, specifically. "I'm sorry I grabbed your marker." Not "about earlier". A vague apology feels like being handed an empty box with a bow on it.



2

"Say why it stunk."

One sentence. "You'd been building it all week." This is the part everybody skips, and it is the part that does all the work.



3

"Ask what would help."

"Do you want me to fix it, replace it, or just leave you alone for a bit?" Then do whichever one they picked.



THE BAD APOLOGY HALL OF FAME

The Floor Mumble:



Delivered downwards, to the carpet, at a volume only dogs can pick up.

"srry."

The Weather Report:



"I'm sorry you feel that way."

This sounds as if a rain cloud magically appeared. This is a complaint wearing an apology's coat.

The Time Machine:



"I SAID I WAS SORRY ALREADY!"

Louder is not sorrier. Start over.

The Tiny Lawyer:



"I'm sorry I knocked it over, BUT you left it right there."

Nope. Everything before the "but" gets deleted.

DO NOT ADD A SNEAKY "BUT"

The word "but" can turn an apology into a tiny garbage truck.

"I'm sorry I knocked over your project, BUT you put it in my way."

Translation: "Surprise! I am not sorry."

Try this instead:



"I'm sorry I knocked over your project. I should have watched where I was going."

You can explain later if you need to. First, own your piece of the balagan.

EMERGENCY APOLOGY SCRIPT

Use this today, on an actual human:

"Hey. I'm sorry I _____.
That was _____ of me.
Next time I will _____.
Is there anything I can do to help fix it?"

Example:

"Hey. I'm sorry I told Max your secret. That was not okay. Next time I will keep private stuff private. Is there anything I can do to help fix it?"

FINAL MENSCH MOVE

After the apology, do the new thing. That's how people know you meant it. Also, breathe. You did the awkward thing. Your mouth survived. Probably.



Actions speak louder than sorry.

THE THREE-SECOND VERSION

- 1 Say what you did.
- 2 Say why it was bad.
- 3 Ask what would help.
- 4 Stop talking.

ONE LAST TEST



Read your apology back to yourself and count the number of times you said the word "but". If the answer is anything other than zero, start again.



I'M SORRY COUPONS



פְּתִיקי סְלִיחָה

From: _____
To: _____
I'm sorry for: סְלִיחָה

From: _____
To: _____
I'm sorry for: סְלִיחָה

From: _____
To: _____
I'm sorry for: סְלִיחָה

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