



Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development, Communications and the Arts



Using the National Relay Service (NRS)










If you have difficulty hearing or speaking to people who use a phone or want to contact someone who has difficulty, the National Relay Service (NRS) can help.

How a relay call works

- In a relay call, people who are d/Deaf, hard of hearing and/or have speech communication difficulty can communicate with hearing people using a phone without hearing or speaking.
- The NRS has specially trained staff called Relay Officers who are the central link in each relay call.
- The Relay Officer converts voice to text or text to voice. Sometimes the Relay Officer converts sign language to English.
- Relay Officers stay on the line throughout each call to help it go smoothly, but don't change or interfere with what is being said.
- There are different relay call options, depending on hearing and speech issues.
- You need to register to use the NRS. Registration is easy and you only have to do it once. See how to register at <https://accesshub.gov.au/about-the-nrs/register-for-the-nrs> .



Which type of relay call is right for you?

Communication preferences	d/Deaf, hard of hearing or have speech communication difficulty		Hard of hearing but use voice		Have difficulty being understood over the phone		Use Auslan	Don't want to use a computer or mobile phone	
	NRS Chat 	SMS Relay 	NRS Captions 	TTY Speak and Read 	Voice Relay 	SMS Relay (Text and Listen) 	Video Relay 	TTY Type and Read 	TTY Type and Listen 
Like to type?	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓
Like to speak?			✓	✓	✓				
Have some hearing and like to listen?			✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Like to read captions or text?	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	
Use Auslan?							✓		
Need bigger print?	✓		✓						
Make a call on the move?	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		
Equipment?	Internet + computer, tablet or smartphone.	Any mobile phone	Internet + phone (e.g. phone + computer, or smartphone + speaker or + headphones.)	TTY	Any type of phone	Any mobile phone on speaker or using headphones	Internet + smartphone, computer or tablet	TTY	TTY

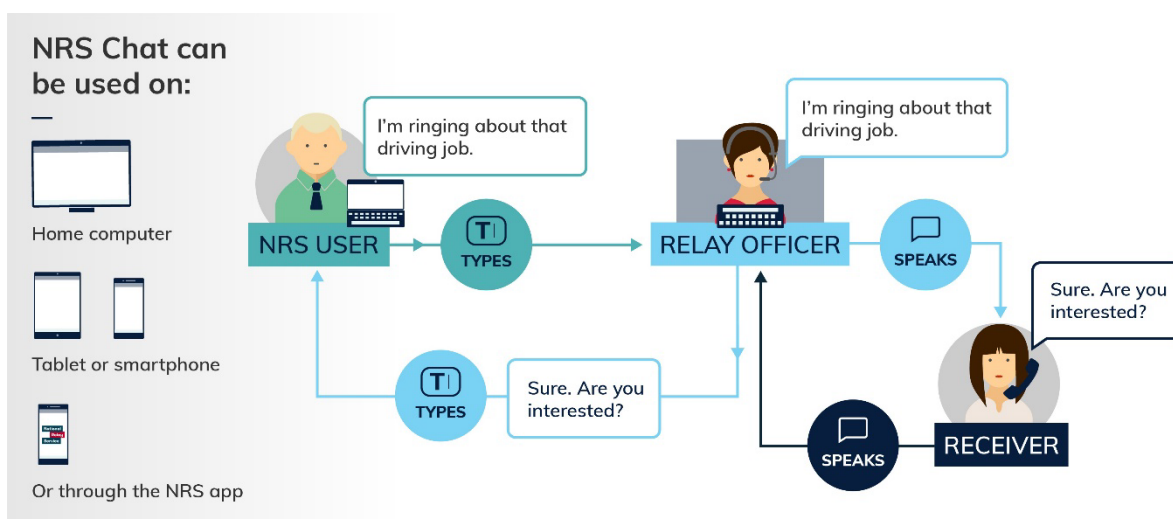
You'll find more details about each call option on the following pages.

For people who are d/Deaf, hard of hearing or have speech communication difficulty—NRS Chat or SMS Relay

NRS Chat

You type your side of the conversation and read the other person’s responses on your screen which have been typed by the Relay Officer. NRS Chat calls can also be made using the app.

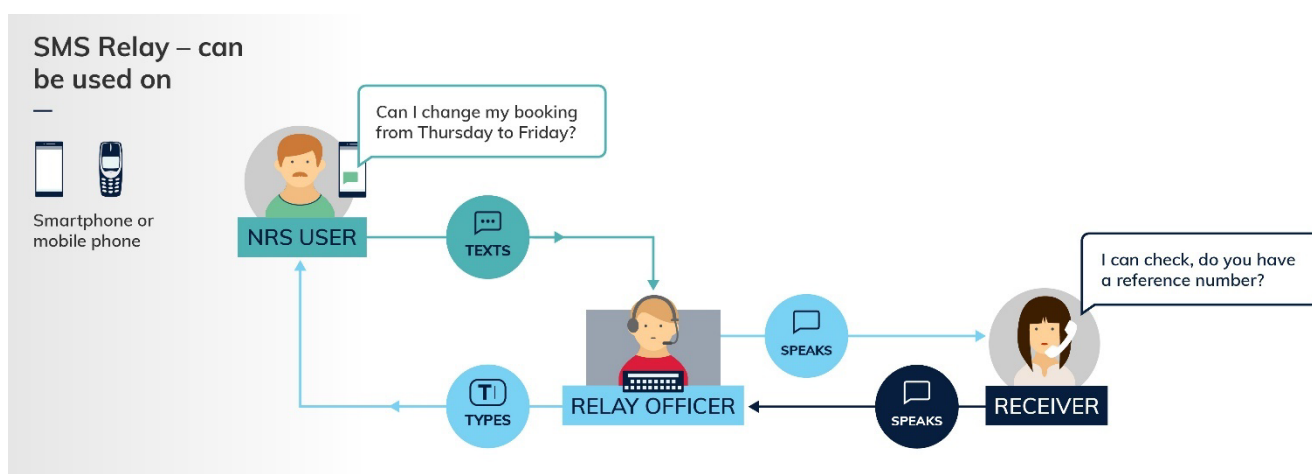
You need: a computer, tablet or smartphone and access to the Internet.



SMS Relay

You text your side of the conversation and read the other person’s responses texted to you by the Relay Officer.

You need: any mobile phone. You don't need an internet connection.

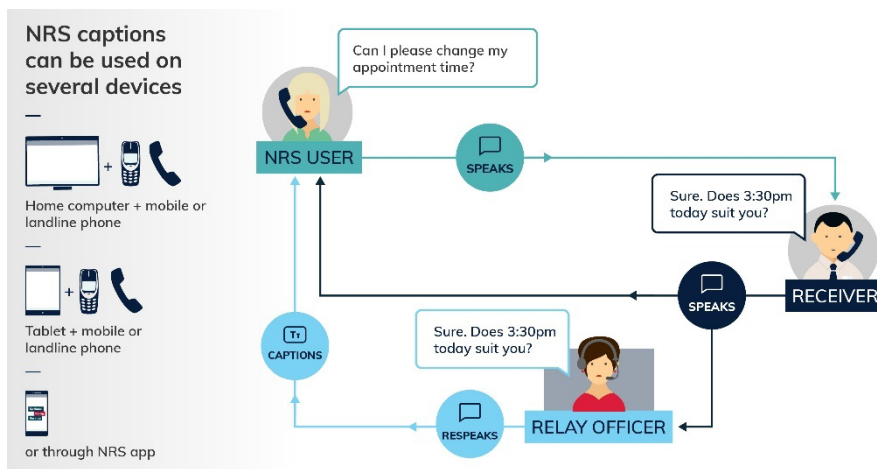


For people who are hard of hearing but like to speak— NRS Captions or TTY Speak and Read

NRS Captions

You talk directly to the other person and read their words on your screen. You can also listen to the other person's responses.

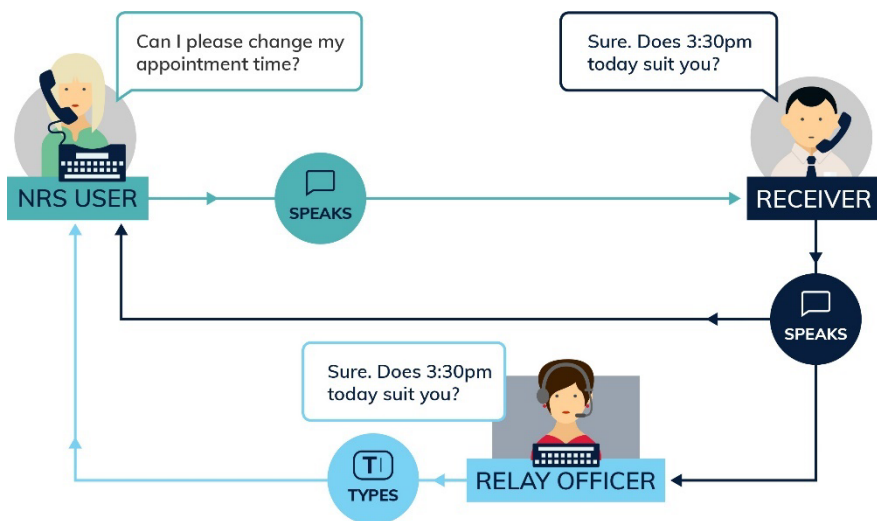
You need: a phone plus an internet connection—for example a phone plus a computer, or just a smartphone on speaker or using headphones. NRS Captions calls can also be made using the NRS app.



TTY Speak and Read

You speak your side of the conversation into the handset of the TTY and read the text of the other person's words on the TTY which have been typed by the Relay Officer. The other person's spoken words will also come through on the call. The volume can be turned up or down according to your preferences.

You need: A TTY which is a specialised fixed-line phone that has a screen and a keyboard that can be used to make relay calls. The TTY needs to be connected to power and plugged into the phone socket.

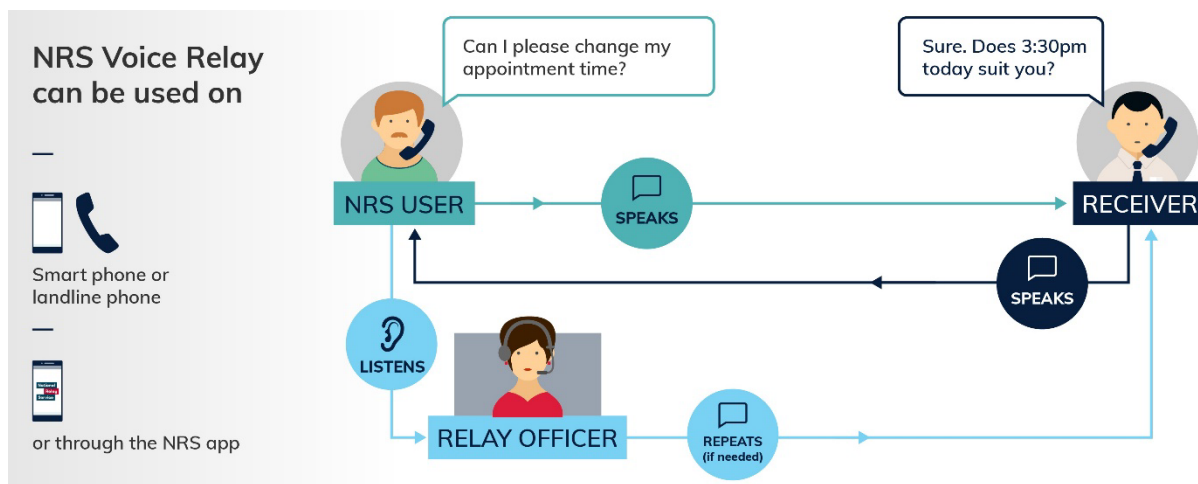


For people who have difficulty being understood on the phone—Voice Relay or SMS Relay (Text and Listen)

Voice Relay

Speak directly to the other person and listen as well. The Relay Officer will re-speak any of your words not understood by the other person.

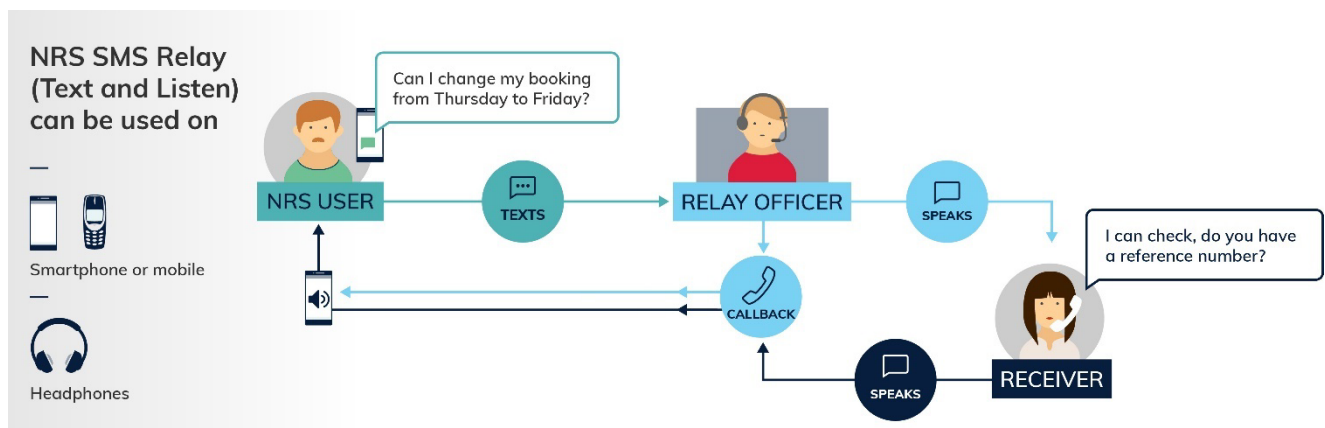
You need: Any type of phone can be used to Voice Relay calls. If using the NRS app, an Apple or Android smartphone or tablet and an internet connection is needed.



SMS Relay (Text and Listen)

Type your side of the conversation on your mobile phone as an SMS and listen to the other person speaking.

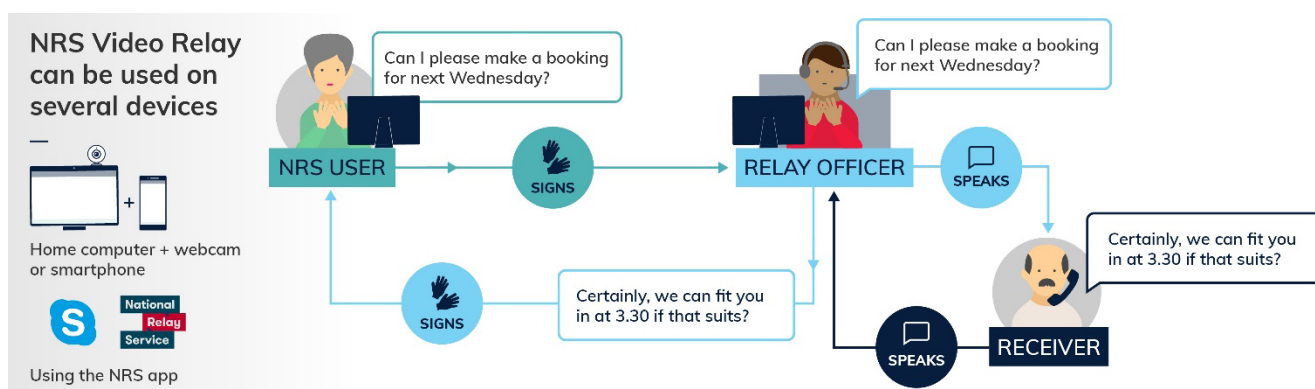
You need: any mobile phone. You don't need an internet connection. You can put your phone on speaker or you can use earphones to listen to the other person.



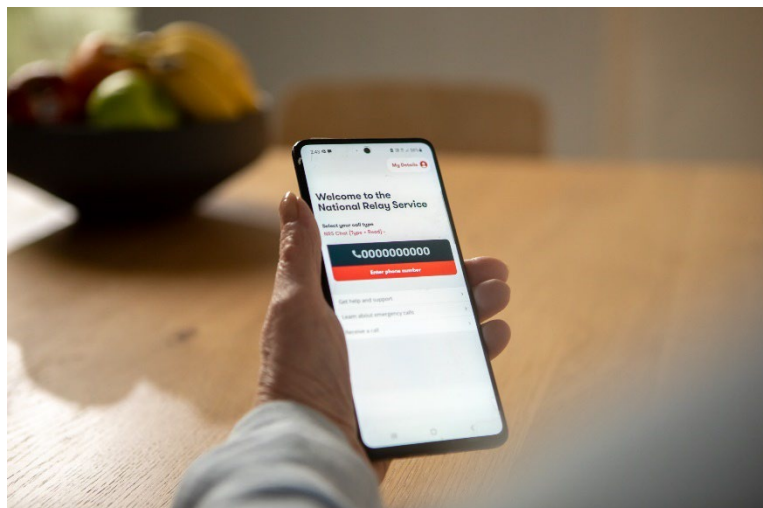
For people who use Auslan—Australian Sign Language—Video Relay

The Relay Officer communicates with you in Auslan and speaks with the other person in English. Available in limited hours.

You need: a good internet connection, and a tablet, a smartphone or a computer with a webcam. Video Relay calls can be made using Skype or through the NRS app.



Download the app



You can make relay calls through the NRS app. The call options currently available on the app are NRS Chat, Voice Relay, NRS Captions and Video Relay.

The app is available on Apple and Android smartphones and tablets—free from the [Apple](#) and [Google](#) stores.

The app is a great option if you want to make relay calls on the move.

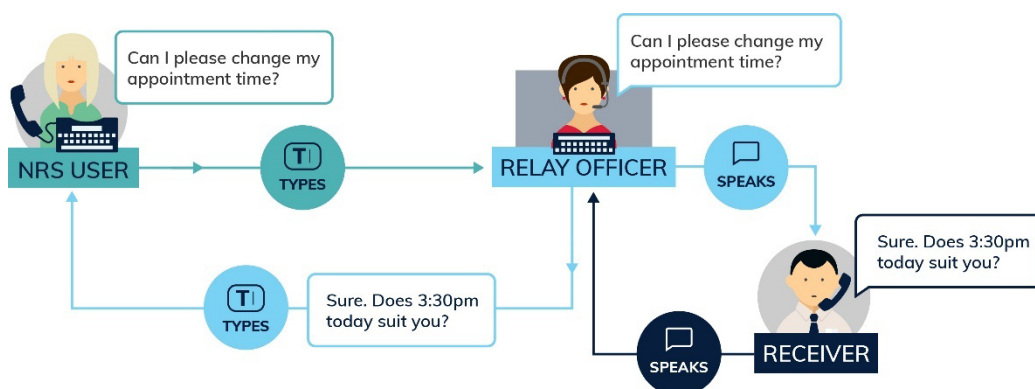
For people you don't want to use a computer or mobile phone—teletypewriter (TTY)

You need: A TTY which is a specialised fixed-line phone that has a screen and a keyboard that can be used to make relay calls. The TTY needs to be connected to power and plugged into the phone socket.

With a TTY you read what is said to you if you can't hear, and type what you want to say if you can't speak. The handset of the TTY also gives you the option to speak and listen to the other person.

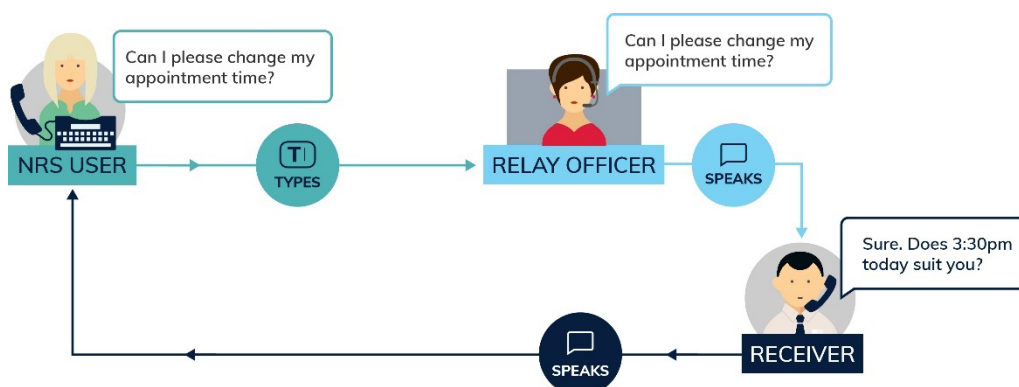
TTY Type and Read

You type your side of the conversation on a TTY and read the responses from the other person on the TTY which have been typed by the Relay Officer.



TTY Type and Listen

You type your side of the conversation using a TTY and a Relay Officer will speak your typed words to the other person. You can listen to the other person's reply using the handset of the TTY.



TTY Speak and Read

Please see to the section **If you are hard of hearing but like to speak—NRS Captions or TTY Speak and Read.**

The NRS is free and confidential

- There is **no extra charge** for making a relay call. You just pay your regular data or phone costs to make your call through the NRS.
- All calls are **confidential**—your privacy is protected by law.
- The **NRS Helpdesk** can assist you to get started, give you tips on making the most of your call, and help you with any call problems.

Making a call in an emergency

If you find yourself in an emergency which is either life threatening or where time is critical, you can make a relay call to fire, police and ambulance services.

You can connect to the NRS and ask for **Triple Zero (000)**. The Relay Officer will stay on the line to relay the conversation.

If you are a TTY user and need to contact **emergency services**, just dial **106 on your TTY**.

Please see <https://accesshub.gov.au/about-the-nrs/how-to-make-an-emergency-call-using-the-nrs> for more information including a video and step by step instructions in English.

More information

More information about the NRS is available at <https://accesshub.gov.au/about-the-nrs> .

There are also a number of communications options that don't use the NRS for people who are d/Deaf, hard of hearing and/or have speech communication difficulty. Find out more information about these options at <https://accesshub.gov.au/other-ways-to-connect> .

For help with making relay calls, contact the [NRS Helpdesk](#):

- Phone: 1800 555 660
- Fax: 1800 555 690
- SMS 0416 001 350
- TTY 1800 555 630
- Email: helpdesk@relayservice.com.au
- Online: <https://accesshub.gov.au/about-the-nrs/nrs-helpdesk/enquiries>
- Chat: <https://nrschat.nrscall.gov.au/nrs/helpdeskchat>
- Video: <https://nrschat.nrscall.gov.au/nrs/contactus>

The NRS Helpdesk operates from 8 am to 6 pm, Eastern Standard Time.