



An Australian Government Initiative



An introduction to relay calls

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

How a relay call works

- A relay call allows you to communicate with a hearing person who is using a phone even if you can't hear or don't use your voice.
- 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 they convert from 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.
- Depending on your hearing and speech, you can choose from one or more relay call channels.



Which type of relay call is right for you?

	If you are deaf, can't hear well or have difficulty using your voice.	If you are deaf, can't hear well or have difficulty using your voice.	If you don't hear well but can use your voice.	If you don't hear well but can use your voice.	If you have difficulty being understood on the phone.	If you have difficulty being understood on the phone.	If you want to use Auslan.	If you don't want to use a computer or mobile phone.	If you 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
Prefer to type?	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓
Prefer 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 on speaker or using headphones.)	TTY	Any type of phone	Any mobile phone on speaker or using headphones	Internet + smartphone, computer or tablet	TTY	TTY

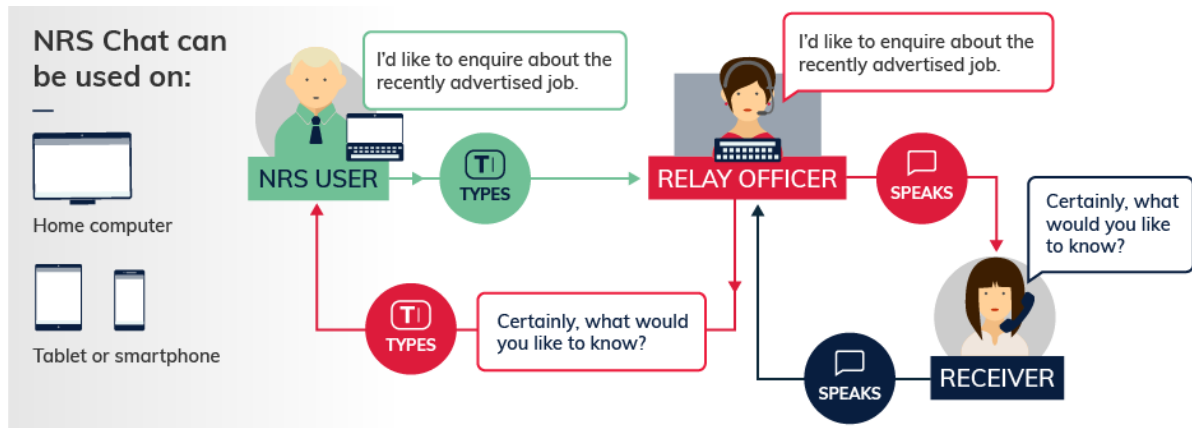
You'll find more details for each call option on the following pages.

If you are deaf, can't hear well or have difficulty using your voice—NRS Chat or SMS Relay

NRS Chat

You type your side of the conversation through the NRS app or web call page and read the other person's responses on your screen. NRS Chat calls can also be made using the app.

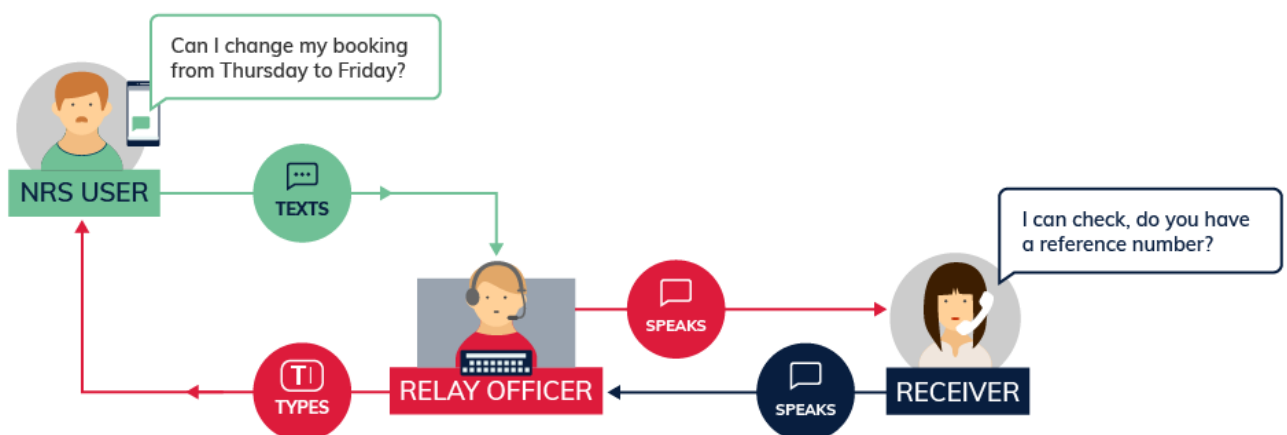
You need: a computer, tablet or smartphone and access to the Internet.



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.

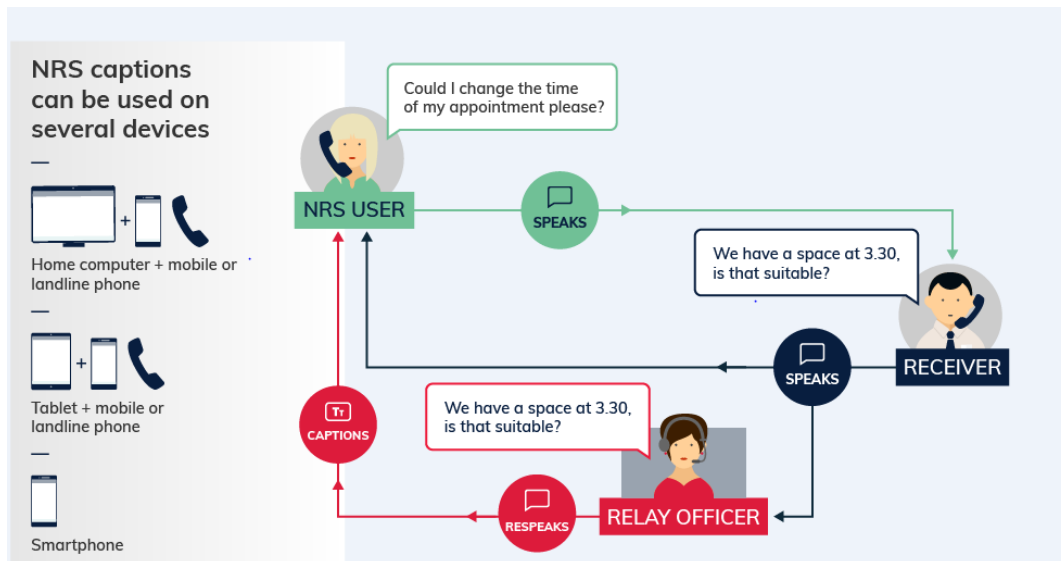


If you don't hear well but can use your voice—NRS Captions or TTY Speak and Read

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.

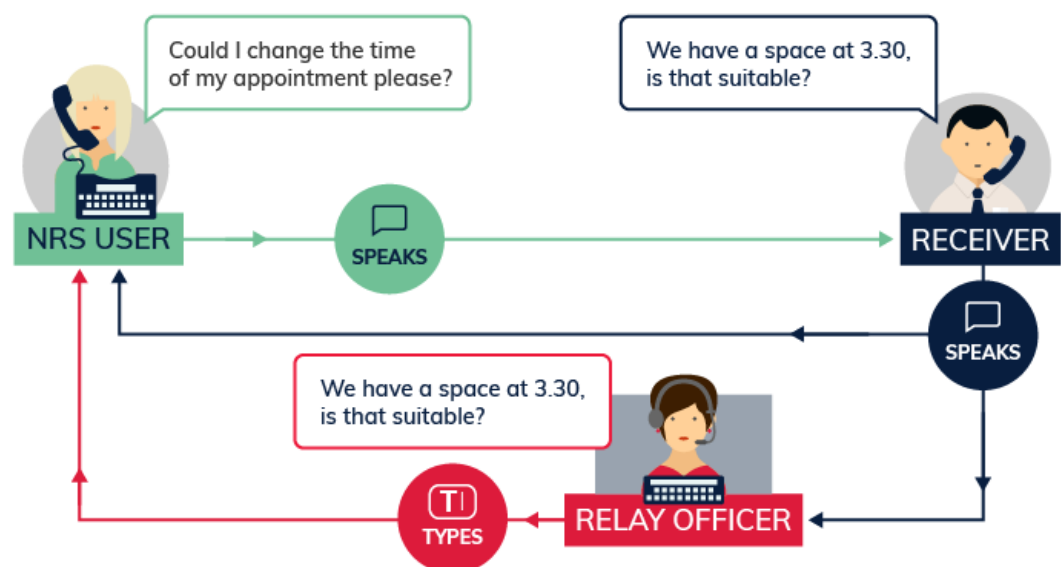
You need: a phone plus an internet connection—for example a phone plus a computer, or just a smartphone on speaker or using headphones. NRS Captions calls can also be made using the NRS app.



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.

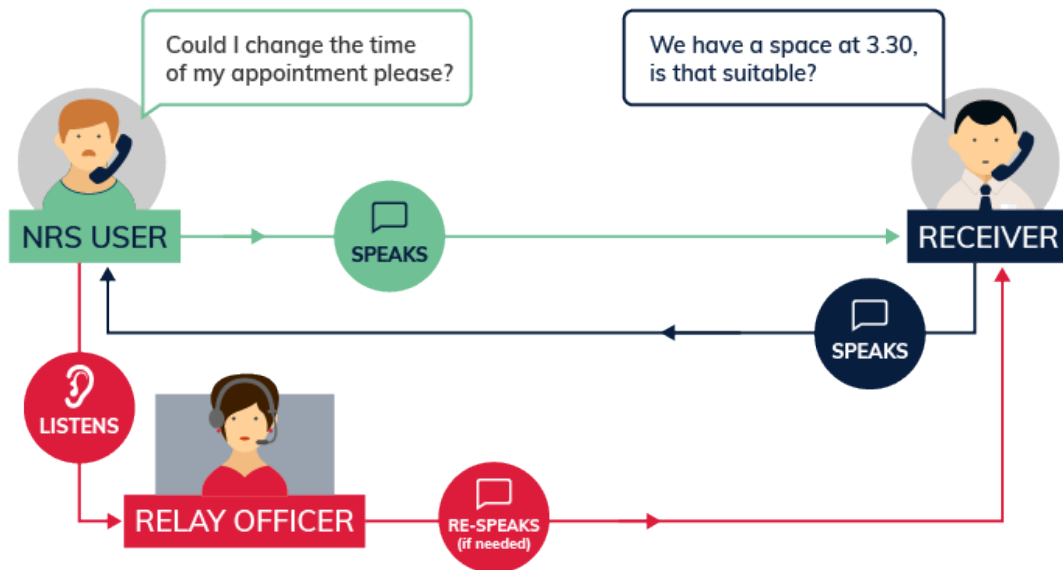


If you have difficulty being understood on the phone—Voice Relay or SMS Relay (Text and Listen)

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.

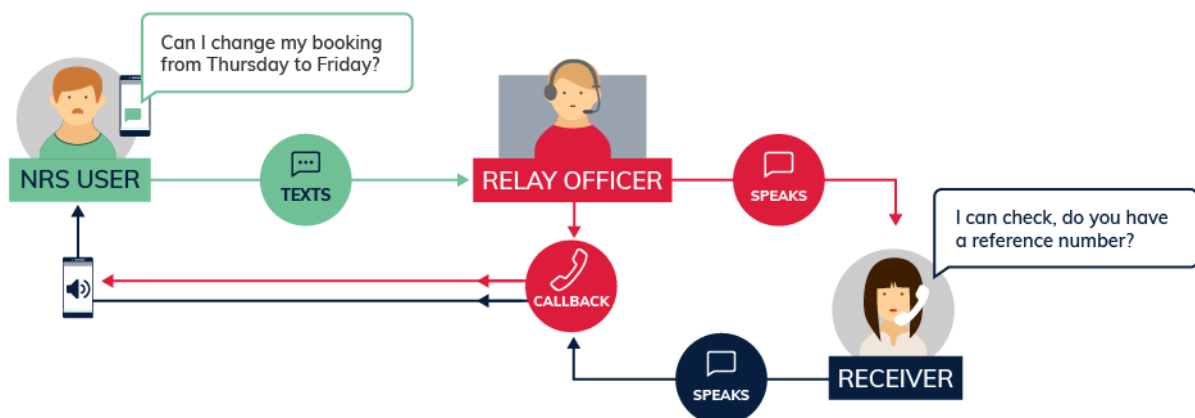
You need: Any type of phone can be used to make standard Voice Relay calls. If using the NRS app, an Apple or Android smartphone or tablet and an internet connection is needed.



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.

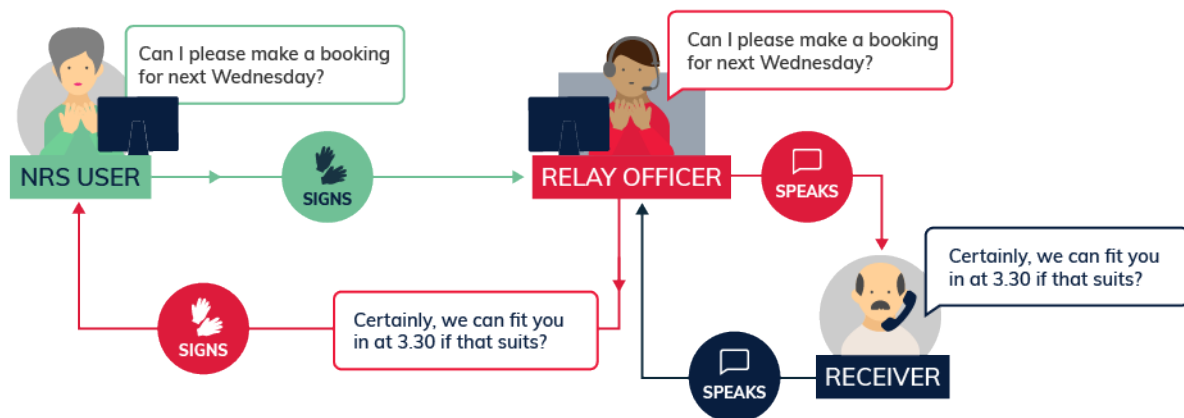
You need: any mobile phone. You don't need an internet connection. You can put your phone on speaker or you will need earphones to listen to the other person.



If you want to 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.

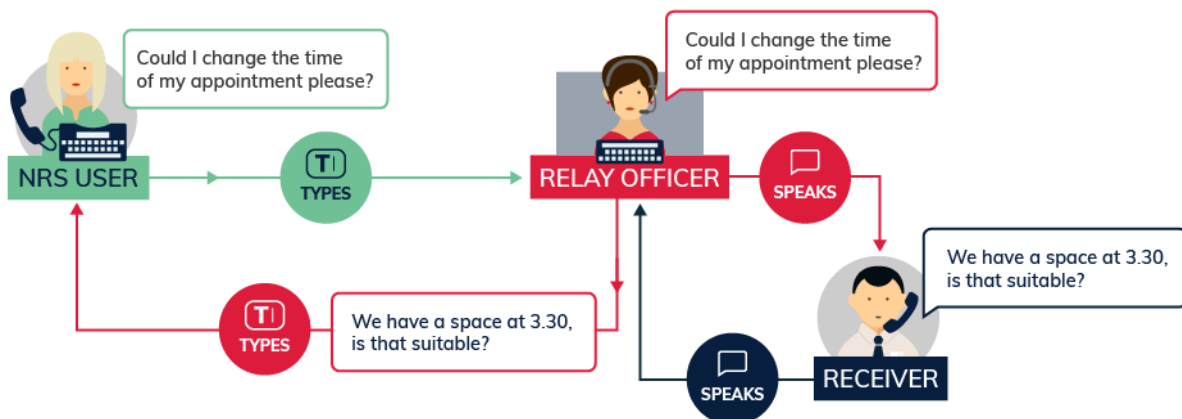
If you don't want to use a computer or mobile phone— teletypewriter (TTY)

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.

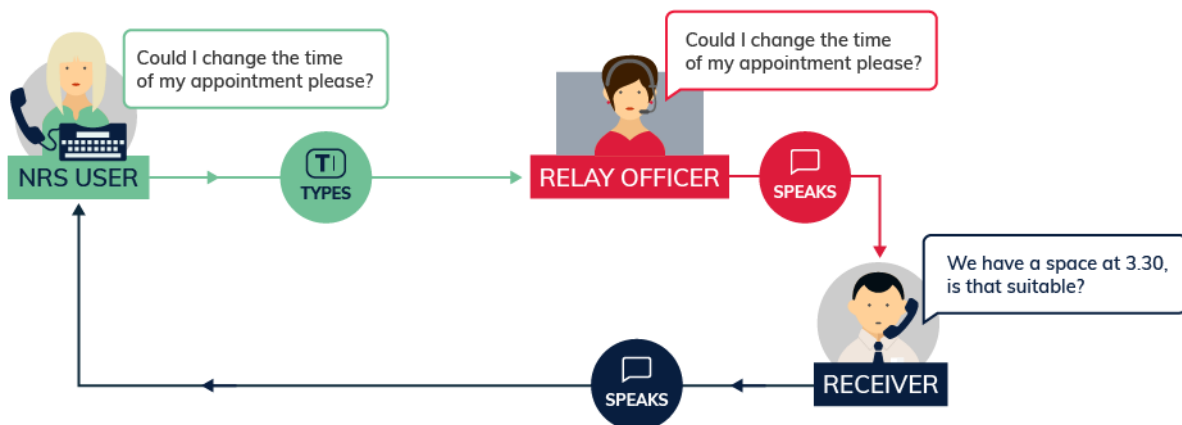
TTY Type and Read

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 party. You can listen to the other person's reply using the handset of the TTY.



TTY Speak and Read

Please refer to the section titled [If you don't hear well but can use your voice—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 ring **106 on your TTY**.

More information

More information about the NRS is available at www.communications.gov.au/accesshub/nrs.

There are also a number of convenient mainstream communications options for people who are deaf, hard of hearing and/or have a speech impairment. Find out more information about these options that don't use the NRS on the [Mainstream communications options webpage](#).

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 : [Online form](#).

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