

# Friendly Teasing or Bullying?

**Y**ou and your friends are having fun, joking around. But then the teasing goes too far. Someone's feelings get hurt. What do you do?

Friends usually realize they've made a mistake, stop teasing, and apologize. Teasing is okay if it's friendly and everyone likes it. It can be a fun part of hanging out together.



But bullying is different. It's repeatedly using mean or threatening words and actions meant to hurt. Bullying is never okay. If you're being bullied, talk to a trusted adult for help.

It can be tricky to tease people in a gentle, positive way. If you accidentally hurt someone's feelings, stop the teasing and say that you're sorry. When everyone is respectful of others' feelings, life can be a barrel of laughs.

Is it friendly teasing or mean bullying? Check out this quiz to make sure everyone is having fun.



1. They put you down for being upset.

Friends  Bullies

2. They continue making fun of you, even when you tell them to stop.

Friends  Bullies

3. They mock your race, religion, looks, or language.

Friends  Bullies

4. They only call you nicknames that you like.

Friends  Bullies

5. You want to avoid going places where you might see them.

Friends  Bullies

6. They whisper or laugh at you when they think you won't notice.

Friends  Bullies

7. You like them and feel good when you're around them.

Friends  Bullies

8. They threaten you or push you around physically.

Friends  Bullies

9. They don't mind if you tease them in return.

Friends  Bullies

10. You enjoy joking back and forth, and you all laugh along good-naturedly.

Friends  Bullies

11. You share some interests and do fun things together.

Friends  Bullies

12. You feel angry, scared, or anxious when they make fun of you.

Friends  Bullies

13. They send mean e-mails to you or about you.

Friends  Bullies

14. They stand up for you when others are mean.

Friends  Bullies



My score:

See answers on page 28. Give yourself two points for each correct answer.

**20–28 points:** You know what true friends are like. If you see bullying, use your smarts to speak up or tell an adult.

**10–18 points:** You spot bullies, but you can sharpen your skills. Stay calm and tell bullies to stop. Look for kinder friends.

**0–8 points:** Take a close look at who you hang out with—they may not be true friends! Talk it over with a parent or teacher.