



Honest Birthday Wishes

TAK

Today I realised that my birthday is just a few days away, and soon I will have to go through the turmoil of typing fake thank yous on quite a large number of insincere birthday wishes. People will exclaim about the many extraordinary qualities I have and how much I have done for them and how much I mean to them; they will very conveniently forget to mention that they do not like me anymore and that they were lying the whole time.

Look, the number of people that can tolerate me in real life is actually lower than my CGPA. I do not expect anyone to pretend to like me on birthday, nor do I believe that people actually have the time to write anything other than "hbd 2u". Which is why I'm providing you with three complete honest birthday wishes that you may improvise and use for any Facebook friend of your choice.

FOR A FRIEND

"Hello there, Shyamloa. This isn't a sarcastic-yet-loving birthday post where I say I can barely stand you, yet put a bunch of hearts after that, finally saying "gib treat pls". Believe me when I say that I truly cannot stand you. You seemed like an okay person when I first met you last year but I finally realise what a stuck-up little witch you are. You should really work on that superiority complex you have. Owning 43 shades of MAC lipsticks does not make you any better than the rest of us, neither does having a rich boyfriend who buys you those lipsticks.

I believe you should use this special day to work on improving yourself, although I don't think you being born makes a day any special. HBD. J"

FOR A PARENT

"Happy birthday, mother! I have to live with you and every day I listen to you judging my life choices, such as using my bed sheet as a plate for eating cookies. I acknowledge the impact you have on my life and how much I love you. However, I am uploading this picture from when I was 3 years old and you were in your 20s because you said you wouldn't let me have dinner unless I publicly profess my love for you on social media. As much as I love you, I don't understand why you're throwing a fit about this even after I got you that nice muslin saree. Is it because you're so young in this picture? Is it because all your friends' children put up corny statuses?"

Give me a break, please, mother. I'm tired and hungry."

FOR YOUR SIGNIFICANT OTHER

"We have forced cheesy conversations every day; I don't feel like doing some more of that here. I organised a very nice surprise birthday party for you and got you very nice presents. Today I also did not make mean remarks about your habit of putting up pointless selfies on Instagram. I was sure that would be enough, yet you chose to make a big deal out of me not answering my phone while I was in class. I don't understand what you want from me.

Happy birthday. I don't feel particularly in love at the moment. Planning birthday celebrations is stressful, especially since it's a thankless job. J"

Fake birthday posts are getting old, alright. Use these, be truthful. Make birthday posts genuine again. But if you want to avoid all sincere/insincere wishes on your own birthday and save yourself the valuable time wasted in typing replies, just hide your birthdate on Facebook.

Thoughts I Have Before My Birthday

MASHIYAT NAYEEM

Birthdays are like golden tickets for a day. For one single day out of 365, you get treated like you're special – whether you are the annoying aunty from next door or the Queen of England. Everyone feeds you cake, people are nice to you and your mom shouts at you a little less. We could all get used to it but the offer expires in 24 hours *sigh*.

Before the big day arrives, I often find myself pondering over it as it ignites philosophical thoughts in me. One issue is getting older. Forgive me for talking like your half-dead grandma, but with each passing year I'm moving closer to the uncertain threshold of death and everyone is basically congratulating me for it. Getting older wouldn't be such a big deal for me if I just looked the part. Neither is my face changing nor am I growing any taller. It's a real burden to carry a large number on your head when you look like you're just hitting puberty, though sometimes it can prove to be a plus point when I get away with paying half the price at a buffet.

Some years, I eagerly anticipate something magical to happen. But no, the clock strikes 12 and absolutely nothing

happens. My life is still the same, I am still the same. But my timeline starts filling up with posts from people I have never spoken to. Are facebook wishes really worth it? Two hundred notifications may mean you're popular but everyone is typing the same damn two words which aren't bringing my eyes any happy tears. A nice paragraph or a horrifying collage of your face from the 4-5 real friends you have is nice. The rest are just mindlessly wishing another person from their friend list because a birthday cake popped up next to their name.

Birthday presents are another nuisance. People give you fancy stuff which you will never use but you have to pretend you like them and shower a hundred thank yous. Then there are people who are a little wiser and try to escape this fakeness by asking me what I want. How am I supposed to pick anything when you're not going to tell me your budget? I'll be super happy if you just give me the cash of your budget. Money is life.

Another unavoidable dilemma is Eid. When Eid falls closely to your birthday, your presents or cash flow gets cut in half. I have been going through this for four years. You're welcome to send me money as your condolences.

