A NO YOU CAN LEAVE ALONE

You can be clear without turning your answer into a closing argument.

When you are not available:

“I’m not available for that.”

Say it once. Let the other person reply.

When the request comes again:

“I understand you’re stuck. I’m still not available.”

My one-sentence no:

A REASON IS INFORMATION

A reason can give useful context:
“I can’t drive. I have an appointment.”

An apology belongs where you caused harm or need to repair something. Declining a new request is different.

A polite “sorry” is your choice. Notice when it turns into asking permission to have a limit.

No confession required.

Educational material. Not therapy.
If saying no could bring threats or harm, seek support from someone safe before trying a direct boundary conversation.

Presented by Belle
Mile or a Millimeter

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You can say no without saying yes to everything.



THE LONG EXPLANATION THAT TURNS A NO INTO A MAYBE

The answer was no.
Then you kept talking.

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01 / THE SENTENCE AFTER THE NO

YOU HAD AN ANSWER

“I can’t this weekend.”
Then comes the rest: the work story,
the tiredness, the whole damn calendar.
You hear yourself add, “Maybe I could…”

You may be trying to sound kind,
avoid disappointment, or prove that
your no is reasonable enough.

WHERE THE ANSWER CHANGES

Where does my no usually turn into a maybe?

You can be kind and still finish the sentence.

02 / KEEP THE ACTUAL ANSWER

THE SHORT VERSION



The explanation edit

Start with a real request. Write the
answer you would usually give.

Full version:

Underline the actual answer.
Cross out details you added only to
win approval. Keep needed logistics.

If you owe an update or handoff,
include it. You can still be brief.

03 / PRACTICE THE STOP

THE NO. THEN NOTHING.

For this practice, stop after your answer.
Let the other person have a turn.
You can listen without changing it.

My short answer:

Say it aloud, then let the pause happen.
Notice the urge to keep explaining.

What I wanted to add:

My reminder for the pause:

“I’ve answered the request.”