

How to Write an Email

Lesson Objective

In this lesson, you will learn some helpful tips about emailing. You'll get a chance to practice writing an English email on paper before you send one. You'll also learn how to format an English email correctly.

Did you know...

- The word "email" is short for "electronic mail."
- About 90% of email is spam or promotional mail.
- The @ sign is called the "at symbol."



Warm-Up

A. Speaking

Discuss the following questions with your classmates.

1. How is an email different from a letter you get in the mail?
2. How important is spelling in an email?
3. In what type of situations do people write formal emails?
4. In what type of situations do people write informal emails?

Warm-Up cont.

B. Vocabulary Preview

Match these words to their correct definitions.

- | | | |
|-------|---------------|--|
| _____ | 1. recipient | a) how a piece of text is laid out |
| _____ | 2. subject | b) the words used to say hello to someone |
| _____ | 3. formatting | c) an expression of dissatisfaction |
| _____ | 4. unique | d) the topic of an email |
| _____ | 5. complaint | e) something you click that takes you to a website |
| _____ | 6. greeting | f) special, one of a kind |
| _____ | 7. signature | g) a preset name at the end of an email |
| _____ | 8. link | h) the person who receives the item (email) |

Introduction to Emailing

A. Email Addresses

You are the sender. If you are using email for business, your email address should look professional. The address should have all or part of your name in it.

The person you are sending the email to is called the recipient. Make sure that the recipient's name is spelled correctly when you type it.

If you are writing an email to more than one person, you can use the Cc field (carbon copy). The Bcc (blind carbon copy) is useful if you don't want to share people's email addresses.

New Message— ↗ ×

To suzan.fletcher@pacificharvest.com

Cc maureen_swanson19@stateunimail.com

Bcc tariq.sk8terdude@botmail.com, sandrine_j_catmom@botmail.com

Task 1

Look at the information in the box and decide whether the statements below are true or false.

- 1. Suzan Fletcher is the sender.
- 2. Sandrine knows the email is also being sent to Tariq.
- 3. The sender sent the email to four people.
- 4. Tariq knows the email is also being sent to Maureen.

Introduction to Emailing cont.

B. Subjects

The subject is what your email is about. It does not need to be a full sentence. It should be short, clear, and easy to read. It shouldn't contain a lot of punctuation marks.

Task 2

Choose the best subject line from the options below.

1. A business email:
 - a) Job Opening - Project Manager
 - b) Position 43BKJ1994
 - c) We need a new project manager. Can you reach out to your network and see if you know anyone who fits the job description?
Let me know!
2. A personal email:
 - a) It'll be sometime, but I'm not sure when.
 - b) ArE yOu BuSy ThIs WeEkEnD
 - c) Surprise Party! Shh!
3. A customer complaint:
 - a) Why did this happen?!?!?!?
 - b) This is the WORST service I've ever used!!! You are TERRIBLE!!!!
 - c) Missing package

C. Greetings

Be sure to address the recipient properly in your greeting. Greetings can be formal or informal. Double-check that you have spelled the recipient's name correctly. Start the body of your email on the next line.

Formal

- Dear Mr Alvarez,
- Dear Ms Hannigan,
- Dear Mrs. Wong:
- Dear Sir,
- Dear Madam,
- To Whom It May Concern:
- Attn: Principal Assaf
- Attn: Director

Informal

- Hey Clark,
- Hi guys,
- Hello ladies,
- Hi all,
- Ashwini!

Introduction to Emailing cont.

D. The Body

You should separate an email into paragraphs. One or two paragraphs may be enough. Email should not be too long. It's best to keep formatting simple.

1. Introduce yourself (if it's the first time you've contacted this person).
[space]
2. Identify your reason for the email.
[space]
3. Provide any special information. Identify any attachments.
[space]

E. Closing Remarks & Signing Off

Include a thank-you message if appropriate. Then, on the next line, add your name. (Include your title if it is for work.)

You may want to set an auto "signature" to appear on every email. This could include links to your website address or social media accounts. This can be done in your email settings.

Formal

- Sincerely,
 - Respectfully,
 - Best,
 - Best regards,
 - Warm regards,
 - Thank you,
- Jake Stein, Executive Director

Informal

- Cheers,
- See you,
- Talk soon,
- Love,
- Thanks!
Kylie

Task 3

What will you include in your auto signature?

Create a unique auto signature for yourself:

Email Checklist

BEFORE HITTING SEND

After you write your email, check your spelling. Fix any mistakes you see. When you are happy with your email, hit "Send."

- Did I type the recipient's email address correctly?
- Did I include a strong subject?
- Did I add other recipients correctly?
- Did I include a greeting?
- Did I include a body?
- Did I close the email appropriately?
- Is the email written in an appropriate tone (formal or informal)?
- Did I attach a document or image that I said would be attached?
- Did I check my spelling before hitting "Send"?

Comprehension Check-In

Work with a partner and answer the following questions based on the lesson so far.

1. What is the word "email" short for?
2. What word is used to describe the person who receives an email message?
3. What is a signature?
4. What does "Bcc" stand for, and what is the purpose of it?
5. What should a person do after composing an email (before hitting "Send")?

Sample Emails

A. Formal (Business)

Read the sample formal email. Discuss the message with a partner. What important features does this email include?

Sender: Florence Trapp
Subject: Cost of Framing
Recipients: Tina Coolridge

Dear Ms. Coolridge,

Hello. I am Florence Trapp, a sales representative for Famous Frames. Thank you for your interest in our services.

The cost of framing your painting will be \$54.00. I have included a breakdown of the fees in the attached document.

Please reach out if you have any further questions.

Best,
Florence Trapp, Sales Rep.
(555) 778-9999

Attachment: Quote #769 Custom Frame Job

B. Informal (Social)

Read the sample informal email. Discuss the message with a partner. How is it different from the formal email?

Sender: Sadie Anderson
Subject: Bake Sale
Recipients: Clara Mack, Bronwyn Novikova, Jia Wu, Adriana Lopez, Dani Sullivan, Shae-Lyn Zutra, Priya Kapoor, Phillipa Ross, Delphine Laurent-Beauford, Cassy Tam, Rhonda Ryan, Twyla Valentine

Hey Swimmers!

Don't forget about our bake sale this Saturday to raise money for our trip to San Diego for the regional swim meet. Please bring your baked goods to my place by 10:00 am. I'd also love it if someone could help me set up.

My address is 894 Albatross Road. (It's the pink house across from the post office.)

See you Saturday,

Sadie

Writing Practice

Write an Email

Handwrite an informal email to a classmate.
Include the sender, recipient, subject, salutation, body, and signature.

Answer Key

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

In this lesson, students learn tips and techniques for writing emails in English. They review formal and informal emails and learn about proper formatting.

LEVEL: Low Int

TIME: 1–2 hours

TAGS: writing, emailing, email, letters, correspondence

Warm-Up

A. SPEAKING

Give your students some time to discuss the questions.

Answers will vary.

B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

- | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|
| 1. h | 3. a | 5. c | 7. g |
| 2. d | 4. f | 6. b | 8. e |

Introduction to Emailing

Parts A–E can be done together as a class, or you can have students read these sections in pairs or small groups.

TASK 1

- | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|
| 1. F | 2. F | 3. T | 4. T |
|------|------|------|------|

TASK 2

- | | | |
|------|------|------|
| 1. a | 2. c | 3. c |
|------|------|------|

TASK 3

Answers will vary.

Email Checklist

Go through the checklist with your students. They could type it out and email it to themselves for future reference (and practice).

Comprehension Check-In

1. The word “email” is short for “electronic mail.”
2. The word “recipient” is used to describe the person who receives an email message.
3. A signature is a name at the end of an email. It may contain a link to a website and social media accounts.
4. “Bcc” stands for “blind carbon copy.” It is used to keep other recipients’ email addresses private.
5. After composing an email (before clicking “Send”), a person should check their spelling and fix any mistakes.

(continued on the next page...)

Answer Key cont.

Sample Emails

You could use these examples or bring in your own authentic examples if you have some that you are comfortable sharing.

Writing Practice

If students already use email in their first language, encourage them to exchange email addresses. Suggest that they email each other in English on a regular basis.

SPELLING NOTE:

This lesson shows the American spelling of the word *Practice*. Most other English-speaking countries spell it this way: *Practise* (when used as a verb; *Practice* when used as a noun). Make it a challenge for your students to find this word in the lesson and see if they know the alternate spelling. Also note that the term *email* can be spelled *e-mail*.