

KEY PHRASES FOR EMAILS

A good tip for effective writing is to follow the 4 Ps:

1 > Preparation

Check you have all the right information to hand e.g. documents to attach.

2 > Purpose

Think about why you are making contact – is an email the best channel of communication? Would it be simpler to pick up the phone? Choose a helpful and appropriate subject line. Make your opening sentence relevant to the purpose e.g. I'm writing to ask you for ... / I just want to check if ...

3 > Process

*How do you want to present the message?
Is it appropriate to start with small talk?*

4 > People

Who are you writing to? If they are your superiors, do you need to be more formal? What do they already know? How do they like to receive information? What is their level of understanding of the subject? What do you want them to do when they receive the email? How will they react?

Basic steps for a standard email

Greet

Small talk

Opening

Request

Inform

Offer

Provide documentation

Friendly sign-off

Final thanks

Close

The following phrases can be stored on your PC or made into templates.

Greetings

▼

Dear (+ first name)
Dear Mr / Ms (+ surname)
Dear Sir / Madam (people whose name you don't have)
Hello / Hi (+ first name) (informal)
Hi All / Everyone / Team
Good morning, (+ first name)
Good afternoon, (+first name)

Dear X

Small talk

▼

I hope you are well.
How are you?
I hope life is treating you well.
I hope your week is going well.

I hope you are well.

Openings

▼

I am writing to request / enquire / inform / check / confirm / ask ...
Just a quick email to ...
I am pleased / sorry to hear / learn that ...

I'm writing to ...

Referencing

Thank you for your email of [date] concerning / enclosing / enquiring about ...

Further to / Regarding / With reference to ...

On the subject of ...

In response to ...

Re your email ...

You may recall that we met last week ... In the course of the conversation you mentioned ...

I was given your name by [name] ... who suggested that ...

Requesting

I would be grateful if you would / could ...

I would appreciate it if you would / could ...

Would you mind sending /checking ...?

Please send / supply / confirm ...

Please could you
send / supply ... ?

Informing

I am pleased to inform you that...

I would like to advise you that ...

I am now in a position to inform you / confirm ...

I would be
happy to ...

Offering

I can / am able to / would like to offer you / provide you with ...

This offer includes / covers / contains ...

Would you like me to ... ?

Do you want me to ... ?

Shall I ... ?

Providing documentation

Please find attached ...

I am attaching ...

I attach ...

Attached are the relevant documents.

I am sending you the relevant documents in the attached file.

You will find the contract / agreement / document in question in the attached file.

I look forward to ...

Friendly sign-off

I look forward to meeting / seeing you next week / in January.

I am looking forward to meeting / seeing you.

I look forward to / I am looking forward to hearing from you.

I look forward to receiving your report.

I am looking forward to receiving your order.

Look forward to ... / Looking forward to ...

See you ...

Many thanks for your help.

Final thanks

Thanking you in advance.

Thank you once again for your assistance.

Thank you for your understanding in this matter.

Thanks again.

Many thanks for your support / help.

Kind regards, X

Close

Best / Kind regards
 BR / BW (semi-formal)
 Best wishes
 All the best (informal)
 Cheers (informal)

USEFUL PHRASES FOR EMAILS

Expressing purpose

Please ... so that I can / am able to / will be able to ...
 I would be grateful if you could ... in order that I can ...
 Could you ... to enable me to ...

Expressing wishes

I would like to ...
 I (particularly) want to ...
 I (do) hope ...
 I require / need ...
 I would prefer not to ...
 I would rather not ...
 I am reluctant to ...
 It would be great to ... (informal)

Confirming

Would you please confirm that ...?
 Please confirm that ...
 If I hear nothing to the contrary, I shall assume that ...
 I am able / pleased to confirm ...

Drawing attention and reminding

I would like to point out that ...

May I draw your attention to ...

Please note that ...

I do not appear to have received ...

Asking for clarification

It is not clear whether ...

I am not sure if ...

Please could you clarify ...

Please could you explain what you mean by ...

Could you supply us with more information ...

Am I right in thinking ...? (informal)

Agreeing

I am willing to ...

I agree to ...

I am happy / delighted to ...

I'm more than happy to ...

Disagreeing and refusing requests

Unfortunately, I am unable to ...

I am unwilling to ...

I cannot agree with / to that ...

I'm sorry but we can't ...

Asking for approval

We trust / hope that you will have no objections to ...

I hope this meets with your approval.

I would be grateful if you could approve ...

Making suggestions

I propose / suggest that ...

I would (strongly) advise / recommend

It is advisable to ...

You might consider ...

Expressing urgency
and necessity

I should like to remind you ...

It is obligatory / necessary for ...

I must / have to ...

Under no circumstances ...

It is important / vital / essential ...

... at your earliest convenience.

... as soon as possible.

... without further delay.

... by return.

... by Friday / the end of January.

Expressing dissatisfaction
and complaining

I am not happy with ...

I am experiencing difficulty ...

This situation is far from satisfactory.

Giving bad news

Unfortunately, ...
I am afraid that ...
I'm sorry but ...

Expressing disappointment

I was disappointed to hear your decision ...
I am very sorry that you feel that / are unable to ...

Apologising

I am sorry to hear / learn / see that ...
Please accept my / our (sincere) apologies for ...
I would like to thank you for your understanding in this matter.
Once again, I would like to apologise for ...
I apologise for the delay in ...
I'm really sorry, but ... (informal)

Clearing up
misunderstanding

There appears to be some misunderstanding concerning ...
I was not aware ... / I did not realise ...

Refusing politely

I (fully) appreciate your point of view / difficulties, but ...
I am afraid that we are not in a position to ...
I feel that (at this stage) it would be better / unwise / not in our interest to ...
We realise this is not ideal. However, ...

Giving assurance

I assure you that ...
Rest assured that ...
I will do my utmost / my best to ensure that ...

Stating actions

I will send / speak to / contact / confirm ...
I have contacted / asked / instructed / arranged for / informed ...
I intend to ...

Acknowledging actions
and instructions

I note / see / hear that you have ...
I have received / taken delivery of ...

Reminding

May I remind you ...
Just to remind you ...
Don't forget to ... (informal)

Expressing confidence
and hope

We are confident that ...
We trust / hope that you will ...
We expect / anticipate / forecast / think / envisage / believe ...

Expressing certainty
and probability

There is no doubt that ...

I am confident that ...

It is likely / probable / possible that ...

It is unlikely / impossible that ...

Giving good news

I am delighted to inform you / hear that ...

You will be delighted to hear that ...

You'll be happy to hear / learn that ...

Congratulating

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on ...

Congratulations on ...

Offering further assistance

Please do not hesitate to contact us again, if you require further assistance.

If you have any further questions, please contact me.

Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Let me know if you need any more help.

Giving more detailed
explanations

Such as

This stands for...

This means that ...

That is to say ...

To put it another way,

In other words,

For example / for instance,

Introducing supporting ideas

This is **as a result of** a strike at the factory.

Prices will have to increase **because of** a rise in the cost of raw materials.

This is **due to** difficulties we are experiencing in finding a new supplier.

This is **in response to** a query from the client.

This will probably **lead to** a rise in demand.

This will **mean** our sales team will need to act quickly.

There will be a short delay in responding **owing to** an unexpected backlog of enquiries.

Directing the reader

Please see below for further details.

As you can see in the attached file, ...

Point 4 deals with ...

A full summary of the report can be found below.

My responses can be found directly after each of your questions (in red).

Useful connectors

To add to an idea: in addition, also, too, as well (as)

To suggest an alternative: instead, alternatively

To talk about cause: therefore, so, consequently

To compare things: similarly, in the same way, likewise

To contrast things: yet, however, but, nevertheless

To conclude: in conclusion, lastly, finally

To contradict a point: in fact, actually, as a matter of fact, on the contrary

To summarise: to sum up, overall, in short / brief

To state the obvious: naturally, of course, obviously

To concede: anyway, at any rate

Email checklist

Before you send your email, read it through and ask yourself:

- Do the main points stand out clearly? Consider use of bullet points.
- Is the message written simply and clearly? (KISS)
- Is the email too long / short?
- Are there any redundant words or phrases e.g. *“at this point in time”*?
- Are the sentences the right length (max 20-25 words) and not too full of ideas?
- Have you used any acronyms or jargon which the reader will not understand?
- Have you explained any complex matters and given clear illustrations (*such as, that is to say, etc.*)?
- Are the ideas clearly linked using connectors (*however, therefore, and, etc.*)?
- Does the subject line show what the email is about?

Practice Exercises

1  ***These common phrases all contain one mistake. Write the correct phrase below:***

1. Please find attach the minutes from last week’s meeting.

2. I will be grateful if you could send me more information on your products.

3. I need a copy of the project update until tomorrow at the latest.

4. I look forward to meet you next week.

5. Can we meet at 9 July at 10.30 instead of 11.00?

6. I look forward to receiving these documents so soon as possible.

2  *Identify the missing word in each of these sentences:*

1. With reference your email of 6 May, ...

2. I am writing to inform that your last invoice is still outstanding.

3. Please get back me if you have any further questions.

4. I look forward to hearing you soon.

5. I'd appreciate if you could forward this to the relevant department.

6. I apologise the delay in replying to your email.

7. If you like any more details, just let me know.

8. I've attached a copy the latest sales figures.
