

# WRITING EMAILS

## Formal or informal?

We write a formal email when we want to be polite, or when we do not know the reader very well. A lot of work emails are formal. We write informal emails when we want to be friendly, or when we know the reader well. A lot of social emails are informal. Here are some examples of formal and informal messages:

Formal	Informal
An email to a customer A job application An email to your manager A complaint to a shop An email from one company to another company	A birthday greeting to a colleague An email to a colleague who is also a good friend A social invitation to a friend at your workplace An email with a link to a funny YouTube clip A message to a friend on a social networking site

Before you start writing an email, decide if you want to write a formal email or an informal one.

## Layout and punctuation

**Starting an email:** We normally write a comma after the opening phrase. We start a new line after the name of the person we're writing to.

**Finishing an email:** We normally write a comma after the closing phrase. We start a new line to write our name at the end.

Formal	Informal
Dear Mr Piper, I am writing to thank you for all your help. I look forward to seeing you next week. With best wishes, John Smith	Hi Tim, Many thanks for your help. See you next week. Cheers, John

## Paragraphs

- Emails are easier to read if the writer uses paragraphs.
- A paragraph in an email is often two or three sentences long.
- Each paragraph starts on a new line.
- When you start writing about a new topic, you can start a new paragraph.

Look at this example email to a friend.

<b>Paragraph 1</b> Greeting	Hello Dmitri, How is life? I haven't seen you for a long time. How are your children?
<b>Paragraph 2</b> Reason for writing	I'm writing with some good news – my wife is having a baby next month. We think it's going to be a girl, and we're very excited. But I also wanted to ask you something!
<b>Paragraph 3</b> Request	You told me you have lots of baby clothes. Do you think I could borrow some for my baby? I've looked in the shops, and new baby clothes are so expensive ... Could you let me know if this is OK?
<b>Paragraph 4</b> Other news	By the way, I've also started a new job. It's going really well!
<b>Paragraph 5</b> 'look forward to' and ending	Anyway, I look forward to hearing from you soon. Give my best wishes to your wife and family. Regards, George

## Phrases for starting and finishing

Here are some phrase which we use for starting and finishing emails. We use these in formal and informal emails:

Starting phrases	Dear Tim, Good morning Tim,
Ending phrases	Regards, With best wishes, With many thanks and best wishes,

You also need to know which phrases to use **only** in a formal email or an informal one:

	Formal	Informal
Starting phrases	Dear Mr Piper, Dear Sir or Madam,	Hi Tim, Hi there Tim, Morning/Afternoon/Evening Tim, Hello again Tim,
Ending phrases	Yours sincerely, Yours faithfully, Yours truly,	Rgds, Cheers, Bye for now, See you soon,