

How to Write a Formal Letter/Email in English

Basic rules:

1. Your text should have a clear structure (greetings, the reasons for your writing, main points, what you want the recipient to do, conclusion).
2. Use formal language (no slang, phrasal verbs, and contracted forms).
3. Write precise sentences, get straight to the point, and keep the text focused.
4. When expressing disagreement or complaining, be polite.

Greetings:

Dear Professor Johnson, Dear Madam, Dear Sir, Dear Sir/Madam, To Whom It May Concern

Reasons for writing:

I am writing in response to/with regard to/regarding your article/book/invitation...

I am writing to enquire about...

I am writing to complaint about...

Having read your article on/book about..., I would like to...

Given your expertise in the field, I would like to ask you...

Developing your point:

First of all, Firstly, Secondly, Last but not least, To begin with, What is more, To conclude...

Another matter I need information on is...

I wonder if you would mind telling me...

I would also appreciate some information about...

Stating what you want the recipient to do:

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

Could you possibly let us know if...

Please, let me know what action you purpose to take.

Thanking the recipient/ offering further information:

Thank you, in advance, for taking time to respond to ...

Thank you for your patience and cooperation.

Thank you for taking my points into consideration.

If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to your response.

Ending:

Kind regards,

Best regards,

Best wishes,

Yours faithfully – (if the greeting states no name)

Yours sincerely – (if the name is given)