UNIT 2:

Writing: Informal emails

Though it might seem easy, knowing how to write a strong informal email is a skill that is often overlooked. However, breaking down the email writing process can make writing a great email feel easy!

Informal Email Meaning

An informal email is a message written with a casual tone. Typically, informal emails are written to someone you already know. Unlike a formal email, the language in an informal email or similar to the spoken word. Because informal emails are written in a more relaxed manner, the format of an informal email is more flexible. However, like a formal email, it is still good to structure an informal email with these components:

1. A Subject Line
2. An Informal Email Greeting
3. Body Text
4. An Informal Email Ending
5. A Signature

Informal emails can be written to a friend, your teacher, a relative, and many others. The most important thing to remember when writing an informal email is to consider your audience. Though an informal email is more laid-back, the language used in an informal email will largely depend on who the recipient is. This is a concept that will apply to each part of an informal email and something that should be considered throughout the entire writing process.

The Subject Line

The subject line of any email is simply the email's official title. The subject line is often considered one of the most important aspects of an email because it is the first part of your message the recipient sees. The subject line can be the difference between someone opening an email, or ignoring it. However, in informal emails, the subject line does not have to be as serious as in formal emails. Subject lines in informal emails allow for more creativity and casual expressions, especially because the sender and recipient are usually already acquainted. When crafting a subject line for an informal email, it's important to consider who you're writing. If you were writing to a classmate or friend, your subject line might look like this:

1. Subject: Beach trip!!!
2. Subject: Looking forward to Saturday...
3. Subject: Study session at my house?

All of these subject lines are very relaxed and fine to use in this context. However, if you were writing to someone you might not know as well, it is better to be more specific, and clear with your subject line, like this:

1. Subject: You're invited to Sunday Breakfast!
2. Subject: Unsure when office hours are this week.
3. Subject: In town this week! Wanting to catch up over coffee!

When choosing a subject line, just remember to use your best judgment and choose an appropriate subject line for who you're writing to.

Informal Email Greetings

Informal email greetings, like informal email subject lines, can be a bit more creative than formal email greetings. As mentioned briefly earlier, the language in an informal email is much more similar to the speech used in everyday life. This is especially true when choosing an informal email greeting!

When writing an informal email greeting, it is common to follow the greeting by asking how the recipient is. However, because informal emails are more casual, this is not a strict rule. Unlike formal emails, it is also not always necessary to use a comma after you're greeting. Instead, you can use various other punctuations like exclamation points to show excitement or even just no punctuation at all. Here are some examples of informal email greetings:

1. Hey! How are you doing?
2. Hello Dan :)
3. Hi Laura,
4. Jenny!! What's up with you?
5. Hey everyone!!

Again, the best way to choose an informal email greeting is to consider who you're writing to and use your best judgment.

> ☀ If you're not sure if any part of your email is too formal or informal for who you're writing to, think about how you would talk to the recipient in person! If you wouldn't normally say out loud to the recipient what you've written, then consider altering your word choice.

Informal Email Body Text

The body text of an informal email is usually the largest section of the message. Like one might expect, the point of an informal email's body text is to express to the recipient why you're writing to them.

Because the email is written in a casual tone, the body section can include whatever you want the recipient to know. It is important to note that emails are typically a short form of communication, meaning, any informal email you write should usually be less than 200 words.

After your greeting, you can jump right in and say why you're emailing. Some good phrases to use when stating the purpose of your email include:

1. I just wanted to let you know...
2. I'm writing because...
3. We haven't talked in forever, but I wanted to tell you about...

Like all the other parts of an informal email, your audience is the most important thing to consider. The language you use when writing to a friend might be very different than the words you choose when speaking to your Uncle.

> 🤿 **Deep dive**
>
> When writing an informal email's body text remember to **BARC**. *BARC* is an acronym that can help you stay on task when writing an informal email. Let's break down BARC.
>
> The B stands for **brief**. Keep your email brief, but warm. Remember that this email is more conversational, so you don't need to pack everything you're thinking into one single email.
>
> The A stands for **audience**. Always consider who you're writing to and align your word choice accordingly.
>
> The R stands for **relevance**. Though the email is informal, stay on topic. Make sure everything you're writing is relevant.
>
> The C stands for **casual**. Remember to keep the tone of the email relaxed and warm.

> 💡 **Did you know?** Depending on the situation, it can be okay to include images or fun emoticons in your informal email. Just make sure you only use such features in the correct setting. For example, you wouldn't include emoticons in an email to a teacher, but you definitely could in an email to a friend or family member!

Informal Email Ending

An informal email ending wraps up your email with a casual goodbye. Usually, an informal email ending consists of a parting message and a signature. Like an informal email greeting, an informal email ending can be a bit more creative than the ending of a more formal message. Some good phrases you can use to "sign-off" from an informal email are:

1. Talk to you soon!
2. See you soon!
3. Can't wait to hear about [insert event here]!
4. Hope you're doing well!

Similarly, signatures can be much less official in an informal email. Some possible signatures might include:

1. Love, [your name]
2. All the best, [your name]
3. Lots of love, [your name]
4. Yours, [your name]
5. Best wishes, [your name]

So, the end of an informal email might look like this:

I'm so excited to catch up with you soon, and can't wait to hear about your crazy summer!
Lots of love,
Annie

Putting both a signature and a "sign-off" message is not always necessary. Sometimes, just one or the other will do. For example:

I really appreciate all of your help with this homework assignment this week! Thanks!
Best,
Justin

Here's another example:

Your original movie was so funny! I'm really glad you showed it to me.
See you at school tomorrow!
Cecilia

Informal Email Expressions

Depending on the situation, you might want to use some common expressions to make your email sound more casual, but still get your point across in a strong manner. Different expressions help establish different tones within your email.

For example, what if you have yet to receive a response from an email you wrote days ago? What is an expression that could convey your interest in a reply while also keeping a light tone? Some useful informal expressions for this situation could be:

I'm not sure if you received my last email yet, but...
I know you're very busy but I am excited to speak with you as soon as possible about...
I know you're very busy, but I just wanted to remind you about...
I just wanted to check in with you about the [subject] I mentioned in my previous email...

Consider this next scenario. Imagine that you are having an incredibly busy week and forget to respond to an email. What are some expressions that could be used to apologize to the recipient while maintaining a casual tone?

I'm so sorry for the delay!
I appreciate your patience.
I'm sorry for any trouble I caused.

The most important thing to remember when throwing in informal email expressions into a message is that any of the expressions used help establish tone, so pick and choose wisely in accordance with how you want the message to come across to the recipient.

Helpful Hints Before Sending your Email

Congratulations! You're almost ready to send your email, but before you do make sure to go through this checklist to make sure your email is perfect.

1. **Proofread your email.** Always check your spelling and grammar before sending! Though this is not as important in an informal email, it's still a good idea to write like a pro!
2. **Double-check the recipient's email address.** After taking all of this time to write a fantastic informal email, you don't want to accidentally send it to the wrong person!
3. **Don't forget to attach files!** You don't want to leave out the pictures of your new puppy or an art project you want to show off!
4. **Add Cc or Bcc recipients!** If you want to send your email to multiple people, don't forget about the Cc and Bcc email feature. Both the Cc and Bcc lines send a copy of your email to additional people. If you write a person's email address in the carbon copy line (Cc), the person's address is shown to all recipients of the email. If you write an email in the blind carbon copy line (Bcc), the person's email is hidden from all recipients of the email.

If you've checked your email, it's time to send!

Informal Email Examples

Here's how an informal email might look.

> **Example**
>
> Subject: Beach on Saturday?
>
> Hey Sally! I was hoping you'd want to go to the beach with me on Saturday to sell seashells by the seashore! If you're available, let me know and I can pick you up at 1:00 this weekend.
>
> See you soon!
>
> Peter

Here's one more example.

Subject: Cat adoption!!

Hi Richard,

Our family is very excited about adopting a cat this weekend.

Thank you so much for helping us throughout

this process! We will see you on

Saturday at 4:00 to pick up our new Kitty!

Best wishes,

Paul and Sharon

Informal Email - Key Takeaways

- An informal email's tone can be casual and relaxed.

- An informal email's word choice largely depends on the recipient. Always consider who you're writing to when choosing what language to use.

- Informal emails have a less rigid structure, but typically begin with a casual greeting, are centered on the body text, and end with a casual signature or "sign-off"

- Remember to BARC (keep it **B**rief, know your **A**udience, stay **R**elevant, and maintain a **C**asual tone) in the body text of an informal email.

- Before sending your email, check that you've entered the correct recipient email address!

Frequently Asked Questions about Informal Email

Q: How do you close an informal email?

A: You can close an informal email with a casual signature like "All the best," or with a parting message like "Talk to you soon!"

Q: How do you open an informal email?

A: You can open an informal email with a casual greeting like "Hi [name]", "Hello [name]", or even just "Hey! How are you doing?"

Q: How do you write an informal email to a teacher?

A: In an informal email to a teacher, the tone can still be light and casual, but you shouldn't use slang words like "cool." The language you use should be somewhat formal.

Q: How do you write an informal email to a friend?

A: To write an informal email to a friend, just write to them like you'd speak to them in person.

Q: How do you "sign off" of an informal email?

A: Using a casual phrase like "Great catching up with you!" or "Talk soon!" can be great sign-offs for an informal email.

References:

Hello Vaia, Informal Email, https://www.hellovaia.com/explanations/english/email/informal-email/, Last accessed: October 5, 2023