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# 117 Email Spam Trigger Words to Avoid and Stay out of the Junk Folder

ZeroBounce Blog

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Can spam trigger words really send your emails to the junk folder? They sure can, but things aren't as black-and-white as they seem. Moosend's Senior Content Writer Téa Liarokapi goes into the topic below – and shows you why and when certain spam words cause email deliverability issues.

Many email marketers worry about their emails going to spam. Some people never check their spam folder, so if you're sending out an important campaign, you want it to arrive in the inbox.

While [email deliverability](#) involves a multi-layered effort, the words you use in your emails *can* cause mailbox providers to relay your messages to the junk folder. However, it all depends on the context, so let's examine this closer below.

[zb-spam-validator]

## What are email spam trigger words?

Email spam trigger words, or spam words, are words and phrases commonly found in the content of spam emails. They aim to lure recipients with an attractive offer and obtain sensitive personal information. As email filters have become more advanced, Internet service providers (ISPs) flag spam words as malicious and automatically direct them to the spam folder.

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Reasons Why





Why is this message in spam? It is similar to messages that were identified as spam in the past.

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ⓘ

Good afternoon!

Lately, many clients have been asking if we can design/source custom and stock awards.

*Yes, we can!!!*

We can curate off-the-shelf awards and design completely custom ones as well.

 A collage of different awards Description automatically generated

In addition, we can drop ship directly to recipients.

*Gmail and other email service providers have advanced algorithms to determine whether an email is spam. What stands out in this example is the lack of personalization, the excessive punctuation marks, the different fonts, colors and the broken image.*

**Related:** [Do you know the origin of the word "spam"?](#)

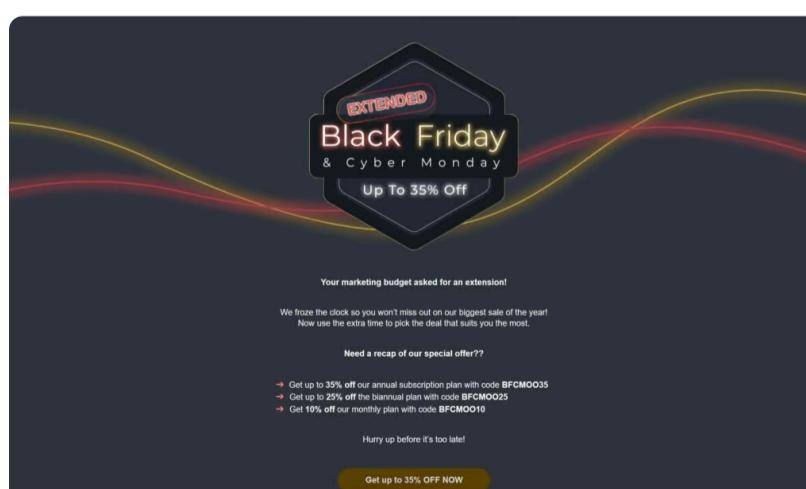
But here's where things get confusing: some email spam trigger words are also some of the most common words marketers use. *Save, last chance or discount* are just three examples you've probably used yourself.

So, should you stop using them altogether to avoid triggering spam filters? Email is more complex than that, and your copy isn't the only factor determining [where your email will be delivered](#).

## When and how can you use email spam trigger words?

The fact that powerful marketing words are also common words used in spam emails doesn't mean that you cannot pepper them into your content. The important thing is for your emails to have valuable content, compelling copy and responsive templates.

Here's an example of a legitimate marketing email using words that can trigger spam filters:

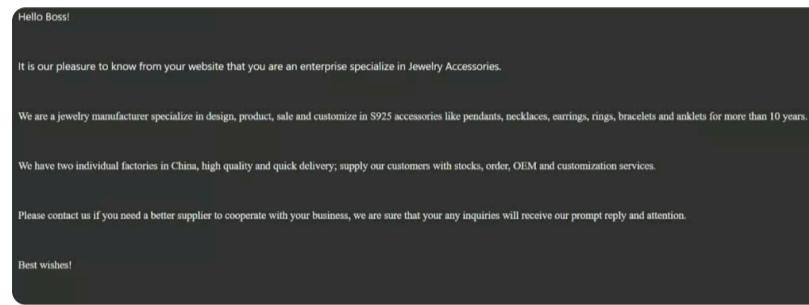




So, yes, you can use words like “free” or “urgent” as part of a relevant, legitimate-looking email.

On the other hand, if you use spam trigger words in an email that already looks like spam, you’ll get in trouble with inbox providers.

Here’s an example of a spam email:



This content is not helpful, and it’s poorly written. Not to mention that I do not own a website.

Of course, spam filters can be triggered for various reasons, and there are many ways your email campaign can end up in the spam folder. Common words in spam emails can cause problems, especially when they’re a part of your [subject line](#).

But let’s talk about factors beyond that for a second.

## Why would your email go to the spam folder?

Your emails can end up in the spam folder for many reasons, and spam trigger words are not at the top of the list. There are more important factors that can sabotage your email deliverability.

Here are just a few:

### Poor email list quality

A common reason emails go to spam is that you haven’t built a valid email list or may not prune it as you should. On average, [almost 23% of an email list decays](#) annually. Every email list will have contacts that go bad, so remember to run your database through an [email verifier](#) no less than quarterly.



*Running your database through an email verifier allows you to see how many of your contacts have churned so you can remove them.*

### No unsubscribe button



categorize you as a spammer.

### Poor email design

Since users are weary of spammers, we can all agree that poor email design is sometimes a dead spam giveaway.

Creating an email that is not responsive, useful, or even sports broken elements will surely earn you a place in the spam folder. So, always make sure to create emails with a clean design. Your campaigns should follow email marketing trends, as this is something spammers rarely – if ever – do.

Related: [Why emails go to spam – and how to fix it](#)

But now, let's revisit the email example from before.

The email addressed me as "Boss." Much like "Dear" or "Mam," "Hey Boss" is not an appropriate greeting. In the era of segmentation and hyper-personalization, such greetings seem awkward, to say the least.

It would be best to add a personal touch by greeting your recipients by name.

Lastly, spam words aren't the only problem here. Have you ever seen an email with all caps like "URGENT: ACTION NEEDED", or "CLAIM YOUR FREE PRIZE!!!!!!"?

If the answer is yes, did you think that it was a legitimate email? Too many punctuation marks, all caps, strange fonts and too many emojis can all trigger spam filters.

Be mindful of this before you harm your credibility with emails that go straight to the spam folder for no apparent reason.

## 117 email spam trigger words to avoid

There are many words you should use rarely in your marketing emails. We'll look at the most common spam trigger words and highlight the ones that don't belong in your copy.

**Bonus tip:** Avoid spam words in general, but especially in your subject line, as they can dramatically lower the chances of your email landing in the user's inbox.

### Common email spam trigger words: A non-extensive list

1. Order status
2. Order shipped
3. Buy



9. Money
10. Earn \$\$\$
11. Home-based
12. Extra income
13. Cheap
14. Affordable
15. Exclusive deal
16. Act fast!
17. Click
18. Click this link
19. Important information regarding
20. Cash
21. Credit
22. Dear/Dear friend
23. Your income
24. Debt
25. Collect
26. Save big
27. The following form
28. You won't believe this
29. 100%/One hundred percent
30. New customers only
31. Make money
32. Online biz
33. Opportunity
34. Be your own boss
35. Earnings
36. Passive income
37. Work from home
38. No cost
39. Save big
40. No credit card required
41. Credit card debt
42. Eliminate debt
43. Package
44. Social security number
45. Lifetime
46. Trial offer
47. Weight loss
48. #1
49. No catch
50. No hidden cost
51. Prize
52. Prizes
53. Priority
54. You won!
55. Free sample
56. Limited time
57. Bonus
58. +++
59. Miracle
60. Miracle solution
61. Click here
62. Email list
63. Increase sales
64. Mass email
65. Spam email
66. Link
67. Amazing
68. Cash bonus
69. Compare rates
70. Re:
71. Order confirmation
72. Order shipped
73. Ad
74. Opt in
75. Risk free
76. Score with
77. Stock statement



- 83. Affair
- 84. Prescription
- 85. Don't delete
- 86. Read this
- 87. Cancel
- 88. Last chance
- 89. No gimmick
- 90. No strings attached
- 91. No obligation
- 92. Refund
- 93. Drug
- 94. Promise
- 95. Reply
- 96. Stuff
- 97. Strong
- 98. Loan
- 99. You've been selected
- 100. Free cash
- 101. Free money
- 102. Don't hesitate
- 103. Instant access
- 104. Terms and Conditions
- 105. QUICK QUESTION
- 106. SUPER OFFER
- 107. Dear [Name]
- 108. Zero chance
- 109. Eliminate bad credit
- 110. Allowance
- 111. Avoid bankruptcy
- 112. Password
- 113. Email harvest
- 114. Offshore
- 115. Clearance
- 116. Meet singles
- 117. Big bucks



## Can spam words affect the entire email?

In short, yes. Not just because your email goes to waste (aka in the spam folder), but also because one slip of the tongue can earn you a reputation. And when you're marked as a spammer by ISPs, it's not easy to get out of that.

This is where smart email marketing tools can save you a lot of headaches.

### Your email subject line

Writing a catchy subject line is great, sure. And you've probably seen humorous subjects like "This is NOT spam, we promise!" But capital words and the phrase "not spam" can look fishy to spam filters.

Invest in an email marketing platform to help A/B test your email subject line or provide a dedicated subject line tester. That way, you'll know when your copy is risky to your [email deliverability](#).

If you want even more reassurance, test your email deliverability with popular providers before sending your campaign. Inbox testers pinpoint potential issues so you can improve your content and design ahead of time.



## Your email copy

We all know that emails start with a “Hey, [First Name]” and then continue with the reason why the brand is contacting the recipient. At this stage, make sure to steer clear of words like “amazing,” “proposal,” “fantastic” and so on.

An eCommerce offer could very well start like this:

“Hey, friend. Fantastic news! We’ve got a limited time offer just for you!”

But this is a suspicious opening line. Even if spam filters don’t detect it, the user will flag it.

We already talked about broken design, but what happens when your body copy sounds slightly fishy?

Let me show you what I mean with another example from my own spam folder:

First, the emojis are a little too much. There’s mention of a specific dollar amount, plus the “sign up here” call-to-action (CTA). Also, I’ve never signed up for this newsletter. You see how all these elements lead me to believe this email is spam.

I know the brand tried to seem fun and score some much-needed [customer engagement](#), but including figures and percentages, emojis and a link is not the best move.

## Your email footer: CTA and signature

Your call-to-action (CTA) is not immune to commonly used email spam trigger words, as it’s where your brand urges users to take action. So make sure it’s not spammy.

Of course, your CTA alone won’t make you look like a spammer. But try to avoid phrases like “Act now” or “Click to claim.”

Also, when prospects get to your signature, be sure you look real. What do I mean by that?

Your email signature is what gives your message extra credibility.



Related: [How to create a professional email signature](#)

It'd be unfortunate to create and customize the perfect email template, segment and personalize your campaigns and end up in the spam folder – just because you didn't polish your email signature.

## Use email spam trigger words – but always in the right context

So, is it safe to use spam words in your emails? Some of you may choose to stay clear of them altogether, but you can include some of these words and phrases in your copy, so long as they are within context.

**What matters more is to ensure that:**

- Your email list is valid and your bounce rate is under 2%
- You segment your database so that you can send the most relevant content to each group of customers and prospects
- Your email templates have no glitches and render correctly on desktop and mobile devices.

Otherwise, using spam trigger words, even sparingly, will send your email straight into the spam folder.

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