

1 WRITING Keeping in touch

SPEAKING

1 Work in pairs. Discuss the questions.

- Are you good at keeping in touch with people? Why? / Why not?
- What's good and bad about these ways of keeping in touch?
 - email
 - phone
 - Facebook (or similar)
 - WhatsApp (or similar)
- Think of someone you know who you haven't been in touch with for a while. Why haven't you been in touch? What was their situation last time you were in touch? Do you know if it has changed at all? In what way?

WRITING

2 Read an email from an Italian student, Chiara, to a Chinese friend she met while studying in the UK. Put the parts (a-g) into the correct order. Then work in pairs and explain your order.

3 Use words from the email to complete the phrases that we often use in emails when catching up with news.

- 1 How are you? Sorry I haven't _____ recently, but I've _____ very busy.
- 2 When I _____ wrote I told you ...
- 3 _____ what? We're getting married!
- 4 _____, what about you? What _____ you doing at the _____?
- 5 I often think _____ you and the great _____ we had.
- 6 Write to me _____ and tell me your _____.

4 Work in groups. Discuss the questions.

- Do you think Chiara and Hugo have decided to get married too quickly? Why? / Why not?
- Would you like to study abroad? Why? / Why not?
- Do you have any friends from other countries? How did you meet?
- Apart from emails, what ways can you think of to practise writing in English? What's the best way?



To Lian@hotmail.ml
From Chiara@hotmail.ml

Dear Lian,

- a** **Apart from** getting married, looking for a flat and working six nights a week, I'm also going to the gym a lot. I want to get fit and lose some weight so I look good in my wedding dress. And that's another thing I need to do – get my wedding dress! I'm completely exhausted, but I'm **also** really happy!
- b** Lots of love
- c** When I last wrote, I told you I'd met a guy called Hugo. Well, guess what? We're getting married! He proposed when we were having a meal to celebrate our first six months together. I know it seems quick, but he's a really wonderful guy. It now looks as if I'm going to stay in Scotland for a long time!
- d** Anyway, what about you? What are you doing at the moment? When you wrote last, you said you were feeling a bit tired and you were thinking of taking a holiday and going to see Eri in Japan. Did you go? How was it? How is Eri? I often think of you and her and the great times we had at school here. It would be great if you could come and visit.
- e** Write to me soon and tell me your news.
- f** How are you? Sorry I haven't written recently, but I've been very busy. So many things are happening in my life at the moment it's difficult to find time for anything else!
- g** **As well as** getting married, we're looking for a new place to live. We want to find a house – somewhere nice where we can start a family. It's very expensive here, so it's good that I **also** started a new job two months ago. I'm working in an Italian restaurant. The basic wages aren't great, but I usually get a lot of tips, so the money could be worse. The owner is Scottish. His grandparents were Italian, but he doesn't speak Italian very well, so it's good for my English **too**. And, of course, I speak English with Hugo and his family. Before I met his parents, I was very nervous, but they're very kind and friendly.

Chiara



KEY WORDS FOR WRITING

as well as, apart from, too and also

We use *as well as* and *apart from* to join ideas and different parts of sentences. Notice how these phrases can start a sentence and that they are followed by an *-ing* form without a subject pronoun. At the end of the clause starting with *as well as / apart from*, add a comma.

As well as getting married, we're looking for a new place to live.

Apart from getting married, looking for a flat and working six nights a week, I'm also going to the gym a lot.

Too and *also* add ideas, but you need another word such as *and*, *but* or *so* to join the two parts of a sentence. *Too* goes at the end of the sentence / clause. *Also* usually goes in the middle.

I am exhausted, **but** I'm **also** really happy.

He doesn't speak Italian very well, **so** it's good for my English **too**.

It's very expensive here, **so** it's good that I **also** started a new job two months ago.

5 Join the pairs of sentences using the words in brackets and making any other necessary changes.

- 1 I started a new job last week. I'm moving house. (also)
- 2 I'm studying a lot. I'm training hard for a marathon. (as well as)
- 3 My brother is living with me at the moment. I'm busy looking after him. (too)
- 4 I helped to organise my Mum's 50th birthday party. I've been busy at work. (apart from)
- 5 I went to Germany on holiday. I went to Sweden for a conference recently. (as well as)
- 6 Quite a lot of bad things have happened. I have some good news. (too)

6 Write three sentences about your recent life using *too / also* or *as well as / apart from*. Then read your sentences to a partner.

GRAMMAR

Reporting what people said

When we write to catch up with news, we often refer to the situation the last time we wrote to / spoke to / saw the person we're writing to. Notice how we use the past perfect simple or the past continuous to show if the action happened before we spoke, or around the same time.

The other week when I saw you, I remember you said your mum **was** ill. (= ill at the time we met)

When I last wrote, I told you I **had met** a guy called Hugo. (= We met before I wrote.)

When you wrote last, you said you **were feeling** a bit tired and you **were thinking** of taking a holiday and going to see Eri in Japan (= You were thinking around the same time as you wrote.)

7 Complete the sentences with the correct auxiliary forms. To do this, you will need to decide if the action took place before or around the same time that you wrote / spoke. Note that you may need to use negative forms.

- 1 The last time you wrote, I think you told me you _____ started a new job.
- 2 The last time I wrote to you, I think I _____ still pregnant.
- 3 The last time we spoke, you said you _____ feeling a bit down.
- 4 The last time I saw you, you _____ doing your exams.
- 5 The last time I saw you, I _____ have a job.
- 6 The last time you wrote, you said you _____ planning to move.
- 7 The last time we spoke, I still _____ graduated.
- 8 The last time I wrote, I _____ going out with Karen.

8 Match sentences 1–8 from Exercise 7 with the follow-up comments / questions a–g.

- a How are you now? I hope you're better.
- b How's it going? Are you finding it easier?
- c Did you find anywhere nice? What's your new address?
- d How did you do? Did you pass them all?
- e Well, Sara is two now and I'm actually expecting my second!
- f Well, guess what? I'm now the assistant manager of a local store.
- g Well, unfortunately we've split up.
- h Well, I finished last July and now I'm doing a Master's.

9 Complete the sentences with your own ideas. Then add a follow-up question or comment.

- 1 The last time you wrote, you said ...
- 2 The last time I saw you, I think I ...
- 3 The last time I spoke to her, ...

PRACTICE

10 You are going to write an email to someone who you haven't been in touch with for a while. You want to catch up with their news. Before you write, think about the following.

- why you haven't been in touch
- the situation you were both in when you last spoke and / or what you talked about
- your situation now; things you're doing; events that have happened to you recently
- questions you want to ask your friend

11 Write your email. Use the model email to help you and use as much language from this lesson as you can.