

Particularities of written- letter communica- tion

COMMUNICATION

LEVEL
Upper-intermediate

NUMBER
EN_BE_3205X

LANGUAGE
English

lingoda

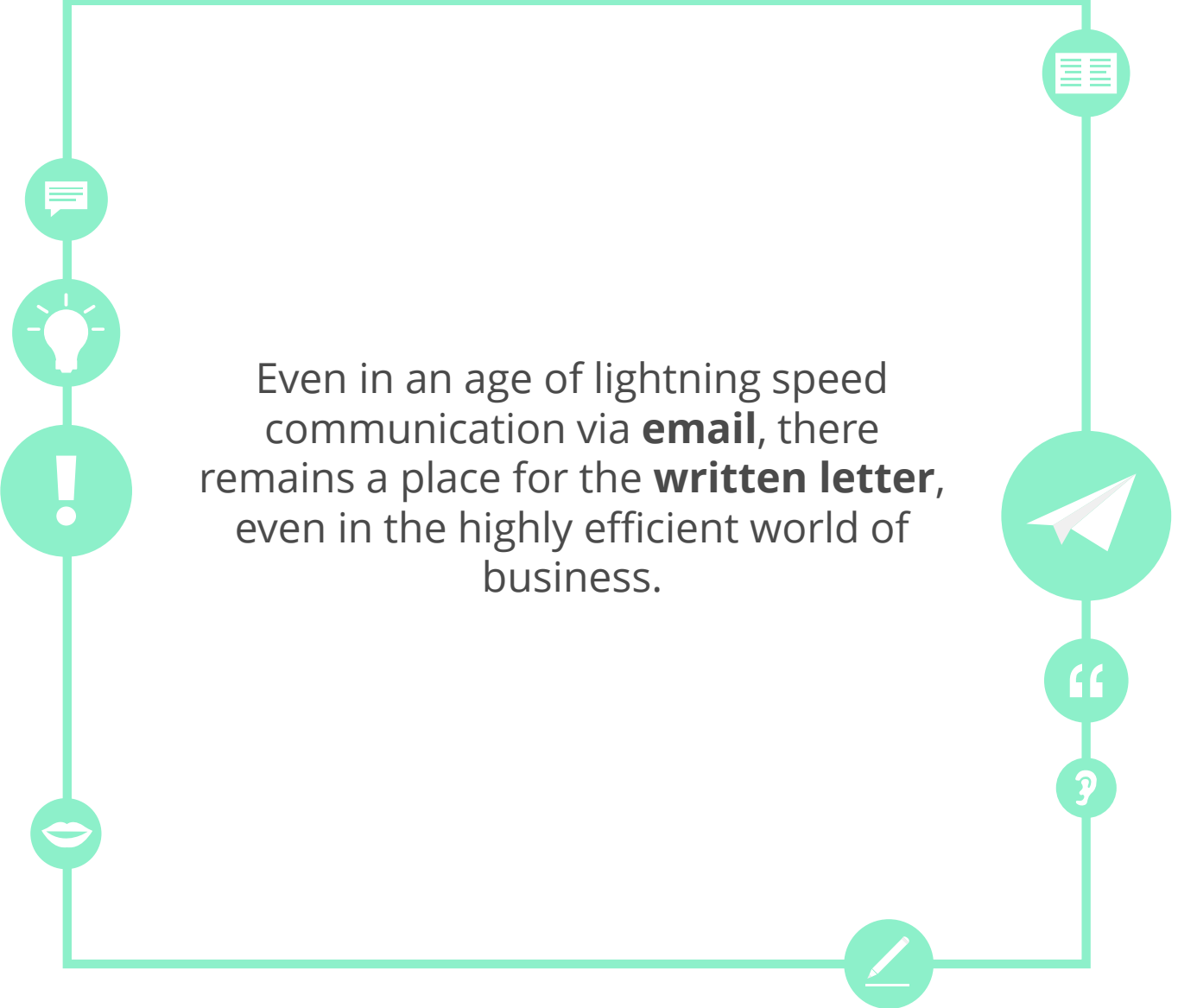




Goals

- Can understand and describe the key differences between emails and other forms of written communication
- Can write clearly in a formal register in a business context





Even in an age of lightning speed communication via **email**, there remains a place for the **written letter**, even in the highly efficient world of business.



Writing by hand



When was the last time you
wrote a letter by hand?
Do you find it easy or difficult?
Time-consuming or enjoyable?



Written letters vs. emails

What reasons can you think of as to why a person might prefer letters over emails? What advantages and disadvantages does each form have?





What do you remember?

What do you remember about these different aspects of writing business emails? Have a brainstorm with your teacher.



1

The structure of the email.



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The structure of the email.



2

Greetings and sign off phrases.



What do you remember?

What do you remember about these different aspects of writing business emails? Have a brainstorm with your teacher.



1

The structure of the email.



2

Greetings and sign off phrases.



3

Other formal phrases that you can use.

Written letters vs. emails

While the majority of correspondence now occurs via email, there are still many occasions when a **written letter** – either typed or handwritten – is more appropriate.

A written letter leaves a physical **record**, which is necessary under certain circumstances.

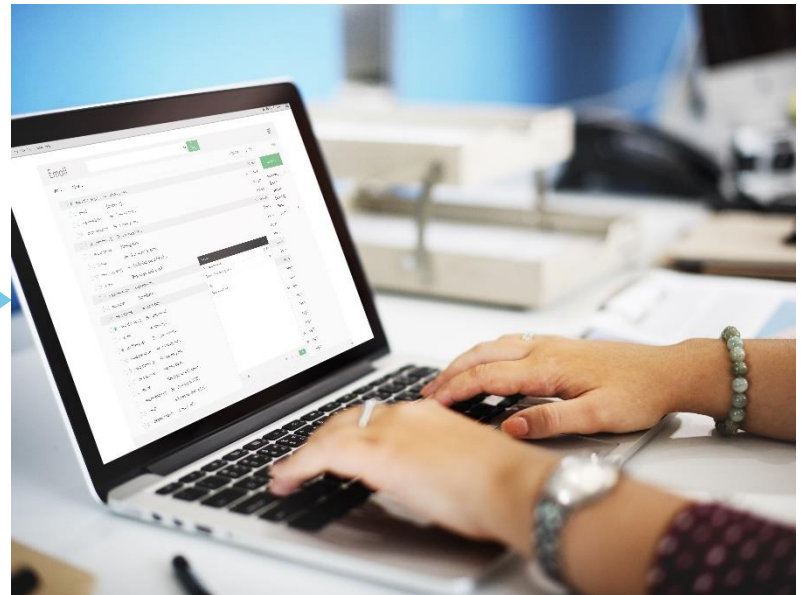
How wonderful it is to receive a **written letter**!



Emails

Emails take much less time to write than written letters, partly because of the wealth of **preset information** that they contain. Look at the list below for elements you will always find in an email.

- Your email address
- Your name and position
- The company name
- Your contact details
- Date sent



Written letters

All of the information on the previous page, which is almost always preset to be contained in an email, must also appear in a **written letter**. There is a **fixed format** for presenting this information. The following slides will lay out the proper format that should be followed.



Ellen Bloggs, Bloggs Shoes.



Beginning of a letter

Brown and Brown
17 Park Lane
London
W1 1AA

27th March 2017

Ms. Alice Rivers
Bloggs Shoes
55 May Street
Birmingham
B12 1BB

Dear Ms. Rivers,

The sender's address is in the top right-hand corner, just above the date. The recipient is below it on the left-hand side.



Your example

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for writing the beginning of a letter.

Write the beginning of your own letter here, with your details and the details of someone you might write to.



Letter vs email

Can you think of any situations where it's necessary to send a letter instead of an email?



Giving your contact details

You will have noticed that on the sample letter on the previous page, only an address is given rather than an email address or contact telephone number.

In a letter, it is preferable to give this information in the **final paragraph**, when you request the recipient to contact you.



My telephone number is +44 123 4567 890.



My email address is bbrown@brown.com



Closing of a letter

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Call my direct line number at +44 123 4567 890, or email me at bbrown@brown.com.

Here is what the final paragraph of a letter may look like.



Your example

Briefly write your own final paragraph, giving your contact details.



Subjects and introductions

- Another important difference between emails and written letters is that emails contain a **subject line**, and written letters often do not.
- It is thus even more important that the **first paragraph** of a written letter acts as an **introduction**, and clearly tells the recipient what the letter is about.

Email subject	Written letter
Our meeting next Tuesday	I am writing to confirm our meeting next Tuesday.
Application for assistant job	I am writing to apply for the position of assistant.
Update on Viper Project	I am writing to give you an update on the Viper Project.



Transform these email subjects into an introductory sentence

1. Monthly review meeting



2. Information needed on
Starlight Project



3. Trip to conference in Rome



4. Overdue report



5. Job interview next Thursday





Punctuation

The rules for **punctuation** in English will differ from the rules in your native language. Some of the most important rules are noted below.

punctuation	name	main uses	example
'	apostrophe	Possession or contractions	John's dog He's late
,	comma	Lists, separating clauses and after certain phrases	Eggs, milk, bread Dear John,
.	full stop	At the end of sentences, in some abbreviations	He is here. etc.
?	question mark	After questions	How are you?



The exclamation mark



Don't use the **exclamation mark** in formal writing!

The exclamation mark is used to show someone is talking loudly, or that the writer is amused by something. It is **not appropriate for formal writing**.



Formal writing is not funny!



Punctuation

Written letters require certain elements of punctuation to be used **consistently**. You will find the rules below.

Dear Sir/Madam,	All words are capitalised. <i>Sir</i> and <i>Madam</i> are separated by a slash, with a comma at the end.
Dear John,	All words are capitalised and there is a comma at the end.
Dear Ms. Jones,	All words are capitalised, the phrase is followed by a comma.
Yours faithfully, Yours sincerely,	Only the first word is capitalised, the phrase is followed by a comma.



Punctuation

Dear sir/Madam.

I am writing to enquire about any tickets you have available for the conference in England next month? It sounds like it will be very interesting and I would very much like to attend with one of my colleagues!

Thank you in advance.

Yours Faithfully,
Pat Hawthorne

Find 5 mistakes with the punctuation in this text.



Punctuation

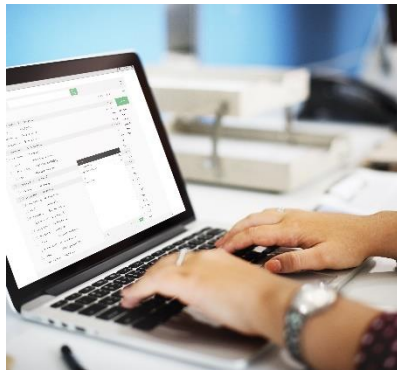
Correct the mistakes in this letter.

dear ms hawthorne
i am writing regarding the letter you sent
requesting information on the upcoming
conference in england i am pleased to inform
you that we still have tickets left and i will be
happy to reserve two for you if that is acceptable
if you have any questions before the day please
do not hesitate to contact me
yours sincerely
james allen



Semi-formal writing

We have talked in previous units about **formal** phrases to use in business writing, but it is also important to recognise **semi-formal** writing. In certain situations at work, if we are writing to a **colleague** with whom we have a close relationship for example, it is appropriate to take a less formal tone. The next two pages will show you two examples of a formal and a more informal email.



Hi John,
We need to get together to talk about the presentation.



Formal email sample

Read through the email and note the conventions of formal writing.

Dear Mr Jones,

I am writing in reference to your request for further information regarding the project on which we are cooperating.

I would like to suggest that we arrange a meeting for sometime next week. I feel that a meeting in person would be the most effective way for us to share ideas. Could you please tell me when would be convenient for you?

I look forward to hearing from you soon,
Yours sincerely,
Tania West

Read through the less formal version on the next page.



Informal email sample

Dear John,

Just a quick note to reply to your email asking for more information about the project we're working on together.

How about we meet up sometime next week? I think having a face-to-face conversation will be the best way for us to exchange notes. Can you let me know when's good for you?

Speak to you soon,
Best,
Tania

What differences can you note between the two texts?



Email to letter

Read back over the two emails above and discuss the following questions.



1

Which email is closest to the language used in a formal written letter?

2

How would you adapt the email into a letter? Would you add any extra information?

3

Are there any final changes you would make?



Summary

Below is a summary of the differences in **formal** and **semi-formal** writing in a business letter.

Formal writing	Semi-formal writing
Use surnames or full names	Use first names
Do not use contractions	Use contractions
Use formal grammar, e.g. could/would	Use less formal grammar, e.g. can/will
Use indirect questions	Use direct questions



Make a plan

Make a short plan for a letter to suggest a meeting with a person who works in a different company from you. In this context, you would like to meet to present the idea of working on a collaborative project; you know their name, but you have not met before.

Why you are writing

When and where to meet

Your contact details

A blank sheet of lined paper with a spiral binding on the left side, intended for writing the letter plan.



Write your own letter

Using your plan from the previous activity, get to work on your own letter!

Remember to include your address and that of your recipient.

A rectangular box containing horizontal lines for writing a letter. The lines are arranged as follows: a single line at the top right (for an address), a single line on the middle left (for a salutation), a block of eight lines in the center (for the main body of the letter), a single line on the middle left (for a closing), and a single line at the bottom left (for a signature).



Reflect on the lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!





Answer key

Exercise p. 19

Accept any appropriate answer

Exercise p. 23

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to enquire about any tickets you have available for the conference in England next month. It sounds like it will be very interesting and I would very much like to attend with one of my colleagues.

Thank you in advance,

Yours faithfully,

Pat Hawthorne

Exercise p. 24

Dear Ms. Hawthorne,

I am writing regarding the letter you sent requesting information on the upcoming conference in England. I am pleased to inform you that we still have tickets left and I will be happy to reserve two for you if that's acceptable.

If you have any questions before the day, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

James Allen





The diagram illustrates the components of an email, organized into two columns and three rows. Each component is represented by a colored rectangular box with a torn bottom edge. The left column contains three boxes: 'address' (blue), 'layout' (yellow), and 'date' (blue). The right column contains three boxes: 'subject' (yellow), 'contact details' (blue), and 'when to send' (yellow). The boxes are arranged in a grid-like fashion, with the left column on the left and the right column on the right.

address	subject
layout	contact details
date	when to send

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