

CAMBRIDGE

ENGLISH VOCABULARY IN USE

Vocabulary
reference and
practice

Fourth Edition

Pre-intermediate
and Intermediate

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Experience
Better
Learning

A

Formal English

Formal English is more common in writing, but you will also hear examples in more formal spoken English, e.g. announcements, speeches, television news, or discussions.

NOTICE IN A CAFE: Only food **purchased** [bought] here may be eaten **on the premises** [here].

BUSINESS LETTER: I **regret to inform you** [I am sorry to say] that we are unable to ...

INFORMATION NOTICE: If you **require** [need] **further assistance** [more help], please contact the above address.

FORMAL LETTER: We are not in a position to **grant** [give or allow] you a visa to this country.

POLICE STATEMENT: The man is being questioned **regarding** [about] the robbery last night.

THEATRE ANNOUNCEMENT: The play will **commence** [start] in two minutes.

STATION ANNOUNCEMENT: The next train to **depart** [leave] from platform 7 will be the 7:22 to Reading.

AIRPORT ANNOUNCEMENT: Will passengers for Miami please **proceed** to [go to] gate 36.

B

Informal English

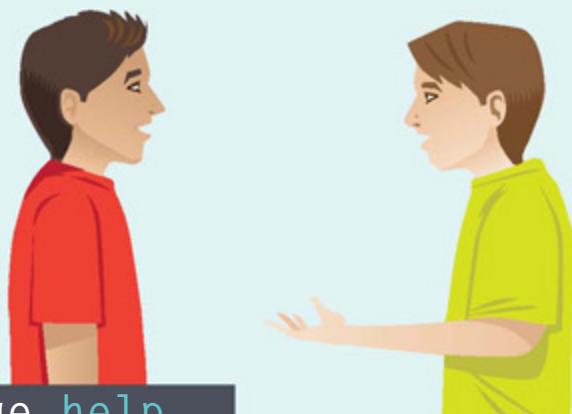
Informal language is more common in spoken English, and also in most emails or letters to friends. The words and phrases in **bold** in these dialogues are all informal.

A: Who's Callum?
B: A **mate** [a friend] of mine.
A: Really?
B: Yeah, I see him **quite a bit** [often]; he's a nice **bloke** [man].

A: Toby, I'm afraid I can't **make it** [come] this evening.
B: Oh, that's a shame.
A: Yeah, I'm sorry, but **the thing is** [the problem is], Ella's not well, so I'll have to look after the **kids** [children].
B: OK, don't worry. There will still be twelve **or so** [about twelve] at the meeting, and I'll ring you later and let you know what happens.
A: **Cheers** [thanks]. That would be great.

A: **I bet** [I'm sure] you're hungry.
B: Yes, **I'm dying for** something to eat. [want to eat something very much]
A: Well, I think you'll find some **stuff** in the fridge.

A: What **are you up to** this evening?
[What are you doing?]
B: Nothing much. Why?
A: Well, would you like to see the new Coen Brothers film? I've heard it's **great** [very good; syn **terrific**].
B: Really? My brother saw it and said it was a **load of rubbish** [terrible].



Language help

We often use the uncountable noun **stuff**, especially in spoken English, to refer to an uncountable noun or a group of things. We do this when others know what we are talking about, or if we don't need to be exact. Put this **stuff** in the cupboard. [e.g. plates, food, toys] We carried our camping **stuff** [equipment]. What's this **stuff** in the fridge in the blue bottle? [liquid]

Exercises

95.1 Put the words into the correct column on the right.

depart mate
cheers commence
regarding terrific
purchase bloke
proceed to kids

formal	informal
<i>depart</i>	

95.2 Now write a synonym for each of the words in 95.1.

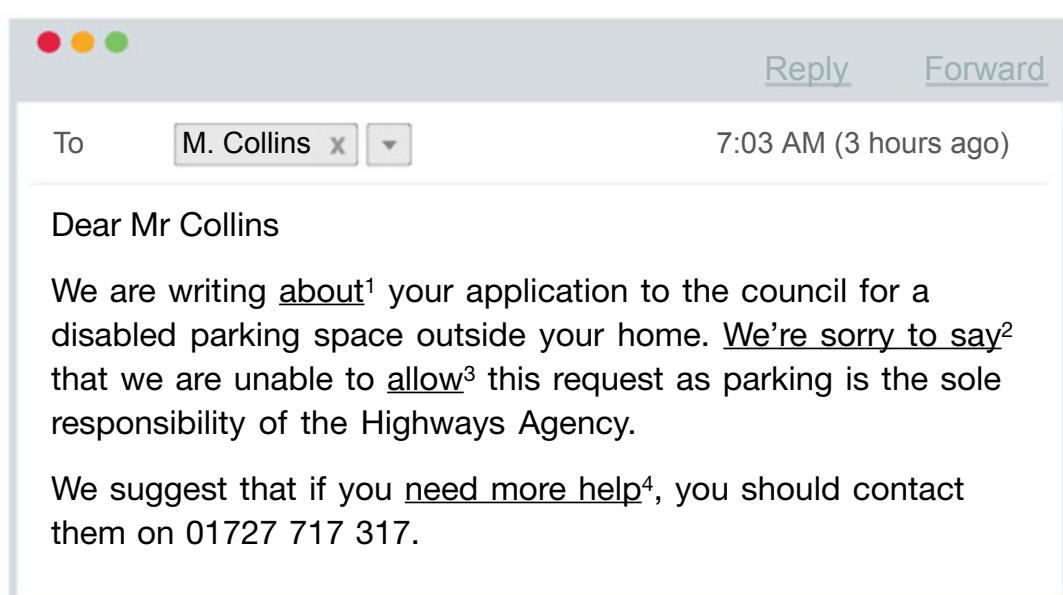
depart	leave	mate	
cheers		commence	
regarding		terrific	
purchase		bloke	
proceed to		kids	

95.3 Replace the underlined words and phrases with more informal words or phrases.

- 1 I'm sure your parents are pleased? I bet
- 2 I'd love to come, but the problem is, my mother wants us to go and see her.
- 3 I watched that new series on TV last night. It was absolutely terrible.
- 4 What are you doing this weekend?
- 5 I really want something to drink.
- 6 None of them can come on Monday.
- 7 Jamie is a friend of mine.
- 8 We go there often.
- 9 You can leave all those books, files and papers on the desk.
- 10 We should be able to get approximately 40 on the coach.

95.4 Rewrite the underlined parts of this letter in more suitable formal English.

- 1 regarding
- 2
- 3
- 4



95.5 Dictionaries will tell you if a word is *formal* or *informal/spoken*. Use your dictionary to find out if the underlined words here are *formal* or *informal/spoken*. What do they mean?

- 1 I thought the film was a drag.
- 2 Smoking isn't permitted.
- 3 It's a scary film.
- 4 This watch cost fifty quid.

A

Types of form

- a **registration form** where you enter your name on an official list, e.g. at a school or college (also called an **enrolment form** when you are applying to do a course of study)
- an **entry form** if you want to enter for an exam, e.g. Cambridge English: First
- a **landing card** for people from some countries when they enter the UK
- a **visa application form** when you make an official request to enter or leave some countries

B

Language of forms

When you **fill in** [complete] a form, you will see that they often have more formal expressions. In spoken English, ideas may be expressed differently.

written	spoken
date of birth	= When were you born?
place of birth	= Where were you born?
country of origin	= Where do you come from?
marital status	= Are you single or married?
date of arrival	= When did you arrive?
date of departure	= When are you leaving? OR When did you leave?
signed	= Write your signature [the special way you have of writing your own name]

C

Curriculum vitae

If you **apply for** a job, you need to send a letter and a **CV (curriculum vitae or résumé** in American English), which should give:

- **personal details** [information about you such as your name, address, email address, etc.]
- details about your **education** and **qualifications**, e.g. university degree, teaching certificate, etc.
- your **work experience** [the jobs you have done]
- your **interests** [what you enjoy doing]
- **skills** [abilities you have learned and practised, e.g. ability to speak a foreign language]
- **career aims** [what you want to do in your future working life]
- names of people who will give you a **reference** [a letter written by someone who knows you which says if you are suitable for a particular job]

If you **apply to** university, they **require** [need; *fml*] a **personal statement** in which you must explain why you want to go to this university; why you want to follow this particular course; details of your educational background; your skills; your interests.

D

Tips for writing a CV or personal statement

A **tip** is a useful piece of advice. Here are some tips for writing a CV or personal statement.

- A CV should be no longer than two pages; a personal statement no more than 45 lines of text.
- **Type** your CV or personal statement (**handwriting** is not suitable).
- Keep it simple. Don't make it **complicated** [difficult to understand].
- Check there are no mistakes.
- Make sure the information you give is **relevant** [connected to and useful for the particular job]. For example, if you are going to be working **on your own** [without others], don't say that you are good at working **in a team** [with a group of people].

Exercises

96.1 What forms do you have to complete in these situations?

- 1 You are just arriving in Britain and you come from a country outside the European Union. A landing card
- 2 You are applying to do an English course at a school in Britain.
- 3 You are going to do a Cambridge exam.
- 4 You want to travel to the United States this summer.

96.2 Write these sentences in more informal English.

- 1 What was your date of arrival? When did you arrive/get here?
- 2 What's your date of birth?
- 3 What's your country of origin?
- 4 What's your marital status?
- 5 What's your date of departure?

96.3 Match the words on the left with the information on the right.

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|---|
| 1 personal details | <input type="checkbox"/> c | a I would like to become a radio producer. |
| 2 education | <input type="checkbox"/> | b Trainee at Northern Radio Station, Jan–June 2007 |
| 3 qualifications | <input type="checkbox"/> | c Leona Phillips, 18 Mansion Road, Beckington BE2 3RJ |
| 4 work experience | <input type="checkbox"/> | d I direct plays for a theatre group, and help with a children's charity. |
| 5 career aims | <input type="checkbox"/> | e letter from Mr J. Tobin BA, MA (University tutor) |
| 6 interests | <input type="checkbox"/> | f BA Honours degree in Media Studies |
| 7 references | <input type="checkbox"/> | g Kent University 2007–2010, Ainslie Grammar School 1999–2006 |

96.4 Answer correct or incorrect.

- 1 It's OK to make one or two mistakes in my CV. incorrect
- 2 I need to type my CV.
- 3 It's OK if my CV is three pages long.
- 4 My CV should be complicated.
- 5 For an admin job, it is relevant to say I have computer skills.
- 6 I can put down a driving licence as one of my skills.
- 7 I can put down travelling abroad as a career aim.

96.5 Replace the underlined words with a word or phrase that has a similar meaning.

- 1 Do I have to complete this form? fill in
- 2 Monica gave me a useful piece of advice about shopping in America.
- 3 I shall be alone most of the time.
- 4 They sent the form back to me because I didn't write my signature at the bottom.
- 5 Please contact us if you need any more help.
- 6 I think I'm good at working as part of a group of people.

96.6 Over to you

Answer the questions. If possible, ask someone else the same questions.

- 1 Have you ever written a CV? If so, what information did it include?
- 2 Have you had to write a personal statement? If so, why?
- 3 On a CV, what would you put as your interests, your skills, and your career aims?

A

The basis of a discursive essay*

In a discursive essay you have to express your own ideas and **point of view** [opinion]. It is also important to show that you understand **both sides of an argument** [reasons **for** something and reasons **against** something]. This means you need to understand and use different link words and phrases such as **in addition**, **however**, etc. (See Unit 93.)

* an essay that discusses a subject

B

Expressing a point of view

Some people believe [Some people think] that no one should be sent to prison under the age of 18.

There is **an argument** [a reason to think] that everyone should have a university education.

Language help

You can express a personal point of view with phrases such as **I believe / think that ...** or **It seems to me that ...** but you can also use less personal and direct ways of expressing a point of view, as in the phrases on the left. Many people think it is better not to use *In my opinion* in written essays.

C

Giving both sides of an argument

One of the advantages of being an only child is that you have more attention from your parents. **However**, it can be lonely without the company of brothers and sisters.

On the one hand, computers can do so many things faster than human beings. **On the other (hand)**, some people are becoming dependent on them, which is not a good thing.

D

Comparing and contrasting*

We often **make comparisons** between groups of people, or between the past and the present. **Compared with / to** my grandparents, I have had much more opportunity to travel abroad.

In the past people didn't have computers, **but nowadays** there is one in almost every home.

Most parts of the developed world have become richer in the last thirty years. **In contrast**, many countries in Africa have become much poorer.

* saying how two things are similar and how they are different

E

Making generalisations

Sometimes a simple statement is not accurate, e.g. *Young people prefer to watch American films*.

This is not true for *all* young people, so we use certain words and phrases to show that we are **making a generalisation** [saying that something is true most of the time or in most situations].

In general, Japanese society is more focused on groups than individuals. (*syn on the whole*)

Teenagers **tend to** have [usually have] more freedom than in the past.

F

Cause and effect*

Poor diet and lack of exercise are the main **causes of obesity** [reasons for being very fat].

Obesity is often the **result of** a bad diet and not enough exercise.

People don't eat the right food or get enough exercise, and **consequently** [because of this; *syn as a result*] they put on weight.

Poor diet can cause obesity, and this can have a bad **effect on** people's health.

* how something happens, and then makes something else happen

Language help

Don't confuse the verb **affect** and the noun **effect**.

Pollution can affect people's breathing.

Pollution can have an effect on people's breathing.

Exercises

97.1 Match the definitions on the left with the examples on the right.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1 expressing a point of view | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | a Canada has a smaller population than the USA. |
| 2 making a comparison | <input type="checkbox"/> | b People tend to retire at a later age. |
| 3 describing the result of something | <input type="checkbox"/> | c Some people believe we should never go to war. |
| 4 showing both sides of an argument | <input type="checkbox"/> | d Animals die because we're cutting down the forest. |
| 5 making a generalisation | <input type="checkbox"/> | e Television can make children lazy. However, there are many programmes with real educational value. |

97.2 One word is missing in each sentence. What is it, and where should it go?

- 1 It seems ~~s~~ me that there is a problem. *to*
- 2 One of the advantages studying law is that it should lead to a good career.
- 3 It is important to give ~~sides~~ of the argument.
- 4 Too much time spent in front of a television can have a bad ~~eff ect~~ children.
- 5 People like to have freedom of choice. On the other, too much choice can be a bad thing.
- 6 Time tends go faster as you get older.

97.3 Choose the correct word to complete the sentences. Sometimes both are correct.

- 1 There is not enough food, and *consequently* / *on the other hand* people are dying.
- 2 Advertising is so powerful that it *causes* / *affects* people to buy things they don't want.
In addition / *However*, it can help them make the right choice when they buy things.
- 3 *In general* / *On the whole* people have more access to education than fifty years ago.
- 4 Supermarkets are very convenient because you can buy almost everything you want.
On the other side / *hand*, they are putting small shops out of business.
- 5 The north of the country is much richer compared *with* / *to* the south.

97.4 Complete part of this essay on the advantages and disadvantages of the Internet for children.

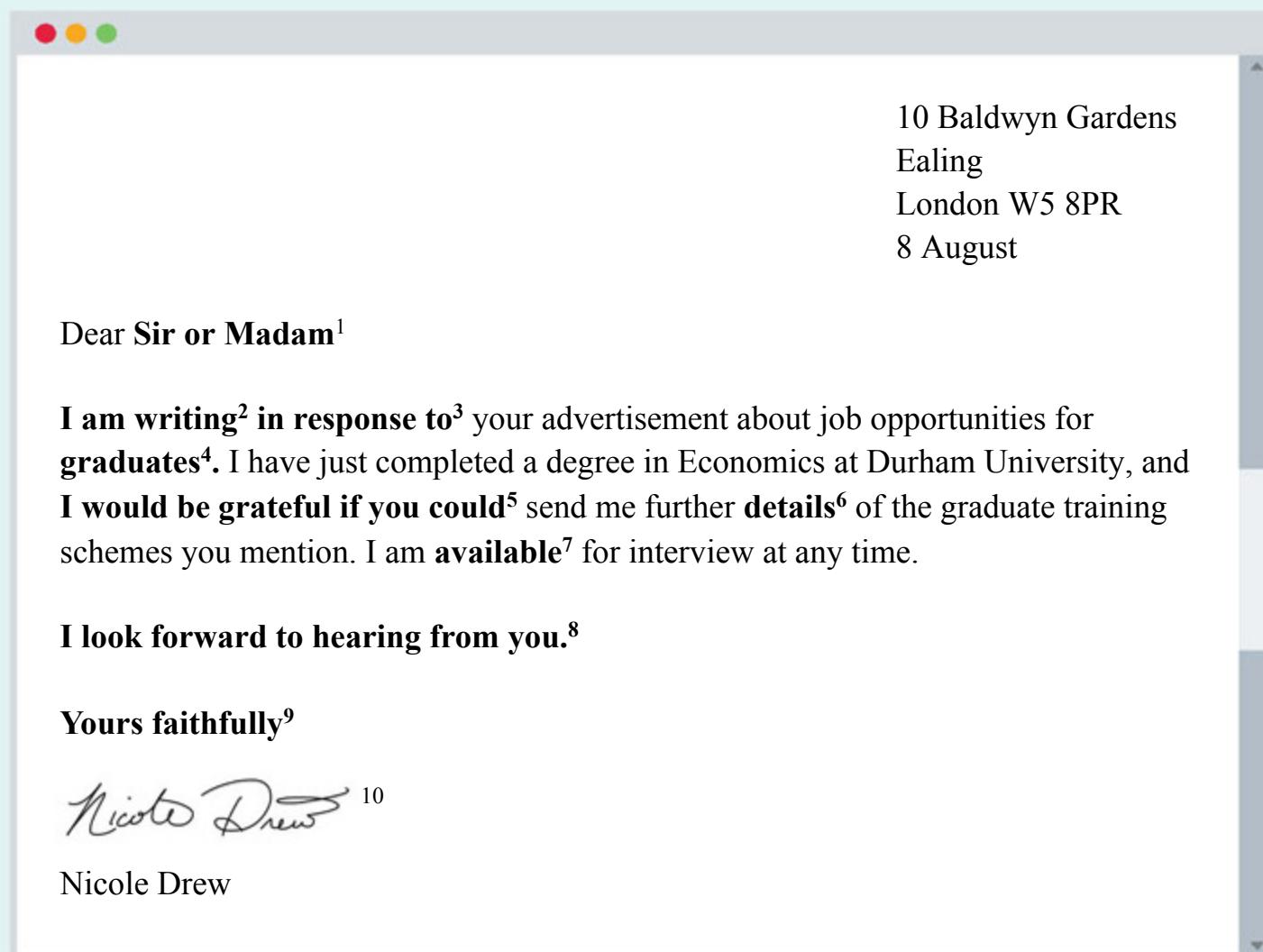
One of the¹ of the Internet is that children have access to so much knowledge and information.², many children can access this knowledge from their own homes; they don't have to go to libraries.³, some of the information on the Internet is unreliable and out-of-date, and there are some websites we would not want our children to look at. ⁴, we need to control the way that our children use the Internet, and there is certainly an ⁵ for much stricter controls on the websites that people are allowed to create. If we don't do this, the Internet could have a bad ⁶ on children.

97.5 Rewrite the sentences following the instructions in (brackets).

- 1 People who drink and drive should go to prison. (*Show that this is a personal opinion.*)
.....
I believe that people who drink and drive should go to prison......
- 2 People are conservative. (*Make this statement a generalisation.*)
.....
- 3 Cars should not be allowed in town centres. (*Make this opinion less personal.*)
.....
- 4 Children played on their bikes. Children spend most of their time in front of a computer. (*Make this a comparison between the past and the present in one sentence.*)
.....
- 5 Many people work longer and longer hours. They don't have time for hobbies. (*Show the connection between these two statements in one sentence.*)
.....

A

A formal letter



¹ use this beginning if you don't know the person's name

² This is a common way to start a letter.

³ in reply to

⁴ people with a university degree

⁵ this is slightly more polite/formal than Please could you ...

⁶ information about something (plural noun)

⁷ free

⁸ This sentence is often used to close a letter when you expect a reply.

⁹ Use this ending if you don't know the name of the person you are writing to. If you know the name, end the letter with Yours sincerely, or Kind regards.

¹⁰ Writing your name like this in a particular way is a signature. It is normal at the end of a formal letter to sign your name first [write your signature], and then print it, e.g. Nicole Drew.

B

Useful words and phrases

Thank you for your letter regarding [about] the damage to your vehicle.

I regret to inform you [I am sorry to say] that your application [official request for something] has not been successful.

I am pleased to inform you that your application has been successful. [I am happy to say]

I am writing to enquire about English courses at your school. [ask about]

You will need to confirm the booking in writing [write to say that the booking is certain].

We would like to thank you for offering your support [say thank you for offering your help].

We would like to apologise for [say sorry for] the delay [when something arrives later than expected]. OR Please accept our apologies for the delay.

I enclose a cheque for £100. [I am sending a cheque for £ 100 in the same envelope as this letter.]

Exercises

98.1 Correct seven more mistakes in the email.

From Michael Ridley 7:03 AM (3 hours ago)

Sir
Dear sir or Madame

I write with response to your advertisement for trainees in yesterday's newspaper, and I would be greatful if you could send me further detail.

I look forward to hear from you.

Kind regards,

Michael Ridley

98.2 Finish the sentences.

- 1 If you don't know the person you are writing to, you start *Dear Sir or Madam*
- 2 If you would like more information, you ask for further
- 3 A common way of closing a letter is *I look forward*
- 4 If you don't know the person you are writing to, you end *Yours*
- 5 If you know the name of the person, you can end *Yours*
- 6 Another way of ending a letter is *Kind*
- 7 At the end of the letter you also write your

98.3 Rewrite the phrases and sentences in more formal English, starting with the words given. Keep a similar meaning.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Thanks for the letter about the fire. | Thank you for your letter <i>regarding the fire</i> . |
| 2 I'm sorry to tell you ... | I |
| 3 I'm happy to tell you ... | I am |
| 4 Are you free on Wednesday? | Are you |
| 5 I want to ask about the dates of the course. | I would like to |
| 6 We want to say sorry for the delay. | Please accept |
| 7 Please send me the details. | I would be |
| 8 Could you say that's definite in a letter? | Could you |
| 9 I'm sending a copy of my CV. | I |

98.4 Complete the letter.

1 *Dear* Mr Wilkinson,
I am 2 in 3 to your letter of 10 February
4 the delivery of the Maxwell dining table and four chairs that you ordered.

In the middle of January there was a fire at the factory and it had to close down for almost a week. The recent heavy snow has caused further problems, and coming so soon after the busy Christmas period, we 5 to inform you that there are 6 of up to four weeks on most orders.

We promise to do everything we can to speed up deliveries, but in the meantime we would like to 7 for the obvious inconvenience this has caused.

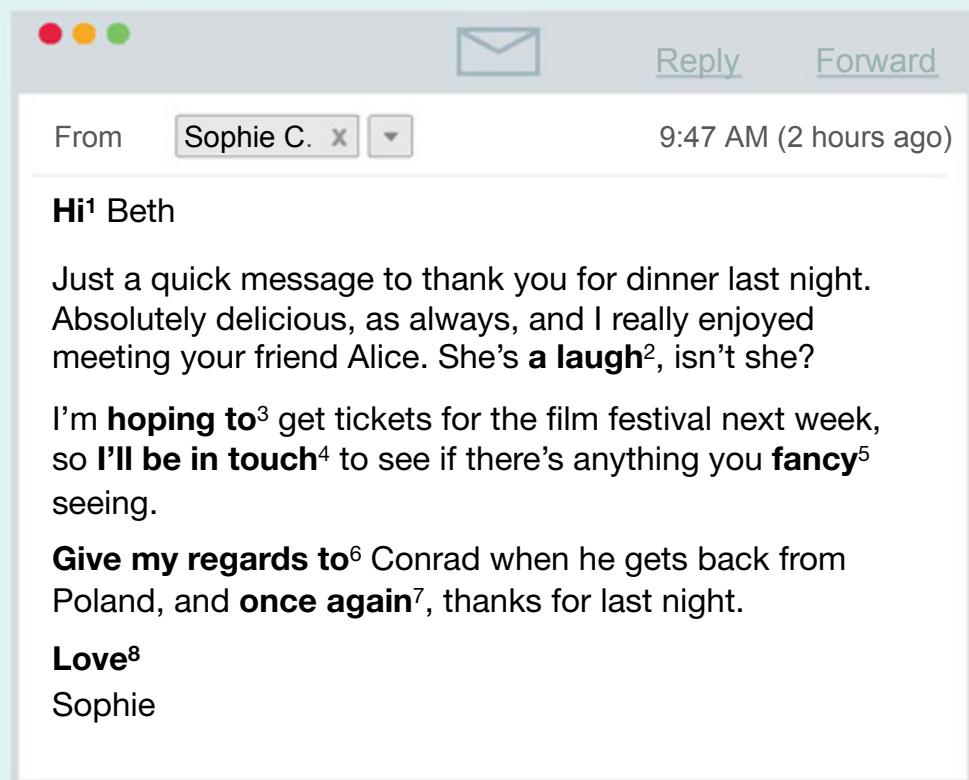
Yours 8

James Porter
Customer services manager

A

An email

- ¹ We can begin an informal email or letter with **Hi** Beth, **Hello** Beth, or **Dear** Beth.
- ² a funny person
- ³ planning or intending to
- ⁴ make contact, e.g. by phone, email or text
- ⁵ want (to see) *infml*
- ⁶ say hello to Conrad from me; also **send my regards to** Conrad. With family members and very close friends we also say **give / send my love to**.
- ⁷ again, as before (here it is used to say thank you one more time)
- ⁸ We can end an informal email/letter to a close friend or family member with **Love** or **Lots of love**. We also often use **Best wishes** or **All the best** when we end a letter or email to a friend.



B

Messaging

Hi Emma

 Sorry it's been **ages¹** **since²** I last got in touch, but I just wanted to **let you know³** that I'm coming to Birmingham **in two weeks' time⁴** – **actually⁵** just before your birthday.

Sounds great, when exactly?


12 March. Could we get **together⁶** and go out for a meal? Maybe Mark could **join us⁷** as well?

That's perfect. Can you contact Mark and I'll book a restaurant?


Great! **Anyway⁸**, better get back to work. See you soon!


¹ a long time² from a time in the past until now³ tell you⁴ two weeks from now

Language help

We can use **actually** to give more exact information, as in the letter (*syn in fact*). We also use it a great deal in spoken English to say something which is surprising or different from what you expect, e.g. He looks Italian, but **actually** he's not. (*Syn in fact*) **Actually** does not mean *at the moment*, e.g. *The land is currently for sale* (NOT The land is **actually** for sale).

⁵ (see Language help)⁶ meet for a social reason⁷ come with us⁸ used to change the subject or end a conversation/letter

Exercises

99.1 Find five more phrases using words from the box.

in give be once best let in to again you
week's touch my a regards time wishes know

be in touch

.....
.....
.....

99.2 Write these phrases in different ways. The phrases can be similar but don't repeat exactly the same words.

- | | | |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|
| 1 Hello Julie | Hi | Julie |
| 2 Hello Mark | | Mark |
| 3 Give my love to Patricia | | Patricia |
| 4 Love, Evelyn | | , Evelyn |
| 5 Best wishes, Sam | | , Sam |

99.3 Rewrite the sentences using the word in capitals. Keep a similar meaning.

- | | | |
|--|-------|--------------------------------|
| 1 Do you want to come with us? | JOIN | Do you want to <i>join us?</i> |
| 2 Do you want to go? | FANCY | Do you |
| 3 I'll write soon. | TOUCH | I'll |
| 4 It looks new, but actually it isn't. | FACT | It looks new, but |
| 5 I'll tell you as soon as possible. | LET | I'll |
| 6 I'm going three weeks from now. | IN | I'm going |
| 7 Jamie is very funny. | LAUGH | Jamie is |
| 8 Let's meet for lunch. | GET | Let's |
| 9 I haven't written for ages. | SINCE | It's |

99.4 Complete the email with words from the box.

touch join fact together hoping in
let since give ages actually anyway

● ● ●

Reply Forward

From Jonny M. 4:42 AM (5 hours ago)

Dear Gilberto

I haven't been in ¹ **touch** for ² – I'm sorry about that. In ³ , I've been really busy ⁴ I last wrote because I've got a new job in TV – ⁵ it's with the BBC. I'm doing research for various documentary programmes and I'm ⁶ to go to Brazil ⁷ three months' time. If so, I'll obviously get in touch. It would be great if we could get ⁸ , and maybe Filipe could ⁹ us if he's free. ¹⁰ , I'll write again soon. I hope things are going well with you, and ¹¹ me know when the baby arrives. And, of course, ¹² my love to Teresa.

All the best,
Jonny