

M 1 - What do you know about emails? – A quiz

Today email communication is a way of life. However, it has not always been so. What do you know about the development of the email? Try the following quiz to find out.



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Tasks

1. Read through the quiz and tick the correct answer.
2. Compare your results with a partner. Then ask your teacher for the correct answers

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) When was the first email sent?
<input type="radio"/> a) 1971
<input type="radio"/> b) 1984
<input type="radio"/> c) 1965
<input type="radio"/> d) 1978 | 2) What is the original meaning of the word spam? A kind of ...
<input type="radio"/> a) ... letter
<input type="radio"/> b) ... reply
<input type="radio"/> c) ... meat
<input type="radio"/> d) ... noise |
| 3) Who is the biggest webmail provider in the USA?
<input type="radio"/> a) Yahoo
<input type="radio"/> b) Google
<input type="radio"/> c) AOL
<input type="radio"/> d) Lycos | 4) What is the most common ¹ password?
<input type="radio"/> a) people's birthday
<input type="radio"/> b) 123456
<input type="radio"/> c) people's postcode
<input type="radio"/> d) names of people's children or pets |
| 5) How many email accounts are there in the world?
<input type="radio"/> a) over three hundred million (300,000,000+)
<input type="radio"/> b) over six hundred million (600,000,000+)
<input type="radio"/> c) over four billion (4,000,000,000)
<input type="radio"/> d) over two billion (2,000,000,000) | 6) Who sends shorter email messages?
<input type="radio"/> a) older people
<input type="radio"/> b) younger people
<input type="radio"/> c) businessmen
<input type="radio"/> d) women |
| 7) What is the average ² number of emails received per person per day (including spam)?
<input type="radio"/> a) 10
<input type="radio"/> b) 40
<input type="radio"/> c) 75
<input type="radio"/> d) 90 | 8) What is the average number of emails sent per person per day?
<input type="radio"/> a) 10–20
<input type="radio"/> b) 20–30
<input type="radio"/> c) 30–40
<input type="radio"/> d) 40–50 |

Vocabulary

1 **common**: gebräuchlich, häufig – 2 **average**: der Durchschnitt, durchschnittlich

The role of emails in daily life – a discussion

M 2

Take part in a discussion about emails.

Task

Discuss the following points in a group or in class. Use the language support below.

- How many emails do you receive/send in a week (at work? at home?)
- Can you imagine¹ a life without emails? Why (not)?
- What kind of spam messages do you receive?
- How do you think (spam) firms get hold of your email address?
- Have you ever sent/received an email in English? What was it about? Who did you send it to?
- Do you reply to every email? Why (not)?

Giving your opinion² – language support

When giving your opinion there are many ways to start your sentence.

- In my opinion, ...
- I think that ...
- I'm sure that ...
- I'm convinced² that ...



You may not have thought about the subject before so find it difficult to give an opinion.

- Perhaps it would be ...
- I've never thought about that, it might ...
- Maybe that's right, but ...
- I suppose ...

You may also agree or disagree³ with something or someone.

- I agree that emails ...
- I disagree with you, I think ...
- I don't agree with you about ...
- I have a different opinion. I ...

Vocabulary

1 **to imagine sth.:** sich etw. vorstellen – 2 **to convince so.:** jmdn. überzeugen – 3 **to disagree with sth.:** gegen etw. sein

How to write good subject lines

M 3

Why do we need subject lines? Find out below.

The importance of subject lines

A recipient¹ receives approximately 90 emails per day. Therefore, it is very important to make sure that your email is read and not deleted² as spam, or overlooked³ as unimportant. One of the most useful ways to ensure⁴ this is to make good use of subject lines.



A subject line is a headline as in a newspaper; it needs to grab the attention⁵ of the reader. In a newspaper it will help to sell more copies of the issue, in an email it will give the reader some indication⁶ as to the content of the email and its relevance.

It should not be too long and need not be a full sentence, but it should be carefully worded so that the recipient will open the email and not dismiss⁷ it at a glance⁸. It should not be too vague and it should never be left empty.

A subject line is also important as this distinguishes⁹ it from spam and will make sure that it is not thrown in the trash bin. It might, therefore be a good idea to make sure it contains something that is relevant for the recipient especially if you are writing for the first time and he/she does not know who you are.

Task 1: Read the info text above. Then decide whether the following statements are true or false? Circle the correct answer.

- a) A subject line is completely unimportant. t / f
- b) An email without a subject line may be deleted by mistake. t / f
- c) Subject lines are like headlines. t / f
- d) A subject line should be a full sentence. t / f
- e) A good subject line catches the reader's eye. t / f
- f) Subject lines can show that the email is not spam. t / f

Task 2: Below you see examples for subject lines. Which ones are positive, and which are negative examples? Say why.

a) Re: Meeting

b) Re: Appointment¹¹ for meeting tomorrow

c) Re: Meeting for heads of department concerning sales figures

d) Re: Sales figures¹⁰ for new products 2017

e) Re: Sales figures

Vocabulary

1 **recipient**: der Empfänger – 2 **to delete sth.**: etw. löschen – 3 **to overlook sth.**: etw. übersehen – 4 **to ensure sth.**: etw. sicherstellen – 5 **to grab someone's attention**: die Aufmerksamkeit von jmdm. erregen – 6 **indication**: die Andeutung – 7 **dismiss sth.**: etw. verwerfen – 8 **at a glance**: auf einen Blick – 9 **to distinguish**: sich unterscheiden – 10 **sales figures**: die Verkaufszahlen – 11 **appointment**: die Verabredung, der Termin

Task 3: Your subject line should sum up the content and not contain any unnecessary information. Read through the following emails carefully and then find a suitable subject line for each one. Explain why you have chosen that subject line.

a) Re: _____

Dear Sir or Madam

We see from your website that you are suppliers¹ of electrical components². However, not all the products we require are listed online.

Please could you send us your latest catalogue and price list for your complete product range³?

Thank you for your help.

Yours faithfully

Amanda Oldman

b) Re: _____

Dear James

I have still not received a copy of the minutes⁴ from our last meeting and need it urgently⁵.

Please could you email it to me today as there are one or two points I need to quote⁶ for a letter to a client.

Thank you for this.

Best regards

Jenny

c) Re: _____

Dear Ms Smith

Yesterday, 26 March, we received the delivery⁷ for our order XY 39485, but after unpacking the boxes we found that four of the products were damaged⁸. Please could you replace⁹ these items as soon as possible?

Thank you for your cooperation¹⁰.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Smythe

Vocabulary

1 **supplier:** der Lieferant – 2 **component:** das Bauteil – 3 **product range:** die Produktpalette – 4 **minutes:** das Protokoll – 5 **urgent:** dringend – 6 **to quote a price:** eine Preisangabe machen – 7 **delivery:** die Lieferung – 8 **damaged:** beschädigt – 9 **to replace sth.:** etw. ersetzen – 10 **cooperation:** die Zusammenarbeit

Language in business emails – reading an info text

M 4

Find out which expressions to use when writing business emails.

Tips for writing emails

General information

- When you are writing an email you must always remember that this is a formal piece of correspondence, even if an email is faster and shorter. An email may get printed out and passed on to customers or colleagues¹, so you must consider whether your words are suitable² for printing out or being read by others.
- Slang, emoticons and abbreviations should be avoided and it is also important to address³ the recipient correctly and not be over-familiar⁴ with a person you do not know well. It is also better to use the full verb forms and not contractions e.g. “we will” and not “we’ll” at the beginning.



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Using the right beginnings and endings

- Let's start by considering the salutation⁵ in an email. For example, if you are making an enquiry⁶ and do not know the person at all you would start with “Dear Sir or Madam” and finish with “Yours faithfully”.
- If you know the person's name, then by all means⁷ use it. In this way you would address the person as “Dear Ms Banks” and finish with “Yours sincerely”. These are the same rules as with a business letter.
- If you have corresponded with a person a number of times and if they are in agreement⁸, then it is acceptable to use their first name. However, before you end up by treading on someone's toes⁹ it might be a good idea to wait and let the other person take the first step¹⁰.
- If you start your email with “Dear Judith”, then the close would be “Kind regards/Best regards”. Do not use “Best wishes”, “Cheers”, “love”, “Greetings” etc. for business.
- At times you may be addressed only with your name alone e.g. “Jane Richards” without the “Dear”. However, using the recipient's name alone can sound harsh and hostile¹¹.

Vocabulary

1 **colleague**: der Kollege, die Kollegin – 2 **suitable**: geeignet, passend – 3 **to address sth.**: etw. ansprechen – 4 **over-familiar**: zu vertraut – 5 **salutation**: die Begrüßungsformel – 6 **enquiry**: die Anfrage – 7 **by all means**: durchaus – 8 **in agreement with ...**: übereinstimmend mit ... – 9 **to tread on someone's toes**: jmdm. auf den Schlips treten – 10 **to take the first step**: die Initiative ergreifen – 11 **harsh and hostile**: hart und unfreundlich

Task 1: Read the tips on salutations and complimentary closes again. Then look at the examples below. Which are positive and which are negative example(s)? Say why.

a) Dear Tom

I hope you are well.

I've just realised I don't have your latest catalogue. I wonder if you could send it as soon as possible as we need it urgently.

Thank you for your help.

Best regards

Sandra



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b) Tom Parker

I need the latest catalogue by Friday. Please send it directly to me.

Cheers Ben

c) Tom

Send me the catalogue this week, I'm desperate for it. My boss will be angry with me if you don't.

Thanks a lot

Trevor

Task 2: Which salutation and complimentary close would you use for these emails? Write the answer on the lines.

a) You are writing to Barbara Thomson, a colleague who you know quite well, although you do not meet her outside of the company.

b) You want to make an enquiry about delivery conditions with a company with whom you have not done business before.

c) You have received an offer for conference facilities from Ms Deidre Murdoch of the Carlton Hotel in London and would like to confirm your dates.

Task 3: Show that you have understood the text: Match an expression from the left hand column to an expression from the right hand one to make a full sentence.

1. <u>e)</u> An email ...	a) ... avoided in a formal email.
2. ____ When you write an email ...	b) ... if you use the first name.
3. ____ Be careful, ...	c) ... are unacceptable in formal e-mails.
4. ____ Slang should be ...	d) ... if you are sure that it is acceptable for the recipient.
5. ____ Emoticons ...	e) ... is normally shorter than a letter.
6. ____ Only use the first name, ...	f) ... might sound very harsh.
7. ____ Kind regards is a good ending, ...	g) ... you must consider your target reader.
8. ____ Omitting ³ "dear" ...	h) ... because your email may be read by a complete stranger.