


#### 4 Match the vocabulary used in formal emails (1–10) with the less formal vocabulary below.

to answer • to ask • to get in touch with • help • to need • *pk*  
• to put off • to be sorry • to set up • to tell

- |              |   |           |               |   |       |
|--------------|---|-----------|---------------|---|-------|
| 1 convenient | = | <u>OK</u> | 6 to contact  | = | _____ |
| 2 assistance | = | _____     | 7 to postpone | = | _____ |
| 3 to inform  | = | _____     | 8 to arrange  | = | _____ |
| 4 to reply   | = | _____     | 9 to enquire  | = | _____ |
| 5 to regret  | = | _____     | 10 to require | = | _____ |

#### 5 Now complete the emails below with words from above. Be careful of the register!



1 Dear Mr Bass


I am writing to \_\_\_\_\_<sup>1</sup> about your range of less exclusive products.

Our company has diversified recently and, in addition to the professional equipment we have previously purchased, we now \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup> products for the hobby golfer.

Could we \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup> a meeting to see one of your sales reps who can \_\_\_\_\_<sup>4</sup> us about your products? The week of 19 August would be \_\_\_\_\_<sup>5</sup> for us.

As I will be out of the office from 2 to 6 August, please \_\_\_\_\_<sup>6</sup> my assistant, Sylvie Jouet, directly.

Best regards  
Simon Pilgrim



2 Hi Sylvie

Just a quick note to say we are very \_\_\_\_\_<sup>7</sup> for the delivery delay.

I'm afraid we'll have to \_\_\_\_\_<sup>8</sup> the delivery date for 10 days because of the truck drivers' strike.

When exactly do you \_\_\_\_\_<sup>9</sup> the goods? If it's very urgent I'll \_\_\_\_\_<sup>10</sup> the manager of the forwarders whether we can \_\_\_\_\_<sup>11</sup> a special delivery somehow.

I'll \_\_\_\_\_<sup>12</sup> asap, but please let me know the latest date for the goods.

Despite this, have a nice day!  
Rgds  
Jean



### Colloquial phrases and contractions

#### Colloquial phrases

When English native speakers write to each other as close business acquaintances they often use colloquial phrases like *the low-down*, *to chase something up* (AmE *down*), or *cheers* (BrE for *thanks*). Be careful when using colloquial phrases as they can make your English sound too familiar when used in the wrong context.

#### Contractions

Emails often reflect spoken English and tend to use contractions instead of the full form, e.g. *here's* (*here is*), *haven't* (*have not*), or *I'll* (*I will*).

Watch out: don't leave out the apostrophe when using contractions as the meaning could be changed.

it's = *it is*    its = *possessive*    I'll = *I will*    ill = *sick*

## 2 Find the matching pairs.

#### colloquial language

- 1 to check sth out
- 2 to touch base with sb
- 3 to send sth by snail mail
- 4 to mail\* sb
- 5 to give sb the low-down
- 6 to chase sth up (AmE: *down*)
- 7 to be out of the loop
- 8 to put sth on hold

#### standard language

- to send sb an email
- to give sb information
- to send sth by post
- to try to find or get sth (that is missing)
- to look at sth in detail
- to get in contact with sb
- to postpone sth (or put sth off)
- to be out of touch or not have heard sth

\* Watch out when *mail* is used as a verb; in AmE *to mail* also means sending something by the traditional postal service (i.e. *by snail mail*!).

Now rewrite this email using standard language to replace the colloquial phrases.

Hello Sally

Thanks for getting in touch and giving me the low-down on the March sales meeting. By the way, I called Barbara's office and tried to chase up the January figures but she's been on holiday – so no success there! Perhaps you could touch base with Gary and ask him to mail me the info directly. I hope he can – I'd hate to have to put the meeting on hold.

Oh, one last thing: can you send me a few of the new brochures? No hurry – snail mail will do!

Ciao

Jon

1 selected

### 3 A virus has knocked out all the apostrophes in these sentences. Put them back in.

- 1 The employees were asked to comment on a no-smoking policy. Well report the results in our next online bulletin.
- 2 Were happy the negotiations ended positively for both parties.
- 3 Lets introduce Internet access for all of our employees. Theyve been using it for years anyway.
- 4 The production plants just had its yearly safety examination and no problems have been reported.
- 5 If you havent received the report, let me know & Ill send it on.
- 6 Heres the survey. Remember, well have to scrap the product if its not popular.

### 4 David has replied to Mike's email in exercise 1 by 'quoting' from the original message. Complete David's email with items a–e.

- a No problem. According to their message, they're back on the 9th. I'll get back to you with the info asap.
- b Thanks for yr email. I've written my answers in below.
- c I agree. Let's discuss it with the new contact person though.
- d Yes, I got it. Thanks.
- e I've tried to call but the answerphone picks up. Apparently they're all on holiday! ;-) I'll keep trying though.

**To:** Mike Ainsley <m.ainsley@trt.ch> **From:** David Page <d.page@trt.ch>

**Subject:** re: Motorson invoice – the story continues!

Morning, Mike

1 [REDACTED]

<You should have a copy of their contract – I faxed it to you on Tues 2nd.>

2 [REDACTED]

<We may have to make out a new invoice in a different name – what do you think?>

3 [REDACTED]

<Could you call Motorson again for me asap & get all the details, including the name of our new contact person? Then we can chase up the outstanding amount.>

4 [REDACTED]

<I'll need the info by Friday 12th as I'm meeting Fiona Chambers to update our client database.>

5 [REDACTED]

D

### 5 Put the following phrases in the correct category, informing or replying.

Just a note to say/tell you ... • In reply to your email ... • Here are the details on ... • I'm writing to clarify ... • I'll get back to you asap ... • Thank you for clarifying ... • I'll follow up the points mentioned in your email ... • I'd like to inform you of ... • Just a few comments about/on ... • Just to update you on ... • Let me fill you in on ... • Thanks for your email. • You'll find the info attached ...

#### Informing

*Just a note to say/tell you ...*

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#### Replying

*In reply to your email ...*

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### 6 Use (parts of) the phrases in exercise 5 to complete these short emails. More than one answer may be possible.

**a** From: Monica Jason To: Janice Forbes

**Subject:** Market research

Hey Janice!

Just \_\_\_\_\_<sup>1</sup>

the market research idea. We have 2000 participants & the start-up date is Oct 1. The rest of the details aren't clear so I'll \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup>.

Best wishes

Monica :)

**c** From: Phoebe Marlow To: Gerald Ainsley

**Subject:** re: Updates

Dear Gerald

In \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup>

I've put together all the answers to your questions in a Word document which I can either fax you or send as an attachment. Which would you prefer?

Speak to you soon

Phoebe

**b** From: David Collins To: Alison Price

**Subject:** Special Offer

Dear Ms Price

I'd \_\_\_\_\_<sup>4</sup> a special offer we're giving to all our most loyal customers. For any order of office supplies which exceeds EUR 200 we shall include a free stationery kit. For more details of this offer you'll find \_\_\_\_\_<sup>5</sup>.

Regards

David Collins

Customer Services

**d** From: Steve East To: Timothy Barker

**Subject:** re: conference info - again!!

Hi Tim

Thanks \_\_\_\_\_<sup>6</sup>. It sounds as if you still haven't got that info about the conference. Let \_\_\_\_\_<sup>7</sup> the important details. (I'll also post the packet to you.) It's taking place on Wed and Thurs 25-26.8. at the Adele Conference Centre in York and we're starting each day at 9am. Your presentation is on Wed at 2 pm - you've only got 40 minutes so talk fast!

Bye for now

Steve