

# Introduction to E-mail reading

## Business Reading

Department of Business English

2/2564



## Email structure

One of the advantages of emails over normal 'snail-mail' letters is that they are quick and direct. We send an email for a particular purpose and we expect a fast response or immediate action. For emails – whether formal or informal – to be most effective, it is a good idea to give them a clear, logical structure.

**Subject line:** This should be short and give some specific information about the contents of your message.

**Salutations:** As in letter-writing, the salutation can be formal or informal, depending on how well you know the person you are writing to.

Dear Mr, Mrs, Ms ...	<i>A formal form of address, also used when first contacting a person.</i>
Dear John	<i>Less formal. Either you have had contact with this person before, or they have already addressed you by your first name.</i>
Hi/Hello Mary (or just the name)	<i>Informal, usually used with colleagues you often work with. In the USA and the UK also sometimes used at first contact.</i>
(no salutation)	<i>Very informal, usually used in messages which are part of a longer email exchange.</i>

**Opening sentence:** This is used to explain why you are writing. (Remember: the opening sentence should always start with a capital letter.)

I'm writing to ...	<i>More formal introduction to say why you are writing.</i>
Just a quick note to ...	<i>Friendly, informal way to say why you are writing.</i>

**Conclusion:** This is where you tell the reader what kind of response, if any, you expect.

Looking forward to your reply.	<i>Friendly ending, can be used in formal or informal correspondence.</i>
Hope to hear from you soon.	<i>Informal ending to indicate a reply is necessary.</i>

**Close:** Like the salutation, this can vary from formal to very informal.

Yours sincerely	<i>Very formal, rarely used in email correspondence.</i>
Regards/Best wishes	<i>Most commonly used close, can be used in formal and informal emails.</i>
Bye/All the Best/Best	<i>Friendly, informal close.</i>
James/Mary	<i>Name only (or initials) is also common when writing to close colleagues.</i>



#### 4 Look at this excerpt from a typical inbox and find an email ...

from Martin which ...

- 1 is urgent.
- 2 is probably not work-related.
- 3 is asking for input.
- 4 contains new information about a meeting.
- 5 is a reply to an email you sent.

from Julia which ...

- 6 is a request for information.
- 7 was sent on from someone else.
- 8 contains one or several documents.
- 9 contains information about the new division.

Skrzynka odbiorcza				do	Zawartość
	Od	Temat	Wysłano		
a	Martin Weber	ideas for a venue?	05.03.2003 12:34		
b	Martin Weber	sales meeting	05.03.2003 13:36		
c	📧 Martin Weber	something amusing for you	05.03.2003 13:53		
d	Martin Weber	car park closed tomorrow	05.03.2003 15:34		
e	! Martin Weber	sales meeting update	05.03.2003 17:41		
f	Martin Weber	Re: tomorrow's event	05.03.2003 19:34		
g	📧 Meadows, Julia	outstanding invoices	06.03.2003 09:02		
h	! Meadows, Julia	FW: invoice 0167	06.03.2003 09:55		
i	Meadows, Julia	REQ: current price list	06.03.2003 12:38		
j	Meadows, Julia	Info	06.03.2003 16:49		
k	Meadows, Julia	Info	07.03.2003 11:06		
l	📧 Meadows, Julia	PET contract	07.03.2003 11:45		

**6** Look at the paragraphs below. Each paragraph belongs to either a formal or an informal email. Find the two emails and write the letters (a–j) in the table below.

**a** Attached you'll find the new price list for our complete product range. We've discussed this with other distributors & they agree the increase can be passed on to their customers without any problems.

**b** A quick note to tell you about next week's meeting

**c** See you then! Enjoy yourself at the première tonight!

**d** Regards,  
Heidi

**e** Hi Vladka,  
How's it going?

**f** Bye, Ivan

**g** I'm writing to inform you of our price increases for the next quarter.

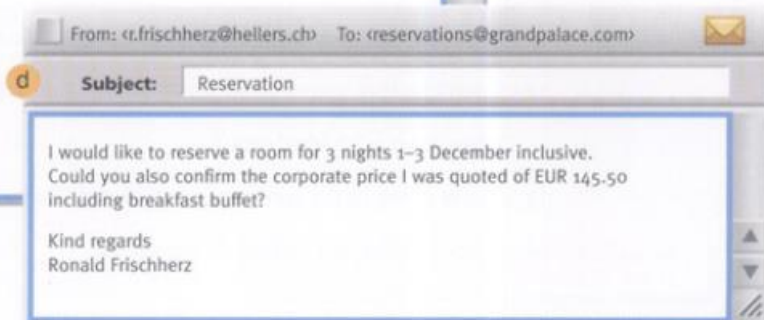
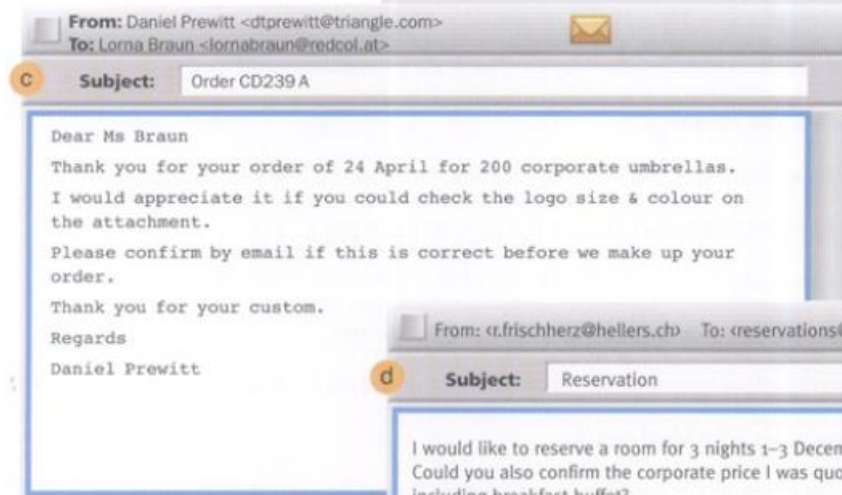
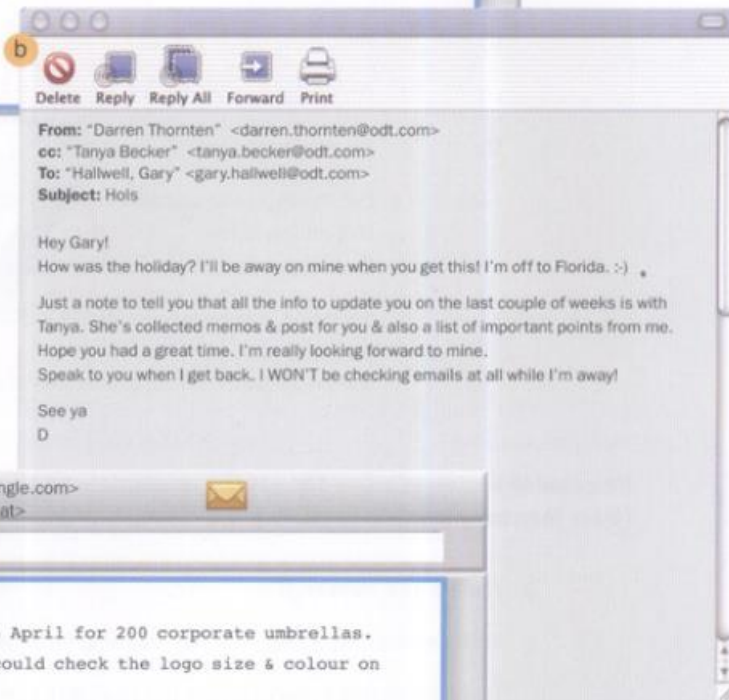
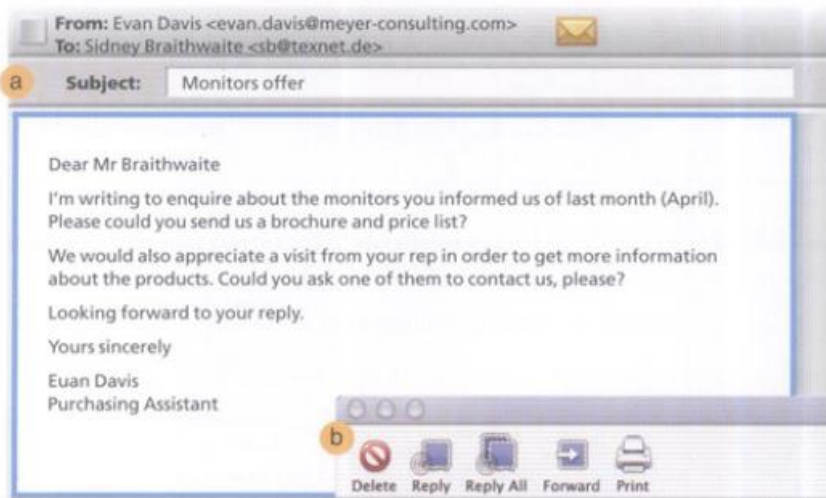
**h** Dear Sam,

**i** We're meeting at 'Frank's' in Haverhill Street at about 5.30 pm. John is bringing the Swiss visitors with him directly after the factory tour. We'll hold a meeting first, then have dinner. Is that OK?

**j** Hope you have a successful third quarter and we look forward to future business contacts with you.

	Formal email	Informal email
salutation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
opening sentence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
body	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
friendly ending	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
complimentary close	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**1 Look at the emails a – f. Which messages are formal and which are informal?**



**e** **To:** Gabriella <gabriella.m@bradforbs.co.uk>  
**From:** Yanis <cyta@infotech2.co.uk>  
**Subject:** Change of plan

Hello Gabi  
 I hope this email reaches you before you leave the office.  
 I'm afraid the rep who's coming to visit you tomorrow has  
 been taken ill.  
 Would it be OK if we put off her visit until she's well?  
 Hope this isn't going to cause you too much trouble.  
 Let me know if I can be of assistance.  
 Have a nice day :)  
 Yanis

**f** **Internet use**

Delete Reply Reply All Forward Print

**Subject:** Internet use  
**To:** Jackie; Dean; Sonal; Natalie; Ursula; Brian; Robert;  
 Gerhard; Chris; Charlie; Amanda; Jane; Christian; Angela;  
 Kati; Simon; David; Tim; Steve; Jason ...  
**cc:** Andrew Todd; Annabel Landis  
**From:** jenny

Dear All:  
 Please note that starting immediately use of the  
 Internet during working times will be limited. Access  
 will be granted between 15.00 – 18.00 every day.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Jenny Morris  
 Human Resources Assistant



**2 Now look at the emails again and find the following.**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1 An announcement to the staff of a new regulation | 4 A request for confirmation of an order |
| 2 A message to a colleague                         | 5 A hotel reservation                    |
| 3 A message to a customer about a change in plans  | 6 An enquiry to a supplier               |

**6** What do you think the following abbreviations stand for? Write out the full meaning.

- |   |           |                       |    |      |       |
|---|-----------|-----------------------|----|------|-------|
| 1 | ie        | <u>in other words</u> | 6  | bw   | _____ |
| 2 | asap      | _____                 | 7  | attn | _____ |
| 3 | Thurs     | _____                 | 8  | rgds | _____ |
| 4 | Jan       | _____                 | 9  | pls  | _____ |
| 5 | at the mo | _____                 | 10 | w/e  | _____ |

**7** Read the two emails below and find at least five things that make them either formal or informal. Then use the notes to write responses in the right register.

Hi Johannes!

I'm coming over to Bern for a conference in 2 weeks & was wondering if you could sort out somewhere for me to stay? I've got a bit of info about the conference hotel, it's the Hotel Bern in Viktoriastrasse 43, but not sure I want to stay there! Can you help me pls?

Hope this is OK with you!

Teresa

PS How about meeting up for a drink one night? :-)

- send map of Bern as attachment
- list of guest houses and hotels at <[www.berncityscope.ch/accommodation.htm](http://www.berncityscope.ch/accommodation.htm)>
- dinner instead?

Dear Johannes

I'm writing to you about my visit to Bern. I'm attending a conference on 20 March and hope you can assist me in arranging accommodation. I've tried the tourist information office but they weren't very helpful.

The conference hotel is Hotel Bern in Viktoriastrasse 43 but I'd prefer to stay in a smaller guest house in the vicinity. Unfortunately I don't know Bern so it's rather difficult to find out where the best accommodation is.

I really hope the above is convenient.

Best regards

Sandy

- list of guest houses and hotels at <[www.berncityscope.ch/accommodation.htm](http://www.berncityscope.ch/accommodation.htm)>
- can book online or should I book something?
- can recommend 'Pension Bergland' (my parents stayed there)