

W5 Informal Email

E-mail informal

Writing W5 · Stages 1–4 · A2 → B1 · Exam text type

ENGLISH LESSON

Informal Email

What is it?

An informal email is a message to someone you know well: a friend, a classmate, a cousin, a pen pal. You write it to **share news, invite, thank, give advice** or **answer** their message.

- **Reader:** a friend or a family member, someone your age or someone you are close to.
- **Style:** friendly and natural, like polite spoken English. Contractions (I'm, don't, can't) are normal.
- **Length:** stages 1–2 about **50–80 words**; stages 3–4 usually **120–150 words** (B1 exams: about 100 words; always check the task).

Structure

Part	What you write	Example
Subject (optional)	a few words about the topic	Subject: Your trip in July
Greeting	Hi / Hey / Dear + first name + comma	Hi Emily,
Opening	react to their message or say why you are writing	Thanks for your email. It's great news that ...
Main part	1–3 paragraphs, one topic per paragraph; cover every point of the task	I have lots of plans for us. ...
Closing line	a question, the next step or a friendly wish	Let me know when your flight lands.
Sign-off + name	on separate lines; your first name only	Take care, / Sofía

Language focus

- **Tenses by meaning:** present simple and continuous for news about now (I'm training for a race), past simple for what happened (We went to the mountains), going to / present continuous for plans (We're visiting Puebla on Saturday), present perfect for fresh news (I've just passed my driving test!).
- **Suggestions:** Why don't we ...? · We could ... · How about + -ing? · Let's ...

- **Questions** keep the conversation going: *What about you? How was your trip? Have you decided yet?*
- **Linking words:** *and, but, so, because, also; at B1 also although, anyway, by the way, actually.*
- **Informal words:** *get (= receive, become), a lot of, pretty (= quite): The test was pretty easy.*

Useful phrases

Function	Phrases
Opening	Thanks for your email. Gracias por tu e-mail. It was great to hear from you. Me dio mucho gusto saber de ti. Sorry I haven't written for so long. Perdón por no escribirte en tanto tiempo.
News	Guess what? ¿Y sabes qué pasó? I have some great news! ¡Tengo una gran noticia! You won't believe what happened. No vas a creer lo que pasó.
Inviting, suggesting	Would you like to come ...? ¿Te gustaría venir ...? Why don't we ...? / How about going ...? ¿Y si ...? / ¿Qué te parece ...?
Answering	I'd love to! ¡Me encantaría! Sorry, I can't make it because ... Lo siento, no puedo porque ...
Closing line	Write back soon. Escíbeme pronto. Let me know if ... Avísame si ... I can't wait to see you! ¡Ya quiero verte! Say hi to your family. Saludos a tu familia.
Sign-off	Take care, • Best, • See you soon, • Love, (family, close friends) Cuídate, • Saludos, • Nos vemos pronto, • Un abrazo,

Model texts

MODEL 1 • STAGES 1-2 • A2 • 56 WORDS

Task: Write to your American friend Jake. Tell him about your weekend

and ask about his.

Hi Jake,

Thanks for your email. I'm fine, but I'm really busy at school this month!

Last weekend, I went to the mountains with my family. We stayed in a small cabin and went hiking every day. On Saturday, we saw a deer near the river. It was amazing!

What did you do last weekend? Write back soon.

Bye for now,

Diego

The word count does not include the greeting, the sign-off or the name.

MODEL 2 · STAGES 3-4 · B1 · EXAM LEVEL · 134 WORDS

Task: Your friend Emily from Ohio is coming to Mexico in July. Invite her to stay with you, suggest two activities, tell her what to bring and ask about her arrival.

Subject: Your trip in July

Hi Emily,

Thanks for your email. It's great news that you're coming to Mexico in July! Of course you can stay with us. My parents have already said yes, and you can have my sister's room because she'll be at summer camp.

I have lots of plans for us. On the first weekend, we could visit Xochimilco. It's famous for its canals and colorful boats called trajineras, and there is music everywhere. If the weather is nice, we can also go kayaking on the lake near our house. Don't worry, it's easy!

Please bring comfortable shoes and a swimsuit. It can get cold at night, so pack a sweater too.

Let me know when your flight lands, and my dad and I will pick you up at the airport. I can't wait to see you!

Take care,

Sofia

Why Model 2 works

- Every point of the task has its place: **invitation** (paragraph 1), **two activities** (2), **what to bring** (3), **arrival** (4).
- The opening reacts to Emily's message; it does not start with a long *How are you? I am fine.*
- The tenses follow the meaning: *have already said* (fresh news), *could visit* (suggestion), *will pick you up* (promise).

- The tone is friendly (Don't worry, it's easy!), but there are no emojis, abbreviations or slang.

¡Ojo!

- ✗ **Dear friend Tom,** → ✓ **Hi Tom, / Dear Tom,**
English doesn't put friend in the greeting.
- ✗ **I write you because ...** → ✓ **I'm writing because ...**
An action happening now: present continuous.
- ✗ **I look forward to see you.** → ✓ **I'm looking forward to seeing you.**
look forward to + **-ing**. In a friendly email, *I can't wait to see you!* sounds more natural.
- ✗ **How about to go to the movies?** → ✓ **How about going to the movies?**
How about + **-ing**.
- ✗ **We could to visit the zoo.** → ✓ **We could visit the zoo.**
No to after could, can, should.
- ✗ **Let me know, it would be great.** → ✓ **Let me know. It would be great.**
Two sentences need a period (or because, so, and), not just a comma.
- ✗ **Wanna come? / u / pls** → ✓ **Do you want to come? / you / please**
Chat spelling and *wanna*, *gonna* don't belong in a school or exam email.

American English

Spelling: favorite, color, center, theater, practice (also the verb), traveling.

Dates: **July 4** or July 4th; in numbers **7/4** means July 4, month first.

Words: vacation (BrE holiday), Mom (BrE Mum), fall (BrE autumn), movie theater (BrE cinema), cell phone (BrE mobile).

Write me soon is correct in American English (BrE Write to me soon).

Exam tip

- Underline every point in the task and tick it off when you have written it. A missing point costs more than a small grammar mistake.
- Use paragraphs, even in a short email. Put the greeting and the sign-off on separate lines.
- Contractions are fine; emojis, chat abbreviations (LOL, u, pls) and *wanna / gonna* are not.
- In B1 exams, an email has about 100 words; a text that is much shorter or much longer can lose points.

Checklist

- ☐ Do I have a greeting, an opening, a closing line, a sign-off and my name?