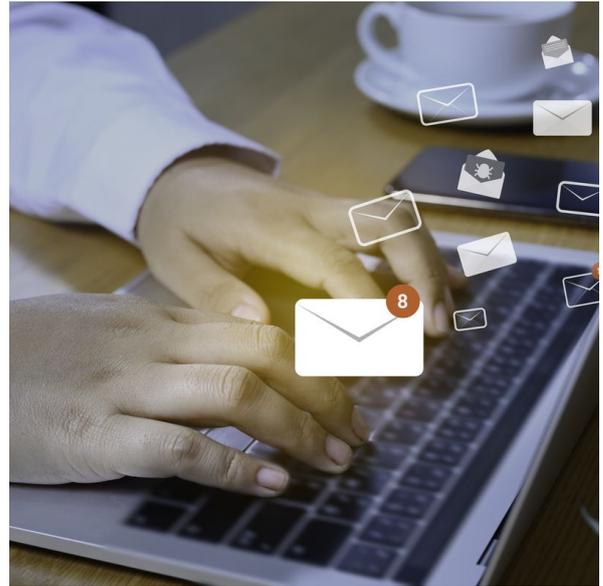




# WORK E-MAILS

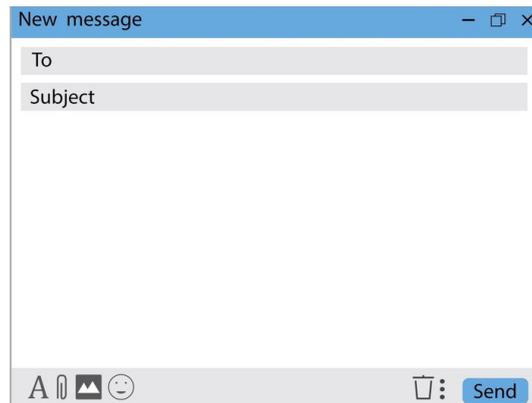


Scan to review worksheet

Expemo code:  
15TL-JM8P-EDV

## 1 Warm up

Look at the picture of an e-mail window and find these items.



the mountains      the paper clip      the smiley face      the subject line      the trash can

1. the icon that means you are attaching a document \_\_\_\_\_
2. the icon that means you are attaching a photo \_\_\_\_\_
3. the icon that lets you choose an emoji \_\_\_\_\_
4. the icon that deletes the e-mail \_\_\_\_\_
5. the place where you write what the e-mail is about \_\_\_\_\_

What's the difference between these pairs of actions?

1. replying to an e-mail and forwarding an e-mail
2. CC and BCC

Do you write many e-mails at work?



## 2

## Reading

Alexis is writing an e-mail to Barbara. Quickly read her e-mail and answer the questions.

1. What is the relationship between Alexis and Barbara?
2. Why is Alexis writing the e-mail?
3. Is this e-mail formal, semi-formal, or informal?
4. What three suggestions does Alexis make?
5. What sort of response does Barbara need to make?

Hi Barbara,

As you missed the last department meeting, **I A) write / am writing** to let you know about arrangements for next week's marketing meeting. It **B) starts / starting** at 10:00 on Tuesday. Donna Wells from head office **C) comes / is coming** to speak to us. I will meet her at the station at 9:00.

Just like last year, we **D) will / are going to** serve coffee and cakes from around 9:45. How about getting the cakes from that nice shop near the office? Let's make sure we show Donna what a friendly department we are. **E) Could / May** you help her get ready for her talk? **F) There are / There is** a big screen in the meeting room, so she just needs to bring her slides.

I am worried that Donna **G) might / can** get a bit **H) tiring / tired** in the afternoon, and she has a long trip back to head office, so why don't we try to finish early?

Please let me know if you are happy with these arrangements. I am really looking forward to Tuesday - I have heard great things about Donna, so I think it is **I) being / going to be** really **J) interesting / interested**.

Kind regards,

Alexis

Read the email again and choose the best option (A-J) to complete the phrases. Then match the options to the language points.

1. a description of what you can find in a place \_\_\_\_\_
2. a prediction based on outside evidence \_\_\_\_\_
3. a prediction that is not certain \_\_\_\_\_
4. a request for someone to do something \_\_\_\_\_
5. a timetable \_\_\_\_\_
6. an action happening around now A, am writing
7. an adjective that describes a situation that makes us feel a certain way \_\_\_\_\_
8. an adjective that describes someone's feelings \_\_\_\_\_
9. an arrangement with another person \_\_\_\_\_
10. an intention or plan \_\_\_\_\_



### 3 Language point

We want to be professional and polite when we write e-mails at work, so there are some things that we need to remember.

Find underlined phrases in the email that match these functions and write them in the space. Read the extra information about each one.

Greeting the person that you are writing to: \_\_\_\_\_ 1

- For a more informal e-mail, use only first names. Include a comma. You can also use these phrases: Dear Barbara, / Hello Barbara,
- For more formal emails, perhaps to a customer or to someone you have never met, use a title and the last name: Dear Mr. Jones, / Dear Ms. Webster,

Opening the e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ 2

- This often refers to a recent event at work or to the last time you had contact (or were planning to have contact) with this person. This might be an e-mail, phone call, or face-to-face meeting.
- You can also use these phrases: Thank you for your e-mail. / It was good to talk to you the other day. / I enjoyed meeting you last week. / Following our meeting on March 5th, ...

Reason for writing: \_\_\_\_\_ 3

- This is a very important point to include. You can also use these phrases: I just wanted to check/confirm something with you. / I would like to ask you about ...
- Note: in this context *just* makes the reason seem less important and makes the writer sound more polite.

Call to action: \_\_\_\_\_ 4

- This is also very important because it lets the other person know what they need to do next. You can also use these phrases: Could you confirm how you would like to move forward? / Send me the details as soon as you can. / Please let me know the outcome of the meeting.
- Sometimes the next action comes from the sender: I will let you know what the customer says. / I will keep you updated.



Closing the e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ 5

- This refers to a future event and shows that you have finished the e-mail.
- Remember that the phrasal verb *look forward to* is always followed by a noun (including gerunds, or *verb + -ing*), so you can also say: I am looking forward to **speaking** to you / **reading** your report / **hearing** the outcome.

Signing the e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ 6

- For more informal e-mail, use only first names. Include a comma. You can also use these phrases: Best wishes, Alexis / Regards, Alexis / All the best, Alexis
- For more formal e-mails: Sincerely, Alexis Matthews

Tip: People don't have much time to read e-mails at work. It's helpful if you use paragraphs to organize your ideas.

How many paragraphs does Alexis use in her e-mail? What are the topics of her paragraphs?

## 4

**Practice**

Read Barbara's reply to Alexis. The phrases in bold all have an extra word. Find them and cross them out.

(1) Hi dear Alexis,

(2) **I thank you** for your e-mail about the arrangements for the meeting. (3) **I am writing it to confirm** your suggestions. First of all, I think it is a great idea to have coffee and cakes ready for Ms. Wells when she arrives. However, I think we should get the cakes from a different shop. The one around the corner is (4) **too much expensive**. (5) **Let's us try** the one near the station. I am very happy to help Ms. Wells get ready for her talk. (6) **I am often going down** to the meeting room later today to meet a customer, so I can check the computer and the screen then. Finally, I agree that we should try to finish early. (7) **I will to check** the train times for Ms. Wells so we have an idea about when we should finish. I will let you know what the options are. (8) **I am looking up forward to the meeting** too.

(9) All the best wishes,

(10) Barbara King

Barbara has not used paragraphs to organize her ideas. Where do you think she should start each paragraph?



**5 Writing**

You receive this e-mail at work. Read the email and answer the questions.

- 1. What is your relationship with Dennis?
- 2. Why is he writing the e-mail?
- 3. What do you need to include in your answer?

Hello,

It was good to meet you when you came up to the head office last week. I am writing to ask you for more details about the customer sales research that you told us about. I am interested because my department completed a similar project last year.

First of all, when are you starting to interview customers? How many people do you think you will speak to? I can share some customer contact details with you if you need more people to speak to.

Also, could you let us know if you are going to collect information from customers face-to-face or online?

It sounds like we are doing very similar things, so let's keep in touch. I look forward to hearing from you.

Regards,  
Dennis Meehan

Write a reply in 100 words, using functional language from the lesson.

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## 6 Extra practice/homework

Donna Wells has written an e-mail to Barbara to confirm arrangements for the meeting. Put the sentences in order.

Best wishes, \_\_\_\_

Could you confirm that I can access the company intranet on that computer? \_\_\_\_

Dear Barbara, I \_\_\_\_

Donna \_\_\_\_

First of all, there has been a change in my travel plans. \_\_\_\_

However, could you tell me the best place to park? \_\_\_\_

I am also a little bit worried about the facilities in the meeting room. \_\_\_\_

I am going to drive to the meeting, so you don't need to meet me at the station. \_\_\_\_

I am going to show some slides during my talk. \_\_\_\_

I am just writing to check some of the arrangements. \_\_\_\_

I'm looking forward to your reply and, of course, to seeing you next week. \_\_\_\_

I was so pleased to receive the invitation to speak at your meeting. \_\_\_\_

Thank you for your help. \_\_\_\_

How would you use paragraphs to organize the e-mail?

## 7 Optional extension

The first thing people see is the subject line of your e-mail. There are lots of ways to get people's attention, so they want to open the e-mail. Match the types of subject lines with the examples.

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| 1. command      | a. 45% of workers have "tired eyes" from using screens       |
| 2. hurry up     | b. 5 things to do before our department review               |
| 3. Information  | c. Don't miss your chance to book vacation days this summer! |
| 4. instructions | d. Great to meet you last week!                              |
| 5. list         | e. Have you done your health and safety training?            |
| 6. personal     | f. How to use the new company time sheet                     |
| 7. questions    | g. Keep your workspace clean                                 |
| 8. statistics   | h. Sales meeting: Sept 3, 2:00 pm                            |

Look back at the e-mails that Alexis, Barbara, and Dennis wrote. Write subject lines for these e-mails.



# Key

## 1. Warm up

5 mins.

Work with the whole class to find the items in the list. You may need to explain/ elicit the meaning and pronunciation of *icon* /,aɪ.kɒn/ (a small picture on a computer screen that we use to give the computer instructions). Then pose the first two follow-up questions for students to consider in pairs, before checking answers with the class. Pose the final follow-up question. Even if students report that they don't have much experience with writing emails at work, point out that it is an important form of communication in professional and academic contexts and that writing emails is a task on Cambridge or IELTS General Training exams. Subject lines are explored in greater detail in the Optional extension stage.

Part 1

1. the paper clip
2. the mountains
3. the smiley face
4. the trash can
5. the subject line

Part 2

1. replying is sending an answer to the person who sent you the e-mail, while forwarding is sending the first e-mail on to another person.
2. CC (carbon copy) means that you are publicly letting other people see your e-mail (and each other), while BCC (blind carbon copy) means that you are privately letting other people see the e-mail, but no one else can see that this is happening.

## 2. Reading

10 mins.

Students will read the e-mail twice. Explain the context and go over the instructions and questions for the first reading activity. Give students a couple of minutes to quickly look through the e-mail and then go over the answers with the class.

For the second reading activity, students will consider the language used in the e-mail in more detail by choosing the best option to complete the sentences. Check answers with the class and then ask students to work in pairs to match each phrase with a language point. These points were presented in units 25-34 of this course plan and provide a good general review of A2 language points. However, if you feel you want to omit the final matching exercise, that's fine.

1. They work together.
2. To tell Barbara about the arrangements for a meeting.
3. Semi-formal - it shows a friendly but professional relationship between Alexis and Barbara. Note that Alexis does not use contractions, which makes the style more formal.
4. How about getting the cakes from that nice shop near the office? / Let's make sure we show Donna what a friendly department we are. / ... so shall we try to finish early?
5. She needs to say if she is happy with all the arrangements.

Reading

1. F, There is
2. I, going to be
3. G, might
4. E, Could
5. B, starts
6. A, am writing
7. J, interesting
8. H, tired
9. C, is coming
10. D, are going to



### 3. Language point

10 mins.

Students need to know a range of set phrases and routines that are used in work e-mails. This is a type of functional language. Make students aware that functional language only works well if the phrases are accurately formulated. If students are inaccurate in their use of functional language, it may confuse their reader or make a poor impression on them. If students are preparing for an English exam that includes an e-mail task, they need to be able to use these expressions correctly, including punctuation like commas in the greeting and signature lines.

Go over the introduction and then go through each of the six functions and the final tip one by one, giving students time to refer back to the e-mail and copy the underlined phrases next to the appropriate function. The functions are listed in a logical order, and the phrases appear in the same order in the e-mail. The purpose in copying the phrases is to support students in noticing the exact wording of each phrase. You should also call students' attention to the explanation, further examples, and notes.

1. Hi Barbara,
2. As you missed the last department meeting, ...
3. ... I am writing to let you know about ...
4. Please let me know if you are happy with these arrangements.
5. I am really looking forward to Tuesday.
6. Kind regards, Alexis

How many paragraphs does Alexis use in her email? What are the topics of her paragraphs?

- Four paragraphs: 1) basic details about the meeting, 2) arrangements for the day; 3) finishing the meeting; 4) call to action and closing the email.

### 4. Practice

10 mins.

Go over the instructions and do the first one as an example with the class. This exercise contains a mix of e-mail phrases and review of key language points from units 25-34 of the course plan. Students work alone, at first without checking the information in the Language point, to test their memory. They can check answers in pairs and then with the whole class. Pose the follow-up question about paragraphs. If you have time, students could read the corrected e-mail out loud in pairs to reinforce accurate use of the language.

NOTE: If students are finding this difficult, skip the writing stage and do the extra practice/homework exercises in class for additional support.

- 1) dear; 2) I; 3) it; 4) much; 5) us; 6) often; 7) to; 8) up; 9) wishes; 10) King

The new paragraphs could start: (Thank you for...) / First of all, / I am very happy / Finally, / I will let you know.

### 5. Writing

13 mins.

In this stage, students will activate the vocabulary and grammar from the lesson in a writing activity. Make sure students understand the aim of the activity is to practice the target language and that they will have to use their imagination.

Go over the instructions with the class, look through the e-mail and answer the questions. Then give students some time to write their reply.

After around ten minutes, students could share their texts in pairs or with the class. If there isn't enough time for students to finish, ask them to complete the writing for homework. You should collect the writing to check.



Corrections should focus primarily on the use of e-mail phrases and whether the reply would be helpful to Dennis in his work.

1. He works for the same company that you work for, and you met him recently for the first time.
2. He wants to know more about your work because it is similar to his.
3. You need to give him details about your plans for interviewing customers: when, how many, and how. You also need to say if you want him to share contact details with you.

## 6. Extra practice/homework

2 mins to explain.

These exercises can be assigned for homework or used instead of the writing activity if the class needs more support. If you use these for homework, make sure that you check the exercises in a future class, or collect them from students and check them yourself outside class. If you prefer, you can make the answers available to students, and they can check their own answers.

1. Dear Barbara,
2. I was so pleased to receive the invitation to speak at your meeting.
3. I am just writing to check some of the arrangements.
4. First of all, there has been a change in my travel plans.
5. I am going to drive to the meeting, so you don't need to meet me at the station.
6. However, could you tell me the best place to park?
7. I am also a little bit worried about the facilities in the meeting room.
8. I am going to show some slides during my talk.
9. Could you confirm that I can access the company intranet on that computer?
10. Thank you for your help.
11. I'm looking forward to your reply and, of course, to seeing you next week.
12. Best wishes,
13. Donna

Paragraph 1 starts I was so pleased / 2 First of all, ... / 3 I am also / 4 Thank you for your help.

## 7. Optional extension

10 mins.

These exercises are designed as a cooler activity if you have time in your lesson. In this activity, students explore some different styles for subject lines. Give students a few minutes to complete the matching exercise. Check answers and then set students up in pairs or small groups to complete the follow-up task if you have time. Accept any reasonable answers.

1. g
2. c
3. h
4. f
5. b
6. d
7. e
8. a