

# Formal and Informal English

Formal English  
for more serious occasions or professional reasons

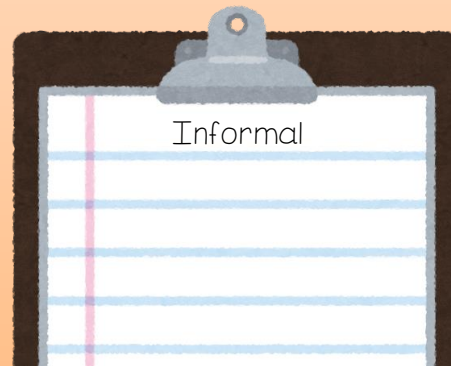
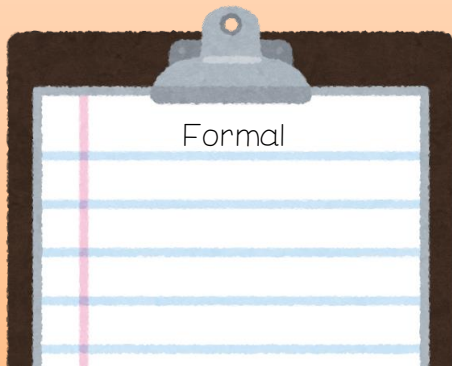
Informal English  
for more casual communication



Which ones are formal? Which ones are informal?

Categorize the following into formal writings or informal writings:

- an application letter
- an email to a friend
- a family newsletter
- a wedding invitation
- an email to a teacher
- a letter of complaint
- a birthday invitation
- a letter to your cousin



What does it mean?

What kind of words would I be using if I was being serious and I want the other person to know I want to be formal? Match the following formal terms to their informal counterparts.

- Dear Mr. Shore ●
- hurry up and reply ●
- Love, Jeffrey ●
- head back ●
- purchase ●
- make sure ●
- however ●

- guarantee ●
- Yours sincerely, Chris Manny ●
- I look forward to hearing back ●
- Hey Elena ●
- return ●
- but ●
- buy ●

Complete the following two letters with the terms you have just matched up, not all the terms will be used. Change the words to the correct tense if necessary.

Informal email to your cousin

You can use an informal greeting and closing message.

From:	jeffrey224@hellomail.com
To:	elena@email.com
Subject:	Gifts from Japan

Write a subject line that says clearly what your email is about.

(1) \_\_\_\_\_,  
 I have been in Tokyo for a week now and I will be (2) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ in 3 days.  
 Before I left, you gave me a list of items you wanted me to look for in Tokyo for you. I was able to find the manga you wanted, you wanted issue #12, (3) \_\_\_\_\_ I also saw #13 for sale as well, did you want me to buy it too? I also saw a few special editions up for sale, do you want me to pick some up too?  
 Another thing, we will be (4) \_\_\_\_\_ fresh strawberries on the morning before we leave for the airport and immediately package them for home. How many packs do you want? The farmers said it's best to eat it on the day, so don't order too many packs!  
 Remember, I'll be leaving Tokyo soon, (5) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ so I can get your gifts in time!

Use informal but polite language.

You can use contractions and abbreviations.

(6) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Other closings:  
 Best Wishes,  
 All the best,  
 Take care

You can use exclamation marks, but not too many.

Answer Key:  
 Formal – an application letter, a wedding invitation, an email to a teacher, a letter of complaint  
 Informal – an email to a friend, a family newsletter, a birthday invitation, a letter to your cousin  
 What does it mean?  
 (Dear Mr. Shore, Hey Elena) (hurry up and reply, I look forward to hearing back) (Love, Jeffrey, Yours sincerely, Chris Mann) (head back, return) (purchase, buy) (make sure, guarantee)  
 Fill in the blanks  
 1. Hey Elena, 2. heading back, 3. but, 4. buying, 5. hurry up and reply, 6. Love, Jeffrey, 7. Dear Mr. Shore, 8. purchased, 9. guaranteed, 10. however, 11. I look forward to hearing back, 12. Yours sincerely, Chris Mann

Complaint letter

Unit B, 26 Floor, Block 32  
56 King's High Road,  
Manchester Heights

Mr. Dean Shore  
Toys Ltd.  
22 Queen's High Road,  
Manchester Square  
2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2020

(7) \_\_\_\_\_,

I am writing to complain about the new electric model car, BX-240, that I (8) \_\_\_\_\_ in your store on 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2020.

Firstly, the colour of the car was not as advertised. I purchased the model car BX-240 Special Edition for the famously coloured bright red. However, when I unwrapped the model car it turned out to be a dark, maroon red. It was extremely disappointing. Furthermore, the advertisement (9) \_\_\_\_\_ that the model car BX-240 will be able to receive signals for remote control as far as 100 metres. Yet, when I tried to control the car from one end of my house to the other, which is no more than 30 metres, the car stopped halfway.

I had been looking forward to this model car for months. (10) \_\_\_\_\_, although the product had been delivered on time, the quality was not what I had expected. I would therefore appreciate a full refund of the model car as compensation for my disappointment.

(11) \_\_\_\_\_ from you.

(12) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The name and address of the person you are writing on the left. Date usually under this address.

Your address is on the right

Use linking words

Formal language. Do not use contractions or abbreviations.

Formal greeting and closing. If you do not know the person's name, use *Dear Sir or Madam* and finish with *Yours faithfully*.

Writing flow of a complaint letter

