

Summary of useful phrases and main points

Important! Please see the appropriate unit for details of how each phrase or point is used.

Unit 1 • Email basics: see letter and email guide, page 128

- *Dear ... / Yours ...*

Dear Sir or Madam – Yours faithfully

Dear Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms Smith – Yours sincerely

Dear John – Best wishes

- **Subject heading:** see letter and email guide, page 128

- **Asking for and sending information**

Please can you tell me ...

Please can you send me (details of) ...

- **Thanking for a previous message**

Thank you for your email.

Thank you for your email, dated 6 June.

Many thanks for your message, dated 6 June.

Thank you for your enquiry.

- **Attaching a document**

I am attaching details of ...

I have pleasure in attaching ...

I attach some information which I hope you find useful.

I attach our price list and look forward to hearing from you.

- **Style**

Write in natural style. Do not use an old-fashioned, very formal style.

Do not use very informal language.

Do not use text message abbreviations.

Do not use slang.

Do not use 'emoticons'.

Be polite.

Unit 2 • Attachments

I am attaching (our catalogue) to this message.

Please find attached (our report).

I have just received (the photographs), which I have attached to this message.

If you have any problems opening the file, please let me know.

- **Problems with attachments**

I am afraid you forgot to attach the report. Could you send your message again, please?

Unfortunately, the attachment won't open on my computer. Could you send it again in a different format?

Sorry! I forgot to send the attachment.

- **Parts of a message:** see letter and email guide, page 128
- **Beginning a message**
We are writing to enquire about ...
We are writing in connection with ...
We are interested in ... and we would like to know ...

<i>Thank you for your email/letter/fax/call of (date)</i>	}	<i>asking if ...</i>
<i>We have received your email/letter/fax/call of (date)</i>		<i>enquiring about ...</i>
		<i>enclosing ...</i>
		<i>concerning ...</i>
- **Ending a message**
I look forward to receiving your reply/order/products/etc.
Looking forward to hearing from you.
I hope that this information will help you.
Please contact me if you need further information.
Please feel free to contact me if you have any further information.
Please let me know if you need any further information.
- **Email conventions**
 Always open (*Dear ...*) and close your emails properly (*Yours ...*).
 Don't write in CAPITALS.
 If you are writing a reply to an email, don't copy the original message back.
 Divide your message into paragraphs.
 Check your work before you send it.

Unit 3

- **Referring**
With reference to ...
Further to ...
I am writing in connection with ...
With regard to ...
- **Giving good/bad news**
good news

<i>I am</i>	<i>pleased</i>	<i>to</i>	<i>tell</i>	<i>you that ...</i>
	<i>delighted</i>		<i>inform</i>	
	<i>happy</i>		<i>advise</i>	

bad news

<i>We/I</i>	<i>regret</i>	<i>to</i>	<i>tell</i>	<i>you that ...</i>
	<i>am/are/am sorry</i>		<i>inform</i>	
			<i>advise</i>	

We regret that ...
- **Saying what you can and cannot do**
We are unable to ...
We are able to ...
We have been forced to ...
- **Giving reasons**

<i>This is</i>	<i>owing to</i>
	<i>due to</i>
	<i>as a result of</i>
	<i>because of</i>

- **British English (BE) and American English (AE)**
 AE writers often use a more informal style than BE.
 There are many spelling differences (e.g. *centre/center, colour/color, catalogue/catalog*).
 There are many vocabulary differences (e.g. *curriculum vitae/résumé, post code/zip code, shop/store*).
 There are some grammatical differences (e.g. AE usually uses the past simple where BE uses the present perfect).
- **Paragraphs**
 Most messages are divided into paragraphs. A paragraph can have just one or more sentences in it and it should have one central topic.

Unit 4

- **Letter layout:** see letter and email guide, page 128
- **The date**
 Write the date in full to avoid confusion: *12 June 2006*
- **Making a mild complaint**
Unfortunately, [then say what is wrong and then request some action].
Unfortunately, we have not yet received the filing cabinets.
Please could you

<i>We would be grateful if you could</i>	<i>deliver them soon.</i>
<i>We would appreciate it if you could</i>	
- **Making a point**
I should like to draw your attention to (the fact that) ...
I should like to point out that ...
I should like to remind you that ...
I hope that it is not necessary to remind you that ...
- **Warning**

<i>Unless ... ,</i>	<i>we will be forced to ...</i>
<i>If ... (not) ... ,</i>	
- **Making a strong complaint**
 Say exactly what is wrong, make a point connected with this, then demand immediate action:
It is now over nine months since we placed this order, and we are still waiting for the cabinets. I should like to point out that we have already paid for these cabinets. We must insist, therefore, that you deliver them immediately.
 If you think that it is necessary, you can also give a warning:
Unless we hear from you within seven days, we will take legal action.

Unit 5

- **Letter layout:** see letter and email guide, page 128
- **Requesting action**

<i>Please could you ...</i>	<i>send us ...</i>	If it is urgent, add: <i>as soon as possible.</i> <i>without delay.</i> <i>immediately.</i>
<i>We would be grateful if you could ...</i>	<i>arrange ...</i>	
<i>We would appreciate it if you could ...</i>	<i>give us further details about ...</i>	
<i>We would appreciate it if you could ...</i>	<i>let us know (about/if) ...</i>	
<i>We would appreciate it if you could ...</i>	<i>inform us (about/if) ...</i>	

- **Apologising**
We must apologise for ...
We apologise for ...
We are extremely sorry for ...
- Fax cover sheets: see page 52

Unit 6

- **Making a letter or email more personal**

The three usual parts of a less formal letter or email are:

- an opening, which mentions your feelings about the last contact you had with each other
- the main message, which says why you are writing now and gives the details
- the close, which talks about the future and often mentions some personal information.

- **Personal business letters and emails: the opening**

Thank you for your letter/telephone call/email/fax.

It was a pleasure to (see you again at/on ...).

It was good to (hear from you again).

It was a pity that (we did not have more time to talk at/on ...).

I am sorry that (I missed you when you visited my office).

After each phrase, you can add a comment:

Thank you for your letter. It was very interesting to hear about the new developments at Wentol.

It was good to talk to you on the telephone today. I was sorry to hear that you had not been well.

- **Personal business letters and emails: introducing the topic**

Requesting action *I was wondering if you could help me.*

Giving information *I thought you might be interested to hear about ...*

Complaining *I am afraid we have a small problem.*

Giving bad news *I am afraid I have some bad news.*

- **Personal business letters and emails: the close**

I look forward to seeing you again next time I am in Taipei.

If you are ever in London, please give me a ring or stop by my office.

Please give my regards to Diana Smith.

Please pass on my best wishes to Mr Lund. I hope that he has now recovered from the flu.

- **Inviting, accepting and declining**

Inviting *We would be very pleased if you could join us at ...*

We would be delighted if you could come to ...

We have pleasure in inviting you to ...

Accepting *I would be delighted to join you at ...*

I would be very pleased to ...

I am very happy to accept your invitation to ...

Declining *I would very much like to come, but unfortunately ...*

Unfortunately, I will not be able to join you because ...

I am so sorry, but I cannot come to ... because ...

Unit 7 • Informal business letters and emails

In a letter, the name and address of the addressee is sometimes omitted.
Open with the addressee's first name.
Use contractions.
Use short, direct phrases.
Use a friendly style and make personal comments.
Use the language you might use when you are speaking English.
Sign with your first name (not your title).
Use words which are more common, e.g. *ask* (instead of *enquire*), *need* (instead of *require*), *tell* (instead of *advise*).

• Replying to complaints

To accept a complaint, you can apologise for the problem, explain what caused it, say what action you will take and apologise again.

To reject a complaint, you can say you are sorry they had problems, explain why you think it is not your fault, say what you can do (optional) and offer a solution (optional).

• Advising customers

To give customers advice, you can say you are sorry you cannot help them directly, say why and suggest what they can do instead:

<i>I recommend that you ...</i>		<i>contact ...</i>
<i>You could ...</i>		<i>try ...</i>
<i>You might prefer to ...</i>		<i>use ...</i>
<i>I suggest you ...</i>		<i>email ...</i>

Unit 8 • Arranging a meeting

On (date), I will be in your area and I would be grateful if I could meet you.

Would (date) at (time) be convenient for you.

I will telephone you next week to confirm. I look forward to meeting you.

• Confirming the details of a meeting

I thought it would be useful to confirm in writing the details of our discussion and then list the points you discussed:

1 *We are able to ...*

2 *We will ...*

3 *You will ...*

• Circular letters to promote a product

Use an appropriate style to attract attention and to create an appropriate image for your product and business.

Use bold or underlining to pick out the important details. You can use CAPITAL LETTERS to pick out the name of a product or business.

Divide your message into clearly organised paragraphs. Each paragraph needs to have a clear focus.

Use positive language. Say clearly what your product can do or what it offers.

Show how your product can help the reader or solve a problem for the reader.