

Unit 1

Are there any rooms free?

Get ready to write

- Have you ever travelled abroad as part of a group?
- Would you consider going on a group holiday now? Why? / Why not?
- Write: a one advantage of travelling as part of a group

 b one disadvantage of travelling as part of a group

 c one difficulty for an organizer trying to book a group

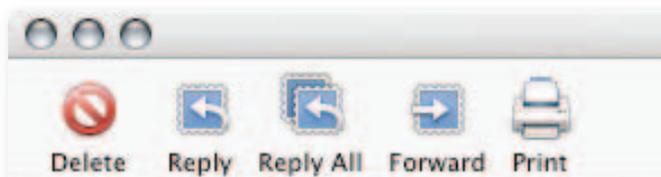
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A Asking about accommodation

Look at an example

- 1 Read this email. Who is the person writing to?
 Tick ✓ the correct answer.

- a a hotel
 b a hotel or hostel
 c a tourist office



¹Next summer I am bringing a group of 16- to 18-year-old students to Vancouver and I am looking for suitable accommodation. At present I am uncertain of the exact number of students but it will probably be about 30. While we are there, we not only want to look at the many attractions in the city, but we would like to visit some of the beautiful places nearby, so we are looking for a reasonably priced hotel or hostel near the city centre with good transport links.

²During our stay we will require the following: twin-bedded rooms in the same hotel, breakfast and, on occasions, an evening meal. We will not require lunch. We would hope that the hotel we use would be able to offer us a special rate.

³Do you have any travel consultants who could look after groups like us? For example, are you able to arrange activities and local transportation for us? Also, it would be very helpful if you could inform me of any other special discounts, such as for cheaper air travel to and from Vancouver.

⁴I look forward to hearing from you.

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2 Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)?

- a The first sentence makes it clear why the person is writing. ...T...
- b The other sentences in Paragraph 1 give background information.
- c Paragraph 2 makes it clear what the person wants.
- d Paragraph 3 asks for extra information.
- e The closing sentence of the email is very informal.

3 Find words or phrases in the email that mean the following:

- a not sure*uncertain*..... (Paragraph 1)
- b not too expensive (Paragraph 1)
- c need (Paragraph 2)
- d give us a discount (Paragraph 2)
- e let me know (Paragraph 3)

Learning tip

If you are writing to someone you know well and are friendly with, your style will be more *informal*, which means it sounds like normal conversation. Contractions, phrasal verbs, colloquial expressions and personal comments are common.

If you are writing to an institution or someone you don't know, your style will be more formal. In *very formal* language we do not usually use contractions (Not ~~don't~~ but do not ✓) or phrasal verbs (Not ~~put up~~ but accommodate ✓). The language is more impersonal and the passive voice is common.

In professional emails the style is often neither very formal nor informal. The aim is to be simple, clear and direct, and more formal or personal language is used when necessary. This is sometimes known as *neutral* language.

Plan

4 You and your partner want to spend a few days in Venice. You are going to write an email in reply to a newspaper advertisement. Read the advertisement and the notes you made. Then think about the questions below.



Venice



Beautiful apartment for rent. Perfect location, only 6 minutes' walk from the main square. Views of the Grand Canal from the terrace. Sleeps 2/4. Ideal for couples. Can accommodate short stays as well as weekly rentals. Prices from 900 euros p.w. Email: info@perfectlocation.com

- Air conditioning? (July!)
- Internet connection? (V. imp. - need to check emails)
- 4 nights?
- Early July OK?
- Price?

- a Have you met the person you are writing to?
- b Is the purpose of your email to get information or make a booking?
- c Will your email be
 - very formal (like an old-fashioned letter e.g. beginning *Dear Sir or Madam*)?
 - informal?
 - neutral?

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5 Write the points in the box in the most logical order in the paragraph plan below.

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| saying how long you want to stay | asking about price |
| saying where you saw the advertisement | closing the email |
| asking about facilities | final comment |
| saying why you're writing | |

Paragraph 1: saying where you saw the advertisement.....

 Paragraph 2:
 Paragraph 3:

 Paragraph 4:
 Paragraph 5:

Focus on ... functional and fixed expressions



- Match 1–7 with a–g to make sentences.
 - I'm very interested in d.
 - Before making a booking
 - (In the advertisement) you say that
 - I notice that
 - I assume
 - I need to know
 - Could you give me some idea
 - a bit about the facilities.
 - the apartment is beautifully designed.
 - of the price?
 - ~~coming next July with my partner.~~
 - it is possible to make a booking for less than a week.
 - that would be acceptable.
 - I have a number of questions I would like to ask.
- Complete these opening and closing sentences.

Opening sentence: *I saw your advertisement* (say where)

.....

Closing: *I look forward to receiving* (say what)

.....
- Which phrase will you use to sign off the email?
 - Yours faithfully
 - Cheers!
 - Best wishes
 - Goodbye

Learning tip

When we write by hand, we often indent the first line of a new paragraph.

I have a number of questions I would like to ask.

You say the apartment is beautifully designed;

However, when we write an email or a business letter we usually leave a space between paragraphs instead of indenting.

Write

6 Write a draft of your email in about 200 words.

Check

Now reread your email and answer the following questions. Make any changes that are necessary to your email.

- Is it clear to the tourist office what you want?
- Have you said when you want to come?
- Have you said how long you want to stay?
- Have you included all other necessary information?
- Is your style appropriate for the tourist office?
- Have you divided your answer into paragraphs?
- Are your paragraphs in a logical order?
- Are your spelling and punctuation correct?
- Have you chosen the best vocabulary?
- Is your grammar correct?

Class bonus

- Sit in groups and exchange your work or fix your work on the wall/board.
- Read each other's emails. Which email do you like best? Can you think of any ways to improve each other's writing?

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Extra practice

You have seen this advertisement in a magazine and you are interested in staying in the place.

CALIFORNIA BED AND BREAKFAST

Redwood House B&B. Single or double. Country setting in San Francisco Bay near Mount St. Helena. Fireplace and TV in all bedrooms. Most bathrooms with Jacuzzi and shower. Breakfast served in our sunroom or in the guests' room. \$200 per night plus tax. info@redwood.com



- 1 Plan your answer.
- 2 Write your email in approximately 200 words.
- 3 Read your answer with the list of questions in Check. Make any necessary changes.

Did you know ...?

Private house B&Bs are common throughout Britain and the US. They are cheaper than hotels and usually have a friendly atmosphere. In Britain they usually provide a cooked breakfast, including eggs and bacon, and sometimes sausages, mushrooms and tomatoes.

Can-do checklist

Tick what you can do.

- I can write to a hotel to get information about services.
- I can write to find out about accommodation available.
- I can divide an email into well-organized, logically ordered paragraphs.
- I can write in a suitable style for the situation.

