

Mistakes with email and letter paragraphing

The emails below have problems with paragraphing, specifically:

- Problems making correct English (body) paragraphs
- Problems dividing the email into paragraphs (showing where one paragraph stops and the next paragraph starts, etc)
- Missing parts of the email

There are no problems with spelling, grammar, formality, etc, just different issues with paragraphing. Find the different paragraphing problem with each email.

Hint 1: One email has no problems.

Hint 2: Match these mixed problems to the emails below. There is one of each.

- Closing line not separated from the body
- Both blank line and indents
- Missing closing greeting
- Missing closing line
- Missing opening line
- A new line for each sentence inside paragraphs (so it looks like a poem or song lyrics)
- No blank line and no indent between paragraphs
- Not starting a new paragraph when you start a new topic
- One-sentence paragraph in the body (so need at least one more sentence)
- Opening line not separated from the body
- Starting a new paragraph even though it's still the same topic as the last paragraph

Split and combine paragraphs in the ones which aren't split in the right places.

Draw triangles to show where blank lines should be.

Draw arrows to show where things which are in the wrong place should go.

Add the correct kinds of opening and closing to the ones which have that missing.

Compare your answers as a class or with the answer key.

Label the corrected emails with their function ("enquiry", "making arrangements", etc) and level of formality ("very formal", "medium formality", etc).

Email A

Dear Mr Jones

Thank you for your email asking for information about our summer courses.

In answer to your first question, the courses start at various times from the last week of July to the third week of August.

Some courses run on more than one date.

You also asked us about methods of payment.

We accept bank transfers as well as credit cards, but please note that you must cover any international transfer fees.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Alex Case (Mr)

Email B

Dear Ms Patel

Thank you for your email about your stay in our university halls.

I was very sorry to hear about your problems with noise from neighbouring rooms. Due to a shortage of accommodation for younger and older students, unfortunately there has been an increase in such issues in recent weeks. I will telephone the building management and ask them to contact the people involved.

I hope that is acceptable with you.

Best regards

Alex Case

Head of Student Accommodation

Email C

Hi everyone

Hope you all had a good weekend.

This is just a brief reminder of the earlier than usual date for expense claims this month.

The deadline for sending your claims to me this month is the 23rd.

This is because of the public holidays at the end of the month.

Thanks.

Kind regards

Alex

Email D

Dear Jane

I'm writing to you about the next series of workshops, which will take place in September.

I was wondering if it might be possible to use the Chancellor's Office for the workshops this time.

I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

All the best

Alex

Email E

Hi Steve

Hope you had a good time in Stockholm.

I'll be in Daytona the week after next and was hoping you might be available to meet up. I'll be there from the 14th to the 17th, so please let me know when most suits you. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes

Alex

Email F

Dear Ms Cho

The deadline for payment of course fees was the day before yesterday, so please come to our office and pay as soon as possible to secure your place on the course. Please note that at this late stage payment must be in cash.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely

Alex Case

Email G

Dear Dr Hassan

Thanks again for putting my article up on your website. I have just linked to it on my blog.

Unfortunately, one detail in the accompanying bio is not quite correct. "Department of Physics" should be "Department of Astrophysics". Could you possibly change that part?

Thanks in advance.

Alex Case

Email H

Dear Sir or Madam

I am writing to you in order to ask for information about your new range of lab equipment. My three main questions are below.

First of all, I'd like to ask about your discount policy. Would the equipment be cheaper if we bought several at the same time? I also have a question about your after sales service. Is it free as long as we own the products, or do we have to pay on a regular basis?

Lastly, could you tell me how long it will be before the next update to these products? We are very keen not to buy products which will shortly become out of date.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours

Alex Case (Mr)

Email I

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I am writing to you in connection with the robotics conference which you organised in Oslo last month. Although overall we enjoyed the experience, there were a couple of things which the people from here agreed could have been improved, which I have described below.

Our first complaint was about the amount of space available in the time out area, which was barely enough to relax in, let alone to network as we planned to. We were also less than happy with the fact we had to leave the conference space straight after the last talks.

Unless these factors are fixed by next year, I'm afraid we have decided we won't attend the same event then. Could you let us know what action is likely to be taken?

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Best regards,

Alex Case

Email J

Hi Jaime

Thanks for your email. It's great to hear that you can come.

Our office is quite difficult to find, so I thought that I'd explain how to get here. After you get out of the train at Mita Station, take Exit 3B. Cross the road straightaway and go through the entrance opposite you. It's the only brick building, so it should be quite easy to spot.

If you need more info, just let me know.

ATB

AI

Email K

Dear Sir or Madam

I'm writing to order some supplies for our graduation party next week. First of all, can you provide us with 4000 of your plastic wine glasses, code number 54GG? The red ones are best, but your website says these are out of stock, in which case beige is fine.

We'd also like to order paper tablecloths and napkins. If possible, could you check what our last order was and supply us with the same?

If there are any problems with that order or if you need any more information, please contact me.

Yours faithfully

Alex Case

Email L

Dear Professor Hardwick

Thank you very much for your talk on Globalisation and the Modern University yesterday. It gave me a completely different perspective on this topic.

If it is not too much trouble, could you possibly send me a copy of your PowerPoint from the presentation? This is because several of my colleagues are interested in learning more about your views after hearing from people who attended.

Yours sincerely

Alex Case

Suggested answers**Corrected email A**

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Dear Jane

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I was wondering if it might be possible to use the Chancellor's Office for the workshops this time. This is because there will be more participants than usual.

I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

All the best

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Corrected email E

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Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes

Alex

Corrected email F

Dear Ms Cho

Thank you for applying for the History of Photography course.

The deadline for payment of course fees was the day before yesterday, so please come to our office and pay as soon as possible to secure your place on the course. Please note that at this late stage payment must be in cash.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely

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I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Alex Case

Defining good, bad and okay email paragraphing

Define a good and bad use of paragraphs in emails (i.e. things you should do, shouldn't do and can do with paragraphs in emails) using the table below.

Good email paragraphing	Okay email paragraphing	Bad email paragraphing

Write Good, Bad or OK next to the things on the next page.

Opening

- An opening greeting (“Dear...”, etc).
- No opening greeting.
- A blank line between the opening greeting and opening line (“Thanks for your email”, etc).
- An indent between the opening greeting and opening line.
- No blank line and no indent between the opening greeting and opening line.
- An opening line.
- No opening line.
- A one-sentence opening line.
- A two-sentence opening line.
- A three-sentence opening line.

Body

- A blank line between the opening line and body.
- An indent between the opening line and body of the email.
- No blank line and no indent between the opening line and the body.
- One-sentence paragraphs (in the body of the email).
- One topic per paragraph.
- Start a new paragraph when you change topics.
- Start a new line with each new sentence in paragraphs/ in the body of the email (like a poem or the words of a song).
- A blank line between the paragraphs in the body of the email.
- An indent between the paragraphs in the body of the email.
- A blank line and an indent between the paragraphs in the body of the email.
- No blank line and no indent between the paragraphs (in the body).

Ending

- A closing line (“I look forward to hearing from you soon”, etc).
- No closing line.
- A blank line between the body and the closing line.
- An indent between the body of the email and the closing line.
- A one-sentence closing line.
- A two-sentence closing line.
- A three-sentence closing line.
- A blank line between the closing line and the closing greeting (“Best regards”, etc).
- No blank line and no indent between the body and the closing line.
- No blank line and no indent between the closing line and the closing greeting.
- No closing greeting.
- A closing greeting (“Best regards”, etc).
- Your name at the end.
- No name at the end.
- A blank line between the closing greeting and your name.
- No blank line between the closing greeting and your name.

Compare your answers as a class or with the answer key below. Note that the recommendations there are quite strict, so you will almost certainly receive emails that don't meet those criteria.

Suggested answers

Good	Okay	Bad
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An opening greeting (“Dear...”, etc). ● A blank line between the opening greeting and opening line (“Thanks for your email”, etc). ● An opening line. ● A one-sentence opening line. ● A blank line between the opening line and body. ● One topic per paragraph. ● Start a new paragraph when you change topics. ● A blank line between the paragraphs in the body of the email. ● A closing line (“I look forward to hearing from you soon”, etc). ● A blank line between the body and the closing line. ● A one-sentence closing line. ● A closing greeting (“Best regards”, etc). ● A blank line between the closing line and the closing greeting. ● A blank line between the closing greeting and your name at the end. ● Your name at the end. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An indent between the opening greeting and opening line. ● A two-sentence opening line. ● An indent between the opening line and body of the email. ● An indent between the paragraphs in the body of the email. ● An indent between the body of the email and the closing line. ● A two-sentence closing line. ● No blank line between the closing greeting and your name. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No opening greeting. ● No blank line and no indent between the opening greeting and opening line. ● No opening line. ● A three-sentence opening line. ● No blank line and no indent between the opening line and the body. ● One-sentence paragraphs (in the body of the email). ● Start a new line with each new sentence in paragraphs/ in the body of the email (like a poem or the words of a song). ● A blank line and an indent between the paragraphs in the body of the email. ● No blank line and no indent between the paragraphs (in the body). ● No blank line and no indent between the body and the closing line. ● No closing line. ● A three-sentence closing line. ● No blank line and no indent between the closing line and the closing greeting. ● No closing greeting. ● No name at the end.