

LESSON 7A WRITING | A formal email

Structure of a Formal Letter

(1) Your Address:

- From:
- To:
- Subject:

(2) Salutation:

- Use a formal greeting such as “Dear [Recipient’s Name],”
- If you don’t know the name, use “Dear Sir/Madam,”

(3) Body:

- Introduction: State the purpose of your letter in the first paragraph.
- Main Content: Provide details, supporting information, or arguments in the subsequent paragraphs.
- Conclusion: Summarize your message or state your desired outcome.

(4) Closing:

- Use a formal closing phrase, such as “Sincerely,” “Best regards,” or “Yours faithfully,” followed by a comma.

(5) Signature:

- Leave space for your signature (if printed).
- Below the signature, type your full name

1 In pairs, look at the photos and answer the questions.

1 In which photo do the vegetables look more appealing? Say why.

The vegetables look more appealing in photo A because they look fresher.

2 What environmental problems do you think the plastic packaging might cause?

The plastic might cause water pollution if it gets into rivers.

2 Read Farid's email to Customer Service. What problem does he describe and what three solutions does he suggest?

Farid describes the use of unnecessary plastic packaging. He suggests using sustainable cardboard, removing unnecessary plastic, and selling fruit and vegetables without any extra packaging.

3 Read the email again. Do you think that the problems and solutions the writer describes are likely to persuade the reader that something should be done

Yes, because the writer uses many persuasive words.

yesterday at 8.13 p.m.	From: Farid Asmar To: Customer Service Subject: Reduce plastic!
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Dear Sir or Madam,

^AI am writing to draw your attention to a
pressing problem to which your stores
are

contributing significantly by their use of
non-biodegradable plastic packaging.

Like many others, ^BI am deeply
concerned by the huge quantity of
plastic used to package items which
simply do not require it. We are told that
since the 1950s the world has produced
more than eight billion tonnes of plastic,
of which around 80 percent has been
thrown into a landfill or left as waste in
the general environment.

^CIt is essential that we all take immediate
action to prevent this.

Much of this plastic is a result of
unnecessary packaging. It is vital that
this is reduced as much as possible.

Some supermarkets have managed to
cut the amount of plastic

packaging by using sustainable
cardboard instead of plastic, or simply by
removing unnecessary plastic from
tissue boxes, pizza boxes and other
items. I would ask you to investigate

alternative forms of packaging for your products as a matter of urgency.

In the meantime, perhaps the quickest way to start to tackle this problem would be to sell fruit and vegetables without any extra packaging, creating a plastic-free aisle, where

customers could use paper bags or their own reusable containers. Around a third of consumers say that they base their buying decisions on ethical practices, so providing

an opportunity to buy fruit and vegetables plastic-free could help you to win over a large number of new customers.

I urge you to consider these possible solutions very seriously, and do everything in your power to reduce the amount of plastic you use in packaging, to protect the planet.

I look forward to your response.

Yours faithfully,

Farid Asmar



4 Complete the Writing box.

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Greeting and signing off

1 **c** If you know the name of the person,

2 **b** If you don't know the person's name,

3 **d** If you start a letter Dear Sir/Madam,

4 **a** If you start a letter with a name,

a end the letter Yours sincerely.

b start the letter Dear Sir or Madam.

c start the letter Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms Haddad.

d end the letter Yours faithfully. Structure of the email (or letter)

5 **v** In the introduction,

6 **f** In the main paragraphs,

7 **e** In the final paragraph,

8 **g** Before you sign off,

e ask the recipient of the email/letter to take some action.

f state the problem(s) and offer solutions.

g mention that you expect a reply.

h state your reasons for writing. Formal writing conventions

9 **l** Don't use contractions, e.g.

10 **i** Avoid using phrasal verbs, e.g.

11 **j** Make points less personal/direct by using passives, e.g.

12 **k** Make your tone less direct by using hypothetical constructions, e.g.

i use **reduce** rather than **cut down on**.

j use **We are told that** rather than **Some people say**.

k use **I would ask you to** rather than **Please**

l use **I am writing** not **I'm writing**.

4 Read the email again. Match the underlined phrases A–D to the categories.

1 Making a point forcefully **C**

2 Call to action/asking for action **D**

3 Giving your reasons for writing **A**

4 Explaining why the issue is important **B**

6 Rewrite the sentences in a more formal style using the words in brackets.

1 I heard that sea plastic is harming over 600 species. (estimated)

It is estimated that sea plastic is harming over 600 species.

2 It's important to look after nature. (vital)

It is vital to look after nature. 3 I urge you to stop using plastic.

3 You've got to stop using plastic! (urge)

I urge you to stop using plastic.

4 All the best, Ibrahim. (faithfully)

Yours faithfully, Ibrahim (+ surname).

5 I'm really bothered by the amount of plastic we use. (concerned)

I am deeply concerned by the amount of plastic we use.

6 Get rid of plastic packaging! (banned)

Plastic packaging should be banned.

7 I'm writing to tell you how bothered I am about ... (express)

I am writing to express my concern about ...

8 You should look into other options. (ask/investigate)

I would ask you to investigate other options.

9 It's important to do this right away. (essential/action)

It is essential to take immediate action.

10 You must do it now. (done/urgency)

This must be done as a matter of urgency.

7 WRITING TASK Write a formal email to a coffee shop chain in your country. Describe the problem

of disposable cups and urge the chain to take action.

- Use the Graphic Organiser to help you plan your writing.

Student own answers

