

Formal email format handout

Use this format for formal business purposes, writing to professors, or for applications.

[Greeting or salutation]

Dear Professor Kim :

[Or]

Dear Mr. Turner

[Body of email]

.....
.....
.....

[Closing]

Sincerely,

[Or]

Yours truly,

[Signature line]

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Use a colon for formal emails. No space before a colon: one space after it. "Dear" does not have a period or comma after it. In British English, a comma is used rather than a colon for business email. Generally try to find the correct name and title of the person you are sending the email or letter to, but if the name is not important such as in routine customer email, you can use either of these for the greeting line: **To Whom It May Concern:** or **Dear Sir or Madam:**

Always capitalize the first letter of family names. These days punctuation is getting simplified, especially in the business world. If it is routine email and not a formal letter on paper then no colon is acceptable. In British English, there is no period after Mr or other titles.

"Sincerely", and other closings are followed by a comma. For email, the name should be typed after skipping one line. If it is a business letter on paper then you should skip four lines because your handwritten signature should be between "Sincerely" and your name. Many documents, like a cover or reference letter, must be signed on paper unless there is a special online application.

Notice that the second word "truly" is not capitalized.

There should be a full signature line at the end of a professional email.

No punctuation at the end of a line. The format family name and comma, "Chang, Dong-gun" is sometimes used for names in Korea and some other Asian countries, but it is not standard in English except for forms in alphabetical order.

No space before a colon: one space after it. Don't forget to include full international contact numbers when writing applications or working with foreign researchers or companies. Note that for reasons of privacy many people do not include cell phone numbers, only office numbers. The entire mailing address is often not included.

These days email and web URLs are so common that many people do not write an introducing word like "Web." It is always a good idea to put **http://** in the web address, however, as many subdomain URLs do not start with WWW.