

▪ We normally begin **notes** and **messages** with the name of the person we are writing the message to (with/without a comma). Then we write one or more sentences/paragraphs, depending on the number of things which we want to tell that person about. At the end, we write our name.

Read the following short examples:

Mum,

Thanks for agreeing to feed the dog!
The dog food is in the cupboard.
Don't forget to give him some water.
I'm back on Saturday.

Tom

Pat

John called about tennis. Ring him.
Don't forget to pick up the jacket from the dry cleaner's.
See you at the restaurant at about 8 p.m.

Beth x x

We often write **notes** and **messages** to family members, flatmates, work colleagues, friends... In those messages and notes we often do the following:

▪ Say **where we are** when that person receives our message. Use the past simple:

I went for a drink with Lucy.

My boyfriend called me so I went out with him.

▪ **Thank** that person for something. Use "thank you for + sth/-ing"; "a big thank you for + sth/-ing"; "(many) thanks for + sth/-ing"; "thanks a million for + sth/-ing":

Thank you for an unforgettable evening. I really enjoyed the food and the music.

A big thank-you for helping to make it the most exciting birthday I've ever had.

Thanks for telling me about the English homework.

Thanks a million for an experience I will never forget.

After thanking, to describe how you felt you can say: I had a fantastic/great/wonderful time. I enjoyed it a lot more than I expected. I would love to do it again.

▪ **Pass on a message** from another person. Use the past simple, present perfect and imperative:

Nicole from the Accounts Department called at 3 o'clock. She wanted to see you. Call her back on 665 78 23 64.

Richard called. He has cancelled tennis this afternoon. Call him back after 5 o'clock.

▪ **Congratulating** her/him on/for sth. Use: Congratulations!/ Well done!/ Congratulations on sth / Congratulate sb on sth / Congratulate sb for (doing) sth:

I've just heard that you passed all your exams. Congratulations!

Congratulations on your new job.

▪ **Apologise** for something. Use:

I'm (really) sorry for (sth/sb/ + verb-ing): Sorry for arriving late at your party.

I'm sorry about (sth/sb/ + verb-ing): I'm really sorry about not being able to come to your party.

I'm sorry + (that) ...: I'm sorry that I got so angry. / Sorry I lost my temper yesterday.

I'm sorry + to infinitive: I was sorry to miss your concert.

I must apologize for (+ verb-ing)...: I must apologize for not being able to come to your party.

▪ Ask her/him a **favour**. Use the imperative or questions like "Can/Could you..., please?":

Please email me the information about the flat. (Imperative + please)

Don't forget to give the dog some water. (Negative imperative)

Could you email me the information about the flat, please?

▪ Tell that person to **do something**, for example, give her/him instructions, an order... Use the imperative or questions like “Can/Could you..., please?”:

Bring some nice food, please. / Can you bring some nice food, please?

Don't forget to call your sister.

Could you water the plants in the living room, please?

When you go out, please shut the balcony door.

If you have any problems, phone my mother, Ana, on 660 44 55 32.

▪ Tell that person to **remember something**. Use “Please remember to + infinitive”, “Please don't forget to + infinitive”:

When you go out, please remember to leave one light on.

Please don't forget to switch the gas off after you've used it.

▪ Give **directions**. Use the imperative and the present simple to say where places are:

The supermarket is in Avenida Tomás Hernández. Go along the street where I live, turn right into the first street and the supermarket is on the left, between a bank and a clothes shop.

▪ Tell that person **where s/he can find something**. Use “there is/ there are” or present simple:

There are some boiled potatoes and rice in the oven and there is wine in the fridge.

The computer is in the study.

▪ Tell that person something that happened some time in the **past** (e.g. yesterday). Use the past simple (finished past actions and past habits) and past continuous (past actions in progress and background descriptions):

My cousin Mary and I visited La Laguna yesterday. What a pity you couldn't come with us! We went shopping and then we visited a beautiful old building.

I was working at my office when I got a phone call.

▪ Tell that person about something that has happened. Use the **present perfect**:

I've been ill all week so I haven't gone to work.

▪ Tell that person about something that is going to/will happen in the **future**. Use “be going to + infinitive” for predictions with evidence and plans. Use “will” + infinitive for predictions without evidence and decisions expressed at the moment of writing (e.g. offers, promises, etc.):

The weather forecast said it's going to rain tomorrow, so take a raincoat with you. (prediction with evidence)

Tomorrow we're going to visit Mum and Dad. (plan)

I think it'll rain tomorrow. (prediction without evidence, it's just an opinion)

I'll phone her later. (decision taken at the moment of writing)

I'll help you with your homework. (offer to do sth)

I'll pay you back tomorrow. (promise to do sth)

▪ **Invite** that person to something or to do something/ **Offer** that person something. **Use:**

I'm writing to invite you to ... my birthday party on 26th July.

Would you (verb)...: Would you come and spend next Easter with us at our apartment in the south of Tenerife? Adolfo and I would be delighted if you accepted.

Would you like (sth)...: Would you like a new watch?

Would you like to (verb)...: Would you like to come to a dinner party on 3rd November at 9 p.m.?

Imperative (e.g. Feel free to + infinitive): Please help yourself to any food and feel free to use my computer.

Shall I...? (offers): Shall I carry your bag?

I will (offers): I will help you with those bags.

Shall we...? (invitations): Shall we eat out tonight?

• After the invitation you can add the following sentences:

Think about it ... and tell me soon.

Let me know... if you can come. I hope you can. / I really hope you can come.

▪ **Make a suggestion or give advice.** You can use a lot of structures:

▫ Structures + infinitive:

I think we/you should ..., We/You should ..., We/You shouldn't ..., We/You could ..., We/You can...
I think you should do some exercise and eat lots of fruit and green vegetables.

You can/could get a train to Brighton from the airport.

Why don't you/we ...?: Why don't you come to my house on Saturday and we can do the homework together?

It would be great if we/you could...: It would be great if we could meet.

▫ Structures + to infinitive:

I think the best thing would be to ... leave your job.

It would be a good idea to... go on holiday together.

I advise (object pronoun) to...: I advise you to go on a diet.

▫ With the verb "advise" there are other possibilities:

I advise + ing (when we don't say who we are giving advice): I advise giving up smoking.

I advise (object pronoun) on/about/of sth: She advised me on the use of computers in the classroom.

Structures + ing:

I recommend + ing: I recommend writing your feelings down on paper.

I advise + ing (when we don't say who we are giving advice): I advise giving up smoking.

▫ Imperative: Go to a specialist so s/he can tell you what to eat.

▫ Second conditional: If I were you, I would (+ inf)...: If I were you, I would travel by bus.

After the advice you can say: I hope that this advice helps.

▪ **Asking for advice/an opinion.** You can use "should" and other structures like the following:

I've got a problem and I'd like your advice.

Do you think I should (+ inf)...?: Do you think I should hire a car or travel around by bus or train?

Can you recommend (+ sth)...?: Can you recommend a good hotel, not too expensive?

Could you tell me (+ sth)...?: Could you tell me a bit about her so I can see if she fits in with us?

What ... should I (+ inf)...?: What sort of clothes should I pack? Casual or formal?

What should I do?

Which ... should I (+ inf)...?: Which places should I visit?

Would you like me to (+ inf)...?: Would you like me to bring anything for you?

What do you think is ... the right thing to do?/ the best month for me to go?

▪ A **blog entry** is a post you write to be published online on a blog. Blog entries are generally informal and very personal.

What is a blog entry about?:

- You can tell a personal experience or an anecdote (about a recent event that happened to you)
- You can write a short story
- You can give advice to the readers who read your blog
- Etc.

Structure of a blog entry:

- It should have a title summarising what the post is about (e.g. My rules on spending, 16 ways to get motivated, Resources for listening...)
- The introduction: start with an interesting sentence or question to make the reader want to continue reading.
- The body: mention the facts, events, your opinions, etc.
- The conclusion: summarise everything. You can invite the reader to leave a comment.

Example of a blog entry with an example contribution:

14/November/ 2013

The weather is changing all over the world.

We want to know how the weather has changed in our country. Can you join in our blog survey?

Write a blog post of between 60-80 words telling us what the weather used to be like in your area and how it has changed today. The best three entries will win €50.

Weather changes

Ten years ago the weather here was very cold in winter. It used to snow and temperatures were low. We had long, hot summers with very little rain.

Things have changed a lot. These days we no longer have snow in the winter. The temperatures are still low but not as low as before. We don't have hot summers any more. The temperatures have fallen 10° and nowadays we have a lot more rain.

These changes are very worrying. We should do something so that these changes don't continue.

Adapted from: EOI Basic. Ready-to-Go!