

## How to E-mail Your Teacher, EP, Boss, Future Professor and Other Adults

### 1. E-mail account name

Make sure your e-mail address is appropriate and not too cutesy. For example, [hotstuf123@yahoo.com](mailto:hotstuf123@yahoo.com), [lovemykitten@live.com](mailto:lovemykitten@live.com), [soccer4life@hotmail.com](mailto:soccer4life@hotmail.com) and [qtpie2005@aol.com](mailto:qtpie2005@aol.com) are not appropriate e-mail addresses for formal communication. A simple e-mail address with your name and/or initials (such as [jsmith@yahoo.com](mailto:jsmith@yahoo.com) or [jane.smith@aol.com](mailto:jane.smith@aol.com)) would be more appropriate. (When you get into college, use your university account when communicating with professors).

### 2. Subject line/header

Do not leave the subject line blank as it can often be confused with spam or junk e-mail. Also, if the subject line is blank, it will be more difficult for the receiver of the e-mail to locate the message later. Be specific, yet concise. For example, if you are writing about a missed class or assignment, try to avoid the subject line of "question." Try something more specific such as: "question about response to literature."

### 3. Think about what you're saying.

- ❖ **Choose an appropriate greeting.** "Hi/Hello Mr./Ms./Mrs.[Blank]" is always appropriate. Substitute "Dear" and you've ended up writing a letter; leave out "Hi" and your tone is too abrupt.
- ❖ **Avoid apologies and begging for extensions on assignments.** Most teachers are tired of hearing those standard apologies and acts of contrition. Simply state that you missed class or didn't write down the homework without excuses.
- ❖ **Ask politely.** "Could you e-mail me the page numbers for the next reading? Thanks you!" is a lot better than "I need the assignment" or "Send me the homework."
- ❖ **Proofread what you've written.** You want your e-mail to show you in the best possible light. If there is a red squiggly line underneath the word, it means you have misspelled it.
- ❖ **Be academic.** Avoid text-message style acronyms and smiley faces.
- ❖ **End academically as well.** Simply end the e-mail by saying, "Sincerely, [Your first and last name]." DO NOT end e-mails with common Facebook or text message sign offs such as, "K thanks!" or "Buh bye."

### 4. So what would a good e-mail to a teacher or EP look like?

From: [jsmith@yahoo.com](mailto:jsmith@yahoo.com)

Subject: question regarding research essay

Hello Mrs. Franco,

I'm working on my essay about William Carlos Williams, and I'm not sure what to make of the last stanza of "Spring and All." I'm having trouble understanding the symbolism in the last stanza. Do you have any suggestions? Thank you!

Sincerely,  
Jane Smith