

B1

BUSINESS GRAMMAR

≈ 27 MIN

Formal vs Informal Register — *set the register*

You know the four dials — now you turn them on new situations.

English has no Sie – **four dials** set the register: contraction/full form, verb choice, softener, ellipsis.

NAME

DATE

YOUR BUILD

1 · SORTING

2 · FILL-IN

3 · CORRECT

4 · WRITE

BRICK 1 · SORT: INFORMAL OR FORMAL · APPROX. 4 MIN

●○○

Team chat, contractions, phrasal verbs → left. Report, full forms, Latinate verbs → right.

We have arranged a review with the supplier.

No worries, I'll check the numbers tonight.

Can't join now – I'll deal with it later.

We will investigate the matter further.

Got a sec? Check the deck for me?

The delay was caused by a documentation error.

We would be grateful if you could address this.

Sounds good – I'll ping you once it's done.

We're setting up a call for Thursday.

The board has established a new process.

INFORMAL · TEAM CHAT

FORMAL · WRITTEN REPORT

BRICK 2 · FILL IN THE RIGHT WORD · APPROX. 6 MIN

○○●

Fill in the right word. Watch for contraction/full form, phrasal/Latinate verb and the request level.

01 Chat: Can't talk now — _____ ping you later. (contraction of 'I will')

02 Report: _____ reduced overhead costs this quarter. (full form of 'we've')

03 Chat: Can you _____ why the invoice bounced? (phrasal verb for 'establish')

04 Email to a supplier: We will _____ the cause of the delay. (Latinate verb for 'find out')

05 On a client call: _____ you resend the contract? (neutral request)

06 Formal letter: I _____ be grateful if you could confirm. (full form only)

07 Report: The team will _____ within 24 hours. (Latinate verb for 'get back to')

08 Report: The invoice _____ late. (passive of 'send')

YOUR BUILD

1 · SORTING

2 · FILL-IN

3 · CORRECT

4 · WRITE

BRICK 3 · FIND AND CORRECT THE MISTAKE · APPROX. 7 MIN



Each sentence has the wrong register or a grammar mistake. Underline the problem and write the whole sentence correctly.

01 I want that you send the invoice today.

.....

02 Team chat: I would like to inform you that the figures have been sent.

.....

03 Got a sec? I would be grateful if you could investigate the numbers.

.....

04 Email to a client: Send me the report today, please.

.....

05 🤪 We will investigate the issue 🙌

.....

06 On a client call: We have reduced costs and we are confident that revenue will grow.

.....

BRICK 4 · WRITE YOUR OWN SENTENCES · APPROX. 8 MIN



Write one sentence for each prompt. Choose the contraction/full form, verb and softener deliberately for the situation.

01 Ask a colleague in chat for a small favour using an ellipsis and a phrasal verb (find out, set up, look into, get back to, deal with).

.....

02 Write the same request for a client call in neutral register with "Could you ..." and a full sentence.

.....

03 Describe a problem for a written report using the impersonal passive, without naming a person.

.....

04 Ask a new client in writing using "I would be grateful if you could ..." and a Latinate verb.

.....

MINI-CHECK – CAN I DO THIS YET?

- ☐ I know the four dials: contraction/full form, phrasal verb/Latinate verb, command/softener, ellipsis.
- ☐ I know contractions are normal in speech at every level — only formal writing prefers full forms.
- ☐ I choose the register by situation and relationship, not by rank.
- ☐ I never write "I want that you..." — I use "I want you to..." instead.

Not every box ticked? Build the lesson once more and try this sheet again tomorrow.

Answer key

Check only when you have finished. Every answer comes with the **why** — the rule matters more than the result.

BRICK 1 · SORTING

- 01 **Formal** — We have arranged a review with the supplier.
Arrange is the Latinate verb; a full sentence, no ellipsis.
- 02 **Informal** — No worries, I'll check the numbers tonight.
Look into is the relaxed phrasal verb; "No worries" belongs in chat.
- 03 **Informal** — Can't join now — I'll deal with it later.
The contraction "Can't" and the phrasal verb deal with — team tone.
- 04 **Formal** — We will investigate the matter further.
Investigate is the Latinate verb; no contraction.
- 05 **Informal** — Got a sec? Check the deck for me?
Ellipsis — the whole request drops words, stays with the team.
- 06 **Formal** — The delay was caused by a documentation error.
The impersonal passive names the problem without blame.
- 07 **Formal** — We would be grateful if you could address this.
The extended softener fits a bigger request.
- 08 **Informal** — Sounds good — I'll ping you once it's done.
A short reaction plus a contraction — relaxed chat tone.
- 09 **Informal** — We're setting up a call for Thursday.
Set up is the phrasal verb; the contraction "We're".
- 10 **Formal** — The board has established a new process.
Established is the Latinate verb at board level.

BRICK 2 · FILL-IN

- 01 **I'll**
Contraction of "I will" — normal in chat.
- 02 **We have**
Full form for formal writing; "We've" would be too relaxed here.
- 03 **find out**
Find out is the phrasal verb for the team chat.
- 04 **establish**
Establish is the Latinate verb with the same meaning.
- 05 **Could**
Could you is the neutral request on a client call.
- 06 **would**
Full form in formal letters — no contraction.
- 07 **respond**
Respond is the Latinate verb for get back to.
- 08 **was sent**
Impersonal passive — no name is attached.

BRICK 3 · CORRECT

- 01 I want **you to** send the invoice today.
Want takes an object plus to-infinitive, not a dass-clause.
- 02 Team chat: **Figures are in — take a look!**
I would like to inform you is too formal for chat.
- 03 Got a sec? **Can you look into the numbers?**
Both halves now stay informal: ellipsis plus can and look into.
- 04 Email to a client: **Could you** send me the report today, please?
The bare imperative is an instruction; could you makes it a request.
- 05 🤔 We'll look into it 🙌
Investigate between emojis mixes two registers; look into fits the chat.
- 06 On a client call: **We've** reduced costs and **we're** confident that revenue will grow.
Contractions are normal in speech at every level, even with a client.

BRICK 4 · WRITE

Your sentences may differ — just check you chose the right verb and the right request level.

- 01 "Got a sec? Can you set up a quick call with Lena?"
Ellipsis plus set up — right for the team chat.
- 02 "Could you arrange a quick call with Lena this week?"
Could you keeps the request neutral; arrange stays professional.
- 03 "The shipment was delayed by a customs issue."
The passive names the problem without blaming anyone.
- 04 "I would be grateful if you could establish the cause of the delay."
The extended softener plus establish — the formal setting.

NEXT BRICKS — KEEP BUILDING FREE ONLINE

PAIR WITH THIS

Modal Verbs for Politeness

englisch-lehrer.com/en/lessons/modal-politeness

ALSO PRESENT

Indirect Questions

englisch-lehrer.com/en/lessons/indirect-questions-business

ALL LESSONS

45+ free lessons

englisch-lehrer.com/en/lessons

HANOVER

Schaufelder Straße 11 · 30167
englisch-lehrer.com/hannover

BERLIN

Kurfürstendamm 30 · 10719
englisch-lehrer.com/berlin

ONLINE COURSES

englisch-lehrer.com/online
worldwide on Zoom

CONTACT

+49 511 4739339
james@englisch-lehrer.com

