Email Pro Tips

Email is the main platform for day-to-day communication in most workplace settings, including higher education. This means that in college you need to be on top of your email game. Follow these best practices for writing, sending, and organizing emails.

Make the most important information easy to find quickly

Always describe the topic of your email in the subject heading — never send an email without a subject heading. In the body of your email, put the most important action items first instead of burying them beneath an introduction or background information. Use subheadings and bullet points whenever necessary for helping your reader visually keep track of the information hierarchy.

Address your recipient by their name

If you are emailing faculty or staff, don't start your email with the word "Hey." Instead, type out your recipient's name and say hello, like this: *Hello, Dr. Professor / Hi, Dr. Teacher / Good morning Person's Name.* The tone for school-related email is more formal than texting.

Send work emails during regular work hours only

Since every email you send creates work for the person you send it to, don't send school-related emails to faculty or staff outside of regular workweek hours. If you write an email to your professor at 12:30am on Saturday night, use Gmail's ['Schedule send'](#) feature to delay sending that email until Monday morning. Doing so will promote a healthy work-life balance by showing that you respect others' time away from work.

Use one email thread for the same topic

Once an email conversation has been started, use a single email thread for the duration of the entire conversation ([Tip #2](#)). Do not compose a 'New Message' if

you already have exchanged emails about a question, topic, or project — use the 'Reply' feature instead. Since composing a new message starts a brand new email thread, your new message takes one conversation and [divides it](#) into separate email threads. That clutters your recipient's inbox and makes it harder for you and your recipient to keep track of the conversation.

Dr. Philip Perdue
Presbyterian College Writing Center
Fall 2023