

Friendly emails to friends and coworkers

French A2 (elementary) · Lesson

Quick answer: An informal French email has a short subject line, a friendly greeting such as Salut or Coucou, a few lines of news and questions, and a warm closing such as Bises or À bientôt. Use tu, the passé composé for finished events and the futur proche for plans.

Level: French A2 (CEFR elementary) · **Standards:** CEFR A2, Writing

How is an informal French email built?

A message to a friend, a neighbor or a coworker you get along with follows a simple frame. Each part has a fixed place, so you can write quickly and still sound natural.

À : Inès

Objet : Mes nouvelles de Nantes

Salut Inès,

Merci pour ton message !

La semaine dernière, j'ai trouvé un poste.

Le mois prochain, je vais déménager.

Et toi, comment vas-tu ? Tu viens samedi ?

À bientôt !

Grosses bises, Malik

1. objet court

2. salutation

3. remerciement

4. nouvelles

5. questions

6. formule finale

7. signature

The seven parts of a friendly email.

Informal email

A message written with tu, a friendly greeting and a warm closing. Sentences stay short, and the tone is close to speech.

How do you open and close a message?

Part	French	Feel
Opening	Salut Inès, · Coucou Malik,	very friendly
Opening	Cher Théo, · Chère Amina,	warm, a little more careful

Part	French	Feel
Thanks	Merci pour ton message !	neutral
Late reply	Désolé(e) de répondre si tard.	neutral
Closing	À bientôt ! · À très vite !	friendly
Closing	Bises · Grosses bises · Amitiés	affectionate, kind

Bises

Literally “kisses,” bises is an everyday closing among friends and relatives, and often among friendly coworkers. It is not romantic.

How do you tell your news?

Choose the tense by the time

Use the passé composé for finished events, the present for the current situation, and aller + infinitive (the futur proche) for plans.

Hier, samedi dernier

passé composé

J'ai trouvé un poste.

Maintenant

présent

Je travaille à Lyon.

Demain, le mois prochain

futur proche

Je vais partir.

One tense for each time frame.

Examples

- Samedi, nous **avons visité** le marché de Rabat. — On Saturday we visited the Rabat market.
- J'**habite** près de la gare. — I live near the station.
- Le mois prochain, je **vais commencer** un nouveau poste. — Next month I'm starting a new job.

How do you ask questions?

Raise your voice, add est-ce que, or use a question word. Ask about the other person first, then about plans.

- Tu viens samedi ? — Are you coming Saturday?

- Est-ce que tu as reçu mes photos ? — Did you get my photos?
- Comment va ta sœur ? — How is your sister?
- Quand est-ce que tu arrives ? — When are you arriving?

Watch out

English “Dear” does not always become Cher: between friends, Salut is more usual. Days and months have no capital letter (lundi 3 mai). After J'espère que, use a normal indicative: J'espère que tu vas bien.

Zoé's tip

Answer the other person's questions first, then add your own news. A reply that skips their questions feels cold, even if your French is perfect.

Key points to remember

- Greet friends with Salut or Coucou followed by a first name.
- Close with Bises, Grosses bises, À bientôt or Amitiés.
- Tell finished events in the passé composé and plans with aller + infinitive.
- Ask questions with rising intonation, est-ce que or a question word.
- Days and months stay lowercase: lundi 3 mai.

Friendly Emails to Friends and Coworkers: frequently asked questions

How do you start an informal email in French?

Write Salut or Coucou plus the first name, or Cher / Chère for a slightly more careful tone. Add a comma and start a new line.

What does bises mean at the end of an email?

It literally means kisses, and it is a normal friendly closing between friends, relatives and close coworkers. It has no romantic meaning.

Should I use tu or vous in a friendly email?

Use tu with friends, family and peers who already use it with you. If you are unsure, begin with vous and switch when the other person does.

How do you apologize for a late reply?

Say Désolé(e) de répondre si tard near the beginning. Then thank the person for the message and answer their questions.

Which tense do I use to tell my news?

Use the passé composé for finished events, the present for your current situation and the futur proche for plans.