

Student Email Etiquette

1. Be concise and to the point.

Do not make an e-mail longer than it needs to be. Remember that reading an e-mail is harder than reading printed communications and a long e-mail can be very discouraging to read.

2. Use proper spelling, grammar & punctuation.

This is not only important because improper spelling, grammar and punctuation give a bad impression of you, it is also important for conveying the message properly. E-mails with no full stops or commas are difficult to read and can sometimes even change the meaning of the text. If you don't know which word to use (your or you're, affect or effect), take the time and do a search. And use your spell check!

3. Make it personal.

Not only should the e-mail be personally addressed (Good Morning, Mr. Smith; Hi, Joe), it should also include personal customized content. For this reason auto replies are usually not very effective. However, Lotus Notes Stationery can be used effectively in this way, see next tip.

4. Use Stationery for frequently used responses.

Some questions you may get over and over again, such as describe your extracurricular activities. Save these responses as stationery to use over and over again.

5. Answer swiftly.

People send an e-mail because they wish to receive a quick response. Therefore, each e-mail should be replied to within at least 24 hours, and preferably within the same day. If the email is complicated, just send an email back saying that you have received it and that you will get back to them.

6. Use proper paragraphs and bullets.

Since reading from a screen is more difficult than reading from paper, the structure and lay out is very important for e-mail messages. Use short paragraphs and blank lines between each paragraph. When making points or lists, use bullets.

7. Do not overuse the high priority option.

We all know the story of the boy who cried wolf. If you overuse the high priority option, it will lose its function when you really need it. Moreover, even if a mail has high priority, your message can come across as slightly aggressive if you flag it as 'high priority'.

8. Do not write in CAPITALS.

IF YOU WRITE IN CAPITALS IT SEEMS AS IF YOU ARE SHOUTING. This can be highly annoying and might trigger an unwanted response in the form of a flame mail. Therefore, try not to send any email text in capitals.

9. Reply with History.

When you reply to an email, you should include the original mail in your reply, in other words click "Reply with history". It's time consuming if you get a response that reads, "Yes, that would be great?" but you do not have the history to see what the person is referring to. You then need to check your sent folder to see what the original email said.

10. Proof Read the email before you send it.

A lot of people don't bother to read an email before they send it out, as can be seen from the many spelling and grammar mistakes contained in emails. Apart from this, reading your email through the eyes of the recipient will help you send a more effective message and avoid misunderstandings and inappropriate comments. If the email is very important, have someone else proof read it too. Sometimes we don't see our own mistakes.

11. Do not overuse Reply to All.

Only use Reply to All if you really need your message to be seen by each person who received the original message.

12. Take care with abbreviations and emoticons.

In formal emails, do not use abbreviations such as BTW (by the way) and LOL (laugh out loud). The recipient might not be aware of the meanings of the abbreviations and are generally not appropriate. The same goes for emoticons, such as the smiley :-). If you are writing to someone from a university admissions' office, emoticons are not appropriate.

13. Be careful with formatting.

Remember that when you use formatting in your emails, the sender might not be able to view it, or might see different fonts than you had intended. If using text colors, use a color that is easy to read on the background.

14. Do not forward chain letters.

Do not forward chain letters. They are all hoaxes. Just delete the letters as soon as you receive them.

15. Do not use email to discuss confidential information.

Sending an email is like sending a postcard. If you don't want your email to be displayed on a bulletin board, posted on Facebook, or broadcast over the internet, **don't send it!** Moreover, never make any slanderous, sexist or racially discriminating comments in emails, even if they are meant to be a joke.

16. Use a meaningful subject.

Try to use a subject that is meaningful to the recipient as well as yourself. For instance, when you send an email to a company requesting information about a product, it is better to mention the actual name of the product, e.g. 'Tuition Questions' than to just say 'Questions'.

17. Avoid long sentences.

Try to keep your sentences to a maximum of 15-20 words. Email is meant to be a quick medium and requires a different kind of writing than letters. Also take care not to send emails that are too long.

18. Don't send or forward emails containing defamatory, offensive, racist or obscene remarks.

By sending or even just forwarding one defamatory or offensive remark in an email, you can get in trouble.

19. Don't forward virus hoaxes and chain letters.

If you receive an email message warning you of a new unstoppable virus that will immediately delete everything from your computer, this is most probably a hoax. By forwarding hoaxes you use valuable bandwidth and sometimes virus hoaxes contain viruses themselves, by attaching a so-called file that will stop the dangerous virus. The same goes for chain letters that promise incredible riches or ask your help for a charitable cause. Even if the content seems to be bona fide, the senders are usually not. Since it is impossible to find out whether a chain letter is real or not, the best place for it is the recycle bin.

20. Don't reply to spam.

By replying to spam or by unsubscribing, you are confirming that your email address is 'live'. Confirming this will only generate even more spam. Therefore, just hit the delete button. Your Lotus Notes mail is filtered for spam so you should not get much. Because nothing will block spam 100%, if you do receive spam, click the link at the bottom of your email to mark it as spam. *NOTE* – you will only see these links when accessing your mail at school.



Quick Tips:

- Think before sending, **anything** you send is permanent and can be used against you.
- Think twice before using another student's email, it can still be traced to you.
- Do not spam administrators or large groups of users; it will be traced back to you.
- When sending any email, make sure it is what you would say face to face. Again, think before sending.
- Be courteous and blind carbon copy when sending to multiple users so that emails addresses are not shared.
- Have a free secondary account for home use (Yahoo, Gmail, Hotmail, etc) to sign up for online services to prevent school email from filling with junk.
- Do NOT give out your password. Never allow someone to use your account. You are held accountable for its use and will have to prove it was not you sending if an inappropriate email is sent.
- Don't send anything that you don't want forwarded to others.
- Don't send anything you wouldn't say in front of your principal, your parents, or a police officer.
- Parents have the right to inspect a student's email upon request.
- Email can be subpoenaed by law enforcement if a student is suspected of breaking the law.
- Students should report all abusive messages.
- Abusive messages from other students should be forwarded to the appropriate district staff.
- Inappropriate messages from outside the district will be forwarded to the appropriate authorities, or the sender will be added to our district block list.
- If you are angry, instead of hitting "Send", you may consider pressing the "Save as draft" button instead. This will place your message in the "Drafts" folder. You can then come back and open the message later to review it when you are calm, and then edit if necessary before sending the message.

- It is much easier to delay sending an email than it is to try to repair the damage from a hurtful message.
- If you're asking for something from someone, say "please". And if someone does something for you, say "thank you".

Attachment tips:

- You can send an email with an attachment to yourself to move it from school to home, or back.
- If you receive an email with an attachment and you do NOT know the sender, do NOT open the attachment! It may contain a virus. Simply delete it.
- File attachments are limited to 10MB. A 5MB to 10MB attachment will be sent after 5:00 pm when the network is not as busy as during the school day.
- Your total storage on the server is 50MB. You should save attachments to your H drive, and then delete the email to save on storage.
- Don't send MP3's, zip files, or copyrighted files.