97 Formal and informal English

A Formal English

Most words and expressions are **neutral**, which means they are **neither** formal **nor** informal, and can be used in most situations.
We use formal language in:

SPOKEN ANNOUNCEMENTS:
The play will **commence** in three minutes.
Passengers should **proceed to** Gate 7.

SPOKEN OR WRITTEN OFFICIAL STATEMENTS:
The robbery **occurred** in the early hours of the morning.

NOTICES:
Only food **purchased** here may be **consumed** on the **premises**.

OFFICIAL LETTERS OR EMAILS:
Please keep your receipt as proof of **purchase**.
If you **require** further **assistance**, …
Tickets can be **obtained** at the box office.
The decision was based **upon** advice given by doctors.

GLOSSARY

neutral	not having any strong qualities (so in this context, neither formal nor informal)
neither … nor …	not … and not
commence *formal*	begin/start
proceed (to/with sth) *formal*	move or travel in a particular direction
occur *formal*	happen
purchase *formal*	buy **purchase** *n*
consume *formal*	eat
premises	the buildings and land that a business owns or uses
require *formal*	need
assistance *formal*	help **assist** *v formal*
obtain *formal*	get
upon *formal*	on

1 Find six more pairs of neutral and formal words in the box.

get ✓	purchase	help	happen	eat	commence	consume
need	obtain ✓	buy	assistance	require	occur	start

▸ get / obtain ....
....

2 Replace the underlined words with a more formal word.

▸ Call us if you need more help. assistance
1 After check-in, please go to passport control. .....
2 The film will begin in five minutes. .....
3 You can buy tickets on the internet. .....
4 There was a castle on the hill. .....
5 We can get any size you need. .....
6 At what time exactly did this happen? .....

3 Complete the sentences.

▸ When does the performance commence ?
1 Please contact us if you ..... further ..... .
2 It's hard to describe the colour: it was ..... blue nor green.
3 The club is moving to larger ..... on the edge of town.
4 Most of the rooms in my flat are ..... in colour. I don't like strong colours.
5 Which European country ..... the most cheese?
6 If you experience any difficulties, we can ..... the tickets for you.
7 Wait for a green light, then ..... if the road is clear.
8 The illness can ..... at any time – often without warning.
9 Nurses are available to ..... you with the shower and getting dressed.

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LIVEWORKSHEETS

B Informal conversation

Informal language is used widely in spoken English and in texts or emails to friends.

Where are the **kids**?

I haven't a **clue**.

What do you **fancy** doing tonight?

I'm not **bothered**, really.

Could you **give me a hand**?

Yeah, sure.

Cheers.

Hang on. I'll be with you in a minute.

It's OK, we've got **loads** of time.

What's up with Carrie?

She's got **a bit of a** problem, and I think she's pretty **fed up**.

SPOTLIGHT *cheers*

We use **cheers** in informal situations to mean either *thank you* or *goodbye*. It is also used to express good wishes when we have an alcoholic drink.

GLOSSARY

kid *inf*	child	**hang on** *inf*	wait a moment SYN **hold on**
I haven't a clue *inf*	= I don't know.	**loads (of sth)** *inf*	lots (of sth)
fancy (doing)sth *inf*	want sth or want to do sth	**What's up (with sb)?** *inf*	= What's the matter (with sb)?
I'm not bothered	= I don't mind what we do / where we go.	**a bit of a/an** *inf*	used when talking about unpleasant things to mean 'rather a': *It's **a bit of a** long walk to the station.*
give sb a hand *inf*	help sb SYN **lend sb a hand**		
yeah *inf*	yes	**fed up** *inf*	bored or unhappy with a situation

4 Same or different? Write *S* or *D*.

▶ yeah / yes S
1 I'm not bothered. / I'm not happy. .....
2 cheers / goodbye .....
3 fed up / hungry .....
4 I don't know. / I haven't a clue. .....
5 kid / teenager .....
6 hang on / wait a minute .....
7 What's the matter? / What's up? .....

5 Replace the underlined words with more informal words. The meaning must stay the same.

▶ Yes, I'll wait. Yeah
1 Could you help me? .....
2 Where are the children? .....
3 We've got a lot of time. .....
4 Could you wait a minute? .....
5 She's bored and unhappy. .....

6 Make sentences from the words.

▶ not / about / holiday / a / I'm / bothered I'm not bothered about a holiday.
1 of / got / she / we've / time / says / loads .....
2 you / hand / today / me / could / lend / a ? .....
3 up / morning / with / what's / this / Matt ? .....
4 afraid / clue / I / a / I'm / haven't .....
5 this / do / fancy / what / doing / evening / you ? .....

7 Complete the dialogues.

▶ What's up ? ~ Nothing. Why?
1 I'm writing a text. Could you ..... on a minute? ~ ....., sure.
2 See you tomorrow. ~ OK. ..... !
3 Could you ..... me a hand? ~ Sorry, I've got a ..... problem today.
4 What do you want to do? ~ Oh, I'm not ....., actually. You decide.
5 What's ..... with Zoe this morning? ~ I haven't a ..... .
6 Do you ..... going out? ~ Yes. What would you like to do?

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