

# 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

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

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

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



### TEST YOURSELF

## 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.

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

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

### 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

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 ?

I'm not bothered about a holiday. ....

....

....

....

....

### 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?

