

An email to explain an accommodation problem

Learn how to write an email to explain a problem with your accommodation.

Before reading

Do the preparation task first. Then read the text and tips and do the exercises.

Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–h) with the vocabulary (1–8).

Vocabulary

1. on behalf of someone
2. occasionally
3. a flatmate
4. to run
5. to cause something
6. to cut out
7. a landlord or landlady
8. an (electrical) appliance

Definition

- a. someone you share a flat with
- b. for someone you share a flat with
- c. (for an electrical item) to stop working suddenly
- d. to be working or using electricity
- e. to make something happen
- f. sometimes
- g. the owner of a flat or house that is rented
- h. an electrical item for the home, like a washing machine or an iron

An email to explain an accommodation problem

From: Eloisa Marr

To: Sam Matthews [landlord]

Subject: 32 Acacia Avenue electricity problem

Dear Sam,

I'm writing on behalf of myself and my flatmates about Number 32 Acacia Avenue as we've been having problems with the electricity.

We noticed that if we use more than one appliance at night when the lights are on, the power cuts out. This means that we can't use the dishwasher at the same time as the oven, for example. For a while we have been careful but recently we have found that even in the daytime, more than one machine running can cause a power cut. Occasionally, the power cuts out for no obvious reason.

We know the electrician who came before couldn't find anything wrong, but please can someone come again as the problem is getting worse? If it would be easier, we can arrange an electrician ourselves and send you the bill.

Kind regards,

Eloisa

Tips

1. To email someone who's not a friend, use a neutral style and polite tone.
2. Start the email with *Dear ...* , not *Hi*. End it with *Kind regards* or just *Regards*.
3. Organise your email in three paragraphs: 1. why you're writing, 2. the problem and 3. what you want the solution to be.
4. Keep it short and simple. Only include the important information.
5. Put specific information in the subject line. Don't just put *Problem*.

Tasks

Task 1

Choose the correct answer.

1. The problems have ...
 - a. just started.
 - b. been happening for a while.
2. The main problem is with ...
 - a. the lights.
 - b. the electricity.
3. They first noticed the problem ...
 - a. at night.
 - b. in the day.
4. The last electrician ...
 - a. didn't find the cause.
 - b. fixed the problem.
5. Eloisa offers to ...
 - a. find an electrician.
 - b. pay for the repairs.
6. The writer seems ...
 - a. calm and polite.
 - b. angry.

Task 2

Circle the correct answer.

1. Which option has the right style and tone?
 - a. Dear Mike,
 - b. Hi Mike,
 - c. Mike!
2. Which option has the right style and tone?
 - a. The Wi-Fi's stopped working – yet again!
 - b. We've been having problems with the Wi-Fi.
 - c. The wireless internet service is, regrettably, malfunctioning.
3. Which option has the right style and tone?
 - a. When I go into the kitchen, guess what? No Wi-Fi!
 - b. It's especially bad in the kitchen.
 - c. The kitchen is experiencing the worst of the problem.

4. Which option has the right style and tone?
 - a. It has been found that the Wi-Fi is periodically disconnected, the cause of which cannot be determined.
 - b. The Wi-Fi just goes off, totally randomly, you know? We've got no idea why.
 - c. Occasionally, the Wi-Fi just cuts out for no obvious reason.
5. Which option has the right style and tone?
 - a. Send a technician ASAP.
 - b. Please can you send someone to have a look?
 - c. We would be profoundly grateful if it is possible to arrange for a technician to visit.
6. Which option has the right style and tone?
 - a. The problem seems to be getting worse.
 - b. It's just getting worse and worse. We can't live like this!
 - c. With every passing day, the problem grows.
7. Which option has the right style and tone?
 - a. We can call the internet company ourselves, OK?
 - b. We are prepared to, if necessary, communicate with the internet company to arrange for a technician to visit.
 - c. If it would be easier, we can arrange it ourselves with the internet company.
8. Which option has the right style and tone?
 - a. Cheers,
 - b. Kind regards,
 - c. Yours sincerely,

Task 3

Put the sentences in order to make the email.

_____ We've been having problems with the central heating since last week.

_____ I'm writing on behalf of myself and my flatmates about Flat 12, 3 Hanley Place.

_____ George

_____ Kind regards,

_____ The radiators in the kitchen and living room aren't working at all. Also, the radiators in the bedrooms feel cold at the bottom.

_____ Please can you send someone to have a look at them? If it would be easier, we can call a plumber ourselves and send you the bill.

_____ Dear Lisa,

Discussion

Have you ever had a bad experience in rented accommodation?

Answers

Preparation task

1. b
2. f
3. a
4. d
5. e
6. c
7. g
8. h

Task 1

1. b
2. b
3. a
4. a
5. a
6. a

Task 2

1. a
2. b
3. b
4. c
5. b
6. a
7. c
8. b

Task 3

- 3 We've been having problems with the central heating since last week.
- 2 I'm writing on behalf of myself and my flatmates about Flat 12, 3 Hanley Place.
- 7 George
- 6 Kind regards,
- 4 The radiators in the kitchen and living room aren't working at all. Also, the radiators in the bedrooms feel cold at the bottom.
- 5 Please can you send someone to have a look at them? If it would be easier, we can call a plumber ourselves and send you the bill.
- 1 Dear Lisa,