

Formal Vocabulary Word List

When writing in a formal, academic register, avoid phrasal verbs, colloquialisms, slang, idioms, contractions and abbreviations.

Generally, French/Latinate vocabulary is more formal than the Germanic equivalent.

For example:

Germanic = French/Latinate
give up = relinquish
put together = assemble
job = occupation

When you are at the editing stage of your writing, see if you can improve the formality of your writing by using this Word List

CASUAL	FORMAL
a lot of	many, much
about	approximately
about	regarding / concerning
above board	legitimate
ads, adverts	advertisements

CASUAL	FORMAL
again and again	repeatedly
and	as well as
annoy	irritate
anybody	anyone
ask	command, order, inquire, request, enquire, interrogate
at first	initially
at once	immediately
ban	prohibit, prevent, forbid
bear, bear up, take care of	support, uphold, bolster
bearing in mind	reference
before	previous, preceding, former, prior
begin, start	commence
belittle, put down	debase, abase, degrade, humiliate, ridicule, insult, demean
belly, midriff	abdomen

CASUAL	FORMAL
better	superior
big, huge	grand, large
blunder	error, mistake
book	reserve
book	novel
boss	manager, supervisor, director, owner
broke	lacking income, lacking money
brotherly	fraternal
bug, beetle	insect
build	construct
building	edifice
but	while / whereas
buy	purchase
careful	prudential, cautious
carry out	effect, cause
cat	feline
chance	opportunity
cheap	inexpensive

CASUAL	FORMAL
check up on	investigate
check, prove	verify
chic, trendy, in vogue, cool, classy	elegant, fashionable, stylish
childish	immature, juvenile
choose, pick	select
chore	task
clear	transparent
climb	ascend
cold, chilly, freezing	frigid
come, land, reach, get to	arrive
cop	police, officer
cry, sob	lament, deplore, weep, mourn
deadly	mortal, fatal
deal with	handle,
deficiency	lack
delay	postpone
dim	indistinct

CASUAL	FORMAL	CASUAL	FORMAL	CASUAL	FORMAL	CASUAL	FORMAL
dirt, land, ground	soil, terrain, earth, landscape	fear	danger, peril, menace, threat, plight	get through	survive, penetrate	great guy	a kind person
do	execute, dispatch, perform, implement, execute, complete, conduct, function, operate	feeling touch	sentiment, sensation	gift	present	gripe	complain
dog	canine	fill me in	inform, tell	give	provide, afford, furnish, offer, supply, transfer, yield, allow, permit, enable, contribute	guess	estimate, gauge
drink	imbibe	fill up	replenish, stock, renew	give up	relinquish, abdicate, desert, renounce, abandon	guess the future	projection, forecast, outlook, predict, forebode, foreshadow
drop	cancel	find out	discover, ascertain	glasses	spectacles	guy	boy, man
eat, feed, snack	dine, consume, devour, ingest	fire	conflagration	go	proceed, pass, process, transfer, transmit, depart	happiness glee	joy, pleasure, delight, bliss, merriment, mirth, euphoria
empty	vacant	first	primary, foremost, main	take a trip, go	travel, journey, voyage	hardship	difficulty, ordeal, obstacle
end, stop	finish, terminate, complete, discontinue, cease	flood	inundate, overwhelm, upset	go on	proceed	hate	detest, loathe, scorn
enough	sufficient	folks	family	go over	exceed	have	possess, include, incorporate, contain, involve, consist, of, be, composed, of, comprise
even, flat, smooth	level, planar, equal	follow	duly, observe	go up	increase	have to give	submit
expect	anticipate	free	release	god, goddess	deity, immortal	heaps of	many, /, much
explored every avenue	investigated alternatives	freedom	liberty	good	beneficial, helpful, gainful, wholesome, worthwhile	height	altitude
fast, speedy	rapid, swift	friendly	amicable, pleasant	good at, crafty	adept, deft, skillful	help	assist
fatherly	paternal	garden, yard	court, enclosure	good thing	advantage, benefit	holy	sacred
fazed	annoyed	gather up	assemble, group, cluster, lease			home	domicile
		get	become, acquire, procure, receive, gain, obtain, achieve, attain				
		get in touch	contact				

CASUAL	FORMAL	CASUAL	FORMAL	CASUAL	FORMAL	CASUAL	FORMAL
house	residence	lay it on thick	exaggerate	many	multiple, numerous, abundant, copious, several	other else	different, alternative
if ...	should, ...	let me know	inform, me	match, fit	correspond	pal	friend, acquaintance
if ... or not	whether or not	lift up	elevating, uplifting, raising, rearing	mean, mean to	denote, indicate, imply, suggest, signify, intend	pay	remunerate, settle
if you don't	failure to	line, row	array, range, rank, series, order, sequence	meaningful	important	perspiration	sweat
ill	indisposed	live	reside	meet	encounter	point of view	attitude, belief, creed, leaning, mindset, opinion, value
in charge	responsible	lively	energetic	mend	repair	put	place, attach, insert, apply, connect, join, link, unite; , adhere, anchor, secure, implant, imbed
in recent years	recently	lost	inadvertently, mislaid	midday	noon	put in writing	provide, written, confirmation
in the end	finally	loving	amorous, fond	mixed	various, miscellaneous	put up	tolerate
in the red	overdrawn	lucky	fortunate	more	further	residence	house
info	information	mad	insane, angry	motherly	maternal	rot spoil	putrefy, defile, befoul
involve	entail	mainly	principally	near	close	rub it in	repeat, a, criticism
job, livelihood	career, profession, vocation, occupation, employment	make	produce, generate, create, assemble, build, construct, erect, fabricate, fashion, forge, form, frame, manufacture, mold	need	require	run away	abscond
keep	preserve, retain	make sure	ensure	new	novel, modern	sad	remorseful
kids	children	make up	compensate	next	subsequently	sadness	grief, sorrow, melancholy
kind	type, class, sort, genre, brand, breed, set, strain	manly	masculine	nightly	nocturnal	same	identical
know spy	recognise, identify, understand			on and off	intermittently	say	pronounce
lack	deficiency			opportunity	chance		
laid back	relaxed			order	authorise		

CASUAL	FORMAL	CASUAL	FORMAL	CASUAL	FORMAL	CASUAL	FORMAL
say no	reject	smart, clever	prudent, wise, insightful,	tell	inform, disclose, relate, narrate	wash scrub	launder, cleanse, rinse, lave, bathe
say sorry	apologise		enlightened, knowledgeable, shrewd, intelligent	tell the difference	distinguish, between	watch	observe, behold
see believe	perceive	snake	serpent	thinking	pensive, thoughtful, mindful	watchful	vigilant
seem	appear	snobby	condescending	thought	idea, concept	way	action, attitude, manner, conduct, behaviour
seem look	appear	so	therefore	to be sorry	regret	wed	marry
self	identity	sore, hurt	ache, pain	to point out	beacon, indicate, signal	weird, odd	strange, outlandish, eerie
set up	establish	sorry!	we regret, ...	trusted	entrusted	well-read	erudite
shape	form	speak, talk	converse, discourse, discuss	try	endeavor	when we get	on receipt
shop	store	stop, end	finish, terminate, complete, discontinue, cease	twin	double, duplicate	whole	entire, complete
shorten	decrease	straight (legal)	legal, legitimate, legit, just, proper, warranted	understand	comprehend	wild	savage, feral
show	demonstrate	stumbling block	point of contention	unhappiness	displeasure, dissatisfaction	will happen	occur
shut	close	supply	furnish	unhappy, serious	serious, grave, sober, grim, stern, earnest	wish	desire
shy	timid	sweat	perspiration	use	consume, utilize	womanly	feminine
sight	vision	take a licking	beaten, badly	vision	sight	wood	forest
skill craft	art, science	take away	withdraw	want	desire	work	labor, drudge, drudgery
sleeping	dormant, hibernate, idle	teach, show	educate	warning, tip off	notice, alert, recommendation, admonition, caveat		
small, little	minute, petite, diminutive						http://duffystirling.wordpress.com