

EMAIL MARKETING

Subject Line Swipe File

Copy, customize, and test these subject lines for your own campaigns. Each includes benchmark performance and best use case.

- ✓ Print-optimized
- ✓ Expert-curated
- ✓ Actionable tips

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100+ Proven Email Subject Lines by Category

Copy, customize, and test these subject lines for your own campaigns. Each includes benchmark performance and best use case.

How to Use This Swipe File

1. **Find your email type** in the categories below
2. **Pick 2-3 subject lines** to test
3. **Customize** the bracketed sections [like this]
4. **A/B test** to find what works for your audience
5. **Track results** and iterate

Category 1: Welcome Emails

First impression matters. Average open rate: 50-60%

#	Subject Line	Open Rate	Best For
1	Welcome to [Brand] – here's 10% off	55%	E-commerce
2	You're in! Here's what happens next	52%	SaaS
3	Quick question, [First Name]	58%	Any
4	[First Name], your account is ready	49%	SaaS
5	Thanks for joining – one quick thing	51%	Any
6	Welcome to the [Brand] family	47%	Lifestyle brands
7	Hey [First Name], nice to meet you	53%	Casual brands
8	You just made a great decision	48%	High-consideration
9	Welcome aboard	45%	Professional
10	Let's get you started	50%	SaaS/Onboarding

Pro tip: Welcome emails should arrive within 5 minutes of signup

Category 2: Abandoned Cart

Recover lost revenue. Average open rate: 40-45%

#	Subject Line	Open Rate	Best For
11	Did you forget something?	45%	General
12	Your cart is getting lonely	42%	Casual brands
13	Still thinking about it?	44%	High-consideration
14	Complete your order – 10% off inside	48%	Price-sensitive
15	[Product name] is almost sold out	51%	Scarcity
16	Your cart expires in 24 hours	47%	Urgency
17	Should I save this for you?	43%	Friendly brands
18	Left something behind?	41%	General
19	Your items are waiting	40%	Neutral
20	Final reminder: your cart is expiring	46%	Last email in sequence
21	Is this still on your list?	42%	Low-pressure
22	We saved your cart (for now)	44%	Time-limited
23	Quick – before it's gone	49%	Urgency
24	Someone's eyeing your cart items	39%	Scarcity (use carefully)
25	Last chance for free shipping	52%	Free shipping threshold

Pro tip: Send at 1 hour, 24 hours, and 72 hours post-abandonment

Category 3: Promotional / Sale

Drive revenue. Average open rate: 15-25%

#	Subject Line	Open Rate	Best For
26	[X]% off everything – today only	28%	Flash sale
27	The sale you've been waiting for	24%	Anticipated sales
28	This won't last long	22%	Urgency
29	Your exclusive offer inside	26%	VIP/Loyalty
30	[First Name], this is for you	29%	Personalized

#	Subject Line	Open Rate	Best For
31	Don't miss this	21%	General
32	48 hours only: [X]% off	27%	Time-limited
33	Our biggest sale of the year	25%	Major events
34	Prices drop at midnight	30%	Countdown
35	You've unlocked early access	32%	VIP/Loyalty
36	Sale ends tonight	29%	Last chance
37	[X]% off for the next [X] hours	26%	Specific urgency
38	Surprise! A gift for you	31%	Unexpected offer
39	Your [X]% off code is expiring	28%	Code expiry
40	Here's something special	23%	Soft promo

Pro tip: Use numbers and specific time limits for best results

Category 4: Re-Engagement / Win-Back

Bring back inactive subscribers. Average open rate: 10-15%

#	Subject Line	Open Rate	Best For
41	We miss you, [First Name]	14%	Relationship brands
42	It's been a while	12%	General
43	Are we still friends?	15%	Casual brands
44	[First Name], where did you go?	13%	Personal
45	Come back – we have news	16%	Product updates
46	A lot has changed since you left	17%	Feature updates
47	Should we stop emailing you?	18%	Last resort
48	We want you back (here's 20% off)	19%	Incentivized
49	[First Name], let's reconnect	12%	Professional
50	Breaking up is hard to do	14%	Casual brands
51	Before you go...	16%	Pre-unsubscribe
52	Is this goodbye?	15%	Last attempt
53	You're about to miss out	13%	FOMO

#	Subject Line	Open Rate	Best For
54	Give us another chance?	11%	Humble approach
55	Still interested in [topic]?	14%	Interest-based

Pro tip: Send at 30, 60, and 90 days of inactivity with escalating offers

Category 5: Newsletter / Content

Nurture relationships. Average open rate: 18-25%

#	Subject Line	Open Rate	Best For
56	This week's top [X]	22%	Curated content
57	[Number] ways to [achieve result]	24%	How-to content
58	The [topic] mistake everyone makes	26%	Problem-focused
59	What we learned this month	21%	Roundups
60	[First Name], you'll want to see this	25%	Personalized
61	Quick tip: [specific tip]	23%	Value-first
62	The truth about [topic]	27%	Myth-busting
63	You asked, we answered	24%	Q&A content
64	[Industry] news you need to know	20%	News digest
65	Our most popular post this month	22%	Best-of
66	[Expert name] shares their secrets	26%	Expert content
67	Case study: How [Company] did [result]	28%	Case studies
68	The [topic] cheat sheet	25%	Resources
69	New: [content title]	21%	New content
70	[Number]% of [audience] get this wrong	29%	Curiosity

Pro tip: Test sending on different days – Tuesday-Thursday typically best

Category 6: Transactional / Order Updates

Keep customers informed. Average open rate: 60-80%

#	Subject Line	Open Rate	Best For
71	Your order is confirmed	75%	Order confirmation

#	Subject Line	Open Rate	Best For
72	Order #[Number] – Receipt inside	72%	Receipts
73	Great news: Your order shipped!	78%	Shipping
74	Your package is on its way	76%	Tracking
75	Delivered! Your [product] has arrived	70%	Delivery confirmation
76	Your tracking number is inside	74%	Tracking
77	Thanks for your order, [First Name]	73%	Post-purchase
78	Your [Brand] order update	71%	General update
79	Out for delivery today	82%	Same-day delivery
80	Action required: Complete your order	68%	Payment issues

Pro tip: These emails have highest open rates – include product recs

Category 7: Review / Feedback Request

Collect social proof. Average open rate: 15-20%

#	Subject Line	Open Rate	Best For
81	How did we do?	18%	General
82	[First Name], quick favor?	22%	Personal ask
83	Your opinion matters to us	16%	Formal
84	We'd love your feedback	17%	Standard
85	30 seconds?	21%	Short survey
86	Help us improve	15%	Product feedback
87	[First Name], how was your [product]?	20%	Product review
88	Your thoughts on your recent order?	19%	Post-purchase
89	Rate your experience	16%	NPS/Rating
90	Can you help others like you?	18%	Review request

Pro tip: Send 7-14 days after delivery for best review rates

Category 8: Seasonal / Holiday

Capitalize on key moments. Varies by timing.

#	Subject Line	Open Rate	Best For
91	Black Friday starts NOW	32%	Black Friday
92	Your holiday shopping, sorted	25%	Holiday season
93	Last day for holiday shipping	35%	Shipping deadline
94	New Year, new [category]	22%	New Year
95	Treat yourself this Valentine's Day	24%	Valentine's
96	Spring into savings	19%	Spring
97	Summer essentials you'll love	21%	Summer
98	Fall favorites are here	20%	Fall
99	Holiday gift guide inside	26%	Holiday gifting
100	The countdown to Christmas begins	28%	Christmas

Bonus: Power Words That Boost Opens

Urgency Words

- Now
- Today
- Quick
- Last chance
- Limited
- Expires
- Hurry
- Final

Curiosity Words

- Secret
- Revealed
- Truth
- Surprising
- Unexpected
- What if
- How
- Why

Personal Words

- You
- Your

- [First Name]
- Exclusive
- Special
- Only for you
- Invitation

Value Words

- Free
 - Save
 - Deal
 - Bonus
 - Gift
 - Off
 - Discount
 - Unlock
-

Subject Line Formulas

The Question

"Did you [action]?" "What if you could [result]?" "[First Name], quick question?"

The List

"[Number] ways to [achieve result]" "[Number] mistakes that [problem]" "[Number] reasons to [action]"

The Curiosity Gap

"The [topic] secret no one talks about" "What we learned from [event]" "This changes everything about [topic]"

The Personal

"[First Name], this is for you" "We made this for you" "Your [personalized item] is ready"

The Urgency

"[X] hours left: [offer]" "Last chance: [deadline]" "Ending tonight"

The Benefit

"Get [result] in [timeframe]" "How to [achieve goal] without [pain point]" "The easy way to [result]"

Testing Best Practices

1. **Test one variable at a time** (subject line OR send time, not both)
2. **Use statistically significant sample sizes** (at least 1,000 per variation)
3. **Wait for full results** (at least 24-48 hours)
4. **Document everything** (build your own swipe file of winners)

5. **Segment tests** (what works for new subscribers may not work for loyalists)

Ready to Improve Deliverability?

Great subject lines don't matter if you land in spam.

GetMailer ensures your emails reach the inbox:

- Deliverability monitoring
- Domain warming
- Bounce management
- Engagement tracking
- Spam testing

Start your free deliverability audit → getmailer.co

These open rates are benchmarks – your results will vary based on audience, industry, and timing.

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Preview Text: The Second Subject Line

Every subject line gets 30-90 characters of preview text next to it in the inbox. Most senders waste it on "View in browser" or repeat the subject. Use it to *extend* the hook:

Subject line	Weak preview	Strong preview
Did you forget something?	View in browser	Your cart's saved — and one item's almost gone
[Name], quick question?	Open to read more	It'll take you 20 seconds to answer
48 hours only: 30% off	Shop the sale now	After Thursday it's back to full price

Rule: never let the preview repeat the subject. Treat them as a one-two punch.

The 30-Day Subject Line Test Plan

Turn this swipe file into a system, not a one-off:

- **Week 1:** Pick your worst-performing email type. Test 2 subject lines from its category against your current control.
- **Week 2:** Keep the winner. Test a different *angle* (e.g., curiosity vs. urgency) using the formulas section.
- **Week 3:** Test personalization — same subject with `[First Name]` vs. without. Measure the real lift for *your* audience.
- **Week 4:** Test preview text on the winning subject. Lock the best combo into a template.

Log each test: subject, preview, open rate, and click rate. After a quarter you'll have your *own* swipe file of proven winners — worth more than any generic list.

Deliverability Guardrails for Subject Lines

A high-converting subject line is worthless if it triggers spam filters:

- **Skip these patterns:** ALL CAPS, multiple exclamation marks (!!!), "FREE" in caps, "\$\$\$", "100% guaranteed", "act now."
- **Emoji:** one, used naturally, is fine. A row of them reads as spam to filters and readers.
- **Match the body.** Clickbait subjects that don't deliver drive spam complaints, which hurt every future send.
- **Watch length on mobile:** ~41 characters show before truncation. Front-load the hook.

TAKE THE NEXT STEP

Ready to Transform Your Email Marketing?

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