

Write an introductory email

Guidelines

1. Use an informative subject line
2. Be formal: Dear Dr. X ... Sincerely,
3. Keep your email short
4. Put the most important things first:
 - a. Who you are
 - b. What you are asking for with your email - to schedule a meeting to discuss the possibility of doing research in their lab
5. Make it personal:
 - a. Show you care about their lab and are prepared by including specifics about their research
 - b. Get them interested in you - e.g., mention your reason for interest, your experience.
6. Attach a copy of your resume and include contact information.
7. End with a reminder about your request to meet.

Example

Subject: Meeting about undergraduate research opportunities in epilepsy

Dear Dr. Newsome,

I am a freshman student at Stanford who plans to major in Electrical Engineering. I am very interested in epilepsy research, and am writing to ask whether you would be willing to meet to discuss possible undergraduate opportunities in your lab.

Your work developing new technologies to visualize seizure activity is very inspiring and exciting. My eventual goals are to develop new technologies to help us understand how the brain functions. I have been an active participant in the Stanford Undergraduate Neuroscience Society and will be taking the Human Behavioral Biology course in the spring, but I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the work your lab is doing, and learn from you and the members of your lab.

I have attached my resume; please let me know if there is any other information I can provide. I look forward to talking to you soon.

Sincerely,
Jane Stanford
650-497-8019
jane.stanford@stanford.edu

Subject line:**Email body:**

Dear Dr. [Last name],

[Introduction and request]

[Explain your interest]

[Closing sentences]

Sincerely,

Full name

Phone number

Email

Next steps

1. Ask somebody to review your draft. Consider scheduling office hours with BEAM (<https://beam.stanford.edu/>).
2. It's ok (in fact, good) to email more than one professor - but don't spam everybody. Only email those you'd actually want to work with, and consider staggering your emails to see if you get a response from the first one or two before sending out more.
3. If you don't hear from a faculty member in a week, it's ok to follow up one time by email.
4. Don't take it personally if you don't hear back; keep trying with other labs.