English Entry Level 3

Key Topics Revision Guide

This guide covers the 10 topics tested most in the Functional Skills English Entry Level 3 exam. Work through each section, study the examples, then try the practice questions.

Contents:

1. Capital Letters and Full Stops
2. Commas
3. Common Spelling Mistakes
4. Their / There / They're
5. Reading for Information
6. Writing an Informal Email
7. Writing a Formal Letter
8. Paragraphs and Organisation
9. Apostrophes
10. Sentence Structure

1. Capital Letters and Full Stops

Every sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop.

Use capitals for: start of sentence, names (Marcus, Jo),
places (Manchester), days/months (Monday, August),
and the word 'I'.

Examples:

Wrong: my brother lives in manchester.
Right: My brother lives in Manchester.

Practice: Fix: 'i went to london on tuesday with sarah.' → I went to London on Tuesday with Sarah.

2. Commas

Use commas to separate items in a list, break up longer sentences, and after an opening phrase.

Lists: I bought milk, bread, cheese, and eggs.
Opening phrases: After the meeting, we went for lunch.
Joining: I wanted to go, but it was raining.

3. Common Spelling Mistakes

Learn these words — they come up constantly in the exam:

appointment | because | definitely | different | environment
necessary | receive | separate | tomorrow | Wednesday

Practice: Break tricky words into chunks: ap-point-ment, en-vi-ron-ment, def-in-ite-ly.

4. Their / There / They're

These three are pronounced the same but mean different things.

THEIR = belonging to them (their house)
THERE = a place (over there)
THEY'RE = they are (they're coming)

Examples:

Quick test: can you replace it with 'they are'? → use they're.
Is it about belonging? → use their.
Otherwise → use there.

5. Reading for Information

You'll read letters, emails, leaflets, notices. Find specific facts.

Step 1: Read the questions FIRST.
Step 2: Scan the text for key words from the question.
Step 3: Underline the relevant information.
Step 4: 2-mark questions need 2 separate points.

Practice: Only use what the text says. Don't add your own knowledge or opinions.

6. Writing an Informal Email

To friends and family. Friendly tone, but still correct grammar and spelling.

Structure: Hi [name], → why writing → main content (2-4 sentences)
→ a question → sign off (See you soon / Take care / Speak soon)

Examples:

Example: Hi Jake, Just wanted to say congrats on the new job!
How's it going? Speak soon, Marcus

7. Writing a Formal Letter

To companies, employers, or people you don't know. Polite and professional.

Layout: Your address (top right) → date → Dear Sir/Madam → purpose
→ details → what you want → Yours faithfully → your name

Examples:

Key rule: Dear Sir/Madam → Yours faithfully.
Dear Mr Smith (known name) → Yours sincerely.

8. Paragraphs and Organisation

Start a new paragraph when you change topic, speaker, time, or place.

Basic 4-paragraph structure for short formal writing:

Para 1: why you are writing | Para 2: details

Para 3: what you want | Para 4: sign off

Practice: Even 2-3 short paragraphs show better organisation than one long block.

9. Apostrophes

Apostrophes show missing letters (contractions) OR belonging (possession).

Contractions (missing letters): don't, I'm, they're, can't, won't

Possession (belonging): Sarah's bag, the dog's bone

NEVER use an apostrophe for plurals.

Examples:

Wrong: 'apple's for sale'
Right: 'apples for sale'

10. Sentence Structure

Every sentence needs a subject (who/what), a verb (doing word), and must make sense on its own.

Avoid fragments: 'Because it was raining.' is not a sentence.

Avoid run-ons: don't join three ideas with no full stops.

Use joining words: and, but, so, because, although, however.

Practice: Read your work aloud. Run out of breath? Sentence too long. Doesn't make sense alone? It's a fragment.