

Common Mistakes in B1 Preliminary (PET) Writing

By EnglishExam.eu Team | 2/11/2026

Avoid these common pitfalls in the PET Writing exam. We analyze mistakes in answering the prompt, word count, vocabulary, and structure.

The Writing paper in the B1 Preliminary exam can be tricky. Here are some common mistakes students make and how to avoid them.

1. NOT ANSWERING THE QUESTION

In Part 1 (Email), you must address all four content points found in the prompt (usually notes like "Explain", "Suggest", "Tell", "Ask"). If you miss one, you lose marks for Content. Check them off as you write.

2. INCORRECT WORD COUNT

You are asked to write about 100 words.

- Too short: You likely haven't developed your ideas enough.
- Too long: You might be including irrelevant information and making more grammar mistakes.

Aim for 90-110 words.

3. REPETITIVE VOCABULARY

Don't use the word "nice" or "good" five times. Use "lovely", "enjoyable", "pleasant", "excellent", "amazing". Show the examiner you have a B1 vocabulary.

4. LACK OF LINKING WORDS

Connect your sentences. Don't just write a list of simple sentences. Use generic linkers: "and", "but", "so", "because". Also try slightly more advanced ones: "however", "although", "since", "as well as".

5. FORGETTING PARAGRAPHS

Even a short email needs structure.

1. Greeting (Hi Alex,)
2. Opening sentence (Thanks for your email.)
3. Body paragraphs (covering the points)
4. Closing sentence (See you soon!)
5. Sign off (Best wishes, Name)

6. GRAMMAR ERRORS

Watch out for common errors like:

- Subject-verb agreement ("People IS" -> "People ARE")
- Past tense ("I GOED" -> "I WENT")
- Prepositions ("I am IN the bus" -> "I am ON the bus")

Always proofread your work before the time is up!

