



DOCUMENT TEMPLATE

# Email Sequences

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01

## What this guide helps you create — and who it's for

The core email sequences your business actually needs — at minimum a welcome / activation sequence for new signups, plus one or two more if your business calls for them (a nurture sequence for leads who aren't ready, a re-engagement sequence for people who went quiet). For each: the trigger, the one goal, how many emails, what each one does, the timing, and the exit condition.

**Use this if** people sign up (or join your list) and then nothing happens — no email, or one generic “welcome aboard” and silence. **Skip it** if you have sequences that demonstrably move people to action and you're just A/B testing subject lines.

### HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

- 1 **Read sections 02–04** so you know what a sequence is *for* — and why a 7–email feature tour is the classic mistake.
- 2 **Open your AI chatbot** — the one you set up in guide 01.
- 3 **Make the decisions in section 03** — which sequences you need, the one goal per sequence, the timing, the exit condition. Do this *before* you touch the prompt.
- 4 **Copy the prompt in section 05** into the chatbot. Paste your Founder Context Block where it says to, and fill in the `{curly braces}`.
- 5 **Send it**, then sharpen what comes back using the four moves in section 06 — one at a time.
- 6 **Build one sequence first** — the welcome/activation one — and get it working before you build any others.

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02

## Why this document matters

The most common email mistake founders make is the feature-tour welcome sequence: seven emails, each one introducing a feature, none of

them asking the reader to *do* anything. The reader signed up to solve a problem; they get a brochure delivered over two weeks. Most of it goes unread, and the person never activates.

A good sequence does the opposite. It has one job — usually “get this person to the moment where they first feel the value” — and every email serves it: a clear first step, a nudge if they get stuck, a story that makes it feel worth doing, a last gentle prompt before the moment passes. And it stops the second they do the thing — because the worst email in the world is “finish your setup!” arriving after you’ve already set up.

## **A welcome sequence has one job: get this person to the moment they first feel the value. Every email serves that, or it’s cut.**

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It comes from four decisions. Section 03.

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### 03

## **The thinking framework — what to settle before you prompt**

The prompt builds the sequences. These calls are yours.

### **— Which sequences do you actually need?**

Don’t build five. For most early-stage businesses, it’s *one*: the welcome / activation sequence. Add a re-engagement sequence (for people who activated then went quiet) only if you have enough users for that to matter. A nurture sequence (for leads not ready to buy) only if you have a real lead-to-buyer gap. Pick the one or two that move the needle now.

### **— One goal per sequence**

A sequence has *one* job. The welcome sequence’s job is to get the person to the activation moment — not to explain every feature, not to “build the relationship,” not to upsell. Name the one action that means this sequence worked, and write every email toward it.

## — What’s the timing?

When do people actually act? Front-load if the value is fast to feel (email 1 immediately, email 2 in a day or two); spread it out if it takes longer. Don’t default to “one a day for a week” — that’s a cadence chosen for symmetry, not for how your users behave.

## — What’s the exit condition?

The moment someone does the goal action, they should stop getting the sequence. Define that exit condition explicitly — and make sure the email tool actually enforces it. A “complete your setup!” email after they’ve set up makes you look like you’re not paying attention, which is the opposite of what the sequence was for.

DECIDE	WEAK DEFAULT	WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE
Which sequences	“welcome, nurture, onboarding, sales, win-back...”	“just the welcome/activation one, for now”
The goal	“introduce them to the product”	“get them to file their first return”
The timing	“one email a day for two weeks”	“email 1 now, 2 on day 2, 3 on day 5, 4 on day 9 — if not activated”
The exit	“(none — they get all of it)”	“they file their first return → sequence stops, they move to the ‘set up’ track”

04

## Common failure modes — what generic output looks like

Ask an AI for “an email welcome sequence” cold, and you get the feature-tour template. Reject these:

× WHAT TO REJECT ON SIGHT

- **The feature tour.** Seven emails, one feature each, no action asked. A brochure on a schedule.
- **No exit condition.** The sequence keeps sending after the person's done the thing — “complete your setup!” three days after they completed it.
- **Company voice, not reader voice.** “We’re thrilled to announce...” / “Our mission is...” — emails about the company, to a reader who only cares about their own problem.
- **A cadence chosen for symmetry.** “Daily for 14 days” because it’s tidy, not because that’s when people act. Too aggressive, and they unsubscribe.
- **Clever subject lines, low opens.** Subject lines that are puns or teasers instead of clear. If the open rate’s low, the rest of the email doesn’t matter.

If the sequences look like this, you haven’t named the one goal or the exit condition. Section 03.

05

## The prompt template

This is the bit that does the work. You don’t need to understand prompting — you just need to do these five things, in order:

**RUNNING THIS PROMPT – STEP BY STEP**

- 1 **Copy the entire grey box below** (all of it, top to bottom).
- 2 **Open your AI chatbot** and paste it into the message box. Don’t press send yet.
- 3 **Paste your Founder Context Block** where the prompt says `{paste your Founder Context Block here}` — delete that line and put your block in its place. (No Context Block yet? Build one in guide 01.)
- 4 **Replace every `{curly-brace}` bit** with your own answer — your four decisions from section 03 go straight in. If you’re unsure of one, leave it; the prompt will ask.
- 5 **Send it.** Then go to section 06 to sharpen what comes back.

## PROMPT TEMPLATE

→ Copy the whole box. Paste your **Founder Context Block** where it says to, then swap everything in {curly braces} for your own answers before you send it.

You are helping me design the email sequences my business needs – each with one job, the right number of emails, and a clean exit.

Here is everything you need to know about my company:

{paste your Founder Context Block here}

Four things I've decided (use these – don't add sequences I didn't ask for):

- Which sequence(s) to build now: {e.g. "just the welcome/activation sequence" – or also a re-engagement one if you have enough users}
- The one goal of each sequence: {e.g. "welcome sequence's goal = file your first return"}
- The timing rhythm: {e.g. "front-loaded – E1 now, then days 2, 5, 9 if not activated"}
- The exit condition for each: {e.g. "they file their first return → sequence stops"}

For each sequence, produce:

1. Trigger – what event puts someone into this sequence.
2. Goal – the one action that means this sequence worked.
3. The emails – for each email: when it sends (relative to the trigger and to whether they've done the goal yet); the ONE job of that email; a subject line (clear, not clever – reader knows what's inside) plus one alternative; and a 2-3 line summary of the body and its single CTA. Don't write the full email copy – just enough that I could write each one in five minutes.
4. Exit condition – in plain terms, and a note that the email tool must actually enforce it.

Then add: which sequence I should build first, and why.

Rules:

- Keep the welcome/activation sequence to the fewest emails that still get someone to the goal. No "feature tour" emails. No "our mission" emails.
- Write to the reader's problem, not about the company.
- Anything in {curly braces} is a slot for me to fill. If I left one blank, ask me for it – don't invent it.

When you're done, tell me which email in the set is most likely to underperform, and why.

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## How to iterate when the output is weak

First drafts come back too long and too company-centric. These four moves fix that — one at a time:

1. **Cut to one sequence.** *“If I could only build ONE sequence right now, it’s the welcome/activation one. Give me just that — we’ll do the others later.”*
2. **Cut the email count, one job each.** *“Reduce the welcome sequence to the fewest emails that still get someone to activation. State the single job of each remaining email — if an email has two jobs, split or cut it.”*
3. **Subject lines: clear over clever.** *“Rewrite every subject line so the reader knows what’s inside before they open it. No puns, no teasers. Then give one alternative each.”*
4. **Add the exit and fix the timing.** *“Add the exit condition to each sequence, in plain terms. And re-time the emails based on when people actually act, not on a daily cadence.”*

If two passes don’t fix it, the sequence hasn’t decided its one goal — back to section 03.

## A worked example

Sam from guide 01, Ledgerwise — the email sequences, focused.

> WORKED EXAMPLE — SAM’S WELCOME/ACTIVATION SEQUENCE

**Trigger:** signed up, hasn’t filed a return yet. **Goal:** file your first return. **Exit:** the moment they file → sequence stops, they move to a short “you’re set up” track.

- **E1 — immediately.** Subject: “Photograph 5 receipts — see Ledgerwise work.” Body: one step, one 60-second video, one button.
- **E2 — day 2, if not activated.** Subject: “Stuck on the receipts bit?” Body: the single most common snag, fixed in two lines, with the button again.
- **E3 — day 5.** Subject: “How a one-van plumber stopped dreading January.” Body: a real-feeling micro-business that was behind on its books and isn’t now — then a soft “your turn?”
- **E4 — day 9.** Subject: “The deadline doesn’t move — want a hand?” Body: a short, honest “if you’re stuck, here’s a 10-minute call” — and the button one last time.

**Plus a re-engagement sequence** — trigger: activated, then no activity for 30 days. Two emails. Goal: log back in and file the next return. E1: “Your books are quietly drifting again.” E2 (a week later): “Last nudge — here’s the 2-minute catch-up.” Exit: any activity.

Notice what’s not here: no “meet our features” email, no “our mission” email, no 14-day daily drip. Four emails, one job, then it stops.

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## Edge cases — and when to go deeper

A few situations need more than the template:

- **You’re B2B with a longer cycle.** Sequences are slower and more about education and booking a call than self-serve activation. The “goal” might be “book a 20-minute call,” and the emails carry case studies, not setup steps.
- **Don’t confuse transactional and marketing emails.** Receipts, confirmations, password resets — those are a separate track, they go to everyone regardless of sequence, and they shouldn’t carry marketing. Keep the wires uncrossed.
- **You don’t have a list yet.** Then this is premature — go build the channel that fills the list first (guides 04 and 05). A sequence to nobody is just a draft.
- **The emails read fine but don’t sound like you** — too neutral, too “marketing department”:

→ WHEN YOU NEED TO GO DEEPER

**Founder Voice Extraction** — Turn the way you actually talk into a reusable voice spec your LLM can write in — so output stops sounding like a press release.

[n-access.co.uk/playbook/founder-voice-extraction](https://n-access.co.uk/playbook/founder-voice-extraction)

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## What to read next

- **07 · Launch Plan** — your launch email and the T+1 “you signed up but didn’t activate” email are the highest-leverage emails you’ll write; this guide writes them.
- **05 · Content Strategy** — your email list is your most reliable distribution channel; this is how you keep feeding it well.
- **08 · Sales & Landing-Page Copy** — the page captures the signup; the sequence is what stops you losing the people who weren’t ready yet.

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## The Founder's Playbook

A library of short operator guides for founders building with AI — not prompt-pack content, an actual method. Each guide is free, each routes you to deeper blueprints when you need them, and each assumes one thing: that you've built your **Founder Context Block** (that's guide 01).

*The Founder's Playbook* · [n-access.co.uk/playbook](https://n-access.co.uk/playbook)