Proposal follow-up emails

Six emails with subject lines, and when to send each one.

How to use this pack

Swap everything in [square brackets] for your own details. Send the emails from your own inbox.

[form link] is optional. It points to a short "where do things stand?" form, so a busy client can answer with a few clicks instead of writing an email.

If the client never replies, you send emails 2, 3 and 5: three follow-ups. Email 4 is for when they gave you a decision date. Email 6 is for after a no.

The timing at a glance

Email	When to send it	What happens next
1. When you send it	Day 0	Wait for a reply
2. First check-in	About 4 business days later	No reply? Send email 3
3. Add something useful	About a week after email 2	No reply? Send email 5 later
4. Decision date passed	1 to 2 business days after their date	Use the new date they give you
5. Last follow-up	About 3 weeks after you send it	No reply? Stop and mark it parked
6. After a no	The same day	Log the reason. Check in later

The six emails

Email 1. When you send the proposal

When: Day 0, the day you send it.

Subject: Your proposal for [project]

Other subject lines: [Project]: proposal and next steps; Here's the plan for [project]

Hi [name],

Here's the proposal for [project], as we discussed on [day]. The short version: [one line on the work], ready by [date], for [price].

Two quick questions so I can plan: when do you expect to decide, and is anyone else reading it with you?

If something is unclear, reply here. Or tell me where things stand in this two-minute form: [form link]

Thanks,

[your name]

Email 2. The first check-in

When: Our suggestion: about 4 business days after you send it.

Subject: Any questions on the [project] proposal?

Other subject lines: Quick check on the [project] proposal; Did the proposal reach you?

Hi [name],

I wanted to check the proposal reached you and that it made sense.

If it's easier than email, I'm happy to walk you through it on a 15-minute call. Here are two times that work for me: [time 1] or [time 2].

Or, if you'd rather not write an email, this short form takes two minutes: [form link]

Thanks,

[your name]

Email 3. Add something useful

When: Our suggestion: about a week after email 2, if you still have no reply.

Subject: One idea for [project]

Other subject lines: A quick answer on [the question they asked]; How we handled [similar problem] for [similar client]

Hi [name],

While you look over the proposal, I thought this might help: [one useful thing: a short example from a similar project, an answer to a question they raised on the call, or a smaller first phase].

Would it help if I changed anything in the proposal, like the scope, the timeline or the payment schedule?

Thanks,

[your name]

Email 4. Their decision date has passed

When: Our suggestion: one or two business days after the date they gave you.

Subject: Updated timing for [project]?

Other subject lines: Still on for [month]?; Checking in on timing for [project]

Hi [name],

You mentioned you hoped to decide on [project] by [date]. No pressure from my side. Could you share an updated idea of timing, so I can plan my schedule?

If something has changed, like the budget or the people involved, tell me and I can adjust the proposal.

Thanks,

[your name]

Email 5. The last follow-up

When: Our suggestion: about three weeks after you send it, when you still have no reply.

Subject: Should I close the file on [project]?

Other subject lines: Last note on [project]; Closing the loop on the proposal

Hi [name],

I haven't heard back, so I'll guess the timing isn't right and stop following up on [project].

If things change, reply to this email and I'll pick it up from there. A one-line answer in this form also helps me plan: [form link]

All the best with [their goal],

[your name]

Email 6. After a no

When: The same day they say no.

Subject: Thanks for letting me know

Other subject lines: Thanks, and one quick question; Thanks for the update on [project]

Hi [name],

Thanks for telling me, and for considering us. I know saying no is never fun to write.

If you have two minutes, I'd love to know what tipped the decision. It helps me quote better next time: [form link]

If it's alright, I'll check in around [month] in case anything changes. Good luck with [project].

Thanks,

[your name]

More subject lines

- Next steps for [project]
- Your questions on the proposal, answered
- [Project] timeline: does [start date] still work?
- A smaller first phase for [project]?
- Is [project] still a priority this quarter?
- Quick question about [project]

Six rules that keep follow-ups friendly

- Reply in the same email thread, so they see the proposal and your last note together.
- Ask one clear question per email. "When do you expect to decide?" beats "Any thoughts?"
- Keep it short enough to read on a phone. Three or four short lines is plenty.
- Bring something new each time: a time slot, an answer, an example or a smaller option.
- Stop after the last follow-up. Mark the proposal as parked and set a date to reconnect.
- Send the emails yourself, from your own inbox, and write the date you sent each one in your tracker.

About the timing

Wait a few business days before the first nudge. We suggest about 4.

Stop after about three follow-ups. After that, park the proposal and set a date to reconnect, about four months out.

Every timing in this pack is our own suggestion. Change it to fit how your clients buy.