🎯 40 Proven Email Subject Line Formulas

Swipe, mix, and adapt for any niche or offer.

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1. The Numbers Game

Use numbers or lists to promise clarity and results.
 E.g., "7 ways to double your sales in 30 days"

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2. The Curiosity Teaser

Piques curiosity without revealing the full answer.
 E.g., "What he said next shocked everyone…"

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3. The Magic Button

Offers an effortless or shortcut-style solution.
 E.g., "Push this button to get more clients"

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4. The Urgency Trigger

Instills a strong need to act now.
 E.g., "Final hours to claim your bonus"

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5. The Scarcity Play

Emphasizes limited availability or spots.
 E.g., "Only 12 seats left—don't miss this"

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6. The Sacred Cow Killer

Challenges popular or outdated industry beliefs.
 E.g., "Everything you've been told about fat is a lie"

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7. The Story Hook

Starts a compelling or emotional narrative.
 E.g., "He was broke, divorced, and sleeping in his car…"

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8. The Celebrity Angle

Ties in a famous person or pop culture figure.
 E.g., "What Oprah taught me about branding"

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9. The Movie/TV Hook

References familiar media to draw attention.
 E.g., "What The Godfather taught me about negotiation"

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10. The Big Promise

Offers a bold, desirable outcome.
 E.g., "Make your first $10K month (without ads)"

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11. The Deep Emotion

Appeals to core emotional desires or fears.
 E.g., "Feel like you're meant for more?"

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12. The Anti-Subject Line

Looks casual, raw, or unpolished—like a personal note.
 E.g., "this might be stupid…"

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13. The Unexpected Twist

Delivers a surprise or ironic reveal.
 E.g., "Why I almost fired my best client"

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14. The Contrarian Take

Goes against the grain to stand out.
 E.g., "Marketing funnels are killing your business"

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15. The Shock Value

Leverages something controversial or extreme.
 E.g., "How I made $100K from a funeral"

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16. The Insult

Playfully pokes at ego or pain points.
 E.g., "Your pitch sucks (and here's why)"

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17. The Cliffhanger

Leaves the story hanging—must click to finish it.
 E.g., "I thought it was over... then this happened"

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18. The Callout

Directly addresses a group, profession, or persona.
 E.g., "Hey coaches, this one's for you"

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19. The Question

Asks a thought-provoking or provocative question.
 E.g., "What if success wasn't what you think it is?"

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20. The If/Then

Sets up a conditional benefit or choice.
 E.g., "If you hate cold calls, do this instead"

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21. The How-To

Promises a step-by-step path to results.
 E.g., "How to turn one video into 30 days of content"

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22. The One-Word Wonder

Short, bold, and intriguing—creates curiosity by brevity.
 E.g., "Unfollowed."

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23. The Testimonial

Uses a real quote or result as proof.
 E.g., "I made more in 2 weeks than I did last year"

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24. The Data Drop

Leads with surprising or specific stats.
 E.g., "87% of freelancers are doing this wrong"

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25. The Mistake

Focuses on lessons from failure or regret.
 E.g., "The $5,000 mistake I'll never make again"

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26. The Objection Crusher

Tackles a common "yeah but…" head-on.
 E.g., "But I don't have time…"

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27. The Curiosity + Benefit Combo

Pairs intrigue with a clear reward.
 E.g., "What this email did (and why you should copy it)"

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28. The Behind-The-Scenes

Gives a peek inside something usually hidden.
 E.g., "Behind the launch: what really worked"

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29. The Open Loop

Starts an idea that requires opening the email to complete.
 E.g., "I can't believe I almost skipped this one step…"

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30. The Direct Command

Tells the reader exactly what to do.
 E.g., "Steal this email sequence"

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31. The Newsjack

Leverages trending topics, events, or headlines.
 E.g., "What Taylor Swift can teach you about pricing"

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32. The Personal Confession

Reveals a personal truth or vulnerability.
 E.g., "I've been lying to you…"

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33. The Future Pacer

Paints the reader's dream future vividly.
 E.g., "Imagine waking up to 3 new clients tomorrow"

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34. The Pattern Interrupt

Breaks scrolling habits with something unexpected.
 E.g., "Stop. Read this before posting again."

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35. The "Why" Statement

Promises explanation or reasoning behind an insight.
 E.g., "Why most online courses never make money"

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36. The Proof Element

Leads with undeniable results or screenshots.
 E.g., "Proof that one tweak tripled my conversions"

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37. The Challenge

Invites participation or a self-test.
 E.g., "Can you do this for 7 days straight?"

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38. The Relatability Hook

Builds instant connection through shared frustration or feeling.
 E.g., "Ever feel like you're doing *everything* right—but still stuck?"

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39. The Myth-Buster

Debunks a common lie or assumption.
 E.g., "The 'passive income' myth nobody talks about"

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40. The Curiosity + Emotion Hybrid

Mixes intrigue with vulnerability for maximum click appeal.
 E.g., "I almost quit everything… until this happened"