

Web Design Client Offboarding Email Template

Everything you need to end a web design client relationship kindly and clearly: the exit email, a version for a client who has gone quiet, three replies for push-back, a handover list, final invoice wording and a filled-in example. Fill in every [bracket] and delete the guidance in italics. Works in Google Docs, Word, Notion or any email client.

1. Before you send: four checks

These are suggestions, not rules. Nothing here tells you what your contract lets you do.

- **Have you named the problem once, in writing?** Sometimes one clear email fixes it and you keep the client. If you haven't, do that first.
- **Is this client underpriced?** Difficult clients are often underpriced clients. Try a higher rate on the next job first. That is our opinion, not a rule.
- **Can you hand over what the client has paid for?** Files, logins and access: see section 6.
- **What does your agreement say about ending early?** AIGA's Standard Form of Agreement for Design Services says that if cancellation becomes necessary, the agreement must describe in advance the process for doing it, "from notification through calculation of your final invoice". Open yours first and follow it. If the problem is an unpaid invoice, send the payment reminders before this email.

Write the email tonight and send it in the morning. Then read it once as the client would, and soften any line that stings.

2. The exit email

One honest sentence about fit, two dates and a number. No blame, no essay. The dates are examples: how much notice to give is a question for your agreement, and we found no official source for a "right" length.

Subject: Ending our work on the [Harbor Dental] site

Hi [Client first name],

I'm stopping work on your site. I don't think I'm the right fit for where it has gone.

My last day is [Friday the 27th]. Files and access go to you on [Monday the 30th], once invoice [1051] is paid.

Final invoice [1051]: [\$390], due [Monday the 30th]. [pay link]

Thank you for the chance to work on it.

[Your name]

Keep "once invoice [1051] is paid" only if your agreement ties handover to payment; if it does, say so in that line. If it does not, delete those words.

Before you send, check: there's no blame in it; both dates are in it; the invoice number, amount, due date and link are in the email, not in an attachment; the dates are in your calendar.

3. The final invoice wording (worked example, made-up numbers)

How your final bill is worked out should already be in your agreement. AIGA lists time worked through the date of cancellation, a lump-sum cancellation fee, or both, as ways agreements do it. If your agreement says time worked, the sum looks like this. If the hours come to less than the deposit, what happens to the difference is for your agreement. Have your terms checked where you work.

- Hours worked to [Friday the 27th]: [31] hours × [\$90] = [\$2,790]
- Less deposit already paid: [\$2,400]
- **Final invoice: [\$390], due [Monday the 30th]**

Line for the invoice: "[Harbor Dental] website, work to [Friday the 27th], per our agreement. Deposit of [\$2,400] already paid."

4. The quiet-client version

If the client has gone quiet, send the same email with one change: a date to reply by. Pick a date you'd be happy to explain, keep it, and don't extend it twice. Check what your agreement says about pausing work first.

Subject: Pausing the [Harbor Dental] site

Hi [Client first name],

I haven't heard back since [Monday the 2nd], so I've paused work.

If I hear from you by [Friday the 27th], we can pick it up.

If not, I'll close the project and send the files and the final invoice on [Monday the 30th].

[Your name]

If the date passes with no reply, send the exit email in section 2, and nobody can say you vanished.

5. Three replies for push-back

Reply once, calmly, and go back to the dates. Don't argue by email and don't post about it. If you've spoken before, call first and send the email straight after, so the dates are in writing.

"Please stay."

Thank you, I appreciate that. My decision stands, and I'll make the handover easy.

"At least finish one more thing."

I can't take on more work. The handover list shows where things stand, so another designer can pick it up.

"I'm angry."

I'm sorry it ended this way. The dates in my email stand.

6. The handover list

Send a short note on where things stand: what's done and what isn't. Hand over the files and access your client has paid for. The website handover checklist template has the full list of keys (domain, hosting, analytics, Search Console, site platform).

- ☐ Where things stand: what's done, what isn't
- ☐ The design files and exports the client has paid for
- ☐ The client's own logo, photos and text, returned (AIGA's guide says the client keeps ownership of the text, images and trademarks it provides)
- ☐ Logins and access, moved to the client's name where you can
- ☐ Anything still owed to the client, and anything the client still owes you
- ☐ A line on unfinished work: your agreement should say who owns it (AIGA notes that cancellation raises that question)

Does the handover wait for the final payment? That is a question for your agreement. AIGA's guide says to make any transfer of rights contingent upon receipt of full payment. Have yours checked.

Know a designer who'd suit them? You can offer a name. It's a kindness, not a duty.

7. Checklist before you send

- ☐ I named the problem once, in writing, before this
 - ☐ I read my agreement's section on ending early
 - ☐ The reason is one honest sentence about fit, with no blame
 - ☐ My last day and the handover day are both in the email
 - ☐ The final invoice has a number, a due date and a link
 - ☐ I'll keep doing the work I promised until my last day
 - ☐ I'll reply once to push-back, then stop
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8. Sending the final invoice

Workspace369 invoices include a payment link and update their status automatically when paid. Payment links are on every plan, from Cadet, the entry plan (see the pricing page for today's price):
https://workspace369.com/features/invoices/?utm_source=youtube&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=opa60-template-accept

Ending one client a year? Invoice from wherever you already do, and keep this email handy.

This template is general information, not legal advice. What your agreement says about ending early, about unfinished work and about handing over files differs by contract and by place; have your terms checked where you work.

Sources, all checked October 18, 2026: AIGA Standard Form of Agreement for Design Services (https://www.aiga.org/sites/default/files/2023-11/Standardformofagreement_2022update.pdf); Workspace369, how to get paid faster (<https://workspace369.com/learn/how-to-get-paid-faster/>).

Template from the One Person Agency channel. Workspace369 invoices carry a payment link; see the pricing page for the limits on each plan; 14-day free trial (card required):
https://workspace369.com/features/invoices/?utm_source=youtube&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=opa60-template. Our #1 pick is Workspace369.

Example: the same email, filled in

A fictional studio and client, so you can see how it reads. Your words and dates will differ. The hours and amounts are made up.

Project: Harbor Dental website, Standard package (7 pages, \$4,800 = \$2,400 deposit + \$2,400 balance), stopped after 31 of 50 hours. Studio: Reyes Web Studio (Maya Reyes). Client: Dana Ruiz.

1. The checks. Maya named the problem in writing two weeks ago, read her agreement's section on ending, and wrote the email on a Sunday night. She sent it Monday morning, the 16th.

2. The exit email. Subject: Ending our work on the Harbor Dental site Hi Dana, I'm stopping work on your site. I don't think I'm the right fit for where it has gone. My last day is Friday the 27th. Files and access go to you on Monday the 30th, once invoice 1051 is paid. Final invoice 1051: \$390, due Monday the 30th. [pay link] Thank you for the chance to work on it. Maya

3. The final invoice. 31 hours $\times$ \$90 = \$2,790. Less the \$2,400 deposit already paid. Final invoice 1051: \$390, due Monday the 30th.

4. The quiet-client version (if Dana had gone silent since Monday the 2nd): "I haven't heard back since Monday the 2nd, so I've paused work. If I hear from you by Friday the 27th, we can pick it up. If not, I'll close the project and send the files and the final invoice on Monday the 30th."

5. Push-back. Dana replies "Please stay." Maya: "Thank you, I appreciate that. My decision stands, and I'll make the handover easy."

6. The handover. On Monday the 30th Maya sends a note on where things stand (home, services and contact pages built; two pages and the booking form not started), the Figma file and exports, Dana's own logo and photos, and the access list.

Fictional example. The studio, the client, the dates and the amounts are made up to illustrate the template.