

Session 1

How to write formal letters?

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Objectives

- To teach students to read letters or letter requests carefully before responding.
- To teach students the importance of creating formal and informal documents.
- To teach students basic letter formats and letter-writing strategies.
- To teach students letter-writing techniques.

Where to USE?



- Schools
- Our boss
- Governmental/private organizations
- Colleagues or any professionals
- Offices
- Students/professors
- Politicians

Definition of “Letter”

Letter

“A written or printed communication directed to a person or organization.”

Letters may be created and sent as:

- E-mail or electronic transmissions
- Hand-delivered transmissions
- Regular mail transmissions

Letter Writing Etiquette

Etiquette is good manners or appropriate or accepted social practices that reflect and promote civility.

When should you write a letter?

- To **thank** someone who has been gracious, kind or helpful to you.
- When you need **assistance or answers** to help you make intelligent decisions.
- To **respond** to a letter or letter request that you have recently received. (do not wait too long)
- To **create legal documents** that record information and support claims.
- To show that you are a **courteous, professional, detail- oriented** person who is aware of etiquette.

Why Letter Writing Matters

“A man who has written a letter
is stuck with it for all time.”

– E. B. White

Therefore . . .

- Letters should be **truthful** as they may become a **permanent record** of what you know, think or feel at the time you are writing the letter.
- Letters have come back to **haunt** many people.
- Letters reflect the **character** and **communication skill** of the writer.

Before Writing a Letter . . .

- **Read** (1) the letter or letters to which you need or want to respond; *or* (2) read a written announcement or article motivating or requesting a letter response.
- **Examine** the **tone** (language) of the letter, announcement or other printed material to which you will respond. The **tone** of the motivating piece helps you determine the tone of your written response (formal or informal).
- **Identify** your audience and purpose in order to determine the type of letter you will write (formal or informal).
- **Think about / Plan** your response.

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Focus and Specificity

- Be **Focused**; however, avoid choppy sentences.
- Don't be so concise that your **tone** is blunt.
- Use **terminology** and **concepts** related to the industry / field. (Jargon may be appropriate in business writing.)
- Avoid vagueness. Be specific in your requests or statements of facts.

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Two Categories of Letters

- **Business Letters** (format writing; more formal writing that may share elements of essay writing)
- **Personal Letters** (often informal; may be addressed to a friend or familiar acquaintance about a personal subject; may regard a personal problem, issue or even a personal business matter pertaining to ones personal finances or personal legal matters)

Informal/Personal Letters

1. Write your address.
2. Write the date.
3. Start with Dear + your friend or relative's name.
4. Include questions such as "How are you?"
5. Finish with Love from / Best wishes + your name

Types of Informal/Personal Letters

- Apologies
- Appreciation and Thank You: For favors, kindness or generosity
- Congratulations
- Personal Complaints
- Invitations
- Offering Condolences
(sympathy or get well)

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Informal (Personal) Letters

1 School Street
Wolverhampton WV1 1LY

1 January 2014

Dear Kasia,

How are you? I'm fine. Thank you for your letter. Did you have a good Christmas holiday? I enjoyed spending time with my family. I ate turkey with stuffing.

Love from Magda

Personal Letters . . . reflect your style or personality

Salutation (Greeting)

Date

December 4, 2007

Dear Maxwell,

I just wanted to take a moment to write you to express my thanks for the extra tutoring help you gave me this fall as I struggled in my Math 1112 course. People like you make our world a better place simply because you take the extra time to help others overcome fears and learn important skills. I think I can safely say, you are going to make a great math teacher one day!

You stand head and shoulders above others in the field of math and I so appreciate the information, time and patience you provided to me. So, once again, thank you so much for everything, and especially for encouraging me!

Signature

Best wishes,
Rita Person

Complimentary Closing

Phrases for an Informal Letter

Thanks for:

- your letter
- your present
- your invitation.

I hope you are well.

It was good to see you last week.

Could you do something for me?

Formal Letters

1. Write your address.
2. Write the date.
3. If you don't know someone's name, start with Dear Sir/Madam.
4. If you know someone's name, start with Dear Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms + family name.
5. Use polite and formal English.
6. If you started with Dear Sir/Madam, finish with **Yours faithfully** + your name and family name.
7. If you started with Dear Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms + family name, finish with **Yours sincerely** + your name and family name.

General Parts of every Business Letter

- Heading (sender's return address and date)
- Inside Address (recipient's address)
- Salutation (greeting)
- Body (paragraphs)
- Complimentary Close
- Signature Line (with or without title)
- Enclosure (optional)
- cc notation (copies sent to others)
- Sender/typist initials (optional)

Common Types of Business Letters

- [Acceptance Letter](#) (yes/ legal)
- [Acknowledgement Letter](#) (Receipt)
- [Adjustment Letter](#) (a legal document / addresses a complaint or claim)
- [Application Letter](#) (request job consideration/ interview)
- [Complaint Letter](#) (a legal document)
- [Cover Letter](#) (accompanies resume or order)
- [Inquiry Letter](#) (posing a question)
- [Order Letter](#) (request letter)
- [Refusal Letter](#) (reject an offer)
- [Response Letter](#) (answers inquiry)
- [Sales Letter](#) (marketing)

To write any type of business letter, follow these basic steps:

- [Identify your reader](#)
- [Establish your objective](#)
- [Determine your scope](#) (how much researched information to include)
- [Organize your letter](#)
- [Draft your letter](#)
- [Close \(End\) Your Letter](#)
- [Review and Revise Your Letter](#) (proof for physical problems and edit for logic issues)

How to Write dates?

1st January

January 1st

6th April

April 6th

2nd July

July 2nd

23rd December

December 23rd

Phrases for a Formal Letter

I am writing to - inform you....
- to confirm our

I would like to
Could you possibly
I would be grateful if you could

I look forward to hearing from you.

Greetings

- Complete the chart. Which greetings belong to formal or to informal letters?

| FORMAL LETTERS | INFORMAL LETTERS | |
|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Dear Sir or Madam, | Dear Daniel, | Dear John, |
| Dear Prof. Jacob, | | Dear Sir, |
| | | Dear Mr. Smith, |
| | | Dear Jane, |
| | | Dear Madam, |
| | | Dear Sir or Madam, |
| | | Dear Prof. Jacob, |
| | | Dear students, |
| | | Dear Daniel, |

Formal Letter Salutation / Greeting

- A formal letter's text starts with a simple and professional greeting such as,

The Word Dear, Mr./Ms./Title, & Last name of Person:"

Examples

Dear Dr. Smithsonian:

Dear Ms. Cleopatra:

- The difference between personal and business letter greetings is that a colon (:) follows the greeting of a business letter and a comma (,) follows the greeting of a personal letter

The Ending/Closing

- The end of a business letter marks the biggest difference between business and personal letters.
- The ending of a business letter usually states '**Sincerely,**' followed by **three blank lines** for the writer's signature and then the **writer's typed name**.

The Ending/Closing

Complete the chart. Which endings are suitable for formal or informal letters?

| FORMAL LETTERS | INFORMAL LETTERS |
|----------------|------------------|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

Yours truly, Peter

Yours sincerely,

Best wishes,

Kind regards,

Yours faithfully,

Yours Jane,

Yours sincerely v.s. Yours faithfully

- **Yours faithfully,**

If you don't know the name of the person you're writing to.

- **Yours sincerely,**

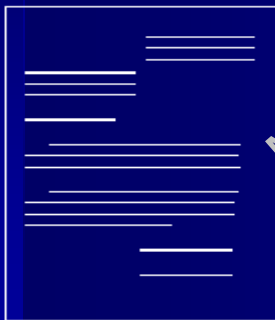
If you know the name of the person you're writing to.

Addresses

- Correct addresses:
 - YOUR address (right)
 - Their address (left)

General Letter Layouts / Styles

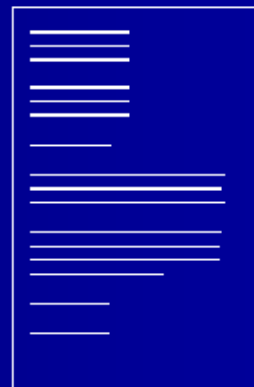
Semi-block Style



Modified Block Style



Block Style



<http://www.englishplus.com/grammar/00000144.htm>

Letter head →

Vancouver Manufacturing
9102 NW 99th Street, Vancouver, Washington 98665
(800) 555-1212 – www.example.com

September 25, 2005

Mr. John Taylor
Director of Operations
ABC Corporation
100 E Main Street
Vancouver, WA 98685

Dear Mr. Taylor:

As our new letterhead indicates, we have recently changed the name of our business from Fort Vancouver Manufacturing to Vancouver Manufacturing.

There has been no change in management and we will be providing the same products and fine service on which we have built our reputation in the industry. We would appreciate it if you would bring this announcement to the attention of your accounts payable department and direct them accordingly.

Thank you for being one of our valued customers. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

Al Olsen
President, Vancouver Manufacturing

1. Block Style (Simplified) Letter Format SAMPLE

Signature Block: Align this with the Complimentary Close. **Leave four blank lines** to sign your name. Don't forget to **sign your name** exactly as you typed it. Your title is optional and depends on the relevancy and degree of formality you need or want to establish.

Source: http://jobsearchtech.about.com/od/letters/1/1l_block_p.htm

Company Logo or Letterhead

March 15, 2007

Mr. John Smith, Director of Operations
SomeGroup Group
100 SomeStreet Drive
Sometown, Alabama 34567

Dear Mr. Smith:

Thank you for your inquiry about Semi-Block format for letters. What follows is a quick summary of the format and the conventions it uses.

Semi-block format or style is frequently called modified semi-block because it is a slightly less formal modification of full block format. This letter style places the date line in alignment with, or slightly to the right of dead center. Another option for placing the date line in semi-block is flush right. Similar to full block, semi-block places the inside address, salutation and any end notations flush with the left margin. However, unlike full block, each body paragraph of semi-block is indented five spaces. The complimentary close and signature block are aligned under the date.

This page illustrates the spacing and layout of semi-block format. Both full block and semi-block formats generally contain all of the necessary parts of a letter.

Sincerely yours ,

Dr. Sheila Carter-Todd

3. Semi-block Style Letter Format SAMPLE

Formal Letters

1 School Street
Wolverhampton WV1 1LY

1 January 2014

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing to request information about the English course that your organisation is starting in February 2014. Please could you tell me how much the course costs and when it finishes.

Yours faithfully

Jatinder Hussain

Example

Your address

Name and address of
someone whom you are
writing to

Date

Dear Prof. Woodruff,

BODY

Yours truly

Your name

Example

6b Princes Gardens
EDINBURGH
ED1 2RM

14th July, 1998

The Manager
Wonderworks Ltd.
Wonderworks House
Tribune Industrial Estate
LINCOLN

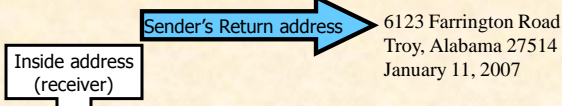
Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Lawnmower Invoice ref. CYX/176/24A

Thank you for the invoice for my lawnmower. I enclose a cheque for both lawnmower and delivery charge. I am delighted with the service I am receiving from it.

Yours faithfully,

Read this Sample Business Letter (Letter of Application) below.



 Taylor, Inc.
 Mr./Ms. S. Student, Human Resources Director
 694 Rockfoot Lane
 Durham, North Carolina 27708

6123 Farrington Road
 Troy, Alabama 27514
 January 11, 2007

Dear Mr./Ms. Student:

I just read an article in the *News and Observer* about Taylor's new computer center just north of Durham. I would like to apply for a position as an entry-level programmer at the center.

I understand that Taylor produces both in-house and customer documentation. My technical-writing skills, as described in the enclosed resume, are well suited to your company. I am a recent graduate of Troy University in Troy, Alabama, with an Associate's Degree in Computer Science. In addition to having taken a broad range of courses, I served as a computer consultant at the college's computer center where I helped train computer users on new systems.

I will be happy to meet with you at your convenience and discuss how my education and experience match your needs. You can reach me at my home address, at (919) 233-1552, or at crock@devry.alumni.edu.

Complimentary Closing

Sincerely,

Raymond Graduate

Sender's Signature



Body?

A formal letter has 4 important parts:

1. Introduction
2. Extra information
3. Question
4. Appreciation

How to Write Official Letters?



| 1 Introduction | 2 Extra Information | 3 Question |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Who am I? | What Capacity? | Why writing this letter? |
| General info? | Details? | Ask/inquiry? |
| Background? | Concise? | Politeness? |
| The way we know them? | Complete? | Imposing? |
| | Accurate? | |

Example

How to Write Official Letters?

حضور محترم معاون آموزشی دانشگاه جناب آقای دکتر

اینجانب فارغ التحصیل مقطع کارشناسی ارشد دانشگاه ... بوده و دارای سوابق تحصیلی-کاري مناسب برای تقاضای استخدام هستم. چند ماه پیش نیز نامه درخواستی را با شماره 1023/86 به این معاونت ارسال نمودم. همانطور که از برگه ضمیمه مشاهده میکنید اینجانب دارای مدارکی هستم که احراز شرایط استخدامی این دانشگاه را برای اینجانب ایجاد می کند. اینجانب علاقمند تدریس در دانشگاه بوده و دارای سوابق تدریس در چند موسسه می باشم. همچنین اینجانب در آزمون دکترا شرکت کرده ولیکن در انتظار پاسخ مصاحبه می باشم. لازم به ذکر است که بیان کم اخیراً از طریق جراید مطلع شدم که این دانشگاه در صدد جذب نیروی هیات علمی در رشته مکانیک بوده و طی مصاحبه و بررسی سوابق به استخدام افراد واجد شرایط پرداخته است. لذا تقاضا مندم در صورت امکان سوابق علمی تحصیلی اینجانب بررسی گردد تا در صورت نیاز این دانشگاه و احراز شرایط توسط اینجانب به عنوان عضو هیات علمی استخدام کردم. آیا این دانشگاه موقعیت برای بورسیه دکترا فراهم می کند یا خیر؟ چگونه می توان از نتیجه درخواست اینجانب برای استخدام مطلع شد.

قبلاً از زحمات جنابعالی و تخصیص وقت برای بررسی نامه اینجانب تشکر می کنم.

Practice

Asking a professor to send me his/her article

- Find out which part each phrase belongs to:

I'm writing on the matter of ...I currently hold a M.Sc. from the Isfahan Univ. of Technology. My thesis centers on evaluation of high rate shear forming of.... I am wondering if you could send me your article titled.....I appreciate your kind response and consideration.

3-Question

4-Appreciation

- I am wondering if you could send me your article titled.....

2-Extra info

1-Introduction

Introduction

- Why are you writing to them...”I am writing to you to because.....”
- Explain who YOU are....
- Be polite! “I hope you don't mind me writing to you but I had to tell you about..”
- Don't mention your name.

Review

Introduction

- Background
- Who you are?
- Position
- Reminder
- Why writing?

Extra Info

- Details
- Importance
- More about topic
-

Question

- Ask
- Issue
- Opinion
- Solution
-

Appreciation

- Thank them
- Appreciate

....

Where our names appear?

Attachments?

Polite language?

How to use a reminder?

Compliment?

Final remarks

Closing? and follow up?

Homework Practice Exercise

1. Write a letter to the editor of the Carbon journal to see why your paper has not been reviewed yet.
2. Write a letter to the department deputy of education to increase capacity of a class.
3. Write a letter to the X factory to be informed of your job application.