

Writing letters

Formal letters

1. Starting a letter

Use one of these phrases to start your letter:

Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss Wilson

Dear Sir or Madam (*Used when you do not know the name of the person you are writing to or whether it is a man or a woman.*)

2. Starting the first paragraph

Here are some useful phrases for starting your letter:

I am writing to enquire about...

I am writing to complain about...

I am writing to inform you...

I am writing in response to your article...

Thank you for your letter of 8 November.

In reply to your letter of 8 November...

Please find enclosed... (*Used when you are sending something else with the letter.*)

3. Before ending a letter

Here are some useful phrases to use before you end your letter:

I look forward to hearing from you.

I look forward to your reply.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any further information.

4. Ending a letter

Use one of these phrases before writing your name to end your letter:

Yours faithfully, (*Used when you have not used a person's family name in the greeting.*)

Yours sincerely, (*Used when you have used a person's family name in the greeting.*)

5. Things to remember about formal letters

Put your address in the top right corner and write the date under it.

Put the name and address of the person you are writing to on the left, above the greeting.

Do not use short forms such as *I'm* and *don't* in the letter.

33 Green Lane
Bounds Green
London
N11 2QT

12 August 2009

Ms A Walker
Trojan Tours
27 Wentworth Street
London
S12 5RA

Dear Ms Walker,

I am writing to enquire about work opportunities with your company. I have a degree in English, having recently graduated from university in Madrid. I am hoping to pursue a career in tourism and am very keen to gain experience in the field.

I am a native speaker of Spanish and speak both English and Italian fluently. I am computer-literate and have good people skills.

I enclose an up-to-date copy of my CV and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Maria Garcia-Hernandez

Informal letters

1. Starting a letter

The most common way to start a letter is to write 'Dear Annie/Sam, etc'. Use one of these phrases after this to continue your letter:

How are you?
I hope you're well.
I was so pleased to get your letter.
It was lovely to hear from you.
Sorry I haven't written for so long.
Sorry I haven't been in touch for ages.
Just a quick note to say...

2. Before ending a letter

Use one of these phrases before you end your letter:

It would be lovely to hear from you.
Hope to hear from you soon.
Hope to see you soon.
Say hello/hi to Pedro from me.
Give my love to Pedro.
Thanks once again for a lovely weekend.

3. Ending a letter

Use one of these phrases before writing your name to end your letter:

Love from
Lots of love,
All my love,
With love,
Best wishes (*Slightly formal, used for friends that you do not know so well.*)
All the best (*Slightly formal, used for friends that you do not know so well.*)
Yours, (*Slightly more formal, suitable for someone that you do not know.*)
Regards, (*Slightly more formal, suitable for someone that you do not know.*)

4. An extra bit

If you have finished writing your letter but want to add a short line, do it in the following way:

PS Give my love to Rosie.
PS Sylvie sends her love.
PS Could I have Jonathan's email address?

1 Arundale Ave
Chorlton
Manchester
M15 8LT

12 July 2009

Dear Yuko,

We were so pleased to get your letter last week. Thank you for writing – it was good to hear all your news. Congratulations to Peter on his new job! I'm sure he'll make a great manager.

I'm sorry I haven't been in touch for ages. It's been a busy time for us, what with having a baby and moving house at the same time (the timing wasn't great!). Anyway, things are a bit calmer now. Daniel is a lovely baby - he even sleeps! - and the new house is a big improvement on our old flat.

It would be lovely to see you in Manchester some time. You know you would be very welcome to come and stay with us (we have far more space in our new place). Let me know if you have a free weekend in the new year.

Thanks once again for getting in touch. Hope to see you soon.

Lots of love,

Louisa

PS Jamie is 40 in February – can you believe it?