

1: Formal and informal letter writing

A formal letter has a number of conventions (traditional requirements) about layout, language and tone that you should follow. These change depending on your audience.

Layout: Addresses and date

Begin with your address in the top-right corner of the page. Immediately below this include the date. Below this, on the left hand side of the page, comes the name and address of the person that you are writing to - the recipient of the letter.

Beginning the letter

Most *formal letters* will start with 'Dear' before the name of the person that you are writing to: 'Dear Ms Brown,' or 'Dear Brian Smith,' You can choose to use first name and surname, or title and surname. If you don't know the name of the person you are writing to, use: 'Dear Sir/Madam,' Remember to add the comma after the name. An *informal letter* may start with 'Hello' or 'Hi' Your opening sentence should clearly state why you are writing the letter - get to the point straight away: 'I would like to apply for the position of ...' An *informal letter* may include 'How are you?' 'How have you been?'

Ending a Letter

Yours faithfully: if you do not know the name of the person, end the letter this way.

Yours sincerely: if you know the name of the person, end the letter this way.

Your signature: Sign your name, then print it underneath the signature.

An informal letter may include 'I hope to see you soon' or 'From' with perhaps 'xxx'

2: Formal and informal email writing

An email has a number of conventions about layout, language and tone you should follow. These change depending on the recipient of the email. Email is one of the biggest forms of digital communication and is used for various purposes: communication in the workplace, contacting companies and speaking to family/friends.

Layout: Email subject (appears as a box over the main body of the email)

Give your email a subject so the recipient knows the content of your email. This should be a few key words. e.g English Homework 19th May 2020 , Photographs of Dan's birthday. No addresses/dates are needed in the layout of an email.

Beginning your email

Email is less formal than a letter however you should still begin with Dear Mr/Mrs... if you do not know the recipient well. If you know the recipient well then you should use their first name (informal).

In a formal email, a short introduction is needed before the main body e.g I hope that this email finds you well and you have had an enjoyable first week of your Summer break (Student to teacher) An informal email may not use an introduction e.g This email is to inform you guys of a quiz that is taking place next week.

Ending your email: A formal email may end with Kind Regards, Many thanks, I look forward to hearing back from you soon, Best wishes. You shouldn't end a formal email with Love, Take Care, xxx however you may wish to end an informal email to family/friends in this way.

3: Paragraphing

A paragraph is a collection of sentences with unity of purpose.

A paragraph should:

- Introduce the paragraph's main point
- Develop and support the point
- Show the significance of the point made

How long should a paragraph be?

- There is no absolute rule: very short or long paragraphs can work when used by an experienced writer. However, as a guideline, paragraphs should usually be no less than 2 or 3 sentences long.

When should I start a new paragraph?

Start a new paragraph for a change in time, topic or location. When you begin a paragraph you should always be aware of the main idea being expressed in that paragraph. When writing a letter, you may use 'Firstly, Secondly etc' to give a clear order for your points.'

4: Vocabulary

- **Faithfully:** in a loyal manner - If you do not know the name of the person, end a letter with 'yours faithfully,'.
- **Sincerely:** in a kind or genuine way - If you know the name of the person, end the letter with 'yours sincerely,'
- **King Regards:** A term of respect to use when signing off an email; a professional and appropriate way to end an email
- **Appropriate:** suitable or proper in the circumstances - When writing letters, it's important to select the appropriate tone.
- **Layout:** the way in which parts of something are arranged - Formal letters have a conventional layout e.g addresses, Dear
- **Symbolism:** a mark, sign or word which represents an idea, object or relationship. *The colour red may be used to symbolise love, passion or danger in Of Mice and Men.*

5: Terminology

- **Register:** the way a speaker uses language differently in different circumstances, including level of formality - *A speaker's register in a formal speech, will differ from that in an informal speech.*
- **Formality:** strictly conventional behaviour - *Formal letters require a high level of formality.*
- **Tone:** the feelings or attitude of a writer towards a subject or audience, usually conveyed through the choice of words - *angry, sarcastic, critical, pleading, humorous*
- **Form:** the text type that a writer uses— *email, letter, novel, script*
- **Zoomorphism:** giving animal like qualities to anything that is not an animal e.g humans, objects— *Lennie snorted into the water.*

6: Grammar— semi-colons

- Use a semi-colon to link (in a single sentence) two independent clauses that are closely related in thought. When a semi-colon is used to join two or more ideas (parts) in a sentence, those ideas are then given equal position or rank. **Some people write with a word processor; others write with a pen or pencil.**
- Use a semicolon between two independent clauses that are connected by conjunctive adverbs or transitional phrases.. **However they choose to write, people are allowed to make their own decisions; as a result, many people swear by their writing methods.**
- Use a semicolon between items in a list or series if any of the items contain commas. **There are basically two ways to write: with a pen or pencil, which is inexpensive and easily accessible; or by computer and printer, which is more expensive but quick and neat.**