

## Letter Writing

### Informal Letters /Friendly Letter Writing

This type of **personal writing** is represented by personal correspondence, thank you letters, letters of congratulation or condolences. All of these can be printed or handwritten.

Formatting of a personal letter is similar to business one, but the differences are in style and punctuation.

1. **The heading** in the upper right corner may consist of an address and date. We do not use punctuation at the end of the heading lines.

2. **The salutation** placed at the left-hand margin is rather friendly and informal. We do use comma here, e.g. Dear Gran, Beloved Mum, Dearest Susie,

3. **The body** may consist of one or more paragraphs, dealing with personal topics.

4. **The complimentary close** is followed with a comma:

e.g. Love, Jane

Sincerely yours, Tom

Yours, Alan

5. **Signature** is written below the complimentary close.

# Sample Friendly Letter

18. 8. 2005

Dear Catherine,

Hi! I am sorry it took me so long to write.

I have been really busy with work. You know how it goes.

How are things with you?

Do you start school soon? Summer goes too fast! The only reason I want school to start is so that it will finish. I'm ready for College.

I miss you! I loved Europe and I was so sad to have to come back to the U.S.A.

I loved meeting all the people, especially you, and learning about real culture.

The U.S. just doesn't appreciate beauty the way Europe does. I am not going to live in the U.S. after college. I think I want to live in Spain.

How is the building of the Bible College coming? We all had such a wonderful time times working + playing with all of you. I wish I were there now.

I hope all is well with you. Send your family my love. I don't have my pictures back yet but I will soon so I will mail you some then.

Love,

Kristina

Write back soon!

# Business Letters/Formal Letter Writing

Business correspondence should get across the message in a direct, clear and natural way. In contrast to informal writing, one should avoid using slang and casual language, clichés, short forms and abbreviations. The writer should avoid overly formal and rigid language too. The letter should be logically structured and organized. The layout of a formal letter follows basically the same order.

**1. The heading** should include a street address, city, state, ZIP code and the date. Your address should be at the top of the letter or in the right-hand corner. The house number goes first, then street. Do not mention your name. The date is usually on the right below sender`s address.

U.S. : 8.20.2011

U.K. : 20.8.2011 (20th August 2011)

Other ways: August 20th 2011

20 August 2011

August 20, 2011

Avoid writing 2/5/2011 (means 2nd May in the U.K. and 5th Feb. in the U.S.)

**2. The inside (receiver`s) name and address** are written on the left and may be in a block form. Always write a proper title before the name (Mr. or Ms.). If you use a title after a person`s name, do not use one before the name (Ken Hovind, M.D. or Mr. Ken Hovind).

**3. The attention line and salutation:** You can include the receiver`s name and position in an attention line (For the attention of the PR Manager), below which you can continue with salutation. Dear Sir/Dear Madam/Dear Sir or Madam/Dear Sirs-U.K./Dear Gentlemen-U.S. are used when you do not know the name or sex of the person you are writing to. If you do know the name, use:

U.S. : Dear Mr. Green,

Dear Ms. Green,

Dear Dr. Green,

U.K. : Dear Mr Green,

Dear Ms Green,

Dear Dr Green,

English usage places no fullstop after Mr, Ms, Dr. Both, English and American, use comma after the greeting. If a letter is intended for more than one person, use plural form:

Dear Professors Hovind and Green,

Dear Professor Hovind and Professor Green,

**4. The body of the letter** may be indented or blocked. It is usual to use block form and leave a line space between paragraphs in the body. In any case, be consistent with the style you choose.

**5. Complimentary close** is the letter-ending. It depends on salutation. If you start with Dear Sir or Madam etc., finish with Yours faithfully. If you begin with a person's name (Dear Dr Green) close with Yours sincerely, or Sincerely yours,

The comma after complimentary close is optional.

U.S. : Yours truly, Truly yours, Sincerely, Best regards

U.K. : Best wishes, Kind regards

Old-fashioned phrases to be avoided: Respectfully yours, We remain yours faithfully,

**The signature** is below complimentary close, usually in black or blue ink and above your typed name. Do not include your title in written signature, only after your typed name below the signature: (signature)

Ken Hovind  
Sales Manager

# Sample Formal Letter

Novomeského 1  
Bratislava 999 99  
Slovak Republic

11. 2. 2011

Healthcare People Management Association (HPMA)  
HPMA Head Office  
77 Mansfield Park  
Richmond  
Surrey TW9 1PL

Dear Sir

I am an Associate Professor of Paediatrics at Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia.  
I plan to apply for an internship at your association.

Would you please send me a copy of the HPMA catalogue, information on financial aid and housing, and materials about your HPMA Internship Programme?

Thank you for your time and assistance in this matter.

Yours faithfully,

(signature)

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# References

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3. Grygel, J.A.: The World Book of Word Power, World Book, Inc., Chicago, 1991
4. SAIA - SCTS: Ako napísať životopis a sprievodný list v anglickom jazyku, SAIA, Bratislava, 1998
5. Spooner, M.D., McKellen, J.S.: Applying for a Job in English, Penguin Books Ltd., London, 1990