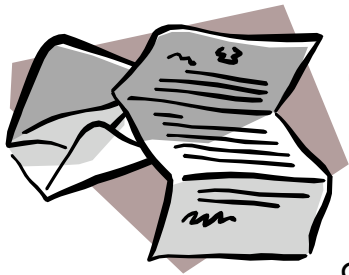


# How to

## ...write a business letter

Business letters are different from personal letters. They need to be laid out in a particular way and to use a more formal style of language. Since a business letter is usually from or to an organisation, it must be written correctly: it will create the wrong impression if it has errors in it.

As with any type of communication you need to think about:



**its purpose.** Why are you writing the letter? What information do you need to get across? Is the information sensitive?

**your audience.** Who is going to receive the letter? What do they know already? How will the information affect them?

## Tips for writing business letters

### Prepare

- Collect together any relevant details or information.
- Write notes on what you need to say first.

### Plan

- Structure the information clearly for the reader.

### Write

- Use the 'house style' of your organisation to lay out the letter.
- Use paragraphs.
- Use short, clear sentences.

### Check

- Proof-read your work.
- Check spellings in a dictionary, with the spell-checker or with another person.

You may write business letters as part of your current job, in your personal life or in a future job. You may need to write your own business letter to apply for a promotion or new job. People are more likely to take you seriously if your letter is well written.





Here's an example of a business letter.

**Fun Party Ltd**  
Long Lane  
Townley  
Sussex  
BR4 6HJ

13 June 20..

Mrs Garner  
58 Home Grove  
Townley  
Sussex  
BR 3 9LK

Dear Mrs Garner

PARTY 5<sup>th</sup> September

Thank you for your letter of 12th June, regarding the party you are planning in September.

I would like to confirm that we will be able to provide catering for 10 children and 4 adults. This will include small sandwiches, fun snacks, small cakes, birthday cake with dog motif, drinks, plates, glasses and cutlery and a party bag for each child.

The cost will be £90 plus VAT. I understand that you would like the food to be delivered to the Townley Community Centre at 4.00 pm.

Yours sincerely  
*Darron Kilter*  
Darron Kilter  
Manager

Your COMPANY NAME AND ADDRESS go here. They can also go against the left margin. **DON'T PUT YOUR OWN NAME AT THE TOP!**

Put the DATE here, or against the left margin.

Put the name and address of the person to whom you are writing here.

Dear...Mrs Garner/Madam

SUBJECT, if appropriate

First sentence refers to any previous correspondence.

Use short sentences and clear paragraphs.

Final paragraph

Yours sincerely/faithfully

Signature and your name

Your position

If it's the first time you have corresponded with the person, use:

Dear Sir/Madam

Yours faithfully

INITIAL CAPITALS

CAPITAL 'Y', small 'f'

If you have had previous correspondence or have spoken, use:

Dear Mrs Garner

Yours sincerely

INITIAL CAPITALS

CAPITAL 'Y', small 's'

## Open or closed punctuation?

You'll notice from the previous example of a business letter that the paragraphs have space between them but are not indented, and that there are no commas after each line of the address or after 'Dear Mrs Garner'. This type of punctuation is called 'open'. It is acceptable for you to use open punctuation when writing by hand or in the communication test, but make sure that you are **consistent**. Don't have some commas in, and leave some out. Choose your style and stick to it.

If you are writing by hand you may prefer to use indented paragraphs, as they show clearly where one paragraph ends and the next begins. If you prefer not to indent, make sure you leave a line space between paragraphs.

The important thing to remember when writing any business communication is that it must be **fit for its purpose**. This means that it must be appropriate for the situation.

The following examples show full (closed) punctuation and indented paragraphs.

Your writing paper may already have the address printed on it.

**Fun Party Ltd.,**  
Long Lane,  
Townley,  
Sussex,  
BR4 6HJ.

13 June 20..

Mrs Garner,  
58 Home Grove,  
Townley,  
Sussex,  
BR3 9LK.

Dear Mrs Garner,

PARTY 5<sup>th</sup> September

Thank you for your letter of 12th June, regarding the party you are planning in September.

I would like to confirm that we will be able to provide catering for 10 children and 4 adults. This will include small sandwiches, fun snacks, small cakes, birthday cake with dog motif, drinks, plates, glasses and cutlery and a party bag for each child.

The cost will be £90 plus VAT. I understand that you would like the food to be delivered to the Townley Community Centre at 4.00 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

*Darron Kilter*

Darron Kilter,  
Manager.

**Fun Party Ltd.**  
**Long Lane, Townley,**  
**Sussex,**  
**BR4 6HJ**

13 June 20..

Mrs Garner,  
58 Home Grove,  
Townley,  
Sussex,  
BR3 9LK

Dear Mrs Garner,

PARTY 5<sup>th</sup> September

Thank you for your letter of 12th June, regarding the party you are planning in September.

I would like to confirm that we will be able to provide catering for 10 children and 4 adults. This will include small sandwiches, fun snacks, small cakes, birthday cake with dog motif, drinks, plates, glasses and cutlery and a party bag for each child.

The cost will be £90 plus VAT. I understand that you would like the food to be delivered to the Townley Community Centre at 4.00 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

*Darron Kilter*

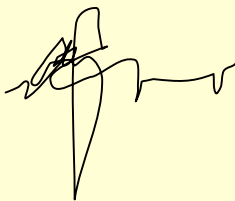
Darron Kilter,  
Manager.

Mr H Farrow  
29 Tiverton Drive  
New Elsdon  
SE9 3KP

Dear Dave

I seen you advertisment in the local paper and wood like some more information about your range of steam cleaners could you also send a catalog with some details about the cleaning products that were mentioned in the ad.

Yours Faithfully



Saturday 14 December

ADVERTISEMENT  
DAVE GRIMES LTD  
**Cleaning Solutions**

We can provide a wide range of equipment and products for all your cleaning needs:

Floor cleaning apparatus  
Steam cleaners  
Cleaning chemicals  
Cleaning products

Telephone 0208 822 1595  
98 High St Old Elsdon  
SE9 3MP

**Try this!**

Read the advertisement and letter.

- Fill in the gaps with the correct information.
- Underline and correct the spelling mistakes.
- Cross out and correct any other errors.
- Rewrite the letter correctly.

