



# Letters

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# Letters

- Use letters to communicate outside your organization especially in formal and semiformal contexts. .
- Whereas the memorandum is for communication within an organization.
- Letters are an essential part of all business and technical communication because they are more formal and reliable than electronic mail and more precise and permanent than telephone or face-to-face conversations.



# Types of Letters

- Job application letters
- Acceptance letters
- Transmittal letters
- Inquiry letters
- Technical-information letters
- Letters of recommendation



# Format of a Letter

- follow your organization style for business letters, Otherwise, follow the guidelines provided here.
- Element of a letter:
  - Heading
  - Date
  - Recipient's address
  - Salutation
  - Body
  - Closing
  - End notations



# Letter heading

- If you are using letterhead stationery, include only the date two lines below the bottom of the letterhead. Spell out the name of month.
- If you are not using letterhead stationery, begin with your full address (city, street, and zip code) 1 to 1½ inches from the top of the page. Spell out address designations, such as Street, Avenue, and West. Include the date aligned at left with the address, spelling out the name of the month.



# Recipient's Address

- Two to four lines below the date, place the following items:
- The recipient's title (such as Mr., Ms., or Dr.) and full name (address a woman who does not have a professional title as Ms. unless you know she prefers Miss or Mrs.; if the recipient does not have a title and you are unsure of his or her gender, omit the title).
- The recipient's job title, if appropriate.
- The name of the company or institution, if appropriate.
- The full address, following the same format as for the address in the heading.
- The recipient's address is always aligned on the left margin.



# Salutation

- Place the salutation two lines below the recipient's address.
- The salutation begins with the word Dear, continues with the recipient's title and last name, and ends with a colon.
- If you are unsure of the recipient's gender and the recipient does not have a professional title, omit the title and, instead, use both the first and the last names in the salutation (Dear Leslie Perelman:).
- If you do not know the name of the recipient of the letter, refer to the department you are writing to (Dear Technical Support:).
- Avoid salutations such as Dear Sir or Madam:.



# Body

- Start the letter two lines after the salutation.
- Body paragraphs should be single spaced with a double space between paragraphs.
- Be concise, direct, and considerate. State the letter's purpose in the opening paragraph. Include supporting information in a middle paragraph or two, and conclude your letter with a brief paragraph that both establishes goodwill and expresses what needs to be done next.
- If a letter requires more than one page, make sure there are at least two lines of body text on the final page. Never use an entire page for just the closing. The second page and all subsequent pages must include a heading with the recipient's name, the date, and the page number.





# Closing Phrase

- Write a complimentary closing phrase two lines below the final body paragraph.
- Yours truly, Sincerely, or Sincerely yours are common endings for professional letters.
- Capitalize the first letter of the first word of your complimentary closing, and end the complimentary closing with a comma.
- Four lines below the closing phrase, write your full name. If you are writing in an official capacity that is not included in the stationery's letterhead, write your title on the next line. Your signature goes above your typed name.



# End Notations

- At the bottom of the last page of a business letter, end notations may show who typed the letter,
- whether any materials are enclosed with the letter, and
- who is receiving a copy of the letter.

- Job Application letter example

32 Bay State Road  
Boston, MA 02215-1903

May 17, 1995

Mr. David White  
Atria, Inc.  
37 Cochituate Place, #113  
Framingham, MA 01701

Dear Mr. White:

I will be graduating from MIT in June with a bachelor's degree in computer science and am interested in opportunities at Atria.

I have worked as an intern with Loral Infrared and Imaging Systems for the past two summers in their software engineering department. While there I developed data stream emulation software for the NASA AIRS weather satellite in C on UNIX and Macintosh platforms. At MIT, I worked in the Earth and Planetary Science Department to create a graphic user interfacing system for viewing data sent back by the Magellan space probe orbiting Venus. This experience would be applicable to the creation of the GUI for the up-coming version of Clearcase revision control tools. While I have taken general course work in computer science, I have taken additional courses in media arts, systems design, algorithms, and artificial intelligence.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and discuss my qualifications for working at Atria. I believe my training has given me the skills to make a valuable contribution. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Chris Markey

- Acceptance letter example

456 Parker Lane  
Somerville, MA 02141  
April 7, 1997

Ms. Isabel Lightman  
Director of Personnel  
Loki Electronics Corporation  
2426 Carelon Ave.  
Berkeley, CA 94721

Dear Ms. Lightman:

I am pleased to accept your offer of a position as an Analyst-Programmer I in the Loki Electronics Operating Systems Division at a salary of \$XX,XXX per year.

I have already given my current employer notice of my intention to leave, and will be ready to report for work on the date you mentioned in your letter, June 1.

I look forward to a long and rewarding career with Loki.

Sincerely,

Denzel Adams

# Inquiry letter example

Arlington Heights Programming Associates  
16 Oak Street  
Springfield, CA 90467

November 11, 1996

Customer Relations  
Turing Data Solutions  
2345 Maple Avenue  
Mountain View, CA 94941

Dear Customer Relations:

I am a systems engineer at Arlington Heights Programming Associates developing a new client-server networked database system for two non-profit corporations.

My team is considering using your new release of Omega Database Plus 1.0 as a key part of the system. If we incorporate your product into our design, our clients will need to purchase at least a total of 140 copies of your software.

We have read your promotional material and are very interested in using your product. We need, however, the answers to the following questions before we can decide whether or not to use Omega Database Plus:

1. Are you still planning to release the Omega Database Plus Version 1.0 on February 12, 1998?
2. What LAN environments will your product support?
3. Will your product support PGP encryption?

page 2

I would be happy to talk to you further about your product. You can call me at (415) 666-4323 or e-mail me at [egarrels@arlpro.com](mailto:egarrels@arlpro.com).

Sincerely,

Edgar Garrels  
Senior Systems Engineer

cc: Mr. R. Williams