



## LETTER WRITING

**FORMAL LETTERS**

Formal Letters have a variety of purposes. Formal Letters are written to:

- Ask for/give information
- Apply for a job
- Make inquiries
- Register complaints about inadequate goods or services
- Place orders/send appropriate replies
- Apologize for behaviour
- Solicit new customers for grievances
- Persuade others
- Make an appeal for help
- Send a recommendation

However, all of these letters have a common goal, which is to get the results you want from someone you may or may not know personally.

**IMPORTANT POINTS**

- The formal letter is written in formal language. Try to avoid starting with 'I'. Keep sentence short and to the point. Do not use contractions.
- End with a short sentence that anticipates the response of the addressee.
- The tone in formal letter is polite and impersonal.
- Use passive voice where possible.
- Be brief and to the point; do not beat about the bush.
- Be clear and specific; state the purpose clearly and concisely.
- Be positive and polite even if you are writing a complaint. Remember on the receiving end of your letter is a human being!

**Business letters**

These include:

- (i) Letters of enquiry/asking for information
- (ii) Replying to enquiry/giving information
- (iii) Placing orders and sending replies
- (iv) Cancelling orders

A business letter is the basic means of communication between two companies. It is a document typically sent externally to those outside a company, but is also sent internally to those within a company.

A business letter should be written whenever you need a permanent record that you have sent the information requested for, because business letters are generally sent to other professionals. A formal salutation and closing must be added.



They are different from personal letters in form, tone and content. Most business letters have a formal tone as opposed to the informal, friendly or personal tone, content and style of the personal letter. The treatment of the subject has to be simple, systematic and formal.

### IMPORTANT POINTS

- begin by identifying yourself
- clearly state the purpose of writing
- give relevant details
- make a request for appropriate action
- be positive and polite - even if you are making a complaint
- use polite language and a pleasant tone
- Quote reference numbers, order number, cheque/demand draft number, file numbers, etc.
- convey message briefly and in a straightforward manner

### Official Letters

These include:

- i. Letters of complaint
- ii. Making inquiries
- iii. Making requests/appeals

Official letters are written to various public or civil servants who generally head their respective departments, sections, branches or zones.

Important points

- Show due respect but do not flatter or sound too servile
- Clearly state the purpose of writing
- Use polite language and a pleasant tone

### Letters to the Editors

These letters give suggestions/create awareness on an issue of public interest or an issue already raised in an article/write-up/published letter.

### Important Points

- Begin with reference to the recent development/event/issue
- Give details of the topic bringing out cause-effect relationship
- Offer suggestions/solutions
- Do not ask the editor to solve the problem as he can only voice your views and ideas.

### Job Applications

These types of letters demand a very formal and precise treatment. Their format is almost the same as that of the forwarding cover letter and is usually accompanied by a curriculum vitae/resume. The curriculum vitae/resume ought to include the name, address, name, date of birth, educational qualifications, experience, hobbies, expected salary and signature.



## ENGLISH

**EXAMPLE**

## Letter of complaint

Neera Singh is the secretary of Army Apartments C G road, Sagar. The complex subscribes to New Cable Services M G road Sagar. The proprietor Mr. Singh has increased the monthly subscription, but he has done nothing to improve the quality of transmission. The sound is low and unclear, the colours blurred, and the selection of channels limited. She writes a letter complaining about the same.

Sender's address Letter-head (optional)	Resident's welfare association Army Apartments C G Road Sagar
Date	22nd July 2016
Address of the Addressee	The Proprietor New Cable Services M G Road Sagar
Subject - Statement	Subject: Complaint against Cable Services
Salutation	Dear Mr. Singh  I am writing this letter on behalf of around 350 cable subscribers belonging to Army Apartments, C G Road Sagar, who are very dissatisfied with your services.  The association has previously complained of low unclear sound, blurred images and distortion of colours which have not been addressed so far. And now the unreasonable increase in monthly subscription without corresponding improvement in transmission is causing dissatisfaction among the residents.  The complaints to the cable operator posted in the colony has fallen on deaf ears. In spite of paying full subscription the residents have access to only limited channels.  Kindly take note of the complaints, otherwise the society will be forced to adhere to the member's demand to cancel the subscription.
Complimentary	Yours sincerely
Name & Designation	Neera Singh Secretary

**Questions for Exercise**

1. Kumar Shanu of Bareilly has purchased a frost free Godrej refrigerator of 265 liters from Life Style, civil lines, Bareilly. After a month of purchase, the freezing section of the refrigerator has stopped functioning. Write a letter to the Sales Manager of the firm complaining about it and requesting for the piece to be replaced, since there is a two-year warranty.



## ENGLISH

2. Write a letter to the Commissioner of Chennai Municipal Corporation, complaining about the poor sanitary conditions and mosquito menace in your locality.
3. Write a letter to the police commissioner (Traffic) about the inadequate parking facilities in the commercial street area of Bangalore, which is causing a lot of inconvenience to the people. You may also offer your suggestions for solving it. You are Rakesh/Radhika, no. 12, Jai Nagar, Bangalore.
4. Along with air and water pollution our cities are also under an attack of noise pollution. Marriage processions, DJs, during wedding receptions, loud music from neighbor flats etc. are all sources of noise which is not good for the old, the ailing and students. Write a letter to the Editor of a local newspaper describing the problem and requesting the concerned authorities to solve it. You are Karan/Karuna, M-114, Mall Road, Delhi.
5. In all big cities road rage has become a serious problem. A minor scratch, a little push, or a small brushing past can lead to a scuffle sometimes resulting even in murder. Write a letter in 120-150 words to the Police commissioner giving your views on the problem and its solutions. You are Karuna/Karan , M 114, Mall Road, Delhi.