Dear Sir

3 HOW TO WRITE A

- BUSINESS LETTER
- ☐ USEFUL PHRASES FOR WRITING LETTERS
 - ☐ EMAILS AND FAXES
- □ LAST BUT NOT LEAST PUNCTUATION
 - EXERCISES





Writing letters in a foreign language requires a lot of knowledge about the subject as well as about the culture.

BEGINNINGS

If you are writing to a stranger or	Dear Sir	Yours faithfully,
you don't know the person's name,	Dear Madam	(your name)
use the phrases on the right.	Dear Sir or	
	Madam	

If you know the person, use Mr, Ms (Mrs and Miss are not considered politically correct), Dr and their surname.

NOTES

Dear Mr Brown Dear Ms Jefferson

Yours sincerely, (your name)

ENDINGS

If you know them quite well, you can use their first name.	Dear Jenny Dear Steven	(With) best wishes Kind regards
For an informal letter to a good friend or family member, use the first name.	Dear Belinda Dear Ken	Love (from) All the best Take care
Note: Love (from) is not normally used by a man writing to another man.		

ASKING FOR INFORMATION

45 Muswell Rd London NW4 15 April 2009

Sunshine Holiday Cottages Fore St Truro

Dear Mr Ellison

Further to our telephone conversation of last Friday, I **enclose** a cheque for £50 as a **deposit** for the rental of Rainbow Cottage for one week, **commencing** 21 August. **I would be grateful if you could** send me further information about the property, **in particular**, **whether** there is parking **nearby**.

We are planning to bring our dog. If this is a problem, please **do not hesitate** to contact me.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely, Louise Robertson

Louise Robertson

179 San Jacinto Blvd San Antonio TX 78210 September 3, 2011

Southern Sports Holidays 142 Woodbridge Road Denver CO 80201-1023

To whom it may concern: 1

I am interested in language and sports holidays as advertised in your brochure and I would appreciate it if you could send me further information about prices and facilities.

Could you tell me how many hours a week of **language tuition** are offered and how large the groups are? I would also like to know whether **special diets** are catered for, as one of my friends is a vegetarian.

Thank you.

Sincerely, 2

Gloria Rodriguez

Gloria Rodriguez

1 To whom it may concern is used especially in American English if you do not know the name of the person you are writing to.

2 In American English end your letter with Sincerely, Sincerely Yours or Yours Truly.

Other useful phrases for asking for information:

- ☐ It would also be helpful to know what/when/etc...
- I would be interested to know...
- Please let me know...
- ☐ Would you send me details of ...
- I would be grateful if you could let me have ...

A LETTER OF COMPLAINT

Reigate Surrey RH6 3KE Tel: 0116 587392

17 Wolfson Close

12 December 2010

London WC1 5NR Dear Sir or Madam

Customer Services

Mainrail

Carbis House

I am writing to complain about the poor service provided by your train company. 1

Yesterday I travelled on the 7.20 from Oxford to London Paddington. Not only was the train thirty minutes late leaving Oxford but we were further delayed and no explanation or apology was offered. Furthermore, the heating broke down and the train got colder and colder. I complained to a member of staff, who was most unhelpful unsympathetic. 2

As a result of the delays I was two hours late for an important meeting with a valuable client, which caused considerable difficulty and embarrassment. 3

In the circumstances I believe I am entitled to compensation. I look forward to hearing from you very soon. 4

Yours faithfully

John Holland

John Holland

Most letters of complaint use formal language and are organized in a standard way:

- explain why you are writing
- 2 explain what the problem is and describe any action you have already taken
- 3 say what inconvenience it has caused you
- 4 state what you want to be done about the problem

Other useful phrases for a letter of complaint:

I await your response/comments.

I am writing to express my dissatisfaction with/at ... I was surprised/shocked/horrified to find ... I explained/requested ... What makes matters worse was that ... Furthermore/in addition to/what's more ... As if this/these was/were not enough ... On top of all this ... As a consequence ... This caused me to ... I am sure you will appreciate that this level of service is unacceptable. I expect to be compensated for the inconvenience I have been caused. I expect better service from a company of your reputation. Please replace the goods as soon as possible. ☐ I would like a full refund. I would like to know what action you will take to rectify this situation. ☐ I look forward to a prompt reply/a full explanation.

AN ORDER

56 Somerset Lane Kai Tak, Kowloon Hong Kong

April 21, 2011

Marketing Director
Dymon Publications
2201 South Maple Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84797
U.S.A.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I would like to order ten (10) copies of the book, Touchy Situations: A Conversation Text for ESL Students. I recently came across this book at a local teachers' conference and was very impressed by its format and contents. Could you please send the books by express mail? I need them for class next Monday. Also, would you mind sending your latest catalog or brochure?

Thank you for your prompt attention. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Best regards,
TRENT CHANG
Trent Chang

Dymon Publications 2201 South Maple Street Salt Lake City, UT 84797 U.S.A.

April 22, 2011

Trent Chang 56 Somerset Lane Kai Tak, Kowloon Hong Kong

Dear Mr. Chang,

Thank you for your order of Touchy Situations: A Conversation Text for ESL Students. I sent the books by RedFex on April 20. They should be arriving within a few days if they are not there already. Please let me know if there are any problems with the shipment.

As requested, I am enclosing a brochure, which provides information about our other products. You may also check out our web site at http://www.dymonbooks.com.

If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Alan Gordon

Alan Gordon

Dymon Publications

Enc: brochure

OFFICIAL LETTER LAYOUT

Modern media like fax or e-mail are mostly used to send messages. But letters, especially official, still have not lost their importance although they are not sent by post so frequently as a few years ago.

Here are some dos and donts about writing official letters.

keep to this layout if you use unheaded paper. Some companies use a different format, but by using the format presented on the following page you wll never make a mistake.



enders address
(without name)
ncluding phone
mber and e-mai
Our ro

number	and e-mail
	Our ref
	Your ref

Your	ref

Our	
Our P Your	
Da	

Recipient's address **Opening salutation**

Letter text

Complimentary close (usually I/We look forward to hearing from you)

Yours

Senders name (typed out)

Senders position in the company

Signature (by hand)

Recipient's name

Do

write the date like this: 23 January 2001 or January 23, 2001 П use Our ref. and Your ref. only if you and the recipient use a letter filing system; П start your letter with Dear Sir/Madam if you do not know the recipient by name or Dear Sirs if you write to an institution. Then close your letter with Yours faithfully; start your letter with e.g. Dear Mr Brown or Dear Ms Jameson if you know the recipient by name. Then close your letter with Yours sincerely; preferably use Ms when writing to a female recipient unless otherwise stated in the letter you have already received from her; write Enc. or Encl. in the bottom left corner of your letter if you want to send something else together with your letter;

write your letter clearly, politely and concisely.

Don't

- □ write the date in this form: 23/1/2001 or 1/23/2001. It might cause confusion, e.g. 2/1/2001 is 2 January 2001 in Britain, but it is 1 February in USA
- write town name in the date
- start your letter with Dear Ms Judith Jameson. You start an informal letter with Dear Judith and a formal letter with Dear Ms Jameson, but never mix up both.
- ☐ write an exclamation mark (!) in the opening salutation
- ☐ use short forms like I'm, I'd, you don't etc. in a formal letter.

LAYOUT

Task 1 Choose the right option:

- 1. On your official letter your name should appear
- A. at the top, on the right
- B. at the bottom
- C. at the top and at the bottom
- 2. If you start your letter with Dear Sirs, you end it with
- A. Yours sincerely
- B. Best wishes
- C. Yours faithfully
- 3. The abbreviation Enc. should appear:
- A. at the bottom, on the left
- B. at the bottom, on the right
- C. below senders address
- 4. Senders address should appear
- A. at the top, on the right
- B. at the top, on the left
- C. at the bottom, on the left
- 5. The complimentary close of an official letter reads:
- A. I/We look forward about hearing from you
- B. I/We look forward to hear from you C. I/We look forward to hearing from you

- 1B

- 2C
- **3A**
- **4A**

5C

16

6. Tick the incorrect opening salutationA. Dear MadamB. Dear Anne MorrisonC. Dear Anne	6B
7. Tick the incorrect date A. 12 January 2001 B. January 12, 2001 C. Bratislava, 12 January 2001	7C
8. The abbreviation for Missis is A. Mrs B. Ms C. Mss	8 A

INFORMAL LETTERS

4 Longton Avenue are writing to. Your

Exeter address usually goes in the Devon EX3 8NS top right hand corner. It

Dear Lucy

welcome.

Love,

Ellie

28 June 2009

Just a note to say a big thanks you for giving us such

a fab time in the Lake District. Bill and I were so pleased to meet your family, and they made us really

I'll never forget climbing Helvellyn. My legs ached for days, but it was worth it for the fantastic views!

We're both back at work now and very busy. However, this weekend we're going to decorate the spare room so I hope you'll come and visit us soon.

something that you have forgotten you can put **PS** (postscript) after your

name.

Use **Dear** + your friend's name.

There is no need to put the

address of the person you

can be left out altogether.

language, contractions (*I'll*, *we're*), etc. End your letter with **Love**,

Love from, Lots of love

You can use informal

for a close friend or a relation. Use **Best wishes**, All the best, Take care for others.

If you want to introduce

some more information or

A BUSINESS LETTER is more formal than a personal letter. It should have **a margin** of at least one inch on all four edges. There are **9 parts** to a business letter.

- Heading or letterhead includes your company's name, address, tel. number, fax number and email address. If possible include your web address. Then skip a line and write a date. Never abbreviate to Jan. 31. Write January 31.
- ☐ **The inside address** (recipient address) make it as complete as possible, include titles and names of persons if known.
- Reference it is optional. Obligatory when dealing with large volume of correspondence. Start with Re:
- □ **Salutation** also called greeting. Always formal. It begins with "Dear" and includes the person's last name. Always personalize the letter if the recipient is known. Otherwise "Dear sir/madam:"
- Subject matter optional, if there is reference, there is no subject and vice versa.
 Placed one line bellow the salutation.

- **The body** written as text with paragraphs. Skip the line between paragraphs. Each paragraph deals with one point and one point only.
- **The Complimentary close** always end with "Sincerely yours "- it can be preceded with longer line like "Looking forward to hearing from you" etc.
- **Signature** Skip several lines (for the handwritten signature) after the close and type your name and your title. Women also indicate how they wish to be addressed - Miss, Mrs, Ms.
- **Enclosures** if you include other material in the letter, put Enc or Encl, two lines below.
 - Business letters should not contain postscripts.

SOME USEFUL PHRASES FOR

INQUIRY

Please send information about...

Please quote prices ..., delivery date ...and terms of payment

Leaflet, catalogue, price list, sample

INVOICE

Prices are increased by...

Prices are reduced by...

We offer discount of ...

Temporarily out of stock...

Spare parts are available

^[1] upit

^[2] faktura

ORDER

This is the order for the merchandize listed bellow We would like to place an order...

Thank you for the prompt handling of this order

OFFER

Thank for your enquiry of April 18th concerning...

We are glad to say that we can supply any quantity of ...

COMPLAINT

I am writing to express my dissatisfaction with...

I was surprised/shocked to find...

^[1] narudžba

^[2] ponuda

^[3] prigovor

E-MAILS AND LETTERS - CHECK LIST

- Always use a standard There are differences between British English and American English customs in letter writing. British English is the standard in EU so stick to it.
- Always use a salutation (greeting) in English In 99% of cases this will be with "Dear..." followed by the last name. The exceptions are letters of recommendation that start with "To whom it may concern".
- Always place the heading under the salutation a concise title, two lines below the greetings, centered and boldfaced, it gives the reader instant access to the main point of the letter.
- Always try to round off a letter with "-ing forms" These stress that you have an on-going relationship and there is unfinished business.

Example: We are looking forward to receiving your...,

We are looking forward to discussing...etc.

- □ Always write the month in letters Write the month in letters, e.g. 12 June 2005, or ISO standard for all-digit dates (CCYY-MM-DD) so 2005-06-12.
- Never use a place-name in front of the date Never write "Zagreb, 12 June 2005", just write the date.
- Never use exclamation marks (!) in business letters An exclamation mark in English is used to express astonishment or surprise. You are very unlikely to need them in normal business letters, faxes or e-mails.
- Never use short forms like "I'm" or "don't" in business letters - Use these only in informal, conversational writing and when reporting speech. Sometimes they are used in e-mails.
- Never capitalize "you" and "your" in mid-sentence -Capitalized "You" and "Your" in mid-sentence disappeared a few hundred years ago in the English language.

PUNCTUATION

	uses	examples
capital letter	 countries nationalities languages religions days of the week months titles 	 Croatia, Spain, Portugal Croatian, Spanish, Portuguese Croatian, Spanish, Portuguese Roman Catholic, Moslem Sunday, Thursday February, July, October Mr and Ms

period (US)	 after abbreviations as the decimal point in figures(read "point") to separate parts of email and web addresses (read "dot")

- to show doubt,

to show surprise,

shock, etc.

especially with a date

- after a direct question

- at the end of a sentence

- What is your name? - James Carter

- Oxford St.

- \$3.5 million

(?) question mark

(!)

(.) full stop (UK)

(?1587-1654) - I was not

- at the end of a sentence there! - Bang! - to indicate loud sound

(,) comma	 between items in a list to show pause in a long sentence before question tags 	
(`) apostrophe	for missing lettersfor possessives	

- You are lying, aren't you?

I'll, she can't, don'tJohn's house, James' house

(:) colon

- to introduce a list or a quotation in a sentence
- in US English in greetings in business letters

You should take: water, juice, some fruit...Dear Mr Stein:

(;) semi-colon	- to separate two parts of a sentence	- I sent John a letter; he will receive it tomorrow.
(-) hyphen	to join two wordstogetherto divide a word atthe end of a line	- e-mail, light-blue
(-) dash	to separate parts of sentencesto mean "to"	 The book – the one with the red covers – is on the shelf. The Zagreb – Rijeka train

(" ") (' ')	
quotation marks, inverted commas	
(UK)	

- to show that words are spoken
- to show that someone else originally wrote the words

(UK English – single marks)

(US English – double marks)

- "We are happy," they said.
- They wrote about the war as 'the worst experience on the journey'.

ENQUIRIES AND REPLIES

The content of a letter of enquiry will depend on how well you know the person or company you are writing to. If you are writing to a company for the first time – whether asking for a catalogue or requesting details about a particular product or service – you should start your letter by giving information about your own company. Then state your reason for writing and make your request.

Complete the following model for a letter of enquiry

attention	forward	Manager	research	software
Based	graphics	Project	sell	together
brochure	list	protecting	send	unauthorized
faithfully	Madam	protection	Sir	

Psychologica 17 Princes Street Telephone 071 982 7111

London Telex 988153

EC1 7DQ Fax 071 982 7712

Our ref: AN/JS

Your ref:

Discpro SA

251, rue des Ramonières

F - 86256 POITIERS CEDEX

France

Ear tha

roi ille	attention			5 Iviaire	agei			
Dear	Sir	or _	Madam					
We are a _	software	· cc	empany in Lo	ondon and	l (currently,	develop)		
are currently developing a Window- based scientific graphics								
package for use in universities and <u>research</u> laboratories. We (interest)								
are intere	e sted in	pro	tecting	the progra	ams we	sell	_ from	
unautho	rized (copvina	and duplica	tion.				

of the Sales

Managor

Could you please	send	us more tech	ion about you	-	
RSP-11 software	protection	system	together	with your	
current brochure	and price	list ?			
We lookforwa	rd to hea	ring from you.			
Yours faithfully					
Anne Newson	on				
Project Direct	tor				

TASK 2 Insert verbal forms and complete the reply to the letter of enquiry in Task 1 (you will have to use some prepositions more than once)

for	in	on	with
from	of	to	

251, rue des Ramonières F - 86256 POITIERS CEDEX

Discpro SA

Tél (33) 99681031

Télècopie (33) 102163

Réf PV/KH

5 July 20 _____

Ms Anne Newson Project Manager Physiologica 17 Princes Street London EC1 7DQ UK

Dear Ms Newson

Thank you for your letter of 1 July in which you (express) expressed
an interestin the RSP 11 software protection system. Please find (enclose)
enclosed our latest brochure and price list.
From the informationin your letter, I can confirm that the range of products we supply would be idealfor_ your needsIn particular, I would liketo_ draw your attentionto_ the RSP 11Won_ page 3 which (design) is designed for_ software protectionin both Windows and 0/S 2 environments.
As you will see, our protection systems (tailor) are tailored to individual programs. Please let me know whether you would like to arrange a meetingwith_ our Technical Director, Mr Michel Gérard, to prepare a more detailed report your program and particular requirements. He will bein London during the
week beginning 15 July.

I look forward <u>to</u> hearing <u>from</u> you.

Yours sincerely

P. Varenne

P. Varenne

Sales Manager

Enc.

Ivan Horvat Ilica 25 10000 Zagreb Croatia

> Zagreb, 4 December 2014 English Language School

54 Poplar Street LONDON SW8 7AC

Dear Misters

I should be grateful if you could send me your information brochure about courses

offered by your school in 2015.

My brother and I are university students and are interested in summer courses in July or August.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely Ivan Horvat

how many mistakes are there?

Correct answers

Ilica 25 10000 Zagreb Croatia

4 December 2014

English Language School 55 Poplar Street LONDON SW8 7AC

Dear Sirs

I would be grateful if you could send me your information brochure about courses

offered by your school in 2015.

My brother and I are university students and are interested in summer courses in July

or August.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully

Ivan Horvat

Invitation to a conference

Yours sincerely

Fill ir	ı the gaps	in this	letter o	of invit	ation	with 1	prepos	itions	from	the	menu
	() 1										

of in on from				
Dear Mr Sm	nith			
I am writing the 5th Inte conf to ence	g <u>on</u> er ræt ional will take p	b eħ alf _ Conferenc blace	e25	_ the Organising of ommittee Information Techn ofogy . Th 28 June 2001.
		1 0		d attendance request form.
in	order to	o assure ac	comm b	ationconfer en ce
participants	<u></u>	good time	we wou	ld be very grateful if you lotted return
				_ 1st June 2001.
We look for	ward to	he	aring fr	om you.

Refusing (declining) an invitation

Mr Smith is not able to come to the conference. In his letter he informs the organising committee about this.

Fill in the gaps in this letter with words from the menu

arranged pleased faithfully commitment participate regret honouring series

Dear Sirs

I am _	pleased	and honoure	d by th earviringe n to					
regret in your conference. I very much to sa								
			ici patie s his time. Betwe	en 20 th and				
30 th Ju	ıne 2001 I am	arivaingeal	of lectures at the	ecomplement of				
South	Essex. It was		_ last January and I can	not change				
this		any more.	-	_				
		honouring						
Thank	you once mo	ore for	me with your in	vitation.				
With v	With very good wishes for the success of the conference,							

Andrew Smith

faithfully

Yours

A formal invitation to a reception:

Mr John Bartleby
Director General of A&B Computers Inc.
and
Mr Ivan Horvat
General Manager of A&B Computers Croatia
request the presence of
Mr and Mrs Bentley

at the reception on the occasion of the opening of new A&B Computers premises in Zagreb at 6 p.m. on Thursday 9 July 2001 at Holiday Hotel. R.S.V.P A&B Computers Croatia, Ilica 5, 10000 Zagreb Regrets only

Mr and Mrs Bentley have to decline this invitation because of previous engagements in a short letter:

A&B Computers Zagreb Ilica 5 10000 Zagreb

Mr and Mrs Bentley thank Mr John Bartleby and Mr Ivan Horvat for their kind invitation to the reception on 9 July, but regret that they are unable to attend due to prior engagements.

WE MUST REMEMBER

RSVP or R.S.V.P. comes from French (répondez s'il vous plaît) and means "please answer".

If you receive an invitation with **R.S.V.P.**, **Regrets only**, it means that you answer only in the case you have to **decline** the invitation. You do not need to send any confirmation of your presence if you want to attend.

WE MUST REMEMBER

to take part **in** a conference to participate **in** a conference and **not** *to take part on a conference

* to participate on a conference

WE MUST REMEMBER

In a covering letter we never use the word "job", but **post** or **position**.

IN EACH OF THE FOLLOWING SENTENCES, CHOOSE THE CORRECT WORD TO FILL IN THE GAP.

1 I would be	_ d if yo	u could send	me deta	ils of your PS/2 rang	je.
a thankful	b please	c content	d (grateful	
2 You were	c to us	by our assoc	iates.		
a advised	b suggest	c recomme	nded	d informed	
3 We were give	n yourc	by the	Chambe	er of Commerce.	
a identity	b company	c name	d placi	ng	
4 Thank you for	your letter	c 19	9 June.		
a in b	on c of	d from			
5 Please	a enclose	d our current	catalogu	ie and price list.	
a find	b look	c receive	d exan	nine	
6 We would app	oreciated	you c	ould sen	d us further informat	tion on your
range of laser p	rinters.				
a it that	b this	c when	d it if		

7 I would be gra	nteful if you cou	uld arrange fo	r your Technical Director _	c	
on me.					
a will call	b is calling	c to call	d calls		
8 We look forwa	ard d	from you.			
a hear	b to hear	c hearing	d to hearing		
9 We would be	grateful	an ear	ly reply.		
a to b	of c for	d with			
10 Should you r	equire anythin	g further at th	is time, please do not	_b	_ to
contact me.					
a void	b hesitate	c delay	d prevent		

A LETTER OF COMPLAINT

CHOOSE THE CORRECT WORD

(At the beginning of May)

KEY

1 C	2 D	3 A	4 B	5 C	6 D	7 B	8 A	9 C	10 D
11 D	12 A	13 C	14 B	15 D	16 A	17 B	18 D	19 C	20 D
21 C	22 D	23 C	24 D	25 C	26 B	27 A	28 D	29 B	30 C
31 D	32 C	33 D	34 A	35 B	36 C	37 D	38 A	39 C	40 B