

Letter Writing

Format of a Letter

- 1 • Letterhead
- 2 • Reference no.
- 3 • Date
- 4 • Recipient's address
- 5 • Salutation
- 6 • Body (a few paragraphs)
- 7 • Complimentary close
- 8 • Sender's name & designation

See page 42 of book

Sender's Address

48 Jalan Tanjung Bungah,
1200 Pulau Pinang,
Malaysia .

- **Style 1**
- **(Closed Punctuation/Indented Lines)**

48 Jalan Tanjung Bungah
1200 Pulau Pinang
Malaysia

- **Style 2**
- **(Open Punctuation/Blocked Lines)**

Sender's Address – Code No/ Poskod

Are there differences in the location of writing the code number in Malaysia and the UK?

University of Malaya
50603 Kuala Lumpur
Selangor Darul Ehsan
MALAYSIA

In Malaysia, the code number is written **before** the state

823 Mulberry Court
Mulberry Street
Liverpool 27 7EZ
England

In the UK, the code number is written **after** the state

Date – The Clean Style

| Exercise | Letter | Invoices and other forms |
|---|------------------|---------------------------------|
| Thirteen August nineteen ninety-two | 13 August 1992 | 13/08/92 |
| Third January two thousand and ten | 3 January 2010 | 03/01/10 |
| Twenty-fifth December two thousand and twelve | 25 December 2012 | |
| First March two thousand and five | | |

When addressing a reader...

“Dear Sir,”

When addressing a reader...

“Dear Sir,”


When addressing a reader...

“Dear Sir or Madam,”

“Dear Personnel Officer,”

“Dear Mr. Rasul,”

“ Dear Miss Chen,”



Courtesy Title

See page 19 of book

Decipher the Gender

“Dear Roop Gupta,”

“Dear Ahbrizal Ahmad,”

Solution: use the full forename-surname

Difficulty of Using Mrs. and Miss.

Can we address a woman as “Ms”?

- not an abbreviation like Mrs. and Mr.
- not mentioned in dictionary
- it’s a fad
- not a neuter term, like chairperson, medical assistant

What are our options?

- use a full forename-surname

In Malaysia, courtesy titles must strictly be adhered to.

Important link: <http://www.statemaster.com/encyclopedia/Malay-titles>

Subject Line

Brief, concise and precise

Normally constructed from:

1. Simple verb + **of** + **Adjective** + **Noun**

Purchase **of** **New** Computers

2. **Noun** + **of** + **Noun**

Prevention **of** Accidents

3. **Noun** + **Adjective**

Printer **Model C4180**

Subject Line

| Situation | Subject Line |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. On 11 August 2010 I bought a Microwave Oven Model MK2764 from your company. Within 24 hours of installation, the oven does not work. | Microwave Oven Model MK2764 |
| 2. We shall have a meeting to inform the staff on ways to prevent fires. | |
| 3. The workers are asking the company to repair the leaking roof. | |

Subject Line

| Situation | Subject Line |
|--|--------------|
| 4. Write to complain about not receiving the ordered Sports shirts No. 8123 | |
| 5. Send a notice to ask the staff to hand in the monthly report for the month of July, 2010 | |
| 6. Ask the managers to evaluate the new MBA/16 Fax Machine | |
| 7. Write in to supplier to ask for catalogue, price list and promotional information for platinum water filters. | |

Gender Biased Language

using the male form of labels and pronouns to refer to a mixed-gender group / people / staff / students in general

The researcher should be careful not to bring **his** own prejudices into **his** academic work.

*Any staff who is seen loitering at eateries will be asked to leave the premise. Disciplinary action will be taken if **he** is seen patronizing the eateries for the second time.*

Substitution for Gender-Biased Language

| No | Gender-Biased Language | Substitution |
|----|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | female / male nurse | medical attendant |
| 2 | stewardess | flight attendant |
| 3 | foreman | supervisor |
| 4 | cleaning ladies | cleaning crew, janitorial staff |
| 5 | a doctor wore his lab coat | a doctor wore a lab coat |
| 6 | a nurse calls her husband | a medical attendant calls the spouse |
| 7 | medical assistant spoke her mind | medical assistant commented |
| 8 | reviewed his paper work | reviewed the paperwork |
| 9 | Postman / mailman | ?? / mail carrier |
| 10 | mankind | humanity, humankind |

How can you avoid gender-biased language in your writing?

Use the plural.

1. Biased: *A nurse is trained to understand her patients' emotions as well as physical symptoms.*

2. Better: *The medical assistants are trained to understand their patients' emotions as well as physical symptoms.*

How can you avoid gender-biased language in your writing?

Eliminate the pronoun or reword to avoid using a pronoun.

1. Biased: *The average teenager worries about **his** physical fitness.*

2. Better: *An average teenager worries about physical fitness.*

How can you avoid gender-biased language in your writing?

Replace the pronoun with *one*, *he*, or *she*, or an article (*a*, *an*, *the*).

1. Biased: *The parent who reads to her infant cares for her infant's intellectual growth.*

2. Better: *The parent who reads to an infant cares for the infant's intellectual growth.*

How can you avoid gender-biased language in your writing?

Repeat a title rather than using a pronoun.

1. Biased: *Ask a firefighter for help, and **he** will get your kitten out of the tree.*
2. Better: *Ask a firefighter for help, and the firefighter will get your kitten out of the tree.*

Introductory Paragraph - Opening Line

Why do we need an opening line?

1. to make reference to previous correspondence

or

to say how you found the recipient's name/address

2. to say why you are writing to the recipient

Introductory Paragraph - Opening Line

Thank you for your letter of 10 August 2010, **telling us about** the ...

Thank you for your letter of 10 August 2010, **inquiring about** the ...

Thank you for your letter of 10 August 2010, **informing about** the ...

Thank you for your letter of 10 August 2010, **explaining about** the ...

Making References

| Preposition | Time | Place |
|-------------|---|--|
| in | Year, Month, in 1999, in December | Country, State, City in Japan, in Phoenix, Arizona |
| on | Day, Date on Saturday, on 2 May, 2009 | Street on Main Street, on 1st Ave. |
| at | Time at 8:00, at 7:30 | Address at 815 East Main Street |

Making Reference to Technology

With reference to your [advertisement of multiple paths on the Internet](#), ...

With reference to your [advertisement of airline fares listed on your website](#), ...

I saw your [advertisement for donations on wwf.com](#) , 22 May 2009 ...

I saw your [advertisement for the position of administrator on Jobstreet.com](#) , 22 May 2009 ...

I saw your [advertisement for a freelance writer on Jobstreet.com](#) , 22 May 2009 ...

Making Reference to Technology

I saw your advertisement **on national TV, RTM 1** regarding ...

I saw your **advertisement of Mt. Everest** **on the CNN** ...

With reference to your **advertisement of the latest reviews of digital cameras** **on the website**, in the product information, I would like to ...

I saw your **advertisement regarding the price marked down of laptops** **on Ebay** and I would like to know ...

Replying

With reference to your letter of 20 March 2010,
I am delighted to inform you that...

With reference to your letter of 20 March 2010,
I have great pleasure to...

With reference to your enquiry for platinum water filter
catalogue, I have the most unpleasant duty of ...

With reference to your enquiry for platinum water filter
catalogue, I regret to inform you that...

Another Way to Start an Opening

Following our telephone conversation yesterday, I am writing to confirm that ...

Our company representative, Mr. Faizal, has informed me that you are interested to see the latest ...

Terminology

Enclosed please find several brochures...

I'm sending you several brochures
for Wisconsin Dells area attractions.

Terminology

Please be advised that you should send...

Please send me your offer within 10 days if you would like to settle this matter..

Terminology

Trusting this will meet with your approval, we hope you would enjoy ...

I hope you will enjoy this new flavour of coffee every bit as much as our original...

Terminology

Trusting this will meet with your approval, we hope you would enjoy ...

I hope you will enjoy this new flavour of coffee every bit as much as our original...

I hope you approve...

Terminology

Thanking you in advance for your cooperation...

I would really appreciate receiving your reply before the 31 June 2009.

Terminology

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter dated...

I received your April 15 memo and will plan to attend the June 1 banquet..

Terminology

According to our records, your cancelled cheque...

Our cancelled cheque shows you deposited our payment in your account on October 31, 1999...

Terminology

Pursuant to your letter dated 1 May ...

I received your May 1 letter...

Terminology

Kindly advise as to the status of this matter...

Please let me know...

Please let me know if your client will accept this settlement offer by July 1, 2000...

Final Closing Paragraph – thank you

Thank you for writing to us.

Thank you for your enquiry/cooperation/assistance in this matter.

Thank you for taking the trouble to write to me and tell me about this matter.

Once again, thank you for your valuable suggestion/assistance which we will consider

Final Closing Paragraph – to encourage further enquiries or action

Once again, thank you for writing to us. I would be grateful if you could let me know what action you intend to take.

Please contact us if you need any further clarification / information / assistance.

We look forward to doing a long and profitable business with you and to hearing from you soon.

Perhaps, you could inform us of your decisions on these proposals within two weeks.

Final Closing Paragraph –
to summarise your position & inform recipient of your intention

I hope the above explanation has helped you to understand our position on this matter.

I am sure you will appreciate / understand our concern / decision over this matter.

I will consider your suggestions / proposals / recommendations carefully and let you have any response / decisions within the next few days / in a month's time/ by 30 May 2010.

These are the problems/issues I would like to review when we meet on 22 February 2011.

Final Closing Paragraph –
to restate briefly one or two salient points of the main
part of your letter

Thank you for writing to us. Could you please take note that our generous discounts end by 31 August and we hope that you will take advantage of this offer before then.

To go briefly over the points I have made – all prices quoted will get 10% deduction if you order in bulk. Delivery would be eight weeks from receiving the order and payment should be made by bank draft. I hope to hear from you soon.

Formal Complimentary Close

Yours
faithfully,

- very formal as you do not know the person to whom you are writing

Yours
sincerely

- very formal but you know the person to whom you are writing

Informal Complimentary Close



| |
|---------------|
| Love, |
| Always, |
| Warmly, |
| Cheers, |
| Best Regards, |
| Best Wishes, |
| |
| |
| |