

Types of Letters

Remember:

- ❖ All paragraphs should be indented.
- ❖ You may choose whether or not to skip a line between paragraphs.
- ❖ The body should be between three to four paragraphs and contain about 100 words.
- ❖ When writing the body of the letter, it is not appropriate to use informal, conversational, or religious comments such as “I hope you have a good day”, “God bless you”, “Good afternoon”, “How are you?” etc.

The body should always contain the following 4 elements:

- A. **Reference:** Explain the reason you are writing this letter.
Refer to a letter you received, an advertisement you saw, or an event or issue that prompted you to write.
- B. **Information:** Supply more detailed information that is related to the reference.
- C. **Purpose:** Give the reasons you are writing your letter.
State clearly what you want the person reading the letter

to do. This is where you would invite the person, express gratitude, congratulate the person etc.

D. Conclusion: End the letter with a polite remark, or ask for a specific time frame to respond.

- ✓ Although these 4 elements must be part of the body, it is possible to combine some elements or organize 2 parts into one paragraph. For example, when writing a letter of congratulations, it is possible to combine the reference and purpose into one sentence. For example, “I extend congratulations to you [**purpose**] for your recent promotion as President of the Environmental Club at our school [**reference**].
- ✓ Thus, students do not have to put the 4 parts of the body in the same order or in separate paragraphs, so long as the four elements are part of the letter.

Letters of Complaint/Concern

In a letter of complaint/concern you must write to an individual or organization, usually to complain about a product, service, or the state of a facility. Write about the problem by describing and giving details about the problem, and also request that something be done about the problem.

All letters of complaint should contain the following basic elements:

Paragraph 1: Begin your letter with an introduction. Tell them who you are and the day when you came into their business. Tell them why you are writing the letter. “I visited the Bahamian Delights Restaurant on October 1st, 2019, to eat dinner with a few friends.” You can also mention how much money you spent on the product.

Paragraph 2: Name the product/service/facility you are complaining about and give the date when the problem first happened. For example, “When I first got the microwave it was working fine. I was very happy. But two days later it would not turn on. It was no longer working.” Give **at least 2 details** about the problem you had. For example, the food was cold, you received the wrong order, the waiter was rude etc. Explain the inconvenience caused, meaning how the problem negatively affected you. For example, “I have to now use the oven to heat my food which takes a longer time to do.” An example of an inconvenienced caused by someone getting food that was cold from a restaurant is “The poor service ruined my birthday dinner, I could not enjoy the food because it was cold.”

Paragraph 3: Tell what you would like the person to do to resolve the problem. That is, tell if you would like to exchange the product for another one, have it repaired, or if you would like a refund. If you need to you can mention how much money you had spent on the product that is not working or how much repairing it cost you. End paragraph 3 by telling when you would like the matter resolved by.

Paragraph 4: Thank the person for taking the time out to resolve the problem. State when you would like them to respond to you by.

Note: Your request should be firm, but you must be polite. Do not threaten the person or make insulting statements. For example, the following statements are too aggressive: “If you do not refund my money I will come to your business and have the police arrest you” **And** “I demand that you fix the building or I will sue you for everything you own”. Instead, try one of the following ways to request a resolution to the problem:

- “I request a refund for ...”
- “Please address this problem by changing...”
- “I would like for you to fix this problem by doing...”

Below is a writing prompt for a letter of complaint. On the following page is an example of how this prompt may be answered in an acceptable manner. As you read, note the major elements of complaint letters that were just mentioned.

Prompt: You recently purchased a new cellphone at a local phone company. However, it started malfunctioning shortly after. Write a letter complaining to the manager of the store, explaining the inconvenience caused, and requesting that the matter be resolved in a satisfactory manner.

P. O. Box F-4711
Freeport, The Bahamas

November 1, 2019

Manager
Phones 'R Us
P. O. Box F-1234
Freeport, The Bahamas

Dear Manager:

I am writing this letter to complain about an I-Phone X cellphone that I purchased from your Phones 'R Us store downtown.

I bought the phone on September 30th, 2019, but it started to malfunction recently. On October 28th, 2019, I noticed that the screen freezes up after a while. Additionally, the phone charger has a shortage that prevents it from properly charging my phone. As a result, I sometimes cannot make phone calls and send messages.

I request that, as the manager of this store, you kindly provide me with a replacement phone. If that is not possible, then I will accept a full refund of the phone's price, which was \$827.16.

I will keep the phone and wait for a response by November 16, 2019. Thank you for considering my request.

Regards,
Kristen Davis

Kristen Davis
P. O. Box F-4711
Freeport, The Bahamas

STAMP

Manager
Phones 'R Us
P. O. Box F-1234
Freeport, The Bahamas

WRITING PROMPT

FORMAL LETTER-WRITING (10 MARKS)

INSTRUCTIONS:

Write **ONE** of the following letters. The body of the letter should contain approximately 100 words. Please begin your letter on a new page.

- 2A. (a) You have noticed that the garbage in your community has not been collected for a long time. Write a letter to the Director of Department of Environmental Health, expressing your concern. In your letter state **TWO** problems that have developed as a result of the lack of collection and request that the matter be addressed.