

Junior
Certificate
School
Programme

Email and Letter Writing Workbook



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education



Professional Development | An tSeirbhís um Fhorbairt
Service for Teachers | Ghairmiúil do Mhúinteoirí



Junior
Certificate
School
Programme

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Email and Letter Writing Workbook

Email and Letter Writing Workbook Published by

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This edition, rewritten, updated and designed by Ciarán Collins*

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Introduction

This booklet is to help you understand the correct way to write different types of letters and emails. We hope that by the end of the booklet you will be confident in your ability to write different types of letters and emails. You will learn the correct layout of letters and emails and you will study examples. You will then practice by writing your own.

The workbook has seven sections:

- The first section covers the **differences between letters and emails** as ways of communicating. Here we will also look at some writing strategies and grammar.
- The second section covers **informal and formal language**. Here we look at the different types of tones, words and phrases we use for writing formally and informally.
- The third section covers **personal letters** which are ones that you would write to family or friends. It also looks at other informal methods of communicating, such as postcards and memos.
- The fourth section covers **formal letters**. These are the ones you would write to people you do not know personally. There are two types of formal letters – covering letters and general business letters.
- The fifth section covers **personal/informal emails**, which you might send to family or friends.
- The sixth section covers **formal emails** which are used for formal environments such as work or college.
- The seventh and final section covers **CVs and letters of application**. A letter of application is similar to a formal letter but needs to include quite specific information.

SECTION 1 - Letters and emails -what's the difference?

Exercise

3-2-1 Activity

List three things you already know about the differences between letters and emails:

1	
2	
3	

List two things you'd like to know about or learn more about, regarding letters/emails

1	
2	

Write one question you have, related to writing letters or emails.

1	
---	--

Letter

Letters have traditionally been typed or written on paper and sent to someone to read, through various forms of transport (on foot, on horseback, by train, by motor vehicle, by air and by sea). Usually, nowadays letters are delivered to peoples' post boxes by the postal service (such as An Post or Royal Mail).

Email

Email is short for electronic mail. Mail is another word for post. So email is "post" that is sent electronically - post that is sent online. Computers have revolutionised how people communicate, and email has become one of the main ways for people to communicate online. The three most popular email service providers are Gmail (owned by Google), Outlook (owned by Microsoft) and Yahoo Mail (owned by Verizon).

Exercise 1

Why do you think email has become so popular? See if you can write out five advantages that emails have over the traditional letter.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Advantages of email

Here are some advantages that emails have over the traditional letter

- Email doesn't use paper, which is better for the environment.
- Emails send instantly, but letters can take days to arrive.
- You can receive an email anywhere, but a letter is delivered to a fixed address.
- Once you have a device and the internet, email is free. Postage of letters costs money.
- You can easily send emails to many people at once.
- You can easily send large documents and different file types, such as pictures.
- You can organise your emails easily and find old emails in an instant.
- Emails are password-protected, so your privacy is protected.
- Email software can link with your online calendar, helping you to stay organised.

Let's get motivated – the GROW model

Writing letters and emails is an important skill to learn nowadays. Whether you're communicating with friends and family or with colleagues and professionals, an ability to write good letters and emails will benefit you for life. Let's use the GROW model to help us to get motivated to become really good writers of letters and emails.

Here's what GROW stands for:

G	Goal	What is your goal?
R	Reality	What is the reality of your situation at the moment?
O	Obstacles	What obstacles stand in your way?
W	Will	What are you willing to do?

Here is how a student might use GROW to help become good at writing emails and letters.

G	Goal	Become good at writing letters and emails.
R	Reality	I don't feel confident in writing letters and emails yet.
O	Obstacles	I'm not sure how emails and letters are supposed to be laid out. I'm not sure what to say in formal emails or letters. I sometimes struggle with spelling and grammar.
W	Will	I will use the workbook to learn and practice the structure of emails and letters. I will use the workbook to learn about formal and informal language. I will read for pleasure every day, which will help with my spelling and grammar. I will ask my teacher for additional worksheets to help with my spelling and grammar.

Exercise 2

Now let's fill out your own GROW table for writing emails and letters.

G	Goal	Become good at writing letters and email?
R	Reality	
O	Obstacles	
W	Will	

Check back on your GROW table now and again to see how you are progressing.

RAFT and ALPS writing strategies

When writing, we must have clarity about what we need to write, before we begin. The RAFT and

ALPS writing strategies will help with this. Here's what they stand for with brief explanations.

RAFT writing strategy

R	Role	What is your role as a writer? Who are you writing as?
A	Audience	Who will read or hear what you are writing?
R	Format	What is the format, layout or structure for this type of writing?
T	Topic	What are you writing about?

ALPS writing strategy

A	Audience	Who will read or hear what you are writing?
L	Language	What kind of language is appropriate for what you are writing?
P	Persona	Who are you writing as? Do you need to adopt a different persona?
S	Structure	What structure does your type of writing require?

Let's try an example. A student is asked to write an email to their school principal asking for a written reference. Here's the RAFT table the student completed before writing their email.

R	Role	Secondary school student
A	Audience	The school principal
R	Format	Formal email
T	Topic	Requesting a written reference

Alternatively, if the student used the ALPS strategy, it might have looked like this.

A	Audience	The school principal
L	Language	Formal, serious, respectful, polite
P	Persona	Secondary school student
S	Structure	Formal email

You can decide which you find more useful.

Exercise 3

Now you can try an example. Imagine you've been asked to write a letter looking for a summer job from your local supermarket. Use the RAFT and ALPS strategies to clarify your task:

R	Role	
A	Audience	
R	Format	
T	Topic	

A	Audience	
L	Language	
P	Persona	
S	Structure	

General Grammar and Punctuation Rules

Capital letters

In letters, capital letters are used:

- for proper nouns (the name of a place or organisation) – e.g. Tophill Community College, Coca-Cola, Greystones
- to start sentences – e.g. This letter ...
- names – e.g. Seán O'Brien
- titles – e.g. Mr, Dr, Ms
- the month in the date (also days of the week) – e.g. January, October
- in addresses – e.g. Ryhill Road, Severn Avenue, Youghal, County Meath
- for the start of greetings – e.g. Dear, Yours, Best

Punctuation

In letters, punctuation is used in the main part of the letter.

- use a question mark to end a question
- use full stops to end a sentence – it is a good idea to keep your sentences short, so they don't run on and on
- use a comma if you are using more than one adjective – e.g. 'bright, intelligent, funny person'
- use a comma if you are listing things – e.g. 'French, English and Maths'
- commas are also used to indicate a pause in a sentence – e.g. 'I wasn't doubtful, I was certain'
- There is no comma after the final item in a list of adjectives, or before 'and' or 'or' in a list of items/people.
- use an apostrophe to indicate something belongs to someone – e.g. John's book, Naomi's sister, Mr Dodd's classroom
- use an apostrophe when a letter has been left out of a word – e.g. did not → didn't, it is → it's, would not → wouldn't

Words that are often confused

- there – indicates a place – e.g. 'over there'
- their – belongs to a group of people – e.g. 'their class'
- they're – short for 'they are' – e.g. 'they're happy to play together'
- your – belongs to you – e.g. 'your family'
- you're – short for 'you are' – e.g. 'you're going to be late'
- to – indicates direction or in place of a noun – e.g. 'he went to the shops', 'they handed it to Alice'
- too – means 'also' or 'in addition' – e.g. 'she went too'
- two – the number – e.g. 'there were two people in the swimming pool'
- it's – short for 'it is' – e.g. 'it's going to be on Wednesday'
- its – when something belongs to the 'it' – e.g. 'the dog chased its tail'

- which – identifies a specific thing – e.g. ‘the one, which he liked’
- witch – a woman believed to practise magic or sorcery – e.g. ‘the wicked witch of the west’
- weather – the day-to-day meteorological conditions – e.g. ‘the weather today was awful’
- whether – indicates uncertainty – e.g. ‘I don’t know whether or not he will be there’
- quiet – not noisy – e.g. ‘it was quiet in the cinema’
- quite – the complete extent of something – e.g. ‘it was quite the opposite’
- are – the second-person singular and plural present tense of the verb “be” e.g. “You are brilliant / We are brilliant”)
- our – a possessive pronoun, meaning “belonging to us.” e.g. “This is our money.”
- threw – when something has been thrown – e.g. ‘she threw the ball’
- through – starting at one place and going to another – e.g. ‘we drove through Dublin’
- complement – a person or thing that completes something, or goes well with something – e.g. ‘the sauce complements this meal’
- compliment – a remark or act that expresses admiration – e.g. ‘she gave him a compliment’
- affect – something that has an impact on something else – e.g. ‘the rain affected the football match’
- effect – to cause something to happen – e.g. ‘it’s difficult to know what the knock-on effect will be’
- ensure – to make sure something happens – e.g. ‘he ensured his homework was finished for Monday’

SECTION 2 – Informal and formal language

The style of language, grammar, and words used for particular situations is sometimes called register. The register (language style) we use can and should change, depending on the situation. If we are reading the six o'clock news we will use different language to how we might chat with a friend. If we are speaking with our teacher, we may use different language to the way we might speak with a child.

With letters, emails, and other forms of writing, we change how we use language, depending on the purpose. We will either use formal or informal language.

Informal language

Informal language is more casual, relaxed, friendly, chatty and spontaneous. It is used when communicating with friends or family.

“Hey dude, how’s it going?” is an example of an informal greeting. You would not use a greeting like this in a formal setting.

When we are writing to friends and family we will often use contractions. For example one would use “I’m” instead of “I am” or “They’ve” instead of “They have.”

Informal language is often less serious in tone and will use more everyday words.

Formal language

Formal language is more serious, polite and to the point. Sentences will be well thought through and the purpose for writing will be very clear. The tone, while polite, is more reserved, as your relationship with the person you are writing to is a formal one. “Dear Mr. Murphy,” is a formal letter or email greeting.

When we are writing formally we will use contractions sparingly. Instead of saying something like, “I’ve worked in shops for years,” in a formal language we might say “I have considerable experience in the retail industry.” In formal language, we use official terminology and phrases.

Formal and Informal Vocabulary

On the next page there are some examples of informal and formal verbs, adjectives, nouns, phrases and idioms. Have a read through them and try the exercises which follow.

Verbs

Informal	Formal
Ask	Enquire
Ask for	Request
Begin	Commence
Book	Reserve
Buy	Purchase
Call	Contact
Check	Verify
Choose	Select
Deal with	Manage
Start	Commence
End	Terminate
Find out	Ascertain
Finish	Complete
Get	Obtain
Go ahead	Proceed
Help	Assist
Keep	Preserve
Leave out	Omit
Live	Reside
Look into	Investigate
Make sure	Ensure
Need	Require
Say	Express
Show	Demonstrate
Stop	Cease

Tell	Inform
Think about	Consider
Use	Utilize
Want	Desire

Adjectives

Informal	Formal
Bad	Negative
Better	Superior
Big	Large
Careful	Prudent
Cheap	Inexpensive
Clear	Transparent
Costly	Expensive
Enough	Sufficient
Good	Positive
Great	Exceptional/excellent
Many	Numerous
Next	Subsequent
Old	Elderly
Set up	Establish
Small	Minor
Whole	Entire
Worse	Inferior
Wrong	Incorrect/erroneous

Nouns

Informal	Formal
Dad	Father
Mum/Mam	Mother
Bother or sister	Sibling
Granny/Grandma	Grandmother
Granda	Grandfather
Auntie	Aunt
Job	Position
Pay	Salary
Boss	Employer/manager
Place	Location
Part	Component
Photo	Photograph
TV	Television
Buddy/mate/pal	Friend
Movie	Film
Plans	Arrangements
Johnny Murphy	Mr. John Murphy
On holiday	On annual leave
Driver	Motorist

Phrases & Idioms

Informal	Formal
I think that...	It is my opinion that...
Because of...	In light of the fact that...

Don't forget...	Please be reminded that...
I'm sorry to say...	I regret to inform you...
Just to let you know...	I am writing to inform you...
Hand in	Submit
If you've any questions...	Should you have any queries...
At first...	Initially...
Right now...	With immediate effect...
A lot of...	Numerous
Non stop	Ceaselessly
Again and again	Repeatedly
Unlikely	Improbable
Go down/lessen	Decrease
Go up/grow	Increase
Go against	Oppose
Point out	Indicate
Put off	Postpone
Put up with	Tolerate
Talk into	Persuade
There seems to be...	There appears to be...
Over the moon	Delighted
As soon as you can	At your earliest convenience
Sorry for the hassle	I apologise for any inconvenience
Let me know if you're free	Please confirm your availability
Have a ball	Have a pleasant time

Exercise 1

See if you can tell which is formal and which is informal language in the below. Write F for formal or I for informal. The first four are done.

Statement	Formal/Informal
Hi!	i
Good morning	f
I hope this email finds you well.	f
How's the form?	i
I might ask you about the price you gave me for the job.	
I wish to enquire about the quoted price for the work.	
The work will commence on Monday.	
We'll be starting the job on Monday.	
Please inform me as to what occurred.	
Fill me in on what happened.	
I will contact you tomorrow.	
I'll get in touch with you tomorrow.	
I will submit my application form.	
I'll give in my application.	
I took money out of the hole in the wall.	
I withdrew funds from the ATM.	
It's your job to solve it.	
It is your responsibility to resolve the situation.	
Give me a shout whenever you need a hand.	
Should you require assistance at any point, please do not hesitate to contact us.	
As indicated in my previous correspondence, the matter remains unresolved.	

As I told you in my last email, the problem's still there.	
We'll make sure to sort it straight away.	
We will ensure that the matter is resolved immediately.	
I have over ten years' experience in the retail sector.	
I'm working in shops for the last ten years.	
I know the factory like the back of my hand.	
I have considerable knowledge and expertise in the running of the factory.	
I'm trying to find out when you're calling.	
I wish to ascertain when your representative will be arriving.	
I am not in a position to disclose that information.	
I can't tell you that.	
I don't want to do it but if I have to get legal, I will.	
While it is a course of action we are anxious to avoid, if we are left with no alternative, we will involve our legal representatives.	
I wish to thank you sincerely for your assistance.	
Thanks a million for the help.	
Could you please inform me if there is adequate accommodation in the vicinity of the college?	
Is it hard to find somewhere to stay near the college?	
I would be obliged if you could tell me the fees for the course.	
How much does the course cost?	
Can't wait to meet you!	
I look forward to meeting you.	
I look forward to hearing from you.	
Write back to me soon.	

Exercise 2

Write in the formal word/term to match the informal word/term below, using the words provided: component, regarding, investigate, establish, positive, location, resolve, request, complete, respond, obtain, provide, purchase, large, assist, remain, negative, occur

Informal	Formal
Ask for (verb)	Request
Get (verb)	
Place (noun)	
Buy (verb)	
Part (noun)	
Good (adjective)	
Big (adjective)	
Stay (verb)	
To do with (phrase)	
Give (verb)	
Bad (adjective)	
Happen (verb)	
Answer (verb)	
Set up (verb)	
Sort out (verb)	
Finish (verb)	
Help (verb)	
Look into (verb)	

The importance of reading

Your ability to write formally develops gradually and the more you read, the more vocabulary and phrases you will have for speaking and writing formally.

“Reading is important. If you know how to read, then the whole world opens up to you.”

– Barack Obama

Complete this GROW table to reach new reading goals.

G	Goal	<p>Read more. How much time would you like to spend reading every week?</p> <p>What reading materials can you use (e.g. books, newspapers, magazines, e-books, online magazines)?</p>
R	Reality	<p>How long do you spend reading every week now?</p>
O	Obstacles	<p>What things might stand in your way of achieving your goal of reading more?</p>
W	Will	<p>What will you do to overcome the obstacles and achieve your weekly reading goals in the weeks ahead?</p>

SECTION 3 - Personal Letters (Informal Letters)

Personal letters are informal. They are written to people you know, such as friends and family. They should be friendly, chatty and relaxed, as though you are talking to the person receiving the letter.

You end a personal letter with an informal phrase, such as 'Best wishes', 'Love', 'Your friend' You must, however, still follow the general rules for writing letters, which you can look at below now.

General Rules for Writing Letters

Most letters today will be written on a computer and printed. They should be on A4 paper and use only one side of the paper.

If you are writing a letter by hand, only use a blue or black pen. There are different paper sizes that can be used for personal letters, and you can write on both sides of the paper. You should always use A4 paper for business letters.

Below are the general rules for writing a personal and a formal letter. When you are completing the exercises, check these lists to make sure you have included everything that is needed. Check the sample letters too.

How to write a personal letter	
1.	Write your own address in the top left-hand corner of the page.
2.	Leave a line space and write the date underneath your address.
3.	Leave a line space and write the opening greeting underneath the address.
4.	Write the main part of your letter. Use a different paragraph for each point you make.
5.	On a new line, write the closing salutation (for example, 'Yours sincerely').
6.	Sign your name underneath the closing salutation.
7.	Before you post your letter, read it again to check for any spelling mistakes.

Look at the example of a personal letter below and complete the exercises that follow.

Personal Letter Example

46 Riverview Park
Glentown ← Your address
Dublin 23

15 February 2016 ← The date

Dear Jim ← The opening greeting

How are things in Wicklow? I haven't seen you in ages, so I decided to write and give you all the news from Glentown.

The football team is doing really well this season. We have reached the semi-final of the cup! The new goalkeeper is great – he hasn't let in a goal in the past three matches.

My sister, Sandra, has just had a baby girl, so I'm now an uncle. Maybe I'll be able to make some money from babysitting and then I can come down and visit you.

Write soon and let me know all your news

Best wishes ← The closing salutation

Martin ← Your signature

Body of the letter made up of a number of paragraphs

Personal letter exercises

1. Fill in the following K-W-H-L chart for the task of writing personal letters:

K-W-H-L Chart

Name _____

Date _____

Task: (e.g. formal email) _____

Fill the spaces on the right hand side for each of the K-W-H-L statements (You can finish the What I learned part after you've completed all the exercises.)

What I K now	
What I want to K now	

<p>How I will find information</p>	
<p>What I Learned <i>Complete this part after you have completed all the other exercises</i></p>	

2. Write your own address and today's date as you would write it in a letter.
3. Write the following addresses and dates as they would be written on a letter.

Address	Date
65 shamrock court mounthill limerick	06-04-22
valeview shadowlands mallow county cork	28-09-22
125 st patrick's street doddermount dublin 22	17-11-22

4. Write your own signature as you would at the end of a personal letter.
5. Look at the following letter and rewrite it correctly. Use capital letters where they should be and correct any spelling errors you see. There are 15 mistakes you need to correct (11 capital letters, 3 spellings and 1 full stop).

12 tulip road

flowertown

dublin 20

6 february 2016

dea sally

How are you settling down to your new school in cork? our class is quite different since you left. It's much quieter for a start!

We had an English test yesterday. When Mrs byrne came in today with the results she was so mad there was nearly smoke coming out of her ears.

Luke Cassidy and Sandra Martin have split up. Luke is really down in the dumps but otherwise everyone is in great form. We're all going down to a gig on friday in the sports center – I wish you were coming with us

Right soon and let us know how you're doing in Cork.

Bye for now

Joe

6. Pretend that you are Sally. Reply to Joe’s letter, telling him about life in your new school in Cork.
7. Write out the following closing salutations as they would be written at the end of a letter:
 - best wishes tom
 - lots of love Margaret
8. Your school is undertaking an exchange with a school in Spain. Write to Yolanda, a student at the Spanish school, and introduce yourself. Let her know you are looking forward to her visit to Ireland. Below are some details you need – you can make up everything else.

Student	Yolanda Aldana
School	Language School of Madrid
Address	Nunez de Balboa 1 28001 Madrid Spain

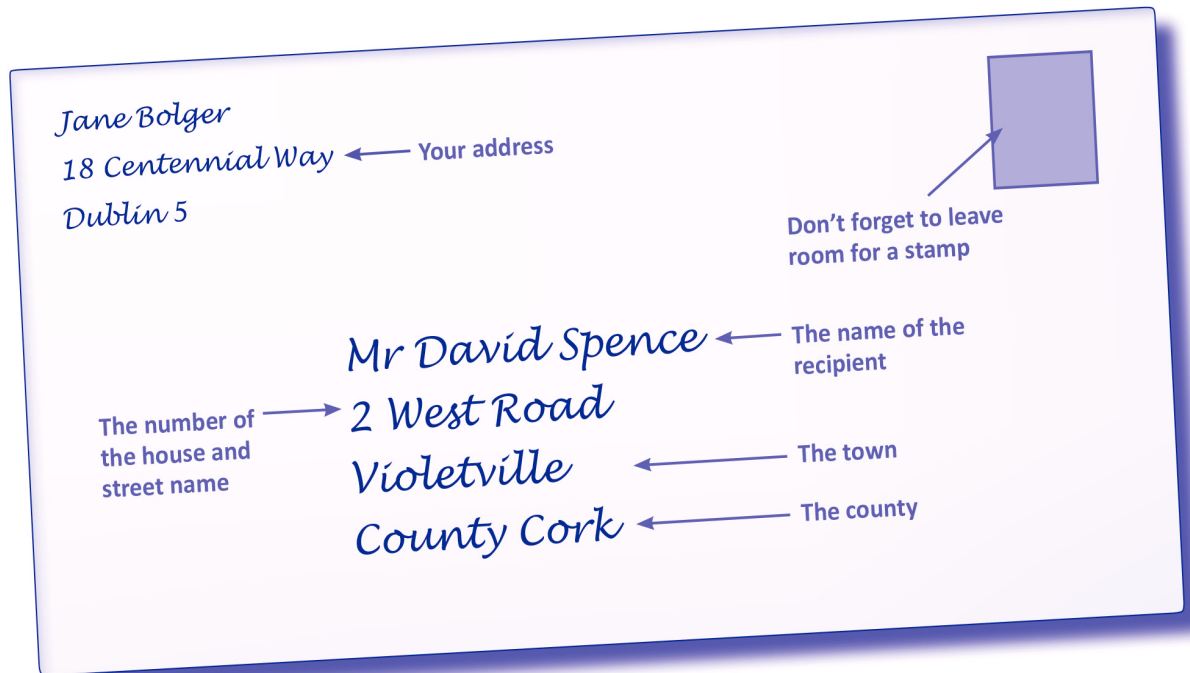
Envelopes

When you have written your letter, it should be placed in an envelope before it is sent. There is a standard way to address an envelope so that they can be read by sorting machines at the post office.

You should also include your own address in the top left-hand corner. Then, if the letter cannot be delivered, it can be returned to you.

REMEMBER: There is no need to use punctuation on an envelope.

Look at the example of a correctly addressed envelope below and complete the exercises that follow.



Envelope exercises

In your copybook:

1. Address an envelope to yourself.
2. Write out envelopes for the following addresses:

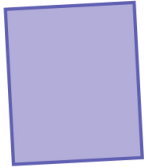
Addresses

Ms Amy Murphy 25 Gate Lodge Bawnboy County Cavan

Mr and Mrs O'Toole 168 Treetown Monageer County Wexford

The Manager Riverview House Main Street Ardee County Louth

The envelope below is addressed incorrectly. Rewrite it, correcting the mistakes – there are 15 mistakes (11 capital letters and 4 groups of things are in the wrong place).



Adam Harpur
23B Mountain view apartments
carrickmines
County dublin

14 hill street
Westport
county mayo

mr Joe o'brien

Postcards

The postcards being referred to here are not the picture-postcard type you might send when we're on holiday. This section will cover plain postcards which are designed to be sent without an envelope.

On the 'front' side of the postcard, you write the name and address of the person to whom you are sending the card. You write this in the same way as you address an envelope, leaving room for a stamp. You write your message on the 'back' of the postcard.

Postcards can be used to:

- enter competitions
- confirm appointments
- invite people to events
- send a short message or reminder.

Some companies use postcards as a form of advertising to let potential customers know about a product or service.

REMEMBER

Picture postcards are used to send greetings when you are on holiday. For this type of postcard, you do not need to include your own address.



Look at the example of a short message below:

*St Alban's School
Brookfield
Dublin 20*

13 June 2016

Dear Alice

Could you please come in for a meeting in Room 15 on Thursday, 16 June 2016 at 8.45 a.m.

*Best wishes
Pat Doyle*

Postcards can also be used to invite people to events, such as a party, wedding or launch. When you receive an invitation this way, it will include the letters RSVP followed by a contact name, phone number or email address. There will also be a date by which you need to reply. You need to contact the person mentioned before the date to let them know if you will be going to the event.

TIP RSVP stands for *répondez s'il vous plait*, which is French for please reply.

MOUNT TOWN COMMUNITY COLLEGE



We are delighted to invite you to the opening of the new library

Monday, 10 October 2016
10 a.m.

RSVP by 30 September
Ms Dunne, Principal, Mount Town College • T: 01-342-9780 • E: principal@midtown.ie

Postcard exercises

In your copybook:

1. There is a competition in your local newspaper for a meal for two in a restaurant in your town. To enter, you have to write your name and address on a postcard and give the answer to a question. The answer to the question is 'June 2014'. Write an example of the postcard you would send to enter this competition.
2. You receive an invitation to the open day for a new gym. Write a postcard letting the owner know whether or not you will attend.

Contact at gym	Isobel Daly
Time and date of open day	2.30 p.m. on Monday, 18 April 2016
Address	Relax! Gym, Wheat Road, Kilanton, County Kilkenny

3. You have been sent a letter inviting you to attend an interview for a college course. Write out both sides of the postcard you would send to accept the interview. Address one side of the postcard to the interviewer and, on the other side, write a short message. Below are the details you need.

Interviewer	Mr. Alan Smith
Time and date of interview	2.30 p.m. on Monday, 18 April 2016
College	Greenfield College of Further Education
Address	Davis Campus, Menlo Park, Galway, County Galway

Memos

A memo is a short note that gives someone a message or some information. They can be very simple – such as a PostIt letting people know you’ll be back soon – or they can be more structured. Memos are often used in a business environment. For example, they can be used to let someone know they have missed a phone call or that the time of a meeting has changed. They are informal and you only need to write the name of the person to whom the memo is written, the message and your own name. Many businesses will have a ‘memo pad’ for writing down these short notes. Look at the examples of memos below and complete the exercises that follow.

Memo exercises

In your copybook:

1. You are working in an office on a work placement. Write a memo telling your manager that he has missed a phone call. Below are the details you need – you can make up everything else.

Manager’s name	Sean Evans
Time of call	10.30 a.m.
Caller’s name	Jamie Carwood

Write a memo to your mum, letting her know you’ve gone to the shops and will be back in 15 minutes.

2. Write a memo to your colleague, Sandra Wall, letting her know the time of her performance review has changed to 2.15 p.m. on Monday, 27 June 2016.

Personal letters wordsearch

X H N L B C W S D N E I R F M D B H
 X O P W A E E D F T Q A L R P O N P
 K O M L D Q S R A S D P P C L P Y D
 I S A R D I J T A T O T A Y Q E H X
 Q I T H R R J B W S E P Q F Y N A G
 G G S S E C A C T I I S E J N I P P
 J N P Q S G H C O T S B G W R N P M
 H A S N S C A A A U Q H O D X G O E
 X T Y C H R V L T D N T E V L G I P
 G U N J D Q L G H T E T S S G R N O
 H R O J E E C C J W Y A Y U P E T L
 Q E W L T V H Y T M L Z R J R E M E
 W X A T E Q N J R G F U H U O T E V
 H X E X R V S J A Y L I M A F I N N
 M R L L A N O S R E P C B X I N T E
 S K V D X M U L B U X I L J Y G K S
 R I N F O R M A L Q A G D O S H S G
 W P A R A G R A P H S H P P V M S M

address

appointment

best wishes

capital letters

chatty

county

dear

envelope

family

friends

informal

love

paragraphs

personal

postcard

signature

stamp

town

SECTION 4 – Formal Letters

There are two main types of formal letters you will need to know about.

- The first is a covering letter or cover letter, which you use when you are enclosing something else with the letter (such as your CV or an application form).
- The second type of letter is a general business letter. In this type of letter, all the details needed by the person receiving the letter are given in the body of the letter.

General Rules for Writing Formal Letters

How to write a formal letter	
1.	Write your own address in the top left-hand corner of the page.
2.	Leave a line space and write the date underneath your address.
3.	Leave a line space and write the recipient's name and address underneath the date.
4.	Leave a line space and write the opening greeting.
5.	Write the main part of your letter. Use a different paragraph for each point you make.
6.	On a new line, write the closing salutation.
7.	Sign your name underneath the closing salutation.
8.	Put your name underneath your signature.
9.	Before you post your letter, read it again to check for any spelling mistakes.

Covering Letters

A covering letter is a brief letter that accompanies something else being sent in the envelope or parcel. For example, if you are sending your CV for a job application, you would write a covering letter to go with your CV. (See page 38 for more detailed information about covering letters for CVs and job applications.)

A covering letter explains the contents to the person receiving the letter or parcel. Today, covering letters are often typed on a computer, rather than handwritten.

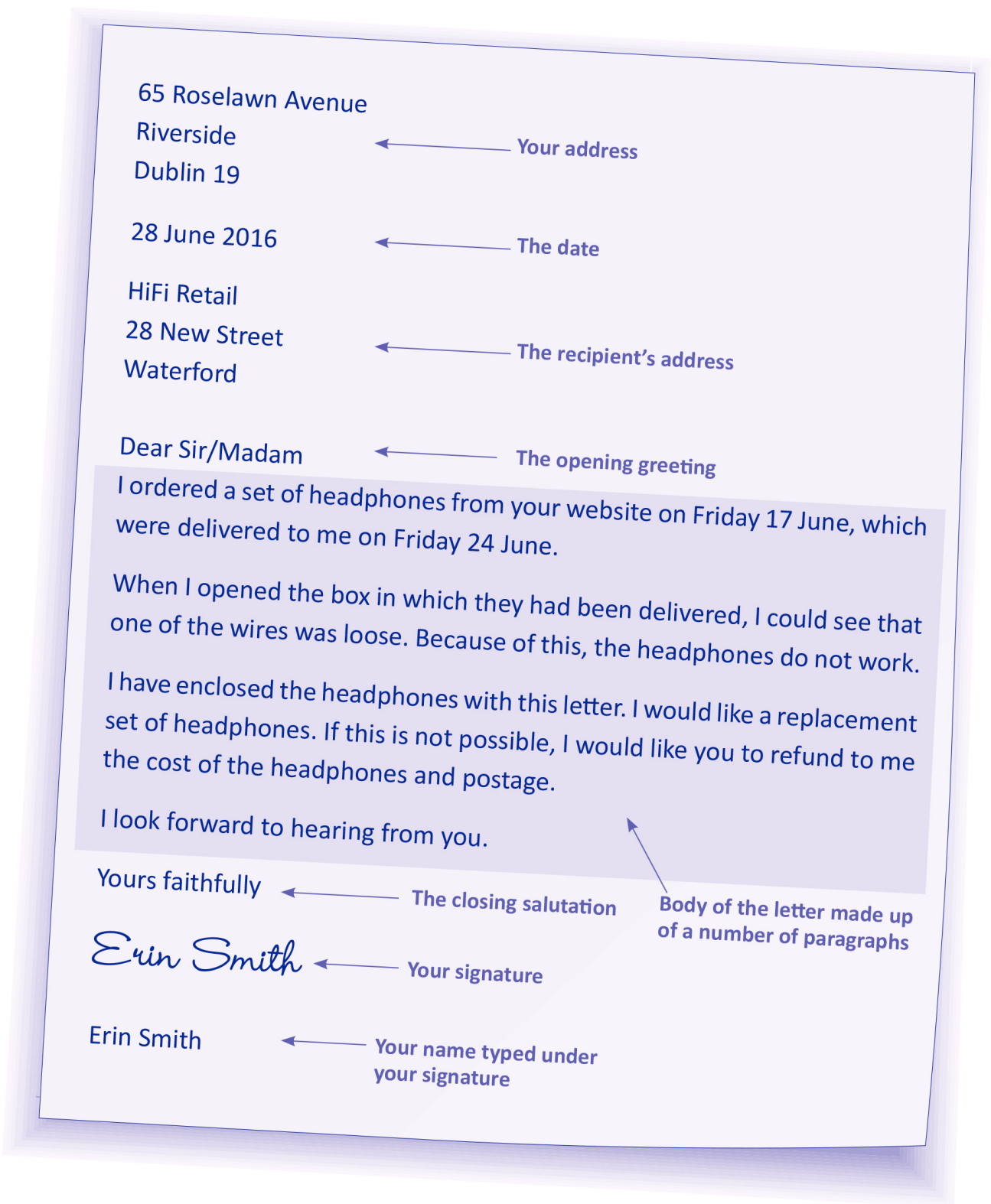
Other types of covering letter are:

- **When making a payment:** A covering letter would outline what the payment is for and also the amount of the payment (such as a cheque enclosed with the letter).
- **When returning faulty goods:** A covering letter would outline when and where the goods were bought and what is wrong with them.
- **When sending in a form:** A covering letter would outline details of what the form is for.

Covering letters all have a similar format. They should:

- be typed using one side of A4 paper.
- have your address in the top left-hand corner of the page.
- have the date underneath your own address.
- have the recipient's address below the date.
- have an appropriate opening greeting. If you know the name of the person to whom you are writing, use his/her name. For example, 'Dear Mr O'Brien' or 'Dear Ms Lucas'. If you do not know the name of the person to whom you are writing, use 'Dear Sir' or 'Dear Madam' (or 'Dear Sir/Madam').
- contain a brief outline of why you are writing in the main body of the letter. For example, the letter could mention that you have enclosed your CV for a particular job. If you are returning faulty goods, outline when and where the goods were bought and what is wrong. If you are enclosing a form, outline what the form is for.
- have an appropriate closing salutation. If you have used a specific name in your opening greeting, close your letter with 'Yours sincerely'. If you have not used a specific name in your opening greeting, close your letter with 'Yours faithfully'.
- ensure your signature is written above your typed name.

Below is an example of the type of covering letter you could send when returning faulty goods.



Covering letter exercises

1. You are going on a school trip with your class. You have to send a cheque for the cost of the trip directly to the travel agent. Write a covering letter to accompany the cheque. Below are the details you need; you can make up anything else.

Name of the travel agent	Ms Alice Wright
Address of the travel agent	125 Hooper Street, Letterkenny, County Donegal
Cheque amount	€25

2. You want to apply for a Saturday job with your local leisure centre. Write a covering letter to go with your CV.
3. Below is a letter returning the brake for a scooter which was bought online. The letter has five mistakes. Rewrite it correctly.

20 Amber Road

Hill View

Kilkenny

www.scootertown.ie

Dear Tom

I ordered a Razor Ultra Pro Brake from your website on Monday, 22 February. However, when I opened the parcel that was delivered, it contained a collar clamp not a brake.

I have enclosed the collar clamp, could you please send me the correct brake.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes

Helen Doorey

Covering letters quiz

1. In a covering letter, where do you place your address?		
<input type="checkbox"/> In the top left-hand corner	<input type="checkbox"/> In the bottom right-hand corner	<input type="checkbox"/> In the top right-hand corner
2. What closing salutation do you use if you do not know the name of the person to whom you are writing?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yours sincerely	<input type="checkbox"/> Best wishes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yours faithfully
3. You are returning a faulty iPhone you bought online at www.fonesrus.ie. What opening greeting do you use?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Dear Sir	<input type="checkbox"/> Dear fonesrus	<input type="checkbox"/> Dear Sir/Madam
4. You are sending your CV to Ronan Quinn. Which opening greeting do you use?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Dear Mr Quinn	<input type="checkbox"/> Dear Sir	<input type="checkbox"/> Dear Ronan
5. You are sending your CV to Ronan Quinn. Which closing salutation do you use?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yours faithfully	<input type="checkbox"/> Yours Sincerely	<input type="checkbox"/> Yours sincerely

General Business Letters

General business letters do not have anything else posted with them. Therefore you need to include all the information the recipient needs in the body of the letter.

This type of letter can be used in many situations. For example to:

- make a general job enquiry
- send or reply to an invitation
- write to a newspaper
- complain about a service or goods

The layout of a general business letter is the same as that of a covering letter. It is the content of the letter that is different.

A general business letter needs to have a lot more detail than a covering letter, and will be longer. You need to give the recipient all the information they need in the main part of the letter.

However, try to keep the letter to one or two pages. Letters enquiring about jobs should be only one page.

The layout of a general business letter is the same as a covering letter. It should:

- be typed using one side of A4 paper.
- have your address in the top left-hand corner of the page.
- have the date underneath your own address
- have the recipient's address below the date.
- have an appropriate opening greeting. If you know the name of the person to whom you are writing, use his/her name. For example, 'Dear Mr O'Brien' or 'Dear Ms Lucas'. If you do not know the name of the person to whom you are writing, use 'Dear Sir' or 'Dear Madam' (or 'Dear Sir/Madam').
- contain a brief outline of why you are writing in the main body of the letter. For example, if you are complaining about a service, give details about what was wrong. If you are returning faulty goods, outline when and where the goods were bought and what is wrong. If you are enclosing a form, outline what the form is for.
- have an appropriate closing greeting. If you have used a specific name in your opening greeting, close your letter with 'Yours sincerely'. If you have not used a specific name in your opening greeting, close your letter with 'Yours faithfully'.
- have your name typed underneath the space in which you will sign your name.

Business Letter Example

Below is an example of a general letter inviting someone to give a talk to a school.

High Hill School
Temple Centre
Enniscorthy
County Wexford
office@highhillschool.ie

← Your address

1 June 2016

← The date

Mr David Brady
Brady Recruitment
High Street
Enniscorthy
County Wexford

← The recipient's address

Dear Mr Brady

← The opening greeting

Every year our school invites local business people to talk to the third-year students about career choices.

As you run a recruitment agency, the students would like you to be one of this year's guests. They feel that you will be able to give them information on the current job climate as well as general information on the type of questions they could be asked at interviews.

The talk will take place on Wednesday, 22 June at 10 a.m. and we would like you to give a general introduction to your business and then answer questions from the students.

Could you please let me know before 8 June if you will be able to participate in this year's career discussion.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

← The closing salutation

Sarah Claffey

← Your signature

Sarah Claffey

← Your name typed under your signature

Body of the letter made up of a number of paragraphs

General business letter exercises

4. Fill in the following K-W-H-L chart for the task of writing a general business letters:

K-W-H-L Chart

Name _____

Date _____

Task: (e.g. formal email) _____

Fill the spaces on the right hand side for each of the K-W-H-L statements (You can finish the What I learned part after you've completed all the exercises.)

What I K now	
What I want to K now	

How I will find information	
What I Learned	

1. Your school is holding an end-of-year concert to help raise money for a new football pitch and would like to invite a local band to play. Write a letter of invitation to the band’s manager. Give details of the concert and the reason for inviting the band.
2. Write a letter to your local radio station asking them to have fewer stories about teenagers behaving badly, and more stories about how teenagers help the community. Give two examples of both the bad news stories and the positive stories.
3. Write a letter to your principal giving details of a bullying incident that you have witnessed.
4. Include details of what happened and how long the bullying has been going on.
5. Write a letter to your local leisure centre and ask if they have any summer jobs for which you could apply.

Envelopes

When you have written your letter, it should be placed in an envelope before it is sent. There is a standard way to address an envelope so that they can be read by sorting machines at the post office.

You should also include your own address in the top left-hand corner. Then, if the letter cannot be delivered, it can be returned to you. There is no need to use punctuation on an envelope.

Look at the example of a correctly addressed envelope below and complete the exercises that follow.

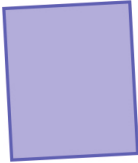


Envelopes exercises

1. Write out envelopes for the following business addresses:

Addresses
Ms Karen McGrath Secretary Hilltop Athletics Club Ballinamore County Leitrim
Dr Andrew Matthews Physics Department Youghal Central College Youghal County Cork
Mr Donal Breen Personnel Manager Side Alley Hotel Main Street Limerick City

2. The envelope below is addressed incorrectly. Rewrite it, correcting the mistakes – there are 15 mistakes (7 capital letters are wrong and the elements of the envelope are in the wrong place).

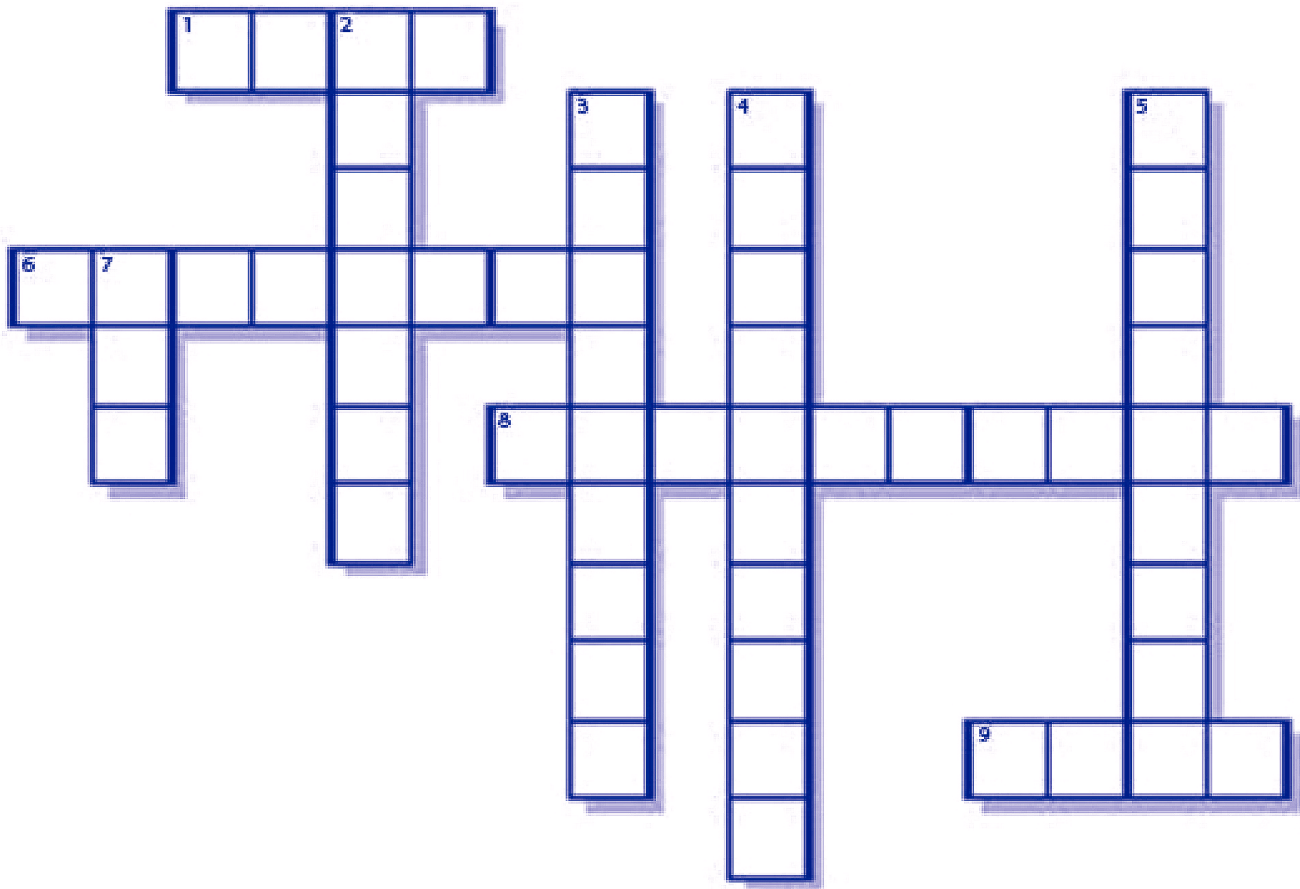


Max Scully
Flat 5
glendown apartments
County dublin

MS Aoife carwood

department of economics
Blackrock Business College Dublin 4

Formal Letters Crossword



Across

1. The first word in an opening greeting.
6. The type of letter sent with something else in the envelope or parcel.
8. If you don't know the name of the person to whom you are writing, use this closing salutation 'Yours'.
9. Tells the person receiving the letter when it was written.

Down

2. You write this in the top left-hand corner of a letter.
3. Your name written at the bottom of the letter.
4. A letter asking someone to attend an event.
5. The type of letter sent when something is wrong.
7. How many pages should a job enquiry letter be?

SECTION 5 – Personal Emails (Informal Emails)

General Rules for Writing Personal Emails

How to write a personal email	
1.	Email addresses need to be entered accurately -otherwise the person you are emailing will not receive it. e.g. sean.higgins1099@gmail.com
2.	Enter the subject of the email
3.	You can use informal language for personal emails
4.	You can use informal greetings and salutations
5.	Read over it for mistakes before you send.
6.	Never send personal information or personal photographs in an email.
7.	Before you post your letter, read it again to check for any spelling mistakes.

Email Format (Layout/Structure)

Email address of recipient goes here

Recipients to be copied in (Cc'd) go here

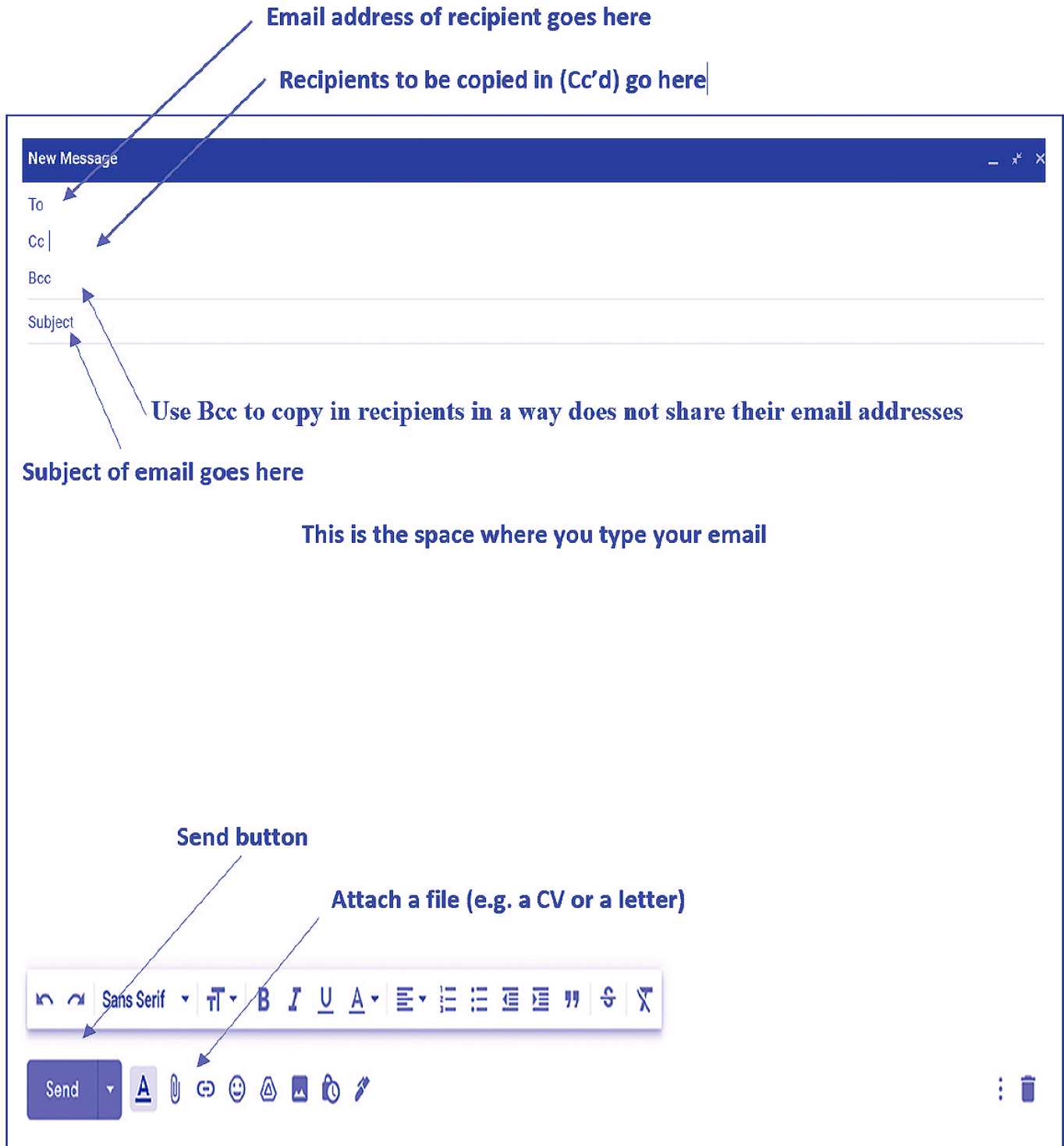
Use Bcc to copy in recipients in a way does not share their email addresses

Subject of email goes here

This is the space where you type your email

Send button

Attach a file (e.g. a CV or a letter)

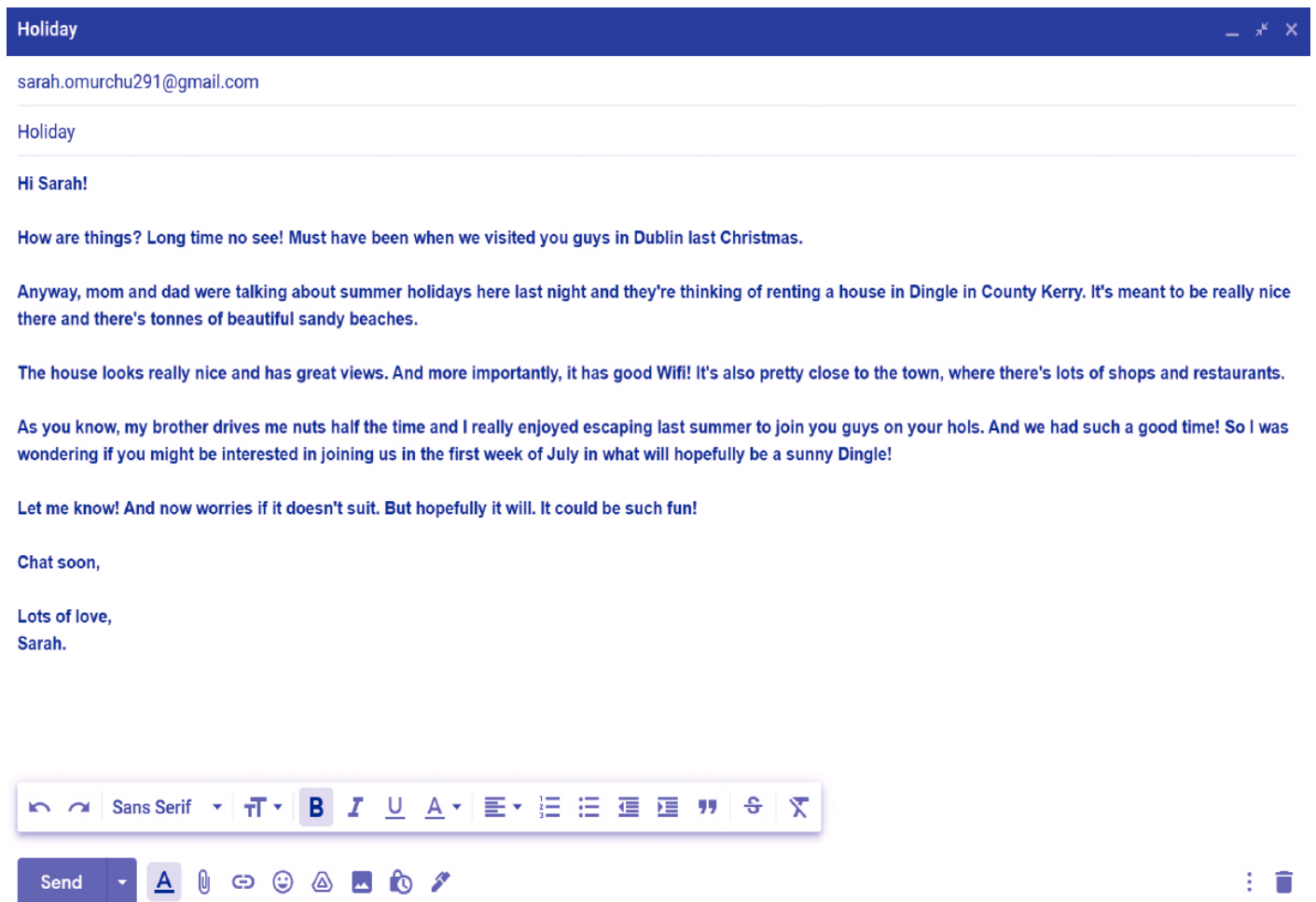


The image shows a screenshot of an email composition window titled "New Message". The window has a dark blue header bar with the title and window control icons. Below the header, there are four input fields: "To", "Cc", "Bcc", and "Subject". The "To" field is highlighted with a blue arrow pointing to the text "Email address of recipient goes here". The "Cc" field is highlighted with a blue arrow pointing to the text "Recipients to be copied in (Cc'd) go here". The "Bcc" field is highlighted with a blue arrow pointing to the text "Use Bcc to copy in recipients in a way does not share their email addresses". The "Subject" field is highlighted with a blue arrow pointing to the text "Subject of email goes here". Below the input fields is a large white area for typing the email body, with a blue arrow pointing to the text "This is the space where you type your email". At the bottom of the window, there is a toolbar with various icons. The "Send" button is highlighted with a blue arrow pointing to the text "Send button". The "Attach a file" icon (a paperclip) is highlighted with a blue arrow pointing to the text "Attach a file (e.g. a CV or a letter)".

- The email address of the person to whom you are writing should go in the space next to the To... box.
- You should include a subject, or topic, for your email in the space next to the Subject box. Always keep your subject concise and precise.
- You only use Cc if you want others to see your email, as well as the main recipient.
- You only use Bcc if you want others to see your email, as well as the main recipient, but don't want people's email addresses to be visible to others.
- You type your email in the main part of the window. Remember, your email is similar to a letter. Start with an opening greeting. Include all the necessary details in a few paragraphs and close with a suitable closing salutation.
- If you want to attach a file, such as a CV or a letter, click the paperclip image and attach the file.
- Never share any personal information or photographs in an email.

Look at the example of a personal email below and complete the exercises that follow.

Sample Personal Email



Personal Email Exercises

1. Fill in the following K-W-H-L chart for the task of writing a **personal email**:

K-W-H-L Chart

Name _____

Date _____

Task: (e.g. formal email) _____

Fill the spaces on the right hand side for each of the K-W-H-L statements (You can finish the What I learned part after you've completed all the exercises.)

What I K now	
What I want to K now	

How I will find information	
What I Learned	

2. Write an email to your sports club coach, telling him you got injured in school and can't play in the match on Sunday.
3. Write an email to your pen pal in New York, filling him in on your life in school.
4. Write an email to your aunt, thanking her for a birthday gift she sent to you.

SECTION 6 – Formal Emails

Email is a very popular means of communication with, within and between companies, businesses and professional organisations. Over 300 billion emails are sent and received every day.

General Rules for Writing Formal Emails

How to write a formal email	
1.	Email addresses need to be entered accurately -otherwise the person you are emailing will not receive it. . e.g. sean.higgins1099@gmail.com
2.	Enter the subject of the email concisely and accurately
3.	Use formal language for formal emails and keep the tone serious
4.	Use formal greetings and salutations
5.	Use paragraphs
6.	Write the most important information first.
7.	If using an online signature, use the typed out version of your name also.
8.	Never send personal information or personal photographs in an email.
9.	Never use emojis in a formal email

Sample Formal Email 1

Read the below formal emails. The first is an email to a politician about the poor condition of a playground.

The screenshot shows an email client interface. At the top, a dark blue header bar contains the text "White Park Playground" on the left and three small icons (minus, maximize, close) on the right. Below the header, the email address "partick.longTD@oireachtas.ie" is displayed. A horizontal line separates the header from the body. The body of the email begins with the subject "White Park Playground". Below this, the salutation "Dear Mr Long" is followed by three paragraphs of text. The first paragraph states the purpose of the email: to report on the safety of White Park playground. The second paragraph details specific equipment issues: broken equipment, a damaged roof on the 'Wendy house', and missing bolts on the slide. The third paragraph mentions peeling paint and an overflowing bin. The final paragraph is a request for action. The email concludes with a sign-off "Yours sincerely" and the name "Joseph Ryan". At the bottom of the email body, there is a rich text editor toolbar with various icons for undo, redo, font face, size, bold, italic, underline, text color, background color, bulleted list, numbered list, link, unlink, quote, insert link, and insert image. Below the toolbar is a row of icons for sending, adding attachments, inserting links, emojis, images, videos, and audio, followed by a "Send" button and a trash icon.

White Park Playground

partick.longTD@oireachtas.ie

White Park Playground

Dear Mr Long

I am writing to you about children's safety in White Park playground, which is in your constituency. This playground is meant to be a safe area but unfortunately it has become a dangerous and unclean environment for the children who play there.

In the past three months, three pieces of equipment in the playground have broken and are dangerous. Part of the roof of the 'Wendy house' has come away and there are several nails sticking out. The swings are damaged and cannot be used, and many of the bolts which should attach the slide to its frame are missing.

As well as this, the paint is peeling from most of the equipment. Furthermore, the bin inside the playground is overflowing at times, which may draw pests.

Could you please ensure that someone looks into this matter and that the playground is made safe for our children. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely
Joseph Ryan

Send

Sample Formal Email 2

The second email below is the politician’s reply. Note that underneath the politician’s closing salutation is the digital signature followed by the name of the organisation and his contact details. This would be standard in emails from people writing emails in a professional capacity.

White Park Playground
— ✖ ✕

josephw.ryan9827@gmail.com

White Park Playground

Dear Mr Ryan,

I refer to your email regarding your concerns about the condition of White Park playground.

Firstly I would like to thank you for bringing the poor condition of the playground to my attention. As you may know, I was instrumental in acquiring funding for the development, so I have a personal interest in the facility's continued success. Facilities for children and young people have been a key priority in my work on behalf of constituents.

I have been in touch with the local council about the matter, and you will be pleased to learn that maintenance personnel are at the playground since this morning. I have been assured that the playground will be returned to its former excellent condition, but that the work will take several days.

I am pleased to have been of assistance on this matter and I thank you once again, for bringing the matter to my attention. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information and have any other concerns or queries in the future.

Kind regards,

Patrick Long

← Digital Signature

← Typed Name followed by name of organisation with contact details

Patrick Long TD
 House of the Oireachtas
 Dáil Éireann
 01-2093842394
 pat.longTD@oireachtas.ie

↶ ↷
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SECTION 7 – CVs and Job Applications

It is very important to write a good letter when you are applying for a job. There are two types of letter that you can use when looking for a job:

- covering letters
- letters of application

You will also need to write your CV. This contains all the main points about you and your experience so that employers learn about you easily.

A covering letter is used when you are sending in your CV or an application form

A letter of application is used when you are not sending in your CV or an application form. In this type of letter, you need to include information about yourself and the job you are applying for.

CVs

A CV is used when you are applying for a job. It is a summary of who you are and what experience you have that employers can use to see if you are suitable for the job they have on offer. CV stands for *curriculum vitae* which is a Latin term meaning the course of one's life. Nowadays it means a brief account of a person's education, qualifications, and previous occupations, typically sent with a job application or cover letter.

Your CV should include:

- Your name
- Your name
- Contact details
- Your qualifications
- Any work experience
- Your hobbies/interests
- The name and contact details for two people who will provide references.

CV Example

CURRICULUM VITAE

Name: Kenneth McCarthy

Address: 99 Thornbush Grove
Riverside
Jamestown
County Kerry

Email: kenneth.mccarthy@gmail.com

Date of birth: 16 February 1998

Secondary Education

School: Jamestown National School
The Hill
Jamestown
County Kerry

Dates attended: September 2011–2019

Qualifications

1. Junior Certificate, 2014
2. Leaving Certificate, 2019
Subjects: English (C), Mathematics (B), Irish (D), Spanish (C), History (C), Biology (C)

Work Experience

Employer: Mr John Ryan
Address: Golden Supermarket
Churchgate Avenue
Jamestown
County Kerry

Dates: June 2017–2018
Part-time: 10 hours a week

Duties: General assistant: stacking shelves, tidying the store, packing customers' bags, collecting goods for customers' online orders, checking in-store promotions.

Interests and Hobbies

Gaelic football: I am a member of the Jamestown GAA Club
Mountaineering: I am a member of the Ace Mountaineering Club

Other Qualifications

I have my St John's Ambulance first aid certificate.

References

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ms J. Nolan Principal Riverside Community College Jamestown County Kerry 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Mr John Ryan Golden Supermarket Churchgate Avenue Jamestown County Kerry
---	---

Covering letters and emails

If you are sending your CV to a company in response to a job advertisement, you should send a covering letter that mentions the job for which you are applying.

65 Roselawn Avenue
Riverside
Dublin 19

28 June 2018

Mr S Brown
Topside Retail
55 Broad Street
Jamestown
County Kerry

Dear Mr Brown

I would like to apply for the position of shop assistant that was advertised in *The Irish Times* on Friday, 24 June.

I enclose a copy of my CV, which outlines my educational qualifications and work experience. As you can see, I have worked in the retail industry for the past year.

I am available for interview at any time and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Kenneth McCarthy

Kenneth McCarthy

Many companies post job vacancies on their websites and are happy for people to send in their CVs via email. If this is the case, write a brief email that outlines your experience and mentions the job for which you are applying.

If you are sending your CV via email, it is a good idea to include your contact details in the covering email.

Shop Assistant Position

manager@topside.ie

Shop Assistant Position

Dear Mr Brown,

I would like to apply for the position of shop assistant that was advertised in The Irish Times on Friday, 24 June.

I enclose a copy of my CV, which outlines my educational qualifications and work experience. As you can see, I have worked in the retail industry for the past year.

I can be contacted by email at kenneth.mccarthy@gmail.com or by phone on 088-282829. I am available for an interview at any time and look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards
Kenneth McCarthy

Send

Verdana

B *I* U A

CV exercises

1. Fill in the following K-W-H-L chart for the task of writing **C.V.**

K-W-H-L Chart

Name _____

Date _____

Task: (e.g. formal email) _____

Fill the spaces on the right hand side for each of the K-W-H-L statements (You can finish the What I learned part after you've completed all the exercises.)

What I K now	
What I want to K now	

How I will find information	
What I Learned	

Write your own CV

- You want to apply for a job you have seen advertised on a company’s website. The advertisement asks for you to email your CV to the personnel manager, Mr David Sweeney. Write the email you would send with your CV. Below are the details you need – you can make up anything else.

Website	www.springs.ie
Position available	Junior designer

- You want to apply for a job as a junior mechanic at Davitt’s Garage, Vale Road, Briarstown, County Tipperary. The advertisement asks you to post your CV to the office manager, Ms Kathleen Dunne. Write the covering letter you would send with your CV. Below are the details you need – you can make up anything else.

Job advertised in	<i>Tipperary Star</i>
Date of advertisement	Monday, 22 August

Well done!

You have almost completed the Letter and Email Writing Workbook.



Attribution: Vincent Le Moign. Licence: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/deed.en>

Now take a moment to think about what you've learned and what the next steps might be.

3-2-1 Activity

Look over the booklet and list three things you've become better at or have a better understanding of.

1	
2	
3	

List two things you'd like to know more about or learn more about or become better at.

1	
2	

Write one question you have, related to writing letters or emails. (Where could you go find the answer? Your teacher / classmates / the internet / a textbook?)

1	
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GROW table

Now let's fill out a new GROW table for writing emails and letters. Look at the progress you've made to develop this important lifes-kill. Well done! How can you continue to improve?

G	Goal	Become good at writing letters and emails?
R	Reality	
O	Obstacles	
W	Will	

Congratulations, and very well done!



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