

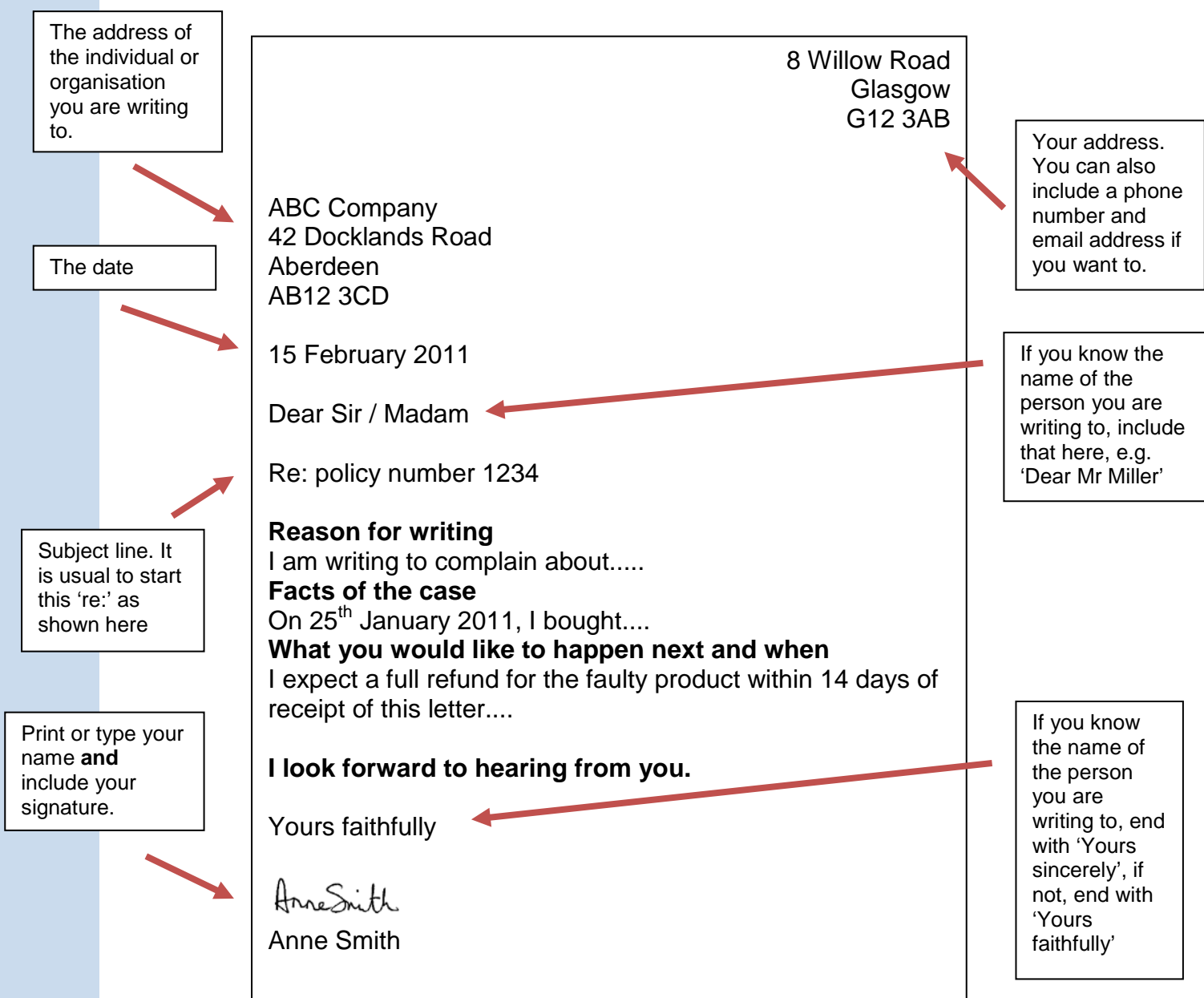


How to write a letter

Writing to organisations or individuals can be a good way of making your voice heard, asserting your rights, and resolving disputes.

Layout

There are some general rules to remember when laying out your letter that help to make the information clear and readable. If you don't have access to a word processor, then it's fine to write by hand. Follow the same format.





What to say in your letter

Before you start the letter:

- Think about the outcome you want. For example, you might want someone to apologise, to offer you a refund or to change a decision
- Note down the main points you want to say – include relevant dates and times, names of anyone involved, and how you have been affected
- Make a list of steps that have already been taken, such as phone calls to the organisation
- If you know about laws, policies or government guidance that may be relevant to your point, include these in your notes.

Use these notes to help you write the letter. It can help to break the letter down into three parts:

- a beginning that explains who you are and why you are writing
- a middle section giving detail and facts
- an end section that says what action you expect and when you expect to get a reply.

Your letter is more likely to get the outcome you want if it includes all relevant information and makes it clear to the reader what they have been asked to do next. It is important that the reader is clear who sent the letter and how to get in touch with you. State your case simply and clearly. Avoid being emotional. Be polite even if you are frustrated, angry or upset. Stick to the facts.

Signing off and checking

Close your letter with a final sentence like:

- I thank you for your assistance
- I look forward to hearing from you.

The letter ends with the sign-off, your signature and name.

Once you have finished writing the letter, don't forget to read it over and check that you have included everything you wanted to say. If you have used a computer, run the spell checker application to check for typing errors. It's usually a good idea to get someone else to check it for you as well, if you can. They may spot things you have missed.

Keep a copy

Make sure you sign, date and keep a copy of the letter. You may need to refer to your letter again or provide a copy as evidence of action you have taken.

Enclosing other documents

You can include additional documents, if you think it will help back up your case. For example, you may want to include copies of receipts, bank statements, letters you have received or letters you have sent.



If you are enclosing other documents, make sure you mention what you have enclosed in your letter.

Posting

Where possible, get proof of posting. This is a free service. If you ask at the Post Office for a 'certificate of posting' they will provide this for you. In certain cases, you may want to use Recorded Signed For Delivery to prove the letter was received. Staff at the Post Office can tell you more about this service or you can look up details online: www.royalmail.com.

And don't forget

Sign, date and make a copy of the letter before you send it.

Other information on Adviceguide which might help

- [Sample debt Letters](#)
- [Sample letters to creditors](#)
- [Credit and debit factsheets](#)

Last updated: 20 January 2011

This fact sheet is reviewed on a monthly basis. The law changes frequently. To confirm you are looking at the most up-to-date version, download the fact sheet from www.adviceguide.org.uk or contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau.

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