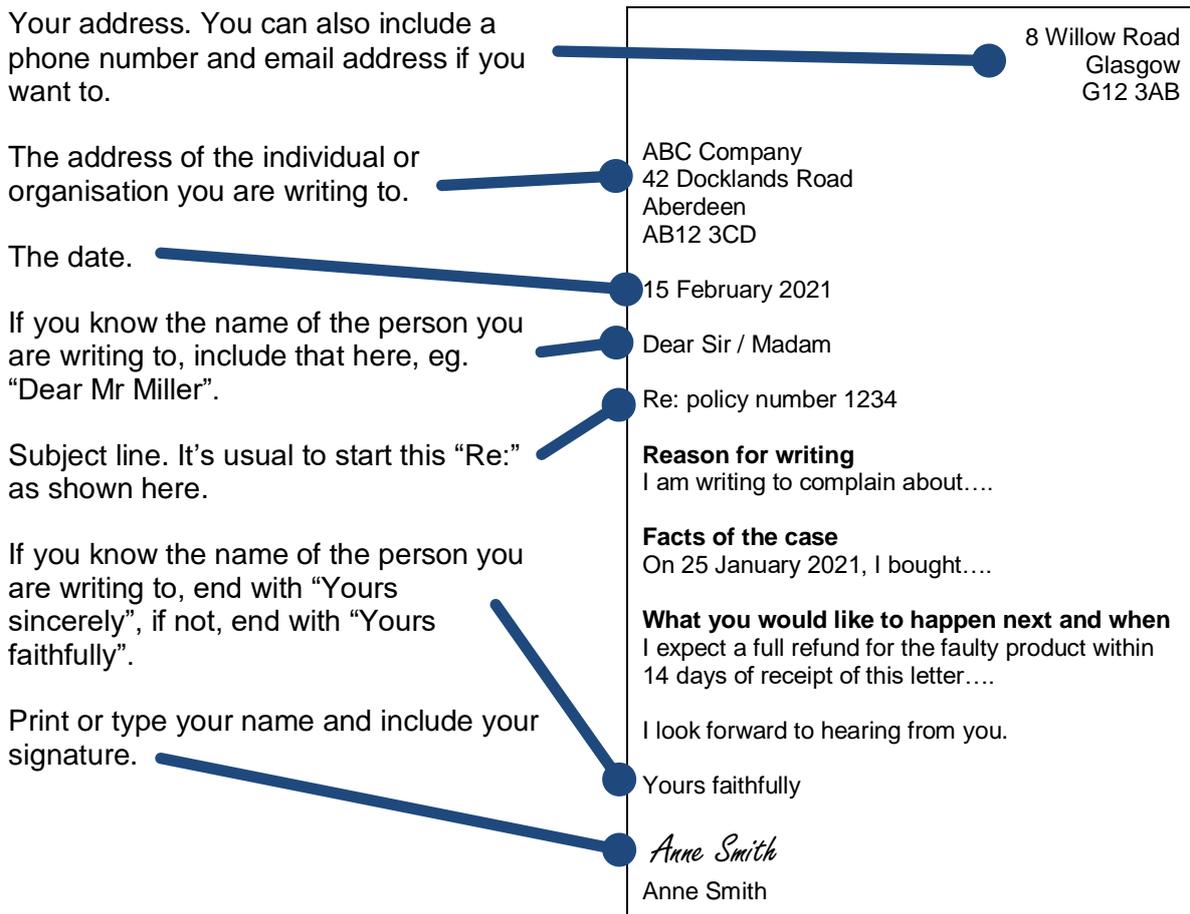


## How to write a letter

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 computer, then it's fine to write by hand. Follow the same format.



The diagram illustrates the layout of a letter with callouts explaining each part:

- Your address.** You can also include a phone number and email address if you want to. (Callout points to: 8 Willow Road, Glasgow, G12 3AB)
- The address of the individual or organisation you are writing to.** (Callout points to: ABC Company, 42 Docklands Road, Aberdeen, AB12 3CD)
- The date.** (Callout points to: 15 February 2021)
- If you know the name of the person you are writing to, include that here, eg. "Dear Mr Miller".** (Callout points to: Dear Sir / Madam)
- Subject line.** It's usual to start this "Re:" as shown here. (Callout points to: Re: policy number 1234)
- If you know the name of the person you are writing to, end with "Yours sincerely", if not, end with "Yours faithfully".** (Callout points to: Yours faithfully)
- Print or type your name and include your signature.** (Callout points to: Anne Smith)

The letter content is as follows:

8 Willow Road  
Glasgow  
G12 3AB

ABC Company  
42 Docklands Road  
Aberdeen  
AB12 3CD

15 February 2021

Dear Sir / Madam

Re: policy number 1234

**Reason for writing**  
I am writing to complain....

**Facts of the case**  
On 25 January 2021, I bought....

**What you would like to happen next and when**  
I expect a full refund for the faulty product within 14 days of receipt of this letter....

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully

*Anne Smith*  
Anne Smith

## 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've 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:

1. A beginning that explains who you are and why you're writing
2. A middle section giving detail and facts
3. 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've 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're frustrated, angry or upset. Stick to the facts.

## Signing off and checking

Close your letter with a final sentence like:

- 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've finished writing the letter, don't forget to read it over and check that you've included everything you wanted to say. If you've used a computer, run the spell checker 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've 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've taken.

## Enclosing other documents

You can include other 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've received or letters you've sent.



If you're enclosing other documents, make sure you mention what you've enclosed in your letter.

## Posting

Where possible, get proof of posting from the Post Office. This is a free service. In some cases, you might want to use 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 on [www.royalmail.com](http://www.royalmail.com).

## And don't forget

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

## More help with writing letters

Get more help with writing letters on these pages on our website:

- [Sample letters to creditors](#)
- [Consumer template letters](#)
- [Credit and debt factsheets](#)

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