

HOW TO WRITE A REPORT

Writing a report

A report sums up the main information from a presentation, a survey, etc.

The main purposes of a report are:

- to communicate results and facts
- to analyse and evaluate them

Reports are often aimed at a specific person (or a specific group of people).

Always structure your reports very clearly: each paragraph has its own distinct purpose and contains exactly that type of information a reader might expect to find. Use subheadings and bullet points to structure your report.

The language used is rather formal and impersonal. Avoid the use of the first person (*I think, I believe*) and make use of passive constructions (*It is recommended that*).

How to structure a report

To: (Adressaten)
From: (Autor / in)
Date: (Datum)
Subject: (Betreff)

Introduction

This report examines ...

The source(s) for this report is / are ...

The information in this report is compiled from ...

Findings

The key findings are as follows: ...

It appears that ...

Our sources indicate that ...

These statistics show that ...

Recommendations

The following measures should be considered: ...

It is recommended that ...

Conclusion

It has been shown that ...

... is recommended / should be considered.

Source: *Focus on Modern Technology*: p.107f

Keep in mind:

- start with: To:
From:
Date:
Subject:
- clear structure
- organize it with headings and subheadings
- clear introduction and conclusion
- formal and impersonal style
- clear and concise sentences
- use passive constructions
- no contractions (~~it's, I'm, there're, they've...~~)
- no abbreviations
- express things objectively (It is believed ...)
- you may use bullet points
- concentrate on factual information which is relevant to the topic
- use key report phrases
- do NOT use: I believe/I think – avoid the “I”
- do NOT express personal feelings



WRITING A REPORT: USEFUL PHRASES

I. OUTLINEING REASONS FOR THE REPORT

This report has been written because ...	to determine (=bestimmen, festlegen) the causes of ...
It was requested (=anfordern, erbitten) by ...	to seek solutions to ...
It was requested on (date).	to assess (=beurteilen, bewerten) the situation ...
The aim/purpose of this report is to ...	In regard to (=in Bezug auf) ...
The objectives (=Zweck) of this report are to ...	This report describes/outlines/deals with ...
This report examines (=untersuchen) ...	This report is based on ...
It does not examine ... because ...	

II. EXPLAINING HOW YOU GOT THE INFORMATION THE REPORT IS BASED ON:

A survey was conducted in order to ...	to assess/evaluate/analyse
To conduct a survey of ...	brainstorm session / complaint box / comment cards
The statistics were analysed ...	opinion poll (=Meinungsumfrage)
Information was gathered in order to ...	to gather (=sammeln) information
80 respondents were surveyed. Of these, 65 were invited for an interview.	

III. STATING THE FACTS/FINDINGS:

According to ...	The central findings are ...
In general, the findings indicate that ...	The information implies that ...
The major finding of the investigation is that ...	The significance (=Bedeutung) of the results was ...
In addition,	
Surprisingly, ..., which was an unexpected consequence of ...	

IV. GIVING OPINIONS ABOUT THE FACTS/FINDINGS: CONCLUSION

The source/sources of ... is/are found to be ...	to draw a conclusion
... led to/caused ...	It is advisable to ...
Due to/Because of ..., ...	to make measures/steps
It can be concluded that ...	to ensure that
To sum up, ...	In conclusion, ...
The main conclusion that can be drawn is therefore that ...	

DON'T
QUIT

V. MAKING SUGGESTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is clear that ...	It would be a good idea to ...
It is recommended/suggested/proposed that ...	It might be advisable to ...
The study concluded that ...	It would be preferable to ...
In the light of these conclusions, it is recommended that ... should be ...	
In addition, a ... could ...	

Grammar Note: To make suggestions and recommendations, you should use "could+infinitive verb" (if you are less sure), or "should+infinitive verb" (if you are more sure). You should also use "suggest+ -ing" or "suggest that+ a subjective noun (e.g. "we") + a verb (e.g. "could+infinitive verb). Do NOT use "suggest to"!

TIPS:

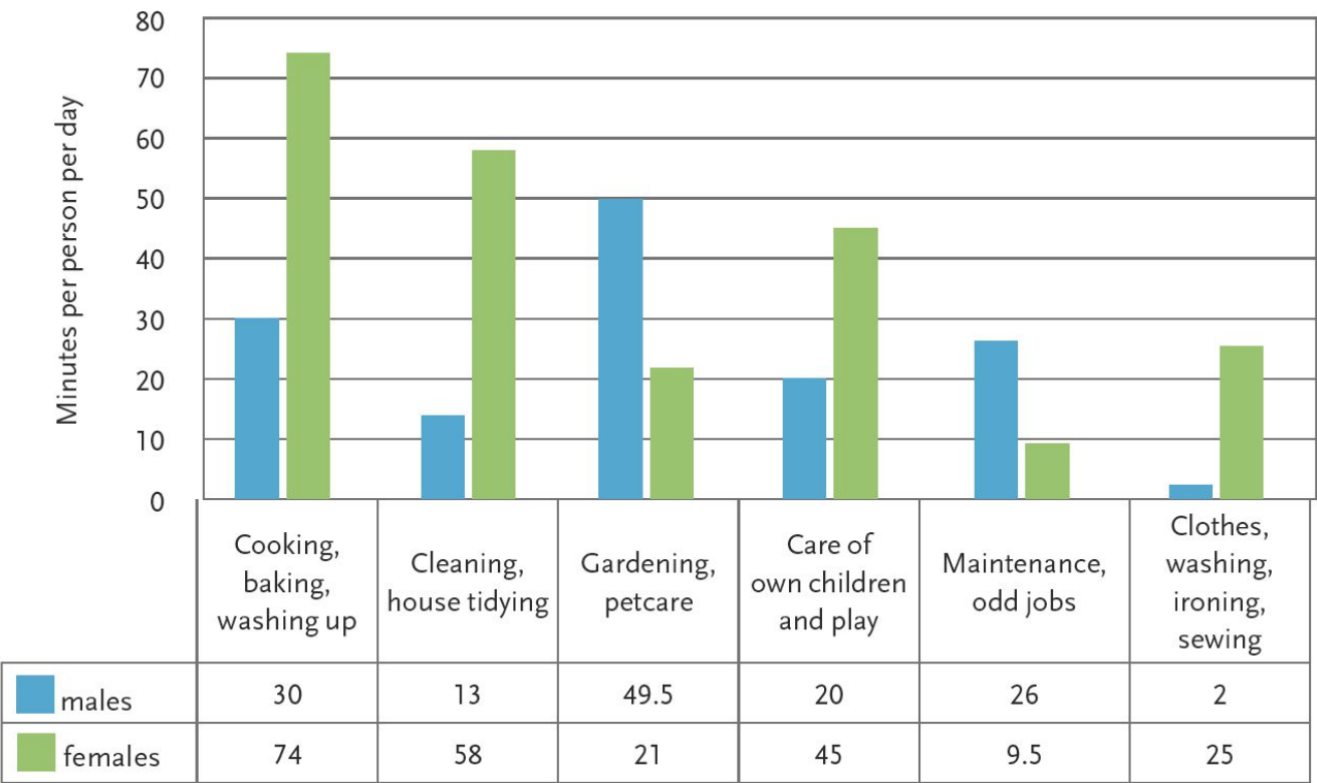
CONTENT:	Concentrate on factual information which is relevant to the topic. If the report is based on a survey, include number language and graph descriptions.
TITLE:	Choose an informative title
INTRODUCTION:	State the aim and content of your report
LAYOUT:	Use sub-headings to emphasise the different sections of the report. Summarise the information you give under suitable sub-headings.
STYLE:	This should be impersonal. Write in formal English. Express facts and opinions objectively. Comment on facts briefly, but do not express strong personal opinions.
CONCLUSION:	Make clear suggestions and recommendations.

Sample Text: REPORT

3.3 Report

Definition	The presentation of a particular situation in the form of a(n official) document; based on information from an investigation by an appointed person or group of people.
Purpose	To inform the reader about the situation, to draw conclusions and / or to make recommendations.
Target group	A person, or persons, of authority, either in a company or an institution.
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Addressee(s) [1]■ Author(s) [2]■ Subject [3]■ Date [4]■ Paragraphs (usually with subheadings) [5]■ Conclusion and / or recommendations [6]

Division of household tasks: by gender, Great Britain



- 1 To: Mr. Hubert
2 From: Melanie Talent
4 Date: 31.01.20..
- 3 **Subject: Analysis of household tasks done by men and women in Great Britain.**

Introduction

The chart above provides an overview of the average amount of time British men and women use for domestic tasks. In general, it can be seen that women spend four hours on household tasks, while men only spend approximately two and a half hours.

Household tasks performed by women and men

According to the chart, women are more likely to perform tasks connected to cooking, cleaning, washing and childcare. In comparison, women spend about 74 minutes on cooking, baking and washing up, while men only spend 30 minutes in doing these tasks. In addition, women use 58 minutes a day for tasks such as cleaning and house tidying, whereas men devote just 13 minutes to these activities. However, there are a few areas where men are more active than women, i.e. gardening, pet care and maintenance jobs around the house. The statistics say that men spend 49.5 minutes a day on gardening and pet care, while women spend only 21 minutes in doing these tasks.

Recommendation

To achieve a balance, it is recommended to initiate measures concerning equal distribution of household chores. This can be achieved through an extensive advertising campaign including television, radio and newspapers.

Conclusion

All in all, the chart above underlines the fact that routine domestic duties are primarily taken care of by women, while men prefer tasks like gardening, house maintenance and pet care.

Source: Sonja Häusler / Karin Pürer: Neue Reifeprüfung schriftlich. Englisch AHS. Linz: Veritas 2015, S. 17

Checklist for reports

- ☐ Always give the addressee, the author's name and the subject of the report.
- ☐ Analyse any statistics or diagrams as clearly and precisely as possible.
- ☐ Draw conclusions from the statistics and make sensible and suitable recommendations.
- ☐ Use sub-headings to show clearly what each paragraph is about.
- ☐ Use formal or neutral language. Do not use contractions: I am (not ~~am~~), We cannot (not ~~we can't~~)

Useful phrases for reports

- The aim of this report is to ...
- The chart above provides an overview of ...
- The chart above shows (how many) ...
- In general, it can be seen that ..., while ...
- According to the chart, ...
- In addition, ...
- In comparison, ...
- However, ...
- The statistics say that ...
- (To improve this situation,) I would suggest / recommend that ...
- This can be achieved through ...
- We should / could also consider ...
- All in all, the chart above underlines the fact that ..., while ...

Source: Context@HTL Companion p.64-65