

Parts of a Business Letter

- The Heading
- The Recipient's Address
- The Subject
- The Salutation
- The Body
- The Complimentary Close
- The Signature Line
- Enclosures

The Heading

The heading contains the return address. It is not necessary to type a return address if you are using a paper with the return address already imprinted, but you should always use a date. Make sure the heading is on the left margin.

Example:

Ms. Jane Doe
543 Washington St
Marquette, MI 49855
Tel:
Fax:
Email:

Recipient's Address

This is the address you are sending your letter to. Be sure to make it as complete as possible so it gets to its destination. Always include title names (such as Dr.) if you know them. This is on the left margin. Be sure to skip a line after the heading and before the recipient's address, then skip another line before the greeting.

Example:

Recipient's name
Company name
Street address
City, state and post code

Subject

The subject of the letter must be short and clear to give the recipient an instant idea what your letter is about. If you have a reference number, such as a claim number or a case number, you should include it on this line too. The subject does not have to be written as a complete sentence.

The Salutation

The salutation or greeting in a business letter is always formal. It often begins with "Dear + Mr./ Mrs./ Ms./ Dr. + person's last name" if you know the name of the recipient. If you don't know their name, you should write "Dear Sir/ Madam". The salutation always ends with a colon.

The Body

The body is the main part of your letter. Be sure to leave a blank line between each paragraph. Skip a line between the salutation and the body, as well as the body and the close.

The Complimentary Close

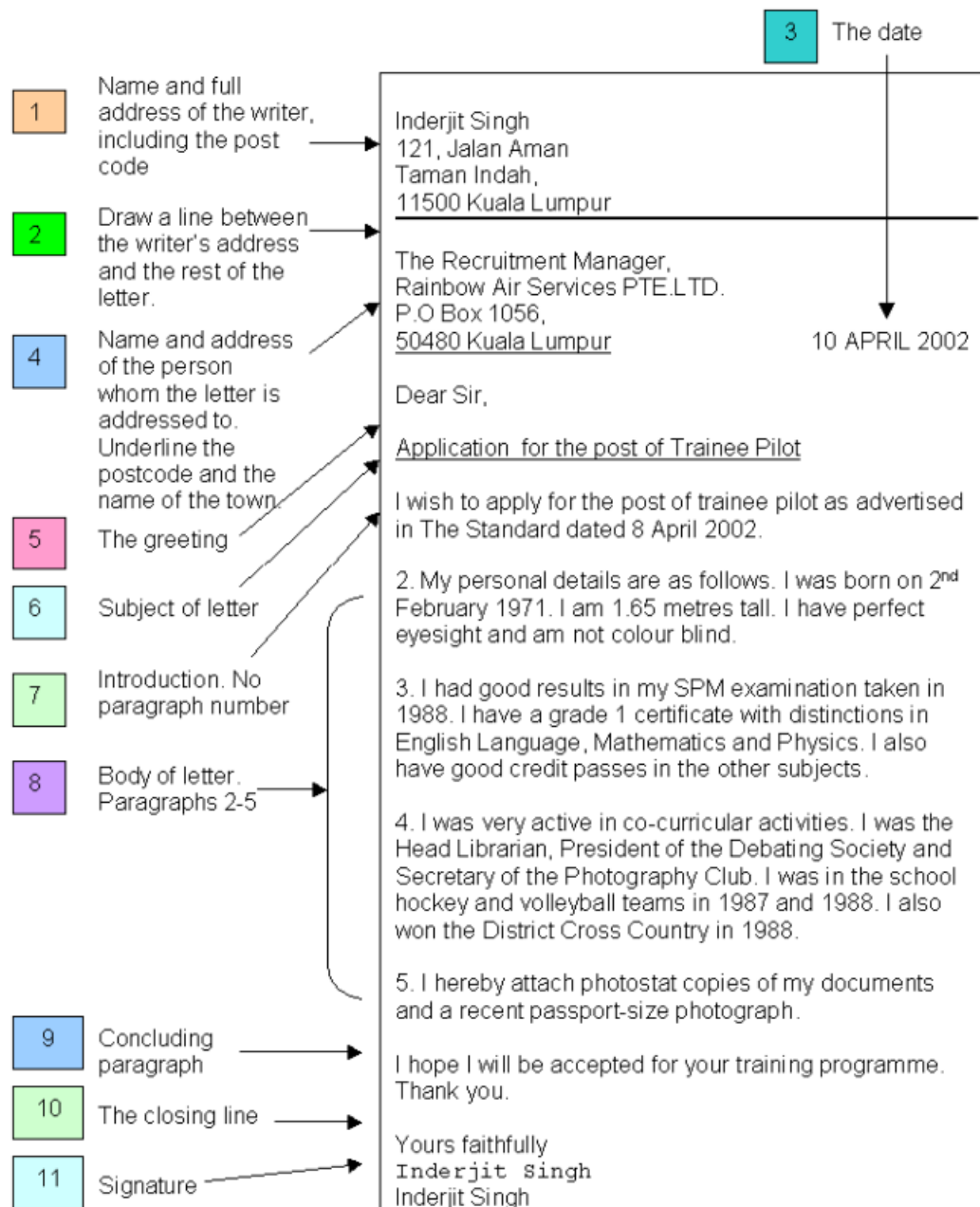
The complimentary close is a short and polite expression that ends your letter. If you started your letter with "Dear Mr./ Ms./ Mrs./ Dr + last name", you must finish the letter with "Yours sincerely". If you started your letter with "Dear Sir/ Madam", you must finish your letter with "Yours faithfully". Leave four lines for a signature between the close and the sender's name.

The Signature Line

Type out the name of the sender. If you are printing this letter out and sending it by mail, you will sign your name in pen. This line will include your first and last name. You may put your title beforehand to show how you wish to be addressed (Ms., Mrs., Dr.). The signature should be in blue or black ink.

Enclosures

If you are enclosing any documents, such as a resume, you can indicate it by typing "I am enclosing a resume/ CV." or "Enclosures". You also may include the name of each document.



Ms. Elaine Sunderlind
1234 Shore Avenue
Victoria, B.C.
V1W 3B8

Your mailing address

The date

January 28, 2002

The name, department and
mailing address of the
person you are writing to.

Mrs. Gail Hopper
Customer Relations
Victoria Springs Water Company
987 Third Street
Victoria, B.C.
V1Z 907

Leave at least 3 lines above
the "Dear" _____
Use the persons formal title:
Ms. Mrs. Mr. Dr.

The 1st paragraph
introduces the
topic or purpose
of your letter.

Dear Ms. Hopper

I am a new customer of Victoria Springs Water Company. Your company
agreed to deliver 25 litres of water to my home each week. However, I have
not received any water deliveries for the past three weeks.

I am very unhappy with your company. I spoke with Mr. Jarvis about this
on the telephone two weeks ago. I sent you an e-mail message last week. I still
have not received my water. Therefore, I will not pay the bill for this month
because I received no water. In addition, I want to cancel my order for water.
I will go to another company for my water.

The 2nd paragraph
gives all the
information and
details.

Please send me a letter confirming my cancellation.

The 3rd paragraph
usually asks the person
to do something.

Use a formal
closing word
and hand write
your name.

Sincerely,
Elaine Sunderlind
Elaine Sunderlind