

# UNIT 5 FORMAL LETTERS

We write formal letters to people we do not know, or those whom we only know a little about and with whom we do not have the same close contact (strangers).

There are very important differences when writing a formal letter:

1. The sender writes his/her FULL NAME and ADDRESS on the TOP RIGHT CORNER of the letter.
2. The DATE goes on the following line, ALIGNED with the sender's address.
3. The sender writes the FULL RECIPIENT'S NAME, his / her TITLE and ADDRESS on the following line on the LEFT SIDE of the letter.
4. The SALUTATION/GREETING has two different forms:
  - if we KNOW the recipient's LAST NAME, then we write as follows:
    - DEAR Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ (man)
    - Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ (married woman)
    - Ms. \_\_\_\_\_ (unknown marital status) / Miss \_\_\_\_\_ (single lady);
  - if we DO NOT KNOW the recipient's LAST NAME, we write:
    - DEAR Sir / Madam
    - "To whom it may concern"
5. Write a comma ALWAYS after the salutation:
  - a. "Dear Mr. Smith,"
6. In the INTRODUCTION, write a sentence stating the PURPOSE your letter:
  - a. *"I am writing this letter to learn about..."*
    - ... TO REQUEST / BECAUSE I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW some (more) information/details about/regarding... (asking for information)
    - ... TO COMPLAIN ABOUT... (complain about a problem)
    - ... TO INFORM YOU ABOUT... (give information)
    - ... TO EXPRESS MY CONCERNS ABOUT... (share your worries/concerns about/regarding a problem)
    - ... TO ORDER (goods such as "shoes", "books"... ) (buy something)
    - ... TO APPLY FOR A JOB (asking for a job)
    - ... TO FORMALLY SUGGEST (suggest something)
7. In the BODY (any sentence AFTER YOUR INTRODUCTORY SENTENCE), give more specific details about the purpose of your letter:
  - What information you need (timetables, prices, models,...)
  - What happened, the reason for your complaint and requested compensation for this inconvenience that you are writing about
  - Describe the details that the recipient (the party who will be receiving your letter/e-mail) has asked for (timetables, prices, models, colours, ...)

- Explain why you are worried, describe your worries or concerns, why the sender should consider your concerns...
  - Describe the product you want to purchase, the number, the colour, the material... (ie. **Ebay vendor/company**)
  - Explain why you are the best candidate for that job position, describe your skills, training, experience... (**writing to an employer**)
  - Explain what your suggestion is, why the recipient should consider it, why your suggestion is their best option...
8. In the CLOSURE, we REINFORCE what we want to happen:
- a. (apology, promotion, application...)
  - b. add some sort of fixed expression, such as:
    - i. *"I am looking forward to hearing from you soon!"*
9. The FINAL SALUTATION/FAREWELL has two different forms:
- if we KNOW the recipient's full name, then write:
    - *"Yours sincerely"* or *"Sincerely yours"* (ALWAYS followed by a comma)
  - if we DO NOT KNOW the recipient's full name, then write:
    - *"Yours faithfully,"* or *"Faithfully yours,"* (ALWAYS followed by a comma)
10. SIGNATURE, OUR HANDWRITTEN FULL NAME and TITLE (if you have one; Mr., Mrs., Ms., Miss)

