

Fast Five

Write the contracted forms of these words:

Did not

Would not

Should not

Cannot

It is

Answers

Didn't

Wouldn't

Shouldn't

Can't

It's

Can I write a formal letter?

When would you use a formal letter?

Usually written to people you don't know

E.g. Written to:

- Complain**
- Apply for a job**
- Reply to a formal letter you have received**

Model Text

Open the Google Doc - Summer Week 3 English Lesson 5-
Model Text.

Look at the features and notice how the language is being
used.

Writing a formal letter

- A formal letter has a number of conventions about **layout**, **language** and **tone** that you should follow.
- There are **set places** to put addresses and the date.
- **How you begin and end** the letter is also very important.

Addresses and date

The first thing that you need to know about is **layout**.

Begin with your address in the top-right corner of the page.

- Immediately, below this include the date.
- Below this, on the left hand side of the page, comes the name and address of the person that you are writing to - the **recipient** of the letter.

Beginning the letter

Most formal letters will start with 'Dear' before the name of the person that you are writing to: 'Dear Ms Brown,' or 'Dear Brian Smith,'

You can choose to use first name and surname, or title and surname. If you don't know the name of the person you are writing to, use:

'Dear Sir/Madam,'

Remember to add the comma.

Opening sentence

Your opening sentence should clearly state why you are writing the letter - get to the point straight away:

- 'I would like to apply for the position of ...'
- 'I am writing to complain about the poor service we received at ...'

Tone

Your letter, like the opening sentence, needs to be precise and to the point. **Tone**, or the way your letter sounds, is very important and finding the right tone can sometimes be difficult. You may need to be firm, but polite. In a formal letter, the aim is to sound 'businesslike'. Avoid any language that seems casual or chatty.

Purpose

Think about the **purpose** of your letter and include all the **relevant details** to help the reader to respond. For example:

- In a job application, include some specific details about why you are an ideal candidate for the role.
- In a letter of complaint, include a summary of what has happened to prompt your complaint, with names, locations and dates, if necessary.

Make sure that each point you make is given a separate paragraph.

Ending the letter

Before you sign off and end your letter, make sure that you provide a **clear course of action** for the reader.

- Making a complaint? Make it clear that you need a reply.
- Applying for a job? End on a positive note and say that you are looking forward to hearing from them.

Signing off

Signing off will depend on how you started your letter.

- If you used someone's name, end with 'Yours sincerely,'
- If you didn't use their name, you used 'Sir/Madam' instead, so end with 'Yours faithfully,'

Finally, don't forget to **proofread** your letter for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Another example of a formal letter

