



# Connors Writing Center

7 Hamilton Smith Hall • UNH • writing@unh.edu • 862-3272

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## Writing Business Letters

When writing a business letter, your goal is to communicate your message clearly while creating a positive impression of yourself and your organization.

### Basic Letter Format

**Margins:** Set margins at the left and right, top and bottom, at 1 to 1.5 inches.

**Paragraphs:** Single-space within paragraphs; double-space between paragraphs. Do not indent the first line of the paragraph.

**Justification:** Use left justification and leave the right margin ragged (uneven).

### Basic Letter Details

**Heading:** The heading provides the reader with a return address. Type the address (do not include the writer's name) at the top of the letter. The address should be aligned on the left side of the page. Spell out words such as *Road*, *Street*, and *West*. If you are using letterhead stationery (stationery with the sender's name and contact information already printed on it), omit the address.

**Date:** The date shows when the letter was written. It appears directly below the heading. Write the date as *month, day, year* with a single comma (ex: August 3, 2006). Do not abbreviate the month (ex: Aug.) or use a number in its place.

5 Hill Street  
Madison, WI 53700  
March 7, 2006

1403 South Queen Street  
Honolulu, HI 96819-5912  
June 17, 2004

**Inside address:** The inside address gives the name and complete mailing address of the person to whom the letter is being sent. Type it flush left and include as many details as necessary, in this order:

- Reader's courtesy title, name, and job title (if the job title is one word)
- Reader's job title (if two or more words)
- Office or department
- Organization name
- Street address/PO box/suite/room (comma precedes Northeast or other directional)
- City, state, ZIP code (or city, province, postal code)
- Country (if not the United States)

Ms. Abigail Brown, Manager  
Rena's Restaurant  
3706 Chamberlain Avenue, Southeast  
Bar Harbor, ME 04609

Dr. Willard R. Moss  
Vice President  
Empire Check Printing  
200 Renaissance Drive  
Detroit, MI 40610

**Salutation:** The salutation personalizes the message. Capitalize all first letters and place a colon after the name.

Dear Ms. Brown:

Dear Dr. Moss:

(over)

