

A



Letter

Is

Better

How To Write A Letter
Guide: Living Person Edition.

"Rediscover the amazing benefits of letter writing and why it should be celebrated!"

By Adam Glennon.

Hello!

Welcome to A Letter Is Better.

This is exciting. I'm excited. Are you excited to be doing this? You're now part of the 10,000 Letter Challenge which means you're a super-cool-amazing-person with a great sense of humour and most possibly, great taste in everything!

This Living Person Edition of the How To Write A Letter Guide is designed to assist you in writing to someone currently alive and able, if they chose, to write back to you.

"Can I write to Captain America?" asked my 7 year old son Ove.

Well, yes. Kind of.

If you've downloaded this PDF for your child then you might need to establish exactly what the purpose of the letter is.

For my son Ove, what was his purpose:

- To speak directly with Captain America, not fully understanding he's a fictional character, and ask him what it's like being a super soldier?
- Communicate with the actor Chris Evans from the Marvel cinematic universe and find out what it was like to play Captain America?
- If you dig a little deeper, did Ove want to find out more about the person who first created Captain America for the comic books and where did they draw inspiration from?

Or mystery option number 4 that turned out that he'd prefer to write to Iron Man instead!

It's important to get the details "Ironed" out because when we start putting pen to paper as part of the 10,000 Letter Challenge, or for our future continuation of the joy of Letter Writing, it's helpful to have a bit of a plan. And that's for us grown ups too!

THE PLAN!

1. Who am I sending the letter to?
2. What is the purpose?
3. What order do I want to express my thoughts, opinions, news etc?
4. The correct way to sign off a letter.
5. Do I want to include anything extra in the letter such as a photograph or gift of some kind? NOTE: This would require a different type of envelope and a first class stamp would not be enough.
6. How do I find the address?

We'll get back to The Plan shortly..

Firstly, this is important.

Vital you might say.

Please, in the most gentle and sincere way, explain to your little ones, and absorb this for yourself also... are you ready?

Our letters DO NOT NEED TO BE PERFECT.

Life is not perfect.

Mistakes happen.

This is not an English Language test. If we don't know the spelling of a word, grab a dictionary or research it on the web. Or just do your best and simply don't worry about it. The recipient is unlikely to judge you or your little one for making errors while writing a handwritten letter.

Spelling is only one issue that might affect your flow.

Wrong word choice is another. If this occurs, just cross it out neatly and write the correct word next to it.

There's a chance your handwriting is not as easy to read as it once was. That's okay. The more you do it the better it'll get.

Take your time. Nice and steady. Take a break. Mistakes will happen!

YOU DO NOT NEED TO START AGAIN!

I REPEAT, YOU DO NOT NEED TO START YOUR LETTER ALL OVER AGAIN.

Life is not perfect and our letters won't be either!

There will be a huge desire for some children, and adults to strive for perfection. Let's be clear.

Perfection doesn't exist. So please take it easy on yourself. Yes, we could complete the first draft of our letter on scrap paper. We could even write it out on a Word Document and that would help with spelling, grammar and all those things but...

YOU DO NOT NEED TO DO THAT.

We are going to focus on planning our letters instead. This again, does not mean we are hoping for a super-neat-and-tidy-perfectly-written-out-letter! We will just be calm and prepared. Knowing we have included all the things we want to say. And if some extra detail comes to mind while in the flow of writing our letter, brilliant. Let's include it.

What do we want from our letters?

The Three Core Fundamentals of A Letter Is Better:

1. Connection.
2. Authenticity.
3. Sense of Accomplishment.

A written letter to a Living Person includes: a friend, relative, public figure or anyone else you can think of who is alive and able to receive one.

Ideally, we want the recipient to send us one in return. It might be better to specify that you'd like to make the exchange of letters a regular thing otherwise they might think it's just a one off and simply tuck it away somewhere special or heaven forbid, send you a text as a way of reply! Or dare I say, a phone call! Brrrrr!

We can't have that! A Letter Is Better!

Include a brief outline of the 10,000 Letter Challenge with the aletterisbetter.com website details at the bottom in the form of a PS.

"Postscript" is an additional thought, comment, or piece of information at the end of a message after your signature and is from the Latin phrase post scriptum, meaning written after.

Just a thought... expecting a reply is not our motivation for writing and sending the letter. It is a gift without conditions.

We write for the pure joy of establishing connection, being authentic and generating that warm sense of accomplishment that arrives when we complete our letter and send it on its journey. Not because we must receive a reply.

Not everyone has the same confidence and writing ability to reply immediately either.

They might have the will but not the way. It might take them a little bit longer. Which is fine. We supply the know-how with this PDF and leave it with them.

No pressure.

We write our letters and release them into the world with joy and without expectation. And if they do reply... AMAZING!

The Three Core Fundamentals of A Letter Is Better:

Connection - your letter will go on a journey. Once you drop it in the postbox it'll most likely get bashed about a little. Squashed even! It'll zoom down a sorting machine of some kind before several pairs of hands will finally pass it along until it arrives at the intended recipient's address..

That's the letter's physical journey.

But what about us? What do we experience as we put pen to paper?

It's a personal journey. It takes effort and time to put pen to paper. There's a deeper meaning and purpose to our words that resonates with the reader because we have provided a physical symbol of our hope to connect. And that is brilliant!

And once we have finished our letter and sent it on its way, we must relinquish any idea of control. Allow the process. A reply might come sooner than you think. Or not at all. That's okay. We can start thinking about the next one! Which is very exciting isn't it?

Authenticity - speaking from our true selves.

It can be hard to express ourselves authentically in some face-to-face situations. The words don't always come out as we planned. We get confused and sometimes say the wrong things which are often difficult to take back once spoken into the world.

Text messages are misunderstood all the time. Email... slightly better but cold and without that real sense of connection.

A Letter Is Better because we have the time to plan and consider what we want to say. No disturbances. No interruptions. Straight from our hearts and onto the paper.

But we do plan. Especially as we develop our letter writing skills. After a while it'll be a natural act and as our confidence grows, so will our ability to write with ease.

Sense of Accomplishment - when we put that final full stop on the paper something happens. A wonderful feeling takes over our bodies. We have created something truly unique.

In order to write the letter we use a great number of skills which we probably don't consider. Cognitive Development: Creative thinking - using our memory, reasoning, and problem-solving abilities. Fine Motor Skills: The coordination of small muscles in the hands and fingers that cooperate with our brains and help us write the words in straight (ish) lines!

That's the physical.

This is creative writing at its finest and goes well beyond the physical act of writing..

On a deeper level, our letters contain a part of ourselves. We give something over. It demonstrates care, effort, and thoughtfulness, and the sender and recipient both benefit from this amazing transaction.

JUST A THOUGHT

If for some reason you can't write a letter using a pen, and there are hundreds of reasons why that might be the case, please take all the information within this PDF and apply it to any way in which you're able to produce a letter.

Every letter counts towards the 10,000 Letter Challenge and your efforts are valued and appreciated.

THE PLAN!

Who am I sending the letter to?

This is the Living Person Edition so let's break down some of the options:

- **Family members.** This person doesn't have to live on the other side of the world. It could be a parent who lives in the next town over. A sibling who works long hours. A Grandparent in a nursing home. There are hundreds of options but I ask you this, who do you think would truly benefit from receiving a letter? Who would you like to connect with on a deeper level? Who would love it?
- **Friends.** Do you have friends living overseas? Have you lost contact with a close friend and now you want to re-establish contact? Which one of your friends would just burst with joy when receiving a letter in the post? Is there someone who needs to hear your words in a quiet, non challenging kind of way? And be able to process and respond in their own time?
- **Public figure.** Has someone inspired you? An actor? Someone in business? A politician? Haha. Joking. How about the owner of your favourite restaurant? The author of a rare book hardly anyone knows about but you love their work?

You get the idea. If they are currently living and you're able to locate their address through the proper channels, you can write them a letter. There's a chance of never knowing if they have received it but it won't diminish the wonderful feeling of writing it.

Remember - it's a gift without conditions.

We write letters because we love it and not for the response.

What is the purpose?

Okay. Here we go. Not every single person we write to will necessarily appreciate what we have to say.

WARNING!

On the whole we like to think the letters we all send are lovely. All good news and sunshine. But in reality that's not the only purpose of writing a letter and sharing thoughts and feelings. Sometimes there might be challenging conversations that need to be had and a letter might be the best way to calmly express your story.

But please don't be reckless.

Think about your actions. Seek support and advice off others before you send it. It never hurts to get feedback from trusted companions in life before we submit a piece of writing in whatever form that may be. So use your best judgement and take your time.

Our first attempt at writing about our feelings can be a little raw. Sometimes it helps to sleep on it!

And for further support please head over to aletterisbetter.com and we can signpost you in the right direction

No matter what content we include in our letters, the purpose will usually return to the three core fundamentals of A Letter Is Better: **Connection. Authenticity. Sense of Accomplishment.**

What order do I want to express my thoughts, opinions, news etc?

Let's delve into the structure of a traditional letter here. We recommend keeping things simple to begin with as our letter writing confidence grows.

1. Greeting - also known as a Salutation.

Adjust your opening to suit the living recipient of your letter:

- Dear... Stranger I've never met. Very bog standard opening. Nothing wrong with using it of course. It's worked in the past and long may it continue.
- My Dearest... Aunt Martha! Moves it up a level from "Dear" and shows a warmer or closer relationship to the recipient.
- Hey... Buddy. This is a very relaxed greeting. Feels a touch American. But it represents an opportunity to sound super friendly as if you were meeting face-to-face. Other possibilities could be, Alright, How you doing? or Hi. You will know which one suits your personality style.
- Hello my amazing... could be anyone. Just as long as they're amazing of course!

These are just options.

And it all depends on the kind of letter we're writing. It's possible to start with the person's name then add some kind of acknowledgement which captures the tone we wish to convey.

Mary, it's been a while...

Or...

John, my old friend...

Or...

I hope this letter finds you well, Mary.

Or...

How have you been getting on, John? I heard you started a new...

Again, we adjust the tone depending on the relationship.

2. The Personal Touch.

After the greeting it's nice to provide that personal touch. It'll help establish Connection. This is just as important if we do not know the recipient personally:

- I watched your TED Talk the other day and it blew my mind...
- You were so amazing in that movie. I loved it and wanted...
- I was compelled to write this letter after reading about your...
- I was washing the car the other day and remembered that time we...
- Do you remember when we walked...
- It's been ten years since we...;

But what if we are sharing sad news or something emotionally complicated?

- I need to share something important with you so please read in a quiet place...
- There's something I've been meaning to talk to you about but I...
- I was sad to hear about...
- I've written this letter because I sometimes find it difficult to...

This depends on the tone and content of our letter. The three core fundamentals of A Letter Is Better: **Connection. Authenticity. Sense of Accomplishment** are there as a guide..

Whatever the news is we share, Authenticity is the key. This builds a stronger Connection which in turn provides that wonderful and personal sense of Accomplishment.

BEFORE MOVING TO THE
NEXT SECTION PLEASE
REMEMBER...

Our letters DO NOT NEED
TO BE PERFECT.

Life is not perfect.

Mistakes happen.

3. The Body of the Letter.

This is the main part of our letters that could benefit from a bit of planning beforehand if we want to feel more prepared. Or when helping our little ones. But if we know exactly what to say, and there are no concerns about spelling or grammar, just go for it!

What to include?

Share personal updates from your life or reasons why you want to connect:

- You'll never guess where I'm moving...
- Do you remember that job I wanted...
- I've watched all your movies and...
- I feel very passionate about your situation and...
- I wanted to share something that's been on my mind...
- I've decided it's time I...
- After listening to your speech I felt compelled...

Ask about their life:

- How are things with you...
- Did you ever buy that car you always wanted...
- What is your next project, I'd love to get involved...
- How did you manage after...
- When are you planning on...
- Where do you think you'll go...
- What was it like playing a SuperHero...

Tell stories and be yourself:

- Stories are a fantastic way to build connection and entertain.
- Share funny and interesting facts about your life or something you experienced.
- Be authentic.
- Don't overthink.
- Enjoy yourself.

4. Closing Thoughts and Signing Off.

This is a great opportunity to express our affection, hopes for future correspondence and connection. Or any other significant feelings we'd like to convey before signing off.

The tone will all depend on our relationship with the recipient of course and we can adjust our words appropriately as we come to the end of the letter.

- I've loved writing this letter to you...
- Sending you my thoughts and...
- I hope we can meet up in person...
- This was my first ever letter and...
- It took me ten years to write this and I hope...

Signing Off:

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- Yours sincerely (Formal. Letters to a stranger.)
- Warmly...
- With love...
- All the best...
- Your friend...
- Anything else you can think of!

Then sign your name!

Amazing you did it... almost.

POSTSCRIPT.

Include a brief outline of the 10,000 Letter Challenge with the aletterisbetter.com website details at the bottom in the form of a PS. And anything else quirky or fun you can think of.

EXTRAS:

- Personal Photographs: Life events, family members or whatever you can think of.
- Small Gifts: A drawing, craft, knitted scarf etc. Note: You'll require a bigger envelope and the cost of postage will increase.
- Anything Flat: A favourite quote, poem or meaningful passage from a piece of literature that deepens your relationship further.

How do I find the address?

This is not so straightforward.

To connect with a public figure, celebrity etc, it's possible to locate their address or forwarding information through:

- Fan Clubs.
- Agents and Publicists.
- Official Website.
- Social Media Pages.

Friends and Family:

- Speak with friends and family who might know.
- Use online services (paid for) like 192.com.
- Contact the recipient and ask directly.
Maybe say you'd like to send them something but don't specify if you want to keep the letter a surprise.

One more thing....

Can you guess what's missing?

One vital piece of formatting to remember...

Always write your address in the top righthand corner of every letter that you send!

We totally forgot to include this detail in the PDF. Added later on.

Life is not perfect, and our PDF's aren't either!

And that is it!

Thank you so much for becoming part
of the 10,000 Letter Challenge.

Don't forget to complete the following:

1. WRITE YOUR LETTER AND INCLUDE THE ALETTERISBETTER.COM INFORMATION WITHIN IT SO THE RECIPIENT CAN TAKE PART ALSO.
2. TAKE A PICTURE OF YOUR LETTER AT THE POST BOX AND SHARE ON ONE OF OUR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS.
FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM
3. WE WILL UPDATE THE 10,000 LETTER COUNTDOWN AND CONGRATULATE YOU PERSONALLY ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

THE COUNT IS ON

10,000

LETTERS SENT BY 2030





YOU ARE PART
OF SOMETHING
AMAZING!

10,000
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