

Materials Needed:

- Paper (lined or unlined)
- Pen or Pencil
- (Optional) Envelopes and stamps if mailing the letter

Let's Write Like We Talk! An Intro to Informal Letters

Hey there! Ever wanted to send a message that's more personal than a text or email? That's where informal letters come in! Think of them as written conversations with people you know well – friends, family, cousins, maybe even a pen pal.

Unlike formal letters (the kind you might send for a job application or a complaint), informal letters are relaxed, friendly, and use everyday language. You can share news, tell stories, ask questions, and just generally chat on paper.

The Anatomy of a Friendly Letter

Even though they're casual, informal letters still have a basic structure:

1. **The Date:** Usually goes in the top right corner. Just write the date you're writing the letter (e.g., October 26, 2023).
2. **The Salutation (Greeting):** This is your friendly 'hello'. Start with 'Dear [Name],' followed by a comma. Examples: 'Dear Aunt Carol,', 'Hi Sam,', 'Hey Bestie,'.
3. **The Body:** This is the main part of your letter – the chat! It's usually broken into paragraphs. Talk about what you've been up to, ask questions, share funny stories, respond to things they might have written in a previous letter. Keep it conversational!
4. **The Closing:** Your friendly 'goodbye'. This goes below the body, slightly indented or aligned with the date. Examples: 'Sincerely,', 'Your friend,', 'Love,', 'Best wishes,', 'Talk soon,'. Put a comma after the closing.
5. **The Signature:** Simply sign your name below the closing.

Tone Time! Keeping it Casual

What makes an informal letter feel friendly?

- **Use contractions:** 'don't', 'it's', 'you're' are totally fine!
- **Ask questions:** Show you're interested in the other person ('How have you been?', 'What did you think of that movie?').
- **Share personal thoughts and feelings:** It's okay to be open with friends and family.
- **Use exclamation points (sparingly!):** To show excitement.
- **Write like you speak (mostly!):** Keep your language natural and comfortable.

Your Turn to Write!

Let's practice! Choose someone you'd like to write to (a friend, grandparent, cousin, sibling, or even a fictional character you like!).

Ideas for your letter:

- Tell them about something exciting that happened to you recently.
- Describe a book you just read or a movie you watched.
- Recall a fun memory you share with them.
- Ask them for advice about something.
- Plan something fun you could do together in the future.
- Just check in and ask how they are doing!

Grab your paper and pen and give it a go! Remember the parts of the letter and keep your tone friendly and conversational. Have fun chatting on paper!