

*This example uses the **BLOCK** format of the business letter*

*Return address and date* { 5 Hill Street  
Madison, Wisconsin 53700  
  
September 9, 2016

*Inside address* { Ms. Helen Jones  
President  
Jones, Jones & Jones  
123 International Lane  
Boston, Massachusetts 01234

*Salutation* { Dear Ms. Jones:

*Body Text* { There are two common business letter formats. They are the block format and indented format.

To simplify matters, we're demonstrating the block format on this page. For authoritative advice about all the variations, I highly recommend latest edition of *The Gregg Reference Manual*, New York: McGraw-Hill. It is a great reference tool for workplace communications.

There seems to be no consensus about whether to skip a line after your return address and before the date. Some guidelines suggest that you do and others do not. Most important is the content of the letter itself and making your point.

When you use the block form to write a business letter, all the information is typed flush left, with one-inch margins all around. The structure of the letter is as follows:

- Type your return address (your own address) unless preprinted stationery is used
- Then skip a line and provide the date (optional)
- Skip one more line and provide the inside address of the party to whom you are writing to
- For formal letters, avoid abbreviations where possible
- Skip a line and type the salutation, which should be followed by a colon
- Skip a line and type the body of your letter with no indentation at the beginnings of paragraphs.
- Skip one line between paragraphs
- After the body of the letter, skip a line and type the closing followed by a comma
- Leave 3 blank lines, skip a line and type your name and title (if applicable)
- Sign the letter in the blank space above your typed name

*Closing* { Sincerely,

*Your signature goes here*

*Typed name and title* { John Doe  
Administrative Assistant

*This example uses the INDENTED format of the business letter*

*Return address  
and date*

5 Hill Street  
Madison, Wisconsin 53700  
September 9, 2016

*Inside address*

Ms. Helen Jones  
President  
Jones, Jones & Jones  
123 International Lane  
Boston, Massachusetts 01234

*Salutation*

Dear Ms. Jones:

There are two common business letter formats. They are the block format and indented format.

To simplify matters, we're demonstrating the indented format on this page. For authoritative advice about all the variations, I highly recommend latest edition of *The Gregg Reference Manual*, New York: McGraw-Hill. It is a great reference tool for workplace communications.

There seems to be no consensus about whether to skip a line after your return address and before the date. Some guidelines suggest that you do and others do not. Most important is the content of the letter itself and making your point.

*Body Text*

If you are using the indented style for a business letter:

- Type your return address (your own address) at the top, with the left edge of the address aligned with the center of the page unless preprinted stationery is used
- Skip a line and type the date so that it lines up underneath your address.
- Skip a line and type the inside address flush left
- Skip a line and type the salutation flush left followed by a colon.
- For formal letters avoid abbreviations
- Type the body of the letter and indent the first line of each paragraph one-half inch
- Skip one line between paragraphs
- Type the closing with its left edge aligned with the return address
- Leave 3 blank lines and type your name aligned with the closing
- Sign your name in the blank space above your typed name

*Closing*

{ Sincerely,

*Your signature goes here*

*Typed name*

{ John Doe