

S4 Checklist: Letter to the editor

Readers of newspapers often write a letter to the editor to comment on something they have read, usually in the hope that the letter will be published in the newspaper. When writing a letter to the editor, take the aspects for writing a formal letter into account. Use formal language, but include strong statements. Before you start writing the letter, you will need to note down important facts and points from the text you are reacting to. Note down any other ideas you have and arrange all of them in a logical order.

Dos	<p>Introduction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Start with <i>Sir</i>, or <i>Madam</i>,✓ Leave out any introductory or closing remarks with which you show your politeness or personal interest. Concentrate on the point you are trying to make.✓ Name the article you refer to at the beginning of your letter.✓ Give the reason why you are writing the letter, i.e. what you support/criticize/ would like to comment on about the article. <p>Main part:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Follow a clear line of argument and stick to the most important point(s).✓ Explain why you share or oppose the author's point of view.✓ Support your arguments with evidence and examples. <p>Conclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ End with a strong statement that sums up your position and/or says what you expect from future articles on the issue.✓ Just sign your name and state your place of residence at the end.
Don'ts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✗ Don't use <i>Yours sincerely/faithfully</i> at the end.✗ Don't quote from the original article unless it is absolutely necessary.✗ Don't retell the article and explain it to the editor, but explain your view.

Language support

Starting the letter:

- *I am writing to you in response to the article ...*
- *Having read your article ..., I would like to point out ...*
- *In the article ..., the author ... claims that ...*
- *The article ... by ... raises the question of whether ...*

Expressing your opinion in the main part of the text:

- *I would like to congratulate you on ...*
- *I personally believe that ...*
- *I could not have put it better myself.*
- *It is beyond doubt that ...*
- *You are absolutely right when you say .../I utterly agree with you that ...*
- *I wholeheartedly endorse ...*

- *As a firm believer in .../As a supporter of ..., I totally agree/I see no reason why ...*
- *Although I understand why ..., I cannot accept the overall conclusion that ...*
- *I see the author's point, but I still feel that ...*
- *I think ... is mistaken if he/she believes ...*
- *What you need to keep in mind is ...*
- *I would question the argument that ...*
- *Your author overlooks the fact that ...*

Ending with a strong statement:

- *The question can no longer be whether ..., but ...*
- *However, doesn't the evidence I have cited prove that ...?*
- *All in all, there can be no doubt that ...*
- *Ultimately, what matters is (that) ...*