# The Art of the Formal Letter

Master the Mail: Write with Purpose and Precision!

■ **The Sender’s Address: Always place your own address in the top right-hand corner of the page to ensure the recipient knows exactly where to send their reply.**

■ **The Salutation: If you know the recipient's name, use 'Dear Mr/Ms [Surname],'. If the name is unknown, use the formal 'Dear Sir/Madam,'.**

■ **The Opening Paragraph: State the purpose of your letter immediately. Be clear, polite, and professional from the very first sentence.**

■ **The Main Body: Use formal vocabulary and avoid contractions (e.g., use 'do not' instead of 'don't'). Keep each new point in its own clear paragraph.**

■ **The Sign-off: If you started with a name, finish with 'Yours sincerely,'. If you used 'Dear Sir/Madam,', finish with 'Yours faithfully,'.**

*Did you know? Did you know? Before the invention of the adhesive postage stamp in 1840, the person receiving the letter—not the person sending it—usually had to pay the delivery fee! It was often very expensive, which is why people used to write across the page in both directions to save space.*

**Key vocabulary: Salutation · Recipient · Formal tone · Sign-off · Concise · Paragraphing**