

HOW TO WRITE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

A letter to the editor is an opportunity to share your opinion directly with a newspaper's audience. It should be a concise response to a recently published article. Whether your letter's purpose is to show your support for a cause or to set the record straight, your letter should present a persuasive argument. While reaching out to national papers such as *The New York Times* can garner broad attention, writing a letter to your hometown paper will reach an important, and often diverse, audience.

FORMAL HEADER

Editor's Name
Name of publication
Address
City, State, ZIP code

Know your audience and publication—read other letters to the editor from the newspaper where you're submitting yours to get a sense of tone, style, and required word count (usually under 500 words).

YOUR INFORMATION

Full Name
Address
City, State, Zipcode

Dear _____,

YOUR STORY

- **Lead** with an evocative story or quote that speaks to the heart of your response. How or why did the original article affect you?
- **State your cause in simple terms**
Your letter should be in response to an article published no longer than a week ago.
- **Use evidence to support your argument**, like statistics, anecdotes, and personal stories. While it's important to be passionate, always maintain a respectful and positive tone.
- **Conclude** with your solution or a call to action.

Sincerely,

Your Name+Signature

REMEMBER TO:

- Proofread your work! It's important that your letter is edited and error-free.
- Not get discouraged if your letter isn't published. Try asking for feedback from the publication and submitting your letter to other outlets.



ILLINOIS HOLOCAUST MUSEUM
& EDUCATION CENTER

Developed by the Take A Stand Center at the Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center