

Video Transcript : Cover letter

A resume without a cover letter is like a burger without a bun. If you really wanted a job from somebody, you wouldn't send them a burger without a bun, would you?

Of course not.

To complete this How-To you will need:

A computer, typewriter, or some other mechanical writing device

Step 1: Address to specific person

Address the letter to a specific person. Writing "to whom it may concern" is lazy—tracking down the right person shows real moxie.

Tip: If you're unsure who to write, call the company and ask. Make sure you get their exact title and the correct spelling of their name.

Step 2: Open with introduction

Open your letter with a short introduction that gets right to the point—say what position you're after and how you found out about it.

Step 3: Demonstrate knowledge of company

Demonstrate that you understand what the company does, and show enthusiasm for whatever that is.

Tip: Read through the company's website to find details you can mention in your letter.

Step 4: Relate past experience

Relate your past work experience to the current opening. Don't count on employers to connect the dots and realize how your previous jobs are relevant.

Step 5: Mention specific things

If you're responding to a job posting, adapt your writing to address specific things mentioned in the post.

Tip: Keep your cover letter short and concise. It shouldn't be longer than a page. A few brief paragraphs is enough.

Step 6: Mention attachments

If you are attaching additional materials, like a portfolio or a reel, mention that at the end of the letter.

Step 7: Add suitable closing

After thanking your reader, sign off with a suitable closing, like "Sincerely" or "Best." And type your name on the next line.

If you're mailing your letter, leave four blank lines between your closing and your typed name so you have room for your signature.

Step 8: Include contact information

Make sure you've included all your contact information, even if it's already on your resume.

Step 9: Proofread letter

Proofread your letter carefully, word by word. Have a friend read it over. At least twice.

Tip: If you're emailing the letter, send it to yourself first to make sure there are no formatting errors.

Step 10: Send letter

Send your letter!

And rest assured that your extra care will set you apart from the crowd.