

# Applying for a job



## Learner guide

Ready for work

**Pre-employment skills**

# **Applying for a job**

Version 1.2



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### Writing application letters

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## What is a cover letter?

When you apply for a job, you need to write a letter that introduces you and says why you would be good at doing the job. This is called a cover letter. You send it along with your resumé.



The cover letter tells the employer or person advertising the job many things:

- Why you are writing to them
- What skills you have
- Why you want the job

Your cover letter must be clear and well written. It should make the employer want to read your resumé. A resumé is a list of the things you have done (your experience) and the things you know how to do (your skills). You can read more about resúmes in the Aspire learner guide *Preparing a resumé*.

The employer will read your resumé if they like your cover letter. If they like your resumé as well, they may ask you to come for a job interview.

You should send a cover letter and a resumé when you apply for a job. Most job applications are sent by email or uploaded to an online application form. Send an email with your cover letter and resumé as attachments. If you don't know how to do this, you can ask an instructor or friend to help.

## Reading the job ad

Usually you will find out about a job by reading an advertisement. Almost all job ads are online these days. You might see a job ad in a shop or café window. Newspapers still have some job ads too, but it is easier to search online for jobs.

Here is an example of a job ad:

Baker wanted
<p>Must have at least two years' experience. Experience with cake decorating an advantage.</p> <p>Please send resumé to Penny Harris at: <a href="mailto:pharris@bakery.com">pharris@bakery.com</a></p> <p>Applications close 12/07/18.</p>

The job ad tells you this information.

What the job ad says	What this tells you
Baker	What the job is – baking.
Must have at least two years' experience	What skills or experience you need to get the job – the word 'must' means you need to have this. If you don't have two years' experience baking, the employer won't consider you for the job.
Experience with cake decorating an advantage	An advantage means this skill or experience is something the employer is looking for. You don't need to have it but it may help you get the job.  If you have experience decorating cakes you will have a better chance of getting the job than someone who does not have any experience decorating cakes.
Please send resumé to Penny Harris	Who you should send your resumé to – Penny Harris is the person you should send it to.

What the job ad says	What this tells you
pharris@bakery.com	How you should send your resumé – this is Penny’s email address, so you need to email your resumé to this address.
Applications close 12/07/18	When you must send your resumé by – you must send it by 12 July 2018.  If you send your resumé after this date, it will be too late.

Note that this job ad does not ask for a cover letter. A lot of job ads only say you have to send a resumé but you should always send a cover letter as well.

## Activity 1

Read this job ad.

### **Office assistant**

Office assistant needed for busy real estate company.

Must have good typing skills.  
Experience in real estate an advantage.

Send resumé to Rita Woodsworth,  
r.woodsworth@estate.com.au, by  
5 June 2018.

1. What is the job?

---

2. What skills do you need for the job?

---

3. What is it an advantage to have?

---

4. Who should you send your resumé to?

---

5. How should you send your resumé?

---

6. When do you need to send your resumé by?

---

7. The ad says 'send resumé'. What else should you send?

---

[Click to complete Activity 1](#)

## When to apply for the job

A job ad tells you when you need to apply for the job by. You have to send your cover letter and resumé by the closing date if you want to be considered for the job.

If you send the application after the closing date it will be too late. The employer may not read your application. They may have already hired someone for the job.

Make sure you check the date when you are looking at job ads. The closing date can be given in various ways.

Here are some examples:

- Shop assistant wanted for bookshop. Applications close 4 June 2018.
- Mechanic needed for busy autoshop. Must apply by 31 December 2018.

If no closing date is listed, you should apply as soon as you can.



## How to start the letter

You need to put your contact information at the start of your cover letter so that the person reading it can find it easily.

Information	What it looks like
Your contact information	<p>Your home or postal address; for example: 123 Green St, Greensville, VIC 1234</p> <p>Your email address; for example: tomsmith@email.com.au</p> <p>Your telephone number; for example: 0444 333 333</p>

You also need to write the date. You then write 'Dear \_\_\_\_\_' and the name of the person you have to write to. Remember, the ad will tell you who to write to.

Here is an example.

123 Green Street  
Greensville, VIC 1234  
tomsmith@email.com.au  
0444 333 333

7 March 2018

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

## Using the job ad to write the letter

Here is an example job ad.

**Shop Assistant**

Shop assistant wanted for weekend work at sports store. Must have retail experience. Knowledge of sports is needed. Send your application to the Manager, Barry Mancini, at [manager@sportsandall.com.au](mailto:manager@sportsandall.com.au). Applications close 12/03/18.

Source: Greensville Community Hub website

A good cover letter is clear and to the point. It should say why you would be good at the job and why you would like to have the job.

Look at the different parts of a job ad to see what you should write in your cover letter. Make sure you tell the employer you have all the things they are looking for. You should write something about each part of the job ad.

Here is what someone would write if they wanted to apply for the job above.

Part of the job ad	What you may write
Who to apply to	Dear Mr Mancini – this is the name of the manager of the store. It is who you are sending your application letter to.
What the job is	I am writing to apply for the position of shop assistant at Sports and All.
Where you saw the job advertised	I saw this position advertised online at the Greensville Community Hub website.
Must have retail experience	From 2015–2017 I worked in a hardware shop where I used the cash register, put new products on shelves and helped customers find what they wanted.
Knowledge of sports is needed	I enjoy watching and playing many sports, including football, basketball and golf. I play on a basketball team and I used to coach younger players.
Weekend work	I am available to work weekends.

## How to finish the letter

Near the end of the letter, tell the employer you look forward to meeting him or her. This makes you sound confident and friendly. It tells the employer that you are interested in talking more about the job in a job interview.



Then you need to close the letter. To do this, write 'Yours sincerely' and then write your name.

Here is an example:

*I look forward to having the opportunity to meet with you.*

*Yours sincerely*

*Peter McGregor*

## Putting it all together

Now you can put all the parts of the letter together. Start with the date, then your personal details. Then write about each part of the job ad. Finish by saying you look forward to meeting the employer, and close the letter.



Here is an example.

11 Green Street  
Greensville, VIC 1234  
p.mcgregor@email.com.au  
0444 111 222

7 March 2018

Dear Mr Mancini

I am writing to apply for the position of shop assistant at Sports and All. I saw this position advertised online on the Greensville Community Hub website on Saturday 5 March.

From 2015–2017 I worked in a hardware shop where I used the cash register, put new products on shelves and helped customers find what they wanted.

I enjoy watching and playing many sports, including football, basketball and golf. I play on a basketball team and I used to coach younger players.

I am available to work weekends.

I look forward to having the opportunity to meet with you.

Yours sincerely

Peter McGregor

## Activity 2

Read the job ad below. Then read Janice's cover letter for this job.

### **Fast Couriers**

Courier wanted for weekend work. Applicants must have experience and a driver's licence. Courier will be responsible for delivering heavy boxes to the inner-eastern suburbs.

Send your resumé to HR Manager, Ms Sue Peters, at 1A Green Street, Greensville, VIC 1234.

Applications close 29 May 2018.

21 Even Road  
Marshfield, QLD 7019  
janice.samson@email.com.au  
0444 444 444

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing to apply for the position of courier with Fast Couriers. I saw the position advertised on Seek.

I believe I would make a great courier because I worked for a restaurant as a delivery person.

I have a driver's licence. I enjoy exercise, so I am strong and can lift heavy things. I am also always on time and know my way around the inner-eastern suburbs.

I am available to work on weekends.

Janice Samson

Janice forgot to write some important things in the letter. Here is a list of the things she should have included. Put a ✓ in the box next to the things Janice wrote and an X in the box next to the things Janice forgot to do.

- Janice wrote the date.
- Janice wrote her address and contact information.
- Janice addressed the letter to the employer, Ms Sue Peters.
- Janice told the employer the position she was applying for and where she saw the job ad.
- Janice wrote what experience she had.
- Janice wrote that she has a driver's licence.
- Janice wrote when she could work.
- Janice told the employer she looked forward to meeting her.
- Janice wrote 'Yours sincerely' and her name.

[Click to complete Activity 2](#)

## Five tips for writing a great letter

1. Be polite
  - You must be very polite and formal in your application letter. For example, write ‘Dear Ms Peters’ instead of ‘Hi Sue’.
2. Use short sentences
  - Try to keep your sentences and paragraphs short. The person reading your application wants to learn about you quickly.
3. Only write one page
  - The person reading your cover letter will have to read lots of letters, so they will not want to read your letter if it is more than one page. Your resumé can be more than one page.
4. Check for mistakes
  - Always check your cover letter for mistakes and fix these before you send it. Ask someone else to check your cover letter too. Sometimes you make mistakes and don’t see them.
5. Make sure your letter is neat
  - Keep your letter simple. Use a plain, professional black font. It is best not to use fancy fonts, all capitals, emojis or too much formatting. If you are printing the letter out, use plain white paper.



## What you have learnt

Put a ✓ in the box when you have understood or done these things.

- A cover letter is a letter you send with a resumé.
- A cover letter introduces you to the employer and tells them why you would be good for the job.
- Read the job ad carefully.
- Check the closing date for applications.
- Include the date and your personal information at the start of the letter.
- Write the letter to the person named in the ad.
- Write about each of the things in the ad.
- Finish the letter by writing that you look forward to meeting with the employer, and then close the letter 'Yours sincerely' and write your name.
- Make sure your letter:
  - is polite
  - uses short sentences
  - is no longer than a page
  - does not have any mistakes
  - is typed professionally.

## Check your learning

Write your own cover letter for a job you are interested in.



[Click to complete](#)

# Answers

## Answers to activities

### Activity 1

#### Answer to Question 1

Office assistant for a real estate company.

#### Answer to Question 2

Good typing skills.

#### Answer to Question 3

Experience in real estate.

#### Answer to Question 4

Rita Woodsworth.

#### Answer to Question 5

Email it to r.woodsworth@estate.com.au.

#### Answer to Question 6

5 June 2018.

#### Answer to Question 7

You should always send a cover letter as well as your resumé.

### Activity 2

#### Answer

- Janice wrote the date.
- Janice wrote her address and contact information.
- Janice addressed the letter to the employer, Ms Sue Peters.
- Janice told the employer the position she was applying for and where she saw the job ad.
- Janice wrote what experience she had.
- Janice wrote that she has a driver's licence.
- Janice wrote when she could work.
- Janice told the employer she looked forward to meeting her.
- Janice wrote 'Yours sincerely' and her name.

## Answers to Check your learning

Your answer will be different but it should have the same types of information. It is a good idea to have a friend check your cover letter before you apply for a job.

Here is an example:

11 Green Street  
Greensville, VIC 1234  
p.mcgregor@email.com.au  
0444 333 333

7 March 2018

Dear Mr Mancini

I am writing to apply for the position of shop assistant at Sports and All. I saw this position advertised online on the Greensville Community Hub website on Saturday 5 March.

From 2015–2017 I worked in a hardware shop where I used the cash register, put new products on shelves and helped customers find what they wanted.

I enjoy watching and playing many sports, including football, basketball and golf. I play on a basketball team and I used to coach younger players.

I am available to work weekends.

I look forward to having the opportunity to meet with you.

Yours sincerely

Peter McGregor