

WRITING: A COMPLAINT

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INTRODUCTION

- **A letter of complaint** usually deals with **bad services** or **unsatisfactory goods**.
- It describes **the faults(s) of the services or goods** and emphasizes **the customer's dissatisfaction** with them.
- There is usually a **suggested conclusion** (eg a refund).
- The style is **formal** and polite.

THE LAYOUT

**Addressee
(who you are
writing to)**

Robert K. Shelton
The manager
Sunny Hotel
12 Lazy Beach
San Francisco, CA 941 23
USA

17 East Garden
PORTSMOUTH
PO21 5AC
UNITED KINGDOM

**Your address,
but not your
name**

**Salutation
(Dear ...,)**

Dear Mr. Shelton,

19th July 2013

Date

Message

I am writing to complain about ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Duis risus.

Unfortunately, habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Nulla turpis magna, cursus sit amet, suscipit a, interdum id, felis. Itaque earum rerum hic tenetur a sapiente delectus, ut aut reiciendis voluptatibus maiores alias.

I feel that your hotel should tellus id magna elementum tincidunt. Proin in tellus sit amet nibh dignissim sagittis. Nullam feugiat, turpis at pulvinar vulputate, erat libero tristique tellus, nec bibendum odio risus sit amet ante. Nulla non lectus sed nisl molestie malesuada.

**Concluding
comment**

I look forward to hearing from you.

Your signature

Yours faithfully,

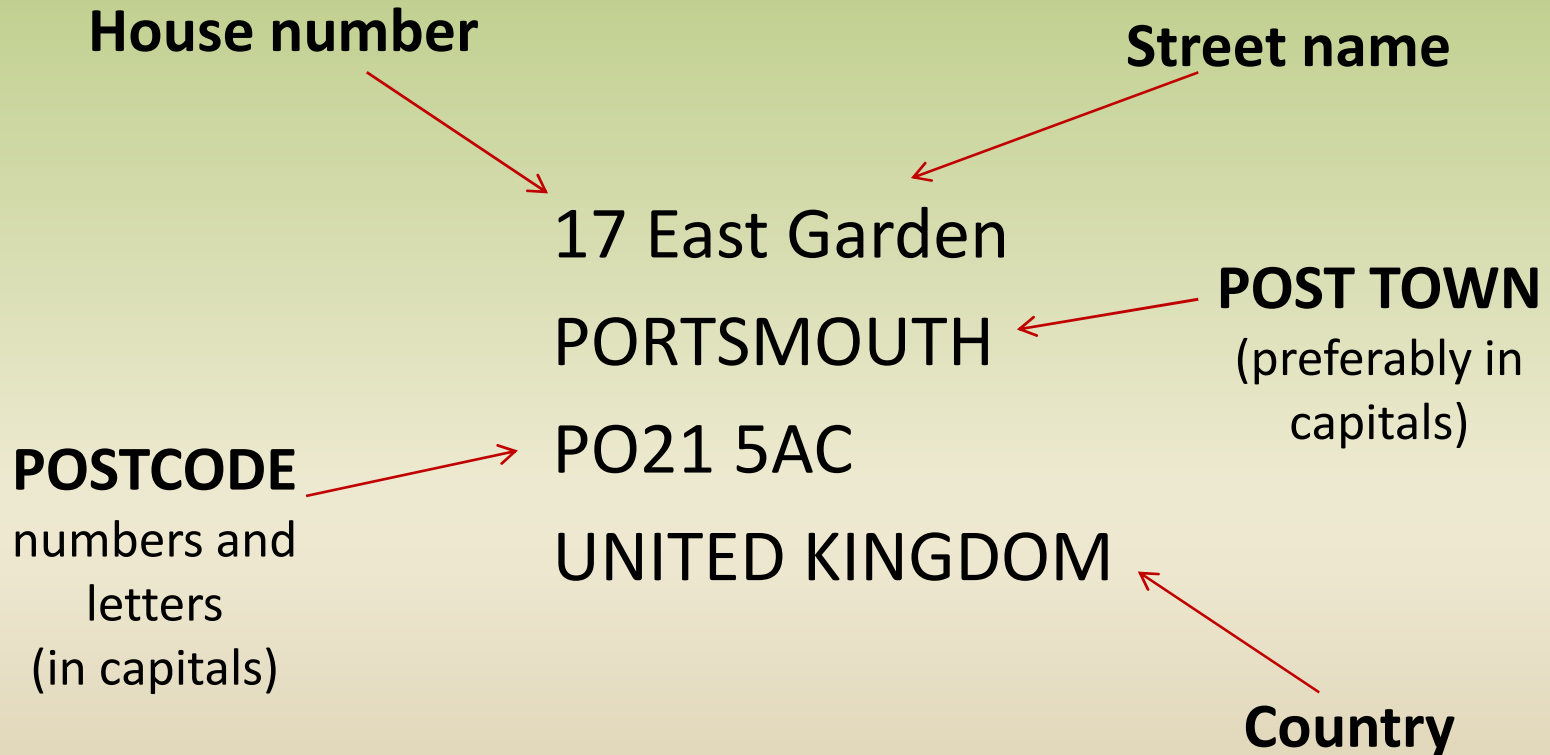
[John Hill](#)

John Hill

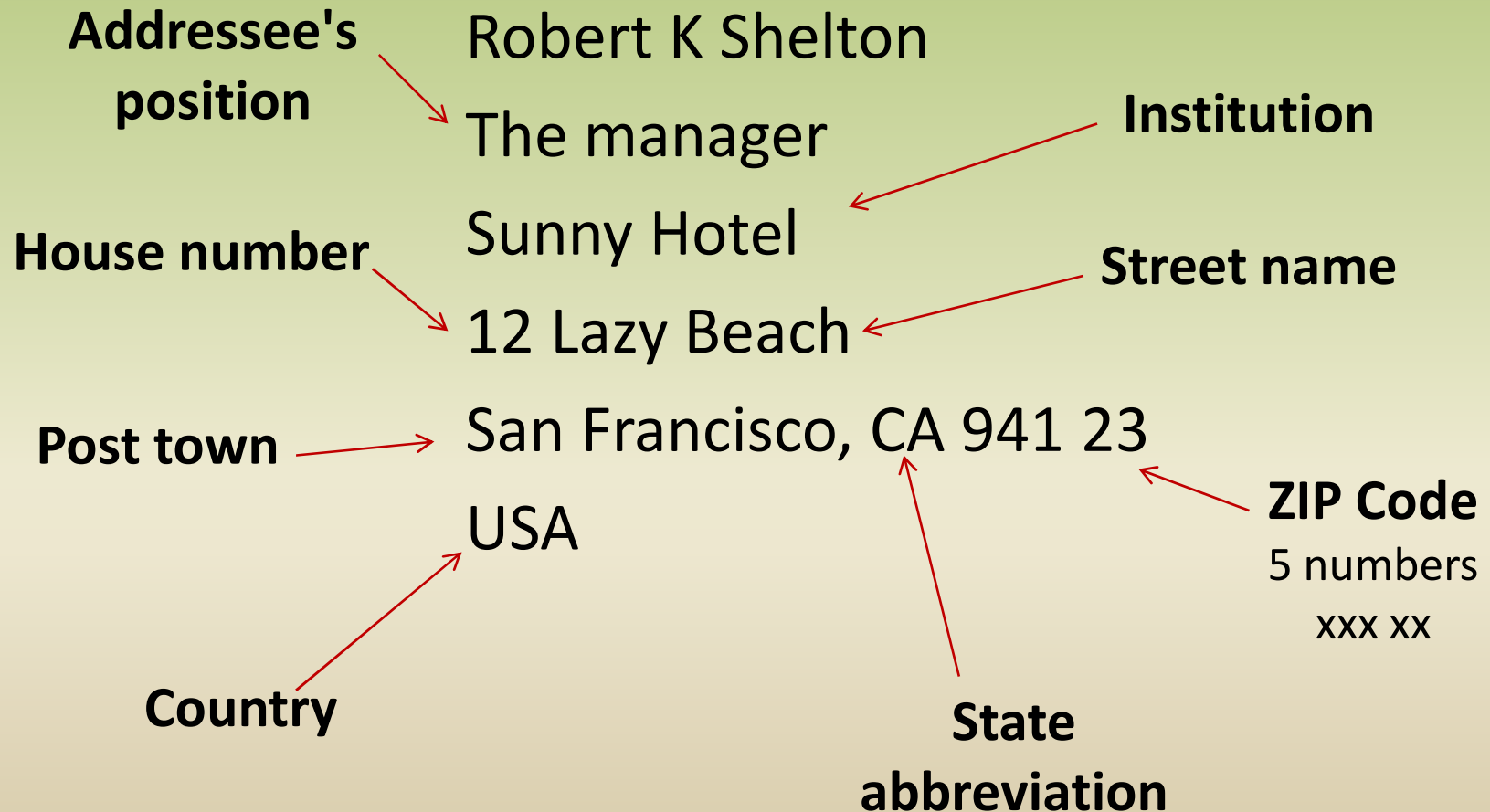
**Complimentary
closing**

Your name

YOUR ADDRESS (UK)



THE ADDRESSEE (USA)



SALUTATION

In case of a **letter of complaint** you should always write to people **by name**. You should find out people's names and their proper positions.

SALUTATION:	WHEN TO USE IT:
Dear Mr + surname,	if the addressee is male
Dear Mrs + surname,	if the addressee is a married woman
Dear Miss + surname,	if the addressee is a single woman
Dear Ms + surname,	if you don't know the woman's marital status

After the salutation use a **comma (,)** or **nothing**

THE MESSAGE (1)

- The style and vocabulary is **formal**.
- Never use **colloquial language** or **slang**.
- **Avoid abusing language**.
- Make sure your grammar and spelling correct. Mistakes make your letter less forceful.
- Avoid using **contracted forms** (~~*I'm; you're; haven't; hasn't; ...*~~)
- Be factual – if you complain about people, use names. (eg. "*the receptionist - Mr. John Wade*" instead of "~~*the receptionist*~~" only).
- *Avoid generalized criticism* – give clear and relevant information what the problem is.

THE MESSAGE (2)

- Make sure you divide the text into logical **paragraphs**.
- In the **first paragraph** say why you are writing and give some background to what happened.
- Then describe what happened in detail and give reasons for complaining.
- In the **final paragraph** tell the company what you want them to do and give a reasonable term when you expect them to do this.

THE MESSAGE (3)

Possible openings:

- I am writing to complain about ...
- I am writing to inform you of ...
- This letter is to notify you about ...
- I am sorry to inform you that ...

Other useful phrases:

- I am returning the defective / damaged goods ... and I will be glad if you can repair / service /replace them.
- I must claim / demand for a refund.
- Thank you for your cooperation / assistance in resolving my problem.
- I hope you can resolve this matter as soon as possible.

CONCLUDING COMMENT AND COMPLIMENTARY CLOSING

At the end use:

"I look forward to hearing from you (soon/shortly)."

This is more formal (and suitable) than:

~~*"I'm looking forward to hearing"*~~

Follow by:

"Yours sincerely" as you should have the contact name (and have begun with *"Dear Mr / Mrs /..."*).

YOUR SIGNATURE AND NAME

- Always remember to **sign your letter in pen** and **type your full name underneath your signature.**
- You may include your academic degree(s) at your name, but don't use them in your signature.

TASK

Imagine you are going to complain about your dissatisfaction with a stay in a hotel. As a compensation, ask the hotel manager for a refund or a price reduction.

You may find the following phrases useful:

noisy hotel room, dirty furniture, uncomfortable beds, swimming pool closed for repairs, broken air-conditioning, dirty laundry

The contact address includes the following fragments:

FL / 336 10 /Chestnut Street / William Smith / 15 / The manager / Tampa

Write your letter of complaint including your address and the correctly organized contact address.



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MINISTERSTVO ŠKOLSTVÍ,
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OP Vzdělávání
pro konkurenceschopnost

INVESTICE DO ROZVOJE VZDĚLÁVÁNÍ

DIGITÁLNÍ UČEBNÍ MATERIÁL

Předmět:	Jazyk anglický
Tématický celek:	Slohové útvary v AJ
Název DUMu:	Complaint
Anotace:	Prezentace vysvětluje náležitosti psaní stížnosti - rozvržení (layout), norma zápisu adresy ve Velké Británii i USA, oslovení (salutation), vhodné stylistické náležitosti zprávy (message), závěr (concluding comment) a závěrečná zdvořilostní fráze (complimentary closing). Součástí je zadání úkolu - napsat stížnost na základě nespokojenosti s pobytem v hotelu.
Autor:	Novotný Petr
Jazyk:	angličtina
Očekávaný výstup:	Žák umí napsat stížnost.
Klíčová slova:	complaint, address, salutation, concluding comment, complimentary closing
Druh učebního materiálu:	prezentace
Druh interaktivity:	kombinovaný
Cílová skupina:	žák
Stupeň a typ vzdělávání:	gymnaziální vzdělávání
Typická věková skupina:	3. ročník SŠ
Zdroje informací:	Urbanová, L; Oakland, A. Úvod do anglické stylistiky. Brno: BARRISTER & PRINCIPAL, 2002. Falla, T; Davies, P. Maturita Solutions. Oxford: OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2009.