



# Rules and tips for submitting letters

**Email:** Usually found at the newspaper website.

It's not that easy to get a letter published in newspapers. They get several hundred submissions every day and generally publish about 25. But there are many things you can do to improve your letter's chances. Here are a few.

**Keep it short** Recommended to be no longer than 200 words. Generally one is published each day that is longer; most are much shorter.

**Keep it simple** Try to make one or two clear points. You can't solve all the world's problems in one letter.

**Keep it with us** Don't copy your letter to other newspapers. Letters known to have been sent elsewhere, are less likely to be published. If you write regularly to other papers, make it clear you have not offered your letter elsewhere.

**Keep it fresh** Please don't send the same letter over and over again. Or dozens of letters on one day. Newspapers like regular letter writers, but want the greatest diversity possible on the page, so you should not expect to be published more than about twice a month or once a week. The more you write, the less likely it is that any given letter will be published. Save them for your most compelling thoughts.

**Keep it civil** Don't abuse people. However strongly you feel about your point, extreme language and wild analogies are unlikely to make it more effectively. If you are considering making a comparison to Hitler or the Nazis, please do so with care. Such references must be thoughtful and historically accurate.

**Keep it relevant** Your letter will have a better chance if it refers to a story in the paper or on the website, or a previous letter. Not all letters published do so, but most do. And it is one way of knowing it is meant only for the selected newspaper.

**Keep it open** Disclose any relevant information. If you work for an organisation, belong to a political party (especially at election times), have academic links or any affiliation that may be remotely connected to the subject matter of your letter. It may not need to be published, but it helps to judge the letter and it may also help the readers. We welcome the inclusion of sources to back up what you say, again not necessarily for publication.

**Get there early** There is no rigid deadline for readers, but there is for the page editors. The later in the day your letter arrives, the harder it is to get it in the following day's paper. Of course, it will still be considered, but after another 24 hours the story may have moved on.

**Follow the rules** Please read the submissions criteria carefully. Always provide your **full name** (not just initials), **home address and a phone number**. A work address is sufficient if you are writing on behalf of an organisation at that address. If the editor cannot find you in the White Pages, on the electoral roll or by other reliable means, they may be unable to publish your letter.

We think readers should be able to trust that those published are who they say they are. Disguising or blurring your identity is, at best, a waste of everyone's time. This may include the use of maiden names.

Unpublished letters are usually not acknowledged unless the writer requests it.