

上海市业余外语广播讲座

写英文信

Writing Letters in English

(英汉对照)

上海译文出版社

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苏 民 编

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前 言

一. 本书是上海市业余英语广播讲座用书, 程度相当于进修班, 专门训练写英文信的能力, 以满足中级班以上的听众或有志自学者学习英语的需要。

二. 写英文信是一种实用英语写作能力。随着与国外交往的发展, 社会各界对此需要日益增多。本书系统地介绍写英文信的基本常识: 种类、格式和具体写法(包括地址、称呼、日期等), 并提供各类英文信的实例。在附录中, 还编有较多的书信常用语, 供读者写信时选用。本书采用英汉对照的编写法, 对自学者尤为方便。

三. 本书经华东师范大学外语系杨霞华教授校订, 特此致谢。

华东师范大学

英语广播教研室

1984年1月

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Introduction

引言

Letters form an important aspect of our life. Letter writing is an activity in which every one of us takes part from time to time, either to keep contact with relatives and friends separated by distance or to maintain relations with people with whom we are doing business. The letters each of us is called upon to write fall into different categories. In the conventions of the English-speaking countries, letters can be classified according to style and subject matter (content). As far as style is concerned, all letters can be differentiated as either Formal or Informal. If letters are to be judged by their content, they can be divided into three types, namely, Personal, Social and Business. Since much of the content of social letters will also go into personal ones, we intend to use only the two terms Personal and Business for simplicity's sake.

书信是我们生活中一个重要组成部分。写信是我们每个人经常从事的活动：或者与远方的亲戚、朋友互通信息；或者和那些与我们有业务关系的人们保持联系。我们每个人要写的信可分成各种类别。按英语语种国家的惯例，书信可按文体和内容分类。就文体来说，所有的信可区分为**正式的**和**非正式的**。如果就信的内容来看，可以分成三种，即：私人信件、社交信件和公务信件。由于大部分社交信件的内容也可纳入私人信件，为简单起见，我们打算只分两类：**私人信**

件和事务信件。

Personal letters are those written to a relation or a friend concerning private or social matter. Regular letters home or to close friends to give the latest news of oneself belong to this type. So do letters of invitations, thanks, congratulations, condolences and so on.

私人信件是指那些涉及私人或社交事务而写给亲戚或朋友的信。属于这一类的有告知自己近况的经常性的家信及给好友的信，还有邀请信、感谢信、祝贺信及吊唁信等等。

Business letters deal with business matter. They are concerned with such things as applications, inquiries and recommendations that an individual may have to write. They also include those letters written between one business institution and another. In that case, they are involved in matters such as ordering and acknowledging receipt of goods, making complaints and so on.

事务信件涉及各种事务问题，诸如个人可能需要写的申请、问讯以及推荐信之类。这类信还包括企业单位之间的来往公函，内容有：订购货物、通知对方来货收到、提出申诉等等。

All business letters are formal in style. And most personal letters are informal. But those concerning social matter can sometimes be very formal. A letter inviting

an old friend for dinner will be informal whereas an invitation to a wedding party will be quite formal. There are also degrees of informality in personal letters. A letter to a close friend of one's own age will be in much more familiar language than one to a former teacher who has also become a friend. It is important to decide before writing a letter what type and in what style it is to be, because the layout and the language for different types and styles of letters are quite different.

所有的事务信件在文体上都是正式的，大多数私人信件则不拘礼仪。不过那些涉及社交事务的信件有时可能相当正式。一封邀请一位老朋友来吃饭的信可以写得比较随便，而邀请朋友来参加婚礼的信件就十分正式。不拘礼仪的私人信件也各有程度上的不同。一封写给一位年龄相仿的好友的信就比写给曾经是自己的老师、后来又成了朋友的人的信要随便得多了。在写信之前首先决定要写的信属于哪种类别、哪种文体是很重要的。因为不同类别、不同文体的信，格式和用词是十分不同的。

Letters are messengers that represent the writer when he is unable to be with the receiver in person. A good letter will not only get business done but also promote good will. However, to be able to do those things, a letter must have certain quality. The basic requirements of a letter in English will be quite similar to those in Chinese.

信件是使者，代表着不能亲自与收信人聚在一起的写信人的心声。一封写得好的信不仅能达到把事务办好的目的，

还能增进双方的友情。然而要做到这两点，一封信就需要有一定的质量。一封英文信最基本的要求与中文信是十分相似的。

In the business world, people often use five Cs to determine whether a business letter is well written or not. They are conciseness, clarity, correctness, completeness and courtesy.

在商业界，人们往往用五个以字母 C 开头的词语来衡量一封事务信件写得好与否。这五个以 C 开头的词语是：简洁、明了、正确、完整和礼貌。

For a personal letter, one is expected to write with ease, sincerity, clarity, courtesy and delicacy.

以一封私人信件来说，则要求写得流畅、真诚、明了、礼貌和妥贴。

It is one thing to know what a letter should be like; it is quite another to put what one knows into practice. Although our readers already have much experience in correspondence in Chinese, they may still be puzzled as to how to write normal letters in idiomatic English.

然而，懂得一封信应该写成怎么样是一回事，而能真正写好一封信则是另一回事。虽然我们的读者早就有不少写中文信的经验，但他们对怎样用地道的英语写出正规的英文信可能仍不知所措。

This booklet is designed for the purpose of giving the

prospective letter-writers some knowledge of the etiquette of letter-writing in English. It is devoted solely to the Chinese learners of English embarking on a course in correspondence in the language. The four chapters will deal with the following topics respectively: the Envelope, the Parts of the Letter, the Body of Personal Letters and the Body of Business Letters. Each chapter contains sample letters to give readers a physical feel of the language used in dealing with a variety of topics. At the end of each chapter are exercises for reinforcement. In the appendix section readers will find various sorts of useful information in relation to letter-writing in general.

这本小册子旨在给予那些可能需要写英文信的读者一些初步的指导,专供我国英语学习者开始学写英文信所用。书中四章分述以下题目:信封、信的几个部分、私人信件的正文和事务信件的正文。每一章有书信实例,以给读者在处理种种题材时有一种具体的语感。在每一章节的最后都配有练习以资巩固。附录部分将给读者提供各种有关写信的有用资料。

Exercise 1

1. Say whether each of the following letters should be written in formal or informal style. Give reasons.
 - a. To a pen-friend in a foreign country.
 - b. To an old teacher of yours, asking him to come to a family dinner.
 - c. To a well-known author, seeking advice for writing

short stories.

- d. To the Sales Manager of a company, asking for a catalogue.
 - e. An invitation to all the members of your class, asking them to come to your New Year party.
 - f. To the Overseas Students Office of a university in a foreign country, asking for information about scholarships.
 - g. To your brother who is now studying abroad.
 - h. To your aunt, who has been ill in bed for a few days.
 - i. To an old friend of yours, inviting him to go to a show with you.
 - j. To a person who has rescued your child from falling into the river. You have obtained his name and address from the policeman who brought the child back.
2. Say whether each of the following letters is clear and polite. Give reasons.

(A)

Dear Sir,

I want to get a place in your college. Send me an application form before the end of this month, or it will be too late for me to apply.

Yours sincerely,

Ding Ping

(B)

Dear Aunt Julia,

I was so sorry to hear that you can't come to our dinner on Sunday. You know how I've been looking forward to seeing you and Uncle John. We are going away to Switzerland next week but I hope we can arrange something again when we come back.

Love,

Elaine

(C)

Dear Dr Williams,

I feel greatly honoured to write you this letter.

Mr Wang told me that you would like to get some information about Miss Ding Ping, a former graduate from our school. I take great pleasure in telling you that I'm very proud of Miss Ding. She is one of my favourite students. She loves her old school very much.

How is she doing at your college? Please write again if you need more information.

Yours faithfully,

W. L. Sun

(Sun Weili)

Principal of No. X School

(D)

Dear John,

Mr Roberts has given me your name and address. He said that you wanted to have a pen-friend in China.

I'm a Chinese boy. I'm 18. I'm studying English in a college. I like music and English literature but I don't like sports very much.

I'm very glad to write to you. Could you tell me what you like and dislike? What are your ambitions in life?

I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Lijun

Chapter 1

第一章

The Envelope

信 封

One thing that puzzles the Chinese learner in English letter writing is how to address an envelope. This is not surprising since the English and Chinese use very different systems in setting out an address. However, the essential standards are the same. They are:

(i) the address must be correctly set out;

(ii) the address must be neatly set out.

我国初学写英文信的人感到犯难的一个问题是信封怎样写。这一点并不奇怪，因为在地址格式上，英语和汉语采用截然不同的方式。不过，基本要求是一致的，那就是：

△地址要写正确

△地址要写整洁

Figure 1 (on p. 10) are two samples of well-addressed envelopes in English and in Chinese.

图 1 是合乎规格的英文信封(A)和中文信封(B)的两个实例。

To acquire correctness and neatness, the following notes will be of help to the learner.

要达到正确和整洁，下面几条说明会给初学者有所帮助。

(A)

Nancy Lee, 4 Oxford St., London, SW6,6DB, U.K.	Stamp
Mr Zhang × × , No 3663, Zhongshan Road, Shanghai, China.	

Figure 1. The Envelope

(B)

中国 上海 中山路 3663 号 张 × × 先生 收 英国伦敦牛津街 4 号李寄	邮 票
--	-----

图 1 信 封

Note: The dotted lines mean this part is not obligatory.

注：虚线部分表示可有可无。