

CORRESPONDENCE

AUTHORITIES FOR PREPARATION

Policies & Procedures (P&P) 261.2, dated 2/8/91
ARS Correspondence Manual M261.2, dated 2/8/91
U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual, dated 2000 and
Word Division Supplement, dated 1987
Ordering Information

OFFICIAL ARS STATIONERY

COPY REQUIREMENTS

INFORMAL LETTER OR MEMORANDUM

FORMAL LETTER

CONTROLLED CORRESPONDENCE

Report of Congressional Conservation – Form ARS 213

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE

Foreign Correspondence Dispatched to Communist-Controlled Countries
Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

FORMS OF ADDRESS

CORRESPONDENCE NOTES

COMMONLY MISUSED WORDS

CORRESPONDENCE

Authorities for Preparation:

P&P 261.2, dated 2/8/91 (<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/261-02.HTM>)
ARS Correspondence Manual M-261.2
(<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/261-02mch-1-2.htm>)
U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual, dated 2000, and
Word Division Supplement, dated 1987

Ordering Information:

United States Government Printing Office Style Manual, 2000
(Stock No. 021-000-00178-3)

Word Division, Supplement to the United States Government Printing Office Style Manual,
1987 (Stock No. 0231-000-00139-2)

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office,
Washington, DC 20402

Government Printing Office catalog web-site (w/search): <http://catalog.gpo.gov/F>

Official ARS Stationery

See attached guidelines and example of the official letterhead.

Electronic letterhead can be used generated by your personal computer, but it must look exactly as the printed letterhead – no colors, black and white.

Order printed letterhead through the Area Procurement Office, Mid South Area, Stoneville, MS.

Copy Requirements

Official File Copy - Prepare an *official file copy* of all memos. The official file copy may be yellow or white. If a white copy is used as the official file, it must be clearly marked or stamped as the '**OFFICIAL FILE**' in the upper right hand corner of the correspondence.

In the Mid South Area, we urge you to use the Yellow Official File Copy for the subject files. The yellow subject file copy is easier to locate and identify, especially with the volume of E-Mail received.

Alphabetical File Copy - Alphabetical files are optional. In the Mid South Area, we urge you to use the Pink Alphabetical File Copy. It is a good cross-reference tool to use to locate the subject file copy.

Reading Files - Reading files or chronological files are optional. If desired, keep each piece of correspondence in a folder with a fastener at the top arranged with the most current date to the top.

Coding - All copies should be coded in the upper right hand corner. Coding notation in the upper right hand corner should agree on the pink, yellow, and reading copies.

Legends - With the varying types of printers available, offices may choose a method that allows for the efficient placement of the dictator's legend on correspondence. The **ARS Correspondence Manual** shows three examples. We use the following format in the Area Office:

ARS:ADO:TJArmy:sw:X5265:4-12-99:C:\WPDOCS\CORRES-PREP.WPD

Informal Letter or Memorandum

Top and bottom margins are about 2 inches.

Side margins are 1 inch.

On the second and succeeding pages, top, bottom, and side margins are one inch.



United States Department of Agriculture

Research, Education and Economics
Agricultural Research Service

November 9, 2004

SUBJECT: Example of Informal Letter

TO: Chief O. Staff, Mid South Area Office

FROM: Ima Secretary
Executive Assistant to the Area Director

This is an example of an informal letter that is less than 10 lines. Double space memos of one paragraph (10 lines or less). Single space the body of memos longer than one paragraph and double space between the paragraphs.



National Sedimentation Laboratory
598 McElroy Drive
P.O. Box 1157, Oxford, Mississippi 38655
Voice: 662 232-2901 • FAX: 662 232-2915 • E-mail: isecretary@ars.usda.gov



United States Department of Agriculture

Research, Education and Economics
Agricultural Research Service

November 9, 2004

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

SUBJECT: Example of Informal Letter

TO: Chief O. Staff
Deputy Area Director
USDA, ARS, Mid South Area
P.O. Box 225
Stoneville, Mississippi 38776

FROM: Ima Secretary
Executive Assistant to the Area Director

This is an example of the informal letter using the "For Official Use Only" line. Information or records that are not for immediate public use shall be marked FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY at both the top and bottom of each page. Further instructions are contained in Directive 253.2, For Official Use Only.

Note that the top caption is typed two lines below the date. The Subject line is typed three lines (triple space) below the For Official Use Only caption.

Type the bottom caption two lines below the last line on each page. If the caption falls above the middle of the page, place it below the middle of the page flush with the left margin.

cc:

S. Y. Scientist

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY



National Sedimentation Laboratory
598 McElroy Drive
P.O. Box 1157, Oxford, Mississippi 38655
Voice: 662 232-2901 • FAX: 662 232-2915 • E-mail: isecretary@ars.usda.gov



United States Department of Agriculture

Research, Education and Economics
Agricultural Research Service

November 9, 2004

SUBJECT: Example of Informal Letter with THROUGH Line

TO: Chief O. Staff
Deputy Area Director
USDA, ARS, Mid South Area
P.O. Box 225
Stoneville, Mississippi 38776

THROUGH: Head Mann
Area Director, Mid South Area

FROM: Ima Secretary
Executive Assistant to the Area Director

This is an example of the informal letter with the THROUGH line. A THROUGH line may be necessary if an official needs to concur with the memo before it is received by the addressee.

The THROUGH line is typed two lines below the last line of the TO block and the FROM line is typed two lines below the last line of the THROUGH block.

The *originating office* will forward the following package to the last THROUGH addressee:

- a. Original, with enclosures and addressed envelope to the recipient. Prepare an envelope that is large enough to accommodate the package being sent.
- b. "cc:" copies, with enclosures (if applicable) and addressed envelopes to the recipients.
- c. Official file copy, with envelope addressed to the sender or secretary. This will be returned with a notation by the Area Office personnel as to the date the letter was mailed.
- d. THROUGH copies, with enclosures (if applicable) and envelopes to the next THROUGH recipient (if applicable). Prepare an envelope that is large enough to accommodate the package being sent.



National Sedimentation Laboratory
598 McElroy Drive
P.O. Box 1157, Oxford, Mississippi 38655
Voice: 662 232-2901 • FAX: 662 232-2915 • E-mail: isecretary@ars.usda.gov

This example also shows the format to use when there is a reason to break a paragraph into subparagraphs. Subparagraphs may be lettered or numbered.

Please see pages 1-7 and 2-18 of the ARS Correspondence Manual for further guidance.



United States Department of Agriculture

Research, Education and Economics
Agricultural Research Service

November 9, 2004

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

SUBJECT: Example of Informal Letter

TO: Chief O. Staff
Deputy Area Director
USDA, ARS, Mid South Area
P.O. Box 225
Stoneville, Mississippi 38776

FROM: Ima Secretary
Executive Assistant to the Area Director

This is an example of the basic informal letter. This style should be used for most daily communications of routine business within USDA and other Federal agencies.

Begin the date about two inches below the last line of the Agricultural Research Service line. Remember to triple space (two lines) after the date; double space (one line) between the Subject and To lines; double space (one line) between the To and From lines. Triple space (two lines) between the From line and the body of the memo.

Double space (one line) between paragraphs. Paragraphs are typed flush with the left margin.

When enclosures are identified in the text, type the word "Enclosure" flush with the left margin, two lines below the last line of the body of the memo. For more than one enclosure, indicate the number of enclosures.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY



National Sedimentation Laboratory
598 McElroy Drive
P.O. Box 1157, Oxford, Mississippi 38655
Voice: 662 232-2901 • FAX: 662 232-2915 • E-mail: isecretary@ars.usda.gov

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Type the second and succeeding pages of a memo on plain bond paper the same quality as the first page. Starting with the second page, type the name of the addressee exactly as it is shown on the first page, six lines or one inch from the top of the page and flush with the left margin. Type the page number on the same line flush with the right margin. Continue the text two lines below the name of the addressee. Allow side margins of one inch and bottom margins of at least one inch.

4 Enclosures:

Mid South Area Secretarial Handbook
Plain Letters Pamphlet
ARS Correspondence Manual - 2 copies

cc:

H. T. Mann
S. I. Command
S. Y. Scientist

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY



United States Department of Agriculture

Research, Education and Economics
Agricultural Research Service

Formal Letter

November 9, 2004

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Dr. John Doe
Research Scientist
Fish Diseases and Parasites Research
P. O. Box 222
Auburn, Alabama 33333

Dear Dr. Doe:

SUBJECT: Example of Formal Letter

The formal letter is used for other than routine work or business transactions, when it is believed that the addressee might expect, or should receive, a more formal or personalized letter.

The style is used for communications with industry and others outside of USDA and other Federal agencies. It is also used when sending ARS employees letters of condolence, congratulations, or disciplinary actions.

This example shows the FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY caption.

Sincerely,

IMA SECRETARY
Executive Assistant to the Area Director

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY



National Sedimentation Laboratory
598 McElroy Drive
P.O. Box 1157, Oxford, Mississippi 38655
Voice: 662 232-2901 • FAX: 662 232-2915 • E-mail: isecretary@ars.usda.gov

Controlled Correspondence

Controlled correspondence refers to correspondence with:

- Office of the Secretary of Agriculture
- Office of the Administrator, ARS
- Congressional
Legislative Reports
- White House

See the *ARS Correspondence Manual* for details.

Congressional Inquiries

Written replies to Congressional inquiries, whether referred or by direct mail, must clear through supervisory channels to the ARS Correspondence Management Unit (CMU). Prepare a formal letter to the members of Congress using the Models of Address chapter of the *ARS Correspondence Manual*. **SEND these letters through the Area Director with a large brown envelope addressed to:**

Ms. Loureatha Gibson
USDA, ARS, CMU
George Washington Carver Center
Building 4, Room 2122B
5601 Sunnyside Avenue
Beltsville, MD 20250-0303

Official **telephone** conversations between ARS employees and Members of Congress and their staff must be documented and forwarded to the ARS Legislative Staff. It is imperative that all ARS employees document Congressional conversations.

References: P&P 125.3 - Documenting Official Congressional Conversations,
dated 5/20/85
ARS Form 213 - Report of Congressional Conversation

The ARS Form 213 MUST BE SENT THROUGH THE AREA DIRECTOR.

Report of Congressional Conversation	Date of Conversation
	Time of Conversation
<p>INSTRUCTIONS: As soon as possible after completing an official conversation, prepare ARS-213 and distribute as follows: ORIGINAL - Administrator, Agricultural Research Service Copies to - •Legislative Staff •Director, Budget and Program Management Staff •File •Area Director – Field Offices <i>ONLY</i>.</p>	
<p>Conversed with – Name and Title of Individual; Congressional Representative’s Name, State, and Office Phone Number.</p>	
Employee’s Name, Title, and Location	Phone No.
<p>Information Given</p>	
<p>Action Recommended (If further action is required)</p>	

Instructions for ARS Form 213

SEND THE ARS FORM 213 THROUGH THE AREA DIRECTOR.

Assemble the form, with appropriate size envelopes, as follows:

Copy for Administrator:

Dr. Edward B. Knipling
Administrator
USDA, Agricultural Research Service
GWCC Building, Room 4-2122A
5601 Sunnyside Avenue
Beltsville, MD 20705

Copy for Legislative Staff Director:

Karen Pearce
Legislative Affairs Analyst
USDA, ARS, LS
Room 351-A, Whitten Building
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Copy for Director, BPMS:

Mr. Joseph S. Garbarino
Director
USDA, ARS, Budget and Program Management Staff
Room 358-A, Whitten Building
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Area Director:

Dr. Edgar G. King, Jr., Area Director
USDA-ARS Mid South Area
P. O. Box 225
Stoneville, MS 38776-0225

File copy to LD/LC/CD if applicable.

The entire package goes to the Legislative Affairs Analyst, so prepare a large brown envelope with their address.

Foreign Correspondence

The P&P 263.2, "Foreign Correspondence Dispatched to Communist Controlled Countries," has been cancelled.

There are five countries, however, under U.S. embargo to which no material or correspondence may be sent without the permission of the Foreign Asset Control Board. These countries are:

- Libya
- Iran
- Iraq
- North Korea
- Cuba

Individual ARS employees wishing to contact these countries or send material may contact the Asset Control Board, U.S. Department of Treasury, directly at 202-622-2500, fax 202-622-1657.

In past experience, the Board has permitted sending printed journal articles to Cuba and Iran, but not to the other countries. For further information, contact the ARS Office of International Research Programs on 301-504-4545.

Other than the above, foreign correspondence should be mailed directly from each office. See attached e-mail from Saida Malik.

From: Saida Malik [SMTP:ARSAFM-MD.WPOMSA.SMALIK@ars.usda.gov]
Sent: Monday, January 11, 1999 9:28 AM
Subject: Cancellation of P&P 263.2

P&P 263.2 - "Foreign Correspondence Dispatched to Communist Controlled Countries" has been canceled as of 12/22/98. There are, however, five countries under U.S. embargo to which no material or correspondence may be sent without the permission of the Foreign Asset Control Board, U.S. Department of Treasury. These countries are:

Libya
Iran
Iraq
North Korea
Cuba

Individual ARS employees wishing to contact these countries or send material, may contact the Asset Control Board directly on 202-622-2500: FAX 202-622-1657

In past experience, the Board has permitted sending printed journal articles to Cuba and Iran, but not to the other countries. For further information, you may contact Eric Rosenquist, National Program Staff, 301-504-5924.

Source: E-Mail from Saida Malik, dated 1/11/99, Cancellation of P&P 263.2

Electronic Communications

Electronic communications are used for transmitting correspondence when speed is important.

Information transmitted electronically is subject to the records and information management requirements; i.e., P&P 251.8, Records Management.

Access the REE Administrative Issuances (Directives, P&P, etc.) website at:

<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/> (with search capability)

Forms of Address

The following list shows the address element, salutation, and complimentary close, when used, for certain addresses.

<i>Addressee</i>	<i>Address on Letter</i> <i>Note: use DC (no periods) on the Envelope</i>	<i>Salutation and Complimentary Close</i>
<u>THE WHITE HOUSE</u> <i>The President</i>	<i>The President</i> <i>The White House</i> <i>Washington, D.C. 20500</i>	<i>Dear Mr., Madam President:</i> <i>Respectfully,</i> <i>or The President</i> <i>Respectfully submitted,</i>
<i>Spouse of the President</i>	<i>Mrs. (full name)</i> <i>The White House</i> <i>Washington, D.C. 20500</i>	<i>Dear Mrs., Mr. (surname)</i>
<i>Assistant to the President</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>Assistant to the President</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>Assistant to the President</i>
<i>Former President</i>	<i>Formal: The Vice President</i> <i>United States Senate</i> <i>Washington, D.C. 20510</i> <i>Informal: The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>The Vice President of the</i> <i>United States</i> <i>Washington, D.C. 20501</i>	<i>Dear Mr., Madam Vice President:</i> <i>Sincerely,</i> <i>Dear Mr., Madam Vice President:</i> <i>Sincerely,</i>
<i>Former Vice President</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>(no title)</i> <i>(Local address) (Zip code)</i>	<i>Dear Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms. (surname):</i> <i>Sincerely,</i>
<i>Director, Office of Management and Budget</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>Director, Office of Management and Budget</i> <i>Washington, D.C. 20503</i>	<i>Dear Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms. (surname):</i>
<u>THE FEDERAL JUDICIARY</u> <i>The Chief Justice</i>	<i>The Chief Justice</i> <i>The Supreme Court</i> <i>Washington, D.C. 20543</i>	<i>Dear Chief Justice:</i> <i>Sincerely,</i>
<i>Associate Justice</i>	<i>Justice (surname)</i> <i>The Supreme Court</i> <i>Washington, D.C. 20543</i>	<i>Dear Justice (surname):</i> <i>Sincerely,</i>
<i>The Clerk of the Supreme Court</i>	<i>The Clerk of the Supreme Court</i> <i>The Supreme Court</i> <i>Washington, D.C. 20543</i>	<i>Dear Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms. (surname)</i> <i>Sincerely,</i>
<u>THE CONGRESS</u> <i>President of the Senate</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>President of the Senate</i> <i>Washington, D.C. 20510</i>	<i>Dear Mr., Madam president:</i> <i>Sincerely,</i>

<i>Addressee</i>	<i>Address on Letter</i> <i>Note: use DC (no periods) on the Envelope</i>	<i>Salutation and Complimentary Close</i>
<i>Speaker of the House of Representatives</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>Speaker of the House of Representatives</i> <i>Washington, D.C. 20515</i>	<i>Dear Mr., Madam Speaker:</i> <i>Sincerely,</i>
<i>United States Senator</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>United States Senate</i> <i>Washington, D.C. 20510</i> <i>or</i> <i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>United States Senator</i> <i>(Congressional District Office address)</i> <i>(City) (State) (ZIP code)</i>	<i>Dear Senator (surname):</i> <i>Sincerely,</i>
<i>United States Representative</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>House of Representatives</i> <i>Washington, D.C. 20515</i> <i>or</i> <i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>Member, United States House of Representatives</i> <i>(local address) (ZIP Code)</i>	<i>Dear Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms. (surname):</i> <i>or</i> <i>Dear Congressman,</i> <i>Congresswoman (surname):</i> <i>Sincerely,</i>
<i>Committee Chairman</i> <i>Chairwoman</i> <i>Chair</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>Chairman, Committee on (name)</i> <i>United States Senate</i> <i>Washington, D.C. 20510</i> <i>or</i> <i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>Chairman, Committee on (name)</i> <i>House of Representatives</i> <i>Washington, D.C. 20515</i>	<i>Dear Mr. Chairman:</i> <i>Madam Chairwoman:</i> <i>Chair:</i> <i>Sincerely,</i>
<i>Subcommittee Chairman</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>Chairman, Committee on (name)</i> <i>(name of parent Committee)</i> <i>United States Senate</i> <i>Washington, D.C. 20510</i> <i>or</i> <i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>Chairman, Subcommittee on (name)</i> <i>(name of parent Committee)</i> <i>House of Representatives</i> <i>Washington, D.C. 20515</i>	<i>Dear Mr., Madam Chairman:</i> <i>Sincerely,</i>
<i>Joint Committee Chairman</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>Chairman, Joint Committee on (name)</i> <i>Congress of the United States</i> <i>Washington, D.C. (ZIP code)</i>	<i>Dear Mr., Madam Chairman:</i> <i>Sincerely,</i>

<i>Addressee</i>	<i>Address on Letter Note: use DC (no periods) on the Envelope</i>	<i>Salutation and Complimentary Close</i>
<i>Senator-elect Representative-elect</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name) United States Senator-elect or Representative-elect (address, if given) or Care of the United States Senate or House of Representatives</i>	<i>Dear Senator-elect (surname) Sincerely, Dear Congressman-elect: Sincerely,</i>
<i>Office of a Deceased Senator or Representative</i>	<i>Office of the late Senator (full name) United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510 or Office of the Late Representative (full name) House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20510</i>	<i>Sir: or Madam: Sincerely,</i>
<i>Secretary of the United States Senate</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name) Secretary of the Senate United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510</i>	<i>Dear M., Mrs., Miss, Ms. (surname): Sincerely,</i>
<i>Delegate</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name) Delegate from (name) United States House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515</i>	<i>Dear Mr. Mrs., Miss, Ms. (surname): Sincerely,</i>
<i><u>LEGISLATIVE AGENCIES</u> Comptroller General</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name) Comptroller General of the United States Washington, D.C. 20515</i>	<i>Dear Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms. (surname): Sincerely,</i>
<i>Librarian of Congress</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name) Librarian of Congress Library of Congress Washington, D.C. 20540</i>	<i>Dear Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms. (surname): Sincerely,</i>
<i>Public Printer</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name) Public Printer U.S. Government Printing Office Washington, D.C. 20401</i>	<i>Dear Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms. (surname): Sincerely,</i>

<i>Addressee</i>	<i>Address on Letter</i> <i>Note: use DC (no periods) on the Envelope</i>	<i>Salutation and Complimentary Close</i>
<u>EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS</u> Cabinet Members	<p><i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>Deputy Secretary of (name of Department)</i> <i>Washington, D.C. (ZIP code)</i></p> <p><i>or</i></p> <p><i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>Assistant Secretary of (name of Department)</i> <i>Washington, D.C. (ZIP code)</i></p> <p><i>or</i></p> <p><i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>Under Secretary of (name of Department)</i> <i>Washington, D.C. (ZIP code)</i></p>	<p><i>Dear Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms. (surname):</i> <i>Sincerely,</i></p>
<i>Postmaster General</i>	<p><i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>Postmaster General</i> <i>Washington, D.C. 20260</i></p>	<p><i>Dear Mr., Madam</i> <i>Postmaster General:</i></p>
<u>AMERICAN MISSIONS</u> <i>American Ambassador</i>	<p><i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>American Ambassador</i> <i>(City) (Country)</i></p>	<p><i>Sir: Madam: (formal)</i> <i>Dear Mr., Madam</i> <i>Ambassador: (informal)</i> <i>Very truly yours,</i> <i>(formal)</i> <i>Sincerely, (informal)</i></p>
<i>Personal (Special)</i> <i>Representative of the President</i>	<p><i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>Personal Representative of the President of the United States of America to (Country)</i> <i>(City) (State/Country)</i></p>	<p><i>Dear Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms. (surname):</i> <i>Sincerely,</i></p>
<i>American Consul General or American Consul</i>	<p><i>Mr. (full name)</i> <i>American Consul General (or American Consul)</i> <i>(City) (Country)</i></p>	<p><i>Dear Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms. (surname):</i> <i>Sincerely,</i></p>
<u>FOREIGN DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS</u> <i>Foreign Ambassador in the United States</i>	<p><i>His (Her) Excellency (full name)</i> <i>Ambassador of (Country)</i> <i>Washington, D.C. (ZIP code)</i></p>	<p><i>Excellency:(formal)</i> <i>Dear Mr., Madam</i> <i>Ambassador: (informal)</i> <i>Very truly yours,</i> <i>(formal)</i> <i>Sincerely, (informal)</i></p>
<i>Foreign Minister in the United States (head of a Legation)</i>	<p><i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>Minister of (Country)</i> <i>Washington, D.C. (ZIP code)</i></p>	<p><i>Dear Mr., Madam Minister:</i> <i>Sincerely,</i></p>
<i>Foreign Minister Counselor in the United States</i>	<p><i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>Minister Counselor</i> <i>Embassy of (Country)</i> <i>Washington, D.C. (ZIP code)</i></p>	<p><i>Dear Mr., Madam Minister:</i> <i>Sincerely,</i></p>

<i>Addressee</i>	<i>Address on Letter</i> <i>Note: use DC (no periods) on the Envelope</i>	<i>Salutation and Complimentary Close</i>
<u><i>INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS</i></u> <i>United States Representative to the United Nations or Organization of American States</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>United States Representative to the United Nations (or Organization of American States)</i> <i>(City) (State) (ZIP code)</i>	<i>Sir: or Madam: (formal)</i> <i>Dear Mr., Madam</i> <i>Ambassador: (informal)</i> <i>Very truly yours, (formal)</i> <i>Sincerely, (informal)</i>
<u><i>STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS</i></u> <i>Governor of State</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>Governor of (State)</i> <i>(City) (State) (ZIP code)</i>	<i>Dear Governor (surname):</i> <i>Sincerely,</i>
<i>Lieutenant Governor</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>Lieutenant Governor of (State)</i> <i>(City) (State) (ZIP code)</i>	<i>Dear Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms. (surname):</i> <i>Sincerely,</i>
<i>State Senator</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>(State) Senate</i> <i>(City) (State) (ZIP code)</i>	<i>Dear Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms. (surname):</i> <i>Sincerely,</i>
<i>State Representative Assemblyman Delegate</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>(State) House of Representatives (or Assembly or house of Delegates)</i> <i>(City) (State) (ZIP code)</i>	<i>Dear Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms. (surname):</i> <i>Sincerely,</i>
<i>Mayor</i>	<i>The Honorable (full name)</i> <i>Mayor of (City)</i> <i>(City) (State) (ZIP code)</i>	<i>Dear Mayor (surname):</i> <i>Sincerely,</i>

¹ i.e., last name.

² Use the Honorable unless the former President is entitled to another distinctive title (for example, military) and prefers to be addressed by it. For example, General (full name); Dear General (full name) ; Dear General (surname).

³ Dear Mr. Chairman is most commonly used; however, Madam Chairwoman and Chair are options.

⁴ If the name of the late Senator's secretary or administrative assistant is known, the letter may be addressed to that person by name.

CORRESPONDENCE NOTES

- & Letterhead: Be sure the letterhead is appropriate for the signer.
- & Always use title (Dr., Mr., Mrs., Ms.) on letters.
- & Do not abbreviate State name in the inside address. Always show the zip code in the address.
- & Do not use titles on the TO: line in memos (To: Dr. John Doe – not acceptable).
- & Double space the body of letters of one paragraph, 10 lines or less. Single space the body of letters longer than one paragraph.
- & Acronyms: The first time referring to a word to be abbreviated, write it out with the acronym following in parentheses. For example, Agricultural Research Service (ARS); fiscal year (FY).
- & Federal Government – always capitalized.
- & State is capitalized when referring to States in the United States (State of Maryland; State, Federal, local). Do not capitalize when used in a general sense (state of mind; a foreign state).
- & Dates – a comma is needed after the year when you have the complete date in a sentence (In your letter dated April 22, 2003, you requested information. . . .). When only month and year are used in a sentence, no commas are used (April 2004).
- & Agency is capitalized when referring to our Agency (ARS). When referring to other agencies, put in lower case.
- & ARS' (not ARS's) when showing possession.
- & We do not use “the Department” in outgoing correspondence. The USDA acronym is to be used.
- & Comma (,) before “and” when there is a series of three (time, money, and measurement).
- & Keep time together on same line – 12:15 p.m., not 12:15 p.m.
- & “Web-site” is hyphenated, not “website”
- & “E-mail” is hyphenated, not “email”
- & “Agencywide” is one word, not “Agency wide”
- & Try to avoid typing part of a personal name at end of sentence. If you must divide name, title, first name, and middle initial should be on the same line.
- & We are the Agriculturala Research Service, not the Agriculture Research Service
- & Period and other punctuation goes inside the quotation marks. For example: David was walking down the street and said, “I am tired.”

Commonly Misused Words

COMMONLY MISUSED WORDS

Affect, Effect

“Affect” is a verb. It means “to change” or “to influence”. “Effect” can be a verb or a noun. As a verb, it means “to cause”; as a noun, it means “a result”.

Aggravate, Irritate

To “aggravate” is “to add to” something that is already troublesome; to “irritate” is “to annoy”.

Allude, Elude

You “allude” to “make reference to” a book; you “elude” or “run away from” someone who is chasing you.

Among, Between

Use “among” when more than two are involved; use “between” when you are comparing two persons, places, or things.

And/or

A shortcut that looks and reads bad can lead to confusion or ambiguity. Avoid using “and/or” whenever possible.

Anybody, Anyone

“Anybody” is written as one word when it refers to “any person”. “Any body” as two words means “any corpse” or “any group.” The same is true for “everybody,” “nobody,” and “somebody”. “Anyone” means anybody; “any one” means “any single person” or “any single thing”.

Assure, Ensure, Insure

To “assure” is to “speak confidently” about something; “to ensure” is “to make sure” or “to make certain”; “to insure” is “to protect something against loss or damage with an insurance policy”.

Being

“Being” is not needed after “regard” in sentences such as, “he was regarded as being the best”. A better way of phrasing this thought is, “he was regarded as the best”.

Can, May

“Can” means “able to”; “may” means “permit”.

“Can I leave work early?” means --- “Am I able to leave to work early?” --- “Is all my work done?” ---

“Are my legs strong enough to carry me away?”

“May I leave work early?” means “May I have permission to go home?”

Compare to, Compare with

To “compare to” is “to point out the similarities in different things”. For example, “life can be compared to a rat race”. To “compare with” is “to point out the difference between similar things”. For example, “rat races can be compared with rush hour traffic”.

Data

Like “media” and “phenomena”, “data” is plural. It refers to more than one fact or piece of evidence.

Commonly Misused Words

Disability, Handicap

A “disability” is a physical or emotional impairment. A “handicap” occurs when a person cannot overcome his/her disability.

Farther, Further

“Farther” has to do with distance. “Further” can be used to indicate distance, and it can also mean to “to promote” or “to advocate”.

Fewer, Less

“Fewer” refers to numbers. “Less” refers to quantity.

Finalize

“Finalize” can mean either “to terminate” or “to put into final form”. Try to avoid using “finalize” since it is overused and pretentious. Instead, use “finish” or “complete”.

Gratuitous, Gratuity

“Gratuitous” means “undeserved” or “unearned”. A “gratuity” is a “tip for services rendered”.

Hopefully

“Hopefully” used to mean “with hope”; now it means “I hope”, and it drives grammarians into fits of rage. They reason that if you write “hopefully, you will write your proposal on time” then you do not know whether you hope to write your proposal on time or you will write an optimistic proposal.

I, Me

When our parents heard us say, “Bob and me played baseball,” they told us to say, “Bob and I.” To determine which is appropriate, read the sentence without the other person’s name.

Imply, Infer

“To imply” is “to suggest or indicate without expressing exactly what you want to say”. For example, “he implied that we were going to get a raise”. “To infer” is “to reach a conclusion from the evidence at hand”. For example, “based on what he said, we can infer that a raise will be coming”.

Irregardless

“Irregardless” is not a word. The correct word to use is “regardless”.

Its, It's

“Its” is the possessive form of the word “it”. It means something belongs to the particular place or thing “it” stands for. For example, “this car is more expensive because its upholstery is leather”. “It’s” is the contraction for “it is”. For example, “it’s a dark colored leather”.

-ize

Many good verbs end in “-ize”. Therefore, we should not add this suffix to other verbs.

Like, As

Except as a term of affection, “like” has to do with comparison. For example, “that was not like him”.

“As” can be used in comparisons. For example, “the two were equally as efficient”.

Commonly Misused Words

Plan Ahead

Would you ever “plan behind”? Just “plan” is sufficient.

Reason is because, Reason is that

“Reason is because” is redundant. “Reason” and “because” both deal with the cause. “Reason is that” is correct.

Secondly, Thirdly

You would not say “firstly”. Therefore, use “first”, “second”, and “third”.

Try to, Try and

To “try to” is “to attempt”. “To try and” implies that two separate actions are taking place.

Unique

Unique means “without equal”. Therefore, do not use “most unique” or “very unique”.