Cover Letter Checklist

You finished your cover letter! Before you send it off, double-check it with our checklist below.

*Look at your cover letter and double-check the following items:*

Is your cover letter less than one page (or the length specified by the employer)?
- A standard cover letter is no longer than one page unless the job application specifies it can be longer.

Is your cover letter written in a standard business letter format?
- The format of your cover letter should be that of a standard business format.
- Your tone should be professional yet personal.

Does your cover letter have a date at the top of the page?

Did you use a standard font (such as Arial or Times New Roman) in 11 or 12-point font?

Did you address your cover letter to a specific person?
- Try, if possible, to address your cover letter to a specific person.

Does the introductory paragraph of your cover letter correctly state the position you’re applying for, the company or organization, and forecast the qualities that make you a right fit for the job (think of it like a thesis)?

Does the body of the cover letter state why you are a good fit for the position and organization or company and how you would benefit them?

Did you include, if relevant, information requested by the employer such as a job reference number, employment availability date, or other information?

Is the content in your cover letter distinct from the information on your resume?
- Remember that your cover letter is an opportunity to share information *not* on your resume. Try not to just repeat information you’ve already stated on your resume. What are the skills and qualities that aren’t quantifiable on a resume (Are you a hard worker? Do you work well in groups or without supervision? Are you a fast learner or able to quickly comprehend or recall information?).

If you described your academic background, is your language free of jargon?
- Remember that not everyone is an expert in your field. Show your resume to a friend or trusted colleague in another field and ask them to double-check your jargon. Does your cover letter translate beyond academia?
Did you use key words mirrored in the job description itself?

Does your cover letter sound personable and genuine?

Did you demonstrate your enthusiasm for the position and how you understand their mission, values, and accomplishments as a company or organization?
  o Remember that your cover letter should be specific to the company or organization you are applying to. Do not use a standard cover letter that is mass mailed to organizations.

Did you include your contact information?

Does your cover letter coordinate with your resume by having the same font and layout?

Did you have a friend or trusted colleague proof read and critique your cover letter?
  o Proofread your cover letter. Ask a friend or colleague to proofread and critique it.