

How to Write a Thank You Note

Read the article called below, by Jacqueline Barba found on newsela.com. Think back on a time when you were very appreciative of something someone did for you. After reading the information from the article, write a thank you note to that person on page 5. Then, deliver the thank you note, either in person or via mail/email, to let them know they made a difference in your life.

Think of a time when you felt thankful. Maybe a classmate invited you to their lunch table when you weren't sure where to sit. Maybe a teacher noticed you were having a hard time with a problem and came over to help. Maybe a friend gave you a hug when you needed cheering up.

In moments like those, you are likely to experience gratitude – the feeling of being grateful for something or someone. Gratitude is a positive feeling. It can feel like warmth and calm in your body. It can make you feel safe and loved. Some of us even get a little teary-eyed when we are grateful!

When you have this positive feeling because of someone else's actions, writing a thank you note is one way to show and share your gratitude. The person you are writing will be happy to know that their actions made a difference. Receiving the thank you note is sure to brighten their day.

You can send a thank you note over email, in a text or even as a video, but don't overlook the traditional handwritten letter or card. Sending a physical note of thanks gives the recipient something to keep and look back on later.

No matter how you choose to send your thank you note, there's an added bonus to expressing gratitude: It will make you feel good all over again! Studies show that when we express gratitude, it improves our mood and our outlook. In other words, it boosts our happiness and makes us more optimistic. So everybody wins – both the person who receives the thank you note, and the person who writes it.

Here are a few tips for writing a thoughtful thank you note.

REFLECT

If you've set out to write a thank you note, you probably already know who you'll be writing to, and what you are thanking them for. Still, before you put pen to paper, take a moment to think about why you are thankful. Here are a few questions you can ask yourself: How did the person's action, kindness or gift make you feel? What makes their behavior so special to you? How did it impact the days or weeks that followed? As you reflect, jot down some notes. You can look back at these notes when you are ready to write your letter.

WRITE A ROUGH DRAFT

If you decide to send a handwritten note or card, write a rough draft on a piece of scrap paper. This way, your thank you note won't have any scribbles or cross-outs on it. In fact, it's a good idea to write a rough draft even if you're typing your thank you note in an email or text. A draft helps you get your thoughts and feelings down on paper before polishing and perfecting them.

USE A GREETING

The greeting, or salutation, of a letter goes at the very top. It addresses the person who is being written to. "Dear [Name]" is a popular greeting. You may want to use this if you're writing to a teacher, a caregiver or another grown-up. If you're writing a note to a friend or classmate, you can also use a more casual greeting like "Hello [Name]," "Hi [Name]" or even "Greetings!"

OPEN WITH A THANKFUL STATEMENT

In a thank you note, as in many kinds of writing, it's a good idea to get right to your point! Begin your letter with a sentence that states that you are thankful and what you are thankful for. Here are a few ideas for how to begin this first sentence:

"Thank you so much for..."

"I am grateful for..."

"I am thankful for..."

"I want to express my gratitude for..."

BE SPECIFIC

After you've explained what you are grateful for, use details and specific examples to explain why you feel this way. Now is a good time to return to the notes you took when you were reflecting on your gratitude. What specific action did the person you are thanking take? How did it affect you? Did it brighten your mood? Help you out of a tough spot? The details here will depend on your unique experience, but the most important part is sharing how the person's behavior or thoughtfulness made you feel. It's okay to be brief! A short note can still be specific and heartfelt.

SAY THANK YOU AGAIN

Close your letter with one final expression of thanks to the reader. You might say, "Thank you, again, for your kindness," "I am very grateful to you" or any other expression of thanks that feels most true.

USE A COMPLIMENTARY CLOSE

Sign off with a complimentary close, the word or phrase that appears right before your signature at the bottom of a letter. Popular closings include "Sincerely," "Warm Wishes" and "With Gratitude." Sign your name below.

REREAD AND SEND YOUR NOTE

Read your note one final time to make sure you're happy with it and that there are no errors or typos. When you're done, it's time to send it off. If you have written a note or card by hand, you can put it in an envelope and drop it in the mail. (Remember to put postage on the envelope first.) If you've written a thank you text or email, you can send it with a click. Once your note is on its way to the reader, all that's left to do is to enjoy the good feelings that follow when you practice gratitude.



Thank you!

