

Memos and Letters: What's the Difference?

Memos: Documents used within organizations to announce policies, report results, instruct employees, disseminate information, and delegate responsibility.

Memos often include the following:

- *Letterhead*
- *Memorandum* (optional)
- *Top Heading*: To, From, Date, Subject
 - Traditionally, these headings are in normal font; however, you can choose to embolden them, type them in all caps, or a combination of both.
 - People's names should include job titles after them, if applicable.
- *Introduction*: Introduces subject of memo; starts two spaces (three lines) below heading
- *Body*: The content of the memo; paragraphs are separated by line breaks
- *Headings*: Signal shift in topics and are often emboldened
- *Closing*: Briefly concludes the memo
- *Additional Recipients* (optional)
- *Enclosed Material* (optional)



Memos often use formatting, such as bullet points and lists, headings, and line breaks to separate and highlight key information.

Letters: Documents that communicate formality, respect, and authority.

- *Heading*: The writer's full return address or printed letterhead and date
- *Inside address*: The recipient's full name, title, and address
- *Salutation*: Contains recipient's personal title, last name; two lines below inside address
- *Body*: Contains the content of the letter; starts two lines below the salutation
- *Complimentary closing*: Standard closing expression; starts two spaces below the body
- *Writer's signature block*: Full typed name that starts four lines below the closing (and may continue with business title and contact information)
- *Continuing pages* (optional)
- *End notations* (optional)

Whereas memos tend to circulate within organizations, letters often transcend a single organization to other group of people: other organizations, clients, communities, etc.