

## Create a Letterhead to Use Over and Over Again – Even in Window Envelopes

This article shows you how to:

- ✓ Create a Word letter template to use and reuse
- ✓ Position the address perfectly for window envelopes
- ✓ Use a table in Word for precise layout and spacing

Why waste time designing a letterhead for every letter you write? Just create the ideal template once and use it every time! Over the six steps in this article, I'll show you exactly how to produce a smart-looking letterhead in Microsoft Word that even works in window envelopes (if you choose to use them), so that you can just get on with the business of letter-writing!



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## Step 1: Set Page Margins and Display the Ruler

An A4 page and a DL window envelope

The letterheads we'll create in this article use standard A4 paper, folded twice (into thirds) to fit an ordinary DL-size envelope. I'm going to assume you'll use window envelopes, and we'll set up the letterhead so that the recipient's address and your return address appear in the window: that saves you the need to print or handwrite an envelope separately. Of course, if you don't want to use window envelopes, you can still follow the same steps, with just one small change which I'll mention when we get there.

Start with a blank document

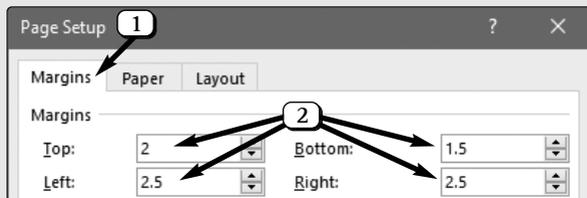
Now let's get going. Start Microsoft Word and, if necessary, choose **Blank document** at the Start screen, so that you're looking at a blank A4 page, then follow these steps:



Set the document's margins

1. Switch to the **Layout** or **Page Layout** tab on the Ribbon. In the 'Page Setup' group, click the **Margins** button, then choose **Custom Margins** at the bottom of the menu that opens.
2. This displays a dialog titled **Page Setup** and you should be looking at the **Margins** tab (1). Change the sizes of the four margins (2) as shown below, by highlighting the figure in each box and typing your own figures to replace them. (Note: don't type 'cm' after each figure, just type the required number.)

Top: 2    Bottom: 5    Left: 2.5    Right: 2.5



3. Switch to the **Layout** tab in this dialog, tick the box beside **Different first page** and then click **OK**.
4. A little later, we'll need to use Word's ruler to line things up properly, so we'll display that now. Switch to the **View** tab on the Ribbon, and in the 'Show' group tick the box beside **Ruler** to make the ruler appear at the top and left of your blank page.

Switch on  
Word's ruler



To give you a clearer view of what you're doing as you build up your template, you might like to turn on the display of paragraph marks and formatting symbols. In the 'Paragraph' group on the Home tab of the Ribbon, click the ¶ button **3**. Now spaces are indicated by a small centre-dot and paragraphs by a ¶ symbol. These symbols only appear on your screen (not on paper when you print), and they're useful to help you see how many blank lines you've inserted or whether you've put extra spaces between words. At any time, you can click the same button again to turn them off.



## Step 2: Create a Table to Hold the Letterhead

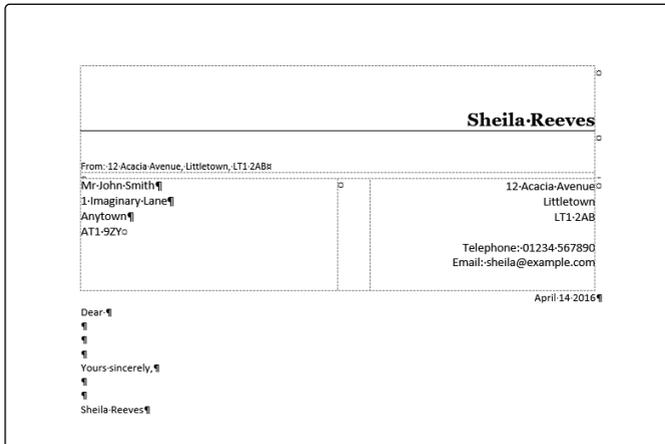
Our letterhead needs the recipient's address at the left of the page and your own address beside it on the right. In the normal run of things, there's no way to do that in Microsoft Word – a paragraph can't be both left-aligned and right-aligned!

Two addresses  
side-by-side

The solution is to use a table. This lets us place things wherever we want them and it has an extra benefit: since we want to use an envelope with a window, it means we can

We can do this  
by using a table

fine-tune the position of the recipient's address to ensure it really does appear in that window. When we've finished, the result will look like the screenshot below. (In the screenshot, Word is displaying the non-printing paragraph markings and gridlines around the table: this is how it will appear on your screen, but it looks considerably neater when printed!)

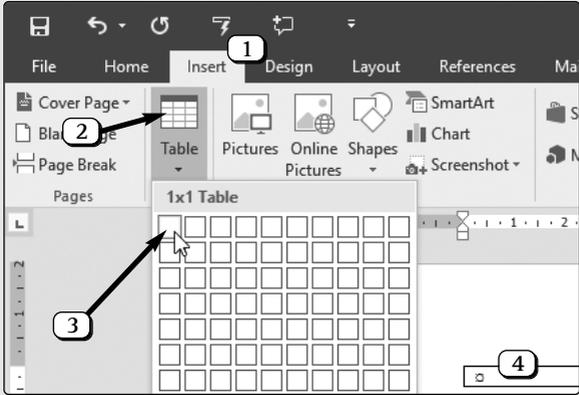


It takes a few extra clicks to set up the table, but it saves you an awful lot of bother in the long run. Here's what to do:



Add a table  
at the top of  
the page

1. With the cursor flashing at the very top of your document, switch to the **Insert** tab **(1)** on the Ribbon.
2. In the 'Tables' group, click the **Table** button **(2)**. This opens a menu containing a grid of little squares. Click the square in the top-left corner of the grid **(3)**. The menu closes, and Word inserts a table at the top of your document consisting of a single row and a single column which stretches the full width of the page **(4)**.



3. The cursor is now flashing at the left of this new table, which is exactly where we want it, and a pair of new Table Tools tabs has appeared at the top of the Word window. Switch to the Table Tools > Layout tab. In the 'Table' group, we need the View Gridlines button to be switched on (highlighted). If it currently isn't, click it to turn it on. (If you find that it actually was switched on and you've just turned it off, click it again.)

4. Switch to the Table Tools > Design tab. In the 'Borders' group (in Word 2013 or later) or the 'Table Styles' group (in Word 2010 or 2007), click the little black triangle beside or below the Borders button (5). On the menu that opens, choose No Border (6). This removes the solid border from our table and displays just a dotted outline. (The dotted outline shows where the table and its cells are, but won't be printed on paper.)

Make sure gridlines are displayed

Remove the borders from the table

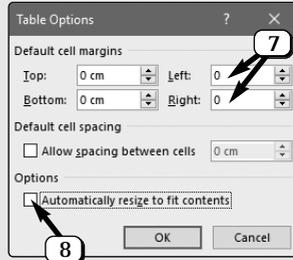
No margins at either side of the table

Set the height of the row to exactly 5 mm

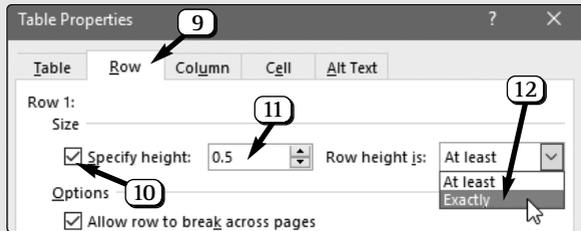
Press **Tab** three times

- Go back to the **Table Tools > Layout** tab. In the 'Table' group, click the **Properties** button. This opens a dialog titled **Table Properties**. At the bottom of the dialog, click the **Options** button.

- In the **Table Options** dialog that opens, change the values for **Left** and **Right** to 0 (7) (just highlight the figure currently shown in those boxes and type a 0, don't type 'cm' afterwards). Remove the tick beside **Automatically re-size to fit contents** (8) and then click **OK** to close the dialog.



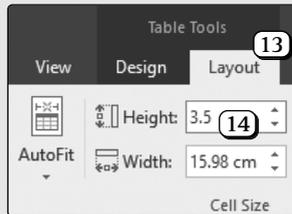
- Now you're back in the **Table Properties** dialog. Here, switch to the **Row** tab (9). Tick the box beside **Specify height** (10) and type the figure 0.5 (11) to set the row height to half a centimetre. To the right, open the drop-down list beside **Row height is** and choose **Exactly** (12). Finally, close this dialog by clicking **OK**.



- Now you're back to your document and its wide single-row table. In a moment, we'll need to add your name, your address, and the recipient's address, and for this we'll need a total of four rows. With the cursor still flashing at the beginning of your table,

press the **(Tab)** key on your keyboard three times. This creates three more rows in your table, giving you four equal-sized rows in total.

- These rows will all contain different items of text, and they need to be different heights, so our next job is to specify how tall each row should be. Click in the first (topmost) row, so that the cursor flashes inside it. Switch to the **Table Tools > Layout** tab **(13)**. In the 'Cell Size' group, click in the **Height** box and change this first row's height to 2 cm (as always, just by typing 2 into the box). Click in the second row of your table, then click in the **Height** box again and set its height to 1.3. For the third row, set a height of 0.2, and set the height of the fourth row to 3.5 **(14)**.



Adjust each row's height

The table is almost ready, but there's one last thing to do. As you can see in the screenshot on page 4, the fourth row needs to be divided into three cells: the left-hand cell for the recipient's address, a middle cell as a spacer, and a right-hand cell which will contain your own address.

Follow these steps:

- First, click in the fourth row of the table, so that the cursor flashes inside it. Switch to the **Table Tools > Layout** tab and in the 'Merge' group click the **Split Cells** button.
- In the dialog that opens, change the value for **Number of columns** to 3 (leaving the 'Number of rows' set to 1) and then click **OK**. Word now splits that fourth row into three cells.



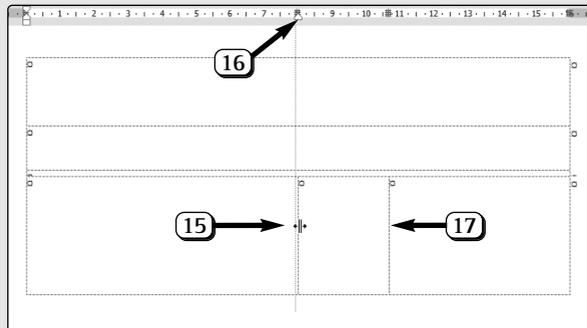
Next: split the fourth row into three cells

Set the number of columns to 3

Move to the line between the first and second cells

Widen the first cell to 8 cm

- The left-hand cell is the one which will contain the recipient's address and – if you'll be using a window envelope – the contents of this cell should appear in the envelope's window, so we want to make it eight centimetres wide. Move the mouse pointer to the vertical line between the first and second cells.
- When you do this, the pointer turns into a horizontal double-arrow shape (15). Press and hold the left mouse button and drag this dividing line to the right. Keep an eye on the ruler, and when you've dragged the line to the 8 position (16), you can release the mouse button.



- In the same way, widen the third cell: place the mouse on the dividing line between the second and third cells (17), then drag the line to the left until you reach the 9 position.

Widen the third cell

It may not look like much at the moment (indeed, all we've produced so far is a collection of boxes with dotted outlines!), but that's got all the legwork done. Our table is now set up with the layout and dimensions we need for the various elements of the letterhead, and we're ready to add the text.

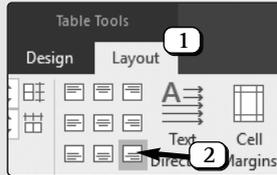
## Step 3: Type Your Name and Address

The topmost row of the table is reserved for your name:

Top row: name



1. Click in the table's top row so that the cursor now flashes inside it. Switch to the **Table Tools > Layout** tab (1) and then in the 'Alignment' group, click on the **Align Bottom Right** button (2).
2. Now type your name into this cell. When you've done that, highlight it (by swiping over it with the mouse, or by triple-clicking it). Now use the options on the **Home** tab of the Ribbon to format it in a way you like, possibly using a fairly-fancy font, a large text size such as 16, perhaps in bold.
3. Still with your name highlighted, switch to the **Table Tools > Design** tab. In the 'Borders' group (Word 2013 or later) or the 'Table Styles' group (Word 2010 or 2007), click the little arrow beside or below the **Borders** button and choose **Bottom Border** from the menu. As you can see in the screenshot shown on page 4, this adds a dividing line across the page below your name.



Type and format your name in the top row

Add a border below your name

In the second row of the table, we'll put your own return address, which will appear at the top of the window in your envelope. (Note: if you're not planning to use a window envelope, you can skip these three steps and leave this second row blank.)

Second row: a return address

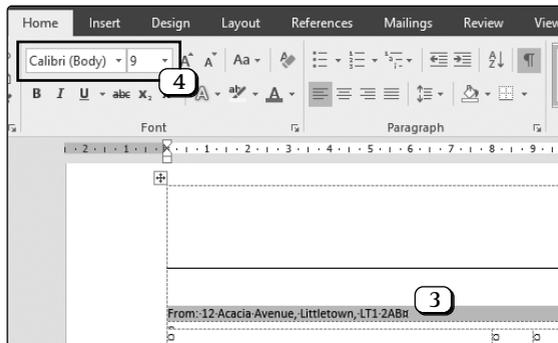


1. Click in the second row of the table. Switch to the **Table Tools > Layout** tab, and in the 'Alignment' group click the **Align Bottom Left** button.

Type **From:** and your address

Choose a small font size for this

- Now type **From:** followed by your address. It must fit on to a single line, but it needn't be complete as long as it includes enough information to act as a return address in case of non-delivery: house number, street name and postcode would suffice.
- Highlight the address you've just typed (3), and using the formatting options on the Ribbon's **Home** tab, set this to an easily-readable font (such as Calibri or Tahoma) at a fairly-small size of about 9 points (4).



Fourth row:  
your address on  
the right



The third row of the table, with its tiny height of 2 mm, just acts as a spacer which we'll leave blank. Next, in the right-hand cell of the fourth row, we'll put your own address:

- Click in the right-hand cell of the last row. Switch to the **Table Tools > Layout** tab, and in the 'Alignment' group click the **Align Top Right** button.
- Now type your address, neatly laid out over several lines. Below the address, leave a blank line and then type your telephone number and/or email address.
- Highlight what you've just typed and choose a font and size for it from the **Home** tab of the Ribbon.

4. The left-hand cell of the fourth row is where you'll type the recipients' address when you use this template to write letters. At the moment, we obviously want to leave this blank, but let's set up its font and size, which should be the same as you've just used for your own address on the right. Click in that left-hand cell, then press **(Shift)** + **(▶)**, which highlights the first line of this cell. On the Home tab of the Ribbon, select the font and size you've just chosen for your own address.

Set the font for the recipient's address

## Step 4: Add the Date, Greeting and Sign-off

Now we reach the finishing touches to the template. We'll add the date, right-aligned below the letterhead, and the traditional greeting and sign-off:

1. Click immediately below your table and type some placeholder text for the date. This could be today's date (or any other date) or just the word 'Date' – it's up to you. When you come to use this template to write letters, you'll edit this line to enter the correct date. After typing it, press **(Enter)** to start a new paragraph.
2. Now click anywhere within the date text you've just typed. Press the key combination **(Ctrl)** + **(R)** and the date text will be aligned to the right of the page.
3. Click at the beginning of the blank paragraph that begins on the line below the date and type **Dear** followed by a space.
4. Press the **(Enter)** key four times, creating some space for your letter itself. Type **Yours sincerely**, followed by three more presses of the **(Enter)** key, and then type your name.



Align the date to the right

Dear...

...and Yours sincerely

Set the font for the body of your letters

Lastly, highlight everything from the beginning of the date line to the end of your name and choose a font and size for all this text from the **Home** tab of the Ribbon. When you use this template to write letters, you'll click on the middle blank line between 'Dear' and 'Yours sincerely' and start typing, and Word will apply the font you've just chosen to this text too.

## Step 5: Add Headers and Page Numbers to Additional Pages

If a letter ever extends to two or more pages

What's going to happen if you write a letter that extends to more than a single page? So far, any subsequent pages have neither a letterhead nor page numbers, so let's sort that out:

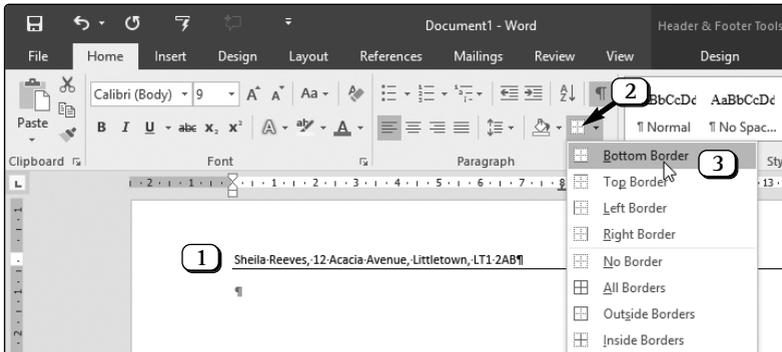


Add a header to the second page

1. Press **(Ctrl)** + **(End)** to jump to the very end of the page. Next, switch to the Ribbon's **Insert** tab, and in the 'Pages' group click the **Blank Page** button.
2. Word inserts a page break below your name in the letter and adds a second page to your document. You'll find the cursor flashing at the top of this new page, which is just where we want it. On the **Insert** tab of the Ribbon, in the 'Header & Footer' group, click the **Header** button and choose **Edit Header**.
3. Now Word displays the header area at the top of this second page. Here, type your name and address and use the options on the **Home** tab of the Ribbon to select a font and a reasonably-small size (perhaps 9 or 10 points) for it.
4. To separate your name and address **(1)** from the text that will appear below it, we'll add a bottom border to it. On the **Home** tab of the Ribbon, in the 'Paragraph' section, click the little arrowhead beside the **Borders** button **(2)** and choose **Bottom Border** **(3)**.

Type your name and address

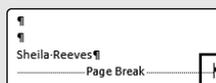
Add a dividing line beneath it



5. We'll also add page numbers to the bottom-right of the pages. Switch back to the **Header & Footer Tools > Design** tab, and in the 'Header & Footer' group, click the **Page Number** button.
6. On the menu that opens, move your mouse down to **Bottom of page** (but don't click that item!). On the menu that pops out beside it, click **Plain Number 3**.
7. Next, at the right of the **Header & Footer Tools > Design** tab, click on the rightmost button, **Close Header and Footer**.

Add page numbering

8. Now go back to the first page of your document, and click at the end of the 'Page Break' marker, then press the **Backspace** key to delete it. (If you don't see this marker, click the ¶ button mentioned on page 3 to display it.) This removes the second page from your document (ensuring Word won't print an almost-blank second page whenever you write a one-page letter!) but Word now knows to include the header and page numbers we've just added on the second and subsequent pages of any longer letters you type.



Delete this second page from your document

## Step 6: Use Your New Template to Write and Print Letters

Finished!

That's it – you've finished. The letterhead possibly looks a little messy on the screen: you might like to temporarily turn off the display of paragraph markings (page 3) and gridlines (page 5) to see how it will look on paper.

Save this template

Save the document by pressing the **(F12)** key to open the Save As dialog, choosing where to save it (such as your Documents folder) and typing a name such as 'Letter Template' for it.



Since the size and position of the window in envelopes can vary a little, one other thing worth doing is to type a dummy address into the left cell of the table's fourth row and print the result on to cheap paper. Fold it and insert it into an envelope and make sure your small return address and the recipient's address are both visible in the window. If they're not, you can adjust the heights of the table cells as necessary to nudge these upwards or downwards as we did on page 7. After another test print to check the result, delete the dummy address and press **(Ctrl) + (S)** to save the finished template.

How to use your letter template

You can now close this document (by pressing **(Ctrl) + (W)**) and/or close Word itself. In future, whenever you want to write a letter, simply open this document. As soon as you've done that, press **(F12)** and save the new letter with a different name, thus ensuring you don't overwrite your pristine template. Type the recipient's address into the left-hand cell of the table's fourth row, edit your 'Date' line to show today's date, type the recipient's name after 'Dear', and then get straight on with typing the letter itself.

A final press of **(Ctrl) + (S)** saves the finished letter, and you can then press **(Ctrl) + (P)** to print it on paper.