

how to write enclosures on the bottom of a letter

How to write enclosures on the bottom of a letter is an essential skill for anyone engaged in formal communication. Enclosures, also known as attachments, are documents or items that accompany a letter to provide additional information or support to the main content of the correspondence. Properly indicating enclosures is critical in ensuring that the recipient understands what additional materials they will find with the letter. This article will guide you through the process of writing enclosures at the bottom of a letter, discussing their importance, different types, formatting, and best practices.

Understanding Enclosures in Letters

Enclosures are critical components of formal letters, as they help to convey additional information succinctly. They can include a variety of documents, such as:

- Resumes: Accompanying job applications.
- Reports: Providing detailed analyses or findings.
- Invoices: For billing purposes.
- Brochures: To give more context about a service or product.
- Forms: To be filled out and returned.

Including enclosures adds depth to your correspondence and ensures that the recipient has all the necessary information to respond or take action.

The Purpose of Indicating Enclosures

When you indicate enclosures in a letter, you serve several important purposes:

1. Clarity: It informs the recipient that additional documents are included.
2. Professionalism: Properly noting enclosures demonstrates attention to detail and professionalism.
3. Organization: It helps the recipient keep track of correspondence and related documents.
4. Encourages Follow-up: Knowing what documents are included can prompt the recipient to review and respond appropriately.

How to Format Enclosures

Proper formatting is crucial when writing enclosures. Here's how to effectively indicate enclosures at the bottom of your letter.

1. Placement

The enclosure notation should be placed below your signature block, typically left-aligned. This placement ensures that it's one of the last things the recipient sees, reinforcing that there are additional materials to consider.

2. Use of the Term "Enclosure" or "Enclosures"

- Single enclosure: If you are including one document, use the singular term "Enclosure."
- Multiple enclosures: If you are including more than one document, use the plural term "Enclosures."

3. List of Enclosures

After the term "Enclosure" or "Enclosures," you should provide a list of the documents included. This list should be in a simple format, typically either as a bullet point list or a numbered list.

Example Layout:

...

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Title]

[Your Company]

Enclosure(s):

1. Resume

2. Cover Letter

3. Reference List

...

Best Practices for Indicating Enclosures

Adhering to best practices can enhance the effectiveness of your enclosure notation.

1. Be Clear and Concise

When listing the enclosures, be clear and concise. Use straightforward language and avoid jargon. Each item should be easily identifiable.

2. Numbering vs. Bulleting

Choose between numbering and bulleting based on the context:

- Numbering: Use when there are multiple enclosures that need to be referenced in the body of the letter.
- Bullets: Use when you simply want to list items without implying a hierarchy or specific order.

3. Reference Enclosures in the Body of the Letter

If you mention any of the enclosures in the body of the letter, make sure to reference them explicitly. For example, you might say, "Please find my resume and cover letter attached for your review," which alerts the reader to look for these documents.

4. Keep It Professional

Ensure that the language and tone of your enclosure notation match the overall tone of your letter. This consistency reinforces professionalism.

5. Be Mindful of Format and Style

Ensure that the style of the enclosure notation matches the rest of your letter in terms of font, size, and formatting. This attention to detail reinforces a polished appearance.

Common Mistakes to Avoid When Writing Enclosures

Even seasoned professionals can make mistakes when indicating enclosures. Here are some common pitfalls to avoid:

1. Failing to List Enclosures: Always make sure to mention any enclosures. This oversight can lead to confusion.
2. Inconsistent Numbering: If you reference enclosures in the letter, make sure the numbers match those listed at the bottom.
3. Using Ambiguous Terms: Avoid vague terminology. Be specific about what documents are included.
4. Omitting a Signature: Always sign your letter before listing enclosures.
5. Incorrectly Counting Enclosures: Double-check that the number of enclosures listed corresponds with what you have actually included.

Examples of Enclosures in Letters

To illustrate how to properly indicate enclosures, here are a couple of examples.

Example 1: Job Application Letter

...

[Your Name]
[Your Address]
[City, State, Zip Code]
[Email Address]
[Phone Number]

[Date]

[Recipient Name]
[Company Name]
[Company Address]
[City, State, Zip Code]

Dear [Recipient Name],

I am writing to express my interest in the [Job Title] position at [Company Name]. I believe my skills in [relevant skills] make me a great fit for your team.

Please find attached my resume and cover letter for your review. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss how I can contribute to your organization.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Enclosures:

1. Resume
2. Cover Letter

...

Example 2: Invoice Letter

...

[Your Company Name]
[Your Company Address]
[City, State, Zip Code]
[Email Address]
[Phone Number]

[Date]

[Client Name]
[Client Company Name]

[Client Address]
[City, State, Zip Code]

Dear [Client Name],

Attached please find Invoice 12345 for services rendered in September. If you have any questions or require further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Best regards,

[Your Name]
[Your Title]

Enclosure:
1. Invoice 12345
^^

Conclusion

Writing enclosures at the bottom of a letter is more than just a formality; it is a vital aspect of effective communication. By understanding the purpose and proper formatting of enclosures, you enhance clarity and professionalism in your correspondence. Remember to be clear and concise, reference enclosures in the letter body, and avoid common mistakes. By following these guidelines, you can ensure that your letters are well-organized and that your recipients have all the information they need to respond effectively. Whether you are applying for a job, sending an invoice, or providing additional information, mastering the art of indicating enclosures will serve you well in your professional endeavors.

Frequently Asked Questions

What does 'enclosure' mean in the context of a letter?

An enclosure refers to any additional documents or materials included with a letter, such as reports, contracts, or resumes.

Where should you place the enclosure notation in a letter?

The enclosure notation should be placed below your signature, typically a few lines down, to indicate that additional materials are included.

How do you format the enclosure notation?

You can simply write 'Enclosure' or 'Enclosures' followed by a colon and then list the documents included, for example: 'Enclosure: Resume'.

Is it necessary to mention enclosures in every letter?

No, it's only necessary to mention enclosures if there are additional documents included with the letter.

How do you indicate multiple enclosures?

If you have more than one enclosure, you can write 'Enclosures' (plural) and then list each document on a new line for clarity.

Should I include a page count for my enclosures?

It's not mandatory, but including the total number of pages or items can provide clarity, especially for longer documents.

Can I use abbreviations for enclosures?

While you can use abbreviations, it's best to spell out 'Enclosure' or 'Enclosures' fully to avoid any confusion.

What if my letter is electronic? Should I still mention enclosures?

Yes, even in electronic letters, you should mention enclosures if you are attaching additional documents.

What is the difference between 'Enclosure' and 'Attachment'?

The term 'Enclosure' is used for physical letters, while 'Attachment' is used for digital correspondence to refer to files included with an email.

Can I include a brief description of each enclosure?

Yes, providing a brief description of each enclosure can help the recipient understand their relevance and purpose.

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