

Modified Block and Simplified Block Business Letters

BASEBALL is a game of inches. A ball or a strike can make all the difference in the outcome of a batter and of a game. In the world of business letters, a few inches make a difference, too. You will see how to distinguish between a modified block and a simplified block letter. In addition, you will learn about formatting these types of letters.

Objective:



Explain modified and simplified block formats.

Key Terms:



modified block
simplified block



Preparing Modified and Simplified Block Business Letters

More than likely, you speak differently to different groups of people. For instance, you are likely more formal at work and at weddings than you are at school and at parties. Letters are the same way. You use different language, depending on the audience. Also, you would not wear sweatpants to a wedding or a tuxedo to P.E. class. In the same manner, letters must “appear” in the proper form.

MODIFIED BLOCK LETTER

A modified block business letter requires the same components of a block business letter. However, the placement of the parts is slightly different. **Modified block** is a style of a busi-



FURTHER EXPLORATION...

ONLINE CONNECTION: When to Use Modified or Simplified Block Letters

When doing business, follow conventional business letter formatting to maintain credibility with your business associates. They should see your letters as competent. So when and why would you choose to use modified or simplified block letter formats? One example is when you do not know the recipient's name. The simplified block format omits the salutation. Read more about this at <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/simplified-style-business-letter-10318.html>. Conduct your own research to find more examples of when and why you would use the modified or simplified block letter formats.

ness letter in which the format has been altered. The modified block style consists of two format changes. The date and the closing lines are tabbed over to the 4-inch mark horizontally. Also, the paragraphs can be indented.

Formatting a Modified Block Letter

Type the date at the 2-inch top vertical margin and at the 4-inch horizontal mark. Leave three blank lines under the date. Then type the inside address at the left margin, and leave one blank line under the inside address. Next, type the salutation at the left margin, and leave one blank line after it. Type the body of the letter. The paragraphs may or may not be indented. Leave one blank line, and type the complimentary closing lines tabbed at the 4-inch horizontal mark. Double-space any additional letter parts after the writer's name and title.

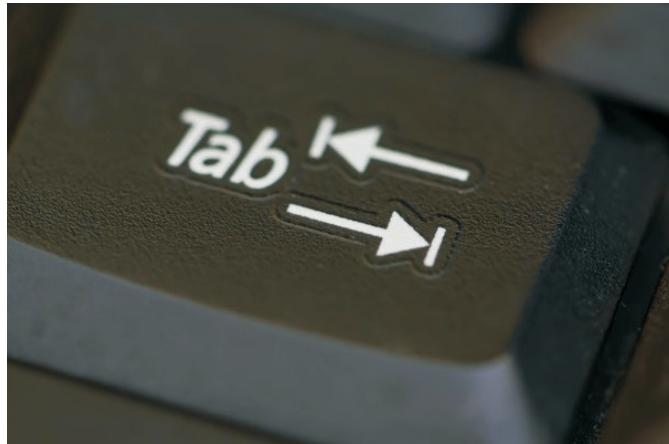


FIGURE 1. Be sure to indent in modified block.

SIMPLIFIED BLOCK LETTER

A **simplified block** is a business letter format that omits the salutation and complimentary closing. All lines start at the left margin. Use the following steps to create a simplified block letter. Type the date at the 2-inch top margin of the page, and leave three blank lines (quadruple space). Type the "inside address." Then leave one blank line. Type the subject line in all capital letters, and leave one blank line. Next, type the body of the letter single-spaced, but you must double-space between paragraphs. In addition, leave three blank lines after the last paragraph. Then type the writer's name and title in all capital letters. Double-space any additional letter parts under the writer's name and title.

Summary:



A modified block letter has a couple of key formatting differences that distinguish it from a block business letter. For instance, the date and the closing lines are tabbed over to the 4-inch mark horizontally. Also, the paragraphs can be indented. A simplified block format is a business letter that omits the salutation and complimentary closing. All other important information is included. Both modified and simplified block letters are acceptable variations.

Checking Your Knowledge:



1. In the modified block letter, how far over is the date tabbed?
2. In which format can you indent?
3. How do modified block letter and simplified block letter formats compare?
4. In which format do you omit the complimentary close?
5. What is one example of when and why you would use a simplified block format when sending a business letter?

Expanding Your Knowledge:



Search for templates for block, modified block, and simplified block letter formats. Write a business letter using each of the templates.

Web Links:



Modified Block

<http://www.savvy-business-correspondence.com/ModifiedBlockBizLetter.html>

Simplified Block

<http://wiz.cath.vt.edu/tw/TechnicalWriting/corresp/letters/formatexamples/simplified.html>

Modified Block

http://jobsearchtech.about.com/od/letters/l/bl_mblock_p.htm

Advantages of Writing a Business Letter

http://www.ehow.com/info_8404351_advantages-writing-business-letter.html