

National Model Aviation Day Example

Letter to the Editor

If you prefer a video tutorial visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yxfIXSfOalk>

Step 1: Decide what your letter is about and who your audience will be. Letters to the editor are often best for a response to an article or a community issue. In this case, we are writing to the editor to explain why model flying is good, and why having a model flying venue is so important to a community. This is also a great place to include information about your National Model Aviation Day event.

Step 2: Read other letters to the editor in your local paper. All editors are different. It's important to see what they choose to publish, because this will help you set the tone for your letter. If you notice that your editor prefers more governmental stories, talk about the FAA and regulation—if they like feel good stories, concentrate on the great things your club has done for your community and for youth in your area.

Step 3: Look at the guidelines. Most papers will have guidelines for the types of letters they will publish. Most papers have rules regarding the letter's length. They also typically ask that you include your name and contact information for verification. There may be additional guidelines. A number of papers won't allow political endorsement and limit how often individuals can submit. Make sure to read these guidelines before you send off your work.

Note: If you can't find the guidelines for submitting letters, call the publication to ask.

Step 4: Be timely. If you were responding to an article in the paper you would want to write the letter within two or three days of the article being published. In this case, you should consider writing the letter close to your event. Or, if your goal is support or sponsorship, write it sooner.

Step 5: If your letter is used, please thank the editor. You can send a thank you card, send a small gift, or send photos after the event. Relationships are very important when working with the media—that's why they call it public/media relations.

Formatting your letter

Here are some important tips when formatting your letter.

1. Include your return address and contact information. Make sure to include your full contact information at the top of your letter. This will include not only your address, but also your email address and daytime phone number.
If your letter is chosen, the editors will use this information to get in touch with you. If the newspaper has an online submission system, it will likely have a space for you to include this information.
2. Include the date. After your contact information, leave a blank line and then add the date. Write it formally, as you would in a business letter, such as: "Feb 25, 2021."
3. Include the recipient's name and address. If you are writing an email or sending in a physical letter, address the letter as you would a business letter.
Include the recipient's name, position, company, and address. If you don't know the editor's name, you can either find it in the newspaper, or you can just write "Editor."
4. State if you want your letter published anonymously. It's usually a good idea to attach your name to your letter, and some newspapers won't publish letters anonymously anyway. But sometimes, there may be a circumstance where you want to state your opinion but you don't want people to know who you are. Add a note to the editor that your letter needs to be published anonymously.
There should be no reason to need to be anonymous for a model aviation event. Please make sure your letters are written to appeal to the community.
5. Write a simple salutation. There's no need to be fancy here. Just write "To the editor," "To the editor of The Herald," or "Dear Editor." Follow this salutation with a comma or a colon.

Crafting your letter

1. State the subject or article you are writing about right away. Orient your readers as quickly as possible by stating the subject at hand, or if you are responding to an article include the name and date of the article that you're responding to. Also, include the article's argument. You can do this in just one or two sentences.

For example: "As a literature professor, I must take issue with your editorial ("Why Novels no Longer Matter in the Classroom," March 18th)."

2. State your position. After you've stated your subject, you should clearly state the position you're taking on the issue and why you feel a certain way. If your authority relates to the issue in some way, then state your occupation as well. Take this time to show why the issue is relevant and important, but remember to be brief.

For example: "While the article states that college students no longer take pleasure in reading, everything I've seen in my classroom is evidence to the contrary. The article is not only inaccurate, but provides a very cursory explanation of the many reasons why students may be challenged by reading fiction in a college setting. Students aren't getting "bored" with fiction because the novel is no longer relevant; rather, their enthusiasm is waning because of professors who are losing interest in their own subject matter."

3. Focus on one major point. Your letter is too short to cover much ground. Give your letter more force by focusing on one issue and providing evidence for that issue.
4. Make your most important point up front. Be bold. This helps your reader identify exactly what you're arguing from the get-go. If your letter is edited, it will be cut from the bottom up. If your most important point is at the beginning, it won't get lost in the editing.
5. Provide evidence. Now that you've stated your position on an issue, you need to back it up with some facts. If you want your letter to be chosen, then you need to show that you've put some thought and research into formulating your letter. Though you don't have a lot of space, just providing a few key facts can make a big difference.

Some Examples:

- Use recent events in your state or community as evidence.
- Use statistics, data, or survey results.
- Tell a personal story that tells a larger point.

- Use current events in politics for support.
6. Use a personal example. To make your point relevant, use a personal story. Readers can more easily recognize the impact that news can have on a person when that person shares a personal story. This is the best place to include information on how model aviation has directly impacted you, someone you know, or the community at large.
 7. Say what should be done. Once you've provided evidence for your point of view, end the letter by saying what can be done to address the issue. Perhaps just raising awareness of the issue in the community is enough, but there may be other things that people can do to address the issue and get involved.
 8. Name names in your letter. If your letter is intended to influence a legislator or a corporation to take a specific action, name that person or corporation. The staff working for the legislator is collecting news mentions of the legislator. Corporations are doing the same. These people will be more likely to read your letter if you name them specifically.
 9. Have a simple closing. Have one sentence that summarizes your point of view on the issue so your readers have a clear reminder of your main message.
 10. Include a closing phrase along with your name and city. At the very end of your letter, include a simple "Sincerely," or "Best regards," to finish your letter. Then include your name and city. Include your state if the newspaper is not your local publication.
 11. Include your affiliation if you are writing in your professional capacity. If your professional expertise is relevant to your article, then include this information between your name and residence. If you are attaching your company's name to your letter, you are implicitly stating that you are speaking on behalf of the organization. If you are writing on your own, then omit your company name. You can still use your professional title if it is relevant to the issue addressed in your letter.

More Tips

1. Be original.
2. Don't write too much and avoid being too wordy. Most letters to the editor are between 150 and 300 words long. Remember to be as concise as possible.
3. Be respectful and professional in tone.
4. Write to the level of the readers. Make sure your letter is written at an appropriate reading level for the newspaper's audience.
5. Proofread your work. Once you're happy with the wording of your letter, proofread your paper to check for grammar and spelling mistakes. Remember that you're competing against many other letter writers, sometimes numbering in the thousands for a national paper. If you have a stray comma or a grammatical hiccup, you risk looking less professional than your competition.

Try walking away from the letter for a few hours and re-reading with fresh eyes. Or, send the letter to other club members to review it before you send it in.

6. Don't be disappointed if your letter doesn't get chosen. No matter how perfect your letter might have been, there is always a chance that other letters will catch the editor's eye and that yours will not be published. That's okay. Now that you know how to write a letter to the editor, you'll be a pro at writing future letters. Be proud of yourself for stating your opinion and advocating for something you believe in.
7. Send it to several papers. Select your favorite and best option first. If it's not printed in a week send it to other papers.

First Name Last Name
Club Name
Address of Writer
City State Zip
Phone Number of Writer
Email Address of Writer

August 13, 2021

Dear Editor,

Drones, as they are often called, have become very popular across the country and are now seen being used in our community by children and adults. We are writing you today because we want the community to be aware that we offer a safe place right here in Stuben. We welcome those flying multirotors, or “drones” but offer space and programs for the traditional model flyer as well.

Our club, the Flying Tigers, has been operating safely for 25 years in Stuben County. We are part of a national organization that has focuses on safety and fun—The Academy of Model Aeronautics. The Tigers are happy to celebrate along with them by participating in National Model Aviation Day on August 16. Our club is opening our flying field to the public to learn more about model flying and about our club, which has become a valued part of the community.

I have been flying model airplanes since I was 5 years old. My father introduced me to the hobby and I have been fascinated by flight ever since. When it was time to choose a career I knew it had to involve aviation, which is why I chose to become an aerospace engineer. I have returned the favor and shared the hobby with my sons and now my granddaughters who both attend Stuben High School

We invite you to visit our club website: www.tigers.com, the national event website modelaviationday.com, and www.discoverflight.org to learn more about model flying.

Sincerely,

Tom Jones

Member of the Flying Tigers

Proud Stuben resident