Cover Letter Checklist

- Make sure your cover letter is specific to the job and shows your passion for the company.
- The content should also demonstrate a well-researched and informed perspective on the company. Stay positive—don’t refer to any bad press.
- Write the letter with the employer’s needs and job requirements in mind. Describe exactly how you and your skills can help meet those needs.
- Open your letter with: Dear (Name of direct hiring manager if known) or Dear Hiring Manager, Dear Human Resources Representative. DO NOT open your cover letter with: Dear Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen or To whom it may concern.
- Include the exact job title and job reference code (if available) in the first paragraph of your cover letter. There may be several positions with the same title, and a reference code will help distinguish the position.
- Make sure the tone of your cover letter is straightforward and businesslike. Use action words (e.g., “built” or “achieved” or “created”) to describe past accomplishments and results.
- Use language that is simple, clear and to the point.
- Do not include personal information like marital status, children or disabilities.
- Did you say exactly how and when you’ll follow up with them? Don’t forget to mark your calendar.
- Close with “Sincerely.”

Overall Appearance

- Your document should appear neat, clean and professional. Use hard returns between paragraphs and one-inch margins all around.
- Select a font and font size that matches your resume, so both documents look like they belong together as a unit.
- Avoid using multiple colors, fancy bullet styles or multiple fonts.
- Limit your letter to three to four paragraphs (one or two if it’s the email/text format), and keep it to one page.

Additional Tips

- Find a friend, colleague, professor or experienced family member to take a look at your cover letter and offer feedback.
- Print your letter and read it out loud. This often helps you catch errors or oddities that you or spellcheck wouldn’t otherwise catch.