Informal Letter Writing

Matthew Williams • Spanish • May 2, 2026

An informal Spanish letter is a friendly personal letter written to someone you know well, such as a friend, cousin, parent, or close family member. In CSEC Spanish, the key is to use the correct format, answer every cue, and sound natural without becoming too casual.

Format

Unlike a formal letter, an informal letter **does not include your address or the addressee's address**. At the top of the page, write only the place where you are and the date.

Example:

Kingston, 12 de enero de 2017

Use this order for the date:

place, day + de + month + de + year

Greeting

Use **querido / querida / queridos / queridas** when writing to someone you know well.

Spanish	Use
Querido Rafael,	one male friend or relative
Querida Beatriz,	one female friend or relative
Queridos Beatriz y Rafael,	mixed group
Queridas amigas,	female group
Querido Papá,	father
Querida Mamá,	mother

The greeting normally ends with a comma.

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Paragraph Structure

Aim for **2 to 3 short paragraphs**, plus the place/date, greeting, closing, and name.

Section	Length	Purpose
First paragraph	20-30 words	greet the person and introduce why you are writing
Middle paragraph	40-50 words	answer the cues with developed sentences
Final paragraph	10-20 words	conclude, ask a question, and say farewell

Opening Phrases

Start naturally by asking how the person is.

INFORMAL OPENINGS

Spanish	English
¿Cómo estás?	How are you?
¿Qué tal?	How are things?
¿Qué hay?	What's up?
¿Cómo te va?	How is it going?
Espero que estés bien.	I hope you are well.
Espero que todo vaya bien.	I hope everything is going well.

Then explain why you are writing.

REASON FOR WRITING

Spanish	English
Escribo para decirte que...	I am writing to tell you that...
Estoy escribiendo para hablarte de...	I am writing to talk to you about...
Déjame decirte sobre...	Let me tell you about...
Quiero contarte acerca de...	I want to tell you about...

Linking Ideas

Use transitions to organise your answer and connect the cues.

Purpose	Spanish phrases
Start	En primer lugar, Primero, Para empezar, Antes de todo
Add	También, Además, Asimismo, Por añadidura
Contrast	Sin embargo, Aunque, Por otro lado, No obstante
Continue	En segundo lugar, Para continuar, Segundo
Result	Por eso, Por lo tanto, Por consiguiente
Conclude	Finalmente, En conclusión, Para concluir, Al fin y al cabo

Useful Idioms

Use one or two idioms only if they fit naturally.

PRACTICE — INFORMAL LETTER IDIOMS

estar en el séptimo cielo
to be extremely happy

estar de buen humor
to be in a good mood

estar de mala leche
to be in a bad mood

estar vivito y coleando
to be alive and kicking

ser pan comido
to be a piece of cake

llevarse bien con alguien
to get along well with someone

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Closing Phrases

Before the final close, you can ask a friendly question and tell the person to reply.

FINAL SENTENCES

Spanish	English
¿Qué vas a hacer este verano?	What are you going to do this summer?
¿Qué piensas estudiar el año que viene?	What do you plan to study next year?
¿Cómo pasaste la Pascua?	How did you spend Easter?
Saluda de mi parte a tu familia.	Say hello to your family for me.
Escribe pronto.	Write soon.
Mantengámonos en contacto.	Let's keep in touch.

Use a friendly closing.

Spanish	Best for
Un abrazo,	friend or relative
Un fuerte abrazo,	close friend or relative
Un fuerte abrazo de tu amigo,	close friend
Un beso,	close friend or family
Besos y abrazos,	close friend or family
Con cariño,	warm family/friend close
Con todo mi cariño,	very affectionate family close
Afectuosamente,	affectionate but slightly more polished

Annotated Example

Click the letter to see how each part works.

DOCUMENT EXAMPLE

Kingston, 20 de febrero de 2025

Querido Pablo,

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¿Qué tal? Espero que estés bien. Escribo para decirte sobre este fin de semana.

Primero, mi familia y yo vamos a pasar tiempo juntos. Voy a montar en bicicleta con mi hermano y mis padres van a ir al cine conmigo el sábado por la tarde. Además, nosotros todos vamos a la playa el domingo por la mañana y por la tarde vamos a un concierto en la iglesia.

En conclusión, me llevo bien con mi familia. ¿Qué vas a hacer este fin de semana?

Con cariño,

Rosa

Exam Checklist

Before you finish, check that you have:

- included the **place and date** at the top
- used an appropriate **informal greeting**
- answered **all cues**
- written in **2 to 3 clear paragraphs**
- used transitions such as primero, además, and en conclusión
- included at least one natural idiom if appropriate
- ended with a friendly closing and your first name

> 📝 **Exam Tip**
> Do not waste space on addresses in an informal Spanish letter. Use that space to answer the cues properly and show range with connectors, opinions, reasons, and a few natural expressions.

Practice

Write an informal letter to a friend about your plans for the weekend. Include:

- 1. where you will go
- 2. who you will go with
- 3. what activities you will do
- 4. one question for your friend

Use at least three connectors and one friendly closing.

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