

## Fun at home activity: Write a letter

Write a letter or a postcard to send to a friend or someone in your family.

Do you like receiving letters and postcards? At the National Museum of Australia we have lots of postcards and letters in our collection. Some of them go back to the 1800s.

**Did you know ...** During war times the Army sent messages using pigeons with mini messages attached to their legs. Incredible!

Today, the mail that is delivered by a postal worker is sometimes jokily called 'snail mail'. This is because it is slower than sending text messages or emails.

Even though it's not as quick, it is delightful and special to receive a letter or a postcard in the mailbox. Handwritten letters and postcards are treasured by the people who receive them.

That's why at the National Museum of Australia we have a very large collection of handwritten mail. You can search our collection on Collection Explorer. Hint: search 'dear mum' or 'dear dad'.



New South Wales Postal Service box, Australia Post Historical collection National Museum of Australia.

## How to create a letter or postcard

Let's make a letter or a postcard to send to a friend or someone in your family.

**Time:** 40 to 60 minutes

**Skill level:** ★★ Medium — you may need an adult to help.

**Materials:**

- Plain or coloured paper



- Scissors (remember scissors are sharp, so ask an adult for help)
- Glue, or sticky tape
- Pencils, pen or textas
- Stamps for posting

## Step 1 – Plan and decorate

Who do you want to write to? What kind of letter or postcard do you want to make? What pictures or decorations could you add?

Choose the size and type to start with:

- If you are making a postcard cut out a piece of card about the size of a postcard.
- If making a letter choose the paper – plain or coloured.

Gather your materials in front of you and start creating.

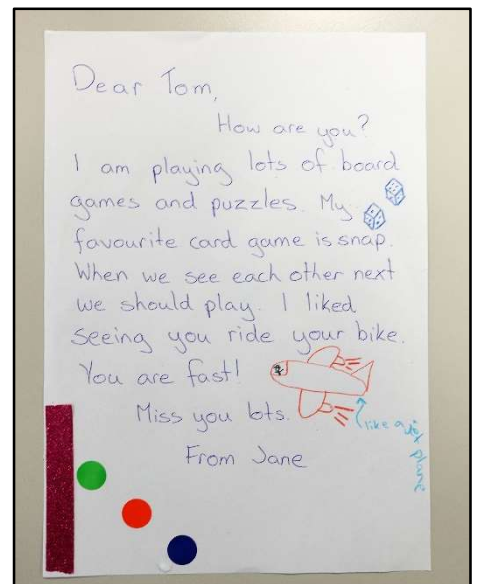
## Step 2 – Write your message

You can practice writing your message on a piece of scrap paper. You might like to write about:

- you and your family
- what you have been doing
- what you are looking forward to
- what you can see out your window or front door
- a story about your pet.

You can also include pictures or ask questions for the person to answer if they write back to you. When you are happy with your letter, write it on your paper or postcard.

Don't forget to say goodbye! You could show your love by adding kisses, hugs or draw a silly picture like an emoji. Have you got a signature that you could add too?



## Step 3 – Address the letter or postcard

Letters need to go in an envelope. You can make your own if you don't have any.

Don't forget you can decorate your envelope too. Remember to leave enough room for the address of your recipient.

Here what you need to address a letter or a postcard:

- Name of the person
- Street address of the person
- Suburb and postcode
- State or Territory
- Country (If sending overseas)

Check with an adult if you have all the details. After all, you want the postal worker to know where to deliver it.

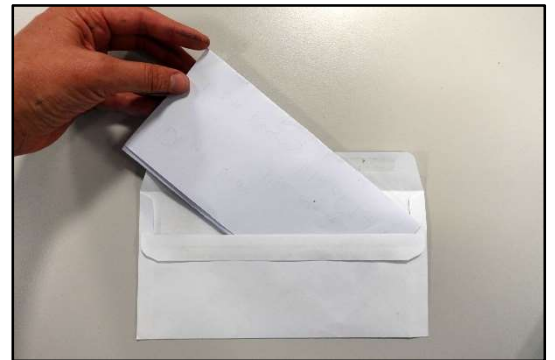
## Step 5 – Post your letter or postcard

Put a stamp on your letter (check with an adult or the post office to make sure the stamp is the right one for your letter).

Keep checking your mailbox for a return letter and have fun!

Here at the museum we love getting letters. If you want to send us a letter our address is:

National Museum of Australia  
Family Programs  
GPO BOs 1901  
Canberra  
ACT 2601



## Share your creation

See creations made by young Museum visitors on our [Flickr stream](#) or check out more [fun at home activities](#) on our website.

Share your creation with us by emailing a photo to: [programs@nma.gov.au](mailto:programs@nma.gov.au)