

Writing a Consumer Complaint Letter

If you are unhappy with a product or service, the best thing to do is let the retailer or manufacturer know. Often, a phone call can resolve the problem. Many companies have toll-free customer service phone numbers and will make credits, refunds or replacements by phone.

If a phone call does not resolve the problem, you will need to write a letter to the company. Putting your complaint in writing is important because it creates a legal record of your complaint and communicates to the company that you are serious about pursuing it.

Here are some tips for writing an effective complaint letter:

- > Direct your letter to the president or chief executive officer.
- > Make sure you include your name, address and contact information (daytime and evening phone numbers).
- > Be very specific and detailed about the problem you encountered as well as the response you expect.
- > Enclose copies—not originals—of all relevant documents, such as receipts, sales agreements and warranties. Keep the originals and copies of all correspondence for your records.
- > Send your letter by certified mail, return receipt requested, so that you have proof that your letter was received.

While sending an e-mail may seem easier, many companies do a poor job of responding to e-mail. You may not get anything other than an automated response thanking you for your comments.

If Your Complaint Is Ignored

If your complaint is ignored or you are not satisfied with the response you have received, try these strategies:

- > Contact your state's consumer protection office or attorney general's office.
- > File a complaint with the Better Business Bureau.
- > Take your story to the media. Many newspapers, TV and radio stations have reporters who cover consumer problems.
- > Contact a federal agency that records and investigates consumer complaints, such as the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Find out more at usa.gov.

Additional Information

This information is brought to you by ComPsych® GuidanceResources®. This company-sponsored benefit offers confidential help and support 24 hours a day, 7 days per week, at no cost to you or your immediate family. Our Guidance Consultants can assist you with your concerns at: **877-627-4239**

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