

5.5

WRITING
Letter of complaint

Lesson outcome

Learners can write a letter or email of complaint with supporting details.

Lead-in

- 1 Read the letter of complaint from one company to another. Choose the correct option in *italics*. Then compare in pairs.

Dear Sirs,

Re: Order # 4587 for 30 dishwashers

We ¹*arranged / ordered* 30 dishwashers for our hotel group last week on the understanding that they would be ²*delivered / carried* yesterday. Although you indicated that this might be difficult, you ³*assumed / assured* us that you could manage it.

However, only 10 machines arrived and, of those, two were ⁴*damaged / injured* and one did not work at all. Your driver was most unhelpful and told us to call you immediately, which we did. We tried to contact you several times but your customer service department did not answer our ⁵*chats / calls*. Despite sending you several emails asking you to contact us, so far we have had no response from you.

We are very surprised by this as we have been customers of your company for many years. However, if you do not ⁶*respond / answer* to this letter immediately, we shall be ⁷*made / forced* to withhold payment, find another supplier and request that you ⁸*distribute / collect* the ten machines already delivered.

We sincerely hope that this situation can be resolved to our mutual satisfaction.

We look forward to receiving your ⁹*punctual / prompt* response.

Jacob Besinger

Purchasing Manager

Functional language

- 2 Complete the table using words and phrases from the letter.

Problem (Para 1)

Last week, we ¹ _____ 100 desks from you.

Unfortunately, some of the desks were ² _____.

My ³ _____ were not answered by your customer service department.

Extra details (Para 2)

You ⁴ _____ the goods would arrive on time.

Ten of the desks were the wrong type.

We were unable to ⁵ _____ your customer service department.

Demand (Para 3)

If you ⁶ _____ to this letter immediately, we ⁷ _____ to look for another supplier.

We ⁸ _____ you collect the desks.

If you do not resolve this situation immediately, we shall have no alternative but to cancel our order.

Desired outcome (Para 4)

We ⁹ _____ that this situation will be resolved to our ¹⁰ _____.

We look forward ¹¹ _____ the correct goods as soon as possible.

T Teacher's resources: extra activities

L The letter of complaint contains examples of linking words. Go to MyEnglishLab for optional grammar work.

→ page 122 See Grammar reference: Linking

TASK

- 3A Work in pairs. Make a list of as many business situations as you can which might require a letter of complaint. Then look at the list of problems on page 130 and complete the table with 'details' and 'demands'.
- B Use a situation from the table in Exercise 3A and write a letter of complaint in around 180 words.
- C Exchange letters with your partner. Did your partner organise the letter well? How many of the phrases in Exercise 2 did your partner use?