Understanding forms

Forms need to be filled in for lots of different reasons. For example, you might want to record a complaint or fill in a course or job application form. Or you might complete a form online to find out about jobs in your area or to book a ticket for a journey or a show.
Forms can be filled in different ways, including:

- by hand
- by word processor and signed by hand
- online (and sent online)

Before filling in any form it's important to be sure of the purpose of the form and to think about who might read it.

Tips

When you're filling in a form:

- read it carefully before you start writing
- check that you understand all the language used
- make sure you understand the instructions on the form

Sometimes there are different types of questions in different sections of a form. There may be questions with a list of possible answers and you have to choose the answer that applies to you. You may have to circle or tick the right answer to a question, or cross out the wrong answers. If you're completing a form on a computer, you may have to use the mouse to click on a drop-down menu and you then click on the answer that's right for you.

Read the instructions (left) and explanations (right) below

Write in BLOCK CAPITALS	Write the whole word in capital letters
Please tick appropriate box	Put a tick in the box ☑ that's right for you
Delete where applicable	Cross out the answers that don't apply to you
Please print	Write without joining up the letters
Please specify	Please give details

There are several different ways of writing dates. The form should let you know what's required. On some forms, you may need to write the date in boxes.

D	D	M	M	Y	Y	Y	Y

For example, you write the day first, then the month and then the year.