

## Tips for Writing a Letter to the Editor

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### Things to think about:

1. **What kind of tone do you want?** Even if the topic fills you with rage, think about what the paper will print. Passion is good but it must be meaningful and well...entertaining. Irony, edgy humor, and pointing out the absurd can go a long way.
2. **What is/are the most significant fact(s) about your issue?** Do you have specific information that the public may not know? What should the public be aware of? Maybe a fact was presented in the third or fourth paragraph that merits attention – you might want to write a letter that addresses this fact. Maybe a story was buried. Letters with specific information tend to get printed more than letters with only opinion.
3. **Keep it short.** The semi-colon is your friend; be pithy. You may have to eliminate a clever idea that you really love in order to create a stronger letter. Always be thinking “what's my point.”
4. **Have fun.** Don't be discouraged if you don't get a letter in right away. Think of it as therapy. It's also a very good way to create a “political journal.” If you copy your text before you submit it to the Star Tribune, you can generate an interesting collection of your perspective. Just because a letter doesn't get printed doesn't mean it has been ineffective; it may inspire an actual story.
5. **Be aware publications limit the number of letters individuals can submit** – one letter to the editor and one netlet per month.