

How to Write an Amends Letter After Divorce (or to a Betrayer Partner)

1. Set your intention

Before writing, take some quiet time to reflect on *why* you're writing the letter.

- The purpose is to take accountability for your own actions — **not to explain, justify, or seek forgiveness.**
 - The goal is to express understanding, responsibility, and compassion, regardless of the other person's behavior or response.
 - Make sure you're emotionally ready — you've processed your pain, done your own healing work, and can write from a calm, centered place.
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2. Choose a respectful and clear title

Examples:

- *Amends After Divorce to [Name]*
- *Amends Letter to My Former Husband/Wife*
- *Letter of Accountability and Healing*

A clear, direct title helps set the tone — mature, sincere, and intentional.

3. Start with acknowledgment and readiness

Begin by explaining why you're writing and how you've come to this point:

- Mention your personal growth, therapy, or 12-step recovery work.
- Acknowledge that it has taken time and reflection to reach readiness.
- State that your intention is to acknowledge your past behaviors and make amends, not to reopen wounds.

Example:

It has taken me a long time and many drafts to reach a place where I feel ready to make a formal amends to you. Over the past couple of years, I've done a great deal of learning and soul-searching — on my own, in therapy, and through my 12-step work.

4. Offer a general apology

This section expresses regret for not living up to your values or vows and owning your part in the breakdown of the relationship.

- Avoid blaming or mentioning the other person's faults.
- Focus only on what *you* did or failed to do.
- Use calm, neutral language.

Example:

In general, I apologize for falling short in my attempt to live out my vows to you. Throughout our marriage, I often tried to get you to change...

5. Include specific examples

After your general apology, list specific behaviors you're taking accountability for.

- Use bullet points for clarity and structure.
- Keep each item short and focused on your behavior, not their reaction.
- Avoid explaining *why* you did it — focus on acknowledging that you did.

Example:

More specifically, I apologize for:

- Interrupting you during conversations.
 - Trying to control you rather than focusing on myself.
 - Failing to show compassion when you were struggling.
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6. Express compassion and closure

After listing your amends, end with empathy and peace:

- Acknowledge their humanity and the shared history.
- Express goodwill without implying reconciliation.
- Offer a brief statement of your commitment to new behavior going forward.

Example:

I have compassion for you and your struggles, and I hold love for you as the father of our children. Going forward, I commit to treating you with courtesy, respect, and kindness in all of our interactions.

7. Review tone and clarity

Before finalizing:

- Read it out loud — it should sound sincere, steady, and free from blame.
 - Remove emotional or charged language.
 - Keep the letter focused on your amends, not your pain.
 - Make sure the message is one of **accountability, empathy, and peace**.
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8. Format the document

- Use a clean, simple font (e.g., Times New Roman or Calibri, size 12).
 - Double-space or use 1.15 spacing for readability.
 - Include clear paragraph breaks between sections.
 - Save the file as a Word document or PDF for a polished look.
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9. Decide how (or whether) to deliver it

- Some people share their amends letter directly; others read it in therapy or write it for their own healing.
 - In a 12-step context, seek guidance from a sponsor or therapist before delivering it, especially if contact might cause harm or emotional distress.
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