



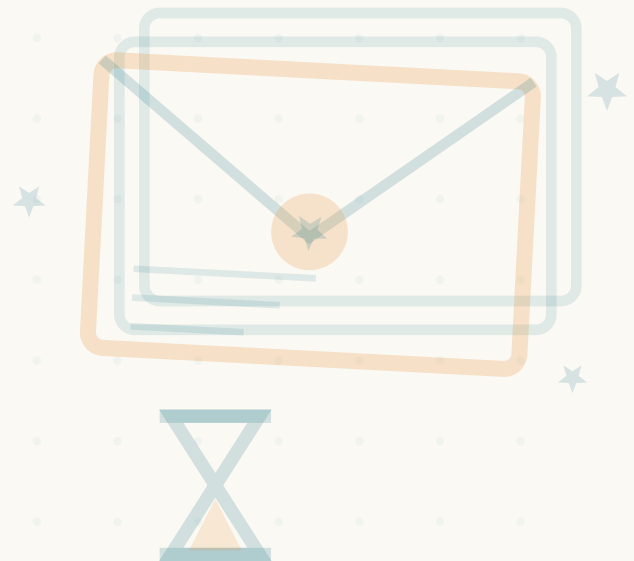
ARDENT WORKSHOP

AN ARDENT WORKSHOP PRODUCT

A Letter for One Day

One milestone, four prompts, and the paper — free from Ardent Workshop.

Write it tonight



LETTERS WRITTEN NOW, FOR DAYS THAT HAVEN'T HAPPENED YET

ardentworkshop.com

Write one letter tonight

Almost everyone freezes on the first letter, and almost always for the same reason: they're trying to write something worthy of the occasion instead of something true about the person. So this page picks the letter for you, gives you the questions, and leaves you the paper. It should take about twenty minutes.

THE LETTER: OPEN WHEN YOU'RE HAVING A HARD DAY

No date on this one — which is exactly why it never gets written, and exactly why it's the one to start with. It's also the letter most likely to actually be opened, because it's opened at need rather than on a birthday.

Four questions — answer whichever one makes something rise up in you

You are not required to answer all four, and they are not meant to be worked through in order like a form. Pick one and start there.

- 1 No advice, no fixing. Just proof that somebody sat down and thought about them on a day they weren't there.
- 2 One thing that reliably helps you on a bad day, offered without insisting.
- 3 A small, funny, specific memory that requires no context.
- 4 The sentence you'd say if they called you right now.

Leave out — Don't ask them to cheer up, and don't list their blessings. That's the letter that gets put back in the envelope unfinished.

If you're still stuck after ten minutes

The move	What it looks like
Start in the middle of a memory.	Skip the greeting and the throat-clearing. Begin with "You were four, and you had decided that..." — you can add the opening line later, or never.
Describe instead of praise.	"You're amazing" tells them nothing. "You spent an entire summer teaching yourself to whistle, badly, in the back seat" tells them who they were, and it's the one they'll read twice.
Answer a question they'd actually ask.	What were you like at my age? Were you scared? Did you like being a parent? Write the answer you'd give if they asked you at a kitchen table at midnight.
Tell on yourself once.	One thing you got wrong, told plainly and without asking to be forgiven in the same paragraph. It's the single thing that makes a letter believable rather than ceremonial.
Stop before you're finished.	Short letters get finished. Two honest paragraphs beat four polished pages, and a letter you finished beats a letter you're still perfecting.

The letter

Fill in the three header lines first — they're what tells whoever finds this envelope when it's meant to be opened. Then write in one sitting without stopping to fix anything, and seal it the same evening. A letter left open "to add to later" gets edited into something safer, and the unedited version was the one worth keeping.

To (their full name)

For which day — the milestone, or the feeling

From (as they'd say it) · Written on (date)

The letter

Cut this out and stick it on the envelope

FOR

TO BE OPENED

FROM

WRITTEN ON No.

And the other twenty-five

That's one letter written. Here is the rest of the plan — the milestones and moments the full keepsake lists, dates, and tracks for you. Copy the list into a notebook if you like; it's yours either way.

- The day you arrived
- Your first birthday
- Your first day of school
- The first time you were brave without us
- Double digits — your tenth birthday
- The year you start middle school
- Your thirteenth birthday
- The first time your heart is broken
- Your sixteenth birthday
- The day you first drive alone
- The day you graduate high school
- The day you leave home
- Your first job and your first real paycheck
- Your twenty-first birthday
- The day you finish your degree or your training
- The first place that's yours
- The day you choose your person
- The day you become a parent
- Your thirtieth birthday
- Your fiftieth birthday
- Open when you have to say goodbye to us
- Open when you doubt you're good enough
- Open when you're homesick
- Open when you're angry with us
- Open when you need to do something brave

THE HARD PART ISN'T THIS PAGE — IT'S THE NEXT TWENTY-FIVE

One letter is a good evening. Twenty-six is a project with no deadline, which is why almost nobody finishes it. The full keepsake dates the whole plan from the child's birth year, flags which letter is due, names the single next one to write, and tracks the mementos that get handed over with it.

Words your family keeps — on a file you own

There's a practical reason to keep something this personal in a workbook you own rather than in a subscription app: **this keepsake has to still work in twenty years.** That is the whole point of it. An app that holds your letters for a monthly fee is an app that can raise the fee, change hands, lose interest, or shut down long before the sixteenth birthday it was supposed to reach — and the letters go with it. A file you own doesn't. You decide where it's stored, you print it, you copy it, and the paper in the box is yours regardless. That's the idea behind Ardent Workshop: owned, organized files that sit between a blank page and a rented app holding your most personal records on

someone else's computer.

THE LETTERS, AND THEN THE PAPERWORK

This keepsake holds the words. The **New-Baby / New-Parent Records Binder** holds the practical side of the same childhood — the documents, the appointments, the numbers, and the things you're asked for at the worst possible moment. Together they cover both halves. [See the New-Baby / New-Parent Records Binder >](#)

See the rest of the Life Admin & Peace of Mind tools at ardentworkshop.com.

A note on what this is. This is a keepsake for personal letters and mementos. It is **not a will**, and nothing in it is legal, financial, or medical advice — a letter does not direct who inherits anything, and it is not a guardianship nomination, a trust, a power of attorney, an advance directive, or a beneficiary designation. If you want your wishes to be binding, put them in the right documents with a qualified professional where you live, and use these letters for the part the paperwork can't carry. Don't write account numbers, passwords, PINs, or where valuables are kept into the letters or this file. The example family shown throughout is clearly fictional.

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