

Guide to File Naming – Starting with Letters

The structure of file names is important to allow users to recognize and quickly access documents and images, and to ensure functionality across software applications/databases.

- The most important criteria in file names is consistency.
- The only punctuation used is the underscore “_” and the hyphen “-”.
- File names will never contain empty spaces.

The Basic Structure of File Naming for Letters:

Lastname-Firstname_letter_YYYY-MM-DD_d##-p##

Letter names have five sections:

- 1) collection name
- 2) a document type of “letter”
- 3) date
- 4) document number
- 5) page number

Each **section** of the file name is separated by an underscore “_”
Each **part** within a section is separated by a hyphen “-”

Collection Name: Lastname-Firstname

Names are entered as last name, hyphen, first name.

The collection name will have been assigned. If you are unsure what name should be used (compound names, nicknames etc. can be confusing) please ask for clarification.

Document Type: letter

Dates: YYYY-MM-DD

Dates are entered as a 4-digit year, hyphen, 2-digit month, hyphen, 2-digit day.

The date will always be 10 characters in length. Always include a zero if it is needed with the day or month to make it 2-digits, e.g. the month of February is “02”, never just “2”.

For incomplete dates any missing information is replaced with "x":

Complete date known:	Smith-John_letter_1917-01-05
Day unknown:	Smith-John_letter_1917-01-xx
Month unknown:	Smith-John_letter_1917-xx-05
No date information:	Smith-John_letter_XXXX-xx-xx

Document Number: d##

Document numbers are entered as “d” followed by 2-digits.

Every letter is given a document number to uniquely identify that letter of that date.

The first letter on a given date is “d01”. If there is a second letter on the same date the second letter is assigned “d02” etc. Example:

First letter, first page for Jan 5th, 1917: **Smith-John_letter_1917-01-05_d01-p01**

Second letter, first page for Jan 5th, 1917: **Smith-John_letter_1917-01-05_d02-p01**

Page Number: p##

Page numbers are entered as “p” followed by 2-digits.

The first page of a letter is always “p01”.

The page numbers assigned should match the order in which the pages of the letter were written. If you are uncertain as to what the page order should be (e.g. multiple pages on one scan, nonconventional page use in writing, etc.) please ask for clarification on assigning page numbers.

First letter, *first page* for Jan 5th, 1917: **Smith-John_letter_1917-01-05_d01-p01**

First letter, *second page* for Jan 5th, 1917: **Smith-John_letter_1917-01-05_d01-p02**

Envelopes: LName-FName_letter_YYYY-MM-DD_d##-env_side

Letter envelope scans follow the same naming rules as letters except that:

- “env” replaces the page #
- if both sides of the envelope have been scanned, an underscore followed by “front” or “back” is added
- if only one side of the envelope is scanned, no side reference is needed

Envelope with *front scan only*: **Smith-John_letter_1917-01-05_d01-env**

Envelope with *front & back scans*: **Smith-John_letter_1917-01-05_d01-env_front**
Smith-John_letter_1917-01-05_d01-env_back