



Saying "thank you" is vital and there are lots of ways to do it

## Thanking donors

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How you 'thank' will depend very much on how the donation was made. But no matter how the donation was made the time to thank is always the same, immediately or as soon after as possible.

If someone gives you a donation there and then, thank them, tell them how it makes you feel, remind them of what it might achieve. If you receive a donation through the post, never underestimate the value of a phone call on the day.

After the immediate 'thank you', you need to consider whether the donor should receive further recognition of their support. A heartfelt 'thank you', from you in person, may be enough for a £2 sponsorship, but bigger donations may deserve a bit more followup.

For large donations, check to see if the donor expects a receipt of any form. In most instances, a letter saying how much was given is sufficient. Make sure that a [gift aid declaration](#) has been completed where relevant, if it hasn't you can ask for one to be completed in your thank you letter. It doesn't cost the donor a penny, but the charity or cause will benefit hugely.

For most donations, your personal thanks is enough, but if you feel the donor has been touched by the same enthusiasm for the cause that got you passionate, you may want to talk to the charity or cause about how they can help you to cultivate the donor.

Here are some suggestions, work you way down the list the more important the donation, use as many as you feel are appropriate. Liaise with the charity or the cause before taking steps that involve them and remember to be clear that you are fundraising [in-aid-of](#) the cause (if you are) in all your correspondence:

- an email saying "thank you" with an update on funds raised
- a quick handwritten note from you on a postcard
- a more formal handwritten letter from you (you can include a photo of the fundraising activity or a leaflet from the charity)
- an invitation to meet and discuss the cause, or to join your fundraising group if you have one (consider your personal safety before arranging to meet someone you don't know)
- a letter from the staff at the charity, or from the cause you are supporting
- a letter signed by the Chief Executive at the charity
- an invitation to visit the charity or cause you are fundraising for

### OOOPS! YOU FORGOT

Many people don't say "thank you", allowing time pressures to interfere with good manners. If it makes you wince to think you have been discourteous, don't panic, most of us have been at some stage and it is never too late to say thank you. Apologise for the delay, but don't make excuses. But always aim to thank as soon as possible after the donation is received.

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### UNABLE TO ACCEPT THE DONATION?

On rare occasions charities are unable to accept donations. The Institute of Fundraising gives [clear guidelines](#) on how this should be managed.

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