

## 6. Writing leaflets and brochures (UK and European Edition)



In this module, we cover the following topics:

- What format do you need?
- Technical literature
- 15 ways to make your brochure more interesting
- Special types of leaflets
- Mistakes to avoid

You have to design leaflets and brochures from the reader's point of view. That means having a logical structure. The information must unfold in the right order.

Start by analysing what the reader needs to know. You can do this by assessing the order in which the reader's questions will flow.

What questions will the customer want answered, and in what order?

Imagine you're the owner of a small hotel, and are thinking of having a lift installed. When you open the lift manufacturer's brochure, you have some major questions on your mind. The brochure answers your questions, and follows your train of thought.

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Brochure section supplies the information</b>
1	What sort of company is it? What does it stand for?	Corporate statement about safety and reliability in lift manufacture.
2	How big should the lift be?	Our range of lifts - one for every need.
3	How will it fit? Is it very complicated to install?	Our design skills - we can fit lifts anywhere.
4	What space do I need for a lift?	Technical drawing, showing space required.

5	How will the lift be maintained?	Service: engineers, call-out, guarantee.
6	Can I have an estimate?	Address, telephone number, contact name.

This system ensures that all readers will pick up the important points about the product. Put the simplest or most important information first to encourage more people to read the brochure.

Don't get carried away by your own interests, especially on technical features. The customer may be more interested in dramatic photos than details of how the product works.

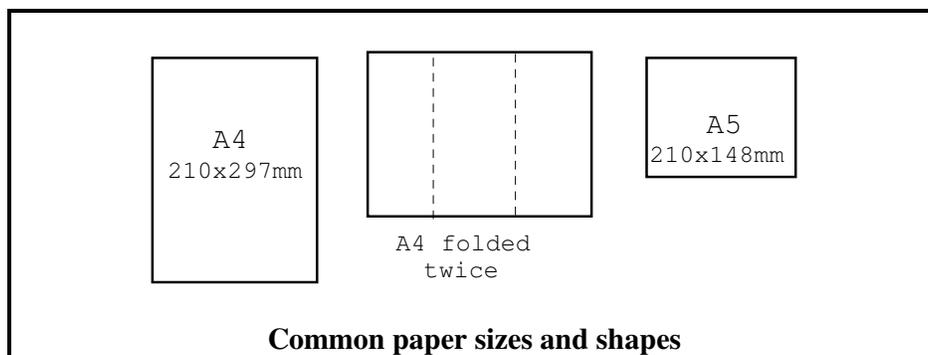
**Exercise 6.1: Devise questions and the answering sections for a car brochure**

Imagine you are writing the brochure for a new car. Write down the questions a purchaser might have, and the answers the brochure might supply.

When you have done this, go to a car showroom and take a few brochures. Has the company followed this process or not?

**What format do you need?**

- The standard leaflet is A4 size, which is convenient for filing.
- Fold A4 in half and you get A5, which is ideal for smaller consumer brochures.
- Use two concertina folds on a sheet of A4 and you get a leaflet that works well for small hotels, financial services, direct mail, and in-store leaflets.



An unusual size or shape will help your brochure stand out. It may also cost more. Readers of technical brochures prefer a standard A4 size.

### **Number of pages**

Having decided the format of the brochure, the main points to be included and the types of photos; you should have a clearer idea of how many pages will be needed. Try doing a rough layout, using the size of paper you think is most suitable for your brochure. Some points will need just a sentence, while others may take a whole page. Remember to allow room for photographs or illustrations.

Single sheet leaflet: A single-page leaflet gets straight to work. On the front is usually a photograph of the product. The copy is restricted to a headline and perhaps a strap line or slogan. On the reverse is technical information, plus the company's name and address.

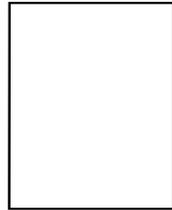
Some companies try to make the leaflet work harder, by including text on the front of the leaflet as well as the back. This looks cramped, and cheapens the effect.

Four-sided leaflet: A four-sided leaflet looks a little more generous, and allows you to convey more information. Its front page normally has just a headline, photo and logo, leaving the inside spread for text. The back page can be left blank or used for technical information.

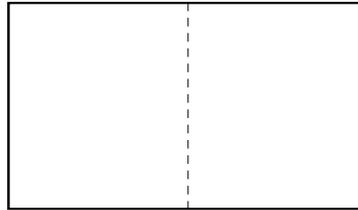
Stapled Brochure: These brochures provide 8, 12 or 16 pages, or any other multiple of 4. If you have a range of products, or if your product is complex, you will need the extra room that a stapled brochure provides. (Printers called a stapled brochure 'stitched').

Folder: Use a folder if you have several leaflets, each on a different topic. Folders are ideal when you regularly supply quotations, or when you need to include technical drawings or data sheets. You can use a folder when the information is likely to change or expand. Use it also when different customers don't need all your leaflets.

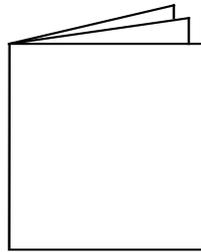
When new products come along they may be added to the folder. And when old ones are deleted, the leaflet may be discarded without wasting all the literature.



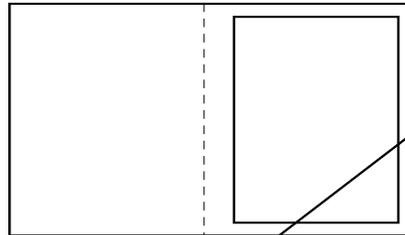
Single sheet



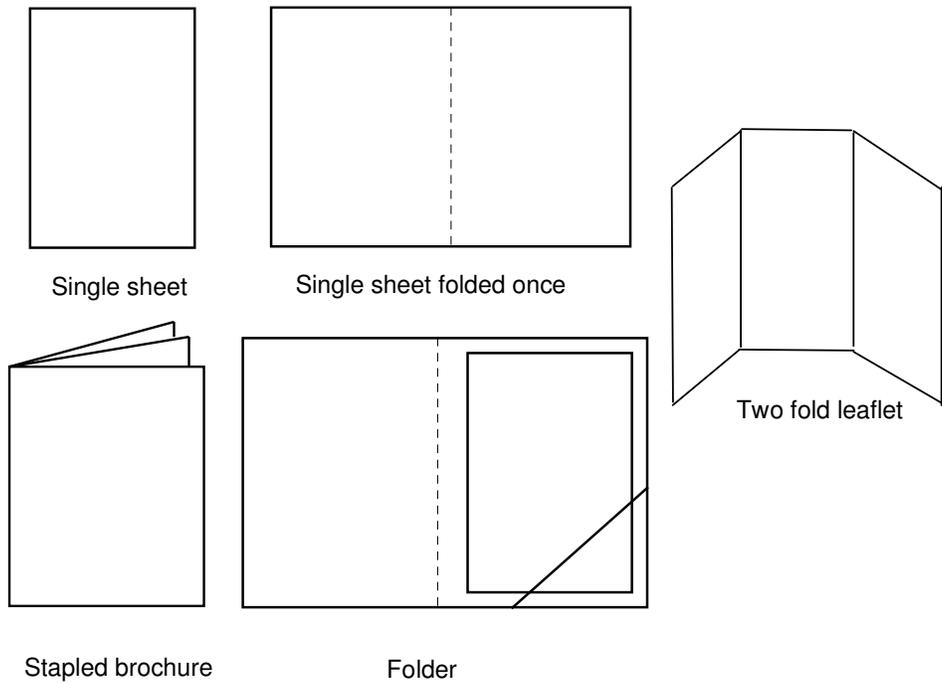
Four sided leaflet



Stapled brochure



Folder



**The front cover**

There are two options for the front cover of a brochure. It should either contain a benefit, or it should be thought-provoking. Both options encourage the reader to pick up the brochure and open it.

Many companies use the front cover of their brochure to list the products they make. This is particularly true for multi-product companies.

Here is the front cover of a leaflet that is offering to insure your mobile phone. On the front cover are the words:

**TRIPLE OPTION  
INSURANCE SCHEME**

Loss and Damage  
\*

Extended Warranty  
\*

Combined Cover  
\*

Arranged by Marigold Insurance

This is a typical failure of imagination. The company couches its service in technical jargon. There are no benefits. And the statements don't identify the real nature of the sale.

Hidden in the leaflet's small print are some important benefits. The insurance company will:

- \* Replace your mobile phone straightaway if it is stolen.
- \* Agree the replacement over the phone.
- \* Take care of all the administration.
- \* Help you stay in touch with your office and your customers by getting you back in communication quickly.
- \* Mend your mobile phone if it stops working after the 12-month warranty expires.

So what should the leaflet say? We want the reader to pick up the leaflet and read it. So we concentrate on the single most important point - in this case, the possibility of theft. The second benefit (repair when out of warranty) can be mentioned inside the leaflet.

The cover should have an illustration of the problem: a car with a broken window. The headline should say:

**Phone theft is rising.**

If your mobile is stolen,  
we'll get you a replacement  
within 24 hours

This leaflet will sell probably four times as many insurance policies - not because it's clever but because it understands the reader's needs, and because it communicates the benefits more effectively.

### **Contents Page**

In brochures of eight pages or more, a list of contents is useful. Make the list bold and separate it from the rest of the text.

Don't cram too much into the contents. List only the most important points. It isn't necessary to list everything that appears on each page.

Use the contents page to sell the brochure. Don't use boring words like 'Introduction' or 'Model 961'. Pick out the most important sales point from your introduction, and use that as the heading.

Try using different colours for each section, or use cut out tabs for each section. Both these points will encourage people to open the brochure.

You may need more than one brochure. Some companies separate their glossy sales leaflets from their simpler assembly instructions. Other firms keep technical literature separate.

### **Describing the product**

List all the features and benefits of your product. Include every reason why the reader should buy your product.

When drawing up the list of features, add the words 'which means that...' after each point. Then complete the sentence. For example, 'The crisps are made from an original recipe, which means that... they taste better, and contain no artificial additives' (You don't need to add the words 'which means that' on every occasion. They are simply a means for identifying benefits). The features and benefits for a speedboat engine are shown on the following page.

Remember that the purchaser is not always the user. So there may be more than one benefit for every feature. Take this child car seat brochure:

These different positions will make the journey more comfortable for your child, and consequently more restful for you.

In describing the product, you don't have to use plain statements. A company that makes thorn-proof clothing might describe a shepherd in torrential rain on a lakeland fell, snug in his raincoat.

<b>Feature</b> (facts about the product)	<b>Benefit</b> (which means that...)
3 litre, 220 HP engine	It goes fast
Weighs 450Kg	Good power-to-weight ratio gives extra power
Diesel engine	Fewer moving parts, low maintenance, more m.p.g., cheap fuel
Indirect ignition	No fumes, low noise
Choice of two drives	Suits big and small boats
Easily accessible engine	Servicing is simple
Glow plug pre-heat	Trouble-free starting
Computer designed	Vibration free, smooth ride

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## **That's it, Folks**

If you want to see the rest of the module, you'll have to enroll!

Here's what else we cover in this module.

**Other things to mention in a brochure**, and how to write about them, and where to include them. They include:

- Sizes, variations, colours
- Satisfied Customers
- Corporate information
- Location
- Export
- Technical performance
- The Call to Action
- Availability
- Client list
- Operating or assembly instructions

Price list and order form  
Conditions of Sale  
Dealer box

**Technical Literature** - How to write it. Filing marks.

**Writing about services**

**Fifteen ways to make your brochure more interesting**

**Special types of leaflets**, including range brochures and sale promotion leaflets

**6 Mistakes to avoid in writing leaflets and brochures**

**Who will design your leaflets and brochures?** How to find designers and work with them.

**Other exercises for you to do, complete with answers.**

**Summary – telling you what you've learnt.**

**Tutor-marked assignment**, in which you get to write a brochure