

Article Writing Basics



INTRO

There are few hard and fast rules when it comes to writing articles. But there is one rule you must never, ever break. No matter what.

You must not, under any circumstances, begin an article with the phrase: "In today's fast-paced digital world."

Just don't do it, OK?

You're better than that.

Make your intro *work harder* for you. Make it *do more*.

Use it to lay out the context for your article and capture the reader's interest. You should also use it to make life easier for your reader. Because you're nice.

Try using a question or common scenario as a hook or opening statement!

Check your tone of voice:

conversational technical reflective
explanatory accessible **educational**
clear straightforward
strategic informative comprehensive

Outline the purpose of the article and tell the reader exactly what they can expect to learn. Doing this from the outset gives your article a clearly defined sense of purpose and scope, and makes it easier for someone to know right away what they're getting into. And in today's fast-paced digital world, people like that sense of security.

CONTENT

The brain likes white space, *use it!*

The body of your article should contain detailed explanations and insights into your topic. That doesn't mean it has to be boring or dense, but accuracy and reliability of information is key to building trust with your audience, and delivering valuable content.

And when it comes to technical articles, you best be including descriptions of relevant technologies, their benefits, and applications.

But however you decide to deliver your content, the most important thing is to present information clearly! Your audience should be able to follow your article easily, and understand the subject as its presented to them:

- To present information clearly and concisely, use bullet points or lists
- This is especially useful in technical articles for highlighting key features or steps



Subheadings should break your content down into manageable sections.

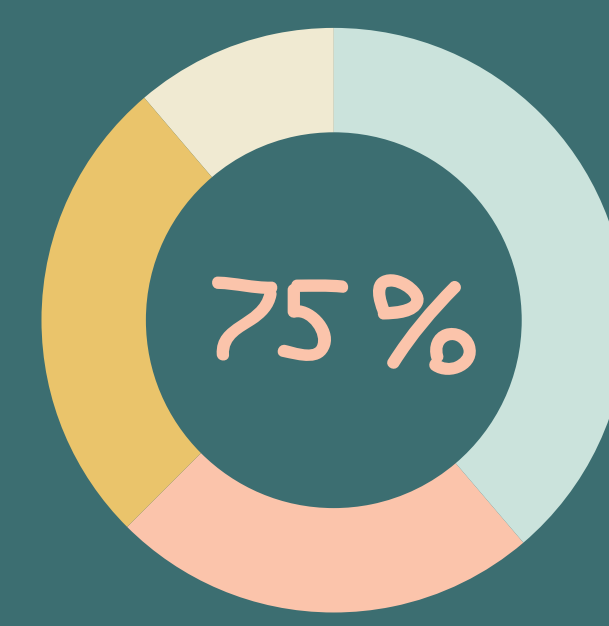


Back, back, back *it up!*

Persuading and educating people is much easier when you have solid resources that back up your claims and reasoning.

Finding data and statistics to support your position isn't always the most fun exercise (unless you like having 44 tabs open at all times), but it's often really helpful for reinforcing or legitimising the content you're sharing.

And if you can add real-life examples or case studies, your content will come across as even more trustworthy, and accurate. And we like that, we like it a lot.



Include images, diagrams, or infographics to complement the text. Highlight key information with **bold text**, *italics*, or **colour**.

Conclusions should never be an *afterthought!*

Conclusions are powerful, if you get them right.

So don't just drop the mic, give your reader something to think about. Create dinner party conversation starters for them. Keep them up at night.

Most articles end with a summary of the key points discussed. This is great and helps reinforce the main takeaways for the reader, but there's no rule that says you have to avoid new material in your conclusion. In fact, introducing a new thought or idea or question right at the end of a piece is a great way to get a reader interested in your next article. It's called a cliffhanger, baby, and it works!

Many articles conclude with a call to action or suggestions for further steps, but remember that CTA's don't have to be boring! Feel free to get creative with what you'd like the reader to take away from your article, or what you'd like them to do next.

- Create a video playlist on youtube
- Create a post-article quiz to test their knowledge
- Invite them to a webinar to learn more on the topic
- Offer a 1:1 so they can ask questions directly to an expert

Many articles conclude with...

Article writing isn't an exact science, there's almost always room for creativity and experimentation. If you're curious about article-writing best practices, or if you have content-related questions, you can visit the Offscript website to book a chat.

