

14 Tips for Writing Better Web Content

Writing for websites is different than writing a college paper or writing a book but there are some similarities. This article will go over **how to write an article online** so that you actually get people reading your content and enjoying it. These guidelines or rules for writing an article will also help you **write content easier**.

I've been doing it for years now and it actually gets easier and easier the more you do it. At the beginning, though, it was tough. I had to force myself to do it. I didn't have a lot of help, so I had to figure it out myself through trial and error. I hope to pass on what I've learned to you.

How to Write Articles for Websites

The first thing to understand is how people read things on the web. They're usually in "search mode" I like to say. This means they've put in a search and ended up on your website. They weren't sure if clicking on the link to get to your page was a good decision or not, so **they're looking for some confirmation that they found the right result before they read more on your page**.

This is the first hurdle you have to clear. There are a few ways to do this, which I list below. I'll also give you tips on a good article writing format that works really well.

Above all, you need good, original content that's not copied from anywhere else. I cannot stress that enough. Yes, you can use some excerpts from other places or curate content but the majority of whatever you write needs to be original content. This article will be a lot about formatting but let's first cover the kind of content you should be writing in the first point:

1. Be Helpful

It's just 2 words... simple, right?

Give them what they're looking for – searching for. Don't brag about yourself – help them. Once you help them, they will seek you out and want more from you. This is the correct business model and writing model to follow.

Your articles must be really helpful and walk them through the solution – kind of like you're talking to a 5 year old but just don't talk down to them or dumb it down. Just get rid of the jargon and speak clearly. **This creates the connection.**

To connect with your audience, you must think like they do and speak their words. This connection **builds trust**. Cicero said this well:

“If you wish to persuade me, you must think my thoughts, feel my feelings, and speak my words.”

– Cicero (Roman Statesman, Orator and Attorney)

Provide Value, Too!

Put time and effort into what you post. Don't just slap some junk up on your website to hit a word limit and call it a success. That actually hurts you a little. Provide real value – the answers people are looking for.

Your content needs to be so good that people will want to bookmark it and share it. This is really how things go viral. What you put into something is what you'll get out of it, right?

Ind creating (crafting) your content. Add videos, ch. It should exceed expectations.



2. Use a Compelling Title / Headline

The first part about writing good content is getting people to your website. Since they see your headline in the search results, you want to write a headline so good that people will think they're missing out on something really important if they don't read it.

The headline is something you control – Google sometimes changes it but not too often. So **make your headline the best it can be**. You can even test different headlines to see which ones work better.

You can give them secrets, best tips, little known facts or the one thing they can't forget – stuff like that.

This article gives you good tips on writing compelling headlines:

9 Proven Headline Formulas That Sell Like Crazy (copyblogger.com)

State the big benefit.

One of the first techniques you should always explore is transforming your major benefit into a headline. After all, your number one selling point should be up front. It stands the best chance of selecting the right audience and preparing them to respond. Plus, if they read nothing else, they have at least seen the best selling point you have to offer. If you have trouble writing this kind of headline, it's a sure sign you need to think a bit more about your product or service.

This is a good tip – to get the major benefit in the headline. The benefit is they “why?” part or the “because” part and it explain how people benefit / how it helps them.

Even the title of that headline is great (“9 Proven Headline Formulas That Sell Like Crazy”) – you can tell they worked on it.

Look at the words being used:

- 9
- proven
- formula
- sell
- crazy

Those are good words – here's why:

- When there are **9** of them, you know that of those 9, there must be at least 1-2 that will work for you, so it's worth clicking on. Headlines that are lists of thing (top 9, 17 best, 13 tips, etc.) work REALLY well. I use this a lot.
- If it's **proven**, then that means it's almost guaranteed to work.
- If there's a **formula**, then that means it's something that can be followed – like a recipe.
- They **sell**, which means they make money, so the results are good
- **Crazy** means it works better than expected.

And it's only 8 words. They get all these thoughts and emotions in just 8 words.

Here's a good formula for writing a great headline:

Number + Adjective + Keyword + Rationale + Promise

Here's an example:

15 Surprising Weight Loss Tips That Will Make You Slimmer in One Week

You can use this headline analyzer tool to help you fine tune your headlines:

CoSchedule Headline Analyzer

Better Titles = Higher Rankings

Say what?

Yes, the click through rate (CTR) your pages get on Google really matters – it's a ranking factor. They measure how many clicks the titles of your pages get. The more clicks you get, the higher you'll start to rank. That means, **the more compelling your titles are, the more clicks you'll get and the higher you will rank.**

Websites like BuzzFeed test headlines/titles like CRAZY. They try lots of different versions to see which ones work the best. It's a science. You need to split test your headlines. Tweak them. Test them.

After you start doing this, you'll soon just know what kind of title works the best and you'll naturally write awesome headlines for articles that get more clicks.

Questions Work Well

People type questions into Google, so with some articles, having the title be a question not only matches what they're looking for but people think it's a forum or something and that the question they're asking will be answered there. Definitely experiment with questions for titles of your posts/articles.

Work Hard on Titles

The point is, don't take just 2 seconds to come up with a title – spend good time on it and that time will pay off!

Some more article headline titles that work great are:

- How to...
- Quickest way to...
- Fastest way to...
- Easiest ways to...
- Ways to...
- Cheapest way to...
- Best way to...
- Best Tips to...

If you need some help with headlines/titles for your articles, [download my book, 113 Article Headline Examples](#), when also sign up and download [10 Essential Items for Any Local Business Website](#) – yes, **you get 3 books for the price of none!**



3. Make the Article Scannable

Again, people are in “search mode” and want to make sure they landed on the right result. They will quickly scan your article and check to make sure it’s what they want. Maybe they’re looking for just a section of the page. Your job is to make sure they find that section. They read that part and then decide to read the rest of the page.

There are a number of ways to do this:

- **Use Headings**

I’m doing it in this article. Headings are the “Heading 2” and “Heading 3” formats. The “Heading 1” text is usually the title of your article. You should only use it once and you have already, so stick to headings 2 and 3 in the body of your article.

- **Write Short Paragraphs**

Big blobs of text look daunting to read and nobody’s going to read them. Write shorter paragraphs than normal to help people get through it and scan easier.

- **Use Bulleted Lists**

You’re reading one right now. It’s easy to read, right?

- **Use Bold Text**

People will scan a page and probably stop and read the important points that you have in bold. This gets them to stick around and read your content. Incidentally, people tend to skip over italicized or indented text so don’t put important points there.

- **Use Images**

A photo says 1000 words, right? The images you include convey your message and confirm to people what your article is about. Make sure you fill in the alt text when

posting images. This alt text is for people that are blind or people that use screen readers.

Here's a good video explaining how to write for the Web and he's mentioning some of the same points that I mention here:

4. Make Sure the Font Isn't Too Small

This point has more to do with the design of your website but make sure the font is big enough. People in their mid-40s and beyond start losing their younger eyes and can't read text that is small. You also want text to look good on mobile devices.

Don't go too large with the font but be mindful of the size of the font/text.

5. Link Out to Other Websites / Resources

I did it above with CopyBlogger. I linked to another website and it was easy to see that it was a link, right?

I linked up the headline, I indented the text and I listed the name of the website that it was from. There's no guessing that if you click on that link you're going to another website, right?

Make sure those links open in a new window/tab so that when people close that tab, they're right back where they left your website. You'll get more traffic doing this.

6. Formats for Writing a Good Article

There are a few formats or ways to write an article that work well. Some methods are for selling things and some are just good structure for writing. Choose the one for the kind of article that you're writing.

You can use a basic formula like this:

1. **Introduction** – explain what you'll write about (2 paragraphs)
2. **Main Point #1** (several paragraphs with a heading)
3. **Main Point #2** (several paragraphs with a heading)
4. **Main Point #3** (several paragraphs with a heading)
5. **Main Point #4** (several paragraphs with a heading)
6. **Main Point #5** (several paragraphs with a heading)
7. **Conclusion** – wrap it up and tell them what you wrote about (with a call to action – 2 paragraphs)

You first tell them what you'll explain, then you explain each point, and then you told them what you explained. Easy, right?

Remember, "features tell and benefits sell" – that means you can list a feature and what it does but the benefit explains why that feature is better and how it helps.

There's also the "AIDA" formula, which I like:

- **Attention**
- **Interest**
- **Desire**
- **Action**

You'll first grab their attention, then create interest (or some people say "tap into desire"). Turn that interest into desire and then ask them to take action. This is good for selling a product.

There's the "CURVE" method:

- **Curiosity** (Intrigue)
- **Urgency** (Hurry!)
- **Relevance** (Why does someone care about this?)
- **Value** (Why you? What do you provide? What's the value?)
- **Emotion** (Call to action)

This one is like AIDA but slightly different.

Another great one is the sales pitch formula that you see all over the place – like in infomercials, TV commercials, radio commercials, online ads, etc.:

- There's a problem with what you're doing today
- Here is the ideal solution to that problem
- Here is what makes the solution difficult or less desirable
- Here is how our product makes it easier for you
- Here is how you can get our product

That's good, right?

It's similar to the AIDA formula but a little stronger. There's also a formula called "Problem – Agitation – Solution" that's similar to this but a little more concise being only 3 steps instead of 5. I like this sales pitch formula a lot.

There's one more called **Bob Stone's "Gem"** that is good:

1. **Benefit** – Start with your strongest benefit
2. **Develop** – Expand on this benefit
3. **Receive** – Explain how the reader can experience this benefit

4. **Prove** – Back up your statement with support copy
5. **Lose** – Tell readers what they'll lose if they don't act
6. **Recap** – Sum up the most important benefit
7. **Ask** – Include a call-to-action

The last thing is to always **have a call to action (CTA) statement**. Ask the reader to do something at the end – it can be big or small but ask them to take action.

My dad took the Dale Carnegie sales course years ago and I remember him (my dad) talking about presenting the fact and benefit. Talk about the fact and what the benefit is. This has more to do with sales but it works with writing as well. It's kind of like saying "because." That word helps lead to the benefit. Something is great because... and then explain why.

I teach skiing in the winter and we use something called "if/then" statements. You put the work on them when you do it. They don't do it to please you but to get the benefit themselves. For example, "if you have good shin and boot contact, you will have more control of the tips of the skis, which guide your skis through the turn."

Then there are **different kinds of articles** you can write (I've touched on a few of these already) – with examples using diets:

- **How to** – "How to Lose 10 Pounds in 10 Days"
- **Lists** – "The Top 13 Ways Celebrities Shed Fat"
- **Mini Case Study** – "Do High Fiber Diets Work the Best for Weight Loss?"
- **Interview Someone** – "Michelle Obama Reveals Her Weight Loss Tips"
- **Curated Content** – "The Best Resources Available for the Best Weight Loss Secrets"
- **News** – "Doctors Now Say Eating Tons of Chocolate Helps You Lose Weight"
- **Product Reviews** – "A Review of the 'Chocolate Diet' and if it Works or Not"

With a mini case study, you'll need to do real research on your own and show your results. The interview is great and easy because the person you're interviewing provides great content for you. With curated content, you're just pulling together resources from around the Web to create something new. Bring in your own commentary as well. Product reviews are pretty self-explanatory but make sure you actually have used the product.

7. Re-read it and Add More Depth



Before you're done with your article, you should

re-read it to check for errors but also make sure you find more areas where you can add more content to add more points and good information.

Read a section and think about if you covered it well enough or not:

- What questions might the reader have?
- How can you help the reader more?
- Did you explain something well enough?

Just go deeper.

Make your article even more useful than it already is so that it stands out even more.

Maybe even put it aside for a day and come back to it. Having a fresh mind and reading it again can help you add in more, great points. Often, your brain needs to rest and process things, so letting it do that can help you add more depth.

Even do more research on the topic to make sure there isn't anything you forgot to add.

Make sure your article isn't too short and that it's not full of "fluff" content. Don't write to hit a word quota but write enough to adequately cover the topic and then go more in depth – just to make sure.

8. Timing Matters

When you post something can really matter. It might be the time of the year, time of the week or even the time of the day.

If you have an article on something that's trending, you'll want to publish it ASAP but not everything is that way. Maybe your article is about how to be more productive, so posting it at the beginning of the week might help people get through their week better.

There are also better times of the day to publish content – like around 8am, noon and 5pm... when people check social media.

9. Proofread and Spell Check

This was kind of covered in point 6 but do make sure you read it over. Sometimes it helps to read it out loud.

My Mac has a voice (text to speech) function and I've used that to listen to what I wrote. It helps me make sure it makes sense.

You can even ask someone else to look it over. Have them read it for spelling and grammar as well as for content. They might think of things you didn't think of.



This is where we go from “writing copy” to

“developing content.” It’s a level up from just writing copy but it’s great to do it because it helps people better understand what you’re writing about (more comprehensive), it’s easy to digest and it adds more value to your article. If you’re going to cover a topic, why not cover it REALLY well?

You can either create your own video or you can simply find some related videos on YouTube and embed them into your article as supplemental material.

With your own video, you can:

- Have a camera pointed at you while you talk
- Do a slideshow while you talk or have some music in the background
- Show your computer screen using screen capture software (I like Camtasia)
- Do a combination of these types

If you’re not good at video, then you can write a script and hire someone at Fiverr to help you.

11. Add Downloads or Other Types of Content

Think about some extra content you can offer like a spreadsheet, PDF “cheat sheet” or checklist. Improve your content and develop it more by adding some great supplemental materials that your competition just isn’t doing.

When people get to your website / page and see all that you’re offering, they’ll want to share this great resource they found with others and **they’ll look like a hero for sharing it**. That is how it works. The only way you can make that happen is by over-delivering by making your content useful and valuable.

12. Figure Out Which Kind of Voice You Have

What? Do impressions?

No, what I mean is how you are going to present yourself as you write. Here’s a good Tweet by Darren Rowse:

What voice do you blog with? Is it one (or more than one) of these? [#ProBlogSlides](#)
pic.twitter.com/5iCZr9ijZ5

— Darren Rowse (@problogger) [April 13, 2016](#)

He lists these kinds of voices:

- Professor
- Artist
- Prophet
- Journalist
- Celebrity
- Companion
- Mentor
- Entertainer
- Reviewer
- Curator
- Storyteller
- Guide
- Teacher
- Thought Leader
- (anything else)

With some articles, you might be teaching. In others, you might be guiding. You might even tell a story in some articles. The point is, there are many ways to write.

13. Be Consistent With Publishing Content

When you get some momentum going, people enjoy it because they expect quality content from you regularly. It doesn't have to be every day but start off publishing one, great (original) piece of content per week. In a year, you'll have 52 more of them – making your website really great.

14. Use Correct Grammar and Proofread

I admit it, I make mistakes... but I try not to. I try to proofread everything and I think I do a decent job but some things slip through. And sometimes you get done with something and you just want to get it done and you hit "Publish" because you want to be done with it. I've been there. It's better to wait than publish. Get done writing and then come back to it tomorrow and check it over with a fresh view.

You want to make sure you use correct grammar, too. Some common mistakes are using apostrophes wrong or things like that. Here's a short list of things (tips) I see that are wrong on a lot of articles I view online:

- Apostrophes NEVER (EVER!) make something plural. They just don't. That's not their job... like, ever (to quote Taylor Swift). Some common mistakes:
 - Lot's (not a word – unless you're saying "lot is" maybe)
 - Page's (this isn't plural... nope)
 - Fee's (the fee's... what? – this isn't plural)
 - Video's (not plural)
 - Tuesday's (not plural)
 - "It's" means "it is" (ALWAYS) – it's not possessive
 - TV's or DVD's is actually not correct. Drop the apostrophe and just write TVs and DVDs.
- Putting a period after quotation marks at the end of a sentence "like this". That's not right – punctuation (including exclamation marks and question marks) belong inside the quotes "like this."
- Using "excessive" quotes "around" things that "don't" need quotation marks around "them." Just stop it. Quotation marks don't really make you trust something more and I would argue that it makes you trust things less. Does this sentence look trustworthy? Come and Get our "Free" book? Why does it say "Free" here? What's the catch? I think about that character Chris Farley played on SNL where he did air quotes for all kinds of things... hilarious! Just imagine him doing that when you use quotes and then see if you should really be using quotes or not.
- There's no such word as "afterwards" – use either "afterwords" or "afterward."
- It's "definitely," not "definately."
- It's "etc." not "ect."

You get the idea. I like using Firefox for my web browser because it highlights incorrectly spelled words as I type (what an age we live in).

I remember when I started writing, I had to look up grammar rules and punctuation rules to remind myself what the right way is. It's something you learn in school and don't really use until you're out in the real world, right? Just admit you forgot about these rules and you've been using them wrong and move on. One warning though... once you look up the right way, you'll see things wrong ALL over the place. It'll probably start bugging you. That's what happened to me. I guess ignorance is bliss.

Maybe someone you know can help you look over articles or you may be able to find someone on [Fiverr](#) that will do that for you.

Here's a video of Chris Farley using air quotes to help make your day:



The points listed above are coming from an

Internet Marketing point of view where you're writing articles and earning money either on your website, on other websites (guest posting) or you're hired to write articles. If you're trying to make money online writing articles, then use what I list above to help you.

Take My Course

If you want to know exactly how to make money writing articles, then [take my course](#) called "[Set Up a Website That Pays in 7 Days](#)" that teaches you how to do research, set up a website and then how to write good content for that website. This article is actually just one, small part of that course that I have open to the public. You'll get a lot more information.

Work as a Writer for Others

There are also sites like [TextBroker](#) and [iWriter](#) where you can get paid to write articles. You submit articles and get paid when you write articles that people want. You get an

assignment and then write. It's a good way to make some money in the short term. If you're looking for long-term income from writing articles, then you really do want to have your own website, which is what my course shows you how to do.

You can even offer your services on [Craig's List](#) in your area or on [Fiverr.com](#) and make money writing there.



Download My Cheat Sheet!

I wouldn't be doing my job if I didn't follow my own tips, right?

Here's a cheat sheet with all the tips on this page so you can print it out and refer to it often:

[Write-An-Article-Cheat-Sheet.pdf \(54 kb\)](#)

Conclusion

Probably **the best tip I can give you** is that you should spend more time than you think you should writing and developing content. Don't just set aside an hour and think that whatever you can get done in that time is going to be "good enough" because that is how most people think. Double the length of time you set or don't set a length at all – just write until you know you have the best content out there.

Don't be afraid to go back in a few days, a week or even in a few months and improve the content you've already written. You add another 1000 words and then send it out again on Twitter and your email list and tell everyone you improved it. This is a great way to recycle the "hype" from the first time it was released.

Please Comment

What do you think of this article? Is it good? Are there tips I missed? Put them in the comments below and I'll do my best to respond to comments!

Original article: <https://www.tonyherman.com/writing-to-get-traffic/>

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