

How to Write Different Types of Articles

Contents

Standard guidance	Page 3
News article/report	Page 4
Opinion piece	Page 6
Review	Page 8
Other (advice and explanation pieces)	Page 10

Standard guidance

- All articles should be over 250 words, reaching up to 800.
- All articles should be formatted clearly, and spellings should be correct. If you are unsure about grammar, ask or Google it. Remember to avoid Americanisms – it's 'hospitalise' NOT 'hospitalize', it's 'cancellation' NOT 'cancelation' and it's 'favour' NOT 'favor'.
- Avoid using exclamation marks. If absolutely necessary, use the bare minimum.
- When writing numbers, write the word form if it's above eleven, or if you're stating a quantity, like 'there were two main problems with...'
- Otherwise, when writing numbers above eleven, use the number form. This should also be done when citing statistics and money.
- ALWAYS cite your sources when using quotes, statistics, reports by hyperlinking them in. You don't need to hyperlink the whole sentence, just the key word. For example, if you say 'a report found...', you'd hyperlink 'report'. If you said 'in India, 58% of people are employed in agriculture', you'd hyperlink the '58%'.
- When using quotations, use speech marks ("").
- When naming a book, film, TV show, song, album, put the name in italics.
- Always follow the WordPress guide when using the system.

News article/report (200 – 400 words)

You might look at the news and wonder how you're going to report it any differently. The best thing to do is to read two or three news stories on the same issue and find the info that interests you the most. Include that in your piece.

When it comes to actually writing a news story, you should always make your first paragraph short and snappy. Two sentences is enough. Think of them as the 'headline' of the piece (even though you obviously have a separate headline'. The key facts are all you need.

Here's an example intro from 'Harry and Meghan expecting second baby':

The Duke and Duchess of Sussex – or Harry and Meghan as they like to be called these days – have announced that they are expecting their second baby.

At this point, you should report what has been said or done in more depth. For example, if there is a statement associated with the news, you should place this next. Or the announcement of whatever the story is.

Once you have done this, there should always be some kind of context to the story. If it's a political news story – what's the backdrop? Why has this event happened and who does it impact? Or, if it's a story about an individual, what has happened to them recently that's relevant? Read the full Harry and Meghan story [here](#) to see how to expand on this.

At the end of the story, you should always conclude with some information. If there is an alternate point of view (like from an opposition

party), state that at the end of your article. It's also nice to sometimes round off an article with your analysis – just a line or two about what you think might happen, or why it's important that the event has happened in the first place.

New stories improve only with practice, so if it's of interest to you, give it a go and keep working. The best way to help yourself is to read news stories – the skills eventually come naturally.

REMEMBER: the word count is just a guide – don't over-write if you don't feel it's necessary.

You can view examples of news stories on Beep below:

- Matt Hancock broke law over Covid contracts
- Joe Biden, 46th President
- Pope makes first female appointment

Opinion (450 – 800 words)

This can be one of the hardest pieces to write, as you will generally have a lot of thoughts and opinions flying around. The best thing to do is make a list of your thoughts, then pick the best ones to put into the article.

When you're introducing the article, you should come up with a strong opening line that accurately captures the problem you're discussing.

For example, an article titled 'Deforestation: The Reality' published on Beep opened with the following:

"Deforestation is one of the saddest things to read about in the world. Hearing that 18 million acres of land are lost to deforestation each year is gutting – not least when so much of that land is home to beautiful animals and breathtaking plants. But there's more to deforestation than you think. It's a complex issue.

Following this, you should aim to make a clear point in your next paragraph. This should be a strong point as it will keep the reader interested.

When writing points, you should state in a sentence what you believe, and then seek to explain it afterwards. This can be done by using your own anecdotes/experiences, or statistics you've found, or opinions of experts.

It's important to note that when you're citing other people's speech and/or statistics, you should always hyperlink your source. You can see above where that has been done in the case of a statistic.

The body of your article should consist of your points. Around three or four points in separate paragraphs are enough. You can sometimes continue one overarching point for the whole piece – just go with what seems to flow from you when you sit down to write.

REMEMBER: the word count is just a guide – don't over-write if you don't feel it's necessary.

You can view examples of opinion pieces on Beep below:

- Deforestation: The Reality
- Logging Out of Online Learning
- Why Priti Patel is Dangerous

Review (350 – 800 words)

Reviews can be some of the hardest articles to write, but with practice, you can become really great at them.

First, you want to come up with a list (mentally or write it down) of your pros and cons. Then, you want to come up with an overall score for whatever you're reviewing. At Beep, we rate out of 5.

At the top of your review, you should put the rating in bold, i.e., **3.5/5**

Next, you want to introduce the subject of your review and you can do this in any way you like. You can say how much attention it has been getting, or how moved/disappointed/entertained you were by it. Be bold in your intro to keep your reader interested – tell them what you think.

Here's an example from a book review of *Normal People*:

If you've ever read a book review by yours truly before, you'll know it's rare I award five stars. They are reserved for special works of art – and Sally Rooney's *Normal People* is exactly that. In fact, *Normal People* is a masterpiece.

One thing to say here is that reviews are totally your own style. Don't mention yourself if you don't want to or do mention yourself and have a good old chat in your piece. It's up to you.

Next thing you should do is make sure you use the right information.

When was the 'thing' released? Who starred in it, who wrote it, who produced it, who does it involve? Apply those where necessary. If you're writing a film/TV review, when mentioning characters, you should say who played them. Here's an example of this:

Young Miss Daphne Bridgerton, played spectacularly by Phoebe Dynevor, is in search of a man she loves. Good luck, you might think. So she and

the ridiculously gorgeous (not sorry) Duke of Hastings (Regé-Jean Page) make a pact to pretend to court in order to buy Daphne more time to fall in love.

In your review, you should also say something that you didn't particularly like about it. Maybe it was a slow burner, or maybe it could have been better IF they'd done something else. Even the most minor of things, you should include closer towards the end (if your review is positive, otherwise begin with what you hated!).

When you conclude, just try and summarise what you've said. Look back at your introduction and what you set out to say, and try and rephrase that. Here's the conclusion of the 'Normal People' review:

It's not trashy young adult fiction, or John Green's dismal attempt at capturing 'the youth of today'. No – Sally Rooney was and is one of us, and that's why she's been able to write about what it's like in such extraordinarily accurate detail. She deserves all the praise in the world for Normal People – and if you haven't read it, start now.

REMEMBER: the word count is just a guide – don't over-write if you don't feel it's necessary.

You can view examples of opinion pieces on Beep below:

- 'Normal People' book review
- 'It's A Sin' TV review
- 'Evermore' album review

Other (350 – 800 words)

There are other types of articles you can write. Most notably, you can write advice/experience pieces and 'explanation' pieces.

For advice/experience pieces, you can share as much or as little as you want about why you're writing. The main thing to bear in mind is that people will read this – what do you want them to take away from it? These articles are also about style – how do you want to present yourself? Friendly and kind? Try and write that way.

REMEMBER: the word count is just a guide – don't over-write if you don't feel it's necessary.

Here are some examples of advice/experience pieces on Beep below:

- Mental health without exercise
- Things Posh People Have Said to Me
- What I Learned This Year

For explanation pieces, this is all a little different. You need to gather a lot of information and you need to hang onto your sources. The most important part of writing these pieces are the subheadings you use. They guide your reader, and your writing. So, think of what you're planning to say, and use headings accordingly. Here are some examples:

- What's actually been going on?
- Why has this been happening?
- What is being done about this?
- What will happen next?

Obviously, they can be made more specific as you know what topic you're writing about. Just use them as signposts and make them clear.

Introductions should always begin by stating the event or the problem/situation you're explaining in simple language. For example:
As Joe Biden is sworn in as President of the United States today, we look at how we can expect the ceremony to look, and what the 46th President aims to do next.

You then want to break down all of your information, using the headings feature mentioned above. Keep your words and sentences simple, but don't be patronising. Just explain it as you would to someone who stopped you on the street and asked you for directions.

Make sure you cite ALL sources here when citing speech, an event, statistics, etc.

REMEMBER: the word count is just a guide – don't over-write if you don't feel it's necessary.

You can view examples of explanation pieces on Beep below:

- Mastering Politics: Myanmar military coup
- Mastering Politics: What's a Bill?
- The Windrush Scandal Explained