

The 5 Steps to Write a Blog Post

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A blog is one kind of a website on the internet. It could be your personal journal or a company's informational website. A blog post is an article on that website.

You can have your own personal blog to write about yourself, your experiences, your thoughts and ideas. Or you can have a blog to post stories and poetry. In the same vein, a company would have a blog to post articles about its products, services and other information about what it does.

Here are the 5 steps that I follow to write a blog post or an article.

Step 1: Come up with a topic to write about

- Topic ideas can come from your own experience, something you know about, something in the news, something you read or saw, what your competitor has written, keyword analysis, your opinion about an issue, etc
- Make a list of topic ideas and keep adding to the list regularly
- Pick up one topic for one blog to write about

For example: I know a little bit about writing articles. It was also something that I asked, which is why I chose this topic to write about.

Step 2: Make a list of pointers that you will cover in the blog

- These are subheads or subtopics that you wish to write about, beginning with an interesting intro
- These subheads usually cover the What, the Why, the How, the When, the Where
- Listing these subheads down will help you structure the blog

For this one, I thought about the steps I typically follow when I write a blog. I listed them down and put them in an order that would be easy for you to understand.

Step 3: Write

- Take up each subhead one by one and start explaining them in detail
- Ensure your sentences are short, paragraphs are small, use words you know
- Make sure you check for grammatical and spelling errors

After I listed down the 5 steps in my process of writing a blog post, I started to expand them. I chose bullet points to make the points easy to consume.

Step 4: Write a good intro

- The intro could be about something you have experienced, a hypothetical story, a real story of a customer or client, a joke, a simile or juxtapose, etc
- Make sure the intro is not too long, make it short and interesting
- But don't force yourself to write an intro either, you can begin directly with the topic as well

I chose a mild dash of humour in the intro of this blog post. I made sure it's short and to the point, covers what the article is about and doesn't feel forced.

Step 5: Review and edit

- Read what you've written and make edits
- Remove unnecessary words and points you've repeated
- Get a peer or senior to review and give feedback

The best writing is rewriting. I never publish the first draft. Reviewing helps you add points that you missed out earlier, while editing helps you get rid of the unnecessary.

Other points to keep in mind while writing an article

- Write a headline that captures attention, without being clickbait-y
- Use data to validate your arguments and points
- If you're not a subject matter expert on the topic, then get the thoughts of someone who is. This will help validate your article
- Narrow down on the most important point of the article and make it the central theme
- Decide on the action you want the reader to take (could be clicking on a CTA, subscribing, sharing, etc) and tailor your conclusion towards that

These points are important but not always necessary. This blog post doesn't have data or an expert's opinion, because it doesn't need them. The most important part of this blog post are the 5 steps and I've made sure the post is about them.

When it comes to action, I want you to take two: 1) Write blog posts (you'll really enjoy it) and 2) Share this with someone who might find it useful.

Tips for writing for SEO

- Try to fit in the keyword in the title and URL
- If you have the keyword in the title, you can add its variation to the URL
- Try to insert the keyword in the first sentence
- Don't stuff the article with the keyword
- Compose subtitles as if they are search queries
- Images should have the keyword in the alt text
- Link contextually to other articles
- Add the keyword to the excerpt and meta description
- Don't write for ranking, write for sharing

The last point is the most important one. Sure, you want your article to rank on the first page of Google, but more than ranking, the metric that is important today is social shares. Are your readers sharing your article with their peers? If they are, then that means you've provided real value to them - you've made the article worth their time.

Be genuine, be useful and be interesting. Your articles will get shared. And once that happens, they'll start ranking too.

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