

HOW TO WRITE A BLOG POST

Lesson Objective

In this lesson, you will learn some helpful tips about blogging. You'll get a chance to practice blogging on paper before you blog online. You'll also learn how to keep spammers away!

Did you know...

The word "blog" is short for web log. A "log" is a record of events. Teachers, pilots, and students keep logs. Bloggers do, too. A blogger is a person who blogs. The word "blog" can be a noun and a verb.

Warm-Up

A. Writing

Choose one of the following three topics. Write for five minutes in your notebook or on the back of your paper. Do not correct your writing. Aim for *quantity* rather than *quality*.

1. Write about your favorite blog. What's it about? Why do you like reading it?
2. Why do you think blogging is a popular form of written expression?
3. How could blogging improve your English skills?

B. Vocabulary Preview

Match these words to their correct definitions.

- | | | | |
|-----|--------------------------|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ___ | 1. blog (<i>noun</i>) | a) | the general subject for a series of posts |
| ___ | 2. blog (<i>verb</i>) | b) | to write posts for a blog |
| ___ | 3. blogger | c) | a person who writes and publishes blog posts |
| ___ | 4. hyperlink | d) | a title for a paragraph or section of a post |
| ___ | 5. tag | e) | a single blog entry |
| ___ | 6. category | f) | short for "web log", an online journal or series of written posts |
| ___ | 7. heading | g) | a keyword that you add to a blog to help online users find useful information |
| ___ | 8. comment | h) | text that takes you to a different webpage when you click on it |
| ___ | 9. post (<i>noun</i>) | i) | to publish a blog post |
| ___ | 10. post (<i>verb</i>) | j) | to assess if something is acceptable |
| ___ | 11. moderate | k) | inappropriate or unwelcome marketing |
| ___ | 12. spam | l) | a response or opinion |

Introduction to Blogging

A. Title

Choose a short title that is keyword rich. This means people might type the same words into a search engine. Use a capital letter for the first letter of the important words in your blog post. Make sure there are no spelling mistakes in your title.

Task 1

Which of the following is a good title? Why aren't the other titles as good?

- _____ 1. I AM GOING TO TELL YOU HOW TO WRITE A BLOG POST
- _____ 2. How to Write a Blog Post
- _____ 3. This Is How You Write Your First Blog Post EVER!!!!!!!!!!!!
- _____ 4. My summer vacation was so good I will blog about it.

B. Subject

Choose a subject that readers will be interested in. Put yourself in the readers' shoes. Would you read a post on this topic? What would you want to know?

Task 2

Do you know a lot about your subject? Use the blanks below to write down a few subjects that you would be interested in blogging about.

C. Formatting

Blog platforms have many *bells and whistles*. This means you can add **colored text**, *italics*, **bold**, images, videos, hyperlinks and more. Be careful. If you use too many details, your blog post will be difficult to read. Use simple formatting, and make sure there is blank space between paragraphs.

Task 3

Rewrite the formatting tip in your own words. This is called "paraphrasing".

Introduction to Blogging cont.

D. Paragraphs and Headings

A blog post should be separated into paragraphs, just like any piece of writing. One or two paragraphs may be enough. Blog posts should not be too long. In a blog post, you can use headings to separate new ideas. Headings should be in a bold font. It may be larger than the main body text. A few headings will keep your readers interested in your blog post.

E. Opening and Closing a Post

Find a way to catch the readers' interest right from the beginning of your post. These are called "hooks".

At the end of your blog post, give the reader a reason to leave a comment. Ask another question, or invite readers to share their own ideas or links. You may need to moderate comments to keep marketers from ruining your blog with spam.

Task 4

Below are some examples of hooks. Can you think of some more examples?

- a question
- a quote
- _____
- _____
- _____

6. Proofreading and Publishing

After you write your blog post, save it as a "draft". Don't publish it yet! Come back a little bit later and read the post out loud to yourself. Fix any mistakes you see. Check your spelling! If you are happy with your post, publish it and share it.

Publishing Checklist

- Did I use a good title?
- Did I format my title correctly?
- Did I choose an interesting subject?
- Did I include a hook?
- Did I separate my thoughts into paragraphs?
- Did I use headings?
- Did I invite comments or discussion?
- Did I proofread my work before publishing?

Task 5

Go back to the piece of writing that you wrote in the warm-up on page 1. Read it through one time. Then read it again and check for spelling mistakes, grammar mistakes, and poor punctuation. Check your capitalization, too. Fix your mistakes directly on the page.

Sample Blog Post

Read the sample blog post. Discuss the post with a partner. What important features does this post include? Discuss the formatting, organization, and content.

Tips for First-Time ELL Bloggers -----> Title
By New Blogger 1 -----> Blog Author

Are you an English language learner (ELL)? Have you ever thought about blogging? Blogging is a great way to practice your reading and writing. It will also help you increase your vocabulary.

You don't have to be an advanced writer to blog. All you need is a computer and an Internet connection. Choose a blog platform. There are many free ones to choose from. Give your blog a name, and get started! -----> Space

Set Achievable Goals -----> Heading
 At first you might think you will blog every day. This is difficult to do. You may run out of time and ideas. It's better to set a goal that you can stick to. Can you blog once a week, or every other Saturday? Commit to your goal. Sign a goal-making contract. -----> Hyperlink

What Will You Blog About? -----> Heading
 Are you going to write fiction or essays? Are you going to write about current events? You don't have to blog about only one topic, but it does help to think of a target audience. A blog about dogs is interesting to dog lovers. A blog about Canada is interesting to people who want to visit Canada. A blog about vocabulary is interesting to people who want to practice their vocabulary. You can have different categories in your blog.

Comments -----> Heading
 After you write your first blog post, open it up for comments. Be sure to read and reply to every comment. This is how you will grow your readership.

Share -----> Heading
 After you publish your post, share it with your email contacts and social media networks. People may subscribe to your blog. Do you have a blog already? Share a link to your blog in the comments below! -----> Closing that encourages interaction

Tags: blogging, blogs, English -----> Include keywords that are searchable online
Categories: How-To, for English learners, Writing -----> Indicate which subcategory this post belongs in

Comments (2)
ESL Guy: I am an English learner. I'm from Korea.
 I just came across your blog post. I want to blog, too!

New Blogger 1: Thanks for stopping by. Come back and share a link to your first blog post! -----> Reply

Comprehension Questions

What have you learned so far?

Answer and discuss these questions in pairs or as a class.

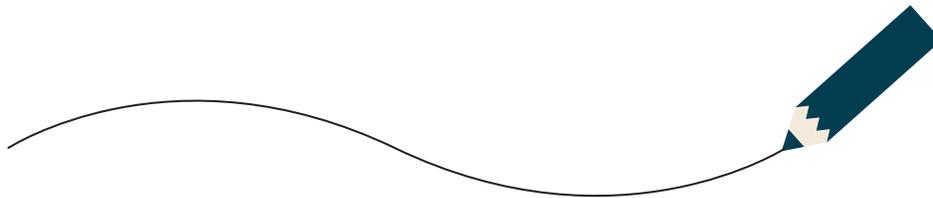
1. What is the origin of the word “blog”?
2. Why should a blog post not have a lot of bells and whistles?
3. What should a blog post start with? Give an example.
4. What can a blogger do to get more comments?
5. Why is it useful to add tags to a blog post?

Vocabulary Review

Complete the sentence with a word or phrase from page 1.

In the brackets, indicate the part of speech.

1. _____ () about a topic that you know a lot about.
2. Don't forget to add _____ () so that people who are searching for information can find your post.
3. Before you _____ () your blog, proofread it!
4. _____ () should be in bold. They describe the subject of a paragraph.
5. If you click on a _____ (), it will take you to a new web page.



Moderating Comments

Most blog platforms give you a choice. You can choose to *allow* all comments or you can *moderate* comments. When you moderate comments, you are the first to see them. This prevents spammers from ruining your blog. Spammers are people who add links to products and other sites that are unrelated to your topic. Spam is a big problem for bloggers! Look at the commenter's name and email address when you moderate comments.

Which of the following comments are probably legitimate? (Write L on the line.) Which are likely spam? (Write S on the line.)

- _____ 1. I love your blog. Great writing! Your readers will love these discount handbags and shoes. (*User Discount77*)
- _____ 2. This post about your trip to New York City was interesting. Did you see the Statue of Liberty? (*User Carly*)
- _____ 3. Great writing. Your website has a nice look and feel. Try this medicine for back pain. (*User Meds4U*)
- _____ 4. You are so interesting. I've never read anything like this. (*User OnlineGamer*)
- _____ 5. It's great to find another mommy blogger. I found your bathing tips useful. Thanks! (*User MamaMeg*)

Write Your Own Paper-Based Blog Post

A. Writing

Write a new draft of the warm-up you wrote on page 1. In your notebook, rewrite your piece in the format of a blog post. Review the tips you learned on pages 2 and 3. Proofread your post later today or tomorrow. (You could also type your post on a computer and print it.)

B. Comments

Share your paper-based blog post with some classmates. Ask your classmates to write a comment on the back of your page. It can be a legitimate comment or a spam comment. Which comments will you accept? Which will you decline?

*Are you ready to start blogging online?
Find a blogging platform and get started!*