

Wikipedia is an encyclopedia.

More than that, it's the world's free online encyclopedia, accessed by nearly 500 million unique visitors each month, in more than 250 languages. It hosts more than 4.5 million articles in English, all of them collaboratively authored and edited by volunteers like you.

As you begin contributing, please respect Wikipedia's community guidelines and proceed in the spirit of productive collaboration. Be courteous and don't be afraid to make mistakes. They can be easily corrected, and other editors will often help improve your article and answer any questions you have.

Wikipedia *isn't* a soapbox, promotional website, or battleground. Think of it as an encyclopedia and let that guide your efforts.

Who edits Wikipedia?

87% men
13% women
75% under the age of 30

“Wikipedia will only contain ‘the sum of all human knowledge’ if its editors are as diverse as the population itself: you can help make that happen.”

—Sue Gardner, Wikimedia Foundation

Encyclopedias have editorial standards in place to ensure their quality, and Wikipedia does, too.

You don't need to learn all of Wikipedia's policies in order to contribute productively, but please take a minute to familiarize yourself with these essential few:

1. No original research.

Your article should summarize the existing, published knowledge on your subject. Even if you know something to be true, do not include any previously unpublished anecdotes, data, opinions, theories.

2. Verifiability is key.

The information you include should be attributed to a reliable, published source that can be verified. Be sure to include inline citations (footnotes) that point back to the books, newspapers, websites and other reference materials you are using.

3. Do not plagiarize.

You'll need to restate the information in your own words.

4. Keep a neutral point of view.

Write your article objectively and without bias.

5. Avoid conflict of interest.

Most importantly, per Wikipedia's conflict of interest policy:
Don't create an article for yourself or your organization.

Choosing your subject / Notability

Every article on Wikipedia must prove notability—in other words, it's up to you to demonstrate that your article belongs in the encyclopedia. To help your article pass the notability test, use a rule of three: Be sure to cite at least three reliable, published sources that are independent of your subject—i.e., no official websites or promotional material. If you can't find at least three good sources, you may find it difficult to prove notability.

A beginner's guide to Wikipedia

What makes a good article?

- ☐ No conflict of interest
- ☐ Notable subject
- ☐ Neutral point of view
- ☐ At least three inline citations to reliable published sources.
- ☐ Links to other articles

EXTRAS

- ☐ Add Categories
- ☐ Add an Infobox
- ☐ Add Images

What material should I cite?

Good sources are reliable, independent, and speak to notability. Books, major newspapers, magazines and academic journals are reputable and not likely to be disputed by other editors. Blogs and other self-published material can be used, but may be considered less reliable. Avoid using these as your only sources.

