

1. Pick a topic

Relevance. Above all, your chosen topic should be both interesting and useful to your target reader. To determine this, you'll want to have a comprehensive audience profile in place. Then, think about how your post can solve a problem or answer a key question for the audience. Most importantly, you won't want to duplicate any content already on your blog. In addition, do a little Googling and see how many posts exist on the same topic. You don't have to write about something completely new, but try to focus on a fresh angle or provide a unique spin that makes your post different.

2. Give a good headline

The mistake many bloggers make is writing headlines the way they speak. While that's okay when you write the post (to a certain extent), when you write headlines that way it waters them down.

You want your headlines to be as ruthlessly concise and powerful as possible. So, chop out weak words and throw in power words (if appropriate).

How to write a great blog post

3. Write an intro that grabs the attention

If you lose the reader in the first few paragraphs — or even sentences — of the introduction, they will stop reading even before they've given your post a fair shake. You can do this in a number of ways: tell a story or a joke, be empathetic, or grip the reader with an interesting fact or statistic. Don't feel pressured to write your intro first. Sometimes it can be difficult to figure out exactly what information is relevant to your introduction until you've written the piece itself.

4. Write in short paragraphs

The visual appeal of your blog's content can be just as important as the content itself. Write your blog posts in short paragraphs (no more than 2-3 sentences is a safe rule) to provide visual relief from a text heavy web page. Most readers will skim a blog post or web page before committing to reading it in its entirety. Text heavy web pages and blog posts can be overwhelming to readers while pages with a lot of white space are easier to skim and more likely to keep readers on the page (or to encourage them to link deeper into the site).

5. Organise your content in an outline

Sometimes, blog posts can have an overwhelming amount of information — for the reader and the writer. The trick is to organise the info so readers are not intimidated by the length or amount of content. The organisation can take multiple forms — sections, lists, tips, whatever's most appropriate. But it must be organised!



Hi friends. We are **HOPPER & CROCKY**. We tell you how to write a blog post in simple steps that people will actually want to read.

8. Throw in a few pop culture references

Pop culture references add flavour to your blog post. They give your readers the impression that you're relatable, and therefore likeable. So, if you're going to insert Harry Potter in your article, then find a connection, a strong one, to make it work. You can't use a pop culture reference just because it sounds good. It also needs to be coherent with your writing.

6. Provide attribution

Don't risk being accused of violating copyrights, plagiarism or stealing content from another blog or website. If you found information on another blog or website that you want to discuss on your blog make sure you provide a link back to the original source.

7. Add images

Human brain processes visual content a lot faster than text based content. That's why adding captivating images can help boost your engagement. There are tons of awesome free resources for finding high quality royalty free images. Just make sure that the images gel with your story.

10. A punchy conclusion

The conclusion is just as hard to write as (if not harder than) the introduction. The easiest way out of your dilemma is to summarise all your points in the conclusion. Then again, that would be boring, since that's what most bloggers do. Instead, you can either end with a thought-provoking question or a call-to-action; or restate your main point, and persuade your reader to care about your point.

11. Publish blogs regularly

Blog posts that are published erratically with long gaps of time between posts are typically considered to be less valuable than blogs that offer more current and consistent posts.

12. Share it

Don't be afraid to use social media to tout your posts. This way you can attract more eyeballs.

13. Respond to blog comments



It's essential to the success of your blog that you respond to the comments left by your readers to show you value them and to further build the two-way conversation on your blog.

14. Don't set unrealistic goals

You know your schedule and abilities better than anyone else, so don't attempt to post every day if you can't. Start out by posting weekly and get in a groove.

7 EASY WAYS TO LEARN A NEW LANGUAGE

Let this master guide you through the easy and fun way to learn any language...



MAKE REALISTIC, SPECIFIC GOALS

1 Learning a new language is a goal, and we all know that goals should be specific. The goal “Learn to speak French”—or whatever language it is that you're trying to learn—is too broad. You need to narrow it down and make it more specific. Here are some examples of specific goals:

- To learn to say the 100 most common phrases for travelers.
- To be able to understand simple instructions and directions.
- To be able to exchange basic greetings and pleasantries.
- To learn 50 food items and be able to order them in a restaurant.

LEARN WORDS IN AN AUTHENTIC CONTEXT

2 Instead of simply learning words in isolation, learn words in their authentic context. That is, learn phrases you're likely to use for that word. For example, instead of just learning the word for “summer” in your target language, learn phrases such as the following:

- I'm going to the beach this summer.
- Last summer I traveled to Spain.

WATCH A MOVIE

3 For the people who wants to take advantage of one of the best ways to learn a language from

the comfort of their own home, put on a foreign movie in another language — without subtitles if you can! Not only is this one of the best ways to learn a foreign language, but you will also get a greater sense of that language's culture as well! If you don't know enough of the language to turn the subtitles off, keep a list of new vocabulary words you hear and what you think they mean. Look them up later. It would be a great fun!

LISTEN

4 In a TED Talk, Chris Lonsdale a psychologist explained his approach to learning a new language. Lonsdale explains that one of the first steps to learn a new language is to listen, a lot. He calls this brain soaking. Lonsdale argues that it doesn't matter if at first you don't understand what you're listening to. You're

listening to recognise patterns, words that repeat, and things that stand out. In addition, you're listening to the rhythm of the language. You can start by looking for podcasts in your target language, as well as scouring YouTube for interesting videos.

KEEP PRACTISING IN YOUR HEAD

5 We all have monologues running in our head, and typically they run in our native tongue. You can continue to practice and construct sentences and fake conversations in your head in a new language. In fact, this sort of visualisation leads to much easier conversations when you actually have them.

BE PATIENT WITH YOURSELF

6 Nothing is more frustrating than feeling like you're stuck in a rut and not making any progress. It is imperative to keep in mind that learning a language is like stepping into an entirely new world, and it's going to take some time. Don't give up!

FINALLY, FIND A WAY TO MAKE IT FUN

7 As with anything, if you're going to stick to it, you have to find a way to make it fun. Find people you enjoy talking to. Go to events where you can practice while doing something fun. Don't just sit in a classroom in front of a book, or you're likely to burn out fairly quickly. Talk about personal topics which you care about.



WORDS YOU MUST ADD TO YOUR VOCABULARY

IMPECUNIOUS

Meaning: having too little money.
Example: The lack of good jobs has made many formerly middle-class people impecunious.

PARVENU:

Meaning: newly rich
Example: Her conspicuous consumption suggested she was new to the game, a parvenu.

SANG-FROID

Meaning: equanimity
Example: Despite the intense questioning, he maintained his sang-froid

WELTSCHMERZ

Meaning: worn down by the world's ills
Example: After years of fighting the system, he was weighed down by Weltschmerz.

MISANTHROPE

Meaning: one who hates humankind
Example: My aunt is a misanthrope who will not even talk to the members of her own family.

BELEAGUER

Meaning: annoy persistently
Example: If we do not spray our house with insect repellent, mosquitos will beleague us all summer.

JEJUNE

Meaning: something that is uninteresting or insignificant.
Example: The man's 2006 computer is jejune when compared to my 2019 model.

KAKISTOCRACY

Meaning: govt. by the worst men
Example: This election feels like a choice between one kakistocracy and another.

INDIGNATION

Meaning: strong displeasure at something considered unjust or offensive
Example: Much to my indignation, he sat down in my seat.



CONFUSING WORDS ?

Here's a quick reference list of pairs of words that regularly cause problems

Centre Around

The lecture will center around the economy. Make it “centre on.” The language scholar Wilson Follett calls center around a “geometrically senseless expression.” This nonsensical turn of phrase results from scrambling center on and revolve around.

All ready, Already

All ready means that every-

thing or everyone is ready. Already refers to something accomplished earlier: We already ate.

Amount, Number

Use amount for things that cannot be counted and number for things that can be counted: This amount of water is enough

to fill a number of bottles. The culprit is amount. Some might incorrectly say “a large amount of bottles,” but no one would say “a large number of water.”

All together, Altogether

All together means “with each other”, and is similar to together: We're all together in this. Altogether means “completely” or “in total”: It is not al-

together his fault.

Burglary, Robbery

Burglary is illegal entry of a structure or dwelling with the intent to commit a crime, usually theft. Robbery is the act of taking someone else's property by force or the threat of force.

Historic, Historical

A historical event occurred some time ago. A historic event is important, memorable, enduring. “A historical study concerns history; a historic one makes history,” says editor Claire Kehrwald Cook in Line by Line.

QUERIES RELATING TO LANGUAGE SKILLS

Do you find grammar confusing? Do you get stuck with words when writing a letter, an essay or a blog? Do you have a fear of public speaking? Or do you simply want to improve your com-

munication skills? Times NIE is here to help you to master the intricacies of the English language. Just shoot us your queries on

toinie75@gmail.com