

## Types of Writing: Process

Sometimes called how-to, instructional, recipe, or technical writing, process writing involves explaining how to do something. Process writing presents instructions in a chronological order to guide a reader through how to do something

### Two Types of Process Writing

- **Informational:** Explains a process so the reader can understand but is not necessarily intended for the reader to perform the steps
  - Examples: how a bill becomes a law, how tornadoes are formed
- **Instructional:** Provides instructions in a detailed, step-by-step format, so that a user can follow and perform the process.
  - Examples: how to set up an iPod, how to install a light fixture, or how to change a flat tire.

### How to Write Processes/Instructions

1. Make an informal list of all the steps in the process, potentially labeling the difference between the major and minor steps. Put them in their proper sequence.
2. Write a short introduction to show the reader why the process is interesting or important.
3. Tell the reader what they need (equipment/ingredients) BEFORE they get started.
4. When process writing, it is typical to use the second person, *you*, or the understood you, to address your reader.
5. Use numbered steps OR present each step in one paragraph so that each is distinct and easily grasped.
6. Include everything the reader needs to know, but don't overwhelm him/her.
7. Flag with a cautionary warning any difficult or dangerous step.
8. End with a summary that tells the reader what the result will be.

### Things to Keep in Mind

1. If two steps are to be performed simultaneously, tell the reader at the START of the first one.
2. If writing in paragraphs, use transitional words/phrases (next, then, at the same time, finally)
3. Maintain an even tone and tense (present, future). Keep the pronouns the same throughout.
4. Note the reasons for every action, unless it's obvious.
5. Define any terms your reader may not be familiar with.
6. Some processes can take place in only one order; some offer a choice. If you have a choice, choose what has worked best for you in the past.
7. Consider adding illustrations or graphics to help emphasize your point.
8. Tell readers what to expect. Feedback lets the readers know they're on the right track.
9. Test your instructions or have someone else test them.

### Links to Additional Information

- [Process Analysis](#) from Tidewater Community College
- [How to Resuscitate a Victim a Victim in an Emergency](#) by Heather Bentzen, Western Student, from [Wink](#)