



Content Contributor Program: Writing Guidelines

Tutorial Basics

Use a friendly, conversational style

People who read Agora tutorials are smart, creative, and curious. Write as if you were talking to a friend or colleague. Respect their intelligence and their time by sticking to the point, writing clearly, and being truthful about what they can accomplish using Agora's products.

Be thorough. Provide all the information someone would need to successfully complete the tutorial.

Write in the active voice.

The goal is to teach people how to accomplish a task and to get them excited about the possibilities.

Write useful headings and subheadings

Headings and subheadings organize content for readers. Some of the headings are standard for every tutorial, but others are unique to your article. Use the styles indicated in [the template](#), and use title case for headings and subheadings as well as the title of the tutorial.

Include the most relevant keywords in your headings and subheadings, and make sure you cover the main point of the content. At the same time, keep headlines short and scannable so readers can quickly find the section they want to reference.

Stay relevant to the title

When a reader clicks the title of a tutorial, they expect to find the answer they want. Don't stray too far from the topic.

Strive for simplicity and clarity

Be as clear as possible. Use the second person ("you") and write as if you're describing the process to a friend or colleague. Use simple words and phrases, focus on the specific task, and write concisely. Write for the most common uses and systems, but if you need to include information about special cases or tangentially related information, create a note for it in a separate paragraph.

Include screenshots and videos

Include snippets of code and other relevant screenshots that help the reader understand the process and follow along. Crop screenshots tightly around the area you want the reader to focus on.

Provide alt text for images, including screenshots. Alt text is important for people who can't see images, whether they have visual limitations or the images simply don't load. Alt text should describe the image in a brief sentence or two.

Add links

Provide a link whenever you're referring to another Agora resource or something on an external website. Use links to direct readers to additional helpful resources, especially in the final section of the tutorial.

- If a link comes at the end of a sentence or before a comma, don't link the punctuation mark.
- Link relevant words in a sentence about the resource, rather than writing general statements such as "click here."
- Link the text to the appropriate URL, and use a different character style to indicate the linked words.

Write clearly structured steps

Separate steps into logical chunks, and preface each chunk with an introductory paragraph. Number steps. Write each step in complete sentences. Limit the number of actions within each numbered step; include no more than three actions per step.

Use bulleted lists

Use bulleted (unordered) lists to display lists when the order doesn't matter, as in the Prerequisites section.

Never offer legal advice

If it's relevant to your topic, you may want to let readers know that different countries have different legal standards for privacy, data collection, or other issues. However, do not offer legal advice; instead, suggest that they contact legal experts to ensure that they comply with any applicable laws.

Write for accessibility

You can make your tutorial more accessible to people with different physical abilities, language skills, and backgrounds by keeping the following in mind:

- Explain acronyms or terminology that your reader might not understand, based on the experience level defined in your prerequisites.
- Avoid idioms. Write simply so that people whose first language isn't English can understand what you mean.
- Use images to illustrate concepts or show examples, but they should always be supplementary. If your reader can't see the images, does everything still make sense?
- Avoid referring to the direction on the page to describe a note, image, or other information. Especially if someone is reading on a mobile device, the page layout may change.
- Include alt text for all images, including screenshots. Where possible, also include captions.

Keep SEO principles in mind

Write the tutorial in a way that makes it easier for search engines to share it. Start by completing the SEO section of the template. Keep the following in mind as you write; many of the things that improve SEO scoring also make the tutorial more useful:

- Use clear, descriptive terms and keywords in titles and headings.
- Link to Agora resources and relevant, trustworthy, external resources.
- Provide alt text for every image.

Use copyrights and trademarks carefully

If you use an image, photo, or other design element made by someone else, get permission first. Once you have permission, credit the copyright owner and link to the original source. Remember that images you find in a web search probably aren't in the public domain.

If you're using a trademark, whether it's an Agora mark or someone else's, use ® for a registered trademark or ™ for an unregistered trademark the first time you use it.

Word List

Standardized spellings

These are common words used in Agora tutorials. Here's how we write them.

- add-on (noun, adjective), add on (verb)
- back end (noun), back-end (adjective)
- best seller (noun), best-selling (adjective)
- beta
- bitrate
- brick-and-mortar
- checkbox
- coworker
- click-through rate (CTR)
- double-click
- drop-down (noun, adjective), drop down (verb)
- e-commerce (the industry)
- ePub
- email (never hyphenate, never capitalize unless it begins a sentence)
- emoji (singular and plural)
- front end (noun), front-end (adjective)
- geolocation
- hashtag
- homepage
- integrate
- internet (never capitalize unless it begins a sentence)
- login (noun, adjective), log in (verb)
- Like (the social media activity)

- multichannel
- nonprofit
- OK
- online (never capitalize unless it begins a sentence)
- opt-in (noun, adjective)
- opt in (verb)
- pop-up (noun, adjective), pop up (verb)
- pre-sale
- real time (noun), real-time (adjective)
- signup (noun, adjective), sign up (verb)
- sync
- third party (noun), third-party (adjective)
- tweet, retweet
- username
- URL
- website
- WiFi

Words to avoid

- broadcasting (use streaming instead)
- communication (when possible, use engagement instead)
- young, old, elderly, or any other word describing a person's age
- crazy, insane, or similar words when describing people, even in jest

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