



Tutorials: Guidelines

Who is this document for?

This document is for tutorial contributors, internal (BEs, SEs, SEO) and external (LPs, VIPs, Community), who are creating tutorials for Cisco U. Before making a tutorial. Please read the following guidelines.

- [How to write a tutorial](#)
- [Tutorial template and resources \(request permission to view\)](#)

What is a tutorial?

Tutorials are the latest content type we are introducing with Cisco U. They are "micro-learning" that aims to provide quick education on specific topics. **Tutorials are free, exclusive content** to Cisco U. and are created by **Cisco employees and technical experts from partners**.

Tutorials should be highly engaging, covering a small task with "how-to" information and immediately actionable steps. Tutorials are primarily used with the following two goals:

- Tutorials are a preview to draw learners into Cisco's & partner comprehensive, paid learning content.
- Tutorials cover use cases with Cisco technologies and/or Adjacent technologies.
- Tutorials enable experimentation on topics that do not fit into a comprehensive course.

Guidelines

The following guidelines describe the parameters for creating tutorial content.

Structure and Purpose:

When creating a tutorial, refer to the following guidelines to structure your content correctly.

- **Duration:** Tutorials should ideally be between 10-45 minutes.
- **Scope:** Content should cover procedural items and avoid many in-depth contexts and theoretical information. Information should be specific, actionable items and steps.
 - Note: The introduction for tutorials will contain theoretical information to set the learner up with a context for what they are about to learn. This instance of theoretical information is recommended.
- **Content elements:** Tutorial content should consist of text and images, with links to videos if necessary.
 - Tutorials should offer learners a frictionless experience by that find a way to have the learner set up lab prerequisites to complete the tutorial either locally or by providing a sandbox.
 - If using something like Cisco Modeling Labs (CML), a suggested topology YAML file is helpful.
- **Structure:** Each tutorial should include an introduction explaining to the learner the context of the tutorial and why this information is useful to them. Each tutorial should also include a brief conclusion with links to Cisco paid content.



- **Linking to other content:** All tutorials should link to paid content that L&C (in addition to other free resources). Ensure has chosen there are UTM codes so the source can be tracked.
 - Note: In the future, there may be a standard set of links based on the Topic area to use when creating tutorials.

Content Creation

Tutorials are currently built using Markdown formatting, leveraging DevOps-like operations using git and GitHub. As a best practice, it is recommended that you build your tutorial using a proper [Markdown editor](#)

Additionally, please note that tutorials will **not** be accepted if there is AI/ML generated content (e.g. ChatGPT) or content copied from Cisco U. paid learning.

Media and Branding

Tutorials differ from our course material but should use the same branding to maintain consistency. Please use the following resources when creating tutorial materials:

- Videos: [Digital Media home page](#)
- Graphics: [Graphics Factory Illustration Style Guide](#)
- General branding: [Cisco Brand Exchange](#)

Tone / Voice of writer

Written content at Cisco should adhere to the [Cisco Technical Content Style Guide](#). However, the following are a few specific guidelines that are important to note for tutorials:

- Tutorials should be informal and friendly but still professional. Remember that this content will be a first-look at Cisco learning content for many new users.
- Content should be useful and self-contained. Although we want to provide learners with just enough information to inspire them to sign up for more content, we also want to give them enough that the tutorial feels useful and productive. For example, no tutorial should end with asking learners to sign up for paid content in order to finish that specific tutorial task.

Metadata Tagging

Tutorial content must have metadata tagging to ensure proper search functionality and data tracking.

Metadata tagging and proper headers are covered as part of the tutorial templates found on the GitHub repo's [README.md](#)



Accessibility

Cisco has several policies and principles surrounding accessibility. To read further information about accessibility basics and principles, see the [Accessibility Confluence page](#) on the Cisco U. Confluence space. When creating content for tutorials, there are a few accessibility items to include:

- Alternative text for graphics:
 - Include these for informational images only. Decorative images do not need alt text.
 - For each informational image, include a brief description of what is shown in the image
- Captions for videos
 - Ensure that Cisco-produced videos have closed captions (created through 3Play Media)
 - Ensure that any linked videos from third-party sources (e.g. YouTube) have automatic captioning enabled.

Publishing Your Tutorial

After creating your tutorial content, use the following instructions to review and publish your work.

Review Process

When you have completed your content, you will also need to complete the following:

- Request a technical review: Submit a pull request to have a Technical Advocate review the tutorial.
 - Note: This review takes approximately 2-3 days.
- Request a copyedit: Submit a ticket to QAS asking for a copyeditor to review the tutorial via PR on GitHub
 - Note: This review takes approximately 2-3 days.

Action Items

- Review <https://www.digitalocean.com/community/pages/write-for-digitalocean>
- Review: <https://www.digitalocean.com/community/tutorials/digitalocean-s-technical-writing-guidelines>
- Review: Existing instructions <https://github.com/CiscoLearning/cisco-learning-codelabs/blob/main/README.md>