

Guidelines

when writing task topics there are important items you must consider. This section provides an overview of these considerations, in addition to the basic structure of task topics.

Task Topics Guidelines

- **Separate Task Information from Conceptual or Reference Information** - following this guideline will ensure that tasks are short, retrievable, and reusable. If you overload a task topic with too much conceptual or reference information, expert users get frustrated because they must wade through information that they might already understand.
- **Write Once Procedure per Topic** - Write only one procedure per task topic so that you can more easily manage, organize, and reuse these topics and so that your users can find specific tasks when they need them.
- **Create Subtasks to Organize Long Procedures** - Procedures that are more than 10 steps can be difficult to follow, especially if some of the steps are complex or have many substeps. Instead of creating one long procedure in a single topic, break it up into several shorter task topics. You can then assemble those task topics into a logical order that helps users to finish the entire procedure.

Structure of Task Topics

- Task topics follow a structure that can vary on the task. In general though, start the task with a brief introduction.
- Next, if required, include prerequisites.
- Finally, list the steps to complete the task.

You can also include a small amount of conceptual or reference information in a task if that information is directly related to the task. However, for larger amounts of conceptual and reference information, create separate topics and link to them.