

# Markdown Notation Reference Guide

**Document Title:** Markdown Notation Reference Guide

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## 1. Overview

Markdown is a lightweight markup language designed for readability and efficiency. It allows staff, faculty, and contributors to produce clean, structured documents in plain text. Static site generators (e.g., **Eleventy**, **Hugo**) or Markdown processors convert these `.md` files into HTML for publication.

## 2. Core Syntax

### 2.1 Headings

Use the `#` symbol. More `#` = smaller heading.

```
# H1 Heading
## H2 Heading
### H3 Heading
#### H4 Heading
```

### 2.2 Paragraphs & Line Breaks

- New paragraph = blank line between blocks.
- Manual line break = two trailing spaces.

```
This is one paragraph.
```

```
This is another paragraph.
```

```
This is the same paragraph but with a line break.
```

### 2.3 Emphasis

```
*Italic* or _Italic_
**Bold** or __Bold__
***Bold + Italic***
```

### 2.4 Lists

**Unordered (bullets):**

- ```
- Item one
- Item two
  - Sub-item
```

## Ordered (numbered):

1. First
2. Second
3. Third

## 2.5 Links

[OpenAI] (<https://openai.com>)

## 2.6 Images

![Alt text] (path/to/image.jpg)

*Alt text is required for accessibility and SEO.*

## 2.7 Blockquotes

```
> This is a blockquote.  
>> Nested blockquote.
```

## 2.8 Code

### Inline:

Use ``backticks`` for inline code.

### Block:

```
```\nconsole.log("Hello, world!");\n```
```

## 2.9 Horizontal Rule

---

## 2.10 Tables

| Column 1 | Column 2 | Column 3 |
|----------|----------|----------|
| Row A    | Row A    | Row A    |
| Row B    | Row B    | Row B    |

## 2.11 Task Lists

- [ ] To do
- [x] Done

## 2.12 Front Matter (YAML)

Used by static site generators to define metadata.

```
---\ntitle: "My First Post"\ndate: 2025-08-22
```

```
tags: ["tutorial", "markdown"]
---
```

### 3. Workflow with Eleventy & Hugo

1. **Write content** in `.md` files following the syntax rules above.
2. **Save** into the appropriate content directory:
  - Hugo → `/content`
  - Eleventy → input folder (configured in `.eleventy.js`).
3. **Build site:**
  - Eleventy → `npx @11ty/eleventy`
  - Hugo → `hugo`
4. Markdown is **rendered into clean HTML** for deployment.

### 4. Best Practices

- Always use meaningful **alt text** for images.
- Maintain consistent **heading hierarchy** (H1 > H2 > H3).
- Use **front matter** for discoverability (tags, dates, titles).
- For maintainability, keep one topic per `.md` file.
- Validate output with local builds before committing to production.