

Wikipedia:Wall of text

"WP:COTD" redirects here. For what used to be Collaboration of the day, see Wikipedia:Today's articles for improvement.

"WP:TEXTWALL" redirects here; not to be confused with the guideline on filibustering, WP:STONEWALL.



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It contains the advice or opinions of one or more Wikipedia contributors. This page is not one of Wikipedia's policies or guidelines, as it has not been thoroughly vetted by the community. Some essays represent widespread norms; others only represent minority viewpoints.

A **wall of text** is an excessively long post to a noticeboard or talk page discussion, which can often be so long that some don't read it.

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Types

Some walls of text are intentionally disruptive, such as when an editor attempts to overwhelm a discussion with a mass of irrelevant kilobytes. Other walls are due to lack of awareness of good practices, such as when an editor tries to cram every one of their cogent points into a single comprehensive response that is roughly the length of a short novel. Not all long posts are walls of text; some can be nuanced and thoughtful. Just remember: **the longer it is, the less of it people will read**.

Variations

Chunk-o-text defense

The *chunk-o-text defense* (COTD) is an alleged wikilawyering strategy whereby an editor accused of wrongdoing defends their actions with a giant chunk of text that contains so many diffs, assertions, examples, and allegations as to be virtually unanswerable. However, an equal-but-opposite questionable strategy is dismissal of legitimate evidence and valid rationales with a claim

of "text-walling" or "TL;DR". Not every matter can be addressed with a one-liner, and validity does not correspond to length, especially the more complex the matter is. The COTD is characterized by noise and hand-waving, not simply verbosity.

Massive wall of text

The *massive wall of text* (MWOT) often appears in disputes and bombards you with so much information and underhanded hostility that it's almost impossible to keep up without replying with one of your own. MWOTs are a good indication that people are talking past each other. Common features include:

- New arguments unrelated to the matter at hand
- Already-discussed arguments
- Giant paragraphs that never really come to a point
- Thinly-veiled personal attacks
- Sarcasm
- The rush you feel through your veins as you type them

Pointing out to someone that they're text-walling only shows that you don't care for their opinion, or that you're averse to nuance. Similarly, linking to this page in response to a massive wall of text is just a cudgel to use against your opponents. *This may be true*, because there is a genuine difference between a massive wall of text and a well-reasoned, nuanced argument. Expect to hear that *all* massive walls of text are in fact well-reasoned, nuanced arguments.

The only known cure is to not write them.

How to survive a wall of text

Read surrounding posts, skim to determine whether the long post is largely substantive or mostly irrelevant. If it is the latter, apply trout and other remedies in suitable proportion. Simplest is just to ignore it if it is not relevant to you.

See also

- Chewbacca defense
- Gish gallop
- Wikipedia:Too long; didn't read
- Wikipedia:Gaming the system
- Wikipedia:Dispute resolution
- Wikipedia search for "massive wall of text" (<https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:Search&limit=20&offset=0&redirs=0&ns1=1&ns3=1&ns5=1&search=%22massive+wall+of+text%22+OR+%22massive+walls+of+text%22>)

External links

- The crud factor (<http://durova.blogspot.com/2009/06/crud-factor.html>)

Essays on Wikipedia civility (nutshell)

The basics · How to be civil · Maintaining a friendly space · Negotiation · Accepting other users · Enjoy yourself · Expect no thanks · Thank you · Apology · Truce · Divisiveness ·

Philosophy	Encouraging the newcomers · Relationships with academic editors · High-functioning autism and Asperger's editors · Obsessive Compulsive Disorder editors A weak personal attack is still wrong · Advice for hotheads · An uncivil environment is a poor environment · Be the glue · Civility warnings · Deletion as revenge · Failure · Forgive and forget · It's not the end of the world · Nobody cares · Most people who disagree with you on content are not vandals · Old Fashioned Wikipedian Values · Revert notification opt-out · Shadowless Fists of Death! · Staying cool when the editing gets hot · The grey zone · The last word · There is no Divine Right Of Editors · Most ideas are bad · Nothing is clear · The rules of polite discourse · There is no common sense · Wikipedia is not about winning · Writing for the opponent
	Argue better · Assume good faith · Assume the assumption of good faith · Assume no clue · Avoid personal remarks · Avoid the word "vandal" · Beyond civility · Call a spade a spade · Candor · Deny recognition · Desist · Discussing cruft · Drop the stick and back slowly away from the horse carcass · Encourage full discussions · Get over it · How to lose · Imagine others complexly · Just drop it · Keep it down to earth · Mind your own business · Say "MOBY" · No Nazis
Don'ts	Civil POV pushing · Don't accuse someone of a personal attack for accusing of a personal attack · Don't be a fanatic · Don't be a griever · Don't be an ostrich · Don't be ashamed · Don't be inconsiderate · Don't be obnoxious · Don't be prejudiced · Don't bite the newcomers · Don't call a spade a spade · Don't call the kettle black · Don't call things cruft · Don't come down like a ton of bricks · Don't create attack pages · Don't cry COI · Don't drink the consensus Kool-Aid · Don't eat the troll's food · Don't engage in cyberbullying · Don't fight fire with fire · Don't give a fuck · Don't insult the vandals · Don't remind others of past misdeeds · Don't spite your face · Don't take the bait · Don't template the regulars · Don't throw your toys out of the pram · POV railroad · Nationalist editing · No angry mastodons (just madmen) · No, you can't have a pony
WikiRelations	WikiBullying · WikiCrime · WikiHarassment · WikiHate · WikiLawyering · WikiLove · WikiPeace
About essays	The difference between policies, guidelines and essays · Don't cite essays as if they were policy · Quote your own essay · The value of essays
Essay directory	

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