

# Mod Certification 101

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## Course Short Description

A course designed to help new Reddit moderators gain basic foundational knowledge and tooling skills.

## Course Long Description

Mod Certification 101, along with [Mod Certification 201](#), is a learning path for new or less experienced Reddit moderators. Mod Certification 101 focuses on the very basics for a new community creator who does not have previous experience setting up and growing a community from scratch. Mod Certification 101 is still recommended if you have no previous moderation experience and are joining an existing mod team in an established community.

In this course, you will learn about:

- Your powers and responsibilities as a moderator
- Setting up a new community
- The basics of styling a community
- Managing content in your community
- Reporting and Reddit's content policy
- Using your community's modmail system
- Reviewing mod actions in your moderation log
- Setting up community rules
- The basics of bans and appeals
- Actions to take in your community before sharing
- Promoting your new community in a positive way

You will be prompted to take actions within your community to help your new community succeed and to help you get more familiar with your mod tools. Upon completion of this course, if you have chosen to provide your username, you will be granted a trophy on your Reddit user profile. Continue on to [Mod Certification 201](#) for a more in depth learning experience around Reddit moderation tools and best practices.

Along with the course content, we recommend that you use [Reddit's Mod Help Center](#) as a resource for more in-depth moderation tooling documentation.

# Introduction to Mod Certification 101

## Welcome, New Reddit Moderator!

Like many before you, you've created a community and hope to share your passions and interests with others. Reddit, as the home to over 100 thousand active communities built around just about any topic you can imagine, is the perfect place to do so.

Getting your new community to reach its full potential requires some amount of effort and dedication. The purpose of this program is to make that easier by giving you the foundational knowledge required to launch a community, manage it, and foster a safe, healthy, and inviting culture. The expected learner for this course is someone new to community building and moderating.

If you included your username upon registration or share your username in the field provided in the final, completion of the Mod Certification 101 course will grant you a [trophy](#) on your Reddit profile page, displaying your achievement to others.



Ooooh. Shiny!

Although we would love to see you complete Mod Certification 101, if you choose not to, it will not negatively impact you in any way. Either way, we recommend that you go ahead and bookmark [Reddit's Mod Help Center](#) to quickly reference as needed on your adventures in moderating.

Before you get started on lessons, we'll talk a little bit about what to expect and what you'll need as you make your way through this course.

Summary: No summary

# Participating in Mod Certification 101

We're so glad that you're here and ready to learn about community building on Reddit but there are a few things you should know before you start lessons.

## Platform Requirements

Mod Certification 101 focuses on tools and actions you'll be taking on Reddit's desktop site. Specifically, Reddit's newer desktop site. If you do not know the difference between old and new Reddit, then don't worry - you're already using the newer site.

Reddit's mod tools and settings on the official Reddit mobile apps are different than on desktop. As such, you should review tool specific documentation on the Mod Help Center if you need further information on mobile moderation tools.

## Speaking of the Mod Help Center

You'll notice throughout the course that we link out to articles on the [Mod Help Center](#) often. In this 101 course, we want to help you get set up and familiar with the basics of moderating without drowning you in too many details. Visit the links provided in lessons any time you'd like more detailed information or additional visual guides.

## Registration and Completion Requirements

All of the Mod Education courses and training programs are voluntary, self guided, and have no *strict* time limits for completion. Registration is always open and ongoing, and there is no specific start or end date for courses. You can dive right in, take breaks as needed, and track your progress in your profile.

## Alt Account

While not required for 101, you may find it helpful to have a second account for practicing using the tools we cover. To create an alt account, you can register for a new account on Reddit.com under the same email (if you so choose), but with a different username and password.

It's often helpful to use an incognito window in your browser of choice so that you can be logged in to both your moderator account and your alt account at the same time.

If you've joined an existing moderation team, make sure to get sign off from them before taking any actions within the community.

### **Uh Oh, I Need Help!**

If you run into issues with this course or the site, reach out to us by [writing in to Modmail](#), including the name of the lesson and details around which concept you're having trouble with.

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In the next section, we've provided you with a variety of resources, both official and non official. Do take a moment and read through this section for familiarity but knowledge of that content will not impact your ability to complete this course. The resources are simply provided for you to reference as needed.

Summary: No summary

## Resources for Mod Certification 101

### Mod Certification 101 FAQ

#### **Who should take this course?**

This course is designed for new or inexperienced moderators who are looking to build a community or join a moderation team on Reddit. Experienced moderators are also completely welcome to take this course if they'd like to receive the Mod 101 trophy on their Reddit profile page.

#### **Is this course required to be a moderator?**

No. Registering for and completing this course is completely voluntary.

## **What do I have to do to pass this course?**

Read through the lessons and pass the course final.

## **Can I retake the Final if I don't pass it the first time?**

Yes.

## **When will I get my trophy?**

Trophies are distributed once a month, typically around the end of the month. If you did not already provide your Reddit username upon sign up for this program, you **must** provide your username in the final to be eligible to receive a trophy.

## **An entire month passed and I didn't get my trophy.**

Please ensure you have passed the course final before [writing in to modmail](#). If you have passed the course final and did not receive a trophy after 30 days, please contact us.

## **How can I receive help if I'm confused?**

If you're confused about a specific area of the course, please [write in to modmail](#). Be sure to include the name of the lesson and details around which concept you're having trouble with.

Summary: No summary

## **Official Reddit Resources for Moderators**

As you go through this course and beyond, you may find that you need more in-depth help or support..

### **Reddit's Mod Help Center**

The quickest way to get self-serve information is in our Mod Help Center.

There, you can find:

- [detailed breakdowns of your moderation tools](#)
- [information on styling your community](#)
- [a list of helpful communities for moderators](#)
- [the current mod programs and initiatives available](#)
- [in-depth guides based on advice from experienced moderators](#)
- and much more.

## **r/ModSupport**

If you still have trouble finding information you need around your mod tools, stop by [r/ModSupport](#). There, admins and fellow moderators can help by finding the mod tooling answers you need. You may even find that your question has already been asked and answered in an existing post.

## **r/ModNews**

To stay up to date on things that specifically impact moderators, make sure to join [r/ModNews](#), an official Reddit community dedicated to sharing news on any tooling or product changes that may affect you.

## **r/RedditRequest**

If you have your eye on a community that seems to be inactive and unmoderated, [r/redditrequest](#) provides a way to adopt abandoned communities and bring them back to life. Be careful to read and follow the rules before making a request.

## **Other Official Reddit Communities**

- [r/reddit](#) - your one stop shop for Reddit updates, announcements, and news
- [r/redditsecurity](#) - actions taken to ensure the safety and security of Reddit, and tips to keep your account secure
- [r/redditmobile](#) - official announcements, and discussion, about Reddit's mobile and tablet apps

Summary: No summary

## Reddit Peer Support

Often, the best advice and guidance will come from your fellow moderators. Here, we've provided a non-exhaustive list of unofficial communities that are known to be helpful resources to mods.

- [r/modhelp](#) is a community where you can ask for general help and advice on moderating
- Primarily in German, [r/DeutscheMods](#) is similar to r/modhelp
- Primarily in French, [r/FrMods](#) is similar to r/modhelp
- [r/modguide](#) houses many moderator written guides that cover a wide breadth of moderation related topics
- [r/needamod](#) is a good resource when you need to recruit moderators for your community or are looking to join a mod team
- [r/automoderator](#) offers help and support for those working with AutoModerator
- r/bannerrequest is a helpful environment if you're looking to jazz up the look of your community but lack the technical skills to create your own custom styling assets.

Summary: No summary

## Reporting to Reddit

Sometimes you'll need to report content that breaks [Reddit's Content Policy](#). We'll cover the content policy and sending reports in-depth in future lessons in this course. In the meantime, we've listed a few quick resources you can reference for reporting content on Reddit.

- Learn more about how to report content generally [Reddit User Help Center](#)
- [Report forms for moderators](#)
- If you need moderator support regarding another user or community please [modmail /r/ModSupport](#)

Summary: No summary

# Moderator Powers and Responsibilities

## Your Powers as a Moderator

Creating a community gives you access to many tools that help you control the content and culture of that community. As the creator, you'll have access to all of the [moderation permissions](#) for your community. If you were added to an existing community, your permissions can vary and are based on what permissions were set for you by the mod team.

On Reddit, a community's creator is generally known as the "top mod." In the future, when you add more moderators, you will be able to set their permissions granularly. As you often don't need many moderators when you're just getting started, recruiting moderators will be covered in Mod Certification 201.

## What you can do as a mod

As a community creator, you have full [mod permissions](#). This means any tool available to mods is available to you within your community. This allows you to:

- remove posts from others
- [pin \(sticky\)](#) up to 2 posts to the top of your community to raise their visibility
- [lock threads and comments](#) so no further community replies can be added
- [distinguish](#) your own comments and posts, creating a visual flag that the content is from a moderator (more on this in the next course!)
- [ban users](#) from coming to your community and temporarily mute users who are abusive to you in your community's modmail
- and [more](#)

## What you can not do as a mod

Being a moderator does not allow you to take any action in communities where you are not a mod and there are many things you will not be able to do, such as:

- see the IP or any other identifying information of community members
- delete or edit other users' content
- remove, delete, or ban any subreddit, including your own



- know who subscribed to your community
- know who voted on or reported content
- And [more](#)

And as I'm sure you've heard, "with great power comes great responsibility." Which is why we will be covering our Moderator Guidelines next.

Summary: Moderators have a large number of tools that allow them to control many aspects of the communities they moderate and the content within them. However, being a moderator does not grant you access to private user information or powers in communities you do not moderate.

## Mod Guidelines and You

Moderators on Reddit are expected to be familiar with our [Moderator Guidelines for Healthy Communities](#). Take a moment now to visit the link and read through them.

Some of the guidelines are things we will cover in this course, such as having a clear community description, complying with our content policy, and having an appeals process for your community members.

Other guidelines may seem more relevant as your community grows and begins to see traffic, like having transparent guidelines for participation in your community, as well as having a stable and active mod team.

Whether you're a new moderator or an experienced moderator, you'll find that following these guidelines will help you grow and maintain a more healthy and stable community.

Now that you have more insight into what powers and responsibilities come with being a moderator, it's time to start getting your community set up.

Summary: You should be familiar with and follow Reddit's [Moderator Guidelines](#).

# Setting Up Your New community

## Navigating to Your New Community

We sometimes see new mods wondering how to [access the community they created](#) so we've added a few ways to do so below.

### Type it directly into your URL bar

- `reddit.com/r/communityname` - replacing "communityname" with your community's actual name.

Use the drop down home menu on [Reddit.com](#) found in the top right of the screen.

- Select the community from the "Moderating Subreddits" list.

### Go to your profile

- Access your profile via `reddit.com/u/username` or via the drop down menu in the upper right of [Reddit.com](#).
- Select the community from the list of communities you moderate.

Now that you're in the right place, let's continue to the next lesson and start getting your community set up.

Summary: You can access communities you moderate by typing the URL in your browser, from Reddit's home page menu, and from your user profile page.

## Set Your Community's Topic

First, if you want people to find your community, it helps to set up a primary topic and some subtopics. You can do this directly through the community widget at the top of the sidebar\* when you're on your community's main listing page. (e.g. `reddit.com/r/communityname`)

**NEW Community topics** ⓘ

🛡️ Only visible to mods

[Add a Primary Topic](#) ▼

You'll see a button labeled 'Add a Primary Topic'-- click on it to begin adding relevant topics - up to 25 after the first primary topic. It will be located near the pencil icon in the topics box.

*\*Your community sidebar is a panel down the right of the screen when your community is viewed on desktop. You can add and re-arrange several different [widgets](#) to provide information, links, and resources for your community members. The community widget is one of a few default widgets that automatically appear in your community sidebar.*

Summary: Use your community widget to set your community's topic and subtopic so the right people can find it.

## Your Community's Description

One of the first things you'll want to do after setting your community's topic, is to put in a detailed description of your community and its purpose.

This can be done directly within your community widget by clicking on the pencil icon (under "About Community")

This description will be displayed in search results, in social media links, in the description under your community's name on mobile, and in Reddit search results for your community, even if it's set to private.

Setting a clear description will also help define the culture of your community. As with topics, this can help people discover your community and determine whether or not they'd like to participate.

Oh, and it's also one of the Mod Guidelines we covered in the previous section of this course.

On to more settings!

Summary: Set up your Community Description to help define your community's culture, help the right people discover your community, and to be in line with the Mod Guidelines.

## Community Setting Basics

There are a few community settings to review as you're getting started. Click on the "[mod tools](#)" button at the top of your community widget. Once on the tools hub, scroll down and select "[Community Settings](#)" on the right.

### Location and Community Type

You'll notice that there are a lot of sections and tools here, but right now, we're going to focus primarily on the "Community" section of your "Community Settings" tools.

If you want your community to be discovered locally, set up a location here. Then select the type of community you'd like to have. Public is the most common type of community, but you may have reasons to have a restricted or private community.

If your community is private, you will need to add redditors to your [approved users](#) list to grant them access to your community. For restricted communities you will need to add redditors to the list to allow them to share content in your community.

### Setting Requirements for 18+ Content

If your community is adult in nature, you must toggle the 18+ setting to on\*

Failure to correctly mark a Not Safe For Work community can lead to the community being shut down for failure to follow [Reddit's content policy](#).

If your community has occasional NSFW content but is generally suitable for most ages, you can choose to leave this box unchecked and instead ensure that any NSFW posts are marked as such individually. We'll discuss how to mark items NSFW in a later section.

Image and video posts are not available post options in 18+ communities.

Next, we'll talk discovery settings. Also known as the settings that determine whether or not people can find your community!

Summary: Set the location, community type, and any necessary age gating in your Community Settings. Communities with primarily 18+ content must be marked as such.

## Discovery Settings

In the **'Privacy and Safety'** section of your 'Community Settings', you will find the 'Discover' section.

Here you can choose whether your community appears in high-traffic feeds such as [r/all](#) and if you'd like your community to be recommended to browsing redditors.

Making sure these settings are toggled **on** will help your community to grow. You can always change the setting later if desired.

Now that you've got most of your basic settings in place, let's look at post and comment settings before reviewing what we've learned in this section.

Summary: To help people find your community, adjust discoverability settings via toggles in the 'Privacy and Security' section of your 'Community Settings'.

## Post and Comment Settings

Once you've set up the basics of your community as outlined in the last four lessons in this section of the course, it's time to consider the post types you'd like to allow in your community.

### Why care about post types?

The post types you choose to allow and the rules you set will play a big part in developing the culture and expectations for your community.

Deciding to be too restrictive with what post types you allow could impact your community's ability to grow, so take a thoughtful approach here. What actually makes sense will depend on the type of community you have created. For example, a community focused on discussion may restrict post types to text only.

### Setting up post types

You will find your [post and comment settings](#), within the community settings section of your mod tools. Here you will see the post types available to your community and the toggle switches that allow you to control which are permitted in your community.

Setting up which post types are permitted means that redditors will only be able to submit those post types and you won't need to be removing any other type of post. Post types that you disallow will be greyed out for submitters attempting to post into your community.

Some of the post type settings can be found in the Reddit mobile app in your community's mod tools, including the video toggle, which is not listed on Reddit's newer desktop site.

### Archive post toggle

The archive post toggle allows you to choose if posts are archived (comments can no longer be added) after 6 months or not. If you have this toggled off and therefore disallow archiving, your community may receive comments on old posts.

If you decide to allow comments after 6 months, consider using [AutoModerator](#) to [alert you when new comments are added](#) on posts past standard archive time.

This can help flag that content for moderation where it may not be seen otherwise. AutoModerator will be covered further in Mod Certification 201 but you can review more information in the Mod Help Center now, if you choose to.

*Note: Image and video posts are unavailable in NSFW communities, and video is unavailable in private communities. Moderators are still able to post certain post types such as text, links, and polls even when those post types are toggled off in the community settings.*

Now that you've gone through and set up the foundations for your community, let's take a moment to review what you've learned.

Summary: You can choose what types of posts to allow in your community via 'Post and Comment Settings' under your 'Community Settings'. Choose wisely.

## Community Set Up Review

There are many more community settings available to you that will become useful as your community grows. For now, let's review what you've learned in this section. If any of the points below feel unfamiliar, go back and review the lesson while simultaneously reviewing the tools in your mod tool hub.

You should know how to:

- find your community
- set your community's topic
- set your community's description
- set a location for your community
- set your community as public or private
- choose how discoverable you want your community to be
- choose what types of posts you will allow in your community

Many of these settings are also available in the mobile app. Check out the app tab at the top of the [Mod Help Center article](#) for help.

Now that your community is set up, let's review a couple of styling tools to help it look more appealing.

Summary: No summary

## Styling Your Community

### Accessing Your Styling Tools

Reddit offers [a variety of tools](#) that allow you to customize the look of your community. Doing this early can help give your community a more individualistic and polished feel which can be appealing to new visitors. We recommend that you set up at least a couple of simple custom elements as you are getting your community started.

All of your styling tools for new Reddit can be found in your mod tools under the "**Community Appearance**" section on desktop. In this section, we'll focus on just a couple of key tools to get you started on your path to styling your community just how you like it.

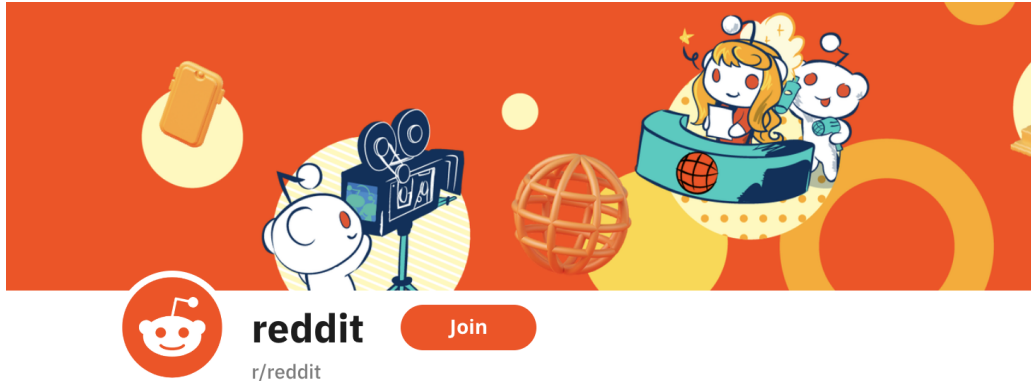
First up will be setting your community's icon.

Summary: Styling your community gives it an identity and makes it more appealing.

### Set a Community Icon

Before you dive in, you'll need to have a 256x256px image that you're going to upload to serve as your community's icon. For context, the circular Reddit logo from r/reddit below is an example of an icon uploaded into a community.





The image above the icon and text is a **banner**, which we'll cover in the next lesson.

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Once you're ready, head to the "Name & Icon" tab in your community appearance tools within [mod tools](#) (or use the "update icon" tool right at the top of your community as seen below, or go to mod tools and "avatar" in app). Here, you can upload the 256x256px image that will serve as your community icon. Your icon will be shown in a variety of places, so pick or create something that you feel truly represents what you want your community to be.

Have your icon uploaded? Let's add a banner next.

Summary: No summary.

## Add a Banner

As with your icon, your banner serves as a way for visitors to visually differentiate you from other communities.

Similar to the last lesson, you'll simply [navigate to the "Banner" tab](#) within your appearance tools. Once here, you can upload a custom banner to represent your community.

Be mindful that the height of your banner will inform the sizing of the banner you'll want to use. If you'd like the banner image to fill the area on all monitors, a width of 4000px is ideal but not required. You can choose to have the image fill the entire screen's width or tile with a repeated pattern.

Take the time now to put in your banner or come back to this once you have an image ready.

Summary: No summary.

## More Styling Tools

While we recommend starting with the customizations we've provided in the previous lessons, there are many other tools you can use to further fancy up your community. Check out our [styling section in the Mod Help Center](#) for a deep dive into each styling tool!

Next up, we'll learn about rules and managing content in your community.

Summary: No summary.

## Rules and Content Management

### Community Rules

It's early. You just started your community. Why would you need any rules?

Honestly, you probably won't need many right away but making sure you have one or two simple rules right off the bat can really set the stage for what kind of culture you want your community to have.

#### **Types of rules**

Rules can be about behavior (i.e. Be kind and respectful, no insults, etc.) as well as expectations around what kind of posts your community should have. (i.e. no memes, only memes, no politics, no off-topic posts, etc.) Rules also serve as a quick explanation you can provide to a community member when you have to remove a post.

Rules can be for posts, comments, or both - and which things you choose will impact the report reasons available to your community members when they are making reports.

Now that you understand why rules are helpful, even early on, try it for yourself by adding one!

## Adding a rule

Adding [rules](#) is simple. Go to the "Rules" tab in your [mod tools](#) and add, edit, and rearrange the order of rules there. Check the upper left of the page for the "Add Rule" button.

Although adding rules is simple, that doesn't mean it's always easy to come up with initial rules. [r/GuideSubreddit](#) has some good examples if you're not sure where to start, but keep in mind that rules should always be tailored specifically to meet your community's needs.

Next, you'll learn about managing content that is posted in your community.

Summary: Rules help define your community's culture. They can be defined for posts, comments, or both, and can be focused on behaviors, content, or more.

## Community Content Management

As a moderator, you may find there are times when you have to - well, moderate content! Such as if your community rules are broken. We have the tools to help you do just this.

Under posts and under comments in your community, and in your [mod queues](#) (see below), you'll see a few little buttons\*.



- **approve** - approves the content, making it visible again if it was marked as spam
- **remove** - removes the item from your community. *(it's often better to not remove content unless it's breaking your rules or the content policy - that's what votes are for)*
- **spam** - removes the item and marks it as spam, helping to teach the spam filter what should be removed in the future

Next to reports, you'll see the option to **ignore reports**. If content keeps getting erroneously reported\*\*, approving the content and ignoring reports on it will keep any further reports on that piece of content out of your mod queues, potentially saving you time and effort.

If you see content that breaks the site-wide content policy, remove and report the content. **Never approve content that breaks site-wide rules.** Doing so can put your community in jeopardy.

*\*Quick tip: Want to browse your community without seeing the content management tools? You can toggle those into a drop down menu by [turning off mod mode](#).*

*\*\*While it's unlikely to happen before you've gotten your community off the ground, if you do run into people spamming reports in your community or putting in abusive report reasons, please go to <https://www.reddit.com/report> and select "This is abusive or harassing" --> "It's abusing the report button" and include the requested information in the form. This allows us to investigate and action abusive accounts.*

Summary: You can approve content, remove content, report content, and ignore reports on content. Removals should be for rule or content policy breaking items. Always remove items that break the site-wide rules.

## Moderation Queues

If you go into your mod tool hub on desktop, your [moderation queue](#) is the landing page. In Reddit's native apps, you can access your modqueue via mod

tools, or your community side drawer which opens from the top left menu. Posts and comments that need your attention will land here. The mod queue contains user reports, and filtered posts and comments. If there is nothing to review, you'll just see a happy little cat where the content would otherwise be.

While there are several options in the "Queues" section of your mod tools, the **mod queue** and the **reports** sections will be the ones you need to pay the closest attention to, as the reports section surfaces only user-reports and these tend to be the most urgent pieces of content to review. The **spam** queue is also good to check occasionally, and is useful for reversing possible mistakes when actioning content. This is especially true as your community grows larger. Check your reports regularly as people begin to join your community!

At this point, you may be wondering where to see all these actions you have or will take? For that, you'll use your mod log.

Summary: Your mod queue is the landing page of your mod tools. Pay special attention to the main mod queue and the reports queue as your community gains traffic.

## Moderation Log

Now that you've dipped your feet into content management through your moderation queue, you'll want to be able to review actions taken in your community.

Your [moderation log](#) is where you will do this. The mod log exists so you can keep an eye on all of the mod actions taken within your community, including things that aren't in your mod queue, like updating community settings. To get to your mod log, click on your mod tools and then go to the 'Community Activity' section. From there, you'll see your mod log.

It is a simple but powerful tool that allows you to filter what you see in a variety of ways, including by the action taken and by the moderator (or rarely, the site-wide administrator) who took the action. You can filter via the drop down menus at the top of your mod log.

This tool is highly useful once your community has grown and you have a team of moderators needing to track and review actions taken within your community.

The mod log can be very useful for catching mistakes and reversing them, which we will discuss in the next lesson.

Summary: Mod actions taken in your community can be reviewed in your moderation log. The log is highly filterable and especially useful when a community has multiple moderators.

## Reversing Content Removals

If you find you've accidentally removed or spammed a piece of content, don't worry, you can restore it. To find removed content you can check these places:

- Your mod log, which lists all recent mod actions. You can filter the log by remove or spam actions, or by the moderator that performed the action.
- Your [spam queue](#). This is where you can find all removed or spammed content.

Once you've located the piece of content you can then approve it and it will appear in your community feed.

Speaking of removals, in our next lesson, we'll be covering removal reasons.

Summary: Find accidentally removed content in your mod log or spam queue. Approve the content to reverse the removal.

## Removal Reasons

Removal reasons allow you to publicly or privately send a community member a reason when you have to remove a piece of content they submitted. This tool also allows you to privately tell your fellow mods why content was removed. It can save you a considerable amount of time that you might otherwise spend explaining yourself to your community members or fellow moderators. It also demystifies the removal action for the community member, turning what could

have been a frustrating experience into one that helps educate them on what is expected within your community.

Building on the rule or rules that you set up at the beginning of this lesson, let's try adding to that by setting up [removal reasons](#):

- Go to your mod tool hub
- Select "Removal reasons"
- Add a removal reason (upper right)

You can use your community rules to help you decide what removal reasons you may need, however you should expect to adapt and change these over time as you see the types of content that you remove or if you revise your rules.

Once you have removal reasons set up, you'll be given the option to add a removal reason when removing content. You also have the option of sending it to the user in a few different ways:

- privately via modmail from the subreddit
- privately via modmail but from your username
- or in a public comment in response to the removal **from your username**
- **or in a public comment in response to the removal from your moderation team**

You can and should also leave a note for your fellow mods, if applicable!

There may be times when you feel that adding a removal reason isn't the best option, and you should use your best judgment in those situations. But for the most part, educating your community members by using removal reasons can help lessen frustrations for them (especially new Reddit users who often don't understand why their post was removed) and encourage them to be better contributors to your community in the future, which will hopefully make things easier for you in the long run. Making a removal reason public can be helpful in lessening questions from other redditors.

Next up, we'll review everything we've covered in the past few lessons before moving forward.

**Summary: Removal reasons allow you to minimize the work load around removals by informing the community member who posted the content, as**

well as your fellow moderators, why the content was removed. They also help educate your community members.

## Rules and Content Management Review

Congrats on familiarizing yourself with some of your content management tools! In addition to the tools covered in this section of Mod Certification 101, there are further tools and automations available that become useful as your community grows. For now, let's review what you should know at this point of the course.

You should be able to:

- set up community rules
- approve, remove, or spam content - and understand what those actions mean
- find your mod queues for reviewing content
- understand the function of your moderation log
- find removed content and reverse removals when needed
- set up removal reasons and determine when and how to best apply them

If you don't feel that you are comfortable with the list above, go back and walk through this section again, making sure you've set at least one community rule and one removal reason. While you review, access your moderation tools and practice approving/removing/reversing content actions while applying removal reasons. Be sure to only practice on content from an alt account, co-mods, or friends - someone who is aware that you are testing a feature and has agreed to it. You can always use an alt to report content so that it lands in your community's mod queue.

Next up, we'll be discussing Reddit's Content Policy.

Summary: No summary



# Reddit's Content Policy

## Overview - Reddit's Content Policy

It's important that all mods understand Reddit's [content policy](#).

Please take the time to visit and read through the policy, revisiting as needed until you are thoroughly familiar with it.

In this lesson, we'll mostly be focusing on mod expectations and how to report content in your community that breaks the content policy. Further details can be found in our [Mod Help Center article](#) on the subject.

Summary: Mods should be familiar with Reddit's [content policy](#).

## Content Policy Violations and You

While a new community is often a quiet community, once you do have some traffic you may also run into people that will behave in ways that violate [Reddit's content policy](#).

Because all content policy violations should be removed and reported to the best of your ability, be sure to familiarize yourself with it now. Willfully ignoring policy violations in your community can jeopardize the community's good standing on Reddit. (That all may sound rough but don't panic, we take good faith efforts into account and we want you to succeed!)

Next up, we'll look at when and how you can report these violations if they happen in your community.

Summary: Mods should remove and report content that violates [Reddit's content policy](#).

## When to Report a Violation

If a user has already reported the content for a content policy violation, you can simply remove the content. If the content was reported by a community member for a community rule and that content also breaks a site wide rule, then you should report the item to us as a content policy violation.

For example:

If your community has a rule that states “no doxxing\*” and a user reports an item under that community rule but no one has reported the content for the site-wide rule “It's personal and confidential information,” you would go ahead and report that item to us directly.

*\*Doxxing is generally defined as finding and publishing someone's personal information, often with malicious intent.*

Summary: Moderators should remove and report content that breaks the content policy and has not yet been reported as such by a community member.

## How to Send Reddit a Report

If an issue is simple and does not require context, you can simply use the [report button](#) beneath the item to send a report to us. Make sure you aren't reporting the item under your own community's rules.

Once you've clicked on **report** you will see a box listing multiple report reasons. The first option is that the content breaks your community's rules, the rest of the individual options listed are content policy rules and these are the ones you need to select from in this case, to make sure the report goes to Reddit.

If you feel that a content policy breaking item requires context in a report, first copy the permalink (using the share button, or the top right menu in app) to the item (message, post, comment, etc) where the policy violation took place and go ahead and remove the content. Once this is done, go to [reddit.com/report](https://reddit.com/report)

If the issue is related to spam, abuse/harassment, or misinformation, select the option, "I want to report spam or abuse". For all other content policy violations,

select the next option and then pick the granular policy violation you are reporting. Be sure to include the link you previously copied in your report, along with any pertinent details. When you're finished filling out all information for the report, be sure to hit the submit button.

You can find more information on reporting in [Reddit's Reporting FAQ](#) and in the event of an emergency, there are some ways to [contact us directly](#).

Next, we'll review what you've learned about the content policy and your mod responsibilities around that policy.

Summary: Use the report button for simple policy breaking content and then remove the item. For more complex issues, gather relevant links to the content/context and report via [reddit.com/report](https://reddit.com/report).

## Content Policy Review

We know that policy isn't always the funnest topic, especially when you're new to moderating and don't have people posting in your community yet! That said, understanding Reddit's rules and how they can impact your community is something that is helpful to know early on, so you aren't surprised down the road.

You should now understand:

- what is not allowed on Reddit.com
- that you should remove any content policy breaking items from your community
- when and how to report content in your community to site wide administrators

If you don't feel clear on your responsibilities around [Reddit's Content Policy](#), please review this section again. We recommend bookmarking the previous link for quick reference when you're unsure of whether or not an item posted is ok or not.

Next up, we have a quick section on managing users in your community.

Summary: No summary

# User Management

## Rule and Policy Enforcement Tools

When a community member has broken your community's rules (or [Reddit's Content Policy](#)) and your attempts to educate them on the issue have failed, [banning \(and muting\)](#) can be utilized to help keep the peace.

Hopefully, it will be a long time before you need to ban or mute someone. But once you need to remove a bad actor (someone who continuously participates in bad faith) from your community, it's important to understand how to approach using the tools.

### Banning and Muting

To ban or mute a user, go to your mod tools and select "banned" or "muted" under "user management", on desktop or in the official Reddit app.

Bans can be permanent or temporary and should include a reason for the ban. Muting prevents a redditor from sending a [modmail](#) (your community's messaging system) to you and your mod team and can last up to 28 days. You can also mute from within modmail, which we'll discuss in the next lesson.

### Ban Reasons

Your ban "reason" will be sent to the user that you are banning, along with any note you choose to include in the ban message. If the banned user responds to the message with questions, this response will appear in your community's modmail ban appeals folder.

Give a detailed clarification of the reason for the ban in the "note to include in ban PM" section, ideally pointing to their infraction and your community's rules or the site's content policy, to help limit confusion, follow-up messages, and repeat offenses.

### Other Actions

You should make a habit of adding a "[mod note](#)" to help your community maintain a record of why you banned the individual and to give other moderators on your team insight into the ban.

To get some familiarity with these tools, you might want to test them with a friend or with an alt account of your own. You can remove the ban or mute afterward using the same tools. That said, we'll more extensively cover actions and testing them in Mod Certification 201.

Because people sometimes make mistakes and need information to do better, it's important to allow appeals from community members. We'll be discussing this next.

Summary: You have tools available to ban and mute community members who do not respond to attempts at education. Be sure to include reasons for the ban, for the actioned party and your fellow moderators.

## Appeals Best Practices

Enforcement tools like banning and muting are a necessary evil for online community builders, but they are more effective when used sparingly and in conjunction with clearly stated rules and expectations.

Assume good faith by allowing appeals from offenders. This, along with efforts toward education, can sometimes turn a rule-breaking user into a positive and engaged community member. You may run into consistently negative community members and trolls now and then, but before deciding on what action to take, attempt to distinguish between an individual who has broken a rule or two but could still contribute to the community and someone acting with malicious intent toward your community.

The more focused you are on reforming and educating users, the less reactive you need to be with enforcement tools. This can help you maintain a healthy community while also minimizing backlash from community members who may not understand the reasoning for your actions.

Once your community grows to the point that you find yourself having to sometimes ban users, be sure to review your ban appeals folder in your modmail!

Summary: Best practices around ban appeals and user reform. Assume good faith and keep the focus on education, wherever possible.

## Communication Through Modmail

### The What and Why of Modmail

You've seen us reference modmail before, but if you haven't used it yet or reviewed the [Mod Help Center section](#) on the subject, you may still be wondering what exactly it is.

#### **What is modmail?**

Modmail is your community's messaging system. Modmail is where you will handle inquiries from your community members, ban appeals, and sometimes even messages from other communities. You can also use modmail to communicate with your mod team (when you have one).

#### **How often should you check modmail?**

Once you have your community up and running, it's a good practice to check modmail at least once a day to ensure you don't miss important messages from your members.

#### **Why would someone reach out privately?**

There are a number of reasons a community member may want to reach out to a mod team privately, such as:

- discomfort in flagging an issue publicly
- time sensitive issues or content that require your attention
- questions they are unable to find answers to elsewhere
- or a myriad of other reasons

#### **Ban appeals**

You may also find yourself in a position where someone has been banned from your community and wants to appeal the ban. Responses to ban messages will

go into your ban appeals folder and from there, you can review the situation utilizing the panel on the right to check their recent history in your community and your team's [Mod Notes](#) about the user. When it's appropriate to respond, be sure to do so in a calm and collected manner.

Next, we'll discuss accessing and using modmail.

Summary: Modmail is the messaging system you'll use to communicate privately with your community members, handle ban appeals, and more. This should be checked regularly.

## Accessing Modmail

There are multiple ways to access your modmail inbox.

### Desktop Modmail

<https://mod.reddit.com/> is where you can navigate to [modmail](#)

You can also navigate to modmail via the shield icon in the top right on [Reddit.com](#).

- grey = no new message
- orangered = new message

### Reddit's Apps Modmail

- locate the modmail option within mod tools
- or access modmail via the notification bell at the bottom of your screen and the modmail tab

Next, we'll talk a bit about your different modmail folders.

Summary: No summary

## Modmail Folders

Modmail has a variety of folders to help keep things organized for you and your team.

[The folders](#) are fairly self explanatory but here are the most important ones you'll be using:

- New - any new messages that have no mod replies
- In Progress - any messages that have mod replies
- Archived - when interaction on a modmail message is considered "complete", once you click the "archive" button on the message, it will end up here.

You'll also see a mod discussions folder for your discussions with your mod team. This folder contains conversations that are only visible to you and other moderators of the community.

For more in depth knowledge on your modmail tools, such as internal team messaging, be sure to check our [section on modmail in the Mod Help Center](#).

Next, we'll be covering ways to promote your community and what you should do beforehand!

Summary:No summary

## Promoting Healthy Growth

### 7 Actions in 7 Days

Building a vibrant community with a positive culture takes time and dedication. It almost never happens overnight. Don't be discouraged by slow momentum - slow and steady is the healthy path to growth for the vast majority of communities. That said, there are things you can do today to get things moving in the right direction.

In this lesson, we'll be reiterating the importance of some previous lesson actions, as well as introducing some new actions. If you've already completed



some of these tasks, great! You've got a head start. If you haven't, that's ok too. Now is the time!

## A Week of Action

There are several things you can do immediately to give your community a leg up. Try taking a week and doing everything in the list below to help your community's odds for success.

### 1. [Post fresh content](#)

- Jumping into an empty community is intimidating. It's up to you to create a welcoming environment so try and publish at least 10 posts this week, but not all at once, post little and often.
- You should do this before doing anything else on this list and can read more about ways to do this in our next lesson. Feel free to jump ahead and come back to this list as needed.

### 2. **Share your community**

- [r/newreddits](#) is a safe place to get the word out about your community without being spammy.
- r/promoteredit is also a good community for sharing your subreddit.
  - *Make sure to read and follow the rules before sharing your community in any place intended for promotion.*

### 3. **Promote yourself in a like-minded community**

- Politely reach out to the moderators of a like-minded community and ask if they would consider featuring you as a related community in their related [communities widget](#) or allow you to make a promotion post.
- Offer to feature theirs in your community's widget as well. If they decline, respect their wishes, thank them for their time, and consider other communities that might also appreciate you returning the favor.
  - *Example: If you just started a blue tongued skink community, you might reach out to the mods of a general reptile community.*

### 4. **Join the conversation**

- If you see a relevant post in another community, [mention yours](#) in the comment section *if* the context is appropriate. Try to relate your community to the discussion rather than simply mentioning it, and

always check the community's rules to ensure your behavior won't be considered spam **before** you do this.

- *Make sure to put a “r/” before your community name to create a link to your community in the comment.*

5. **Update your [community description](#)**

- Use precise language to help users discover your community organically.

6. **Add a [rule](#) or two**

- Setting early expectations for behavior in your community can both help foster the culture you want and help you explain to users why you may have to remove rule breaking content when it occurs.

7. **[Style your community](#)**

- Even just adding an icon and banner, as discussed in a previous lesson, will make your community a more inviting place to visitors.

If you've already done all of the above, you're off to a great start. Keep going!

Our next lesson covers a topic heavily tied to action 1 from this list: seeding content for your new community.

Summary: A list of actions to complete in one week to help your community grow.

## Seeding Content

In our previous lesson, we discussed best practices for things you can do in one of the first weeks after your community's inception to help it gain traction. Here, cover one of the most important things you can do from that list, which is [seeding content](#).

### What is Seeding Content?

For the purpose of this lesson, seeding content means creating content, uploading content, or sharing existing content (from Reddit or other sources) to post in your community, making sure to give credit to the original source whenever possible.

### Why Seed Content?

The reason seeding content is so powerful is that it gives visitors something to engage with. If you walked into a room full of people and no one was talking, you'd probably be hesitant to be the first person to speak. Similarly, a visitor to your community is unlikely to post unless they see others posting before them and have a feel for the vibe of your community.

So, even if you've made your community beautiful, set up rules, and are sharing it around places - without content, it's unlikely to see any action from visitors!

## How Do I Seed Content?

You can seed content in a few different ways. One of which is by making unique posts that encompass what you'd like to see in your community. Another is by [crossposting content](#) into your community from similar communities.

To help your new community not feel like a one person show, you might use a second account to make some of the posts (being careful that you don't vote on your own content) or have friends help post some early content. You can also search for content outside of Reddit, or once you have a few members, post questions and start discussions - assuming your community concept allows for it.

It's best to make sure your community has at least enough content that a visitor has to scroll to get through it before taking the steps of promoting the community directly.

Once you have some content in your community, move on to the next lesson where we'll talk about healthy ways to promote your community.

Summary: Create and share content in your community to set expectations for the community and be a more welcoming space for others to engage in.

## Before Promoting Your Community

At this point in the course, you should already have most of the "7 Actions in 7 Days" done. If not, here's a quick review of what you'll want to have done before promoting yourself:

- seed content
- update your community description

- have a rule or two in place to set the tone and expectations
- customize your community by adding an icon and banner

If you at least have those things complete, you're in a good position to start sharing your community. But remember to keep the fresh content coming as you do!

Next up, we'll cover the different ways you can promote your community.

Summary: No summary

## Community Promotion Tools

There are many different ways to promote a new community. Some of them welcomed and expected, some of them off putting and considered spam. This lesson will help you learn about the promotion tools available to you and how to use them in an effective and non-spammy way.

### Crossposting

We talked about crossposting into your community a bit when we discussed [seeding content](#). But you can also [crosspost](#) into other similarly minded communities to gain a bit of attention. While this is a great tool for getting the word out, it's important that you use the crosspost tool thoughtfully, respecting the rules of other communities when doing so. Also, note that some communities disable crossposting.

For example, it can be a good practice to ask the poster of OC (original content) if they're alright with you crossposting their content, or you can invite them to crosspost their content into the community themselves.

### Subreddit Mentions

Mentions are simply when you link a mention of your community in the comments of another community. Just as with crossposting, you need to respect the rules of other communities and only use [subreddit mentions](#) as a promotional tool when you're responding to relevant content. Randomly dropping subreddit mentions without appropriate relevancy is considered spammy behavior.

You can see an example of a subreddit mention in [this comment](#).

## Community Invites

[Community invites](#) are an **app only** tool that allow you to invite users to your community. Because this is a powerful tool, it should be used in a way that is considerate of the people you are inviting so as not to be seen as spam. If a user hasn't shown interest in content similar to that found in your community, **do not** invite them.

Additionally, mass inviting everyone you see interacting in a similar community would also be considered spammy behavior. Get to know people, interact around the site, find people who will be a good fit, and **then** invite them! Abusing your moderator tools to spam users can have consequences for you and your community.

## A Reminder

As you can see, in addition to sharing your community in places like [r/newreddits](#) and [r/promoteareddit](#), there are tools to help you grow and succeed, as long as you're willing to take advantage of them in a thoughtful way. Keep the best practices listed here in mind and go forth and grow. But always remember - growing a community is a slow climb that takes patience and effort.

Best of luck to you and your new community!

Next up, we'll be reviewing everything you've learned in Mod Certification 101 to help you prepare for the final! Congrats on getting this far.

Summary: You can and should promote your community in a variety of ways, but promotion should be done thoughtfully so that your promotion efforts do not reflect poorly on you and your community.

# 101 Review and Final

## Mod Certification 101 Review

You've done it! You've reached the end of this course. And if things have gone as they should, you'll have picked up some useful knowledge along the way.

### Review

Here, we've provided a basic list of what has been covered. If you see something that you're unsure of in the list below, use the navigation menu to go back to certain lessons and review in detail before taking the final. Don't forget to access the Mod Help Center for details as needed. You can also skip this review and go straight to the final if you're feeling confident.

Here's what you should feel comfortable with:

- your powers as a mod
- The Mod Guidelines
- how to access your community
- how to adjust your community's settings
  - description
  - location
  - type
  - discovery
  - posts and comments
- styling your community
  - where and how to add an icon and banner
- how to set up community rules
- how to approve, remove, and spam content
- how to ignore reports on content
- where to access your moderation queue
- the most important mod queues
- what your mod log is and how you can use it
- how to set up removal reasons

- how to reverse content removals
- Reddit's Content Policy and how it impacts your responsibilities as a moderator
- how and when to report content on Reddit
- how to access and use your user management tools
- best practices for dealing with bans and ban appeals
- how to access modmail
- actions you should take prior to promoting your community
- healthy ways to promote your community

## Trophy Info

After you've successfully passed the final, you will be granted a Reddit profile trophy within 2 weeks.

If you didn't provide your username during sign up and have decided you do want a Reddit.com profile trophy upon passing the final, be sure to include your username when prompted during the test.

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Congrats again on making it to the end of the course. One last bit of information before you dive into the test.

80% is required to receive a trophy for the Mod Certification 101 final. That said, if you struggle on the first pass through, you are welcome to try again. We hope that you continue on to [Mod Certification 201](#), where we dive much deeper into the many moderation tools available to you, as well as how to handle mod scenarios you may encounter in the future.

Alright, on to the final!

Summary: No summary

## The Final

1. As a mod, which of the following things are you able to do?
  - a. View the username of the person who sent in a report
  - b. Remove a post in your community
  - c. Delete your community

- d. All of the above
2. What is Modmail?
    - a. A shared messaging system for communicating with other moderators
    - b. A shared messaging system for taking inbound requests from Reddit users
    - c. A shared messaging system for responding to ban appeals from users
    - d. All of the above
  3. Which of the following would be considered spammy behavior on the part of a moderator or a mod team?
    - a. Crossposting relevant content into your community from other communities
    - b. Crossposting a relevant piece of content from your community into a related community
    - c. Sending community invites to a large number of random users across the site
    - d. Sharing your community in r/NewReddits or r/PromoteAReddit
  4. When should you remove content?
    - a. When you don't like the content
    - b. When your community members don't like the content
    - c. When the content violates your community rules or Reddit's sitewide content policy
    - d. When you don't like the person who posted the content
  5. Which of these is NOT an option you can act on when reviewing reported content?
    - a. Approve
    - b. Delete
    - c. Remove
    - d. Ignore reports
  6. If someone violates Reddit's content policy within your community, what should you do?
    - a. Remove it
    - b. Ignore it, the Admins will deal with it
    - c. Remove and report it
    - d. Spam it
  7. Why should you add an icon and banner to your community?
    - a. Community customization is required by Reddit
    - b. Styling your community helps it stand out to users, which helps you gain more members, aiding in community growth.
    - c. Unstyled communities aren't made discoverable on Reddit
  8. Which of these can lead to your community being shut down for not following Reddit's content policy?
    - a. Not adding a community icon and banner
    - b. Not marking the community NSFW/18+ if it is adult in nature
    - c. Failing to report content to site-wide administrators that breaks your community's rules
    - d. All of the above
  9. Where can you look to see which moderator actioned a piece of content?
    - a. The mod log
    - b. Modmail



- c. Mod profile pages
  - d. All of the above
10. Which of these is a best moderation practice regarding banning members in your community?
- a. Including a ban reason detailing which rule the member violated
  - b. Adding a mod note so your mod team knows why the member was banned
  - c. Reviewing your ban appeals folder in modmail regularly
  - d. All of the above
11. Which of the following are you not able to do?
- a. Lock threads
  - b. Permanently ban redditors from your community
  - c. See personally identifying information about your community members
  - d. Mark your community 18+
12. Out of these four actions, which should you do first?
- a. Set up custom styling widgets in your community
  - b. Invite people to your community
  - c. Mention your community in other communities
  - d. Post content in your community
13. Why is it important to write a clear and accurate community description?
- a. It is displayed in search results
  - b. It helps redditors decide if they are interested in your community
  - c. It helps set the culture of your community
  - d. All of the above
14. It's best practice to use removal reasons because?
- a. The redditor can't post to the community for 24hrs
  - b. They educate the redditor about what they did wrong, reducing the chance of them doing it again
  - c. It isn't. It's almost always best not to use them
  - d. Not having removal reasons is against site-wide rules
15. Why do brand new communities not need rules?
- a. They should have one or two rules to set behavior and content expectations
  - b. All communities don't need rules
  - c. Only communities with lots of members need rules
  - d. Rules should only be set once you encounter bad behavior
16. Why is it important to regularly check your ban appeals folder?
- a. It gives you a quick way to mute banned users
  - b. For a laugh
  - c. So that you can go ahead and archive them
  - d. There's a chance you can turn the situation around and the redditor could become a valued community member
17. To grow your community and make it welcoming, what can you do?
- a. Add a good community description and a couple of rules
  - b. Seed some content
  - c. Mention it in other communities where relevant

d. All of the above

18. If you would like a Reddit profile trophy upon passing this final, please provide your username. Do not include the characters "u/" before your username.

If you do not want a trophy, please put "no trophy" in the field.