

# Basic Blog Formatting Checklist

## Per Blog Post:

- Benefit-Oriented Title/Headline.** Readers should know what to expect and what they will gain by reading your post.
- More Line.** After your first paragraph, add a block for your “More” line. Choose the line, not the link. This is the text that appears on your blog homepage with the option to Read More.
- Subheads.** Every non-listicle post should utilize subheads. Aim for two to three at least. If your post is long, you will need more. Every three paragraphs should have a subhead.
  - Format all subheads H2 using paragraph styles (H1 is the main title -- WP does that for you.) Your subheads must be bigger than your normal text size and bold. If you use a color which is a good idea, be consistent throughout your posts.
  - Avoid auto numbering for listicle lists. Auto numbering will mess up your html subhead formatting. The numbers don't format correctly. Just type a 1 (no period or #1. After you format, you can go back and add the 1. or change #1 to 1. if you like that better.) Auto numbering can work for sublists; it depends on your theme.
- Visuals.** One visual per blog. (You can certainly have more, especially if you have a long post.) If you have more visuals, you can have fewer subheads for non-listicle posts. The idea is to create chunkiness and scannability. Images should not be too close to the text and not be too huge. Try for uniformity in size throughout the post and the blog in general.
- Spacing.** Keep spacing uniform between paragraphs too.
- Outbound Links.** You must have at least two (2) outbound links in every blog, All links must be embedded in descriptive text, not copied urls. Links must be set to open in a new window.
- Inbound Links.** You don't have to have an inbound link in each post, but do so if you can. You should have some internal links pointing to other posts/pages of your site.
- Sharing/Like Buttons.** Social media sharing buttons should be enabled for each post.
- Categories and Tags.** Every post should be categorized and should show with your post on your main page. (You don't have to show tags.) Your posts should not show as Uncategorized - EVER. Categories = Good organization.
- Conclusions/Calls To Action.** End each post should have a definitive conclusion that doesn't sum up what you just wrote, but thanks your readers for their time and letting them know what's next. Ask them to take some action: Please leave me a comment.

Submit your favorite \_\_\_\_\_, Don't forget to share this post. Let me know what you think... Stay tuned for my next post about \_\_\_\_\_.

## General Blog Checklist:

- Menu Order.** Home/Blog, About, Resources, Contact (Contact comes last if you have a contact page. You're not required to have one. You can have contact information on your About page) You don't need a Blog Feed page if your homepage is your blog feed.
- Home/Main Blog Page.** New bloggers usually use their main Blog page as their Homepage. You can always add a static homepage later if you want one. The point is to show your latest posts with excerpts/featured Images. Only first-paragraph excerpts (it's fine for the first paragraph length to vary a bit for each post) and/or a featured image should appear on your main blog page. You never want to have all of your posts showing up on the main page. That is too much to scroll.
- About page.** Your About page should have at least one image and it should be scannable. It is best if the image is of you, but it doesn't have to be you if you are not comfortable posting your image. You can use an avatar or post an image that represents the theme. You need to break up paragraphs that are four or more with at least two subheads.
- Resources/Links I Like.** This page should have at least three - five go-to resources in your topic area. They can be a mix of websites, IG influencers, books, magazines, YouTubers, products, etc.
- Widgets.** The essential widgets are the Follow Button and Subscribe on the sidebar and the footer. A Text and/or Image widget on the sidebar or footer is a nice touch. You can get fancier later with widgets that will embed your social media feeds, but this will depend upon your theme, your subscription and plug-ins that you'll need.

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