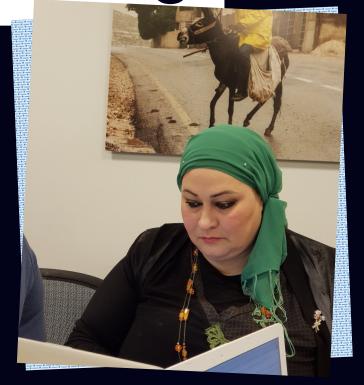# Basic Rules of Editing

We believe in **Brave, Friendly Spaces**

The goal of this session is to create an encouraging space for collective learning. This requires intentional behavior, wherein participants are conscious of and accountable for the effect of their statements and actions on others. We respect our experiences and the experiences of others and recognize that we can't do this work without one another.
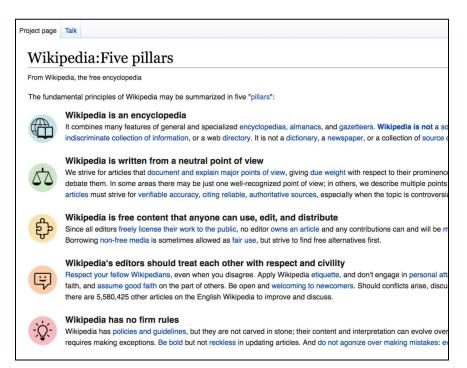
We agree to hold each other accountable to foster a Brave, Friendly Space.

Review the whole Brave, Friendly Spaces agreement here: bit.ly/AFBraveSpace

Wikipedia's Guidelines

Wikipedia outlines their rules for editing in both the Five Pillars and their Core Content Policies.

We've based this guide on the policies outlined there, but we've broken it down into **seven basic rules** you need to follow while editing!

1. Stay neutral (this time)

All Wikipedia articles must be written from a neutral point of view. They should represent significant views fairly and **without bias**.

Pro Tips for staying neutral:

- Avoid stating opinions as facts, and stating facts as opinions
- Use non-judgemental language
- indicate the relative prominence of opposing views

2. Maintain verifiability

In Wikipedia, **verifiability** means that people reading and editing the encyclopedia can check that any information comes from a reliable source. Make sure to **attribute** your content to a reliable published source.

Pro Tip:

Practice by adding references and citations to existing articles instead of starting new ones. This way, you'll get comfortable with including verified material that comes from reliable sources.

3. No originality, please

Wikipedia does **not** publish original thought or original research: all material must be linked to a reliable published source. This isn't journalism, criticism or scholarship… it's an **encyclopedia**!

REAL Life Example:

Let's say you're writing a paper that is not yet published about how *Nashville* is the most feminist television show. If you can't support this thesis with published articles or books, you can't include it in the Wikipedia page for *Nashville*.

4. Don't promo your pals

It might be tempting to work with a topic you're directly involved in. But if you think you might have a Conflict Of Interest, don't create an article. Editors should never write articles about themselves or where they work.

REAL Life Example:

Let's say you work for Art+Feminism and notice problems with its Wikipedia page. Since there's a possible COI, you wouldn't edit the page. Instead, you might suggest changes on its talk page.

5. Use reliable sources

Your sources should be **published** secondary or tertiary sources, as unpublished materials and interviews are not considered reliable. Your best bet is to use **academic and peer-reviewed publications**.

Other Reliable Sources you can use on Wikipedia:

- University-level textbooks
- Books published by respected publishing houses
- Magazines and journals
- Mainstream newspapers

6. Test Notability

Article topics need to be verified by reliable sources. They should meet Wikipedia's notability guidelines, which state that topics must have "received significant coverage" or they should meet these specific guidelines for artists.

⚠️ **CAUTION:**

Just because something doesn't pass these guidelines, doesn't mean it's not important. These guidelines reinforce structural racism and sexism. The histories of black and brown people, queer and trans folk, etc. have often **not** received **significant coverage**.

Know your stub…

A [stub](#) is an article that, while providing some useful information, is too short to provide full view of a subject. If a stub has little verifiable information, or if its subject doesn't have notability, it may be deleted or merged into another article

Pro Tip:

Editors follow different rules to identify stub articles. Some say that an article with less than ten sentences or less than 1500 words isn't long enough to be an article and will deem it a stub.