

# Gnome Games

## Writing Style Guide Template

UPDATE 1-Apr-19

When creating product posts, event posts or blog articles, here are some general guidelines to keep in mind:

### General

- Unless otherwise noted, articles should be a minimum 300 words.
- Please use MS Word and the Blog Template to create posts. Cutting and pasting into the Wordpress interface can copy hidden elements that change layout, SEO and cause problems displaying on phones and mobile devices.
- In the intro, don't lead with "this article will share/tell you/etc." Just get straight into what it's about. For example, "Here are 10 ways you can [blah blah blah]"
- Avoid the obvious and make the next person's job as easy as possible with quality information
- If a sentence could be split into two sentences, do it. Shorter sentences are easier for reader comprehension. Run on sentences are confusing.
- Use the oxford comma (item 1, item 2, and item 3)
- Never cite a competitor—you never want to direct potential sales away from us. For example, aim instead to get source material from news outlets.
- Use images from publishers and manufacturers first, distributors second.
- Speak in the second person: "you" not "I", "me", or "they", unless otherwise instructed.
- Avoid cliches and popular sayings. Find a different way to say what you mean to say.
- Avoid abbreviations. Ex/ "veggies" should be "vegetables".
- If you're creating an outline or draft (vs an article), give me just a little more than you think I'll need to hit my word count. Sometimes, there are things I can't use that are irrelevant and create additional work for me.
- Avoid ending sentences with "etc." Instead just say "and" before the last list item, and perhaps proceed the list with an "including." The word "including" implies that there are more options, and that given items are just a few examples.
- End the outline/article with a relevant call to action, i.e. comment, get in touch, come in and play, preorder, and other actions to motivate the customer to visit us or purchase from us
- Use the end of an outline/article to draw the topic back to the customer and connect them in a relevant way.

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### Headings

- Besides the title of an article, subheadings should start with heading 3 (h3), and so on, as you add additional subheadings (and subheadings of subheadings).
- Always use title case. [This tool can help](#).
- Don't add links to headings. Find a better place within the body copy after them.
- Make sure that headings aren't too long for the [standard meta title length](#).

### Links

- The text you link to should be descriptive of what you're linking too. Please don't link "click here", instead link the name of the website, product, event or the specific page you're linking to (for example).
- Please do not post bald links – Linkify the descriptive text with the link instead.
- Avoid linking more than 5 words together (and aim for less). Search engines see this as spammy and it also hurts readability.

### Formatting

- BE CONSISTENT. If you start a list and end each point with a period, make sure all list items reflect this (for example).
- Use bullet points whenever possible to create white space and break up information.
- Do your best to limit paragraphs to about 3 sentences maximum. Shorter sentences and paragraphs are easier to read on mobile (aka, the most important device to optimize for).
- The article's title should be in heading 1, subheadings should be in heading 2, etc.
- Make sure all fonts are consistent (Arial), and that all body text is the same font size (11). Do not change font with HTML without specific purpose (Star Wars font for emphasis on a Star Wars post would be a case where we do this).
- Periods **outside of** quotations. Ex/ So and so said, "blah blah blah".
- When creating space, emphasis, don't use a dash or double dash, use this: — (you can create on Mac with control + option + -)

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### Quotes and Examples

- If using a direct quote, attribute with a full name and link to the source of the quote.
- If you're quoting a website, not a person (except if it's a definition of a concept), paraphrase the information. Please do not quote direct web copy—it's a [duplicate content](#) issue.
- If sharing an example, make sure it isn't plagiarized from an article. Make up a completely new example.

### Self-Editing

- For your first pass of the document, aim for content over proper grammar. Please go in a second time to focus ONLY on editing.
- Read over your final outline/article AT LEAST ONCE before submitting as a draft.
- Read it once out loud to make sure what you've written makes sense.
- Ask yourself, is this something *you* would read/find interesting? If not, what can you change?
- Ask yourself if this is something that will resonate with the target audience of the article.
- If you're writing an **OUTLINE – or DRAFT** ask yourself, "Did I include enough information so that I or someone else can complete it in a distraction-free (no internet) zone if necessary?".

### Guidelines for Images

- High-resolution—no fuzziness
- Free and legal to use – remember we have fair use of any product images for products we are selling from a manufacturer or publisher website for promotion of the sale of their products and official events.
- Product Images should be 300 x 300 minimum
- Featured Images should have very little text
- Relevant to the article, not just vaguely related

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### Product Post Guidelines

Product posts are designed specifically to provide a customer the details they need to make a purchase decision about a product. They should not include how to play, strategy or any reference to events or specific play opportunities.

Always include:

- Product Name and Publisher
- Applicable ages
- Number of players
- Estimated time of play
- Product Description that includes a motivation and / or call to action
- Our regular price
- OUR product ALU using the XXX 1234 Format
- Images should include the sealed product and game setup for play if applicable
- Images must include ALT TEXT and file name that includes the name of the product
- Minimum word count is 300 words
- Links to the publisher website UNLESS the publisher sells the product on their website.
- Include media file of rules if available on the publisher website
- Product posts social sharing must include all stores and appropriate game groups.  
Remember to space out sharing so it hits at different times.

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### Event / Play Opportunity Post Guidelines

Event or Play Opportunity posts are designed specifically to provide a customer the details, motivation and engagement they need to make a decision to come and play at Gnome Games.

All event / Play Opportunity Posts MUST link to an Event Calendar event.

**The event calendar event must always be created first!**

Always include:

- Name of the Play Opportunity
- Name of the Game / Product the event supports
- Date of the event
- Format as appropriate
- Times On Site registration, start and any specific times that the event contains
- Registration information to include preregistration details, on site start time, price
- Price – both preregistration and on site if different
- On line registration link
- Link to the event calendar event
- Images should include the sealed product and game setup for play if applicable
- Images must include ALT TEXT and file name that includes the name of the product or event
- Event description should use H3 to separate from event specifics
- Include links to Facebook groups, publisher special event pages as appropriate.
- Minimum word count is 300 words
- Links to the publisher website UNLESS the publisher sells the product on their website.
- Include media file of deck registration, character sheets or other resources as appropriate. This may be hosted by the publisher or on our site.
- Include Player ID registration link and information as appropriate.

Suggestions for changes to this document should be forwarded to [HQ@gnomegames.com](mailto:HQ@gnomegames.com)