

Editing and Proofing for News Articles

1. Strong leads—is the lead catchy, smart, funny, or interesting in some way that would make us stop and read the story? Remember your competition: **EVERYTHING ELSE!**
2. Look for 5 W's and H early in the story.
3. What is the “nut” of the story? If you can't find it and summarize in 20 words or less, then you don't have it. *Write a nut-graf.*
4. Write in short, active-voice paragraphs (usually one sentence—NOT like your last literature criticism essay).
5. Look for proper style rules (AP).
6. Use proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
7. Could your article use sidebars, photos, graphics—if so—let your editor

know immediately and make suggestions.

8. Do your research.
9. Write a strong, active headline for your story.

Editing and Proofing for A & E Articles

A & E follows the same rules as above, with a few additions:

1. What is the emotional or human interest side of the story?
2. Leads can be a bit longer—but again—make sure they are strong, active-voice sentences.
3. In feature stories—the 5 W's and H can be distributed evenly throughout the story—but the story still needs a focus. Ask yourself: What's the point?
4. Do your research. Find out all you can before you cover an event or profile an artist. The more you know up front—the more tools you'll have to discover

new and interesting facts for your readers.

5. The writing style should be fun—but not flip. Your “voice” probably needs some tweaking and maturation—if you fly off trying to sound like the expert on tastes and social mores, you’ll probably end up sounding like a no-nothing blowhard. So, have fun, but remember to be the wordsmith (or craftsperson)—not the artist.

Editing and Proofing for Sports Articles

A & E follows the same rules as News Articles, with a few additions:

1. Unlike hard-boiled news writers, sports writers practice less objectivity in their writing. They DO root for the home team, and want to supply their sports fans with the most up-to-date information about the strengths, weaknesses, and even gossip

surrounding their teams. This doesn't mean that you only report on good news—but remember—your readers want to know anything that will help them to better understand how their team is doing—and how they'll do in the future.

2. Get the names and stats right!!—nothing hurts a sports story more than bad stats—indeed, sports is, in many ways, a numbers game.
3. Like A & E articles, be sure to have fun with your stories—but play as a professional. Give coaches and players the same respect you hope to be shown to you. Without them—you don't have a job.