



WE DISCOVER, WE GROW

Girlguiding

As good as our word

Our editorial guidelines

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Girlguiding

Section 1

Our tone of voice

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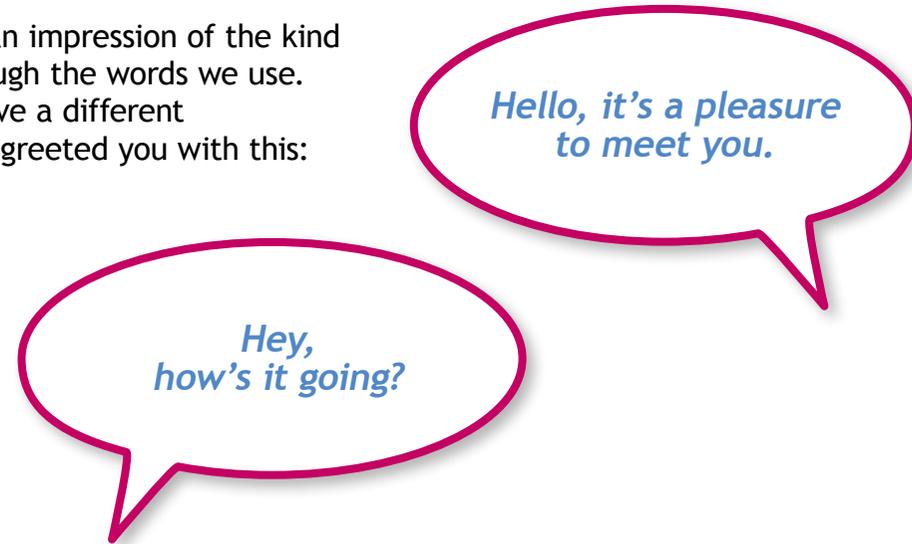
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Why tone of voice matters

Whenever we communicate for Girlguiding, we want to sound true to ourselves. We can do this by using language that lets our personality and humanity come through. Our words should consistently reflect who we are today.

We each give people an impression of the kind of person we are through the words we use. For example, you'd have a different view of someone who greeted you with this:

Than you would if someone said this:



And it's the same with organisations. The language we use when we communicate plays an important role in the emotional connections people make with us. Or perhaps don't make with us.

There's another reason why our tone of voice is so important. Put simply, it's vital to get our messages across clearly and consistently.

We want reading every Girlguiding communication to be a pleasant experience. Useful *and* enjoyable. So we need to keep our intended readers in mind and think about how best to communicate with them.

These guidelines will help us to write consistently in our tone of voice and house style. And this in turn will help our messages hit home and our personality and values shine through.

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Our tone of voice

Our aim is to give everyone who writes for Girlguiding the confidence to communicate in a way that reflects our personality as a youth charity in today's world:

- We're **credible** - a solid organisation with a long and much-loved pedigree.
- We're **adventurous** - full of fun and constantly adapting to help young women step confidently into their futures.
- We're **welcoming** - we embrace all girls and young women. Their voices, dreams and worries are our guiding light.

To bring who we are to life whenever we communicate, **our tone of voice has three characteristics:**

1. **Straight talking** - we tell it like it is
2. **Enthusiastic** - our writing has a spring in its step and a twinkle in its eye
3. **In tune** - we're empathetic and helpful

Let's look at each of these in more detail.

1. We're straight talking

We're honest and straightforward. We get to the point and say what we mean. We don't fluff things up or pad them out - or hide behind our own jargon. We tell it like it is - plain and simple. And this openness builds trust and credibility.

Sounding like real people when we write helps us come across as approachable and down to earth.

Being **straight talking** reflects our values of being **empowering** and **inclusive**. When our messages are clear and easy to follow, this helps everyone to find the information they need to get on with their day.

[See techniques for sounding straight talking](#)

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2. We're enthusiastic

Girlguiding is full of adventures, big and small. We play together; we laugh together. We inspire each other. We care about what we do, and this passion shows in the enthusiasm in our voice.

We have opinions, and we share them. We're not afraid to challenge or to talk about difficult things, but we do this from a place of love and respect.

We're not standing still as an organisation; and our communications have a certain pace and energy that reflects our drive.

Sounding **enthusiastic** helps us reflect our values of being **challenging**, **inspiring** and **fun**.

[See techniques for sounding enthusiastic](#)

3. We're in tune

We're welcoming and approachable - and tuned in to people's needs, especially young people's. We embrace all girls and young women. We listen; we empathise; we show we care. We have each other's backs. We're all in this together, and we like it that way.

So we always write with a clear sense of who we're speaking to, and why what we're saying matters to them. We show people that we know how they feel - and make sure our communications fit the audience and the situation.

Sounding **in tune** helps us reflect our values of being **caring** and **inclusive**.

[See techniques for sounding in tune](#)

Whatever we write, and whoever our audience is, we want these three tone characteristics to come through. Let's look at some techniques that will help us do this.

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How to sound straight talking

Sounding straight talking is about being:

- Conversational
- Open and honest
- Refreshingly clear and simple

We don't take it too far. We never sound brusque, simplistic or rude.

Three ways to sound straight talking

1. Use everyday language.
2. Get to the point.
3. Imagine it's a conversation.

1. Use everyday language

We always want to sound approachable, and to have a certain energy to our words. We want to make readers feel like we're talking to them. So we write like people speak. This means using everyday words instead of formal language and Girlguiding jargon.

So instead of this...

Guiding within the United Kingdom is organised into a number of geographical areas to provide support, lines of two-way communication and opportunities for young members, leaders and commissioners to make decisions and take responsibility.

Instead of...

Instead of...	We say...
Amend	Change
Assist	Help
Contact	Get in touch
Enquire	Ask
Provide	Give

We say...

We'd write...

We're organised along geographical lines in the UK to give our members clear lines of communication and support, and plenty of chances to act.

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2. Get to the point

We don't beat around the bush. Whatever our message, we get right to it - with a healthy dose of empathy for the person at the other end. For example, if we have a change in safety processes to announce to parents, we explain clearly what's changing and why and how it'll help their daughter.

We also respect people's time by being concise. This gives our writing clarity and confidence. We make every word count - if it's not adding anything to the message or the tone, delete it.

So instead of this...

We continue to recommend that all girls and young women are supported to attend the programme most appropriate for their age however we recognise that for some members with disabilities transitioning to the next stage of Girlguiding may present additional challenges.

We might say...

We know that adjusting to the next stage of Girlguiding can be challenging for young people with disabilities.

3. Imagine it's a conversation

Why does what you're writing matter to the other person? How might they feel about it? How would you put it to them if they were sitting right in front of you? Start with this in mind.

We ask the occasional question and address people directly with 'you'. We use contractions (such as 'don't' instead of 'do not' or 'we'll' instead of 'we will') in writing, like we do in speech. And we sometimes start our sentences with 'and' or 'but' if it helps the flow of what we're writing.

So instead of this...

No matter what your guiding role, you will be working with data.

This means it's vital that you understand the core principles of data protection, and know how to implement them in everyday guiding.

We'd write something like...

Do you know how to keep everyone's data safe?

People trust us with their details and personal information. So it's vital to stay up to date on how to keep data safe in your day-to-day guiding work.

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How to sound enthusiastic

Sounding enthusiastic is about being:

- Confident
- Bold
- Energetic

We're careful not to go too far and sound brash, inappropriate or over the top. And sounding enthusiastic doesn't just mean adding an exclamation mark.

Three ways to sound enthusiastic

1. Keep sentences focused and pacy.
2. Put people first, using active language.
3. Be yourself, and don't be afraid to show an opinion or use humour where it feels right.

1. Keep sentences focused and pacy

Short, focused sentences will give your writing energy and clarity. Aim for no more than 15 to 20 words. Try to stick to one idea per sentence, as this helps keep the meaning crystal clear. And put the most important information first.

Keep your paragraphs snappy, too: around four or five lines max.

Varying the length of your sentences can help give your writing pace and rhythm. And the occasional short sentence can add impact. Like this.

So instead of this...

What makes guiding special?

We are for all girls.

We are for all girls and young women, whatever their background and circumstances, offering them fun, exciting activities and the chance to make life-long friends.

We'd say...

We're for all girls

You're welcome here. Whoever you are. And wherever you're from. Girlguiding is for every girl and young woman who wants to have adventures, learn, laugh and make friends for life.

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2. Put people first, using active language

Using active language (instead of passive) puts people front and centre. In practice, this means thinking about who the 'do-er' is in a sentence and starting with them. Your sentences will sound livelier as a result, and you'll naturally use a lot more words like 'you', 'we' and 'our'.

- ✗ **Passive:** A toolkit has been created...
- ✓ **Active:** We've created a toolkit...

So instead of...

In 2015 the decision was made to review the structure of the national staff team in order to ensure that staff resource was concentrated on the priorities of the new strategy.

We'd say...

In 2015, we restructured our national team to deliver our new strategy effectively.

3. Be yourself

We want to come across as real people when we communicate - authentic and likeable. Using conversational language when we write will help to give our communications a human voice.

We can also show a little of our own personality - perhaps with a colourful phrase, a story, or even a little humour. Be yourself. Have fun (as long as it's appropriate). People will know and appreciate that you're a real person - and that you want to come across as one.

So instead of...

As part of Girlguiding's commitment to maintaining a safe space in guiding, disclosure checks will be renewed every five years. We are contacting you to notify you that your disclosure check for your role(s) in guiding needs to be renewed by Friday 21 May.

We might write...

From time to time we have to do things in Girlguiding that might not be particularly enjoyable, but that are necessary to keep our girls safe. One of these is renewing our disclosure checks every five years, and this is your lucky year.

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How to sound in tune

Sounding in tune is about being:

- Welcoming
- Approachable
- Thoughtful

We take care to never come across as overly familiar, patronising or gushy.

Three ways to sound in tune

1. Acknowledge why things matter using warmth and empathy.
2. Show, instead of telling - with stories, real voices and specific examples.
3. Help people find key info through good signposting: clear headings, lists, links and calls to action.

1. Acknowledge why things matter using warmth and empathy

We show our readers we understand them by acknowledging what they're likely to be thinking or feeling, where we can. But we're careful not to make assumptions - it's a fine balance.

We also focus on the impact of what we're talking about on our audience. For example, if we're explaining a change in safety processes to parents, we say how and why this is better for their daughter.

Not only does this make it clear that we can see things from their point of view, it also helps us make sure we're writing in a way that's meaningful and appropriate to our audience.

So instead of...

Girlguiding offers fun, challenge and adventure to our young members in the UK. We know that young people thrive in safe surroundings so Girlguiding takes the safety of girls and young women very seriously and has an excellent reputation for providing a safe environment for members to enjoy both indoor and outdoor activities.

We might say...

Safety is at the heart of everything we do. So you can rest easy knowing that when you wave your young one goodbye on her next camping trip or weekly unit meeting, she's in safe hands. Because we know that when girls feel safe, they feel brave enough to do things they never thought they could.

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2. Show, instead of telling

We always want to reflect and celebrate the fun, varied and inclusive experience of Girlguiding. One of the best ways to do this is to paint a picture of what Girlguiding is like - to use description and evocative language to make things specific and real for our audience. So instead of talking about something in the abstract, we give examples, tell stories and bring the real voices of our guides and volunteers to the forefront.

So instead of this...

Being a guide is all about having the space to try new things. Through taking part in a range of different activities with girls their own age, Guides develop self-confidence and make lots of new friends.

We might write...

We run, slide, climb, row, walk, paddle, skip and whizz our way through challenging activities. We laugh all the way and encourage each other to keep on going, ignore the mud on our faces, and never mind which one of us capsizes the canoe or stumbles on the slack line.

3. Help people find key info through good signposting

Think up front about the essential things you want your reader to know. Then make these stand out by putting them in places people will easily see them: at the starts of sentences and paragraphs - and in titles, headings, links and lists.

If you're writing something longer and more complicated, it's also useful to 'layer' your information - moving from a summary of the key points through to more detail. This gives people the option to read to the level of detail they need.

It also helps us keep our communications as accessible as possible for people with learning disabilities.

See the next page for an example:

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So instead of writing this...

*Your unit's trial invoice is **now live**. You have until noon on Tuesday 7 March to check it. If the number or names of the girls shown on your invoice is incorrect please amend their records on GO! or speak to your commissioner if the volunteer records need changing. You'll be able to view the updated invoice from 10am the following day and the official invoice will be ready for you to download from noon on Thursday 9 March.*

We'd write something like this...

Your unit's [trial invoice](#) is ready for you.

- Please check your invoice before noon on **Tuesday 7 March**.
- If you spot anything that needs correcting, update the girls' records on GO or speak to your commissioner about volunteer details straight away.
- You can recheck your corrected invoice any time from 10am the next day.
- Your official invoice will be ready to download at noon on **Thursday 9 March**.



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Section 2

Our voice in action

SECTION 2: Our voice in action

Flexing our tone

Before and after examples:

- Webpage for parents
- Webpage for members
- Email to members
- Email footer
- From a newsletter
- From an impact report
- Instructions to members

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Flexing our tone

While we always want to sound straight talking, enthusiastic and in tune, we may sometimes want to ‘flex’ our tone, depending on what we’re writing and who we’re writing to. We can do this by putting more emphasis on one or two of the characteristics, while toning down others.

For example, in emails to members we might want to dial up the straight talking and in tune elements of how we sound. While on our website and social media, we can be more enthusiastic to help us capture people’s attention.

The following examples will help you see how we can apply our tone of voice to different types of writing.

All the ‘before’ examples in this guide are genuine examples from Girlguiding communications.

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Original version

The screenshot shows a webpage titled 'HOW GUIDING BENEFITS GIRLS'. The page features a navigation bar with links like 'Home', 'What we do', 'Information for parents', 'Get involved', 'Making guiding happen', 'Social action, advocacy and campaigns', and 'About us'. The main content area has a large image of two girls playing soccer. Below the image, the text reads: 'Whatever inspires your daughter, whatever her interests, Girlguiding offers the chance to develop her potential'. A section titled 'Who does your daughter want to be when she grows up?' follows, with a sub-headline 'Whether she already has a clear idea, or if she is still looking to find out, we'll be there to support both of you on the journey.' This is followed by a paragraph: 'When your daughter becomes a Rainbow, Brownie, Guide or member of The Senior Section she will join a group of girls her own age and will be led by our carefully trained and dedicated volunteers. Whatever inspires your daughter, whatever her passions and interests, Girlguiding offers her the chance to develop her potential, make friends and have fun.' A list of activities follows: 'For example, through regular group meetings or at special events and trips she might: • conquer her fears on the abseil tower • gain a leadership qualification • try out new games and sports • attend her first ever sleepover • support other girls to learn about body confidence • campaign for the rights of girls all over the world • put up her first tent • go canoeing • go on an international adventure • try her hand at car maintenance • or go to her first ever festival, our girls-only event Wellies and Wristbands.' The final section is 'Girlguiding is unique' with the text: 'We offer a safe, welcoming girl-only space for girls and young women to try new things, help other people and discover their passions and talents. All while having fun with a group of ready-made friends!' and 'We're dedicated to girls leading the way - they choose activities, challenges and events that inspire them, and our volunteers support them to make it happen. Because girls shape and lead everything we do, we know that we're offering the best opportunities and experiences for girls today.'

Is this kind of language likely to engage or create emotion?

How many people join Girlguiding to help with career choices? This seems a slightly odd angle to focus on...

We need to make sure every word and phrase is adding something - is this one? (Would we expect people to be uncarefully trained? And aren't volunteers by definition dedicated?)

Slightly odd wording in 'support other girls to learn about' - does this mean to teach other girls?

Speaking directly to parents, which is good - but where's the energy in 'develop her potential'?

And using 'daughter' may exclude some people (carers)

Feels a bit repetitive - haven't we read this before?

Do we want people to leave this page at this point? This link also takes us to an Activity finder page, not to a page about games and sports as you'd expect

Do we need this level of detail here?

Hasn't this point already been made on this page?

The underlying message here is a good one. But the sentences could do with more energy and pace

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Toned-up version

The screenshot shows a webpage for Girlguiding with the following content:

GUIDING'S GOOD FOR GIRLS
What she'll get out of guiding

Home > Information for parents > Guiding's good for girls

Adventures for life
Whether she joins as a bright-eyed little Rainbow, in her teens or in between, she'll learn, laugh, play, grow and make friends in Girlguiding.

On our guiding programmes, she might...

- Try her hand at new games and sports.
- Put up her first tent.
- Learn to keep a car running like a dream.
- Hear her favourite bands at her first ever festival, our girls-only Wellies and Wristbands.
- Splash out in a canoe or kayak.
- Connect with girls in other countries and have an international adventure.
- Learn what it takes to be a leader.

And much, much more.

Girlguiding is...

Shaped by girls
We give them a safe and welcoming space to grow and have fun. Alongside other girls and skilled volunteer leaders, she'll be able to choose the activities she loves doing and to try new things. Girls set their own direction, and they give us ours.

In tune with girls today
We're refreshing our programme and activities, based on what girls have told us, to prepare them for life in today's world. Staying relevant, fun and useful for girls and young women means asking them lots of questions. And more importantly, really listening to the answers and making useful changes.

Handwritten annotations on the page:

- "Short, energetic heading" pointing to "GUIDING'S GOOD FOR GIRLS"
- "To the point, clear and inviting" pointing to "What she'll get out of guiding"
- "Concise and compelling heading that focuses on a key thing that girls get out of guiding" pointing to "Adventures for life"
- "Everyday, descriptive language gives this sentence energy and clarity" pointing to "Whether she joins as a bright-eyed little Rainbow, in her teens or in between, she'll learn, laugh, play, grow and make friends in Girlguiding."
- "A shorter, more manageable list that still paints a picture of the variety of activities" pointing to the bulleted list of activities.
- "Short, impactful sentence" pointing to "And much, much more."
- "We're still speaking to parents here" pointing to the "Shaped by girls" section.
- "Short sentences and straight talking language help this paragraph flow" pointing to the "In tune with girls today" section.

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Original version

It's a small detail, but we can only learn more if we've already learned something. We don't really need 'more' in this phrase

Insurance jargon - will everyone know what this means?

Does this paragraph sound like Girlguiding or like something out of an insurance policy? It's long and full of jargon...

The formal wording ('in respect of acts') is affecting clarity and tone

The voice on this page is switching back and forth from Girlguiding's (our policy) to the reader's (!)

The cost of legal action for who?

Can you imagine anyone actually saying this?

A missing contraction ('don't') gives this a formal, slightly stiff tone

Does this phrase add anything? Isn't the page speaking to members?

Why not simply say 'for'?

So what does this really mean for members?

This link could be shorter and include a call to action, such as 'download'

Public Liability Insurance | Girlguiding

PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE

Learn **more** about our public liability insurance policy for members and what it covers

Home > Making guiding happen > Running your unit > Finance, insurance and property > Insurance > Public liability insurance

Girlguiding's public liability insurance gives you cover for guiding activities

It **indemnifies** Girlguiding and our members against claims of negligence by Girlguiding, or persons acting on Girlguiding's behalf, that causes damage to third party property or injury to third parties. **The cover includes the cost of legal action.**

Who is covered?
The policy covers Girlguiding members, or anyone acting on behalf of Girlguiding, **whilst undertaking a recognised guiding activity. As a member, you do not** have to be in guiding wear for our policy to cover you, but you must adhere to all rules and policies associated with the activity - otherwise any claim may be invalidated.

The policy is in respect of acts by members of Girlguiding and does not cover acts of members of other organisations when participating in joint activities. These people should have their own public liability insurance.

Details of our policy

- There is an excess of £100 **in respect of** third party property damage.
- All our members can be considered third parties.
- You can show that you are covered by displaying the public liability insurance certificate. **This certificate is available in the form of a "To whom it may concern" letter.**

Why might I need to show I am covered?
It is useful to have the certificate available for many aspects of running your unit. Some meeting places require a copy of the public liability insurance certificate before letting you hire. Also, you might need to show the certificate if you are holding a stand at an event.

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Contents page

Toned-up version

WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED
How we insure our members against public liability

Accidents do happen...
Even to the best of us. So we have public liability insurance to protect us - and **you** - if someone (a 'third party') makes a claim for damages or injury caused by negligence. The policy covers legal costs, too.

Who is covered?
Any member of Girlguiding who's acting on our behalf on a guiding activity. You don't have to be wearing a guiding uniform to be covered. But you do have to be working in line with our rules and policies for the insurance to be valid.

Members of other organisations joining us in activities should have their own insurance.

Make sure everyone's protected

- If you're hiring a venue, check that the venue owner has their own public liability cover for up to £5 million. You may need to sign a hire agreement to confirm cover.
- If you're holding a joint event, make sure the other organisation has a similar level of public liability insurance to Girlguiding.
- When you're running an activity, always check that the activity provider has public liability cover for up to £5 million.

Good to know...

- There's a £100 excess payable for third-party property damage claims.
- Any member can be considered a third party - in other words, you could make a claim if, say, your property is damaged during a Girlguiding activity.
- If you'd like to display or prove your public liability insurance, you can [download a letter](#) confirming this. It can be useful to show this when you're hiring a venue or hiring a stand at an event.

Snappy and reassuring

Clear and to the point
- if you click on this you
know what you're going
to be reading

Down to earth, inclusive
start to the page

Natural, everyday language
helps make messages easy
to follow

A clear heading that's also a
call to action

Immediately brings the
reader into the picture
(you), instead of talking
about them as if they
aren't there (members)

Keeps language
conversational, but
provides legal term
where necessary

More helpful link wording

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Without line spaces between paragraphs, this email looks like one heavy block of text

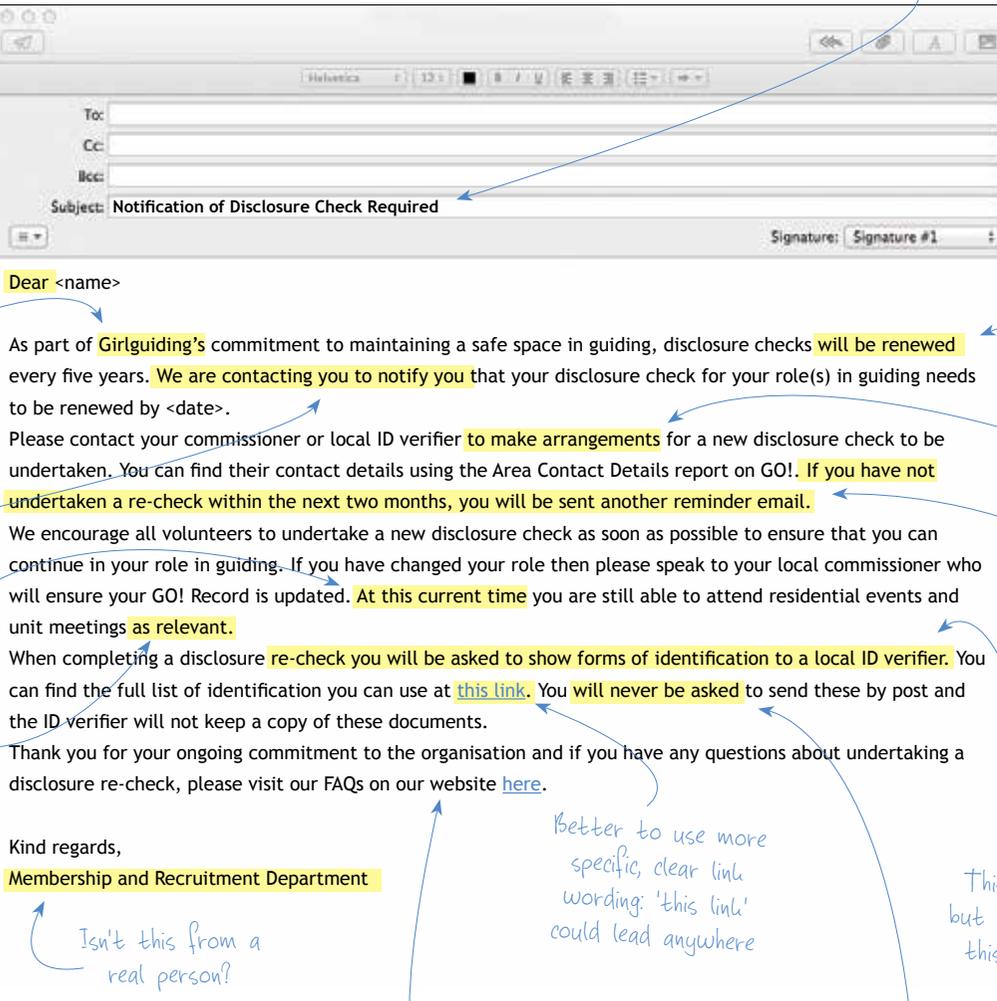
How will this subject line make people feel? For some, it might seem rather scary and offputting...

Do we need such a formal sign-on in an email?

Why don't we just say 'our'? Using the organisation's name has a distancing effect

Does this phrase really add anything?

What are these phrases adding?



Renewed by who? (passive verbs cloud meaning)

This phrase could put people off - it sounds vague and potentially time-consuming

Does the tone here feel like Girlguiding or like a corporate communication? Things like missing contractions ('you've') and formal, passive language ('undertaken', 'you will be sent') all add to the tone

This is very useful info, but it's slightly buried at this point in the email

Better to use more specific, clear link wording: 'this link' could lead anywhere

Quite a long sentence (and another vague link)

Asked by who? (passive language takes people out of the picture)

Isn't this from a real person?

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Toned-up version

A clear, more energetic subject heading

A much warmer and more natural way to start an email

Very honest and down to earth - you can hear someone saying this

A little wry humour to put a smile on people's faces

The main call to action is bolded to stand out - and is closely linked to the benefit of doing this

I know what I'm going to find if I click on this link

Another reminder of the benefits

Conversational language makes this sound much more real and heartfelt

A less bureaucratic-sounding team name

Gives this a human face

Actions are clearly laid out - and seem much less daunting

Acknowledges the effort this will involve - and takes the time to thank people. Much more 'in tune'

From time to time we have to do things in Girlguiding that might not be particularly enjoyable, but that are necessary to keep our girls safe. One of these is renewing disclosure checks every five years, **and this is your lucky year.**

Please renew your disclosure check by <date> so that you can continue your Girlguiding activities uninterrupted. Here's what you need to do:

1. Contact your commissioner or local ID verifier - you'll find their details on GO under Area contact details.
2. They'll talk you through the next steps, one of which will be to show us [new ID documents](#).

Thanks so much for helping us with this important paperwork. Once it's done, you'll be able to enjoy the good times at Girlguiding for another five years.

If you have any questions at all about this, please come back to me or ask your commissioner.

Many thanks

<name>
Membership team

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Original version

This is making a very positive point, but it's lost in the legal, bureaucratic language

This whole paragraph sounds like a legal necessity. Why not use it as a chance to reinforce our values and personality? And give people something unexpected?

All information provided via Girlguiding's Join Us enquiry system is stored securely in line with the Data Protection Act 1998, and protected against unlawful or unauthorised use. It is the policy of Girlguiding that all personal information will only be used for guiding purposes and will never be passed on to a third party unless expressly authorised to do so by the information's owner or if obliged to do so by law.

So it's just policy-driven?

Where are the people? Passive language drains them out of the sentence

Toned-up version

Much more direct and human

You can rest assured that we take very good care of the details you give us. We keep personal information completely secure and will never pass it on to anyone else, unless we have permission to or have to by law.

This also sounds more reassuring – we're clear and confident about what we do

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Flexing our tone

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- Webpage for parents
- Webpage for members
- Email to members
- Email footer
- From a newsletter
- From an impact report
- Instructions to members

Contents page

Original version

Reaching new heights

The fantastic courses at Blackland Farm will empower you to keep leading with confidence

You're probably aware that Blackland Farm offers great activities for young girls, but did **you** know about the variety of opportunities for adults too? The instructors at Blackland Farm excel in helping people to enhance their leadership skills - and offer training courses and qualifications that are **recognised by national governing bodies**. Whether you want to boost your personal development or be able to offer even more activities to your unit, there's something to suit everyone. For example, there are training courses for leaders in camping, first aid and navigation. Or, if you're keen to broaden your horizons, there's everything from archery instruction and British Canoe Union courses to Girlguiding Level 1 climbing and abseiling. Blackland Farm can also offer bespoke sessions if you fancy trying your hand at some more unusual activities, such as tractor driving or safely using a chainsaw! **The instructors will discuss your aims and the outcomes you hope to achieve before you make a start, to ensure that you learn in a way that suits and benefits you most.**

Visit girlguiding.org.uk/adventure-made-easy to learn more about leadership training opportunities for adults

Quite a lot to take in at a glance

We're involving the reader (with 'you' and the question), but we could be more concise here

If everything is in one long, dense paragraph, it's harder for key messages to stand out

What does this really mean? Will people know what these 'national governing bodies' are?

Because it's so long, this sentence gets tangled up with its punctuation

Why not include the reader in this instead of talking about them in the third person? (for adults)

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Toned-up version

Much more engaging and energetic heading

Short, focused sentences give this pace and punch. Colourful phrases like 'courses galore' make it sound lively

Examples are more concisely worded and easier to grasp

The conversational language makes this more concise and confident

A heading that's closer to the subject matter

Learning without limits

Add new strings to your bow at Blackland Farm

Blackland Farm isn't just for girls. We have courses galore that will give you new skills to lead with confidence. **Are you** after a qualification that's nationally recognised? We've got you covered. Want to develop your personal or leaderships skills? Covered. Looking to learn new things to add to your unit's activities? Look no further.

We offer training in everything from camping, first aid and navigation to archery, canoeing, climbing and abseiling - and can even teach things like tractor driving and using a chainsaw. And we tailor our training to your individual aims and learning style to make sure you get the most out of your time.

Learn more about the training you can do at [girlguiding.org.uk/adventure-made-easy](https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/adventure-made-easy)

Pulls the reader in (and structures the messaging) through questions

A clear, inviting call to action

The paragraphs help break up the information and make the whole thing much more reader-friendly

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The image shows a screenshot of an impact report with several handwritten annotations in blue ink. The report text is as follows:

Impact report

Our thanks for an inspiring, adventurous and life-changing

We would like to take this opportunity to share our sincere thanks for the support we have received from the staff team, trustees and players of People's Postcode Lottery. Because of you, we have been able to change the lives of girls and young women in postcodes across Great Britain this year. Together, we have widened access to the guiding adventure, given girls more opportunities to broaden their horizons, have fun and make life-long friendships, improved girls' confidence and skills, and enabled girls to speak out about what matters to them.

The support of players of People's Postcode Lottery is helping us to achieve the following top-level outcomes next year:

- A revised holistic inclusive girl-led programme that is relevant and modern for girls and young women. New programme will be developed in areas where the offer is currently limited, up-skilling girls for an independent future, encouraging girls to become involved in adventure and social action, and equipping them with technical skills.
- Improved quality of experience offered to girls in their units.
- Membership of Girlguiding made more attractive to girls and young women.
- Increased retention of our young members.
- Increased numbers of volunteers feeling valued and supported.

We are committed to empowering our amazing volunteers to deliver a first-class, modern and girl-led programme and to be inspirational role models who can give the experiences and opportunities that girls want and need.

Handwritten annotations:

- What does this phrase really mean? 'Filler language' like this stops us from getting to the point (pointing to 'we have been able to change...')
- Would this sound more natural with a contraction ('we've')? (pointing to 'we have')
- Again, lots going on in this heading - could we make it more streamlined and clear? (pointing to the heading 'The support of players...')
- What does this mean? (pointing to the first bullet point)
- Another very long and full sentence - could we break it into smaller, more focused ones to help our reader? (pointing to the final paragraph)
- Instead of labelling our thanks as 'sincere', it's always better to make sure it sounds that way (pointing to 'sincere')
- There's so much going on in this sentence that it's hard to take it all in (pointing to the paragraph about widening access)
- A missing word ('the') makes this sound cut and pasted (pointing to 'the offer is currently limited')
- Will this be clear to the audience? (pointing to the list of outcomes)
- If these points aren't complete sentences, do we need full stops at the ends? (pointing to the list of outcomes)

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Toned-up version

This is still quite a full sentence, but the language makes it easier to follow

Emphasises our key point

Starting each point with 'we're' makes this sound more energetic and human

This key point is emphasised in its own sentence

Impact report

Thank you for inspiring and changing the lives of girls

We'd like to say a **huge thanks** to everyone at People's Postcode lottery - staff, trustees and players. Because of you, this year we made a difference to the lives of girls and young women in postcodes all over Great Britain. You've helped us to open up the guiding adventure to even more people. And thanks to you, girls everywhere have made lifelong friends, learned new skills, had fun and adventures, and been able to speak out about the things that matter to them.

You've made a real difference, so thank you once again.

The players of People's Postcode Lottery will be helping us to do even more next year.

- **We're** developing a new girl-led programme that's in tune with what matters to all girls and young women. In places where our offer is limited, this will help prepare girls to live independently. It will get more girls involved in adventure and social action - and give them technical skills to help them succeed in today's world.
- We're giving girls in every Girlguiding unit an even better experience.
- We're attracting more new people into Girlguiding across Great Britain - and keeping young members with us for longer.
- We're making sure our volunteers feel even more valued and supported.

Our amazing volunteers are what make Girlguiding so special. So we're doing all we can to help them deliver a first-class experience - to inspire girls and young women and give them the experiences and opportunities they want and need.

Speaks directly to the reader

More everyday language makes this sound sincere - no need to label it as such

Straight talking and clear

Shorter, more focused sentences help our points come through

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Will people who are new to this know what this means? Is there a clearer, more everyday way to say what these are?

Could we make this active and more concise?

Saying 'you're' would help this read more naturally

Section session plans

On the following pages you can find the sample session plans, which should be used when you're first running Think Resilient. Once you are comfortable running the programme, you can choose to use the blank templates to plan a tailored session, using the 'Activity decider tool' on pages 22-23. Remember that this should be done following a conversation with the leader.

These session plans act as guidelines - make sure you keep an eye on the timings. Plan beforehand how you will adjust what you're doing if things don't quite go to plan and activities go over their allotted time, as this is likely to happen with bigger groups. If you have extra time, you should deliver an activity from the fifth resilience-building technique.

Should be done by who? Avoiding putting the people here makes it sound a little shift^y - why not just ask them directly?

Nice conversational phrase

This is quite a long, full sentence - would the points be clearer in shorter, more focused ones?

The word 'should' might come across as slightly bossy - could we replace it with something that sounds more helpful (such as 'can') or make a more direct request?



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Toned-up version

Planning your session

We've put together at-a-glance session overviews to help you when you're first running Think Resilient. Once you feel comfortable with the programme, you can tailor the sessions or create your own using the activity decider tool and blank template (pages 22-25). It's good to talk things over with the leader before you crack on with your planning.

These overviews list key things like materials and timings. Keep an eye on the timings, and plan ahead for how you'll adjust if things take longer (as sometimes happens with bigger groups). If you have extra time, you can add in an activity from the fifth resilience-building technique.

This is more active and inclusive

Here we're emphasising what we've done and why it'll help people

Conversational phrase adds colour and softens the tone

This sounds more helpful and less bossy without the 'should'

We're specifically telling people what they'll get from the overviews

Much more straight talking and warm than 'you should deliver an activity'

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WE DISCOVER, WE GROW

Girlguiding

Section 3

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Writing with style

Whenever we write, we need to be consistent and error-free. Some people really notice the details and expect us to get them right, so this guide will help you make sure you're always using the right style for Girlguiding.

If you need to look something up that isn't included here, check the *Guardian/Observer* style guide online:

theguardian.com/styleguide

This is our default guide for advice on how to handle things like punctuation, capitalisation, spelling and grammar.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

Try not to use internal abbreviations in external communications. Always think about whether people will understand them, and if there's a more natural way to say it.

If you have to use an acronym that people might not be familiar with, always spell it out the first time and put the abbreviation in brackets, like this:

We ask all volunteers to have a criminal record check before working with our girls - called the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

A note on plurals: to create a plural of an acronym, simply add an 's' to the end without an apostrophe, as in 'there are several PDFs'.

A note on capitalisation: usually, when you pronounce each letter of an acronym it's written in all capitals, like HIV. When you say an acronym like a word it only takes an initial capital, like 'Aids'.

However, Girlguiding acronyms that are said like a word still appear in all capitals, like 'GOLD', 'ICANDO' and 'WAGGGS'. Only use block capitals for acronyms like these - otherwise, try to avoid them.

Here are some acronyms that we frequently use at Girlguiding and what they stand for.

BGO	British Girlguiding Overseas
GOLD	Guiding Overseas Linked with Development
LGBT	lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans
NYA	National Youth Agency
WAGGGS	World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts

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Capital letters

Capitals draw attention to a particular word, but they also make sentences slower to read and are best minimised. We try to use them consistently and avoid overusing them. If in doubt, use lower case.

Use initial capitals for:

- Names of things ('proper nouns')
 - Brands: Adidas, Twitter
 - Places: London, Europe, Waddow Hall
 - People: Prince William, Beyoncé
 - Unique projects, events and initiatives: Big Gig, Free Being Me
- Publications: *Girls' Attitudes Survey* and *The Guardian*
- The first words only of headings, subheads, labels, banners and navigation - not every word
- Job titles on a business card or in an email signature
- Job titles in body copy when they precede and form part of someone's name, or are immediately after it between commas: 'Chief Executive Julie Bentley and Ruth Marvel, Strategy Director, attended the meeting on behalf of Girlguiding'.

Don't capitalise:

- General names for things: uniforms, police, insurance policy, training materials, volunteers
- Job roles in body copy:
 - All unit leaders will be sent a free resource pack.
 - Our chief executive is Julie Bentley and our strategy director is Ruth Marvel.
- Any word simply to make it feel more important
- The words we use to describe Girlguiding areas, such as 'regions', 'counties', etc: our Lanark district, our Tamworth division
- The words 'award', 'badge', 'qualification' or 'team' when naming one:
 - Laurel award
 - Collector badge
 - Leadership qualification
 - Safeguarding team
- Every word in headings, titles, labels, navigation, etc
 - Child safety information

If you want to check capitalisation for a particular Girlguiding term, go to our [glossary](#).

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Conjunctions

There's nothing wrong with starting sentences with conjunctions like 'and', 'but' and 'or'. It's perfectly grammatically correct and is more common these days - in fact, it can be a useful way to add a bit of energy to your writing. But use them sparingly and make sure they're followed by complete sentences.

Contractions

Contractions like 'it's' or 'isn't' shorten two words by adding an apostrophe. We use contractions to give our writing a more natural, human tone - words like 'I've', 'we've' and 'you'll'. The trick is to read your text out loud to make sure it sounds natural and flows properly.

Dates

We use this format for dates: day, month then year. We don't use suffixes (12th, 20th, 1st).

12 September 2017

It's often helpful to say the day too - and you only need to specify the year when it's not obvious:

Wednesday 12 September

If you're using dates in a table, it's fine to abbreviate the longer names of months:

12 Sept 2017

For decades, we talk about the 1990s, the nineties or the '90s, never the 1990's, and make sure we're consistent.

Email addresses

Write email addresses in lower case. If you're writing an email address at the end of a sentence, it's fine to follow it with a full stop.

Hashtags

Use initial capitals for each word in hashtags:

#ForTheGirl

Headlines and headings

Only the first letter of the first word should be capitalised, unless it's a proper noun.

How to use the brand

ie and eg

Remember: ie means in other words, while eg means for example. It's usually best to write out these phrases instead of using the abbreviations.

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Inclusive language

We always try to avoid language that defines or excludes people - or that makes assumptions about them. For example, it may not always be a parent who takes a Rainbow to their meeting.

Here are a few general rules for inclusive language:

- Use the pronoun 'they' when gender is unknown, neutral or mixed.
- When describing someone with a particular characteristic (such as a condition or disability), ask yourself first if you even need to mention it. Is it relevant? If it is, take their lead when you can and use the language they use. If in doubt, check with them - people appreciate this.
- A general rule of thumb is to put the person first and characteristic second. This avoids defining people by a single aspect.

Instead of...	Use...
disabled people	people with disabilities
the elderly	people who are older

See our [glossary](#) of common terms for more examples.

Money

Use the £ symbol instead of writing out the word 'pounds'. And don't use decimals unless there are pence to include:

Instead of...	Use...
£45.00	£45

Numbers

Use words for one to ten, and write numbers for 11 and above. (To remember this, think '11 plus'.)

There are ten counties in Girlguiding Ulster.
There are 19 counties in our London and South East England region.

Don't mix the two in the same sentence:

There are 4 men and 12 women on our board of trustees.

If you're writing a headline or space is limited (like in a table), then you can write one to ten as digits.

We usually write **ages** in numbers and hyphenate the compound:

12-year-olds

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Percentages

Use the symbol instead of spelling out the word. They should be written as numerals:

Instead of...	Use...
50 per cent	50%

Phone numbers

Break these after the area code:

020 7834 6242
0161 941 2237
028 9042 6025
not 0289 042 6025 (Northern Ireland)

Break UK mobile numbers into groups of five and six digits:

07769 708527

Singular/plural

Girlguiding and The Guide Association take a singular verb:

Girlguiding is...

Spelling

We use British spelling (not American). If in doubt, check the [Guardian/Observer online style guide](#) or the *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*: oxforddictionaries.com.

Times

Write times like this:

9.30am, 10pm

Use the 12-hour clock (11pm) rather than the 24-hour clock (23.00).

Websites

We don't include the 'www' when writing website addresses:

girlguiding.org.uk

Avoid giving links or breadcrumbs in printed text, as these can easily become outdated and impossible to follow. Instead, say:

search for <X> on our website

Punctuation

Ampersands (&)

Only use ampersands in brand names (M&S), unless you're struggling with space (for example, in a table). In normal sentences, spell out the word 'and'.

Apostrophes

Apostrophes can be tricky. But they're important - getting this basic punctuation wrong can irritate people.

We use an apostrophe for two reasons:

1. To show that a letter or letters have been left out: don't forget, I'm afraid. See contractions.
2. To show possession: this month's publication. If the owner is plural, the apostrophe usually comes after the 's'. If the plural doesn't end in an 's', you can treat it as singular.

So, the bees' knees is talking about more than one bee. And the bee's knees? Just the one bee.

There are two situations that can cause problems, so watch out for them:

1. Ordinary plurals don't need apostrophes. 'We sell apple's and pear's' is **wrong**.
2. It's or its? It's means it is or it has. Its means belonging to it, which is unusual because it shows possession but doesn't need an apostrophe: the company is confident about its future.

Brackets

Use brackets (like this), not square brackets [like this].

If you're putting a whole sentence into brackets, put the full stop inside too. (This is a full sentence in brackets, so it has its full stop inside.)

If you're only putting part of a sentence inside the brackets then you need to put the full stop outside (like this).

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Dashes

These can be used between parts of sentences instead of commas or semicolons. They add a little more emphasis and can also be a useful way of breaking up long sentences - but be careful not to overuse them.

Exclamation marks

Use exclamation marks sparingly, as they can give your writing a slightly hysterical tone. (We don't throw in exclamation marks as an easy way of sounding enthusiastic.)

Whenever you find yourself using one, always check how it reads without. Then only use it if you think it adds an important emphasis.

Full stops

We use these at the ends of sentences, and that's it.

Hyphens

When referring to young people by their age, we hyphenate the compound:

14-year-olds

And when two or more words join together as a description before a noun, it's best to hyphenate them where there's any chance of confusion:

You need to make three monthly payments. (three payments in a month)

You need to make three-monthly payments. (one payment every three months)

Tip: when the first word ends in -ly, you don't hyphenate the compound: specially designed uniforms.

Quotations

Use single quotation marks. For quotes within quotes use double quotation marks.

The chief guide told the girls, 'My mum always used to say to me "you can be whatever you want to be."'

Look and layout

Bold

Use bold sparingly to emphasise words, numbers and dates. It's a great way of making something stand out at first glance, so bold text is ideal for key information such as URLs or email addresses.

Don't use bold too often, though. And never use it for an entire paragraph - when everything is in bold, nothing stands out.

Bold italic

Bold italic makes text hard to read, so stick with bold alone.

Headings and subheadings

Don't use end punctuation, except when you need a question mark. Don't use a full stop at the end, and think long and hard about using exclamation marks.

Use a capital letter only at the start and lower case after that, except for proper nouns.

- ✗ What Adults Do in Guiding
- ✓ What adults do in guiding

Italics

We put publication titles in italics, except on our website.

Otherwise, use them sparingly - they make writing look cluttered and are hard to read online.

You can use them for a gentle emphasis. Words in italic will stand out as important when someone reads what you've written, but they won't stand out at a glance like bold. This means that italics are best for a softer emphasis, like a note or reminder.

Links

We avoid using phrases like 'click here' when linking. Instead we make our links clearer and more meaningful so that they stand out and indicate where they lead to.

- ✗ If you have any questions about undertaking a disclosure re-check, please visit our FAQs on our website [here](#).
- ✓ You'll find more information about disclosure re-checks in [our FAQs](#).

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Lists/bullets

Introduce lists with a colon, and use bullet points like this:

- Item 1
- Item 2

Start each item in the list with a capital letter.

- If the items in the list are full sentences, put a full stop at the end, just as you would on a normal sentence.
- For phrases, there's no need for a full stop at the end.
- And each list should be one or the other, not a mixture of the two.

Start your lists off with bullets. Only use numbers if you're listing a sequence or starting your list off with a number phrase (such as 'Ten great reasons to join Girlguiding').

Spaces

Use a single space after a full stop. Like this.

Use a single line between paragraphs.

There should be no space on either side of a forward slash:

Instead of..

and / or

Use...

and/or

Glossary of common terms

Our organisation is full of language that's unique to Girlguiding and the guiding movement. We need to be mindful that this is our own very special jargon, and it can sometimes feel exclusive. This glossary will help you write consistently for and about Girlguiding.

Our style	Comments
1st Response	Not First Response (our first aid training scheme)
A	
activity centres	Lower case; use for internal audiences or after first use of Girlguiding Activity Centres; we no longer use TACs (training and activity centres)
activity theme	Lower case
Adventure Made Easy	Initial capitals and italics for publication
adviser	Not advisor; lower case for role
Advocate; advocate	Initial capital for the name of our panel, but lower case for its members
Anglia region	Initial capitals for place names; lower case on 'region'
annual subscription	Lower case
area	Lower case (a broad term for our districts, regions, counties, countries and divisions)
A Safe Space	Initial capitals for the name of our safeguarding scheme; initial capitals and italics when referring to the resource
assistant leader	Lower case for the role
award	Lower case when referring to awards in general and when giving the name of a specific award: Laurel award

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B

Baden-Powell Adventure; Baden-Powell Challenge	Initial capitals for the names of these schemes
badge	Lower case when talking about badges in general and in the names of badges: Active Response badge
badge secretary	Lower case for the role
barbecue	Not barbeque or BBQ
Be Well	Upper case for the name of the programme theme
Beaver Scouts; Beavers	Initial capitals (Scouts aged 8-10)
Being Our Best	Initial capitals (Our strategic plan for 2015-20)
Big Gig	Initial capitals for the name of this event
Blackland Farm	Initial capitals
board of trustees; the board	Lower case
branch associations; branches	Lower case
Brownie; Brownies	
Brownie Adventure	Initial capitals for the name of the programme; the programme resource is also in italics
Brownie buddy	Initial capital on Brownie only
Brownie helper	Initial capital on Brownie only
Brownie holiday	Initial capital on Brownie only
Brownie unit	Not Brownie pack

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C

chief commissioner	Lower case in body copy unless used as part of name
chief guide	Lower case in body copy unless used as part of name
Chief Guide's Challenge	Initial capitals for the name of the initiative
commissioner	Lower case in body copy unless used as part of name
cooperate	Not co-operate
coordinator	Not co-ordinator
country; county	Lower case, even when referring to the Girlguiding area
Cub Scouts; Cubs	Scouts aged 8-10 ^{1/2}
Girlguiding Cymru (Wales)	

D

DBS check; disclosure check	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Either use the abbreviation (stands for Disclosure and Barring Service check) or the simple term.• Only the abbreviation uses capitals.• (Used to be the CRB check).
<i>Discover, grow</i>	Lower case 'grow'; newsletter in italics
district	Lower case, even when referring to Girlguiding area
district assistant; district commissioner	Lower case in body copy unless used as part of name
division	Lower case
Duke of Edinburgh's Award	Spell out with initial caps at first mention, then DofE

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E

e-card; e-learning; e-newsletter	With hyphen
email	One word, no hyphen
emergency file	Lower case
Explorer Scouts; Explorers	Scouts aged 14-18
Express Myself	Upper case for the name of the programme theme

F

fair trade	Lower case and two words when describing the general movement
Fairtrade	One word with initial capital to refer to the official trademarked name
first aid; first aider	Lower case
Five Essentials	Initial capitals for the name of our principles
Forum for Young Women	Initial capitals for this externally run project
founders	Used to refer to our founders, Robert Baden-Powell and Agnes Baden-Powell; lower case
Free Being Me	Initial capitals for name of this jointly run programme; the resource is also in italics
Foxlease	Initial capital for the place
fundraising	One word, lower case

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G

Girlguiding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Girlguiding is who we are (noun and adjective)• Use Girlguiding when referring to the charity or our name• One word, initial capital; don't abbreviate to GG
Girlguiding Activity Centres	Brand name for activity centres for external audiences; initial capitals; don't abbreviate
Girlguiding HQ	We no longer say CHQ or Commonwealth Headquarters
Girlguiding UK	Use only in a global context
Girlguiding shop	We can also refer to this as our volunteer shop; don't use the term trading
Girlguiding qualified trainer	Lower case; someone who delivers training and has achieved Trainer qualification
Girls' Attitudes Survey	Initial capitals (and italics for the publication); don't use the abbreviation GAS externally
GO	Our membership database, Guiding Organiser
Go for GOLD	The selection event for GOLD
<i>Going Away With Guiding</i>	Initial capitals and italics for the resource
Going Away With licence Going Away With scheme	Initial capitals, except on the words licence and scheme
GOLD	Abbreviation for Guiding Overseas Linked with Development
good turn	Lower case

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government	Always lower case
Guide, Guides	Initial capitals when referring to the 10-14-year-old section
The Guide Association	The legal/financial entity - only use when necessary: 'please make cheques out to The Guide Association'
Guide camp permit	Initial capital on Guide only
Guide International Service (GIS)	Initial capitals for the name of this project
Guide Law	
guiding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Guiding is what we do (verb)• Lower case, except when it's in a sentence with Scouting (Guiding and Scouting) or a global context (World Guiding)
<i>Guiding Essentials</i>	Initial capitals, in italics
<i>The Guiding Handbook</i>	Initial capitals, in italics
<i>guiding</i> magazine	Lower case, in italics
<i>The Guiding Manual</i>	Initial capitals, in italics Don't call it 'the online Guiding Manual'
H	
Have Adventures	Upper case for the name of the programme theme
home contact	Lower case for the role and system

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I

ICANDO

All capitals for our activity centre in London

interest badges

Lower case; write activities in full and lower case eg fitness interest badge

International Scout and Guide Fellowship (ISGF)

Spell out with initial caps at first mention, then ISGF

internet

Lower case

J

jamboree

Lower case, unless referring to the name of one (Jamboree Denmark)

joint unit

Lower case

K

Know Myself

Upper case for the name of the programme theme

L

large bus permit

Lower case

leader

Lower case for role

leader in training

Lower case; no hyphens

Leadership qualification

Initial capitals for name of qualification; lower case for the word 'qualification'

leadership team

Lower case

lend a hand

Lower case

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LGBT	How we refer to the lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans community
local authority	Lower case
London and South East England region	Initial capitals for place names; lower case on 'region'
Long Service award	Initial capitals for name of award; lower case for the word 'award'

M

Magic and Mayhem	Initial capitals for the name of the event
Marketing and Audience Engagement department	Initial capitals for the name of the team; lower case for the word 'department' itself
member	Lower case; say member, not volunteer
members' area (on the website)	Lower case with apostrophe
member organisation (of WAGGGS)	Lower case
mentor	Lower case for the role
mentoring	Lower case
Midlands region	Initial capitals for place names; lower case on 'region'

N

no one	No hyphen, two words
North East England region North West England region	Initial capitals for place names; lower case on 'region'

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O

occasional helper

Lower case

octant

Lower case

online print centre

Lower case

order code

- Lower case
- Girlguiding order code, not Trading Service order code
- Put code before price when describing items

P

parent/carer

Lower case; not parent/guardian

Patrol

Initial capitals when talking about a Brownie grouping

Patrol sleepover

patron

Lower case; our patron is HM Queen Elizabeth II

Pax Lodge

Initial capitals for place name

Peer Education

Upper case when referring to the Girlguiding project; lower case if talking about it generally

peer educator

Lower case for role

peer group residential events

Lower case

people with...
disabilities/hearing loss/epilepsy/etc

Put people first and definition second when mentioning conditions; only mention something when it's relevant - see [style guide](#) for more

pow wow

Lower case

programme

Lower case

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programme renewal

Lower case

Promise

Promise badge

Initial capital for name of badge, but not on 'badge' itself

Promise celebration

Not enrolment

Promise sign

Q

the Queen

Always capitalised; we can initially say Her Majesty The Queen, then HM the Queen or the Queen on subsequent mentions

Queen's Guide

Queen's Guide award

Initial capitals

R

Rainbow; Rainbows

Initial capital when referring to section for girls aged 5-7

Rainbow chat

Rainbow helper

Rainbow jigsaw

Ranger

Upper case

recognised volunteer

recruitment checks

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region	Always lower case
residential	Lower case
S	
Safeguarding team	Initial capital for the name of the team; lower case for the word 'team' itself
Girlguiding Scotland	
Scouting Scouts The Scout Association	Always capitalised; in sentences that refer to both, guiding always comes first and is upper case: Guiding and Scouting
Scout Network	The Scout section for 18-25-year-olds
Scouts	The Scout section for 10 ¹ / ₂ -14-year-olds
second	Initial capital when referring to the deputy leader of a patrol or Six
section	Lower case
The Senior Section	Don't abbreviate to SS; always put 'The' at the beginning. The plural here is 'members of The Senior Section'
The Senior Section permit	Initial capitals
Silver Fish award	Initial capitals for name of award; lower case for the word 'award'
Six	Initial capitals when talking about a Brownie grouping
sixer	Lower case for the role
skills builders	Lower case; write activities in full and lower case eg first aid skills builders

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Skills For My Future	Upper case for the name of the programme theme
Sparkle and Ice	Initial capitals for the name of the event
special needs adviser/coordinator members with disabilities	Lower case for the role; don't say 'adviser for'
social services	Lower case unless referring to a specific body: Hertfordshire Social Services
South West England region	Initial capitals on place but not the word 'region'

T

Take Action	Upper case for the name of the programme theme
task and finish group	Lower case
they	Use as a gender-neutral third-person pronoun
trainer	Lower case; someone who delivers training but is not Girlguiding qualified
Trainer qualification	Initial capitals for name of qualification; lower case for the word 'qualification'
training opportunities	Lower case
trans (adj)	Lower case, preferable to transgender; don't use transsexual
Travelling Abroad training programme	Initial caps only on the name of the module
trefoil	Lower case
Trefoil Guild	Initial capitals for name; lower case when talking generally about individual guilds
trustee	Lower case

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tweet

Lower case (for verb and noun)

Twitter

Initial capital on the brand name

U

UK

- England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland
- Avoid saying ‘this country’ or ‘this nation’ when you mean the UK
- Don’t say ‘the capital’ or ‘the national anthem’ without specifying which one

Girlguiding Ulster

unit

unit helper

Lower case for role

unit leader

Lower case for role; we don’t say guider

unit meeting

Lower case

unit meeting activities

Lower case

unit meeting activity cards

Lower case

V

volunteer

Lower case

volunteer shop

Lower case; we can also say Girlguiding shop

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W

Waddow Hall

Not just Waddow

webpage

One word

wellbeing

One word

Wellies and Wristbands

Initial capitals for event name

World badge

World Centres

These are Our Chalet in Switzerland, Our Cabaña in Mexico, Pax Lodge in the UK, Sangam in India and Kusafiri in Africa

world chief guide

Lower case in body copy unless using as part of name

World Conference

World Flag

World Guiding

Guiding has an initial capital in this context

World Thinking Day

Initial capitals for this event

Y

young leader

Lower case for role

Young Leader qualification

Initial capitals for name of qualification; lower case for the word 'qualification'

Girlguiding messaging

Our vision

An equal world where all girls can make a positive difference, be happy and safe, and fulfil their potential.

Our mission

Through fun, friendship, challenge and adventure we empower girls to find their voice, inspiring them to discover the best in themselves and to make a positive difference in their community.

Who we are

In one sentence

Girlguiding is the leading charity for girls and young women in the UK.

Short version

Girlguiding is the leading charity for girls and young women in the UK. We build girls' confidence and raise their aspirations. We give them the chance to discover their full potential and encourage them to be a powerful force for good. We give them a space to have fun.

Full version

Girlguiding is the leading charity for girls and young women in the UK. Thanks to the dedication and support of 100,000 amazing volunteers, we are active in every part of the UK, giving girls and young women a space where they can be themselves, have fun, build brilliant friendships, gain valuable life skills and make a positive difference to their lives and their communities. We build girls' confidence and raise their aspirations. We give them the chance to discover their full potential and encourage them to be a powerful force for good.

Our key messages

- We are for all girls.
- We give girls their own space.
- We give girls a voice.
- We change as the lives of girls change.

Checklist: good writing for Girlguiding

- ✓ Does the writing sound **straight talking, enthusiastic and in tune**?
- ✓ Is the language **everyday and active**, with plenty of you, we, our, your, etc?
- ✓ Does it sound **conversational**, like a real (likeable) person talking?
- ✓ Are **sentences and paragraphs** focused, concise and manageable?
- ✓ Have you **focused on what matters** (and why) to your audience?
- ✓ Do the **main points** stand out?
- ✓ Where possible, have you used descriptive language, examples and real voices to **paint a picture**?
- ✓ Are the details (such as capital letters and punctuation) in line with our **house style**?



WE DISCOVER, WE GROW

Girlguiding

A helping hand...

If you have any questions about our tone of voice and writing style or would like to add a term to our glossary, please get in touch with M&AE@girlguiding.org.uk.

These guidelines were created with the support of Enough Said.

