

NEWSWIRE

# Press Release Readability Matters

— SMART START —

Learn how concise and simple messaging can improve readability for more effective content.

## Thank you for downloading the **Press Release Readability Matters Smart Start**.

Simplicity is the key to high press release readability and in this guide, we'll explore how to craft copy that's newsworthy, compelling, optimized for search engines, and easy for your target audience and the media to read.

### What's a Press Release?

To get started, it's important we have a firm understanding of what a press release is.

A press release is a compelling and concise news story that's typically written by a public relations professional and distributed to targeted media sources to announce something newsworthy.

The goal of a press release is to secure coverage from relevant publications and stay in front of a company's target audience.

Press releases can cover important news such as:

- The release of a special report
- A company milestone
- A new product announcement/launch
- A new round of funding
- Announcement of a new executive
- And much more

No matter the announcement, quality press releases should address the who, what, where, when, why, and how.

These are commonly referred to as the 5 W's + How, which make up the foundation of the inverted pyramid.

The [inverted pyramid](#) is an integral piece in the overall press release format puzzle, helping to maximize a company's ability to not only reach their target audience but the media as well.

## What's a Readability Score?

In short, readability refers to the quality of your content. A readability score, on the other hand, is the grading scale. The most common way to test readability is the Flesch Reading Ease test which takes into account **the average sentence length (word count) and the average number of syllables per word.**

Based on these two factors, a piece of content is given a number between 0 and 100.

A higher number means the content is easy-to-read while a lower number means it's difficult to read. Here's a breakdown of the scoring:

**90-100** - very easy to read, easily understood by an average 11-year-old student

**80-90** - easy to read

**70-80** - fairly easy to read

**60-70** - easily understood by 13- to 15-year-old students

**50-60** - fairly difficult to read

**30-50** - difficult to read, best understood by college graduates

**0-30** - very difficult to read, best understood by university graduates

Source: Wikipedia.com





## How does press release readability affect SEO?

Press releases, just like any piece of content, should be optimized for search engines. This means infusing keywords in the headline and throughout the body. While the technical mechanics of your press release are important, so is the tone and presentation of your copy.

Google keeps an eye on how long a user stays on the page, how it's formatted, and what people do after reading. These factors all play a role in how search engines like Google weigh the value of your content.

The more readable the content, the more likely you are to have people link to your content, and the higher you'll rank for a specific keyword.

## Tips to Improve Your Press Release Readability Score

Have you ever read a press release multiple times and still had no idea what it was about?

A low readability score creates confusion. So, how can you avoid that? Here are a few ideas to get started.

### Word Choice

Though you may feel like a scholar when using a big word, it can hurt your readability score. That's because the more syllables a word has, the harder it can be to read.

Remember, not everyone has the same vocabulary. Keep your wording simple to boost readability.

### Sentence length

Avoid long sentences and use simple sentence structure. When editing, look for long sentences. When you find one, either shorten it or break it down into smaller sentences.

Not only will your readability score improve by doing this, so too will your authority. Shorter sentences elicit feelings of confidence. The shorter, the better.

### Avoid jargon

*Jargon : the technical terminology or characteristic idiom of a special activity or group*

Depending on the audience, jargon can be hard to understand.

If you're writing a press release intended for your peers, using language that's unique to your industry can work. However, if you're writing for the general public, use words and phrases that a layperson can understand.

### Make Breaks

**It's reported 81 percent of people only skim the content they read online.**

Short attention spans and content skimming fuel the importance of your press release format.

Make your content easier to skim by turning long paragraphs into shorter ones and when possible, break up your content with bulleted lists.

# NEWSWIRE

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