

# HOW TO WRITE AN OP-ED

## WHAT IS AN OP-ED?

An op-ed (originally short for “opposite the editorial page”) is a written work that expresses the opinion of the author on a specific subject. It is a great way to share your perspective along with information regarding the issue being addressed. Op-eds are typically written by members of the community and then submitted to news outlets for publication. You can publish an op-ed in a variety of news outlets, including local or national ones.

- \* Typically, op-eds are no more than 1,000 words, but length requirements may vary between news outlets.
- \* Paragraphs should be short, sentences should be clear and concise, and language should be simple and straightforward.
- \* Make sure it includes YOUR perspective and experience. Your story is what makes op-eds so engaging.

# 1

## DEFINE YOUR ARGUMENT BEFORE YOU BEGIN WRITING

Op-eds need to assert something. So, the first step is to clearly define your argument and point of view. Make sure there is substance to your argument and be prepared to provide evidence to support your opinion.

## START WITH A POWERFUL OPENING

Begin your article with a hook to grab your reader's attention. This could be a strong claim, fact, observation, anything that entices your audience to want to read further.

State what the issue is and clearly define your stance.

## BACK UP YOUR OPINION IN THE PARAGRAPHS THAT FOLLOW

Tell your readers why they should care about this issue.

Identify counterarguments to your opinion and use facts to discredit them.

Cite specific references and easy-to-understand data.

Include hyperlinks to your sources in your article to provide your readers with easy access to additional information.

## SUMMARIZE ARGUMENT IN A STRONG FINAL PARAGRAPH

Keep in mind that an article's conclusion is its last and often most memorable detail.

Circle back to your opening paragraph and restate your opinion

Wrap up with your final thoughts and leave your readers with a call to action if possible.

## BEFORE YOU SUBMIT AN OP-ED FOR PUBLICATION:

- \* Check your facts
- \* Make sure you cite all your sources
- \* Get an outside opinion or two. Give your work to someone that might provide you with some constructive criticism. If you know any good writers or editors, ask them for feedback and how your work might be improved.
- \* Read your article out loud
- \* Identify two or three places you might want to publish. **Each news outlet might have their own guidelines in terms of length** and other components so this may save you some editing time in the future.

If you are looking for more information, the [OpEd Project](#) is a great resource

## EXAMPLES

- [Another Opinion: Drug prices](#)
- [Chronic Illnesses Are Devastating the Finances of Young Americans Like Me](#)
- [Public opinion is unified on lowering prescription drug prices — why are Democrats settling for less?](#)
- [ROUNDUP: Editorials & Op-Eds From Across the Country Expose Big Pharma's Lies on Drug Pricing](#)

## SOURCES:

- <https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/files/hks-communications->
- <https://news.climate.columbia.edu/2020/05/04/writing-submitting-opinion-piece/>
- <https://www.the-learning-agency.com/insights/write-an-op-ed/#PartOne>
- <https://communicators.duke.edu/writing-media/writing-effective-op-eds/>