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Arca Editorial Style Guide

arca

Index

Writing Goals

With every piece of content published, Arca aims to:

Empower.

Help people understand Arca by using language that informs them and encourages them to make the most of our products and services.

Respect.

Treat readers with the respect they deserve. Remember that people have other things to do. Be considerate and inclusive. Don't market at people; communicate with them.

Speak truth.

Understand Arca's place in our users' lives. Avoid dramatic storytelling and grandiose claims. Focus on our real strengths and speak truth with clarity.

Educate.

Give readers the exact information they need with opportunities to learn more. Remember, you are the expert and readers don't have access to everything you know.

Guide.

Think of yourself as a tour guide for our readers. Communicate in a friendly and helpful way.

Writing Principles

To achieve our goals at Arca, we will make sure our content is:

Clear.

Understand the topic you're writing about. Use simple words and sentences.

Useful.

Before you start writing, ask yourself: What purpose does this serve? Who is going to read it? What do they need to know?

Friendly.

Write like a human. Don't be afraid to break a few rules if it makes your writing more relatable. All of our content should be warm and human.

Appropriate.

Write in a way that suits the situation. Just like you do in face-to-face conversations, adapt your tone depending on who you are writing to and what you are writing about.

Voice & Tone

Do's & Don'ts

Voice & Tone

One way we write empowering and informative content is by being aware of our voice and our tone. This section explains the difference between voice and tone and lays out the elements of each as they apply to Arca.

What is the difference between voice and tone?

Think of it this way: You have the same voice all the time, but your tone changes. You might use one tone when you are out to dinner with your closest friends, and a different tone when you are in a meeting with your boss.

Your tone also changes depending on the emotional state of the person you are addressing. You would not want to use the same tone of voice with someone who is scared or upset as you would with someone who is laughing.

The same is true for Arca. Our voice does not change much from day to day, but our tone changes all the time.

Voice

At Arca, we've walked in our customers' shoes, and we know fintech is a minefield of confusing terminology. That's why we speak like the experienced and compassionate business partner we wish we'd had way back when.

We treat every hopeful brand seriously. We want to educate people without patronizing or confusing them.

Using a conversational voice, we use language to bring joy to our work. We prefer the subtle over the noisy, the wry over the farcical. We don't take ourselves too seriously. But we do impart our expertise with clarity, empathy, and wit.

All of this means that when we write copy:

1. **We are plainspoken.** We understand the world our customers are living in: one muddled by hyperbolic language, upsells, and over-promises. We strip all that away and value clarity above all.
2. **We are genuine.** We relate to customers' challenges and passions and speak to them in a familiar, professional, and accessible way.

3. **We are translators.** Only experts can make what's difficult look easy, and it's our job to demystify fintech-speak and actually educate.

Tone

Arca's tone is informative but relatable, and it's always more important to be clear than entertaining. When you are writing, consider the reader's state of mind. Are they confused and seeking help? Or, just reading to learn more about industry trends?

Once you have an idea of their emotional state, you can adjust your tone accordingly.

Style tips

Here are a few key elements of writing Arca's voice:

- **Active voice.** Use active verbs as often as possible. Avoid passive voice.
- **Avoid slang, cliches, and jargon.** Write in plain English.
- **Write positively.** Use positive language rather than negative language.
- **Be human.** Write like how you talk on the phone during a professional conversation. Be positive and personal.
- **Be clear.** Use short, clear words.
- **Be concise.** Aim for 10 to 12 words a sentence—maximum.
- **Maintain consistency.** Be consistent in your style.
- **Be specific.** Harness the power of concrete words and specific terms.
- **Be inclusive.** Eliminate sexist and biased language—both conscious and unconscious.
- **Be yourself.** (The very best version of you.)

Writing Guidelines

Do's & Don'ts

Writing Guidelines

Writing about Arca

Our name Arca began as a metaphor for the arc of safety and security and is spelled as one word with an uppercase A.

Writing About People

We write the same way we build client services: with a person-first perspective. Whether you're writing for an internal or external audience, it's important to write for and about other people in a way that's compassionate, inclusive, and respectful. Being aware of the impact of your language will help make Arca a better place to work and a better steward of our values in the world. In this section we'll lay out some guidelines for writing about people with compassion.

As part of an audience

- Don't capitalize "audience" unless it's grammatically necessary.
- Don't refer to an audience as "it." Audiences are made up of real people, so always use "they."
- This goes for contacts, too. Remember, people are not data.

Age

Don't reference a person's age unless it's relevant to what you're writing. If it *is* relevant, include the person's specific age, offset by commas.

- The CEO, 16, just got her driver's license.

Don't refer to people using age-related descriptors like "young," "old," or "elderly."

Disability

Avoid disability-related idioms like "lame" or "falling on deaf ears." Don't refer to a person's disability unless it's relevant to what you're writing. If you need to mention it, ask whether your subject prefers person-first language ("they have a disability") or identity-first language ("they are disabled").

When writing about a person with disabilities, don't use the words "suffer," "victim," or "handicapped." "Handicapped parking" is OK.

Gender and sexuality

Don't call groups of people "guys." Don't call women "girls."

Avoid gendered terms in favor of neutral alternatives, like "server" instead of "waitress" and "businessperson" instead of "businessman."

It's OK to use "they" as a singular pronoun.

Use the following words as modifiers, but never as nouns:

- lesbian
- gay
- bisexual
- transgender (never "transgendered")
- trans
- queer
- LGBT

Don't use these words in reference to LGBT people or communities:

- homosexual
- lifestyle
- preference

Don't use "same-sex" marriage, unless the distinction is relevant to what you're writing. (Avoid "gay marriage.") Otherwise, it's just "marriage."

When writing about a person, use their communicated pronouns. When in doubt, just ask or use their name.

Hearing

Use "deaf" as an adjective to describe a person with significant hearing loss. You can also use "partially deaf" or "hard of hearing."

Heritage and nationality

Don't use hyphens when referring to someone with dual heritage or nationality. For example, use "Asian American" instead of "Asian-American."

Medical conditions

Don't refer to a person's medical condition unless it's relevant to what you're writing. If a reference to a person's medical condition is warranted, use the same rules as writing about people with physical disabilities and emphasize the person first. Don't call a person with a medical condition a "victim."

Mental and cognitive conditions

Don't refer to a person's mental or cognitive condition unless it's relevant to what you're writing. Never assume that someone has a medical, mental, or cognitive condition.

Don't describe a person as "mentally ill." If a reference to a person's mental or cognitive condition is warranted, use the same rules as writing about people with physical disabilities or medical conditions and emphasize the person first.

Race

At Arca, when we write about a culture or ethnicity, we capitalize the name. For example, we capitalize Black as it refers to Americans in the African diaspora while we keep white lowercase since white refers to the color of a person's skin and not a group of people.

Vision

Use the adjective "blind" to describe a person who is unable to see. Use "low vision" to describe a person with limited vision.

Grammar & Mechanics

Do's & Don'ts

Grammar & Mechanics

Adhering to certain rules of grammar and mechanics helps us keep our writing clear and consistent.

This section will lay out our house style, which applies to all our content unless otherwise noted in this guide.

Basics

- **Write for all readers.** Some people will read every word you write. Others will just skim. Help everyone read better by grouping related ideas together and using descriptive headers and subheaders.
- **Focus your message.** Create a hierarchy of information. Lead with the main point or the most important content, in sentences, paragraphs, sections, and pages.
- **Be concise.** Use short words and sentences. Avoid unnecessary modifiers.
- **Be specific.** Avoid vague language. Cut the fluff.
- **Be consistent.** Stick to the copy patterns and style points outlined in this guide.

Abbreviations and acronyms

If there's a chance your reader won't recognize an abbreviation or acronym, spell it out the first time you mention it. Then use the short version for all other references. If the abbreviation isn't clearly related to the full version, specify in parentheses.

- First use: Network Operations Center
- Second use: NOC
- First use: Coordinated Universal Time (UTC)
- Second use: UTC

If the abbreviation or acronym is well known, like API or HTML, use it instead (and don't worry about spelling it out).

Active voice

Use active voice. Avoid passive voice.

In active voice, the subject of the sentence does the action. In passive voice, the subject of the sentence has the action done to it.

- Yes: Marti logged into the account.
- No: The account was logged into by Marti.

Words like "was" and "by" may indicate that you're writing in passive voice. Scan for these words and rework sentences where they appear.

One exception is when you want to specifically emphasize the action over the subject. In some cases, this is fine.

- Your account was flagged by our Abuse team.

Capitalization

We use a few different forms of capitalization. Title case capitalizes the first letter of every word except articles, prepositions, and conjunctions. Sentence case capitalizes the first letter of the first word.

When writing out an email address or website URL, use all lowercase.

- hello@ar.ca
- ar.ca

Don't capitalize random words in the middle of sentences. Here are some words that we never capitalize in a sentence:

- website
- internet
- online
- email

Contractions

They're great! Use them. They give your writing an informal, friendly tone.

Emoji

Emoji are a fun way to add humor and visual interest to your writing. However, use them infrequently and deliberately.

Numbers

Spell out a number when it begins a sentence. Otherwise, use the numeral. This includes ordinals.

- Ten new employees started on Monday, and 12 start next week.
- I ate 3 donuts at Coffee Hour.
- Meg won 1st place in last year's customer service contest.
- We hosted a group of 8th graders who are learning fintech.

Sometimes it feels weird to use the numeral. If it's an expression that is typically spelled out, leave it that way.

- A friendly smile can help you make a great first impression.
- That is a third-party integration.
- Put your best foot forward with the all-in-one platform that grows with you.

Numbers over 3 digits get commas:

- 999
- 1,000
- 150,000

Write out big numbers in full. Abbreviate them if there are space restraints, as in a tweet or a chart: 1k, 150k.

Dates

Generally, spell out the day of the week and the month. Abbreviate only if space is an issue in the application.

- Saturday, January 24
- Sat., Jan. 24

Decimals and fractions

Spell out fractions.

- Yes: two-thirds
- No: 2/3

Use decimal points when a number can't be easily written out as a fraction, like 1.375 or 47.2.

Percentages

Use the % symbol instead of spelling out "percent."

Ranges and spans

Use a hyphen (-) to indicate a range or span of numbers.

- It takes 20-30 days.

Money

When writing about US currency, use the dollar sign before the amount. Include a decimal and number of cents if more than 0.

- $20
- $19.99
- $x B or $x billion
  - Be consistent with choice throughout writing
- $x M or $x million
  - Be consistent with choice throughout writing

When writing about other currencies, follow the same symbol-amount format:

- ¥1
- €1

Telephone numbers

Use dashes without spaces between numbers. Use a country code if your reader is in another country.

- 555-867-5309
- +1-404-123-4567

Temperature

Use the degree symbol and the capital F abbreviation for Fahrenheit.

- 98°F

Time

Use numerals and am or pm, with a space in between. Don't use minutes for on-the-hour time.

- 7 am
- 7:30 pm

Use a hyphen between times to indicate a time period.

- 7 am–10:30 pm

Specify time zones when writing about an event or something else people would need to schedule.

Abbreviate time zones within the continental United States as follows:

- Eastern time: ET
- Central time: CT
- Mountain time: MT
- Pacific time: PT

When referring to international time zones, spell them out: Nepal Standard Time, Australian Eastern Time. If a time zone does not have a set name, use its Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) offset.

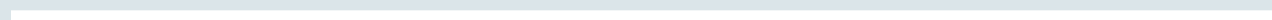Abbreviate decades when referring to those within the past 100 years.

- the 00s
- the 90s

When referring to decades more than 100 years ago, be more specific:

- the 1900s
- the 1890s

Punctuation

Do's & Don'ts

Punctuation

Apostrophes

The apostrophe's most common use is making a word possessive. If the word already ends in an s and it's singular, you also add an 's. If the word ends in an s and is plural, just add an apostrophe.

- The donut thief ate Sam's donut.
- The donut thief ate Chris's donut.
- The donut thief ate the managers' donuts.

Apostrophes can also be used to denote that you've dropped some letters from a word, usually for humor or emphasis. This is fine but do it sparingly.

Colons

Use a colon (rather than an ellipsis, em dash, or comma) to offset a list.

- Erin ordered 3 kinds of donuts: glazed, chocolate, and pumpkin.

You can also use a colon to join 2 related phrases. If a complete sentence follows the colon, capitalize the 1st word.

- I was faced with a dilemma: I wanted a donut, but I'd just eaten a bagel.

Commas

When writing a list, use the serial comma (also known as the Oxford comma).

- Yes: David admires his parents, Oprah, and Justin Timberlake.
- No: David admires his parents, Oprah and Justin Timberlake.

However, when using the ampersand in titles and headers, omit the serial comma.

- Yes: People, Places & Things
- No: People, Places, & Things

Otherwise, use common sense. If you're unsure, read the sentence out loud. Where you find yourself taking a breath, use a comma.

Dashes and hyphens

Use a hyphen (-) without spaces on either side to link words into single phrase, or to indicate a span or range.

- first-time user
- Monday-Friday

Use an em dash (—) without spaces on either side to offset an aside.
Use a true em dash, not hyphens (- or --).

- Multivariate testing—just one of our new Pro features—can help you grow your business.
- Austin thought Brad was the donut thief, but he was wrong—it was Lain.

Ellipses

Ellipses (…) can be used to indicate that you're trailing off before the end of a thought. Use them sparingly. Don't use them for emphasis or drama, and don't use them in titles or headers.

- "Where did all those donuts go?" Christy asked. Lain said, "I don't know…"

Ellipses, in brackets, can also be used to show that you're omitting words in a quote.

- "When in the Course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another and to assume among the powers of the earth, […] a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation."

Periods

Periods go inside quotation marks. They go outside parentheses when the parenthetical is part of a larger sentence, and inside parentheses when the parenthetical stands alone.

- Christy said, "I ate a donut."
- I ate a donut (and I ate a bagel, too).
- I ate a donut and a bagel. (The donut was Sam's.)

Leave a single space between sentences.

Question marks

Question marks go inside quotation marks if they're part of the quote. Like periods, they go outside parentheses when the parenthetical is part of a larger sentence, and inside parentheses when the parenthetical stands alone.

Exclamation points

Use exclamation points sparingly, and never more than one at a time. They're like high-fives: A well-timed one is great, but too many can be annoying.

Exclamation points go inside quotation marks. Like periods and question marks, they go outside parentheses when the parenthetical is part of a larger sentence, and inside parentheses when the parenthetical stands alone.

Never use exclamation points in failure messages or alerts. When in doubt, avoid!

Quotation marks

Use quotes to refer to words and letters, titles of short works (like articles and poems), and direct quotations.

Periods and commas go within quotation marks. Question marks within quotes follow logic—if the question mark is part of the quotation, it goes within. If you're asking a question that ends with a quote, it goes outside the quote.

Use single quotation marks for quotes within quotes.

- Who was it that said, "A fool and his donut are easily parted"?
- Brad said, "A wise man once told me, 'A fool and his donut are easily parted.'"

Semicolons

Go easy on semicolons. They usually support long, complicated sentences that could easily be simplified. Try an em dash (—) instead, or simply start a new sentence.

Ampersands

Because ampersands are used in design typography (like book covers), ampersands can be used in titles and headers only. Just don't use ampersands in prose unless it is part of a company or brand name.

- Ben and Dan
- Ben & Jerry's

People, Places & Things

Do's & Don'ts

People, Places & Things

File extensions

When referring generally to a file extension type, use all uppercase without a period. Add a lowercase "s" to make plural.

- GIF
- PDF
- HTML
- JPGs

When referring to a specific file, the filename should be lowercase:

- fintec_trends.gif
- ben-twitter-profile.jpg
- ilovearca.html

Pronouns

If your subject's gender is unknown or irrelevant, use "they," "them," and "their" as a singular pronoun. Use "he/him/his" and "she/her/her" pronouns as appropriate. Don't use "one" as a pronoun.

Quotes

When quoting someone in a blog post or other publication, use the present tense.

- "Using Arca has helped our money grow," says Jamie Smith.

Names and titles

The first time you mention a person in writing, refer to them by their first and last names. On all other mentions, refer to them by their first name.

Capitalize the names of departments and teams (but not the word "team" or "department").

- Marketing team
- Support department

Capitalize individual job titles when referencing to a specific role. Don't capitalize when referring to the role in general terms.

- Our new Marketing Manager starts today.
- All the managers ate donuts.

Don't refer to someone as a "ninja," "rockstar," or "wizard" unless they literally are one.

Schools

The first time you mention a school, college, or university in a piece of writing, refer to it by its full official name. On all other mentions, use its more common abbreviation.

- Georgia Institute of Technology, Georgia Tech
- Georgia State University, GSU

States, cities, and countries

Spell out all city and state names. Don't abbreviate city names.

Per AP Style, all cities should be accompanied by their state, with the exception of: Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Honolulu, Houston, Indianapolis, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, New Orleans, New York, Oklahoma City, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Salt Lake City, San Antonio, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Washington.

On first mention, write out United States. On subsequent mentions, U.S. is fine. The same rule applies to any other country or federation with a common abbreviation (European Union, EU; United Kingdom, UK).

URLs and websites

Capitalize the names of websites and web publications. Don't italicize.
Avoid spelling out URLs, but when you need to, leave off the http://www.

Writing about Arca

Our company's legal entity name is "Arca Funds, LLC." Our trade name is "Arca." Use "Arca Funds, LLC." only when writing legal documents or contracts. Otherwise, use "Arca."

Always capitalize the first "A" in Arca.

Refer to Arca as "we," not "it."

Capitalize branded terms, like Arca Funds, Arca Labs, Arca Services. We also capitalize product names (Arca Digital Assets Fund, Arca Digital Yield Fund, Arca Endeavor Fund, Arca NFT Fund, and Arca Bitcoin Trust) to distinguish them from generic use of those adjectives.

Don't capitalize descriptive product or feature names, like email or landing pages.

Writing about other companies

Honor companies' own names for themselves and their products. Go by what's used on their official website.

- iPad
- YouTube
- Yahoo!

Refer to a company or product as "it" (not "they").

Slang and jargon

Write in plain English. If you need to use a technical term, briefly define it so everyone can understand.

- Arca's team is constantly scaling our portfolio offerings to make sure our users have a great experience with our products. One way we do this is with shards, or partitions, that help us better horizontally scale our database infrastructure.

Text formatting

Use italics to indicate the title of a long work (like a book, movie, or album) or to emphasize a word.

- *Dunston Checks In*
- Brandon *really* loves *Dunston Checks In*.

Use italics when citing an example of an Arca element, or referencing button and navigation labels in step-by-step instructions:

- When you're all done, click *Send*.

- The familiar A/B testing variables—*Subject line*, *From name*, and *Send time*—have now been joined by *Content*, and up to 3 combinations of a single variable can now be tested at once.

Left-align text, never center or right-aligned.

Leave one space between sentences, never 2.

Write positively

Use positive language rather than negative language. One way to detect negative language is to look for words like "can't," "don't," etc.

- Yes: To get a donut, stand in line.
- No: You can't get a donut if you don't stand in line.

Web Elements

Do's & Don'ts

Web Elements

Every piece of content we publish is supported by several smaller pieces. This section lays out our style in regards to these web elements, and explains our approach to the tricky art of SEO.

Alt text

Alt text is a way to label images, and it's especially important for people who can't see the images on our website. Alt text should describe the image in a brief sentence or two.

Buttons

Buttons should always contain actions. The language should be clear and concise. Capitalize every word, including articles. It's OK to use an ampersand in button copy. Standard website buttons include:

- Log In
- Sign Up Free
- Subscribe
- Email Us

Checkboxes

Use sentence case for checkboxes.

Drop-down menus

Use title case for menu names and sentence case for menu items.

Forms

Form titles should clearly and quickly explain the purpose of the form.

Use title case for form titles and sentence case for form fields.

Keep forms as short as possible.

Only request information that we need and intend to use. Don't ask for information that could be considered private or personal, including gender. If you need to ask for gender, provide a field the user can fill in on their own, not a drop-down menu.

Headings and subheadings

Headings and subheadings organize content for readers. They should include the most relevant keywords and cover/highlight the main point(s) of the page.

Headings and subheadings are written in sentence case. Avoid using end punctuation except for question marks or when a heading is two or more sentences.

Organize headings and subheadings hierarchically, with headings first, followed by subheadings in order... (An H2 will nestle under H1, an H3 under H2, and on down.)

- Headings (H1) give people a taste of what they're about to read. Use them for page and blog titles.
- Subheadings (H2, H3, etc.) break articles into smaller, more specific sections. They give readers avenues into your content and make it more scannable.

Links

Provide a link whenever you're referring to something on an external website. Use links to point users to relevant content and trusted external resources.

Don't include preceding articles (a, an, the, our) when you link text. For example:

- Yes: Read the [automation guide](#) for details.
- No: Read [the automation guide](#) for details.

If a link comes at the end of a sentence or before a comma, don't link the punctuation mark.

Don't say things like "Click here!" or "Click for more information" or "Read this." Write the sentence as you normally would, and link relevant keywords.

Links should look different than regular copy, strong text, or emphasis text. They should have a hover state that communicates they're interactive and should have a distinct active and visited state. When setting the hover state of links, be sure to include focus state as well, to help readers using assistive technologies and touch devices.

Lists

Use lists to present steps, groups, or sets of information. Give context for the list with a brief introduction. Number lists when the order is important, like when you're describing steps of a process. Don't use numbers when the list's order doesn't matter.

If one of the list items is a complete sentence, use proper punctuation and capitalization on all of the items. If list items are not complete sentences, don't use punctuation, but do capitalize the first word of each item.

Navigation

Use title case for main or global navigation. Use sentence case for subnavigation. Navigation links should be clear and concise.

Radio Buttons

Use title case for headings and sentence case for button fields.

Related articles

Sometimes a long piece of copy lends itself to a list of related links at the end. Don't go overboard—4 is usually plenty.

Related articles should appear in a logical order, following the step down/step up rule: The first article should be a step down in complexity from the current article. The second one should be a step up in complexity to a more advanced article.

If you can, avoid repeating links from the body text in related articles.

Titles

Titles organize pages and guide readers. A title appears at the beginning of a page or section and briefly describes the content that follows. Titles also tell search engines what a page is about, and show up in search results.

Titles are written (you guessed it) in title case. Don't use end punctuation in a title unless the title is a question.

SEO

We write for humans, not machines. We don't use gross SEO techniques like keyword stuffing to bump search results. But we also want to make it easy for people and search engines to find and share our content.

Here are some not-icky ways to do this:

- Organize your page around one topic. Use clear, descriptive terms in titles and headings that relate to the topic at hand.
- Use descriptive headings to structure your page and highlight important information.
- Give every image descriptive alt text.

Writing Arca Content

Do's & Don'ts
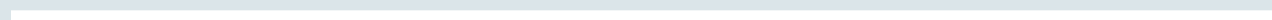
Writing Arca Content

WRITING TECHNICAL CONTENT

At Arca, technical content appears primarily in our blog posts and data sheets. This section will lay out the guiding principles of technical content, discuss the main types of technical content, and outline the process of writing and editing technical articles.

Basics

Someone reading technical content is usually looking to answer a specific question. That question might be broad or narrowly focused, but either way our goal is to provide answers without distraction.

For each project, consider your audience's background, goal, and current mood. Ask these questions:

- Is the reader a prospective user, a new user, or an experienced user?
- What is the goal of the user? To complete a task? To research a topic?
- Is the user in the middle of a task? Are they in a hurry? Could they be frustrated?

We don't want to overload our audience with unnecessary information, choices, or complex ideas or phrases when we don't have to. This is particularly critical when a user may be new and/or frustrated.

When relevant, provide a brief outline of an article's focus in an introductory paragraph or section, and stick to the topic at hand. Keep sentences, paragraphs, and procedural steps focused and concise.

Types of technical content

Technical content articles vary in target audience, goal, and tone. Arca technical content is built from templates, which serve different purposes and readers.

Templates should be considered guidelines and are not intended to be prescriptive. We may deviate from or combine elements of different templates to best serve the reader.

Here are some examples of article templates we use.

Article Template	User Type	Goal
Pathfinder	prospective, new, intermediate	**Orientation.** Bundle topics and provide links to relevant information or general reference.
General Reference	prospective, new, intermediate	**Introduction.** Provide a high-level explanation of what the service is, how it works, and its benefit to the user. Include links to relevant documents.
FAQ	new, intermediate, advanced	**Support.** Outline expected behavior and include potential causes of unexpected behavior. Group by cause or topic.
Explainer	new, intermediate	**Guidance.** Briefly describe a task. Provide a roadmap and prerequisites, and clear step-by-step instructions.

When writing technical content, follow the style points outlined in the Voice and Tone and Grammar and Mechanics sections.

Here are some other goals and pointers to keep in mind:

Stay relevant to the title

When a user clicks the title of an article, they expect to find the answer they want. Don't stray too far from the title or topic at hand. Use links to make related content available. If you find you're getting too far from the intended topic, then you may need to create a separate but related article.

Keep headlines and paragraphs short and scannable

Focused users often scan an article for the part that will answer their particular question. Be sure headlines are short, descriptive, and parallel, to facilitate scanning.

Use second person and describe actions to a user

Technical content talks to users when support agents can't.

Strive for simplicity and clarity

Be as clear as possible. Use simple words and phrases, avoid gerunds and hard-to-translate idioms or words, focus on the specific task, limit the number of sentences per paragraph. If you must include edge cases or tangentially related information, set it aside in a Before You Start list or Notes field.

Provide context through embedded screenshots, videos, and GIFs

Screenshots, videos, and GIFs may not be necessary for every article or process but can be helpful to orient new users. Crop screenshots tightly around the action to focus attention.

Formatting technical content

Technical content uses organization, capitalization, and other formatting to help convey meaning. Although articles are organized differently, some formatting tips are consistent throughout all technical content.

Capitalization

Capitalize proper names of Arca products, features, pages, tools, and teams when explicitly mentioned. In step-by-step instructions, capitalize and bold navigation and button labels as they appear in online.

- Arca
- Compliance Team, Billing Team
- Navigate to the **Reports** page.
- Click **Create**.

Headings

Organize article content with H2s and H3s. Use H2s for higher-level topics or goals and use H3s within each section for supporting information or tasks.

Article title: About Fintech

- H2: How fintech and Arca work
- H2: How to use fintech
- H2: Resources
    - o H3: Get inspired and learn best practices
    - o H3: Create a portfolio
    - o H3: Learn about reports

Ordered Lists

Only use ordered lists for step-by-step instructions. Separate steps into logical chunks, with no more than 2 related actions per step. When additional explanation or a screenshot is necessary, use a line break inside the list item.

Unordered Lists

Use unordered lists to display examples or multiple notes. If an unordered list comprises more than 10 items, use a table instead.

WRITING LEGAL CONTENT

Arca publishes many kinds of legal content to protect ourselves and our clients around the world. Most of our legal content is written by the Legal department with help from the Communications team. This section gives a general overview of the types of legal content we publish and how those documents are written.

Basics

The way we write, review, and publish legal content is different than how we do many other kinds of writing at Arca. The most important difference is that all legal content either starts with or passes through the Legal team.

But that doesn't mean legal content has to be difficult to read. We try to present our legal information in the most pleasant way possible. Our goals for Arca's legal content are:

- **Accuracy.** Our first and foremost concern is that we present the correct information in a truthful way.
- **Clarity.** We try to avoid legal jargon and overly formal wording. Our users need to understand the agreement they're making with us.
- **Succinctness.** We want our users to read and understand our legal documents, while also respecting their time.

Types of legal content

We publish several types of legal documents, each with their own writing processes and goals.

Public legal documents

We keep these in one place on our legal page:

- Terms of use
- Acceptable use policy
- Privacy policy
- API use policy
- Copyright policy

These policies apply to all Arca's users. The Legal and Communication teams work together to make them as transparent and easy to read as possible. When someone signs up to use Arca, they must agree to all those terms.

All of our public legal documents, and any changes to those documents, are drafted by our in-house Legal team. When new legal documents are published or edited, we notify all our users of the updates and provide a window for them to object before the new terms go into effect.

Guides and articles about legal topics

We also publish guides and technical articles about legal concepts that may affect our users. Here are some examples:

- Terms of Use and anti-spam requirements
- About the new anti-spam law
- Stay compliant with CASL

The Legal team performs periodic reviews of all marketing and technical content to make sure all related links and information is up to date.

Customer service messages

We respond to legal questions from users every day. We answer common CAN-SPAM inquiries, like "Why does my mailing address have to appear on campaigns?" We also see questions about our practices and policies, like "How long is data retained?" and "Where are your offices located?"

Our Support team handles most user communications. If a user raises a legal issue, a support agent will send the proposed reply to the Legal team for review. Users may also contact the Legal team directly.

Common issues can be reviewed and sent by a paralegal or other legal staff member. More complex issues, or issues threatening litigation or criminal wrongdoing, will be drafted by a paralegal, and then escalated to a lawyer for review.

Public communications

Occasionally we may have to publish communications about security, privacy, and other corporate issues. This could come in the form of an email to users, a blog post, a public statement, or a press release.

The Communications team works with the Legal team to write and publish these documents, and the executive team reviews them.

Additional Guidelines

When writing legal content, generally follow the style points outlined in the Voice and Tone and Grammar and Mechanics sections. Here are some more general considerations, too.

Start with the facts

We have some standard language that we use for common issues or requests, but since legal content is so fact-specific, we start there before getting into structure and format. That's why you won't see many templates for our legal content.

Use plain language

Legal content is serious business, so the tone is slightly more formal than most of our content. That said, we want all of our users to be able to understand our legal content. So whenever possible, we use plain language rather than legal jargon.

Instead of: "If an individual purports, and has the legal authority, to sign these Terms of Use electronically on behalf of an employer or client then that individual represents and warrants that they have full authority to bind the entity herein to the terms of this hereof agreement" We say: "If you sign up on behalf of a company or other entity, you represent and warrant that you have the authority to accept these Terms on their behalf."

There are some legal terms we have to include because either there's not a sufficient plain language alternative, or case law or statute dictates that term has to be used for the contract to hold up in court. For example, sometimes we need to say "represent and warrant" instead of "confirm" or "agree." If we use those terms, we can provide an example or quick definition to help people understand what they're reading. We can't avoid all legal terminology, but we can pare it down to what's necessary.

Some companies have complicated terms and write plain-language summaries so people can understand the agreement. We don't summarize our legal content, but instead try to write the terms themselves in plain language. We use a sidebar to provide examples or links to further reading for people who want more context.

Definitions

Using plain language for the terms you define up front can make legal documents easier to read. You've probably read contracts that say something like "The Corporation" or "The User" throughout, instead of "we" (meaning the company) and

"you" (meaning the user who is agreeing to the terms). There's a quick fix for that. At the beginning of the document, say something like:

- Arca Funds is owned and operated by Arca, LLC d/b/a Arca, a limited liability corporation ("Arca," "we," or "us"). As a user of the Service or a representative of an entity that's a user of the Service, you're a "Member" according to this agreement (or "you").

After that, you're free to use "we," "us," "you," and "your" throughout the rest of the agreement. That simple change makes the document much friendlier to read.

Contractions

We use contractions in many of our legal documents, which makes them sound more human and flow better with the rest of our content. Contracting words doesn't affect the validity of an agreement.

Never offer legal advice

While we want to inform our users about legal issues related to their use of Arca, we can't offer them legal advice. Sometimes it's a fine line. The legal department will check for this in their content review.

WRITING EMAIL NEWSLETTERS

We send a lot of email ourselves, and we follow our own best practices to set an example for users. But as devices shrink and the inbox evolves, our oldest tip is still the most important: Only send when you have something to say.

Basics

Our email newsletters help empower and inform Arca users. Here are the most common types of content we send by email:

- Industry announcements
- Tips for getting the most out of existing products and services
- Regular monthly newsletters
- Event invitations and information about online podcasts
- System alerts about changes to functionality or scheduled maintenance
- Internal newsletters

Email Guidelines

Email newsletters generally follow the style points outlined in the Voice and tone and Grammar and mechanics sections. Here are some additional considerations.

Consider all elements

Every email newsletter is made up of the following elements. Make sure they're all in place before clicking send.

From name

This is usually the company or team's name. It identifies the sender in the recipient's inbox.

Subject line

Keep your subject line descriptive. There's no perfect length, but some email clients display only the first words. Tell—don't sell—what's inside. Subject lines should be in sentence case. (Note that this is different from a headline, which you may want to include in the campaign itself.)

Preheader text

The top line of your campaign appears beside each subject line in the inbox. Provide the info readers need when they're deciding if they should open.

Body copy

Keep your content concise. Write with a clear purpose and connect each paragraph to your main idea. Add images when they're helpful.

Call to action

Make the next step clear. Whether you're asking people to buy something, read something, share something, or respond to something, offer a clear direction to close your message so readers know what to do next.

Footer

All campaigns follow CAN-SPAM rules. Include an unsubscribe link, mailing address, and permission reminder in the footer of each newsletter.

Consider your perspective

When sending an email newsletter from Arca, use the 3rd person "we." When sending a newsletter as an individual, use the 1st person.

Use a hierarchy

Most readers will be scanning your emails or viewing them on a small screen. Put the most important information first.

Include a call to action

Make the reader's next step obvious and close each campaign with a call to action. Link to a blog post, event registration, learn more page, or signup page. You can add a button or include a text link in the closing paragraph.

Avoid unnecessary links

More than 50 percent of emails are read on a mobile device. Limit links to the most important resources to focus your call to action and prevent errant taps on smaller screens.

Use alt text

Some email clients disable images by default. Include an alt tag to describe the information in the image for people who can't see it.

Segment your audience

It's exciting to send to millions of users at once, but it's doubtful that every subscriber is interested in every topic. Segment your list to find a particular audience that's likely to react.

Once you've selected an audience, adjust the language to fit their needs. For example, users who developed custom integrations are more likely to understand and appreciate direct, technical terms.

Test your campaigns

Run an Inbox Inspection to see your newsletter in different email clients. Read your campaign out loud to yourself, then send a test to a coworker for a second look.

WRITING FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

We use social media to build relationships with Arca's online community. However, social media use also creates opportunities to say the wrong thing, put customers off, and damage the Arca brand. So, we're careful and deliberate in what we post to our social media channels. This section lays out how we strike that delicate balance.

Basics

Arca has a presence on most major social media platforms. Here are our most active accounts and what we usually post on each:

- Twitter: Industry news, brand marketing, events, media mentions, evergreen content, "we're hiring!" posts
- LinkedIn: Industry news, recruiting content, media mentions, evergreen content

These channels are all managed by the Marketing team. We also have a few team-specific accounts on Behance, YouTube, Dribbble, and other platforms. The guidelines in this section apply to all Arca's channels.

Guidelines

Our writing for social media should generally follow the style points outlined in the Voice and tone and Grammar and mechanics sections. Here are some additional pointers, too.

Write short, but smart

Some social media platforms have a character limit; others don't. But for the most part, we keep our social media copy short.

- Twitter: 240 characters.
- LinkedIn: No limit, but aim for 1-2 short sentences.

To write short, simplify your ideas or reduce the amount of information you're sharing—but not by altering the spelling or punctuation of the words themselves. It's fine to use the shorter version of some words, like "info" for "information." But do not use numbers and letters in place of words, like "4" instead of "for" or "u" instead of "you."

Engagement

Do your best to adhere to Arca style guidelines when you're using our social media channels to correspond with users. Use correct grammar and punctuation—and avoid excessive exclamation points.

When appropriate, you can tag the subject of your post on Twitter or LinkedIn. But avoid directly tweeting at or otherwise publicly tagging a post subject with messages like, "Hey, we wrote about you!" Never ask for retweets, likes, or favorites.

- Yes: "We talked with @lauraolin about turning her awesome emails into a book. http://blog.Arca.com/how-laura-olins-emails-got-her-freelance-work-and-a-book-deal"
- No: "Hey @lauraolin, can you RT this post we wrote about you? http://blog.Arca.com/how-laura-olins-emails-got-her-freelance-work-and-a-book-deal"

#Hashtags and $Cashtags

We employ hashtags and cashtags rarely and deliberately. We may use them to promote an event or connect with users at a conference. Do not use current event or trending hashtags to promote Arca.

A cashtag is a very useful digital tool for investors who want to participate and access information on cryptocurrencies and large companies listed on the stock exchanges, and who are looking for specific data on official company websites, in this case the Twitter account.

How to use $Cashtags

If you want to peruse conversations happening around stocks and cryptocurrencies in real-time, cashtags are your best friends. Using them is easy:

- Substitute the hashtag sign (#) for the dollar sign ($).
- Type the ticker symbol (acronym) of the cryptocurrency or company you are searching for. For example: $TWTR for Twitter, $PEP for PepsiCo, or $GOOG for Google,
- Immediately, all the information related to the company or currency appears.

Tweetstorms

The tweetstorm is a must-use tool in your communications toolbox for driving and shaping the social media and traditional media conversation. Here are some great guidelines for using tweetstorms:

- [Tales of a Tweetstorm: Bringing Attention to Your Issue Rapid-Fire](#)
- [Organizing a Tweetstorm to Respond to Breaking News](#)
- [How to Write a Tweetstorm](#)
- [The right way to tweetstorm](#)

Trending topics

Do not use social media to comment on trending topics or current events that are unrelated to Arca.

Be aware of what's going on in the news when you're publishing social content for Arca. During major breaking news events, we turn off all promoted and scheduled social posts.

WRITING FOR ACCESSIBILITY

We're always working to make our content more accessible and usable to the widest possible audience. Writing for accessibility goes way beyond making everything on the page available as text. It also affects the way you organize content and guide readers through a page. Depending on the audience and country, there may be laws governing the level of accessibility required. At minimum, an accessible version should be available. Accessibility includes users of all mental and physical capacities, whether situational (broken glasses!) or more permanent.

Basics

We write for a diverse audience of readers who all interact with our content in different ways. We aim to make our content accessible to anyone using a screen reader, keyboard navigation, or Braille interface, and to users of all cognitive capabilities. As you write, consider the following:

- Would this language make sense to someone who doesn't work here?
- Could someone quickly scan this document and understand the material?
- If someone can't see the colors, images, or video, is the message still clear?
- Is the markup clean and structured?
- Mobile devices with accessibility features are increasingly becoming core communication tools, does this work well on them?

Many of the best practices for writing for accessibility echo those for writing technical content, with the added complexity of markup, syntax, and structure.

Avoid directional language

Avoid directional instructions and any language that requires the reader to see the layout or design of the page. This is helpful for many reasons, including layout changes on mobile.

- Yes: "Select from these options," (with the steps listed after the title)
- No: "Select from the options in the right sidebar."

Use headers

Headers should always be nested and consecutive. Never skip a header level for styling reasons. To help group sections, be sure the page title is H1, top-level sections are H2s, and subsequent inside those are H3 and beyond. Avoid excessive nesting.

Employ a hierarchy

Put the most important information first. Place similar topics in the same paragraph, and clearly separate different topics with headings.

Starting with a simple outline that includes key messages can help you create a hierarchy and organize your ideas in a logical way. This improves scannability and encourages better understanding.

Make true lists instead of using a paragraph or line breaks.

Label forms

Label inputs with clear names and use appropriate tags. Think carefully about what fields are necessary, especially those required. Label required fields clearly. The shorter the form, the better.

Use descriptive links

Links should provide information on the associated action or destination. Try to avoid "click here" or "learn more."

Use plain language

Write short sentences and use familiar words. Avoid jargon and slang. If you need to use an abbreviation or acronym that people may not understand, explain what it means on first reference.

Use alt text

The alt tag is the most basic form of image description, and it should be included on all images. The language will depend on the purpose of the image:

- If it's a creative photo or supports a story, describe the image in detail in a brief caption.
- If the image is serving a specific function, describe what's inside the image in detail. People who don't see the image should come away with the same information as if they had.
- If you're sharing a chart or graph, include the data in the alt text so people have all the important information.

Each browser handles alt tags differently. Supplement images with standard captions when possible.

Make sure closed captioning is available

Closed captioning or transcripts should be available for all videos. The information presented in videos should also be available in other formats.

Be mindful of visual elements

Images should not be the only method of communication, because images may not load or may not be seen. Avoid using images when the same information could be communicated in writing.

WRITING FOR TRANSLATION

The Arca website is viewed by thousands of users in hundreds of countries and territories, not just the United States. As our user base grows, it becomes more and more important that our content is accessible to people around the world.

We call the process of writing copy for translation "internationalization." This section will address things you can do to help international audiences, including translators, better comprehend your text.

Basics

We try to write all of our content in standard, straightforward English that can be understood by users with limited English proficiency. It's much easier for a translator to clearly communicate ideas written in straightforward, uncomplicated sentences. Here are some guiding principles for writing for international audiences:

- **Use active voice.** We always aim for this, but it's especially important when writing for translation.
- **Use the subject-verb-object sentence structure.** It's not used by all languages, but it's widely recognized.
- **Use positive words when talking about positive situations.** For example, because a question like "Don't you think she did a great job?" begins with a negative word, a non-native English speaker may interpret its implication as negative. A better version would be "She did a good job, right?"

Guidelines

When writing for international audiences, we generally follow what's outlined in the Voice and tone and Grammar and mechanics sections. But in this section more than others, some style points contradict what's stated elsewhere in the guide. If you're writing something to be translated, the guidelines in this section should take precedence.

Consider cultural differences

Arca's voice is conversational and informal. However, in some cultures, informal text may be considered offensive. Check with your translator to see if this is the case for the particular language you're writing for.

The translation company should give the option to translate in a formal or informal tone, if the language allows for it. (For example, in Spanish, it is possible to write informally where tú = you or formally where usted = you.)

When writing text that will be translated, be careful about making references to things of local or regional importance. These may not be recognizable to readers outside the US.

Prioritize clarity

Keep your copy brief, but don't sacrifice clarity for brevity. You may need to repeat or add words to make the meaning of your sentences clear to a translator.

Repeat verbs that have multiple subjects.

- Yes: Customers who have ordered online can pick up their food at the cashier. Walk-in customers should stop by the cashier to order their food.
- No: Customers who have ordered online or who are walk-ins should stop at the cashier to order or pick up their food.

Repeat subjects and verbs

- Yes: The Standard plan offers predicted demographics, but the Essentials plan does not.
- No: The Standard plan offers predicted demographics, but not the Essentials plan.

Avoid ambiguity and confusion

Many words, parts of speech, and grammar mechanics we don't think twice about have the potential to cause confusion for translators and non-native English speakers. Here are some of the big trouble spots to avoid.

Avoid -ing words

In English, many different types of words end in -ing: nouns, adjectives, progressive verbs, etc. But a translator who is a non-native English speaker may not be able to recognize the distinctions and may try to translate them all in the same way.

Because of this, we want to avoid -ing words when possible. One exception to this rule is words like "graphing calculator" and "riding lawnmower," where the -ing word is part of a noun's name and can't be worked around.

Here are some other cases where you might see -ing words, and suggestions for how to edit around them.

Gerunds

- Yes: In this article we will talk about list subscriber collection.
- No: In this article we will talk about getting list subscribers.

Adjectives

- Yes: At the top of the page, there is icon with a smile on his face.
- No: At the top of the page, there is a smiling icon.

Parts of verbs

- Yes: Several developers are currently working on that feature.
- No: Several developers are working on that feature. (When you can't easily avoid the -ing word, it may help to add an adverb to clarify the meaning.)

Parts of phrases modifying nouns

- Yes: From our backyard, we could hear the planes that took off from the airport.
- No: From our backyard, we could hear the planes taking off from the airport.

Other words and mechanics to avoid

- Slang, idioms, and cliches
- Shortened words, even if they're common in English (use "application," not "app")
- Uncommon foreign words (use "genuine," not "bona fide")
- Unnecessary abbreviations (use "for example," not "e.g.")
- *I.e.* is an abbreviation for the phrase *id est*, which means "that is." *I.e.* is used to restate something said previously in order to clarify its meaning
- Converting one part of speech into another if it isn't already commonly used (use "Send us an email" instead of "message us")
- Non-standard or indirect verb usage (use "he says," not "he's like" or "he was all")
- Double negatives
- Synonyms, generally. Don't use a lot of different words for the same thing in a single piece of writing. Instead of mixing it up with "campaign," "newsletter," "bulletin," etc., pick one term and stick with it.

Beware words with multiple meanings

"Once" (could mean "one time," "after," "in the past," or "when") – Yes: After you log in, you will see your account's Dashboard. – No: Once you log in, you will see your account's Dashboard.

"Right" (could mean "correct," "the opposite of left," "politically conservative," etc.)
- Yes: In the File Manager, click the correct image and drag it to the pane at right.
- No: In the File Manager, click the right image and drag it to the right pane.

"Since" (could refer to a point in time, or a synonym of "because")
- Yes: Because you already have a complete mailing list, you can send your campaign at any time.
- No: Since you already have complete mailing list, you can send your campaign at any time.

"Require" plus an infinitive (could confuse the relationship between subject and object)

- Yes: Autoresponders can be configured and sent from paid accounts.
- No: A paid account is required to send autoresponders. (This could imply that users with paid accounts are required to send autoresponders.)

"Has" or "have" plus past participle (could confuse the relationship between subject and object)

- Yes: The folder contains sent campaigns.
- No: The folder has sent campaigns.

Measurements

When writing for an international audience, use the metric system. Spell out all units and avoid abbreviation.

Currency

Many countries call their currency "the dollar," but the value is going to differ between countries. The US dollar is not the same as the Canadian dollar, for example. So, it's important to specify.

Indicate currency by using its 3-letter abbreviation, such as USD or CAD. Don't use currency symbols, like $ or €. We would say 25 USD, not $25.

Avoid colloquial phrases that relate to money, like "five-and-dime," "greenbacks," or "c-notes." These won't translate well.

CREATING STRUCTURED CONTENT

At Arca, we write 2 kinds of content: structured and unstructured. Most of our technical and educational documents are structured, following standardized content templates. These templates make both writing and reading easier. They also help future-proof our documents, making it easier for developers to come in later and add semantic data to make the work reusable outside of where it was originally published. This section lays out when to use a structured content template and how to create a template of your own.

Basics

While some content types are better served by a unique structure created by the writer, others lend themselves to a reusable structure. Blog posts, newsletter content, and most marketing copy are all examples of unstructured content that will vary from piece to piece. The more reusable your content might be, the more helpful a content template will be.

Consider using a template if:

- Users would benefit from seeing your content multiple places
- Readers need to be able to scan it
- Writers need to be able to create it quickly
- You want to encourage repeat visits and familiarity with your content

All educational content at Arca relies heavily on content templates. We use templates for Technical Content, data sheets, marketing guides, and more.

Guidelines

If you're looking for a template for your structured content but can't find one that meets your needs, you may want to create your own. There are 2 main ways to approach this.

Use a model

If you already have a piece of content that serves its purpose well, use it as a model. Review some of the templates in the style guide to see how granular you might want to get and look for any elements you might want to add.

As you read through the model document, make a list of all the individual parts that make up the piece. Then briefly describe what they do and how they do it.

Common elements in templates are:

- Title
- Introduction
- Body content (which can usually be broken apart into smaller elements)
- Additional links

Keep in mind that the template must be reusable, so it's best to focus on the high-level goal of the content type, rather than the message of a particular piece.

Start from scratch

If you like outlining before you write, that's a great way to start your template. This will give you an early look at the elements you'll include in your final template and will help organize your writing process.

You may prefer to write a draft first, then outline later based on how the parts fit together. Read your draft closely and identify the important elements or patterns you've used. Looking for things like introductions, sections with headings, tables, images, and other elements that aren't topic specific. Write them out and describe how they inform the meaning or usability of the piece.

Create your template by listing out the elements you identify in your outline or draft. Consider each element and what it contributes to the meaning of the piece. Is its purpose important enough that every content of this type should include it? If so, make it part of your template.

Copywrite & Industry Terms

Do's & Don'ts
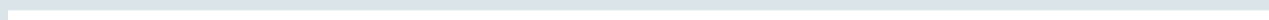
Copyright & Industry Terms

COPYRIGHT AND TRADEMARKS

Copyright is a bundle of exclusive legal rights that vary depending on the type of work. A copyright owner can grant some or all of those rights to others through a license. This section will lay out our approach to copyrights, trademarks, and Creative Commons licenses.

Basics

Copyright protection applies to any original works that are fixed in a tangible medium. This includes works like drawings, recordings of a song, short stories, or paintings, but not something like a garden, since it will grow and change by nature. Copyright does not cover facts, ideas, names, or characters.

Copyright protection begins when the work is first created and it doesn't require any formal filings. However, to enforce a copyright in the US, you need to register the work with the US Copyright Office.

Copyright notice on the work is not required but it *is* recommended, since it cuts off a defense of innocent infringement.

Copyright at Arca

Copyright law applies to nearly every piece of content we create at Arca, from our website to our blog posts to the gifts we make for our users. We display proper—and prominent—copyright notice on our website site and any other content we produce. At minimum, these copyright notices read, "© [YEAR] Arca."

At the bottom of every page of our website, we also include a longer notice to make it clear that all rights are reserved, and our marks are registered: "© 2018-2021 All Rights Reserved.

Other creators' copyrights

We respect the copyright of other creators. If we want to use someone else's copyrighted work, we have to obtain a license from the owners.

A copyright license spells out these terms:

- Where we can use the work
- How long we can use it for
- How much we'll pay them for the use
- Whether or not we're the only ones who can use the work
- What we can do with the work
- Any restrictions on our use (for example, that we can use it online but not on a billboard)

A common license will read something like this:

"You grant Arca a perpetual, worldwide, non-exclusive, royalty free license to display, distribute, and publish the Work in our marketing in any medium now known or later developed."

If you need to get a copyright license for work at Arca or if someone outside of Arca asks to use our copyrighted work, please contact the legal team.

Social media and copyright

This is an area where the letter of the law and common practice sometimes differ. Social media posts often include copyrighted elements like pictures, GIFs, or pieces of writing. If you're using a copyrighted element in a commercial manner on social media, you should request permission from the copyright holder. Since Arca is a company, we defer to the position that our use will be perceived as commercial. But if you're using it in a more informative or commentary way, like sharing a meme to indicate how you feel about a news story, you may not need to request permission. Regardless, you should always link to the source of the copyrighted element you're using, and never make it look like you created work that belongs to someone else.

Image use and copyright

Arca almost always uses original images in our blog posts. If you use an image, photo, or other design element made by someone outside Arca, get permission first. Once you have permission, always give the copyright owner credit and link back to the original source.

Images retrieved via Google image search are not licensed for fair use, but many images are available under license through stock photo websites, or open for use under a Creative Commons license. Arca retains a photo gallery of curated images for use under a Creative Commons license. Use those first.

Creative Commons licenses

Instead of the standard "all rights reserved," some creators choose to make their work available for public use with different levels of attribution required. That's what we've done with this style guide. Find a breakdown of licenses on the [Creative Commons website](#).

Please check with Arca's legal team before making something you created here available under a Creative Commons license. We love to share our work, but we use these licenses sparingly, because we have to protect our intellectual property and trade secrets.

Trademarks

A trademark, often called a mark, can be a word, name, sign, design, or a combination of those. It's used to identify the provider of a particular product or service. They're usually words and images, but in some cases, they can even be a [color](#).

To be protectable, a trademark needs a distinctive element. There's a "spectrum of distinctiveness" that spans from inherently protectable marks to ones that require additional proof to ones that may never be protected.

- **Fanciful marks**, which are made up words like Kodak or Xerox, are the most easily registered and protected.
- **Arbitrary marks**, which are words which are used out of context like Apple or Sprite, are also easy to protect.
- **Suggestive marks**, which suggest at some element of the goods or services like Greyhound, follow.
- **Descriptive marks**, where the word's dictionary meaning aligns with the goods or services offered, like Mr. Plumber or Lektronic, are not protectable unless they develop a secondary meaning. That means a consumer would immediately associate the mark with only that good or service. This can be hard to prove, so it's best to avoid descriptive marks when possible.
- **Generic terms**, or the common name for a product or service, are not protectable.

We usually classify Arca as a fanciful mark, but it could also be considered arbitrary. A trademark is only valid for as long as it indicates the source of that good or service, so we have to be very careful about how our marks are used. We may send out cease and desist letters because even the friendliest companies have to protect their trademarks. If a trademark is properly protected, it can last forever and may be a company's most valuable asset.

Displaying trademark notices

To note that something is a trademark, and in the case of registered marks in order to collect damages, the trademark has to be displayed with an appropriate symbol.

Here are the various trademark symbols and when to use them:

- For unregistered trademarks of goods, use ™
- For unregistered trademarks of services, use ℠
- For trademarks granted registration by the United States Patent and Trademark Office, use ®
  - Note that using ® on marks that haven't been registered by the USPTO can be considered fraud, so if you're not sure if a trademark is registered, don't use ® .

The trademark symbol should appear as close to the mark as possible.
Here's how to indicate Arca's trademark:

- Include the ® symbol in the upper right-hand corner, above the word: Arca® this use is preferable.
- Include the ® symbol in the lower right-hand corner, below the word: Arca®

Marks are also sometimes indicated by using all caps: ARCA.

Our trademarks should be properly noted the first time they're used in a press release or article, or anywhere else our trademark and copyright notice does not appear.

Registering trademarks at Arca

We register all of our trademarks. Before we decide to use a name for a product, we perform a trademark search to make sure there aren't any confusingly similar trademarks already in use.

For the most part, our trademarks are "fanciful marks," which mean the name is fictional or a play on words.

If you're working on a new product at Arca, submit name possibilities to the legal team so they can get a head start on the trademark search. Even if you haven't used the name yet, we can go ahead and file an Intent to Use application.

WORD LIST

Standardized spellings

These words can be slippery. Here's how we write them. (If it's not on this list, defer to the [AP Style Guide](#).)

- pass-through
- on-chain
- off-chain
- trade-off
- add-on (noun, adjective), add on (verb)
- back end (noun), back-end (adjective)
- best seller (noun), best-selling (adjective)
- beta
- brick-and-mortar
- checkbox
- coworker
- click-through rate (CTR)
- cost per click
- double-click
- drop-down (noun, adjective), drop down (verb)
- e-commerce (the industry)
- ePub
- email (never hyphenate, never capitalize unless it begins a sentence)
  - To name
  - From name
  - Reply-to name
  - Subject line
  - Cc, Bcc
- emoji (singular and plural)
- front end (noun), front-end (adjective)
- geolocation
- hashtag
- homepage
- integrate
- internet (never capitalize unless it begins a sentence)
- login (noun, adjective), log in (verb)
- Like (the social media activity)
- multichannel
- nonprofit
- OK
- omnichannel (use sparingly)

- online (never capitalize unless it begins a sentence)
- opt-in (noun, adjective), opt in (verb)
- pay-per-click (PPC)
- pop-up (noun, adjective), pop up (verb)
- pre-sale
- product-market fit
- signup (noun, adjective), sign up (verb)
- sync
- third party (noun), third-party (adjective)
- tweet, retweet
- username
- URL
- website
- WiFi

Words to use carefully

We use plain language, which means avoiding industry jargon. But some jargon-adjacent words can be appropriate in educational contexts. Only use these if you're writing about marketing education and have room to briefly define them.

- buyer journey
- conversion
- customer lifecycle
- integrated marketing
- lead generation
- marketing funnel
- multichannel marketing
- omnichannel marketing
- product-market fit
- value proposition

Words to avoid

- funnel, incentivize, leverage, disruption, thought leader, learnings, or other fluffy corporate terms
- internets, interwebs, or any other variation of the word "internet"
- ninja, rockstar, wizard, unicorn (unless referring to a literal ninja, rockstar, wizard, or unicorn)
- young, old, elderly, or any other word describing a person's age
- crushing it, killing it
- crazy, insane, or similar words to describe people
- best-in-breed

- Silicon Valley cliches like rise and grind, or disruptor/disruption.
- activation (when referring to our presence at an event)
- blacklist, whitelist, grandfathered, slave, master, deaf, blind and any other racist or ableist terms

INDUSTRY TERMS

- Crypto vs digital assets
    - Always use digital assets when speaking high level
    - Crypto can be used in a more casual setting
- Bitcoin vs bitcoin
    - As a concept or a network, Bitcoin is capitalized
    - As a currency unit, bitcoin is lowercase
- dApp
    - When starting a sentence utilize DApp
    - If speaking in plural terms utilize dApps
- Layer 1 | Layer 2
- Tokenization vs Digitization
    - Use digitization when speaking high level in the financial industry
    - Use tokenization secondarily, when speaking about specific products
- Digital asset ecosystem
    - Anytime the word after digital asset has a plural meaning, asset is singular
    - When a product comes after digital asset that is plural, asset is singular
    - For example, Digital asset funds
- Digital assets ecosystem
- Token holder
- Use cases

TL;DR

The Basics
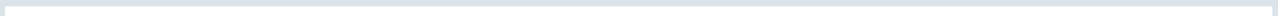
TL;DR

Too Long; Didn't Read

The Arca Editorial Style Guide goes into depth on many subjects. It may be more information than you need.

Here are the most important things to know.

Principles

Good content is:

- Clear
- Useful
- Friendly
- Appropriate

Voice and tone

Arca's voice is:

- Human
- Familiar
- Friendly
- Straightforward

Our tone changes depending on the situation, but it's generally professional and relatable and we value clarity over entertainment.

Our priorities are to educate our users about our products without patronizing or confusing them, so they can get their work done and get on with their lives.

Writing about people

We write and build services with a person-first perspective. Being aware of the impact of your language will help make Arca a better place to work and a better steward of our values in the world.

- Don't reference age or disability unless it's relevant to what you're writing.
- Avoid gendered language and use the singular "they."
- When writing about a person, use their preferred pronouns; if you don't know those, just use their name.

Related resource: The [Conscious Style Guide](#).

Grammar and mechanics

- Some people will read every word you write. Others will just scan. Help everyone by grouping related ideas together and using descriptive headers and subheaders.
- Focus your message and create a hierarchy of information. Lead with the main point or the most important content.
- Use active voice and positive language.
- Use short words and sentences.
- Avoid unnecessary modifiers.
- Use specific examples.
- Avoid vague language.
- Be consistent. Adhere to the copy patterns and style points outlined in this guide.
- Feel free to use contractions.
- Use the serial comma. Otherwise, use common sense.
- When in doubt, read your writing out loud.

Web elements

- Organize your page around one topic.
- Use clear, descriptive terms that relate to the topic in titles and headings.
- Give every image descriptive alt text.
- **Buttons** should always contain actions. The language should be clear and concise. Capitalize every word, including articles.
- Use sentence case for **checkboxes** and **radio buttons**.
- Use title case for **drop-down menu names** and sentence case for **menu items**.
- Use title case for **form titles** and sentence case for **form fields**. Only request information that we need and intend to use. Don't ask for irrelevant personal information, like gender.

- Use title case for **main navigation**. Use sentence case for **subnavigation**.
- Use title case for **headings** and sentence case for **subheadings**.
- Organize headings and subheadings in a hierarchy, with heading first, followed by subheadings in order.
- Include the most relevant keywords in your headings and subheadings.
- Provide a link whenever you're referring to a website, relevant content, and trusted external resources.
- Don't say things like "Click here!" or "Click for more information" or "Read this." Instead, link relevant keywords.
- Use lists to present steps, groups, or sets of info. Set up your list with a brief introduction. Number lists when the order of information is important.

Writing for accessibility

- Create a hierarchy, with the most important information first.
- Place similar topics in the same paragraph, and clearly separate different topics with headings.
- Use plain language. Write short sentences and familiar words.
- Links should provide information on the associated action or destination. Avoid saying "click here" or "learn more."
- Avoid using images when descriptive text will do.
- Avoid directional instructions or language that requires the reader to see the layout or design of the page.
- Label inputs on forms with clear names and use appropriate tags. Think carefully about what fields are necessary, and especially which ones you mark as required.

Writing for translation

- Use active voice.
- Avoid double negatives.
- Use contractions with caution.
- Avoid using synonyms for the same word in a single piece of writing.
- Write briefly, but don't sacrifice clarity for brevity. You may need to repeat or add words to make the meaning of your sentences clear to a translator.
- Avoid slang, idioms, and cliches.
- Avoid unnecessary abbreviations.

Download the Complete Media Kit

Arca Masterbrand Media Kit