

Writing Headlines

Headlines are an extremely important part of writing. They help create a design for the section, and entice readers to read the story.

Main Headlines and Subheads

The main story on each spread should have both a main headline and a subhead. The main headline doesn't have to contain a verb, especially if it features a clever twist.

The subhead should contain a verb and should be similar to a one-sentence story summary, but should not end with a period. It should not repeat words or ideas from the main headline because the goal is to convey two distinctive viewpoints.

Writing Headlines

The main headline is usually two to three times larger in size than the subhead. Use words and ideas that connect the reader to the idea of the story. If the page features a story on marching band, the headline might be: "The Music Men," "Marching Orders" or "Putting the Best Foot Forward."

In addition to this larger headline, a subhead could summarize the essence of the story as in the following example:

Putting the Best Foot Forward

Band takes top honors in state competition

Note that the main headline teases and the subhead highlights the story's main theme. Neither headline repeats words or roots of words. Both provide entry points that invite readers to explore the story.

One way to create a main headline is to find a verbal-visual link between the dominant photo and the story. A story on the band might have a dominant photo of the horn section, and the main headline could be: "Tooting Their Own Horns," "Brass Acts" or "Horning In"

The subhead would follow up with: "Awards come easily for seasoned marching band"

Avoid words that are obvious, as in the following examples: "Swimmers make a splash" or "Wrestlers hit the mats"

Brass Acts

Awards come easily for seasoned marching band

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