



# Writing & Editing News Style Packages

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

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## 1. Introduction ✨

Welcome to the world of TV writing and editing. This is where words wield the power to inform, engage, and captivate audiences. In this fast-paced realm of journalism and digital media production, crafting news-style packages is an art that combines precision and storytelling finesse. Whether it's the voice behind the anchor desk or the unseen narratives behind the scenes, this introduction will provide essential insights into writing and editing news-style packages.

In this dynamic landscape, news-style packages are the backbone of modern journalism and storytelling. They deliver the day's events with clarity, brevity, and impact, ensuring that viewers and readers are well-informed and updated. In this guide, we will explore the key elements of crafting a compelling news style package, from writing concise leads that hook the audience to organizing information in the **inverted pyramid** style to maintain clarity and urgency.

But news writing is more than just stringing words together—it's about understanding the audience's needs, maintaining journalistic ethics, and embracing the ever-evolving digital landscape. As editors, you'll play a vital role in shaping content, vetting information, and ensuring accuracy and credibility.

Throughout this journey, the emphasis is on the importance of remaining unbiased, fact-checking rigorously, and presenting information in a balanced and impartial manner. Your dedication to journalistic integrity will fortify the trust between newsrooms or media companies and their audiences.

So, whether you're aiming to break the latest headlines or curate engaging stories, the art of writing and editing news-style packages is a skill that unlocks the doors to the world's most significant events. Let's embark on this enlightening journey together to uncover the secrets to becoming a proficient news writer and editor.

Writing a TV news style package involves creating a concise and engaging news segment that includes all the necessary elements to inform the audience effectively

**Choose a Newsworthy Topic:**

Select a current and relevant news story that would interest your target audience. The story should be timely and have a significant impact or relevance to your viewers.

**Research and Gather Information:**

Conduct thorough research on the chosen topic. Gather facts, statistics, quotes from relevant sources, and any visuals that can help enhance the story.

**Craft a Strong Opening:** Start your package with a compelling and attention-grabbing introduction. This could be a catchy phrase, a startling fact, or a powerful image related to the story.

**Provide Context:** Briefly explain the background and context of the news story. This helps the audience understand why the event or issue is important and how it fits into the broader picture.

**Present the Main Content:** Organize the information in a clear and logical manner. Put the most critical information at the beginning and follow up with supporting details. Use short sentences and simple language to make the content easily digestible for viewers.

**Include Interviews:** Incorporate soundbites from relevant experts, witnesses, or people directly affected by the story. These interviews should add depth and credibility to your package.

**Use Visuals:** Television news relies heavily on visuals. Include video clips, images, infographics, or relevant B-roll footage to complement the narration and enhance the story's impact.

**Stay Objective and Unbiased:** Report the facts impartially and avoid inserting personal opinions or biases into the package. Let the audience form their own opinions based on the information presented.

## Also...

**Address Counterarguments:** If applicable, acknowledge counterarguments or alternative viewpoints related to the story. This demonstrates thorough and fair reporting.

**Keep It Concise:** Aim for a package that lasts between 1.5 to 3 minutes. TV news segments have limited time, so every second counts.

**End with a Strong Conclusion:** Wrap up the package with a concise summary of the main points. You can also include a closing line that leaves a lasting impression or encourages viewers to take action if relevant.

**Practice Delivery:** If you'll be presenting the news package on camera, practice your delivery to ensure a confident and clear presentation.

**Edit and Revise:** Review your news style package for clarity, accuracy, and flow. Make any necessary edits or revisions before broadcasting or publishing.

**Get Feedback:** If possible, seek feedback from colleagues or mentors to improve the quality of your news-style package.

News style-packages are designed to inform, engage, and deliver information concisely. By following these steps, you can create a well-structured and compelling story.

## 2. Structuring ✨

Structuring a News-style package involves presenting information in a format suitable for broadcast. It should be concise, visually engaging, and follow a specific sequence to keep the viewers' attention. Here's a step-by-step guide on how to structure a News-style package:

### **1. Intro/Tease:**

- The package begins with a short teaser or introduction that grabs the audience's attention and introduces the main topic of the story. This can be a few seconds of compelling footage or a hooking statement by the anchor.

### **2. Opening Shot:**

- Start the package with a visually striking shot related to the story. It could be a relevant image or video footage that sets the scene and captures the viewer's interest.

### **3. Lead Voiceover:**

- The anchor or reporter delivers a concise and attention-grabbing headline, followed by a lead voiceover that provides essential information about the story. This should answer the who, what, when, where, why, and how questions in a few sentences.

### **4. Background and Context:**

- Offer some background information and context to help viewers understand the significance of the story. This may include relevant facts, statistics, historical information, or previous developments related to the topic.

### **5. Main Body:**

- Present the main content of the story in a sequence that flows logically. This could involve a series of short segments, each covering a different aspect of the story. Use video clips, images, and interviews to enhance the narrative and keep the visuals engaging.

### **6. Soundbites/Interviews:**

- Incorporate soundbites or short interviews with relevant people involved in the story. These should be concise and provide insights or perspectives related to the topic.

## 7. Visuals and B-roll:

- Use B-roll footage (additional footage that complements the main shots) to provide visual variety and support the narration. B-roll can include relevant scenes, locations, or actions related to the story. Other visuals can include full-screen graphics detailing information that may be hard to follow such as percentages and numerical values that need to be seen on the screen.

## 8. Transitions:

- Use smooth transitions between different segments of the story to maintain a cohesive flow. Transitions can be accomplished through visual effects or voiceover transitions.

## 9. Conclusion:

- Summarize the main points of the story and reiterate its importance. The conclusion should be brief and leave a lasting impression on the viewers.

## 10. Tag-out:

- End the package with a closing statement from the anchor or reporter, often called a tag-out. This can be a brief remark that emphasizes the main message of the story.

## 11. Outro:

- Conclude the package with a fade-out or a transition to the next segment or news item. The outro may also include a teaser for an upcoming story.

**Remember** that a TV news-style package is typically short, ranging from 1 to 3 minutes. It needs to be visually engaging and follow a clear narrative structure to keep the viewers' attention. Be sure to practice delivering your script with a confident and authoritative voice, keeping in mind the visual elements that will complement your narration.

# 3. What is B-Roll?

**B-roll** is a term commonly used in film and television production, especially in the context of news reporting, documentaries, and video storytelling. It refers to supplementary or secondary footage that is used to visually complement the main or primary footage, which typically consists of interviews or scenes directly related to the main subject of the story. The B-roll is essential for adding depth, visual interest, and context to the storytelling process.

The term "B-roll" comes from the early days of filmmaking when the footage was categorized into two main rolls:

- "A-roll" (the main footage with primary content) and
- "B-roll" (additional or supporting footage). The distinction is still used today, even though the majority of the footage is now recorded digitally.

### **B-roll serves several purposes in video production:**

**Visual Enhancement:** B-roll is used to show relevant scenes, locations, or actions related to the main story. It helps to illustrate what is being discussed and provides context to the audience.

**Seamless Editing:** B-roll helps smooth out the transitions between different segments of a story, making the final video more cohesive and polished.

**Covering Edits:** In some cases, B-roll is used to cover up edits in interviews or main footage. This helps create a more seamless and visually appealing final product.

**Breaking Monotony:** Constantly showing the main footage can become visually monotonous. The B-roll breaks this monotony by adding variety and interest to the video.

**Time Compression:** B-roll can help compress time in a story. For example, it can be used to show a time-lapse of a building being constructed instead of showing the entire process in real-time.

B-roll footage can include a wide range of shots, such as establishing shots of locations, close-ups of objects, people engaging in relevant activities, and footage that highlights the theme or emotion of the story.

**Overall, B-roll is a powerful tool** in video production, providing visual storytelling elements that enrich the viewer's experience and contribute to the overall impact of the video.

# 4. How to write a good lede to your package.

Writing a compelling lead (also spelled "lead") is crucial for capturing the reader's attention and drawing them into your story. The lead is the opening paragraph or sentence of a news article or feature story, and it should summarize the main point of the story while piquing the reader's interest. Here are some tips on how to write an effective lead.

**Be Clear and Concise:** Keep your lead brief and to the point. It should convey the most critical information in a concise manner.

**Answer the Five W's and H:** Address the who, what, when, where, why, and how questions in your lead. This provides the essential facts and context for the reader.

**Use Active Voice:** Write your lead in the active voice to make it more engaging and immediate. Passive voice can sound distant and less impactful.

**Create an Intriguing Hook:** Start with a hook that grabs the reader's attention. It could be a surprising fact, a provocative statement, a question, or a compelling anecdote.

**Focus on the News Value:** Highlight the news value or significance of the story. Why is this information important, and why should the reader care?

**Use Strong Verbs and Adjectives:** Choose powerful verbs and descriptive adjectives to make your lead vivid and engaging.

**Avoid Jargon and Unnecessary Details:** Keep your lead accessible to a broad audience. Avoid using jargon or technical terms that might confuse readers at this stage.

**Match the Tone of the Story:** The lead should set the tone for the rest of the article. If your story is serious, the lead should reflect that. If it's lighthearted, the lead should be as well.

**Consider the Inverted Pyramid:** In news writing, the inverted pyramid style places the most important information at the beginning, followed by supporting details in descending order of importance. The lead should reflect this structure.

**Revise and Refine:** Don't be afraid to revise your lead several times to find the most impactful and captivating version.

Here's an example of a lead for a News-Style Package about a recent scientific discovery:

"Breaking barriers and unveiling the mysteries of the universe, scientists have made a monumental breakthrough in a recent scientific discovery. This cutting-edge research promises to reshape our understanding of COVID-19."

Writing a TV news-style package lead requires a concise and attention-grabbing introduction that quickly communicates the main point of the story. Since television news packages have limited time, the lead must be captivating and provide a clear summary of the story. Here are some tips for writing a TV news-style package lead:

**Keep It Short:** TV news leads are typically brief, usually one or two sentences at most. Aim to deliver the key information in a concise manner.

**Focus on the Core Message:** Identify the most critical aspect of the story and focus on that for your lead. Avoid going into too many details right away.

**Use Clear and Direct Language:** Use straightforward language that the audience can easily understand. Avoid jargon or complex terms that might confuse viewers.

**State the Who and What:** Address the "who" and "what" of the story in the lead. Tell the viewers who or what the story is about.

**Highlight the Impact or Importance:** Emphasize the significance or impact of the story. Why should viewers care about this topic?

**Consider Using a Strong Verb:** Begin the lead with a powerful verb that conveys action and immediacy.

**Create a Sense of Urgency or Curiosity:** Use words that create a sense of urgency or curiosity to compel viewers to continue watching.

**Avoid Revealing Everything:** While the lead should provide a clear idea of the story's subject, it should not give away all the details. Leave some room for viewers to want to know more.

**Practice Your Delivery:** As TV news is delivered verbally, practice saying the lead out loud to ensure it flows smoothly and sounds engaging.

**Fit within Time Constraints:** Remember that TV news packages have limited time, so make sure your lead can be delivered within a few seconds.

## 5. Common terminology in News-Style packages

In TV news packages, various industry-specific terms are used to describe different elements and aspects of the production. Here are some common terminologies used in video field productions:

**Package:** A pre-recorded news story that includes interviews, B-roll footage, and a reporter's narration. It is usually edited to fit within a specific time slot.

**Lead:** The opening sentence or paragraph of a news story that summarizes the main point and captures the audience's attention.

**B-roll:** Supplementary or secondary footage that complements the main footage and provides visual context and variety.

**Soundbite:** A short excerpt from an interview or speech, typically used to convey a particular point or opinion.

**VO (Voiceover):** A narration by the reporter or anchor that plays over video footage.

**VO/SOT (Voiceover/Sound on Tape):** A news segment that begins with the reporter's narration (voiceover) and then transitions to a soundbite from an interviewee (sound on tape).

**Stand-up:** A segment in which the reporter appears on camera, often reporting from the scene of the story.

**Lower Third:** A graphic that appears on the lower third of the screen, displaying the name and title of the person being interviewed or providing additional information.

**Package Tag:** The concluding part of a news package, often a brief summary or additional information provided by the reporter.

**Bump-in/Bump-out:** The short video clips at the beginning and end of a package that show the reporter on camera.

**Crossfade:** A transition between two video clips or images where one fades out while the other fades in.

**Cutaway:** A shot that temporarily replaces the main shot, often used to cover edits or enhance the storytelling.

**Live Shot:** A live on-location broadcast from a reporter or anchor.

**Cue:** A signal or prompt for someone, such as a reporter or anchor, to start speaking.

**Two-Shot:** A camera shot that includes two people, often an interviewer and an interviewee, in the frame.

**OTS (Over-the-Shoulder):** A shot of the reporter or anchor speaking while visuals or graphics are displayed on the screen.

**Mic Flag:** A small logo or flag attached to a microphone to identify the news organization.

**Tease:** A short promotional segment used to build interest in an upcoming news story or broadcast.



## 6. Mastering Narrative Angles: Crafting Compelling Video Stories

Storytelling is an art that revolves around perspective, and one of the key elements that adds depth and intrigue to a video or TV news story is the *narrative angle*. The following information helps us unravel the concept of narrative angles in storytelling and helps us explore how producers/editors, journalists, and reporters employ various angles to present stories in captivating and impactful ways.

## □ Understanding Narrative Angles:

Narrative angle refers to the specific perspective, approach, or focus that a news story takes. It shapes how information is presented, the emotions it evokes, and the audience's engagement. These angles serve as the lenses through which viewers perceive the events and issues being reported.

## □ Types of Narrative Angles

- **Human Interest Angle:** This angle humanizes the news by focusing on personal stories, emotions, and experiences of individuals affected by the events. It resonates emotionally with viewers and helps them connect with the subject matter.
- **Investigative Angle:** Journalists dig deep to uncover hidden truths, corruption, or misconduct. This angle aims to expose wrongdoing and holds those responsible accountable.
- **Conflict Angle:** Centered around clashes of ideas, interests, or forces, this angle highlights the tension and drama inherent in a situation. It's commonly used to depict social or political disputes.
- **Solution Angle:** Instead of just presenting problems, this angle offers potential solutions to issues, inspiring hope and encouraging positive change.
- **Trend Angle:** This angle explores emerging patterns, societal shifts, or popular trends, providing insights into broader changes over time.

## □ Applying Narrative Angles

- **Breaking News:** In fast-paced situations, journalists often use a straightforward approach, focusing on facts and updates to keep viewers informed.
- **In-depth Features:** Longer segments allow for more nuanced angles, diving into various facets of a story to provide context and depth.
- **Profile Stories:** Here, the human interest angle shines as it introduces viewers to people's lives, struggles, triumphs, and aspirations.
- **Societal Stories:** An aspect of society, culture, or ideological angle helps dissect policy decisions, trends, debates, and their implications for the public.
- **Solution Stories:** This can offer ways to address the challenges while highlighting their impact on communities.

**The Impact of Narrative Angles:** Narrative angles are potent tools that can influence public perception, drive empathy, and spark conversations. They determine whether a story is gripping or mundane, and how long it resonates with viewers.

- **Evolving Landscape:** In the age of digital media and social platforms, narrative angles are adapting to shorter attention spans. Visual storytelling, concise narratives, and interactive elements are becoming integral.

Narrative angles are the compasses that guide producers and journalists through the sea of information, enabling them to shape news stories into compelling narratives. By strategically choosing and skillfully executing these angles, storytellers captivate their audience, illuminate important issues, and ultimately contribute to a more informed and engaged society.