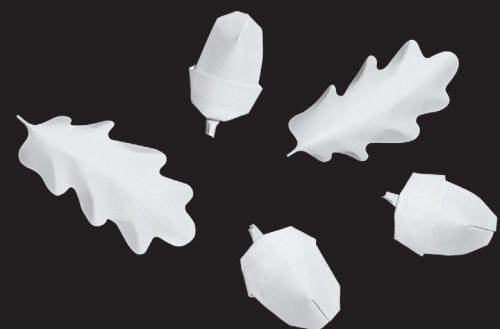


Guidelines



Personality – Nabarro in a nutshell
Whenever you’re writing, think about the personality of your prose. It should be engaging, personal, conversational, warm, concise and clear.

Clarity
Clarity is one of the most valuable assets we can offer our clients. Clarity in the way we understand their objectives, clarity in the way we deliver our advice. Our tone of voice reflects this: we turn complex legal gobbledegook into simple, straightforward, succinct language – plain English.

Creating copy with personality
Give it energy. Cut the corporate-speak and the legalese. Use the active tense, not the passive. Talk about ourselves as ‘we’. Write as you would speak in conversation – talk to your reader, use ‘you’. Read it to yourself to make sure you’ve got the rhythm right.



Writing technical legal pieces
There are times when you need to produce technical documents or tenders that contain a lot of legal terminology and will, by necessity, be dryer and less energetic in tone. However, every piece of Nabarro writing should reflect our ‘clarity’ tone somewhere – whether it’s in using interesting headlines or an engaging introduction, or an attention-grabbing design element.

We’ll versus we will
To create the right conversational tone, informal contractions such as ‘we’ll’ and ‘it’s’ can be used. The general rule of thumb is to write as you would speak in a business meeting. If you’re not sure whether to use a contraction or not, read the sentence aloud to check whether it sounds too stiff and formal or too casual.

Keep it interesting
Combine pace, conversational tone and pared-down content to create something you’d find engaging to read yourself. Ensure the level of detail is appropriate – don’t create flabby copy that’s bogged down with too much information.

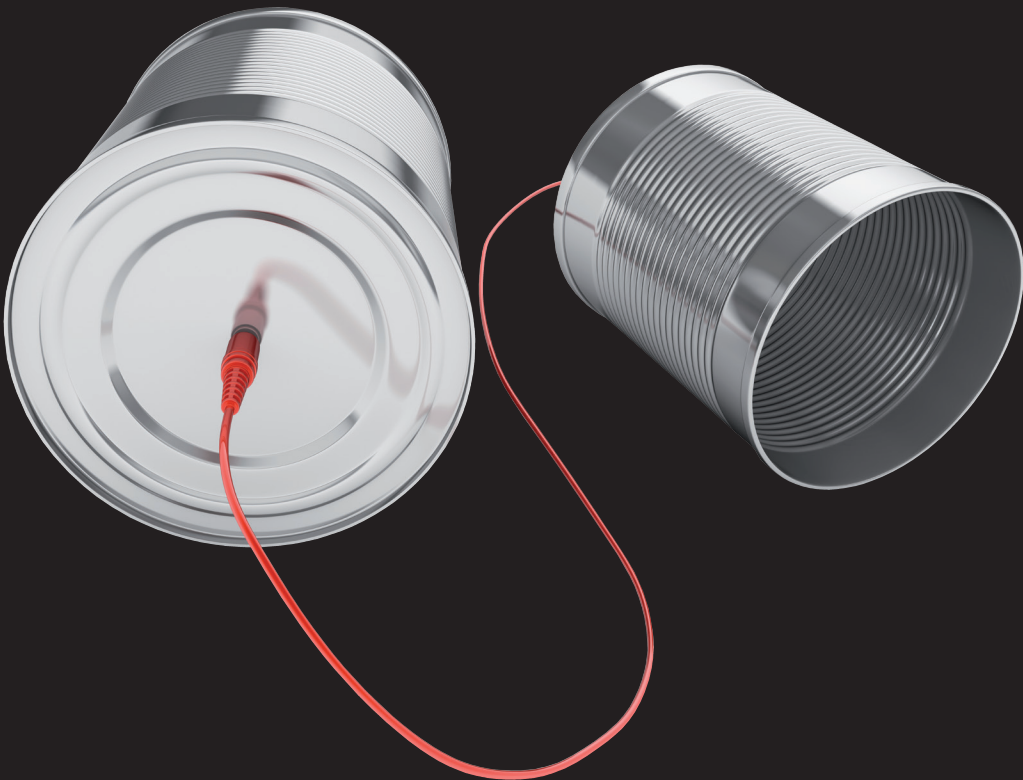


Think before you pun
We are intelligently witty. Not cheesy. Think before punning. Wit involves being original, not churning out clichéd humour.



Your personality
These guidelines are about Nabarro’s tone of voice. But there may be times where a reader would expect your own personality to shine through your writing – a blog post or a profile in social media, for example – and it’s absolutely fine to use your own style in these instances.

Clearly Nabarro A guide to writing with clarity



Content guide

Get to the point

What are the three salient points you want to get across in your article? Look back over your writing and if these points aren't all highlighted in headlines, or outlined in the early paragraphs, restructure it and push them to the fore.

It can be tempting to tell a story with your copy. A beginning, a middle and an end. But many readers only get as far as the headline or first couple of paragraphs. If that's what the majority of people are reading, then that's where your most important messages should go: don't hide them away at the end.

Want to entice your reader?

Headlines are a great way to draw your reader in. A bold statement or asking a pertinent question are particularly effective.



The headline should be short and snappy and spell out the value the reader will get by reading on:

- ✓ Be precise
- ✓ Spark curiosity
- ✓ Connect to your reader's self-interest
- ✓ Don't be obscure. People don't have time to sit and puzzle out the meaning: they simply won't read on.

A note on writing for the web

Online copy is a different kettle of fish from print. Ideally, paragraphs should be no more than one or two sentences long. The BBC's website has got this down to a fine art: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/>.

Online readers tend to skim text, rather than reading it the whole way through, as is more common with print. Bear in mind that they may read any paragraph in isolation. For this reason, the headline should contain the main message upfront, with more details unfolding as the reader moves down the page. If they don't read on, at least they got the most important part of the message.

Don't just chuck it all in and hope for the best

When faced with writing content, particularly for tenders and practice area pages, it can feel like a bad idea to leave anything out. You're rightly proud of the work you do and have a lot to say. But squeezing in every detail of your team's abilities and achievements, along with extensive market commentary isn't the best approach.

What does your audience actually want to know? And how would they like you to speak to them?

It's better to include a few, well-put key messages that all your readers are likely to digest than have 98% give up after the first few lines of relentless information.



Say it without words



Can you represent any part of your writing with something visual instead? A great infographic or image can relay the same message as long, wordy sentences much more effectively.

We have a fantastic set of new visuals which include many striking, text-based design elements. What information can you pull out of the text and represent with these visual tools instead?

Sub-headlines

Using sub-headlines throughout your piece breaks up the text and increases readability, helping your reader navigate to the most relevant points. As much as we'd all love to think a reader is hanging on our every word, a lot of people skim-read or dip in and out, particularly on the web.

Dos and Don'ts

Passive tense vs active tense

- ! *The mat was sat on by the cat.*
- ✓ The cat sat on the mat.
- ! *Many of the major transactions in the UK have been acted on by Nabarro.*
- ✓ We act on many of the UK's major transactions.

Formal vs informal

- ! *Nabarro is a major commercial law firm renowned for the positive and practical way it works. The firm combines a no-nonsense approach and wide-ranging expertise to achieve clients' objectives across many sectors, including both the private and public sectors.*
- ✓ We are a major commercial law firm renowned for the positive and practical way we work. Our no-nonsense approach and wide-ranging expertise help our clients achieve their objectives across many sectors, both public and private.



Cheesy vs witty

- ! Wit should have a spark of originality. Cheesy puns simply churn out clichés. It can be easy to slip into cheesy territory, particularly when you're working on material that has a theme, such as a tender or a brochure.
- Cheese: *'Nabarro can help you get a slice of the action!'*
- Wit: *'With Nabarro there's light at the beginning of the tunnel.'*
- In this example, turning around a well-known phrase can give a fresh, clever perspective.



Them not us

- ! *Nabarro's XXXXX practice is second to none and we pride ourselves on working on the most significant industry deals throughout the UK. We are ranked Tier 1 for XXXXX in the Legal 500 Directory. We have a large depth and breadth of experience across the sector, with over 50 lawyers in our award-winning team.*
- ✓ With experience of working on the biggest transactions in the industry, our XXXX practice can offer you expert advice. Whether you need tailored guidance on a contract, or would like us to act for you on a major commercial deal, our team of 50 lawyers has the wealth of experience to guide you through.



Flabby vs taut

- ! *Nabarro is a major UK commercial law firm with international reach and a network of over 1000 lawyers via our International Alliance, which brings together top European law firms, operating across nine jurisdictions, to combine specialist legal advice for effective cross-border work.*
- Our no-nonsense approach and wide-ranging expertise help our clients to achieve their objectives, however varied they may be, across a large number of both private and public sectors. Our commitment to clarity is revealed in our understanding of our clients' objectives, our capacity to shed light on complex legal issues and the straightforward, unequivocal nature of our advice; at Nabarro, clarity matters.
- ✓ Nabarro is a major UK commercial law firm. Through our network of top European law firms, we're able to draw on over 1000 legal specialists for effective cross-border advice.
- Our no-nonsense approach and wide-ranging expertise help clients achieve their objectives across many sectors, both public and private.
- We're committed to clarity. From our thorough understanding of our clients' objectives, to the straightforward, unequivocal nature of our advice.

