

Ask a Question

How to ask a great question.

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Applies to: Free Basic Business Enterprise

This documentation is for **Stack Overflow Enterprise**. Free, Basic, and Business users can access their documentation [here](#). [Find your plan](#).

Overview

The best way to get a good answer on your Stack Overflow site is to write a clear, detailed, concise question. Here are some tips that will help you improve your chances of getting the answer you seek.

Before you post

Do your research

Search your site for similar questions, and keep track of what you find. If you find a similar question elsewhere on the site, include a link to it in your question. Showing how answers to related questions *don't* hit the mark can help others understand how your question differs. This will also help eliminate incorrect "your question has already been answered here..." comments.

Write a great question

Write the perfect title

The title is the first thing potential answerers will see. If your title isn't interesting, they may not read the question. Here's how to make your title count:

- Try to sum up your entire question in one sentence. What can you include that will help someone identify and solve your problem? Include any details (for example: error messages, API calls, unusual circumstances) that distinguish your question from similar questions already on the site.
- Pay attention to spelling, grammar, and punctuation in your title. Remember that the title is the first part of your question others will see.
- If you're having trouble summarizing the problem, write the title last. Sometimes writing the rest of the question first can make it easier to write a clear, succinct title.

Explain the problem

When you begin writing the body of your question, begin by expanding on the summary you put in the title. Explain how you encountered the problem you're trying to solve, and any difficulties that have prevented you from solving it yourself. The first

paragraph in your question is the second thing most readers will see (after the title), so make it as engaging and informative as possible.

Help others reproduce the problem

Provide context that not only explains how you arrived at your problem, but helps others reproduce the issue. If you're writing code, for example, include enough of the code to help others attempt the same thing. If you're going through a workflow process, describe the whole process—not just the step where you ran into the problem. Even if your question seems simple, explaining how you came to it can help others understand and solve the problem.

Include all relevant tags

Tags are how potential answerers will find your question, so make sure to include as many relevant tags as possible (for example: software library, project, workflow, etc.). When you start typing in the **Tags** field, the system will suggest tags that match what you've typed. Be sure to read the tag descriptions to make sure they're relevant to the question you're asking. Read more about [tags](#).

Proofread before posting

Before you post your question, read through it from start to finish. If possible, wait a few hours between writing and proofreading. Pretend you're seeing your question for the first time. Ask yourself: does it make sense?

Try reproducing the problem that prompted your question, in a fresh environment, using only the information included in your question. Add any details you missed and read through it again. Now is an excellent time to look back at your title to make sure it still describes the problem.

If your title, first paragraph, and main question are as good as you can make them, you're ready to **Post** your question.

After you post

Respond to feedback

After you post, leave the question open in your browser to see if anyone adds a helpful comment. If they point out that you missed an important piece of information, edit your question to include it. If someone posts an answer, be prepared to try it out, provide feedback, and ultimately accept it if it's correct (see below).

As the author of the question, you will also receive notifications for all new activity related to your post. These notifications will appear in your inbox on-site, but you can also receive notifications via email or through third-party integrations (like Slack).

Accept an answer

The ultimate goal of the question-answer process is an answer that's accepted, recognized, and pinned to the top of the other answers. This gives a clear indication to other users that your problem is solved, as well as how it was solved. Accepting an answer also gives the author a small reputation boost.

Questions with an accepted answer appear differently in lists of questions, giving a quick visual indicator that the problem is solved.

Additional resources

Learning to ask a good question is a worthy challenge, one you won't master overnight. Here are some additional resources that you may find useful:

[Writing the perfect question](#)

[How to ask questions the smart way](#) (long, but good advice)

[How to debug small programs](#)

If you need further support or have questions, contact your site administrator.