



What is an op-ed?

An op-ed is an opinion piece written by the reader of a newspaper, magazine, or other source on a topic relevant to the publication's audience. The term comes from "opposite editorial"—"the page of a newspaper facing the editorial page, typically devoted to personal comment and feature articles."

The basics:

- Keep it concise. The article should be between 500-750 words and expresses an opinion on a timely news topic.
- Make a single point. You only have 500 to 750 words. Make one point clearly and persuasively.
- Avoid jargon. Simple language ensures that all readers, even non-experts, can understand your point.
- "Humanize" your article. Illustrations, anecdotes and personal stories help explain and bring the issue to life.
- State the issue upfront. The first paragraph should clearly outline your stance/opinion and the issue you are raising.
- End with a bang. Make sure the reader knows what you are asking of them. What should they do? What do you suggest? What is the remedy for the issue at hand?
- Respect your reader. Never underestimate your reader's intelligence, or overestimate his or her level of information. Recognize that your average reader is not an expert in your topic, and that the onus is on you to capture his or her attention. Make the argument compelling.
- Include contact information.

Other things to know:

Submissions/Outlets: Major outlets are very selective when it comes to op-ed pieces. Think about where your ideas will make the greatest contribution and will have the greatest odds of being published. Consider smaller or local publications or an industry publication that specializes in your topic. Additionally, creating a track record of success at smaller outlets can eventually increase your odds at larger outlets. It is important to note that most national newspapers will not consider your piece if you submit to more than one paper at the same time so determine a list of targets in the order you want to pitch to them.