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Defining a writing style ensures consistency and builds credibility for our product and brand. Establishing rules about the words we use and how we use them makes our message easier to understand.

We've put together these guidelines so that everyone can write in a consistent manner. The green and red boxes provide dos (green) and don'ts (red) to help illustrate the concepts.

Dos

Don'ts

Writing Style

Sentences and paragraphs: short is sweet

Avoid large blocks of text. A paragraph should only be about one topic. Start with the most important information, and add explanations if necessary. If you have multiple pieces of information to convey, use bulleted lists for easier scanning.

Keep your sentences short and sweet. It's good to be terse, just not abrupt. After writing a sentence, see if there are words that you can remove without sacrificing meaning. When in doubt, choose clarity over minimalism, even if it requires more words.

Enter your Sumo Logic username and password.

Enter the credentials that you usually use to sign into Sumo Logic.

Active voice is (usually) preferable

Generally, you should use the active voice, as it is stronger and more concise.

You can view your team's public dashboards without logging in.

Sumo Logic sends an email notification when an alert triggers.

Public dashboards can be viewed by other team members.

You will receive an email notification when an alert is triggered.

The passive voice is acceptable in some cases, for instance when the object is more important than the actor. For example:

The Sumo Logic UI is designed to be intuitive and easy to use

Sumo Logic designed the UI to be intuitive and easy to use.

Use present tense

Present tense is appropriate when something will happen immediately or soon, as opposed some time in the future. In sentences that describe the effect of the user's interaction with the UI, we avoid the use of "will". It is clearer and more concise.

After you enter a valid parse expression, extracted fields appear in the preview pane.

After you enter a valid parse expression, extracted fields will appear in the preview pane.

consistent.

You can extract metrics that are embedded in logs.

You can extract multiple metrics from a single log.

You can count logs as a metric.

You can extract metrics that are embedded in logs.

Multiple metrics can be extracted from a single log.

It is possible to count logs as a metric.

Word consistency

Eliminate synonyms. Each important item and action should have a single word to represent it.

When you're running a search, see the Search Operator Cheat Sheet.

When running a query, see the Operator Cheat Sheet.

Voice and Tone

This section has guidelines for voice and tone in the UI. What's our voice? Our voice is our own distinctive writing style: it's clear, concise, and informal. What's our tone? Our tone reflects our attitude towards our users and how we want them to feel when they use Sumo Logic: we use language that is friendly, encouraging, and reassuring.

Use simple, conversational language

Use the sort of words that you would use in a face-to-face conversation. We try to aim for an eighth grade reading level. Don't use words just because they sound better. Avoid jargon and choose short, simple words over long and complicated ones.

Turn on keyboard shortcuts.

The CloudTrail app collects these logs which gives you better visibility into events that are happening in your system.

Enable keyboard shortcuts.

The Sumo Logic App for CloudTrail ingests these logs, providing greater visibility into events that, in turn, allows for security and operations forensics.

Use common contractions

Using contractions contributes to our goals of striking a conversational, friendly tone. Use common contractions, like "don't", "won't", and "you'll". Avoid less common contractions, like "should've", or "it'll".

You don't have access to this dashboard.

It'll be necessary to get access to this dashboard.

Be positive or neutral

Be positive or neutral. Avoid negativity except to emphasize a severe warning.

If your session times out, your tables will still be there when you sign in again.

If you accidentally get timed out, you won't lose your tabs.

Use "Sumo Logic" instead of "Sumo"

Our brand guideline is to always refer to "Sumo Logic", rather than Sumo. To be more conversational, it is also fine to say "we".

Sumo Logic connects to S3 every 5 minutes to download your logs.

Select a frequency so we know how often to run the search

Sumo connects to S3 every 5 minutes to download your logs.

Use “org” instead of “organization”

Use “org” as it sounds more conversational and is the term more commonly used by our customers.

Add additional users to your org.

Add additional users to your organization.

Use “need to” instead of “have to” or “must”

Use need to. “Have to” and “must” can sound harsh and unfriendly.

You'll need to set a time range for your scheduled search

You'll must set a time range for your scheduled search

Address the user in second-person

Speak directly to the user by using “You” and “Your”. It's more personal and friendly.

You can define as many rules as you like.

The user can define as many rules as desired.

Avoid text and word abbreviations

Avoid the use of abbreviations like “e.g.,” “i.e.,” and “etc”. Although they may be well understood, such abbreviations don't support our goal of a conversational tone. In other words, let's not use that we wouldn't use in oral speech.

You can assign multiple roles to a user, such as administrator, analyst, or manager.

You can assign multiple roles to a user, such as administrator, analyst, etc.

Avoid “please” and “sorry”

Avoid the use of “please”. It might be appropriate if the statement or recommendation relates to a problem or inconvenience. Otherwise, it's just an extra word that adds no value. Don't preface an ordinary instruction with “please”.

Also avoid the use of “sorry”. Try other ways to show empathy for the user without assuming blame.

Please reach out to support @sumologic.com for help with this issue.

Please enter a source category.

Be judicious in use of “always” and “never”

Sometimes it's appropriate to say “always” or “never”. Keep in mind though that “always” can imply a result that is not guaranteed, and “never” may very well not be the case—the exception makes the rule.

You'll always be able to add users later.

Using the API will always be easier.

Never share your password

Avoid gender-specific pronouns

Try not to use pronouns like “he”, “she”, “him”, “her”, “his”, and “hers”. Instead, try to reconstruct the sentence to avoid gender.

A user's role search filter controls what data the user can view.

A user's role search filter controls what data he can view.

Avoid saying "allow" and "let"

The verbs "allow" and "let" may imply that Sumo Logic is in a position of power over the user. It is preferable to use phrasing that emphasizes the user's agency.

You can open up to 50 tabs.

Sumo allows you to open up to 50 tabs.

Other Conventions

This section describes conventions we adhere to to ensure the labels, links, and language are consistent across the Sumo Logic UI.

Links to Sumo Logic documentation

When linking to documentation, use the phrase "Learn more" on its own or after the end of a sentence.

Add a processing rule to filter messages. [Learn more.](#)

[Find out how](#) to add a processing rule to filter message.

Labeling actions

Avoid generic labels for actions. Try to set expectations for the next step or reiterate the action the user is taking, with the exception of very common labels like "Cancel" or "Got it". They should usually start with a verb. Avoid articles like "a", "an", "the".

- Save search
- Set permissions
- Add user
- Back
- Cancel
- Dismiss
- Done
- Got it
- Learn more
- Dismiss
- OK
- Save

- Submit
- Continue
- Next
- Add a user

Referring to locations in the UI

Avoid "below", "above", "next to", and so on, when referring to UI elements on a page, as locations may change or appear differently for different users.

The data filter appears after selecting a source category.

The data filter appears below selecting a source category dropdown.

Mouse actions

Try to avoid these if possible. Instead use "Select". Try to avoid referring to the UI element directly. If you need to use these actions to be specific, use "Click" (not "Click on" or "Left-click"), "Right-click", "Hover" (not "Mouse over"), and "Drag". Use the label rather than the UI component when referring to these.

Click **Add Processing Rule** to create a rule to filter out log messages.

Click "Add Processing Rule" button to create a rule to filter out log messages.

Examples

When adding an example, introduce it with "like", "such as", or "for example". Don't use e.g., i.e., or example:. unless space is a concern, like in a table. Only use bold when you want to emphasize an action the user should take.

Create a label to name you filter, like East Coast.

Create a label to name you filter, e.g. East Coast.

When to use “select”, “choose”, and “enter”

- Select—Use to tell users to pick something from a limited number of options, such as from a list or a dropdown menu, or when you are referring to checking or toggling a UI element.
- Choose—Use to encourage the user to make a decision that is more subjective or open-ended.
- Enter—Use enter when the user is explicitly inputting something from scratch, rather than from a pre-built set of options.

Select roles for this user

Choose plan

Choose a theme

Enter time range

Enter an email address

Select a profile photo

Choose **Add Panel** to add a panel to your dashboard

Choose a level of accesss for this user

Set an email address

Type your password

Sign in vs. log in

Use sign in and sign out (2 words). The page where you sign in is called the sign in page. Don't use log in.

Enter your username and password on the sign in page.

You'll need to sign out for the change to take place.

Log in to view this dashboard.

Enter your login credentials.

Use “add” instead of “create” or “new”

Use **create** for generating something open-ended from scratch. Use **add** for a specific action or directed task, which often includes adding an item to a set of existing items. Use **new** to emphasize a blank slate.

Create dashboard

Add partition

New tab

Create user

Add scheduled search

New parameter

Capitalization

Learn more

Share with filters applied

Lavanya Shastri, Product Manager

a member of the engineering team

learn more

Sign in

Share with Filters Applied

a member of the Engineering team

Use title case for feature names and UI elements

Title case is a capitalization style in which every word is capitalized, except for articles of speech, conjunctions, or prepositions

Use title case for feature names and UI elements.

Here are examples of feature names you should capitalize:

- Field Extraction Rules
- Partitions
- Scheduled Views

Also capitalize the labels of UI elements, including: in the UI:

- page titles
- tabs
- slide-out panes
- fields
- buttons
- checkboxes
- radio buttons
- tooltips
- button text
- column headers

When using title case, don't capitalize articles of speech, conjunctions, or prepositions such as:

a, an, the, and, but, or, on, in, with

Use sentence case for phrases and sentences

Sentence case is a capitalization style in which only the first word in a sentence or phrase is capitalized.

Use sentence case for phrases or help text in empty fields, tooltips, explanatory text, links, or labels that are calls to action or sentence-like. For example:

- Your sample messages will appear here
- Run a log search
- Import saved messages
- Search for collectors and sources by name of sourceCategory
- Search ingest budgets

Use all caps for acronyms

Use all capital letters only for acronyms.

Numbers, Dates, Times, and Units

Numbers

- Use numerals, rather than spelling the number out. For example, "2" instead of "two".
- Use commas for numbers that are 4 or 5 digits in length, for example, 1,000 or 99,999.
- For numbers 100,000 and higher, use "K", "M", and "B" to indicate thousands, millions, or billions.
- Use an en dash without a space on either side for number ranges.

You have 2 more attempts.

1,450 messages

5-7

You can assign up to five roles.

1450 messages

5 - 7

Dates and times

Use the month's full name (September). If space is a concern, use 3-letter abbreviations (Sep).

Avoid writing dates numerically (7-25-17) and ordinal indicators (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th). Use the 12-hour clock unless the user has specified otherwise, followed by am or pm in lowercase letters without a space.

When including a time zone, append the time zone's abbreviation after the "am" or "pm", separated by a space.

To show a time range, use an en dash and include the "am" or "pm" after both times.

Note The notation used in the time range editor is an exception to some of these rules.

September 24, 2017
Sep 24
8:15:00am
6:pm NZDT
1:00pm –2:00pm

9-24-17
September 1st
5:30PM

Units of measurement

For storage and memory sizes (MB, GB), the unit of measurement should be uppercase. For dimensions and weights, the unit of measurement should be lowercase (cm, lb). Do not separate the number and the unit with a space.

5GB

5gb

Paths

In user-driven paths throughout the interface, use > to indicate going to the next level of choices. / can be confused with actual file paths.

Go to Manage Data > Collection

Go to Manage Data / Collection

Punctuation

Periods

In the UI, avoid periods for single sentences on their own. Whenever there are two or more sentences, use periods at the end of each sentence. Separate sentences by one space, not two.

Automatically run the search after selecting from a list of saved searches

The Windows app provides insight into your system's operatooooopns which helps you to better manage your environment. The app consists of searches and Dashboards that provide visibility into your environment for real-time analysis.

Show confirmation when closing a search tab.

Commas

Use the oxford comma (also known as the serial comma) in sentences. There should be a comma after every list item (unless you're using a bulleted or numbered list).

Track status codes by geolocation, server, and path.

Track status codes by geolocation, server and path.

Exclamation Points

Use exclamation points to express excitement or encourage the user. Don't use them for errors, warnings, or confirmation of basic actions as they are usually unnecessary and can distract from important details.

Thanks for your feedback!

Your search has been saved!

In standard sentences, avoid enclosing text in parentheses because it breaks up the sentence and can be hard to follow. Instead, try to rephrase the sentence or use commas for closely related material, and dashes for less related material. Acronyms and symbols may be enclosed in parentheses.

Zscaler Web Security collects logs through Nanlog Streaming Service (NSS) to populate searches.

This dashboard focuses on file-based threats (by users, threat name, and file type) across the environment.

Ellipses and Truncation

Use ellipses for truncation. Don't use ellipses for placeholders or trailing off a sentence unless it is getting cut off. When truncating, think about which part of the string is most essential for the user. This may require truncating in the beginning, middle, or end of a string.

...Category=apache

You may want to change your preferences.

_sourceCategory...

You may want to change your preferences....

Colons

Colons are used to introduce lists or to separate titles from subtitles. Only include the colon if the introduction isn't a complete sentence.

Panels included in this dashboard:

- Geo Location of All Users
- Login Events by User
- Logins from Multiple IP

You can assign permissions to users: edit, manage, and delete.

Use emojis rarely, if ever

Don't use emojis in the UI, or in error or success messages. Emojis may be used in product announcements and other special text. They should not be used to express something negative.

Introducing the new Sumo Logic UI! 🎉

There was a problem with your collection installation. 😞

Text Formatting

This section has guidelines about formatting text in the UI.

Italics

Use italics when you need to emphasize the names of examples, or for book titles, magazines, newspapers, and movies.

Bold

Use bold when referring to labels of things. Don't use quotes.

Lists

Use a bulleted list when items are related but order doesn't matter. Use a numbered list when item order matters, like a series of steps. Introduce bulleted lists with a colon or a heading. If any list item contains two or more sentences, punctuate all list items. If all list items are one sentence or fragments, don't punctuate.

Underlining

Don't underline text, to avoid confusion with links.