

# How to create A WRITING PORTFOLIO that stands out

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Young writers—professionals too—often feel shy or insecure to brag about their work online, when they really should. Shouting about their creations is something they tend to avoid for the fear of it sounding too arrogant or blustering. But the word 'brag' here isn't actually boasting if you consider showcasing your progress in writing as a display of your skills and competence.

A writing portfolio, with your works organised just ready to serve before any evaluator, is the premier way to sophisticatedly show off your achievements and expertise. That too, without sounding braggish or hubristic. A well-organised and lucrative writing portfolio can enhance your chances to make a pretty good first impression, not to mention smart.

## WHAT IS A WRITING PORTFOLIO?

A writing portfolio is a collection of writing samples that showcase a writer's skills, areas of expertise and achievements. The concept of a portfolio is simple but creating one can be pretty challenging and there's always chances of messing it up. But once up and used at the right place, it can do wonders.

## WHY DO YOU NEED IT?

In the digital age, aspiring writers are facing newer issues, like the publishing sector shifting to digital ways and demanding the writers to be equally present in the scene and prove their salt in both print and online media. Breaking into the scene as a promising writer is fairly challenging; making self-promotion an important resort for personal branding here.

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Among the perks of an organised writing portfolio, the topmost is that a portfolio shows what your forte is and how good your pieces are. In short, it can showcase your preparedness and your 'can-do' attitude to your evaluator or recruiter and craft an efficient online presence for you.

## CREATING A WRITER'S PORTFOLIO

Portfolios in the past were clipped-up hard copies of write-ups with your résumé, but we are past those hassling paper-carrying days. Whether applying for a job, pitching as a freelancer, or showcasing your work, an online writer's portfolio is always preferred.

For creating one, there are two possible options: one is hosting your personal website, and another is taking the help of portfolio-based online sites.

If you choose the first option, you

need to register a domain name branding your personal forte and choose a suitable option to host your site that fits your budget. There are sites like Wix, Bluehost, Weebly and more that you can use.

If you choose the latter, it's less work. Most of those portfolio sites are free up to a certain limit and design-ready; you can even buy a domain name for some. Some popular portfolio sites are Clippings.me, Contently, Quietly, Journo Portfolio, Pressfolios etc. These sites offer free usage to a certain limit with good service, but you can always upgrade to premium for more.

Here are some helpful pro-tip from the designers, developers, and experts on creating writing portfolios:

## DO'S

1. The objective of creating the portfolio should reflect clearly in it. The work one chooses to get a professional job will be different from the one to land a travel or fashion gig. So, map out what your portfolio should tell people
2. Spend some time considering your workpieces and the formats you would use. Your writings can be in plain text, links, PDF files. It may contain images, or you might want to use social media posts or curated stories etc
3. Keep it simple and professional; let your work speak for itself. Use crisp and clear fonts that are not too dramatic or large. Keep your colours subtle and sufficiently contrasting
4. Excessive images may end up distracting from your work but can liven up a portfolio. Try to ensure the images that you use are compelling and colourful

by relating them well with the context

5. The recommended number is 10-20 pieces of work for an online portfolio with the target to give a snapshot of what you can do as an overview

6. Categorise your content and make different portfolios for each angle you write in, if convenient

7. Be careful that your portfolio serves the vertical you are applying for; it's of little use presenting a travel-related portfolio for a science-based magazine

8. Add a short biography with your story in it, with your name, profession, job title, workplace or your objectives. Include links to your social media handles like Twitter, LinkedIn, Tumblr and anywhere else you maintain a professional presence

## DON'TS

1. Don't add your age, rather the age of your writing journey
2. Try to avoid grammar/spelling errors because that doesn't impress anyone
3. Avoid cliches like 'I was born to be a successful writer', in your bio and in your works as well
4. Avoid spammy headlines or unnecessary sensualisation to attract readers
5. Plagiarism is something you must avoid at any cost. Your evaluators are there to assess your work and if you think your dishonesty will get scot-free, you are wrong  
Lastly, don't feel shy to share your portfolio with your friends and family and your social media accounts to mark your presence. Keep on updating it every once in a while, and watch it do charms for you.



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