

ENGL 2311 Project 2: Instructions

Instructions: Assignment Overview

In this assignment, you will write step-by-step instructions that explain how to perform a technical task.

You will complete a five-part assignment sequence, for a score of up to 30 points = 30/30 = 100%.

Assignment Goals:

After completing this assignment, you will have gained the following skills:

- Writing a documentation plan
- Researching technical processes and explaining them to specific audiences
- Writing clear steps that are the right size and in the imperative mood
- Differentiating steps from feedback statements
- Testing instructions to make sure the audience can follow them
- Following a style guide and writing for translation

Task to Document:

You are free to write instructions for almost any technical task. "Technical" does not necessarily mean that the task has to be about computers or high-tech. You can choose any task that is sufficiently complex and that requires you to use precise and technical vocabulary. Make sure that the task has clearly sequential steps and is not a bunch of tips and tricks.

- **Recommendation:** Choose a task that you know well enough to document or, even better, a task that you are learning or that someone can describe to you. If you document a new-to-you task, you can identify steps that might be confusing to non-experts.
- **Ideas:** Installing a washer and dryer, tuning bicycle brakes, creating and populating a database, setting up a wifi network, building a telescope, deleting a Facebook account, building a raised gardening bed.
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- **Exclusion:** Recipes and cooking instructions are excluded.

If you have questions about whether your topic idea will work for this assignment, just ask.

Audience

You can also choose the audience for this assignment. Make sure that your document plan (the first assignment for Project 2) describes the audience's motivations, skills, and context. Unless your audience is the general public, the introduction for your instructions should describe the audience so that readers can decide whether your instructions are for them.

Assignment Format:

Your Instructions assignment should be about 800 - 1500 words, have at least 10 appropriately sized steps (which might vary widely based on your number of sub-steps), and include the following elements:

- A descriptive title that uses a "How to..." or gerund format

- A short but informative introduction that provides context about the task and indicates the target audience
- If necessary, a list or explanation of prerequisites
- Numbered steps, written in imperative mood. If necessary, steps can be organized into top-level steps with sub-steps.
- As appropriate, feedback statements and cues to help your audience know that they are on the right track.

Images: You might find that images are critical for describing some steps. Feel free to include images. If you create them yourself, don't worry about your drawing ability. This is a writing class, not a drawing class, so you will not be graded on your artistic ability. If you use an image from someone else, make sure to cite your source.

Video: If you prefer to create an instructional video, you can! You will not be graded on your video production skills or acting skills, but you will need to turn in a written script with your video that clearly organizes the elements described above. Videos are a particularly good choice for tasks that involve manipulating physical objects.

Examples of Instructions:

- [How to Install Tubeless Tires on a Mountain Bike](#)
- [How to Build an Inexpensive Desk out of ¾" Plywood](#)
- [How to Restring a Guitar](#)
- [How to Build a Raised Garden Bed](#)
- [Instructions for Printing and Assembling a Booklet](#)

I. Instructions: Doc Plan

This is the first assignment in the **Project 2 Instructions Assignment** sequence.

Before you write a technical document, it is important to plan what you're going to write and to communicate that plan to stakeholders. In this assignment, **you won't write a draft of your instructions. You'll write the documentation plan for the instructions.** Doc plans are commonly used by technical and professional writers to describe what they are going to write and why, who they will write it for, when they will write it, and any other pertinent project details.

Your doc plan should include the following sections:

1. **Descriptive Title.** The title of your doc plan should include the title of your proposed document. For example, "Doc Plan: How to Build a Telescope."
2. **Executive Summary.** Two to three sentences that describe the purpose of your document, what your instructions will cover, and what they will not cover.
3. **Audience.** A description of your intended audience, including their existing skills and knowledge and motivation for reading.
4. **Summary Outline.** List the top-level sections for your planned document, not every step in your instructions.
5. **Deliverables and Schedule.** List the documents that you will write, their delivery format (document, web page, video, etc.) and when they will be complete. This section will be close to the assignment schedule, but you should call out any additional work around images or if you plan to make a video.

Your doc plan should be short and should fit on one page.

Grading Rubric for Instructions: Doc Plan

Criteria	Points
Title and Summary: Your title and summary make clear the audience and the topic for your instructions.	1 pt
Outline: You give a high-level overview of the sections that your document will include.	1 pt
Deliverables and Schedule: You clearly list what you will do, the format you'll deliver it in, and when it will be complete.	2 pt

Total: 4 Points

II. Instructions: First Draft

This is the second assignment in the **Project 2 Instructions Assignment** sequence. For this First Draft assignment, you will:

1. Use the title, summaries, and audience analysis from your **doc plan** as a starting point.
2. Write an **introduction** that provides context about the task and indicates the target audience.
3. Consider any **pre-requisites or required materials**, and document them if necessary.
4. Write at least **five steps** that use the [imperative mood](#). You can write more but should have at least five steps for your peer reviewers to read and test. **TIP:** Try to have ten steps.

Grading Rubric for Instructions: First Draft

Criteria	Points
Title and Introduction: Your title and introduction make it clear what task the instructions describe.	1 pt
Audience: Your introduction makes the target audience clear.	2 pt
Steps: Your instructions have at least 5 steps.	2 pt

Total: 5 Points

III. First Draft Instructions and Doc Plan: Peer Review

This assignment is part of the **Project 2 Instructions assignment** sequence. For this assignment, you will:

1. Actively participate in the peer review sessions for the doc plan and first draft instructions
2. Using the “**Grading Rubric for Instructions: Doc Plan**” and “**Grading Rubric for Instructions: First Draft**,” provide feedback to your peers -- orally (if done in person) but ESPECIALLY as a written “Reply” to at least one classmate (your peer). You will share your feedback notes with your peers and also submit the feedback for this assignment (in the “Discussion Board”).
3. After both peer review sessions are complete, reflect on the peer review process by answering the following “**Post-Review Questions**”:
 - A. What was the most useful feedback that you received during the peer review process? How will you change your instructions based on that feedback?
 - B. What did you learn by talking with your peers about your doc plan and first draft?
 - C. What did you do or say during the peer review process that you think helped your peers the most?
 - D. What will you change about how you give or receive feedback during the next peer review?

What to turn in:

- Your peer review feedback for your peer’s doc plan AND first draft of instructions -- BOTH in the “Discussion Board.”
- Your answers to the “Post Review Questions” in the “Discussion Board.”

Grading Rubric for Peer Review: Instructions and Doc Plan

Criteria	Points
Active participation: You actively participate in the peer review session(s).	2 pts
Post-Review Questions: You responded thoughtfully to the questions about the peer review process.	3 pts

Total: 5 Points

IV. Instructions: Final Draft

This is the Final Draft assignment in the **Project 2 Instructions Assignment** sequence. For this Final Draft assignment, you will:

1. Address feedback from the peer review sessions about your first draft and make meaningful improvements based on the feedback.
2. Ensure that your title and introduction make clear what task(s) the instructions describe and what the target audience for the instructions. If appropriate, list pre-requisites or required materials.
3. Ensure that your instructions follow best practices for procedural discourse, including using active verbs in the imperative mood, sizing steps correctly for you audience, and differentiating user steps from system feedback.
4. Polish your instructions and ensure that they conform to the style guidance in the GNOME [“Developer Documentation Style Guidelines.”](#). Proofread carefully to ensure a high quality final product.
5. Submit your final draft in this course’s Blackboard “Lessons/Assignments” menu link.

Grading Rubric for Instructions: Final Draft

Criteria	Points
Improvement: You addressed peer review comments and made significant improvements from your first draft to your final draft	3 pts
Completion: Your instructions are complete and document the whole task. The have an introduction, a list of pre-requisites or required materials, and at least 10 steps	3pts
Audience Analysis: Your instructions use appropriate vocabulary, are appropriately complex, and appropriately address the motivations of your audience.	2 pts
Procedural Rhetoric: Your instructions follow best practices for writing tasks, including using active verbs in the imperative mood, sizing steps correctly for your audience, and differentiating user steps from system feedback.	2 pts
Style: You have made an effort to proofread your instructions and to conform to the GNOME style guide. Your instructions do not necessarily have to be perfect, but they should be much more polished than an early draft.	2 pts

Total: 12 Points

V. Instructions: Reflection

This is the last assignment in the **Project 2 Instructions Assignment** sequence. Reflect on your experience planning, drafting, reviewing, and revising your instructions by answering the following questions:

- A. What aspect of your instructions makes you the proudest, and why?
- B. What changed the most from your doc plan and first draft to your final draft? How did peer reviews influence that change?
- C. What is one aspect of your instructions that you would still like to improve, and why? How would you go about doing that?
- D. What is one writing skill that you learned or improved while working on this assignment? What do you want to learn or improve next?

Copy and paste the preceding questions into a document and write **at least 300 words** total for your responses to all four questions. Submit the document in “Lessons/Assignments”.

Grading Rubric for Instructions: Reflection

Criteria	Points
Answering Questions: You answered all of the questions thoughtfully and explained how you grew as a writer (in 300 words).	4 pts

Total: 4 points