
Basic Readability - How to Craft Links Effectively

Provide visual points of entry

- Point of entry type 1: A grouped set of related links.
- Point of entry type 2: List of similar-interest links in a colored/bordered box.
- Point of entry type 3: Contrasting headings with sets of links.
- Point of entry type 4: Icons as identifiers
- Point of entry type 5: Small significant graphic with a short text heading.
Picture of a celebrity, for typical example.

Choose the Right Words for Individual Links

- What is the shortest phrase that explains the link?
- Can the phrase be taken more than one way?
- Will a correctly-worded heading identify the links below it adequately?
- Are the site keywords (as in your meta tags) used in the links?

Reduce the number of clicks required. Use available space efficiently.

Three-click rule: "Nothing on a site should be more than 3 clicks away."

Reduce the amount of energy needed to find the most commonly-used links.

Arrange your lists of links so that the most-used ones are on *top* or to *left*.

But don't put everything on the first page, if your site has too much content.

5-9 links in a list or 5-9 points-of-entry may be plenty. Look at Yahoo!

Put the most important stuff in the upper left, the middle top, and straight down the middle.

That's where most users' eyes go first.

Design as if the links are the critical parts.

Provide sitewide context at all times.

Basic site navigation. Always provide a way home.

Provide clues to what the site is about

What if they came from a search engine directly to a sub-page?

Logo may be enough, but it must be clear.

Perhaps a motto at bottom of page ("For all your accordion needs")

Develop the Keyword List and Use It

Client, focus group, searches of other sites collecting their key words