



# Style Guide

For writing

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NO FRILLS

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# Introduction

No Frills is all about keeping things simple. We cut out what customers don't need so they can focus on what matters. This guide follows that same idea: clear words, no extras, and a voice that feels familiar and straightforward.

## Why This Guide Exists

This style guide exists to make sure everything we write at No Frills is as clear, direct, and useful as the brand itself. No fluff. No filler. Just what people need to know when they need to know it.

We're not here to sound fancy. We're here to help people get things done quickly and clearly, whether they're checking a price, reading a product description, or resetting a password.

This style guide keeps teams aligned on voice, tone, formatting, and content standards that reflect the No Frills way of speaking and thinking. When our writing is consistent, it feels like one clear voice even if many people write it. That's how we keep things simple for our customers.

## Who Should Use This Guide

This guide is for anyone who writes customer-facing content across No Frills platforms, including:

- UX Writers
- Technical Writers
- Developers
- Content Strategist

It's not for marketing teams or promotional content creators. This guide is about usability, not persuasion. We're here to help people shop smarter, not sell them things they don't need.

## Where to Use It

Use this guide when writing or reviewing content that customers see or use, including:

- User interfaces
- Error messages, confirmations, and alerts
- Help content and FAQs
- Support chat or automated messages

- In-app instructions or onboarding
- Developer documentation
- Internal tools that staff or store employees use

Wherever the words go, they should sound like No Frills. Direct and down-to-earth, with a dash of playfulness.

# Chapter 1: No Frills' Brand Voice and Style

## Our Voice and Tone

At No Frills, we talk like we stock. We are clear, bold, and no-nonsense with a side of cheeky. We cut the frills so shoppers know exactly who we are and what we stand for.

### Here's the Deal on Our Voice and Tone

**Our voice:** Direct and down-to-earth, with a dash of playfulness. We're self-aware and relatable, showing a genuine connection to local producers and an understanding of customer priorities. Whether we're reminding you to grab bananas or rolling out a new deal, when we say something, you can tell it's us.

**Our Tone:** Adapts to match the moment. We prioritize being clear and aware in the way we talk to our customers and try to be funny or cheeky when we can make it fit. Launching something new? We're hyped. Explaining store changes? We keep it clear and caring. The voice stays the same, but our tone matches what's needed.

Situation	Tone Example
Product Launch	Upbeat, enthusiastic, witty
Addressing a Complaint	Empathetic, apologetic, reassuring
Sharing Announcement for Savings	Excited, proud, celebratory
Providing Instructions	Clear, practical, supportive

Table 1.1: Examples of Adapting Tone

Our customers count on us to keep things simple, because wasting words (or money) isn't our style. Our voice shows who we are. Our tone shows that we understand who our customers are.

## Examples:

- **Voice:** “We’re No Frills. We cut the nonsense and bring value with savings.”
- **Tone-Friendly Promotion:** “Score big savings this week, because paying more makes no sense!”
- **Tone-Service Update:** “We’re sorry for any inconvenience during our makeover. We’re working hard to keep prices as low as possible.”

So, whether we’re cutting prices or cutting to the chase, we keep it simple, bold, and all about our shoppers.

## Typography and Colours

### Colours

No Frills keeps it simple. We have 2 iconic colours: yellow and black. We accent these colors with white and red (for our Canadian roots).

We use two common colour combinations:

- Black text on a yellow background for primary use.
- Yellow text on a background for bold statements and advertising.

Red backgrounds with white or yellow text can be used to highlight:

- Sale items and prices or call attention to deals.
- When a product is made in Canada.

These colours can be used in different combinations to highlight information as long as it maintains readability and contrast.

### Typography

Typography is a key element of our brand identity. It reflects and conveys our values and information clearly and consistently. We use size, font, weight, and colours to highlight the most important information for our customers.

## Fonts

When we cut the frills, we cut them from our fonts too. No Frills strictly uses only sans-serif fonts in all its content.

Currently used fonts include:

- Helvetica
- Futura
- Noir Pro

## Weight and Styling

Regular weight should be used for most body text, product descriptions, and longer paragraphs. This weight ensures comfortable readability without overpowering the layout.

Bold weight is used for emphasis, such as headings, subheadings, callouts, and important information. Bold text is used to draw attention and establish hierarchy.

Light weight is used to indicate additional information that is relevant to the customer but isn't prioritized in the customer's needs.

Italics are rarely used and are reserved for specific purposes in combination with a handwritten style font to establish a personal touch to our stores or promotions.

Apply these weights and styles consistently to keep communications easy to read and visually balanced across all platforms and materials.

Best Practice	Avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use regular weight for body text and paragraphs.</li> <li>• Use bold weight for the most important information, such as product information, categories, and prices.</li> <li>• Use light weight to show short, additional information such as brand name and weight.</li> <li>• Use weights in combination with different font sizes and letter casing to help organize information priority.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Semi-bold or medium weight fonts.</li> <li>• Italics unless with a handwritten style font for specific promotions or to establish a personal touch (for example, the name of the store owner).</li> <li>• Underlining unless used to indicate a hyperlink.</li> <li>• Other decorative styles that add clutter or extra flair.</li> </ul>

Table 1.2: Guidelines for Font Weight

## Hierarchy

The way we lay out our headings and content gives our customers the most important information first and the details second.

Information should be organized to help navigate and provide context for the customer. The largest text on a page should be used to answer or identify a customer's need or desire, with additional information being organized and styled according to priority.

In example 1 (Table 1.3), product names take precedence over product brands, and sale prices are the focal point. This identifies the most valuable information to our customers: what the product is and how much it costs.

In example 2 (Table 1.3), the selling point of the no-name mobile takes priority over all other information. This is because it identifies the customer's need for phone plans and explains why they should consider no-name mobile.

### Example 1: Product information on website

PRESIDENT'S CHOICE

#### **The Decadent Chocolate Chip Cookie**

300 g

[Product Image]

**\$3.75 ea Member Price**

**\$4.50 ea Non-members**

\$1.50/100 g

### Example 2: Homepage for no-name mobile

#### **Great quality plans, low prices**

**Get 30GB of data for \$29 with auto top-up**

- National 4G coverage
- No Long-term contracts or hidden fees

(so switch)

**Activate now**

Table 1.3: Hierarchy Examples

## Design Principles

Like our fonts and colors, we keep the designs simple too. We're bold and practical, which means minimalist designs with little visual clutter and plain language (no jargon) to reinforce the "no frills" message.

## Words We Use

We're known for a few iconic words and phrases that all reflect who we are. Our current slogan, "won't be beat," is one of them.

### Brand Keywords

- No nonsense
- No frills
- Value
- Local
- Simple
- Trusted low prices
- Community
- Hauler
- Unbeatable
- Fresh

### Core Phrases

- "Proud to be a hauler"
- "Shop like a hauler"
- "Fresh. Low. Prices."
- "Just the facts"
- "All value. No nonsense."
- "We know local"
- "lower food prices"

Keep it simple. In general, we like to be down-to-earth and no nonsense. So, we avoid flowery or complex words that seem overly formal or elevated. We are confident, so we avoid negative or apologetic terms unless we've made a mistake.

## Language Principles

- **Be direct:** Use clear, short phrases that communicate value and practicality.
- **Emphasize action:** Prefer verbs like "shop," "save," "haul," "grab," "find," and "get."
- **Celebrate community:** Use "we" and "you"—never corporate or distant.
- **Highlight simplicity:** Choose words like "simple," "easy," and "clear."
- **Inject confidence:** Words should feel bold and unapologetic, such as our uses of "proud," "hauler," and "trusted."

## Words and Phrases to Avoid

- Frilly or complex language (for example: “premium,” “luxurious,” “elevated”)
- Jargon or industry buzzwords
- Overly formal words (for example: “therefore” or “consequently”)
- Negative or apologetic terms that aren’t necessary to customer communication
- Words or phrases suggesting anything beyond “no frills” simplicity

We Use	We Avoid
No nonsense	Fancy
Value	Luxury
Local	Exotic
Community	Company
Shop	Purchase
Hauler	Shopper
Proud	Privileged
Simple	Sophisticated
Fresh	Gourmet

Table 1.4: Words We Use and Avoid

### Example:

- **Use:** Shop like a hauler and fill your cart with value.
- **Avoid:** Experience an exclusive shopping journey with premium selections.

## Logo Use

We use our logo the way we brand our grocery: clear, consistent, and straight to the point. We use our logo to reinforce that customers know what to expect when they see our logo, and we like to keep it that way.

### Logo Elements

- The wordmark “No Frills” is written in a custom, bold, sans-serif font (modified Futura Extra Bold) in capital letters.
  - “No” is written in red.
  - “Frills” is written in black.
  - No space between the words (i.e., same space between all letters).
- Blue rectangle icon with a single rounded bottom-left corner.
  - Width and height are equal to the height of the words “No Frills”.
  - A red maple leaf centered inside a square.



Figure 1: No Frills Logo

### Logo Backgrounds

The No Frills logo can be used either without a background on a white canvas or with the signature yellow associated with the No Frills brand. The background should have the minimum height and width of the No Frills logo.



Figure 2: No Frills Logo with Yellow Background

### Approved Logo Use

The No Frills logo should only be used on official No Frills publications, documents, web-content, and social media accounts.

Only use official, unaltered logo files provided by No Frills brand assets.

Dos	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Always keep the wordmark and icon together</li> <li>Only use solid white, black, or official yellow as backgrounds</li> <li>Maintain padding equal to the height of the “N” in “No Frills”</li> <li>Use and preserve high quality/resolution image files of the logo</li> <li>Use a minimum size of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Digital: 50px wide</li> <li>Print: 1 inch wide</li> </ul> </li> <li>Default placement to top-left corner of digital or print content</li> <li>Avoid patterns or gradients that reduce contrast</li> <li>Only use the approved colours (red, black, and yellow) for the wordmark</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Separate the wordmark and icon, or break up any components of the logo</li> <li>Crop, stretch, distort, or rotate the logo in any way</li> <li>Overlay images or text on top of the logo</li> <li>Place any unapproved elements next to or within the logo and background margins</li> <li>Place the logo against a background that is shorter than the height or width of the logo</li> <li>Add taglines or additional text to the logo</li> <li>Place on a busy background that reduces contrast or legibility</li> <li>Change colours, opacity, or add effects (shadows, gradients)</li> </ul>

Table 1.5: Logo Guidelines

# Chapter 2: How we write

This chapter sets the rules for how we write at No Frills. It covers grammar, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and formatting. Follow these guidelines for a clear and consistent writing style.

## Grammar and Spelling

### Sentence Structure and Length

Write like you talk. Keep sentences short (aim for 12 words or less). Use plain language; avoid jargon and unnecessary clauses.

#### Example:

- **Use:** Register for a PC Optimum™ account.
- **Avoid:** We invite you to complete the registration process in order to establish a PC Optimum™ account.

### Voice

Use active voice for instructions, UI text, product facts, and help topics.

#### Example:

- **Use:** Scan your PC Optimum™ card.
- **Avoid:** Your PC Optimum™ card should be scanned.

Use passive voice only when the action matters more than who's doing it, such as in brand stories or case studies.

#### Example:

- **Use:** The No Frills® store was opened in 1978.
- **Avoid:** Loblaw's converted its stores to No Frills® franchises in 1987.

### Articles

Always include a, an, or the where needed.

#### Examples:

- **Use:**
  - Create a shopping list.
  - Choose an available pickup time.
- **Avoid:**
  - Create shopping list.
  - Choose available pickup time.

## Pronouns

Use second-person pronouns like “you” to speak directly to the reader. Use “we” when referring to the company or team.

## Rules

- Use “you” to address the reader in instructions or guidance.
- Use “we” to represent the company, team, or shared actions.
- Avoid third-person references like “users” or “customers.”

## Examples:

- **Use:**
  - You can track your order in your account.
  - We deliver fresh produce every day.
- **Avoid:**
  - Users can track orders in their accounts.
  - The store delivers fresh produce every day.

## Verb Tense

- Use present tense for instructions and descriptions.

**Example:**

- **Use:** Click **CHECKOUT**.
- **Avoid:** You will click **CHECKOUT**.

- Use past tense for history, brand stories, or case studies.

**Example:** The first No Frills® store opened in East York in 1978.

- Use future tense only for planned changes or announcements.

**Example:** We will add more locations next year.

## Phrasing

Frame instructions and information positively when possible.

**Example:**

- **Use:** Enter your email to reset your password.
- **Avoid:** You can't reset your password without entering your email

## Spelling

Always use Canadian spellings.

**Example:**

Use	Avoid
colour	color
cheque	check (payment)
favourite	favorite
centre	center
litre	liter
metre	meter
traveller	traveler

Table 2.1: Spelling We Use and Avoid

## Punctuation Standards

Use the names in the following table to refer to punctuation marks and special characters.

Symbol	Name
\$	Dollar sign
%	Percent sign
&	Ampersand
!	Exclamation mark
.	Period
,	Comma
'	Apostrophe
:	Colon
-	Hyphen
( )	Parentheses
™ / ®	Trademark symbols
#	Number sign
/	Forward slash
_	Underscore

Table 2.2: Spelling We Use and Avoid

Follow these rules for each symbol.

## Dollar Sign

Use the dollar sign before numbers. Don't write the word "dollar" after the number.

### Example:

- **Use:** \$5 and under
- **Avoid:**
  - 5 dollars and under
  - Dollar 5 and under

## Percent Sign

Use the percent sign without a space between the number and the symbol.

### Examples:

- **Use:**
  - 2% milk
  - % Daily Value (nutrition info)
- **Avoid:**
  - 2 percent milk
  - 2 % milk (no space before the symbol)

## Ampersand

Write "and" in text. Use "&" only if it's part of an official category or product label.

### Examples:

- **Use:**
  - Dairy & Eggs
  - \$5 and under
- **Avoid:**
  - Dairy and Eggs
  - \$5 & under

## Period

Use periods correctly.

**Period in running text:** End full sentences with a period. Don't skip it.

**Example:**

- **Use:** Get this item with your grocery order.
- **Avoid:** Everything you need to ace another year Fresh, locally grown produce from Canadian farmers

**Periods in headings:** Use periods in short, punchy headings for emphasis.

**Example:**

- **Use:** Scoop. Snack. Repeat.
- **Avoid:** Scoop snack repeat (missing punctuation loses the brand style)

**Period in abbreviations:** Use periods in abbreviations for consistency with Canadian English style.

**Example:**

- **Use:** U.S. currency
- **Avoid:**
  - US currency
  - U S currency (incorrect spacing)

**Periods with numbers:** Use a period as a decimal point in prices and measurements.

**Examples:**

- **Use:**
  - "\$1.49"
  - "\$18.00/1 kg"
- **Avoid:**
  - \$1,49 (comma instead of decimal)
  - \$1 49 (space instead of decimal)

## Comma

Use commas to separate items in a list. Include the Oxford comma before the last item.

### Example:

- **Use:** apples, bananas, and grapes
- **Avoid:** apples, bananas and grapes (missing Oxford comma)

## Apostrophe

Use apostrophes for contractions and to show possession.

### Examples:

- **Use:**
  - Contractions: won't, don't, you'll
  - Possession: today's deals
- **Avoid:**
  - wont, dont
  - todays deals

## Colon

Use colons to introduce specific details or lists, such as product numbers or labels.

### Example:

- **Use:**
  - Product Number: 20156771\_EA
  - The payment options we accept are:
- **Avoid:**
  - Product Number - 20156771\_EA (don't replace a colon with a dash)
  - The payment options we accept are; (semicolon is incorrect here)

## Hyphen

Use hyphens in compound words.

### Example:

- **Use:** Bi-Colour Corn
- **Avoid:** Bi Colour Corn

## Exclamation Mark

Use exclamation marks only in customer-facing content that highlights offers or announcements. Don't use them in help text, UI labels, or buttons.

### Examples:

- **Use:**
  - That's up to \$75 in points!
  - Check out our weekly flyer for incredible savings and deals!
- **Avoid:**
  - Click Start shopping now!
  - Add to cart now!

## Parentheses

Use parentheses to add supporting detail that's secondary but useful.

### Examples:

- **Use:**
  - Credit (MasterCard and Visa)
  - Sugars (sugar, dextrose)
- **Avoid:**
  - Credit - MasterCard and Visa available
  - Sugars: sugar, dextrose

## Trademark and Registered Trademark

Use <sup>TM</sup> or <sup>®</sup> on the first mention of brand names.

### Examples:

- **Use:**
  - PC Optimum<sup>TM</sup> points
  - No Name<sup>®</sup> products
- **Avoid:**
  - PC Optimum points
  - No Name products

After the first mention, you don't need to repeat <sup>TM</sup> or <sup>®</sup> in the same topic or section.

## Number Sign

Don't use the number sign (#) in customer-facing text. Use "number" spelled out in labels or product details.

### Example:

- **Use:** Product Number: 20156771\_EA
- **Avoid:** Product #20156771\_EA

## Slash

Use the forward slash to show paired options in compact lists.

### Examples:

- **Use:**
  - Interac/Debit
  - \$18.00/1 kg (unit price)
- **Avoid:**
  - Interac or Debit (too long for labels)
  - \$18.00 per 1 kg

## Underscore

Use underscores in product numbers and IDs.

### Example:

- **Use:** Product Number: 20042333\_EA
- **Avoid:** Product Number: 20042333 EA

## Capitalization Rules

We use three capitalization styles.

- **Sentence case:** Capitalize only the first word and proper nouns.
- **Title case:** Capitalize the first and main words.
- **All Caps:** Write every letter in uppercase.

## Capitalization in Headings

Use sentence case for all action-based headings unless they are links or buttons. Only capitalize the first word and any proper nouns.

### Example:

- **Use:** Start shopping
- **Avoid:** Start Shopping or START SHOPPING

Use title case for concept-based headings.

### Examples:

- **Use:**
  - Long Weekend Essentials
  - Weekly Flyer
  - No Frills Delivers
- **Avoid:**
  - Long weekend essentials
  - weekly flyer
  - No Frills delivers

## Capitalization in UI Labels and Links

Use title case for navigation links and core UI labels.

**Examples:**

- **Use:**
  - About Us
  - Store Locator
- **Avoid:**
  - about us
  - Store locator

## Capitalization in Buttons and Promo Codes

Use all caps for action buttons and promo codes to make them stand out.

**Examples:**

- **Use:**
  - CHECKOUT
  - SELECT LOCATION
  - Use the code TRYNF to save on your first order.
- **Avoid:**
  - checkout
  - Select location
  - Use code Trynf

## Capitalization in Brands and Proper Nouns

Always capitalize proper nouns, including brand names, trademarks, and geographic names.

**Examples:**

- **Use:**
  - PC Optimum™
  - Loblaws, Ontario
- **Avoid:**
  - pc optimum™
  - ontario

## Capitalization in Generic Product Names

Write product names and labels in the title case unless they're in the middle of a sentence.

### Examples:

- **Use:**
  - Bananas, Bunch
  - Red Cherries
- **Avoid:**
  - bananas
  - Red cherries

## Capitalization in Lists

Capitalize the first word of each list item. Use lowercase for the rest of the item unless it includes a proper noun or abbreviation.

### Example:

- **Use:**
  - Interac/Debit
  - Credit (MasterCard and Visa available)
  - U.S. currency
  - Apple Pay/Google Pay
- **Avoid:**
  - interac/debit
  - credit (mastercard and visa available)

## Capitalization in General Text

Use sentence case in running text. Capitalize only proper nouns or abbreviations.

### Examples:

- **Use:**
  - We accept U.S. currency at all No Frills locations.
  - PC Optimum™ points can be redeemed on groceries.
- **Avoid:**
  - We Accept U.S. Currency At All No Frills Locations.
  - pc optimum™ points

# Lists and Steps

Use lists and steps for options, product details, or instructions.

## Ordered Lists

Use a numbered list when order matters, like in procedural steps.

### Example:

To order online

1. Sign in to your account.
2. Add items to your cart.
3. Choose a pickup or delivery time.
4. Pay online.

## Unordered Lists

Use a bulleted list when the order doesn't matter. Use at least two items in a list. Group items in a clear way. If it's not obvious, add a short description.

### Example:

The product labels we use are:

- Dairy & Eggs
- Meat & Seafood
- Snacks & Candy
- Pantry

## List Formatting Rules

- Start each list with a capital letter.
- Use list items that are grammatically parallel.
- Don't use a period unless the list is a full sentence.
- Keep lists short, no more than 7-9 items.
- If a list exceeds 10 items, consider using more than one list.
- Use a consistent style across a page or topic.

**Example:**

The payment options we accept are:

- Interac/Debit
- Credit (MasterCard and Visa available)
- U.S. currency
- PC Optimum points

## Numbers, Dates, and Measurements

Keep numbers clear and easy to read. Use the same style every time so customers don't have to think twice.

### Numbers

- Use digits for most numbers.

**Examples:**

- **Use:** 3 items, 1.5 kg
- **Avoid:** three items

- Spell out simple, round numbers.

**Example:**

- **Use:** one hundred stores
- **Avoid:** 100 stores when used in plain text

- Put a zero before decimals.

**Example:**

- **Use:** 0.5 kg
- **Avoid:** .5 kg

### Dates

- Write dates as July 20, 2025.

**Example:**

- **Use:** July 20, 2025
- **Avoid:** 7/20/2025

- Add commas in sentences.

**Example:**

- **Use:** Your order arrives on July 20, 2025, at 5 p.m.
- **Avoid:** Your order arrives on July 20 2025 at 5 p.m.

## Measurements

Use metric units for weights and volumes. Add imperial only if you need a price comparison. Keep it clear and consistent so anyone reading it gets it at a glance.

### Standard units

- **Weight:** grams (g), kilograms (kg)
- **Volume:** millilitres (ml), litres (l)
- **Imperial:** pounds (lb)

### Rules

- Write the metric first. Add imperial only when needed for price comparison.

**Example:** \$13.87 / 1kg \$6.29 / 1lb

- Put a space between the number and the unit when it stands alone.

**Examples:**

- **Use:** 250 g, 2 lb
- **Avoid:** 250g, 2lb

- Use lowercase symbols for metric units (g, kg, ml, l).

- Avoid decimals where you can. Switch to a smaller unit.

**Example:**

- **Use:** 500g
- **Avoid:** 0.5 kg

# Emphasis and Special Formatting

Keep it simple. Only highlight what helps customers act or understand important details.

## **Bold**

Use bold to highlight key elements that help readers act fast.

### **Product and price text**

Use bold for product names, labels, and prices.

#### **Examples:**

- **Large Grade A Eggs**
- **\$3.93 ea**

### **Headings and buttons**

Use bold for page headings, section titles, and buttons.

#### **Examples:**

- **Shop Categories**
- **CHECKOUT**

### **UI elements in steps**

In instructions or help content, bold UI labels and clickable items so they're easy to spot.

**Example:**

1. Click **CHECKOUT**.
2. Select **PC Optimum™** from the menu.

**Asterisk (\*)**

Use an asterisk to call out conditions, disclaimers, or extra details.

**Rules**

- Place the asterisk right after the related word or number, with no space.
- Add a short note or explanation below or nearby.
- Don't use more than one asterisk in the same section.

**Examples:**

- % Daily Value\*
- \*5% or less is a little, 15% or more is a lot
- Sign up for an annual pass and get your first year for \$29.99\*.

# Chapter 3: Writing Style and Rules

This chapter sets the standards for how we write at No Frills. Consistent writing helps reinforce our straightforward, approachable brand voice—across every channel and message.

## Section and Heading Styles

### Headings and Formatting

Use clear, descriptive headings and subheadings that are short and direct—ideally five words or fewer. Headings should follow a logical flow, clearly communicating the purpose of the content, and do not always have to be at the top of a section.

- **Case and Style:**
  - Use sentence case for call-to-action headings and headings related to the no name brand content.
  - Use title case for all other customer-facing content.
  - Employ sentence case with short titles and proper heading hierarchy (H2, H3).
- **Formatting:**
  - Headings should be bold with a line break before and after.
  - Use all-capitalized headings sparingly, reserved mainly for callout tags designed to catch a hauler's attention (e.g., flyer deals) or to differentiate sections of headings.
- **Usage:**
  - H1 headings are used for main categories, topics, and messages.
  - H2 headings are used for subcategories and promotions.
  - H3 headings are used for individual items and products when they are not the focus of the page.
  - Brand names are styled as regular paragraphs.

## Word Choices

When writing content for our haulers, the best practice is to keep it simple and friendly. Here are three principles to keep in mind:

- Use simple language
- Be inclusive
- Maintain the brand voice

	Simple Language	Inclusive Language	Brand Voice
Goal	Use words everyone understands. Avoid jargon, buzzwords, and complex terms.	Be welcoming and responsible. Don't use slang, idioms, or culturally specific phrases that not everyone understands.	Be positive, friendly, no-nonsense, direct, and conversational. Never be sarcastic or condescending.
Examples	Use: "Sign up for auto-top up to stay connected." Avoid: "Enroll in the automatic top-up service to ensure uninterrupted connectivity." Use: "Find a store." Avoid: "Locate a retail location."	Use: "Bring your friends and come by the store for the hottest flyer deals!" Avoid: "Grab your buddies and swing by the store for a killer deal!"	Use: "Shop now to get these savings while they last." Avoid: "Obviously, you should already know these savings aren't going to last—don't sleep on it!"

Table 3.1: Word Choices

## Writing by Platform

Adjust your style to match the needs of wherever your message will appear, but always keep the brand voice.

- **Web:** Use short blocks, strong headings, and action links.
  - Short paragraphs, plenty of white space.
  - Bullets and lists for easy scanning.
  - Headings guide the reader.
- **Print/Flyers:** Use bold titles, generous spacing, and a consistent layout.
  - Ultra concise, fewer words, bigger impact.
  - High contrast between text and background for legibility.
- **Social media:**
  - Keep it brief and punchy.
  - Use emojis sparingly, if at all.
  - Calls to action should be simple: "Find out more" and "See weekly deals".

- **Email:**
  - Friendly, clear greeting and signoff
  - Use clear subject lines (avoid ALL CAPS)
  - Limit to one main message per email

## Content Across Platforms

Keep messaging consistent across mobile, desktop, app, and print. Don't use different phrases for the same thing just to sound "fresh."

### Example

- **Use:** "Start shopping" everywhere.
- **Avoid:** "Begin your haul" on the web and "Shop now" in print.

Haulers should see the same terms and tone no matter where they read it.

## Consistency in Multi-Format Writing

If the same content appears on the website, on in-store signage, and in the app, use the same wording unless the format requires a change (for example, space limits).

### Good practice:

- **Web:** Price drop on apples—\$1.99/lb.
- **Signage:** Apples—\$1.99/lb.

Change only when needed for space or clarity.

## Abbreviations and Acronyms

- Only use abbreviations if they're common and widely recognized. If it's not obvious, spell it out the first time.
  - Examples: FAQ, kg, PC Optimum™
- Always spell out the term the first time if it's not obvious.
  - Example: "Stock Keeping Unit (SKU)"
- After first use: Use the abbreviation only.
- No Frills and Loblaw acronyms: only use internal acronyms with teams who understand them. Spell them out for customer-facing communication.
- No periods: Don't punctuate abbreviations (example: "SKU" not "S.K.U.")

**Avoid:**

- Using more than one abbreviation per sentence unless necessary.
- Creating your own acronyms
- Overuse: if an abbreviation is not widely known, don't use it.

Keep it simple. Keep things clear, honest, friendly, and direct—just like No Frills. When in doubt, choose words and formats that make things easier for everyone to understand.

# Chapter 4: Common Blocks of Text

This chapter provides standardized templates and formats for essential written content used throughout No Frills materials, ensuring consistency, clarity, and compliance in all communications. These are reusable templates. Use them consistently across content.

## Company Description

**Purpose:** Use this standardized company description on the website, in press releases, job postings, and partner materials to introduce No Frills in a concise, consistent way.

### Short Version

No Frills is Canada's discount grocery store, dedicated to saving you money on everyday essentials. Low prices, real food. No extras.

### Long Version

No Frills is a leading Canadian discount grocery store, proudly offering thousands of products at unbeatable prices since 1978. With hundreds of locations and a simple, no-nonsense approach, we help customers get more for less every day. No Frills is part of the Loblaw family of stores and is committed to quality, affordability, and exceptional value.

## Product Description

Product descriptions follow this structure in online listings, signage, and marketing to ensure all key information and benefits are clear.

Product descriptions can be short and upbeat or long and detailed. They should be descriptive—explaining what the product is and providing inspiration on how it can be used. When writing descriptions for external products, follow the product's company guidelines and templates on how to write for their product. When describing products briefly, always prioritize the name of the product rather than the brand it comes from. Use enticing descriptive words and a clearly labeled price.

### Template:

- **Headline:** [Product name and a key benefit]
- **Intro sentence:** Briefly describe what it is and its main use or value.
- **Bullet list:** (3–5 points highlighting key features, sizes, or reasons to buy)
- **Call to action:** (Optional for web or ads)

### **Example: Oreos Product Description**

Canada's #1 Cookie Brand—OREO Original Sandwich Cookies are grabbable, snackable, and forever dunkable. The combination of two delicious sensations—rich chocolate wafer cookies and smooth sweet creme. OREO cookies are the perfect snack.

- This package contains 1 resealable 270 g pack of OREO Original Sandwich Cookies.
- Nothing compares to the iconic OREO. The classic combo of cream sandwiched between two chocolate cookies has been winning hearts (and stomachs) for over 100 years.
- Packable, snackable, and forever dunkable, the classic OREO makes for the perfect afternoon pick-me-up, shareable snack, or sweet treat.
- No artificial flavours or colours
- Kosher cookies are always made with real cocoa. Each serving of cookies is 160 calories. Baked in Canada.

### **Example: Farmer's Market Chocolate Chip Cookies Product Description**

Chewy And Loaded With Chocolate Chips Just Like Homemade.

### **Example: Bananas Product Description**

Bananas are a versatile addition to your kitchen. Slice them over your morning cereal for a nutritious start to the day, or blend them into a smoothie for a quick, refreshing beverage. These bananas come in a convenient bunch, making it easy to keep your fruit bowl stocked. Their natural sweetness and soft texture make them a favourite for snacks and baking. Enjoy the convenience of having fresh bananas on hand for various uses throughout the week.

*Table 4.1: Product Descriptions*

## Reference Formats

Here are the standard ways to cite or link to supporting information in policies, documents, and help articles.

- **Web links:** Use the full URL for internal documents and a shortened descriptive link for public references.

### Examples:

- **Internal/official policies:** The website, <https://www.nonamemobile.ca/en/help/plans-add-ons-and-services/9-1-1-emergency-service-costs/> provides information on emergency services for No Frills phone plans.
- **Public/promotional:** Learn more at [nonamemobile.ca/911](https://www.nonamemobile.ca/911).

- **External sources:**  
Cite as: “Source: Health Canada, 2024”
- **Product codes/SKUs:**  
List as “SKU: 123456” on product labels, signage, and order forms.

## Legal and Safety Disclaimer

Ensure legal and safety language is present where required, such as on online purchases, product packaging, store signage, and promotional materials.

### Standard disclaimer template:

- **General:** “Prices and availability may vary by store. See in-store for details.”
- **Online purchasing:** “Products may not be exactly as shown. See in-store for details. Restrictions may apply.”
- **Safety (allergen):** “Please check product packaging for the most up-to-date ingredient and allergen information.”
- **Warnings or Notices:** “Store in a cool, dry place. Check expiry date before use.”

## Help or FAQ Templates

Maintain a consistent tone and structure for frequently asked questions and help materials, both online and in print.

### FAQ entry template:

- **Q:** [State the question simply and directly]
- **A:** [Provide a concise, helpful answer]

### Example FAQs:

- **Q: What is No Frills' price match policy?**  
**A:** We won't be beat. If you find a lower price at another major grocery store, show us and we'll match it on the same item.
- **Q: Can I order groceries online?**  
**A:** Yes! Shop online at [nofrills.ca](http://nofrills.ca) for pickup or delivery in select areas.

Whenever possible, keep answers brief and use plain language. If further help is needed, direct customers to relevant help sources, like below:

“For more information on how to pick up your order, visit [nofrills.ca/FAQ](http://nofrills.ca/FAQ).”

# Chapter 5: Write for Everyone

Using language that can be applied universally is essential to good communication. Our goal is to make the customer feel comfortable reading our websites, flyers, and content. It is important to use language that is inclusive and unproblematic.

## Inclusive Language

Use language that can be universally used to describe customers. Avoid language that assumes gender, ability, or age. For example, use the word “they” instead of “he” or “she.” This ensures that the reader will be addressed appropriately regardless of who they are.

### Appropriate Use of Gendered Words

When discussing gender-specific items, use of the words “man,” “men,” “woman,” and “women” is acceptable.

**Example:** “Venus Sensitive women’s razors are made for women with sensitive skin.”

### Pharmaceutical and Healthcare

When writing about pharmaceutical topics, refer to customers as patients. Additionally, when writing about family healthcare, use the term “family wellness” instead.

### Call to Actions

Use “you” when writing call to actions. Refer to the reader/customer as “you” for instructions.

**Example:**

- Step 3. Remove the back panel of your phone and the battery. You’ll see a SIM card slot.
- Get this item with your grocery order.

### Haulers

Use the term “Hauler” when referring to customers in promotional materials such as flyers or banners.

A hauler is someone who gets a lot for a lot less.

# Culturally Neutral Language

## Casual Language Use

Know when to lean into the brand's personality and write more casually. Use your judgment to incorporate this type of language in customer-facing content, like help articles, in-app messages, or error screens.

For example, here's an excerpt from a flyer:

"You wanna talk dedication? Hillside Gardens got it by the bushel, having grown root & field vegetables for four generations!"



In this scenario, "want to" and "have it" can be transformed to "wanna" and "got it".

## Use Universal Formats

### Dates

When writing dates, write out the full month name, followed by the day and year. Write dates like July 3, 2025.

### Weights and Prices

When writing prices:

- Use dollar signs like:  
**\$2.38 ea**
- For weighed produce, add estimated prices in brackets. For example:  
**Honeycrisp Apples \$2.38 (est.) ea**

When writing weights and quantities:

- Use both metric and imperial for produce items. For example:  
**1.5 kg (3.3 lbs)**
- Use metric for liquid items using liters and milliliters.
- When describing the average weight of produce items, use kilograms. For example:  
**Average weight is 0.24 KG**
- Use grams when describing the weight of non-produce items. For example:  
**Pocky Chocolate Cream Coated Biscuit Sticks**  
**156 g**  
**\$5.49 ea**  
**\$3.52 / 100g**
- Add spaces before and after slash marks when describing price and weight.

## Translation-Friendly Writing

Try to keep sentences short and clear for easier translations. Do not use any phrases that may not make sense when translated. Avoid using double meanings or complex phrases as well.

## Cultural Promotions

When promoting cultural holidays from different countries and ethnic groups, use their respective language in subtitles or second headings for flyers.

**Note:** Products in these sections will still be written in English and French.

# Chapter 6: Make It Easy to Read

Your writing quality is as important as your writing visuals. Using good writing practice allows you to communicate with the reader as clearly as possible without giving them too much information at once. Sentence structure and visual hierarchy are important tools to consider when writing.

## Reading Levels

Write at a grade 6-8 reading level, incorporating the use of plain words and short sentences. When writing more than a few words, use smaller font sizes so as to not overwhelm the reader with text.

## Screen Reader Compatibility

Don't put text in images. Screen readers can't read it, which makes it inaccessible. When you do include images, write alternative text for screen readers. Define what is being shown in the image in simple, short sentences. Structure pages using headings (H1, H2, H3) so that screen readers can follow the hierarchy.

## Visual Readability

### Colour Usage

Our prices are our main selling point. Write prices in large yellow text with circular red backgrounds with bold product names. Follow these formats for more visual readability:

- Use black text on white or yellow backgrounds.
- Use red or black text on yellow backgrounds.
- Use white text on red backgrounds.
- Use large, readable fonts.
- Follow this hierarchy for product text fonts:
  - H1 (bolded): Product name
  - H2: Quantity
  - H3: Product number

## Spacing

Break up dense paragraphs with space or bullets, and try to keep paragraphs to a maximum of two sentences.

Keep products at the same Y-axis when grouped together on a webpage or flyer.

## Mobile-Friendly Writing

To write for small-screen compatibility, use short sentences and big headings. Check to see that headings and paragraphs display well for the best responsive design, with easy accessibility for tapping and navigation.

# Chapter 7: Referencing and Linking

This section explains how to handle references in No Frills content, including internal links, external sources, and citations where required.

## Internal Linking Practices

Use specific links or titles for internal content. When creating hyperlinks, make sure that it is visually obvious that it can be clicked or tapped.

### Examples:

- **Use:**
  - See our return policy.
  - Read the PC Optimum™ terms and conditions.
  - Learn more
- **Avoid:** Click here

## External Referencing Guidelines

Avoid referencing outside sources unless legally required, such as health guidelines or product certifications.

When needed, use plain language and name the source.

### Example:

- “As outlined by Health Canada nutrition guidelines...”
- “Based on data from the CFIA (Canadian Food Inspection Agency)...”

## Tone When Referencing

Keep references clear and neutral. Do not use colloquialisms when referencing outside links. For example, do not use the NOFRILLS brand voice when referencing resources such as health guides and safety information. Keep the reference short and helpful without overexplaining. Link to a source once per document unless absolutely necessary.

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**Won't Be Beat.**