

Formatting Your Press Release

Here are some basic guidelines to help you format your press releases:

Type on letterhead to identify your organization. Or develop a masthead that you use strictly for press releases.

Include a date. This is especially important if you send releases out on a regular basis.

Don't forget to include a contact name and phone number. Oftentimes, reporters will call for clarification or additional information.

Use all caps, boldface and underline your headline.

Use the 5 W's: who, what, when, where and why to ensure that the most important information is all contained within the first or second paragraph. Always use double-spacing, which gives editors and reporters room to make notes and changes. Make sure the body of your release is typed in upper and lower case—USING ALL CAPS THROUGHOUT IS HARD TO READ!

Include a quote to make your press release more interesting. Make sure the quote is brief and adds valuable information and always identify the speaker.

Add a photo. "A picture is worth a thousand words." If you do send a picture, add it as an attachment to your email and limit the size to less than one megabyte. Always include a caption that clearly identifies everyone in your photo.

Keep it short and sweet. Limit your release to one page, if possible. If you do write a two-page release, make sure to fill both pages with information.

Always include contact information, including your website address at the bottom of your release.

Use ### to indicate the end of the release or **–More–** at the bottom of the first page if it runs to two pages.

Follow-up is key! Call to ensure the reporter or editor has received your release and offer to answer any questions they might have.