# Assignment 3: Process Instructions

For your third assignment, you will write **process instructions**. Process instructions tell a reader how to perform a task. As discussed in Chapter 14 of *PSTC*, writing good process instructions requires careful consideration of your audience and a clearly organized set of steps to be performed.

### Planning

To begin this assignment, you will need to identify some process or task here on the university campus that would benefit from instructions. For example, you might identify an appliance in the chemistry lab or a machine in the fitness center that needs good instructions. You will need to clear your topic with me via a properly formatted email before proceeding (this e-mail will count for part of your assignment grade; see *PSTC* pp. 255-258 for guidance in formatting your e-mail). If the process you choose already has instructions, you will need to submit the existing instructions along with your rewrite.

### Drafting

To write your process instructions, you will need to follow the format discussed in class and outlined in your text (see *PSTC* pp. 402-415, and *HTW* pp. 266-271). Make sure your introduction identifies the purpose of the task, the tools and materials needed, and the safety warnings or precautions to be observed. Your steps should be written in the imperative mood and should each clearly identify what portion of the larger task is to be performed. Remember to number your steps. If needed, include feedback statements as part of each step. Your conclusion should provide the reader with any necessary troubleshooting, follow-up, or maintenance required.

If your instructions include any technical terms potentially unfamiliar to your audience, take care to include sentence or parenthetical definitions.

### Visuals

Clear instructions often contain visuals to aid your reader. Consider the process or task your instructions describe, and whether visuals would aid your reader in completing them. Review *PSTC* chapter 8, pp. 224-235, to consider how best to use visuals to suit your audience and purpose.

To complete the assignment, you will need to prepare one more document. Write a brief description (1-2 pages) of a **proposed usability test** for your process instructions. Describe how you would test the instructions, and how your findings might lead to changes in your instructions. Review *HTW* pp. 558-560 for this portion of the assignment.

### Formatting

You are free to select the font and point size for your **instructions**. All decisions should be based upon organization and readability. If graphics will improve your document, include them. If bold-faced type is needed for headings or safety instructions, use it.

For your **usability test proposal**, please refer to the Assignment Submission policy.

### Minimum page length

2 pages

## Due Dates

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** First Draft **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** Peer Review **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** Final Draft

## Cover Letter

When you are ready to submit your final draft in Week 11, you must include a cover letter at the beginning of this document, before your final draft begins. Your cover letter must summarize and **explain** the revisions you made to your original draft.

## Let’s Reach for an A!

The default grade for this assignment (and this course) is a B. If you would like to earn a grade of “A” for this assignment, you must do the following:

In addition to the assignment's main purpose, you must carry out the proposed usability test. This will require some planning ahead on your part – not only will you need extra time to complete this, you will also need to have instructions that are doable by the people and resources around you. You might have more success asking someone to test out instructions on changing the strings on a guitar as opposed to installing solar panels on a house.

Here’s an example. If you’ve chosen to write instructions on how to change the oil in your car, you will also have to write a proposed usability test to see if these instructions work. If you want to earn that A, ask someone (a friend, family member, roommate, etc.) will help you test out the instructions.

If they agree, document what happens. Did you follow the usability test you proposed? Did they find the instructions easy to follow? Were they successful? What recommendations would they make to improve the instructions? This should be about an additional page long.

It does not have to be perfect, but it must demonstrate a good faith attempt to develop nuance in your argument by analyzing how different genres can affect the audiences your purpose can reach. **In other words, by doing this, you are demonstrating that you know how to revise your instructions for better clarification. Furthermore, you are developing skills in note-taking and observation.**

*Note: If you want to earn an “A” in this course, you must make good faith attempts to complete the “Let’s Reach for an A!” sections in 2 of the 3 major assignments.*

## Final Submission Checklist

* I have included a cover letter as the first page of my assignment where we summarize and explain what revisions we made to our draft.
* I have included an introduction that identifies the context for these instructions.
* I have included a clear and concise language for instructions.
* I have used the imperative mood in instructions.
* I have included visuals as needed.
* I have included a proposed usability test.
* If I want to earn an “A,” we have made a good faith attempt to fulfill the requirements in the “Let’s Reach for an A!” section.
* I have included in-text citations and a Works Cited/Reference page.
* I have formatted my paper [as our instructor has described.]