

Be bold in updating pages

*This page is considered a guideline on CommonWiki. *It illustrates standards of conduct that many editors agree with in principle. Although it may be advisable to follow it, it is not policy. When editing this page, please ensure that your revision reflects consensus. When in doubt, discuss first in the comment area.

The CommonWiki community encourages users to **be bold in updating articles**. Wikis develop faster when people fix problems, correct grammar, add facts, make sure the language is precise and so on. We expect everyone to be bold: it's okay. How many times have you read something on a website and thought, "Well, that's wrong. Why doesn't somebody fix that?" CommonWiki not only allows you to add, revise, and edit the article — it *wants* you to do it. It does require some amount of politeness, but it works. You'll see.

Also, of course, others here will edit what *you* write. **Don't take it personally**. They, like all of us, just want to make CommonWiki as good as it can possibly be.

...but don't be reckless!

New users in particular are often excited by the openness of CommonWiki and dive right in. That's a good thing. But please note: "be bold in updating pages" does not mean that you should make large changes or deletions to long articles on complex, controversial subjects with long histories, without carefully looking at your edit. In addition, making large-scale changes to Featured articles, which are recognized as CommonWiki's best articles for their completeness, accuracy and neutrality, is often a bad idea. In many such cases the text as you find it has come into being after long and arduous negotiations between users of diverse backgrounds and points of view.

Before you edit an article, it's a useful idea to first read the article in its entirety, read the comments on the talk page, and view the [page history](#) to get a sense of how the article came into being and what its current status is. It's also worth reading around some related articles, as what you thought was a problem or omission may vanish after you have followed a few links.

"Be Bold" has become an unofficial slogan of Wikipedia

If you expect or see a disagreement with your version of the article, and you want to change or delete anything substantial in the text, it's a good idea to list your objections one by one in the talk page, reasonably quoting the disputed phrases, explaining your reasoning and providing solid references.

Then, wait for responses for at least a day: often people edit CommonWiki in their spare time or may be on leave and may not respond immediately. If no one objects, proceed, but always move large deletions to the Talk page and list your objections to the text so that other people will understand your changes and will be able to follow the history of the page. Also be sure to leave a descriptive [edit summary](#) detailing your change and reasoning.



Exceptions

Categories and templates

Although it is generally fine to be bold in updating **articles**, being bold in updating **categories and templates** can often be a *bad* thing. This is because category changes - and even more so template changes - can affect a large number of pages. In the case of templates, changing code on one template that is very widely used can cause problems for Wikipedia's servers. (This is why the [most heavily used templates](#) are protected from editing.) It is usually worth proposing any changes to categories and/or templates on talk or other relevant WikiProject pages prior to making any change.

Reverting

Be bold in contributions, but not in destructions. Editing is a collaborative effort, so **editing boldly** should not be confused with **reverting boldly**. This only leads to edit wars (see notes below). Use the comment area instead. A simple guideline for simple reverting is that it works best for, and is really intended as, *_a tool against CLEAR vandalism._* So save it for that! In cases other than vandalism, somebody is trying to be constructive. Even if they are doing it badly, and even if they are completely and foolishly wrong, there are usually more polite and constructive ways to deal with them than simply returning the article back to the pristine way (you think) it should remain. So, here's the time to think of better solutions.

If you're tempted to revert for anything but clear vandalism, take a deep breath; it may be better to discuss it on the talk page or build on the previous edit with a new edit of your own. It may be even better to simply do nothing for 24 hours while you cool down. Reverting isn't always collaborative editing, but often a cheap shortcut. (And, it doesn't help that you're limited in space for your revert "edit summary" comment. Over-succinctness may lead to rude-sounding stuff.) Be careful if a revert touches off a revert war. If a revert war begins, then collaboration is not working, and editing the article boldly by reverting is not collaboration. Instead it attempts to force one editor's will on the other editors, which will never work. Such edits will not survive. The "correctness" or "truthfulness" of the edit is irrelevant at this point (**See: BOLD, revert, discuss cycle**).

Notes - also see

- [How to edit a page](#)
- [Editing policy](#)
- [BOLD, revert, discuss cycle](#)

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