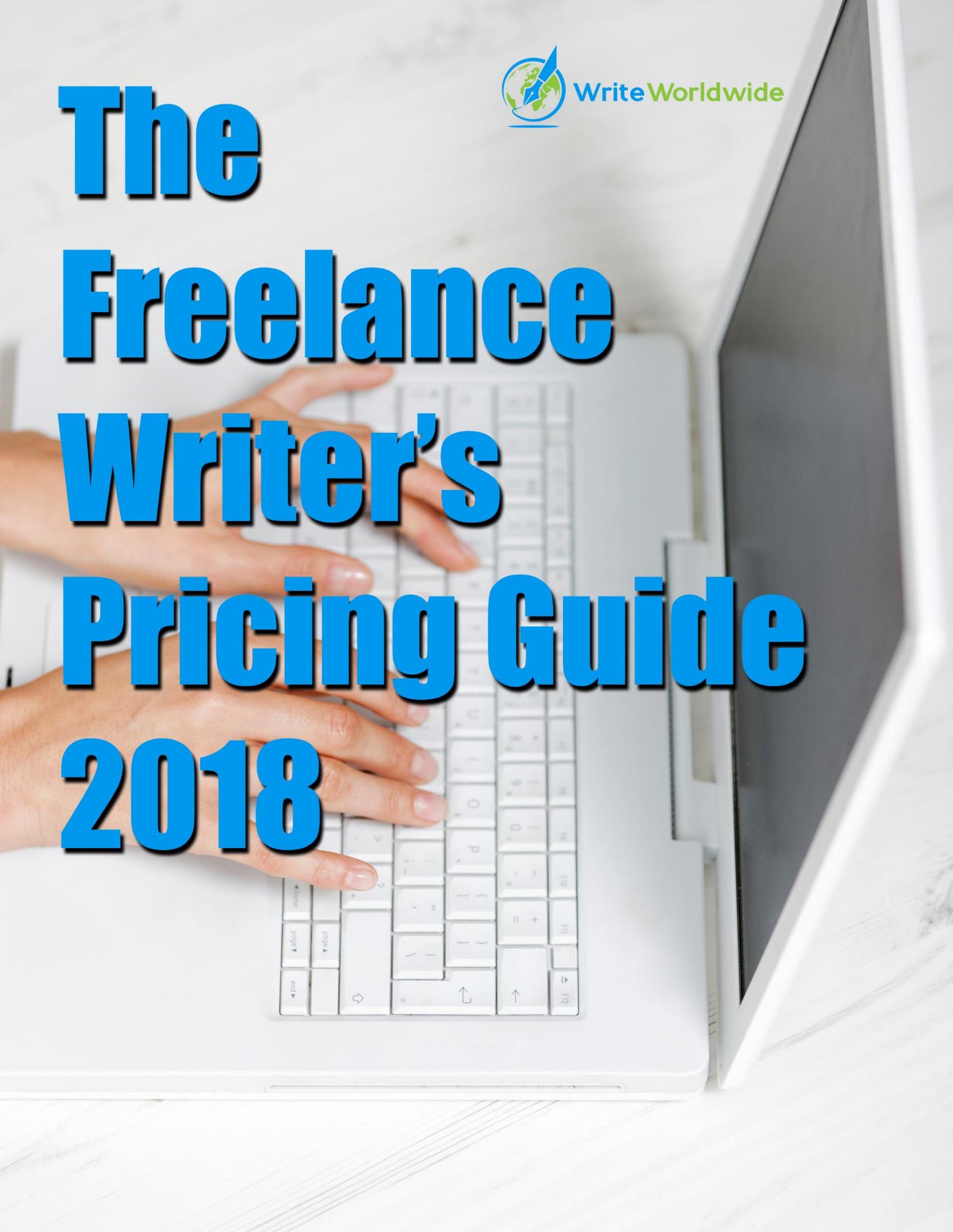


The Freelance Writer's Pricing Guide 2018



So you've gone through all of the [WriteWorldwide learning resources](#), you've tightened up your grammar skills, learned how to write engaging headlines, and you've even managed to find a niche that's ripe for the taking.

But now that it's time to send out your first cold pitch, you've just realized that you have no clue what you should charge.

Do you go high, so potential clients assume that you've been at this for a while?

Do you go low, so you can snag as many clients as possible and build up that all-important portfolio of published work?

Or do you go somewhere in the middle?

You probably already know the answer.

But before we go any further, it's time for some tough love.

You can't charge if you can't write

We can't stress enough how important it is to be able to write properly. Now we're not suggesting that you can't make mistakes or bend the rules; everyone takes liberties with grammar rules now and then. If you look hard enough, you'll probably find a few grammar rules broken right here in this guide. But you simply CANNOT ask people to pay for your work if you haven't mastered the fundamentals of writing.

Basic grammar mistakes, bad spelling, and poor sentence structure are the hallmarks of a poor writer, and this is just as true for native English speakers as it is for non-native speakers. It doesn't matter how well you speak the language; if your writing isn't up to scratch, then you cannot ask someone to pay for it.

Please take this advice on board and test yourself before pitching potential clients. Write 500 words on any topic and ask for feedback in freelance writing groups or from other writers you know. And don't be offended if they offer constructive criticism. Remember you asked for their help so best to listen if they have something to say.

If you want to take your writing game up a notch, then take a look at our [Ultimate Guide on How to Improve Your English Writing Skills](#). You can even download it for free as a PDF and keep it handy for future reference.

Now that we got that out of the way, let's go right ahead and explain why new writers should never price themselves too high or too low.

Don't go too high

The temptation to start making good money as soon as possible is hard to resist. You might find yourself thinking that you can write as well as anyone, so why shouldn't you charge \$500 per blog post? And you may have a point. However, with very little experience and no portfolio of published content, you may find that you'll price yourself out of the game.

Business and website owners who pay top dollar for content creation will expect to see samples of your work and blog posts on your own website might not do the trick. They'll want to see your work on established sites and possibly even a few testimonials from people that matter (unfortunately mothers don't count).

We're not saying it's right, but this is how it works when you set high rates for your writing.

Don't go too low

At the other end of the scale, some new writers are so desperate to get samples of their work on established websites that they'll write for pennies.

Now, this is an understandable feeling, and those looking to make a name for themselves often fall into this way of thinking. If this sounds like you, and creating a portfolio is your primary goal, here's a suggestion: write for free.

Yes, you read that right, writing for free is better than writing for pennies and here's why.

When you write for free, you are doing so with the sole purpose of creating a solid piece of work that you are proud to put your name to and, most importantly, one that you can show potential clients. Publishers will be less demanding, appreciate your efforts, and in most cases, will even give you a byline.

When you write for pennies, you take on a completely different mindset, and publishers/business owners often feel that they have the right to make unreasonable demands. After all, they are paying you even if it's just pennies.

You will feel overworked and underappreciated. Keep this up for long, and you may even feel inclined to throw the towel in before your fledgling writing career has started.

So where's the middle ground?

We're glad you asked.

In this guide, we're going to give you two ends of the scale for a variety of writing jobs. However, the low end of our scale is simply the minimum that you should charge or accept.

Like we said, we don't agree with undercharging for your work, so we'll start our scale in the middle.

The high prices you see in this guide are by no means a ceiling. Smash right through those prices if you can, but realistically they are the most that you can hope to get paid for writing if you have limited experience. But don't worry if you can't get to that level right off the bat, even experienced writers might struggle to get those rates.

Now before we go any further, we have to mention that this pricing guide is a guide only. That's sort of why we called it a guide.

Do not assume that clients will happily pay you the minimum rates that we suggest or that you can only charge within our suggested range.

This guide offers suggested rates based on our experience and some industry standards. Use the information as you see fit, but NEVER undercharge.

Per word vs. per hour vs. per project

Before we get down to the actual figures, we should have a quick chat about how you should approach your pricing.

There are three options available to you; you can charge by the word, set an hourly rate, or charge a project fee.

Charging per word

This is often the first option for many freelance writers and it likely stems from the world of journalism where, for a time, charging by the word was the industry standard. In fact, many magazines and newspapers still pay their writers this way.

The great thing about charging by the word is that it gives you a sense that every word you write has value. And if your blog post or article gets too long, no need to worry, you're getting paid anyway.

The problem with this though is that you may find yourself inadvertently waffling through pointless paragraphs just to get your word count up. There's also a chance that the person who is paying you will put a limit on your word count so they can stay within budget.

Now, this might not sound too bad to you, but there are times when it can be difficult condensing 1000 words worth of information into a 500-word blog post.

Charging by the hour

Some writers swear by this pricing method as it ensures that every minute they spend on a project is a minute that they are getting paid, and in theory, it makes perfect sense. Work ten hours on an in-depth article and get paid for ten hours of work. Sounds great, right?

Unfortunately, when a business owner pays you by the hour, they tend to see you as a remote employee rather than a freelancer or contractor. This means that they feel no reservations about questioning your hours or suggesting that you spend less time researching.

For the most part, those that don't write rarely understand the time and effort that goes into crafting the perfect piece of content. This sometimes leads them to suspect that you are overcharging and suspicions like that can destroy a working relationship.

Then there's also the issue of speed. Perhaps you have god-like researching skills, or maybe you can type 120 words per minute. It seems a little unfair that you should get paid less for delivering the same high-quality work in two hours that it takes another writer ten hours to do.

No, we have to say that charging by the hour doesn't do you or your client any favors at all. So if we had to tell you to avoid any of these three pricing methods, it would be this one.

Charging by the project

And last but by no means least we come to project pricing. Now, this is one of the simplest and most straightforward ways to set your rates and, yes, you guessed it, it's one of our favorites here at WriteWorldwide.

When you charge by the project, you are charging for the value that you are providing. That means that it doesn't matter how many words it runs to or how long it takes to write, the content you provide is going to offer your client some serious value.

It could be a simple how-to post for a DIY site, or it could be an in-depth article on tax laws; whatever it is, by charging a project fee, you guarantee your client that there will be no meaningless paragraphs or filler content and that they will receive it within a reasonable timeframe.

This is also how you get to differentiate between various types of copy and content and so charge accordingly. For example, a 1000-word landing page for a \$997 product offers far more value to the client than a 1000-word blog post on a recent episode of The Walking Dead.

But if you charge by the word, then it's safe to say that your client will expect both to cost the same. After all, they're just words thrown together in a series of sentences, right?

We won't go into it too much here, but if you want to learn more about this approach to setting your rates for any freelancing work, then we suggest you read 'Breaking the Time Barrier' by Mike McDerment and Donald Cowper.

This short ebook breaks down why you should charge for the value you offer your client and not the time you spend on a project. It's a real eye-opener and has changed the lives of many a freelancer. You can download it for free [right here](#).

So how much should you charge?

So at long last, we come to the interesting part; how much should you charge.

Before you take a look at the table on the next page, we have to remind you once again that these are merely suggested rates. If you find that clients want to pay you more, then yay for you!

Likewise, if you want to accept a lower payment than our indicated minimum, then don't feel bad about it. This is your career, and it's entirely up to you to decide what you think is a fair payment for your work. All we're trying to do with this guide is give you a starting point and perhaps a few targets that you can strive to hit over the next year.

CONTENT	RANGE
Blog Posts <i>1000 words max</i>	\$50 - \$350
Long-Form Blog Posts <i>1000-3000 words</i>	\$250 - \$1000
Emails <i>Subscriber/autoresponder/sales email</i>	\$50 - \$750
Copyediting	Per project
Web Pages <i>Home, About, FAQ, etc.</i>	\$100 - \$500
Sales Pages <i>Landing page to promote one offer only</i>	\$250 – the sky is the limit!
Press Release Short <i>250 words max</i>	\$100 - \$175
Press Release Long <i>800 words max</i>	\$250 - \$1000
Product Descriptions <i>Short descriptions of 50-150 words</i>	\$50 - \$150
White Papers <i>6-10 pages</i>	\$2000 - \$5000
eBooks <i>10,000 words aprox</i>	\$2000 - \$6000

Blog posts

When starting out in your freelancing career, you may come across quite a few jobs on websites such as Prologger where agencies or businesses with small budgets are offering low pay for articles.

Now while you may be inclined to take whatever you can get, we suggest that \$50 should be your absolute minimum rate for a blog post under 1000 words. Ideally, you'll charge more, but when you're starting out, this is as low as you want to go.

Blog posts may seem easy but bear in mind that like all content, it all depends on how well you understand the topic and how much research you have to do. While you may be able to crank a short one out in an hour, the majority will take much longer to complete.

Long-form posts will generally pay much better, and most experienced writers will charge a minimum of \$400 per post. However, if you're just starting out then \$250 isn't a bad rate for your first few clients.

Emails

You can usually place any email you write in one of three categories – the subscriber email, the autoresponder, and the sales email.

Subscription emails

These are the emails that keep your client's subscriber list in the loop. They inform them of the latest goings-on at the company/website or perhaps offers some tips and advice relative to a particular industry. Some clients prefer short and snappy emails sent out every day while others may prefer the long storytelling kind going out once a week.

Autoresponders

These are those short emails that you get when you subscribe to a list, buy a product, or sign up for a service. They could also include abandoned cart emails (every e-commerce site should have a sequence of these), and they usually run to a couple of hundred words at the most.

Sales emails

Any email that your client sends out with the sole purpose of directing customers to a sales page falls into this category. Length varies depending on the product or service but generally speaking, these are long emails crafted to make the sale before the reader even gets as far as the sales page.

How you charge for each type of email depends on the length and of course the value of the message within. An email selling a high-ticket item is obviously worth a lot more to a client than a simple autoresponder confirming a purchase or subscription sign-up.

Understanding how valuable the email is to your client should allow you to set your rates accordingly. This is why our range goes from as low as \$50 (simple autoresponders) to \$750 for sales emails.

Once again, we have to remind you that this is just a suggested range. If you feel that a sales email is worth more to your client than \$750, then go right ahead and set your rates higher. Be warned though, that clients that want these types of emails will often ask you for results from your previous work. If you don't have results to share, then you can't expect to command high rates.

Copyediting

Do not confuse copyediting with proofreading. If a client asks you, a freelance writer, to have a quick look at something, then the chances are they'll want you to rewrite sections of it. Now, this one is difficult to set a range for as in some cases copyediting can result in more work than writing a fresh piece of content.

For this reason, you will need to ask the client how far they expect you to go with the copyediting. If it's looking like a rewrite for anything more than 50% of the copy, then charge your current rate for creating a new piece of that type of content.

Website pages

A website is often the first point of contact for potential clients and customers, and so the content needs to reflect the company's core values and brand image. And while a client may tell you that the home page 'only' has 300 words, those 300 words could be the difference between a sale or an abandoned cart.

We started our range at \$100 per page but in fairness, you can and should charge more. Like we said, this is some of the most important copy and content on the website so think of the value in those words and sell that thought to your client.

Sales pages

A sales page or landing page has one purpose and one purpose only, and there are no prizes for guessing what that is: to sell of course.

How you charge for this type of page depends on the item that you are trying to sell. If it's a high-ticket service or product, then your client will have no problem paying top dollar and may also allow you to negotiate a royalty on sales generated.

If, however, it's a low-priced product that isn't expected to generate a massive profit then your client may not be too eager to pay premium fees.

Press releases

Most press releases are around 300 words and with good reason. The idea is to get to the point as quickly as possible before the reader gets bored and moves on. After all, it is 'just' a press release and not an article or post with actionable tips and advice.

However, there are times when a longer version is necessary. Perhaps the client wants to make several announcements in one release, or maybe there's simply too much information to get the message across in under 300 words.

Either way, a press release needs to contain no fluff and no redundant language. Every single word must count, and this makes the press release a little more difficult to write than standard blog posts. That's why you'll notice that even our minimum suggested rate is actually quite high.

Believe it or not, sometimes it's harder to write less.

Product descriptions

Another piece of copy that business owners often underestimate the power of is the humble product description. It's incredible that so many online stores fail to understand the significance of this short paragraph. It's pretty much the difference between a sale and that abandoned cart we mentioned earlier, and that's why you need to charge accordingly.

It's rare that you would have to write only one or two of these for an online store so perhaps a bulk package rate could be a deal clincher for a potential client.

White papers

This is one of the most powerful pieces of content in the world of B2B marketing. A good white paper helps a company build trust with their potential clients and sets them up as an authority within their industry. It is one of the best soft-sell tools in business and writing a good one will take a lot of research and no small amount of time.

A typical white paper will run anywhere from 6-10 pages comprising 2000-3000 words but considering the potential it offers your client, it is far more valuable than a blog post of similar length.

This is why you can charge premium prices especially if you have expert knowledge in the industry you are writing about. Top copywriters with experience can demand as much as \$7000 for a white paper. Now there's a goal for you.

eBooks

Along with white papers, this is the kind of work that most new writers will struggle to get. Writing an eBook takes a lot of time, research, and hard work. It's not something that you can just knock up overnight, and it's certainly not a project that you can bluff your way through.

Generally speaking, the kind of eBooks that a new writer will target will be short books of around 10,000+ words or so. These will most likely be manuals or guides for specific industries or niches.

Our range is deliberately broad as the fee you set really does depend on the content and your expertise in the field. Be sure to take this into account before setting your rate.

In fact, whatever rate you think is acceptable for your first eBook, we suggest adding another 50% on top of that just to be sure you haven't underestimated the work involved.

That's all folks

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, we have to remind you once again that this is no more than a guide. You may find that you want to charge more or less than our suggested rates, and that's just fine. You are the only person who can truly decide how much your work is worth.

If you're new to freelance writing and found this guide useful then perhaps you'll enjoy our latest eBook ['Your Freelance Writing Roadmap: The Definitive Guide to Getting Paid to Write.'](#)

You can also take a look at our free resources [right here](#).

That's it for us folks.

All the best from the team here at WriteWorldwide.

And remember, whatever rates you settle on, never undervalue your work.

