



# Wikipedia:Tomats

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The following is a draft working towards a proposal for adoption as a Wikipedia [policy, guideline, or process](#).



The proposal must not be taken to represent consensus, but is still in development and under [discussion](#), and has not yet reached the [process](#) of gathering [consensus](#) for adoption. Thus references or links to this page should not describe it as policy, guideline, nor yet even as a proposal.

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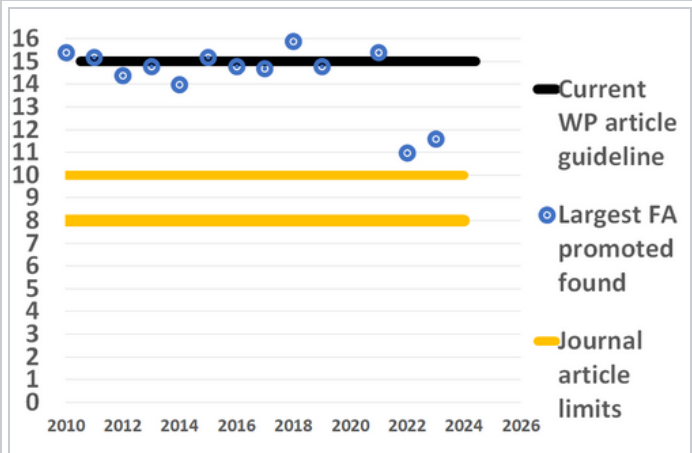
A **tomats** is a measurement of text size that compares an article or other document against the length of *The Old Man and the Sea*. This book contains 26,531 words, so an article length of one tomats means that the article contains about 26,500 words. In principle, the length of an individual encyclopedia article should fall somewhere in between the length of a single dictionary definition and the length of a book.

Issue	Summary of arguments
Readability	Some believe tightening the guideline will increase readability. Attention span time. The average reading session is below the "don't bother to split"-limit. <sup>[1]</sup> It is not even 10% of the limits proposed in the earliest "readers may tire"-argument from 2004. <sup>[2]</sup> Content further down is less likely to be read, but readers can pick out sections they want to read. <sup>[3]</sup>
Comprehensiveness	Some believe there is a trade-off between comprehensiveness and readability, others believe there is no trade-off.
Accessibility	Concision is included in <a href="#">dyslexia friendly guidelines</a> and fatiguing conditions. Accessible text <a href="#">should be structured well</a> . This is more challenging with longer articles, especially on mobile, which only allows navigation on top-level headings. Search engines often direct the reader to the main article even when there is a subarticle on the exact topic. Some believe technical issues for readers with slower connections should mean limiting length.
Quality	Some believe tightening the guideline will increase quality.
Maintenance	Long articles have more content to maintain. On the other hand, when articles are split to resolve length issues, the maintenance load over multiple articles may

	become even larger.
Explicit consensus	It is difficult to achieve explicit consensus on large bodies of text; there is a higher risk of single-authored text that may not reflect consensus.

Guideline limits, existing and others (words)	Summary of evidence
8,000-10,000	Length of journal articles. <a href="#">[1][2][3][4][5][6][7][8]</a> For attention span, a 2005 study includes this session estimate: 40 minutes x 238 words ~ 10,000 words. <a href="#">[4]</a> .
15,000	Current guideline.
No limit	Some editors believe removing the guideline would increase comprehensiveness. Removing limits reduces rules, <a href="#">Avoid instruction creep</a> , <a href="#">WP:IAR</a> and <a href="#">MOS:BLOAT</a> .

Year	Size	Longest promoted article found
2010	15400	<a href="#">[5]</a> Elvis
2011	15200	<a href="#">[6]</a> Manhattan project
2012	14400	<a href="#">[7]</a> Air Raids on Japan
2013	14800	<a href="#">[8]</a> Spanish conquest of Petén
2014	14000	<a href="#">[9]</a> Babe Ruth
2015	15200	<a href="#">[10]</a> Maya civilization
2016	14800	Lenin
2017	14700	<a href="#">[11]</a> Mandela
2018	15900	<a href="#">[12]</a> Andrew Jackson, currently going through review
2019	14800	<a href="#">[13]</a> Jomo Kenyatta
2020	11700	Henry IV, Holy Roman Emperor
2021	15400	<a href="#">[14]</a> James Longstreet
2022	11000	<a href="#">[15]</a> Empire Strikes Back
2023	12700	<a href="#">[16]</a> Henry II of England



Is there a better guideline?

- <sup>^</sup> ["European Journal of Futures Research"](#) . *SpringerOpen*. May 20, 2013. Retrieved November 26, 2023.
- <sup>^</sup> ["Information for Authors"](#) . *academic.oup.com*. Oxford University Press. Retrieved November 26, 2023.
- <sup>^</sup> ["Manuscript Submission Guidelines: AERA Open: Sage Journals"](#) . *Sage Journals*. January 1, 2023. Retrieved November 26, 2023.

4. ^ ["Early Modern Women: An Interdisciplinary Journal: Instructions for authors"](#) . *Early Modern Women: An Interdisciplinary Journal*. November 17, 2019. Retrieved November 26, 2023.
5. ^ ["Development and Change"](#) . *OnlineLibrary.Wiley.com*. Wiley. doi:10.1111/(issn)1467-7660 . ISSN 0012-155X .
6. ^ ["Submissions"](#) . *Global Labour Journal*. February 3, 2022. Retrieved November 26, 2023.
7. ^ ["BGSU SSCI Journal Publishing Guide"](#) (PDF). Retrieved November 26, 2023.
8. ^ ["Guide for authors"](#) . *ScienceDirect.com by Elsevier*. January 6, 2016. Retrieved November 26, 2023.

Category: Wikipedia draft proposals

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