

# TrekTexas Content Style Guidelines

## Overall Tone and Voice

This is a friendly casual website for the outdoor enthusiast. No need to be too formal, but do keep it professional, so no swearing or offensive language. Perfect grammar is not expected, but spell things correctly, and keep an eye on punctuation. DO NOT write in the first or second person. Meaning do not use “I”, “we”, “my”, “our”, “you” or “your”. Keep it all in the present tense as well. People are visiting the site to see what is current.

## Research/Necessary Information

Expect to spend about an hour on each destination, depending on your typing speed and research skills. To help you out, here are the methods that we used.

- **Google It.** If it is a state park or national park, then first hit up the Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept (TPWD) or National Park Service (NPS) websites. Consider these the main websites for the parks as they will have the most up-to-date information. Other privately owned parks or campgrounds will have their own websites.
- **Pick out key information.**
  - List the official website
  - Price: entrance fees, camp fees, and equipment rentals.
  - How can I reserve a spot? List reservation call number or link, as well as how many sites are available. Make a distinction between primitive sites, cushy tenting, cabins, and RV's.
  - What does this park have to offer? List location, and main features. My first choice for finding this info, and it appears on almost every TPWD website, is to view the short video in the rotating picture/thumbnail line up.
  - Always list cool facts, what the place is most known for and fun thing to do there.
  - Sports- YES to any sweat inducing activities like rock climbing, hiking, mountain biking, swimming, and cliff jumping. YES to chill activities like river floating, and natural pool soaking. NO to fishing, golfing, stargazing, bird watching, and RVing. Unless any of the above 'NO's' are a major draw to the park, don't list them.
  - Details that make the difference between visiting and not visiting an area. Things such as *dogs*- can you bring them? *Exposure* – will you need to pack lots of water and sunscreen? *Trail or activity difficulty* – who can realistically conquer this, a beginner or only someone with experience? *Necessary equipment* – do you need decent shoes? *Peak season* – when should you visit? *Acreage and trail mileage plus conditions* – paved, loose gravel, mud?
- **Cross Reference.** Park websites don't have all the information you'll be looking for, so be sure to surf the web. Sporting sites, for example, will have more info that the main park website might not have listed. And ALWAYS check out tripadvisor, yelp, and other websites where people post about their experiences in the area. They will tell it like it is, and this will be helpful for details such as disgusting bathrooms, un-enforced leash laws for dogs, or realistic trail conditions. Don't be afraid to call up a park or campground and speak to the owners as well. Private companies seem to either have bomb websites, or terrible ones with old information, and a ton of pictures that take forever to load, so speaking to a human being, in some cases can be more helpful.

## Template

Once you've acquired all the necessary info, use the article writing template to assure you've addressed all the necessary pieces of info.