



30 Ways to Come Up with New Topic Ideas

Almost everyone who writes experiences writer's block. How do you come up with more topics when you feel you've said everything there is to say on the subject already?

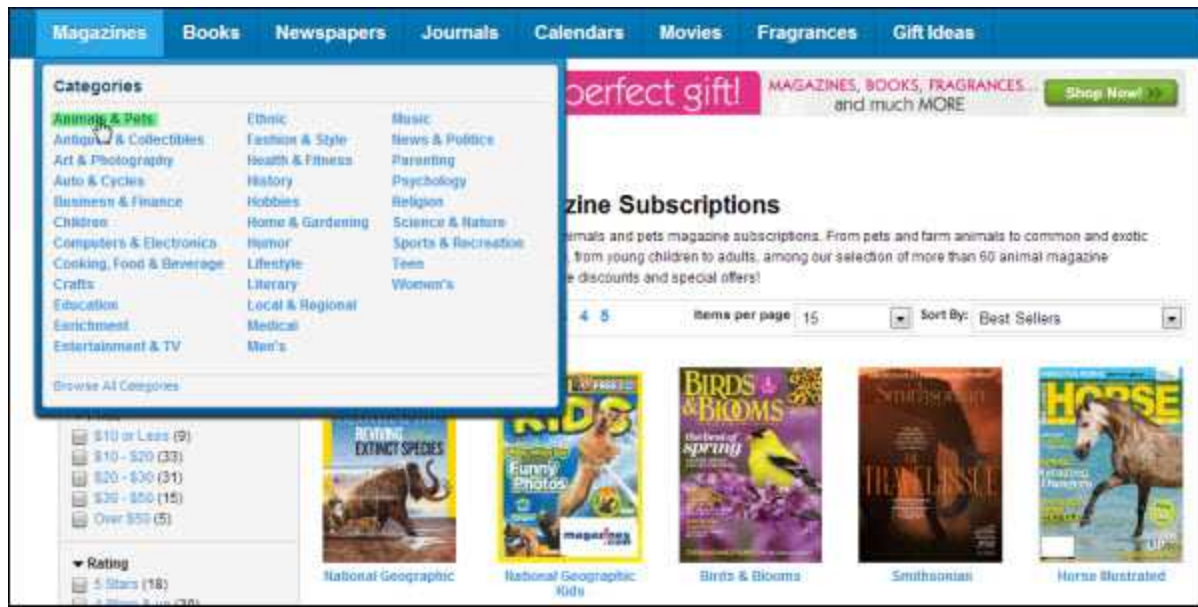
Here are 30 ways anyone can adopt for coming up with new topic ideas...

1. Explore New "Places"

Life changes all the time – and so does everything else. If you feel like there's nothing more to know about your niche or topic, break your own research habits. Go offline and try looking for information in a new "place".

2. Monitor Magazine Trends

Look at the titles on the front pages of magazines in your niche. That's what is currently trending. Write them down. Go home and input phrases from those titles as keywords and see if it sparks an idea or two for you. (Also check Magazines.com, making sure you select the correct category for your niche.)



3. Ask Your Niche

Ask people in your niche what they want you to write about – but don't stop there. You'll get a much better response if you guide and "trigger" them into responding. For example, ask them what they think you haven't written about yet. Or ask them to complete a sentence such as: "The most frustrating part about selecting yarn is _____".

But whatever you do – just ask!

4. Look for Ideas on TV

Watch documentaries. Take notes.

It's that simple.

5. Check Twitter to See What's Trending

But before you rush to do this, take the time to read Twitter's tutorial page on [trending](#) for further tips on the best way to use this feature.



6. Categorize – Then Think of A Topic

Topics are easier to come up with if you are directed in some way, so write down a minimum of four categories:

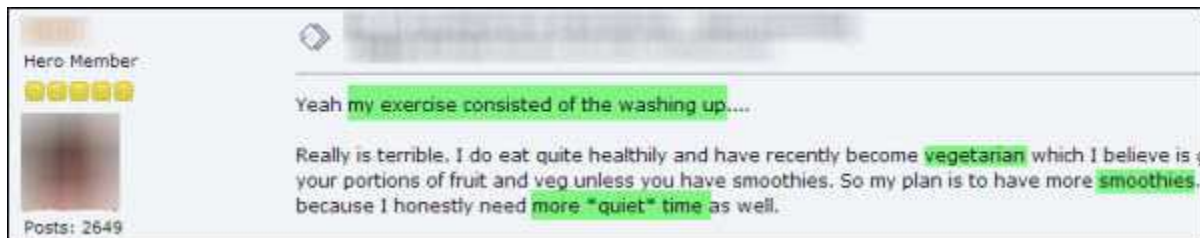
- Evergreen (always current)
- New Information
- Top Tips for...
- “How-to”

Now try to come up with your best idea for each category. You’ll be surprised how well this tip works. But even if you just come up with one idea, it’s totally worth the effort.

7. Talk, Talk, Talk to Others in Your Niche

Look for clues in what they say. Interact in person, on your Facebook, in a Google+ Circle, within a mastermind forum and whenever the opportunity comes up.

Look for **niche-related keywords** or **possible article titles** in conversations. These can trigger winning ideas!



8. Change a Pattern

Sometimes running out of ideas means you’re getting stale. And you get stale when you never vary your patterns. So vary your thinking, your research techniques; even your route when you’re walking (if you’re prone to getting ideas while out walking or jogging). Write in the morning instead of afternoon.




And go read some new publications.

9. Look for Triggers

Simply log onto a relevant forum or Facebook Group and see what issues are currently triggering (a) many responses (b) heated responses (c) conflict. Those are tip-offs that you can turn these triggers into topics.

10. Look Through Old Files and Material

Writers tend to have dozens of unfinished articles, thoughts, ideas, and content in general lying forgotten in the depths of their hard drive – and you're probably no exception! Go through your hard drive and look. You may find an evergreen gem you'd completely forgotten about hidden away in these sad little files.

 cake	3/17/2013 11:25 PM	JPG File
 Are You a Facebook Pest	3/12/2013 7:06 PM	Text Document
 skills	3/11/2013 3:58 AM	JPG File

11. Spot Complaints

Learn to be alert for complaints in forum and social network posts as well as in others' blog posts. If you can provide a solution, you'll gain instant hero status.

12. Mine Headlines for Topic Ideas

This doesn't mean "steal other peoples' headlines": Rather, look at headline **types** to trigger ideas for a new topic, mentally adding your niche keywords after or within the headline formulae.

Find [lists](#) of headlines by inserting search terms like "top 100 headlines" or "best headlines" in your Google search bar. Learn to pick out winning formulae you can finish: E.G. "The Secret of _____"; "A Little Mistake that _____".

1. THE SECRET OF MAKING PEOPLE LIKE YOU

Almost \$500,000 was spent profitably to run keyed ads displaying this headline. It drew many hundreds of thousands of readers into the body matter of a "people mover" advertisement – one which, by itself, built a big business. Pretty irresistible, isn't it?

2. A LITTLE MISTAKE THAT COST A FARMER \$3,000 A YEAR

A sizable appropriation was spent successfully in farm magazines on

13. Follow Official Authority Blogs

If you want to find out the latest news and tips for your niche, follow the quintessential authority blog for that particular niche (e.g. allfacebook.com for Facebook news; blog.linkedin.com for Linked In).

14. Carry a Notebook and Pencil Stub

This is an oldie but goodie. The best ideas are always the ones you don't jot down, so make sure you [carry a notebook](#) and scribble down every idea you have – no matter how uninspired you might feel it is. Later, when you have no memory of them and read them, you may be surprised at the topic ideas these notes trigger.



15. Read the Comments

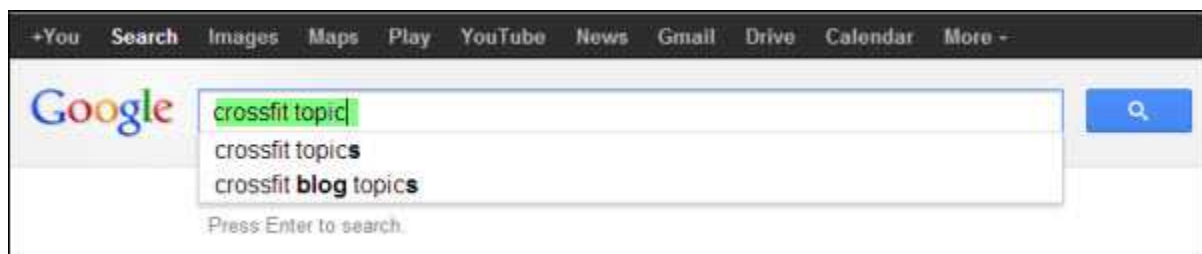
When you read articles that come up in response to [your keyword] topic ideas, be sure to read the comments below the articles. That's where you find the real gold – when readers point out omissions and errors, add more thoughts of their own or ask further questions.

16. Keep an “Idea Jar”

In the old days, writers would often literally keep a container and a stack of blank paper slips for quickly jotting down ideas. Take this one step further: Pulling an idea at random from your particular jar, then forcing yourself to write XXX number of words on the topic is a wonderful way increase your article – and idea – generation power.

17. Search for the Keyword “Topics”

You can always be blatant about it. Go to Google.com and search for “[your keyword] topics”.

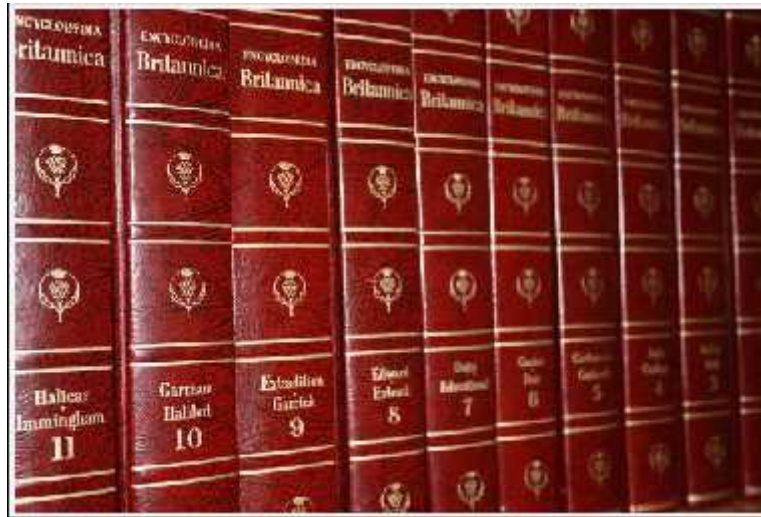


When you do this, you'll get the top selections. The key: To look for – and write about – the “twist”: The area or point other articles *didn't* cover.

18. Hit the Encyclopedias

If you always search online, go to your local public library. Look up your topic in their [Encyclopedia collection](#).

More often than you might think, Encyclopedias contain fascinating subject tangents and facts *not* currently explored online.



19. Ask Yourself Questions

Set aside an uninterrupted fifteen minutes. Turn off your cell phone. Think about your niche. Then start asking yourself questions – and do your best to finish them.

Don't over-complicate the process: Ask yourself questions like...

- What if...
- Why Should You...
- When is it...

20. Make Topic Generation a Game

Find ways to make topic generation fun for you – not something you dread. Challenge yourself to find ten topics (not one). Give yourself a chocolate covered coffee bean or a truffle if you come up with a real winner. Take yourself out for a cappuccino if you fill up your monthly blogging calendar with topics. Whatever it takes to engage your brain ultimately ensures your topics themselves will be more engaging.

21. Think Visually

Use mind-mapping software or hand-draw your central niche topic in a circle. Brainstorm ideas connected with that topic (don't try to make headlines or blog titles just yet).

22. Play Word Association Games

Ask someone to help you with this: You can do it in person with an assistant or peer on the phone (or at a coffee shop – make sure you have a pen and napkin handy!)

Or you can ask your forum, Facebook group or even Facebook friends to “play”.

What does this word make you think of? Q: "Promotion" A: _____
<input type="text" value="Write a comment..."/>

23. Narrow Your Topic Range

If topics feel wimpy, boring or unsatisfying they are probably too broad. Zero in on specifics and focus on one point per post or article.

24. Use a Bulletin Board

If you already use a bulletin board, keep a certain color of post-it notes for possible topics. Don't limit yourself to writing full-blown topic ideas, however – even a keyword that strikes you can be scribbled on the post-it note for future possible topic research. (You'll find the color coding helpful too.)

25. Think Like a Newbie

You may be so over-familiar with your niche or hobby, you find yourself making assumptions, glossing over terms and methods, and worrying about coming up with someone “new”. Topic generation is all about balance – different types of posts, media and content.

Put yourself in your newest member's [shoes](#) and try to think what she would ask.



26. Use a Life Example

People don't respond to topics – they respond to people. Use a single example from your own life, from someone else's or from a famous person's life to illustrate a niche point.

27. Run an Open Forum

Not only is this great practice for when you're ready to monetize it and not only does it establish you as an authority figure in your niche, you'll find a wealth of topics and ideas in your members' questions and posts.

Just make sure you participate and keep the forum active. A forum gives you *cart blanche* to come right out and ask what they want – and expect answers.

And if you have to work too hard, perhaps it's time to change topics altogether!

28. Monetize Your Forum

Once you're comfortable running your open forum, monetize it. Grant privileges and assistance at the monetized level that is more specific than at the open level. And if your niche is ripe for this, instead of Silver, Gold and Platinum levels, offer Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced (with a clear, brief explanation of each level so people can self-qualify themselves).

That way, you'll always have a clear picture of what each level of expertise struggles with, wants and aspires to. (And you'll know which of these groups is your most active!)

29. Start (or Join) a Facebook Group

If your niche is hot, invite subscribers and Friends to join a Facebook Group. Explain the benefits. And treat it much as your monetized forum – with one proviso: Don't do what an abnormally high percentage of Facebook Group moderators seem to be doing these days, which is withdrawing from active monitoring and participation. That's the way to rapidly cool off a devoted audience – and you'll miss all those topic ideas.

30. Look for Quotes

When all else fails, search quotes relevant to your niche. Pick the best one and build a post around it.

(Tip: Write a bunch of **evergreen, quote-based posts** and keep them on tap for days when you're *really* stuck for time or topic ideas.)

Remember...

"Writing is an act of faith, not a trick of grammar."—E. B. White



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