



## Natalie Schreifer Freelance Writer and Editor



*I write for various magazines and websites and also help other writers edit and develop their manuscripts.*

### *What do you do as a freelance writer and editor?*

**Freelance writing:** I work for various websites and magazines on a freelance basis, which means that I'm hired to write just one article, not to work part- or full-time. As a freelancer, I can write about whatever I'd like, and I have a few different niches, or specialties: video games, health, and identity.

I write a few different types of articles, including:

- **reported features**, which use research and interviews to discuss a topic (example: "[Static Stretching and Dynamic Stretching: Which Is Better?](#)" for *Next Avenue*),
- **opinion pieces**, which use sources to support my personal opinion on a subject (example: "[Opinion: The New Zelda Has Finally Arrived. It's Time for a Rethink on Video Games](#)" for *CNN*), and
- **service pieces**, which help readers learn how to do something (example: "[How to Cope with Post-Game Depression](#)" for *Wired*).

**Freelance editing:** I help writers edit and develop their manuscripts, which are typically novels or memoirs. I read their work and suggest ways to improve the plot, pacing, character development, and more. I also work for professors and read academic articles; I edit these for clarity and help with citations.

### *How long have you been a freelance writer and editor?*

I began freelancing in 2015.

### *Where do you currently work?*

I work on a freelance basis, which means I run my own company and work for myself.

### *How do you spend most of your time at work?*

I spend a lot of time researching topics, drafting pitches (which are a short description of the article I want to write), emailing editors, writing articles, and editing those articles to make sure they're the best they can be before I submit them.

### *Why did you choose this career?*

I chose to be a freelance writer and editor because I've always loved the written word. I quit for a few years after college, but I missed it so much that I started writing part-time. Less than a year later, I ended up quitting my full-time job to go to grad school and learn more about writing.

**NATALIE'S FAVE**  
Favorite video game series: The Legend of Zelda



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### ***What did you do to prepare for this career?***

Some people get a journalism degree, but I have a creative writing degree instead, a Master of Fine Arts in fiction. I wrote my first freelance pieces before going to grad school; good pitches are more important than a degree.

That said, writing a good pitch can be challenging. You have to pitch the right idea to the right editor at the right time. One great way to get experience is to start local. At one of my first writing jobs, I was the content coordinator for a small, community magazine. I learned a lot about writing and editing there. Check out your local newspaper or community magazine to see if they have any jobs or internships.

### ***What do you enjoy most about your job?***

I really enjoy the freedom of freelancing. If I want to write about health for a few months, I can! If I get bored of that, I can write about video games for a few months after that. If I want to write about multiple subjects, or write about a totally new one, I can. I don't need to change jobs in order to change what I'm writing about, which means my work is never boring. I'm always learning something new.

### ***What do you find most challenging about your job?***

Freelancing can go through cycles of feast or famine—sometimes, I'll end up with four deadlines in the same week, and then other times, I'll have only one deadline, or maybe even zero. Time management is super important! But sometimes deadlines are out of my control, which can be challenging.

### ***What was one of your first jobs and how did that experience influence your career path?***

At my first job, I was a receptionist at a tennis club. It had nothing to do with writing, but it was helpful because it allowed me to meet, and make small talk with, lots of different people. Many of them had impressive job titles, but seeing them outside of work helped me see that that yes, maybe they were the CEO of a company, but they were also a regular person, too, just like me. This helped me feel more comfortable when I needed to pitch to an editor—after all, that editor is just another person!

### ***What is one piece of advice you would give to a young person who is interested in your profession?***

Read! I can't recommend reading enough. Read about topics you like, topics you don't know anything about, and even topics that seem boring. Reading widely can improve your own writing craft and help you learn trends in the industry, both of which will help you write better pitches (and better articles!). Lots of reading material is available for free—try your favorite websites for articles or your local library for newspapers, magazines, and books.



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