



Writing Tip Wednesday

NCEH/ATSDR Writer-Editor Services

This week's writing tip is a greatest hit from 2017. It's a summary of Grammarly's excellent review of the often-confusing "follow up." There's a quiz at the end to test your new knowledge!

Follow up is a verb.
Follow-up is a noun or adjective.
Followup is wrong.

If you are using "follow up" as a verb, there is a space between "follow" and "up." If you are using it as a noun or an adjective, choose the universally accepted "follow-up."

Verb

- Your doctor and the physical therapist will **follow up** after the surgery to see how you are recovering.
- Please **follow up** with Assan no later than Thursday.
- We need two staff members to **follow up** on getting volunteers for the event.

Noun

- After having the asbestos removed, the company had a **follow-up** with the inspector.
- Dr. Beltrand told the reporter that the second article was an outstanding **follow-up** to the first.
- "Before we go," Malcolm said, "quick **follow-up**: can we get more Plain Language training in 2018?"

Adjective

- If everything goes well, you could be called for a **follow-up** interview.
- We heard nothing about our complaint, so we sent a **follow-up** letter.
- Make a **follow-up** appointment so we can monitor the effects of your new medication.

Quick Tips

- Using it as a verb? Put a space between the two words, and no hyphen: "**follow up.**"
- Using it as a noun or adjective? Put a hyphen between the two words: "**follow-up.**"
- Writing it as "followup"? Don't.

Test Yourself!

1. After each webinar, we send out a _____ survey to get feedback.
2. Please schedule the _____ for this Wednesday between noon and 3:00.
3. In three weeks, Duong will _____ to make sure food safety issues are being addressed.
4. The team plans to _____ with all participants after two months.
5. Community members thanked us and requested a _____ in the fall.
6. One year later, Ricardo conducted a _____ study.

Answers

1. follow-up
2. follow-up
3. follow up
4. follow up
5. follow-up
6. follow-up

Sources

- [Follow up, Follow-up, Followup: Which One is Right?](#)
- [To Follow Up on Follow-Up](#)