H2s

Content
H2s (and subtitles) add structure to longer content. They make it less intimidating by breaking it up into bite-size pieces, and help the user pick and choose the most relevant parts. Like an H1, an H2 needs to use clear, concise language, ideally with the most important words frontloaded at the beginning.

Length
An H2 looks neater and reads better when it's one line only. Even if there's limited space, it's well worth cutting out a few words until it fits in one deck.

Additional tips
- It's worth adding SEO keywords where possible – especially if the H2 is for longer content, or a landing page. You can find some on the 'related queries' section in Google Trends, or you can ask the SEO team (currently Angie Rooney and Jon Lindley) what words should be included.
- Use sentence case for headings – it's easier to read.

Already have a family tree?

With records you won't find elsewhere, we can help you unlock new stories and trace elusive ancestors. Add your family tree to Findmypast for access to exclusive record hints.

What is the 1921 Census?

Was your grandmother one of the first female racing car drivers? Or your grandfather one of the last mole catchers? The 1921 Census reveals where they were, who they were with and what they were doing one summer night a century ago.

Error messages

Content
When a user sees an error message, they're likely to be feeling confused and frustrated. This is when the copy needs to show total empathy, and make a conscious effort to change those negative emotions. This can be achieved with a little humour, or simply by giving them the right information to solve the problem quickly and move on. Whichever route you take, the copy should:

- Explain in plain English what went wrong
- Reassure them it wasn't their fault and even if it was, it's not a big deal
- Give them the tools they need to fix the problem, then get out of their way.

The copy should not:
- Over-explain or use too much technical information. How much do they really need to know to move on?
- Use tech or developer speak (invalid, illegal, validation, unsupported, permission, etc).
- Use triggering words like 'error' or 'failure'.

Length
The body copy of an error message should be two lines or less – three absolute max.

Additional tips
- Avoid the blame game. Even if it was their fault, These things happen. Make it clear it's not the end of the world.
- Keep in mind they may see this message repeatedly. How does that make them feel?
- Avoid making people look in other locations for answers. If it can't be avoided, use a "Learn more" link.
- Work closely with a designer on this. The right imagery can make or break an error message.