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## How to Craft Links Effectively

### Provide visual points of entry

- Point of entry type 1: A grouped set of related links.
- Point of entry type 2: List of similar-interest links in a colored/bordered box.
- Point of entry type 3: Contrasting headings with sets of links.
- Point of entry type 4: Icons as identifiers
- Point of entry type 5: Small significant graphic with a short text heading.  
Picture of a celebrity, for typical example.

### Choose the Right Words for Individual Links

- What is the shortest phrase that explains the link?
- Can the phrase be taken more than one way?
- Will a correctly-worded heading identify the links below it adequately?
- Are the site keywords (as in your meta tags) used in the links?

### Reduce the number of clicks required. Use available space efficiently.

Three-click rule: "Nothing on a site should be more than 3 clicks away."

### Reduce the amount of energy needed to find the most commonly-used links.

Arrange your lists of links so that the most-used ones are on *top* or to *left*.

### But don't put everything on the first page, if your site has too much content

5-9 links in a list or 5-9 points-of-entry may be plenty. Look at Yahoo!

### Put the most important stuff in the upper left, the middle top, and straight down the middle.

That's where most users' eyes go first.

### Design as if the links are the critical parts.

### Provide sitewide context at all times.

Basic site navigation. Always a way home.

### Provide clues to what the site is about

- What if they came from a search engine directly to a sub-page?
- Logo may be enough, if it's clear.
- Motto at bottom of page ("For all your accordion needs")

### Develop the Keyword List and Use It

Client, focus group, searches of other sites collecting their key words