

# Documentation

## Spec Organization and Prose

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1. Define the overall model of the technology and shape of the problem before defining the API and technical details.
2. Start with an overview / high-level description, push fiddly details and more boring material further down in the section, so that a reader gets an overall understanding before adding details and so that authors can stop reading once they get bored and have read everything they need.
3. Algorithmic vs Constraint based spec approaches: understand which to use when -- they each have their strengths and weaknesses, and you can use either or both as appropriate.
4. Use diagrams/figures/examples generously to illustrate, but not replace, normative prose.
5. Keep examples and figures close to the point they're illustrating.
6. Use the Infra data types and literals when you need to reference data types in the abstract. <https://infra.spec.whatwg.org/>
7. Periodically read your spec from top to bottom, to make sure it makes sense when read in order.
8. Also review your table of contents:
  - \* Ensure the spec and its heading structure is well-organized
  - \* Have headings (and thus the TOC links) use evocative language (not just titled by bits of code) to help readers quickly find the right section from the TOC.
  - \* Be generous with subheadings, to break up long sections and facilitate linking and easier ToC usage.

## Spec Tooling / Formatting

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1. Use version control.
2. Use a preprocessor like [ReSpec](#) or [Bikeshed](#)
3. Use manual IDs so that IDs remain stable as you adjust the heading text; add old IDs (via empty elements with IDs, or e.g. Bikeshed's oldids attribute) when removing or changing IDs so that links to your spec don't break.
4. Consider [semantic line breaks](#)  
(We looked at the source code to CSS Grid as an example\*, see <https://github.com/w3c/csswg-drafts/blob/master/css-grid-1/Overview.bs> )