

Keep your help center up to date

Help center best practices

An outdated article does more harm than a missing one. People follow the steps, the steps don't work, and they stop trusting the rest of your help center. Here's a routine that keeps your content accurate without a big cleanup once a year.

Give every category an owner

Content without an owner goes stale. Give each category a named person, not a team, who knows that part of the product and is responsible for its articles. Owners review their articles on schedule, update them when the product changes and answer questions about them.

Keep the list where everyone can see it. For example:

Category	Owner	Review every
Get started	Onboarding lead	6 months
Payments	Payments product manager	3 months
Account and billing	Support lead	3 months

Review on a schedule that matches the risk

Not every article needs the same attention. Review more often where facts change often or mistakes cost more:

- **Often** (every few months): pricing, plans, billing, security, integrations and fast-moving features.
- **Less often** (once or twice a year): stable how-tos and explainers.
- **Right away:** anything a customer reports as wrong.

In a review, follow the steps in the product yourself. Check that the labels match the screen, the screenshots are current, the links work, plan and limit details are correct, and the article is still needed at all.

Make docs part of every release

Many articles go stale on release day. Make updating them part of shipping:

1. When you plan a change, list the articles it affects. Search your help center for the feature's name and its labels.
2. Draft the updates before launch, while the details are fresh.
3. Publish them on release day, with new screenshots.
4. Link to the updated articles from your release notes.

Let the data tell you what to fix

Your readers point out problems every day. Check these regularly:

- **Failed searches:** missing articles, or articles that don't use the words people search for.
- **Low-rated articles:** content that exists but doesn't help. Read any written feedback first.
- **Popular articles:** the most-read articles deserve the most frequent checks.
- **Reader comments and support tickets** that mention an article: often the fastest way to find a wrong step.
- **AI answers readers rated unhelpful:** gaps in your content, or facts that only appear in screenshots.

Keep one article per topic

Duplicates drift apart, and readers can't tell which one is right. When you find two articles about the same task, merge them into the better one and redirect the other's address to it. Before you write a new article, search for an existing one you could update instead.

Retire articles the right way

When a feature goes away or an article is no longer needed:

- Remove the article instead of leaving it up with a warning at the top.
- Redirect its address to the closest replacement, so bookmarks and search results don't end on a "not found" page.

- Update or remove links to it from your other articles.

Write articles that age well

Some writing choices make upkeep much lighter:

- **Skip dates and "new" labels** in the text. "Recently added" is wrong a few months later.
- **Keep each fact in one place.** State prices, limits and plan details in one article, or on your pricing page, and link to it instead of repeating them.
- **Describe controls by their label,** not by their color or position, which change more often than names do.
- **Use screenshots only where they help.** Every image is one more thing to update after a redesign.

A simple maintenance routine

How often	What to do
Every week	Check failed searches, new comments and articles flagged for review.
Every month	Review low-rated articles and your most-read articles, and fix the top few.

Every
release

Update the articles the release affects, including screenshots.

Twice a
year

Go through each category with its owner. Merge duplicates and retire what's obsolete.

For what to look at each month, see [Help center metrics that matter](#).

How HelpCenter.io helps

In HelpCenter.io, you can schedule an article for review, and its author gets an email reminder on the day. Make each category's owner the author of its articles, and the reminders go to the right person. (The author's name also shows on the article if your design displays it.) **Flag for review** asks a teammate to check an article, with a note, and **Watch** emails you when someone changes an article you care about. **Statistics** shows underperforming articles and failed searches.

On Catalyst, staged changes, and change sets in early preview, let you prepare updates to live articles and publish them together on release day. When you retire an article, you can create a redirect from **Trash**, and changing an article's address creates a redirect automatically. See [Flag articles for review](#), [Get notified when an article changes](#), [Find your best and weakest articles](#) and [Edit live articles safely with staged changes](#).

Related articles

- [Flag articles for review](#)
- [Get notified when an article changes](#)
- [Find your best and weakest articles](#)
- [Edit live articles safely with staged changes](#)

- [Redirect old links to the right page](#)