

Dispute Resolution on the English Wikipedia



By Steven Zhang

What is dispute resolution?

- Process to resolve disputes over article content and user conduct
- Can involve the assistance of a third party
- A variety of techniques are used, including consensus-building, collaboration, or compromise

Why is dispute resolution important?

- Can help with editor retention - happier, more productive users
- Leads to article neutrality, quality and stability

“Wikipedia is a machine – dispute resolution is the grease that keeps it all running”

Conclusion: Dispute resolution is ineffective and inefficient

- Full survey results: [[WVP:Dispute resolution survey]]
- Four out of five respondents rated their experience poorly.
- Problems: Duration, complexity and lack of volunteers
- 70% of respondents had volunteered
- Resolution rate: 47%*

Problems with dispute resolution

When asked about the problems with dispute resolution, the most common responses were:

“It takes so long for a dispute to be resolved”

General response times: 5 to 24 hours

General resolution times: 2 to 28 days

Problems with dispute resolution

“The process is too hard to use”

The screenshot shows the Wikipedia page for 'Wikipedia:Dispute resolution'. The page is titled 'Wikipedia:Dispute resolution' and is a redirect from 'Wikipedia:DR'. It contains several sections of text and navigation elements. The main content area includes sections like 'Avoiding disputes', 'Focus on content', 'Stay cool', 'Discuss with the other party', 'Seeking preliminary advice and feedback to resolve the dispute', 'Seek some general advice', and 'Editor assistance'. There are also sidebars for navigation and a 'Dispute resolution' sidebar on the right. A pyramid diagram is visible in the bottom right corner.

Dispute resolution
Tips for dispute resolution
Use etiquette
Assume good faith
Be civil
Be open to compromise
Ask for editor assistance
Discuss on talk pages
Content disputes
Get a third opinion (→)
Request comments (→)
Dispute resolution noticeboard
Request informal mediation
Formal mediation
(request · guide · policy)
Conduct disputes
Comments on user conduct
Wikiquote assistance (→)
Administrator assistance
Arbitration
(request · policy · enforcement)

Refuting the Central Point
Refutation
Counterargument
Contribution
Responding to them
Ad Hominem
Name-calling

Stay in the top three sections of this pyramid.

Problems with dispute resolution

“The process is too hard to use”

- 43% said there were too many forums
- 39% described the process as complex
- 30% didn't know where to take their dispute

Problems with dispute resolution

“There aren't enough volunteers”

- 70% have volunteered at some point, but only one in three do so frequently
 - 52% thought there were not enough volunteers
- Reasons for participation: Dispute resolution being critical to Wikipedia, keeping articles balanced or just helping people
- Reasons for non-participation: Disputes too toxic, complex and lengthy, lack of knowledge on how

How we can change dispute resolution and why

- Simplify the way to request dispute resolution
- a workflow system has been created to do this
- Make it easier for editors to do dispute resolution
- Investigate technical and policy changes such as dispute-detecting bots, edit filters and page-specific blocking.

How you can get involved in the change

- Try volunteering - it's not that as hard as you think!
- Keep an eye on discussions at the Dispute Resolution WikiProject ([[WP:DRP]])
- Ask lots of questions - the existing volunteers will be more than happy to help