

Components of useful documentation

Introduction

1

- Brief description of the project that explains **what it does, and who it is for**
- Short code sample or screenshot
- Links to further materials

Tutorials

2

- **Step by step guide to getting started with the project**
- Goal is to have the user create a simple, working example at the end
- Emphasis on getting something working, not explaining every concept in detail

How-To Guides

3

- Targetted guides on **how to solve common problems or tasks**
- Aimed at users already somewhat familiar with your project
- Help users find the correct guide with good naming

Reference

4

- Describes each section of the public API of the project
- **Auto-generated API description without context is not enough**
- Each method/class/endpoint needs to be annotated and explained

Contributor Guides

5

- **Architecture overview**, including diagrams
- History of the project: Why does it exist? What were the constraints and assumptions?
- Contributor-specific How-To's: building, deploying, monitoring, opening PRs