

FREEPRESS 101:

How do reporters and newsrooms get their stories?

There are no hard or fast rules when it comes to newsgathering and where journalists find stories. What is newsworthy can be subjective — but as a general rule, it is interesting, significant and new. Conflicts, timely events and unusual occurrences all often appear on a newsroom's daily story schedule. Write-ups about popular trends and oddities also go to print.

Reporters are always on the lookout for fresh ideas.

They keep an eye out for story ideas in daily life when walking past event posters, talking to people in casual conversation, and by scanning through social media.

If a reporter is curious about how government decisions are being made or certain figures from public bodies, they may also file a freedom of information request to obtain data and put together a story about it.

Story ideas can also come from tipsters with inside scoops about timely information. They can come from meeting agendas and politicians' schedules. Unique events and success stories also appear in the newspaper.



Maggie Macintosh
Education reporter.

Maggie Macintosh got her start in journalism delivering newspapers door-to-door with a wagon she wheeled around her Hamilton, Ont. neighbourhood.

A decade later, in December 2017, she stepped into the Winnipeg Free Press newsroom. That's when she got her first front-page story in a daily newspaper, frostbite and, fairly quickly, fell for Winnipeg — a city just as gritty and underestimated as the one she's from.

Maggie is a bilingual English/French graduate of the School of Journalism at Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson University). She appreciates alliteration and tips on anything education-related.