



Minimalism in writing

When you're writing technical resources you want to make sure you go direct to the point. Clear, concise text with a minimum of extra words is most helpful to users.

It also reminds me of we were taught to write instructional material. Write short sentences, make the point as fast as possible and chunk the content in small self-contained fragments.

Some items worth considering when writing technical material:

Do not include the obvious. Don't end the instructions with obvious things like *Click OK [to close the dialog]* unless "the obvious" is followed by additional instructions or behavior that needs to be described.

Use short sentences, simple sentence structures, and simple words. Avoid extra words and keep content simple and easy to read.

If there is extra information that will be useful to some users, consider putting it in an expanding or drop-down hotspot, hyperlink to a separate page, a pop-up or similar alternative. This will make the visible text shorter, while still providing the extra information for those to need it.

Strive for consistency. Whenever possible, use the same words for the same thing. Resist the temptation to use synonyms to make text "more interesting" to read.

Avoid long paragraphs. Divide long sets of instructions into shorter tasks.

You don't need to document every aspect of the product. Users can play with the product on their own and discover additional functionality.

Links and Resources

- [Minimalism](#)
- [What is Minimalism?](#)
- [Why "Minimalism" doesn't mean "plain writing"](#)
- [The Art of Saying Less: Minimalism](#)
- [Minimalism in documentation](#)

- [Fewer Words, Greater Impact: How to Write Like a Minimalist](#)
- [Implementation and Benefits of Minimalism in Technical Writing](#)
- [Minimalism \(technical communication\)](#)