

AVOID UNNECESSARY USE OF THE PASSIVE VOICE

- Research **concludes/shows** that
- These results **indicate/suggest/show/demonstrate**
- Eliman **argues** that
- **"Figure X shows"** and not **"As shown in figure X"**.

Use passive when:

- 1) The agent is unknown *"My house was broken into"*
- 2) The agent is people in general *"Valuables can be left in the hotel safe"*
- 3) The agent is unimportant *"The boxes should be handled with care"*
- 4) The agent is obvious *"He is being treated in hospital (presumably by a Dr)"*

OVERUSE OF NOMINALIZATION

"An evaluation of the tutors by the administrative staff is necessary in assuring quality service to our student".

"The administrative staff evaluates the tutor so that we can better serve our students".

"There is an increasing reluctance to allow schools to be founded by corporate sponsorship".

"The public is increasingly reluctant to allow schools to be founded by corporate sponsorship".

"It is the students who are responsible for arranging the annual school dance".

"The students are responsible for arranging the annual school dance".

UNDERLINE IMPORTANT IDEA

- Most important; Major; Leading; Primary; Crucial
- Minor; Subsidiary; Inconsequential; Trivial
- Repetition: "Our primer consideration must be **freedom** – the **freedom** to assemble, the **freedom** to demonstrate, the **freedom** to take action".

AVOID WORDINESS

- No unnecessary words, paragraph, sentences:
 - o *"The article **which was released not long ago** has received much attention".*
 - o *"The recently released article has received much attention."*
 - o *"**It is possible that** John will be appointed chief editor".*
 - o *"John **may be** appointed chief editor".*
 - o *"**It is necessary that** students hand their papers in on time".*
 - o *"Students **must** hand in their papers in on time".*
 - o *"He pointed out **the fact that** the report misrepresented minority groups".*
 - o *"He pointed out that the report misrepresented minority group".*
 - o *"It is **terrible tragedy** that she has dropped out of school."*
 - o *"Her dropping out of school is a tragedy".*
 - o *"The game was cancelled **owing to the fact that** the weather was bad".*
 - o *"The game was cancelled **because of** bad weather".*

Owing to the fact that => Since / Because

- Due to the fact that => Because
- In spite of the fact that => Though / Although
- Call your attention to the fact that => Remind you
- I was unaware of the fact that => I was unaware that
- The fact he had not succeeded => His failure
- A majority of => Most
- A number of => Many
- Are of the same opinion => Agree
- Less frequently occurring => rare
- All three of the => The three
- Give rise to => Cause
- Have an effect on => Affect
- Based on the assumption that => If

NEGATIVES

“She was **not** often right” “She was usually wrong”.

“She did **not** want to perform the experiment incorrectly” “She wanted to perform the experiment correctly”

“They did not believe the drug was harmful” “She believed the drug was safe”

SUPERFLUOUS USES OF THERE/IS THERE/ARE

“**There are** many ways in which we can arrange the pulleys”. We can arrange the pulleys in many ways”.

“**There was** a long line of bacteria on the plate” “Bacteria lined the plate”

“**There are** many physicists who like to write” “Many physicists like to write”.

“The data confirm that **there is** an association between vegetables and cancer” “The data confirm an association between vegetables and cancer”

IS THAT

You can also clarify by simply eliminating so-called "Blah blah blah is that..." phrases; simply cross out "is that" and start the sentence with whatever followed it: “*What I would like to say is that you stink*” “You stink I would like to say”.

OMIT NEEDLESS PREPOSITIONS

“The meeting happened **on** Monday” “The meeting happened Monday”

“They agreed **that is** was true” “They agreed it was true”

“*The car of my father*” “*My father’s car*”.

“*The job that I had this summer*” “*My summer job*”.

COMMA/ SEMI-COLON

Conjunction: for, and, nor, but, or, yet

R1	Independent/Independent	No conjunction	Semi-colon
R2	Independent/Independent	Conjunction	Comma
R3	Dependent/Independent		Comma
R3	Independent/Dependent		

R1: “Sevenson’s romances are entertaining; they are full of exciting adventure”

R2: “It is nearly half past five, and we cannot reach town before dark”

R3: “If you are not sure about this, let me know”.

R4: “Let me know if you are not sure about this”.

THIS+NOUN

Repeat noun after “This” to avoid ambiguities.

WHILE VS ALTHOUGH

If the sentence is not time-dependent, then do not use “While” but “Although”

“*Pierre likes cars, although Paul prefers bikes*” and not “*Pierre likes cars, while Paul prefers bikes*”

COMMA + SUCH AS

“Two aspects of alcohol use are related to brain injuries: as a factor associated with risk of an injury such as a motor vehicle crash, and as a factor in TBI diagnosis, recovery, or survival after injury.”

“Two aspects of alcohol use are related to brain injuries: its association with risk of injury, such as motor vehicle crash, and its post-injury influences on TBI diagnosis, recovery, or survival after injury”

OXFORD COMMA

"We had coffee, cheese and crackers, and grapes" and not *"We had coffee, cheese and crackers and grapes"*.

Adding a comma after *crackers* makes it clear that *cheese and crackers* represents one dish. In cases like this, clarity demands the Oxford comma

COMMA + INTERCHANGEABLE ADJECTIVES

Use a comma to separate two adjectives when the adjectives are interchangeable: *"He is a strong, healthy man"* or *"We could also say healthy, strong man"*.

COMMA + EXPRESSIONS THAT INTERRUPT THE SENTENCE FLOW

Use commas to set off expressions that interrupt the sentence flow (*nevertheless, after all, by the way, on the other hand, however, etc.*): *"I am, by the way, very nervous about this"*.

COMMA + NAME/TITLE

Use commas to set off the name, nickname, term of endearment, or title of a person directly addressed: *"Will you, Aisha, do that assignment for me?"*, *"Yes, old friend, I will."*, *"Good day, Captain."*

COMMA + MONTH/DAY/YEAR

Use a comma to separate the day of the month from the year, and always put one after the year: *"It was in the Sun's June 5, 2003, edition"*. No comma is necessary for just the month and year: *"It was in a June 2003 article"*.

COMMA + STATE

Use a comma to separate a city from its state, and one after the state: *"I'm from the Akron, Ohio, area"*.

COMMA + NON ESSENTIAL DESCRIPTION

If something or someone is sufficiently identified, the description that follows is considered nonessential and should be surrounded by commas: *"Freddy, who has a limp, was in an auto accident."*

COMMA + THEREFORE/HOWEVER/FURTHERMORE

- If you use these words at the beginning of a sentence, put a comma after them: *"However, we intend following up shortly"*.
- Use a semicolon and comma with these words to introduce a new independent clause in the middle of a sentence: *"We plan to stay for another year; however, Peter is leaving now"*.
- When you use *however, furthermore* or *therefore* as intensifiers or for emphasis, you need commas around both sides of them: *"We, however, do not agree with the verdict"*.

THUS VS THEREFORE VS HENCE

- **THUS:** 'Thus' means **'in this/that way'** - it relates to **'HOW'** - the **manner** in which - this or that happens or comes about. It has a practical flavour. eg. Traditionally, you arrange things thus = Traditionally, this is how you arrange things.
- **THEREFORE:** 'Therefore' means **'for this reason'**, or **'because of this or that'** - it relates to deductive reasoning, it tells **WHY** this or that is so, or happened. eg. He was late and therefore missed the bus = he was late and for this reason missed the bus
- **HENCE:** 'Hence' means **'from this/that'** - it relates to **WHERE** - position, or point in time; it tells **from where or what, or to where or what**, something comes, derives, or goes eg. -i. Get thee hence! = Get yourself away from here! -ii. Henceforth all entrances will be guarded = From now on all entrances will be guarded -iii. She got the job - hence her good spirits = She got the job and her good spirits derive from that fact. (Note the different slant to 'therefore', which would also fit, but would say "her good spirits are due to ('because of'; 'for that reason') that".

COMPARE TO VS COMPARE WITH

- **Compare to** = to point out **similarities** between different things
 - **Compare with** (used more often in science) = to point out **differences** between similar things
- ⇒ *"Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?"* => similarities
- ⇒ *"Brain tumors are relatively rare compared with more common cancers, such as those of the lung, breast, and prostate"* => differences

ELIMINATE THERE ARE/IS

- “*Many physicists like to write*” and not “*There are many physicists who like to write*”.
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