

WAYS TO AVOID WORDINESS

1. Avoid redundancy or words with overlapping meanings.

Overlapping Meaning	Concise
absolutely complete	complete
ask the question	ask
assembled together	assembled
continue on	continue
cooperate together	cooperate
each and every	each or every
same identical	same
still remains	remains
the reason is because	because

2. Avoid wordy prepositional phrases.

Wordy	Concise
At the present time, students feel that in a number of cases exams are unfair for the reason that they require so much preparation.	Students today feel that having too many exams is unfair because they require so much preparation.

3. Avoid circumlocutions (roundabout ways of saying things).

Wordy	Concise
concerning the matter of	about
during the course of	during
regardless of the fact that	although
due to the fact that	because
it is often the case that	often

4. Avoid the passive voice. The passive voice often makes sentences awkward and wordy.

Passive	Active
An article about the history of his home town was written by John A. Smith.	John A. Smith wrote an article about the history of his home town.

The student was reprimanded by the teacher for talking during the test.	The teacher reprimanded the student for talking during the test.
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5. Avoid negative constructions.

Wordy	Concise
His speech was not unworthy of praise.	His speech was worthy of praise.
By the end of the second scene, the audience is not aware of how the play will end.	The first two scenes created suspense.

6. Avoid wordy beginnings of sentences. Be careful to choose the best subject for the sentence and place it near the beginning of the sentence with the main verb close to it.

Wordy	Concise
The book, <i>The Story of My Life</i> , written by Helen Keller, is about Keller's experience of awakening to language awareness.	In <i>The Story of My Life</i> , Helen Keller describes her awakening language awareness.
What the editorialist is trying to describe is the extent of the world hunger problem.	The editorial describes the extent of the world hunger problem.