

## NOUN CLUSTERS

Noun clusters combine several nouns into one term creating unclear writing. If used sparingly, this is a useful way to better define what you want to say. But when you place too many nouns consecutively, you end up with confusing sentences.

The main rule with noun clusters is to avoid using them, especially with more than two or three nouns.

### Example

**Avoid:** Security policy orchestration software

**Use:** A software for the orchestration of security policy

**Avoid:** Service level agreement achievement percentage

**Use:** The percentage of service-level agreements achieved

**Avoid:** Business process improvement methodologies

**Use:** Methodologies that improve business processes

### Use a verb

Most of the time **including a verb** will make the cluster understandable and the sentence clearer. Verbs bring the concept to life by focusing on an action or a movement. Always try constructing a sentence with subject and verb, instead of relying on noun clusters.

**Noun:** Service level agreement achievement percentage

**Verb:** The percentage of service-level agreements achieved

### Add a preposition

Another way is to read the cluster and add in preposition between the nouns to clarify how they connect to each other.

**Avoid:** Business process improvement methodologies

**Use:** Methodologies that improve business processes

### Writing tip

Sometimes noun clusters can be transformed in acronyms, but this only works when it is a well-known cluster. Acronyms are abbreviations that 'flow nicely'. Government departments are very often summarized using acronyms as they are known by everyone. For instance, in the United Kingdom, the Competition and Markets Authority is very often only referred as the **CMA**.

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