SENTENCES

Sentence length

Short sentences are easier to understand than long sentences. The ideal sentence length is 15-17 words. In science, because of its complex ideas the ideal sentence length is around 22 words.

Compare

- We conducted an **evaluation** to determine if the **treatment** improved the health of patients and **increased** their life expectancy. (20 words)

- We **evaluated** if the **treatment** improved health of patients and **increased** life expectancy. (13 words)

One idea per sentence

Write sentences that only contain one idea. Be concise and direct.

Compare

Three ideas per sentence:

It is not entirely certain if testing cosmetics on animals is completely safe for researchers as they can be exposed to hazardous chemicals despite wearing safety equipment, therefore, further research is needed urgently.

Three separate sentences:

When testing cosmetics on animals, researchers are exposed to hazardous chemicals. Despite wearing safety equipment, they are still at some risk. The safety of researchers under such conditions needs further research urgently.

Word Location

The location of a word within a sentence influences its interpretation. Start your sentence with the main topic and put the word you want to stress at the end.

Compare

- The food was **excellent**, in spite of its very **high price.**

- In spite of the very **high price**, the food was **excellent**.

Linking topics

Word location is also important between sentences. Link sentences by placing relevant topics close to each other as shown in the second sentence.

Compare

- The **price** was very high, but the food was *excellent*. I had just enough **money** to pay.

- The food was *excellent*, but had a very high **price**. I had just enough **money** to pay.