

Conciseness in Academic Writing: How to Prune Sentences

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In academic writing (or in writing in general), wordiness is hardly next to Godliness. Writers often tend to express themselves in a convoluted manner using weak words that fail to have much of an impact. However, concise writing must not be confused with sentences that are staccato or have very few words—it is brought about by words and phrases that are strong and have been deliberately chosen to bring about an impact.

Conciseness, in short, indicates completeness in brevity.

Here are a few ways to [ensure conciseness in your writing](#)/edits.

Word choice “one meaning per word and one word per meaning”	Hyphenation They are a powerful tool to ensure clarity. Use them wisely (and in a consistent manner).	Numbers One style per one coherent group
Structural elements Even in the absence of journal guidelines, ensure consistency with respect to page numbering, headings, and paragraph indentations.	Language & grammar Ensure consistency with respect to spelling, emphasis (bold/italic), punctuation, tense, voice, and AmE/BrE usage.	

For instance, you need not begin a psychology essay with such obvious information as the following: “Sigmund Freud is one of the most famous psychiatrists of all time.”

Invest proper thought in your intended argument and keep your [audience](#) in mind.

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