

# How to Improve Your Writing: Tips, Tricks, and Resources

It doesn't matter what industry you plan to work in or what road through life you'd like to take; competent writing is essential. Good writing skills and grammar help you communicate more effectively with others, make you more creative in all areas of your life, and gain you an unmatched respectability from both your colleagues and the public.

This is truer than it's ever been in today's world of digital marketing, remote work, and long-distance communication. If you're looking for some easy tips on how to improve writing skills and grammar, look no further. We'll give you some tricks, resources, and exercises to improve writing skills so you'll never be intimidated by writing again.

## Why do writing skills matter?

It's no secret that we all love a well-written story. But even if your path isn't one of a professional writer or storyteller, writing and grammar skills are essential in every workplace. Let's look at a few of the ways well-developed writing skills help in everyday life.

### Improves communication

Written communication is one of the most important life skills we have, whether that's through telling a good story or crafting a clear-cut email. If you've ever replied to a message and asked for something to be explained, or worse, sent a message and had someone misconstrue it as something else, you'll know how important written communication can be. When we can't communicate effectively, mistakes happen and we lose out on valuable time trying to fix things. By practising your writing and improving a little bit every day, you'll see your communication skills improve immensely in every area of your life.

### Enhances creativity

Even if all you're doing is writing out tedious technical manuals, engaging with the written word will enhance your creativity in surprising ways. Writing stimulates the frontal cortex of your brain — the part associated with creativity. People who regularly engage this part of the brain are able to generate ideas and solve problems faster. Coming up with new ways to

explain and communicate ideas also improves your imagination as well as your ability to process ideas and invent your own.

### **Boosts credibility**

There's nothing worse than reading an article with some brilliant ideas and seeing it peppered with typos, structural errors, and misplaced verbs. Immediately it makes the article look unprofessional and unreliable. Are spelling and grammar mistakes a fair way to assess the validity of an idea? Well, not necessarily, but poorly written work always raises some red flags for its readers. For instance, if a writer didn't bother to take ten minutes editing their article, does that mean they cut corners in other places too? Should we trust that they can teach us about the effects of global warming when they can't be bothered to learn the difference between a hyphen and an em-dash? Poor writing is difficult to trust and has a hugely negative effect on the credibility of the writer. By improving your writing, you'll find that what you write has a much more powerful impact.

## **3 Exercises to improve your writing skills**

So now we have some ideas about why writing skills are so important. Let's put that into practice with a few practical exercises for improving writing.

### **Analyse some bad writing**

Most people can tell that a piece is badly written, even if they're not entirely sure why — they just *sense* it. What you're going to do is find a page of poor writing (no judgement here if you want to google search "Harry Potter fan fiction") and take a hard look at what, specifically, makes it bad.

Is it because a single sentence goes on for two thirds of the page? Is it a string of clunky adverbs? Does the dialogue feel unnatural? See if you can pick out the particular mechanics that aren't working in the piece. Becoming aware of these things at a technical level will help you avoid them in your own writing.

Bonus round: try rewriting it and see if you can turn it into a piece of *good* writing.

### **Write something brilliant... then slice it in half**

Write 1000 words. It doesn't matter what it is at this point; you can write a short story, a brief essay on prohibition-era speakeasies, or instructions on how to make your grandma's

famous blackberry jam cookies. Polish it up until you're satisfied you've got a pretty solid 1000 words.

Then, without changing the information you've communicated in your piece, edit it down to 500 words.

Look for ways to cut away anything that's not completely necessary for getting the important points across. Look for superfluous modifying words, unnecessary adjectives, indulgent turns of phrase, until you've told exactly the same story in half as many words. This isn't to say that everything you write should always be told as minimally as humanly possible, but this exercise will give you a sense of what is essential and what is extraneous in your writing.

### **Write something three ways**

For this exercise you can use the same 1000 words you used above, or you can write something new. Take your subject and write about it in three different voices.

For example, your first piece might be something colloquial, intimate, and familiar (“Hey girl, I’m going to take you down into the Chicago underbelly and the fast-and-loose jazz clubs of the roaring 20s.”) The second might be more formal and academic (“‘Prohibition’ refers to the time period between 1920 and 1933 in which the United States government banned the production, importation, and sale of alcoholic beverages.”) The third might be simple and straightforward, as though explaining your topic to a child (“Back in the 1920s, the American government decided it was illegal for anyone to have alcohol. This meant that if someone wanted to drink something alcoholic, they had to do it in secret.”)

You can also do this exercise by imitating the writing styles of other writers whose work you've enjoyed. By approaching the same subject with different word choices, you can get a sense of what feels most natural to you as well as how to adjust the way you communicate your ideas to different audiences.

Continue reading at <https://www.supersummary.com/how-to-improve-your-writing-skills/>