

Academic writing – basic features

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Before beginning to write, please **change the document language to English**. In this way you will avoid typos and spelling mistakes.

- **Grammar:**
 - Present simple (remember –(e)s when necessary – e.g. the writer describes)
 - Present perfect when describing past events when no time is given, especially when contrasted with the regular actions of present simple
 - E.g. Politicians usually introduce various measures when faced with a crisis and they realize that they have not addressed the issues before.
 - Articles → the most common mistake for us, Slavs, pay attention to these
 - Sentence structure:
 - Write in sentences – there must always be a verb.
 - Grammatical gender –
 - **Use inclusive language**
 - i.e. do NOT use generic HE, but **THEY**
 - the least awkward is to use plural, e.g. instead of: Should anyone need assistance, he is encouraged to enroll for a course in academic writing. - wrong
 - But: Should anyone need assistance, **they** are encouraged to enroll for ... - correct
- **Vocabulary:**
 - The list of forbidden words:
 - Big, nice, get, go, very, really, great
 - Avoid colloquial words:
 - Basically, definitely, totally
 - Avoid chatty style –
 - DO NOT write phrases such as: It is a problem? Yes, it, sure, is.
 - Use moderate, factual language → avoid intensifiers such as very, extremely, absolutely etc.
 - Avoid repetitions, especially in the same sentence.
 - Use thesaurus.com to find synonyms.
 - Spelling
 - Numbers in words:
 - Nineteenth century instead of 19th
 - -ful as a suffix – one L
 - E.g. beautiful, wonderful, etc.
 - Words that are often misspelled: (here proper versions!)
 - Believe (NOT belive)
 - Writing (NOT writting)

- Use linking words: (followed by a comma)
 - To introduce ideas:
 - E.g. First of all,/Firstly
 - To add more information:
 - E.g. What is more,/ Furthermore,/ Moreover,/ In addition,
 - To present a contrast:
 - E.g. However,/ Nonetheless,/ Nevertheless, / Notwithstanding,
 - Implication:
 - E.g. Thus,/ Therefore,/ Hence
 - Conclusion:
 - E.g. – To conclude,/ To sum up,/In conclusion,/In sum,/ On balance,
- Try using specific vocabulary:
 - Therefore, avoid: somewhere, someone, something
 - E.g. Someone might think about doing something if they go somewhere. – NO!
 - Better: Some might consider taking action/engaging in certain activities when they decide to travel to particular destinations.
- **Punctuation:**
 - Commas:
 - Always after linking words – e.g. However,
 - Moreover,
 - After adverbials of manner:
 - E.g. Undoubtedly,
 - Interjections separated with commas –e.g.
 - That led, however, to another war.
 - relative clauses:
 - see the difference between defining and non-defining;
 - these 2 sentences have a different meaning:
 - People, who are aggressive, attack each other. (All people are aggressive.)
 - The people who are aggressive attack each other. (Only those who are aggressive attack each other.)
 - Inverted commas:
 - Only up in English “this way”.
- **Layout**
 - Paragraphs!
- **Content:**
 - Only relevant content: do not fill your essay with unnecessary words or clichés.
 - E.g. – Some express such an opinion, others hold an opposite view, however, I do not know, since I am no expert in this field.
 - In a summary
 - Do not describe at length how many pages books have, how many chapters there are etc. = **to the point!**
 - **Try to be concise!**
- **How to write titles of books/articles:**
 - Just a title – in italics
 - If you include an article or a chapter and the name of the book → the part is in “inverted commas”, whereas the whole book/journal is *Italicized*
 - All meaningful words (not grammar words) should be capitalized e.g. – *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*