

An abstract graphic on a black background. It features several overlapping, rounded rectangular bars in various colors: red, cyan, yellow-green, green, and blue. The bars are arranged in a way that they appear to be layered, with some extending horizontally and others vertically. The word "Wordiness" is written in a red, outlined font, positioned to the right of the central vertical bars.

Wordiness



# Explanation



- Wordiness occurs when a writer uses words or phrases that seem to modify a noun but do not actually add to the meaning of the sentence.
- Although such words and phrases can be meaningful in the appropriate context, they are often used as "filler" and can easily be eliminated.



# Ways to Eliminate Wordiness

- **Delete empty words and phrases**

Example: The following is an example of unnecessary words or phrases that can be deleted from sentences:

*generally, apparently, really, I believe I feel, virtually, needless to say, obviously, etc.*

- **Substitute verbs with prepositions, with verbs not needing prepositions**

Example: Use the word “discover” instead of “find out”

- **Change phrases into single words**

Example: The competitor who runs fastest will receive a trophy.

Revised: The fastest competitor will

receive a trophy.

**Examples:**

appear to be	appear
dash quickly	dash
completely finished	finished
at this point in time	now
had an effect upon	influenced
the purpose of	for
until such a time	until



# Ways to Eliminate Wordiness

- ***Eliminate unnecessary modifiers***

Example: He cannot manage that without some kind of additional help.

Revised: He cannot manage that without additional help.

- ***Change unnecessary relative clauses (starting with that, who, which) into phrases***

Example: The news, which was released yesterday, was devastating.

Revised: The news released yesterday was devastating.

- ***Use active rather than passive verbs***

Example: The report was submitted by the auditor last week.

Revised: The auditor submitted the report last week.



# Ways to Eliminate Wordiness

- ***Omit repetitive wording, or words that provide excessive detail***

Example: Imagine a mental picture of someone engaged in the intellectual activity of learning the rules of playing chess.

Revised: Imagine someone trying to learn the rules of chess.

- ***Reword unnecessary infinitive phrases***

Example: The duty of the receptionist is to answer all incoming calls.

Revised: The receptionist answers all incoming calls.

- ***Avoid the use of expletives (e.g. it is, there are) at the beginning of sentences***

Example: It is the teacher who sets the rules.

Revised: The teacher sets the rules.



# Want additional help?



For an article on writing concisely, see  
[http://www.liberty.edu/media/2030/On\\_Writing\\_Concisely.pdf](http://www.liberty.edu/media/2030/On_Writing_Concisely.pdf)

