

## THE MOST USEFUL WAYS OF IMPROVING WRITING SKILLS

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Writing style is the voice and tone a writer uses to convey a story or express an idea. Every writer has their own personal writing style based on how they use words, their level of formality, their sentence structure, and their overall approach to the art of writing. A good writer uses different styles of writing depending on the purpose of their text. For example, blogging has a more casual tone while business writing requires more formal language.

4 Types of Writing Styles. There are four general stylistic categories that writing falls into. These different types of writing styles are differentiated by their purpose. Writers will use one of these general styles while also incorporating their own personal style into their piece:

1. Expository writing: An expository writing style is used for delivering facts and information rather than storytelling. Examples of expository writing include nonfiction books, scientific writing, technical writing, and news articles.
2. Descriptive writing: A descriptive style uses figurative language and sensory details to paint a picture in a reader's mind. Poets use this type of writing style in their work.
3. Narrative writing: Narrative style has a plot, characters, and setting and is used in creative writing. It is the style writers use to craft a novel, novella, or screenplay. Examples of narrative writing style include Ernest Hemingway's short story "The Old Man and the Sea" and The Shining by Stephen King.
4. Persuasive writing: A persuasive writing style tries to influence readers to adopt the writer's point of view. Examples of persuasive writing include letters of recommendation, academic writing, and cover letters.

8 Tips for Improving Your Writing Style. To be a better writer, you need to know how to be direct and clear, while also putting your own stamp on your writing. Follow these eight writing tips for improving your style:

1. Be direct in your writing. Good writing is clear and concise. Lose filler words, like unnecessary adverbs and prepositional phrases, simply take up space and weigh a sentence down. Say exactly what you mean in the most direct way.
2. Choose your words wisely. There are many ways to write a sentence, and there are different words you can choose to convey the same idea. Always choose the simpler of two words. Use familiar vocabulary instead of lofty words from the English language. Simple words are more direct and easier for all

readers to understand. Use a thesaurus if you need a little help finding a replacement or an easier way to say something.

3. Short sentences are more powerful than long sentences. A story loses steam with wordiness. Short sentences are easier to comprehend, something that readers appreciate. Avoid trying to pack too much into a line

4. Write short paragraphs. Keep your paragraphs short and manageable. Each one should consist of sentences that support the same idea. Short paragraphs are easier to digest. They also create a more visually appealing layout on the page. Academic writing often consists of lengthier paragraphs, as they need more information to support each theme. In less formal writing, shorter paragraphs are the norm.

5. Always use the active voice. Use the active voice and adhere to subject-verb-object sentence structure. It's the most direct path to making your point. With the active voice, the subject is doing something, which is more exciting than the passive voice, in which something is being done to the subject. The passive voice might be grammatically correct, but it creates long, complex sentences and is a weaker way of presenting information.

6. Review and edit your work. Proofreading your first draft should be the first step in your editing process before you hand your story over to a professional editor. Tighten your writing, check your word choice and sentence structure, and hone your voice to improve your style.

7. Use a natural, conversational tone. Your writing style relies on your own, unique voice. Communicate in your comfort zone.

8. Read famous authors. Pick up any book by Mark Twain, and you'll know it's his writing simply by the tone of the story and the words he uses. Great writers put a stamp on their writing with a signature style. Along with works of fiction, read Strunk and White's famous style guide *The Elements of Style*. Learning how other writers create their style. Then do the same with your own writing.

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4. Harmer J. *The Practice of English Language Teaching*, 271-275.