

# The Dos and Don'ts of Scientific Writing

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inspired by the work from Frank L. Visco and William Safire

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**Do** write in active voice.

**Don't** let words be written. It was found to result in confusion about by whom actions have been caused.

**Do** use simple and common words. Your goal is to inform, not to impress.

**Don't** engender flowery or compounded character constructions to disguise incertitude.

**Do** use positive forms and opposites to avoid negative forms.

**Don't** use non-positive forms and inverted anti-counter-forms when not unavoidable.

**Do** make every word count. Split long sentences to increase readability.

**Don't** try to say something in a way that seems to formulate a simple statement with a lot more words than what would actually have been necessary to explain it.

**Don't** put individual statements, even if they belong together, in one sentence – especially not in sub-clauses and in between dashes – or using conjunctions and try to connect them, because a mixture of thoughts (e.g. by reading additional statements) is difficult to follow; even if you want to.

**Do** make use of prepositions in between words of a sentence in order to avoid a cluster of nouns.

**Don't** skip a sentence's inter-word prepositions ensuring noun cluster avoidance.

**Do** use a clear sentence structure.

**Don't** use prepositions to end your sentences with.

**Don't** use adverbs to accidentally or intensionally split infinitives.

**Don't** forget to make a comparison if you use more comparatives.

**Do** skip unnecessary phrases.

**Don't** use "it is clear", "this means that", "and so on" or something like that.

On the other hand, **don't** overuse introductory phrases such as "however" or "therefore". Additionally, be consistent and **don't** break clear patterns.

**Don't** you think that rhetorical questions are useless as well?

**Do** name things explicitly and repeat the names, even if you have to repeat names multiple times.

**Don't** write about it because it is hard to know what it is. This is also true for this.

**Don't** use abbr. or TLAs without explaining them.

**Don't** use several synonyms or similar terms or different words with the same meaning.

**Do** write precisely about specific facts and figures in 2 out of 3 sentences.

**Don't** state quantities with 2.9931 more significant figures than their accuracy.

**Don't** use quite vague quantifiers, such as "very", "some", "often", "many", or "most" too often.

**Don't** generalize statements about information in writings.

**Do** write cautiously about your conclusions as they could be wrong or incomplete.

**Don't** always use all absolute quantifiers because nothing is ever purely binary.

**Don't** use an insane amount of exaggeration, it is a billion times worse!!!

**Don't** reverse the order and assume knowledge, which means that statements are explained later, for example, in subclauses. Furthermore, only one argument should be delivered or described in a paragraph. Therefore, introductory phrases are often used to make sentences look related. However, this text still does not flow.

**Do** write text that flows. You create flow by beginning sentences with information the reader already knows. New information should be added at the end of a sentence to deliver your argument step-by-step. Such a sentence structure will smoothly guide the reader through an entire paragraph without using introductory phrases.