

25 Tips That Will Make You a Better Writer

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1. Replace adjectives with verbs. *'She ran fast across the street.'* vs *'She jogged cross the street.'*
2. Wipe out all references to tears.
3. Show Don't Tell: *'He decided to climb the ladder'* vs *'He placed a foot on the bottom rung of the ladder and looked up. It was a long way to the top of the house where his Frisbee balanced on the edge of the roof.'*
4. Cut Christianese: *I was saved by the blood of the lamb.*
5. Scratch out that's and which's.
6. Avoid clichés like 'they were going out of style.'
7. Use your senses: taste, smell, feel, texture, temperature, colors, and setting.
8. Include dialogue, when possible because, as one reader said, "It makes the scene come alive."
9. *But* conjunctions are not the right way to start a sentence.
10. Don't write 'it's' when you mean 'its', it's easy to remember the difference.
Correct uses. It is = it's; Its mine.
11. Use transitions. Example: Speaking of a transition...
12. Don't expect editor to clean up your work.
13. Don't talk in a passive voice. *'He was shown a Scripture from the Bible'* vs *'He read the verse.'* Even better, *'Mike flipped to John 3:16 then handed Greg the Bible.'* This last example is an example of 'show don't tell.'
14. Use details. *'He drove a car.'* vs *'He drove a Corvette.'*
15. Don't be repetitive by repeating yourself as I did here.
16. Sometimes what you want to say becomes encumbered with verbiage that bogs down the meaning you meant originally with a meaning that may not be as clear as you had intended.
IN OTHER WORDS: Say what you mean to say.
17. Keep track of all your facts and quotes with scans and copies of original quoted material as well as its publisher and copyright info.
18. Stay within your word count.
19. Don't, get, carried, away, with commas.
20. Watch out of the exclamation marks!!!! Use only one or two per chapter!!! And that might be too much!!!!
21. Don't mix your metaphors or your writing will sing like a horse of a different color.
22. Be careful any words out.
23. Remember, computer spell checkers can only tail ewe sew much.
24. Author Susan Osborn explained it this way, "Writers should never shift your point of view."
25. BONUS: Use your computer's speech program to read your words back to you.