

WRITING CONCISELY

I. Focusing on the Subject and Verb

Wordy (87 words)

The highly pressured nature of critical-care nursing is due to the fact that the patients have life-threatening illnesses. Critical-care nurses must have possession of steady nerves to care for sick patients who are critically ill and very sick. The nurses must also have possession of interpersonal skills. They must also have medical skills. It is considered by most health-care professionals that these nurses are essential if there is to be improvement of patients who are now in critical care from that status to the status of intermediate care.

Concise (37 words)

Critical-care nursing is highly pressured because the patients have life-threatening illnesses. Critical-care nurses must possess steady nerves and interpersonal and medical skills. Most health-care professionals consider these nurses essential if patients are to improve to intermediate care.

Wordy

The reason why most of the country shifts to daylight savings time is that winter days are much shorter than summer days.

Concise

Most of the country shifts to daylight savings time because winter days are much shorter than summer days.

A. Nouns Made from Verbs

Wordy

The occurrence of the winter solstice, the shortest day of the year, is an event occurring about December 22.

Concise

The winter solstice, the shortest day of the year, occurs about December 22.

B. Weak Verbs

Wordy

The earth's axis has a tilt as the planet is in orbit around the sun so that the northern and southern hemispheres are alternately in alignment toward the sun.

Concise

The earth's axis tilts as the planet orbits the sun so that the northern and southern hemispheres alternately align toward the sun.

C. Passive Voice

Wordy

During its winter the northern hemisphere is tilted farthest away from the sun so that the nights are made longer and the days are made shorter.

Concise

During its winter the northern hemisphere tilts away from the sun, making the nights longer and the days shorter.

Better

During its winter the northern hemisphere tilts away from the sun, lengthening the nights and shortening the days.

II. Cutting or Shortening Empty Words and Phrases

all things considered
as far as I'm concerned
for all intents and purposes
for the most part

in a matter of speaking
in my opinion
last but not least
more or less

Wordy

As far as I'm concerned, discrimination against women still exists in medicine for all intents and purposes.

Concise

Discrimination against women still exists in medicine.

Empty Words

angle	character	kind	situation
area	element	manner	thing
aspect	factor	nature	type
case	field		

Wordy

The type of large expenditures on advertising that manufacturers must make is a very important aspect of the cost of detergents.

Concise

Manufacturers' large advertising expenditures increase the cost of detergents.

Empty Phrases

For

at all times
at the present time
at this point in time
in today's society
in the nature of
for the purpose of
in order to
until such time as
for the reason that
due to the fact that
by virtue of the fact that
because of the fact that
despite the fact that
in the event that
by means of
in the final analysis

Substitute

always
now
now
now
like
for
to
until
because
because
because
because
although
if
by
finally

III. Reducing Clauses to Phrases, Phrases to Single Words

Wordy

The Channel Tunnel, which runs between Britain and France, bores through a bed of solid chalk that is twenty-three miles across.

Concise

The Channel Tunnel between Britain and France bores through twenty-three miles of solid chalk.

IV. Eliminating *there is* and *it is* Constructions

Wordy

There were delays and cost overruns that plagued construction of the Channel Tunnel. It is the expectation of investors to earn profits at last, now that there are trains passing daily through the tunnel.

Concise

Delays and cost overruns plagued construction of the Channel Tunnel. Investors expect to earn profits at last, now that trains pass daily through the tunnel.

V. Combining Sentences

Wordy

An unexpected problem with the Channel Tunnel is stowaways. The stowaways are mostly illegal immigrants. They are trying to smuggle themselves into England. They cling to train roofs and undercarriages.

Concise

An unexpected problem with the Channel Tunnel is stowaways, mostly illegal immigrants who are trying to smuggle themselves into England by clinging to train roofs and undercarriages.