



# Academic Writing

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# Important notice



At the end of this presentation there is a link to a Google Forms quiz. It is recommended that you score an 80% or higher.

Please take your time viewing and studying this material before you proceed with the quiz.

# Objectives

After studying this module, students will:

- Differentiate between the active and passive voice.
- Recognize the elements of formal register.
- Know which characteristics of informal register to avoid.
- Identify different points of view in writing.

# Active and Passive Voice

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# Active Voice

- In the **active voice**, the **subject** performs the action of the verb.
- Examples:

**Students** handed-in the project before the due date.

I gave him a big hug.

After the game, **they** went to eat pizza.

# Passive Voice

- In the **passive voice**, the **subject** receives the verb's action. The focus is on the object, instead of the subject.
- In the passive voice, the subject can also be omitted.
- Examples:
  - The projects** were handed-in by the students on time.
  - The bill** was signed into law this morning.
  - I** was added to the dean's list.

# Constructing the Passive Voice

There are multiple ways to construct sentences in the passive voice. One of the most common structures is:

**Object** + **To Be verb** + **Past participle verb** + **by** + **agent** (can be omitted)

- **The class is taught by Anne.**
- **Dave was expelled.**
- **It will be released on Friday.**

# Active vs. Passive Voice

- While both the active and passive voice are correct, the **active voice is preferred** in academic writing.
- Sentences in the **passive voice** tend to be wordy, less direct, and can even be confusing (especially if overused) because the grammatical structure emphasizes the object instead of the subject.
- Resort to the **passive voice** when the agent is unknown or when emphasis on the object is essential.



# Register

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Register refers to the style of language used in a particular communicative situation.

# Informal vs. Formal Register

**Informal register** is characterized by:

- being casual and conversational.
- spontaneity, therefore, it does not necessarily follow conventional rules or structures.

**Formal register** is characterized by:

- strict adherence to grammatical rules.
- precise and concise language.

This is the **preferred** register in academic writing.

# Informal Register

## Colloquialisms

- Colloquialisms are words or phrases used in **familiar** conversations. They can include **idioms** and **slang**.
- Examples

They *trashed* it →  
They destroyed it

He has *a lot* of money →  
He is a millionaire.

## Contractions

- Contractions are the shortened version of two combined words. Although very common, they are considered informal.
- Examples

*it's* → it is

*can't* → cannot

*they're* → they are

# Formal Register

## Concision

- Conciseness means to communicate a message with few words.
- Examples:

*due to the fact that* → because

*I screamed loudly* →

I screamed (a scream is loud by definition)

## Precision

- Precision in writing is the quality of being exact, finding the best word or phrase for each context.
- Examples:

*I bought something* →

*I bought* new shoes

*He said a lot of things* →

He said it was justified and necessary.

# Point of View

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Point of view refers to the perspective from which a story is narrated.

# How Point of View Affects Tone

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The tone of a text can be defined as the attitude or style we assume when writing. The point of view (POV) affects how the reader interacts with and reacts to the text.

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1<sup>st</sup>  
Person  
POV

- Text written from the **I/we** perspective
- Example: *We celebrated/ I love you.*

2

2<sup>nd</sup>  
Person  
POV

- Text written to **you**
- Example: *You are very friendly.*

3

3<sup>rd</sup>  
Person  
POV

- Text about **he/she/it/they**
- Example: *It is not acceptable/ They were frightened/ She is the best.*



# 3<sup>rd</sup> Person POV

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In academic writing, 3<sup>rd</sup> person POV is generally preferred.  
Always consult your professor's instructions for each writing assignment.



# Point of View

- For certain types of texts, such as argumentative essays, the 1<sup>st</sup> person POV is appropriate; nevertheless, these can also be written in 3<sup>rd</sup> person POV.
- Examples

*I think this is the best solution.* →

This is the best solution.

*I found his story to be riveting yet brief.* →

His story was riveting yet brief.



## Dos

- ✓ Write in the active voice whenever possible
- ✓ Write concisely
- ✓ Write precisely or accurately
- ✓ Use full forms
- ✓ Use formal expressions
- ✓ Consult your professor about the best POV for each text



## Don't

- x Overuse the passive voice
- x Be wordy and redundant
- x Be vague and ambiguous
- x Use contractions
- x Use colloquialisms or slang
- x Choose POV randomly

# Bibliography

Calonia, Jennifer. "What Is Conciseness?" *Grammarly Blog*, Grammarly, 1 Oct. 2020, [www.grammarly.com/blog/conciseness/#:~:text=Conciseness%20is%20communicating%20complete%20information,words%20to%20illustrate%20your%20point](https://www.grammarly.com/blog/conciseness/#:~:text=Conciseness%20is%20communicating%20complete%20information,words%20to%20illustrate%20your%20point).


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Sama. "Your Ultimate Guide to The Passive Voice in English." *In English With Love*, 27 Nov. 2020, [www.inenglishwithlove.com/blog/the-passive-voice-in-english](https://www.inenglishwithlove.com/blog/the-passive-voice-in-english)

Para finalizar, haga clic sobre el enlace para tomar la prueba y enviar el informe a su profesor(a):

<https://forms.gle/vjmVUBQ6AXVJyVNv5>

¡Gracias por utilizar los recursos del !

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