



## 2.1.2 Improving your writing

### Writing strategies of successful writers

This website, <https://www.dur.ac.uk/writingacrossboundaries/writingonwriting/> strategies successful scholars use to develop their reading and writing skills (in italics). Below we have summarized some of their strategies to give you a sense of how concrete their strategies are.

- Develop and maintain the writing habit
  - *Write (read) every day, edit yourself severely and rewrite.*
  - *Examine (read) in depth and detail the writings of the best and brightest scholars.*
  - View writing as a gradation of styles & types from writing for yourself to writing for others – notes, bullet-points, reviews, as well as articles, chapters, theses & books – with the quality of the former writing critical to the latter.
  - Use different modes, e.g., pen and paper, maps, etc.
  - Write anywhere, everywhere.
  - Write for different readers.
  - The process of writing is the discovery; the writing is the "finding".
- Create a structure
  - Writing is always a narrative in that each part must lead to a next part.
  - Work out the *sequence* for telling your story; this forces you to decide who is doing the telling & the order of events or facts.
  - Interrogate each paragraph & sentence: How does this build the case that is on trial?
- Get started *and finished*
  - Try intensive writing, that is, writing without reading/editing; you may find it easier to do this if you turn off the computer screen.
  - Start writing early AND finish writing early.
- Draw in the reader



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- Use a cameo, exemplar, primal scene from research to take the reader to a particular time and place.
  - Readers should have some expectation for the next part, but try to surprise them by how you say it or some twist that at first seems strange but then makes sense.
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- Other strategies
    - Write in active mode; avoid the passive.
    - Avoid 'it'; use short sentences and paragraphs.
    - Our words have rhythm; read your text aloud.
    - Make the existential decision: which language shall I use?
    - Make your sentences lean; make every word matter; aspire to prose that is arresting even beautiful.

## Other useful resources

Below are a number of websites that provide useful guidance about writing – whether you plan a academic or professional career.

### Academic

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/> : large range of online writing resources

<https://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ld/resources/writing/writing-resources/science>: tips on writing in the sciences

<https://medium.com/@Write4Research>: posts by academic writers about a range of issues

To know more about writing: <https://www.estudiosdelaescritura.org/recursos.html>

Resources to do a PhD: <http://biblioteca.uoc.edu/es/recursos/tesis-doctoral> (En 3 llengües: CAT, CASt, EN;)

### Peer Review

<https://www.elsevier.com/en-gb/reviewers/what-is-peer-review> : an overview of the peer review process

<https://authorservices.wiley.com/Reviewers/journal-reviewers/how-to-perform-a-peer-review/index.html> : how to perform peer review

<https://science.howstuffworks.com/innovation/scientific-experiments/scientific-peer-review.htm> : peer review in the sciences



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### **Professional**

Two different but related URLs:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/681/01/>: workplace writing, including job applications but also a range of professional genres, e.g., memos, white papers, press releases

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/4/16/>: work place writing with definitions of different types of professional writing as well as good writing guidelines

<https://techcommunicators.com/>: Although this site is designed to attract individuals to sign up for courses, you can find examples of different kinds of professional writing and some brief writing suggestions.

### **Websites with a particular focus**

<http://www.ease.org.uk/publications/author-guidelines>: for scholars using English as an additional language

<http://arts.uottawa.ca/writingcentre/en/hypergrammar>: outline of English grammar usage (Oxford dictionary); lessons followed by interactive reviews



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