

Tips for Writing in Plain Language

Writing in plain language helps audiences understand a message the first time they read it.

There are five simple steps to follow when writing in plain language:

- 1. Write for your audience:** Use words and concepts the audience will understand.
- 2. Use an active voice:** Write in the present tense and keep messages positive.
- 3. Use common words:** Always avoid the use of jargon, abbreviations or acronyms. Also remember to use inclusive language.
- 4. Add a personal touch:** Use a conversational tone and write in the first and second person.
- 5. Use short sentences:** Remove any confusing and unnecessary words.

Test Reading Level:

Try to write to a reading level of grade 8 or lower. To view the reading level of a document, use the Editor tool in Microsoft Word. This tool can be found under the “Home” menu.

Other Helpful Tips to Improve Accessibility:

- Use a readable Sans-Serif font, such as Arial, Calibri or Verdana.
- Select a font size of at least 12 point or larger.
- Add headings to structure documents.
- Ensure the text and background colours are set to at least 80% colour contrast.
- Use descriptive text for hyperlinks.
- Provide alternative text for images and digital signatures.

Additional Resources:

[AccessibilityMB.ca](https://www.accessibilitymb.ca) for additional resources on creating accessible documents.

This information is available in alternate formats on request.