

SENTENCES Basic Rules

ONE IDEA OR CONCEPT PER SENTENCE. A SENTENCE MUST MAKE SENSE ON ITS OWN

LONG SENTENCES CAN BE BEAUTIFUL – IF USED CAREFULLY AND FOR A PURPOSE

INCORRECT

NOT A SENTENCE (NAS)

As I took hold of the steering wheel.

This is A FRAGMENTED SENTENCE.
Words like WHEN / AS / AFTER / BECAUSE
require 'closure'.

TOO LONG SENTENCE (TLS)

For the first time I felt the low rumble of the powerful engine against my hands for the first time and pressed the accelerator to set off in pursuit of my enemy who was by now more than a mile ahead.

The sentence is UGLY. It contains too many separate ideas. It would be so much better if it was broken up.

CORRECT

As I took hold of the steering wheel, I felt the low shudder of the V8 engine against my hands for the first time. I pressed the accelerator hard and set off in pursuit of my enemy. In the distance, a cloud of dust rose against the evening skyline. She was now more than a mile ahead. I would have to be fast.

Proofread and edit so that sentences contain manageable amounts of information.

ADVANCED

Expert writers bend or break the traditional rules for effect. Unless you are a highly skilled writer you should keep it simple. There is a huge difference between a dramatic effect and a mistake. The only way to develop sophisticated sentencing skills is to READ. As often as possible. That last sentence was wrong (NAS), but I used it on purpose for emphasis.