



Some tips for writing a draft

Before you start writing, you have to think a lot about your future text: You have to define your topic, search for literature, read a lot and get an idea about the structure of your text. But eventually, you have to jump in at the deep end and just start to produce sentences.

Drafting is trying to find words and phrases to express what you think. It is writing for yourself to find out what you really want to say. The aim is not to write a great text straight away, but simply to produce something you can revise later. So:

- Don't wait too long. Just start writing.
Perhaps it's easier to write the first sentences by hand instead of typing.
- Try to write quickly and fluently.
Perhaps it helps you to use an alarm clock and try to write as many words as possible in the space of ten minutes.
- Don't interrupt yourself to reread your literature or consult a manual or dictionary.
You can insert a short comment for yourself, mark the position in your text or write XYZ. Add the missing information after your writing session.
- Make sure you have really understood what you've read and about what you are writing.
Talking about the contents to someone from your class will help you arrive at a better understanding.
- Write sentences that are clear and easy to understand.
Sometimes it's easier if you speak aloud to find the right words.

If you have to write in (English as a) a second language:

- Write in the target language from the start.
Translation is much more difficult than trying to find words in the second language.
- Collect useful words and phrases before you start writing.
For academic language, www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk may help you.
- Keep with the KISS principle: Keep it Strictly Simple.
You don't have to use an exalted, complex language, but write clear sentences in a simple language.
- Put aside your literature and try to find your own words.



If your writing doesn't flow smoothly:

- Are you really trying to write a draft or do you think you have to write a perfect text straight away?
- Could you choose a better place or time, or would it help to set a limit for writing session?
- Do you have to understand your topic better before you can write about it?
- Who or what can pressure you gently to be more motivated to finish your work? Or do you need some recreation, reinforcement or just time?
- Does your outline work or should you plan and structure your text anew?

If you have any questions about writing a draft, talk to the [writing tutors](#)!

