A: Getting started.

Business Writing:
A Handy Quick Start Guide

Setting up your brilliant,
free business-writing tool.

Get up and writing
in minutes.

Words Direct•
TRAINING
TONE OF VOICE
COPYWRITING

Items required.
(Not supplied.)

• A PC or Mac with
Microsoft Word

• Elementary office skills

• A love of words. (Or at
least a warm, well-
disposed feeling.)

• A cup of tea and a hobnob.
(Optional.)

Microsoft Word
2016/2013

1. Open File menu.

2. Click on Options at the
bottom of the menu

3. Select Proofing

4. Tick bottom box in the
second menu: "Show
readability statistics"

Word for Mac
2011

1. Open the Word menu
and select Preferences

2. Click on Authoring and
Proofing Tools

3. Select Spelling
and Grammar

4. Tick the box that says:
"Show readability
statistics"

Using Readability Statistics

✓ With Readability Statistics enabled, everything you write will be scored for complexity. You'll be able to get an objective idea of how simple your writing is to read.

✓ Your writing will be scored according to the Flesch Reading Ease test, which will measure its syllables and sentence lengths. Aim for a score of between 60 and 70 on the test. Equally, your sentences should be between 15 and 25 words long on average.

✓ We recommend running Readability Statistics for everything you write. The test isn't a perfect guide, but it will highlight overly complex passages. Plus you can use it to map how your writing improves over time.

1. Some words sound the same but have different meanings. What should I do?

English is littered with bothersome words. 'Affect' and 'effect', 'dependant' and 'dependent' and so on. The Word grammar tool can't always help, but online support is at hand.

Try:

The Economist Style guide: http://www.economist.com/styleguide/introduction

2. The meaning of words changes all the time. How do I keep up?

The UK's biggest news organisation prides itself on keeping up to date. They're always worth checking for the latest developments.

BBC Style Guide: http://www.bbc.co.uk/academy/journalism/news-style-guide

3. I hate style guides that sound like the grammar-police.

We think advice about words should be easy and entertaining to read. You'll like this one:

The Guardian Style guide: http://www.theguardian.com/guardian-observer-style-guide-a

4. I've space on my shelves for a couple of books. Any suggestions?

The Elements of Style by Strunk* and White is one of the classics and still well-worth a read. But

Stephen Pinker's latest book: The Sense of Style is hard to beat. Psycho-linguistics. Computational Mind Theory. Classic Style. It's all in there.

5. Sounds great, if a little....heavy. Anything lighter?

That's simple. Bill Bryson's Troublesome Words. It couldn't read less like a manual – but that exactly what it is when it comes to business writing troubleshooting.

That's Strunk with a 't'.