



10 Rules for Good Writing

- 1. Prefer the simple description to the elegant:**
 - *--She was chubby with small and pale hands.
 - She was fusby with diminutive and colorless hands.
- 2. Prefer the familiar word to the exotic:**
 - *--He held the wine flask carelessly.
 - He held the ampula carelessly.
- 3. Prefer the ordinary writing style to the romantic style:**
 - *--His kiss was tender.
 - His lips gently brushed her pouting mouth.
- 4. Prefer nouns and verbs to adjectives and adverbs:**
 - *--As she hangs the picture over the desk she feels tender thoughts of Walter.
 - Hanging the picturesque painting high above the red lacquered desk, she held heart-swelling and passionate thoughts of Walter.
- 5. Use picture nouns and action verbs:**
 - *--In Portland, it is to be expected that August will be hot, but under the blue and white striped table umbrellas shading Jonathan Adams, the heat became all but intolerable.
 - It was a hot summer day, but under the umbrella Jonathan Adams could deal with the heat.
- 6. Never use a long word when a short one will do as well:**
 - "It was serendipitous to me, Watson."
 - *--"It was news to me, Watson."
- 7. Master the simple metaphor:**
 - *--She was built flat as Kansas.
 - *--He was tough as a year in jail.
- 8. Prefer the simple sentence to the complicated:**
 - *--The existing world's food production can be increased with the use of common chemicals.
 - The way to increase the world's production of food from existing acreage is through the application of relatively inexpensive chemicals that can be mass produced in factories.
- 9. Vary your sentence length:**
 - The President called in his advisor. They talked about the foreign options. The options were bleak and risky.
 - *--The President called in his advisor to discuss the options they had to resolve the foreign crisis. The options were risky.
- 10. Use the active voice:**
 - *--Congress set the budgetary limits, and the union fought the new contract.
 - Budgetary limits were set by congress, and the new contract was fought.

