

Top 10 GRAMMAR MOVES for ACADEMIC WRITING

[1] Expanded Noun Phrases

Academic writing is in part characterised by complex additional information packed into noun phrases.

For instance, in art you write about 'the *monumental scale of Abstract Expressionism*'. In design technology you may describe '*assembly line mass production techniques*'.

[2] Nominalisation

Nominalisation describes when active verbs and adjectives become static information-packed nouns.

For example, we observe writing moves to convert common verbs like '*change*' to more specific verbs like '*adapt*' and then nominalise it into the noun, '*adaptation*'.

[3] Shrunk Verb Phrases

When precision is the order of the day, writers can shrink verb phrases to be more precise and effective.

For instance, '*find out*' is shrunk to the more precise '*discover*', '*take apart*' becomes '*dismantle*', or '*hand out*' becomes '*distribute*'.

[4] Sophisticated Synonyms

Selecting purposefully from an array of synonyms can ensure writing is both sophisticated and specific.

For example, when you are describing the causes of an event in history, exact synonyms that relate to its significance matter. Is the event '*momentous*' or merely '*sizeable*'?

[5] Sentence Signposts

Signposting sentences with conjunctions that link across and within sentences are a common grammar move that can add clarity and organisation to writing. They can help structure arguments ('*First...furthermore...finally*'), or cohere 'cause and effect' descriptions ('*so that...as a result*').

[6] Tentative Language

Academic writing is typically characterised by an appropriate tentativeness. Modal verbs like '*could*', '*might*' and '*may*' are routinely used if we are writing an essay in history. Equally, we may speculate about how a population may '*tend to*' represent a certain phenomena in geography.

[7] Additional Appositives

An appositive is an additional phrase in a sentence that adds information about the noun. Additional appositives, a '*helpful feature for writers*', appear when we want to demonstrate additional knowledge, clarify or question.

For instance, you may write informatively about '*Wordsworth's 'Daffodils', an icon of the Romantic era, describes...*'

[8] Points Within Parentheses

Parentheses (commonly described as brackets) can clarify points, add information, or offer useful asides. They can be used to display your knowledge or convey humour.

For example, you may clarify details in art, '*Van Gogh's sunflowers (which included 5 major canvasses) were painted...*'

[9] Right Branching Sentences

Right branching sentences place the most important information at the start of the sentence, including the noun and verb, with the rest of the information following after. Used habitually, they can make for easier reading.

For instance, '*The Vikings developed longships to....*'

[10] Use Of The Passive Voice

The passive voice describes when the writer intentionally removes themselves as the subject of the sentence to add formality and objectivity.

For example, in science, you might revise '*I mixed the solution in the beaker*' to the more subtle and scientific sounding, '*The solution was mixed in the beaker*'.