

# SENTENCES

ONE IDEA or CONCEPT per sentence (1ips)

Must be a **complete IDEA / CONCEPT**. A sentence must **make sense on its own**.

## INCORRECT

Fragmented Sentences

*As I took hold of the steering wheel.*

This is **not a sentence (NAS)**. Words like 'As' makes us expect further information. Words like WHEN / AS / AFTER / BECAUSE require 'closure'.

Too Long Sentence (TLS)

*I took hold of the steering wheel. 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. (TLS)*

The second sentence is UGLY because it contains **too many separate ideas**. It would be so much better if it was broken up. The example below shows how to break the ideas up into separate sentences. Note that it's easier to add more detail now.

## 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. He was now more than a mile ahead. I would have to be fast.*

It's natural to write long, confusing sentences on a first draft. Your mind is generating ideas and your hands write them out continuously in note form. Proofread and edit to create manageable chunks of information. Long sentences can be beautiful – only if used carefully and for a purpose.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

'A simple sentence contains a **subject** and a **verb**. Commonly, sentences also contain an **object**.' *Senior Skills*

*Sally drove her car.*

A **verb** is not just a physical action like **drove**, but also refers to abstract 'actions': **was, be, like, am** and so on.

*I am Sally.*

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.**