

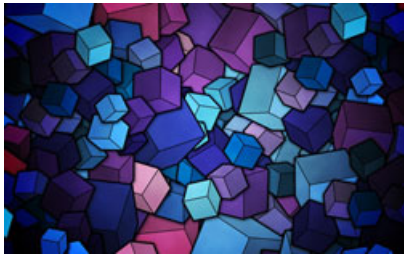
# Paragraphs - the building blocks of writing

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Paragraphs remain one of the most important parts of writing. They serve as containers for ideas and help break up large chunks of text, making your content easier to read. But knowing how to write a good, well-structured paragraph can be little tricky.

There's no set length for a paragraph. However, it is possible to have your paragraphs too long or too short. Here are some tips that will help you to get your paragraphs right:



- 1. Carefully construct your paragraphs** - good writing starts with good structure. Create a logical structure that leads the reader directly to the conclusions you want them to reach.
- 2. Begin with an introductory sentence** - this sets out the subject of the paragraph. The remainder of the paragraph should go on to explain or 'unpack' the initial sentence.
- 3. No superfluous stuff** - if it's not directly related to your introductory sentence, delete it or move it to another paragraph.
- 4. Keep one idea to one paragraph** - if you begin with one idea, don't end with another or wander around different ideas.
- 5. Split long paragraphs into shorter ones** - it's perfectly acceptable to begin a paragraph with a sentence connecting it to the previous paragraph.
- 6. Make your paragraph flow** - fit sentences together in a way that's clear to your reader. Make them feel that they move easily from one sentence to the next, and that each coheres with the one before and after.
- 7. Write shorter paragraphs** - this will increase the clarity of your writing. Making it more concise and your arguments is easier to follow.
- 8. Clear, logical and easy to understand** - by breaking your ideas down into bite-size chunks they're easier to understand.
- 9. Opening paragraphs must grab attention** - give a clear and concise reason why you are communicating and lead your reader on to wanting more.
- 10. Closing paragraphs should finish strong** - a call-to-action, summary or conclusion should be direct and to-the-point. Don't waffle or pussy-foot around. Ask.

*"A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts."* - William Strunk, jnr. The Elements of Style.

## ABOUT JAMES HURFORD

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