# Sources: Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is restating something. This skill is very similar to restating a thesis statement. You want to include the same information but say it in a different way. It is also like a summary; the most obvious difference between them is length. You typically use summaries for text that is too long to paraphrase. A paraphrase will usually be approximately the same length as the original source text.

The page number is not required in the in-text citation for a paraphrase, but it is encouraged.

### An effective paraphrase—

* is written in your own words.
* keeps the original meaning (does not add or take away important ideas or relationships).
* does not keep the structure of the original while only changing some words for synonyms.
* is approximately the same length as the original.

### Example: Source

"Carmakers had gotten so good at silencing the exhaust and reciprocating parts inside their offerings that those who relied on noise cues to locate them–especially the vision impaired–were having a tough time hearing the cars approach, and accidents were on the rise."

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/billroberson/2019/10/08/silent-but-deadly-electric-vehicles-need-to-make-more-noise-and-tesla-has-some-ideas-about-that/?sh=759790d546d9>

### Example: Paraphrase

Accidents involving electric vehicles increased because the creators of the cars were too effective at reducing the noise and people such as those with a visual impairment could not hear the cars approaching (Robertson, 2019).

Here are some general steps for writing a paraphrase.

1. Read or listen to what you will paraphrase.
2. Divide the sentence into parts and make sure you understand what each part means.
3. Identify any logical connectors (e.g., because, and, while, in contrast, etc.).
4. Rephrase each of the parts of the sentence (using synonyms, word forms, etc.).
5. Put the sentence back together.
6. Compare the paraphrase to the original.

## **Read/Listen to source**

As with a summary, before you can write an effective paraphrase, you need to have a solid understanding of the source text. You should look up any new words in the original text if possible.

## **Divide the sentence**

Many English sentences combine clauses and phrases together, and you will need to understand each of the clauses before you can paraphrase a sentence. Start by dividing the sentence into clauses (a clause has a subject and a verb).

### Example: Sentence to Paraphrase

"Carmakers had gotten so good at silencing the exhaust and reciprocating parts inside their offerings that those who relied on noise cues to locate them–especially the vision impaired–were having a tough time hearing the cars approach, and accidents were on the rise."

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/billroberson/2019/10/08/silent-but-deadly-electric-vehicles-need-to-make-more-noise-and-tesla-has-some-ideas-about-that/?sh=759790d546d9>

### Example: Sentence Divided into Clauses

"Carmakers had gotten so good at silencing the exhaust and reciprocating parts inside their offerings / that those who relied on noise cues to locate them–especially the vision impaired–were having a tough time hearing the cars approach, / and accidents were on the rise."

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/billroberson/2019/10/08/silent-but-deadly-electric-vehicles-need-to-make-more-noise-and-tesla-has-some-ideas-about-that/?sh=759790d546d9>

Now you can clearly see that this sentence has three main parts. The second part has an embedded relative clause (it describes the people included in the word those). You need to make sure you understand each part of the sentence (e.g., new words, the pronoun references, etc.).

This step becomes more important (and more difficult) when the sentence is more complicated. Consider this more complex example:

### Example: Source

"All of which presaged a more robust presence in the membership by 2000, when about 15% of the total membership identified themselves as female, increasing in 2010 to 20%, and by 2020, around a third (see Figures 1 and 2), based on data supplied by the Association's Business Office at Executive Director, Inc. (EDI)" (Offutt & McCluskey, 2021, p. 9).

Source:  <https://doi.org/10.1002/aepp.13183>

How many main parts are there in this example? Can you identify the clauses? Start by identifying the main verb(s). Every clause has to have a verb, so this can help you locate the clauses.

If you can't look at the sentence and find the main verbs quickly, you can try crossing out or simplifying phrases that don't have verbs or that you can identify as adjective clauses. Remember that your goal is to find the verbs so you can find the clauses.

**Here are some examples of phrases you could cross out if you are trying to identify the main verb:**

1. An appositive (words that rename or give extra, grammatically unnecessary information)

Example: My teacher, a recent college graduate, loves grammar.

2. Phrases that show when, where, and how

Examples: A few years ago, I took a class.Throughout the history of the country, the United States has fought for freedom.The scientist studied the dangerous animal with extreme caution.

We can use this approach with the more complicated quote we looked at before.

Every new mode of communication — be it Facebook, Twitter, or new visual sharing appslike Instagram, Periscope, Reddit, or Snapchat — has its own rules and style, and we're creating sophisticated new language rules for each of them.

The verbs are has and are creating. Now it is easier to see that there are two clauses:

Every new mode of communication has its own rules and style.We're creating sophisticated new language rules for each of them.

Dividing the sentence into clauses will be easier now.

### Example: Sentence Divided into Clauses

"Carmakers had gotten so good at silencing the exhaust and reciprocating parts inside their offerings / that those who relied on noise cues to locate them–especially the vision impaired–were having a tough time hearing the cars approach, / and accidents were on the rise."

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/billroberson/2019/10/08/silent-but-deadly-electric-vehicles-need-to-make-more-noise-and-tesla-has-some-ideas-about-that/?sh=759790d546d9>

## **Identify any logical connectors**

The way that two clauses are joined shows you the relationship that they have. For example, if two clauses are joined with because, you know that there is a cause/ effect relationship. This step is usually simple if you are familiar with some of these relationships.

Here are some common connectors and their general relationships.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| cause/effect: | because, since, due to, as a result, consequently, thus, therefore |
| contrast: | however, but, in contrast, on the other hand, whereas, although |
| example: | for example, for instance |
| time: | when, before, after, while, during, since, until |
| sequence: | then, next, last, first, second, third |
| possibility: | if |
| alternative: | or |
| addition: | and |

## **Rephrase each part**

Here are some strategies for rephrasing clauses and phrases. Most para- phrases combine several strategies.

1. Use synonyms
   * EX: the financial **impact**> the **influence**on finances
2. Use equal transition words/conjunctions (if possible)
   * EX: because > since
3. Change from active to passive voice
   * EX: Nearly classes **uses**the internet. > The Internet **is used**by almost every class.
4. Change word forms
   * EX: Geometry is **easy**. > Geometry is **easily** explained.
5. Change the subject
   * EX: **You**can be misunderstood. > **Misunderstandings**happen.
6. Change an adjective into an adjective clause
   * EX: **new**types of communication > types of communication **that are new**

Returning to the first example given, look at how each part of the sentence was changed.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Carmakers had gotten so good at silencing the exhaust and reciprocating parts inside their offerings | ---> | the creators of the cars were too effective at reducing the noise |
| that those who relied on noise cues to locate them–especially the vision impaired–were having a tough time hearing the cars approach, | ---> | and people such as those with a visual impairment could not hear the cars approaching |
| and accidents were on the rise. | ---> | Accidents involving electric vehicles increased |

These clauses changed in several ways. For example, the first clause changed from active to passive voice, and in the second clause, the subject was changed.

## **Put the sentence back together.**

After you have changed the sentence parts, you can put it back together. Many people change the order of the clauses at this point. Make sure that the structure of the paraphrase is different than the original structure.

### Example: Paraphrase

Accidents involving electric vehicles increased because the creators of the cars were too effective at reducing the noise and people such as those with a visual impairment could not hear the cars approaching (Robertson, 2019).

## **Compare to the original.**

Make sure you changed the structure, but not the meaning.

### Example: Source

"Carmakers had gotten so good at silencing the exhaust and reciprocating parts inside their offerings that those who relied on noise cues to locate them–especially the vision impaired–were having a tough time hearing the cars approach, and accidents were on the rise."

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/billroberson/2019/10/08/silent-but-deadly-electric-vehicles-need-to-make-more-noise-and-tesla-has-some-ideas-about-that/?sh=759790d546d9>

## Exercises

### Exercise 1: Choose the best paraphrase.

Choose the best paraphrase for each original quote:

1. “In much the same way that we’re becoming bilingual, we’re also learning to swap between other, new types of communication” (Van Camp, 2016, para. 21).

1. Changing from one new type of communication to another is becoming easier for us, as is changing between languages (Van Camp, 2016).
2. We are learning to change languages and change communication (Van Camp, 2016).
3. In the same way as we are learning multiple languages, we are learning how to change between types of communication that are new (Van Camp, 2016).
4. Because we can change types of languages, we can now similarly also change between types of communication that are new (Van Camp, 2016).

2. “Since offense is easily avoided by remembering a few simple rules, it’s worth your time making sure you’re up to date on modern U.S. norms (Clark, 2012, para.3).

1. Norms change a lot in the U.S., especially in business (Clark, 2012).
2. Because you can easily avoid offense by remembering a few easy rules, it’s very important to make sure you are current with U.S. customs (Clark, 2012).
3. Learning current U.S. norms is worthwhile because if you know some basic rules, you won’t offend people (Clark, 2012).
4. Your time is well spent if you learn the most current rules for behavior because business can not be conducted well if you have offended people (Clark, 2012).

Sources:

<http://www.digitaltrends.com/features/dt10-language-and-tech/>

<https://www.nyintl.nyc/new-york-international-blog1/2012/12/american-business-etiquette>

### Exercise 2: Write a paraphrase

Write a paraphrase for the original quote below.

"When women are visible through professional recognition, more potential female students are likely to be attracted to study in the fields of agricultural and applied economics" (Offutt & McCluskey, 2021, p. 19).

Source:  <https://doi.org/10.1002/aepp.13183>

### Exercise 3: Write a body paragraph with paraphrases

Create context for a paraphrase. First, introduce the information with a sentence connecting it to a cause-effect statement. Second, rewrite this sentence as a paraphrase. Third, write a commentary about the information.

1. "You can see Webster’s legacy in the American spelling of words like color (from colour), honor (from honour), and labor (from labour). ("British and American Spelling," 2017).

Source:

<https://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/six-difference-between-britsh-and-american-english/3063743.html>

### Exercise 4: Write a quote, summary, or paraphrase

Using each paragraph below, write a quotation, a summary, or a paraphrase.

For the quotation and the paraphrase, choose one sentence. For the summary, summarize the entire paragraph. Include the correct citation for each.

Author: NASA

Year: n.d.

Paragraph: 1-2

Website: <https://climate.nasa.gov/effects/>

Original:

Changes to Earth’s climate driven by increased human emissions of heat-trapping greenhouse gases are already having widespread effects on the environment: glaciers and ice sheets are shrinking, river and lake ice is breaking up earlier, plant and animal geographic ranges are shifting, and plants and trees are blooming sooner.Effects that scientists had long predicted would result from global climate change are now occurring, such as sea ice loss, accelerated sea level rise, and longer, more intense heat waves.

Read this online at <https://ensign.edtechbooks.org/academic_b_writing/paraphrasing>