

Sentences: Six Terms and Techniques to Know

Wayne Schiess

DanglingElements
CompoundPrepositions
CorrelativeConjunctions
Length
Nominalizations
Subordination

1. What's a good average sentence length?

20

22

25

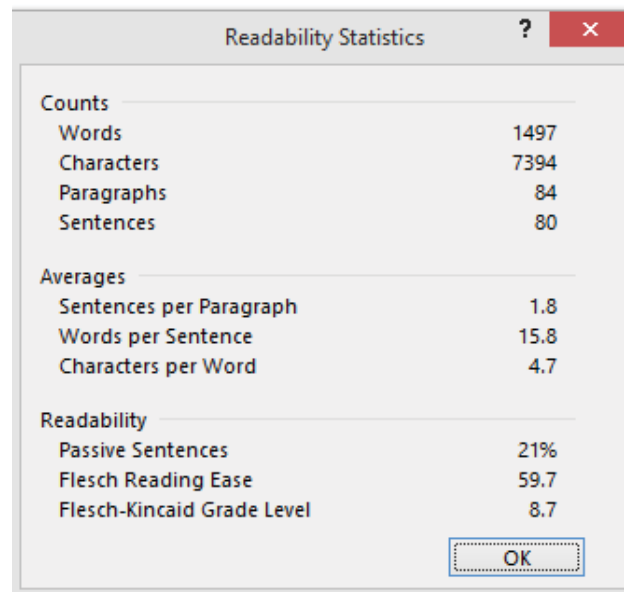
-Wydick, *Plain English for Lawyers*
-Enquist & Oates, *Just Writing:
Grammar, Punctuation, & Style for the
Legal Writer*
-Garner, *Legal Writing in Plain English*

How do I know my average sentence length?

Microsoft Word can tell you.

1. File > Options > Proofing > *When correcting spelling and grammar in Word*
2. Check > *Show readability statistics*
3. You must also check > *Check grammar with spelling*

You'll get a grammar check with every spell check, but you could disable that by going to Settings and unchecking all the grammar settings.



Readability Statistics	
Counts	
Words	1497
Characters	7394
Paragraphs	84
Sentences	80
Averages	
Sentences per Paragraph	1.8
Words per Sentence	15.8
Characters per Word	4.7
Readability	
Passive Sentences	21%
Flesch Reading Ease	59.7
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	8.7
OK	

How long for any given sentence?

45
words

When do you assess maximum sentence length?

On the edit.

Find the full text of this and thousands of other resources from leading experts in dozens of legal practice areas in the [UT Law CLE eLibrary \(utcle.org/elibrary\)](https://utcle.org/elibrary)

Title search: Six (or More) Techniques for Readable, Persuasive Sentences

Also available as part of the eCourse

[Hooked on CLE: February 2019](#)

First appeared as part of the conference materials for the
2018 Robert O. Dawson Conference on Criminal Appeals session
"Six (or More) Techniques for Readable, Persuasive Sentences"