

# Sentences: Six Terms and Techniques to Know

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Dangling Elements

Compound Prepositions

Correlative Conjunctions

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.

The image shows a 'Readability Statistics' dialog box with the following data:

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

An 'OK' button is located at the bottom right of the dialog box.

How long for any given sentence?

**45**  
words

When do you assess maximum sentence length?

**On the edit.**

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

Also available as part of the eCourse

[eSupplement to the 31st Annual Health Law Conference](#)

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