

Non-Negotiable DEAD WORDS LIST

Understand...if you use ANY of the following in your writings, you will receive a 50!!!!!!!

Some words in the English language tend to be overused and, therefore, lose their power. These words are referred to as **DEAD WORDS**. Below is a list of dead words and some interesting alternatives.

This list is not limited to just these words!

DEAD WORDS	ALTERNATIVES
YOU	THERE ARE NO ALTERNATIVES! WE DO NOT WRITE IN SECOND PERSON!
a lot, lots	Numerous, heaps, many scores, innumerable, much a great deal, many times, often
also	Too, moreover, besides, as well as, in addition to
awesome, cool, rad	fine, wonderful, marvelous, fantastic, excellent
awful	dreadful, alarming, frightful, terrible, horrid, shocking
but	however, moreover, yet, still, nevertheless, though, although, on the other had
fun	pleasant, pleasurable, amusing, entertaining, jolly
funny	amusing, comical, laughable, jovial, strange, peculiar, unusual
got, get	received, obtained, attained, succeed in
good	excellent, exceptional, fine, marvelous, splendid, superb, wonderful
great	wonderful, outstanding, marvelous, fantastic, excellent
guy	man, person, fellow, boy, individual
have to	need to, must
kid	child, boy, girl, youngster, youth, teen, teenager, adolescent
like	such as, similar to, similarly
mad	angry, frustrated, furious, incensed, enraged, irate
nice	pleasant, charming, fascinating, captivating, delightful, pleasurable, pleasing
pretty	attractive, comely, beautiful
scared	afraid, fearful, terrified, frightened
so	this, according, therefore
then	first, second, next, later, finally, afterwards, meanwhile, soon
very	extremely, exceedingly, fantastically, unusually, incredibly, intensely, truly, fully, especially, shockingly, bitterly, immeasurable, infinitely, severely, surely, mightily, powerfully, chiefly

Phrases Not to Use

1. **I believe, I feel, I think, I know** It is your essay—a compilation of thoughts—so I already assumed these are your beliefs, feeling, thoughts, and knowledge. Do not insult my intelligence!
2. **And also** This is often redundant.
3. **And/or** Outside of the legal world, most of the time this construction is used, it is neither necessary nor logical. Try using one word or the other.
4. **As to whether** The single word *whether* will suffice.
5. **Basically, essentially, totally** These words seldom add anything useful to a sentence. Try the sentence without them and, almost always, you will see the sentence improve.
6. **Being that or being as** These words are a non-standard substitute for *because*. ~~Being that~~ Because I was the youngest child, I always wore hand-me-downs.
7. **Considered to be** Eliminate the *to be* and, unless it's important who's doing the considering, try to eliminate the entire phrase.
8. **Due to the fact that** Using this phrase is a sure sign that your sentence is in trouble. Did you mean *because*? *Due to* is acceptable after a linking verb (The team's failure was due to illness among the stars.); otherwise, avoid it.
9. **Each and every** One or the other, but not both.
10. **Now and days** One or the other, but not both.
11. **Equally as** Something can be *equally important* or *as important as*, but not *equally as important*.
12. **Etc.** This abbreviation often suggests a kind of laziness. It might be better to provide one more example, thereby suggesting that you could have written more, but chose not to.
13. **He/she** is a convention created to avoid gender bias in writing, but it doesn't work very well and it becomes downright obtrusive if it appears often. Use *he or she* or pluralize (where appropriate) so you can avoid the problem of the gender-specific pronoun altogether.
14. **Firstly, secondly, thirdly**, etc. Number things with *first, second, third*, etc. and not with these adverbial forms.
15. **Got** Many writers regard *got* as an ugly word, and they have a point. If you can avoid it in writing, do so. I ~~have got to~~ *must* begin studying right away. I have ~~got~~ two pairs of sneakers.
16. **Had ought or hadn't ought.** Eliminate the auxiliary *had*. You ~~hadn't~~ ought not to pester your sister that way.
17. **Interesting** One of the least interesting words in English, the word you use to describe an ugly baby. If you *show* us why something is interesting, you're doing your job.
18. **In terms of** See if you can eliminate this phrase.
19. **Irregardless** No one word will get you in trouble with the boss faster than this one.
20. **Kind of or sort of.** These are OK in informal situations, but in formal academic prose, substitute *somewhat, rather* or *slightly*. We were ~~kind of~~ rather pleased with the results.

21. **Literally** This word might be confused with *literarily*, a seldom used adverb relating to authors or scholars and their various professions. Usually, though, if you say it's "literally a jungle out there," you probably mean *figuratively*, but you're probably better off without either word.
22. **Lots or lots of** In academic prose, avoid these colloquialisms when you can use *many* or *much*. Remember, when you do use these words, that lots of something countable are plural. Remember, too, that **a lot of** requires three words: "He spent *a lot of* money" (not alot of).
23. **Just** Use only when you need it, as in *just* the right amount.
24. **Nature** See if you can get rid of this word. Movies of a violent nature are probably just violent movies.
25. **Necessitate** It's hard to imagine a situation that would necessitate the use of this word.
26. **Of** Don't write would of, should of, could of when you mean would have, should have, could have.
27. **On account of** Use *because* instead.
28. **Only** Look out for placement. Don't write "*He only kicked that ball ten yards*" when you mean "*He kicked that ball only ten yards.*"
29. **Orientate** The new students become *oriented*, not orientated. The same thing applies to **administrate** -- we *administer* a project.
30. **Per** Use *according to* instead. We did it *per* your instructions? Naah. (This word is used frequently in legal language and in technical specifications, where it seems to be necessary and acceptable.)
31. **Plus** Don't use this word as a conjunction. Use *and* instead.
32. **Point in time** Forget it! *At this time* or *at this point* or *now* will do the job.
33. **Previous** as in "our previous discussion." Use *earlier* or nothing at all.
34. **So as to** Usually, a simple *to* will do.
35. **Suppose to, use to.** The hard "d" sound in *supposed to* and *used to* disappears in pronunciation, but it shouldn't disappear in spelling. "We *used* to do that" or "We were *supposed* to do it this way."
36. **The reason why is because.** *Deja vu* all over again!
37. **Thru** This nonstandard spelling of *through* should not be used in academic prose.
38. **'Til** Don't use this word instead of *until* or *till*, even in bad poetry.
39. **Try and** Don't try and do something. Try to do something.
40. **Thusly** Use *thus* or *therefore* instead.
41. **Utilize** Don't use this word where *use* would suffice. (Same goes for *utilization*.)
42. **Very, really, quite (and other intensifiers)** Like *basically*, these words seldom add anything useful. Try the sentence without them and see if it improves.