

Concrete Ways to Improve Your Legal Drafting¹

By

Chris Bowers

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¹ The genesis of much of this presentation and paper is the “*Style Manual for Ordinances Amending the Dallas City Code* (1974) by former Dallas City Attorney Analeslie Muncy. In turn, that manual was based in part on F. Reed Dickerson, “*The Fundamentals of Legal Drafting*” (1965) and the *Texas Law Review Manual on Style*. Some of the items on the lists in this paper come from books or papers or both by Chad Baruch, Christy Benson, Peter Butt, Robert P. Charrow, Veda R. Charrow, Morris Cohen, T. Selden Edgerton, Myra K. Erhardt, John D. Feerick, Rudolf Flesch, Bryan A. Garner, Alan M. L. Jones, James J. Kilpatrick, Joseph Kimble, David Mellinkoff, Kathy McGinty, Thomas A. Murawski, the Plain Language Action and Information Network (PLAIN), Mark K. Osbeck, the Office of Legislative Counsel for the U.S. Department of Justice, Judge Mark P. Painter, Janice C. Redish, Matthew Salzwedel, Justice Antonin Scalia, Wayne Schiess, Sally Spurgin, Tina L. Stark, William Strunk, Jr., Cheryl M. Stephens, J. Alexander Tanford, the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, Eugene Volokh, E.B. White, Nick Wright, Richard C. Wydick, and William Zinsser. I dedicate this paper to Mary Helen Bowers, one of my two favorite editors.

Introduction

The lists in this paper supplement the powerpoint presentation given at the Government Law Section of the Dallas Bar Association on September 13, 2013. All these lists contain suggestions (as opposed to mandates) and exceptions exist to almost all the suggestions.

Archaic Terms to Avoid

You usually should avoid using these archaic terms. The list of “Preferred Substitutes for Wordy Phrases” in this paper contains alternatives for many of these terms.

above [as an adjective]
above-cited
above-listed
above-mentioned
aforementioned
aforesaid
aforethought
albeit
and/or
anent
annexed [in the sense of “attached”]
anon
arguendo
as regards
avouched
attached please find
be advised
be it remembered
before-mentioned
belied
below [as an adjective]
below-mentioned
bestow
comes now
dehors the record
ensue
forbear
forswear
foregoing
forthwith
gainsay
henceforth
hereabout
hereafter

hereby
herefor
herefrom
herein
hereinabove
hereinafter
hereinbefore
hereon
hereto
heretofore
hereunto
hereupon
herewith
hitherto
ifsoever
imbibe
implead
in lieu
in no wise
in point of fact
inasmuch as
insofar as
inter alia
issue [for children]
know all men by these presents
now comes
nought
party of the first part
perchance
peruse
please be advised
pled
post hoc
provided that
redound
residue
said [as a substitute for “the,” “that,” or “those”]
saith
same [as a substitute for “it,” “he,” “him,” etc.]
sayeth
thereabout
thereafter
thereby
therefor
therefrom
therein

thereinafter
thereinbefore
thereinto
thereof
thereon
thereto
theretofore
thereunto
thereupon
therewith
thitherward
to wit
undersigned
unto
viz.
whatsoever
whencesoever
whensoever
whereagainst
whereas
whereat
whereby
wherefore, premises considered
wherefore
wherein
whereinsoever
whereinto
whereof
whereon
whereout
wheresoever
wherethrough
whereuntil
whereupon
wherewith
whichsoever
whither
whithersoever
whitherward
whomsoever
whosoever
witnesseth

Buzzwords and Jargon to Avoid

You usually should avoid using these buzzwords and jargon.

24/7/365

Accessorized

Alignment

Analytics

At the end of the day

Attitudinally

Back-end

Balancing test

Ballpark figure

Bandwidth

Benchmarking

Best practices

Big society

Bottom line

Brand

Break through the clutter

Brick-and-mortar

Bring to the table

Building capabilities

Buzzword

Clear goal

Client-centric

Cloud Computing

Co-opetition

Constructive criticism [or engagement]

Convergence

Core competency

Cost-benefit analysis

Cost effective

Cost-efficient

Countless

Crowdsourcing

Customer-centric [also customer-centric mindset]

Definitely

Dialogue

Dimension

Disrupt

Diversity

Downsizing

Drinking the Kool-Aid [trusting in things offered by authority figures]

Eating your own dogfood [use a product yourself which you sell to others]

Empowerment
Enable
Entitlement
Enterprise
Event horizon
Environment [when used to modify nouns, such as “work environment”]
Epic
Escalate [in the sense of “intensify”]
Eventuate
Exit strategy
Exposure [in the sense of “liability”]
Eyeballs
Face time
Facepalm
Finalize
Framework
Free value
Fulfilment issues
Game-changer
Generation X
Globalization
Granular
Grow [as in "grow the business"]
Having said that
Headquarters [as a verb]
Herding cats
Holistic (approach/integration)
Hopefully
Hyperlocal
Ideation
Impact [as a verb]
Impactful
In the last analysis
Incentivize
Information society
Input
Interface [except in computer contexts]
Invested in
Jailbreak
Leverage [used as verb to mean magnify, multiply, augment, or increase]
Lifestyle
Long tail
Low hanging fruit
Make it pop
Management visibility
Matrix [except in computer contexts]

Meaningful
Milestone
Mindshare
Mission critical
Moving forward
Need-to-know basis
New economy
Next generation
Off-putting
Ongoing
On the cutting edge (or leading edge)
On the runway
Operational
-oriented, -orientated
Organic growth
Outside the box
Overall
Overly
Pain point
Paradigm
Paradigm shift
Parameters [except in computer or math contexts]
Personalize
Plutocracy
Point in time
Political capital
Price-point
Prioritize
Pro-active and Proactive
Process [in the sense of "to process a claim or dispute"]
-pronged test
Reach out [as in "reach out to him for support"]
Really
Realistic
Reconceptualize
Realistic
Robocall
Run like a business
Sea change [transformation]
Sick [as in a really good performance]
Socialist
Solution
Sourced
Spin-up
Stakeholder
State-of-the-art

Streamline
Superinjunction [court order preventing press from reporting a story and saying order exists]
Survival strategy
Sustainability
Synergy
Takeaway
-tiered analysis
Thrust [as a noun]
Truthiness
Touchpoint
Unfollow
Updated
Utilize
Value-added
Viability
Visibility
Wait-and-see-attitude
Warfighter
Wellness
Win-win
-wise [in the sense of “liability-wise” or “crime-wise”]
Worst-case scenario
YOLO [You Only Live Once]

Empty Phrases to Avoid

You usually should avoid using these empty phrases. The list of “Preferred Substitutes for Wordy Phrases” contains alternatives for many of these phrases.

as far as ___ is concerned
as stated previously
at least as far as ___ is concerned
be it remembered that
clearly
hereby
I might add
I respectfully suggest that
I would add
I would argue that/like to point out
insofar as ___ is concerned
in the case of
in the process of
in the last analysis
in this regard it is of significance that
it has been determined that
it is

it is apparent that
it is beyond dispute
it is clear that
it is important to add that
it is interesting/important to note/point out
it is respectfully suggested that
it is ___'s position that
it is submitted that
it may be recalled that
it might be said that
it seems
it should be noted that
it should not be forgotten that
it would appear that
it would be helpful to remember that
obviously
on a ___ basis
personally
plainly
respectfully suggest
respective
respectively
the course of
the month of
the use of
there are
there is

Old Redundant Phrases to Avoid

You usually should avoid using these redundant phrases. When a term is bolded, you usually should use that term. The list of “Preferred Substitutes for Wordy Phrases” in this paper contains alternatives for many of these phrases.

Absolute and unfettered discretion
Acknowledge and confess
Act and deed
Aid and abet
Aid and comfort
All and every
All and singular
Alter or change
Annul and set aside
Any and all
Approve and accept
Assume and agree

Authorize and direct
Authorize and empower
Authorize and require
Bind and obligate
Break and enter
By and between
By and under
By and with
Cancel, annul, and set aside
Cease and come to an end
Cease and desist
Chargeable and accountable
Claim and demand
Confess and acknowledge
Conjecture and surmise
Convey, embrace, and include
Convey, transfer, and set over
Covenant and **agree**
Covenant and promise
Covenant and surmise
Covenants and obligations
Deem and consider
Desire and require
Do and perform
Due and owing
Due and payable
Each and all
Each and every
Entirely and completely
Estate and interest
Final and conclusive
Finish and complete
First and foremost
Fit and proper
Fit and suitable
For and during the period
For and in behalf of
For and in consideration of
Force and effect
Fraud and deceit
Free and clear
Free and unfettered
From and after
Full and complete
Full faith and credit
Furnish and supply

Give and grant
Give, devise, and bequeath
Good and sufficient
Goods and chattels
Grant and convey
Grant, bargain, sell, and convey
Had and received
Have and hold
Have and obtain
Heed and care
Hold and keep
Hold, perform, observe, fulfill, and keep
If and when
In good order and repair
In lieu, in place, instead, and in substitution for
In my name, place, and stead
In my stead and place
Intents and purposes
In truth and in fact
Just and reasonable
Keep and maintain
Kept and performed
Kind and character
Kind and nature
Known and described as
Known and distinguished as
Last will and testament
Let or hindrance
Lewd and lascivious
Liens and encumbrances
Lot, tract, or parcel of land
Lying and situated
Made and entered into
Made and provided
Made, ordained, constituted, and appointed
Maintenance and upkeep
Make, publish, and declare
May have access to and examine
Means and includes
Mentioned and referred to
Meet and just
Mind and memory
Modified and changed
Name and style
Null and void and of **no legal** force and **effect**
Of and concerning

Order and direct
Ordered, adjudged, and decreed
Over, above, and in addition to
Over and above
Pardon and forgive
Part and parcel
Pay, satisfy, and discharge
Peace and quiet
Perform and discharge
Perform or observe
Possession, custody, and control
Power and authority
Quiet and peaceable
Ratifying and consenting
Relieve and discharge
Remise, **release**, and forever quitclaim
Represents and warrants
Request and demand
Rest, residue, and remainder
Revoked, annulled, and held for nought
Right, title, and **interest**
Save and except
Seized and possessed
Sell and assign
Shall and will
Shall have and exercise
Shun and avoid
Signed, sealed and delivered
Situating, lying and being in
Sort or kind
Sole and exclusive
Stand, remain, and be in full force
Suffer or permit
Supersede and displace
Terms and conditions
Then and in that event
Transfer and assign
True and correct
Truth and fact
Truth and veracity
Type and kind
Uncontroverted and uncontradicted
Under and subject to
Understood and agreed
Undertake and agree
Unless and until

Void and of no effect
Void and of no force
Void and of no value
Void and of non-effect
Various and sundry
Ways and means
When and as
Will and testament
Within and under the terms of

Modern Redundant Phrases to Avoid

You usually should avoid using these redundant phrases. When a term is inside parentheses, you usually may remove that term without harm.

A

(absolutely) essential
(absolutely) necessary
actively (engaged)
(actual) facts
advance (forward)
(advance) planning
(advance) preview
(advance) reservations
(advance) warning
add (an additional)
add (up)
(added) bonus
(affirmative) yes
(all-time) record
alternative (choice)
A.M. (in the morning)
(and) etc.
(anonymous) stranger
(annual) anniversary
(armed) gunman
(artificial) prosthesis
ascend (up)
ask (the question)
assemble (together)
attach (together)
ATM (machine)
autobiography (of his or her own life)

B

bald(-headed)

balsa (wood)
(basic) fundamentals
(basic) necessities
best (ever)
(binding) contract
biography (of his--or her--life)
blend (together)
(boat) marina
bouquet (of flowers)
brief (in duration)
(brief) moment
(brief) overview
(brief) summary
(burning) embers

C

cacophony (of sound)
cameo (appearance)
cancel (out)
(careful) scrutiny
cash (money)
circle (around)
circulate (around)
classify (into groups)
(close) proximity
(closed) fist
collaborate (together)
combine (together)
commute (back and forth)
compete (with each other)
(completely) annihilate
(completely) destroyed
(completely) eliminate
(completely) engulfed
(completely) filled
(completely) revoke
(completely) surround
(component) parts
confer (together)
connect (together)
connect (up)
confused (state)
consensus (of opinion)
(constantly) maintained
cooperate (together)
could (possibly)

crisis (situation)
curative (process)
(current) incumbent
(current) trend

D

depreciate (in value)
descend (down)
(desirable) benefits
(different) kinds
disappear (from sight)
drop (down)
during (the course of)
dwindle (down)

E

earlier (in time)
(early) beginnings
eliminate (altogether)
emergency (situation)
(empty) hole
empty (out)
(empty) space
enclosed (herein)
(end) result
enter (in)
(entirely) eliminate
equal (to one another)
eradicate (completely)
estimated at (about)
evolve (over time)
(exact) same
(excess) verbiage
(exposed) opening
(expressly) mandated
extradite (back)

F

(favorable) approval
(fellow) classmates
(fellow) colleague
few (in number)
filled (to capacity)
(final) conclusion
(final) end
(final) outcome

(final) ultimatum
(first) conceived
first (of all)
fly (through the air)
follow (after)
(foreign) imports
(former) graduate
(former) veteran
(free) gift
(from) whence
(frozen) ice
(frozen) tundra
full (to capacity)
(full) satisfaction
fuse (together)
(future) plans
(future) recurrence

G

gather (together)
(general) consensus
(general) public
GOP (party)
GRE (exam)
green [or blue or whatever] (in color)
grow (in size)

H

had done (previously)
(harmful) injuries
(head) honcho
heat (up)
HIV (virus)
hoist (up)
(hollow) tube
(honest) truth
hurry (up)

I

if (and when)
(illustrated) drawing
including (but not limited to)
incredible (to believe)
indicted (on a charge)
input (into)
integrate (together)

integrate (with each other)
interdependent (on each other)
introduced (a new)
introduced (for the first time)
(ir)regardless
ISBN (number)

J

join (together)
(joint) collaboration

K

kneel (down)
(knowledgeable) experts

L

lag (behind)
later (time)
later (in time)
LCD (display)
lift (up)
(little) baby
(live) studio audience
(live) witness
(local) residents
look (ahead) to the future
look back (in retrospect)

M

made (out) of
(major) breakthrough
(major) feat
(mandatory) requirement
manually (by hand)
may (possibly)
meet (together)
meet (with each other)
(mental) attitude
(mental) telepathy
merge (together)
might (possibly)
minestrone (soup)
mix (together)
modern _____ (of today)
(mutual) cooperation
(mutually) interdependent

mutual respect (for each other)
(number-one) leader in _____

N

nape (of her neck)
narrow (down)
(native) habitat
(natural) instinct
never (before)
(new) beginning
(new) construction
(new) innovation
(new) invention
(new) recruit
none (at all)
nostalgia (for the past)
(now) pending

O

off (of)
(old) adage
(old) cliché
(old) custom
(old) proverb
(open) trench
open (up)
(oral) conversation
(originally) created
output (out of)
(outside) in the yard
outside (of)
(over) exaggerate
over (with)
(overused) cliché

P

(passing) fad
(past) experience
(past) history
(past) memories
(past) records
(patently) obvious
penetrate (into)
period (of time)
(personal) friend
(personal) opinion

pick (and choose)
PIN (number)
pizza (pie)
plan (ahead)
plan (in advance)
(Please) RSVP
plunge (down)
(polar) opposites
(positive) identification
postpone (until later)
pouring (down) rain
(pre)board (as an airplane)
(pre)heat
(pre)record
(private) industry
(present) incumbent
present (time)
previously listed (above)
proceed (ahead)
(proposed) plan
protest (against)
pursue (after)

R

raise (up)
RAM (memory)
reason is (because)
reason (why)
recur (again)
re-elect (for another term)
refer (back)
reflect (back)
(regular) routine
remand (back)
repeat (again)
reply (back)
retreat (back)
revert (back)
rise (up)
round (in shape)

S

(safe) haven
(safe) sanctuary
same (exact)
(sand) dune

scrutinize (in detail)
self-_____ (yourself)
separated (apart from each other)
(serious) danger
share (together)
(sharp) point
shiny (in appearance)
short (in height)
(short) synopsis
shut (down)
(single) unit
skipped (over)
slow (speed)
small (size)
(small) speck
soft (in texture) [or (to the touch)]
sole (of the foot)
spell out (in detail)
spliced (together)
start (off) or (out)
(still) persists
(still) remains
(sudden) impulse
(suddenly) without warning
(sum) total
surrounded (on all sides)

T

tall (in height)
tall (in stature)
(temper) tantrum
ten (in number)
three a.m. (in the morning)
(three-way) love triangle
time (period)
(tiny) bit
(total) destruction
(true) facts
(truly) sincere
tuna (fish)
(twelve) noon or midnight
(two equal) halves

U

(ultimate) goal
undergraduate (student)

(underground) subway
(unexpected) emergency
(unexpected) surprise
(unintentional) mistake
(universal) panacea
(unnamed) anonymous
UPC (code)
(usual) custom

V

vacillate (back and forth)
(various) different
(veiled) ambush
(very) pregnant
(very) unique
visible (to the eye)

W

(wall) mural
warn (in advance)
weather (conditions)
weather (situation)
whether (or not)
(white) snow
write (down)
(written) instrument

Vague Terms to Avoid

You usually should avoid using these terms unless you want to be broad or vague.

Aspect
Basis
Character
Circumstances
Condition
Consideration
Degree
Facet
Factor
Feasible
Level
Impact
Information
Notwithstanding anything in this contract to the contrary
Operative entities

Requested relief
Restrict
Situation
Substantial
Unless otherwise agreed
Viable

Weak Phrases to Avoid

You usually should avoid using these terms unless you want to qualify or weaken a statement.

A bit
A little
A tad
A touch
Adequately
Barely
Faintly
Fairly
Hardly
Just
Marginally
Moderately
Only just
Passably
Pretty
Rather
Reasonably
Relatively
Satisfactorily
Scarcely
Slightly
Somewhat
To a certain/some extent
Vaguely

Preferred Substitutes for Wordy Phrases

I recommend you usually replace the phrases in the left column with the phrases in the right column. Some of the more important phrases you should avoid are bolded.

Don't say

Say

A
a number of

some, several, a few, many, (actual number)

absolute and unfettered discretion	may
abundance	enough, plenty, (specific amount)
abutting	next to
accede to	allow, agree to
accelerate	speed up
accentuate	stress
accommodation	room
accompany	go with, with
accomplish	carry out, do
accord (verb)	give
accord respect to	respect
accorded	given
accordingly	so, thus
accrue	add, gain
accurate	correct, exact, right
acknowledge and confess	acknowledge, admit, recognize
acquiesce	agree
acquire	get
additional	added, more, other, extra
additionally	also
address	discuss
addressees	you
addressees are requested	(omit), please
adequate number of	enough
adjacent to	next to, near to
adjudicate	determine/try
adjustment	change, alteration
admissible	allowed, accepted
admit of	allow
advantageous	helpful
adversely impact on	hurt, set back
advert to	mention
advise	recommend, tell
afford an opportunity	allow, let
afforded	given
aforementioned	named above, mentioned earlier, these
aforesaid	named above, mentioned earlier, already
	described
aggregate	total
aid and abet	help, assist
aircraft	plane, jet
albeit	although, though, while, as, notwithstanding
alienate	transfer, convey
all of	all
alleviate	ease, reduce
allocate	divide

along the lines of	like, as in
along these lines	similarly, to the same effect, (omit)
alternatively	or
ambit	reach, scope
ameliorate	improve, better, help
an absence of	no, none
an amount of ____	____
and particularly	particularly
____ and/or ____	____ or ____ or both
anent	about
annexed	attached
anon	immediately, right away
annul and set aside	annul
antecedent	previous
anterior to	before
anticipate	expect
any and all	all
any security or any part thereof	all or part of a security
apparent	clear, plain
appears to have no relevance	is irrelevant
applicable	should apply, which applies
applicant	you
application	use
appreciable	many
apprehend	arrest, caught, detain
appropriate	(omit), proper, right
approximate [ly]	about
are in mitigation of	mitigate
arrive onboard	arrive
as a consequence of	because of
as a matter of fact	actually
as a means of	to
as far as ____ is concerned	(omit)
as from	on, from
as of yet	yet
as per our telephone conversation of this date	as we discussed this afternoon
as prescribed by	in, under
as seem(s) to be the case	as it seems to be
as stated previously	(omit)
as to	about, of, on, with, for, to, by, in, into
as to whether	whether
as well as	and
as yet	yet
ascertain	find out, learn
assist, assistance	aid, help, support
at its discretion	may, can

at least as far as ____ is concerned
at present
at that particular time
at that point in time
at the moment
at the place
at the present time
at the time that/when
at this point in time
at this time
at your earliest convenience
attached please find
attain
attains the age of
attempt [as a verb]
attributable to
authorize
avouched

B

basic essentials
be advised
be responsible for
because of the fact that
beg
begin and commence
belated
belied
beneficial [not in the sense of ownership]
benefit
bestow
beverage
bring an action against
by means of
by reason of
by the clear language of
by virtue of

C

calculate
calculate out
cancel out
capability
case [in the sense of instance]
category
cause it to be done

(omit)
now
then
then
now, currently
where
now, currently, at present
when
now, currently, at present
now, currently, at present
as soon as you can
attached is, I have attached
meet
becomes . . . years old
try
due, because of, because
allow, let
affirmed, admitted, vouched for

essentials
(omit)
must
because
ask
start
late, tardy
lied against, spoken falsely
useful, helpful
help
give, grant, put, place, award
drink
sue
by, with
because of, because
under
by, under

compute
compute, calculate
cancel
ability
(omit and reword)
kind, class, group
have it done

cause to be done

caveat

cease

chairman

chauffeur

circumstances in which

clearly

close proximity

cognizant of

combined

comes now

commence

compared with

compensate

complete [as a verb]

completely revoke

comply with

component

comprise

conceal

concerning [the matter of]

conduct an examination of

congressman

consensus of opinion

consequence

consequently

considerable

consolidate

constitutes

contains

contiguous to

convene

corporation organized and existing under
the laws of New Jersey

correspondence

corridor

counsel

covenant and agree

currently

D

decline to accept

deem [and consider]

deemed

dehors the record

have done, effect

warning

stop, end

chair or chairperson

driver

when, where

(omit)

near

aware, knows

joint

(omit)

begin, start

than

pay, repay, to make up for, offset

finish, fill in

revoke

follow

part

form, include, make up

hide

about, on

examine

member of Congress

consensus

result

so, as a result

important, much, significant

combine, join, merge

is, forms, makes up

has

next to

meet

New Jersey corporation

letter

hall

lawyer, attorney

agree

(omit), now

decline

believe, consider, think, find, conclude,

means, includes, judged to be

considered as, is

outside of the record

delete
demise
demonstrate
depart
designate
desire
despite the fact that
determine
determined
disbursement
disclose
discontinue
disseminate
distribute out
diverse
does not have
does not include
does not operate to
donate
draw conclusions
due and payable
due to
due to the fact that
duly authorized
duly incorporated
duly signed
during such time as
during the period/time that

cut, drop
rent, death, lease, convey
prove, show
leave, go
appoint, choose, name
want, wish
although, even though
decide, figure, find
decided
expenditure, the payment of money
show
drop, stop
give, issue, pass, send
distribute
several, various
lacks
excludes, omits
does not
give
conclude
payable, due
because
due to, because
authorized
included, incorporated
signed
during, while
during, while

E

each ____ apiece
each and every
early beginnings
echelon
economical
effect modifications
effectuate
e.g.
elect
eliminate
else but
else than
elucidate
employ [in the sense of “use”]
enclose please find
encounter

each
(omit), each, every
beginnings, early days, early times
level
cheap
make changes
carry out, do
for example
choose, pick
cut, drop, end
but
but
explain, clarify, expand upon, make clear
use
I have enclosed
meet

emphasize	stress
end [in the sense of “result” or “product”]	result, product, (omit)
endeavor [verb]	try
enquiry	question
ensue	take place, follow
ensure	make sure
entitlement	right
enumerate	count
“ ___ ” environment	“ ___ ”
equally as	equally
equipments	equipment
equitable	fair
equivalent	same, equal
establish	set up, prove, show
estate or interest	interest
etc.	for example, such as, and so forth
evaluate	test, check
evidence(d) [verb]	show(ed), demonstrate(d), prove(d)
evident	clear, (omit)
evince	show, prove, demonstrate
excessive number of/an	too many
excluding	except
exclusively	only
execution	signing, signature, completion
exhibit [verb]	show, prove, demonstrate
exit [verb]	leave
expedite	hasten, speed up, hurry, quicken
expeditious	fast, quick
expend	spend
expertise	ability
expiration	end
explanation of the causes	explain why
expressly agree	agree

F

facilitate	ease, help, make easier
failed to	didn't
failed to show in ___	showed ___
feasible	can be done, workable, possible
females	women
finalize	complete, finish
first and foremost	first
firstly, secondly, ...	first, second, ...
fit and proper	fit, proper
following	after
foot pursuit	running after

for a period of
for the duration of
for the period of
for the purpose of
for the reason that
forbear
formulate
forswear
foregoing [referring to previous matter]
foregoing [referring to doing without]
foreman
forfeit
forthwith
forward
fraud and deceit
free gift
frequently
from the point of view
from time to time
function
fundamental
furnish
furthermore

G

gainsay
general consensus
give consideration to
give, devise, and bequeath

H

has a duty to
has a negative impact
has a requirement for
has knowledge of
has no bearing on this case
has not yet attained
has the capability
he is a man who
henceforth
hereafter
hereby

herein
hereinafter

for
while, during
for
to [or comparable]
because, since, for, to
refrain, restrain, refrain from acting
plan
swear falsely, commit perjury
these, this
to give up, waive, abandon
supervisor or foreperson
give up, lose
immediately, as soon as possible, by
send
fraud
gift
often
from
may, at times
act, role, work
basic
give, send
also, in addition

contradict, oppose
consensus
consider
bequeath, give

must
hurts, harms
needs
know
is irrelevant
is under
can
he
from this time forward, from now on
after this . . . takes effect, after, afterwards
(omit), by means of this document, with
these words, with this action
here, in this document/agreement
below, in this document/agreement, starting
from this time, later in this document

hereinbefore	above, in this document/agreement
hereof	of this document/agreement
hereon	on this day
hereto	to this document/agreement
heretofore	until now, before this...takes effect, earlier in this document, previously, before the time of writing
hereunder	under this document/agreement, in a later part of this document
herewith	below, here, with this
hitherto	until now, until this time, to this place
honest truth	truth
however	but, yet

I

I am of the opinion that	I think, I believe
I am not in a position to	I cannot
I might add	(omit)
I should appreciate your advising me	Please tell me
I should further point out	in addition, additionally
I would add	(omit)
I would argue that/like to point out	(omit)
I would ask that you	Please
identical	same
identify	find, name, show
identify with	agree, understand
i.e.	that is, namely
if and when	if, when
ifsoever	if ever
imbibe	drink
immediately	at once
impacted	affected, changed
implead	sue
implement	carry out, start
impliedly	implicitly
in a case in which	when, where
in a timely manner	on time, promptly, timely
in accordance with	by, under, following, per
in addition	also, besides, too
in all likelihood	probably
in an effort to	to
in an ___ manner	___ly, e.g., "hastily" instead of "in a hasty manner"
in any case	from any perspective
in between	between
in case of	if

in cases which

in close proximity

in compliance with your request

in connection with

in excess of

in excess of your expectations

in fact

in favor of

in lieu of

in light of the fact that

in many cases

in most cases

in no wise

in order that

in order to

in point of fact

in receipt of

in reference to

in regard(s) to

in relation to

in respect of

in sections 2023 to 2039,

in some instances

in spite of the fact that

in terms of

in the amount of

in the case of

in the course of

in the event of/that

in the interest of

in the last analysis

in the majority of cases/instances

in the nature of

in the near future

in the process of

in the situation/case in which

in this regard

in this regard it is of significance that

in truth and in fact

in view of

in view of the above

inasmuch as

inception

when, where [say “whenever” or “wherever” only when you need to emphasize the exhaustive or recurring applicability of the rule]

near

as you asked

with, about, concerning, regarding

more than, exceeding

higher than you expected

actually

for

instead of, in place of

because, given that

often

usually

by no means, assuredly not.

for, so

to

in fact, actually, (omit)

received

about

about, concerning, on, in

about, with, concerning, towards, to

for, about, to, of

in sections 2023-2039

sometimes

although, even though

in, (omit)

for

when, (omit)

during, while, in

if

for

(omit)

usually, often

like, similar to, about

shortly, soon

(omit)

when

in addition, additionally

(omit)

in fact

because, due to

so

since, because

start

includes, but is not limited to,
incumbent upon
indicate [in the sense of “show”]

indication
individual (noun)
inform
initial
initiate
inquire
inside of
insofar as
insofar as ___ is concerned
instant [as an adjective]
institute
institute legal proceedings against
instrument
inter alia
interface
interpose no objection
interrogate
irregardless
is able to
is applicable to
is authorized [to]
is binding on/upon
is desirous of
is dispositive of
is empowered
is entitled [in the sense of “has the name”]
is entitled to [in the sense of “has the right”]
is in consonance with
is indebted to
is not ... unless
is responsible for
is unable to
it appears
it has been determined that
it is
it is clear that
it is directed that
it is essential
it is important to add that
it is interesting to note/point out
it is my considered opinion
it is requested

includes
must, should
show, suggest, prove, write down, say,
mean, state
sign
person
tell
first
start
ask, question
inside
as, to the extent
(omit and start with subject)
this
begin, start
sue
document
(omit), among others, among other things
meet, work with
don't object
question
regardless
can
applies to
may
binds
wants
disposes of
may
is called
may
agrees with, follows
owes
is ... only if
(omit), handles
cannot
seems
(omit)
(omit)
(omit), clearly
shall, must
must, need to
additionally, in addition
(omit)
I believe, I think
please, we request, I request

it is respectfully suggested that	(omit)
it is of significance that	(omit)
it is submitted that	(omit)
it is the duty of	shall, must
it may be recalled that	(omit)
it might be said that	(omit)
it seems	(omit)
it shall be unlawful	may
it should be noted that	(omit)
it would appear that	(omit)

J

jointly and severally	together and separately
-----------------------	-------------------------

K

kind of [in the sense of “sort of”] knowledge and information	rather, something like (either one)
--	--

L

last will and testament	will
law passed	law enacted
let me take this opportunity to	I want to, (omit)
liaison	discussion
limited number	limits
locate	find

M

magnitude	size
maintain	keep, support
majority	most (except for voting)
make a mockery of	(omit), mock
make an attempt/effort	try
make accommodation for	accommodate
make assumption	assume
make payment	pay
make provision for	provide for
make reference to	refer
manner	way
many instances/cases,/situations	often
maximum	greatest, largest, most
may at all times	may, (omit)
may at any time	may
may not ... until	may only ... when
meets with our approval	we approve
mental attitude	attitude
merge together	merge

methodology
minimize
minimum
modify
monitor
month + of + year
moreover
multiple

N

narrate
nebulous
necessitate
negatively affect
negotiate [in the sense of “enter into” a contract]
nevertheless
no doubt but that
no fewer than
no later than June 30, 1974
no small part
nonetheless
not ___ except
not ___ unless
not able
not accept
not certain
not help but see
not inappropriate
not incapable
not insignificant
not later than 10 May
not later than 8:00
not many
not often
not the same
not uncommon
not uncomplicated
not unlike
notify
notwithstanding

notwithstanding the fact that
now comes
null and void
numerous

method
decrease, method
least, smallest
change
check, watch
July 2013
what’s more
many

say
vague
cause, need, require
hurt, harm, injure
make
still, besides, even so
no doubt, undoubtedly, doubtless
at least
after July 1, 1974, by
large part
still, besides, even so
only if
only if
unable
reject
uncertain
not help seeing
appropriate
capable
significant
by May 10, before May 11
by 8:00
few
rarely, seldom
different
common
complicated
similar, alike
let know, tell
despite, in spite of, still, however, even
though, yet, but
although, even if, despite
(omit)
void, without legal effect, of no legal effect
many, actual number

O

objective [noun]	aim, goal
obligate	bind, compel
observe	see, watch
obviously	(omit)
obtain	get
occasion [as a verb]	cause
of an ___ character/nature	___ly, (omit)
of the one/other part	(omit)
off of	off
on a number of occasions	often, sometimes
on a ___ basis	(omit), ___ly
on and after July 1, 1974	after June 30, 1974
on behalf of	for
on his own application	at his request
on or about	on, about
on or before June 30, 1974	before July 1, 1974
on request	if you ask
on the basis of	by, from, based on
on the contrary	but, so
on the ground(s) that	because, (omit)
on the other hand	(omit), but, so
on the part of	by
operate	run, use, work
optimum	best, greatest, most
option	choice, way
or, alternatively	or
or, in the alternative	or
orientate	orient
outside of	outside
overall	(omit)
oversight [as a verb]	oversee
owing to	because
owing to the fact that	because

P

paragraph (5) of subsection(a) of section 2097	section 2097(a)(5)
parameters	limits, guidelines, boundaries
participate	take part
particular point in time	time, point, now, moment
particulars	details
party of the first part	[the party's name]
per annum	a year
per centum	percent
per day	a day
per foot	a foot

perform	do
period of time	period, time
permit	let, allow
personally	(omit)
personnel	people
perspire	sweat
pertaining to	about, of, on
peruse	read
PIN number	PIN
place [as a verb]	put
plainly	(omit)
please advise me as to	please tell me
please furnish me with information	please tell me
pled	pleaded
point in time	time, point, now, moment
portion	part
possess	have, own
post hoc	hindsight
potentiality	potential
practicable	practical
preclude	prevent
preliminary to	before
pre-owned	used
preparatory to	to prepare for
presently	soon, in a short time
preserve	keep
previous	earlier
previous to	before
previously	before
prior	earlier
prior to	before
prioritize	rank, set priorities, make priorities
proceed	do, go ahead, try, go
procure	(omit), obtain, get
proficiency	skill
promulgate	issue, publish
prosecute its business	carry on its business
provide	give, offer, say
provide a description of	describe
provide(s) guidance for	guides
provided that	if, but, except for, except that, however
provision of law	law
proviso	condition
purchase [as a verb]	buy
purport	claim, intend
pursuant to	by, following, per, under, in accordance

pursuant to the terms of

Q

question as to whether
question of whether
question at issue
quite
quite puzzling

R

rate of speed
read and construed as
reason ___ is because
reasonable man
recapitulate
recognizance
redound
refer back
referred to as
reflect
refuse to grant
regard(ed) as being
regarding
relate well

relating to
relative to
relocate
remain
remainder
remand back
remunerate [ion]
render
render assistance
represents
request [verb]
require(ment) [in the sense of “need”]
requirement [in the sense of “law”]
reside(nce)
residue
respective(ly)
respond
retain
retire [for the evening]

**with, in conformity with, in response to,
in carrying out, as required by
under**

question whether
question whether
issue
(omit), [use a stronger word]
baffling

speed
read
because
reasonable person
sum up
agreement, promise, bail
produce a result, to return.
refer
called
say, show
deny
regarded as
about, of, on
see things the same way, have a lot in
common
about, on
about, on
move
stay
rest
remand
pay, payment
give, make
help
is
ask
must, need
rule
live, dwell, house
the rest, part that remains
(omit)
answer
keep
go to bed

rights of man

human rights

S

said [as an adjective referring to a particular person or thing already referred to]

the, this, that, these, those

same [as a pronoun referring to a particular person or thing already referred to]

it, them

save and except

except

sayeth

says

selection

choice

segregate out

segregate

separate out

separate

set forth in

in

severally

separately

shall

must, will, may

should you wish

if you want

similar to

like

solicit

ask for, request

some instances/cases/situations

sometimes

sort of

rather, something like

specified [in the sense of “expressly mentioned”]

named

state [as a verb]

say, remark

State of Kansas

Kansas

state-of-the-art

latest

stipulates

says

strategize

plan

student body

students

subject

the, this, your

subject to

if, as long as

subject to exemption

exempt

submit

give, send

submit an application

apply

subsequent(ly) [to]

later, next, after, then, afterwards

substantial

large, much

substantiate

prove

successfully complete

complete, pass

such [as an adjective referring to a particular person or thing already referred to]

the, this, that, these, those

such other

another

suffer [in the sense of “permit”]

permit

sufficient [number of]

enough

summon

send for, call

T

take action to

(omit), act

take into consideration	consider
takes the position	claims
terminate, termination	end, stop, fire
than was formerly the case/situation	(omit), now
that was a situation/instance/case in which	there
the case at bar	this case
the Congress	Congress
the course of	(omit)
the fact is	actually, (omit)
the fact of the matter is	actually
the fact that	that
the instant case	this case
the judge he	the judge the judge
the manner in which	how
the month of	(omit)
the particular individual	[Name]
the parties expressly agree	___ and ___ agree
the question as to whether	the question whether, whether
the reason...is because/due to/that	(reword)
the reason being that	because
the same	it, them
the totality of	all
the truth is	actually, (omit)
the undersigned	I
the use of	(omit)
there are	(omit)
there is	(omit)
thereafter	after, afterwards, later
thereby	by, by the [document]
therefore	thus, so, as a result
therein	there, in, in the [document], in it, in them,
	inside
thereinbefore	before, previously
thereinto	into, that, it
thereof	its, their
thereon	thereupon
therewith	thereupon, forthwith
this case is a novel one	this novel case
this is a case/topic that	this case/topic
this is in reply to your letter of	I write to respond to your letter dated
this is to acknowledge your letter dated	I write to respond to your letter dated
thitherward	toward it, in that direction
time is of the essence	time is critical, if X cannot perform by a Y
	date, Z may terminate the contract and
	clause A will apply
	(either one)
time period	

timely
to be violative of
to have and to hold
to the effect that
to wit
took advantage of
transfer and assign
transmit
transpire
true facts
try and
type (or type of)

prompt
violate
to have, to possess, own
that
:, namely, that is to say, (omit)
preyed
transfer, sell, give
send
happen, occur
facts
try to
(omit), rather, something like

U

under date of
under the provisions of
unexpected surprise
unto
until such time as
upon
upon written request
used for ___ purposes
usual habits
utilize, utilization [in the sense of “use”]

on, dated
under
surprise
to, onto, upon
until
on
when you ask in writing
used for ___
habits
use

V

validate
variation
various different
vendee
verbal exchange
verbatim
very
very angry
viable
vice
visualize
viz.

confirm
change
various, different
buyer, purchaser
conversation
word for word
(omit), [use a stronger word]
enraged
practical, workable
instead of, versus
see
:, namely, that is to say

W

warrant
was aware
we are in receipt of
whencesoever
whereagainst
whereas

call for, permit
knew
we’ve received
from whatever place or source
against which
because, although, while

whereby

wherefore
whereinsoever
whereinto
whereof
whereon
whereout
wherethrough
whereuntil
whereupon
wherewith

whether or not

whichsoever
whither
whithersoever
whitherward
wholly or partially
whomsoever
whosoever
will you be good enough to
with the minimum of delay
with a view to
with certain knowledge
with reference to
with regard to
with respect to
with the exception of
with the object of ____ [or other gerund]
within or without the United States
without prejudice

witnessed
witnesseth
workman

Y

you are requested
your attention is drawn
your office

by which, by means of which, through
which, in accordance with which, with the
help of which, how, by which, as a result of
which

why
in whatever respect or place
into which, into what
of what
on what
out of which
through which, through the agency of
to what
at, after, then, when
with what

whether

every one that
to what place
to any place
toward what, toward which place
in whole, wholly, in part, partially
everyone who, whomever
everyone who, whoever
please
quickly, [or say when]
to, to try to, by, from
knowing
about, for, concerning
about, for, on
on, about, for, concerning
except for, excepting
to ____ [or comparable infinitive]
inside or outside the United States
not meant to be used as evidence, without
preventing the filing of another lawsuit
saw
(omit)
worker

please
please see, please note
you

Preferred Substitutes for and Definitions of Foreign Phrases

I recommend you usually replace the phrases in the left column with the phrases in the right column. Some of the phrases in the right column are definitions instead of synonyms.

Don't say

Say

A

a fortiori

with a stronger reason

a priori

from the cause to the effect; an argument based on a previous event

ab initio

from the beginning

absque hoc

but for this, without this

actus reus

wrongful act

ad hoc

“for this”; for a specific purpose, case, or situation

ad hominem

“to the person”; an attack on a person's character

ad infinitum

forever, limitless

ad litem

“for the lawsuit”; a representative for a person who cannot represent himself

ad valorem

according to value

adjournment sine die

an adjournment without setting a date for the next meeting

alter ego

a second self, a second identity within a person

amicus curiae

“friend of the court”; a person who is allowed to appear in a lawsuit (usually by filing a brief) even though he is not a party “before”

ante

for the sake of argument

arguendo

B

bona fide

sincere, genuine, in good faith, honest

C

carte blanche

unconditional authority, complete discretion

casus belli

an event that causes or justifies a war

caveat

“let him beware”; warning

caveat emptor

“let the buyer beware”

certiorari

“to make sure”; a writ from a higher court commanding a lower court to forward the record of the case

cestui que trust

“he who benefits”; beneficiary of a trust

child en ventre sa mere

fetus, unborn child

circa

about

compos mentis contra	having a sound mind, sane against; used in case citations to indicate that the cited source directly contradicts the point being made
corpus juris	“body of law”; the complete collection of laws from a particular jurisdiction or court
corpus delicti	“the body of the crime”; material evidence in a crime

D

damnum absque injuria	“loss without injury”; damage without violation of a legal right
de facto	“in fact”; in reality, in effect, actual, existing, whether or not lawfully
de jure	“of right”; according to law, lawful, rightful entitlement or claim, legitimate
de minimis	small, unimportant
de novo	anew, new, from the start
defalcation	misappropriation of or failure to account for funds by one entrusted with them
dicta	a digression; a judge’s views on a case that are not necessary to reach the decision
dictum	formal pronouncement from an authoritative source
dramatis personae	list of main characters
duces tecum	“bring with you”; command to bring requested documents

E

e pluribus unum	“out of many, one” “one from many”; motto on coins that suggests that many states formed one nation
estoppel	the principle that bars a person from denying or alleging a certain fact due to that party's previous conduct, allegation, or denial.
et seq.	“and the following” ones
et ux	“and wife”
ex contractu	“from a contract”; a lawsuit based on a contract
ex delicto	“from wrongdoing”; a lawsuit based on a tort or crime
ex hypothesi	by hypothesis, hypothetically
ex officio	Something done because a person holds an office or position.
ex parte	From or on one side only, with the other side absent or unrepresented

ex post facto	“after the event”, retrospectively
ex post facto law	a retroactive law
ex rel	“on relation”; on behalf of
expressio unius est exclusio alterius	The express mention of one thing excludes all others
extant	existing
ferae naturae	“of wild nature”; wild animals who do not belong to anyone
F	
fiat	“let it be done”; warrant issued by a judge
forum non conveniens	“inconvenient court”; a court refuses to hear a particular case because a more appropriate forum exists for the issue
G	
gift causa mortis	gift given by reason of the donor’s immediate perception that he was dying
gravamen	The basic gist or “heart” of a charge or complaint
guardian ad litem	An independent party appointed in a dispute to represent parties that cannot represent themselves
H	
habeas corpus	“you have the body”; court order to bring a person before the court
I	
ibid.	in the same place
id.	the same thing
idem (id.)	the same source, but not necessarily the same page or location
id est (i.e.)	“that is”
imprimatur	“let it be printed”; authorization for a document to be printed
in absentia	in a person’s absence
in camera	“in chambers”; in private, no spectators allowed
in curia	in court
in esse	in being; now existing
in flagrante delicto	red-handed, in the act
in forma pauperis	“as a pauper”; someone unable to afford the costs associated with a legal proceeding.
in foro conscientiae	in the forum of conscience
in futuro	in the future

in haec verba	verbatim, in these words
in limine	A motion to a judge that is heard and considered outside the presence of the jury.
in loco parentis	in the place of a parent
in omnibus	in all, in every respect
in pari materia	similar laws applying to the matter are used to interpret a vague one
in pari passu	equally, without preference, in equal
in personam	refers to a judgment, lawsuit, or subpoena directed at a specific named individual
in re	“In the matter of”
in rem jurisdiction	the power a court may exercise over real or personal property or a "status"
in situ	in position, left in place
in terrorem clause	“In threat”; A clause in a will that threatens any party who contests the will with being disinherited
in toto	completely, as a whole, entirely
indicia	indications or signs that make certain facts probable
infra	below or under, within, later in the book
innuendo	an intimation about someone or something
instanter	instantly
inter alia	“among other things”
inter sese	“among themselves”
inter vivos	“between the living”; a gift between the living
ipse dixit	“he himself said it”; assertion given undue weight solely due to the person making the assertion
ipsissima verba	the very same words
ipso facto	“by the fact itself”; therefore, by that very fact
J	
jurat	the part of an affidavit about where, when, and before whom it was sworn to
L	
laches	unreasonable delay in asserting a claim or right
lex loci	“law of the place”
lingua franca	A language spoken by all in an area, even if not the mother tongue
locus	place
locus delicti	scene where wrongdoing took place

M

male fide
malem in se
malum prohibitum
mandamus

mens rea
modus operandi
mortis causa

mutatis mutandi

bad faith
“wrong in and of itself”; morally wrong
“prohibited evil”; prohibited by a law
“we command”; a writ issued by a higher court to a government official that orders perform some duty or act
guilty mind, wrongful purpose
“method of operating”
“in thinking about approaching death”; gift made after death
after making the necessary changes in detail

N

nihil dicit

nisi

nolo contendere

non compos mentis
non obstante veredicto
nota bene

nunc pro tunc

“he says nothing”; a judgment rendered when one party does not cooperate in the proceedings
“unless”; a decree that does not take effect unless one or more conditions are met.
“I will not contest it”; a plea where the defendant neither admits nor denies the charge, but does not contest it
insane, mentally incompetent
“notwithstanding the verdict”
“note well”; cautioning of or qualifying the main text
“now for then”; a court order that corrects a procedural or clerical error

O

obiter dictum

onus probandi

a judge’s incidental opinion, which is not binding
burden of proof

P

parens patriae

pendente lite

per
per annum
per capita

“parent of the nation”; the power of the State to act as parent to a child when the parents are unable or unwilling
“pending the suit”; a case in progress; court order that provides relief until the final judgment is rendered.
by, through, by means of, during
“by the year, yearly”
“by the head”; dividing money equally according to the number of persons

per curiam	“by the court”; a unanimous decision by a multi-judge court where no judge credited with authoring the opinion
per diem	daily, by the day
per se	“by itself”; as a matter of law, inherently
per stirpes	“by roots”; each branch of the family receives an equal share
persona non grata	“unwelcome person”; a country expels a diplomat because he is not welcome
posse committatus	“the power of the state”; a body of armed citizens pressed into service by legal authority to keep the peace or pursue a fugitive
post hoc	“after this”
post mortem	“after death”; an autopsy or an investigation of an event after it occurred
précis	summary, outline
prima facie	at first appearance, on the face of it, at face value, at first sight, presumably
prima facie case	a case that is supported by enough evidence to indicate that the claims within are true in the absence of any rebuttal.
primogeniture	“first offspring”; the custom that the first born inherits the parents’ entire estate
pro	for, in favor of
pro bono publico	“for the public good”; professional work done for free
pro forma	done or produced as a matter of form, done as a formality
pro hac vice	“for this turn”; a lawyer who is allowed to participate in a specific case, despite being in a jurisdiction in which he has not been admitted
pro rata	proportionately, by percentage
pro se	“for himself”; representing oneself without counsel
pro tanto	for that much; a partial payment of a claim, based on the defendant's ability to pay
pro tem	for the time being, temporarily
propria persona	“proper person”; representing oneself without a lawyer’s services
proximate cause	An act from which an injury results as a natural, direct, uninterrupted consequence and without which the injury would not have occurred

Q

qua	“which; as”; in the capacity of
quantum	“how much”; quantity
quantum meruit	“as much as it deserves”; the doctrine by which the law infers a promise to pay a reasonable amount for labor and materials furnished
quasi	“as if”; being similar to something, without actually being that thing.
qui tam	filing a suit in the name of the government and receiving a percentage of any amount awarded
quid pro quo	“this for that”; an equal exchange
quo warranto	“by what warrant?”; a writ that requests that an official show by what legal right he is exercising a power

R

ratio decidendi	“reason for the decision”
res	“thing, matter, issue, affair”
res gestae	“things done”; refers either to the complete act of a felony statements given that may be exempt from hearsay rules
res ipsa loquitur	“the thing speaks for itself”; it goes without saying; in tort law, when no proof of what caused the harm, but only one reasonable explanation exists
res judicata	the thing has already been adjudicated
res nova, res integra	an undecided question, a case of first impression
respondeat superior	“let the master answer”; the concept that an employer is responsible for the actions of its employees.

S

scienter	“knowingly”; fully aware of committing a bad act
scire facias	“let them know”; a writ directing a local official to officially inform a person of official proceedings concerning the person
seriatim	“in series”; hearing matters in a specific order
sic erat scriptum (“sic”)	“thus was it written”
simpliciter	simply, summarily, taken alone
sine die	“without day”; postponed indefinitely
sine qua non	“without which, nothing”; an indispensable

situs	condition, a prerequisite “the place”; refers to laws specific to the location, or where an offense or tort occurred
stare decisis	“the decision stands”; a judge’s duty to follow a precedent.
status quo	the current state of affairs
status quo ante	the state of affairs that existed previously
stricti juris	of the strict right of law
sua sponte	“of its own accord”; action taken by the court or official body without a party’s request
sub judice	pending judgment
sub nomine	“under the name”; indicates that the official name of a case changed during the proceedings
sub silentio	“under silence”; a court decision made without specifically stating the ruling, order, or action.
sub suo periculo	at one’s own peril
subpoena	“under penalty”; a writ compelling testimony, the production of evidence, or other action, under penalty for failure to do so
subpoena duces tecum	“bring with you under penalty”; an order compelling a person to produce physical evidence in a proceeding
sui generis	“of its own kind/genus”; something that is unique
supersedeas	“refrain from”; a bond given by an appellant as surety to the court, requesting a delay of payment for awards or damages granted, pending the outcome of the appeal
supra	“above”; refers to a previously cited source
T	
trial de novo	“trial anew”; a completely new trial of a matter previously judged
U	
ultra vires	“beyond the power”; outside one’s jurisdiction, beyond one’s authority
V	
vel non	“or not”; or the lack of (if, then); used when considering if a situation exists or not

veto	“I forbid”; a person’s power to prevent an action
vice versa	“the other way around”; conversely, the order reversed; something that is the same either way
vide	“see”; refers the reader to another location
viz.	“Namely”

Types of Transition Words

You can improve your writing by choosing the appropriate transition words for your document.

When introducing a main reason: primarily, most important, just as important, more importantly, what’s more, importantly

When introducing a cause: because, since, when.

When introducing a result (cause and effect): so, as a result, thus, therefore, accordingly, then, consequently, as a consequence, conclusively, in conclusion, inevitably, hence, because, because of, since, as, thereby, due to, leading to, owing to.

When comparing: likewise, similarly, in the same way, as, like, similar to.

When contrasting in expectation: however, still, nevertheless, nonetheless, yet, but, unfortunately, surprisingly, ideally, apparently, originally, on the contrary, although, even though, though, despite, despite the fact, despite of, in spite of, besides, even so, so.

When contrasting in comparison: in contrast, by contrast, on the one hand, on the other hand, conversely, whereas, while, unlike, but, so.

When contrasting in action: instead, instead of.

When emphasizing or pressing a point: in fact, indeed, of course, moreover, as a matter of fact, that is, essentially, interestingly, fortunately, inevitably

When conceding or qualifying: granted, of course, to be sure, admittedly, though, even though, although, even if, at least.

When confirming: typically, usually, traditionally, normally, naturally, clearly, plainly, in accordance with, confirms.

When explaining a sentence: that is, then, earlier, previously, meanwhile, simultaneously, now, until now, no sooner, eventually, finally, in the end.

When continuing an explanation: in this context, in this connection, in this respect, in this perspective, here, with.

When placing a condition: in that case, otherwise, now, given, if, provided that, when, while, until, as long as, now that, once that.

When placing no condition: regardless, despite, even though.

When generalizing: in general, generally, generally speaking, in a broader context, in a broader perspective.

When specializing: in particular, particularly, specifically.

When reintroducing: regarding, for, in connection with, focusing on, with respect to.

When adding a point: also, and, in addition, besides, what is more, similarly, further, nor, likewise, moreover, furthermore, additionally, besides, with.

When sequencing or ordering ideas: First,...Second,...Third,...Finally, last, then, next, now, continuing, further, before, after.

When giving an example: for instance, for example, for one thing, for another thing, likewise, another, as shown by, as exemplified by, as illustrated by, be it, like, such as, e.g.

When clarifying or restating: in other words, that is, in short, put differently, again, this means, put another way, again, to sum up, in summary, summing up, i.e.

When summing up: to summarize, to sum up, to conclude, in conclusion, in short.

Absolutes and Weak Intensifiers

Do not use weak intensifiers to modify absolutes.

Absolutes

Absolute
Complete
Dead
Entirely
Equal
Essential
Eternal
Fatal
Final
Finite
Identical

Immortal
Imperative
Indispensable
Infinite
Irrevocable
Mortal
Opposite
Perfect
Pregnant
Round
Square
Straight
Supreme
Total
Unanimous
Unique
Universal
Virgin

Weak Intensifiers

Barely
Extremely
Fairly
Moderately
Quite
Rather
So
Somewhat
Very