Other Important Tips

Avoid Contractions

Contractions occur when you combine two words into one with the help of an apostrophe.

I + am =I'm

Do + not=don't

Will + not=won't

Contractions are considered informal writing, which is not appropriate for formal writing that is required in college courses.

Avoid Second Person

Second person is considered the pronouns *you* and *your*. These words address the reader directly, which you should not do in formal writing unless you are writing a process paragraph or essay.

Avoid I Feel/Think/Believe

You do not need to include the expressions *I feel*, *I think*, or *I believe* in your essay. Since it is your essay, it is understood that the ideas in your essay are your feelings, thoughts, and beliefs.

Avoid There is/There are/There was/There were

The expressions *there is*, *there are*, *there was*, and *there were* are wordy and cause a sentence not to have as much power behind it. Compare these two examples.

Incorrect
There is a house on fire down the street.

There are a lot of rules in English.

Correct
A house is on fire down the street.

English has a lot of rules.

Be Concise
If you can use two words instead of five to express an idea, you should use the former. Being wordy can be confusing to your reader, and it is often better to get to the point as quickly as possible.

Wordy
Due to the fact that she missed the bus, she was late to work.

In today's day and age, young people must become more politically active.

Concise
Because she missed the bus, she was late to work.

Today, young people must become more politically active.