

# Advanced Sentence Correction

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# Concision- A Glance

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<b>AVOID</b>	<b>USE</b>
<b>Despite the fact that</b>	Although
<b>Have the capability</b>	Can
<b>Exactly the same</b>	Same
<b>In close proximity to</b>	Near
<b>Past experience</b>	Experience
<b>Final Outcome</b>	Outcome

# Concision- GMAT Favorites

- ✓ In case there is a choice between the left column word / expression and the right column expression, the GMAT will prefer the word / expression on right column.
- ✓ Favorites are the last on the list of priorities on SC.
- ✓ Only after checking Grammar, Idiom, Meaning Clarity and Concision should you think of these as the tie-breakers.
- ✓ The use of favorites before checking Grammar, Idiom, Meaning Clarity and Concision will certainly land you in trouble in tougher problems.
- ✓ For example, there are a few sentences in the Official Guide in which the use of “BEING” is correct.
- ✓ Also, remember the entire phrase: for example the choice is between “Instead of” and “Rather than”, not between “Instead” and “Rather”.
- ✓ Apply these with a lot of caution.
- ✓ Please google and use GMATClub SC questions extensively to understand these preferences better.

Avoid	Use
Instead of	Rather than
Due to	Because of
2 times	Double / Twice
Being	... Lack of “being”
Compare to	Compare with
Do it	Do so
May be	Perhaps
If	Whether
Hopefully	It is hoped
As well as	And
Enough	So
Ability	Able
Capability	Can
As a result of	Result from
One time	Once
4 times	Quadruple
Economical	Economic
Try and	Try to
Liable	Likely
Ought to	Should
But	Although
“Which” after the comma	A NOUN or ING form
Just like	Just as / Just as ... so / just as ... so too
Like	Such as
Like	As if / as though
Noun form	Verb Form
Apostrophe / Possessive forms	...

# Concision – Special Cases

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## Cases to avoid:

Such like    Occurring    Seeming    On account of    Owing to    Lesser    Not any    And also

## Words followed by 'to be' / 'to' / 'that':

Seem, Known, Thought, Estimated, Believe, Appear, Qualify, Likely, Predict, Project

## Root form:

ordered, mandatory, ruled, authorized, condition, imperative, important, required, proposed, necessary, demand

**Incorrect:** The game was postponed due to rain.

**Correct:** The game was postponed because of rain.

**Correct:** The game's postponement was due to rain.

# Verb Action Noun Patterns (A)

## V-A-N Pattern 1: Prefer a Verb to an Action Noun

An Action Noun, such as revolution, is a noun that expresses an action. Try to express actions with verbs (such as revolt), rather than with action nouns (such as revolution). Generally, a short, simple verb is stronger than a phrase with the relevant action noun and a generic verb, such as be or make. In the other examples listed below, notice how the nouns create wordy prepositional phrases.

**Wordy:** The townspeople's REVOLUTION WAS AGAINST the king. **Better:** The townspeople REVOLTED AGAINST the king.

Wordy: They are subject to the applicability of rules.	Better: Rules apply to them.
Wordy: His conception of money was as a goal.	Better: He conceived of money as a goal.
Wordy: The cost of storms to the country is billions.	Better: Storms cost the country billions.
Wordy: Her decision was to go.	Better: She decided to go.
Wordy: His example was an influence on me.	Better: His example influenced me.
Wordy: Her example was an inspiration to me.	Better: Her example inspired me.
Wordy: They made a reference to the strike.	Better: They referred to the strike.
Wordy: The weight of the apples is a pound.	Better: The apples weigh a pound.

However, note that, like all other patterns of wordiness and concision, this pattern does NOT provide hard-and-fast rule. As you start to notice these patterns, do not fall in love with them! Always use concision last. Moreover, in many cases, a difference among answer choices involving Concision also hinges on other issues.

# Verb Action Noun Patterns (B)

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## V-A-N Pattern 2: Prefer a That-Clause (with Verbs) to a Series of Phrases (with Nouns)

**Wordy:** The hypothesis ABOUT the COMPOSITION OF the universe AS largely dark energy seems strange.

**Better:** The hypothesis THAT the universe IS largely COMPOSED OF dark energy seems strange.

When you tack a long thought onto a noun, try to put the thought in a **That-Clause** rather than in a long series of prepositional phrases. A **That-Clause** starts with the word **that** and contains a working verb (one that, **as is**, can be the main verb of a sentence by itself). **Is composed** is a working verb.

"Idea" nouns, such as hypothesis, idea, or suggestion, lend themselves particularly well to this pattern. Other examples include belief, discovery, evidence, indication, and report. These sorts of nouns are often modified by **That-Clauses** that contain full sentences:

The **BELIEF THAT** the Earth is flat is contradicted by **EVIDENCE THAT** the Earth is round and the **DISCOVERY THAT** the Earth circles the Sun.

# Verb Action Noun Patterns (C)

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## V-A-N Pattern 3: Prefer a Verb to an Adjective

<b>Wordy: The artist WAS INFLUENTIAL TO the movement.</b>	<b>Better: The artist INFLUENCED the movement.</b>
<b>Wordy: This rash is aggravating to the pain.</b>	Better: This rash aggravates the pain.
<b>Wordy: We are able to go to the store now.</b>	Better: We can go to the store now.
<b>Wordy: This signal is indicative of a problem.</b>	Better: This signal indicates a problem.
<b>Wordy: Her example was inspirational to me.</b>	Better: Her example inspired me.
<b>Wordy: This painting is suggestive of calm.</b>	Better: This painting suggests calm.

# Verb Action Noun Patterns (D)

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## V-A-N Pattern 4: Prefer an Adjective to a Noun a Verb to an Adjective

**Wordy:** THERE IS AN ABUNDANCE OF funds for school construction.

**Better:** Funds for school construction ARE ABUNDANT.

**Wordy:** She has the ability to juggle.

**Better:** She is able to juggle. (The best form here is “She can juggle.”)

**Wordy:** She has the capability to juggle.

**Better:** She is capable of juggling.

**Wordy:** I am of the conviction that they are right.

**Better:** I am convinced that they are right.

**Wordy:** We have a disinclination to stay.

**Better:** We are disinclined to stay.

**Wordy:** He is in isolation.

**Better:** He is isolated.

# Verb Action Noun Patterns (E)

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## V-A-N Pattern 5: Prefer an Adverb to a Prepositional Phrase

**Wordy:** Oil prices have fallen, but prices at the gasoline pump have not fallen TO A COMPARABLE EXTENT. **Better:** Oil prices have fallen, but prices at the gasoline pump have not fallen COMPARABLY.

To modify a verb phrase (e.g., have not fallen), use a simple adverb rather than a long prepositional phrase that means the same thing. Since prepositional phrases contain nouns, this is another example of the V-A-N principle.

Notice also that the first example above is suboptimal for another reason. The phrase 'fall to' often indicates the 'level' to which something falls, rather than the 'extent': Prices have fallen to under a dollar. As a result, you might misread the first example.

**Wordy:** to a considerable extent      **Better:** considerably

**Wordy:** to a significant degree      **Better:** significantly

Two other concision patterns do not fit the V-A-N framework but are worth noting. Both of these patterns involve overuse of the generic verb **to be**. As we have already seen, the verb **to be** can appear in many instances of wordiness. When you search for the most concise answer, run an "Elimination **BE**": get rid of any unnecessary uses of **be**. (Remember that the verb **to be** can take on many other forms: **am, are, been, is, was, were**.)

# Verb Action Noun Patterns (F)

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## V-A-N Pattern 6: Prefer an Adjective to an Adjective Clause with Be an Adverb to a Prepositional Phrase

**Wordy:** Marcos is a professor WHO IS ADMIRABLE.      **Better:** Marcos is an ADMIRABLE professor.

An adjective clause that contains the verb **to be** (in any of its forms) is generally wordier than the adjective by itself.

In particular, if the main clause contains **be** as well, try to use the adjective alone. The first example has two occurrences of the word **is**, one of which is unnecessary. The second example has only one **is**, because the adjective **admirable** has been moved in front of the noun **professor**.

This principle works similarly with nouns that identify or describe other nouns:

**Wordy:** Joan, WHO IS a FIREFIGHTER, works in Yosemite Park.      **Better:** Joan, a FIREFIGHTER, works in Yosemite Park.

# Verb Action Noun Patterns (G)

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## V-A-N Pattern 7: Remove IT IS ... THAT. ..

**Wordy:** IT IS without fear THAT children should play.    **Better:** Children should play without fear.

The first construction is perfectly grammatical and even useful when you want to emphasize some aspect of the situation (such as **without fear**). But the GMAT avoids such constructions in correct answers. You should do the same as you make your choice.

**Again, none of these Concision patterns expresses a rule but rather a preference.** Make use of these patterns judiciously. In particular, be wary of shortcuts. Words or phrases such as being or the fact that do not automatically indicate that an answer choice is wrong. In The Official Guide 12th Edition, both of these common signals of wordiness are present in correct answers. The other answer choices are all grammatically wrong.

# Concision: Don't Make It Too Short

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"Too Short" Pattern 1: Keep the Prepositional Phrase if You Need To

## Too Short

I talked to the BOSTON SOLDIER.  
Aegean Sea salt  
Ural Mountain ore  
Danube River access  
Changes IN the population of honeybees  
Memorial Day week OR Memorial Day's week  
The merger year  
The oxygen amount  
The honeybee population density

## Better

I talked to the SOLDIER FROM BOSTON.  
salt FROM the Aegean Sea  
ore FROM the Ural Mountains  
access TO the Danube River  
population changes of honeybees  
the week OF Memorial Day  
the year OF the merger  
the amount OF oxygen  
the density OF the honeybee population  
OR the honeybee population's density

# Concision: Don't Make It Too Short

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"Too Short" Pattern 2: Keep 'That Of' or 'Those Of' if You Need To

**Too Short:** The face I see in ads every day is a famous actor.

**Better:** The face I see in ads every day is THAT OF a famous actor.

**Wordy:** The fields I most enjoy studying are THOSE OF physics and chemistry.

**Better:** The fields I most enjoy studying are physics and chemistry.

# Concision: Don't Make It Too Short

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"Too Short" Pattern 3: Keep "That" after a Reporting Verb (such as indicate, claim, contend, or report)

**Too Short:** The study INDICATES the problem has vanished.

**Better:** The study INDICATES THAT the problem has vanished.

The criminals AGREED THAT gold would be the scam.

They CLAIMED THAT gold was growing scarce.

They CONTENDED THAT the price of gold would rise.

They DECLARED THAT they had discovered gold.

Investors FOUND THAT they could not get answers.

An article INDICATED THAT the mine was worthless.

An investigation REVEALED THAT the gold was a mirage.

The court RULED THAT the criminals were guilty of fraud.

This story SHOWS THAT crime does not pay.

# Advanced Parallelism

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## Nouns

**Concrete nouns** refer to things, people, places, and even time periods or certain events: rock, continent, electron, politician, region, holiday, week etc.

**Action nouns** refer to actions, as their name implies. They are often formed from verbs: Eruption, pollution, nomination, withdrawal, development, change, growth

**-Ing forms** of verbs can also be used as nouns to indicate actions. -Ing verb forms used as nouns are called Gerunds. Gerund phrases are divided into two categories as well:

# Advanced Parallelism

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## Gerunds

### Simple Gerund Phrases

Fishing is fun.

My favorite occupation is reading.

Pointless questioning makes me sick.

He is crazy about singing.

They are afraid of swimming in the sea.

Sam dreams of being a pop-star.

My uncle is afraid of going by plane.

Cooking is one of her hobbies.

Getting a good job is not easy.

Driving becomes more and more expensive.

Making fun of other people is not nice.

Smoking costs a lot of money. I don't like writing.

I don't like writing letters.

I dislike his coming here uninvited. She is good at dancing.

I don't like playing cards.

You should give up smoking.

He is interested in making friends.

We insist on cooking the dinner ourselves.

Cycling is fun.

Finding a parking space is quite difficult in this area.

No smoking in this area.

Learning about other cultures makes people more tolerant.

### Focus on the sentence:

Tracking satellites accurately is important for the space agency.

Simple gerund phrases are "Nouns on the Outside, Verbs on the Inside." That is, the underlined phrase acts as a noun: Something is important for the space agency.

However, inside the actual phrase, the words are arranged as if they follow a verb. Tracking satellites accurately can easily be made part of a working verb phrase: I AM tracking satellites accurately.

# Advanced Parallelism

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# Advanced Parallelism

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## Gerunds

### Complex Gerund Phrases:

A settling of debts is called for.

The clearing of forests is a bad idea.

The making of Titanic was aired.

The accurate tracking of satellites is important for the space agency.

Complex gerund phrases are "Nouns through and through." The -Ing gerund form is made fully into a noun; in fact, it is often preceded by articles (a, an, or the) or adjectives (accurate). The object is put into an Of prepositional phrase (e.g., the running of marathons) or placed in front of the -Ing form (e.g., marathon running).

# Advanced Parallelism

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## Parallel Rules

The GMAT follows very strict rules of structural parallelism with these gerund forms.

Simple gerund phrases are NEVER PARALLEL to complex gerund phrases—even though they both are -Ing forms of a verb, and both are used as nouns!

Of the two types of gerund phrases, only complex ones can be parallel to action nouns. In a list of action nouns, a simple gerund phrase might be mistaken for something other than a noun.

**Wrong:** The rebels demanded the withdrawal of government forces from disputed regions, significant reductions in overall troop levels, raising the rebel flag on holidays, AND a general pardon.

Withdrawal, reductions, and pardon are all action nouns. Thus, you should not include the word “raising” by itself (it might be misinterpreted as a modifier). Rather, you should choose THE raising OF.

**Right:** The rebels demanded the withdrawal of government forces from disputed regions, significant reductions in overall troop levels, THE raising OF the rebel flag on holidays, AND a general pardon.

In any list of action nouns, always choose the complex gerund phrase (often with articles and the word Of) over the simple gerund phrase!

Also, if an appropriate action noun for a particular verb already exists in English, then avoid creating a complex gerund phrase. Instead, use the pre-existing action noun.

**Wrong:** The rebels demanded the withdrawal of government forces from disputed regions AND releasing certain political prisoners.

**Wrong:** The rebels demanded the withdrawal of government forces from disputed regions AND THE releasing OF certain political prisoners.

**Right:** The rebels demanded the withdrawal of government forces from disputed regions AND THE RELEASE OF certain political prisoners.

Release is a pre-existing action noun (meaning the act of releasing), so use this noun. Fortunately, the complex gerund phrase will generally sound worse than the pre-existing action noun.

Working Verbs: Only working verbs are parallel to other working verbs.

The plant BOTH exceeded output targets AND ran more smoothly than ever.

# Advanced Parallelism

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## Adjectives, Past Participles, and Present Participles (used as adjectives)

an **interesting** book a **sleeping** child two **playing** dogs the **winning** number several **travelling** bags the **moving** power a **touching** moment an **exciting** film a **working** man **running** water the **lost** son an **interested** audience a **broken** leg an **emptied** bottle a **closed** door a **decorated** room two **packed** bags the **written** letters the **sold** car the **bought** apples

**Now focus on the sentence below:**

A mastodon carcass, **thawed** only once AND still **fresh**, is on display.

The match was **interesting** but **fixed**.

Only a few feet **wide** BUT **spanning** a continent, the railroad changed history.

The sizzler was **spicy** and **appetizing**, but a bit **overcooked**.

Because of **strained** budgets and **fading** public support, Indian Hockey is dying a slow death.

**Clauses:**

**Wrong:** A mastodon carcass, thawed only once AND which is still fresh, is on display.

**Right:** A mastodon carcass, which has been thawed only once AND which is still fresh, is on display.

# Advanced Parallelism

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## Absolute Phrases

Notice the following sentences (such constructions are considered correct)

Joan looked nervous, **her fears** creeping up on her.

Tom paled when he came home, **his mother** standing in the doorway.

John, **his arms flailing in the wind**, called out desperately for help.

The car, Lamborghini previously owned by Raj and red in color with gold plated tire rims, fell in the lake, the cold water filling the compartment.

She returned to her bench, **her face showing all the unhappiness that had suddenly overtaken her**.

The boy watched, **his eyes bulging in the dark**.

About the bones, ants were ebbing away, **their pincers full of meat. hackles up and deep growls in their throats**  
**, their heads down, their forearms working, their breath whistling.**

Six boys came over the hill half an hour early that afternoon, running hardThe good dogs came stiffly out of their little houses, .

Noiselessly Lenny appeared in the open doorway and stood there looking in, **his big shoulders nearly filling the opening**.

**His head aching, his throat sore**, he forgot to light the cigarette.

Miss Hearne, **her face burning**, hardly listened to these words.

Light flickered on bits of ruby glass and on sensitive capillary hairs in the nylon-brushed nostrils of the creature that quivered gently, gently, **its eight legs spidered under it on rubber-padded paws**.

# Abstract nouns modifying the entire clause (after a comma)

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(If you have an appositive modifier that's an abstract noun - such as "strategy", "figure", "statistic", "findings", "situation", "change", "difference", etc. - then such an appositive may be allowed to describe the entire situation described in the previous clause.)

1. I only have one onion, which will make it impossible to cook this dish. WRONG
2. I only have one onion, and that will make it impossible to cook this dish. WRONG
3. I only have one onion, a deficiency that will make it impossible to cook this dish. RIGHT.
4. The scientists discovered whale-fish bones in the Arctic, findings that prove the existence of whale-fish.
5. Scientists have found high levels of iridium in certain geographical formations around the world, results that suggest the cataclysmic impact of a meteor millions of year ago.
6. An asteroid bigger than Mount Everest slammed into North America, Sixty-five million years ago, an event that caused the plant and animal extinctions that mark the end of the geologic era known as the Cretaceous Period.
7. The coach tried to put 5 receivers on the line, a strategy that failed.
8. X observed large concentrations of metals in the sediments, findings consistent with the history of deposits in the region.
9. Recent studies have shown that X is 60 percent of Y, a finding that has shocked many in the scientific community. OR Recent studies have shown that X is 60 percent of Y, a statistic that has shocked many in the scientific community.
10. Neanderthals had a vocal tract resembling an ape's and so were probably without language, a shortcoming that may explain why they were supplanted by our own species.
11. Scientists have observed large concentrations of heavy—metal deposits in the upper twenty centimeters of sediments from the Baltic Sea, findings consistent with the growth of industrial activity in the area.
12. I went to the bar with John Smith, an excursion that was much more fun than working all night.
13. The general tried to get his troops to retreat before being surrounded, a strategy that ultimately failed.

# Appositive Phrases

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Appositives rename noun phrases and are usually placed beside what they rename. The following example shows a noun phrase in apposition to another:

1. The lady, our president, spoke out against racism.
2. We waited in our favorite meeting place, the pub.
3. Our department head, a careful reader and outspoken critic, will review the memo before it is circulated.
4. My radio, an old portable, is in the repair shop.
5. The boys climbed the mountain, one of the highest in the West.
6. People are summed up largely by the roles they fill in society—wife or husband, soldier or salesperson, student or scientist—and by the qualities that others ascribe to them.
7. In America, as in anywhere else in the world, we must find a focus in our lives at an early age, a focus that is beyond the mechanics of earning a living or coping with a household.
8. It went away slowly, the feeling of disappointment that came sharply after the thrill that made his shoulders ache.
9. The land that lay stretched out before him became of vast significance, a place peopled by his fancy with a new race of men sprung from himself.
10. However, I looked with a mixture of admiration and awe at Peter, a boy who could and did imitate a police siren every morning on his way to the showers.
11. That night in the south upstairs chamber, a hot little room where a full-leafed chinaberry tree shut all the air from the single window, Emmett lay in a kind of trance.
12. Van'ka Zhukov, a boy of nine who had been apprenticed to the shoemaker Alyakhin three months ago, was staying up that Christmas Eve.
13. There were a sizable number of well-read inmates, especially the popular debaters.
14. Lamp Trimmer Samuel Hemming, lying in his bunk, heard a curious hissing sound coming from the forepeak, the compartment closest to the bow of the Titanic.
15. Ives and Ramirez parked, and upon approaching the entranceway saw Father Jimenez, an old man now in wire rim glasses peering out from behind the screen.
16. Three days ago he received a payment for \$1000, part of the long-overdue pension that had been delayed for various bureaucratic reasons.
17. I went to the bar with John Smith, a consultant in Los Angeles.
18. Seamen distinguish flotsam, goods floating on seawater after a shipwreck from jetsam, goods thrown overboard by the crew of a ship.

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# Finer points related to the word “Twice”

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Appositives rename noun phrases and are usually placed beside what they rename. The following example shows a noun phrase in apposition to another:

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6. People are summed up largely by the roles they fill in society—wife or husband, soldier or salesperson, student or scientist—and by the qualities that others ascribe to them.
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8. It went away slowly, the feeling of disappointment that came sharply after the thrill that made his shoulders ache.
9. The land that lay stretched out before him became of vast significance, a place peopled by his fancy with a new race of men sprung from himself.
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# Finer points related to the word “Twice”

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If you say "twice as **many**", then this construction should be paired with a **countable noun**.

e.g., twice as many dogs --> "dogs" is a countable noun

If you said "twice as **much**", then this construction should be paired with an **uncountable noun**.

e.g., twice as much water --> "water" is an uncountable noun

If the noun in question is already an **explicitly numerical quantity**, then you should use **neither** "much" nor "many". instead, you should just use "twice" or "double" by itself.

e.g., twice the increase --> "increase" is an explicitly numerical quantity

twice as much water --> correct, since "water" is an uncountable noun (but is not an explicitly numerical quantity)

twice the water... --> incorrect, since water is not a numerical quantity

twice as much as the increase... --> incorrect; redundant twice the increase... --> correct

# Conditionals

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If I meet her, I will tell her a story. [Future Probable]

If I met her, I would tell her a story. [Future Improbable]

If I were to meet her, I would tell her a story. [Future Improbable]

Were I to meet her, I would tell her a story. [Future Improbable]

If I had met her, I would have told her a story. [Past (could not happen)]