Tone of Voice - How Acrolinx Helps

Get the right tone of voice for the audience you're trying to reach.

acrolinx

The words we read have a lot of power because they can make us feel any number of ways. In the business world, your tone of voice is critical for building a connection with your target audience. It gives customers a clear impression of who you are as a company and what you're like to do business with. But with multilingual teams, across different departments and locations, it can be hard to use the right tone of voice, at the right time, and in the right pieces of content.

Acrolinx helps you use the right tone of voice for the audience you're trying to reach. Choose the strength of each voice characteristic per target audience. Acrolinx then gives your writers guidance so their content has the right balance of Clarity and Conversational Tone.

Tone of Voice Settings

Clarity

Content is best when it's easy to read. In the Acrolinx Dashboard, you can define the level of Clarity that your writers aim for. Create separate audience types and select from a dropdown list the level of Clarity: very simple, simple, average, or complex. The Acrolinx Sidebar then highlights sentences to give your writers guidance to keep them on track.

Conversational Tone

If your content is snooze-worthy, you might want to try conversational tone. If you want your content to be conversational, Acrolinx will highlight paragraphs that sound formal or that aren't particularly engaging.

Audience Types
Adjust the level of complexity your writers need. You can also define several audience types for different writers.

Active Voice
Reminds your writers to use active voice. You can even adjust the guideline setting to be more or less strict.

Complex Words and Long Paragraphs
Acrolinx highlights overly complex words and paragraphs that contain too many sentences; it then provides guidance on simplifying content to suit your target audience.

Acronym Check
Acrolinx highlights acronyms that are undefined or appear before the definition so that your writers avoid unfamiliar acronyms that might confuse your audience.

Overused Words
Acrolinx highlights clichés and overused phrases to help keep your wording fresh and original.

Formal Words
They say it's better to be overdressed for a party than underdressed, but that doesn't apply to content. Acrolinx measures the formality of words and highlights these to help writers tone it down. (Pun intended!)

Length and Variation of Sentences and Paragraphs
Keep it short! That's how we talk. Acrolinx gives you a friendly reminder when your sentences are too long. It also notices if all of your sentences have a similar length.

Complex and Repetitive Structures
Too many commas, semicolons, or other complex structures can be difficult to read. Also, too much repetition can be monotonous for readers. Acrolinx catches when you repeat the same type of phrase at the beginning of sentences.

Terminology
Terminology is where you keep your company's branding, trademarks, and technical words and make sure they're used correctly and consistently.

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Below is an example of the Acrolinx Tone of Voice functionality in action. It demonstrates how Acrolinx makes a typical tone of voice guideline actionable and accessible to writers in real-time.

1

An Example of a Style Guide Requirement

Clarity of writing follows clarity of thought.
Think what you want to say, then say it as simply as possible.

How Acrolinx makes it happen

You want your content to be as easy as possible to read. It might contain some technical words but you want a broad audience to understand your message. Adjust the Clarity settings in the Dashboard to the simplest degree. Acrolinx highlights complex sentences and gives your writers guidance on keeping words and sentence structures simple.
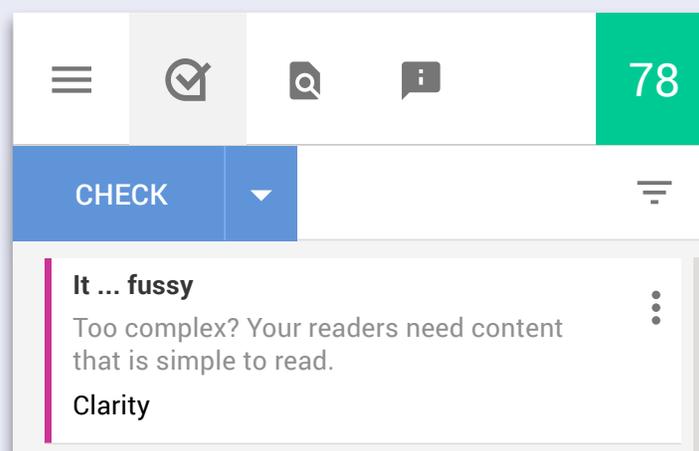
simple	A simple language with short sentences and no complex constructions. ▲
complex	Complex language, which you may be used to in scientific papers and similar publications.
average	A somewhat average description of an average clarity.
simple	A simple language with short sentences and no complex constructions.

2

Get to the point.
The first few lines should tell the reader what they can expect to learn from the piece. Start on a high and don't bury the good insights! Use sub-headings and signpost your way through.

The structure of your content can have a big impact on the readability. If you forget to include a summary section, sub-heading, or other specific formatting, the Sidebar will remind you.

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CHECK ▼

It ... fussy
Too complex? Your readers need content that is simple to read.
Clarity

Tone of Voice - How Acrolinx Helps

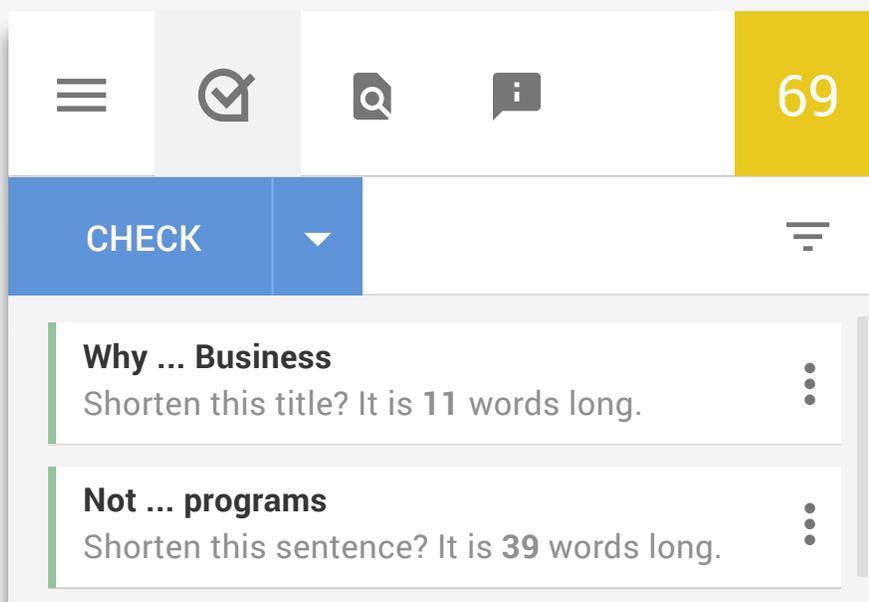**Get the right tone of voice for the audience you're trying to reach.**

4

3 Be concise.

Only include details that are relevant. When you include too much, you risk the whole piece being ignored.

Acrolinx notices when you're being too wordy. It highlights long sentences, strings of modifiers and nouns, and unnecessarily long paragraphs. This feedback reminds your writers to keep their content concise.

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CHECK

Why ... Business
Shorten this title? It is **11** words long.

Not ... programs
Shorten this sentence? It is **39** words long.

4 Be aggressively selective.

Keep paragraphs to 4 sentences or less. Never use a long word when a short one will do. If it's possible to cut a word, cut it.

You can adjust Acrolinx Tone of Voice settings for your content needs, whether simple, average, or complex. Acrolinx keeps an eye on paragraph length and highlights your content when you use too many sentences. That way, you can focus on what you're writing! Acrolinx Clarity also identifies overly complex words that you should simplify to suit your target audience.
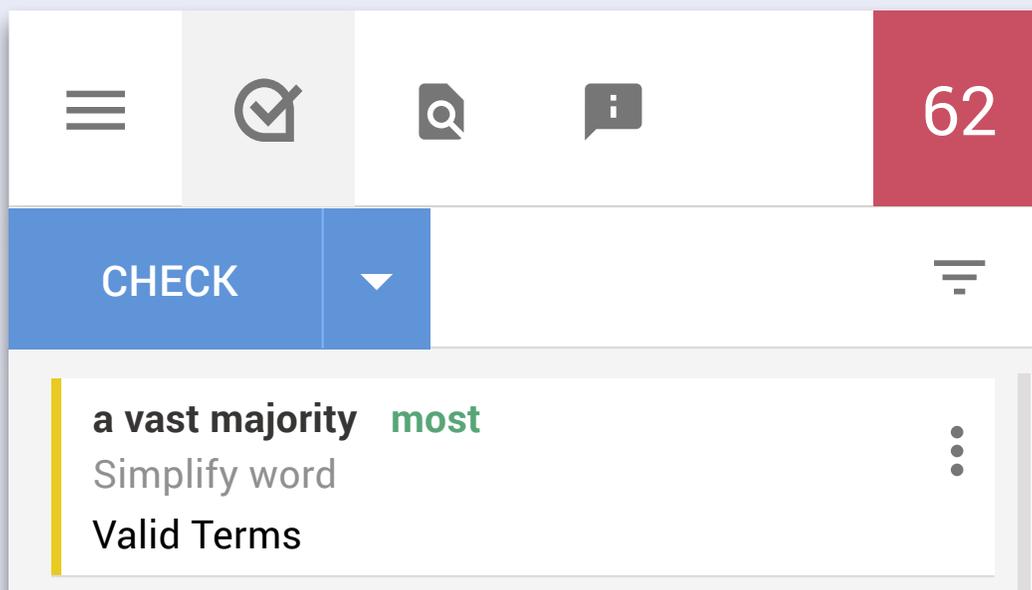
62

CHECK

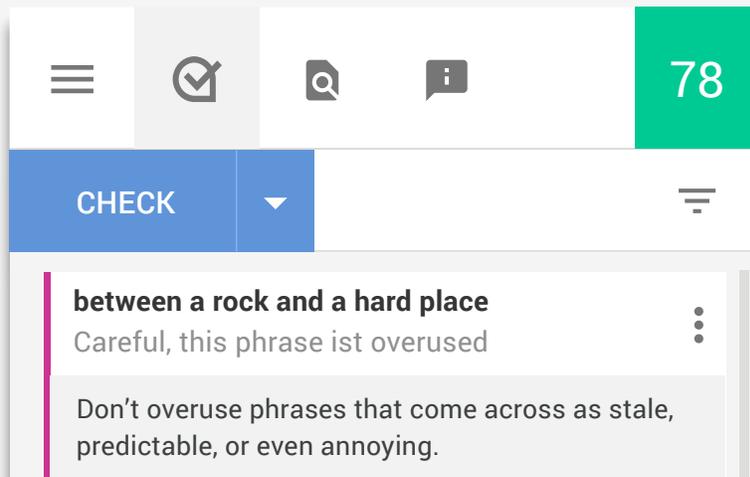**a vast majority**   most
Simplify word
Valid Terms

5

Write like a human.

Never use corporate or technological jargon if you can think of an everyday English equivalent.

The Acrolinx overused words guideline highlights clichés and phrases that can come across as stale, predictable, or even annoying. Terms you enter in Terminology are treated as exceptions to this guideline. In Acrolinx Terminology you can additionally define corporate or technical phrases that your writers should avoid.
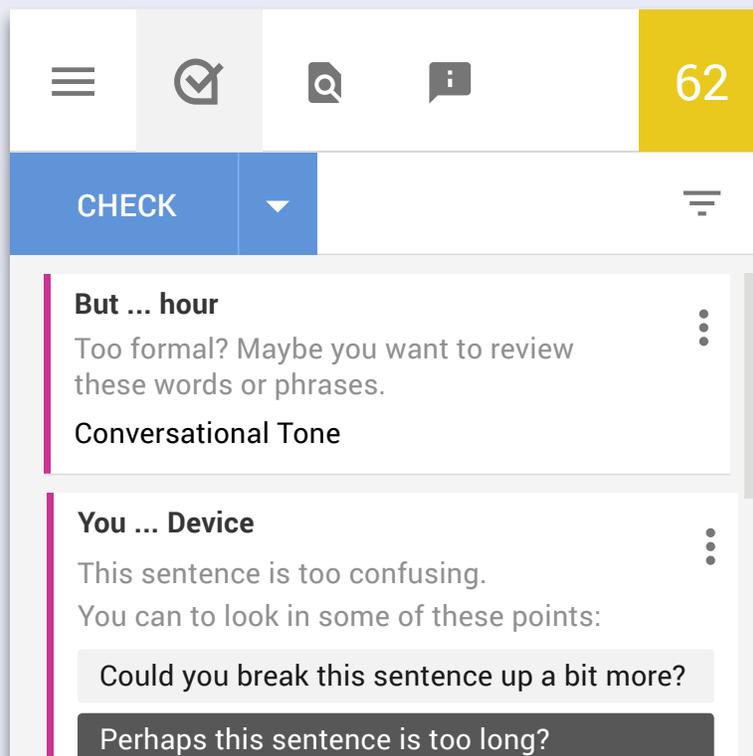
78

CHECK

between a rock and a hard place
Careful, this phrase ist overused

Don't overuse phrases that come across as stale, predictable, or even annoying.

6

You be the judge.

Ask yourself: Would I like the person who wrote this? Would I speak like this if I was speaking to a friend or colleague?

You want your content to be conversational, without formal words. We'll highlight paragraphs that sound formal or that are not particularly engaging.

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CHECK

But ... hour
Too formal? Maybe you want to review these words or phrases.

Conversational Tone

You ... Device
This sentence is too confusing.
You can to look in some of these points:

Could you break this sentence up a bit more?

Perhaps this sentence is too long?

6

7

Use active voice rather than passive voice.
Readers prefer active voice sentences, it keeps things lively and interisting. Words like 'was' and 'by' are signs that you're writing in passive voice.

Acrolinx has guidelines to remind your writers to use active voice. You can even adjust the guideline settings to be more or less strict.

Select Contexts ✕

Guideline: **Passive** · Can you write this in the **active voice**?

- ◉ Turn on this guideline for the selected contexts
- ○ Turn off this guideline for the selected contexts

ACRONYMDEF

APPOINTMENT

BODY

BODY_TEXT

CITE

CMD

8

Abbreviations and acronyms.
If there's a chance your reader won't understand, spell it out the first time you mention it. Then use the short version for the rest of the piece.

Acrolinx has a Clarity guideline that highlights acronyms that are defined somewhere in the document but appear before the definition. That way, you can be sure that you've defined acronyms once at the beginning before confusing your readers.

☰   ☑   🔍   💬   **78**

CHECK ▼   ☰

SEO ⋮
Will your readers know what these acronyms mean?

You used *SEO* once.

Get the right tone of voice for the audience you're trying to reach.

7

9

Keywords are king.
Ensure you're optimizing our searchability. Populate headlines, sub-headings, and paragraphs with the right words.

The Findability add-on in the Sidebar provides constant feedback to writers. For each piece of content you check, Acrolinx provides a discovered keyword list based on the top keywords in your content. You can also enter your target keywords in Findability, check your content, and get feedback on correct use and prominence of keywords.

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CHECK ▾

Findability

👁 30   ◎ 0   ⋮

content
⑉ 43   ☰ 15   ★ 28   →

marketing
⑉ 41   ☰ 13   ★ 43   →

growth
⑉ 34   ☰ 8   ★ 65   →

marketing content
⑉ 32   ☰ 7   ★ 28   ✓

publishing
⑉ 30   ☰ 6   ★ 62   ✓

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