

AMA Manual of Style

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Redundant, Expendable, and Incomparable Words and Phrases

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It's déjà vu all over again. Yogi Berra (1925-) A redundancy is a term or phrase that unnecessarily repeats words or meanings. Below are some common redundancies that can usually be avoided (redundant words are italicized): Some words and phrases can usually be omitted without affecting meaning, and omitting them often improves the readability of a sentence: Quite, very, and rather are often overused and misused and can be deleted in many instances (see also , Correct and Preferred Usage of Common Words and Phrases). Avoid roundabout and wordy expressions: An adjective denoting an absolute or extreme state or quality does not logically admit of quantification

Redundant Words

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A redundancy is a term or phrase that unnecessarily repeats words or meanings. Below are some common redundancies that can usually be avoided (redundant words are italicized):

Expendable Words and Circumlocution

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Some words and phrases can usually be omitted without affecting meaning, and omitting them often improves the readability of a sentence: Quite, very, and rather are often overused and misused and can be deleted in many instances (see also , Correct and Preferred Usage of Common Words and Phrases). Avoid roundabout and wordy expressions:

Incomparable Words

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An adjective denoting an absolute or extreme state or quality does not logically admit of quantification or comparison. Thus, we do not, or should not, say *deadest*, *more perfect*, or *somewhat unique*. It is generally acceptable, however, to modify adjectives of this kind with adverbs such as *almost*, *apparently*, *fortunately*, *nearly*, *probably*, and *regrettably*. Listed below are words that should not be used with a comparative (*more*, *less*), superlative (*most*, *least*), or quantifying (*quite*, *slightly*, *very*) modifier. Note: In general, superlatives should be avoided in scientific writing.