

READABILITY TIPS

Using Microsoft Word Readability Features

Researchers often create flyers to recruit participants to their studies. Using plain language allows information to be understood quickly and easily, and may assist in recruiting more diverse volunteers. Readability statistics are useful when creating study materials to ensure a standard of plain language is maintained.

Enable the readability function in Microsoft Word in 5 easy steps:

STEP 1. Open Word and go to “File” then “Options.”

STEP 2. Click on “Proofing.”

STEP 3. Under “When correcting spelling and grammar in Word,” make sure the “Check grammar with spelling” box is selected.

STEP 4. Select “Show readability statistics.”

STEP 5. Go back to your document and check grammar. The Readability Statistics should pop up at the end of the check.

WRITING TIPS

- Aim for 5th grade reading level or lower.
- Aim for reading ease above 50.
- Try to make sentences no more than 20 words long.
- Use words that are common in plain language, when you can.
- Try to make paragraphs no more than 4 sentences long.
- Make the flyer as simple as possible. Use bullet points, short phrases, and spacing for easy reading.
- Use words with 1 or 2 syllables whenever possible.
- Remember, details can be shared during screening or on the consent form.



Before

Participants Needed for Cognitive Study

What will you do: Complete questionnaires, do a memory task (N-back), play Tetris, and watch a Tetris video for approximately 1.5 hours

Location: 123 Bell Hall, North Campus, UB

To get started: Fill out the screening questionnaire and we will contact you to schedule an appointment! Please visit <https://bit.ly/example>. Or for more information, contact us directly at example@gmail.com

Tip: Avoid technical terms (e.g. "N-back").

Tip: Give details in plain language.

Readability Statistics	
Counts	
Words	97
Characters	566
Paragraphs	4
Sentences	1
Averages	
Sentences per Paragraph	0.0
Words per Sentence	19.0
Characters per Word	5.1
Readability	
Flesch Reading Ease	58.4
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	9.8
Passive Sentences	0.0%

After

Volunteers Needed for Memory Study

In the study, you will:

- visit the office once for 1.5 hours,
- complete surveys,
- play computer games, and
- watch a video.

The office is at 123 Bell Hall, North Campus.

Are you interested?

Fill out this survey <https://bit.ly/example>. Contact us at example@gmail.com.

Tip: "Memory" is simpler than "cognitive." Make it easy and clear to understand the study

Readability Statistics	
Counts	
Words	49
Characters	291
Paragraphs	9
Sentences	4
Averages	
Sentences per Paragraph	1.3
Words per Sentence	5.5
Characters per Word	4.4
Readability	
Flesch Reading Ease	62.8
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	5.8
Passive Sentences	0.0%

Tip: Ease refers to sentence and word length. The shorter the easier. Grade level indicates education level needed to understand the text.

RESOURCES

[CTSI Recruitment Resources Toolkit](#)

[Online support for Microsoft Word](#)

[Document that discusses readability statistics and how to use them](#)

Contact us: ctsiresearch@buffalo.edu