

Grammarly - a user review

by Niall McN

General metrics

3,512

characters

595

words

32

sentences

2 min 22 secreading
time**4 min 34 sec**speaking
time

Score



This text scores better than 85%
of all texts checked by Grammarly

Writing Issues

26

Issues left

9

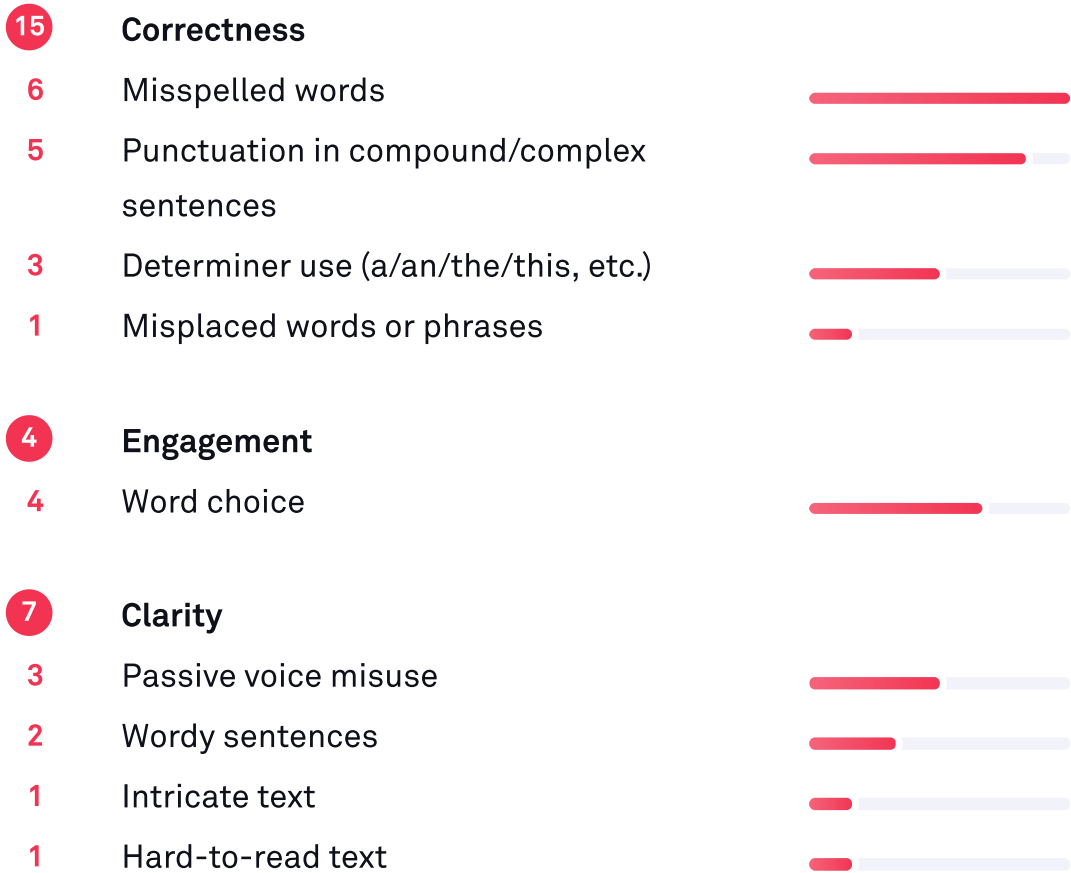
Critical

17Advanced

Plagiarism

This text hasn't been checked for plagiarism

Writing Issues



Unique Words

Measures vocabulary diversity by calculating the percentage of words used only once in your document

47%

unique words

Rare Words

Measures depth of vocabulary by identifying words that are not among the 5,000 most common English words.

35%

rare words

Word Length

Measures average word length

4.8

characters per word

Sentence Length

Measures average sentence length

18.6

words per sentence

Grammarly - a user review

Grammarly is a digital writing tool that aims to improve the quality and clarity of your writing. It is pretty much your word-processor's¹ spell and language checker on steroids. Grammarly has an online platform as well as as a chrome and microsoft² word plugin but³ I use the desktop app. My workflow is writing in Google Docs and then copy and paste to a new document in Grammarly for editing and checking. You can, however, also import documents⁴ directly if you are working in Word or another word processor.

When starting a new project on Grammarly, you set your goals. These are⁵ divided into Audience, Formality and Domain, with a few experimental options such as Tone and Intent (I haven't used these yet). Audience offers three options, General, Knowledgeable and Expert, with Knowledgeable being the default. This option means your text needs focus to understand and read. Formality looks at the use of slang and casual language and is divided into Informal, Neutral and Formal. Domain⁶ is where you have the most options. You can select whether your text is Academic, Business, General, Email, Casual or Creative, with rules and conventions applied based on your selection.

The app has a writing assistant which analyses your text, providing suggestions in four areas - Correctness, Clarity, Engagement and Delivery. These suggestions appear as alerts next to the text⁷ to be changed. In some cases, such as spelling or punctuation errors, these can be implemented by clicking⁸ on the correction in the alert message. In other cases, the software may ask you to rewrite a sentence that is in the passive voice or choose a synonym for a

word appearing frequently⁹ in the text. An overall document score is provided¹⁰ in teh¹¹ right-hand side of the screen and¹² each time an edit¹³ or change is made this score is updated. This score is based¹⁴ on Readability and Vocabulary, with useful metrics provided. I particularly like the Readability module, which provides a score based on teh¹⁵ Flesch reading-ease test, assigning an age-range and education level to the text. This¹⁶ is useful for educational publishing where you need to write to the level of the learner. You can download this report. Here is the report¹⁷ for this blog post, before editing.

Grammarly also has a built in¹⁸ plagiarism check, which references your writing against pages available on the internet. Useful if you are colatting¹⁹ a number of²⁰ sources and may have missed one. And I guess if you are an educational institute or teacher receiving assignments from students (not sure how Grammarly's plagiarism check stacks up against the likes of Turnitin?).

There are some limitations on characters per document when using the desktop app or online editor (100,000 characters at a time). If you were working with a lengthy manuscript²¹ you could split this into chapters to work on at a time. These limitations don't apply when using the Microsoft²² plugins. All basic²³ functions are available for free with a Grammarly account but if²⁴ you want more²⁵ of the advanced functionality²⁶ you need to upgrade to a premium account at roughly \$130 a year.

Apart from improving your writing before publication, I find it also trains me to watch out for issues when drafting a text as I now am thinking forward to what alerts Grammarly may flag.

Overall I think Grammarly is a useful tool to add to your arsenal as a writer or editor.

I'm sure there are competitor products out there at the moment. Let me know in the comments if you have any experience with them.

1.	word processor's, word-processors	Misspelled Words	Correctness
2.	microsoft → Microsoft	Misspelled Words	Correctness
3.	, but	Punctuation in Compound/Complex Sentences	Correctness
4.	documents → materials	Word Choice	Engagement
5.	are divided	Passive Voice Misuse	Clarity
6.	The domain, or A domain	Determiner Use (a/an/the/this, etc.)	Correctness
7.	text → book, version	Word Choice	Engagement
8.	<i>In some cases, such as spelling or punctuation errors, these can be implemented by clicking on the correction in the alert message.</i>	Wordy Sentences	Clarity
9.	frequently appearing	Misplaced Words or Phrases	Correctness
10.	is provided	Passive Voice Misuse	Clarity
11.	teh → the	Misspelled Words	Correctness
12.	, and	Punctuation in Compound/Complex Sentences	Correctness
13.	an edit	Determiner Use (a/an/the/this, etc.)	Correctness
14.	is based	Passive Voice Misuse	Clarity
15.	teh → the	Misspelled Words	Correctness
16.	This	Intricate Text	Clarity
17.	report → story, description, news, announcement	Word Choice	Engagement

18.	built in → built-in	Misspelled Words	Correctness
19.	colatting → collating, collecting	Misspelled Words	Correctness
20.	a number of → several, some, many	Wordy Sentences	Clarity
21.	manuscript,	Punctuation in Compound/Complex Sentences	Correctness
22.	the Microsoft	Determiner Use (a/an/the/this, etc.)	Correctness
23.	basic → essential	Word Choice	Engagement
24.	, but	Punctuation in Compound/Complex Sentences	Correctness
25.	but if → . Still, if	Hard-to-read text	Clarity
26.	functionality,	Punctuation in Compound/Complex Sentences	Correctness
