

Rule there is simply
no room in



Rule #1: As there is very little time to develop characters use few characters and stick to one theme or viewpoint. There is simply no room in a short story to accommodate more than one or two round characters. Description of the central character has to be kept short and snappy and care must be taken that the description of minor characters takes up as little space as possible. If you have just one or two main characters, that automatically restricts your chances of switching viewpoints. However if you are tempted to give more than two characters importance you will find trouble in fully developing more than one point of view.

Rule#2: Select a time frame: It is difficult to span several lifetimes in a story that is limited to 10, 000 words. You might be tempted to move around in time, but your chances of success will be bigger if you limit the time frame. It could be difficult to cover even the period of a month in a short story without drastically compromising the plot or the characters of the story.

Limiting the time period allows the writer to put more focus on the events that are included in the narrative. Rule #3: Be discerning: A short story calls for more restraint and control. The use of words must be judicious.

Remember each line is eating space and since you have limited space you have to make sure that with each line your story progresses. If a line does not in any way help to build the character or press forward the plot then it has no place in the short story. You have to let it go. The beauty of a short story lies in the skill of the author to tell his story in lesser words. Rule #4: Keep to the simple and basic story structure: Every story is loosely composed of description, disagreement, mounting action, climax and completion.

As much as one would like to be creative, the truth remains that the story has to make the reader feel like something has happened. This effect can be achieved when a conflict in the story is resolved. Although storytelling may seem incredible and thrilling there are very concrete moves that go into its writing.

The beginning is of paramount importance because you have to capture the reader's interest. So the first line in the story has to have maximum effect. It must have the ability to draw the reader's attention. While the body or the buildup of the story is important as it keeps the reader with you, the conclusion is that part of the story which has to be as powerful as the beginning. It is the ending that the reader carries forward even after the story has been read. Rule #5: Don't be restricted by the rules: The rules are meant to help you and make your writing an easier experience. But don't be confounded by them.

Remember always whatever the type of story you are writing the most important thing always is telling your story. If you must break the rules to tell your story by all means do your story justice. More and more we see authors j experimenting.

The lines between genres like short story and poem are now merged in exciting new ways resulting in a short story that reads like a poem and a poem that tells a short story. Innovation of course is not everyone's cup of tea, so if it is not your thing then stick to the basics and remain true to yourself and your story. Keeping these rules in mind, you should be able to successfully complete your stories. If however you are unable to contain your

story within the parameters of a short story, consider expanding it into a novel. As you begin to write you will discover over a period of time your own style.

But good prose itself has a sound or tempo quite its own. Learning how to write good prose isn't something that anyone can teach you, talent has a whole lot to do with it. But you don't need to be discouraged, there are several things you can do to improve your writing. Improve your writing First thing to do is to read your work out aloud. Often the writer reads not what he has written but what he thinks he meant to write. So you must take time.

Often it is better to read what you have written a couple of days after you have written it. It gives you a fresh perspective. When you read don't rush through the sentences. Take your time reading what you have written. Make the necessary pauses to accommodate punctuation. Accentuate an exclamation point and raise the pitch of your voice at the end of questions. Reading and observing the sound of your punctuation is an important part of editing what you have written. As you read, you will notice the elements that the reader might find unsettling.

Sometimes what may sound good to you while writing might not sound as good when read aloud. A figure of speech that you thought sounded impressive may not sound so good when read aloud. These are the things to look for while reading aloud. While alliteration, the repetition of the first letter in subsequent words adds power to your writing it has to be used sparingly to retain its charm.

Rhyming must be strictly avoided in the writing of prose. Pay due respect to the reader's intelligence. Repeated uses of the names of the characters or third person pronouns lend your work a discordant note. Although you might be tempted to remind your readers in every other chapter the characters full name, please exercise control. No matter how great a story teller you are, your work will be of no consequence if you don't have your basics right. Correct grammar is of paramount importance to story writing. So before you sit to write your first story it wouldn't hurt to refresh your grammar basics.

The correct use of grammar gives your writing its natural flow. Sentence fragments are technically correct but on rare occasions they deliver the punch better. Short sentences have a flavor worth mentioning, but their effect lies in their judicious usage. Complex sentences on the other hand are cumbersome and tire the reader just by their presence.

Remember the key word here is 'moderation'. Rhythm in writing is the one quality that comes natural to a born writer. It is as natural to him as is breathing. Some writers have an intrinsic sense of rhythm, style and it comes with an equally inherent understanding of the language and grammar usage. Others who aspire to be writers will have to work a little harder to maintain proper sentence structure.

But do not be discouraged. There is a way to find your own rhythm. First thing to do is to put down your thoughts on to paper. When you are done sit back at leisure and read aloud what you have written. If you keep tripping over your prose rest assured that your readers will have a similar experience as well. Realign your sentences and your words to make your work sound

better. It will be difficult at first but remember, 'Rome was not built in one day,' and so it is with writing as well. As you continue to rewrite what you have written you will find your style slowly emerging.

Bear in mind always that writing is an art and not a science. Once you have that imprinted in your mind you will find it easier to absorb advice on your writing. Creative workshops are important to help you grow as a writer. It always helps to have another opinion and when that opinion is well-informed so much the better. Reading is an important exercise in learning to write. Read as many books as you can.

Try and analyze what it is about some writings that you really, really like. The idea is not to imitate someone else's style of writing; the idea is to find your unique voice. Most writers who are beginning to learn to write are tempted to put all the words they know into sentences.

Your prose might be brilliant but if you can say in five words what you said in twenty then by all means do. Strip away all the words that are irrelevant until your sentences lie naked in front of you. Once you have done away with the extraneous watch how your words streak across the page. So remember when it comes to writing less is more. Avoid repetitions and reiterations; they make your prose sound mundane and redundant. Remember that active voice is powerful.

Although you might have a repository of words at your command remember always that simple always wins. If you use a word that the reader does not understand he just skips the word and tries to understand the gist of the

sentence. So keep the language simple. Mix up your adjectives. For example:

I have a sweet tooth. I love to eat sweets.

I like chocolate. I like pastries. Instead of saying it in three sentences an effective way of saying it would be to club the three things together.

Chocolates, sweets, pastries-I love everything sweet, picks a plot and then fabricates the story about the plot.