

Instructions find an important place in technical writing. Instructions are made for various purposes such as installing software packages, assembling a piece of equipment, using a new device, trouble shooting and so on. In general, instructions should be clear, precise, understandable, complete and above all user- friendly.

To give instructions the root forms of verbs should be used. (root: the part of a word on which the other words are formed)

Guidelines to be followed

- Use the imperative form - close the lid
- Begin each step with an action verb
- Frame each step in such a way that it focuses on a single task.
- Use a numbered list when the order is important.
- Use simple and direct language free from jargon and ambiguity.

Examples:-

Eight instructions to maintain a computer in good condition:

1. Don't touch the cables.
2. Avoid touching the open sockets.
3. Switch off the main supply and open all the doors and windows, in case of sparks or short circuits.
4. Avoid touching the monitor.
5. Shut down the system when it is not in use.
6. Shut down the system properly.
7. Open only minimum number of required sites, while working on the net, for quick access.
8. Don't rest your legs anywhere on the stabilizer or UPS.

Write a set of eight instructions to save petrol:

1. Don't keep the engine running while the vehicle is not in motion.
2. Keep the engine in good condition.
3. Fit the vehicle with an engine that gives high mileage.
4. Service the vehicle regularly; an ill-maintained vehicle consumes more petrol.
5. Avoid clutch driving. Resting one's foot on the clutch pedal leads to more fuel consumption.
6. Avoid frequent change of gear to save petrol.
7. Inflate the tyres at an optimum level of air pressure.
8. Use the correct engine oil for the proper functioning of the engine.

EXERCISE

1. Write a set of eight instructions that must be followed as safety measures in a Chlorine Plant.
2. Write a set of eight instructions to control air pollution in metropolitan cities like Chennai.
3. As the Maintenance Engineer of Software Company, give a set of eight instructions that are to be followed by the lab assistants while handling sophisticated equipment.
4. Write a set of eight instructions that are to be followed by all pedestrians.
5. Write a set of 8 instructions to make your city clean and green.
6. Write a set of 8 instructions advising your younger sister on how to prepare for her Board Exams.
7. Write a set of 8 instructions on road safety.