

The Writer's Word Count Cheat Sheet

How many words do you actually need? This reference covers word counts, page counts, reading times, and speaking times for every common writing format — from tweets to theses.

Blog & web content

FORMAT	WORDS	PAGES (SINGLE)	READING TIME
Short blog post	300–600	1–2 pages	1–2 min
Standard blog post	800–1,200	3–4 pages	3–5 min
Long-form article	1,500–2,500	5–10 pages	6–10 min
Pillar / ultimate guide	3,000–5,000	12–20 pages	12–20 min
Landing page	300–800	1–3 pages	1–3 min
Product description	100–300	< 1 page	< 1 min
Newsletter email	200–500	1–2 pages	1–2 min

SEO INSIGHT

Blog posts between 1,500–2,500 words tend to rank highest in Google search results. However, quality and relevance matter more than hitting a specific count. Write as many words as the topic needs — no more, no fewer.

Academic & education

FORMAT	WORDS	PAGES (DOUBLE)	READING TIME
Short essay	250–500	1–2 pages	1–2 min
College essay (Common App)	250–650	1–2.5 pages	1–3 min
UC personal insight	350 max	1.5 pages	1.5 min

Research paper (undergrad)	2,000–5,000	8–20 pages	8–20 min
Literature review	3,000–6,000	12–24 pages	12–24 min
Master's thesis	15,000–50,000	60–200 pages	1–3 hours
PhD dissertation	50,000–100,000	200–400 pages	3–7 hours
Abstract	150–300	< 1 page	< 1 min

NOTE

Page counts for academic writing assume double-spaced, 12pt Times New Roman, 1-inch margins — the standard for most universities. Always check your institution's specific formatting requirements.

Professional & business

FORMAT	WORDS	PAGES (SINGLE)	READING TIME
Cover letter	250–400	1 page	1–2 min
Resume / CV	400–800	1–2 pages	2–3 min
Executive summary	200–500	1–2 pages	1–2 min
Business proposal	2,000–5,000	8–20 pages	8–20 min
White paper	3,000–6,000	12–24 pages	12–24 min
Case study	1,500–3,000	6–12 pages	6–12 min
Press release	300–500	1–2 pages	1–2 min
One-pager / brief	250–500	1 page	1–2 min

Creative writing

FORMAT	WORDS	PAGES (PRINT)	READING TIME
Flash fiction	100–1,000	< 4 pages	< 4 min
Short story	1,000–7,500	4–30 pages	4–30 min

Novelette	7,500–17,500	30–70 pages	30–70 min
Novella	17,500–40,000	70–160 pages	1–3 hours
Novel	50,000–110,000	200–440 pages	3–7 hours
Epic novel	110,000+	440+ pages	7+ hours
Picture book text	200–1,000	32 pages (illus.)	3–5 min
Screenplay (feature)	7,000–10,000	90–120 pages	1.5–2 hours

Speeches & presentations

Conversational speaking pace: **~150 words per minute**. Presentation pace (with pauses, slides): **~130 words per minute**.

DURATION	WORDS (CONVERSATIONAL)	WORDS (PRESENTATION)	NOTES
1 minute	130–150	100–130	Elevator pitch, intro
3 minutes	390–450	300–390	Lightning talk
5 minutes	650–750	500–650	Short speech, toast
10 minutes	1,300–1,500	1,000–1,300	TED-length talk
15 minutes	1,950–2,250	1,500–1,950	Conference session
20 minutes	2,600–3,000	2,000–2,600	Keynote address
30 minutes	3,900–4,500	3,000–3,900	Lecture, workshop
60 minutes	7,800–9,000	6,000–7,800	Full lecture, sermon

Quick conversion reference

Use these rules of thumb for fast estimates:

- **Words → Pages (single-spaced):** divide by 250
- **Words → Pages (double-spaced):** divide by 125

- **Words** → **Reading time:** divide by 225 (avg adult reading speed)
- **Words** → **Speaking time:** divide by 150 (conversational pace)
- **Pages** → **Words (single):** multiply by 250
- **Pages** → **Words (double):** multiply by 125
- **1 minute of reading** ≈ 225 words ≈ 0.9 single-spaced pages
- **1 minute of speaking** ≈ 150 words ≈ 0.6 single-spaced pages

Assumptions: 12pt font, 1-inch margins, standard letter size. Actual counts vary with font choice, line spacing, and margin settings.

Count your words instantly with WordInstant's free Word Counter tool.

wordinstant.com/word-counter

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