

Want to be a better writer?

Here's how:

1. Read all you can of other writers—classic and new books. We learn how to write through reading.
2. Start writing and keep writing, no matter what. We learn to be good writers through practice.
3. Write about what you are passionate about. Choose your subject for yourself. If you care about it, your writing will engage readers.
4. Bring a piece of yourself to everything you write. Your experiences and your interpretations make your writing unique.
5. Observe people wherever you go. A writer is constantly gathering material. Even a difficult experience can be useful. I've been in trying circumstances and said to myself, "Maybe I can write about this later."
6. Observe yourself—your reactions and your sensory experiences. How does that apple taste? What does your body do when you are angry? These experiences can be used to enrich your writing.
7. To create believable characters, get to know them better than you know your family and friends. When you can hear your characters talking to you, you're into your characters.
8. Give your villains good qualities and your heroes flaws. Create well-rounded characters that you care about in some way, so your readers can care about them, too.
9. Show who your characters are through action, dialogue, and inner thoughts.
10. When writing a story, ask yourself: What is this story about? Write it in one sentence. This focuses your story and brings you clarity.