

3. Given information comes before new

Sentences normally contain both "given" information and "new" information. Given information could be a concept, object or situation which we assume the reader knows about. It could also refer to something that has already been discussed in the text. New information, on the other hand, is not assumed to be understood by the reader, or has not yet been discussed in the text. Typically, given information comes before new and provides a framework or context within which to understand the new information. This information in turn becomes "given" in the subsequent text. Consider the following simple example:

- given information*
1. The sound reproduction from a radio can be quite inferior to that from a record or tape. *new information*
- new information*
2. Multipath distortion is one cause, and in some environments, perhaps the major cause of this *given information*
- given information*
inferior sound reproduction *new information*
3. Tall structures or buildings in the receiver's environment, cause multipath distortion. *given information*
- new information* *given information*
4. Most of the radio signal is reflected and defracted by these tall structures and buildings before it reaches the radio's antenna.

Compare the above version with this rewritten one. Which is easier to read?

- given information* *new information*
1. The sound reproduction from a radio can be quite inferior to that from a record or tape.
- given information* *new information*
2. One cause of this inferior reproduction is multipath distortion; in some environments, this is perhaps the major cause.
- given information* *new information*
3. Multipath distortion occurs when there are tall structures or buildings in the receiver's environment.
- given information* *new information*
4. These tall structures reflect and defract most of the radio signal before it reaches the radio's antenna.