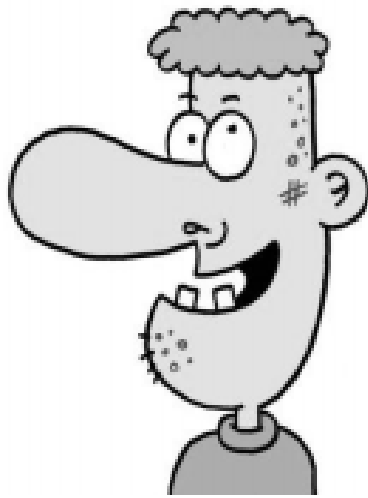


Describing a person: adding details



When you write, you need to **avoid general terms** that do not give readers enough information to go on. **Be as vivid and specific as possible** -- readers want details.

Tip: pick concrete terms that create distinct images in your readers' minds. Give your readers as much information as they need. Replace overly used adjectives such as "well", "good", "nice", "lovely", or "pretty"

with details. After all, ambiguous word choice is a reflection of a confused mind.

A descriptive essay about a person should consist of:

- a) an Introduction in which you give general information about the person, saying when, where and how you first met them;
- b) a Main Body in which you describe their physical appearance, personal qualities and hobbies/interest. You start a new paragraph for each topic;
- c) a Conclusion in which you write your comments and/or feelings about the person.

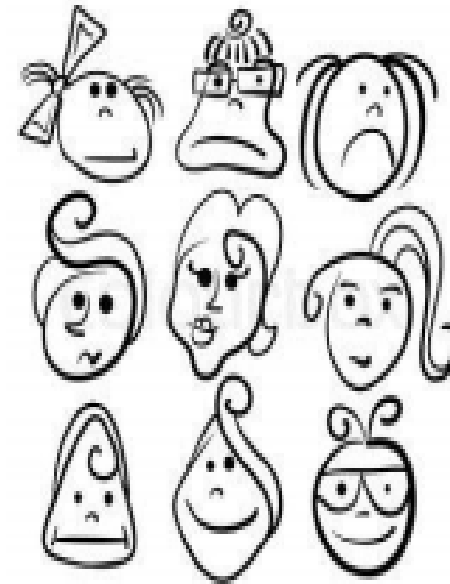
** When describing someone you know well or see often (i.e a friend, a neighbour, etc), you should use present tenses. When describing someone who is no longer alive, or someone you knew a long time ago and you do not see any more, you should use past tenses.

** Descriptions of people can be found in articles, letters, narratives, etc. The writing style you use depends on the situation and the intended reader. For example, if you are writing an article for a magazine, you should use semi-formal style and a polite, respectful tone.

Useful vocabulary

Face Shape

- Square
- Oval
- Round
- Triangular
- Heart-shaped



Skin/Face/Complexion (Complexion is the natural appearance and color of the skin, especially of the face; e.g. Mary has a soft, creamy complexion.

- **Freckled:** sprinkled or covered with light brown spots
- **Rosy:** pink-cheeked; fair complexion that glows with a hint of pink
- **Ruddy:** skin that has a healthy reddish tint; may have the appearance of sunburn
- **Tanned:** skin with a healthy golden-brown tint
- **Wrinkled:** full of or covered with lines or loose folds of skin; often associated with age
- **Other skin-related adjectives:** pale, spotless, silky, smooth, creamy, baby-soft, glowing, paper-thin or translucent (as with a very old person); rough, callused, dry

Eyes

Eye expressions:

- **Adj. eyes:** piercing, mesmerizing, sad, sorrowful, tear-filled, gentle, sympathetic, warm, compassionate, expressive, twinkling, lively, dancing, laughing

Eye Shape and Size

- Large, small, almond-shaped, round, slanted, squinty, crinkly

Mouth/Lips

- Thin lips, full lips, pouting lips, pursed lips (puckered up, like when someone is concentrating)
- Laugh, smile, beam, grin, frown, grimace, scowl

Hair

Texture/Appearance

- wavy, curly, straight, spiky, stiff, buzzed, shaved, parted, neatly-combed, tamed, long, short, cropped

Hair Styles

- braids, ponytail, pigtails, bun, twist, bob, ringlets, flip, bangs, buzz
- layered, feathered, chopped, gelled, spiked, slicked down

Lots of hair

- thick, full, lustrous, bushy, coarse, wiry (stiff)

Little hair

- thin, scraggly, fine, baby-fine, wispy, limp, flat, balding, bald, bald spot, receding hairline (gradual loss of hair at the front of the head)

Treated hair

- permed, dyed, bleached, highlighted, weaved

Hair colors

- black, brunette, brown, chestnut-brown, honey-blond, blond, golden-blond, ash-blond, auburn, red, strawberry-blond, gray, silver, white, salt-and-pepper

Facial Hair

- Beard, goatee, mustache, sideburns
- Five o'clock shadow: new beard growth, shadowy in appearance, that can be seen late in the day on the jaw, chin, or cheek area (also known as stubble)
- Adjectives: bearded, unshaven, clean-shaven, trimmed, neatly-trimmed

Clothing

- Fabric: denim, twill, wool, cotton, tweed, polyester, corduroy, fleece, spandex, leather
- Bottoms: jeans, cargo pants, flat-front pants, pleated pants, slacks, trousers, overalls, sweatpants, crop pants, capris, skirt, culottes, shorts, board shorts
- Tops: sport shirt, dress shirt, polo shirt, button-down shirt, tank top, blouse, long-sleeve, short-sleeve, sleeveless, collared, T-shirt, sweatshirt, hoodie, pullover, sweater, cardigan
- Other clothing: dress, uniform, costume, pajamas, bathrobe, robe, vest, jacket, blazer, coat, socks, stockings, gloves, hat, cap, shoes, boots, slippers, sandals, flip-flops, heels, pumps

Sentence Starters Describing Clothes

- Smartly dressed in (name of garment), she...
- Casually attired in (name of garment), Jolene...
- Simply clad in (name of garment), Mark...
- Dennis sports a (name of garment)



Describing a person's character/personality

- There are many adjectives that can be used to describe a person's character. A description of a person's personality can be **positive** or **negative**.

Aggressive (ready to attack or confront)

Ambitious (having a strong desire and determination to succeed)

Confident (feeling sure about yourself)

Down to earth, easy going (approachable and relaxed)

Extrovert, sociable, friendly (outgoing and expressive) - *Opposite* **Introvert, unsociable**

Generous (ready to give more of something than is necessary or expected)

Honest (truthful and sincere) - *Opposite* **Dishonest**

Intelligent, smart, clever (quick to understand, learn and apply ideas)

Jealous (envying someone or their achievements and advantages)

Naïve (lack of experience, wisdom or judgment)

Nosy (wants to know about other people's affairs)

Open (communicative and frank)

Optimistic, positive (hopeful and confident about the future) - *Opposite* **Pessimistic, negative**

Pigheaded, stubborn (determined not to change one's attitude or position)

Polite (respectful and considerate of others) - *Opposite* **Rude**

Reliable (able to be trusted) - *Opposite* **Unreliable**

Sensitive (delicate appreciation of others' feelings)

Talented (being good at something)

Trustworthy (able to be relied on as honest or truthful)