

# Adjectives: A Trap for New Writers

The Craft of Writing · By Simon Townsend · 1 min read

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## Adjectives a trap

Do not depend on adjectives, use strong verbs.

This is still one of the best pieces of advice I was given early in my career.

Some early (or bad) writers will write: "She had a beautiful face but wore ugly clothes."

The adjectives "beautiful" and "ugly" convey NOTHING.

- Beautiful how, in what way, to whom?
- Ugly as in worn-out?
- Ugly as in dirty?
- Ugly to the writer?
- What, in fact, did the clothes look like?

Relying on adjectives and hoping they mean to the reader the same as they mean to you the writer, is LAZY WRITING.

"Show don't tell" is the rule here.

Describe the clothes and let the reader decide if they're ugly.

However, strong verbs like shoved, smashed, floated, sank?convey a picture well.

Read good publications and good books.

You'll see that not relying on adjectives, but using strong verbs makes for much better writing.

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