

Very

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

What's the difference between "?" and "very?"? You're using that pesky word "very". "Very" is a word to be used sparingly, in fact rarely. We all use "very" in conversation because we're all a little lazy when we talk amongst friends. I sometimes write "very good" on students' assignments, because my brief notes in red ink are in conversational style. I also use exclamation marks, where I advise students to rarely use exclamation marks in writing journalism. But what does "very" really mean? How does "very" make your writing more specific and clear? How does it convey a more accurate description to your reader? What is the difference between a tall woman and a very tall woman? 10cm? 20cm? 50cm? How much faster than a fast car is a very fast car? What on earth is a "very, very nice person"? I'm not saying don't ever use "very". I'm saying think about it before using it. Tend to keep away from "very" and train yourself to be descriptive and specific.

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