

PRÉCIS

WHAT IS A PRÉCIS?

A précis is a way of summarizing in which the tone, proportions, and meaning of the original text are maintained. A précis summarizes a reading that you have completed. The length of a précis can vary greatly; it can be 100-200 words or approximately one-fifth to one-sixth of the length of the original reading. Check with your professor for exact length specifications.

HOW TO WRITE A PRÉCIS

They are various steps that can be followed in order to write an effective précis. They are as follows:

- ⇒ Read the article or book multiple times.
- ⇒ Take notes on the key points of the reading and underline key sentences.
- ⇒ Compose an outline of the reading.
- ⇒ Using the outline and your notes, summarize each paragraph in the reading into one to two sentences.
- ⇒ Combine the sentences into a logical format and create your own paragraphs that mirror the work.
- ⇒ Review the précis and ensure that it has the same tone, proportions and meaning of the original text.

TIPS FOR AN EFFECTIVE PRÉCIS

- ⇒ Be sure to include the thesis or purpose of the reading.
- ⇒ Include the author, title of the reading and other relevant source information.
- ⇒ Be as concise as possible, but still include all important points.
- ⇒ Use your own words, but do not include your opinion.
- ⇒ Avoid using phrases like "this article states..."; instead cite the author or the authoring organization.
- ⇒ Do not make an argument in the précis; only restate the author's argument.
- ⇒ Revise and edit the précis to make it as clear and accurate as possible.