

## Compound Noun Phrases

The compound noun phrase can distort the match that readers expect between the form of an idea and the grammar of a sentence; the use of compound noun phrases can make writing difficult to read.

Early *childhood thought disorder misdiagnosis* often results from unfamiliarity with recent *research literature* describing such conditions. This paper is a review of seven recent studies in which are findings of particular relevance to *pre-adolescent hyperactivity diagnosis* and to *treatment modalities* involving *medication maintenance level evaluation procedures*.

Some grammarians claim we should never use one noun to modify another, but that would rule out common phrases such as *stone wall*, *student center*, *space shuttle*, and vast numbers of other useful terms.

But you should try revising a long series of nouns when it is not familiar to your readers, and especially when it includes nominalizations. To revise, just reverse the order of words and find prepositions to connect them:

<b>Before:</b>	1	2	3	4	5
	early	childhood	thought	disorder	misdiagnosis
<b>After:</b>	misdiagnose disordered thought in early childhood				
	5	4	3	1	2

Re-assembled, it looks like this:

Physicians misdiagnose disordered thought in young children because they are unfamiliar with recent literature on the subject.

### Exercise

Unpack the compound noun phrases in 1 through 8.

1. The plant safety standards committee discussed recent EPA air quality regulation announcements.
2. Diabetic patient blood pressure reduction may brought about by renal depressor medication.