Top 10 tips for writing in academic English

As university you are required to complete a range of assignment tasks, which involve the use of academic English. If you do not have a strong background in academic English, or you are not confident because English is your second language, you should take note of the following advice.

1. Read often.
Read as widely and as much as possible to extend your vocabulary and knowledge of written English.

2. Write often.
Write as often as possible, including blogs, emails, letters, diary entries, learning journals.

3. Get an english dictionary and thesaurus.
Get hold of and learn how to use a comprehensive, university level, English dictionary and thesaurus.

4. Peer review
Ask someone else to read and check your writing to help you edit and proof-read your work.

5. English skills workshops.
Attend the English skills workshops offered by the Student Learning Centre.

6. Regularly use online resources.
Make regular use (daily and weekly) of online resources for developing grammar and English skills.

7. Know your grammar.
Learn to identify basic grammar categories (such as noun, pronoun, verb, adverb, adjective, preposition and conjunction), and basic grammar concepts such as subject, object.

8. Know sentence structure patterns.
Learn to identify basic English sentence structure patterns such as simple, compound and complex sentences.

Learn the function of the main punctuation marks: full stop, comma, semicolon, colon and apostrophe.

10. Use a grammar checker.
Learn to identify and correct common writing errors involving grammar and punctuation by understanding and using grammar checkers and spell checkers wisely.

Watch the video
For an interesting perspective on the frustrations of the effects of less than perfect grammar, watch this humourous YouTube clip.

Yo Comments Are Wack! (YouTube)