



“**Appropriate**,” like “[successfully](#),” doesn’t appear on many lists of [unneeded words](#). But it sneaks into CDC writing all the time:

We will determine appropriate follow-up recommendations.

Place soiled clothing in appropriate waste containers.

Results help guide appropriate medical treatment and can be used to study health outcomes from environmental exposures. *\*\*Also note the passive voice here!\*\**

We will make the recommended changes where feasible and appropriate.

The health assessors will issue appropriate recommendations.

In these examples, "appropriate" is likely to be unnecessary and distracting. It should go without saying that your studies, changes, treatments, and approvals are appropriate. No one would assume that you’re making *in*appropriate recommendations or sending patients to *in*appropriate places.

However, context matters—we aren’t suggesting you delete “appropriate” at every opportunity. Sometimes it’s helpful to emphasize a correct choice over an incorrect one. In the second example above, you might want to recommend use of a specific type of waste container if the soil is contaminated and you need to prevent dangerous cross-contamination. There are plenty of other instances where “appropriate” makes perfect sense, like in these examples:

More specialized methods might be appropriate, depending on the dataset.

We did not think the board’s recommendations were appropriate.

So, when you’re editing your own writing (which you should always do), take a minute and think about whether “appropriate” is appropriate.

### Resources

- [CDC Style Guide](#) (see Wordiness and Vocabulary Issues sections)
- [Utilize vs. Use](#)

- [Pretentious Writing](#)
- [Addressing the Issue](#)