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## Test Your Grammar Skills

### Register – List of Techniques

The message can be made **stronger** by:

<i>Techniques:</i>	<i>Notes:</i>	<i>Examples (main meaning &gt; plus register):</i>
adverbs	more direct	You're well behaved. > You're <b>incredibly</b> well-behaved.
contractions	contractions make the message more direct	What is the time? > <b>What's</b> the time?
higher-level vocabulary		Great. > <b>Congratulations!</b>
idioms	non-literal language works like a private code that communicates between initiates	<b>Get a move on!</b> We're leaving in five minutes.
imperative form (orders)	the language is clear – you have no choice; order or instruction	<b>Sit.</b> <i>not</i> Would you like to sit down?
intensifiers		You're well behaved. > You're <b>so</b> well-behaved.
introduction (preamble)	the speaker makes sure they have got their listener's attention before beginning their message	The bus was late. > <b>You won't believe this, but</b> the bloody bus was late again!
metaphor		You're well behaved. > You're an absolute <b>angel</b> .
punctuation ( <i>in written English</i> )		Be quiet. > Be quiet!
simile		You are pretty. > You are as pretty <b>as a picture!</b>
slang		Be quiet. > Be quiet, you <b>nitwit!</b> (fool)
specific language	the message is made clearer by using unambiguous language	We're leaving <b>in five minutes.</b> <i>not</i> We're leaving in about five minutes.
swearing	shows stronger emotion	The bus was late. > The <b>bloody</b> bus was late.

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The message can be made **weaker** by:

<i>Techniques:</i>	<i>Notes:</i>	<i>Examples (main meaning &gt; plus subtext):</i>
discourse markers	er, um, right, OK, you know, well, <i>etc.</i>	It's over! Move on! > I'm terribly sorry, but I really don't think... <b>You know, er</b> , Samantha, my darling, it's not you, really – it's me.
'don't forget'	weakens the sentence by reducing the power of imperative form	<b>Don't forget</b> – we're leaving in about five minutes.
giving a clear reason	weakens the sentence by reducing the power of imperative form	Eat! > Eat up, matey. <b>It's good for you!</b>
indirect language	not being clear or direct	What's the time? > <b>Have you got the time?</b> (this does not make literal sense, but communicates the same thing)
modal verbs	by adding a layer of politeness	Sit. > <b>Would</b> you like to sit down.
passive voice	the message is partly obscured because it is less clear who does what	I broke the glass. > The glass <b>is broken</b> .
phatic language (waffling)	the message is made unclear by the use of unnecessary words	This is my chair. > <b>What do you think – you know – I think</b> this is my chair. Isn't it?
phrasal verbs	more polite than using the bare infinitive in imperative form, perhaps because a direction is indicated	Sit. > <b>Sit down</b> .
polite keywords (please / thank you / excuse me / sorry)	they make imperative form more socially acceptable	Sit. > <b>Please sit down</b> .
question tags	the speaker shows a lack of confidence in their message by asking for confirmation in a weak way	This is my chair. > This is my chair, <b>isn't it?</b>
statements vs. questions	a question is more polite than a direct statement or imperative form, because it gives the listener an option to respond	I'm going to borrow your car. > <b>Can I borrow your car?</b>
verbosity / number of words	in general: more unnecessary words = more polite	Sign here. > <b>Would you mind possibly</b> signing here, <b>please, if it's OK?</b> Thank you.

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Here are some of the non-linguistic tools and factors that can modify the register in spoken English:

<i>Tools / Factors:</i>	<i>Effect:</i>
emphasis	the message is made <b>stronger</b> by the speaker adding extra power to particular words or phrases when they speak
gesture	the message is made <b>stronger</b> by the speaker using hand, head, or other body gestures
hesitation	the message is made <b>weaker</b> by the speaker pausing regularly, indicating they are not convinced of what they are saying
intonation	the message is made <b>stronger</b> by the speaker adding emphasis to particular syllables, words, and / or phrases
mood / emotion	the message is made <b>stronger</b> or <b>weaker</b> depending on how the techniques are used as the speaker talks
relationship / status of speakers	the message is made <b>stronger</b> or <b>weaker</b> depending on how the techniques are used as the speaker talks
tone of voice	the message is made <b>stronger</b> or <b>weaker</b> depending on how the techniques are used as the speaker talks