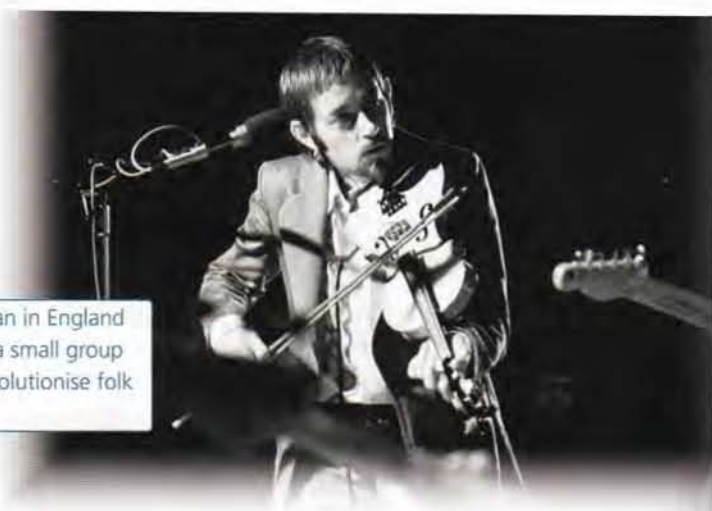


# 103 Organising information in writing



The electric folk movement began in England in the late 1960s. It was led by a small group of musicians who wanted to revolutionise folk music.

## 1 The order of information

Compare these examples:

**A**

known information

*The electric folk movement* began in England in the late 1960s. *It* was led by *a small group of musicians who wanted to revolutionise folk music.*

new information

Here we start the second sentence with *it* (for something we have already mentioned – electric folk).

**B** *The electric folk movement began in England in the late 1960s. A small group of musicians who wanted to revolutionise folk music started it.*

Here we start the second sentence with new information and end with *it* (electric folk).

In writing we usually begin a sentence with information we already know about and end with something new, as in the first example. It makes the writing easier to understand, especially in long sentences with subordinate clauses.

## 2 Short phrases and long phrases

We usually prefer to put short phrases before the verb and long phrases at the end of the sentence:

short phrase      verb      long phrase

*Most rock bands* include a vocalist, a guitarist, a bass guitarist and a drummer.

Long phrases at the start of a sentence can seem clumsy and less clear:

*A vocalist, a guitarist, a bass guitarist and a drummer are included in most bands.*

## 3 Using different grammar forms

In order to follow the two points above, we sometimes have to choose different grammar forms. These are the common forms we use to put known information at the beginning of the sentence:

GRAMMAR FORM	EXAMPLES
known information as the <b>subject</b> of the sentence	<i>'OK Computer' was Radiohead's most successful record. The album caused a sensation when they recorded it.</i>
a <b>passive form</b> to bring an object to the beginning of the sentence (► Unit 83)	<i>Radiohead released OK Computer in 1997. When the album was released, it caused a sensation.</i>
<i>it</i> as a subject (► Unit 60.3)	<i>When it was released, it caused a sensation.</i>
a <b>noun phrase</b> that refers to the known information (► Unit 104)	<i>The release of the album came at an important time for the group. Releasing the album proved to be a turning point for the group.</i>