Here is a list of rules to follow about verb tense change in your academic papers.

**What is Verb Tense?**

Verb tense means the time frame an action took or will take place. The three main forms of verb tenses are the past, present, and future tense. This expands into twelve categories including the past perfect, present perfect, and future perfect.

**When to Change**

It is sometimes necessary to change the verb tense if there is a change in the time frame of the action. For example, if the time frame shifts from past to present, you will need to change the verb tense to indicate this.

**Example!**

Although the drive to school was only ten minutes, I hated it. In hindsight, I think my feelings about the drive were influenced by my poor relationship with my home room teacher.

**When Not to Change**

You should avoid changes in verb tense if all the actions are taking place in the same time frame. There should be no change in verb tense if the time frame is consistent. Verb tense change is a common mistake and is often used in informal writing and can be heard in speech.

**Example!**

I opened to driver side door of the truck, pulled myself into the seat, and started the engine. I was just pulling out of the drive way when my tire blew out.