

GRAMMAR

Use words, phrases, clauses, and sentences to express clear and complete thoughts.

WORDS Words are built from parts; an understanding of Greek and Latin roots, prefixes, suffixes, and word families will help you determine the meanings of unfamiliar words.

GREEK & LATIN ROOTS

1. Many English words have been built from **roots**, or units of meaning, that come from **Greek (G)** or **Latin (L)**.

- *aqua* (L), meaning “water,” as in *aquarium* and *aquatic*
- *bio* (G), meaning “life,” as in *biography* and *biology*
- *chron* (G), meaning “time,” as in *chronic* and *chronology*
- *dic* (L), meaning “speak,” as in *contradict* and *dictate*
- *graph* (G), meaning “write,” as in *autobiography* and *autograph*

PREFIXES

1. Letter combinations added to the beginnings of base words or roots are called **prefixes**.
2. Prefixes may change the meanings or parts of speech of base words.
3. The following prefixes are commonly used in English:
- *un-*, meaning “not or in opposition to,” as in *uncomfortable*
 - *re-*, meaning “again or reverse,” as in *rewrite* and *recall*
 - *il-*, *im-*, *in-*, and *ir-*, meaning “not or in opposition to,” as in *illegal*, *impossible*, *indirect*, and *irregular*
 - *dis-*, meaning “not or in opposition to,” as in *disappear*
 - *em-* and *en-*, meaning “cause to,” as in *embody* and *encourage*

SUFFIXES

1. Letter combinations added to the ends of base words or roots are called **suffixes**.
2. **Inflectional suffixes** indicate the forms of words, such as case, tense, part of speech, or number.
3. **Derivational suffixes**, which create new words, may change the meanings of base words.
4. The following suffixes are commonly used in English:
- *-es* and *-s* indicate plurality, as in *bushes* and *magazines*
 - *-ed* indicates past tense, as in *played*
 - *-ing* indicates the present participle verb form, as in *dreaming*
 - *-ly* indicates a “characteristic of,” as in *neighborly*
 - *-er* and *-or* indicate a “person associated with,” as in *preacher* and *inventor*

SYNONYMS

1. Many words in English have similar meanings. Words with similar meanings are called **synonyms**.

2. By understanding the shades of meaning that distinguish synonyms, a writer can choose the best word to convey his or her meaning; for example,
- *sorry*: “expression of apology or mild regret”
 - *remorseful*: “full of a deep sense of guilt over a wrong”
 - *repentant*: “characterized by a feeling of sorrow over a sin”

ANTONYMS

1. Many words in English have opposing meanings. Words with opposing meanings are called **antonyms**.
2. Writers may use antonyms to convey contrast.
- The hikers are **free** to move about the nature preserve; there are no **restricted** areas.
 - The mother worked to **pacify** the cranky child with a toy. She did not want to **agitate** the child any further.
 - In the **sorrowful** days that followed the funeral, Mario could not appreciate the **joyful** emergence of spring.

ADOPTED WORDS

1. English is a melting pot of **words** that have been **adopted** from other languages.
- *cafeteria* comes from Spanish
 - *chipmunk* comes from the North American Indians
 - *cola* comes from Africa
 - *tycoon* comes from Japanese
 - *typhoon* comes from Chinese

MULTIPLE-MEANING WORDS

1. Some English words have more than one meaning; some of these **multiple-meaning words** are different parts of speech.
- *count*, a noun meaning “a European nobleman”
 - *count*, a verb meaning “to name numbers”
2. Often, readers must use the context of a sentence to determine which meaning a writer intends.
- As part of Malik’s workout routine, he rotates his outstretched **arms**.
 - The police arrested the criminals and charged them with illegal **arms** dealing.
 - In the ancient **temple**, the monks began to chant.
 - As Kai sensed the onset of a migraine headache, she began rubbing her **temple**.

PARTS OF SPEECH Words can be placed into categories based on function.

NOUNS

1. A **noun** is a word that names a person, place, object, or idea. Nouns can be common, proper, collective, countable, or uncountable.
2. A **common noun** names a nonspecific person, place, object, or idea (e.g., *beauty*, *boy*, and *planet*).
3. A **proper noun** names a specific person, place, or object (e.g., *California*, *Maria*, and *Paris*).
4. A **collective noun** is singular in form but names a group (e.g., *audience*, *family*, and *team*).
5. Some nouns are **countable** (e.g., *one boy*, *nine planets*, and *fifty states*).
6. Other nouns are **not countable**. These nouns represent unknown quantities (e.g., *blood*, *sand*, and *traffic*).

PRONOUNS

1. A **pronoun** is a word that can assume the position and function of a noun, but it does not specifically name a person, place, object, or idea.
2. Pronouns can be subjective, objective, possessive, indefinite, or relative.
3. A **subjective pronoun** can function as the subject of a sentence.
- **He** fed the cat.
 - **She** fed the cat.
 - **It** got extremely fat.
 - **They** wished they had fed it less.
4. An **objective pronoun** can function as a direct object, an indirect object, the object of a preposition, or the subject of an infinitive.
- Mr. Iman called **him** at noon.
 - Yumi gave **him** the message.
 - Yumi gave copies of the message to **them**.
 - The company expects **him** to respond.
5. A **possessive pronoun** demonstrates ownership.
- **My** fax machine is malfunctioning.
 - I will borrow **her** fax machine.
 - She said that she began using **their** fax machine when **her** machine broke.
 - May I use **your** fax machine?
6. An **indefinite pronoun**, which may also be a subjective pronoun, makes a general rather than specific reference.
- **Anyone** can attend the game.
 - **Everybody** is invited.

- **Nobody** will be rejected.
 - **Someone** will greet you at the gate.
7. A **relative pronoun** begins a modifying clause.
- The library **that Renaldo designed** is featured in an architectural magazine.
 - Renaldo, **who also designed other public buildings**, is gaining recognition in his field.
 - The library, **which houses many historical collections**, attracts many visitors.
 - The librarian, **whose credentials are impeccable**, conducts regular tours.

ADJECTIVES

1. An **adjective** is a word that describes or modifies a noun or pronoun by telling type, quantity, or specificity.
2. An adjective can be a proper, demonstrative, descriptive, quantitative, qualitative, or predicate adjective.
3. A **proper adjective** is formed from a proper noun (e.g., *American*, *Democratic*, and *French*).
4. A **demonstrative adjective** answers the question, *Which one?* (e.g., *this*, *that*, *these*, and *those*).
5. A **descriptive adjective** answers the question, *What kind?* (e.g., *big*, *red*, and *small*).
6. A **quantitative adjective** answers the question, *How many?* (e.g., *few*, *several*, and *three*).
7. A **qualitative adjective** answers the question, *How much?* (e.g., *considerable*, *little*, and *much*).
8. A **predicate adjective** follows any linking or state-of-being verb.
- The men **were sick** from eating the raw oysters.
9. In comparing the quality of nouns, adjectives **change by degrees**.
- The **positive degree** covers one item: *big, good*.
 - The **comparative degree** covers two items: *bigger, better*.
 - The **superlative degree** covers three or more items: *biggest, best*.
10. A **participle** is a verbal that can function as an adjective. In a **present participle**, the verb ends with the suffix *-ing*. (NOTE: A verbal is a verb form that can function as a noun, an adjective, or an adverb.)
- The **girl talking** on the phone is Mary. (The participle *talking* modifies the noun *girl*.)
11. In a **past participle**, the verb typically ends with the suffix *-ed*.
- The **letter signed** by John was ready for the mail. (The participle *signed* modifies the noun *letter*.)
12. An **infinitive** is another kind of verbal that can function as an adjective.
- She had **money to spend**. (The infinitive *to spend* modifies the noun *money*.)

VERBS

1. A **verb** is a word that describes the action or state of being of a noun or pronoun.
2. A verb can be transitive, intransitive, auxiliary, linking, or phrasal.
3. A **transitive verb** requires an object to complete the action.
 - Push **this bell** if you **want admittance**.
4. An **intransitive verb** does not require an object to express action.
 - The sun **shone** brightly.

NOTE: The same verb may be transitive in some sentences and intransitive in others.
5. An **auxiliary or helping verb** appears before a main verb to express tense or mood.
 - They **have studied** diligently.
 - I **can enroll** in the course.
6. A **linking verb** demonstrates the state of a noun or pronoun by linking a subject with a word or phrase that follows and restates or describes the subject.
 - He **is** sad.
 - He **seems** happy.

NOTE: The same verb may be linking in some sentences and transitive in others.
7. A **phrasal verb** is usually a two-word verb that combines a main verb with an adverb or preposition. In such cases, the two-word verb takes on its own meaning that may be separate from the meanings of the individual words.
 - Joe and Mona decided to **break up**. (Joe and Mona decided to end their relationship.)
 - The pile of unpaid bills began to **eat at** Rita's sanity. (The unpaid bills are bothering Rita's sanity.)
 - Melanie **ran into** her chemistry professor over the summer. (Melanie met her chemistry professor unexpectedly.)

ADVERBS

1. An **adverb** is a word that describes or modifies a verb, adjective, or other adverb.
2. An adverb answers one or more of these questions:
 - How? *quickly, slowly, fast*
 - When? *now, then, never*
 - Where? *here, there, down, up*
3. Many adverbs end with the suffix *-ly* (e.g., *affectionately, silently, and truthfully*).
4. Generally, an adverb follows a verb. However, there are exceptions.
 - John walked **slowly**.
 - John walked **faster** than Peter.
 - He **rarely** goes to the movies. (The frequency adverb *rarely* comes before the verb *goes*.)
5. An adverb that modifies an adjective or adverb **precedes** the word being modified.
 - John walked **surprisingly slowly** for someone so tall.
6. Add the suffix *-er* or *-est* to form a comparative adverb from a one-syllable word, such as *slow*.
 - John walked **slower** than I did.
 - John walked **slowest** of all.
7. Generally, add the word *more* or *most* to form a comparative adverb from a word of more than one syllable, such as *effectively*.
 - John works **more effectively** than I do.
 - In fact, of all the workers, John works **most effectively**.

NOTE: Two-syllable words that end in *y* get *-er* and *-est* (e.g., *happier, happiest*).
8. Some adverbs have irregular comparative forms, such as *badly, worse, and worst, or little, less, and least*.
9. An **infinitive** is a verbal that can function as an adverb.
 - Juan **studied to get a good grade**. (The phrase *to get a good grade* modifies the verb *studied*.)
 - Tanya **stretches to prepare for the race**. (The phrase *to prepare for the race* modifies the verb *stretches*.)

CONJUNCTIONS

1. A **conjunction** is a word that joins or links parts of a sentence.
2. A conjunction can be coordinating, correlative, subordinating, or adverbial.
3. A **coordinating conjunction** joins words, phrases, or clauses of equal importance.
 - Joe **and** Mary went to the show.
 - You will find it in the cupboard **or** under the counter.
 - Jim shut the door, **but** he did not lock it.
4. A **correlative conjunction** is a pair of words that link words, phrases, or clauses of equal importance.
 - **Not** Tom **but** his brother won the tournament.
 - **Neither** Mary **nor** Jane was impressed by this.
5. A **subordinating conjunction** causes one clause to be dependent on another.
 - Tom and his brother won the tournament **because they practiced hard**.
 - **Although the brothers competed fiercely**, they shook hands in the winner's circle.
6. A **conjunctive adverb** joins main clauses. A conjunctive adverb is always preceded by a semicolon (;) and followed by a comma (.).
 - She knew her lack of studying would be a detriment; **nevertheless**, she took the test.
 - She was sick and tired of all this nagging about studying; **however**, she did find the chart useful.

PREPOSITIONS

1. A **preposition** is a word that conveys a relationship between a noun or pronoun and another word. The following are common prepositions:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>about, above, according to, across, after,</i> • <i>against, along, among, around, at</i> • <i>before, behind, below, beneath, beside,</i> • <i>between, beyond, by</i> • <i>down, during</i> • <i>except</i> • <i>for, from</i> • <i>in, in place of, inside, into</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>like</i> • <i>near</i> • <i>of, off, on, out, outside, over</i> • <i>past</i> • <i>since</i> • <i>through, to, toward</i> • <i>under, until, up, upon</i> • <i>with, within, without</i>
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2. A preposition introduces a **prepositional phrase**, which is made up of a preposition plus its object and any modifier and functions as an adverb or adjective.
 - The mouse **under the table** ate some crumbs. (The prepositional phrase *under the table* modifies the subject *mouse*.)
 - The students **in the lab** made aspirin **with a chemical reaction**. (The prepositional phrase *with a chemical reaction* modifies the verb *made*, and the phrase *in the lab* modifies the subject *students*.)

ARTICLES

1. An **article** is a word that precedes a noun and conveys specificity, either indefinite (*a, an*) or definite (*the*).
 - Please hand me **a** doughnut. (any doughnut)
 - Please hand me **an** envelope. (any envelope)
 - Please hand me **the** book. (a specific book)
2. Use *a* with nouns that begin with consonant sounds (*doughnut, eulogy*) and *an* with nouns that begin with vowel sounds (*envelope, honor*).

INTERJECTIONS

1. An **interjection** is a word or phrase that functions alone to convey intense emotion.
 - Goodness!
 - Oh my!
 - Wow!

PARTS OF A SENTENCE Words make up the two main parts of a sentence: the subject and the predicate.

SUBJECT

1. The **subject** of a sentence tells *who* or *what* a clause or sentence is about.
2. The subject is often a noun or pronoun. The subject may be singular or compound.
 - The **pirates** captured the ship and stole its treasure. (singular, noun subject)
 - **She** appreciated the jeweled gifts from the ardent, if criminal, suitor. (singular, pronoun subject)
 - **John and Peter** quit their jobs to pursue a life at sea. (compound, noun subject)
3. Generally, a subject appears before the verb, but it may be separated from the verb by modifiers or prepositional phrases. To determine a subject, ask, *Who or what is the sentence about?*
 - **The train** runs. (Who or what runs? The train.)
 - **John**, who is late for the train, runs. (Who or what runs? John.)
4. A subject may have a **complement**, or a noun, adjective, or phrase that appears after a linking verb for the purpose of restating or telling about the subject.
 - **Dr. Sawyer** will become an outstanding university **president**. (*Dr. Sawyer* is the subject; *president* tells about Dr. Sawyer.)
5. A **gerund** is a verbal that features the *-ing* form of a verb and acts as a noun. Therefore, it can take any position in a sentence that a noun can take, including subject, direct object, subject complement, or object of a preposition. The *-ing* verb form may introduce a phrase. These gerunds or gerund phrases function as sentence subjects:
 - **Walking** is a healthy exercise.
 - **Reading travel books** is my hobby.
6. An **infinitive** is a verbal construction that includes the word *to* followed by a simple verb. An infinitive may function as a noun, adjective, or adverb. When it functions as a noun, it may appear as a subject, direct object, or subject complement. Make sure not to confuse the infinitive form with a prepositional phrase. The infinitive form may introduce a phrase. These infinitive phrases function as sentence subjects:
 - **To sing the national anthem** at the World Series is a goal of the pop star.
 - **To travel by train** across Europe has been a long-time dream of mine.
7. A **noun clause** may also function as the subject of a sentence.
 - **That one needs a clear goal** is stressed in college preparatory classes.

PREDICATE

1. The **predicate** of a sentence, which includes the verb, tells what a subject is doing, states what is being done to a subject, or expresses a state of being. The verb may be singular or compound.
 - The bandits **captured the stagecoach**. (singular)
 - The bandits **captured and looted the stagecoach**. (compound)
2. The verb may represent action, thought, or state of being. The verb may be written in the active or passive voice.
 - **John ran** the race. (active voice.)
 - The race **was run by John**. (passive voice)

Objects

1. In the predicate, an **object** receives the action of the verb.
2. An object may be direct or indirect.
3. A **direct object** is a noun, pronoun, or noun phrase that receives the action expressed by the verb.
 - I have read the **book**. (Read what? The book.)
 - The author researched the **time period** prior to writing the book. (Researched what? The time period.)
4. An **indirect object** is a noun, pronoun, or nominative element *for whom, to whom, or to what* the action of the verb is done.
 - I read the **class** the entire book. (Read to whom? The class.)
 - My teacher gave **me** an A for my presentation. (Gave to whom? Me.)
5. Gerunds and infinitive phrases may function as direct objects. Note that verbals may also contain direct or indirect objects. In the second example, *me* is the indirect object and *practice* is the direct object of the infinitive *to give*:
 - The football fans do not appreciate my **playing**.
 - The coach agreed **to give me some additional practice**.
6. The object of a preposition answers the question *whom, what, or where* after the preposition. Note that a gerund may serve as the object of a preposition.
 - John traveled **to the country**. (To where? The country.)
 - Proper shoes are needed **for** comfortable **walking**. (For what? Walking.)

SENTENCE TYPES & FORMS Sentences can be placed into categories based on meaning and structure.

TYPES

1. A **declarative sentence** makes a statement and ends with a period.
 - Today is my birthday.
 - On my birthday, I like to eat cake.
 - 2. An **imperative sentence** gives a command and ends with a period. In an imperative sentence, the subject *you* is often implied.
 - (You) Close the door on your way out.
 - Brandon, open the door.
3. An **interrogative sentence** asks a question and ends with a question mark.
 - Who was that woman?
 - Were you happy to make her acquaintance?
4. An **exclamatory sentence** expresses strong feeling and ends with an exclamation point.
 - What a beautiful morning!
 - On such a beautiful morning, I love to run!
2. Because a simple sentence meets these criteria and can stand on its own, it is an **independent clause**.
3. In a simple sentence, the subject, the verb, or both may be compound.
 - John slept.
 - John and Bobbie slept.
 - John and Bobbie ate and slept.

Compound Sentence

1. A **compound sentence** contains two or more independent clauses and expresses more than one complete thought.
2. Independent clauses are joined by a comma and coordinating conjunction (*and, or, nor, for, so, yet, but*) or a semicolon when a coordinating conjunction is not present.
 - Bobbie likes watching TV, **but** she prefers going to the movies.
 - Bobbie likes watching TV; John enjoys exercising on the treadmill.

NOTE: When the sentences are very short and integrally related, a comma may not be necessary (e.g., Sierra demonstrated CPR and Jamal observed her.)

FORMS

Simple Sentence

1. A **simple sentence** contains a subject and a verb and expresses one complete thought.

Complex Sentence

1. A **complex sentence** contains an independent clause and a dependent clause.
2. Although the dependent clause may contain a subject and a verb, it cannot stand alone as a sentence; it is dependent on an independent clause for completeness.
 - She rarely takes vacations because she is the CEO. (*Because she is the CEO* is the dependent clause; *she rarely takes vacations* is the independent clause.)
3. A dependent clause that appears at the beginning of a complex sentence is set off by a comma.
 - If you are going to walk, be sure to stay on the path. (*If you are going to walk* is the dependent clause; *be sure to stay on the path* is the independent clause.)

Compound-Complex Sentence

1. A **compound-complex sentence** contains at least two independent clauses and at least one dependent clause.
 - If you are going to walk, be sure to stay on the path; you will not get lost. (*If you are going to walk* is the dependent clause; *be sure to stay on the path* and *you will not get lost* are the independent clauses.)

DEPENDENT CLAUSES

Dependent clauses can be noun clauses, adjective clauses, or adverbial clauses.

NOUN CLAUSES

1. A **noun clause** functions as a noun.
 - **That she had not finished the paper** was the reason for her low grade. (The noun clause is the subject.)
 - I know **what I will do today**. (The noun clause is the direct object of the verb *know*.)
 - She wondered about **what she should do next**. (The noun clause is the object of the preposition *about*.)

ADJECTIVE (OR RELATIVE) CLAUSES

1. An **adjective clause** points out or describes any noun or pronoun in a sentence.
2. A relative pronoun (*who, whom, whose, which, that*) usually introduces an adjective clause. However, an adjective clause can sometimes be introduced with a relative adverb (*when, where, why*).
 3. Adjective clauses may be **restrictive** or **nonrestrictive**.
 - The car **that is parked by the curb** belongs to me. (The adjective clause restricts meaning to clarify which car.)
 - The car, **which is parked by the curb**, belongs to me. (The adjective clause provides nonessential, additional information about the car.)

ADVERBIAL CLAUSES

1. An **adverbial clause** functions as an adverb.
2. An adverbial clause is introduced by a subordinating conjunction (*after, although, as, as if, because, before, if, since, so that, that, unless, until, when, where, while*).
3. When an adverbial clause begins a sentence, set it off with a comma. Generally, do not use a comma when the adverbial clause appears at the end of a sentence.
 - **Because he stepped on her toe**, she was annoyed. (The adverbial clause modifies the adjective *annoyed*.)
 - She was annoyed **because he stepped on her toe**.

SENTENCE STRUCTURE & CLARITY

Sentences must express complete and clear thoughts.

FRAGMENTS

1. A **sentence fragment** does not express a complete thought because it does not contain both a subject and a predicate. A fragment may also be a dependent clause. For these reasons, a fragment cannot stand on its own as a complete sentence.
 - Enjoyed the movie. (no subject)
 - Speaking of movies, Joe, Lucy, and I. (no predicate)
 - Although I enjoyed the movie. (dependent clause)
2. To fix a fragment, add the missing component or join it with a complete sentence.
 - I enjoyed the movie.
 - Speaking of movies, Joe, Lucy, and I saw *Quakes* yesterday.
 - Although I enjoyed the movie, I prefer romantic comedies.

COMMA SPLICES

1. A **comma splice** occurs when a writer places a comma between the two or more independent clauses in a compound sentence.
 - Bobbie likes John, she loves vacations.
2. To fix a comma splice, use one of these constructions:
 - Bobbie likes John. She loves vacations. (period)
 - Bobbie likes John, **but** she loves vacations. (comma and coordinating conjunction)
 - Bobbie likes John; she loves vacations. (semicolon)
 - Bobbie likes John; **however**, she loves vacations. (semicolon, conjunctive adverb, and comma)
 - **Although** Bobbie likes John, she loves vacations. (subordination)

FUSED OR RUN-ON SENTENCES

1. A **fused or run-on sentence** occurs when a writer places no punctuation between independent clauses.
 - Bobbie likes movies John likes vacations.
2. To fix a fused or run-on sentence, use one of these constructions:
 - Bobbie likes movies. John likes vacations. (period)
 - Bobbie likes movies, **and** John likes vacations. (comma and coordinating conjunction)
 - Bobbie likes movies; John likes vacations. (semicolon)
 - Bobbie likes movies; **however**, John likes vacations. (semicolon, conjunctive adverb, and comma)
 - **Although** Bobbie likes movies, John likes vacations. (subordination)

AGREEMENT

VERBS

1. A **verb** has four basic forms: infinitive (*to* plus the verb stem), past tense, present participle, and past participle. Each form works alone or with other verbs to express times of action and states of being.
 - *to hope* (infinitive)
 - *hoped* (past tense)
 - *hoping* (present participle)
 - *have hoped* (past participle)
2. In addition, a verb has five properties: tense, person, number, voice, and mood.

Tense

1. The **simple tense** of a verb expresses when the action takes place: past, present, or future.
 - I **ride** my scooter. (present)
 - I **rode** my scooter. (past)
 - I **will ride** my scooter. (future)
2. The **perfect tense** of a verb expresses the completeness of an action in relation to another action.
 - I **have ridden** my bike to the park (one complete action), but I **have never ridden** it to the river (an incomplete action).
3. The **progressive tense** of a verb expresses the continuance of an action.
 - I **have been riding** my bike every day for a year.
4. Writers must be careful to maintain a consistent verb tense when writing.
 - I **rode** (past) my bike before I **go** (present) to the store. (inconsistent tense)

- I **rode** my bike before I **went** to the store. (consistent tense)
 - I **ride** my bike before I **go** to the store. (consistent tense)
5. Some verbs, such as *lie* and *lay*, and *set* and *sit*, are a source of confusion for writers.

Verb	Present Tense	Past Tense	Present Participle	Past Participle
<i>lie</i> , meaning "rest or recline"	lie/lies	lay	lying	lain
<i>lay</i> , meaning "to put down"	lay/lays	laid	laying	laid
<i>sit</i> , meaning "rest in a chair"	sit/sits	sat	sitting	sat
<i>set</i> , meaning "to put down"	set/sets	set	setting	set

Person

1. A verb must match the subject in **person**.
 - *I am hoping* for rain. (first person)
 - *You are hoping* for rain. (second person)
 - *He is hoping* for rain. (third person)

Number

1. A verb must match its subject in **number**.
2. A **singular verb** requires a singular subject; a **plural verb** requires a plural subject.
 - The *woman* **was** tall.
 - The *women* **were** tall.

- When two singular subjects are joined by *and*, the verb is plural.
 - The man and the woman were** tall.
- When two subjects are connected by *or*, *either...or*, or *neither...nor*, the verb agrees with the nearest subject.
 - Neither the teacher nor **the students are** tall enough to dunk the basketball.
- When a noun is collective (with or without the suffix *-s*), the verb is generally singular.
 - The tall, coed basketball **team wins** the game.
 - The **news reports** the win.
- With many indefinite pronouns, the verb is third-person singular.
 - Someone is** measuring the height of each man and woman.
- With other indefinite pronouns, use context to determine whether the verb is singular or plural.
 - Some** of the women **are** tall.
 - Some** of the height **comes** from their mothers.
- With relative pronouns, the verb agrees with the antecedent.
 - I have a **teammate who jumps** high.
- When the subject comes after the verb, make sure that the verb agrees with the subject.
 - There **are** three **courses** of action the team can take.
- A verb agrees with the subject, not the subject complement.
 - The strategy **books** that I received **were** technical.

Voice

- In a sentence, a subject may perform or receive the action of a verb. This condition is called **voice**.
- Voice may be active or passive.
- In the **active voice**, the subject does the action.
 - The car **struck** the barn.
 - The bear **stole** the campers' supplies.
- In the **passive voice**, the subject is acted upon. The **passive form** consists of some form of the verb *be* plus the past participle.
 - The barn **was struck** by the car.
 - The campers' supplies **were stolen** by the bear.
- In general, writing should favor the active voice over the passive voice.

Mood

- The **mood** of a verb expresses the writer's attitude toward the action.
- A verb may be indicative, imperative, or subjunctive.
- The **indicative mood** makes a statement or asks a question.
 - It is 40 miles to Gainesville, but we will get there in time.
- The **imperative mood** expresses a command, request, suggestion, or entreaty where the subject (usually the pronoun *you*) is understood.
 - Stop! Please sign the form before returning it. (**NOTE:** This is also an imperative sentence.)
- The **subjunctive mood** equals the past tense in structure and is used after *if* and *wish* when the statement is contrary to reality.
 - I wish I **were** a rich woman. (**NOTE:** Use *were* for both singular and plural subjects.)
 - If I **knew** her number, I **would** call her.

PRONOUNS

Case

- Errors in **pronoun case** occur when a writer uses one type of pronoun to do the job of another.
 - Marco and **me** want to attend the soccer game. (objective pronoun acting as a subjective pronoun)

- The ticket seller was annoyed by **them** chanting. (objective pronoun acting as a possessive pronoun)
- To fix an error in pronoun case, make sure the form of each pronoun matches its function in a sentence.
 - Marco and **I** want to attend the soccer game. (correct use of subjective pronoun)
 - The ticket seller was annoyed by **their** chanting. (correct use of possessive pronoun)

Reference

- Because a pronoun takes the place of a noun, the pronoun must refer clearly to a specific noun.
- Generally, a pronoun refers to the last named noun.
 - Jerome shot the **basketball**, and **it** bounced off the rim.
 - The ball rebounded to **Sharon**, and **she** passed the ball to her teammate.
- If the pronoun reference is unclear, the meaning of the sentence will be unclear, too.
 - I could see the scoreboard and the clock as **it** kept record of the points.
 - What the sentence says:* I could see the scoreboard and the clock as the clock kept record of the points.
 - What the sentence intends to say:* I could see the scoreboard and the clock as the scoreboard kept record of the points.
- To fix a pronoun reference error, you can usually rewrite the sentence so that the pronoun refers to the last named noun.
 - I could see the clock and the **scoreboard** as **it** kept record of the points.

Antecedents

- The noun to which a pronoun refers is called its **antecedent**.
- Pronouns must agree with their antecedents in number, person, and gender.
- Shifts in **pronoun-antecedent agreement** cause confusion for readers.
 - Everybody** (singular) will wear **their** (plural) fan shirts to the game. (number error)
 - Fans** (third person) should bring **your** (second person) signs, horns, and body paint. (person error)
 - If your **parent** does not stay, have **him** leave a contact number. (gender error)
- To fix a pronoun-antecedent error, match the pronoun with the antecedent in number, person, or gender. If the construction becomes awkward, try to recast the sentence.
 - Everybody** will wear **his or her** fan shirt to the game. (awkward); (**You**) Join the fun and wear **your** fan shirt to the game! (different construction)
 - Fans** should bring **their** signs, horns, and body paint.
 - If your **parent** does not stay, have **him or her** leave a contact number.
- Plural antecedents demand plural pronouns.
 - Joe and Suzette** will need **their** megaphones for the game.
- If *or* or *nor* joins singular and plural antecedents, the pronoun agrees with the last named antecedent.
 - Neither Smith nor the **cheerleaders** remembered **their** signs.
- Collective nouns demand singular pronouns unless the participants act as individuals.
 - The **team** appreciates **its** fan support. (The team as a whole appreciates the fan support.)
 - The **team** wrote thank-you notes to **their** fans. (The team members each wrote thank-you notes.)
- Singular indefinite pronouns demand singular pronouns; plural indefinite pronouns demand plural pronouns.
 - Everyone** will wear **his or her** team hat.
 - Many** fans will get **their** autograph books signed.

MISPLACED & DANGLING MODIFIERS

- A **modifier**, such as an adjective or adverb, provides additional information.
- To avoid the confusion of a **misplaced modifier**, place a modifier near its subject in a sentence.
 - The boys unpacked **computers** from the **boxes that were damaged**. (What are damaged? The computers or the boxes?)
 - The boys unpacked **computers that were damaged** from the boxes. (In this case, the author intends to say the computers are damaged.)
- Make sure a modifier gives information about only one subject.
 - The damaged computers that angered **Paulo enormously** amused **Santo**. (Is Paulo enormously angered, or is Santo enormously amused?)
 - The damaged computers that angered Paulo amused **Santo enormously**. (In this case, the author intends to say that Santo is enormously amused.)
- Make sure to state the subject to be modified; an unstated subject produces a dangling modifier.
 - Observing the damaged computers**, a call to the manager was placed. (Who observes the computers?)
 - Observing the damaged computers**, **Paulo** placed a call to the manager. (Paulo observes the computers.)
 - By studying consistently over several weeks**, it was easy to pass the test. (Who studies?)
 - By studying consistently over several weeks**, **Steve** easily passed the test. (Steve studies.)

SENTENCE FLOW & PHRASING Sentences must show fluidity and logic.

PARALLELISM

- To convey comparison or contrast, effective writers use the same form for words, phrases, clauses, or sentences. This practice creates **parallelism**.
 - The horses like prancing, galloping, and to run. (*To run* is not parallel with *prancing* and *galloping*.)
 - The horses like prancing, galloping, and running. (parallel)
 - The horses like to prance, to gallop, and to run. (parallel)

TRANSITIONS

- Transitional words and phrases** help writers convey connections between ideas to readers; for example,
 - Cause and effect:** *as a result, because, consequently, due to*
 - Comparison and contrast:** *however, in contrast, on the other hand, similarly*
 - Summary:** *in fact, in conclusion, in other words, to sum up*
 - Time:** *first, next, soon, then*

WORD CHOICE

- When **choosing words**, identify the type of writing, the purpose, and the audience. Then consider these issues:
 - Bias:** Words that show favoritism toward a particular subject at the expense of another.
 - Clichés:** Words or phrases that are overused and lack originality.
 - Denotation and connotation:** The dictionary definition of a word versus the associations readers make with a word.
 - Formality:** The appropriateness of language for a given purpose and audience, including slang, idioms, or jargon.
 - Tone:** The writer's attitude toward the subject.
 - Wordiness:** The use of many words where a few will yield greater clarity.

ACTION VERBS

- When selecting verbs, choose verbs that favor **action** above states of being whenever possible.
 - I **am** creative. (state of being)
 - I **created** an interactive curriculum for a college-level writing course. (action)

PUNCTUATION & MECHANICS

Use correct punctuation and mechanics to clarify the meanings of sentences.

PUNCTUATION

APOSTROPHES

Apostrophes show possession, plurality, and contracted word forms.

Possession

- Add -'s to form the possessive of most singular nouns, irregular plural nouns not ending in *s*, and indefinite pronouns not ending in *s*.
 - My **mother's** purse held many treasures.
 - The **Women's** League is very active.
 - Can **anyone's** dog enter the kennel show?
- This rule also applies to singular proper nouns ending in *s*, *x*, or *z*.
 - We listened to the stereo in **Chris's** new car.
 - Liz's** dress was the sensation of the party.
 - The Bible speaks admiringly of **Moses's** wisdom.

NOTE: A less common convention is to add only an apostrophe to singular nouns ending in an *s* or *eez* sound if the addition of the -'s would create awkward pronunciation.

- Add only an apostrophe to form the possessive of plural nouns ending in *s*.
 - The **cats'** toys were spread around the room.
 - The latest car designs were engineered for **drivers'** comfort.
 - Did you receive an invitation to the **Vanderbilts'** party?
- To form the possessive of compound nouns, add -'s to only the last word.
 - My **mother-in-law's** furniture was imported from Havana.
 - Webster's **brother-in-law's** office was vandalized.
- To show joint possession, make only the last noun possessive.
 - James and Susan's** dog chased our cat.
- To show individual ownership, make both nouns possessive. In the following sentence, two cars have been vandalized—James's and Susan's:
 - James's** and **Susan's** cars were both vandalized.
- Do not use an apostrophe with possessive pronouns.
 - Ours** is the bright red Mustang. (not *our's*)
 - The squirrel held an acorn in **its** paws. (not *it's*, which is the contraction for *it is*)

Plurality

- Some style guides recommend the use of an apostrophe to form certain plurals, while others do not.
 - Phillip's report card had three **A's** and two **B's**. (Modern Language Association)
 - Phillip's report card had three **As** and two **Bs**. (Chicago, Turabian)

Contractions

- Use an apostrophe to indicate **contractions**, or shortened forms of words. In these cases, the apostrophe indicates missing letters or numbers.
 - I'm** not permitted to enter the restricted zone. (I am)
 - The **'92** hurricane left a wide swath of damage through the Miami area. (1992)
 - Strangely enough, we never had the opportunity to try **fish 'n' chips** while we were in London. (fish and chips)
- Do not confuse contractions with possessive pronouns: for example, *your* (possessive)/*you're* (*you are*), *their* (possessive)/*they're* (*they are*), *its* (possessive)/*it's* (*it is*).

BRACKETS

- Brackets** enclose editorial comments inserted within quoted material.
- Make sure that words in brackets provide context or clarity for the original quotation. Do not use bracketed comments to change the meaning of the original quotation.
 - Machiavelli, the political pragmatist, argues that "princes [i.e., **people in positions of power**] have accomplished most who paid little heed to keeping their promises."

COLONS

- Colons** introduce additions, modifications, and basic examples, including explanations, summaries, series, or quotations.
 - Frank introduced four kinds of fish into his new aquarium: three angels, six tetras, a pair of Bala sharks, and a spotted catfish.
 - After a few months, Frank encountered a problem with his new aquarium setup: algae growth.
 - Tamara suggested a solution: "I keep quite a few snails in my aquarium. They eat the excess algae."
- Do not use a colon inside a main clause.
 - Frank's favorite fish is: the angelfish. (incorrect)
 - Frank's favorite fish is the angelfish. (correct)
- However, a colon may link independent clauses when the second modifies the first.
 - Frank learned a serious lesson about aquarium maintenance: Do not overfeed fish, as this action causes the water to cloud.

NOTE: Some style guides recommend capitalizing the word after the colon, while others only do so if the independent clause before the colon introduces more than one complete sentence.

- A colon has several other uses; for example,
 - Biblical citation:** Genesis 1:1
 - Bibliographic entry:** Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.
 - Formal business letter salutation:** Dear Mr. Brown:
 - Title and subtitle:** *Dudes: My Story*

COMMAS

- Use **commas** to separate main clauses within sentences, which are joined by coordinating conjunctions.
 - Mary counsels students, **and** she volunteers at the local hospital.
 - John planned to invest his tax return, **but** he bought a computer instead.
 - Doug will play the game, **or** he will mow the lawn.
 - I don't smoke, **nor** do I eat near people who smoke.

- Sandra won't be going with us, **for** she returned her application too late.
 - The bank lowered its interest rates, **so** we decided to refinance our mortgage.
 - I haven't seen the new house, **yet** I know how to get there.
- Do not use commas before conjunctions that link phrases.
 - Mary counsels students, and delivers meals to shut-ins. (incorrect)
 - Two inches of snow and a glazing of ice covered the streets. (correct)
 - Use commas to separate elements that introduce and modify sentences.
 - After looking at several cars**, Michael decided on a sporty model.
 - Use commas with **dates** that include a month, day, and year.
 - On **December 7, 1941**, Japanese warplanes bombed Pearl Harbor.
 - On **Wednesday, December 28, 2014**, I will celebrate my 30th birthday.
 - Use commas with **address and place names**.
 - The president of the United States lives at **1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, DC**.
 - We visited **Nashville, Tennessee**, last summer.
 - Use commas with **large numbers**.
 - The city marina cost **\$8,479,000** to construct.
 - Jill's dress has over **2,500** hand-sewn beads.
 - Martin planted **1,500** marigold plants.
 - Use commas with **quotations** to separate the quoted words from the sources.
 - John F. Kennedy said, "Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country."
 - "Sometimes love is stronger than a man's convictions," wrote Isaac Bashevis Singer.
 - "I never forget a face," said Groucho Marx, "but in your case, I'll make an exception."
 - "Don't speak to me," she sighed. "Your words are meaningless."
 - Use commas with **parenthetical words and phrases**.
 - John's new car, **in my opinion**, is a lemon.
 - Use commas with nouns of **direct address**.
 - Adam**, do you want to plant the palms this afternoon?
 - Use commas with **interjections**.
 - Well**, that about does it for today.
 - Use commas with **coordinate adjectives that modify nouns separately**. Coordinate adjectives can be joined with *and*, and their positions can be changed without altering the meaning of the sentence.
 - We felt the **salty, humid** air near the beach. (We felt the **humid, salty** air near the beach.)
 - Martha created a **three-tiered, white, flower-covered** wedding cake for Jason and Renee. (Martha created a **flower-covered, three-tiered, white** wedding cake for Jason and Renee.)
 - Do not use commas with cumulative adjectives. Cumulative adjectives cannot be rearranged because they are different types of adjectives. Their rearrangement would break the general order of adjective progression, as in the second example: determiner (*a*), observation (*mysterious*), physical description (*ancient*), origin (*Greek*), material (*ceramic*), and qualifier (*funeral*).
 - Adam bought **two tall** palms. (Not Adam bought tall two palms.)
 - I found a shard from a **mysterious ancient Greek ceramic funeral urn**. (Not I found a shard from a funeral Greek ancient ceramic mysterious urn.)
 - Use commas with **nonrestrictive elements**. Nonrestrictive elements can be omitted without affecting meaning.
 - Frank's new aquarium, **a marine tank**, hosts brilliant coral and brightly colored fish.
 - Awakened by a strange noise**, Alan wondered whether he remembered to lock the door when he went to bed.
 - Do not use commas to set off **restrictive elements**. Restrictive elements are essential for meaning.
 - The first house on the left is for sale. (*On the left* is needed to show which house is for sale.)
 - Those people who have already purchased tickets may enter the theater now. (*Who have already purchased tickets* is necessary to understand who may enter the theater.)
 - Use commas with **parallel words, phrases, and lists or series**.
 - The department store offered **a suit, a shirt, and a tie** for one low price.
 - The kitten stalked the ball of yarn **behind the curtain, over the television, and under the table**.
 - Marie offered her students a treat if they would **complete their assignment, clean their desks, and stack their books neatly**.
 - Use commas to **prevent misreading and to indicate omissions**.
 - To Susan**, Jason's choice of costume was unacceptable. (The comma clarifies that there are two people: Susan and Jason.)
 - As soon as we left**, Marilyn closed the store. (The comma indicates the omission of *the store*.)
 - Helen bought a new television; Mark, a laser printer; and Sarah, a stereo system. (Commas indicate the omission of the verb *bought*.)

DASHES

- Dashes** emphasize material within a sentence more emphatically than commas.
 - I would suggest—**or should I say, argue**—that all aspects of the present economy must be changed.
 - Three members of the board of regents—even **the newly appointed member**—voted to reduce the education budget.
 - Adam's mother—a **woman of high energy, intelligence, and wit**—always hosts the best parties.
- En dashes** show number ranges.
 - Please read pages **21–53** in your textbook.

ELLIPSES

1. **Ellipsis** points indicate an omission from a direct quotation. Three spaced periods indicate an omission within a quotation; four spaced periods indicate an omission at the end of a sentence in a direct quotation.
 - “Another **problem...is** acid **rain....Researchers** at Yale University studied effects on the rain forest over a period of years.”
2. Ellipsis points can also be used to suggest fragmented speech or a thought that trails off.

END PUNCTUATION

1. **Periods** end most sentences.
 - Mary asked us about selling her house.
2. **Question marks** end direct questions.
 - Is Mary going to sell her house?
3. **Exclamation points** end emphatic statements.
 - No cigars! Put that out now!

HYPHENS

1. **Hyphens** are sometimes used to form compound words, mark line breaks, and indicate certain prefixes. Different reference sources and style guides may give different information regarding hyphens in compound words and prefixes.
 - The **ill-fated** ship sank quickly.
 - The **player-king** delivered his lines expertly.
 - **Anti-imperialist** protesters stood near the **government** building during the **mid-September** meetings.

PARENTHESSES

1. **Parentheses** enclose supplemental information that is not necessary to the meaning of sentences.
 - There are three sections to a thoughtfully composed essay: (1) the introduction, (2) the body, and (3) the conclusion.
 - *Hamlet and the Law of Desire* (1987) suggests that Shakespeare's famous tragedy is about the traditional rite of passage all boys go through as they mature into men.

QUOTATION MARKS

1. Use **quotation marks** to enclose direct quotations. Capitalize the first word of a direct quotation. Do not capitalize the first word in the second part of an interrupted quotation unless the second part begins a new sentence.

- Martha whispered quietly, “I’m scared of the dark.”
 - “**When,**” she breathed, “**do we get out of here?**”
 - “**What if we get stuck in this place?**” she asked.
 - “**I knew I should not have taken up spelunking.**”
2. Do not use quotation marks with indirect quotations.
 - Father said that we should be frugal with our money.
 3. Use quotation marks with **article, essay, and short story titles**.
 - The current edition of *Vanity Fair* contains an article titled “**Raider of the Lost Art.**”
 4. Use quotation marks with **chapter titles**.
 - Susan quoted from chapter 3 of Carole Jackson's *Color Me Beautiful*, “**The Seasonal Palettes.**”
 5. Use quotation marks with **song titles**.
 - The Commodores’ “**Three Times a Lady**” was the number one hit when I graduated from high school.
 6. Use quotation marks with **titles of short poems**.
 - T. S. Eliot’s “**The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock**” remains a landmark poem of the 20th century.
 7. Use quotation marks with **television and radio episode titles**.
 - More people saw “**Going Home,**” the final episode of *M.A.S.H.*, than any other television show to date.
 8. Use quotation marks with **special words, phrases, or sentences**.
 - The phrase “**rule of thumb**” has a violent history.
 - The infamous declaration “**Let them eat cake**” represents the arrogance of the French aristocracy.
 9. Direct quotations longer than four typed lines are set off as **block quotations** by indenting one inch from the left margin. In this format, do not use quotation marks. If the quotation contains multiple paragraphs, use a first paragraph indent for each new paragraph after the first. Include a citation after the closing punctuation, if needed.

There are many reasons why a pond ecosystem fails. For instance, industrial pollution might disrupt the natural biodiversity of the system. Another problem, due in part to industrial pollution, is acid rain, which acidifies the pond system. (53)

10. Periods and commas should go inside ending quotation marks:
 - He said, “Let’s go to the beach today.”
11. Question marks and exclamation points go inside ending quotation marks when they are part of the quoted material but outside when they are not:
 - Frank asked, “When can I add to the fish tank?” (The question mark is part of the quoted material.)
 - Do you agree or disagree with the saying, “A penny saved is a penny earned”? (The question mark is not part of the quoted material.)

SEMICOLONS

1. **Semicolons** join related main clauses when there are no coordinating conjunctions.
 - I will not paint the house; you can’t make me.
 - Sally built a tree house; she painted it blue.
2. Semicolons work with conjunctive adverbs to join main clauses.
 - I would like to go to the museum with you; **however**, I must visit my dentist instead.
 - Jim had given much thought to his future; **therefore**, it came as no surprise when he returned to school.
 - The audience was sparse; **in fact**, there were only five people.
 - I want to travel this summer; **accordingly**, I will have to save money this winter.
 - Six people saw the bandit leaving the store; **moreover**, one customer even got his tag number.
3. Semicolons separate **items in series** that contain commas.
 - I packed my suitcase with **old, comfortable jeans; rugged, warm sweaters; and new, freshly starched shirts.**

SLASHES

1. **Slashes** indicate options and unindented lines of poetry.
 - Please use your book **and/or** calculator.
 - A good professor is a true **teacher/scholar**.
 - Many children recognize these famous lines: “’Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the **house / Not** a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.” (NOTE: A space is used before and after the slash when quoting lines of poetry.)

MECHANICS

ABBREVIATIONS

1. **Abbreviations** are shortened forms of common words or phrases.
2. While it is acceptable to use common abbreviations, avoid unfamiliar abbreviations.
3. Some abbreviations appear in all capital letters without punctuation, and others utilize lowercase letters and punctuation; for example,
 - **Acronyms:** AIDS, NASA, AIDS
 - **Latin abbreviations:** i.e., e.g., et al., etc.
 - **Organizations:** CIA, FBI
 - **Titles:** Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr., St.
 - **Years and times:** a.m., p.m., BCE, CE

CAPITALIZATION

1. In addition to capitalizing the first word in a sentence, use **capital letters** in the following cases:
 - **Calendar terminology:** Monday, April, Christmas
 - **Historical items:** World War II, the Emancipation Proclamation, the Gaza Strip
 - **Proper names and adjectives:** George Washington, Italian wine, Pacific Ocean
 - **Quotations that are uninterrupted complete sentences:** “To be, or not to be, that is the question: Whether ’tis nobler in the mind to suffer,” queries Hamlet. (Do not use a capital letter when the quotation is a fragment or when the quotation is the second half of an interrupted complete quotation.)

- **Religious terminology:** Allah, Christians, Judaism
- **Titles:** *Gone with the Wind*, *Star Wars*, *Sense and Sensibility*
- **Titles or ranks that appear before a name:** Dr. Mackenzie Wiggin, President Bill Clinton, Professor Baker

NOTE: Consult a dictionary if you are unsure as to whether a noun should be capitalized.

ITALICS

1. **Italic font** indicates titles of books, magazines, newspapers, plays, long poems, and other long works.
 - My sister can recite passages from *Walden*.
 - *Newsweek* is my favorite news magazine.
 - Daniel bought a copy of the *L.A. Times*.
 - Professor Briggs can read *Paradise Lost* in Italian.

NUMBERS

1. While many style guides differ regarding the treatment of **numbers**, these general guidelines may prove helpful when determining whether to write a number numerically or linguistically:
 - **One or two-word numbers:** twenty-five
 - **Numbers of more than two words:** 19,830 or forty-seven thousand people
 - **Addresses, dates, times, and numerical values:** 12 N. 1st St.; April 6, 1968; 3:20 p.m.; three o’ clock; 50 percent
- NOTE:** A number beginning a sentence is always spelled out (e.g., **One** day, I will be a star.)

PARAGRAPHING

1. Begin a new paragraph when there is a change in any of the following:
 - **Idea:** The yogurt is creamy; The yogurt is flavorful; The yogurt is healthy.
 - **Scene:** In the library...; Outside the door...; At the park...
 - **Speaker:** “Are you hungry?” asked Stuart. “Yes,” answered Kevin.
 - **Time:** Later that day...; In two hours...; Tomorrow...

SPELLING

1. Use these tips to improve your **spelling**:
 - Maintain a personalized list of frequently misspelled words. Here are some common culprits: *absence*, *brilliant*, and *celebrate*. For more, see the **Dictionary of Commonly Confused & Misspelled Words** QuickStudy guide.
 - Use methods of memorization such as mnemonics, association, repetition, categorization, or sentence clues to learn the words on this personalized list; for example, “An absence from class will earn you a C.”
 - Be familiar with **homophones**, or words with similar sounds but different meanings and spellings, such as the following: *ascent/assent*, *canvas/canvass*, and *foreword/forward*.
 - Use resources such as computer spell-check programs and dictionaries for reference whenever there is uncertainty regarding spelling.