

The Elements of Style

William Strunk, Jr.

E. B. White

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Foreword

Introduction

1 Elementary Rules of Usage

- 1.1 Form the possessive singular of nouns by adding 's.
- 1.2 In a series of 3 or more terms with a single conjunction, use a comma after each term except the last.
- 1.3 Enclose parenthetic expressions between commas.
- 1.4 Place a comma before a conjunction introducing an independent clause.
- 1.5 Do not join independent clauses with a comma.
- 1.6 Do not break sentences in 2.
- 1.7 Use a colon after an independent clause to introduce a list of particulars, an appositive, an amplification, or an illustrative quotation.
- 1.8 Use a dash to set off an abrupt break or interruption & to announce a long appositive or summary.
- 1.9 The number of the subject determines the number of the verb.
- 1.10 Use the proper case of pronoun.
- 1.11 A participial phrase at the beginning of a sentence must refer to the grammatical subject.

2 Elementary Principles of Composition

- 2.1 Choose a suitable design & hold to it.
- 2.2 Make the paragraph the unit of composition: 1 paragraph to each topic.
- 2.3 Use the active voice.
- 2.4 Put statements in positive form.
- 2.5 Use definite, specific, concrete language.
- 2.6 Omit needless words.
- 2.7 Avoid a succession of loose sentences.
- 2.8 Express coordinate ideas in similar form.
- 2.9 Keep related words together.
- 2.10 In summaries, keep to 1 tense.
- 2.11 Place the emphatic words of a sentence at the end.

3 A Few Matters of Form

4 Words & Expressions Commonly Misused

5 An Approach to Style (With a List of Reminders)

- 5.1 Place yourself in the background.
- 5.2 Write in a way that comes naturally.
- 5.3 Work from a suitable design.