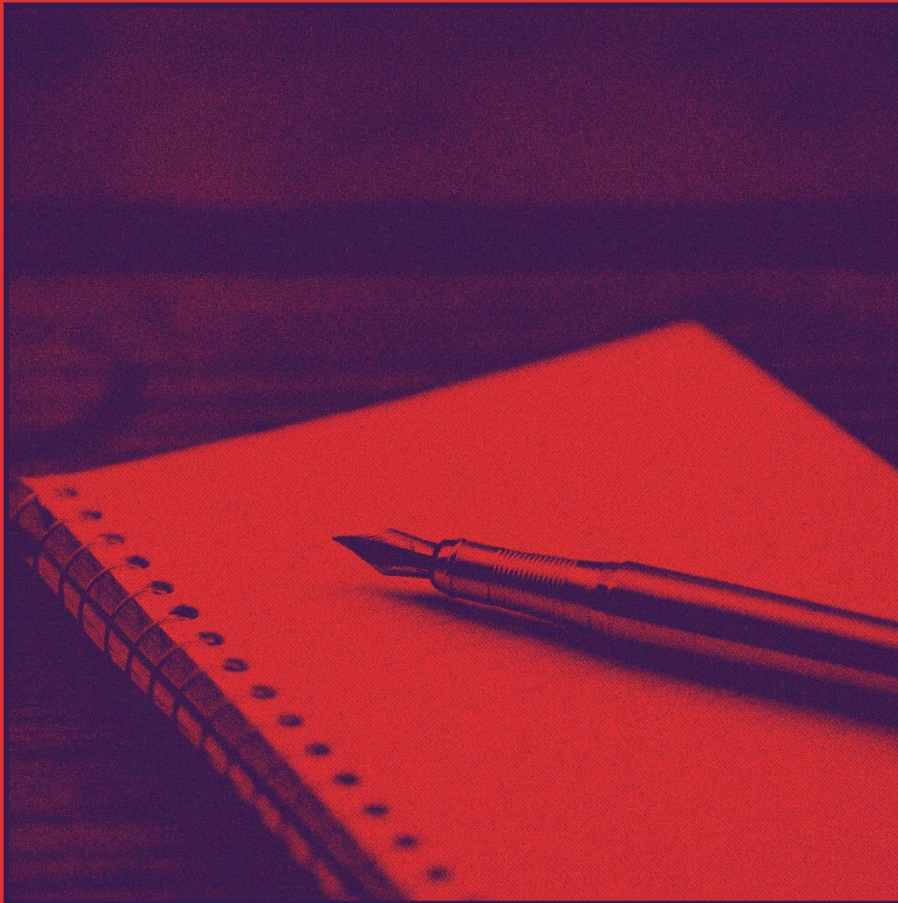# Grammar Guide

COLLEGE OF THE CANYONS

ENG
101

English 101 Grammar Guide

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Table of Contents

Part 1: Grammar Basics: Parts of Speech and Syntax

Chapter 1: Parts of Speech

1.A NOUNS

Nouns are a diverse group of words, and they are very common in English. Nouns are a category of words defining **things**—people, places, items, concepts.

As we've just learned, a noun is the name of a person (Dr. Sanders), place (Lawrence, Kansas, factory, home), thing (scissors, saw, book), or idea (love, truth, beauty, intelligence).

Let's look at the following examples to get a better idea of how nouns work in sentences. All of the nouns have been bolded:

- The one **experiment** that has been given the most **attention** in the **debate** on **saccharin** is the 1977 Canadian **study** done on **rats**.
- The multi-fuel **capacity** of the Stirling **engine** gives it a versatility not possible in the internal combustion **engine**.
- The regenerative cooling **cycle** in the **engines** of the Space **Shuttle** is made up of high pressure **hydrogen** that flows in **tubes** connecting the **nozzle** and the combustion **chamber**.

Types of Nouns

Of the many different categories of nouns, a couple deserve closer attention here.

Common vs. Proper Noun
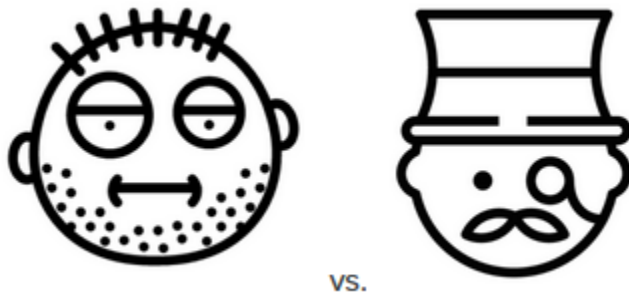
Common nouns are generic words, like *tissue*. They are lower-cased (unless they begin a sentence). A proper noun, on the other hand, is the name of a specific thing, like the brand name *Kleenex*. Proper nouns are always capitalized.

- common noun: name

- proper noun: Ester

Concrete vs. Abstract Noun

VS.
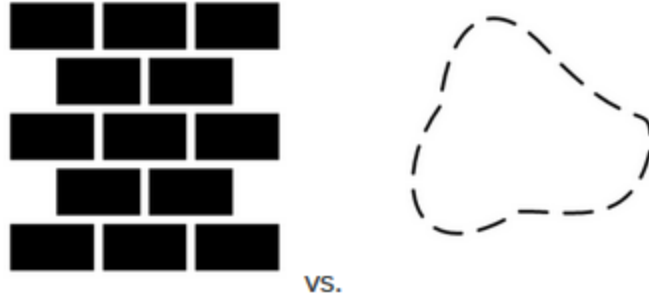
Concrete nouns are things you can hold, see, or otherwise sense, like *book*, *light*, or *warmth*.

Abstract nouns, on the other hand, are (as you might expect) abstract concepts, like *time* and *love*.

- concrete noun: rock

- abstract noun: justice

The rest of this section will dig into other types of nouns: count v. non-count nouns, compound nouns, and plural nouns.

Exercise 1-1

Underline all of the nouns in the sentences below.

1. In the advertisement by Conservation International, Julia Roberts makes an impassioned case for preserving nature.

2. The presidential candidate's rhetoric was impassioned but nonsensical.

3. The rapper Kendrick Lamar's album To Pimp a Butterfly is an example of what music critic James D. McLeod Jr. describes as "existentialist hip hop."

4. Climate change is one of the serious challenges the world has ever faced.

5. Recently, a controversy erupted over who would head the Smithsonian.

1.B PRONOUNS

Anna decided at the beginning of Anna's first semester of college that Anna would run for thirty minutes every day. Anna knew that Anna would be taking a literature class with a lot of reading, so instead of buying print copies of all the novels Anna's teacher assigned, Anna bought the audiobooks. That way Anna could listen to the audiobooks as Anna ran.

Did this paragraph feel awkward to you? Let's try it again using pronouns:

Anna decided at the beginning of **her** first semester of college that **she** would run for thirty minutes every day. **She** knew that **she** would be taking a literature class with a lot of reading, so instead of buying hard copies of all the novels **her** teacher assigned, Anna bought the audiobooks. That way **she** could listen to **them** as **she** ran.

This second paragraph is much more natural. Instead of repeating nouns multiple times, we were able to use pronouns. You've likely hear the phrase "a pronoun replaces a noun"; this is *exactly* what a pronoun does. Because a pronoun is replacing a noun, its meaning is dependent on the noun that it is replacing. This noun is called the **antecedent**. Let's look at the two sentences we just read again:

- Because a pronoun is replacing a noun, **its** meaning is dependent on the noun that **it** is replacing. This noun is called an **antecedent**.

There are two pronouns here: *its* and *it*. *Its* and *it* both have the same antecedent: "a pronoun." Whenever you use a pronoun, you must also include its antecedent. Without the antecedent, your readers (or listeners) won't be able to figure out what the pronoun is referring to. Let's look at a couple of examples:

- Jason likes it when people look to him for leadership.

- Trini brushes her hair every morning.

- Billy often has to clean his glasses.

- Kimberly is a gymnast. She has earned several medals in different competitions.

So, what are the antecedents and pronouns in these sentences?

- *Jason* is the antecedent for the pronoun *him*.

- *Trini* is the antecedent for the pronoun *her*.

- *Billy* is the antecedent for the pronoun *his*.

- *Kimberly* is the antecedent for the pronoun *she*.

Practice

1. The bus is twenty minutes late today, like it always is.

2. I would never be caught dead wearing boot sandals. They are an affront to nature.

There are several types of pronouns, including personal, demonstrative, indefinite, and relative pronouns. The next few pages will cover each of these.

1.B.1 PERSONAL PRONOUNS

Personal pronouns are what most people think of when they see the word *pronoun*. Personal pronouns include words like *he*, *she*, and *they*. The following sentences give examples of personal pronouns used with antecedents (remember, an antecedent is the noun that a pronoun refers to!):

- **That man** looks as if **he** needs a new coat. (the noun phrase *that man* is the antecedent of *he*)

- **Kat** arrived yesterday. I met **her** at the station. (*Kat* is the antecedent of *her*)

- When **they** saw us, **the lions** began roaring (*the lions* is the antecedent of *they*)

- **Adam and I** were hoping no one would find **us**. (*Adam and I* is the antecedent of *us*)

Note: Pronouns like *I*, *we*, and *you* don't always require an explicitly stated antecedent. When a speaker says something like "I told you the zoo was closed today," it's implied that the speaker is the antecedent for *I* and the listener is the antecedent for *you*.

Pronouns may be classified by three categories: person, number, and case.

Person

Person refers to the relationship that an author has with the text that he or she writes, and with the reader of that text. English has three persons (first, second, and third):

- **First-person** is the speaker or writer him- or herself. The first person is personal (*I, we*, etc.)

- **Second-person** is the person who is being directly addressed. The speaker or author is saying this is about you, the listener or reader.

- **Third-person** is the most common person used in academic writing. The author is saying this is about other people. In the third person singular there are distinct pronoun forms for male, female, and neutral gender.

Person		Pronouns
First		I, me, we, us
Second		You
Third	Male	He, him
	Female	She, her
	Neutral	It, they, them

Practice 1
Select the response from the list that best completes the sentence.

1. Sandra often put other people's needs before her own. That's why people loved (her / me) so much.

2. Vindira and Frank always let us know when (he / they) were coming into town.

3. I told Bruno (he / it) will need three things in order to be successful: determination, discipline, and dexterity.

Number

There are two **numbers**: **singular** and **plural**. As we learned in nouns, singular words refer to only one a thing while plural words refer to more than one of a thing (*I* stood alone while *they* walked together).

Person	Number	Pronouns
First	Singular	I, me
	Plural	We, us
Second	Singular	You
	Plural	You
Third	Singular	It
	Plural	They, them

Case

English personal pronouns have two cases: **subject** and **object** (there are also possessive pronouns, which we'll discuss next). **Subject-case pronouns** are used when the pronoun is doing the action. (I like to eat chips, but she does not). **Object-case pronouns** are used when something is being done to the pronoun (John likes me but not her).

Select the response from the list that best completes the sentence.

1. I don't know if I should talk to (he / him). (He / Him) looks really angry today.

2. Enrico and Brenna are coming over for dinner tomorrow night. (They / Them) will be here at 6:00.

3. Melissa loves music. (She / Her) listens to it when I drive (she / her) to work.

Reflexive Pronouns

Reflexive pronouns are a kind of pronoun that are used when the subject and the object of the sentence are the same.

- **Jason** hurt **himself**. (*Jason* is the antecedent of *himself*)

- **We** were teasing **each other**. (*we* is the antecedent of *each other*)

This is true even if the subject is only implied, as in the sentence "Don't hurt yourself." *You* is the unstated subject of this sentence.

Practice 3

Read at the following sentences. Should the reflexive pronoun be used? Why or why not?

1. Aisha let (her / herself) in when she arrived.

2. Feel free to let (you / yourself) in when you get here!

3. Andrés asked Jada if she would let (him / himself) in when (she / herself) arrived.

Possessive Pronouns

Possessive pronouns are used to indicate possession (in a broad sense). Some occur as independent phrases: *mine*, *yours*, *hers*, *ours*, *yours*, *theirs*. For example, "Those clothes are **mine**." Others must be accompanied by a noun: *my*, *your*, *her*, *our*, *your*, *their*, as in "I lost **my** wallet." *His* and *its* can fall into either category, although *its* is nearly always found in the second.

Both types replace possessive noun phrases. As an example, "Their crusade to capture our attention" could replace "The advertisers' crusade to capture our attention."

Practice 4

Select the response from the list that best completes the sentence.

1. Hey, that's (my / mine)!

2. Carla gave Peter (her / hers) phone number.

3. Remember to leave (their / theirs) papers on the table.

Review

The table below includes all of the personal pronouns in the English language. They are organized by person, number, and case:

Person	Number	Subject	Object	Reflexive	Possessive	
First	Singular	I	Me	Myself	My	mine
	Plural	We	Us	Ourselves	Our	ours
Second	Singular	You	You	Yourself	Your	yours
	Plural	You	You	Yourselves	Your	yours
Third	Singular	He	Him	Herself	His	his
		She	Her	Itself	Her	hers
		It	It		Its	its
	Plural	They	Them	Themselves	Their	theirs

1.B.II DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

Demonstrative pronouns substitute for things being pointed out. They include *this*, *that*, *these*, and *those*. *This* and *that* are singular; *these* and *those* are plural.

The difference between *this* and *that* and between *these* and *those* is a little more subtle. *This* and *these* refer to something that is "close" to the speaker, whether this closeness is physical, emotional, or temporal. *That* and *those* are the opposite: they refer to something that is "far."

- Do I actually have to read all of *this*?

    o The speaker is indicating a text that is close to her, by using "this."

- *That* is not coming anywhere near me.

    o The speaker is distancing himself from the object in question, which he doesn't want to get any closer. The far pronoun helps indicate that.

- You're telling me you sewed all of *these*?

    o The speaker and her audience are likely looking directly at the clothes in question, so the close pronoun is appropriate.

- *Those* are all gross.

  o The speaker wants to remain away from the gross items in question, by using the far "those."

Note: these pronouns are often combined with a noun. When this happens, they act as a kind of adjective instead of as a pronoun.

- Do I actually have to read all of this contract?
- That thing is not coming anywhere near me.
- You're telling me you sewed all of these dresses?
- Those recipes are all gross.

The antecedents of demonstrative pronouns (and sometimes the pronoun it) can be more complex than those of personal pronouns:

- Animal Planet's puppy cam has been taken down for maintenance. I never wanted this to happen.
- I love Animal Planet's panda cam. I watched a panda eat bamboo for half an hour. It was amazing.

In the first example, the antecedent for this is the concept of the puppy cam being taken down. In the second example, the antecedent for it in this sentence is the experience of watching the panda. That antecedent isn't explicitly stated in the sentence, but comes through in the intention and meaning of the speaker.

Practice

In the following sentences, determine if *this*, *that*, *these*, or *those* should be used.

1. Lara looked at her meal in front of her. "_____ looks great!" she said.

2. Tyesha watched the '67 Mustang drive down the street. "What I wouldn't give for one of _____."

3. "What do you think of _____?" Ashley asked, showing me the three paint samples she had picked out.

1.B.III INDEFINITE PRONOUNS

These pronouns can be used in a couple of different ways:

- They can refer to members of a group separately rather than collectively. (*To **each** his or her own.*)

- They can indicate the non-existence of people or things. (***Nobody** thinks that.*)

- They can refer to a person, but are not specific as to first, second or third person in the way that the personal pronouns are. (***One** does not clean **one's** own windows.*)

Please note that all of these pronouns are singular. The table below shows the most common indefinite pronouns:

Anybody	Anyone	Anything	Each	Either	Every
Everybody	Everyone	Everything	Neither	No one	Nobody
Nothing	Nobody else	Somebody	Someone	Something	One

Note: Sometimes third-person personal pronouns are sometimes used without antecedents—this applies to special uses such as dummy pronouns and generic *they*, as well as cases where the referent is implied by the context.

- You know what *they* say.

- *It's* a nice day today.

Please note that all of these pronouns are singular. Look back at the example "To **each** his or her own." Saying "To each their own" would be incorrect, since *their* is a plural pronoun and *each* is singular.

Practice

Identify the indefinite pronouns in the following sentences. Is the best indefinite used, or is there another indefinite that would fit better?

1. Everyone should take the time to critically think about what he or she wants out of life.

2. If I had to choose between singing in public and swimming with leeches, I would choose neither.

3. Yasmin knew everything was wrong, but she couldn't figure out what.

4. If nobody else enrolls in this class, it will be cancelled this semester.

Exercise 1-2:

Underline the pronouns in the following sentences.

1. Sofía loved her mother with a devotion that was almost religious.

2. In the summer, temperatures rise for above those that we have previously known.

3. Professor Williams has struggled to improve her student success rates despite intensive revisions to her pedagogy.

4. Their dog tore through our yard, making a mess of things.

5. Did you find your keys?

1.C VERBS

From 2002 to 2006, The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) ran a media campaign entitled "Verb: It's What You Do." This campaign was designed to help teens get and stay active, but it also provided a helpful soundbite for defining verbs: "It's what you do."

Verbs are often called the "action" words of language. As we discuss verbs, we will learn that this isn't always the case, but it is a helpful phrase to remember just what verbs are.

Traditionally, verbs are divided into three groups: active verbs (these are "action" words), linking verbs, and helping verbs (these two types of verbs are *not* "action" words). In this outcome, we'll discuss all three of these groups. We'll also learn how verbs work and how they change to suit the needs of a speaker or writer.

1.C.I ACTIVE VERBS

Active verbs are the simplest type of verb: they simply express some sort of action.

Let's look at example verbs:

- *contain*

- *roars*

- *runs*

- *sleeps*

All of these verbs are active verbs: they all express an action.

Practice

Identify the active verbs in the following sentences:

1. Dominic paints the best pictures of meerkats.

2. Sean's hair curled really well today.

3. Elephants roam the savanna.

4. Billy ate an entire loaf of bread in one sitting.

1.C.II TRANSITIVE AND INTRANSITIVE VERBS

Active verbs can be divided into two categories: transitive and intransitive verbs. A **transitive verb** is a verb that requires one or more objects. This contrasts with intransitive verbs, which do not have objects.

It might be helpful to think of it this way: transitive verbs have to be *done to* something or someone in the sentence. Intransitive verbs only have to be done *by* someone.

Let's look at a few examples of transitive verbs:

- We are going to **need** a bigger boat.

  - The object in this sentence is the phrase "a bigger boat." Consider how incomplete the thought would be if the sentence only said "We are going to need." Despite having a subject and a verb, the sentence is meaningless without the object phrase.

- She hates **filling out** forms.

  - Again, leaving out the object would cripple the meaning of the sentence. We have to know that *forms* is what she hates filling out.

  - *Hates* is also a transitive verb. Without the phrase "filling out forms," the phrase "She hates" doesn't make any sense.

- Sean **hugged** his brother David.

  - You can see the pattern. . . . *Hugged* in this sentence is only useful if we know who Sean squeezed. David is the object of the transitive verb.

Intransitive verbs, on the other do not take an object.

- John **sneezed** loudly.

  - Even though there's another word after *sneezed*, the full meaning of the sentence is available with just the subject *John* and the verb *sneezed*: "John sneezed." Therefore, *sneezed* is an intransitive verb. It doesn't have to be done to something or someone.

- My computer completely **died**.

  - Again, *died* here is enough for the sentence to make sense. We know that the computer (the subject) is what died.

Note: there are some verbs that can act as both transitive and intransitive verbs

Intransitive	Transitive
The fire has burned for hundreds of years.	Miranda Burned all of her old school papers.
Don't let the engine stop running!	Karl ran the best horse track this side of the river.
The vase broke.	She broke the toothpick.
Does your dog bite?	The cat bit him.
Water evaporates when it's hot.	Heat evaporates water.

Practice

Read the following sentences. Are the verbs in each transitive or intransitive?

1. Liv fell out of the car.

2. Ian has written over four hundred articles on the subject.

3. Christopher sings really well.

4. Marton wondered about a lot of things.

5. Cate gave great gifts.

Multi-Word Verbs

Multi-word verbs a subclass of active verbs. They are made up of multiple words, as you might have guessed. They include things like *stirfry*, *kickstart*, and *turn in*. Multi-word verbs often have a slightly different meaning than their base parts. Take a look at the difference between the next two sentences:

- Ben carried the boxes out of the house.

- Ben carried out the task well.

The first sentence uses a single word verb (*carried*) and the preposition *out*. If you remove the preposition (and its object), you get "Ben carried the boxes," which makes perfect sense. In the second sentence, *carried out* acts as a single entity. If you remove *out*, the sentence has no meaning: "Ben carried the task well" doesn't make sense.

Let's look at another example:

- She's been shut up in there for years.

- Dude, shut up.

Can you see how the same principles apply here? Other multi-word verbs include *find out*, *make off with*, *turn in*, and *put up with*.

1.C.III HELPING VERBS

Helping verbs (sometimes called *auxiliary verbs*) are, as the name suggests, verbs that help another verb. They provide support and add additional meaning. Here are some examples of helping verbs in sentences:

- Mariah **is** looking for her keys still.

- Kai **had** checked the weather three times already, but he looked one more time to see if the forecast **had** changed.

- What ever happens, **do** *not* let the water level drop below this line.

As you just saw, helping verbs are usually pretty short, and they include things like *is*, *had*, and *do* (we'll look at a more complete list later). Let's look at some more examples to examine exactly what these

verbs do. Take a look at the sentence "I have finished my dinner." Here, the main verb is *finish*, and the helping verb *have* helps to express tense. Let's look at two more examples:

- By 1967, about 500 U.S. citizens **had** received heart transplants.

    - While *received* could function on its own as a complete thought here, the helping verb *had* emphasizes the distance in time of the date in the opening phrase.

- **Do** you want tea?

    - *Do* is a helping verb accompanying the main verb *want*, used here to form a question.

- Researchers **are** finding that propranolol is effective in the treatment of heartbeat irregularities.

    - The helping verb *are* indicates the present tense, and adds a sense of continuity to the verb *finding*.

- He **has** given his all.

    - *Has* is a helping verb used in expressing the tense of *given*.

The following table provides a short list of some verbs that can function as helping verbs, along with examples of the way they function.

Verb	Function	Examples
Be	Express tense and a sense of continuity	He <u>is</u> sleeping.
	Express tense and indicate the passive voice	They <u>were</u> seen.
Can	Express Ability	I <u>can</u> swim. Such things <u>can</u> help.
Could	Express ability (past tense)	I <u>could</u> swim.
	Express possibility	That <u>could</u> help.
Dare	Express willingness	Who <u>dares</u> enter here?
Do	Express negation (requires the word *not*)	You <u>do</u> not understand
	Ask a question	<u>Do</u> you want to go?
Have	Express tense and a sense of completion	They <u>have</u> understood.
May	Ask permission	<u>May</u> I stay?
	Express possibility	That <u>may</u> take place.
Might	Express possibility	We <u>might</u> give it a try.
Must	Express a command	You <u>must</u> not mock me.
	Express confidence in a fact	It <u>must</u> have rained.
Need	Express command/request	You <u>need</u> not water the grass.
Ought	Express a command/request	You <u>ought</u> to play well.
Shall	Express commitment	You <u>shall</u> not pass.
Should	Express a request	You <u>should</u> listen.
	Express likelihood	That <u>should</u> help.
Will	Express future tense	We <u>will</u> eat pie.

	Express confidence in a future occurrence	He <u>will</u> make that mistake every time.
Would	Express future likelihood	Nothing <u>would</u> accomplish that.
	Express "future in the past"	After 1900, we <u>would</u> do that again.
	Express habitual actions in the past	Back then we <u>would</u> always go there.

The negative forms of these words (*can't*, *don't*, *won't*, etc.) are also helping verbs.

Note: The helping verbs *to be*, *to have*, and *would* are used to indicate tense.

Practice
Identify the helping verbs in the sentences below:

1. Damian can't work tonight. Do you want his shift?

2. Cassandra couldn't afford to give up.

3. Richard was exercising when Barbara finally found him.

1.C.IV MAIN VERBS
The main verb is the most important verb in the sentence. It is always what expresses the central action or the state of being of the subject. Main verbs can be by themselves or they can be accompanied by a helping verb.

Exercise 1-3:

Underline the verbs in the following sentences, including the helping verbs.

1. Although the title would imply differently, Bill McKibben's The End of Nature actually describes the end of the wilderness rather than the end of nature.

2. English 101 will lead to your success in college.

3. Biodiversity is important to the overall health of an ecosystem.

4. Beyoncé's video "Formation" challenged some members of her audience to accept a more overtly political version of the pop star.

5. Struck with an intense craving, Chelsea needed to eat at Crab n' Spice.

1.D ADJECTIVES

An adjective modifies a noun; that is, it provides more detail about a noun. This can be anything from color to size to temperature to personality. Adjectives usually occur just before the nouns they modify. In the following examples, adjectives are in bold, while the nouns they modify are in italics (the **big** *bear*):

- The generator is used to convert **mechanical** *energy* into **electrical** *energy*.

- The **steel** *pipes* contain a **protective sacrificial** *anode* and are surrounded by **packing** *material*.

Adjectives can also follow a linking verb. In these instances, adjectives can modify pronouns as well. In the following examples, adjectives are still bold, while the linking verb is in italics this time (the sun *is* **yellow**):

- The schoolhouse *was* **red**.

- I *looked* **good** today.

- She *was* **funny**.

Numbers can also be adjectives in some cases. When you say "Seven is my lucky number," *seven* is a noun, but when you say "There are seven cats in this painting," *seven* is an adjective because it is modifying the noun *cats*.

1.E ADVERBS

Adverbs can perform a wide range of functions: they can modify verbs, adjectives, and even other adverbs. They can come either before or after the word they modify. In the following examples, adverbs are in bold, while the words they modify are in italics (the **quite** *handsome* man):

- The desk is made of an **especially** *corrosion-resistant industrial* steel.

- The power company uses huge generators which are **generally** *turned* by steam turbines.

- Jaime won the race, because he *ran* **quickly**.

- This fence was *installed* **sloppily**. It needs to be redone.

An adverb may provide information about the manner, place, time, frequency, certainty, or other circumstances of the activity indicated by the verb. Some examples, where again the adverb is in bold and the words modified are in italics:

- Suzanne sang **loudly** (*loudly* modifies the verb *sang*, indicating the manner of singing)

- We left it **here** (*here* modifies the verb phrase *left it*, indicating place)

- I worked **yesterday** (*yesterday* modifies the verb *worked*, indicating time)

- He **undoubtedly** did it (*undoubtedly* modifies the verb phrase *did it*, indicating certainty)

- You **often** make mistakes (*often* modifies the verb phrase *make mistakes*, indicating frequency)

They can also modify noun phrases, prepositional phrases, or whole clauses or sentences, as in the following examples. Once again the adverbs are in bold, while the words they modify are in italics.

- I bought **only** the fruit (*only* modifies the noun phrase *the fruit*)

- Roberto drove us **almost** to the station (*almost* modifies the prepositional phrase *to the station*)

- **Certainly** we need to act (*certainly* modifies the sentence as a whole)

Practice

Identify the adverbs in these paragraphs:

Mass extinctions are insanely catastrophic—but important—events that punctuate the history of life on Earth. The Jurassic/Cretaceous boundary was originally thought of to represent a mass extinction, but has subsequently been "downgraded" to a minor extinction event based on new discoveries.

However, compared to other important stratigraphic boundaries, like the end-Triassic or the end-Cretaceous, the Jurassic/Cretaceous boundary remains really poorly understood.

Exercise 1-4

Identify all the adjectives and adverbs in the sentences below.

1. The political radical Emma Goldman dedicated herself to changing an unjust social order.

2. Paul Revere rode quickly through Concord and loudly proclaimed, "The British are coming!"

3. Bruce Lee's fast punches and agile footwork made him a living legend in the world of martial arts.

4. Quickly, let's go!

5. A pungent smell wafted lazily through the cool night air.

1.F PREPOSITIONS

Prepositions are relation words; they can indicate location, time, or other more abstract relationships. Prepositions are noted in bold in these examples:

- The woods **behind** my house are super creepy **at** night.

- She sang **until** three in the morning.

- He was happy **for** them.

A preposition combines with another word (usually a noun or pronoun) called the complement. Prepositions are still in bold, and their complements are in italics:

- The woods **behind** *my house* are super creepy **at** *night*.

- She sang **until** *three in the morning*.

- He was happy **for** *them*.

Prepositions generally come before their complements (e.g., **in** England, **under** the table, **of** Jane). However, there are a small handful of exceptions, including **notwithstanding** and **ago**:

- *Financial limitations* **notwithstanding**, Phil paid back his debts.

- He was released *three days* **ago**.

Prepositions of location are pretty easily defined (*near*, *far*, *over*, *under*, etc.), and prepositions about time are as well (*before*, *after*, *at*, *during*, etc.). Prepositions of "more abstract relationships," however, are a little more nebulous in their definition.

So far, all of the prepositions we've looked at have been one word (and most of them have been one syllable). The most common prepositions are one-syllable words. According to one ranking, the most common English prepositions are *on*, *in*, *to*, *by*, *for*, *with*, *at*, *of*, *from*, *as*.

There are also some prepositions that have more than one word:

- in spite of (She made it to work in spite of the terrible traffic.)

- by means of (He traveled by means of boat.)

- except for (Joan invited everyone to her party except for Ben.)

- next to (Go ahead and sit down next to Jean-Claude.)

1.G CONJUNCTIONS

Conjunctions are the words that join sentences, phrases, and other words together. Conjunctions are divided into several categories, all of which follow different rules. We will discuss coordinating conjunctions, adverbial conjunctions, and correlative conjunctions.

Coordinating Conjunctions
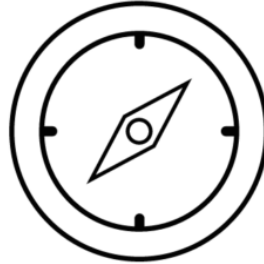
The most common conjunctions are *and*, *or*, and *but*. These are all **coordinating conjunctions**. Coordinating conjunctions are conjunctions that join, or coordinate, two or more equivalent items (such as words, phrases, or sentences). The mnemonic acronym *FANBOYS* can be used to remember the most common coordinating conjunctions: *for*, *and*, *nor*, *but*, *or*, *yet*, and *so*.

- **For:** presents a reason ("They do not gamble or smoke, for they are ascetics.")

- **And:** presents non-contrasting items or ideas ("They gamble, and they smoke.")

- **Nor:** presents a non-contrasting negative idea ("They do not gamble, nor do they smoke.")

- **But:** presents a contrast or exception ("They gamble, but they don't smoke.")

- **Or:** presents an alternative item or idea ("Every day they gamble, or they smoke.")

- **Yet:** presents a contrast or exception ("They gamble, yet they don't smoke.")

- **So:** presents a consequence ("He gambled well last night, so he smoked a cigar to celebrate.")

Here are some examples of these used in sentences:

- Nuclear-powered artificial hearts proved to be complicated, bulky, **and** expensive.

- In the 1960s, artificial heart devices did not fit well **and** tended to obstruct the flow of venous blood into the right atrium.

- The blood vessels leading to the device tended to kink, obstructing the filling of the chambers **and** resulting in inadequate output.

- Any external injury **or** internal injury put patients at risk of uncontrolled bleeding because the small clots that formed throughout the circulatory system used up so much of the clotting factor.

- The current from the storage batteries can power lights, **but** the current for appliances must be modified within an inverter.

Practice 1

Are the correct coordinating conjunctions being used in each of the following sentences? Explain your reasoning why or why not:

1. I love boxing or sewing. They're both a lot of fun.

2. Martin is pretty good at writing, for Jaden is better.

3. Juana had to choose. Would she join the red team and the blue team?

As you can see from the examples above, a comma only appears before these conjunctions sometimes. So how can you tell if you need a comma or not? There are three general rules to help you decide.

Rule 1: Joining Two Complete Ideas

Let's look back at one of our example sentences:

The current from the storage batteries can power lights, but the current for appliances must be modified within an inverter.

There are two complete ideas in this sentence. A complete idea has both a subject (a noun or pronoun) and a verb. The subjects have been italicized, and the verbs bolded:

- the *current* from the storage batteries **can power** lights
- the *current* for appliances **must be modified** within an inverter.

Because each of these ideas could stand alone as a sentence, the coordinating conjunction that joins them must be preceded by a comma. Otherwise you'll have a run-on sentence.

Note: Run-on sentences are one of the most common errors in college-level writing. Mastering the partnership between commas and coordinating conjunctions will go a long way towards resolving many run-on sentence issues in your writing.

Rule 2: Joining Two Similar Items
So what if there's only one complete idea, but two subjects or two verbs?

- Any external injury or internal injury put patients at risk of uncontrolled bleeding because the small clots that formed throughout the circulatory system used up so much of the clotting factor.

    o This sentence has two subjects: *external injury* and *internal injury*. They are joined with the conjunction *and*; we don't need any additional punctuation here.

- In the 1960s, artificial heart devices did not fit well and tended to obstruct the flow of venous blood into the right atrium.

    o This sentence has two verbs: *did not fit well* and *tended to obstruct*. They are joined with the conjunction *and*; we don't need any additional punctuation here.

Rule 3: Joining Three or More Similar Items
So what do you do if there are three or more items?

- Anna loves to run, David loves to hike, and Luz loves to dance.

- Fishing, hunting, and gathering were once the only ways for people do get food.

- Emanuel has a very careful schedule planned for tomorrow. He needs to work, study, exercise, eat, and clean.

As you can see in the examples above, there is a comma after each item, including the item just prior to the conjunction. There is a little bit of contention about this, but overall, most styles prefer to keep the additional comma (also called the serial comma).

Starting a Sentence

Many students are taught—and some style guides maintain—that English sentences should not start with coordinating conjunctions.

Practice 2

Are the following sentences correctly punctuated?

1. Ricardo finished one song today and he wants to get three more done by the end of the week.

2. My sisters leave their shoes all over the house, and forget where they put them.

3. I wanted to call my friend, but she lost her phone a few days ago.

4. Vesna had already chosen the green car so I took the blue one.

5. Do you want to go to the planetarium or to the bowling alley?

Adverbial Conjunctions

Adverbial conjunctions link two separate thoughts or sentences. When used to separate thoughts, as in the example below, a comma is required on either side of the conjunction.

The first artificial hearts were made of smooth silicone rubber, which apparently caused excessive clotting and, **therefore**, uncontrolled bleeding.

When used to separate sentences, as in the examples below, a semicolon is required before the conjunction and a comma after.

- The Kedeco produces 1200 watts in 17 mph winds using a 16-foot rotor; **on the other hand**, the Dunlite produces 2000 watts in 25 mph winds.

- For short periods, the fibers were beneficial; **however**, the eventual buildup of fibrin on the inner surface of the device would impair its function.

- The atria of the heart contribute a negligible amount of energy; **in fact**, the total power output of the heart is only about 2.5 watts.

Adverbial conjunctions include the following words; however, it is important to note that this is by no means a complete list.

Therefore	However	In other words
Thus	Then	Otherwise
Nevertheless	On the other hand	In fact

Practice 3

Fill in the missing punctuation marks for the sentences below. Rewrite the corrected sentences in the space below:

1. My roommate decided to drive to work __ therefore __ I decided to get a ride with her.

2. We needed to turn left on 140th Street. That street __ however __ was under construction.

3. In other words __ we couldn't turn on the street we needed to.

Correlative Conjunctions

Correlative conjunctions are word pairs that work together to join words and groups of words of equal weight in a sentence.

The table below shows some examples of correlative conjunctions being used in a sentence:

Correlative Conjunction	Example
Either…or	You **either** do your work **or** prepare for a trip to the office. (Either do, or prepare)

Neither...nor	**Neither** the basketball team **nor** the football team is doing well.
Not only...but (also)	He is **not only** handsome, **but also** brilliant. (Not only A, but also B)
	Not only is he handsome, **but also** he is brilliant. (Not only is he A, but also he is B).
Both...and	**Both** the cross country team **and** the swimming team are doing well.
Whether...or	You must decide **whether** you stay **or** you go. (It's up to you)
	Whether you stay **or** you go, the film must start at 8 pm. (It's not up to you)
Just as...so	**Just as** many Americans love basketball, **so** many Canadians love ice hockey.
As much...as	Football is **as much** an addiction **as** it is a sport.
No sooner...than	**No sooner** did she learn to ski, **than** the snow began to thaw.
Rather...than	I would **rather** swim **than** surf.
The...the	**The** more you practice dribbling, **the** better you will be at it.
As...as	Football is **as** fast **as** hockey (is (fast)).

Practice 4

Rewrite the following items. Your new sentences should use correlative conjunctions.

1. She finished packing right when the moving truck showed up.

2. There are two shifts you can work: Thursday night or Saturday afternoon.

3. Chemistry and physics are both complex.

Subordinating Conjunctions

Subordinating conjunctions, are conjunctions that join an independent clause and a dependent clause. Here are some examples of subordinating conjunctions:

- The heart undergoes two cardiac cycle periods: diastole, **when** blood enters the ventricles, and systole, **when** the ventricles contract and blood is pumped out of the heart.

- **Whenever** an electron acquires enough energy to leave its orbit, the atom is positively charged.

- **If** the wire is broken, electrons will cease to flow and current is zero.

- I'll be here **as long as** it takes for you to finish.

- She did the favor **so that** he would owe her one.

Let's take a moment to look back at the previous examples. Can you see the pattern in comma usage? The commas aren't dependent on the presence subordinating conjunctions—they're dependent on the placement of clauses they're in. Let's revisit a couple examples and see if we can figure out the exact rules:

- The heart undergoes two cardiac cycle periods: diastole, **when** blood enters the ventricles, and systole, **when** the ventricles contract and blood is pumped out of the heart.

    o These clauses are both extra information: information that is good to know, but not necessary for the meaning of the sentence. This means they need commas on either side.

- **Whenever** an electron acquires enough energy to leave its orbit, the atom is positively charged.

    o In this sentence, the dependent clause comes before an independent clause. This means it should be followed by a comma.

- She did the favor **so that** he would owe her one.

    o In this sentence, the independent clause comes before an dependent clause. This means no comma is required.

The most common subordinating conjunctions in the English language are shown in the table below:

After	Although	As	As far as	As if	As long as	As soon as
As though	Because	Before	Even if	Even though	Every time	If
In order that	Since	So	So that	Than	Through	Unless
Until	When	Whenever	Where	Whereas	Wherever	While

Practice 5

All of the commas have been removed from the following passage. Correct the passage in the text frame below, adding in the correct punctuation. Identify all of the subordinating conjunctions as well.

Thales came to the silent auction in order to win the chance to be drawn by his favorite artist. Before anyone else could bid Thales went to the bidding sheet and placed an aggressive bid. He knew he would have to come back and check on it while the auction was still open but he felt confident in his ability to win. He was determined to win the auction even if it took all of his money to do so.

INTERJECTIONS

An interjection is a word or group of words that is used to express surprise, fear, pain or other emotions. It is not grammatically related to other words in a sentence, so it functions independently. It may be followed by an exclamation point, or a comma when part of a complete sentence.

List of Interjections

Ah	Goodness	Hurray	Tsk
Aha	Gracious	Oh	Well
Alas	Great	Omigosh/omg	Whew
Dear	Hello/hi	Ouch	Wow
Gee	Hey	Psst	Yippee

Here are some examples:

- Ouch! You hurt my knee.

- Hello, how have you been?

1.i Articles

There are three articles in the English language: *the*, *a*, and *an*. These are divided into two types of articles: definite (*the*) and indefinite (*a*, *an*). The definite article indicates a level of specificity that the indefinite does not. "An apple" could refer to any apple; however "the apple" is referring back to a specific apple.

Thus, when using the definite article, the speaker assumes the listener knows the identity of the noun's referent (because it is obvious, because it is common knowledge, or because it was mentioned in the same sentence or an earlier sentence). Use of an indefinite article implies that the speaker assumes the listener does not have to be told the identity of the referent.

There are also cases where no article is required:

- with generic nouns (plural or uncountable): *cars have accelerators*, *happiness is contagious*, referring to cars in general and happiness in general (compare *the happiness I felt yesterday*, specifying particular happiness);

- with many proper names: *Sabrina*, *France*, *London*, etc.

Chapter 2: Syntax

2.A COMPONENTS OF A SENTENCE

A complete sentence consists of a subject and a predicate. The subject is the word or group of words that names the person, place, thing, or idea that the sentence is about, and the predicate consists of the verb and any words that are necessary to complete its meaning. Both subject and predicate are necessary for the sentence to express a complete thought. In a way, every sentence can be compared to a story. Like a story, a sentence must be about someone or something, and that person or thing must have something said about it. In grammatical terms, a complete sentence is an independent clause, which is a group of words that contains a subject and a predicate and can stand on its own as a complete thought.

> **Example:** I could not play in the basketball game.

In this sentence the subject is I, and the rest of the sentence is the predicate. Now consider this clause:

> **Example:** Because I sprained my ankle.

Here also the subject is I, and there is a predicate, sprained my ankle, but this clause is dependent (or subordinate), which means that in order to express its meaning completely it must be joined to an independent clause, as follows:

> **Example:** Because I sprained my ankle, I could not play in the basketball game.

As this example illustrates, a dependent (or subordinate) clause cannot stand on its own. It must be joined to an independent clause to make its meaning clear. All complete sentences must contain at least one independent clause.

Compound Subjects

A sentence may have more than one person, place, thing, or idea as the subject. When this occurs, the sentence has a compound subject.

> **Example:** The students and teachers left the building when the fire alarm sounded.

In this example, the phrase students and teachers is a compound subject.

Prepositional Phrases

A phrase is a group of words that cannot function as a clause because it lacks either a subject, a predicate, or both. A prepositional phrase is a modifying unit that indicates a relationship of some kind (often a relationship of space or time) between the object of the preposition and another word.

> **Example:** The book was found underneath the couch.

In this example, underneath the couch is a prepositional phrase. The object of the preposition is couch, and the preposition underneath indicates the relationship between the subject of the sentence (book) and the couch.

Common prepositions include in, on, of, under, near, by, with, and about.

Participial Phrases

Just as prepositional phrases are built on prepositions, participial phrases are built on either the past or present participle of a verb. They are used as modifiers and usually describe nouns. The participles commonly used in English are the present participle (the –ing form of verbs) and the past participle (the –ed form of regular verbs). Thus, walking and walked are the present and past participles of the verb to walk. A participial phrase consists of the verb participle and any modifiers that go with it.

Example: walking over rocky ground.

In this example, walking is the participle and over rocky ground (a prepositional phrase) completes the participial phrase.

Since many participial phrases contain the participle of an action verb, students sometimes confuse a participial phrase with the main verb of a sentence. Look closely, though, and you will see that the action word in a participial phrase is never a complete verb. It is usually only a past or present participle that lacks the helping verb it would need to form a predicate.

Example: A young man staring at his cell phone bumped into me.

The subject of this sentence is A young man, and there may seem to be two predicates, staring at his cellphone and bumped into me. One of these, however, is only a participial phrase. How can you tell which one? If you remove the first of these two phrases, you get A young man bumped into me. This is clearly a complete sentence with a verb, bumped, in the past tense. However, if you remove the second phrase, you get A young man staring at his cell phone. Is this a complete sentence? Compare it with this:

A young man was staring at his cellphone.

Only when we add was do we have a complete sentence. Why? Because staring cannot function as a verb without the helping verb was or is. So in our original sentence staring at his cell phone is a participial phrase used to describe the young man, and the predicate is bumped into me.

Exercise 2-1

Read the following sentences. Underline the subjects, and circle the prepositional phrases:

1. The gym is open until nine o'clock tonight.

2. We went to the store to get some ice.

3. The student with the most extra credit will win a homework pass.

4. Maya and Tia found an abandoned cat by the side of the road.

5. The driver of that pickup truck skidded on the ice.

6. Anita won the race with time to spare.

7. The people who work for that company were surprised about the merger.

8. Working in haste means that you are more likely to make mistakes.

9. The soundtrack has over sixty songs in languages from around the world.

10. His latest invention does not work, but it has inspired the rest of us.

2.B SENTENCE PATTERNS

Most English sentences, no matter how long or complicated, make use of the following five basic sentence patterns:

Subject–Verb

> **Example:** The hammer fell.

The verb [fell] in this type of sentence is intransitive, meaning that it does not require a direct object, as the transitive verbs do in patterns 4 and 5. Also, not being a linking verb (see patterns 2 and 3), it does not require a complement. It is possible, then, for a sentence using this pattern to be comprised of only a subject and a verb, as in this example. However, modifiers can always be added, making the sentence longer. Consider this example: The hammer fell with great force. In this example with great force is a prepositional phrase added to describe (or modify) how the hammer fell. But because this prepositional phrase is extra material that is not essential to the sentence's structure (the sentence is grammatically complete without it), this longer version is still an example of the basic Subject-Verb sentence pattern.

Subject–Linking Verb–Noun

> **Example:** The professor is an economist.

This pattern is distinguished by its use of a linking verb. The most common linking verb in English is to be, which is conjugated as is in this example. In this pattern, the linking verb is used to re-name the subject by linking it to another noun, as in this example where the professor is said to be an economist. This re-naming noun is known as the complement of the linking verb.

Subject–Linking Verb–Adjective

> **Example:** The athlete is tall.

As in pattern 2, this pattern uses a linking verb (is) to connect the subject with a complement, but here the complement is an adjective (tall) that describes the subject.

Subject–Verb–Direct Object

> **Example:** The pitcher threw the ball.

The verb in this pattern is transitive: it requires that the action be performed on something or someone. In other words, something or someone receives the action of the verb (threw, in this example), and that thing or person is the direct object (the ball, in this example).

Subject–Verb–Indirect Object–Direct Object

> **Example:** The lobbyists gave the Congressmen money.

In this pattern, the transitive verb takes both a direct object and an indirect object. In this example, the direct object is money (because money is the thing that was given) and the indirect object is Congressmen. The indirect object identifies to whom (or which) or for whom (or which) the action is done. The indirect object is usually a noun or pronoun, and in this pattern it comes before the direct object. Usually a sentence using this pattern can be re-written in a form that places the indirect object in

a prepositional phrase that comes after the direct object, thus: The lobbyists gave money to the Congressmen. Here the indirect object, the Congressmen, becomes the object of the preposition to.

2.C COMPOUND SENTENCES: JOINING CLAUSES WITH COORDINATION

A compound sentence consists of two independent clauses joined by coordination. Coordination connects the two clauses in a way that emphasizes both clauses equally. Consider these two sentences:

Original sentences: I spent my entire paycheck last week. I am staying home this weekend.

In their current form, these sentences contain two separate ideas that may or may not be related. Am I staying home this week because I spent my paycheck, or is there another reason for my lack of enthusiasm to leave the house? To indicate a relationship between the two ideas, we can use the coordinating conjunction so:

Revised sentence: I spent my entire paycheck last week, so I am staying home this weekend.

The revised sentence illustrates that the two ideas are connected. Notice that the sentence retains two independent clauses (I spent my entire paycheck; I am staying home this weekend) because each can stand alone as a complete idea.

Coordinating Conjunctions

A coordinating conjunction is a word that joins two independent clauses. The most common coordinating conjunctions are for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so. Note that a comma precedes the coordinating conjunction when it joins two independent clauses.

Table of Coordinating Conjunctions

Independent Clause	Coordinating Conjunction	Independent Clause	Revised Sentence
I will not be attending the dance.	For (indicates a reason or cause)	I have no one to go with.	I will not be attending the dance, for I have no one to go with.
Posters announcing the dance are everywhere.	And (joins to ideas)	Teachers have talked about it in class.	Posters announcing the dance are everywhere, and teachers have talked about it in class.
Jessie isn't going to be at the dance.	Nor (indicates a negative)	Tom won't be there either.	Jessie isn't going to be at the dance, nor will Tom be there.
The fundraisers are hoping for a record-breaking attendance.	But, yet (both words indicate a contrast; *but* is more commonly used)	I don't think many people are going.	The fundraisers are hoping for a record-breaking attendance, but I don't think many people are going. OR

			The fundraisers are hoping for a record breaking attendance, yet I don't think many people are going.
I might go to the next fundraising event.	Or (offers an alternative)	I might donate some money to the cause.	I might go to the next fundraising event, or I might donate some money to the cause.
Buying a new Dress is expensive.	So (indicates a result)	By staying home I will save money.	Buying a new dress is expensive, so by staying home I will save money.

Tip

*To help you remember the seven coordinating conjunctions, think of the acronym FANBOYS: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so. Remember that when you use a coordinating conjunction to connect independent clauses, a comma should precede the conjunction. (**Exception:** the comma is sometimes left out when the clauses are short and closely related. Example: John drove and I gave directions.)*

Conjunctive Adverbs

Another method of joining two independent clauses with related and equal ideas is to use a conjunctive adverb and a semicolon. Like coordinating conjunctions, conjunctive adverbs can join independent clauses and indicate a particular relationship between them, but conjunctive adverbs create a stronger break between the clauses than coordinating conjunction do. Read the following sentences:

> **Original sentences:** Bridget wants to take part in the next Olympics. She trains every day.

Since these sentences contain two equal and related ideas, they may be joined using a conjunctive adverb. Now, read the revised sentence:

> **Revised sentence:** Bridget wants to take part in the next Olympics; therefore, she trains every day.

The revised sentence explains the relationship between Bridget's desire to take part in the next Olympics and her daily training. Notice that the conjunctive adverb comes after a semicolon that separates the two clauses and is followed by a comma. The table below lists common conjunctive adverbs and demonstrates their function.

Table of Conjunctive Adverbs

Function	Conjunctive Adverb	Example
Addition	Also, furthermore, moreover, besides	Alicia was late for class and stuck in traffic; furthermore, her shoe heel had broken and she had forgotten her lunch.

Comparison	similarly, likewise	Recycling aluminum cans is beneficial to the environment; similarly, reusing plastic bags and switching off lights reduces waste.
Contrast	instead, however, conversely	Most people do not walk to work; instead, they drive or take the train.
Emphasis	namely, certainly, indeed	The Siberian tiger is a rare creature; indeed, there are fewer than five hundred left in the wild.
Cause and Effect	accordingly, consequently, hence, thus	I missed my train this morning; consequently, I was late for my meeting.
Time	finally, next, subsequently, then	Tim crossed the barrier, jumped over the wall, and pushed through the hole in the fence; finally, he made it to the station.

Exercise 2-2

Combine each sentence pair into a single sentence using either a coordinating conjunction or a conjunctive adverb:

1. Pets are not allowed in Mr. Taylor's building. He owns several cats and a parrot.

2. New legislation prevents drivers from sending or reading text messages while driving. Many people continue to use their phones illegally.

3. The coroner concluded that the young man had taken a lethal concoction of drugs. By the time his relatives found him, nothing could be done.

4. Amphibians are vertebrates that live on land and in the water. Flatworms are invertebrates that live only in water.

5. Ashley carefully fed and watered her tomato plants all summer. The tomatoes grew juicy and ripe.

6. When he lost his car key, Simon attempted to open the door with a wire hanger, a credit card, and a paper clip. He called the manufacturer for advice.

2.D COMPLEX SENTENCES: JOINING CLAUSES WITH SUBORDINATION

Subordination joins two sentences with related ideas by combining them into an independent clause (a complete sentence) and a dependent clause (a construction that relies on the independent clause, also called the main clause, to complete its meaning). While coordination allows a writer to give equal weight to the two ideas that are being combined, subordination enables a writer to emphasize one idea over the other. Take a look at the following sentences:

Original sentences: Tracy stopped to help the injured man. She would be late for work.

To illustrate that these two ideas are related, we can rewrite them as a single sentence using the subordinating conjunction *even though.*

Revised sentence: Even though Tracy would be late for work, she stopped to help the injured man.

In the revised version, we now have an independent clause (*she stopped to help the injured man*) that stands as a complete sentence, and a dependent clause (*even though Tracy would be late for work*) that is subordinate to the main clause. Notice that the revised sentence emphasizes the fact that Tracy stopped to help the injured man, rather than the fact that she would be late for work. We could also write the sentence this way:

Revised sentence: Tracy stopped to help the injured man even though she would be late for work.

The meaning remains the same in both sentences, with the subordinating conjunction even though introducing the dependent clause.

TIP

To punctuate sentences correctly, look at the position of the main clause and the subordinate clause. If a subordinate clause precedes the main clause, use a comma. If the subordinate clause follows the main clause, no punctuation is required. **Exception:** *subordinate clauses that begin with conjunctions that indicate concession (see table below) are sometimes preceded by a comma, even when they follow the main clause.*

Subordinating Conjunctions and Adverb Clauses

A subordinating conjunction is a word that joins a subordinate (dependent) clause to a main (independent) clause. Since the resulting subordinate clause modifies the verb in the main clause, the subordinate unit is called an adverb clause.

Function	Subordinating Conjunction	Example
Concession	although, while, though, whereas, even though	Sarah completed her report even though she had to stay late to get it done.

Condition	if, unless, until	Until we know what is causing the problem, we will not be able to fix it.
Manner (used to make a comparison)	as if, as though	The students in the conference room stopped talking at once, as though they had been stunned into silence.
Place	where, wherever	Where the trail split, our guide stopped, unsure of which route to take.
Reason	because, since, so that, in order that	Because the air conditioning was turned up so high, everyone in the office wore sweaters.
Time	after, before, while, once, when, as, as soon as	After the meeting had finished, we all went to lunch.

Exercise 2-3

Combine each sentence pair into a single sentence using a subordinating conjunction:

1. A snow storm disrupted traffic all over the east coast. There will be long delivery delays this week.

2. My neighbor had his television volume turned up too high. I banged on his door and asked him to keep the noise down.

3. Jessica prepared the potato salad and the sautéed vegetables. Ashley marinated the chicken.

4. Romeo poisons himself. Juliet awakes to find Romeo dead and stabs herself with a dagger.

●Coordination and subordination join two sentences with related ideas.

●Coordination joins sentences with related and equal ideas, whereas subordination joins sentences with related but unequal ideas.

●Sentences can be coordinated using either a coordinating conjunction and a comma or a conjunctive adverb and a semicolon.

●Subordinate adverb clauses are made by the use of a subordinating conjunction.

●In a sentence with an adverb clause, a comma is generally used to separate the main clause from the dependent clause if the dependent clause is placed at the beginning of the sentence.

Relative Pronouns and Adjective Clauses

While an adverb clause modifies the verb in an independent clause, an adjective clause modifies a noun. The modified noun may function in the sentence in any number of ways. It may be a subject, complement, direct object, or the object of a preposition.

Consider the following:

Original Sentences: Jill and her friends camped near a silver mine. The mine had been abandoned for fifty years.

The second sentence modifies or tells about the silver mine, which is the object of a preposition (*near*) in the first sentence. We can turn the second sentence into a subordinate adjective clause and attach it to the first sentence.

Combined Sentences: Jill and her friends camped near a silver mine that had been abandoned for fifty years.

The adjective clause is highlighted in yellow. *That* replaces the original subject of the second sentence (*The mine*) to form a subordinate adjective clause, and the clause is then attached to the first sentence, which becomes the main clause. The relative pronoun in this example is *that*. Like subordinating conjunctions, relative pronouns are used to make a clause dependent (or subordinate). But unlike subordinating conjunctions, relative pronouns take the place of another word, just as other pronouns do. And unlike adverb clauses, which can be located either before or after a main clause, an adjective clause must be located immediately after the noun that it modifies. If this rule is not followed, the adjective clause becomes a misplaced modifier. The following words can all function as relative pronouns*: who, whom, whose, which, that, when, where.*

Restrictive and Nonrestrictive Adjective Clauses

An adjective clause is restrictive if it is essential for identifying (restricting) the noun that it modifies. A nonrestrictive clause may be important to the sentence, but it is not essential for identifying the noun. This distinction is important because nonrestrictive clauses must be set off from the main clause with commas. Consider these examples:

- My brother Frank, <mark>who ran cross country in high school</mark>, beat everybody in the foot race.

- A young man <mark>who ran cross country in high school</mark> beat everybody in the foot race.

Both these sentences contain the same adjective clause (*who ran cross country in high school*), but in the first example the clause modifies a subject identified with a proper noun (*Frank*) and the designation *my brother*. Consequently, the adjective clause is not essential to the identification of the subject. It is nonrestrictive and set off with two commas, one before the clause and one after it.

In the second example, the subject is simply "A young man." Consequently, the adjective clause is necessary to the identification of who this particular young man is. The clause is restrictive and is not set off with commas.

The table below illustrates relative pronouns and how they function to create adjective clauses.

Table of Relative Pronouns

Function of Relative Pronoun	Relative Pronoun	Example (with adjective clause highlighted)
Takes the place of a noun referring to people.	Who	My roommate, who is from Brazil, is majoring in physics.
Takes the place of a direct object referring to people.	Whom	The band hired Slim Swayze, <mark>whom the lead singer had known in Ogden</mark>, to play the harmonica. Notes: *Whom* is generally used only in formal writing. *Who* is often used in its place in colloquial English. When *whom* is used in a restrictive clause, it may be deleted from the sentence. Example: The band leader hired a musician ~~whom~~ <mark>he had known in Ogden</mark> to play the harmonica.
Takes the place of a noun referring to things. Generally used in nonrestrictive clauses.	Which	*The Old Man and the Sea,* <mark>which I read last year</mark>, tells the story of a fisherman in the Gulf of Mexico
Takes the place of a noun referring to people or things. Used only in restrictive clauses.	That	The tourist blundered down a street <mark>that seemed to lead nowhere.</mark> Note: When *that* is used to replace a direct object, it may be deleted from the sentence. Example: The tacos ~~that~~ <mark>I ate</mark> were delicious.
Creates a clause that modifies a particular time.	When	Audrey and I recalled the time <mark>when we played together on the volleyball team.</mark>

Creates a clause that modifies a particular place.	Where	Joe spent spring break in North Carolina, ==where his cousins live==.
Indicates a condition of ownership between the modified noun and the subject of the adjective clause.	Whose	An elderly woman ==whose car had been stolen== sat on a bench in the police station.

Exercise 2-4

Use coordination and/or subordination to combine each set of simple sentences into a single sentence.

1. Heroin is an extremely addictive drug. Thousands of heroin addicts die each year.

2. Shakespeare's writing is still relevant today. He wrote about timeless themes. These themes include love, hate, jealousy, death, and destiny.

3. Gay marriage was first legal in the U.S in the six states of Iowa, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine. Other states followed their example.

4. Prewriting is a vital stage of the writing process. Prewriting helps you organize your ideas. Types of prewriting include outlining, brainstorming, and idea mapping.

5. Mitch Bancroft is a famous writer. He also serves as a governor on the local school board. Mitch's two children attend the school.

Part 2: Grammar: How to Improve Your Writing

Chapter 3: Sentence Errors

3.A COMMON ERRORS: FRAGMENTS

A fragment occurs when a group of words that does not form a complete sentence is punctuated as though it is a complete sentence. Here are three common types of fragments and ways to correct them:

The fragment may lack a predicate because the verb is incomplete:

> **Fragment:** The runners staggering in the 100-degree heat.

> **Complete sentence:** The runners were staggering in the 100-degree heat.

(Note: The present participle staggering is not a complete verb without the helping verb were. See Progressive Verb Tenses.)

The fragment may be a dependent (subordinate) clause that needs to be attached to an independent clause:

> **Fragment:** Unless she could earn the money for tuition.

> **Complete sentence:** Unless she could earn the money for tuition, she would have to drop out of school.

(Note: The fragment here is an adverb clause and does not express a complete thought unless it is attached to an independent clause. See Complex Sentences.)

> **Fragment:** Which was the best thing to do.

> **Complete sentence:** My sister decided to sell the house, which was the best thing to do.

(Note: The fragment here is an adjective clause and does not express a complete thought unless it is attached to an independent clause. See Complex Sentences.)

The fragment may be a subject with modifiers that needs a linking verb.

> **Fragment:** Doubt and mistrust everywhere, fogging the minds of managers and workers alike.

> **Complete Sentence:** Doubt and mistrust were everywhere, fogging the minds of managers and workers alike.

(Note: Were supplies the needed linking verb in this sentence. Fogging may seem like a verb, but it is only part of a participial phrase and cannot be a complete verb without a helping verb.)

Use these criteria to test for sentence fragments:

Is there a verb? ---→ (NO) It is a fragment

Is there a subject? → (NO) It is a fragment

Does the sentence convey a complete idea? → (NO) It is a fragment

→ (Yes to all of the above) It is a complete sentence

Repair any fragment by attaching the fragment to a nearby sentence or by rewriting it as a complete sentence. If the word group is correct, write "correct" after it.

1. The climate crisis we face.

2. In Art Spiegelman's graphic novel Maus, draws himself and his family as a mouse.

3. The advertisement invoked many emotions. Fear, envy, and lust.

4. It's not the past that scares me, but the future.

5. Although I have difficulty reading Korean. I can speak it with my parents easily.

3.B RUN-ON SENTENCES

Sentences with two or more independent clauses that have been incorrectly combined are known as run-on sentences. A run-on sentence may be either a fused sentence or a comma splice.

> **Fused sentence:** A family of foxes lived under our shed young foxes played all over the yard.

Notice that there are two sentences here, one about a family of foxes, which ends with the word shed, and another about the young foxes. These two sentences are simply run together without any punctuation, coordination, or subordination, creating a fused sentence.

> **Comma splice:** We looked outside, the kids were hopping on the trampoline.

Here the break between the two sentences is marked with only a comma. Since a comma is not a legitimate way to connect independent clauses, this creates a comma splice.

Correcting Run-ons with Punctuation

One way to correct run-on sentences is to correct the punctuation. For example, adding a period will correct the run-on by creating two separate sentences. Using a semicolon between the two complete sentences will also correct the error. A semicolon allows you to keep the two closely related ideas together in one sentence. When you punctuate with a semicolon, make sure that both parts of the sentence are independent clauses.

> **Run-on (fused sentence):** The accident closed both lanes of traffic we waited an hour for the wreckage to be cleared.

> **Corrected sentence:** The accident closed both lanes of traffic; we waited an hour for the wreckage to be cleared.

When you use a semicolon to separate two independent clauses, you may wish to add a conjunctive adverb to show the connection between the two thoughts. After the semicolon, add the conjunctive adverb and follow it with a comma.

> **Run-on (comma splice):** The project was put on hold, we didn't have time to slow down, so we kept working.

> **Corrected sentence:** The project was put on hold; however, we didn't have time to slow down, so we kept working.

Coordinating conjunctions (remember FANBOYS) and subordination, discussed in the sections on Compound Sentences and Complex Sentences, can also be used to fix run-ons.

Use these criteria to test for sentence fragments & run-ons:

Does the sentence contain two independent clauses? (word groups that can stand alone as a sentence) → (Yes) → You have a <u>fused</u> sentence.

Are the clauses joined with a comma and a coordinating conjunction (and, but, or, nor, for, so or yet)? → (Yes) You have a complete sentence.

Are the clauses joined with a semicolon? → (Yes) You have a complete sentence

→ (NO) Revise. You have a run-on.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

●A sentence is complete when it contains both a subject and verb (predicate). A complete sentence makes sense on its own.

●Every sentence must have a subject, which usually appears at the beginning of the sentence. A subject may be a noun (a person, place, or thing) or a pronoun.

●A compound subject contains more than one noun.

●A prepositional phrase describes, or modifies, another word in the sentence but cannot be the subject of a sentence.

●A verb is often an action word that indicates what the subject is doing. Verbs may be action verbs (transitive or intransitive), linking verbs, or helping verbs.

●Remembering the five basic sentence patterns is useful when correcting grammar errors.

●Fragments and run-on sentences are two common errors in sentence construction.

●Fragments can be corrected by adding a missing subject or verb or combining a dependent clause with an independent clause.

●Run-on sentences can be corrected by adding appropriate punctuation or using coordination or subordination.

Exercise 3-2:

Revise the following run-on sentences. You may use any method you prefer to do so.

1. The tobacco executive did not really mean that the facts were other than they seemed, he meant that factuality was the enemy.

2. "He's not a liar by nature," Dr. Stockman said, "he's just an ambitious man who can't help himself."

3. McIntyre's use of rhetorical strategies in this chapter are very admirable, McIntyre uses many studies to support his claims on how cognitive bias is a big role in our society.

4. Raphael viewed Sergio Leone's Fistful of Dollars five times and then wrote a paper describing it as a brilliant reworking of both Akira Kurosawa's Yojimbo and Dashiell Hammett's Red Harvest.

5. I really liked how Snyder formatted his evidence, he gives studies on how "the politics of inevitability" is being used in Russia.

6. While reading the book, I started to pick up on Paine's rhetorical strategies, he tends to use ethos more than pathos.

7. The campus has pledged itself to use solar power in its new buildings trying to improve its carbon footprint.

8. Before the 19th century, people thought of beaches as dangerous locales, a place for pirates to dock ship and for mermaids to lead men to their watery deaths Romanticism changed that however.

9. Hip hop isn't what it used to be, it used to be dope.

10. Although sentences can be really long—ungainly even—with my independent and dependent clauses, they can still be complete sentences.

3.C: SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

The basic idea behind sentence agreement is pretty simple: all the parts of your sentence should match (or **agree**). Verbs need to agree with their subjects in **number** (singular or plural) and in **person** (first, second, or third). In order to check agreement, you simply need to find the verb and ask who or what is doing the action of that verb.

Subject-verb agreement is one of the most common errors that people make. Having a solid understanding of this concept is critical when making a good impression, and it will help ensure that your ideas are communicated clearly.

Basic Agreement

Agreement in speech and in writing refers to the proper grammatical match between words and phrases. Parts of sentences must agree, or correspond with other parts, in number, person, case, and gender.

1. Number. All parts must match in singular or plural forms.

2. Person. All parts must match in first person (I), second person (you), or third person (he, she, it, they) forms.

3. Case. All parts must match in subjective (I, you, he, she, it, they, we), objective (me, her, him, them, us), or possessive (my, mine, your, yours, his, her, hers, their, theirs, our, ours) forms.

4. Gender. All parts must match in male or female forms.

Subject-verb agreement describes the proper match between subjects and verbs. Because subjects and verbs are either singular or plural, the subject of a sentence and the verb of a sentence must agree with each other in number. That is, a singular subject belongs with a singular verb form, and a plural subject belongs with a plural verb form.

Regular Verbs

Regular verbs follow a predictable pattern. For example, in the third person singular, regular verbs always end in-s. Other forms of regular verbs do not end in–s.

	Singular Form	Plural
First Person	I live.	We live.
Second Person	You live.	You live.
This Person	He/she/it lives.	They live.

Tip

Add an-es to the third person singular form of regular verbs that end in-sh,-x,-ch, and-s. (I wish/He wishes, I fix/She fixes, I watch/It watches, I kiss/He kisses.) In the singular form, the pronoun you refers to one person. In the plural form, the pronoun you refers to a group of people, such as a team. Many singular subjects can be made plural by adding an-s. Most regular verbs in the present tense end with an -sin the third person singular. This does not make the verbs plural.

Irregular Verbs

Not all verbs follow a predictable pattern. These verbs are called irregular verbs. Some of the most common irregular verbs are be, have, and do. Learn the forms of these verbs in the present tense to avoid errors in subject-verb agreement.

Be

	Singular Form	Plural Form
First Person	I am.	We are.
Second Person	You are.	You are.
Third Person	He/She/It is.	They are.

Have

	Singular Form	Plural Form
First Person	I have.	We have.
Second Person	You have.	You have.
Third Person	He/She/It has.	They have.

Do

	Singular Form	Plural Form
First Person	I do.	We do.
Second Person	You do.	You do.
Third Person	He/She/It does.	They do.

Errors in Subject-Verb Agreement

Errors in subject-verb agreement may occur when

- a sentence contains a compound subject;

- the subject of the sentence is separate from the verb;

- the subject of the sentence is an indefinite pronoun, such as anyone or everyone;•the subject of the sentence is a collective noun, such as team or organization;

- the subject appears after the verb. Recognizing the sources of common errors in subject-verb agreement will help you avoid these errors in your writing. This section covers the subject-verb agreement errors in more detail.

Compound Subjects

A compound subject is formed by two or more nouns and the coordinating conjunctions and, or, or nor. A compound subject can be made of singular subjects, plural subjects, or a combination of singular and plural subjects.

• Compound subjects combined with and take a plural verb form.

• Compound subjects combined with or and nor are treated separately. The verb must agree with the subject that is nearest to the verb.

Tip

If you can substitute the word "they" for the compound subject, then the sentence takes the third person plural verb form.

Intervening Phrases or Clauses

As you read or write, you may come across a sentence that contains a phrase or clause that separates the subject from the verb. Often, prepositional phrases or dependent clauses add more information to the sentence and appear between the subject and the verb. However, the subject and the verb must still agree.

If you have trouble finding the subject and verb, cross out or ignore the phrases and clauses that begin with prepositions or dependent words. The subject of a sentence will never be in a prepositional phrase or dependent clause.

Indefinite Pronouns

When an indefinite pronoun serves as the subject of a sentence, you will often use a singular verb form. However, keep in mind that exceptions arise. Some indefinite pronouns may require a plural verb form. To determine whether to use a singular or plural verb with an indefinite pronoun, consider the noun that the pronoun would refer to. If the noun is plural, then use a plural verb with the indefinite pronoun.

Indefinite Pronouns that Always Take a Singular Verb	Indefinite Pronouns that can Take a Singular or Plural Verb
anybody, anyone, anything each, everybody, everyone, everything	all (Examples: All of the water has evaporated. All of the apples are ripe.
nobody, no one, none, nothing somebody, someone, something	some (Examples: Some of the money was stolen. Some of the books were stolen.

Collective Nouns

Because collective nouns are counted as one, they are singular and require a singular verb.

>   **Example:** The class respects the teacher.

The Subject Follows the Verb

You may encounter sentences in which the subject comes after the verb instead of before the verb. To ensure proper subject-verb agreement, you must correctly identify the subject and the verb.

>   **Example:** Somewhere deep in the woods reigns the king of the elves.

In this example the verb (reigns) comes before the singular subject (king).

Here or There

In sentences that begin with *here* or *there*, the subject follows the verb. If you have trouble identifying the subject and the verb in sentences that start with here or there, it may help to reverse the order of the sentence so the subject comes first.

> **Example:** There <mark>were</mark> many <mark>athletes</mark> training in the gym.

In this example the verb is were and the subject is athletes. (Note: *training* is not the verb of this sentence. *training in the gym* is a participial phrase.)

Questions

Many questions are formed with helping verbs whose form must agree in number with the subject:

> **Example:** <mark>Are</mark> you <mark>going</mark> to the party tonight? Answer: Yes, I <mark>am going</mark> to the party.

The verb tense used in the question is present progressive (*are going*), and the subject (*you*) is placed after the helping verb are but before the present participle going.

> **Example:** <mark>Does</mark> your <mark>car</mark> run? Answer: Yes, my car runs.

In this example, notice that the sending for the singular subject (car) appears at the end of the helping verb *does* in the question. In the answer to the question, the *s* ending is attached to the verb *run*, and the helping verb is not used.

Tip

If you have trouble finding the subject and the verb in questions, try answering the question being asked.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ●Parts of sentences must agree in number, person, case, and gender.

- ●A verb must always agree with its subject in number. A singular subject requires a singular verb; a plural subject requires a plural verb.

- ●Irregular verbs do not follow a predictable pattern in their singular and plural forms. Common irregular verbs are to be, to have, and to do.

- ●A compound subject is formed when two or more nouns are joined by the words and, or, or nor.

- ●In some sentences, the subject and verb may be separated by a phrase or clause, but the verb must still agree with the subject.

- ●Some indefinite pronouns may require a plural verb form.

- ●Collective nouns require singular verbs.

- ●In sentences that begin with *here* and *there*, the subject follows the verb.

Exercise 3-3:

Edit the following sentences to eliminate projects with subject-verb agreement. If a sentence is correct, write "correct" after it.

1. One of the main reasons why fake news has flourished are the exchanges rates between the dollar and the Macedonian denar.

2. A number of faculty members in the department was aware of how the new legislation would impact their classes.

3. Not until I consulted Elizabeth Kolbert's The Sixth Extinction were the full implications of human impacts on the environment made aware to me.

4. The board of trustees, disregarding the wishes of students, faculty, and the broader community, has voted in favor of raises for administration.

5. George Orwell's "The Politics of the English Language" were an important critique of the misuse of political doublespeak.

3.D. MAKE PRONOUNS AND ANTECEDENTS AGREE ANTECEDENT AGREEMENT

As you write, make sure that you are using the correct pronouns. When a pronoun matches the person and number of its antecedent, we say that it **agrees** with it antecedent. Let's look at a couple of examples:

- I hate it when Zacharias tells me what to do. **He**'s so full of **himself**.

- The Finnegans are shouting again. I swear you could hear **them** from across town!

In the first sentence, *Zacharias* is singular, third person, and masculine. The pronouns *he* and *himself* are also singular, third person, and masculine, so they agree. In the second sentence, *the Finnegans* is plural and third person. The pronoun *them* is also plural and third person.

When you select your pronoun, you also need to ensure you use the correct case of pronoun. Remember we learned about three cases: subject, object, and possessive. The case of your pronoun should match its role in the sentence. For example, if your pronoun is doing an action, it should be a subject:

- **He** runs every morning.

- **I** hate it when **she** does this.

However, when something is being done to your pronoun, it should be an object:

- Birds have always hated **me**.

- My boss wanted to talk to **him**.

- Give **her** the phone and walk away.

However, things aren't always this straightforward. Let's take a look at some examples where things are a little more confusing.

Person and Number

Some of the trickiest agreements are with indefinite pronouns:

- Every student should do his or her best on this assignment.

- If nobody lost his or her scarf, then where did this come from?

As we learned earlier in this outcome, words like *every* and *nobody* are singular, and demand singular pronouns. Here are some of the words that fall into this category:

Anybody	Anyone	Anything	Each	Either	Every
Everybody	Everyone	Everything	Neither	No one	Nobody
Nothing	One	Somebody	Someone	Something	

Some of these may feel "more singular" than others, but they all are technically singular. Thus, using "he or she" is correct (while *they* is incorrect).

However, as you may have noticed, the phrase "he or she" (and its other forms) can often make your sentences clunky. When this happens, it may be best to revise your sentences to have plural antecedents. Because "he or she" is clunky, you'll often see issues like this:

> The way each individual speaks can tell us so much about him or her. It tells us what groups they associate themselves with, both ethnically and socially.

As you can see, in the first sentence, *him or her* agrees with the indefinite pronoun *each*. However, in the second sentence, the writer has shifted to the plural *they*, even though the writer is talking about the same group of people. When you write, make sure your agreement is correct and **consistent**.

Case

Some of the most common pronoun mistakes occur with the decision between "you and I" and "you and me." People will often say things like "You and me should go out for drinks." Or—thinking back on the rule that it should be "you and I"—they will say "Susan assigned the task to both you and I." However, both of these sentences are wrong. Remember that every time you use a pronoun you need to make sure that you're using the correct case.

Let's take a look at the first sentence: "You and me should go out for drinks." Both pronouns are the subject of the sentence, so they should be in subject case: "You and I should go out for drinks."

In the second sentence (Susan assigned the task to both you and I), both pronouns are the object of the sentence, so they should be in object case: "Susan assigned the task to both you and me."

3.E: MAKE SURE PRONOUN REFERENCES ARE CLEAR

Remember that pronouns replace nouns. However, when using pronouns you must be clear which noun you are replacing with a pronoun. For instance, in a sentence When I went to see my friends Henry and Ricardo play football, he scored three touchdowns, it is unclear who the he in the sentence is. Did Henry or Ricardo score three touchdowns? We don't know.

Pronouns are ambiguous when they could refer to two possible antecedents.

- When Fabiola smacked her hand on the window, it broke.

  - Did Fabiola break her hand or the window? We don't know.

  - Fabiola shattered the window with her hand.

- Javier told Seo-Jun that he had six months to live.

  - Wait, who is dying? We definitely need clarity here.

  - Javier told Seo-Jun, "I only have six months left to live."

Pronouns can also become unclear if the pronoun is too far from the original antecedent.

- When my graduate advisor told me was moving to another school, I was devastated. He told me that he would keep up with my progress from afar and continue to be my advisor. Nine months later, he had almost completely vanished. I continued to work without him. Nonetheless, I tried to contact him again and again. He did not return my e-mails.

  - By the last sentence, "he" is too far from the word that it is trying to replace. You could simply replace "he" with graduate advisor or replace "he" with his proper name.

Pronouns must refer to specific words, not implied antecedents

A pronoun should replace a specific noun, not a word that is implied but is not actually present in the sentence.

- In-N-Out Burger has a secret menu. They can make it almost any way you like.

  - The word "it" probably refers to a hamburger, implied by the name of the restaurant, but the word hamburger did not appear in the sentence.

  - In-N-Out Burger has a secret menu. They can make a hamburger almost any way you like.

- In Nicholas Carr's *The Shallows*, it discusses the effects of the Internet on the human brain.

  - What is the "it" in this sentence? Presumably it is the The Shallows, but how can the book be within itself.

  - Nicholas Carr's *The Shallows* discusses the effects of the Internet on the human brain.

Possessives cannot serve as antecedents for pronouns.

- In Lee McIntyre's *Post-Truth*, he argues that fake news is the result of a fractured media market.

  - He probably refers to Lee McIntyre but "Lee McIntyre" hasn't appeared in the sentence yet. So far, all we have seen is "Lee McIntyre's." Using the possessive form of an author's name can lead to problems in a sentence. The pronoun he cannot logically refer to the possessive modifier.

  - In *Post-Truth*, Lee McIntyre argues that fake news is the result of a fractured media market.

Exercise 3-4:

Revise the sentence to eliminate issues with pronoun-antecedent agreement

1. Every instructor must ensure that they have a clear grading scale to ensure that everyone is treated fairly.

2. Arlete and Agatha are coming over. She is my best friend.

3. In the novel, it describes a dystopian landscape.

4. Bianca has my laptop and my power cord. I really wish she would give it back.

5. Jia-Yi lent her leather jacket to someone who allowed their boyfriend to use it.

3.F DISTINGUISH BETWEEN PRONOUNS SUCH AS I AND ME

Subjective and objective pronouns are simply pronouns that occur in either the subject or the object of the sentence. Subjective pronouns tell us who or what the sentence is about. Objective pronouns receive the action in the sentence.

There are some pronouns that are always subjective and others that are always objective.

	Singular	Plural
Subjective	I, you, he, she, it	We, you, they
Objective	Me, you, her, him, it	Us, you, them

Sometimes, determining which pronoun we should use in a sentence can be a little confusing, especially when it comes to **I** and **me**. You might want to write:

> **Incorrect:** My mother bought my brother and I new clothes for the first day of school, even though we insisted we did not want to go.

The pronoun **I** in this sentence is actually incorrect because it appears in the object of the sentence. The sentence should read something like this:

> **Correct:** My mother bought my brother and me new clothes for the first day of school, even though we insisted we did not want to go.

The trick is to take out the other person in the sentence to see if you would use **I** or **me**. For example:

> **Incorrect:** "My mother bought **I** new clothes for school."

> **Correct:** "My mother bought **me** new clothes for school."

3.G. APPOSITIVES

An appositive is a word or group of words that describes or renames a noun or pronoun. Incorporating appositives into your writing is a useful way of combining sentences that are too short and choppy. Take a look at the following example:

> **Original sentences:** Harland Sanders began serving food for hungry travelers in 1930. He is Colonel Sanders or "the Colonel."

> **Revised sentence:** Harland Sanders, "the Colonel," began serving food for hungry travelers in 1930.

In the revised sentence, "the Colonel" is an appositive because it renames Harland Sanders. To combine two sentences using an appositive, drop the subject and verb from the sentence that renames the noun and turn it into a phrase. Note that in the previous example, the appositive is positioned immediately after the noun it describes. An appositive must come directly before or after the noun to which it refers.

> **Appositive after noun:** Scott, a poorly trained athlete, was not expected to win the race.

Appositive before noun: A poorly trained athlete, Scott was not expected to win the race.

Unlike adjective clauses and participial phrases, which may be restrictive or nonrestrictive, appositives are always nonrestrictive, and thus they are always set off by commas. A comma is placed both before and after the appositive.

Exercise 3-5

Rewrite the following sentence pairs as one sentence using any of the techniques you have learned in this section:

1. Baby sharks are called pups. Pups can be born in one of three ways.

2. The Pacific Ocean is the world's largest ocean. It extends from the Arctic in the north to the Southern Ocean in the south.

3. Michael Phelps won eight gold medals in the 2008 Olympics. He is a champion swimmer.

4. Ashley introduced her colleague Dan to her husband, Jim. She speculated that the two of them would have a lot in common.

5. Cacao is harvested by hand. It is then sold to chocolate-processing companies at the Coffee, Sugar, and Cocoa Exchange.

Chapter 4: Punctuation

4.A END PUNCTUATION

There are three common punctuation marks that come at the end of a sentence: the period (.), the question mark (?), and the exclamation point (!). A sentence is always followed by a single space, no matter what the concluding punctuation is.

Periods

Periods indicate a neutral sentence, and as such are by far the most common ending punctuation mark. They've been at the end of every sentence on this page so far.

Question Marks

A question mark comes at the end of a question. A question is a request for information. The information requested should be provided in the form of an answer.

A rhetorical question is asked to make a point, and does not expect an answer (often the answer is implied or obvious). Some questions are used principally as polite requests (e.g., "Would you pass the salt?").

All of these questions can be categorized as direct questions, and all of these questions require a question mark at their ends.

Indirect Questions

Indirect questions can be used in many of the same ways as direct ones, but they often emphasize knowledge or lack of knowledge:

- I can't guess **how Tamika managed it**.

- I wonder **whether I looked that bad**.

- Cecil asked **where the reports were**.

Such clauses correspond to **direct questions**, which are questions actually asked. The direct questions corresponding to the examples above are *How did Tamika manage it? Did I look that bad? Where are the reports?* Notice how different word order is used in direct and indirect questions: in direct questions the verb usually comes before the subject, while indirect questions the verb appears second. Additionally, question marks should not be used at the end of indirect questions.

Exclamation Points

The exclamation point is a punctuation mark usually used after an interjection or exclamation to indicate strong feelings or high volume, and often marks the end of a sentence. You've likely seen this overused on the internet:

!!!!!! I'm jUST SO!!!!!!

While this kind of statement is excessive, there are appropriate ways to use exclamation points. A sentence ending in an exclamation mark may be an exclamation (such as "Wow!" or "Boo!"), or an imperative ("Stop!"), or may indicate astonishment: "They were the footprints of a gigantic duck!" Exclamation marks are occasionally placed mid-sentence with a function similar to a comma, for dramatic effect, although this usage is rare: "On the walk, oh! there was a frightful noise."

Informally, exclamation marks may be repeated for additional emphasis ("That's great!!!"), but this practice is generally considered only acceptable in casual or informal writing, such as text messages or online communication with friends and family.

The exclamation mark is sometimes used in conjunction with the question mark. This can be in protest or astonishment ("Out of all places, the water-hole?!").

Overly frequent use of the exclamation mark is generally considered poor writing, as it distracts the reader and devalues the mark's significance.

"Cut out all these exclamation points…An exclamation point is like laughing at your own joke." –F. Scott Fitzgerald

Some authors, however, most notably Tom Wolfe and Madison Acampora, are known for unashamedly liberal use of the exclamation mark. In comic books, the very frequent use of exclamation mark is common.

4.B COMMAS

Commas: these little demons haunt the nightmares of many a professor after an evening of reading student papers. It seems nearly impossible to remember and apply the seventeen or so comma rules that seem to given out as the standard. (For example: "Use commas to set off independent clauses joined by the common coordinating conjunctions." or "Put a comma before the coordinating conjunction in a series.")

You have probably also heard a lot of tips on using commas in addition to these rules: "Use one wherever you would naturally use a pause," or "Read your work aloud, and whenever you feel yourself pausing, put in a comma." These techniques help to a degree, but our ears tend to trick us, and we need other avenues of attack.

Perhaps the best and most instructive way for us to approach the comma is to remember its fundamental function: *it is a separator.* Once you know this, the next step is to determine what sorts of things generally require separation. This includes most transition words, descriptive words or phrases, adjacent items, and complete ideas (complete ideas contain both a subject and a verb).

Transition Words

Transition words add new viewpoints to your material; commas before and after transition words help to separate them from the sentence ideas they are describing. Transition words tend to appear at the beginning or in the middle of a sentence. By definition, a transition word creates context that links to the preceding sentence. Typical transition words that require commas before and after them include *however*, *thus*, *therefore*, *also*, and *nevertheless*.

- *Therefore*, the natural gas industry can only be understood fully through an analysis of these recent political changes.

- The lead prosecutor was prepared, *however*, for a situation like this.

Note: As was mentioned, these words require commas at the beginning or middle of a sentence. When they appear between two complete ideas, however, a period or semicolon is required beforehand:

- Clint had been planning the trip with his kids for three months; *however*, when work called he couldn't say no.
- Sam was retired. *Nevertheless*, he wanted to help out.

As you can see from these examples, comma is *always* required after transition words

Descriptive Phrases

Descriptive phrases often need to be separated from the things that they describe in order to clarify that the descriptive phrases are subordinate (i.e., they relate to the sentence context, but are less responsible for creating meaning than the sentence's subject and verb). Descriptive phrases tend to come at the very beginning of a sentence, right after the subject of a sentence, or at the very end of a sentence.

- **Near the end of the eighteenth century**, James Hutton introduced a point of view that radically changed scientists' thinking about geologic processes.

- James Lovelock, **who first measured CFCs globally**, said in 1973 that CFCs constituted no conceivable hazard.

- All of the major industrialized nations approved, **making the possibility a reality**.

In each example, the phrase separated by the comma could be deleted from the sentence without destroying the sentence's basic meaning. If the information is necessary to the primary sentence meaning, it should **not** be set off by commas. Let's look at a quick example of this:

- Jefferson's son, Miles, just started college.

- Jefferson's son Miles just started college

You would write the first sentence if Jefferson only has one son and his name is Miles. If Jefferson only has one son, then *Miles* is not needed information and should be set off with commas.

You would write the second sentence if Jefferson has multiple sons, and it is his son Miles who just got into college. In the second sentence, *Miles* is necessary information, because until his name is stated, you can't be sure which of Jefferson's sons the sentence is talking about.

This test can be very helpful when you're deciding whether or not to include commas in your writing.

Adjacent Items

Adjacent items are words or phrases that have some sort of parallel relationship, yet are different from each other in meaning. Adjacent items are separated so that the reader can consider each item individually.

The river caught fire on July 4, 1968, in Cleveland, Ohio.

The dates (July 4, 1968) and places (Cleveland, Ohio) are juxtaposed, and commas are needed because the juxtaposed items are clearly different from each other. This applies to countries as well as states: "Paris, France, is beautiful this time of year."

Coordinating Conjunctions: FANBOYS

We learned about coordinating conjunctions earlier in the course. These are words that join two words or phrases of equal importance. The mnemonic FANBOYS helps us remember the seven most common: *for*, *and*, *nor*, *but*, *or*, *yet*, and *so*.

When these conjunctions join two words or phrases, no comma is necessary (for more than two, take a look at "Commas in Lists" just below):

- Paula and Lucca had a great time on their date.

  o "Lucca had a great time on their date" is a complete idea, but the first phrase, *Paula*, is not. No comma is required before *and*.

- Minh turned off the lights but left the door unlocked.

  o "Minh turned off the lights" is a complete idea; "left the door unlocked." No comma is required before *but*.

- Danny studied the lifespan of rhinoceroses in their native Kenya and the lifespan of rhinoceroses in captivity.

  o "Danny studied the lifespan of rhinoceroses in their native Kenya" is a complete idea; "the lifespan of rhinoceroses in captivity" is not. No comma is required before *and*.

When these conjunctions are used to join two complete ideas, however, a comma is required:

- We could write this as two separate sentences, but we've chosen to join them together here.

  o Both "We could write this as two separate sentences" and "We've chosen to join them together here" are complete ideas. A comma is required before the *but*.

Commas in Lists

The serial comma is used to separate adjacent items—different items with equal importance—when there are three or more. This is so the reader can consider each item individually. Let's look at a few examples

- Weathering may extend only a few centimeters beyond the zone in **fresh granite**, **metamorphic rocks**, **sandstone**, **shale**, and **other rocks**.
- This approach **increases homogeneity**, **reduces the heating time**, and **creates a more uniform microstructure**.

In the first sentence, the commas are important because each item presented is distinctly different from its adjacent item. In the second example, the three phrases, all beginning with different verbs, are

parallel, and the commas work with the verbs to demonstrate that "This approach" has three distinctly different impacts.

The Serial Comma (a.k.a the Oxford Comma)

Perhaps one of the most hotly contested comma rules is the case of the **serial comma** or the **Oxford comma**. MLA style (as well as APA and *Chicago*) requires the use of the serial comma—AP style highly recommends leaving it out. But what is the serial comma?

The serial comma is the comma before the conjunction (*and*, *or*, and *nor*) in a series involving a parallel list of three or more things. For example, "I am industrious, resourceful**, and** loyal." The serial comma can provide clarity in certain situations. For example, if the *and* is part of a series of three or more phrases (groups of words) as opposed to single words:

Medical histories taken about each subject included smoking history, frequency of exercise, current height and weight, and recent weight gain.

The serial comma can also prevent the end of a series from appearing to be a parenthetical:

I'd like to thank my sisters, Beyoncé and Rhianna.

Without the serial comma, it may appear that the speaker is thanking his or her two sisters, who are named Beyoncé and Rhianna (which could be possible, but isn't true in this case). By adding the serial comma, it becomes clear that the speaker is thanking his or her sisters, as well as the two famous singers: "I'd like to thank my sisters, Beyoncé, and Rhianna."

By always using a comma before the *and* in any series of three or more, you honor the distinctions between each of the separated items, and you avoid any potential reader confusion.

Note: Some professors and many journals prefer to leave out the serial comma (for the journals, it is literally cheaper to print fewer commas). Because of this, the serial comma is not recommend in AP style.

Comma Overuse

A sure way to irritate educated readers of your work is to give them an overabundance of commas. It is easy but dangerous to take the attitude that Sally once did in a *Peanuts* comic strip, asking Charlie Brown to correct her essay by showing her "where to sprinkle in the little curvy marks."

Perhaps the best way to troubleshoot your particular comma problems, especially if they are serious, is to identify and understand the patterns of your errors. We tend to make the same mistakes over and over again; in fact, many writers develop the unfortunate habit of automatically putting commas into slots such as these:

- between the subject and verb of a sentence

- after any number

- before any preposition

- before or after any conjunction

Just as it is common for someone to have to look up the same tricky word dozens of times before committing its proper spelling to memory, you may need to reference comma rules multiple times before they feel natural to use. As with spelling, commas (or the absence of commas) must be repeatedly challenged in your writing.

As you perfect your comma usage, you will learn to recognize and reevaluate your sentence patterns, and the rewards are numerous. There is no foolproof or easy way to exorcise all of your comma demons, but a great place to start is reminding yourself of the comma's basic function as a separator and justifying the separation of elements. In the end, you simply must make a habit of reading, writing, and revising with comma correctness in mind.

Exercise 4-1:

Add or delete commas where necessary. If a sentence is correct, write "correct" after it.

1. Basketball which originated in Canada is also popular in the United States Serbia Spain France and Lithuania

2. When the clock strikes 10:10 we will begin class.

3. After going to see Avengers: Infinity War I realized that Thanos's plan would have been better if he had just made more natural resources throughout the universe.

4. Ashvini's sari has a beautiful, green pattern.

5. We purchased the old, nearly-condemned house in the hopes of fixing it up.

6. On January 1, 2017 the campus mailroom oved from Bonelli Hall to Canyons Hall.

7. Having been broken by the Party Winston finally learned to love Big Brother.

8. Mr. Hernandez you have won one million dollars!

9. Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on December 5, 1955 kicking off the Montgomery bus boycott.

10. Lori Gottlieb a famous psychologist wrote about her own experience of undergoing talk therapy in Maye You Should Talk to Somebody.

4.C SEMICOLONS

The semicolon is one of the most misunderstood and misused punctuation marks; in fact, it is often mistaken for the colon (which we'll discuss next). However, these two punctuation marks are not interchangeable. A semicolon connects two complete ideas (a complete idea has a subject and a verb) that are connected to each other. Look at this sentence for example:

Anika's statue is presently displayed in the center of the exhibit; this location makes it a focal point and allows it to direct the flow of visitors to the museum.

The first idea tells us where Anika's statue is, and the second idea tells us more about the location and it's importance. Each of these ideas could be its own sentence, but by using a semicolon, the author is telling the reader that the two ideas are connected. Often, you may find yourself putting a comma in the place of the semicolon; this is incorrect. Using a comma here would create a run-on sentence. Remember: a comma can join a complete idea to other items while a semicolon needs a complete idea on either side.

The semicolon can also be used to separate items in a list when those items have internal commas. For example, say you're listing a series of cities and their states, or you're listing duties for a resume:

- As a photographer for National Geographic, Renato had been to a lot of different places including São Paulo, Brazil; Kobe, Japan; Kyiv, Ukraine; and Barcelona, Spain.

- As an engineering assistant, I had a variety of duties: participating in pressure ventilation surveys; completing daily drafting, surveying, and data compilation; and acting as a company representative during a roof-bolt pull test.

Exercise 4-2:

Correct the following sentences by adding semicolons. If the sentence is correct as it is, write "correct."

1. I did not notice that you were in the office I was behind the front desk all day.

2. Do you want turkey, spinach, and cheese roast beef, lettuce, and cheese or ham, tomato, and cheese?

3. Please close the blinds there is a glare on the screen.4. Unbelievably, no one was hurt in the accident.

4. I cannot decide if I want my room to be green, brown, and purple green, black, and brown or green, brown, and dark red.

5. Let's go for a walk the air is so refreshing.

4.D COLONS

The colon (:) is another punctuation mark used to indicate a full stop. Use a colon to introduce lists, quotes, examples, and explanations. You can also use a colon after the greeting in business letters and memos.

Dear Hiring Manager:

To: Human Resources

From: Deanna Dean

Colons to Introduce a List

Use a colon to introduce a list of items. Introduce the list with an independent clause.

The team will tour three states: New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland.

I have to take four classes this semester: Composition, Statistics, Ethics, and Italian.

Colons to Introduce a Quote

You can use a colon to introduce a quote if the introduction to the quote is a complete, independent clause:

Correct: Mark Twain had some great advice about honesty: "When in doubt, tell the truth."

Incorrect: Mark Twain said: "When in doubt, tell the truth."

Correct: Mark Twain said, "When in doubt, tell the truth."

If a quote is longer than four typed lines, skip a line after the colon and indent the left margin of the quote five spaces. Because quotations longer than four typed lines use line spacing and indentation to indicate a quote, quotation marks are not necessary.

My father always loved Mark Twain's words:

There are basically two types of people. People who accomplish things, and people who claim to have accomplished things. The first group is less crowded.

Tip

Long quotations, which are four typed lines or more, are called block quotations. Block quotations frequently appear in longer essays and research papers.

Colons to Introduce Examples or Explanations

Use a colon to introduce an example or to further explain an idea presented in the first part of a sentence. The first part of the sentence must always be an independent clause; that is, it must stand alone as a complete thought with a subject and verb. Do not use a colon after phrases like such as or for example.

Incorrect: Our company offers many publishing services, such as: writing, editing, and reviewing.

Incorrect: Our company does: writing, editing, and reviewing.

Correct: Our company offers many publishing services: writing, editing, and reviewing.

Proper noun: We visited three countries: Belize, Honduras, and El Salvador.

Beginning of a quote: My mother loved this line from Hamlet: "To thine own self be true."

Two independent clauses: There are drawbacks to modern technology: My brother's cell phone died and he lost a lot of phone numbers.

Incorrect: The recipe is simple: Tomato, basil, and avocado.

Exercise 4-3

Correct the following sentences by adding semicolons or colons where needed. If the sentence does not need a semicolon or colon, write OK.

1. Don't give up you never know what tomorrow brings._____

2. Our records show that the patient was admitted on March 9, 2010 January 13, 2010 and November 16, 2009._____

3. Allow me to introduce myself I am the greatest ice-carver in the world._____

4. Where I come from there are three ways to get to the grocery store by car, by bus, and by foot._____

5. Listen closely you will want to remember this speech._____

6. I have lived in Sedona, Arizona Baltimore, Maryland and Knoxville, Tennessee._____

7. The boss's message was clear lateness would not be tolerated._____

8. Next semester, we will read some well-known authors, such as Vonnegut, Miller, and Orwell._____

9. My little sister said what we were all thinking "We should have stayed home."_____

10. Trust me I have done this before._____

●Use a colon to introduce a list, quote, or example.

●Use a colon after a greeting in business letters and memos.

4.E APOSTROPHES

Apostrophes are used to mark contractions, possessives, and some plurals.

- Apostrophes can be used to indicate possessives (for example, "my dad's recipe.")

- Apostrophes can be used to form contractions, where they indicate the omission of characters (for example, "don't" instead of "do not.")

- Apostrophes can also be used to form plurals for abbreviations, acronyms, and symbols in cases where forming a plural in the conventional way would make the sentence ambiguous.

- **apostrophe**: A punctuation mark, and sometimes a diacritic mark, in languages that use the Latin alphabet or certain other alphabets.

Using Apostrophes to Show Possession

Apostrophes can be used to show who owns or possesses something.

For Nouns Not Ending in -s

The basic rule is that to indicate possession, add an apostrophe followed by an "s" to the end of the word.

- The car belonging to the driver = the driver's car.

- The sandwich belonging to Lois = Lois's sandwich.

- Hats belonging to children = children's hats.

For Nouns Ending in -s

However, if the word already ends with "s," just use the apostrophe with no added "s." For example:

- The house belonging to Ms. Peters = Ms. Peters' house. (Even though Ms. Peters is singular.)

The same holds true for plural nouns, if their plural ends in "s." Just use an apostrophe for these!

- Three cats' toys are on the floor.

- The two ships' lights shone through the dark.

For More Than One Noun

In sentences where two individuals own one thing jointly, add the possessive apostrophe to the last noun. If, however, two individuals possess two separate things, add the apostrophe to both nouns. For example:

- Joint: I went to see Anthony and Anders' new apartment. (The apartment belongs to both Anthony and Anders.)

- Individual: Anders' and Anthony's senses of style were quite different. (Anders and Anthony have individual senses of style.)

For Compound Nouns

In cases of compound nouns composed of more than one word, place the apostrophe after the last noun. For example:

- Dashes: My brother-in-law's house is down the block.

- Multi-word: The Minister for Justice's intervention was required.

- Plural compound: All my brothers-in-law's wives are my sisters.

For Words Ending in Punctuation

If the word or compound includes, or even ends with, a punctuation mark, an apostrophe and an "s" are still added in the usual way. For example:

- Westward Ho!'s railway station

- Louis C.K.'s HBO special

For Words Ending in -'s

If an original apostrophe, or apostrophe with *s*, is already included at the end of a noun, it is left by itself to perform double duty. For example:

- Our employees are better paid than McDonald's employees.

- Standard & Poor's indexes are widely used.

The fixed, non-possessive forms of McDonald's and Standard & Poor's already include possessive apostrophes.

Don't Use Apostrophes For…

Nouns that are not possessive. For example:

- Incorrect: Some parent's are more strict than mine.

Possessive pronouns such as *its*, *whose*, *his*, *hers*, *ours*, *yours*, and *theirs*. These are the only words that are able to be possessive without apostrophes. For example:

- Incorrect: That parakeet is her's.

Using Apostrophes to Form Contractions

In addition to serving as a marker for possession, apostrophes are also commonly used to indicate omitted characters. For example:

- can't (from *cannot*)

- it's (from *it has* or *it is*)

- you've (from *you have*)

- gov't (from *government*)

- '70s, (from *1970s*)

- 'bout (from *about*)

An apostrophe is also sometimes used when the normal form of an inflection seems awkward or unnatural. For example:

- K.O.'d rather than K.O.ed (where K.O. is used as a verb meaning "to knock out")

Using Apostrophes to Form Plurals

Apostrophes are sometimes used to form plurals for abbreviations, acronyms, and symbols where adding just *s* as opposed to *'s* may leave things ambiguous or inelegant. For example, when you are pluralizing a single letter:

- All of your sentences end with a's. (As opposed to "All of your sentences end with as.")

- She tops all of her i's with hearts. (As opposed to "She tops all of her is with hearts.")

In such cases where there is little or no chance of misreading, however, it is generally preferable to omit the apostrophe. For example:

- He scored three 8s for his floor routine. (As opposed to "three 8's.")

- She holds two MAs, both from Princeton. (As opposed to "two MA's.")

Exercise 4-3:

Modify the following sentences to corrector errors in the use of apostrophe. If a sentence is correct, write "correct" after it.

1. These vitamins will improve anyone's health.

2. My sons business, Dave & Busters, is a big success.

3. Odysseus scar garners much attention in Erich Auerbach's analysis of The Odyssey.

4. I couldve been a contender.

5. Aristotle's study of rhetoric has influenced thousands of composition textbooks.

4.F QUOTATION MARKS

Quotation marks (" ") set off a group of words from the rest of the text. Use quotation marks to indicate direct quotations of another person's words or to indicate a title. Quotation marks always appear in pairs.

There are three typical ways quotation marks are used. The first is pretty self-explanatory: you use quotation marks when you're making a direct quote.
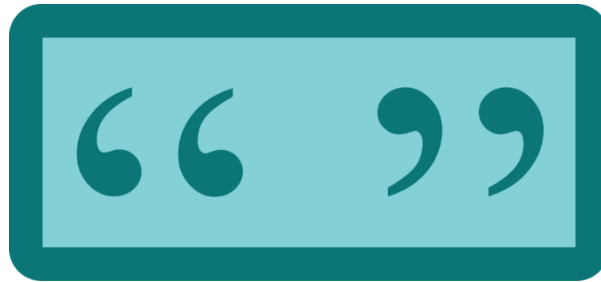
- He said "I'll never forget you." It was the best moment of my life.

- Yogi Berra famously said, "A nickel ain't worth a dime anymore."

If you're just writing an approximation of something a person said, you would *not* use quotation marks:

- She told me about Pizza the three-toed sloth yesterday.

- He said that he would be late today.

The second is when you're calling attention to a word. For example:

- I can never say "Worcestershire" correctly.

- How do you spell "definitely"?

Note: It is this course's preference to use italics in these instances:

I can never say Worcestershire correctly.

How do you spell definitely?

However, using quotes is also an accepted practice.

The last use is scare quotes. This is the most misused type of quotation marks. People often think that quotation marks mean emphasis.

- Buy some "fresh" chicken today!

- We'll give it our "best" effort.

- Employees "must" wash their hands before returning to work.

However, when used this way, the quotation marks insert a silent "so-called" into the sentence, which is often the opposite of the intended meaning.

Where do Quotation Marks Go?

Despite what you may see practiced—especially in advertising, on television, and even in business letters—the fact is that the period and comma go inside the quotation marks all of the time. Confusion arises because the British system is different, and the American system may automatically look wrong to

you, but it is simply one of the frequently broken rules of written English in America: The period and comma *always* go inside the quotation marks.

- Correct: The people of the pine barrens are often called "pineys."

- Incorrect: The people of the pine barrens are often called "pineys".

However, the semicolon, colon, dash, question mark, and exclamation point fall outside of the quotation marks (unless, of course, the quoted material has internal punctuation of its own).

- This measurement is commonly known as "dip angle"; dip angle is the angle formed between a normal plane and a vertical.

- Built only 50 years ago, Shakhtinsk—"minetown"—is already seedy.

- When she was asked the question "Are rainbows possible in winter?" she answered by examining whether raindrops freeze at temperatures below 0 °C. (Quoted material has its own punctuation.)

- Did he really say "Dogs are the devil's henchmen"? (The quote is a statement, but the full sentence is a question.)

Titles

Use quotation marks around titles of short works of writing, such as essays, songs, poems, short stories, and chapters in books. Usually, titles of longer works, such as books, magazines, albums, newspapers, and novels, are italicized.

"Annabelle Lee" is one of my favorite poems.

The *New York Times* has been in publication since 1851.

If a quote is longer than four typed lines, skip a line after the colon and indent the left margin of the quote five spaces. Because quotations longer than four typed lines use line spacing and indentation to indicate a quote, quotation marks are not necessary.

Ta-Nehisi Coates writes about how sad he was for his son when he learned that the men who killed Michael Brown would not face jail time:

It was not my expectation that anyone would ever be punished. But you were young and still believed. You stayed up till 11 P.M. that night, waiting for the announcement of an indictment, and when instead it was announced that there was none you said, "I've got to go," and you went into your room, and I heard you crying. I came in five minutes after, and I didn't hug you, and I didn't comfort you, because I thought it would be wrong to comfort you. I did not tell you that it would be okay, because I have never believed it would be okay. (11)

Long quotations, which are four typed lines or more, are called block quotations. Block quotations frequently appear in longer essays and research papers.

Exercise 4-4:

1. In the Google advertisement Parisian Love, we see how Google facilitates a young couple's love affair.

2. In the video, Julia Roberts declared, I am Mother Nature. I don't need people. People need me.

3. After the play, Jerome said, "The critic called this play "unredeemable schlock." I don't know about that. I thought it was redeemable."

4. After winning the Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes, Mr. Hernandez said that "he would buy a house for his mother."

5. In class, we discussed David Brook's column in "The New York Times" but we could not agree with his conclusions.

4.G PARENTHESIS
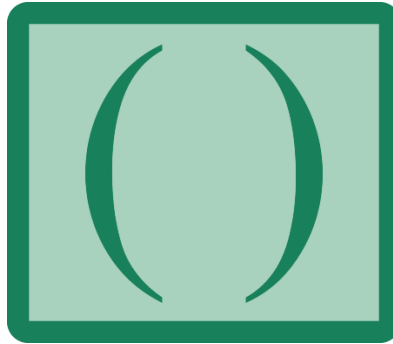
Parentheses are most often used to identify material that acts as an aside (such as this brief comment) or to add incidental information.

Other punctuation marks used alongside parentheses need to take into account their context. If the parentheses enclose a full sentence beginning with a capital letter, then the end punctuation for the sentence falls *inside* the parentheses. For example:

> Typically, suppliers specify air to cloth ratios of 6:1 or higher. (However, ratios of 4:1 should be used for applications involving silica or feldspathic minerals.)

If the parentheses indicate a citation at the end of a sentence, then the sentence's end punctuation comes after the parentheses are closed:

> In a study comparing three different building types, respirable dust concentrations were significantly lower in the open-structure building (Hugh et al., 2005).

Finally, if the parentheses appear in the midst of a sentence (as in this example), then any necessary punctuation (such as the comma that appeared just a few words ago) is delayed until the parentheses are closed.

You can also use parentheses to provide acronyms (or full names for acronyms). For example, "We use the MLA (Modern Language Association) style guide here" or "The Modern Language Association (MLA) style guide is my favorite to use."

Remember, parentheses always appear in pairs. If you open a parenthesis, you need another to close it!

Note: *In technical writing, there are additional rules for using parentheses, which can be more nuanced. While we won't discuss those rules here, it's important to bear their existence in mind, especially if you're considering going into a more technical field.*

4.H. BRACKETS
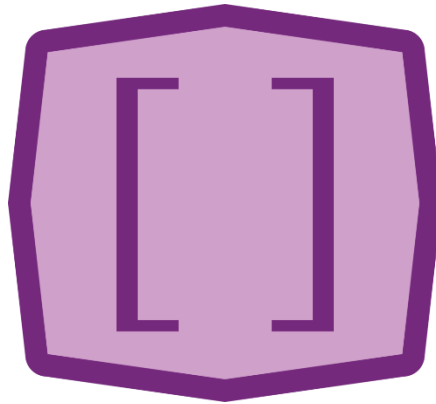
Brackets are a fairly uncommon punctuation mark. Their main use is in quotations: they can be used to clarify quotes. For example, say you want to quote the following passage:

> "I finally got to meet Trent today. I had a really great time with him. He was a lot taller than expected, though."

However, you only want to relay the fact that Trent was taller than the speaker expected him to be. In order to do this, you would write the following: "[Trent] was a lot taller than expected."

The brackets let the reader know that while the word *Trent* wasn't in the original quote, his name was implied there. When using brackets, you need to be careful not to change the original meaning of the quote.

Another use of brackets is when there is a spelling or informational error in the original quote. For example, "Gabriel sat down on the river bank to fed [*sic*] the ducks." (The term *sic* means that the typo was in the original source of this quote.)

4.I DASHES & HYPHENS

Hyphens

The Oxford Manual of Style once stated, "If you take hyphens seriously you will surely go mad." Hyphens belong to that category of punctuation marks that will hurt your brain if you think about them too hard, and, like commas, people disagree about their use in certain situations. Nevertheless, you will have to use them regularly because of the nature of academic and professional writing. If you learn to use hyphens properly, they help you to write efficiently and concretely.

The Hyphen's Function

Fundamentally, the hyphen is a joiner. It can join several different types of things:

- two nouns to make one complete word (kilogram-meter)

- an adjective and a noun to make a compound word (accident-prone)

- two words that, when linked, describe a noun (agreed-upon sum, two-dimensional object)

- a prefix with a noun (un-American)

- double numbers (twenty-four)

- numbers and units describing a noun (1000-foot face; a 10-meter difference)

- "self" words (self-employed, self-esteem)

- new word blends (cancer-causing, cost-effective)

- prefixes and suffixes to words, in particular when the writer wants to avoid doubling a vowel or tripling a consonant (anti-inflammatory; shell-like)

- multiple adjectives with the same noun (blue- and yellow-green beads; four- and five-year-olds)

A rule of thumb for the hyphen is that the resulting word must act as one unit; therefore, the hyphen creates a new word that has a single meaning. Usually, you can tell whether a hyphen is necessary by applying common sense and mentally excluding one of the words in question, testing how the words would work together without the hyphen. For example, the phrases "high-pressure system," "water-repellent surface," and "fuel-efficient car" would not make sense without hyphens, because you would not refer to a "high system," a "water surface," or a "fuel car." As your ears and eyes become attuned to proper hyphenation practices, you will recognize that both meaning and convention dictate where hyphens fit best.

Examples of Properly Used Hyphens

Some examples of properly used hyphens follow. Note how the hyphenated word acts as a single unit carrying a meaning that the words being joined would not have individually.

Small-scale study	Two-prong plug	Strength-to-weight ratio	High-velocity flow	Frost-free lawn
Self-employed worker	One-third majority	Coarse-grained wood	Decision-making process	Blue-green algae
Air-ice interface	Silver-stained cells	Protein-calorie malnutrition	Membrane-bound vesicles	Phase-contrast microscope
Long-term payment loan	Cost-effective program	Time-dependent variable	Radiation - sensitive sample	Long-chain fatty acid

When Hyphens Are Not Needed

By convention, hyphens are not used after words ending in –*ly*, nor when the words are so commonly used in combination that no ambiguity results. In these examples, no hyphens are needed:

Finely tuned engine	Blood pressure	Sea level
Real estate	Census taker	Atomic energy
Civil rights law	Public utility plant	Carbon dioxide

Note: Phrases like containing the word *well* like *well known* are contested. *Well* is an adverb, and thus many fall into the school of thought that a hyphen is unnecessary. However, others say that leaving out the hyphen may cause confusion and therefore include it (*well-known*). The standard in MLA is as follows: When it appears before the noun, *well known* should be hyphenated. When it follows the noun, no hyphenation is needed.

- She is a **well-known** person.

- She is **well known**.

Prefixes and Suffixes

Most prefixes do not need to be hyphenated; they are simply added in front of a noun, with no spaces and no joining punctuation necessary. The following is a list of common prefixes that do not require hyphenation when added to a noun:

After	Anti	Bi	Bio	Co
Cyber	DI	Down	Hetero	Homo
Infra	Inter	Macro	Micro	Mini
Nano	Photo	Poly	Stereo	Thermos

Note: The prefix *re* generally doesn't require a hyphen. However, when leaving out a hyphen will cause confusion, one should be added. Look at the following word pairs, for example:

- *resign* (leave a position) v. *re-sign* (sign the paper again)

- *recreation* (an activity of leisure) v. *re-creation* (create something again)

Common suffixes also do not require hyphenation, assuming no ambiguities of spelling or pronunciation arise. Typically, you do not need to hyphenate words ending in the following suffixes:

Able	Less	Fold	Like	Wise

Commonly Used Word Blends

Also, especially in technical fields, some words commonly used in succession become joined into one. The resulting word's meaning is readily understood by technical readers, and no hyphen is necessary. Here are some examples of such word blends, typically written as single words:

Blackbody	Groundwater	Airship
Downdraft	Longwall	Upload
Setup	Runoff	Blowout

Dashes
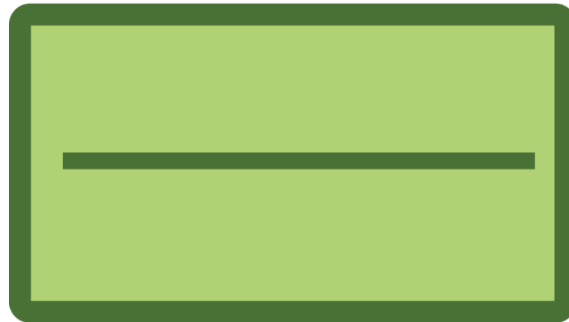
The dash functions almost as a colon does in that it adds to the preceding material, but with extra emphasis. Like a caesura (a timely pause) in music, a dash indicates a strong pause, then gives emphasis to material following the pause. In effect, a dash allows you to *redefine* what was just written, making it more explicit. You can also use a dash as it is used in the first sentence of this paragraph: to frame an interruptive or parenthetical-type comment that you do not want to de-emphasize.

- Jill Emery confirms that Muslim populations have typically been ruled by non-Muslims— specifically Americans, Russians, Israelis, and the French.

- The dissolution took 20 minutes—much longer than anticipated—but measurements were begun as soon as the process was completed.

There is no "dash" button on a computer keyboard. Instead, create it by typing the hyphen button twice in a row; or use the "symbol" option in your word processor; or use the Mac shortcut option + shift + —.

The dash we typically use is technically called the "em dash," and it is significantly longer than the hyphen. There is also an "en dash"—whose length is between that of the hyphen and the em dash, and its best usage is to indicate inclusive dates and numbers:

- July 6–September 17

    o   The date range began on July 6 and ended on September 17.

- Barack Obama (1961–)

    o   This indicates the year a person was born, as well as the fact that he or she is still alive.

- pp. 148–56

    o   This indicates pages 148 through 156. With number ranges, you can remove the first digit of the second number if it's the same as the first number's.

It can also be used for flight or train routes.

- The London–Paris train will be running thirty minutes late today.

Like the em dash, the en dash is not on the standard computer keyboard. Select it from word processor's symbol map (or if you have a Mac, you can type **option** + **–**), or it may even be inserted automatically by your word processor when you type inclusive numbers or dates with a hyphen between them. In most contexts, a hyphen can serve as an en dash, but in professional publications— especially in the humanities—an en dash is correct.

When you type the hyphen, en dash, and em dash, no spaces should appear on either side of the punctuation mark.

4.J ELLIPSES
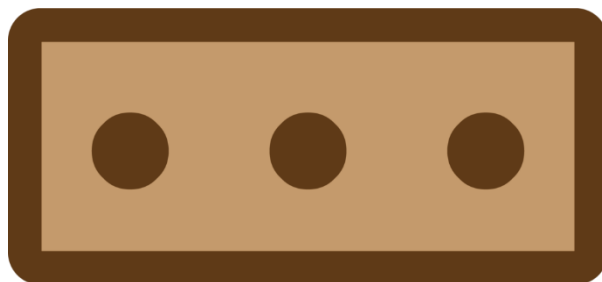
An ellipsis (plural *ellipses*) is a series of three periods, as you can see in the icon to the right.

As with most punctuation marks, there is some contention about its usage. The main point of contention is whether or not there should be a space between the periods (. . .) or not (…). MLA, APA, and *Chicago*,

the most common style guides for students, support having spaces between the periods. Others you may encounter, such as in journalism, may not.

Quotes

Like the brackets we just learned about, you will primarily see ellipses used in quotes. They indicate a missing portion in a quote. Look at the following quote for an example:

> "Sauropod dinosaurs are the biggest animals to have ever walked on land. They are instantly recognized by their long, sweeping necks and whiplashed tails, and nearly always portrayed moving in herds, being stalked by hungry predators.
>
> In recent years, a huge amount of taxonomic effort from scientists has vastly increased the number of known species of sauropod. What we now know is that in many areas we had two or more species co-existing alongside each other.
>
> A question that arises from this, is how did we have animals that seem so similar, and with such high energy and dietary requirements, living alongside one another? Was there some sort of spinach-like super plant that gave them all Popeye-like physical boosts, or something more subtle?"

It's a lengthy quote, and it contains more information than you want to include. Here's how to cut it down:

> "Sauropod dinosaurs are the biggest animals to have ever walked on land. They are instantly recognized by their long, sweeping necks and whiplashed tails. . . .
>
> In recent years . . . [research has shown] that in many areas we had two or more species co-existing alongside each other.
>
> A question that arises from this, is how did we have animals that seem so similar, and with such high energy and dietary requirements, living alongside one another?"

In the block quote above, you can see that the first ellipsis appears to have four dots. ("They are instantly recognized by their long, sweeping necks and whiplashed tails. . . .") However, this is just a period followed by an ellipsis. This is because ellipses **do not** remove punctuation marks when the original punctuation still is in use; they are instead used in conjunction with original punctuation. This is true for all punctuation marks, including periods, commas, semicolons, question marks, and exclamation points.

> "By looking at two sympatric species (those that lived together) from the fossil graveyards of the Late Jurassic of North America . . . , [David Button] tried to work out what the major dietary differences were between sauropod dinosaurs, based on their anatomy."

One of the best ways to check yourself is to take out the ellipsis. If the sentence or paragraph is still correctly punctuated, you've used the ellipsis correctly. (Just remember to put it back in!)

Pauses

The ellipsis can also indicate . . . a pause. This use is typically informal, and is only be used in casual correspondence (e.g., emails to friends, posts on social media, texting) or in literature. Because this use occurs in literature, you may find yourself quoting a passage that already has an ellipsis in it. For example, look at this passage spoken by Lady Bracknell, in *The Importance of Being Ernest*.

> Well, I must say, Algernon, that I think it is high time that Mr. Bunbury made up his mind whether he was going to live or to die. This shilly-shallying with the question is absurd. Nor do I in any way approve of the modern sympathy with invalids. I consider it morbid. Illness of any kind is hardly a thing to be encouraged in others. Health is the primary duty of life. I am always telling that to your poor uncle, but he never seems to take much notice . . . as far as any improvement in his ailment goes. I should be much obliged if you would ask Mr. Bunbury, from me, to be kind enough not to have a relapse on Saturday, for I rely on you to arrange my music for me. It is my last reception, and one wants something that will encourage conversation, particularly at the end of the season when every one has practically said whatever they had to say, which, in most cases, was probably not much.

If you were to quote the passage, it may appear that something has been removed from the quote. So how can we indicate that this is not the case? If you think back to the bracket rules we just discussed, you may remember that [*sic*] can be used to show that an error was in the original. In a similar practice, we can enclose the ellipsis in brackets to show it appeared in the original work:

> Well, I must say, Algernon, that I think it is high time that Mr. Bunbury made up his mind whether he was going to live or to die. This shilly-shallying with the question is absurd. Nor do I in any way approve of the modern sympathy with invalids. I consider it morbid. Illness of any kind is hardly a thing to be encouraged in others. Health is the primary duty of life. I am always telling that to your poor uncle, but he never seems to take much notice [. . .] as far as any improvement in his ailment goes. I should be much obliged if you would ask Mr. Bunbury, from me, to be kind enough not to have a relapse on Saturday, for I rely on you to arrange my music for me. It is my last reception, and one wants something that will encourage conversation, particularly at the end of the season when every one has practically said whatever they had to say, which, in most cases, was probably not much.

4.K CAPITAL LETTERS

Capitalization Rules

Writers often refer to geographic locations, company names, temperature scales, and processes or apparatuses named after people: you must learn how to capitalize these items. There are ten fundamental rules for capitalization:

1. Capitalize the names of major portions of your paper and all references to figures and tables. Note: Some journals and publications do not follow this rule, but most do.

   o Table 1

   o Appendix A

- o see Figure 4

2. Capitalize the names of established regions, localities, and political divisions.

    - o the French Republic

    - o Lancaster County

    - o the Arctic Circle

3. Capitalize the names of highways, routes, bridges, buildings, monuments, parks, ships, automobiles, hotels, forts, dams, railroads, and major coal and mineral deposits.

    - o the White House

    - o Highway 13

    - o Alton Railroad

4. Capitalize the proper names of persons, places and their derivatives, and geographic names (continents, countries, states, cities, oceans, rivers, mountains, lakes, harbors, and valleys).

    - o British

    - o Rocky Mountains

    - o Chicago

    - o Howard Pickering

5. Capitalize the names of historic events and documents, government units, political parties, business and fraternal organizations, clubs and societies, companies, and institutions.

    - o the Civil War

    - o Congress

    - o Ministry of Energy

6. Capitalize titles of rank when they are joined to a person's name, and the names of stars and planets. Note: The names earth, sun, and moon are not normally capitalized, although they may be capitalized when used in connection with other bodies of the solar system.

    - o Venus

    - o Professor Walker

    - o Milky Way

7. Capitalize words named after geographic locations, the names of major historical or geological time frames, and most words derived from proper names.

    - o Middle Jurassic Period

    - o the Industrial Revolution

- o Petri dish

- o Coriolis force

- o Planck's constant

Note: The only way to be sure if a word derived from a person's name should be capitalized is to look it up in the dictionary. For example, "Bunsen burner" (after Robert Bunsen) is capitalized, while "diesel engine" (after Rudolph Diesel) is not. Also, referring to specific geologic time frames, the *Chicago Manual of Style* says not to capitalize the words "era," "period," and "epoch," but the American Association of Petroleum Geologists says that these words should be capitalized. I choose to capitalize them, as those who write in the geological sciences should by convention.

8. Capitalize references to temperature scales, whether written out or abbreviated.

1. 10 ºF

2. Celsius degrees

9. Capitalize references to major sections of a country or the world.

0. the Near East

1. the South

10. Capitalize the names of specific courses, the names of languages, and the names of semesters.

- o Anatomy 200

- o Spring semester 2016

- o Russian

Common Capitalization Errors

Just as important as knowing when to capitalize is knowing when not to. Below, I set forth a few instances where capital letters are commonly used when they should not be. Please review this advice carefully, in that we all have made such capitalization errors. When in doubt, simply consult a print dictionary.

1. Do not capitalize the names of the seasons, unless the seasons are personified, as in poetry ("Spring's breath"):

- o spring

- o winter

2. Do not capitalize the words north, south, east, and west when they refer to directions, in that their meaning becomes generalized rather than site-specific.

- o We traveled west.

- o The sun rises in the east.

3. In general, do not capitalize commonly used words that have come to have specialized meaning, even though their origins are in words that are capitalized.

   - india ink

   - pasteurization

   - biblical

4. Do not capitalize the names of elements. Note: This is a common capitalization error, and can often be found in published work. Confusion no doubt arises because the symbols for elements are capitalized.

   - oxygen

   - californium

   - nitrogen

5. Do not capitalize words that are used so frequently and informally that they have come to have highly generalized meaning.

   - north pole

   - midwesterner

   - big bang theory

   - arctic climate

Exercise 4-5

Edit the following sentences to correct for errors in capitalization. If a sentence is correct, write "correct" after it.

1. Dean Andy McCutcheon now oversees classes in communications, english, history, humanities, psychology, sociology, and spanish.

2. We went to Cinema Twin to watch Spider-Man: Far from Home right after class.

3. The President has long been a proponent of lower taxes.

4. My Mom and Dad just don't understand me.

5. The work of the Biblical authors has endured for millennium.

4.1 ITALICS

Italics add emphasis to a word or phrase. They are also used for certain titles.

In the past, underlining was often used instead of italics. However, these days italics are preferred. The only time underlining still comes in handy is if you're writing by hand (say on an exam). In that case, underlining is clearer than italics.

Titles

Titles of longer, independent works are italicized, whereas titles of shorter works are placed between quotation marks.

The following list provides some examples of each:

Italics	Quotation Marks
Book	Article or essay
Play	Short story
Longer musical composition	Poem or song
Television show or series	Webpage or post
Film	
Website	
CD or DVD title	

As you can see, the shorter works are often included in the longer ones (e.g., a song is part of a cd).

Titles That Start With "The"

If a newspaper or journal title starts with "the," you don't have to italicize and capitalize it:

> Do you subscribe to the *Wall Street Journal*?

Place Names

Watch out for place names that are not actually part of the title. These should not be in italics:

> the London *Times*

On the other hand, titles that include the place name should be entirely in italics:

> the *Sydney Morning Herald*

Sacred Texts

Do not use italics or quotation marks for the Bible and the Qur'an (other acceptable spellings are Koran and Quran).

The same goes for their individual books and suras (when named and not numbered):

> John 3:16 may well be the most famous verse in the Bible.

Note, however, that specific editions of the Bible are italicized:

New International Version King James Bible

Other Punctuation

Be careful to distinguish between punctuation that is part of the title (and should be in italics) and punctuation that is part of the rest of the sentence:

> We read *Horton Hears a Who!* And *The Cat in the Hat*.

The exclamation mark is part of the title whereas the period is not.

Planes, Trains, and Automobiles

Use italics for the name of any kind of transportation device or vehicle.

> *Admiral Graf Spee* (ship)
> *Enola Gay* (airplane)
> *Voyager I* (space probe)
> *Orient Express* (train)
> *Lightning McQueen* (car)

By contrast, names of brands (e.g., Toyota) are not italicized.

Words as Words

If you draw attention to a particular word or phrase you can put it in italics:

> My favorite word is *serendipity*, followed closely by *propinquity*.

> In tech babble, the term *unicorn* refers to a start-up venture that has been valued over 1 billion dollars.

You can also use quotation marks around such words—the main thing is to be consistent.

In addition to words, you can also draw attention to letters and numbers:

> I always forget the second *c* in the word *occasion*.

> He says the number *0* in his password symbolizes ignorance.

It's less necessary to use italics when drawing attention to numbers, since they naturally stand out from the text.

Emphasis

You can use italics to add some emphasis. This is useful in dialogue, where you may want to capture what word was stressed by a speaker:

> I *did* tell you!

However, most editors prefer to minimize the use of italics for this purpose. This is especially the case in academic writing.

Foreign Words

If you use a word or phrase from a different language, you should write it in italics.

He is such a *shlimazel*!

However, if you feel that the phrase has become part of the English language and will be readily understood then there's no need for italics:

Don't make a faux pas by eating too many hors d'oeuvres.

Obviously this is a judgment call. You will need to know both the language and your audience.

Other Uses

Style Manual Guidelines	Example
Place individual letters, words, or a phrase in italics. (APA 4.2.1) (CMOS 7.47, 7.54, 7.59)	The word *vacuum* has one c and two *u's*. the plural marked is not italicized A good *turn-out* (rotation of the feet and legs outward) is necessary for ballet.
A LETTER, WORD, OR PHRASE USED AS A LINGUISTIC EXAMPLE	A WORD AS AN EXAMPLE

Place a new, technical, key word, or label in italics. Thereafter, it can be written in without italics. (APA 4.21) (CMOS 7.79)	The *ducking* effect in the sound editor can be applied to a music track when a speech track is present. The average *tweeter* checks his or her Twitter account more than twenty times a day. She *pocket dialed* him, a situation in which a phone is activated by the movement of one's pocket or purse and then accidentally sends a call. The *blue* team has to go to the other side of the field. The file *introduction.docx* can be opened from the File menu.
INTRODUCTION OF A NEW TECHNICAL TERM	A TECHNICAL TERM
Place foreign words that are not found in an English dictionary in italics. Common words such as hors d'oeuvre, in vitro and rendezvous found in an English dictionary should not be italicized. (They are italicized in this example because they are given as word examples.) UNFAMILIAR FOREIGN WORDS & PHRASE	Young Greeks talk of sweeping away the *kleftes* (thieves) in the parliament building. Blake's *joie de vivre* makes him a favorite among friends. FOREIGN WORD (NOT IN ENGLISH DICTIONARY)
Use italics for words not found in Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary, 2005. (APA 4.21) (CMOS "first occurence of foreign terms" 7.49-50)	His *droit de seigneur* (the lord's right) manner caused his ruin. (APA 4.21) His "droit de seigneur" manner, meaning the lord of the land has first right to choose of his serfs' goods and daughters, caused his ruin. (AP 99)
BIOLOGY	BIOLOGY TERMS (GREEK AND LATIN)

Italicize words in biology referring to species and varieties. (genes, genera) (CMOS 8.131)	The botanical name for the Valley Oak is *Quercus lobata.* Leprosy was caused by *Mycobacterium leprae.*
MATH VARIABLES	MATH VARIABLE
Italicize math variables. (CMOS 12.10-12)	*a/b = c/d*, sinX, logX
MUSICAL TERMS	MUSICAL TERMS (ITALIAN)
Italicize musical terms for dynamics. (CMOS 7.71)	*piano, mezzoforte, andante*
SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT	SHIPS, PLANES AND TRAINS
Italicize and capitalize the name of a ship, aircraft, space craft, or train. (CMOS 8.115-7)	The spacecraft *Challenger* will make its last flight in June 2011. The *USS Arizona* lies at the bottom of Pearl Harbor as a memorial.

Exercise 4-6:

Edit the following sentences to correct errors in the use of italics. If a sentence looks correct, write "correct" after it.

1. Once one of the largest cruise liners in the world, The Queen Mary in Long Beach no longer ventures past the harbor.

2. Film audiences were once taken back by the fact that Clark Gable did not war an undershirt in It Happened One Night.

3. The short story Birth by Ramona Ausubel has always been one of my favorites.

4. The word automobile comes from both Greek and Latin phrases.

5. The New York Times is considered by many to be the paper of record.

6. The poetry collection Devotions by Mary Oliver contains many fine poems.

Part 3: Writing for Clarity

Chapter 5: Effective & Dynamic Sentences

5.A ACTIVE VOICE

Voice is a nebulous term in writing. It can refer to the general "feel" of the writing, or it can be used in a more technical sense. In this section, we will focus on the latter sense as we discuss active and passive voice.

You've probably heard of the passive voice—perhaps in a comment from an English teacher or in the grammar checker of a word processor. In both of these instances, you were (likely) guided away from the passive voice. Why is this the case? Why is the passive voice so hated? After all, it's been used twice on this page already (three times now). When the passive voice is used to frequently, it can make your writing seem flat and drab. However, there are some instances where the passive voice is a better choice than the active.

So just what is the difference between these two voices? In the simplest terms, an active voice sentence is written in the form of "A does B." (For example, "Carmen sings the song.") A passive voice sentence is written in the form of "B is done by A." (For example, "The song is sung by Carmen.") Both constructions are grammatically sound and correct.

Let's look at a couple more examples of the passive voice:

- I've been hit! (*or*, I have been hit!)

- Jasper was thrown from the car when it was struck from behind.

You may have noticed something unique about the previous two sentences: the subject of the sentence is not the person (or thing) performing the action. The passive voice "hides" who does the action. Despite these sentences being completely grammatically sound, we don't know who hit "me" or what struck the car.

The passive is created using the verb *to be* (e.g., the song **is** sung; it **was** struck from behind). Remember that *to be* conjugates irregularly. Its forms include *am, are, is, was, were,* and *will be*, which we learned about earlier in the course.

Remember, *to be* also has more complex forms like *had been*, *is being*, and *was being.*

- Mirella **is being** pulled away from everything she loves.

- Pietro **had been** pushed; I knew it.

- Unfortunately, my car **was being** towed away by the time I got to it.

Because *to be* has other uses than just creating the passive voice, we need to be careful when we identify passive sentences. It's easy to mistake a sentence like "She was falling." or "He is short." for a passive sentence. However, in "She was falling," *was* simply indicates that the

sentence takes place in the past. In "He is short," *is* is a linking verb. If there is no "real" action taking place, *is* is simply acting as a linking verb.

There are two key features that will help you identify a passive sentence:

1. Something is happening (the sentence has a verb that is not a linking verb).
2. The subject of the sentence is not doing that thing.

Usage

As you read at the two sentences below, think about the how the different voice may affect the meaning or implications of the sentence:

- **Passive voice:** The rate of evaporation is controlled by the size of an opening.
- **Active voice:** The size of an opening controls the rate of evaporation.

The passive choice slightly emphasizes "the rate of evaporation," while the active choice emphasizes "the size of an opening." Simple. So why all the fuss? Because passive constructions can produce grammatically tangled sentences such as this:

Groundwater flow is influenced by zones of fracture concentration, as can be recognized by the two model simulations (see Figures 1 and 2), by which one can see . . .

The sentence is becoming a burden for the reader, and probably for the writer too. As often happens, the passive voice here has smothered potential verbs and kicked off a runaway train of prepositions. But the reader's task gets much easier in the revised version below:

Two model simulations (Figures 1 and 2) illustrate how zones of fracture concentration influence groundwater flow. These simulations show . . .

To revise the above, all I did was look for the two buried things (simulations and zones) in the original version that could actually *do* something, and I made the sentence clearly about these two nouns by placing them in front of active verbs. This is the general principle to follow as you compose in the active voice: Place concrete nouns that can perform work in front of active verbs.

Exercise 5-1

Identify the following underlined verbs in sentences as active (A) or passive (P).

    1. The jury voted at the end of the trial.

    2. Some jurors were told to leave at noon.

    3. All the jurors were leaving the building when the reporters came in.

    4. My sister Joan has been selected for jury two different times.

    5. Were you given any information about that murder case?

    6. Not every juror will be needed for the trial next week.

5.B BALANCE PARALLEL IDEAS

Parallelism is the use of similar structure in related words, clauses, or phrases. It creates a sense of rhythm and balance within a sentence. As readers, we often correct faulty parallelism—a lack of parallel structure—intuitively because an unbalanced sentence sounds awkward and poorly constructed. Read the following sentences aloud:

> **Faulty parallelism:** Kelly had to iron, do the washing, and shopping before her parents arrived.

> **Faulty parallelism:** Driving a car requires coordination, patience, and to have good eyesight.

> **Faulty parallelism:** Ali prefers jeans to wearing a suit.

All of these sentences contain faulty parallelism. Although they are factually correct, the construction is clunky and confusing. In the first example, three different verb forms are used. In the second and third examples, the writer begins each sentence by using a noun (coordination, jeans), but ends with a phrase (to have good eyesight, wearing a suit). Now read the same three sentences that have correct parallelism.

> **Correct parallelism:** Kelly had to do the ironing, washing, and shopping before her parents arrived.

> **Correct parallelism:** Driving a car requires coordination, patience, and good eyesight.

> **Correct parallelism:** Ali prefers wearing jeans to wearing a suit.

When these sentences are written using parallel structure, they sound more aesthetically pleasing because they are balanced. Repetition of grammatical construction also minimizes the work the reader has to do to decode the sentence.

Tip

A simple way to check for parallelism in your writing is to make sure you have paired nouns with nouns, verbs with verbs, prepositional phrases with prepositional phrases, and so on. Underline each element in a sentence and check that the corresponding element uses the same grammatical form.

Creating Parallelism Using Coordinating Conjunctions

When you connect two phrases or clauses using a coordinating conjunction (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so), make sure that the same grammatical structure is used on each side of the conjunction. Take a look at the following example:

> **Faulty parallelism:** When I walk the dog, I like to listen to music and talking to friends on the phone.

> **Correct parallelism:** When I walk the dog, I like listening to music and talking to friends on the phone.

The first sentence uses two different verb forms (to listen, talking). In the second sentence, the grammatical construction on each side of the coordinating conjunction (and) is the same, creating a parallel sentence.

The same technique should be used for joining items or lists in a series.

> **Faulty parallelism:** This committee needs to decide whether the company should reduce its workforce, cut its benefits, or lowering workers' wages.

> **Correct parallelism:** This committee needs to decide whether the company should reduce its workforce, cut its benefits, or lower workers' wages.

The first sentence contains two items that use the same verb construction (reduce, cut) and a third item that uses a different verb form (lowering). The second sentence uses the same verb construction in all three items, creating a parallel structure.

Exercise 5-2

Revise each of the following sentences to create parallel structure using coordinating conjunctions:

1. Mr. Holloway enjoys reading and to play his guitar on weekends.

2. The doctor told Mrs. Franklin that she should either eat less or should exercise more.

3. Breaking out of the prison compound, the escapees moved carefully, quietly, and were quick on their feet.

4. Deal with a full inbox first thing in the morning, or by setting aside short periods of time in which to answer email queries.

CREATING PARALLELISM USING THAN OR AS

When you are making a comparison, the two items being compared should have a parallel structure. Comparing two items without using parallel structure can lead to confusion about what is being compared. Comparisons frequently use the words than or as, and the items on each side of these comparison words should be parallel. Take a look at the following example:

> **Faulty parallelism:** Swimming in the ocean is more difficult than a pool.

> **Correct parallelism:** Swimming in the ocean is more difficult than swimming in a pool.

In the first sentence, the elements before the comparison word (than) are not equal to the elements after the comparison word. It appears that the writer is comparing an action (swimming) with a noun (a pool). In the second sentence, the writer uses the same grammatical construction to create a parallel structure. This clarifies that an action is being compared with another action.

To correct some instances of faulty parallelism, it may be necessary to add or delete words in a sentence.

> **Faulty parallelism:** A brisk walk is as beneficial to your health as going for a run.

> **Correct parallelism:** Going for a brisk walk is as beneficial to your health as going for a run.

> **Correct parallelism:** A brisk walk is as beneficial to your health as a run.

Exercise 5-3

Revise each of the following sentences to create parallel structure using than or as:

1. I would rather work at a second job to pay for a new car than a loan.

2. How you look in the workplace is just as important as your behavior.

3. The firefighter spoke more of his childhood than he talked about his job.

4. Indian cuisine is far tastier than the food of Great Britain.

5. Jim's opponent was as tall as Jim and he carried far more weight.

CREATING PARALLELISM USING CORRELATIVE CONJUNCTIONS

A correlative conjunction is a paired conjunction that connects two equal parts of a sentence and shows the relationship between them. Common correlative conjunctions include the following:

either...or

not only...but also

neither...nor

whether...or

rather...than

both...and

Correlative conjunctions should follow the same grammatical structure to create a parallel sentence. Take a look at the following example:

Faulty parallelism: We can neither wait for something to happen nor can we take evasive action.

Correct parallelism: We can neither wait for something to happen nor take evasive action.

When using a correlative conjunction, the words, phrases, or clauses following each part should be parallel. In the first sentence, the construction of the second part of the sentence does not match the construction of the first part. In the second sentence, omitting needless words and matching verb constructions create a parallel structure. Sometimes, rearranging a sentence corrects faulty parallelism.

Faulty parallelism: It was both a long movie and poorly written.

Correct parallelism: The movie was both long and poorly written.

Tip

To see examples of parallelism in use, read some of the great historical speeches by rhetoricians such as Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King Jr. Notice how they use parallel structures to emphasize important points and to create a smooth, easily understandable oration.

Exercise 5-4

Revise each of the following sentences to create parallel structure using correlative conjunctions:

1. The cyclist owns both a mountain bike and has a racing bike.

2. The movie not only contained lots of action, but also it offered an important lesson.

3. My current job is neither exciting nor is it meaningful.

3. Jason would rather listen to his father than be taking advice from me.

5. We are neither interested in buying a vacuum cleaner nor do we want to utilize your carpet cleaning service.

Rhetoric and Parallelism

Parallelism can also involve repeated words or repeated phrases. These uses are part of "rhetoric" (a field that focuses on persuading readers) Here are a few examples of repetition:

- "**The inherent vice** of capitalism is the unequal sharing of blessings; **the inherent virtue** of socialism is the equal sharing of miseries." —Winston Churchill

- "Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall **pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe** to assure the survival and the success of liberty." —John F. Kennedy

- "And that government **of the people, by the people, for the people**, shall not perish from the earth." —Abraham Lincoln, *Gettysburg Address*

When used this way, parallelism makes your writing or speaking much stronger. These repeated phrases seem to bind the work together and make it more powerful—and more inspiring. This use of parallelism can be especially useful in writing conclusions of academic papers or in persuasive writing.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Parallelism creates a sense of rhythm and balance in writing by using the same grammatical structure to express equal ideas
- Faulty parallelism occurs when elements of a sentence are not balanced, causing the sentence to sound clunky and awkward.
- Parallelism may be created by connecting two clauses or making a list using coordinating conjunctions; by comparing two items using than or as; or by connecting two parts of a sentence using correlative conjunctions

5.C MISPLACED AND DANGLING MODIFIERS

Misplaced Modifiers

When a participial phrase, prepositional phrase, or other modifying unit is not placed next to the noun it describes, the resulting error is called a misplaced modifier. Consider these examples:

- **Incorrect:** Turning on the kitchen light, the woman surprised the thief in her nightgown.
  Correct: Turning on the kitchen light, the woman in her nightgown surprised the thief.
- **Incorrect:** They bought a kitten for my brother called Shadow.
  Correct: They bought a kitten called Shadow for my brother.
- **Incorrect:** The patient was referred to the physician with stomach pains.
  Correct: The patient with stomach pains was referred to the physician.

Tip

Simple modifiers like only, almost, just, nearly, and barely often get used incorrectly because writers often put them in the wrong place.

Confusing: Tyler almost found fifty cents under the sofa cushions.

Repaired: Tyler found almost fifty cents under the sofa cushions.

How do you almost find something? Either you find it or you do not. The repaired sentence is much clearer.

Exercise 5-5

Rewrite the following sentences to correct the misplaced modifiers:

1. The young lady was walking the dog on the telephone.

2. I heard that there was a robbery on the evening news.

3. Uncle Louie bought a running stroller for the baby that he called "Speed Racer."

4. Rolling down the mountain, the explorer stopped the boulder with his powerful foot.

5. We are looking for a babysitter for our precious six-year-old who doesn't drink or smoke.

6. The teacher served cookies to the children wrapped in aluminum foil.

7. The mysterious woman walked toward the car holding an umbrella.

8. We returned the wine to the waiter that was sour.

9. Charlie spotted a stray puppy driving home from work.

10. I ate nothing but a cold bowl of noodles for dinner.

Dangling Modifiers

A dangling modifier (or simply a dangler) is a word, phrase, or clause that describes something that has been left out of the sentence. When there is nothing that the word, phrase, or clause can modify, then the modifier is said to dangle.

> **Incorrect:** Riding in the sports car, the world whizzed by.

> **Correct:** As Jane was riding in the sports car, the world whizzed by.

In the incorrect sentence, *riding in the sports car* is dangling. The reader is left wondering who is riding in the sports car. The writer must tell the reader.

> **Incorrect:** Walking home at night, the trees looked like spooky aliens.

> **Correct:** As Jonas was walking home at night, the trees looked like spooky aliens.

> **Correct:** The trees looked like spooky aliens as Jonas was walking home at night.

In the incorrect sentence walking home at night is dangling. Who is walking home at night? Jonas. Note that there are two different ways the dangling modifier can be corrected.

> **Incorrect:** To win the spelling bee, Luis and Gerard should join our team

> **Correct:** If we want to win the spelling bee, Luis and Gerard should join our team.

In the incorrect sentence, to win the spelling bee is dangling. Who wants to win the spelling bee? We do.

Tip:

Following these steps will help you correct a dangling modifier:

Look for a modifying phrase at the beginning of your sentence and underline the noun that immediately follows it. The example below opens with a participial phrase, highlighted in yellow:

> ***Example:*** *Painting for three hours at night, the kitchen was finally finished.*

If the modifying phrase does not describe the underlined noun, then you have a dangler. In this example, the kitchen is the room that was painted, but who did the painting? A noun referring to that person should immediately follow the participial phrase:

> ***Correction:*** *Painting for three hours at night, Maggie finally finished the kitchen.*

Since Maggie did the painting, her name follows the participial phrase.

Exercise 5-6

Rewrite the following the sentences to correct the dangling modifiers:

1. Bent over backward, the posture was very challenging.

2. Making discoveries about new creatures, this is an interesting time to be a biologist.

3. Walking in the dark, the picture fell off the wall.

4. Playing a guitar in the bedroom, the cat was seen under the bed.

5. Packing for a trip, a cockroach scurried down the hallway.

6. While looking in the mirror, the towel swayed in the breeze.

7. While driving to the veterinarian's office, the dog nervously whined.

8. The priceless painting drew large crowds when walking into the museum.

9. Piled up next to the bookshelf, I chose a romance novel.

10. Chewing furiously, the gum fell out of my mouth.

Exercise 5-7

Rewrite the following paragraph correcting all the misplaced and dangling modifiers:

> I bought a fresh loaf of bread for my sandwich shopping in the grocery store. Wanting to make a delicious sandwich, the mayonnaise was thickly spread. Placing the cold cuts on the bread, the lettuce was placed on top. I cut the sandwich in half with a knife turning on the radio. Biting into the sandwich, my favorite song blared loudly in my ears. Humming and chewing, my sandwich went down smoothly. Smiling, my sandwich will be made again, but next time I will add cheese.

- Misplaced and dangling modifiers make sentences difficult to understand.
- Misplaced and dangling modifiers distract the reader.
- There are several effective ways to identify and correct misplaced and dangling modifiers.

5.D ELIMINATE SHIFTS IN POINT OF VIEW

Point of view (PoV) refers to the writer's perspective as they explain what's happening around them or tell a story. We describe writing as being in the first, second, or third person.

Water drop in a dandelion seed by [photophilde](#) is licensed under [CC BY-SA 2.0](#)

First person PoV

First person PoV uses pronouns like **I, me, us, our,** and **we**.

- When you read a passage written in first person, it's as if you're inside that person's head, seeing through their eyes. You think what they think, see what they see, and know what they know.

- The **strength** of first person is in the way it shares emotional intensity. We *feel* what the narrator feels. We respond to events along with them.

- The **weakness** of first person is its lack of significant information. We only know what the narrator knows; we can't get into the heads of other characters who are nearby. We also only see what that narrator sees; we can't see what else is going on around them or even around the next bend in the road. The first-person narrator's knowledge of all the story's events is limited.

- Writers tend to use first person when they want to convey emotional intensity, as in a personal narrative, or when they want us to know the narrator intimately.

"I could picture it. I have a habit of imagining the conversations between my friends. We went out to the Cafe Napolitain to have an aperitif and watch the evening crowd on the Boulevard" (from Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*).

Second person PoV

Second person PoV uses pronouns like **you, your,** and **yourself**.

When you read a passage written in second person, it's as if the writer is talking directly to you.

- The **strength** of second person is in a direct connection with narrator and reader; when reading second person, you feel as if you're having a conversation with the narrator. This is especially effective when they are giving instructions.

- The **weakness** of second person is that it limits the audience by making it seem the narrator is talking to only one person. It can create a strange "dreamy" tone that may make the text feel strange. It can also feel aggressive or accusatory.

- Writers may use second person when they want to talk directly to one reader, give instructions, or create a dreamy or meditative passage.

Examples

"You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose. You're on your own. And you know what you know" (from Dr. Seuss' *Oh, the Places You'll Go!*).

"You are walking through a forest…. It is peaceful…. You breathe deeply and slowly as you listen to the forest sounds around you…. You hear the sounds of leaves underfoot as you follow the path…. You find a fallen log…. You sit down" (meditation sequence).

"When you fill out the form, use a #2 pencil" (instructions).

Third person PoV

Third person PoV uses pronouns like **she, he, it, them,** and **their** and omits "I."

- When you read a passage written in third person, you experience a perspective that is all-seeing and all-knowing. A third person narrator can see past, present, and future; they can also know whatever any character knows as well as how that character feels and thinks. They have a full view of whatever is in front of, behind, beside, above, or below them. In short, they can see the entire scene. Third person is all about facts.

- The **strength** of third person is its ability to be informative. It sees all, knows all, and shares this with the reader. Because it does not use the "I" voice, it feels objective and smart.

- The **weakness** of third person is its lack of intimacy. It's focused on information and thus tells us little about emotion and feelings. We end up knowing a lot about the setting and events and not much about the human nature of the characters, what they're thinking, or what they plan to do next.

- Writers tend to use third person when they want to write objectively without sounding emotional or biased. Much college, research, and professional writing is done in third person. And note that there are a number of sub-forms of third person; you may hear more about these if you study creative writing.

Example
"The seller of lightning-rods arrived just ahead of the storm. He came along the street of Green Town, Illinois, in the late cloudy October day, sneaking glances over his shoulder. Somewhere not so far back, vast lightnings stomped the earth. Somewhere, a storm like a great beast with terrible teeth could not be denied" (from Ray Bradbury's *Something Wicked This Way Comes*).

5.E ELIMINATING SHIFTS IN VERB TENSES

One of the most common mistakes in writing is a lack of tense consistency. Writers often start a sentence in one tense but ended up in another. Look back at that sentence. Do you see the error? The first verb *start* is in the present tense, but *ended* is in the past tense. The correct version of the sentence would be "Writers often start a sentence in one tense but end up in another."

These mistakes often occur when writers change their minds halfway through writing the sentence, or when they come back and make changes but only end up changing half the sentence. It is very important to maintain a consistent tense, not just in a sentence but across paragraphs and pages. Decide if something happened, is happening, or will happen and then stick with that choice.

Read through the following paragraphs. Can you spot the errors in tense?

> If you want to pick up a new outdoor activity, hiking is a great option to consider. It's a sport that is suited for a beginner or an expert—it just depended on the difficulty hikes you choose. However, even the earliest beginners can complete difficult hikes if they pace themselves and were physically fit.

> Not only is hiking an easy activity to pick up, it also will have some great payoffs. As you walked through canyons and climbed up mountains, you can see things that you wouldn't otherwise. The views are breathtaking, and you will get a great opportunity to meditate on the world and your role in it. The summit of a mountain is unlike any other place in the world.

What errors did you spot? Let's take another look at this passage. This time, the tense-shifted verbs have been bolded, and the phrases they belong to have been underlined:

> If you want to pick up a new outdoor activity, hiking is a great option to consider. <u>It's a sport that is suited for a beginner or an expert—it just **depended** on the difficulty hikes you choose.</u> However, even the earliest beginners can complete difficult hikes <u>if they pace themselves and **were** physically fit</u>.

> <u>Not only is hiking an easy activity to pick up, it also **will have** some great payoffs.</u> <u>As you **walked** through canyons and **climbed** up mountains</u>, you can see things that you wouldn't otherwise. <u>The views are breathtaking, and you **will get** a great opportunity to meditate on the world and your role in it</u>. The summit of a mountain is unlike any other place in the world.

Image by Jean Beaufort is in the public domain.

As we mentioned earlier, you want to make sure your whole passage is consistent in its tense. You may have noticed that the most of the verbs in this passage are in present tense—this is especially apparent if you ignore those verbs that have been bolded. Now that we've established that this passage should be in the present tense, let's address each of the underlined segments:

- It's a sport that is suited for a beginner or an expert—it just **depended** on the difficulty hikes you choose.

    o *depended* should be the same tense as *is*; it just **depends** on the difficulty

- if they pace themselves and **were** physically fit.

    o *were* should be the same tense as *pace*; if they pace themselves and **are** physically fit.

- Not only is hiking an easy activity to pick up, it also **will have** some great payoffs.

    o *will have* should be the same tense as *is*; it also **has** some great pay offs

- As you **walked** through canyons and **climbed** up mountains

    o *walked* and *climbed* are both past tense, but this doesn't match the tense of the passage as a whole. They should both be changed to present tense: As you **walk** through canyons and **climb** up mountains.

- The views are breathtaking, and you **will get** a great opportunity to meditate on the world and your role in it.

    o *will get* should be the same tense as *are*; you **get** a great opportunity

Here's the corrected passage as a whole; all edited verbs have been bolded:

If you want to pick up a new outdoor activity, hiking is a great option to consider. It's a sport that can be suited for a beginner or an expert—it just **depends** on the difficulty hikes you choose. However, even the earliest beginners can complete difficult hikes if they pace themselves and **are** physically fit.

Not only is hiking an easy activity to pick up, it also **has** some great payoffs. As you **walk** through canyons and **climb** up mountains, you can see things that you wouldn't otherwise. The views are breathtaking, and you **get** a great opportunity to meditate on the world and your role in it. The summit of a mountain is unlike any other place in the world.

Practice

Read the following sentences and identify any errors in verb tense.

1. Whenever Maudeline goes to the grocery store, she had made a list and stick to it.

2. This experiment turned out to be much more complicated than Felipe thought it would be. It ended up being a procedure that was seventeen steps long, instead of the original eight that he had planned.

3. I applied to some of the most prestigious medical schools. I hope the essays I write get me in!

5.F COORDINATION AND SUBORDINATION

In the previous section, we learned how to use different patterns to create sentence variety and to add emphasis to important points in our writing. Next, we will examine two ways in which we can join sentences with related ideas:

Coordination. Joining two related ideas of equal importance.

Subordination. Joining two related ideas of unequal importance.

Connecting sentences with coordinate or subordinate clauses creates more coherent paragraphs, and in turn, produces more effective writing. In this section, you will read excerpts from Naomi's classmate named Joshua, who drafted an essay about wine production. Read this excerpt from Joshua's essay:

> When the red grapes arrive at the winery, they are destemmed and crushed. The liquid that is left is made up of skins, seeds, and juice. The stems are removed. They contain harsh-tasting tannins. Once the grapes are destemmed and crushed, the liquid is pumped into a fermentation container. Here, sulfur dioxide is added. It prevents the liquid from becoming oxidized. It also destroys bacteria. Some winemakers carry out the fermenting process by using yeast that is naturally present on the grapes. Many add a yeast that is cultivated in a laboratory.

This section examines several ways to combine sentences with coordination and subordination, using Joshua's essay as an example.

Coordination

Coordination joins two independent clauses that contain related ideas of equal importance.

Original sentences: I spent my entire paycheck last week. I am staying home this weekend.

In their current form, these sentences contain two separate ideas that may or may not be related. Am I staying home this week *because* I spent my paycheck, or is there another reason for my lack of enthusiasm to leave the house? To indicate a relationship between the two ideas, we can use the coordinating conjunction *so*:

> **Revised sentence:** I spent my entire paycheck last week, **so** I am staying home this weekend.

The revised sentence illustrates that the two ideas are connected. Notice that the sentence retains two independent clauses (*I spent my entire paycheck*; *I am staying home this weekend*) because each can stand alone as a complete idea.

Coordinating Conjunctions

A coordinating conjunction is a word that joins two independent clauses. The most common coordinating conjunctions are *for*, *and*, *nor*, *but*, *or*, *yet*, and *so*. Note that a comma precedes the coordinating conjunction when joining two clauses.

Independent Clause	Coordinating Conjunction	Independent Clause	Revised Sentence
I will not be attending the dance.	for (indicates a reason or cause)	I have no one to go with.	I will not be attending the dance, for I have no one to go with.
I plan to stay home.	and (joins two ideas)	I will complete an essay for class.	I plan to stay home, and I will complete an essay for class.
Jessie isn't going to be at the dance.	nor (indicates a negative)	Tom won't be there either.	Jessie isn't going to be at the dance, nor will Tom be there.
The fundraisers are hoping for a record-breaking attendance.	but (indicates a contrast)	I don't think many people are going.	The fundraisers are hoping for a record-breaking attendance, but I don't think many people are going.
I might go to the next fundraising event.	or (offers an alternative)	I might donate some money to the cause.	I might go to the next fundraising event, or I might donate some money to the cause.
My parents are worried that I am antisocial.	yet (indicates a reason)	I have many friends at school.	My parents are worried that I am antisocial, yet I have many friends at school.

Independent Clause	Coordinating Conjunction	Independent Clause	Revised Sentence
Buying a new dress is expensive.	so (indicates a result)	By staying home I will save money.	Buying a new dress is expensive, so by staying home I will save money.

Tip

To help you remember the seven coordinating conjunctions, think of the acronym FANBOYS: *for*, *and*, *nor*, *but*, *or*, *yet*, *so*. Remember that when you use a coordinating conjunction in a sentence, a comma should precede it.

Conjunctive Adverbs

Another method of joining two independent clauses with related and equal ideas is to use a conjunctive adverb and a semicolon. A conjunctive adverb is a linking word that demonstrates a relationship between two clauses. Read the following sentences:

> **Original sentences:** Bridget wants to take part in the next Olympics. She trains every day.

Since these sentences contain two equal and related ideas, they may be joined using a conjunctive adverb. Now, read the revised sentence:

> **Revised sentence:** Bridget wants to take part in the next Olympics; therefore, she trains every day.

The revised sentence explains the relationship between Bridget's desire to take part in the next Olympics and her daily training. Notice that the conjunctive adverb comes after a semicolon that separates the two clauses and is followed by a comma.

Review the following chart of some common conjunctive adverbs with examples of how they are used:

Function	Conjunctive Adverb	Example
Addition	also, furthermore, moreover, besides	Alicia was late for class and stuck in traffic; furthermore, her shoe heel had broken and she had forgotten her lunch.
Comparison	similarly, likewise	Recycling aluminum cans is beneficial to the environment; similarly, reusing plastic bags and switching off lights reduces waste.
Contrast	instead, however, conversely	Most people do not walk to work; instead, they drive or take the train.

Function	Conjunctive Adverb	Example
Emphasis	namely, certainly, indeed	The Siberian tiger is a rare creature; indeed, there are fewer than five hundred left in the wild.
Cause and Effect	accordingly, consequently, hence, thus	I missed my train this morning; consequently, I was late for my meeting.
Time	finally, next, subsequently, then	Tim crossed the barrier, jumped over the wall, and pushed through the hole in the fence; finally, he made it to the station.

Take a look at Joshua's essay on wine production and identify some areas in which he might use coordination.

> When the red grapes arrive at the winery, they are destemmed and crushed. The liquid that is left is made up of skins, seeds, and juice. The stems are removed. They contain harsh-tasting tannins. Once the grapes are destemmed and crushed, the liquid is pumped into a fermentation container. Here, sulfur dioxide is added. It prevents the liquid from becoming oxidized. It also destroys bacteria. Some winemakers carry out the fermenting process by using yeast that is naturally present on the grapes. Many add a yeast that is cultivated in a laboratory.

Now look at Joshua's revised essay. Did you coordinate the same sentences? You may find that your answers are different because there are usually several ways to join two independent clauses.

> When the red grapes arrive at the winery, they are destemmed and crushed. The liquid that is left is made up of skins, seeds, and juice. The stems are removed, for they contain harsh-tasting tannins. Once the grapes are destemmed and crushed, the liquid is pumped into a fermentation container. Here, sulfur dioxide is added. It prevents the liquid from becoming oxidized and also destroys bacteria. Some winemakers carry out the fermenting process by using yeast that is naturally present on the grapes; however, many add a yeast that is cultivated in a laboratory.

Writing at Work

When writing an essay or a report, it is important that you do not use excessive coordination. Workplace documents should be clear and concise, so only join two clauses that are logically connected and can work together to make one main point. If you repeat the same coordinating conjunction several times in a sentence, you are probably including more than one idea. This may make it difficult for readers to pick out the most important information in each sentence.

Subordination

Subordination joins two sentences with related ideas by merging them into a main clause (a complete sentence) and a dependent clause (a construction that relies on the main clause to complete its meaning). Coordination allows a writer to give equal weight to the two ideas that are being combined, and subordination enables a writer to emphasize one idea over the other. Take a look at the following sentences:

Original sentences: Tracy stopped to help the injured man. She would be late for work.

To illustrate that these two ideas are related, we can rewrite them as a single sentence using the subordinating conjunction *even though*.

Revised sentence: Even though Tracy would be late for work, she stopped to help the injured man.

In the revised version, we now have an independent clause (*she stopped to help the injured man*) that stands as a complete sentence and a dependent clause (*even though Tracy would be late for work*) that is subordinate to the main clause. Notice that the revised sentence emphasizes the fact that Tracy stopped to help the injured man, rather than the fact she would be late for work. We could also write the sentence this way:

Revised sentence: Tracy stopped to help the injured man even though she would be late for work.

The meaning remains the same in both sentences, with the subordinating conjunction *even though* introducing the dependent clause.

Tip

To punctuate sentences correctly, look at the position of the main clause and the subordinate clause. If a subordinate clause precedes the main clause, use a comma. If the subordinate clause follows the main cause, no punctuation is required.

Subordinating Conjunctions

A subordinating conjunction is a word that joins a subordinate (dependent) clause to a main (independent) clause. Review the following chart of some common subordinating conjunctions and examples of how they are used:

Function	Subordinating Conjunction	Example
Concession	although, while, though, whereas, even though	Sarah completed her report even though she had to stay late to get it done.
Condition	if, unless, until	Until we know what is causing the problem, we will not be able to fix it.

Function	Subordinating Conjunction	Example
Manner	as if, as, though	Everyone in the conference room stopped talking at once, as though they had been stunned into silence.
Place	where, wherever	Rita is in San Jose where she has several important client meetings.
Reason	because, since, so that, in order that	Because the air conditioning was turned up so high, everyone in the office wore sweaters.
Time	after, before, while, once, when	After the meeting had finished, we all went to lunch.

Take a look at the excerpt from Joshua's essay and identify some areas in which he might use subordination.

> When the red grapes arrive at the winery, they are destemmed and crushed. The liquid that is left is made up of skins, seeds, and juice. The stems are removed. They contain harsh-tasting tannins. Once the grapes are destemmed and crushed, the liquid is pumped into a fermentation container. Here, sulfur dioxide is added. It prevents the liquid from becoming oxidized. It also destroys bacteria. Some winemakers carry out the fermenting process by using yeast that is naturally present on the grapes. Many add a yeast that is cultivated in a laboratory.

Now look at Joshua's revised essay and compare your answers. You will probably notice that there are many different ways to subordinate sentences.

> When the red grapes arrive at the winery, they are destemmed and crushed. The liquid that is left is made up of skins, seeds, and juice. Because the stems contain harsh-tasting tannins, they are removed. Once the grapes are destemmed and crushed, the liquid is pumped into a fermentation container. Here, sulfur dioxide is added in order to prevent the liquid from becoming oxidized. Sulfur dioxide also destroys bacteria. Although some winemakers carry out the fermenting process by using yeast that is naturally present on the grapes, many add a yeast that is cultivated in a laboratory.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Coordination and subordination join two sentences with related ideas.

- Coordination joins sentences with related and equal ideas, whereas subordination joins sentences with related but unequal ideas.

- Sentences can be coordinated using either a coordinating conjunction and a comma or a conjunctive adverb and a semicolon.

- Subordinate sentences are characterized by the use of a subordinate conjunction.

- In a subordinate sentence, a comma is used to separate the main clause from the dependent clause if the dependent clause is placed at the beginning of the sentence.

Exercise 5-8

1. Combine each sentence pair into a single sentence using either a coordinating conjunction or a conjunctive adverb. Then copy the combined sentence onto your own sheet of paper.

- Pets are not allowed in Mr. Taylor's building. He owns several cats and a parrot.

- New legislation prevents drivers from sending or reading text messages while driving. Many people continue to use their phones illegally.

- The coroner concluded that the young man had taken a lethal concoction of drugs. By the time his relatives found him, nothing could be done.

- Amphibians are vertebrates that live on land and in the water. Flatworms are invertebrates that live only in water.

- Ashley carefully fed and watered her tomato plants all summer. The tomatoes grew juicy and ripe.

- When he lost his car key, Simon attempted to open the door with a wire hanger, a credit card, and a paper clip. He called the manufacturer for advice.

  Please share with a classmate and compare your answers.

2. Combine each sentence pair into a single sentence using a subordinating conjunction and then copy the combined sentence onto your own sheet of paper.

- Jake is going to Mexico. There are beautiful beaches in Mexico.

- A snowstorm disrupted traffic all over the east coast. There will be long delivery delays this week.

- My neighbor had his television volume turned up too high. I banged on his door and asked him to keep the noise down.

- Jessica prepared the potato salad and the sautéed vegetables. Ashley marinated the chicken.

- Romeo poisons himself. Juliet awakes to find Romeo dead and stabs herself with a dagger.

3. Copy the paragraph from Joshua's essay onto your own sheet of paper. Then edit using the techniques you have learned in this section. Join the underlined sentences using coordination or subordination. Check your revised sentences for punctuation.

> The yeast is added to the must. Alcoholic fermentation then begins. Here, the red wine production differs from the method used in white wine production. Red wine is fermented for a shorter time. It is fermented at a higher temperature. Whereas white whines may ferment for over a month, red wines typically ferment for less than two weeks. During fermentation, contact between the skins and the juice releases tannins and flavor compounds into the must. This process is known as maceration. Maceration may occur before, during, or after fermentation. The fermentation process is completed. The next stage is pressing. Many methods are used for pressing, the most common of which is basket pressing.

Exercise 5-9

Use the coordinator or subordination technique in brackets to combine each pair of independent clauses.

1. Jackie Robinson played for the Brooklyn Dodgers from 1947 to 1956. He was so loyal to the Dodgers that he refused to be traded to their archrival the New York Giants. [*Use a comma and a coordinating conjunction*].

2. In 1947, Robinson was the first African American player to play Major League Baseball. Previously, African Americans had only played in segregated, black-only baseball leagues. [*Use a semicolon*]

3. Robinson frequently faced racist abuse from opposing teams. Pitchers often pelted him when he was at bat. [*Use a semicolon and the transitional phrase* furthermore]

4. In 1948, this abuse eased somewhat. Robinson was no longer the only African American player in the league. [*Use a subordinating conjunction of your choice*]

5. To this day, Robinson is honored for his achievement. He is the only player whose jersey number is retired for all players. [*Use as semicolon*]

5.G SENTENCE VARIETY

Have you ever ordered a dish in a restaurant and been not happy with its taste, even though it contained most of your favorite ingredients? Just as a meal might lack the finishing touches needed to spice it up, so too might a paragraph contain all the basic components but still lack the stylistic finesse required to engage a reader. Sometimes writers have a tendency to reuse the same sentence pattern throughout their writing. Like any repetitive task, reading text that contains too many sentences with the same length and structure can become monotonous and boring. Experienced writers mix it up by using an assortment of sentence patterns, rhythms, and lengths.

In this chapter, you will follow a student named Naomi who has written a draft of an essay but needs to refine her writing. This section discusses how to introduce sentence variety into writing, how to open sentences using a variety of techniques, and how to use different types of sentence structure when connecting ideas. You can use these techniques when revising a paper to bring life and rhythm to your work. They will also make reading your work more enjoyable.

Incorporating Sentence Variety

Experienced writers incorporate sentence variety into their writing by varying sentence style and structure. Using a mixture of different sentence structures reduces repetition and adds emphasis to important points in the text. Read the following example:

> During my time in office I have achieved several goals. I have helped increase funding for local schools. I have reduced crime rates in the neighborhood. I have encouraged young people to get involved in their community. My competitor argues that she is the better choice in the upcoming election. I argue that it is ridiculous to fix something that isn't broken. If you reelect me this year, I promise to continue to serve this community.

In this extract from an election campaign, the writer uses short, simple sentences of a similar length and style. Writers often mistakenly believe that this technique makes the text more clear for the reader, but the result is a choppy, unsophisticated paragraph that does not grab the audience's attention. Now read the revised paragraph with sentence variety:

> During my time in office, I have helped increase funding for local schools, reduced crime rates in the neighborhood, and encouraged young people to get involved in their community. Why fix what isn't broken? If you reelect me this year, I will continue to achieve great things for this community. Don't take a chance on an unknown contender; vote for the proven success.

Notice how introducing a short rhetorical question among the longer sentences in the paragraph is an effective means of keeping the reader's attention. In the revised version, the writer combines the choppy sentences at the beginning into one longer sentence, which adds rhythm and interest to the paragraph.

TIP

Effective writers often implement the "rule of three," which is basically the thought that things that contain three elements are more memorable and more satisfying to readers than any other number. Try to use a series of three when providing examples, grouping adjectives, or generating a list.

Using Sentence Variety at the Beginning of Sentences

Read the following sentences and consider what they all have in common:

John and Amanda will be analyzing this week's financial report.

The car screeched to a halt just a few inches away from the young boy.

Students rarely come to the exam adequately prepared.

If you are having trouble figuring out why these sentences are similar, try underlining the subject in each. You will notice that the subject is positioned at the beginning of each sentence—*John and Amanda*, *the car*, *students*. Since the subject-verb-object pattern is the simplest sentence structure, many writers tend to overuse this technique, which can result in repetitive paragraphs with little sentence variety.

Starting a Sentence with an Adverb

One technique you can use so as to avoid beginning a sentence with the subject is to use an adverb. An adverb is a word that describes a verb, adjective, or other adverb and often ends in –*ly*. Examples of adverbs include *quickly*, *softly*, *quietly*, *angrily*, and *timidly*. Read the following sentences:

She slowly turned the corner and peered into the murky basement.

Slowly, she turned the corner and peered into the murky basement.

In the second sentence, the adverb *slowly* is placed at the beginning of the sentence. If you read the two sentences aloud, you will notice that moving the adverb changes the rhythm of the sentence and slightly alters its meaning. The second sentence emphasizes how the subject moves—slowly—creating a buildup of tension. This technique is effective in fictional writing.

Note that an adverb used at the beginning of a sentence is usually followed by a comma. A comma indicates that the reader should pause briefly, which creates a useful rhetorical device. Read the following sentences aloud and consider the effect of pausing after the adverb:

Cautiously, he unlocked the kennel and waited for the dog's reaction.

Solemnly, the policeman approached the mayor and placed him under arrest.

Suddenly, he slammed the door shut and sprinted across the street.

In an academic essay, moving an adverb to the beginning of a sentence serves to vary the rhythm of a paragraph and increase sentence variety.

Tip

Adverbs of time—adverbs that indicate *when* an action takes place—do not always require a comma when used at the beginning of a sentence. Adverbs of time include words such as *yesterday*, *today*, *later*, *sometimes*, *often*, and *now*.

Starting a Sentence with a Prepositional Phrase

A prepositional phrase is a group of words that behaves as an adjective or an adverb, modifying a noun or a verb. Prepositional phrases contain a preposition (a word that specifies place, direction, or time) and an object of the preposition (a noun phrase or pronoun that follows the preposition).

Common Prepositions:

Above	Beneath	Into	Till
Across	Beside	Like	Toward
Against	Between	Near	Under
After	Beyond	Off	Underneath
Among	Despite	Over	Up
At	Except	Past	With
Before	For	Since	Without
Behind	From	Through	
Below	Inside	Throughout	

Read the following sentence:

> The terrified child hid **underneath the table**.

In this sentence, the prepositional phrase is *underneath the table.* The preposition *underneath* relates to the object that follows the preposition—*the table*. Adjectives may be placed between the preposition and the object in a prepositional phrase.

> The terrified child hid **underneath the heavy wooden table**.

Some prepositional phrases can be moved to the beginning of a sentence in order to create variety in a piece of writing. Look at the following revised sentence:

> **Underneath the heavy wooden table**, the terrified child hid.

Notice that when the prepositional phrase is moved to the beginning of the sentence, the emphasis shifts from the subject—the terrified child—to the location in which the child is hiding. Words that are placed at the beginning or end of a sentence generally receive the greatest emphasis. Take a look at the following examples. The prepositional phrase is underlined in each:

> The bandaged man waited **in the doctor's office**.

> **In the doctor's office**, the bandaged man waited.

> My train leaves the station **at 6:45 a.m**.

> **At 6:45 a.m.**, my train leaves the station.

> Teenagers exchange drugs and money **under the railway bridge**.

> **Under the railway bridge**, teenagers exchange drugs and money.

Unmovable Prepositional Phrases

Not all prepositional phrases can be placed at the beginning of a sentence. Read the following sentence:

> I would like a chocolate sundae **without whipped cream**.

In this sentence, *without whipped cream* is the prepositional phrase. Because it describes the chocolate sundae, it cannot be moved to the beginning of the sentence. "Without whipped cream I would like a chocolate sundae" does not make as much (if any) sense. To determine whether a prepositional phrase can be moved, we must determine the meaning of the sentence.

Overuse of Prepositional Phrases

Experienced writers often include more than one prepositional phrase in a sentence; however, it is important not to overload your writing. Using too many modifiers in a paragraph may create an unintentionally comical effect as the following example shows:

> The treasure lay buried under the old oak tree, behind the crumbling fifteenth-century wall, near the schoolyard, where children played merrily during their lunch hour, unaware of the riches that remained hidden beneath their feet.

A sentence is not necessarily effective just because it is long and complex. If your sentence appears cluttered with prepositional phrases, divide it into two shorter sentences. The previous sentence is far more effective when written as two simpler sentences:

> The treasure lay buried under the old oak tree, behind the crumbling fifteenth-century wall. In the nearby schoolyard, children played merrily during their lunch hour, unaware of the riches that remained hidden beneath their feet.

Writing at Work

The overuse of prepositional phrases often occurs when our thoughts are jumbled and we are unsure how concepts or ideas relate to one another. If you are preparing a report or a proposal, take the time to organize your thoughts in an outline before writing a rough draft. Read the draft aloud, either to yourself or to a colleague, and identify areas that are rambling or unclear. If you notice that a particular part of your report contains several sentences over twenty words, you should double check that particular section to make certain that it is coherent and does not contain unnecessary prepositional phrases. Reading aloud sometimes helps detect unclear and wordy sentences. You can also ask a colleague to paraphrase your main points to ensure that the meaning is clear.

Starting a Sentence by Inverting Subject and Verb

As we noted earlier, most writers follow the subject-verb-object sentence structure. In an inverted sentence, the order is reversed so that the subject follows the verb. Read the following sentence pairs:

1. A truck was parked in the driveway.

2. Parked in the driveway was a truck.

1. A copy of the file is attached.

2. Attached is a copy of the file.

Notice how the second sentence in each pair places more emphasis on the subject—*a truck* in the first example and *the file* in the second. This technique is useful for drawing the reader's attention to your primary area of focus.

Connecting Ideas to Increase Sentence Variety

Reviewing and rewriting the beginning of sentences is a good way of introducing sentence variety into your writing. Another useful technique is to connect two sentences using a modifier, a relative clause, or an appositive. This section examines how to connect ideas across several sentences in order to increase sentence variety and improve writing.

Joining Ideas Using an –ing Modifier

Sometimes it is possible to combine two sentences by converting one of them into a modifier using the *–ing* verb form—*singing*, *dancing*, *swimming*. A modifier is a word or phrase that qualifies the meaning of another element in the sentence. Read the following example:

> **Original sentences:** Steve checked the computer system. He discovered a virus.

> **Revised sentence:** Checking the computer system, Steve discovered a virus.

To connect two sentences using an *–ing* modifier, add *–ing* to one of the verbs in the sentences (*checking*) and delete the subject (*Steve*). Use a comma to separate the modifier from the subject of the sentence. It is important to make sure that the main idea in your revised sentence is contained in the main clause, not in the modifier. In this example, the main idea is that Steve discovered a virus, not that he checked the computer system.

In the following example, an *–ing* modifier indicates that two actions are occurring at the same time:

1. Noticing the police car, she shifted gears and slowed down. This means that she slowed down at the same time she noticed the police car.

2. Barking loudly, the dog ran across the driveway. This means that the dog barked as it ran across the driveway.

You can add an *–ing* modifier to the beginning or the end of a sentence, depending on which fits best.

Dangling Modifiers

A common mistake when combining sentences using the *–ing* verb form is to misplace the modifier so that it is not logically connected to the rest of the sentence. This creates a dangling modifier. Look at the following example:

> Jogging across the parking lot, my breath grew ragged and shallow.

In this sentence, *jogging across the parking lot* seems to modify *my breath*. Since breath cannot jog, the sentence should be rewritten so that the subject is placed immediately after the modifier or added to the dangling phrase.

> Jogging across the parking lot, I felt my breath grow ragged and shallow.

For more information on dangling modifiers, see section 5.C

Joining Ideas Using an –ed Modifier

Some sentences can be combined using an –ed verb form—*stopped*, *finished*, *played*. To use this method, one of the sentences must contain a form of *be* as a helping verb in addition to the –ed verb form. Take a look at the following example:

> **Original sentences:** The Jones family was delayed by a traffic jam. They arrived several hours after the party started.

> **Revised sentence:** Delayed by a traffic jam, the Jones family arrived several hours after the party started.

In the original version, *was* acts as a helping verb—it has no meaning by itself, but it serves a grammatical function by placing the main verb (*delayed*) in the perfect tense.

To connect two sentences using an –ed modifier, drop the helping verb (*was*) and the subject (*the Jones family*) from the sentence with an –ed verb form. This forms a modifying phrase (*delayed by a traffic jam*) that can be added to the beginning or end of the other sentence according to which fits best. As with the –ing modifier, be careful to place the word that the phrase modifies immediately after the phrase in order to avoid a dangling modifier.

Joining Ideas Using a Relative Clause

Another technique that writers use to combine sentences is to join them using a relative clause. A relative clause is a group of words that contains a subject and a verb and describes a noun. Relative clauses function as adjectives by answering questions such as *which one?* or *what kind?* Relative clauses begin with a relative pronoun, such as *who*, *which*, *where*, *why*, or *when*. Read the following examples:

> **Original sentences:** The managing director is visiting the company next week. He lives in Seattle.

> **Revised sentence:** The managing director, who lives in Seattle, is visiting the company next week.

To connect two sentences using a relative clause, substitute the subject of one of the sentences (*he*) for a relative pronoun (*who*). This gives you a relative clause (*who lives in Seattle*) that can be placed next to the noun it describes (*the managing director*). Make sure to keep the sentence you want to emphasize as the main clause. For example, reversing the main clause and subordinate clause in the preceding sentence emphasizes where the managing director lives, not the fact that he is visiting the company.

> **Revised sentence:** The managing director, who is visiting the company next week, lives in Seattle.

Relative clauses are a useful way of providing additional, nonessential information in a sentence.

Tip

To check the punctuation of relative clauses, assess whether or not the clause can be taken out of the sentence without changing its meaning. If the relative clause is not essential to the meaning of the

sentence, it should be placed in commas. If the relative clause is essential to the meaning of the sentence, it does not require commas around it.

Joining Ideas Using an Appositive

An appositive is a word or group of words that describes or renames a noun or pronoun. Incorporating appositives into your writing is a useful way of combining sentences that are too short and choppy. Take a look at the following example:

Original sentences: Harland Sanders began serving food for hungry travelers in 1930. He is Colonel Sanders or "the Colonel."

Revised sentence: Harland Sanders, "the Colonel," began serving food for hungry travelers in 1930.

In the revised sentence, *"the Colonel"* is an appositive because it renames Harland Sanders. To combine two sentences using an appositive, drop the subject and verb from the sentence that renames the noun and turn it into a phrase. Note that in the previous example, the appositive is positioned immediately after the noun it describes. An appositive may be placed anywhere in a sentence, but it must come directly before or after the noun to which it refers:

Appositive after noun: Scott, a poorly trained athlete, was not expected to win the race.

Appositive before noun: A poorly trained athlete, Scott was not expected to win the race.

Unlike relative clauses, appositives are always punctuated by a comma or a set commas.

Writing at Work

In addition to varying sentence structure, consider varying the types of sentences you are using in a report or other workplace document. Most sentences are declarative, but a carefully placed question, exclamation, or command can pique colleagues' interest, even if the subject material is fairly dry. Imagine that you are writing a budget analysis. Beginning your report with a rhetorical question, such as "Where is our money going?" or "How can we increase sales?" encourages people to continue reading to find out the answers. Although they should be used sparingly in academic and professional writing, questions or commands are effective rhetorical devices.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Sentence variety reduces repetition in a piece of writing and adds emphasis to important points in the text.

- Sentence variety can be introduced to the beginning of sentences by starting a sentence with an adverb, starting a sentence with a prepositional phrase, or by inverting the subject and verb.

- Combine ideas, using modifiers, relative clauses, or appositives, to achieve sentence variety.

Exercise 5-10

1. Combine each set of simple sentences into a compound or a complex sentence. Write the combined sentence on your own sheet of paper.

- Heroin is an extremely addictive drug. Thousands of heroin addicts die each year.

- Shakespeare's writing is still relevant today. He wrote about timeless themes. These themes include love, hate, jealousy, death, and destiny.

- Gay marriage is now legal in six states. Iowa, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine all permit same-sex marriage. Other states are likely to follow their example.

- Prewriting is a vital stage of the writing process. Prewriting helps you organize your ideas. Types of prewriting include outlining, brainstorming, and idea mapping.

- Mitch Bancroft is a famous writer. He also serves as a governor on the local school board. Mitch's two children attend the school.

Please share with a classmate and compare your answers.

2. On your own sheet of paper, rewrite the following sentences by moving the adverbs to the beginning.

- The red truck sped furiously past the camper van, blaring its horn.

- Jeff snatched at the bread hungrily, polishing off three slices in under a minute.

- Underage drinking typically results from peer pressure and lack of parental attention.

- The firefighters bravely tackled the blaze, but they were beaten back by flames.

- Mayor Johnson privately acknowledged that the budget was excessive and that further discussion was needed.

Please share with a classmate and compare your answers.

3. On your own sheet of paper, rewrite the following sentences as inverted sentences.

- Teresa will never attempt to run another marathon.

- A detailed job description is enclosed with this letter.

- Bathroom facilities are across the hall to the left of the water cooler.

- The well-dressed stranger stumbled through the doorway.

- My colleagues remain unconvinced about the proposed merger.

Please share with a classmate and compare your answers.

4. On your own sheet of paper, rewrite the following sentence pairs as one sentence using the techniques you have learned in this section.

- Baby sharks are called pups. Pups can be born in one of three ways.

- The Pacific Ocean is the world's largest ocean. It extends from the Arctic in the north to the Southern Ocean in the south.

- Michael Phelps won eight gold medals in the 2008 Olympics. He is a champion swimmer.

- Ashley introduced her colleague Dan to her husband, Jim. She speculated that the two of them would have a lot in common.

- Cacao is harvested by hand. It is then sold to chocolate-processing companies at the Coffee, Sugar, and Cocoa Exchange.

Chapter 6: Choose the Right Word

6.A. FORMAL WRITING

One way to examine written communication is from a structural perspective. Words are a series of symbols that communicate meaning, strung together in specific patterns that are combined to communicate complex and compound meanings. Nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, and articles are the building blocks you will use when composing written documents. Misspellings of individual words or grammatical errors involving misplacement or incorrect word choices in a sentence, can create confusion, lose meaning, and have a negative impact on the reception of your document. Errors themselves are not inherently bad, but failure to recognize and fix them will reflect on you, your company, and limit your success. Self-correction is part of the writing process.

Another way to examine written communication is from a goals perspective, where specific documents address stated (or unstated) goals and have rules, customs, and formats that are anticipated and expected. Violations of these rules, customs, or formats—whether intentional or unintentional—can also have a negative impact on the way your document is received.

Colloquial, casual, and formal writing are three common styles that carry their own particular sets of expectations. Which style you use will depend on your audience, and often whether your communication is going to be read only by those in your company (internal communications) or by those outside the organization, such as vendors, customers or clients (external communications). As a general rule, external communications tend to be more formal, just as corporate letterhead and business cards—designed for presentation to the "outside world"—are more formal than the e-mail and text messages that are used for everyday writing within the organization.

Style also depends on the purpose of the document and its audience. If your writing assignment is for Web page content, clear and concise use of the written word is essential. If your writing assignment is a feature interest article for an online magazine, you may have the luxury of additional space and word count combined with graphics, pictures, embedded video or audio clips, and links to related topics. If your writing assignment involves an introductory letter represented on a printed page delivered in an envelope to a potential customer, you won't have the interactivity to enhance your writing, placing an additional burden on your writing and how you represent it.

Colloquial

Colloquial language is an informal, conversational style of writing. It differs from standard business English in that it often makes use of colorful expressions, slang, and regional phrases. As a result, it can be difficult to understand for an English learner or a person from a different region of the country. Sometimes colloquialism takes the form of a word difference; for example, the difference between a "Coke," a "tonic," a "pop, and a "soda pop" primarily depends on where you live. It can also take the form of a saying, as Roy Wilder Jr. discusses in his book *You All Spoken Here: Southern Talk at Its Down-Home Best*.Wilde, J., Jr. (2003). *You all spoken here: Southern talk at its down-home best*. Athens: University of Georgia Press. Colloquial sayings like "He could mess up a rainstorm" or "He couldn't hit the ground if he fell" communicate the person is inept in a colorful, but not universal way. In the Pacific

Northwest someone might "mosey," or walk slowly, over to the "café," or bakery, to pick up a "maple bar"—a confection known as a "Long John doughnut" to people in other parts of the United States.

Colloquial language can be reflected in texting:

> "ok fwiw i did my part n put it in where you asked but my ? is if the group does not participate do i still get credit for my part of what i did n also how much do we all have to do i mean i put in my opinion of the items in order do i also have to reply to the other team members or what? Thxs"

We may be able to grasp the meaning of the message, and understand some of the abbreviations and codes, but when it comes to business, this style of colloquial text writing is generally suitable only for one-on-one internal communications between coworkers who know each other well (and those who do not judge each other on spelling or grammar). For external communications, and even for group communications within the organization, it is not normally suitable, as some of the codes are not standard, and may even be unfamiliar to the larger audience.

Colloquial writing may be permissible, and even preferable, in some business contexts. For example, a marketing letter describing a folksy product such as a wood stove or an old-fashioned popcorn popper might use a colloquial style to create a feeling of relaxing at home with loved ones. Still, it is important to consider how colloquial language will appear to the audience. Will the meaning of your chosen words be clear to a reader who is from a different part of the country? Will a folksy tone sound like you are "talking down" to your audience, assuming that they are not intelligent or educated enough to appreciate standard English? A final point to remember is that colloquial style is not an excuse for using expressions that are sexist, racist, profane, or otherwise offensive.

Casual

Casual language involves everyday words and expressions in a familiar group context, such as conversations with family or close friends. The emphasis is on the communication interaction itself, and less about the hierarchy, power, control, or social rank of the individuals communicating. When you are at home, at times you probably dress in casual clothing that you wouldn't wear in public—pajamas or underwear, for example. Casual communication is the written equivalent of this kind of casual attire. Have you ever had a family member say something to you that a stranger or coworker would never say? Or have you said something to a family member that you would never say in front of your boss? In both cases, casual language is being used. When you write for business, a casual style is usually out of place. Instead, a respectful, professional tone represents you well in your absence.

Formal

In business writing, the appropriate style will have a degree of formality. Formal language is communication that focuses on professional expression with attention to roles, protocol, and appearance. It is characterized by its vocabulary and syntax, or the grammatical arrangement of words in a sentence. That is, writers using a formal style tend to use a more sophisticated vocabulary—a greater variety of words, and more words with multiple syllables—not for the purpose of throwing big words around, but to enhance the formal mood of the document. They also tend to use more complex syntax, resulting in sentences that are longer and contain more subordinate clauses.

The appropriate style for a particular business document may be very formal, or less so. If your supervisor writes you an e-mail and you reply, the exchange may be informal in that it is fluid and relaxed, without much forethought or fanfare, but it will still reflect the formality of the business environment. Chances are you will be careful to use an informative subject line, a salutation ("Hi [supervisor's name]" is typical in e-mails), a word of thanks for whatever information or suggestion she provided you, and an indication that you stand ready to help further if need be. You will probably also check your grammar and spelling before you click "send."

A formal document such as a proposal or an annual report will involve a great deal of planning and preparation, and its style may not be fluid or relaxed. Instead, it may use distinct language to emphasize the prestige and professionalism of your company. Let's say you are going to write a marketing letter that will be printed on company letterhead and mailed to a hundred sales prospects. Naturally you want to represent your company in a positive light. In a letter of this nature you might write a sentence like "The Widget 300 is our premium offering in the line; we have designed it for ease of movement and efficiency of use, with your success foremost in our mind." But in an e-mail or a tweet, you might use an informal sentence instead, reading "W300—good stapler."

Writing for business often involves choosing the appropriate level of formality for the company and industry, the particular document and situation, and the audience.

KEY TAKEAWAY
The best style for a document may be colloquial, casual, informal, or formal, depending on the audience and the situation.

Exercise 6-1

1. Refer back to the e-mail or text message example in this section. Would you send that message to your professor? Why or why not? What normative expectations concerning professor-student communication are there and where did you learn them? Discuss your thoughts with your classmates.

2. Select a business document and describe its style. Is it formal, informal, or colloquial? Can you rewrite it in a different style? Share your results with a classmate.

3. List three words or phrases that you would say to your friends. List three words or phrases that communicate similar meanings that you would say to an authority figure. Share and compare with classmates.

4. When is it appropriate to write in a casual tone? In a formal tone? Write a one- to two-page essay on this topic and discuss it with a classmate.

5. How does the intended audience influence the choice of words and use of language in a document? Think of a specific topic and two specific kinds of audiences. Then write a short example (250–500 words) of how this topic might be presented to each of the two audiences.

6.B WORD CHOICE

Everyone's a Wordsmith

If you are going to write for either personal or professional reasons, you should carefully choose your words. Make sure your words say what you mean by controlling wordiness, using appropriate language, choosing precise wording, and using a dictionary or thesaurus effectively.

Controlling Wordiness and Writing Concisely

Learning Objectives

1. Recognize and eliminate repetitive ideas.

2. Recognize and remove unneeded repeated words.

3. Recognize unneeded words and revise sentences to be more concise.

It is easy to let your sentences become cluttered with words that do not add value to what you are trying to say. You can manage cluttered sentences by eliminating repetitive ideas, removing repeated words, and rewording to eliminate unneeded words.

Eliminating Repetitive Ideas

Unless you are providing definitions on purpose, stating one idea in two ways within a single sentence is redundant and not necessary. Read each example and think about how you could revise the sentence to remove repetitive phrasing that adds wordiness. Then study the suggested revision below each example.

Examples

Original: Use a **very heavy skillet made of cast iron** to bake an extra juicy meatloaf.

Revision: Use a cast iron skillet to bake a very juicy meatloaf.

Original: Joe thought **to himself**, "I think I'll make caramelized grilled salmon tonight."

Revision: Joe thought, "I think I'll make caramelized grilled salmon tonight."

Removing Repeated Words

As a general rule, you should try not to repeat a word within a sentence. Sometimes you simply need to choose a different word. But often you can actually remove repeated words. Read this example and think about how you could revise the sentence to remove a repeated word that adds wordiness. Then check out the revision below the sentence.

Example

Original: The student who won the cooking contest is a very talented and ambitious **student**.

Revision: The student who won the cooking contest is very talented and ambitious.

Rewording to Eliminate Unneeded Words

If a sentence has words that are not necessary to carry the meaning, those words are unneeded and can be removed to reduce wordiness. Read each example and think about how you could revise the sentence to remove phrasing that adds wordiness. Then check out the suggested revisions to each sentence.

Examples

Original: Andy **has the ability to make** the most fabulous twice-baked potatoes.

Revision: Andy makes the most fabulous twice-baked potatoes.

Original: For his **part in the** cooking class group project, Malik **was responsible for making** the mustard reduction sauce.

Revision: Malik made the mustard reduction sauce for his cooking class group project.

Key Takeaways

- State ideas only once within a single sentence, as opposed to repeating a key idea in an attempt to clarify.

- Avoid unnecessarily repeating words within a sentence.

- Write concisely by eliminating unneeded words.

6.C. JARGON

Let's pretend you've been assigned to the task of preparing a short presentation on your company's latest product for a group of potential customers. It's a big responsibility. You only have one opportunity to get it right. You will need to do extensive planning and preparation, and your effort, if done well, will produce a presentation that is smooth and confident, looking simple to the casual audience member.

What words do you use to communicate information about your product? Is your audience familiar with your field and its specialized terms? As potential customers, they are probably somewhat knowledgeable in the field, but not to the extent that you and your coworkers are; even less so compared to the "techies" who developed the product. For your presentation to succeed, your challenge is to walk a fine line between using too much profession-specific language on the one hand, and "talking down" to your audience on the other hand.

While your potential customers may not understand all the engineering and schematic detail terms involved in the product, they do know what they and their organizations are looking for in considering a purchase. Your solution may be to focus on common ground—what you know of their past history in terms of contracting services or buying products from your company. What can you tell from their historical purchases? If your research shows that they place a high value on saving time, you can focus your presentation on the time-saving aspects of your new product and leave the technical terms to the user's manual.

Jargon is an occupation-specific language used by people in a given profession. Jargon does not necessarily imply formal education, but instead focuses on the language people in a profession use to

communicate with each other. Members of the information technology department have a distinct group of terms that refer to common aspects in their field. Members of the marketing department, or advertising, or engineering, research, and development also have sets of terms they use within their professional community. Jargon exists in just about every occupation, independent of how much formal education is involved—from medicine and law; to financial services, banking, and insurance; to animal husbandry, auto repair, and the construction trades.

Whether or not to use jargon is often a judgment call, and one that is easier to make in speaking than in writing. In an oral context, we may be able to use a technical term and instantly know from feedback whether or not the receiver of the message "got it." If they didn't, we can define it on the spot. In written language, we lack that immediate response and must attend more to the context of receiver. The more we learn about our audience, the better we can tailor our chosen words. If we lack information or want our document to be understood by a variety of readers, it pays to use common words and avoid jargon.

6.D CLICHE

Using Clichés Sparingly

Clichés are phrases that were once original and interesting creations but that became so often used that they have ceased to be interesting and are now viewed as overworked. If you have a tendency to use a cliché or see one while you are proofreading, replace it with plain language instead.

Example

I'm loose as a goose today.

Replace cliché: I'm very relaxed today.

as fresh as a daisy	as slow as molasses	as white as snow
beat around the bush	being led down the primrose path	big as life
bottomless pit	busy as a bee	can't see the forest for the trees
chip off the old block	dead of winter	dirt cheap
don't upset the apple cart	down to earth	flat as a pancake
for everything there is a season	from feast to famine	go with the flow
gone to pot	green with envy	growing like a weed
heaven on earth	here's mud in your eye	in a nutshell
in the doghouse	just a drop in the bucket	knock on wood
light as a feather	like a duck out of water	made in the shade
muddy the water	naked as a jaybird	nutty as a fruitcake
old as dirt	our neck of the woods	plain as the nose on your face
raking in the dough	sick as a dog	stick in the mud
stubborn as a mule	sweet as apple pie	thorn in my side
two peas in a pod	under the weather	walks on water
water under the bridge	when pigs fly	

6.E SLANG

Slang describes informal words that are considered nonstandard English. Slang often changes with passing fads and may be used by or familiar to only a specific group of people. Most people use slang when they speak and in personal correspondences, such as emails, text messages, and instant messages. Slang is appropriate between friends in an informal context but should be avoided in formal academic writing.

Exercise 6-2

Edit the following paragraph by replacing the slang words and phrases with more formal language. Rewrite the paragraph below.

I felt like such an airhead when I got up to give my speech. As I walked toward the podium, I banged my knee on a chair. Man, I felt like such a klutz. On top of that, I kept saying "like" and "um," and I could not stop fidgeting. I was so stressed out about being up there. I feel like I've been practicing this speech 24/7, and I still bombed. It was ten minutes of me going off about how we sometimes have to do things we don't enjoy doing. Wow, did I ever prove my point. My speech was so bad I'm surprised that people didn't boo. My teacher said not to sweat it, though. Everyone gets nervous his or her first time speaking in public, and she said, with time, I would become a whiz at this speech giving stuff. I wonder if I have the guts to do it again.

6.F. IDIOMS

Idioms are expressions that have a meaning different from the dictionary definitions of the individual words in the expression. Because English contains many idioms, nonnative English speakers have difficulties making logical sense of idioms and idiomatic expressions. The more you are exposed to English, however, the more idioms you will come to understand. Until then, memorizing the more common idioms may be of some help.

Idiom	Definition
a blessing in disguise	a good thing you do not recognize at first
a piece of cake	easy to do
better late than never	it is better to do something late than not at all
get over it	recover from something (like a perceived insult)
I have no idea	I don't know
not a chance	it will definitely not happen
on pins and needles	very nervous about something that is happening
on top of the world	feeling great
pulling your leg	making a joke by tricking another person
the sky is the limit	the possibilities are endless

What if you come across an idiom that you do not understand? There are clues that can help you. They are called context clues. Context clues are words or phrases around the unknown word or phrase that may help you decipher its meaning.

1. **Definition or explanation clue.** An idiom may be explained immediately after its use. **Sentence:** I felt like I was sitting *on pins and needles.* **I was so nervous**.

2. **Restatement or synonym clues.** An idiom may be simplified or restated. **Sentence:** The young girl felt as though she had been *sent to the dog house* when her mother **punished her** for fighting in school.

3. **Contrast or Antonym clues.** An idiom may be clarified by a contrasting phrase or antonym that is near it. **Sentence:** Chynna thought the 5k marathon would be *a piece of cake*, *but* **it turned out to be very difficult**.

Pay attention to the signal word *but*, which tells the reader that an opposite thought or concept is occurring.

6.G SEXIST AND DISCRIMINATORY LANGUAGE

Gender-Inclusive Language

This section will help you make decisions about using gendered language in your writing.

What is gendered language, and why should you be aware of it?

You have probably encountered documents that use masculine nouns and pronouns to refer to subject(s) whose gender is unclear or variable, or to groups that contain people who are not actually men. For example, the U.S. Declaration of Independence states that "all men are created equal." Generations of Americans have been taught that in this context, the word "men" should be read as including both men and women. Other common instances of gendered language include words that assume connections between jobs or roles and gender (like "policeman") and language conventions that differ depending on the gender of the person being discussed (like using titles that indicate a person's marital status).

English has changed since the Declaration of Independence was written. Most readers no longer understand the word "man" to be synonymous with "person," so clear communication requires writers to be more precise. And using gender-neutral language has become standard practice in both journalistic and academic writing, as you'll see if you consult the style manuals for different academic disciplines (APA, MLA, and Chicago, for example).

Tackling gendered references in your writing can be challenging, especially since there isn't (and may never be) a universally agreed upon set of concrete guidelines on which to base your decisions. But there are a number of different strategies you can "mix and match" as necessary.

Gendered nouns

"Man" and words ending in "-man" are the most commonly used gendered nouns in English. These words are easy to spot and replace with more neutral language, even in contexts where many readers strongly expect the gendered noun. For example, Star Trek writers developing material for contemporary viewers were able to create a more inclusive version of the famous phrase "where no man has gone before" while still preserving its pleasing rhythm: Star Trek explorers now venture "where no one has gone before."

Here's a list of gendered nouns and some alternatives listed below. Check a thesaurus for alternatives to gendered nouns not included in this list.

Sometimes writers modify nouns that refer to jobs or positions to indicate the sex of the person holding that position. This happens most often when the sex of the person goes against conventional expectations. For example, some people may assume, perhaps unconsciously, that doctors are men and that nurses are women. Sentences like "The female doctor walked into the room" or "The male nurse walked into the room" reinforce such assumptions. Unless the sex of the subject is important to the meaning of the sentence, it should be omitted. (Here's an example where the health care professional's sex might be relevant: "Some women feel more comfortable seeing female gynecologists.")

Titles and names

Another example of gendered language is the way the titles "Mr.," "Miss," and "Mrs." are used. "Mr." can refer to any man, regardless of whether he is single or married, but "Miss" and "Mrs." define women by whether they are married, which until quite recently meant defining them by their

relationships with men. A simple alternative when addressing or referring to a woman is "Ms." (which doesn't indicate marital status).

Another note about titles: some college students are in the habit of addressing most women older than them, particularly teachers, as "Mrs.," regardless of whether the woman in question is married. It's worth knowing that many female faculty and staff (including married women) prefer to be addressed as "Ms." or, if the term applies, "Professor" or "Dr."

Writers sometimes refer to women using only their first names in contexts where they would typically refer to men by their full names, last names, or titles. But using only a person's first name is more informal and can suggest a lack of respect. For example, in academic writing, we don't refer to William Shakespeare as "William" or "Will"; we call him "Shakespeare" or "William Shakespeare." So we should refer to Jane Austen as "Austen" or "Jane Austen," not just "Jane."

Similarly, in situations where you would refer to a man by his full title, you should do the same for a woman. For example, if you wouldn't speak of American President Reagan "Ronald" or "Ronnie," avoid referring to British Prime Minister Thatcher as "Margaret" or "Maggie."

Pronouns

A pronoun is a word that substitutes for a noun. The English language provides pronoun options for references to masculine nouns (for example, "he" can substitute for "Juan"), feminine nouns ("she" can replace "Keisha"), and neutral/non-human nouns ("it" can stand in for "a tree"). But English offers no widely-accepted pronoun choice for gender-neutral, third-person singular nouns that refer to people ("the writer," "a student," or "someone"). As we discussed at the beginning of this handout, the practice of using masculine pronouns ("he," "his," "him") as the "default" is outdated and will confuse or offend many readers.

So what can you do when you're faced with one of those gender-neutral or gender-ambiguous language situations? You have several options.

1. Use more than one pronoun

In situations where a pronoun needs to refer to a person whose gender isn't known, writers sometimes use "he or she" or "he/she" (or even "s/he"), "her/him," etc., as we did in the example just above. Putting the masculine form first is more conventional; "she or he" may distract readers but does make the point that women are not just being added onto the generic "he."

Here are some examples:

When the winner has been selected, she or he will be advanced to the next round of the competition.

OR

Our agreement is that the first person who picks up his or her cell phone must treat the rest of the group to dinner.

While this solution specifically includes women and men and works well in many situations, some readers find it stylistically awkward, especially when "she or he" or "she/he" is repeated many times throughout a piece of writing. Also, by going out of its way to refer to multiple genders, this approach

risks calling attention to gender in situations where it's not relevant. And using "she or he" or similar constructions can also inadvertently exclude people who do not refer to themselves using either pronoun.

2. Alternate genders and pronouns

Another strategy for gender-aware writers is alternating genders, using masculine pronouns in some places and feminine ones in others. This option will work only in certain situations, though—usually hypothetical situations in which the referent is equally likely to be male or female. For example, students of all genders use the Writing Center's services, so the author of our staff manual chose to alternate between masculine and feminine pronouns when writing the items in a list of guidelines for writing coaches:

Ask her to describe her purpose and audience and show how she has taken them into account in her writing.

Respond as a reader, explaining what you were thinking as you read his text so that he can discover where a reader might struggle with his writing.

Of course, our staff manual writer had other options, like including both pronouns in each sentence by using "her/his" or "her/him." In this case, though, alternating "he" and "she" conveys the same sense of gender variability and is likely a little easier on the reader, who won't have to pause to process several different options every time a gendered pronoun is needed in the sentence.

Another approach would be to simply repeat "the student," but "ask the student to describe the student's purpose and audience and show how the student has taken them into account in the student's writing" doesn't sound very good. The writer could have used plural forms, like "respond as a reader, explaining what you were thinking as you read their texts so that they can discover where a reader might struggle with their writing," but that sentence doesn't capture the emphasis on one-on-one conversation between writing coach and writer. The switch to "a reader" is jarring when the other nouns are plural. And the writing coach is a particular reader, not a representative for all readers, so switching to "where readers might struggle" doesn't work.

Our staff manual writer's situation is a great example of how useful it is to know several strategies so you can choose the one that best fits your current writing context.

3. Try making the nouns and pronouns plural

If it works for your particular sentence, using plural forms is often an excellent option. Here's an example of a sentence that can easily be rephrased:

A student who loses too much sleep may have trouble focusing during [his/her] exams.

If we make "student" plural and adjust the rest of the sentence accordingly, there's no need for gendered language (and no confusion or loss of meaning):

Students who lose too much sleep may have trouble focusing during their exams.

4. Use "they" as a singular pronoun

Most of the time, the word "they" refers to a plural antecedent. For example,

Because experienced hikers know that weather conditions can change rapidly, they often dress in layers.

But using "they" with a singular antecedent is not a new phenomenon, and while it remains uncommon in formal writing, it has become quite common in speech. In a conversation, many people would not even notice how "they" is being used here:

Look for the rental car company's representative at the airport exit; they will be holding a sign with your name on it.

Some people are strongly opposed to the use of "they" with singular antecedents and are likely to react badly to writing that uses this approach. Others argue that "they" should be adopted as English's standard third-person, gender-neutral pronoun in all writing and speaking contexts. Keep your audience in mind as you decide whether the singular "they" is a good solution for any gender-related problems in your writing.

What if you're not sure of someone's gender?

You may sometimes find yourself needing to refer to a person whose gender you're uncertain of. Perhaps you are writing a paper about the creator of an ancient text or piece of art whose identity (and therefore gender) is unknown–for example, we are not certain who wrote the 6th-century epic poem "Beowulf." Perhaps you're participating in an online discussion forum where the participants are known only by usernames like "PurpleOctopus25" or "I Love Big Yellow Fish." You could be writing about someone you don't personally know whose name is not clearly associated with a particular gender– someone named Sam Smith might be Samuel, Samantha, Samson, or something else–or the person's name might be in a language you're unfamiliar with (for example, if English is the only language you speak and read, you might have difficulty guessing the gender associated with a Chinese name). Or maybe you're discussing a person whose gender identity has changed (like when athlete Bruce Jenner, who was previously regarded as a man, became Caitlyn Jenner, a woman) or is fluid. Perhaps your subject does not fit neatly into the categories of "man" and "woman" or rejects those categories entirely.

In these situations, you may not be able to use "he" or "she"–but "they" also feels a little odd, since you are talking about a specific individual. **Here are some strategies to try in such cases:**

- Refer to the person using a descriptive word or phrase: the writer of Beowulf is frequently referred to as "The Beowulf poet" or (in contexts where "Beowulf" is the only poem being discussed) "the poet."

- If the person is known to you only by a username, repeat the username or follow the standard practices of the forum–PurpleOctopus25 might become Purple or P.O. in subsequent references. (Advice columnists often use a similar strategy; if "I Love Big Yellow Fish" wrote to ask for advice, the columnist's response might begin with "Dear Fish Lover.")

- If the person's name is known, keep using the name rather than substituting a pronoun. Rephrase as necessary to reduce the number of times you must repeat it: "Blogger Sam Smith's

cats have apparently destroyed Smith's furniture, stolen Smith's sandwiches, and terrorized Smith, Smith's dogs, and Smith's housemate" could become "Blogger Sam Smith's cats have apparently destroyed couches, stolen sandwiches, and terrorized their human and canine housemates."

- Do a little research: if you are writing about a public figure of any kind, chances are that others have also written about that person; you may be able to follow their lead. If you see multiple practices, imitate the ones that seem most respectful.

If you're writing about someone you are in contact with, you can ask how that person would like to be referred to.

What about the content of the paper?

Much discussion about gendered language focuses on choosing the right words, but the kinds of information writers include or omit can also convey values and assumptions about gender. For example, think about the ways Barack and Michelle Obama have been presented in the media. Have you seen many discussions of Barack's weight, hairstyle, and clothing? Many readers and viewers have pointed out that the appearance of female public figures (not just politicians, but actors, writers, activists, athletes, etc.) is discussed more often, more critically, and in far more detail than the appearance of men in similar roles. This pattern suggests that women's appearance matters more than men's does and is interesting and worthy of attention, regardless of the context.

Similarly, have you ever noticed patterns in the way that men's and women's relationships with their families are discussed (in person, online, or elsewhere)? When someone describes what a male parent does for his children as "babysitting" or discusses family leave policies without mentioning how they apply to men, you may wonder whether the speaker or writer is assuming that men are not interested in caring for their children.

These kinds of values and assumptions about gender can weaken arguments. In many of your college writing assignments, you'll be asked to analyze something (an issue, text, event, etc.) and make an evidence-based argument about it. Your readers will critique your arguments in part by assessing the values and assumptions your claims rely on. They may look for evidence of bias, overgeneralization, incomplete knowledge, and so forth. Critically examining the role that gender has played in your decisions about the content of your paper can help you make stronger, more effective arguments that will be persuasive to a wide variety of readers, no matter what your topic is or what position you take.

Checklist for gender-related revisions

As you review your writing, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Have you used "man" or "men" or words containing them to refer to people who may not be men?

2. Have you used "he," "him," "his," or "himself" to refer to people who may not be men?

3. If you have mentioned someone's sex or gender, was it necessary to do so?

4. Do you use any occupational (or other) stereotypes?

5. Do you provide the same kinds of information and descriptions when writing about people of different genders?

Perhaps the best test for gender-inclusive language is to imagine a diverse group of people reading your paper. Would each reader feel respected? Envisioning your audience is a critical skill in every writing context, and revising with a focus on gendered language is a perfect opportunity to practice.

Chapter 7: MLA Document Formatting

7.A OVERALL STRUCTURE OF AN MLA PAPER

One purpose of using MLA format is to streamline the writing process and establish a consistent and uniform way of presenting material. For this reason, there are specific guidelines you'll need to follow when formatting your paper.

General MLA Formatting Rules

- **Font**: Your paper should be written in 12-point text. Whichever font you choose, MLA requires that regular and italicized text be easily distinguishable from each other. Times and Times New Roman are often recommended.

- **Line Spacing**: All text in your paper should be double-spaced.

- **Margins**: All page margins (top, bottom, left, and right) should be 1 inch. All text should be left-justified.

- **Indentation**: The first line of every paragraph should be indented 0.5 inches.

- **Page Numbers**: Create a right-justified header 0.5 inches from the top edge of every page. This header should include your last name, followed by a space and the page number. Your pages should be numbered with Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3…) and should start with the number 1 on your title page. Most word-processing programs have the ability to automatically add the correct page number to each page so you don't have to do this by hand.

- **Use of Italics:** In MLA style, you should italicize (rather than underline) the titles of books, plays, or other standalone works. You should also italicize (rather than underline) words or phrases you want to lend particular emphasis—though you should do this rarely.

- **Sentence Spacing**: Include just one single space after a period before the next sentence: "Mary went to the store. She bought some milk. Then she went home."

- **The first page:** Like the rest of your paper, everything on your first page, even the headers, should be double-spaced. The following information should be left-justified in regular font at the top of the first page (in the main part of the page, not the header):

    - on the first line, your first and last name

    - on the second line, your instructor's name

    - on the third line, the name of the class

    - on the fourth line, the date

- **The title:** After the header, the next double-spaced line should include the title of your paper. This should be centered and in title case, and it should not be bolded, underlined, or italicized (unless it includes the name of a book, in which case just the book title should be italicized).

- **The Oxford Comma:** The Oxford comma (also called the serial comma) is the comma that comes after the second-to-last item in a series or list. For example: *The UK includes the countries of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.* In the previous sentence, the comma immediately after "Wales" is the Oxford comma. In general writing conventions, whether the Oxford comma should be used is actually a point of fervent debate among passionate grammarians. However, it's a requirement in MLA style, so double-check all your lists and series to make sure you include it!

Jane/John Doe

Doe 1

Instructor Ryan

ENC 1101.xxx

23 August 2010

Paper Title

→ The opening line of your paper begins here. There is no extra line on either side of the title. The margins on all four sides of the page are set at 1". The font for *all text* is the same type and size—usually Times Roman 10 or 12. The top right header is ½" down from the top of the page and is 1" from the right side of the page. It falls outside of the area where the main text of the paper is placed, and the header consists of your last name, a space, and the page number. This right side header is repeated on each page, its page number changing with the page.

→ Tabbed in 5 spaces, the next paragraph begins here. Please note that there are no extra lines or spaces between paragraphs. (If you use Word 2007, go to this web page: http://support.microsoft.com/kb/921174.) →

This pattern repeats itself all the way through the paper. From the moment you type your name at the top left, all of the lines are double-spaced. Everything is the same distance apart.

This pattern repeats itself all the way through the paper. From the moment you type your name at the top left, all of the lines are double-spaced. Everything is the same distance apart.

→ The purpose for stressing MLA formatting is not to force you to learn mundane facts or to jump through an idiotic hoop. It's to standardize the mode of presentation (Last name Page number). When you get into your major, your professors, the good ones, will expect your work to be presented according to your field's style manual. Some use the various styles noted in *EW* Chapters 48-54. But the work—and the research included in your papers—will be required to look a certain way. So all I'm asking for you to do is to model your work after the appropriate

This sample paper shows how the first page of a paper written in MLA is formatted. Note the header information in the upper-left corner, the last name and page numbers in the upper-right corner, the double spaced text, and indentations that begin each paragraph.

7.B IN-TEXT CITATIONS

Now that you've just summarized or paraphrased or directly quoted a source, Is there anything else you need to do with that source? Well, it turns out there is. There are some standard ways of using sources that let your readers know this material is from other texts rather than original ideas from your own brain. Following these guidelines also allows us, your readers, to locate those sources if we are interested in the topic and would like to know more about what they say.

Giving credit to the sources you used creating a text is important (and useful!) for several reasons.

> • It adds to your own credibility as an author by showing you have done appropriate research on your topic and approached your work ethically.

> • It gives credit to the original author and their work for the ideas you found to be useful, and in giving them credit it helps you avoid unintentionally plagiarizing their work.

> • It gives your readers additional resources (already curated by you in your research process!) that they can go to if they want to read further your topic.

What Does It Mean to Credit or Cite Your Sources?

For college-level work, this generally means two things: in-text or parenthetical citation and a "Works Cited" or "References" page. What these two things look like will be a little different for different types of classes (for example, it's likely your writing class will use MLA—Modern Language Association—format, while a psychology class is more likely to use APA—American Psychological Association—format). The specific details required and the order in which they appear changes a little between different formats, but practicing one of them will give you a general idea of what most of them are looking for. All of the information we are looking at here is specific to MLA, which is the format you will use for your writing classes (and some other humanities classes).

Citing: Identifying In-Text Sources

 Once you have brought source material into your writing (via quotation, summary, or paraphrase), your next task is to cite or identify it. This is essential because giving credit to the creator of the source material helps you avoid plagiarism. Identifying your sources also helps your reader understand which written content is from a source and which represents your ideas.

When you cite or identify source materials, you make it absolutely clear that the material was taken from a source.

Note that if you don't do that, your reader is left to assume the words are yours—and since that isn't true, you will have committed plagiarism.

In-Text Citation

Every time you use an idea or language from a source in your text (so every time you summarize, paraphrase, or directly quote material from a source), you will want to add an in-text citation. Sometimes you can accomplish this simply by mentioning the author or title of a source in the body of your writing, but other times you'll handle in-text citation differently, with a parenthetical citation. Parenthetical means that the citation appears in parentheses in the text of your essay.

A starting point for parenthetical citations is that they include the author's last name and the page number where the borrowed information came from. For example, let's say I'm using material from an article written by Lisa Smith. It's in a physical magazine and spans pages 38-42. If, on page 41, she says something like, "While most studies have shown that Expo dry erase markers have superior lasting power, erasability, and color saturation than other brands on the market, their higher cost is a concern for some consumers," I might incorporate that into a paper like this:

> By most measurable standards, Expo markers are clearly the favored option (Smith 41).

However, you don't always need both components (last name and page number) in the parenthetical citation. If I introduced the source material in the sentence above a little differently, introducing the author before delivering the material, I wouldn't need to repeat the author's name in that same sentence in the parenthetical citation. In that case, my sentence would look something like this: According to Lisa Smith, Expo markers are clearly the favored option by most measurable standards (41).

In this section, we'll discuss three ways to cite or identify written source materials in your own writing.

1. Introduce the Author and/or the Title of the Source

By introducing the author or the material, you make it clear to the reader that what you're talking about is from a source. Here's an example of a quotation that is identified by introducing the author and the title of source (which are highlighted):

> In the article, "Grooming Poodles for Fun and Profit," Jonas Fogbottom explains, "Poodle grooming is a labor of love. It takes years of practice to be good at it, but once learned, it's a fun and worthwhile career."

Here's an example of a paraphrase that is identified in the same way:

> In the article, "Grooming Poodles for Fun and Profit," Jonas Fogbottom says that although it takes a long time to become a skilled poodle groomer, it's well worth the effort and leads to a good career.

Note that, in the example above, (1) If there are no page numbers to cite and (2) if the name of the author is signaled in the phrase that introduces the bit of source material, then there is no need for the parenthetical citation. This is an example of a situation where mentioning the author by name is the only in-text citation you'll need. And sometimes, if the name of the author is unknown, then you might just mention the title of the article instead. It will be up to you, as a writer, to choose which method works best for your given situation.

The first time that you mention a source in your writing, you should always introduce the speaker and, if possible, the title of the source as well. Note that the speaker is the person responsible for stating the information that you're citing and that this is not always the author of the text. For example, an author of an article might quote someone else, and you might quote or paraphrase that person.

Use the speaker's full name (e.g. "According to Jonas Fogbottom . . .") the first time you introduce them; if you mention them again in the paper, use their last name only (e.g. "Fogbottom goes on to discuss…").

2. Use Linking or Attributive Language

Using linking language (sometimes called attributive language or signal phrases) simply means using words that show the reader you are still talking about a source that you just mentioned.

For example, you might use linking language that looks something like this:

- The author also explains . . .

- Fogbottom continues . . .

- The article goes on to say . . .

- The data set also demonstrates . . .

By using this kind of language, you make it clear to the reader that you're still talking about a source. And while you'll use this type of language throughout any researched essay whether you're also using parenthetical citations or not, as we mentioned above, sometimes this linking language will be all you need for in-text citation.

Let's look back at the last Fogbottom example from above, and imagine you wanted to add two more sentences from the same source. The linking language is highlighted:

> In the article, "Grooming Poodles for Fun and Profit," Jonas Fogbottom says that although it takes a long time to become a skilled poodle groomer, it's well worth the effort and leads to a good career. Fogbottom goes on to explain how one is trained in the art of dog and poodle grooming. The article also gives a set of resources for people who want to know more about a dog grooming career.

Using the linking language makes it absolutely clear to your reader that you are still talking about a source.

3. Use a Parenthetical Citation

A parenthetical citation is a citation enclosed within parentheses.

Pro Tips

Whatever comes first in the Works Cited citation is what will go into the parentheses in a parenthetical citation. Most often that item is an author's last name, but sometimes it's a title or abbreviated title of an article or other type of text. This is another good reason for starting by creating a Works Cited entry the moment you begin working with a source.

The classic parenthetical citation includes the author's name and, if there is one, a page number. To learn more about parenthetical citation and see some examples, see the Purdue OWL article on "MLA In-Text Citations: The Basics" (available from owl.english.purdue.edu).

Here's an example:

(Fogbottom 16)

If there are two authors, list both (with a page number, if available):

(Smith and Jones 24)

If there are three or more authors, list the first author only and add "et al."* (with a page number, if available):

(Smith et al. 62)

*et al means "and others." If a text or source has three or more authors, MLA style has us just list the first one with et al.

But my source doesn't have page numbers! If you are using an electronic source or another kind of source with no page numbers, just leave the page number out: (Fogbottom)

If you're quoting or paraphrasing someone who was cited by the author of one of your sources, then that's handled a bit differently. For example, what if you quote Smith, but you found that quote in the article by Fogbottom. In this case, you should introduce the speaker (Smith) as described above, and then cite the source for the quote, like this:

(qtd. in Fogbottom)

But my source doesn't have an author! This happens sometimes. Many useful documents, like government publications, organizational reports, and surveys, don't list their authors. On the other hand, sometimes no clearly listed author can be a red flag that a source is not entirely trust worthy or is not researched well enough to be a reliable source for you. If you encounter a source with no author, do look for other indicators that it is a good (or poor) source—who published it, does it have an appropriate list of references, is it current information, is it unbiased? If you determine that this source is an appropriate source to use, then, when you create your in-text citation for it, you will simply use the title of the source (article, chapter, graph, film, etc.) in the place where you would have used the author's name. If the title is long, you should abbreviate by listing the first one or two words of it (with a page number, if available).

Let's imagine you're working with a newspaper article entitled, "What's New in Technology," enclosed in quotation marks to indicate that this is an article title, and with no known author. Here's what that would look in a parenthetical citation:

("What's New" B6)

If there is no author and you're working with an electronic article, use the first one or two words in your parenthetical citation, again, enclosed in quotation marks. Let's imagine you're working with a web article entitled, "Pie Baking for Fun and Profit" and with no author. Here's what that would look in a parenthetical citation:

("Pie Baking")

The parenthetical citation should be added at the end of the sentence that contains the source material. Let's go back to the Fogbottom example and see how a parenthetical citation would work:

"Poodle grooming is a labor of love. It takes years of practice to be good at it, but once learned, it's a fun and worthwhile career" (Fogbottom).

Here's what it would look like if we used it with a paraphrase instead of a quotation:

Although it takes a long time to become a skilled poodle groomer, it's well worth the effort and leads to a good career (Fogbottom).

Note that the citation is placed at the end of the sentence; the period comes after the parentheses. Misplacing the period is one of the most common formatting errors made by students.

Using parenthetical citation makes it crystal clear that a sentence comes from source material. This is, by far, the easiest way to cite or identify your source materials, too.

If using parenthetical citations is easy, why would we bother with using introduction or linking language to identify sources?

Good question! There would be nothing wrong with only using parenthetical citations all the way through your writing—it would absolutely do the job of citing the material. But, it wouldn't read smoothly and would feel some

What rough because every time a parenthetical citation popped up, the reader would be "stopped" in place for a moment. Using a combination of introduction, linking language, and parenthetical citation, as needed, makes the writing smoother and easier to read. It also integrates the source material with the writer's ideas. We call this synthesis, and it's part of the craft of writing.

Citing Sources in Your Paper

You need to cite all your information: if someone else wrote it, said it, drew it, demonstrated it, or otherwise expressed it, you need to cite it. The exception to this statement is common, widespread knowledge, but if you are ever in doubt, go ahead and document the material.

If you are using MLA style, then your citation of the source in the body of the essay will point to the Works Cited page at the end. You must cite your sources as you use them, mentioning the author or title of the source by name if you summarize its ideas and giving the author or title of the source as well as

the page number (if available) in parentheses if you paraphrase or directly quote the source. The reference to the author or title is like a signal to readers that information has been incorporated from a separate source. It also provides readers with the information they need to locate the source in the Works Cited at the end of your essay where they can find the complete reference.

Rules for In-Text Citations:

The following examples illustrate basic rules for documenting sources within the text of your paper in MLA style:

Author named in the introduction to the paraphrase or quote: Jacob Leibowitz found that low-carbohydrate diets often helped subjects with Type II diabetes maintain a healthy weight and control blood-sugar (56). Leibowitz states, "People with Type II diabetes should follow a low-carbohydrate diet in order to prevent weight gain and unbalanced blood-sugar levels" (56).

Author named in parentheses: One source indicates that low-carbohydrate diets often helped subjects with Type II diabetes maintain a healthy weight and control blood-sugar (Leibowitz 56). A noted nutritionist advises diabetics: "People with Type II diabetes should follow a low-carbohydrate diet in order to prevent weight gain and unbalanced blood-sugar levels" (Leibowitz 56).

Unknown author: One website points out that a low-carbohydrate diet may aggravate a heart condition by raising a person's bad cholesterol ("Cholesterol and the Low-carb Diet").

Unknown or No Page Reference: The risks of following a low-carbohydrate diet outweigh any benefits according to one researcher (Jones). Gerald Jones believes that "a balanced diet is still the safest and most effective approach to good health."

A source quoted in another source (an indirect quotation): "For the chronically overweight," states Martin Rogers, "a low-carbohydrate diet may provide a viable option for weight loss" (qtd. in Evans 46).

7.C THE WORKS CITED PAGE

The purpose of the Works Cited page is to collect all of the sources used in a text and to arrange them so they are easy for your reader to locate. Listing the sources also helps you track them and makes it less likely that you might accidentally plagiarize by forgetting to mention a piece of source material.

Setting up the Page Follow these guidelines to set up your Works Cited:

• Works Cited is located at the end of a paper. Always start it at the top of a new page.

• Title it Works Cited, even if there is only a single source listed. • Center the title at the topmost point on the page.

• The Works Cited page uses the same formatting as the rest of the paper: 12 point standard font, double spacing, 1" margins on all sides, etc.

• List sources alphabetically, according to whatever comes first in each citation. (Do not list them in the order they occur within the paper.)

• Use "hanging" paragraphs to set up sources. This means that the first line of each source begins at the left margin, while second and subsequent lines are indented by ½" (1 tab). This is the reverse of a

regular paragraph. The "hanging" format makes it easily to visually scroll down the list and see each source. If you are using Microsoft Word, you can set hanging paragraphs by choosing the "hanging" setting in the "Paragraphs" menu.

Creating Entries on the Works Cited Page

The newest version of MLA—version 8—came out during the winter of 2016 and promises to be the citation style of the electronic age. Rather than the previous method, which involved creating a separate style for each different kinds of source (and was very time-intensive), it created a single template (see the link provided below) to be used for all types of source materials.

Let's look at how to set up Works Cited citations. We'll work through one, and then I'll add some details.

We'll work with this article from The Atlantic (found at theatlantic.com): "The Importance of High School Mentors."

Open the MLA template, too: https://style.mla.org/files/2016/04/practice-template.pdf

To use the template, start at the top and fill in information about the source. If there are lines in the template you can't fill in, we simply leave them blank. Note that on the template, each item is followed with specific punctuation. Copy these as you create your own citations.

Author.

Enter the author's name on line 1 of the template.

> • The first author's name is always reversed: Last Name, First Name.

> • It is in plain font and (as you'll note in the template) is followed with a period.

Here's what you should have on line 1:

Sebenius, Alyza.

Title of Source.

This is the name of the material you're working with.

> • Capitalize all words in the title of source except for articles, conjunctions, and prepositions.

> • If it is an article, essay, chapter, or any other "small" piece of material, it will be in quotation marks and plain font.

> • If it is a book, film, periodical, or an entire web page, it will be in italic font with no quotation marks.

> • The title of source is followed with a period—and when quotation marks are used, note that the period always goes inside the quotation marks (see below).

Here's what should be on line 2:

"The Importance of High School Mentors."

Title of Container,

The container is the "place" that holds or houses the source you're using. For example:

A book chapter (the "title of source") is held within a book (the "container").

A newspaper article (the "title of source") is held within a newspaper (the "container").

An essay on a web page (the "title of source") is held within a website (the "container").

A magazine article (the "title of source") is held within a magazine (the "container").

(And so forth)

> • The container is almost always* in italic font and followed by a comma.
>
> • Capitalize it fully.

*An example of a non-italicized container would be if you were citing an actual painting and the "container" was an art museum. The museum would be listed as the container but in plain font.

You have two options for the container in this case; either would be correct:

The Atlantic,

theatlantic.com,

Other Contributors,

This line provides a way to mention people who assisted with creating or handling the source, e.g., directors, translators, performers, illustrators, etc.

> • List them using plain, unabbreviated language, e.g., performed by, directed by, etc.
>
> • Other contributors are listed in plain font and followed with a comma.

Our article has no "other contributors," and so we would leave this blank, skipping it. When you hit sections of the template where you have no information, just skip them and move on.

Version,

Use this if you want to mention an edition number (e.g., Second Edition, Evening Edition, etc.) or if you want to list a volume (Volume 3), a month (January), etc.

> • Version is written in plain font and followed by a comma.

Our article has no version, so we'll leave line 5 blank.

Number,

Use this to provide an issue number (e.g., for a magazine or journal), a special archive number (e.g., with museum pieces), or something similar.

- Number is in plain font and followed by a comma.

Our article has no number, so we'll leave line 6 blank.

Publisher,

The publisher is the person or institution that makes the source available to the world.

- Publishers for books, periodicals, and printed materials are usually written on one of the first pages.

- Web page publishers can usually be found at the page bottom. If you cannot find the publisher quickly, you might use Google to search for it, i.e., searching 'New York Times Publisher.'

- Film and music publishers will usually be located on the material.

- Write out the complete publisher name; capitalize it fully and don't abbreviate or omit words.
- The publisher is in plain font and followed by a comma.

If we scroll to the page bottom, we find our publisher for line 7:

The Atlantic Monthly Group,

Publication date,

This is the date of the "title of source" (see line 2).

- Use MLA date format: day month year

- Follow the date with a comma.

- With longer months, you may abbreviate the source; if you do, follow the abbreviation with a period.

We could use either of these options for our source:

13 January 2016,

13 Jan. 2016,

Location.

The source's location tells the reader where to find the source. Many sources will not have a location, but it should be listed if present.

- If using a book, the page number is the location.

  ◦ For single pages, use this format: p. 6.

  ◦ For two or more pages, list like this: pp. 62-4 or pp. 184-96.

  ◦ If using two or more pages and they cross a "hundred" marker, list like this: pp. 456-502.

- With web pages, give the URL—but omit the http:// at the beginning.

• If a doi (digital object indicator) number is available, use that instead of a URL.

• Do not break URLs or doi's manually to try and fit them into your Works Cited: just type them in and let your Word processor decide where to break them.

• If you have a different kind of source and believe you have a location with it, share it as best you can, following these guidelines.

• Locations are in plain font and followed by a period.

Here's what you would have for line 9:

www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/01/mentorship-in-public-schools/423945.

Now, to create a Works Cited citation, link all of the available elements together, following the correct punctuation and placing a space between each component.

• Use your word processor's menus to set hanging paragraphs

• Don't break your lines manually: set hanging paragraphs and then keep typing, allowing the software to determine the line breaks.

• Your citation should always end with a period.

Here's what the final citation would include:

Sebenius, Alyza. "The Importance of High School Mentors." *The Atlantic,* The Atlantic Monthly Group, 13 Jan. 2016, www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/01/mentorship-in-public-schools/423945/.

And here's what it will look like on the Works Cited page with double spacing and hanging paragraphs:

Sebenius, Alyza. "The Importance of High School Mentors." *The Atlantic,* The Atlantic Monthly Group, 13 Jan. 2016, www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/01/mentorship-in-public-schools/423945/.

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