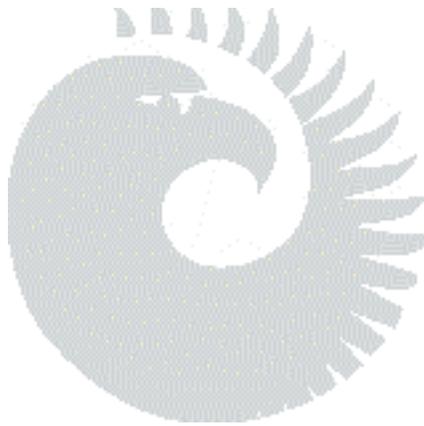


Writing Handbook

for the

American University of Central Asia

edited by Helen F. Smith



American University of Central Asia
205 Abdumomunova Street,
Bishkek, 720040, Kyrgyzstan

Format for papers

All papers must be neat and legible.

Leave margins of one inch to the left and right. Double-space all typed papers. For handwritten papers, use ink. Use lined paper and write on every other line.

On the first page, in three lines in the top right, put your name, your course and section number, and the date. Skip two lines before the title and three more lines before you begin the text of your paper.

Do not underline your own title.

On all other pages, in the upper right corner, put the page number and your name. Indent one-half inch for each new paragraph. To eliminate inaccuracies including errors of fact, punctuation, spelling and usage, be sure that your work is thoroughly edited and closely reread.

Use a paper clip or staple to hold the sheets together at the upper left.

Correction symbols

<i>agr</i> error in pronoun or subject-verb agreement	<i>lc</i> use lowercase	<i>ss</i> sentence structure error
<i>ar</i> articles	<i>p</i> punctuation error	<i>T</i> error in verb tense
<i>cap</i> make it a capital letter	<i>ref</i> pronoun reference error	<i>tr</i> transition needed
<hr/>	<i>ROS</i> run-on sentence	<i>wo</i> word order
italicize or underline	<i>sf</i> sentence fragment	<i>ww</i> wrong word
# not in parallel structure	<i>sp</i> spelling error	^ word(s) left out

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—HFS

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Introduction

The point of this handbook is to help you express yourself clearly when you have a piece of writing to do. After you've finished a piece of writing, you should be proud to turn it in with your name on it.

How do you know when you need this handbook? You might just browse through it at first to see the spelling words or punctuation rules you'll want to refer to later—and to pick up a pointer or two. You can use this book if you're stuck in the middle of writing a paper and trying to figure out capitalization rules. Or you might want to look at it when you're editing so as to be sure you've covered all your bases. And for a research paper, you can find exact guidelines on documentation.

Since the contents go from A to Z and there is an Index in the back, so, it's fairly easy to find what you want:

- whether to write *affect* or *effect*
- what to do about the passive voice
- how to set up a list of works cited
- when to use a semicolon
- when to capitalize in a title.

This book is designed to be functional.

—Helen F. Smith

After you've
finished a piece
of writing,
you should be
proud to
turn it in
with your name
on it.

A

a, an

Use the indefinite article, *a*, before consonant sounds: *a Halloween party, a 2010 target date*.

Use the indefinite article, *an*, before vowel sounds: *an honest debate, an interesting topic*.

abbreviations

Be sparing in the use of abbreviations.

On first reference, spell out names of agencies, firms, groups and organizations, except for abbreviations that are familiar to all readers, such as *U.S.A.* In subsequent references, use only those abbreviations that will be clear to readers.

Do not use periods

1. for acronyms, initials that spell out pronounceable words: *NOW, UNESCO*.

2. when letters within a single word form an abbreviation: *TV*.

3. for *ACT, PSAT* and *SAT*.

4. for metric units: *cm, m, ml, kg*.

See **academic degrees, addresses, periods, reference words, states and commonwealths**.

a cappella

academic degrees

Use abbreviations when they follow a name: *Victor Filippov, M.A.; Gulmira Akatova, Ph.D.; Irina Petrova, Ed.D.*

Otherwise, write out: *He received his master's degree, and she received her doctorate.*

See **doctor**.

accept, except

Accept means receive: *She accepts the candy.*

Except means exclude: *She accepted all the candy, except the licorice.*

accommodate

action verb, state-of-being verb

Action verbs invigorate your writing; state-of-being verbs are static.

Use action verbs: *Ivan won the prize. Tania conducts the choir. El-nura led the team.*

Be sparing in the use of abbreviations.

Accept means receive.
Except means exclude.

Stick to the active voice unless you have a reason for using the passive.

Avoid state-of-being verbs: *Ivan was the prize winner. Tania is the choir's conductor. Elnura was the leader of the team.*

See **sentences: parts of speech and parts of a sentence.**

active voice, passive voice

Stick to the active voice because it is usually most forceful. It shows who did what: *The professor gave a lecture.*

The passive voice emphasizes what was done: *The lecture was given by the professor.*

It may obscure who did it: *The lecture was given.*

Avoid the passive voice unless you have a reason: *The ball was hit for a home run—by a determined Roger Jones who has been playing baseball for 10 years with one arm.*

addresses

Abbreviate *Ave., Blvd., St.* and *Ter.* only in numbered addresses: *120 Columbus Ave., Columbus Avenue.*

Do not abbreviate *Circle, Drive, Lane, Place, Plaza, Point, Port, Oval* or *Road.*

Write out first through ninth when used as street names: *521 Fifth Ave.*

Abbreviate directions in numbered addresses: *23 N. 15th St.*

Write out direction if number is omitted: *North 15th Street.*

Abbreviate direction or area following names of streets: *345 Fifth St., N.W.*

See **abbreviations, directions and regions, numbers, states and commonwealths.**

advice, advise

Use advice as a noun: *I asked my teacher for advice about dropping out of a course.*

Use advise as a verb: *"I advise you to ask for a meeting with our department head before you do anything rash," she said.*

adviser

Use *adviser.* Do not use *advisor.*

affect, effect

To *affect* means to influence: *The headline affected the voters.*

To *effect* means to bring about: *Through the referendum, voters effected a needed change.*

An *effect* is a result: *The new trade bill had a powerful effect on the auto industry.*

Avoid using *affect* as a noun except in the context of psychology, when it means a feeling: *His angry affect indicated that he felt his friend's*

To *affect* means to influence.
To *effect* means to bring about.
An *effect* is a result.

comment was unfair.

African-American

See **hyphen**.

ageism

Be direct in stating the age or age group. Use *16-year-old boy* or *71-year-old woman*.

A *kid* is a baby goat. While *elderly* is acceptable in such phrases as *housing for the elderly*, do not refer to an individual as *elderly*. Do not use *elderly housing*. Avoid a patronizing tone.

ages

Use numerals for ages: *He is 15, the 5-year-old boy, the 20-year-old.*

Do not use an apostrophe with plurals: *She is in her 40s.*

See **apostrophe**.

agreement

Use singulars with singulars, plurals with plurals.

Make pronouns and nouns match: *All the students want their pictures taken.*

Not: *Everybody wants their picture taken.*

Note that *everybody* is a singular pronoun, and *their* is a plural pronoun.

Make subjects and verbs match: *Three members of the class are majoring in English. "Each member of the class is a good writer," the professor said.*

See **coherence; everybody, everyone; he/she, his/her; no one, nobody, none; pronouns**.

aggravate, irritate

To *aggravate* is to make heavier, more serious, more severe: *When the timpani and the bass viols join the other instruments, they aggravate the mood.*

To *irritate* is to annoy: *It will irritate the conductor if the bassoon comes in late.*

AIDS

Use this acronym on first reference for acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

a lot

Do not overuse this vague expression; but if you ever do use it, be sure to spell it correctly as two words.

Use singulars with singulars, plurals with plurals. Make pronouns and nouns match.

To *aggravate* is to make heavier, more serious, more severe. To *irritate* is to annoy.

America denotes the United States and all the other countries on the two continents in the Western Hemisphere.

all

Hyphenate: *all-American, all-around, all-star*.

all ready, already

All ready means everyone is prepared: *Having reviewed the night before, we were all ready for the quiz.*

Already means previously: *I had already taken the quiz.*

all right

Never use *alright*.

alma mater

An *alma mater* is a place from which someone has graduated: *As a member of the Class of 2003, his alma mater is the American University of Central Asia.*

alternate, alternative

If you mean “by turns,” use *alternate*. For “choice,” use *alternative*.

To *alternate* means to occur in successive turns: Practice times *alternate* for the pianists and violinists.

As an adjective, *alternate* means rotating by turns or substitute: She is the *alternate* conductor.

Use *alternative* to show there is choice: An *alternative* to having lunch is to take a walk.

alumna, alumnus/ alumnae, alumni

All these words are in Latin.

Use *alumna* to refer to an individual female graduate, *alumnus* to refer to an individual male graduate. Pluralize as *alumnae* for females and *alumni* for males. Refer to a mixed group as *alumni*, or use the English word: *graduates*.

See **graduate**.

a.m., p.m.

Write *2 p.m.*, or *2:15 p.m.*, but not *2:00 p.m.* Avoid extra zeros. If the context is clear, just write *2* or *2:15*.

See **numbers**.

America

Because the term denotes the United States and all the other countries on the two continents in the Western Hemisphere, be more explicit. Except in directly quoted material, write *United States of America* or *U.S.A.* to denote the country. Write *U.S. citizen*, not *American citizen*.

American University of Central Asia

Use on first reference.

Use *AUCA* for second and subsequent references.

Capitalize *University* when referring to *AUCA*.

See **capitalization**.

among, between

Use *among* with more than two: *The five students divided the work among themselves.*

Use *between* with two: *They decided between two approaches to the assignment.*

Use *among* with more than two.
Use *between* with two.

ampersand {&}

Use this mark only when it is part of a school or company name. Do not use it merely to replace and.

See **company names, punctuation**.

annotation

An annotation is a brief comment that describes or evaluates a work cited in a bibliography.

See **bibliography**.

annual

Use to describe repetition for at least two years in a row.

ante

In general, do not hyphenate. *Ante* means before.

anti

In general, do hyphenate. *Anti* means against.

apostrophe {'}

Use an apostrophe to show ownership, to show omission of letters or numbers, and for clarity.

1. for singular and plural possessives: *The boy's story interested me. The students' film was a success.*

The apostrophe goes before the *s* with singular possessives and after the *s* for plural possessives.

2. for possessives ending in *s*: *two days' time, Boris' book.*

Not: *days's, Boris's*. No additional *s* is needed after *s* followed by an apostrophe.

3. for joint possessives: *Marat and Tania's story.*

Put the apostrophe after the last possessive only. You need no additional 's.

Use an apostrophe to show ownership, to show omission of letters or numbers, and for clarity.

4. for contractions: *"Don't say it's over between us," Leonid pleaded.*
 5. for omitted letters and numerals: *rock 'n' roll, '50s music, the Class of '10.*
 6. to form the plural with letters of the alphabet: *He earned straight B's, the Oakland A's.*
- Do not use an apostrophe
1. with possessive pronouns: *hers, its, yours.*
 2. when a name without an apostrophe is official: *City Teachers Association.*
- See **ages, possessive before gerund, punctuation.**

April Fools' Day

appositive

An appositive takes the place of another word or phrase in the same sentence: *My friend Sergei* plays in the rock group. This sentence would make sense with just *my friend* or just *Sergei*, which are in apposition to each other.

See **colon; comma; sentences: parts of speech and parts of a sentence.**

as you know

Avoid this expression. It can put people on the defensive.

assure, ensure, insure

Assure means to declare earnestly: *I assure you that it is true.*

Ensure means to make certain to happen: *She ensured his reappointment to the staff.*

Insure means to cover under a policy against accident or death: *He bought life insurance.*

attribution

Cite sources for all statements a skeptical reader might question. Full and thorough attributions should appear early enough so that the reader can evaluate an assertion's validity and degree of bias: *In 1865, delivering his second inaugural address, President Abraham Lincoln urged that the United States strive for "a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."*

Note: Use present tense when attributing published material such as a quotation from literature, but use past tense for a person's spoken words.

To begin *Hamlet*, Bernardo asks, "Who's there?" (I. i. 1.).

As she *described* her summer vacation, Aigul said, "Lake Issyk-Kul was magnificent."

See **documentation, plagiarism, quotations.**

average

Except in obviously informal uses, such as “I’m just an *average* kind of guy,” specify *mean*, *median* or *mode*.

The *mean* is the sum divided by the number of addends. The *median* is the exact middle of a range: 10, 11, 16, 23, 24. The *mode* is the number that occurs most often: 10, 11, 12, 12, 12, 16.

See **percent**.

a while

B

baby-sit, baby-sitting, baby sitter

Use with *for*: *I baby-sat for John*.

Not: *I baby-sat John*.

benefit, benefited, benefiting

berth, birth

Use as follows: *ship’s berth*, *to give birth*.

bibliography

A bibliography is a list of works a writer has used in doing research for a paper. Today it is more commonly referred to as a list of works cited.

See **documentation**.

biological classification

Capitalize for genus, and lowercase for species: *Felis tigris*.

biweekly, semiweekly

Use biweekly to mean every two weeks. Use semiweekly to mean twice a week.

boldface and italics

Use boldface and italics judiciously. Secure emphasis by a more forceful phrasing of the thought. This caution applies to the use of entire words in upper case or in boldface within the context of an essay.

Use italics to indicate words or phrases in a language other than that in which you are writing: Looking at the hamburger covered with relish, onions, ketchup, chocolate and cheese, she said, “*No me gusta*.” He said, “That’s gross.”

When you are writing an assignment by hand, use underlining to denote italics.

Use boldface and italics judiciously. Secure emphasis by a more forceful phrasing of the thought.

Note: Both boldface and italics are hard to read in large masses.
See **titles for papers and other works**.

bookkeeper

boyfriend, girlfriend

brackets and parentheses

See **parentheses and brackets**.

brand names

Capitalize brand names. Use sparingly. Unless you have a reason to specify a brand name, write *photocopy*, not *Xerox*; *tissue*, not *Kleenex*.

by See **company names**.

In general, do not hyphenate: *bylaw*, *byroad*, *byway*.

C

capitalization

Use a minimum of capitalization.

Capitalize

1. proper nouns: *Main Street*, *Cincinnati*, *Connecticut*, *the Nevada Athletic Association*.

2. course titles and departments: *Introduction to Political Studies*, *International and Comparative Politics*.

3. a class with its year of graduation, but not names of classes in the school: *the Class of 2009*, *the junior class*, *junior Victor Ivanov*.

4. full names of schools, but not academy, college or high school by themselves.

5. holidays: *Labor Day*.

6. languages: *Farsi*, *Italian*, *Japanese*.

See **American University of Central Asia**, **directions and regions**, **seasons**, **titles for papers and other works**, **titles for people**.

Celsius

This measure of temperature used in the metric system sets its zero-degree point at the freezing point of water, or 32 degrees Fahrenheit. Celsius used to be called centigrade. To convert to Fahrenheit, multiply by 9, divide by 5 and add 32.

center on

A center is a point. Write *center on*.

Do not write *center around*.

Use a minimum of capitalization.

Basic format for a business letter

The format below is useful for job and college application cover letters, consumer complaints, and goods and services orders.

Align the whole letter to the left. Include all the parts below from date to return address. When appropriate, use enclosure notation and indicate copies with a single, lowercase *c* followed by a colon. Follow the punctuation in the sample below. Center the letter on the sheet. For e-mail, formal guidelines are unnecessary.

In a letter of application, begin with where you heard about the job and what the job is. Summarize your résumé, and say how to contact you.

Terminology	Placement on a page
date	December 1, 2006
inside address	Mrs. Ann Rustavelli, director Camp Back Acres 111 Old Evergreen Road Monadnock, NH 03000
salutation	Dear Mrs. Rustavelli: I would like to apply for the counselor position that you advertized in the campus newspaper.
body of the letter	As my résumé says, I have experience working with children as a wolunteer in arts programs, which I hope will qualify me for the position. At the American University of Central Asia, where I am a freshman, I participate in the Sport Club and the Debate Club. I am available for an interview at your convenience. I look forward to hearing from you.
complimentary closing	Yours truly,
return address	Anna Petrova 555 First St. Bishkek, 720000, Kyrgyzstan 666-000
enclosure notation	enclosures: 1

Use a colon after the courtesy title and name in the salutation.

If you are sending copies, use *c* followed by a colon. Do not use *cc*, an old typewriter term for carbon copies.

See **addresses, parallel structure and résumés.**

A clause has a subject and a verb, either stated or implied. A phrase lacks a subject and verb combination.

chairman

Use *chairman* or *chair* for both sexes. Use *chairperson* only if it is the official title an organization uses.

city

Capitalize when part of a name: *Kansas City*. Lowercase for *city of Dallas*.

clauses and phrases

A clause has a subject and a verb, either stated or implied. All of the following are clauses: *I went to my apartment. . . because I needed a sweater . . . Go see your sister.*

An independent clause may stand on its own as a sentence: *I couldn't finish my history paper.*

A dependent clause needs an independent clause to complete the thought: *When I lost my notes, I couldn't finish my history paper.*

A phrase lacks a subject and verb combination: *right on outdoors into the fresh air...strawberry ice cream with chocolate sauce, bananas and some whipped cream and a cherry on top of that.*

See **comma; semicolon; sentences: simple, complex, compound.**

clichés

Don't use overworked expressions: *a dime a dozen, raining cats and dogs.*

co

Hyphenate words that denote occupation or status: *co-chairman, co-star.*

Do not hyphenate: *coeducation, cooperate, coordinate.*

coed

Use to denote education for males and females.

Never use to mean a female student.

coherence

In a sentence, all parts should relate smoothly. In a paragraph or a longer work, coherence depends on orderliness and adequate transitional material.

See **agreement; dangling modifier; misplaced modifier; sentences: simple, complex, compound; transitions.**

collective nouns

In general, use with singular verbs and singular pronouns: *The*

hockey team is glad it met its goal.

Use with plural verbs and pronouns when describing a group whose members act independently and individually: *The committee disagreed about the way the chairman counted their votes.*

See **agreement; sentences: parts of speech and parts of a sentence.**

colon {:}

Use a colon

1. before a series that forms an appositive: *Try this meal: soup, chicken, salad, dessert and coffee.*

Do not use a colon before a list that follows a “to be” verb: *The students who received awards are Svetlana Ivanova, Asia Kasimova, and Vladimir Petrov.*

2. before quotations that illustrate a statement: *Outlining the course, the teacher said the class could expect a variety of writing assignments: “We’ll begin with anecdotes and then move on to analytical essays, short stories and one-act plays.”*

3. before quotations longer than four lines in academic papers.

4. before an independent clause that explains the beginning clause: *Igor can be too thorough: He left home this morning with four sets of keys — to the same car.*

5. in dramatic scripts:

Ivan: Marina, don’t leave me.

Marina: Oh, Ivan.

6. in Q and A:

Q: How will we find the money?

A: I don’t know.

7. for time: 1:07.4.

8. between the chapter and verse of a book in the Bible: *Job 3:16.*

Do not use a dash with a colon.

See **punctuation, quotations.**

comma {,}

Commas can be the SPICE of writing. They help to distinguish

- separate items in a list
- parenthetical material
- introductory material
- coordinating conjunctions within compound sentences
- exceptional cases.

Use a colon before a series that forms an appositive, but not before a list that follows a “to be” verb.

Commas can be the **SPICE** of writing. They help to distinguish

- separate items in a list
- parenthetical material
- introductory material
- coordinating conjunctions within compound sentences
- exceptional cases.

To remember these categories, think in terms of the acronym, **SPICE**.

Use a comma

• to separate (**S**pice)

1. items in a series: *For lunch I had a tuna sandwich, chips, milk and chocolate ice cream.* Note that no comma is necessary to separate *milk* and *chocolate ice cream* because *and* already does so. Actually, each of the other commas replaces an understood *and*.

Sometimes, however, a comma is necessary before the *and*: *For lunch I had a tuna sandwich, chocolate milk, and ice cream.* In this instance, if there were no comma before *and*, it might seem that both the milk and the ice cream were chocolate.

Or: *The musicians include sophomores Olga Borisova, Aigul Moldogazieva and Bakyt Satarov, and freshman Victor Pavlov.* Here, the comma and second *and* show that Victor is part of a different group.

2. two modifiers, provided they are of the same kind and modify the noun, verb or adjective with equal force: *She gave him a cold, steady stare.*

One way to test whether the modifiers are equal is to reverse their order: *She gave him a steady, cold stare.*

3. elements in addresses: *Paul Gray, 999 Riverside Drive, New York, NY, 10025, is what it says on the letter.* Note that a comma is necessary after an address when the sentence continues.

4. groupings in numerals with more than three digits: *876,026,047.*

• to enclose parenthetical expressions (**sP**ice)

5. nonessential clauses and phrases: *College students, who work hard, succeed in their classes.* The nonessential clause, which goes between commas, functions as almost a parenthetical, by-the-way expression. The reader infers that *all* college students work hard.

The essential adjectival clause, however, limits the meaning of the word it modifies. Without the commas, *only* the college students who work hard succeed in their classes: *College students who work hard succeed in their classes.*

6. nonessential appositives: *Sergei Ivanov, the play's producer, expressed optimism.*

Some appositives, however, are essential to the meaning of a word or phrase and do not take a comma: *Her friend Sergei* specifies exactly which friend of all her friends.

Remember to put in the second comma after a parenthetical expression of several words: *The students, AUCA's best debaters, won the meet.*

7. ages: *Bakyt Kasimov, 17, looks like my best friend.*

Commas enclose parenthetical, by-the-way expressions.

8. mild interjections: *Finally, alas, they broke up.*

9. nouns of direct address: *I ask you, Mr. Jones, why you disagree.*

A noun of direct address calls someone by name.

10. dates: *I remember it was Wednesday, June 12, 2006, when he said so.* Note that a comma is necessary after a date when the sentence continues.

11. yes, no: *Yes, I want to go.*

•to set off introductory material (spIce)

12. a phrase: *Smiling hungrily at the strawberry yogurt, he reached for his spoon.*

13. an adverb clause: *As he smiled hungrily at the strawberry yogurt, he reached for his spoon.*

Do not use a comma before an adverb clause that follows an independent clause: *You look beautiful when you smile.*

14. attribution for a complete, directly quoted sentence: *The teacher said, "Please take the essays to the office."*

Do not use a comma to set off a directly quoted word or phrase: *Elena is the athlete who most consistently "puts team above self."*

15. a quotation or paraphrase followed by attribution: *"Please take the essays to the office," the teacher said.*

•before a coordinating conjunction followed by an independent clause (spice)

16. in compound sentences: *He moved to Bishkek, but she stayed in Osh.*

Use a comma before *for, and, nor, but, or* and *yet* when they link independent clauses. Remember these conjunctions by the acronym FANBOY.

• in exceptional cases (spicE)

17. for clarity: *To the sophomore, Ivan Pavlov was helpful. To the sophomore, Ivan, Pavlov, was helpful.*

18. to indicate the omission of a verb in a compound sentence: *Olga was elected editor; Marina, assistant.*

19. before *for, as* or *since* when they mean because: *Being cast in the play was great, since Mr. Green is going to be the director.*

Note: Do not put a comma before because: *She won the award because of her extensive community service and her concern for justice.*

See **addresses; appositives; attribution; clauses and phrases; dates; dollars and cents; like and as; punctuation; quotation marks; quotations; sentences: parts of speech and parts of a sentence; that, which.**

commitment

Commas follow introductory material.

Commas go before coordinating conjunctions in compound sentences.

Commas clarify in exceptional cases.

company names

Check for accurate spelling. Use Co. at the end. Do not use a comma before Inc. For example, write *Ajax Co. Inc.*

See **sentences**.

consistent**convince, persuade**

Convince refers to change of thought: *Convince your mother that you are right.*

Persuade refers to change of action: *Persuade your teacher to dismiss you 10 minutes early.*

copyright

Obey copyright laws. Copyright means the exclusive right for the creator or owner of original artistic, literary or photographic material to make, distribute and control copies of that work for a specific number of years, as guaranteed by U.S. federal law.

See **attribution, bibliography, documentation, plagiarism, quotations**.

council, counsel, counselor

A *council* is a group that deliberates and discusses: *The council met today.*

A *counsel* is advice: *He gave me thoughtful counsel.*

To *counsel* means to advise: *She counseled me to take chemistry.*

A *counselor* gives advice after consultation: *Mr. Allen, my counselor, helped me with my career planning.*

curriculum, curricula

Curriculum is singular; *curricula* is plural.

D**dangling modifiers**

Modifiers must refer clearly to some other word in a sentence.

A sentence containing a dangling modifier doesn't make sense: *After running onto the field, the game began.* The sentence should say, *After running onto the field, the teams began the game.*

See **coherence, misplaced modifier**.

dash {—}

Dashes are usually separators. A dash is twice the length of a hyphen. Be sparing with dashes. They tend to seem informal.

Use dashes

1. to show an abrupt change in emphasis, action or thought: *He said, "Bring me that" — but he was gone.*

2. to indicate faltering or broken speech: *"Well — er — you see — it was this way."*

3. to denote an unexpected change in sentiment: *He was generous — with other people's money.*

See **hyphen, punctuation**.

data

Use a plural verb for several kinds of individual items: *These data show the need for higher taxes.*

Use a singular verb for *data* as a unit: *This data is accurate.*

dates

Write *Friday, June 7, 2006*, specifying the name of the day and month, and giving the date in numerals.

Do not use *on* before a date.

Never use *st, nd, rd, th* in a date. Do not write *June 7th*.

See **months**.

days of the week

Do capitalize; do not abbreviate: *Monday, Tuesday . . .*

de

In general, no hyphen: *demobilize*.

Deaf, deaf

Capitalize for a person involved in the Deaf Community: *Laurent Clerc was the first Deaf teacher of the Deaf in the United States.*

Lowercase for a person with a hearing loss: *He was deaf after the accident.*

defamation

Defamatory material hurts someone's reputation.

See **libel, slander**.

demonstrative adjective

Demonstrative adjectives tell which one(s): *this ice cream, that set of combinations, these numbers, those answers.*

See **this**.

dialect and slang

People from a region or a group often use distinctive pronunciation, expressions and grammatical constructions. In academic

Dashes are usually separators. A dash is twice the length of a hyphen.

Avoid becoming suddenly slangy in your writing. Do not jar your reader.

settings, “Standard Written English” is preferred.

Standard English: *Mr. Smith, may I please make a photocopy?*

Slang: *Yo, Dude, can I, like, make a photocopy?*

Avoid becoming suddenly slangy or colloquial in a formal paper. Keep it *He said*, not *He’s like* or *He goes*. Do not jar your reader.

However, urban rap or informal rural dialect is often used in popular music, films and books. For example, in *Of Mice and Men*, Steinbeck has the highly respected Slim say, “It wasn’t nothing.”

diction

This term denotes the words a writer chooses. In making decisions about words, consider connotation, context and level of formality.

different from

Use different from: *Almaty is different from Bishkek.*

Avoid *different than*.

dimensions

Use numerals. Write out *inches, feet, meter, yards, etc.:* *She is 5 feet 7 inches tall.*

directions and regions

Lowercase directions: *She drove west on the highway.*

Capitalize regions: *That’s what I like about the South.*

Do not capitalize *north, south, east, west* and their compounds and derivatives except when they designate sections of a country or form proper names or well-known sections of a city: *the West Coast, the South End, the Lower East Side.*

See **addresses, capitalization**.

diseases

Lowercase unless the diseases include a proper name: *diabetes, leukemia, Alzheimer’s disease, Gehrig’s disease.*

dispel, dispelled, dispelling

doctor

Use *Dr.* on first reference to a person who holds an M.D., a doctor of medicine degree. *Dr.* may also be used to refer to a person who holds a Ph.D. (doctor of philosophy) or an

Lowercase directions. Capitalize regions and well-known sections of a city.

Ed.D. (doctor of education).

See **academic degrees**.

documentation

Documentation is a means of providing clear, complete information about the sources of all quotations and ideas that are not your own. To avoid plagiarism, provide such information in all academic work. Documentation in parentheses is the most efficient way to present such information although some teachers may ask for footnotes or endnotes. However, most teachers prefer parenthetical notes.

1. For papers based on a single source, give page references in parentheses: Although the shooting of Candy's old "dragfooted sheepdog" (26) might seem a minor incident in Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, its similarity to Lennie's death is striking.

2. For poetry, give line references rather than page numbers.

3. For Shakespearean plays, give act, scene and line references: Juliet laments Romeo's being a Montague and wishes he could change his name: "That which we call a rose/By any other name would smell as sweet" (II. ii. 43-44).

Note that a slash is necessary to indicate where a line of verse ends, and that a large Roman numeral is used for the act, a small Roman numeral for the scene and an Arabic numeral for the lines, separated by periods. The end punctuation of a sentence goes after the parentheses enclosing the documentation.

4. For research papers with more than one source, include the author's name and the page number right after the words, facts or ideas quoted or paraphrased: One critic argues that the feud in *Romeo and Juliet* is only the means by which fate acts (Charlton 52).

Note the absence of comma, "page" and "p." in parentheses.

5. You must also list every one of your sources with full publishing information at the end of your paper in a list of works cited. Arrange the sources alphabetically by author's last name or by title if no author is given.

6. Footnotes, explanatory notes at the bottom of a page, can sometimes help your reader. In such a case, insert a superscript number to indicate a matching note at the bottom of the page. Single-space the footnote, and place it four lines below the last line of text. For more than one footnote on a page, double-space.

Reference words

b.
born
©
copyright
ca.
circa, or about;
used with dates
cf.
confer, or
compare
ch., chs.
chapter,
chapters
d.
died
ed., eds.
edited by,
editor(s),
edition(s)
e.g.
exempli gratia, for
example
et al.
et alia, et alii, and
others
etc.
et cetera, and so
forth
ibid.
same source as
referred to just
above
i.e.
id est, that is
N.B.
nota bene, note
well
n.d.
no date
n. pag.
no pagination
op.
opus, work
op. cit.
work cited
rev.
revised by,
revision, review,
reviewed by
trans. (tr)
translated by,
translator,
translation

7. If you use endnotes, put them after your essay but before your list of works cited. For endnotes, insert sequential superscript numbers to indicate matching notes at the end of your paper: While several noted authorities, 1 including my English teacher, 2 blame other sources for Romeo and Juliet's tragedy, I blame their parents.

Format for footnotes and endnotes

¹See Isaac Asimov, "The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet," *Asimov's Guide to Shakespeare* (New York: Avenal, 1970) 475. See also Donald A. Stouffer, "The School of Love: Romeo and Juliet," *Shakespeare's World of Images* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1949) 53. Stouffer sees a different problem in Romeo and Juliet's tragedy: ". . . the most dangerous enemy is Time."

²Liana Kish argues that the "awesome" power of Romeo and Juliet's love causes them to act impetuously.

Type of source	Format for lists of works cited
	WORKS CITED
a chapter or essay in a book	Asimov, Isaac. "The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet." <i>Asimov's Guide to Shakespeare</i> . New York: Avenal, 1970. 475-498.
a whole book	Campbell, Lily B. <i>Shakespeare's Tragic Heroes: Slaves of Passion</i> . New York: Cambridge U, 1930.
a poem in a book	Frost, Robert. "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening." <i>A Pocket Book of Robert Frost's Poetry</i> . New York: Washington Square P, 1960. 194.
two books by the same author	Frye, Northrup. <i>Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays</i> . Princeton: Princeton UP, 1957. ----- . <i>Northrup Frye on Shakespeare</i> . New Haven: Yale UP, 1986.

<p>"Hamlet." <i>Shakespeare Online</i>. Internet. World Wide Web. http://the.tech.met.edu.Shakespeare/other.html. 26 June 1996.</p>	Internet, World Wide Web
<p>"Globe Theatre." <i>Information Finder</i>. CD-ROM. Chicago: World Book, Inc. 1994 ed.</p>	electronic encyclopedia
<p>Harrison, G.B. <i>Major British Writers</i>. Vol. 2. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1959.</p>	one volume of a multivolume work
<p>Hoy, Cyrus. "New Questions About Shakespeare's Texts." <i>New York Times</i> 25 May 1994: 23.</p>	newspaper article
<p>Kalem, T. E. "Bard Becalmed: American Shakespeare Theatre Production [of <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>]." <i>Time</i> 1 July 1974: 43.</p>	magazine article
<p>Lamb, Charles, and Mary Lamb. <i>Tales from Shakespeare</i>. New York: Children's Classics, 1986.</p>	one book by multiple authors
<p>Markham, Anne. "Lorenzo Ghiberti." <i>Brief Lives: A Biographical Companion to the Arts</i>. 1971 ed.</p>	signed article in reference book
<p>"Massachusetts" <i>The Columbia Encyclopedia</i>. 1950 ed. 1237-1239.</p>	unsigned article in reference book
<p>Morgan, Joyce. "Rebuilding the Globe." <i>World Press Review</i>. Sept. 1995. <i>Magazine Article Summaries</i>. CD-ROM. EBSCO. April 1994-Dec. 1995.</p>	CD-ROM-periodical
<p>"Not so great debate." 3 July 1996. <i>Boston Globe</i>. Online. Dialog Information Service.</p>	on-line service
<p>"Race in America." <i>Nightline</i>. Host Ted Koppel. ABC News, New York. 24 May 1996.</p>	television or radio program
<p>DePeter, Tom, personal interview, May 15, 2003.</p>	interview
<p>Schumann, Robert. <i>Liederkreis, Op. 39 & Other Eichendorff Songs</i>. Perf. Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone) and Gerald Moore (piano). LP. Angel, 1965.</p>	sound recording or film

See **copyright, numbers, plagiarism, quotations.**

dollars and cents

Use the \$ and numerals except in amounts of more than six figures: *The equipment is valued at \$418,000. The project cost \$1.2*

million.

Put the dollar sign first: \$50 not 50\$.

Use a period between the dollars and cents: \$50.25.

Do not use a comma between dollars and cents: \$50, 25.

Use a comma for more than three digits in a group:

\$1,000.26; \$10,000.26; \$100,000.26.

Do not write \$.50, 50 cts. or \$0.50. Write 50 cents.

See commas, numbers.

dot

See **period**.

E

each other

elicit, illicit

Elicit means to bring out: *His anecdotes about the student who won the award elicited warm applause.*

Illicit means not allowed: *Her illicit behavior was scandalous.*

ellipsis { . . . }

Three periods separated by spaces show that words have been omitted from a quotation: *"This generation . . . will see a revival of learning."*

1. Use a space before and after an ellipsis.

2. At the end of a sentence, use a fourth period: *To begin 1984, Orwell writes, "It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen"*

See **punctuation, quotations**.

employee(s)

endnotes

See **documentation**.

everybody, everyone

Meaning "every single one," these words take singular pronouns and verbs: *Everybody wants his own way. She asked everyone to be a good sport.*

Avoid overstatement.

See **no one, nobody, none**.

Separate the three periods in an ellipsis by spaces.

ex

Use a hyphen when denoting former: *an ex-husband*.

exaggerate

excel, excelled, excelling

exclamation point {!}

Prefer the period. Use exclamation points to show only unusually strong emotion: *"Help! Help!" he yelled as a swarm of bees chased him across the field.*

See **punctuation**.

F

farther, further

Use *farther* to refer to distance: *He ran two miles farther up the road than John did.*

Use *further* to refer to degree: *He saw further consequences of the staff cuts.*

fewer, less

Use *fewer* when referring to separate items: *I am applying to fewer companies than he is.*

Use *less* when referring to a quantity or a total: *She has less than \$100 left.*

finalize

Do not use. Instead, write finish or complete.

See **jargon**.

fiscal year

This term denotes a 12-month period that a company, governmental body or institution uses for bookkeeping purposes. A fiscal year might not coincide with the calendar year.

follow up, follow-up

Use without a hyphen as a verb: *She asked him to follow up the interview by checking the applicant's references.*

Use with a hyphen as an adjective: *He did the follow-up reference check.*

footnotes

See **documentation**.

Do not overuse exclamation points. Prefer the period.

Use *farther* to refer to distance. Use *further* to refer to degree.

Use *fewer* to refer to separate items. Use *less* to refer to a quantity or a total.

foresight

formally, formerly

Use *formally* to mean in a formal manner: *She dressed formally for the ballet.*

Use *formerly* to mean at an earlier time: *Formerly, she lived in Karakol.*

fractions

Write out and hyphenate fractions if they are less than one: *one-fifth, two-thirds.*

See **numbers**.

freshman, freshmen

Use *freshman* as a singular noun: *Natalia Kulikova, a freshman.*

Use *freshman* as an adjective: *freshman year; freshman course requirements.*

Use *freshmen* as a plural noun: *The freshmen elected Elena Kamchieva president. Svetlana Davydova has freshmen in her writing class.*

full time, full-time

Do not hyphenate as an adverb: *He teaches full time.*

Do hyphenate as an adjective: *He is a full-time teacher.*

See **hyphens**.

G

good, well

Use *good* as an adjective: *She is a good director.*

Use *well* as an adverb: *The show is going well.*

goodbye

government

graduate

Always use *graduate* with *from* as a verb: *He will graduate from AUCA.*

Not: *He graduated AUCA.*

See **alumna, alumnus/alumnae, alumni, American University of Central Asia**.

H

he/she, his/her

Do not use these pronouns with slashes. Change to *they* or *their*, making certain to change attending verbs and referents appropriately.

Use matching plurals: *Although students may want to take their time walking down the hall, they should get to class promptly.*

Avoid the cumbersome slashed singular: *Although a student may want to take his/her time walking down the hall, he/she should get to class promptly.*

See **agreement, pronouns**.

hold

This word is easily overworked. One editor says a person can *hold* a package or a baby, but not a meeting, a dance, a party or an election.

Be concise: *meet*. Try different verbs: *host* a dance, *give* a party, *run* an election.

hopefully

Hopefully is an adverb that means in a hopeful manner: *The child looked hopefully at the box of candy.*

Do not use *hopefully* to mean *I hope* or *Let's hope*, as in *Hopefully, it will be a sunny day tomorrow.*

hyphen{-}

Use a hyphen

1. to indicate the joining of two or more words to express one idea: *secretary-treasurer, president-elect.*

2. to indicate two heritages: *Italian-American, Japanese-American.*

The best general rule on hyphens and heritages is to follow an individual's preference.

3. in compound modifiers: *up-to-date style, game-winning homer.*

4. with compound numbers: *seventy-five.*

5. to avoid confusion and ambiguity: *two year-old boys, 2-year-old boys.*

6. in suspensive constructions: *the 14-, 15- and 16-year-olds.*

7. to label an academic year: *In the 2007-08 academic year, he took French for the first time.*

Use prepositions, not hyphens, in formal writing with *from . . . to*: *She attended AUCA from 2003 to 2005.*

See **punctuation, syllabication**.

Hopefully is an adverb that means in a hopeful manner. Do not use *hopefully* to mean *I hope* or *Let's hope*.

Hyphens join two or more words to express one idea.

Make it “i” before “e” except after “c” or when sounded as “ay” as in “neighbor” or “weigh.”

I

“i” before “e”

As the rule goes, make it “i” before “e” except after “c” or when sounded as “ay” as in neighbor or weigh.

But: *Neither leisured foreign sovereign seized the heifer on the weird heights.*

ideologies

Lowercase ideologies when they denote philosophies: *He is a conservative, and she is a liberal.*

Capitalize them when they refer to political parties or when they are derived from a proper name: *Conservatives, Liberal Democrats, Social Democrats.*

See **political parties**.

impact

Use as a noun: *The impact of the punch knocked him out.*

Do not use as a verb: *This level of funding should impact the program.*

See **jargon**.

impel, impelled, impelling

important

Do not write *importantly*.

in

In general, no hyphen: *incomparable*.

inasmuch as

inter, intra

Inter means between or among: *The interdepartmental meeting included faculty from Business Administration, Economics and Modern Foreign Languages.*

Intra means within: *She received the medicine with an intravenous injection.*

italics

See **boldface and italics, titles for papers and other works**.

its, it's

Its is possessive: *The dog wagged its tail.*

It's is the contraction for *it is*: *It's raining.*

See **apostrophe**.

Do not write *importantly*.

Its is possessive.
It's is a contraction for *it is*.

J jargon

Use plain English: *She set deadlines. We discussed what we hoped students would learn.*

Don't use jargon, the inflated language that sounds important and technical but means little: *She utilized parameters for input. We held discussions around learning outcomes.*

Avoid overuse of the suffix *-wise* as in, *Weatherwise, it will probably rain.*

job titles

Use *firefighter, journalist, police officer.*

Not: *fireman, newsman, policeman.*

See **chairman, lady.**

Jr., Sr.

Do not put a comma between the name and Jr. or Sr.: *Paul Farrell Jr.*

See **capitalization.**

judgment

junior, senior

Never abbreviate classes: *junior class, senior class.*

K

kilogram

A term for 1,000 grams, this measurement of weight is part of the metric system. To convert to pounds, multiply by 2.2.

kilometer

A kilometer is 1,000 meters, or about 3,281 feet or five-eighths of a mile. To convert to miles, multiply by 0.62.

know-how

knowledgeable

L

lady

Just as *gentleman* is not a synonym for *man*, *lady* is not a synonym for *woman*. Some girls and women find the use of *lady*, as in *The Lady Tigers won the meet*, demeaning.

See **job titles.**

Use plain English, not jargon, the inflated language that sounds important and technical but means little.

Just as *gentleman* is not a synonym for *man*, *lady* is not a synonym for *woman*.

To keep your writing orderly, alphabetize lists of names or items of equal rank.

Avoid using *many* and *most*. If you do not know the exact amounts, do some research.

libel

Only a court can determine if a statement is libelous. In general, the term refers to defamation that is published and is not provably true.

See **defamation, slander**.

like and as

Like is a preposition: *My tears fell like rain.*

As is a subordinating conjunction: *I knew I was making the right move, as I really wanted more of a challenge.*

Never use *like* to mean *said*: *I'm like, "Why shouldn't I?"*

And she's like, "Well, that's just sooo totally cheesy."

lists

To keep your writing orderly, alphabetize lists of names or items of equal rank: *Flavors are chocolate, coffee, pistachio, raspberry, strawberry and vanilla.*

See **parallel structure**.

M

many, most

Avoid vague terms. Whenever possible, use exact amounts. If you do not know the exact amounts, do some research. Be sure to attribute the information to sources.

See **attribution, documentation**.

media

Medium is singular: *The newspaper is a medium.*

In general, use *media* with a plural verb: *The media often distort news about problems.*

Format for a memorandum

Memorandum

to:

from:

date:

subject:

Use this format for internal communication when messages are in English.

See **format for a business letter, parallel structure and résumés**.

meter

A meter equals 39.37 inches. To convert meters to inches, multiply by 39.37. To convert meters to yards, multiply by 1.1.

middle age, middle-aged**million, billion**

Use with numerals: *1.7 million, \$3 billion.*

See **dollars and cents, numbers.**

misplaced modifier

Put a modifier next to the word it modifies. A misplaced modifier destroys your logic: *I only wanted one piece of candy.*

The sentence should say: *I wanted only one piece of candy.*

See **coherence, dangling modifier.**

Miss, Mr., Mrs., Ms.

See **titles.**

misspelled**months**

Capitalize names of months. Abbreviate, except months with six letters or fewer, when used with a date: *Thursday, Jan. 15; Friday, July 10.*

See **comma, dates.**

mph

Use without periods.

N**nauseated, nauseous**

Nauseated means afflicted by illness: *He felt nauseated.*

Nauseous means causing illness: *Poison gas can be nauseous.*

noon

Do not write *12 o'clock noon* or *12 noon*. Just write *noon*.

no one, nobody, none

These words usually mean “no single one.” They take singular pronouns and verbs: *No one wants his desk next to hers. Nobody in his right mind misses a free cup of coffee. None of these absences is excused.*

Put a modifier next to the word it modifies.

No one, nobody and *none* mean no single one. They take singular pronouns and verbs.

Do not begin a sentence with a numeral. Instead, write it out or rephrase the thought.

Do not use *their, they* or *them* with *no one, nobody* and *none*.

Never write: *No one wants their desk next to hers. Nobody in their right mind misses a free cup of coffee. None of these absences are excused.*

See **agreement; everybody, everyone.**

numbers

Write out *one* through *nine* and *first* through *ninth*. Use numerals for 10 and above.

Do not begin a sentence with a numeral. Instead, write it out or rephrase the thought. Years are the only exception: *2010 is the year when they will graduate.*

When numbers include decimals, use *and*: *Three dollars and five cents is my total profit.* For those without decimals, do not use *and*: *Two hundred three dollars will pay for all those clothes.*

More samples of usage:

1. *Last year 2,167 students enrolled, bringing the student-teacher ratio to 16-to-1.*
2. *More than a hundred people tried out.*
3. *The Boston Red Sox defeated the New York Yankees 5-0.*
4. *Keegan made a six-yard gain after Walker ran from the 30-yard mark.* (Note the hyphens.)
6. *She is the No. 1 person you should see.*
7. *His time was 10.2 seconds.*
8. *The image occurs in Act II. scene i. line 2.*
9. *Mix 1 tablespoon of sugar with 2 teaspoons of grated orange peel.*
Add 2 eggs.
10. *Thanks a million.*

See **addresses, averages, dates, dollars and cents, fractions, percent, weights.**

O

occur, occurred, occurring

oral, verbal

Use *oral* for spoken words: *She gave an oral report.*

Use *verbal* to mean any kind of communication with words: *The verbal message is clearer than the visual.*

over, more than

Use *over* with heights: *He jumped over the fence.*

Use *more than* with quantities: *More than 1,000 watched the game.*

P

parallel structure

When you have ideas of equal weight, use parallel structure. Give an orderly impression. Express similar ideas in similar grammatical forms.

Some examples:

1. Keep to the simple verb form: *He eats, sleeps and breathes football statistics.*

Not: *He eats, sleeps and even breathes football statistics.*

2. Arrange nouns and adjectives in similar patterns: *Miriam Schwartz is an all-scholastic and league all-star in field hockey; Jennifer Chang is an all-scholastic and league MVP in soccer.*

3. Use similar constructions for subheadings within an outline or essay:

Unusual animals in alpine habitats

Different examples of adaptive behavior

Recent changes in ecological data.

parallel structure and résumés

Career counselors emphasize that there is no one “right” or “wrong” way to organize categories, but they do suggest parallel structure.

Some pointers:

Use similar typography and wording to highlight similar sections. One method is to boldface the headings and follow the last word in each heading with a colon. Use tabs and indents to accentuate similarities among categories and to show separations of categories.

As to the categories, much depends on the individual. Some people combine lists and explanatory paragraphs. Some opt for chronological order if their activities have varied from year to year. Others use topical headings. Word, capitalize and punctuate category headings and items within categories so they match.

Whatever the form for headings, list your accomplishments in an order.

When you have ideas of equal weight, use parallel structure.

Sample Résumé

Ivan Petrov
100 Panfilova Street
Bishkek, 720001, Kyrgyzstan
(996 312) 00-00-00

Objective:

To obtain a position that uses my computer skills.

Education:

American University of Central Asia, 2003-2007

Honors, achievements and outside interests:

Computer Graphics Award, 2006
Mini-posters Competition Award, 2004
Web-design Club, 2003-present

Work experience:

Data entry clerk, Data Co., Bishkek, 2006-present
Graphic designer, Design, Inc., Bishkek 2004-2005
Clerk, Special Supermarket, 2003-2004

Skills:

Keyboarding
Macintosh Computers—MS Office, MS Photo Editor,
InDesign CS, Internet
Dealing with customers

References:

On request

parentheses {()} and brackets {[]}

Avoid overuse of parentheses () and brackets [].

Use parentheses

1. for nicknames after given names: *William (Chip) Logan*.

2. for interpolations: *The Berlin (NH) group visited Paris (Maine)*.

Put the period outside the parentheses if the material inside is not a full sentence: *Marina Petrova scores a point (photo by Marat Jumagulov)*.

Although it is usually smoother to paraphrase, brackets can show that the writer has added material to a direct quotation: *"I spoke to Dr. Young [Dean Jeffrey Young]."*

In analytical essays, brackets can help quotations fit into your sentence structure: *Friar Lawrence advises Romeo and Juliet to proceed "wisely and slow [because] they stumble that run fast" (II. iii. 94)*.

See **abbreviations, punctuation, quotation marks**.

percent

Write it out. Give the base, which is the figure from which the percentage is derived: *Twenty percent of the 10 students excelled*.

See **average**.

period {.}

Use a period

1. at the end of every declarative sentence.

2. after most abbreviations: *The Goss Co., the Rev. Joseph Higgins, Rep. Barney Frank, 104 West St.*

3. as a decimal point: *Your score on the test is 86.5.*

Do not use a period

1. after chemical symbols: *CuO (copper oxide)*.

2. after radio call letters or in network abbreviations: *KNBC, CBS*.

See **abbreviations, dollars and cents, ellipsis, punctuation**.

personal, personnel

Personal means an individual's own ideas or concerns: *This letter is private and personal*.

Personnel means a group of employees or an administrative division that focuses on persons a company or other institution employs: *There was important material in his file in the personnel office*.

Avoid overuse of parentheses and brackets.

When you use percents, give the base.

Avoid even the suspicion of plagiarism. Give credit to all of the sources you have used in preparing your paper including CD-ROMs, the Internet and personal interviews.

plagiarism

Plagiarism means passing off someone else's work as your own.

Avoid even the suspicion of plagiarism. Give credit to all of the sources you have used in preparing your paper including CD-ROMs, the Internet and personal interviews.

See **copyright, documentation, quotations**.

political parties

Capitalize the *Democratic Party, the Republican Party*. Capitalize *Communist, Conservative, Liberal, Socialist*, etc., when they refer to political parties. Lower case when they denote a political point of view: She is a *liberal Republican*.

See **ideologies**.

possessive before gerund

Use the possessive form of a noun or pronoun before a gerund (verb form used as a noun): *Ivan's losing his match cost the team a victory. My mother was thrilled at my winning the piano competition.*

See **apostrophe**.

postgraduate

predominant, predominate

Predominant, an adjective, means having superior strength: *The painter used red as the predominant color.*

To *predominate* means to exert control: *In the painting, red predominated.*

principal, principle

As an adjective, *principal* means main: *Blue is the principal color.*

As a noun, *principal* means the main one, such as the head of a school: *The principal announced a new schedule.*

A *principle* is a moral or theoretical tenet: *Freedom of expression is an important principle.*

pronouns

Make pronoun references accurate and clear.

Some guidelines:

1. Make pronouns agree with their antecedents: *The team beat its opponent. The seniors gave their views about the class gift.*
2. Be accurate with cases. Use the nominative case, not the objective case, for a subject: *He is older than I am. My friends and*

If a pronoun reference is unclear, drop the pronoun and use the noun.

I like to go out for lunch. He and I are lab partners.

Not: *He is older than me. Me and my friends like to go out for lunch. Him and me are lab partners.*

Use the objective case, not the nominative case, for an object: *It was a secret between him and me.*

Not: *It was a secret between him and I.*

2. Use *he* or *his* when the antecedent is masculine or common: *Nobody in his right mind would want to study today.*

3. Use *she* and *her* to refer to feminine nouns: *The Queen Elizabeth 2 left her berth.*

4. If a pronoun reference is unclear, drop the pronoun and use the noun: *Bishkek is my hometown* is clearer than *It is my hometown.*

See **agreement; coherence; he/she, his/her; sentences: parts of speech and parts of a sentence.**

punctuation

Punctuate for clarity only. Avoid unnecessary punctuation.

See **ampersand, apostrophe, colon, comma, dash, documentation, ellipsis, exclamation point, hyphen, parentheses and brackets, period, question mark, quotation marks, quotations, quotations within quotations, semicolon.**

Use punctuation for clarity only.

Q

question mark {?}

Use at the end of a direct question: *Did you say, "I hate ketchup"?*

Note that the question mark goes outside the quotation marks because the quoted material is not in the form of a question. But: *We asked, "Will he go?" "Should I stay?" he asked.*

Do not use a question mark at the end of an indirect question: *He asked if he should stay.*

See **punctuation, quotation marks, quotations.**

quotation marks {" " }

Use quotation marks

1. to indicate that a sentence is that of another person: *"He is alive!" the boy shouted.*

2. to indicate that a word, phrase or clause is that of another person: *The teacher called the class "just great—a terrific group."*

Note: Neither a comma nor a capital is necessary when quoting a sentence fragment. But do use a comma and capital when quoting a full sentence: *The teacher said, "This class is just great—a terrific group."*

3. at the beginning of each paragraph in a quotation of several paragraphs and at the end of the last paragraph of the series.

Never use quotation marks around titles of books. Use italics instead.

Avoid merely throwing in long quotations to “impress” your reader.

4. to express irony: *The “game” turned into a brawl.*
5. to introduce unfamiliar words: *The “ampersand” is a punctuation mark.*
6. to indicate titles of book chapters, lectures, magazine or newspaper articles, poems, short stories, songs, speeches, and works of art: *William Blake’s “The Tyger.”*

Never use quotation marks

1. around a paraphrase.
2. around nicknames.
3. around titles of books. Use italics instead: “Leaves of Grass” is just one section of Walt Whitman’s *Song of Myself*.
4. with *Bible*, *Encyclopedia Britannica* or other reference materials.

See **attribution, boldface and italics, documentation, ellipsis, parentheses and brackets, punctuation, quotations, quotations within quotations, titles for papers and other works.**

quotations

Use quotations from your reading and research to support and illustrate your ideas, but quote only the words you need to make your point.

Quotations cannot substitute for your own ideas, but they can add persuasive support. Do not pad. Avoid merely throwing in long quotations to “impress” your reader. Teachers become especially annoyed with such time- and space-wasters.

Be accurate when quoting, and specify the source and context of every quotation.

Some pointers:

1. Use quotations in your essays to give validation to your ideas or to add a particularly vivid or apt expression: Steinbeck’s ominous view of nature becomes clear in *Of Mice and Men* when a “silent . . . motionless” heron “lanced down and plucked [the little water snake] . . . out by its head while its tail waved frantically” (109).

2. Frame the quotation in some way, indicating its source, Steinbeck; its context, *Of Mice and Men*; and its purpose, illustrating his ominous view of nature.

3. When quoting printed material, make sure that all the words, capitalization and punctuation are as they appear in the source.

In the example above, there are no commas before “silent . . .” and “lanced . . .” because these words are phrases, not full sentences.

Use a comma, however, to separate attributions such as “he says” or “Steinbeck writes” from the quotation.

4. When you make a point and follow it with a quotation that supports the point, use a colon: Steinbeck's imagery in *Of Mice and Men* reveals his ominous view of nature: "The silent . . . motionless" heron "lanced down and plucked [the little water snake] . . . out by its head . . . while its tail waved frantically" (109).

5. To add clarifying words of your own to quotations, use brackets, not parentheses. Often, these words and phrases substitute for pronouns, as with [the little water snake] in the example above.

6. For omissions in prose, type in an ellipsis: "silent . . . motionless heron."

7. For omissions of whole lines in verse, use a row of asterisks:

*Breathes there the man with a soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!*
* * * * *

*As home his footsteps he hath turn'd.
From wandering on a foreign stand.
(Sir Walter Scott, "The Lay of the Last Minstrel").*

8. When quoting poetry or dramatic verse, use a slash mark to indicate line endings: Shakespeare writes in *Romeo and Juliet*, "If I profane with my unworthing hand/ This holy shrine. The gentle sin is this:/ My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand/ To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss" (I. v. 93-96).

9. When quoting more than four lines in formal academic papers, different rules apply. Instead of using quotation marks, set off these passages by starting a new line and indenting 10 spaces. Use a colon at the end of the introduction to the quotation: In *Of Mice and Men*, Steinbeck shows that Curley's wife is another disappointed dreamer as she tells Crooks and Lennie of her ambitions:

Whatta think I am, a kid? I could of went with shows.
Not jus' one neither. An' a guy tol' me he could put
me in pitchers . . . Sat'day night. Ever'body out doin'
som'pin'. Ever'body. An' what am I doin'? Standin'
here talkin' to a bunch of bindle stiffs . . . and likin' it
because they ain't nobody else. (86)

Note that after a long quotation like this one the period goes before the page number even though the period goes after the page number following a short passage in quotation marks.

10. When there is no page number, place commas and periods inside quotation marks: He said, "I never know what to have for lunch."

Place colons and semicolons outside the quotation marks.

If other punctuation is part of the quoted material, place it inside the quotation marks: *He asked, "What's for lunch?" and She*

Place commas
and periods
inside
quotation marks.

Use single quotation marks to set off quotations within quotations, but for no other purpose.

Be concise. Never waste your reader's time.

yelled, "Go away!" If not, place the punctuation outside: *Why do you keep saying, "I know we should eat lunch"?*

See **attribution, clauses and phrases, copyright, documentation, ellipsis, parentheses and brackets, plagiarism, question mark, sic.**

quotations within quotations {" ' ' ' }

Use single quotation marks { ' ' } to set off quotations within quotations: *"When Mr. Bassett told me, 'You won the Kennedy Prize,' it was just incredible," Mary said.*

Do not use single quotation marks for any other purpose.

quotes, quotations

Use *quotes* as a verb only: *She often quotes Maya Angelou.*

Use *quotations* as a noun: *He likes to write quotations from Robert Frost on the blackboard.*

R

reason

Write the *reason is that*

Do not write the *reason is because*

redundancy

Be concise: *He nominated her.*

Not: *He placed her name in nomination.*

Eliminate repeated words: *She lives in Cambridge, MA.*

Not: *She lives in the city of Cambridge in the commonwealth of Massachusetts.*

Delete adjectives and adverbs that restate what nouns and verbs imply: *She ran up the stairs. She had brought her week-old baby to work.*

Not: *She ran quickly up the stairs. She had brought her little week-old baby to work.*

Never waste your reader's time.

refer

Never write *refer back*.

reinforce

repetitious wording

Do not repeat key words except for effect. Never begin a series of sentences or paragraphs with the same word(s) unless your repetition is deliberate to improve coherence or provide emphasis.

See **parallel structure, transitions.**

role, roll

Use *role* for a part an actor plays: *She has the role of Lady Macbeth.* It also means a function someone has: *Her role is to monitor the company's cash flow.*

Use *roll* to refer to turning over in a circular motion: *Please roll up the rug.* Among other meanings of *roll* are an attendance list and a loud, reverberating sound: *The teacher takes the roll. We heard a roll of thunder.*

S

seasons

Use lowercase: *spring, fall.*

self

Hyphenate this prefix: *self-sufficient.*

semicolon {;}

Use a semicolon

1. to separate items in a series if the items include commas: *Prizes went to Mikhail Kuzmin, a senior; Ludmila Kashina, a junior; and Elmira Satylganova, a sophomore.*

2. to link independent clauses when there is no coordinating conjunction: *Getting into college is one challenge; staying there is another.*

3. to link independent clauses when one of the clauses is internally punctuated: *Azat, who liked my paper, wrote me a note; but Aigul, who can't stand Chekov, threw the copy of my essay into the wastebasket.*

See **clauses and phrases; commas; punctuation; sentences: simple, complex and compound.**

sentence

A sentence is a complete thought. To change the pace in your writing, vary the kinds of sentences you use.

sentence: indicative, imperative, interrogative

Indicative, imperative and interrogative sentences depend on the relationship between the subject and verb.

A sentence in which the verb makes a statement about a subject is indicative: *Fresh basil improves tomato sauce.*

In an imperative, the verb makes a request of the subject or gives the subject a command: *Please pass in your tests.*

A sentence in which the verb asks the subject a question is interrogative: *Will this class ever end?*

Use semicolons to separate items in a series if the items include commas.

sentences: parts of speech and parts of a sentence

The four major parts of speech are nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. The other parts of speech are conjunctions, interjections, prepositions and pronouns.

Conjunctions link: chocolate *and* vanilla.

Interjections cause a pause in a thought: When I shut down my computer—*yeow*—I lost the whole document.

Prepositions show how a noun or pronoun relates to another word in a sentence: *before* class, *under* your book.

Pronouns take the place of nouns: *They* want *her* in the registrar's office.

Parts of a sentence:

1. A subject is a noun about which a verb makes a statement or asks a question: *Sergei Kazakov* coaches football. Does the *team* have co-captains this year? In an imperative sentence, the subject ("*you*") is implied: Please clear the table.

2. A direct object receives action from or gives the result of a verb: Ivan slammed the *puck* into the goal.

3. An indirect object is the person (or thing) to or for whom (or which) the action in the verb is performed: My English teacher wrote *Natalia* a great recommendation.

4. An object of a preposition is a noun connected to another word in the sentence by means of a preposition: My English teacher wrote a great recommendation for *Natalia*.

5. A complement, often called a predicate nominative, is a noun that completes a state-of-being verb and names the same person or thing as the subject: *Natalia* is my best *friend*. Another kind of complement used with this type of verb is a predicate adjective, which modifies the subject: This pizza is *delicious*.

6. A verb is the key word or phrase that makes a statement about or asks a question of the subject. A verb expresses action or state of being or becoming: The teacher *assigned* too much homework. She *is* a true friend.

7. A predicate is the verb with all its baggage—modifiers, complements, objects. The predicate is usually everything in a sentence except the subject: It *has lately been possible for University graduates to study in France, Germany, Hungary, Russia and the United States*.

sentences: simple, complex, compound

A simple sentence has one independent clause. This clause may have a simple subject and a simple verb: *The students need two more credits*.

Four major parts of speech

To determine the part of speech of a word:

1. First, find the verb of the sentence.
2. Then find the subject.
3. Then see what kind of word completes the verb.
4. Then find the modifiers.
5. Connectors, then interrupters, come last.

IF IT MEANS THE	AND ITS FUNCTION IS TO	AND IT ANSWERS THE QUESTION	THEN IT IS A
I. Name of a person, place, thing idea, action or quantity	act as 1. subject of a verb 2. indirect object 3. direct object 4. predicate complement (nominative) 5. object of a preposition 6. other*	WHO? or WHAT?	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 10px; display: inline-block;">Noun</div>
II. Action or State (of being or becoming)	1. make a statement about 2. ask a question of 3. give a command to the subject	WHAT IS GOING ON?	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 10px; display: inline-block;">Verb</div>
III. Describing or limiting of a noun	modify a noun	WHAT KIND? or WHICH ONE? Whose? How many?	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 10px; display: inline-block;">Adjective</div>
IV. Time Place Manner Degree (Reason) (Circum- stance) ()=clauses only	modify a verb, adjective or adverb	WHEN? WHERE? HOW? HOW MUCH? How often? To what extent? With what result? WHY? In what circumstances? On what condition? Despite what?	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 10px; display: inline-block;">Adverb</div>

*Other, less frequent functions of a noun are appositive, nominative of address, nominative absolute and object complement.

It may have a compound subject and a compound verb with all of the subjects performing all of the actions : *Michael, Olga and Victor want to graduate and need two more credits.*

A compound sentence has two or more independent clauses: *The Sports Club will play a volleyball match this afternoon, and the Drama Club will perform this evening.*

A complex sentence has a dependent and an independent clause: *After the Sports Club plays its volleyball match, the Drama Club will perform this evening.*

See **clauses and phrases, coherence, comma.**

separate

There is “a rat” in *separate*.

shall, will

Use *shall* to express determination: *We shall win the prize.*

Use *will* in most future forms: *We will in the park after lunch.*

sic

Use this word to show you know that material you are quoting contains an error: *The newspaper said he’s in the “Sportt Club” [sic].*

sizable

slander

In general, this term means spoken defamation that is not provably true.

See **defamation, libel.**

slang

See **dialect and slang.**

spelling

When in doubt, look it up. Use the spell checker on the computer, but do not rely entirely on this program. Spell checking does not pick up homonyms—*their/they’re, its/it’s*—omissions and such inaccuracies as *form/from*.

Allow time to read over your work carefully, word by word if necessary, before you turn it in.

split infinitive

The infinitive form consists of *to* and a verb: *to leave*.

Use *sic* to show that material you are quoting contains an error.

When in doubt about spelling, look up the word. Use the spell checker on the computer, but do not rely entirely on this program.

Put the adverb before or after the infinitive phrase: *The usher asked the noisy viewers to leave quietly.*

Avoid split infinitives: *to quietly leave.*

states and commonwealths

In the United States there are 46 states; there are four commonwealths: Kentucky, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Virginia. Except in formal uses, refer to all 50 as states.

Guidelines:

1. Do not capitalize *commonwealth of* or *state of*.
2. Capitalize and write out states' names when they stand alone.
3. Abbreviate when state name appears with name of county or municipality: *Dade County, FL; Mineola, NY.*

4. Use standard U.S. Postal Service form with two letters capitalized: *Alabama becomes AL; Alaska, AK; Arizona, AZ; Arkansas, AR; California, CA; Colorado, CO; Connecticut, CT; Delaware, DE; Florida, FL; Georgia, GA; Hawaii, HI; Idaho, ID; Illinois, IL; Indiana, IN; Iowa, IA; Kansas, KS; Kentucky, KY; Louisiana, LA; Maine, ME; Maryland, MD; Massachusetts, MA; Michigan, MI; Minnesota, MN; Mississippi, MS; Missouri, MO; Montana, MT; Nebraska, NE; Nevada, NV; New Hampshire, NH; New Jersey, NJ; New Mexico, NM; New York, NY; North Carolina, NC; North Dakota, ND; Ohio, OH; Oklahoma, OK; Oregon, OR; Pennsylvania, PA; Rhode Island, RI; South Carolina, SC; South Dakota, SD; Tennessee, TN; Texas, TX; Utah, UT; Vermont, VT; Virginia, VA; Washington, WA; West Virginia, WV; Wisconsin, WI; Wyoming, WY.*

See **addresses**.

stationary, stationery

Stationary, an adjective, means staying in one place: *Sit in a stationary position.*

Stationery, a noun, means writing paper and envelopes. *Try this stationery for your job application.*

stepfather, stepmother

subjunctive

Use subjunctive for conditions contrary to fact, and for strong doubts, regrets and wishes: *If I were the president of the Drama Club, I would support staging a comedy next year. I wish it had been possible to stage a comedy last year.*

But: *If he becomes president of the Drama Club, I expect him to support staging a comedy. He said he hoped it would be possible to stage a comedy.*

Do not capitalize *commonwealth of* or *state of*.

Abbreviate state names when they appear with the names of counties and municipalities.

To syllabicate correctly, consult a dictionary in the language you are studying.

suppose, supposed

Use *suppose* to express conjecture: *I suppose we'd better go to class.*

Use *supposed* to express obligation: *We're supposed to be in class on time.*

syllabication

In general, avoid dividing words. Rules differ depending upon the language in which you are writing. Consult a dictionary in the language you are studying. Some guidelines for English and Romance languages:

1. Never divide proper nouns, abbreviations, numbers, addresses or dates, contractions, or words of fewer than six letters.

2. Divide by syllable near the middle of a word: *uni-verse*.

3. Avoid confusing divisions, such as *un-iverse*.

4. Put the hyphen at the end of the line, not the beginning.

If you are using a word processing program, see if it has a syllabication feature.

See **hyphen**.

T

team

A team is a collective noun that takes a singular verb and matches a singular pronoun: *The football team will host its major rival this afternoon.*

teen-age, teen-ager

temperature

Use numerals except for zero: *40-degree heat, temperatures in the 30s, 10 below zero.*

tense

Use verb tense to indicate the time when an action or state of being occurs. Keep past and present tenses distinct: *She visited Lake Issyk-Kul last summer* or *She was visiting Lake Issyk-Kul last summer*. Not: *She visits Lake Issyk-Kul last summer* or *She is visiting Lake Issyk-Kul last summer*.

that, which

Use *that* for references to inanimate objects and animals

in essential clauses and phrases: *News publications that are full of important information enlighten readers.*

Use *which* for nonessential clauses and phrases: *News publications, which are full of important information, enlighten readers.*

Never use *that* or *which* for people; use *who*: *All the students who are in my class are going to the presentation.*

Not: *All the students that are in my class are going to the presentation.*

See **clauses and phrases; comma; who, whom.**

their, there, they're

Use these homonyms correctly: *They won their award in the Olympiad. There's a moon out tonight. They're all in the lecture hall.*

this

Use *this* as an adjective: *This discussion with the administration will prevent confusion.*

Do not use *this* as a pronoun: *This will prevent confusion.*

See **demonstrative adjective.**

threw, through

Threw is *throw* in the past tense: *I threw the ball.*

Through means in one side and out the other side: *I walked through the park.*

titles for papers and other works

When you create a title for a paper, set the direction for your readers. Titles identify and set the tone. When you cite a title of another person's work, be accurate.

Titles should summarize and emphasize the content and tone of your paper: *Horatio's Friendship with Hamlet.*

Do not merely put on a label: *World War II Paper.*

Never use the title of the book or work you are writing about as your own title: *Of Mice and Men.*

Never underline your own title or put it in italics.

1. Capitalize initial letters in the first and last words of a title and in all other words except articles, conjunctions and prepositions of three or fewer letters: *"I'll Remember in the Still of the Nite."*

2. Use italics for titles of books, CDs, computer programs, films, periodicals, operas, plays, television pro-

Never use *that* or *which* for people; use *who*.

Use *this* as an adjective. Do not use *this* as a pronoun.

grams and works of art. Underline titles to indicate italics in handwritten papers.

3. Put quotation marks around titles of shorter works such as newspaper articles, poems, short stories, songs and speeches.

4. Use the following as guidelines: *They listened to Beethoven's String Quartet in F major, Op. 59, No. 1; to Haydn's String Quartet in E flat major, Op. 76, No. 6; and to Mozart's Symphony in C (Jupiter), K.-V. 551.*

titles for people

When referring to people, use courtesy titles, formal titles and political titles with precision. Do not use false titles.

•courtesy titles

When writing about people, decide whether to use Miss, Mr., Mrs. or Ms.; then be consistent.

Most writers do not use *Miss, Mr. or Mrs.* on first reference. Instead, they use the person's first name, middle initial and last name: *Yvette E. Wilson*. In subsequent references, the writers use a consistent, shorter form: *Wilson*.

But to avoid ambiguity, use *Mr. and Mrs.* in references to a married couple or members of the same family: *John and Mary Smith* and then *Mr. Smith* or *Mrs. Smith*.

Avoid referring to a woman as *Mrs. John Smith*. Write her first name: *Mrs. Mary Smith*.

•false titles

False titles describe a person's occupation or area of skill without specifying exact professional authority: *politician, soprano soloist, goal tender*.

1. Do not use false titles adjectivally before a person's name as in *goal tender Ivan Ivanov*. Instead, set the name off from the descriptive phrase with commas: *Ivan Ivanov, a goal tender, excelled during the game*.

2. Never capitalize false titles.

3. Base decisions about the use of the definite or indefinite article on whether the individual is well known: *Anna Emelyanova, the actress, spoke on careers in film. Elena Alikova, a member of the club, served refreshments*.

•formal titles

A person's formal title exactly defines the individual's official, professional scope of authority: *mayor, senator, president*.

1. Capitalize one-word formal titles that precede a person's name: *President Harry Truman, Queen Victoria*.

When writing about people, use courtesy titles, formal titles and political titles with precision.

Never capitalize false titles.

2. Do not separate a one-word formal title that precedes a name and the name with a comma: *President Harry Truman*.

Not: *President, Harry Truman*.

3. When a formal title follows a name, use a comma and lowercase the title: *Harry Truman, president*.

- political titles

Be consistent.

Some samples of usage:

1. *Rep. Mary Garcia spoke with Gov. Ed Quinn, Sen. William Jones and Mayor Margaret Lincoln.*

2. *State Reps. John Doe, D-Des Moines, and Jane Doe, R-Perry, sponsored the bill.*

See **boldface and italics, quotation marks**.

to, too, two

Use *to* for direction toward: *Come to my house.*

Use *too* for more than enough, or in addition: *He ate too much. He had dessert, too.*

Use *two* for the amount: *He ate two sandwiches.*

tobacco

total, totaled, totaling

transfer, transferred, transferring

transitions

A transition shows a shift in thought. Use transitions to point the direction for your ideas and to link sentences and paragraphs.

Individual words and phrases help connect sequences within paragraphs or essays based on

- chronological development: *first, next, after, meanwhile, finally*
- comparison: *but, yet, however, similarly, on the other hand*
- logic: *as a result, consequently, furthermore, nevertheless, furthermore*
- spatial relationships: *beyond, higher up, farther along, to the left, to the right.*

Note that connector words may be unnecessary if the relationship between ideas is obvious: *I kissed her. She swooned.*

Repetition of key words and phrases can add emphasis:

To break up with your boyfriend, tell him you still want to be his friend because he really is a nice person, but you do want to break up with him. When he asks why you want to break up with him, say that you think the two of you would make better friends than boyfriend

A person's formal title exactly defines the individual's official, professional scope of authority.

Use transitions to point the direction for your ideas and to link sentences and paragraphs.

Never write
try and.

Do not use *very*
with *unique*,
which means one
of a kind.

and girlfriend. If he agrees with you, try to hide the fact that you had hoped he would be sadder than that. If he starts to cry and says he can't live without you, feel guilty and remind him you will still be *friends*.

In the body of an essay, a complex sentence can link paragraphs. Try beginning with a dependent clause that summarizes the previous paragraph and then using a main clause that introduces the next main section of evidence: Although F. Scott Fitzgerald uses gray in *The Great Gatsby* to evoke the devastation of World War I, his green imagery suggests pastoral innocence and hope.

See **clauses and phrases; coherence; pronouns; repetitious wording; sentences: simple, complex, compound**.

try to

Use *try to*. Never write *try and*.

U-V

ultra

In general, no hyphen: *ultrasound*.

un

In general, no hyphen: *uncover*.

underlining

See **boldface and italics**.

unique

Do not use *very* with *unique*, which means one of a kind.

United States of America

Write it out as a noun. *U.S.* may be used as an adjective. See **America**.

used to

Used to is past tense: *I used to hear people say, "Her office is near the cafeteria."*

versus

Write *vs.* in sports references, as in *Boston Red Sox vs. New York Yankees*; write *v.* when citing a legal case: *Roe v. Wade*.

very, really, actually

Avoid these overused adverbs and others like them. Find

a more precise way to express an idea.

W-Z

war

Capitalize when part of a name: *World War II*.
Never write WW2.

wear, were, where

Use *wear* for clothes: *I will wear a coat*.
Use *were* for to be, past tense: *We were lost in the desert*.
Use *where* for location: *I know where I'm going*.

weather, whether

Use accurately: *I don't know whether the weather will be sunny*.

weights

Use numerals: *the 8-pound, 6-ounce boy*.

weird

who, whom

Use *who* for subjects or predicate nominatives as you would use *he, she, they*: *Anne Baker, who should make the all-star team, is a junior. Who will make the all-star team?*

Use *whom* for objects, as you would use *him, her, them*: *Anna Solovgova, whom the coach called "a player with great potential," should make the all-star team*.

See **pronouns; that, which**.

Xerox

Do not use this brand name as a synonym for photocopier.

See **brand names**.

zero, zeros

ZIP code

Use *who* for subjects. Use *whom* for objects.

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