



## Basic Grammar Rules

### Subject-Verb Agreement

Singular subjects take singular verbs; plural subjects take plural verbs.

**Examples:**

- Incorrect: The dog run.
- Correct: The dog runs.
- Incorrect: The dogs runs.
- Correct: The dogs run.

When a sentence has a compound subject joined by 'and', use a plural verb unless the subjects together form a single unit.

**Examples:**

- Correct: Jack and Jill went up the hill.
- Correct: Mac and cheese is my favorite dish.

If the subject is separated from the verb by words like 'along with', 'as well as', ignore these phrases.

**Examples:**

- Correct: The politician, along with his aides, *is* expected shortly.
- Incorrect: The politician, along with his aides, *are* expected shortly.

### Pronoun Agreement

Pronouns must agree in number and gender with their antecedents.

**Examples:**

- Incorrect: Each student should bring their book.
- Correct: Each student should bring his or her book.
- Correct: All students should bring their books.

Use singular pronouns with singular indefinite pronouns (e.g., everyone, someone, nobody).

**Examples:**

- Correct: Everyone should do his or her best.
- Incorrect: Everyone should do their best.

### Correct Tense Usage

Maintain consistent tense throughout a sentence or paragraph unless a shift in time is intended.

**Examples:**

- Incorrect: I went to the store, and I will buy milk.
- Correct: I went to the store, and I bought milk.
- Correct: I am going to the store, and I will buy milk.

Use the correct tense for the intended meaning (past, present, future, perfect tenses).

**Examples:**

- Correct: I had finished my work before he arrived.
- Correct: I will have finished my work by tomorrow.

## Punctuation Essentials

### Commas

Use commas to separate items in a list.

**Example:**

- I need to buy milk, bread, and eggs.

Use commas to separate independent clauses when they are joined by a coordinating conjunction (and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet).

**Example:**

- I wanted to go to the park, but it started to rain.

Use commas after introductory phrases or clauses.

**Example:**

- After the movie, we went for ice cream.

Use commas to set off nonessential information.

**Example:**

- My brother, who is a doctor, lives in New York.

### Semicolons

Use semicolons to join two closely related independent clauses.

**Example:**

- The sky is clear; the stars are twinkling.

Use semicolons to separate items in a list when the items themselves contain commas.

**Example:**

- I visited Paris, France; Rome, Italy; and London, England.

### Apostrophes

Use apostrophes to indicate possession.

**Example:**

- The dog's bone.

Use apostrophes to indicate contractions.

**Example:**

- It is = It's
- Cannot = Can't

# Stylistic Considerations

## Clarity and Conciseness

Avoid unnecessary words and phrases. Be direct and to the point.

**Example:**

- Wordy: Due to the fact that it was raining, the game was canceled.
- Concise: Because it was raining, the game was canceled.

Use active voice whenever possible. It makes your writing more direct and engaging.

**Example:**

- Passive: The ball was caught by the player.
- Active: The player caught the ball.

## Word Choice

Choose words that are precise and appropriate for your audience.

**Example:**

- Instead of 'big', use 'enormous', 'large', or 'substantial', depending on the context.

Avoid jargon and overly technical terms unless your audience is familiar with them.

**Example:**

- Instead of 'utilize', use 'use'.

## Sentence Variety

Vary the length and structure of your sentences to keep your writing interesting.

**Example:**

- Mix short, punchy sentences with longer, more complex ones.

Use different sentence beginnings to avoid monotony.

**Example:**

- Instead of always starting with the subject, try starting with an adverb or prepositional phrase.

# Common Grammatical Errors

## Misplaced Modifiers

Modifiers should be placed as close as possible to the words they modify.

**Incorrect:** I saw a dog running down the street with a limp.

**Correct:** Running down the street, I saw a dog with a limp.

## Dangling Modifiers

A dangling modifier does not have a clear word to modify in the sentence.

**Incorrect:** Having finished the game, the dinner was delicious.

**Correct:** Having finished the game, we enjoyed a delicious dinner.

## Faulty Parallelism

Items in a list or series should have the same grammatical structure.

**Incorrect:** I like to swim, hiking, and to bike.

**Correct:** I like to swim, hike, and bike. (or) I like swimming, hiking, and biking.