Prof. Kathy's Grammar Tip Sheet

Periods and commas always go INSIDE quotation marks at the end of sentences.

- Correct: "Put the period inside the quotation mark."
- Incorrect: "Putting the period outside the quotation mark is not correct".

- Correct: "I put commas inside the quotations mark," and so should you.
- Incorrect: "I put commas outside the quotations mark", and you do, too.

Exception: When there are in-text citation parentheses at the end of the sentence, the period goes after the parentheses, not at the end of the quotation.

Egbert (2009) stated, "Each type of technology affords opportunities for different actions and can help fulfill learning goals in different ways"←period goes not go here (p. 12).←Period goes here.

Italicize book, magazine, newspaper and journal titles. Put article titles in quotation marks.

The italics rule DOES apply to the reference list. The article quotation rule DOES NOT apply to the reference list. Do not put anything in quotation marks in the reference list.

Use "double" quotation marks, not 'single' quotation marks for all quotations, even when quoting one word.

"Use 'single' quotation marks when you quote words inside a quotation."

British English uses 'single' quotation marks. American English uses "double" quotations marks. Always use American English in your college assignments.

Pronoun agreement.   A pronoun replaces a noun in the sentence. You need to use singular pronouns with singular nouns and plural pronouns with plural nouns. If you use plural pronouns with singular nouns, you've got a pronoun/antecedent agreement error. For example:

- Incorrect: The student went to their class.
- Correct: The student went to his or her class.

"Student" is a singular noun, so it takes a singular pronoun (he/she) to replace it in the sentence. "Their" is a plural noun that you would use if you had said: The students went to their classes.

Use ellipses dots . . . correctly. They should not replace normal punctuation. They have a specific purpose. They should have a blank space before, in-between and after . . . the dots.

Points of view (first-person, second-person, third-person). Please review this points of view document: http://www.epcc.edu/tutorialservices/valleverde/Documents/Point_of_View.pdf

In general, you should use:

1. **First-person** (I, me, my, mine, we, our) when you are writing about your own experiences, viewpoint, arguments or opinions.

2. **Second-person** (you, your, yours) when you are talking directly to the reader. This is appropriate when responding to your classmates (You did a great job on your assignment) or when an assignment is written to the audience, such as in your e-newsletter where you are instructing readers how to write better. It should never be used as a "universal you" to mean everyone. Be careful that when you use a quotation from the textbook (or another source) that is in second-person, you don't continue to use second-person in the rest of your paragraph.

3. **Third-person** (he, she, they, them, their) should be used when an objective viewpoint is required. This is definitely used in academic research papers and most college assignments. It should be used in your assignments when you are defining concepts or answering questions that do not ask for your personal experience or viewpoint (first-person).

Points of view should not be mixed in a sentence.   For example: I do not want to use second-person point of view because when you do so incorrectly, it confuses the reader.

Most of you are not aware of how you slip into second-person point of view in your writing when you are not actually talking directly to the reader. Become aware of it.

Comma Errors

- Complete sentence = subject and verb (called independent clause or phrase).
- Incomplete sentence = usually lacks a subject (dependent clause or phrase).

Comma splice errors = Two complete sentences that are connected with a comma.

- John ran to the store, he bought milk.   = Complete sentence, complete sentence.

To correct comma splice errors:

John ran to the store. He bought milk.   (Make into two sentences.)
John ran to the store; he bought milk.   (Put a semicolon between the sentences.)
John ran to the store, and he bought milk.   (Add a comma and conjunction between them.)

Run-on Sentence = Two complete sentences with no punctuation between them.

- Complete sentence complete sentence.
- John ran to the store he bought milk.

Correct the same way as above for the comma splice.

Transitional Word Between Complete Sentences

- Complete sentence; however, complete sentence.
- John ran to the store; however, he bought candy instead of milk.

Commas With Conjunctions

- Conjunctions are: and, but, or, for, nor, yet, so

When you connect two complete sentences with a conjunction, put a comma before the conjunction.

- Complete sentence, and complete sentence.
- John ran to the store, and he bought milk.

When you connect a complete sentence and an incomplete sentence with a conjunction, DO NOT put a comma before the conjunction.

- Complete sentence and incomplete sentence.
- John ran to the store and bought milk.

Introductory Words, Phrases and Clauses

1. Subordinate phrases lack a subject and a verb.

   - In fact, John ran to the store.
   - Therefore, John ran to the store.
   - In addition, John ran to the store.

2. Subordinate clauses have a subject and verb but begin with a word such as although or when.

   - Although Mary wanted to go the store, John ran to the store.

Since vs. because.   Since is related to time = Since last week, we raised $10,000.   "Because" provides reasons = Because it was hot, we went swimming.   NOT: Since it was hot, we went swimming. They are not interchangeable.

As vs. because. Same as above. "Because" provides reasons. "As" means "while," which is related to time = while something was happening, something else happened. They are not interchangeable.

Although vs. while. "Although" means "even though."   "While" is related to time = while something was happening, something else happened. They are not interchangeable.

Apostrophes

- **Its** = possession = something owns something = The dog chased its ball.
- **It's** = contraction of it is = apostrophe takes the place of "i" in is.   It's time for a snack.

- They're = they are
- Their = shows possession
- There = specifies a location

- You're = you are
- Your = shows possession

- We're = we are
- Were = past tense of "are"
- Where = specifies a location

- Loose = not fixed in place
- Lose = cease to keep

- Affect = an action
- Effect = a result

Showing singular and plural possession:

- Dog = one dog
- Dogs = more than one dog
- Dog's = one dog that possesses something = The dog's ball was blue.
- Dogs' = more than one dog that possesses something = The dogs' balls were blue.

OWL Grammar Website Quick Find List

Apostrophe
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/punctuation/apostrophe_introduction.html

Commas: Quick Rules
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/punctuation/commas/index.html

Commas after Introductions (Introductory clauses, phrase, words)
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/punctuation/commas/commas_after_introductions.html

Commas, Extended Rules
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/punctuation/commas/extended_rules_for_commas.html

Commas vs. Semicolons in Compound Sentences
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/punctuation/commas/commas_vs_semicolons.html

Commas with non-essential elements
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/punctuation/commas/commas_with_nonessential_elements.html

Other Punctuation: Semicolon, Colon, Parentheses
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/english_as_a_second_language/esl_students/punctuation/semicolons_colons_and_parentheses.html

Run-ons, Comma Splices and Fused Sentences:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/punctuation/independent_and_dependent_clauses/runonsentences.html

Common words that sound alike:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/grammar/spelling_common_words_that_sound_alike.html

Independent and Dependent Clauses:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/punctuation/independent_and_dependent_clauses/index.html

Hyphens
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/english_as_a_second_language/esl_students/punctuation/hyphens_and_dashes.html

Using Pronouns Clearly:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/grammar/pronouns/index.html

Quotation Marks and Apostrophes:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/english_as_a_second_language/esl_students/punctuation/quotation_marks_and_apostrophes.html

Additional Punctuation Rules when Using Quotation Marks
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/punctuation/quotation_marks/more_quotation_mark_rules.html

Sentence Fragments:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/mechanics/sentence_fragments.html