

# Handbook

## GRAMMAR

### Parts of Speech

#### Noun

A **noun** is a word that names a person, place, thing, quality, or idea.

Person	Place	Thing	Quality	Idea
teacher	classroom	train	honesty	poverty

A **proper noun** is the name of a specific person, place, or thing. All other nouns are common nouns.

Specific Person	Specific Place	Specific Thing
Wayne Gretzky	Toronto	Windows 2000

**Abstract nouns** refer to qualities or ideas; **concrete nouns** refer to entities that can be experienced using the senses.

Abstract Nouns	Concrete Nouns
courage	house
pride	forest
truth	thunder

**Count nouns** refer to people, places, and things that can be counted. **Noncount nouns** refer to entities that cannot be counted. **Collective nouns** name a group of people or things.

Count Nouns	Noncount Nouns	Collective Nouns
girls	soil	team
countries	wood	audience
cups	cheese	committee
butterflies	salt	flock
stones	knowledge	herd

A **singular noun** refers to one entity; a **plural noun** refers to two or more entities.

Singular Nouns	Plural Nouns
woman	women
city	cities
brick	bricks

A **compound noun** is formed by combining two or more words.

weightlifter	waterspout
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The **gender** of a noun may be **masculine, feminine, indefinite, or neuter.**

<b>Masculine</b>	<b>Feminine</b>	<b>Indefinite</b>	<b>Neuter</b>
man	actress	child	book
uncle	niece	youth	car

## Verb

A **verb** is a word that shows action (**action verb**) or a state of being (**linking verb**).

Carlos **pointed** at a child who appeared lost.

**action verb**

linking verb

Sometimes a verb may be made up of more than one word: a **main verb** and one or more **helping (or auxiliary) verbs**.

The soccer team **had been** competing for the regional title.

**helping verbs** main verb

<b>Common Action Verbs</b>	<b>Common Linking Verbs</b>	<b>Common Helping Verbs</b>
walk	be	have
swim	become	be
run	have	do
jump	seem	can
dance	feel	shall
sing	remain	will

A **transitive verb** requires a noun phrase (called a *direct object*) to complete its meaning. An **intransitive verb** does not require a direct object.

As I **described** *the problem*, Father grinned.

**transitive verb** *direct object*      intransitive verb

A verb may be either **singular** or **plural**, depending on the number of its subject.

Singular verb:      The dog **barks** at the approaching mail carrier.

Plural verb:        The dogs **bark** at the approaching mail carrier.

The **tense** of a verb expresses the time of its action. There are three **simple verb tenses: present, past, and future.**

Simple present:    I **exercise** every day.

Simple past:        I **exercised** with Leigh yesterday.

Simple future:     I **will exercise** with Joaquin tomorrow.

More complex time relations are indicated by the **perfect tenses.**

Present perfect:    I **have exercised** for several years.

Past perfect:        I **had exercised** sporadically before joining a gym.

Future perfect:    By the end of this month, I **will have exercised** more than any of my team members.

**Progressive forms** are used to indicate continuing actions.

Present progressive:	I <b>am exercising</b> now.
Past progressive:	I <b>was exercising</b> when Julia arrived.
Future progressive:	I <b>will be exercising</b> later this evening.
Present perfect progressive:	I <b>have been exercising</b> all morning.
Past perfect progressive:	I <b>had been exercising</b> , but I stopped to take a shower.
Future perfect progressive:	When the timer rings, I <b>will have been exercising</b> for two hours.

The *-ing* form of the verb is called the **present participle**; the **past participle** is the form of the verb usually ending in *-d*, *-ed*, *-n*, *-en*, or *-t*.

Helene was **studying** for the test that everyone else had written last week.

**present participle**

past participle

For **regular verbs**, the past tense is formed by adding *-ed* or *-d* to the verb, and the past-tense and past-participle forms are the same. This is not true of **irregular verbs**.

Regular Verbs			Irregular Verbs		
Present Tense	Past Tense	Past Participle	Present Tense	Past Tense	Past Participle
walk	walked	walked	ride	rode	ridden
plan	planned	planned	break	broke	broken
toss	tossed	tossed	draw	drew	drawn
wrap	wrapped	wrapped	eat	ate	eaten

## Adjective

An **adjective** is a word that describes a noun or pronoun. Adjectives give information such as *Which one? What kind? How much? How many?*

*A*, *an*, and *the* are adjectives called **articles**. *The* is a **definite article** because it indicates a particular person, place, or thing.

**The** goalie caught **the** soccer ball in mid-leap.

*A* and *an* are **indefinite articles** because they do not refer to particular people, places, or things.

**A** goalie caught **a** soccer ball in mid-leap.

**Proper adjectives** are formed from proper nouns and are capitalized.

The **Spanish** class was postponed.

**Predicate adjectives** follow linking verbs and give information about the subject of the sentence.

This spaghetti sauce tastes **delicious**.

**Compound adjectives** are formed by joining words used to describe a noun.

Rejeane bought an **eighteen-speed** bicycle.

Most adjectives and adverbs have three forms, or **degrees: positive, comparative, and superlative.**

<b>Positive</b>	<b>Comparative</b>	<b>Superlative</b>
slow	slower	slowest
big	bigger	biggest
good	better	best

## Adverb

An **adverb** is a word that describes a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. When describing verbs, adverbs tell *how, when, or where.*

Describes a verb:	Gillian skated <b>effortlessly</b> across the ice.
Describes an adjective:	The judges were <b>quite</b> impressed by her performance.
Describes an adverb:	The audience clapped <b>very</b> loudly when her performance ended.

The **degree** of an adjective or adverb refers to the number of items being described. An adjective or adverb in the **positive degree** describes items, but does not make a comparison.

All six competitors ran **fast**.

In the **comparative degree**, an adjective or adverb compares two items.

Erica ran **faster** than Justine.

In the **superlative degree**, an adjective or adverb compares three or more items.

Of the six competitors, Frances ran **fastest**.

Adjectives and adverbs that are three or more syllables long use *more* and *most* to form the comparative and superlative forms.

Positive:	The leaves fell <b>rapidly</b> .
Comparative:	The maple tree lost its leaves <b>more rapidly</b> than the oak tree.
Superlative:	The mountain ash lost its leaves <b>most rapidly</b> .

## Pronoun

A **pronoun** is a word that takes the place of a noun. (Refer to the chart on page 15 for a list of examples.) The noun that the pronoun takes the place of is called the **antecedent** of the pronoun.

**Personal pronouns** refer to specific people or things.

Sandi asked Mike to take notes for **her**.

*antecedent*

**personal pronoun**

**Indefinite pronouns** refer to nonspecific people or things.

**Somebody** left Michelle a message.

**Reflexive** and **intensive pronouns** can only be used when they refer to another word in the sentence. **Reflexive pronouns** name a receiver of an action that is identical to the doer of the action.

After seeing his test score, Joey told **himself** he would study harder next time.

**Intensive pronouns** emphasize a noun or pronoun.

The mayor **herself** apologized for the garbage on the streets.

**Relative pronouns** introduce subordinate clauses that function as adjectives, referring back to the noun or pronoun that the clause describes.

The man **whose** wallet was stolen waited to see the detective.

**Demonstrative pronouns** identify or point to nouns. Besides taking the place of nouns, they may act as adjectives.

Demonstrative pronoun: **That** is my favourite video.

Adjective: **That** video is my favourite.

**Interrogative pronouns** are used in asking questions.

**Which** is the correct answer?

Personal pronouns change form, or **case**, depending on their use in a sentence. When a pronoun is used as a *subject*, choose the **subjective case**.

Subjective case: **She** waited until 4:00. (subject of *waited*)

When a pronoun is used as an *object*, choose the **objective case**.

Objective case: Terry gave **her** the textbook. (indirect object of *gave*)

Choose the **possessive case** when indicating *ownership*.

Possessive case: The decision was **hers** to make.

	Subjective	Objective	Possessive
<b>First-person singular</b>	I	me	my, mine
<b>Second-person singular</b>	you	you	your, yours
<b>Third-person singular</b>	he, she, it	her, him, it	her, hers, his, its
<b>First-person plural</b>	we	us	our, ours
<b>Second-person plural</b>	you	you	your, yours
<b>Third-person plural</b>	they	them	their, theirs

## Preposition

A **preposition** is a word that shows the relationship between two words in a sentence. Usually, the word or phrase following a preposition (known as the **object of the preposition**) is a noun (phrase) or pronoun.

The volume **of** the music was unacceptable.

**preposition** object of the preposition

However, a preposition can also be followed by a verb (to form the infinitive), by an adjective, or by an adverb.

Tracy wanted **to** see the new James Bond film. (verb)

Karen's travel experiences went **from** bad **to** worse. (adjective)

Jorge recalled an experience **from** earlier in the year. (adverb)

**Prepositional phrases** almost always function as adjectives or adverbs. When a prepositional phrase functions as an adjective, it immediately follows the noun or pronoun it describes.

The girl **on the bicycle** looked familiar. (modifies the noun *girl*)

When a prepositional phrase functions as an adverb, it may or may not appear next to the verb it describes.

The girl rode several miles **on the bicycle**. (modifies the verb *rode*)

## Conjunction

A **conjunction** is a word that joins two or more words, phrases, or main clauses. There are three kinds of conjunctions. **Coordinating conjunctions** join two or more words, phrases, or complete sentences.

You might want to talk to Silas **or** Ray about the tournament. (joins words)

Relaxing on the beach **and** reading a book are two of my favourite activities. (joins phrases)

The engine sputtered and backfired, **but** the car still would not start. (joins main clauses)

The coordinating conjunctions are *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so*. (A mnemonic device to help remember these is FANBOYS.)

**Correlative conjunctions** are pairs of conjunctions that join grammatically equal elements in a sentence.

**Neither** Fredda **nor** her parents enjoyed the performance.

**Both** the basketball team **and** the soccer team won district championships.

**Subordinating conjunctions** only join clauses, one of which functions as a noun, adjective, or adverb and cannot stand alone. Subordinating conjunctions can appear either at the beginning or in the middle of a sentence.

**Before** the train left, we bought souvenirs at the gift shop.

The storm arrived **before** we were prepared for it.

Some common subordinating conjunctions are *as, although, because, since, unless, until, whenever, and while*.

### Interjection

An **interjection** is a word that indicates strong feeling or sudden emotion.

**Hey!** The game has already started!

**Rubbish!** There is no such thing as a ghost.

**Ouch!** That hurts!

### Verbal

A **verbal** is a verb form that functions as a part of speech other than a verb. The three main types of verbals are **participles, gerunds, and infinitives**.

A **participle** is a verb form that can act as a verb only when it is accompanied by a helping verb (e.g., a form of *be* or *have*). A participle on its own can also function as an adjective. (Refer to page 296 of this handbook for more information about participles.)

Participle acting as a verb: The class **was attending** the science fair.

*helping verb* **participle**

Participle acting as an adjective: **Attending** the science fair, the class learned about new forms of computer software now available.

A **gerund** is an *-ing* verb form that functions as a noun.

**Walking** is one of the most effective cardiovascular exercises. (subject of the verb *is*)

Elise stopped **walking** and waited for Dennis to catch up. (direct object of the verb *stopped*)

The **infinitive** is the basic form of the verb used with *to*. Infinitives can function as adjectives, adverbs, or nouns.

**To ensure** our safety, Etienne suggested that we all wear reflective clothing. (adjective describing *Etienne*)

Grady called **to see** if Marianne wanted to join us. (adverb modifying *called*)

Everyone wanted **to hike** until nightfall. (direct object of *wanted*)

## GRAMMAR | Parts of a Sentence

### Subject

The **subject** is the noun phrase that tells who or what the sentence is about. The **simple subject** is the main noun (or pronoun) by itself; the **complete subject** includes all the words that describe or modify that noun or pronoun.

The bright red **sunset** indicated fine weather for the following day.

complete subject     **simple subject**

A sentence may have a **compound subject** that contains two or more simple subjects joined with a coordinating conjunction.

**Hard work and patience** are requirements for success.

compound subject

### Predicate

The **predicate** is the verb phrase that either tells the action the subject is performing or explains the condition or effect of the subject. The **simple predicate** is the main verb by itself; the **complete predicate** includes any words or phrases that modify the verb.

Four large dogs **raced across the golf course**.

**simple predicate**     complete predicate

A **compound predicate** includes two or more predicates joined with a coordinating conjunction.

The dogs **barked annoyingly at several golfers and dug holes in the fairways**.

compound predicate

### Direct and Indirect Object

A **direct object** is a noun phrase that completes the meaning of a transitive verb. The direct object answers *whom* or *what* about the verb. A transitive verb may also take an **indirect object**, which answers *to whom*, *for whom*, *to what*, or *for what* about the verb.

Kelly gave *Eileen* **a book about calligraphy**.

*indirect object*      **direct object**

### Subject Complement

A **subject complement** is a noun or adjective that is used after a linking verb. It describes or renames the subject.

Subject	Linking Verb	Subject Complement
The horses	appeared	restless.
The leader of the herd	was	a palomino.

### Phrase

A **phrase** is a group of words that lacks either a verb, a subject, or both, and functions as a single unit in a sentence. There are many different types of phrases, each identified by the function it performs.

**A herd of gazelles** grazed peacefully on the African plain. (noun phrase)

The conflict **has ended** without incident. (verb phrase)

**Three large, mysterious** shapes loomed over them. (adjective phrase modifying *shapes*)

Julian opened the package **very carefully**. (adverb phrase modifying *opened*)

Hundreds **of people** waited impatiently as the delay continued. (prepositional phrase)

**Splashing about the pool**, the twins attracted considerable attention. (participial phrase)

Several seniors began **walking regularly in the mall**. (gerund phrase)

Gerry waited **to see his final score**. (infinitive phrase)

An **appositive phrase** is a noun phrase that renames a nearby noun.

Margaret Atwood, **the author of *The Blind Assassin***, is one of Canada's finest writers.

### Clause

A **clause** is a group of words that contains both a verb and its subject.

Phrase:      our vacation (lacks a verb)

Phrase:      ended abruptly (lacks a subject)

Clause:      our vacation *ended* abruptly

subject    *verb*

A **main** (or independent) **clause** makes a complete thought and can stand alone as a sentence. A **subordinate** (or dependent) **clause** cannot stand alone as a sentence.

The audience applauded loudly **until the actress left the stage.**

main clause

**subordinate clause**

### Restrictive and Nonrestrictive Elements

A phrase or clause is **restrictive** if it is essential to the meaning of a sentence. A **nonrestrictive** phrase or clause is not essential to the meaning of a sentence.

*Always* separate nonrestrictive phrases or clauses from the rest of a sentence using commas, dashes, or parentheses. *Never* use punctuation to separate restrictive phrases or clauses from the rest of a sentence.

- Restrictive phrase: Margaret Atwood’s novel ***The Handmaid’s Tale*** has been adapted as a film.
- Nonrestrictive phrase: Julie’s father, **David Proule**, is an English teacher.
- Restrictive clause: Barbara wore the dress **that her husband gave her on their fifth anniversary.**
- Nonrestrictive clause: Philip Thomas—**who won this year’s essay contest**—is in Grade 11 at Twelve Cedars High School.

## GRAMMAR

### Sentence Types

Sentences can be classified according to their structure and their function.

#### Sentence Structure

There are four types of sentence structures: **simple**, **compound**, **complex**, and **compound–complex**.

A **simple sentence** contains only one main clause (one subject and one predicate).

Lightning pierced the darkness.

A **compound sentence** contains two or more main clauses.

**Lightning pierced the darkness**, and **Alicia yelled in surprise.**

**main clause**

**main clause**

A **complex sentence** contains one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses.

As lightning pierced the darkness, **rain began pounding on the metal roof.**

subordinate clause

**main clause**

A **compound–complex sentence** contains at least two main clauses and at least one subordinate clause.

Because the rain showed no sign of letting up,

subordinate clause

**Alicia began looking for pans to catch the water dripping through the roof,**

main clause

and **she found a bucket and two plastic containers under the sink.**

main clause

### Sentence Function

Sentences can be classified according to their purpose. Writers use **declarative sentences** to make statements, **imperative sentences** to issue requests or commands, **interrogative sentences** to ask questions, and **exclamatory sentences** to make exclamations.

Declarative sentence:     Seat belts save lives.

Imperative sentence:     Wear seat belts at all times.

Interrogative sentence:   Will you risk your life by not buckling up?

Exclamatory sentence:    Driving without a seat belt on today's highways is madness!

### Active and Passive Voice

The **voice** of a verb tells about the role of the subject in a sentence. In the **active voice**, the subject *performs* the action, so the emphasis is on the doer. In the **passive voice**, the subject *receives* the action, so the emphasis is on the receiver of the action.

Active voice:            Sally Williams **wrote** the memo.

Passive voice:          The memo **was written** by Sally Williams.

Active voice:            The thieves **stole** the computers.

Passive voice:          The computers **were stolen** by the thieves.

When deciding what voice to use in your writing, consider what—or who—is important in the sentence.

Use the active voice

- when the “doer” is more important than the receiver
- when the focus is on who did something
- to give the sense that something is happening
- to make the writing clear, direct, and brief

Use the passive voice

- when the “doer” is less important than the receiver
- when the “doer” is not important or is not known
- to avoid identifying the “doer”
- to focus on what happened or was observed

## GRAMMAR

### Common Word-Use Problems

#### Pronoun Case

##### Subject Complements

Personal pronouns used as subjects or subject complements must appear in the **subjective case**, while those functioning as objects must appear in the **objective case**. (Refer to pages 298–299 of this handbook for more information about pronoun case.) Problems often arise when a personal pronoun follows the linking verb *to be*. In formal writing, a pronoun used as a subject complement must appear in the subjective case.

- Wrong:       The person you are looking for is **her**. (objective case)  
 Correct:      The person you are looking for is **she**. (subjective case)
- Wrong:        “It is **me**,” came the voice at the door. (objective case)  
 Correct:        “It is **I**,” came the voice at the door. (subjective case)

If you find this formal usage stilted, try rewriting the sentence:

- She** is the person you are looking for.  
 “It is **Alex**,” came the voice at the door.

##### Compound Structures

Problems often arise when personal pronouns are used in compound structures.

- Wrong:        Suzanne and **him** attended the art auction. (subjective form needed because the pronoun is the subject of the verb *attended*)
- Wrong:        Caitlin asked Avery and **I** to attend it with her. (objective form needed because the pronoun is the object of the verb *asked*)

One way to avoid these errors is to imagine only the pronoun in the compound structure.

- Correct:        Suzanne and **he** attended the art auction.  
 Correct:        Caitlin asked Avery and **me** to attend it with her.

**We Versus Us**

Problems can arise when *we* or *us* precedes a noun.

Wrong: **Us** students raised all the money needed for the class trip.

Wrong: Two local businesses donated money to **we** students.

When choosing between *we* or *us*, omit the noun and choose the pronoun that is appropriate.

Correct: **We** students raised all the money needed for the class trip.

Correct: Two local businesses donated money to **us** students.

**Who Versus Whom**

Problems often arise when writers must choose between *who* and *whom*.

Wrong: **Who** are you waiting for?

Wrong: **Whom** is the best candidate for the job?

Wrong: This is the boy **who** I met at the party.

Wrong: Gayle is the person **whom** sold me this jacket.

When choosing between *who* or *whom* at the beginning of a question, answer the question using *she/he* or *her/him*. If you use the subjective pronoun *she/he* in your answer, choose the subjective pronoun *who*. If you use the objective pronoun *her/him* in your answer, choose the objective pronoun *whom*.

**Who/Whom** are you waiting for?

Answer: I am waiting for **him**.  
(Choose **whom**.)

**Who/Whom** is the best candidate for the job?

Answer: **She** is the best candidate.  
(Choose **who**.)

When *who* or *whom* appears in the middle of a sentence, look at the verb following the pronoun to determine whether or not it requires a subject. If so, choose the subjective pronoun *who*; if not, choose the objective pronoun *whom*.

This is the boy **who/whom** I met at the party. (In the part of the sentence following the pronoun, the verb *met* already has a subject—I—so choose the objective pronoun **whom**.)

Gayle is the person **who/whom** sold me this jacket. (In the part of the sentence following the pronoun, the verb *sold* has no subject, so choose the subjective pronoun **who**.)

When *who* or *whom* is followed by an expression like *I think* or *they know*, ignore this expression when deciding which pronoun to use.

The person **who/whom** I think is best for the job is Noelle. (Ignore *I think* and you will see that the verb *is* has no subject, so choose the subjective pronoun **who**.)

## Pronoun Gender

Personal pronouns like *he, his, she, her, it,* and *its* must agree in gender with their antecedents. Indefinite pronouns like *anybody, anything, each, either, everybody, everyone, nobody, no one, somebody, something,* etc., are singular, and writers must choose singular personal pronouns to replace them.

Wrong: Everyone is looking forward to **their** vacation. (The possessive pronoun *their* is plural, but its antecedent—*everyone*—is singular.)

There are three ways to correct this problem:

1. Replace the plural pronoun with *she or he* (or *her or his*).

Correct: Everyone is looking forward to **her or his** vacation.

Because this is wordy, writers often choose one of the revisions that follow.

2. Make the antecedent plural.

Correct: **All the students** are looking forward to **their** vacation.

3. Rewrite the sentence to avoid the agreement problem.

Correct: Everyone is looking forward to **this** vacation.

## Pronoun Reference

A pronoun should refer clearly to the antecedent it is replacing. When a pronoun refers to two possible antecedents, the pronoun's reference is **ambiguous**. It is usually best to rewrite the sentence to correct the problem.

Ambiguous: Jerry told Luke that **he** had left their locker door open. (It is not clear whether *he* refers to *Jerry* or *Luke*.)

Correct: Jerry told Luke, "I left our locker door open."

When a pronoun refers to an antecedent that is suggested but not actually present in the sentence, the pronoun's reference is **implied**. Although a modifier may strongly imply the noun to which the pronoun refers, be sure to include the actual noun in the sentence.

Implied: After biking all afternoon, Colleen returned **it** to the garage.

Correct: After biking all afternoon, Colleen returned **the bike** to the garage.

## Comparative Versus Superlative

Use the comparative degree when comparing two items. Use the superlative degree when comparing more than two items. (Refer to page 297 of this handbook for more information about comparative and superlatives degrees.)

Wrong: This is the **best** of the two soap detergents.

Correct: This is the **better** of the two soap detergents. (The comparison involves only two items.)

- Wrong: After reading all five politically correct fairy tales, I found the first to be the **more** amusing.
- Correct: After reading all five politically correct fairy tales, I found the first to be the **most** amusing. (The comparison involves more than two items.)

### Adjective Versus Adverb

Use adverbs—not adjectives—to modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs.

- Wrong: After the tune-up, the engine ran very **quiet**.
- Correct: After the tune-up, the engine ran very **quietly**.
- Wrong: Janelle performed **good** in the part of Ophelia.
- Correct: Janelle performed **well** in the part of Ophelia.
- Wrong: Danny plays the guitar **real** well.
- Correct: Danny plays the guitar **really** well.

Use adjectives—not adverbs—as subject complements.

- Wrong: Jasmine looked **well** in her prom dress.
- Correct: Jasmine looked **good** in her prom dress.
- Wrong: All her classmates felt **badly** about Felicity's accident.
- Correct: All her classmates felt **bad** about Felicity's accident.

## GRAMMAR

### Common Sentence Problems

#### Subject–Verb Agreement

A verb must agree in number with its subject. A singular subject requires a singular verb, and a plural subject requires a plural verb.

When two nouns joined by *and* form a **compound subject**, the verb is usually plural.

Heather and Jennifer **take** karate lessons on Tuesday nights.

compound subject    **plural verb**

When compound subjects are connected by *or* or *nor*, make the verb agree with the part of the subject nearer to the verb.

Two knights or a bishop **is** all you need to win this game of chess.

**singular verb**

A bishop or two knights **are** all you need to win this game of chess.

**plural verb**

**Indefinite pronouns** often result in subject–verb disagreement, so writers need to remember which indefinite pronouns are plural and which are singular.

Indefinite pronouns that are singular	Indefinite pronouns that are plural	Indefinite pronouns that may be singular or plural
another, anybody, anyone, anything, each, either, every, everybody, everyone, everything, little, much, neither, no one, nobody, nothing, one, somebody, someone, something	both, few, many, others, several	all, any, more, most, none, some

Neither of the boys **was** in the classroom.

singular subject      **singular verb**

Few of the teachers **were** surprised by the announcement.

plural subject      **plural verb**

All of the cake **was** spoiled.

singular subject      **singular verb**

All the hockey players **were** sick with the flu.

plural subject      **plural verb**

**Collective nouns** are usually considered singular and, therefore, require a singular verb. (Refer to page 294 of this handbook for a discussion of collective nouns.)

A crowd **was** lined up in front of the cinema.

singular subject **singular verb**

However, when the sentence emphasizes the actions of individuals, the collective noun is considered to be plural.

The crowd **were expressing** their opinions about the film.

plural subject      **plural verb**

Phrases that come between a subject and a verb are not the true subject.

None of the three candidates **is enjoying** the public debate.

singular subject      *phrase*      **singular verb**

The verb must agree with its subject even when the subject *follows* the verb.

There **is** only one letter for you.

**singular verb**      singular subject

There **are** three people waiting for you.

**plural verb**      plural subject

Although they look plural, words such as *athletics*, *economics*, *mathematics*, *measles*, *mumps*, and *physics* are usually singular.

The news **is** not good.

singular subject    **singular verb**

### Pronoun–Antecedent Agreement

A pronoun must agree in case and number with its subject. (Refer to pages 298–299 of this handbook for a discussion of pronoun case.)

**Singular antecedents** require singular pronouns.

The principal arranged to hold the meeting in **her** office. (The singular pronoun *her* replaces the singular antecedent *principal*.)

**Plural antecedents** require plural pronouns.

The teachers shared **their** ideas with the administrator. (The plural pronoun *their* replaces the plural antecedent *teachers*.)

Indefinite pronouns, such as *anybody*, *anyone*, *each*, *either*, *neither*, *no one*, and *someone*, are singular and must be replaced by singular pronouns. (Refer to page 309 in this handbook for a more detailed list of singular indefinite pronouns.)

Everyone wrote a report on **her or his** favourite novel.

singular antecedent                      **singular pronoun**

**Compound antecedents** joined by *and* are plural.

Keith and Ryan built a rocket as part of **their** science project.

plural antecedent                                      **plural pronoun**

When compound antecedents are joined by *or* or *nor*, the pronoun must agree in number with the nearer antecedent.

Either Graham or his two brothers will share **their** lunch with Tim.  
(plural *their* agrees with plural *brothers*)

Either the two brothers or Graham will share **his** lunch with Tim.  
(singular *his* agrees with singular *Graham*)

There is one exception to the above rule. If one antecedent is female and the other is male, rewrite the sentence.

Wrong:     Either Susan or Juan will bring **his** stereo to the party.  
(The pronoun *his* refers to Juan, the male antecedent; it does not represent Susan, the female antecedent.)

Correct:    Either Susan or Juan will make sure there is a stereo at the party.



### Comma Splice

A **comma splice** is a type of run-on sentence in which two sentences (main clauses) are separated by a comma. A comma cannot join two main clauses.

Wrong: An owl hooted in the distance, the sound sent shivers up my spine.

To correct a comma splice, follow one of the three suggestions given on the previous page for correcting run-on sentences.

### Sentence Fragment

A **sentence fragment** is a group of words that is punctuated as a sentence but expresses an incomplete thought. Sentence fragments may lack a subject, a verb, or both.

Drove all night long. (lacks a subject)

The winner of the competition. (lacks a verb)

Running and jumping in the grass. (lacks both a verb and a subject)

Sentences that begin with a coordinating conjunction (e.g., *and*, *but*, or *or*) may contain both a subject and a verb, but they are technically fragments because the conjunction does not link one idea to another, thus making the thought incomplete.

Fragment: But Jan was very tired.

Correct: We intended to stay later, but Jan was very tired.

Sentences that begin with a subordinating conjunction (e.g., *before*, *until*, *because*) are fragments if the subordinate clause is not followed by a main clause.

Fragment: Because the car ran out of gas.

Correct: Because the car ran out of gas, we were late for the movie.

Although sentence fragments are grammatically incorrect, writers often use them intentionally to achieve a particular effect. Fragments can convey a sense of realism (especially in dialogue) or emphasize a particular detail or impression.

Rowan had never feared the dark. **Until now.**

Sentence fragments can be used to generate excitement by quickening the pace of a piece of writing. However, several of them can have the opposite effect, slowing down the pace by emphasizing the repetitive quality of an experience.

While intentional sentence fragments can be very effective, *unintentional* fragments can make the writer appear careless and can lessen the overall impact of a piece.

### Double Negative

A **double negative** occurs when two negative modifiers are used in the same construction.

Henry didn't see nothing. (If he did not see nothing, he must have seen something.)



3. Invert sentences to avoid having too many that follow the common subject–verb–object pattern.

Common: The discovery of penicillin was one of the most important scientific advances of the 20th century.

Inverted: One of the most important scientific advances of the 20th century was the discovery of penicillin.

### Parallelism

Words, phrases, clauses, or sentences with similar grammatical structures or functions are said to be **parallel**. Errors in parallelism occur when elements in a series are not expressed in the same grammatical form (e.g., single words are not balanced with single words, phrases are not balanced with phrases, verbs are not balanced with verbs, and so on).

Not parallel: During our hike, we heard the chirping of birds, the chattering of chipmunks, and the sound of leaves rustling.

Correct: During our hike, we heard the chirping of birds, the chattering of chipmunks, and the rustling of leaves.

Not parallel: Suffering from a migraine, Cynthia turned off the phone's ringer, darkened the room, hung a do-not-disturb sign on the door, and she tried to sleep.

Correct: Suffering from a migraine, Cynthia turned off the phone's ringer, darkened the room, hung a do-not-disturb sign on the door, and tried to sleep.

### Redundancy

**Redundancy** occurs when the writer says the same thing twice. Effective writers use as few words as possible to convey their meaning.

Redundant: Greg **quietly whispered** the location of the hidden bracelet.

Correct: Greg whispered the location of the hidden bracelet.

Redundant: Celine **very quickly hurried** through the supermarket's bakery section.

Correct: Celine hurried through the supermarket's bakery section.

Redundant: Everyone in the group **cooperated together** to complete the task.

Correct: Everyone in the group cooperated to complete the task.

### Point of View

**Point of view** is the perspective from which a piece is written. There are three grammatical points of view: **first person** (*I* or *we*), **second person** (*you*), and **third person** (*he/she/it/one* or *they*). A reader can easily become confused when a passage switches from one point of view to another.

**My friends and I** took a first-aid course last spring. During the course, you learned

**first person**

second person

how to dress wounds, apply splints, and give CPR.

Although some writers may intentionally switch points of view to create a particular effect, it is best to choose the most appropriate point of view and to maintain it throughout the piece of writing.

**My friends and I** took a first-aid course last spring. During the course, **we** learned how to dress wounds, apply splints, and give CPR.

## MECHANICS

### Capitalization

#### Proper Nouns and Adjectives

Capitalize proper nouns and proper adjectives.

Proper Noun	Proper Adjective
Canada	Canadian
Shakespeare	Shakespearean

#### Names and Titles of People

Capitalize people's names and initials that stand for names.

Sarah McLachlan      Michael G. Tibbits

Capitalize titles and abbreviations of titles when used before people's names or in direct address.

Professor Jane Sampson      Ms. Tina Turner      Dr. S. Segal

Capitalize titles of high importance, even when they are used without names.

the Prime Minister of Canada      the Pope  
the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court

#### Family Relationships

Capitalize words indicating family relationships when the words are used as names or parts of names. If the noun is preceded by a possessive word or by *a*, *an*, or *the*, it is not capitalized.

When is Dad going to be home, Mom?      My aunt gave me a hug after the game.

#### The Pronoun *I*

Always capitalize the pronoun *I*.

My brother and I will be attending the party.

#### The Supreme Being and Sacred Writings

Capitalize all words referring to God and religious scriptures.

God      Allah      the Koran      the Bible      the Torah

### Geographical Names

In a geographical name, capitalize the first letter of all words except articles and prepositions.

Continents:	North America	Asia	Africa
Bodies of water:	Lake Erie	Atlantic Ocean	the Gulf of Mexico
Landforms:	Rocky Mountains	Arctic Tundra	Sahara Desert
World regions:	the Yukon	Middle East	Central America
Public areas:	the Plains of Abraham	Fundy National Park	Red Square
Political units:	Province of Manitoba	France	Republic of China
Roads/highways:	Highway 401	Fourth Avenue	Erb Street

### Directions and Sections

Capitalize names of sections of a country and any adjectives that modify those names.

- The Prairie Provinces are Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta.
- The population on the West Coast has increased over the past 10 years.
- The East Coast town was hit by a terrible storm.

Do not capitalize compass directions or adjectives that merely indicate direction or a general location.

- The wind is blowing from the east.
- Take this highway north for 10 km.

### Organizations and Institutions

Capitalize the names of organizations and institutions, including political parties, governmental bodies or agencies, schools, colleges, universities, churches, hospitals, clubs, businesses, and abbreviations of these names.

Liberal Party	United Nations	Forest Heights Collegiate
St. Joseph's Church	Louise Marshall Hospital	Rotary Club
Chapters	YWCA	UN

### Events, Documents, and Periods of Time

Capitalize the names of historical events, documents, and periods of time.

- World War II
- Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- the Middle Ages

### Months, Days, and Holidays

Capitalize the names of months, days, and holidays but not the names of seasons.

- June
- Saturday
- Labour Day
- fall

### Races, Languages, Nationalities, and Religions

Capitalize the names of races, languages, nationalities, and religions.

- Asian
- French
- Portuguese
- Hinduism

### School Subjects and Class Names

Do not capitalize the general names of school subjects. School subjects that are languages are always capitalized. Do capitalize the titles of specific courses and of courses that are followed by a number.

geography    English    World History    Mathematics 100

Capitalize class names only when they refer to a specific group or event, or when they are used in direct address.

Only seniors will be allowed to attend the Senior Prom.

### Structures

Capitalize the names of specific monuments, bridges, and buildings.

Peace Tower    Burlington Skyway    CN Tower

### Ships, Trains, Airplanes, and Automobiles

Capitalize the names of ships, trains, airplanes, and automobiles.

*Titanic*    *Orient Express*    Concorde    Corvette

### Bodies of the Universe

Capitalize the names of the planets in the solar system and other objects in the universe, except words like *sun* and *moon*.

Saturn    the Milky Way    Halley's Comet

Note: Capitalize the word *earth* only when it is used in conjunction with the names of other planets. The word *earth* is not capitalized when the article *the* precedes it.

### Abbreviations

Capitalize the following time abbreviations: B.C., A.D., A.M., and P.M. (or a.m. and p.m.). Capitalize certain other abbreviations: Ont., TV, NHL, Ph.D., SOS.

### First Words

Capitalize the first word of every sentence.

There are more students in Grade 11 this year.

In general, capitalize the first word of every line of poetry. (In some modern poetry, lines do not begin with a capital letter.)

Speak to me

I can't understand you with your back turned.

(from "Changes" by D. Ginette Clarke)

Capitalize the first word of a direct quotation.

Margaret Atwood, in her official version of the truth, declares: “My name was Betty. I had a perky personality and was a cheerleader for the college football team. My favourite colour was pink. Then I became a poet.”

Capitalize the first word in the greeting of a letter. Also capitalize the person’s name and title, and words such as *Sir* and *Madam*.

Dear Sir or Madam:          Dear Dr. Stemeroff:

Capitalize only the first word in the complimentary close.

Yours truly,                  Sincerely,

Capitalize the first word of each item in an outline and letters that introduce major subsections.

- I. Animals
  - A. Dogs
    - 1. German Shepherd
    - 2. Collies

Capitalize the first word, the last word, and all other important words in titles. Do not capitalize conjunctions, articles, or prepositions with fewer than four letters.

Book title:	<i>Fugitive Pieces</i>	Short story:	“Borders”
Newspaper:	<i>The Globe and Mail</i>	Song:	“O Canada”
Magazine:	<i>Canadian Living</i>	Television series:	<i>The Nature of Things</i>
Play:	<i>Lion in the Streets</i>	Work of art:	the <i>Mona Lisa</i>

Note: The word *the* at the beginning of a title and the word *magazine* are capitalized only when they are part of the formal name.

## MECHANICS | Punctuation

### Period

Use periods after declarative and imperative sentences.

I shall be there this afternoon.          Close the door.

Use a period after an indirect quotation.

He asked about the population of Canada.

Use periods after abbreviations.

T. S. Eliot          Jr.          Mr.          i.e.          Alta.          St.          A.M.

Note: A two-letter provincial abbreviation without periods is used only when it is followed by a postal code.

Kitchener, ON N2M 4R9

Use a period after a number or letter in an outline.

- I. Winter Sports
  - A. Skiing
    - 1. Downhill
    - 2. Cross-country

Note: No period is used if the numeral or letter is enclosed in parentheses.

In numerals use a period to indicate a decimal number.

\$4.93      3.865

Use periods following certain units of expression.

Good morning.      Good night.

### Question Mark

Use question marks at the end of interrogative sentences.

Are you going?      It will be a long trip, won't it?

Note: Do not use a question mark after an indirect quotation or after a courtesy question in a business communication.

He asked if I was feeling well.      Will you please see that I am kept informed.

### Exclamation Mark

Use an exclamation mark at the end of an emphatic word, phrase, clause, or sentence.

Wonderful!      What a surprise!      I can hardly believe it!      That looks great!

### Comma

Use a comma after every item in a series except the last. A series consists of three or more words, phrases, or clauses.

We found some nickels, dimes, and quarters in his pocket.

She darted up the stairs, along the hallway, and into her bedroom.

I laugh, I sing, and I dance.

Use commas after the adverbs *first*, *second*, *third*, and so on, when these adverbs introduce parallel items in a series.

There are three ways to create a successful Web site. First, offer something useful on every page; second, make it look good; and third, provide links to other sites.

Use a comma between two or more adjectives of equal rank that modify the same noun.

You should strive for clear, concise, courteous writing in your memo.

Note: To decide whether adjectives are of equal rank, try placing the word *and* between them. If the *and* sounds natural, and if you can reverse the order of the adjectives without changing the meaning, then the comma is needed.

Use a comma to separate an introductory word, phrase, or clause from the rest of the sentence.

Yes, we will be attending the birthday party after all.

During the winter, many retired people take holidays in warmer climates.

When you decide whether or not you are going, give me a call.

Use commas to set off words or groups of words that interrupt the flow of a sentence.

She was, however, able to qualify for the team.

The novel, to be quite honest with you, brought me to tears.

Use commas to set off nouns in direct address.

If you really understand the problem, Andrea, you should have no problem solving it.

Aaron, you have made the team.

Use commas to set off the speaker's tags used with direct quotations.

The coach said, "The bus will be leaving in five minutes."

"We shall be leaving," the coach said, "in five minutes."

Note: Do not use commas with indirect quotations.

The coach said that the bus would be leaving in five minutes.

Use a comma before the conjunction that joins the two main clauses in a compound sentence.

Naomi seemed to agree, and no one else objected.

In dates, use a comma between the day of the month and the year.

July 17, 1943      Monday, October 15, 2001

No commas are required when the following styles are used.

July 1943      15 October 2001

Use a comma between the name of a city or town and the name of a province, state, or country.

Regina, Saskatchewan      London, England

In writing an address as part of a sentence, use a comma after each item. (Note that you do not place a comma between the province and the postal code.)

Halifax, Nova Scotia B3K 2Z1

Use a comma after the salutation of a friendly letter and after the complimentary close of a friendly letter or a business letter.

Dear Shania,                      Yours sincerely,

Use a comma to prevent the danger of misreading or confusion if a comma is not used.

Who he is, is not known.                      Outside, it was freezing.

### Semicolon

A semicolon separates related sentence elements. It indicates a more definite break than a comma does, but a less abrupt break than a period does.

Use a semicolon to join independent clauses *without* a coordinating conjunction (e.g., *and, or, nor, for, but, so, yet*).

Robin has submitted her assignment; Dale has not yet done so.

Use a semicolon to join two main clauses when the second clause begins with a conjunctive adverb (e.g., *however, therefore, furthermore*).

Poetry existed; therefore, it could be written.

Use a semicolon to separate items in a series if one or more of these items contain commas.

My experiences as a textbook writer have taught me that writers must be self-disciplined, sensitive to the needs and wants of students and teachers, and knowledgeable of their subject area; that students need and want materials that are attractive, well organized, and educational; and that teachers need to know that a textbook will address the necessary knowledge and skills students need to learn.

### Colon

Use a colon to introduce a list of items. A word or phrase such as *these* or *the following* is often followed by a colon. A colon must be preceded by an independent clause and should not be used directly after a preposition or a verb.

Every Web page should contain the following items: title, navigational links, and the author and copyright information.

Use a colon to introduce a long or formal quotation.

As a variation of the theme, Buffie's usually passive protagonist, Addy, responds to her father's sense of injury with the following accusation:

"I can't let Mom go on her own. Even if you can!"

"But you're leaving me on my own," he said.

"No, I'm not! You're choosing to be alone. That's different. You could come and be with us. Please, Dad." A terrible pressure inside my head scared me, but I managed to say, "We've always been a family ... you can't ..."

"We still are a family, kiddo. Maybe ... maybe I'll come later."

He was lying. I could see it in his eyes. (80)

Use a colon between two independent clauses when the second clause explains the first. (Note that the first word following a colon is not capitalized unless it is a proper noun or the start of a quotation.)

A fancy graphics-based menu in which the user can click on different parts of the image to go to different pages may be used: this is known as an image map.

Use a colon after the greeting in a formal letter.

Dear Sir or Madam:      Dear Mr. Pietraszko:

Use a colon between numbers showing hours and minutes.

4:15 a.m.      12:00 noon

## Hyphen

Use a hyphen between syllables divided at the end of a line.

The hall can accom-  
modate 50 people.

Use a hyphen in compound numbers from twenty-one to ninety-nine. Use a hyphen in fractions.

thirty-five      eighty-eight      three-quarters      five-eighths

Use a hyphen in certain compound nouns.

father-in-law      self-respect

Use a hyphen between the words that make up a compound adjective when the modifier is used before the noun. Do not use a hyphen when the compound adjective follows the noun.

well-known person      hard-working people      The highway was well paved.

Do not use a hyphen between an adverb ending in *-ly* and an adjective preceding the noun.

My neatly cut hedge was much admired by my neighbour.

## Apostrophe

Use an apostrophe to form the possessive of singular and plural nouns. To form the possessive of a singular noun, add an apostrophe and *-s*, even if the noun ends in *-s*.

Jane's book                      John Davis's hat

To form the possessive of a plural noun that ends in *-s*, add an apostrophe only. To form the possessive of a plural noun that does not end in *-s*, add both an apostrophe and *-s*.

the boys' jackets              the women's dresses

To form the possessive of an indefinite pronoun, add an apostrophe and *-s*.

no one's pen                      everybody's responsibility

Use an apostrophe in a contraction to show where one or more letters have been left out. Avoid using contractions in formal writing.

can't = cannot                  he'll = he will or he shall                  Sam's = Sam is or Sam has

Use an apostrophe to show the omission of figures in a date.

the class of '01                  the storm of '95

Use an apostrophe to show the plurals of letters, numbers, signs, and words referred to as words.

There are two *f*'s in the word *different*.  
There are too many *then*'s in your sentences.

## Quotation Marks, Underlining, and Italicizing

Use quotation marks to begin and end a direct quotation. Do not use quotation marks for an indirect quotation.

Bruno said, "My feelings are hurt."                  Bruno said that his feelings were hurt.

To punctuate a direct quotation, enclose the exact words used by a speaker or writer in quotation marks. The first word of the quotation is capitalized. Commas are always placed inside the quotation marks. When the end of the quotation falls at the end of the sentence, the period is placed inside the quotation marks.

"The dam has busted!" screamed the worker.  
He whispered, "I didn't know you cared."

Put question marks and exclamation marks inside the quotation marks if they are part of the quotation.

"How far do we have to go?" asked Shuna.  
"Help!" cried the little boy. "I can't swim!"

Put question marks and exclamation marks outside the quotation marks if they are not part of the quotation.

Who said, "Practice makes perfect"?

How furious he was when she muttered, "I don't remember"!

Always put commas and periods inside the quotation marks.

The finance minister said, "This move will preserve Canada for the future."

"This move will preserve Canada for the future," said the finance minister.

Enclose the parts of a divided quotation in quotation marks. Do not capitalize the first word of the second part unless it begins a new sentence.

"I'd rather be at home," said the young girl, "than here at camp."

"I'd rather be at home," said the young girl. "However, I'm going to stick it out until the end of camp."

In punctuating dialogue, begin a new paragraph to indicate a new speaker.

"Morning, ma'am."

"Good morning."

"Where are you heading?"

"Salt Lake City."

(from "Borders" by Thomas King)

Note: In dialogue, if a single speaker utters more than one paragraph, begin each paragraph with opening quotation marks, but place closing quotation marks only at the end of the speech.

When quoting a passage longer than one paragraph, do not use quotation marks; instead, set it off by indenting 10 spaces from the left margin. Indent the first line of each paragraph an additional three spaces.

Here is how the narrator of "Borders" describes his and his mother's encounter with the media:

Early the next morning, the television vans began to arrive, and guys in suits and women in dresses came trotting over to us, dragging microphones and cameras and lights behind them. One of the vans had a table set up with orange juice and sandwiches and fruit. It was for the crew, but when I told them we hadn't eaten for a while, a really skinny blonde woman told us we could eat as much as we wanted.

They talked mostly to my mother. Every so often one of the reporters would come over and ask me questions about how it felt to be an Indian without a country. I told them we had a nice house on the reserve and that my cousins had a couple of horses we rode when we went fishing. Some of the television people went over to the American border, and then they went to the Canadian border.

Use quotation marks to enclose the titles of short stories, poems, essays, magazine and newspaper articles, chapters, television episodes, and songs.

Short story:	“Borders”
Poem:	“To a Sad Daughter”
Essay:	“Why Dogs Are the Cat’s Pyjamas”
Magazine or newspaper article:	“Eye Spy”
Chapter:	“The Whiteness of the Whale”
Television episode:	“The Giant Panda”
Song:	“Immortality”

The titles of books, newspapers, magazines, movies, television series, plays, works of art, and long musical compositions are underlined in writing and italicized in print.

Book:	<i>Technical Communication</i>
Newspaper:	<i>National Post</i>
Magazine:	<i>Maclean’s</i>
Movie:	<i>American Beauty</i>
Television series:	<i>The Nature of Things</i>
Play:	<i>The Hitchhiker</i>
Work of art:	Michelangelo’s <i>David</i>
Long musical composition:	Wagner’s <i>The Ring</i>

Use quotation marks or italics to set apart a word that is being discussed; to indicate that a word is slang; to point out that a word or phrase is being used in a special way.

The words *accept* and *except* are often confused.

That movie was really “cool.”

This new outfit should really “light up my life.”

## Parentheses

Use parentheses around words that are included in a sentence to add information or to help make an idea clearer.

It calls for building methane digesters that convert garbage into methane and compost. (Natural gas is about 95 percent methane.)

Dogs are capable of showing friendship and may do so (or may not).

Use parentheses to enclose letters or numbers labelling items in a series.

The secretary for our club is allowed to (1) sign cheques, (2) pay bills, and (3) make purchases.

## Brackets

Use brackets to enclose any words or phrases that you have inserted into an otherwise word-for-word quotation.

*Audubon* reports that “if there are not enough young to balance deaths, the end of the species [California condor] is inevitable.”

Use brackets to enclose stage directions in a script.

CELINE: I don’t like the looks of those clouds. [*turning to the window*] Do you think they’ll get home before the storm starts?

## Ellipsis

If you omit any part of a quotation, use an ellipsis (...) to indicate that something has been left out. If the part left out comes at the end of the sentence, some style guides suggest adding a period before the ellipsis.

In A. D. Melville’s translation ... we find that Daedalus is challenging the known limits of the universe. Rebelling against his imprisonment by King Minos, he declares, “Minos may own all else, but he does not own the air” (177). Daedalus wishes to break free of his world, and soar over the sea to return to Athens. He believes that he can escape the confines of his community.

## Dash

Use a dash to indicate a sudden break or change in a sentence.

Two teams—Vancouver and Toronto—made it to the Stanley Cup playoffs.  
The all-new T595 Daytona signals the dawn of a new era in Triumph’s history—technology, looks, and performance at the cutting edge of motorcycle design.

Use a dash to emphasize a word, a series of words, a phrase, or a clause.

Some high-tech companies—those that are on the cutting edge of technology—are seeing their stock prices rise quickly.  
I think that one of these career choices—advertising, photography, or media—will lead to future employment.

Use a dash to show that someone’s speech is being interrupted by another person.

Why, hello—yes, I understand—no, I don’t believe so—oh—of course.

# MECHANICS

## Abbreviations

Use standard abbreviations for titles immediately before and after proper names.

Ms. Robin Ashoona	Rev. William Lamont	St. Jude	Prof. Sylvia Chin
Dennis Hines, Jr.	Donald Lang, Ph.D.	André Surin, M.D.	Neil Coburn, C.A.

Note: Don't abbreviate a title if it is not used with a proper name.

My doctor is a cardiac specialist.

Abbreviate given names only if the person is most commonly known that way.

W. O. Mitchell is a well-known Canadian writer.

Use familiar abbreviations for the names of organizations, corporations, and countries.

RCMP   CFL   OHIP   CTV   YMCA   UN

Note: Use the full name with the abbreviation in parentheses the first time it is used in a passage.

The Canadian Football League (CFL) provides excellent entertainment. Players for the CFL are very skilled.

Use the abbreviations A.M., P.M., A.D., B.C. No., and \$ only with specific times, dates, numbers, and amounts, respectively.

2:00 A.M. (or a.m.)   50 B.C.   A.D. 39   No. 15 (or no. 15)   \$100

Use Latin abbreviations sparingly.

cf (compare)   e.g. (for example)   et al. (and others)   etc. (and so forth)  
i.e. (that is)   N.B. (note well)   P.S. (postscript)

Note: Do not use these abbreviations in formal writing.

Use abbreviations for the names of provinces in tables and notes (see second column below) and in bibliographies and mail addresses (see third column below).

<b>Province or Territory</b>	<b>Traditional</b>	<b>Postal</b>
Alberta	Alta.	AB
British Columbia	B.C.	BC
Manitoba	Man.	MB
New Brunswick	N.B.	NB
Newfoundland	Nfld.	NF
Northwest Territories	N.W.T.	NT
Nova Scotia	N.S.	NS
Nunavut	Nun.	NU
Ontario	Ont.	ON
Prince Edward Island	P.E.I.	PE
Quebec	Que.	QC
Saskatchewan	Sask.	SK
Yukon Territory	Y.T.	YT

In formal writing, abbreviations for the following are not commonly accepted: personal names, units of measurement, days of the week, holidays, months, courses of study, divisions of written works, provinces and countries (except in addresses), and company names (unless the abbreviation is part of the company name). Note, however, that even formal writing allows metric abbreviations (14 kg, 8 cm, etc.), but avoid combining such abbreviations with numbers spelled out, as in ten kg.

William (not Wm.)	pound (not lb.)	Tuesday (not Tues.)
Christmas (not Xmas)	March (not Mar.)	science (not sci.)
chapter (not ch.)	Ontario (not Ont. or ON)	Company (not Co.)

## MECHANICS | Writing Numbers

In prose, numbers from one to nine are usually written as words; all numbers 10 and over are usually written as numerals.

three      eight      60      506

You may use a combination of numerals and words for very large numbers.

6 million      7 trillion

Use words, not numerals, to begin a sentence.

Four hundred eighty-seven students attend our school.

Use only numerals to express money, decimals, percentages, chapters, pages, time, telephone numbers, dates, identification numbers, postal codes, addresses, and statistics.

\$6.25	47.2	5 percent	chapter 6
pages 36–39	9:00 a.m.	44 Warren Road	Highway 15
July 1, 1948	A.D. 123	a vote of 43 to 26	50 km/h

If you are comparing two or more numbers in a sentence, write all of them as numerals or as words.

The students ranged in age from eight to seventeen.

The students ranged in age from 8 to 17.

Numbers that come before a compound modifier that includes a numeral should be written as words.

We need ten 12-foot lengths to finish the floor of the deck.

# VOCABULARY AND SPELLING

## Vocabulary

You can determine the meaning of many new words by using the three word parts: roots, prefixes, and suffixes. Following are definitions and examples for each.

### Roots

As the name suggests, a **root** is a word from which other words grow, usually through the addition of prefixes or suffixes.

Root	Meaning	Examples
aud	hear, listen	audible, audience
auto	self	autobiography, automatic
bene	good, well	benefit, benevolent
bio	life	biography, biosphere
centri	centre	concentric, eccentric
chron	time	chronological, synchronize
cide	kill	homicide, pesticide
derm	skin	dermatology, taxidermy
duc	to lead or to make	induce, reproduce
form	shape, structure	conform, formula
geo	earth	geography, geology
graph	to write	autograph, pictograph
hydro, hydra	water	hydrophobia, dehydrate
magn	great	magnificent, magnify
man	hand	manual, manicure
micro	small	microfilm, microwave
mit, miss	send	submit, missile
path, pathy	feeling, suffering	pathos, empathy
photo	light	photography, photometer
port	to carry	porter, export
psych	soul	psychiatry, psychology
rupt	break	erupt, rupture
scrib, script	write	describe, scripture
sent, sens	feel	sentiment, sensation
tele	far away	telegraph, telescope
therm	heat	thermometer, thermostat
vac	empty	vacuum, evacuate
vid, vis	see	video, revise

### Prefixes

**Prefixes** are those “word parts” that come before the root word (*pre-* means “before”). Prefixes often change the intent of the root word. The following are some common prefixes of negation, opposition, quantity, time, and space.

**Prefixes of Negation or Opposition**

Prefix	Meaning	Examples
a, an	without, not	amoral, anaerobic
anti	against	antibody, anticlimax
contra	against	contradict, contravene
de	from, down	deprive, demote
dis	apart, away	disappear, dismiss
il, im, in, ir	not	illegal, impossible, indiscrete, irregular
mal	wrong	malpractice, malfunction
mis	wrong, bad	misuse, misprint
non	not	nontoxic, nonsense
un	not	unable, unfair

**Prefixes of Quantity**

Prefix	Meaning	Examples
bi	two, double, twice	bicycle, biweekly
milli	thousand	millimetre, milligram
mono	one, single	monoplane, monotone
omni	all	omniscient, omnipotent
semi	half	semicolon, semiconductor
tri	three	triangle, tripod
uni	one	unity, unique

**Prefixes of Time and Space**

Prefix	Meaning	Examples
ante	before	anteroom, antecedent
circum	around	circumference, circumspect
co, col, com, con, cor	with	copilot, collaborate, compose
e, ex	out of	contact, correspond
hyper	over, more than	emit, exit
hypo	under, less than	hypersensitive, hyperactive
inter	between	hypothesis, hypoglycemia
mega	enlarge, large	interfere, international
micro	tiny	megaphone, megabyte
neo	recent	microscopic, microbe
post	after	neoclassic, neophyte
pre	before	postscript, postpone
pro	forward, in favour of	preview, prevent
re	again, back	proceed, promote
sub	under, beneath	review, return
super, supr	over, above	submarine, submerge
syn, sym, sys,	with, together	supervise, supreme
trans	across, over	synchronize, sympathy, system
		transmit, transport

## Suffixes

**Suffixes** come at the end of words and root words, and they modify or extend the meaning of the word. Suffixes can alter the part of speech of the original word; e.g., *create* (verb), *creation* (noun), *creative* (adjective), *creatively* (adverb). The following are some common suffixes arranged according to the part of speech they signify.

### Noun Suffixes

Suffix	Meaning	Examples
acy	state or quality	privacy, democracy
al	act of	refusal, rebuttal
ance, ence	state or quality of	resistance, eminence
dom	place or state of being	kingdom, boredom
er, or	one who	painter, navigator
ism	doctrine or belief, condition	Communism, alcoholism
ist	one who	federalist, dentist
ity, ty	state, quality of	captivity, clarity
ment	act of, process	contentment, amendment
ness	state of	restlessness, consciousness
ship	position held	friendship, dictatorship
sion, tion	state of being or action	depression, transition

### Verb Suffixes

Suffix	Meaning	Examples
ate	cause to be	regulate, obliterate
en	cause to be or become	frozen, lighten
ify, fy	make or cause to be	amplify, simplify
ize	cause to become	publicize, idolize

### Adjective Suffixes

Suffix	Meaning	Examples
able, ible	capable of being	agreeable, edible
al	pertaining to	political, natural
ful	full of	frightful, careful
ic	pertaining to	poetic, heroic
ish	having the quality of	foolish, Irish
ive	having the nature of	creative, exhaustive
less	without	careless, senseless

### Adverb Suffixes

Suffix	Meaning	Examples
ly	in a certain manner	slowly, lightly

# VOCABULARY AND SPELLING

## Spelling

### Spelling Rules

The letter *q* is usually followed by the letter *u*.

quite      quality      quick      quack

Every syllable has a vowel or *y*.

left      im-por-tant      try      slow-ly

Use *i* before *e* except after *c*, or when it sounds like the letter *a*. (See also page 155.)

believe      receive      neighbourhood

When a *c* at the beginning of a word is followed by *e*, *i*, or *y*, it is soft (like the *s* sound); otherwise, it is hard (like the *k* sound).

cent      circle      cyber      cart      cottage

For words ending in a consonant plus *y*, change the *y* to *i* before adding a suffix other than *-ing*.

bakeries      monies      crying      prying

Drop the silent *e* from a root word before adding *-ing*.

creating      reducing      casing

For one-syllable words with a short vowel, double the final consonant before adding an ending.

fitting      clapping      bidding

### Spelling Strategies

#### Sound Strategies

Imagine the sound of the word or actually say it out loud. This strategy works well for words that are spelled exactly the way they sound.

humanitarian      reminder

Use correct pronunciation. You may spell some words incorrectly because you do not pronounce them correctly.

extraordinary      February      probably

Exaggerate hidden sounds. Some sounds are difficult to hear when you say the word normally. Exaggerating these sounds can help you spell the word correctly.

intEResting      exHAusted

Say longer words one syllable at a time.

mil-len-ni-um      me-te-or-o-log-i-cal      hy-per-bol-i-cal-ly

Think of another word with the same pattern.

stealth—wealth      weight—eight

### Visual Strategies

Highlight difficult letters.

fraGility      existEnce      soCiable

Draw the shape or configuration of the word.

g<sup>o</sup>reed      heirloom

Look closely at the spelling of a word, and then close your eyes. Visualize the word. Do this a few times; then write the word on a piece of paper and check the spelling.

Trust your instincts: if a spelling does not “look” right, it probably isn’t. Try writing the word several ways, or check it in a dictionary.

### Meaning Strategies

Break words into root words, prefixes, and suffixes.

unthinkable      audible      photographic

Use related words to help you spell a word.

nation      national      nationality

Use word origins. The following words are derived from the Greek word *bios* meaning “life.”

biology      bionic      biography      biopsy      biomechanics      biosphere

### Mnemonic Devices

Use mnemonic devices: rhymes, puns, and word associations.

two servings for dessert      alone in the desert      The principal is my pal.

### Dictionary

Use a dictionary to help you check the spelling of difficult words.

### Electronic Spell Checker

Use a spell checker to check the spelling of all of the words in your writing. Be careful, however. Spell checkers will only check the spelling of a word, not whether you have used the word correctly. Also, spell checkers do not check the names of people, places, or specialized vocabulary. You must check the spelling of these words on your own.

### Homophones

**Homophones** are words that sound alike but have different spellings and meanings. Homophones usually come in pairs, but they also come in groups of three or more.

there/their      its/it's      to/too/two      buy/by/bye

### Homographs

A **homograph** is one of two or more words that have the same spelling but differ in origin, meaning, and sometimes pronunciation.

school: a place of learning (Greek)      school: a group of fish (Old English)

### Homonyms

**Homonym** is a general term covering both homophones and homographs. It refers to one of two or more words that have the same sound and often the same spelling, but different meanings.

trail (verb)/trail (noun)      weather/whether

### Synonyms

A **synonym** is a word having the same or nearly the same meaning as another word. When choosing a synonym, be careful because each word has its own connotation.

big: huge, gigantic, colossal      nice: pleasant, likeable, agreeable

### Antonyms

An **antonym** is a word having a meaning opposite to that of another word.

light/heavy      asleep/awake      mindful/forgetful

### Plural Nouns

A noun is singular if it names one thing. It is plural if it names more than one thing. Follow these rules when forming the plurals of nouns:

Most nouns form the plural by simply adding *-s* to the singular.

lakes      impressions      performances

Nouns that end in *-s*, *-sh*, *-ch*, *-x*, or *-z* form the plural by adding *-es*.

glasses      splashes      watches      boxes      waltzes

If a noun ends in *-o* preceded by a vowel, add *-s* to form the plural. Some nouns that end in *-o* preceded by a consonant form the plural with *-s*. Others form the plural with *-es*. Check a dictionary to determine the correct spelling.

radios      silos      heroes

If a noun ends in *-y* preceded by a vowel, add *-s* to form the plural. If the *-y* follows a consonant, change the *-y* to *i* and add *-es*.

chimneys      monkeys      duties      parties

Note: For proper names ending in *-y*, just add *-s*.

Rileys      Murphys

For some nouns ending in *-f* or *-fe*, add an *-s*. For others, change the *-f* to *-v* and add *-es*.

reefs      giraffes      loaves

Some nouns have the same form for both singular and plural.

trout      moose      Sioux      deer

Some nouns form their plurals in irregular ways.

goose—geese      foot—feet      woman—women      child—children

If a compound noun is written as separate words or is hyphenated, change the most important word to the plural form.

sister-in-law—sisters-in-law      eleventh grader—eleventh graders

### Possessive Nouns and Pronouns

A possessive noun is one that shows ownership or belonging. Follow these rules when using the possessive form:

If a noun is singular, add an apostrophe and *-s* to form the possessive.

Janine's hat      cat's paws      three dollar's worth

If a noun is plural and ends in *-s*, add just the apostrophe.

girls' teams      parents' car      players' equipment

If a noun is plural and does not end in *-s*, add an apostrophe and *-s*.

men's suits      geese's feathers      children's gloves

Do not use an apostrophe with possessive personal pronouns.

His essay was better than **hers**.      Those books are **yours**, not **mine**.

To form the possessive case of some indefinite pronouns, add an apostrophe and an *-s*.

**Somebody's** keys were left in my locker.      **Nobody's** experiment worked.