SPaG Sheet

SPaG= Spelling, Punctuation, and Grammar, AKA surface errors

2. Separate run-on, or fused, sentences or join them correctly (see http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com/run-on-sentences.aspx).
3. Commas (see http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/commas.htm; http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/607/02/).
   a. Commas are not strong enough to join sentences (see http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com/comma-splice.aspx).
   b. Coordinating conjunctions need a comma after them to join independent clauses (see http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/conjunctions.htm).
   c. Commas separate direct quotes or speech from the rest of the sentence. They go INSIDE the quotation marks if they end the speech (example: “I’m on my way,” he said.) (see http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/marks/quotations.htm).
   d. A pair of commas sets off non-restrictive modifiers and appositives, words or phrases that rename or define a noun, from the rest of the sentence (see http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/596/1/).
   e. Use a comma to separate parallel (or independent) adjectives (example: a tall, dark, handsome stranger) (see http://grammarist.com/grammar/coordinate-adjectives/).
   f. Use commas to set off absolute phrases, adding detail and variety to your writing (see http://grammar.about.com/od/ab/g/absoluteterm.htm).
   g. Use a comma to separate introductory elements (see http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/commas_intro.htm).
   i. Use commas to separate interrupters, including tag questions and embedded material: side comments, names, years, state names, and abbreviations with names (see http://www.chompchomp.com/terms/interrupter.htm; http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/how-to-use-commas-in-addresses-and-dates.html).
4. Semicolons (; ) do three things: they join two closely related independent clauses; they separate sentences joined by conjunctive adverbs; they act as “super commas” to separate items in lists that include other punctuation (see http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com/semicolons.aspx and http://video.about.com/grammar/Quick-Tip--How-to-Use-a-Semicolon.htm).
7. Quotation marks indicate direct use of someone else’s words and titles of short works. They are not used for emphasis, unless you intend to be sarcastic. Use double quotation marks to indicate a direct quote (single quotation marks are used only to replace double quotation marks inside another quote, except in newspaper writing) (see http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/577/01/ and http://www.unnecessaryquotes.com).
8. Exclamation points should be used sparingly; otherwise they lose their punch and look juvenile! (see http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/marks/exclamation.htm).
9. A dash is the long mark that signals an abrupt break in thought. It should be used only occasionally in most formal writing (see http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/marks/dash.htm; http://video.about.com/grammar/Quick-Tip--How-to-Use-a-Dash.htm).
10. A hyphen is the short mark used to join two words. Hyphenation can change or clarify meaning (example: thirty-year-old cars; thirty year-old cars). Hyphenate ages used as modifiers. (See http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/576/01/).
11. Put modifiers as close as possible to the words or phrases they are intended to modify; avoid dangling or misplaced modifiers (see http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com/misplaced-modifiers.aspx).
12. Use the correct word. Look it up. Is this really what you meant to say? Watch out for confusable words. Some common ones are listed below. (See http://www.grammaruntied.com/blog/?p=463 for more).
   a. Its it’s Its means belongs to it; it’s means it is (see http://www.grammar-monster.com/easily_confused/its_it.htm or http://public.wsu.edu/~brians/errors/its.html).
   b. Affect effect Affect and effect mean different things in different uses. Affect as a verb means “to influence.” (Using impact as a synonym is lazy and jargony.) Effect as a verb means “to bring to pass.” Effect as a noun is a specialized term in psychology. Effect, as a noun means “result” (see http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com/affect-versus-effect.aspx).
   c. All right, already, altogether and all together are all different. Alright is NOT a correct spelling (even though Word accepts it). The correct spelling is all right. (See http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com/all-right-versus-alright.aspx).
d. **Lay/lie** The verb *lay* is transitive. It denotes action that is transferred to a recipient (example: The hen lays eggs.) The verb *lie* is intransitive. Someone or something is acting (example: The cat lies in the sun.) (see http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com/lay-versus-lie.aspx).

e. **They’re their there** Their means belongs to them; there means a place; they’re means they are (see http://www.wiktionary.com/Sample/There-Their-and-They%27re).

f. **Too/too** Too means more than enough. To means in the direction of or in order to. Two means 2 (see http://grammar.about.com/od/words/a/togloss.htm).

g. **Loose** Loose means not tight. Lose means to not win or to be unable to find. (example: Lose laces could mean you will lose your shoes.) (See http://www.grammar.monster.com/easily_confused/loose_lose.htm).

h. **Every day** Every day means each day, or day by day. Everyday means normal, average (see http://grammar.about.com/od/alightersideofwriting/g/everydayloss.htm).

i. **Than** Than has to do with time and sequence; than has to do with comparison (see http://grammar.quickandirtytips.com/then-versus-than.aspx).

13. **Him or he, I or me?** Determine the correct case of the pronoun by omitting “extra” nouns (turn “my sister and me” into “me”). (Examples: Paul told Suzie and me his secret. Jose and I went to the play.) (See http://grammar.quickandirtytips.com/cases.htm).

14. **Verbs must agree** with their subjects, even if other material has intervened (see http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/599/01/).

15. The word *they* is not used for a generic singular pronoun in conservative, formal writing. Everyone, somebody, anyone, everybody, and either are also singular. Use a singular pronoun with these words, or re-word the sentence (example: Everybody knows they can progress. Re-worded: We all know we can progress.) (See http://grammar.quickandirtytips.com/indefinite-pronouns.aspx).

16. Pronouns must refer clearly to a plausible noun (see http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/595/01/).

17. **Use figures** for most numbers over 10, unless you are beginning a sentence or matching within a category. Dates, ages, specific units, percentages, and money are expressed in figures. (See http://writingcenter.waldenu.edu/493.htm).


19. We belong to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (notice the capital _T_, the lower-case _d_ and the hyphen) (see D&C 115:4; www.mormonnewsroom.org/style-guide).

20. Use **parallel structure** in lists and in series. (Match the form of verbs, nouns, phrases, etc.) (see http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/623/1/).

21. Use **active voice** unless you have a good reason not to (see http://grammar.quickandirtytips.com/active-voice-versus-passive-voice.aspx).


23. **Paragraphs** should have unity and structure; each paragraph should be about one single thing or idea (see http://grammar.about.com/od/developingparagraphs/a/parunity.htm).

24. **Transitions** move your reader smoothly from one idea to the next and clarify the relationships between your points (see http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/574/01/ and http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/574/02/).

25. **Use APA document style**. (See http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/; or see http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/18/ for a sample paper with annotations. Another great resource with a template and good advice is http://writingcenter.waldenu.edu/10.htm). Or go to the LDSBC Writing Center to find the format page for an APA style document without a title page.

26. **Use APA citation style** and include a correctly formatted references list (see APA.org, APA on Purdue OWL http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pdAfIqRt60c&list=PL8F43A67F38DE3D5D&index=1 or the poster on most classroom walls, or go to the Writing Center for a handout or to a library mini-class).

27. **Titles of your own writing** should be appropriate to the content (A Place of Retreat, not Profile; Proposal to Save Ten Percent of Transport Costs at XYZ, not Proposal) All “major” words (“nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs,) and pronouns must be capitalized, “including the second part of hyphenated words,” as should all words “of four letters or more.”

28. **Titles of articles and other short writing**, such as chapters, are usually put inside “quotation marks” in the text of your writing. Titles of longer pieces, such as books, are usually italicized in the text of your writing. (See http://www.stlcc.edu/Student_Resources/Academic_Resources/Writing_Resources/Grammar_Handouts/italics_vs_quotation_marks.pdf or http://grammar.yourdictionary.com/punctuation/titles-using-italics-and-quotation-marks.html or http://www.grammar-quizzes.com/punc-itals.html).

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