

Correction Symbols

FR - sentence fragment - write complete sentences

RO - run-on - use correct end punctuation

VT - verb tense problem - keep verb tense consistent

ag - subject/verb, noun/pronoun agreement problem

w/c - incorrect or poor word choice

⊙ - misspelled word

~~you~~ - do not use second person - you, your, yours, etc.

awk - awkward sentence structure - reword

∧ - insert - something is missing

X or — - omit/delete

lc - lower case letter needed

c - capitalize

~ - switch places

⊙ - What does this mean?

¶ - begin a new paragraph

→ - indent the paragraph

syl - incorrectly divided a word

Formal Essay Writing Reminders

1. If handwriting your essay, write on white, lined, regular-sized paper in blue or black.
2. Capitalize the first, last, and important words in titles, including the second part of the hyphenated words.
MEMORIZE THIS RULE: The only words which are not capitalized in titles are:
 - (a) article adjectives (a, an, and the),
 - (b) short prepositions
 - (c) coordinating conjunctions, unless they begin a title.

3. Do not put quotation marks around or underline your own title for a paper.
4. Use appropriate punctuation for published works:

"Quotation Marks"

short story
short poem
chapter in a book
article in a magazine
article in a newspaper
entry in an encyclopedia
episode of television series
song
essay
√ Also direct quotations, words used in a special sense, slang, or dialogue

Underlining OR *Italics*

novel
book-length poem
full-length book (fiction or non-fiction)
name of magazine
name of newspaper
name of encyclopedia
name of television series
name of album (CD)
movie
√ Also names of ships, airplanes, trains, works of art, words or numbers used as such, and foreign words and phrases

5. Double-space your essay if typing.
6. Indent the first line of each paragraph at least one inch (or one pre-set tab). Do not skip an extra line between paragraphs.
7. If handwriting your essay, keep your left margin even with the red line down the left side of the paper. Leave at least two lines (1 inch) at the bottom of the paper.
8. Do not use abbreviations.
9. Spell out contractions.
10. In your title and sentences spell out numbers less than one hundred. Hyphenate spelled-out compound numbers from twenty-one through ninety-nine.
11. Do not use "you" (second person) in any form unless you are quoting or writing a process paper.
12. Do not use first person (I, me, my, mine, we, us, etc.) except in examples of personal experience.
13. If you must divide a word at the end of a line, divide it between syllables only. Use your dictionary to verify syllable divisions. A monosyllabic (one-syllable) word cannot be divided; write it on one line.
14. Remember that personal pronouns never use apostrophes to show possession. For example, its is plural and it's is the contraction for it is.
15. Do not use apostrophes to make nouns plural.
16. Look up in a dictionary any word which you are not sure how to spell or capitalize or hyphenate.
17. Remember: Cannot is spelled as one word, not two.
18. Remember: The phrase a lot is made up of two words, not one, and, due to its frequent overuse, should be avoided. Avoid colloquialisms and slang expressions.
19. Never use this, that, these, or those without a clear antecedent. Rather than use any of these words as vague pronoun references, either follow them with a specific noun or replace them with a specific noun.
20. Avoid beginning sentences with there is and there are whenever possible. These words often add to wordiness and delay your subject.
21. Use active voice verbs to add interest to your writing. Using too many linking verbs (such as is, are, was, and were) or passive voice verbs makes very dull reading. Keep verb tense consistent.
22. Use appropriate transitional devices for clarity, coherence, and smoothness of movement. Otherwise, your writing will be choppy and your ideas hard to follow.
23. Write complete sentences and use correct punctuation. Vary sentence length and structure.
24. If handwriting your essays, write legibly and neatly. Make sure each letter looks exactly like the letter it should be. Dot all i's and cross all t's. Make sure that only the letters that should be capitalized are capitalized.