

That

Use "that" when using a restrictive clause that would change the meaning of the sentence without it.

Example-Books *that big* can't fit into my bag.

Example-The librarians at Monmouth *that have hybrid cars* get better gas mileage.

Who v That

In general, use "who" when referring to a person and "that" when referring to an object. Contemporary writing often switches these, but older writers like Chaucer did as well. Use your best judgment.

Example-Dr. Bluemel was the professor who was teaching *The Wife of Bath* this semester.

Example-Missy's new boots were the ones that were purchased by Tony.

That, This, and It

Whenever you use these words, make sure there is a noun right before or after. It is difficult to know what the writer is talking about otherwise.

Example-Professor Lenard believes that her class will work harder if she brings them pizza each morning. She proceeds to prove this.

(theory? What is *this*?)

Keep the same rule in mind for "it." You won't be following "it" with a noun, but always make sure the closest noun to "it" is what "it" is referring to. For example:

Example-Professor Tompkins looked at it with disgust.

(The book? The paper? The projector?)

Which

Use "which" when dealing with a nonrestrictive clause, which is something that can be left out of the sentence without changing the meaning. It is just supplemental information.

Example-Dr. Tompkins' class, which is very large, had a great discussion of *Measure For Measure* today.

Example #2-Dr. Kinsella gave the first grammar exam today, which is always very difficult.

(If you leave this out it doesn't change the meaning of the sentence)

In general "which" can be removed.

Infinitives

Unmarked form of a verb.

Example-Go, Run,

Full Infinitives

Add "to"

Example-To Run, To Go

Through or Thru

Thru is an informal spelling of through. Due to this, I would avoid using it in academic writing.

Abbreviation

Shortened version of a word.

Example-Etc.

Acronym

Specialized shortened version of a word.

Example-OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries)

Initialism

Specialized shortened version of a word that cannot be pronounced.

Example-FBI

Affect

Affect is a verb that means "to influence" someone or something.

Example-The grade Dr. Brosh gave Toni affected her mood.

Effect

Effect is a noun that is a bit more subtle than "affect," but basically it means "as a result."

Example-The cell phone ban in the library effected the noise level in the stacks.

" " v "

Double quotes signify some sort of specialness about the word. Often this is "scare quotes" signifying the author doesn't believe the statement.

Example-Debbie's grandmother thought women were more "equal" once they received the right to vote.

Example-Alice The Cat is very "concerned" about our complaints.

Single quotes are used to cite dialogue within dialogue.

Example-"Arianna turned towards Kimberly and said 'prepare her for the operation.'"

Then v Than

Then is used when something is "versus" something else. Than is used for a comparison.

Example-Next Lauren called Kristen, then she prepared for their date on Friday night.

Example-Sean is a better gamer than Nicole.

Woman v Women

Woman=single word, equal to man. You would not write "a men are working on the health care bill." Do not write "A women is working on the health care bill."

Imply v Infer

A writer or speaker implies something. Readers or listeners infer.

Example-At the conference, Jane McGonigal implied that gaming can assist those dealing with post concussion syndrome.

Example-Listeners to the podcast could infer that Jason Calacanis does not like Cory Doctorow.

There v Their v They're

There contains "here" and, thus, indicates location. Their conveys possession. They're is a contraction of "they are."

Example-Alice The Cat is sleeping over there.

Example-Henry and Angela collaborated on their conference presentation over Skype.

It's v Its

It's is an abbreviated verb form which means "it is" while its is a possessive pronoun.

Example-It's going to be very hot today in Pemberton.

Example-The team protected its player's martial infidelities from the media.

Whether v If

Whether involves yes/no situations (two outcomes). If is for more generic situations and open-ended possibilities.

Example-Patrick and Veronica couldn't decide whether to record the new episode today or tomorrow.

Example-Chris didn't know if he would get to watch his favorite show on Hulu this weekend.

Also remember to watch for whether or weather.

Toward v Towards

They are the same thing and interchangeable.

Between v Among

Between=Two Among=More than two

Example-Jessica couldn't decide between grilling asparagus or eggplant.

Example-From among her many friends, Elizabeth choose Megan to be her maid of honor.

Hung v Hanged

Objects are hung, people are hanged.

Example-Alexa hung the drapes in her new apartment.

Example-Starbuck hanged the Cylon traitor late last night.

Two Words

The following words are always written as two words

- a lot
- each other
- high school
- in turn
- no one
- in which

Numbers

Please spell out any number under 10. Once you reach two digits, you may use numerals. Never begin a sentence with a numeral.

Opinions and Beliefs

When writing, never use the phrase "In my opinion, I believe...." This is rather redundant! Be careful even when using one of these; you will sound apologetic for your views.

Imperatives

Do not give commands in your writing.

Titles

Please refer to your Wadsworth handbook for proper use of italics, underlining, and quotation marks for titles of books, television shows, albums, newspapers, etc.

Names

Please make sure you double check the names of authors, historical figures, etc. For example, T.S. Eliot only has one L in it, not two. By the way, please do not refer to the author by their first name. Once you have introduced an author/character/etc you do not need to type out their full name anymore.

Think, Feel, Believe

Make sure you are using the appropriate word in your writing. Each has a different meaning.

Further v Farther

Farther is used for psychical distance. Further is used for figurative/metaphysical distance.

Example-Toni ran farther than before with her new running shoes.
Example-"Further," Buffy exclaimed, "I am tired of his crap!"

Bad v Badly

Bad is used for emotions. Badly is an adverb that modifies a verb.

Example-I feel bad that so many students do not share my love of appositives.

Example-I eat badly when I am on vacation.

Lay v Lie

You lay on a bed. You lie to your friends.

Example-Dawn lay down on the bed with Celia.

Example-Jenni got caught in a lie by her professor.

Transitions

Transitional words and phrases will help guide your ideas as you move from idea to example in your paragraphs. There are many different ways and reasons to transition. Here are some examples for the more common ones:

To Signal Sequence or Addition

Again | Also | Besides | First...Second...Third | Furthermore | In Addition | Moreover | One...Another | Too

To Signal Time

Afterward | As Soon As | At First | At The Same Time | Before | Earlier | Finally | In The Meantime | Later | Meanwhile | Next | Now | Soon | Subsequently | Then | Until

To Signal Comparison

Also | By The Same Token | In Comparison | Likewise | Similarly

To Signal Contrast

Although | But | Despite | Even Though | However | In Contrast | Instead | Meanwhile | Nevertheless | Nonetheless | On The Contrary | On One Hand... | On The Other Hand... | Still | Whereas | Yet

To Introduce Examples

For Example | For Instance | Namely | Specifically | Thus

To Signal Narrowing Of Focus

After All | Indeed | In Fact | In Other Words | In Particular | Specifically | That Is

To Introduce Conclusions or Summation

As A Result | Consequently | In Conclusion | In Other Words | In Summary | Therefore | Thus | To Conclude

To Signal Concession

Admittedly | Certainly | Granted | Naturally | Of Course

Pronoun Case

Subjective

I | He, She | It | We | You | They | Who/Whoever

Objective

Me | Him, Her | It | Us | You | Them | Whom/Whomever

Possessive

My | Mine | His, Her | Hers | Its | Our/Ours | Your/Yours | Their/Theirs | Whose

Although v While

Although should be used when there is some sort of concession involved. While is used when you are expressing an "at the same time" idea. Many contemporary Grammarians and Grammatical Organizations argue they can be used interchangeably.

Example-Although Alice never dated Shane, she did have a crush on her.

Example-While Alabama plays Clemson in football their men's gymnastics teams are also competing.

Active Voice v Passive Voice

You should try to write in active voice as often as possible. Active voice is when the subject of your sentence is doing a direct action.

Example-Steve loves Amy.

Example #2-I Heard It Through The Grape Vine.

Also:

- Not every full length work of literature is a novel.
- Do not overuse words like unique. Not every idea in your papers is unique.
- Avoid vague, wordy, phrases like centers on, deals with, involves, revolves around, has a lot to do with, is primarily concerned with, in order to, etc

Misplaced Modifiers

Modifiers are words or phrases that modify. Misplaced modifiers modify what you didn't want to modify.

Example #1-I graded only Alexa's paper. (nothing but Alexa's paper)

Example #2-I only graded Alexa's paper. (did nothing else with it except grade)

Make sure you are using modifiers in an appropriate manner because it will change the meaning of your writing!