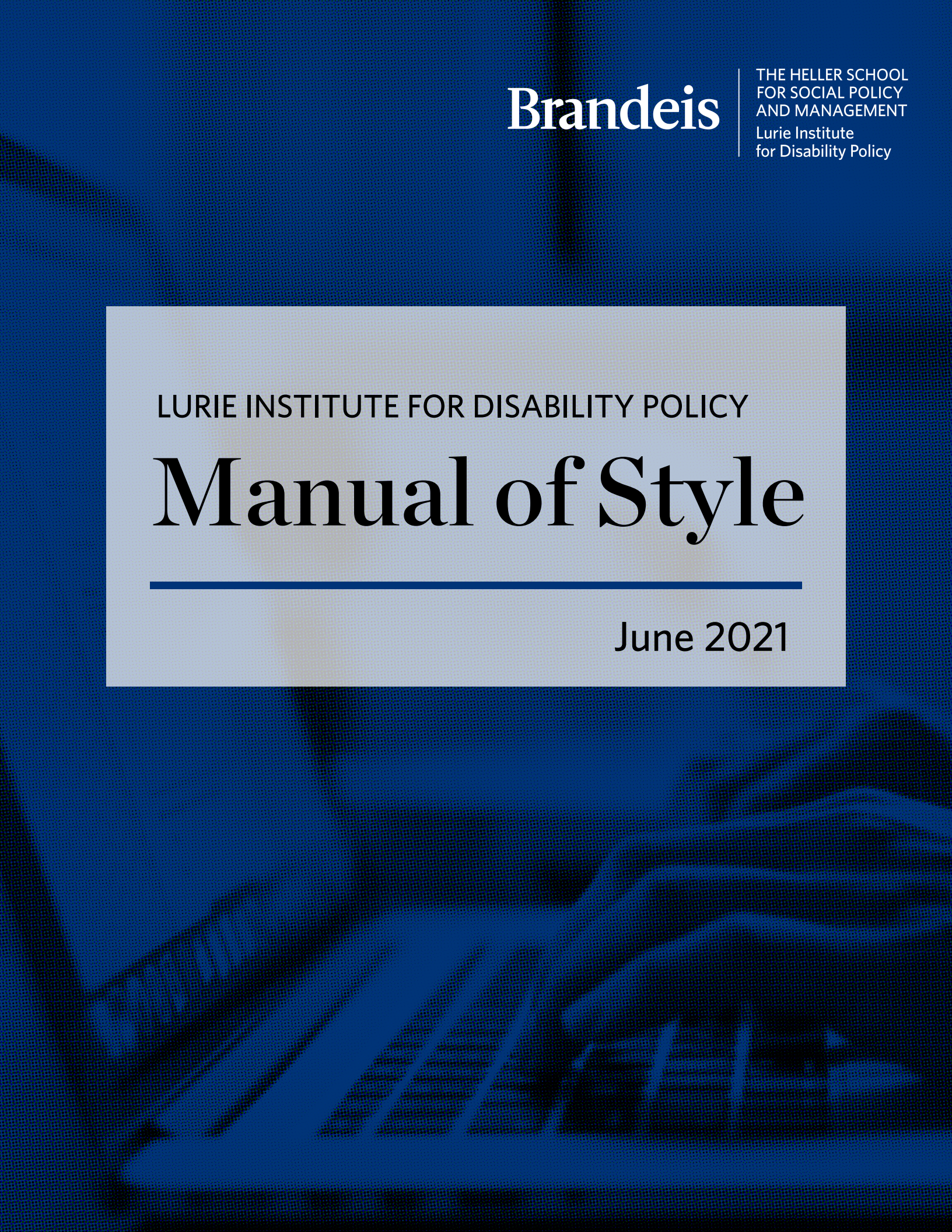


The background of the entire page is a dark blue, textured image. It appears to be a close-up of a person's hand holding a pen, poised to write on a document. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and shadows, giving it a professional and focused feel.

Brandeis

THE HELLER SCHOOL
FOR SOCIAL POLICY
AND MANAGEMENT
Lurie Institute
for Disability Policy

LURIE INSTITUTE FOR DISABILITY POLICY

Manual of Style

June 2021

Lurie Institute for Disability Policy Manual of Style

June 2021

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Preface

This manual covers a variety of subjects: our organizational style; the fine points of English grammar, spelling, and usage; clear, jargon-free writing; and design standards for our publications and website. I've intended it to be a handy reference for all Lurie faculty and staff who are writing, designing, or editing our publications.

The guidelines are based on two core principles:

- ***Our communications should reflect our values: inclusion, social justice, and respect.*** We do this by writing clearly, using inclusive language, taking advice from self-advocates, creating plain-language documents, and incorporating principles of accessible design.
- ***Writing is about communication, not just self-expression.*** Inconsistent and nonstandard language is more likely to annoy and distract than it is to enlighten. Clear, standard language shows respect for the reader and the ideas we convey.

(This guide supersedes the *Lurie Institute Communications Manual* and the *Inclusive Language Usage Manual*.)



Finn Gardiner
Communications Specialist
The Lurie Institute for Disability Policy

The Lurie Style

Use conversational Standard English. This is the written equivalent of business casual—it's buttoned-up enough to be professional, but relaxed enough to be approachable. It is not stiff, breezy, or cutesy. Conversational Standard English avoids slang, nonstandard usage, and unnecessary jargon—it follows the conventions used in the best-edited writing. Misplaced slang makes a travesty of the serious, and jargon creates a clubby effect, leaving outsiders to wonder what on earth you're talking about. Using standard spelling, punctuation, word choice, and grammar eliminates unnecessary distractions and allows readers to focus on what we're trying to say, not on our errors.

"...the language that appears on our screens is often a confusing, oddly-pieced-together mixture of slang, jargon, misuses, and difficult words. The model of writing is no model really at all, just a farrago of verbal artifacts, often ones that plagiarize one another, and almost always ones whose sense is hard to discern."

FRANK L. CIOFFI

Regrettably, many academics, lawyers, and other professionals learn how to write in formal Standard English, but they don't learn how to write conversationally and follow the rules at the same time. This results in befuddling knowledge gaps that frustrate editors and others familiar with the rules of Standard English. These gaps aren't the writers' fault, of course; they're the fault of an education system that has failed them.

Unfamiliarity with conversational Standard English reveals itself through the startling appearance of nonstandard forms such as "irregardless" and "anyways," or common faults like "alot" and "alright." Typically signs of inexpert writing, these misuses suggest that otherwise knowledgeable writers have not yet learned how to balance correctness and approachability. If they had learned this balance, they would know that *all right* was a phrase, not a single word, and they'd drop the superfluous *s* from *anyway*. Such writers are accustomed to writing so formally that common expressions like these seldom appear—or so informally that few will notice or correct their mistakes. This unintentionally limited view of English usage can reduce writers' versatility. Conversational Standard English, in contrast, is supple—with a few tweaks, it can be made formal or casual. But it's harder to dress up nonstandard English or turn technical gobbledygook into understandable prose. If you don't already know the rules, that's all right—there's always room to learn,

regardless of your age, background, or formal education. By knowing conversational Standard English, you'll be well prepared to tackle most writing projects.

Using Standard English

The best way to become familiar with the conventions of conversational Standard English is to read it yourself. It's an acquired taste, but it's one worth acquiring. As you get used to reading thoughtful prose, you'll start noticing how you can refine your own work. You can start by reading articles in publications like the *New York Times*, the *New Yorker*, and *The Economist*. Literary nonfiction uses it, too. Scholarly articles and business reports won't help you here—they tend to be full of jargon and verbiage that repel the nonspecialist.

Proper words in proper places make the true definition of a style.

JONATHAN SWIFT

Distinguish between what is commonly used and what is commonly understood. Scores of people use “your” to mean “you are,” but there’s no cause to imitate them. Even the confused writers who say, “Your not going to believe this” will understand “You’re not going to believe this.” Those who write “I could care less” and “irregardless” will recognize “I couldn’t care less” and “regardless.”

If you’re not sure whether an expression is standard, there are lots of resources you can consult. In general, books are more helpful than websites, with the exception of Paul Brians’s *Common Errors in English Usage*. *The Elements of Style*—also known as “Strunk and White”—is an excellent primer, and *Garner’s Modern English Usage* is the gold standard of usage manuals—it combines warmth, scholarship, and sound judgment. (If you’re curious about more resources, check the bibliography.)

Writing more clearly

[Jargon] is almost universally criticized as the soulless, devitalized, pretentious means we use to confuse words with things, opinions with truths, intentions with results.

MICHAEL A. BAILIN

Although our research addresses disabled people’s real-life circumstances, jargon and abstract language threaten to make our writing impenetrable. Writing in our field is rife with expressions like “stakeholders,” “comorbidities,” “strategic planning,” and “pursuant to,” but that doesn’t mean we have to use them. In a policy

brief for lay readers, there's no need to use "myocardial infarction" for "heart attack" or "ischemia" for "stroke."

You can make your writing warmer, clearer, and more conversational by avoiding jargon, buzzwords, and circumlocutions. Sentences like "In order to expand their capacity, community organizations and key stakeholders must implement impactful strategic planning protocols for the utilization of home- and community-based services among individuals with disabilities by means of leveraging our core competencies" are clunky, opaque, and ugly. This kind of writing doesn't inspire people to act—in fact, it's downright soporific. Perhaps sleeping-pill manufacturers fear that jargon-ridden briefs might encroach on their territory. Writing in well-edited newspapers and magazines, such as the *New York Times*, the *New Yorker*, and *The Economist*, is typically free of such abominations. Let us resist the tendency toward leaden prose. (For more information about specific terms, consult the **Getting Words Right** section of this manual.)

"The test of good writing is whether you can convey to your readers exactly what you intend to convey."

— SIR ERNEST GOWERS

Even if you're not specifically writing plain-language articles, writing straightforwardly helps readers understand what you're talking about. Imagine how you would explain a concept to someone outside your field: your parents, your best friend from high school, your partner, or someone you've just met at a party. Would you tell them about "best practices for knowledge translation through strategic capacity-building," or would you tell them about how you've hired people to make your research easier to understand for the general public? I know what I'd do.

Consider using these methods to make your meaning clearer:

Simplify as much as you can without distorting the meaning. Plain-language writing should be simple, not simplistic.

In plain-language summaries, aim for a sixth-grade reading level or below. Easy Read documents should be written at a third- or fourth-grade reading level.

Find concrete descriptions for abstract words. People are more likely to understand new ideas if they're explained in ways they can see, touch, smell, hear, or feel. Abstract words like *marginalization*, *privilege*, and *oppression* are difficult to visualize. *Oppression* comes from a Latin word, *opprimo*, meaning "push against," but the immediacy of the metaphor vanished once it was imported to English. The same goes for *privilege*, which comes from a Latin term, *privilegium*, meaning "private law."

We can recast a sentence like "We aim to build our capacity in order to more efficaciously utilize our core competencies" to say, "To serve more clients, we'll hire

five new staff members, enroll our current staff in continuing-education classes, and move to a larger building.” Nebulous abstractions like “building capacity” are now concrete: expanded office space, new staff, and classes for current staff. Clear examples are the enemy of obscurity.

Use the active voice as much as possible. The passive voice is a grammatical construction that emphasizes an action rather than the performer of that action; for example, the sentence “The book was written by Ricardo Lopez” uses the passive voice. The active voice emphasizes the performer and the action. In the active voice, the previous sentence would read, “Ricardo Lopez wrote the book.” Although the passive voice has its uses, overusing the passive voice can make your writing sound clunky or evasive.

Avoid noun pileups. Sentences that are predominantly nouns and noun phrases can be difficult to parse. They also make writing sound dead or inert, especially when the nouns in question are abstractions. Here’s an example of a noun pileup, with all the nouns and noun phrases highlighted:

Individuals with the lived experience of disability had increased odds of receipt of Medicaid healthcare coverage and home- and community-based service benefits.

That’s a lot of nouns. Let’s make this a little easier to understand:

People with disabilities had higher odds of receiving Medicaid benefits, including healthcare coverage and home- and community-based services.

Or: The odds of receiving Medicaid benefits—including healthcare coverage and home- and community-based services—were higher for people with disabilities.

Be wary of prepositional phrases. Like noun pileups, a surfeit of prepositional phrases (*receipt of Medicaid benefits, experiences of individuals with the lived experience of disability*) can make sentences sound dull and clunky.

Use the shortest word possible that accurately conveys your meaning. If you can’t avoid using a more complex term, be sure to define it clearly. The definition can be woven into the text—e.g., “Women with cognitive disabilities—disabilities that affect people’s ability to learn, think, concentrate, or organize—were less likely to receive sex education than women without cognitive disabilities.” You may also list definitions in an aside or in a separate glossary, depending on your readership.

"Most obscurity is an unmixed, and unnecessary, evil."

—F.L. LUCAS

By using conversational Standard English, you'll be able to reach readers without annoying, distracting, or confusing them unnecessarily. Ungainly, nonstandard, buzzword-ridden writing does none of that. Clear writing, respectful language, standard usage, thoughtful prose—all these elements demonstrate consideration for our readers. Good writing isn't decontextualized formalism; it's an embodiment of our values.

Getting Words Right

General Principles

Don't rely on your intuition if you're unsure about a spelling. Instead, check a dictionary such as the *American Heritage Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, the *Webster's New World Collegiate Dictionary*, or the *New Oxford American Dictionary*. (The *Oxford English Dictionary* is useful for finding word roots, but it's not intended to be a workaday resource for people looking up preferred spellings.) Pay attention to the usage notes, too. Some dictionaries give explicit guidance about which spellings to use, while others simply describe common forms—including misspellings like “accidently” and nonstandard expressions like “nite,” “thru,” and “irregardless”—without making rulings on their acceptability. These are called descriptive dictionaries, since they *describe* how people write without making recommendations—and those people include nonprofessional writers, such as YouTube commenters and the denizens of gaming forums. If a descriptive dictionary gives you unclear guidance, consult a usage guide such as *Garner's Modern English Usage* or *The Elements of Style*.

A concern held by some writers . . . is that descriptive dictionaries sometimes pander to ignorance, and if enough people are misspelling or misusing a word a certain way, the lexicographers will obligingly include that misuse in their next edition.

ANNE STILMAN

Double-check the spelling of proper names. People don't like seeing their names misspelled—or the names of their towns, states, organizations, or brands, either.

Don't rely solely on spellcheck. Although spellcheckers can catch unmistakable errors like “intelligence,” “embarass,” and “thier,” they're less useful for other kinds of mistakes—there is no replacement for good judgment.

Watch out for compound-word errors. Many writers, both experienced and not, struggle with compound words. This section includes common compound-word errors, e.g., two-word phrases that people often misspell as one word (**at least, all right, every time**), one-word compounds that are wrongly separated (**anywhere, someone, nonprofit**), and compounds that can be one or two words depending on the context (**anyway/any way, any time/anytime**).

Use respectful and inclusive language. Researchers and people who translate research for lay audiences should talk about disability and health without being

demeaning, dehumanizing, or condescending. Although this manual includes the preferred terms for many groups, we cannot begin to represent the entirety of people's words to describe themselves.

Avoid hypercorrection. Sometimes writers try so hard to sound proper that they end up making mistakes in the process. This is called “hypercorrection.” For example, some people say and write “between you and I” for “between you and me.” This construction is ungrammatical—simply removing “I” from the sentence reveals its illogic—but these writers have developed a phobia of using “me” in a compound subject because they were told not to say, “Me and Billy bought ice cream.” Although some descriptive grammarians defend hypercorrect expressions as established idioms, they are wrong. Enough people are aware of the standard forms that the hypercorrect ones will irritate attentive readers.

Watch out for similar-sounding words that mean very different things. Many writers use *disinterested* for *uninterested*. *Disinterested* means impartial; *uninterested* means bored or apathetic. *Elicit* means to draw out, *solicit* means to ask for, and *illicit* means illegal, but their similar sounds lead some writers to confuse them. Everyone gets confused sometimes, so it's always good to check to make sure you're getting things right.

Troublesome Words and How to Write Them

a bit is two words, not one. See also **collision-course compounds**.

abridgment has no e after the g. See also **judgment, acknowledgment**.

accidentally, not “accidently.”

accommodation; accommodate. Two c's, two m's.

If you need **accommodations** [read **accommodations**], don't hesitate to contact us.

achievement is so spelled, not “achievment” or “acheivement.”

acknowledgment. No e after the g, unless you're writing in British English. There is no gem in **acknowledgment**. See also **judgment, abridgment**.

I included you in the **acknowledgements** [read **acknowledgments**] section.

actionable is not to be used for “doable.” If something is actionable, it's grounds for a lawsuit.

addiction. Use person-first language like *people with addictions*, *people in recovery*, and *people with substance-use disorder*, and avoid terms like “addict,” “substance abuse,” “junkie,” and “drug abuse.”

additional is often a mouthful for “more.”

affect and **effect**. *Affect* is a verb meaning “to have an effect on.” *Effect* is a noun that means “influence” or “impact.” *Effect* can also be a verb that means “to start.” If something is being changed, it is being *affected*, not *effected*.

after all is two words. Avoid the collision-course compound “afterall.”

a little is always two words. See also collision-course compounds and **a lot**.

all. The *of* in *all of* is usually superfluous unless *all of* comes before a nonpossessive pronoun or a possessive noun. See also **off**, **inside**, and **outside**.

All of [read **All**] our articles can be read using screen readers.

We told **all of them** to update their profiles.

All of John's books are crammed on a large bookshelf.

all right is the standard spelling—two *l*'s, two words. The nonstandard collision-course compound “alright” is **never** all right for our publications, website, or social media. It's common, but that doesn't make it correct—after all, “alot” for **a lot** and “your” for *you're* are common, too. Words like *although* and *already* are like living fossils—they came into use in Old and Middle English—but “alright” is **Piltdown Man**. The expression *all right* is from the Victorian era; it follows the pattern of other Modern English *all-* phrases like *all set* and *all done*. Avoid “allright,” too.

It's **alright** [read **all right**] for parents with disabilities to ask for help.

Allright [read **All right**], everyone! Let's get started.

almost. The word meaning “nearly” is not spelled “all most” or “almost.”

a lot. **Never** “alot.” People encounter informal phrases like *a lot* more in speech than they do in writing, so they may hear it as a unit and write it that way, too. The confusion is understandable, but *a lot* is always two words. Unlike “alright,” “alot” hasn't managed to appear in most dictionaries—*yet*. *Webster's New World Dictionary* lists “alot” as a slangy spelling of *a lot*, but its inclusion is not an endorsement. See collision-course compounds.

We had **alot** [read **a lot**] of social-media views this month.

already; all ready. *Already* is an adverb that refers to time. *All ready* is an adjective phrase that refers to preparedness. “Allready,” on the other hand, is never correct.

Is Amir **already** [read **all ready**] to go?

I've **all ready** [read **already**] told you that the event is on Friday.

alright is all wrong. See **all right** and collision-course compounds.

although. “All though” and “allthough” are incorrect forms of the word meaning “even though.”

altogether; all together. *Altogether* is an adverb meaning “wholly” or “entirely.” *All together* is an adjective phrase meaning “all gathered.” There is no such word as “alltogether.”

We should change the laws ***all together*** [read ***altogether***].

We were ***altogether*** [read ***all together***] for the meeting.

alumnus, alumna, and alumni. *Alumnus* is masculine singular; *alumna* feminine singular. *Alumni* is the plural for *alumnus*, and *alumnae* is the plural for *alumna*. Do not say “an alumni.” Avoid these confusing gendered terms and use *graduate* if possible.

Alzheimer’s disease; Alzheimer’s. So spelled. Not “old-timer’s disease.” See also ***dementia.***

anoint. Two *n*’s, not three. “Annoint” is incorrect.

antiracism. One word.

antisemitism. Also one word.

any day should always be written as two words. Although it resembles legitimate compounds such as *someday*, “anyday” is still incorrect. See **collision-course compounds.**

any time is a noun phrase; ***anytime*** is an adverb. Note, however, that the similar-looking “everytime” is not a word. See **every time.**

Is there ***anytime*** [read ***any time***] left?

You can get in touch with us at ***any time.***

We can get in touch with our community partners ***any time*** [read ***anytime.***]

anymore; any more. The adverb meaning “any longer” is usually spelled *anymore*, though you may also come across the spelling “any more,” particularly in older books or writing published outside the United States. We recommend using the one-word form. *Any more* is correct when referring to a number of items. Do not use *anymore* to mean “nowadays”; this use of *anymore* is nonstandard.

Do you have ***anymore*** [read ***any more***] tissues?

I’m still working here ***anymore*** [read ***nowadays.***]

He doesn’t work here ***any more*** [read ***anymore.***]

Any way means “in any manner”; *anyway* means “regardless.”

Is there ***anyway*** [read ***any way***] I can help?

I’ll do it ***any way*** [read ***anyway.***]

anyways is slang. You can use it in informal conversations, but don’t write it—stick to *anyway.*

They didn't follow the plan **anyways** [read **anyway**].

anywhere, somewhere, nowhere, and elsewhere. These are all single-word compounds. Avoid the slangy “someplace,” “noplacel,” and “anyplace.”

You can find good writing **any where** [read **anywhere**].

apart means “separate,” “outside,” or “other than.” A **part** means a piece of something. Saying that you're glad to be “apart” of a group is like saying that you have “alot” of experience.

I'm glad to be **apart** [read **a part**] of this committee with you, Ayodele.

A part [read **Apart**] from the problems I've already mentioned, the meeting went smoothly.

apiece means “each.” A **piece** is a portion. See also **apart**.

aromantic people don't experience romantic attraction, but they can be sexually attracted to people. They can be gay, straight, lesbian, or bisexual.

asexual people don't experience sexual attraction, but they can be romantically attracted to people. They can have gay, straight, lesbian, or bi romantic attractions.

Asian refers to anyone whose ancestry originates from that continent, including Chinese, Indian, Thai, and Bangladeshi people. In practice, many Americans associate the term **Asian** with East Asians. It's best to narrow it down to a region (e.g., South Asia, Southeast Asia), nationality (e.g., Indian, Taiwanese, Sri Lankan), or ethnicity (Korean, Bengali, Japanese, Hmong, Han Chinese).

as per is jargon that's best avoided—use “according to,” “under,” or “as” instead. Cf. **pursuant to**.

Asperger syndrome, Asperger's. Before the release of the *DSM-5* in 2013, Asperger syndrome was a diagnosis often used to describe autistic people who did not have a speech delay or an intellectual disability. Use only when referring to historical diagnoses, or if people refer to themselves that way. Otherwise, simply say **autistic** or **on the autism spectrum**.

assist and **assistance** are often used as overblown synonyms for “help.”

as well occasionally appears as a **collision-course compound**, “aswell,” in unedited writing. The last name **Aswell** exists, but the phrase **as well** is always two words.

We should check our website for accessibility **aswell** [read **as well**].

Can you please call Dr. **Aswell**, Zaheer?

at least is always two words. Avoid the nonword “atleast.” See also **collision-course compounds**.

Atleast [read **At least**] forty percent of mothers with disabilities reported complications during childbirth.

autistic, person with autism, person on the autism spectrum. Many autistic people prefer *autistic person* and actively dislike “person with autism.” Much of the insistence on “person with autism” comes from nonautistic parents or professionals, not autistic people themselves. The “disorder” label is strictly medical-model; many autistic people use a social model or a combined medical–social model. If you need to refer to a diagnosis, say *has an ASD diagnosis* or similar. Don’t go overboard and say things like “person with a lived experience of autism spectrum disorder.” See also **diagnostic labels**. Cf. **Deaf**.

Yet, when we say “Autistic person,” we recognize, affirm, and validate an individual’s identity as an Autistic person. We recognize the value and worth of that individual as an Autistic person—that being Autistic is not a condition absolutely irreconcilable with regarding people as inherently valuable and worth something.

LYDIA BROWN

bacterium is singular; **bacteria** is plural. Do not say “a bacteria” or “bacterias.”

E. coli is a potentially dangerous, but common, **bacteria** [read **bacterium**].

based on, not “based off of” or “based around.” See also **off**.

birth defects. If you can, use *congenital disabilities* or specific conditions (e.g. cleft palate, scoliosis, osteogenesis imperfecta) instead. See also **congenital disabilities**, **congenital conditions**.

bisexuals are attracted to their own gender and other genders. Some people also use the term *pansexual*, especially if they are attracted to nonbinary people.

Black is an umbrella term for people of West, South, and East African descent, whereas *African American*, *African*, and *Black Caribbean* are more specific. (North Africans are typically considered Middle Eastern.) In the United States, *African American* and *Black American* refer to Black people who were descended from enslaved Africans in the United States, whereas *African* and *Black Caribbean* refer to people whose families immigrated voluntarily, as well as their descendants. All African Americans are Black, but not all Black people are African Americans. Some Black people belong to multiple categories. Furthermore, many Black people are also Hispanic or Latino. We recommend capitalizing **Black**.

blind; low vision; partially sighted. People who have little to no vision are blind. Like **autistic** and **Deaf/deaf** people, blind people tend to prefer *blind*. Be wary, however, of

the metaphor “blind to” (see **disability as metaphor**). To refer to people with some vision loss, use *people with vision loss*, *partially sighted people*, or *people with low vision*. Some people may be legally blind but have some residual vision. Avoid “visually impaired.”

blog post. Two words, though “blogpost” is starting to make the rounds. Avoid the one-word version.

Our website hosts several **blogposts** [read **blog posts**] by disabled parents.

boarders and borders. *Boarders* are lodgers; *borders* are boundaries or perimeters.

breakdown; break down. *Breakdown* is a noun; *break down* is a verb phrase. Do not use the one-word *breakdown* for the verbal expression.

We should **breakdown** [read **break down**] this material to make it easier to understand.

I had a **break down** [read **breakdown**] before my meeting.

burden. Many publications refer to “the financial burden of raising a child with a disability.” Though it’s often unintentional, connecting the term “burden” with disability implies that people with disabilities themselves are the burdens.

buy-in is better worded as *support*, *agreement*, or *cooperation*. Good prose stylists haven’t bought into this piece of jargon.

cancellation is spelled with two *l*’s in both British and American English.

cannot. This one-word compound is sometimes spelled as two words. In professionally edited writing, it’s *cannot*. “Can not” should be reserved for phrases like “You can go, or you *can not* go.”

Some parents with disabilities **can not** [read **cannot**] find the resources they need.

capacity; capacity-building. When organizations “build capacity,” they really mean hiring new people, training staff and volunteers, renting new offices, buying more equipment, or finding other ways to get more done. Use more specific language and avoid “capacity-building.”

cast and its derivatives, such as *broadcast*, *telecast*, and *webcast*, are irregular verbs. Do not say “casted” or “broadcasted.”

catalogue; catalog. Both are correct, but *catalogue* is a little easier to use. When used as a verb, *catalogue* becomes *cataloguing*, whereas *catalog* often becomes “cataloging.” “Cataloging” looks as though it should have a long “o,” but it doesn’t. *Catalogue* also has the benefit of being acceptable in all varieties of English, unlike the all-American *catalog*. Whichever one you pick, be consistent.

Caucasian. See white.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is plural.

ceteris paribus, or “all other things being equal,” is spelled thus—but the expression should be avoided anyway. Use a clear English phrase instead, like “After controlling for other variables” or “all other things being equal.”

childcare. One word.

cleft palate. Avoid the derogatory “harelip.”

cognitive disabilities. These disabilities affect thinking, remembering, or planning. These disabilities include the developmental disabilities and conditions acquired during adulthood, such as traumatic brain injury, acquired seizure disorders, or Alzheimer’s and other dementias.

collision-course compounds. Common two-word phrases, including a lot, all right, every time, and each other, are sometimes written erroneously as single words, as if they were in a head-on collision: “alot,” “alright” and “allright,” “eachother,” “atleast,” “aswell,” “everytime,” and so on.

compare. To highlight differences, use *compare with*, not *compare to*. Reserve *compare to* for constructions like “Nothing *compares to* my father’s green-bean casserole.”

Compared to [read **with**] fathers without disabilities, disabled fathers were more likely to use Medicaid.

comprise means “include.” Do not use it to mean “makes up” or “is composed of.” If *comprise* is followed by *of*, it’s probably being misused.

congenital disabilities and congenital conditions are preferable to “birth defects.”

Congress. Capitalize only when referring to a specific legislature, such as the United States Congress.

co-occurring conditions is more neutral—and easier for people to understand—than “comorbidities.”

corona for coronavirus or COVID-19 is too casual for our purposes. Remember that it’s *coronavirus* and *COVID-19*, not “corona-19,” or—heaven forbid—“CORONA-19,” as if “corona” itself were an acronym.

Several students, including Chidike and Adam, caught **corona** [read **the coronavirus**] over the summer.

coronavirus is often misspelled as “corona virus.” The names of other virus groups, such as hantaviruses and noroviruses, are also single-word compounds. Leave “corona virus” to email spammers who peddle quack COVID remedies. Don’t

capitalize it, either; it's not a proper noun. And it's certainly not "CoronaVirus," as though it were a venture-backed tech start-up. See also **corona** and **COVID-19**.

The **corona virus** [read **coronavirus**] is especially dangerous for people with chronic illnesses.

We are working as hard as we can to stop the spread of the **Coronavirus** [read **coronavirus**].

We are working as hard as we can to stop the spread of the **CoronaVirus** [read **coronavirus**].

core competencies is vague management-speak for "what we do best." Instead of saying "core competencies," be more specific.

country should be lowercase unless it's part of a proper name, e.g., Texas's *Big Country* region.

COVID-19, COVID. All caps, hyphenated. Though the spellings "Covid-19" and "covid-19" do appear in some publications' style guides, we use the World Health Organization's all-caps spelling. Use **COVID-19** at first mention; it's acceptable to use **COVID** or *the coronavirus* afterward.

Not recommended: Covid-19, covid-19, Covid 19, COVID 19, covid 19, COVID19 (except in hashtags as #COVID19), Covid19, covid19, CoViD-19

Recommended: COVID-19

criterion is singular; **criteria** is plural. Do not say "a criteria," or worse, "criterias."

We included age as a **criteria** [read **criterion**] for inclusion in the study.

data is traditionally plural, not singular, but the singular form is increasingly common. In our publications, use the traditional form or reword the sentence to sidestep the singular-plural problem.

The data on autistic parents with disabilities **is** [read **are**] inconclusive.

Or Researchers lack conclusive data on autistic parents.

data set. Two words. *Dataset* is relatively common, but it is not yet standard.

Deaf; deaf; hard of hearing. Many deaf (or Deaf) people prefer identity-first language, so use *deaf people* or *Deaf people* rather than "people with deafness." When capitalized, *Deaf* refers to people in a specific Deaf subculture who often use signed languages to communicate. Lowercase *deaf* is a general term to refer to anyone with significant hearing loss. *Hard of hearing* is preferable to "hearing impaired."

decision-making. Hyphenate. The related phrase *supported decision-making* is also hyphenated. To refer to *supported-decision-making policies*, add a hyphen after *supported*, since it's now part of a compound adjective.

deficit. Unless you're talking about a government budget, be wary of the word "deficit."

definitely. So spelled. Never "definitely," "deffinately," or "defiantly." ("Defiantly" is the adverb form of *defiant*, but it never means "definitely.")

deformed; deformity. Avoid describing people as "deformed" or "having deformities."

dependent, not "dependant." The noun *dependant* is standard in British English, but not in American English. The adjective is never spelled with an *a*.

The **dependant** [read **dependent**] variable was classroom performance.

dementia. There are several kinds of dementia, though Alzheimer's is the best-known form of it. See also **Alzheimer's**.

Democrat; Democratic. The political party in the United States is called the *Democratic Party*; there is no such thing as the "Democrat Party." Members of the party are called *Democrats*, but the adjective is *Democratic*. Refer to *Democratic senators*, not "Democrat senators."

The home- and community-based services bill had support from both Republican and **Democrat** [read **Democratic**] representatives.

developmental disabilities. See **intellectual and developmental disabilities**.

diagnosis; diagnoses. *Diagnosis* is singular; *diagnoses* plural.

diagnostic labels. While some diagnostic labels are accepted both by researchers and community members, there are others that are more contentious. See **hearing impaired, harelip, mental retardation, and obesity**, for example.

Do not defend terms that do not hurt you; let the injured parties speak their truths. Do not insist that because they are medical terms they cannot cause harm.

AUBREY GORDON

differently abled, handicapable, and other cloying terms. Disabled people and rhetoricians alike condemn these ill-advised euphemisms for "disabled."

disability as metaphor. Be thoughtful about using disabilities or illnesses as metaphors for other ideas. Some of these metaphors include "being blind to a

problem,” “the complaint fell on deaf ears,” or “political polarization is a plague on American civic life.”

disease, disorder. Although tuberculosis, COVID-19, AIDS, diabetes, and cancer are rightly called diseases, using this label for many disabilities like autism and deafness can seem insulting or condescending. *Disorder* is also under dispute for some conditions, though it is less controversial than *disease*. *Condition* or *disability* is preferable to *disorder* unless you are using a diagnostic label.

disseminate. Say “share” or “distribute” when writing for the general public.

dissociation and **dissociative**, not “disassociation” and “disassociative.”

Down syndrome. Not “Down’s syndrome.” Capital *D*, lowercase *s*. Use *people with Down syndrome*, not “Down syndrome people.”

due to should not be used as a synonym of “because”; it properly means “attributable to,” so it should be used with a linking verb like “is” or “are.” Never use “due to the fact that.”

Due to [Because of] the pandemic, we held online classes.

Due to the fact that [Because] parents with disabilities face discrimination, many of them lose custody of their children.

Her success was **due to** her dedication and practice.

each other is always two words. “Eachother” isn’t a word; it’s a pair of words smashed together to make a veritable Frankenstein’s monster. See **collision-course compounds**.

The two mothers we spoke to helped **eachother** [read **each other**] through an online peer-support program.

elderly. See **older adults**.

elicit means “to draw out.” **Solicit** means “to ask for.” **Illicit** means “illegal.”

email. One word, no hyphen; avoid the obsolescent “e-mail.”

embarrass has two *r*’s and two *s*’s.

endorse. Avoid using *endorse* as a synonym for “report.” Psychiatrists often use *endorse* in this fashion, as in “the patient endorsed symptoms of bipolar disorder.” For most people, however, *endorse* means “recommend” or “support.” Nobody *supports* symptoms of depression.

Some participants **endorsed** [read **reported**] symptoms of anxiety and depression.

The state senator **endorsed** her mayor, who was running for Congress.

"The repetitive, habitual use of insider lingo undermines the inherently public nature of the issues under discussion."

TONY PROSCIO

et al. (from the Latin *et alia*, "and others") is always followed by a period. Don't put a period after **et**. Cf. **et cetera**.

et cetera is preferably spelled as two separate words (or abbreviated as *etc.*), not "etcetera." Don't use **et cetera** or *etc.* to refer to people; use **et al.** instead. Note, too, that it's "etc.," not "ect." See also **et al.**

everyday; everyday. *Everyday* is an adjective; *every day* is a noun phrase. See also **anymore** and **breakdown**.

Satya watches the five o'clock news **everyday** [read **every day**].

This isn't an **every day** [read **everyday**] occurrence.

every time is always two words, unlike **anytime** and **sometimes**. "Everytime" is not a word; it's a **collision-course compound**.

Everytime [read **Every time**] I get home from work, I curl up with a good book.

exceptional. Use *has a disability* or *disabled*. Alternatively, you may refer to a specific support need. Beware of the term "exceptional" as a euphemism for intellectual disability.

federal. Lowercase unless you're quoting text from a federal agency.

food insecurity. Do apples have low self-confidence? Although this piece of jargon appears frequently in nonprofit organizations' reports, it doesn't pack the same punch as "hunger" or even "lack of food." Avoid using more than once or twice.

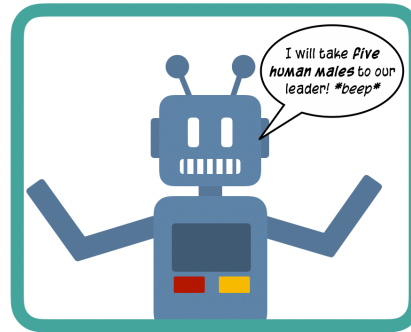
fractions used as nouns, such as "three-quarters of the participants," should be hyphenated.

fundraising; fundraiser. One word.

gay men and **lesbians** are attracted primarily to people of the same gender.

gendered language. Do not use *he* as a generic pronoun in hypothetical situations. Singular *they* in hypothetical situations is preferable to *he or she* or *he* in our briefs. Better yet, reword the sentence to use plural examples: "people with disabilities can

advocate for themselves” instead of “a person with a disability can advocate for himself” or “a person with a disability can advocate for himself or herself.” Avoid talking about “females” and “males” in briefs and articles—used excessively, it sounds like robot-speak. Saying “men,” “women,” “boys,” and “girls” sounds more natural.



gender identity refers to someone’s internal sense of being a man, woman, nonbinary, or genderfluid. This is different from **gender expression** (masculine, feminine, androgynous) or sex assigned at birth (male, female, intersex). *Transgender* people have a gender identity that is different from the sex assigned at birth. Be careful about terminology: for example, a transgender woman was assigned male at birth, but she has a female gender identity. Whenever possible, use language that matches the person’s gender identity, not their sex assigned at birth.

going forward is management-speak for *in the future*, *from now on*, or similar expressions. Avoid in writing.

government should be lowercase unless it’s in a title.

graduate should always be used with *from*—don’t say that people “graduated college.”

She’s been writing professionally since she **graduated** [read **graduated from**] college.

grow. No, you cannot “grow a business.” Reserve “growing” for flowers and vegetables—and let this piece of jargon wilt on the vine.

handicap or handicapped. Use *disability* instead of “handicap.” Although some languages use “handicap” as a neutral word for disability, it’s outdated in English. “Handicapped” parking spaces or bathrooms are better referred to as *accessible* parking or bathrooms.

hard of hearing is hyphenated when it comes directly before a noun (*hard-of-hearing mothers*), but is three separate words when it follows a word (*people who are hard of hearing*).

harelip. Avoid. Use *cleft palate*.

healthcare. One word recommended. The *Merriam-Webster* and *American Heritage* dictionaries still list *healthcare* as the two-word “health care,” but the industry itself is moving toward the single-word form. The *New Oxford American Dictionary* and *Webster’s New World Collegiate Dictionary* also use *healthcare*. The single-word form is easier to use, though if you must use the two-word form, remember that the noun

“health care” is two words, but the adjectival form is either a single word (*healthcare policy*) or hyphenated (*health-care policy*).

healthy. Avoid using “healthy” in contrast with “disabled.”

hearing impaired. Avoid; the preferred terms are **hard of hearing** or *having hearing loss*.

hermaphrodite is no longer acceptable as a term for intersex people.

high- and low-functioning. These terms are imprecise; people’s skills vary contextually. Someone may have excellent academic skills and struggle with housekeeping. Refer instead to support needs: **high support needs** instead of “low-functioning.”

higher-weight or high weight are simpler and less stigmatizing than “obese” and “obesity.” See also **diagnostic labels, obesity**. Cf. **people with intellectual disabilities**.

high or low support needs. More accurate and less demeaning than “high- and low-functioning.” “High-functioning” has been used as a synonym for “average or above-average intelligence”; intellectual ability is not the same as the ability to manage activities of daily living.

high school is two words, not one.

home in; hone in. The traditional expression is *home in on*, not “hone in on,” though “hone in on” is approaching standard status. It’s not there yet, though, so avoid both expressions and use “zero in on” or “focus on” instead.

home- and community-based services has a hyphen after *home* and *community*. (See also **Hyphens**.)

housing insecurity. Use “unstable housing” or “homelessness.”

however, whoever, whichever, wherever, and whenever. These are usually one word.

Who ever [read **Whoever**] decided to heat up leftover fish and Brussels sprouts in the microwave needs to clean it out after they’re done.

I, me. Some writers use *me* when *I* should appear, and others use *I* when *me* should appear. “Better than him” is all right to use in speech and casual writing, but in more formal works, use “better than he is.”

OK in conversation and casual writing: Rodrigo is better at using Stata **than me**.

Always appropriate: Rodrigo is better at using Stata **than I am**. (Using **than I** without a verb can sound stilted.)

On the other hand, using *I* for *me*, as in “send that document to Rachel and *I*” or “between you and *I*,” is never correct. People use expressions like “between you and

I” under the false impression that *I* is somehow more formal or “correct” than *me*. Not so—use *me* and *I* according to their grammatical function.

“Nothing is sadder than faulty propriety.”

SHERIDAN BAKER

It’s also incorrect to use *me* as a subject pronoun, as in “me and my friends were really tired after the game.” Remove the other person from the statement, and you’ll see why. “Send that document to *I*” and “*Me* was really tired after the game” are clearly ungrammatical.

Can you send ***Liang and I*** [read ***Liang and me***] that brief so we can review it?

Between ***you and I*** [read ***you and me***], this house is a mess.

Check out this new article by ***Massimo and I*** [read ***Massimo and me***]!

Me and Elizabeth [read ***Elizabeth and I***] are tired of going on Zoom calls.

Another way to test whether *I* or *me* works is to substitute another pronoun:

Can you send ***he*** that brief so we can review it? [Obviously incorrect, so use ***Liang and me***]

Us are tired of going on Zoom calls. [Obviously incorrect, so use ***Elizabeth and I***]

IDD. See **intellectual and developmental disabilities**.

illicit. See **elicit**.

impact. Not to be used as a verb. People’s experiences *affect* their outcomes; they don’t “impact” them. It’s all right to use *impact* as a noun, though: “people’s experiences have an *impact* on their outcomes.” See also **affect, effect**.

impactful. Avoid this ugly piece of jargon. Try *influential*, *powerful*, or *effective*.

This program was ***impactful*** [read ***effective***] in improving children’s mental health.

impairment. Although some disabilities may be considered impairments, those that have an associated community or culture (e.g., Deaf and autistic people) may not want their disabilities called “impairments.”

imply; infer. You *imply* your own meaning and *infer* others’ meanings.

in case is two words, never one. See **collision-course compounds**.

Incase [read **In case**] you missed it, we're hosting a webinar!

incentivize and **incent** are archetypal examples of management-speak. Avoid both of them.

indeed. One word, unlike **in fact** and **in case**.

independent, independence. Not “independant” or “independance.”

The study had three **independent** [read **independent**] variables and one dependent variable.

individuals. You can safely replace “individuals” with *people* in most cases. The same applies to “persons.”

in fact. This expression is *in fact* **two** words, not one. Remember that “infact” is a spelling *infraction*, just like the rest of the **collision-course compounds**.

Infact [read **In fact**], these problems aren't limited to a single population.

infer. See **imply**.

in front. Two words. See **collision-course compounds**.

inoculate. One *n*, one *c*. Don't write “innoculate” or “inoculate.”

I hope we can **innoculate** [read **inoculate**] everyone against all the COVID-19 variants.

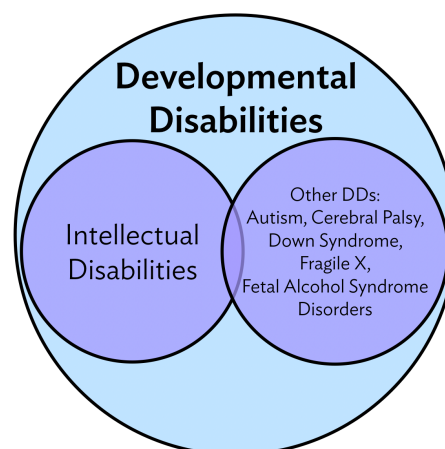
in order to is often a wordy way of saying “to.”

inside can stand on its own; there's no need to say “inside of” unless you're using *inside* as a noun. See also **all**, **outside**.

insofar and **inasmuch** are both solid compounds that are better avoided.

intellectual. So spelled.

intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Developmental disability (DD) is an umbrella term to refer to cognitive disabilities that occur during childhood and adolescence. These disabilities include intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, fetal alcohol syndrome disorders, Down syndrome, and autism. Intellectual disability is only one kind of DD. There are many people who have a DD who do not have an ID, but all people with ID have a DD. Note that people with intellectual



disabilities tend to prefer person-first language.

intellectually disabled. Use person with an intellectual disability.

intellectual deficiency. Use intellectual disability.

intelligence, intelligent. (A) **SPELLING.** Two *i*'s, two *l*'s, no *a*'s. Spelling **intelligence** as “intelegence,” “intellegence,” or “intellagence” may cause readers to doubt yours. (B) **USE.** Clarify what you mean by “intelligence.” Do you mean the general ability to learn, understand information, and recognize patterns, or are you talking about IQ-test performance? If the latter, remember that IQ tests measure only certain components of intelligence, and that many people with disabilities that affect their verbal or motor skills may underperform on these tests. IQ testing also has a history of racial, gender, and other forms of bias.

A diagnosis of intellectual disability requires a score below 70 on a standardized **intellegence** [read **intelligence**] test and below-average performance on a test of adaptive skills.

internet. Lowercase. It's best to think of the internet as a public medium, like radio or television.

interventions can refer to myriad treatments, programs, and policies. Don't use “interventions” without explaining what they are.

irregardless is a nonstandard portmanteau of *irrespective* and *regardless*. Avoid it.

it's, its. “It's” is a contraction of “it is.” “Its” means “belonging to it.” *No possessive personal pronoun (my, your, his, hers, its, ours, theirs) takes an apostrophe.*

Its [read **It's**] always a good idea to double-check your work before sending it out for review.

I need to get my car fixed; I noticed that **it's** [read **its**] lights aren't working anymore.

Jew; Jewish; Judaism. *Jews* are adherents of Judaism or members of a cultural group that historically practiced Judaism. *Jew* is always a noun, never an adjective. *Judaism* is the name of the religion. Avoid using the expression “the Jews,” which smacks of antisemitism.

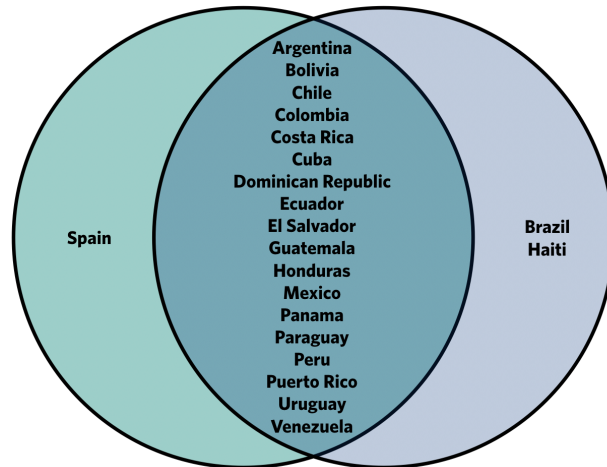
judgment. No *e* after the *g*. There is no “gem” in *judgment*, acknowledgment, or abridgment.

Good disability policy requires sound **judgement** [read **judgment**].

knowledge translation is jargon for telling lay readers and policymakers about your research. Outside grant applications, use clearer language.

Latino/Latina/Latinx and Hispanic overlap, but they are not identical. *Hispanics* have ancestors from Spanish-speaking countries and can be of any race. *Latinos* are people

from primarily Romance-language-speaking areas in the Americas and their descendants. (Descended from Latin, the Romance languages include Spanish, French, Italian, Romanian, Catalan, and Portuguese.) People who belong to these ethnic groups may refer to themselves as Hispanic or Latino. For some, though, *Hispanic* smacks of colonialism, and for some Latin Americans, the term is inaccurate. Haiti and Brazil are Latin American countries, but the primary languages in these countries are Haitian Creole, French, and Portuguese, not Spanish. Brazilians are Latino, but not Hispanic, since the primary language in Brazil is Portuguese. People from Spain are Hispanic, but not Latino.



👉 **NOTE:** If you're familiar with a person's specific ethnicity (e.g., Mexican, Cuban, or Brazilian), it's better to use those terms than general ones like *Hispanic* and *Latino*. A majority of respondents to a 2012 [**Pew Research poll**](#) preferred specific terms over general ones.

lay and lie are similar to other verbs like **set** and **sit**. You **lie** down, but you **lay** things down, just as you **sit** down and **set** things down.

If you're tired, you should **lay** [read **lie**] in bed until you feel refreshed.

I **lay** [read **laid**] the book down on the table last night.

Here's how to conjugate **lay** and **lie**:

Verb	lay	lie
Present	I lay the book on the table.	I lie down.
Past	I laid the book on the table.	I lay awake in bed last night.
Past Participle	I have laid the book there many times before.	I have lain awake in bed multiple times this week.

These conjugations also apply to words such as **underlie**, **overlie**, and **mislay**. Do not confuse the conjugation of the irregular **lie** ("recline") with the regular **lie** ("say something untrue").

layperson; laypeople. One word, though you can also use **lay audiences** or **lay readers**.

learning disability. Some British writers use **learning disability** to refer to an intellectual disability. In America, Canada, Australia, and other countries, people use **intellectual disability**. In these countries, **learning disability** refers to specific disabilities like dyslexia, dysgraphia, and dyscalculia.

learnings. Lessons, knowledge, or information. "Learnings" is ungainly management-speak.

lifespan. One word. Note that **lifespan** is frequently spelled as two words outside medicine and the social sciences. The American Psychological Association uses the one-word version.

lighthearted. One word.

light-headed. Two hyphenated words.

little people; people with dwarfism; people of short stature. More respectful and less pathologizing than "dwarf." "Dwarfs" belongs in *Snow White*, not publications about disability.

lived experience. This phrase is common to refer to people with disabilities or other marginalized people, but it is euphemistic. Be specific: if you mean "people with disabilities," then say so.

longtime; long time. One word as an adjective (a **longtime** supporter of disability rights); two as a noun phrase (they were there for a **long time**).

long-standing. Two hyphenated words, not “longstanding.”

loose is not the opposite of *win*; it’s the opposite of *tight* or *tighten*. You can *lose* your keys or an election, but you can’t “loose” them. You can’t have “lose” shoelaces, either.

I wish the Patriots weren’t **loosing** [read **losing**] so many games this season.

We had to tie up some **lose** [read **loose**] ends.

mental illness. Some professionals and self-advocates are shifting toward *psychiatric disability*. Avoid terms such as “mental disease,” “mental patient,” or “mentally ill clients.”

Middle Eastern and **Arab** are not interchangeable. Although many Arabs do live in the Middle East, not all Middle Easterners are Arabs. Most of the people living in Turkey, Iran, and Afghanistan are not Arabs. Furthermore, not all Middle Easterners or Arabs are Muslims, and not all Muslims are Middle Easterners or Arabs.

For example, Iran, Turkey, and Afghanistan are predominantly Muslim, non-Arab countries in the Middle East. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Palestine are Islamic Middle Eastern countries with Arab majorities, and Israel is a predominantly non-Muslim, non-Arab country.

Middle Easterners can belong to any religion. Most countries in the Middle East are predominantly Muslim, but Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, and people of other faiths also live in the region. Indonesia, Pakistan, and Bangladesh are predominantly Muslim countries outside the Middle East.

millennium; millennial. So spelled.

Since the dawn of the new **millenium** [read **millennium**], the rights of people with disabilities in the United States and around the world have expanded.

mindset. One word. Some newspapers still print “mind-set,” but most dictionaries now list *mindset* as the primary spelling.

minuscule, not “miniscule.”

morbidity, comorbidity. The connotations of the word “morbid” are often inappropriate. For “comorbidities,” use **co-occurring conditions**.

more so. Two words. Avoid the **collision-course compound** “moreso.”

Muslims are adherents of *Islam*. See **Middle Eastern** for a discussion of the differences between ethnicity and religion.

myself, yourself, himself, herself, ourselves, and themselves. These pronouns are all one word.

nation. Lowercase.

National Institutes of Health is plural.

Native American, Native, American Indian, and **Indigenous American** all refer to the indigenous peoples of the United States. Although no consensus exists among these groups, **most Native people prefer to be identified with their ethnic group**, such as Lakota, Wampanoag, or Cherokee. Using *Indian* without a qualifier like *American Indian* may cause confusion, since it's also used to refer to people from India and their descendants. Capitalize *Indigenous* when referring to Indigenous Americans.

never mind, not “nevermind.” See **collision-course compounds**.

nevertheless. One word, not three separate or hyphenated words.

Never the less [read **Nevertheless**], parents with disabilities are still poorer, hungrier, and more isolated than their nondisabled counterparts.

nonbinary; genderfluid. *Nonbinary* people don't see themselves as being either men or women. *Genderfluid* people's identity fluctuates over time. *Nonbinary* and *genderfluid* are both single-word compounds.

nonprofit, not “non profit” or “non-profit.” *Not-for-profit* is also acceptable—remember to hyphenate it when used as an adjective. See also **prefixes**.

The Community Living Policy Center works with several **non profit** [read **nonprofit** or **not-for-profit**] organizations.

no one. Unlike *someone* and *everyone*, *no one* should be written as two separate words. “Noone” looks as though it should rhyme with “moon.” See also **collision-course compounds**.

Noone [read **No one**] should be denied medical treatment because of a disability.

normal often sounds like a value judgment. Instead, use *typically developing*, *nondisabled*, or other value-neutral terms, unless you are using “normal” to refer to other phenomena, like the normal statistical curve.

numerals should never be used at the start of a sentence.

5 [read **Five**] mothers participated in our survey.

obesity; obese. Like “retarded” and “mental retardation,” “obese” and “obesity” are loaded terms that double as jargon. Although these words are diagnostic labels that insurance companies and researchers use, they are often considered stigmatizing and insulting; they come from a Latin term meaning “having eaten oneself into fatness.” The shaming is built into the terms themselves. If you must refer to the medical label, use an endnote. **Never** use the adjective “obese.” In plain-language

writing, just say *high weight*. See also **diagnostic labels** and **high weight, higher weight**. Cf. **retarded, mental retardation**.

🔊 **NOTE:** Weight stigma prevents higher-weight people from receiving healthcare that addresses their needs. This intersects with racism, classism, and other forms of marginalization: people from marginalized groups are less likely to afford nutritious food. Stress and anxiety can also harm people’s metabolism. The language frequently used to describe the relationship between weight and health is often focused on individual “lifestyle problems,” rather than the systems and processes that affect people’s health.

occur; occurred; occurrence. Always two c’s after the o. *Occurred, occurring, and occurrence* also have two r’s.

of course, not “ofcourse,” which is a common misspelling of this two-word phrase. Perhaps “Ofcourse” is a heretofore-unknown character from *The Handmaid’s Tale*. See **collision-course compounds**.

Ofcourse [read **Of course**], there is still room to improve healthcare for parents with disabilities.

offline properly means “away from the internet,” not “later,” “outside this meeting,” or “from the internet.” People can’t download files when they’re offline.

I downloaded this document **offline** [read **from the internet**].

Let’s discuss this **offline** [read **later** or **after the meeting**].

I was **offline** for several days and couldn’t respond to your email.

off. (a) Do not use “off of”; **off** on its own is enough. (b) Do not use **off**—or worse, “off of”—to mean “from.” See also **all, inside, and outside**.

I jumped **off of** [read **off**] the railing.

I borrowed this book **off** [read **from**] my sister.

older adults—or a specific age range, such as “ages 65 and older”—is preferable to *senior citizens, seniors, or the elderly*.

OK; okay; ok; O.K. The preferred variants are **OK** and *okay*. Avoid “Ok” and “ok.” Pick one and stick with it.

oneself is one word; do not use “one’s self.”

on top. Two words. *Onto* may be a word, but “ontop” is not. See also **collision-course compounds**.

otherwise. One word.

outside does not need to be followed by “of.” See also **all**, **inside**, and **off**.

We work with parents with disabilities **outside of** [read **outside**] the United States, too.

queer is a catchall term that includes gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and trans people. **LGBTQ** is used in a similar way.

parameters. Reserve the term *parameter* for variables in statistics. If you want to say *outline* or *border*, then use those terms instead.

parliament should be capitalized only when referring to a specific parliament (or the old-school musical group).

people with intellectual disabilities. Members of this community generally prefer person-first language—*people with intellectual disabilities*—to “intellectually disabled people.”

person- and identity-first language. There are some patterns—people with physical and intellectual disabilities often prefer person-first language, whereas autistic people and people with sensory disabilities (e.g. *blind people*) often prefer identity-first language.

persons sounds stilted; use *people* instead. See also **individuals**.

phenomenon is singular; **phenomena** is plural. Do not say “a phenomena” or “phenomenas.”

policymaker; policymaking. One word. This word also appears as a hyphenated compound, but it’s typically written solid in journalism and public-policy writing. Avoid the unhyphenated “policy making” and “policy maker.”

political ideologies. Lowercase words such as *liberal*, *conservative*, *socialist*, *communism*, *libertarian*, or *centrism* unless they are part of an organization’s name, such as Germany’s *Social Democratic Party*, or are based on a proper name, such as *Marxism*. Capitalizing *conservative* in the phrase *conservative Republican* implies that there is a party called the “Conservative Republicans.”

a **Conservative Republican** [read *conservative Republican*] senator from Texas

a member of the United Kingdom's **liberal democrat** [read *Liberal Democrat*] Party

The consortium included **Liberals** [read *liberals*], conservatives, **keynesians** [read *Keynesians*], **Socialists** [read *socialists*], **marxists** [read *Marxists*], libertarians, and social democrats.

a **Liberal Democratic** [read *liberal Democratic*] representative from Ohio

political titles. Lowercase the words *president*, *congressman*, *congresswoman*, *senator*, *prime minister*, *queen*, *representative*, *king*, *mayor*, and other political titles unless they come directly before a name (e.g., *President Obama*, *Senator Cruz*, *Queen Elizabeth II*). *Member of Parliament* is an exception; this expression should always be capitalized wherever it appears in a sentence. Never capitalize the adjectival forms of these expressions.

The **Mayor** [read *mayor*] of Exampleville tried to make a deal with state **Senators** [read *senators*] and **Representatives** [read *representatives*].

predominant; predominate; predominantly. *Predominant* is the adjective. *Predominate* is a verb. *Predominantly* is an adverb. Do not use *predominate* as an adjective. “Predominately” is nonstandard for *predominantly*.

preexisting conditions is insurance-company jargon. Restrict it to discussions of insurance policy. Note, too, that *preexisting* is written solid; don't hyphenate it.

prefixes. The prefixes *anti-*, *co-*, *multi-*, *non-*, *pre-*, *post-*, *re-*, *sub-*, *super-*, *un-*, *over-*, and *under-* are usually attached directly to the root word, unless the word they precede is a proper noun, or if the resulting compound is difficult to scan. See also **antiracism** and **nonprofit**.

post-doctoral [read *postdoctoral*], re-election [read *reelection*],
non supercalifragilisticexpialidocious [read
nonsupercalifragilisticexpialidocious], anti racism [read **antiracism**],
under achievement [read **underachievement**], non compliant [read
noncompliant], sub-minimum wage [read **subminimum wage**], super
heroes [read **superheroes**], over-confident [read **overconfident**],
unAmerican [read **un-American**]

🔊 **NOTE:** Avoid making too many one-off compounds with the *non-*, *pro-*, or *anti-* prefixes; less familiar ones may be difficult to scan. You may have to recast the sentence to avoid an unwieldy *non-* compound. Note, too, that *pro-choice* and *pro-life* are always hyphenated. Consult a good dictionary if you're not sure whether to hyphenate a prefix.

preventive. Not “preventative.”

principal; principle. *Principal* means “main,” “primary,” or “most important.” A *principal* is also the person in charge of a school. A *principle* is a moral. *Principle* can only be used as a noun, whereas *principal* can be a noun or an adjective. There is no such thing as a “principle investigator.”

The sample's **principle** [read **principal**] diagnoses included epilepsy, Type 1 diabetes mellitus, and generalized anxiety disorder.

Our **principle** [read **principal**] investigator read the research assistant's literature review.

Our **principals** [read **principles**] include self-determination, civil rights, and inclusion.

prior to. *Garner's Modern English Usage* calls *prior to* “one of the most easily detectable symptoms of bureaucratese, officialese, and legalese.” Stick to *before*.

public; pubic. Beware of the embarrassingly common “pubic health” typo. Unless you're discussing the reproductive system, you're far more likely to write about *public health*, *public policy*, and *public employees*. Even the Massachusetts state government has made this mistake:

“Select the following links and review the information regarding **Pubic** [read **Public**] Employees in the State of Massachusetts.”

publicly. So spelled; it's not “publically.”

pursuant to is fluffy legalese; use *under* or *according to* instead.

Pursuant to [read **Under**] the Americans with Disabilities Act, people with disabilities have the right to receive reasonable accommodations.

record-keeping is hyphenated, not solid.

regards. For the terms meaning “about” or “concerning,” *regarding*, *in regard to*, *with regard to*, and *as regards* are standard. Avoid the nonstandard “in regards to” and “with regards to.” The singular noun *regard* means “concern” or “respect.” The plural *regards* means “greetings,” as in “I send her my regards” or “best regards.” The

regards in *as regards* is a verb, not a noun; it's short for "as it regards." See also **irregardless**.

relatives. Words such as *mother*, *aunt*, *grandfather*, and *sister* are usually lowercased. Capitalize only when addressing a specific person (Hi, *Dad*) or using a term of kinship as a title (I visited *Aunt Kimiko* last week).

This brief is about **Mothers** [read **mothers**] with disabilities.

Last year, my **Grandfather** [read **grandfather**] came to visit.

That's all right, **dad** [read **Dad**].

I saw **grandma Jane** [read **Grandma Jane**] weeding her garden.

retarded and mental retardation are outmoded diagnostic labels that are widely considered pejorative. Use *intellectual disability*. If you are quoting someone else, or if older data sets include this category, add a caveat—"mental retardation" has not been the accepted term in nearly a decade. See **intellectual and developmental disabilities** and **diagnostic labels**.

For word-lovers, the death of words can be a sad thing, but they're just words. If they needlessly foment serious trouble among people, they might as well die.

BRYAN GARNER

self-words, including *self-advocacy*, *self-control*, and other *self-* compounds, must be hyphenated, except in the names of organizations that don't use the hyphen, e.g., the Autistic Self Advocacy Network or Self Advocates Being Empowered.

senior citizens; seniors. See **older adults**.

separate. Two *a*'s, two *e*'s. Not "seperate."

somebody, anybody, everybody, and nobody. The pronouns *somebody*, *anybody*, *everybody*, and *nobody* are always one word. "Any body" suggests a selection of corpses.

Some body [read **Somebody**] shared our brief on Twitter.

someone, everyone, and anyone. These pronouns are single-word compounds. Keep in mind, however, that **no one** is an exception and is written as two separate words.

Some one [read **Someone**] called our office while we were out; should we give them a call back?

someday means a nonspecific day, but *some day* refers to a specific one.

sometimes means “occasionally.” **Sometime** means “former”; it can also be an adverb meaning “some unspecified amount of time.” **Some time** is used in expressions like “Let’s pick some time to meet.”

special; special needs. “Special” and “special needs” are euphemisms for “disabled.” Just say that people *have disabilities* or that they are *disabled*.

stakeholders. Unless Buffy the Vampire Slayer is involved in your project, avoid using *stakeholders* instead of more specific terms—or even just “people.”

straight or **heterosexual** people are primarily attracted to people of the opposite binary gender—e.g., straight men are attracted to women.

straightforward is one word if you mean “simple.” “Straight forward” means “directly ahead.”

strategic planning. This phrase is redundant, since a strategy is a long-term plan. Just say “long-term plan” or “strategy.”

subsequently; subsequent to. “Subsequently” and “subsequent to” are merely long-winded—and avoidable—ways of saying *after* or *later*. Cf. **prior to**.

suffer from; afflicted with. Avoid saying that people “suffer from” or are “afflicted with” a disability.

supersede. Not “supercede.” The “sede” in *supersede* is related to the word “seat”; it comes from the Latin *sedere*, “to sit.” Think of a seat when remembering how to spell this word.

technical assistance. To the uninitiated, “technical assistance” suggests calling I.T. to fix your Wi-Fi connection. Use more specific terms such as *advice*, *consulting*, *training*, and *continuing education* to avoid evoking images of tech support.

time frame. Two words.

till and **until** are both acceptable; “til”—with or without an apostrophe—is not.

thank you. Write this expression as two separate words. Hyphenate *thank you* only when it’s used as an adjective: “I received a *thank-you* note.” The **collision-course compound** “thankyou” is never correct.

Thankyou [read **Thank you**] for coming to our annual lecture.

they. Although old-school usage pundits criticize the hypothetical singular *they*, it’s a handy substitute for the cumbersome *he or she* and the sexist generic *he*.

they’re, their, and there. “They’re” is a contraction of “they are.” “Their” means “belonging to them.” “There” is an adverb that designates a location.

toolkit is one word, not two.

toward, towards, and other words ending in -ward(s). Use *toward*, *afterward*, *onward*, and *forward*. “Towards” and “afterwards” are frequent in speech, but most published writing in the United States uses *toward* and *afterward*. *Backwards* is acceptable, but avoid alternating *backwards* and *backward* in the same document.

twofold, threefold, and other **-fold** expressions are all single words.

underlying conditions. Avoid; use “chronic illnesses and disabilities” instead.

uninterested; disinterested. *Uninterested* means “disengaged, unconcerned, or bored”; *disinterested* means “impartial.” This distinction is an important one to maintain; ignore any apologists who wave it away.

utilize; utilization. Avoid whenever possible; *use* is the clearer choice. For phrases like “emergency-department utilization,” try “emergency-department visits,” “emergency-room use,” or another concrete expression. *Utilization* strictly means using something for a purpose other than its traditional one, or making the best use of something—for example, one can *utilize* a paper clip to open a door—but people don’t *utilize* the emergency department; they *use* it.

website; webpage. One word, lowercase. “Web sites” and “Web pages” proliferated in the Nineties; we’ve now graduated to *websites*. Using “web sites,” or worse, the fusty “Web sites,” can seem a little out of date, as though you’re still using Windows 95 and a dial-up modem to access the internet. To avoid the impression that you’re hoarding old AOL CDs, stick to the single-word forms.

well-being is hyphenated; don’t write “well being” or “wellbeing.”

wheelchair-bound; confined to a wheelchair. Wheelchairs give people the freedom to move around—they don’t bind them. You can simply say *wheelchair user* or *person who uses a wheelchair*.

white refers to people of European descent. Lowercase. Some writers also use the term *Caucasian*, but this refers properly to people from the Caucasus region.

who, whom, whoever, and whomever. Most people don’t use *whom* in everyday conversation, so it can be a little tricky to use. In more formal writing, however, it’s important to pay attention to the difference.

OK in casual conversation: Sam is someone **who** I admire greatly.

Correct in formal writing: Sam is someone **whom** I admire greatly.

Who and *whom* are similar to other pronouns like *she* and *her*, *he* and *him*, and *I* and *me*. *Whom* is an object pronoun that serves the same purpose as *her*, *him*, *them*, and *me*. The “m” is a clue—most object pronouns have an “m.” Try replacing *who* or *whom* with another pronoun, such as *I*, *me*, or *them*. If the subject pronoun sounds right (*I*, *he*, *she*, *they*), then *who* is the appropriate pronoun; if *her*, *him*, or *them* sounds right, then *whom* is the right choice. When in doubt, use *who*.

Send this file to **whomever** [read **whoever**] asked for it.

whose, who's. *Whose* is a possessive pronoun; *who's* is a contraction for “who is.”

Who's [read **Whose**] book is that lying on the table?

Whose [read **Who's**] coming to the party?

Wi-Fi is so written; it's not “wifi,” “Wifi,” or “wi-fi.”

worldview. One word.

your; you're. *Your* means “belonging to you”; *you're* is a contraction of “you are.”

Zoom (conference-calling software) is a brand name, so it should be capitalized.

Numbers

In pieces that are predominantly qualitative, express all numbers between 0 and 99 as words, unless they're ages, percentages, or times. Percentages can be worded as "9 percent," with the word "percent" written out.

Isabella Rosales, a **twenty-five**-year-old mother of twins, told us that "the best part of being a mother with cerebral palsy was finding a like-minded community—or at least, it was in the top **10 percent** of experiences."

In more quantitative pieces, write numbers from 0 to 9 as words, unless they're percentages, ages, or times—these should always be expressed as numerals. Use the percentage sign instead of writing out the word "percent." If single- and double-digit numbers both appear in a sentence, write them both as numerals.

About **20%** of adolescents said that they wanted to start working before they graduated from high school, whereas **7%** wanted to wait until they started college. Also, **15** respondents said that they wanted to work with the Massachusetts Department of Rehabilitation before starting the job search.

Never open a sentence with a numeral, even if that numeral is a year. Instead, start with something like "The year 2000" or "In 1998, researchers found. . ."

2020 [read **The year 2020**] was a challenging year for disability advocates.

6 [read **Six**] respondents said that they struggled to communicate with their medical team.

Numbers used loosely, as in "**thousands** of examples" or "**hundreds** of people congregated on beaches to celebrate the Fourth of July—and spread COVID-19," should always be expressed as words, regardless of context.

Unfortunately, **1000s** [read **thousands**] of disabled parents have lost custody of their children because of systemic bias in court proceedings.

We received **100s** [read **hundreds**] of responses from self-advocates on Twitter.

Capitalization

Overview

The following words should always be capitalized:

- names of people, places, and organizations, e.g., *Judy Heumann*, *Lurie Institute for Disability Policy*, *Massachusetts*. These nouns are called “proper nouns.” Adjectives that come from these proper nouns, like *English* or *Japanese*, are called “proper adjectives.”
- names of publications, e.g., the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, *The Economist*, and the *New England Journal of Medicine*. (Note that the “the” may or may not be capitalized as part of a title—this depends on the style used by the publication.)
- names of ethnic and cultural groups, as well as their languages, e.g., *Russian*, *German*, *Wampanoag*, *Tamil*, *Kurd*, *Vietnamese*, *American*, *British*, *Yoruba*
- religions and their adherents, e.g. *Jews*, *Christianity*, *Muslims*, *Hinduism*, and *Buddhists*
- most ideas named after people, such as *Keynesianism*, *Marxism*, *Darwinism*, and *Maoism*
- brand names of companies and products, e.g., *Microsoft Office*, *Google*, *Photoshop*, *Instagram*, *Snapchat*, and *Lysol*. (The exception is brand names that use CamelCase, like *iPhone*, *macOS*, and *iPad*.)
- days of the week (*Saturday*, *Tuesday*), months (*October*, *June*), and holidays (*Hanukkah*, *Easter*, *Ramadan*, *Beltane*, *Diwali*)
- the pronoun *I*

Capitalization in titles

Main titles should be in “up style,” meaning that all nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs are capitalized. Remember to capitalize the verb *to be* and all its inflections (*is*, *was*, *were*, *are*, *being*) and pronouns (*it*, *me*). Lowercase all prepositions, regardless of length (e.g., *with*, *about*, *on*, *toward*, *among*), as well as articles (*a*, *an*, *the*).

Crippling the Academy: Notes toward Disability-Inclusive Research
All I Want for Christmas Is a COVID Vaccine

In up-style headings, the second part of a hyphenated compound should be lowercase if the first part is a prefix that cannot stand alone (e.g., *anti-*).

Anti-intellectualism in American Life

The second part of a hyphenated compound should be capitalized if both parts can stand alone.

Easy-to-Make Activities for All Ages

Service-Learning Opportunities for Youth with Disabilities

You should always capitalize the first and last word of a title, even if it's a preposition or article.

Ideas to Be Reckoned ***With***

Subtitles should be in “down style” or sentence case:

Policy implications

All-caps setting

Use sparingly; all-caps text is HARD TO READ at long measures.

Punctuation

Apostrophes

Apostrophes serve two primary purposes in English: to show the omission of letters in contractions (*I'm*, *they're*, *it's*) or ownership (*Bob's house*).

APOSTROPHES IN CONTRACTIONS

Apostrophes are used to show that letters are missing in contractions like *you're* (you are), *they're* (they are), and *I'm* (I am).

Sometimes people confuse contractions like *it's* and *you're* for the similar-sounding possessive personal pronouns *its* and *your*. If there's an apostrophe in the word, it's a contraction; no possessive personal pronoun uses an apostrophe. See also *you're/your* under **Getting Words Right**.

Its [read ***It's***] a good idea to make documents accessible.

Your [read ***You're***] going to be moving next week, right?

POSSESSIVE APOSTROPHES

The second function of the apostrophe is to show possession. For singular nouns, add an apostrophe and an *s*. This includes singular nouns that end in *s*, *z*, or *sh*.

Jane ***Hawkins's*** interview with NPR

Arturo ***Gomez's*** newly opened bakery

George W. ***Bush's*** secretary of state

For nouns whose plural form ends in *s*, just add an apostrophe:

We brought the pie to my ***parents'*** house for Thanksgiving.

The ***girls'*** father has muscular dystrophy.

The ***boys'*** bathroom needs a new sink.

To make the plural possessive of proper names ending in *s*, *z*, or *sh* such as *Hawkins*, *Gomez*, or *Bush*, add an *-es* and an apostrophe:

We dropped off some food at the **Hawkins'** [read **Hawkinses'**] house.

The **Bush's** [read **Bushes**] are an American political dynasty.

The **Gomez** [read **Gomezes**] came to our New Year's Eve party.

If this form seems awkward to you, you can say something like "We dropped off some food at the Hawkins family's house."

👉 **NOTE:** There are no apostrophes in the possessive personal pronouns *his*, *hers*, *yours*, *ours*, *its*, and *theirs*. "Your's," "hi's," "her's," and "their's" are incorrect, and *it's* means "it is," not "belonging to it."

Exceptions. Irregular plurals like *men*, *women*, and *children* form their possessives with an apostrophe before the s. There are no such words as "mens'," "womens'," or "childrens'." The two-word pronouns *each other* and *one another* also become possessive by adding an apostrophe and an s. When used to mean "persons," *people* also forms its possessive with 's, e.g., "Several *people's* coats hung on the rack."

mens' [read **men's**] clothing, **childrens'** [read **children's**] health,
womens' [read **women's**] rights, other **peoples'** [read **people's**]
 children, **each others'** [read **each other's**] books, **one anothers'** [read
one another's cars]

MISUSED APOSTROPHES

People often use apostrophes to mark plurals—this is the "greengrocer's apostrophe" or "grocer's apostrophe." **Do not use an apostrophe to make words plural.** Some believe that proper nouns, such as "Americans," "Tuesdays," or "Smiths," need apostrophes in their plurals, but that isn't the case. *Apostrophes do not make words plural.* There is no exception for names, days of the week, or other capitalized nouns:

We meet the **Smith's** [read **Smiths**] on **Tuesday's**. [read **Tuesdays**].
 The **Smith's** [read **Smiths**] are **Canadian's** [read **Canadians**].

Others believe that words ending in a vowel (*a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*, or often *y*) need an apostrophe to form their plurals. This is a misconception. Words ending in vowels either add an -s or an -es to become plural, not an apostrophe.

We uploaded our students' **bio's** [read **bios**].

Apostrophes are used to indicate the plural of single letters (there are two e's in the word *fence*), but not for full words.

Colons

Colons are used to introduce lists, combine full sentences, and punctuate greetings in business letters.

Dear Mr. Jones:

It wasn't a good idea to go camping: in fact, the idea was ludicrous.

We made sure to bring three items to the potluck: potato salad, potato chips, and freshly squeezed lemonade.

Don't use colons to introduce lists or quotations that flow with a sentence.

The application requirements **are**: [read **are**] a bachelor's degree or equivalent experience, three letters of recommendation, and a detailed portfolio of writing, design, and editing work.

Commas

COMMAS IN LISTS

The *Oxford comma* is the comma after the second-to-last item in a list:

I had bacon, **eggs**, and sausage for breakfast.

This comma has several names—the Oxford comma, the Harvard comma, the serial comma, the series comma—and inspires strong emotions in those disposed to care about such stylistic niceties. Use it.

JOINING SENTENCES WITH COMMAS

Commas shouldn't be used to join two sentences that can stand on their own. Using commas when periods, semicolons, or colons would be more appropriate creates a run-on sentence—a "comma splice." Remember that *however*, *moreover*, and *additionally* are adverbs, not conjunctions, so they can't be used to join two sentences. To join two full sentences, use a semicolon (;) or add a conjunction such as *but*, *and*, or *or*.

Incorrect: I sent the participants the link to the webinar, however, it turns out I sent them the wrong one.

Correct: I sent the participants a link to the webinar; however, it turns out I sent them the wrong one.

Correct: I sent the participants a link to the webinar. It turns out, however, that I sent them the wrong one.

Correct: I sent the participants a link to the webinar, **but** I sent them the wrong one.

DIRECT-ADDRESS COMMAS

Use a comma to set off people's names when addressing them directly. You don't need one to begin an email—*Hi Tracy* is acceptable as a greeting—but you should use a comma in other kinds of writing. Remember to use a comma both before and after the name.

I'm doing OK Akemi [read **OK, Akemi, and**] and I hope you are, too.

COMMAS AND QUOTATIONS

Introduce quotations with a comma:

I said, "Don't leave your dirty plates on the table."

There's one important exception: don't use a comma to introduce a piece of quoted material that flows naturally in the sentence—here, a comma can be distracting.

Incorrect: He told us that he would, "do his due diligence."

Correct: He told us that he would "do his due diligence."

MISCELLANEOUS COMMA RULES

Follow greetings in emails and friendly letters with a comma.

Dear Jane,

Hi Paul,

Don't use a comma after a sentence-starting **And** or **But** unless the next word is a direct-address noun.

But, he [read ***But he***] had no clue.

And, they [read ***And they***] never emailed us either!

But Mom, [read ***But, Mom,***] I wanted to go on the water slide, too!

And Ignacio, [read ***And, Ignacio,***] it's your turn to take the meeting minutes.

Hyphens

HYPHENATING COMPOUND ADJECTIVES AND ADVERBS

If you are using a multiword phrase as a descriptor (for example, *easy to read* in *easy-to-read articles*), you will need to hyphenate the phrase for clarity. These multiword modifiers are also known as compound or phrasal adjectives and adverbs. You do not, however, need to hyphenate these adjectives and adverbs if they follow the word they modify (the articles were *easy to read*), with some exceptions.

Although these hyphens are rare in unedited writing, they're standard in well-edited books, newspapers, websites, and magazines. This list contains examples of compound adjectives and verbs. Asterisks before phrases denote nonrecommended forms.

assisted-living facility not ****assisted living facility***

bad-faith argument not ****bad faith argument***

cease-and-desist order not ****cease and desist order***

community-based services not ****community based services***

easy-to-read articles not ****easy to read articles***

emergency-department visits not ****emergency department visits*** (they're visiting the emergency department; these aren't department visits that are also emergencies)

hidden-design cakes not ****hidden design cakes*** (a real-life example from a Netflix description of a *Great British Bake-Off* episode; "hidden design cakes" would imply that the contestants were hiding design cakes, rather than making cakes with hidden designs. Fortunately, Netflix hyphenated this correctly.)

in-school suspensions not ****in school suspensions***

long-term services and supports not ****long term services and supports***

long-suffering mother of eight not ****long suffering mother of eight*** (you're not referring to her length, are you?)

question-and-answer sessions not ****question and answer sessions***

third-party suppliers not ****third party suppliers***

well-known disability activist not ****well known disability activist***

well-to-do clients not ****well to do clients***

zero-tolerance guide to punctuation not ****zero tolerance guide to punctuation*** (sadly, a real example)

👉 **NOTE:** Do not hyphenate compound modifiers if the first word is an adverb ending in ***-ly***, since there is no risk of confusion. Note, however, that *adjectives* ending in ***-ly***—and nouns ending in ***-ly*** that are used as adjectives—are not exempted from hyphenation.

a ***reasonably-priced*** [read ***reasonably priced***] restaurant
but a ***curly-haired*** toddler and a ***family-owned*** business

Suspended hyphens. If you are modifying a word with multiple adjectives, you need to put a hyphen after each term. For example, ***home- and community-based services*** frequently appears without a hyphen after “home.” This is incorrect. The hyphen shows that people can receive services both at home and in the community.

This organization provides ***home and community-based*** [read ***home- and community-based***] ***services.***

Without the hyphen, readers may interpret “provides home and community-based services” as “provides a home as well as community-based services,” not “provides home-based services and community-based services.”

Compound adjectives that are always hyphenated. Phrases such as “gluten-free,” “sugar-free,” and “fragrance-free” are always hyphenated. Many adjectives beginning with *all-* (*all-powerful*, *all-encompassing*, *all-inclusive*) are also hyphenated. All expressions with *self-* are hyphenated, both as nouns and as adjectives.

“Permanent open compounds.” Although it’s easier to apply the rules for compound-adjective hyphenation consistently, some writers feel that some common compounds, such as *high school* and *child welfare*, may not need these hyphens, since the context is clear. If you must make exceptions, keep them to a minimum.

Common exceptions:

- child welfare
- high school
- mental health

- middle school
- physical health
- public health
- social media

EXPRESSIONS OF TIME

Expressions of time should be hyphenated when they come directly before a word. These hyphens should follow both the number and the unit of time, e.g.,

- **five-minute** online video
- **eighty-year-old** chef
- **two-month** vacation
- **three-hour** tour
- **two-year** postdoctoral program

Note that expressions of age are not hyphenated when they come after the word they describe: “The book was **five years old**.”

We helped an **eighty year old** [read **eighty-year-old** or **80-year-old**] woman move out of an institution.

Svetlana was **eighty-years-old** [read **eighty years old** or **80 years old**]

Svetlana was **eighty years-old** [read **eighty years old** or **80 years old**].

Periods, exclamation points, and question marks

Periods. Use only one space after a period. Double-spacing after periods used to be common, but the current practice is to use only one space.

Periods are used in some abbreviations. The Latin abbreviations *et al.* (*et alia*, or “and others”), *etc.* (*et cetera*, or “and more”), *e.g.* (*exempli gratia*, or “for example”), and *i.e.* (*id est*, or “that is”) all use periods.

Question marks. Do not use a question mark for indirect questions.

I wonder **where my phone is?** [read **where my phone is.**]

Exclamation points. Use exclamation points (!) sparingly. There are few occasions in which they are warranted.

Quotation marks

Quotation marks are used to report speech, define words or phrases being used as words, and convey doubt or sarcasm (known as “sneer quotes” or “scare quotes”).

Double quotation marks are the default, but if you need to use quotation marks inside another set of quotation marks, use single ones. For example—

“But, Mom, you haven’t read ‘The Reckoning,’ have you?”

Under American rules, **commas and periods *always* appear inside quotation marks**. Note, however, that other punctuation marks like the question mark and the exclamation point go outside the quotation marks unless they’re part of the material being quoted. Semicolons and colons always go **outside** quotation marks.

We published a new brief called ***“Emergency-Department Visits among Autistic Parents”***. [read ***“Emergency-Department Visits among Autistic Parents.”***]

In ***“The Cask of Amontillado”***, [read ***“The Cask of Amontillado,”***]
Edgar Allan Poe combines themes of betrayal and suspense.

Did you read ***“The Cask of Amontillado?”*** [read ***“The Cask of Amontillado?”***]

I read ***“The Cask of Amontillado;”*** [read ***“The Cask of Amontillado”;***]
he read “The Most Dangerous Game.”

You don’t need to use quotation marks—or commas, for that matter—for an indirect quotation:

I said that she should avoid leaving her dirty dishes on the table.

INAPPROPRIATE USES OF QUOTATION MARKS

These emphatic quotation marks are easily confused for sarcastic ones. If a supermarket’s fish is “fresh,” rather than fresh, it’s probably not a good idea to buy it for tomorrow’s dinner. For emphasis, use *italics* or **boldface**, not quotation marks.

SCARE QUOTES

These quotation marks—called “scare quotes,” “sneer quotes,” and similar nicknames—cast doubt on the legitimacy of the word or phrase they surround. Use scare quotes sparingly.

Semicolons

Semicolons link full sentences together and organize complex lists. If there are already commas in a list item, you need to use semicolons for clarity, e.g.—

Clarity is the first aim; economy, the second; grace, the third; dignity, the fourth. —Sheridan Baker, *The Practical Stylist*

Citations

Academic honesty requires citing all quotations, ideas, and other resources from other authors. In briefs and reports for nontechnical audiences, use the American Psychological Association's citation system with two major modifications. You may put citations in footnotes or endnotes to increase readability. You may also list the authors' full names if space permits. Consult the APA's website or style manual for more detailed information about citing sources in APA format. Avoid using abbreviated journal names in citations for nontechnical users; they're difficult to figure out for readers who are not already familiar with the publications.

In more informal documents, you can use hyperlinks and a simple list of publications, or you can use a bibliography.

For academic journal submissions or grant proposals, follow the guidelines specified in the call for proposals.

Exercise: Banish the Jargon and Fluff

Edit this sample brief to use plainer and more natural language. You should also look for errors, inconsistencies, redundancies, and wordy sentences. Citations should be in APA format.

At this point in time, there is a dearth of research data about employment rates and outcomes among individuals with disabilities. The paucity of comprehensive results on the employment outcomes among persons with disabilities reflects the systemic bias (“ableism”) aimed toward these individuals in the United States (U.S.).

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Persons with mental or physical impairments have the right to seek employment without incurring discrimination due to their disability (Bloggs, Smith, & Chandrasekhar 2015; Almeida, Wong, Wilson, & Yamamoto, 2020; Martin et al., 2019). Nevertheless, individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, still encounter significant barriers to accessing and maintaining employment at this time (Al-Jamil, Shellstrop, Anagonye, & Mendoza, 2016; Potter, Weasley, & Granger, 2007). In light of the fact that individuals with disabilities have reduced access to employment, the present authors commenced this study to identify barriers and facilitators to securing and maintaining employment among this population (Hall 31; Bloggs, Smith, & Chandrasekhar, 2015; Gupta Poole & Weiss, 2019).

In order to employ the utilization of our research methodology, a thorough analysis of our data was conducted, utilizing the Stata® 15.0 statistics package on Microsoft® Windows® 10®. Prior to collecting data, approval for our project was granted by the University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB), pursuant to the University’s IRB Protocols—2012 Edition.

A comprehensive review of the relevant literature was conducted using LexisNexis, Academic Search Premier, and Google. Subsequent to the review, a survey was employed in the field to identify persons with disabilities who wanted to report on their experiences identifying and maintaining gainful employment. Comprising of three hundred twelve (312) individuals; the sample was selected through dissemination via our community stakeholder partners. Three hundred (200) participants responded to our survey product, and twelve (12) key informants were interviewed. All 13 key informants endorsed psychological distress due to the fact that they had difficulties securing long-term employment by means of traditional application protocols. 5 participants stated that they experienced a chronic lack of employment opportunities; furthermore, 8 individuals indicated that they had experienced housing instability.

It is our regret that one participant had to withdraw from the study due to the fact that he developed a myocardial infarction and required prompt thoracic surgery. In addition, it was necessary that we cancel our in-person key-informant interviews due to the ongoing COVID-19 (“corona virus”) pandemic. Irregardless of these difficulties, it was still possible to discuss employment with our interlocutors, we utilized Zoom® conference-calling software in order to conduct these interviews in lieu of meeting in person.

It is our hope that this study proves impactful in identifying the key barriers and facilitators in acquiring long-term employment outcomes for individuals with the lived experience of developmental disability. Key stakeholders such as teachers and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) professionals can utilize our research to develop scalable solutions to grow the next generation of gainfully employed persons with disabilities. Additionally, we are confident that they can leverage our findings in order to build capacity in their organizational frameworks and decision-making process. We have initiated a knowledge-translation project to disseminate our learnings to additional subject-matter experts (SMEs), who can leverage their core competencies in order to develop holistic strategies to disseminate our findings to all relevant stakeholders going forward. This will incent community organizations to find comprehensive solutions with regards to removing barriers to employment for persons with disabilities.

Exercise: Spot the Errors

This passage contains several spelling, punctuation, and usage errors. Can you find them all?

Its important to protect your self from COVID 19, other wise known as the Corona Virus. Alot of people have gotten sick from the virus, so you should take the precaution's you need to stay safe. Here are some ways you can protect yourself from corona. When you're around people you don't live with, stay atleast six feet (two meters) apart from eachother. This is called "social distancing". You should wear a mask when ever you go out aswell. Wash your mask everytime you've finished using it. Remember that even if you feel alright, you can still have COVID anyways. Go to a doctor if your worried about having the corona virus, or if you have been around people who have Corona-19. If you have COVID, you should stay away from people as much as possible. This is called "quarantine". You should stay in quarantine for a two week period, after two-week's time, get in touch with your doctor for next steps.

Errors highlighted:

Its important to protect **your self** from **COVID 19**, **other wise** known as the **Corona Virus**. **Alot** of people have gotten sick from the virus, so you should take the **precaution's** you need to stay safe. Here are some ways you can protect yourself from **corona**. When you're around people you don't live with, stay **atleast** six feet (two meters) apart from **eachother**. This is called "**social distancing**". You should wear a mask **when ever** you go out **aswell**. Wash your mask **everytime** you've finished using it. Remember that even if you feel **alright**, you can still have COVID **anyways**. Go to a doctor if **your** worried about having the **corona virus**, or if you have been around people who have **Corona-19**. If you have COVID, you should stay away from people as much as possible. This is called "**quarantine**". You should stay in quarantine for a **two week** period, after **two-week's** time, get in touch with your doctor for next steps.

Corrected version:

It's important to protect **yourself** from **COVID-19**, **otherwise** known as the **coronavirus**. **A lot** of people have gotten sick from the virus, so you should take the **precautions** you need to stay safe. Here are some ways you can protect yourself from **the coronavirus**. When you're around people you don't live with, stay **at least** six feet (two meters) apart from **each other**. This is called "**social distancing**." You should wear a mask **whenever** you go out **as well**. Wash your mask **every time** you've finished using it. Remember that even if you feel **all right**, you can still have COVID **anyway**. Go to a doctor if **you're** worried about having the **coronavirus**, or if you have been around people who have **COVID-19**. If you have COVID, you should stay away from people as much as possible. This is called "**quarantine**." You should stay in quarantine for a **two-week** period. After **two weeks'** time, get in touch with your doctor for next steps.

Answer key:

1. The contraction of **it is** is **it's**. **Its** means "belonging to it."
2. The pronoun **yourself** is one word.
3. **COVID-19** is hyphenated.
4. **Otherwise** is one word.
5. **Coronavirus** is one word. Don't capitalize it unless it is the first word in a sentence.
6. **A lot** is two words. "Alot" is nonstandard.
7. Don't pluralize words with apostrophes. It should be **precautions**.
8. "Corona" is too casual; use **COVID-19** or **the coronavirus**.

9. "Atleast" is not a word. Make it two words: **at least**.
10. There is no such word as "eachother." Make it two words: **each other**.
11. The period belongs inside the quotation marks.
12. **Whenever** is one word.
13. **As well** is two words. There is no such word as "aswell."
14. "Everytime" is not a word. Write it as two words: **every time**.
15. **All right** is two words. "Alright" is a nonstandard spelling of **all right**.
16. "Anyways" is slang. It should be **anyway**.
17. **You're** is the contraction of "you are." **Your** means "belonging to you."
18. **Coronavirus** is one word.
19. It's **COVID-19** or **the coronavirus**, not "Corona-19."
20. The period after "quarantine" belongs inside the quotation marks.
21. **Two-week period** should be hyphenated.
22. The comma after "two-week period" should be a period or semicolon, since what follows it is a complete sentence.
23. **Two weeks' time** should have a possessive apostrophe after the "s" in "weeks." No hyphen is needed in "two weeks' time," since "two weeks" isn't being used as an adjective.

Exercise: Choose the Right Words

1. I uploaded the students' _____.
 - a. bios
 - b. bio's
 - c. bios'
2. I twisted my ankle last week, but I'm feeling _____ today.
 - a. alright
 - b. allright
 - c. all right
 - d. Al Wright
3. My sister was tested for the _____.
 - a. coronavirus
 - b. conoravirus
 - c. corona virus
 - d. CoronaVirus
4. I don't want to _____ my Social Security benefits if I start part-time work.
 - a. lose
 - b. loose
5. The dog wagged _____ tail.
 - a. its'
 - b. it's
 - c. its
6. If you have _____, you should avoid interacting with other people as much as possible.
 - a. corona
 - b. COVID-19

- c. Corona-19
 - d. Covid 19
7. Even if you feel OK, you should visit the doctor _____.
- a. anyways
 - b. anyway
8. The researchers are conducting a study on the _____ experiences of mothers with disabilities.
- a. healthcare
 - b. health care
 - c. HealthCare
9. We published _____ of briefs last month.
- a. alot
 - b. a lot
 - c. allot
10. We gave the speaker two _____ notice so she could prepare her remarks.
- a. month's
 - b. months
 - c. months'
11. Mothers with disabilities _____ a variety of strategies to care for their children.
- a. use
 - b. utilize
 - c. employ the utilization of
12. The Community Living Policy Center studies _____.
- a. long term services and supports
 - b. long-term services and supports
 - c. longterm services and supports

13. Several _____ organizations in Greater Boston sponsored the ADA anniversary celebration.

- a. nonprofit
- b. non-profit
- c. non profit

14. _____ services allow people with disabilities to live at home instead of in institutions.

- a. Home- and community-based services
- b. Home and community-based services
- c. Home and community based services

15. Our _____ investigator sent in the grant proposal.

- a. principle
- b. principal

How to Write a Brief

Introduction: What is a brief, anyway?

Briefs condense research into digestible summaries for laypeople, policymakers, and service providers. The name gives it away: they're relatively *brief* explanations of thorny issues. Good policy briefs allow people outside your field to understand your research so they can make decisions backed by evidence. Here are some tips for writing effective briefs.

How do I structure a brief?

Brief drafts should use the following structure. They can be reorganized afterward, but this is a good start:

- **Summary/Main Findings:** This is an abstract geared toward laypeople or researchers outside your field of study. What is this study about? What important data did you find? Use short, meaningful statements. Avoid jargon.
- **Background:** This is your introduction. Why did you do this study? What is the story behind it, and why should readers care? What is the background of your research? What problems led you to conduct your study?
- **Findings:** What were the most important outcomes of your research?
- **Implications:** How will your findings influence policy, practice, or further research?
- **Methods:** How did you do this study? Make sure to keep this succinct. It should be the shortest section of your brief.

Summary 10%

Background 20%

Findings 30%

Implications 30%

Methods 10%

What makes a good brief?

Principles of Good Brief-Writing



Know Your Audience



Clarify Technical Content



Know Your Story



Use Respectful and Inclusive Language

Good briefs are succinct, understandable, and don't require specialized knowledge. When you write a brief, you should know your audience, know your story, clarify technical content, and use respectful and inclusive language.

Know your audience.

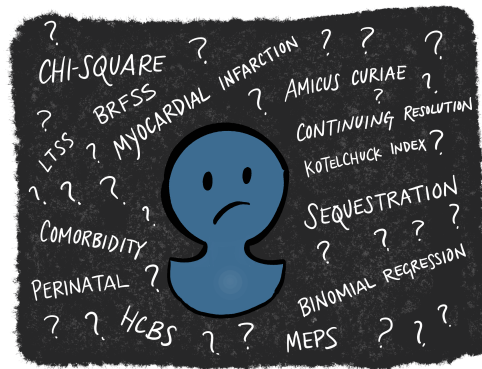
The ideas, facts, and conclusions you emphasize may be different for lawyers, researchers, service providers, and self-advocates. Even if you use the same primary source for your brief, you can focus on different parts for different audiences.

Know your story.

What story are you trying to tell with your data? Behind every research article is a story to tell. For example, the story behind an article about hospitalization disparities among mothers with disabilities might be that disabled mothers may not be able to afford healthcare that would prevent unnecessary hospital stays. It's even more important to consider your story when sharing statistical data.

Clarify technical content.

Keep medical, legal, statistical, and policy jargon to a minimum. Although terms such as *Elixhauser comorbidities* or *amicus curiae* are useful when interacting with specialists, the vast majority of lay readers will not understand technical jargon. Do not pepper your brief with sentences like "According to our binomial regression, nonparents with disabilities ($n=2145$) had statistically significant differences in



receipt of Medicaid insurance compared with parents with disabilities ($n=456$) or nondisabled parents ($n=10,000$) ($p \leq 0.01$).” If you must use technical terms, define them clearly. If a common term has a one-to-one correspondence with a technical term (e.g., *myocardial infarction* versus *heart attack*), use the common term.

Watch out for common corporate and nonprofit jargon, too. Tony Proscio’s essays, “[In Other Words](#),” “[When Words Fail](#),” and “[Bad Words for Good](#),” include numerous buzzwords that organizations use—*stakeholders*, *buy-in*, *capacity*, ad nauseam—and ways to avoid them. **GETTING WORDS RIGHT** includes plain-language alternatives for jargon.

Use accessible language. For general-purpose briefs, aim for a 10th-grade reading level; for plain-language writing, try for a 6th-grade reading level. Microsoft Word has a reading-level checker, as do websites like [Readable](#), [ReadabilityFormulas](#), and [WebFX](#).

Approximate or paraphrase statistical terms when reporting quantitative data. For example, “Our analyses showed that there was a strong association between limited healthcare access and poverty for Medicaid recipients.” Round percentages to the nearest integer.

Identify ways to represent your content visually. Images can turn complicated abstractions into concrete messages. Ann Emery, a data visualization specialist, shares tips on data visualization for reports [here](#) and [here](#).

Use respectful and inclusive language.

Use language about health and disability that reflects the preferences of the people being discussed. For example, blind, deaf, and autistic people often prefer identity-first language, whereas people with intellectual disabilities usually prefer person-first language.

Avoid stigmatizing or dehumanizing language (e.g., “mental retardation,” “birth defects,” or “obese patients”).

Be aware of limitations in datasets, too. National datasets are often poor at capturing information about race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

NOTE: Few national population-health surveys currently include options for transgender or nonbinary respondents. There are fertile people who are not women (some trans men and some nonbinary people) who can get pregnant, and people who are not men who cannot (some trans women and some nonbinary people). Trans people are often lumped in with people who share their sex assigned at birth, though it may not match their gender identity. Some of these problems are a limitation of the large national data sets used to track health

outcomes, and some are limitations set by granting agencies (e.g., studies about women's health). The Williams Institute has **a useful guide** to handling gender in new data sets. In many cases, including some of these caveats in a *Limitations* section may be useful.

For more information about inclusive language, check the **GETTING WORDS RIGHT** section of the manual.

Document Checklist

Content

- ☐ Have we minimized the use of jargon, unfamiliar statistical terms, and other specialized language? Remember that briefs are primarily for people outside your field, like policymakers, self-advocates, and service providers.
- ☐ Have we used inclusive language? Check the Getting Words Right section.
- ☐ Have we avoided nonstandard usage?
- ☐ Have we checked the reading level of your document? Standard briefs should be around the tenth-grade reading level; plain-language ones should be at the sixth-grade reading level.
- ☐ Have we copyedited our briefs? Point people, original authors, and the communications team should review the document before publication.
- ☐ Have we listed the authors? For adaptations of journal articles, authors should be listed in the same order as in the original journal article.
- ☐ Are we using a consistent citation format?
- ☐ Have we included the date? You should include the month and year at the very least.
- ☐ Have we included contact information like the Lurie email address, Twitter, Facebook, and website?
- ☐ Does the brief include a funding statement, including the grant number?

Layout and Design

- ☐ Have we included logos? Our briefs should include the Lurie logo along with the logo for any associated research projects or partner organizations, if applicable. For example, a PEP brief would use both the Lurie and the National Research Center for Parents with Disabilities logos. (See examples in the Appendix.)
- ☐ Have we decided on visuals to accompany the data in our documents? Sara DeLong shares a useful guide to making reports more visually interesting [on Ann Emery's Depict Data Studio website](#). Ann Emery also offers a free course on [improving the design of reports](#). While the communications team will typically be designing visuals, knowing what to emphasize streamlines the process.

- ☐ Have we used the right fonts? If you don't have the official Brandeis fonts (Whitney and Chronicle), use Franklin Gothic and Georgia—they come installed with MS Office. Note: PEP documents use Avenir Next and Avenir Next Condensed and Chronicle. If Avenir Next is not available, use Century Gothic or Corbel. CLPC uses Knockout and Chronicle.
- ☐ Are we using the official Brandeis palette for visual elements, or a close approximation? (See “Appendix: Lurie Themes.”) Using the eyedropper tool in Word, PowerPoint, or Photoshop can help you get the right shade. Also, are we using enough contrast in our design to ensure everyone can read what we've written?
- ☐ Have we made the document accessible for blind and partially sighted people? Some of our student assistants and staff members have been trained to make PDF files accessible for blind people and people with low vision. PDFs should also have embedded image descriptions.

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Appendix: Grammar and Structure

Parts of speech

adjectives. Adjectives describe nouns and pronouns. Adjectives and adverbs are also called describing words or modifiers.

blue, old, Russian, round, short, thoughtful, fast, Taiwanese, silver

adverbs. Adverbs describe verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs.

always, never, sometimes, quickly, carefully, not, however, fast

conjunctions. Conjunctions, or combining words, connect parts of sentences together.

and, but, or, so, yet, because, since, although

nouns. Nouns are words for people, places, things, or ideas.

epidemiologist, university campus, imperialism, book,
postmodernism, grammar, Harriet Tubman, apple, graveyard

pronouns. Pronouns take the place of nouns.

someone, they, he, she, I, everybody, whoever, each other

prepositions. Prepositions express relationships between two other words used in a sentence.

toward, against, through, on, about, under, of, from, by, between,
among, concerning

verbs. Verbs express actions or states of being.

is, feel, say, does, went, governed, ruled, walk

Appendix: Principles of Good Brief-Writing

Principles of Good Brief-Writing CHEAT SHEET



Know your audience.

Who is this document for?
How should I frame this issue?



Know your story.

What information stands out?
Why should people care?



Clarify technical content.

How can I explain the data?
How can I visualize the findings?



Use respectful and inclusive language.

How can I use language that helps, rather than hurts?

Appendix: Commonly Misspelled Words and Phrases

ableism	criticism	independent
abridgment	curiosity	in fact
accelerate	deceive	in front
accidentally	definitely	inoculate
accommodate	dependency	intelligent
achievement	dependent	irresistible
acknowledgment	each other	judgment
address	embarrass	liquefy
ad nauseam	every time	maneuver
aging	exaggerate	minuscule
all right	exalt	misspelling
a lot	excel	necessary
anoint	excellent	never mind
argument	foreword	non sequitur
at least	fulfill	occasion
autistic	guarantee	occasionally
beginning	grammar	occur
belief	harassment	occurrence
believe	heterogeneous	oneself
brief	holistic	oppression
cancellation	homogeneous	parallel
<i>ceteris paribus</i>	idiosyncrasy	persevere
chief	implement	possess
collectible	in case	possession
conceive	independence	preferable

preference

principal

principle

propaganda

psychiatric

psychological

publicly

rarefy

receive

recognize

relevant

rhythm

ridiculous

separate

stupefy

success

successful

specimen

supersede

supplement

threshold

vacuum

warranty

Appendix: Buzzwords, Jargon, and Fluff

as per	engagement (unless someone's getting married)	parameters (for "perimeters," "borders," or "guidelines")
at the end of the day		
at this point in time	going forward	persons (for "people")
at this time	grow the business	prior to
because of the fact that	functionality	proven track record
best-of-breed	holistic	pursuant to
bring to the table	individuals (for "people")	scalable
buy-in	impact (v.)	stakeholders
capacity; capacity-building; expanding capacity	impactful	strategic planning
-centered	incent	subsequent to
-centric	incentivize	synergy
<i>ceteris paribus</i>	in light of the fact that	take this offline
comorbidities (Elixhauser or otherwise)	in receipt of (your letter, Medicaid, your invoice)	think outside the box
core competencies	interventions	trajectory
critical	learnings	utilize
crucial	leverage (v.)	utilization
deliverables	mission-critical	
due to the fact that	mission-driven	
dynamic	new innovations (as opposed to <i>old</i> innovations?)	
enclosed please find	operationalize	
endorse (for "report")	owing to the fact that	
	paradigm	

Appendix: The Blacklist

Avoid with extreme prejudice these nonstandard, noninclusive, and jargonistic terms—unless someone else is being quoted.

“Alot” for **a lot** (nonstandard)

“Alright” for **all right** (nonstandard)

“Anyways” for **anyway** (nonstandard—reserve this one for spoken language)

Hearing impaired for **hard of hearing** (noninclusive)

High- and low-functioning (noninclusive)

Impactful (management-speak)

“Irregardless” for **regardless** or irrespective (nonstandard)

Obese/obesity (noninclusive jargon)

People with autism/people with autism spectrum disorder (noninclusive)

Retarded and mental retardation (noninclusive)

Appendix: Logos

Brandeis

THE HELLER SCHOOL
FOR SOCIAL POLICY
AND MANAGEMENT
Lurie Institute for
Disability Policy



The Lurie Institute
for Disability Policy



National Research Center for Parents with Disabilities
Parents Empowering Parents
Padres Empoderando a Padres

Appendix: Lurie Themes

Lurie Themes

-  **Dark Blue** | Hex #003478 | R: 0 G: 52 B: 120
-  **Light Grey** | Hex #8C8C8C | R: 140 G: 140 B: 140
-  **Dark Grey** | Hex #3F3F3F | R: 63 G: 63 B: 63
-  **Teal** | Hex #5FA49D | R: 95 G: 164 B: 157
-  **Purple** | Hex #81358A | R: 125 G: 53 B: 138
-  **Light Yellow** | Hex #F1EA75 | R: 241 G: 234 B: 117

PEP/INROADS Themes

-  **Dark Green** | Hex #275D4E | R: 39 G: 93 B: 78
-  **Light Grey** | Hex #8C8C8C | R: 140 G: 140 B: 140
-  **Dark Grey** | Hex #3F3F3F | R: 63 G: 63 B: 63

CLPC Themes

-  **Chartreuse** | Hex #D6DA34 | R: 214 G: 218 B: 52
-  **Dark Grey** | Hex #3F3F3F | R: 63 G: 63 B: 63
-  **Medium Blue** | Hex #39B3E7 | R: 57 G: 179 B: 231