

SOME TIPS ON SCHOLARLY WRITING

1. Stick strictly to the topic. Anything else is off the topic. (When in doubt, refer to your purpose statement.)
2. Organize clearly. Begin with an appropriately-sized introduction, which includes a purpose statement.
3. Proper use of paragraphs is critical - make sure you understand the purpose of paragraphs, so you will know when one ends, and another should begin!
4. Make sure sentences are complete.
5. Keep sentences crisp, short and simple; this results in better grammar.
6. Use "and" not more than once or twice in a sentence. After that, it's better to begin a new sentence.
7. In a series, use "and" only before the last item (e.g. She bought apples, grapes, beans and tomatoes).
8. It's better to use **full words** than contractions (e.g., "do not" rather than "don't").
9. For numbers under 20, use words rather than digits (e.g., "nineteen" rather than "19").
10. "Many" is better English than "a lot of."
11. "Someone" or "anyone" or "no one" is better English than "somebody," "anybody" or "nobody."
12. Use **your own words** as much as possible. Save quotations for exceptional occasions.
13. Quotations:
 - quotations must be perfectly exact;
 - use quotation marks for any quotation of more than **3 words**.
 - if omitting some words, indicate the omission with 3 dots (...). E.g., "She bought apples, grapes...and tomatoes."
14. In most cases avoid adverbs (e.g., extremely, terribly, fairly, very, quite).
15. Be sure that subjects and pronouns agree in number.
E.g., Anyone who wants to see her/his work should come see me.
OR Those who want to see their work should come see me.
NOT: Anyone who wants to see their work should come see me.
16. Use "that" for things and "who/whom" for people.
E.g., The people who came were happy. ✓
NOT: The people that came were happy. ✗
17. Punctuation:
 - Commas (,) normally link dependent clauses to independent clauses.
E.g., Although she did not study, she passed the course anyway.
 - Commas (,) also normally join independent clauses with "and" or "but."
E.g., She did not study, but she passed the course anyway.
 - Semi-colons (;) are stronger than commas. They join independent clauses without "and" or "but."
E.g., She did not study; she passed the course anyway.
 - Colons (:) often precede a series.
E.g., She did not study for the following reasons: she had a job, was sick, and cared for her father.
18. Apostrophes:
The word "its" only has an apostrophe when used as a contraction for "it is", never when indicating a possessive. E.g., It's time to go home. OR The snake hissed and rattled its tail.
** See also *The Apostrophe Protection Society Website*: <http://www.apostrophe.fsnet.co.uk/>