Pocket Writing and Style Guide
This writing and style guide is a quick reference guide that complements both *A Writer’s Reference*, seventh edition, edited by Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers, and *The Chicago Manual of Style* (*CMS*), seventeenth edition. For additional and more in-depth information on writing and grammar, please refer to *A Writer’s Reference*, and for more complete information on citations, refer to *CMS*.

The sections included in the *NWC Pocket Writing and Style Guide* aim to help with three key issues:

- **Grammar**: Students can find information relating to common grammatical concerns.
- **Drafting**: Students can get fast tips on outlining, brainstorming, and writing papers.
- **Citing**: Students will find information on and examples of Chicago-style bibliography references and footnotes/endnotes.

We hope that you find this pocket style guide useful as you complete your course work at the Naval War College. Remember that the Writing Center is available for assistance as well, so please do not hesitate to ask for help. Feel free to stop by the Writing Center for quick questions. To schedule an appointment, please go to [https://usnwc.mywconline.com](https://usnwc.mywconline.com). Once you have created an account, you will be able to schedule appointments online. We are delighted to assist you in any way we can.
What you really need to know about . . .

GRAMMAR

Using appropriate grammar is a part of writing clearly and concisely. Writing with appropriate verb forms, correct punctuation, and the like will polish your ideas and make your paper stronger and clearer to readers. The following information and strategies can help make your writing more compelling and effective.

Comma: indicates a pause in the text and highlights relationships between words and phrases within a sentence; generally used to emphasize a particular part of a sentence or to clarify a meaning.

Correct Use of Comma:

- To separate two independent clauses (sentences that can stand alone) with a coordinating conjunction (and, or, but, for, nor, yet, so) in between

  I’m going to rock and roll all night, and I will party every day.

- To separate a series of phrases, letters, or numbers

  Seminars one, two, and three were the first to submit papers for review.

- To separate an adverbial modifier (also known as an introductory phrase) if it appears at the beginning of a sentence

  During the staff ride, students got to experience Pickett’s charge firsthand.

- To set off transitional words

  The students differed, however, in their discussion of the book *On War*. 
• To emphasize contrasting statements in a sentence

It was the quality of her JMO paper, not her Vego summary, which won the student the writing award.

• To separate parallel adjectives

It was a long, hot day to go for a hike.

• To separate parenthetical or nonrestrictive elements

The MRE, though unappetizing, was filling.

• To separate an adjective from the noun it follows

The general, old and wise, will never forget his first tour overseas.

• To separate city and state names

I work on a base in Newport, Rhode Island.

Incorrect Use of Comma:

• To separate two independent clauses (comma splice)

The Marine Corps Marathon is today, I am going to run 26 miles.

Corrected: The Marine Corps Marathon is today; I am going to run 26 miles. (Note: A period can also replace a semicolon here, as can a coordinating conjunction with a comma before it.)

Semicolon: a mark of separation that designates an almost complete stop.

Correct Use of Semicolon:

• To connect two complete sentences

Col. Smith wants the documents by 0800; he needs to evaluate the information.
• **Before conjunctive adverbs (therefore, however, thus, hence, nevertheless) when they connect two related, complete thoughts**

We have turned in our paper proposals; therefore, we now have time to research topics for our NSA paper.

• **To separate a series of clauses or phrases if one or more elements contain internal punctuation**

Attending the awards ceremony were Dr. Jones, the project’s benefactor; Mr. Davis, the project engineer; and Mrs. Beck, the president of the university.

**Incorrect Use of Semicolon:**

• **To separate two independent clauses if a coordinating conjunction is present**

I fought in Operation Desert Storm; and I fought in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

**Corrected:** I fought in Operation Desert Storm; I also fought in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

**Colon:** generally used to call attention to the words that follow it; when used in a sentence, a colon can be used ONLY after an independent clause (complete sentence).

(Note: According to the CMS, “When a colon is used within a sentence [such as in the first example below]..., the first word following the colon is lowercased unless it is a proper name. When a colon introduces two or more sentences..., when it introduces a speech in dialogue or an extract..., or when it introduces a direct question, the first word following it is capitalized.”)

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Correct Use of Colon:

• After an independent clause to call attention to a list, an appositive, or a quotation

Maslow considers the following in his proposed hierarchy of needs: physiological, safety, love/belonging, esteem, and self-actualization.

• After the salutation in a formal letter

Dear Secretary Mattis:

• Between independent clauses if the first clause introduces or sets up the second

Remember the old saying: Be careful what you wish for.

• Between independent clauses when (1) the second clause directly (not just vaguely) relates to the first and (2) the emphasis is on the second clause

Swarming maximizes target saturation: it can be especially valuable in littorals.

(Note: You can also use a semicolon or period to link two independent clauses that bear close relation, though “the colon is a little softer than the period, but a little harder than the semicolon.”)

Incorrect Use of Colon:

• Between a verb and its object

This year I will write: a JMO paper, a leadership paper, and an S&P paper.

Corrected: This year I will write a JMO paper, a leadership paper, and an S&P paper.

• Between a preposition and its object

During his period of service, my brother was stationed at: Norfolk, North Island, and Yokosuka.

Corrected: During his period of service, my brother was stationed at the following bases: Norfolk, North Island, and Yokosuka.

• At the end of a complete sentence before a quotation (if this sentence does not specifically lead up to or introduce the quotation)

The Peloponnesian War offers many lessons today: “When one great power threatens to displace another, war is almost always the result—but it doesn’t have to be.”

Corrected: The Peloponnesian War offers many lessons today. “The Thucydides Trap” is based on Graham Allison’s idea that the United States and China, whom he sees as resembling Sparta and Athens, respectively, are on a collision course towards war: “When one great power threatens to displace another, war is almost always the result—but it doesn’t have to be.”

• After “such as,” “including,” or “for example”

The U.S. operates in over 100 countries, including: Bahrain, Brazil, and South Korea.

Corrected: The U.S. operates in over 100 countries, including Bahrain, Brazil, and South Korea.

Dash: used for emphasis or to represent a sudden break in thought; frequently used when a writer wishes to represent linguistic patterns in dialogue (e.g., repetition, after-thoughts). Use sparingly, particularly in academic writing.
Correct Use of Dash:

- To point out a sudden break in thought or to set off a parenthetical element

  On War—a seminal text on the theory of war—is as relevant now as it was in the nineteenth century.

- To emphasize a single word or phrase

  Clam chowder—that is the best soup at the Black Pearl.

- To emphasize the second (or third, etc.) independent clause of sentence

  I was not exaggerating when I emphasized the importance of logistics vessels—they can even decide the course of a war.

- For repetition or to give the appearance of an after-thought

  The soldiers’ morale suffered significantly after losing over 1,000 men in the battle—they were ready to surrender.

(Note: Dashes can be used in place of commas, colons, semicolons, or parentheses, depending on the context. In all cases, dashes offer a greater degree of separation between thoughts.)

Incorrect Use of Dash:

- In scholarly writing if another punctuation mark can better replace it

  I’m running three races this month—a 5k, a 10k, and a half marathon.

  Corrected: I’m running three races this month: a 5k, a 10k, and a half marathon.
Sun Tzu—who wrote *The Art of War*—was not only a military strategist, but also a Chinese general.

**Corrected:** Sun Tzu, who wrote *The Art of War*, was not only a military strategist, but also a Chinese general.

**Hyphen:** generally used to create the impression of unity or to clarify ambiguity, particularly when distinguishing a similar-sounding compound word from a word with a different meaning.

**Correct Use of Hyphen:**

- **When the modifier precedes the noun it modifies**
  
  The meeting will assess the long-term goals in Afghanistan.

- **When the modifier is a letter or number**
  
  MS-13 originated in Los Angeles in the 1980s.

- **When a letter would be doubled or tripled in order to create a compound word**
  
  Anti-immigration laws were a controversial topic in last year’s election.

- **When a prefix is added to a proper noun**
  
  Pre-World War II is an especially important era for military strategists to consider.

(Note: Prefixes such as non- and mid- often combine with a common noun to form one word, e.g., noncombatant.)

**Incorrect Use of Hyphen:**

- **When the modifier follows the noun it modifies**
  
  We will assess our goals, which are lengthy-in-scope, at the meeting.
Corrected: We will assess our goals, which are lengthy in scope, at the meeting.

• After adverbs ending in –ly

I’m going to order a freshly-baked croissant at the new French bakery down the street.

Corrected: I’m going to order a freshly baked croissant at the new French bakery down the street.

Parentheses: enclose explanatory words, phrases, or sentences; may provide a reader with a note of interest or provide valuable information.

Correct Use of Parentheses:

• To clarify the meaning of a particular passage without changing its message

There was a small dent in the plane (though no one knows how it got there).

(Note: If parentheses occur at the end of a sentence, the period should appear after the second parenthesis.)

The president vetoed the bill. (However, Congress can overturn the veto.)

(Note: An entire sentence is sometimes—though rarely—enclosed in parentheses. In this case, the ending punctuation mark should go inside the second parenthesis.)

• To enclose numerals or letters that indicate sequence

The soldier’s narrative (see Section A) described the Battle of Fallujah.

Incorrect Use of Parentheses:

• If the information in the parentheses is necessary to the sentence’s meaning and interferes with the grammatical structure of the sentence
There was a small dent (in the plane), though no one knows how it got there.

**Corrected:** There was a small dent in the plane (though no one knows how it got there).

*(Note: Parentheses almost always disrupt the flow of a sentence; thus they should be used only occasionally, when absolutely necessary.)*

**Brackets:** help ensure that readers can understand quoted and/or parenthetical material; also used to correct any mistakes made by the original author (i.e., misspelling, capitalization errors).

**Correct Use of Brackets:**

- **To clarify an ambiguous pronoun in a quotation**
  
  “[Abraham Lincoln] gave the Gettysburg Address in this very spot.”

- **To insert words or phrases that help clarify the meaning of a quotation**
  
  “The immediate overriding menace of nuclear war [which helped to characterize attitudes during the Cold War] seems to have faded from the forefront of national concern,” according to Stohl and Smith.³

- **If you are quoting an independent clause but not the whole sentence (omitting words at the beginning of the quoted sentence)**

  According to Clausewitz, “[I]t is certain, and may be regarded as a truth of the first importance, that to attack an enemy thoroughly

inured to War, in a good position, is a critical thing.”

- To indicate a misspelling, using the bracketed Latin word [sic], meaning “thus” or “such.”

“We will construct the Maginot line too [sic] prevent the Germans from invading France.”

**Italics:** used to indicate book titles, to signal foreign expressions, or to add emphasis; should be used consistently throughout the paper.

**Correct Use of Italics:**

- To emphasize a particular word or phrase

  I would *never* leave my post unattended.

- For titles of books, newspapers, periodicals, films, paintings, and TV shows

  *Lincoln in American Memory*, the *New York Times*, *Saving Private Ryan*, *Joint Force Quarterly*, *Mona Lisa*

- To highlight unfamiliar foreign words and phrases in a text.

  He was a *bon vivant*.

- When referring to words, letters, or figures.

  The word *strategic* is often misinterpreted.

**Incorrect Use of Italics:**

- To emphasize familiar foreign words

  The officer’s favorite food is *sushi*.

  **Corrected:** The officer’s favorite food is sushi.

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For titles of individual chapters in books or articles in periodicals

*On Danger in War* by Clausewitz appears in the text in *On War.*

**Corrected:** “On Danger in War” by Clausewitz appears in the text in *On War.*

**Abbreviations:** shortened forms of words or phrases; should be used only if context is clear to the reader; must be spelled out completely the first time they are used in a paper.

**Correct Use of Abbreviations:**

- When using acronyms (words formed by combining the first letters of a series of words in a phrase).

  NASA, SCS, scuba

  *(Note: Abbreviate with caution. Unless an abbreviation or acronym is so familiar that it is used more often than the full form (e.g., CIA, FBI, NATO, WTO), write the words in full on the first appearance. Do not introduce an abbreviation or acronym if it will not be used standing alone later.)*

  *(Note: Many acronyms are written in capital letters without punctuation (NASA). However, other acronyms (such as scuba) have become so familiar that they function as words themselves and appear in lowercase.)*

  *(Note: Acronyms have periods separating their letters if they have only two letters and no periods when there are three or more letters. E.g., U.S. and USA.)*

**Incorrect Use of Abbreviations:**

- When beginning a sentence, with the exception of address terms (e.g., Mr. or Ms.)

  CVWs, despite what some would call their slow decline, are still a visible projection of American sea power.
Corrected: Carrier air wings, despite what some would call their slow decline, are still a visible projection of American sea power.

- Before identifying a person by his or her full military rank
  
  Brig. Gen. Martinez assisted in overseeing the tactical planning of the operation.

  Corrected: Brigadier General John Martinez assisted in overseeing the tactical planning of the operation.

(Note: Use the full rank title to identify a person for the first time, and then switch to Brig. Gen. Martinez.)

- If the precedes the term
  
  Hon. Jones made a difficult decision.

  Corrected: The Honorable Jones made a difficult decision.

- For states and territories
  
  His next assignment for the Navy is in Norfolk, VA.

  Corrected: His next assignment for the Navy is in Norfolk, Virginia.

Capitalization: use of an uppercase letter to mark the beginning of a sentence or a proper noun.

Correct Use of Capitalization:

- For the first word in every sentence
  
  By the end of his career, he had achieved the rank of rear admiral.

- For the first word of every expression used as a sentence
  
  Really? How come?
• When writing the salutation and the closing of a letter
  Dear Richard, Sincerely,

• For proper nouns
  United States Navy

• For a common noun or adjective that forms an essential part of a proper noun
  Rappahannock River traverses the entire northern part of Virginia.

(Note: If a common noun stands for a proper noun, do not capitalize the word. Rappahannock River versus the river)

• For all names of documents, national or international government and military organizations, and regions
  the Declaration of Independence, Korean War Veterans Association, Gaza Strip

• For names of departments within organizations
  Department of Agriculture

• For military ranks when used with proper names
  Colonel Fairfax (versus colonel)

• For proper names of colleges, organizations, committees, and agencies
  Naval War College, Dean of Academics

• For official degree names only when they are spelled out
  Master of Education (versus master’s degree)

(Note: When referring to a degree in general terms, it requires an ‘s.)
• For the titles of official regulations, directives, acts, laws, bills, and treaties

    the Tea Act, the Bill of Rights (versus the bill), Treaty of Versailles

• For names of programs, movements, or concepts when used as proper nouns

    the United Nations, the Quadruple Alliance

• For nouns followed by numbers or letters, with the exception of the following: note, page, paragraph, line, size, and verse.

    Figure A, Section 1

• For compass directions when referring to a specific region or if the direction is part of a proper name

    Southern Maryland (versus south); Since moving to Wisconsin, I have decided to reside in the North.

• For days of the week, months, races, languages, seasons, holidays, religions, and events

    Monday, German, Memorial Day, Sufism, Chili Cook-off

• For brand names

    Nike shoes (versus shoes)

• For specific course names

    History 545 (versus history), Joint Military Operations

• For the first word after a colon if what follows forms two or more complete sentences

    I have several goals for my immediate future: First, I’m going to win big in the stock market.
Second, I will marry Jennifer Lawrence. Third, I will become famous for climbing Mount Everest.

(Note: Do not capitalize the first word after a colon if it forms only one complete sentence. Example: I do not have a plan for my future: the end of the world is coming soon.)

- For the first word of a quoted sentence
  
  Winston Churchill once said, “He is a modest little man who has a good deal to be modest about.”

Incorrect Use of Capitalization:

- For common nouns that refer to proper nouns
  
  The Military
  
  Corrected: the military

Numerals: help to determine size or amount of a person, place, or thing

Correct Use of Numerals:

- When referring to money
  
  $100

- When referring to measurements, dimensions, and/or temperatures
  
  57cm, 7x6, 25 degrees Celsius

- When referring to percentages, ratios, proportions, and/or scores
  
  25%, ¼

- When referring to mathematical expressions
  
  100 + 25 = 125
• When referring to abbreviations, symbols, and/or serial numbers
  SECNAV M-5216.5

• When using unit modifiers and hyphenations
  M-16

• When referring to dates or military time
  14 June 2010, 1300

• When referring to state, federal, and interstate highways
  I-95, Route 1

Incorrect Use of Numerals:

• When a cardinal number is less than ten

  He owns 4 pairs of boots.

  Corrected: He owns four pairs of boots.

(Note: CMS 17th ed. also allows for writing out all numbers less than 100. Both practices are correct, though many publications follow the zero through nine rule.)

(Note: Spelled-out numerals form their plurals as other nouns do (i.e. eighties, nineties). Numerals form their plurals by adding –s, and no apostrophe is needed (i.e. 1840s, 450s).)

(Note: If numbers appear in a series and one of those numbers is greater than nine, all the numbers in the series should appear as numerals (1, 6, and 13).)

• When an ordinal number is less than or equal to one hundredth.

  The relevant quotation appears on the 93rd page of the book.
Corrected: The relevant quotation appears on the ninety-third page of the book.

- **When referring to a particular century**

  The 21\textsuperscript{st} century necessitates a new view of warfare that takes into consideration the complexities of the cyber realm.

  Corrected: The twenty-first century necessitates a new view of warfare that takes into consideration the complexities of the cyber realm.

- **When referring to a decade**

  The 90s saw a great boom in the U.S. economy.

  Corrected: The nineties saw a great boom in the U.S. economy.

- **When referring to a time of day without using a.m. or p.m.**

  12:30, 3:15, 8:45, 9:15 train

  Corrected: twelve thirty, three fifteen, eight forty-five, nine-fifteen train

  \textit{(Note: Hyphenate the time of day when using it as an adjective.)}

- **If the number is the name of a numbered street and is less than one hundred**

  The restaurant is on 5\textsuperscript{th} Avenue.

  Corrected: The restaurant is on Fifth Avenue.

- **If the number begins a sentence**

  15 days ago, I gathered some interesting research for my MMS paper.
Corrected: Fifteen days ago, I gathered some interesting research for my MMS paper.

- **If the number is used with a formal subject**
  
The 13 colonies came together to form the United States.

  Corrected: The thirteen colonies came together to form the United States.

- **When preceding a compound modifier with a number**
  
  She sold 80 35-millimeter cameras in one week.

  Corrected: She sold eighty 35-millimeter cameras in one week.

**Possessive Nouns:** used to indicate ownership; formed by adding an apostrophe (‘) or an apostrophe s (‘s) to the end of a word.

**Correct Use of Possessive Nouns:**

- **If the noun does not end in –s, add ‘s.**
  
  The Secretary of State’s dress for the inaugural ball was very stylish.

- **If the noun is singular and ends in –s or an s sound (i.e. –x or –z), add –’s.**
  
  Her article is about Marx’s critique of capitalism.

  The bus’s passengers gasped as the driver accelerated to 20 miles above the speed limit.

  (Note: *A Writer’s Reference* observes: “To avoid potentially awkward pronunciation, some writers use only the apostrophe with a singular noun ending in –s: Sophocles’.”)

• **If the noun is plural and ends in –s, add only an apostrophe.**

  The military officers’ uniforms were brand new.

• **If the noun is plural and does not end in –s, add –’s.**

  The women’s rugby team beat the men’s team.

• **For compound nouns (use –’s or s’ with the last element)**

  My mother-in-law’s visit was too long.

• **For indefinite pronouns**

  Someone’s coffee got knocked from the counter and spilled all over my new fur coat.

• **To show possession of two or more nouns**

  The instructor found both Tom’s and Theresa’s contributions to the seminar discussion very germane to the topic at hand.

*Incorrect Use of Possessive Nouns:*

• **To put acronyms and numbers in plural form**

  Several IED’s hit our convoy.

  **Corrected:** Several IEDs hit our convoy.

  In the 1980’s the United States was embroiled in the Cold War.

  **Corrected:** In the 1980s the United States was embroiled in the Cold War.

• **With the possessive pronoun its**

  It’s effectiveness for keeping sleep-deprived students engaged was clear.
Corrected: Its effectiveness for keeping sleep-deprived students engaged was clear.

**Pronouns**: words that take the place of a person, place, or thing; frequently used in writing to avoid repetition.

- **Subjective Case**: pronouns used as subjects (I, you, he, she, it, we, they, who)

- **Objective Case**: pronouns used as objects of verbs or prepositions (me, you, him, her, it, us, them, whom)

- **Possessive Case**: pronouns that express ownership (mine, yours, his, hers, its, ours, theirs, whose)

(Note: Possessive pronouns should not be confused with possessive determiners, which function as adjectives: my, your, his, her, its, our, their, whose.)

**Correct Use of Pronouns**:

- **When pronouns function as subjects**

  My supervisor and I/me have a few things to discuss. (I have a few things to discuss.) My supervisor and I have a few things to discuss.

  (Note: If a compound sentence contains two pronouns, or a noun and a pronoun, drop the noun or other pronoun. This action will help you decide which case pronoun you need to use in the sentence.)

- **When pronouns function as objects**

  My friend bought pizza for my sister and me.

  Peer editing helps you as much as (it helps) me.

  (Note: In this case, the pronoun is functioning as the object of the preposition for.)

- **When pronouns function as possessives**

  The destroyer is hers to command.
• In cases of indefinite pronouns, which refer to non-specific persons or things (anybody, anyone, anything, each, either, everybody, everyone, everything, neither, nobody, no one, nothing, somebody, someone, something)

Everyone runs at his or her own pace.

(Note: It is becoming increasingly accepted to replace “his or her” in these contexts with “their.”)

• In cases of generic nouns, which refer to a typical member of a group. Although they may seem to have plural meanings, they are singular.

A captain must work hard to earn the respect of his or her subordinates.

(Note: Another way to convey this meaning is to write the generic noun in the plural and use the pronoun “they.”)

Captains must work hard to earn the respect of their subordinates.

• In the case of collective nouns. According to A Writer’s Reference, “Ordinarily the group functions as a unit, so the noun should be treated as singular; if the members of the group function as individuals, however, the noun should be treated as plural.”

The platoon followed the enemy into the jungle. (as a unit)

The platoon grabbed their rifles. (as individuals)

• In the case of compound antecedents. (Recall that an antecedent is the word or expression [noun] that gives its meaning to the pronoun and usually precedes it.) Most compound antecedents joined with and should be treated as plural.

The 2000 Camp David Summit was a meeting between then President Bill Clinton, Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak, and Palestinian Authority Yasser Arafat, and they walked away without an agreement.

- According to A Writer’s Reference, “With compound antecedents joined with or or nor (or with either . . . or or neither . . . nor), make the pronoun agree with the nearer antecedent. Also, if one of the antecedents is singular and the other plural, put the plural one last to avoid awkwardness.”

Either Jason or Allison should receive a writing award for her essay.

Neither the cat nor the dogs could find their way home.

**Incorrect Use of Pronouns:**

- **With unclear antecedents**

The Weimar Republic and the Third Reich both sought to reform Germany, though it created particularly devastating economic problems.

**Corrected:** The Weimar Republic and the Third Reich both sought to reform Germany, though the Weimar Republic created particularly devastating economic problems.

**Coordinating Conjunctions:** connect words, phrases, or clauses that are of equal importance or have the same grammatical structure within a sentence, e.g., and, or, but, for, nor, yet, so.

**Correct Use of Coordinating Conjunctions:**

- *To connect compound subjects*

The State Department and other government organizations must coordinate their efforts with the military to win the Long War.

- **To connect compound objects**
  
  I plan to invest in Google and Yahoo stock.

- **To connect compound phrases or predicates**
  
  Students should complete all the reading and participate in class.

(Note: A comma should not be used in the above example before the conjunction. The reason is that it is a compound predicate without a compound subject. A comma should be used in the case of joining two independent clauses (both contain a subject and a verb and can stand alone as complete sentences): The exam is coming up, so students should finish all the reading.)

- **When paired with a comma to connect two independent clauses (see note above)**
  
  The Writing Center staff can help students with grammar, but our primary focus is on the structure and coherence of the argument.

**Incorrect Use of Coordinating Conjunctions:**

- **Confusing coordinating conjunctions with conjunctive adverbs**

  This essay is very well written, however that does not make it perfect.

  **Corrected:** The essay is very well written; however, that does not make it perfect. *Or:* The essay is very well written, but that does not make it perfect.

(Note: *However* is not a coordinating conjunction, so grammatically it is not interchangeable with *but*, even though the
meanings are the same. Using however with a comma here produces a comma-splice or run-on sentence.)

**Parallelism:** the act of balancing single words with single words, phrases with phrases, and clauses with clauses; makes a sentence more easily understood and more pleasing to the reader’s ear.

**Correct Use of Parallelism:**

- **To balance single words**
  
  General Neller spoke in a candid, genuine, and passionate manner at the meeting on Friday.

  *(Note: The writer uses three adjectives to describe a noun.)*

- **To balance phrases**
  
  “I choose my friends for their good looks, my acquaintances for their good characters, and my enemies for their intellects.”—Oscar Wilde

- **To balance clauses**
  
  “The inherent vice of capitalism is the unequal sharing of blessings; the inherent virtue of socialism is the equal sharing of miseries.”
  —Winston Churchill

**Incorrect Use of Parallelism:**

- **Failure to use like word forms (i.e., mixing nouns with adjectives in a list of two or more items)**

  The issues spring from politics and economic matters.

  Corrected: The issues spring from politics and economics. *Or:* The issues spring from political and economic matters.

**Active versus Passive Voice:** When you use the active voice, the subject of the sentence performs an action. When you
use the passive voice, the subject of the sentence is acted upon, usually by an agent, which would be the subject if the sentence were written in active voice.

**Active Voice:**

- Makes your writing more direct and often emphasizes strong verbs, which form the movement of your sentence

  The general issued the command to his troops.

**Passive Voice:**

- Is less direct, often wordy, and therefore not as preferable in academic writing

  The command was issued by the general to his troops.

  **Corrected:** The general issued the command to his troops.

**Incorrect Use of Active and Passive Voice**

- When a sentence contains two or more verbs, all verbs should maintain the same voice.

  When she finished her deployment in Afghanistan, a “welcome home” party was given.

  **Corrected:** When she finished her deployment in Afghanistan, her family and friends gave her a “welcome home” party.

**Point of View:** the perspective from which a paper is written; errors in student writing occur when inappropriate or multiple points of view are used.

**Correct Use of Point of View:**

- First person for personal narratives and/or some social science papers
I observed the participants in their natural habitat.

- **Second person when an author wants to address readers directly or to give the piece an informal tone**

  Change the structure of the government to allow for a better civil-military relationship.

*(Note: The implied subject in this sentence is “you” because the sentence is a command.)*

- **Third person to allow for distance or objectivity between the author and the subject**

  The researcher took a case-study approach to collect and organize the data.

  This paper illustrates the need for combatant commanders to better operational leadership among their subordinates.

**Incorrect Use of Point of View:**

- **Second person if writing a formal, academic paper**

  You need to learn from the failures of those who came before you on the battlefield.

  **Corrected:** It is necessary to learn from the failures of those who came before on the battlefield.

- **Switching back and forth between different points of view**

  If someone wants to win a writing award, you must write a superb paper.

  **Corrected:** If someone wants to win a writing award, he or she must write a superb paper.
Plan an Approach: Here are three key steps you can take to make sure you meet the requirements of your assignments:

- Identify the key words in the assignment.
- Keep the essay requirements in mind (length, outside research, type of paper).
- Give yourself enough time to complete the assignment correctly.

Identify the Key Words: First, look for the key words in the assignment. Key words will tell you how to approach the assignment and will indicate the type of paper the instructor wants you to develop. Below are some examples of common key words:

- **Summarize:** to give the main points briefly.\(^8\)
- **Apply:** to use a learned concept, model, or idea in a new situation.\(^9\)
- **Argue:** to take a position; to choose a side with justification.
- **Compare/contrast:** to bring out points of similarity and points of difference.\(^10\)
- **Evaluate:** to weigh the advantages and limitations; to appraise.\(^11\)

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11. Ibid.
• **Synthesize:** to combine existing elements in order to create something original.\(^\text{12}\)

• **Explain:** to make clear; to show the meaning of something.\(^\text{13}\)

• **Interpret:** to translate; to explain the significance of something.\(^\text{14}\)

• **Justify:** to provide support for your position.

• **Discuss:** to consider a subject from multiple points of view (cite); to present the pros/cons.

• **Analyze:** to break content into components to identify parts, see relationships among them, and recognize organizational principles.\(^\text{15}\)

• **Comprehend:** to understand what is being communicated to make use of the information.\(^\text{16}\)

Usually you will have to perform more than one cognitive task (e.g., evaluating, synthesizing, analyzing) when answering a test or assignment question; this may require you to answer multiple sub-questions. Below is an example of the sub-questions you may need to address in order to fully answer a test question or prompt:

• **Example 1:** Compare Bugeaud’s counterinsurgency theory with Callwell’s counterinsurgency theory. Which approach is more applicable today?

  A. How are the theories similar?

  B. How are the theories different?

  C. What is the current military situation?

  D. Apply the theories to the current situation.

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14. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
E. Argue which approach would work best.

**Determine the Scope of the Assignment:** When deciding what information to include in your assignment, keep the essay length in mind; strive for depth as opposed to breadth. When an instructor assigns a short paper on a broad topic, he/she is often checking to see whether students can identify the most important elements in the material. Keep this in mind when deciding what details you can leave out.

**Give Yourself Enough Time:** The scope of the assignment and needed approach will help you to determine how much time you need to complete the assignment. When possible, it’s always best to complete the assignment in steps.

**Prewrite:** Create a plan or model for the paper that shows the completion of research and includes brainstorming (freewriting, cubing, mind mapping, and so on) and outlining. Prewriting helps you to decide what you want to say and how to organize your information effectively.

**Prewriting Strategies:**

- **Freewrite:** Write down any words, sentences, ideas, or phrases that relate to your topic. This effort will help you to see your ideas on paper, so you can begin to make connections. Don’t worry about organization.

- **Use Post-it notes/different-colored index cards:** Write ideas, words, phrases, or entire paragraphs on Post-it notes or different-colored index cards. Assign each topic idea to a different Post-it or colored index card. This technique will help you figure out how to best organize your ideas, as you will be able to move the notes/cards when you see a better flow or fit for the information.

- **Use a recorder:** Record yourself talking about your subject. Then, play the tape back and write down everything you said.
• **Mind map**: Similar to cluster diagramming and outlining, mind mapping uses specific strategies to highlight connections between ideas. Each mind map has its own purpose. Some are used to compare/contrast, while others are used to break down an idea/concept/object into its component parts or to formulate analogies.

• **Construct bridge maps**: This technique is helpful for highlighting analogies between different subjects. It may be hard to explain how a military structure works; therefore, it may be helpful to compare the military structure to something with which your audience is familiar.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A commander</th>
<th>A director</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>is to his Marines</td>
<td>is to his team of employees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• What is the relationship between the two subjects? How are they similar? How are they different?

  - A commander supervises his sailors on tasks and assignments, while guiding them and working with them to advance their performance in the military combat and operation zones.

  - A director supervises his team as well, while guiding the members and working with them to advance their performance in the workplace and boardroom.

• **Create cause and effect maps**: These show the cause(s) and effect(s) of a thesis statement.

• **Thesis statement**: Finland’s demise occurred because the Soviets demonstrated vast campaign plan improvements, to include improved intelligence processes, effective combined arms application, and enhanced logistics and combat service support effort.
**Develop a theory and application matrix:** A matrix helps to visually depict the concepts in your readings/research; this example takes the key components of two counterinsurgency theories and connects the theory to its application in the field.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kilcullen’s Insurgency Theory</th>
<th>Contextualization of the Theory/Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Views insurgency as a global conflict.</td>
<td>Need to control overall environment as opposed to specific area (war on terrorism approach as opposed to war in Iraq approach).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Views counterinsurgency as a system.</td>
<td>Strategy of disaggregation (de-linking or dismantling elements so insurgency can no longer function).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classic Insurgency Theory (Galula)</th>
<th>Contextualization of the Theory/Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Views insurgency as political/revolutionary war. Therefore, military leaders must consider the political reaction of every military action.</td>
<td>Insurgency will be defeated by controlling the target population. This means eliminating opposition, winning hearts and minds of the people, and building infrastructure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People tend to favor the side that can offer the most protection.</td>
<td>Presents unity of command; divides lower ranks from the leaders.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Soviet Campaign Improvements
  - Improved intelligence processes
  - Effective combined arms application
  - Enhanced logistics/combustion service

  How did these improvements lead to Soviet success?
Thesis Statement: Write a sustained and logical argument that outlines the main idea of the paper and how the main idea will be proven; students must take a position and use facts and examples to support that position.

- **Topic:** Avoid recycling old arguments. Chances are your topic has been covered by someone else. This doesn’t necessarily mean you have to choose a new topic. You may want to ask yourself, “What new insight can I bring to this event? Are there any research gaps—is there a particular aspect of a conflict that has yet to be uncovered?”

- **Research Question:** The research question tells the reader what is going to be looked at—the topic of the paper. However, effective thesis statements include not only a what, but also a why and how.

**Going from Research Question to Thesis Statement:**

- **Research Question:** Why should the United States address Hugo Chavez’ growing influence in Latin America?

- **Working Thesis Statement:** The U.S. must counter Hugo Chavez’ influence in Latin America to maintain its regional credibility in the region. This thesis is still vague and incomplete because it does not answer the how.

- **Developed Thesis Statement:** In an effort to maintain its regional credibility in Latin America and to preserve its national interests, the U.S. must become less dependent on Latin American oil and must reach out diplomatically to other nations in the region to counter Hugo Chavez’ influence. This thesis statement is complete because it contains the what, how, and why.

**Effective Thesis Statement Example:**

- The United States reconstruction of infrastructure in Iraq, particularly the reconstruction of
the electrical system, played a key role as a non-kinetic force multiplier for the coalition forces to set conditions to create a secure and stable country. Argument is specific (focuses on one aspect of reconstruction). Answers what this did for Iraq (set conditions to create a secure and stable country).

**Outlining:** Drafting an outline allows you to see all your main points on paper and to organize them strategically before you begin to write; this makes it easier to see where additional research or evidence is needed.

- Thesis and main points provide the framework for your outline. Your outline may be as structured, abstract, or informal as you would like.
- Each point should relate back to your thesis (argument). Each main point should be followed by two or three sub-points that are linked to the thesis.
- Outlines can be very informal. Simply organizing your points in a logical way and ensuring each point develops and supports the thesis can be very helpful in keeping you on track with your paper.

**Organizational methods:**

- **Cause and effect:** Indicate causal relationships between things and events.
- **Compare and contrast:** Line up related ideas for a detailed account of similarities and differences.
- **Increasing importance:** Arrange paragraphs so that the most important point comes last, thus building the paper’s strength.

**Elements of the Paper:** Most academic papers contain three main parts: the introduction, the body, and the conclusion. The length and scope of each part will depend on the type and length of the paper you are writing.

**Introduction:** varies in length and complexity depending on the type and length of the paper you are writing; contains
just enough background information to lead up to your thesis statement. The thesis statement is usually the last sentence in the introduction and accomplishes the following:

- Generally introduces the topic of your paper—provides just enough information for the reader to understand your thesis statement.
- Captures the reader’s interest.
- Presents the thesis (argument) that will be developed and supported in the body of the paper.

**Introductions should not include/do the following:**

- Have vague terms: acronyms, abstract ideas (concepts, subjective terms).
- Have broad, sweeping statements: “from the beginning of time man has . . .,” “underdeveloped nations are a threat to national security.”
- Give too much information: if you want to investigate how George Washington shaped the Continental Army, you do not need to begin providing specific examples of his leadership style in the introduction. Save it for the body.
- Create suspense: the reader should not have to “dig” or read beyond the introduction to get a sense of what the paper is about.
- Contain definitions.

**Body Paragraphs:** considered the “meat and potatoes” of the paper and provide specific evidence and examples to support the thesis statement. In the body of the paper, you will synthesize the information you have gathered during your research for JMO/NSA papers and from your readings for S&P/S&W.

**Body paragraphs should do the following:**
• Contain only one main (controlling) idea. A topic sentence (usually the first sentence) often expresses the main idea of a paragraph. Just as the paper should only cover the scope of the thesis statement, a paragraph should only address the main idea covered in its topic sentence.

• Highlight connections between ideas and provide transitions—that is, show the reader how each sentence (idea) in a paragraph is related to the next idea; highlight relationships between paragraphs; show the reader how each element of the thesis is related to the next.

• Use transitional words and phrases (e.g., however, therefore, conversely, moreover).

• Develop ideas. Each paragraph should contain enough examples and evidence to support the paragraph’s central claim. Also, the source material you use to support your claims (whether it is paraphrased or quoted) and the way you present the material will influence the way your reader perceives your argument.

**Conclusion:** gives you the chance to make connections between the main points you have presented throughout the paper and to draw broader implications; echo the main idea (thesis) of your paper; provide closure.

**Conclusions should accomplish the following:**

• Provide the *so what*; explain implications.

• Give the reader a sense of closure.

• Synthesize material you have presented in the body of the paper.

**Conclusions should not do the following:**

• Rewrite the introduction in different words.

• Restate the thesis statement verbatim.
- Introduce new information.

**Using Sources and Quotations:**

- Make sure your sources and paraphrases play a supporting role. Your paper should not be a collection of paraphrases and quotations. When you write a research paper, you need to make an original argument based on the research you conduct—your sources merely provide the evidence to support your central argument. As the writer, you are the lead actor; your sources are supporting actors.

- Do not use a quotation when a paraphrase will suffice. Exact wording may be important at times, especially when you are discussing doctrine, legislation, or another researcher’s exact position. However, do not use quotations just because you think the author expressed a particular concept or idea better than you can paraphrase it. Use your own words.

- Do not use a quotation without placing it in context. Make sure you fully explain the significance of the quotation (who said it, how does it relate to your research, why it is important).

- Avoid back-to-back quotations. Placing one quotation directly after another fails to give you the chance to fully explain how the first supports your point before moving on to the next statement.

- When multiple sources make the same claim, you may want to group them together. For instance, instead of saying, “General X believes it is important to employ the concept of D.O. in current and future conflicts. General Y also thinks D.O. should be used in current and future conflicts,” you may want to say, “According to Generals X and Y, the concept of D.O. should be employed in current and future conflicts.”
Writing is a process and involves multiple steps. Therefore, it is important to remember that your first draft will not be your last. Once you have finished your draft, try to put it aside for a few days before taking another look.
Your best friend for citing sources . . .

THE CHICAGO
MANUAL OF STYLE
(CMS)

Examples of citations for notes (N), shortened notes (S), and bibliographies (B) appear below.

**Note:** When you cannot find an exact match for your source, use the citation format closest to your source.

**BOOKS**

**Basic Format for Print Book**


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Basic Format for E-Book (electronic book)


One Author


Examples of NWC Library’s electronic book service:


Two Authors


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N/S. Pomper et al., *Election of 1976*, 61.

*For four to 10 authors or editors, include all names in the bibliography.*


Association or Institution as Author


No Author Given and Sacred Works

*Do not use Anonymous or Anon.*


N. Qur’an 19:17–21.

*Sacred texts are usually not included in the bibliography.*

Multivolume Works and Series

*Example of one volume in the series:*


Example of the entire series:


For works listed consecutively by the same author in the bibliography, use three dashes in place of the author’s name.


Editor, Compiler, or Translator


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**Introductions, Prefaces, Afterwords, Abstracts**


**Reprint Editions**


**Work of One Author in a Work Edited by Another**

*If you are citing the entire chapter or contribution, include inclusive page numbers.*


*When you cite a different chapter/contribution in the same book as previously cited, include a shortened citation for that book.*
N. Lewis B. Ware, “Regional Study 1: Conflict and Confrontation in the Post-Cold-War Middle East,” in Magyar et al., Challenge and Response, 49.

**SOURCE CITED AND QUOTED IN ANOTHER SOURCE**


**PERIODICALS**

**Article in an Online Journal**


**Journal Article from a Database**


**Article in an Online Magazine**


**Magazine Article from a Database**


**Volume Number Not Shown**


**Volume Number Shown**


*Include the first and last page numbers of article in the bibliography.*


N/S. Handler, “American University Today,” 256.

**Electronic Journals and Magazines**


List all authors in the bibliography, up to 10 authors (CMS 14.76).


Example of an article from JSTOR, a library subscription database:


Example of an article from ProQuest, a library subscription database:


Example of an article from EBSCO, a library subscription database:


**NEWSPAPER ITEMS**

News Story

*Omit the initial “the” from titles of English-language newspapers.*


Unsigned news story


Editorial (unsigned)


Online Newspapers, News Services, and Other News Sites


*Example of an Internet article still available at time of publication of the work:*


*Newspaper Article from a Database*


*MULTIMEDIA*


**PowerPoint Presentations**


**CD-ROM or DVD**

*Citations to works issued on CD-ROM are similar to those for printed works (Chicago 14.168, 14.279).*

N. *The Complete National Geographic* (Washington, DC: National Geographic, 2010), DVD-ROM.


N. R. J. Hicks, *Nuclear Medicine, from the Center of Our Universe* (Victoria, Australia: ICE T Multimedia, 1996), CD-ROM.

B. Hicks, R. J. *Nuclear Medicine, from the Center of Our Universe*. Victoria, Australia: ICE T Multimedia, 1996. CD-ROM.

**Video Recordings and Slides**


**ONLINE SOURCES**


*If there is no author, you may substitute the owner of the site (Chicago 14.245).*


*Since very informal Web sites, such as personal home pages and fan sites, may have no titles, you may use descriptive phrases (Chicago 14.244).*


**Electronic Mailing Lists**


**Blogs**


*If the word “blog” is not found in the title of the Web site, indicate “(blog)” in the citation note after the blog title.*


**Podcasts**


Social Media


N/S. Souza, “President Obama.”

(Note: According to CMS 17th ed., “Because social media content is subject to editing and deletion, authors are advised to retain a copy of anything they cite.”)

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B. Evaluation Division. Air University. *To Analyze the USAF Publications System for Producing Manuals*. Staff study, 13 July 1948.


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Unpublished


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N. Joseph Dinkel, description of Louis Agassiz written at the request of Elizabeth Cary Agassiz, Agassiz Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

**Examples of an entire collection cited in the bibliography:**


N. James Oglethorpe to the Trustees, 13 January 1733, Phillipps Collection of Egmont Manuscripts, 14200:13, University of Georgia Library.


N. George Creel to Colonel House, 25 September 1918, Edward M. House Papers, Yale University Library.


**PUBLIC DOCUMENTS**

Refer to CMS 17th ed. 14.269-305 for information on citing public documents. For a more in-depth guide to citing the range of documents in this section, CMS 17th ed. recommends following *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation*, published by the Harvard Law Review Association.


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N. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Foreign Policy, 86th Cong., 2nd sess., 1960, Committee Print 1, 729.


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N/S. Senate, *Study of Air Power*, 1727.


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*Known as public laws or statutes, bills and resolutions first appear in the Congressional Record, then in United States Statutes at Large, often in the United States Code Annotated, and finally in the United States Code.*


N. HR 11818, 89th Cong., 1st sess., 1956, sec. 301(a).

N. S 218, 83rd Cong., 2nd sess., 1954.


*Citations to the statutes are to volume, year, and page number.*


*Citations to the code are always to section number, not page.*


**Executive Department Documents**


**Presidential Proclamations and Executive Orders**


*In a complete set of CFR volumes, do not use Comp.*


N/S. *Public Papers: Eisenhower*, 274–90.


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NATO Documents


United Nations Documents


Treaties and International Agreements

CMS 17th ed. recommends following The Bluebook for citing documents in this section. To find that information refer to CMS 17th ed. 14.290 and individual sections.


**PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVES**


**LEGAL CITATIONS**

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B. Bundy, LTC G. W., War Plans Division, War Department General Staff. LTC G. W. Bundy to LTC Clayton J. Bissell, War Plans Division. Memorandum, 18 July 1941.


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N. Diary of FADM William D. Leahy, 8 February 1946, William D. Leahy Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

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