

Writing Style Errors
for papers submitted in Dr. Doverspike's graduate classes
Academic Year 2017-2018
(Revised 06-06-18)

Listed by their numbers as they appeared on the APA Checklist, these errors were the most common style errors that were made on papers. It is not an error that the list actually contains 13 unlucky items. These errors, which were based on the Top 10 errors on papers for each of three semesters, account for more than 95% of the edits made on papers. None of these are unique to APA style, but are contained in most American English style guides, such as Plain English handbook (Walsh & Walsh, 1959), *English Grammar and Composition* (Warriner, Mersand, & Griffith, 1977), *Chicago Manual of Style* (University of Chicago Press, 2002), and *Elements of Style* (Strunk & White, 2009).

14. With acronyms and abbreviations, spell out the word the first time you use it, and put the acronym in parentheses (or if already in parentheses, use brackets). After identifying the acronym, use the acronym without the parenthesis (p. 107).
15. Use a period to end a complete sentence (p. 88).
17. Use a comma between elements (including *and* and *or*) in a series of three or more items (p. 89).
19. Use a comma following an introductory adverbial or introductory prepositional phrase (p. 88).
20. Use a comma to separate two independent clauses joined by a conjunction (p. 89).
22. Place periods and commas inside double quotation marks (with few exceptions) (p. 92).
27. Each pronoun should refer clearly to its antecedent and should agree with the antecedent in number and gender (p. 79).
28. Verify noun-pronoun agreement so that nouns and pronouns agree in number. For example, always use a singular pronoun when referring to an antecedent singular noun (p. 79).
32. Write the word for any number below 10, and use numerals for any number 10 or above. If beginning a sentence with a number, always spell out the number with a word (p. 111-112).
43. Direct quotations must be accurate (p. 172).
46. All direct quotes in text require that a page number of the quote be specified (p. 92, 171).
51. All citations in the text should be contained in the reference list (p. 174).
55. Titles of books and periodicals should be *italicized*. (p. 185).

References

References for the above citations are contained on the [APA \(2010\) Style Checklist](#).