

Grammar Rules to Follow

You should have a book containing grammar rules from your LS1000 course. If you do not have one, we recommend Strunk and White's **The Elements of Style**. There is some ambiguity when "older" rules have been replaced with "newer" grammar rules. In order to prevent any ambiguity, you **should use the following rules**:

-Always use a comma before a conjunction when two complete sentences are connected.

Einstein hypothesized that electrons were particles, **and** he also developed the formula $E = mc^2$.

-Always use a comma after an introductory phrase. (This rule is the rule most missed by people in all walks of life. Introductory phrases many times begin with a preposition, e.g. before, after, in, to, from.)

Before Germer began any experiment, he carefully checked each component of his apparatus.

-To avoid confusion, always use a comma (or semicolon) after EACH word, phrase, etc. in a list including after the conjunction.

Nobel scientists of the early twentieth century included **Heisenberg, Einstein, and Pauli.**

The chemist used **potassium nitrate, 98 %, Aldrich; sodium chloride, 99.9 %, Fisher Scientific; and** zinc oxide, 97 %, Aldrich.

-Do not use a colon after a verb.

The components of the instrument **are** a light source, a lens, and photographic paper.

But...

The components of the instrument **are the following:** a light source, a lens, and photographic paper.

Do not use a colon after a prepositional phrase.

The results of the experiment were tabulated **with** a computer, a calculator, and by hand.

-Do not end sentences with prepositions.

-Do not use two different verb tenses in the same sentence. In addition, when writing about something that has already occurred, use the past tense.

-Spell out numbers under 101, e.g. one, twenty-one, ninety-nine, one hundred, 106, 285, etc.

-Do not use contractions or the possessive form of a word. (The possessive form of a name is ok in your paper.)

One **should not** dispose of aluminum cans in the trash but should recycle them.
“...the **strength of the material**...” NOT “...the material’s strength...”
...**Einstein’s** famous formula is...

-The phrase **“cannot”** is one word, not two.

-When using references, quotation marks, etc., in conjunction with commas and other punctuation marks, **the punctuation mark goes before the reference number** or quotation mark.

In 1998 alone, the United States, Europe, and Asia together produced ninety-four million tons of consumer **plastics**.¹

-When referring to figures and tables within a written paragraph, **capitalize the words “Figure,” “Table,” and “Equation.”**

DeBroglie hypothesized that everything possessed a wavelength. His formula is given by **Equation 1**.

-Please use the equation editor if it’s available to format equations. If you need help, please ask.

-Please use Excel to make your tables and insert them into your paper as “paste special” and “picture enhanced metafile.” (Using metafile prevents your making an enormous file that can cause your computer problems as you write your paper.)

-Save, save, save your paper as you work on it.

If you have any questions, please ask.