



# What does effective writing look like (in the details)?

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## Introduction

What are mechanics? Quite simply, mechanics are the structural and grammatical details of sentences and paragraphs. Correct mechanics ensure that your reader is not distracted or misled by errors and can focus on your main message.

This module focuses on four areas: punctuation, parallel construction, relative pronouns, and capitalization. You will also consider how to use connector words to make the logic of your document apparent to the reader.

Before you begin working through the module, complete the pretest that follows the learning objectives. You may find that you already have a good understanding of some of these mechanical details. If you complete the pretest without errors, treat this module as a quick review.



*"People will form an opinion based on the way you write.  
The way you write can have a very direct impact  
on people's impressions of you."  
—Manager*

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## Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, you will be able to

- Punctuate sentences correctly according to four common punctuation patterns.
- Identify and fix faulty parallel construction.
- Punctuate lists and series correctly according to four common punctuation patterns.
- Identify and fix errors with relative pronouns (which, that, and who).
- Apply rules for capitalization.
- Identify appropriate uses of common connector words and phrases.
- Evaluate and revise documents for mechanics.

## Pretest

This pretest provides you with an opportunity to test your knowledge of the correspondence mechanics discussed in this module. You will be asked 15 questions about grammar and punctuation. The pretest will help you identify the parts of the module that are most important to you.

Answer the following questions by choosing the correct answer from the choices provided. If you answer correctly, you will receive feedback in blue. If you answer incorrectly, you will receive feedback in red, including a section reference to the content in this module.

**1. Is this sentence correct?**

**We need to build our teams in a way which delivers high-quality assistance to our clients.**

☐ **Correct as is**      ☐ **Incorrect**

Once you have completed the pretest, work through each topic starting with punctuation patterns in sentences.

## Sentence Patterns and Punctuation

English sentences follow standard patterns of punctuation depending on their structure. The first section of this module focuses on four of the most common patterns for complex and compound sentences. These patterns will be described in the next pages:

- Compound sentence with coordinating conjunction
- Complex sentence with introductory clause
- Compound sentence without coordinating conjunction
- Compound sentence with transitional word

Are you familiar with these common patterns? Remind yourself of the patterns by punctuating each of the following sentences. Either retype the sentence or copy it into the answer box.

To begin, either retype the sentence or copy it into the answer box. To copy the sentence, highlight the sentence and press **<Ctrl> C**, then click in the answer box and press **<Ctrl> V**. Next, add the correct punctuation. Finally, click "Show answer" to see if you answered correctly.

<b>Sentence 1</b>	<b>I tried to finish the report formatting before the end of the day but there were too many complex tables.</b>
<b>Your answer:</b>	<input type="text"/>
Show answer	<p>I tried to finish the report formatting before the end of the <u>day, but</u> there were too many complex tables.</p> <p>Pattern: compound sentence with coordinating conjunction</p>
<b>Sentence 2</b>	<b>When she arrived at the office the meeting had already begun.</b>
<b>Your answer:</b>	<input type="text"/>
Show answer	<p>When she arrived at the <u>office, the</u> meeting had already begun.</p> <p>Pattern: complex sentence with introductory clause</p>
<b>Sentence 3</b>	<b>I thought it would be finished on time however the work took longer than expected.</b>
<b>Your answer:</b>	<input type="text"/>
Show answer	<p>I thought it would be finished on <u>time; however, the</u> work took longer than expected.</p> <p>Pattern: compound sentence with transitional word</p>
<b>Sentence 4</b>	<b>When the fire alarm rang everyone went outside.</b>
<b>Your answer:</b>	<input type="text"/>
Show answer	<p>When the fire alarm <u>rang, everyone</u> went outside.</p> <p>Pattern: complex sentence with introductory clause</p>
<b>Sentence 5</b>	<b>He said it was finished therefore I assumed it was.</b>
<b>Your answer:</b>	<input type="text"/>
Show answer	<p>He said it was <u>finished; therefore, I</u> assumed it was.</p> <p>Pattern: compound sentence with transitional word</p>
<b>Sentence 6</b>	<b>I know she planned to attend she made her reservations last week.</b>
<b>Your answer:</b>	<input type="text"/>
Show answer	<p>I know she planned to <u>attend; she</u> made her reservations last week.</p> <p>Pattern: compound sentence without coordinating conjunction</p>
<b>Sentence 7</b>	<b>The project was very time-consuming nonetheless the manager was very happy with the outcome.</b>
<b>Your answer:</b>	<input type="text"/>
Show answer	<p>The project was very <u>time-consuming; nonetheless, the</u> manager was very happy with the outcome.</p> <p>Pattern: compound sentence with transitional word</p>
<b>Sentence 8</b>	<b>The program assistant worked long hours on the mission but it was the only way to accomplish the objectives.</b>
<b>Your answer:</b>	<input type="text"/>
Show answer	<p>The program assistant worked long hours on the <u>mission, but</u> it was the only way to accomplish the objectives.</p> <p>Pattern: compound sentence with coordinating conjunction</p>

## Compound Sentence with Coordinating Conjunction

Now that you have seen the four sentence patterns, you will learn more about each one. A compound sentence is composed of two independent clauses; each of the two clauses could stand alone as a sentence. When the two independent clauses are joined by a coordinating conjunction, the sentence needs a comma before the conjunction. (The coordinating conjunctions are **and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so.**)

The pattern looks like this:

He asked for the report	, and	I gave it to him.
Independent clause	Coordinating conjunction	Independent clause

**Note:** In a compound sentence, each part of the sentence is an independent clause. That is, each part has its own subject and verb, and each part could stand alone. When there is only one subject and two verbs, do not use a comma between the verbs.

One subject and two verbs: not a compound sentence	
Incorrect—with comma: <i>He asked for, and received the report.</i>	Correct—no comma: <i>He asked for and received the report.</i>

## Compound Sentence without Coordinating Conjunction

When a compound sentence, which has two independent clauses, has no coordinating conjunction between those two independent clauses, the recommended punctuation is a semicolon. The pattern looks like this:

He asked for the report	;	I gave it to him.
Independent clause		Independent clause

**Note:** You cannot use a comma to join these two independent clauses because there is no coordinating conjunction. When two independent clauses occur in the same sentence, the semicolon is mandatory. You may also replace the semicolon with a period and create two sentences.

Compound sentence: comma not enough without coordinating conjunction	
Incorrect—with comma: <i>He asked me for the report, I gave it to him.</i>	Correct—with semicolon: <i>He asked me for the report; I gave it to him.</i>

## Compound Sentence with Transitional Word

When a transitional word joins two independent clauses, the usual pattern is a semicolon before the transitional word and a comma after it. (The common transitional words of this type are **accordingly, consequently, furthermore, however, moreover, nevertheless, therefore.**) The pattern looks like this:

He asked for the report	; therefore ,	I gave it to him.
Independent clause	Transitional Word	Independent clause

He asked for the report	; however ,	I could not give it to him.
Independent clause	Transitional Word	Independent clause

**Note:** If the transitional word is separating independent clauses — each of which has its own subject and verb, and each of which could stand alone as a sentence — you may correctly use either a semicolon or a period to separate the independent clauses. Do not use the semicolon if the transitional word is not separating independent clauses.

Independent clause followed by a transitional word: semicolon or period before the transitional word	
Incorrect—with comma before:  <i>We have not received your reservation, therefore, our assumption is that you will not be attending the meeting.</i>	Correct—with a semicolon (or period) before:  <i>We have not received your reservation; therefore, our assumption is that you will not be attending the meeting.</i>  <b>or</b>  <i>We have not received your reservation. Therefore, our assumption is that you will not be attending the meeting.</i>

## Complex Sentence with Introductory Clause

A complex sentence is made up of an independent clause and a dependent clause. If the dependent clause comes first, it needs a comma to separate it from the rest of the sentence. (The dependent clause is introduced by a subordinating conjunction. Some of the most common subordinating conjunctions are **after, although, because, before, if, since, when.**) The pattern looks like this:

When he asked for the report	,	I gave it to him.
Dependent clause		Independent clause

**Note:** If the sentence begins with the independent clause and ends with the dependent clause, do not use a comma.

Complex sentence with independent clause first: no comma following independent clause	
Incorrect—with comma:  <i>I gave him the report, when he asked for it.</i>	Correct—no comma:  <i>I gave him the report when he asked for it.</i>

## Punctuation Practice

For each sentence, decide if the punctuation is correct or incorrect. If it is incorrect, revise it.

<b>Sentence 1</b>	<b>The entire staff was fully engaged; however, we almost missed the final deadline.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Correct as is</b>	<b>Your revision:</b> <input type="text"/>
Show answer	This sentence is correct as is.
<b>Sentence 2</b>	<b>The deputy stayed late to help with the final proofreading and he was actually quite good at it.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Correct as is</b>	<b>Your revision:</b> <input type="text"/>
Show answer	The deputy stayed late to help with the final <b>proofreading, and</b> he was actually quite good at it.
<b>Sentence 3</b>	<b>The photocopying machine jammed yet, the report went out on time.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Correct as is</b>	<b>Your revision:</b> <input type="text"/>
Show answer	The photocopying machine <b>jammed, yet the</b> report went out on time.
<b>Sentence 4</b>	<b>The TTL praised the report but had no real idea of the amount of work involved.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Correct as is</b>	<b>Your revision:</b> <input type="text"/>
Show answer	This sentence is correct as is.
<b>Sentence 5</b>	<b>Although we are now confident about doing this kind of project we are not eager to start another one soon.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Correct as is</b>	<b>Your revision:</b> <input type="text"/>
Show answer	Although we are now confident about doing this kind of <b>project, we</b> are not eager to start another one soon.
<b>Sentence 6</b>	<b>The office is having a small celebration, I have offered to coordinate it.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Correct as is</b>	<b>Your revision:</b> <input type="text"/>
Show answer	The office is having a small <b>celebration; I</b> have offered to coordinate it.
<b>Sentence 7</b>	<b>When there is something to celebrate, we do.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Correct as is</b>	<b>Your revision:</b> <input type="text"/>
Show answer	This sentence is correct as is.
<b>Sentence 8</b>	<b>We will have the party on a Wednesday because of people's varying work schedules.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Correct as is</b>	<b>Your revision:</b> <input type="text"/>
Show answer	This sentence is correct as is.
<b>Sentence 9</b>	<b>A few people will still have to miss the party, nevertheless we have decided to go ahead with it.</b>

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Correct as is</b>	<b>Your revision:</b> <input type="text"/>
<input type="button" value="Show answer"/>	A few people will still have to miss the <b>party; nevertheless,</b> we have decided to go ahead with it.
<b>Sentence 10</b>	<b>I feel certain, however, that all of us will have a good time together.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Correct as is</b>	<b>Your revision:</b> <input type="text"/>
<input type="button" value="Show answer"/>	This sentence is correct as is.
<b>Sentence 11</b>	<b>He wrote and revised the letter.</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Correct as is</b>	<b>Your revision:</b> <input type="text"/>
<input type="button" value="Show answer"/>	This sentence is correct as is.

This exercise completes this section on sentence punctuation. Next, you'll consider the mechanics of parallel construction.

## Parallel Construction

Parallel construction (parallelism) helps to show the connections between ideas. It creates a smooth, readable document. Just like correct punctuation, correct parallel construction fades into the background and allows the reader to focus on your meaning.

The basic principle of parallelism is easy to state: elements that are similar in function should be similar in form.

You may have had the experience of reading a list where proper parallelism was not maintained. For instance, look at this example:

My job responsibilities include

- Writing letters
- To answer the phone
- Provide information to visitors
- Responding to routine e-mail inquiries

This description is awkward because the list does not use proper parallelism. The writer has used three different verb forms instead of choosing one form and using it throughout.

## Ensuring Parallelism

Below is one way the list could be revised to maintain proper parallel structure:

My job responsibilities include

- Writing letters
- Answering the phone
- Providing information to visitors
- Responding to routine e-mail inquiries

Parallelism does not apply only to verbs, and it does not apply only to bulleted lists. It gives balance and symmetry to other parts of written material as well. Below are four examples:

**Verbs:** She researched, wrote, and presented the report.

**Nouns:** The main divisions of my curriculum vitae are education, work experience, and references.

**Phrases:** We hope the new reporting system will appeal to Bank staff in the External Affairs Department and to Fund staff in the External Relations Department.

**Clauses:** I wanted to start the project at once; my supervisor advised me to wait; and the Board decided to cancel it completely.

## Opportunities for Parallel Construction

Parallel construction is especially useful in three kinds of situations:

- In lists or series of two or more items, whether in a paragraph or in a displayed list
- Following paired conjunctions such as **both ... and**, **either ... or**, **neither ... nor**, **not only ... but also**, **not ... but**
  - It is important **not only** to finish your work on time **but also** to do it well. (Note the use of the infinitive form of the verb with paired conjunctions.)
- With comparisons and contrasts
  - Someone once said, "In a developing country, don't drink the water; in a developed country, don't breathe the air."



## Practice with Parallelism

There are many opportunities to use parallelism to add balance and symmetry to your writing. Unfortunately, there are just as many ways to create sentences and paragraphs that are not parallel. Practice parallelism by correcting each of the faulty sentences in the exercise that follows.



There are often several ways to resolve problems with parallelism. A suggested response is provided. Your revision may be different but still be correct. If you have doubts, check with your tutor.

<b>Sentence 1</b>	<b>Earlier in her life, the new team assistant had been a waitress, a tour guide, a computer programmer, and taught school.</b>
<b>Your revision:</b>	<input type="text"/>
Show answer	Earlier in her life, the new team assistant had been a waitress, a tour guide, a computer programmer, and <b>a schoolteacher</b> .
<b>Sentence 2</b>	<b>We signed the contract, shook hands, and the deal was concluded.</b>
<b>Your revision:</b>	<input type="text"/>
Show answer	We signed the contract, shook hands, and <b>concluded the deal</b> .
<b>Sentence 3</b>	<b>The division chief told us that the report was timely, informative, and would hold our interest.</b>
<b>Your revision:</b>	<input type="text"/>
Show answer	The division chief told us that the report was timely, informative, and <b>interesting</b> .
<b>Sentence 4</b>	<b>Because of her money-saving idea, the department promoted her to program assistant, and she was also given a substantial salary increase.</b>
<b>Your revision:</b>	<input type="text"/>
Show answer	Because of her money-saving idea, the department promoted her to program assistant and <b>gave her</b> a substantial salary increase.
<b>Sentence 5</b>	<b>Both because of time and money, the project had to be cancelled.</b>
<b>Your revision:</b>	<input type="text"/>
Show answer	<b>Because of both</b> time and money, the project had to be cancelled.
<b>Sentence 6</b>	<b>This is a time not for words but action.</b>
<b>Your revision:</b>	<input type="text"/>
Show answer	This is a time not for words but <b>for</b> action.
<b>Sentence 7</b>	<b>Either you must agree to his request or suffer the repercussions.</b>
<b>Your revision:</b>	<input type="text"/>
Show answer	<p>Either <b>you must agree</b> to his request, or <b>you must suffer</b> the repercussions.</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>You must either <b>agree</b> to his request or <b>suffer</b> the repercussions.</p>

<b>Sentence 8</b>	<b>My objections are, first, the injustice of the policy; second, that it is unconstitutional.</b>
<b>Your revision:</b>	<input type="text"/>
<div>Show answer</div>	<p>My objections are, first, the injustice of the policy; second, <b><u>its</u></b> <b><u>unconstitutionality</u></b>.</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>My objections are, first, <b><u>that the policy is unjust</u></b>; second, that it is unconstitutional.</p>
<b>Sentence 9</b>	<b>The project team advises working more flexibly and to do more stakeholder consultations.</b>
<b>Your revision:</b>	<input type="text"/>
<div>Show answer</div>	<p>The project team advises working more flexibly and <b><u>doing</u></b> more stakeholder consultations.</p>
<b>Sentence 10</b>	<b>Tell us what color you want the office painted, how you want the furniture arranged, and the location of the pictures.</b>
<b>Your revision:</b>	<input type="text"/>
<div>Show answer</div>	<p>Tell us what color you want the office painted, how you want the furniture arranged, and <b><u>where you want the pictures located</u></b>.</p>
<b>Sentence 11</b>	<b>The purposes of the study are to determine what engineers think of the proposed project, evaluation of their general attitudes toward this type of project, and recommending actions on the basis of the findings.</b>
<b>Your revision:</b>	<input type="text"/>
<div>Show answer</div>	<p>The purposes of the study are <b><u>to determine</u></b> what engineers think of the proposed project, <b><u>to evaluate</u></b> their general attitudes toward this type of project, and <b><u>to recommend</u></b> actions on the basis of the findings.</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>The purposes of the study are to <b><u>determine</u></b> what engineers think of the proposed project, <b><u>evaluate</u></b> their general attitudes toward this type of project, and <b><u>recommend</u></b> actions on the basis of the findings.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> the "to" is not mandatory in this case. It is preferred, because using it reinforces the parallelism.</p>

## More Practice with Parallelism

The e-mail message available below contains several problems with parallelism. Revise the e-mail, and then check your response against the suggested response. Your proposed solutions may differ, but you should find at least eight mistakes in the original. Remember, parallelism applies to verbs, nouns, phrases, and clauses. In every instance, elements that are similar in function should be similar in form.

<a href="#">E-mail for Your Revision</a> 	<a href="#">Suggested Revision</a> 
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Now that you have finished practicing with parallelism, you will move on to lists and series.

## Lists and Series

Some aspects of the mechanics of good writing are defined as much by institutional style as they are by grammatical rules. The punctuation of lists and series is one such aspect. Questions often arise about the correct use of punctuation for a series of items within a sentence or for a list of items displayed with bullets or numbers. Although there are different possible solutions, certain patterns are preferred by the Bank; your strategy as a writer should be to use these patterns regularly.

### Punctuation for Lists and Series

In this section of the module, you will focus on four patterns involving the punctuation of lists and series:

- Serial comma within a sentence
- Serial semicolon for complex items
- Punctuation introducing a series or list
- Punctuation within a displayed list

### Serial Comma within a Sentence

A series is a list of related items. When there is a series of three or more items within a sentence, and a coordinating conjunction such as **and**, **but**, **or**, **nor**, **for**, **yet**, and **so** appears before the final item, put a comma after each item — and before the conjunction. The pattern looks like this:

***Item, item, coordinating conjunction item.***

- Stationery, pens, and pencils are available.
- The data may be given for 15, 20, 25, or 30 years.
- Tomorrow we will discuss terms of reference, mission length, and travel arrangements.

**Note:** The series can appear at any point in the sentence including subject, verb, object, and even modifiers. The punctuation pattern is the same.

### Serial Semicolon for Complex Items

When the individual items in the series already have commas within them, the writer must use semicolons to separate the items. The same is true when the individual elements are long and complex. The pattern, then, looks like this:

***Punctuation, within item; item; coordinating conjunction item***

- The newest staff members are Amira Said, staff assistant; Georgiy Sumakov, project manager; and Chris Lee, technical director.
- Before the terms of reference can be completed, we need additional details on how long the project is to last; where and how the recent mission uncovered the issues that are to be addressed; and who the primary in-country contact will be.

**Note:** Because of the potential for confusion, it is usually better not to use this type of series at the beginning of the sentence.

## Punctuation Introducing a Series or List

The rules of punctuation are the same either within a sentence or at the beginning of a displayed list: Use a colon if the introductory material is a complete sentence or if it uses the words **the following** or **as follows**; otherwise, do not. The patterns look like this:

<b>The introduction is a complete sentence: item, item, and item.</b>
The mission learned three key things: A, B, and C.
<b>The pattern is as follows: item, item, and item.</b>
Mr. Smith addressed the following issues: W, X, Y, and Z.

**Note:** Never use a colon to separate the subject from the verb or the verb from its object or complement.

<b>Introduction without "as follows/the following" or without complete sentence</b>	
Incorrect—separating subject from verb:  <i>After the meeting, Ms. Kim: outlined the strategy, named the committees, and established the deadlines.</i>	Correct—no colon:  <i>After the meeting, Ms. <b>Kim outlined</b> the strategy, named the committees, and established the deadlines.</i>
Incorrect—separating verb from complement:  <i>The tasks of the mission were: A, B, and C.</i>	Correct—no colon:  <i>The tasks of the mission <b>were A, B, and C.</b></i>

## Punctuation within a Displayed List

The rules about how to punctuate a displayed list are still evolving. However, following some basic guidelines, based on the length of items in the list, will make your punctuation more consistent:

- If the items in the list are short (a word or a short phrase), use no end punctuation.
- If the items are slightly longer, use commas.
- If the items are long phrases but are not complete sentences, use semicolons.
- If the items are complete sentences (each with its own subject and verb), use semicolons or periods.
- If you use commas or semicolons, add "and" at the end of the second-last item and a period after the last one. If you use periods throughout, be sure to capitalize each item.

### The Patterns

<b>Very short items: no punctuation</b>
This e-mail addresses three concerns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lunch breaks</li><li>• Late arrivals</li><li>• Family leave</li></ul>
<b>Short items: commas</b>
This e-mail addresses three concerns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coverage during lunch breaks,</li><li>• Problems with late arrivals, <b>and</b></li><li>• Notification of family leave.</li></ul>

**Long phrases: semicolons**

According to the AO, we need to address the following concerns about staffing:

- The need for phones to be covered during lunch breaks;
- The inconvenience caused by late arrivals; **and**
- The importance of proper notification if a staff member must take unscheduled family leave.

**Sentences: semicolons or periods**

According to the AO, we need to address the following concerns about staffing:

- The phones need to be covered during lunch breaks;
- People who arrive later than their scheduled time cause inconvenience to other staff members; **and**
- The designated person must be notified before 8:00 a.m. if a staff member must take unscheduled family leave.

**Or**

According to the AO, we need to address the following concerns about staffing:

- The phones need to be covered during lunch breaks.
- People who arrive later than their scheduled time cause inconvenience to other staff members.
- The designated person must be notified before 8:00 a.m. if a staff member must take unscheduled family leave.

## Practice with Series and Lists

Punctuating a series or a list is not complex, but it is painstaking. For each of the examples, decide whether or not the punctuation is correct as it is. If it is incorrect, revise it.

<b>Example 1</b>	We need the following supplies by Friday: 12 yellow legal pads, 15 blank name cards, 5 flipcharts and 2 flipchart stands.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Correct as is</b>	<b>Your revision:</b> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="text-align: right;"> <span>^</span>  <span>v</span> </div>
<div>Show answer</div>	We need the following supplies by Friday: 12 yellow legal pads, 15 blank name cards, 5 <b>flipcharts, and</b> 2 flipchart stands.  (Add comma after "flipcharts.")
<b>Example 2</b>	The agenda will cover the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AWS schedules</li> <li>• Management initiatives</li> <li>• Visitors from the field</li> <li>• The annual picnic</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Correct as is</b>	<b>Your revision:</b> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="text-align: right;"> <span>^</span>  <span>v</span> </div>
<div>Show answer</div>	Correct as is.
<b>Example 3</b>	The three members of the team will be: Nancy Jenkins, program assistant; Maria Gonzalez, task manager, and Farida Amar, HR officer.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Correct as is</b>	<b>Your revision:</b> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="text-align: right;"> <span>^</span>  <span>v</span> </div>
<div>Show answer</div>	The three members of the team will <b>be Nancy</b> Jenkins, program assistant; Maria Gonzalez, task manager; and Farida Amar, HR officer.  (No colon after the verb. Use semicolons in a series when the items contain internal commas.)
<b>Example 4</b>	The workshop outline states three objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describing the importance of reader's needs, writer's purpose, and document's main message in writing e-mails and letters,</li> <li>• Planning and drafting both responsive and initiative e-mails and letters.</li> <li>• Applying standard guidelines in analyzing and revising e-mails and letters</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Correct as is</b>	<b>Your revision:</b> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="text-align: right;"> <span>^</span>  <span>v</span> </div>
<div>Show answer</div>	The workshop outline states three objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describing the importance of reader's needs, writer's purpose, and document's main message in writing e-mails and <b>letters;</b></li> <li>• Planning and drafting both responsive and initiative e-mails and <b>letters; and</b></li> <li>• Applying standard guidelines in analyzing and revising e-mails and <b>letters.</b></li> </ul>
<b>Example 5</b>	The report addresses the issues involved and the solutions recommended.

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Correct as is</b>	<b>Your revision:</b> <div></div>
<input type="button" value="Show answer"/>	Correct as is.
<b>Example 6</b>	In this workshop, participants will: describe the criteria for writing clear documents, plan and draft both responsive and initiative e-mails and letters and apply standard guidelines in analyzing and revising e-mails and letters.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Correct as is</b>	<b>Your revision:</b> <div></div>
<input type="button" value="Show answer"/>	<p>In this workshop, participants <u>will describe</u> the criteria for writing clear <u>documents; plan</u> and draft both responsive and initiative e-mails and <u>letters; and</u> apply standard guidelines in analyzing and revising e-mails and letters.</p> <p>(No colon after the verb; semicolons help separate complex items in a list.)</p>
<b>Example 7</b>	<p>Four issues are already being addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marcelle will identify a coordinator to plan the event schedule.</li> <li>• Itzhak and Brigitte will research where we should advertise.</li> <li>• Ruben will plan how to register participants.</li> <li>• Lee, Chris and Pat will explore possible locations.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Correct as is</b>	<b>Your revision:</b> <div></div>
<input type="button" value="Show answer"/>	<p>Four issues are already being addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marcelle will identify a coordinator to plan the event schedule.</li> <li>• Itzhak and Brigitte will research where we should advertise.</li> <li>• Ruben will plan how to register participants.</li> <li>• Lee, <u>Chris, and</u> Pat will explore possible locations.</li> </ul> <p>(Correct with the exception of the missing comma in the final series.)</p>

The next section of this module addresses relative pronouns.

## Relative Pronouns

Another common difficulty for writers is using relative pronouns correctly. These pronouns help to build connections between parts of a sentence, so using them correctly adds coherence to your writing.

### Using *Which*, *That*, and *Who*

The words **which**, **that**, and **who** are all relative pronouns. This means they relate groups of words to other nouns or pronouns. In the examples below, click on the relative pronoun to find out which word or group of words each one relates to.

I've never been to Dakar, **which** is reputed to be very beautiful.

["Which" relates to "Dakar."]

The books **that** hold the greatest appeal were not the ones recommended by our teacher.

["That" relates to "the books."]

I would like to speak with the consultant **who** wrote this report.

["Who" relates to "the consultant."]

Establishing the purpose of a descriptive clause before you actually construct it will help you to use **that** and **which** effectively and reduce the chance of possible misinterpretations.

## Which

When a clause is descriptive or parenthetical and can be removed from the sentence without changing the reader's understanding of the noun, use **which** and enclose the clause with commas.

The World Bank, **which** has 184 members, has its headquarters in Washington, DC.

There is only one World Bank, so the information in the **which** clause is merely descriptive and does not affect the reader's understanding of the noun, "the World Bank."

The July 14 policy paper, **which** Susan introduced at yesterday's meeting, is under review.

Because the reader already understands that the policy paper under review is the one dated July 14, the clause "which Susan introduced at yesterday's meeting" is simply additional information; therefore, **which** should be used because the clause it introduces is not essential to the reader's understanding of the noun.

## That

When a clause serves to limit or define the noun it is modifying, use **that** to introduce the clause.

The policy paper that Michael will introduce at next week's meeting is under review.

Without the clause "that Michael will introduce at next week's meeting," the meaning of the noun "policy paper" remains ambiguous. The likelihood for misinterpretation by the reader is great; accordingly, **that** should be used. Also, because the clause is essential to the meaning of the noun, do not use commas.

The two organizations that were founded at the Bretton Woods Conference were the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Monetary Fund.

The **that** clause is essential to the reader's understanding of the noun phrase "the two organizations": It answers the question, "What two organizations?"

## That, Which, and Who

**Who** can be used with or without commas, depending on the meaning. As with **that** and **which**, your job is to determine whether the clause could be removed from the sentence without changing its meaning. If the **who** clause is essential to the meaning of the noun, do not enclose it with commas.



## Practice with Relative Pronouns

Choose the correct relative pronoun — **that**, **which** or **who** — from the drop-down lists below. When you have made your choices, click on the **Submit** button.

Dear Janice,

I'm writing to apologize for my confusion when you asked for the latest version of the CAS last night.

As you know, Sandy and I had worked for a number of hours on formatting it correctly, and so we were very tired.

Sandy,  was trying to help me, was even more tired than I was. As soon as we finished printing out the version  was on my flash drive, I knew it was the wrong one. I'm glad you spent only a few minutes reviewing it before we discovered the error.

You now have the correct version,  was on my hard drive and on the unit's shared drive the whole time.

Again, I'm sorry. Please let Sandy and me know if you need further changes.

Regards,  
Raoul

Submit

Reset

The next section of this module focuses on capitalization.

## Capitalization

Capitalization is one of those mechanical elements that writers sometimes use inconsistently. It's not difficult to understand why. Why must you write "the president of the World Bank" but "President Jim Yong Kim," or "executive directors" but "Board of Executive Directors"? Whenever you find yourself in doubt, it is best to consult your style guide. In this course, we outline the main rules. For more details, consult the resources provided in the [resource list](#), including the *World Bank Style Guide*, *The Chicago Manual of Style*, or *The Gregg Reference Manual*.

You should always capitalize proper nouns, but there are many words that can also appear in lower case without loss of meaning. Have a look at the following examples that show when to use capitalization.



Rule	Example
<b>When you use words like president, state, administration, government, or ministry generically, or after a person's name, do not capitalize them.</b>	The delegation met with the president at the White House.
<b>However, when you use the same words as part of a proper noun or title before the person's name, then you need to capitalize.</b>	The delegation was greeted by President Obama at the White House.
<b>The same applies for geographic or institutional names: capitalize names of places and proper names of institutions, but use lowercase for general areas, positions, or descriptions.</b>	<p>The recent project involved loan agreements managed by various Latin American central banks.</p> <p>The project for the northern part of the country was conducted in collaboration with the Central Bank of Colombia.</p> <p>The mission team traveled extensively through southern China.</p> <p>The mission team stopped first in South Africa.</p>
<b>For writing at the World Bank, you should capitalize names of projects and loans.</b>	The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors today approved a US\$50 million loan for Brazil to enhance the impact of the Federal Water Resources Management Project (PROAGUA) in the country's most drought-prone regions.

Some capitalization styles specific to the World Bank are

- Annual Meetings
- Board meeting
- executive directors (but Board of Executive Directors, U.S. Executive Director)
- the president of the World Bank; President Jim Yong Kim
- the Bank, the Fund
- World Bank headquarters; headquarters
- Country office; the Tanzania Country Office
- Asia Region; the Regional vice president; drought affected several regions of the country (However, when Region refers to an organizational unit of the Bank, it is capitalized to avoid confusion.)

## Practice with Mechanics

There are several errors in the e-mail available below, including errors of punctuation, parallelism, capitalization, and word usage. Find the errors and revise the e-mail, then compare your response to the answer key.

<a href="#">E-mail for Your Revision</a> 	<a href="#">Suggested Revision</a> 
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Next, you will consider logical connectors. These connectors add a sense of flow to the correspondence you write.

## Logical Connectors

To help the reader see how ideas are connected, sometimes the writer adds a few words to show this connection. These words can reassure the reader; they say, in effect, "Yes, we are still moving in this direction." Or they can warn the reader, "We are heading somewhere else now." They can also inform the reader, "Here is how I see these ideas as being connected. Please try to see **this** connection, not some other one." Connector words are one way that a writer can control the imagination of the [creative reader](#).

## Logical Connectors: Many Purposes

Logical connectors serve many purposes. In this exercise, you'll see a collection of common connector words. Sort them according to the function they perform.

Drag the connection word to the function it performs.

although	particularly	meanwhile	despite	adjacent to
also	nevertheless	finally	in other words	after
in conclusion	again	besides	to illustrate	because
before	as a result	nearby	above	in brief
therefore				

Addition	
Causality and consequence	
Comparison and contrast	
Examples	
Place	
Summary	
Time	

## Logical Connectors: A Reference Guide

Writers often choose connector words more from habit than anything else. If you have noticed this tendency in your own writing, pay particular attention to this reference guide to connector words. It will provide you with some variety.

[Connector Words and Phrases](#)



## Analyze Your Own Writing

Now that you have reviewed the mechanics of punctuation, parallelism, relative pronouns, and capitalization, analyze your own work with these points in mind. It is important that you do this now. Mechanical errors tend to be habitual errors. If you have often confused **which** and **that**, for example, you will not be accustomed to seeing them as incorrect when they are confused. Now is the time to look at your writing with fresh eyes and make sure that none of those habitual errors have crept in!

For this reflective activity, use a sample of your own writing. You may use the sample you submitted for course entry, or you may prefer to use another example. Review your document carefully using the [checklist](#). Correct the errors you find. You might choose to print the checklist and highlight the points you find particularly challenging. That way it will be a resource for you in the future.

## Assignment 3: Revise for Mechanics

This assignment has three parts, all of which focus on the mechanics that you have studied in this module. Use the [checklist](#) to remind you what kinds of mechanical errors to look for and correct. You will submit three documents to your tutor:

- The [Ms. Wong e-mail](#), with all mechanical errors corrected. Do not rewrite any part of the e-mail; instead, focus on the mechanical aspects given in the checklist.
- Your Responsive e-mail from Assignment 2, with all mechanical errors corrected.
- Your Initiative document from Assignment 2, with all mechanical errors corrected.

Your tutor highlighted the mechanical errors in your Module 2 documents before returning the documents to you. Your job is to determine what is wrong in each highlighted area and to correct the mechanical error or errors. Refer to the checklist or review the sections in this module so that you can find and correct all of the mechanical errors.

Do not submit the checklist to your tutor; this is just for your own use. This time the tutor's feedback will focus on how successfully you have applied the mechanical guidelines that you have studied in this module.

Upload the following three Word files to the [Moodle](#) Assignment 3 page for this assignment:

- The corrected Ms. Wong e-mail
- The corrected responsive e-mail from Assignment 2
- The corrected initiative document (e-mail or short document) from Assignment 2

## Resources and Documents

### Working Documents

- [Ms. Wong e-mail](#)
- [Mechanics Checklist](#)
- [Connector Words and Phrases](#)

### Other Resources

- *The Chicago Manual of Style*. University of Chicago Press, 16th edition, 2010.
- *The Gregg Reference Manual*. McGraw-Hill/Irwin, 11th edition, 2011.
- *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*. Merriam-Webster, 11th edition, 2012.
- *World Bank Style Guide* (Intranet: style guide, EXTOP)

## Summary

Good mechanics help you convey information to your readers without distracting or confusing them. There are many elements to good mechanics, only some of which were discussed in this module.

Correct mechanics require attention to detail.

- Sentences are punctuated according to punctuation patterns. Pay attention to the type of sentence (complex or compound) and the presence or absence of conjunctions.
- Lists and series are punctuated according to list contents. Pay attention to Bank guidelines and to the length of the items listed.
- Parallel construction adds symmetry and flow to documents. Pay attention to the structure of verbs, nouns, clauses, and phrases, and ensure that you use similar forms for similar functions.
- Relative pronouns clarify the relationship between parts of sentences. Pay attention to the different purposes served by **which**, **that**, and **who**.
- Capital letters identify proper nouns. Pay attention to the role words are serving in a sentence to determine if they should be capitalized, and consult your style guide if you are unsure.
- Connector words help the reader see how ideas are connected.

At times, correctness is a function of English grammar. At other times, correctness is a function of Bank style. When you are writing correspondence at the Bank, both are important.

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