

Writers' Humor

The History of English

Back in the beginning, everyone spoke English. Then the Welsh, not liking how things were being run, moved over to the west side of the island, where they were attacked by the Irish, who stole all the vowels. When the Danes invaded, the Irish gave the vowel to them, telling them they were all pronounced "ooo."

Rules for Writers

Remember to never split an infinitive. The passive voice should never be used. Do not put statements in the negative form. Verbs have to agree with their subjects. Proofread carefully to see if you words out. If you reread your work, you can find on rereading a great deal of repetition can be avoided by rereading and editing. A writer must not shift your point of view. And don't start a sentence with a conjunction. (Remember, too, a preposition is a terrible word to end a sentence with.) Don't overuse exclamation marks!! Place pronouns as close as possible, especially in long sentences, as of 10 or more words, to their antecedents. Writing carefully, dangling participles must be avoided. If any word is improper at the end of a sentence, a linking verb is. Take the bull by the hand and avoid mixing metaphors. Avoid trendy locutions that sound flaky. Everyone should be careful to use a singular pronoun with singular nouns in their writing. Always pick on the correct idiom. The adverb always follows the verb. Last but not least, avoid cliches like the plague; seek viable alternatives.

- Never use a preposition to end a sentence with.
 - Avoid annoying alliteration.
 - Don't verb nouns.
 - Don't use no double negatives.
 - Make each pronoun agree with their antecedent.
 - When dangling, watch your participles.
 - Don't use commas, which aren't necessary.
 - Verbs has to agree with their subjects.
 - About those sentence fragments.
 - Try to not ever split infinitives.
 - Its important to use apostrophe's correctly.
 - Always read what you have written to see if you've any words out.
 - Correct spelling is esential.
 - Proofread you writing.
 - Between you and I, case is important.
 - Verbs has to agree with their antecedents.
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Eschew Obfuscation

In promulgating your esoteric cogitations and in articulating your superficial sentimentalities and amicable philosophical or psychological observations, beware of platitudinous ponderosity. Let your extemporaneous descantings and unpremeditated expatiation have intelligibility and veracious vivacity without rhodomontade or thrasonical bombast.

Sedulously avoid all polysyllabic profundity, pompous prolixity, psittaceous vacuity, grandiloquent, maniloquent, or vaniloquent vapidty. Eschew all conglomeration of flatulent garrulity, jejune babblement and asinine affectation.

In other words, be brief, say what you mean, mean what you say, and don't use big words.

ENGLISH IS TOUGH STUFF

Dearest creature in creation,
Study English pronunciation.
I will teach you in my verse
Sounds like corpse, corps, horse, and worse.
I will keep you, Suzy, busy,
Make your head with heat grow dizzy.
Tear in eye, your dress will tear.
So shall I! Oh hear my prayer.

Just compare heart, beard, and heard,
Dies and diet, lord and word,
Sword and sward, retain and Britain.
(Mind the latter, how it's written.)
Now I surely will not plague you
With such words as plaque and ague.
But be careful how you speak:
Say break and steak, but bleak and streak;
Cloven, oven, how and low,
Script, receipt, show, poem, and toe.

Hear me say, devoid of trickery,
Daughter, laughter, and Terpsichore,
Typhoid, measles, topsails, aisles,
Exiles, similes, and reviles;
Scholar, vicar, and cigar,
Solar, mica, war and far;
One, anemone, Balmoral,
Kitchen, lichen, laundry, laurel;
Gertrude, German, wind and mind,
Scene, Melpomene, mankind.

Billet does not rhyme with ballet,

Bouquet, wallet, mallet, chalet.
Blood and flood are not like food,
Nor is mould like should and would.
Viscous, viscount, load and broad,
Toward, to forward, to reward.
And your pronunciation's OK
When you correctly say croquet,
Rounded, wounded, grieve and sieve,
Friend and fiend, alive and live.

Ivy, privy, famous; clamour
And enamour rhyme with hammer.
River, rival, tomb, bomb, comb,
Doll and roll and some and home.
Stranger does not rhyme with anger,
Neither does devour with clangour.
Souls but foul, haunt but aunt,
Font, front, wont, want, grand, and grant,
Shoes, goes, does. Now first say finger,
And then singer, ginger, linger,
Real, zeal, mauve, gauze, gouge and gauge,
Marriage, foliage, mirage, and age.

Query does not rhyme with very,
Nor does fury sound like bury.
Dost, lost, post and doth, cloth, loth.
Job, knob, bosom, transom, oath.
Though the differences seem little,
We say actual but victual.
Refer does not rhyme with deafer.
Foeffer does, and zephyr, heifer.
Mint, pint, senate and sedate;
Dull, bull, and George ate late.
Scenic, Arabic, Pacific,
Science, conscience, scientific.

Liberty, library, heave and heaven,
Rachel, ache, moustache, eleven.
We say hallowed, but allowed,
People, leopard, towed, but vowed.
Mark the differences, moreover,
Between mover, cover, clover;
Leeches, breeches, wise, precise,
Chalice, but police and lice;
Camel, constable, unstable,
Principle, disciple, label.

Petal, panel, and canal,
Wait, surprise, plait, promise, pal.
Worm and storm, chaise, chaos, chair,
Senator, spectator, mayor.
Tour, but our and succour, four.

Gas, alas, and Arkansas.
Sea, idea, Korea, area,
Psalm, Maria, but malaria.
Youth, south, southern, cleanse and clean.
Doctrine, turpentine, marine.

Compare alien with Italian,
Dandelion and battalion.
Sally with ally, yea, ye,
Eye, I, ay, aye, whey, and key.
Say aver, but ever, fever,
Neither, leisure, skein, deceiver.
Heron, granary, canary.
Crevice and device and aerie.

Face, but preface, not efface.
Phlegm, phlegmatic, ass, glass, bass.
Large, but target, gin, give, verging,
Ought, out, joust and scour, scourging.
Ear, but earn and wear and tear
Do not rhyme with here but ere.
Seven is right, but so is even,
Hyphen, roughen, nephew Stephen,
Monkey, donkey, Turk and jerk,
Ask, grasp, wasp, and cork and work.

Pronunciation--think of Psyche!
Is a paling stout and spikey?
Won't it make you lose your wits,
Writing groats and saying grits?
It's a dark abyss or tunnel:
Strewn with stones, stowed, solace, gunwale,
Islington and Isle of Wight,
Housewife, verdict and indict.

Finally, which rhymes with enough--
Though, through, plough, or dough, or cough?
Hiccough has the sound of cup.
My advice is to give up!!!

--Author Unknown

A Plan for the Improvement of English Spelling

For example, in Year 1 that useless letter "c" would be dropped to be replaced either by "k" or "s," and likewise "x" would no longer be part of the alphabet. The only case in which "c" would be retained would be the "ch" formation, which will be dealt with later. Year 2 might reform "w" spelling, so that "which" and "one" would take the same consonant, while Year 3 might well abolish "y" replacing it with "I" and Year 4 might fix the "g/j" anomaly once and for all. Generally, then, the improvement would continue year by year with Year 5 doing away with useless double consonants, and Years 6-12 or so modifying vowels and the remaining voiced and unvoiced

konsonants. Bai iear 15 or sou, it wud fainali bi posibl tu meik ius ov thi ridandant letez “c,” “y,” and “x”--bai now jast a memori in the maindz ov ould doderez--tu riplais “ch,” “sh,” and “th” rispektivli. Fainali, xen, aafte sam 20 iers ov orxogrefkl riform, wi wud hev a lojikl, kohirnt speling in ius xrewawt xe Ingliy-spiking werld.

Canonical List of Oxymorons

“Anarchy rules!”	Bankrupt millionaire
“Free with purchase”	Beginning Finnish
“Happy Monday”	Better than new
“Never generalize”	Black light
“One size fits all”	Boring orgasm
“Slow children” (sign with a picture of a running child)	Brave politician
“Thank God I'm an Atheist”	British fashion
“This page intentionally left blank”	Budget deficit
A little big	Bug free code
Academic sorority	Business ethics
Accordion music	Butthead
Accurate stereotype	Cafeteria food
Act naturally	California culture
Advanced BASIC	California expressway
Aerobic exercise	Canadian culture
Affirmative action, equal opportunity	Casual intimacy
Affordable housing	Cat-proof
Aging yuppie	Central Intelligence Agency
Airline food	Centrally-planned economy
Almost exactly	Cheerful pessimist
Alone together	Childproof
American beer	Christian education
American chop suey	Christian militia
American culture	Christian Scientists
American education	Church of Scientology
American English	Civil engineer
American geographers	Civil servant
American history	Civil libertarian
American Honda	Civil war
Americans	Classic rock & roll
Apple tech support	Clean dirt
Arms limitation	Clean hack
Art student	Clearly confused
Artificial intelligence	Clearly misunderstood
Athletic scholarship	Clinton leadership
Australian spelling	Coca-Cola Foods
Automated data processing	Coed fraternity/sorority
Back to the future	Collective liberty
Bad health	College algebra
Balding hair	College education
	Colored music
	Committee schedule

Committee decision
Common sense
Communist Party
Completely unfinished
Compulsory volunteering
Computer science
Computer jock
Computer security
Congressional action
Congressional ethics
Congressional hearing
Congressional oversight
Conservative Democrat
Conspicuous absence
Constant change
Construction worker
Convenience store
Cooperative multitasking
Corporate planning
Cost effective
Country music
Courtesy towing
Creation science
Curved line
Customer satisfaction
CNN style
Debugged program
Debutante ball
Decent lawyer
Definite maybe
Degradable plastic
Democratic Congress
Department of the Interior
Desktop publishing
Diet ice cream
Dining hall food
Disco music
Down escalator/elevator
Dress pants
Driving pleasure
Dry beer
Dry ice
Dry wine
DOS operating system
Economic reform
Electroshock therapy
English syntax
Enquiring minds

Environmentalist bumper sticker
Ergonomic keyboard
European Community
Evolutionary fact
Exact estimate
Executive decision
Express bus
Express mail
Fair reporting
Fair trial
Fallout shelter
Family entertainment
Fast food
Federal budget
Fighting for peace
Final version
First annual
First-strike defense
Flat-busted
Flexible freeze
Football scholarship
Forth programming language
Found missing
Free election
Free electron laser
Free love
Freezer burn
French culture
Fresh frozen
Friendly advice
Friendly competitor
Friendly fire
Full-length bikini
Full service
Functional manager
Funny clean joke
Fuzzy logic
Gay drill sergeant
Genuine imitation
Good grief
Good mother-in-law
Good Alan Rudolph film
Government aid/assistance
Government efficiency
Government integrity
Government organization
Graduate student
Great Britain

Guest host
Gunboat diplomacy
Half dead
Happily married
Hard disk
Hard water
Hazardous waste disposal
Helicopter flight
Higher education
Holy Roman Empire
Holy War
Honest crook
Honest politician
House Ethics Committee
Huge market niche
Human evolution
Indecent exposure
Industrial park
Institutional Revolutionary Party
Intelligent life-forms
Internal Revenue Service
IBM compatible
Journalistic accuracy
Journalistic integrity
Jumbo shrimp
Just in Time (JIT)
Justice Rehnquist
Justice Thomas
Kentucky Fried Chicken
Kosher ham
Lace-up loafers
Lebanese government
Legal brief
Legal ethics
Legally drunk
Liberal Party (conservative)
Liberal, Kansas
Liquid crystal
Literal interpretation
Living dead
Long Island Expressway
Male compassion
Management science
Management support
Management action
Management style
Marketing strategy
Married life

Martial law
Math teacher
Mature student
McDonalds dinner
Meatless hamburger
Medicaid payment
Medical ethics
Microsoft Works
Middle East peace process
Military intelligence
Military justice
Military peace
Modified final judgment
Monopoly
Moral Majority
Mutual attraction
Mutually exclusive
Necessary meeting
New Classic
New Democrat
New Mexico
Nice cat
Noble savage
Non-alcoholic beer
Non-denominational church
Nonworking mother
Now, then
Nuclear defense
Objective parent
Oddly appropriate
OpenVMS
Operating system
Operation Rescue
Pacific Ocean
Paperless office
Partly pregnant
Passive aggression
Peace force
Peace officer
Peace-Maker missile
People's Democratic Republic Of
Yemen
Personal computer
Petty cash
Philosophy science
Plastic glasses
Plastic silverware
Pocket calculator

Police protection
Polite cabbie
Political leadership
Political science
Politically correct
Poor Republican
Pop art
Portable standard Lisp
Postal Service
Pot luck
Practical logic
Precision bombing
Presidential promises
Pretty ugly
Private e-mail
Productivity committee
Professional courtesy
Progressive Conservative
Proprietary standard
Psychiatric care
Public school education
Quality assurance
Quality service
Quebec intellectual
QuickBASIC
Quick fix
Quick reboot
Rap music
Rapid transit
Rare steak
Reagan memoirs
Real fantasy
Realistic schedule
Reasonable female
Recently new
Reckless caution
Red Indians
Relativistic correction
Religious education
Religious fact
Religious tolerance
Religious science
Republican initiative
Resident alien
Responsible committee
Restrained grandparent
Rolling stop
Rush hour

Russian economy
Safe sex
Same difference
Sanitary landfill
Satisfied Democrat
Saving price
Savings & loan
School food
School vacation
Scottish Danish
(actual pastry sold at 7-11)
Second best
Sedate sex
Semi truck
Semi-boneless ham
Senate Ethics Committee
Sensitive male
Severely/slightly killed
Silent scream
Small crowd
Smart bomb
Smart drugs
Social Security
Social science
Socialist Worker
Soft rock
Software documentation
Software engineering
Solid glass
Southern justice
Spare rib
Speed limit
Sports sedan
Stealth bomber
Straight hook
Student athlete
Student teacher
Summer school
Suburban culture
Supporting documentation
Sweet sorrow
Synthetic natural gas
Tame cat
Taped live
Tax return
Television critic
Temporary tax increase
Terribly pleased

Terminal initialization	User-friendly war
Tight slacks	Vegetable beef soup
Tone color	Ventura Freeway
Total Quality Management (TQM)	Violent agreement
True gossip	Virtual reality
True story	Voting power
Unbiased journalism	Waiting patiently
Unbiased news reports	War games
Unbiased opinion	War hero
Unbiased predisposition	Wilderness management
Uncontested divorce	Windows NT (New Technology)
Understanding banker	Wonder Bread
Understanding Unix	Woods Metal
Union workers	Working vacation
United States	Young Floridian
University of Nevada at Las Vegas	Yummy sushi
Unix prompt	10K fun run
Unix security	12-ounce pound cake
Unsalted Saltines	6502-based computer
Urban planning	
User friendliness	

Discouragement and Demotivation for Writers...

DETERIORATA

Go placidly amid the noise and waste,
And remember what comfort there may be in owning a piece thereof.
Avoid quiet and passive persons, unless you are in need of sleep.
Rotate your tires.
Speak glowingly of those greater than yourself,
And heed well their advice--even though they be turkeys.
Know what to kiss--and when.
Remember that two wrongs never make a right,
But that three do.
Wherever possible, put people on HOLD.
Be comforted, that in the face of all aridity and disillusionment,
And despite the changing fortunes of time,
There is always a big future in computer maintenance.

You are a fluke of the universe...
You have no right to be here.
Whether you can hear it or not, the universe
Is laughing behind your back.