

The Little Book of Effective Writing

This 'Little Book' explains how to make your meaning clear in writing.

Printed copies are available in the Libraries and campus shops. A PDF version is available on the Skills for Learning website.

Useful resource

Sentence grammar from BBC Skillswise at:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/topic-group/sentence-grammar>

This part of the BBC 'Skillswise' website has useful information, video clips and exercises on different aspects of sentence structure, including punctuation.



Skills for Learning is a collection of resources to support the learning and teaching of academic skills.

Developing your academic skills is an essential part of successful study at university and your future employability. Academic skills include the use of IT, numeracy, academic literacy, problem solving, critical thinking, working with others and research skills.

We also offer Skills for Learning workshops and tutorials on academic communication, maths and IT skills.

More information

More information on all aspects of academic writing is available on the Skills for Learning website:

<http://skillsforlearning.leedsbeckett.ac.uk>

Skills for Learning

Quick Guides

Spelling, punctuation and grammar

These guides cover the basics of popular academic skills topics. All of the Quick Guides are available as PDF documents on the Skills for Learning website.

Good spelling, punctuation and grammar allow you to express yourself clearly. Your abilities in spelling, punctuation, and the correct arrangement of words within sentences will be used as an indication of the quality of your work.

Make an effort to get these things right.

*Check everything
you write*

<http://skillsforlearning.leedsbeckett.ac.uk>

Improve your spelling

- There are tried and tested methods for improving your spelling such as:
 - Writing words over and over again
 - Using common spelling 'rules'
 - Learning groups of words together
 - Using mnemonics for certain words (big elephants can't always use small exits)
- Probably the most popular method used by English teachers is known as: "Look, cover, write, check" (look at the word, cover it up, write it, check it).

If you are uncertain about the spelling of a word, use a dictionary to check you have got it right. If you keep spelling the same words incorrectly, make a list of words to practise.

Some people have dyslexia and this usually causes difficulties with recognising words and spelling patterns. If you think you might have dyslexia, arrange to take a test through your university disability service, as extra help and support is available for students with dyslexia.

QuickScan: your preferred learning style

This software is available on Leeds Beckett University student computers. The software consists of a questionnaire which takes about 15-25 minutes to complete. After the test you get a report that identifies if there are any indications of dyslexia. You can show this result to Disability Advice. QuickScan also identifies your preferred learning style.

The Little Book of Punctuation

This 'Little Book' takes the approach that punctuation is directly tied to sentence structure. It explains how sentences work, and how to use punctuation in different types of sentence to make your meaning clear.

Printed copies are available in the Libraries and campus shops. A PDF version is on the Skills for Learning website.

The English language has about half a million different words. But we can only hope to spell a maximum of 15,000-20,000 of these words with confidence.

Improve your punctuation and grammar

The traditional approach to improving your punctuation is to study the rule(s) for using each of the punctuation marks. The rules are especially useful if you lack confidence in using one particular punctuation mark, such as the apostrophe. Another approach is to look at the different ways sentences can be written and at how punctuation makes the various types of sentences work. Use punctuation, or leave it out, to emphasise or change your meaning.

Experiment with different ways of arranging and punctuating your sentences, and try to vary the length of your sentences. Then consider the effect on your points well.

Punctuation and grammar are not two separate things; use them together to create sentences which make your points well.

Don't think that some spelling issues stop you being able to write well