

## Pieplow's Pet Peeves & Other Helpful Hints

- turn off Grammar Check – it's often wrong
- Spell check – this is a great feature but look to see what is being corrected; it may not be the word you want to use
- people are “who;” things are “that”
  - Advocates argue that guns are too easy for people to buy and own, especially those that/who should not have them.
- amount v. number, less v. few – can the things be counted?
  - Violence is an amount because it can't be easily counted, but the number of assaults can be added up. And we hope for less violence and fewer assaults.
- Don't write like you talk (unless you are writing dialogue):
  - get – usually can substitute “to be”
  - then v. than
  - whether v. weather
  - sight (seeing), site (location), cite (citation)
- using “myself” when you should use “me” or “I”
  - Brad and myself – it should be “he gave the present to Brad and me” or “Brad and I wrapped the present”
  - If you have a question, call myself – it should be “call me”
- double check “lists” – words that imply more, give cues
  - also works subconsciously when you summarize your argument/points in the conclusion but don't make those points in exactly the same order in body of argument.
- Conventions: numbers 1-10 are written out
  - So are numbers that begin a sentence
- Legal case names – underline or italicize
- quotations within quotations:
  - “Use double marks for the ‘outside’ quotation, single marks for ‘internal’ statements.”
- hyphenating words: when you use several words as one, make them one using hyphens
  - state-of-the-art component system
  - he's a six-year-old boy with brown hair
- it's (comma) therefore (comma) and (comma) however (comma) – as in this example full of redundancies: “The situation, however, remained the same, and nothing, therefore, was changed.”
- periods and commas go inside quotation marks
  - the end.”
  - “you don't say,” he said.
- Capitalize the names of things that are entities unto themselves
  - the Bible, Prohibition, the Reformation, First Amendment, Congress, Middle East, the Constitution
- inanimate objects cannot feel, think, believe or do anything human
  - The article believes . . . The article writes . . . The article feels . . . . does it really?
- information in parentheses – if you need it to explain a concept, it's probably important enough (at least in academic writing) to put it into the regular text
- every “if” does not require a “then” – If I go to the store, I'll pick up some milk.
- “whether” does not require an “or not” – the “or not” is implicit in the “whether”