

Writing With Style

APA Style Made Easy

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Chapter 10

Grooming Tips for Psychology Papers

PARALLEL CONSTRUCTION

Items in a series

Nouns

Participants read vignettes, labels, and lists.

Adjectival phrases

Participants read crazy vignettes, crooked labels, and long lists.

Verb phrases

Participants read a story, ate a burrito, and fed a goat.

Verb forms

Active/passive

Participants ate and
opened presents.

Participants were offered
food and were
showered with gifts.

Gerund

While sitting and waiting,
participants were eating
and opening presents.

COMPARISONS

Be clear about what goes with what

- Always use THAN
 - Some were older than others.
 - Some scored higher than others on the measure.
 - Some did better on the posttest than on the pretest.
 - Some did better on the pretest than others did on the pretest.

AGREEMENT

Between subject and verb

Find the simple subject when it is buried in a lot of extra words and make a decision about singular or plural.

The **objectives** of the study, which was the first of its kind and kind of crazy, **were** written on the door of the room.

Between pronoun and referent

- He or she
- Singular
 - Cannot change to **they** later in the sentence
- One
- Has to stay that way all through the sentence

SENTENCE ERRORS

Run-on/comma splice

- Two sentences joined with a comma
- Two sentences joined with a conjunctive adverb, most commonly
 - *Also*
 - *However*
 - *Therefore*

How to avoid it

- Use a period instead of a comma.
- Use a semi-colon instead of a comma.
- Use a coordinating conjunction:

and

or

but

so

for

yet

nor

whereas (this is a great one)

PUNCTUATION

Colons to introduce lists

- Use a comma instead of colon after

for example

for instance

namely

that is

- Use a colon after

as follows

the following

- Use no punctuation for

such as

the verb to be

Comma before AND

- Yes, before the last item on a list of three or more
 - Bananas, apples, and strawberries
- Yes, when the AND joins 2 independent clauses
 - He ate bananas, and she ate apples.
- No, when the AND just joins 2 items — like a compound subject or verb
 - The man with the fur coat and the woman with the red hat ate green apples and rotten strawberries.