

## How The OWL Checks For Grammar

**AFTER** reviewing a paper for overall structure, we look for the most common grammar or punctuation errors.

- We do not mark every error, but will identify types of error.
- We'll tell you how they can be fixed by asking the following questions or pointing you to an in-depth resource.
- See <http://libguides.sfasu.edu/aarc/basicgram> for more info.

### 1. **Long, confusing, or wordy sentences** –

- This sentence is confusing. How can you rewrite it to clarify your meaning?
- Not sure what you're saying here. Who is doing what action?
- You have multiple ideas in this sentence. Which is priority and should be in its own sentence?

### 2. **Run-on sentences** – *This is my winning lottery ticket, I bought it at Kroger's.*

- You have multiple actions/verbs in this single sentence. Can you rewrite so each action stands alone?
- You've joined 2 sentences with just a comma. What word can you use instead?
- This is a run-on. How can you rewrite it into 2 sentences?

### 3. **Sentence fragments** – *Running swiftly through daunting hordes of defensive linemen.*

- You have an action in this sentence, but who is doing this action?
- You refer to a thing – X – but what is it doing?
- This sentence is incomplete. What sentence does this bit belong with?
- 'Ing' is never a verb. Who is doing what action in this sentence?

### 4. **Verb tense errors** – *He have asked me to dinner, then leaves me the check*

- You switch time from past to present here. When did this take place?
- You have a singular subject, but a plural verb. How many are doing this action?

### 5. **Pronoun errors** – *Chain Saw Massacre video game, they the best. It totally destroyed it.*

- You use ‘it’ repeatedly here. Who or what is it?
- Not clear what’s happening here.
- You refer to one person as ‘they’ which is plural. Can you rewrite?
- You just named the thing you’re discussing. Can you rewrite without using ‘they’?

6. **Commas** – *When Juliet saw Romeo she said What light, through yonder window breaks?*

- Commas separate extra from the core of the sentence. What belongs together here?
- Commas separate intros from main idea. Where does the main idea begin?

7. **Apostrophes** – *AARC tutor’s are the coolest.*

- Apostrophes indicate possession, not plural. How many people are involved here?
- Need an apostrophe to indicate possession. Who does this belong to?