Right Source MARKETING

Top 10 Grammar Rules You're Probably Breaking

Writing style may be subjective, but if you want to communicate clearly, grammar rules are non-negotiable. Common grammar mistakes can doom your content and cloud your message.

Are you breaking any of these 10 grammar rules in your writing?

1. It's vs. its. » "It's" is a contraction, short for "it is" or "it has." "Its" is a possessive pronoun. **Example:** *"It's important to proofread your content before publishing so it can make its full impact on readers."*

2. You're vs. your. » "You're" is a contraction of "you" and "are." "Your" is a possessive pronoun. **Example:** *"You're ahead of the game if you know your grammar rules."*

3. They're, there, their. » They're = a contraction of they + are. There = a place. Their = a possessive for more than one person. **Example:** *"They're going to meet us there in their car."*

4. Me, myself, and I. » To decide between me and I, use a test: **A)** *"Send the blog post to Michael and I when you're done"* or **B)** *"Send the blog post to Michael and me when you're done."* For the answer, take off one person and say the sentence: *"Send the blog post to I when you're done."* Nope. So the answer is B.

Use "myself" when you write: "I thought to myself, I really am a great writer," or "I, myself, can't stand when people make grammar mistakes."

5. That vs. who. » "That" is used when you refer to an object. "Who" is used when you refer to a person. *"She is the woman who wrote the fantastic blog post that I wanted you to read."*

6. It vs. they. » This rule gets broken often when describing a company. A company is an entity, but it is made up of people. Use "it" to refer to the company: *"XYZ Inc. was sold for $500 million. It is based in Seattle."* But "they" is used to refer to the people in the company: *"XYZ Inc.'s directors said they are thrilled."*

7. Improper use of the apostrophe. » Apostrophes are for two things: To create contractions (should have = should've) and to show possession (*Susie's pen*). Don't put apostrophes in places they don't belong.

8. Affect vs. effect. » Affect is a verb and means "to influence," as in: *"Writing a bad post will affect your reputation."* Effect is usually a noun and means "a result," as in: *"The effect of quality writing is superstardom."*

9. Then vs. than. » Use "than" to compare things and "then" for everything else. **Example:** *"This checklist is better than the one my boss created."*

10. Overuse of exclamation points. » This is obnoxious!!! The exclamation point should be used very sparingly, so that when you really have something to exclaim, it's meaningful. Well-crafted, eloquent sentences will make an impression on readers with just a period.

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