

9 More English Grammar Mistakes by Kempton Smith

9. Who, which or that?

"Who" (or "whom") refers to persons. "Which" refers to animals or things, never to persons. "That" can refer to either persons or things.

Examples of correct usage:

The girl who was hungry.

The dog which bit the mailman.

The bus that goes to the station.

8. Anyone vs any one

"Anyone" means "any person," not necessarily a specific person. It could refer to multiple people simultaneously.

As two words, "any one" refers to a single person.

Examples:

Anyone can download my software. But a single-user software license can only be used by any one user at a time.

7. Commonly misspelled words

All right

Dependable

Independent

Recommend

Responsible

Separate

6. Don't put punctuation at the end of a URL

While not technically an English grammatical error, don't put a period or anything immediately after a URL reference. Doing so will usually invalidate the URL. You might call this an internet grammatical rule.

Place the punctuation after the closing anchor tag of the link.

Example: {note that the anchor tags are not actually used so you can see the syntax.}

My URL is {opentag} HREF="http://www.kemptonsmith.com">www.kemptonsmith.com{closetag}.

5. Software not softwares

"Software" can be singular or plural. Never use "softwares."

4. Do the quotes go after or before the period?

Put quotation marks after a period or comma. Put quotes before a colon. Put quotes after a question mark unless the entire sentence is a question. This is a US English standard. British English usage can differ.

Examples:

He asked, "Are you hungry?"

She replied, "Yes."

Did she say, "Yes"?

3. There, their, or they're

"There" is used in two ways. It can specify a place. It can also be used as an expletive or empty word to start a sentence.

"Their" is used as a possessive form of "they."

"They're" is short for "they are."

Examples:

There are nine planets in the solar system.

The two boys raced their bikes.

They're both tired after riding so far.

2. Site or sight

A "site" is a location or place.

"Sight" refers to your sense of vision; not to a web site.

Examples:

A web site is a place on the internet that you visit with your browser.

A beautiful sunset is a marvelous sight.

1. Its or It's

The possessive form of "it" is "its," not "it's." Use "it's" only when it means "it is." Unless you can replace "it's" with "it is," use "its." Never use "its'."

Examples:

It's raining today.

The dog wagged its tail.