



Grammar Quick Tips

1. Spaces

Use *one space* between sentences.

2. Numbers

Spell out numbers one through nine. Also, spell out a number if it begins a sentence.

3. Commas

Do not use the oxford comma (a.k.a. the serial comma), which is the comma that comes before conjunctions like “and” and “or” in a series of three or more items.

4. Dashes

Use an *en dash* (not a hyphen) for number ranges, including date and time ranges.

Examples:

- May 2–5
- 1–3:30 p.m.
- 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

Use an *em dash* (the longest dash) with a space before and after it — just like this — to call out impactful information in a sentence.

5. Time

Do not use “:00” when writing times. Use periods and lowercase letters for “a.m.” and “p.m.”

6. Quotes

Punctuation goes *inside* the end quotation mark.

Examples:

- “Murray State University affords opportunities to students,” said Dr. Bob Davies.
- John Smith referred to Murray State as an “incredible value.”

7. Titles

Capitalize professional titles *only* when they come before the person’s name. Make titles lowercase if they are informal, appear without a person’s name, follow a person’s name or are set off before a name by commas.

8. Colleges and departments

Capitalize the names of Murray State colleges. Make the names of academic departments lowercase, except words that are proper nouns.

Examples:

- Jesse D. Jones College of Science, Engineering and Technology
- School of Nursing and Health Professions
- department of history
- department of English

9. Degrees

Degrees should be capitalized or not capitalized in accordance with the following examples:

- bachelor’s degree
- Bachelor of Arts
- associate degree
- master’s degree
- Master of Science
- doctorate degree

10. University name usage

Please *do not* use “MSU.” Always spell out the University’s full name in the first instance, and use “Murray State” in subsequent instances.

When referring to Murray State as “the University,” capitalize the “U.”