



# The Writing Center at Bristol Community College

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## Common Grammatical Errors

Errors in grammar occur in a variety of forms. The sooner writers can recognize patterns of errors, the sooner they can become effective editors of their work. The list below offers a sampling of common grammatical errors with examples of sentences containing a particular kind of error.

Common Errors	Examples of Errors	Corrected Examples
Adding unnecessary articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We got <b>a</b> good news about our jobs.</li><li>• We need eggs and <b>a</b> sugar.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We got good news about our jobs.</li><li>• We need eggs and sugar.</li></ul>
Adding an unnecessary “s” to words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ana must <b>writes</b> a letter</li><li>• Does he <b>watches</b> TV everyday?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ana must write a letter.</li><li>• Does he watch TV everyday?</li></ul>
Adding an unnecessary “ing” to verbs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• He does <b>working</b> on the car.</li><li>• He should <b>mowing</b> the lawn.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• He does work on the car.</li><li>• He should mow the lawn.</li></ul>
Omitting necessary articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>I gave box to nurse.</b></li><li>• <b>She is aunt of girl.</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I gave the box to the nurse.</li><li>• She is the aunt of the girl.</li></ul>
Choosing the wrong article	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We have <b>a</b> prettiest house in the neighborhood.</li><li>• Do you have <b>the</b> question?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We have the prettiest house in the neighborhood.</li><li>• Do you have a question?</li></ul>
Shifting tenses inappropriately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tomorrow we <b>will go</b> to the shopping center and <b>have to buy</b> sneakers for gym class.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tomorrow we will go to the shopping center and will have to buy sneakers for gym class.</li></ul>
Using words and phrases that lack parallelism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• William was a good <b>president</b> and <b>smart</b>.</li><li>• <b>Picking</b> berries, <b>making</b> jam and <b>savings</b> are fun.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• William was a good and smart president.</li><li>• Picking berries, making the jam, and baking pies are fun.</li></ul>
Using verbs and subjects not in agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The <b>flowers grows</b> in the garden.</li><li>• The <b>doctor and nurse speaks</b> to the patient.</li><li>• <b>Everybody have</b> a name.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The flowers grow in the garden.</li><li>• The doctor and nurse speak to the patient.</li><li>• Everybody has a name.</li></ul>

Shifting persons inappropriately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Becky and Zim</b> took the bus to the pier on the island and then <b>we</b> walked to the cottage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becky and Zim took the bus to the pier on the island, and then they walked to the cottage.</li> </ul>
Using incomplete sentences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Children playing in the park.</b></li> <li>• <b>Commuters running to catch their trains.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like to play in the park.</li> <li>• Commuters seem to be running to catch their trains.</li> </ul>
Using the wrong form of the pronoun.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jesse and <b>me</b> did the homework.</li> <li>• Jesse and I did <b>their</b> homework.</li> <li>• The pilots check <b>his</b> baggage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jesse and I did the homework.</li> <li>• Jessie and I did our homework.</li> <li>• The pilots checked their baggage.</li> </ul>
Selecting the inappropriate word	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are <b>less</b> people in the audience today than yesterday.</li> <li>• He was not <b>conscience</b> when he arrived at the hospital.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are fewer people in the audience today than yesterday.</li> <li>• He was not conscious when he arrived at the hospital.</li> </ul>