

Error List

Improper Verb Tense

- ✓ Verb tense (e.g., past, future, etc.) must match the time period of the sentence and be consistent with or complementary to the rest of the sentence.

Incorrect

The great sleuth Sherlock Holmes using deductive reasoning, catching criminals and impressing his colleagues in the process.

In 1879, Nikola Tesla will file the first radio patent, at least a decade before Guglielmo Marconi – the man generally credited with the feat – filed a patent of his own.

Correct

The great sleuth Sherlock Holmes used deductive reasoning, catching criminals and impressing his colleagues in the process.

In 1879, Nikola Tesla filed the first radio patent, at least a decade before Guglielmo Marconi – the man generally credited with the feat – filed a patent of his own.

Sentence Fragment

- ✓ A sentence must be a complete thought that can stand on its own.

Incorrect

Since I switched to a Raw Foods diet, which emphasizes regular consumption of unprocessed, natural foods over many commonly available packaged food products.

Correct

I switched to a Raw Foods diet, which emphasizes regular consumption of unprocessed, natural foods over many commonly available packaged food products.

SAT WRITING
GRAMMAR

Parallelism Error

- ✓ Lists and parallel structures must maintain the same format.

Incorrect

It's much easier to master Guitar Hero than becoming truly proficient with a six-string guitar.

In response to the environmental disaster, the volunteer group picketed corporate headquarters, started a letter-writing campaign, and were asking people to donate to the cause.

Correct

It's much easier to master Guitar Hero than to become truly proficient with a six-string guitar.

In response to the environmental disaster, the volunteer group picketed corporate headquarters, started a letter-writing campaign, and asked people to donate to the cause.

Subject-Verb Agreement Error

- ✓ The subject and corresponding verb must agree in number.

Incorrect

The most important factor to consider when looking at used cars are whether the previous owners were diligent with maintenance work.

Correct

The most important factor to consider when looking at used cars is whether the previous owners were diligent with maintenance work.

SAT WRITING GRAMMAR

Comma Splice

- ✓ Two independent clauses **CANNOT** be joined with a comma; a semicolon or period is the appropriate punctuation for two independent clauses. A comma requires at least one dependent clause.

Incorrect

The judge's nomination came as a surprise to us all, his conservative views were seen as troubling, even divisive.

Correct

The judge's nomination came as a surprise to us all; his conservative views were seen as troubling, even divisive.

The judge's nomination came as a surprise to us all, as his conservative views were seen as troubling, even divisive.



independent clause: a portion of a longer sentence that can stand on its own as a separate, complete sentence

Misplaced Modifier

- ✓ Descriptive phrases must be adjacent to whatever they're describing.

Incorrect

After spending four years working diligently, Tom's diploma hung proudly in his office.

Correct

Tom hung his diploma proudly in his office after spending four years working diligently.

SAT WRITING
GRAMMAR

Pronoun Agreement Error

- ✓ A pronoun must always agree in number with its antecedent.

Incorrect

The university took great pride in their rigorous Ultimate Frisbee tournament.

Long marginalized by pop culture and social trends, intricate fantasy literature is attracting followers with their rich, detailed storylines and compelling themes.

Correct

The university took great pride in its rigorous Ultimate Frisbee tournament.

Long marginalized by pop culture and social trends, intricate fantasy literature is attracting followers with its rich, detailed storylines and compelling themes.

Improper Conjunction

- ✓ Any conjunctions or transition words must function logically in the sentence.

Incorrect

The independent analysis indicated the candidate's tax plan would cut services for low-income citizens but would raise taxes on those same people.

Correct

The independent analysis indicated the candidate's tax plan would cut services for low-income citizens and would raise taxes on those same people.

Faulty Comparison

- ✓ All comparisons must be apples to apples.

Incorrect

The author's later work, which exhibited masterful use of restricted perspective, was more mature than his contemporaries.

Correct

The author's later work, which exhibited masterful use of restricted perspective, was more mature than that of his contemporaries.

SAT WRITING
GRAMMAR

Noun Agreement Error

- ✓ Corresponding nouns must agree in number when appropriate.

Incorrect

The stranded survivors decided to make their last stand against the zombie invasion, grabbed their weapon, and charged into battle, only to be eaten alive.

Correct

The stranded survivors decided to make their last stand against the zombie invasion, grabbed their weapons, and charged into battle, only to be eaten alive.

Pronoun Ambiguity

- ✓ The relationship between a pronoun and its antecedent must be clear and explicit.

Incorrect

Tom, Sara, and Jamie all went to the mall together, but he couldn't take the crowds and had to leave early.

Correct

Tom, Sara, and Jamie all went to the mall together, but Jamie couldn't take the crowds and had to leave early.

Adverb-Adjective Confusion

- ✓ An adjective modifies a noun. An adverb modifies a verb, adjective, or another adverb.

Incorrect

If you ever encounter a poisonous snake in the woods, the best course of action is to slow back away and egress when you're at a safe distance.

Correct

If you ever encounter a poisonous snake in the woods, the best course of action is to slowly back away and egress when you're at a safe distance.

SAT WRITING
GRAMMAR

Pronoun Case Error

- ✓ A pronoun can either be a subject (e.g., I, he, she, we, they) or an object (e.g., me, him, her, us, them). The case must match the pronoun's role in the sentence.

Incorrect

The teacher told Bobby and I to stop passing notes during class or risk having them read aloud.

Correct

The teacher told Bobby and me to stop passing notes during class or risk having them read aloud.

Idiomatic Usage Error

- ✓ The English language requires certain consistent constructions (e.g., “not only...but also, as...as, etc.).

Incorrect

Not only did the committee miss the point of my Reusable Bathroom Tissue ad campaign, and they accused me of being a threat to public health.

Twice as many government officials opposed the new piece of legislation than supported it.

Correct

Not only did the committee miss the point of my Reusable Bathroom Tissue ad campaign, but they accused me of being a threat to public health.

Twice as many government officials opposed the new piece of legislation as supported it.

Preposition Error

- ✓ Certain verbs require specific prepositions.

Incorrect

Our team has worked for several months on a robot that we plan on submitting to the robotics division of the science fair.

Correct

Our team has worked for several months on a robot that we plan to submit to the robotics division of the science fair.