



POWER WRITING TIPS

Avoid these grammatical felonies! We frequently see errors in these three areas (a) correct use of end quote marks with question marks and exclamation points, (b) correct use of *last* or *lastly*, and (c) correct expression of decades. Read below to learn how you can avoid these errors.

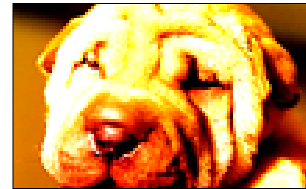
End Quote Marks with Question Marks and Exclamation Points

1. At the end of a sentence, place a question mark or exclamation point *inside* the closing quotation mark when it applies only to the quoted material—not to the whole sentence.
 - Pat said, “Did Mark go to the conference?”
 - The officer said, “Stop!”
2. At the end of a sentence, a question mark or exclamation point goes *outside* the closing quotation mark when it applies to the sentence but not to the actual quote.
 - Did Max say, “I’ll deliver the package”? (Quoted statement at the end of a question.)
 - Stop saying, “I don’t know”! (Quoted statement at the end of an exclamation.)
3. If a sentence ends with a quote and both the sentence and the quote require the same mark of punctuation, use the one that comes first, placed *inside* the closing quote.
 - Did Max say, “Where is the meeting?” (Quoted question at the end of a question.)
 - Quit yelling, “Fire!” (Quoted exclamation at the end of an exclamation.)

Last or Lastly?

The preference is *finally*. Both *last* and *lastly* are awkward.

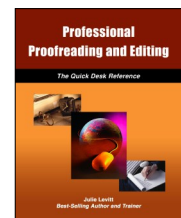
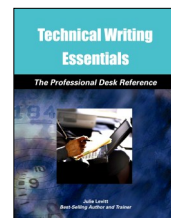
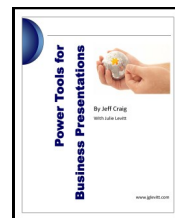
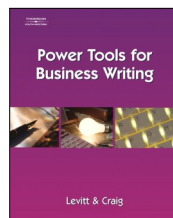
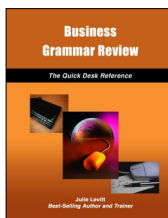
- *Finally, after training, focus on play to keep your puppy alert.*



Expressing Decades Correctly

1. Spell out age ranges when used in nontechnical content:
 - *He was in his forties.*
2. Express decades in either of these ways:
 - (a) *the 1970s*, (b) *the seventies*, or (c) *the ‘70s*—but NOT *the 70’s*.

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