SELECTIVE GLOSSARY

A

accents (in names, e.g.) Don't omit them.

acknowledgment

alumni The female singular form of 'alumni' is 'alumna' and the male is 'alumnus'.

appendices not appendixes

assertible not assertable

C

Castañeda not Castaneda

common sense (NOT 'commonsense'), in contexts such as, 'Here we appeal to common sense.'. Adjectivally, 'common-sense', as in 'The common-sense view of the matter . . . '

comprise 'Comprise' means 'include' or 'encompass'. It takes no preposition.

The seminars comprise both undergraduate and graduate students. [NOT 'are comprised of', and DEFINITELY NOT 'comprise of'.]

But:

The seminar is composed of both undergraduate and graduate students.

continuous, continually 'Continuous' means unceasingly; 'continually' means repeatedly.

co-operate not 'cooperate'

co-worker not 'coworker'.

D

data The plural of 'datum'; as a plural, it requires a verb in plural form: e.g. 'The data show . . .' and NOT 'The data shows . . .'; likewise 'sense-data are', not 'sense-data is'.

defence/defense Use 'defence' (Australian and UK spelling). Note, however, 'defensible' and 'defensive'.

dialog/dialogue Use 'dialogue' when using the word in its traditional sense, as a conversation between more than one participant. In computer terminology, 'dialog' is commonly accepted.

E

ellipses 'ellipses' is plural, 'ellipsis' singular.

email is preferred to e-mail

enrol

F

fewer (see also 'less')

Use 'fewer' when referring to people or countable objects, not 'less' (which usually applies to quantities and uncountable masses):

Fewer than 20 students signed up for the new course.

'Twelve items or fewer'

focused, focusing (not 'focussed')

G

Gödel not Godel

H

however should be followed and/or preceded by a comma in contexts where it means 'but'. Contrast:

However, we may decide this matter next week.

However we may decide this matter, next week . . .

Sometimes more than a comma is needed:

Yesterday he arrived early; however, today he was late.

Yesterday he arrived early, however; today he was late.

I

in so far rather than 'insofar'

in to, into The two mean different things:

The boy ran in to his mother.

The boy ran into (collided with) his mother.

install

installation

instalment

its and it's The word 'its' is already in the possessive form, in the same way that 'her' or 'their' already indicate possession:

its home	*her home*	*their home*	*your home*

An apostrophe after 'it' creates a verb not a possessive: *it's* is an abbreviation of *it is*:

    It's a sure sign = It is a sure sign

J

judgment

L

less (See also 'fewer')

'Less' is used of an uncountable mass or volume, or a non-specific amount:

    There is less love in the world today.

    The blue mug holds less than the red one.

    My drinks bill was less than it was last week.

licence/license 'licence' is a noun, while 'license' is a verb:

    She gained her driver's licence and thereby was licensed to drive.

light in the light of (not 'in light of')

Łucasiewicz not Lucasiewicz

M

more than When referring to something countable, use 'more than' rather than 'over':

    The band numbered more than 200 players.

But

    Derek is over 180 centimetres tall.

myriad Like 'comprise', 'myriad' does not take a preposition:

    She had myriad reasons not to accept the offer.

N

Nietzsche

no one not 'no-one'

number When abbreviating, use 'no.' for number and 'nos' (without the full stop) for numbers.

P

practice/practise 'practice' is a noun, 'practise' a verb.

    He practised medicine in a rural practice.

program is used of computer programs, and in certain stock phrases ('program explanation'); otherwise use 'programme'.

S

spatio-temporal

T

toward UK usage requires 'towards' in most cases

W

web terms are often written as one word, except where an acronym is involved:

    website, cyberspace, CD ROM