

当代

基础英语写作

Contemporary Basic English Writing



编 刘 爽 魏承杰
主编 王云雁 姚 尧 刘敬钰



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内 容 简 介

本书是根据《大学英语课程教学要求》和目前大学英语教学及研究生英语教学需求,专门为提高大学生和研究生的基础英语写作能力和学术英语写作能力编写的英语写作基础教程。全书共六部分,包括文稿格式、词汇、句子、段落结构、短文写作和修辞方法的应用等内容。本书语言清晰易懂,例句及范例鲜活生动,每部分内容都附有练习题和参考答案,引导学习者循序渐进地提高英语写作水平,有一定的实用性和时代性。

本书可作为在校大学生、研究生的英语写作教材,可供大学、中学英语教师参考使用,也可供从事相关工作、需提高英语水平的读者及广大英语爱好者学习使用。

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前 言

英语写作能力是英语应用能力的重要体现,是认识能力、思考能力和文字运用能力的综合反映,是衡量英语素质的一个重要标准,也是多年来中国学生英语学习相对薄弱的环节。随着时代的发展,社会各界对英语人才的需求持续增长。本书是为适应新时期国家和社会对创新人才培养的需要,全面提高英语学习者的英语写作能力,结合英语学习者的实际需求编写而成。

全书共六章,涵盖词汇的选择、句子的写作、段落和篇章的构成及展开方法、四种基本文体的写作模式、文稿格式、标点符号以及修辞方法的使用等内容,每一章节后都有配套的练习和参考答案。本书强调英文写作的实践性和实用性;针对英语基础阶段学习者基础薄弱的实际情况,列举大量范例供学生模仿和实践;注重语言能力和文化素质的同步提升;注重培养学生的英语思维习惯,实现语言综合应用能力和人文素养的全面提高。本书努力体现英语写作教学的研究成果,降低学生对英语写作的畏难情绪,提高学生的学习兴趣。

本书涵盖辽宁省教改课题“基于创新的大学英语 TBCL 教学模式研究”(项目编号为 03020607)的部分成果,亦为沈阳航空航天大学规划教材。由于编者学识有限、不足之处望读者不吝赐教。

本书在编写过程中得到北京航空航天大学出版社领导和编辑的大力支持,在此表示诚挚感谢。

编 者

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Unit 1

Prewriting

1.1 Form and Punctuation

As they are as important as the idea and the essay itself, form and punctuation are like the icing on the cake. Knowing the correct form and punctuation is also an indispensable part of writing a good article.

1.1.1 Form

The form of an essay may include many aspects, of which the following can be listed in every detail: arrangement, word division, capitalization and handwriting.

1. Arrangement

Writing in correct manuscript form is very important. We should follow the general practices in writing the title, leaving the margins, paragraphing, capitalizing and dividing words. To make your handwriting distinct to read and provide room for corrections, you had better write on every other line, and write on only one side of the paper if it is thin. Leave a margin on each side of the paper: about two centimeters at the top and a centimeter and a half at the left, the right and the bottom. In an exercise book the top and bottom margins are already there, so you need only to draw a vertical line to mark the left margin. You cannot make the right margin very straight, but you must not write on the edge of the paper. When there is not enough space left for a word, write it on the next line if it cannot be divided. In other words, there must be some blank space on the right side of the paper.

Put the title or topic of the essay in the middle of the first line. Capitalize the first and last words of the title and all other words (including words following hyphens in compound words) except articles, coordinating conjunctions (*and*, *or*, *but*, *nor*, *for*), prepositions, and *to* in infinitives:

Examples:

- Problems of Combining Work and College
- The Advantages of Temporary Jobs
- Being the Only Child
- On Excessive Packaging
- Chinese and Western Styles of Education

You also must pay attention to the use of punctuations in titles. No period is used at the end of a title. Use a question mark if the title is a direct question, but do not use one if it is an indirect question. Use quotation marks with quotes or titles of articles; and underline names of books. Indent the first line of every paragraph, leaving a space of about four or five letters. For paging, use Arabic numerals without parentheses or periods in the upper right-hand corner of all pages. The first page need not be marked. Do not begin a line with a comma, a period, a semicolon, a colon, a question mark or an exclamation mark. Do not end a line with the first half of a pair of brackets, quotation marks, or parentheses. The hyphen that indicates a divided word is put at the end, not at the beginning, of a line.

2. Word Division

If the space left near the edge of the paper is not enough for the word you are going to write, you have to decide whether to divide the word or to write it on the next line. Never squeeze a word into the margin. The general principle is to divide a word according to its syllables. The following hints may be helpful to us in the division of words: One-syllable words like *count*, *health*, *brain* and *thought* cannot be divided. Do not write one letter of a word at the end or at the beginning of a line, even if that one letter makes up a syllable, such as *alone*, *tricky*. Do not put a two-letter syllable at the beginning of a line, like *hated*, *cabin*. Avoid separating proper names of people or places, like *China*, *Paris*. Divide hyphenated words only at the hyphen, like *well-known*, *self-centered*, *empty-handed*. Do not divide words in a way that may mislead the reader: *peacock*, *really*. Do not divide the last word on a page. Instead, write the whole word on the next page. Divide words with prefixes or suffixes between the prefix or suffix and the base part of the word: *restatement*, *irregular*, *carefulness*. Divide two-syllable words with double consonants between the two consonants: *struggle*, *shatter*, *sorrow*.

3. Capitalization

Chinese students often neglect the use of capitalization. Capitals are used mainly at three places: the first words of sentences, key words in titles, and proper names. Not only a complete sentence, but a sentence fragment treated as a sentence, should begin with a capital letter. The first word of quoted speech (words put between quotation marks) is capitalized. If a quoted sentence is broken into two parts and put in two pairs of quotation marks, the second part does not begin with a capital letter unless the first word is a proper noun or an adjective derived from a proper noun:

“Wow, college is great”, I said, “especially on weekends”.

Common nouns that are parts of proper names are capitalized:

Common Nouns:

a famous university, a broad street, a large lake, the president of the university

Proper Names:

Tsinghua University, Chang'an Street, Lake Erie, President Brown, the Middle Ages, Labour Day, the People's Republic of China

Words derived from proper names are usually capitalized:

Marxist, Darwinism, Hegelian, Confucian, Latinize, Taoist

4. Handwriting

Write carefully so that your handwriting can be read easily. Be sure to make your capitals a little bigger and higher than your small letters. Leave a little space (about one letter) after a comma and a slightly bigger space (about two letters) after a period. When you want to cross out a word, do not use brackets to enclose it, but draw a thick line across it. When you want to add a word, write it above, not below, the line of words you have written with a clear sign showing where it is to be inserted. There are two common ways of writing the letters: one is to form loops and the other is to print (to write without joining the letters). Both are good, but you had better stick to one of the two styles.

Exercise 1

Capitalize the following titles.

- (1) approaches to teaching English as a foreign language
- (2) a museum you know well

- (3) around the world in eight days
- (4) an experience that changed my life
- (5) language and culture

Exercise 2

Write ten sentences demonstrating the uses of capital letters shown.

1.1.2 Punctuation

Punctuation means the marks used to clarify meaning by indicating separation of words into sentences, clauses, and phrases. It is necessary to learn to use all the punctuation correctly.

1. The Comma (,)

The comma is the most frequently used punctuation mark, which ordinarily indicates a short pause within a sentence.

He tried hard, yet he failed to convince her.

Sometimes commas are required by the structure of a sentence, even where no pause is necessary.

- Use a comma to separate two independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction (*and, but, or, for, so, nor, or yet*).

Everything in the world is outside you, but health belongs to yourself.

It must have rained last night, for the ground is wet.

He had learned English for only one year, yet he can communicate with people in English.

I've got a meeting to attend, so I have to go now.

- Use a comma after an introductory phrase or clause.

When the class was over, the students ran out of the class.

After we had finished our laundry, we discovered that one sock was missing.

Until you told me, I had heard nothing of it.

According to the owner of the laundromat, customers have conflicting theories about missing laundry.

- Use a comma to separate items in a series of words, phrases or clauses.

Mary collects coins, stamps, bottle caps, erasers and pocket lint.

She buys bread, butter, vegetables, and many other things from this supermarket.

Careless driving includes speeding, stopping suddenly, turning from the wrong lane, going through red lights, and so forth.

Remember that there is no comma separating “such as” and the first word in the list of items that follow:

John eats a variety of vegetarian foods, such as tofu, nuts and fruit.

- Use a comma to set off nonrestrictive clauses and phrases.

Shakespeare’s shortest tragedy, *Macbeth*, is one of his greatest plays.

He had to leave his hometown, where he had lived ever since he was born.

Michael Joseph Jackson, the American singer, songwriter, record producer, dancer, actor, and philanthropist, died in 2009.

Restrictive clauses and phrases are not set off by commas:

This is the house where the famous poet was born.

The American magician Houdini died in 1926.

- Use a comma to separate a parenthetical or interrupting expression.

Tim, my nephew, sometimes plays soccer with his friends.

In fact, his mother does all the work for him.

You should, indeed you must, talk directly to the mayor right now.

They have many courses: Chinese, English, Mathematics, History, to name just a few.

- Conjunctive adverbs such as “however” “moreover” “thus” “consequently” and “therefore” are used to show continuity and are frequently set off by commas when they appear in midsentence.

She felt ill. She went to work, however, and tried to concentrate.

Jane was a bright and eager student and, consequently, did well in school.

- Use a comma to set off items in addresses and dates.

He was born on January 29, 1994.

The Sheriff followed me from Austin, Texas, to question me about my uncle.

- Use a comma to set off dialogues from the speaker.

I retorted, “It’s your fault, not his.”

“The Summer Palace,” he said, “is like a fairyland.”

- Use a comma to separate numbers.

With numbers over 1,000, commas are often used to separate digits by thousands. From right to left, a comma is placed after every three numerals.

150,000, 487,720, 095

2. The Period (.)

- Use a period to end a sentence that makes a statement.

The shy girl tried to speak but finally she remained silent.

We are not allowed to go on tea breaks these days.

- Use a period after initials and many abbreviations.

I.Q., Dr., M. A., e.g., B. C., Ph. D.

Mr. Smith grew up in Washington, D. C.

When in doubt about the use of periods with abbreviations, consult a good dictionary.

- Use a period after an imperative sentence.

Don't walk on the grass.

Try your best to help him.

Note only one period is necessary if the sentence ends with an abbreviation.

To find a good job, you should obtain a B. A.

3. The Semicolon (;)

- Use a semicolon to link two closely related independent clauses.

She doesn't like this film; she is disgusted with it.

The scientists did not accept this theory; they did not ridicule it.

- Use a semicolon to connect two independent clauses when the second one begins with a conjunctive adverb (*however, therefore, hence, nevertheless, moreover, thus, otherwise, besides* and so on).

Do it now; otherwise, it will be too late.

He didn't go to the meeting; therefore, he doesn't know what new decisions were made.

Buses are always crowded; hence he prefers to cycle.

- Use a semicolon to separate a series of items which contain internal commas.

This semester I won't have to work on Teacher's Day, September 10; National Day, October 1; and New Year's Day, January 1.

4. The Colon (:)

- Use a colon to introduce an explanation, a summary, or an appositive.

One factor is often missing from modern labor: pleasure in the work.

- Use a colon to precede a quotation or a definition.

The president has made the following announcement: students who need financial assistance may apply at the Student Affairs Office.

- Use a colon between the hour and the minute to show the time or to record the scores of the games.

The train leaves for Tokyo at 20:25.

China beat Japan 3:2 in the women's volleyball tournament.

- Use a colon in the salutations of business or after a formal heading.

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen:

To: Subject: Date:

5. The Question Mark (?)

- Use a question mark after a direct question:

May I come in?

Do you think you will win the game?

"When will you hand in your paper?", the teacher asked.

- Use a question mark after a statement turned into a question (said in a rising tone).

John cleaned the room this morning?

You want to buy it?

Pay ten Yuan?

- Use a question mark between the parts of a series.

Did she buy milk? Butter? Beef? Eggs?

- Use a question mark within parentheses to indicate the writer's uncertainty.

The author of this strange book was born in 1078 (?) and died in 1135 (?).

6. The Exclamation Mark (!)

- The exclamation mark follows words, phrases, or sentences to show strong feelings.

Fire! Call the rescue squad!

What a beautiful day!

Help! I can't swim!

"Get out!" he yelled.

Wow! What a strange hat!

- Sometimes the exclamation mark is used after a slogan that expresses a wish.

Long live our friendship!

7. Quotation Marks (" ")

- Use quotation marks to enclose direct quotations.

"Shall I turn off the radio?" he asked his mother.

"Yes, please," she answered.

"Which American poet do you like best?" Mary asked.

- Quotation marks are used for titles of articles, essays, short stories, short poems, songs, etc., and for headings of chapters or subdivisions of books.

My favorite English song is "My heart will go on."

You can find Byron's poems "She Walks in Beauty" and "When We Two Parted" in *The Romantic Poets*.

- Words with a special meaning are sometimes put between quotation marks. Pointing to a small desk in a corner of the room, he said, "My 'headquarters' is here."

- Single quotation marks are used to enclose a quotation within a quotation. "I'm so proud of the 'A' on my grammar test," Sue told her parents.

Professor Hall told his class, "One of my favorite books is 'Pride and Prejudice' by Jane Austin."

- When using other marks of punctuation with quoted words, phrases, or sentences, follow the proper rules.

➤ Place a period or comma inside the quotation marks.

"John," she said, "I've lost my gloves."

➤ Place a colon or semicolon outside the quotation marks.

He reassured me, "You're a fine boy;" however, I didn't believe him.

➤ Place a quotation mark or exclamation point inside the quotation marks when the quotation itself is a direct question or exclamation; otherwise, they are placed outside.

She asked, "What does modernism mean?"

Did she say, "I know him?"

Tom screamed, "Help!"

8. Parentheses (())

- Use parentheses to set off words, dates, or statements that give additional information, explain, or qualify the main thought.

He is teaching two courses (Linguistics and Theoretical Grammar) this semester.

Tang Xianzu (1550 — 1616), who wrote *The Peony pavilion*, was a famous dramatist of the Ming Dynasty.

- Use parentheses to enclose figures or letters for enumeration.

The book consists of three parts: (1) ancient history, (2) modern history, and (3) contemporary history.

- Parentheses may enclose the first-time use of acronyms (words formed from the initial of several words) or abbreviations.

World Trade Organization (WTO)

University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA)

9. Brackets ([])

- Use brackets to indicate editorial explanations in the work of another writer.

The country girl ended the interview by saying, “My biggest hit so far is ‘You’re the Reason Our Kids Are Ugly [original version by Sarah Bellham].”

- Use brackets to replace parentheses within parentheses.

William Strunk Jr. and E. B. White wrote a very useful little book for students learning to write (*The Elements of Style* [New York: Macmillan, 1972]).

10. The Dash (—)

- Use a dash marks a break in thought or a change in tone.

Now let’s be reasonable — wait, put down that ice pick!

He might do many good things for the people of the city — if he was elected.

- Use a dash to set off a parenthetical matter.

His old problems — such as asthma and high blood pressure — are still worrying him.

He was amazed to learn his test score — a pitiful 43.

- Use a dash before a statement that summarizes or amplifies the preceding thought.

Poor management, insufficient supply of raw material, and shortage of skilled workers — these were the main causes of the failure of the factory.

Not everyone agrees with a football coach Vince Lombardi, who said, “Winning isn’t everything — it’s the only thing.”

- Sometimes use the dash just like quotation marks in a dialogue.

— Have you seen my hat?

— It is on the chair over there.

- Sometimes use a dash to introduce subheadings and authors after quotations.

We learn from history that men never learn anything from history. — Hegel

Wang Zhaojun in *Autumn in the Han Palace*

— An Interpretation of the Theme of the Play

11. The Slash (/)

- Use a slash to indicate that either is acceptable.

When students meet after the winter vacation, they often ask each other, “How was your Spring Festival (vacation/life at home)?”

Bring a salad and/or a dessert to share at the picnic.

- Use a slash to mark line divisions in quoted poetry. Do use a space both before and after the slash.

In this well-known poem, Shelley wrote: "Be through my lips to un-awakened earth/
The trumpet of a prophecy! Oh, wind, /If Winter comes, can spring be far behind?"

- Use a slash to separate the numerator from the denominator when fractions are written in a sentence.

A kilometer is 31/50 of a mile.

- Sometimes the slash means "per":

Rent: 50 yuan/sq.m.

12. The Apostrophe (')

- Add an apostrophe plus "s" to a noun to show possession.
my sister's motorcycle one's social status
Jack's dog the puppy's wounds
- Add only an apostrophe to a plural noun ending in "s" to show possession.
children's toys the bears' cave
parents' warning the Smiths' house
- Use an apostrophe to indicate omitted letters in a contraction.
It's too bad your car burned.
He *can't* make it.
There's a dictionary on the desk.
- To show joint possession between two people or things, you need to add an apostrophe and "'s" only to the second noun. To show separate ownership, add an apostrophe plus "'s" to both nouns.

Henry and Michael's project will be presented today. (one project)

Henry's and Michael's projects will be presented today. (two projects)

13. Italics and Underlining

In handwritten and typewritten papers underlining has the same function as italics in printed matter.

- Titles of books, periodicals, newspapers, government reports, plays, long poems, movies and operas are underlined or italicized:

Students of English like to read *Moby Dick*.

Gone with the wind is one of his favorite novels.

- Foreign words or phrases are usually underlined or italicized:

Homo sapiens is the binomial nomenclature for the human species.

One Chinese *Li* is equal to half a kilometer.

- Names of ships, aircraft, titles of works of art, software programs, web sites or home pages are underlined or italicized:

I sailed on the Changjiang River on board the *Dongfanghong II*.

Did you see *Rodin's Thinker* at the exhibition?

www.baidu.com

- Words or letters referred to as such are underlined or italicized:

In the phrase "look forward to" *to* is a preposition and should be followed by a noun or a gerund.

No matter how I spelled *offered*, it always looks wrong.

- Sometimes underlining or italics indicate emphasis:

What a man *does* is more important than what he says.

Everyone was surprised to discover that the butler *didn't* do it.

Exercise 3

Punctuate the following sentences and use capitals where necessary.

- (1) when we entered the room jane looked around and asked where the cat is
- (2) she must have run away I answered she doesn't like to stay at home
- (3) we must go and find her jane said let's go
- (4) at this moment the cat walked out from under the chair

Exercise 4

Punctuate the following paragraph.

Sam

You can never imagine how happy I was when I opened the gift An mp5 player of the latest model that's really amazing You do know me Thanks a million times for the gift Wish you a fair journey

Kelly

Exercise 5

Correct the following sentences by adding, deleting or changing periods, question marks or exclamation points, where appropriate.

- (1) The space program sent some cows into orbit last year I think they are known as the herd shot around the world.