

(英文版)

ENGLISH VERSION

余子龙  
修订

# 简洁的 原理

## *The* Elements *of* Style

人民日报出版社

[美] 威廉·斯特伦克  
原 著

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## 中文序

### 1 — 2

《简洁的原理》很特别。这是一本一个中国人和一位美国人合作的书，是一本一个活着的人和一位逝去的人合作的书。

原书作者是美国康奈尔大学的英文教授威廉·斯特伦克 (William Strunk, 1869-1946)。他去世后的第一任合作者是美国作家、《夏洛的网》的作者 E. B. 怀特 (E. B. White, 1899-1985)。图书出版后，两位作者的名字——Strunk and White——成为书的代名词，在美国家喻户晓。

我是第二任合作者。站在斯特伦克的大树上，采撷着 E. B. 怀特的文字，问学于各类书籍，历时五年，终有所成。心怀诚恐，但天道酬勤，自信《简洁的原理》会是你学习路上的朋友：风雨

无阻，永远同行。

八条用法法则、十条写作法则、几个格式问题、一些经常用错的词语，以及几条修改作文的建议——这些就是《简洁的原理》的全部内容。

五年修订，五年学习，跋涉杂书百种方知一书之重：只要读懂、读通《简洁的原理》，就会明白如何学英语、如何用英语，就会明白如何做学问、如何做事情。

余子龙

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## 使用说明

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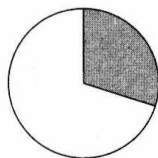
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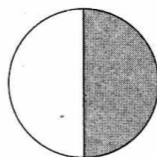
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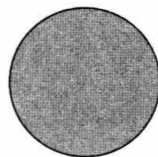
第三年

每半年读一遍



第四年始

每年读一遍



\* 每次写作，请参照书中的法则修改。



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## Must-Read Terms

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### | Topic Sentence

The **topic sentence** is the most important sentence in a paragraph. It states the main idea of the paragraph and introduces the reader to the topic.

### | Sentence and Clause

A **sentence** is a group of words that contains a subject and a predicate, and expresses a complete thought. A **clause** is a group of words that contains its own subject and predicate, but forms only part of a sentence. There are two basic types of clause: independent and dependent (or main and



subordinate). A **main (independent) clause** could stand alone as a sentence. A **subordinate (dependent) clause** requires a main clause.

- \* *We saw you coming.* (a sentence: an independent clause)
- \* *We saw you coming, and we were glad.* (a sentence consisting of two independent clauses)
- \* *When we saw you coming, we were glad.* (a sentence consisting of a subordinate clause and a main clause, i.e., a dependent clause and an independent clause)

## | **Subject and Predicate**

The **predicate** is the part of a sentence or clause that expresses what is said about the **subject**, i.e., it is all the words in a sentence except the subject.

- \* *Anne || smiled.* (subject || predicate)
- \* *Jennifer || picked up her books and left to catch the bus.* (subject || predicate)

## | **Restrictive relative clauses and nonrestrictive relative clauses**

**Restrictive relative clauses** serve to identify or define the antecedent noun and are not set off by commas; removing

such a clause changes the meaning of the main clause.

**Nonrestrictive relative clauses** do not serve to identify or define the antecedent noun; removing such a clause does not change the meaning of the main clause.

- \* This is the house *that Jack built*. (restrictive)
- \* This house, *which Jack built*, is now falling down.  
(nonrestrictive)

**antecedent:** an earlier word, phrase, or clause to which a following pronoun refers back.

- \* Judy wrote to say that *she* is coming. (“She” refers back to “Judy.”)
- \* a man *who* sought success (“Who” refers back to “a man.”)

## | **Loose Sentence and Periodic Sentence**

A **loose sentence** begins with the independent clause, followed by modifying phrases or dependent clauses. A **periodic sentence** begins with modifying phrases or dependent clauses, and puts the independent clause at the end.

- \* *He killed Frank with a hammer.* (loose sentence)

\* *With a hammer he killed Frank.* (periodic sentence)

## | Other Terms

**active voice:** A rabbit *bit* him.

**passive voice:** He *was bitten* by a rabbit.

**count noun:** *a car, two tickets*

**mass noun:** *advice, furniture*

**concrete noun:** *book, cloud*

**abstract noun:** *beauty, geography*

**possessive determiner:** *my, your*

**possessive pronoun:** *mine, yours*

**indirect speech:** He said *that he was tired*.

**indirect question:** She asked *where I was going*.

**present perfect:** They *have arrived*.

**past perfect:** I *had forgotten*.

**present tense:** He *goes* there often.

**past tense:** She *left* yesterday.

**past participle:** They *have arrived*; a *broken* heart

**present participle:** A baby is *crying*; a *sleeping* baby

**verbal nouns (=gerunds):** She was praised for her *playing*;  
a *sleeping* pill

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## Introduction \*

9 — 13

*During the five years I have spent revising the text, I have stopped several times, to wonder whether I am really able to enhance its long-established reputation. But every time I stopped, the words of Isaac Bashevis Singer, an American writer and the recipient of the 1978 Nobel Prize in Literature, echoed in my ears, "We were taught never to rely completely on any authority. We tried to find motivation and consistency in God's laws and His commandments."*

Few books have had the impact on American literary culture and thought that *The Elements of Style* has.

Since 1959, when Strunk and White's edition was first

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\* Based on Strunk's original introduction, E. B. White's introduction, and Mark Garvey's book *Stylized*.

published, it has been used as a textbook by thousands of colleges and universities. It has been so popular that its authors—Strunk and White—have become household names, and the book has often been called “Strunk and White.” In the United States, almost every teacher and student, every writer and editor, every child and parent knows this book. Teachers recommend it to their students, and editors to their unskilled writers. Many writers and editors reread and consult it often; in some families, it is handed down from parent to child. This “little” book has done more to establish an American ideal of good prose writing than any other book or any teacher, living or dead.

Strunk’s book proposes to give in brief space the principal requirements of plain English style. It aims to lighten the task of instructor and student by concentrating attention on a few essentials: the rules of usage and principles of composition most commonly violated. By now, these rules and principles have been widely accepted and have hence set for English prose writing standards of good taste, good

conduct, and simple justice.

This revision is based on William Strunk's 1918 and 1920 editions. It consists of eight rules of usage (Chapter I), ten principles of composition (Chapter II), a few matters of form (Chapter III), a list of words and expressions commonly misused (Chapter IV), and some suggestions on rewriting (Chapter V). In Chapter I, I have added one rule of usage (Rule 7: The number of the subject determines the number of the verb); in Chapter II, I have removed the original principle of "Avoid a succession of loose sentences" to Chapter V; in Chapter III, I have added several punctuation marks such as colons and dashes. Chapter IV has been refurbished with more words and expressions commonly misused by students who use English as a foreign language. Chapter V is newly added, with a focus on rewriting. In the book, many examples are dealt with in parallel columns (**with the preferred usage listed on the right**)—the true vs. the false, the right vs. the wrong, the bold vs. the timid, the trim vs. the ragged. The intention of every revision that I have made is to help the writer better

grasp the essentials of English prose writing.

*The Elements of Style* is not a destination; it is a springboard, helping the writer move ahead in the right direction and up the ladder of good prose writing. When reading great literary works, the reader may find that the best writers sometimes disregard the rules of rhetoric. When they do so, however, the reader will usually find in the sentence some compensating merit, attained at the cost of the violation. Unless he is certain of doing as well, he will probably do best to follow the rules. After he has learned, by their guidance, to write plain English adequate for everyday uses, let him look, for the secrets of style, to the study of the masters of literature.

All through the book we can sense Strunk's deep sympathy for the reader. He felt that "the reader was in serious trouble most of the time, floundering in a swamp, and that it was the duty of anyone attempting to write English to drain this swamp quickly and get the reader up on dry ground, or at least to throw a rope." In revising the

text, just as E. B. White did when undertaking his own revision, I have “tried to hold steadily in mind this belief of his, this concern for the bewildered reader.”

Yu Zilong

2016



