March Madness

Usage Reminders

Its is the possessive form while “it’s” is a contraction of it is.

Example: “The Army explored its options.”

Example: “The Army is exploring options, and it’s finding new avenues for growth.”

The possessive of plural nouns (except for a few irregular plurals, like aircraft, that do not end in s) is formed by adding an apostrophe only.

Example: United States’ grand strategic objective

Example: glaring national security Achilles’ heel

Use an em dash or a pair of em dashes to set off an amplifying or explanatory element. Use the em dash [—] symbol, not 2 hyphens, and do not add additional spaces on either side of the symbol to the terms to be set off:

Example: There are only two things we can count on—death and taxes.

Tip: To access special characters, click the “Insert” tab in Microsoft Word, choose Symbols, then select More Symbols or Special Characters. If you prefer keyboard shortcuts, on a PC use ALT+CTRL and the minus key (from the number pad); on a Mac, it’s option+shift+hyphen key.

Hint: Create personal shortcuts by clicking on the “Shortcut Key…” in the Symbols tab.

Parentheses can set off text that has no grammatical relationship to the rest of the sentence.

Could a technologically enhanced super soldier (or sailor, airman, marine, or guardian) easily integrate into civilian society once their service is complete?

Make Words Count Instead of Making the Word Count

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original phrase</th>
<th>Replacement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>as well as</td>
<td>and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in order to</td>
<td>to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in addition to</td>
<td>additionally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as a result with</td>
<td>consequently, thus, or hence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>both coffee and tea are great</td>
<td>coffee and tea are great</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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