



## Technical Grammar and Punctuation

Speakers of Japanese often make similar grammar mistakes when they are learning technical English. Here are a few rules worth learning and a few mistakes worth avoiding for anyone who may not know this.

### Correct Use of *Master* and *Doctor*

- **Master** of Engineering
- Taro has a **Master** of Engineering degree.
- Taro has a **master's** in engineering.
- Taro has a **master's** degree in engineering.
- Taro and his friends have **master's** degrees.
- Taro is a **master's** student.
  
- Taro is a **master** at programming. (= Taro is an expert at programming.)
- Taro and his friends are **masters** at programming. (= They are experts at programming.)
  
- **Doctor** of Engineering
- Taro has a **Doctor** of Engineering degree.
- Taro has a **doctorate** in engineering.
- Taro has a **doctoral** degree in engineering.
- Taro and his friends have **doctoral** degrees.
- Taro is a **doctoral** student.

### Correct Use of *Interest*

- I'm **interested in** getting more information on neural networks.
- My friends and I **are interested in** learning how to use Photoshop.
- The symposium **is** for those **interested in** the use of symbolic math software.
- The Prometheus Research Group **is** an independent association of academics and other intellectuals **interested in** the problem of human intelligence and its place in nature.
  
- I **have an interest in** network security.
- In the 1980s, many computer manufacturers donated free computers to universities who **had an interest in** using them for educational purposes.
  
- Artificial intelligence **interests** me.
- How to block spam **interests** nearly everyone on the Internet.

### Correct Use of *S*

**Use S:** I enjoy reading bookss, using computerss, watching moviess, playing sportss, playing musical instrumentss, reading articless, conducting experimentss, writing paperss, relaxing on weekendss, studying on weekdayss, eating noodless, chatting with friendss, learning from professorss, listening to lecturess, attending conferencess, participating in discussionss, doing assignmentss, taking testss, earning good gradess, applying for jobss, having interviewss, etc.



**Don't Use S:** I enjoy playing basketball, playing the piano, conducting research, using equipment, making software, setting up hardware, sending email, drinking beer, eating pizza, doing homework, earning money, learning this course material, etc.

## Formatting Mathematical Sentences

**Correct:** If  $a = b$ , then for all real numbers  $x$ ,  
 $a + x = b + x$ ,  $ax = bx$ ,  $-a = -b$ .

**Incorrect:** If  $a = b$ , then for all real numbers  $x$   
 $a + x = b + x$  /  $ax = bx$  /  $-a = -b$

**Incorrect:** If  $a = b$ , then for all real numbers  $x$ :  
 $a + x = b + x$ ,  $ax = bx$ ,  $-a = -b$ .

**Incorrect:** If  $a = b$ , then for all real numbers  $x$ :  
 $a + x = b + x$   $ax = bx$   $-a = -b$

## Proper Placement and Punctuation for Parentheses

**Correct:** Good engineering papers can be found in journals published by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE).

**Incorrect:** Good engineering papers can be found in journals published by the IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers).

**Incorrect:** Good engineering papers can be found in journals published by the IEEE. (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers)

**Incorrect:** Good engineering papers can be found in journals published by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. (IEEE)

## Other Miscellaneous Correct and Incorrect English

**Correct:** It costs \$100 a unit.

**Incorrect:** It costs \$100 an unit.

**Correct:** The highest salaries in the company were paid to Dr. Suzuki, the CEO; Dr. Paik, the CFO; and Dr. Singh, the CIO.

**Incorrect:** The highest salaries in the company were paid to Dr. Suzuki, the CEO, Dr. Paik, the CFO, and Dr. Singh, the CIO.

**Correct:** Acknowledgment, Acknowledgments (North American English) - with no e

**Correct:** Acknowledgement, Acknowledgements (outside North America) - with e

**Correct:** Acknowledgment (IEEE style preference for papers) - no e or s

**Correct:** Acknowledgements (*Nature* style preference for papers) - with e and s

**Correct:** Acknowledgments (*Science* style preference for papers) - no e but with s