

# The Proof Angel Summary of

## Grammar and usage: September 2014

Here is an interesting argument. Both the [grammar Nazis and the anarchists have got it wrong](#).

Well, the middle way is often best, isn't it?

### About beyond

Changes in usage often creep up on us gradually.

This post tracks the change in the use of [beyond](#).

### How to use the ellipsis

It took a long time for me to notice that the ellipsis consists of 3 dots.

I picked up that a row of dots means something has been missed out, but it never occurred to me that there was a name for the mark, or conventions for its use. I would just use a random number of dots.

In case you are as misguided as I used to be, this post explains the [use of the ellipsis](#).

### Could parallelism help you?

Sometimes, creating a pattern in the words you use helps to create a balanced sentence, enforcing your logic. This is known as parallelism. Find out more about it [in this post](#).

### Using capital letters

Sometimes it is obvious when capital letters should be used. At other times it is more a matter of style, and we have an element of choice. Here are some thoughts on [using capital letters](#).



The Proof Angel is the trading name of Sarah Perkins, freelance editor and proofreader.

## Putting adjectives in order

I'm in two minds about this [post about adjectives](#). While it is interesting to analyse the language, some times it can get confusing. This could be one of those times where attempts to follow the "rules" might be inhibiting. What do you think?

## Affect and effect

Here is a nice little explanation of the difference between [affect and effect](#).

## Establishing what is correct

Sometimes you hear people saying they want their work to be 100% correct. That is a very difficult target. While much of the English language is governed by widely recognised rules, those rules don't cover everything.

Unless you are working to a very detailed style guide covering exactly what is required in a wide range of scenarios, there will be plenty of things that can be expressed in a variety of ways. The best way will depend on various factors, such as the context, the level of formality, and sometimes even the way it looks on the page.

It might be important for all the documents produced by an organisation to have a similar look and feel. If so, a style guide helps to achieve that consistency, and you can measure correctness against that target, if it covers enough detail.

This post shows how difficult it can be to [find the correct form](#).

## Why do we need grammar?

Grammar has had a rough ride over the years. Like many other things, it has gone in and out of fashion. This post tracks the [fall and rise of grammar](#).

## The abuse of the present tense

Do you cringe when they use the present tense in history programmes? I do. I also hate it when the radio announcers say that a one off programme is produced by whoever it is. No it isn't. It was produced by them, but then they finished it and moved on to something else. That is why we are able to listen to it now.

I can cope when they make the same announcement after a long running series, as the same people are probably still on the case as I listen.

Here is a post about the debate between [John Humphrys and Melvyn Bragg](#) on the subject.

## Who or whom?

A lot of people struggle with the difference between these two, [so another infographic](#) doesn't hurt, does it?