

Georgia Bar Journal Style Sheet

To make the editing process as efficient as possible, we ask that you follow the 20 “Dos and Don’ts” listed below as you draft and edit your article. If we have already accepted your article for publication, and if time permits, please feel free to revise your article to be consistent with these guidelines and resubmit the article to your editor before he or she begins editing.

1. **Do** put periods and commas inside quotation marks.
2. **Do** put endnote numbers outside of punctuation marks (particularly quotation marks).
3. **Do** use active voice, whenever possible.
4. **Don’t** split your infinitives unnecessarily. Unless it would change your meaning, correct split infinitives. For example, “to quickly move” is a split infinitive. This phrase should read, “to move quickly.” This rule does not apply to phrases of art, such as “to proximately cause.”
5. **Don’t** (as in never) form the plural of an object by adding “s” to it.
6. **Do** create the possessive of a proper name ending in “s” by adding “s” to the name. For example, “Joe Davis’s children,” or “Beth Jones’s house.” When indicating plural possessive, only add the apostrophe. For example, “the Davises’ home,” or “the Joneses’ dog.”
7. **Do** eliminate extra words; short, simple sentences are easier to read.
8. **Don’t** begin your sentences with “however” when you mean “nevertheless.”
9. **Don’t** use “which” when “that” is proper. Consider the sentence you have written with “which.” If you can remove the clause beginning with the “which” then you likely have used it properly. If you cannot remove the clause without changing the meaning of the sentence or the sentence structure, then you should have used “that.”
10. **Do** put a comma before “which;” **don’t** put a comma before “that.”
11. **Do** use the proper words for what you mean. For example, **don’t** use:

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|------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| a. “ since ” | when you mean | “ because ” |
| b. “ while ” | when you mean | “ although ” |
| c. “ where ” | when you mean | “ in which ” or “ if ” |
| d. “ whether or not ” | when you mean | “ whether ” |
| e. “ in order to ” | when you mean | “ to ” |

12. **Do** follow your “if” phrases with the logical causal connector “then.” For example, “If you want new shoes, then you should buy some.”
13. **Do** refer to a court’s action in the past tense; use the present tense only when referring to the thing in which a statement or argument appears. Hence, you should write, “the court held,” but “the opinion states.”
14. **Do** capitalize the word “Court” when referring to the U.S. Supreme Court, the Supreme Court of Georgia and the Court of Appeals of Georgia (in both the text and endnotes).
15. **Do** use “who” when “who” is referring to the actor in the sentence. Use “whom” after a preposition or when the action is being done to the person. For example, “John, who recently graduated from college, will start law school in the fall,” but “from whom did you learn that John was going to law school?”
16. **Do** place the word “only” before the word or verb phrase it modifies. For example, “Maggie wears only black shoes” not “Maggie only wears black shoes.” The latter would mean Maggie wears no clothes, just black shoes.
17. **Do** capitalize “Constitution” if you are referring to the document. **Don’t** capitalize references to the amendments.
18. **Do** leave only one space after the period at the end of a sentence.
19. **Do** put spaces in between the periods in an ellipsis.
20. **Don’t** underline anything in your article. Use italics instead in the body of the article. In the end notes, follow the citation sheet.