

# Conventions Cheat Sheet / Ramsey

## A LOT vs. "ALOT"

- a lot = correct
- "alot" = wrong

## THERE / THEY'RE / THEIR

- there = over there, there is
- they're = they are
- their = belong to them

## TO / TWO / TOO

- to = to speak, to walk; to the store
- two = 2
- too = also; in excess ("too small")

## YOUR / YOU'RE

- your = belongs to you
- you're = you are

## ITS / IT'S

- its = belongs to it
- it's = is is; it has

## WOMAN / WOMEN

- woman = 1
- women = more than 1

## WHERE / WERE

- where = a location
- were = past tense of "are"

## COULD HAVE vs. COULD "OF"

- could HAVE = correct
- could "of" = wrong

## THEN / THAN

- then = next
- than = comparison ("more than three")

## WHO'S / WHOSE

- who's = who is; who has
- whose = belongs to whom?

## FEWER / LESS

- fewer = things you can count ("fewer molecules of air")
- less = things you can't count ("less air")

## CHOOSE / CHOSE

- choose = present and future tense ("I will choose")
- chose = past tense ("Yesterday, I chose")

## ACCEPT / EXCEPT

- accept = to receive
- except = but

## WHO / THAT

- who = people ("friends who talk")
- that = things ("paper that's red")

## LOSE / LOOSE

- lose = not have anymore ("You will lose")
- loose = opposite of tight

## ALREADY / ALL READY

- already = before now
- all ready = everyone or everything is ready

## "I" vs. "ME"

- "I" vs. "me": ignore people next to the "I" and "me," then listen: "Give that pen to ~~my friend and~~ ME."



### AFFECT / EFFECT

- affect = alter (“Climate change will *affect* all of us”)
- effect = outcome (“What’s the *effect* of this change?”)

### EVERYDAY / EVERY DAY

- everyday = common, normal, ordinary
- every day = each day

### DEFIANT / DEFINITE

- defiant = going against authority
- definite = for sure; specific

### PRINCIPAL

- principal = person in charge of school

### ALL RIGHT vs. “ALRIGHT”

- all right = correct
- “alright” = wrong

### “DAD” vs. “dad”

- “Dad” vs. “dad”: capitalize when using instead of his NAME: “When will you be here, Dad?”

### COMMAS

- after introductory phrases: “Well, I don’t know.”
- to separate three or more items in a series: “I can walk, talk, and chew gum.”
- before and after interrupting elements: “An advisor, who is usually a professor, can help you.”
- before “so,” “or,” “but,” and “and” when using these “SOBAs” to pull together two full sentences: “I walked to school, and I looked around.” (NO comma here: “I walked to school and looked around.”)
- between adjectives when they can switch places and the sentence still makes sense: “I saw tall, leafy trees.”)

### SEMICOLONS

- use semicolons (;) to pull together two complete sentences: “I ate a lot; I was hungry.”

### COMMA AND PERIOD PLACEMENT

- commas and periods go INSIDE end quotation marks unless you’re doing parenthetical documentation for a research paper

### COLONS

- colons (:) go after complete sentences: “I bought three things: eggs, milk, and bread.”

### QUESTION MARK PLACEMENT

- question marks go INSIDE end quotation marks when the words inside quotation marks are a question: He asked, “Who’s at the door?”
- question marks go OUTSIDE end quotation marks when the words inside quotation marks are NOT a question: Who said, “I’m quite late”?

### APOSTROPHES

- use apostrophes for contractions (can’t, wouldn’t, don’t)
- use an apostrophe THEN an “s” for singular possession: “My cat has a tail. That’s my cat’s tail.”
- use an “s” THEN an apostrophe for plural possession: “My two cats have tails. Those are my cats’ tails.”



