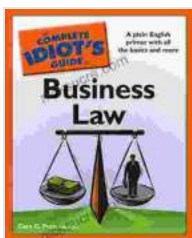# A Comprehensive Plain English Primer

Plain English is a simple, clear, and concise writing style that is easy to understand. It is a valuable tool for writers of all kinds, from students to professionals. Plain English can help you to write clearly and effectively, and it can also help you to avoid common writing errors.

In this primer, you will learn the basics of plain English. We will cover topics such as sentence structure, grammar, and punctuation. We will also provide tips on how to write clearly and concisely.

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Business Law: A Plain English Primer with All the Basic and More by Cara C. Putman

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 1699 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 471 pages

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Sentence Structure

A sentence is a group of words that expresses a complete thought. Sentences can be simple or complex. Simple sentences have one independent clause. Complex sentences have one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses.

Independent Clauses

An independent clause is a group of words that can stand alone as a sentence. It contains a subject and a verb.

Example: The dog barked.

Dependent Clauses

A dependent clause is a group of words that cannot stand alone as a sentence. It contains a subject and a verb, but it also contains a subordinating conjunction, such as because, although, or since.

Example: Because the dog was hungry, it barked.

Sentence Length

Sentences should be kept to a reasonable length. Long sentences can be difficult to read and understand. Aim for sentences that are no more than 20 words long.

Sentence Variety

Sentence variety is important for creating interesting and engaging writing. Try to use a variety of sentence lengths and types. For example, you can mix simple sentences with complex sentences.

Grammar

Grammar is the system of rules that govern the use of language. Good grammar is important for clear and effective writing.

Subject-Verb Agreement

The subject of a sentence must agree with the verb in number.

Example: The dog barks. (singular subject, singular verb)

The dogs bark. (plural subject, plural verb)

Pronoun Agreement

Pronouns must agree with their antecedents in number and gender.

Example: The dog wagged its tail.

The dogs wagged their tails.

Verb Tense

The tense of a verb indicates the time of an action or event.

Example: The dog is barking. (present tense)

The dog barked. (past tense)

The dog will bark. (future tense)

Punctuation

Punctuation is used to clarify the meaning of sentences. The most common punctuation marks are the period, comma, semicolon, and colon.

Period

A period is used to end a sentence.

Example: The dog is barking.

Comma

A comma is used to separate items in a list, to separate independent clauses, and to set off nonessential information.

Example: The dog, the cat, and the mouse all lived in the same house.

The dog is barking, but I don't know why.

Semicolon

A semicolon is used to separate independent clauses that are closely related.

Example: The dog is barking; the cat is hissing.

Colon

A colon is used to introduce a list or a quotation.

Example: The following items are required: a pen, a pencil, and a notebook.
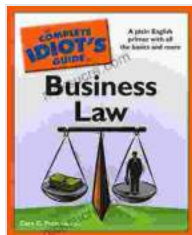
"I have a dream," said Martin Luther King, Jr.

Tips for Writing Clearly and Concisely

Here are a few tips for writing clearly and concisely:

* Use active voice instead of passive voice. * Avoid using jargon and technical terms. * Be specific and avoid using generalizations. * Use strong verbs and nouns. * Eliminate unnecessary words. * Proofread your writing carefully before submitting it.
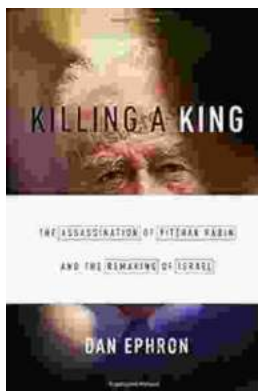
Plain English is a simple, clear, and concise writing style that is easy to understand. It is a valuable tool for writers of all kinds. By following the principles of plain English, you can write clearly and effectively.

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