Periods (.)

Periods are used to end sentences or to separate letters in some abbreviations.

**Rule #1:**

Use a period to end a complete statement, a command, an indirect question, or a polite request.

**Examples of Rule #1:**

- The benefits include stock options. (statement)
- Organize these jobs based on the deadlines. (command)
- She asked for directions to the site. (indirect question)
- Will you please be on time for work. (polite request)

**Rule #2:**

Use a period in most abbreviations or acronyms that contain lowercase letters. If the abbreviation is at the end of a sentence, use only one period. Omit the periods in the initials of government agencies, companies, radio and television stations, some professional designations, and well-known people. Some abbreviations written in all capital letters may be written without periods.

**Examples of Rule #2:**

- The guides were published by ABC, Inc.
- In five years, I plan to return to school for a Ph.D.
- The seminar was led by Robert Sanchez, CPA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FBI</th>
<th>SBA</th>
<th>DOT</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IBM</td>
<td>KFBK</td>
<td>KXTV</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLU</td>
<td>FDR</td>
<td>JFK</td>
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</tbody>
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BA or B.A. US or U.S. AM or a.m.

**Rule #3:**

Use a period after a person's initial.

**Example of Rule #3:**

- Mr. Brian P. Neal is president of the company.

**Rule #4:**

Use a period after a complete sentence in a list. DO NOT use punctuation after a single word or phrase.
Examples of Rule #4:

Two workable solutions were presented:
1. Continue along the present course of action.
2. Make the changes the consultant suggested.

Rule #5:

Use periods after letters and numbers in an alphanumeric outline, except those enclosed in parentheses. Use periods to separate levels of headings in a numeric outline.

Examples of Rule #5:

Alphanumeric outline

I.
   A.
   B.
   1.
   2.
   a.
   b.
   (1)
   (2)
II.

Numeric outline

1.
   1.1
   1.2
   1.2.1
   1.2.2
   1.2.2.1
   1.2.2.2
2.

Rule #6:

Use a period in a decimal and between dollars and cents.

Examples of Rule #6:

.050   1.5   $1.50   $.50

Rule #7:

Use periods in an ellipsis (a series of three periods with a space before, between, and after the series) to show that something has been omitted from quoted material. If the omission includes a complete sentence, add a fourth period to the ellipsis to indicate the period at the end of the sentence.
Examples of Rule #7:

Jon said, "I was ready to ship the product . . . packing material was not available."
Margaret stated, "I have several key issues . . . When will the package arrive?"