Plain English Rules

- Omit surplus
- Avoid Compound Construction
- Avoid word-wasting idioms
- Focus on the actor, the action and the object
- Do not use redundant phrases, sentences or paragraphs
- Use base verbs, not nominalizations (verbs turned into nouns)
- Prefer the active voice (the subject does the acting)
- Use short sentences
- Avoid large gaps between subject, verb and object
- Put conditions and exceptions where they are clear and easy to read
- When necessary, make a list
- Modifiers
    - Put modifying words close to what they are modifying
    - Avoid nested modifiers
    - Clarify the reach of modifiers
- Choose your words with care
    - Use concrete words
    - Use familiar words
    - Do not use technical jargon when it is not necessary
    - Avoid shotgunning (using lots of words hoping one may stick)
    - Use words of authority with care
- In rule drafting, use singular and present tense
- Avoid elegant variation
- Avoid noun chains
- Avoid multiple negatives
- Avoid cosmic detachment—include people
- Use strong nouns and verbs
- Avoid sexist language
- Punctuate carefully and correctly (rules on 85-100)
- Cite your sources!
    - Use quotation marks correctly