

CORRECT GRAMMAR 3.0. Lifetree Software Inc. San Francisco, California.
\$49.00.

Reviewed by Charles I. Abramson, SUNY Health Science Center

Correct Grammar is an easy to use, powerful and inexpensive grammar checker suitable for IBM personal computers and compatibles. It installs in minutes, is readily customized, and is designed to work with all major word processor programs such as WordPerfect, WordStar and Microsoft Works. It will also process ASCII files. I highly recommend Correct Grammar. It is a fine program.

To run Correct Grammar your computer must be an IBM PC, XT, AT, PS-1 or PS-2, or 100% compatible with DOS 2.0 or higher. It must have one disk drive and a hard drive with 1 Mb free. The RAM requirements vary depending on whether you have expanded memory (EMS) – 370K, or use a 128K EGA or VGA video card – 340K. In the absence of these, 435K of RAM must be free.

Other grammar checkers typically compare your sentences against their internal dictionaries. Correct Grammar, however, uses artificial intelligence to analyze each part of a sentence. When an error is detected the software offers a suggestion that can be accepted or ignored. Other options allow you to edit the sentence, or turn off the rule that was used in making the suggestion. An especially useful option is the Tutorial. The tutorial gives you a “lesson” in the principles of writing as they apply to the current situation.

Correct Grammar is as easy to use as a spell checker. (In fact Correct Grammar contains a spell checker.) When your document is ready to edit simply retrieve it with Correct Grammar and, if you prefer, checking will begin immediately. Alternatively, users of WordPerfect and WordStar, for instance, can begin checking directly from within the word processor. When editing is complete you have the option of saving the document. Following your decision a Readability Report appears. The report is a nice feature which includes descriptive statistics on, for example, the number of paragraphs, sentences, and words. Information is provided on the inappropriate use of the passive voice and Readability Scores.

Readability Scores are a handy feature that compares your writing with one of the well-known objective standards for evaluating English prose. According to Lifetree, the best known of these standards is the Flesch Reading Ease Score (FRES). The FRES contains such descriptive statistics as the average sentence length, and the average

number of syllables. An estimate of the manuscript's style and reading difficulty is also provided.

The program is feature rich and easy to use and customize. I have tested the program using an IBM compatible with WordPerfect 5.0. The descriptive statistics and Readability Scores are particularly useful features to help you direct your writing for particular audiences. In addition, it provides useful feedback for those, such as students, wishing to improve their writing. The manual is clearly written and easy to follow. In addition, I found the support staff friendly and readily available. The program is available from Lifetree Software Inc., 33 New Montgomery Street, Suite 1260, San Francisco, California 94105; telephone (415) 541-7864.