

## Original sentence (state court form excerpt):

Failing to appear in this court as directed herein shall cause the issuance of a warrant for your arrest on said charges and failure to appear in accordance with the command of this citation is in itself a misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine up to \$500 or up to 3 months in jail or both.

### AI prompt:

Please rewrite this court-form sentence using plain language. Do not write explanations on replies. Place any original jargon in parentheses. It is okay to use contractions. Here is the sentence: Failing to appear in this court as directed herein shall cause the issuance of a warrant for your arrest on said charges and failure to appear in accordance with the command of this citation is in itself a misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine up to \$500 or up to 3 months in jail or both.

### ChatGPT/GPT-4 rewrite:

<p>If you don't come to court as ordered, a warrant for your arrest will be issued for the charges against you. Not showing up as ordered by this citation is a misdemeanor, and you could be fined up to \$500, jailed for up to 3 months, or both.</p>	<p><i>[Original]</i></p> <p>Failing to appear in this court as directed herein shall cause the issuance of a warrant for your arrest on said charges and failure to appear in accordance with the command of this citation is in itself a misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine up to \$500 or up to 3 months in jail or both.</p>
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### Bard rewrite:

<p>If you do not appear in court as ordered, a warrant will be issued for your arrest. Failure to appear in accordance with this citation is a misdemeanor offense that can result in a fine of up to \$500, up to 3 months in jail, or both.</p>	<p><i>[Original]</i></p> <p>Failing to appear in this court as directed herein shall cause the issuance of a warrant for your arrest on said charges and failure to appear in accordance with the command of this citation is in itself a misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine up to \$500 or up to 3 months in jail or both.</p>
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**Bing rewrite:** (“more balanced” conversation style)

<p>If you don't come to court as directed, you could be arrested and charged with a misdemeanor offense. This offense could result in a fine of up to \$500 or up to 3 months in jail, or both.</p>	<p><i>[Original]</i></p> <p>Failing to appear in this court as directed herein shall cause the issuance of a warrant for your arrest on said charges and failure to appear in accordance with the command of this citation is in itself a misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine up to \$500 or up to 3 months in jail or both.</p>
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**Word Editor track changes:**

<p>Failing to appear in this court as directed herein shall cause the issuance of a warrant for your arrest on said charges and failure to appear in accordance with the command of this citation is <del>in itself a</del> misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine up to \$500 or up to 3 months in jail or both.</p>	<p><i>[Original]</i></p> <p>Failing to appear in this court as directed herein shall cause the issuance of a warrant for your arrest on said charges and failure to appear in accordance with the command of this citation is in itself a misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine up to \$500 or up to 3 months in jail or both.</p>
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**BriefCatch track changes:**

<p>Failing to appear in this court as directed <del>herein will cause the</del> <del>shall cause the</del> issuance of a warrant for your arrest on said charges and failure to appear in accordance with the command of this citation is in itself a misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine up to \$500 or up to 3 months in jail or both.</p>	<p><i>[Original]</i></p> <p>Failing to appear in this court as directed herein shall cause the issuance of a warrant for your arrest on said charges and failure to appear in accordance with the command of this citation is in itself a misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine up to \$500 or up to 3 months in jail or both.</p>
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**Grammarly** (premium, “general” audience, “neutral” formality, “general” domain):

<p>Failing to appear in this court as directed herein shall cause the issuance of a warrant for your arrest on said charges. <del>F</del> and failure to appear <del>in accordance with</del> <u>under</u> the command of this citation is <del>in itself</del> a misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine up to \$500 or up to 3 months in jail or both.</p>	<p><i>[Original]</i></p> <p>Failing to appear in this court as directed herein shall cause the issuance of a warrant for your arrest on said charges and failure to appear in accordance with the command of this citation is in itself a misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine up to \$500 or up to 3 months in jail or both.</p>
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**ProWritingAid track changes:** (“general” audience)

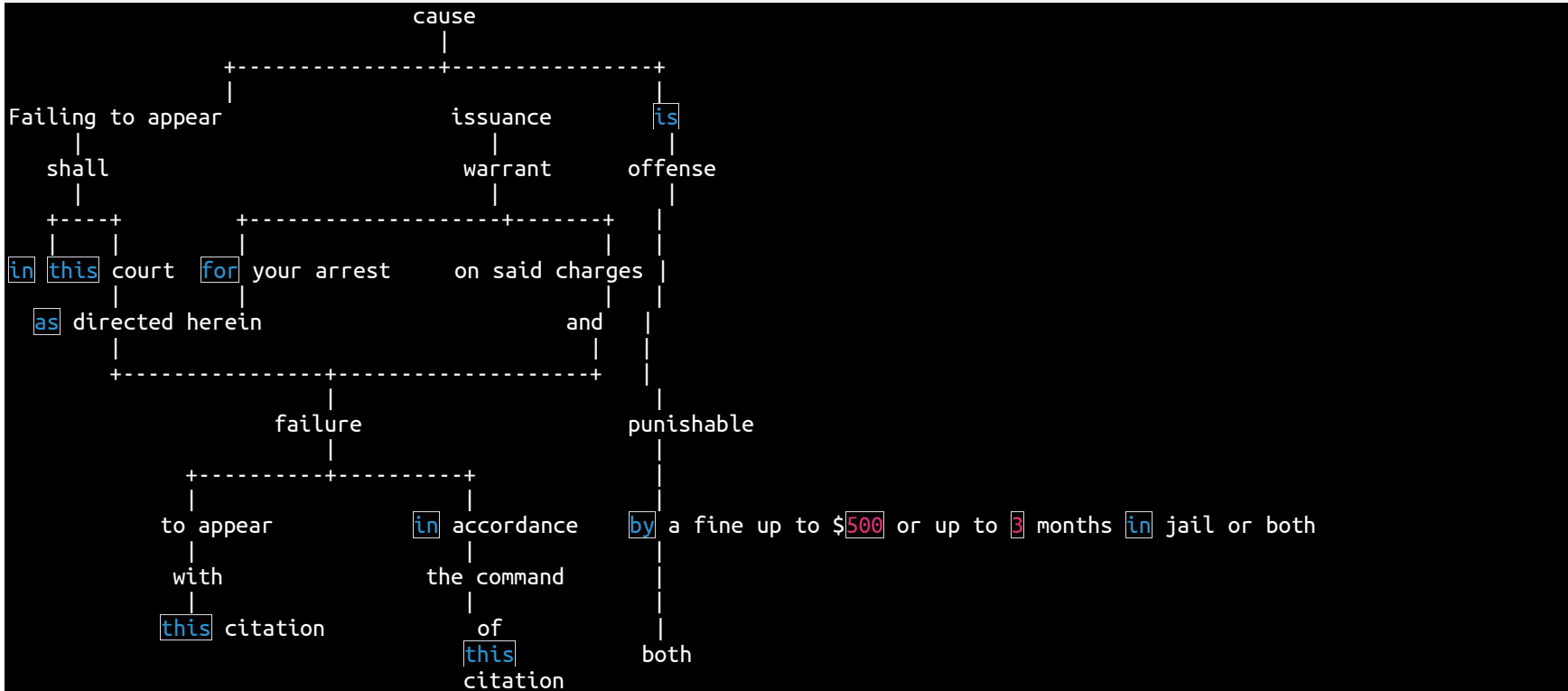
<p>Failing to appear in this court as directed <del>herein</del> shall cause the issuance of a warrant for your arrest on said charges and failure to appear <del>in accordance with</del> <u>under</u> the command of this citation is <del>in itself</del> a misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine up to \$500 or up to 3 months in jail or both.</p>	<p><i>[Original]</i></p> <p>Failing to appear in this court as directed herein shall cause the issuance of a warrant for your arrest on said charges and failure to appear in accordance with the command of this citation is in itself a misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine up to \$500 or up to 3 months in jail or both.</p>
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**WordRake** (“brevity” and “simplicity” selected):

<p>Failing to appear in this court as directed herein shall <del>cause the issuance of issue</del> a warrant for your arrest <del>on said charges on the charges</del> and failure to appear <del>in accordance with</del> <u>under</u> the command of this citation is <del>in itself</del> a misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine up to \$500 or up to 3 months in jail or both.</p>	<p><i>[Original]</i></p> <p>Failing to appear in this court as directed herein shall cause the issuance of a warrant for your arrest on said charges and failure to appear in accordance with the command of this citation is in itself a misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine up to \$500 or up to 3 months in jail or both.</p>
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## ChatGPT/GPT-4 prompt to “diagram” the original sentence:

Diagram the following sentence: “Failing to appear in this court as directed herein shall cause the issuance of a warrant for your arrest on said charges and failure to appear in accordance with the command of this citation is in itself a misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine up to \$500 or up to 3 months in jail or both.”



In this sentence diagram, 'Failing to appear in this court as directed herein' is a noun phrase that acts as the subject of the sentence. The main verb is 'shall cause', and its object is the noun phrase 'the issuance of a warrant for your arrest on said charges'.

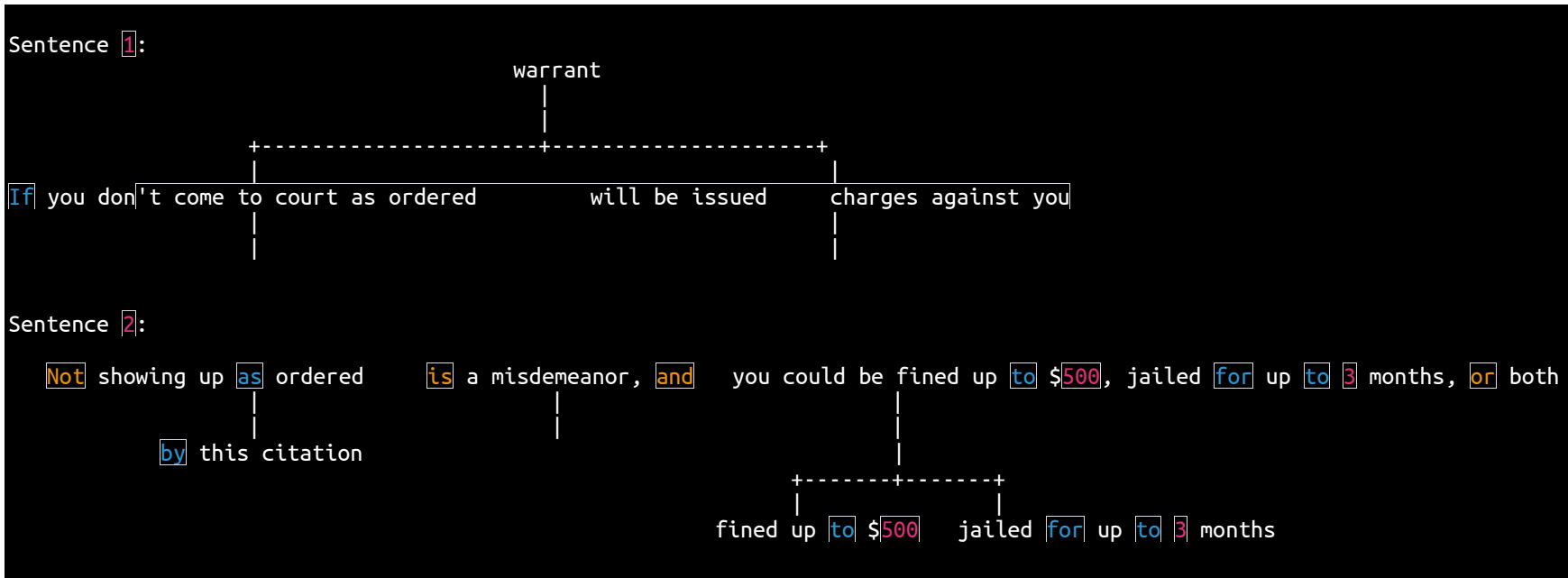
The sentence also contains a second independent clause, 'failure to appear in accordance with the command of this citation is in itself a misdemeanor offense'. This clause is connected to the first by the coordinating conjunction 'and'.

The predicate of this second clause is 'is', and the subject is 'failure to appear in accordance with the command of this citation'. The phrase 'in accordance with the command of this citation' modifies the verb 'appear', and 'this citation' is the object of the preposition 'of'.

The sentence ends with a compound predicate consisting of the verb 'punishable' and the compound direct object 'a fine up to \$500 or up to 3 months in jail or both'.

## ChatGPT/GPT-4 prompt to diagram the two ChatGPT “plain” sentences:

Diagram the following two sentences: "If you don't come to court as ordered, a warrant for your arrest will be issued for the charges against you. Not showing up as ordered by this citation is a misdemeanor, and you could be fined up to \$500, jailed for up to 3 months, or both."



In this sentence diagram, 'If you don't come to court as ordered' is a subordinate clause that acts as the condition for the main clause. The main clause consists of the subject 'a warrant for your arrest' and the predicate 'will be issued for the charges against you'.

The sentence also includes a second independent clause, 'Not showing up as ordered by this citation is a misdemeanor', which is connected to the first by the coordinating conjunction 'and'.

The subject of this second clause is 'Not showing up as ordered by this citation', and the predicate is 'is a misdemeanor'. The sentence then ends with a compound predicate consisting of the verb 'could be' and the compound direct object 'fined up to \$500, jailed for up to 3 months, or both'.

## Plain-language goals: **Can the audience ...**

- ① **Find** what they need
  - ② **Understand** what they find *the first time* they read or hear it
  - ③ **Use** what they find to meet their needs
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## Plain-language writing looks like:

- Short, simple, **familiar words and phrases** (go for the simple over fancy, dressed-up words encourages Bryan Garner)
- Unnecessary words** left out
- Repetitive and redundant** words avoided
- Avoid **jargon** (legal, foreign, and technical) when possible. When necessary, keep to a minimum
- Abbreviations minimized**
- Necessary terms and abbreviations are clearly defined.** Difficult legal terms are defined, not eliminated
- Active voice** is used most of the time.
- The simplest form of a verb is preferred (**present tense**)
- Hidden verbs** are avoided. No “nouners” or “zombie nouns”
- The **subject, verb, and object are kept close** together
- Main ideas are placed before** exceptions and conditions
- Double negatives and exceptions to exceptions** are avoided
- No slashes** (like and/or)
- Use “**must**” to show requirements instead of “shall”
- Contractions** are okay when proper
- Use “you” and other pronouns to **speak directly to the reader**
- Use **gender-neutral language** like the person, you, or they
- Nouns and verbs agree**
- Avoid **split infinitives**
- Avoid **unnecessary qualifiers** (or intensifiers)
- Use lists** to simplify complex material
- Use correct spelling and **punctuation** (including the **Oxford comma**; see **current event example**)