I. Berkeley’s main argument against abstract general ideas (AGIs)

1. Abstract general ideas are produced only through a process of abstracting (i.e., through what Berkeley calls abstraction, which involves separating ideas or qualities which cannot exist separately).
2. Therefore, there are abstract general ideas only if we can abstract.
3. We cannot abstract.
4. Therefore, there are no abstract general ideas.

II. The two sources of the thought that there are AGIs

1. The thought that “every name hath, or ought to have, one only precise and settled signification” (Introduction, Section 18).
2. The thought “that language has no other end but the communicating ideas, and that every significant name stands for an idea” (Introduction, Section 19).

III. Further criticisms of abstract general ideas

1. AGIs are inconsistent.
2. We do not need AGIs in order to communicate.
3. We do not need AGIs in order to expand our knowledge.

IV. According to Berkeley, an idea becomes general…

…not when it becomes the sign of an abstract idea, but when it becomes the representative of all particular ideas of a certain sort.

V. Berkeley’s main argument for Idealism

1. x is perceived if and only if x is an idea. [assumption]
2. x exists if and only if x is perceived. [esse is percipi; anti-abstractionist premise]
3. Therefore, x exists if and only if x is an idea. [from 1. and 2.]
4. If 3. is true, then there is no matter (i.e., no material substance).
5. Therefore, there is no matter. [from 3. and 4.]
6. There is *some* sort of substance, either matter, mind (i.e., immaterial substance), or both matter and mind. [assumption]
7. Therefore, there is only mind. [from 5. and 6.]

VI. No distinction between primary qualities and secondary qualities (*Part I, Section 14*)

1. Secondary qualities exist only in a mind perceiving them.
2. We cannot conceive of primary qualities without also conceiving of secondary qualities.
3. If 1. and 2. are true, then 4. is true.
4. Therefore, primary qualities do not exist outside a mind perceiving them.
5. If there’s a distinction between primary qualities and secondary qualities at all, then primary qualities exist outside of any mind.
6. Therefore, there is no distinction between primary qualities and secondary qualities.

VII. The mind-dependence of *primary* qualities (*Part I, Section 15*)

1. So-called secondary qualities are subject to perceptual relativity.
2. If any kind of quality is subject to perceptual relativity, then it exists only in a mind perceiving them.
3. Therefore, so-called secondary qualities exist only in a mind perceiving them.
4. So-called *primary* qualities are subject to perceptual relativity.
5. Therefore, even so-called *primary* qualities exist only in a mind perceiving them.

VIII. Material objects not necessary to explain our ideas (*Part I, Section 18*)

1. Either we know by sense that material objects exist without the mind and correspond to our ideas, or we know by reason.
2. We don’t know by our senses, for “by them we have the knowledge only of our sensations, ideas, or those things that are immediately perceived by sense, call them what you will.”
3. We don’t know by reason, for reason tells us that there’s no “necessary connexion betwixt [objects] and ideas.”
4. Thus, we don’t know that material objects exist without the mind and correspond to our ideas.
5. Thus, it is possible that we have the very ideas that we now have and that there are no material objects.

6. Thus, the supposition that there are material objects is not necessary in order to explain the existence of our ideas.

IX. Primary qualities are not the cause of our sensation (Part I, Section 25)

1. No idea or object of thought can produce or make any alteration in another; the very being of an idea implies passiveness and inertness in it.
   a. We perceive in our ideas no power or activity.
   b. Thus, there is no such thing contained in them.

2. Extension, figure, and motion are ideas or objects of thought.

3. Thus, extension, figure, and motion cannot be the cause of our sensations.

X. There is some other Will or Spirit (Part I, Sections 26 and 29)

1. We perceive a continual succession of ideas, some are anew excited, others are changed or totally disappear.

2. Therefore, there is a cause of these ideas, whereon they depend, and which produces and changes them.

3. This cause is not a quality or idea or combination of ideas. [From Part I, Section 25]

4. [This cause is either a quality or idea or combination of ideas, or a substance.]

5. Therefore, this cause is a substance.

6. There is no material substance.

7. [A substance is either material, or it is immaterial.]

8. Therefore, the cause of ideas is an immaterial active substance or Spirit.

9. I am not (or my will is not) the cause of the ideas that I perceive by Sense.

10. [Some will is the cause of the ideas that I perceive by Sense.]

11. Therefore, there is some other Will or Spirit that causes the ideas that I perceive by Sense.

XI. Ideas of sense, ideas of imagination

1. Ideas of imagination are those that are caused by human will.

2. Ideas of sense are
   a. stronger, livelier, and more distinct than ideas of imagination
   b. steadier, more orderly, and more coherent
   c. are not excited at random
d. occur with predictable regularity  
e. form coherent wholes that themselves can be expected to “behave” in predictable ways  
f. follow laws of nature

XII. Real things and imaginary things

1. REAL THINGS are composed solely of ideas of sense.  
2. IMAGINARY THINGS are not composed solely of ideas of sense.

XIII. Ordinary objects

1. Berkeley has now given an account of ordinary objects without appealing to a material substratum. Ordinary objects are nothing but lawfully arranged collections of ideas of sense.