



Writing Style Guidelines

Consistency and professionalism in communication are key components of how an institution presents itself. Institutions of higher education, especially, should hold themselves to a high standard, reflective of their intrinsic purpose. To these ends, *The Chicago Manual of Style* has been selected as the official reference source for all publications and communication from Bethany Seminary as well as academic writing within the seminary.

The exception to this policy is treatment of religious terms, such as biblical references, references to God, and theological events. For queries such as these, *The SBL Handbook of Style* serves as Bethany's authoritative guide (see page 6).

Summarized below are a few categories of situations most commonly encountered. This is meant to be a quick reference guide only; please refer to the *Chicago Manual of Style* itself for issues and exceptions not mentioned here. The entire manual is accessible through Earlham College's Lilly Library website.

- www.earlham.edu/library
- On the left-hand menu, click on **Writing and Citing Help** under **Research Help**
- Click on *Chicago* in the list, then *Chicago Manual of Style* in main part of screen
- Click on **View ebook**

1. *The Editors' Points of View*

From the preface:

In preparing this fifteenth edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*, we have sought to address the increasing proportion of our users who work with magazines, newsletters, corporate reports, proposals, electronic publications, Web sites, and other nonbook or nonprint documents. We have continued, nonetheless, to focus on the specific needs of our core constituency—writers and editors of scholarly books and journals. Because new needs, both technological and literary, prompted a major revision, *Chicago* consulted a wider range of advisers than ever before. We enlisted scholars, publishing professionals, and writers familiar with book and journal publishing, journalism, and—particularly valuable—electronic publication. . . .

As always, most *Chicago* rules are guidelines, not imperatives; where options are offered, the first is normally our preference. Some advice from the first edition (1906) . . . bears repeating: "Rules and regulations such as these, in the nature of the case, cannot be endowed with the fixity of rock-ribbed law. They are meant for the average case, and must be applied with a certain degree of elasticity."

2. *Punctuation (Chapter 6)*

Punctuation should be governed by its function, which is to promote ease of reading. Although punctuation, like word usage, allows for subjectivity, authors and editors should be aware of certain principles lest the subjective element obscure meaning.

- In typeset matter, one space, not two (in other words, a regular word space), follows any mark of punctuation that ends a sentence.
- When a conjunction joins the last two elements in a series, a comma—known as the serial or series comma or the Oxford comma—should appear before the conjunction. *Chicago* strongly recommends this widely practiced usage.
- An adverbial or participial phrase at the beginning of a sentence is usually followed by a comma. A single word or a very short introductory phrase does not require a comma except to avoid misreading.
- In the month-day-year style of dates, now recommended by *Chicago*, commas are used both before and after the year. Where month and year only are given, or a specific day (such as a holiday) with a year, neither system uses a comma.
- A colon introduces an element or a series of elements illustrating or amplifying what has preceded the colon. The colon may be used instead of a period to introduce a series of related sentences. A colon is not normally used after *namely*, *for example*, and similar expressions. Nor is it used before a series introduced by a verb or a preposition.
- An em dash or a pair of em dashes sets off an amplifying or explanatory element. (Commas, parentheses, or a colon may perform a similar function.) Use dashes judiciously, when a more abrupt break is desired; most of the time, commas will suffice.

*It was a revival of the most potent image in modern democracy—the revolutionary idea.
The influence of three impressionists—Monet, Sisley, and Degas—is obvious in her work.*

- **Multiple punctuation:** Periods and commas precede closing quotation marks, whether double or single. Unlike periods and commas, colons, semicolons, question marks, and exclamation points all follow closing quotation marks unless a question mark or an exclamation point belongs within the quoted matter.

Take, for example, the first line of “To a Skylark”: “Hail to thee, blithe spirit!”

An opening parenthesis should be preceded by a comma or a semicolon only in an enumeration; a closing parenthesis should never be preceded by a comma or a semicolon. A question mark, an exclamation point, and closing quotation marks precede a closing parenthesis if they belong to the parenthetical matter; they follow it if they belong to the surrounding sentence. A period precedes the closing parenthesis if the entire sentence is in parentheses; otherwise it follows.

When an expression that takes a period ends a sentence, such as an abbreviation, no additional period follows. When such an expression is followed by a comma, however, both period and comma appear.

3. *Capitalization (Chapter 8)*

Chicago generally prefers a “down” style, the parsimonious use of capitals. Although proper names are capitalized, many words derived from or associated with proper names (brussels sprouts, board of trustees), as well as the names of significant offices (presidency, papacy), may be lowercased with no loss of clarity or respect.

- Civil, military, religious, and professional titles are capitalized when they immediately precede a personal name and are thus used as part of the name (usually replacing the title holder’s first name). Titles are normally lowercased when following a name or used in place of a name. In formal contexts as opposed to running text, such as a displayed list of donors in the front matter of a book or a list of corporate officers in an annual report, titles are usually capitalized even when following a personal name.

Secretary of State Albright
Susan Franklin, chief operating officer of Caterham Corporation
Françoise Meltzer, professor of comparative literature
James R. Norris, chair of the Department of Chemistry
professor emeritus

- Names of degrees, fellowships, and the like are lowercased when referred to generically. In conservative practice, periods are added to abbreviations of all academic degrees. *Chicago* now recommends omitting them unless they are required for tradition or consistency.
- Academic subjects are not capitalized unless they form part of a department name or an official course name or are themselves proper nouns. Official names of courses of study are capitalized. Names of lecture series are capitalized. Individual lectures are capitalized and usually enclosed in quotation marks.

They have introduced a course in gender studies.

I am signing up for Beginning Archaeology.

This year's Robinson Memorial Lectures were devoted to the nursing profession. The first lecture, "How Nightingale Got Her Way," was a sellout.

4. *Titles of Works (Chapter 8)*

- Titles and subtitles of books, pamphlets, periodicals, newspapers, and sections of newspapers that are published separately in either print or electronic form are italicized when mentioned in text, notes, or bibliography. Only the official name of a periodical should be italicized. An added descriptive term is lowercased and set in roman.

I read it both in *Time* magazine and in the *Washington Post*.

- Quoted titles of articles and features in periodicals and newspapers, chapter and part titles, titles of short stories or essays, and individual selections in books are set in roman type and enclosed in quotation marks.
- Any work available on the Internet or as a CD-ROM, whether or not it also exists in print form, is treated the same way as above.

5. *Abbreviations (Chapter 15)*

Abbreviations should be used only in contexts where they are clear to readers. Those in common use (HMO, UPS) are normally spelled out at first occurrence as a courtesy to those readers who might not easily recognize them. Less familiar ones, however, should be used only if they occur, say, five times or more within an article or chapter, and the terms must be spelled out on their first occurrence.

To avoid unnecessary periods in abbreviations, *Chicago* recommends the following general guidelines: use periods with abbreviations that appear in lowercase letters; use no periods with abbreviations that appear in full capitals or small capitals, whether two letters or more.

6. *Treatment of Words (Chapter 7)*

For general matters of spelling, *Chicago* recommends using *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* and its chief abridgment, *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* in its latest edition. If more than one spelling is given, or more than one form of the plural, *Chicago* normally opts for the first form listed, thus aiding consistency.

Webster's is also the best resource regarding treatment of compound words. With frequent use, open or hyphenated compounds tend to become closed. *Chicago's* general adherence to *Webster* does not preclude

occasional exceptions when the closed spellings have become widely accepted, pronunciation and readability are not at stake, and keystrokes can be saved.

Good writers use italics for emphasis only as an occasional adjunct to efficient sentence structure. Overused, italics quickly lose their force. When a word or term is not used functionally but is referred to as the word or term itself, it is either italicized or enclosed in quotation marks (depending on clarity).

7. *Plurals and Possessives (Chapter 7)*

With a few exceptions, an apostrophe is not used when forming plurals. An apostrophe is never used to form the plural of a family name. The possessive of most singular nouns is formed by adding an apostrophe and an *s*, and the possessive of plural nouns (except for a few irregular plurals that do not end in *s*) by adding an apostrophe only.

the horse's mouth
a bass's stripes
puppies' paws
children's literature
Dickens's novels
the Williamses' new house

8. *Numbers (Chapter 9)*

- As a general rule, whole cardinal numbers from one through one hundred and any number beginning a sentence are spelled out (In nontechnical contexts).

The property is held on a ninety-nine-year lease.
The building is three hundred years old.
The three new parking lots will provide space for 540 more cars.

This rule also applies to the following:

Round numbers—hundreds, thousands, hundred thousands

Ordinal numbers (ending in *-st*, *-nd*, *-rd*, etc.)

Simple fractions

Quantities consisting of whole numbers and simple fractions—**if short**

Isolated references to currency amounts (if amounts are spelled out, also spell *dollar/s* & *cent/s*)

When a day is mentioned without the month or year

Centuries and decades (if the century is clear); no apostrophe between the year & the *s*.

Times of day in even, half, and quarter hours; use numerals for exact times

Names of numbered streets, if one hundred or less

Physical quantities of distances, lengths, areas, etc., (in nontechnical material) **but** If an abbreviation or a symbol is used for the unit of measure, express the quantity with a numeral

- If many numbers occur within a paragraph or a series of paragraphs, maintain consistency in the immediate context. If according to rule you must use numerals for one of the numbers in a given category, use them for all in that category. In the same sentence or paragraph, however, items in one category may be given as numerals and items in another spelled out.

Between 1,950 and 2,000 persons attended the concert.
Geoffrey found 5¢, Miranda 12¢, Nathan 26¢, and Maria 35¢.
A mixture of buildings—one of 103 stories, five of more than 50, and a dozen of only 3 or 4—has been suggested for the area.

- A mixture of numerals and spelled-out numbers is sometimes used to express very large numbers (in the millions or more), especially when they are fractional.

A figure of 4.5 billion years is often given as the age of the solar system.

A price of \$3 million was agreed on.

- Percentages are given in numerals, and the word *percent* is used (except in science & statistics.)
- Use numerals to refer to pages, chapters, parts, volumes, and other divisions of a book.
- An en dash used between two numerals implies *up to and including*, or *through*. A dash should not be used if *from* or *between* is used before the first of a pair of numbers.

Please refer to pages 75–110.

from 1898 to 1903

9. *Lists (Chapter 6)*

Lists may be either run into the text or set vertically (outline style). Short, simple lists are usually better run in, especially if the introduction and the items form a complete grammatical sentence

- Where similar lists are fairly close together, consistency is essential. All items in a list should be syntactically alike, that is, all should be noun forms, phrases, full sentences, or whatever the context requires. Unless numerals or letters serve a purpose—to indicate the order in which tasks should be done, to suggest chronology or relative importance, etc.—they may be omitted.
- Numerals or letters that mark divisions in a run-in list are enclosed in parentheses. If letters are used, they are sometimes italicized.
- A vertical list is best introduced by a complete grammatical sentence, followed by a colon. Items carry no closing punctuation unless they consist of complete sentences. . . . In a numbered vertical list that completes a sentence begun in an introductory element and consists of phrases or sentences with internal punctuation, semicolons may be used between the items, and a period should follow the final item.

Reporting for the Development Committee, Jobson reported that

1. a fund-raising campaign director was being sought;

2. the salary for this director, about \$50,000 a year, would be paid out of campaign funds;

3. the fund-raising campaign would be launched in the spring of 2005.

Religious Terms and Concepts

The *SBL Handbook of Style*

As an authoritative guide for the vast field of ancient Near East, biblical, and early Christian studies, *The SBL Handbook of Style* is much more comprehensive than Bethany publications would require. The following selected excerpts contain the guidelines that will cover most examples of more common religious references and terms appearing in Bethany's public communications.

The entire *SBL Handbook of Style* is online at: <http://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/SBLHS.pdf>

4.4 Expressions Requiring Special Treatment

Designations for the Bible

In general, a word or phrase used as a title of the whole or a specific part of the Bible is capitalized; the name of a genre is not capitalized. Thus any ancient and modern designation for the Bible, a book of the Bible, a division of the biblical canon (e.g., Pentateuch), or a discrete section of a biblical book (e.g., Primeval History) may be a proper noun and so capitalized.

Several matters require comment. First, note that *book* and *parable* are not considered part of the title and so are lowercase, while *Letter* is considered part of the title and so is capitalized. Note further that *Psalms* is the title of a book, while *psalm* is usually the name of a genre (as exemplified in the many biblical *psalms*) but is sometimes part of the name of a particular psalm (such as *the Twenty-Third Psalm* or *Psalm 100*). . . .

The very same word or phrase may be used sometimes as a title and sometimes generically. For example, *the Fourth Gospel* is a commonly used alternative title for the Gospel of John, but if your central thesis is, "John was the first gospel written, although it is the fourth gospel in the canon," you are using the words generically. . . . Similarly, "the major themes woven by Mark into his Gospel" makes it clear that we are talking about the canonical Gospel of Mark, whereas "Mark's gospel" would mean the message that he proclaimed. *The Gospels* is commonly used as the name for a specific division of the New Testament canon. . . . On the other hand, adding a modifier, as in *the canonical gospels* or *the four gospels*, makes the noun generic.

Titles of Non-Biblical Texts from the Ancient Near East

A title should be set in italics only when it represents a direct transliteration of the ancient language (not including personal and place names). Titles should not be set in quotation marks except when citing the translations of a text. Thus,

The Babylonian Epic of Creation (but, *Enuma Elish*)
The Stela of the Vultures
Code of Hammurabi
The Tale of Apopis and Seqenenre

Nouns Referring to God

Certain nouns customarily used to refer to God, to a hypostasis of the one God, or to one of the persons of the Trinity are capitalized when so used:

Bat Qol, Comforter, Creator, Father, Immanuel, King, King of kings, Lamb, Lamb of God, Lord, Lord of lords, Maker, Messiah, Redeemer, Son, Son of God,

Son of Man, Wisdom, Word

Nontraditional designations should also be capitalized (e.g., *Parent* used as a gender-neutral substitute for *Father*). Ordinarily, noun phrases are capitalized as if they were book titles (e.g., *Son of Man*), but the second term in *King of kings* and *Lord of lords* is lowercase in accord with NRSV and NIV usage because the point in these expressions is the exaltation of the one Christ over all merely human powers. Other designations less often used outside of particular scriptural contexts are less often capitalized:

bread of life or Bread of Life, crucified one or Crucified One, man of sorrows or Man of Sorrows, light of the world or Light of the World

With all of these, and especially the latter category, usage varies. If the author has a preference and has been consistent, that preference should be let stand. If not, the copy editor should make consistent decisions.

Pronouns Referring to God

Avoid using gender-specific pronouns in reference to the Godhead. In those cases when such pronouns are unavoidable, they should not be capitalized.

Events and Concepts

As a general rule, do not capitalize the names of biblical, religious, and theological (including eschatological) events and concepts:

atonement, body and blood, body of Christ, creation, crucifixion, day of judgment, exile, exodus (from Egypt), fall, first missionary journey, kingdom of God (or heaven), man of sin, nativity (of Jesus), new covenant, passion (of Christ), resurrection, tabernacle, temple, virgin birth

8.2 Bible Texts, Versions, Etc.

Books of the Bible cited without chapter or chapter and verse should be spelled out in the main text. Books of the Bible cited with chapter or chapter and verse should be abbreviated, unless they come at the beginning of the sentence. **NOTE: Bethany will spell out all occurrences of names of books of the Bible unless they appear in a citation.**

All occurrences of biblical books in parentheses and footnotes should be abbreviated. Authors citing more than one translation of the Bible must indicate which translation is used in a particular citation. When this citation is in parentheses, a comma is not needed to separate the citation and the abbreviation of the translation, as is indicated in the fourth example below.

Right: *The passage in 1 Cor 5 is often considered crucial.*
 The passage, 1 Cor 5:6, is often considered crucial.
 First Corinthians 5:6 is a crucial text.
 "Do you not know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough?" (1 Cor 5:6 NRSV).

Wrong: *1 Cor 5:6 is a crucial text.*
 1 Corinthians 5:6 is a crucial text.

In addition, the following abbreviations should be used.

Divisions of the canon

| | |
|----|---------------|
| HB | Hebrew Bible |
| NT | New Testament |

OT Old Testament

Units of text:

ch./chs. chapter/chapters
v./vv. verse/verses

Modern versions:

ASV American Standard Version
CEV Contemporary English Version
GNB Good News Bible
GOODSPEED *The Complete Bible: An American Translation*, E. J. Goodspeed
JB Jerusalem Bible
KJV King James Version
LB Living Bible
MLB Modern Language Bible
MOFFATT *The New Testament: A New Translation*, James Moffatt
NAB New American Bible
NASB New American Standard Bible
NAV New American Version
NEB New English Bible
NIV New International Version
NJB New Jerusalem Bible
NJPS *Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures: The New JPS Translation according to the Traditional Hebrew Text*
NKJV New King James Version
NRSV New Revised Standard Version
PHILLIPS *The New Testament in Modern English*, J. B. Phillips
REB Revised English Bible
RSV Revised Standard Version
RV Revised Version
TEV Today's English Version (= Good News Bible)
TNIV *Today's New International Version (addition to SBL's original list)*
WEYMOUTH *The New Testament in Modern Speech*, R. F. Weymouth

The Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

Note that abbreviations for the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, New Testament, Apocrypha, and Septuagint titles *do not* require a period and *are not* italicized.

| | | | |
|---------|----------------|-------|---------------------------------|
| Gen | Genesis | Song | Song of Songs (Song of Solomon) |
| Exod | Exodus | Isa | Isaiah |
| Lev | Leviticus | Jer | Jeremiah |
| Num | Numbers | Lam | Lamentations |
| Deut | Deuteronomy | Ezek | Ezekiel |
| Josh | Joshua | Dan | Daniel |
| Judg | Judges | Hos | Hosea |
| Ruth | Ruth | Joel | Joel |
| 1-2 Sam | 1-2 Samuel | Amos | Amos |
| 1-2 Kgs | 1-2 Kings | Obad | Obadiah |
| 1-2 Chr | 1-2 Chronicles | Jonah | Jonah |
| Ezra | Ezra | Mic | Micah |
| Neh | Nehemiah | Nah | Nahum |

| | | | |
|--------|--------------|------|-----------|
| Esth | Esther | Hab | Habakkuk |
| Job | Job | Zeph | Zephaniah |
| Ps/Pss | Psalms | Hag | Haggai |
| Prov | Proverbs | Zech | Zechariah |
| Eccl | Ecclesiastes | Mal | Malachi |

New Testament

| | | | |
|---------|-----------------|------------|---------------|
| Matt | Matthew 1-2 | Thess 1-2 | Thessalonians |
| Mark | Mark | 1-2 Tim | 1-2 Timothy |
| Luke | Luke | Titus | Titus |
| John | John | Phlm | Philemon |
| Acts | Acts | Heb | Hebrews |
| Rom | Romans | Jas | James |
| 1-2 Cor | 1-2 Corinthians | 1-2 Pet | 1-2 Peter |
| Gal | Galatians | 1-2-3 John | 1-2-3 John |
| Eph | Ephesians | Jude | Jude |
| Phil | Philippians | Rev | Revelation |
| Col | Colossians | | |

Apocrypha & Septuagint

| | | | |
|----------|-----------------------------|----------|-----------------------|
| Bar | Baruch | Jdt | Judith |
| Add Dan | Additions to Daniel | 1-2 Macc | 1-2 Maccabees |
| Pr Azar | Prayer of Azariah | 3-4 Macc | 3-4 Maccabees |
| Bel | Bel and the Dragon | Pr Man | Prayer of Manasseh |
| Sg Three | Song of the Three Young Men | Ps 151 | Psalms 151 |
| Sus | Susanna | Sir | Sirach/Ecclesiasticus |
| 1-2 Esd | 1-2 Esdras | Tob | Tobit |
| Add Esth | Additions to Esther | Wis | Wisdom of Solomon |
| Ep Jer | Epistle of Jeremiah | | |