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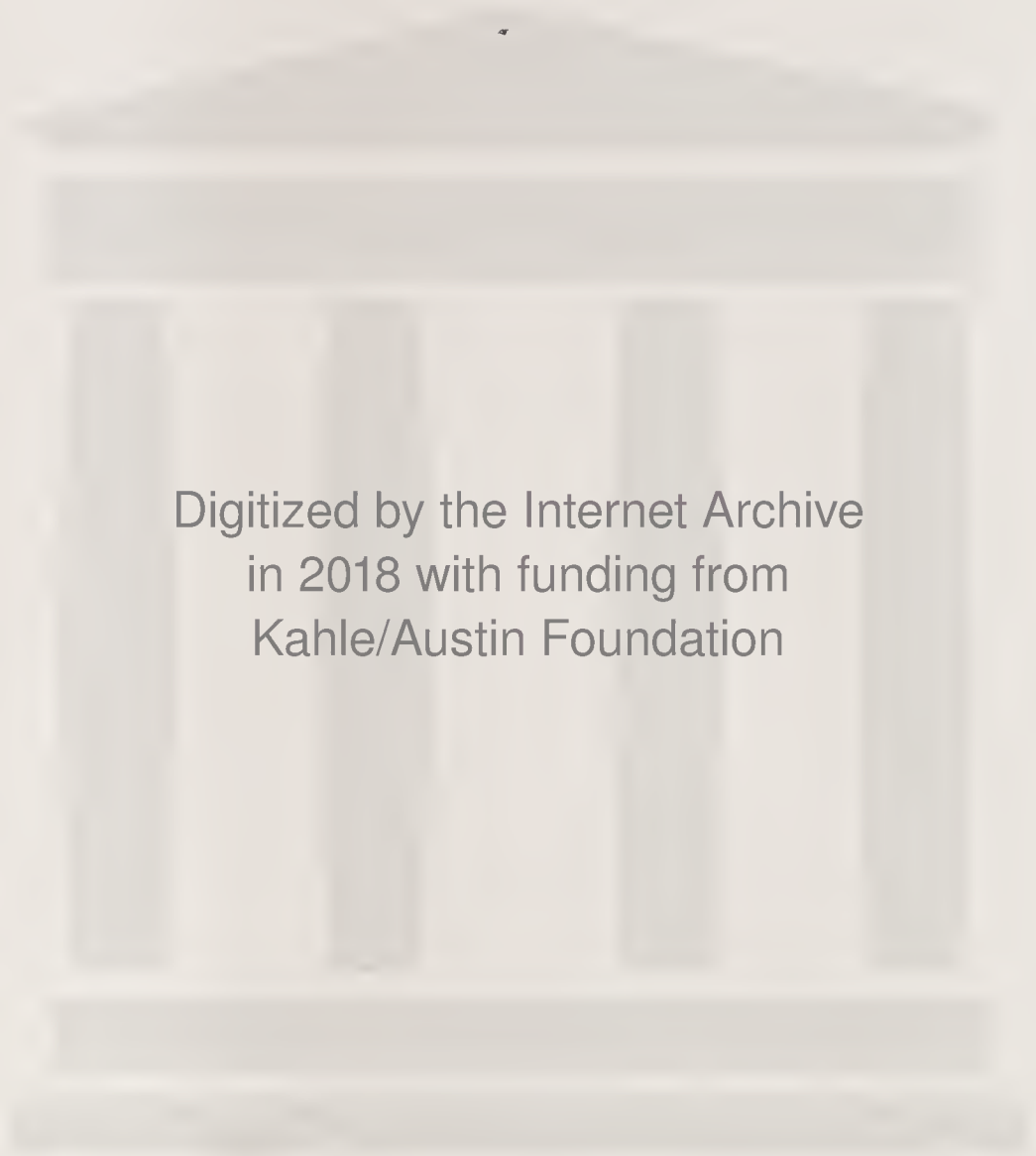


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Webster's Punctuation Guide

A practical guide
to the basic rules
of writing

Created in Cooperation with the Editors of
MERRIAM-WEBSTER



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Preface

This volume is designed to be a concise handbook on the conventions of contemporary American English—in particular, the conventions of punctuation, capitalization, italicization, abbreviation, quotation, and documentation of sources.

Just as the Merriam-Webster dictionaries strive to mirror the language as it is actually used, this book strives to reflect the practices actually employed in published writing. It is based on a continuous study of the ways Americans use their language, and it draws on Merriam-Webster's extensive citation files of 15 million examples of English words used in context, gathered from a broad selection of books, newspapers, magazines, and other publications.

Firmly based on real-life source material, this book attempts to reflect both the consensus and the variety evident in mainstream American published writing. When a statement about style must be qualified, the word *usually*, *generally*, or *normally* indicates that a significant minority of writers and editors follow another practice. *Sometimes* is used when describing an alternative, minority practice. *Often* or *frequently* indicates that a convention is commonly but not universally followed; it does not necessarily identify a majority practice.

Whenever a practice raises questions that require an explanation, a brief note is provided. Conventions restricted to journalism or specialized fields are labeled as such.

1 Punctuation

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Punctuation marks are used to help clarify the structure and meaning of sentences. They separate groups of words for meaning and emphasis; they convey an idea of the variations in pitch, volume, pauses, and intonation of the spoken language; and they help avoid ambiguity. The choice of what punctuation to use, if any, will often be clear and unambiguous. In other cases, a sentence may allow for

several punctuation patterns. In cases like these, varying notions of correctness have developed, and two writers might, with equal correctness, punctuate the same sentence quite differently, relying on their individual judgment and taste.

Apostrophe

The apostrophe is used to form most possessives and contractions as well as some plurals and inflections.

1. The apostrophe is used to indicate the possessive of nouns and indefinite pronouns. (For details, see the section beginning on page 124.)

the girl's shoe
the boys' fathers
Simmons's role
children's laughter
anyone's guess
the Browns' house
Arkansas's capital

2. Apostrophes are sometimes used to form plurals of letters, numerals, abbreviations, symbols, and words referred to as words. (For details, see the section beginning on page 114.)

cross your *t*'s
three 8's or three 8s

two L.H.D.'s *or* two L.H.D.s
used &'s instead of *and's*

3. Apostrophes mark omissions in contractions made of two or more words and in contractions of single words.

wasn't
they're
she'd rather not
Jake's had it
ass'n
dep't

4. The apostrophe is used to indicate that letters have been intentionally omitted from a word in order to imitate informal speech.

"Singin' in the Rain," the popular song and movie

"Snap 'em up" was his response.

Sometimes such words are so consistently spelled with an apostrophe that the spelling becomes an accepted variant.

rock 'n' roll [*for* rock and roll]

ma'am [*for* madam]

sou'wester [*for* southwester]

5. Apostrophes mark the omission of digits in numerals.

class of '98

fashion in the '90s

If the apostrophe is used when writing the plurals of numerals, either the apostrophe that stands for the missing figures is omitted or the word is spelled out.

90's *or* nineties *but not* '90's

6. In informal writing, apostrophes are used to produce forms of verbs that are made of individually pronounced letters. An apostrophe or a hyphen is also sometimes used to add an -er ending to an abbreviation; if no confusion would result, the apostrophe is usually omitted.

OK'd the budget

X'ing out the mistakes

4-H'er

49er

Brackets

Outside of mathematics and chemistry texts, brackets are primarily used for insertions into carefully handled quoted matter. They are rarely seen in general writing but are common in historical and scholarly contexts.

1. Brackets enclose editorial comments, corrections, and clarifications inserted into quoted matter.

Surely that should have peaked [sic] the curiosity of a serious researcher.

Here they much favour the tiorba [theorbo], the arclute [archlute], and the cittarone [chitarrone], while we at home must content ourselves with the lute alone.

In Blaine's words, "All the vocal aristocracy showed up—Nat [Cole], Billy [Eckstine], Ella [Fitzgerald], Mabel Mercer—'cause nobody wanted to miss that date."

2. Brackets enclose insertions that take the place of words or phrases.

And on the next page: "Their assumption is plainly that [Durocher] would be the agent in any such negotiation."

3. Brackets enclose insertions that supply missing letters.

A postscript to a December 17 letter to Waugh notes, "If D[eutsch] won't take the manuscript, perhaps someone at Faber will."

4. Brackets enclose insertions that alter the form of a word used in an original text.

He dryly observes (p. 78) that the Gravely investors had bought stocks because "they want[ed] to see themselves getting richer."

5. Brackets are used to indicate that capitalization has been altered. This is generally optional; it is standard practice only where meticulous handling of original source material is crucial (particularly legal and scholarly contexts).

6 • PUNCTUATION

As Chief Justice Warren held for the Court,
“[T]he Attorney General may bring an
injunctive action . . .”

or in general contexts

“The Attorney General may bring . . .”

Brackets also enclose editorial notes when text has been italicized for emphasis.

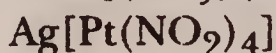
But tucked away on page 11 we find this fascinating note: “In addition, we anticipate that *siting these new plants in marginal neighborhoods will decrease the risk of organized community opposition*” [italics added].

6. Brackets function as parentheses within parentheses, especially where two sets of parentheses could be confusing.

Posner’s recent essays (including the earlier *Law and Literature* [1988]) bear this out.

7. In mathematical copy, brackets are used with parentheses to indicate units contained within larger units. They are also used with various meanings in chemical names and formulas.

$$x + 5[(x + y)(2x - y)]$$



With Other Punctuation

8. Punctuation that marks the end of a phrase, clause, item in a series, or sentence follows any bracketed material appended to that passage.

The report stated, “if we fail to find additional sources of supply [of oil and gas], our long-term growth will be limited.”

When brackets enclose a complete sentence, closing punctuation is placed within the brackets.

[Since this article was written, new archival evidence of document falsification has come to light.]

Colon

The colon is usually a mark of introduction, indicating that what follows it—generally a clause, a phrase, or a list—has been pointed to or described in what precedes it. (For the use of capitals following a colon, see paragraphs 7–8 on page 74.)

With Phrases and Clauses

1. A colon introduces a clause or phrase that explains, illustrates, amplifies, or restates what has gone before.

An umbrella is a foolish extravagance: if you don't leave it in the first restaurant, a gust of wind will destroy it on the way home.

Dawn was breaking: the distant peaks were already glowing with the sun's first rays.

2. A colon introduces an amplifying word, phrase, or clause that acts as an apposi-

tive. (For details on appositives, see the section on pages 17–18.)

That year Handley's old obsession was replaced with a new one: jazz.

The issue comes down to this: Will we offer a reduced curriculum, or will we simply cancel the program?

3. A colon introduces a list or series, often following a phrase such as *the following* or *as follows*.

She has trial experience on three judicial levels: county, state, and federal.

Anyone planning to participate should be prepared to do the following: hike five miles with a backpack, sleep on the ground without a tent, and paddle a canoe through rough water.

It is occasionally used like a dash to introduce a summary statement following a series.

Baseball, soccer, skiing, track: he excelled in every sport he took up.

4. Although the colon usually follows a full independent clause, it also often interrupts a sentence before the clause is complete.

The nine proposed program topics are: off-shore supply, vessel traffic, ferry services, ship repair, . . .

Information on each participant includes: name, date of birth, mailing address, . . .

For example: 58 percent of union members voted, but only 44 percent of blue-collar workers as a whole.

The association will:

Act with trust, integrity, and professionalism.

Operate in an open and effective manner.

Take the initiative in seeking diversity.

With Quotations

5. A colon usually introduces lengthy quoted material that is set off from the rest of a text by indentation but not by quotation marks.

The *Rumpole* series has been nicely encapsulated as follows:

Rumpled, disreputable, curmudgeonly barrister Horace Rumpole often wins cases despite the disdain of his more aristocratic colleagues. Fond of cheap wine ("Château Thames Embankment") and Keats's poetry, he refers to his wife as "She Who Must Be Obeyed" (an allusion to the title character of H. Rider Haggard's *She*).

6. A colon is often used before a quotation in running text, especially when (1) the quotation is lengthy, (2) the quotation is a formal statement or is being given special emphasis, or (3) a full independent clause precedes the colon.

Said Murdoch: "The key to the success of this project is good planning. We need to know precisely what steps we will need to

take, what kind of staff we will require, what the project will cost, and when we can expect completion.”

The inscription reads: “Here lies one whose name was writ in water.”

This was his verbatim response: “At this time Mr. Wilentz is still in the company’s employ, and no change in his status is anticipated imminently.”

Other Uses

7. A colon separates elements in bibliographic publication data and page references, in biblical citations, and in formulas used to express time and ratios. No space precedes or follows a colon between numerals.

Stendhal, *Love* (New York: Penguin, 1975)

Paleobiology 3:121

John 4:10

8:30 a.m.

a winning time of 3:43:02

a ratio of 3:5

8. A colon separates titles and subtitles.

Southwest Stories: Tales from the Desert

9. A colon follows the salutation in formal correspondence.

Dear Judge Wright:

Dear Laurence:

Dear Product Manager:

Ladies and Gentlemen:

10. A colon follows headings in memorandums, government correspondence, and general business letters.

TO:

SUBJECT:

VIA:

REFERENCE:

11. An unspaced colon separates the writer's and typist's initials in the identification lines of business letters.

WAL:jml

A colon also separates copy abbreviations from the initials of copy recipients. (The abbreviation *cc* stands for *carbon* or *courtesy copy*; *bcc* stands for *blind carbon* or *courtesy copy*.) A space follows a colon used with the fuller name of a recipient.

cc:RSP

JES

bcc:MWK

bcc: Mr. Jones

With Other Punctuation

12. A colon is placed outside quotation marks and parentheses that punctuate the larger sentence.

The problem becomes most acute in "Black Rose and Destroying Angel": plot simply ceases to exist.

Wilson and Hölldobler remark on the same phenomenon in *The Ants* (1990):

Comma

The comma is the most frequently used punctuation mark in English and the one that provides the most difficulties to writers. Its most common uses are to separate items in a series and to set off or distinguish grammatical elements within sentences.

Between Main Clauses

1. A comma separates main clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction, such as *and*, *but*, *or*, *nor*, or *so*.

She knew very little about the new system,
and he volunteered nothing.

The trial lasted for nine months, but the jury
took only four hours to reach its verdict.

We will not respond to any more questions
on that topic this afternoon, nor will we
respond to similar questions in the future.

All the first-floor windows were barred, so he
had clambered up onto the fire escape.

2. When one or both of the clauses are short or closely related in meaning, the comma is often omitted.

They said good-bye and everyone hugged.

If commas set off another phrase that modifies the whole sentence, the comma between main clauses is often omitted.

Six thousand years ago, the top of the volcano blew off in a series of powerful eruptions and the sides collapsed into the middle.

3. Commas are sometimes used to separate short and obviously parallel main clauses that are not joined by conjunctions.

One day you're a successful corporate lawyer, the next day you're out of work.

Use of a comma to join clauses that are neither short nor obviously parallel, called *comma fault* or *comma splice*, is avoided. Clauses not joined by conjunctions are normally separated by semicolons. For details, see paragraph 1 on page 65.

4. If a sentence is composed of three or more clauses that are short and free of commas, the clauses are occasionally all separated by commas even if the last two are not joined by a conjunction. If the clauses are long or punctuated, they are separated with semicolons; the last two clauses are sometimes separated by a comma if they are joined by a conjunction. (For more details, see paragraph 5 on pages 66–67.)

Small fish fed among the marsh weed, ducks paddled along the surface, an occasional muskrat ate greens along the bank.

The kids were tired and whiny; Napoleon, usually so calm, was edgy; Tabitha seemed to be going into heat, and even the guinea pigs were agitated.

With Compound Predicates

5. Commas are not normally used to separate the parts of a compound predicate.

The firefighter tried to enter the burning building but was turned back by the thick smoke.

However, they are often used if the predicate is long and complicated, if one part is being stressed, or if the absence of a comma could cause a momentary misreading.

The board helps to develop the financing and marketing strategies for new corporate divisions, and issues periodic reports on expenditures, revenues, and personnel appointments.

This is an unworkable plan, and has been from the start.

I try to explain to him what I want him to do, and get nowhere.

With Subordinate Clauses and Phrases

6. Adverbial clauses and phrases that begin a sentence are usually set off with commas.

Having made that decision, we turned our attention to other matters.

In order to receive a high school diploma, a student must earn 16 credits from public or private secondary schools.

In addition, staff members respond to queries, take new orders, and initiate billing.

If the sentence can be easily read without a comma, the comma may be omitted. The phrase will usually be short—four words or less—but even after a longer phrase the comma is often omitted.

As cars age, they depreciate.

or As cars age they depreciate.

In January the firm will introduce a new line of investigative services.

On the map the town appeared as a small dot in the midst of vast emptiness.

If nobody comes forward by Friday I will have to take further steps.

7. Adverbial clauses and phrases that introduce a main clause other than the first main clause are usually set off with commas. If the clause or phrase follows a conjunction, one comma often precedes the conjunction and one follows the clause or phrase. Alternatively, one comma precedes the conjunction and two more enclose the clause or phrase, or a single comma precedes the conjunction. Short

phrases, and phrases in short sentences, tend not to be enclosed in commas.

They have redecorated the entire store, but[,] to the delight of their customers, it retains much of its original flavor.

We haven't left Springfield yet, but when we get to Boston we'll call you.

8. A comma is not used after an introductory phrase if the phrase immediately precedes the main verb.

From the next room came a loud expletive.

9. A subordinate clause or phrase that modifies a noun is not set off by commas if it is *restrictive* (or *essential*)—that is, if its removal would alter the noun's meaning.

The man who wrote this obviously had no firsthand knowledge of the situation.

They entered through the first door that wasn't locked.

If the meaning would not be altered by its removal, the clause or phrase is considered *nonrestrictive* (or *nonessential*) and usually is set off by commas.

The new approach, which was based on team teaching, was well received.

Wechsler, who has done solid reporting from other battlefronts, is simply out of his depth here.

They tried the first door, which led nowhere.

10. Commas set off an adverbial clause or phrase that falls between the subject and the verb.

The Clapsaddle sisters, to keep up appearances, rode to the park every Sunday in their rented carriage.

11. Commas set off modifying phrases that do not immediately precede the word or phrase they modify.

Scarbo, intent as usual on his next meal, was snuffling around the butcher's bins.

The negotiators, tired and discouraged, headed back to the hotel.

We could see the importance, both long-term and short-term, of her proposal.

12. An absolute phrase (a participial phrase with its own subject that is grammatically independent of the rest of the sentence) is set off with commas.

Our business being concluded, we adjourned for refreshments.

We headed southward, the wind freshening behind us, to meet the rest of the fleet in the morning.

I'm afraid of his reaction, his temper being what it is.

With Appositives

13. Commas set off a word, phrase, or clause that is in apposition to (that is, equivalent

to) a preceding or following noun and that is nonrestrictive.

It sat nursing its front paw, the injured one. Aleister Crowley, Britain's most infamous satanist, is the subject of a remarkable new biography.

A cherished landmark in the city, the Hotel Sandburg has managed once again to escape the wrecking ball.

The committee cochairs were a lawyer, John Larson, and an educator, Mary Conway.

14. Restrictive appositives are not set off by commas.

He next had a walk-on role in the movie *The Firm*.

Longfellow's poem *Evangeline* was a favorite of my grandmother's.

The committee cochairs were the lawyer John Larson and the educator Mary Conway.

Lord Castlereagh was that strange anomaly[,] a Labor-voting peer.

With Introductory and Interrupting Elements

15. Commas set off transitional words and phrases.

Indeed, close coordination will be essential. Defeat may be inevitable; however, disgrace is not.

The second report, on the other hand, shows a strong bias.

When such words and phrases fall in the middle of a clause, commas are sometimes unnecessary.

They thus have no chips left to bargain with.

The materials had indeed arrived.

She would in fact see them that afternoon.

16. Commas set off parenthetical elements, such as authorial asides.

All of us, to tell the truth, were completely amazed.

It was, I should add, not the first time I'd seen him in this condition.

17. Commas are often used to set off words or phrases that introduce examples or explanations, such as *namely*, *for example*, and *that is*.

He expects to visit three countries, namely, France, Spain, and Germany.

I would like to develop a good, workable plan, that is, one that would outline our goals and set a timetable for accomplishing them.

Such introductory words and phrases may also often be preceded by a dash, parenthesis, or semicolon. Regardless of the punctuation that precedes the word or phrase, a comma usually follows it.

Sports develop two valuable traits—namely, self-control and the ability to make quick decisions.

In writing to the manufacturer, be as specific as possible (i.e., list the missing or defective parts, describe the malfunction, and identify the store where the unit was purchased).

Most had traveled great distances to participate; for example, three had come from Australia, one from Japan, and two from China.

18. Commas set off words in direct address.

This is our third and final notice, Mr. Sutton.
The facts, my fellow Americans, are very different.

19. Commas set off mild interjections or exclamations.

Ah, the mosaics in Ravenna are matchless.
Uh-oh, His Eminence seems to be on the warpath this morning.

With Contrasting Expressions

20. A comma is sometimes used to set off contrasting expressions within a sentence.

This project will take six months, not six weeks.

21. When two or more contrasting modifiers or prepositions, one of which is introduced by a conjunction or adverb, apply to a noun that follows immediately, the second is set off by two commas or a single comma, or not set off at all.

A solid, if overly wordy, assessment

or a solid, if overly wordy assessment

or a solid if overly wordy assessment

This street takes you away from, not toward,
the capitol.

or This street takes you away from, not
toward the capitol.

grounds for a civil, and maybe a criminal,
case

or grounds for a civil, and maybe a crimi-
nal case

or grounds for a civil and maybe a crimi-
nal case

Dashes or parentheses are often used
instead of commas in such sentences.

grounds for a civil (and maybe a criminal)
case

22. A comma does not usually separate elements that are contrasted through the use of a pair of correlative conjunctions such as *either . . . or*, *neither . . . nor*, and *not only . . . but also*.

Neither my brother nor I noticed the error.

He was given the post not only because of his
diplomatic connections but also because of
his great tact and charm.

When correlative conjunctions join main clauses, a comma usually separates the clauses unless they are short.

Not only did she have to see three salesmen
and a visiting reporter, but she also had to
prepare for next day's meeting.

Either you do it my way or we don't do it at all.

23. Long parallel contrasting and comparing clauses are separated by commas; short parallel phrases are not.

The more that comes to light about him, the less savory he seems.

The less said the better.

With Items in a Series

24. Words, phrases, and clauses joined in a series are separated by commas.

Men, women, and children crowded aboard the train.

Her job required her to pack quickly, to travel often, and to have no personal life.

He responded patiently while reporters shouted questions, flashbulbs popped, and the crowd pushed closer.

When the last two items in a series are joined by a conjunction, the final comma is often omitted, especially where this would not result in ambiguity. In individual publications, the final comma is usually consistently used; consistently omitted, or used only where a given sentence would otherwise be ambiguous or hard to read. It is consistently used in most non-fiction books; elsewhere it tends to be used or generally omitted equally often.

We are looking for a house with a big yard, a view of the harbor[,] and beach and docking privileges.

25. A comma is not generally used to separate items in a series all of which are joined with conjunctions.

I don't understand what this policy covers or doesn't cover or only partially covers.

They left behind the fogs and the wood storks and the lonesome sighing of the wind.

26. When the elements in a series are long or complex or consist of clauses that themselves contain commas, the elements are usually separated by semicolons, not commas. See paragraph 7 on pages 67–68.

With Coordinate Modifiers

27. A comma is generally used to separate two or more adjectives, adverbs, or phrases that modify the same word or phrase.

She spoke in a calm, reflective manner.

They set to their work again grimly, intently.

The comma is often omitted when the adjectives are short.

one long thin strand

a small white stone

little nervous giggles

skinny young waiters
in this harsh new light

The comma is generally omitted where it is ambiguous whether the last modifier and the noun—or two of the modifiers—constitute a unit.

the story's stark dramatic power
a pink stucco nightclub

In some writing, especially works of fiction, commas may be omitted from most series of coordinate modifiers as a matter of style.

28. A comma is not used between two adjectives when the first modifies the combination of the second plus the noun it modifies.

the last good man
a good used car
his protruding lower lip
the only fresh water
the only freshwater lake
their black pickup truck

A comma is also not used to separate an adverb from the adjective or adverb that it modifies.

this formidably difficult task

In Quotations

29. A comma usually separates a direct quotation from a phrase identifying its source

or speaker. If the quotation is a question or an exclamation and the identifying phrase follows the quotation, the comma is replaced by a question mark or an exclamation point.

She answered, "I'm afraid it's all we've got."

"The comedy is over," he muttered.

"How about another round?" Elaine piped up.

"I suspect," said Mrs. Horowitz, "we haven't seen the last of her."

"You can sink the lousy thing for all I care!" Trumbull shouted back.

"And yet . . . [,]" she mused.

"We can't get the door op—" Captain Hunt is heard shouting before the tape goes dead.

In some cases, a colon can replace a comma preceding a quotation; see paragraph 6 on pages 9–10.

30. When short or fragmentary quotations are used in a sentence that is not primarily dialogue, they are usually not set off by commas.

He glad-handed his way through the small crowd with a "Looking good, Joe" or "How's the wife" for every beaming face.

Just because he said he was "about to leave this minute" doesn't mean he actually left.

Sentences that fall within sentences and do not constitute actual dialogue are not usually set off with commas. These may be

mottoes or maxims, unspoken or imaginary dialogue, or sentences referred to as sentences; and they may or may not be enclosed in quotation marks. Where quotation marks are not used, a comma is often inserted to mark the beginning of the shorter sentence clearly. (For the use of quotation marks with such sentences, see paragraph 6 on pages 58–59.)

“The computer is down” was the response she dreaded.

He spoke with a candor that seemed to insist, This actually happened to me and in just this way.

The first rule is, When in doubt, spell it out.

When the shorter sentence functions as an appositive (the equivalent to an adjacent noun), it is set off with commas when nonrestrictive and not when restrictive.

We had the association’s motto, “We make waves,” printed on our T-shirts.

He was fond of the slogan “Every man a king, but no man wears a crown.”

31. A comma introduces a directly stated question, regardless of whether it is enclosed in quotation marks or if its first word is capitalized. It also introduces a tag question.

I wondered, what is going on here?

The question is, How do we get out of this situation?

That’s obvious, isn’t it?

A comma is not used to set off indirect discourse or indirect questions introduced by a conjunction (such as *that* or *what*).

Margot replied quietly that she'd never been happier.

I wondered what was going on here.

The question is how do we get out of this situation.

32. The comma is usually omitted before quotations that are very short exclamations or representations of sounds.

He jumped up suddenly and cried "I've got it!"

Replacing Omitted Words

33. A comma may indicate the omission of a word or phrase in parallel constructions where the omitted word or phrase appears earlier in the sentence. In short sentences, the comma is usually omitted.

The larger towns were peopled primarily by shopkeepers, artisans, and traders; the small villages, by peasant farmers.

Seven voted for the proposal, three against.

He critiqued my presentation and I his.

34. A comma sometimes replaces the conjunction *that*.

The smoke was so thick, they were forced to crawl.

Chances are, there are still some tickets left.

With Addresses, Dates, and Numbers

35. Commas set off the elements of an address except for zip codes.

Write to Bureau of the Census, Washington,
DC 20233.

In Needles, California, their luck ran out.

When a city name and state (province, country, etc.) name are used together to modify a noun that follows, the second comma may be omitted but is more often retained.

We visited their Enid, Oklahoma plant.

but more commonly

We visited their Enid, Oklahoma, plant.

36. Commas set off the year in a full date.

On July 26, 1992, the court issued its opinion.

Construction for the project began on April 30, 1995.

When only the month and year are given, the first comma is usually omitted.

In December 1903, the Wright brothers finally succeeded in keeping an airplane aloft for a few seconds.

October 1929 brought an end to all that.

37. A comma groups numerals into units of three to separate thousands, millions, and so on.

2,000 case histories
15,000 units
a population of 3,450,000
a fee of \$12,500

Certain types of numbers do not contain commas, including decimal fractions, street addresses, and page numbers. (For more on the use of the comma with numbers, see paragraphs 1–3 on page 181.)

2.5544
12537 Wilshire Blvd.
page 1415

With Names, Degrees, and Titles

38. A comma separates a surname from a following professional, academic, honorary, or religious degree or title, or an abbreviation for a branch of the armed forces.

Amelia P. Artandi, M.D.
Robert Hynes Menard, Ph.D., L.H.D.
John L. Farber, Esq.
Sister Mary Catherine, S.C.
Admiral Herman Washington, USN

39. A comma is often used between a surname and the abbreviations *Jr.* and *Sr.*

Douglas Fairbanks, Sr.
or Douglas Fairbanks Sr.
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
or Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

40. A comma is often used to set off corporate identifiers such as *Incorporated, Inc., Ltd., P.C.,* and *L.P.* However, many company names omit this comma.

StarStage Productions, Incorporated

Hart International Inc.

Walsh, Brandon & Kaiser, P.C.

The sales manager from Doyle Southern, Inc., spoke at Tuesday's meeting.

Other Uses

41. A comma follows the salutation in informal correspondence and usually follows the complimentary close in both informal and formal correspondence.

Dear Rachel,

Affectionately,

Very truly yours,

42. The comma is used to avoid ambiguity when the juxtaposition of two words or expressions could cause confusion.

Under Mr. Thomas, Jefferson High School has flourished.

He scanned the landscape that opened out before him, and guided the horse gently down.

43. When normal sentence order is inverted, a comma often precedes the subject and verb. If the structure is clear without it, it is often omitted.

That we would succeed, no one doubted.
And a splendid occasion it was.

With Other Punctuation

44. Commas are used next to brackets, ellipsis points, parentheses, and quotation marks. Commas are not used next to colons, dashes, exclamation points, question marks, or semicolons. If one of the latter falls at the same point where a comma would fall, the comma is dropped. (For more on the use of commas with other punctuation, see the sections for each individual mark.)

“If they find new sources [of oil and gas], their earnings will obviously rebound. . . .”

“This book takes its place among the most serious, . . . comprehensive, and enlightened treatments of its great subject.”

There are only six small files (at least in this format), which take up very little disk space.

According to Hartmann, the people are “savage,” their dwellings are “squalid,” and the landscape is “a pestilential swamp.”

Dash

The dash can function like a comma, a colon, or a parenthesis. Like commas and parentheses, dashes set off parenthetical material such as examples, supplemental facts, and explana-

tory or descriptive phrases. Like a colon, a dash introduces clauses that explain or expand upon something that precedes them. Though sometimes considered a less formal equivalent of the colon and parenthesis, the dash may be found in all kinds of writing, including the most formal, and the choice of which mark to use is often a matter of personal preference.

The common dash (also called the *em dash*, since it is approximately the width of a capital M in typeset material) is usually represented by two hyphens in typed and keyboarded material. (Word-processing programs make it available as a special character.)

Spacing around the dash varies. Most newspapers insert a space before and after the dash; many popular magazines do the same; but most books and journals omit spacing.

The *en dash* and the *two-* and *three-em dashes* have more limited uses, which are explained in paragraphs 13–15 on pages 37–38.

Abrupt Change or Suspension

1. The dash marks an abrupt change or break in the structure of a sentence.

The students seemed happy enough with the new plan, but the alumni—there was the problem.

2. A dash is used to indicate interrupted speech or a speaker's confusion or hesitation.

“The next point I’d like to bring up—” the speaker started to say.

“Yes,” he went on, “yes—that is—I guess I agree.”

Parenthetical and Amplifying Elements

3. Dashes are used in place of commas or parentheses to emphasize or draw attention to parenthetical or amplifying material.

With three expert witnesses in agreement, the defense can be expected to modify its strategy—somewhat.

This amendment will finally prevent corporations—large and small—from buying influence through exorbitant campaign contributions.

When dashes are used to set off parenthetical elements, they often indicate that the material is more digressive than elements set off with commas but less digressive than elements set off by parentheses. For examples, see paragraph 16 on page 19 and paragraph 1 on pages 46–47.

4. Dashes set off or introduce defining phrases and lists.

The fund sought to acquire controlling positions—a minimum of 25% of outstanding voting securities—in other companies.

Davis was a leading innovator in at least three styles—bebop, cool jazz, and jazz-rock fusion.

5. A dash is often used in place of a colon or semicolon to link clauses, especially when the clause that follows the dash explains, summarizes, or expands upon the preceding clause in a somewhat dramatic way.

The results were in—it had been a triumphant success.

6. A dash or a pair of dashes often sets off illustrative or amplifying material introduced by such phrases as *for example*, *namely*, and *that is*, when the break in continuity is greater than that shown by a comma, or when the dash would clarify the sentence structure better than a comma. (For more details, see paragraph 17 on page 19.)

After some discussion the motion was tabled—that is, it was removed indefinitely from the board's consideration.

Lawyers should generally—in pleadings, for example—attempt to be as specific as possible.

7. A dash may introduce a summary statement that follows a series of words or phrases.

Crafts, food booths, children's activities, cider-making demonstrations—there was something for everyone.

Once into bankruptcy, the company would have to pay cash for its supplies, defer maintenance, and lay off workers—moves that could threaten its future.

8. A dash often precedes the name of an author or source at the end of a quoted passage—such as an epigraph, extract, or book or film blurb—that is not part of the main text. The attribution may appear immediately after the quotation or on the next line.

“I return to her stories with more pleasure, and await them with more anticipation, than those of any of her contemporaries.”—William Logan, *Chicago Tribune*

Only the sign is for sale.

—Søren Kierkegaard

With Other Punctuation

9. If a dash appears at a point where a comma could also appear, the comma is omitted.

Our lawyer has read the transcript—all 1,200 pages of it—and he has decided that an appeal would not be useful.

If we don't succeed—and the critics say we won't—then the whole project is in jeopardy.

In a series, dashes that would force a comma to be dropped are often replaced by parentheses.

The holiday movie crowds were being entertained by street performers: break dancers, a juggler (who doubled as a sword swallower), a steel-drummer, even a three-card-monte dealer.

10. If the second of a pair of dashes would fall where a period should also appear, the dash is omitted.

Instead, he hired his mother—an odd choice by any standard.

Much less frequently, the second dash will be dropped in favor of a colon or semicolon.

Valley Health announced general improvements to its practice—two to start this week: evening office hours and a voice-mail message system.

His conduct has always been exemplary—near-perfect attendance, excellent productivity, a good attitude; nevertheless, his termination cannot be avoided.

11. When a pair of dashes sets off material ending with an exclamation point or a question mark, the mark is placed inside the dashes.

His hobby was getting on people's nerves—especially mine!—and he was extremely good at it.

There would be a “distinguished guest speaker”—was there ever any other kind?—and plenty of wine afterwards.

12. Dashes are used inside parentheses, and vice versa, to indicate parenthetical material within parenthetical material. The second dash is omitted if it would immediately precede the closing parenthesis; a closing parenthesis is never omitted.

We were looking for a narrator (or narrators—sometimes a script calls for more than one) who could handle a variety of assignments.

The wall of the Old City contains several gates—particularly Herod’s Gate, the Golden Gate, and Zion Gate (or “David’s Gate”)—with rich histories.

En Dash and Long Dashes

13. The *en dash* generally appears only in typeset material; in typed or keyboarded material the simple hyphen is usually used instead. (Word-processing programs provide the en dash as a special character.) Newspapers similarly use the hyphen in place of the en dash. The en dash is shorter than the em dash but longer than the hyphen. It is most frequently used between numbers, dates, or other notations to signify “(up) to and including.”

pages 128–34
1995–97

September 24–October 5

8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

The en dash replaces a hyphen in compound adjectives when at least one of the elements is a two-word compound. It replaces the word *to* between capitalized names, and is used to indicate linkages such as boundaries, treaties, and oppositions.

post–Cold War era

Boston–Washington train

New Jersey–Pennsylvania border

male–female differences

or male-female differences

14. A *two-em dash* is used to indicate missing letters in a word and, less frequently, to indicate a missing word.

The nearly illegible letter is addressed to a Mr. P—— of Baltimore.

15. A *three-em dash* indicates that a word has been left out or that an unknown word or figure is to be supplied.

The study was carried out in ——, a fast-growing Sunbelt city.

Ellipsis Points

Ellipsis points (also known as *ellipses*, *points of ellipsis*, and *suspension points*) are periods, usually in groups of three, that signal an omis-

sion from quoted material or indicate a pause or trailing off of speech. A space usually precedes and follows each ellipsis point. (In newspaper style, spaces are usually omitted.)

1. Ellipsis points indicate the omission of one or more words within a quoted sentence.

We the People of the United States . . . do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

2. Ellipsis points are usually not used to indicate the omission of words that precede the quoted portion. However, in some formal contexts, especially when the quotation is introduced by a colon, ellipsis points are used.

He ends with a stirring call for national resolve that "government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth."

Its final words define the war's purpose in democratic terms: ". . . that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth."

Ellipsis points following quoted material are omitted when it forms an integral part of a larger sentence.

She maintained that it was inconsistent with "government of the people, by the people, for the people."

3. Punctuation used in the original that falls on either side of the ellipsis points is often omitted; however, it may be retained, especially if this helps clarify the sentence structure.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation . . . can long endure.

We the People of the United States, in Order to . . . establish Justice, . . . and secure the Blessings of Liberty . . . , do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

For details on punctuating omissions within block quotations, see Chapter 6, "Quotations."

4. If the last words of a quoted sentence are omitted and the original sentence ends with punctuation other than a period, the end punctuation often follows the ellipsis points, especially if it helps clarify the quotation.

He always ends his harangues with some variation on the question, "What could you have been thinking when you . . . ?"

5. When ellipsis points are used to indicate that a quotation has been intentionally left unfinished, the terminal period is omitted. No space separates the last ellipsis point and the quotation mark.

The paragraph beginning "Recent developments suggest . . ." should be deleted.

6. A line of ellipsis points indicates that one or more lines have been omitted from a poem. Its length usually matches the length of the line above. (For more details on quoting verse, see the section beginning on page 223.)

When I heard the learned astronomer,

 How soon unaccountable I became tired
 and sick,
 Til rising and gliding out I wandered off by
 myself,
 In the mystical moist night-air, and from
 time to time,
 Looked up in perfect silence at the stars.

7. Ellipsis points are used to indicate faltering speech, especially if the faltering involves a long pause or a sentence that trails off or is intentionally left unfinished. Generally no other terminal punctuation is used.

The speaker seemed uncertain. "Well, that's true . . . but even so . . . I think we can do better."

"Despite these uncertainties, we believe we can do it, but . . ."

"I mean . . ." he said, "like . . . How?"

8. Ellipsis points are sometimes used informally as a stylistic device to catch a

reader's attention, often replacing a dash or colon.

They think that nothing can go wrong . . .
but it does.

9. In newspaper and magazine columns consisting of social notes, local events listings, or short items of celebrity news, ellipsis points often take the place of paragraphing to separate the items. (Ellipsis points are also often used in informal personal correspondence in place of periods or paragraphing.)

Congratulations to Debra Morricone, our up-and-coming singing star, for her full scholarship to the Juilliard School this fall! . . . And kudos to Paul Chartier for his winning All-State trumpet performance last Friday in Baltimore! . . . Look for wit and sparkling melody when the Lions mount their annual Gilbert & Sullivan show at Syms Auditorium. This year it's . . .

Exclamation Point

The exclamation point is used to mark a forceful comment or exclamation.

1. An exclamation point can punctuate a sentence, phrase, or interjection.

There is no alternative!
Without a trace!
My God! It's monstrous!

2. The exclamation point may replace the question mark when an ironic, angry, or emphatic tone is more important than the actual question.

Aren't you finished yet!

Do you realize what you've done!

Why me!

Occasionally it is used *with* the question mark to indicate a very forceful question.

How much did you say?!

You did what!?

3. The exclamation point falls within brackets, dashes, parentheses, and quotation marks when it punctuates only the enclosed material. It is placed outside them when it punctuates the entire sentence.

All of this proves—at long last!—that we were right from the start.

Somehow the dog got the gate open (for the third time!) and ran into the street.

He sprang to his feet and shouted “Point of order!”

At this rate the national anthem will soon be replaced by “You Are My Sunshine”!

4. If an exclamation point falls where a comma could also go, the comma is dropped.

“Absolutely not!” he snapped.

They wouldn't dare! she told herself over and over.

If the exclamation point is part of a title, it may be followed by a comma. If the title falls at the end of a sentence, no period follows it.

Hello Dolly!, which opened in 1964, would become one of the ten longest-running shows in Broadway history.

His favorite management book is still *Up the Organization!*

Hyphen

Hyphens have a variety of uses, the most significant of which is to join the elements of compound nouns and modifiers.

1. Hyphens are used to link elements in compound words. (For more on compound words, see the section beginning on page 129.)

secretary-treasurer

cost-effective

fund-raiser

spin-off

2. In some words, a hyphen separates a prefix, suffix, or medial element from the rest of the word. Consult a dictionary in doubtful cases. (For details on using a hyphen with a prefix or a suffix, see the section beginning on page 146.)

anti-inflation
 umbrella-like
 jack-o'-lantern

3. In typed and keyboarded material, a hyphen is generally used between numbers and dates with the meaning “(up) to and including.” In typeset material it is replaced by an en dash. (For details on the en dash, see paragraph 13 on page 37.)

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 the years 1995–97

4. A hyphen marks an end-of-line division of a word.

In 1975 smallpox, formerly a great scourge, was declared totally eradicated by the World Health Organization.

5. A hyphen divides letters or syllables to give the effect of stuttering, sobbing, or halting speech.

“S-s-sammy, it’s my t-toy!”

6. Hyphens indicate a word spelled out letter by letter.

l-i-a-i-s-o-n

7. Hyphens are sometimes used to produce inflected forms of verbs made of individually pronounced letters or to add an -er ending to an abbreviation. However, apostrophes are more commonly used for

these purposes. (For details on these uses of the apostrophe, see paragraph 6 on page 4.)

DH-ing for the White Sox
or DH'ing for the White Sox
a dedicated UFO-er
or a dedicated UFO'er

Parentheses

Parentheses generally enclose material that is inserted into a main statement but is not intended to be an essential part of it. For some of the cases described below, commas or dashes are frequently used instead. (For examples, see paragraph 16 on page 19 and paragraph 3 on page 33.) Parentheses are particularly used when the inserted material is only incidental. Unlike commas and dashes, an opening parenthesis is always followed by a closing one. Because parentheses are almost always used in pairs, and their shapes indicate their relative functions, they often clarify a sentence's structure better than commas or dashes.

Parenthetical Elements

1. Parentheses enclose phrases and clauses that provide examples, explanations, or supplementary facts or numerical data.

Nominations for principal officers (president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary) were heard and approved.

Four computers (all outdated models) will be replaced.

Although we liked the restaurant (their Italian food was the best), we seldom had time for the long trip into the city.

First-quarter sales figures were good (up 8%), but total revenues showed a slight decline (down 1%).

2. Parentheses sometimes enclose phrases and clauses introduced by expressions such as *namely*, *that is*, *e.g.*, and *i.e.*, particularly where parentheses would clarify the sentence's structure better than commas. (For more details, see paragraph 17 on page 19.)

In writing to the manufacturer, be as specific as possible (*i.e.*, list the defective parts, describe the malfunction, and identify the store where the unit was purchased), but also as concise.

3. Parentheses enclose definitions or translations in the main part of a sentence.

The company announced plans to sell off its housewares (small-appliances) business.

The *grand monde* (literally, "great world") of prewar Parisian society consisted largely of titled aristocracy.

4. Parentheses enclose abbreviations that follow their spelled-out forms, or spelled-out forms that follow abbreviations.

She cited a study by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

They attended last year's convention of the ABA (American Booksellers Association).

5. Parentheses often enclose cross-references and bibliographic references.

Specialized services are also available (see list of stores at end of brochure).

The diagram (Fig. 3) illustrates the action of the pump.

Subsequent studies (Braxton 1990; Roh and Weinglass 1993) have confirmed these findings.

6. Parentheses enclose numerals that confirm a spelled-out number in a business or legal context.

Delivery will be made in thirty (30) days.

The fee is Four Thousand Dollars (\$4,000), payable to UNCO, Inc.

7. Parentheses enclose the name of a state that is inserted into a proper name for identification.

the Kalispell (Mont.) Regional Hospital
the *Sacramento* (Calif.) *Bee*

8. Parentheses may be used to enclose personal asides.

Claims were made of its proven efficacy
(some of us were skeptical).

or

Claims were made of its proven efficacy.
(Some of us were skeptical.)

9. Parentheses are used to enclose quotations that illustrate or support a statement made in the main text.

After he had a few brushes with the police,
his stepfather had him sent to jail as an
incorrigible ("It will do him good").

Other Uses

10. Parentheses enclose unpunctuated numbers or letters indicating individual elements or items in a series within a sentence.

Sentences can be classified as (1) simple,
(2) multiple or compound, and (3) complex.

11. Parentheses indicate alternative terms.

Please sign and return the enclosed form(s).

12. Parentheses may be used to indicate losses in accounting.

Operating Profits (in millions)	
Cosmetics	26.2
Food products	47.7
Food services	54.3
Transportation	(17.7)
Sporting goods	(11.2)
<hr/>	
Total	99.3

With Other Punctuation

13. When an independent sentence is enclosed in parentheses, its first word is capitalized and a period (or other closing punctuation) is placed inside the parentheses.

The discussion was held in the boardroom.
(The results are still confidential.)

A parenthetical expression that occurs within a sentence—even if it could stand alone as a separate sentence—does not end with a period but may end with an exclamation point, a question mark, or quotation marks.

Although several trade organizations opposed the legislation (there were at least three paid lobbyists working on Capitol Hill), the bill passed easily.

The conference was held in Portland (Me., not Ore.).

After waiting in line for an hour (why do we do these things?), we finally left.

A parenthetical expression within a sentence does not require capitalization unless it is a quoted sentence.

He was totally confused ("What can we do?")
and refused to see anyone.

14. If a parenthetical expression within a sentence is composed of two independent clauses, a semicolon rather than a period usually separates them. Independent sentences enclosed together in parentheses employ normal sentence capitalization and punctuation.

We visited several showrooms, looked at the prices (it wasn't a pleasant experience; prices in this area have not gone down), and asked all the questions we could think of.

We visited several showrooms and looked at the prices. (It wasn't a pleasant experience. Prices in this area have not gone down.)

Entire paragraphs are rarely enclosed in parentheses; instead, paragraphs of incidental material often appear as footnotes or endnotes.

15. No punctuation (other than a period after an abbreviation) is placed immediately before an opening parenthesis within a sentence; if punctuation is required, it follows the final parenthesis.

I'll get back to you tomorrow (Friday), when
I have more details.

Tickets cost \$14 in advance (\$12 for seniors); the price at the door is \$18.

The relevant figures are shown below (in millions of dollars):

16. Parentheses sometimes appear within parentheses when no confusion would result; alternatively, the inner parentheses are replaced with brackets.

Checks must be drawn in U.S. dollars. (*Please note:* We cannot accept checks drawn on Canadian banks for amounts less than four U.S. dollars (\$4.00). The same regulation applies to Canadian money orders.)

17. Dashes and parentheses may be used together to set off parenthetical material. (For details, see paragraph 12 on page 37.)

The orchestra is spirited, and the cast—an expert and enthusiastic crew of Savoyards (some of them British imports)—comes through famously.

Period

Periods almost always serve to mark the end of a sentence or abbreviation.

1. A period ends a sentence or a sentence fragment that is neither a question nor an exclamation.

From the Format menu, choose Style.

Robert decided to bring champagne.
Unlikely. In fact, inconceivable.

Only one period ends a sentence.

The jellied gasoline was traced to the Trenton-based Quality Products, Inc.

Miss Toklas states categorically that "This is the best way to cook frogs' legs."

2. A period punctuates some abbreviations. No space follows an internal period within an abbreviation. (For details on punctuating abbreviations, see the section beginning on page 153.)

Assn.	e.g.
Dr.	Ph.D.
etc.	p.m.

3. Periods are used with a person's initials, each followed by a space. (Newspaper style omits the space.) If the initials replace the name, they are unspaced and may also be written without periods.

J. B. S. Haldane
L.B.J. or LBJ

4. A period follows numerals and letters when they are used without parentheses in outlines and vertical lists.

I. Objectives

A. Economy

1. Low initial cost

2. Low maintenance cost

B. Ease of operation

Required skills are:

1. Shorthand
2. Typing
3. Transcription

5. A period is placed within quotation marks, even when it did not punctuate the original quoted material. (In British practice, the period goes outside the quotation marks whenever it does not belong to the original quoted material.)

The founder was known to his employees as “the old man.”

“I said I wanted to fire him,” Henry went on, “but she said, ‘I don’t think you have the contractual privilege to do that.’”

6. When brackets or parentheses enclose an independent sentence, the period is placed inside them. When brackets or parentheses enclose a sentence that is part of a larger sentence, the period for the enclosed sentence is omitted.

Arturo finally arrived on the 23rd with the terrible news that Katrina had been detained by the police. [This later proved to be false; see letter 255.]

I took a good look at her (she was standing quite close to me).

Question Mark

The question mark always indicates a question or doubt.

1. A question mark ends a direct question.

What went wrong?

"When do they arrive?" she asked.

A question mark follows a period only when the period punctuates an abbreviation. No period follows a question mark.

Is he even an M.D.?

"Will you arrive by 10 p.m.?"

A local professor would be giving a paper with the title "Economic Stagnation or Equilibrium?"

2. Polite requests that are worded as questions usually take periods, because they are not really questions. Conversely, a sentence that is intended as a question but whose word order is that of a statement is punctuated with a question mark.

Could you please send the necessary forms.
They flew in yesterday?

3. The question mark ends a question that forms part of a sentence. An indirect question is not followed by a question mark.

What was her motive? you may be asking.

I naturally wondered, Will it really work?

I naturally wondered whether it would really work.

He asked when the report was due.

4. The question mark punctuates each element of a series of questions that share a

single beginning and are neither numbered nor lettered. When the series is numbered or lettered, only one question mark is generally used.

Can you give us a reasonable forecast? Back up your predictions? Compare them with last year's earnings?

Can you (1) give us a reasonable forecast, (2) back up your predictions, and (3) compare them with last year's earnings?

5. The question mark indicates uncertainty about a fact or the accuracy of a transcription.

Homer, Greek epic poet (9th–8th? cent. B.C.)

He would have it that Farjeon[?] is the onlie man for us.

6. The question mark is placed inside brackets, dashes, parentheses, or quotation marks when it punctuates only the material enclosed by them and not the sentence as a whole. It is placed outside them when it punctuates the entire sentence.

I took a vacation in 1992 (was it really that long ago?), but I haven't had time for one since.

What did Andrew mean when he called the project "a fiasco from the start"?

Williams then asks, "Do you realize the extent of the problem [the housing shortage]?"

Quotation Marks

The following paragraphs describe the use of quotation marks to enclose quoted matter in regular text, and for other, less frequent uses. For the use of quotation marks to enclose titles, see paragraph 70 on page 104.

Basic Uses

1. Quotation marks enclose direct quotations but not indirect quotations or paraphrases.

Dr. Mee added, "We'd be grateful for anything you could do."

"We just got the lab results," he crowed, "and the blood types match!"

"I'm leaving," she whispered. "This meeting could go on forever."

"Mom, we *tried* that already!" they whined in unison.

"Sssh!" she hissed.

She said she was leaving.

Algren once said something like, Don't ever play poker with anyone named Doc, and never eat at a diner called Mom's.

2. Quotation marks enclose fragments of quoted matter.

The agreement makes it clear that he "will be paid only upon receipt of an acceptable manuscript."

As late as 1754, documents refer to him as "yeoman" and "husbandman."

3. Quotation marks enclose words or phrases borrowed from others, and words of obvious informality introduced into formal writing. Words introduced as specialized terminology are sometimes enclosed in quotation marks but more often italicized.

Be sure to send a copy of your résumé—or as some folks would say, your “biodata summary.”

They were afraid the patient had “stroked out”—had had a cerebrovascular accident.

New Hampshire’s only “green” B&B referred to as “closed” or “privately held” corporations

but more frequently

referred to as *closed* or *privately held* corporations

4. Quotation marks are sometimes used to enclose words referred to as words. Italics are also frequently used for this purpose.

changed every “he” to “she”

or

changed every *he* to *she*

5. Quotation marks may enclose representations of sounds, though these are also frequently italicized.

If it sounds like “quank, quank” [*or like quank, quank*], it may be the green treefrog.

6. Quotation marks often enclose short sentences that fall within longer sentences,

especially when the shorter sentence is meant to suggest spoken dialogue. Mottoes and maxims, unspoken or imaginary dialogue, and sentences referred to as sentences may all be treated in this way.

On the gate was the inscription “Arbeit macht frei” [or *Arbeit macht frei*]—“Work will make you free.”

The fact was, the poor kid didn’t know “C’mere” from “Sic ’em.”

In effect, the voters were saying “You blew it, and you don’t get another chance.”

Their reaction could only be described as “Kill the messenger.”

She never got used to their “That’s the way it goes” attitude.

or

She never got used to their that’s-the-way-it-goes attitude.

Quotation marks are often omitted in sentences of this kind when the structure is clear without them. (For the use of commas in such sentences, see paragraphs 29–30 on pages 24–26.)

The first rule is, When in doubt, spell it out.

7. Direct questions are enclosed in quotation marks when they represent quoted dialogue, but usually not otherwise.

She asked, “What went wrong?”

The question is, What went wrong?

We couldn’t help wondering, Where’s the plan?

or

We couldn't help wondering, "Where's the plan?"

8. Quotation marks enclose translations of foreign or borrowed terms.

This is followed by the *Dies Irae* ("Day of Wrath"), a climactic movement in many settings of the *Requiem*.

The term comes from the Latin *sesquipedalis*, meaning "a foot and a half long."

They also frequently enclose definitions.

Concupiscent simply means "lustful."

or

Concupiscent simply means lustful.

9. Quotation marks sometimes enclose letters referred to as letters.

The letter "m" is wider than the letter "i."

Put an "x" in the right spot.

However, such letters are more frequently italicized (or underlined), or left undifferentiated from the surrounding text where no confusion would result.

How many *e*'s are in her name?

a V-shaped blade

He was happy to get a B in the course.

With Longer Quotations

10. Quotation marks are not used with longer passages of prose or poetry that are

indented as separate paragraphs, called *block quotations* or *extracts*. For a thorough discussion of quotations, see Chapter 6.

11. Quotation marks enclose lines of poetry run in with the text. A spaced slash separates the lines. (For details on poetry set as an extract, see the section beginning on page 223.)

When Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote that
“Nothing is so beautiful as spring— / When
weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and
lush,” he probably had my yard in mind.

12. Quotation marks are not used with epigraphs. However, they are generally used with advertising blurbs. (For details on epigraphs and blurbs, see the section beginning on page 219.)

The whole of science is nothing more than
a refinement of everyday thinking.

—Albert Einstein

“A brutal irony, a slam-bang humor and a
style of writing as balefully direct as a death
sentence.”—*Time*

With Other Punctuation

13. When a period or comma follows text enclosed in quotation marks, it is placed within the quotation marks, even if the original language quoted was not followed by a period or comma.

He smiled and said, "I'm happy for you."

But perhaps Pound's most perfect poem was "The Return."

The cameras were described as "water-proof," but "moisture-resistant" would have been a better description.

In British usage, the period or comma goes outside the quoted matter whenever the original text did not include the punctuation.

14. When a colon or semicolon follows text enclosed in quotation marks, the colon or semicolon is placed outside the quotation marks.

But they all chimed in on "O Sole Mio": raw adolescents, stately matrons, decrepit old pensioners, their voices soaring in passion together.

She spoke of her "little cottage in the country"; she might better have called it a mansion.

15. The dash, question mark, and exclamation point are placed inside quotation marks when they punctuate the quoted matter only, but outside the quotation marks when they punctuate the whole sentence.

"I can't see how—" he started to say.

He thought he knew where he was going—he remembered her saying, "Take two lefts,

then stay to the right"—but the streets didn't look familiar.

He asked, "When did they leave?"

What is the meaning of "the open door"?

She collapsed in her seat with a stunned "Good God!"

Save us from his "mercy"!

Single Quotation Marks

16. Single quotation marks replace double quotation marks when the quoted material occurs within quoted material.

The witness said, "I distinctly heard him say, 'Don't be late,' and then I heard the door close."

"We'd like to close tonight with that great Harold Arlen wee-hours standard, 'One for My Baby.'"

This analysis is indebted to Del Banco's "Elizabeth Bishop's 'Insomnia': An Inverted View."

When both single and double quotation marks occur at the end of a sentence, the period falls within both sets of marks.

The witness said, "I distinctly heard him say, 'Don't be late.'"

British usage often reverses American usage, enclosing quoted material in single quotation marks, and enclosing quotations within quotations in double quotation marks. In British usage, commas and

periods following quoted material go inside only those quotation marks that enclose material that originally included the period or comma.

17. A quotation within a quotation within a quotation is usually enclosed in double quotation marks. (Such constructions are usually avoided by rewriting.)

As the *Post* reported it, "Van Houten's voice can be clearly heard saying, 'She said "You wouldn't dare" and I said "I just did."'"

or

The *Post* reported that Van Houten's voice was clearly heard saying, "She said 'You wouldn't dare' and I said 'I just did.'"

Semicolon

The semicolon may be used much like the comma, period, or colon, depending on the context. Like a comma, it may separate elements in a series. Like a period or colon, it frequently marks the end of a complete clause, and like a colon it signals that the remainder of the sentence is closely related to the first part. However, in each case the semicolon is normally used in a distinctive way. It serves as a higher-level comma; it connects clauses, as a period does not; and it does not imply any following exemplification, amplification, or description, as a colon generally does.

Between Clauses

1. A semicolon separates related independent clauses joined without a coordinating conjunction.

Cream the shortening and sugar; add the eggs and beat well.

The river rose and overflowed its banks; roads became flooded and impassable; freshly plowed fields disappeared from sight.

2. A semicolon often replaces a comma between two clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction if the sentence might otherwise be confusing—for example, because of particularly long clauses or the presence of other commas.

In a society that seeks to promote social goals, government will play a powerful role; and taxation, once simply a means of raising money, becomes, in addition, a way of furthering those goals.

3. A semicolon joins two clauses when the second includes a conjunctive adverb such as *accordingly*, *however*, *indeed*, or *thus*, or a phrase that acts like a conjunctive adverb such as *in that case*, *as a result*, or *on the other hand*.

Most people are covered by insurance of some kind; indeed, many don't even see their medical bills.

It won't be easy to sort out the facts; a decision must be made, however.

The case could take years to work its way through the courts; as a result, many plaintiffs will accept settlements.

When *so* and *yet* are treated as conjunctive adverbs, they are often preceded by a semicolon and followed by a comma. When treated as coordinating conjunctions, as they usually are, they are generally only preceded by a comma.

The new recruits were bright, diligent, and even enthusiastic; yet[,] the same problems persisted.

His grades improved sharply, yet the high honor roll still eluded him.

4. A semicolon may join two statements when the second clause is elliptical, omitting essential words that are supplied by the first. In short sentences, a comma often replaces the semicolon.

The conference sessions, designed to allow for full discussions, were much too long; the breaks between them, much too short.

The aged Scotch was haunting, the Asiago piquant.

5. When a series of clauses are separated by semicolons and a coordinating conjunction precedes the final clause, the final semicolon is sometimes replaced with a comma.

The bars had all closed hours ago; a couple of coffee shops were open but deserted[; *or* ,] and only a few lighted upper-story windows gave evidence of other victims of insomnia.

6. A semicolon is often used before introductory expressions such as *for example*, *that is*, and *namely*, in place of a colon, comma, dash, or parenthesis. (For more details, see paragraph 17 on page 19.)

On one point only did everyone agree; namely, too much money had been spent already.

We were fairly successful on that project; that is, we made our deadlines and met our budget.

In a Series

7. A semicolon is used in place of a comma to separate phrases or items in a series when the phrases or items themselves contain commas. A comma may replace the semicolon before a conjunction that precedes the last item in a series.

The assets in question include \$22 million in land, buildings, and equipment; \$34 million in cash, investments, and accounts receivable; and \$8 million in inventory.

The votes against were: Precinct 1, 418; Precinct 2, 332; Precinct 3, 256.

The debate about the nature of syntactic variation continues to this day (Labov 1991; Dines 1991, 1993; Romaine 1995).

The Pissarro exhibition will travel to Washington, D.C.; Manchester, N.H.; Portland, Ore., and Oakland, Calif.

When the items in a series are long or are sentences themselves, they are usually separated by semicolons even if they lack internal commas.

Among the committee's recommendations were the following: more hospital beds in urban areas where there are waiting lines for elective surgery; smaller staff size in half-empty rural hospitals; and review procedures for all major purchases.

With Other Punctuation

8. A semicolon that punctuates the larger sentence is placed outside quotation marks and parentheses.

I heard the senator on yesterday's "All Things Considered"; his views on Medicare are encouraging.

She found him urbane and entertaining (if somewhat overbearing); he found her charmingly ingenuous.

Slash

The slash (also known as the *virgule*, *diagonal*, *solidus*, *oblique*, and *slant*) is most commonly used in place of a short word or a hyphen or en dash, or to separate numbers or text ele-

ments. There is generally no space on either side of the slash.

1. A slash represents the words *per* or *to* when used between units of measure or the terms of a ratio.

40,000 tons/year

29 mi/gal

price/earnings ratio

or price-earnings ratio

cost/benefit analysis

or cost-benefit analysis

a 50/50 split or a 50-50 split

20/20 vision

2. A slash separates alternatives, usually representing the words *or* or *and/or*.

alumni/ae

his/her

the *affect*/*effect* problem

or the *affect-effect* problem

3. A slash replaces the word *and* in some compound terms.

air/sea cruise or air-sea cruise

the May/June issue or the May-June issue

1996/97 or 1996-97

travel/study trip or travel-study trip

4. A slash is sometimes used to replace certain prepositions such as *at*, *versus*, and *for*.

U.C./Berkeley *or* U.C.–Berkeley
 parent/child issues *or* parent–child issues
 Vice President/Editorial
or Vice President, Editorial

5. A slash punctuates a few abbreviations.

w/o [*for* without]
 c/o [*for* care of].
 I/O [*for* input/output]
 d/b/a [*for* doing business as]
 w/w [*for* wall-to-wall]
 o/a [*for* on or about]

6. The slash separates the elements in a numerical date, and numerators and denominators in fractions.

11/29/95
 2 3/16 inches wide *or* 2 $\frac{3}{16}$ inches wide
 a 7/8-mile course *or* a $\frac{7}{8}$ -mile course

7. The slash separates lines of poetry that are run in with the text around them. A space is usually inserted before and after the slash.

Alexander Pope once observed: " 'Tis with
 our judgments as our watches, none / Go
 just alike, yet each believes his own."

2 Capitals and Italics

Beginnings. 71

Proper Nouns and Adjectives 76

Other Styling Conventions 106

Words and phrases are capitalized or italicized (underlining takes the place of italics in typed or handwritten text) to indicate that they have a special significance in particular contexts. (Quotation marks sometimes perform the same functions; see paragraphs 69–71 on pages 103–5 and the section on quotation marks beginning on page 57.)

Beginnings

1. The first word of a sentence or sentence fragment is capitalized.

They make a desert and call it peace.

So many men, so many opinions.

O times! O customs!

2. The first word of a sentence contained within parentheses is capitalized. How-

ever, a parenthetical sentence occurring inside another sentence is not capitalized unless it is a complete quoted sentence.

No one answered the telephone. (They were probably on vacation.)

The road remains almost impassable (the locals don't seem to care), and the journey is only for the intrepid.

After waiting in line for an hour (what else could we do?), we finally left.

In the primary election Evans placed third ("My campaign started late").

3. The first word of a direct quotation is capitalized. However, if the quotation is interrupted in mid-sentence, the second part does not begin with a capital.

The department manager explained, "We have no budget for new computers."

"We have no budget for new computers," explained the department manager, "but we may next year."

4. When a quotation, whether a sentence fragment or a complete sentence, is syntactically dependent on the sentence in which it occurs, the quotation does not begin with a capital.

The brochure promised a tour of "the most exotic ancient sites."

His first response was that "there is absolutely no truth to the reports."

5. The first word of a sentence within a sentence that is not a direct quotation is usually capitalized. Examples include mottoes and rules, unspoken or imaginary dialogue, sentences referred to as sentences, and direct questions. (For the use of commas and quotation marks with such sentences, see paragraphs 30–31 on pages 25–27 and paragraphs 6–7 on pages 58–60.)

You know the saying “Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.”

The first rule is, When in doubt, spell it out. One ballot proposition sought to enforce the sentencing rule of “Three strikes and you’re out.”

My question is, When can we go?

6. The first word of a line of poetry is traditionally capitalized. However, in the poetry of this century line beginnings are often lowercased. The poem’s original capitalization is always reproduced.

Death is the mother of beauty, mystical,
Within whose burning bosom we devise
Our earthly mothers waiting, sleeplessly.

—Wallace Stevens

If tributes cannot
be implicit,
give me diatribes and the fragrance of
iodine,
the cork oak acorn grown in Spain . . .

—Marianne Moore

7. The first word following a colon is lowercased when it begins a list and usually lowercased when it begins a complete sentence. However, when the sentence introduced is lengthy and distinctly separate from the preceding clause, it is often capitalized.

In the early morning they broadcast an urgent call for three necessities: bandages, antibiotics, and blood.

The advantage of this system is clear: it's inexpensive.

The situation is critical: This company cannot hope to recoup the fourth-quarter losses that were sustained in five operating divisions.

8. If a colon introduces a series of sentences, the first word of each sentence is capitalized.

Consider the steps we have taken: A subcommittee has been formed to evaluate past performance. New sources of revenue are being explored. Several candidates have been interviewed for the new post of executive director.

9. The first words of items that form complete sentences in run-in lists are usually capitalized, as are the first words of items in vertical lists. However, numbered phrases within a sentence are lowercased.

For details, see the section beginning on page 194.

10. The first word in an outline heading is capitalized.

- I. Editorial tasks
- II. Production responsibilities
 - A. Cost estimates
 - B. Bids

11. In minutes and legislation, the introductory words *Whereas* and *Resolved* are capitalized (and *Resolved* is also italicized). The word immediately following is also capitalized.

Whereas, Substantial benefits . . .
Resolved, That . . .

12. The first word and certain other words of the salutation of a letter and the first word of a complimentary close are capitalized.

Dear Sir or Madam:
 Ladies and Gentlemen:
 To whom it may concern:
 Sincerely yours,
 Very truly yours,

13. The first word and each subsequent major word following a SUBJECT or TO heading in a memorandum are capitalized.

SUBJECT: Pension Plans

TO: All Department Heads and Editors

Proper Nouns and Adjectives

The following paragraphs describe the ways in which a broad range of proper nouns and adjectives are styled. Capitals are always employed, sometimes in conjunction with italics or quotation marks.

Abbreviations

1. Abbreviated forms of proper nouns and adjectives are capitalized, just as the spelled-out forms would be. (For details on capitalizing abbreviations, see the section beginning on page 155.)

Jan. [*for* January]

NATO [*for* North Atlantic Treaty Organization]

Abstractions and Personifications

2. Abstract concepts and qualities are sometimes capitalized when the concept or quality is being personified. If the term is simply used in conjunction with other words that allude to human characteristics or qualities, it is not capitalized.

as Autumn paints each leaf in fiery colors
the statue of Justice with her scales
hoping that fate would lend a hand

Academic Degrees

3. The names of academic degrees are capitalized when they follow a person's name. The names of specific degrees used without a person's name are usually lowercased. More general names for degrees are lowercased.

Lawton I. Byrne, Doctor of Laws
earned his associate in science degree
or earned his Associate in Science degree
completed course work for his doctorate
working for a master's degree

Abbreviations for academic degrees are always capitalized. (For details, see paragraphs 11–12 on pages 163–64.)

Susan L. Wycliff, M.S.W.
received her Ph.D. in clinical psychology

Animals and Plants

4. The common names of animals and plants are not capitalized unless they contain a proper noun, in which case the proper noun is usually capitalized and any name element preceding (but not following) it is often capitalized. When in doubt, consult a dictionary. (For scientific names, see the section on pages 99–100.)

the springer spaniel	Queen Anne's lace
Holstein cows	black-eyed Susan
California condor	mayflower
a Great Dane	jack-in-the-pulpit

Awards and Prizes

5. Names of awards and prizes are capitalized. Words and phrases that are not actually part of the award's name are lowercased.

Academy Award
 Emmy
 Rhodes Scholarship
 Rhodes scholar
 Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist
 Nobel Prize winner
 Nobel Prize in medicine
but
 Nobel Peace Prize

Derivatives of Proper Names

6. Derivatives of proper names are capitalized when used in their primary sense. If the derived term has taken on a specialized meaning, it is often lowercased. Consult a dictionary when in doubt.

Roman sculpture
 Viennese culture
 Victorian prudery
 a Britishism
 Hodgkin's disease

chinaware
 pasteurized milk
 french fries
but
 American cheese
 Dutch door

Geographical and Topographical References

7. Terms that identify divisions of the earth's surface and distinct areas, regions, places, or districts are capitalized, as are derivative nouns and adjectives.

the Pacific Rim	Burgundy
the Great Lakes	Burgundians
Arnhem Land	the Highlands
the Golan Heights	Highland attitudes

8. Popular names of localities are capitalized.

Little Italy	the Sunbelt
the Left Bank	the Big Easy

9. Compass points are capitalized when they refer to a geographical region or form part of a place-name or street name. They are lowercased when they refer to a simple direction.

the Southwest	North Pole
West Coast	north of the Rio Grande

North Atlantic	born in the East
East Pleasant Street	driving east on I-90

10. Nouns and adjectives that are derived from compass points and that designate or refer to a specific geographical region are usually capitalized.

Southern hospitality
 Easterners
 Southwestern recipes
 Northern Europeans

11. Words designating global, national, regional, and local political divisions are capitalized when they are essential elements of specific names. They are usually lowercased when they precede a proper name or are not part of a specific name.

the Roman Empire
 British Commonwealth nations
 New York State
 the state of New York
 the Third Precinct
 voters in three precincts

In legal documents, such words are often capitalized regardless of position.

the State of New York

12. Generic geographical terms (such as *lake*, *mountain*, *river*, or *valley*) are capitalized if they are part of a proper name.

Lake Tanganyika	Cape of Good Hope
Great Salt Lake	Massachusetts Bay
Atlas Mountains	Cayman Islands
Mount Everest	Yosemite Valley

When a place-name is subsequently referred to by its generic term, the term is lowercased.

They went water-skiing on Lake Michigan that afternoon; the lake was calm and the weather beautiful.

When *the* precedes the generic term, the term is lowercased.

the river Nile

13. Generic geographical terms preceding two or more names are usually capitalized.

Lakes Huron and Erie

Mounts McKinley, Whitney, and Shasta

14. Generic geographical terms that are not used as part of a single proper name are not capitalized. These include plural terms that follow two or more proper names, and terms that are used descriptively or alone.

the Indian and South Pacific oceans

the Mississippi and Missouri rivers

the Pacific coast of Mexico

Caribbean islands

the river delta

15. The names of streets, monuments, parks, landmarks, well-known buildings, and other public places are capitalized. However, common terms that are part of these names (such as *street*, *park*, or *bridge*) are lowercased when they occur after multiple names or are used alone.

State Street	Golden Gate Bridge
the Lincoln	Empire State
Memorial	Building
Statue of Liberty	Beverly Hills Hotel
the Pyramids	back to the hotel
Grant Park	Main and Oak streets

Well-known shortened forms of place-names are capitalized.

the Hill [*for* Capitol Hill]
the Channel [*for* English Channel]
the Street [*for* Wall Street]

Governmental, Judicial, and Political Bodies

16. Full names of legislative, deliberative, executive, and administrative bodies are capitalized, as are easily recognizable short forms of these names. However, nonspecific noun and adjective references to them are usually lowercased.

United States Congress
Congress
the House

the Fed
congressional hearings
a federal agency

When words such as *department*, *committee*, or *agency* are used in place of a full name, they are most often capitalized when the department or agency is referring to itself, but otherwise usually lowercased.

This Department welcomes constructive criticism . . .

The department claimed to welcome such criticism . . .

When such a word is used in the plural to describe more than one specific body, it is usually capitalized when it precedes the names and lowercased when it follows them.

involving the Departments of State and Justice
a briefing from the State and Justice departments

17. Full names of high courts are capitalized. Short forms of such names are often capitalized in legal documents but lowercased otherwise.

. . . in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit

International Court of Justice

The court of appeals [*or* Court of Appeals] held . . .

the Virginia Supreme Court

a federal district court

the state supreme court

However, both the full and short names of the U.S. Supreme Court are capitalized.

the Supreme Court of the United States

the Supreme Court

the Court

18. Names of city and county courts are usually lowercased.

the Springfield municipal court

small-claims court

the county court

juvenile court

19. The noun *court*, when it applies to a specific judge or presiding officer, is capitalized in legal documents.

It is the opinion of this Court that . . .

The Court found that . . .

20. The terms *federal* and *national* are capitalized only when they are essential elements of a name or title. (*Federal* is also capitalized when it refers to a historical architectural style, to members of the original Federalist party, or to adherents of the Union in the Civil War.)

Federal Election Commission

a federal commission

Federalist principles
National Security Council
national security

21. The word *administration* is sometimes capitalized when it refers to the administration of a specific U.S. president, but is more commonly lowercased. Otherwise, it is lowercased except when it is a part of the official name of a government agency.

the Reagan administration
 or the Reagan Administration
the administration *or* the Administration
from one administration to the next
the Social Security Administration

22. Names of political organizations and their adherents are capitalized, but the word *party* is often lowercased.

the Democratic National Committee
the Republican platform
the Christian Coalition
most Republicans
the Democratic party
 or the Democratic Party
party politics

Names of less-distinct political groupings are usually lowercased, as are their derivative forms.

the right wing
the liberals

the conservative agenda
but often
 the Left
 the Right

23. Terms describing political and economic philosophies are usually lowercased; if derived from proper names, they are usually capitalized. Consult a dictionary for doubtful cases.

authoritarianism	nationalism
democracy	social Darwinist
fascism <i>or</i> Fascism	Marxist

Historical Periods and Events

24. The names of some historical and cultural periods and movements are capitalized. When in doubt, consult a dictionary or encyclopedia.

Bronze Age	Third Reich
Middle Ages	the atomic age
Prohibition	Victorian era
the Renaissance	age of Pericles
New Deal	the baby boom
Fifth Republic	

25. Century and decade designations are normally lowercased.

the nineteenth century
 the twenties
 the turn of the century
 a 12th-century manuscript

but

Gay Nineties

Roaring Twenties

26. The names of conferences, councils, expositions, and specific sporting, cultural, and historical events are capitalized.

Fourth World Conference on Women

Council of Trent

New York World's Fair

Super Bowl

Cannes Film Festival

Miss America Contest

San Francisco Earthquake

Johnstown Flood

27. Full names of specific treaties, laws, and acts are capitalized.

Treaty of Versailles

the Nineteenth Amendment

the Bill of Rights

Clean Air Act of 1990

but

gun-control laws

an equal-rights amendment

28. The words *war*, *revolution*, and *battle* are capitalized when they are part of a full name. Official names of actions are capitalized. Descriptive terms such as *assault* and *siege* are usually lowercased even

when used in conjunction with a place-name.

War of the Roses
World War II
the French Revolution
Battle of Gettysburg
Operation Desert Storm
between the two world wars
the American and French revolutions
the siege of Leningrad
Washington's winter campaign

Hyphenated Compounds

29. The second (third, etc.) element of a hyphenated compound is generally capitalized only if it is itself a proper noun or adjective. (For hyphenated titles, see paragraph 65 on pages 102–3.)

Arab-Israeli negotiations
or Arab–Israeli negotiations
East-West trade agreements
or East–West trade agreements
French-speaking peoples
Forty-second street
twentieth-century architecture

30. When joined to a proper noun or adjective, common prefixes (such as *pre-* or *anti-*) are usually lowercased, but geographical and ethnic combining forms (such as *Anglo-* or *Sino-*) are capitalized.

(For details, see paragraphs 45 and 52 on pages 147 and 149.)

anti-Soviet forces

Sino-Japanese relations

Legal Material

31. The names of the plaintiff and defendant in legal case titles are italicized. The *v.* (for *versus*) may be roman or italic. Cases that do not involve two opposing parties are also italicized. When the party involved rather than the case itself is being discussed, the reference is not italicized. In running text, a case name involving two opposing parties may be shortened.

Jones v. Massachusetts

Smith et al. v. Jones

In re Jones

She covered the Jones trial for the newspaper.

The judge based his ruling on a precedent set in the *Jones* decision.

Medical Terms

32. Proper names that are elements in terms designating diseases, symptoms, syndromes, and tests are capitalized. Common nouns are lowercased; however, abbreviations of such nouns are all-capitalized.

Alzheimer's disease	black lung disease
Tourette's syndrome	mumps
Schick test	AIDS

33. Scientific names of disease-causing organisms follow the rules discussed in paragraph 58 on page 99. The names of diseases or conditions derived from scientific names of organisms are lowercased and not italicized.

a neurotoxin produced by *Clostridium botulinum*
nearly died of botulism

34. Generic names of drugs are lowercased; trade names should be capitalized.

retinoic acid
Retin-A

Military Terms

35. The full titles of branches of the U.S. armed forces are capitalized, as are standard short forms.

U.S. Marine Corps	the Marines
the Marine Corps	the Corps

Those of other countries are capitalized when the precise title is used; otherwise they are usually lowercased. The plurals of *army*, *navy*, *air force*, and *coast guard* are lowercased.

Royal Air Force
the Guatemalan army
the tiny armies of both countries

The modifiers *army*, *navy*, *marine*, *coast guard*, and *air force* are usually lowercased; *naval* is lowercased unless it is part of an official name. The noun *marine* is usually lowercased.

an army helicopter
the first naval engagement
a career navy man
the Naval Reserves
the marine barracks
a former marine

Full or shortened names of specific units of a branch are usually capitalized.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
the Third Army
the Eighty-second [*or* 82nd] Airborne
the U.S. Special Forces, or Green Berets
... of the First Battalion. The battalion commander ...

36. Military ranks are capitalized when they precede the names of their holders, or replace the name in direct address. Otherwise they are lowercased.

Major General Smedley Butler
Please be seated, Admiral.
The major arrived precisely on time.

37. The names of decorations, citations, and medals are capitalized.

Medal of Honor
Purple Heart

Numerical Designations

38. A noun introducing a reference number is usually capitalized. The abbreviation *No.* is usually omitted.

Order 704	Form 2E
Flight 409	Policy 118-4Y

39. Nouns used with numbers or letters to refer to major reference entities or actual captions in books or periodicals are usually capitalized. Nouns that designate minor reference entities and do not appear in captions are lowercased.

Book II	Figure D.4
Volume 5	page 101
Chapter 2	line 8
Table 3	paragraph 6.1
Example 16.2	question 21

Organizations

40. Names of organizations, corporations, and institutions, and terms derived from those names to designate their members, are capitalized.

the League of Women Voters
General Motors Corporation

the Smithsonian Institution
the University of the South
the Rotary Club
all Rotarians

Common nouns used descriptively or occurring after the names of two or more organizations are lowercased.

enrolled at the university
Yale and Harvard universities
but
the Universities of Utah and Nevada

41. Words such as *agency*, *department*, *division*, *group*, or *office* that designate corporate and organizational units are capitalized only when used as part of a specific proper name. (For governmental units, see paragraph 16 on pages 82–83.)

head of the Sales Division of K2 Outfitters
a memo to the sales divisions of both companies

42. Nicknames for organizations are capitalized.

the Big Six accounting firms
referred to IBM as Big Blue
trading on the Big Board

People

43. The names and initials of persons are capitalized. If a name is hyphenated, both

elements are capitalized. Particles forming the initial elements of surnames (such as *de*, *della*, *der*, *du*, *l'*, *la*, *le*, *ten*, *ter*, *van*, and *von*) may or may not be capitalized, depending on the practice of the family or individual. However, the particle is always capitalized at the beginning of a sentence. The prefixes *Mac*, *Mc*, and *O'* are always capitalized.

Cecil Day-Lewis

Agnes de Mille

Cecil B. DeMille

Walter de la Mare

Mark deW. Howe

Martin Van Buren

... of van Gogh's life. Van Gogh's technique
is ...

44. A nickname or epithet that either is added to or replaces the name of a person or thing is capitalized.

Babe Ruth the Sun King

Stonewall Jackson Deep Throat

Billy the Kid Big Mama Thornton

A nickname or epithet placed between a person's first and last name is enclosed in quotation marks or parentheses or both. If it precedes the first name, it is sometimes enclosed in quotation marks but more often not.

Charlie "Bird" [or ("Bird") or (Bird)] Parker
Mother Maybelle Carter

45. Words of family relationship preceding or used in place of a person's name are capitalized; otherwise, they are lowercased.

Uncle Fred	her uncle's book
Mother's birthday	my mother's legacy

46. Words designating languages, nationalities, peoples, races, religious groups, and tribes are capitalized. Designations based on color are usually lowercased.

Spanish
Muslims
Spaniards
Assiniboin
Chinese
both blacks and whites
Asians
white, black, and Hispanic jurors

47. Corporate, professional, and governmental titles are capitalized when they immediately precede a person's name, unless the name is being used as an appositive.

President John Tyler
Professor Wendy Doniger of the University of Chicago
Senator William Fulbright of Arkansas
Arkansas's late former senator, William Fulbright

48. When corporate or governmental titles are used as part of a descriptive phrase to

identify a person rather than as part of the name itself, the title is lowercased.

Marcia Ramirez, president of Logex Corp.
the president of Logex Corp., Marcia Ramirez

but

Logex Corp.'s prospects for the coming year
were outlined by President Marcia Ramirez.

49. High governmental titles may be capitalized when used in place of individuals' names. In minutes and official records of proceedings, corporate or organizational titles are capitalized when used in place of individuals' names.

The Secretary of State objected.

The Judge will respond to questions in her chambers.

The Treasurer then stated his misgivings about the project.

but

The report reached the senator's desk yesterday.

The judge's rulings were widely criticized.

The co-op's treasurer, it turned out, had twice been convicted of embezzlement.

50. The word *president* may be capitalized whenever it refers to the U.S. presidency, but more commonly is capitalized only when it refers to a specific U.S. president.

It is the duty of the president [*or* President]
to submit a budget to Congress.

The President's budget, due out on Wednesday, is being eagerly awaited.

51. Titles are capitalized when they are used in direct address.

Is it very contagious, Doctor?

You may call your next witness, Counselor.

Religious Terms

52. Words designating the supreme being are capitalized. Plural forms such as *gods*, *goddesses*, and *deities* are not.

Allah

the Almighty

Brahma

the Trinity

Jehovah

in the eyes of God

Yahweh

the angry gods

53. Personal pronouns referring to the supreme being are often capitalized, especially in religious writing. Relative pronouns (such as *who*, *whom*, and *whose*) usually are not.

God gave His [*or his*] Son

Allah, whose Prophet, Muhammad . . .

54. Traditional designations of apostles, prophets, and saints are capitalized.

the Madonna

the Twelve

the Prophet

St. John of the Cross

Moses the Lawgiver
John the Baptist

55. Names of religions, denominations, creeds and confessions, and religious orders are capitalized, as are adjectives and nouns derived from these names.

Judaism	Eastern Orthodox
Church of England	Islamic
Apostles' Creed	Jesuit teachers
Society of Jesus	a Buddhist

Full names of specific places of worship are capitalized, but terms such as *church*, *synagogue*, and *mosque* are lowercased when used alone. The word *church* is sometimes capitalized when it refers to the worldwide Catholic Church.

Hunt Memorial Church
the local Baptist church
Beth Israel Synagogue
services at the synagogue

56. Names of the Bible and other sacred works, their books and parts, and versions or editions of them are capitalized but not italicized. Adjectives derived from the names of sacred books are capitalized, except for the words *biblical* and *scriptural*.

Bible
biblical
the Scriptures

Talmud
Revised Standard Version
Talmudic
Old Testament
Koran *or* Qur'an
Book of Revelation
Koranic *or* Qur'anic

57. The names of prayers and well-known passages of the Bible are capitalized.

the Ave Maria
Ten Commandments
Lord's Prayer
Sermon on the Mount
the Our Father
the Beatitudes

Scientific Terms

58. Genus names in biological binomial nomenclature are capitalized; species names are lowercased, even when derived from a proper name. Both names are italicized.

Both the wolf and the domestic dog are included in the genus *Canis*.

The California condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*) is facing extinction.

The names of races, varieties, or subspecies are lowercased and italicized.

Hyla versicolor chrysoscelis
Otis asio naevius

59. The New Latin names of classes, families, and all groups above the genus level in zoology and botany are capitalized but not italicized. Their derivative nouns and adjectives are lowercased.

Gastropoda	gastropod
Thallophyta	thallophytic

60. The names, both scientific and informal, of planets and their satellites, stars, constellations, and other specific celestial objects are capitalized. However, except in technical writing, the words *sun*, *earth*, and *moon* are usually lowercased unless they occur with other astronomical names. A generic term that follows the name of a celestial object is usually lowercased.

Jupiter
 Mars, Venus, and Earth
 the North Star
 life on earth
 Andromeda
 a voyage to the moon
 Ursa Major
 Halley's comet
 the Little Dipper

Names of meteorological phenomena are lowercased.

aurora australis
 northern lights
 parhelic circle

61. Terms that identify geological eons, eras, periods, systems, epochs, and strata are capitalized. The generic terms that follow them are lowercased.

Mesozoic era
Upper Cretaceous epoch
Quaternary period
in the Middle Ordovician
the Age of Reptiles

62. Proper names that are elements of the names of scientific laws, theorems, and principles are capitalized, but the common nouns *law*, *theorem*, *theory*, and the like are lowercased. In the names of popular or fanciful theories or observations, such words are usually capitalized as well.

Mendel's law
the Pythagorean theorem
Occam's razor
Einstein's theory of relativity
Murphy's Law
the Peter Principle

63. The names of computer services and databases are capitalized. Some names of computer languages are written with an initial capital letter, some with all letters capitalized, and some commonly both ways. When in doubt, consult a dictionary.

America Online
World Wide Web

CompuServe
 Microsoft Word
 Pascal *or* PASCAL
 BASIC
 Internet *or* internet

Time Periods and Dates

64. The names of the days of the week, months of the year, and holidays and holy days are capitalized. Names of the seasons are lowercased.

Tuesday	Ramadan
June	Holy Week
Yom Kippur	last winter's storm
Veterans Day	

Titles of Works

65. Words in titles of books, magazines, newspapers, plays, movies, long poems, and works of art such as paintings and sculpture are capitalized except for internal articles, coordinating conjunctions, prepositions, and the *to* of infinitives. Prepositions of four or more letters are often capitalized. The entire title is italicized. For sacred works, see paragraph 56 on pages 98–99.

Far from [or From] the Madding Crowd
Wolfe's Of Time and the River
Publishers Weekly
USA Today
 the original play *A Streetcar Named Desire*

All about [or About] Eve, with Bette Davis
 Monet's *Water-Lily Pool*, in the Louvre
 Rodin's *Thinker*

The elements of hyphenated compounds in titles are usually capitalized, but articles, coordinating conjunctions, and prepositions are lowercased.

Knock-offs and Ready-to-Wear: The Low End of Fashion

Politics in Early Seventeenth-Century England

66. The first word following a colon in a title is capitalized.

Jane Austen: A Literary Life

67. An initial article that is part of a title is capitalized and italicized. It is often omitted if it would be awkward in context.

The Oxford English Dictionary

the 20-volume *Oxford English Dictionary*

68. In the titles of newspapers, the city or local name is usually italicized, but the preceding *the* is usually not italicized or capitalized. (In newspaper writing, any *the* is generally capitalized, see example in paragraph 69 below.)

reported in the *New York Times*

last Thursday's *Atlanta Constitution*

69. Many periodicals, especially newspapers, do not use italics for titles, but instead

either simply capitalize the important words of the title or, more commonly, capitalize the words and enclose the title in quotation marks.

the NB. column in *The Times Literary Supplement*

The Nobel committee singled out Walcott's book-length epic "Omeros."

70. The titles of articles in periodicals, short poems, short stories, essays, lectures, dissertations, chapters of books, episodes of radio and television programs, and novels published in a collection are capitalized and enclosed in quotation marks. The capitalization of articles, conjunctions, and prepositions follows the rules explained in paragraph 65 above.

an article on Rwanda, "After the Genocide," in the *New Yorker*

Robert Frost's "Death of the Hired Man"

O'Connor's story "Good Country People"

"The Literature of Exhaustion," John Barth's seminal essay

last Friday's lecture, "Labor's Task: A View for the Nineties" •

The Jungle Book's ninth chapter is the well-known "Rikki-tikki-tavi."

*M*A*S*H's* final episode, "Goodbye, Farewell and Amen"

71. The titles of long musical compositions are generally capitalized and italicized; the titles of songs and other short com-

positions are capitalized and enclosed in quotation marks, as are the popular names of longer works. The titles of compositions identified primarily by their musical forms (such as *quartet*, *sonata*, or *mass*) are capitalized only, as are movements identified by their tempo markings.

Mozart's *The Magic Flute*

Frank Loesser's *Guys and Dolls*

"The Lady Is a Tramp"

Beethoven's "Für Elise"

the Piano Sonata in C-sharp minor, Op. 27,
No. 2, or "Moonlight" Sonata

Symphony No. 104 in D major

Brahms's Violin Concerto in D

the Adagietto movement from Mahler's
Fifth Symphony

72. Common titles of book sections (such as *preface*, *introduction*, or *index*) are usually capitalized when they refer to a section of the same book in which the reference is made. Otherwise, they are usually lowercased. (For numbered sections of books, see paragraph 39 on page 92.)

See the Appendix for further information.

In the introduction to her book, the author explains her goals.

Trademarks

73. Registered trademarks, service marks, collective marks, and brand names are capitalized. They do not normally require any

further acknowledgment of their special status.

Frisbee	Jacuzzi
Levi's	Coke
Kleenex	Vaseline
College Board	Velcro
Dumpster	Realtor
Xerox	Scotch tape
Walkman	Band-Aid
Teflon	

Transportation

74. The names of individual ships, submarines, airplanes, satellites, and space vehicles are capitalized and italicized. The designations *U.S.S.*, *S.S.*, *M.V.*, and *H.M.S.* are not italicized.

Challenger
Enola Gay
H.M.S. Bounty

The names of train lines, types of aircraft, and space programs are not italicized.

Metroliner
Boeing 727
Pathfinder Program

Other Styling Conventions

1. Foreign words and phrases that have not been fully adopted into English are itali-

cized. In general, any word that appears in the main section of *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* does not need to be italicized.

These accomplishments will serve as a monument, *aere perennius*, to the group's skill and dedication.

"The cooking here is *wunderbar!*"

The *prix fixe* lunch was \$20.

The committee meets on an *ad hoc* basis.

A complete foreign-language sentence (such as a motto) can also be italicized. However, long sentences are usually treated as quotations; that is, they are set in roman type and enclosed in quotation marks. (For details, see paragraph 6 on pages 58–59.)

The inscription *Honi soit qui mal y pense* encircles the seal.

2. In nonfiction writing, unfamiliar words or words that have a specialized meaning are set in italics on their first appearance, especially when accompanied by a short definition. Once these words have been introduced and defined, they are not italicized in subsequent references.

Vitiligo is a condition in which skin pigment cells stop making pigment. *Vitiligo* usually affects . . .

Another method is the *direct-to-consumer* transaction, in which the publisher markets

directly to the individual by mail or door-to-door.

3. Italics are often used to indicate words referred to as words. However, if the word was actually spoken, it is usually enclosed in quotation marks instead.

Purists still insist that *data* is a plural noun.

Only can also be an adverb, as in "I *only* tried to help."

We heard his warning, but we weren't sure what "repercussions" meant in that context.

4. Italics are often used for letters referred to as letters, particularly when they are shown in lowercase.

You should dot your *i*'s and cross your *t*'s.

If the letter is being used to refer to its sound and not its printed form, slashes or brackets are used instead of italics in technical contexts.

The pure /p/ sound is rarely heard in the mountain dialect.

A letter used to indicate a shape is capitalized but not italicized. Such letters are often set in sans-serif type.

an A-frame house

the I beam

Churchill's famous V sign

forming a giant X

5. Italics are often used to show numerals referred to as numerals. However, if there is no chance of confusion, they are usually not italicized.

The first 2 and the last 1 are barely legible.
Anyone whose ticket number ends in 4 or 6 will win a door prize.

6. Italics are used to emphasize or draw attention to words in a sentence.

Students must notify the dean's office *in writing* of any added or dropped courses.

It was not *the* model for the project, but merely *a* model.

7. Italics are used to indicate a word created to suggest a sound.

Its call is a harsh, drawn-out *kreee-awww*.

8. Individual letters are sometimes italicized when used for lists within sentences or for identifying elements in an illustration.

providing information about (*a*) typing, (*b*) transcribing, (*c*) formatting, and (*d*) graphics located at point A on the diagram

9. Commas, colons, and semicolons that follow italicized words are usually italicized.

the Rabbit tetralogy (*Rabbit Run*, *Rabbit Redux*, *Rabbit Is Rich*, and *Rabbit at Rest*); *Bech: A Book*; *S*; and others

However, question marks, exclamation points, quotation marks, and apostrophes are not italicized unless they are part of an italicized title.

Did you see the latest issue of *Newsweek*?

Despite the greater success of *Oklahoma!* and *South Pacific*, Rodgers was fondest of *Carousel*.

"Over Christmas vacation he finished *War and Peace*."

Students always mistake the old script s's for f's.

Parentheses and brackets may be italicized if most of the words they enclose are also italicized, or if both the first and last words are italicized.

(see also *Limited Partnership*)

[German, *Dasein*]

(and is replaced throughout by &)

10. Full capitalization is occasionally used for emphasis or to indicate that a speaker is talking very loudly. It is avoided in formal writing, where italics are far more often used for emphasis.

Term papers received after Friday, May 18,
WILL BE RETURNED UNREAD.

Scalpers mingled in the noisy crowd yelling
"SIXTY DOLLARS!"

11. The text of signs, labels, and inscriptions may be reproduced in various ways.

a poster reading SPECIAL THRILLS COM-
ING SOON

a gate bearing the infamous motto "Arbeit
macht frei"

a Do Not Disturb sign

a barn with an old CHEW MAIL POUCH ad on
the side

the stop sign

12. *Small capitals*, identical to large capitals but usually about the height of a lower-case *x*, are commonly used for era designations and computer commands. They may also be used for cross-references, for headings in constitutions and bylaws, and for speakers in a dramatic dialogue.

The dwellings date from A.D. 200 or earlier.
Press ALT+CTRL+PLUS SIGN on the numeric
keyboard.

(See LETTERS AS LETTERS, page 162.)

SECTION IV. The authority for parliamentary
procedure in meetings of the Board . . .

LADY WISHFORT. O dear, has my Nephew
made his Addresses to Millamant? I order'd
him.

FOIBLE. Sir Wilfull is set in to drinking,
Madam, in the Parlour.

13. *Underlining* indicates italics in typed material. It is almost never seen in typeset text.
14. *Boldface* type has traditionally been used primarily for headings and captions. It is

sometimes also used in place of italics for terminology introduced in the text, especially for terms that are accompanied by definitions; for cross-references; for headwords in listings such as glossaries, gazetteers, and bibliographies; and for page references in indexes that locate a specific kind of material, such as illustrations, tables, or the main discussions of a given topic. (In mathematical texts, arrays, tensors, vectors, and matrix notation are standardly set bold as well.)

Application Forms and Tests Many offices require applicants to fill out an employment form. Bring a copy . . .

Figure 4.2: The Electromagnetic Spectrum

The two axes intersect at a point called the **origin**.

See **Medical Records**, page 123.

antecedent: the noun to which a pronoun refers

appositive: a word, phrase, or clause that is equivalent to a preceding noun

Records, medical, **123–37**, 178, 243

Referrals, **38–40**, 139

Punctuation that follows boldface type is set bold when it is part of a heading or heading-like text; otherwise it is generally set roman.

Table 9: Metric Conversion

Warning: This and similar medications . . .
Excellent fourth-quarter earnings were reported by the pharmaceutical giants **Abbott Laboratories, Glaxo Wellcome, and Merck.**

3 Plurals, Possessives, and Compounds

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Compounds	129

This chapter describes the ways in which plurals, possessives, and compounds are most commonly formed.

In regard to plurals and compounds, consulting a dictionary will solve many of the problems discussed in this chapter. A good college dictionary, such as *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, will provide plural forms for any common word, as well as a large number of permanent compounds. Any dictionary much smaller than the *Collegiate* will often be more frustrating in what it fails to show than helpful in what it shows.

Plurals

The basic rules for writing plurals of English words, stated in paragraph 1, apply in the vast

majority of cases. The succeeding paragraphs treat the categories of words whose plurals are most apt to raise questions.

Most good dictionaries give thorough coverage to irregular and variant plurals, and many of the rules provided here are reflected in the dictionary entries.

The symbol → is used here to link the singular and plural forms.

1. The plurals of most English words are formed by adding *-s* to the singular. If the noun ends in *-s*, *-x*, *-z*, *-ch*, or *-sh*, so that an extra syllable must be added in order to pronounce the plural, *-es* is added. If the noun ends in a *-y* preceded by a consonant, the *-y* is changed to *-i* and *-es* is added.

voter → voters

anticlimax → anticlimaxes

blitz → blitzes

blowtorch → blowtorches

calabash → calabashes

allegory → allegories

Abbreviations

2. The plurals of abbreviations are commonly formed by adding *-s* or *'s*; however, there are some significant exceptions. (For details, see paragraphs 1–5 on pages 157–58.)

yr. → yrs.

TV → TVs

M.B.A. → M.B.A.'s

p. → pp.

Animals

3. The names of many fishes, birds, and mammals have both a plural formed with a suffix and one that is identical with the singular. Some have only one or the other.

bass → bass *or* basses

partridge → partridge *or* partridges

sable → sables *or* sable

lion → lions

sheep → sheep

Many of the animals that have both plural forms are ones that are hunted, fished, or trapped; those who hunt, fish for, and trap them are most likely to use the unchanged form. The -s form is often used to emphasize diversity of kinds.

caught three bass

but

basses of the Atlantic Ocean

a place where antelope feed

but

antelopes of Africa and southwest Asia

Compounds and Phrases

4. Most compounds made up of two nouns—whether they appear as one word, two words, or a hyphenated word—form their plurals by pluralizing the final element only.

courthouse → courthouses

judge advocate → judge advocates
player-manager → player-managers

5. The plural form of a compound consisting of an *-er* noun and an adverb is made by pluralizing the noun element only.

runner-up → runners-up
onlooker → onlookers
diner-out → diners-out
passerby → passersby

6. Nouns made up of words that are not nouns form their plurals on the last element.

show-off → show-offs
pushover → pushovers
tie-in → tie-ins
lineup → lineups

7. Plurals of compounds that consist of two nouns separated by a preposition are normally formed by pluralizing the first noun.

sister-in-law → sisters-in-law
attorney-at-law → attorneys-at-law
power of attorney → powers of attorney
chief of staff → chiefs of staff
grant-in-aid → grants-in-aid

8. Compounds that consist of two nouns separated by a preposition and a modifier form their plurals in various ways.

snake in the grass → snakes in the grass

justice of the peace → justices of the peace

jack-in-the-box → jack-in-the-boxes

or jacks-in-the-box

will-o'-the-wisp → will-o'-the-wisps

9. Compounds consisting of a noun followed by an adjective are usually pluralized by adding -s to the noun. If the adjective tends to be understood as a noun, the compound may have more than one plural form.

attorney general → attorneys general

or attorney generals

sergeant major → sergeants major

or sergeant majors

poet laureate → poets laureate

or poet laureates

heir apparent → heirs apparent

knight-errant → knights-errant

Foreign Words and Phrases

10. Many nouns of foreign origin retain the foreign plural. However, most also have a regular English plural.

alumnus → alumni

genus → genera

crisis → crises

criterion → criteria

appendix → appendixes *or* appendices

concerto → concerti *or* concertos
symposium → symposia *or* symposiums

11. Phrases of foreign origin may have a foreign plural, an English plural, or both.

pièce de résistance → pièces de résistance
hors d'oeuvre → hors d'oeuvres
beau monde → beau mondes
or beaux mondes

Irregular Plurals

12. A few English nouns form their plurals by changing one or more of their vowels, or by adding *-en* or *-ren*.

foot → feet	woman → women
goose → geese	tooth → teeth
louse → lice	ox → oxen
man → men	child → children
mouse → mice	

13. Some nouns do not change form in the plural. (See also paragraph 3 above.)

series → series	corps → corps
politics → politics	species → species

14. Some nouns ending in *-f*, *-fe*, and *-ff* have plurals that end in *-ves*. Some of these also have regularly formed plurals.

elf → elves
loaf → loaves

scarf → scarves *or* scarfs

wife → wives

staff → staffs *or* staves

Italic Elements

15. Italicized words, phrases, abbreviations, and letters are usually pluralized by adding -s or -'s in roman type. (See also paragraphs 16, 21, and 26 below.)

three *Fortunes* missing from the stack

a couple of *Gravity's Rainbows* in stock

used too many *etc.*'s in the report

a row of *x*'s

Letters

16. The plurals of letters are usually formed by adding -'s, although capital letters are often pluralized by adding -s alone.

p's and q's

V's of migrating geese

or Vs of migrating geese

dot your *i*'s

straight As *or* straight A's

Numbers

17. Numerals are pluralized by adding -s or, less commonly, -'s.

two par 5s *or* two par 5's

1990s *or* 1990's

in the 80s *or* in the 80's *or* in the '80s

the mid-\$20,000s *or* the mid-\$20,000's

18. Written-out numbers are pluralized by adding -s.

all the fours and eights
scored three tens

Proper Nouns

19. The plurals of proper nouns are usually formed with -s or -es.

Clarence → Clarences

Jones → Joneses

Fernandez → Fernandezes

20. Plurals of proper nouns ending in -y usually retain the -y and add -s.

Sunday → Sundays

Timothy → Timothys

Camry → Camrys

Words ending in -y that were originally proper nouns are usually pluralized by changing -y to -i and adding -es, but a few retain the -y.

bobby → bobbies

johnny → johnnies

Tommy → Tommies

Bloody Mary → Bloody Marys

Quoted Elements

21. The plural of words in quotation marks are formed by adding -s or -'s within the quotation marks, or -s outside the quo-

tation marks. (See also paragraph 26 below.)

too many “probably’s” [*or* “probablys”] in
the statement
one “you” among millions of “you”s
a record number of “I can’t recall”s

Symbols

22. When symbols are referred to as physical characters, the plural is formed by adding either -s or -’s.

printed three *s
used &’s instead of *and*’s
his π ’s are hard to read

Words Ending in -ay, -ey, and -oy

23. Words that end in -ay, -ey, or -oy, unlike other words ending in -y, are pluralized by simply adding -s.

castaways
donkeys
envoys

Words Ending in -ful

24. Any noun ending in -ful can be pluralized by adding -s, but most also have an alternative plural with -s preceding the suffix.

handful → handfuls
teaspoonful → teaspoonfuls
armful → armfuls *or* armsful
bucketful → bucketfuls *or* bucketsful

Words Ending in -o

25. Most words ending in -o are normally pluralized by adding -s. However, some words ending in -o preceded by a consonant take -es plurals.

solo → solos

photo → photos

tomato → tomatoes

potato → potatoes

hobo → hoboes

hero → heroes

cargo → cargoes *or* cargos

proviso → provisos *or* provisoes

halo → haloes *or* halos

echo → echoes

motto → mottoes

Words Used as Words

26. Words referred to as words and italicized usually form their plurals by adding -'s in roman type. (See also paragraph 21 above.)

five *and's* in one sentence

all those *wherefore's* and *howsoever's*

When a word referred to as a word has become part of a fixed phrase, the plural is usually formed by adding -s without the apostrophe.

oohs and aahs

dos and don'ts *or* do's and don'ts

Possessives

Common Nouns

1. The possessive of singular and plural common nouns that do not end in an *s* or *z* sound is formed by adding *-’s* to the end of the word.

the child’s skates
women’s voices
the cat’s dish
this patois’s range
people’s opinions
the criteria’s common theme

2. The possessive of singular nouns ending in an *s* or *z* sound is usually formed by adding *-’s*. A less common alternative is to add *-’s* only when it is easily pronounced; if it would create a word that is difficult to pronounce, only an apostrophe is added.

the witness’s testimony
the disease’s course
the race’s sponsors
the prize’s recipient
rickets’s symptoms *or* rickets’ symptoms

A multisyllabic singular noun that ends in an *s* or *z* sound drops the *-s* if it is followed by a word beginning with an *s* or *z* sound.

for appearance’ sake
for goodness’ sake

3. The possessive of plural nouns ending in an *s* or *z* sound is formed by adding only an apostrophe. However, the possessive of one-syllable irregular plurals is usually formed by adding *-’s*.

dogs’ leashes

birds’ migrations

buyers’ guarantees

lice’s lifespans

Proper Names

4. The possessives of proper names are generally formed in the same way as those of common nouns. The possessive of singular proper names is formed by adding *-’s*.

Jane’s rules of behavior

three books of Carla’s

Tom White’s presentation

Paris’s cafes

The possessive of plural proper names, and of some singular proper names ending in an *s* or *z* sound, is made by adding just an apostrophe.

the Stevenses’ reception

the Browns’ driveway

Massachusetts’ capital

New Orleans’ annual festival

the United States’ trade deficit

Protosystems’ president

5. The possessive of singular proper names ending in an *s* or *z* sound may be formed by adding either *-’s* or just an apostrophe.

Adding -'s to all such names, without regard for the pronunciation of the resulting word, is more common than adding just the apostrophe. (For exceptions see paragraph 6 below.)

Jones's car or Jones' car

Bliss's statue or Bliss' statue

Dickens's novels or Dickens' novels

6. The possessive form of classical and biblical names of two or more syllables ending in -s or -es is usually made by adding just an apostrophe. If the name has only one syllable, the possessive form is made by adding -'s.

Socrates' students

Elias' prophecy

Claudius' reign

Zeus's warnings

Ramses' kingdom

Cis's sons

The possessives of the names *Jesus* and *Moses* are always formed with just an apostrophe.

Jesus' disciples

Moses' law

7. The possessive of names ending in a silent -s, -z, or -x are usually formed with -'s.

Des Moines's recreation department

Josquin des Prez's music

Delacroix's painting

8. When the possessive ending is added to an italicized name, it is not italicized.

East of Eden's main characters
the *Spirit of St. Louis's* historic flight
Brief Encounter's memorable ending

Pronouns

9. The possessive of indefinite pronouns is formed by adding -'s.

anyone's rights
everybody's money
someone's coat
somebody's wedding
one's own
either's preference

Some indefinite pronouns usually require an *of* phrase to indicate possession.

the rights of each
the inclination of many
the satisfaction of all

10. Possessive pronouns do not include apostrophes.

mine	hers
ours	his
yours	theirs
its	

Miscellaneous Styling Conventions

11. No apostrophe is generally used today with plural nouns that are more descriptive than possessive.

weapons systems
managers meeting
singles bar
steelworkers union
awards banquet

12. The possessive form of a phrase is made by adding an apostrophe or -'s to the last word in the phrase.

his father-in-law's assistance
board of directors' meeting
from the student of politics' point of view
after a moment or so's thought

Constructions such as these are often rephrased.

from the point of view of the student of politics
after thinking for a moment or so

13. The possessive form of words in quotation marks can be formed in two ways, with -'s placed either inside the quotation marks or outside them.

the "Marseillaise"'s [*or* "Marseillaise's"] stirring melody

Since both arrangements look awkward, this construction is usually avoided.

the stirring melody of the "Marseillaise"

14. Possessives of abbreviations are formed like those of nouns that are spelled out. The singular possessive is formed by

adding -'s; the plural possessive, by adding an apostrophe only.

the IRS's ruling
AT&T's long-distance service
IBM Corp.'s annual report
Eli Lilly & Co.'s chairman
the HMOs' lobbyists

15. The possessive of nouns composed of numerals is formed in the same way as for other nouns. The possessive of singular nouns is formed by adding -'s; the possessive of plural nouns is formed by adding an apostrophe only.

1996's commencement speaker
the 1920s' greatest jazz musicians

16. Individual possession is indicated by adding -'s to each noun in a sequence. Joint possession may be indicated in the same way, but is most commonly indicated by adding an apostrophe or -'s to the last noun in the sequence.

Joan's and Emily's friends
Jim's, Ed's, and Susan's reports
her mother and father's anniversary
Peter and Jan's trip *or* Peter's and Jan's trip

Compounds

A compound is a word or word group that consists of two or more parts that work

together as a unit to express a specific concept. Compounds can be formed by combining two or more words (as in *double-check*, *cost-effective*, *farmhouse*, *graphic equalizer*, *park bench*, *around-the-clock*, or *son of a gun*), by combining prefixes or suffixes with words (as in *ex-president*, *shoeless*, *presorted*, or *uninterruptedly*), or by combining two or more word elements (as in *macrophage* or *photochromism*). Compounds are written in one of three ways: solid (as in *cottonmouth*), hyphenated (*screenwriter-director*), or open (*health care*). Because of the variety of standard practice, the choice among these styles for a given compound represents one of the most common and vexing of all style issues that writers encounter.

A good dictionary will list many *permanent compounds*, compounds so commonly used that they have become permanent parts of the language. It will not list *temporary compounds*, those created to meet a writer's need at a particular moment. Most compounds whose meanings are self-evident from the meanings of their component words will not be listed, even if they are permanent and quite widely used. Writers thus cannot rely wholly on dictionaries to guide them in writing compounds.

One approach is to hyphenate all compounds not in the dictionary, since hyphenation immediately identifies them as compounds. But hyphenating all such com-

pounds runs counter to some well-established American practice and can therefore call too much attention to the compound and momentarily distract the reader. Another approach (which applies only to compounds whose elements are complete words) is to leave open any compound not in the dictionary. Though this is widely done, it can result in the reader's failing to recognize a compound for what it is. A third approach is to pattern the compound after other similar ones. Though this approach is likely to be more complicated, it can make the compound look more familiar and thus less distracting or confusing. The paragraphs that follow are intended to help you use this approach.

As a general rule, writing meant for readers in specialized fields usually does not hyphenate compounds, especially technical terminology.

Compound Nouns

Compound nouns are combinations of words that function in a sentence as nouns. They may consist of two or more nouns, a noun and a modifier, or two or more elements that are not nouns.

Short compounds consisting of two nouns often begin as open compounds but tend to close up as they become familiar.

1. **noun + noun** Compounds composed of two nouns that are short and commonly used, of which the first is accented, are usually written solid.

farmhouse	paycheck
hairbrush	football
lifeboat	workplace

2. When a noun + noun compound is short and common but pronounced with nearly equal stress on both nouns, it is more likely to be open.

fuel oil	health care
park bench	desk lamp

3. Noun + noun compounds that consist of longer nouns and are self-evident or temporary are usually written open.

costume designer
computer terminal
billiard table

4. When a noun + noun compound describes a double title or double function, the compound is hyphenated.

hunter-gatherer
secretary-treasurer
bar-restaurant

Sometimes a slash is used in place of the hyphen.

bar/restaurant

5. Compounds formed from a noun or adjective followed by *man*, *woman*, *person*, or *people* and denoting an occupation are normally solid.

anchorman	spokesperson
congresswoman	salespeople

6. Compounds that are units of measurement are hyphenated.

foot-pound	column-inch
kilowatt-hour	light-year

7. **adjective + noun** Most adjective + noun compounds are written open.

municipal court	minor league
genetic code	nuclear medicine
hazardous waste	basic training

8. Adjective + noun compounds consisting of two short words are often written solid when the first word is accented. However, some are usually written open, and a few are hyphenated.

notebook	dry cleaner
bluebird	steel mill
shortcut	two-step

9. **participle + noun** Most participle + noun compounds are written open.

landing craft	barbed wire
frying pan	preferred stock
sounding board	informed consent

10. **noun's + noun** Compounds consisting of a possessive noun followed by another noun are usually written open; a few are hyphenated. Compounds of this type that have become solid have lost the apostrophe.

fool's gold	cat's-paw
hornet's nest	bull's-eye
seller's market	foolscap
Queen Anne's lace	menswear

11. **noun + verb + -er or -ing** Compounds in which the first noun is the object of the verb are most often written open but sometimes hyphenated. Permanent compounds like these are sometimes written solid.

problem solver	fund-raiser
deal making	gene-splicing
air conditioner	lifesaving

12. **object + verb** Noun compounds consisting of a verb preceded by a noun that is its object are written in various ways.

fish fry	bodyguard
eye-opener	roadblock

13. **verb + object** A few, mostly older compounds are formed from a verb followed by a noun that is its object; they are written solid.

cutthroat
breakwater

carryall
pickpocket

14. **noun + adjective** Compounds composed of a noun followed by an adjective are written open or hyphenated.

sum total
consul general

president-elect
secretary-general

15. **particle + noun** Compounds consisting of a particle (usually a preposition or adverb) and a noun are usually written solid, especially when they are short and the first syllable is accented.

downturn
outfield
input
outpatient

undertone
upswing
afterthought
onrush

A few particle + noun compounds, especially when composed of longer elements or having equal stress on both elements, are hyphenated or open.

on-ramp
cross-reference

off year
cross fire

16. **verb + particle; verb + adverb** These compounds may be hyphenated or solid. Compounds with particles such as *to*, *in*, and *on* are often hyphenated. Compounds with particles such as *up*, *off*, and *out* are hyphenated or solid with about

equal frequency. Those with longer particles or adverbs are usually solid.

lean-to	spin-off
trade-in	payoff
add-on	time-out
start-up	turnout
backup	hideaway

17. **verb + -er + particle; verb + -ing + particle** Except for *passerby*, these compounds are hyphenated.

runner-up	carrying-on
diners-out	talking-to
listener-in	falling-out

18. **letter + noun** Compounds formed from a single letter (or sometimes a combination of them) followed by a noun are either open or hyphenated.

T square	T-shirt
B vitamin	f-stop
V neck	H-bomb
Rh factor	A-frame
D major	E-mail or e-mail

19. **Compounds of three or four elements** Compounds of three or four words may be either hyphenated or open. Those incorporating prepositional phrases are more often open; others are usually hyphenated.

editor in chief	right-of-way
power of attorney	jack-of-all-trades
flash in the pan	give-and-take
base on balls	rough-and-tumble

20. Reduplication compounds Compound words that are formed by reduplication and so consist of two similar-sounding elements are hyphenated if each element has more than one syllable. If each element has only one syllable, the compound is often written solid. Very short words and newly coined words are more often hyphenated.

namby-pamby	singsong
razzle-dazzle	sci-fi
crisscross	hip-hop

Compound Adjectives

Compound adjectives are combinations of words that work together to modify a noun—that is, they work as *unit modifiers*. As unit modifiers they can be distinguished from other strings of adjectives that may also precede a noun.

For instance, in “a low, level tract of land” the two adjectives each modify the noun separately; the tract is both low and level. These are *coordinate* (i.e., equal) *modifiers*. In “a low monthly fee” the first adjective modifies the noun plus the second adjective; the phrase denotes a monthly fee that is low. It could not

be revised to “a monthly and low fee” without altering or confusing its meaning. Thus, these are *noncoordinate modifiers*. However, “low-level radiation” does not mean radiation that is low and level or level radiation that is low, but rather radiation that is at a low level. Both words work as a unit to modify the noun.

Unit modifiers are usually hyphenated, in order to help readers grasp the relationship of the words and to avoid confusion. The hyphen in “a call for more-specialized controls” removes any ambiguity as to which word *more* modifies. By contrast, the lack of a hyphen in a phrase like “graphic arts exhibition” may give it an undesirable ambiguity.

21. Before the noun (attributive position)

Most two-word compound adjectives are hyphenated when placed before the noun.

the fresh-cut grass
its longer-lasting effects
her lace-trimmed dress
a made-up excuse
his best-selling novel
projected health-care costs

22. Compounds whose first word is an adverb ending in -ly are usually left open.

a privately chartered boat
politically correct opinions
its weirdly skewed perspective
a tumultuously cascading torrent

23. Compounds formed of an adverb not ending in *-ly* followed by a participle (or sometimes an adjective) are usually hyphenated when placed before a noun.

the well-worded statement
more-stringent measures
his less-exciting prospects
their still-awaited assignments
her once-famous uncle

24. The combination of *very* + adjective is not a unit modifier. (See also paragraph 33 below.)

a very happy baby

25. When a compound adjective is formed by using a compound noun to modify another noun, it is usually hyphenated.

a hazardous-waste site
the basic-training period
a minor-league pitcher
a roll-call vote
their problem-solving abilities

Some familiar open compound nouns are frequently left open when used as adjectives.

a high school diploma
or a high-school diploma
a real estate license
or a real-estate license
an income tax refund
or an income-tax refund

26. A proper name used as a modifier is not hyphenated. A word that modifies the proper name is attached by a hyphen (or an en dash in typeset material).

the Civil War era
 a New England tradition
 a *New York Times* article
 the Supreme Court decision
 the splendid *Gone with the Wind* premiere
 a Los Angeles-based company
 a Pulitzer Prize-winning author
 pre-Bull Run skirmishes

27. Compound adjectives composed of foreign words are not hyphenated when placed before a noun unless they are hyphenated in the foreign language itself.

per diem expenses
 an ad hoc committee
 her *faux-naïf* style
 a *comme il faut* arrangement
 the a cappella chorus
 a ci-devant professor

28. Compounds that are quoted, capitalized, or italicized are not hyphenated.

a "Springtime in Paris" theme
 the book's "I'm OK, you're OK" tone
 his AMERICA FIRST sign
 the *No smoking* notice

29. Chemical names and most medical names used as modifiers are not hyphenated.

a sodium hypochlorite bleach
the amino acid sequence
a new Parkinson's disease medication

30. Compound adjectives of three or more words are hyphenated when they precede the noun.

step-by-step instructions
state-of-the-art equipment
a wait-and-see attitude
a longer-than-expected list
turn-of-the-century medicine

31. **Following the noun** When a compound adjective follows the noun it modifies, it usually ceases to be a unit modifier and is therefore no longer hyphenated.

instructions that guide you step by step
a list that was longer than expected

However, a compound that follows the noun it modifies often keeps its hyphen if it continues to function as a unit modifier, especially if its first element is a noun.

hikers who were ill-advised to cross the glacier
an actor too high-strung to relax
industries that could be called low-tech
metals that are corrosion-resistant
tends to be accident-prone

32. Permanent compound adjectives are usually written as they appear in the dictio-

nary even when they follow the noun they modify.

for reasons that are well-known
a plan we regarded as half-baked
The problems are mind-boggling.

However, compound adjectives of three or more words are normally not hyphenated when they follow the noun they modify, since they usually cease to function as adjectives.

These remarks are off the record.
medical practice of the turn of the century

When compounds of three or more words appear as hyphenated adjectives in dictionaries, the hyphens are retained as long as the phrase is being used as a unit modifier.

The candidate's position was middle-of-the-road.

33. When an adverb modifies another adverb that is the first element of a compound modifier, the compound may lose its hyphen. If the first adverb modifies the whole compound, however, the hyphen is retained.

a very well developed idea
but
a delightfully well-written book
a most ill-timed event

34. Adjective compounds that are color names in which each element can function as a noun are almost always hyphenated.

red-orange fabric

The fabric was red-orange.

Color names in which the first element can only be an adjective are often unhyphenated before a noun and usually unhyphenated after.

a bright red tie

the pale yellow-green chair

reddish orange fabric

or reddish-orange fabric

The fabric was reddish orange.

35. Compound modifiers that include a number followed by a noun (except for the noun *percent*) are hyphenated when they precede the noun they modify, but usually not when they follow it. (For details on measurement, see paragraph 42 on pages 203–4.)

the four-color press

a 12-foot-high fence

a fence 12 feet high

a 300-square-mile area

an area of 300 square miles

but

a 10 percent raise

If a currency symbol precedes the number, the hyphen is omitted.

an \$8.5 million deficit

36. An adjective composed of a number followed by a noun in the possessive is not hyphenated.

a nine days' wonder

a two weeks' wait

but

a two-week wait

Compound Adverbs

37. Adverb compounds consisting of preposition + noun are almost always written solid. However, there are a few important exceptions.

downstairs

uphill

offshore

overnight

but

in-house

off-key

on-line

38. Compound adverbs of more than two words are usually written open, and they usually follow the words they modify.

here and there

more or less

head and shoulders

hand in hand

every which way

once and for all

but

a more-or-less certain result

A few three-word adverbs are usually hyphenated, but many are written open even if the corresponding adjective is hyphenated.

placed back-to-back

met face-to-face

but

a word-for-word quotation

quoted word for word

software bought off the shelf

Compound Verbs

39. Two-word verbs consisting of a verb followed by an adverb or a preposition are written open.

follow up

take on

roll back

run across

strike out

set back

40. A compound composed of a particle followed by a verb is written solid.

overlook

undercut

outfit

download

41. A verb derived from an open or hyphenated compound noun is hyphenated.

double-space

water-ski

rubber-stamp

field-test

42. A verb derived from a solid noun is written solid.

mastermind

brainstorm

highlight

sideline

Compounds Formed with Word Elements

Many new and temporary compounds are formed by adding word elements to existing words or by combining word elements. There are three basic kinds of word elements: prefixes (such as *anti-*, *non-*, *pre-*, *post-*, *re-*, *super-*), suffixes (such as *-er*, *-fold*, *-ism*, *-ist*, *-less*, *-ness*), and combining forms (such as *mini-*, *macro-*, *pseudo-*, *-graphy*, *-logy*). Prefixes and suffixes are usually attached to existing words; combining forms are usually combined to form new words.

- 43. prefix + word** Except as specified in the paragraphs below, compounds formed from a prefix and a word are usually written solid.

anticrime	subzero
nonaligned	superheroine
premedical	transnational
reorchestration	postdoctoral

- 44.** If the prefix ends with a vowel and the word it is attached to begins with the same vowel, the compound is usually hyphenated.

anti-incumbent	semi-independent
de-escalate	intra-arterial
co-organizer	pre-engineered

However, there are many exceptions.

reelect
preestablished
cooperate

45. If the base word or compound to which a prefix is added is capitalized, the resulting compound is almost always hyphenated.

pre-Victorian
anti-Western
post-Darwinian
non-English-speaking
but
transatlantic
transalpine

If the prefix and the base word together form a new proper name, the compound may be solid with the prefix capitalized.

Postimpressionists
Precambrian
but
Pre-Raphaelite

46. Compounds made with *ex-*, in its “former” sense, and *self-* are hyphenated.

ex-mayor	self-control
ex-husband	self-sustaining

Compounds formed from *vice-* are usually hyphenated. Some permanent compounds are open.

vice-chair	vice president
vice-consul	vice admiral

A temporary compound with *quasi*(-) or *pseudo*(-) may be written open (if *quasi* or *pseudo* is being treated as a modifier) or hyphenated (if it is being treated as a combining form).

quasi intellectual
or quasi-intellectual
pseudo liberal
or pseudo-liberal

47. If a prefix is added to a hyphenated compound, it may be either followed by a hyphen or closed up solid to the next element. Permanent compounds of this kind should be checked in a dictionary.

unair-conditioned
ultra-up-to-date
non-self-governing
unself-confident

48. If a prefix is added to an open compound, the hyphen is often replaced by an en dash in typeset material.

ex–campaign treasurer
post–World War I era

49. A compound that would be identical with another word if written solid is usually hyphenated to prevent misreading.

a re-creation of the setting
shopped at the co-op
multi-ply fabric

50. Compounds that might otherwise be solid are often hyphenated in order to clarify their formation, meaning, or pronunciation.

tri-city

non-news

de-iced

anti-fur

re-oil

pro-choice

51. When prefixes are attached to numerals, the compounds are hyphenated.

pre-1995 models

post-1945 economy

non-19th-century architecture

52. Compounds created from proper ethnic or national combining forms are hyphenated when the second element is an independent word, but solid when it is a combining form.

Anglo-Saxon

Anglophile

Judeo-Christian

Francophone

Sino-Japanese

Sinophobe

53. Prefixes that are repeated in the same compound are separated by a hyphen.

re-refried

post-postmodern

54. Compounds consisting of different prefixes or adjectives with the same base word which are joined by *and* or *or* are

shortened by pruning the first compound back to a hyphenated prefix.

pre- and postoperative care
anti- or pro-Revolutionary sympathies
over- and underachievers
early- and mid-20th-century painters
4-, 6-, and 8-foot lengths

55. **word + suffix** Except as noted in the paragraphs below, compounds formed by adding a suffix to a word are written solid.

Fourierism	characterless
benightedness	custodianship
yellowish	easternmost

56. Compounds made with a suffix or a terminal combining form are often hyphenated if the base word is more than two syllables long, if it ends with the same letter the suffix begins with, or if it is a proper name.

industry-wide	jewel-like
recession-proof	Hollywood-ish
American-ness	Europe-wide

57. Compounds made from a number + *-odd* are hyphenated. A number + *-fold* is written solid if the number is spelled out but hyphenated if it is in numerals.

fifty-odd	tenfold
50-odd	10-fold

58. Most compounds formed from an open or hyphenated compound + a suffix do not separate the suffix with a hyphen. But combining forms that also exist as independent words, such as *-like*, *-wide*, *-worthy*, and *-proof*, are attached by a hyphen.

self-righteousness
middle-of-the-roadism
bobby-soxer
a Red Cross-like approach
a New York-wide policy

Open compounds often become hyphenated when a suffix is added unless they are proper nouns.

flat-taxer
Ivy Leaguer
World Federalist

59. **combining forms** New terms in technical fields created with one or more combining forms are normally written solid.

cyberworld
macrographic

4 Abbreviations

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Abbreviations may be used to save space and time, to avoid repetition of long words and phrases, or simply to conform to conventional usage.

The contemporary styling of abbreviations is inconsistent and arbitrary, and no set of rules can hope to cover all the possible variations, exceptions, and peculiarities encountered in print. The form abbreviations take—capitalized vs. lowercased, punctuated vs. unpunctuated—often depends on a writer's preference or a publisher's or organization's policy. However, the following paragraphs provide a number of useful guidelines to contemporary practice. In doubtful cases, a good general dictionary or a dictionary of abbreviations will usually show standard forms for common abbreviations.

The present discussion deals largely with general, nontechnical writing. In scientific writing, abbreviations are almost never punctuated.

An abbreviation is not divided at the end of a line.

Abbreviations are almost never italicized. An abbreviation consisting of single initial letters, whether punctuated or not, never standardly has spacing between the letters. (Initials of personal names, however, normally are separated by spaces.)

The first reference to any frequently abbreviated term or name that could be confusing or unfamiliar is commonly spelled out, often followed immediately by its abbreviation in parentheses. Later references employ the abbreviation alone.

Punctuation

1. A period follows most abbreviations that are formed by omitting all but the first few letters of a word.

cont. [*for* continued]

enc. [*for* enclosure]

Oct. [*for* October]

univ. [*for* university]

Former abbreviations that are now considered words do not need a period.

lab

photo

gym

ad

2. A period follows most abbreviations that are formed by omitting letters from the middle of a word.

govt. [*for* government]
atty. [*for* attorney]
bros. [*for* brothers]
Dr. [*for* Doctor]

Some abbreviations, usually called *contractions*, replace the omitted letters with an apostrophe. Such contractions do not end with a period. (In American usage, very few contractions other than two-word contractions involving verbs are in standard use.)

ass'n or assn. [*for* association]
dep't or dept. [*for* department]
nat'l or natl. [*for* national]
can't [*for* cannot]

3. Periods are usually omitted from abbreviations made up of single initial letters. However, for some of these abbreviations, especially uncapitalized ones, the periods are usually retained. No space follows an internal period.

GOP [*for* Grand Old Party]
PR [*for* public relations]
CEO or C.E.O. [*for* chief executive officer]
a.m. [*for* ante meridiem]

4. A few abbreviations are punctuated with one or more slashes in place of periods. (For details on the slash, see the section beginning on page 68.)

c/o [*for* care of]
d/b/a or d.b.a. [*for* doing business as]

w/o [*for* without]

w/w [*for* wall-to-wall]

5. Terms in which a suffix is added to a numeral are not genuine abbreviations and do not require a period. (For details on ordinal numbers, see the section on page 178.)

1st

3d

2nd

8vo

6. Isolated letters of the alphabet used to designate a shape or position in a sequence are not abbreviations and are not punctuated.

T square

A1

F minor

7. When a punctuated abbreviation ends a sentence, its period becomes the terminal period.

For years she claimed she was “the oldest living fossil at Briggs & Co.”

Capitalization

1. Abbreviations are capitalized if the words they represent are proper nouns or adjectives.

F [*for* Fahrenheit]

IMF [*for* International Monetary Fund]

Jan. [*for* January]
 Amer. [*for* American]
 LWV [*for* League of Women Voters]

2. Abbreviations are usually all-capitalized when they represent initial letters of lowercased words. However, some common abbreviations formed in this way are often lowercased.

IQ [*for* intelligence quotient]
 U.S. [*for* United States]
 COLA [*for* cost-of-living allowance]
 FYI [*for* for your information]
 f.o.b. or FOB [*for* free on board]
 c/o [*for* care of]

3. Most abbreviations formed from single initial letters that are pronounced as words, rather than as a series of letters, are capitalized. Those that are not proper nouns and have been assimilated into the language as words in their own right are most often lowercased.

OSHA	snafu
NATO	laser
CARE	sonar
NAFTA	scuba

4. Abbreviations that are ordinarily capitalized are commonly used to begin sentences, but abbreviations that are ordinarily uncanceled are not.

Dr. Smith strongly disagrees.

OSHA regulations require these new measures.

Page 22 [*not* P. 22] was missing.

Plurals, Possessives, and Compounds

1. Punctuated abbreviations of single words are pluralized by adding -s before the period.

yrs. [*for* years]

hwys. [*for* highways]

figs. [*for* figures]

2. Punctuated abbreviations that stand for phrases or compounds are usually pluralized by adding -'s after the last period.

M.D.'s or M.D.s

Ph.D.'s or Ph.D.s

LL.B.'s or LL.B.s

v.p.'s

3. All-capitalized, unpunctuated abbreviations are usually pluralized by adding a lowercase -s.

IRAs

CPAs

PCs

SATs

4. The plural form of a few lowercase one-letter abbreviations is made by repeating the letter.

ll. [*for* lines]

pp. [*for* pages]

nn. [*for* notes]

vv. [*for* verses]

ff. or ff [*for* and the following ones or folios]

5. The plural form of abbreviations of units of measurement (including one-letter abbreviations) is the same as the singular form. (For more on units of measurement, see the section on pages 203–5.)

10 cc or cc. [*for* cubic centimeters]

30 m or m. [*for* meters]

15 mm or mm. [*for* millimeters]

24 h. [*for* hours]

10 min. [*for* minutes]

45 mi. [*for* miles]

However, in informal nontechnical text several such abbreviations are pluralized like other single-word abbreviations.

lbs.

qts.

gals.

hrs.

6. Possessives of abbreviations are formed like those of spelled-out nouns: the singular possessive is formed by adding -'s, the plural possessive simply by adding an apostrophe.

the CEO's speech

Apex Co.'s profits

the PACs' influence

Brown Bros.' ads

7. Compounds that consist of an abbreviation added to another word are formed in the same way as compounds that consist of spelled-out nouns.

an FDA-approved drug
an R&D-driven company
the Eau Claire, Wisc.-based publisher

Compounds formed by adding a prefix or suffix to an abbreviation are usually hyphenated.

pre-CD recordings
non-IRA deductions
a CIA-like operation
a PCB-free product

Specific Styling Conventions

A and An

1. The choice of the article *a* or *an* before abbreviations depends on the sound, rather than the actual letter, with which the abbreviation begins. If it begins with a consonant sound, *a* is normally used; if with a vowel sound, *an* is used.

a CD-ROM version
a YAF member
a U.S. Senator
an FDA-approved drug
an M.D. degree
an ABA convention

A.D. and B.C.

2. The abbreviations A.D. and B.C. and other abbreviated era designations usually appear in books and journals as small capitals; in newspapers and in typed or key-boarded material, they usually appear as full capitals. The abbreviation B.C. follows the date; A.D. usually precedes the date, though in many publications A.D. follows the date as well. In references to whole centuries, A.D. follows the century. (For more on era designations, see paragraph 12 on pages 190–91.)

A.D. 185 *but also* 185 A.D.

41 B.C.

the fourth century A.D.

**Agencies, Associations,
Organizations, and Companies**

3. The names of agencies, associations, and organizations are usually abbreviated after being spelled out on their first occurrence in a text. If a company is easily recognizable from its initials, the abbreviation is likewise usually employed after the first mention. The abbreviations are usually all-capitalized and unpunctuated. (In contexts where the abbreviation will be recognized, it often replaces the full name throughout.)

Next, the president of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority presented the annual PVTA award.

. . . at the American Bar Association (ABA) meeting in June. The ABA's new officers . . . International Business Machines released its first-quarter earnings figures today. An IBM spokesperson . . .

4. The words *Company*, *Corporation*, *Incorporated*, and *Limited* in company names are commonly abbreviated even at their first appearance, except in quite formal writing.

Procter & Gamble Company
or Procter & Gamble Co.
Brandywine Corporation
or Brandywine Corp.

Ampersand

5. The ampersand (&), representing the word *and*, is often used in the names of companies.

H&R Block
Standard & Poor's
Ogilvy & Mather

It is not used in the names of federal agencies.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Office of Management and Budget

Even when a spelled-out *and* appears in a company's official name, it is often replaced by an ampersand in writing referring to the company, whether for the sake of consistency or because of the writer's inability to verify the official styling.

6. When an ampersand is used in an abbreviation, there is usually no space on either side of the ampersand.

The Barkers welcome all guests to their B&B at 54 West Street.

The S&P 500 showed gains in technology stocks.

The Texas A&M Aggies prevailed again on Sunday.

7. When an ampersand is used between the last two elements in a series, the comma is omitted.

Jones, Kuhn & Malloy, Attorneys at Law

Books of the Bible

8. Books of the Bible are spelled out in running text but generally abbreviated in references to chapter and verse.

The minister based his first Advent sermon on Matthew.

Ye cannot serve God and mammon.—Matt. 6:24

Compass Points

9. Compass points are normally abbreviated when they follow street names; these abbreviations may be punctuated and are usually preceded by a comma.

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue[,] NW [N.W.]

When a compass point precedes the word *Street*, *Avenue*, etc., or when it follows the word but forms an integral part of the street name, it is usually spelled out.

230 West 43rd Street

50 Park Avenue South

Dates

10. The names of days and months are spelled out in running text.

at the Monday editorial meeting

the December issue of *Scientific American*

a meeting held on August 1, 1998

The names of months usually are not abbreviated in datelines of business letters, but they are often abbreviated in government and military correspondence.

business dateline: November 1, 1999

military dateline: 1 Nov 99

Degrees and Professional Ratings

11. Abbreviations of academic degrees are usually punctuated; abbreviations of pro-

fessional ratings are slightly more commonly unpunctuated.

Ph.D.

B.Sc.

M.B.A.

PLS

or P.L.S. [*for* Professional Legal Secretary]

CMA

or C.M.A. [*for* Certified Medical Assistant]

FACP

or F.A.C.P. [*for* Fellow of the American College of Physicians]

12. Only the first letter of each element in abbreviations of degrees and professional ratings is generally capitalized.

D.Ch.E. [*for* Doctor of Chemical Engineering]

Litt.D. [*for* Doctor of Letters]

D.Th. [*for* Doctor of Theology]

but

LL.B. [*for* Bachelor of Laws]

LL.M. [*for* Master of Laws]

LL.D. [*for* Doctor of Laws]

Geographical Names

13. When abbreviations of state names are used in running text immediately following the name of a city or county, the traditional state abbreviations are often used.

Ellen White of 49 Lyman St., Saginaw, Mich.,
has been chosen . . .

the Dade County, Fla., public schools

but

Grand Rapids, in western Michigan, . . .

Official postal service abbreviations for states are used in mailing addresses.

6 Bay Rd.

Gibson Island, MD 21056

14. Terms such as *Street*, *Road*, and *Boulevard* are often written as punctuated abbreviations in running text when they form part of a proper name.

an accident on Windward Road [*or* Rd.]

our office at 1234 Cross Blvd. [*or* Boulevard]

15. Names of countries are usually spelled in full in running text.

South Africa's president urged the United States to impose meaningful sanctions.

Abbreviations for country names (in tables, for example), are usually punctuated. When formed from the single initial letters of two or more individual words, they are sometimes unpunctuated.

Mex.

Scot.

Can.

U.K. *or* UK

Ger.

U.S. *or* US

16. *United States* is normally abbreviated when used as an adjective or attributive. When used as a noun, it is generally spelled out.

the U.S. Department of Justice

U.S. foreign policy

The United States has declined to participate.

17. *Saint* is usually abbreviated when it is part of a geographical or topographical name. *Mount*, *Point*, and *Fort* may be either spelled out or abbreviated. (For the abbreviation of *Saint* with personal names, see paragraph 25 below.)

St. Paul, Minnesota

or Saint Paul, Minnesota

St. Thomas, U.S.V.I. or Saint Thomas

Mount Vernon or Mt. Vernon

Point Reyes or Pt. Reyes

Fort Worth or Ft. Worth

Mt. Kilimanjaro or Mount Kilimanjaro

Latin Words and Phrases

18. Several Latin words and phrases are almost always abbreviated. They are punctuated, lowercased, and usually not italicized.

etc.

ibid.

i.e.

op. cit.

e.g.

q.v.

cf.

c. or ca.

viz.

fl.

et al.

et seq.

Versus is usually abbreviated *v.* in legal writing, *vs.* otherwise.

Da Costa v. United States

good vs. evil

or good versus evil

Latitude and Longitude

19. The words *latitude* and *longitude* are abbreviated in tables and in technical contexts but often written out in running text.

in a table: lat. 10°20'N or lat. 10-20N

in text: from 10°20' north latitude to
10°30' south latitude
or from lat. 10°20'N to lat.
10°30'S

Military Ranks and Units

20. Official abbreviations for military ranks follow specific unpunctuated styles for each branch of the armed forces. Non-military writing usually employs a punctuated and less concise style.

in the

military: BG Carter R. Stokes; USA
LCDR Dawn Wills-Craig, USN
Col S. J. Smith, USMC
LTJG Carlos Ramos, USCG
Sgt Bernard P. Brodkey, USAF

outside the

military: Brig. Gen. Carter R. Stokes
Lt. Comdr. Dawn Wills-Craig
Col. S. J. Smith
Lt. (j.g.) Carlos Ramos
Sgt. Bernard P. Brodkey

21. Outside the military, military ranks are usually given in full when used with a surname only but abbreviated when used with a full name.

Major Mosby

Maj. John S. Mosby

Number

22. The word *number*, when followed by a numeral, is usually abbreviated to *No.* or *no.*

The No. 1 priority is to promote profitability.

We recommend no. 6 thread.

Policy No. 123-5-X

Publ. Nos. 12 and 13

Personal Names

23. When initials are used with a surname, they are spaced and punctuated. Unspaced initials of a few famous persons, which may or may not be punctuated, are sometimes used in place of their full names.

E. M. Forster

C. P. E. Bach

JFK *or* J.F.K.

24. The abbreviations *Jr.* and *Sr.* may or may not be preceded by a comma.

Martin Luther King Jr.

or Martin Luther King, Jr.

Saint

25. The word *Saint* is often abbreviated when used before the name of a saint. When it forms part of a surname or an institution's name, it follows the style used by the person or institution. (For the styling of *Saint* in geographical names, see paragraph 17 on page 166.)

St. [*or Saint*] Teresa of Avila

Augustus Saint-Gaudens

Ruth St. Denis

St. Martin's Press

St. John's College

Scientific Terms

26. In binomial nomenclature, a genus name may be abbreviated to its initial letter after the first reference. The abbreviation is always capitalized, punctuated, and italicized.

... its better-known relative *Atropa belladonna* (deadly nightshade).

Only *A. belladonna* is commonly found in ...

27. Abbreviations for the names of chemical compounds and the symbols for chemical elements and formulas are unpunctuated.

MSG

O

PCB

NaCl

Pb

FeS

28. Abbreviations in computer terms are usually unpunctuated.

PC	Esc
RAM	Alt
CD-ROM	Ctrl
I/O	ASCII
DOS	EBCDIC

Time

29. When time is expressed in figures, the abbreviations *a.m.* (*ante meridiem*) and *p.m.* (*post meridiem*) are most often written as punctuated lowercase letters, sometimes as punctuated small capital letters. In newspapers, they usually appear in full-size capitals. (For more on *a.m.* and *p.m.*, see paragraph 39 on pages 202–3.)

8:30 a.m. or 8:30 A.M. or 8:30 A.M.

10:00 p.m. or 10:00 P.M. or 10:00 P.M.

Time-zone designations are usually capitalized and unpunctuated.

9:22 a.m. EST [*for* eastern standard time]

4:45 p.m. CDT [*for* central daylight time]

Titles and Degrees

30. The courtesy titles *Mr.*, *Ms.*, *Mrs.*, and *Messrs.* occur only as abbreviations today. The professional titles *Doctor*, *Professor*, *Representative*, and *Senator* are often abbreviated.

Ms. Lee A. Downs

Messrs. Lake, Mason, and Nambeth

Doctor Howe or Dr. Howe

31. Despite some traditional objections, the honorific titles *Honorable* and *Reverend* are often abbreviated, with and without *the* preceding the titles.

the Honorable Samuel I. O'Leary

or [the] Hon. Samuel I. O'Leary

the Reverend Samuel I. O'Leary

or [the] Rev. Samuel I. O'Leary

32. When an abbreviation for an academic degree, professional certification, or association membership follows a name, no courtesy or professional title precedes it.

Dr. Jesse Smith or Jesse Smith, M.D.

but not Dr. Jesse Smith, M.D.

Katherine Fox Derwinski, CLU

Carol W. Manning, M.D., FACPS

Michael B. Jones II, J.D.

Peter D. Cohn, Jr., CPA

33. The abbreviation *Esq.* (for *Esquire*) often follows attorneys' names in correspondence and in formal listings, and less often follows the names of certain other professionals, including architects, consuls, clerks of court, and justices of the peace. It is not used if a degree or professional rating follows the name, or if a

courtesy title or honorific (*Mr.*, *Ms.*, *Hon.*, *Dr.*, etc.) precedes the name.

Carolyn B. West, Esq.

not Ms. Carolyn B. West, Esq.

and not Carolyn B. West, J.D., Esq.

Units of Measurement

34. A unit of measurement that follows a figure is often abbreviated, especially in technical writing. The figure and abbreviation are separated by a space. If the numeral is written out, the unit should also be written out.

15 cu. ft. *but* fifteen cubic feet

What is its capacity in cubic feet?

35. Abbreviations for metric units are usually unpunctuated; those for traditional units are usually punctuated in nonscientific writing. (For more on units of measurement, see the section on pages 203–5.)

14 ml

8 ft.

12 km

4 sec.

50 m

20 min.

5 Numbers

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The treatment of numbers presents special difficulties because there are so many conventions to follow, some of which may conflict in a particular passage. The major issue is whether to spell out numbers or to express them in figures, and usage varies considerably on this point.

Numbers as Words or Figures

At one style extreme—usually limited to proclamations, legal documents, and some other types of very formal writing—all numbers (sometimes even including dates) are written out. At the other extreme, some types of technical writing may contain no written-out numbers. Figures are generally easier to read than spelled-out numbers; however, the spelled-out forms are helpful in certain circumstances, and are often felt to be less jarring than figures in nontechnical writing.

Basic Conventions

1. Two alternative basic conventions are in common use. The first and more widely used system requires that numbers up through nine be spelled out, and that figures be used for exact numbers greater than nine. (In a variation of this system, the number ten is spelled out.) Round numbers that consist of a whole number between one and nine followed by *hundred*, *thousand*, *million*, etc., may either be spelled out or expressed in figures.

The museum includes four rooms of early American tools and implements, 345 pieces in all.

He spoke for almost three hours, inspiring his audience of 19,000 devoted followers.

They sold more than 700 [*or seven hundred*] TVs during the 10-day sale.

She'd told him so a thousand times.

2. The second system requires that numbers from one through ninety-nine be spelled out, and that figures be used for all exact numbers above ninety-nine. (In a variation of this system, the number one hundred is spelled out.) Numbers that consist of a whole number between one and ninety-nine followed by *hundred*, *thousand*, *million*, etc., are also spelled out.

Audubon's engraver spent nearly twelve years completing these four volumes, which comprise 435 hand-colored plates.

In the course of four hours, she signed twenty-five hundred copies of her book.

3. Written-out numbers only use hyphens following words ending in *-ty*. The word *and* before such words is usually omitted.

twenty-two

five hundred ninety-seven

two thousand one hundred forty-nine

Sentence Beginnings

4. Numbers that begin a sentence are written out. An exception is occasionally made for dates. Spelled-out numbers that are lengthy and awkward are usually avoided by restructuring the sentence.

Sixty-two new bills will be brought before the committee.

or There will be 62 new bills brought before the committee.

Nineteen ninety-five was our best earnings year so far.

or occasionally 1995 was our best earnings year so far.

One hundred fifty-seven illustrations, including 86 color plates, are contained in the book.

or The book contains 157 illustrations, including 86 color plates.

Adjacent Numbers and Numbers in Series

5. Two separate figures are generally not written adjacent to one another in run-

ning text unless they form a series. Instead, either the sentence is rephrased or one of the figures is spelled out—usually the figure with the shorter written form.

sixteen ½-inch dowels
worked five 9-hour days in a row
won twenty 100-point games
lost 15 fifty-point matches
By 1997, thirty schools . . .

6. Numbers paired at the beginning of a sentence are usually written alike. If the first word of the sentence is a spelled-out number, the second number is also spelled out. However, each number may instead be styled independently, even if that results in an inconsistent pairing.

Sixty to seventy-five copies will be required.
or Sixty to 75 copies will be required.

7. Numbers that form a pair or a series within a sentence or a paragraph are often treated identically even when they would otherwise be styled differently. The style of the largest number usually determines that of the others. If one number is a mixed or simple fraction, figures are used for all the numbers in the series.

She wrote one composition for English and translated twelve [*or* 12] pages for French that night.

His total record sales came to a meager 8 [*or* eight] million; Bing Crosby's, he mused, may have surpassed 250 million.

The three jobs took 5, 12, and 4½ hours, respectively.

Round Numbers

8. Approximate or round numbers, particularly those that can be expressed in one or two words, are often spelled out in general writing. In technical and scientific writing, they are expressed as numerals.

seven hundred people *or* 700 people

five thousand years *or* 5,000 years

four hundred thousand volumes

or 400,000 volumes

but not 400 thousand volumes

but in technical writing

200 species of fish

50,000 people per year

300,000 years

9. Round (and round-appearing) numbers of one million and above are often expressed as figures followed by the word *million*, *billion*, and so forth. The figure may include a one- or two-digit decimal fraction; more exact numbers are written entirely in figures.

the last 600 million years

about 4.6 billion years old

1.2 million metric tons of grain

\$7.25 million
\$3,456,000,000

Ordinal Numbers

10. Ordinal numbers generally follow the styling rules for cardinal numbers. In technical writing, ordinal numbers are usually written as figure-plus-suffix combinations. Certain ordinal numbers—for example, those for percentiles and latitudes—are usually set as figures even in nontechnical contexts.

entered the seventh grade
wrote the 9th [*or* ninth] and 12th [*or* twelfth]
chapters
in the 21st [*or* twenty-first] century
the 7th percentile
the 38th parallel

11. In figure-plus-suffix combinations where the figure ends in 2 or 3, either a one- or a two-letter suffix may be used. A period does not follow the suffix.

2d *or* 2nd
33d *or* 33rd
102d *or* 102nd

Roman Numerals

12. Roman numerals are traditionally used to differentiate rulers and popes with identical names.

King George III

Henri IV

Innocent X

13. When Roman numerals are used to differentiate related males with the same name, they are used only with the full name. Ordinals are sometimes used instead of Roman numerals. The possessive is formed in the usual way. (For the use of *Jr.* and *Sr.*, see paragraph 24 on page 168.)

James R. Watson II

James R. Watson 2nd *or* 2d

James R. Watson II's [*or* 2nd's *or* 2d's]
alumni gift

14. Lowercase Roman numerals are generally used to number book pages that precede the regular Arabic sequence (often including a table of contents, acknowledgments, foreword, or other material).

on page iv of the preface

See Introduction, pp. ix–xiii.

15. Roman numerals are used in outlines; see paragraph 23 on page 197.

16. Roman numerals are found as part of a few established scientific and technical terms. Chords in the study of music harmony are designated by capital and lowercase Roman numerals (often followed

by small Arabic numbers). Most technical terms that include numbers, however, express them in Arabic form.

blood-clotting factor VII

cranial nerves II and IX

cancer stage III

Population II stars

type I error

vii₆ chord

but

adenosine 3',5'-monophosphate

cesium 137

HIV-2

17. Miscellaneous uses of Roman numerals include the Articles, and often the Amendments, of the Constitution. Roman numerals are still sometimes used for references to the acts and scenes of plays and occasionally for volume numbers in bibliographic references.

Article IX

Act III, Scene ii *or* Act 3, Scene 2

(III, ii) *or* (3, 2)

Vol. XXIII, No. 4 *but usually* Vol. 23, No. 4

Punctuation

These paragraphs provide general rules for the use of commas, hyphens, and en dashes with compound and large numbers. For spe-

cific categories of numbers, such as dates, money, and decimal fractions, see Specific Styling Conventions, beginning on page 186.

Commas in Large Numbers

1. In general writing, figures of four digits may be written with or without a comma; including the comma is more common. If the numerals form part of a tabulation, commas are necessary so that four-digit numerals can align with numerals of five or more digits.

2,000 cases *or less commonly* 2000 cases

2. Whole numbers of five digits or more (but not decimal fractions) use a comma to separate three-digit groups, counting from the right.

a fee of \$12,500

15,000 units

a population of 1,500,000

3. Certain types of numbers of four digits or more do not contain commas. These include decimal fractions and the numbers of policies and contracts, checks, street addresses, rooms and suites, telephones, pages, military hours, and years.

2.5544

Room 1206

Policy 33442

page 145

check 34567

1650 hours

12537 Wilshire Blvd. in 1929

4. In technical writing, the comma is frequently replaced by a thin space in numerals of five or more digits. Digits to the right of the decimal point are also separated in this way, counting from the decimal point.

28 666 203

209.775 42

Hyphens

5. Hyphens are used with written-out numbers between 21 and 99.

forty-one years old

his forty-first birthday

Four hundred twenty-two visitors were counted.

6. A hyphen is used in a written-out fraction employed as a modifier. A nonmodifying fraction consisting of two words only is usually left open, although it may also be hyphenated. (For details on fractions, see the section beginning on page 192.)

a one-half share

three fifths of her paycheck

or three-fifths of her paycheck

but

four five-hundredths

7. Numbers that form the first part of a modifier expressing measurement are followed by a hyphen. (For units of meas-

urement, see the section beginning on page 203.)

a 5-foot board
a 28-mile trip
an eight-pound baby
but
a \$6 million profit

8. Serial numbers, Social Security numbers, telephone numbers, and extended zip codes often contain hyphens that make lengthy numerals more readable or separate coded information.

020-42-1691
413-734-3134 *or* (413) 734-3134
01102-2812

9. Numbers are almost never divided at the end of a line. If division is unavoidable, the break occurs only after a comma.

Inclusive Numbers

10. Inclusive numbers—those that express a range—are usually separated either by the word *to* or by a hyphen or en dash, meaning “(up) to and including.”

spanning the years 1915 to 1941
the fiscal year 1994–95
the decade 1920–1929
pages 40 to 98
pp. 40–98

Inclusive numbers separated by a hyphen or en dash are not used after the words *from* or *between*.

from page 385 to page 419

not from page 385–419

from 9:30 to 5:30 *not* from 9:30–5:30

between 1997 and 2000

not between 1997–2000

between 80 and 90 percent

not between 80–90 percent

11. Inclusive page numbers and dates may be either written in full or elided (i.e., shortened) to save space or for ease of reading.

pages 523–526 *or* pages 523–26

1955–1969 *or* 1955–69

However, inclusive dates that appear in titles and other headings are almost never elided. Dates that appear with era designations are also not elided.

England and the French Revolution 1789–1797

1900–1901 *not* 1900–01 *and not* 1900–1

872–863 B.C. *not* 872–63 B.C.

12. The most common style for the elision of inclusive numbers is based on the following rules: Never elide inclusive numbers that have only two digits.

24–28 *not* 24–8

86–87 *not* 86–7

Never elide inclusive numbers when the first number ends in 00.

100–103 *not* 100–03 *and not* 100–3
 300–329 *not* 300–29

In other numbers, do not omit the tens digit from the higher number. *Exception:* Where the tens digit of both numbers is zero, write only one digit for the higher number.

234–37 *not* 234–7
 3,824–29 *not* 3,824–9
 605–7 *not* 605–07

13. Units of measurement expressed in words or abbreviations are usually used only after the second element of an inclusive number. Symbols, however, are repeated.

ten to fifteen dollars
 30 to 35 degrees Celsius
 an increase in dosage from 200 to 500 mg
but
 45° to 48° F
 \$50–\$60 million
or \$50 million to \$60 million

14. Numbers that are part of an inclusive set or range are usually styled alike: figures with figures, spelled-out words with other spelled-out words.

from 8 to 108 absences
 five to twenty guests

300,000,000 to 305,000,000
not 300 million to 305,000,000

Specific Styling Conventions

The following paragraphs, arranged alphabetically, describe styling practices commonly followed for specific situations involving numbers.

Addresses

1. Numerals are used for all building, house, apartment, room, and suite numbers except for *one*, which is usually written out.

6 Lincoln Road	Room 982
1436 Fremont Street	Suite 2000
Apartment 609	One Bayside Drive

When the address of a building is used as its name, the number in the address is often written out.

the sophisticated elegance of Ten Park Avenue

2. Numbered streets have their numbers written as ordinals. Street names from First through Tenth are usually written out, and numerals are used for all higher-numbered streets. Less commonly, all numbered street names up to and including One Hundredth are spelled out.

167 Second Avenue

19 South 22nd Street

or less commonly

19 South Twenty-second Street

145 East 145th Street

in the 60s

or in the Sixties [streets from 60th to 69th]

in the 120s [streets from 120th to 129th]

When a house or building number immediately precedes the number of a street, a spaced hyphen may be inserted between the two numbers, or the street number may be written out, for the sake of clarity.

2018 - 14th Street

2018 Fourteenth Street

3. Arabic numerals are used to designate highways and, in some states, county roads.

Interstate 90 *or* I-90

U.S. Route 1 *or* U.S. 1

Texas 23

County 213

Dates

4. Year numbers are written as figures. If a year number begins a sentence, it may be left as a figure but more often is spelled out; the sentence may also be rewritten to avoid beginning it with a figure.

Nineteen thirty-seven marked the opening of the Golden Gate Bridge.

or The year 1937 marked the opening of the Golden Gate Bridge.

or The Golden Gate Bridge opened in 1937.

the 1997 edition

5. A year number may be abbreviated to its last two digits when an event is so well known that it needs no century designation. In these cases an apostrophe precedes the numerals.

the blizzard of '88

class of '91 *or* class of 1991

the Spirit of '76

6. Full dates are traditionally written in the sequence month-day-year, with the year set off by commas that precede and follow it. An alternative style, used in the military and in U.S. government publications, is the inverted sequence day-month-year, which does not require commas.

traditional: July 8, 1976, was a warm, sunny day in Philadelphia.

the explosion on July 16, 1945,
at Alamogordo

military: the explosion on 16 July 1945
at Alamogordo

the amendment ratified on
18 August 1920

7. Ordinal numbers are not used in full dates. Ordinals are sometimes used, how-

ever, for a date without an accompanying year, and they are always used when preceded in a date by the word *the*.

December 4, 1829
 on December 4th
or on December 4
 on the 4th of December

8. All-figure dating, such as 6-8-95 or 6/8/95, is usually avoided in formal writing. For some readers, such dates are ambiguous; the examples above generally mean June 8, 1995, in the United States, but in almost all other countries mean August 6, 1995.

9. Commas are usually omitted from dates that include the month and year but not the day. The word *of* is sometimes inserted between the month and year.

in October 1997
 back in January of 1981

10. References to specific centuries may be either written out or expressed in figures.

in the nineteenth century
or in the 19th century
 a sixteenth-century painting
or a 16th-century painting

11. The name of a specific decade often takes a short form, usually with no apostrophe

and uncapitalized. When the short form is part of a set phrase, it is capitalized.

a song from the sixties
occasionally a song from the 'sixties
or a song from the Sixties
tunes of the Gay Nineties

The name of a decade is often expressed in numerals, in plural form. The figure may be shortened, with an apostrophe to indicate the missing numerals; however, apostrophes enclosing the figure are generally avoided. Any sequence of such numbers is generally styled consistently.

the 1950s and 1960s
or the '50s and '60s
but not
the '50's and '60's
the 1950s and '60s
the 1950s and sixties

12. Era designations precede or follow words that specify centuries or numerals that specify years. Era designations are unspaced abbreviations, punctuated with periods. They are usually typed or keyboarded as regular capitals, and typeset in books as small capitals and in newspapers as full-size capitals. The abbreviation B.C. (before Christ) is placed after the date, while A.D. (*anno Domini*, "in the year of our Lord") is usually placed before the

date but after a century designation. Any date given without an era designation or context is understood to mean A.D.

1792–1750 B.C.

between 600 and 400 B.C.

from the fifth or fourth millennium to c. 250 B.C.

between 7 B.C. and A.D. 22

c. A.D. 100 to 300

the second century A.D.

the 17th century

13. Less common era designations include A.H. (*anno Hegirae*, “in the year of [Muhammad’s] Hegira,” or *anno Hebraico*, “in the Hebrew year”); B.C.E. (before the common era; a synonym for B.C.); C.E. (of the common era; a synonym for A.D.); and B.P. (before the present; often used by geologists and archaeologists, with or without the word *year*). The abbreviation A.H. is usually placed before a specific date but after a century designation, while B.C.E., C.E., and B.P. are placed after both a date and a century.

the tenth of Muharram, A.H. 61 (October 10, A.D. 680)

the first century A.H.

from the 1st century B.C.E. to the 4th century C.E.

63 B.C.E.

the year 200 C.E.

5,000 years B.P.

two million years B.P.

Degrees of Temperature and Arc

14. In technical writing, a quantity expressed in degrees is generally written as a numeral followed by the degree symbol ($^{\circ}$). In the Kelvin scale, neither the word *degree* nor the symbol is used with the figure.

a 45° angle

$6^{\circ}40'10''\text{N}$

32°F

0°C

Absolute zero is zero kelvins or 0 K.

15. In general writing, the quantity expressed in degrees may or may not be written out. A figure may be followed by either the degree symbol or the word *degree*; a spelled-out number is always followed by the word *degree*.

latitude $43^{\circ}19'\text{N}$

latitude 43 degrees N

a difference of 43 degrees latitude

The temperature has risen about thirty degrees.

Fractions and Decimal Fractions

16. In nontechnical prose, fractions standing alone are usually written out. Common

fractions used as nouns are usually unhyphenated, although the hyphenated form is also common. When fractions are used as modifiers, they are hyphenated.

lost three quarters of its value
or lost three-quarters of its value
 had a two-thirds chance of winning

Multiword numerators and denominators are usually hyphenated, or written as figures.

one one-hundredth of an inch
or 1/100 of an inch

17. Mixed fractions (fractions with a whole number, such as $3\frac{1}{2}$) and fractions that form part of a modifier are usually expressed in figures in running text.

waiting $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours
 a $\frac{7}{8}$ -mile course
 $2\frac{1}{2}$ -pound weights

Fractions that are not on the keyboard or available as special characters on a computer may be typed in full-sized digits; in mixed fractions, a space is left between the whole number and the fraction.

a 7/8-mile course
 waiting 2 3/4 hours

18. Fractions used with units of measurement are usually expressed in figures, but common short words are often written out.

$\frac{1}{10}$ km

 $\frac{1}{3}$ oz.

 $\frac{7}{8}$ inch

half a mile

a half-mile walk

a sixteenth-inch gap

19. Decimal fractions are always set as figures. In technical writing, a zero is placed to the left of the decimal point when the fraction is less than a whole number; in general writing, the zero is usually omitted. Commas are not used in numbers following a decimal point.

An example of a pure decimal fraction is 0.375, while 1.402 is classified as a mixed decimal fraction.

a .22-caliber rifle

0.142857

20. Fractions and decimal fractions are usually not mixed in a text.

weights of $5\frac{1}{2}$ lbs., $3\frac{1}{4}$ lbs., and $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.

or weights of 5.5 lbs., 3.25 lbs., and .5 oz.

not weights of 5.5 lbs., $3\frac{1}{4}$ lbs., and $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.

Lists and Outlines

21. Both run-in and vertical lists are often numbered. In run-in numbered lists—that is, numbered lists that form part of a normal-looking sentence—each item is preceded by a number (or, less often, an italicized letter) enclosed in parentheses. The items are separated by commas if they are brief and unpunctuated; if they

are complex or punctuated, they are separated by semicolons. The entire list is introduced by a colon if it is preceded by a full clause, and often when it is not.

Among the fastest animals with measured maximum speeds are (1) the cheetah, clocked at 70 mph; (2) the pronghorn antelope, at 61 mph; (3) the lion, at 50 mph; (4) the quarter horse, at 47 mph; and (5) the elk, at 45 mph.

The new medical dictionary has several special features: (a) common variant spellings; (b) examples of words used in context; (c) abbreviations, combining forms, prefixes, and suffixes; and (d) brand names for drugs and their generic equivalents.

22. In vertical lists, each number is followed by a period; the periods align vertically. Runover lines usually align under the item's first word. Each item may be capitalized, especially if the items are syntactically independent of the words that introduce them.

The English peerage consists of five ranks, listed here in descending order:

1. Duke (duchess)
2. Marquess (marchioness)
3. Earl (countess)
4. Viscount (viscountess)
5. Baron (baroness)

The listed items end with periods (or question marks) when they are complete

sentences, and also often when they are not.

We require answers to the following questions:

1. Does the club intend to engage heavy-metal bands to perform in the future?
2. Will any such bands be permitted to play past midnight on weekends?
3. Are there plans to install proper acoustic insulation?

Items that are syntactically dependent on the words that introduce them often begin with a lowercase letter and end with a comma or semicolon just as in a run-in series in an ordinary sentence.

Among the courts that are limited to special kinds of cases are

1. probate courts, for the estates of deceased persons;
2. commercial courts, for business cases;
3. juvenile courts, for cases involving children under 18; and
4. traffic courts, for minor cases involving highway and motor vehicle violations.

A vertical list may also be unnumbered, or may use bullets (•) in place of numerals, especially where the order of the items is not important.

Chief among the advances in communication were these 19th-century inventions:

Morse's telegraph

Daguerre's camera
Bell's telephone
Edison's phonograph

This book covers in detail:

- Punctuation
- Capitalization and italicization
- Numbers
- Abbreviations
- Grammar and composition
- Word usage

23. Outlines standardly use Roman numerals, capitalized letters, Arabic numerals, and lowercase letters, in that order. Each numeral or letter is followed by a period, and each item is capitalized.

III. The United States from 1816 to 1850

A. Era of mixed feelings

1. Effects of the War of 1812
2. National disunity

B. The economy

1. Transportation revolution
 - a. Waterways
 - b. Railroads
2. Beginnings of industrialization

IV. The Civil War and Reconstruction, 1850–77

Money

24. A sum of money that can be expressed in one or two words is usually written out in running text, as is the unit of currency.

But if several sums are mentioned in the sentence or paragraph, all are usually expressed as figures and are used with the unspaced currency symbol.

The scalpers were asking eighty dollars.

Grandfather remembered the days of the five-cent cigar.

The shoes on sale are priced at \$69 and \$89.

Jill wanted to sell the lemonade for 25¢, 35¢, and 45¢.

25. Monetary units of mixed dollars-and-cents amounts are expressed in figures.

\$16.75

\$307.02

26. Even-dollar amounts are often expressed in figures without a decimal point and zeros. But when even-dollar amounts appear near amounts that include cents, the decimal point and zeros are usually added for consistency. The dollar sign is repeated before each amount in a series or inclusive range.

They paid \$500 for the watercolor.

The price had risen from \$8.00 to \$9.95.

bids of \$80, \$90, and \$100

in the \$80–\$100 range

27. Sums of money in the millions or above rounded to no more than one decimal

place are usually expressed in a combination of figures and words.

a \$10-million building program
\$4.5 billion

28. In legal documents a sum of money is usually written out fully, often capitalized, with the corresponding figures in parentheses immediately following.

Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000)

Organizations and Governmental Entities

29. Ordinal numbers in the names of religious organizations and churches are usually written out.

Seventh-Day Adventists
Third Congregational Church

30. Local branches of labor unions and fraternal organizations are generally identified by a numeral, usually placed after the name.

Motion Picture Studio Mechanics Local 476
Loyal Order of Moose No. 220
Local 4277 Communications Workers of America

31. In names of governmental bodies and electoral, judicial, and military units, ordi-

nal numbers of one hundred or below are usually written out but often not.

Second Continental Congress

Fifth Republic

First Congressional District

Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit

U.S. Eighth Army

Twelfth Precinct *or* 12th Precinct

Ninety-eighth Congress *or* 98th Congress

Percentages

32. In technical writing, and often in business and financial writing, percentages are written as a figure followed by an unspaced % symbol. In general writing, the word *percent* normally replaces the symbol, and the number may either be written out (if it does not include a decimal) or expressed as a figure.

technical: 15%

13.5%

general: 15 percent

87.2 percent

Fifteen percent of the applicants
were accepted.

a four percent increase
or a 4% increase

33. In a series or range, the percent sign is usually included with all numbers, even if one of the numbers is zero.

rates of 8.3%, 8.8%, and 9.1%
 a variation of 0% to 10%
or a 0%–10% variation

Plurals

34. The plurals of written-out numbers, including fractions, are formed by adding -s or -es.

at sixes and sevens
 divided into eighths
 ever since the thirties
 still in her thirties

35. The plurals of figures are formed by adding -s or less commonly -'s, especially where the apostrophe can prevent a confusing typographic appearance.

in the '80s
 since the 1980s [*or less commonly* 1980's]
 temperatures in the 80s and 90s [*or* 80's and 90's]
 the *l*'s looked like *l*'s

Ratios

36. Ratios are generally expressed in figures, usually with the word *to*; in technical writing the figures may be joined by a colon or a slash instead. Ratios expressed in words use a hyphen (or en dash) or the word *to*.

odds of 10 to 1
a proportion of 1 to 4
a 3:1 ratio
29 mi/gal
a fifty-fifty chance
a ratio of ten to four

Time of Day

37. In running text, the time of day is usually spelled out when expressed in even, half, or quarter hours or when it is followed by *o'clock*.

around four-thirty
arriving by ten
planned to leave at half past five
now almost a quarter to two
arrived at nine o'clock

38. Figures are generally used when specifying a precise time.

an appointment at 9:30 tomorrow morning
buses at 8:42, 9:12, and 10:03 a.m.

39. Figures are also used when the time of day is followed by *a.m.* and *p.m.* These are usually written as punctuated lowercase letters, sometimes as small capital letters. They are not used with *o'clock* or with other words that specify the time of day.

8:30 a.m. or 8:30 A.M.
10:30 p.m. or 10:30 P.M.

8 a.m. or 8 A.M.
 home by nine o'clock
 9:15 in the morning
 eleven in the evening

With *twelve o'clock* or 12:00, it is helpful to specify *midnight* or *noon* rather than the ambiguous *a.m.* or *p.m.*

The third shift begins at 12:00 (midnight).

40. Even-hour times are generally written with a colon and two zeros when used in a series or pairing with any times not ending in two zeros.

started at 9:15 a.m. and finished at 2:00 p.m.
 worked from 8:30 to 5:00

41. The 24-hour clock system—also called *military time*—uses no punctuation and omits *o'clock*, *a.m.*, *p.m.*, or any other additional indication of the time of day. The word *hours* sometimes replaces them.

from 0930 to 1100
 at 1600 hours

Units of Measurement

42. In technical writing, all numbers used with units of measurement are written as numerals. In nontechnical writing, such numbers often simply follow the basic conventions explained on pages 174–75;

alternatively, even in nontechnical contexts all such numbers often appear as numerals.

In the control group, only 8 of the 90 plants were affected.

picked nine quarts of berries

chugging along at 9 [*or* nine] miles an hour

a pumpkin 5 [*or* five] feet in diameter

weighing 7 pounds 9 ounces

a journey of 3 hours and 45 minutes

The singular form of units of measurement is used in a modifier before a noun, the plural form in a modifier that follows a noun.

a 2- by 9-inch board

or a two-inch by nine-inch board

or a two- by nine-inch board

measured 2 inches by 9 inches

or measured two inches by nine inches

a 6-foot 2-inch man

is 6 feet 2 inches tall

or is six feet two inches tall

is six feet two *or* is 6 feet 2

43. When units of measurement are written as abbreviations or symbols, the adjacent numbers are always figures. (For abbreviations with numerals, see the section on page 172.)

6 cm

67.6 fl. oz.

1 mm

4'

\$4.25

98.6°

44. When two or more quantities are expressed, as in ranges or dimensions or series, an accompanying symbol is usually repeated with each figure.

4" × 6" cards

temperatures of 30°, 55°, 43°, and 58°

\$450–\$500 suits

Other Uses

45. Figures are generally used for precise ages in newspapers and magazines, and often in books as well.

Taking the helm is Colin Corman, 51, a risk-taking high roller.

At 9 [*or* nine] she mastered the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto.

the champion 3[*or* three]-year-old filly
for anyone aged 62 and over

46. Figures are used to refer to parts of a book, such as volume, chapter, illustration, and table numbers.

vol. 5, p. 202

Chapter 8 *or* Chapter Eight

Fig. 4

47. Serial, policy, and contract numbers use figures. (For punctuation of these numbers, see paragraph 3 on page 181.)

Serial No. 5274

Permit No. 63709

48. Figures are used to express stock-market quotations, mathematical calculations, scores, and tabulations.

Industrials were up 4.23.

$3 \times 15 = 45$

a score of 8 to 2 *or* a score of 8-2

the tally: 322 ayes, 80 nays

6 Quotations

Styling Block Quotations	208
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Writers and editors rely on two common conventions to indicate that a passage of prose or poetry is quoted directly from another source. Short quotations are usually run in with the rest of the text and enclosed by quotation marks. Longer passages are usually set off distinctively as separate paragraphs; these paragraphs, called *block quotations* or *extracts*, are the main subject of this chapter. For the treatment of short run-in quotations, see the sections beginning on page 57 (for punctuation) and page 71 (for capitalization).

For prose quotations, length is generally assessed in terms of either the number of words or the number of lines. Quoted text is usually set as a block when it runs longer than about 50 words or three lines. However, individual requirements of consistency, clarity, or emphasis may alter these limits. A uniform policy should generally be observed throughout a given work.

Running in longer quotations can make

a passage read more smoothly; alternatively, setting even short quotations as extracts can make them easier for the reader to locate.

For quotations of poetry, different criteria are used. Even a single line of poetry is usually set as an extract, although it is also common to run one or two lines into the text.

Attribution of quotations to their author and source (other than epigraphs and blurbs) is dealt with in Chapter 7, “Notes and Bibliographies.” (The unattributed borrowed quotations in this chapter are from William Shakespeare, the *Congressional Record*, Abraham Lincoln, the U.S. Constitution, Martin Lister, the Song of Songs, William Wordsworth, John Keats, T. S. Eliot, Walt Whitman, Ezra Pound, and Matthew Arnold.)

Styling Block Quotations

Block quotations are generally set off from the text that precedes and follows them by adding extra space above and below the quotation, indenting the quoted matter on the left and often on the right as well, and setting the quotation in smaller type with less leading.

Introductory Punctuation, Capitalization, and Indention

Block quotations are usually preceded by a sentence ending with a colon or a period, and

they usually begin with a capitalized first word.

Fielding hides his own opinions on the matter deep in *Tom Jones*:

Now, in reality, the world have paid too great a compliment to critics, and have imagined them men of much greater profundity than they really are. From this complaisance the critics have been emboldened to assume a dictatorial power, and have so far succeeded that they are now become the masters, and have the assurance to give laws to those authors from whose predecessors they originally received them.

If the quoted passage continues an obviously incomplete (unquoted) sentence that precedes it, a comma may be used instead, or no punctuation at all, depending on the sentence's syntax, and the following extract will usually begin with a lowercase letter.

According to Fielding,

the critics have been emboldened to assume a dictatorial power, and have so far succeeded that they are now become the masters, and have the assurance to give laws to those authors from whose predecessors they originally received them.

When the beginning of a block quotation is also the beginning of a paragraph in the original, the first line of the quotation is normally indented like a paragraph, and any sub-

sequent paragraph openings in an extract are similarly indented.

Expanding on his theme, his tone veers toward the contemptuous:

The critic, rightly considered, is no more than the clerk, whose office it is to transcribe the rules and laws laid down by those great judges whose vast strength of genius hath placed them in the light of legislators, in the several sciences over which they presided. This office was all which the critics of old aspired to; nor did they ever dare to advance a sentence without supporting it by the authority of the judge from whence it was borrowed.

But in process of time, and in ages of ignorance, the clerk began to invade the power and assume the dignity of his master. The laws of writing were no longer founded on the practice of the author, but on the dictates of the critic. The clerk became the legislator, and those very peremptorily gave laws whose business it was, at first, only to transcribe them.

Quotations within an Extract

If a block quotation itself contains quoted material, double quotation marks enclose that material. (In a run-in quotation, these would be set as single quotation marks.)

Davenport reports what may have been the last words Pound ever spoke in public:

“Tempus loquendi,” the frail voice said with its typical rising quaver, “tem-

pus tacendi," quoting Ecclesiastes, Malatesta, and Thomas Jefferson simultaneously, and explaining, in this way, that he had said quite enough.

Dialogue in a block quotation is enclosed in quotation marks, and the beginning of each speech is marked by paragraph indentation, just as in the original.

Next O'Connor's hapless protagonist is collared and grilled by the retired schoolteacher in the second-floor apartment:

"Florida is not a noble state," Mr. Jerger said, "but it is an important one."

"It's important alrighto," Ruby said.

"Do you know who Ponce de Leon was?"

"He was the founder of Florida," Ruby said brightly.

"He was a Spaniard," Mr. Jerger said.

"Do you know what he was looking for?"

"Florida," Rudy said.

"Ponce de Leon was looking for the fountain of youth," Mr. Jerger said, closing his eyes.

"Oh," Ruby muttered.

If a speech runs to more than one paragraph, open quotation marks appear at the beginning of each paragraph of the extract; closing quotation marks appear only at the end of the final paragraph.

For dialogue from a play or meeting minutes, the speakers' names are set on a small

indentation, in italics or small capitals, followed by a period or colon. Runover lines generally indent about an em space further.

This vein of rustic drollery resurfaces in the scene where the transformed Bottom meets the fairies (act 2, scene 1):

Bottom. I cry your worship's mercy, heartily: I beseech your worship's name.

Cobweb. Cobweb.

Bottom. I shall desire you of more acquaintance, good Master Cobweb: if I cut my finger, I shall make bold with you. Your name, honest gentleman?

Peaseblossom. Peaseblossom.

Bottom. I pray you, commend me to Mistress Squash, your mother, and to Master Peascod, your father.

SEN. BAUCUS: Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

SEN. WARNER: Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER: Without objection, it is so ordered.

Alterations and Omissions

Although absolute accuracy is always of first importance when quoting from another

source, there are certain kinds of alterations and omissions that authors and editors are traditionally allowed to make. (The conventions described in this section are illustrated with block quotations; however, the conventions are equally applicable to run-in quotations.)

Obviously, the author must always be careful not to change the essential meaning of a quotation by making deletions or alterations or by putting quotations in contexts that may tend to mislead the reader.

Changing Capital and Lowercase Letters

If the opening words of a quotation act as a sentence within the quotation, the first word is capitalized, even if that word did not begin a sentence in the original version.

Henry Fielding was already expressing identical sentiments in 1749:

The critics have been emboldened to assume a dictatorial power, and have so far succeeded that they are now become the masters. . . .

In situations in which meticulous handling of original source material is crucial (particularly in legal and scholarly writing), the capital letter would be placed in brackets to indicate that it was not capitalized in the original source.

[T]he critics have been emboldened to assume a dictatorial power, and have so far succeeded that they are now become the masters. . . .

Even if the quotation's first word was capitalized in the original, it is generally not capitalized when the quoted passage is joined syntactically to the sentence that precedes it.

Fielding asserts boldly that

the critic, rightly considered, is no more than the clerk, whose office it is to transcribe the rules and laws laid down by those great judges whose vast strength of genius hath placed them in the light of legislators, in the several sciences over which they presided.

Omissions at the Beginning or End of a Quotation

Since it is understood that most quotations are extracted from a larger work, ellipsis points at the beginning and end of the quotation are usually unnecessary. If a quotation ends in the middle of a sentence, however, the period following the omission is closed up to the last word and followed by three ellipsis points. Any punctuation that immediately follows the last quoted word in the original is generally dropped.

We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion

of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives. . . .

If the omission in the quoted passage ends with a question mark or an exclamation point, such punctuation follows the three ellipsis points. (Some style guides ask that these marks precede the ellipsis points.)

Omissions within Quotations

Omissions from quoted material that fall within a sentence are indicated by three ellipsis points.

The Place where it is kept . . . is a very Pit or Hole, in the middle of the Fauxbourg, and belongs to the Great Abbey of that Name.

Punctuation used in the original that falls on either side of the ellipsis points is often omitted; however, it may be retained, especially to help clarify the meaning or structure of the sentence.

We the People of the United States, in Order to . . . establish Justice, . . . provide for the common defence, . . . and secure the Blessings of Liberty . . . , do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

If an omission includes one or more entire sentences, or the beginning or end of a sen-

tence, within a paragraph, the end punctuation preceding or following the omission is retained and followed by three ellipsis points.

We can not dedicate—we can not consecrate—we can not hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. . . . It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced.

If a full paragraph or more is omitted, the omission is indicated by ellipsis points at the end of the paragraph that precedes the omission.

The words were written in 1915 by Hans Leip (1893–1983), a German soldier on his way to the Russian front parting from his sweetheart. His “Lili Marleen” was really a combination of two girls, his own, Lili, and his buddy’s, Marleen. The poem was published in 1937 in a book of Leip’s poems entitled *Die kleine Hafenorgel* (“The Little Harbor Organ”). Norbert Schultze (1911–), who would become the prominent composer of such propaganda titles as “The Panzers Are Rolling in Africa,” set “Lili Marleen” the next year. . . .

It was Lale Andersen, a singer in literary cabarets in Munich and Berlin, whose

record of the song was released in late 1939. It was not initially a success, but on August 18, 1941, a German shortwave radio station in Belgrade broadcast the song to Rommel's troops in North Africa.

If text is omitted from the beginning of any paragraph other than the first, three indented ellipsis points mark the omission. Note that they do not stand in for any omitted text preceding the paragraph.

We were in Paris at the time of the Fair of St. Germain. It lasts six weeks at least: The Place where it is kept, well bespeaks its Antiquity; for it is a very Pit or Hole, in the middle of the Fauxbourg, and belongs to the Great Abbey of that Name. . . .

. . . Knavery here is in perfection as with us; as dextrous Cut-Purses and Pick-Pockets. A Pick-Pocket came into the Fair at Night, extreamly well Clad, with four Lacqueys with good Liveries attending him: He was caught in the Fact, and more Swords were drawn in his Defence than against him; but yet he was taken, and delivered into the Hands of Justice, which is here sudden and no jest.

Other Minor Alterations

Archaic spellings and styles of type, punctuation, and capitalization should be preserved in direct quotations if they do not interfere with a reader's comprehension.

Also he shewed us the *Mummy of a Woman* intire. The scent of the Hand was to me not unpleasant; but I could not liken it to any Perfume now in use with us.

If such archaisms occur frequently, the author may wish to modernize them, adding an explanation to this effect in a note or in the preface. (Several passages quoted in this chapter have been tacitly modernized.) Obvious typographical errors in modern works may be corrected without comment. Inserting *sic* in brackets after a misspelling in the original version is not necessary unless there is a specific reason for calling attention to the variant. The same holds for using *sic* for other small apparent errors of fact, grammar, punctuation, or word choice or omission.

Sometimes an author wishes to insert a brief explanation, clarification, summary of omitted material, or correction. These insertions, or *interpolations*, are enclosed in brackets. (For more on this use of brackets, see the section beginning on page 4.)

For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone;

The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle [i.e., turtle-dove] is heard in our land.

Words that were not originally italicized may be italicized in the quoted passage for the

sake of emphasis, as long as the author adds a bracketed notation such as “Italics mine,” “Italics added,” or “Emphasis added” immediately following the italicized portion or (more often) at the end of the passage.

Both Russell and Ochs had noted the same reference: “Portions of the Feingold collection found their way into the hands of Goering and Hess; others would later surface in Romania, Argentina and Paraguay; and *the still unaccounted-for pieces were rumored to be part of a prominent Alsatian estate*, but no systematic effort was made to recover them.” [Italics mine.]

Any footnote or endnote numbers or parenthetical references in the original version are usually omitted from short quotations; in their place authors often insert their own references.

Epigraphs and Blurbs

Thorough documentation is normally required only in scholarly writing, and even in scholarly contexts certain kinds of set-off quotations need not be exhaustively documented. These include quotations from classic sources—which will have been published in a number of different editions, and therefore have various possible publishing data—

and casual allusions that are not essential to the author's central argument.

Such quotations may particularly be employed as *epigraphs*—short quotations from another source placed at the beginning of an article, chapter (where they may be placed above the title), or book. Other instances would include examples illustrating grammatical elements or word usage, and dictionaries of quotations.

For such quotations, the attribution is generally set by itself on the line below the quotation. Alternatively (and especially if space is a concern), it is run in on the last line of the quotation. When set on its own line, it is generally preceded by an em dash; somewhat less frequently, it is set without an em dash, often enclosed in parentheses. Whatever its punctuation, it is normally set flush right. When run in with the quotation, it usually follows the latter immediately with no intervening space, separated only by either an em dash or parentheses.

The name of the quotation's author is normally set roman, and the name of the publication in which it originally appeared is normally set italic. Either may instead be set in small caps. If all the attributions consist only of authors' names, they may be set in italics.

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential fact of life, and see if I could not learn

what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.

—Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*

or

(Henry David Thoreau)

Epigraph attributions are often very brief; this one, for example, could have read “H. D. Thoreau,” “Thoreau, *Walden*,” or simply “Thoreau.”

Advertising *blurbs*—favorable quotations from reviewers or customers that appear on book jackets or advertising materials—are standardly enclosed in quotation marks, and the attribution is never enclosed in parentheses. But the latter’s placement may vary, subject to the overall design of the jacket or advertisement. The attribution may appear on its own line or be run in with the blurb; it may be preceded by an em dash or unpunctuated; it may be set flush with the right margin of the quotation, run in with the quotation with no intervening space, centered on its own line, or aligned on a set indentation.

“Ms. Kingston finds the necessary, delicate links between two cultures, two centuries, two sexes. Seldom has the imagination performed a more beautiful feat.”—*Washington Post*

When an attribution line follows a passage of poetry, the line may be set flush right, cen-

tered on the longest line in the quotation, or indented a standard distance from the right margin.

Bring me my Bow of burning gold,
Bring me my Arrows of desire,
Bring me my Spear; O clouds unfold!
Bring me my Chariot of fire!

—William Blake, *Milton*

An attribution line following quoted lines from a play or the Bible may include the act and scene or the book and verse.

All the world's a stage
And all the men and women merely
players;
They have their exits and their
entrances;
And one man in his time plays many
parts,
His acts being seven ages.

(*As You Like It*, 2.7)

A feast is made for laughter, and wine
maketh merry:
but money answereth all things.

(Ecclesiastes, 10:19)

(For details on documenting other sources of quotations, see Chapter 7, "Notes and Bibliographies," and the section beginning on page 229.)

Quoting Verse

The major difference between quotations of prose and poetry is that lines of poetry always keep their identity as separate lines. When run in with the text, the poetic lines are separated by a spaced slash.

Was it Whistler, Wilde, or Swinburne that Gilbert was mocking in the lines "Though the Philistines may jostle, you will rank as an apostle in the high aesthetic band, / If you walk down Piccadilly with a poppy or a lily in your medieval hand"?

When poetic lines are set as extracts, the lines are divided exactly as in the original.

Dickinson describes this post-traumatic numbness as death in life:

This is the Hour of Lead—
Remembered, if outlived,
As Freezing persons, recollect the
Snow—
First—Chill—then Stupor—then the
letting go—

Up to three or four short lines of poetry are occasionally run in if they are closely integrated with the text.

In the thoroughly miscellaneous stanza that follows—"He has many friends, lay men and clerical, / Old Foss is the name of his cat; / His body is perfectly spherical, / He weareth a runcible hat"—Lear seems to

bestow new meaning on his older coinage
runcible.

However, quotations of as few as one or two lines are usually set off from the text as extracts.

He experienced the heady exaltation of
Revolutionary idealism:

Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very Heaven!

The horizontal placement of a poetry excerpt is normally determined by its longest line, which is centered horizontally, all the other lines aligning accordingly.

The relative indentions of an excerpt's lines should always be preserved.

The famous first stanza may have given the English-speaking world its lasting image of the Romantic poet:

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness
pains

My sense, as though of hemlock I had
drunk,

Or emptied some dull opiate to the
drains

One minute past, and Lethe-wards
had sunk:

'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thine happi-
ness,—

That thou, light winged Dryad of
the trees,

In some melodious plot

Of beechen green, and shadows num-
berless,
Singest of summer in full-throated
ease.

If the quotation does not start at the beginning of a line, it should be indented accordingly.

I do not find
The Hanged Man. Fear death by water.

If the lines of a poem are too long to center, the quotation may be set using a standard indentation, with runover lines indented further.

As it nears its end, the poem's language becomes increasingly evocative:

The last scud of day holds back for me,
It flings my likeness after the rest and
true as any on the shadowed wilds,
It coaxes me to vapor and the dusk.

In a speech that extends over several lines, quotation marks are placed at the beginning and end of the speech. If a speech extends beyond one stanza or section, quotation marks are placed at the beginning of each stanza or section within the speech.

In the cream gilded cabin of his steam
yacht
Mr. Nixon advised me kindly, to
advance with fewer
Dangers of delay. "Consider
Carefully the reviewer.

“I was as poor as you are;
When I began I got, of course,
Advance on royalties, fifty at first,” said
Mr. Nixon,

It was formerly common to begin every line within a speech with quotation marks, but these added quotation marks are now standardly removed without comment by modern editors.

When a full line or several consecutive lines of poetry are omitted from an extract, the omission is indicated by a line of ellipsis points extending the length of either the preceding line or the missing line.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which
seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
.....
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor
light,

Poetry extracts that do not end in a period or other terminal punctuation may be followed by ellipsis points; alternatively, the original punctuation (or lack of it) may be left by itself.

This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd
isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-paradise, [. . .]

7 Notes and Bibliographies

Footnotes and Endnotes	229
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Writers and editors use various methods to indicate the source of a quotation or piece of information borrowed from another work.

In high-school papers and in popular writing, sources are usually identified only by casual mentions within the text itself.

In college term papers, in serious nonfiction books published for the general public, and traditionally in scholarly books and articles in the humanities, footnotes or endnotes are preferred. In this system, sequential numbers within the text refer the reader to notes at the bottom of the page or at the end of the article, chapter, or book; these notes contain full bibliographic information on the works cited.

In scholarly works in the natural sciences and social sciences, and increasingly in the humanities as well, parenthetical references

within the text refer the reader to an alphabetically arranged list of references at the end of the article, chapter, or book.

The system of footnotes or endnotes is the more flexible, since it allows for commentary on the work or subject and can also be used for brief discussions not tied to any specific work. However, style manuals tend to encourage the use of parenthetical references in addition to or instead of footnotes or endnotes, since for most kinds of material they are efficient and convenient for both writer and reader.

In a carefully documented work, an alphabetically ordered bibliography or list of references normally follows the entire text (including any endnotes), regardless of which system is used.

Though different publishers and journals have adopted slightly varying styles, the following examples illustrate standard styles for footnotes and endnotes, parenthetical references, and bibliographic entries. For more extensive treatment than can be provided here, consult *Merriam-Webster's Manual for Writers and Editors* (2nd ed., Merriam-Webster, 1995); *The Chicago Manual of Style* (14th ed., Univ. of Chicago Press, 1993); *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (5th ed., Modern Language Assn. of America, 1999); or *Scientific Style and Format* (6th ed., Cambridge Univ. Press, 1994).

Footnotes and Endnotes

Footnotes and endnotes are usually indicated by superscript numbers placed immediately after the material to be documented, whether it is an actual quotation or a paraphrase of the language used in the source. The number is placed at the end of a paragraph, sentence or clause, or at some other natural break in the sentence; it follows all marks of punctuation except the dash.

As one observer noted, "There was, moreover, a degree of logic in the new LDP-SDPJ axis, in that the inner cores of both parties felt threatened by the recent electoral reform legislation,"⁷ and . . .

The numbering is consecutive throughout a paper, article, or monograph; in a book, it usually starts over with each new chapter.

The note itself begins with the corresponding number. Footnotes appear at the bottom of the page; endnotes, which take exactly the same form as footnotes, are gathered at the end of the article, chapter, or book.

Endnotes are generally preferred over footnotes by writers and publishers because they are easier to handle when preparing both manuscript and printed pages, though they can be less convenient for the reader.

Both footnotes and endnotes provide full bibliographic information for a source the first time it is cited. In subsequent references,

this information is shortened to the author's last name and the page number. If more than one book by an author is cited, a shortened form of the title is also included. The Latin abbreviation *ibid.* is sometimes used to refer to the book cited in the immediately preceding note.

The following examples describe specific elements of first references and reflect humanities citation style; notes 12–14 show examples of subsequent references. All of the cited works appear again in the Bibliographies and Reference Lists section beginning on page 235.

Books

The basic elements for book citations are (1) the author's name; (2) the book's title (in italics); (3) the place of publication, publisher, and date of publication (in parentheses); and (4) the page(s) where the information appears.

One author:

1. Elizabeth Bishop, *The Complete Poems: 1927–1979* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1983), 46.

Two or three authors:

2. Bert Hölldobler and Edward O. Wilson, *The Ants* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap–Harvard Univ. Press, 1990), 119.

3. Gerald J. Alred, Charles T. Brusaw, and Walter E. Oliu, *The Business*

Writer's Handbook, 6th ed. (New York: St. Martin's, 2000), 182–84.

Four or more authors:

4. Randolph Quirk et al., *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language* (London: Longman, 1985), 135.

Corporate author:

5. Commission on the Humanities, *The Humanities in American Life* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1980), 58.

No author:

6. *The World Almanac and Book of Facts 2000* (Mahwah, N.J.: World Almanac Books, 1999), 763.

Editor and/or translator:

7. Arthur S. Banks and Thomas C. Muller, eds., *Political Handbook of the World, 1999* (Binghamton, N.Y.: CSA Publications, 1999), 293–95.

8. Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. and ed. H. M. Parshley (New York: Knopf, 1953; Vintage, 1989), 446.

Part of a book:

9. G. Ledyard Stebbins, "Botany and the Synthetic Theory of Evolution," *The Evolutionary Synthesis: Perspectives on the Unification of Biology*, ed. Ernst Mayr and William B. Provine (1980; reprint, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1998), 382–89.

*Second or
later edition:*

10. Albert C. Baugh and Thomas Cable, *A History of the English Language*, 4th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1992), 14.

*Two or more
volumes:*

11. Ronald M. Nowak, *Walker's Mammals of the World*, 6th ed., 2 vols. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1999), 2: 461.

*In subsequent
references:*

12. Nowak, 462.

13. Baugh and Cable, *History*, 18–19.

14. Ibid., 23.

Articles

The basic elements for citations of articles are (1) the author's name, (2) the article's title (in quotation marks), (3) the name of the periodical (in italics), with information identifying the issue (following the form the periodical itself uses), and (4) the page(s) referred to.

*Weekly
magazine:*

15. Richard Preston, "A Reporter at Large: Crisis in the Hot Zone," *New Yorker*, Oct. 26, 1992: 58.

*Monthly
magazine:*

16. John Lukacs, "The End of the Twentieth Century," *Harper's*, Jan. 1993: 40.

*Journal
paginated
by issue:*

17. Roseann Duenas Gonzalez, "Teaching Mexican American Students to Write: Capitalizing on the Culture," *English Journal* 71, no. 7 (Nov. 1982): 22–24.

*Journal
paginated
by volume:*

18. Stephen Jay Gould and Niles Eldredge, "Punctuated Equilibria: The Tempo and Mode of Evolution Reconsidered," *Paleobiology* 3 (1977): 121.

Newspaper:

19. William J. Broad, "Big Science Squeezes Small-Scale Researchers," *New York Times*, Dec. 29, 1992: C1.

Signed review:

20. Gordon Craig, review of *The Wages of Guilt: Memories of War in Germany and Japan*, by Ian Buruma, *New York Review of Books*, July 14, 1994: 43–45.

*In subsequent
reference:*

21. Gonzalez, 23.

Parenthetical References

Parenthetical references are highly abbreviated bibliographic citations that appear within the text itself, enclosed in parentheses. These direct the reader to a detailed bibliography or reference list at the end of the work,

often removing the need for footnotes or endnotes.

A parenthetical reference, like a footnote or endnote number, is placed immediately after the quotation or piece of information whose source it refers to; punctuation not associated with a quotation follows the reference.

As one observer noted, "There was, moreover, a degree of logic in the new LDP-SDPJ axis, in that the inner cores of both parties felt threatened by the recent electoral reform legislation" (Banks, 448), and . . .

Any element of a reference that is clear from the context of the running text may be omitted.

As noted in Banks, "There was, moreover, a degree of logic in the new LDP-SDPJ axis, in that the inner cores of both parties felt threatened by the recent electoral reform legislation" (448), and . . .

Parenthetical references in the humanities usually include only the author's (or editor's) last name and a page reference (see extract above). This style is known as the *author-page system*.

In the sciences, the year of publication is included after the author's name with no intervening punctuation, and the page number is usually omitted. This scientific style is commonly called the *author-date system*.

As some researchers noted, “New morphological, biochemical, and karyological studies suggest that *P. boylii* actually comprises several distinct species” (Nowak 1999), and . . .

To distinguish among cited works by the same author, the author’s name may be followed by the specific work’s title, which is usually shortened. (If the author-date system is being used, a lowercase letter can be added after the year—e.g., 1999a, 1999b—to distinguish between works published in the same year.)

Each of the following references is keyed to an entry in the bibliographic listings in the following section.

Humanities

style:

(Banks, 448)
(Quirk et al., 135)
(Baugh and Cable, *History*, 14)
(Comm. on the Humanities, 58)

Sciences style:

(Gould and Eldredge 1977)
(Nowak 1999a)

Bibliographies and Reference Lists

A *bibliography* lists all of the works that a writer has found relevant in writing the text. A *reference list* includes only works specifically men-

tioned in the text or from which a particular quotation or piece of information was taken. In all other respects, the two listings are identical.

Bibliographies and reference lists both differ from bibliographic endnotes in that their entries are unnumbered, are arranged in alphabetical order by author, and use different patterns of indention and punctuation. The basic elements are (1) the author's name (inverted for the first author); (2) the book's title (in italics); (3) the place of publication, publisher, and date of publication; and (4) for periodical articles only, the page(s) where the information appears. The following lists illustrate standard styles employed in, respectively, the humanities and social sciences and the natural sciences:

The principal differences between the two styles are these: In the sciences, (1) an initial is generally used instead of the author's first name, (2) the date is placed directly after the author's name, (3) all words in titles are lowercased except the first word, the first word of any subtitle, and proper nouns and adjectives, and (4) article titles are not enclosed in quotation marks. Increasingly in scientific publications, (5) the author's first and middle initials are closed up without any punctuation, and (6) book and journal titles are not italicized. The following bibliographic lists include both books and periodical articles.

Humanities style

- Alred, Gerald J., Charles T. Brusaw, and Walter E. Oliu. *The Business Writer's Handbook*. 6th ed. New York: St. Martin's, 2000.
- Banks, Arthur S., and Thomas C. Muller, eds. *Political Handbook of the World, 1999*. Binghamton, N.Y.: CSA Publications, 1999.
- Baugh, Albert C., and Thomas Cable. *A History of the English Language*. 4th ed. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1992.
- Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex*. Trans. and ed. H. M. Parshley. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953; Vintage, 1989.
- Bishop, Elizabeth. *The Complete Poems: 1927–1979*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1983.
- Commission on the Humanities. *The Humanities in American Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980.
- Craig, Gordon. Review of *The Wages of Guilt: Memories of War in Germany and Japan*, by Ian Buruma. *New York Review of Books*, July 14, 1994: 43–45.
- Gonzalez, Roseann Duenas. "Teaching Mexican American Students to Write: Capitalizing on the Culture." *English Journal* 71, no. 7 (November 1982): 22–24.
- Lukacs, John. "The End of the Twentieth Century." *Harper's*, January 1993: 39–58.
- Quirk, Randolph, Sidney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech, and Jan Svartvik. *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. London: Longman, 1985.

The World Almanac and Book of Facts 2000. Mahwah, N.J.: World Almanac Books, 1999.

Sciences style

Broad, W.J. 1992. Big science squeezes small-scale researchers. *New York Times*, 29 Dec.:C1.

Gould, S.J., and N. Eldredge. 1977. Punctuated equilibria: The tempo and mode of evolution reconsidered. *Paleobiology* 3:115–51.

Hölldobler, B., and E.O. Wilson. 1990. *The ants*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap–Harvard Univ. Press.

Nowak, R.M. 1999. *Walker's mammals of the world*. 6th ed. 2 vols. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press.

Preston, R. 1992. A reporter at large: Crisis in the hot zone. *New Yorker*, 26 Oct.:58–81.

Stebbins, G.L. Botany and the synthetic theory of evolution. 1980. *The evolutionary synthesis: Perspectives on the unification of biology*. Ed. E. Mayr and W.B. Provine. Reprint, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1998.

Special Cases

Reference lists frequently contain items that do not fit neatly into any of the categories described above. Some are printed items such as government publications, others are nonprint items. These special references are styled in formats similar to those used for books and articles.

Television and radio programs

"Goodbye, Farewell, and Amen." *M*A*S*H*. CBS. WFSB-TV, Hartford, Conn. 28 Feb. 1983.

Burns, Ken. *Baseball*. PBS. WGBY-TV, Springfield, Mass. 28 Sept. 1994.

Computer software

Import/Export USA. CD-ROM. Detroit: Gale Research, 1998. Windows.

On-line sources

Kinsley, Michael. "Totally Disingenuous." *Slate*, 11 Sept. 2000. <http://slate.msn.com/Readme/00-09-11/Readme.asp> [13 Sept. 2000].

"French Truckers Create Blockades." *AP Online*. 4 Sept. 2000. Lexis-Nexis [14 Sept. 2000].

Microform

"Marine Mammals; Permit Modification: Naval Facilities Engineering Commission (P8D)." *Federal Register* 55.1:90. Washington: CIS, 1990. Microfiche.

Government publications

U.S. Department of Labor. *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2000-1*. Washington, D.C.: GPO, 2000.

U.S. Congress. Senate. Subcommittee on Administrative Law and Government Relations of the Committee on the Judiciary. *Hearings*

on Post-Employment Restrictions for Federal Officers and Employees. 101st Cong., 1st sess. 27 Apr. 1989. H.R. 2267.

Cong. Rec. [Congressional Record]. 29 June 1993: S8269-70.

Personal interview

Norris, Nancy Preston. Conversation with author. Wilkes-Barre, Pa., 10 October 1995.

Christian, Dr. Lionel. Telephone conversation with author, 2 January 1996.

Appendix A

Word Usage

Problems in Word Usage

The following list discusses words that present a variety of problems to writers. Review it from time to time to keep yourself alert to potential usage issues in your own writing. (See also the next section, which provides a list of easily confused words and clichés.)

aggravate *Aggravate* is used chiefly in two meanings: “to make worse” (“aggravated her shoulder injury,” “their financial position was aggravated by the downturn”) and “to irritate, annoy” (“The President was aggravated by the French intransigence”). The latter is not often seen in writing. However, *aggravation* usually means “irritation,” and *aggravating* almost always expresses annoyance.

almost, most *Most* is often used like *almost* in speech (“Most everyone was there”), but it is rarely seen in writing.

alot, a lot *Alot* hardly ever appears in print and is usually regarded as an error.

alright Though the business community has been using the one-word *alright* since the 1920s, it is only gradually gaining acceptance and is still often regarded as an error. It is rarely seen in published works outside of newspaper writing.

amount, number *Number* is normally used with nouns that can form a plural and can be used with a numeral (“a large number of orders,” “any number of times”). *Amount* is mainly used with nouns that denote a substance or concept that can’t be divided and counted up (“the annual amount of rainfall,” “a large amount of money”). The use of *amount* with count nouns, usually when the number of things can be thought of as a mass or collection (“a substantial amount of job offers”), is often criticized; and many people will regard it as an error.

apt, liable Both *liable* and *apt*, when followed by an infinitive, are used nearly interchangeably with *likely* (“more liable to get tired easily,” “roads are apt to be slippery”). This use of *apt* is widely accepted, but some people think *liable* should be limited to situations risking an undesirable outcome (“If you speed, you’re liable to be caught”) and it is generally used this way in writing.

as, as if, like *Like* used as a conjunction in the sense of *as* (“just like I used to do”) or *as if* (“It looks like it will rain”) has been frequently criticized, especially since its use in

a widely publicized cigarette commercial slogan. Though *like* has been used in these ways for nearly 600 years, it is safer to use *as* or *as if* instead.

as far as “As far as clothes, young people always know best” is an example of *as far as* used as a preposition. This use developed from the more common conjunction use (“As far as clothes are concerned . . .”) by omitting the following verb or verb phrase; it is very widely used in speech but is often regarded as an error in print.

awful It has been traditional to criticize any use of *awful* and *awfully* that doesn’t convey the original sense of being filled with awe. However, *awful* has long been acceptable in the meanings “extremely objectionable” (“What an awful color”) and “exceedingly great” (“an awful lot of money”) in speech and casual writing. Use of *awful* and *awfully* as intensifiers (“I’m awful tired,” “he’s awfully rich”) is likewise common in informal prose, but it is safer to avoid them in formal writing.

between, among It is often said that *between* can only be used when dealing with two items (“between a rock and a hard place”), and that *among* must be used for three or more items (“strife among Croats, Serbs, and Muslims”). However, *between* is actually quite acceptable in these latter cases, especially when specifying one-to-one relation-

ships, regardless of the number of items (“between you and me and the lamppost”).

can, may Both *can* and *may* are used to refer to possibility (“Can the deal still go through?” “It may still happen”). Since the possibility of someone’s doing something may depend on someone else’s agreeing to it, the two words have become interchangeable when they refer to permission (“You can [may] go now if you like”). Though the use of *can* to ask or grant permission has been common since the last century, *may* is more appropriate in formal correspondence. However, this meaning of *may* is relatively rare in negative constructions, where *cannot* and *can’t* are more usual (“They can’t [may not] use it without paying”).

comprise The sense of *comprise* meaning “to compose or constitute” (“the branches that comprise our government”) rather than “to include or be made up of” (“Our government comprises various branches”) has been attacked as wrong, for reasons that are unclear. Until recently, it was used chiefly in scientific and technical writing; today it has become the most widely used sense. But it still may be safer to use *compose* or *make up* instead.

contact Though some regard *contact* as only a noun and an adjective, its use as a verb, especially to mean “get in touch with”

(“Contact your local dealer”), has long been widely accepted.

data *Data* has firmly established itself with a meaning independent of its use as the plural form of *datum*. It is used in one of two ways: as a plural noun (like *earnings*), taking a plural verb and plural modifiers (such as *these* or *many*) but not cardinal numbers (“These data show that we’re out of the recession”); or as an abstract mass noun (like *information*), taking a singular verb and singular modifiers (such as *this*, *much*, or *little*) (“The data on the subject is plentiful”). Both constructions are standard, but many people are convinced that only the plural form is correct, and thus the plural form is somewhat more common in print. What you want to avoid is mixing in signs of the singular (like *this* or *much*) when you use a plural verb.

different from, different than Both of these phrases are standard; however, some people dislike the latter and will insist that, for example, “different than the old proposal” be changed to “different from the old proposal.” *Different from* works best when you can take advantage of the *from* (“The new proposal is very different from the old one”). *Different than* works best when a clause follows (“very different in size than it was two years ago”).

disinterested, uninterested *Disinterested* has basically two meanings: “unbiased” (“a disinterested decision,” “disinterested intellectual curiosity”), and “not interested,” which is also the basic meaning of *uninterested*. Though this second use of *disinterested* is widespread, some people object to it and it may be safer to avoid it.

due to When the *due* of *due to* is clearly an adjective (“absences due to the flu”) no one complains about the phrase. When *due to* is a preposition (“Due to the holiday, our office will be closed”), some people object and call for *owing to* or *because of*. Both uses of *due to* are entirely standard, but in formal writing one of the alternatives for the prepositional use may be safer.

each other, one another The traditional rules call for *each other* to be used in reference to two (“The two girls looked at each other in surprise”) and *one another* to be used in reference to three or more (“There will be time for people to talk with one another after the meeting”). In fact, however, they are employed interchangeably.

finalize Though avoided by many writers, *finalize* occurs frequently in business and government contexts (“The budget will be finalized,” “finalizing the deal”), where it is regarded as entirely standard.

good, well Both *good* and *well* are acceptable when used to express good health (“I feel good,” “I feel well”), and *good* may also connote good spirits. However, the adverb *good* has been much criticized, with people insisting that *well* be used instead (“The orchestra played well this evening”), and this adverbial use should be avoided in writing.

hardly *Hardly* meaning “certainly not” is sometimes used with *not* for added emphasis (“Just another day at the office? Not hardly”). *Hardly* is also used like *barely* or *scarcely* to emphasize a minimal amount (“I hardly knew her,” “Almost new—hardly a scratch on it”). When *hardly* is used with a negative verb (such as *can’t*, *couldn’t*, *didn’t*) it is often called a double negative, though it is really a weaker negative. *Hardly* with a negative is a spoken form, and should be avoided in writing (except when quoting someone directly).

hopefully When used to mean “I hope” or “We hope” (“Hopefully, they’ll reach an agreement”), as opposed to “full of hope” (“We continued our work hopefully and cheerfully”), *hopefully* is often criticized, even though other similar sentence adverbs (such as *frankly*, *clearly*, and *interestingly*) are accepted by everyone. Despite the objections, this sense of *hopefully* is now in standard use.

I, me In informal speech and writing, such phrases as “It’s me,” “Susan is taller than me,” “He’s as big as me,” “Who, me?” and “Me too” are generally accepted. In formal writing, however, it is safer to use *I* after *be* (“It was I who discovered the mistake”) and after *as* and *than* when the first term of the comparison is the sentence’s subject (“Susan is taller than I,” “He is as big as I”).

imply, infer *Infer* is mostly used to mean “to draw a conclusion, to conclude” and is commonly followed by *from* (“I infer from your comments that . . .”). *Imply* is used to mean “to suggest” (“The letter implies that our service was not satisfactory”). The use of *infer*, with a personal subject, as a synonym of *imply* (“Are you inferring that I made a mistake?”) is not widely accepted in print and is best avoided.

irregardless *Irregardless*, though a real word (and not uncommon in speech), is still a long way from general acceptance; use *regardless* (or *irrespective*) instead.

lay, lie Though *lay* has long been used as an intransitive verb meaning “lie” (“tried to make the book lay flat,” “lay down on the job”), it is generally condemned. In writing it is safer to keep the two words distinct, and to keep their various easily confused forms (*lie, lying, lay, lain; lay, laying, laid*) distinct as well.

lend, loan Some people still object to the use of *loan* as a verb (“loaned me the book”) and insist on *lend*. Nevertheless, *loan* is in standard use. *Loan* is used only literally (“loans large sums of money”), however, while *lend* can be used both literally (“lends large sums of money”) and figuratively (“Would you please lend me a hand?”).

less, fewer The traditional view is that *less* is used for matters of degree, value, or amount, and that it modifies nouns that refer to uncountable things (“less hostility,” “less clothing”) while *fewer* modifies numbers and plural nouns (“fewer students,” “fewer than eight trees”). However, *less* has been used to modify plural nouns for centuries. Today *less* is actually more likely than *fewer* to modify plural nouns when distances, sums of money, and certain common phrases are involved (“less than 100 miles,” “less than \$2000,” “in 25 words or less”) and just as likely to modify periods of time (“in less [fewer] than four hours”). But phrases such as “less bills,” “less vacation days,” and “less computers” should be avoided.

like, such as Should you write “cities like Chicago and Des Moines” or “cities such as Chicago and Des Moines”? You are in fact free to use either one, or change the latter to “such cities as Chicago and Des Moines.”

media Media is the plural of *medium*. With all the references to the mass media today, *media* is often used as a singular mass noun ("The media always wants a story"). But this singular use is not as well established as the similar use of *data*, and, except in the world of advertising, you will probably want to keep *media* plural in most writing.

memorandum *Memorandum* is a singular noun with two acceptable plurals: *memorandums* and *memoranda*. *Memoranda* is not yet established as a singular form.

neither The use of *neither* to refer to more than two nouns, though sometimes criticized, has been standard for centuries ("Neither the post office, the bank, nor City Hall is open today"). Traditionally, the pronoun *neither* is used with a singular verb ("Neither is ideal"). However, when a prepositional phrase follows *neither*, a plural verb is common and acceptable ("Neither of those solutions are ideal").

one The use of *one* to indicate a generic individual lends formality to writing, since it suggests distance between the writer and the reader ("One never knows" is more formal than "You never know"). Using *one* in place of *I* or *me* ("I'd like to read more, but one doesn't have the time") is common in British English but may be thought odd or objectionable in American English.

people, persons *People* is used to designate an unspecified number of persons (“People everywhere are talking about the new show”), and *persons* is commonly used when a definite number is specified (“Occupancy by more than 86 persons is prohibited”). However, the use of *people* where numbers are mentioned is also acceptable nowadays (“Ten people were questioned”).

per *Per*, meaning “for each,” is most commonly used with figures, usually in relation to price (“\$150 per performance”), vehicles (“25 miles per gallon,” “55 miles per hour”), or sports (“15 points per game”). Avoid inserting words like *a* or *each* between *per* and the word or words it modifies (“could type 70 words per each minute”).

phenomena *Phenomena* is the usual plural of *phenomenon*. Use of *phenomena* as a singular (“St. Elmo’s Fire is an eerie phenomena”) is encountered in speech and now and then in writing, but it is nonstandard and it is safer to avoid it.

plus The use of *plus* to mean “and” (“a hamburger plus french fries for lunch”) or “besides which” (“We would have been on time, but we lost the car keys. Plus, we forgot the map”) is quite informal and is avoided in writing.

presently The use of *presently* to mean “at the present time” (“I am presently working up a

report”) rather than “soon” (“He’ll be with you presently”), while often criticized, is standard and acceptable.

pretty *Pretty*, when used as an adverb to tone down or moderate a statement (“pretty cold weather”), is avoided in formal writing, so using it in correspondence will lend an informal tone.

prior to *Prior to*, a synonym of *before*, most often appears in fairly formal contexts. It is especially useful in suggesting anticipation (“If all specifications are finalized prior to system design, cost overruns will be avoided”).

proved, proven Both *proved* and *proven* are past participles of *prove*. Earlier in this century, *proved* was more common than *proven*, but today they are about equally common. As a past participle, either is acceptable (“has been proved [proven] effective”), but *proven* is more frequent as an adjective (“proven gas reserves”).

providing, provided Although *providing* in the sense of “if” or “on condition that” has occasionally been disapproved (“providing he finds a buyer”), both *providing* and *provided* are well established, and either may be used. *Provided* is somewhat more common.

real The adverb *real* is used interchangeably with *really* only as an intensifier (“a real

tough assignment"). This use is very common in speech and casual writing, but you should not use it in anything more formal.

set, sit *Set* generally takes an object ("Set the lamp over there") and *sit* does not ("sat for an hour in the doctor's office"). There are exceptions when *set* is used intransitively ("The sun will set soon," "The hen was setting") and *sit* takes an object ("I sat her down by her grandfather"). When used of people, however, intransitive *set* is a spoken use that should be avoided in writing.

shall, will *Shall* and *will* are generally interchangeable in present-day American English. In recent years, *shall* has been regarded as somewhat affected; *will* is much more common. However, *shall* is more appropriate in questions to express simple choice ("Shall we go now?") because *will* in such a context suggests prediction ("Will the prototype be ready next week?").

slow, slowly *Slow* used as an adverb (meaning "slowly") has often been called an error. *Slow* is almost always used with verbs indicating motion or action, and it typically follows the verb it modifies ("a stew cooked long and slow"). *Slowly* can be used in the same way ("drove slowly"), but it also is used before the verb ("The winds slowly subsided"), with adjectives formed from verbs ("the slowly sinking sun"), and in places

where *slow* would sound inappropriate (“turned slowly around”).

so The use of the adverb *so* to mean “very” or “extremely” is widely disapproved of in formal writing, except in negative contexts (“not so long ago”) or when followed by an explaining clause (“cocoa so hot that I burned my tongue”). The use of the conjunction *so* to introduce clauses of result (“The acoustics are good, so every note is clear”) and purpose (“Be quiet so I can sleep”) is sometimes criticized, but these uses are standard. In the latter case (when used to mean “in order that”), *so that* is more common in formal writing (“to cut spending so that the deficit will be reduced”).

such Some people disapprove of using *such* as a pronoun (“such was the result,” “sorting out glass and newspapers and such”), but dictionaries recognize it as standard.

Frequently Confused Words

Misusing one word for another in one’s writing is a common source of confusion, embarrassment, and unintentional humor. Computer spell checkers will not identify a word that is being wrongly used in place of the proper word. Try to review the following list periodically in order to avert word confusions you may be overlooking.

abjure to reject solemnly

adjure to command

abrogate to nullify

arrogate to claim

abstruse hard to understand

obtuse dull, slow

accede to agree

exceed to go beyond

accent to emphasize

ascent climb

assent to agree to something

access right or ability to enter

excess intemperance

ad advertisement

add to join to something; to find a sum

adapt to adjust to something

adept highly skilled

adopt to take as one's child; to take up

addenda additional items

agenda list of things to be done

addition part added

edition publication

adjoin to be next to

adjourn to suspend a session

adjure to command

adverse unfavorable
averse disinclined

advert to refer
avert to avoid
overt unconcealed

advice counsel or information
advise to give advice

affect to act upon or influence
effect result; to bring about

agenda *see* ADDENDA

alimentary relating to nourishment
elementary simple or basic

allude to refer indirectly
elude to evade

allusion indirect reference
illusion misleading image

amenable accountable, agreeable
amendable modifiable

amend to alter in writing
emend to correct

ante- prior to or earlier than
anti- opposite or against

anymore any longer, now
any more more

appraise to set a value on
apprise to give notice of
apprise to appreciate or value

arraign to bring before a court
arrange to come to an agreement

arrogate *see* ABROGATE

ascent *see* ACCENT

assay to test for valuable content
essay to try tentatively

assent *see* ACCENT

assure to give confidence to
ensure to make certain
insure to guarantee against loss

aural relating to the ear or hearing
oral relating to the mouth, spoken

averse *see* ADVERSE

avert *see* ADVERT

bail security given
bale bundle of goods

base bottom
bass fish; deep voice

biannual usually twice a year; sometimes
every two years
biennial every two years

bloc group working together

block tract of land

born produced by birth

borne carried

breadth width

breath breathed air

breathe to draw in air

callous hardened

callus hard area on skin

canvas strong cloth; oil painting

canvass to solicit votes or opinions

capital city that is the seat of government

capitol state legislature building

Capitol U.S. Congress building

casual not planned

causal relating to or being a cause

casually by chance or accident

casualty one injured or killed

censor to examine for improper content

censure to express disapproval of

cession a yielding

session meeting

cite to summon; to quote

sight payable on presentation

site piece of land

collaborate to work or act jointly

corroborate to confirm

collision act of colliding

collusion secret cooperation for deceit

complacent self-satisfied

complaisant amiable

complement remainder

compliment admiring remark

concert to act in harmony or conjunction

consort to keep company

consul diplomatic official

council administrative body

counsel legal representative; to give advice

corespondent joint respondent

correspondent one who communicates

corroborate *see* COLLABORATE

council *see* CONSUL

councilor member of a council

counselor lawyer

counsel *see* CONSUL

credible worthy of being believed

creditable worthy of praise

credulous gullible

currant raisinlike fruit

current stream; belonging to the present

cynosure one that attracts

sinecure easy job

decent good or satisfactory

descent downward movement

dissent difference of opinion

decree official order

degree extent or scope

defuse to make less harmful

diffuse to pour out or spread widely

deluded misled or confused

diluted weakened in consistency

demur to protest

demure shy

deposition testimony

disposition personality; outcome

depraved corrupted

deprived divested or stripped

deprecate to disapprove of

depreciate to lower the worth of

descent *see* DECENT

desperate having lost hope

disparate distinct

detract to disparage or reduce

distract to draw attention away

device piece of equipment or tool

devise to invent, to plot

diffuse *see* DEFUSE

diluted *see* DELUDED

disassemble to take apart

dissemble to disguise feelings or intentions

disburse to pay out

disperse to scatter

discreet capable of keeping a secret

discrete individually distinct

disparate *see* DESPERATE

disperse *see* DISBURSE

disposition *see* DEPOSITION

dissemble *see* DISASSEMBLE

dissent *see* DECENT

distract *see* DETRACT

edition *see* ADDITION

effect *see* AFFECT

e.g. for example

i.e. that is

elementary *see* ALIMENTARY

elicit to draw or bring out

illicit not lawful

eligible qualified to have

illegible not readable

elude *see* ALUDE

emanate to come out from a source

eminent standing above others

immanent inherent

imminent ready to take place

emend *see* AMEND

emigrate to leave a country

immigrate to come into a place

eminence prominence or superiority

immanence restriction to one domain

imminence state of being imminent

ensure *see* ASSURE

envelop to surround

envelope letter container

equable free from unpleasant extremes

equitable fair

erasable removable by erasing

irascible hot-tempered

essay *see* ASSAY

every day each day

everyday ordinary

exceed *see* ACCEDE

excess *see* ACCESS

extant currently existing

extent size, degree, or measure

flaunt to display ostentatiously

flout to scorn

flounder to struggle

founder to sink

forego to precede

forgo to give up

formally in a formal manner

formerly at an earlier time

forth forward, out of

fourth 4th

gage security deposit

gauge to measure

gait manner of walking

gate opening in a wall or fence

generic general

genetic relating to the genes

gibe to tease or mock

jibe to agree

jive foolish talk

guarantee to promise to be responsible for

guaranty something given as a security

hail to greet

hale to compel to go; healthy

hearsay rumor

heresy dissent from a dominant theory

i.e. *see* E.G.

illegible *see* ELIGIBLE

illicit *see* ELICIT

illusion *see* ALLUSION

immanence *see* EMINENCE

immanent *see* EMANATE

immigrate *see* EMIGRATE

imminence *see* EMINENCE

imminent *see* EMANATE

imply hint, indicate

infer conclude, deduce

impracticable not feasible

impractical not practical

inapt not suitable

inept unfit or foolish

incite to urge on

insight discernment

incredible unbelievable

incredulous disbelieving, astonished

incurable not curable

incurable capable of being incurred

inept *see* INAPT

inequity lack of equity

iniquity wickedness

infer *see* IMPLY

ingenious very clever

ingenuous innocent and candid

inherent intrinsic

inherit to receive from an ancestor

iniquity *see* INEQUITY

insight *see* INCITE

install to set up for use

instill to impart gradually

insure *see* ASSURE

interment burial

internment confinement or impounding

interstate involving more than one state

intestate leaving no valid will

intrastate existing within a state

irascible *see* ERASABLE

it's it is

its belonging to it

jibe *see* GIBE

jive *see* GIBE

lead to guide; heavy metal

led guided

lean to rely on for support

lien legal claim on property

lesser smaller

lessor grantor of a lease

levee embankment to prevent flooding

levy imposition or collection of a tax

liable obligated by law

libel to make libelous statements; false publication

lien *see* LEAN

material having relevance or importance;
matter

matériel equipment and supplies

median middle value in a range

medium intermediate; means of communication

meet to come into contact with

mete to allot

meretricious falsely attractive

meritorious deserving reward or honor

meticulous extremely careful about details

militate to have effect

mitigate to make less severe

miner mine worker

minor one of less than legal age; not important or serious

moot having no practical significance

mute a person unable to speak; to tone down or muffle

naval relating to a navy

navel belly button

obtuse *see* ABSTRUSE

oral *see* AURAL

ordinance law, rule, or decree

ordnance military supplies

ordonnance compilation of laws

overt *see* ADVERT

parlay to bet again a stake and its winnings

parley discussion of disputed points

peer one of equal standing

pier bridge support

peremptory ending a right of action,
debate or delay

preemptory preemptive

perpetrate to be guilty of

perpetuate to make perpetual

perquisite a right or privilege

prerequisite a necessary preliminary

persecute to harass injuriously

prosecute to proceed against at law

personal relating to a particular person
personnel body of employees

perspective view of things
prospective relating to the future
prospectus introductory description of an enterprise

perspicacious very discerning
perspicuous easily understood

pier *see* PEER

plain ordinary
plane airplane; surface

plaintiff complaining party in litigation
plaintive sorrowful

plat plan of a piece of land
plot small piece of land

pole long slender piece of wood or metal
poll sampling of opinion

pore to read attentively
pour to dispense from a container

practicable feasible
practical capable of being put to use

precede to go or come before
proceed to go to law

precedence priority
precedents previous examples to follow

preemptory *see* PEREMPTORY

preposition part of speech

proposition proposal

prerequisite *see* PERQUISITE

prescribe to direct to use; to assert a prescriptive right

proscribe to forbid

preview advance view

purview part or scope of a statute

principal main body of an estate; chief person or matter

principle basic rule or assumption

proceed *see* PRECEDE

proposition *see* PREPOSITION

proscribe *see* PRESCRIBE

prosecute *see* PERSECUTE

prospective *see* PERSPECTIVE

prostate gland

prostrate prone; to reduce to helplessness

purview *see* PREVIEW

raise to lift, to increase

raze to destroy or tear down

reality the quality or state of being real

realty real property

rebound to spring back or recover

redound to have an effect

recession ceding back

recision cancellation

rescission act of rescinding or abrogating

respectfully with respect

respectively in order

resume to take up again

résumé summary

role part, function

roll turn

session *see* CESSION

shear to cut off

sheer very thin or transparent

sight *see* CITE

sinecure *see* CYNOSURE

site *see* CITE

stationary still

stationery writing material

statue piece of sculpture

stature natural height or achieved status

statute law enacted by a legislature

tack course of action

tact sense of propriety

tenant one who occupies a rental dwelling
tenet principle

therefor for that
therefore thus

tortuous lacking in straightforwardness
torturous very painful or distressing

track path or course
tract stretch of land; system of body organs

trustee one entrusted with something
trusty convict allowed special privileges

venal open to bribery
venial excusable

waive to give up voluntarily
wave to motion with the hands

waiver act of waiving a right
waver to be irresolute

who's who is
whose of whom

your belonging to you
you're you are

Appendix B

Grammar Glossary

This glossary provides definitions, and sometimes discussions, of grammatical and grammar-related terms, many of which appear in the text. Examples are enclosed in angle brackets. Cross-references to other glossary entries are shown in boldface.

abbreviation A shortened form of a written word or phrase used in place of the whole (such as *amt.* for *amount*, or *c/o* for *care of*).

Abbreviations can be used wherever they are customary, but note that what is customary in technical writing will be different from what is customary in journalism or other fields. See also **acronym**.

absolute adjective An adjective that normally cannot be used comparatively <*ancillary* rights> <the *maximum* dose>.

Many absolute adjectives can be modified by adverbs such as *almost* or *near* <an *almost* fatal dose> <at *near maximum* capacity>. However, many adjectives considered to be absolute are in fact often preceded by com-

parative adverbs <a *more perfect* union> <a *less complete* account>. In such cases, *more* means “more nearly” and *less* “less nearly.”

absolute comparative The comparative form of an adjective used where no comparison is implied or stated, although in some cases comparison may be inferred by the reader or hearer <*higher* education> <a *better* kind of company> <gives you a *brighter* smile> <an *older* woman>. See also **absolute adjective**; **comparison**; **double comparison**; **implicit comparative**.

acronym A word or abbreviation formed from the initial letter or letters of each of the major parts of a compound term, whether or not it is pronounceable as a word (such as *TQM* for *Total Quality Management*, or *UNPROFOR* for *United Nations Protection Force*); also called *initialism*.

active voice A verb form indicating that the subject of a sentence is performing the action <he *respects* the other scientists> <a bird *was singing*> <interest rates *rose*>; compare **passive voice**.

adjective A word that describes or modifies a noun <an *active* mind> <this is *serious*> <*full* and *careful* in its attention to detail>.

An adjective can follow a noun as a complement <the book made the bag *heavy*> and can sometimes modify larger units, like

noun phrases <the *celebrated* “man in the street”> and noun clauses <it seemed *incomprehensible* that one senator could hold up the nomination>.

Adjectives can be described as *coordinate adjectives* when they share equal relationships to the nouns they modify <a *concise, coherent* essay> <a *soft, flickering, bluish* light>, and as *noncoordinate adjectives* when the first of two adjectives modifies the second adjective and the noun together <a *low monthly* fee> <the *first warm* day>.

An *indefinite adjective* designates unidentified or not immediately identifiable persons or things <*some* children> <*other* hotels>.

An *interrogative adjective* is used in asking questions <*whose* book is this?> <*which* color looks best?>.

A *possessive adjective* is the possessive form of a personal pronoun <*her* idea> <*its* second floor>.

A *relative adjective* (*which, that, who, whom, whose, where*) introduces an adjectival clause or a clause that functions as a noun <at the April conference, by *which* time the report should be finished> <not knowing *whose* lead she should follow>. See also **absolute adjective**; **attributive**; **demonstrative adjective**; **predicate adjective**.

adverb A word that modifies a verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, phrase, clause, or sentence.

Traditionally adverbs indicate time, place, or manner <do it *now*> <*there* they remained> <she went *willingly*>. They can connect statements <a small bomb had been found; *nevertheless*, they were continuing their search> and can tell the reader what the writer thinks about what is being said in the sentence <*luckily* I got there on time>. They can modify verbs <ran *fast*>, adjectives <an *awfully* long speech>, participles <a *well*-acted play>, adverbs <doing *fairly* well>, particles <woke *right* up>, indefinite pronouns <*almost* everyone>, cardinal numbers <*over* 200 guests>, prepositional phrases <*just* out of reach>, and more. Sometimes they modify a preceding noun <the great city *beyond*>, and some adverbs of place and time can serve as the objects of prepositions <since *when*> <before *long*>.

The notion that adverbs should not separate auxiliaries from their main verbs <you can *easily* see the river from here> <they should be *heartily* congratulated> is a false one, apparently based on fear of the split infinitive. See also **auxiliary verb**; **sentence adverb**; **split infinitive**.

adverbial genitive A form, or case, of some nouns used as adverbs of time, normally formed by adding -s <he worked *nights*> <the store is open *Sundays*>.

agreement A grammatical relationship that involves the correspondence in number

either between the subject and verb of a sentence or between a pronoun and its antecedent; also called *concord*.

Subject-verb agreement for compound subjects joined by and: When a subject is composed of two or more singular nouns joined by *and*, the plural verb is usually used <*the sentimentality and lack of originality which mark his writing*> <*the bitterness and heartache that fill the world*>. Occasionally when the nouns form a single conceptual unit, the singular verb can be used <*the report's depth and scope demonstrates*> <*her patience and calm was remarkable*>. See also **notional agreement**.

Compound subjects joined by or (or nor): When singular nouns are joined by *or*, the singular verb is usually used <*the average man or woman was not interested*>; when plural nouns are so joined, the plural verb is used <*wolves or coyotes have depleted his stock*>. When the negative *neither . . . nor* is used with singular nouns, it usually takes a singular verb <*neither she nor anyone else is fond of the idea*>; when used with plural nouns, it takes a plural verb <*neither the proponents nor their adversaries are willing to accept*>. But when *neither . . . nor* is used with nouns of differing number, the noun closest to the verb usually determines its number <*neither he nor his colleagues were present*> <*neither the teachers nor the principal was interested*>. Similar rules apply to *either . . . or*.

Compound subjects joined by words or phrases like with or along with, or by punctuation: When a singular noun is joined to another by a word or phrase like *with*, *rather than*, or *as well as*, a singular verb is generally used <*that story, along with nine others, was published*> <*the battleship together with the destroyer was positioned three miles offshore*>. Parenthetical insertions set off by commas, dashes, or parentheses should not affect agreement <*this book, as well as various others, has achieved notoriety*> <*their management—and the company's balance sheets—has suffered*>.

Subject formed by a collective noun phrase: In constructions like “a bunch of the boys were whooping it up” or “a fraction of the deposits are insured,” which make use of a collective noun phrase (*a bunch of the boys, a fraction of the deposits*), the verb is usually plural, since the sense of the phrase is normally plural. See also **collective noun**.

Subject expressing money, time, etc.: When an amount of money, a period of time, or some other plural noun phrase of quantity or measure forms the subject, a singular verb is used <*ten dollars is all I have left*> <*two miles is as far as they can walk*> <*two thirds of the area is under water*>.

Subject formed by one in (out of) . . . : Phrases such as “one in five” or “two out of three” may take either a singular or a plural verb <*one in four union members was undecided*>

<one out of ten soldiers were unable to recognize the enemy>, though grammarians tend to favor the singular.

Pronoun-antecedent agreement for nouns joined by and, or: When antecedents are singular nouns joined by *and*, a plural pronoun is used <the computer and the printer were moved because *they* were in the way>. But singular nouns joined by *or* can use either a singular or a plural pronoun, whichever sounds best <either *Fred or Marianne* will give *their* presentation after lunch> <each employee or supervisor should give what *he or she* can afford>.

Agreement for indefinite pronouns: The indefinite pronouns *anybody, anyone, each, either, everybody, everyone, neither, nobody, none, no one, somebody*, and *someone*, though some of them are conceptually plural, are used with singular verbs <*everyone* in the company *was* pleased> <*nobody* *is* responsible>, but are commonly referred to by *they, their, them*, or *themselves* <*nobody* could get the crowd's attention when *they* spoke> <*everybody* there admits *they* saw it>. Writing handbooks prescribe *he, she*, or *he or she*, or some other construction instead of the plural pronouns, but use of the plural *they, their*, or *them* has long been established and is standard.

antecedent A word, phrase, or clause to which a subsequent pronoun refers <*Judy* wrote to say *she* is coming> <they saw *Bob*

and called to *him*> <I hear *that he is ill* and it worries me>.

appositive A word, phrase, or clause that is equivalent to an adjacent noun <a biography of *the poet Robert Burns*> <sales of *her famous novel, Gone with the Wind*, reached one million copies in six months> <*we grammarians* are never wrong>.

Restrictive and nonrestrictive appositives play different roles in a sentence and are traditionally distinguished by their punctuation. A nonrestrictive appositive <*his wife, Helen*, attended the ceremony> is generally set off with commas, while a restrictive appositive <he sent *his daughter Cicely* to college> uses no commas and indicates that one out of a group is being identified (in this case, one daughter from among two or more). Exceptions occur where no ambiguity would result <his wife Helen>. See also **nonrestrictive clause**; **restrictive clause**.

article One of three words (*a, an, the*) used with a noun to indicate definiteness <*the blue car*> or indefiniteness <*a simple task*> <*an interesting explanation*>.

attributive A modifier that immediately precedes the word it modifies <*black tie, U.S. government, kitchen sink, lobster salad*>.

Nouns have functioned like adjectives in this position for many centuries. In more

recent years, some critics have objected to the proliferation of nouns used to modify other nouns: e.g., *language deterioration*, *health aspects*, *image enhancement*. While long or otherwise unexpected strings of this sort can occasionally be disorienting to the uninitiated (e.g., *management team strategy planning session*), the practice is flourishing and usually serves to compress information that the intended audience need not always have spelled out for it. Be sure, however, that the context and audience will allow for such compression.

A fairly recent trend toward using plural attributives has been attacked by some critics. There always had been a few plural attributives—*scissors grinder*, *physics laboratory*, *Civil Liberties Union*, *mathematics book*—but is it proper to use the more recent *weapons system*, *communications technology*, *operations program*, *systems analyst*, *earth-resources satellite*, *singles bar*, *enemies list*? The answer is that such plural attributives are standard. The plural form is chosen to stress plurality—more than one weapon, operation, enemy, etc.—or to otherwise distinguish its meaning from whatever the singular attributive might connote.

auxiliary verb A verb that accompanies another verb and typically expresses person, number, mood, or tense (such as *be*, *have*, *can*, *do*) <they *can* see the movie tomorrow> <she *has* left already>. See also **verb**.

cardinal number A number of the kind used in simple counting <one, 1, thirty-five, 35>; compare **ordinal number**.

case In English, a form of a noun or pronoun indicating its grammatical relation to other words in a sentence. See **nominative**; **objective**; **possessive**. See also **genitive**.

clause A group of words having its own subject and predicate but forming only part of a compound or complex sentence. A *main* or *independent clause* could stand alone as a sentence <we will leave as soon as the taxi arrives>; a *subordinate* or *dependent clause* requires a main clause <we will leave as soon as the taxi arrives>.

There are three basic types of clauses—all subordinate clauses—that have part-of-speech functions. An *adjective clause* modifies a noun or pronoun <the clown, *who was also a horse trainer*> <I can't see the reason *why you're upset*>. An *adverb clause* modifies a verb, adjective, or another adverb <*when it rains*, it pours> <I'm certain *that he is guilty*> <we accomplished less *than we did before*>. A *noun clause* fills a noun slot in a sentence and thus can be a subject, object, or complement <*whoever is qualified* should apply> <I don't know *what his problem is*> <the trouble is *that she has no alternative*>. See also **sentence**; **subordinate clause**.

collective noun A singular noun that stands for a number of persons or things consid-

ered as a group (such as *team*, *government*, *horde*).

Subject-verb agreement: Collective nouns have been used with both singular and plural verbs since Middle English. The principle involved is one of notional agreement. When the group is considered as a unit, the singular verb is used <the *government* is prepared for a showdown> <his *family* is from New England> <the *team* has won all of its home games>. When the group is thought of as a collection of individuals, the plural verb is sometimes used <her *family* are all staunch conservatives>. Singular verbs are more common in American English and plural verbs more common in British English, though usage remains divided in each case. See also **agreement**; **notional agreement**.

A collective noun followed by *of* and a plural noun follows the same rule as collective nouns in general. When the notion is that of plurality, the plural verb is normally used <an *assemblage of rocks* were laid out on the table> <a *group of jazz improvisers* were heard through the window>. When the idea of oneness or wholeness is stressed, the verb is generally singular <this *cluster of stars* is the largest yet identified>.

Pronoun agreement: The usual rule is that writers should take care to match their pronouns and verbs, singular with singular <the

committee *is* hopeful that *it* will succeed>, plural with plural <the faculty *are* willing to drop *their* suit>. But in fact writers sometimes use a plural pronoun after a singular verb <the audience *was* on *their* way out>. (The reverse combination—plural verb with singular pronoun—is very rare.)

Organizations as collective nouns: The names of companies and other organizations are treated as either singular <*Harvard* may consider *itself* very fortunate> or, less commonly, plural <the *D.A.R.* *are* going to do another pageant>. Organizations also sometimes appear with a singular verb but a plural pronoun in reference <*M-G-M* *hopes* to sell *their* latest releases> <*Chrysler* *builds* *their* convertible in Kentucky>. This usage is standard, though informal.

colloquial An adjective describing usage that is characteristic of familiar and informal conversation.

While not intended to carry pejorative overtones, the label *colloquial* often implies that the usage is nonstandard. See also **dialect**; **nonstandard**; **standard English**.

comma fault (comma splice, comma error)

The use of a comma instead of a semicolon to link two independent clauses (as in “I won’t talk about myself, it’s not a healthy topic”). Modern style calls for the semi-

colon, but comma splices are fairly common in casual and unedited prose.

comparison Modification of an adjective or adverb to show different levels of quality, quantity, or relation. The *comparative* form shows relation between two items, usually by adding *-er* or *more* or *less* to the adjective or adverb <he's short*er* than I am> <her second book sold *more* quickly>. The *superlative* form expresses an extreme among two or more items, usually by adding *-est* or *most* or *least* to the adjective or adverb <the cheetah is the fastest mammal> <that's the *least* compelling reason> <the *most* vexingly intractable issue>. See also **absolute adjective**; **absolute comparative**; **double comparison**; **implicit comparative**.

complement An added word or expression by which a predicate is made complete <they elected him *president*> <she thought it *beautiful*> <the critics called her *the best act of her kind since Carmen Miranda*>.

compound A combination of words or word elements that work together in various ways (*farmhouse*; *cost-effective*; *ex-husband*; *shoeless*; *figure out*; *in view of that*; *real estate agent*; *greenish white powder*; *carefully tended garden*; *great white shark*).

Compounds are written in one of three ways: solid <*workplace*>, hyphenated

<*screenwriter-director*>, or open <*health care*>. Because of the variety of standard practice, the choice among these styles for a given compound represents one of the most common and bothersome of all style issues. A current desk dictionary will list many compounds, but those whose meanings are self-explanatory from the meanings of their component words will usually not appear. Most writers try to pattern any temporary compounds after similar permanent compounds such as are entered in dictionaries.

compound subject Two or more nouns or pronouns usually joined by *and* that function as the subject of a clause or sentence <*doctors and lawyers* reported the highest incomes for that period> <*Peter, Karen, and I* left together>. See also **agreement**; **collective noun**.

concord See **agreement**.

conjunction A word or phrase that joins together words, phrases, clauses, or sentences.

Coordinating conjunctions (such as *and*, *because*, *but*, *or*, *nor*, *since*, *so*) join elements of equal weight, to show similarity <they came early *and* stayed late>, to exclude or contrast <he is a brilliant *but* arrogant man>, to offer alternatives <she can wait here *or* return later>, to propose reasons or grounds <the timetable is useless, *because* it is out-of-date>.

or to specify a result <his diction is excellent, *so* every word is clear>.

Correlative conjunctions (such as *either . . . or*, *neither . . . nor*) are used in pairs and link alternatives or equal elements <*either* you go or you stay> <the proposal benefits *neither* residents *nor* visitors> <she showed *not only* perceptive understanding *but also* mature judgment>.

Subordinating conjunctions (such as *unless*, *whether*) join subordinate clauses to main clauses and are used to express cause <*because* she learns quickly, she is an eager student>, condition <don't call *unless* you're coming>, manner <it looks *as though* it's clearing>, purpose <he gets up early *so that* he can exercise before work>, time <she kept a diary *when* she was a teenager>, place <I don't know *where* he went>, or possibility <they were undecided *whether* to go or stay>.

conjunctive adverb A transitional adverb (such as *also*, *however*, *therefore*) that expresses the relationship between two independent clauses, sentences, or paragraphs.

Conjunctive adverbs are used to express addition <he enjoyed the movie; *however*, he had to leave before the end>, emphasis <he is brilliant; *indeed*, he is a genius>, contrast <that was unfortunate; *nevertheless*, they should have known the danger>, elaboration <on one point only did everyone agree: *namely*, too much money had been spent already>, conclusion <the case could take

years to work its way through the courts; *as a result*, many plaintiffs will accept settlements>, or priority <*first* cream the shortening and sugar, *then* add the eggs and beat well>.

contact clause A dependent clause attached to its antecedent without a relative pronoun such as *that*, *which*, or *who* <the key [that] you lost> <he is not the person [who] *we thought he was*>.

The predicate noun clause not introduced by the conjunction *that* <we believe [that] *the alliance is strong*> is as long and as well established in English as the contact clause. It is probably more common in casual and general prose than in formal prose. It is also more common after some verbs (such as *believe*, *hope*, *say*, *think*) than others (such as *assert*, *calculate*, *hold*, *intend*).

contraction A shortened form of a word or words in which an apostrophe usually replaces the omitted letter or letters (such as *dep't*, *don't*, *could've*, *o'clock*, *we'll*).

Contractions involving verbs used to be avoided more than they are today. In fact, many contemporary writing handbooks recommend using contractions to help you avoid sounding stilted.

count noun A noun that identifies things that can be counted <two *tickets*> <a *motive*> <many *people*>; compare **mass noun**.

dangling modifier A modifying phrase that lacks a normally expected grammatical relation to the rest of the sentence (as in “*Caught in the act*, his excuses were unconvincing”).

The common construction called the *participial phrase* usually begins with a participle; in “*Chancing to meet them there*, I invited them to sit with us,” the subject, “I,” is left implicit in the preceding phrase, which modifies it. But a writer may inadvertently let a participial phrase modify a subject or some other noun in the sentence it was not intended to modify; the result is what grammarians call a *dangling participle*. Thus in “*Hoping to find him alone*, the presence of a stranger was irksome,” it is the “presence” itself that may seem to be hoping.

Dangling participles can be found in the writing of many famous writers, and they are usually hardly noticeable except to someone looking for them. The important thing to avoid is creating an unintended humorous effect (as in “*Opening up the cupboard*, a cockroach ran for the corner”).

dangling participle See **dangling modifier**.

demonstrative adjective One of four adjectives—*this*, *that*, *these*, and *those*—that points to what it modifies in order to distinguish it from others. The number (singular or plural) of the adjective should agree with the

noun it modifies <*this* type of person> <*that* shelf of books> <*these* sorts of jobs> <*those* varieties of apples>.

demonstrative pronoun One of the words *this*, *that*, *these*, and *those* classified as pronouns when they function as nouns <*this* is my desk; *that* is yours> <*these* are the best popovers in town> <*those* are strong words>.

dialect A variety of language distinguished by features of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation that is confined to a region or group. See also **nonstandard**; **standard English**.

direct object A word, phrase, or clause denoting the goal or result of the action of the verb <he closed the *valve*> <they'll do *whatever it takes*> <"Do it now," he said>; compare **indirect object**.

direct question A question quoted exactly as spoken, written, or imagined <the only question is, *Will it work?*>; compare **indirect question**.

direct quotation Text quoted exactly as spoken or written <I heard her say, "*I'll be there at two o'clock*">; compare **indirect quotation**.

divided usage Widespread use of two or more forms for a single entity (such as *dived* and *dove* for the past tense of *dive*).

double comparison Use of the forms *more*, *most*, *less*, or *least* with an adjective already inflected for the comparative or superlative degree (such as *more wider*, *most widest*).

This construction results from using *more* and *most* as intensifiers <a *most* enjoyable meal>. In modern usage, double comparison has all but vanished from standard writing. See also **comparison**; **intensifier**.

Double comparison can also occur by inflection. Though forms such as *firstest*, *mostest*, and *bestest* are most typical of the speech of young children, the form *worser* (which has a long literary background) still persists in adult speech. You will want to avoid it in writing.

double genitive A construction in which possession is marked both by the preposition *of* and a noun or pronoun in the possessive case.

In expressions like “that song of Ella Fitzgerald’s” or “a good friend of ours,” the possessive relationship is indicated by both *of* and the genitive inflection (*Fitzgerald’s*, *ours*), even though only one or the other would seem to be strictly necessary. However, this construction, also known as the *double possessive*, is an idiomatic one of long standing and is standard in all kinds of writing. See also **genitive**.

double modal The use of two modal auxiliaries in succession, resulting in such ex-

pressions as *might can*, *might could*, and *might should*.

Today double modals tend to be found in Southern dialect and are unfamiliar to speakers from other parts of the country.

double negative A clause or sentence containing two negatives and having a negative meaning.

In modern usage, the double negative (as in “they didn’t have *no* children” or “it wouldn’t do *no* good”) is widely perceived as a rustic or uneducated form, and is generally avoided in both writing and speech, other than the most informal.

A standard form of double negative is the rhetorical device known as *litotes*, which produces a weak affirmative meaning <a *not unreasonable* request>. It is used for understatement, but should not be overused.

double passive A construction that uses two verb forms in the passive voice, one being an infinitive (as in “the work of redesigning the office space *was requested to be done* by outside contractors”).

The double passive is awkward and potentially ambiguous (did outside contractors ask for the work to be done, or were they asked to do the work?) and should be avoided.

double possessive See **double genitive**.

double superlative See **double comparison**.

false titles Appositive preceding a person's name with no preceding article or following comma, which thus resembles a title, though it is rarely capitalized <organized by *consumer advocate* Ralph Nader> <works of *1960s underground cartoonist* Robert Crumb>. The use of such titles is sometimes criticized, but it is standard in journalism.

faulty parallelism See **parallelism**.

flat adverb An adverb that has the same form as its related adjective, such as *sure* <you *sure* fooled me>, *bright* <the moon is shining *bright*>, and *flat* <she turned me down *flat*>.

Although such forms were once common, later grammarians saw them as faulty because they lacked the *-ly* ending. Today flat adverbs are few in number and some are widely regarded as incorrect.

formal agreement See **notional agreement**.

gender In English, a characteristic of certain nouns and pronouns that indicates sex (masculine, feminine, neuter) <*he, him, his, she, her, it, its; actor, actress; brother, sister; emperor, empress; heir, heiress; fiancé, fiancée; testator, testatrix*>.

genitive A form, or case, of a noun or pronoun that typically shows possession or source <the girl's sweater> <nobody's fool>

<an uncle *of mine*> <some idea *of theirs*> <the company's failure> <a year's salary> <the nation's capital> <a stone's throw>.

The form is usually produced by adding -'s or a phrase beginning with *of*. While the possessive is the genitive's most common function, it has certain other functions as well; these include the *subjective* <Frost's poetry>, *objective* <her son's graduation>, *descriptive* <women's colleges>, and *appositive* <the state *of Massachusetts*> <the office *of president*> genitives. See also **double genitive**; **possessive**.

gerund A verb form having the characteristics of both verb and noun and ending in -*ing* (also called a *verbal noun*) <the ice made *skiing* impossible>.

A gerund can be preceded by a possessive noun or pronoun <her husband's *snoring*> <their *filling* the position>. See also **possessive**; **possessive with gerund**.

hypercorrection The use of a nonstandard linguistic form or construction on the basis of a false analogy to a standard form or construction (as in "*whom* should I say is calling?"; "this is between you and *I*"; "no one but *he* would notice"; "open *widely*").

idiom A common expression that is peculiar to itself grammatically <*it wasn't me*> or that cannot be understood from the meanings of

its separate words <I told them to *step on it*> <the newspaper *had a field day*>.

imperative The form, or mood, of a verb that expresses a command or makes a request <*come here*> <please *don't*>; compare **indicative**; **subjunctive**.

implicit comparative. One of a small group of adjectives (primarily *major*, *minor*, *inferior*, *superior*) whose meaning resembles a true comparative but which cannot be used with comparative forms (such as *more*, *most*; *less*, *least*) <a *major* contributor> <an *inferior* wine>.

However, two other implicit comparatives *junior* and *senior* can be used with comparative forms <a *more senior* diplomat> <the *least junior* of the new partners>. See also **comparison**.

indefinite pronoun A pronoun that designates an unidentified person or thing <*somebody* ate my dessert> <she saw *no one* she knew>.

Many indefinite pronouns should agree in number with their verbs. See **agreement**. See also **notional agreement**; **pronoun**.

indicative The form, or mood, of a verb that states a fact or asks a question <the train *stopped*> <they'll *be* along> <everyone *is* ravenous> <*has* the rain *begun*?> <who *knows*?>; compare **imperative**; **subjunctive**.

indirect object A grammatical object representing the secondary goal of the action of its verb <she gave *the dog* a bone>; compare **direct object**.

indirect question A statement of the substance of a question without using the speaker's exact words or word order <the officer asked *what the trouble was*> <they wondered *whether it would work*>; compare **direct question**.

indirect quotation A statement of the substance of a quotation without using the speaker's exact words <I heard her say *she'd be there at two o'clock*>; compare **direct quotation**.

infinitive A verb form having the characteristics of both verb and noun and usually used with *to* <we had *to stop*> <*to err* is human> <no one saw him *leave*>. See also **split infinitive**.

infinitive phrase A phrase that includes an infinitive and its modifiers and complements <we expect them *to arrive by five o'clock*> <he shouted *to be heard above the din*> <*to have earned a Ph.D. in four years* was impressive>.

inflection The change in form that words undergo to mark case, gender, number, tense, person, mood, voice, or comparison

<*he, his, him*> <*waiter, waitress*> <*rat, rats*>
<*blame, blames, blamed, blaming*> <*who, whom*> <*she is careful, if she were careful, be careful*> <*like, likes, is liked*> <*wild, wilder, wildest*>. See also **case**; **comparison**; **gender**; **mood**; **number**; **person**; **tense**; **voice**.

initialism See **acronym**.

intensifier A linguistic element used to give emphasis or additional strength to another word or statement <*a very hot day*> <*it's a complete lie*> <*what on earth is he doing?*> <*she herself did it*>. See also **double comparison**.

interjection An exclamatory or interrupting word or phrase <*ouch!*> <*oh no, not that again*>.

interrogative pronoun One of the pronouns *what, which, who, whom, and whose*, as well as combinations of these words with the suffix *-ever*, used to introduce direct and indirect questions <*who is she?*> <*he asked me who she was*> <*which did they choose?*> <*I wondered which they chose*>.

Who is frequently substituted for *whom* to introduce a question even when it is the object of a preposition <*who are you going to listen to?*> <*who do you work for?*>.

intransitive verb A verb not having a direct object <*he ran away*> <*our cat purrs when I stroke her*>; compare **transitive verb**.

linking verb A verb that links a subject with its predicate (such as *is*, *feel*, *look*, *become*, *seem*) <she *is* the new manager> <the future *looked* prosperous> <he *has become* disenchanted>.

Linking verbs such as the so-called “sense” verbs *feel*, *look*, *taste*, and *smell* often cause confusion, since writers sometimes mistakenly follow these words with adverbs <this scent *smells nicely*> instead of adjectives <this scent *smells nice*>.

main clause See **clause**.

mass noun A noun that denotes a thing or concept without subdivisions <some *money*> <great *courage*> <the study of *politics*>; compare **count noun**.

modifier A word or phrase that qualifies, limits, or restricts the meaning of another word or phrase. See **adjective**; **adverb**.

mood The form of a verb that shows whether the action or state it denotes is conceived as a fact or otherwise (e.g., a command, possibility, or wish). See **indicative**; **imperative**; **subjunctive**.

nominal A word or group of words that functions as a noun, which may be an adjective <the *good* die young>, a gerund <*seeing* is believing>, or an infinitive <*to see* is *to believe*>.

nominative A form, or case, of a noun or pronoun indicating its use as the subject of

a verb <three *dogs* trotted by the open door>
<later *we* ate dinner>; compare **objective**;
possessive.

nonrestrictive clause A subordinate or dependent clause, set off by commas, that is not essential to the definiteness of the word it modifies and could be omitted without changing the meaning of the main clause (also called *nonessential clause*) <the author, *who turned out to be charming*, autographed my book>; compare **restrictive clause**. See also **appositive**.

nonstandard Not conforming to the usage generally characteristic of educated native speakers of a language; compare **standard English**. See also **dialect**.

notional agreement Agreement between a subject and a verb or between a pronoun and its antecedent that is determined by meaning rather than form; also called *notional concord*.

Notional agreement contrasts with *formal* or *grammatical agreement* (or *concord*), in which overt grammatical markers determine singular or plural agreement. Formally plural nouns such as *news*, *means*, and *politics* have long taken singular verbs; so when a plural noun considered a single entity takes a singular verb, notional agreement is at work and no one objects <the *United States* is sending its ambassador>. When a singular noun is

used as a collective noun and takes a plural verb or a plural pronoun, we also have notional agreement <the *committee* are meeting on Tuesday> <the *group* wants to publicize *their* views>. Indefinite pronouns are heavily influenced by notional agreement and tend to take singular verbs but plural pronouns <*everyone* is required to show *their* identification>. See also **agreement**; **collective noun**.

notional concord See **notional agreement**.

noun A member of a class of words that can serve as the subject of a verb, can be singular or plural, can be replaced by a pronoun, and can refer to an entity, quality, state, action, or concept <*boy, Churchill, America, river, commotion, poetry, anguish, constitutionalism*>.

Nouns are used as subjects <the *artist* painted still lifes>, direct objects <critics praised the *artist*>, objects of prepositions <a painting signed by the *artist*>, indirect objects <the council gave the *artist* an award>, retained objects <an artist was given the *award*>, predicate nouns <Petra Smith is this year's *award winner*>, objective complements <they announced Petra Smith as this year's *award winner*>, and appositives <Petra Smith, this year's *award winner*>. See also **collective noun**; **count noun**; **mass noun**; **nominal**; **proper noun**.

noun phrase A phrase formed by a noun and its modifiers <*portly pensioners* sat sunning themselves> <they proclaimed *all the best features of the new financial offering*>.

number A characteristic of a noun, pronoun, or verb that signifies whether it is singular or plural. See **singular**; **plural**.

object A noun, noun phrase or clause, or pronoun that directly or indirectly receives the action of a verb or follows a preposition <she rocked *the baby*> <he saw *where they were going*> <I gave *him the news*> <over *the rainbow*> <after *a series of depressing roadhouse gigs*>. See **direct object**; **indirect object**.

objective A form, or case, of a pronoun indicating its use as the object of a verb or preposition <we spoke to *them* yesterday> <he's a man *whom* everyone should know>; compare **nominative**; **possessive**.

ordinal number A number designating the place occupied by an item in an ordered sequence <*first, 1st, second, 2nd*>; compare **cardinal number**.

parallelism Repeated syntactical similarities introduced in sentence construction, such as adjacent phrases and clauses that are equivalent, similar, or opposed in meaning and of identical construction <ecological

problems of concern *to scientists, to business-people, and to all citizens*> <he was respected not only *for his intelligence* but also *for his integrity*> <*to err is human, to forgive, divine*>.

Parallelism is mainly used for rhetorical and clarifying effects, and its absence can sometimes create problems for the reader. *Faulty parallelism* is the name given to the use of different constructions within a sentence where you would ordinarily expect to find the same or similar constructions. Very often such faulty parallelism involves the conjunctions *and* and *or* or such other coordinators as *either* and *neither*. Consider the sentence “To allow kids to roam the streets at night and failing to give them constructive alternatives have been harmful.” An infinitive phrase (*To allow kids to roam . . .*) and a participial phrase (*failing to give them . . .*) are treated as parallel when they are not. The meaning would be taken in more readily if both phrases were similar; replacing the infinitive with a participle achieves this parallelism (*Allowing kids to roam . . . and failing to give them . . .*). When such errors are obvious, they can be puzzling. Often, however, the problem is subtle and hardly noticeable, as in the sentence “Either I must send a fax or make a phone call.” Here *or* is expected to precede the same parallel term as *either*; by repositioning *either*, you solve the problem <I must *either*

send a fax *or* make a phone call>. Such examples of faulty parallelism are fairly common, but your writing will be more elegant if you avoid them.

parenthetical element An explanatory or modifying word, phrase, or sentence inserted in a passage, set off by parentheses, commas, or dashes <a ruling by the FCC (*Federal Communications Commission*)> <all of us, *to tell the truth*, were amazed> <the examiner chose—*goodness knows why*—to ignore it>.

participial phrase A participle with its complements and modifiers, functioning as an adjective <*hearing the bell ring*, he went to the door>.

participle A verb form having the characteristics of both verb <the noise has *stopped*> and adjective <a *broken* lawn mower>. The *present participle* ends in -ing <*fascinating*>; the *past participle* usually ends in -ed <*seasoned*>; the *perfect participle* combines *having* with the past participle <*having escaped*>. See also **auxiliary verb**; **dangling modifier**; **possessive**.

particle A short word (such as *by*, *to*, *in*, *up*) that expresses some general aspect of meaning or some connective or limiting relation <pay *up*> <heave *to*>.

parts of speech The classes into which words are grouped according to their function in a

sentence. See **adjective**; **adverb**; **conjunction**; **interjection**; **noun**; **preposition**; **pronoun**; **verb**.

passive voice A verb form indicating that the subject of a sentence is being acted upon.

Though often considered a weaker form of expression than the active voice, the passive nevertheless has important uses—for example, when the receiver of the action is more important than the doer <*he is respected* by other scholars>, when the doer is unknown <*the lock had been picked* expertly> or is understood <*Jones was elected* on the third ballot>, or when discretion or tact require that the doer remain anonymous <mistakes *were made*>; compare **active voice**.

person A characteristic of a verb or pronoun that indicates whether a person is speaking (*first person*) <*I am, we are*>, is spoken to (*second person*) <*you are*>, or is spoken about (*third person*) <*he, she, it is; they are*>. See also **number**.

personal pronoun A pronoun that refers to beings and objects and reflects person, number, and often gender.

A personal pronoun's function within a sentence determines its case. The *nominative* case (*I, we, you, he, she, it, they*) is used for pronouns that act as subjects of sentences or as predicate nouns <*he and I will attend*> <*our new candidate will be you*>.

The *possessive* case (*my, mine, our, ours, your, yours, his, her, hers, its, their, theirs*) is used for pronouns that express possession or a similar relationship <*our own offices*> <*its beak*>.

The *objective* case (*me, us, you, him, her, it, them*) is used for pronouns that are direct objects, indirect objects, retained objects, or objects of prepositions <he told *me* about the new contract> <she gave *him* the manuscripts> <he was given *them* yesterday> <this is between *you* and *her*>. See also **indefinite pronoun; pronoun**.

phrase A group of two or more words that does not contain both a subject and a verb and that functions as a noun, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction, or verb <*the old sinner*> <*stretching for miles*> <*without a limp*> <*in lieu of*> <*as far as*> <*break off*>.

There are seven basic types of phrases. An *absolute phrase* consists of a noun followed by a modifier (such as a participial phrase) and acts independently within a sentence without modifying a particular element of the sentence <he stalked out, *his eyes staring straight ahead*>.

A *gerund phrase* includes a gerund and its modifiers, and it functions as a noun <*eating two doughnuts* is Mike's idea of breakfast>.

An *infinitive phrase* includes an infinitive and may function as a noun, adjective, or adverb <*to do that* would be stupid> <this was

an occasion *to remember*> <they struggled *to get free*>.

A *participial phrase* includes a participle and functions as an adjective <*hearing the bell ring*, he went to the door>.

A *verb phrase* consists of a verb and any other terms that either modify it or complete its meaning <he *comes once a month*> <she *will have arrived too late*>. See also **noun phrase**; **participial phrase**.

plural A word form used to denote more than one <the *Browns*> <the *children*> <these *kinds*> <seven *deer*> <they *are* rich> <*we* do care>.

possessive A form, or case, of a noun or pronoun typically indicating ownership <the *president's* message> <*their* opinions> <*its* meter>; compare **nominative**; **objective**. See also **double genitive**; **genitive**; **possessive with gerund**.

possessive with gerund Use of a possessive form before a gerund.

In "the reason for everyone['s] wanting to join," either the possessive or the common form of *everyone* can be used. Writing handbooks recommend always using the possessive form, but the possessive is mandatory only when the *-ing* word is clearly a noun <*my being* here must embarrass you>. The possessive is quite common with proper nouns <the problem of *John's forgetting* the

keys> but rare with plurals <learned of the *bills* [*bills'*] *being* paid>. In most other instances, either the possessive or common form can be used.

predicate The part of a sentence or clause that expresses what is said of the subject <Hargrove *threw a spitball*> <the teachers from the surrounding towns *are invited to the dinner*> <Jennifer *picked up her books and left to catch the bus*>.

predicate adjective An adjective that follows a linking verb (such as *be, become, feel, taste, smell, seem*) and modifies the subject <she is *happy* with the outcome> <the milk tastes *sour*> <he seemed *puzzled* by the answer>.

prefix An affix attached to the beginning of a word to change its meaning <*ahistorical*> <*presorted*> <*anti-imperialist*> <*posthypnotic*> <*overextended*>; compare **suffix**.

preposition A word or phrase that combines with a noun, pronoun, adverb, or prepositional phrase for use as a modifier or a predication <a book *on* the table> <you're *in* big trouble> <*outside* himself> <*because of* that> <came *from* behind> <peeking *from* behind the fence>.

Despite a widespread belief that a sentence cannot end with a preposition, there is no such grammatical rule. In fact, many sentences require the preposition at the end <what can she be thinking *of*?> <he got the

answer he was looking *for*> <there are inconveniences that we must put up *with*> <they haven't been heard *from* yet> and many others are perfectly idiomatic in placing it there <you must know which shelf everything is *on*>.

prepositional phrase A group of words consisting of a preposition and its complement <*out of debt* is where we'd like to be!> <here is the desk *with the extra file drawer*> <he drove on *in a cold fury*>.

pronoun Any of a small set of words that are used as substitutes for nouns, phrases, or clauses and refer to someone or something named or understood in the context.

Pronouns can be divided into seven major categories, each with its own function. See **demonstrative pronoun**; **indefinite pronoun**; **interrogative pronoun**; **personal pronoun**; **reciprocal pronoun**; **reflexive pronoun**; **relative pronoun**. See also **agreement**.

proper adjective An adjective that is derived from a proper noun and is usually capitalized <*Roman* sculpture> <*Jeffersonian* democracy> <*Middle Eastern* situation> <*french* fries>.

proper noun A noun that names a particular being or thing and is usually capitalized <*Susan, Haydn, New York, December, General Motors, Mormon, Library of Congress, Middle Ages, Spanish Civil War, Reaganomics*>.

reciprocal pronoun One of the pronouns *each other* and *one another* used in the object position to indicate a mutual action or cross-relationship <chased *each other* around the yard> <fighting with *one another*>.

Reciprocal pronouns may also be used in the possessive <they depend on *each other's* ideas> <borrowed *one another's* sweaters>.

redundancy Repetition of information in a message.

Redundancy is an implicit part of the English language; it reinforces the message. In "Two birds were sitting on a branch," the idea of plurality is expressed three times: by the modifier *two*, by the *-s* on *bird*, and by the plural verb *were*. Many words can be accompanied by small words that give them extra emphasis <*final result*> <*past history*> <*climb up*> <*refer back*>. These are often attacked as needlessly wordy, but in most instances they are harmless, and sometimes they actually promote communication. The use and employment of many more words, phrases, and expressions than are strictly needed, necessary, wanted, or required should be avoided.

reflexive pronoun A pronoun that refers to the subject of the sentence, clause, or verbal phrase in which it stands, and is formed by compounding the personal pronouns *him*, *her*, *it*, *my*, *our*, *them*, and *your* with *-self* or

-selves <she dressed *herself*> <the cook told us to help *ourselves* to seconds> <I *myself* am not concerned>.

relative pronoun One of the pronouns (*that*, *which*, *who*, *whom*, and *whose*) that introduces a subordinate clause which qualifies an antecedent <a man *whom* we can trust> <her book, *which* sold well> <the light *that* failed>.

The relative pronoun *who* typically refers to persons and some animals <a man *who* sought success> <a person *whom* we can trust> <Seattle Slew, *who* won horse racing's Triple Crown>; *which* refers to things and animals <a book *which* sold well> <a dog *which* barked loudly>; and *that* refers to persons, animals, and things <a man *that* sought success> <a dog *that* barked loudly> <a book *that* sold well>.

Whom is commonly used as the object of a preposition in a clause that it introduces <she is someone *for whom* I would gladly work>. However, *who* is commonly used to introduce a question even when it is the object of a preposition <*who* are you going to listen to?> <*who* do you work for?>.

restrictive clause A subordinate clause not set off by commas that is essential to the definiteness of the word it modifies and cannot be omitted without changing the meaning of the main clause (also called *essential*

clause) <textbooks *that are not current* should be returned>. See also **appositive**; **nonrestrictive clause**.

sentence A group of words usually containing a subject and a verb, and in writing ending with a period, question mark, or exclamation point. A *simple sentence* consists of one main or independent clause <*she read the announcement in yesterday's paper*>. A *compound sentence* consists of two or more main clauses <*he left at nine o'clock, and they planned to meet at noon*>. A *complex sentence* consists of a main clause and one or more subordinate clauses <*it began to snow before they reached the summit*>. A *compound-complex sentence* consists of two or more main clauses and one or more subordinate clauses <*Susan left for Masters Hall after the presentation; there she joined the new-product workshop, which was already in progress*>. See also **clause**; **subordinate clause**.

A *declarative sentence* makes a statement <*the cow jumped over the moon*>. An *exclamatory sentence* expresses strong feeling <*that's ridiculous!*>. An *interrogative sentence* asks a question <*who said that?*>. An *imperative sentence* expresses a command or request <*get in here now*>.

A *cumulative sentence* is structured so that its main point appears first and is followed by other phrases or clauses expanding on or

supporting it. A *periodic sentence* is structured so that its main idea or thrust is suspended until the end, thereby drawing the reader's attention to an emphatic conclusion. A *topic sentence* is a key sentence to which the other sentences in a paragraph are related; it may be placed either at the beginning (as a *lead-in* topic sentence) or the end of a paragraph (as a *terminal* topic sentence).

sentence adverb An adverb that modifies an entire sentence, rather than a specific word or phrase within the sentence <*fortunately* they had already placed their order>.

sentence fragment A group of words punctuated like a sentence, but without a subject or a predicate or both <*So many men, so many opinions.*> <*Yeah, when you think about it.*>. See also **sentence**; **clause**.

singular A word form denoting one person, thing, or instance <*man*> <*tattoo*> <*eventuality*> <*she* left> <*it* is here>.

split infinitive An infinitive preceded by *to* and an adverb or adverbial phrase <*to ultimately avoid* trouble>.

Grammarians used to disapprove of the split infinitive, but most now admit that it is not a defect. It is useful when a writer wants to emphasize the adverb <*were determined to thoroughly enjoy* themselves>. See also **infinitive**.

standard English English that is substantially uniform, well-established in the speech and writing of educated people, and widely recognized as acceptable; compare **nonstandard**. See also **dialect**.

subject A word or group of words denoting the entity about which something is said <*he stopped*> <*it's clouding up*> <*all sixty members voted*> <*orthodoxy on every doctrinal issue now reigned*> <*what they want is more opportunity*> <*going to work* was what she hated most> <*to sing at the Met* had long been a dream of his>.

subject-verb agreement See **agreement**.

subjunctive The form, or mood, of a verb that expresses a condition contrary to fact or follows clauses of necessity, demand, or wishing <*if he were here, he could answer that*> <*it's imperative that it be broadcast*> <*they asked that the meeting proceed*> <*I wish they would come soon*>; compare **imperative**; **indicative**.

subordinate clause A clause that functions as a noun, adjective, or adverb and is attached to a main clause <*theirs is a cause that will prevail*>. See also **clause**; **sentence**.

suffix An affix attached to the end of a word to modify its meaning <*editors*> <*county-wide*> <*Hollywood-ish*> <*umbrella-like*>; compare **prefix**.

superlative See **comparison**.

tense The characteristic of a verb that expresses time present <*see*>, past <*saw*>, or future <*will see*>.

Aspect involves the use of auxiliary verbs to indicate time relations other than the simple present, past, or future tenses. The *progressive* tenses express action either in progress <*is seeing*>, in the past <*was seeing*>, or in the future <*will be seeing*>. The *perfect* tenses may express action that began in the past and continues in the present <*has seen*>, that was completed before another past action <*had seen*>, or that will be completed before some future action <*will have seen*>.

transitive verb A verb that acts upon a direct object <*she contributed money*> <*he runs the store*> <*express your opinion*>; compare **intransitive verb**.

verb A word or phrase that is the grammatical center of the predicate and is used to express action, occurrence, or state of being <*leap, carry out, feel, be*>. See also **auxiliary verb**; **linking verb**; **mood**; **voice**.

verbal One of a group of words derived from verbs. See **gerund**; **infinitive**; **participle**.

voice The property of a verb that indicates whether the subject acts or is acted upon. See **active voice**; **passive voice**.

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