

Ooligan Press

At Ooligan Press we strive to publish the very best version of each book we acquire, retaining each author's unique vision, voice, and writing style. We help authors express their views and ideas in ways that intrigue readers and capture their attention. With each book, we balance our knowledge as editors with the issues and guidelines specific to the project. That said, we maintain that each book project must follow a distinct set of stylistic guidelines. No single style guide is all-inclusive. The Ooligan Press Style Guide outlines the basics of our house style, but each book project will have its own special style preferences, exceptions, and guiding principles.

Ooligan Press uses the following reference materials to guide style choices:

- [*The Chicago Manual of Style*, 17th edition \(University of Chicago Press, 2017\)](#)
- [*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th edition \(2004\)](#)

While not strictly followed, we also use these reference materials:

- *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk, Jr. & E. B. White (MacMillan Publishing Co., 2000)
- *Fowler's Modern English Usage* by H. W. Fowler (Oxford University Press, 2004)

Note to editors: Each book project should have its own style sheet to be used during the editing and design process, then archived with the manuscript for future reference. A blank style sheet is available on the server in Ooligan/Editing/Forms.

Basics

- When establishing the style for a particular book, consistency is key. This is especially true in cases where a book's style veers from standard guidelines. Look for consistency in spelling, punctuation, tense, grammar, and formatting.
- Use the American spelling of words. This is particularly important to look for in translated manuscripts.
- Use the active voice. It gives writing greater power and force. However, keep in mind that there are instances when the passive voice is appropriate to use. (For example, use the passive voice when you want to emphasize the action, not the actor: "The victim was slaughtered in the dark alley.")
- Watch out for homonyms and make sure you are using the spelling that coincides with the meaning you wish to express.
- For all issues of documentation, formatting, and indexing, please refer to *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 17th edition ([CMOS](#)).

Abbreviations (*CMOS*, chapter 10)

- Lesser-known abbreviations should be spelled out in their first appearance in the text, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses. (*CMOS* [10.3](#))

- In cases where the meaning of an abbreviation is commonly known (e.g., DNA), it is not required to spell it out. (*CMOS* [10.3](#))
- Usage rather than logic determines whether abbreviations other than those standing for proper names are given in upper- or lowercase letters. Noun forms are usually uppercase (HIV, VP), and adverbial forms are usually lowercase (rpm, mpg). Note also that acronyms, especially those of five or more letters, tend to become lowercase with frequent use (NAFTA/Nafta, WASP/Wasp). (*CMOS* [10.6](#))
- Abbreviations of all lowercase letters should appear with either a period at the end or periods separating the letters, while those in capital letters or small caps should not be punctuated with periods. (*CMOS* [10.4](#))
- Initialisms, which are read as a series of letters, are often preceded by a definite article (“member nations of the EU”). Whether to include the article may depend on established usage. For example, one would refer to the NBA and the NAACP, on the one hand, but to W3C, PBS, and NATO, on the other—though all these organizations include the definite article in spelled-out form. If no established usage can be determined, use the definite article if it would be used with the spelled-out form. (*CMOS* [10.9](#))
- A civil or military title preceding a full name may be abbreviated. Preceding a surname, however, the title should be spelled out (e.g., Lt. Col. Henry Dixon, President Kennedy). Social titles are always abbreviated (e.g., Dr. Livingston, Mrs. Jones). (*CMOS* [10.11–21](#))
- Chicago permits the use of *US* as a noun, subject to editorial discretion and provided the meaning is clear from context. (*CMOS* [10.32](#))

Dates and Times (*CMOS*, 9.29–40; 10.38–42)

- Always spell out months and days of the week unless space restrictions require otherwise. (*CMOS* [9.31](#))
- Only abbreviate months and days of the week when space is limited, such as with a table or figure. (*CMOS* [10.39–41](#))
- Years should appear as numerals except when used to begin a sentence. (*CMOS* [9.29–30](#))
- Specific dates should appear as numerals (e.g., March 22, 2006). (*CMOS* [9.31](#))
- Centuries and decades are spelled out unless numerals are important to the text. However, there are exceptions. When discussing a decade as a whole in a situation when numerals *are* used, no apostrophe is required between the year and the *s* (e.g., 1950s). (*CMOS* [9.32–33](#))
- When shortening a decade reference (e.g., the '50s), make sure the apostrophe is facing the correct way (it should still look like a backwards C). (*CMOS* [9.33](#); [6.117](#))
- Spell out times of day unless an exact time is necessary. (*CMOS* [9.37](#))
- When using the abbreviations a.m. and p.m., it is also correct to use small caps with no periods or spaces. Consider the look of the text when deciding which style to use. For example, in literary fiction, the use of small caps could make the abbreviation stand out from the rest of the text and distract the reader. Marketing materials should use a.m. and

- A colon used within a sentence, preceding lists, or between independent clauses instead of a semicolon should be followed by a lowercase letter unless it is a proper name. (*CMOS* [6.63](#))
- The first word following a colon is capitalized when it introduces an extract, dialogue, or multiple sentences. (*CMOS* [6.63](#))
- When using expressions such as “as follows” or “the following,” a colon should

immediately follow the phrase. In this case, a lowercase letter will follow when semicolons are used between full sentences. A capital letter will follow when a period or similar ending punctuation is used between full sentences. (*CMOS* [6.64](#))

- A colon is not used after such expressions as “namely,” “including,” or “for example.” (*CMOS* [6.64](#))

Ellipses (*CMOS*, 13.50–58)

- Use an ellipsis when omitting a word, phrase, line, or paragraph from a quoted passage. (*CMOS* [13.50](#))
- Make sure that the use of an ellipsis does not change the meaning of the quoted material. (*CMOS* [13.51](#))
- The default mode for ellipses is three spaced periods.
- In poetry, when omitting the end of a line, use four ellipsis points if the preceding line is a grammatical sentence. If it is not a grammatical sentence, use three ellipsis points. (*CMOS* [13.56](#))
- When poetry is set line-by-line and a complete line of poetry is omitted, or several lines of a poem are omitted, this omission is indicated by a single line of widely spaced dots equal to the length of the preceding line in the poem. (*CMOS* [13.57](#))

Em dash (*CMOS*, 6.85–92)

- An em dash (or set of em dashes) is used to set off explanatory phrases or to amplify the meaning of a particular phrase. (*CMOS* [6.85](#))
- An em dash can also be used to indicate a disruption of thought, a break in sentence structure, or a sudden stop in dialogue. (*CMOS* [6.87](#))
- An em dash may be used to separate an introductory pronoun from a subject or series of subjects. (*CMOS* [6.86](#))
- An em dash can be used in the place of a comma to set off a subordinate clause. For example, “Because the data had not been fully analyzed—the reason for this will be discussed later—the publication of the report was delayed.” (*CMOS* [6.85](#))
- No more than two em dashes should be used in a sentence. If multiple phrases in a sentence need to be set apart, use parentheses or recast the sentence to eliminate the need to set so many phrases off. (*CMOS* [6.85](#))