

Bard Graduate Center
STYLE GUIDE

Bard Graduate Center follows *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Please refer to that source for any style queries unanswered here, and for further examples to all the rules outlined below. The most important guideline is to decide on one style and use it exclusively—consistency is key.

SPELLING

Use American spelling as defined by *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*. Where a variant spelling carries a special connotation within a discipline, the author's preference should be respected.

traveled, enameled, paneling, etc.
civilize, emphasize, etc.
e-mail, Internet, online, website
catalogue

CAPITALIZATION

Proper names are capitalized, but many words derived from them are not:

President Lincoln *but* **the presidency**
Brussels *but* **brussels sprouts**

Use capitals when referring to some specific art styles, movements, and historical and cultural periods, especially when they are derived from proper nouns:

art nouveau, conceptualism *but* **Beaux-Arts, Dada, Neoplatonism**
humanism, modernism *but* **Industrial Revolution**

Geographical terms are capitalized when they refer to a region, but not when used as adjectives. Popular names of places, or epithets, are usually capitalized, but certain terms considered political rather than geographical are lowercased:

the Southwest, *but* **southern United States**
the Badlands, the South Seas *but* **the iron curtain, the third world**

Academic subjects and lecture series are not capitalized unless they form part of a department name or are themselves proper nouns. Titles in speakers' blurbs should be in lower case, unless they are named professorships or fellowships:

bachelor of arts, master of science, doctorate
They have introduced a course in gender studies.
the professor at Princeton *but* **Anthony Grafton, Dodge Professor of History**

Jones is chair of the Committee on Comparative Literature.

The same law that governs academic position titles applies to titles of nobility:

The phrase, “let them eat cake,” is often attributed to Queen Marie Antoinette of France *but* Marie Antoinette was not the queen of France when she lost her head.

In Europe, the recipe for manufacturing hard-paste porcelain was first discovered in 1710 at the court of August II (1670–1733), elector of Saxony and king of Poland.

When newspapers and periodicals are mentioned in text, an initial *the*, even if part of the official title, is lowercased (unless it begins a sentence):

She reads the Chicago Tribune on the train.

We read Le Monde and Die Zeit.

I lost my copy of the New York Times Magazine.

After a colon

When a colon is used within a sentence, the first word following the colon is lowercased unless it is a proper name. When a colon introduces two or more sentences, or when it introduces a speech in dialogue or an extract, the first word following it is capitalized.

PUNCTUATION

Commas

Bard Graduate Center uses the serial comma, also known as the Oxford comma. If an ampersand replaces the word “and,” the serial comma is unnecessary:

The owner, the agent, and the tenant were having an argument.

Winken, Blinken & Nod are experts.

Quotation marks

In main text, use double quotation marks with singles within:

“A great philosopher once said, ‘You can’t always get what you want.’”

Closing punctuation such as a period belongs inside the quotation mark; colons and semicolons belong outside the quotation mark; endnote numbers belong outside the quotation mark.

Titles of “named” decorative arts objects are designated by Upper Case in quotes, followed by genre in roman:

“Lancaster” state bed, “Butterfly” wallpaper, etc.

Titles of articles, poems (unless very long), unpublished works, television show episodes, songs, photographs, and mottoes should be set in roman type within quotation marks:

John S. Ellis’s article “Reconciling the Celt” appeared in the journal.

Robert Frost’s “The Housekeeper”

“The Star-Spangled Banner”

Ansel Adams’s “North Dome”

For the titles of books, periodicals, plays, operas, exhibitions, paintings, sculptures, and works on paper, italics should be used.

Possessives

The general rule is that the possessive of most singular nouns is formed by adding an apostrophe and an *s*, and the possessive of plural nouns by adding an apostrophe only. This covers most proper nouns, including names ending in *s*, *x*, or *z*.

Exceptions:

-Nouns that are plural in form but singular in meaning:

politics' true meaning

-Names of places or organizations that have a plural form ending in *s*:

United States' reputation

-Cases when the possessive is formed without an additional *s* for a name of two or more syllables that ends in an *eez* sound:

Euripides' plays

-Words and names ending in unpronounced *s*:

Descartes' portrait

-For . . . *sake* expressions:

for Jesus' sake *but* **Jesus's contemporaries**

Hyphens

Hyphens, en dashes, and em dashes should appear without surrounding spaces. Do not use a hyphen with prefixes such as **anti**, **counter**, **inter**, **multi**, **re**, **semi**, **super**, **ultra**, etc., even when two like vowels or consonants fall together, unless the second element is capitalized, is a number, or consists of more than one word (**pre-1914**, **un-American**) or the word might be misread (**re-create**, **un-ionized**).

fencelike, **Tokyo-like** *but* **gull-like**

devil-may-care attitude

much-maligned person

Do not use a hyphen after an adverb ending with **-ly**:

a recently discovered virus

(Note that the *-ly* adverbs are moveable or switchable: e.g., **a virus discovered recently**.)

En dashes

En dashes should connect numbers and, less often, words. They are used in place of a hyphen in a compound adjective when one of its elements is an open compound:

1914–1918

red wine–raspberry vinaigrette *but* **non-English-speaking peoples**

Em dashes

Em dashes should set off an amplifying or explanatory element, as commas, parentheses, or a colon would. A question mark or exclamation point—but never a comma, a colon, or a semicolon, and rarely a period—may precede an em dash:

Only if—heaven forbid!—you lose your passport should you call home.

Parentheses and brackets

When an entire independent sentence is enclosed in parentheses, the period belongs inside the closing parenthesis. If there is parenthetical material that belongs inside a larger phrase in parentheses, use square brackets. Square brackets should also enclose material—usually added by someone other than the original writer—that does not belong to the surrounding text. In a translated work, they can be used sparingly to enclose a word or phrase in the original language to avoid ambiguity:

The differences between society [*Gesellschaft*] and community [*Gemeinde*] will now be analyzed.

Ellipses

In using ellipses points within quotations to represent words that have been deleted, please insert a space after each point. (. . . , not ...) Use four points if an entire sentence or if text to the end of a sentence has been deleted. It is not necessary to use ellipses points for text dropped at the beginning of a quotation.

The statement is shortsighted . . . the opposing faction . . . is more idealistic.

NUMBERS

Spell out whole numbers from one through one hundred, round numbers, and any number beginning a sentence. Use figures for 101 and above, including whole numbers followed by hundred, thousand, million, and so on. This applies to ordinals as well as cardinals. Where many numbers occur within a passage of text, maintain consistency in the immediate context:

two, nine, sixty-five million, 1286

The population of the seaport is over two hundred thousand

second base, 125th place, 223rd anniversary

“Nineteen ninety-nine was a long year” or “The year 1999 was long”

One building of 103 stories, five of more than 50, and a dozen of only 3 or 4

A mixture of numerals and spelled-out numbers can be used to express very large numbers, especially when they are fractional. Note that *billion* in American usage means a thousand million, not, as in traditional British usage, a million million:

A figure of 4.5 billion years

If an abbreviation or a symbol is used for the unit of measure, the quantity is always expressed as a numeral:

50 km, 10°C

Percentages: these are always given in figures, followed by the word *percent*:

Only 45 percent of the electorate voted.

Money

Isolated references to money fall under the general rule. Where the value of a currency in any particular year is in question, the date may be inserted in parentheses. Context should dictate here:

Children can ride for seventy-five cents.

US\$(1992)2.47

Last year they paid \$2 each for admission; now they must have to pay \$3.

Dates and times

Centuries: spell out the number and hyphenate when used as an adjective:

**He was a chronicler of the nineteenth century
twentieth-century architecture**

Decades: do not use an apostrophe to form the decade; it is acceptable to use “fifties,” “twenties,” and so on if the century is clearly understood. Era designations can use CE, BCE, AD, BC, AH, AUC, and BP, so long as the author is consistent:

**1990s, the nineties
July 3, 1993 but July 1993, Thanksgiving Day 2009
350–345 BC, AD 1306**

Times of day in even, half, and quarter hours are spelled out in the text. Figures should be used to emphasize exact times:

**He left the office at a quarter to four.
The first train leaves at 5:22 a.m.**

Dimensions

For two-dimensional objects use height x width; for three-dimensional objects use height x width x depth or height x diameter. Convert centimeters to inches in text and give inches first, if necessary followed by centimeters in parentheses:

6 x 5 in. (15.2 x 12.7 cm)

ITALICS

Use italics for foreign words, unless they are in common usage in the English language:

***ras-le-bol* but **trompe l’oeil**
Aha-Erlebnis but **zeitgeist****

Also use italics for the titles of books, periodicals, plays, operas, exhibitions, paintings, sculptures, and works on paper. Do not italicize building names, series titles, object names, or people’s titles, even if in a foreign language. Scholarly words and abbreviations are not italicized unless a particular use calls for it:

***Divine Comedy*
New York Times
The Burghers of Calais
Cellini’s saltcellar
ibid., et al., but sic**

For the titles of articles, poems (unless very long), unpublished works, television show episodes, songs, photographs, and mottoes, roman type within quotation marks should be used.

ABBREVIATIONS

A few abbreviations:

n.p. = no place, no publisher, or no page numbers

n.d. = no date

n., nn. = note, notes

fol. = folio

r = recto; **v** = verso (no period is used after **r** or **v**)

Periods

Initials of persons should have periods and a space between initials, unless they are used alone:

M. F. K. Fisher

LBJ

No periods are used in academic degrees like **PhD** and **MA**

They are used in **Mr., Mrs., Messrs., Jr., Dr.,** company name elements like **Ltd., Co., Bros., Corp.,** and the country names **U.S.** and **U.K.**

ILLUSTRATIONS

Standard captions should include:

1. artist's full name
2. title of the work of art
3. date of its creation
4. medium
5. dimensions
6. collection information (who owns it and accession/ inventory number)
7. photo credit (who took the picture)

The manufacturer's name and date of design should be added if applicable. For architecture, include the date of the design, the date the structure was completed, and the date of the photograph.

If the photograph is from a book, please give bibliographical details for the book, including the page and figure number on which the picture is found.

FORMATTING DOCUMENTS

1. Use left justification, not full justification for lines.
2. Number all pages.
3. Do not insert extra lines between paragraphs. Use the left tab key to indent paragraphs.
4. Quotations: if a quotation is more than 100 words—or at least eight lines—in length it should be set as an extract: indented, without quotation marks, and with a blank line above and below.
5. Endnotes should be formatted at the end of the document in line with the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th Edition (17.26–17.359).

To access the shorter Bard Graduate Center citations guide online, see <http://www.bgc.bard.edu/images/content/1/1/11445.pdf>.