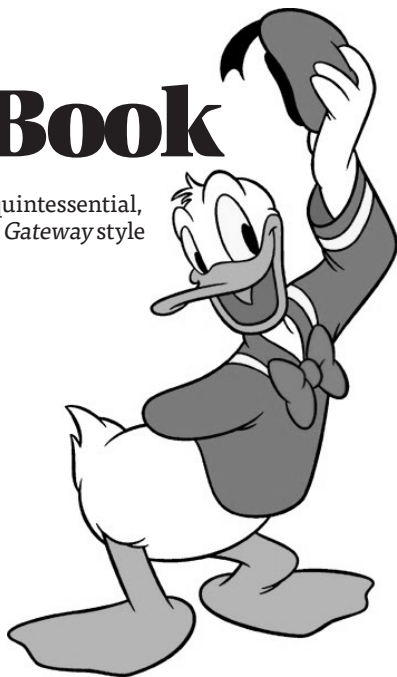


The Duck Book

The official, ubiquitous, quintessential,
must-have guide to *Gateway* style



Published by



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The Canadian Press Stylebook

And all the *Gateway* contributors who had to hear the laments of their editors for their so-called lack of style.



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INTRO‘DUCK’TION



The *Duck Book* is an essential resource for beginners or long-time veterans, a collection of rules and regulations governing the textual styles used in *The Gateway*.

The book follows its own rules, meaning that, in the above paragraph for example, book titles are italicized and newspapers are, too. And periods fall inside double quotes. And it rarely uses single quotes unless the word is already inside double quotes. Et cetera, et cetera ...

The *Duck Book* is merely a solidification of technical style culled from years of verbally transmitted rules. Inspiration is derived from the fact that, in the past, one had to talk and listen, constantly absorb and discuss, in order to “get it right.”

We want to eliminate this currently inescapable ignorance inherent in our newspaper-making process by producing a comprehensive guide, thus providing a hospitable breeding ground for consistency and readability, not only from paper to paper, but also from year to year.

As you peruse these pages, keep in mind that style (in the technical sense, not to be confused with the type of style one hones through years of experience) can be a very subjective thing. What *The Gateway* does may not be what your English professor told you to do, which is also different from what the Canadian Press or the Associated Press do, not to mention MLA or APA. At the same time, these rules are not set in stone; we encourage *The Gateway* to keep this guide in check and modify its pages as necessary.

There’s a lot of information here, but don’t get overwhelmed. These sorts of rules are common to almost every type of writing and, although specific to *The Gateway*, it’ll be a valuable quick-reference resource after you move on to bigger and better things.

David “Skip” Zeibin
Editor-in-Chief 2002/03

PREFACE TO THE EIGHTH EDITION:

Style can be a difficult thing to master. Grammar, punctuation and capitalization are constantly changing. New words are added to the dictionary or to everyday speech, and the English language must be flexible to account for these changes. We at *The Gateway* must be just as flexible.

In this latest edition of *The Gateway's* style guide, we've completely eliminated all inconsistencies with Canadian Press style. As *The Gateway* exists to train volunteers for a future in journalism, we believe it would be most beneficial if we used the style used by journalists throughout Canada, and that is CP Style. This way, if you move on in the field, your training at *The Gateway* will serve you well, rather than getting you in trouble.

This means we've had to get rid of some of our favourite things, including the Oxford comma and square brackets to indicate a partial quote. But we feel that overall it will be a positive step for *Gateway* style. So what, you may ask, is the *Duck Book's* purpose if *Gateway* style is now equivalent to CP Style?

This book can serve as your abbreviated CP Style Guide. It's an introductory guide for beginners and an abbreviated guide for those who just want know enough to produce a clean article for their editors (we appreciate it). It's also a matter of efficiency — instead of having to sift through 500 pages of a CP Style Guide to find what you need, just come to the good 'ol Duck and 99 per cent of the time, you'll find an answer to your question.

In any cases where the *Duck Book* isn't clear, refer to *The Canadian Press Stylebook (15th Edition)*, located on numerous *Gateway* shelves and desks. If that doesn't solve matters, just ask your editor and we'll be happy to discuss the many uses of the semicolon or the comma.

Alexandria Eldridge
Editor-in-Chief 2011–12

PUNCTUATION

Punctuation can be a beautiful thing. It helps organize language by separating distinct ideas, or parts of those ideas. Working in tandem with the basic rules of grammar, proper punctuation is absolutely essential.

When used properly, punctuation can make the most extravagant thought-stream understandable; when used improperly, simple mistakes in punctuation can cause readers unnecessary frustration as they struggle to organize your random thoughts on the fly. Kind of like trying to read Hemingway.

Periods

Periods end statements, but not questions or exclamations. They're also often used when certain words are abbreviated:

JTT was last spotted in the U.K. during WWII.

See page 13 for more information on when to use periods in abbreviations.

Commas

Sadly, the comma is one of the most abused and least understood punctuation marks, second only perhaps to the apostrophe (page 9) — but it doesn't have to be that way.

Commas can be used with conjunctions (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so — the acronym FANBOYS is a handy mnemonic device) to separate grammatically independent but logically related clauses:

Uncle Frank has been senile for years, but Kathie Lee likes him that way.

Watch out for the dreaded comma splice, which makes newspaper editors sad. This occurs when two independent clauses are joined only by a comma — hence the need for an appropriate conjunction (also see Semicolons, page 8):

Uncle Frank has been senile for years, yet no one really seemed to notice until now.

Uncle Frank has been senile for years, *and* that's not likely to change anytime soon.

You can also use commas to separate adjectives describing a noun:

The large, cranky, poorly trained monkeys ate all the bananas.

This rule even applies if there are only two adjectives; the comma simply serves as a substitute for “and”:

As a young, jaded Film Studies major, Dan was functionally unemployable.

However, the comma is deleted here if the last adjective has a closer relation to the noun than the other adjectives or if the adjectives could not be separated by “and” and still make sense:

Dr. Randolph is a distinguished foreign politician.

You can continue to omit commas in a descriptive phrase, so long as the sentence doesn't become too convoluted:

Dr. Randolph is one seriously distinguished motherfucker of a foreign politician.

To prevent ambiguity when using verbs intransitively (that is, verbs that don't take a direct or indirect object), use a comma to offset the part of the sentence that may cause the verb to be read transitively:

With the groupies wildly pursuing, John hid in an abandoned garage (not “wildly pursuing John”).

In the apartment above, the cat had been sleeping all day (not “the apartment above the cat”).

Pairs of commas are used to separate parenthetical (i.e. explanatory) clauses that aren't part of the main sentence (also see Hyphens, page 11):

Red Green, Canada's answer to Bob Vila, is named

Steve Smith in real life.

Mayonnaise, on the other hand, takes the sandwich to unparalleled new heights of gastronomic perfection.

Within the context of quotations, commas are used to introduce a quote or to act in place of a period when the sentence continues beyond the end of the quote (see also Capitalization in Quotations, page 17). Note that the comma (and period) always goes inside the quotation marks:

“I love *The Raccoons*,” she exclaimed. “I used to watch that show all the time!”

Finally, commas are used to separate items in a list, but not before the final “and,” “or” or “nor” unless that avoids confusion. This is a subject of much dispute among grammar nerds: most newspaper styles (including CP) advise against the use of the serial or “Oxford” comma, while most formal and academic styles insist on it. If you leave it out, some interesting interpretations may arise. Therefore, only use it in cases where to leave it out would create confusion:

Mike dedicated the book to his parents, Dana and God.

Three obvious fruits to name in a list are apples, oranges and bananas.

It’s especially useful when giving a list of pairs where “and” occurs within those pairs:

The following musicians are lame: ABBA, Sonny and Cher, Ike and Tina Turner, Vanilla Ice, Milli Vanilli, Gladys Knight and the Pips, and Celine Dion.

One final thought: as a general rule, a list reads best when the bulkiest item (i.e. the one with the most syllables) falls at the end:

I would like a jar of Vaseline, some rubber gloves, and a twelve-pack of your largest condoms, please.

Semicolons

The oft-maligned semicolon can alternately be described as a weak period or a strong comma. In the first case, a semicolon links two independent clauses (that is, complete sentences that can stand on their own); ideally, these two clauses will be logically related:

I haven’t been wrong since 1973; my wife claims otherwise.

You could instead use a comma and link the two phrases with a conjunction appropriate for the context:

I haven’t been wrong since 1973, but my wife claims otherwise.

You can also use semicolons to separate items in a list — specifically, when commas are already used within the items of that list:

My three favourite things to wear are my blue and black bowling shirt, which I bought when I was in LA; my crazy, neon-orange Hammer pants, which I’ve had since I was eight; and my ratty, too-small, army-issue hiking boots.

Keep in mind that once you start using the semicolon as a “super-comma,” you have to use it all the way through — even if the list becomes less ambiguous:

The guests at the wedding consisted of my uncle, Frank Gifford; my aunt, Kathie Lee; their beautiful son, Cody; William Shatner; and Sinbad.

Colon

The grammatical colon has several functions. It can serve as the link from a general to a specific example, a cause to its effect, a premise to its conclusion, etc.:

There’s something I forgot to tell you: your children are all dead.

It won’t be easy: rabid dogs can cause a terrible mess.

I told you: we're an anarcho-syndicalist commune.

It can also be used to introduce a list of items (just make sure the portion before the colon is a complete sentence):

I'll be taking many things on my camping trip: a hatchet, duct tape, bamboo shoots, and my dirty, dirty children.

Or, you might want to introduce an explanatory quote more formally:

Klein offered the following bit of wisdom in response to rising poverty levels in the province: "Get a job."

Question mark

Things are pretty straightforward here: use a question mark to indicate that the preceding sentence is a question (unless the question is implied indirectly):

Do you prefer bamboo shoots or water torture?

I asked him what he preferred: the bamboo shoots or the water torture.

I asked him, "Which do you want first? The bamboo shoots or the water torture?"

Note that the question mark goes inside the quotation marks if the question itself is a quotation, but goes outside the quotation marks if the entire sentence (of which the quotation is a part) is a question.

The agent asked, "What do you have this weapons-grade plutonium for?"

What I want to know is, what did that agent mean by "weapons-grade plutonium"?

Exclamation mark

You can use one exclamation mark following a sentence expressing absurdity, command, warning, contempt, disgust, emotion, pain, enthusiasm, wish, regret, wonder, admiration, or surprise:

Help! Help! I'm being repressed!

But damn! There's a bomb under there!

Usually, however, the exclamation mark is only used sarcastically, and even then should be rarely used. It should never be used in a serious article or headline.

Oh man, I totally love getting kicked in the junk!

That new Hilary Duff movie looks awesome!

Apostrophe

Easily the most misunderstood punctuation mark, apostrophes are actually quite simple to use—just keep in mind that they're always used to replace abbreviated letters. Thus:

They're = they are

We're = we are

With that in mind, remember that apostrophes are also used to indicate possession. In such cases, apostrophes stand for letters as well — but unless you've studied other case-inflected languages like Latin or Anglo-Saxon, don't worry about it.

One example of misused apostrophes is so egregious that we've given it its own section: the notorious "ITSO." This is the improper use of "its" or "it's" and doing "it" will drive your editors batshit insane. This is very common mistake, but it really isn't that hard. Use "its" with no apostrophe all the time EXCEPT when it is a contraction of "it is."

It's nine in the afternoon! That means...yes. Her eyes are the size of the moon.

Exposing yourself in public is its own reward.

If you're not sure, just read the sentence out and substitute "it is" in. If it reads right, use "it's." If not, use "its."

When dealing with words that end in S, just know that the apostrophe comes before the "s" in singular and plural

nouns, and after the “s” if the noun ends in “s”:

Quick, men! Steal that man’s pants from the men’s room!

According to the first girl’s testimony, the girls’ lives were filled with jealousy and despair — that’s what happens when a bunch of girls live in the same house.

Plural nouns ending in “s” take an apostrophe alone, but singular nouns and names ending in “s” (or an “s” sound) take an extra “s”:

Ross’s sure-footedness is inversely proportional to the amount of liquor that the Barnes’ son gives him.

According to CSIS’ website, Tom Jones’s family was on Chris’s hit list.

Another common mistake is to use an apostrophe for pluralization. It used to be acceptable to pluralize abbreviations, numbers, and symbols in this way, but this is no longer the case, except for when it’s absolutely necessary to disambiguate from the item itself:

Young MCs, terrible CDs, the ’80s, but small c’s

Therefore, whenever possible, construct the noun so as to be distinct from the pluralizing lower-case “s”:

250 C.C.s (not 250 c.c.’s), “dot the Is and cross the Ts” (not “dot the i’s and cross the t’s”)

Quotation marks

Quotation marks are used to set off direct reported speech, as well as to cite or emphasize (often sarcastically) a word or phrase. Keep all punctuation inside the quotes (except for colons and semicolons):

The doctor “claimed” that I was suffering from “a simple case of scabies”; I had my own theory.

“Your brain fell out,” the doctor explained patiently. “Shall I put it back in for you? Keeping in mind that that

kind of procedure ain’t cheap.”

“Yeah. That whole ‘brain’ thing has been dragging me down for some time.”

In the first sentence, double quotes are used to set off the word “claimed” sarcastically, as well as to represent an actual quote. In the last example, single quotes are used to set off the word “brain” inside the double quotes. Never use single quotes for emphasis unless they’re being used inside double quotes or in headlines, or if it’s for an explanatory phrase used in one of your sentences.

For the building on the south side of the leak, fire crews performed a ‘shelter in place,’ where occupants were allowed to remain inside.

Parentheses and brackets

Parentheses should not be used that often; therefore, don’t get too attached to them, especially in fact-based news articles. If the statement you’re making isn’t important enough to be part of a sentence without parentheses, ask yourself if the statement is worth saying at all. If so, it’s more common to set them off with commas or em-dashes.

Regardless, in cases they are used, parentheses set off explanatory words or phrases (also see Parenthetical clauses, page 24). Punctuation is kept outside the parentheses unless the thought begins after another sentence ends:

The man (a retired guerilla) snapped the doll’s skinny neck in two.

Now, gut the fish (you may want to use gloves).

I didn’t really want to ride home alone. (Last summer, I was attacked by a freaky little seniors’ brigade.)

However, it usually isn’t necessary to have an entire sentence set off in parentheses on its own; that is, it should follow logically enough from the previous phrase to remain a part of it. If not, you

can rephrase things in order to clarify:

I didn't really want to ride home alone (not since I was attacked by a freaky little seniors brigade last summer).

Parantheses are also used to replace words in quotes for the sake of clarity or grammatical correctness:

“(NAFTA) will be beneficial for all involved,” Reagan said.

The original quote may have been, “It will be beneficial ...” Unless clarification is made, however, the reader may not know what “it” is.

Dashes

There are two sizes or lengths of dashes: the en dash (–) and the em dash (—).

A single em-dash represents a pause, be it a hesitation or the introduction of an explanation of what came before it (see also Parenthetical clauses, page 24). Place spaces on either side of an em-dash:

I've got to butcher that baby chicken — otherwise it might butcher us.

Girls, women, ladies — I collect all of them.

Use an en-dash to represent ranges and scores (sports writers take note), as well as to indicate matchups. Don't place spaces around these:

The mass execution runs April 24–27.

Tragically, the Bears lost 1,086–5.

The Spain–Brazil game was the most exciting, but it'll be Argentina vs Portugal in the final.

Hyphens and hyphenation

Aside from their rather obvious function of connecting words from one line to the

next in a paragraph, hyphens also serve to “glue” words together to form longer words or phrases known as compounds.

The most common kind of compound is the compound adjective — that is, two or more words that work together to describe one noun. Hyphenating them reduces ambiguity by indicating which (compound) adjectives modify which nouns:

More than 70 high-school students were jailed for possession.

Here, it's clear that the students, who go to high school, were jailed for possession — and not necessarily that the 70 school students were high. Here are some other examples:

Nearly twenty-odd folks attended.

vs

Nearly twenty odd folks attended.

We are grizzly-bear hunters

vs

We are grizzly bear-hunters.

If one of the words is an adverb, keep in mind that it is probably modifying an adjective, not the main noun. As a rule, adverbs ending in -ly never take a hyphen:

I say, that is a hideously tacky neon-coloured fanny pack, my good man.

I beg your pardon? It's truly no match for your overly baggy '80s-era Hammer pants.

Hyphens are also used to link prefixes if awkward letter pairs, doubled vowels, missing letters, or other ambiguities are encountered, as well as if the prefixed word begins with a capital:

I'm going to re-form this nude clay model in response to recent Tory reform.

Postsecondary students are a po-mo bunch.

My noncommittal attitude is non-negotiable.

Also use a hyphen to link words with a common ending or suffix in a list:

The body count increased two-, three-, then fourfold — and then Jack escaped.

Next, observe proper hyphenation technique when describing a person's age (see also Numbers, page 30):

The 27-year-old man liked six-year-olds but hated kids that were 18 years old or older.

Here, “27-year-old” acts as one big super-adjective (or compound modifier, if you prefer) modifying “man”; “kids that were 18 years old,” on the other hand, is just a regular descriptive phrase to which the normal rules of syntax apply. That is, it could just as well read:

The 27-year-old man liked six-year-olds but hated kids that were too big to hug.

You wouldn't say “kids that were too-big-to-hug” — nor, then, would you say “kids that were 18-years-old.”

Hyphens are also used to link compound nouns — that is, long strings of nouns that act as one big noun (note: these usually end up looking rather quaint):

Moving-picture, flying-machine, self-love

Ditto for compound names:

Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, Chief Standing-On-The-Road, L'Anse-aux-Meadows National Historic Site

If you're unsure whether a term is two words, hyphenated, or one word, check the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary* (see also Compound words, page 27).

Finally, while hyphenating a compound adjective all the way through is technically correct, it's sometimes unnecessary — especially if the compound consists of a reasonably recognizable word-pair:

Then-SU president Matt “Dreamy Eyes” Brechtel was featured in a not-so-serious *Getaway* article.

The children will now re-enact post-World War II embargo agreements post-haste.

be indicated by capital letters; if they aren't, then leave out the hyphen at your own risk.

And of course, for any times you're unsure about hyphens, consult CP Style or the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

Ampersand

If you've ever wondered what that squiggly mark in the A&W sign was called, now you know.

However, the ampersand, colloquially known as the “and sign,” has fallen out of common use in writing.

Only use an ampersand if preferred by the group, organization, or formal title; use “and” in all other cases:

Vice President (Operations & Finance), Johnson & Johnson, Grand & Toy, Mr. & Mrs. Smith, Big & Rich, Tegan and Sara, Twist and Shout

The elusive ellipsis ...

Ellipses are three consecutive periods used to replace extraneous words in quotes, or to demonstrate a speaker trailing ... ooh, a squirrel!

There should never be spaces between the periods that make up an ellipsis, but there should be spaces around the ellipsis. If an ellipsis falls at the end of a sentence, go space>ellipsis>space>period.

I sense a disturbance in the Force ...

If the ellipses are used to signify an omission in a quotation, use an ellipsis with spaces on either side. However, it is preferable to paraphrase if you're eliminating significant portions of a quote.

“He's circus-ugly ... His whole face looks like Ken Baumgartner's upper lip.”

Rogers called him “circus ugly,” adding that “his whole face looks like Ken Baumgartner's upper lip.”

Such pairs will usually, but not always, Finally, watch out for programs such as

Microsoft Word, which will often automatically insert these spaces into an ellipsis character.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Periods always follow abbreviations of titles, initials, and geographical locations:

Dr., Mr., Mrs., B.C., P.E.I., U.S.

Periods are omitted in all other abbreviations, including common names, currency, metric symbols, common acronyms, and mixed-case abbreviations that begin and end with a capital letter:

JFK, FDR, GST, VIP, PhD, km/h, NATO, SU, GSA, U of A

Unless you're using a well-known acronym — RCMP, for example — make sure you write out the full name before using an acronym.

The University of Alberta is once again experiencing a budget deficit. This is the U of A's second year of funding cuts and tuition increases.

It is not necessary to put bracketed abbreviations after the name of an organization. If it is a complex abbreviation, general terms are preferable.

The union vs AASUA

CAPITALIZATION

According to the CPStylebook: "Capitalize all proper names, trade names, government departments and agencies of government, names of associations, companies, clubs, religions, languages, nations, races, places, addresses. Otherwise, lowercase is favoured where a reasonable option exists."

Proper names

Capitalize the first letter of all proper names. This includes the names of people, places, languages, religions and their adherents, months, days, and their derivatives:

Batman-esque, Marxist, Americanism, Mandarin, Irish terrier, Muslim, the Roman Catholic Church, Hanukkah, Friday, October, Nudie Magazine Day

Familial terms

A good rule here is to capitalize them only if it would make sense to replace the word with that person's name:

Mom told me to do the dishes.

"Your *mom's* a pot of boiling oil!"

"My other grandma bought me a kitty — what are you going to buy me, Grandma?"

However, note that more conventional words originally derived from proper nouns are not capitalized:

brussels sprouts, french fries, venetian blinds, nanaimo bars

Titles

Upon first reference, always refer to a person by their preferred full name along with the title most pertinent to the story — after that, their last name will suffice. However, in a long story or one that is filled with names, it's better to repeat a person's title than to confuse the reader. It may also be necessary to distinguish between two people with the same last name, in which case repeating titles may be necessary; however, *The Gateway* does not employ "courtesy titles" such as Mr. or Mrs. in front of people's names.

Capitalize formal or governmental titles, as well as any that would replace Mr. or Mrs., when they directly precede the

person's name:

Pope Benedict; Dr. John; Professor John Frink;
Lieutenant Commander Data; Brother John; Mayor
Stephen Mandel; the Right Honourable Joe Clark, PC

All other occupational titles, including officials of companies, unions, political organizations and the like, aren't capitalized:

Widget president Barbara Sansom, CAW secretary
Margaret Wilson, general manager Kevin Lowe, head
coach Eric "Thursty" Thurston, fireman John Young,
high-school principal Seymour Skinner, CUP chairman
(and chief shit-disturber) John Ross Prusakowski

We also never capitalize a title when it follows the person's name. In this case, the title is acting as a general occupational description:

University President Indira Samarasekera looks
nothing like Nick Dehod, the SU president.

For ease of reading, a title more than two words long should be set off from the name with commas:

Rahim Jaffer, archduke of keeping it real, didn't do too
well in front of the House of Commons last week.

Normal syntax rules still apply, however, so don't set off a person's name from their title unnecessarily:

Advanced Education Minister Denis Herard talked
about building some sort of wisdom-bridge.

Lower-case titles when they're standing alone, except when referring to the current Pope, Canada's reigning monarch, the current Canadian Governor General, and all legislative Speakers:

The Queen's corgies are annoying.

The Speaker's chair looks comfy.
The mayor prefers to rent his geese.

It's also acceptable to capitalize full titles of nobility, religion and the like that are commonly used instead of a name:

The Prince of Wales, the Dark Lord

However, titles preceded by "former," "acting," and so on, or which are no longer held by the person in question, should be lower-cased:

Acting prime minister Kim Campbell, mayor-elect Don
Iveson, former president David Palmer

Also lower-case plural uses of titles:

premiers John Martineau and Gerry Germain, popes
John Paul II and John XXIII, lords Black and Voldemort

Titles of government officials below cabinet rank are lower-cased:

deputy minister Eva Swartz, House leader Ian Loy
(federal), house leader Ian Loy (provincial)

Use parentheses to surround the portfolio of a vice-president:

Students' Union Vice-President (Operations & Finance)
Zach Fentiman and President Nick Dehod are two-time
UAWF tag team champions.

Abbreviations such as VPOF and VPSP can be used in headlines, or in the story after the full title has been spelled out.

Institutions, awards, and organizations

Capitalize the names of institutions, institutional groups, societies, organizations, and awards:

Alberta Learning, the Crown, the Liberal Party, the
Stonecutters, the Students' Union, the Nobel Prize, the
Order of Canada, the Montgomery Burns Award for
Outstanding Achievement in the Field of Excellence.

Note that a *Liberal* belongs to a political party, while a *liberal* simply adheres to a certain ideology. Likewise, calling someone a "green" because they are an environmental activist is not capitalized, while calling someone a "Green" because they are a member of the Green

Party is (same goes for “party”: capitalized if part of the name, otherwise lower-case).

Capitalize the names of universities, colleges, and their faculties or departments, but not their courses or programs:

University of Alberta, Simon Fraser University, Grant MacEwan Community College, Strathcona High School, Faculty of Arts, Department of English, McGill Medical School, honours biochemistry program, introductory physiognomy course, C LIT 100

Buildings and places

Capitalize the proper names of buildings, bridges, canals, parks, roads, and other manufactured structures:

Parliament Buildings, Edmonton City Hall, High Level Bridge, High Level Diner, Banff National Park, Whyte Avenue, 109 Street

Note that the same terms are lower-cased when standing alone or pluralized, unless they are conventionally used as a short form of the name. Specific streets are always concrete, and therefore, always capitalized:

city hall, the bridge, the river, Banff and Jasper national parks, the North and South Saskatchewan rivers

Regional governments

Capitalize provincial, state, and regional legislatures, as well as local government councils, departments, and boards:

Alberta Legislature, Edmonton City Council, Calgary Board of Education, Students’ Council, University Administration, Conservative Cabinet

Another important point for us: only capitalize “Students’ Council” when referring to the whole name as a proper noun. Otherwise, just say “council” without a capital.

Sports

With sports references, words such as Games (as in Olympic Games), Series (as in World Series), and Cup (as in Stanley Cup) are capitalized. This is to avoid confusion with the generic usage of the same word:

We had some epic games of Bop It.

I can’t wait for the Games to come to London.

This is an exception to the rule that common nouns standing alone are lower-cased.

Trademarks

Capitalize the names of corporations and their trademarked product names:

Honda Accord, Crown Royal Canadian Whisky, Microsoft Office

If a trademarked noun (or verb) has entered into everyday speech, however, lower-case usage is acceptable — especially when referring (often unwittingly) to general usage. Consult the dictionary if you’re still unsure what the kids are saying these days:

aspirin, kleenex, slurpee, frisbee, to xerox, to skidoo, to rollerblade, tweets

Names with internal capitalization are becoming more and more common; thus where the change is minor and the name is well established, follow the organization’s preference:

PowerPoint, PlayStation, InDesign, iPod, eBay

However, it’s a slippery slope to being pandering and inconsistent; as *Washington Post* editor Bill Walsh puts it, “as writers and editors it’s our job to report these names ... it’s not our job to replicate their logos.” As such, for corporate names and titles in all-caps, we only

capitalize the first letter:

Band-Aid (not BAND-AID), Via Rail (not VIA rail), See Magazine (not SEE Magazine)

Likewise, for all other logos and images, just treat them as normal words:

Guess Jeans (not GUESS? jeans); Yahoo (not Yahoo!)

For names of people or groups, it's best to follow their preference, but for corporate or promotional names, capitalize the first letter no matter what:

KISS, kd lang, bpNichol, e.e. cummings, Adidas, Chapters Indigo, Barnes & Noble

Finally, don't attempt to correct the grammar of a corporate name or logo, even if it makes you want to claw your eyes out (note: this usually comes in the form of a missing apostrophe):

Earls, Tim Hortons, Michaels

Religions

Capitalize all major religions and sects, as well as the names of deities and other sacred names:

Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Catholicism, Sunni, Orthodox Jew, God, Allah, Great Spirit, the Big Guy upstairs, the Almighty, the Holy Spirit, Muhammad

However, the use of capitals in pronouns referring to a deity is now considered archaic.

Capitalize familiar religious references:

Garden of Eden, Noah's Ark, the Ten Commandments, the Crucifixion, Good Samaritan, Sabbath, Ramadan

However, always lower-case heaven, hell, paradise, purgatory, and nirvana (unless you're talking about the band, of course). Note that the words like god and goddess in pagan, pantheistic, and non-denominational references are lower-cased, but their proper (i.e. specific) names are capitalized:

And God said, "let there be killer bees."

The gods must be crazy, dropping Coke bottles on us like that.

Titles and works

Capitalize all the words — except for articles, conjunctions, and prepositions — in the titles of books, newspapers, plays, movies, television shows, songs, and other works (see also Italics, page 23).

The "the" is usually left lowercase, except at the start of titles of books, magazines (if it's actually part of the title), movies, television programs, songs, paintings. As well, only capitalize "the" before a newspaper name if it is part of the newspaper's name.

On the Road Again; The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly; The Lord of the Rings

"Ring of Fire," "U a Freak," "I Am the Walrus"

The Walrus, The Economist, The New York Times, the Edmonton Journal, The Gateway

Historic periods, events, and groupings

Capitalize commonly accepted historic periods and events, artistic movements, formal alliances, and similar groupings:

The Renaissance, Impressionism, The Second World War (or WWII; never "Two" or "2"), the Industrial Revolution, Prohibition, the British Empire, the Group of Seven, the good old days, my heyday

Ratified (but not proposed or defeated) laws, treaties, important legal codes, and historic documents are capitalized as well:

British North America Act, Charter of Rights, Magna Carta, Charlottetown Accord

Quotations

When a quote is reproduced as a complete sentence, capitalize the initial word (and precede it with a comma):

According to the creepy bus driver, “That Veronica Vaughn is one fine piece of ace.”

However, don’t use one if the quotation is an incomplete phrase that flows logically from the introductory clause (no commas are necessary in this case):

McGavin said he “eats pieces of shit like [him] for breakfast.”

Ditto for parenthetical remarks:

I shot a man in Reno (he was a total dick).

Never capitalize the initial capital of any statement that follows a colon or semicolon (unless another rule supercedes it):

“Tell you what, son: bring me my gun and we’ll see what happens.”

That’s just it: Pat seems to like little boys more.

Abbreviations and geography

Capitalize letters in abbreviations, compass directions (when abbreviated), or when denoting a widely recognized geographic region. Geographical abbreviations take periods:

U.S.A., N.W.T., B.C., A.B., the Far North, the Maritimes, the Prairies, Upstate New York, the Middle East, the Deep South, the Bible Belt, the Western Hemisphere, western Alberta, northern Quebec.

In general, the words northern, southern, eastern, and western are lower-cased unless they are part of a term denoting a widely recognized geographic region. Same goes for province and state names, unless part of a

corporate name.

When in doubt, consult the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary* or *The Canadian Press Stylebook* for more specific capitalization rules and examples. Both of these resources can be found in *The Gateway’s* office.

GOVERNMENT

National and provincial legislatures

In both federal and provincial politics, the Official Opposition is the opposition party with the most seats:

the Liberal Opposition, the opposition parties.

Note that the title for members of provincial legislatures varies from province to province, so always spell out the title for members from provinces other than Alberta:

Pundits have asked whether John Tory, a Member of the Provincial Parliament (MPP) for Ontario’s Progressive Conservative party, was aided in his election victory by his coincidental name.

Political affiliations

Only give the political affiliation and constituency of MPs or members of provincial legislatures if it is relevant to the story. For members of Parliament and provincial legislatures, give their party and constituency; for senators, give their party and province.

Ward 10 Councillor Don Iveson

Avoid party abbreviations such as BQ and Lib., except in the case of the NDP (New Democratic Party) and PQ (Parti Québécois). However, with PQ, always give the full name of the party first:

André Boisclair, leader of the Parti Québécois, once snorted cocaine off an undead hooker. *Allegedly.*

When describing a member of Parliament or member of the Legislative Assembly, it's acceptable to refer to them simply as an "MP" or "MLA" as long as the federal context has been established:

Rahim Jaffer, former Conservative member for Edmonton-Strathcona, was once voted one of the sexiest MPs on the Hill.

Government jargon and spokespeople

When in need of a government source for an article, use spokespeople *only* as a last resort. Often you will be directly referred to just such a spokesflak, but always push to talk to someone with real involvement in an issue, such as a minister or deputy minister.

Avoid using the type of government jargon you often hear in interviews or read in press releases. Jargon is uninformative and can even be misleading:

task force, government initiative, negative growth, collateral damage, stakeholders, synergize, jazzercise

NAMES AND INITIALS

Always refer to someone by their preferred full name the first time they are mentioned in an article, along with the title (if any) that is *most relevant to the story* (see also Titles, page 12). After that, refer to them by their last name only, unless their title is necessary to distinguish them from someone with the same name.

Generally, it's best to refer to people using their preferred spelling and length/form. This includes shortened forms of first names, lower-cased names, and the use of initials (note: make sure to ask interviewees about their preference, as well

as to confirm the correct spelling of their name):

Joe Clark, Red Kelly, Doug Owram, Rod Fraser, kd lang

If they have no preference, use their full first and last names. Retain the use of Sr. or Jr., but only use them with the full name, and do not set them off with commas. Use II and the like only in case of preference:

John Smith Sr., Steve Stephenson III, Henry VIII

Particularly when writing crime or accident stories (which, admittedly, is almost never at *The Gateway* — unless you're writing Campus Crime Beat, in which case names are rarely given), it is useful to give a person's middle initial along with their age and occupation so that confusion as to the person's identity does not arise, as well as to disambiguate between two people with similar names:

Lee Harvey Oswald, Mark David Chapman, George H. W. Bush, George W. Bush

People with first names applicable to either sex (eg Chris, Jean, Leslie, Lee, Pat, Jayne) should be identified as male or female as quickly as possible (usually with the use of he or she).

Famous (and dead) authors, composers and so on may be referred to by surname only:

Dickens' *Great Expectations*, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, Darwin's theory of evolution

Nicknames

Use nicknames to refer to someone only if they are better known by that name. To enclose a nickname in someone's given name, use quotation marks; however, if the nickname precedes the name, no quotation marks are necessary:

Magic Johnson, David "Skip" Zeibin, Ross "I saw the ninja again" Prusakowski, Big John Henry, Drunko McPierse, Nick "The Toboggan" Frost

Foreign names

If different spellings exist, always use the most common:

Khrushchev, not Khrushchyov

In non-English names, always respect an individual's preference. If you don't know, ask, but *de*, *la*, *van*, *von* and the like are usually lower case (except at the start of a sentence):

Charles de Gaulle was insane; as that one guy put it, "De Gaulle was insane."

And watch the *Mc/Mac* distinction — because, as anyone who's seen *Braveheart* can attest, one group you don't want to piss off is the Scottish.

With French names, retain accents according to that person's preference — but, following preferences, don't assume or insert any if the name is better known in its anglicized form:

Stéphane Dion, Jean Chretien, Denis Herard

For names based in alphabets other than Latin (the one English uses), use the accepted English phonetic equivalent. Follow the individual's preference if stated, but don't insert non-Latin characters or diacritics.

In Chinese, Korean, and many other Asian languages, the family name comes first. However, if a name has been westernized, put their given name first instead.

Ban Ki-moon, Kim Jong-il, Li Xiu, John Woo

For Arabic names, it's best to follow common usage and that person's preferred spelling (see also Arabic words, page 27).

Plurals of last names

Plurals of proper names usually involve adding "s" or "es":

the Burnses, the Charleses, the Henrys, the Joneses

For possessives, add the apostrophe after the pluralization. In this case, the final "s" after a "z" sound isn't necessary, as the name is plural (see also Apostrophes, page 9):

I am envious of the Joneses' various possessions — the Charleses', not so much.

Note that in the above example, the comma goes outside the apostrophe, as the latter is considered an integral part of the spelling and not simply a quotation mark.

Professional titles

In general, use *Dr.* to refer to licensed healthcare professionals. Specify their occupation only when relevant. Note that each province decides which of its healthcare professionals may use *Dr.* — when in doubt, Google it.

It's not necessary to use *Dr.* to refer to someone with an honorary or academic PhD. This largely depends on the context. If it is pertinent, give the person's discipline or explain that they have earned an honorary degree:

McLellan, who received an honorary doctorate of law from the U of A, has since retired from politics.

Avoid false titles by placing a "the" in front of the phrase. Thus it's not "King of Spain," but "*the* King of Spain."

Use gender-specific titles whenever possible. Only use words like *chairperson* and *spokesperson* if the identity (and therefore gender) of the title-holder is unknown.

General rules

For French place-names (both Canadian and otherwise), retain all hyphens, and shorten *saint* and *sainte* to *St* and *Ste* respectively:

Ste-Anne-des-Monts, St-Jean-Sur-Richelieu, St-Louis-du-Ha! Ha!

Retain all accents, except for where a more common anglicized alternative exists:

Hérouxville, Rivière-du-Loup, Jonquière, but Montreal and Quebec (city and province)

Use the term “Newfoundland and Labrador” when discussing the province as a whole (note: the provincial abbreviation is N.L., for Newfoundland and Labrador, and not NFLD). Use “Newfoundland” alone in more casual references, or when only the island itself is being discussed.

NUMBERS

Like dates and time (page 21), units appended to the end of amounts have a preceding space.

In general, measurements are spelled out in the first reference, then abbreviated (but kept in lowercase) in all subsequent references:

Paul normally moves at a speed of under three kilometers per hour, but has been clocked as high as 70 km/h when rushing for grilled cheese sandwiches.

It took him ten minutes to install the 11-watt lightbulb.

The exception is temperature, which is always abbreviated when the format is used, but spelled out otherwise:

Today's forecast brings a high of 25 C.
It's about five degrees colder today than yesterday.

Though common metric abbreviations don't contain periods, indicate imperial measurements as follows (note the format for denoting height):

I ran at 60 m.p.h., but still couldn't outrun the 5-11, 178 lb. Human Bullet.

The choice of metric or imperial is purely

conventional. Readers are usually more familiar with imperial weights like pounds and imperial measurements such as feet and inches. However, large distances are usually noted in kilometers, and tiny quantities are typically noted in milligrams or grams. Use your discretion: think about using units your reader isn't going to need to use a metric/imperial conversion table (or widget) to understand.

Integers up to nine are written out; 10 and up (as well as decimals) are numerals (see also Quack facts, page 30). The only exception to this is with weight, distance, time, and sports scores — that is, in cases where the unit is directly attached to the number (eg. 6 p.m. or 5-11).

Keep all the numerals together up to 999. At 1,000, a comma is introduced to separate the thousands from the hundreds, the millions from the thousands, and so on:

I count 8,603 dogs, 10,481 cats, and 313,451 mice.

If the number must begin a sentence or headline, spell it out (but try to avoid this):

Thirty thousand students showed up for Saturday's protest (ha! — just kidding).

Numbers 1,000,000 and up should be spelled out (and rounded up to a maximum of two decimal places).

3 million albums; an estimated 6.62 billion casualties

In this case, we don't spell out the 3 in “3 million,” because it's actually part of the number 3,000,000 — which, needless to say, is well over nine.

For monetary values, a \$ symbol should precede the digits — you don't need spell out the word “dollars”:

\$5, \$20,000; \$35.42; £24; but 50¢; 2p

Don't use hyphens unless you're forming a compound adjective (see page 27):

\$25 million per year, but a \$250-million contract

If specification of currency is required, format it as follows (note spacing and period omission):

\$25 CAD, \$23.50 US, but US\$50,000, a US\$10-million reward.

“Per cent” should be written as two words (though “percentage” is one word, as a “centage” doesn’t exist). Numbers are formatted as usual:

I try to incorporate mayonnaise into 66.7 per cent of my diet; I’m right 99.9 per cent of the time; that represents a one per cent increase; what percentage would you say it was?

Numerical suffixes

Avoid suffixes like “-st,” “-nd,” “-rd,” and “-th” (except for numbers nine and under).

I live on 109 Street and 68 Avenue.

The only exception to this rule is when citing a century, in which case you should follow *Gateway style* with the number in question (note hyphenation of compound adjectives):

She lived in the 19th century; I like 19th-century architecture; Charlemagne was crowned emperor of the Romans in the ninth century.

Dates and Time

The rule for dates is pretty simple. If necessary, write the day of the week first, followed by a comma, then the month, followed by the numerical date (*sans suffix*). If you need to put the year in, precede it with a comma as well:

I caught all 150 original Pokémon on Wednesday, September 23, 1997.

If you’re just specifying one or more years and want to use a shortened version, it would look something like this:

I caught Mewtwo back in ’97.

If you’re specifying a decade, you still require an apostrophe:

I seem to recall losing my virginity back in the ’60s — the 1860s, that is.

Time is an even simpler matter (alright, Einstein, but for our purposes it is). Basically, always write the time as you would see it on a digital clock, followed by the qualifiers “a.m.” or “p.m.” separated by a space. Military time (eg 23:00) is never used.

The package arrived at 3:53 p.m. this afternoon.

If the time you’re using is at the top of the hour (eg 4:00), eliminate the “:00” portion of the equation:

Omar stuck up the convoy at 4 p.m.

When combining the date and the time in the same sentence, make sure that you list the time before the date:

Prop Joe has called a meeting at 4 p.m. on Sunday, September 4, 2005.

Finally, don’t use terms such as “yesterday” or “tomorrow” in stories. Instead, name the day if it happens within seven days of publication:

Premier Stelmach’s announcement on chocolate eclairs for every new baby is expected to happen on Thursday. The Opposition response will come next Monday.

For more distant dates, use the date:

The Stanley Cup finals will start on May 30.

(CANADIAN) SPELLING

Maintaining consistent spelling practices in Canada is basically a lost cause.

Given British, American, and distinctly Canadian options, often a choice must simply be made and then adhered to. For consistency's sake, *The Gateway* takes the spelling of the main (i.e., first) entry of a word in the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary*.

Keep in mind that most computer programs — most notably Microsoft Word — use an American dictionary by default. Don't let it auto-change your Canadian spellings back into heathen Yankee style. Watch out for Mr. Webster's canonical dictionary, your computer's built-in spell check, and basically the entire Internet.

Spelling it 'our' way

Canadian spellings tend towards -our and -re endings:

humour, colour, honour (but honorable), vigour and rigour (but vigorous and rigorous), centre, fibre, theatre, meagre, sombre, manoeuvre

Note that "metre" is used except when referring to the measuring device (eg. ohmmeter).

Like the British, Canadians also prefer "-ce" instead of "-se" endings on nouns like defence and offence. But we always side with the Yanks when using "-ize" or "-yze" endings:

prize, realize, specialize, civilize, analyze, paralyze

Exceptions are advertise, chastise, depise, surmise, and all verbs ending in -cise, -prise, and -vise:

comprise, exercise, supervise, surprise, televise.

Twinning consonants

When a suffix beginning with a vowel (-ish, -ing, -able, -ed, -er) is added to a word ending with the letter L, double that L; in all other cases, refer to the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary*:

councillor, controlled, travelled, labelled, dropped, permitted, marketing, targeted.

I before E except after C

This old adage behaves fairly nicely with Latin-derived words:

Believe, relieve, achieve, receive, deceive, conceive

But it doesn't really apply to words with Germanic roots (including Old English):

Rottweiler, either, weight, height

Words ending with an "e" followed by a suffix beginning with an "i" are another exception, as these types of formations are purely coincidental:

caffeine, codeine, protein, plebeian

Finally, some other "weird" exceptions:

seize, species, heinous, counterfeit, forfeit, mischief, chief, foreign, heifer, leisure, sieve

Compound plurals

Most compound nouns have their last word pluralized:

forget-me-nots, break-ins

However, nouns followed by a prepositional phrase, people followed by an adverb, and nouns followed by an adjective are all exceptions (note: you might have to insert hyphens that wouldn't otherwise belong):

editors-in-chief, students-at-large, daughters-in-law, ladies-in-waiting, hangers-on, passers-by, runners-up

Watch out for those sneaky hyphenated compounds, though:

secretary-generals

ITALICS

The Gateway italicizes words using its own layout software and won't recognize formatting from word processing programs, so don't bother italicizing it yourself. Instead, simply put an underscore on either side of the word(s) you want italicized:

Awesome, the Edmonton Journal

Okay, we lied: *The Gateway* actually uses an eight-degree oblique—but you only have to worry about that if you're an editor (or a typography nerd). Also, be careful not to put punctuation inside the underscores.

Use italicization in the following contexts:

Titles of works

Italicize the titles of (published) books, plays, movies, TV shows, major musical works (this includes album titles, operas, and symphonies, but not song titles), works of art, long-form poetry, and periodical publications, as well as individual ships, trains, aircraft, and so on (particularly in a military context):

The Big Lebowski, *Lost*, *Pride and Prejudice*, Nirvana's *In Utero*, Michelangelo's *David*, *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*

Note that punctuation marks are not italicized unless they're part of the title.

The “the” at the beginning of a title is only italicized if it is part of the full title. The articles “the” or “a” may be omitted from a title if the work is well known or has already been cited in full:

Darwin's *Origin of Species*, Dickens' *Tale of Two Cities*

Foreign words

Italicize foreign words and phrases:

je me souviens, carpe diem, j'aime le pamplemousse

However, when a foreign word or abbreviation becomes sufficiently naturalized into English, leave it alone (that said, try to avoid using clichés like the plague — I mean, yeah, like something bad. And while you're at it, watch out for mixed modifiers as well):

vice versa, laissez faire, spaghetti, ad hoc, i.e., eg., jihad

Emphasis

Italics are also used to emphasize particular words, whether seriously or sarcastically:

“*I love Mondays*,” she exclaimed.

“*What? I'm foreign.*”

When not to italicize

Anything not listed above is not italicized. This includes titles of chapters in books, articles in periodicals, shorter poems, TV episodes, radio programs, song titles, and so on:

My favourite episode of *The Simpsons* is “Last Exit to Springfield.”

Musical works identified by a description (usually symphonies) and names of sacred texts and their subdivisions are neither italicized nor put in quotation marks:

Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, the Bible, the Qu'ran, Leviticus, Romans

Finally, if a piece of text is already printed in italics, then any words that would normally be italicized are left upright, or “roman”:

Letters to The Gateway should be sent to ...

Also, for you science nerds, don't italicize

genus and species names; just capitalize the genus.

Man, that guy barely qualifies as a Homo sapien.

SYNTAX

Below are a few types of sentence constructions that tend to be under-used, under-loved, or just under-understood:

Parenthetical clauses

A parenthetical clause is an explanatory or digressive phrase that breaks from the regular train of thought in the main sentence. The name is a bit misleading, however, as parenthetical clauses can variously be set off by parentheses, commas, or dashes.

Klein, who ruled the province with an iron fist for years, finally retired in 2006.

There is a “hierarchy of digression,” if you will, among parenthetical citations — that is, which form of punctuation you use depends on the degree to which you wish to emphasize that thought.

With three options to choose from, we have what could perhaps be described as the Goldilocks effect. Parentheses represent the weakest emphasis, and therefore contain only minimally or tangentially relevant information and are not used often:

Conrad Black (who’s married to journalist Barbara Amiel) was found guilty of mail fraud and obstruction.

Em-dashes offer maximal emphasis, and are meant to reinforce a point highly relevant — if not crucial — to the sentence at hand (see also Dashes, page 10):

Conrad Black — who allegedly misled and deceived Hollinger International’s shareholders and directors for years — was found guilty of mail fraud and

obstruction.

Finally, commas are used when the parenthetical clause is approximately equal in relevancy to the main sentence — in other words, when it fits in *just right*:

Conrad Black, the former newspaper baron, was found guilty of mail fraud and obstruction.

There are no hard-and-fast rules for determining where a phrase fits in to this hierarchy — just use your own judgment to decide how the phrase fits in, or whether it needs to be there at all.

That vs which

The that/which dilemma plagues nearly everyone who speaks the English language, and its misuse by otherwise well-educated people trying to sound more elegant has only exacerbated the problem.

Thankfully, it’s really quite simple once you learn it. The word “that” is a specifier, meaning the information that follows can refer to only one thing. Compare the following examples:

Plants that I own often end up dying.

This means that only the plants that I own are dead — my neighbour’s plants are alive and well, for all I know. However, if I were to say:

Plants which I own often end up dying.

It would be incorrect twice over. For one thing, “which” isn’t interchangeable with “that” — it’s always part of a separate parenthetical clause. So it should read:

Plants, which I own, often end up dying.

This is the correct use of “which,” but changes the original meaning of the sentence. Now it suggests that I own all the plants in the world, or at least an *unspecified* amount, and that I’m therefore responsible for defoliation

worldwide.

So, “which” is it? Depends on the context, obviously — but as long as you use “that” and “which” properly, you’ll easily be able to tell.

Who vs whom

Again, often messed up, but easy to learn. “Who” is a subject, and “whom” is an object. In other words, “who” does things, and “whom” has things done to it.

Who ate all the muffin-tops?

People who read the *Sun* tend not to be so bright.

To whom do we owe this honour?

Ask not for whom the bell tolls ...

Remember: “whom” always goes with a preposition (to, from, with, at, above, etc), while “who” always pairs with a verb. However, “whom” tends to sound stuffy even when used correctly, so when in doubt, leave it out.

Mevs I

To me or not to me? That is all too often the question. Just as with who/whom, “me” is an object, while “I” is a pronoun (and thus a subject). So, “I” does things, while “me” has things done to it:

I think I’ll try on those Nascar boxers you gave to me.

Therefore it’s not the case that “She and I” is always right and “me and her” is always wrong. It depends on what the grammatical subject of the sentence is (ie. that which is modifying the verb):

Roger and I live in Michigan.

Here’s a movie I made about Roger and me.

The trick is to cut out the other person in the sentence and see if it still makes sense:

I live in Michigan (not “me live in Michigan”).

Here’s a movie about me (not “a movie about ... I”).

FORMATTING

And now some final text formatting tips to get you started:

Spacing

Put space, one space, and only one space, so help you God, after a period (or other final punctuation mark):

Failure to comply will result in an editor beating you with a typewriter, the device to which we owe the outdated convention of putting two spaces after a period.

If, despite your best efforts, you can’t shake the two-space habit that Mavis Beacon taught you, don’t worry: the magic of computers can help you out here. Just perform a “replace all” command, and replace [space>space] with [space]. That way, your editor doesn’t have to do it for you!

Indentation

Do not attempt to indent your paragraphs in any way, shape, or form, be it manually or automagically with hanging tabs and the like. Instead, simply align your paragraphs “flush left,” leaving one full line of space in between:

Just pretend that this is an entire paragraph, one that takes up 3–5 lines.

Now, pretend that this is the next one. See the pretty space above it? This is achieved by pressing return/enter not once but twice on your keyboard.

Paragraph length

There’s no hard-and-fast rule as to exactly how long a paragraph ought to be,

but these general guidelines are pretty reliable.

Start a new paragraph when switching from narration to quote (and vice-versa):

According to Dehod, a lot of stuff got done in Council.

“We got a lot of stuff done in council,” Dehod said.

As of press time, no one else was available for comment.

When switching from speaker to speaker:

“We got a lot of stuff done in council,” Dehod said.

“It was a complete waste of fucking time,” countered Rory Tighe, Vice President (Student Life).

If the quote is getting a bit long, you can break it up with a new paragraph. Just make sure not to close the quotation marks in the preceding paragraph, while still “opening” the quote in the new paragraph:

However, Rory Tighe, Vice President (Student Life), thought otherwise.

“It was a complete waste of fucking time. All we did for the first hour was debate what kind of pizza we should get.

Note: if you do manage to submit a perfectly formatted article on deadline (and, if you’ve made it this far into the Duck Book, chances are you will), your editor may begin hugging you, sobbing uncontrollably, or both. Consider yourself warned.

And of course, if you have other any questions about CP style, don’t be afraid to ask said sobbing newspaper editor — he or she will, once they dry their eyes a bit, be more than happy to help. Just don’t ask an editor a question about style generally, unless you want to hear about worn-out sneakers or this totally rad T-shirt site they found on the Internet.

STICKY SPELLINGS

Compound words

Note: the following examples supersede COD spellings wherever discrepancies arise.

badass
coexist
hardcore / softcore
oilsands (not “tar sands”)
postmodern
workforce
worldview

Sports words

backcourt / frontcourt / halfcourt
end zone
face off (verb)
faceoff (noun)
halftime
kick off (verb)
kickoff (noun)
lay up (verb)
layup (noun)
playoff
postseason / preseason
power play
quarter-final but **semifinal**
shootout
shut out (verb)
shutout (noun)

Arabic words

(note capitalization)

al-Qaeda
burka
Hezbollah
Janjaweed
Muhammad (unless otherwise specified)
Qu’ran
sharia law
Shi’a

Pesky pairs

Make sure you know these like the back of your favourite body part:

adverse	unfavourable
averse	opposed
affect (verb)	influence, have an effect on
effect (n or v)	a result; bring about, accomplish
allusion	a casual reference
illusion	a false impression
alternate(ly)	in turns, first one and then the other
alternative(ly)	providing a choice
amount	how much? (weight and money)
number	how many? (items)
as	introduces clauses: <i>It tastes good as a cigarette should.</i>
like	introduces a noun or pronoun not directly followed by a verb: <i>He smokes like a pipe.</i>
assume	accept for the sake of argument
presume	take for granted
breach	break a contract or a wall
broach	open a barrel or a topic
can (could)	denotes ability/power to do something
may (might)	suggests doubt; also expresses permission
climactic	of a climax
climatic	of climate
compare to	likento: <i>They compared him to Hitler.</i>
compare with	show similarities and differences: <i>He cannot compare with Hitler.</i>

complementary	completing; supplying needs
complimentary	praising; free
compose	make up
comprise	contain all the parts
include	contain some of the parts
continual	frequently repeated
continuous	uninterrupted
council	an assembly
counsel	advice, a legal adviser; to advise
country	a geographic and political territory
nation	a group of people with a shared identity, history, language, geography, etc
dependant (noun)	one who depends on another
dependent (adj)	depending on
different from	used with a noun or pronoun
different than	introduces a clause
disinterested	impartial
uninterested	not interested
effective	having an effect; coming into operation
effectual	answering its purpose
elicit (verb)	to draw out, evoke
illicit (adjective)	not legal
emigrant	leaves the country
immigrant	enters the country
migrant	moves from one place to another
eminent	prominent
imminent	near at hand
ensure	to make sure
insure	to provide insurance
assure	to remove uncertainty

farther	denotes physical distance: <i>farther down the road.</i>	observation	noting, looking at
further	everything else: <i>to slip further into debt.</i>	obsolete obsolescent	no longer in use becoming obsolete
forbid prohibit	is followed by “to” is followed by “from”	paramount tantamount	supreme equal to
forego forgo	precede abstain from	practicable practical	able to be done useful, sensible, functional
gender sex	grammatical or socio-cultural biological/anatomical	precede proceed	to go before to go along, continue
hanged hung inapt inept	killed by hanging suspended unsuitable clumsy	presently at present momentarily	soon, in a moment now for a moment
inmate	occupant of a hospital, home, prison, or other institution	principal	chief, most important; capital sum; school di rector
prisoner, convict	occupant of a prison	principle	basic truth or rule; code of conduct
it’s	abbreviation for “it is” or “it has”	rebut, refute deny	prove to be false declare to be false
its	belonging to it	regretful regrettable	full of regret causing regret
judicial judicious	of a judge or law court sound of judgment	repetitive	characterized by repetition
lay (laying, laid) lie (lying, lay)	to lay something down to recline	repetitious	characterized by unnecessary or tedious repetition
lead (n and v) to lead led (verb) lede (noun)	metal; present tense of to lead past tense of to lead the opening line of an article	sensual sensuous	arousing or satisfying bodily appetites or sexual desire appealing to the senses, sometimes the mind
loath loathe	reluctant to detest	stationary stationery	unmoving writing material
luxuriant luxurious	lush costly, rich	strait	narrow, confined; a body of water
meter metre	a measuring device a measure of distance; a verse rhythm	straight	unbent, direct
observance	obeying, paying heed to	than	relative pronoun: <i>my dad is stronger than your dad.</i>

then indicates sequence: *I get up, and then I have breakfast.*

was past tense of 'to be': *I was something of a wunderkind then.*

were subjunctive tense of 'to be'; used to express a condition contrary to fact: *she spoke to him as if he were a fool.*

while (noun) They had to wait for a while (note the for).

awhile They had to wait awhile (no preposition).

QUACK FACTS

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The Gateway

For a full listing of Gateway editors and business staff, consult the equally handy-dandy *Gateway Staff Manual* (the official guide to how we do what we do). Or, just check out page two of any copy of *The*

Gateway that you see propping up table legs around campus.

Numbers & figures

one
first
nine
ninth
10
10th
999
1,000
100,000
1 million
\$2 million
\$3.45 million CAD
US\$6.78 billion

Accents & characters

For Macintosh computers:

áéíóú	alt>e>(letter)
àèìòù	alt>>(letter)
âêîôû	alt>i>(letter)
äëïöü	alt>u>(letter)
- (en-dash)	alt>-
— (em-dash)	alt>shift>-

For PCs:

- (en-dash)	alt + 0150
— (em-dash)	alt + 0151

Check your character map for the rest!

Reference materials

The Canadian Press Stylebook (15th edition)
ISBN 978-0-920009-42-0

Canadian Oxford Dictionary (2nd edition)
ISBN 0-19-541816-6

Oxford Guide to Canadian English Usage (2nd edition)
ISBN 0-19-542602-9

