University of Nebraska Press House Style Sheet  
(updated March 2022)

REFERENCE MATERIALS

We follow the Chicago Manual of Style, 17th ed., for most MSS, although on occasion we will ask that you use MLA, AAA, APA, or another style. Exceptions to CMS will be noted in the Project Notes.

We prefer Merriam-Webster’s 11th Collegiate Dictionary. In general, we prefer closed style for many prefixes, but please check the author’s usage against a reliable dictionary. Where multiple spellings are offered, always use the preferred spelling. Retain accents, special letters, and italics for foreign terms as appropriate.

EDITORIAL PREFERENCES

Abbreviations and acronyms

Use the abbreviation “U.S.” as an adjective; UNP allows the abbreviation to be used in the noun form. (The adjective may be spelled out or abbreviated. UNP uses periods with U.S., which is contrary to CMS.)

Delete periods in all other acronyms and abbreviations for organizations (e.g., CIA, UNL).  
Delete periods if an entire name is abbreviations (e.g., JFK, FDR).

Change the abbreviations e.g., i.e., and etc. in the main text to “that is,” “for example,” “and so forth,” or related phrases (such abbreviations are acceptable in parenthetical remarks or in the notes).

See also GUIDELINES FOR SMALL CAPS AND FULL CAPS, below.

Alphabetization

Use the letter-by-letter system as described in CMS 16.59. Do not continue across commas (except the serial comma).

Names with St. are alphabetized with other words beginning with st, not as if they were spelled Saint.

Names beginning with Mac or Mc are alphabetized letter-by-letter as they appear, not mixed together as if they were all spelled Mac.


Bias-free language

Use of biased, derogatory, or offensive language

In creative works: The acquiring editor should be notified and asked to approve the use.

In quoted texts within scholarly works: UNP preference is to elide the word (n—, r—, g—, etc.). It is acceptable to add an s at the end of the dash to make the sentence grammatically correct. The copyeditor should inform the author of this house preference. If the author wants to retain the full use, the author must include some kind of explanation in a note attached to first use. Of course, even if the author agrees to follow the press’s preference to elide, the author still may want to include an explanation for why the word has been changed. If the word is used repeatedly (for example, in a book analyzing offensive language), a note of explanation must be included in the FM, whether as a separate note or as part of the introductory material.

In published works: If an offensive word is used in the title of a published work, it should be retained.

Disability Language Style Guide

This was developed by the National Center on Disability and Journalism at Arizona State University. It covers two hundred words and terms commonly used.

https://ncdj.org/style-guide/

Capitalization

UNP follows Chicago’s preference for a spare use of capitals, what is referred to as a “down” style.

See CMS 8.1.
the University of Nebraska Press (UNP); the press

Captions and credit lines

Use sentence-style capitalization for all captions, whether full or incomplete sentences.
If one caption in the manuscript ends with a period, all captions end with a period, whether they’re complete sentences or not.
Credit lines should not be enclosed in parentheses.

Dates

UNP house preference is for the month-day-year date style (January 1, 1990), but CMS 17 allows both the month-day-year and the day-month-year styles. Stet day-month-year if it is used consistently throughout a manuscript or the book is intended for an international audience.
Do not use only digits for dates (e.g., 08/08/02).
Spell outs months in the notes and bibliography, even if the author has consistently abbreviated.

Diacritics

Verify diacritical marks when you can and list the special characters (not the full words) on page FM 1 in the front matter, below the title; list accented words on the style sheet.
Because the press is now using Times New Roman, most characters and diacritics are represented. Please consult your project editor if a character is unavailable.

Ethnic Groups

Capitalize names of ethnic and national groups, as well as adjectives associated with these names. See CMS 8.38.
Capitalize Black and Indigenous as ethnic terms. If an author wishes to retain lowercase spelling, please consult your project editor.

Foreign Words

Foreign proper nouns are not italicized. See CMS 7.53.
Unfamiliar foreign words and phrases are italicized. If the word or phrase becomes familiar through repeated use throughout the text, it is italicized only on its first occurrence. See CMS 7.53.
UNP applies these rules to Native proper nouns, words, and phrases as well.

Hyphenation

Leave terms African American, Asian American, Italian American, and the like as open compounds, whether used as adjectives or nouns. See CMS 8.39.

Initials

Space initials in full personal names (e.g., M. F. K. Fisher), but provide full names wherever possible (query the author).
If initials are used as a name, periods are retained but space is omitted (e.g., G.P. [Cather], B.J. [Hollars], E.W. [Scripps]).
See also GUIDELINES FOR SMALL CAPS AND FULL CAPS, below.

Numbers

Inclusive numbers

For inclusive numbers and inclusive years, we generally follow CMS 9.60–61 and 9.63–64.

Large monetary amounts

Sums of money of more than one hundred dollars are normally expressed by numerals, or for numbers of a million or more, by a mixture of numerals and spelled-out numbers, per CMS 9.24.

Military units

Spell out military units per CMS 9.47.
Use numerals for unit numbers greater than one hundred.
Capital roman numerals are sometimes acceptable for divisions; please consult your project editor.

**Numerals vs. words**
Spell out numbers according to *CMS* 9.2–7, observing the consistency rule in 9.7.

**Parts of a work**
Use lowercase and arabic numerals to refer to parts of a work (part 3, chapter 5, appendix 2, table 1), including the MS being edited.

**Roman numerals**
Leave roman numerals as full caps (sovereigns, centuries in titles, etc.) or lowercase (folios); do not code for small caps.
Be especially careful to insert en dashes as needed.

**Possessives**
For proper names ending in -s, add ’s for the possessive: Jones’s, Descartes’s.
Retain the apostrophe for plural attributive nouns: employees’ cafeteria, taxpayers’ associations.
However, do not use an apostrophe for proper names (often corporate names) or where there is no possessive meaning: *Publishers Weekly*, Department of Veterans Affairs, a housewares sale.
Keep in mind the exceptions to the general rule listed in *CMS* 7.20–22.

**Punctuation**

**Commas**
Use the serial comma.
Do not use a comma after short introductory phrases such as “In the 1930s.”
Delete commas from compound predicates (see *CMS* 6.25).

**Ellipses**
Use the three- or four-dot method (see *CMS* 13.50-58). For some manuscripts, the three-dot method is acceptable for rendering trailing thought.
Do not begin or end quotations—in running text or in extracts—with ellipses.

**Citing notes**
In both documentation and indexes, when both the page and the note number appears, the period is omitted after the n and no space appears on either side (e.g., 102n4).

**Font**
Set punctuation following italicized words in roman unless the punctuation belongs to a title or to the word it follows (see *CMS* 6.2).

**Slash, or solidus (/)**
Be wary if the author seems to overuse the slash between two nouns; often it indicates a theoretical shortcut that perplexes rather than informs the reader. If the slash appears outside the contexts explained in *CMS* 6.105–13, edit to eliminate it if you’re certain about the author’s intention or query the author directly if you are not sure.
In run-in verse, use a space on either side of the slash.

**Spell check**
Ideally, you should run a spell check after the first edit (to catch preexisting typos and any typos in insertions) and again after cleanup (to catch typos in new insertions and also to draw your attention to accidentally deleted word spaces and so forth).

**Tables**
Simple tables will appear within the manuscript and will be tagged. Unless noted in Project Notes, please edit these tables electronically.
Use sentence-style capitalization for table titles and column heads.

Technical terms

email, ebook (closed up, no hyphen, which is contrary to CMS)
World Wide Web; the web
internet; the net
website; a web page
Do not italicize web addresses, but do add the <url> character style: bisonbooks.com, nebraskapress.unl.edu

Titles

Of persons Please review CMS 8.19–33, especially 8.21 regarding titles used in apposition to a name.
Of works Please review the general rules beginning at CMS 8.156. Note that UNP does not capitalize prepositions in the titles of works unless emphasis has been placed on the preposition.
Of foreign-language works An English-language translation of a title, if the work has not been published in translation and the English title is provided only for the reader’s information, should appear in parentheses and be set roman using sentence-style capitalization. If the title represents a published translation, use italics or quotation marks as appropriate and use headline-style capitalization.

UNP word list

antisemitism, anti-Semite
Black people, Blacks, people of color
Civil War terms: Confederate Army, Union Army, Northerner, Southerner
coauteur
co-chair
coeditor
co-founder
co-president
co-translator
COVID-19
ebook
email
Euro-American
Far West, Pacific Northwest, Southwest
the Great Plains
high plains, central plains, northern plains, southern plains
Indigenous
internet
ISIS (ISIL, DAESH)
mulatto
nation-building (n., adj.)
the plains (but note: Plains is often capped in anthropological contexts where it indicates a culture complex, and is capped with tribal designations such as Plains Apaches. Also note: the term plains in its various forms takes a plural verb (the plains are); if the construction is awkward, say “the plains region [or area] is.”)
PR
the Staked Plain (Llano Estacado)
state-building (n., adj.)
Texas Panhandle, Oklahoma Panhandle
trans-Mississippi West
western history; westerner; Wild West, Old West
West Texas, Southern California, but otherwise lowercase directional terms
white people, whites
$US20

OTHER STYLE ISSUES

UNP prefers that instead of which for restrictive clauses.

Avoid British spellings (e.g., use toward, backward, afterward, color, grey, amid, among, and the like as opposed to
towards, backwards, afterwards [with an s], colour, grey, amidst, amongst). Most dictionaries will identify
British spellings and provide the American alternative.

Remove superfluous numbers and bullet points from short lists, unless a step-by-step procedure is being
described.

When an author is deceased, we prefer to say that he or she is the author or editor of a work as opposed to
was.

Per CMS 13.11, when incorporating fragmentary quotations into text, phrase the surrounding sentence in such
a way that the quoted words fit into it logically and grammatically.

For biblical citations, we prefer colons: Gen. 1:2.

We prefer to use Arabic numerals for part numbers. In creative works, Roman numerals are permissible only if
the author insists.

MLA style now requires the use of URLs (or DOIs) in Works Cited and no longer requires the medium of
publication.

In running text, series lists, and back cover copy, a title of a work within a title should remain in italics and be
enclosed in quotation marks (see CMS 8.173). However, on the cover and title page, titles within titles
should be set in italics, the remaining text set in roman, and the quote marks omitted: Navajo Talking
Picture: Cinema on Native Ground (cover and title page); “Navajo Talking Picture: Cinema on Native
Ground (running text).

When the title of a book is also the name of a series or prize, use both the main title and the subtitle in
descriptive copy and other running text to avoid confusion (e.g., American Lives: A Reader, American
Lives Series; The Prairie Schooner Book Prize: Tenth Anniversary Reader, Prairie Schooner Book Prize in
Fiction).

Inclusive language

Rephrase as necessary to avoid “man” when the author means “humanity” and “he” when the author
means “he or she.”

Do not allow “s/he.” If it seems appropriate, you may also alternate between “he” in one paragraph
or section and “she” in the next.

Please be mindful of historical contexts in which “he” and “man” are, in fact, accurate and
appropriate.

Use a fully plural construction (plural noun and plural verb) if possible, but do not use “their” as a
singular possessive.

Refer to CMS 5.255, Nine techniques for achieving gender neutrality, and the AAUP Guidelines for Bias-
Free Writing (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995).

See CMS 5.256 for the discussion on the use of they as a gender-neutral singular pronoun and when
used by a person who does not identify with a gender-specific pronoun.

GUIDELINES FOR SMALL CAPS AND FULL CAPS

UNP uses small capitals for design reasons—so that acronyms will not stand out on the text page and because
our books use old-style figures, which vary above and below the x-height, making a full capital loom large
over a below-the-line numeral.

Our usual style is to small cap (character style: <sm>) all acronyms, abbreviations that lack periods
(YMCA), capital letters in letter-plus-number combinations (B-52), and words and phrases typed in full capitals
for emphasis or style (including abbreviated source citations in text and abbreviations lists and acronyms in titles and publishers' names).

**Use SMALL CAPS, NO PERIODS:**
- acronyms and abbreviations for organizations: NATO, UN, NAACP,
- the abbreviations AD, BC, BCE, CE
- academic degrees: BA, BS, MA, MFA (but EdD, PhD, full caps, no periods)
- technical abbreviations: CD, CD-ROM, DVD, URL
- letter-number combinations: B-52, A7, RG 972-Y-034
- abbreviations with ampersands: A&M
- two-letter postal abbreviations (CA, NY, NJ) in tables, notes, and bibliographies
  - spell out state and province names in running text
  - house style for place of publication is unpunctuated with state abbreviations set in small caps
    (e.g., Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1998)
- Washington DC (both in text and source citations)
- Political affiliation and state abbreviation (D-NE)
- RFK Stadium, JFK Library (this construction applies only when JFK and RFK are not used for their names elsewhere in the text)

**COVID-19**

**Use FULL CAPS, NO PERIODS:**
- names of countries: UK, USSR, EU
- initials that stand for a person's entire name: FDR, JFK (exception: If, for example, JFK is used as a name in the manuscript, use full caps for all other occurrences, such as JFK Library, etc.)
- city names: LA, NYC
- roman numerals: III, VII, XVI
- URLs (so readers don’t assume they have to match the formatting)

**Use FULL CAPS, WITH PERIODS:**
- *U.S.* when used adjectivally (this is contrary to the recommendation of *US* in *CMS*, 17th ed.); we also prefer to spell out *United States* when it is used as a noun, although we will follow *CMS*, 17th ed, and allow *U.S.* to be used as a noun.
- names such as G. P. Cather and W. R. Freeman where the first and middle initials are used as a nickname: G.P., W.R. (use space between the initials only when the full name is used)

**Other usages**
- Use full capitals for capital letters used as letters (e.g., The "B" [or the B] stands for . . . ) and all other single letters that are not part of letter-number combinations.
- Use full capitals for single capital letters preceding a hyphen, unless they are part of a letter-number combination: T-shirt, X-ray (also x-ray), U-shaped.
- When following MLA style, UNP prefers to spell out these abbreviations (Oxford University Press, University of Nebraska Press) unless the author or series stipulates a strict usage.
- Use lowercase letters, with periods, for *a.m.* and *p.m.*
- Always spell out "okay"; do not abbreviate to "OK" or "O.K."
Citation form

Full and short cites
If the MS contains both notes and a comprehensive, alphabetized bibliography, the sources in the notes need contain only the author’s surname, a shortened title, and the page number where relevant; do not repeat the full bibliographic information in the notes.

If the MS contains only a partial (selected) bibliography, or a bibliography in essay form, or no bibliography at all, a work’s first mention anywhere in the notes should provide full bibliographic information; successive citations should use the shortened form (as above) unless your project editor instructs otherwise.

UNP does not allow the use of “ibid.” or “op. cit.” All instances should be changed to shortened citations.

In short cites, UNP does not allow the shortened title of the work to be omitted when the work just cited is repeated. This is contrary to the recommendation in CMS 17th ed., 14.34. The examples on the left are CMS’s new recommendation. Please continue to format short cites as shown on the right.


Place of publication
Our house style is unpunctuated, with state postal abbreviations set in small caps (e.g., New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 2002).
Eliminate the state where it is obvious from the publisher’s name or where the city is well known (e.g., Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press).
Do not anglicize the city of publication if the author has not done so. Thus, “München,” not “Munich.”

Per CMS 14.134, an initial “The” is omitted from the publisher’s name as well as the abbreviations Inc., Ltd., S.A., Co., Pub. Co., etc.

Publisher
The CMS section on indicating the publisher in bibliographic entries (14.133–41) is useful.
Abbreviate the publisher’s name by deleting “Publishers,” “Co.,” “Press,” etc., where possible (CMS 14.134). However, retain “Press” when it is an obvious part of the name (e.g., University of Nebraska Press).

Use ampersands (rather than “and”) as appropriate (CMS 14.135).

Season or month of publication
Capitalize season of publication when it stands in place of a month (CMS, 14.171).
Allow abbreviations for month of publication, but please ensure consistency.

Volume and page numbers
When volume and page numbers are cited with only a colon between, close up (e.g., 2:38).
If there is anything but a numeral before the colon (for example, a closed parenthesis), insert a space after the colon (see examples at CMS 14.177).
Use arabic numerals, not roman numerals, for volume numbers.
Avoid “ff.” and “passim.”
Query uses of “cf.” where you suspect the author means “see” or “see also.” In such cases, spell out.
General chapter notes

Acknowledgments and information on earlier versions of a chapter should appear in an unnumbered note at the head of the notes section for that chapter (tagged as eds); see CMS 14.55.

Name of bibliography

We prefer “Selected Bibliography” (not “Select Bibliography”) for bibliographies that are not inclusive and “Bibliographical Essay” as appropriate.

For inclusive bibliographies, either “Bibliography,” “References,” or “Works Cited” is acceptable.

Note markers

Note markers in the text should be styled as enref (endnotes) or fnref (footnotes).

Move note markers to the end of the sentence if possible (to the end of a phrase otherwise).

Do not allow more than one note per sentence; combine notes as necessary.

Notes in the notes section will generally be styled as en (endnote). The character style ennum should already be applied to the note number (number, period, and tab). Footnotes will generally be styled as fn (footnote). The character style fnnum should already be applied to the note number (number, period, and tab). The A-heads in the notes section will be styled as eh (E-head).

Notes keyed to page numbers and short phrases

When using the annotation method of page locators keyed to short phrases in the text, the notes should be formatted as follows: 000 short phrase: Begin citation [note the gt character style on the short phrase; the paragraph style should be glo].

The short phrase should ideally start the beginning of a sentence because the capital letter will assist readers in finding the appropriate place on the page. For example,


However, if the source is for a direct quotation, the phrase used in the notes should mirror the beginning of the quote. The phrase should be surrounded by quotation marks, which will help the reader find the appropriate place on the page more quickly. For example,


Capitalization of the first word in the phrase should match the text:

Text: Washington rebounded to beat the Sun Devils 21–15 in what one newspaper called “the ugliest football game in history.” [note the gtref style on the phrase; do not include quote marks]

Note: 000 “the ugliest football game”: Arizona Republic, October 15, 2000.

There is no strict guide for how long the phrases should be, but four or five words is a good target.
WORKING WITH THE ELECTRONIC FILES

GENERAL

Initial manuscript and file preparation
All files have been named by the project editor and should not be changed. We use the author’s last name preceded by a number: 0000 for case copy and running heads, 000 for front matter, 00 for an introduction not included in the front matter, 80 for appendixes (source acknowledgments, etc.), 90 for the bibliography, 99 for the back matter (which can include the list of contributors, index, series list, captions, etc.), and 01, 02, 03 (etc.) for chapters.

In addition to the information that follows, please see the “Scribe Guide for Freelance Copyeditors” for an explanation about the press’s current XML workflow.

Unless your project editor has made other arrangements with you, the MS will arrive fully composed using Word’s Style feature (e.g., all paragraph styles and most character styles will already be applied). If additional composing needs to be done (e.g., long quotations need to be set off from the text) as part of the copyediting process, your project editor will provide instructions about which style(s) to use.

The files will be set in Times New Roman. The type size and line spacing will vary depending on the style that has been applied to each paragraph. Do not change these settings. Use Word’s magnification tool if you would like to read the text at a smaller or larger size.

Our formatting macros strip out embedded notes, apply character styles (italics, small caps, superscript, etc.), and clean up extra spaces in the manuscript. It is okay to use either straight quotes or smart quotes when editing, but please consult your project editor to see if he or she has a preference.

Double check all composition work done by the press. If you notice that a paragraph or character style has been applied erroneously, please alert your project editor.

**If you need to apply styles but are unsure which one(s) to use, consult your project editor.**

For the most part, the remaining composing (or “tagging”) work will consist of applying or fixing character styles in the main text and apparatus. Please also keep in mind the following:

En dash
The press uses true en dashes (–) between letters or between a number and a letter (e.g., University of Nebraska–Lincoln, post–Civil War period, July 4–August 9) and between inclusive numbers. In most cases en dashes should already appear in the manuscript, but if you need to add one, please do so.

Em dash
The press uses true em dashes (—) in manuscripts rather than double hyphens. In the bibliography insert three em dashes for repeated sources (———).

Queries
We recommend three-digit or symbol footnotes (e.g., start at 100 or use *, †, and so forth) for queries. Do not insert queries within the text or use Word’s Comments feature (this is counter to CMS 2.87).

Showing revisions
Unless you are notified otherwise, use Word’s Track Changes feature to indicate revisions in the MS going to the author for review. Please use bold for insertions (do NOT use underlining) and strikethrough for deletions.

Use revision marks for all changes.

Because punctuation changes can be difficult to read, our “Author Instructions for Reviewing the Copyedited Manuscript” lists examples of deleted punctuation so the author can learn to read such changes. If you would like to draw the author’s attention to a hard-to-read change that is specific to the manuscript, please address it in your cover letter.


**ELEMENTS OF THE MS**

**Front and back matter**

Confirm that the contents page and chapter openings agree; A-heads in the notes should match the running heads, which appear in the 0000 file.

Part of the project editor’s preparation is to verify titles, the order of the material, copyright statements, and permissions credit lines. Do not change these without consulting the project editor, but do point out any discrepancies. If the author suggests changing any of these, please flag for the project editor to approve.

**Prose block quotes and letters (correspondence)**

Follow *CMS* 13.9–10 to determine whether quoted text should be set as a block quote (basic styles: *bqs, bqf, bq, bql*) or run in to text. In general, prose quotations of one hundred words or more should be set off from the text.

Be sure to add or delete quotation marks as needed. Use double quotation marks for quotations within an extract but single for quotes within a run-in quote.

Ensure that source citations appear before final punctuation for run-in quotes but after it for block quotes. Set parenthetical source information following a prose block quote after the final punctuation and a space (not on a new line).

Letters (basic styles: *ltf, lt, ltl*) with dates, addresses, signatures, and so forth, should be set off from the text no matter how long they are. If the letter text does not have any other special elements, follow the one-hundred-word rule.

**Verse (senseline) extracts**

Generally, two or more lines of verse within the text should be set as a verse extract (basic styles: *slf, sl, sll*). MLA style runs in as many as three lines but sets longer verse quotations as extract; for run-in verse, use a space on either side of the slash.

For stanza breaks, the first line of a new stanza will generally be composed as *slf* (senseline first) to signal that space is needed.

When a verse translation follows a foreign-language verse extract, the translation should be set as verse extract as well and enclosed in square brackets; the *slf* tag would be used for the first line of the translation.

**Heads**

Edit front matter and chapter titles only to the extent of indicating correct capitalization style, following the style established by the project editor. Text following a subhead is set flush left (style: *paft*).

Subheads within chapters should be tagged *ah, bh, and ch* per *CMS* 1.56. If you identify more than three levels of heads, alert the project editor. We generally prefer to avoid “Introduction” or “Conclusion” as a subhead; a section break is sufficient (on the first paragraph of the new section, use the style *psec*).

Our usual style for A-heads (style: *eh*) in the notes is chapter number (sans “chapter”) plus period followed by chapter title. Thus: 1. The Legacy of Beethoven.

**Chapter epigraphs**

The source should appear at the end of the epigraph, not keyed to a note number (see *CMS* 1.37). Set the attribution on a new line (style: *ept*).

Avoid using epigraphs under subheads; encourage the author to work them into the text or delete them.

**Illustrative materials**

Whenever possible, we will send a PDF of illustrations for your reference.

The project editor will check permissions and include required credit lines.

Edit the captions as necessary (included with the back matter in file 99).
Check captions and titles for accuracy, and check against the list of illustrations in the front matter. Ensure that the information in illustrative materials, especially figures, maps, and tables, corresponds to data and discussions in the text.

Read through for errors in spelling, calculation, and the like.

The project editor will indicate whether the illustrations are to be grouped or scattered; if they are to be scattered, make sure call-outs are marked in the text: e.g., {~7~IM: insert unp-[author name]-fig01 here.}. If call-outs are missing, please ask the author to indicate during the review approximately where illustrations should be placed; insert call-outs during cleanup.

Do not advise the author to add illustrative material without consulting the project editor. The press almost never allows the addition or swapping of illustrations once the manuscript has been turned over to the EDP staff by the Acquiring staff.

If you believe that any tables, graphs, or figures are superfluous, please discuss with the project editor. If any are poorly constructed, advise the author on how to improve them. CMS chapter 3 gives useful advice on the editing of illustrations and tables.

**Maps**

If the project editor indicates that maps will be prepared by a freelance cartographer, please check the lists of labels (in file 0000) against the highlighted sample maps to make sure that every element listed is shown on the sample map and against the text to verify spellings.

**Tables**

Most tables can be edited electronically. Tables will appear in the manuscript where the author placed the call-out or in a separate Word document included with the manuscript files. Tables within the manuscript will be tagged (thn, th, tch, td include tags for sources lines, etc.).