Common Notions Style Guide
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Behold the exciting art of preparing your manuscript for publication with Common Notions! Please read the following style guide over carefully as you complete the final draft of your manuscript before submission. Any questions can be sent directly to your editor.

Perhaps the most important single guideline of all is to avoid any complicated formatting in an effort to make a manuscript more closely reflect the desired appearance of the book. For nearly all manuscripts, the simplest format is best: a series of headings and indented paragraphs in the same font (12-point Times New Roman/footnotes in 10-point) with uniform margins and tabs, and no special characters, or embedded images or text boxes (see Images). Format preferences that the copy editor and designer should know about may be communicated separately or noted in brackets, for example: [Image 1 goes here] [Heading in bold sans serif font].

For most things not detailed here, consult The Chicago Manual of Style (references below refer to the 16th edition. You can access the table of contents and also attain a free 30-day trial on their website (http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/16/contents.html). Common Notions would also be happy to share a full electronic version of The Chicago Manual of Style at your request.

Advance Praise:
“Advance Praise,” not “Advanced Praise”
Include quotes around text.
List author, e.g.

—Ariel Salleh, University of Sydney, author of Ecofeminism as Politics and Eco-Sufficiency and Global Justice

Block quotes: Quotes of one hundred words or more should be set off as a block quotation. These should have a single indent for the whole quote (highlighting the whole thing and hitting Tab once), not using tabs, spaces, or hard returns on each line.

Block quotes do not get “quotes” around them.

Boxed/sidebar text: Rather than placing text boxes, tables, or sidebars in the manuscript, simply include the plain text with a bracketed note to explain the placement and style. If detailed instructions are required, please check in with the editor or copy editor.

Capitalization of Racial/Ethnic/Political Groups: Capitalize Black, Latino/a, Asian, Indigenous, Native (do not capitalize white). Also: Black Liberation movement, Women’s Liberation movement, Gay Liberation movement (in both cases, only lowercase when referring to the condition, perspective, phenomenon), leftists and not Leftists (the Left when referring to a specific and not generic formation), Third World (always upper case)
N.B.: women’s liberation and gay liberation remain lowercase if describing the condition, perspective, phenomenon, or actuality; as opposed to “the movement,” or leftwing organization.

**Capitalization of titles:** Titles mentioned or cited in text or notes are usually capitalized headline-style (see 8.157 in Chicago Manual of Style). For aesthetic purposes, titles appearing on the cover or title page or at the head of an article or chapter may deviate from Chicago's rules for the capitalization of titles.

**Capitalize:**
The first and last words in titles and subtitles and capitalize all other major words (nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and some conjunctions (except for and, but, for, or, and nor)

**Lowercase:**
(articles and conjunctions) the, a, and an | and, but, for, or, and nor | to | as | of

In general, all the major words are capitalized:
1. Capitalize the first and last words in titles and subtitles
2. Lowercase the articles the, a, and an; and the conjunctions and, but, or, nor, and for.
3. Lowercase prepositions (except when used adverbially or adjectivally, such as up in Look Up, or on in The On Button)
4. Lowercase to and as.

**Citations:** A quick guide to Chicago-style references with examples is online at http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html. Two common examples for books and journal articles for quick reference are:

**Books**

Footnote/endnote:

Abbreviated style for subsequent references:

References:

**Journal articles**

Footnote/endnote:

Abbreviated Style for subsequent references:

References:


Colon: Only capitalize after the colon when the colon introduces (1) a quotation or (2) multiple sentences.

Dashes: The most common and versatile dash is the em dash, — (longer than the en dash, –). The Mac keyboard shortcut is Shift+Option+Hyphen. For the en dash, Option+Hyphen. Both are generally formed without spaces before or after—like so. The en dash (not a hyphen) is used for ranges of numbers such as pages and years (1968–2011). The double dash (--) is not used.

Decades: Spell out decades, e.g. “eighties” instead of ‘80s or 1980s.

Diacritics, accents, and foreign words: These should generally be used when known to be part of a word or name. However, these are routinely omitted from promotional materials on the web due to complications that result when using them in electronic formats.

Foreign-language words used in books should include the correct diacritics/accents. Foreign-language words that are not proper names and that are likely unfamiliar to most readers should be in italics on first mention (a translation of the term into English may follow in parentheses and not in italics). Such terms used repeatedly should not be italicized each time once they’ve been introduced and the attentive reader will know what is meant. Latin phrases that are common in English do not need italics.

Ellipses: In general, use three points with spaces before and after each, like . . . this. When an ellipsis indicates an omission from a quoted passage, following a grammatical sentence, a period is used at the end of the sentence before the ellipsis, and the next sentence begins with a capital letter. For example: “This complete sentence precedes an omission. . . . The quoted passage then resumes.” To indicate hesitation and the like, no extra point is needed, even after a sentence. To prevent ellipses from breaking across two lines, it is best to use nonbreaking spaces in Word (on a Mac, hold down Option when hitting the space bar).
Endnotes and footnotes: For reference format, see Citations.

Please use Word’s footnote/endnote system, with options set to default.

It is preferable to place the note number after a sentence, not in the middle, except to avoid confusion as to what the note pertains to. Where multiple citations are needed for one sentence, combine these in a single note, separated with a semicolon. Discursive notes should be as concise as possible. To further save space, a reference can be abbreviated after the first citation (see Citations), except when there is no bibliography and the abbreviated note would be placed far from the original note. Ibid. (followed by page numbers, if different) can be used when the source is the same as the one preceding it. Avoid the term op cit.

Cross references (for example: See also note XX.) can be useful to save space and avoid repeating lengthy material, but avoid cross references by repeating anything only one or two lines long, using the abbreviated citation style if appropriate. Numbers should be written as: XX.

Please have footnotes/endnotes renumber at the start of each new chapter. Do this by selecting format numbering under footnote preferences and selecting “restart each section.” Next insert a “section break (next page)” after each chapter. Please also make sure footnotes/endnotes are not indented and are in 10-point Times New Roman.

Format: For nearly all manuscripts, the simplest format is best: a series of headings (see Headings) and indented paragraphs in the same font with uniform margins and tabs, no special characters, images, or text boxes (see Images). Section breaks where a special character should appear in the book can be indicated in the manuscript with three asterisks (***). Word has a Style feature (under format) for advanced formatting that can cause design complications, so please do not use Styles. See also Images and Spacing and indents.

Full capitals (a.k.a. “all caps”): This is a style to be used sparingly. Words to be emphasized should generally be in italics, not in full caps. Full caps may be used in fiction to describe something written that way such as a sign or headline (for example: “A sign said, OPEN 24 HOURS.”) that may be converted later to small caps.

Gender Pronouns: Use of “they” as a pronoun is preferred when referring to trans and gender-nonconforming people. So too, for instance, when referring to communities such as Latinxs (instead of Latin@s).

Headings: An author or editor can indicate desired levels of headings as follows:

Chapter Titles: FULL CAPS, BOLD (HOUSE STYLE GUIDE)
Two line breaks after
Chapter authors are not italicized

Section Headers
Two line breaks before, one line break after
Level 1, headings: Bold, Headline-Style Caps (House Style Guide)
Level 2, subheadings: Bold, italics, sentence-style caps (house style guide)
Level 3, sub-subheadings: italics, sentence-style caps (house style guide)
Hyphens: A handy system to help bring order to the world of hyphens is Chicago’s hyphenation guide (CMOS 7.85), online at http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/16/images/ch07_tab01.pdf. In keeping with Webster and Chicago Manual, hyphens are generally not needed for prefixes or suffixes. For example: anticapitalist, antiglobalization, or coauthor. Exceptions include: avoiding potential confusion about a word (re-creation vs. recreation); a prefix preceding a numeral or proper noun (sub-Saharan, pre-1960s); and to prevent a double ‘a’ or ‘i’ (anti-intellectual, anti-imperialism).

Images, tables, and graphs: Rather than embedding these in the manuscript, indicate placement with a bracketed note in the manuscript containing the image’s file name and send them separately as high-resolution files. For many images, the TIF format is preferred, while EPS is preferred for vector art (line art). Acceptable resolution for photographs is 300 dpi or greater. Line art that is not vector (scans) should be in black/white (not grayscale) and should be 1200 dpi. Include captions as separate text alongside the images, tables, and graphs.

Initials: A name with multiple initials has no spaces between them: C.L.R. James. A name that consists only of initials is set without spaces or periods (JFK), as are acronyms (NATO).

Interviews: An author’s previously unpublished transcriptions of interviews may require a judgment call about how much to “clean up.” While some transcripts must be an accurate record of what the speaker said, other (unpublished) transcripts can be edited for grammatical slips and elisions. More substantial changes may be explained in a note or preface. The book’s author or editor may consult copy editors about what type of editing of this material is desirable, if any.

Italics vs. quotation marks with titles: Books, periodicals, films, plays, TV series, works of art, and longer musical works (e.g., ballets and operas) are italicized. Essays, short stories, chapters, songs, and poems (unless very long), are roman (i.e., not italic) and placed in quotation marks.

Job titles, academic appointments, professional designations, etc.: These are generally lowercase: Smith is associate professor of history at UCLA. An exception is a named professorship (Edward Said was Parr Professor of English and Comparative Literature) or when it immediately precedes the name as a title (Professor Said). In most cases, even when a proper name is involved, a general title or appointment will still generally be lowercase (fellow of the Royal Society). For other cases and examples, see CMOS 8.27, 10.21.

Numbers: In nontechnical prose, zero through one hundred are typically spelled out, as are round multiples of those numbers in hundreds, thousands, and hundreds of thousands (thirty-three thousand).

Other numbers, such as 120 and 7,852, use numerals.

If, according to these rules, one number would be expressed in numerals, then all numbers grouped in that category can be in numerals: “Between 1,950 and 2,000 attended the event.”

Bear in mind there are many exceptions in this system, such as percentages, which should be numerals (and written out as “15 percent” rather than “15%”).

If your manuscript will contain many scientific or statistical figures, please email via the address at the beginning of the guide with any questions or consult chapter 9 of CMOS.
Possessive: For singular nouns, add apostrophe + s, including with ending in s (Williams’s play).

Previously published material: If a previously published work is to be changed in any significant way, it is best to explicitly present it as a revised edition and/or to include an editor’s note or preface that describes the changes made. In other cases, things should generally remain as faithful to the original as possible. Obvious errors may be silently corrected, and in some cases footnotes and cross references may be updated if needed. Quoted material in a text should also remain faithful to the way it appears in the original source.

When something like a new preface is added to a previously published work, the style of the former should match the latter.

References: See Citations and Endnotes and footnotes.

Serial comma: Common Notions generally uses serial commas, for example the final comma in “A, B, and C” (not A, B and C). An exception is when an ampersand is used: A, B & C (not A, B, & C).

Spacing and indents: Manuscripts should be single-spaced. The first paragraph of a section is not indented, but subsequent paragraphs have an indent formed with a hard return (not a series of tabs or spaces) and a single tab. There should not be an extra line space between paragraphs. A line space can be indicated with a bracketed note: [space].

Use a single space between sentences, not double. (See also Block quotes)

Spelling: Spell-checking the manuscript is a very very good idea, but Word’s dictionary should not be considered authoritative. A better reference is Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, which is often the final arbiter on spelling questions.

Non-American spellings written by non-U.S. authors are typically not to be Americanized. In Word, the Language setting under Tools helps ensure consistency in spelling.

Even when non-American spellings are used, it is best to use conventional American punctuation (such as quotation marks) to ensure that a system of punctuation is well understood by copy editors and proofreaders and thus used consistently.

Titles: See Italics vs. quotation marks and Capitalization of titles

Underlining: Use italics instead.

U.S. and United States: U.S. (with periods) is generally preferred as an adjective, whereas United States is spelled out as a noun. However, U.S. can be used as a noun in looser, more informal styles of writing. But also USA (not U.S.A.)

Style supplement: Please favor the following usage, e.g.:

“such as” instead of “like”
“in which” instead of “where”
“that” instead of “which”
Final Manuscript Formatting

Main body at 12pt; Footnotes at 10pt
Make spacing after headers consistent
  - Chapter headings: bolded, two line breaks after
  - Subheadings: bolded, two line breaks before, one line break after
Check to see Chapters and headings conform to TOC
Make sure footnotes are accurately sequenced and located from the original.
  - Make sure footnotes are not indented
Replace … ellipses with . . .
Consistent use of serial commas
Conform house style guide (and Chicago Manual rules) on numbers, e.g. number from one to one hundred spelled out; and percentages, e.g. “15 percent” rather than “15%”
Swap out hyphens for en-dashes and em-dashes
  - Add full proper names / verify proper names and organizations
Conform citations to style guide
  - Change to Ibid., where necessary