

chicago manual of style oxford comma

Chicago Manual of Style Oxford Comma: Why It Matters and How to Use It

chicago manual of style oxford comma is a topic that often sparks lively debates among writers, editors, and grammar enthusiasts. Whether to include that final comma before the conjunction in a list—commonly known as the Oxford comma—has divided opinions for years. But for those who follow the Chicago Manual of Style (CMS), the answer is clear: the Oxford comma is not just recommended; it's the standard. Understanding the Chicago Manual of Style's stance on the Oxford comma can help writers craft clearer, more precise sentences and avoid ambiguity.

In this article, we'll explore what the Oxford comma is, why the Chicago Manual of Style insists on its use, and how this tiny punctuation mark can make a big difference in your writing. Along the way, we'll touch on related style guides, common misconceptions, and practical tips for applying the Oxford comma effectively.

What Is the Oxford Comma?

The Oxford comma, also called the serial comma, is the comma placed immediately before the coordinating conjunction (usually "and" or "or") in a list of three or more items. For example:

- I bought apples, oranges, and bananas.

The comma after "oranges" is the Oxford comma. Without it, the sentence reads:

- I bought apples, oranges and bananas.

Both versions are grammatically acceptable in many contexts, but the presence or absence of the Oxford comma can change the meaning or clarity of a sentence.

Chicago Manual of Style and the Oxford Comma

The CMS Recommendation

The Chicago Manual of Style has long championed the use of the Oxford comma. According to CMS, the serial comma should always be used in a series of three or more elements. This recommendation stems from the desire for clarity and precision. The manual argues that the Oxford comma helps readers parse lists more easily and prevents misreading.

In the CMS 17th edition, the guideline is clear: use the comma before the conjunction in a list to avoid ambiguity.

Why Does CMS Favor the Oxford Comma?

One of the main reasons CMS prefers the Oxford comma is to eliminate confusion. Consider the following sentence without the Oxford comma:

- I dedicate this book to my parents, Ayn Rand and God.

Without the serial comma, it might sound like the author's parents are Ayn Rand and God, which is probably not the intended meaning. Adding the Oxford comma clears up the ambiguity:

- I dedicate this book to my parents, Ayn Rand, and God.

Now it's clear that the dedication is to three separate entities.

The Chicago Manual of Style emphasizes that the Oxford comma reduces the chance of misinterpretation, especially in complex lists or when items in the list themselves contain conjunctions.

Oxford Comma Versus Other Style Guides

Comparison with AP Style

While CMS insists on the Oxford comma, other major style guides differ. For example, the Associated Press (AP) style generally omits the serial comma unless its absence leads to confusion. This difference often causes writers to wonder which style to adopt.

The key is knowing your audience and the style guide you're following. If you're writing for a publication that uses AP style, you might skip the Oxford comma unless clarity demands it. But if you're working within academic, book publishing, or many professional writing contexts, CMS's preference for the Oxford comma is the safer bet.

Oxford Style and MLA

Other style guides, like the Modern Language Association (MLA), also support the use of the Oxford comma. This consensus among academic and book publishing standards reinforces the importance of the serial comma in formal writing.

Practical Tips for Using the Oxford Comma

When to Use the Oxford Comma

Following the Chicago Manual of Style, it's best practice to always include the Oxford comma in lists of three or more items. This rule applies regardless of whether the items are simple or complex. Here are some examples:

- She invited her friends, colleagues, and neighbors.
- The recipe calls for flour, sugar, eggs, and butter.

When It's Especially Important

The Oxford comma becomes particularly crucial when list items contain internal conjunctions or could be misread. For instance:

- The main characters are Tom, Dick and Harry and Sally.

This sentence is confusing without the Oxford comma:

- The main characters are Tom, Dick, and Harry and Sally.

Here, the serial comma helps distinguish between the characters and avoids lumping "Harry and Sally" as a single entity.

Consistency Is Key

One of the most important aspects of using the Oxford comma, as emphasized by the Chicago Manual of Style, is consistency. If you decide to use the serial comma, apply it uniformly throughout your document. Inconsistent use can distract readers and undermine the professionalism of your writing.

Common Misconceptions About the Oxford Comma

It's Optional or Outdated

Some writers mistakenly believe the Oxford comma is optional or a relic of old-fashioned grammar. In reality, the Chicago Manual of Style's endorsement reflects modern standards of clarity in writing. Far from being outdated, the serial comma plays a vital role in effective communication.

It Always Makes Sentences Longer

While it's true the Oxford comma adds an extra punctuation mark, its impact on sentence length is minimal. The clarity it provides often saves readers from rereading or misinterpreting sentences, which ultimately enhances readability.

Why the Oxford Comma Matters in Professional Writing

In academic papers, legal documents, and published books, precision is paramount. The Chicago Manual of Style's insistence on the Oxford comma helps writers avoid pitfalls that can arise from ambiguous lists. Misinterpretations can lead to serious consequences, especially in contracts or instructions.

Beyond avoiding confusion, using the Oxford comma signals a writer's attention to detail and respect for established writing conventions. It's a small mark that can elevate the professionalism of any piece.

Examples from Real Life

Consider this classic example often cited in grammar discussions:

- We invited the strippers, JFK and Stalin.

Without the Oxford comma, it appears that JFK and Stalin are the strippers. With the serial comma:

- We invited the strippers, JFK, and Stalin.

The meaning is clear: three separate entities were invited.

How to Decide Whether to Use the Oxford Comma

If you're writing for a publication or institution, check their style guide first. Many follow the Chicago Manual of Style or have their own rules regarding the serial comma.

If you're writing independently, consider your audience and the type of writing. Academic and book publishing contexts generally favor the Oxford comma for clarity and professionalism.

When in doubt, think about whether the absence of the comma could cause confusion. If yes, include it. Otherwise, consistency in your choice is the best policy.

Final Thoughts on Chicago Manual of Style Oxford Comma

The Chicago Manual of Style's recommendation to use the Oxford comma is grounded in a

commitment to clarity, precision, and reader understanding. While it might seem like a minor detail, the presence or absence of that comma can have outsized effects on meaning.

Whether you're a student, professional writer, or casual blogger, understanding the rationale behind the Chicago Manual of Style's approach to the Oxford comma empowers you to make informed decisions in your writing. Embracing this punctuation mark doesn't just align you with a respected style guide—it helps ensure your message is communicated clearly and effectively every time.

Frequently Asked Questions

Does the Chicago Manual of Style recommend using the Oxford comma?

Yes, the Chicago Manual of Style strongly recommends using the Oxford comma, which is the comma placed before the conjunction in a list of three or more items.

What is the Oxford comma according to the Chicago Manual of Style?

According to the Chicago Manual of Style, the Oxford comma is the comma used immediately before the coordinating conjunction (usually 'and' or 'or') in a series of three or more terms.

Why does the Chicago Manual of Style advocate for the Oxford comma?

The Chicago Manual of Style advocates for the Oxford comma because it helps prevent ambiguity and clarifies the meaning of sentences by clearly separating items in a list.

Is the Oxford comma mandatory in Chicago style writing?

While the Oxford comma is strongly recommended in Chicago style, it is technically a stylistic choice. However, its use is widely accepted and encouraged to maintain clarity.

How does the Chicago Manual of Style differ from AP Style regarding the Oxford comma?

The Chicago Manual of Style recommends always using the Oxford comma, whereas AP Style typically omits the Oxford comma unless its absence causes confusion.

Can the absence of an Oxford comma change the meaning of a sentence according to Chicago Manual of Style?

Yes, the Chicago Manual of Style notes that omitting the Oxford comma can sometimes create ambiguity or change the intended meaning of a sentence.

Where can I find official guidance on the Oxford comma in the Chicago Manual of Style?

Official guidance on the Oxford comma can be found in the Chicago Manual of Style, 17th edition, specifically in the sections covering punctuation and lists.

Additional Resources

Chicago Manual of Style Oxford Comma: An In-Depth Examination of Punctuation Precision

chicago manual of style oxford comma is a phrase that often sparks debate among writers, editors, and educators. The Oxford comma, also known as the serial comma, is the comma placed immediately before the coordinating conjunction (usually “and” or “or”) in a list of three or more items. For example, in the phrase “apples, oranges, and bananas,” the comma after “oranges” is the Oxford comma. The Chicago Manual of Style (CMS), a highly respected guide in American publishing and academia, advocates for the consistent use of the Oxford comma. This article investigates the Chicago Manual of Style’s stance on the Oxford comma, explores its implications, compares it with other style guides, and analyzes the broader impact of this punctuation choice on clarity and readability.

The Chicago Manual of Style and the Oxford Comma

The Chicago Manual of Style is widely regarded as the authoritative guide for writers, editors, and publishers in the United States. Its preference for the Oxford comma is both deliberate and pragmatic. CMS maintains that the serial comma helps avoid ambiguity in lists by clearly separating each element. This approach aligns with the manual’s overarching philosophy of promoting clarity, precision, and consistency in writing.

In the 17th edition of the Chicago Manual of Style, the Oxford comma is not optional but recommended as a standard practice. The manual explicitly advises writers to include the comma before the final conjunction in a series unless the meaning remains clear without it. This guidance differentiates CMS from other style guides that take a more flexible or even opposing stance.

Clarity and Ambiguity: Why the Oxford Comma Matters

One of the central arguments in favor of the Oxford comma presented by the Chicago Manual of Style is its role in preventing ambiguity. Consider the sentence: “I dedicate this book to my parents, Ayn Rand and God.” Without the Oxford comma, the sentence implies that Ayn Rand and God are the writer’s parents, which is likely unintended. Adding the Oxford comma transforms the sentence into: “I dedicate this book to my parents, Ayn Rand, and God,” making the list clear and unambiguous.

The Chicago Manual of Style underscores that while the Oxford comma may sometimes appear superfluous, its consistent use eliminates confusion, especially in complex sentences or legal and academic writing where precision is paramount. This viewpoint reflects CMS’s broader editorial priority: to ensure that the reader’s understanding is never compromised by punctuation choices.

Comparative Analysis: Chicago Manual of Style vs. Other Style Guides

To fully appreciate the Chicago Manual of Style's position on the Oxford comma, it is instructive to compare it with other prominent style guides such as the Associated Press (AP) Stylebook and the Modern Language Association (MLA) Handbook.

- **Associated Press Stylebook:** The AP Stylebook typically advises against using the Oxford comma unless its omission leads to confusion. This approach is common in journalistic writing, where brevity and speed are prioritized.
- **Modern Language Association (MLA) Handbook:** The MLA recommends the Oxford comma consistently, much like the Chicago Manual of Style, especially in academic writing to maintain clarity.
- **American Psychological Association (APA) Style:** The APA also endorses the use of the Oxford comma for clarity, particularly in scientific and research publications.

This comparative overview reveals that while several major style guides recognize the Oxford comma's value, the Chicago Manual of Style is among the most emphatic in its recommendation. The CMS's insistence on the serial comma underscores its commitment to uniformity and unambiguous prose.

Practical Implications of the Oxford Comma in Publishing

In professional publishing, adherence to a consistent style is crucial for maintaining credibility and reader trust. The Chicago Manual of Style's endorsement of the Oxford comma reinforces this principle. By advocating for the serial comma, CMS helps editors and writers avoid misinterpretations that could undermine the text's authority.

For example, legal documents, contracts, and academic papers often hinge on precise language. A missing Oxford comma in a contractual clause could lead to costly disputes over interpretation. The Chicago Manual of Style's guidance, therefore, serves a practical purpose beyond aesthetics—it protects against potential misunderstandings that arise from ambiguous punctuation.

Pros and Cons of the Oxford Comma According to Chicago Manual of Style

The Chicago Manual of Style's preference for the Oxford comma is grounded in a nuanced understanding of its advantages and drawbacks.

Pros

- **Enhanced Clarity:** The Oxford comma clearly separates list items, reducing the risk of misreading.
- **Consistency:** Using the serial comma uniformly avoids confusion about when to apply or omit punctuation.
- **Professionalism:** CMS's endorsement reflects a standard that is widely respected in academic and literary circles.

Cons

- **Potential Redundancy:** Some critics argue the Oxford comma is unnecessary in simple lists and can clutter prose.
- **Increased Length:** Especially in lengthy documents, consistently adding commas might marginally increase word count and visual complexity.
- **Style Conflicts:** Writers accustomed to AP or journalistic styles may find the CMS's insistence on the serial comma in conflict with other editorial mandates.

Despite these considerations, the Chicago Manual of Style's position remains firm: the benefits of clarity and consistency generally outweigh the drawbacks.

Contextual Use and Flexibility Within the Chicago Manual of Style

While the Chicago Manual of Style champions the Oxford comma, it also acknowledges that there may be rare instances where its omission is acceptable if the meaning is unequivocal. This caveat demonstrates CMS's pragmatic approach to punctuation: rules serve the ultimate goal of clear communication rather than rigid adherence.

Moreover, the manual encourages writers to consider their audience and the document's purpose when applying the Oxford comma. In informal writing or creative contexts, flexibility might be appropriate. However, in formal publishing—where CMS's guidance is most often applied—the serial comma remains a staple of polished prose.

Impact on SEO and Digital Content Writing

In the evolving landscape of digital content, the Chicago Manual of Style's recommendation on the Oxford comma also intersects with considerations of search engine optimization (SEO). While punctuation itself does not directly influence search rankings, clarity and readability do. Content that is clearly written with unambiguous punctuation tends to engage readers better, reduce bounce rates, and improve overall user experience—factors that indirectly benefit SEO.

Writers and content creators who adhere to the Chicago Manual of Style's approach may therefore find their work more accessible and authoritative. The Oxford comma's role in preventing misinterpretation is particularly valuable in online environments where readers often skim text quickly.

Chicago Manual of Style oxford comma remains a central topic in discussions about punctuation standards. Its endorsement by one of the most influential style guides underscores the importance of clarity and consistency in writing. While opinions on the Oxford comma vary across different writing communities, the Chicago Manual of Style's advocacy provides a strong foundation for those who prioritize precision and professionalism in their prose.

Chicago Manual Of Style Oxford Comma

chicago manual of style oxford comma: *Chicago manual of style 18th edition 2025/2026* Alica Struth, 2025-07-31 The definitive guide to grammar, usage, and citation—updated for modern writing and publishing Tailored for students, researchers, editors, and authors, this edition brings clarity and structure to the most widely used style in publishing, journalism, and academic writing. Updated for the 2025/2026 academic and professional cycle, this manual ensures you stay aligned with the latest style conventions. Key Features: Complete coverage of Chicago Manual of Style 18th Edition rules and updates, reflecting the latest language usage and formatting practices. Step-by-step guidance on grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and manuscript preparation. In-depth instruction on both notes and bibliography and author-date citation systems, with examples for books, journals, digital sources, legal documents, and more. Comprehensive formatting rules for headings, tables, footnotes, indexes, block quotes, and bibliographies. Ideal for academic papers, theses, nonfiction books, dissertations, and scholarly publishing. Why This Guide Is Essential: Updated specifically for the 2025/2026 academic and publishing environment. Designed for quick reference and practical application in real-world writing. Simplifies complex style guidelines into clear, accessible instructions. Trusted by educators, editors, and authors across disciplines and industries. What You'll Gain: Mastery of the Chicago Style's structure, mechanics, and citation models Enhanced writing clarity and professionalism The ability to format any project with accuracy and confidence A trusted reference to use throughout your academic and publishing career Translator: Brittany Deaton PUBLISHER: TEKTIME

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across borders for work, study, or travel, understanding these distinctions will empower you to speak, write, and connect with confidence and clarity. Explore how spelling changes like colour vs color influence perception, and discover vocabulary differences that could transform everyday conversations. Dive into the nuances of pronunciation and accent, and unravel grammar rules that often confuse learners. This book also decodes cultural etiquette embedded in language, revealing how formality and politeness differ on both sides of the Atlantic. Perfect for language learners, educators, business professionals, and curious readers alike, this guide provides practical examples and insights to help you navigate the English language's rich diversity. Embrace the richness of English by mastering the variations that make it uniquely American and British. Inside This Book, You'll Discover: Spelling Variations: Why Colour and Color Coexist Vocabulary Differences: From Lifts to Elevators Pronunciation and Accent: The Sound of English Across the Pond Grammar Differences: Past Simple vs Present Perfect Punctuation Styles: Quotation Marks and Full Stops Date and Time Formats: Decoding the Calendar and Clock Business and Workplace English: Office Vocabulary and Etiquette Whether you are writing emails, preparing presentations, or simply curious about language, this book is your essential companion for mastering American and British English. Scroll Up and Grab Your Copy Today!

chicago manual of style oxford comma: The Writer's Guide to Self-Editing Naveed Saleh, 2019-03-07 Over the years, technological advances have given publishers the ability to produce more books and online publications with greater speed. This new efficiency, however, has increased editors' workloads, limiting the amount of detailed editorial feedback that they can provide authors. In turn, writers must become self-editors, ensuring that their text is nearly perfect on submission. This book serves as a guide to self-editing nonfiction print and online publications, including articles for general and academic audiences. It is both prescriptive and descriptive, drawing from stylebooks, dictionaries, research, and more to provide a full picture of both style and grammar. Also provided are techniques that boost search-engine optimization and engagement of Internet audiences.

chicago manual of style oxford comma: The Little Book of Writing Better George Grätzer, 2024-11-29 This colorful and concise little book is tailored to a general readership. A sister to the recently published The Little Book of Math into English, this accessible guide avoids lengthy lessons and complex grammatical jargon. Instead, the reader is provided with key insights that are directly relevant and easily applicable. By following the straightforward recommendations and working the exercises (640 in number), readers can count on significantly reducing their writing errors and learn to create clearer, more readable, pieces of writing. Topics are divided into four parts. Part I is labeled Crucial and contains five topics that lay the foundations of writing by covering the most essential elements of grammar and sentence construction. Part II is Very Important and contains six slightly more advanced topics that assist with refining writing and ensuring clarity. Part III is Important and also contains six topics addressing common issues that help to master the art of polishing a writing piece even further. Part IV, And Some More, contains four nuanced topics that are useful for additional fine-tuning. Each topic concludes with a section called Practice Makes Perfect, offering exercises and hints. Solutions then follow. Appendix A gives a quick tutorial on grammatical terms and constructs. Appendix B looks at ChatGPT and the positive aspects of its powerful capabilities. Appendix C provides a bonus Gold Rush of additional exercises, each of which is referenced to specific sections of the book.

chicago manual of style oxford comma: Writing Errors and Their Ways Philip J. Skerry, 2023-04-11 This book examines errors in writing from several different perspectives. The most important perspective is contextual: what may be an error in one kind of writing may not be an error in another kind. Another perspective is a hierarchical one: some errors are more significant than others. A third perspective deals with genres such as fiction vs. nonfiction, written vs spoken language. Throughout the book, the emphasis is on Standard Written American English (SWAE), which is presented as the gold standard of writing. Other factors that affect writing errors are examined in detail, such as the role of social movements and trends. Examples are drawn from the

LGBTQO community and the roles of social media. Throughout the text, errors are presented, along with grammatical explanations and correction strategies. The book takes into consideration that language and language standards change, as exemplified by the upheaval in pronoun usage tied to dramatic changes in gender roles and identities.

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chicago manual of style oxford comma: How to Control Tone, Flow, and Meaning with Punctuation: A Complete Guide to Every Mark Ranjot Singh Chahal, 2025-08-03 Punctuation is more than a set of grammar rules—it's the key to shaping tone, guiding flow, and delivering meaning in every sentence. Whether you're writing a formal email, an academic paper, or a blog post, how you use punctuation can make the difference between confusion and clarity. In *How to Control Tone, Flow, and Meaning with Punctuation*, you'll explore each punctuation mark in depth—from the period and comma to the semicolon, dash, and ellipsis. With clear explanations, real examples, and modern usage tips, this guide shows how to use punctuation not just correctly, but effectively. Learn how to craft smoother sentences, control pacing, and convey emotion with precision. Perfect for students, professionals, and everyday writers, this book is your complete resource for mastering the art of punctuation. Whether you're polishing your grammar or enhancing your writing style, this guide will help you write with confidence and clarity.

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English language. With more than a thousand new entries, 200 replacement entries, and thoroughly updated usage data, this fifth edition is fully abreast of the times and further establishes the author as the authority on effective writing.

chicago manual of style oxford comma: *No Good Stede Goes Unpunished* Eddie Jones, 2020-11-27 It is 1717 and Ricky finds himself aboard a ship owned by Stede Bonnet, a rich sugar plantation owner who thought becoming a pirate might be a fun way to live out the rest of his life. Bonnet, in the midsts of a midlife crisis, decides to abandon his cushy-life, kids, and wife, to become a pirate. It does not go well. As they set sail from Barbados and slant west towards the North American coast, Bonnet's crew runs afoul of the British Royal Navy and is put to the test when they encounter a heavily-armed warship. Based on the true events of Bonnet's adventures, *No Good Stede Goes Unpunished* blends adventure, humor, and historical accuracy into a lively pirate yarn. Parents can trust the Caribbean Chronicles Series. There is no sexual dialogue or situations, violence, or strong language, only positive moral values and a wee little bit of humor. :) We hope you enjoy these pirate books for young adults, teens, and older kids.

chicago manual of style oxford comma: *The Joy of Syntax* June Casagrande, 2018-07-24 Language columnist June Casagrande presents a fun and breezy guide to everything a grown-up interested in grammar needs to know. When it comes to grammar, it seems like everyone—even die-hard word nerds—feel they missed something in school. *The Joy of Syntax* picks up where sixth grade left off, providing a fresh foundation in English syntax served up by someone with an impressive record of making this otherwise inaccessible subject a true joy. With simple, pithy information on everything from basic parts of speech and sentence structure to usage and grammar pitfalls, this guide provides everything you need to approach grammar with confidence.

chicago manual of style oxford comma: *For Who the Bell Tolls* David Marsh, 2013-10-03 *For Who the Bell Tolls* is a book that explains the grammar that people really need to know, such as the fact that an apostrophe is the difference between a company that knows its s*** and a company that knows it's s***, or the importance of capital letters to avoid ambiguity in such sentences as 'I helped my Uncle Jack off his horse.' David Marsh's lifelong mission has been to create order out of chaos. For four decades, he has worked for newspapers, from the Sun to the Financial Times, from local weeklies that sold a few thousand copies to the Guardian, with its global readership of nine million, turning the sow's ear of rough-and-ready reportage into a passable imitation of a silk purse. The chaos might be sloppy syntax, a disregard for grammar or a fundamental misunderstanding of what grammar is. It could be an adherence to 'rules' that have no real basis and get in the way of fluent, unambiguous communication at the expense of ones that are actually useful. Clear, honest use of English has many enemies: politicians, business and marketing people, local authority and civil service jargonists, rail companies, estate agents, academics . . . and some journalists. This is the book to help defeat them. 'A splendid and, more importantly, sane book on English grammar.' Mark Forsyth, author of *The Etymologicon*

chicago manual of style oxford comma: *The Chicago Guide to Copyediting Fiction* Amy J. Schneider, 2023-03-10 A book-world veteran offers the first copyediting guide focused exclusively on fiction. Although *The Chicago Manual of Style* is widely used by writers and editors of all stripes, it is primarily concerned with nonfiction, a fact long lamented by the fiction community. In this long-awaited book from the publisher of the Manual, Amy J. Schneider, a veteran copyeditor who's worked on bestsellers across a wide swath of genres, delivers a companionable editing guide geared specifically toward fiction copyeditors—the first book of its type. In a series of approachable thematic chapters, Schneider offers cogent advice on how to deal with dialogue, voice, grammar, conscious language, and other significant issues in fiction. She focuses on the copyediting tasks specific to fiction—such as tracking the details of fictional characters, places, and events to ensure continuity across the work—and provides a slew of sharp, practicable solutions drawn from her twenty-five years of experience working for publishers both large and small. *The Chicago Guide to Copyediting Fiction* is sure to prove an indispensable companion to *The Chicago Manual of Style* and a versatile tool for copyeditors working in the multifaceted landscape of contemporary fiction.

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chicago manual of style oxford comma: Learned Writing Chinua Asuzu, 2019-05-22 As lawyers, we must not, in hot pursuit of common law, outrun common sense. The dread of that eventuality prompted this book. *Learned Writing* promotes common sense in legal language. Plain language, which is commonsensical, broadens access to legal documents, thus democratizing the law. If democracy is government of the people, by the people, and for the people, law is the language in which government interacts with the people—it is the language of democracy. The people whose government speaks through law must understand what is said. No democratic society should brook legalese, a dense, verbose dialect known only to lawyers. What then should society do to redress the lawyer-induced obscurity? A Shakespearean character had an alarming proposal: "The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers." Apparently, that proposal was not enthusiastically endorsed, which explains why we're still here. A milder remedy—enrolling lawyers in language classes—has been muted, which explains why this book is in your hands. *Learned Writing* motivates lawyers to prefer plain language to the legalese and verbosity that have besmirched legal writing for centuries. This book is as sweeping a treatment of its subject as you can find anywhere.

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