English Style Guide

for writers and translators at
Salesian Head Office, Rome

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Preface

This Style Guide is intended primarily for English-language writers and translators working at the Salesian *sede centrale* (Salesian Head Office) in Rome. In this sense, then, it is a 'house style' which can guide the use of English in documentation produced by the General Council, General Chapters, Sectors and their Departments, Secretariats, ANS, sdb.org.

The reality is that English is now spoken, and certainly understood, by an increasing number of Salesians and Salesian Family members around the world, to a point where it may already be the most widely understood language, other than Italian, in the Congregation. The term 'style' as used in this Guide is synonymous with a set of accepted linguistic conventions in the language. It does not refer to literary style, nor to pronunciation, and while it recognises that different varieties of English have introduced words specific to their context, these will only be the concern of this Guide where their use might lead to incomprehension or worse, misunderstanding.

There are many varieties of English, which some may prefer to call dialects, although they are not so much dialects in strict linguistic terms as they are variations on a common language. For reasons of stylistic consistency the variety of English on which this Guide bases its instructions and advice is the standard usage of Britain. For the sake of convenience, it is called 'British usage' or 'British English' in this Guide, recognising that it is the 'trunk' from which so many other Englishes have branched out. For the most part, English in Ireland, India, Australia and New Zealand, South Africa only displays some minor differences from the linguistic conventions of British English, (and 'Brexit' aside!) it is also a fact that the European Union, through the European Commission's Director-General for Translation, likewise bases its style guide on British English.

None of the above is intended to suggest that the major branch of English known as American English or American usage is any less valid. The ultimate aim of the Guide is to encourage clear, reader-friendly English, and this partly implies that

a choice be made between one or other set of conventions, except where those two major varieties of English themselves allow for variety of convention.

Note that the Guide is addressed not only to writers, but also to translators. This inclusion of translation is important in a worldwide Congregation and Family such as the Salesians of Don Bosco and the Salesian Family that stems from it. On the one hand, many documents need to be translated into English from Italian (or other languages of the Congregation), while on the other, many more documents today are being authored in English for the use of the Congregation at large. These may be read by people for whom English is not their mother tongue, or they may need to be translated into their mother tongue. Many people who speak English as another language struggle to understand English texts. Human translation is expensive. Machine translation frequently does not give good translations. So the English we write or speak needs to be clear, consistent, **and translatable**.

What guides this house style?
The *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) is obviously a guiding light for standard British English and usage. But not only the dictionary.

The New Oxford Style Manual (NOSM) is an essential handbook for anyone working with text or seeking authoritative guidance on matters of style, spelling and presentation. Nevertheless, some of the choices made by the NOSM are specific to Oxford University Press house style, and are not followed in this Guide. An example of this is the so-called Oxford (or serial, or Harvard) comma, the comma used before a conjunction linking the final item in a series, as in *Portugal, Spain, and France* where the comma after Spain is the serial comma. This Guide does not advise the use of the serial comma.

The OED has versions specific to other parts of the English-speaking world: Australia, New Zealand, South Africa …

In Australia, the *Macquarie Dictionary* was first published in print in 1981 and has been online since 2003. It is now nationally and internationally regarded as the standard reference on Australian English.

India looks to the Oxford Dictionary, and indeed many Indian words have been added to it, but India also famously has its *Hobson-Jobson: A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases, and of Kindred Terms, Etymological,*

Historical, Geographical and Discursive which has been in print since at least 1903 and is still being reprinted.

One very useful online guide is *TheWriter.com*. It describes itself as '40-odd people on a mission to rescue the corporate world from the tyranny of linguistic mediocrity. We've been around since 1999, and have offices in London and New York'. It, too, follows standard British English, but recognises the different usage employed by its New York office.

The previously mentioned *English Style Guide for authors and translators in the European Commission* is also a helpful source, especially given the fact that many Salesians who know and use English in Europe, and there are many of them, will be guided consciously or unconsciously by the European Commission's constant presence through media and other forms of documentation. The latest version of this guide (12 December 2019) quite clearly states, as well, that 'the reproduction and reuse of this document is authorised, provided the sources and authors are acknowledged and the original meaning or message of the texts are not distorted'. Expect to find some elements of this guide, then, in the current document.

The *Salesian Dictionary*, (SD) published in 2019 as a result of the East Asia-Oceania Salesian Translators' Workshop is the only extant general guide to English in a Salesian context. See immediately below under the reference to the translators' appendix.

Where people make the valid choice for American English, they will find useful references in this Guide to the differences it involves. Ultimately, the Guide urges consistency, whatever choices are made.

Appendix for translators.
Many mentions of linguistic conventions involved in translation are made throughout this Guide, but we also add an appendix specific to it, part of which has already appeared in the recent publication of the *Salesian Dictionary*. The SD is itself an important reference work for translators and this Style Guide.

How to use this house style guide.
We have preferred to take a simple alphabetic approach with some minimal cross-referencing. The PDF version additionally has an index. Anyone using the web version can search all the text with CTRL+F.

Given that more people than we realise have some degree of colour-impairment, we have chosen to use icons to assist with such things as indicating our preferences or providing additional information.

in the *PDF version*, our preferences will show **a black and white triangle with an exclamation mark**; in the *online web version* a red flame, a 'caution' icon.

Additional useful information will show up with a black and white 'tip' icon or light bulb in both the *PDF* and *web* versions.

A 'note' icon will be used for any other information deemed interesting but not essential beyond that. In the *PDF* version this is a notepad with pencil in black and white. In the *web version* it is an 'i' on a blue circle.

If viewing the web version *offline*, these icons will be replaced by their names: CAUTION, TIP, NOTE respectively.

1

Abbreviations, acronyms and initialisms

- **abbreviations** in the strict sense are formed by omitting the end of a word or words (*Lieut.*)

- **contractions** are formed by omitting the middle of a word or words (*Dr*). Informal contractions are widely used but not always appropriate.

- **acronyms** are formed from the initial letters of words, and pronounced as words themselves, as opposed to **initialisms** which are formed that way but not pronounced as words (*BBC*).

If the short version is more familiar than the full one, like **BBC**, **FBI** or **FAQs**, you don't need to write it out.

If it is not, or if you are not sure how well known it is, put it in full the first time you use it, then use just the short version from then on. This may often be the case with Salesian acronyms or initialisms, especially those that refer to the original language which is not English – **Salesian Institutes for Higher Education (IUS)**.

IUS was initially a simple acronym, until 2001, for *Istituzioni Universitarie Salesiane*. In 2001 the semantic range of *Universitarie* was extended to include the more generic *institutes of higher education* but the letters making up the acronym remained unchanged. This phenomenon of maintaining an acronym but adjusting its meaning is not uncommon in Salesian English — another example is ANS.

As for **punctuation** (or not) of abbreviations, contractions, acronyms, initialisms, follow these general guidelines but also refer to the section on Chapter 30, Punctuation:

- Traditionally, abbreviations end in full stops while contractions do not: *Jun.*, *Jr.*, and *Rev.* would be normal. These are all abbreviations. *Mr* and *Dr* are contractions. The rule to be followed is that if the shortened form includes the final letter (making it a contraction rather than an abbreviation), it does not end with a full stop. This includes *St* (for Saint) but an exception is made for 'street' which is **St.** with a full stop to distinguish it from Saint.

- Acronyms and initialisms, besides being generally written in capital letters, usually have no full stops.

- There are other exceptions to the principle that abbreviations have full stops. For example, abbreviations for eras such as *AD* and *BC* have no full stops. Arabic and Roman ordinal numbers take no full stops (*1st*, *2nd*), nor do book sizes (*4to*).

- **US usage** is different: all abbreviated forms tend to take a full stop (they will call it a *period*) at the end.

> *no.* is short for Italian *numero* and takes a full stop to avoid confusion. There is not complete agreement in British usage regarding the plural of this contraction, but the NOSM helpfully places this question in a broader context by saying:

A problem can arise with plural forms of abbreviations such as *vol.* or *ch.*: these would strictly be *vols* and *chs*, which are contractions and should not end with a full stop. However, this can lead to the inconsistent-looking juxtaposition of *vol.* and *vols*, or *ch.* and *chs*, so in some styles full stops are retained for all such short forms. Similarly *Bros*, the plural form of *Bro.* brother, is often written with a full stop.

— *New Oxford Style Manual*

> Our house style leaves the question open. But whatever form you choose, be consistent throughout a work or series.

Another matter to consider is whether to use full stops for abbreviations such as **i.e.** or **e.g.**

Our preference is that you use full stops, and that *i.e.* and *e.g.* are not followed by a comma, to avoid double punctuation.

The *Macquarie Dictionary*, for example, has a *usage* note that indicates that the desire of some writers to reduce the amount of punctuation in abbreviations has produced some evidence of *ie* without stops. Along similar lines, i.e. the effort to reduce the amount of punctuation, the NOSM tells us that Oxford style tries to avoid double punctuation where possible, so for example, if the abbreviation *a.m.* ends a sentence, there is no additional full stop: *I came back at 3 a.m.* For the same reason Oxford style does not use a comma after *i.e.* and *e.g.* though **US usage** does.

There is the special case of a limited set of referencing abbreviations, where the plural is formed by repeating a lower-case letter. These take full stops. For example:

> *ff.* (following) *fnn.* (footnotes) *ll.* (lines) *pp.* (pages)

There is wide disagreement on whether there should be a space after the item (page number usually) followed by *ff.* Our preference is that there be a space (even a thin space), but,

We just ask writers to be consistent in these matters. But be careful to disinguish *nn.* (notes) from *nos* or *nos.* (numbers).

People tend to use the term 'acronym' to describe anything made up of initial letters, but most dictionaries define it as 'a word'. So, NATO is an acronym (because it's pronounced as a word) but DNA is an initialism. (Short for deoxyribonucleic acid.)

Did you know that *scuba* is an acronym? It stands for 'self-contained underwater breathing apparatus'. You know it now.

No one quite knows what to call the ones whose pronunciation involves a combination of letter names and words, like JPEG or MS-DOS. And then there are the social media ones like BYOB, OMG, FYI. New ones are popping up all the time. At best they can be called abbreviations, not acronyms, but they are generally referred to as texting language, or SMS code, since they originate from the shorthand needed for SMS. But note that they, too, do not normally require full stops.

What about the use of definite and indefinite articles before an acronym or initialism? For *indefinite articles* apply the rule **a** before a consonant, **an** before a vowel or 's' as if the abbreviation following the article were being spoken: *an SDB* but *a GC28 deliberation*. As for *definite articles*, you need to determine if the item needs an article: *GC28 said that* … (note that Italian will use an article where English does not: *Il CG28 indica che* …), but *the VDB are known as the women Volunteers of Don Bosco*.

Foreign language abbreviations retain the capitalisation of the language they come from, unless they have been translated into English versions. Be careful with *cf.* (confer) which is always to be used instead of the Italian *cfr.*

2

Ampersands

Don't use them unless they are part of a name, like **John Wiley & Sons** or **M&Ms**.

The symbol we know as the 'ampersand' (&) first appeared in some graffiti on a Pompeian wall around the first century AD. It wasn't called an 'ampersand' at the time — it was just a ligature of the cursive letters 'E' and 'T' forming the Latin word *et*, which means 'and'. This is why 'etc.' is sometimes written '&c'. By the early 19th century, **&** was the 27th letter in the alphabet, coming right after Z. Without a title yet, it was still read as just 'and', which made reciting the end of the alphabet a little confusing — X, Y, Z, and and. Kids starting inserting the phrase 'and per se and' to distinguish it, and over time, this all got blended together to sound more and more like *ampersand,* just like 'grandpa' becomes 'grampa' when you say it aloud.

3

'And' and 'but': why it's okay to start a sentence with a conjunction

All content here taken from *TheWriter.com*.

'You can't start a sentence with "and" or "but"!'

Has someone just spluttered this down the phone at you? Fret not. Here's all the evidence you need to prove them wrong.

> And the idea that *and* must not begin a sentence, or even a paragraph, is an empty superstition. The same goes for *but*. Indeed either word can give unimprovably early warning of the sort of thing that is to follow.
>
> — Kingsley Amis *The King's English (1997)*

> There used to be an idea that it was inelegant to begin a sentence with and. That idea is now as good as dead. And to use and in this position may be a useful way of indicating that what you are about to say will reinforce what you have just said.
>
> — Sir Ernest Gowers *The Complete Plain Words (1954)*

> There is a persistent belief that it is improper to begin a sentence with and, but this prohibition has been cheerfully ignored by standard authors from Anglo-Saxon times onwards.
>
> — RW Burchfield *New Fowler's Modern English Usage*

And (do you see what we did there) if they still don't like it, here are some more examples of people doing it. One of them's from the Bible, for crying out loud.

> In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.
> **And** the earth was without form, and void; and darkness [was] upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.
> And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.
> And God saw the light, that [it was] good: and God divided the light from the darkness.
> And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night.
> And the evening and the morning were the first day.
>
> — Genesis 1 King James version

4

Apostrophes

Other than the famous *Greengrocer's apostrophe* (see further on), most people know what to do about apostrophes:

To show belonging
When something belongs to one person or thing:

Hilario's desk is next to **Michael's**.

Words ending in 's'
Note the following examples:

Nicolo was pleased with the **Salesians'** feedback (the feedback of the Salesians who responded).

Editors don't always listen to our **writers'** opinions (the opinions of a group of writers).

Personal names ending in *s* are these days often given the regular apostrophe *s*, whatever their number of syllables or their sound:

> *Burns's poetry*, (But *TS Eliots' poetry* since *eliots's* sounds awkward. Sound will always be a good guide).
>
> *Dickens's novels*.

Those who have occasion to refer to classical or biblical names of several syllables may still prefer the apostrophe alone, as with: *Jesus' teachings*, *Moses' law*, *Euripides' plays*.

⚠️ Whatever you do, make sure you are consistent.

When it's plural and doesn't end in 's'
As exemplified by:

> The **children's** day (the day for celebrating children).
>
> We don't interrupt **people's** holidays with work stuff (the holidays of a group of people).

When there's time involved, but also
apostrophes are no longer used in several kinds of expression where the idea of possession is tenuous:

> one **weeks** notice
>
> three **years** work
>
> 30 **days** credit.
>
> *Teachers Federation*, *Kings Cross*, *Visitors book*

In contractions
When you use an apostrophe in a contraction it shows that a letter is missing. So:

> **they're** is short for 'they are'

But note that in **won't**, even though there are two letters missing, only one apostrophe is used.

Remember, the only time **it's** needs an apostrophe is when you mean 'it is' or 'it has'. Even though you'd think the possessive form of 'its' (eg 'the air conditioning unit has a mind of its own') would need an apostrophe, it doesn't. If you find it confusing, think of 'ours' (which is never 'our's').

Not contractions (as they don't have apostrophes in them) but worth mentioning are:

- **their** means 'belonging to them'
- **whose** means 'of whom'
- **your** means 'belonging to you'.

The greengrocer's apostrophe

There was formerly a respectable tradition (17c-19c) of using the apostrophe for noun plurals, especially in loanwords ending in a vowel (as in *We doe confess Errata's*, Leonard Lichfield, 1641, and *Comma's are used*, Phillip Luckcombe, 1771) and in consonants s, z, ch, sh (as in *Waltz's and cotillions*, Washington Irving, 1804). Although this practice is rare in 20th c. standard usage, the apostrophe of plurality continues in … the nonstandard ('illiterate') use often called in BrE the **greengrocer's apostrophe**, as in **apple's 55p per lb** and **We sell the original shepherds pie's** (notice in a shop window, Canterbury, England).

— Tom McArthur *The Oxford Companion to the English Language. Oxford University Press 1992*

Given this, perhaps we can expect the ultimate demise of the apostrophe altogether, especially since we already have the arbitrary codification of *its* and *whose* without apostrophe as the genitives of *it* and *who*, respectively.

5

Books

Not all text produced at Salesian Head Office becomes a book, but a significant anount of text does, so it might be helpful to say just a little about book publication (and the reader is also referred to the Appendix on editing). There is so much to say about book publishing! Everyone knows a book is judged by its cover, so perhaps we should limit ourselves to talking about book dimensions and book parts.

5.1. Book dimensions

The size of a book is generally measured by the height against the width of a leaf, or sometimes the height and width of its cover.

There are so many 'standards' out there, but we can probably mentioned the United States', the United Kingdom's cover dimensions, and the ISO 216 paper sizes used especially in Europe, but increasingly worldwide.

The following table is adapted from the scale of the *American Library Association*[1], in which size refers to the dimensions of the cover (trimmed pages will be somewhat smaller, often by about 1⁄4 inch or 5 mm). The words before *octavo* signify the traditional names for unfolded paper sheet sizes. Other dimensions may exist as well. *US Trade size* corresponds with *octavo* and is popular for hardbacks. *Mass market paperback* corresponds with *duodecimo*.

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[1] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book_size#United_States

Book formats and corresponding sizes

Name	Abbreviations	Leaves	Pages	Approximate cover size (width × height)	
				inches	cm
folio	2º or fo	2	4	12 × 19	30.5 × 48
quarto	4º or 4to	4	8	9½ × 12	24 × 30.5
Imperial octavo				8¼ × 11½	21 × 29
Super octavo				7 × 11	18 × 28
Royal octavo				6½ × 10	16.5 × 25
Medium octavo	8º or 8vo	8	16	6½ × 9¼	16.5 × 23.5
octavo				6 × 9	15 × 23
Crown octavo				5⅜ × 8	13.5 × 20
duodecimo or twelvemo	12º or 12mo	12	24	5 × 7⅜	12.5 × 19
sextodecimo or sixteenmo	16º or 16mo	16	32	4 × 6¾	10 × 17
octodecimo or eighteenmo	18º or 18mo	18	36	4 × 6½	10 × 16.5
trigesimo-secundo or thirty-twomo	32º or 32mo	32	64	3½ × 5½	9 × 14
quadragesimo-octavo or forty-eightmo	48º or 48mo	48	96	2½ × 4	6.5 × 10
sexagesimo-quarto or sixty-fourmo	64º or 64mo	64	128	2 × 3	5 × 7.5

A common paperback size in the UK is **B-format**. For example, Penguin Classics are in B-format, which is 129 mm × 198 mm (5 1⁄8 in × 7 3⁄4 in). This contrasts with **A-format** (110 mm × 178 mm, 4 3⁄8 in × 7 in) and **C-format** (135 mm × 216 mm, 5 3⁄8 in × 8 1⁄2 in).

Formerly the descriptions *octavo*, *quarto*, *duodecimo*, etc. were used (see table above).

The **ISO 216** paper sizes include **A**, **B**, **C**. Book publishers are mostly interested in the **A5** of these. The A5 is closest to the British *Demy* or US *Digest* size (*Digest* being 5.5 x 8.5 inches while *A5* is 5.83 x 8.27 inches or, to put this latter in millimetres, 210mm x 148mm.

Whatever paper size or book size is being considered, remember that printers require margins. A general rule is 18-20 mm margins but the inner margin usually needs 20-22 mm.

Photographs and areas of colour (or even just type) that run off the edge of a page are said to *bleed* and this may be deliberate, not accidental. Pages that bleed are printed on a larger sheet of paper and trimmed. Wherever this occurs, a minimum of 3 mm of extra image area must be supplied outside the trim.

5.2. Book parts

A traditional printed book or other publication may be divided into three sections: the preliminary pages or prelims, also called front matter, the main text and the endmatter or back matter.

Prelims
These pages may consist of (see glossary for definitions and descriptions of most of these):

- a half-title recto page (optional)

- a half-title verso page (if a half-title is included)

- a title recto page

- a title verso (imprint) page

- a table of contents

In a more complex publication there may also be:

- a frontispiece

- a dedication

- an epigraph

- a foreword

- lists of illustrations, figures, tables, maps

- a preface

- acknowledgements

- lists of contributors

- a list of abbreviations

Note that preliminary pages are usually numbered with Roman numerals.

Main text

The main text is generally quite simply structured. The first text page always starts on a recto with the page number being an Arabic numeral 1.

Main text is often broken up into parts, sections and chapters, depending on the length and complexity of the publication.

Apart from standard paragraphs, the main text may contain figures, tables, illustrations, boxed text, call-out text, footnotes, quotations and a variety of other elements that are treated differently in the text design.

End matter

Everything that follows the main text. This may include appendices, glossaries, endnotes, bibliographies and indexes. The normal order is as follows:

- list of abbreviations and acronyms

- appendices

- glossary

- endnotes

- bibliography and/or references

- other lists

- acknowledgements

- index

- advertisements

6

Brackets (parentheses)

Enclosing parenthetic material in round brackets, rather than commas or en rules, tends to reduce the importance of the information.

Avoid double use, i.e. brackets within brackets, unless you are using square brackets within round brackets.

A comma should not appear before an opening round bracket.

When you use brackets as part of a longer sentence, the full stop (or any other punctuation) goes on the outside. When the whole sentence is within the brackets, the full stop should come on the inside. This is also a good guide for punctuating quoted material.

If you're not sure, take the text in brackets away. If there's any stray punctuation hanging around then you've got it wrong.

Square brackets […]
We don't use square brackets very often. You'll need to use them when you're interrupting a quotation to add something or clarify it. Like this:

> George is a [client] consultant.

Or, if you have a set of brackets inside a set of brackets. Like this:

> Jan went to the shop with his list of items (Lapsang Souchong, coffee [ground, not instant] and golf balls), but all he came back with was a stapler.

Of course, if you are writing mathematical formulas, square brackets are used to enclose round brackets:

$$7[4ab - (2nm \times 6bm) \times nm] + 7a = 1240$$

Angle brackets <…>
These are used for email and web addresses.

Guillemets «…» (also known as chevrons, or, in Italian, virgolette basse)
Only to be used if an entire text is in, say, French or Italian. Translators need to be wary of transferring them into English. They are to be replaced with curly quotation marks.

7

British vs American English

Here are some of the main differences.

Spelling

One of the biggest differences comes with words ending in **-ise**. American English changes pretty much all of these to **'-ize'** – 'organize', 'recognize', and so on. It does the same thing with **-yse** ('analyze', 'paralyze').

-ize has been in use since the 16th century and is NOT an Americanism though it is the usual American form today. A reputable publisher like Oxford University Press uses -*ize* and in fact either termination is acceptable in British and Australian English. Nevertheless, the OED makes the following comment regarding usage:

Attempts to distinguish **-ize** in words based on Greek (idolize, monopolize) from **-ise** in words that have come to English from or through French (realise, moralise) founder on the difficulties of knowing the precise history of many words. Current Australian usage clearly favours consistent use of **-ise**, a practice which has the advantage of being easy to remember.

It will be clear, then, where our preference lies: *-ise* for the sake of consistency and also because it is easier.

Most words ending in **-our** in British or Australian English end in '-or' in American English (color, flavor, honor, neighbor, rumor, labor, humor). But note that Australian English uses *Labor* in reference to the Labor Party. Note that

'contour', 'velour', 'paramour' and 'troubadour' are spelt the same everywhere. (In the olden days we used to put 'u's in fairly unusual places in British English like 'ambassadour', 'governour', 'inferiour', 'errour', 'horrour' and 'mirrour'. True.) **(W)**.

Americans also sometimes like to swap around **'r's** and **'e's**. So 'centre' becomes 'center'. Same goes for 'kilometer', 'theater', 'caliber', 'fiber', 'saber' and 'somber'.

We also disagree on words ending in **-ce**. Although we both use 'advice' as a noun and 'advise' as a verb, American English has abandoned the 'licence'/'license' and 'practice'/'practise' distinction and uses 'practice' and 'license' for both meanings (see Chapter 39, *Tricky words*). American English uses 'defense' and 'offense', while we write 'defence' and 'offence'. 'Defensive' and 'offensive' always have an 's'.

And words written with 'ae'/'oe' in British English have a single 'e' in American English, like 'amoeba', 'anaemia', 'anaesthesia', 'foetal', 'haemophilia', 'oesophagus', 'orthopaedic' and 'paediatric'.

Double consonants. Follow the convention of doubling a final *-l* after a short vowel on adding *-ing* or *-ed* to verbs (sole exception: *parallel, paralleled*) and adding *-er* to make nouns from verbs: *level, levelling, levelled, leveller; travel, travelling, travelled, traveller*.

There are so many other differences in spelling. Here is a list which might contain a few surprises, and one of two of the **American spellings** are much more likely to find more general use, e.g. we suggest *novitiate* be adopted in our texts:

US	British
behoove	behove
caliper	calliper
carburetor	carburettor
checkered	chequered
chili	chilli
granddad	grandad
jewelry	jewellery
karat	carat

US	British
licorice	liquorice
maneuver	manoeuvre
mustache	moustache
novitiate	noviciate
pajamas	pyjamas
peddler	pedlar
phony	phoney
pita bread*	pitta bread
plow	plough
pudgy	podgy
raccoon	racoon
tartar sauce	tartare sauce

British English spellings mainly follow Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755), while [their] transatlantic cousins favour (or favor) Noah Webster's *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828). Most Commonwealth countries are happy with the British way of doing things – Canadians, being so close to the US, take some American ones and some English ones.

Compound words

The US is more ready to accept new words spelled solid (i.e. with no space or hyphen). An exception is *no one* which is always two words in the US but sometimes *no-one* for us.

Nouns make up the largest group of compound words, and most are readily understandable without a hyphen. But a hyphen is needed in some instances:

• *verb-plus-adverb*: make-up, teach-in, go-ahead. The *adverb-plus-verb* combination, however, is unproblematic: bypass, downpour, uproar

- *noun-plus-noun*: two types are regularly hyphenated: expressions in which each element has equal status (owner-driver), and expressions in which the elements rhyme (culture-vulture)

- *compound adjectives*: pretty much always hyphenated (bitter-sweet) unless they are set phrases (equal opportunity employer)

- *compound verbs*: when they consist of adjective plus noun, or noun plus verb, they are usually hyphenated (to cold-shoulder, to gift-wrap). When they are an adverb plus a verb they are usually one word (to bypass, to undergo). The relatively few compound adverbs are usually one word (barefoot, overboard).

See also Chapter 38, *To hyphenate or not to hyphenate?*

Lexical variations

We say *eggplant* but **the US says** *aubergine*. What is a *flat* for us is an *apartment* in the US. We have *lifts* and they have *elevators*. There are many more such variations.

But note carefully some semantic differences in certain words. So, for example, a *biscuit* in the US is more like a roll or scone, and the Christmas crib would be called a *créche* in the US. An *entree* is a main course in the US, and if you call a person *homely* there, it is less likely to be a compliment as it means plain, unattractive. *Momentarily* will mean 'in a moment' in the US, and *to table* something means to remove from consideration rather than to present it for consideration. There is much grist for the mill of misunderstanding!

Punctuation

Americans are happy with Oxford commas (that's when you put a comma before the 'and' in a list – see Chapter 11, *Commas*). This might also be known by some as the serial comma or even the Harvard comma . And as would be clear from this comment, Oxford University Press certainly do use the Oxford comma! We do not, for the most part, but see the comment on commas further on.

They also prefer double quotation marks (see Chapter 31, *Quotation marks*).

And finally, US usage tends to treat brands, for example *Apple*, and collective nouns like 'team' or 'staff' as single units. So they use them with the singular verb (unless you're definitely talking about individuals). So in America you are more

likely to hear 'Apple changed its logo' than 'Apple changed their logo'. For us it's the opposite.

Inflections.
The US does not use -t in past participles like *burnt-, _learnt*, *smelt*, *spilt*, *spoilt*. They only use the *-ed* versions of these words.

Variability in function words.
around/round: The US does not use *round* as a preposition.

around/about: US English prefers *around*.

amidst/amongst/whilst: these will not be used in the US. Only *amid/among/ while*.

toward/towards: The US will use *toward* rather than *towards*.

Note that in British English we use *-ct-* not *-x-* in *connection*, *reflection*, etc. But note *complexion* and *flexion*. Write *gram*, *kilogram* (not *gramme*, *kilogramme*). However, use *tonne* not *ton* ('ton' refers to the non-metric measure). Write *metre* for the unit of length, *meter* for measuring instruments.

Data-processing usage. Avoid the forms *inpu[t]ted* and *output[t]ed*. Instead use *input* and *output*: e.g. 70 000 (or 70,000) items of data were input last month. However, note the verb *to format*, which takes the forms *formatted* and *formatting*.

See also:
Chapter 39, *Tricky words*
Chapter 11, *Commas*

8

Bullet points

Bullets or dot points are usually preferable to numbers and letters, but we should restrict indenting to two levels. Capitalisation follows normal sentence rules. Some people use semicolons for separating dot points, with a full stop after the last. A minimalist approach uses no punctuation at the end of a point, and a very minimalist approach does not even use a point at the end of the last one.

We prefer to do things as follows:

If the sentence before the bullets ends with a colon (like this one):

- start each point with a lower case letter (Word might try to autocorrect you so watch out for it)
- don't punctuate at the end of each line
- finish the last one with a full stop.

If the bullets are a self-contained list (i.e. there is no sentence ending in a colon before them) do them like this:

- Capital letter at the start of each one.
- And a full stop at the end of each one.

If the bullet points are all questions, ignore the above and start them with caps (even if when preceded by a colon). Because otherwise it looks a bit weird.

If the bullet points are answering a question, what do you do?

- Capital letter at the start of each one.
- Full stop at the end of each one.

9

Caps vs lower case

If in doubt, use lower case. Save capital letters for proper nouns (like **John** or **Rome**), acronyms and initialisms.

Headings should generally be *sentence case* (that's when the first letter of the sentence is capitalised and the rest are lower case), unless you are doing something which needs to look pretty, in which case you might want to use *title case* (That's When Every Word In The Sentence Starts With A Cap). Headings are not normally followed by a full stop.

… well, almost every word. When it comes to using title case , the formal rule is that you capitalise all nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs and adjectives. So you don't need to do articles like 'the', 'a' or 'an'. Some people say you should capitalise any conjunction or preposition that's five letters or more. But that one's optional.

We could also present this succinctly and clearly by referring to *minimum* versus *maximum* capitalisation.

minimal capitalisation means only first word of a title and any proper nouns and names are capitalised. Titles of public works are in italics; unpublished works are set aside by quote marks, as are article or chapters in published item. *Maximal capitalisation* involves capitalising all words in a title other than article, prepositions and conjunctions.

Legislation and periodicals are usually given maximal capitalisation.

Definitely upper case:

References to elements of a publication should be capitalised when mentioned in running text: *Chapter 4*.

The *Macquarie Dictionary* offers some precise advice on this matter:

The titles of books, films, etc. can be in capital letters throughout, as can some usually shortish advertisements and headlines in newspapers, but texts of any kind which are of more significant length, are typically in lower-case letters with capitals reserved for the first letters only of the first word of each sentence and of particular words, usually names. The following names are usually capitalised.

Classification	Example
people	*Alice Jackson*
institutions	*Commonwealth Bank*
titles	*Lady Veronica Hardcastle*
degrees	*Professor Jones PhD*
places	*Darwin*
natural features	*Great Barrier Reef*
nations	*France*
peoples	*Inuit*
languages	*French*
established religions	*Christianity*
their followers	*Hindus*
significant periods	*Middle Ages*
events	*Olympic Games*
special days	*Christmas Day*
festivals	*Ramadan*

We should add that adjectives as well as nouns denoting place, language or indigenous people are capitalised: *Aboriginal*, *Catalan*. Related verbs tend to retain the capital, but note that *anglicise* and *westernise* are usually lower case.

To unmask the origin of the capital letter we need to refer to a script derived from the Old Roman cursive called *uncial*.

Uncial is a *majuscule* script, a synonym meaning 'large or capital letter', commonly used by Latin and Greek scribes beginning around the 3rd century AD. The word is derived from the Latin *uncialis* meaning 'of an inch, of an ounce'.

The first use of the word uncial, and thus the possible origin of its modern meaning, is from St Jerome's preface to the Book Of Job and the following passage:

> Let whoever will to keep the old books, either written on purple skins with gold and silver, or in uncial letters, as they commonly say …
>
> — St Jerome's Preface on Job *Patristic Bible Commentary*

It is believed that St Jerome is referring to the uppercase letters within the text. In addition, as St Jerome makes reference to – the move from the rough writing surface of papyrus to the smoother parchment and vellum made possible a more rounded single stroke writing style instead of the former angular, multiple stroke style.

Colons and semicolons

Colons

Henry Watson Fowler said we should use a colon 'to deliver the goods that have been invoiced in the preceding words'.

The colon is a marker of relationship and sequence. The OED quite helpfully offers the insight that the colon 'points forward'.

So use them:

To introduce a list

> The food must be simple: chicken, salad and wine.

To add to what has gone before

> His career was cut short by illness: a great loss to the scientific community.

To introduce a direct question when it amplifies or modifies the preceding idea

> Alex had to choose: The latest Marian Keyes for book club? Or something more high-brow?

Note in this instance that *no capital is need if there is one question, but in this case, where there are two questions in complete sentences, capitals are required*. If they were merely sentence fragments, lower case would be sufficient.

For steps

> If you're the last person out of the office, follow these steps: first, rejoice at having finished for the day, even if it is five hours after everyone else has left; second, close the windows; third, switch off the lights; fourth, set the alarm.

Note that steps as indicated above employs semicolons.

US English always uses a capital after a colon.

Semicolons
Linking

Semicolons mark the boundary between main clauses which are juxtaposed in the same sentence:

> He had no further plans; he just wanted out.

Complicated lists

Use it in a list that already contains commas:

> 'On Harry's desk you'll find: *The Oxford English Dictionary*, for his wordy needs; the remnants of a pot plant, long-since dead; and an empty mug, crying out to be filled up with tea (milk, no sugar).'

The OED explains: without the semicolons, commas would have to serve both within and between the items listed, and the boundaries between would be less clear.

11

Commas

We all know how commas work. But there are a few grey areas, mainly around the **Oxford comma**, **comma splices** and **separating adjectives**.

Oxford (Harvard, serial) comma

The comma used before a conjunction linking the final item in a series, as in *Portugal, Spain, and France* where the comma after Spain is the serial comma.

American English favours using this comma (hence the Harvard comma) but increasingly it is used only where an ambiguity might result if it were absent.

There is a classic Australian example along the lines of:

> The wombat eats shoots, roots, and leaves.

But even here, one could argue that even with the comma you still create a possible confusion in that 'leaves' might be understood to be a verb.

If the wombat eats shoots and roots, and also eats a different category of foods like bananas and mangoes? Then a comma might help:

> In captivity, the wombat eats shoots and roots, and bananas and mangoes.

In general, though, our preference is not to use the serial comma, or perhaps put another way, the real preference is *the use of punctuation to aid clarity*. Only use the serial comma when absolutely needed for clarity.

Comma splice

A comma splice is where you use a comma to separate two independent clauses, when you should actually be using a semicolon, a dash or a conjunction (like 'and', 'but' or 'so'). It is wrong (to be blunt), because commas are used for separating, not connecting.

Spliced: We are heading for home, we will get there late.

Each clause has a subject and a predicate and forms a complete thought – so it could stand on its own as a sentence. That means a comma doesn't work.

Not spliced: *We are heading for home; we will get there late*.

Or: *We are heading for home but will get there late*.

Or: *We are heading for home – we will get there late*.

If you read it out loud you should be able to hear it.

Ah, but:

There are some quite famous comma splices, including:

> I came, I saw, I conquered.

Then there is:

> … often he sat and looked at the branches of a tree silhouetted against the sky, it was like a Japanese print…
>
> — Somerset Maugham *Of Human Bondage*

So splices are sometimes acceptable when the clauses are short and similar, or as a poetic device.

Separating a list of adjectives

Ever wondered where to put the comma in a list of adjectives? Well, it depends on the type of adjective.

Coordinate adjectives

where they describe the noun but each adjective is doing its own bit of describing, for example, 'a long, wordy email'. The email is both 'long' and 'wordy'.

Cumulative adjectives

where they don't separately describe the noun. The adjective directly before the noun pairs with it, and then the adjective before that describes the pair. For example, 'our most experienced in-house trainer'. The person we're discussing is an 'in-house trainer'. And they are the most 'experienced'.

So how do you know if your adjectives are cumulative or coordinate?

You can rearrange coordinate adjectives ('a wordy, long email') and put an 'and' between them ('a long and wordy email'). But you cannot do either to cumulative ones. *An in-house experienced trainer*? No way.

So if your adjectives pass the rearranging or 'and' test, then you know you'll need to separate them with commas.

By the way: in English, we use adjectives in the following order:

- **opinion / size / age / shape / colour / origin / material / purpose – NOUN.**

Or put another way, in a string of two or three adjectives, the order is normally the evaluative first, followed by the descriptive and then the definitive.

So: **'Beautiful, big, old, round, silver, French, metal mixing bowl'**. Any other order sounds wrong:

'Big, old, beautiful, French, silver, round, metal mixing bowl?'

'Round, old, silver, big, beautiful, metal, French mixing bowl?'

'My Greek, Fat, Big Wedding?'

It is no longer considered necessary to put a comma between every adjective, even if there are several in front of a noun, as in:

a bright red sports car

The OED is a bit more specific on this, saying that no comma is needed to separate adjectives of different types: *a large black gibbon native to Sumatra*. Nor is a comma needed to separate two or more classifying adjectives where the adjectives relate to different classifying systems: *French medieval lyric poets*. *Annual economic growth*.

Our preference lies with the earlier mentioned principle of reducing punctuation where it is possible to do so.

12

Compass points

Lower case for **north**, **south**, **east** and **west**, except when it's part of a name like South Korea or South Africa.

Also use lower case if it's a vague area ('northeast India') but upper case when talking about a specific region and using the word 'the' before it (like 'the South').

And while single capital letter abbreviations are normally followed by a full stop (*La Sapienza U.*), Compass points **N**, **S**, **E**, **W** are not.

Spell out compass points in general text with hyphens as needed: *north-westerly*.

13

Currency

It is important to note that there is a difference between *currency symbols* and *currency codes*.

For general writing, currency symbols are generally more recognisable than currency codes.

So if you are writing about a $13,000 scholarship on an American university website, use:

> US$13,000

On the other hand, if you prefer to use the currency code, place it before the number, followed by a space:

> USD 13,000

As well as US$ (USD) there is A$ (AUD), € (EUR), and £ (GBP). Others can easily be sought online.

Amounts of money may be spelled out in words with the unit of currency, but are more often printed in numerals with the symbols or abbreviations: *thirteen dollars* or *$13.*

There is no need to include '.00' – **$33** not *$33.00*. But a minimum of two digits must always be shown for cents in a decimal fraction. If the number of cents is

less than ten, a zero must precede it: **$0.08**[=8 cents], not *$0.8*[which could be read as 80 cents].

Round numbers lend themselves to words better than do precise amounts, though even these may need to be spelled out where absolute clarity is vital.

For anounts of millions and above, and for thousands in financial contexts, it is permissible to combine symbols, numerals, words and abbreviations according to the convention of the context in which they appear.

Ranges should be **$6,000–$7,000** (not *$6,000–7,000*, and note the use of an en dash for ranges).

A dollar sign ($) is fine for Australian and American dollars, but use the appropriate currency symbol or code if there is any room for confusion.

Use the euro symbol rather than writing the word out in full. So it's **€540**, not *540 euros.*

See also:
Chapter 40, *Useful keyboard shortcuts*

14

Dashes

There are three different weights of dash. A *hyphen* (which we all know), an *en dash* and an *em dash*. Here they are:

Hyphen -
En dash –
Em dash —

In Britain, but also in much of the publishing industry in English-speaking countries the en and em dash may well be known as the en and em rule, so from here one we are calling them a 'rule'.

Hyphens get their own section: see Chapter 38, *To hyphenate or not to hyphenate?*

Em rule
Em rules are often used instead of en dashes to separate out a phrase (like this in **the US**, where there is also no space either side: 'There was no way to make the words better—or was there?').

The em rule (with a space either side) signifies:

- an abrupt change, or
- introduces an amplification or explanation, or
- sets apart parenthetic elements.

Despite this, it is common to find an en rule being used for the above purposes!

Our recommendation is that whichever approach you take to the above use (or not) of the em rule, it be consistent.

And did you know there is also a **2-em rule**? This is to avoid repetition in reference lists and bibliographies, and to mark an abrupt break in reported speech or direct speech.

Australian Bureau of Statistics 1999a, *Australian demographic statistics, December quarter 1988. ABS, Canberra*.

— 1999b, *Australian social trends*, cat. no. 4102.0, ABS, Canberra

En rule

Note that in contrast with the em rule, the main function of which is to separate, the en rule is a linking device.

- Use an en rule, not a hyphen, in a range like 30–40 (only use it if you're doing a range of figures – use 'to' for things like 'Monday to Friday'). And for those ranges, don't forget to take the spaces out from either side of the rule. Use it also for time (April–June) and distance (Rome–Florence trains)

- Overuse of the en rule indicates a lack of structural clarity

- We suggest an en rule for showing the range between different chapters in Scripture references, e.g. Mk 10:21–11:4.

- This one's a little complicated. Use an en rule to show an association between words that retain their separate identities: *a Commonwealth–state agreement*, *cost–benefit ratio*. If there is more than one word being linked on one or both sides of the rule, a spaced en rule should be used: *the United States – China trade negotiations*. When the en rule is used this way, the things it links must be parallel in structure – that is, numbers should be linked with numbers, nouns with nouns, adjectives with adjectives, and so on: **European–Japanese research teams** not *Europe–Japanese research teams*. To be fair, chances are no one will notice what rule you use in a situation like this so don't fret about it.

- You can link prefixes such as *non*, *pre*, or *anti* by using an en rule instead of the usual hyphen, if that prefix is attached to more than one word:

> **non–English speaking countries**, but
>
> *non-refundable goods*.

However a hyphen is still acceptable in this situation. As above: 'chances are no one will notice what rule you use in a situation like this so don't fret about it'!

By the way, the situation with compound adjectives is similar to the one with prefixes.

If you type in a hyphen to separate out a phrase within a sentence, MS Word will generally autocorrect it to an en rule. But sometimes you might need to put one in manually. Have a look at the Symbols part of the Chapter 40, *Useful keyboard shortcuts* section to see how.

An em dash is called an em dash because it's (historically) the width of the capital roman *M*. En dashes are called en dashes because … well, you can probably figure that out (but in fact they are half an em dash).

15

Dates and times

Format dates like this: **2 March 2020**. If you are using a range of dates, go for **2 to 3 March** over *2nd–3rd March*. It looks nicer. The argument behind presenting a date as *2 March 2020* is that it is unambiguous, requires no punctuation and progresses logically from day to month to year. It is typographically preferable to such forms as 'March 2, 2020' or '2nd March 2020', because it avoids the potential confusion of adjacent numbers in the first, and requires fewer keystrokes than either.

Grouped years should be **2001–2002** (not *2001–02*). And remember to use an en dash, not a hyphen.

Use the 12-hour clock with a full stop, not a colon. Also use figures and 'a.m.' and 'p.m.' (unless your habit is not to use full stops) – **2.00 p.m.**

The argument for not using full stops is that *am* and *pm* can be treated like other symbols associated with numerals, which are unpunctuated. There may also be an argument based on the argument of the declining use of punctuation where it can be avoided …

> Whichever you choose, *a.m.* or *am* we want you to be consistent. You will find American English may use *AM* but we prefer you do not.

Don't say *0.5 days* when talking about periods of time. Say half a day.

If you are talking about a decade, don't put an apostrophe in it (**1960s**).

16
Ellipses

If you are using an ellipsis to show a pause in speech, an omission, an unfinished thought or an enigmatic trailing off into silence … then place a space either side of the three (not four) points. So:

Nats asked us to gather at one end of the office. 'That's all I'm saying …' she ended cryptically.

This 'space either side' is followed by the OED and Macquarie, and indeed by the New York Times. It is our choice as well.

If the ellipsis is at the end of a sentence, you do not need to put a full stop after it. The same goes for before an ellipsis: no punctuation mark precedes it.

When you use an ellipsis to deliberately leave a thought unfinished in a piece of writing, it's called *aposiopesis*.

17

Etc.

We don't really like it. Use 'and so on', 'like'.

Same goes for **e.g.** and **i.e.**. We prefer 'like', 'such as' and 'for example'.

If a list begins with *e.g.* do not end it with *etc.*

18

Exclamation marks

Generally avoid them. They can make you sound like you are shouting (the influence of the digital world where all-caps and exclamation marks have a 'shouting' inference to them).

If you absolutely do need to use one, make sure it is only one.

19

Foreign words

No need to italicise foreign words that have slipped into common usage (like curriculum, cliché or faux pas).

Use them for unfamiliar foreign words, e.g. 'A foreign word may provide the *mot juste* for the word of the day.'

20

Forward slash

The forward slash may be used to mean 'per' (km/h) and in fractions (19/100).

Marketing years, financial years, and any other twelve-month periods that do not coincide with calendar years are also denoted by a forward slash, e.g. 2012/2013, which is 12 months, rather than by a hyphen (or en dash), e.g. 2015-2016, which means 2 years.

The forward slash is often used to give alternatives, as in 'and/or' and 'yes/no/ maybe'. It is closed up when separating single words, but is written with a space either side when one or more of the alternatives is a compound term, e.g.:

Rome/Paris

but

police car / fire engine / ambulance

21

He, she or they

If you are not sure whether you are talking about a man or a woman, use 'they' or 'their' as the pronoun.

There's no singular pronoun in English that covers both sexes. So traditionally people have gone for 'he' or 'his' when they didn't know if they were referring to a Larry or a Lucy. But singular 'they' has actually been around for a very long time: you can find it in Chaucer, Shakespeare and even the US Declaration of Independence.

> We had a missed call from someone this morning, but they didn't leave a message.
>
> One of the people at this morning's workshop left their notebook on the table upstairs.

For those who argue that pronouns like *they*, *them* and *their* are grammatically plural and need to refer to a plural noun, we can suggest that the use of these plural pronouns shows **notional** rather than **formal** agreement. We see this situation in a sentence such as *The police have been alerted*. Here, the plural verb is based on the notion that the word 'police' refers to many officers of the law, even though the word is in singular form. We make lots of choices beteween formal and notional agreement in English: *clergy*, *committee*, *crowd*, *family*, *government*, *orchestra*, *team* to name a few.

The evolving use of the singular *they*, *them*, and *their* makes an interesting comparison with the evolution of the singular use of *you* in place of *thou* and *thee* in early modern English.

22

Initials (people)

Once again, the trend towards reduced punctuation has overtaken the convention of placing full stops and spaces after initials of people's names.

These days we write *Mary J Nagy*, or *B Bertolucci*, or *WMJ Steinhauser*. Things are **different in the US**.

23

Italics

Italics are used to indicate emphasis or stress; to style titles, headings, indexes, cross-references.

Italic type is used in English texts for words and phrases that are still regarded as foreign or need to be distinguished from identical forms. When a word is sufficiently assimilated to be printed in roman, it may still retain its accents: *paté*, or may lose them: *elite*, *facade*.

The explanation or translation of a foreign word or phrase may be presented in any number of ways, using roman type in quotation marks or parentheses, as appropriate. Foreign proper names are not italicised, even when cited in their original language: Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Roma.

Use italics for titles of books, periodicals, plays, films, TV and radio series.

It is worth noting the matter of punctuation and italics: punctuation should be printed in the same font (roman, italic or bold) as the preceding word or expression if they belong to that word or epxression. If they relate to the surrounding text as a whole – which is more often the case – they should be printed in the style of the text.

24

Job titles and team names

The official titles of the principals or chief executives of many institutions are capitalised. For example: *The Archbishop of Milan*.

When abbreviated to their generic element, however, most of these titles are presented in lower case: *The archbishop's view is shared by …*

The current incumbents of monarch, foreign heads of state are all capitalised in official publications truncated or used generically as the case may be: *The President of the United States, President Trump …* but reference to previous incumbents are lower case: *She served as vice-chancellor for a decade*.

Other incumbents of non-official roles, then, are likely to be lower-cased:

So, *Claire Wilkinson, head of verbal identity*, *John Abrahams is a senior writer* and *Sandra Leong is part of the youth ministry team*.

Numbers

Writers and editors can have considerable disagreement over this one! So what normally happens is that a publisher determines the threshold below which numbers are expressed in words. Assuming non-technical writing (technical material may determine its own rules), the following is our recommendation:

⚠️ Write numbers from one to one hundred as words:

> The subcommittee will be preparing three separate reports over the next fifteen months.

But all numbers on websites should be written as figures.

NOSM adds the following helpful information:

Large round numbers may be expressed in a mixture of numerals and words (*6 million*) or entirely in words (*six million*). In some contexts it makes more sense to use a rounded number rather than an exact one, such as a **population of 60,000** rather than *of 60,011*.

In expressing approximate figures some styles traditionally preferred *more than* to *over*. Modern usage tends to treat them as synonyms.

When a sentence contains one or more figures of 100 or above, a more consistent look may be achieved by using Arabic numerals throughout the sentence: for example, **90 to 100** (rather than *ninety to 100*).

In some contexts a different approach is necessary. For example, it is sometimes clearer when two sets of figures are mixed to use words for one and figures for the other, as in *thirty 10-page pamphlets*.

Spell out ordinal numbers – *first, second, third* – except when quoting from another source.

It is customary to use words for numbers that fall at the beginning of sentences. In such contexts, to avoid spelling out cumbersome numbers, recast the sentence: *The year 1984*.

Use figures for ages expressed in cardinal numbers, and words for ages expressed as ordinal numbers or decades: *a girl of 15*; *in his thirty-third year*; *in the twenty-first century*.

In less formal or more discursive contexts (fiction) ages may be spelled out, as may physical attributes: *a two-year-old*; *a nine-inch nail*.

Numbers take hyphens when they are spelled out.

Figures are used for:

- parts of books including chapters, pages, and plates
- numbers of periodicals
- scores of games and sporting events
- distances of races
- houses or building numbers
- road or highway numbers in a national system

Put a comma in numbers over **1,000**. And remember that every three zeros get a comma – **We were told that the budget was €4,750,350** (we wish).

Use hyphens in phrases where a number is part of the adjective, like **four-hour session** or **five-year-old child**. And in fractions: **two-thirds majority**.

Spell out million and billion, like **12 million people use them** or **The company spent $2 million.**

Exceptions

Exceptions

When the number comes with a unit of measurement, then it's figures all the way. **'Three** trainers walked for **3km** to get to their workshop', or 'We split the bill for after-work drinks between **six of us** and it came to **€8** each'.

Same for page numbers e.g. 'have a look at **page 8'**.

'to' or a dash?

If you are writing a span, like 'three to four' or '120–160', use 'to' when you're writing words and an en dash (not a hyphen) when writing figures.

See also:

26

Okay

It's **okay**. Not *OK*. Not *O.K.* And not *ok*.

27

Old-fashioned words

They used to be stylish; they're not any more. So change these dated words for their oh-so-modern alternatives:

- *whilst* becomes **while**

- *upon* becomes **on**

- thus *therefore* becomes **so**.

28

Percentages

We use **per cent** but you will always find **percent** in the US. Use *per cent* where the number is also spelled out in words: *twenty per cent*. With figures, use the per cent sign (%), closed up to the figure, e.g. *25%*.

29

Proofreading symbols

Most of the marks the editors cover your work with are pretty self-explanatory. But in case you can't understand the scribbles, here are the basic marks and what they mean.

Core symbols

^	Insert	(cap)	Uppercase
⚊	Delete	(lc)	Lowercase
⌒	Close up	(sc)	Small caps
⌇	Delete and close up	(eq)	Equal space
#	Space	(stet)	Stet, or let it stand
(tr)	Transpose		
(sp)	Spell out		

Punctuation symbols

⋏	Comma	1/M	Em dash
⊙	Period	⌄	Apostrophe
⅋	Semicolon	⌄/⌄	Quotation marks
⅋	Colon	?	Question mark
⊙/⊙/⊙	Ellipsis	!	Exclamation point
⌢	Hyphen	(/)	Parentheses
1/N	En dash	[/]	Brackets

Formatting symbols

(bf)	Boldface type	(rom)	Roman type
(ital)	Italic type	(wf)	Wrong font
(us)	Underscore		

Layout symbols

[	Move left	(run in)	Run in text
]	Move right	¶	Begin paragraph
⌐	Move up	(break)	Break or rebreak
⌊⌋	Move down	(bb)	Bad break
⊕	Center		

30

Punctuation

Punctuation is mentioned many times throughout this guide. Here is a basic summary of matters regarding standard British English punctuation:

With the exception of dashes (especially en and em rules) and the three-point ellipsis, **punctuation marks in standard English are closed up to the preceding word, letter or number** (which is different from, say, French, which ensures a space before punctuation involving two elements like a colon or semicolon).

Only **a single space follows any stop**, such as a full stop, exclamation mark, question mark, semicolon or colon. It used to be (in the days of typewriters) that two spaces followed such stops. This is no longer the case.

A full stop marks the end of a sentence; footnotes conclude with a full stop; headings do not have a full stop after them.

No full stop is required if a sentence ends with an ellipsis (…), with an abbreviation that takes a point (etc.) or with a quotation complete in itself that takes a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark before the closing quote (which is different from, say, Italian, which adds a full stop at the end in this latter case).

Abbreviations which do not include the final letter of the word take a full stop (Art.), but contractions where part of the middle of the word is left out but the last letter is included (Mr) do not.

An ellipsis is three points and indicates an omission in the text. If it falls at the end of a sentence there is no extra full stop needed. When it starts a sentence, it is followed by a space. The points are not enclosed in round or square brackets

(as they are in Italian) except when an entire line or paragraph is omitted. Then the ellipsis is placed on its own separate line between square brackets.

A colon is most often used to indicate that an expansion, qualification, quotation or explanation is about to follow (e.g. a list of items in running text). The part before the colon must be a full sentence in its own right, but the second need not be. Do not use colons at the end of headings.

In British usage a colon does not require the next word to begin with a capital letter. **US usage does**.

Use a **semicolon** not a comma to combine two sentences into one without a linking conjunction. The misuse of the comma to achieve this is known as the comma splice.

In a list of three or more items **a comma** is used to separate them, except between the last two, which are separated by 'and' or 'or' (unless there is a need to avoid confusion).

Coordinate adjectives (adjectives that can be rearranged and conncted with 'and') **are separated by commas**, but if they are not adjectives whch are part of a series, i.e. they cannot be rearranged or be separated by 'and' (sweet red wine) then a comma is not used.

Commas are used to make an important distinction between two types of relative construction, often known as 'defining' (where commas are used) and 'non-defining' (no commas) relative clauses. The non-defining relative clause merely adds extra information: *The Rector Major who is the 10th successor of Don Bosco was Provincial in Spain*. Compare this with *The Rector Major, who is the tenth successor of Don Bosco, was Provincial in Spain*. In the first case we are told about a particular RM (the 10th successor of Don Bosco). There was at least one other (Fr Rinaldi) who was a Provincial in Spain but we are talking about the 10th successor of Don Bosco. In the second case, the emphasis is on the fact that the RM was Provincial in Spain. That he is also the 10th successor of Don Bosco is additional and not necessary information. The difference is subtle, but it comes into play especially when translating from Italian, which has a *more rather than less* approach to text. Cf. Appendix C, *TRANSLATING ITALIAN*.

Question marks, as we know, are used at the end of a direct question, but they are not used in indirect speech:

> We should ask ourselves how this decision will affect the next six-year period.

Do not use a question mark after a request or instruction disguised as a question out of courtesy:

> Would you please sign this form.

For **quotation marks** see the section that immediately follows.

For **forward slashes** See Chapter 20, *Forward slash*.

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Quotation marks

Use single rather than double quotes. But it is okay to use double quotes when you have a nice quote in a large font size, like in a PowerPoint presentation or a proposal title. They look prettier in that context.

If you have a quote within a quote it should go like this:

Carlo said, 'Is it true that Pedro asked "If you're a Catholic, does that make you a Christian?" the other day?'

Punctuating around quotation marks
Pretty much the same rules as when you are punctuating round brackets.

So when the quote you use is part of a longer sentence, the full stop (or any other punctuation) goes on the outside:

> Harry said it was 'beautifully written'.

When the whole sentence is in speech marks, the full stop should go on the inside (even with the 'Harry said' at the beginning – and notice the cap on 'It'):

> Harry said 'It was beautifully written.' Or 'It was beautifully written,' said Harry.

Curly or straight?

Curly quotes (' ' " ") look nicer, so if you are writing for print, go with these. Word/ Libre Office should put them in automatically, but if straight ones show up instead (' "), which they do sometimes, generally if you've copied and pasted something, see Chapter 40, *Useful keyboard shortcuts* on how to fix them.

Block quotations do not need to be enclosed in quotation marks, since they are set off distinctively from the main text by indentation and spacing.

See also:
Chapter 40, *Useful keyboard shortcuts*
Chapter 6, *Brackets (parentheses)*

32

Roman or roman?

Roman with a capital *R* refers to numerals, while the lower-cased *r* is a reference to type, unless it is the name of a particular typeface, such as Times New Roman, where it would be capitalised. Not everyone is so fussy about these upper or lower case differences, though. As there is no arabic type (though there is an Arabic alphabet, obviously), any references to **Arabic**, as in numerals, will be capitalised.

33

Saints' names

These names can be problematic, as they exist as titles for individuals, as place names, and as surnames.

In British usage the English word *saint* is abbreviated as *St*, whereas **US usage** will always follow that with a full stop (period).

In French a capital *S* and hyphen are used if the name refers to the name of a place, institution, or saint's day, or is a family name: *Saint-Étienne*. A lower-case *s* with no hyphen is used if the reference is to the person of a saint, for example *sainte Jeanne d'Arc*. Italian *san*/*santo*/*sant'* depend on Italian rules for the indefinite article.

34

Small caps

Small capitals are slightly thicker and wider, to match the weight of the lower-case and capital letters surrounding them. They are often 'faked' by reducing normal capitals, but should not be. Typefaces often include them, and this is the better way to produce them.

The main uses of small caps are as follows:

- for specifying eras
- for displayed subsidiary titles and headings, signatures in printed correspondence, academic qualifications following names displayed in a list
- in some style, for the first word or words of chapters
- in some styles, for author's names in footnotes and bibliographies.

35

Split infinitives

Split away, my friends. We do it all the time in speech.

And George Bernard Shaw and Jerome K Jerome have done it in writing, so we are in good company. Probably the most famous example is in *Star Trek* – 'to boldly go …'.

> The most frequently cited split infinitive is from the opening voice-over of *Star Trek*: 'to boldly go where no man has gone before'. (*Star Trek: The Next Generation* had 'one' in place of 'man' as a timely reminder of the need to be aware of the shift towards gender-neutral language today.)

The infinitive form of a verb is its 'root' form, beginning with 'to', like 'to eat' or 'to sleep'. A split infinitive is when, instead of appearing next to each other, the 'to' and the other part of the verb are separated by another word (which is almost always an adverb), such as 'You're going to really love it'. While there may be nothing wrong with this, be aware that a sentence with a split infinitive may be ambiguous: does *to further cement trade relations* mean *to cement trade relations further*, or *to promote relations with the cement trade*?

36

That or which?

'That' defines. 'Which' gives extra information, often in a clause with commas round it. Or: the reason for distinguishing between the use of *that* and *which* in relative clauses is to avoid ambiguity in some contexts. So,

This is the house that Jack built.

But:

This house, which Jack built, is a roaring success.

As a rule of thumb, if you have commas in there, go with 'which'.

But the bottom line is really this: where there is no danger of ambiguity, *that* or *which* could be used.

37

Titles of books, films, TV programmes

Use italics rather than quotes. So you would write: 'Nick Parker has written a book about how much he loves toast. It's called *Toast*.'

See also:

38

To hyphenate or not to hyphenate?

First, look it up in the dictionary. If you're still not sure, read this.

There are two situations where you are likely to need a hyphen.

When an adjective is made up of more than one word

We call these compound adjectives. This is how they work:

- An adjective describes a noun, e.g. 'the **written** word'
- A compound adjective does the same thing, but it's made up of more than one word, like **'round-the-clock support'**.

A compound adjective usually gets a hyphen when it comes before a noun, like in 'a **well-honed** piece of writing'.

But if the first word ends in 'ly', like in 'a **specially designed** workshop', you don't need a hyphen.

When it comes after the noun, the compound adjective usually doesn't get a hyphen. So we say **an easy-to-remember number**, but **the number is easy to remember**. Same goes for up to date – if it's before a noun it needs a hyphen. **A document is up to date** but **it's an up-to-date document**.

After a prefix
If you are adding a prefix like '*pre*', '*un*', '*non*' or '*anti*' to a proper adjective (an adjective made from a proper noun [one with a capital letter] like American, Japanese, Victorian), use a hyphen: **un-American**, **non-EC countries**. Long-established words like 'preamble' and 'degrade' don't need a hyphen as the prefix

is seen as fully fused. But also note the rather specific case mentioned under en rules in Chapter 14, *Dashes*.

Use a hyphen with prefixes or suffixes (such as '-like') when you've repeated letters in a word, but you pronounce them separately, as in **shell-like** or **anti-inflammatory**. Because *shelllike* looks weird.

Also use a hyphen if there's a risk of mispronouncing a word. So you'd hyphenate **co-worker**, for example, to stop people tripping up over 'cow' when they read it. But coordinator doesn't need one.

And we hyphenate words that are spelt the same but can have very different meanings or different pronunciations (called homographs) like **recreation** (fun) and **re-creation** (creating again).

Numbers and fractions. Numbers take hyphens when they are spelled out. Fractions take hyphens when used attributively, but not when used as nouns: *twenty-eight*, *two-thirds completed*, but *an increase of two thirds*.

There are also what are called 'hanging hyphens': *full- and part-time positions*. But fuller wording such as *full-time and part-time positions* is a way of avoiding this situation which can, at times, be ambiguous.

Some examples of the difference a hyphen can make:

- *A man-eating tiger* – a tiger that eats humans.
- *A man eating tiger* – a man who's eating tiger meat.
- *She re-covered the sofa* – she put a new cover on the sofa.
- *She recovered the sofa* – from where?

Words we don't hyphenate (there will be others).
cooperate

coordinate

email

online

rewrite

subtotal

website

The last word

Still confused? Follow these two rules:

1. If you can avoid using a hyphen, do.

2. If you think there's any risk of ambiguity, add one in.

> The hyphen is an endangered species in English. In 2007, the sixth edition of the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* removed the hyphens from 16,000 entries including 'figleaf', 'potbelly' and 'pigeonhole'.

The Oxford University Press style manual points out that 'If you take hyphens seriously, you will surely go mad'. So don't sweat it too much.

See also:
Chapter 25, *Numbers*

39

Tricky words

Words you might not realise you don't know how to spell.

acknowledgement not *acknowledgment*.

any more is always two words.

any time or **anytime**? Use it as one word like this: *He said the meeting can be scheduled anytime*. But if you're using it as an adjective to modify a noun it should be two words: *The Rector won't have any time until Thursday*.

dependent or **dependant**? In British English, a dependant is someone who's dependent on someone else. In American English, it's dependent for both.

effect or **affect**? Most of the time you use **affect as a verb** and **effect as a noun**: 'When you affect something, you have an effect on it.' But not always (obviously). You can use **effect** as a verb when you mean 'to bring about'. So you could say 'George hoped to effect a change through his extra training'. But why would you? It sounds horrible. Talking of things that sound horrible, you can also use **affect** as a noun when you're talking about a mood that someone's in. Like you might say 'Paul displayed a sad affect'. Don't though.

biannual can mean twice a year or once every two years. **Biennial** means once every two years. Best to spell out which one you mean.

email is one word with no hyphen. It is different in Italian: *e-mail*.

every day is two words *except* when it's an adjective ('The Writer helps people use everyday language' but 'John cycles to and from work every day').

focusing not *focussing*, **focused** not *focussed*.

in to or **into**? When 'in' and 'to' end up next to each other, should you leave a space between them or push them together? Well it depends on what you're trying to say. **Into** tells us about movement and usually answers the question 'Where?' Like, 'He accidentally put too much sugar into his coffee'. The 'to' of **in to** is short for 'in order to', so we leave a space. For example, 'We put sugar in [in order] to make it taste better'.

judgement not *judgment* (except in legal terms: a judge makes a *judgment*. But he can show *bad judgement* when making that *judgment*)!

learnt or **learned**? These days they're actually pretty interchangeable. But **learnt** is traditionally British. If you're writing for a non-UK audience, you'll be safer using **learned**. US usage does not include the -t participial ending.

licence is the noun, **license** is the verb.

online (one word, no hyphen).

PowerPoint (one word, capital P in the middle).

practice is the noun, **practise** is the verb. Except in the US, where it's **practice** for both.

stationary means standing still. **Stationery** is pens and pencils and all that ('e for envelope' is an easy way to remember it).

straight away not *straightaway*. It's okay to say *straightaway* in the outside world, but it's not our way.

web page is two words, but **website** is one.

40

Useful keyboard shortcuts

Some you know and some you don't. But you may not be using a US keyboard, so not everything below applies. If you are using an international keyboard, an Italian one perhaps, you will have other ways of solving the issues below.

Before you start: We're sure you know this but don't actually press '+'. Just hold down the 'Ctrl', 'Alt' or the 'Alt Gr' key and use the keypad (the number keys on the right end of the keyboard) to type the number in.

Commands
Ctrl+A – Select all

Ctrl+C – Copy

Ctrl+V – Paste

Ctrl+F – Find

Ctrl+P – Print

Ctrl+F2 – Print preview

Ctrl+Z – Undo

Ctrl+Y – Redo

Shift+F5 – Go back to your last edit point

Formatting (highlight the text you want to format).
Ctrl+B – Bold

Ctrl+I – Italics

Ctrl+U – Underline

Ctrl+L – Left-justify

Ctrl+E – Centre text

Ctrl+J – Justify it

Ctrl+R – Right-justify it

Shift+F3 – Changes the case of text. Useful if you've accidentally HIT THE CAPS LOCK KEY

Ctrl+= – Makes text subscript

Symbols (these don't work on laptops)
Alt+0145 – Left single quote (curly quote ', not a straight one ') (see Quote marks)

Alt+0146 – Right single quote (curly quote ', not a straight one ')

Alt+0147 – Left double quote (curly quotes ", not straight ones ")

Alt+0148 – Right double quote (curly quotes ", not straight ones ")

Alt+0150 – Inserts an en dash (–) (see Dashes)

Alt+0151 – Inserts an em dash (—) (see Dashes)

Alt Gr+t – Trademark sign (™)

Alt Gr+c – Copyright (©)

Alt Gr+r – Registered trademark (®)

Alt Gr+4 – Euro symbol (€)

Alt Gr+o – To get an ó (add in the Shift key if you want it in caps)

General
F4 – **Repeats your last command** – So if you apply a style you can use F4 to apply it to all other paragraphs – highlight the text and apply the one you want, then highlight the next piece of text and hit F4.

F5 – **Refresh** – For web pages (if one breaks, or to make sure you've got the most recent version) and other stuff like in My Computer (if you've deleted/added/moved files and they're not showing, F5 should reveal them).

See also:
Chapter 31, *Quotation marks*
Chapter 14, *Dashes*

41

Web and email addresses

No 'http://' at the start of web addresses. No italics. Ditto with email addresses – no italics needed.

Talking about websites, email or the internet,

- **Website** is all one word.
- The word email doesn't have a hyphen in it. It does in Italian, and the French try to avoid the word and use one of their own_ *courrier électronique*.

If you're writing about the internet it should have a lower case 'i'.

If a web or email address comes at the end of a sentence, it should not have a full stop after it. Even if it's at the end of a paragraph. Of course, if the address is enclosed in angle brackets, closing full stops may be used as normal outside the closing bracket.

42

Weights and measures

A space is required between a numeral and a symbol of measurement (apart from the symbols for degree, minute and second of plane angular measure). So **10 kg**, but **45°** (degree of plane angle). And use figures – don't spell the number out.

Glossary: some printing and publishing terms

accent
a mark on a letter that indicates pitch, stress or vowel quality.

afterword
a short concluding section in a book, typically written by someone other than the author.

appendix
a section of subsidiary matter at the end of a book or document. Note that **annex** is used by some, but in Australia this is generally limited to a document (annex to a treaty, for example).

Arabic numeral
any one of the numbers 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9; cf. **Roman numeral**.

artwork
illustrations, figures, photographs or other non-textual material.

ASCII
American Standard Code for Information Exchange, used as a standard format in the transfer of text (alphanumeric and some symbols) between computers.

AsciiDoc
a human-readable document format, semantically equivalent to DocBook XML, but using plain-text mark-up conventions.

back matter
another term for **end matter**.

bibliography
a list of books or other texts that are referred to in a work. It may also be called **references** if it only contains works mentioned in the main body of text.

bitmap

graphics file made up of **pixels**.

bleed

(of an illustration or design) be printed so that it runs off the page.

block quote

a quotation that is broken off from the text to begin on a new line. Often set in smaller type.

bold

(also **boldface**) a style of type with **thick strokes**.

caption

a title or brief explanation accompanying an illustration.

caret

a mark ^, or its handwritten version found in proofreading to propose insertion into the text.

colophon

a publisher's emblem, usually appearing on the title page of a book.

copy

matter to be published, in particular the text before it is copy-edited.

copy-edit

(also **copyedit**)to correct, style and mark up copy to make it ready for printing.

copyright

the exclusive legal right to print, publish, perform, film or record literary, artistic or musical material.

copyleft

a licensing arrangement whereby a copyright holder grants, at no cost, the recipient of a copy of their work the right to use, modify and redistribute the work under the condition that the ownership of the original work is acknowledged and that all derivative works are distributed under the same terms.

copyright page

    another term for **title page verso**

corrigenda

    (singular **corrigendum**) a list of errors in a printed book that is affixed to or printed in the book.

credits

    acknowledgements expressing gratitude for permission to use images.

digraph

    1 a combination of two letters representing one sound, as in *ph*. 2 another term for **ligature**.

drop cap

    (drop capital) a large capital letter at the beginning of a section of text.

dustjacket

    another term for **jacket**.

edition

    a version of a book at its first publication and every subsequent publication for which minor changes are made.

em

    a unit for measuring the width of the printed matter, originally reckoned as the width of a capital roman M in the typeface used, but in digital fonts, equal to the current typesize.

em rule

    (also **em dash**) a long dash — .

en

    a unit of horizontal space equal to half an **em**.

en rule

    (also **en dash**) a short dash – used in particular between ranges of figures.

end matter

    (also **back matter**) material that supplements the text and is placed after it.

endnote

a note printed at the end of a book or section of a book.

epigraph

a quotation placed at the beginning of a volume, part or chapter.

epilogue

an author's short concluding comment on the text.

EPUB

open-source standard and file format for ebooks.

errata slip

(singular **erratum slip**) a list of errors and their corrections inserted loose in a book. Distinguish from **corrigenda** which is fixed in the book.

face

short for **typeface**.

figure

an illustration that is integrated into the text.

flush

aligned with the left- or right-hand edge of the text.

flyleaf

a blank page at the beginning or end of a book.

folio

1 a sheet of typescript. 2 the page number in a printed book.

font

a set of type of one particular face and size.

footer

text that is repeated at the bottom of the page, such as the page number.

footnote

a note printed at the bottom of the page within the text area and above the **footer**.

foreword

a recommendation of the work written by someone other than the author, printed before the main text.

frontispiece

an illustration that faces the title page.

front matter

another term for **preliminary matter**.

full out

aligned (or flush) with the left- or right-hand edge of the text.

gutter

the blank space between facing pages of a book or between adjacent columns of type.

half-title

the first page of the preliminary matter of a book, bearing only the work's title.

hard hyphen

a nonbreaking hyphen that is keyed and appears whether the word containing it is split across the end of a line or not; cf. **soft hyphen**.

header

text that is repeated at the top of the page, such as a chapter title or main heading.

heading

a title at the head of a page, a section of a book, or a table.

headword

a word that begins a separate entry in a reference work such as a dictionary.

HTML

Hypertext Markup Language, a standardised coding system for tagging text files to achieve formatting, graphic and hyperlink effects on websites.

imposition

the layout on the quad sheet of the pages of a publication so that when the sheet is printed and folded they will fall in the correct order.

imprint

the name and other details of a book's publisher.

ISBN

International Standard Book Number.

ISSN

International Standard Serial Number.

italic

a sloping style of *type*.

jacket

(also **dust jacket**) a removable paper cover used to protect a book.

JPEG

a **bitmap** file format that compresses the image data to produce a smaller file.

justified

(of text) adjusted so as to fill the width of the text area and align at the left and right margins.

kern

a part of a printed character that overlaps its neighbours.

kerning

adjustment of the spacing between characters in a piece of text.

label

explanatory description of a feature in an illustration.

landscape

a format of printed matter which is wider than it is high; cf. **portrait**.

LaTeX

not to be confused with latex! A high-quality typesetting system; it includes features designed for the production of technical and scientific documentation. LaTeX is the de facto standard for the communication and publication of scientific documents. LaTeX is available as free software.

leader line

a labelled line added to an illustration to point out a salient feature.

leaders

    a series of dots or dashes across the page to guide the eye.

leading

    (pronounced *leding* with a short *e*) the amount of blank space between lines of print.

leaf

    a single sheet of paper, forming two pages in a book.

legend

    another term for **caption**.

ligature

    a character consisting of two or more joined letters, such as æ.

linefeed

    the distance between one line of type to the bottom of the next.

lower case

    small letters as opposed to capital letters (**upper case**).

margin

    the white space around the text area on a page.

markup

    1 the process or result of correcting a text in preparation for printing. 2 the tags or codes (or, in the case of lightweight markup languages, keyboard symbols like underscore, asterisk and so on) used in markup languages.

markup language

    a system for coding text so that content can be described for output in print or digital media.

octavo

    (abbrev. **8vo**) a size of book page that results from folding each printed sheet into eight leaves (sixteen pages).

offprint

    a printed copy of an individual article or essay that originally appeared as part of a larger publication.

opening

a double-page spread (see **spread**).

orphan

the first line of a paragraph set as the last line of a page or column, considered undesirable.

Oxford comma

another term for **serial comma**.

page proof

pages composed in DTP (Desktop Publishing) software with all the elements, e.g. text, running heads and images laid out in the final form.

parentheses

(also **parens**) round brackets ().

PDF

Portable Document Format, a file format for capturing and sending electronic documents in exactly the intended format. A PDF always has a source file which can be adjusted, rather than the PDF itself.

pica

a unit of type size and line length equal to 12 points (about 4.2 mm).

pixel

picture element; single physical point in a bitmap image.

point

a unit of measurement for type sizes and spacing. It was traditionally 0.351 mm in the US and the UK but is now standardised as 0.356 mm.

portrait

a format of printed matter which is higher than it is wide; cf. **landscape**.

preliminary matter

(also **prelims**) the pages preceding the main text of a book, including the title page, title page verso, contents page and preface.

preface

a section in the preliminary matter where the author sets out the purpose, scope and content of the book.

proof

a trial impression of typeset text which is checked for errors before final printing.

proofread

read proofs, mark any errors and make a final check of the material.

quad sheet

the large sheet of paper that is printed with text and the folded and cut to produce separate leaves.

quarto

(abbrev. **4to**) a size of book page resulting from folding each printed sheet into four leaves (eight pages).

ragged right

(of text) justified only at the left margin, with the result that the width of lines is variable.

ream

500 (formerly 480) sheets of paper.

recto

the right-hand page of a spread, having an odd page number; cf. **verso**.

reprint

a republication of a book for which no corrections or only minor corrections are made.

roman

an upright style of type used for text that requires no special emphasis or distinction.

Roman numeral

any of the letters representing the numbers in the Roman numerical system (I or i = 1: V or v = 5; X or x = 10, etc); cf. **Arabic numeral**.

round brackets

parentheses ().

running head

(or foot) a book title, chapter title or other heading which appears at the top (or bottom) of every page or spread.

sans serif

a type of style without **serifs**.

serial comma

(also Oxford or Harvard comma) a comma used after the penultimate item in a list of three or more items, before 'and' or 'or'.

serif

a slight projection finishing off a stroke of a letter.

small caps

(capitals) capital letters which are of the same height as a lower-case x in the same typeface.

soft hyphen

a hyphen inserted automatically into a word when it is divided at the end of a line of text.

spread

(also **double-page spread**) a pair of pages (left-hand and right-hand) exposed when a book is opened at random; cf. **opening**.

style sheet

1 house style guidance for authors and editors on the client's preferred forms of text, such as variations in spelling, hyphenation and capitalisation, and treatment of reference lists, quotations and numbers. 2 a list of the word-processor or DTP styles used in a particular project.

table

an arrangement of data in columns and rows.

tag

a set of plain text characters used in **markup languages** to describe content.

text area
    the part of the page in which the text and images of the book are accommodated; the area inside the margins.

title page
    a page at the beginning of a book containing the complete title and subtitle of the work, the name of the author or editor, and the publisher's name.

title page verso
    the verso of the title page, on which is printed the statement and clauses that establish the copyright of the material, the identity of the work and its publication history.

type
    characters or letters that are printed or shown on a screen.

typeface
    a particular design of type.

typescript
    the text of a publication in paper form.

typeset
    arrange or generate the type or data for a piece of text to be published.

typography
    1 the style and appearance of printed text. 2 the process of setting and arranging text in type for printing.

Unicode
    an international encoding system by which each letter, digit and symbol is assigned a unique numerical value that applies across different platforms and programs.

upper case
    capital letters as opposed to small letters (**lower case**).

vector image
    a graphics file with mathematical descriptions of the objects within, e.g. a line or the boundary of a shape.

verso

the left-hand page of a spread, having an even page number; cf. **recto**.

widow

a last word or short last line of a paragraph falling at the top of a page or column, considered undesirable.

x-height

the height of a lower-case x, considered characteristic of a given typeface or script.

XML

Extensible Markup Language, a system that allows users to define their own customised markup languages, especially in order to dispolay documents on websites.

Appendix A. Clear English

Tips for translators and writers who know their work will need to be translated

Here are some tips to help translators avoid copying structure and wording from other languages that would be awkward in English. This will happen where any two languages are involved, and is called 'interference'. Since Salesians are often translating between Italian and English, it is helpful to understand the chief points of interference that may be involved. There is a separate appendix on Appendix C, *TRANSLATING ITALIAN* which deals with many of these interferences..

These more general tips should be useful to non-native speakers of English too, but may also serve as handy reminders for native speakers.

1. Use simple words where appropriate: English is a simple, concise, precise language. We prefer *begin* or *start* to *initiate* for example.

2. Leave out unnecessary words: *a person designated as responsible team leader* can be rephrased more simply as *a designated team leader*. Apply Occam's Razor to your English! (Entities should not be multiplied without necessity.)

3. Prefer a verb to an abstract noun: rather than *proceed to the counting of* the votes, just *count the votes*.

4. Prefer a gerund to an abstract noun: rather than saying *through the acquisition of* new skills, talk about *acquiring* new skills.

5. Prefer participles to relative clauses: the team *which is* planning the project is even clearer when written as *the team planning the project*. And if you can eliminate the participle altogether, better still: *the team's project*.

6. Use the passive voice sparingly: A meeting *was held* in Rome between the two provincials, will read just as well if we say *The two provincials met in Rome*.

7. Where possible replace negatives with positives: It is *not uncommon* for requests to be rejected, could easily read *it is common for requests to be rejected*.

8. Use short forms and pronouns to avoid repeating full names: *The Formation Sector* is planning a new document. In this way *the Formation Sector*

hopes to enourage ongoing formation. This might be just as clear in context if written as *Formation is planning a new document. In this way the Sector hopes to encourage ongoing formation*.

9. Express conditions, including hidden ones, with 'if' …: *In the event of* something going wrong, could read *If something goes wrong*.

10. Keep the subject close to the beginning of the sentence: this is particularly important when translating fromn Italian, which will often have adverbial clauses and other factors coming before the subject.

11. If a sentence is too long pull out some of the information and make different sentences with it. This too is important when translating from Italian, which can have very long sentences.

12. English may use different number, articles, gender or words from other languages: be particularly aware of uncountable nouns or nouns English prefers to keep in the singular. Compare Italian *riflessioni e discussioni sull'argomento* with the English *reflection and discussion on the matter*.

13. Use 'the' rather than 'this' to refer back to a document: Regulation 23 … *this* Regulation … could be written as Regulation 23 … *the* Regulation …

14. Consider alternatives to 'of', especially if translating from Italian. An English with too many 'of's looks foreign and cumbersome.

15: And finally, be very, very aware of false friends. Read on …

Appendix B. FALSE FRIENDS

Sometimes an Italian word can be correctly translated by looking for similarities with English words, but in many cases the word has a different meaning. False friends are words which look or sound similar to an English word but differ significantly in meaning. Some false friends have more than one translation between Italian and English, and so it is very important to recognise the different possible meanings of some English words compared to their Italian 'friend'. The use of loanwords, too, often results in the use of a word in a restricted context, which may then develop new meanings not found in the original language, thus also creating a false friend.

A

Italian	False Friend	Comment
accidente	accident	Mostly means a stroke, a fit, damn! Could be 'accident' but that would normally be *incidente*
accomodare	accommodate	Means to fix, arrange. 'To accommodate' would normally be *alloggiare*
ad hoc	ad hoc	Means specially made. 'Ad hoc' as we use it in English would be *improvvisato*
affluente	affluent	Means a tributary. 'Affluent', as we use it inEnglish would be *ricco*
affrontare	affront	Means to face someone. 'Affront' (cause affront) as we use it in English would be *oltraggiare, offendere*

Italian	False Friend	Comment
agenda	agenda	Means a diary. 'Agenda' as we use it in English would be *l'ordine del giorno*
anticipare	anticipate	Means to bring forward. 'Anticipate' would be *prevedere, aspettarsi*
argomento	argument	Means topic. 'Argument' in Italian would be *discussione, litigo*
arrangiare	arrange	Means to fix, manage. 'Arrange' as we use it in English would be *sistemare, disporre*
attendere	attend	Means to wait for. 'Attend' as we use it in English would be *frequentare*
attico	attic	Means a penthouse or top-floor flat. 'Attic' as we use it in would be *soffitta*
attuale	actual	Means current (can mean actual). But 'actual', as we most often use it in English would be *effettivo, reale*
avvertimento	advertisement	Means a warning, notice, caution. `Advertisement' would be *annuncio, inserzione*

B

Italian	False Friend	Comment
baldo	bald	Means courageous. 'Bald' is *calvo*
bendare	bend	Means to bandage. 'To bend' is *curvare, inchinare, piegare*
box	box	Afraid not! It is a loan word that has changed meaning in Italian and means a garage or parking space. Box is *scatola*
bravo	brave	Means well done! Clever, good. 'Brave' is *coraggioso*
brina	brine	Sorry, but it refers to hoarfrost. 'Brine' would be *acqua salata*

C

Italian	False Friend	Comment
candido	candid	Means pure, honest. 'Candid' is *schietto*
cantina	canteen	Means cellar, basement. 'Canteen' is *mensa*
carta	card	Could mean card but more often, in a Salesian context, it will mean charter, document. 'Card' could be *tessera, biglietto*
cautione	caution	Means bail. 'Caution' is *cautela*

Italian	False Friend	Comment
cava	cava	Means pit, quarry. 'Cave' would be *caverna*
caldo	cold	Means the opposite – warm. 'Cold' is *freddo*
collegio	college	Means boarding school. 'College' (US) would be *istituto universitario*
comodità	commodity	Means comfort, convenience. 'Comodity' is *prodotto, merce, materia prima*
comprensivo	comprehensive	Means understanding, inclusive, sympathetic. 'Comprehensive' is *esauriente*
conduttore	conductor	Means driver (tram, bus). 'Conductor' is *bigliettaio (tram), direttore d'orchestra (music)*
coerenza	coherence	Means consistent (viewpoint). 'Consistent' as for texture would be *consistenza*
collaboratore	collaborator	Could mean this but also partner, co-worker. The negative sense of the word in English would be *informatore, collaborazionista*
colloquio	colloquium	Could 'colloquium' is a *seminario accademico*

Italian	False Friend	Comment
confetti	confetti	Means wedding sweets, sugared almonds. 'Confetti' as we use it in English is *coriandoli*
confrontare	confront	Means to compare. 'Confront' as we use it in English is *far fronte a*
consistente	consistent	Means substantial, solid. 'Consistent' would be *coerente, costante* 'Convenient' as we use it in English is *adatto, comodo, opportuno*

D

Italian	False Friend	Comment
delusione	delusion	Means disappointment. 'Delusion' is *illusione*
diffidenza	diffidence	Means distrust. 'Diffidence' is *sfiducia*
disgrazia	disgrace	Means bad luck, misfortune. 'Disgrace' is *vergogna, disonore*
docile	docile	Could be docile but more likely well-behaved, obedient. 'Docile' is also *arrendevole, mansueto*
domandare	demand	Means to ask. 'To demand' is *pretendere, esigere, insistere*

E

Italian	False Friend	Comment
editore	editor	Means publisher. 'Editor' is *direttore, curatore (books)*
educazione	education	Very ofen means upbringing, good manners. 'Education' is *cultura, formazione, istruzione* and also *educazione*
effettivo	effective	Means real. 'Effective' is *efficace*
emotivo	emotive	Means emotional. 'Emotive' is *che desta impressione*
energetico	energetic	Means energy. 'Energetic' is *energico, attivo*
esibizione	exhibition	Means performance. 'Exhibition' is *mostra*
eventualmente	eventually	Means if necessary, possibly. 'Eventually' is *alla fine, finalmente*

F

Italian	False Friend	Comment
fastidioso	fastidious	Means annoying. 'Fastidious' is *esigente, scrupoloso*
fatale	fatal	Means inevitable though can also be fatal. 'Fatal' is *mortale, fatidico*

Italian	False Friend	Comment
fattoria	factory	Means farm. 'Factory' is *fabbrica*
formazione	formation	Could be, but could also be education.
frequentare	frequent	Mostly means to attend (e.g. school). 'Frequent' can also be *frequentare*

G

Italian	False Friend	Comment
geniale	genial	Means brilliant, gifted. 'Genial' is *simpatico, amichevole*
globale	global	Can mean global but more often overall. 'Global' could be *mondiale*
gregario	gregarious	Means backup or support. 'Gregarious' is *socievole*

I

Italian	False Friend	Comment
impressionante	impressive	Can mean impressive but especially shocking. 'Impressive' is *notevole*
inabitato	inhabited	Actually mean uninhabited! 'Inhabited' is *abitato*
incaricato	incharge	Incharge doesn't exist. 'Individual in charge'

Italian	False Friend	Comment
		does, or 'appointee' or similar. An *incaricato* is also an *addetto*
incidente	incident	Means an accident. An 'incident' is an *evento*
ingiuria	injury	Means insult. 'Injury' is *ferita, danno*
interrogazione	interrogation	Means an oral exam (school). 'Interrogation' is *interrogatorio*
irrilevante	irrelevant	Means insignificant (can mean irrelevant). 'Irrelevant' is normally *non pertinente*

L

Italian	False Friend	Comment
libreria	library	Means bookshop. 'Library' is *biblioteca*
liminalità	liminality	Means a frontier situation. The rather special meaning of liminality in anthropology is *disorientamento*
linguaggio	language	Can be language but also style, expression. 'Language' can be *lingua*
lurido	lurid	Means filthy. 'Lurid' is *spargiante, pacchiano*

M

Italian	False Friend	Comment
maggazzino	magazine	Means warehouse. 'Magazine' is *periodico, rotocalco*
mansione	mansion	Means duty, task. 'Mansion' is *villa, blocco di apartamenti*
marmellata	marmalade	Means jam (any kind of jam). 'Marmalade' is *marmellata di agrumi*
marrone	maroon	Means brown. 'Maroon' is *rosso fegato* or *rosso granata*
miseria	misery	Means poverty. 'Misery' is *sofferenza*
monsignore	Monsignor	Means bishop, archbishop…. 'Monsignor' (with its meaning of a special title for a priest) is also *monsignore*
morbido	morbid	Means soft. 'Morbid' is *morboso*
moroso	morose	Means in arrears (rent!). 'Morose' is *scontroso*

N

Italian	False Friend	Comment
nominare	nominate	Means to name. 'Nominate' is *proporre per una candidatura*
novella	novel	Means a short story. 'Novel' is *romanzo*

O

Italian	False Friend	Comment
occasione	occasion	Means this but also opportunity, bargain. 'Occasion' is not always *occasione*. It could be *evento, momento*
occorre	occur	Means something is needed. 'Occur' is *accadere, venire in mente*
orfano	orphan	Means orphan but in Italian, an orphan may have lost only one parent, e.g. *orfano di padre*
organico	organic	Means systematic, holistic, complete. 'Organic' is more likely to be *biologico, ecologico, naturale*
organismo	organism	Can be organism but think more in terms of an organisation.

P

Italian	False Friend	Comment
parenti	parents	Means relatives. 'Parents' are *genitori*
pastorale	pastoral	Yes, but in Salesian context it refers to ministry or pastoral ministry.

Italian	False Friend	Comment
patente	patent	Means licence. A 'patent' is a *brevetto*
paternità	paternity	Means fatherhood, authorship. To be 'fatherly' (fatherliness) is *(essere) paterno*
pavimento	pavement	Means floor. 'Pavement' (footpath) is *marciapiede*
petrolio	petrol	Means oil. 'Petrol' is *benzina*
preoccupato	preoccupied	Means worried. 'Preoccupied' is *assorto*
presbiterio	presbytery	Means the sanctuary in the church. 'Presbytery' is *casa parrochiale* or *canonica*
pretendere	pretend	Means to claim (Pretender to the throne!). 'To pretend' is *far finta*
prevaricare	prevaricate	Means to abuse (use of power). 'Prevaricate' is *tergiversare*
procura	procure	Salesian usage suggests it might be a Mission office. But the noun 'procure' does not exist in and the verb 'to procure' has an insalubrious meaning! To be avoided. Call it a PDO or Mission Office.

Italian	False Friend	Comment
protocollo	protocol	Means register, register number, registry office. 'Protocol', instead, is *etichetta*, though it would be protocol if it refers to a draft document or treaty
puntura	puncture	Means sting (wasp, i.e. *puntura di vespa*). A 'puncture' is *foratura di pneumatico*

Q

Italian	False Friend	Comment
questionare	question	Means to argue or quarrel. 'To question' is *interrogare*
qui pro quo	quid pro quo	One letter makes the difference! A 'qui pro quo' is a mistake, a misunderstanding. 'Quid pro quo' is *quid pro quo* and means 'tit for tat', 'You scratch my back I scratch yours!'

R

Italian	False Friend	Comment
rapa	rape	Means turnip. 'Rape' is *stupro*
rata	rate	Means installment. 'Rate' (depending on

Italian	False Friend	Comment
		context) is *tasso, livello, velocità*
realizzare	realise	Means to carry out or fulfil or achieve. 'Realise' is *accorgersi, capire*
retribuzione	retribution	Means remuneration, salary. `Retribution' is *punizione, ricompensa*
ricordo	record	Means a memory, a reminder. 'Record' is *disco*, or *appunto*
ricoverare	recover	Means to admit (to hospital). 'Recover' is *guarire (da), recuperare*
rilevante	relevant	Means important, remarkable. 'Relevant' is *pertinente*
ritenere	retain	Means to think, consider. 'Retain' is *conservare, trattenere*
rude	rude	Means rough and ready. 'Rude' is *maleducato, offensivo*

S

Italian	False Friend	Comment
salario	salary	Means wages. 'Salary' is *stipendio*
sano	sane	Means healthy. 'Sane' is *equilibrato*
scarsamente	scarcely	Means rarely. 'Scarcely' is *a stento, appena*

Italian	False Friend	Comment
scolaro	scholar	Means pupil. A 'scholar' is a *studioso*
sconvenienza	inconvenient	Means a failure of good manners, unseemly. 'Inconvenient' is *disturbo, scomodità*
scuole pubbliche	public schools	It means state schools. `'ublic schools' can have other meanings in different parts of the English-speaking world. They could be private schools charging high fees (UK).
sinergia	synergy	Might be synergy, but might also be simply 'teamwork'.
simpatico	sympathetic	Means nice, pleasant character. 'Sympathetic' is more likely to be *comprensivo*
sopportare	support	Means to put up with. 'Support' is *sostenere*
suggestivo	suggestive	Means full of atmosphere, evocative. 'Suggestive' is *allusivo*

T

Italian	False Friend	Comment
tenente	tenant	Means lieutenant. 'Tenant' is *inquilino*
territorio	territory	Might well be territory, but in a Salesian context

Italian	False Friend	Comment
		it can often be glossed simply as 'local area'.
tremendo	tremendous	Means awful, terrible. 'Tremendous' is *fantastico*
triviale	trivial	Means vulgar, indecent. 'Trivial' is *banale*

U

Italian	False Friend	Comment
udienza	audience	Can mean audience but usally hearing. 'Audience' is *pubblico*
urna	urn	Can mean urn but would normally be translated as casket when used, for example of Don Bosco's remains or relics. An *urna* is also a ballot box in Italian. An urn could also be a *vaso*

V

Italian	False Friend	Comment
vicario	vicar	Yes, but also a vice-rector.
vile	vile	Means cowardly. 'Vile' is *brutto, orribile*

Appendix C. TRANSLATING ITALIAN

Table of Contents

C.1. In general

Many things could be said about the key differences between Italian and English, and the *In particular* section below will mention a number of these, in the hope that it alerts the translator to some of the issues that result in a translation sounding unnecessarily 'foreign'. A degree of foreignness may well be a good thing, but that will occur naturally.

What needs to be avoided are those elements of difference that turn the reader off, which is the last thing any translator intends to do! What the translator is after is what we might call 'a good match' between the two languages and cultures.

The most overlooked factor in Italian to English translation is *style*.

Consider the following key factors in style differences between the two languages:

REGISTER

Register, as understood in linguistics, is the way a speaker uses language differently in different circumstances. We think immediately of formal versus informal, for example. Or 'fancy' language versus 'common' language.

One of the first things that strikes the reader (or listener) of Italian is that it uses what we would call 'fancy' words in English, where we would choose more 'common' words. This is all to do with the history of the two languages – Italian derives largely from Latin.

English has some Latin, and a considerable amount of Germanic influence (Anglo-Saxon) as well, but history intervenes in another way. The clergy and the educated spoke Latin (or French, deriving from Latin) in places where the English language

was developing into what it is today, whereas the common people spoke the more Saxon-oriented English.

Anglo-Saxon and Latinate words have a very different sound and feel to them: Anglo-Saxon words are concrete, shorter, more blunt and guttural, 'of the body', feeling words. Latin words are abstract, polysyllabic, of more elevated diction, 'of the mind', thinking words.

Think of 'chew' versus 'masticate', 'ask' versus 'inquire', 'friendly' versus 'amicable', 'go' versus 'depart'. Italian will happily talk about a 'protagonist' or 'protagonism', but you will not hear that word in any English conversation in the bus on the way home! So when translating, bear this very important stylistic difference in mind. If not, the English translation will sound snooty, puffed up and beyond the comprehension of the ordinary reader. Don Bosco was well aware of this problem, even in dealing with the perhaps less marked difference between Piedmontese and Tuscan (Italian as we now know it) and would get his mother to check things out for him!

NAMES AND PLACES

> Italian, like many Romance languages (but not only – it can be the case in Asian languages too) does not like to stress an individual's (the 'protagonist's!) or a place's name too much. Very often, rather than saying 'I' did something, the Italian will say 'we'. Or an indirect passive verb form will be used rather than the direct active voice, to take the stress off a direct action (and verb endings in Italian also mean that the subject needs less reference – it will be clear from the verb ending).

Another side of this phenomenon is that if a paragraph mentions 'Rome', for example, English has no difficulty mentioning Rome for the five times that word might appear in the paragraph. Italian will not do that. Initially it will be Rome, the next time the 'Eternal City', a third time it will be 'the capital of Italy', a fourth time maybe 'the city on the Tiber', and a fifth time perhaps a little historical knowledge will be required of the reader – 'heart of the ancient Republic and Empire'.

But the translator does not need to subject the reader to his or her version of 'The Chase' or any of the other well-known TV quiz shows!

The Rector Major is who he is, and does not need to be further described as 'of the Salesians', or coming from Spain, or Argentina, or even 'the tenth Successor

of St John Bosco', unless those pieces of information are especially significant for the piece in hand.

MORE VERSUS LESS

Italian prefers more, English less. It is as simple as that!

The translator needs to think about reducing sentence or paragraph size without losing what is essential.

Italian also has a fascination with the semicolon, where English will use a full stop. The semicolon keeps ideas linked, and the free-flowing stylistic approach of Italian has a preference for this linking.

It appears in another form as well: link words like *infatti, inoltre,* or a sentence that begins with *E, Ma*. Many of these link features can be simply ignored in English.

OVERALL STRUCTURE

This is one area, possibly the most challenging of all in translation, that probably cannot be removed, but it does need to be kept under control. Italian thinking structure as it applies to the essay is different to the way we were all brought up in English (introduction, a couple of paragraphs of development, a conclusion). The Italian 'essay' will have ideas flitting off in different directions, all needing to be pulled together somehow at the end. More so, perhaps, in spoken Italian, the English listener shudders when he hears *In conclusione…*, which is likely to be an essay in itself.

The number of ideas and references, in Italian writing, to what might sound to us like esoteric and unconnected ideas, is prized over how these might actually relate to one another. One translator has called this the 'Hegel and the price of rice in China' phenomenon. It calls for some very astute reflection by the translator to determine whether or not it all needs to be included.

C.2. In particular

Maybe the best way to highlight some of the particular issues that come into play with style, is to give an example from a master of written English who deliberately attempted to show the stylistic difference between Italian and English. The example is taken from *Farewell to Arms*, Ernest Hemingway's 1929 novel that propelled him onto the literary stage:

"How are you, baby? How do you feel? I bring you this — " It was a bottle of cognac. The orderly brought a chair and he sat down, "and good news. You will be decorated. They want to get you the medaglia d'argento but perhaps they can get only the bronze."

"What for?"

"Because you are gravely wounded. They say if you can prove you did any heroic act you can get the silver. Otherwise it will be the bronze. Tell me exactly what happened. Did you do any heroic act?"

"No," I said. "I was blown up while we were eating cheese."

"Be serious. You must have done something heroic before or after. Remember carefully."

"I did not."

"Didn't you carry anybody on your back? Gordini says you carried several people on your back but the medical major at the first post declares it is impossible. He has to sign the proposition for the citation."

"I didn't carry anybody. I couldn't move."

"That doesn't matter," said Rinaldi.

He took off his gloves.

"I think we can get you the silver. Didn't you refuse to be medically aided before the others?"

"Not very firmly."

"That doesn't matter. Look how you are wounded. Look at your valorous conduct in asking to go always to the first line. Besides, the operation was successful."

"Did they cross the river all right?"

"Enormously. They take nearly a thousand prisoners. It's in the bulletin. Didn't you see it?"

"No."

"I'll bring it to you. It is a successful coup de main."

Pioneering a technique that he would use even more masterfully in his Spanish Civil War novel, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Ernest Hemingway offers us a novel in *Farewell to Arms* that plays on the linguistic gap between Italian and English, which he uses in this case to mirror the confusion of war. He has an American fighting for the Italians in the First World War, so he needs to present him speaking English for readers, and he also needs Italians speaking in a way that shows they spoke very good Italian, but in English!

The passage above is indicative of the quality of dialogue whereby he achieves this. His character, Frederic Henry, also had to speak but was allowed to make mistakes, and his accent gave him away anyway. At one point his own officers thought he might have been German and nearly executed him. A doctor treating him thought he was French. A barber thought he might be an Austrian officer. A southern Italian sergeant thought he might be a northerner, and a bartender thought he was a South American!

This is excellent stuff for a translator to read! But being congratulated for achieving a level of prose worthy of Hemingway (in this instance) would be a left-handed compliment, and besides, there is enough evidence that he wasn't that great a linguist anyway!

Word choice

It starts with 'baby' — sounds almost American, as it may have been then, or 'Globish' today, but as addressed to a young soldier? Not really. 'Gravely' wounded is not inaccurate if that were really the case, but there is a slight difference between 'grave' (death is imminent) and 'serious' for the native English speaker; the brief context available to us in the passage tells us they are swilling cognac and the wounded man is flippant — his injuries may not even be serious let alone grave!

Is 'Remember carefully' correct? Would not 'recall' sound just a bit more native?

Does an army cross a river 'enormously'?

A 'proposition' for a citation sounds a mite pompous to us, but not to an Italian.

There are countless words in Italian which seem to invite literal equivalents in English. *Persone* is usually better translated as 'people' rather than 'persons'. *Realtà* might often be just 'thing/s'. *Situazione* might be 'circumstance', and so on. These are words to be found in the thick of ordinary conversation and text, but there is a stratosphere of terms in erudite and scholarly Italian which can lead the translator to grasp the nearest calque or loan word and hope for the best – with inevitable disappointment. Does *strenua lotta* mean a strenuous fight? No, it means putting up a brave one. Does *stringente* mean stringent? Well, no, it actually means 'cogent' 'persuasive'. Does *suggestivamente* mean 'suggestively'? That can cause trouble! It implies 'meaningfully' rather than 'bawdily'. Is *dolce* `sweet'? It can be, but *dolce, dolcemente, dolcezza* in our Salesian context often refers to 'gentleness'. Is *inutile* 'useless'? Yes, often, but in the phrase *è inutile ripetere* it probably means 'pointless' or 'redundant' or 'no real point in….'

Tense

'I bring you this.' Perfect Italian — present tense to suggest a present action, except that in English the speaker would have said 'I have brought you this.' 'They take nearly a thousand prisoners' is historic present, but English, which does employ this feature, would not use it in this instance.

Italian has more complicated uses of past tense with conditional tenses and moods than does English. *Lui promise che ci avrebbe messo una buona parola* seems to invite the translation 'He promised he would have put in a good word', whereas English uses the present conditional: 'He promised he would put in a good word.'

Grammar

When we read 'asking to go always to the first line' there is a question of word order: adverbial position. Similarly, earlier in the passage, 'get only' which is good Italian, should be 'only get' to be good English. It goes a little further than this in the case just quoted. What appears to be grammatically correct other than the word order is in fact not saying what it should be saying in the light of the previous sentence. The object (you) has been omitted, partly because the word order adopted would now make it awkward to include unless 'you' is switched for 'they'.

Stock phrases

We are not yet finished with 'asking to go always to the first line.' Here is a stock Italian phrase, *prima linea*, translated literally as 'first line'. English might just say 'the Front'. We suspect that 'first post' is something similar, and in a war context it is too reminiscent in English anyway of the 'Last Post' which is an entirely different matter!

Hemingway uses this particular technique in all kinds of ways. He has someone say, elsewhere in the novel, 'Just as you like', which is fine in English until you realise it is *come vuoi* which would be better translated as 'You can think what you like!' Or he has a character reply 'Nothing' in a situation where an Italian would say *di niente*, meaning 'you're welcome' or 'don't mention it'.

The final phrase in the passage is French, and quite ambiguous: it could mean a swift attack (it does mean that in the context) but it can also mean a helping hand! And why include it in this dialogue? It suits Hemingway's purpose excellently to create a little more confusion.

In the light of this, it would be our experience that any number of stock phrases in Italian can play similar havoc with our translations.

We can have almost instinctual assumptions about words and phrases and their meaning and use. In other words, in our experience a word or a phrase is always used in a certain way and therefore when we see it in the source text we don't really think about it or consider its context, our brain supplies the usage we have always seen and moves on. When this happens the chances that we have missed the context and thus the meaning are pretty good. Hemingway is indirectly showing us the danger of straight borrowing.

It can be a question of regularly used phrases in expository texts like, for example: *In questo orizzonte di senso* — it would be unwise to translate this literally as 'in this horizon of meaning'; that sounds either ridiculous or pompous or both. Either *orizzonte* or *prospettiva* will turn up in our texts on a very regular basis in a phrase similar to the one above, and if translated literally they create a stilted effect on the translation. Consider the following stock uses of such items as:

Ampliamento di prospettiva: could also be broadening one's outlook on things

in prospettiva: has a temporal sense, future — in the future, in view of…

in prospettiva di: with … in mind

In una prospettiva: with an aim to

ampliare l'orizzonte della ricerca: as used here, *orizzonte* can be scope, boundaries, angle (almost anything except `horizon'!)

There are many Italian phrases which appear to have simple, literal equivalents but where adopting that belief creates problems. *In considerazione di* seems to invite 'in consideration of' (which it could be) but very often in context it means `on account of this'.

In effetti: try 'actually' rather than 'in effect', which it almost certainly isn't, or in some contexts it may mean 'That's right!' The discourse feel of the phrase is lost if we go for 'in effect'.

Infatti often has a different discourse function in Italian than its too obvious translation has in English. In many instances it would be better translated as 'indeed'. The English 'in fact' looks backward to what has been said while the Italian *infatti* looks forward to what is about to be said. Here is a very good example of this from a recent document:

Mi sembra infatti importante non solo informarvi di quanto è stato fatto, ma anche presentarvi le prospettive di futuro che riusciamo a intravvedere. 'Indeed I think it is important not only to let you know what has been done but also offer you what we can glimpse of the future.'

Or it could be forever translating Italian connectives! That can become tedious and the translation sounds too heavy. It is much more common for texts in Italian to be explicitly structured by the use of connectives like *e, dunque, magari, pure, appunto, però, tuttavia, mentre, infatti* or they may be phrasal in nature, like *in tal senso, in modo tale che, per tali motivi…* In a similar vein, Italian will often introduce qualifying phrases like *più o meno, quà e là* which could well be translated literally — or be omitted. An English text where all these phrases have been translated, and literally too, is off-white compared to white and at best stilted in style.

Appendix D. Editing process

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D.1. Introductory comment

Before looking at what publishers would regard as the 'normal' publishing processes, it might be important to realise that the world is changing and that digital transformation is already here and deeply affecting the publishing industry. But for all kinds of reasons, book publishers are still "reacting" to change rather than driving it or working alongside it and with it.

In some parts of the world it would seem that the only digital/software approaches available to the population in general involve the well-known 'Windows' (aka Microsoft) and the rather more high-end 'Apple' (aka Macintosh). This largely ignores the Linux world – and the mentality that goes with it. Yet in many other parts of the world things are different. Whole cities and states have adopted Linux as their basic approach, along with the consequences that flow from this decision.

That aside, it needs to be recognised that modern production methods are not as linear as the traditional ones, and are focused on creating content that can be repurposed for many different publishing outputs, not just print.

This point is made because the text you are now reading is the result of this latter mentality, which includes, among other things, a toolchain substantially different from the Word-InDesign-PDF one. This text was produced using a markup language (AsciiDoc, but there are many of them, including the high-level LaTeX often used for academic publishing) which is basically plain text. From this single text file, output is then possible to HTML, PDF, EPUB, Docbook, or even LaTeX.

The content is stored in a neutral format. This may be text coded with **XML tags**, or it may be a light-weight markup language such as Asciidoc. These approaches allow content to be structured, stored and transmitted in a form independent of software or hardware.

Crucially, XML tags or light-weight markup languages describe content rather than presentation, e.g. a tag such as <strong>, or a markup which uses asterisks either side of a word, can be rendered as bold text in print, but might become red text on a website.

The original text file, if needs be, could still go through the Word-Indesign-PDF toolchain. It would involve either converting the markup to Word, or stripping the markup (relatively trivial) and reintroducing it to Word that way.

The advantage of the markup approach for the author is that it does not distract greatly from the authoring process, and the content will always be safe and manipulable, since that is the nature of text-only digital files.

The digital workflow involves pre-editing (basic file cleanup and tagging/markup), and the processes involved in editorial quality (editing, checking, testing) are flexible – old boundaries between initial editing and later proofreading are less applicable.

There are few style guides or editors' handbooks that deal with the above.

D.2. The traditional editing process

Since this is an appendix, and since there are also books available for further reading, we only wish to indicate here some broad outlines regarding what happens when you, the author, have completed your draft of the text you wish to be published, and present it to a publisher for consideration.

D.2.1. Items to be considered

Style.
The editor will consider matters of style. There is not single standard style, but a publisher may have a 'house style'.

Consistency.

The editor will look at things like consistency. Inconsistencies in the spelling of names, layout of tables, structure of chapters, presentation of figures will all cause unease. Even if the narrative seems to flow smoothly, readers may decide that the publication is 'hard to read'.

Grammar, spelling and word use.
Many of the prominent issues are addressed in the house style, but other references, particularly dictionaries and quite specific niche references, depending on the material involved, may be consulted.

D.2.2. Onscreen editing

Few publishers and editors still work in hard copy only. Onscreen editing offers significant advantages such as the ability to track editorial changes electronically, to switch between a marked-up and corrected view, insert queries for the author, apply global corrections, run checks on spelling and grammar, reduce double-handling, make backups … among many others.

The common Word shortcuts have already been indicated in the house style.

We will not go into the matter of electronic styles here, since these can be read up on elsewhere, but suffice it to note that Word's in-built styles are invaluable.

D.2.3. Copyediting techniques

Basic requests from editors to authors

Do

- adopt the house style consistently and as much as possible
- supply a word list of the spelling and usage of terms in the manuscript
- apply electronic styling to semantically identify parts of the text, such as headings, quotes, boxed text, poetry and emphasised characters
- insert manual intructions about the treatment of text if it has not been electronically styled
- use Word's (or Libre Office's or …) Table facility to create tables
- use automated footnotes or endnotes

- include a header or footer that contains the names of the publication, the chapter and page number
- use standard typefaces such as Times New Roman or Arial, to ensure compatibility supply artwork according to the publisher's requirements, including clear labelling of files
- use unique and useful file names, including chapter number or name for text files, and figure numbers for figures, and always add the date to make it clear which is the latest version keep backups of files, and save files frequently while working supply a printout or PDF of the manuscript against which to compare the Word version.

Don't

- apply manual formatting to the text – use electronic styles
- use more than the minimum amount of styling required
- insert manual hyphenation in non-hyphenatied words, line breaks or bullets
- create tables using tabs, spaces and/or columns – use Word's Table facility
- add extra paragraph returns, tabs or spaces – one of each at a time is enough
- underline text or apply special formatting such as outlining or drop shadows
- use Word's Text box feature for boxed text
- use all caps (all capital letters).

There could be much more to say, but let the above suffice.

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