

The Chicago Manual of Style Online

HOME | THE CHICAGO MANUAL OF STYLE | FORUM | CHICAGO STYLE Q&A | TOOLS | HELP

SEARCH ►

16th edition 15th edition

LATEST Q&A | BROWSE Q&A | SUBMIT A QUESTION | SIGN UP FOR Q&A ALERTS

Account Administration | Shopping Cart

The Chicago Manual of Style Online

Subscribe
Sign Up for Free Trial



Subscribe
Sign Up for Free Trial
Buy this book

New!

The Chicago Manual of Style Citation Share Click [here](#) to share examples of citations you've encountered or created in our easy citation share. We may add them to our Citation Quick Guide or use them in future editions of the *Manual*.

Twitter



Connect

Follow on Twitter
Like on Facebook
 SHARE

RSS

Contact Us

Link

The Chicago Manual of Style Online

Possessives and Attributives

[Display All Answers](#)

Q. When indicating possession of a word that ends in *s*, is it correct to repeat the *s* after using an apostrophe? For example, which is correct: "Dickens' novel" or "Dickens's novel"?

[Answer »](#)

Q. I have suddenly become an editor and am having trouble on a daily basis with the numeric use of decades. First, is "the 90s" or "the '90s" correct? We often see the apostrophe omitted these days. Next, if a sentence contains the phrase, "Perhaps the 70s best director . . ." (meaning, the best director of that decade), "70s" is both plural and possessive. Should it be "70's"? "70s"? Other than reconstructing the sentence, what's an editor to do?

[Answer »](#)

Q. Would the phrase "The Board of Trustees meeting" be considered an attributive noun? Or should possession be indicated with an apostrophe? Thank you for your assistance.

[Answer »](#)

Q. Which is correct? (a) He has 15 years' experience designing software, or (b) He has 15 years experience designing software. I've seen it written both ways. I believe "years" needs an apostrophe. If he has 15 years of experience, that would translate to "15 years' experience." Right? Please help.

[Answer »](#)

Q. My husband owns a production company with his brother. The name of the company is Deep-Dish Pictures. The brothers would like to state on their video jacket that the film is: A PEPPERONI BROTHERS FILM. No one in the production company can agree if it should be: A PEPPERONI BROTHERS FILM, A PEPPERONI BROTHER'S FILM, or A PEPPERONI BROTHERS' FILM. [Company and surname changed for this forum.] Please help!!!! Thanks!

[Answer »](#)

Q. A friend of John or a friend of John's? I've heard that both are correct. A friend tossed the famous ambiguity at me this way: "A student of Einstein." Unless it's Einstein's, then it might be taken to mean a student who is working on Einstein.

[Answer »](#)

Q. When using a pronoun to replace the first noun when two nouns show possession of one item, which case should the pronoun be? For example, in the sentence "I'm going to my uncle and aunt's house," "uncle" is not in the possessive case. So which case should the pronoun be? "I'm going to him and my aunt's house"? "I'm going to he and my aunt's house"? Or, "I'm going to his and my aunt's house"? And, if the answer is "his," how do you reconcile that the pronoun is not agreeing with the noun it replaces in gender, number, and case? And what is correct if the pronoun replaces the second noun? "Megan's and his room"? Or "Megan and his room"?

[Answer »](#)

Q. Which is correct: "so and so, four months pregnant" or "so and so, four months' pregnant"?

[Answer »](#)

Q. My fourteen-year-old stepson claims that the newest version of Microsoft Word "corrects" the contraction "it's" by removing the apostrophe. He also claims that they "looked it up" online and that the rule has been changed so that neither the contraction nor the possessive has an apostrophe. I explained to him that the contraction and possessive of "its" may be one of the most difficult rules for people to learn because

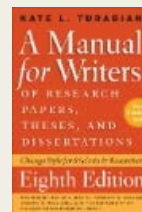
Visit Our Shop Talk Blog

We've launched a new space for all things Chicago style. Find our monthly interview here as well as writing tips, editing ideas, and behind-the-scenes looks at the *Manual*.



Featured Interview
Chicago librarian Louise Brueggemann talks about libraries and literature for young people.

Books for Editors and Writers



A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations
Eighth Edition

Kate L. Turabian



Scientific Style and Format: The CSE Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers
Eighth Edition

Council of Science Editors



The Subversive Copy Editor

Carol Fisher Saller



A Story Larger Than My Own

Women Writers Look Back on Their Lives and Careers

Edited by Janet Burroway

Manual de estilo Chicago-Deusto: Primera edición adaptada al español de la 16ª edición del Manual de estilo de

Download this icon to link to *The Chicago Manual of Style Online* from your site.

many people want to believe there should be an apostrophe for the possessive form. Are you aware of a so-called change? I never trust software and I am trying to convince him that he should not trust it either. Thank you for your time.

[Answer »](#)

Q. My editor keeps correcting my possessive. Which is correct? (One person owns the house but several people live there.) We went to the Kerr's or We went to the Kerrs' or We went to the Kerrs. I used the first one and she says it's wrong. Thank you so much.

[Answer »](#)

[Next Page](#)



Chicago

Javier Torres Ripa

Book Catalogs



[Seasonal Catalogs](#)

[Subject Catalogs](#)

[About *The Chicago Manual of Style*](#) [About the University of Chicago Press](#) [Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Policy](#) [Site Map](#)

The Chicago Manual of Style 15th edition text © 1982, 1993, 2003 by The University of Chicago. *The Chicago Manual of Style* 16th edition text © 2010 by The University of Chicago. *The Chicago Manual of Style Online* © 2006, 2007, 2010 by The University of Chicago. *The Chicago Manual of Style* is a registered trademark of The University of Chicago.