

Open Press Publishing House Style Guide

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The publishing style guide ensures uniformity in presentation across all BCcampus publications. It encompasses:

- Accessibility standards
- Guidelines for handling various content types to ensure consistent functionality across all formats
- Standards for attributing text, images, and multimedia
- Structuring front and back matter
- Metadata management

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General

Questions for the Developer

- Are you adapting or remixing OER resources?
- If so, have you listed the OER resources that you are adapting and have you indicated which resources are used for each specific content? These will have to be attributed properly throughout the resource or book and will have to be included in the copyright info and front matter sections.
- Is the book in parts and chapters that are in logical order?
- Does your book have long chapters? (Long chapters require a lot of scrolling – consider using internal links and collapsed headings.)
- Does each part, section, and chapter have the same components and are they all in the same order throughout? (e.g., Each chapter starts with an Introduction and Learning Outcomes, and ends with Practice Exercises, Key Terms, Media attributions, and References?)
- Do you want to include a Glossary? (You can use the glossary tool in PB. Ensure all definitions have the same format and punctuation.)
- Does each image include alt text in your resource? (Please let OP know if you need help with this)
- Would you like to use internal links to other chapters or sections, figures, etc.?
- Are there equations in your book?

Book Structure & Sections

Book Styles

See BCcampus' [BOOK STYLE SHEET TEMPLATE](#)

If you are creating a book in Pressbooks, you will want to make note of the unique stylistic elements that are tailored to your specific book. Unlike the house style, the book style varies for each publication and serves to complement it by encompassing only the styles that diverge from or are not covered by the overarching house style.

This may involve elements such as:

- Structure of the book
- Structure of parts and chapters
- Numbering of parts, chapters, figures, and tables
- Textboxes

Order of Textbook Components in PB

The following is a list of components that may be found in the sections or chapters in a textbook.

However, this is only a suggested guideline. If you would like to change the order, go ahead! But please ensure that your components are in the same consistent order in every section throughout your book.

1. Introduction
2. Learning Outcomes
3. Features, Exercise or practice questions, throughout the text (H5P) and in consistently styled textboxes
4. Key Terms – near the end of the chapter
5. Long Descriptions (if any)
6. Media Attributions
7. References

Front & Back Matter

Front Matter

Must include the following pages:

- Acknowledgements
- Accessibility

Back Matter

Can include any of the following pages:

- References (all references used in the book)
- Media Attributions (all media attributions in the book)
- Extra resources

Learning Objectives, Practice Exercises, and Features

- Use a consistent textbox format for each component (e.g. Learning Outcomes, Practice exercises, feature boxes...)
- Make sure these components are in the same order for every section
- Practice exercises that have show/ reveal answer should use: “show/ hide answer” before the answer within the textbox.

End-of-Chapter or -Section Content

Media Attributions

Examples

- **Figure 1:** [Borrelia hermsii](#) Bacteria by [NIAID](#), via Wikimedia Commons, is in the [public domain](#), found in [Human Biology \(Wakim & Grewal\)](#) is used under a [CC BY 4.0](#) license.
- **Figure 2:** [Figure 4.4.1 Relative Size of Atoms to Humans](#); in [General Biology \(Boundless\)](#) at LibreTexts Biology is used under a [CC BY-SA 4.0](#) license.
- **Figure 7.1** Determine your Current Network, by author and Sarah Brydges, Co-op Student.
- **Figure 7.2** Sample Thank You and Follow Up Letter, by author, adapted from [Informational interview: Thank-you letter with tips](#) (Doyle, 2019)
- **Table 7.1A** Goal #1 Update Resume, by author.
- **Table 7.1B** Goal #2 Apply to 5-7 Jobs in the Field, by author.

References

- OP defaults to APA style, but author/ creator can choose editorial style based on the subject matter discipline (e.g., MLA for English, Chicago for Journalism, CSE for Sciences) and make it consistent throughout the book
- Websites and some book themes in PB do not have a hanging indent reference style available unless specifically coded in – may have to add specific CSS for this.

Examples

Camosun College. (2019). [Trades access common core: Line B – Employability skills competency B-2: describe expectations and responsibilities of employers and employees](#). LBC Campus. <https://open.bccampus.ca/browse-our-collection/find-open-textbooks/?uuid=c9bcd8df-17a3-4cf8-8400-426f395b3a62> [CC BY 4.0](#)

Career Development Manitoba. (n.d.). [A guide to conducting an effective job search \[pdf\]](#). Government of Manitoba. http://www.manitobacareerdevelopment.ca/cdi/docs/job_search.pdf

Doyle, A. (2019, July 8). [Informational interview: Thank-you letter with tips](#). The Balance Careers. <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/informational-interview-thank-you-letter-example-2063970>

Long Descriptions

- Use long descriptions for complex images, charts, diagrams, etc.

Text Formatting

Headings

Heading Guidelines

- Use heading styles in editor (either in PB or WP)
- Use headings and subheadings sequentially to indicate relationships between topics.
- Use Title Case for heading levels 1-3 and then Sentence case for level 4+ headings
- Do not rely only on colour or font size to organize the heading structure, as screen readers will not recognize the text as a heading, nor will they be able to differentiate between heading levels. You can customize the Headings shown in the table below, but ensure they are documented in your style sheet and they are consistent throughout your chapters and sections.
- Always start with Level 1 heading (the section or chapter title is separate and does not count as your level 1) and go down heading levels sequentially based on hierarchy of topics.
- **Mark Textbox titles as headings.** They should be one heading level lower than the previous heading.

Level	Format
1	Flush Left, Bold, Title Case Heading Text begins as a new paragraph.
2	Flush Left, Bold, Title Case Heading (smaller font size than Heading 1) Text begins as a new paragraph.
3	<i>Flush Left, Bold Italic, Title Case Heading (same font size as Heading 2)</i> Text begins as a new paragraph.
4	Indented, Bold, Sentence Case Heading, Ending with a Period. Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.
5	<i>Indented, Bold Italic, Sentence Case Heading, Ending with a Period.</i> Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.

Colour

Colour Guidelines

- When using font colours other than the default, use the [Contrast Checker](#) to verify contrast ratios and adjust those colours as needed.
- Consider colour blindness when using colour to convey information – use descriptive alt text for images when necessary.

Links

- Ensure external links are working
- Internal links can help the reader navigate through the resource – ensure they will work in export formats
- Make link text meaningful. E.g., "[W3C content readability guideline](#)" not "click here"
- Avoid mid-sentence links. E.g., "Learn more about this project by reading the [Readability Guidelines blog posts](#)." Not "Learn more by reading the [Readability Guidelines blog posts](#) about this project."
- Make call to action (CTA) links and button text specific. E.g., Not "more information" and never "click here." People need to know where the thing they click on is going to take them. Start with a verb ("Book your ticket") and aim to make link text make sense in isolation as some with screen readers may be tabbing from link to link and not reading the surrounding context.
- Avoid misleading link text and try to link directly to the destination, not the home page or landing page, unless the link text is intentionally informing the reader that the link takes them to the landing or home page of the organization.

Lists

- Ensure numbered and bulleted lists are formatted with the platform editor and not as plain text, as this attaches a recognizable code for screen readers.
- If you are using sub-numbers or sub-bullets in your lists, ensure they are formatted correctly (may need code: `<ol type="a">`)
- Nested lists can be used to help present information
- To provide greater accessibility, consider providing both choices: a list and a table.

Equations

- Equations written in plain text use proper symbols (i.e., $-$, $\times$, $\div$). A hyphen ($-$) may look like a subtraction sign ($-$), but it will be read as a hyphen or dash by a screen reader or other text to speech tool
- Use LaTeX or other markup language, or Microsoft Word's equation editor, which is helpful for screen reader accessibility and looks more polished and professional. This is rendered using MathJax in Pressbooks.
- Consider using a different colour font for equations
- Ensure all math equation formatting can be exported correctly
- Note: you may consider presenting a complex equation as an image with an alt text description (written in [MathSpeak](#)) or a long description, if necessary.

Media

Figures and Images

- Figures should be numbered within each section or chapter. E.g., **Figure 1.1:** Image Preah Tineang Phochani Royal Palace.
- Use long descriptions for complex figures or diagrams (see also Charts and Graphs)
- Describe the image and its purpose in the surrounding text content.
- Include alt text (or long descriptions for complex images)
- Image links (e.g., using an icon for “print”) should describe the action and purpose of the icon link and never the describe the icon (e.g., not “printer icon”).
- Decorative images (images that are not relevant to the text content and used purely for interest) should have blank or empty alt text.

Image Caption Examples

From an open image platform:



Figure 1.1: Preah Tineang Phochani Royal Palace. (Konsek/ Wikimedia Commons) [CC BY-SA 4.0](#)

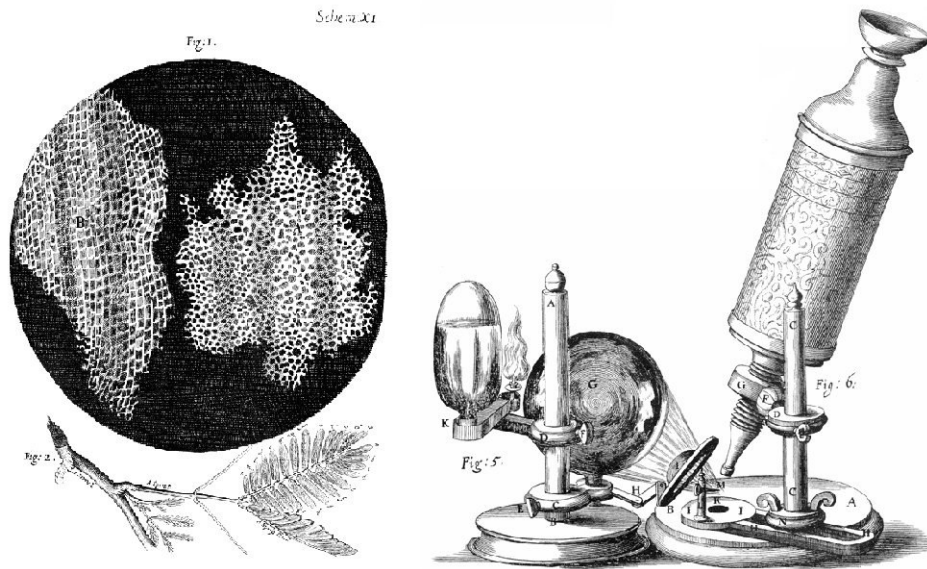


Figure 1.2: Robert Hooke sketched the cork cells as they appeared under a simple light microscope. Hooke-microscope-cork by Robert Hooke (1635-1702) (Alejandro Porto/Wikimedia Commons). [Public Domain](#)

From an open textbook:

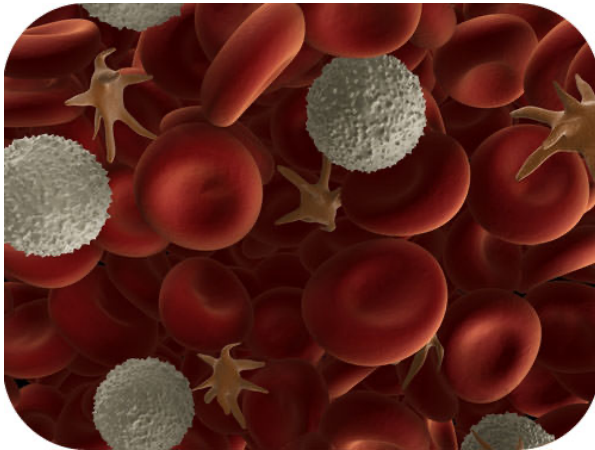


Figure 1.3: Human blood cell diversity. This image shows red blood cells (erythrocytes), white blood cells (leukocytes) and platelets. (Introductory Biology, CK-12) [CK-12 License](#)

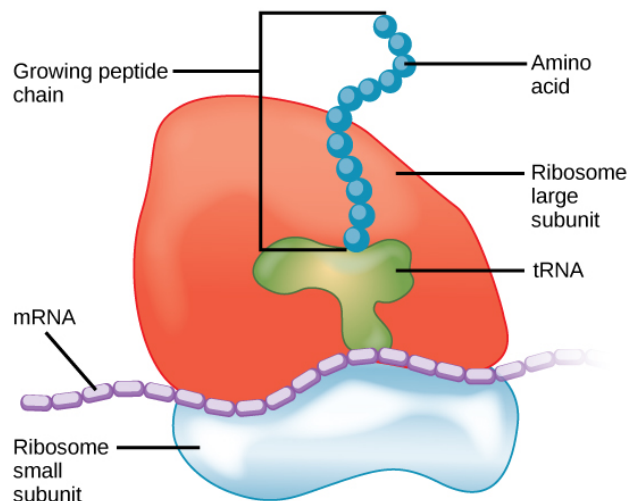


Figure 1.4: Ribosomes are made up of a large subunit (top) and a small subunit (bottom). During protein synthesis, ribosomes assemble amino acids into proteins. (Singer 2019/LibreTexts) [CC BY-SA 4.0 \[Long Description\]](#)

Captions

- Include Figure number followed by colon (or period?)
- ...by creator,
- ...via <platform (Wikicommons, Unsplash, Pexels – images must always have an open CC or site license!)>
- ... is used under <a CC ... license> or <the site license> - must always be linked to the terms of use/ license information!

Examples: Figure 1.1: [Preah Tineang Phochani, Royal Palace](#) by Marcin Konsek, via Wikimedia Commons, is used under a [CC BY-SA 4.0](#) license.

Copyright & Licensing

What is Copyright?

According to the Government of Canada (2024), **copyright** is a type of protection that covers “original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works that are in a fixed material form (i.e., written, recorded).”

Furthermore, the copyright owner has certain rights, including:

- “the sole right to produce or reproduce that work or a substantial part of it in any material form
- the sole right to perform that work or any substantial part of it in public
- if the work is unpublished, the right to publish it or any substantial part of it.” (Government of Canada, 2024)

In other words, the copyright owner has full control of their work and how it can be used. If others want to use their work, they have to ask for permission from the copyright holder.

For more information on Canada's copyright laws, see the [Government of Canada's guide to copyright](#).

What is Creative Commons Licensing?

Although works are protected by copyright when it is created, some people choose to license their work for others to use. Licensing generally allows others to use someone's work under specific conditions (or none at all).

Creative Commons licenses are a common way people license their work. There are a variety of licenses you can choose from, including:

- [CC BY](#)
- [CC BY-SA](#)
- [CC BY-NC](#)
- [CC BY-NC-SA](#)
- [CC BY-ND](#)
- [CC BY-NC-ND](#)
- [CC0](#)

What do all these abbreviations mean? Here is a breakdown according to the Creative Commons (n.d.) website:

- CC — Creative Commons — Identifies the license as a Creative Commons one.
- BY — Attribution — "Credit must be given to the creator."
- SA — ShareAlike — "Adaptations must be shared under the same terms."
- NC — NonCommercial — "Only noncommercial uses of the work are permitted."
- ND — NoDerivatives — "No derivatives or adaptations of the work are permitted."

CC0 is unique from the others listed in that it allows creators give up their copyright and put their works into the worldwide public domain. CC0 enables reusers to distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon the material in any medium or format, with no conditions" (Creative Commons, n.d.).

For more information on Creative Commons licenses, see Creative Commons' [About CC Licenses](#) page.

Copyright and Licensing Guidelines

- Decide which CC license you would like to apply to your own content. By default, the Open Press will apply a [CC BY-NC-SA](#) license to the content unless you specify otherwise.
- This license allows others to copy and redistribute your material in any format or medium, or remix, transform, and build upon the material with appropriate attribution. This license prohibits commercial use of the content (for selling or advertising purposes) and the user must distribute their own remixed or transformed content under the same license as your original content.
- Try to avoid using any content that is licensable. Use open access resources, such as CC license, public domain and open site licenses (such as Unsplash, Pexels, etc.).
- Give credit and attribution to the creators of the content you are using.
- Keep track of which materials you are using and indicate where they have been used in your content. **Provide source URL directly with the content!**
- For images, provide a URL that links to the webpage the image is on, not just the image file.

Alt Text and Long Descriptions

What is Alt Text?

Alternative text (or **alt text**) Alt text, also known as alternative text, is textual content linked to an image, providing identical purpose and essential information as the image itself. This ensures that in scenarios where the image isn't accessible to the reader, such as when images are disabled in a web browser or when a screen reader is being used due to visual impairment, no information or functionality is missed. Lacking or inadequate alt text can cause frustration for visually impaired users.

Alt text guidelines

- Include simple alt text for decorative images
- Avoid “image of”, or “photo of”, etc. unless it is important to include the type of medium for the image (such as for describing a photo of a painting).

Alt text example



Caption

Figure 1.5: [Two Yellow Labrador Retriever Puppies](#) (Chevanon Photography / Pexels) [Pexels license](#)

Alt text

Two happy puppies sitting in a flower field.

What are Long Descriptions?

Long descriptions are lengthier image descriptions. They are often used for complex diagrams, charts, and figures.

Long description guidelines

- Similar to alt text, only include information that is important and relevant.
- For complex diagrams, charts and figures, include a long description link and provide information in the long description, usually found under the References section at the end of a chapter or section.
- Long descriptions for images (especially for charts, graphs, and diagrams) can be linked to from the Figure or image caption. E.g., **Figure 1.2:** Robert Hooke sketched the cork cells as they appeared under a simple light microscope. Hooke-microscope-cork by Robert Hooke (1635-1702) (Alejandro Porto/Wikimedia Commons). [Public Domain](#) (Long description)

For more information, see [W3C's Complex Images](#) article.

Charts and Graphs

- Avoid using only colour to differentiate between important information – use colour in combination with labels (or textures) to convey information
- Consider using alt text or long descriptions for complex charts and graphs

Tables

See Tables Tutorial [Tips and Tricks](#) from W3C WAI.

DO NOT USE TABLEPRESS – The TablePress plugin in PressBooks is not accessibility friendly; use the built-in table function in PressBooks to build your table or copy and paste the table from a Word document.

Tables are great for organizing data. However, using a screen reader to “read” a table may be very time-consuming and frustrating, as seen in the video by Dallas College, “[Screen Reader Reading Tables](#)” (1:26).

Table Guidelines

It is important to follow the accessibility guidelines for tables:

Table titles & captions

- Tables should have a numbered table title above the table. E.g., **Table 1.1: Favourite Kitten Toys**
 - A clear title will help the reader understand what type of information will be translated for them, especially for those using a screen reader.
- All tables should have a title case caption included above the table that includes the table number and the title. (E.g., “Table 1.1 Building Accessible Tables”)

Table cells & headers

- Avoid merged cells (cells that span over two or more columns or rows) or split cells. Split the table up into separate smaller tables if necessary.
- Avoid blank cells, if possible.
- Use table headers for data tables to describe the content of the column or row.

General format

- Align text to the left and numeric data to the right (for left to right languages) so that people using larger text sizes or smaller screens can find it. Give the column header the same alignment as the cells below it.
- Do not use tables for layout purposes.
- Avoid tables nested within other tables.

Other guidelines

- Consider whether the table may work as a list (may be more accessible, as lists are much easier to understand in an auditory manner when using a screen reader)
- Consider adding alt text to a table, if possible.
- Consider using a table [summary](#) for complex tables or break up into individual simple

Important: Please note that table headers are different than *headings* used in the text. Do not use headings for text in your tables.

Table Examples

Good Table

- Table number included
- Descriptive title
- Clear column and row headers
- Text is left-aligned; numbers are right-aligned

Type	Description	How Many	Buy More?
Mice	Fluffy grey mice with string tails	10	No
Wand Toy	A bird toy attached to a wand by a string	1	No
Springs	Plastic springs	25	Yes
Dynamite	A dynamite stick filled with catnip	2	Yes

Table 1.1: Inventory of Cat Toys

Bad Table

- No table number
- Table title is not very descriptive
- Merged cells
- Content is disjointed

Common Name	Family	Genus
Plants		
Prickly Pear Cactus	Cactaceae	Opuntia
Pine	Pinaceae	Pinus
Animals		
Giraffe	Giraffidae	Giraffa
Crow	Corvidae	Corvus

Plants and Animals

Improved Bad Table

- Separate Plants and Animals into two tables (could also use lists instead)
- Add table numbers with more descriptive table titles (e.g., Table 1.2: Comparing Plant Taxonomy)
- Included clear column and row headers

Common Name	Family	Genus
Prickly Pear Cactus	Cactaceae	Opuntia
Pine	Pinaceae	Pinus

Table 1.2: Comparing Plant Taxonomy

Common Name	Family	Genus
Giraffe	Giraffidae	Giraffa
Crow	Corvidae	Corvus

Table 1.3: Comparing Animal Taxonomy

Videos

Videos, whether made by you or someone else, are a useful alternative for conveying information.

Video Guidelines

In-text format

- Third-party videos are usually linked/ embedded, but if they are CC licensed or public domain,
- Include context information (title, date and platform) to introduce an embedded video.
- Authors may include a list of the videos in each section in the Media Attributions list. For attribution lists: Title, by author/ creator (date) <terms of our use such as permission or license, if applicable.>
- Title of video in quotations.
- Time duration of video in parenthesis after title (see examples below).
- Name of creator with year of publication in parenthesis after

References & copyright

- Reference citation included for all videos at the end of the chapter section
- If video has been created specifically for your OER content, you can add a reference to it (if it is posted on another platform like YouTube, for example, or simply introduce it (include the year it was made) and the CC license that you'd like to apply to it.
- There is no caption required under the video, but you can add the license or copyright information to the media attribution list at the end of the chapter.

Accessibility

- All videos must have Closed captioning and or transcripts.
- Include a list of videos with only auto-generated CC in the accessibility front matter section

Video Examples

Just links

Watch "[Fluid Mosaic Model of the Cell Membrane](#)" (1:25 min) by Wesley McCammon (2009).

Watch the following videos:

1. "[Insights into cell membranes via dish detergent - Ethan Perlstein](#)" (3:49 min) by TED-Ed (2013).
2. "[Langmuir Blodgett animation](#)" (45 s) by MCeep (2013).

3. [“*Female Friday* FIRST TIME HEARING Cranberries -Zombie |REACTION”](#) (9:16 min) by Rob Squad Reactions (2021).

For embed-linked video

The YouTube video below, “Job Fair do's and don'ts” (1:43) by Thompson Rivers University (2019), highlights some common tips related to job fairs and employment opportunities.

H5Ps

Here are some general guidelines for using H5Ps in your resource:

- Ensure that copyright information is included in the meta-data if you are using images! (see ecampus Ontario’s Open Library webpage: [H5P: Adding metadata and copyright information](#))
- See also [Copyright Considerations for H5P Interactives](#) from Student Success Library and Learning Services on the CONESTOGAC.ON.CA website.
- Images used in H5P require descriptive alt text especially if the questions in your interactive H5P rely on visual cues.
- Consider the size and display of images as readers may be engaging with the content on laptops, tablets or phones.
- Think about how colour is used to convey information (e.g., consider colour blindness and contrast in a bar graph, for example)

IMPORTANT: Not all H5P content types are accessible. The developers at H5P.com maintain a [list of content types](#) and their accessible status. Please be sure to review it before deciding to use a content type.

Resources

Guides & Tools

Copyright & Plagiarism

- [University of Regina\) Copyright and Licensing](#)
- [\(TRU Library\) Plagiarism: What it is and how to avoid it](#)

Design

- [Canva](#) — Design graphics and similar digital material
- [\(Coolors\) Contrast Checker](#) — Check if your text and background colours have enough contrast for accessibility purposes
- [\(Coolors\) Colour Palette Generator](#) — Easily generate and customize a five colour palette

Development

- [\(Overleaf\) LaTeX Editor](#) — An online LaTeX editor to check if your LaTeX code works
- [\(Rice University\) LaTeX Mathematical Symbols Sheet](#) — A pdf document with many LaTeX symbols that can be used
- [\(eCampusOntario\) Using LaTeX in Pressbooks](#) — A guide to getting started with using LaTeX in Pressbooks

Writing

- [\(Smart Words\) Transition Words](#) — A list of various transition words and where to use them

Citations & References

General

- [List of Title Word Abbreviations](#) — A database of common abbreviations (can be used to find journal abbreviations)
- [Title Capitalization Tool](#) — A tool for automatically capitalizing titles in different ways according to certain citation styles (e.g., APA, Chicago, AP, MLA, BB, and AMA)

American Chemical Society (ACS)

- [\(ACS Publications\) ACS Style Quick Guide](#)
- [\(Williams College\) Citing Your Sources: ACS](#)

American Psychological Association (APA)

- [\(APA Style\) Style and Grammar Guidelines](#)
- [\(TRU Library\) APA Citation Style Guide \(7th Edition\)](#)

The Chicago Manual of Style (Chicago)

- [\(TRU Library\) Chicago Manual of Style](#)
- [\(The Chicago Manual of Style Online\) Chicago-Style Citation Quick Guide](#)

Council of Science Editors (CSE)

- [\(Scientific Style and Format\) The CSE Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers](#)
- [\(TRU Library\) CSE Citation Style Guide](#)
- [\(U of A Library\) CSE Citation Style QuickGuide](#)

Modern Language Association (MLA)

- [\(Purdue University\) MLA Formatting and Style Guide](#)
- [MLA Style Center](#)
- [\(TRU Library\) MLA Citation Style Guide](#)

OP Style Guide References

- Benetech Diagram Center. (n.d.). *Image description guidelines*. <http://diagramcenter.org/table-of-contents-2.html>.
- Content Design London. (2022). *Links*. <https://readabilityguidelines.co.uk/content-design/links/>.
- Creative Commons. (n.d.). About CC licenses. <https://creativecommons.org/share-your-work/cclicenses/>.
- Dallas College. (n.d.a). *Accessible headings*. <https://www.dallascollege.edu/about/accessibility/guidelines/pages/headings.aspx>.
- Dallas College. (n.d.b). *Building accessible tables*. <https://www.dallascollege.edu/about/accessibility/guidelines/pages/building-tables.aspx>.
- Education and Outreach Working Group. (2024). *An alt decision tree*. W3C Web Accessibility Initiative. <https://www.w3.org/WAI/tutorials/images/decision-tree/>.
- Government of Canada. (2024). A guide to copyright. <https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/canadian-intellectual-property-office/en/guide-copyright>.
- Pennsylvania State University. (n.d.). *Image alt tag tips for HTML*. <https://accessibility.psu.edu/images/imageshtml/>
- WebAIM. (2021). *Alternative text*. <https://webaim.org/techniques/alttext/>.