

AMA Manual of Style

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Inclusive Language

Roxanne K. Young

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Sexist language, racist language, theistic language all are typical of the policing languages of mastery, and cannot, do not, permit new knowledge or encourage the mutual exchange of ideas. Toni Morrison JAMA and the Archives Journals avoid the use of language that imparts bias against persons or groups on the basis of sex, race or ethnicity, age, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation. The careful writer avoids generalizations and stereotypes and is specific when choosing words to describe people. Sex refers to the biological characteristics of males and females. Gender includes more than sex and serves as a cultural indicator of a person's personal

Correct and Preferred Usage of Common Words and Phrases

Roxanne K. Young

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UPDATE: We will discontinue using quotation marks to identify parts of an article, but retain the capitalization; eg, This is discussed in the Methods section (not the "Methods" section). This change was made February 14, 2013. What would become of us if the delectable did not exist, sighed the proofreader. José Saramago We not infrequently are compelled to refuse publication to an article which contains valuable facts, but which is weighed down with so many imperfections as to discourage one as does the porcupine from closer investigation. JAMA The second quote, from a 1904 editorial in JAMA, certainly holds true today, but of course, editors do consider manuscripts that

Other Types of Articles

Richard M. Glass

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Journals publish other items and articles that do not fit into any of the major categories. Examples include personal reflections and essays (eg, A Piece of My Mind in JAMA), news articles, poetry, obituaries, reports on conferences, and articles based on clinical photographs. Authors should examine several issues of a journal to make sure that a submission is appropriate and read the journal's instructions for authors to determine requirements regarding various types of articles.

Accent Marks (Diacritics)

Brenda Gregoline

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An accent mark (diacritic), when added to a letter, indicates a phonetic value different from that of the unmarked letter. English words once spelled with accent marks (eg, cooperate, preeminent) now are written and printed without them. Consult the most recent edition of Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary to resolve questions about whether a word should retain its accent. In general, English words in common usage should be spelled without diacritical marks. Accent marks should always be retained in the following instances: # Proper names Dr Bönne-man is a Pew Scholar in the Biomedical Sciences. # When it is desirable to show the correct

Index Style

Bruce McGregor and Harriet S. Meyer

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The style of terms in the index must be the same as the style in the text. Alphabetization in indexes begins with the first letter of the term, eg, G period G phase G protein. Commas precede letters in sorting order (examples from Thomas). cold, common cold agglutinin disease Vibrio, noncholera Vibrio cholerae infection. Other punctuation is ignored. Omsk hemorrhagic fever virus O'nyong-nyong virus. For entries that are identical except for case, choose whether uppercase or lowercase will take precedence in sorting and be consistent throughout the index. ab11, 99, 106 110 Ab11, 95, 100 103 Brca1, 112 BRCA1, 54, 804 809. When an identifier in parentheses is used to clarify similar terms,

Periodical Indexing

Bruce McGregor and Harriet S. Meyer

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Vocabulary control is of particular importance not only for indexes compiled for multiauthor texts, but also for the indexes that appear at the end of the volume year in medical journals. In general, the rules and guidelines that apply to back-of-the-book indexes also apply to journal indexes. Where, in specialty journals, nomenclature is in flux or variable, indexers should follow the style and recommendations of their publishers or editors, cross-referencing to preferred terms or forms of entry rather than double-posting. Journal indexes differ from book indexes in basing index entries largely on title and abstract information, which summarizes an article's

Clock Referents

Roxanne K. Young

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Occasionally, reference to a locus of insertion, position, or attitude is given in terms of a clock-face orientation, as seen by the viewer (see also , Numbers and Percentages, Use of Numerals, Measures of Time).Note: The terms clockwise and counterclockwise can also be confusing. The point of reference (eg, that of observer vs subject) should be specified if the usage is ambiguous.

Laboratory Values

Roxanne K. Young

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Usually, in reports of clinical or laboratory data, the substance per se is not reported; rather, a value is given that was obtained by measuring a substance or some function or constituent of it. For example, one does not report hemoglobin but hemoglobin level. Some other correct forms are as follows: differential white blood cell count agglutination titer prothrombin time pulse rate erythrocyte sedimentation rate total serum cholesterol value or level or concentration increase in antibody level creatinine level or clearance serum phosphorus concentration increase in bilirubin level platelet count 24-hour urine output or volume antinuclear antibody titer mean corpuscular

Online and Electronic Indexes

Bruce McGregor and Harriet S. Meyer

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Although indexing services continue to index scientific literature much as in the past, few any longer compile their indexing into the printed monthly and annual cumulations such

as Index Medicus or Chemical Abstracts that once sat in long rows on university library shelves. The database products that have replaced cumulated print indexes nevertheless still depend on controlled vocabulary indexing as a means of achieving acceptable degrees of relevancy in retrieving citations from among millions of abstracts. To eliminate the many marginal “hits” that result from the unmediated keyword searching of large databases, search screens typically allow users to construct their

Controlled Vocabulary Indexing

Bruce McGregor and Harriet S. Meyer

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In indexing journals offering broad coverage of general medicine and specialties and in indexing sets of periodicals issued by different publishers, indexers usually rely on the external authority of a controlled vocabulary. Controlled vocabularies allow indexers to resolve variances in natural language systematically. The vocabularies establish preferred terms with cross-references from alternative forms of entry. Thus, all relevant references can be gathered under a single heading. Controlled vocabularies also establish hierarchical relationships among related terms. Such hierarchies most often take the form of a thesaurus in which narrower terms are entered as subentries beneath the broader terms to which they