

## **Writer's Guide and Style Guide for the Bulletin of the American Orchid Society *Orchids* and its Supplemental Issues**

*Orchids* – *The Bulletin of the American Orchid Society* welcomes submission of essays and photographs from hobbyists, vendors and the scientific community. *Orchids* is published as a monthly, 64-page, English-language magazine in both paper and a digital format plus, when possible, a stand-alone Supplement on a specific topic such as a genus, hybrids or culture. See aos.org for a free digital copy of the magazine if you do not currently subscribe. The magazine has averaged a circulation of 10,000 over the last 15 years. It was originally published as the *American Orchid Society Bulletin* and began publication in 1932. The name was changed to *Orchids* beginning with the January 1995 issue. Additionally, a digital version started publication in January 2013 on aos.org.

*Orchids* and its Supplement are published by the American Orchid Society, a non-profit 501(c)3 organization founded in 1921, and as such, neither the magazine nor the American Orchid Society, can reimburse its authors and photographers. Most authors derive satisfaction from sharing their knowledge with the orchid community and advancing the enjoyment of orchids for all enthusiasts.

### **GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION OF ARTICLES**

#### *Submission and Copyright*

Ideas for articles or finished articles should be submitted to either of the Co-Chairs of the American Orchid Society Editorial Board, Jean Allen-Ikeson at jean.ikeson@gmail.com or Kathy Barrett at mormodes@hotmail.com. After consideration, the Board will notify you whether or not we feel the idea for an article or a finished article has been accepted. Submissions for scientific articles for publication in the magazine's *Lindleyana* section including description of new species will be peer reviewed prior to publication.

The manuscript should be submitted as text only and with charts, photographs, drawings, and captions submitted as separate files. The text version must be submitted as a text document file (.doc or .rtf), not a .pdf! A second version of the manuscript *may* also be submitted with imbedded photographs, illustrations or charts to give the Editor a *suggestion* only of where you think they should appear. This version may be submitted as a text file or a .pdf as it is only for visual formatting suggestions. **Do not send the article in a desktop publishing layout expecting that to be used “as is” in the magazine.** It is not possible to convert to our layout program without problems. **Note that headers cannot be moved to the tops of columns or other formatting changes that result in irregular length columns.** The Editor, Editorial Staff and the Editorial Board will try to accommodate layout *suggestions* but the final decision on layout shall be made by the Editor.

If an article is accepted for publication, it usually takes at least four months to be printed but can also take up to a year. The deadline for regular columns is 45 days prior to the month that the column will

appear. Short articles for Parting Shot or the Spotlight are usually 200-600 words. As a rule of thumb, a page of printed text in the magazine will use 1000 words without pictures. Usually pictures take up about half of the space so a 1000 word article would be in the range of two or a bit more printed pages in *Orchids*.

Feature articles are welcomed and appreciated. Such articles are usually at least 1500 words. Articles over 3500 words may be printed in more than one part over two or more issues. Features may be on such topics as a genus, a species, hybrids, a line of breeding or hybridizing, orchid history, culture, and techniques for making hardware and structures for better culture.

If you are submitting an article that you think is sensitive in any way, that is, you want to see the galley proof (final layout) just prior to publication, please be aware that proofs cannot be held more than 48 hours due to the tight deadlines of a monthly publication. If there is any material that you consider critical in any way or that you might be away and not have access to email, you must communicate this with submission of the article. The magazine publication date cannot be extended. Galley proofs are intended only to be used to check for typos, mislabeled photographs, etc., but not to “just see how it looks” to start a major rewrite.

**The AOS Editorial Board requests that submissions be original works and that such works be submitted only to *Orchids*. Authors agree not to send their works to other publications until after it has been published in *Orchids* or its Supplement for a year.** Do not simultaneously submit an article to *Orchids* and another publication.

When an article or artwork is accepted, the author or photographer (the contributor) agrees to give the AOS nonexclusive rights to use material(s) in any and all media, including electronic or digital media and any media that may be developed in the future. This agreement permits the Society to use the material again without securing permission from the contributor. For example, the Society occasionally makes articles from *Orchids* available on its website so a wider audience can benefit from the information. Authors and photographers still hold copyright to their materials, both text and images.

Groups such as those that publish newsletters who wish to reprint articles published in *Orchids* and its Supplement are encouraged to request permission to publish directly from the author who still owns the copyright. The publication reprinting the work should also add the following credit: Reprinted with permission of *Orchids – The Bulletin of the American Orchid Society*, month and year of publication in *Orchids*, and the website [aos.org](http://aos.org).

### *Content*

Content contains the words and ideas that form your article. Most writers need to edit their material to correct grammar, typos, where the language does not flow, etc. One of the problems with self-editing is that the eye reads what it expects to see. Therefore, most writers find it useful to read their

manuscripts aloud. There is a good reason for that. Reading aloud forces you to read slowly and read each word in full rather than skimming over them. Errors, confusing sentences, and ideas that do not follow logically will become evident. All good writers spend considerable time editing and polishing their work. *Orchids* magazine staff appreciate articles that have been polished before submission. This includes italicizing genera and species! This style guide should help answer questions, help you format citations and reference lists, give more detailed information for photographs or other illustrations, charts, etc.

The editorial staff reserves the right to make editorial changes to manuscripts to render them easier to read, correct typos, spelling or citation errors, bring them in line with AOS *Orchids* style, or remove or reword anything that staff consider to be offensive or in conflict with AOS values or mission.

Style refers to the way an article appears on the page (indents, paragraphs, type face, grammar, syntax, reference lists, abbreviations, etc.). Please refer to the following *Orchids* magazine Style Guide for more information.

Copyright law requires that you request “permission to publish” by letter or email if you are reusing more than a short quote, a chart or figure from another writer or publication or for photographs from the original photographer. Please provide copies of permissions to the Editor. You need not request permission to publish photographs or quotes from American Orchid Society publications or electronic media such as *Orchids Plus*.

#### *Photographs*

Photographs need to be of sufficient quality to produce a clear and sharp photo when enlarged in the publication. Generally, we prefer that the resolution is a full-resolution .jpg for photography. Do not send RAW files. Minimum size is 2000 x 3000 pixels (dpi or dots per inch do not matter) or, when multiplied together, the pixels equal 6,000,000 mp. If you submit just a few photographs or illustrations, please submit captions at the time of submission. However, if you have a number of photographs or have referenced AOS Award photographs, you may be asked to write captions after the final selection has been made by editorial staff. See the note in the previous paragraph about copyright and permission to publish photographs from photographers other than yourself or that have been previously published in American Orchid Society publications.

#### *Final Proofs*

Proofs are files that display what an article will look like when published in the magazine with photographs, charts, captions, etc. Authors may be emailed proofs to double check for typos. Please understand that a monthly magazine is always on a tight deadline and if editorial staff have not received comments within 48 hours of a proof being emailed, it will be assumed that no errors were found. Publication cannot be held for an author to return from vacation or a field trip. This is why editing of your

manuscript prior to submission is so important. In all cases, editorial staff reserve the right to the final decision on formatting.

### *The Manuscript*

Type style: Times New Roman, 11 pt

Line spacing: 1.5 pts

Text: Align left only. Do not align right or justify; leave right edge ragged.

Paragraphs: never use the SPACE key to indent.

Paragraph spacing: no extra space between paragraphs; use the RETURN key, not the space bar!

Title: Suggest a short title, but the Editor reserves the right to modify it.

Title style: NO bold in titles, subtitles, etc., align left

Subtitles: Subtitles are acceptable, especially for longer feature articles. No bold, underlining, etc. in submitted copy; align left

Track Changes and editing: If Track Changes, an editing tool located in the Review tab of Microsoft Word, has been used, please insert a note at the beginning of the article that changes have been accepted.

Preferable: avoid Track Changes as it can interfere with our layout program.

### STYLE GUIDE

This style guide is based on The Chicago Manual of Style, 16<sup>th</sup> Edition, (2010), with some input from The Manual of Scientific Style (2009), and style and spelling used in the orchid world.

Common style problems: not italicizing genera and species; using the letter x instead of the multiplication sign in hybrids; incomplete sentences; beginning a sentence with an abbreviation; writing in English using Spanish, German, etc. language structure and syntax; starting new paragraphs using the space key rather than the return key; using the space key instead of the tab key to indent; imbedding charts in text rather than submitting them separately; not following the World Checklist of Selected Plant Families for accepted genera and species names, the RHS International Orchid Register for hybrid names and the International Plant Names Index for abbreviations of publications.

### *Names*

Spelling of genera and species should follow the World Checklist of Selected Plant Families and, for hybrid genera and grex names, the Royal Horticultural Society International Orchid Register. Authors should double check the spelling of plant names, that the current accepted name is being used (e.g., *Laelia purpurata* is now *Cattleya purpurata*) according to Kew's World Checklist of Selected Plant Families, and ensure that the parents of hybrids are correct and in the proper order according to the RHS International Orchid Register.

Common names. The name should be in lowercase letters unless it is a person's name such as Hartmann's *Sarcochilus* and followed by the scientific name in parentheses, the orange-blossom orchid (*Sarcochilus falcatus*). However, scientific names are preferred.

The word species. Spell it out in text, do not abbreviate; e.g., cattleyas (*Cattleya* species) not cattleyas (*Cattleya* spp.).

Section (as in a botanical grouping). The word section should be lowercase type and not in italics, but the name of the section begins with an uppercase letter (capital) and the section name is in italics (example: *Dendrobium* section *Densiflorum*).

First instance of a species or hybrid name in the article or at the beginning of a sentence. Spell out the genus as in *Sarcochilus falcatus*. You are not required to put the abbreviation in parentheses with the first instance. An exception might be for an obscure or new genus whose abbreviation is not intuitive or could be confusing for the reader.

Second instance. Abbreviate using accepted abbreviations *Paph. insigne* not *P. insigne*. See list on the Royal Horticultural Society site:

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/pdfs/plant-registration-forms/orchid-name-abbreviations-list>

Registered hybrid. *Cymbidium* Balkis with the genus italicized and the grex not italicized, but the first letter of each word in the grex name in upper case except for special instances where the official name is all or in part in lower case. For the first instance of a hybrid, provide the parentage in parentheses unless described in the text of the article: *Cymbidium* Balkis (Alexanderi × Rosanna); or *Cymbidium* Balkis is a cross between *Cymbidium* Alexanderi and *Cymbidium* Balkis. If the entire manuscript is about *Cymbidium*, then it is acceptable to omit the genus for parents: *Cymbidium* Balkis is a cross between Alexanderi and Balkis. This avoids the manuscript from becoming tedious. Where the manuscript is about multiple genera, including intergeneric genera, then leave in the genus.

Unregistered hybrid. *Oncidium* (Quistrum × *fuscatum*) (genus not repeated in the parentheses as both are *Oncidium*) for intrageneric crosses; *Oncostele* (*Onc.* Quistrum × *Rhynchostele bictoniensis*) for intergeneric crosses. Genera may be abbreviated if it is not the first instance of the specific species or hybrid. But in this case, *Oncostele* and *Rhynchostele* must be spelled out since they are the first instance of these crosses or species used in this article, while *Oncidium* may be abbreviated because *Oncidium* Quistrum was previously mentioned. When an *Oncidium* species or hybrid that has not been mentioned previously is used, then the genus must be spelled out again in the first instance. Note: use the multiplication sign (under INSERT tab, then Symbols, in Microsoft Word) instead of the letter x. Please make sure you have not italicized the parentheses, periods, multiplication signs or any other punctuation.

Clonal names. *Paphiopedilum* Winston Churchill ‘Indomitable’ written with the first letter of each word in the clonal name capitalized and the name in a single apostrophe, not double quotation marks.

AOS Awards. *Paphiopedilum* Winston Churchill ‘Indomitable’ FCC/AOS. No comma between the clonal name and award. Abbreviate the award when listed as an award after a plant's name as in ‘Indomitable’ FCC/AOS, but spell out an award name when used in a sentence in text; e.g., Max Thompson received a Certificate of Cultural Excellence for *Bulbophyllum* Walnut Valley Jersey ‘Jacob’. If, within the same article, there are additional instances of Certificate of Cultural Excellence as in the previous example, then it may be abbreviated as CCE: Byron Rinke received a CCE on *Pabstiella yauaperiensis*.

Specific points given for an AOS award. Place the point score in parentheses following the award such as *Cattleya purpurata* ‘Wanda Ruth’ CCE (98). Specific points for awards are not necessary unless the points are out of the ordinary, an increase over other clones that is significant to the discussion in the article, etc. In this example, 98 points is out of the ordinary for any award, but it might also be useful for an award that was 79 or 89 points to denote that it was at the top of the range for that award if mentioning that is in line with the tone of the article.

Multiple AOS Awards. Hyphenate the awards, *Oncostele* Wildcat ‘Bobcat’ AM-CCM/AOS.

Multiple Awards to a clone from different judging systems. Should a plant mentioned have awards from multiple judging systems, the awards should be listed in alphabetical order based on the judging entity. For instance, *Cymbidium* Balkis ‘Silver Orb’ AM/AOS, SM/CSA, AM/RHS.

Abbreviations other than awards. Spell out American Orchid Society or Royal Horticultural Society the first time it appears in an article, but abbreviate it the second time. You do not need to follow the first instance with the abbreviation in parentheses if it is a commonly used name in horticulture or the orchid world such as RHS and AOS.

Commercial products such as fertilizer, pesticides, potting mix, or pots. Use the generic name and add the brand name if possible. Include the manufacturer’s website in parentheses where products can be purchased or for more information about the product.

Titles. Place the degree or diploma after the name rather than before; e.g., John Smith, DVM, not Dr. John Smith.

Trademark names. Do not put in all capital letters (even if that way on the package). Follow by the type of product, e.g., Q-Tips<sup>TM</sup> cotton swab, not Q-TIPS.

Numbers and measurements. Spell zero to nine unless the number is a measurement. Spell out all numbers that are at the beginning of a sentence. Put metric measurements in parentheses following the US units. For example, 29 flowers on four inflorescences that were up to 20 inches (50 cm) in length; flowers were 3 inches (7.5 cm) in width. Note no periods after measurement abbreviations and always a space between the number and the measure unit. Abbreviate metric measurement but not US units such as feet, yards, etc.

Plurals of numbers. No apostrophe is used. For example, hybridizers were active in the 1970s, not 1970's. All the participants were in their 60s.

Hyphens in numbers. Hyphenate numbers when part of a measurement that modifies a noun such as a 25-cm pot, but the pot was 25 cm.

Percent. Spell out, for example, 25 percent, not 25% when used in text. However, 3 percent, not three percent as it is a measurement of sorts. When using percent in a chart or table, using the % sign is acceptable. Do not leave a space between the numbers and the percent sign.

Fractions. Spell out where possible, e.g., three-quarters of the people who attended. But use numbers with measurements such as 1.39 inches or 1 ¼ inches. Fractions such as ¼ may be used if they are common and use decimals (0.1 or 0.85) for less usual fractions such as 1/10 or 1/12. For decimals less than 1.0 as in this example, put a zero before the decimal point as in 0.96 rather than .96).

Temperature. Do not use a degree sign, write temperatures as 70 F (21 C).

Time: a.m. and p.m. not am or pm.

### *Citations*

Citations are required by copyright law, to help later researchers find where you found information, and to avoid the suggestion of plagiarism.

Citing an author in the text. Smith (2015) suggested that “reds are more difficult to obtain” (Smith 2015). Note there is no comma but a space between Smith and 2015. If you are quoting or citing an email or conversation, it should be (Smith pers. comm.) with no date or comma or Smith (pers. comm.) said. . . Personal communications are not added as a reference to the Reference List. Citations should always be within the sentence before the end of the final punctuation. The plant was first found by Smith (1838). Not: the plant was first found by Smith. (1938).

Footnotes. Do not use; try to find an alternative.

Direct quotes. If a citation is a direct quote from an author, then the quote should be set off by quotation marks: Smith (1979) reported that he “used the red clone to make the first batch of hybrids, but used the yellow clone to make the second batch a year later.” However, if the quote is a long one, then it should be indented and without quotation marks. The quote should be preceded by a comma or a colon.

Do not alter genus or species names from an original quote even if the name has changed. For example, Smith (1979) suggested that:

Red odontoglossums can be enhanced by using specific hybrids as parents. . . Whereas older, yellow odontoglossums had a tendency to fade until the introduction of hybrids such as *Odontoglossum* Golden Guinea. (fictitious quote; should be longer!)

### *References*

You must cite the reference in the body of the article to list it in References. If you did not cite a reference in the text that you consider important to the subject, then it should be listed under a section after References called Further Reading. If you used a series of emails as personal communications, putting pers. comm. in the text is all you need to do. They are not listed in the reference list. Do not italicize any punctuation within references! For books, where the publisher's name contains the city or state name, you do not need to repeat the city or state; Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press rather than Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press. For books published in large, well-known cities that cannot be confused with other cities or states, it is not necessary to use the state; for instance, San Francisco, but Washington, DC. Alphabetize all items in the reference list by author or owner (if a website or electronic media has an author).

Single-author book: Author last name, authors initials. Date of publication. Name of book in italics. City of publication, state (abbreviated if a state in the USA) or country (not abbreviated) of publication: Name of publisher. If you are referencing specific pages, then place the numbers after the name of the publisher without adding p., pp., or pages. Separate the publisher from the numbers with a comma. For example,

Hackney, C.T. 2004. *American Cattleyas: Species and Outstanding Clones That Define American Hybridizing*. Wilmington, NC: Courtney T. Hackney, 111-134.

Two authors, books: First author's last name followed by initial and then initial of second author and second author's last name. Date of publication. Title in italics. Town of publication, state or country of publication: publisher, pages. Use pages if just a few pages or the entire book was used that did not consist of a specific chapter or article in the book (see Article in a book). For example,

McQueen, J. and B McQueen. 1993. *Orchids of Brazil*. Melbourne, Australia: The Text Publishing Co.

Three or more authors, books: Same as two authors but list all authors and put the initials before the last name except for the first listed author's name, where the initials follow.

Book in a series: Withner, C.L. 1988. *The Cattleyas and Their Relatives, Vol 1: The Cattleyas*. Portland, OR: Timber Press.

Edited book: Withner, C., Ed. 1974. *The Orchids: Scientific Studies*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.



Article in a single author book: Koopowitz, H. 2008. "Standard-Complex Hybrids—Reds and Spots." *Tropical Slipper Orchid: Paphiopedilum and Phragmipedium Species and Hybrids*. Portland, OR: Timber Press, 249-265.

Article in an edited book: Melquist, G.A.L. 1974. "Some Aspects of Polyploidy in Orchids, with Particular Reference to Cymbidium, Paphiopedilum, and the Cattleya Alliance." In *The Orchids: Scientific Studies*, edited by Carl Withner. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 93-409.

Single-author article in a journal or magazine: Author, initial(s). Date. Article title. Journal in italics volume (issue number if available): page numbers. Note: no punctuation between the journal title and the volume number, just a space. For example,  
Chadwick, A.A. 2003. "The Large Flowered *Cattleya* Species." *Orchids* 72:38-47.

Multiple authors article in a journal or magazine: Murahige, T., T.J. Sheehan and H. Kamemoto. 1963. "Controlling Weeds in Orchids with Herbicides." *American Orchid Society Bulletin* 32(9):521-525.

Articles in Supplements: Higgins, W.E. and K.A. Roberts. 2016. "*Cattleya* Forms and Varieties." Supplement to *Orchids*, October, 2016, 38-49, 52-63.

Unpublished manuscripts: Manuscripts are considered published (and treated as such) even if in a newsletter or a handout that is part of a booklet given out at a seminar or training course. Smith, A. A. 2016. *The genus Vanda in Florida Gardens*. Unpublished.

Electronic media: Should follow last reference in References that starts with an author(s). *Orchids Plus*. v. 1.3. 2016. American Orchid Society.

Internet websites. Should be alphabetized in the regular Reference list. If there is no owner or author, simply list the website at the end of the reference list. Remove underlining and change blue color from automatic formatting used in word processors to black.. If there is not a modification date as in the *Wikipedia* example, then provide your access date. For example,

Kew World Checklist of Selected Plant Families. <http://theplantlist>. Accessed November 17, 2016.

<http://africanorchids.dk/>. Accessed October 25, 2016.

*Wikipedia*. 2016. "Polyploid." Last modified October 27, 2016. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polyploid>.

Blog sites. Author's first name. Date. "Article in quotes like an article in a journal." *Name of blog in italics* (blog), month and day of blog. (two spaces) full website. For example,  
American Orchid Society. 2016. "Orchids: the masters of lying, cheating and stealing." *Blog* (blog), May 16, <http://www.aos.org/blog/general/orchids-the-masters-of-lying,-cheating-stealing.aspx>. In this example, no author was given, so the owner can stand in for the author, namely, the American Orchid Society. Note the word blog should follow the title of the blog site in parentheses. In this example, the blog site was confusingly called *Blog*.

### *Grammar and Punctuation*

Grammar and punctuation are like traffic signs, traffic lights and the laws you must know to pass your driving test to get a license to drive. Punctuation tells you when to stop and go and in what lanes you can drive so that the content of your writing makes sense and avoids being confusing or involves you in a wreck! Syntax is the arrangement of words in the same way that there is a convention of how lanes are arranged on a highway. Left two lanes continue on the highway, next to right lane either continues or exits onto the ramp, and the far right lane exits. How confusing is it in a strange city to exit from the left lane without warning. Syntax, grammar and punctuation avoid a similar situation in articles. That is why they are so important.

Different languages use different syntax. English arranges adjectives before nouns in most cases whereas in French, adjectives, except for a few exceptions, follow the nouns. For a significant number of readers of *Orchids* whose first language is not English, use of grammar and punctuation is essential for comprehension. Just saying, “I don’t like commas so I am not using them,” leaves readers wondering what you mean in your article. Conversely, many of our authors think in one language and write in English for *Orchids* and commonly place English words and content into Spanish, German, etc. syntax, which makes reading such an article terribly confusing or convoluted. For all authors, it is essential to read your article out loud to yourself to make sure that it follows common rules of grammar, punctuation and English syntax and that sentences are not so long that they have become a marathon to read. Reading out loud forces the eye to read what is actually on the page and not skim over the article.

Commas. Use to set off non-restrictive appositives such as “The author’s nickname, Red, was obvious.” Also use commas to isolate asides or comments that might otherwise fit in parentheses such as “The Show was, to put it mildly, an astounding success.”

Commas and hyphens. Strings of adjectives preceding a noun are one of the most common errors and least understood concepts in grammar. Grammar is not a collection of mindless rules, but should be used to make language more easily read and understood by all of us. Please remember that many of the readers of *Orchids* have a first language that is not English. Grammar should clarify meaning and helps all readers understand what you are saying. For instance, the soft, striated sepals means that the sepals are soft and striated. Conversely, the soft-striated sepals means that the striations are soft rather than sharp. With soft striated petals, it is anyone’s guess as to what it means. Commas and hyphens do matter!

Lists of adjectives preceding a noun. The rule of thumb is that if you could put an “and” between two adjectives in a series, then they should be separated by a comma. The crystalline, red-brown petals glowed. In this case, the petals are both crystalline and red-brown. Conversely, the man was the largest orchid grower in the county. Orchid grower acts as a compound noun so largest modifies both orchid and

grower as a single entity. If you put a comma in after largest, it would mean largest and orchid were separate and independently modify grower and so suggest that the grower was a large man.

Commas after the dates or addresses. Use commas when the full date or address is given. When it is only the month and year or just a city or state, then commas are not used. The house at 123 Birch Rd., Everyville, North Carolina, was purchased by the current owner on May 17, 1982, but was built in October 1888 by William Housebuilder. William Housebuilder originally built houses in Pennsylvania in small farming communities.

Commas and quotations. Introduce quotes with a comma if a clause precedes it unless it is preceded by a word such as “that.” Ernest Hetherington said, “Good color is essential for quality awards”; but Ernest Hetherington said that “good color is essential for quality awards”. In the first case, good color starts a complete sentence. Adding the word “that” includes that in the quote as part of the transition, rather than as a separate thought where the comma was used in the first example.

Commas and clauses: Independent clauses should be separated by a comma unless very short. Incomplete clauses should not be separated by a comma because the verb in the first clause needs to be linked with the second incomplete clause. He went to the Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden to see the orchid library, and he wandered around the mango orchards. But, he went to the Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden information booth and to the gift shop. “To the gift shop” must not be separate (by placing a comma before it) from the subject and verb of the sentence, “he went.” A comma is also necessary when a dependent clause (the clause would not stand alone as a complete sentence) that begins with such words as if, whether, or when. Whether you become a judge or not, it does not matter to me. When the show opened, I rushed to the vendor area.

Commas with lists or clauses. Simple lists of items or clauses may be separated by commas. Complex lists that contain commas may be more readable with semicolons. In all cases, lists should be formatted similarly in terms of being preceded by verbs or prepositions; e.g., he went to the greenhouse, into the potting shed, and to the gravel pile. If this was more complex, then it should read: He went to the greenhouse and to the potting shed, and then filled a bucket from the gravel pile. Note in this instance, the first two prepositional phrases are linked by a comma following shed and with an “and” to combine them. The final clause contains a nonrelated verb and preposition and is set off with a comma and an additional “and.” With series of clauses connected by an “and” between the final two items, place a comma after the next to the last item and the word “and” to provide clarity and separation.

Semicolons. Use to join two related but independent clauses (both have verbs and can exist as a full sentence) that are closely related. However, for long independent clauses, it is better to split them into separate sentences. This gives more emphasis to the thoughts or ideas in your article. Semicolons may also be used in front of transitional adverbs such as therefore and however, which are then followed by a comma and the clause. For example, Reichenbach published the first description using that name; therefore, the name has priority over subsequently published descriptions using different names. Semicolons may also be used to link long lists of items or a series that contains commas within items and that might lead to confusion otherwise. Semicolons in this case identify separations between items or clauses that might otherwise not be clear to the reader.

Colons. Colons suggest an illustration or example when following an independent clauses; e.g., his collection included a wide range of orchids: cattleyas, oncidiums, stanhopeas, masdevallias and habenarias. A colon may also introduce a list or series; e.g., potting materials: bark, charcoal, coco fiber, sphagnum moss, or lava rock. Or it may separate a primary title from a subtitle in a book or articles; e.g., *Orchids: Scientific Studies*. Remember to not italicize punctuation in such instances.

Commas, periods and quotation marks. **Periods and commas fall inside (precede) both single and double quotation marks** unless the quotation mark is part of quoted name or title. He said, “It was the best orchid I have ever seen.” Or I just bought *Cattleya* Chocolate Drop ‘Kodoma’. In the latter case, ‘Kodoma’ is part of the full name for *Cattleya* Chocolate Drop. Quotes within quotes are set off by single quotation marks. She suggested that “orchids should be considered the ‘Great Obsession’”. Because there are two sets of quotation marks at the end of this sentence, then the period comes after both and is an exception to the rule. Citations should fall after the final quotation mark but before final periods or commas. Vinicolor paphiopedilums now “produce a high percentage of deep color” (Brown 2011).

Semicolons, colons exclamation marks. **Semicolons and colons should be outside (after) quotation marks.**

Quotation marks, exclamation marks and question marks. **Question marks and exclamation marks are generally placed after quotation marks** unless they are part of the quoted material. He said, “Wow!” but I cannot believe she meant “slow down”! In the latter case, it is the “I cannot believe” speaker who is making the exclamation, not the “she,” so the exclamation mark goes with the entire sentence, not the quoted “slow down.” exclamation marks and questions marks should be within parentheses if they are part of the words in the parentheses: (Wow!).

Parentheses (also see en and em dash)/brackets/braces. Parentheses ( ) first, then add internal brackets [ ], and finally add braces { } inside the brackets. For example, (*insigne* × *charlesworthii*);

(*superbiens* × [*insigne* × *charlesworthii*]); or (Winston Churchill × [*superbiens* × {*insigne* × *charlesworthii*}}).

**Italics.** Use them for Latin botanical names, titles of books or journals, plays, paintings, sculptures, films, operas, symphonies and other lengthy musical pieces. When using italics, do not italicize punctuation immediately preceding or following an italicized word, (*Cattleya skinneri*, a native of Costa Rica, is pretty.) Parentheses around an italicized phrase — "Skinner's cattleya (*Cattleya skinneri*) is hardy to Zone 9"— are always in Roman.

**En and em dash and hyphens.** On a keyboard, a hyphen is a single hyphen (aka the minus sign on the keyboard of a pc) and used to connect words such as red-splashed petals where one word modifies another. AOS style is to use ragged right margins and not hyphenate split words between two lines. So-called en dashes are longer than a hyphen and created by pressing the minus sign and Control on the keypad on the side of your pc keyboard or minus plus the Option key on a mac. They are used to connect ranges such as pages, measurements or words of equal weight (pages 3–8, 4.5–6 cm, east–west border). An em dash is typed by pressing Ctrl, Alt and the minus sign on the side numerical keypad on a pc or, if you are using a tablet without a numerical keypad, then go to the INSERT menu in Word and across to the right side of that menu and find the em dash in SYMBOL; or Shift, Option and minus (this latter on the top of the keyboard) on a Mac. They may replace commas or parentheses to add emphasis to a phrase or an aside. His *Cattleya labiata*—at least it was sold to him as a *Cattleya labiata*—turned out to be a hybrid. Commas are normally used in such cases, but to make the phrase more of an aside, use parentheses. Em dashes give the phrase even more weight but should not be overused.

**Hyphens and words that end in ly.** Do not hyphenate ly words in front of an adverb, e.g., lightly veined sepals, but light veined-sepals. In general, adverbs that precede a word ending in ed, which modify a noun, are hyphenated. Purple-veined lip. But when ed combinations do not precede a noun, then they are not hyphenated. The lip was purple veined. Or even better, the lip was veined purple.

**Contractions.** Do not use! Spell out I'm, they're, it's, etc. to I am, they are here, it is.

**Italics, capital letters, quotation marks or underlining for emphasis.** When you are speaking, it is easy to raise your voice a bit, change the speed of talking, or stop and look at the listener to add emphasis to a word or phrase. When you are writing, you can still do that by using a short sentence or adding an exclamation mark. Individual words or phrases may appear within the body of a sentence that you feel have a high degree of significance. It is acceptable to highlight the word or phrase occasionally. If you do

it often, the emphasis loses its impact. So avoid where possible. If you must, then you may capitalize a word (WOW factor), place it in italics (*Never* before had an explorer climbed these cliffs to collect orchids), quotation marks (the word “and” is used to link two clauses) but avoid the use of underlining. Before the age of computers, when manuscripts were typed on a manual typewriter, italics was not available. To indicate italics, underlining was used so it is now redundant.

That vs. which. That is correct in restrictive clauses; which is correct in nonrestrictive clauses. Use which with a comma preceding it when the clause is more of a comment, something that could be put in parentheses and that is not essential. Use that with no comma in front of it for clauses that define something that is crucial. For example, the flower, which had a little transport damage, was vividly colored. The important meaning in this sentence is vivid color and the transport damage is a side comment and not essential. Alternately, the plant that is by the greenhouse door is the one you should take. You are talking about a specific plant and giving directions that are essential for finding it.

Who/whom: Who is the subject of a clause or sentence; whom is the object of a verb or preposition. Who are you going to make head judge; to whom it may concern or the judge whom you selected. With such phrases or when in doubt, it is easier to turn the sentence around and it becomes apparent that whom is the object: you selected whom.

Me/myself: Me is an object pronoun, meaning that it refers to the person that the action of a verb is being done to, or to whom a preposition refers, i.e., Please call the editor or me (not myself). Myself is a reflexive or stressed pronoun. Generally speaking, it should be used only in conjunction with the subject pronoun I; for example, I did it myself. Myself can be used for stress but should not be used alone. The common practice of saying “please see myself” is incorrect. While myself can be reflexive (I myself or I’m doing something for myself), most often you should use me.

### Further Reading

*Chicago Manual of Style*, 16<sup>th</sup> Edition. 2010. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. The venerated reference for publishing known simply in the trade as ‘Chicago’ with answers to even the most obscure questions.

Rabinowitz, H. and S. Vogel, Eds. 2009. *The Manual of Scientific Style*. Boston, MA: Academic Press. Fills in the gap for science writers that ‘Chicago’ skips over.

Truss, L. 2003. *Eats, Shoots & Leaves*. New York: Avery. So you think grammar is a total yawn and about as fun as reading the IRS guide to preparing income tax for professional preparers? Think again. This book is refreshing and funny, full of history and points out the differences between UK conventions and American conventions for grammar. Small wonder it made the *NY Times* Bestseller List. Maybe the IRS should hire this writer to explain tax guides!