

Canadian Press Style Guide

An Overview

The Canadian Press Stylebook is the standard for most universities and colleges in the country, but it also goes through regular revisions. The current edition is the thirteenth.

Titles should be used with given name and surname on first reference, and long titles should be offset in apposition. You should only use titles rarely after the first use (this is not always true for the university environment):

Dean John Michaels was in attendance.

Jane Rutherford, Acting Dean of Pharmacy, attended the meeting.

In general, do not use the courtesy titles Mr., Mrs., Ms or Miss. When possible, refer to a married couple by their first names and then their last name; when they do not share the same last name, an explanation is necessary.

Jane Smith and Erin Michaels, a married couple, do not share a surname. Jason and Erin Lee do.

According to CP Style, the professional title “Dr.” is only used for licensed health care professionals, such as dentists, veterinarians, and chiropractors (note that this can conflict with the university environment and the University’s style guide). Currently, the title is followed by a period, though this is not typically the case in many newspapers and some universities or the older editions of the CP Stylebook):

Dr. Jane Smith, a chiropractor, addressed the audience.

Jack Turner, a doctor of philosophy, delivered his presentation to his peers.

In CP Style, capitalize the names of universities but not their departments (this conflicts with much standard practice), and use lowercase for schools:

The University of Alberta’s department of economics has received national accolades.

The faculty of arts is among the largest in Canada, and the department of English is particularly well-known. Both encourage the Victoria high school’s growth.

Spell out numbers under ten, and use figures for those 10 and above. Do not use commas to separate different units of the type of measure. Spell out first through ninth and use figures for higher enumerations:

We had three batteries, nine minutes 30 seconds of preparation time, 12 rolls of wire, nine light bulbs, and 30 inches of solder, but not even one solder iron.

Other rules for numbers:

- For numbers at the beginning of a sentence, always spell the number
- Use Roman numerals only for sequences of people or animals, such as in a lineage
- Do not list decades or centuries in the possessive form (ie: 1920s not 1920's)

For possessives, use an apostrophe s for all words not ending in s. For those that end in an s, plural words are followed by an apostrophe alone while singular words are followed by an apostrophe s, unless it would be distracting to speak it aloud with the extra syllable, in which case use only an apostrophe:

The faculty of engineering raised the instructors' salary. (plural possessive)

Professor Jones's class was unruly. (singular possessive. Alternatively: "Professors Jones' class...")

Joint possessives use only one apostrophe. Individual possessives require two:

Jane Jones and Frank Phung's proposal was unanimously accepted. (joint possessive)

We are interested in two of the proposals coming from faculty members in the department of genetics: Dr. Johnson's and Monica Engstrom's.

CP Style uses the Oxford English Dictionary as its authoritative guide for spelling. Where alternative spellings are listed, use the first.

For abbreviations, omit periods unless the abbreviation is geographical. For degrees, most lowercase and mixed abbreviations take periods unless they begin and end with a capital letter.

Dr. Smithe was present when Ben Nielsen was awarded his PhD, but he did miss the convocation for Nielsen's M.Sc. two years earlier.

Dates and times are not abbreviated, but months may be abbreviated when they follow a specific date.

January 2005 was particularly cold, but on Mar. 5, 2005, this all changed.