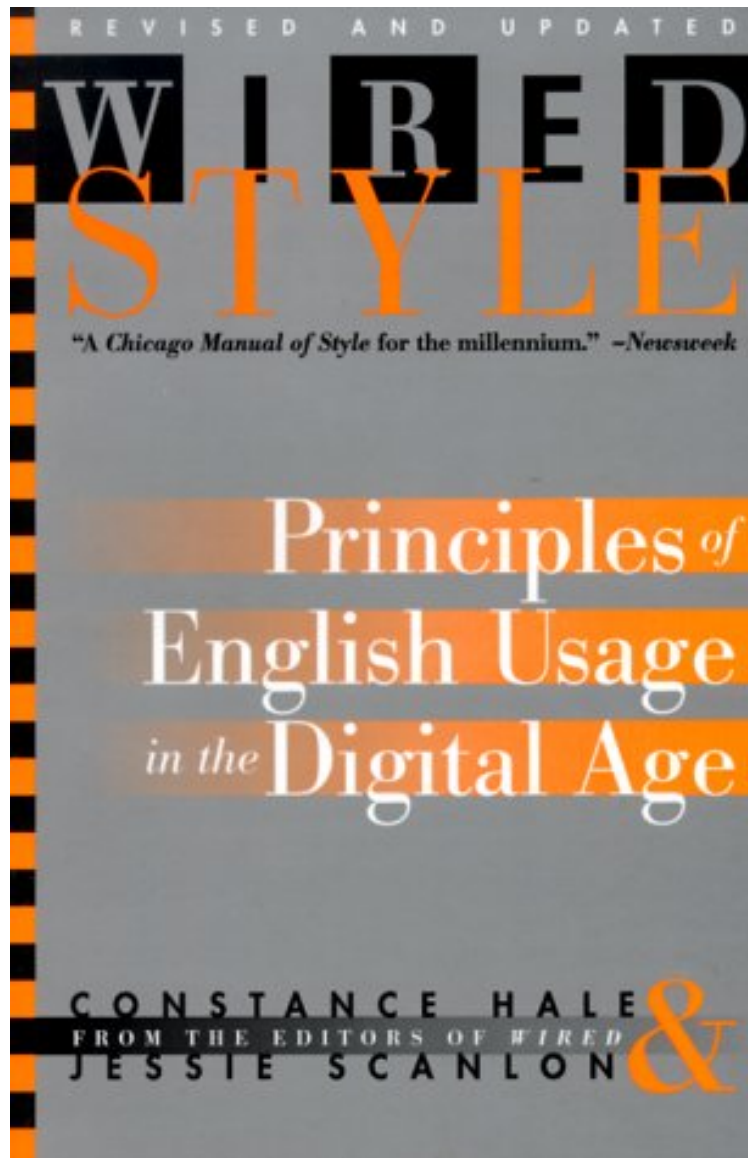


[FREE] Wired Style: Principles of English Usage in the Digital Age

## Wired Style: Principles of English Usage in the Digital Age

Constance Hale, Jessie Scanlon  
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**Constance Hale, Jessie Scanlon : Wired Style: Principles of English Usage in the Digital Age** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Wired Style: Principles of English Usage in the Digital Age*:

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Oh. My. GAWD. By A Customer Having read through the first edition, I looked forward to the next, which was supposed to be organized like a real style guide (read: *The AP Stylebook* and *Libel Manual*) and less like an in-your-face, smarmy declaration of war against English. At least the

editors of Wired accomplished that much, renaming some key writing principles like "Screw the Rules" with "Be Irreverent." But you really have to wonder about a style guide which quotes Entertainment Weekly -- that's right, Entertainment Weekly, that standard bearer of educational enlightenment -- not once, but TWICE on its back cover. This means that the publishers had a hard time coming up with complementary quotes to fill in the space. I work as a copywriter for a book publisher, and to quote the same publication twice on the same cover is simply bad, bad form -- only the most desperate of publishers do so. Little wonder why EW reviewed this book -- after all, Wired Style is SO funny, like the little jab it takes at hackers when defining "Trojan Horse": "The work of dark-side hackers. A seemingly innocuous program that hides a malicious virus.... the word is proof that hackers read the classics." Ha. Ha. Isn't that smart? Because we all thought hackers hadn't read the classics, and wouldn't know what a Trojan Horse is. You'd never find this kind of "humor," this smartalecky take on English usage, in the New York Times Manual of Style and Usage. It IS useful to have a guide to help explain such terms as "Trojan Horse," "Watermark," and "dpi" in context of the Web and computers (thus the two stars), but Wired Style has a long way to go before it can compare to the authoritative works such as the NYT and AP guides -- which do not, despite Wired Style's continued claim in both editions of their guide, force writers to call Bill Gates "William H. Gates III, chairman of Microsoft Corporation." (This claim is based on a general rule for identifying people who are not immediately recognizable to the general public -- Bill Gates doesn't qualify. The editors at Wired really should know better.)

63 of 65 people found the following review helpful. Not a very useful stylebook

By A Customer

As a copy editor, I have to try to find a consistent spelling for terms that appear regularly, some of which are not yet in the dictionary. In 1998 I bought the 1996 hardcover version of this book, thinking it would fill in the gaps dictionaries and other stylebooks have left regarding how to consistently spell "website," "webpage," "email," "e-commerce," "Internet," "intranet," etc. It was the only book I saw on the subject back then. The capitalization of "Internet" makes some sense, but capitalizing "Web site" and making it two words does not really, especially since in the 1999 revised soft cover version they add the possibilities of lowercased, unhyphenated single words like "webzine" and "webmaster" (not Webmaster, etc.). The insistence on not hyphenating "email" but hyphenating "e-commerce" ends up making an article I edited look ridiculously inconsistent. I had "Web site," "intranet," "Internet," "email," "e-commerce" and other terms all appearing in the same story. And let's face it, everyone spells it "website" in email (e-mail?) except the authors of this stylebook. I find it useless and hope to find a better stylebook for internet and other techno-specific terms that considers the needs of copy editors.

Thank goodness for the book's index re: finding what I was looking for though!

51 of 53 people found the following review helpful. High Cyber Snoot Factor

By Robert Stribley

If you're not careful, reading this book could make you feel pretty hip, pretty web-savvy, and maybe even a little superior; but you might feel a little dirty when it's all over. First off, and most importantly, Wired Style isn't a style book. Strunk White for the web, it ain't. That book hasn't been written yet. Wired Style is certainly written in the Wired style, but it provides mostly definitions and few examples of usage. Wired Style \*is\* funny sometimes, witty sometimes and condescending often. It may help you learn a fair bit about the web. I could even say it's an engaging read. But it's not gonna help you become a better writer, which is what style guides are intended to do. A better-informed writer? OK. So, essentially, Wired Style is, you know, it's pretty snazzy, rad, awesome, boss. It's da bomb. It's way cool. (Sorry, I guess you get the point.) Which means it'll sound pretty out-dated within a few years. But it makes for a light, fun, superiority complex-inducing read right now. For those concerned with "e-mail" versus "email," "web site" versus "website" and other similar dilemmas, just strive for consistency in your own writing. Also, hyphens usually disappear over time, so if you're typing "email" instead of "e-mail," you're just ahead of the curve; we'll probably all be writing it that way eventually.

Features a comprehensive, comprehensible A to Z list covering acronyms and when to use them, computer buzzwords and when to lose them, and playful additions to your literary lexicon. Softcover.

.com Remarkably more down-to-earth than its predecessor, the revised Wired Style guide is a handy little reference for digerati, or those who think they are. This version is much more accessible to general Internet users, not unlike the Web, which has become more mainstream in the three years since the original publication was released. (The previous edition was criticized for its pomposity and near-incomprehensibility.) This revision still delivers the inside scoop, though. You'll not only learn how to talk about cyberspace (for example, you can read about the evolution of the term "email" and why Wired prefers it without the hyphen), you'll also get an encyclopedic listing of all the trendy lingo that describes it. Geared heavily toward high-tech communications writers but of use to any Web surfer, this pocket-size manual employs a very simple structure: it contains a short and well-organized discussion on writing technical material clearly and interestingly; a compact but thorough dictionary of relevant terms; a brief style FAQ (with answers to questions such as, "What's the deal with all those capital letters in the middle of words?"); and a petite index. The introduction offers 10 "Principles for Writing Well in the Digital Age," encouraging you to "play with voice," "capture the colloquial," and "flaunt your subcultural literacy," all trademarks of Wired's tendency to be esoteric. Sure, it's fun and cool to be colloquial and subculturally in the know, but it's just as important to be widely understood. Luckily, in this edition, the editors have caught on to this, and have produced a guide that is smart, useful,

and almost unpretentious. --Teri Kieffer  
From Library Journal  
Everyone today is traveling the information superhighway, surfing the net, sending and receiving E-mail, and creating a homepage. Along with the digital revolution come big changes in our language and word usage. The editors of Wired magazine take up these changes in this product of their new publishing division. The work looks at how the digital age has changed the way we write; it sets out to give a new set of rules to use along with Elements of Style and The Chicago Manual of Style. A large part of the book is lists of words and acronyms with definitions, e.g., "IRL?in real life?Online shorthand. All caps." The book looks like the magazine without the color; the binding is hardcover with concealed wire-o and slipcase. This interesting, artful, and inexpensive edition will find a niche in most collections. ?Lisa J. Cihlar, Winfield P. L., Ill.  
Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.  
From Booklist  
In an effort to stay on top of changes not addressed in Strunk and White, AP, or The Chicago Manual of Style, Hale and her fellow editors at Wired magazine waded through the "shifting verbal currents of the post-Gutenberg era" to determine where jargon stops and the vernacular of digiculture begins. This annotated glossary includes technological terms, phrases, acronyms, and idioms commonly used on the Internet, World Wide Web, news groups, and online forums. Wired's style sheet shows how to incorporate an e-mail or Web address in prose, how to deal with hyphens, and how to make a plural of the computer mouse. Although they prefer mice, mice is also acceptable. (Remarkably, Douglas Engelbart, who invented this ubiquitous pointing device in 1964, hadn't given the matter much thought.) By taking on the colloquial online voice, the editors reach into the heart of the Net to help writers who may be composing e-mail, business letters, term papers, or articles-- anyone who wants to use the new parlance more effectively. This hardcover edition has concealed wire-O binding and a slipcase. Jennifer Henderson