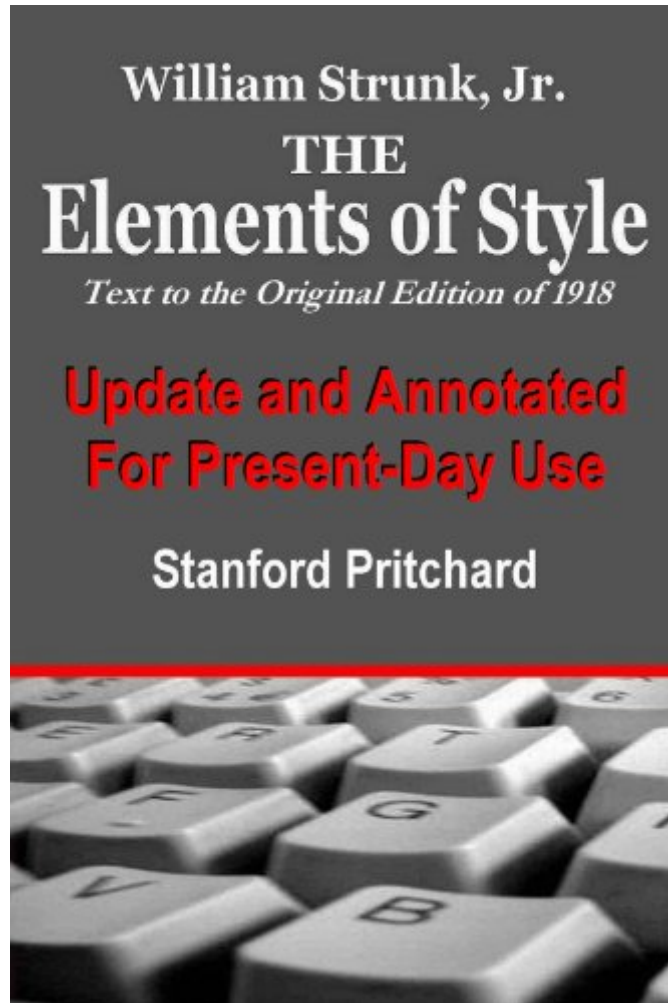


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# The Elements Of Style, Annotated And Updated For Present-Day Use



## Synopsis

ABOUT THE ELEMENTS OF STYLE: UPDATED FOR PRESENT-DAY USE  
The ancients wrote at a time when the great art of writing badly had not yet been invented. In those days to write at all meant to write well. • “ Georg Christoph Lichtenberg. I was originally born in Ohio.... Well, that’s interesting, I thought, as I absentmindedly listened to the sports announcer on the radio. Wait! STOP! “I was ORIGINALLY BORN IN OHIO...”? Well, gosh. Where were you born after THAT? Then there are the baseball commentators who routinely say things like: “If he makes that play, the run may not have scored.” Well, again, wait just a minute. “If he MAKES that play...” But the play is already over. Why is the sentence in the present tense? “...The run may not have scored.” But it DID score, so in this case, the proper word is “might,” “MIGHT not have scored.” A baseball announcer with any feeling for elementary good grammar would have said: “If he had made that play, the run might not have scored.” Oh, and then there are little niceties like this: “If I’m the Dallas Cowboys, I gotta believe....” But you AREN’T the Dallas Cowboys, and besides, how could one person be an entire football organization? Okay, okay, sports broadcasters are easy to pick on (though one wonders why sports announcers, who are paid to speak, can’t speak clearly, grammatically, and well). The problem is -- and it’s the problem squarely confronted in this book -- that such loose, breezy, and ungrammatical language is epidemic in print, too. Newspapers and magazines are full of clichés and buzzwords, and there’s not one writer in ten who understands that difference between “lay” and “lie.” If you have a friend who goes duck hunting, and s/he gives you a bunch of down, you might want to LAY the down on your mattress. Similarly, you LAY turf in the yard, or LAY bricks in the patio. But when you take to your bed for a nap, you LIE down. (The issue is clarified in this book.) Language, whether spoken or written, is like a game, and like all games, it has rules. Now, “rules” does not have to be a scary word, and we all know that in language, the rules are constantly changing. “Ain’t” was once a fairly common, and unremarkable, word, but nowadays, the President cannot use “ain’t” in a State of the Union address; that’s just the way the game is currently played. Furthermore, we judge language, whether spoken or written, by how well it accomplishes its ends within the agreed-upon rules. (On the subject of games without rules, Robert Frost said, apropos free verse: “I would as soon play tennis with the net down.”) There are many rules, formal and informal, and many little distinctions, to be learned, in language, and the author considers it fun, rather than a chore, to learn them. What is the difference between “loath” and “loathe”? When do we use “who,” and when do we use “whom”? What is a gerund, what is apposition? These, and many other niceties of language, are investigated and explained in this updating of William Strunk, Jr.’s classic work. The book is based on Strunk’s original text of 1918,

which he wrote for the use of his students at Cornell University; it proved to be a landmark. The book was revised and expanded by E.B. White, of New Yorker fame, in 1959, but it has had no significant update since 1979. And since that time, many little affronts (for some of us, insults) to the eye and ear have gotten into the language. So here is a new edition of Strunk's classic work, with many of his rules and pronouncements expanded and explained; with new sections on proper usage and correct spelling; and even a "Rogue's Gallery" comprised of samples of egregious writing culled from current newspapers and magazines. For anyone who will reflect on it, language is an ongoing, fascinating adventure. The author intends this book to make that adventure more rewarding, and more enjoyable. Oh. The difference between "dryer" and "drier"? That, like so mu

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## **Customer Reviews**

I have the original paperback version of this book. I decided to buy a Kindle edition and took a look at available options. While the original version can be obtained for free, this book will bring you more value. I liked the fact that this particular edition is updated for modern use. While the original book is brilliant, one shouldn't forget that it was written almost a century ago. So, some insights to outdated rules and expressions are worth the price.

I'm not a grammarian. I'm a writer (novels *Cologne No. 10 For Men and Well Considered*) who is finding Stanford Pritchard's recent revision of William Strunk, Jr.'s *The Elements of Style--Updated and Annotated For Present-Day Use* quite useful. The original *Elements of Style*, however serviceable it has been over the past century, is out of date and does not conform to current practice. Pritchard's revisions bring it up to date. I consider "Strunk and Pritchard" to be an authoritative reference and a handy tool for evaluating my grammar, usage, principles of composition, expressions, commonly misspelled words, punctuation, choice of words (clicks), and "other irritating solecisms." Pritchard's new sections on Usage and Punctuation, and his "Rogue's Gallery" of "Haphazard Writing in Newspapers and Magazines" are informative and entertaining. Considering his many years of writing and editing for top-rated journals and publications, I trust his literary judgment. I also enjoy his dry wit. I will keep S&P on my bookshelf above my computer next to my Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary and use it often. I have already used it in this manner: I studied it throughout (it's not long), compared my writing to the S&P recommendations, noted the differences in the margins, and searched my text using Word's Search Document to locate opportunities to improve my writing. I have also picked up S&P and consulted the new alphabetical Usage section several times. I do argue with the recommendations occasionally before changing my text.

This book is wonderful in so many ways. I've used it for 20+ years to craft active prose. It is something that all students should use to improve their writing skills. I am an English professor who strongly encourages all students to read this book, and I am grateful for its timely update.

I have been using the printed edition of *The Elements of Style* for over 25 yrs. in my work at the law firm. I found it to be a quicker resource than anything else and easy to use. Every person who does any editing (as I do once a week) should have a copy either on Kindle or paperback. Paperback is actually easier to use than on my Kindle.

I have the original one as well... This one is heavily "wordy" by the contributors. I now know the annotation doesn't follow the rules set out in the book, so the advice falls in on itself.

To have an updated version of Strunk and White is an invaluable asset in today's writing world. So many changes in the way the language is misused and misinterpreted, it's nice to have some solid

advise on usage. Good to have along with my other reference works.

Every author needs at least one style guide. Niggling questions about where the punctuation goes and other mysteries arise. This is certainly one of the most trusted, and it's updated for modern usage. Do not try using a guide from the 1920s today. Follow your BLISS, Ronda Del Boccio best selling author and speaker

This is a must to read if not to own and reference. The updated version gives further insight and explanation, but overall the information remains valid for writers in the modern day. I refer to this when needed or when instructing writing.

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