

A Short Guide to Writing about Art

SEVENTH EDITION

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- ✓ **A Writer's Checklist: Revising a Draft**
- ✓ Is the title of the essay informative and interesting? (p. 147) Is it in the proper form? (pp. 260–61).
- ✓ Is the opening paragraph interesting, and by its end does it focus on the topic? (pp. 177–80)
- ✓ Is the work of art identified as precisely as possible (artist, material, location, date, and so on)? (pp. 262, 303) Are photocopies of works of art included?
- ✓ Is the point (thesis) stated soon enough—perhaps even in the title—and is it kept in view? (pp. 16, 100–01, 144, 225–27)
- ✓ Is the organization reasonable and clear? (pp. 17–18, 145–46, 254) Does each point lead into the next without irrelevancies?
- ✓ Is each paragraph unified by a topic sentence or topic idea? (pp. 170–71) Do transitions connect the paragraphs? (pp. 172–74).
- ✓ Are generalizations and assertions about personal responses supported by evidence—by references to concrete details in the work? (pp. 29–30)
- ✓ Are the sentences concise, clear, and emphatic? Are needless words and inflated language eliminated? (pp. 156–58, 161–63)
- ✓ Is the concluding paragraph conclusive without being repetitive? (pp. 180–82)
- ✓ Are the dates and quotations accurate? Is credit given to sources? (pp. 279–83)
- ✓ Are quotations introduced adequately, so that the reader understands why each one is offered? (pp. 256–57)
- ✓ Are the long quotations really necessary? Can some be shortened (using ellipses to indicate omissions) or summarized in my own words? (p. 275)
- ✓ Are the titles of works of art—other than architecture—underlined? (p. 274)
- ✓ Are footnotes and bibliographic references in the proper form? (pp. 283–303)
- ✓ Has the essay been proofread? (p. 304) Are spelling and punctuation correct?

Bibliography (List of Works Cited)

A bibliography is a list of the works cited or, less often, a list of all relevant sources. (There is rarely much point in the second sort; if a particular book or article wasn't important enough to cite, why list it?) Normally a bibliography is given only in a long manuscript such as a research paper or a book, but instructors may require a bibliography even for a short paper if they wish to see at a glance the material that the student has used. In this case a heading such as "Works Cited" is less pretentious than "Bibliography."

Bibliographic Style

Because a bibliography is arranged alphabetically by author, the author's *last name is given first* in each entry. If a work is by more than one author, it is given under the first author's name; this author's last name is given first, but the other author's or authors' names follow the normal order of first name first. (See the entry under Rosenfield, below.)

Anonymous works are listed by title at the appropriate alphabetical place, giving the initial article, if any, but alphabetizing under the next word. Thus an anonymous essay entitled "A View of Leonardo" would retain the "A" but would be alphabetized under V for "View."

In typing an entry, use double-spacing. Begin flush with the lefthand margin; if the entry runs over the line, indent the subsequent lines of the entry five spaces. Double-space between entries.

A Book by One Author

Howard, Deborah. Venice and the East: The Impact of the Islamic World on Venetian Architecture. Yale University Press., 2000.

Notice that article (here *the*, but also *a* and *an*), conjunctions (here *and*), and pronouns (here *of* and *on*) are not capitalized except when they are the first or last word of the title or of the subtitle (here, *The Impact*).

An Exhibition Catalog

An exhibition catalog may be treated as a book, but some journals add "ex. cat." after the title of a catalog. The first example, a catalog that includes essays by several authors, gives the editor's name, which is specified on the title page. The second example is a catalog by a single author.

Barnet, Peter, ed. Images in Ivory: Precious Objects of the Gothic Age, exh. cat. Detroit: Detroit Institute of Arts, 1997.

Tinterow, Gary. Master Drawings by Picasso, exh. cat. Cambridge, Mass.: Fogg Art Museum, 1981.

A Book or Catalog by More Than One Author

Rosenfield, John M., and Elizabeth ten Grotenhuis. Journey of the Three Jewels: Japanese Buddhist Paintings from Western Collections. New York: Asia Society, 1979.

Notice in this entry that although the book is alphabetized under the *last name* of the *first* author, the name of the second author is given in the ordinary way, first name first.

A Collection or Anthology

Nelson, Robert S., ed. Visuality before and beyond the Renaissance. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

If a collection has more than one editor, use the following form:

Goldwater, Robert, and Marco Treves, eds. Artists on Art. New York: Pantheon, 1945.

This entry lists the collection alphabetically under the first editor's last name. Notice that the second editor's name is given first name first. A collection may be listed either under the editor's name or under the first word of the title.

An Essay in a Collection or Anthology

Livingstone, Jane, and John Beardsley. "The Poetics and Politics of Hispanic Art: A New Perspective." In Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display, ed. Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine, 104–20. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian, 1991.

This entry lists an article by Livingstone and Beardsley (notice that the first author's name is given with the last name first, but the second author's name is given first name first) in a book called *Exhibiting Cultures*, edited by Karp and Lavine. The essay appears on pages 104–20.

Two or More Works by the Same Author

Cahill, James. Chinese Painting. Geneva: Skira, 1960.

_____. Scholar Painters of Japan: The Nanga School. New York: Asia House, 1972.

The horizontal line (eight units of underlining, followed by a period and then two spaces) indicates that the author (in this case James Cahill) is the same as in the previous item. Note also that multiple titles by the same author are arranged alphabetically (*Chinese* precedes *Scholar*).

An Introduction to a Book by Another Author

Clark, Kenneth. Introduction to Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art, by James Hall, 2nd ed. New York: Harper and Row, 1979.

This entry indicates that the student made use of Clark's introduction rather than the main body of Hall's book; if the body of the book were used, the book would be alphabetized under *H* for Hall, and the title would be followed by: Intro. Kenneth Clark.

An Edited Book

Rossetti, Dante Gabriel. Letters of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Edited by Oswald Doughty and J. R. Wahl. 4 vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1965.

A Journal Article

Mitchell, Dolores. "The 'New Woman' as Prometheus: Women Artists Depict Women Smoking." Woman's Art Journal 12, no. 1 (1991): 2–9.

Because this journal paginates each issue separately, the issue number must be given. For a journal that paginates issues continuously, give the year without the issue number.

A Newspaper Article

"Museum Discovers Fake." New York Times, 21 January 1990, D29.

Romero, Maria. "New Sculpture Unveiled." Washington Post, 18 March 1980, 6.

Because the first of these newspaper articles is unsigned, it is alphabetized under the first word of the title; because the second is signed, it is alphabetized under the author's last name.

A Book Review

Gevisser, Mark. Review of Art of the South African Townships, by Gavin Younger. Art in America 77, no. 7 (1989): 35–39.

This journal paginates each issue separately, so the issue number must be given as well as the year.

Electronic Sources

See pages 245–47.

ART BULLETIN STYLE*

The following material through page 303 is a verbatim reprint of the *Art Bulletin Style Guide*, except that it omits material relevant only to contributors to *Art Bulletin*, such as instructions concerning the maximum

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