

Top 25 Print and Online Editorial Resources

QUICK HELP

BASIC

EXPANDED

PROFESSIONAL

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No editor or proofreader lifts a pencil or touches a mouse without a few essential reference works at the ready. This aid lists twenty-five of the must-use resources for you to have and use.



Key Print and Online Editorial Resources

At a minimum you should have:

1. *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Eleventh edition (to check spellings, capitalizations, and hyphenations)
2. *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th edition (for guidance on grammar, usage, punctuation, names, titles, numbers, and a thousand other details)

After these two, the universe of optional extras expands. Here are some of the brightest:

3. *Edit Yourself*, by Bruce Ross-Larson
4. *Garner's Modern American Usage*, by Bryan A. Garner
5. *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*
6. *The Associated Press Stylebook*
7. *The Careful Writer*, by Theodore M. Bernstein
8. *The Copyeditor's Handbook*, by Amy Einsohn
9. *The Elephants of Style*, by Bill Walsh
10. *The Gremlins of Grammar*, by Toni Boyle and K. D. Sullivan
11. *Woe Is I*, by Patricia T. O'Connor
12. *Word Court*, by Barbara Wallraff
13. *Words Into Type*, 3rd edition, by Marjorie E. Skillin and Robert M. Gay

The World Wide Reference Department

In addition to online versions of some of the hard-copy reference tools listed above, the Internet offers a nearly endless supply of editorial guidance. It's also the quickest, easiest way to double-check almost any fact, as long as you remember one thing: *just because it's posted on the Internet doesn't mean it's correct*. Carefully consider the source of any information you find online and try to corroborate it before you use it.



Here are some valuable sites to consider in starting your own online reference library. (Note: The information here was current at the time of this writing, but on the web change is the only constant. Be prepared to do a little detective work should any of these addresses change.):

14. [Acronym Finder](http://www.acronymfinder.com/) (<http://www.acronymfinder.com/>). Find definitions quickly for almost any acronym, abbreviation, or initialism. A terrific tool that lets you sort by category and industry.
15. [Answers.com](http://www.answers.com) (<http://www.answers.com>). If you have questions, Answers.com has up-to-date answers. It's like an encyclopedia crossed with a dictionary supercharged by Google.
16. [AP Stylebook](http://www.apstylebook.com/) (<http://www.apstylebook.com/>). The journalist's standard style guide is available online by subscription for \$20 per year. With a site license, you can also customize it with your own entries.
17. [Bartleby.com](http://www.bartleby.com/) (<http://www.bartleby.com/>). This is your dream library, online. From reference books to poetry to fiction to the classics, this site has the books—and the search tools. Look up facts, nail down quotations, or read a whole book, right here.
18. [Chicago Manual of Style, 15th ed.](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/search.html) <http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/search.html>). This search tool speeds you to answers in the print version of the editor's standard style guide.
19. [Dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com) (www.dictionary.com). Different dictionaries can offer slightly different definitions. At this site, you'll find definitions from several of your favorite resources—great when you want different perspectives. It also shows your chosen word in different languages. Not quite as robust as yourDictionary.com (listed below), this is still a great site with a number of excellent features.
20. [Google](http://www.google.com/) (<http://www.google.com/>). How are others using a term or spelling a name? This giant database will tell you. But remember—it simply contains what's published, mistakes and all. If you can, make sure several Google sources agree before you use what you find.
21. [Guide to Grammar & Writing](http://www.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/) (<http://www.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/>). This site will fill you in, good-naturedly, on anything you'd like to know about grammar and composition. Nicely indexed and easy to use.



22. [Merriam-Webster Online \(http://www.m-w.com/\)](http://www.m-w.com/). If you can't spell a word, how do you look it up? Answer: Go to this site. All of *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* is here, plus search options that steer you to correct spellings, and more. You can use the tenth edition at no charge or subscribe to use the eleventh edition. And if you already own the hard copy of the eleventh, a year's subscription is free.
23. [Thesaurus.com \(http://thesaurus.reference.com/\)](http://thesaurus.reference.com/). Have your way with words. This is your online look-up tool for synonyms and antonyms.
24. [Webopedia.com \(http://www.webopedia.com/\)](http://www.webopedia.com/). A great source for computer and Internet technology terms and definitions.
25. [yourDictionary.com \(http://www.yourdictionary.com/\)](http://www.yourdictionary.com/). How do you say hello in Hindi? Find out here. This site links to online dictionaries that translate English into more than 300 languages, and vice versa. It has a world of information on English words, too.

For more help in the world of words, see our entire set of easy-to-use [Job Aids for Effective Communication](#) that give you quick, clear guidance as you prepare anything from a memo to a manual to a web page.

