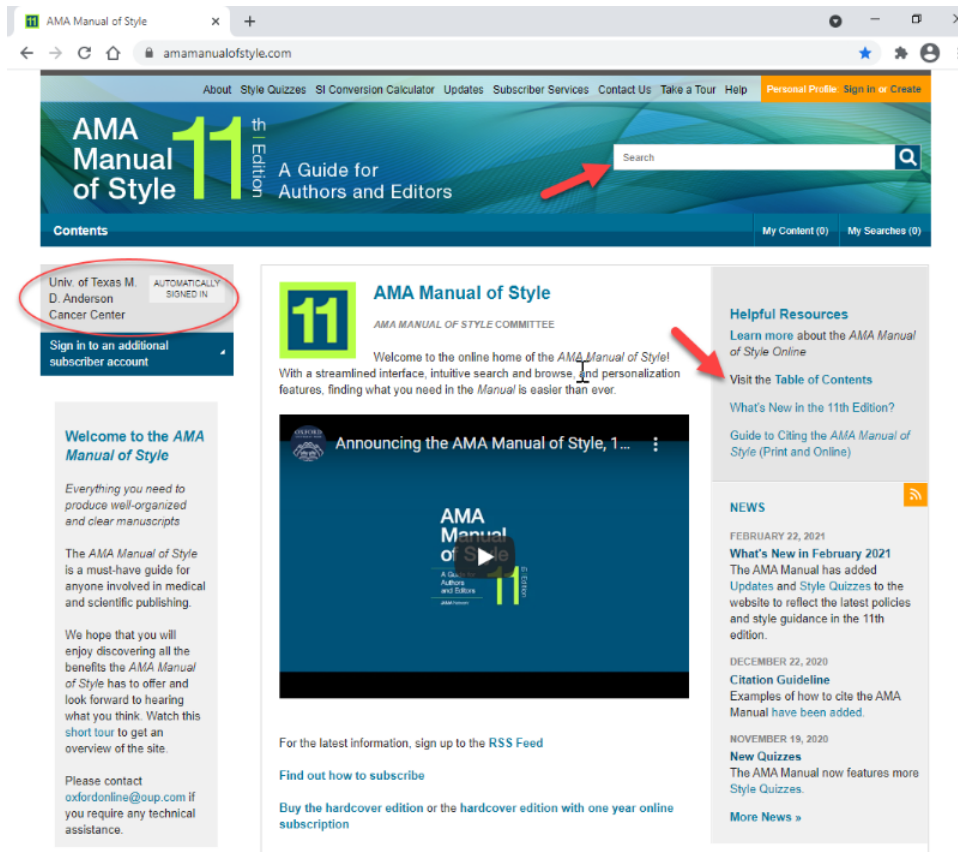


# Word for Word

Get your questions answered  
with (the *AMA Manual of*) Style



The screenshot shows the homepage of the AMA Manual of Style website. The header includes navigation links like 'About', 'Style Quizzes', 'SI Conversion Calculator', 'Updates', 'Subscriber Services', 'Contact Us', 'Take a Tour', and 'Help'. A search bar is located in the top right. The main banner features the title 'AMA Manual of Style 11th Edition' and a subtitle 'A Guide for Authors and Editors'. A red arrow points to the search bar. Below the banner, there's a 'Contents' link and a 'My Content (0)' link. On the left, a sidebar shows the user is logged in as 'Univ. of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center' and offers a 'Sign in to an additional subscriber account' button. The main content area has a 'Welcome to the AMA Manual of Style' message, a video player titled 'Announcing the AMA Manual of Style, 11th Edition', and links to 'Find out how to subscribe' and 'Buy the hardcover edition or the hardcover edition with one year online subscription'. On the right, there's a 'Helpful Resources' section with links to 'Learn more about the AMA Manual of Style Online', 'Visit the Table of Contents', 'What's New in the 11th Edition?', and 'Guide to Citing the AMA Manual of Style (Print and Online)'. Below that is a 'NEWS' section with updates from February 2021, December 2020, and November 2020.

Are pie charts acceptable in a research article?

Is “sacrificed” acceptable terminology for the end of a mouse experiment?

Is “t test” or “t-test” preferable?

Editors look up style questions like these all the time, and we often find answers in the *AMA Manual of Style*. MD Anderson employees have free online access to this resource through the Research Medical Library.

The 11th edition of *AMA Manual of Style: A Guide for Authors and Editors* was published last year. It can be trusted for its information on everything from punctuation to nomenclature to ethical considerations.

Some of the information in the manual specifies the style used by JAMA Network journals (for example, how to format references and how to present numbers). However, most of the information is broadly useful in scientific publishing. For example, Chapter 4 on tables, figures, and multimedia provides great advice about effective ways to display data, and Chapter 11 on correct and preferred usage covers commonly misused scientific and medical terms. Chapter 14 covers nomenclature, such as that used for cancer staging and drug names.

To use the manual, go to <https://www.amamanualofstyle.com/> while logged into the MD Anderson network. You should see the name of the institution and “Automatically signed in” near the top left of the screen (as circled in the screenshot above). If that doesn’t work, go to the Research Medical Library website at <https://www3.mdanderson.org/library/>, search for “AMA Manual 11th edition,” and click on “Available online.” On the manual home page, you can either enter a topic in the search bar at the top right of the page or click on “Table of Contents” to browse (see the red arrows in the screenshot).

Users can also purchase a print version of the manual.

Answers to the questions above:

Pie charts should be avoided in scientific publications (Section 4.2.1, Statistical Graphs).

“Sacrificed” is considered a euphemism and should be changed to the more direct “killed,” “humanely killed,” or “euthanized” (Section 11.5, Jargon).

An italicized “t” and a space (“t test”) are preferred (Section 19.5, Glossary of Statistical Terms).

## **Bibliography**

Christiansen S, Iverson C, Flanagin A, et al. *AMA Manual of Style*:

*A Guide for Authors and Editors*. 11th ed. Oxford University Press; 2020.

—Sunita Patterson

*Copyright © 2021, All rights reserved. Research Medical Library, Editing Services.*