

*9 Books No Professional Magazine Writer  
Would Be Caught Dead Without*

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## Introduction

Welcome to the *9 Books No Professional Magazine Writer Would Be Caught Dead Without!*

My name is Carol Joyous and I am delighted you chose to opt in and accept this **FREE GIFT** from me!

Who am I? I'm a professional writer and editor and I've spent most of my adult life in the publishing field. I've sat on both sides of the editorial desk, working as a writer, editor, proofreader, and publications consultant.

So, I know what it's like to sell my writing to book, magazine, and corporate clients. I also know what happens on the buying side of those publishing venues because I've worked there and I've hired and purchased from writers, editors, proofreaders, and even designers and photographers.

As a result of my experience in the publishing industry, I know what professional writers and other creatives do to be successful. I know how they think. I know what they believe. I know how they get freelance jobs. I know how they price their services. Because I've done all of that, too. And I want to share this information with you, beginning with this **Free Gift**, the *9 Books No Professional Magazine Writer Would Be Caught Dead Without*.

Whether you're an established writer or you're just starting out on your **Freelance Writing Journey**, it's important that you have a few key tools in your **Writing Toolbox**. These 9 books will provide you with a solid foundation. I'm sure you will add more books to your Writing Toolbox as time goes on, but these will provide a solid base for you.

Professional writers use many different types of reference books to help them make sure their writing does the job it's supposed to do. There are books on writing, grammar reference guides, style guides, dictionaries, and my all-time favorite, the thesaurus.

A lot of people think writers always use perfect grammar and syntax, but that couldn't be further from the truth. Writers are human and, therefore, we make mistakes, too.

The thing that sets professional writers apart from their wannabe counterparts is that they know they may need help at times. So they're prepared. That's where the ***9 Books No Professional Magazine Writer Would Be Caught Dead Without*** comes in.

These 9 books are both my favorite go-to resource books and the favorites of many of my friends who are magazine writers. I think you'll find these books helpful.

New books are published all the time. So, if you have a favorite oldie or a favorite new writing reference book that is not on this list, please let me know and I may add them to this list the next time I update it.

Also, if you have any freelance writing questions, please feel free to email me at [carol@caroljoyous.com](mailto:carol@caroljoyous.com). I may answer you directly, or if your question is of a more general nature, I may answer it in one of my regular emails, which you subscribed to when you chose to opt in and accept this **Free Gift**.

## Why These 9 Books?

Many of these books have been used by writers and editors since before the arrival of the Internet. Some are classics. Most have been updated to reflect our changing language. Although longevity may not be an adequate reason to use these books, effectiveness is.

Each of these 9 books has a proven track record of providing excellent writing advice, grammar, punctuation, style, and functionality to many different types of writing styles.

Two of my favorites are *On Writing Well* by William Zinsser and *The Elements of Style* by Strunk and White. They're small books that wield a powerful effect.

Thank you, again, for choosing to opt in and take advantage of the opportunity to learn about these 9 valuable books for magazine writers. I take your trust in me very seriously and I look forward to getting to know you better and to helping you achieve your freelance writing goals.

**Note:** When it comes to purchasing books for your own **Writing Toolbox**, I'd like to suggest that you purchase one at a time. There's no need to purchase every book on this list at once. The cost would be prohibitive. Select each book based on the value you think it may deliver to you. If you're eager to begin writing and selling to magazines, I recommend one of the first three books on this list and the dictionary.

If you live outside of the United States, some of these books may apply more than others to the specific writing work you do. Remember to keep in mind that British spelling and grammar rules may vary from what's presented in these books.

Also, if you live in a country where English is a second language, the publishing industry, as well as corporations, may have different reference book preferences, so be open to the possibilities.

In addition, no one reference book is right in every situation. Wherever you may live, book publishers, magazine publishers, and corporations may have their own preferences. They may even have their own in-house style guides they prefer you to use.

**Note:** Depending on when you receive this Free Gift, newer editions may be available for some of these books.

Now, let's dive in and check out these books!

## **Books on Writing for Magazines and Newspapers**

### **Writing Articles About the World Around You by Marcia Yudkin**

In my opinion, and especially if you're new to writing for publication, this book will take you by the hand on a tour of what it takes to craft an article that an editor wants to publish. Yudkin also covers query letters, research, and structuring articles.

### **The Art and Craft of Feature Writing by William E. Blundell**

This book is based on The Wall St. Journal [Style] Guide. It's a bit heavier than Yudkin's book. Blundell takes a deep dive into how to craft a strong feature article, and goes into detail about theme and story development. It includes several writing samples, as well, which I think you will find helpful.

### **Writer's Market by Writer's Digest Books**

This is the most comprehensive guide covering which publishers are buying what and how much they pay. If you're serious about writing articles for a living, you must have this book. Most libraries carry copies of Writer's Market, however, it's updated annually, so the library copy may be out of date and you want to make sure that your submissions go to the right publication and editor, so there are no surprises about staff changes, rights purchased, or payment. If you're serious about writing for magazines, keep this book updated every year. You can donate the out-of-date version to your local school, university, or public library.

## Grammar Reference Books

### **On Writing Well by William Zinsser**

This is one of my all-time favorite books on writing. Zinsser has an easy-to-read, conversational style. After reading it, you will be forever grateful for how much easier it is to write well and clearly, even when writing about technical topics.

### **The Elements of Style, Fourth Edition by Strunk & White**

I bring a copy of this book with me on almost every project I work on and I keep a copy handy in the bookcase in my office. This book may be small, but it's powerful and has helped me untangle some thorny grammar issues for my clients. It's been the deal breaker more times than I can count when a client's style guide of choice hasn't addressed a grammar point that's popped up in an article or document I'm writing.

## The Two Most Popular Style Guides

Sometimes being familiar with a client's favored style guide will land a gig for you, in spite of your lack of technical knowledge about the product that is the subject of your article. This has been the case for me on more than a couple of occasions.

Although style guides can be a bit complicated, you can quickly familiarize yourself with the most important nuances of each in a couple of hours. Review the table of contents, the index, and punctuation and capitalization rules. If the article you're writing is heavy on numbers, check out how the style guide handles numbers. Asking your client what they like most about their favorite style guide will also help you know what to focus on as you get acquainted with it.

### **The Chicago Manual of Style, Published by University of Chicago Press; Seventeenth Edition (September 5, 2017)**

This is my favorite style guide. It's the dictionary of style issues. I'm also rather fond of it because it prefers the serial comma, which is my preferred punctuation style.

### **The Associated Press Stylebook 2018: and Briefing on Media Law 2018, Published by Basic Books (June 12, 2018)**

As you probably already know, AP prefers not to use the serial comma. While I disagree with that, I understand that space is at a premium for newspapers and so I've often used AP for clients who prefer it, as well as when I worked as a stringer for two local newspapers and when I wrote a weekly newspaper column..

## The Most Popular Thesaurus

### **Roget's International Thesaurus, 7th Edition, Thumb Indexed**

I've been using Roget's since I first discovered it in high school. When you need just the right word, it's great to have this book at your fingertips. It's also now available as a free PDF download, so if you prefer not to fill your bookcase, you can save it on your hard drive.

## Dictionary

### **Merriam-Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh Edition Published by Merriam-Webster**

This is my favorite dictionary, but the company publishes several other dictionaries as well. You may have your own favorite among them. The *New Collegiate* is considered the favorite American English dictionary and dates back to 1843 when G&C Merriam Company bought the rights to Noah Webster's *An American Dictionary of the English Language* after Webster's death. It contains a page of Proofreader's Marks, which I find helpful when I'm working with clients who are not familiar with them. You may find that some of your clients may ask you to use a specific dictionary. If they do, don't hesitate to purchase it because it may come in handy with more than one client as you continue your Freelance Writing Journey.

## Summary

Well, there you have it. A list of the ***9 Books No Professional Magazine Writer Would be Caught Dead Without***. I'm sure you have some favorites of your own. I'd love to hear about them. Please feel free to share them with me at [carol@caroljoyous.com](mailto:carol@caroljoyous.com) and I may include them when I update this document, with a call out to you!