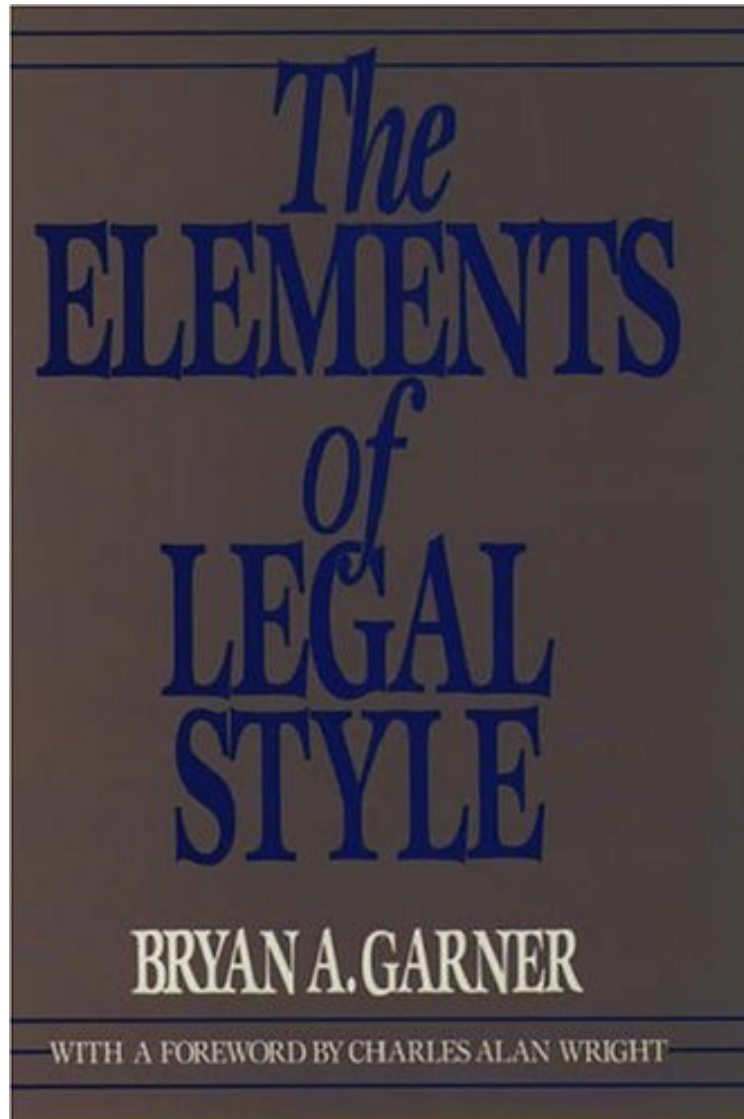


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## The Elements of Legal Style

*Bryan A. Garner*

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**Bryan A. Garner : The Elements of Legal Style** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Elements of Legal Style:

42 of 43 people found the following review helpful. The best single investment in legal writing.By David ChaumetteI bought this book in 1994 or so, and try to read it every year as a refresher course. You can read the entire book (skimming the examples) in a long weekend. Doing that will immesurably improve the coherence and power of your writing. This book has helped me. The examples are clear and relevant and relatively easy to use in your own writing.Garner has a real gift and this early book was just the first sign of his abilities. Enjoy!13 of 13 people found the

following review helpful. For those who wish to reach beyond the stars. By Fred A. Wertheimer First introduced to Bryan A. Garner at one of his brief writing seminar, several years ago, I have since been a loyal reader of his works. This book is (1) a reference book, (2) an invaluable resource, (3) more than just a grammar or style book ever thought of being, (4) chocked full of historical information and legal literary quotes, (5) presented in a humorous and accessible manner, and (6) the standard to which all legal writers should aspire. Poor writing and the use of legalese have always been bug-a-boos of mine. And, over the lifetime of my legal practice, having to slave over thousands of statutes, briefs, decisions, motions, etc., has only intensified my belief that too few lawyers know how to write well, and that the legal profession should abolish the use of legalese from the practice of law. In Mr. Garner, I have found a champion. In "The Elements of Legal Style", writers wishing to take their craft beyond the stars will find a valuable cache of information that will lay the foundations to improve their writing and persuading skills. He shows you how to remove the legalese from your writing, how to make your writing dynamic and exciting, and how to use your writing to better persuade. This book, along with "The Winning Brief", should be the foundation of your arsenal of writing tools. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A gem in the haystack of legal writing books By June Brian Garner is Editor-in-Chief of the prestigious Black's Law Dictionary, but his approach here is anything but stodgy. This book, published by Oxford University Press, looks at legal style in language. It includes his own set of 'rules' for usage, some of which will be familiar to most. As well, it has a marvelous section explaining carefully correct usages. One example: "Words and Expressions Confused and Misused." Garner also discusses "Speaking Legally" and "Expressive Tactics" - such as precisely when it is useful to repeat, in what ways tactics can be made more expressive, and how best to put forth a legal argument. He concludes with a sparkling collection of legal quotations on style. This is an excellent purchase for someone (1) looking for advanced-direction in legal English usage for writing and presentation, and (2) interested in learning to love legal writing more. Garner's examples are well-selected, and it has a full listing of the content topics inside the front and back covers, giving it a ready-reference quality. Quite readable, too, for such heady and easily boring stuff.

When Bryan A. Garner's award-winning Dictionary of Modern Legal Usage appeared in 1987, it was widely acclaimed throughout the English-speaking world. Just in the U.S., Harvard Law Review called it "an authoritative guide" that "all legal writers will find...invaluable." ABA Journal hailed it as "a work of learning, taste, care, and wit"; and the Michigan Bar Journal called it "a landmark reference." Garner modeled that volume after Fowler's venerable Dictionary of Modern English Usage. Now he has written a new writing guide, this one inspired by Strunk White's classic book, The Elements of Style. Like the Strunk White book, The Elements of Legal Style offers authoritative, down-to-earth, and often witty advice on a broad array of writing concerns, from basic grammatical rules to enhancing clarity, force, and persuasiveness. Unlike Strunk White, it is written for lawyers, law students, judges and their law clerks--for anyone who writes in and about the law. With broad experience as a practitioner, academic, and writing consultant, Garner knows first hand where legal writing goes wrong, and he pays particular attention to these trouble spots. He not only reveals how and why lawyers spill their words vervbosely, he also memorably shows how lawyers can clean up their spills. In a section on commonly misused words in law, Garner crisply guides readers through the hazards of legal wordchoice. Throughout the book, Garner draws on splendid and not-so-splendid examples of legal prose to illustrate his points, quoting such eminences as Justice Holmes, Clarence Darrow, William Prosser, Fred Rodell, Ronald Dworkin, Laurence H. Tribe, and Justice Scalia. Fred Rodell, the Yale law professor, once wrote that "90 per cent of American scholars and at least 99.44 per cent of American legal scholars not only do not know how to write simply; they do not know how to write." Rodell exaggerated for comic effect, of course, but legal writing certainly needs improvement. In The Elements of Legal Style, Bryan Garner shows the way.

"Just what I needed to teach legal assistants about legal writing."--Konnie Kustron, Eastern Michigan University "Law school courses need to be built on this book."--William R. Keffer, Arco Oil and Gas Company "Garner has given to the legal profession [an] extraordinary book.... Invaluable."--South Dakota Law "Presents sensible advice in a pleasant and compelling manner, making it of value to all students of writing, not only legal writing."--Philip H. Pfatteicher, East Stroudsburg University About the Author About the Author Bryan A. Garner is the president of LawProse, Inc., a Dallas firm that teaches lawyers how to improve their writing. He is internationally renowned as the author of A Dictionary of Modern Legal Usage (Oxford, 1987) and is now at work on a book on legal drafting. Mr. Garner has taught advanced seminars in Legal Editing and Language of the Law at The University of Texas School of Law and Southern Methodist University School of Law. He has lectured throughout the country, as well as abroad, on legal language and writing. Mr. Garner is editor-in-chief of The Scribes Journal of Legal Writing and chairs the Plain-Language Committee of the State Bar of Texas.