

# The Style Guide

*Editorial Reference for Matters of Girth, Submission, and Review*

FIRST EDITION: 1978 · LAST REVISION: 2014 (AS AMENDED) · MAINTAINED BY THE SENIOR CATALOGUER

This document is the operational reference of the publication. It is cited frequently. It is read infrequently. The Senior Cataloguer apologizes for neither.

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# Preamble

The publication exists to catalogue, with care, those subjects whose physical presence exceeds expectation. The work is taxonomic, not exclamatory. We do not celebrate. We document.

This Style Guide was drafted in the spring of 1978 by the founding cataloguer, against the recommendation of the publisher, who at the time was aboard a vessel and unreachable for comment. It has been amended thirty-one times. Its current form reflects the editorial consensus as of November 2014, the last year in which a consensus was reached.

All staff are expected to be familiar with this document. External bodies are welcome to cite it; we do not require attribution, but we do appreciate it.

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## I. Definitions

### § I.1

**Girth.** The measurable, observable quality of occupying more lateral space than the surrounding category would predict. Girth is not weight. Girth is not volume in isolation. Girth is the relationship between a subject and the silhouette its category permits.

### § I.2

**Mass.** A supporting attribute, not a qualifier. A subject may have considerable mass and remain ineligible if its mass does not produce visible girth. (See § II.3.)

### § I.3

**Displacement.** The space a subject occupies that would otherwise be available. Relevant to submissions of architecture, vehicles, and the larger fruits. Not relevant to sounds, ideas, or temperatures.

§ I.4

**The Subject.** The thing being catalogued. Strictly inanimate, or animate in a non-mammalian capacity. The publication has not catalogued a person and will not. AMENDED 1982, 1991, 2004, 2014.

## II. Girth Criteria

A subject must satisfy at least one of the following to be eligible for entry. Satisfying more than one does not strengthen the submission, but it is appreciated by the reviewer.

§ II.1 · THE LATERAL TEST

The subject, viewed from a standard documentary angle (three-quarter rear, side profile, or full front), occupies a greater lateral extent than its category's median exemplar. Reference exemplars are maintained in the Appendix.

§ II.2 · THE SILHOUETTE TEST

The subject's silhouette, isolated from background, communicates the quality of girth to a stranger with no prior context. A subject that requires context fails this test. ADOPTED 1991, AFTER THE TOASTER, TOASTER-OVEN DISPUTE.

§ II.3 · MASS WITHOUT GIRTH IS INSUFFICIENT

A neutron star is massive. A neutron star is not eligible. The publication catalogues subjects whose mass is visible to the unaided observer at a documentary remove.

§ II.4 · ENGINEERED GIRTH IS ELIGIBLE

A subject designed for girth, by intent or by accident, qualifies. The Bagger 288 was designed. The Atlantic Giant pumpkin was selected for, over decades, by people who understood the assignment. Both qualify. ESTABLISHED 1986, REVISITED 2009.

§ II.5 · DOMESTIC SUBJECTS ARE ELIGIBLE ONLY IF NOTABLE

The Cavendish banana qualifies on grounds of recognizability. A regular banana does not. The distinction is documented in the precedent log. Submitters are urged to consult it before filing.

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## III. Submission Protocol

### § III.1

**The Submission Form.** Submissions are made via the form at /submit.html. The form is short. The Senior Cataloguer has resisted lengthening it since 1996.

### § III.2

**Required Materials.** A photograph is required. The photograph should depict the subject, not the submitter, not the submitter's home, and not the submitter's hand for scale unless the scale is the point.

### § III.3

**Optional Materials.** Dimensions, manufacturer (where applicable), historical provenance, and a single sentence explaining the submitter's interest. Multi-paragraph justifications are filed but not considered.

### § III.4

**Resubmission.** A rejected submission may be resubmitted after three months, with new photographic evidence. Two rejections of the same subject by the same submitter triggers a brief letter from the Editor-in-Chief.

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## IV. Common Rejection Categories

The following are the categories under which submissions are most frequently declined. They are listed in approximate order of frequency, 2019 through present.

### § IV.1 · INSUFFICIENT GIRTH

The subject is documented, but does not exceed its category's median. Common with submissions of mid-size sedans and standard kitchen appliances.

### § IV.2 · MASS CONFUSED FOR GIRTH

See § II.3. Frequent.

### § IV.3 · ANIMATE SUBJECT

The publication does not catalogue persons, mammals, or living vertebrates. Submissions of pets, family members, and athletes are returned, with regrets.

### § IV.4 · INSUFFICIENT PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

A photograph taken in poor light, from an oblique angle, or at distance is filed but not considered for review.

### § IV.5 · THE SUBJECT IS ALREADY CATALOGUED

Resubmissions of already-published subjects are filed without acknowledgment. The publication does not maintain a comments section. PER A 2009 DIRECTIVE.

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## V. Editorial Review

### § V.1

**First Pass.** All submissions are reviewed by the Senior Cataloguer within fourteen days, unless the Senior Cataloguer is on holiday, in which case the period extends.

§ V.2

**Second Opinion.** Contested submissions are forwarded to the Junior Cataloguer for a written opinion. The Junior Cataloguer's opinion is filed but is not binding on the Senior Cataloguer, who reviews it with appreciation and then proceeds as planned.

§ V.3

**The Editor-in-Chief.** The Editor-in-Chief reviews submissions of significant editorial weight (architecture exceeding twenty stories, vehicles of original manufacture before 1970, food items requiring refrigeration in excess of four cubic feet). The Editor-in-Chief may overturn a rejection. The Editor-in-Chief has done so eleven times since 2014.

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## VI. Style of Address

§ VI.1

**Tone.** Documentary. The publication reports. It does not celebrate.

§ VI.2

**Numbers.** Spelled out in full when read aloud (forty-seven, not 47). Exceptions for technical specifications (model numbers, displacement in cubic centimeters, structural ratings).

§ VI.3

**Punctuation.** The publication does not use em dashes or en dashes. The comma is sufficient. The semicolon, used sparingly, is sufficient. The hyphen connects compound adjectives. The dash, in any longer form, is a stylistic indulgence the publication has elected to forgo. ADOPTED 1991, REAFFIRMED 2026.

§ VI.4

**Address.** Subjects are referred to by their full taxonomic name on first reference (Cavendish, Banana), and may be shortened thereafter where unambiguous. The publication uses the comma-inverted form for cataloguing purposes (Saturn V, Booster) when the qualifier is essential.

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## Appendix: Notable Precedents

The following are precedents established in editorial review and cited in subsequent decisions. The list is not exhaustive. The full record is maintained in the green cabinet, third drawer.

PRECEDENT 1986-04 · LIEBHERR T 282B

Established that engineered vehicles intended for industrial application may be catalogued under their formal model designation. The Liebherr T 282B remains, in the Senior Cataloguer's view, the publication's high-water mark.

PRECEDENT 1991-11 · TOASTER, TOASTER-OVEN

Established § II.2, the Silhouette Test. The dispute lasted eleven months. The cataloguer who proposed the Toaster-Oven entry no longer works at the publication.

PRECEDENT 2009-03 · THE ATLANTIC GIANT PUMPKIN

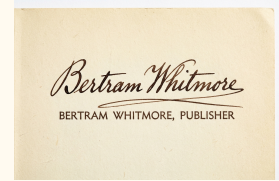
Established that subjects produced by selective breeding over decades qualify under § II.4. Resolved at the 1986 staff retreat, but not formally entered until 2009.

PRECEDENT 2014-09 · THE SUBMISSIONS FREEZE

The Senior Cataloguer proposed, in September 2014, that the publication cease accepting external submissions. The proposal was filed but not adopted. The Senior Cataloguer occasionally references it.

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FILED AND WITNESSED



Bertram Whitmore  
FOUNDER & PUBLISHER, THICCCTIONARY

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