

From the stylebook:

double possessive:

Two conditions must apply for a double possessive – a phrase such as *a friend of Reston's* – to occur:

1. The word after of must refer to an animate object, like a person, and
2. The word before of must involve only a portion of the animate object's possessions.

Otherwise, do not use the possessive form of the word after of:

The friends of John Adams mourned his death. (All the friends were involved.)

He is a friend of the college.

(Not college's, because college is inanimate.)

Memory Aid: This construction occurs most often, and quite naturally, with the possessive forms of personal pronouns: He is a friend of mine.

Prison is a generic term that may be applied facilities that confine people serving sentences for felonies.

Jail is normally used to confine people serving sentences for misdemeanors or civil offenses, such as contempt of court.

innocent, not guilty In court cases, plea situations and trials, *not guilty* is preferable to *innocent*, because it is more precise legally.

(However, special care must be taken to prevent omission of the word *not*.)

When possible, say a defendant was *acquitted* of criminal charges.

Chapter 5

Exercise 3: Teen Acquitted

You are a copy editor at the Los Angeles Star. Using the Associated Press stylebook as a guide, edit these sentences from news articles for style, spelling, grammar, logic, syntax and factual errors. Also correct any awkward writing. Include comments about any information in the story that is incomplete or illogical.

~~LOS ANGELES~~—A teenager was acquitted Tuesday of the rape and murder ~~Tuesday~~ of a ~~University of California at Los Angeles~~ UCLA student during a burglary.

Thomas Reston, 17, who was being tried for a second time in the murder of Denise Sanders, also was acquitted of the burglary charge.

The killing last March occurred in an on-campus apartment and prompted University of California, Los Angeles, ~~University~~ officials to ~~beef up~~ increase security on campus.

Sanders, 20, was raped and murdered after returning home from a football [football in March? confirm] game and surprising ~~Reston~~ someone ransacking her apartment. Her nude body was found the next day be her roommate.

Sanders, who was from Concord, ~~Massachusetts~~ Mass., was a ~~sophomore~~ sophomore majoring in political science.

Reston's first trial ended in a deadlocked jury after a key prosecution witness recanted his testimony. Randy Commings, a friend of ~~Restons~~ Reston's, told police in a taped interview that Reston had admitted to him that he killed Sanders. But during the trial, Commings said police coerced him into ~~fingering~~ implicating his friend.

Commings was in custody at the time on a drug charge. [when? time of murder or time of trial?]

Commings refused to testify at the second trial ~~in spite of~~ despite immunity from prosecution and was sentenced to ~~6~~ six months in jail for contempt of court.

Prosecutors had no physical evidence linking Reston to the crime.