

# Since versus Because

## Usage recommendations following

### *The Chicago Guide to Grammar, Usage and Punctuation*

Garner (2016) in his “word usage” section includes *since* in his listing of “troublesome words and expressions.” His recommendation (Garner 2016, p 313) is as follows

**Since.** This word may relate either to time {since last winter} or to causation {since I am a remote sensor, I know what a pixel is}. Some writers erroneously believe that the word relates exclusively to time. But the causal *since* was a part of the English language before Chaucer wrote in the fourteenth century, and it is useful as a slightly milder way of expressing causation than *because*.  
**But if there is any possibility of confusion with the temporal sense, use *because*.**

Garner (2016) also includes *because* his listing of “troublesome words and expressions.” His recommendation (Garner 2016, p 243) is as follows

**Because.** This word is normally a subordinating conjunction that introduces a dependent clause that expresses cause, reason, or motive {I re-sent the message because it kept bouncing back}. When *because* follows a negative, it is preceded by a comma if the because-clause explains the negative {I did not call yesterday, because I was traveling all day [without the comma, the suggestion might be that I did not call for a different reason]}.

## References

Garner BA (2016) *The Chicago Guide to Grammar, Usage, and Punctuation*. The University of Chicago Press (Chicago IL): 583 p