

Canisius College Editorial Style Guide

A

a, an

- Use the article *a* before consonant sounds: *a historic event*, *a one-year term* (sounds as if it begins with a *w*), *a united stand* (sounds like *u*)
- Use the article *an* before vowel sounds: *an energy crisis*, *an honorable man* (the *h* is silent), *an NBA record* (sounds like it begins with the letter *e*)

abbreviations

- Do not use abbreviations that the reader will not quickly recognize.

BEFORE A NAME:

- Abbreviate titles when used before a full name: *Dr.*, *Gov.*, *Lt. Gov.*, *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Rep.*, *Rev.*, *Sen.* and certain military designations (see military titles)

AFTER A NAME:

- Abbreviate *junior* and *senior* after an individual's name.
- Abbreviate *company*, *corporation*, *incorporated* and *limited* when used after the name of a corporate entity.

IN NUMBERED ADDRESSES

- Abbreviate *avenue*, *boulevard* and *street* in numbered addresses: *He lives at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.*
- Spell out *avenue*, *boulevard* and *street* when no number precedes address: *He lives on Pennsylvania Avenue.*

academic degrees

- Use an apostrophe in *bachelor's degree*, *master's degree*, etc.
- There is no possessive in *bachelor of arts* or *master of science*.
- Lowercase: *digital media arts degree*

ACADEMIC ABBREVIATIONS:

- Use capital letters and **NO** periods: **BA, BS, MS, MBA**
- When used after a name, an academic abbreviation is set off by commas: *Sara Morris, PhD, spoke.*

academic departments

- Capitalize the formal names of academic departments: *the History Department*, *the English Department*.
- A phrase such as *the department* is preferable on second reference
- Lowercase *department* in plural uses but capitalize the proper name element: *the departments of Math and Accounting*.
- Do not abbreviate in any usage.

academic titles

- Capitalize and spell out formal titles such as *chairman* when they precede a name; lowercase elsewhere.
- Lowercase modifiers such as *department Chairman Jerome Wiesner*.
- See titles, for more

accept, except

- *Accept* means to receive
- *Except* means to exclude

acronym

- Spell out organization's formal title on first reference, followed by acronym in parentheses: *Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC)*.
- Use acronym on second and subsequent references: *The team plays in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference. This year's MAAC Tournament is in July.*

act

- Capitalize when part of the name for pending or implemented legislation: *the Taft-Hartley Act*.

addresses

- Use the abbreviations **Ave.**, **Blvd.** and **St.** only with a numbered address: *2001 Main St.*
- Spell out **Avenue**, **Boulevard** and **Street** when part of a formal street name without a number: *He lives on Main Street.*
- Lowercase and spell out when used alone or with more than one street name: *Massachusetts and Pennsylvania avenues.*
- Always spell out similar words: *alley*, *drive*, *road* and *terrace*.
- The preferred style is *building name* followed by *room number*: *Bagen Hall 206, Old Main 109, Lyons Hall 202.*

administration

- Lowercase: the administration; *the president's administration*, *the governor's administration*, *the Regan administration*
- See government entry for distinctions that apply in using administration

admiral

- See military titles

adopt, approve, enact, pass

- Amendments, ordinances, resolutions and rules are *adopted* or *approved*
- Bills are *passed*
- Laws are *enacted*

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affect, effect

- *affect* (v) -to influence: *The game will affect the standings.*
- *effect* (v) - to cause: *He will effect many changes in the company.*
- *effect* (n) - result: *He miscalculated the effect of his actions.*

African-American

- The preferred term is *black*
- Use African-American only in quotations or the names of organizations or if someone describes themselves so
- Capitalize
- Hyphenate

ages

- Spell out ages *one* through *nine*; use numerals for ages *10* and *above*.
- Use a hyphen when an age is expressed as an adjective before a noun or as substitutes for a noun: *A 5-year-old boy won the race. The boy is five years old.*
- See numbers

air force

- Capitalize when referring to U.S. forces: the *U.S. Air Force*, the *Air Force*, *Air Force* regulations.
- Do not use the abbreviation USAF
- Use lowercase for the forces of other nations: *the Israeli air force*
- See military entry

alma mater

- Italicize

alumnus, alumni, alumna, alumnae

- *alumnus*: masculine singular
- *alumna*: feminine singular
- *alumnae*: feminine plural
- *alumni*: masculine plural or when referring to a group of men and women

amendments to the Constitution

- Capitalize: *First Amendment, 10th Amendment*, etc.

among, between

- *among* introduces more than two: *The funds were divided among Ford, Carter and McCarthy.*
- *between* introduces two items but also should be used when expressing the relationships of three or more items considered one pair at a time: *Negotiations on a debate format are underway between the network and the Ford, Carter and McCarthy committees.*
- As with all prepositions, any pronouns that follow these words must be in the objective case: *among us, between him and her, between you and me.*

ampersand (&)

- Use the ampersand when it is part of a company's formal name: *Procter & Gamble*
- The ampersand should not otherwise be used in place of *and*.

a.m., p.m.

- Lowercase with periods
- Avoid the redundant: *10 a.m. this morning*

annual

- An event cannot be described as *annual* until it has been held in at least two successive years.
- Do not use the term: *first annual*; instead, note that sponsors plan to hold an event *annually*.

anthems

- Lowercase the term: national anthem
- See composition titles

apostrophe

- Use the following guidelines:
 - PLURAL NOUNS *NOT* ENDING IN *S*: Add 's: *the alumni's contributions.*
 - PLURAL NOUNS ENDING IN *S*: Add an apostrophe: *the churches' needs.*
 - OMITTED NUMBERS: *The class of '62. The Spirit of '76. The '20s.*
- For more details on the use of apostrophe, refer to the Associated Press Style Guide or contact the Public Relations Office

Appalachia

- In the broadest sense, the word applies to the entire region along the Appalachian Mountains, which extend from Maine into northern Alabama.
- Specify the region when using the word *Appalachia*; otherwise refer to the area as the *Appalachian Mountains* or the *Appalachians*.

appeals court

- See U.S. Court of Appeals

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archbishop

- See religious titles

archdiocese

- Capitalize as part of a proper name: *the Archdiocese of Buffalo, the Buffalo Archdiocese*
- Lowercase when it stands alone

army

- Capitalize when referring to U.S. forces: the *U.S. Army, the Army, Army regulations*
- Do not use the abbreviation USA
- Use lowercase for the forces of other nations: the French army
- See military entry

Ash Wednesday

- The first day of Lent, 46 days before Easter

assembly

- Capitalize when part of the proper name for the lower house of a legislature: *the New York Assembly*
- Retain capitalization if the state name is dropped but the reference is specific: *The state Assembly*
- Lowercase all plural uses: *the New York and Pennsylvania assemblies*.

assemblyman, assemblywoman

- Do not abbreviate
- See legislative titles

assistant

- Do not abbreviate
- Capitalize only when part of a formal title before a name: *Assistant Secretary of State George Ball*
- Whenever practical, however, an appositional construction should be used: *George Ball, assistant secretary of state*

associate

- Never abbreviate
- Apply the same capitalization norms listed under *assistant*

at large

- Usually two words for an individual representing more than a single district: *congressman at large; councilman at large*
- But it is **ambassador-at-large** for an ambassador assigned to no particular country

attorney general, attorneys general

- Never abbreviate
- Capitalize only when used as a title before a name: *Attorney General Elliott Spitzer*

avenue

- Abbreviate only with a numbered address
- See addresses

awards, decorations

- Capitalize the names of awards but not the terms that can sometimes be used with them: *Nobel Prize, Nobel Prize in physics*.

B

bachelor of arts, bachelor of science

- A *bachelor's degree* or *bachelor's* is acceptable in any reference
- See academic degrees for guidelines on academic abbreviations

baptism

- See sacraments

because, since

- Use *because* to denote a specific cause-effect relationship: *He went because he was told*.
- *Since* is acceptable in a casual sense when the first event in a sequence led logically to the second but was not its direct cause: *They went to the game, since they had been given tickets*.

Beside, besides

- *beside* means at the side of
- *besides* means in addition to

between, among

- *between* introduces two items but also should be used when expressing the relationships of three or more items considered one pair at a time: *Negotiations on a debate format are underway between the network and the Ford, Carter and McCarthy committees*.
- *among* introduces more than two: *The funds were divided among Ford, Carter and McCarthy*.
- As with all prepositions, any pronouns that follow these words must be in the objective case: *among us, between him and her, between you and me*.

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Bible

- Capitalize when referring to the Scriptures in the Old Testament or the New Testament.
- Capitalize related terms such as the *Gospels*, the *Scriptures*, the *Holy Scriptures*, the *Gospel of St. Mark*.
- Lowercase *bible* when used as a non-religious term: *My dictionary is my bible*.
- Lowercase *biblical* in all uses
- Use the following form when listing the number of chapter and verse(s): *Matthew 3:16, Luke 21:1-13*.
- Never abbreviate individual books of the Bible.

Bill of Rights

- The first 10 amendments to the Constitution

bishop

- See religious titles

board

- When referring to a Canisius College board, capitalize when part of the proper name and on subsequent references: *The Canisius College Board of Trustees met on Monday. The Board will meet again on Tuesday.*
- For all other references to boards, capitalize when part of the proper name and lowercase on subsequent references: *The Buffalo Board of Education meets weekly. The board will meet again next Tuesday.*

boldface

- Use **boldface** type for the slug lines, bylines and underlines for bylines atop a story, and for separate subhead lines if needed within a story.
- Do not use **boldface** for individual words within a paragraph.

book titles

- See titles, composition

The Buffalo News

- Italicize
- See newspapers

boulevard

- Abbreviated only with a numbered address
- See addresses

brother

- See Roman Catholic Church

brothers

- Abbreviate as **Bros.** in formal company names: *Warner Bros.*
- For possessives: *Warner Bros.' profits*

building

- Never abbreviate
- Capitalize the proper names of buildings, including the word *building* if it is an integral part of the proper name: *the Empire State Building*

bureau

- Capitalize when part of the formal name for an organization or agency: *the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Newspaper Advertising Bureau*
- Lowercase when used alone or to designate a corporate subdivision: *the Washington bureau of The Associated Press*

business names

- See company names

C

cabinet

- Capitalize references to a specific body of advisers heading executive departments for a president, governor, etc.: *The president-elect said he has not made his Cabinet selections.* (The capital letter distinguishes the word from the common noun meaning cupboard.)

Cabinet titles

- Capitalize the full title when used *before* a name; lowercase in other uses: *Secretary of State Condolizza Rice; Don Evans, secretary of commerce.*
- See titles

campaign manager

- Do not treat as a formal title; always lowercase

call letters

- Use all caps and hyphens to separate the type of station from the base call letters: *WGRZ-TV, WBEN-AM*

capital

- The city where a seat of government is located; do not capitalize
- When used in a financial sense, *capital* describes money, equipment or property used in a business by a person or corporation

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capitalization –

- In general, avoid unnecessary capitals. Use capital letters only if you can justify them by one of the following principals:
 - **PROPER NOUNS**
 - Capitalize nouns that constitute the unique identification of a person, place, thing or particular entity: *John, Mary, America, Boston, England, General Electric, Gulf Oil.*
 - Capitalize the formal name of an office, department or organization on first reference (as a proper noun) and lowercase its common-noun equivalent on subsequent reference: *The Mathematics Department will hold a workshop in June. In November, the department will evaluate the success of the workshops.*
 - **PROPER NAMES**
 - Capitalize common nouns such as *party, river, street* and *west* when they are an integral part of the full name for a person, place or thing: *Democratic Party, Niagara River, Main Street, West Virginia*
 - Lowercase these common nouns when they stand alone in subsequent references: *the party, the river, the street*
 - Lowercase the common noun elements of names in all plural uses: *the Democratic and Republican parties, Main and State streets, lakes Erie and Ontario*
 - **POPULAR NAMES**
 - Capitalize places and events that may lack officially designated proper names but have popular names that are equivalent: *the East Side (of Buffalo), the Combat Zone (of downtown Boston), the Kentucky Derby, the World Series.*
 - The principle applies also to shortened versions of the proper names of one-of-a-kind events: *the Series* (for the World Series), *the Derby* (for the Kentucky Derby)
 - **DERIVATIVES**
 - Capitalize words that are derived from a proper noun and still depend on it for their meaning: *American, Christian,*

Christianity, English, French, Shakespearean

- Lowercase words that are derived from a proper noun but no longer depend on it for their meaning: *french fries, herculean, venetian blind*
- **COMPOSITIONS**
 - Capitalize the principal words in the names of books, movies, plays, poems, operas, songs, radio and television programs, works of art, etc.
 - See composition titles
- **TITLES**
 - Capitalize formal titles when used immediately *before* a name; lowercase formal titles when used after a name and set title off with commas: *Canisius President Rev. Vincent M. Cooke, SJ; Rev. Vincent M. Cooke, SJ, president of Canisius College.*
 - A formal title generally is one that denotes a scope of authority, professional activity or academic activity: *Canisius President Rev. Vincent M. Cooke, S.J.*
 - Other titles serve primarily as descriptions: *astronaut John Glenn, peanut farmer Jimmy Carter, movie star John Wayne*
 - If there is doubt about the status of a title, use a sentence construction that sets the name or the title off with commas.

capitol

- Capitalize *U.S. Capitol* and *the Capitol* when referring to the building in Washington, D.C. and state capitols: *The meeting was held on Capitol Hill in the west wing of the Capitol.*
- Follow the same practice when referring to state capitols: *The New York State Capitol.*

captain

- Lowercase and spell out in such uses as *team captain Carl Yastrzemski*
- See military titles

cardinal

- See Roman Catholic Church

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catholic, catholicism

- Use **Roman Catholic Church**, **Roman Catholic** or **Roman Catholicism** in first references to those who believe that the pope, as bishop of Rome, has the ultimate authority in administering an earthly organization founded by Jesus Christ.
- Most subsequent references may be condensed to **Catholic Church**, **Catholic** or **Catholicism**
- Lowercase **catholic** where used in its generic sense

celebrant

- Reserve **celebrant** for someone who conducts a religious rite: **He was the celebrant of the Mass.**
- Use **celebrator** for someone having a good time: **The celebrators kept the party going until 3:00 a.m.**

cents

- Spell out the word **cents** and lowercase; spell out numbers one through nine and use numerals for 10 and above: **five cents** ; **12 cents**
- Use the \$ sign and decimal system for larger dollar amounts: **\$1.01**, **\$2.50**

century

- Lowercase, spelling out numbers less than 10: **the first century**, **the 20th century**
- For proper names, follow the organization's practice: 20th Century Fox, Twentieth Century Fund
- Capitalize and spell out when it begins a sentence: Twentieth century traditions are different than 18th century traditions.

chair

- Capitalize as a formal title before a name: **company Chairman Henry Ford**, **department Chairman John Smith**
- Do not capitalize as casual, temporary position: **meeting chairman Robert Jones**.
- Do not use chairperson unless it is an organization's formal title for an office

chapters

- Capitalize **chapter** when used with a numeral in reference to a section of a book: **Chapter 1**, **Chapter 20**.
- Lowercase when standing alone

chief justice

- Capitalize only as a formal title before a name: **Chief Justice Sandra Day O'Connor**
- The officeholder is the chief justice of the United States, not of the Supreme Court

Christmas, Christmas Day

- December 25
- Never abbreviate Christmas to Xmas or any other form

church

- Capitalize as part of a formal name of a building, congregation or denomination: **St. Joseph's Church**, **the Roman Catholic Church**.
- Lowercase when used in the institutional sense: **He believes in the separation of church and state.**

cities and towns

- Capitalize in all uses
- The preferred form for a section of a city is lowercase: **the west end**, **northern Los Angeles** but capitalize widely recognized names for the sections of a city: **South Side** (Chicago), **Lower East Side** (New York)
- Spell out the names of cities unless in direct quotes: **A trip to Los Angeles** but **"We're going to L.A."**

citizen, resident, national, native

- A **citizen** is a person who has acquired the full civil rights of a nation either by birth or naturalization
- Cities and states in the United States do not confer citizenship. To avoid confusion, use **resident**, not citizen when referring to inhabitants of states and cities.
- **National** is applied to a person residing away from the nation of which he or she is a citizen or to a person under the protection of a specified nation
- **Native** is the term denoting that an individual was born in a given location

city

- Capitalize if part of a proper name, an integral part of an official name or a regularly used nickname: **New York City**, **Windy City**, **Queen City** ; lowercase elsewhere
- Avoid city of phrases but if necessary, always lowercase: **the city of Buffalo**, **the city Board of Education**.
- Capitalize when part of a formal title before a name: **City Manager Francis McGrath** ; lowercase when not part of the formal title: **city Health Commissioner Frank Smith**
- See city council and governmental bodies

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city council

- Capitalize when part of a proper name: *the Buffalo City Council*
- Retain capitalization if the reference is to a specific council but the context does not require the city name: *BUFFALO (AP) – The City Council ...*
- Lowercase in other uses: *the council, the Buffalo and New York city councils, a city council*
- Use *city council* in a generic sense for plural references: *the Buffalo, Rochester and Syracuse city councils*

city hall

- Capitalize with the name of a city or without the name of a city if the reference is specific: *Buffalo City Hall, City Hall*
- Lowercase plural uses: *the Buffalo and Rochester city halls*
- Lowercase generic uses: *You can't fight city hall*

coast

- Lowercase when referring to the physical shoreline: *Atlantic coast, Pacific coast, east coast*
- Capitalize when referring to regions of the United States lying along such shorelines: *the Atlantic Coast states, a Gulf Coast city, the West Coast, the East Coast.*
- Do not capitalize when referring to smaller regions: *the Virginia coast*
- Capitalize *the Coast* when standing alone only if the reference is to the West Coast.

Coast Guard

- Capitalize when referring to this branch of the U.S. armed forces, a part of the Department of Homeland Security: *the U.S. Coast Guard, the Coast Guard, Coast Guard policy*
- Use lowercase for similar forces of other nations

Cold War

- Capitalize when referring specifically to the post-World War II rivalry between the United States and the former Soviet Union.
- Use only in the historic sense

collective nouns

- Nouns that denote a unit take singular verbs and pronouns: *class, committee, crowd, family, group, herd, jury, orchestra, team: The committee is meeting to set its agenda. The jury reached its verdict. A herd of cattle was sold.*
 - **PLURAL FORM** - Some words that are plural in form become collective nouns and take singular verbs when the group or quantity is regarded as a unit
RIGHT: *A thousand bushels were created (individual items)*
RIGHT: *The data is sound (a unit)*
RIGHT: *The data have been carefully collected (individual items)*

college

- Capitalize when part of a proper name: *Canisius College*
- Lowercase college on subsequent references and for generic uses: *Canisius College has invested \$115 million in its campus. The college has been recognized as a leader in the community.*

College of Cardinals

- See Roman Catholic Church

colon (:)

- The most frequent use of a colon is at the end of a sentence to introduce lists, tabulations, texts, etc. *:There were three considerations: expense, time and feasibility.*
- Capitalize the first word after a colon only if it is a proper noun or the start of a complete sentence: *He promised this: The company will make good on all its losses.*
- The colon can be effective in giving emphasis: *He had only one hobby: eating.*

colonel

- See military titles

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comma (,)

- Refer to the following guidelines
 - **IN A SERIES:**
 - Use a comma to separate elements in a simple series: *The flag is red, white and blue.*
 - Use a comma before the concluding conjunction in a complex series of phrases: *I had orange juice, toast, and ham and eggs for breakfast.*
 - **WITH EQUAL ADJECTIVES:**
 - Adjectives are equal if the commas can be replaced by the word *and* without changing sense.
 - Use commas to separate a series of adjectives equal in rank: *a thoughtful, precise manner.*
 - **NON-ESSENTIAL CLAUSE:**
 - A non-essential clause can be eliminated without altering the basic meaning of a sentence.
 - Use commas to set off a non-essential clause: *The following pages provide a few illustrations, from the class of 2000, of distinguished seniors.*
 - **CONJUNCTIONS**
 - When a conjunction such as *and*, *but* or *for* links two clauses that could stand alone as separate sentences, use a comma before the conjunction in most cases: *She was glad she had looked, for a man was approaching the house.*
 - As a rule of thumb, use a comma if the subject of each clause is expressly stated: *We are visiting Washington, and we also plan a side trip to Williamsburg. We visited Washington, and our senator greeted us personally.*
 - No comma when the subject of the two clauses is the same and is not repeated in the second: *We are visiting Washington and plan to see the White House*
 - For more information on the use of comma's, refer to the Associated Press Style Guide or contact the Public Relations Office

commander

- See military titles

commander in chief

- Capitalize only if used as a formal title

commissioner

- Do not abbreviate
- Capitalize when used as a formal title

committee

- Capitalize only when part of a formal name: *the House Appropriations Committee*
- Do not capitalize *committee* in shortened versions of long committee names: *the Special Senate Select Committee to Investigate Improper Labor-Management Practices*, for example, *became the rackets committee*
- Do not abbreviate

company, companies

- Use *Co.* or *Cos.* when a business uses either word at the end of its proper name: *Ford Motor Co.*, *American Broadcasting Cos.* but *Aluminum Company of America*
- Spell out *company* or *companies* when it appears alone in second reference

company names

- Do not use a comma before *Inc.* or *Ltd.*
- Follow the spelling and capitalization preferred by the company: *iMac*, *eBay* but capitalize the first letter if it begins a sentence
- Do not use all capital letter names unless the letters are individually pronounced: *CRX*, *BMW*
- Use an ampersand (&) only if it is part of the company's formal name but not otherwise in place of *and*
- When in doubt about a formal company name, consult the Standard & Poor's Register of Corporations

compared to, compared with

- Use *compared to* when the intent is to assert, without the need for elaboration, that two or more items are singular: *She compared her work for women's rights to Susan B. Anthony's campaign for women's suffrage.*
- Use *compared with* when juxtaposing two or more items to illustrate similarities and/or differences: *His time was 2:11:10, compared with 2:14 for his closest competitor.*

complementary, complimentary

- The husband and wife have *complementary* careers.
- They received *complimentary* tickets to the show.

complement, compliment

- *Complement* is a noun and a verb denoting completeness or the process of supplementing something: *The ship has a complement of 200 sailors and 20 officers; The tie complements his suit.*
- *Compliment* is a noun or a verb that denotes praise or the expression of courtesy: *The captain*

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complimented the sailors. She was flattered by the compliments on her outfit.

composition titles

- Apply the following guidelines to *book titles, computer game titles, movie titles, opera titles, play titles, poem titles, song titles, television program titles* and the *titles of lectures, speeches and works of art* :

GUIDELINES

- Capitalize the principal words, include prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters
- Capitalize an article – *the, a, an* – or words fewer than four letters if it is the first or last word in a title
- Put quotation marks around the names of all such works except the Bible and books that are primarily catalogs of reference material. In addition to catalogs, this category includes almanacs, directories, dictionaries, encyclopedias, gazetteers, handbooks and similar publications.
- Translate a foreign title into English unless a work is known to the American public by its foreign name

EXAMPLES

- “*The Star Spangled Banner*,” “*The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*,” “*Gone with the Wind*,” “*Of Mice and Men*,” *the NBC-TV “Today” program*, *the “CBS Evening News*,” “*The Mary Tyler Moore Show*.”
- See television program names for further guidelines and examples

compound adjectives

- See the hyphen entry

comptroller, controller

- *Comptroller* generally is the accurate word for government financial officers
- *Controller* is the proper word for financial officers of businesses and for other position such as air traffic controller
- Capitalize when used as the formal titles for financial officers; lowercase for aircraft controller and similar occupational applications of the word

conclave

- A private or secret meeting. In the Roman Catholic Church it describes the private meeting of cardinals to elect a pope

confirmation

- See sacraments

congress

- Capitalize *U.S. Congress* and *Congress* when referring to the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives (Although *Congress* sometimes is used as a substitute for the House, it properly is reserved for reference to both the Senate and House)
- Capitalize *congress* also if referring to a foreign body that uses the term or its equivalent in a foreign language, as part of its formal name: *the Argentine Congress, the Congress*
- Lowercase when used as a synonym for *convention* or in second reference to an organization that uses the word as part of its formal name: *the Congress of Racial Equality, the congress*

congressional

- Lowercase unless part of a proper name: *congressional salaries, the Congressional Quarterly, the Congressional Record*

congressional districts

- Use figures and capitalize *district* when joined with a figure: *the 1st Congressional district, the 1st District*
- Lowercase *district* whenever it stands alone

congressman, congresswoman

- Use only in reference to members of the U.S. House of Representatives
- See legislative titles

constitution

- Capitalize references to the U.S. Constitution, with or without the U.S. modifier: *The president said he supports the Constitution.*
- When referring to constitutions of other nations or of states, capitalize only with the name of a nation or a state: *the French Constitution, the Massachusetts Constitution, the nation’s constitution, the state constitution, the constitution*
- Lowercase in other uses: *the organization’s constitution*
- Lowercase *constitutional* in all uses

contractions

- Contractions reflect informal speech and writing so avoid excessive use.

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contrasted to, contrasted with

- Use *contrasted to* when the intent is to assert, without the need for elaboration that two items have opposite characteristics: ***He contrasted the appearance of the house today to its ramshackle look last year***
- Use *contrasted with* when juxtaposing two or more items to illustrate similarities and/or differences: ***He contrasted the Republican platform with the Democratic platform***

controller

- See the **comptroller, controller** entry

corporal

- See **military** titles

corps

- Capitalize when used with a word or a figure to form a proper name: ***the Marine Corps, the Signal Corps, the 9th Corps***
- Capitalize when standing alone only if it is a shortened reference to U.S. Marine Corps.
- The possessive form is *corps'* for both singular and plural: ***one corps' location, two corps' assignments***

Council, councilor, councilman, councilwoman

- A deliberative body and those who are members of it
- See **legislative** titles

county

- Capitalize when an integral part of a proper name: ***Erie County, Niagara County***
- Avoid *county of* phrases but if necessary always lowercase: ***the county of Erie***
- Lowercase the word *county* if used to distinguish an agency from state or federal counterparts: ***the county Board of Supervisors***.
- Lowercase plural combinations: ***Erie and Niagara counties***

course numbers / course prefixes

- Use Arabic numbers and capitalize the subject when used with numeral: ***History 101, Philosophy 209***
- Use the three-letter prefix before *each* course number and separate letters/numbers with a single space: ***MUS 218 AND MUS 230*** (not *MUS 218 and 230*; not *Music 218 and Music 230*)

course name

- Lowercase the names of academic courses unless followed by numerals

court decisions

- Use figures and a hyphen: ***The Supreme Court ruled 5-4; a 5-4 decision***
- If appears in quoted matter, use the word *to* with hyphens: ***The court ruled 5-to-4.***

court districts

- See **court names**

courtesy titles

- Refer to both men and women by first and last name: ***Susan Smith; Robert Smith***
- Use the courtesy titles *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Miss* or *Ms.* only in direct quotations or in other special situations:
 - When it is necessary to distinguish between two people who use the same last name, as in married couples or brothers and sisters
 - In cases where a person's gender is not clear from the first name or from the story's context, indicate the gender by using *he* or *she* in subsequent reference

courthouse

- Capitalize with the name of a jurisdiction: ***the Erie County Courthouse, the U.S. Courthouse***
- Lowercase in other uses: ***the county courthouse, the courthouse, the federal courthouse***
- ***Court house*** (two words) is sometimes used in the proper names of some communities

court names

- Capitalize the full proper names of courts at all levels
- Retain capitalization if U.S. or a state name is dropped: ***the U.S. Supreme Court, the Supreme Court, the state Superior Court, the Superior Court, Superior Court***
- For courts identified by a numeral: ***2nd District Court, 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals***
- For additional details on federal courts, see **judicial branch**
- See **judge** for guidelines on titles before the names of judges

credit hours, credits

- Spell out numerals (one – nine): ***three credit hours; six credits***

curate

- See **religious titles**

currency (American)

- Use numerals and the \$ symbol: ***Canisius College surpassed its goal by \$8.8 million.***

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cyberspace

- Refers to the digital world of computer networks
- When used as a prefix, (*cyber-*), follow the general prefix rule and do not use a hyphen before a word starting with a consonant

D

dangling modifiers

- Avoid modifiers that do not refer clearly and logically to some word in the sentence:
 - **Dangling:** *Taking our seats, the game started.* (*Taking* does not refer to the subject *game* nor to any other word in the sentence.)
 - **Correct:** *Taking our seats, we watched the opening of the game.* (*Taking* refers to *we*, the subject of the sentence)

Dark Ages

- The period beginning with the fall of Rome in 476 and ending about the 10th century.

dash (-)

- Follow these guidelines:
- **ABRUPT CHANGE:** Use dashes to denote an abrupt change in thought in a sentence or an emphatic pause: *We will fly to Paris in June – if I get a raise.*
- **SERIES WITHIN A PHRASE:** When a phrase that otherwise would be set off by commas contains a series of words that must be separated by commas, use dashes to set off the full phrase: *He listed the qualities – intelligence, humor, conservatism, independence – that he liked in an executive.*
- **ATTRIBUTION:** Use a dash before an author's or composer's name at the end of a quotation: *"Who steals my purse steals trash." – Shakespeare.*
- **IN DATES:** *NEW YORK (AP) – The city is broke.*
- **WITH SPACES:** Put a space on both sides of a dash in all uses except the start of a paragraph

data

- A plural noun, it normally takes plural verbs and pronouns
- See collective nouns entry, for examples of when data may take singular verbs and pronouns

dates

- Always use numerals alone, never with *st*, *nd*, *rd* or *th*.
- Eliminate *on* before a date or day of the week if its absence will not cause confusion: *The meeting will be held Monday.*
- Use *on* to avoid an awkward juxtaposition of a date and a proper name: *John met Mary on Monday.*
- See months for examples

days of the week

- Capitalize; do not abbreviate in running text.
- Only abbreviate if used in a tabular format: *Sun, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat* (three letters, without periods)

dean

- Capitalize when used as a formal title before a name: *Dean Cary Anderson*
- Lowercase if follows name or used alone: *Dr. Cary Anderson, dean of student affairs; the dean.*

dean's list

- Lowercase in all uses: *He is on the dean's list. She is a dean's list student.*

decades

- Acceptable to use numerals or spell out decades: *the class of 1970, the seventies.*
- Use an apostrophe to indicate numerals that are left out: *the class of '90.*
- Show plural by adding the letter *s* (no apostrophe): *the 1980s, the mid-1930s.*

decimals

- Use numerals.
- For amounts less than one, set with an initial zero: *The average number of children born to college graduates dropped from 2.3 to 0.95 per couple.*

defense attorney

- Always lowercase ; never abbreviate

definitely

- Overused as a vague intensifier; avoid it.

degrees

- See academic degrees

deity

- Lowercase
- See gods and religious references

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delegate

- The formal title for members of the lower houses of some legislatures.
- Do not abbreviate.
- Capitalize only before their names.
- See **legislative titles**
- Always lowercase in other uses: *convention delegate Richard Henry Lee*.

democrat, democratic, Democratic Party

- See **political parties**

Democratic National Committee

- On the second reference: *the national committee, the committee*
- Similarly: *Democratic State Committee, Democratic County Committee, Democratic City Committee, the state committee, the city committee, the committee*.

depart

- Follow it with a preposition: *He will depart from Buffalo Niagara International Airport. She will depart at 11:30 a.m.*

departments, academic – See **academic departments**

deputy

- Capitalize as a formal title before a name

dictionaries

- For spelling, style and usage questions not covered in this style guide, consult Webster's New World College Dictionary, Fourth Edition

different

- Takes the preposition *from*, not *than*

differ from, differ with

- To *differ from*, means to be unlike
- To *differ with*, means to disagree

dimensions

- Use figures and spell out *inches, feet, yards*, etc. to indicate depth, height, length and width: *He is 5 feet 6 inches tall*
- Hyphenate adjectival forms before nouns: *the 5-foot-6-inch man; the basketball team signed a 7-footer*
- Use an apostrophe (') to indicate feet and quote marks (") to indicate inches (5'6") only in very technical contexts

diocese

- Capitalize when part of a proper name: *the Diocese of Buffalo*.
- Lowercase on subsequent references when diocese is used alone: *The Buffalo Diocese named a new chair for its annual giving. The diocese expects to reach its goal.*

directions and regions

- In general, lowercase north, south, northeast, northern, etc. when they indicate compass direction; capitalize these words when they designate regions

COMPASS DIRECTIONS:

- *He drove west.*
- *The cold front is moving east.*

REGIONS:

- *A storm system that developed in the Midwest is spreading eastward. It will bring showers to the East Coast by morning and to the entire Northeast by late in the day.*

WITH NAMES OF NATIONS:

- Lowercase unless they are part of a proper name or used to designate a politically divided nation: *northern France, eastern Canada, the western United States*. But, *Northern Ireland, South Korea*

WITH STATES AND CITIES:

- The preferred form is to lowercase compass points only when they describe a section of a state or city but capitalize compass points when part of a proper name or when denoting widely known sections: *western Texas, southern Atlanta, North Dakota, West Virginia, Southern California, the South Side of Chicago, the Lower East Side of New York*.

- If in doubt, lowercase

IN PROPER NAMES:

- Capitalize when combining with another common noun to form the name for a region or location: *the North Woods, the South Pole, the Far East, the Middle East, the West Coast* (the entire region, not the coastline itself), *the Western Hemisphere*.

director

- Capitalize when used as a formal title that precedes a person's name or when *director* is part of formal title: *FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover*.
- Lowercase when *director* is referenced as an occupational description: *company director Joseph Warren, director of the All-College Honors Program*.

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diseases

- Do not capitalize *arthritis*, *emphysema*, *leukemia*, *migraine*, *pneumonia*, etc.
- When a disease is known by the name of a person identified with it, capitalize only the individual's name: *Bright's disease*, *Parkinson's disease*, etc.

disinterested, uninterested

- *Disinterested* means impartial, which is usually the better word to convey the thought
- *Uninterested* means that someone lacks interest

dissertation titles

- See titles, composition

distances

- Use figures for 10 and above; spell out one through nine: *He walked four miles. He ran 15 miles.*

district

- Always spell it out
- Use a figure and capitalize district when forming a proper name: *the 2nd District*

District attorney

- Do not abbreviate
- Capitalize when used as a formal title before a name: *District Attorney Frank Clark.*
- Use **DA** (no periods) only in quoted matter

district court

- See court names

District of Columbia

- Abbreviate *D.C.* when the context requires that it be used in conjunction with Washington: *Washington, D.C.*
- Spell out when used alone.
- The *district*, rather than *D.C.* should be used in subsequent references

doctor

- When referencing someone who holds a medical degree, the preferred use is to indicate the professional title following the name: *Jonas Salk, MD*
- When referencing someone who holds a doctorate degree, the preferred use is to indicate the academic degree following the person's name: *Herbert Nelson, PhD, vice president for academic affairs*

doctoral, doctorate

- *doctoral* (adj.) – *He earned his doctoral degree in 1965.*
- *doctorate* (n) – *He has a doctorate in clinical psychology.*

dollars

- Always lowercase
- Use figures and the \$ sign in all references, except casual or amounts without a figure: *The book cost \$4 dollars. Please give me a dollar.*
- For specified amounts, the word takes a singular verb: *He said \$500,000 is what they want.*
- For amounts more than \$1 million, use numerals up to two decimal places: *He is worth \$4.35 million*
- For amounts less than \$1 million: *\$4, \$25, \$500, \$1,000, \$650,000.*

dot-com

- As an informal adjective describing companies that do business mainly on the Internet

Dr.

- See doctor

E

each

- Takes a singular verb

each other, one another

- Two persons look at *each other*; more than two look at *one another*
- Either phrase may be used when the number is indefinite: *We help each other. We help one another.*

earth

- Generally lowercase; capitalize when used as the proper name of the planet: *She is down-to-earth. How does the pattern apply to Mars, Jupiter, Earth, the sun and the moon?*

east, eastern

- See the directions and regions entry

Easter

- Falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon that occurs on or after March 21. If the full moon falls on a Sunday, Easter is the next Sunday.

East Side

- See directions and regions

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Eastern Europe

- No longer a separate political unit but can be used in specific references to the region. Use only in historic sense (Also Western Europe)

editor

- Capitalize *editor* before a name only when it is an official corporate or organizational title; do not capitalize as a job description

editor in chief

- Follow the style of the publication but in general, no hyphen.
- Capitalize when used as a formal title before a name: *Editor in Chief Horace Greeley*
- See titles

effect, affect

- *effect* (v) - to cause: *He will effect many changes in the company.*
- *effect* (n) - result: *He miscalculated the effect of his actions.*
- *affect* (v) -to influence: The game will affect the standings.

either

- Use it to mean one or the other; not both
 - RIGHT: *She said to use either door.*
 - WRONG: *There were lions on either side of the door*
 - RIGHT: *There were lions on each side of the door. There were lions on both sides of the door*

either... or, neither ... nor

- The nouns that follow these words do not constitute a compound subject; they are alternate subjects and require a verb that agrees with the nearer subject: *Neither they nor he is going. Neither he nor they are going.*

elder

- For its use in religious contexts, see the entry for an individual's denomination

-elect

- Always hyphenate and lowercase: *President-elect Regan, senator-elect*

Election Day

- The first Tuesday after the first Monday in November

eleventh

- Spell out only in the phrase *the eleventh hour*, meaning at the last moment; otherwise use the numeral

ellipsis (...)

- Formed with three periods and a space on either side.
- Indicates the deletion of one or more words when condensing quotes, text and documents: "*It has become evident to me that I no longer have a strong enough political base in Congress. ... As long as there was a base, I felt it was necessary to see the constitutional process through to its conclusion.*"
- Do not use at the beginning and/or end of direct quotes.

E-mail

- Short form of electronic mail
- Also *E-book, E-commerce, E-business*

embassy

- An embassy is the official residence of an ambassador in a foreign country and the office that handles the political relations of one nation with another
- Capitalize with the name of a nation; lowercase without it: *the French Embassy, the U.S. Embassy, the embassy*

emcee, emceed, emceeing

- A colloquial verb and noun best avoided,
- A phrase such as *He was the master of ceremonies*, is preferred

em dash (-)

- Signifies an abrupt change in thought: *The professor – he had been awake all night – came to class in an angry mood.*

emeritus (singular male), emerita (singular female)

emeriti (plural)

- This word is often added to formal titles to denote that individuals who have retired retain their rank or title
- When used, italicize and place *emeritus* after the formal title, in keeping with the general practice of academic institutions: **Professor Emeritus Samuel Eliot Morison, Dean Emeritus Courtney C. Brown, Publisher Emeritus Barnard L. Colby** or **Samuel Eliot Morison, professor emeritus of history; Courtney C. Brown, dean emerita of the faculty of business; Barnard L. Colby, publisher emeritus**

emigrate, immigrate

- One who leaves a country *emigrates* from it.
- One who comes into a country *immigrates*.
- The same principal holds for *emigrant* and *immigrant*

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enquire, enquiry

- The preferred words are inquire, inquiry

ensure, insure

- Use *ensure* to mean guarantee: *Steps were taken to ensure accuracy.*
- Use *insure* for references to insurance: *The policy insures his life.*

entitled

- Use it to mean a right to do or have something; do not use it to mean titled.
 - RIGHT: *She was entitled to the promotion.*
 - RIGHT: *The book was titled “Gone With the Wind.”*

essential clauses, nonessential clauses

- These terms are used in this Style guide instead of restrictive clause and nonrestrictive clause to convey the distinction between the two in a more easily remembered manner
- Both types of clauses provide additional information about a word or phrase in the sentence. The difference between them is that the *essential clause* cannot be eliminated without changing the meaning of the sentence. The *nonessential clause*, however, can be eliminated without altering the basic meaning of the sentence
- **PUNCTUATION:** An *essential clause* must not be set off from the rest of a sentence by commas; a *nonessential clause* must be set off by commas. Note the following examples:
 - *Reporters who do not read the Stylebook should not criticize their editors.*

The writer is saying that only one class of reporters, those who do not read the Stylebook, should not criticize their editors. If the ‘who ... Stylebook’ phrase were deleted, the meaning of the sentence would be changed, substantially.
 - *Reporters, who do not read the Stylebook, should not criticize their editors.*

The writer is saying that all reporters should not criticize their editors. If the ‘who ... Stylebook’ phrase were deleted, this meaning would not be changed.
- **USE OF WHO, WHOM, THAT, WHICH:** See separate entries on *that* (conjunction); *that, which* (pronouns); *who, whom*.
 - *That* is the preferred pronoun to introduce *essential clauses* that refer to an inanimate object or an animal without a name.

- *Which* is the only acceptable pronoun to introduce a *nonessential clause* that refers to an inanimate object or animal without a name.
- The pronoun *which* occasionally may be substituted for *that* in the introduction of an *essential clause* that refers to an inanimate object or an animal without a name. In general, this use of *which* should appear only when *that* is used as a conjunction to introduce another clause in the same sentence: *He said Monday that the part of the Army which suffered severe casualties needs reinforcement.*
- See *that* (conjunction) for guidelines on the use of *that* as a conjunction.

essential phrases, nonessential phrases

- These terms are used in this Style guide instead of restrictive phrase and nonrestrictive phrase to convey the distinction between the two in a more easily remembered manner.
- The underlying concept is the one that also applies to clauses: An *essential phrase* is a word or group of words critical to the readers’ understanding of what the author had in mind. A *nonessential phrase* provides more information about something. Although the information may be helpful to the readers’ comprehension, they would not be misled if the information were not there.
- **PUNCTUATION:** Do not set an *essential phrase* off from the rest of a sentence by commas; set off *nonessential phrases* by commas:
- *We saw the award-winning movie “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest.”* No comma, because many movies have won awards, and without the name of the movie the reader would not know which movie was meant.
- *They ate dinner with their daughter Julie.* Because they have more than one daughter, the inclusion of Julie’s name is critical if the reader is to know which daughter is meant.
- *We saw the 1975 winner in the Academy Award competition for best picture, “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest.”* Only one movie won the award. The name is informative but even without the name no other movie could be meant.
- *They at dinner with their daughter Julie and her husband, David.* Julie has only one husband. If the phrase read ... *and her husband David*, it would suggest that she had more than one husband.
- *The company chairman, Henry Ford II, spoke.* In the context, only one person could be meant.
- *Indian corn, or maize, was harvested.* Maize provides the reader with the name of the corn but

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its absence would not change the meaning of the sentence.

- **DESCRIPTIVE WORDS:** Do not confuse punctuation rules for nonessential clauses with the correct punctuation when a nonessential word is used as a descriptive adjective. The distinguishing clue often is the lack of an article or pronoun:
 - RIGHT: *Julie and husband Jeff went shopping. Julie and her husband, Jeff, went shopping.*
 - RIGHT: *Company Chairman Henry Ford II made the announcement. The company chairman, Henry Ford II, made the announcement.*

euros

- The common currency of 12 of the 15 European Union nations

European Union

- The European Union, based in Brussels, Belgium was created by the Treaty on European Union signed in February 1992 and took effect November 1, 1993.
- The six founding members of the European Union are France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg.
- EU (no periods)

every day (adv.), everyday (adj.)

- She goes to work **every day**
- He wears *everyday shoes*

every one, everyone

- Two words when it means each individual item: *Every one of the clues was worthless.*
- One word when used as a pronoun meaning all persons: *Everyone wants his life to be happy.* (Note that *everyone* takes singular verbs and pronouns.)

ex-

- Use no hyphen for words that use *ex-* in the sense of *out of*: *excommunicate, expropriate*
- Hyphenate when using *ex-* in the sense of former: *ex-convict, ex-president* (Usually the word *former* is better)
- Do not capitalize *ex-* when attached to a formal title before a name: *ex-President Nixon*. The prefix modifies the entire term: *ex-New York Gov. Nelson Rockefeller*; not *New York ex-Gov.*

except, accept

- *Except* means to exclude
- *Accept* means to receive

exclamation point (!)

- Refer to the following guidelines:
- Use an exclamation point to express a high degree of surprise or other strong emotion.
- Avoid overuse by replacing exclamation mark with a comma for mild interjections.
- Never use comma or period after exclamation mark:
- **WRONG:** “Halt!”, the corporal cried.
- **RIGHT:** “Halt!” the corporal cried.
- Place inside quotation marks when it is part of the quoted material: *“How wonderful!” he exclaimed.*
- Place outside quotation marks when it is not part of the quoted material: *I hated reading Spenser’s “Faerie Queen”!*

exam

- Use *examination* on first reference.

executive branch

- Always lowercase

executive director

- Capitalize before a name only if it is a formal corporate or organizational title
- See titles

F

faculty

- Faculty ranks are as follows (progressively): **adjunct professor, assistant professor, associate professor, professor**

fall

- See seasons

family names

- Capitalize words denoting family relationships only when they precede the name of a person or when they stand unmodified as a substitute for a person’s name: *I wrote to Grandfather Smith. I wrote Mother a letter. I wrote my mother a letter.*

Far East

- The easternmost portions of the continent of Asia: China, Japan, North and South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and the eastern portions of Russia.
- Confine Far East to this restricted sense. Use the Far East and Southeast Asia when referring to a wider portion of eastern Asia.

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farther, further

- *Farther* refers to physical distance: *He walked farther into the woods.*
- *Further* refers to an extension of time or degree: *She will look further into the mystery.*

father

- Use *Rev.* in first reference when it precedes the names of Roman Catholic priests.
- Use *Father* in subsequent references before the names of Roman Catholic priests; do not abbreviate
- Always include the courtesy title *S.J.* (Society of Jesus) when first referencing a Jesuit priest: *Rev. Vincent M. Cooke, S.J., spoke at the dedication. Father Cooke then invited his guests to a brief reception.*
- See religious titles

faze, phase

- *Faze* means to embarrass or disturb: *The snub did not faze her.*
- *Phase* denotes an aspect or stage: *They will phase in a new system.*

FBI

- Acceptable in all references for Federal Bureau of Investigation

federal

- Use a capital letter for the architectural style and for corporate or governmental bodies that use the word as part of their formal names: *the Federal Trade Commission, Federal Express*
- Lowercase when used as an adjective to distinguish something from state, county, city, etc.: *federal assistance, federal court, federal judge, the federal government.*
- Also, *federal District Court* (but *U.S. District Court* is preferred) and *federal Judge Ann Aldrich* (but *U.S. District Judge Ann Aldrich* is preferred)

Federal Bureau of Investigation

- FBI is acceptable in all references

federal court

- Always lowercase
- The preferred form for first reference is to use the proper name of the court.
- See entries under U.S. and the court name.
- Do not create nonexistent entities such as *Buffalo Federal Court*. Instead, use *a federal court in Buffalo*.
- See judicial branch

fewer, less

- In general, use *fewer* for individual items; *less* for bulk or quantity
RIGHT: *Fewer than 10 applicants called.* (individuals)
RIGHT: *I had less than \$50 in my pocket* (amount) BUT: *I had fewer than 50 \$1 bills in my pocket* (individual items)
WRONG: *The trend is toward more machines and less people.* (People in this sense refers to individuals.)
WRONG: *She was fewer than 60 years old.* (Years, in this sense, refers to a period of time, not individual years.)

figuratively, literally

- *Figuratively* means in an analogous sense but not in the exact sense: *He bled them white.*
- *Literally* means in an exact sense; do not use it figuratively
 - WRONG: *He literally bled them white.*

financial editor

- Capitalize only as a formal title before a name
- See titles

firewall

- Software that monitors incoming and outgoing Internet traffic to your computer and checks for suspicious patterns

firm

- A business partnership is correctly referred to as a firm: *He joined a law firm.*
- Do not use *firm* in references to an incorporated business entity. Use the **company** or the *corporation* instead.

floor leader

- Treat it as a job description, lowercased, rather than a formal title: *Republican floor leader John Smith.*
- Do not use when a formal title such as *majority leader, minority leader* or *whip* would be the accurate description
- See entries for legislative titles and titles

FM

- Acceptable in all references for the frequency modulation system of radio transmission.

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following

- The word usually is a noun, verb or adjective: *He has a large following. He is following his conscience. The following statement was made.*
- Although Webster's New World records its use as a preposition, the preferred word is **after**: *He spoke after dinner. NOT: He spoke following dinner.*

foreign words/phrases

- Some foreign words and abbreviations have been accepted universally into the English language: bon voyage; versus, vs., et cetera, etc. They may be used without explanation if they are clear in the context.
- Many foreign words and their abbreviations are not understood universally although they may be used in special applications such as medical or legal terminology. If such a word or phrase is needed, place it in quotation marks and provide an explanation: "ad astra per aspera," a Latin phrase meaning "to the stars through difficulty;" **The sign on her door says *qui docet discit* (he who teaches learns).**

former

- Always lowercase but retain capitalization for a formal title used immediately before a name: *former President Nixon*

forward

- Not *forwards*

four-star general

fractions

- Spell out amounts less than one in stories, using hyphens between the words: *two-thirds, four-fifths.*
- Use figures for precise amounts larger than one, converting to decimals whenever practical: *3 3/4, 1 1/2 or 1.5.*

full-

- Hyphenate when used to form compound modifiers: *full-dress; full-fledged; full-length; full-page; full-scale*

full time, full-time

- Hyphenate when used as a compound modifier: *He works full time. She has a full-time job*

fund raising, fund-raising, fund-raiser

- *Fund raising* (adv) is difficult; *They planned a fund-raising (adj) campaign. A fund-raiser (n) was hired.*

further

- See the **farther, further** entry

G

gallon

- Equal to 128 fluid ounces
- To convert to liters, multiply gallon amount by 3.8.

general assembly

- See **legislature** for its treatment as the name of a state's legislative body
- Capitalize when it is the formal name for the ruling or consultative body of an organization: *the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches*

general manager

- Capitalize as a formal title before a name

genus, species

- In scientific or biological names, capitalize the first, or generic, Latin name for the class of plant or animal and lowercase the species that follows: *Homo sapiens, Tyrannosaurus rex*

geographic names

- See **state names**

girl

- Applicable until 18th birthday is reached.
- Use *woman* or *young woman* afterward.

God

- Capitalize **God** in references to the deity of all monotheistic religions.
- Capitalize all noun references to the deity: *God the Father, Holy Ghost, Holy Spirit*, etc.
- Lowercase personal pronouns: *he, him, thee, thou.*
- See **religious references**

gods and goddesses

- Lowercase *gods* and *goddesses* in references to the deities of polytheistic religions
- Lowercase *god, gods* and *goddesses* in references to false gods: *He made money his god.*

Good Friday

- The Friday before Easter
- Capitalize.

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good, well

- **Good** is an adjective that means something is as it should be or is better than average.
- **Good** should not be used as an adverb. It does not lose its status as an adjective in a sentence such as: *I feel good*. Such a statement is the idiomatic equivalent of: *I am in good health*. An alternative: *I feel well*, could be interpreted as meaning that your sense of touch was good.
- When used as an adjective, **well** means suitable, proper, healthy.
- When used as an adverb, **well** means in a satisfactory manner or skillfully

Google

- A trademark for a Web search engine

GOP

- See Grand Old Party

Gospel(s), gospel

- Capitalize when referring to any or all of the first four books of the New Testament: *the Gospel of St. John, the Gospels*.
- Lowercase in other references: *She is a famous gospel singer*.

government

- Always lowercase, never abbreviate: *the federal government, the U.S. government*.

governmental bodies

- Follow these guidelines
FULL NAME: Capitalize the full proper names of governmental agencies, departments and offices: *The U.S. Department of State, the New York Department of Human Resources*
WITHOUT JURISDICTION: Retain capitalization in referring to a specific body if the dateline or context makes the name of the nation, state, county, city unnecessary: *The Department of State, the Department of Human Resources or the state Department of Human Resources, the City Council, the Fire Department or the city Fire Department*
Lowercase further condensations of the name: the department, the council, etc.
PLURALS, NONSPECIFIC REFERENCES
All words that are capitalized when part of a proper name should be lowercased when they are used in the plural or do not refer to a specific, existing body: *The president will address the lower houses of the New York and New Jersey legislatures; The bill requires city councils to provide matching funds.*

governor

- Capitalize and spell out as a formal title before name
- Lowercase and spell out in all other uses

grade, grader

- Hyphenate the noun forms: **first-grader, second-grader, 10th-grader**
- Hyphenate the adjectival forms: *a fourth-grade pupil, a 12th grade pupil*.

grades

- Capitalize letter grade
- Do not italicize or set in quotation marks: *He received an A on his thesis*.
- When referencing a plural letter grade, add s: *She was sure she would get straight As*.

grade point average

- GPA

graduate

- **Graduate** (v) is correctly used in the active voice: *She graduated from Canisius College*.
- It is correct but unnecessary to use the passive voice: *He was graduated from the university*.
- Do not, however, drop *from*: *John Adams graduated from Canisius College*. **NOT:** *John Adams graduated Canisius College*.

gram

- To convert to ounces, multiply grams by .035.

grand jury

- Always lowercase: *an Erie County grand jury, the grand jury*

Grand Old Party

- **GOP** is acceptable as a synonym for Republican Party without first spelling out *Grand Old Party*.

great-

- Hyphenate: *great-grandfather, great-great-grandmother*, etc.
- Use great grandfather only if the intended meaning is that the grandfather was a great man.

Great Britain

- It consists of England, Scotland and Wales but not Northern Ireland
- Britain is acceptable in all references
- See United Kingdom

greater

- Capitalize when used to define a community and its surrounding region: *Greater Buffalo*

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Great Lakes

- The five, from the largest to the smallest: Lake Superior, Lake Huron, Lake Michigan, Lake Erie, Lake Ontario

Great Plains

- Capitalize *Great Plains* or the *Plains* when referring to the U.S. prairie lands that extend from North Dakota to Texas and from the Rocky Mountains east toward the Mississippi River valley.
- Use *northern Plains*, *southwestern Plains*, etc., when referring to a portion of the region.

group

- Takes singular verbs and pronouns: *the group is reviewing its position*.

Gulf Coast

- Capitalize when referring to the region of the United States lying along the Gulf of Mexico.

H

hacker

- In common usage, the term has evolved to mean one who uses computer skills to unlawfully penetrate proprietary computer systems

half

- It is not necessary to use the preposition of: half the time is correct but half of the time is not wrong

half-mast, half-staff

- On ships and at naval stations ashore, flags are flown at *half-mast*
- Elsewhere ashore, flags are flown at *half-staff*

headquarters

- May take a singular or plural verb
- Do not use *headquarter* as a verb

heavenly bodies

- Capitalize the proper names of planets, stars and constellations: *Mars*, *the Big Dipper*, *Aries*
- For comets, capitalize only the proper noun element of the name: Halley's come
- Lowercase *sun* and *moon*
- See earth

he, him, his, thee, thou

- Personal pronouns referring to the deity are lowercase
- See deity

hemisphere

- Capitalize *Northern Hemisphere*, *Western Hemisphere*, etc.
- Lowercase in other uses: *the Eastern and Western hemispheres*, *the hemisphere*

her

- Do not use this pronoun in reference to nations or ships, except in quoted matter; use *it* instead

highway designations

- Use these forms, as appropriate in the context, for highways identified by number: *U.S. Highway 1*; *U.S. Route 1*; *U.S. 1*; *state Route 34*; *Route 34*; *Interstate Highway 495*; *Interstate 495*
- On second reference only for Interstate: *I-495*
- When a letter is appended to a number, capitalize it but do not use a hyphen: *Route 1A*
- See addresses

his, her

- Do not presume maleness in constructing a sentence but use the pronoun *his* when an indefinite antecedent may be male or female: *A reporter attempts to protect his sources*. (Not *his or her sources* but note the use of the word reporter rather than newsman)
- Frequently, however, the best choice is a slight revision of the sentence: *Reporters attempt to protect their sources*

Hispanic

- The preferred term for those whose ethnic origin is in a Spanish-speaking country
- Latino/Latina is acceptable for Hispanics who prefer that term.
- Capitalize

historical periods and events

- Capitalize the names of widely recognized epochs in anthropology, archaeology, geology and history: *the Bronze Age*, *the Dark Ages*, *the Middle Ages*
- Capitalize also widely recognized popular names for the periods and events: *the Atomic Age*, *the Boston Tea Party*, *the Civil War*
- Lowercase century: *the 18th century*
- Capitalize only the proper nouns or adjectives in general descriptions of a period: *ancient Greece*, *classical Rome*, *the Victorian era*

historic, historical

- A *historic* event is an important occurrence, one that stands out in history
- Any occurrence in the past is a *historical* event

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history

- Avoid the redundant *past history*

holidays, holy days

- Capitalize: *New Year's Eve, Easter, Groundhog Day*

holy communion

- See sacraments

Holy Father

- The preferred form is to use *the pope* or *the pontiff*, or to give the individual's name
- Use *Holy Father* in direct quotations or special contexts where a particular literary effect is desired.

holy orders

- See sacraments

Holy Spirit

- Now preferred over Holy Ghost

Holy Week

- The week before Easter

home page

- The "front" page of a particular Web site

hometown

- Use a comma to set off an individual's hometown when it is placed in apposition to a name, whether *of* is used or not: *Tim Johnson, of Vermillion, SD; Mary Richards, Minneapolis*

honorary degrees

- All references to honorary degrees should specify that the degree was honorary
- Do not use *Dr.* before the name of an individual whose only doctorate is honorary

honors classes

- Capitalize when referring to formal course or program: *All-College Honors Program; Honors student*

hopefully

- It means *in a hopeful manner*; do not use it to mean it is hoped, let us or we hope.
 - RIGHT: *It is hoped that we will complete our work in June.*
 - RIGHT: *We hope that we will complete our work in June.*
 - WRONG: *Hopefully, we will complete our work in June.*

house of representatives

- Capitalize when referring to a specific governmental body and all shortened references: *the U.S. House of Representatives, the House has adjourned for the year*
- Capitalize shortened references that delete the words *of Representatives*: *the U.S. House, the Massachusetts House*
- Retain capitalization if U.S. or the name of a state is dropped but the reference is to a specific body
- Lowercase plural uses: *the Massachusetts and Rhode Island houses*
- Apply the same principle to similar legislative bodies such as *the Virginia House of Delegates*
- See organizations and institutions entry for guidelines on how to handle the term when it is used by a nongovernmental body

human, human being

- Human is preferred but either is acceptable

husband, widower

- Use *husband* not widower in referring to the spouse of a woman who dies

hydro-

- The rules in prefixes apply but in general no hyphen: *hydroelectric, hydrophobia*

hyper-

- The rules in prefixes apply but in general no hyphen: *hyperactive, hypercritical*

hyperlink

- A link from one part of an Internet page to another page, as a restaurant home page with a link to its menu

hypertext

- A system of linking electronic documents

hyphen (-)

- Hyphens are joiners. Use them to avoid ambiguity or to form a single idea from two or more words
- Use a hyphen whenever ambiguity would result if it were omitted: the president will speak to small-business men
 - RIGHT: The president will speak to *small-business men*.
 - WRONG: The president will speak to *small businessmen*. (unclear)
- When a **compound modifier** – two or more words that express a single concept – precedes a noun, use hyphens to link all the words in the compound except the adverb *very* and all adverbs

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that end in *-ly*: *a first-quarter touch down; a bluish-green dress; a full-time job; a very good time, an easily remembered rule*

- Use a hyphen to designate dual heritage: *Italian-American, Mexican-American*
- No hyphen, however, for *Latin American, French Canadian*

PREFIXES AND SUFFIXES

- See the **prefixes** and **suffixes** entries

WITH NUMERALS

- Use a hyphen to separate figures in *odds, ratios, scores*, some *fractions* and some *vote tabulations*: *He received a 10- to 20-year sentence in prison*

I **immigrate**

- See the **emigrate, immigrate** entry

impassable, impassible, impassive

- *Impassable* means that passage is impossible: *The bridge was impassable*
- *Impassible* can describe lack of sensitivity to pain or suffering or suggest an inability to be affected
- *Impassive* can describe lack of sensitivity to pain or suffering or also imply that no reaction was noticeable: *She was impassive throughout the ordeal*

impeachment

- The constitutional process accusing an elected official of a crime in an attempt to remove the official from office
- Do not use as a synonym for convicted or removed from office

imply, infer

- Writers or speakers *imply* in the words they use
- A listener or reader *infers* something from the words

in, into

- *In* indicates location: *He was in the room.*
- *Into* indicates motion: *She walked into the room*

-in

- Precede with a hyphen: *break-in; cave-in; walk-in*

in-

- No hyphen when it means *not*: *inaccurate; insufferable*; often solid in other cases: *inbound; indoor; infield; infighting*
- A few combinations take a hyphen: *in-depth; in-house; in-law*

Inc.

- See **incorporated**

include

- Use *include* to introduce a series when the items that follow are only part of the total: *The zoo includes lions and tigers*
- Use *comprise* when the full list of individual elements is given: *The zoo comprises 100 types of animals, including lions and tigers*

incorporated

- Abbreviate and capitalize as *Inc.* when used as part of a corporate name
- Do not set off with commas

incredible, incredulous

- *Incredible* means unbelievable
- *Incredulous* means skeptical

Indians

- *American Indian* is the preferred term for those in the United States
- Where possible, be precise and use the name of the tribe: *He is a Navajo commissioner*
- *Native American* is acceptable in quotations and names of organizations

infra-

- The rules in prefixes apply but in general, no hyphen: *infrared; infrastructure*

initials

- Use periods (no space) when an individual uses initials instead of a first name: *H.L. Mencken*
- If a person is referred to by the initials of their family name, no periods are used: *FDR, JFK, MLK*
- If available, include middle initial in first reference of person: *John J. Smith*

inquire, enquiry

- Not enquire, enquiry

in spite of

- Despite means the same thing and is shorter

inter-

- The rules in prefixes apply but in general no hyphen: *inter-American; interstate, interracial*

Internal Revenue Service

- *IRS* is acceptable on second reference
- Capitalize also *Internal Revenue* but lowercase *the revenue service*

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Internet

- A decentralized, worldwide network of computers that can communicate with each other
- Capitalize
- When a story mentions a specific Web site or Web service, include the Internet address (URL) within the text, as this is essential information to the reader
- Add Internet addresses to the end of a story when they provide additional information but aren't specifically referred to in a story.
- Avoid URLs that are particularly lengthy and complicated, unless essential to guide the reader to a particular document

intra-

- The rules in prefixes apply but in general no hyphen: **intramural**; **intrastate**

island

- Capitalize as part of a proper name: *Prince Edward Island, the Hawaiian Islands*
- Lowercase when it stands alone or when the references is to the islands in a given area: *the Pacific islands*
- Lowercase all *island of* constructions: *the island of Nantucket*

it

- Use this pronoun rather than *she*, in references to nations and ships

IT

- Acronym for *information technology*
- Spell out on first reference: *She is a new professor of information technology (IT) at Canisius College but has studied IT for several years.*

italic

- See **titles, composition**

it's, its

- *It's* is a contraction for it is or it has: *It's up to you; it's been a long time*
- *Its* is the possessive form of the neuter pronoun: *the company lost its assets*

J

jargon

- The special vocabulary and idioms of a particular class or occupational group
- In general, avoid jargon
- When it is appropriate in a special context, include an explanation of any words likely to be unfamiliar to most readers

JAVA

- A trademark of Sun Microsystems Inc. for a computer programming language that can be run across the Internet

JAVAScript

- **A scripting language, developed by Netscape, designed to run inside Web pages**

Jesus

- The central figure of Christianity, he also may be called *Jesus Christ* or *Christ*
- Personal pronouns referring to him are lowercase

job descriptions

- Always lowercase.

JPEG, JPG

- Acronyms for *joint photographic experts group*, one of two common types of image compression mechanisms used on the World Wide Web

Jr.

- See the **junior, senior** entry

judge

- Capitalize before a name when it is the formal title for an individual who presides in a court of law; do not continue to use the title in second reference
- Do not use *court* as part of the title unless confusion would result without it: *U.S. District Judge John Sirica; District Judge John Sirica, federal Judge John Sirica; Judge John Sirica; U.S. Circuit Judge Homer Thornberry; appellate Judge John Blair*
- Occasions when *court* is needed in the title: *Juvenile Court Judge John Jones; Superior Court Judge Robert Harrison, state Supreme Court Judge William Cushing*
- When the formal title *chief judge* is relevant, put the court name after the judge's name: *Chief Judge John Sirica of the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C.; Chief Judge Clement F. Haynsworth Jr. of the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals*
- Lowercase *judge* as an occupational designation in phrases such as: *beauty contest judge Bert Parks*

judicial branch

- Always lowercase
- The federal court system that exists today is composed of the *Supreme Court of the United States, the U.S. Court of Appeals, U.S. District Courts and the U.S. Customs Court*. There are also four district judges for U.S. territories

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junior, senior, II, III

- Abbreviate as **Jr.** and **Sr.** only with full names of persons; do not precede with comma: ***Martin Luther King Jr., Pope John Paul II***
- The notation **II** or **2nd** may be used if it is the individual's preference. Note, however, that **II** and **2nd** are not necessarily the equivalent of junior – they often are used by a grandson or nephew

jury

- The word takes singular verbs and pronouns: ***The jury has been sequestered until it reaches a verdict***
- Do not capitalize: ***a U.S. District Court jury; a federal jury; an Erie County grand jury***

justice

- Capitalize before a name when it is the formal title
- It is the formal title for members of the U.S. Supreme Court and for jurists on some state courts

K

keynote address

- Also *keynote speech*

kick off, kick-off, kickoff

- **kick off (v)** -***The event will kick off this week.***
- **kick-off (adj.)** – ***The kick-off event went smoothly.***
- **kickoff (n)** – ***The event is a kickoff to the week's activities.***

kids

- Preferred use is *children*

king

- Capitalize only when *precedes* the name of royalty: ***King George VI***

Korean War

- Lowercase Korean conflict

kudos

- It means credit or praise for an achievement
- The word is singular and takes singular verbs

L

lady

- Do not use as a synonym for woman
- ***Lady*** may be used when it is a courtesy title: ***Lady Diana***

lake

- Capitalize as part of a proper name: ***Lake Erie, Finger Lakes***
- Lowercase in plural uses: ***lakes Erie and Ontario***

languages

- Capitalize the proper names of languages and dialects: ***Aramaic, Cajun, English, Persian, Yiddish***

last

- Avoid the use of ***last*** as a synonym for latest if it might imply finality: ***The last time it rained, I forgot my umbrella is acceptable*** but ***The last announcement was made at noon today*** may leave the reader wondering whether the announcement was the final announcement or whether others are to follow

Last Supper

late

- Do not use to describe someone's actions while alive
 - **WRONG: *Only the late senator opposed this bill.*** (The senator was not dead at that time.)

laws

- Capitalize legislative acts; not bills: ***the Taft-Hartley Act, the Kennedy bill.***

lawsuit

- Civil lawsuit is redundant

lawyer

- A generic term for all members of the bar
- An ***attorney*** is someone legally appointed or empowered to act for another, usually, but not always, a lawyer.
- An ***attorney at law*** is a ***lawyer***
- When used in a legal sense, counselor, means a person who conducts a case in court, usually but not always a lawyer

lay, lie

- The action word is ***lay***; it takes a direct object
- ***Laid*** is the form for its past tense and its past participle; its present participle is ***laying***
- ***Lie*** indicates a state of reclining along a horizontal plane; it does not take a direct object; its past tense is ***lay***; its past participle is ***lain***; its present participle is ***lying***
- When ***lie*** means to make an untrue statement, the verb forms are ***lie, lied, lying***

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lectern, podium, pulpit, rostrum

- A speaker stands *behind a lectern, on a podium or rostrum, or in the pulpit.*

lectures

- Capitalize and use quotation marks for their formal titles
- See titles, compositions

legal cases

- Italicize the names of legal cases
- Use the abbreviation *v.* for versus in case names: *Miranda v. Arizona*
- Retain the italics when case name is shortened: **the *Miranda* case**

legislative titles

- Follow these guidelines:
FIRST REFERENCE FORM
 - Use Rep., Reps., Sen. and Sens. As formal titles before one or more names in regular text
 - Spell out and capitalize these titles before one or more names in a direct quotation
 - Spell out and lowercase representative and senator in other uses
 - Spell out other legislative titles in all uses
 - Capitalize formal titles such as assemblyman, assemblywoman, city councilor, delegate etc., when they are used before a name; lowercase in other uses
 - Add U.S. or state before a title only if necessary to avoid confusion: U.S. Sen. Nancy Kassebaum spoke with state Sen. Hugh Carter

FIRST REFERENCE PRACTICE

- The use of a title such as *Rep.* or *Sen.* in first reference is normal in most stories. It is not mandatory, however, provided an individual's title is given later in the story

SECOND REFERENCE

- Do not use legislative titles before a name on second reference unless they are part of a direct quotation

CONGRESSMAN, CONGRESSWOMAN

- *Rep.* and *U.S. Rep.* are the preferred first-reference forms when a formal title is used before the name of a U.S. House member
- The words *congressman* or *congresswoman*, in lowercase, may be used in subsequent references that do not use an individual's name

- *Congressman* and *congresswoman* should appear as capitalized formal titles before a name only in direct quotation

ORGANIZATIONAL TITLES

- Capitalize titles for formal, organizational offices within a legislative body when they are used before a name: *Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill, Majority Leader Robert C. Byrd, Democratic Whip James C. Wright, Chairman John J. Sparkman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee*

legislator

- Member of legislative body

legislature

- Capitalize when preceded by the name of a state: *the Kansas Legislature*
- Retain capitalization when the state name is dropped but the reference is specifically to that state legislature

Lent

- The period from Ash Wednesday through Holy Saturday, the day before Easter
- Capitalize.

-less

- No hyphen before this suffix: *childless; waterless, tailless*

less

- See the fewer, less entry

lie

- See the lay, lie entry

lieutenant

- See military titles

letter grades

- See grades

lieutenant governor

- Capitalize and abbreviate as *Lt. Gov.* when used as a formal title before one or more names in regular text: *Lt. Gov. Mary O. Donahue*
- Capitalize and spell out when part of a formal title in direct quotations: *"The Lieutenant Governor will arrive in 15 minutes," said the mayor.*

light, lighted, lighting

- *Lit* is acceptable as the past tense form

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-like

- Do not precede this suffix by a hyphen unless the letter “l” would be tripled or the main element is a proper noun: *businesslike*; *shell-like*

like-

- Follow with a hyphen when used as a prefix meaning similar to: *like-minded*; *like-natured*
- No hyphen in words that have meanings of their own: *likelihood*; *likeness*; *likewise*

like, as

- Use *like* as a preposition to compare nouns and pronouns. *It requires an object: Jim blocks like a pro.*
- The conjunction *as* is the correct word to introduce clauses: *Jim blocks the linebacker as he should*

literally, figuratively

- See the figuratively, literally entry

literature

- See composition titles

login, logon, logoff (n)

- But use as two words in verb form: *I log in to my computer*

Lord’s Supper

- See sacraments

-ly

- Do not use a hyphen between adverbs ending in *-ly* and adjectives they modify: *an easily remembered rule, a badly damaged island, a fully informed woman*

M

MAAC

- Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference

magazine names

- Italicize the names of magazine titles
- Lowercase *magazine* unless it is part of the publication’s formal title: *Harper’s Magazine*, *Newsweek* magazine; *Time* magazine

magistrate

- Capitalize when used as a formal title before a name
- Use *magistrate judge* when referring to the fixed-term judge who presides in U.S. District Court and handles cases referred by U.S. district judges

major

- Lowercase all academic majors except when a proper noun is part of the title: *Jane Smith, a biology major*; *He is an English major*
- Also see military titles

majority leader

- Capitalize when used as a formal title before a name: *Majority Leader Robert C. Byrd*.
- Lowercase elsewhere

manager

- Capitalize when used as a formal title before a name: *General Manager Dick O’Connell*
- Do not capitalize in job descriptions such as: *equipment manager John Smith*

managing editor

- Capitalize when used as a formal title before a name

Marines

- Capitalize when referring to U.S. forces or an individual in a Marine Corps unit: *the U.S. Marines*; *He is a Marine*
- Do not describe Marines as soldiers, which is generally associated with the Army. Use *troops* if a generic term is needed

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

- Federal holiday honoring Martin Luther King Jr., who was born January 15, 1929.
- Holiday is marked on the third Monday in January

Mass

- Mass is *celebrated* NOT *said*
- Always capitalize when referring to the ceremony; lowercase preceding adjectives: *high Mass*, *requiem Mass*

master of arts, master of science

- A *master’s degree* or *master’s* is acceptable in any reference
- Lowercase
- See academic degrees

MD

- No periods

metro bus, metro rail

- Capitalize only when referring to the (NFTA) proper name: *Metro Bus*; *Metro Rail*

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mid-

- No hyphen unless a capitalized word follows: *mid-America; mid-Atlantic; midsemester; midterm*
- Use a hyphen when *mid-* precedes a figure: *mid-30s*

Middle Ages

- AD 476 to approximately A.D. 1450
- Capitalize

Middle East

- *Mideast* is also acceptable but *Middle East* is preferred

middle initials

- In general, use them; they are considered an integral part of a person's name

middle names

- Use them only with people who are publicly known that way (*James Earl Jones*) or to prevent confusion with people of the same name

midnight

- Do not put a 12 in front of it

military academies

- Capitalize *U.S. Air Force Academy, U.S. Coast Guard Academy, U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, U.S. Military Academy, U.S. Naval Academy*
- Retain capitalization if *U.S.* is dropped: *the Air Force Academy*
- Lowercase academy whenever it stands alone

military titles

- Capitalize a military rank when used as a formal title before an individual's name
- On first reference, use the appropriate title before the full name of a member of the military
- In subsequent references, do not continue using the title before a name; use only the last name
- Spell out and lowercase a title when it is substituted for a name: *Gen. John J. Pershing arrived today. An aide said the general would review the troops.*
- See [Associated Press Style Guide](#) for full listing of military titles and proper abbreviations

military units

- Use numerals and capitalize key words when linked with figures: *The 1st Infantry Division was deployed; The division will be deployed for three months*

millions, billions

- Use figures with million or billion in all except casual uses: *The lottery is \$20 million; I would like to make a million dollars*

minister

- It is not a formal title in most religions, with exceptions such as the Nation of Islam, therefore it is not capitalized.
- Where it is a formal title, it should be capitalized before the name: *Minister John Jones*
- See [religious titles](#)

minority leader

- See entry for [majority leader](#)

monsignor

- See [Roman Catholic Church](#)

months

- Capitalize and spell out the complete names of all months in running text: *We were there in October 1969*
- When a phrase lists only the month and year, do not separate the year with commas: *January 1972 was a cold month*
- When a phrase refers to a month, day and year, set off the year with commas: *His birthday was October 9, 1969*
- Only *Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov.* and *Dec.* can be abbreviated; there are no abbreviations for *March, April, May, June and July*

more than

- Use when referring to quantities or amounts: *Their salaries went up more than \$20 a week. I paid more than \$200 for this suit.*

mountains

- Capitalize as part of a proper name: *Appalachian Mountains; Rocky Mountains*; or simply the *Appalachians, the Rockies*

movie titles

- See [composition titles](#)

MP3

- A popular audio compression format on the Internet

Mr., Mrs.

- The plural of *Mr.* is *Messrs.*; the plural of *Mrs.* is *Mmes*; these abbreviated spellings apply in all uses, including direct quotations
- See [courtesy titles](#) for guidelines on when to use *Mr.* and *Mrs.*

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Ms.

- This is the spelling and punctuation for all uses of the courtesy title, including direct quotations
- There is no plural; if several women who prefer *Ms.* must be listed in a series, repeat *Ms.* before each name
- See courtesy titles for guidelines on when to use *Ms.*

music

- Capitalize, but do not use quotation marks, on descriptive titles for orchestral works: *Bach's Suite No. 1 for Orchestra; Beethoven's Serenade for Flute, Violin and Viola*
- If the instrumentation is not part of the title but is added for explanatory purposes, the names of the instruments are lowercased: *Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante in e flat major for violin and viola*
- If in doubt, lowercase the names of the instruments
- Use *quotation marks* (“...”) for nonmusical terms in a title: *Beethoven's “Eroica” Symphony*
- If the work has a special full title, all of it is quoted: *“Symphonie Fantastique;” “Rhapsody in Blue”*
- In subsequent references lowercase *symphony, concerto*, etc.

N

names

- Use full name, including middle initial on first reference; use last names only on second reference: *Michael W. Jones is a professor of mathematics. Jones has worked at the college for several years.*
- When referencing a cleric/priest, use full name including title on first reference; retain title and use last name only on second reference: *Rev. Vincent M. Cooke, S.J., spoke at academic convocation. Father Cooke's state-of-the-college address was attended by faculty and staff.*

national anthem

- Lowercase but capitalize “The Star Spangled Banner”

national guard

- Capitalize when referring to U.S. or state-level forces: *the National Guard, he is a National Guardsman*
- Lowercase for the forces of other nations

Navy

- Capitalize when referring to U.S. forces: *the U.S. Navy, the Navy, Navy policy*; lowercase when referring to naval forces of other nations
- See military academies

neither ... nor

- See the either ... or, neither ... nor entry

newspaper names

- Capitalize *the* in a newspaper's name if that is the way the publication prefers to be known; do no place name in quotes
- Lowercase *the* before newspaper names if a story mentions several papers, some of which use *the* as part of the name and some of which do not

New Testament

- See Bible

nicknames

- A nickname should be used in place of a person's given name *only* when it is the way the individual prefers to be known: *Jimmy Carter*
- Use quotation marks when a nickname is inserted into the identification of an individual: *Sen. Henry M. “Scoop” Jackson*
- Capitalize without quotation marks such terms as *Sunshine State, the Old Dominion, Motown, Old Glory*

9/11

- **September 11** is the preferred term to use in describing the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001

No.

- Use the abbreviation for *number* in conjunction with a figure to indicate position or rank: *No. 1 choice*

non-

- The rules of prefixes apply but in general no hyphen when forming a compound that does not have special meaning and can be understood if *not* is used before the base word.
- Use a hyphen, however, before proper nouns or in awkward combinations, such as *non-nuclear*

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none

- It usually means *no single one*
- When used in this sense, it always takes singular verbs and pronouns: *None of the seats was in its right place*
- Use a plural verb only if the sense is *no two* or *no amount*: *None of the consultants agree on the same approach. None of the taxes have been paid.*

noon

- Do not put a *12* in front of it
- See midnight

nowadays

- Not *nowdays*

numbers

- Use the following guidelines:
- **SPELL OUT:**
- Cardinal numbers *zero* through *nine*
- Ordinals *first* through *ninth*
- Centuries: spell out *first – ninth*: *the fifth century*
- Fractions (use hyphens): *one-fifth*
- Number that begins a sentence (with the exception of a year):
- *Fifteen people signed up for the welcoming committee. 1978 was a great year.*
- **USE NUMERALS FOR:**
- Cardinal numbers *10* and *above*
- Ordinals *10th* and *above*
- Ages (hyphenate adjectival forms): *3-year old boy, 10-month old baby, 75 years old.*
- Addresses: *2001 Main St.*
- Measure, abbreviated units: *55 mph, 50lb., 35 mm.*
- Credits/credit hours: *3 credit hours, 6 credits, 3-credit course*
- Currency – See currency
- Parts of a book, periodical or manuscript: *volume 3, chapter 6*
- Percentages (use the word *percent*, not the *symbol*)
- Sizes: *a size 8 dress*
- Time: *2:00 a.m.*
- Years: *1945*

O

occupational titles

- Always lowercase
- See titles

ocean

- The five oceans from the largest to smallest: *Pacific Ocean, Atlantic Ocean, Indian Ocean, Antarctic Ocean, Arctic Ocean*
- Capitalize when referencing the specific name of an *ocean*: *the Atlantic Ocean.*
- Lowercase when standing alone or in plural uses: *the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.*

odd-

- Follow with a hyphen: *odd-looking; odd-numbered*

office

- Capitalize *office* when part of a formal name: *Office of Alumni Relations; Public Relations Office; Office of Management and Budget*

Old Testament

- See Bible

olympics

- Capitalize all references to the international athletic contests: *the Olympics; the Winter Olympics; the Olympic Games, an Olympic-sized pool*

on

- Do not use *on* before a date or day of the week when its absence would not lead to confusion: *The meeting will be held Monday; He will be inaugurated January 20*
- Use *on* to avoid an awkward juxtaposition of a date and a proper name: *John met Mary on Monday; He told Reagan on Thursday that the bill was doomed*
- Use *on* also to avoid any suggestion that a date is the object of a transitive verb: *The House killed on Tuesday a bid to raise taxes; The Senate postponed on Wednesday its consideration of a bill to reduce import duties*

one-

- Hyphenate when used in a writing fractions: *one-half; one-third*
- Use phrases such as *a half* or *a third* if precision is not intended

one another

- See the each other, one another entry

on-line

- Hyphenate

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opinion polls

- See the polls and surveys entry

oral, verbal, written

- Use *oral* to refer to spoken words: *He gave an oral promise.*
- Use *written* to refer to words committed to paper: *We had a written agreement.*
- Use *verbal* to compare words with some other form of communication: *His tears revealed the sentiments that his poor verbal skills could not express.*

organizations and institutions

- Capitalize the full names of organizations and institutions: *the American Medical Association, General Motors Corp.*
- Retain capitalization if *Co., Corp. or a similar word is deleted from the full proper name: General Motors.* See company, corporation and incorporated entry
- Capitalize the names of major subdivisions: *the Pontiac Motor Division of General Motors*

Oval Office

- The white House office of the president

over

- Generally refers to spatial relationships (ex: over/under): *The plane flew over the city; The baby crawled under the table.*
- *More than* is preferred with numerals: *Their salaries went up more than \$20 a week.*

P

page numbers

- Use numerals and capitalize *page* when used with a figure: *Page 1; Page 10*
- When a letter is appended to the figure, capitalize it but do not use a hyphen: *Page 1, Page 10, Page 20A*
- One exception: *It's a Page One story*

paintings

- See composition titles

parentheses ()

- In general, use parentheses around logs; otherwise use sparingly
- If a sentence must contain incidental material, then commas or two dashes are more effective; use these alternatives where possible
- When they are necessary, follow these guidelines:
PUNCTUATION
 - Place a period outside a closing parenthesis if the material inside is not a sentence (*such as this fragment*).

- (*An independent parenthetical sentence such as this one takes a period before the closing parenthesis.*)
- When a phrase placed in parentheses (*this one is an example*) might normally qualify as a complete sentence but is dependent on the surrounding material, do not capitalize the first word or end with period

NEVER USE

- Do not use parentheses to denote a political figure's party affiliation and jurisdiction; instead set them off with commas as shown under party affiliation

parish

- Capitalize as part of the formal name for a church congregation: *St. John's Parish.*
- Lowercase standing alone or in plural combinations: *the parish, St. John's and St. Mary's parishes*

partial quotes

- When a partial quote is used, do not put quotation marks around words that the speaker could not have used:
 - WRONG: *She said she "was horrified at their slovenly manners."*
 - RIGHT: *She said she was horrified at their "slovenly manners."*

part time, part-time

- Hyphenate when used as a compound modifier: She works part time; She has a part-time job

party affiliation

- Follow these guidelines:
GENERAL FORMS
 - When party designation is given, use any of these approaches as logical in constructing a story: *Democratic Sen. Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota said ... ; Sen. Hubert Humphrey, D-Minn., said ... ; Rep. Morris Udall of Arizona is seeking the Democratic presidential nomination.*

SHORT-FORM PUNCTUATION

- Set short forms such as **D-Minn.** off from a name by commas: *Rep. Morris Udall, D-Arizona*
- Use **R-** for *Republicans*; **D-** for *Democrats*; and *three letter* combinations for other affiliations

FORM FOR U.S. HOUSE MEMBERS

- The normal practice for U.S. House members is to identify them by party and state: *U.S. Reps. Thomas P. O'Neill Jr., D-Cambridge, and Margaret Heckler, R-Wellesley*

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- When using abbreviations set off with commas: *Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, D-N.Y.*

Party

- See the political parties entry

Pastor

- See religious titles

PDF

- Portable document format, a file format for the Adobe Acrobat reader

people, persons

- Use *person* when speaking of an individual: *One person waited for the bus.*
- The word *people* is preferred to *persons* in all plural uses: *Thousands of people attended the fair; What will people say; There were 17 people in the room*
- *Persons* should be used only when it is in a direct quote or part of a title as in *Bureau of Missing Persons*
- *People* also is a collective noun that takes a plural verb when used to refer to a single race or nation: *The American people are united*

percent

- Use numerals (for amounts 10 and above) and spell out *percent*: *She saved 10 percent on the clothing sale.*
- *Percent* takes a singular verb when standing alone or when a singular word follows an of construction: *The teacher said 60 percent was a failing grade*
- *Percent* takes a plural verb when a plural word follows an of construction: *He said 50 percent of the members were there.*
- Use figures *2.5 percent* (use decimals not fractions)
- Repeat *percent* with each individual figure: *He said 10 percent to 30 percent of the electorate may not vote*

period (.)

- Follow these guidelines:
 - END OF A DECLARATIVE SENTENCE: *The stylebook is finished.*
 - END OF MILDLY IMPERATIVE SENTENCE: *Shut the door.*
 - END OF RHETORICAL QUESTION
- Period is preferable if statement is more a suggestion than question: *Why don't we go.*
 - END OF AN INDIRECT QUESTION: *He asked what the score was.*

- **ABBREVIATIONS** - For further guidelines, see the abbreviations and acronyms entry
 - INITIALS: *John F. Kennedy, T.S. Eliot*
 - Abbreviations using only the initials of a name do not take periods: *JFK, LBJ*
- **ENUMERATIONS** - After numbers or letters in enumerating elements of a summary: *1. Wash the car. 2. Clean the basement.* Or: *A. Punctuate properly. B. Write simply*
- **PLACEMENT WITH QUOTATION MARKS** - Periods always go inside quotation marks (See quotation marks)
- **SPACING** - Use a single space after a period at the end of a sentence

periodicals

- See titles, compositions

personifications

- Capitalize: **Mother Nature, Old Man Winter**

-persons

- Do not use coined words such as *chairperson* or *spokesperson* in regular text; instead, use *chairman* or *spokesman* if referring to a man or the office in general; use *chairwoman* or *spokeswoman* if referring to a woman.
- If applicable, can also use a neutral word such as *leader* or *representative*
- Use *chairperson* or similar coinage only in direct quotations or when it is the formal description for an office

PhD, PhDs

- The preferred form is to say a person *holds a doctorate* and name the individual's area of specialty
- *PhD* should come after a person's name on first reference and be separated by commas: *Timothy H. Wadkins, PhD, is an associate professor of religious studies.*
- Do not use periods to separate *PhD*

planets

- Capitalize the proper names of planets: *Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, Neptune, Pluto, Saturn, Uranus, Venus*
- Capitalize *earth* when used as the proper name of our planet: *The astronauts returned to Earth.*
- Capitalize nouns and adjectives derived from the proper names of planets: *Martian, Venusian*; lowercase adjectives derived from other heavenly bodies: *solar, lunar*
- See earth and heavenly bodies entries

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plants

- In general, lowercase the names of plants but capitalize proper nouns or adjectives that occur in a name: *Douglas fir*; *Scotch pine*; *white Dutch clover*

plurals

- Follow these guidelines in forming and using plural words:
 - MOST WORDS - Add *s*: *boys, girls, villages*
 - WORDS ENDING IN *ch, s, sh, ss, x* and *z*: - Add *es*: *churches, lenses, parishes, boxes*
 - WORDS ENDING IN *is* - Change *is* to *es*: *oases, parentheses, theses*
 - WORDS ENDING IN *y* - If *y* is preceded by a consonant or *qu*, change *y* to *i* and add *es*: *armies, cities, navies*; Otherwise add *s*: *donkeys, monkeys*
 - WORDS ENDING IN *o*: - If *o* is preceded by a consonant, *most* plurals require *es*: *buffaloes, heroes*; Exception: pianos
 - WORDS ENDING IN *f* - In general, change *f* to *v* and add *es*: *leaves, selves*
 - LATIN ENDINGS - Latin-root words ending in *us* change *us* to *i*: *alumnus, alumni*; Most ending in *a* change to *ae*: *alumna, alumnae* (*formula, formulas is an exception*); Most ending in *um* add *s*: *memorandums, referendums, stadiums*; Among those that still use the Latin ending: *addenda, curricula, media*
 - FORM CHANGE - *Man, men; child, children; foot, feet; mouse, mice*; etc.; Caution: when *s* is used with any of these words it indicates possession and must be preceded by an apostrophe: *men's, children's*, etc.
 - WORDS THE SAME IN SINGULAR AND PLURAL - *corps, chassis, deer, moose, sheep, etc.*
 - WORDS PLURAL IN FORM, SINGULAR IN MEANING - Some take singular verbs: *measles, mumps, news*; Others take plural verbs: *grits, scissors*
 - COMPOUND WORDS - Those written solid add *s* at the end: *cupfuls, handfuls*; For those that involve separate words or words linked by a hyphen, make the most significant word plural: *courts-martial, daughters-in-law, passers-by*; Significant word in the middle: *assistant attorneys general, deputy chiefs of staff*; Significant words last: *assistant attorneys, assistant corporation counsels, deputy sheriffs*

- WORDS AS WORDS - Do not use 's: *His speech had too many "ifs," "ands" and "buts."*
- PROPER NAMES - Most ending in *es* or *s* or *z* add *es*: *Joneses, Gonzalezes, Charleses*; Most ending in *y* add *s*, even if preceded by a consonant: *the Duffys, the Kennedys*; exceptions include *Alleghenies and Rockies*; For others add *s*: *the Carters, the McCoys, the Mondales*
- NUMBERS - Add *s*, no apostrophe: *The custom began in the 1920s*
- SINGLE LETTERS - Use 's: *Mind your p's and q's; He received four A's and two B's*
- MULTIPLE LETTERS - Add *s*, no apostrophe: *Four VIPs were there; She knows her ABCs*

p.m., a.m.

- Lowercase with periods
- Avoid the redundant 10 p.m. tonight

podium

- See the lectern, podium, pulpit, rostrum entry

poetry

- See composition titles entry
- Capitalize the first word in a line of poetry unless the author deliberately has used lowercase for a special effect
- Do not, however, capitalize the first word on indented lines that must be created simply because the writer's line is too long for the available printing width

police department

- In communities where this is the formal name, capitalize *police department* with or without the name of the community: *the Buffalo Police Department; the Police Department*
- If a police agency has some other formal name such as *Public Safety*, use that name if it is the way the department is known to the public
- If a story uses *police department* as a generic term for such an agency, lowercase
- Lowercase *police department* in plural uses: *the Buffalo and Amherst police departments*.
- Lowercase *department* whenever it stands alone

political parties

- Capitalize both the name of the party and the word party if it is customarily used as part of the organization's proper name: *the Democratic Party, the Republican Party*
- Capitalize *Communist, Conservative, Democrat, Liberal, Republican, Socialist*, etc, when they

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refer to a specific party or its members; lowercase when they refer to political philosophy: *John Adams was a Federalist but a man who subscribed to his philosophy today would be described as a federalist; The liberal Republican senator and his Conservative Party colleague said they believe that democracy and communism are incompatible*

- Lowercase the name of a philosophy in noun and adjective forms unless it is the derivative of a proper name: *communism, communist; fascism, fascist; But Marxism, Marxist; Nazism, Nazi*

politics

- Usually it takes a plural verb: *My politics are my own business*
- As a study or science, it takes a singular verb: *Politics is a demanding profession*

polls and surveys

- Stories based on public opinion polls must include the basic information for an intelligent evaluation of the results; such stories must be carefully worded to avoid exaggerating the meaning of the poll results
- Information that should be included in every story based on a poll includes the answers to these questions:
 - Who conducted the poll and who paid for it
 - How many people were interviewed
 - Who was interviewed
 - How was the poll conducted (by telephone or some other way)
 - When was the poll taken
 - What are the sampling error margins for the poll and for subgroups mentioned in the story
 - What questions were asked and in what order

pontiff

- Not a formal title; always lowercase

pope

- Capitalize when used as a formal title before a name: *Pope John Paul II spoke to the crowd; At the close of his address, the pope gave his blessing*
- See Roman Catholic Church and titles entries

possessives

- Refer to the following guidelines:
 - PLURAL NOUNS ENDING NOT ENDING IN S - Add 's:
The alumni's contributions.

- PLURAL NOUNS ENDING IN S - Add only an apostrophe: *the churches' needs, the girls' toy.*
- NOUNS PLURAL IN FORM/SINGULAR MEANING - Add only an apostrophe: *mathematics' rules, measles' effects.*
- SINGULAR NOUNS NOT ENDING IN S - Add 's: *the church's needs, the girl's toys.*
- SINGULAR COMMON NOUNS ENDING IN S - Add 's unless the next word begins with s: *the hostess's invitation, the hostess' seat.*
- SINGULAR PROPER NAMES ENDING IN S - Use only an apostrophe: *Agnes' book, Dickens' novels.*

- For more information on possessives refer to the Associate Press Style Guide or contact the Public Relations Office

pre-

- The rules in prefixes apply
- General rule is that a hyphen is used if a prefix ends in a vowel and the word that follows begins with the same vowel: *pre-election; pre-eminent; pre-exist*
- Otherwise, follow Webster's New World Dictionary, hyphenating if not listed there. Some examples: *prearrange; precondition; precook; prehistoric*

prefixes

- See separate listings for commonly used prefixes
- Generally, do not hyphenate when using a prefix with a word starting with a consonant
- Three rules are constant, although there are some exceptions to first-listed spellings in Webster's New World Dictionary
 - Except for *cooperate and coordinate*, use a hyphen if the prefix ends in a vowel and the word that follows begins with the same vowel
 - Use a hyphen if the word that follows is capitalized
 - Use a hyphen to join double prefixes:
sub-subparagraph

president

- Capitalize president only as a formal title before one or more names: *President Ronald Reagan, Presidents Ford and Carter*
- Lowercase in all other uses: *He is running for president. Lincoln was president during the Civil War*

press conference

- Should be referred to as *news conference*

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press secretary

- Seldom a formal title
- For consistency, always use lowercase, even when used before an individual's name
- See titles entry

priest

- A vocational description, not a formal title
- Do not capitalize
- See religious titles entry

primary day

- Use lowercase for any of the days set aside for balloting in a primary

principal, principle

- *Principal* is a noun and adjective meaning someone or something first in rank, authority, importance or degree: *She is the school principal; He was the principal player in the trade*
- *Principle* is a noun that means a fundamental truth, law, doctrine or motivating force: *They fought for the principle of self-determination*

pro-

- As a prefix, use a hyphen when coining words that denote support for something: *pro-labor; pro-peace; pro-business*

professor

- Never abbreviate
- Lowercase before a name
- Do not continue in second reference unless part of a quotation

pronouncers

- When necessary to use a *pronouncer*, put it in parentheses immediately following the word or name
- The syllable to be stressed should be in caps with an apostrophe: *Ayatollah Khomeini (koh-MAY'nee)*
- Refer to the Associate Press Style Guide for the basic sounds represented by AP phonetic symbols

proper nouns

- See capitalization entry

prosecutor

- Capitalize before a name when it is the formal title
- In most cases, however, the formal title is a term such as *attorney general, state's attorney or U.S. attorney*; If so, use the formal title on first reference

- Lowercase *prosecutor* if used before a name on a subsequent reference, generally to help the reader distinguish between prosecutor and defense attorney without having to look back to the start of the story

public schools

- Use numbers and capitalize public school when used with a figure: *Public School 3; Public School 10*

pulpit

- See the lectern, podium, pulpit, rostrum entry

punctuation

- Think of it as a courtesy to your readers, designed to help them understand a story
- See individual entries: *colon; comma; ellipsis; exclamation mark; hyphen; parentheses; period; question mark; quotation marks; and semicolon*
- The punctuation entries in this Style Guide refer to guidelines rather than rules

Q

question mark

- Follow these guidelines:
 - END OF A DIRECT QUESTION - *Who started the riot?*
 - INTERPOLATED QUESTION - *You told me – Did I hear you correctly? – that you started the riot.*
 - MULTIPLE QUESTION - Use a single question mark at the end of the full sentence: *Did you hear him say, "What right have you to ask about the riot?" ; Did he plan the riot, employ assistants and give the signal to begin? ; Did he plan the riot? Employ assistants: Give the signal to begin?*
 - **CAUTION** - Do not use question marks to indicate the end of indirect questions: *He asked who started the riot.*
 - PLACEMENT WITH QUOTATION MARKS - Inside or outside, depending on the meaning: *Who wrote "Gone with the Wind"?* ; *He asked, "How long will it take?"*
 - MISCELLANEOUS - The question mark supersedes the comma that normally is used when supply attribution for a quotation: *"Who is there?" she asked.*

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quotation marks (“ ”)

- Follow these basic guidelines for open-quote marks (“) and close-quote marks (”)
 - FOR DIRECT QUOTATIONS - To surround the exact words of a speaker or writer when reported in a story: **“I have no intention of staying,” he replied; “I do not object,” he said, “to the tenor of the report.”**; **Franklin said, “A penny saved is a penny earned.”**; **A speculator said the practice is “too conservative for inflationary times.”**
 - RUNNING QUOTATIONS
 - If a full paragraph of quoted material is followed by a paragraph that continues the quotation, do not put close-quote marks at the end of the first paragraph
 - Do, however, put open-quote marks at the start of the second paragraph; continue in this fashion for any succeeding paragraphs, using close-quote marks only at the end of the quoted material
 - If a paragraph does not start with quotation marks but ends with a quotation that is continued in the next paragraph, do not use close-quote marks at the end of the introductory paragraph if the quoted material constitutes a full sentence; use close-quote marks, however, if the quoted material does not constitute a full sentence
 - DIALOGUE OR CONVERSATION - Each person’s words, no matter how brief, are placed in a separate paragraph, with quotation marks at the beginning and end of each person’s speech
 - COMPOSITION TITLES - See the **composition titles** entry for guidelines on the use of quotation marks in book titles, movie titles, etc.
 - IRONY - Put quotation marks around a word or words used in an ironical sense: **The “debate” turned into a free-for-all.**
 - UNFAMILIAR TERMS - A word or words being introduced to readers may be placed in quotation marks on first reference: **Broadcast frequencies are measured in “kilohertz.”**; Do not put subsequent references to kilohertz in quotation marks
 - AVOID UNNECESSARY FRAGMENTS - Do not use quotation marks to report a few ordinary words that a speaker or writer has used:
 - WRONG: *The senator said he would “go home to Michigan” if he lost the election.*
 - RIGHT: *The senator said he would go home to Michigan if he lose the election.*
 - PARTIAL QUOTES - When a partial quote is used, do not put quotation marks around words that the speaker could not have used
 - WRONG: *She said she “was horrified at their slovenly manners.”*
 - RIGHT: *She said she was horrified at their “slovenly manners.”*
 - QUOTES WITHIN QUOTES -
 - Alternate between double quotation marks (“or”) and single marks (‘or’): *She said, “I quote from his letter, ‘I agree with Kipling that “the female of the species is more deadly than the male,” but the phenomenon is not an unchangeable law of nature,’ a remark he did not explain.”*
 - Use three quotes together if two quoted elements end at the same time: *She said, “He told me, ‘I love you.’”*
 - PLACEMENT WITH OTHER PUNCTUATION - The period and comma always go within the quotation marks ; The dash, semicolon, the question mark and the exclamation point go within the quotation marks when they apply to the quoted matter only; they go outside when they apply to the whole sentence

quotations

- When quoting a person, make any necessary corrections to avoid errors in grammar and word usage.

R

radio station

- The call letters alone are frequently adequate but when this phrase is needed, use lowercase: **radio station WHEC**
- See **call letters** entry

raised, reared

- Only humans may be **reared**
- All living things, including humans, may be **raised**

ranges

- The form: **\$12 million to \$14 million**; NOT \$12 to \$14 million

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rarely

- It means seldom
- *Rarely ever* is redundant; *rarely if ever* is appropriate

ratios

- Use numerals and a hyphen: *the ratio was 2-to-1; a ratio of 2-to-1*
- Omit the word *to* when the numbers precede the word ratio: *a 2-1 ratio*
- Always use the word *ratio* or a phrase such as *a 2-1 majority* to avoid confusion with actual figures

re-

- The rules in prefixes apply
- The general rule is that a hyphen is used if a prefix ends in a vowel and the word that follows begins with the same vowel: *re-elect; re-enact; re-enter; re-establish*

reared

- See raised, reared entry

rebut, refute

- *Rebut* means to argue to the contrary: *He rebutted his opponent's statement.*
- *Refute* connotes success in argument and almost always implies an editorial judgment; instead use *deny, dispute, rebut or respond to*

rector

- See religious titles

recur, recurred, recurring

- Not *reoccur*

reference works

- Capitalize their proper names
- Do not use quotation marks around the names of books that are primarily catalogs of reference material.
- In addition to catalogs, this category includes almanacs, directories, dictionaries, encyclopedias, gazetteers, handbooks and similar publications

refute, rebut

- See the rebut, refute entry

regions

- See the directions and regions entry

reign, rein

- The leather strap for controlling a horse is a *rein*; figuratively: *seize the reins, free rein to*
- *Reign* is the period a ruler is on the throne: *The king began his reign.*

religious affiliations

- Capitalize the names and related terms applied to members of the order: *He is a member of the Society of Jesus. He is a Jesuit.*

religious references

- Refer to the following guidelines:
 - **DEITIES**
 - Capitalize the proper names of monotheistic deities: *God, the Father, the Son, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit*
 - Lowercase pronouns referring to the deity: *he, him, his, thee, thou, who, whose, they, etc*
 - Lowercase *gods* in referring to the deities of polytheistic religions
 - Capitalize the proper names of pagan and mythological gods and goddesses: *Neptune, Thor, Venus, etc.*
 - **LIFE OF CHRIST**
 - Capitalize the names of major events in the life of Jesus Christ in references that do not use his name: *The doctrines of the Last Supper, the Resurrection*
 - Lowercase when the words are used with his name: *The ascension of Jesus into heaven took place 40 days after his resurrection from the dead.*
 - Apply the principle also to events in the life of his mother: *He cited the doctrines of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption.* But: *She referred to the assumption of Mary into heaven.*
 - **RITES**
 - Capitalize proper names for rites that commemorate the Last Supper or signify a belief in Christ's presence: *the Lord's Supper, Holy Communion*
 - Lowercase the names of other sacraments
 - See sacraments entry
 - **HOLY DAYS**
 - Capitalize the names of holy days
 - See the holidays and holy days entry
 - **OTHER WORDS**
 - Lowercase *heaven, hell, devil, an apostle, priest*

religious titles

- **CLERGYMEN/WOMEN**
 - The first reference to a clergyman or clergywoman should include a capitalized title before the individual's name
 - If the clergyman is an ordained priest, then Rev. is the designation that

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applies before a name on first reference; on second reference use Father: *Canisius President Rev. Vincent M. Cooke, S.J., spoke to the college community. Father Cooke presented his state-of-the-college address.*

- **CARDINALS, ARCHBISHOPS, BISHOPS**
 - The preferred form for first reference is to use *Cardinal, Archbishop or Bishop* before the individual's name: *Cardinal Timothy Manning, archbishop of Los Angeles.* On second reference: *Archbishop Manning or the cardinal*
- **MINISTERS AND PRIESTS**
 - Use *Rev.* before a name on first reference
 - Substitute *Monsignor* before the name of a Roman Catholic priest who has received this honor
- **NUNS**
 - Always uses *Sister* or *Mother*, if applicable, before a name: *Sister Agnes Rita*; On second reference: *Sister Rita*
- **OFFICEHOLDERS**
 - The preferred first-reference form for those who hold church office but are not ordained clergy in the usual sense is to use a construction that sets the title apart from the name by commas.
 - Capitalize the formal title of an office if it is used directly before an individual's name.

reluctant, reticent

- *Reluctant* means unwilling to act: *He is reluctant to enter the primary*
- *Reticent* means unwilling to speak: *The candidate's husband is reticent*

representative

- See legislative titles entry

Republican National Committee

- On second reference: *the national committee, the committee*

Republican, Republican Party

- GOP may be used on second reference
- See political parties entry

Reserve

- Capitalize when referring to U.S. armed forces as in Army Reserve
- Lowercase in reference to members of these backup forces: *reserves or reservists*

Reserve Officers' Training Corps

- The *s'* is military practice
- *ROTC* is acceptable in all references
- When the service is specified, use Army *ROTC*, Navy *ROTC* or Air Force *ROTC*

resident

- See the citizen, resident, subject, national, native entry

restrictive clauses

- See the essential clauses, nonessential clauses entry

restrictive phrases

- See the essential phrases, nonessential phrases entry

road

- Do not abbreviate
- See addresses entry

Roman Catholic Church

- Clergy ranks below the pope are as follows: *cardinal, archbishop, monsignor, priest and deacon*
- See religious titles entry

roman numerals

- Use roman numerals for wars and to establish personal sequence: *World War I, King George V*

room numbers

- Use numerals and capitalize *room* when used with a figure: *Room 206*

rooms

- Capitalize the names of specially designated rooms: *Blue Room, Lincoln Room, Oval Office*

rostrum

- See the lectern, podium, pulpit, rostrum entry

ROTC

- See Reserve Officers' Training Corps entry

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S

sacraments

- Capitalize the proper names used for a sacramental rite that commemorates the life of Jesus Christ or signifies a belief in his presence: *the Lord's Supper, Holy Communion*
- Lowercase the names of other sacraments: *baptism, confirmation, penance, matrimony, holy orders and the sacrament of anointing the sick*
- See **religious references** entry

saint

- Abbreviate as *St.* in the names of saints, cities and other places: *St. Jude; St. Paul, Minnesota*

SAT

- Use only the initials in referring to the previously designated Scholastic Aptitude Test or the Scholastic Assessment Test

savior

- Use this spelling rather than the alternate form *saviour*

scene numbers

- Capitalize scene when used with a figure: *Scene 2; Act 2, Scene 4*; but: *the second scene; the third scene*

school

- Capitalize when part of a proper name: *Public School 3, Maryvale Elementary School*

screen saver

- Two words

scripture(s)

- Capitalize when referring to the religious writings of the Bible
- See **Bible** entry

sculptor

- Use for both men and women

seasons

- Lowercase *winter, spring, summer, fall* and derivatives such as *springtime* unless part of a formal name: *Dartmouth Winter Carnival; Winter Olympics; Summer Olympics*

secretary

- Capitalize before a name only if it is an official corporate or organizational title
- Do not abbreviate

secretary-general

- Hyphenated
- Capitalize as a formal title before a name: *Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold*

section

- Capitalize when used with a figure to identify part of a law or bill: *Section 14B of the Taft-Hartley Act*

self-

- Always hyphenate: *self-assured; self-defense; self-government*

semester

- Always lowercase.

semiannual

- Twice a year, a synonym for biannual
- Do not confuse with *biennial*, which means every two years

semicolon

- Use semicolons to separate elements of a series: *He leaves a son, John Smith; three daughters, Jane, Mary and Susan Smith; and a sister, Martha Smith.*
 - Retain the semicolon before the final *and*.
- Use a semicolon to link independent clauses: *The package was due last week; it arrived today.*
 - Unless a particular literary effect is desired, however, the better approach is to break the independent clauses into separate sentences.

senate

- Capitalize all specific references to governmental legislative bodies, regardless of whether the name of the nation or state is used: *the U.S. Senate, the Senate, the New York Senate, the state Senate*
- Lowercase plural uses: *the Virginia and North Carolina senates*
- Lowercase references to non-governmental bodies: *the student senate*
- See *governmental bodies* entry

Senator, Sen.

- See **legislative titles and party affiliation** entries

senior

- See **junior, senior** entry

senior citizen

- Use the term sparingly; *elderly* is preferred

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sentences

- Capitalize the first word of every sentence, including quoted statements and direct questions
- Capitalize the first word of a quoted statement if it constitutes a sentence, even if it was part of a larger sentence in the original: *Patrick Henry said, "Give me liberty or give me death."*
- In direct questions, even without quotation marks: *The story answers the question, Where does true happiness really lie?*
- Use a single space between sentences

shall, will

- Use *shall* to express determination: *We shall overcome; You and he shall stay*
- Either *shall* or *will* may be used in first-person constructions that do not emphasize determination: *We shall hold a meeting; We will hold a meeting*
- For second- and third- person constructions, use *will* unless determination is stressed: *You will like it; She will not be pleased*
- See the should, would entry

she

- Do not use this pronoun in references to ships or nations; use *it* instead

sheriff

- Capitalize when used as a formal title before a name

ships

- See the boats, ships entry

should, would

- Use *should* to express an obligation: *We should help the needy*
- Use *would* to express a customary action: *In the summer we would spend hours by the ocean*
- Use *would* also in constructing a conditional past tense but be careful:
Wrong: *If Soderholm would not have had an injured foot, Thompson would not have been in the lineup.*
Right: *If Soderholm had not had an injured foot, Thompson would not have been in the lineup.*

sister

- Capitalize when precedes the names of a nuns: *Sister Mary Pat*
- If no surname is given, the name is the same in all references
- If a surname is used in first reference, drop the given name on second reference: *Sister Clair Regina Torpy* on first reference, *Sister Torpy* on subsequent references

- Use *Mother* the same way when referring to a woman who heads a group of nuns
- See religious titles entry

sizes

- Use numerals: *a size 8 dress, size 40 long*

slash

- Acceptable in descriptive phrases such as *24/7* or *9/11* but otherwise confine its use to special situations, as with fractions or denoting the ends of a line in quoted poetry

socialist, socialism

- See political parties entry

social security

- Capitalize all references to the U.S. system
- Lowercase generic uses: *Is there a social security program in Sweden?*

software titles

- Capitalize but do not use quotation marks around such titles as WordPerfect or Windows but use quotation marks for computer games: *"Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego?"*

song titles

- See composition titles

south

- See directions, regions

speaker

- Capitalize as a formal title before a name; generally it is a formal title only for the speaker of a legislative body: *Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill*

species

- Same in singular and plural
- Use singular or plural verbs and pronouns depending on the sense: *The species has been unable to maintain itself; Both species are extinct*

speeches

- Capitalize and use quotation marks for their formal titles, as described in composition titles entry

speeds

- Use numerals: *The car slowed to 7 miles an hour; Winds of 5 to 10 miles per hour*

spokesman, spokeswoman

- But not *spokesperson*; use representative if you do not know the sex of the individual

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spring

- See seasons entry

square

- Do not abbreviate when part of a proper name: *Washington Square*

stanch, staunch

- *Stanch* is a verb: *He stanchd the flow of blood*
- *Staunch* is an adjective: *She is a staunch supporter of equality*

standard time

- Capitalize *Eastern Standard Time, Pacific Standard Time*, etc. but lowercase *standard time* when standing alone

“The Star-Spangled Banner”

- Lowercase the national anthem

state

- Lowercase in all *state of* constructions: *the state of New York*
- Do not capitalize state when used simply as an adjective to specify a level of jurisdiction: *state Rep. William Smith, the state Transportation Department, state funds*
- Apply the same principle to phrases such as *the city of Buffalo, the town of Amherst, etc.*

state house

AL – Alabama
AZ – Arizona
AR – Arkansas
CA – California
CO – Colorado
CT – Connecticut
DE – Delaware
FL – Florida
GA – Georgia
IL – Illinois
IN – Indiana
KS – Kansas
KY – Kentucky
LA – Louisiana

MD – Maryland
MA – Massachusetts
MI – Michigan
MN – Minnesota
MS – Mississippi
MO – Missouri
MT – Montana
NE – Nebraska
NV – Nevada
NH – New Hampshire
NJ – New Jersey
NM – New Mexico
NY – New York
NC – North Carolina

ND – North Dakota
OK – Oklahoma
OR – Oregon
PA – Pennsylvania
RI – Rhode Island
SC – South Carolina
SD – South Dakota
TN – Tennessee
VT – Vermont
VA – Virginia
WA – Washington
WV – West Virginia
WI – Wisconsin
WY – Wyoming

- Capitalize all references to a specific statehouse, with or without the name of the state: *The Vermont Statehouse is in Montpelier; The governor will visit the Statehouse today*
- Lowercase plural uses: *the Massachusetts and Rhode Island statehouses*

state names

- Follow these guidelines:
 - STANDING ALONE - Spell out the names of all 50 states when they stand alone in text.
 - EIGHT NOT ABBREVIATED NAMES - The names of eight states are never abbreviated in datelines or text: *Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas and Utah*
 - ABBREVIATIONS
 - Only use two-letter abbreviations.
 - Use in conjunction with the name of a city, town, village or in datelines.
 - Use in conjunction with the name of a city, county, town or village in text: *We traveled to Buffalo, NY*
 - Use in short form listings of party affiliation: *D-NY*
 - PUNCTUATION - Place one comma between the city and the state name unless ending a sentence or indicating a dateline: *He was traveling from Buffalo, NY, to Austin, Texas*

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state police

- Capitalize with a state name if part of the formal title for a police agency: *the New York State Police*
- Lowercase the words state police whenever they are not preceded by a state name

staunch, stanch

- See the stanch, staunch entry

street

- Abbreviate only with a numbered address
- See addresses entry

student

- See the pupil, student entry

subject

- See the citizen, resident, subject, national, native entry

suffixes

- See separate listing for commonly used suffixes
- If a word combination is not listed in Webster's New World Dictionary, use two words for the verb form; hyphenate any noun or adjective forms

summer

- See seasons entry

super-

- The rules in prefixes apply but in general, no hyphen: *superagency*; *superhighway*; *superpower*

superintendent

- Do not abbreviate
- Capitalize when used as a formal title before a name

supreme court of the United States

- Capitalize *U.S. Supreme Court*, *the Supreme Court* when the context makes the U.S. designation unnecessary
- The chief justice is properly the chief justice of the United States not of the Supreme Court: *Chief Justice William Rehnquist*
- The proper title for the eight other members of the court is *associate justice*
- When used as a formal title before a name, it should be shortened to justice unless there are special circumstances: *Justice Sandra*

Day O'Connor, Associate Justice Sandra Day O'Connor

- See judge entry

supreme courts of the states

- Capitalize with the state name (the *New York Supreme Court*) and without the state name when the context makes it unnecessary: *the state Supreme Court*, *the Supreme Court*
- If a court with this name is not a state's highest tribunal, the fact should be noted. In New York, for example, the Supreme Court is a trial court. Appeals are directed to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court. The state's highest court is the Court of Appeals

suspensive hyphenation

- The form: *The five- and six-year olds attend morning classes*

T

telephone numbers

- Use numerals.
- Enclose area code in parentheses for toll and toll-free calls: *(716) 888-2790*, *(800) 555-1212*
- If extension numbers are given: *Ext. 2*, *Ext. 364*

television program titles

- Follow the guidelines in composition titles entry
 - Put quotation marks around the word show, only if it is part of the formal name: "**The Mary Tyler Moore Show**"
 - The word show may be dropped when it would be cumbersome, such as in a set of listings
 - In text or listing, treat programs named after the star in any of the following ways: "**The Mary Tyler Moore Show**," "**Mary Tyler Moore**"; be consistent
 - Use quotation marks also for the title of an episode: "**Chuckles Bites the Dust**," **is an episode of "The Mary Tyler Moore Show"**

television station

- The call letters alone are frequently adequate but when this phrase is needed, use lowercase: *television station WTEV*

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tempertures

- Use figures for all except *zero*
- Use a word, not a minus sign to indicate temperatures below zero: *The day's low was 10 below zero, The day's low was minus 10*
- Temperatures get *higher* or *lower* – not – *warmer* or *cooler*.

Ten Commandments

- Do not abbreviate or use figures

that (conjunction)

- Use the conjunction *that* to introduce a dependent clause if the sentence sounds or looks awkward without it.
- There are no hard and fast rules but in general:
 - *That* usually may be omitted when a dependent clause immediately follows a form of the verb to say: *The president said he had signed the bill*
 - *That* should be used when a time element intervenes between the verb and the dependent clause: *The president said Monday that he had signed the bill.*
 - *That* usually is necessary after some verbs. They include: *advocate, assert, contend, declare, estimate, make clear, point out, propose and state*
 - *That* is required before subordinate clauses beginning with conjunctions such as *after, although, because, before, in addition to, until and while*: *Haldeman said that after he learned of Nixon's intention to resign, he sought pardons for all connected with Watergate.*
 - When in doubt, include *that*

that, which

- Use *that* and *which* in referring to inanimate objects and to animals without a name
- Use *that* for essential clauses, important to the meaning of the sentence and without commas: *I remember the day that we met*
- Use *which* for nonessential clauses, where the pronoun is less necessary and use commas: *The team, which finished last a year ago, is in first place*
- Tip: If you can drop the clause and not lose the meaning of the sentence, use *which*; otherwise use *that*. A *which* clause is

surrounded by commas; no commas are used with *that clauses*

- See the essential clauses, nonessential clauses entry for guidelines on using *that* and *which* to introduce phrases and clauses

their, there, they're

- *Their* is a possessive pronoun: *They went to their house.*
- *There* is an adverb indicating direction: *We went there for dinner.*
- *There* also is used with the force of a pronoun for impersonal constructions in which the real subject follows the verb: *There is no food on the table.*
- *They're* is a contraction for *they are*

Third World

- Refers to the economically developing nations of Africa, Asia and Latin America.
- Capitalize.

times

- Use figures except for noon and midnight: *2:00 p.m./1:00 a.m.*
- Use a colon to separate hours from minutes: *3:30 p.m.*
- Abbreviations for divisions of the day (a.m./p.m.) are in lowercase with periods.
- Avoid redundancies: *10 a.m. in the morning.*
- The construction *4 o'clock in the morning* is acceptable but time listings with a.m./p.m. are preferred

Time sequences

- Spell out: 50 hours, 23 minutes, 14 seconds
- When using the abbreviated form, as in sports statistics or subsequent references, the form is: 2:30:21:.65 (hours, minutes, seconds, tenths, hundredths)

time zones

- Capitalize the full name of the time zone: *Eastern Standard Time (EST), Eastern Daylight Time.*
- Lowercase all but the region when referring to time zone in short form: *the Eastern time zone, Mountain time.*

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titles

- In general, confine capitalization to formal titles used directly before an individual's name
- Follow the basic guidelines:
 - LOWERCASE
 - Lowercase and spell out titles when they are not used with an individual's name: *The president issued a statement; The pope gave his blessing.*
 - Lowercase and spell out titles in constructions that set them off from a name by commas: The vice president, Nelson Rockefeller, declined to run again; Paul VI, the current pope, does not plan to retire.
 - COURTESY TITLES - See the courtesy titles entry for guidelines on when to use *Miss, Mr., Mrs., Ms.* or no titles
 - FORMAL TITLES
 - Capitalize formal titles when they are used immediately before one or more names: *Pope Paul, President Washington, Vice Presidents John Jones and William Smith*
 - A formal title generally is one that denotes a scope of authority, professional activity or academic activity: *President George W. Bush, Sen. Dianne Feinstein, Dr. Marcus Welby, Pvt. Gomer Pyle*
 - Other titles serve primarily as occupational descriptions: *astronaut John Glenn, movie star John Wayne, peanut farmer Jimmy Carter*
 - A final determination on whether a title is formal or occupational depends on the practice of the governmental or private organization that confers it. If there is doubt about the status of a title and the practice of the organization cannot be determined, use a construct that sets the name or the title off with commas
 - ABBREVIATED TITLES
 - The following formal titles are capitalized and abbreviated as shown when used before a name outside quotations: *Dr., Gov., Lt. Gov., Rep., Sen.* and certain military ranks listed in the military titles entry.
 - PAST AND FUTURE TITLES
 - Spell out all except Dr., Mr., Mrs., Ms., when they are used in quotations
 - LONG TITLES
 - A formal title that an individual formerly held, is about to hold or holds temporarily is capitalized if used before the person's name but do not capitalize the qualifying word: *former President Ford, Attorney General designate Griffin B. Bell; acting Mayor Peter Bayer*
 - UNIQUE TITLES
 - Separate a long title from a name by a construction that requires a comma: *Charles Robinson, the undersecretary for economic affairs, spoke. Or: The undersecretary for economic affairs, Charles Robinson, spoke*
 - See academic titles, composition titles, legislative titles, military titles and religious titles

tonight

- All that's necessary is 8 tonight or 8 p.m. today.
- Avoid the redundant: 8 p.m. tonight

toward

- Not *towards*

town

- Apply the capitalization principles in city

town council

- Apply the capitalization principles in city council

trans-

- The rules in prefixes apply but in general, no hyphen: *transcontinental; transship; trans-Exceptions: trans-Siberian; trans-Atlantic; trans-Pacific* (these are exceptions to the general rule that a hyphen is needed when a prefix precedes a capitalized word)

treasurer

- Capitalize when used as a formal title immediately before a name
- See titles

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trees

- See plants

trustee

- See board of trustees

TV

- Acceptable as an abbreviated form of televisions, as a noun or adjective

Twelve Apostles

- The disciples of Jesus
- An exception to the normal practice of using figures for 10 and above

U

U.N.

- Used as an adjective but not as a noun, for United Nations
- See United Nations entry

un-

- The rules in prefixes apply but in general, no hyphen: un-American; unarmed; unnecessary

under-

- The rules in prefixes apply but in general, no hyphen: underdog; underground; undersold

undersecretary

- One word
- See titles entry

United Kingdom

- Consists of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- Great Britain (or Britain) consists of England, Scotland and Wales
- Ireland is independent of the United Kingdom

United Nations

- Spell out when used as a noun
- Use U.N. only as an adjective
- The periods in U.N. for consistency with U.S. are an exception to the first listing in Webster's New World Dictionary

United States

- Spell out when used as a noun: *He lives in the United States.*
- Use U.S. only as an adjective: *He is a U.S. citizen. U.S. courts, U.S. dollars*
- See U.S. entry

upstate

- Always lowercase: upstate New York

upward

- Not *upwards*

URL

- Uniform Resource Locator, an Internet address: <http://canisius.edu>

U.S.

- Used as an adjective but not as a noun, for United States
- See United States entry

U.S. District Courts

- There are 94
- In shortened and subsequent references: *the District Court, the District Courts, the court*
- Judge is the formal title for District Court jurists: *U.S. District Judge Frank Johnson*
- See judge

U.S. Military Academy

- See military academies

U.S. Navy

- See navy, military academies or military titles entries

U.S. Postal Service

- Use *U.S. Postal Service* or the *Postal Service* on first reference
- Retain capitalization of Postal Service in subsequent references to the agency
- Lowercase the service when it stands alone
- Lowercase post office in generic references to the agency and to an individual office: I went to the post office

U.S. Supreme Court

- See Supreme Court of the United States

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V

valley

- Capitalize when part of a full name: *the Mississippi Valley*.
- Lowercase in plural uses and when used alone: *the Missouri and Mississippi valleys*.

Vatican City

- Capitalize

Verbal

- See the oral, verbal, written entry

Verbs

- Follow these guidelines:
 - SPLIT FORMS
 - In general, avoid awkward constructions that split infinitive forms of a verb (*to leave, to help, etc*) or compound forms (*had left, are found out, etc.*)
 - AWKWARD: *She was ordered to immediately leave on an assignment*
 - PREFERRED: *She was ordered to leave immediately on an assignment*

vernacular

- The native language of a country or place
- A vernacular term that has achieved widespread recognition may be used without explanation if appropriate in the context
- Terms not widely known should be explained when used
- In general, they are appropriate only when illustrating vernacular speech

versus

- Spell it out in ordinary speech and writing: *The proposal to revamp Medicare versus proposals to reform Medicare and Medicaid at the same time ...*
- In short expressions, however, the abbreviation *vs.* is permitted: *The issue of guns vs. butter has long been with us*
- For court cases, use *v.*: *Marbury v. Madison*

vice-

- Use two words: *vice admiral, vice chairman, vice chancellor, vice consul*

vice president

- Capitalize or lowercase following the same rules that apply to president
- Do not drop the first name on first reference
- See president and titles entries

village

- Apply the capitalization principles in city

virus, worm

- A computer virus is any malicious, invasive program designed to infect and disrupt computers
- A worm is a type of virus that spreads on networks such as the Internet, copying itself from one computer to another without human intervention

vote tabulations

- Always use figures for the totals
- Spell out below 10 in other phrases related to voting: by a five-vote majority, with three abstentions, four votes short of the necessary two-thirds majority
- For results that involve fewer than 1000 votes on each side, use these forms: *The House voted 230-205; a 230-205 vote*
- To make totals that involve more than 1,000 votes easier to read, separate the figures with the word “to” to avoid hyphenated adjectival constructions

W

wars

- Capitalize when used as part of the name for a specific conflict: *World War I, the Cold War*.
- Lowercase when used alone: *the two world wars*.

Washington

- Abbreviate the state as WA
- Never abbreviate when referring to the U.S. capital
- Use state of Washington or Washington state and Washington, D.C., or District of Columbia when the context requires distinction between the state and the federal district
- See state and state names

weights

- Use figures: *The baby weighed 9 pounds, 7 ounces*

well

- Hyphenate as part of a compound modifier: *She is a well-dressed woman*

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west, western

- See the directions and regions entry

whereabouts

- Takes a singular verb: *His whereabouts is a mystery*

which

- See the essential clauses, non essential clauses entry, the that, which entry; and the who, whom entry

White House

- Do not personify it with phrases such as the White House said; instead use a phrase such as a White House official said

who's, whose

- *Who's* is a contraction for *who is*, not a possessive: *Who's there?*
- *Whose* is the possessive: *I do not know whose coat it is*

who, whom

- *Who* is the pronoun used for references to human beings and to animals with a name
- It is grammatically the subject (never the object) of a sentence, clause or phrase: *The woman who rented the room left the window open*
- *Whom* is used when someone is the object of a verb or preposition: *The woman to whom the room was rented left the window open*
- See the essential clauses, nonessential clauses entry for guidelines on how to punctuate clauses introduced by who, whom, that and which

-wide

- No hyphen: *citywide; countrywide; nationwide*

wide-

- Usually hyphenated: *wide-angle; wide-awake; wide-eyed*
- Exception: *widespread*

winter

- See seasons entry

-wise

- No hyphen when it means in the direction of or with regard to: *clockwise; lengthwise; otherwise*
- The word *penny-wise* is spelled with a hyphen because it is a compound adjective in which wise means smart, not an application of the suffix –wise

World Wide Web

- Also acceptable: the *Web; Web site, Web page*
- Exceptions: *webcam; webcast; webmaster*

X

X ray or X-ray

Y

yard

- Equal to 36 inches/3 feet.
- To convert to meters, multiply yard(s) by .91

years

- Use numerals without commas: *1986*.
- Set off a year with commas when it follows a month and date: *January 1, 2000*.
- Use an s (without an apostrophe) to indicate spans of decades or centuries: *the 1890s, the 1800s*.
- Do not use a comma to set off a month and a year: *January 2000*.

youth

- Applicable to boys and girls from ages 13 to 18.
- Use man or woman for individuals 18 and older.

Z

zero, zeros

zip codes

- Use all-caps for **ZIP** (Zone Improvement Program); lowercase *code*: *ZIP code*.
- Do not use a comma between the state name and the ZIP code: *Buffalo, New York 14208*.