Hints on Better Writing

presented by

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Session Objectives:

- **Establish the importance of writing for lead engineers**
- **Help you become more aware of why you may feel uncomfortable with writing tasks**
- **Encourage you to approach writing tasks more confidently**
- **Help you become more aware of common writing problems**
- **Suggest areas you can work on to improve your writing style**

Hints on Better Writing
Table of Contents

Writing Tips

I. It's not unusual to find people who dread the task of writing. Some of us can't do it; some of us just don't want to do it. Why?

A. Teachers usually stressed what we did wrong, not what we did right.

B. It's almost impossible to remember all the rules of grammar.

C. Our supervisors and peers reinforce our negative attitude.

D. So most of us have little confidence in our writing ability and think of writing as a hopeless chore. It's no wonder that other parts of our job seem much more enjoyable.

II. But it is part of our job and most of us would probably like to improve in that area or we wouldn't be here. A big step in writing better is changing our approach - feeling better about the whole task.

A. Try to **write like you talk.** Your style will improve and you'll probably feel more comfortable, too.

B. Don't try to remember everything you learned about good composition; just **concentrate on a few good rules.**

1. **Be concise.** Don't add unnecessary words.

2. **Use clear, concrete words** to say exactly what you want to say.

3. **Be organized** enough to guide your reader.

C. **Use a good handbook** to fill in the gaps. But how do you know whether it's good?

1. If **it's been published and is for sale**, it's been reviewed and shouldn't contain any incorrect information.

2. Make sure **it fits your needs**, whether that means help with grammar, style, or both.

3. Most important, make sure **you like it and can use it.** If you don't agree with the author's advice, or can't use it quickly, you're wasting your money.

III. Questions:

Helpful Hints On How to Put Words Together

The art of writing can be boiled down to eight rules of thumb—apply them well and prose can be made to sing.

What is the secret of storytelling? In *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, the King of Hearts tells the White Rabbit: "Begin at the beginning and go on till you come to the end. Then stop."

If writing were only that easy. What many people cram between the beginning and the end are sentences overstuffed with adjectives, adverbs and other verbiage that leave readers glassy-eyed and confused.

Professional writers cherish their individual methods for putting ideas on paper with force, grace and clarity. But they generally hold a handful of principles in common—rules that can profit all who pick up a pen or sit down at a word processor:

1. Be yourself.

Many inexperienced writers believe they must acquire a style. Yet the classic handbook on writing, *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk, Jr., and E. B. White, advises: "To achieve style, begin by affecting none."

Style cannot be spooned over prose like hot fudge over ice cream. Each person's writing has a flavor all its own that evolves with practice. When style is forced through the use of highfalutin words or someone else's vocabulary, the result is writing that sounds false because it is.

2. Be clear and concise.

Words with many syllables and sentences that go on and on may seem impressive to the writer, but they often send an unintended message: The writer has nothing to say. Short words and short sentences usually make a much stronger point.

William Zinsser, author of *On Writing Well*, calls clarity the first test of writing: "If you're not writing clearly, you might as well not be writing at all. And if you write clean, elegant sentences with as much simplicity as possible, style will eventually come."

Words can be tricky if used carelessly, as Robert Graves and Alan Hodge illustrate in their book *The Reader Over Your Shoulder.*

Citing a melodramatic passage from Graham Greene's novel *It's a Battlefield*, " 'Kay Rimmer sat with her head in her hands and her eyes on the floor,' " they add, "And her teeth on the mantelpiece? A slip like this will break the spell of a novel for any intelligent reader."

3. Let nouns and verbs do the talking.

Strong, explicit nouns and verbs rarely need a string of adjectives or adverbs to intensify their meaning. *Hurling* leaves a sharp image in the reader's mind. *Hurling forcefully* blurs that image because the adverb makes the phrase redundant. "Good writing is like a good watch," declares Zinsser. "There should be no extra parts, and every part in there should be doing some useful, new work."

4. Be correct.

Nothing irks literate readers more than to find commas sprinkled haphazardly and a subject and verb that do not agree. Bad grammar suggests the writer is careless or ignorant.

James J. Kilpatrick, syndicated columnist and author of *The Writer's Art*, observes: "The notion that a person can be a good writer and turn up his nose at rules of correct grammar and spelling is false. Bad grammar is like fingers across a blackboard: A reader won't stick with the writer very long."

5. Write mostly in the active voice.

The active voice, in which the subject does the acting—as in "the writer kicked the word processor"—creates a forceful construction that leaves no doubt about who did what to what.

Inverting the same sentence into the passive voice—"The word processor was kicked by the writer"—weakens the action. That sentence also produces a less vivid picture in readers' minds.

The late Theodore Bernstein in his book *The Careful Writer* saw a vast difference between the two: "The active voice strikes like a boxer moving forward in attack; the passive voice parries while backpedaling."

6. Stick to the main point.

C. S. Lewis likened writing to "driving sheep down a road. If there is any gate to the left or right, the readers will most certainly go into it." Rambling words, phrases or ideas add little to the meaning of a sentence or paragraph. Instead, they just distract and confuse the reader.

Jacques Barzun, the author of *Simple & Direct: A Rhetoric for Writers*, stresses: "Pursuing a straight line is shortest and best."

7. Write with the ear.

A sentence may look correct on paper, but its cadence may be jarring or monotonous. Does a phrase sound too familiar? Clichés can make a fresh idea seem stale.

Metaphors—"the hard-luck tale brought forth a *geyser of tears*"—and similes—"she spouted tears *like a geyser*"—can give prose poetic power. So can alliteration—"*poetic power of prose.*" But when these literary devices are overused or misused, they may weaken or muddy a message rather than amplify it.

Like many writers, Kilpatrick "listens" to sentences in his head as he writes, tapping out their rhythm on a table. "Beginning writers," he says, "can cultivate their ear by having someone read their pieces aloud to them."

8. Revise, revise, revise.

Writing that flows effortlessly is rarely finished prose. Rereading catches clichés and grammatical errors. Revising prunes words that are unnecessary, tightens sentences that ramble and eliminates points that are pointless.

"No conscientious writer should complain of the trouble," scolds Barzun. "Writing is a social act; whoever claims his neighbor's attention by writing is duty-bound to take trouble—and in any case, what is life for, unless to do at least some things right?" □

By LUCIA SOLORZANO

AN APPROACH TO STYLE: SOME IDEAS

1. Place yourself in the background.
2. Write in a way that comes naturally.
3. Work from a suitable design.
4. Write with nouns and verbs.
5. Revise and rewrite.
6. Do not overwrite.
7. Do not overstate.
8. Avoid the use of qualifiers.
9. Do not effect a breezy manner.
10. Use orthodox spelling.
11. Do not explain too much.
12. Do not construct awkward adverbs.
13. Make sure the reader knows who is speaking.
14. Avoid fancy words.
15. Do not use dialect unless your ear is good.
16. Be clear.
17. Do not inject opinion.
18. Use figures of speech sparingly.
19. Do not take shortcuts at the cost of clarity.
20. Avoid foreign languages.
21. Prefer the standard to the offbeat.

from The Elements of Style, Strunk and White.

STYLE: Common Problems and What to do about Them

READER'S REACTION: "I can't see the point. The writing is hard to follow."

WRITER'S SOLUTION: Organize carefully and provide signals for the reader.

1. Repeat an important word or idea.
2. Use a pronoun whose antecedent is in the previous sentence.
3. Use a transitional word to clarify the relationship between ideas.

What you write is only going to be read once, and it's going to be read as fast as the reader can manage. The reading is only one task amid a pile of others awaiting attention. You may have spent hours on the writing, but it isn't realistic to expect the same from the reader. So you have to take every precaution to make your writing carry the reader along smoothly.

Getting your ideas down in sequence is a vital first step. Next, you have to provide signals to help the reader follow your steps in the sequence. Some signals are extremely visible; they are the headings, enumerations, and spacings that emphasize your main ideas. But more subtle signs, too, can be built into the sentences.

READER'S REACTION: "I find this writing boring, boring, boring. The only change of pace is that it is also confusing."

WRITER'S SOLUTION: The shortest, most direct way of saying what you mean is usually the best.

1. Divide overloaded sentences. Listen to E.B. White, author of *The Elements of Style:* "When you become hopelessly mired in a sentence, it is best to start fresh; do not try to fight your way through against the terrible odds of syntax. Usually what is wrong is that the construction has become too involved at some point; the sentence needs to be broken apart and replaced by two or more shorter sentences.

2. Cut excess words and worn-out expressions. Prune and shape the sentence; cut out the deadwood – the words that add nothing to the meaning.

3. Vary the length and structure of sentences. The short sentences after several long ones is like tabasco in a Bloody Mary – it adds bite to an otherwise bland concoction. Likewise, if all of your sentences begin with a subject-verb-object construction, it's nap time for the reader. Try a subordinate clause opener, "With concern for her subordinates . . .

READER'S REACTION: "This writing seems so vague and slow-moving that I find it very easy to put down."

WRITER'S SOLUTION: Be specific and direct.

1. Prefer active to passive voice. In the passive voice, the subject of the sentence is NOT the doer of the action but the receiver of it. The subject is acted upon.

   ACTIVE VOICE: The board decided to change the product's name.

   PASSIVE VOICE: The decision to change the product's name was made by the board.

   PASSIVE VOICE: After reviewing all the requests, it is suggested the budget be cut.

2. Don't hedge unnecessarily. "Hedging" is overqualifying. Look at these phrases: "It would appear at this time . . ." "It is felt that . . ." "Under certain conditions . . ." "It is often the case that . . ."

3. Prefer the plain to the pompous, the vigorous to the verbose.

READER'S REACTION: "Who does this guy think he is, anyway?"

WRITER'S SOLUTION: Every word has a denotation, the meaning you find in the dictionary, and a connotation, the emotional associations attached. While it is impossible to control the connotations each individual reader may attach to a word, the writer must be sensitive enough to recognize words whose unfavorable connotations may destroy the meaning intended.

1. Be sensitive to the tone of the communication. Look at these phrases: "Failed to comply . . ." and "Please be advised . . ." They come across to the reader as arrogant and impersonal.

2. Read your writing aloud, listening to the sounds and rhythms of the language.

   NO STYLE IS GOOD THAT IS NOT FIT TO BE SPOKEN OR READ ALOUD WITH EFFECT!

Organizing and Putting It All Together

Basic Organizational Strategies

- Place your most important ideas first.
- Group similar ideas.
- List items in decreasing order of importance.
- Always put detail (explanation, elaboration, description, supporting data) in the middle.
- Make your introductory statements (your "set-ups") as short as possible.
- Be consistent. If you introduce three items as A, B, & C, discuss them in the same order later.
- In longer sections, begin and end with important ideas.

THE OPENING

A poorly-started memo/report is like a football team that gets off to a poor start: It may be saved by heroic efforts at the middle and the end, but the issue may be in doubt for an uncomfortably long time.

If your purpose is to:

Disclose a new approach or concept that may be helpful to the people in a field. . . .mention the idea in a general way and indicate why it is important.

Recommend a solution to a certain problem. . . .state in general terms what the problem is and what way you will propose for solving it.

Evaluate work or a project previously reported. . . .specify the work and indicate briefly what you have decided about its significance, feasibility, usefulness, integrity, or relevance.

Justify the expense and time of a project or new funds and support for it. . . .mention the project and support required and tell the reader in a few words why the support is needed.

Report on the progress of a project or program. . . .mention the highlights of what you have found, that is the satisfactoriness or unsatisfactoriness of progress in general, and where things seem to be going best and worse.

Provide information to support a program, product, or service. . . .tell the reader what the project or product is, what kinds of information will follow, and any general appraisal of the information that the reader should keep in mind while reading it.

Instruct readers about principles and procedures. . . .specify the subject to be explored, what kinds of instruction will be given, and any general appraisals of them that the reader should keep in mind.

Establish your record, reputation, or credibility for work done. . . .summarize this purpose frankly and, if the reason for your concern is not apparent, describe it briefly, too.

THE OPENING

The opening is the most critical part of any memo/letter you write.

- It must create interest.
- It must draw the reader to the body

The Dynamic Approach

- Instantly captivating
- Captures interest
- Involves the reader

The Relevancy Approach

- Identifies subject matter
- Attracts reader with subject at hand
- Directly applicable to the reader's interest

Some examples of openings that might not work:
Please be advised that. . .Referring to your letter of. . .Thank you for your letter of. . .This memo is in reply to. . .As per your request. . .Please find. . .Herein attached is. . .This will acknowledge your letter of. . .In your letter dated June 15th you stated. . .We regret (or are pleased) to inform you that. . .

EXAMPLES OF EFFECTIVE OPENINGS

I have a problem you may be willing to help solve. Perhaps together we can identify one of the pressing problems confronting top management in America's leading industrial companies.

Did I say something wrong in my letter of March 16, 1983?

Jim, don't you think it's time for a long overdue get-together?
As opposed to this opening: I should like to meet with you on Friday, April 15, at 5:00 p.m.

Your letter, received today, created an embarrassing situation. The director's reaction, when I told her about your request, was more than I expected. Sparks flew, but she didn't say "no." As a matter of fact, she made some suggestions of her own. . .
As opposed to this opening: This will acknowledge receipt of your recent letter, because of the nature of your request, I found it necessary to review it with my supervisor. . .

The annual inventory (copy attached) turned up some interesting surprises. You'll probably receive many requests for contributions this year, but I'll wager that none of them concern you so directly.

If you think that joining our firm will mold you into a faceless person boxed in a white-washed wallboard cubicle, then you just don't know the Boeing Military Airplane Company.

I know you have a crowded calendar, and so do I. If I knew of a better or quicker way of bringing our critically essential program to your attention, I'd be the first to suggest it.
As opposed to this opening: I would appreciate your advising me whether I may meet with you to present our program, I can assure the meeting will be brief. . .

The racing season starts at Aqueduct in four weeks.

On my last statement, dated October 3, you overcharged me $78.98.

Bonus check will be ready this Friday. I thought you would like to know the reasons for the delay in getting them to you.

Would you be willing to speak at a Wichita Engineering Association meeting on June 3, 1983?

Mike, it's been a rewarding experience reviewing your accomplishments while compiling the data for your annual performance review.

I am returning, for a slight correction, drawing number 466B which Dan recently submitted to me.

THE BODY

Methods used to develop paragraphs (i.e., supporting the topic sentence).

A. The "Listing" Method – used when the writer has several points to make.

B. The "Definition" Method – used when the writer has to define terms the reader may not be familiar with or fully understands.

C. The "Example" Method – used when examples or illustrations can show the reader what the writer means.

D. The "General to Specific" Method – used when the topic sentence requires refining.

E. The "Comparison/Contrast" Method – used when the writer wants to show similarities and/or differences between two or more things.

F. The "Cause/Effect" Method – used when causes and effects can solidly unify a paragraph through the logic of their relationship.

EXAMPLES

"Cause/Effect" Method

The causes of small business failures are well documented. Poor management appears to be the most common cause. Lack of management experience, unbalanced management experience, and incompetent management far outstrip other business failure causes such as lack of technical ability, fraud, or disasters.

"Comparison/Contrast" Method

Besides general business conditions, there are other factors – over which the owners have no control – affecting individual firms. Examples of these are the relocations of highways, sudden changes in style, the replacement of existing products by new products, and local labor conditions. Although these factors may cause some businesses to fail, they may represent opportunities for others. One local marketplace may decline in importance, but at the same time new shopping centers are developing. Sudden changes in style or the replacement of existing products may mean troubles to certain businesses but open doors for new ones. Adverse employment situations in some areas may be offset by favorable situations in others. Ingenuity in taking advantage of changing customer desires and technological improvements will always be rewarded.

"General to Specific" Method

Before undertaking any new business venture, you should *consider several things* about the state of the economy. What are the general business conditions? What are the business conditions *in the city* and *neighborhood* where you are planning to locate? What are the current conditions *in the line of business* you're planning?

"Definition" Method

Many insurance contracts use deductibles. The deductible may be a percentage of the loss or a specified dollar amount. In some contracts the deductible may be a waiting period. In others, it's subtracted from the loss settlement that would otherwise be payable or from the value of the insured property. Each policy must be checked to determine what kind of deductible it has.

"Example" Method

1. One of the major mistakes in choosing an employee is to hire the person without a clear knowledge beforehand of exactly what you want the person to do. For example, you should answer such questions as these before hiring anyone: If you are running a retail store, will a salesperson also do stockkeeping or bookkeeping? In a restaurant will a waiter or waitress also perform some of the duties of a host or hostess? Will the sawyer in a sawmill also be required to pile lumber? Answers to these kinds of questions are necessary to prevent misunderstandings.

2. Any effort to isolate personality traits faces the primary problem of definition. For example, honesty has different meanings for different people. Some people receiving a dime too much at the grocery would return it, but the same people receiving a dime too much from a vending machine might keep it and suffer no feelings of dishonesty. In many instances the meaning of honesty depends on the individual definition. Until a standardized concept is applied to the definition of personality traits, the problem will remain.

"Listing" Method

The basic fire insurance policy is nearly identical in every state. The standard fire policy contains: (1) an insuring clause, (2) stipulations and conditions that govern both your basic insurance contract and the extensions and endorsements, and (3) an attachment that describes the property being insured.

SENTENCE RANGE

Although most successful writers maintain a 16-to-18-word sentence average, that by no means implies they write a lot of sentences that length, nor that their typical sentences hover right around that average.

In fact, the more widely you can range about a 16-to-18-word average, the more lively your writing style is likely to be. (Not that sentence variety is the sole cause of liveliness; but it's a very important one.)

Here are some typical sentence ranges from well-known writers, both in fiction and non-fiction. In each case, I've chosen a full page at random:

Rudolf Flesch, *How to Write, Speak and Think More Effectively*—

10 words, 11, 17, 8, 12, 21, 9, 18, 23, 19, 14, 7, 23, 4, 1, 21, 14, 20, 3, 4, 25.

Longest sentence, 25 words; shortest, one word; average, 16.6 words.

Truman Capote, *In Cold Blood*—

15 words, 13, 10, 9, 4, 10, 18, 5, 11, 8, 11, 31, 8, 5, 6, 20, 5, 7.

Longest sentence, 31 words; shortest, 4 words; average, 10.9 words.

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *A Thousand Days*—

29 words, 26, 10, 14, 19, 12, 24, 7, 24, 7, 8, 6, 23, 8, 20, 24.

Longest sentence, 29 words; shortest, 6 words; average, 17 words.

Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi*—

12 words, 41, 15, 4, 78, 38, 37, 30, 18, 8, 17, 6, 20, 41, 5, 7, 7, 14, 8, 4, 8, 20.

Longest sentence, 78 words; shortest, 4 words; average, 19 words.

Paul A. Samuelson, *Economics*—

31 words, 35, 24, 17, 14, 6, 17, 12, 15, 33, 15, 6, 13, 21, 38, 14.

Longest sentence, 38 words; shortest, 6 words; average, 19 words.

PARAGRAPH LENGTH

Like long sentences and long words, long paragraphs also can impede the reader's progress.

In general, readers tend to skip long paragraphs if possible. If not, they may well whiz through them in a less-than-comprehending fashion: Dutiful, skimping, blanked-out. They look for cheaper Grace in the shorter paragraphs before and after. Thus, when we stuff our most profound ideas into those tubby paragraphs, we're working directly against normal reader habits.

Prefer the short paragraph. But vary the length to avoid reader boredom. There are two reasons for emphasizing shorter paragraphs.

1. The visually appealing page they create. Pages of long paragraphs provide walls of words the reader must batter through. Pages of varied, mostly short, paragraphs, are attractive. That often makes the difference as to which of two messages is read first, or at all; and which one is shunted aside "for now."

2. The mental digestibility they allow. When you break food down into smaller bites, it becomes easier to digest. So it is with information. As you break ideas into their subparts, they become easier for the mind to "digest."

Can you overdo small paragraphs? Well—yes. But by far the greater problem is overdoing the long ones. Strive for reasonable variety.

How long should a paragraph be? A tough question. One writer put it well, though. In its proportions, he suggested, a paragraph should resemble a breadbox more than it does a telephone booth.

Checklist for Revising a Faulty Paragraph

1. *Is the central idea of the paragraph clearly stated or implied?* If not, add a clear statement of the controlling idea.

2. *Does the subject of the paragraph shift one or more times?* If so, either develop each main point in a separate paragraph or restate the central idea so that it will closely relate all the points discussed.

3. *Are all sentences in the paragraph relevant to the central idea?* If not, cross out each irrelevant sentence. If any sentence is related to the central idea but not clearly so, revise it to make the relationship clear.

Industrial Communications Style Guide

INDUSTRIAL COMMUNICATIONS STYLE GUIDE

The Industrial Communications Style Guide is a gathering of information regarding writing styles. The sources are credited throughout the publication with a reference number.

1. *The Associated Press Stylebook*, Copyright June 1980
2. *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, Copyright 1985
3. *The McGraw-Hill Style Manual*, Copyright 1983
4. Industrial Graphics Department of Boeing Military Airplane Co. at Wichita, Kansas
5. *World Aviation Directory*, Copyright 1982
6. International System of Units

abbreviations Follow these guidelines:

BEFORE A NAME: Abbreviate the following titles when used before a full name: *Dr., Gov., Lt. Gov., Mr., Mrs., Rep., the Rev., Sen.*, and certain military designations.
For guidelines on how to use titles, see **courtesy titles; legislative titles; military titles.**

AFTER A NAME: Abbreviate *junior* or *senior* after an individual's name. Abbreviate *company, corporation, incorporated,* and *limited* when used after the name of a corporate entity. See **company names.**

WITH DATES OR NUMERALS: Use the abbreviations a.m., p.m., and No.
Right: *at 8 a.m.; in room No. 24; on Oct. 14, 1968.*
Wrong: *Late last p.m. he asked for your telephone No.*
The abbreviations are correct only with figures.
Right: *Late last night he asked for your telephone number.*
See **months; numerals.**

IN NUMBERED ADDRESSES: Abbreviate *avenue, boulevard,* and *street* in numbered addresses.
He drove down College Ave. He lives at 1235 N. McLean Blvd.

STATES AND NATIONS: *The United States* and the *Union of Soviet Socialist Republics* may be abbreviated with periods (*U.S., U.S.S.R.*).

SPECIAL CASES: Many abbreviations are desirable in callouts, tabulations, and certain types of technical writing.

CAPS, PERIODS: Follow *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, omit periods unless the result would spell an unrelated word.

MEASUREMENT TERMS: Do not abbreviate the terms in text (300 pounds, 5 feet, 3 percent). Abbreviate in charts when preceded by a figure (5 gal., 35%, 7 lb, 40°F, 6 in).[4]
The abbreviated term is always singular (*5 gal.* not *5 gals., 7 lb* not *7 lbs*).[1]
The measurement term shall be abbreviated according to the the International System of Units.[4]
See **weights and measures.**

AC, DC, VAC, VDC alternating current, direct current, volts of alternating current, volts of direct current.[4]
The McGraw-Hill Style Manual uses *ac, dc* and *V ac V dc.*
The "International System of Units" does not give an abbreviation.

academic degrees Use an apostrophe in *bachelor's degree, a master's,* etc.
Use such abbreviations as *B.A., M.A., LL.D.* and *Ph.D.*
When used after a name, an academic abbreviation is set off by commas: *Raymond Vane, Ph.D., wrote the article.*
Do not precede a name with a courtesy title for an academic degree and follow it with the abbreviation for the degree in the same reference:
Wrong: *Dr. Gloria Penard, Ph.D.*
Right: *Dr. Gloria Penard, a geologist.*
Right: *Gloria Penard, Ph.D., gave the opening address.*
When in doubt about the proper abbreviation for a degree, follow the first listing in *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary.*[1]
See **doctor.**

academic departments Use lowercase except for words that are proper nouns or adjectives: *the department of chemistry, the chemistry department, the department of English, the English department.*[1]

academic titles Capitalize and spell out formal titles such as *professor, dean, president, chairman,* etc. when they precede a name. Lowercase elsewhere.

Lowercase modifiers such as *zoology Professor Joseph Napora* or *department* in *department Chairman Cheryl Hanes.*[1]

See **doctor** and **titles**.

acronyms An acronym is a pronounceable word formed from the initial letter in a series of words: *ALCOA, BMAC, MIC, NATO, radar, scuba,* etc.[1]

Capitalize the series of words represented by the acronym as you would if the acronym did not appear: *Pacific standard time (PST), white Anglo Saxon Protestant (WASP), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)*[2]

See **second reference**.

Activity Center Capitalize it in reference to a specific building. When using the term *center,* lowercase. See **Schaefer, J. Earl.**[4]

A.D. Acceptable in all references for anno Domini: *in the year of the Lord.*

A.D. goes before the figure: *A.D. 42.*[1]

afterward Not *afterwards.*[1]

air base Two words. Follow the practice of the U.S. Air Force, which uses *air force base* as part of the proper name for its bases in the United States and *air base* for its installations abroad: *Lackland Air Force Base, Texas,* but *Clark Air Base, Phillipines.*

On second reference: *The Air Force base, the air base,* or *the base.*[1]

Military
Guide to Air Force Bases

Altus AFB, OK 73521
Andrews AFB, MD 20331
Arnold AFS, TN 37389

Barksdale AFB, LA 71110
Beale AFB, CA 95903
Bellows AFS, HI (APO San Francisco 96333)
Bergstrom AFB, TX 78743
Blytheville AFB, AR 72315
Bolling AFB, DC 20332
Brooks AFB, TX 78235

Cannon AFB, NM 88101
Carswell AFB, TX 76127
Castle AFB, CA 95342
Chanute AFB, IL 61868
Charleston AFB, SC 29404
Columbus AFB, MS 39701
Craig AFB, AL 36701

Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ 85707
Dobbins AFB, GA 30060
Dover AFB, DE 19901
Duluth International Airport, MN 55814
Dyess AFB, TX 79607

Edwards AFB, CA 93523
Eglin AFB, FL 32542
Eielson AFB, AK (APO Seattle 98737)
Ellington AFB, TX 77030
Ellsworth AFB, SD 57706
Elmendorf AFB, AK (APO Seattle 98742)
England AFB, LA 71301
Ent AFB, CO 80912

Fairchild AFB, WA 99011
Forbes AFB, KS 66620
Francis E. Warren AFB, WY 82001

George AFB, CA 92392
Glasgow AFB, MT 59231
Goodfellow AFB, TX 76901
Grand Forks AFB, ND 58201
Griffiss AFB, NY 13440
Grissom AFB, IN 46970
Gunter AFB, AK 36114

Hamilton AFB, CA 94934
Hancock Field, NY 13225
Hanscom Field (see Laurence G. Hanscom Field)
Hickam AFB, HI (APO San Francisco 96553)

Military
Guide to Air Force Bases

Hill AFB, UT 84401
Holloman AFB, NM 88330
Homestead AFB, FL 33030
Hurlburt Field, FL 32544 (Elgin AFB Auxiliary Field No. 9)

Indian Springs AF Auxiliary Field, NV 89018

Keesler AFB, MS 39534
Kelly AFB, TX 78241
Kincheloe AFB, MI 49788
King Salmon Airport, AK (APO Seattle 98713)
Kingsley Field, OR 97601
Kirtland AFB, NM 87117
K.I. Sawyer AFB, MI 49843

Lackland AFB, TX 78236
Langley AFB, VA 23365
Laredo AFB, TX 78040
Laughlin AFB, TX 78840
Laurence G. Hanscom Field, MA 01730
Little Rock AFB, AR 72076
Lockbourne AFB, OH 43217
Loring AFB, ME 04750
Los Angeles AFS, CA 90045
Lowry AFB, CO 80230
Luke AFB, AR 85301

MacDill AFB, FL 33608
Malstrom AFB, MT 59402
March AFB, CA 92508
Mather AFBCA 95655
Maxwell AFB, AL 36112
McChord AFB, WA 98438
McClellan AFB, CA 95652
McConnell AFB, KS 67221
McCoy AFB, FL 32812
McGuire AFB, NJ 08641
Minot AFB, ND 58701
Moody AFB, GA 31601
Mountain Home AFB, ID 83648
Murphy Dome AFS, AK (APO Seattle 98750)

Myrtle Beach AFB, SC 29577

Nellis AFB, NV 89110
Niagara Falls International Airport, NY 14306
Norton AFB, CA 92409

Offutt AFB, NE 68113
Otis AFB, MA 02542

Patrick AFB, FL 32925
Pease AFB, NH 03801
Peterson Field, CO 80914
Plattsburgh AFB, NY 12903
Pope AFB, NC 28308

Randolph AFB, TX 78148
Reese AFB, TX 79401
Richards-Gebaur AFB, MO 64030
Robins AFB, GA 31093

Scott AFB, IL 62225
Selfridge AFB, MI 48045
Seymour Johnson AFB, NC 27530
Shaw AFB, SC 29152
Shemya AFS, AK (APO Seattle 98736)
Sheppard AFB, TX 76311

Tinker AFB, OK 73145
Travis AFB, CA 94535
Truax Field, WI 53707
Tyndall AFB, FL 32401

Vance AFB, OK 73701
Vandenberg AFB, CA 93437

Webb AFB, TX 79720
Westover AFB, MA 01022
Wheeler AFB, HI (APO San Francisco 96515)
Whiteman AFB, MO 65301
Williams AFB, AZ 85224
Wright-Patterson AFB, OH 45433
Wurtsmith AFB, MI 48753

Air Bases in Other Countries

Albrook AFB, Canal Zone
Andersen AFB, Guam
Ankara AS, Turkey
Athenai Airport, Greece
Aviano AB, Italy

Bitburg AB, West Germany

Camp New Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Cam Ranh Bay AB, South Vietnam
Ching Chuan Kang AB, Taiwan
Clark AB, Philippines

Da Nang Airport, South Vietnam

Erding AS, West Germany

Frankfurt, West Germany
Fuchu AS, Japan

Goose AB, Labrador, Canada

Hahn AB, West Germany
High Wycombe AS, United Kingdom
Howard AFB, Canal Zone

Incirlik AB, Turkey
Iraklion AS, Crete
Izmir, Turkey

Johnston Island AB, Central Pacific
Kadena AB, Okinawa
Keflavik Airport, Iceland

Airbases in Other Countries

Korat AB, Thailand
Kulis
Kunsan AB, South Korea
Kwangju AB, South Korea

Lajes Field, Azores
Lindsey AS, West Germany

Mildenhall
Misawa AB, Japan
Moron AB, Spain

Nakhon Phanom Airport, Thailand

Osan AB, South Korea

RAF Alconbury, United Kingdom
RAF Bentwaters, United Kingdom
RAF Chicksands, United Kingdom
RAF Lakenheath, United Kingdom
RAF Mildenhall, United Kingdom
RAF Scuithorpe, United Kingdom
RAF Upper Heyford, United Kingdom
RAF West Raisilp, United Kingdom
RAF Wethersfield, United Kingdom
RAF Woodridge, United Kingdom
Ramey AFB, Puerto Rico
Ramstein AB, West Germany
Rhein-Main AB, West Germany

San Vito dei Normanni AS, Italy
Sembach AB, West Germany
Shu-Lin-Kou AS, Taiwan
Soendrestrom AB, Greenland
South Ruislip AS, United Kingdom
Spangdahlem AB, West Germany

Tachikawa AB, Japan
Taegu AB, South Korea
Tainan AS, Taiwan
Taipei AS, Taiwan
Tan Son Nhut Airfield, South Vietnam
Tempelhof Airport, Berlin, Germany
Thule AB, Germany
Thule AB, Greenland
Torrejon AB, Spain

Ubon Airfield, Thailand
Udorn Airfield, Thailand
U-Tapao Airfield, Thailand

Wakkanai AS, Japan
Wiesbaden AB, West Germany

Yamato AS, Japan
Yokota AB, Japan
Yongsan AB, South Korea

Zaragoza AB, Spain
Zweibrucken AB, West Germany

air force Capitalize when referring to *U.S. Air Force, the Air Force, Air Force regulations.* Use lowercase for the forces of other nations: *the Israeli air force.*[1,3]

airline, airlines Capitalize *airlines, air lines*, and *airways* when used as part of a proper airline. Use *airlines* when referring to more than one line.

Do not use *air line, air lines* or *airways* in generic reference to an airline.[1]

Major airlines and aircraft manufacturers are listed below.

Airlines and Aircraft Manufacturers

Aden Airways; S. Arabia
Adria Avionpromet; Yugoslavia
Aer Lingus, Dublin
Aerocondor; Columbia
Aeroflot, Moscow
Aerolineas Argentinas
Aeromexico
Aerovias Condor de Colombia
Air Afrique; Ivory Coast
Air Algerie; Algiers
Air Asia; Taiwan
Airbrasil
Airbus Industrie of North America
Air Europe
Air California
Air Canada; Montreal
Air Ceylon
Air Congo
Air France
Air Guinea
Air India; Bombay
Air Jamaica
Airlift Intl; U.S.
Air Malta
Air New Zealand
Alaska Airlines
Alitalia Airlines, Rome
Allegheny Airlines
All Nippon Airways; Japan
Aloha Airlines
Ambassadair Air Travel
American Airlines
American Eagle Airlines
American Flyers Airlines
America West, Phoenix
Ansett Airlines of Australia

Airlines and Aircraft Manufacturers

ARAMCO Aircraft Remkt Serv
Ariana Afghan Airlines
Austrian Airlines
Autair Intl Airways; London
Avianca; Bogota, Columbia
Aviateca; Guatemala

Batch-Air
Braathens Airtransport; S.A.
Braniff International Airways
Britannia Airways
British Airways
British Caledonian Airways
British Eagle Airways
British European Airways
British Overseas Airways
British United Airways; London
British West Indian Airways; Trinidad

Caledonian Airways; Scotland
Canadian Air Force
Canadian Pacific Air Lines
Capitol Intl Airways
Cargolux Airlines
Carib Aviation; Puerto Rico
Cathay Pacific Airways; Hong Kong
Central African Republic
Central Airlines; U.S.
Ceskoslovenske Aerolinie
Channel Airways; England
China Airlines; Taiwan
China Southwest Airlines
Civil Air Transport; Taiwan
Compania de Aviacion Faucett; Peru, S.A.
CONAIR
Condor; Flugdienst, Germany
Continental Airlines

Dan-Air Services
De Havilland Aircraft of Canada
Delta Air Lines
Diversified World Invest.
Dominicana Airlines
Donaldson International Airways

East African Airways; Kenya
Eastern Airlines
Eastern Provincial Airways; Canada
Egyptair
El Al Israel Airlines
Empresa Guatemalteca de Aviacion
Ethiopian Airlines
Executive Jet Aviation

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
Federal Express
First German Republic
Flying Tiger Line
Forca Aerea Brasileira
Frontier Airlines

Garuda Indonesian Airways
GenRad Inc.
Government of Argentine
Government of Jordan

Hapag-Lloyd
Hawaiian Airlines; Honolulu

Iberia International Airlines
Icelandair; Flugelag
Imperial Government of Iran
Imperial Iranian Air Force
Indian Airlines
Indonesian Air Force
Interior Aviation Centre; BC, Canada
Invicta International Airlines
Iran National Airlines
Irish International Aerlinte
Israel Aircraft Industries
ITT (Intl Telephone and Telegraph)

Japan Air Lines
Japan Domestic Airlines
Jordanian Government
Jugoslovenski Aerotransport; Yugoslavia

KLM (Royal Dutch Airlines); Netherlands
Korean Air Lines
Kuwait Airways

Lake Central Airlines
Lan Chile Airlines
Lauda Air Luftfahrt
Linea Aerea del Cobre; Chile
Lineas Aereas Costarricenses; S.A.
Lineas Aereas de Nicaragua; S.A.
Lloyd Aereo Boliviano
Lufthansa German Airlines

Maersk Air; Copenhagen
Mexicana Airlines
Mohawk Airlines
Monarch Airlines
Montana Austria

NASA Space Shuttle Program
National Airlines
National Aeronautics & Space Admin
NAVAIR
New Zealand National Airways
Nordair
North Central Airlines
Northeast Airways
Northern Consolidated Airlines
Northwest-Orient Airlines

Olympic Airways
Orion Airways of England
Ozark Air Lines

Pacific Northwest Airlines

Airlines and Aircraft Manufacturers

Pacific Southwest Airlines
Pacific Western Airlines
Pakistan Intl Airlines
Pan American World Airways
Phillipine Airlines
Piedmont Airlines

Qantas Airways
Quebecair

Rowan Companies Inc
Royal Air Maroc
Royal Dutch Airlines (KLM)
Royal Jordanian Airlines
Royal Nepal Airlines

Sabena Belgian World Airlines
Saturn Airways
Saudia (Saudi Arabian Airlines)
Scandinavian Airlines
Seaboard World Airlines
Singapore Airlines
SNECMA (Societe Nationale d et de Construction de Moteurs d Aviation)
South African Airways
Southern Airways; U.S.
Southern Cross Malaysian Airways
Southwest Airlines (Okinawa)
SPANTAX; Madrid
Standard Airways; U.S.
Stanhope Steamship Lines
Sudan Airways
Swissair

TAN Airlines; Honduras
TAP Air Portugal
TAME of Equador
Thai Airways; Thailand
Toa Domestic Airlines; Japan
Transair; Sweden
Trans Australia Airlines
Transavia Holland
Transbrasil S.A. Linhas Aereas
Trans Caribbean; U.S.
Trans European Airways
Trans International; U.S.
Trans Mediterranean Airways
Trans Pacific
Trans Polar
Transportes Aereo de Carga; S.A.
Transportes Aereo Rio Platense
Transportes Aereos Portugueses
Trans World Airlines (TWA)
Trek Airways; U.S.
Turk Hava Yollari; Turkey

Union of Burma Airway
United Airlines
United Arab Emirates
United States Air Force
Universal Airways
USAir
UTA of France

VARIG Airlines; Brazil
VASP (Viacao Aerea Sao Paulo); S.A.
Venezolana Internacional de Aviacion; S.A.
Voyageur Airways

Wardair; Canada
Western Airlines
World Air Center; U.S.
World Airways; U.S.

airport Capitalize as part of a proper name: *La Guardia Airport, Newark International Airport.* The first name of an individual and the word *international* may be deleted from a formal airport name while the remainder is capitalized: *John F. Kennedy International Airport, Kennedy International Airport,* or *Kennedy Airport.*[1]

airways The system of routes that the federal government has established for airplane traffic. See the **airline, airlines** entry.[1]

all- Use a hyphen. Some examples:[2]

all-around	all-over	all-out	all-American

all right not alright.[1]

a.m., p.m. Use periods with lowercase or small capital letters: *5 p.m.* or *5:30 P.M.*[3]

amid not amidst.[1]

ammunition See **weapons.**

ampersand (&) Use the ampersand when it is part of an acronym *(IR&D)* or a company's formal name: *Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, Newport News Shipbuilding & Dry Dock Co.*
The ampersand should not otherwise be used in place of *and.*[1]

ante- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen.[2]

anti- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen. Some examples:[2]
anti-ice antiskid antiwar

anybody, any body, anyone, any one One word for an indefinite reference: *Anyone can do that.*
Two words when one element of a group is being singled out: *Any one of them may speak up.*[1]

apostrophe (') Follow these guidelines:

POSSESSIVES: See the **possessives** entry.

OMITTED LETTERS: *You've, it's, this 'n' that. 'Tis the season to be jolly.*

OMITTED FIGURES: *The class of '62. The Spirit of '76. The '20s.*

PLURALS OF A SINGLE LETTER: *Dot your i's and j's. She brought home a report card with two A's and three B's.*

DO NOT USE: For plurals of numerals or multiletter combinations: *two 727s; the ALCMs.* This is an exception to Webster's. See **plurals.**[1]

asterisk Always place after the term in the body of the text to indicate that an explanatory note is at the bottom left of the page.
Type the explanatory note in sentence structure with the asterisk preceding it.[4]

autopilot[2]

B.C. The abbreviation B.C. is placed after the figure for the year: *25 B.C.*[1]

bellmouth[4]

bench mark[2]

bi- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen.[2]

brackets Brackets may function as parentheses within parentheses: *Phillips Act (13 Stat., Ch. 8 [or Sec. 2], P. 48).*[2]

building Capitalize the proper names of buildings, including the word *building* if it is an integral part of the proper name: *the Administration Building, the Tooling Building.*[1]

bullet, dash Capitalize the first letter of each line. Be consistent in the use of periods: Either use one at the end of each line or do not use a period at the end of any of the lines.

- Bullet – dash format.
  - Use dash and indent one pica.
    - Use dashes thereafter, indented as sublists.[4]

by- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen. Some examples:
byline bypass bystreet bylaw
By-election and *by-product* are exceptions. Follow Webster's.

capitalization In general, avoid unnecessary capitals.

If there is no relevant listing in this book for a particular word or phrase, consult *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*. Use lowercase if the dictionary lists it as an acceptable form for the sense in which the word is being used.

Some basic principles:

PROPER NOUNS: Capitalize nouns that constitute the unique identification for a specific person, place or thing: *Richard, Kathy, England, Denver.*

Some words, such as the examples just given, are always proper nouns. Some common nouns receive proper noun status when they are used as the name of a particular entity: *General Electric, Exxon Oil.*

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, Olentangy River, Water 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 Market streets, lakes Huron and Superior.*[1]

Among entries that provide additional guidelines are:

building
committee
family names
foreign governmental bodies
foreign legislative bodies
geographic names
governmental bodies
government officials
historical periods and events
legislature
months
monuments
nationalities and races
organizations and institutions
plants
police department
seasons
trademark
union

INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONS: Words such as *group, division, department, office,* or *agency* that designate corporate and organizational units are capitalized when used with a specific name.[2]

DERIVATIVES: Capitalize words that are derived from a proper noun and still depend on it for their meaning: *American, Christian, Christianity, English, French, Marxism, Shakespearean.*

Lowercase words that are derived from a proper noun but no longer depend on it for their meaning: *french fries, manhattan cocktail, pasteurize, venetian blind.*

SENTENCES: Capitalize the first word in a statement that stands as a sentence. See **sentences; parentheses.**

In poetry, capital letters are used for the first words of some phrases that would not be capitalized in prose.[1]

COMPOSITIONS: Capitalize the principal words in the names of books, magazines, movies, newspapers, plays, poems, operas, songs, radio and television programs, works of art, etc. See **composition titles; magazine names; newspaper names.**[2]

TITLES: Capitalize formal titles when used immediately before a name. Lowercase formal titles when used alone or in constructions that set them off from a name by commas:

Marlene Smith, vice president of the Provident State Bank
The pope shook President Reagan's hand
Elizabeth II, queen of Great Britain[1,2,3]
John Lox, quarterback for the New York Giants
Jim White, curator of the Topeka Museum (not Curator White)
Ed Lockhart, supervisor of Engineering (not Supervisor Lockhart)

We do not follow Webster's guide to capitalize corporate titles when referring to specific individuals. It does not coincide with his not capitalizing president, pope, or queen when referring to a specific person.

See **academic titles; courtesy titles; legislative titles; military titles; nobility titles; titles.**

ABBREVIATIONS: Capital letters apply in some cases. See **abbreviations; acronyms.**[1]

INITIAL CAP. FORMAT: *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* states, "Words in titles are capitalized with the exception of internal conjunctions, prepositions, and articles of four letters or less." Always capitalize the first and last words of the title.

The Way of the World *Of Mice and Men.*

Capitalize a conjunction or preposition of five or more letters.

Words Not Capitalized

Abbreviations	e.g., et al., etc., i.e.
Articles	a, an, the
Conjunctions	and, *as, but, for, if, like,* or, *than, that, when*
Prepositions	*as,* at, but, by, down, for, from, in, into, *like, near,* of, *on,* onto, *out, over, past, per, plus,* than, *that,* till, *to, upon,* via, vs, with,

Note: The words in italics are sometimes capitalized, sometimes not, depending on their linguistic form.

Celsius Use this term rather than *centigrade* for the temperature scale that is part of the metric system.

The Celsius scale is named for Anders Celsius. In it, zero represents the freezing point of water, and 100 degrees is the boiling point at sea level.

When giving a Celsius temperature, *The Associated Press Stylebook* uses: *30 degrees Celsius* or *30 C. The McGraw-Hill Style Manual* uses these forms: *30°C or 30 °C.*

centigrade See **Celsius.**

cents Spell out the word *cents* in lowercase, using numerals for amounts less than a dollar: *8 cents, 32 cents.* Use the $ sign and decimal system for larger amounts: *$1.05, $2.50.*[1]

century Lowercase, spelling out numbers less than 10: *the first century, the 20th century.*[1]

CF6 An airplane engine manufactured by General Electric and SNECMA.[5]

CFM56 An airplane engine manufactured by General Electric and SNECMA.[5]

chapter Capitalize *chapter* when used with a numeral in reference to sections of a book. Always use Arabic figures: *Chapter 4, Chapter 13.*
Lowercase when standing alone.[1]

co- Follow Webster's guide: A hyphen is used if a prefix ending with a vowel is followed by a root word beginning often with the same vowel (cooperate and coordinate are exceptions).[2]

collective nouns Nouns that denote a unit take singular verbs and pronouns: *committee, crowd, group, herd, organization, team.*
Some usage examples: *The committee is meeting to set its agenda. The group meets once a year. Our organization has the best attendance record.*

PLURAL IN FORM: Some words that are plural in form become singular in concept and take singular verbs when the group or quantity is regarded as a unit.
Right: *A thousand bushels is a good yield.* (a unit, singular concept)
Right: *A thousand bushels were created.* (individual items, plural concept)
Right: *The data" is sound.*[1]
"When *data* is used as the plural of *datum*, it takes a plural verb. In the computer age, however, the word has come to mean a collection or mass of information and, in that sense, may lose its plural connotation.[3]

colon The most frequent use of a colon is at the end of a sentence to introduce lists.
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 all the losses. But: *There were three considerations: expense, time, and feasibility.*

EMPHASIS: The colon often can be effective in giving emphasis: *He had only one hobby: eating.*

LISTINGS: Use the colon in such listings as time elapsed *(2:38:09.4)*, time of day *(9:45 p.m.)*, biblical and legal citations *(2 Corinthians 3:3, Colorado Code 5:174-321).*

DIALOGUE: Follow these guidelines:
Q AND A: The colon is used for question-and-answer interviews:
Q: Did you fire him?
A: Indeed I did.

INTRODUCING QUOTATIONS: Use a comma to introduce a direct quotation of one sentence that remains within a paragraph. Use a colon to introduce longer quotations within a paragraph and to end all paragraphs that introduce a paragraph of quoted material.

PLACEMENT WITH QUOTATION MARKS: Colons go outside quotation marks unless they are part of the quotation itself.

MISCELLANEOUS: Do not combine a dash and a colon.[1]

comma The following guidelines treat some of the most frequent questions about the use of commas. Additional guidelines on specialized uses are provided in separate entries such as **dates.**

For more detailed guidance, consult the "comma" entry in the "Handbook of Style" of *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*.

IN A SERIES: A comma is needed for clarity before *and* or *or* in a series. *Men, women, and children crowded into the square. It requires one to travel constantly, to have no private life, and to need no income other than living expenses on the road.—Sarah Davidson.*[2,3]

See the **dash** and **semicolon** entries for cases when elements of a series contain internal commas.[2]

PUNCTUATES AN INVERTED NAME *Smith, John W., Jr.*[2]

No comma is used before *Jr.* in news copy.

GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES, ITEMS IN DATES, ADDRESSES: *Kent, Washington, is the site of one of their facilities. On Sunday, June 23, 1940, he was wounded. Number 10 Downing Street, London, is a famous address.*[2]

WITH EQUAL ADJECTIVES: Use commas to separate a series of adjectives equal in rank. If the commas could be replaced by the word *and* without changing the sense, the adjectives are equal: *a thoughtful, precise manner; a dark, dangerous street.*[1]

Use no comma when the last adjective before a noun outranks its predecessors because it is an integral element of a noun phrase, which is the equivalent of a single noun: *a cheap fur coat* (the noun phrase is *fur coat); the old oaken bucket; a new, blue spring bonnet.*

WITH NONRESTRICTIVE CLAUSES: See the **restrictive clauses, nonrestrictive clauses** entry.

WITH NONRESTRICTIVE PHRASES: See the **restrictive phrases, nonrestrictive phrases** entry.

WITH INTRODUCTORY CLAUSES AND PHRASES: A comma normally is used to separate an introductory clause or phrase from a main clause: *When he had tired of the mad pace of New York, he moved to Dubuque.*

The comma may be omitted after short introductory phrases if no ambiguity would result: *During the night he heard many noises.*

But use the comma if its omission would slow comprehension: *On the street below, the curious gathered.*

WITH 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.* But 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.*

The comma may be dropped if two clauses with expressly stated subjects are short. In general, however, favor use of a comma unless a particular literary effect is desired or it would distort the sense of a sentence.

INTRODUCING DIRECT QUOTES: Use a comma to introduce a complete, one-sentence quotation within a paragraph: *Wallace said, "She spent six months in Argentina and came back speaking English with a Spanish accent."* But use a colon to introduce quotations of more than one setence. See **colon.**

Do not use a comma at the start of an indirect or partial quotation: *He said his victory put him "firmly on the road to a first-ballot nomination."*

comma (cont'd)

BEFORE ATTRIBUTION: Use a comma instead of a period at the end of a quote that is followed by attribution: *"Rub my shoulders," Miss Cawley suggested.*
Do not use a comma, however, if the quoted statement ends with a question mark or exclamation point: *"Why should I?" he asked.*

WITH ACADEMIC DEGREES: See separate entry under this term.

WITH YES AND NO: *Yes, I will be there.*

IN DIRECT ADDRESS: *Mother, I will be home late. No, sir, I did not do it.*

SEPARATING SIMILAR WORDS: Use a comma to separate duplicated words that otherwise would be confusing: *What the problem is, is not clear.*[1]

IN LARGE FIGURES: Use a comma to group numbers into units of three in separating thousands, millions, etc. However, a comma is not necessary in numbers of four figures. Do not use the comma for pagination, dates, or street numbers.[2]

The International System of Units prefers a space instead of a comma in figures of five digits or more. When the space is used to separate groups of three digits, the digits are counted from the decimal point to the left.

PLACEMENT WITH QUOTES: Commas always go inside quotation marks.[3]
See **semicolon.**

committee Do not abbreviate. Capitalize when part of a formal name: *the Program Committee, the House Appropriations Committee.*[1]
See **subcommittee.**

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.*
If *company* or *companies* appears alone in second reference, spell the word out and do not capitalize it even when referring to a specific previously mentioned organization.
The forms for possessives: *The Boeing Co.'s profits, American Broadcasting Cos.' profits.*

THEATRICAL: Spell out *company* in names of theatrical organizations: *the Martha Graham Dance Company.*[1]

company (military) Capitalize only when part of a name: *Company B.* Do not abbreviate.[1]

company names Consult the *Aviation Directory* if in doubt about a formal name. McGraw-Hill uses a comma before *Inc.* or *Ltd.* Webster's and The Associated Press do not.[4]

compare to/compare with Use *compare to* for analogy, that is, for saying that one thing is like another:
Smith compared my boss to Machiavelli.
Use *compare with* for comparison of similarities and differences:
Jones compared her research findings with those of her associates.[3]

composition titles Follow these guidelines:

ITALICIZE IN PRINT, UNDERLINE IN TYPESCRIPT: titles of books, magazines, newspapers, plays, movies, works of art, and long musical compositions.

Eliot's *The Waste Land*
Saturday Review
Christian Science Monitor
Shakespeare's *Othello*
the movie *High Noon*
Gainsborough's *Blue Boy*
Mozart's *Don Giovanni*

PUT QUOTATION MARKS AROUND: poems, short stories, articles, lectures, chapters of books, short musical compositions, and radio and TV programs.

Robert Frost's "Dust of Snow"
Katherine Anne Porter's "That Tree"
the third chapter of *Treasure Island* is entitled "The Black Spot"
"America the Beautiful"
Ravel's "Bolero"
NBC's "Tonight Show"

CAPITALIZE: the principal words, including prepositions and conjunctions of five or more letters. (Associated Press and the Air Force style guide capitalize those with four or more letters.)
An article, conjunction, or preposition is capitalized when it is the first or last word in the title.[2]

computer commands Commands, subcommands, and macros are typed in the *all cap.* format. The following list contains a sample of these terms as were available to us at the time this guide was printed.[4]

ADD
ALTER
ARM
AUTOST

BACKWARD
BAKUP
BOMB RELEASED
BOTTOM

CANCEL
CAPPEND
CDELETE
CFIRST
CHANGE
CINSERT
CLAST
CLOCATE
CMS
CMSG
COMMAND
COMPRESS
CONTINUE
COPY
COUNT
COVERLAY
CP
CREPLACE
CURSOR

DELETE
DISENABLE
DOWN
DUPLICAT

EMSG
ENABLE
ENTER
EPROM
EXEC
EXPAND

FILE
FIND
FINDUP
FLYTO
FORWARD

GET
GETDAT

HEATERON
HELP
HEXTYPE

INPUT
INVAL

JOIN

LEFT
LOAD
LOCATE
LOCK
LOGOFF
LOGON

computer commands (cont'd)

LOWERCAS

MACRO
MODIFY
MOVE
MSG

NAV
NEXT
NFIND
NFINDUP
NOGO
NUC

OFF
ON
ON/OFF
OPCOM
OVERLAY

PARSE
PASSWORD
POWERINP
POWERON
PREARM
PROFILE
PURGE
PUT
PUTD
PUTDAT

QUERY
QUIT

READ
READY
RECOVER
RENUM
REPEAT
REPLACE
REQ
RESET
RET
RESTORE
RIGHT

SAFE
SAT
SAVE
SCHANGE
SET
SHIFT
SIMULATION
SORT
SOS
SPINDOWN
SPLIT
STACK
STATUS

TEST
TEST FAIL
TEST NUMBER
TOP
TRACKBAL
TRANSFER
TYPE

UNLOCK
UP
UPPERCAS
USERID

XEDIT
XHAIR

computer terms These are some terms used in computer language. The following list is a guide to capitalization.[4]

Ada processor
AP101C processor
assembly language

BASIC Beginner's All-purpose Symbolic Instruction Code
bit binary digit
BIT built-in test
BITE built-in-test equipment
Block 0, I, II
bus a channel for transferring data
byte a group of binary digits

C&D controls and displays
CF 61
COMPOOL common data pool
CP computer program

deg degree
del deliver, keyboard
DEL abbreviation for delete command
Doppler utilizing a shift in frequency in accordance with the Doppler effect
DTUC data transfer unit cartridge

esc escape, keyboard
etx accept, keyboard

FCP Flight Computer Program
FIT fault isolation test
FORTRAN FORmula TRANslator

GMCP Ground Maintenance Computer Program

hdg heading
hot spare computer mode

input information fed into a data processing unit
IMU inertial measurement unit
INS Inertial Navigation System
integ integration

JOVIAL Jule's Own Version of the International Algorithmic Language

Kalman filter

link-edit computer mode

MAGVAR magnetic variation
multiplex many functions
mux multiplex

nav navigation
nuc nuclear

ret return, keyboard

SAT Systems Avionics Tester
sin sine
SIRD software Implementation Requirements Document
spotlite pilot's aircraft capability

TERCOM terrain contour matching
throughput output production

wander angle
WD weapon delivery
WPT weapon preload test

continual, continuous *Continual* means a steady repetition, over and over: *The proposal has been the source of continual repricing.*

Continuous means uninterrupted, steady, unbroken: *All she saw ahead of her was a continuous stretch of desert.*[1]

continued The use of *(Cont'd)* in successive chart headings is not necessary.[4]

contractions Avoid excessive use of contractions. Contractions listed in the dictionary are acceptable in informal contexts or circumstances where they reflect the way a phrase commonly appears in speech or writing.[1]

corporation An entity that is treated as a person in the eyes of the law. It is able to own property, incur debts, sue, and be sued.

Abbreviate *corporation* as *Corp.* when a company or government agency uses the word at the end of its name: *General Motors Acceptance Corp., the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.*

Spell out *corporation* when it occurs elsewhere in a name: *the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.*

Spell out and lowercase *corporation* whenever it stands alone.

The form for possessives: *General Motors Acceptance Corp.'s profits.*[1]

counter- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen.[1]

courtesy titles In general, do not use the courtesy titles *Miss, Mr., Mrs.*, or *Ms.* Use the first and last names of the person on first reference: *Betty Ford, Ronald Reagan*, and the last name only on second reference: *Ford quoted Reagan to make her point.*[1]

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.)[3]

dash Follow these guidelines (See **em dash**):

ABRUPT CHANGE: Use an em dash to denote an abrupt change of thought in a sentence:

dash (cont'd)

We will fly to Japan in June—if I get a raise.
Smith offered a plan—it was unprecedented—to raise revenues.

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 em dashes to set off the full phrase: *He listed the ingredients—gin, tonic water, lime slice—that he liked in his favorite drink.*

ATTRIBUTION: Use an em dash before an author's or composer's name at the end of a quotation: *"Orphans don't have vanity. I'm not sure why, but one needs parents to be vain." —Helprin*[1]

IN LISTS: Em dashes should be used to introduce individual sections of a list. Capitalize the first word following the dash. Be consistent in the use of periods.[3] See **bullet, dash**. Some examples:
The colonel gave the following instructions:
—Install the engines.
—Check for FODs.
—Deliver to test pilot.

WITH SPACES: In news copy only, put a space on both sides of an em dash except at the start of a paragraph and the designation of an author.[1]

Follow these guidelines for an en dash (See **en dash**):

IN RANGES: Use the en dash in nontextual material: *the years 1949–1962, 40–50 kg*

IN HEADINGS: The en dash can replace the hyphen in all-cap headings.[3]

data When data is used as the plural of datum it generally takes plural verbs and pronouns.
Many data were obtained.
In the computer age, however, the word has come to mean a collection or mass of information and, in that sense, may lose its plural connotation:
Data is stored for retrieval.[3]

dates Always use Arabic figures, without *st, nd, rd* or *th.*[1]

DC-9[5]

DC-10-30[5]

de- A prefix meaning *from, down, away.* The rules in **prefixes** apply. Some examples:[2]
de-emphasis dethrone devitalize

decades Use Arabic figures to indicate decades of history. Use an apostrophe to indicate numerals that are left out; show plural by adding the letter *s: the 1890s, the '90s, the Gay '90s, the 1920s, the mid-1930s.*[1]

deci- A prefix denoting one-tenth of a unit.[2]

degree sign When typing in 10 pt or smaller and for copy to be reduced, use the bold sign.[4]

dek- (before a vowel), **deka-** (before a consonant). A prefix denoting 10 units of a measure.[2]

different Takes the preposition *from*, not *than*: *Smith's findings were different from Malinak's.*[1]

disc, disk *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* uses *disk* to refer to medical (slipped disk) or celestial (the solar disk) terms and *disc* when referring to the computer, phonograph, or farming implement.[2]

dimensions In text, use figures and spell out *inches, feet, yards,* etc. to indicate depth, height, length, and width. Hyphenate adjectival forms before nouns.[1]

EXAMPLES: *He is 5 feet 6 inches tall, the 5-foot-6-inch man, the 5-foot-6 man, the 5-foot man, the basketball team signed a 7-footer.*

The car is 17 feet long, 6 feet wide, and 5 feet high: The rug is 9 feet by 12 feet, the 9-by-12 rug.

The storm left 5 inches of snow.

Use an apostrophe to indicate feet and quote marks to indicate inches *(5'6")* only in very technical contexts.[1]

dis- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen.[2]

disbursement/dispersement *Disbursement* is the paying out of money. *Dispersement* is the act of scattering.[3]

discreet/discrete *Discreet* means prudent. *Discrete* means separate or distinct.[3]

distances Use figures for *10* and above, spell out *one* through *nine: He walked four miles.*[1]

district Always spell it out. Use a figure and capitalize *district* when forming a proper name: *the 2nd District.*[1]

doctor Use *Dr.* in first reference to a medical physician who holds a doctor of medicine degree: *Dr. Christian Barnard.*

The form *Dr. applies to all first-reference uses before a name.*

Dr. also may be used on first reference before the names of individuals who hold other types of doctoral degrees. However, because people frequently identify *Dr.* only with physicians, care should be taken to assure that the individual's specialty is stated in first or second reference. Do not continue the use of *Dr.* in subsequent references.

See **academic degrees; courtesy titles**.[1]

dollars Always lowercase. Use figures and the $ sign in all except casual references or amounts without a figure: *The book cost $4. Dad, please give me a dollar. Dollars are flowing overseas.*

For specified amounts, the word takes a singular verb: *He said $500,000 is what they want.*

For amounts of more than $1 million, use the $ sign and numerals up to two decimal places. Do not link the numerals and the word by a hyphen: *He is worth $4.35 million. He is worth exactly $4,351,242. He proposed a $300 billion budget.*

The form for amounts less than $1 million: $4, $25, $500, $1,000, $650,000.[1]

down- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen.[2]

E-3A A KC-135 airplane converted to the early warning and control system (AWACS).

earth Lowercase unless used in a list containing the other planets.[3]

ECP 406[4]

ellipsis (. . .) Use an ellipsis to indicate the deletion of one or more words in condensing quotes, texts, and documents.

SPACING REQUIREMENTS: Use the *thin space* between the periods of the ellipsis. Leave one regular space—never a thin—on both sides of an ellipsis: *I . . . gave up and went home at midnight.*

PUNCTUATION GUIDELINES: If the words that precede an ellipsis constitute a grammatically complete sentence, place a period at the end of the last word before the ellipsis. Follow it with a regular space and an ellipsis: *She quit talking and began to glare. . . .* When material is deleted at the end of one paragraph and at the beginnning of the one that follows, pace an ellipsis in both locations.

QUOTATIONS: Do not use ellipsis at the beginning and end of direct quotes: *"It has become evident to me that I no longer have a strong enough political base," Nixon said.* Not: *". . . It has become evident to me that I no longer have a strong enough political base . . .," Nixon said.*[1]

em dash It is longer than an en dash and is used exclusively as a mark of punctuation. See **dash.**[3]

en dash It is slightly longer than a hyphen and is used to join two unhyphenated compound modifiers: *New York–New Haven route, the years 1949–1962, 40–50 kg.*
This use of en dash is recommended only for tables, footnotes, and other nontextual material. In text the word *to* is preferred: *the years 1949 to 1967, from 40 to 50 kg, −5 to −10.*[3]
See **dash.**

endo- A prefix meaning within (the opposite of exo-). The rules in **prefixes** apply. Some examples:[4]
endoskeleton endothermal endotoxin

eng engine[4]

engr engineer[4]

engrg engineering[4]

en route always two words[1]

ensure, insure Use *ensure* to mean guarantee: *Steps were taken to ensure accuracy.*
Use *insure* for references to insurance: *The policy insured the airplane.*[1]

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
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.*[1]

exo- A prefix meaning out of; outside; outer. Use no hyphen. Some examples:[2]
exodus exoenzyme exogenous exonuclease

extra- Do not use a hyphen when *extra-* means *outside of* unless the prefix is followed by a word beginning with *a* or a capitalized word.

Follow *extra* with a hyphen when it is part of a compound modifier describing a condition beyond the usual size, extent or degree:[1]

extra-dry drink extra-large book

Fahrenheit The temperature scale commonly used in the United States.

The scale is named for Gabriel Daniel Fahrenheit, a German physicist who designed it. In it, the freezing point of water is 32 degrees and the boiling point is 212 degrees.[1]

In cases that require mention of the scale:

Associated Press uses these forms: *86 degrees Fahrenheit or 86 F* (note the space and no period after the *F* if degrees and Fahrenheit are clear from the context.)

McGraw-Hill's acceptable renderings are 86°F or 86 °F.

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 Aunt Minnie. I wrote Father a letter. I wrote my father a letter.*[1]

farther/further Use *farther* for distance, *further* for time or quantity.[3]

I've traveled farther than my sister.

The engineer studied the problem further.

fewer/less *Fewer* is used for a number of things, and *less* is used for a single amount or a mass: *To lower your cholesterol, eat fewer eggs and less saturated fat.*[3]

figure The symbol for a number: *the figure 5.* See **numerals**.[1]

final consonant Do not double the final consonant when a suffix beginning with a vowell is added to a word if the word (1) ends in a single consonant and is not accented on the last syllable *benefit—benefited, profit—profited, differ—differing,* (2) the final consonant is preceded by more than one vowell, *defeat—defeated,* or (3) the word ends in more than one consonant *confirm—confirming.*[3]

fleet Use figures and capitalize *fleet* when forming a proper name: *the 6th Fleet.*

Lowercase *fleet* whenever it stands alone.[1]

-fold No hyphen:[2]

twofold threefold

forego/forgo To *forego* means to precede or go before. To *forgo* means to abstain from or give up.[3]

foreign governmental bodies Capitalize the names of specific foreign governmental agencies and departments, either with the name of the nation or without it: *the Norwegian Foreign Ministry, the Foreign Ministry.*

Lowercase *the ministry* or a similar term when standing alone.[1]

foreign legislative bodies In general, capitalize the proper name of a specific legislative body abroad.

The most frequent names in use are *congress, national assembly,* and *parliament.*

GENERIC USES: Lowercase *parliament* or a similar term only when used generically to describe a body for which the foreign name is being given: *the Diet, Japan's parliament.* But capitalize *parliament* or a similar term when used independently of the foreign name:

Reporters gathered outside the Israeli Parliament today.

foreign legislative bodies (cont'd)

Parliament is the appropriate generic descriptive for the Diet in Japan, the Cortes in Spain, the Knesset in Israel and the Supreme Soviet in the Soviet Union.

PLURALS: Lowercase *parliament* and similar terms in plural constructions: the Spanish and French parliaments.

INDIVIDUAL HOUSES: The principle applies also to individual houses of a nation's legislature, just as *Senate* and *House* are capitalized in the United States.[1]

formula Use figures in writing formulas.[1]

fractions Spell out amounts less than *1* in text, using hyphens between the words: *two-thirds, four-fifths, seven-sixteenths,* etc.
Use figures for amounts larger than *1*, converting to decimals whenever practical.
Use *1½, 2⅝,* etc. with no space between the whole number and the fraction.[1]

NEWS COPY: Always use the autofraction: *2 1/64 3 13/16 1 3/32.*

free world Associated Press renders it always as *Free World.* McGraw-Hill lowercases *free world.*

full- Hyphenate when used to form compound modifiers:[2]
full-dress full-length full-page full-scale

gage, gauge A *gage* is a security or a pledge.
A *gauge* is a device to measure something.
Gauge is also a term used to designate the size of shotguns. See **weapons.**[1]

GenRad Inc.[5]

geographic names See Rand McNally's *The New International Atlas* or *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary's* Geographical Names Section.

DOMESTIC: Do not use the postal abbreviations for state names in text. For acceptable abbreviations and rules on when the abbreviations may be used, see entries under **state names.**[4]

government Always lowercase: *the federal government, the state government, the U.S. government.*[1]

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 Nebraska Department of Human Resources, the Tulsa City Council, the Kansas City Fire Department.*

WITHOUT JURISDICTION: Retain capitalization in referring to a specific body if the context makes the name of the nation, state, county, city, etc. unnecessary: *the Department of State, the Department of Human Resources, the City Council, the 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. Some

examples:
All states except Nebraska have a state senate.
The town does not have a fire department.
The bill requires city councils to provide matching funds. The president will address the lower houses of the New York and New Jersey legislatures.

FOREIGN BODIES: The same principles apply.[1]

government officials According to *The McGraw-Hill Style Manual;* president, vice president, commander in chief, and speaker of the House are exceptions to the general rule calling for lowercase when the title is separate from the name. *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* does not recognize this exception to the general rule. See **capitalization**.

graduate A person *graduates* from the school. A school *graduates* the person.[3]

Greek symbols For typing codes on the Linotron 202, follow these guidelines:

Greek Symbols

.101	.102	.103	.104	.105	.106	.107	.108	.109	.110
α	β	ψ	δ	ε	φ	γ	η	ι	ξ
alpha	beta	psi	delta	epsilon	phi	gamma	eta	iota	xi

.111	.112	.113	.114	.115	.116	.117	.118	.119	.120
κ	λ	μ	ν	ο	π	ϑ	ρ	σ	τ
kappa	lambda	mu	nu	omicron	pi	theta	rho	sigma	tau

.121	.122	.123	.124	.125	.126
θ	ω	φ	χ	υ	ζ
theta	omega	phi	chi	upsilon	zeta

.127	.128	.129	.130	.131	.132	.133	.134	.135	.136
A	B	Ψ	Δ	E	Φ	Γ	H	I	Ξ
alpha	beta	psi	delta	epsilon	phi	gamma	eta	iota	xi

.137	.138	.139	.140	.141	.142	.143	.144	.145	.146
K	Λ	M	N	O	Π	Θ	P	Σ	T
kappa	lambda	mu	nu	omicron	pi	theta	rho	sigma	tau

.147	.148	.149	.150	.151	.152
Θ	Ω	6	X	Y	Z
theta	omega	phi	chi	upsilon	zeta

half- Follow *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*. Hyphenate if not listed there.
Some frequently used words without a hyphen:
halfback halfhearted halftone halftrack
Some frequently used combinations that are two words without a hyphen:
half brother half note half sole (n)
half dollar half size half tide

half- (cont'd)

Some frequently used combinations that include a hyphen:[1]

half-baked	half-hour	half-moon
half-blood	half-life	half-sole (v)
half-cooked	half-mast	half-truth

hardware, software Abbreviated different ways: hdwe, H/W, S/W, HW/SW.

hect- (before a vowel), **hecto-** (before a consonant) A prefix denoting 100 units of a measure. Move a decimal point two places to the right, adding zeros if necessary, to convert to the basic unit: 5.5 hectometers = 550 meters.[1]

highway designations Use these forms for highways identified by number: *U.S. Highway 1, U.S. Route 1, U.S. 1, Route 1, Illinois 34, Illinois Route 34, state Route 44, Route 44, Interstate Highway 235, Interstate 235.* On second reference only: *I-235.*

When a letter follows a number, capitalize it but do not use a hyphen: *Route 1A.*[1]

historical periods and events Capitalize the names of widely recognized epochs, periods, and events: *the Bronze Age, the Dark Ages, the Atomic Age, the Boston Tea Party, the Civil War, the Exodus, the Great Depression, Prohibition.*

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, the fall of Rome.*

For additional guidance, follow the capitalization in *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, using lowercase if the dictionary lists it as an acceptable form.[1]

historical present See **universal present**.

howitzer See **weapons**.

hydro- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen. Some examples:[2]

hydroelectric	hydrophobia

hyper- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen. Some examples:[2]

hyperactive	hypercritical

hyphen Hyphens are joiners. Use them to avoid ambiguity or to form a single idea from two or more words. Some **guidelines:**

AVOID AMBIGUITY: Use a hyphen whenever ambiguity would result if it were omitted:
He recovered his health.
He re-covered the leaky roof.

NOUNS FORMING COEQUAL TERMS: Hyphenate. *author-critic, owner-manager.*

COMPOUND MODIFIERS: 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 that end in *ly: a third-quarter touchdown, her grey-blue eyes, a part-time student, a well-dressed man, a know-it-all attitude, a very good story, an easily forgotten mistake.*

Many combinations that are hyphenated before a noun are not hyphenated when they occur after a

noun: *The team scored in the third quarter. Her eyes, a grey blue, were expressing her sorrow. She goes to school part time. His attitude suggested that he knew it all.*

But when a modifier that would be hyphenated before a noun occurs instead after a form of the verb *to be*, the hyphen usually must be retained to avoid confusion: *The story is well-known. The movie is second-rate. The children are well-mannered.*

The principle of using a hyphen to avoid confusion explains why no hyphen is required with *very* and *ly* words. Readers can expect them to modify the word that follows. But if a combination such as *little-known man* were not hyphenated, the reader could be expecting *little* to be followed by a noun, as in *little* man. Instead, the reader encountering *little known* would have to back up mentally and make the connection on his own.

TWO-THOUGHT COMPOUNDS: *serio-comic, socio-economic.*

COMPOUND PROPER NOUNS AND ADJECTIVES: Use a hyphen to designate dual heritage: *Italian-American, Mexican-American.*

No hyphen, however, for *French Canadian* or *Latin American.*

PREFIXES AND SUFFIXES: See the **prefixes; suffixes** sections of this book for specifics on when to hyphenate.

WITH NUMERALS: Use a hyphen to separate figures in odds, ratios, scores, and some fractions. See examples in entries under these headings.

When large numbers must be spelled out, use a hyphen to connect a word ending in *y* to another word: *twenty-one, fifty-five*, etc.

SUSPENSIVE HYPHENATION: The form: *He received a 10-to-20 year sentence in prison.*[1]

in- Normally no hyphen:

inaccurate	insufferable		
inbound	infield		
indoor	infighting		

A few combinations take a hyphen, however:

in-depth	in-group	in-house	in-law

Follow Webster's when in doubt.[1]

incorporated Abbreviate and capitalize when used as part of a corporate name. *The McGraw-Hill Style Manual* sets it off with commas: *Elcom Systems, Inc., announced . . . Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* and *The Associated Press Stylebook* do not. *Executive Aviation Inc. announced. . .*

See **company names.**

infra- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen. Some examples:[2]

infrared	infrastructure

inter- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen. Some examples:[2]

inter-American	interstate	interracial

intra- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen. Some examples:[2]

intramural	intrastate

IPB 1, IPB 2, IPB 3, IPB 4 Industrial Park Building 1, Industrial Park Buildng 2, etc., at BMAC, Wichita.[4]

island Capitalize *island* or *islands* as part of a proper name: *Prince Edward Island, the Hawaiian Islands.*

Lowercase *island* and *islands* when they stand alone or when the reference is to the islands in a given area: *the Pacific islands.*

Lowercase all *island of* constructions: *the island of Nantucket.*[1]

italics Italicize titles of books, magazines, newspapers, plays, movies, works of art, and music. See **composition titles**.

Also, names of ships and spacecraft (*West Star, Apollo 13*); words, letters, and figures when referred to as such (The second *m* is frequently left out of *accommodate*, the *7* on the 737 airplane has been repainted); and foreign words and phrases *(ich dien).*[2]

JT3D An airplane engine used for the KC-135 re-engine.[4]

junior, senior Capitalize and precede with a comma when abbreviated following a name. *Joe Cosby, Jr, will speak to them after breakfast.*[3]

In news copy, do not use commas. *Joe Cosby Jr. will speak.*

Junior Chamber of Commerce It no longer exists. See **Jaycees**.[1]

KE-3A The KC-135 airplane converted to the early warning and control system (AWACS).[4]

Kelvin scale A scale of temperature based on, but different from, the Celsius scale. It is used primarily in science to record very high and very low temperatures. No degree sign is used: *273.16 K.*

kilo- A prefix denoting 1,000 units of a measure. Move a decimal point three places to the right, adding zeros if necessary, to convert to the basic unit: 10.5 kilograms = 10,500 grams.[1]

kilocycle The new term is *kilohertz.*[1]

king Capitalize only when used before the name of royalty: *King George VI.* Continue in subsequent references that use the king's given name: *King George*, not *George.*

Lowercase *king* when it stands alone.

Capitalize in plural uses before names: *Kings George and Edward.*

Lowercase in phrases such as *chess king Bobby Fischer.*

See **nobility titles**.[1]

knot A knot is one nautical mile per hour. It is redundant to say *knots per hour.*

Always use figures: *Winds were at 7 to 9 knots; a 10-knot wind.*[1]

labor hours a non-sexist rendering of *man-hours.*[4]

latitude and longitude *Latitude*, the distance north or south of the equator, is designated by parallels. *Longitude*, the distance east or west of Greenwich, England, is designated by meridians.

Use these forms to express degrees of latitude and longitude: *New York City lies at 40 degrees 45 minutes north latitude and 74 degrees 0 minutes west longitude; New York City lies south of the 41st parallel north and along the 74th meridian west.*[1]

lay/lie The transitive verb is *lay.* It takes a direct object:

We lay the report on your desk now.
We are laying the report on your desk.
We laid the report on your desk yesterday.
We have laid the report on your desk.

The intransitive verb is *lie*:[3]
We lie in the sun now.
We are lying in the sun.
We lay in the sun yesterday.
We have lain in the sun.

legislative titles Use 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. Herman Talmadge spoke with state Sen. Hugh Carter.*

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 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, just as *senator* is used in references to members of the Senate.

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, Minority Leader John J. Rhodes, Democratic Whip James C. Wright, Chairman John J. Sparkman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, President Pro Tem John C. Stennis.*

See **titles**.[1]

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's legislature:

Topeka, Kansas — Both houses of the Legislature adjourned today.

Capitalize *legislature* in subsequent specific references and in such constructions as: *the 100th Legislature, the state Legislature.*

Although the word *legislature* is not part of the formal, proper name for the lawmaking bodies in many states, it commonly is used that way and should be treated as such in any article that does not use the formal name.

Lowercase *legislature* when used generically or in plural reference:

No legislature has approved the amendment.

The Arkansas and Colorado legislatures are considering the amendment.

See **governmental bodies**.[1]

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 likewise likeness[1]

limited Abbreviate and capitalize as *Ltd.* when used as part of a formal corporate name. McGraw-Hill sets it off from the company name with commas. *Canadian Enterprises, Ltd., endorsed the amendment.* Associated Press does not use the comma: *Brazil Coffeemakers Ltd. endorsed the agreement.*

lists In lists consisting entirely of sentence items, use a period after each item:

1. *State the problem.*
2. *Formulate an algorithm for its solution.*
3. *Prepare general and detailed flow charts.*

In lists consisting entirely of nonsentence items, do not use periods:

1. *Six KE-3As to Saudi*
2. *Five JT3Ds to Seattle*
3. *Eight JVXs to Vertol*

If sentence and nonsentence items are mixed within a list, use a period after every item.[3]

Mail Stop M/S

Mach number Named for Ernst Mach, an Austrian physicist, the figure represents the ratio of the speed of an object to the speed of sound.

A body traveling at *Mach 1* would be traveling at the speed of sound. *Mach 2* would equal twice the speed of sound.[1]

magazine names Capitalize the name and type it in italics, but do not place it in quotes. Lowercase *magazine* unless it is part of the publication's formal title: *Harper's Magazine, Newsweek* magazine, *Time* magazine.[2]

man-hour See **labor hour**

Man Tech Manufacturing Technology organization at BMAC, Wichita.[4]

Marine, Marines Always capitalize.[1]

metric system The principal abbreviations are: *g* (gram), *kg* (kilogram), *t* (metric ton), *m* (meter), *cm* (centimeter), *km* (kilometer), *mm* (millimeter), *l* or *L* (liter), capital L to avoid confusion with the figure *1*, and *ml* or *mL* (milliliter).[1]

mgt management

mid- Follow *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*. Hyphenate if not listed there. Hyphenate if a capitalized word follows or when *mid-* precedes a figure.[2]

mid-America mid-Atlantic mid-30s

Middle East not Mideast

midnight Do not put a *12* in front of it. It is part of the day that is ending, not the one that is beginning.[1]

MiG The *i* in this designation for a type of Soviet fighter is lowercased because it is the Russian word for *and*. The initials are from the last names of the designers, Arten Mikovan and Mikhail Gurevich.

The forms: *MiG-19, MiG-21s.*

See **aircraft names.**[1]

mile Also called a *statute mile*, it equals 5,280 feet.

Use figures for amounts under 10 in dimensions, formulas and speeds: *The farm measures 5 miles by 4 miles. The car slowed to 7 mph. The new model gets 4 miles more per gallon.*

Spell out below 10 in distances: *He drove four miles.*[1]

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, 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.*

In addition to the ranks listed on the next page, each service has ratings such as *machinist, radarman, torpedoman*, etc., that are job descriptions. Do not use any of these designations as a title on first reference. If one is used before a name in a subsequent reference, do not capitalize or abbreviate it.

ABBREVIATIONS: The abbreviations, with the highest ranks listed first:

Rank	Usage before a name
ARMY	
Commissioned Officers	
general	Gen
lieutenant general	Lt Gen
major general	Maj Gen
brigadier general	Brig Gen
colonel	Col
lieutenant colonel	Lt Col
major	Maj
captain	Capt
first lieutenant	1st Lt
second lieutenant	2nd Lt
Warrant Officers	
chief warrant officer	Chief Warrant Officer
warrant officer	Warrant Officer
Enlisted Personnel	
sergeant major of the Army	Army Sgt Maj
command sergeant major	Command Sgt Maj
staff sergeant major	Staff Sgt Maj
first sergeant	1st Sgt
master sergeant	Master Sgt
platoon sergeant	Platoon Sgt
sergeant first class	Sgt 1st Class
specialist seven	Spec 7
staff sergeant	Staff Sgt
specialist six	Spec 6
sergeant	Sgt
specialist five	Spec 5
corporal	Cpl
specialist four	Spec 4
private first class	Pfc
private 2	Pvt 2
private 1	Pvt 1

AIR FORCE

Ranks and abbreviations for commissioned officers are the same as those in the Army.

Enlisted Designations

Rank	Usage before a name
chief master sergeant	CMSgt
senior master sergeant	SMSgt
master sergeant	MSgt
technical sergeant	TSgt
staff sergeant	SSgt
sergeant	Sgt
airman first class	A1C
airman	Amn
airman basic	AB

Rank	Usage before a name
NAVY, COAST GUARD	
Commissioned Officers	
admiral	Adm
vice admiral	Vice Adm
rear admiral	Rear Adm
commodore	Commodore
captain	Capt
commander	Cmdr
lieutenant commander	Lt Cmdr
lieutenant	Lt
lieutenant junior grade	Lt j.g.
ensign	Ensign

military titles (cont'd)

Warrant Officers	
chief warrant officer	Chief Warrant Officer (CWO)
warrant officer	Warrant Officer (WO)
Enlisted Personnel	
master chief petty officer	Master Chief Petty Officer
senior chief petty officer	Senior Chief Petty Officer
chief petty officer	Chief Petty Officer
petty officer first class	Petty Officer 1st Class
petty officer second class	Petty Officer 2nd Class
petty officer third class	Petty Officer 3rd Class
seaman	Seaman
seaman apprentice	Seaman Apprentice
seaman recruit	Seaman Recruit

MARINE CORPS

Ranks and abbreviations for commissioned officers are the same as those in the Army. Warrant officer ratings follow the same system used in the Navy. There are no specialist ratings.

Others	
sergeant major	Sgt Maj
master gunnery sergeant	Master Gunnery Sgt
master sergeant	Master Sgt
first sergeant	1st Sgt
gunnery sergeant	Gunnery Sgt
staff sergeant	Staff Sgt
sergeant	Sgt
corporal	Cpl
lance corporal	Lance Cpl
private first class	Pfc
private	Pvt

PLURALS: Add *s* to the principal element in the title: *Majs. John Jones and Robert Smith; Maj. Gens. John Jones and Robert Smith; Specs. 4 John Jones and Robert Smith.*

RETIRED OFFICERS: A military rank may be used in first reference before the name of an officer who has retired. Do not, however, use the military abbreviation *Ret.* Instead, use *retired* just as *former* would be used before the title of a civilian: *They invited retired Army Gen. John Smith.*[1]

milli- A prefix denoting one-thousandth of a unit. Move a decimal point three places to the left in converting to the basic unit: 1,567.5 millimeters = 1.5675 meters.[1]

millions, billions Use figures with *million* or *billion* in all except casual uses: *I'd like to make a billion dollars.* But: *The nation has 1 million citizens. I need $7 billion.*

Do not go beyond two decimals: *6.32 million persons, $10.93 billion, 6,328,000 persons, $10,934,650.* Decimals are preferred where practical: *1.5 million.* Not: *1½ million.*

Do not mix *millions* and *billions* in the same figure: *8.5 billion.* Not: *8 billion 500 million.*

Do not drop the word *million* or *billion* in the first figure of a range: *He is worth from $2 million to $4 million.* Not: *$2 to $4 million.*

Note that a hyphen is not used to join the figures and the word *million* or *billion,* even in this type of phrase: *The president submitted a $500 billion budget.*[1]

mini- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen. Some examples:[2]

minibus miniskirt miniseries

minus sign When typing in 10 pt or smaller and for copy to be reduced, use the bold sign.[4]

monetary units See the **cents; dollars** entries.

months Capitalize the names of months in all uses. When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate only *Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov.,* and *Dec.* When a phrase lists only month and year only, do not separate the year with commas. When a phrase refers to a month, day, and year, set off the year with commas.

EXAMPLES: *January 1972 was a cold month. Feb. 14, 1987, was the target date.*
In tabular material, use these three-letter forms without a period: *Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov,* and *Dec.*[1]

monuments Capitalize the popular names of monuments and similar public attractions: *Lincoln Memorial, Statue of Liberty, Washington Monument, Leaning Tower of Pisa,* etc.[1]

multi- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen. Some examples:[2]
multicolored multilateral multimillion

nationalities and races Capitalize the proper names of nationalities, peoples, races, tribes, etc: *Arab, Arabic, African, Afro-American, American, Eskimo* (plural Eskimos), *Jew, Jewish, Nordic, Oriental, Sioux, Swede,* etc.[1]

navy Capitalize when referring to U.S. forces: *the U.S. Navy, the Navy, Navy policy.*
Lowercase when referring to the naval forces of other nations: *the British navy.*[1,3]
See **military titles**.

newspaper names Type the newspaper's name in italics. Capitalize *the* in a newspaper's name if that is the way the publication prefers to be known.
Where location is needed, but is not part of the official name, use parentheses: *The Huntsville (Ala.) Times.*[1]

NM *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary's* abbreviation for nautical mile (see **nmi**).

nmi International System of Units' abbreviation for nautical mile (see **NM**).

no., No. Use as the abbreviation for *number* in conjunction with a figure to indicate position or rank. *The Associated Press Stylebook* capitalizes the term. *The McGraw-Hill Style Manual* does not.
See **abbreviations**.

nobility titles In general, the guidelines in **courtesy titles** and **titles** apply.
Some guidelines and examples:

ROYALTY: Capitalize *king, queen, prince,* and *princess* when they are used directly before one or more names; lowercase when they stand alone: *Queen Elizabeth II, Queen Elizabeth, the queen of England, the queen, Kings George and Edward, Queen Mother Elizabeth, the queen mother.*
Also capitalize a longer form of the sovereign's title when its use is appropriate in a story or it is being quoted: *Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth.*[1]

non- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen. Some examples:[2]
nonallergenic noncreative nonsensitive

none It can be either singular or plural. Let concept be your guide:[4]
Right: *He looked for solace, but none was forthcoming.* (singular concept)
Wrong: *He looked for solace, but none were forthcoming.*
Right: *He looked for his friends, but none were there.* (plural concept)
Wrong: *He looked for his friends, but none was there.*

noon Do not put a *12* in front of it.[1]

numerals A numeral is a figure, letter, word or group of words expressing a number.
Roman numerals use the letters *I, V, X, L, C, D, and M.* Use Roman numerals for wars and to show

numerals (cont'd)

personal sequence for animals and people: *World War II, Native Dancer II, King George VI, Pope John XXIII.* See **Roman numerals.**

Arabic numerals use the figures *1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9,* and *0.* Use Arabic forms unless Roman numerals are specifically required.

The figures *1, 2, 10, 101,* etc. and the corresponding words—*one, two, ten, one hundred one,* etc.—are called cardinal numbers. The term ordinal number applies to *1st, 2nd, 10th, 101st, first, second, tenth, one hundred first,* etc.

Follow these guidelines in using numerals:

LARGE NUMBERS: Use a comma to group numbers into units of three when separating thousands, millions, etc. The comma is not necessary in numbers of four figures.

When large numbers must be spelled out, use a hyphen to connect a word ending in *y* to another word; do not use commas between other separate words that are part of one number: *forty; eighty; thirty-one; fifty-two; two hundred seventy-six; one thousand three hundred sixty-four; one million five hundred thirty-two thousand four hundred ninety-nine.*

SENTENCE START: Spell out a numeral at the beginning of a sentence. If necessary, recast the sentence. There is one exception—a numeral that identifies a calendar year.

Wrong: *765 employees were laid off this year.*
Right: *This year 765 employees were laid off.*
Right: *1982 was a very bad year.*

CASUAL USES: Spell out casual expressions: *A thousand times no! Thanks a million. He walked a quarter of a mile.*

PROPER NAMES: Use words or numerals according to an organization's practice: *20th-Century Fox, Twentieth Century Fund, Big Ten.*

FIGURES OR WORDS?

For ordinals:

- Spell out *first* through *ninth* when they indicate sequence in time or location: *first base, the First Amendment, he was first in line.* Starting with *10th,* use figures.
- Use *1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th,* etc. when the sequence has been assigned in forming names. The principal examples are geographic, military and political designations such as *1st Ward, 7th Fleet* and *1st Sgt.* See examples in the separate entries listed below.[1]

CAPITALIZATION OF A PRECEDING NOUN:

The Associated Press Stylebook always capitalizes the noun preceding the figure: *Room 1, Page 5, Ramp 2.*

The McGraw-Hill Style Manual does not capitalize the noun preceding the figure: *generator 1, type 3, method 2, page 86, room 8.*

Some Punctuation and Usage Examples:

- *DC-10, but 747B*
- *2nd District Court*
- *a ratio of 2-to-1, a 2-1 ratio*
- *(212) 262-4000*
- *minus 10, zero, 60 degrees*
- *a 5-year-old girl*
- *the 1970s, the '70s*
- *5 cents. $1.05, $650,000, $2.45 million*

–No. 3 choice, but Public School 3
–0.6 percent, 1 percent, 6.5 percent

OTHER USES: For uses not covered by these listings: Spell out whole numbers below *10*, use figures for *10* and above. Typical examples: *The woman has three sons and two daughters. He has a fleet of 10 station wagons and two buses.*[1]

TWO ADJACENT NUMBERS: *The Associated Press Stylebook* makes no change from the above guidelines: *They had 10 dogs, six cats, and 97 hamsters. They had four four-room houses, 10 three-room houses, and 12 10-room houses.*[1]

The McGraw-Hill Style Manual says that in two adjacent numbers, one should be spelled: *ninety 10-pound weights, 30 twenty-two-cent stamps.*

OC-ALC Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center.

odd- Follow with a hyphen:[2]
odd-looking odd-numbered

off- Follow *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*. Hyphenate if not listed there. Some commonly used combinations with a hyphen:
off-color off-peak off-season off-white
Some combinations without a hyphen:[2]
offhand offshore offstage
offset offside

one- Hyphenate when used in writing fractions:
one-half one-third
Use phrases such as *a half* or *a third* if precision is not intended.[1]

organization charts Each box is divided into the top two-thirds and the bottom one-third. The organization name is typed in bold and centered in the top section and the manager's name is typed in medium with the last line located the same in every box.
Charts prepared for the BMAC organization manual use 10 point type in all caps.[4]

organizations and institutions Capitalize the full names of organizations and institutions: *the American Medical Association; First Presbyterian Church; Johns Hopkins University; Harvard University Medical School; the Society of Professional Journalists; Sigma Delta Chi.*
See **company; corporation; incorporated.**

SUBSIDIARIES: Capitalize the names of major subdivisions: *the Pontiac Motor Division of General Motors.*

INTERNAL ELEMENTS: Use lowercase for internal elements of an organization when they have names that are widely used generic terms: *the board of directors of General Electric, the board of trustees of Columbia University, the history department of Miami University, the sports department of the Wichita Eagle Beacon.*[1]
Words such as *group, division, department, office,* or *agency* that designate corporate and organizational units are capitalized when used with a specific name. . . . *while working for the Editorial Department of The Boeing Co.* but: . . . *a notice to all department heads.*[2]

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS: Some organizations and institutions are widely recognized by their abbreviations: *ALCOA, GOP, NAACP, NATO.* For guidelines on when such abbreviations may be used, see the entries under **abbreviations; acronyms; second reference.**[1]

out- Follow *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*. Hyphenate if not listed there.
Some frequently used words:

outdated	outpatient	output	outtalk[1]

-out Follow *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*. Hyphenate nouns and adjectives not listed there.
Some frequently used nouns:

cop-out	fallout	flameout	hide-out

Two words for verbs.[1]

over- Follow *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*. A hyphen seldom is used.[1]

-over Follow *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*. Hyphenate if not listed there.
Two words for verbs.[1]

pan- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen.[1]

para- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen.[1]

parentheses Parentheses are jarring to the reader. If a sentence must contain incidental material, then commas or two dashes are frequently more effective.

ENCLOSE NUMBERS IN A SERIES: *We must set forth (1) our immediate needs, (2) our long term objectives, and (3) the budget for the year.*

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 a period.[1]

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. For example: *Thousands of people attended the fair. Some rich people pay few taxes. What will people say? There were 17 people in the room.*
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.* In this sense, the plural is *peoples: The peoples of Africa speak many languages.*[1]

percent **Always** use a figure and spell out *percent* in text. Exceptions: Use the % sign (bold in 10 pt or smaller or for copy to be reduced)[4] to indicate interest rate in text or with figures on charts.
It 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. He said 50 percent of the membership was there.*
It takes a plural verb when a plural word follows an *of* construction. *He said 50 percent of the members were there.*[1]

percentages Use figures: *1 percent, 10 percent, 2.5 percent* (use decimals, not fractions).
For amounts less than 1 percent, precede the decimal with a zero: *The cost of living rose 0.6 percent.*
Repeat *percent* with each individual figure: *He said 10 percent to 30 percent of the electorate may not vote.*[1]

phase Use Roman numerals and capitalize *phase* when used with a figure: *Phase III.* The phase sign,

a zero with a virgule inserted, can be used on charts. The sign is used with no space before the numeral *(Ø/, Ø/I, Ø/IV).*[4]

Plant I and Plant II Boeing Military Airplane Co., Wichita, plant numbers.

plants In general, lowercase the names of plants, but capitalize proper nouns or adjectives that occur in a name.

Some examples: *tree, fir, white fir, Douglas fir, Dutch elm, Scotch pine, clover, white clover, white Dutch clover.*[1]

plurals Follow these guidelines in forming and using plural words:

MOST WORDS: Add *s: books, airplanes, helicopters.*

WORDS ENDING IN CH, S, SH, SS, X, AND Z: Add *es: churches, lenses, parishes, glasses, boxes, buzzes. (Monarchs* is an exception.)

WORDS ENDING IN IS: Change *is* to *es: axes, 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.* (See PROPER NAMES below for an exception.)
Otherwise add *s: donkeys, monkeys.*

WORDS ENDING IN O: If *o* is preceded by a consonant, most plurals require *es: buffaloes, dominoes, echoes, heroes, potatoes.* But there are exceptions: *pianos.*

WORDS ENDING IN F: Change *f* to *v* and add *es: leaves, selves* (many exceptions).

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).
Those ending in *on* change to *a: phenomenon, phenomena.*
Most ending in *um* add *s: memorandums, referendums, stadiums.* Among those that still use the Latin ending: *addenda, curricula, media.*
Use the plural that *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate* lists as most common for a particular sense of a word.

WORDS THE SAME IN SINGULAR AND PLURAL: *corps, deer, moose, sheep,* etc.
The sense in a particular sentence is conveyed by the use of a singular or plural verb.

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, tablespoonfuls.*
For those that involve separate words or words linked by a hyphen, make the most significant word plural:
—Significant word first: *adjutants general, attorneys general, courts-martial, passers-by, postmasters general, presidents-elect, sergeants major.*
—Significant word in the middle: *assistant attorneys general, deputy chiefs of staff.*
—Significant word last: *assistant attorneys, assistant corporation counsels, lieutenant colonels.*

WORDS AS WORDS: Do not use *'s: His speech had too many ifs, ands, and buts.* (Exception to *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate.*)

plurals (cont'd)

PROPER NAMES: Most ending in *es* or *z* add *es: Charleses, Joneses, Gonzalezes.*
Most ending in *y* add *s* even if preceded by a consonant: *the Duffys, the Kennedys, the two Germanys, the two Kansas Citys.* Exceptions include *Alleghenies* and *Rockies.*
For others, add *s: the Reagens, the McCoys, the Mondales.*

FIGURES: Add *s: The custom began in the 1920s. The airline has two 727s. There were five size 7s.* (No apostrophes, an exception to *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate* guideline under "apostrophe.")

SINGLE LETTERS: Use *'s: Mind your p's and q's. He learned the three R's and brought home a report card with four A's and two B's. The Oakland A's won.*

MULTIPLE LETTERS: Add *s: She knows her ABCs. I gave him five IOUs.*

For further information, see **collective noun; none; possessives.**[1]

plus sign When typing in 10 pt or smaller and for copy to be reduced, use the bold sign: *32 + 18.*[4]

police department Capitalize *police department* with or without the name of the community: *the Wichita Police Department, the Police Department.*
If a police agency has some other formal name such as Security and Fire Protection, use that name if it is the way the department is known. If *police department* is used as a generic term for such an agency, put *police department* in lowercase.
Lowercase *police department* in plural uses: *the Los Angeles and San Francisco police departments.*
Lowercase *the department* whenever it stands alone.[1]

poly- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen.[2]

possessives Follow these guidelines:

PLURAL NOUNS NOT ENDING IN S: Add *'s: the alumni's contributions, women's rights.*

PLURAL NOUNS ENDING IN S: Add only an apostrophe: *the unions' needs, the kittens' food, the ships' wake, states' rights,*

NOUNS PLURAL IN FORM, SINGULAR IN MEANING: Add only an apostrophe: *mathematics' rules, measles' effects.* (But see INANIMATE OBJECTS below.)
Apply the same principle when a plural word occurs in the formal name of a singular entity: *General Motors' profits, the United States' wealth.*

NOUNS THE SAME IN SINGULAR AND PLURAL: Treat them the same as plurals, even if the meaning is singular: *one corps' location, the two deer's tracks, the lone moose's antlers.*

SINGULAR NOUNS NOT ENDING IN S: Add *'s: the child's balloon, the young man's motorcycle, the church's parking lot, the ship's route, the VIP's seat.*
Some style guides say that singular nouns ending in *s sounds* such as *ce, x,* and *z* may take either the apostrophe alone or *'s.* See SPECIAL EXPRESSIONS below, but otherwise, for consistency, always use *'s* if the word does not end in the letter *s: Buzz's photos, the fox's den, the justice's verdict, Marx's theories, the fence's wire, Gereaux's profits.*

SINGULAR COMMON NOUNS ENDING IN S: Add *'s* unless the next word begins with *s: the hostess's invitation, the hostess' scarf; the witness's testimony, the witness' salary.*

SINGULAR PROPER NAMES ENDING IN S: Use only an apostrophe: *Achilles' heel, Agnes' book, Jesus' life, Kansas' schools, Moses' law, Tennessee Williams' plays.*

SPECIAL EXPRESSIONS: The following exceptions to the general rule for words not ending in *s* apply to words that end in an *s* sound and are followed by a word that begins with *s: for appearance' sake, for conscience' sake, for goodness' sake.* Use *'s* otherwise: *the appearance's cost, my conscience's voice.*

PRONOUNS: Personal, interrogative and relative pronouns have separate forms for the possessive. None involve an apostrophe: *mine, ours, your, yours, his, hers, its, theirs, whose.*

Caution: If you are using an apostrophe with a pronoun, always be sure that the meaning calls for a contraction: *you're, it's, there's, who's.*

Follow the rules listed above in forming the possessives of other pronouns: *another's idea, others' plans, someone's guess.*

COMPOUND WORDS: Applying the rules above, add an apostrophe or *'s* to the word closest to the object possessed: *the major general's decision, the major generals' decisions, the attorney general's request, the attorneys general's request.* See the **plurals** entry for guidelines on forming the plurals of these words.

Also: *anyone else's attitude, John Adams Jr.'s father, Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania's motion.* Whenever practical, however, recast the phrase to avoid ambiguity: *the motion by Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania.*

JOINT POSSESSION, INDIVIDUAL POSSESSION: Use a possessive form after only the last word if ownership is joint: *Jack and Betty's car.*

Use a possessive form after both words if the objects are individually owned: *Jack's and Betty's shoes.*

DESCRIPTIVE PHRASES: Do not add an apostrophe to a word ending in *s* when it is used primarily in a descriptive sense: *citizens band radio, a Cincinnati Reds infielder, a teachers college, a Teamsters request, a writers guide.*

Memory Aid: The apostrophe usually is not used if *for* or *by* rather than *of* would be appropriate in the longer form: *a radio band for citizens, a college for teachers, a guide for writers, a request by the Teamsters.*

An *'s* is required, however, when a term involves a plural word that does not end in *'s: a children's hospital, a people's republic, the Young Men's Christian Association.*

DESCRIPTIVE NAMES: Some governmental, corporate, and institutional organizations with a descriptive word in their names use an apostrophe, some do not. Follow the user's practice: *Actors Equity, Diners Club, the Ladies' Home Journal, the National Governors' Conference, the Veterans Administration.*

QASI POSSESSIVES: Follow the rules above in composing the possessive form of words that occur in such phrases as *a day's pay, two weeks' vacation, three days' work, your money's worth.*

Frequently, however, a hyphenated form is clearer: *a two-week vacation, a three-day job.*

DOUBLE POSSESSIVE: Two conditions must apply for a double possessive – a phrase such as *a friend of John's* – to occur: (1) The word after *of* must refer to an animate object, and (2) The word before *of* must involve only a portion of the animate object's possessions.

Otherwise, do not use the possessive form on the word after *of: The friends of John Adams mourned his death.* (All the friends were involved.) *He is a friend of the college.* (Not college's, because college is inanimate.)

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

possessives (cont'd)

INANIMATE OBJECTS: There is no blanket rule against creating a possessive form for an inanimate object, particularly if the object is treated in a personified sense. See some of the earlier examples, and note these: *death's call, the wind's murmur.*

In general, however, avoid excessive personalization of inanimate objects, and give preference to an *of* construction when it fits the makeup of the sentence. For example, the earlier references to *mathematics' rules* and *measles' effects* would better be phrased: *the rules of mathematics, the effects of measles.*[1]

post- Follow *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*. Hyphenate if not listed there. Some words that use a hyphen:[2]

post-bellum post-mortem

pre- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen.[2]

prefixes Prefixes and suffixes are generally attached to the base word without a hyphen. Webster lists three exceptions that we will apply constantly.

A hyphen is used betweeen some prefix and root combinations:
- Prefix + proper name: *pre-Renaissance.*
- Prefix ending with a vowel + root word beginning often with the same vowel: *co-opted, re-ink*
- Stressed prefix + root word, especially when this combination is similar to a different word: *recover from an illness, re-cover a sofa.*

See separate listings for commonly used prefixes.[2]

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. Money is the principal problem.*

Principle is a noun that means a fundamental truth, law, doctrine, or motivating force: *They fought for the principle of self-determination.*[1]

pro- Use a hyphen when coining words that denote support for something. Some examples:

pro-business pro-labor pro-life pro-war

No hyphen when *pro* is used in other senses: *produce, profile, pronoun,* etc.[1]

PW2037 Pratt & Whitney engine number.[5]

quotation marks The basic guidelines for open-quote marks (") and close-quote marks ("):

FOR DIRECT QUOTATIONS: To surround the exact words of a speaker or writer:
"I am asking for a raise," he replied.
"I do object, " he said, "to your plans to marry Paul."
Franklin said, "A penny saved is a penny earned."
The union representative said the proposal 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 the end of each person's speech:
"Will you stay?"
"Yes."
"How long?"
"The weekend."

NOT IN Q-and-A: Quotation marks are not required in formats that identify questions and answers by *Q:* and *A.*

NOT IN TEXTS: Quotation marks are not required in full texts, condensed texts or textual excerpts. See **ellipsis.**

COMPOSITION TITLES: See the **composition titles** entry.

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 person has used:
Wrong: *The senator said he would "go home to Boston" if he lost the election.*
Right: *The senator said he would go home to Boston if he lost the election.*

PARTIAL QUOTES: When a partial quote is used, do not put quotation marks around words that the speaker could not have used.
Suppose the individual said, *"I am horrified at your slovenly manners."*
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 marks together if two quoted elements end at the same time: *She said, "He told me, 'I love you.' "*

PLACEMENT WITH OTHER PUNCTUATION: Follow these long-established printers' rules:
—The period and the comma always go within the quotation marks.
—The dash, the 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.
See **comma.**[1]

quotations Quotations normally should be corrected to avoid the errors in grammar and word usage that often occur unnoticed when someone is speaking but are embarrassing in print.
Do not routinely use abnormal spellings such as *gonna* in attempts to convey regional dialects or mispronunciations. Such spellings are appropriate, however, when the usage, dialect, or mispronunciation is relevant or helps to convey a desired touch.

FULL vs PARTIAL QUOTES: In general, avoid fragmentary quotes. If a speaker's words are clear and concise, favor the full quote. If cumbersome language can be paraphrased fairly, use an indirect construction, reserving quotation marks for sensitive or controversial passages that must be identified specifically as coming from the speaker.

PUNCTUATION: See **quotation marks.**[1]

ratios Use figures and a hyphen: *the ratio was 2-to-1, a ratio of 2-to-1, a 2-1 ratio.* As illustrated, the word *to* should be omitted when the numbers precede the word *ratio.*

Always use the word *ratio* or a phrase such as *a 2-1 majority* to avoid confusion with actual figures.[1]

re- Follow the general rule that a hyphen is used if a prefix ends in a vowel and the word that follows begins with the same vowel:

re-engine re-entry re-ink

For many other words, the sense is the governing factor:

recover (regain) reform (improve) resign (quit)
re-cover (cover again) re-form (form again) re-sign (sign again)

Otherwise, follow *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary.* Use a hyphen for words not listed there unless the hyphen would distort the sense.[1]

re-engine[2]

religious affiliations Capitalize the names and the related terms applied to members of the orders: *He is a member of the Society of Jesus. He is a Jesuit.*[1]

restrictive clauses, nonrestrictive clauses Both types of clauses provide additional information about a word or phrase in the sentence.

The difference between them is that the restrictive clause cannot be eliminated without changing the meaning of the sentence.

The nonrestrictive clause, however, can be eliminated without altering the basic meaning of the sentence.

PUNCTUATION: A restrictive clause must not be set off from the rest of a sentence by commas. A nonrestrictive clause must be set off by commas.

The presence or absence of commas provides the reader with critical information about the writer's intended meaning. Note the following examples:

A book that is read in one night is not fully absorbed.
A book, fiction or non-fiction, is a good night-time companion.

USE OF WHO, THAT, WHICH: *Who* or *whom* introduces a clause referring to a human being or an animal with a name. (See the **who, whom** entry.) Do not use commas if the clause is restrictive to the meaning; use them if it is not.

That is the preferred pronoun to introduce restrictive clauses that refer to an inanimate object or an animal without a name. *Which* is the only acceptable pronoun to introduce a nonrestrictive clause that refers to an inanimate object or an animal without a name.

The pronoun *which* occasionally may be substituted for *that* in the introduction of a restrictive 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 yesterday that the part of the airplane which suffered the most damage will be repaired in Seattle.*[1,4]

See **that (conjunction).**

restrictive phrases, nonrestrictive phrases The underlying concept is the same one that also applies to clauses:

A restrictive phrase is a word or group of words critical to the reader's understanding.

A nonrestrictive phrase provides additional information. Although the information is helpful to the reader's comprehension, the reader would not be misled if the information were left out.

PUNCTUATION: Do not set a restrictive phrase off from the rest of a sentence by commas:

We saw the award-winning movie "Sophie's Choice." (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 had lunch with their daughter Wendy. (Because they have more than one daughter, the inclusion of Wendy's name is critical to the reader.)

Set off nonrestrictive phrases by commas:

We saw the 1975 winner in the Academy Award competition for best movie, "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest." (Only one movie won the award. Even without the name, no other movie could be meant.)

They had lunch with their daughter Wendy and her husband, Mike. (Wendi has only one husband. If the phrase read *and her husband Mike,* it would suggest that she had more than one husband.)

The company chairman, Lee A. Iacocca, 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 its absence would not change the meaning of the sentence.)

DESCRIPTIVE WORDS: Do not confuse punctuation rules for nonrestrictive clauses with the correct punctuation when a nonrestrictive word is used as a descriptive adjective. The distinguishing clue often is the lack of an article or pronoun:

Right: *Wendy and husband Mike went shopping. Wendy and her husband, Mike, went shopping.*

Right: *Company Chairman Lee A. Iacocca made the announcement. The company chairman, Lee A. Iacocca, made the announcement.*[1,4]

Roman numerals They use letters *(I, V, X,* etc.) to express numbers.

Use Roman numerals for wars and to establish personal sequence for people and animals: *World War I, Native Dancer II, King George V, Pope John XXIII, Jack Jones II, John Jones III.*

In Roman numerals, the capital letter *I* equals 1, *V* equals 5, *X* equals 10, *L* equals 50, *C* equals 100, *D* equals 500, and *M* equals 1,000.

Other numbers are formed from these by adding or subtracting as follows:

—The value of a letter following another of the same or greater value is added: *III* equals 3, *CLXVI* equals 166.

—The value of a letter preceding one of greater value is subtracted: *IV* equals 4.[1]

room numbers *The Associated Press Stylebook* says to capitalize *room* when used with a figure: *Room 2, Room 211.*

The McGraw-Hill Style Manual does not capitalize room: *He visited her in room 34.*

rqmt abbreviation for requirement.[4]

Schaefer, J. Earl A former vice president of The Boeing Co., in whose name a memorial park with a recreation center was built in Wichita in 1982. The J. Earl Schaefer Memorial Park Fitness/Recreation Center is often referred to as the *Activity Center.*[4]

scores Use figures exclusively, placing a hyphen between the totals of the winning and losing teams: *The Royals defeated the Red Sox 6-2, the Pirates scored a 13-7 football victory over the Packers, the golfer had a 5 on the first hole but finished with a 2-under-par score.*

Use a comma in this format: *Boston 6, Cincinnati 5.*[1]

seasons Lowercase *spring, summer, fall, winter,* and derivatves such as *springtime* unless part of a formal name: *Dartmouth Winter Carnival, Winter Olympics, Summer Olympics.*

second reference When used in this book, the term applies to all subsequent references to an organization or individual within a story.

The listing of an acceptable term for second reference does not mean that it always must be used after the first reference. Often a generic word such as *the corporation, the firm,* or *the department* is more appropriate and less jarring to the reader. At other times, the full name may need to be repeated for clarity.

For additional guidelines that apply to organizations, see **capitalization.**

For additional guidelines that apply to individuals, see **courtesy titles; titles.**[1]

self- Always hyphenate:[2]

self-assured self-defense self-government

semicolon In general, use the semicolon to indicate a greater separation of thought and information than a comma can convey but less than the separation that a period implies.

The basic guidelines:

TO CLARIFY A SERIES: Use semicolons to separate elements of a series when the sentence contains material that also must be set off by commas:

He leaves a son, Joseph Voros of Chicago; two daughters, Elaine Voros of Wichita, Kan., and Susan, wife of William Knight of Tulsa; and a sister, Mary Jane, wife of Robert Warren of Omaha, Neb.

Note that the semicolon is used before the final *and* in such a series.

Another application of this principle may be seen in the cross-references at the end of entries in this book. Because some entries themselves have a comma, a semicolon is used to separate references to multiple entries.

See the **dash** entry for a different type of connection that uses dashes to avoid multiple commas.

TO LINK MAIN CLAUSES: Use a semicolon when the clauses are joined by conjunctive adverbs as *consequently, furthermore, however: Speeding is illegal; furthermore, it is very dangerous.*

TO LINK INDEPENDENT CLAUSES: Use a semicolon when a coordinating conjunction such as *and, but,* or *for* is not present: *The child support was due last week; it arrived today.*

If a coordinating conjunction is present, use a semicolon before it only if extensive punctuation also is required in one or more of the individual clauses: *They pulled their boats from the water, sandbagged the retaining walls, and boarded up the windows; but even with these precautions, the island was hard-hit by the hurricane.*

Unless a particular literary effect is desired, however, the better approach in these circumstances is to break the independent clauses into separate sentences.

PLACEMENT WITH QUOTES: Place semicolons outside quotation marks.

sentences Capitalize the first word of every sentence, including quoted statements and direct questions:

Patrick Henry said, "I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death."

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?*

See **ellipsis.**

setup *noun* assembly and arrangement.[2]

set up *verb transitive* to place upright[2]

slash (virgule) separates alternatives; separates successive divisions, as months or years; often represents *per.*[1]

WHEN TYPING: Use Korinna extra bold font for 14 pt medium or smaller and for copy that is to be reduced.[4]

slow pitch[2]

speed of sound See **Mach number.**

speeds Use figures. *The car slowed to 20 miles per hour, winds of 6 to 8 knots, 10-knot wind.* Avoid extensively hyphenated constructions such as *15-mile-per-hour winds.*[1]

state names Follow these guidelines:

	In Text	Postal		In Text	Postal
Alabama	Ala.	AL	Montana	Mont.	MT
Alaska	Alaska	AK	Nebraska	Neb.	NE
Arizona	Ariz.	AZ	Nevada	Nev.	NV
Arkansas	Ark.	AR	New Hampshire	N.H.	NH
California	Calif.	CA	New Jersey	N.J.	NJ
Colorado	Colo.	CO	New Mexico	N.M.	NM
Connecticut	Conn.	CT	New York	N.Y.	NY
Delaware	Del.	DE	North Carolina	N.C.	NC
District of Columbia	D.C.	DC	North Dakota	N.D.	ND
Florida	Fla.	FL	Ohio	Ohio	OH
Georgia	Ga.	GA	Oklahoma	Okla.	OK
Guam	Guam	GU	Oregon	Ore.	OR
Hawaii	Hawaii	HI	Pennsylvania	Pa.	PA
Idaho	Idaho	ID	Puerto Rico		PR
Illinois	Ill.	IL	Rhode Island	R.I.	RI
Indiana	Ind.	IN	South Carolina	S.C.	SC
Iowa	Iowa	IA	South Dakota	S.D.	SD
Kansas	Kan.	KS	Tennessee	Tenn.	TN
Kentucky	Ky.	KY	Texas	Texas	TX
Louisiana	La.	LA	Utah	Utah	UT
Maine	Maine	ME	Vermont	Vt.	VT
Maryland	Md.	MD	Virginia	Va.	VA
Massachusetts	Mass.	MA	Virgin Islands	V.I.	VI
Michigan	Mich.	MI	Washington	Wash.	WA
Minnesota	Minn.	MN	West Virginia	W.Va.	WV
Mississippi	Miss.	MS	Wisconsin	Wis.	WI
Missouri	Mo.	MO	Wyoming	Wyo.	WY

EIGHT NOT ABBREVIATED: The names of eight states are never abbreviated in text: *Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas,* and *Utah.*

Memory aid: Spell out the names of the two states that are not part of the continental United States and of the continental states that are five letters or fewer.

state names (cont'd)

STANDING ALONE: Spell out the names of the 50 U.S. states when they stand alone in textual material. Any state name may be condensed, however, to fit typographical requirements for tabular material.[1]

AFTER THE NAME OF A CITY OR COUNTY: In footnotes, references, and tables, a state's name may be abbreviated.[3]

PUNCTUATION: Place one comma between the city and the state name and another comma after the state name: *He was traveling from Wichita, Kansas, to Abilene, Texas, en route to his home.*

Use *state of Washington* or *Washington state* when necessary to distinguish the state from the District of Columbia. *(Washington State* is the name of a university in the state of Washington.)[1]

sub- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen.[2]

subcommittee Lowercase when used with the name of a legislative body's full committee: *a Ways and Means subcommittee.*

Capitalize when a subcommittee has a proper name of its own: *the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations.*[1]

subjunctive mood Use the subjunctive mood of a verb for contrary-to-fact conditions, and expressions of doubts, wishes, or regrets:

If I were a rich man, I wouldn't have to work hard.
I doubt that more money would be the answer.
I wish it were possible to take back my words.

Sentences that express a contingency or hypothesis may use either the subjunctive or the indicative mood, depending on the context. In general, use the subjunctive if there is little likelihood that a contingency might come true:

If I were to marry a millionaire, I wouldn't have to worry about money.
If the bill should overcome the opposition against it, it would provide extensive tax relief.

But:

If I marry my millionaire, I won't have to worry about money.
If the bill passes as expected, it will provide an immediate tax cut.

suffixes See separate listings for commonly used suffixes.

Follow *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* for words not in this book.

If a word combination is not listed in Webster's, use two words for the verb form; hyphenate any noun or adjective forms.[1]

super- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen.[2]

supersede [2]

supra- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen.[2]

tear slip[2]

Tech Mod Technology Modernization organization at Boeing Military Airplane Co., Wichita, Kansas.[4]

temperatures Use figures for all except *zero*. Use a word, not a minus sign, to indicate temperatures below zero.
Right: *The day's low was minus 10.*
Right: *The day's low was 10 below zero.*
See **centigrade; Fahrenheit.**[1]

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 sold three new airplanes to Saudi Arabia.*
—*That* should be used when a time element intervenes between the verb and the dependent clause: *The president said Monday that he was flying to Huntsville.*
—*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.* Omission can hurt. Inclusion never does.[1]

that, which, who, whom (pronouns) Use *who* and *whom* in referring to persons and to animals with a name: *Marsha Trenton is the woman who helped me.* See the **who, whom** entry.
Use *that* and *which* in referring to inanimate objects and to animals without a name.
See the **restrictive, nonrestrictive clauses** entry for guidelines on using *that* and *which* to introduce phrases and clauses.[1]

times Use figures except for *noon* and *midnight.* Use a colon to separate hours from minutes. *11 a.m., 1 p.m., 3:30 p.m.*
Do not put a 12 in front of noon or midnight. Midnight is part of the day that is ending, not the one that is beginning.[1]

time-sharing[2]

titles Capitalize formal titles when used immediately before a name. Lowercase formal titles when used alone or in consructions that set them off from a name by commas. See **capitalization.**

trademark A trademark is a brand, symbol, word, etc., used by a manufacturer or dealer and protected by law to prevent a competitior from using it: *Astroturf,* for a type of artificial grass, for example.
When a trademark is used, capitalize it.[1]

trade-off[2]

trans- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen.[2]

tri- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen.[2]

turbo- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen.[2]

ultra- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen.[2]

un- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen.[2]

under- The rules in **prefixes** apply, but in general, no hyphen.[2]

under way Two words in virtually all uses: *The project is under way. The naval maneuvers are under way.*

One word only when used as an adjective before a noun in a nautical sense: *an underway flotilla.*[1]

union Capitalize when used as a proper name for the Northern states during the Civil War: *The Union defeated the Confederacy.*[1]

union names The formal names of unions may be condensed to conventionally accepted short forms that capitalize characteristic words from the full name followed by *union* in lowercase.

Follow union practice in the use of the word *worker* in shortened forms. Among major unions, all except the *United Steelworkers* use two words: *United Auto Workers, United Mine Workers,* etc.

When *worker* is used generically, make *autoworkers* one word in keeping with widespread practice; use two words for other job descriptions: *bakery workers, mine workers, steel workers.*[1]

universal present The present tense is properly used in stating something that is universally true or that was thought to be true at the time. Some examples:

Pasteur *found* that antibodies *are* produced by inoculation of rabies virus.

The attitude was adopted in the Neanderthal age of philosophy, when it *was supposed* that nature *exists* for the convenience of man.

Do not confuse the *universal present* with the *historical present,* which is simply a literary device for recounting past events in a more immediate way:

"The slipper fits, and Cinderella and the prince live happily ever after."[3]

up- Follow *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary.* Hyphenate if not listed there. Some frequently used words (all are nouns, some also are used as adjectives):

breakup	buildup	call-up	change-up
checkup	cleanup	close-up	cover-up
follow-up	frame-up	grown-up	holdup
letup	makeup	mix-up	mock-up
pile-up	push-up	roundup	setup
shake-up	shape-up	smashup	speedup
tie-up	walk-up	windup	

Use two words when any of these occurs as a verb.[2]

See **suffixes.**

U.S. United States[2]

U.S.S.R. Union of Soviet Socialist Republics[2]

VAC, VDC See **AC, DC, VAC, VDC.**

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: *He was ordered to immediately drive to the hospital.*
Preferred: *He was ordered to drive immediately to the hospital.*
Awkward: *There was the egg that he had last Easter overlooked in the egg hunt.*
Preferred: *There was the egg that he had overlooked in the egg hunt last Easter.*
Occasionally, however, a split is not awkward and is necessary to convey the meaning.
He wanted to really help his father.
Those who lie are often found out.
How has your sister been?
The Christmas party was tentatively scheduled.[1]

vice- Use two words: *vice admiral, vice chairman, vice chancellor, vice consul, vice president, vice principal, vice regent, vice secretary.*
Several are exceptions to *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*. The two-word rule has been adopted for consistency by both *The McGraw-Hill Style Manual* and *The Associated Press Stylebook.*

volume Capitalize volume when it is used with a figure in reference to a portion of a book. Use the author's preference, either Roman or Arabic figures: *Volume 4, Volume IV.*
Do not capitalize *volume* when it stands alone.[3]

warehouse For warehouse numbers at Boeing Military Airplane Co., use Arabic numerals: *Warehouse 1, Warehouse 2,* etc.[4]

weapons *Gun* is an acceptable term for any firearm. Note the following definitions and forms in dealing with weapons and ammunition:

antiaircraft A heavy-caliber cannon that fires explosive shells. It is designed for defense against air attack. The form: *a 105mm antiaircraft gun.*

artillery A carriage-mounted cannon.

automatic A kind of pistol designed for automatic or semiautomatic firing. Its cartridges are held in a magazine. The form: *a .22-caliber automatic.*

buckshot See **shot** below.

bullet The projectile fired by a rifle, pistol, or machine gun. Together with metal casing, primer, and propellant, it forms a *cartridge.*

caliber A measurement of the diameter of the inside of a gun barrel except for most shotguns. Measurement is in either millimeters or decimal fractions of an inch. The word *caliber* is not used when giving the metric measurement. The forms: *a 9mm pistol, a .22-caliber rifle.*

cannon A large-caliber weapon, usually supported on some type of carriage, that fires explosive projectiles. The form: *a 105mm cannon.*

carbine A short-barreled rifle. The form: *an M-3 carbine.*

cartridge See **bullet** above.

weapons (cont'd)

Colt Named for Samuel Colt, it designates a make of weapon or ammunition developed for Colt handguns. The forms: *a Colt .45-caliber revolver, .45 Long Colt ammunition.*

gauge This word describes the size of a shotgun. Gauge is expressed in terms of the number per pound of round lead balls with a diameter equal to the size of the barrel. The bigger the number, the smaller the shotgun.

Some common shotgun gauges:

Gauge	Interior Diameter
10	.775 inches
12	.729 inches
16	.662 inches
20	.615 inches
28	.550 inches
.410	.410 inches

The .410 actually is a caliber, but commonly is called a gauge. The forms: *a 12-gauge shotgun, a .410-gauge shotgun.*

howitzer A cannon shorter than a gun of the same caliber employed to fire projectiles at relatively high angles at a target, such as opposing forces behind a ridge. The form: *a 105mm howitzer.*

machine gun An automatic gun, usually mounted on a support, that fires as long as the trigger is depressed. The forms: *a .50-caliber Browning machine gun.*

Magnum A trademark for a type of high-powered cartridge with a larger case and a larger powder charge than other cartridges of approximately the same caliber. The form: *a .357-caliber Magnum, a .44-caliber Magnum.*

M-1, M-14 These and similar combinations of a letter and figure designate rifles used by the military. The forms: *an M-1 rifle, an M-14 carbine*

musket A heavy, smooth-bore, large caliber shoulder firearm fired by means of a matchlock, a wheel lock, a flintlock, or a percussion lock. Its ammunition is a musket ball.

pistol A hand weapon. It may be a *revolver* or an *automatic.* Its measurements are in calibers. The form: *a .38-caliber pistol.*

revolver A kind of pistol. Its cartridges are held in chambers in a cylinder that revolves. The form: *a .45-caliber revolver.*

rifle A firearm with a rifled bore. It uses bullets or cartridges for ammunition. Its size is measured in calibers. The form: *a .22-caliber rifle.*

Saturday Night Special The popular name for the type of cheap pistol used for impulsive crimes, often committed Saturday nights.

shell The word applies to military or naval ammunition and to shotgun ammunition.

shot Small lead or steel pellets fired by shotguns. A shotgun shell usually contains 1 to 2 ounces of shot. Do not use *shot* interchangeably with *buckshot,* which refers only to the largest shot sizes.

shotgun A small-arms gun with a smooth bore, sometimes double-barreled. Its ammunition is shot. Its size is measured in gauges. The form: *a 12-gauge shotgun.*

submachine gun A lightweight automatic or semiautomatic gun firing small-arms ammunition.[1]

weights Use figures: *The baby weighed 9 pounds, 7 ounces. She had a 9-pound, 7-ounce girl.*[1]

weights and measures Follow these guidelines:

Terms not marked with a dot are SI symbols and retain their given uppercase and lowercase form in all cases. Terms marked with a dot are abbreviations.

International System of Units (SI) Symbols and Common Abbreviations for Units of Measure

A	ampere
a	atto (prefix, one-quintillionth)
Å	angstrom (obsolete: 1Å = 0.1 nm)
aA	attoampere
• abs	absolute (temperature and gravity)
Ah	ampere-hour
A/m	amperes per metre
At	ampere-turn
at	atmosphere, technical
atm	atmosphere, standard (inf, As)
• at. wt	atomic weight
• avdp	avoirdupois
B	bel (10 dB)
• B	billion (informal)
B	byte
b	bit
bar	bar (no abbreviation)
bbl	barrel
Bd	baud (usually 1 Bd)
bd ft	obsolete; see fbm
Bev	obsolete; see GeV
• Bhn	Brinell hardness number
bhp	brake horsepower
• bm	board measure
• bp	boiling point
bps	bits per second
Bps	bytes per second
Btu	British thermal unit
bu	bushel
°C	degree Celsius (e.g. 40°C)
c, c, ct	cent(s)
c	centi (prefix, one-hundredth)
C	coulomb
c	obsolete; see Hz
cal	calorie
cc	obsolete; use cm^3
cd	candela (candle obsolete)
cd-ft	cord-foot
cd/in^2	candelas per square inch
cd/m^2	candelas per square metre
c.f.m.	obsolete; see ft^3/min
c.f.s.	obsolete; see ft^3/s
c-h	candle-hour
Ci	curie
c/m	cycles per minute
cmil	circular mil
cp	candlepower
cP	centipoise
cSt	centistoke
ct	carat (precious stones only)
cu. ft.	obsolete; see ft^3
cu. in.	obsolete; see in^3
cu. yd.	obsolete; see yd^3
cwt	hundredweight
D	darcy
d	deci (prefix, one-tenth)
• d	pence
da	deka (prefix, 10)
dB	decibel
dBm	decibels referred to 1 mW
dBu	decibel unit
deg	degree (angular)
• doz	dozen
dr	dram
dwt	deadweight tons
dwt	pennyweight
dyn	dyne
E	exa (prefix, 1 quintillion)
• emf	electromotive force
erg	erg
esu	electrostatic unit
eV	electronvolt
°F	degree Fahrenheit (e.g. 40°F)
F	farad
f	femto (prefix, one-quadrillionth)
F	fermi

weights and measures (cont'd)

fbm	board foot; board foot measure
fc	footcandle
fL	footlambert
fm	femtometre
ft	foot
ft^2	square foot
ft^3	cubic foot
ftH^2O	conventional foot of water
ft-lb	foot-pound
ft-lbf	foot-pound-force
ft/min	feet per minute
ft^2/min	square feet per minute
ft^3/min	cubic feet per minute
ft-pdl	foot poundal
ft/s	feet per second
ft^2/s	square feet per second
ft^3/s	cubic feet per second
ft/s^2	feet per second squared
ft/s^3	feet per second cubed
G	gauss
G	giga (prefix, 1 billion)
g	gram; gravity
Gal	gal (acceleration)
gal	gallon
gal/min	gallons per minute
gal/s	gallons per second
Gb	gilbert
g/cm^3	grams per cubic centimetre
GeV	gigaelectronvolt
GHz	gigahertz (gigacycles per second)
gr	grain
• gr	gross
h	hecto (prefix, 100)
H	henry
h	hour in combined units
ha	hectare
hp	horsepower
hph	horsepower-hour
hr	hour
Hz	hertz (cycles per second)
ihp	indicated horsepower
in	inch
in^2	square inch
in^3	cubic inch
in/h	inches per hour
inH^2O	conventional inch of water
inHg	conventional inch of mercury
in-lb	inch-pound
J	joule
J/K	joules per kelvin
K	kayser
K	kelvin (no degree symbol, e.g., 40 K))
• K	thousand (informal)
k	kilo (prefix, 1,000)
kc	obsolete; see kHz
kcas	knots calibrated airspeed
keas	knots estimated airspeed
keV	kiloelectronvolt
kG	kilogauss
kg	kilogram
kHz	kilohertz (kilocycles per second)
kias	knots indicated airspeed
kip	1,000-lb deadweight load
klbf	kilopound-force
km/h	kilometres per hour
kn	knot (speed)
kΩ	kilohm
kPa	kilopascal
ksi	thousand pounds per square inch
kt	kiloton
kt	carat (gold only)
ktas	knots true airspeed
kV	kilovolt
kVA	kilovoltampere
kvar	kilovar
kW	kilowatt
kWh	kilowatt-hour
L	lambert
L	litre (liter)
lb	pound
lb ap	pound, apothecary
lb avdp	pound, avoirdupois
lbf	pound-force
lbf-ft	pound-force foot
lbf/ft^2	pound-force per square foot
lbf/ft^3	pound-force per cubic foot
lbf/in^2	pound-force per square inch
lb/ft	pounds per foot
lb/ft^2	pounds per square foot
lb/ft^3	pounds per cubic foot
lb/in^2	pounds per square inch
lb/in^2a	pounds per square inch absolute
lb/in^2g	pounds per square inch gage
lct	long calcined ton
ldt	long dry ton
lin ft	linear foot
lm	lumen
lm/ft^2	lumens per square foot
lm/m^2	lumens per square metre
lm-s	lumen second

lm/W	lumens per watt
L/s	litres per second
lx	lux
M	mega (prefix, 1 million)
• M	million (informal U.S. style)
m	metre (meter)
m	milli (prefix, one-thousandth)
μ	micro (prefix, one-millionth)
mA	milliampere
Mb	megabit
MB	megabyte
μA	microampere
mbar	millibar
μbar	microbar
Mc	obsolete; see MHz
mc	obsolete; see mHz
mD	millidarcy
• meq	milliequivalent
MeV	megaelectronvolt
mF	millifarad
μF	microfarad
mG	milligauss
μg	microgram
Mgal/day	million gallons per day
mH	millihenry
μH	microhenry
mho	mho
MHz	megahertz (megacycles per second)
mHz	millihertz (millicycles per second)
mi	mile (statute)
mi^2	square mile
mi/h	miles per hour
mil	mil
min	minute (time)
μin	microinch
μm	micrometre (micron obsolete)
μm^2	square micrometre
μm^3	cubic micrometre
mmHg	conventional millimetre of mercury
μmho	micromho
MΩ	megohm
mo	month
mol	mole (unit of substance)
mrad	milliradian
ms	millisecond
m3/s	cubic metres per second
μs	microsecond
Mt	megaton
mV	millivolt
μV	microvolt
MW	megawatt
mW	milliwatt
μW	microwatt
MWd/t	megawatt-days per ton
MWe	megawatts electrical
MWh	megawatt-hour
Mx	maxwell
my	myria (prefix, 10,000)
n	nano (prefix, one-billionth)
N	newton
nA	nanoampere
nF	nanofarad
nm	nanometre
N·m	newton metre
N/m^2	newtons per square metre
nmi	nautical mile
Np	neper
ns	nanosecond
$N·s/m^2$	newton seconds per sq metre
Oe	oersted (use of A/m preferred)
ops	operations per second
oz	ounce (avoirdupois)
p	pico (prefix, one-trillionth)
P	poise; peta (prefix, 1 quadrillion)
Pa	pascal
pA	picoampere
pct	percent (% preferred)
pdl	poundal
pF	picofarad
• pF	water-holding energy
• pH	hydrogen-ion concentration
ph	phot
pk	peck
p/m	parts per million
ps	picosecond
psi	obsolete; see lbf/in^2, lb/in^2
pt	pint
pW	picowatt
ql	quintal
qt	quart
R	roentgen
°R	degree rankine
°R	degree reaumur
rad	radian (angular measurement)
rd	rad (ionizing radiation dosage)
rem	rem
Re	Reynolds number
r/min	revolutions per minute
• rms	root mean square
r/s	revolutions per second
s	second (time) in combined units;
• s	shilling
S	siemens
μS	micromho (approval pending)

weights and measures (cont'd)

sb	**stilb (1 cd/cm^2)**
scp	**spherical candlepower**
sec	**second**
s-ft	**second-foot**
shp	**shaft horsepower**
slug	**slug**
sr	**steradian**
St	**stoke**
stdft^3	**standard cubic foot**
Sus	**saybolt universal second**
T	**tera (prefix, 1 trillion)**
T	**tesla**
t	**tonne**
thm	**therm**
thmlMW	**thermal megawatt**
ton	**ton (no abbreviation)**
u	**atomic mass unit (unified)**
V	**volt**
VA	**voltampere**
VAR	**voltampere reactive**
V/m	**volts per metre**
W	**watt**
Wb	**weber**
Wh	**watt-hour**
W/(m·K)	**watts per metre kelvin**
W/sr	**watts per steradian**
W/(sr·m^2)	**watts per steradian sq metre**
yd	**yard**
yd^2	**square yard**
yd^3	**cubic yard**
yr	**year**
Ω	**ohm**

well Hyphenate as part of a compound modifier: *The writer is a well-dressed woman. The writer is well-dressed.*[1]

who, whom Use *who* and *whom* for references to human beings and to animals with a name. Use *that* and *which* for inanimate objects and animals without a name.

Who is the word when someone is the subject of a sentence, clause or phrase: *The woman who drove the cab was working her way through college. Who is there?*

Whom is the word when someone is the object of a verb or preposition: *The woman to whom the car was leased, left her purse in the trunk. Whom do you wish to see?*

See the **essential clauses, nonessential clauses** entry for guidelines on how to punctuate clauses introduced by *who, whom, that,* and *which.*[1]

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.*[1]

wide- Usually hyphenated. Some examples:

wide-angle	wide-brimmed	wide-open
wide-awake	wide-eyed	

Exception: *widespread.*[1]

work force[2]

work load[2]

workstation[2]

years Use figures without commas: *1975.* Use an *s* without an apostrophe to indicate spans of decades or centuries: *the 1890s, the 1800s.*

Years are the lone exception to the general rule in numerals that a figure is not used to start a sentence: *1976 was a very good year.*

When the year follows the month and day, it is set off by commas: *January 30, 1985, was cold and miserable.*[1]

See **A.D.** and **B.C.**

Grammar References

Punctuation Style

As you begin this booklet, it is important that you fully appreciate the necessity of punctuation marks.

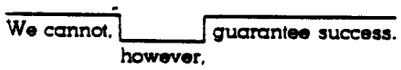
One of the special endowments of humans is the ability to communicate on a higher level than other creatures. Gestures and other forms of "body language" are one means by which we help to convey our ideas and feelings. Words, though, are our primary means of communication. Therefore, the words we use must be carefully chosen and grouped in a logical sequence to reduce the chance of misinterpretation or ambiguity.

When we communicate orally, we help to convey our meaning not only through the words we use and the structure of our sentences but also through certain vocal techniques. We do not speak in a monotone; we do not sound like talking robots. We use pauses as well as changes in pitch and volume. When we communicate in writing, we must use punctuation marks as a substitute for voice inflection.

You can prove this to yourself by reading the following sentence aloud and noticing the drop in voice level on the parenthetical (nonessential) word:

We cannot, however, guarantee success.

Using a line drawing, we can illustrate the inflection as follows:



In some cases the omission of even one punctuation mark can cause confusion. You will see this is so as you read the following sentences:

In the summer cottages near the beach rent for $400 a month.

Ever since reading books about the Revolutionary War has been one of my hobbies.

Wouldn't a comma after *summer* and one after *since* have speeded up your comprehension of these sentences?

Sometimes a change in punctuation completely changes the meaning of a sentence, as in the following examples:

The landlord said, "The tenant is entirely at fault."
"The landlord," said the tenant, "is entirely at fault."

If no formal system of punctuation existed, we would have to invent one. Fortunately, however, there is a system of basic rules that will help to ensure clarity of meaning.

Very few punctuation rules are absolute, however. In fact, a punctuation mark may be optional in a given sentence. The rules presented on these pages are basic ones that are widely accepted and applied in modern business communications. To learn them well, use them not only in all of your classes but also in your personal correspondence. In addition, become conscious of the variations in punctuation style used in business periodicals and other publications. By doing so, you will develop a balanced and sensible approach to this important subject, which is essential to your success in a business office.

PUNCTUATION STANDARDS

THE PERIOD (AND ELIPSE)

Use the period to mark the end of a declarative sentence, a mildly imperative sentence, or an indirect question.

Examples: The mail has not come.

Learn how to use periods correctly.
Please bring in the mail.

Mr. Ryan asked whether the report was done.
She asks how you stay so even-tempered.

Note: Courtesy questions, which sometimes replace imperatives in business writing, may be followed by a question mark, but are usually followed by periods. In reality, it's a matter of personal preference.

Will you write me again if I can be of further service.
May we have your check by Monday.

Use the period with most abbreviations.

Examples: Mr. U.S. etc. P.M.

Note: Many abbreviations, especially acronyms do not use a period after or between the letters.

BMAC IRS USAF NFL

Use the ellipse mark (three spaced periods) to indicate

- the omission of one or more words within a quoted passage
- a pause or deliberately unfinished statement.

THE QUESTION MARK

Use the question mark after direct questions.

Examples: What department are you in?
Did he ask what department you're in?
Where is the meeting?

Note: Declarative sentences may contain direct questions.

You have the agenda, don't you?
You told me - did you not? - that you had it.

Declarative sentences may be converted into questions.

I have the agenda?
He's a manager?

Use the question mark between parts of a series to emphasize each part as a question.

Example: Who makes those decisions - the office manager? her supervisor? the vice president?

Note: A question mark within parentheses indicates the writer's uncertainty as to the correctness of the preceding item.

He started here at BMAC in 1976 (?) as an errand boy for...

Caution: Never use a comma or period after a question mark.

THE EXCLAMATION POINT

Use an exclamation point after a word, phrase, or sentence that expresses strong feeling, surprise, or disbelief.

Examples: Congratulations! You did a great job.
Act now!
You've got to be kidding!

Cautions: Don't overuse the exclamation point or it loses its effect. Instead, use a comma after mild interjections and a period after mild imperatives and mildly exclamatory statements.

Oh, don't worry about it.
How empty this place is on holidays.

Never use a comma or period after an exclamation point.

THE COMMA

A comma ordinarily indicates a pause. but every pause is not indicated with a comma.

Use a comma before coordinating conjunctions (and, but, or, nor, for) and connectives (so, yet) between main clauses.

Examples: Do it now, or do it later.
She didn't like it, so I did it over.
He didn't find it, nor did he redo it.

Note: Without the connectives, these main clauses would be separated by a semicolon or a period.

Do it now; do it later.
She didn't like it. I did it over.
He didn't find it. He didn't redo it.

Caution: Don't confuse a compound sentence (one with two main clauses) with a sentence containing a compound predicate (two verbs).

She knew shorthand, and she could type well.

She knew shorthand and could type well.

Exceptions: A semicolon or dash may be substituted for a comma when the main clauses reveal striking contrast or have internal punctuation.

Our neighbors are friendly, considerate and generous - yet somehow they drive us crazy.

The comma may be omitted when there is no possibility of confusing the reader or when omitting it makes reading easier.

Sometimes she took walks but she didn't like the outdoors.

For special emphasis, occasionally a comma may be used before a connective in a sentence with a compound predicate.

He was good, and knew it.

Use a comma after introductory elements (phrases, transitional expressions, and interjections).

Examples: When she isn't busy, she feels guilty.

In the cabinet along the far wall, you'll find supplies.

On the otherhand, this format looks better.

Well, when will you have it done?

Exception: If the introductory element is short, the comma may be omitted as long as it does not make reading difficult.

In his opinion even the president was guilty.

- but -

In Detroit, weather is always a conversation item.

Note: If the phrase follows the main clause, there is no comma separating the two.

She feels guilty when she isn't busy.

Use a comma to separate items in a series, whether it's adjectives or a list of items.

Examples: It must be large, flyable, good, cheap.
It must be large, flyable, good, and cheap.

It's a large, empty, useless room.

Fill out an order for paper, tape, and thumb tacks.

Note: If the elements of a series are all separated by 'and', no commas are used.

... an order for paper and tape and thumb tacks.

Exceptions: The comma before 'and' may be omitted if there is no danger of misreading.

... an order for paper, tape and thumb tacks.

If the elements of a series contain internal punctuation, use a semicolon instead of a comma to separate them.

He likes short, clear letters; quick, cheap phone calls; and on-time, organized meetings.

Use a comma(s) to set off elements/phrases not necessary to the meaning of the sentence. These include transitional expressions, defining phrases, contrasts, and extra information.

Examples: She is, in the meantime, writing documentation.

Socially, he is unacceptable.
Mr. Jones, the vice president, is visiting today.

His experience, not his father, got him this job.

He spent hours teaching Mary, who has a degree, how to operate the system

Exception: When expressions such as 'also', 'too', 'of course', 'perhaps', 'at least', 'therefore', and 'likewise' cause little or no pause in reading, the comma is frequently omitted.

He is perhaps the key employee in this project.

Use a comma for the following:

With direct quotations, to set off expressions such as 'I replied' and 'he said'

"Good old Joe," he announced, "is a manager."

After calendar dates

January 31, 1961, is my birthday.
... 18 March 1986,as the final test date.

After geographical names (cities, states, etc.)

Wichita, Kansas, is the home of BMAC.
His address is 1234 Main Street, Wichita, Kansas 67200.
*note the zip code and state name are not separated by a comma.

In direct address

Will you, Mr. Jones, be able to complete this project?
Bob, you did well.

To indicate omissions

Last year we finished the design, this year the modification.

After etc.

We expect all managers, secretaries, clerks, engineers, etc., to attend.

Use a comma to prevent misreading even if the rules don't call for one.

Example: Those who can, pay for those who can't.

Caution: Don't overdo it!

THE SEMICOLON

Use a semicolon between main clauses not separated by 'and','but', 'or', 'nor', 'for', 'so', or 'yet.'

Example: He wrote the specs; he can design it.

Use a semicolon to separate a series of items which themselves contain commas.

The team included an engineer; a specialist in navigation, controls, and displays; and me.

THE COLON

Use a colon to emphasize a list of items after what could be a complete sentence.

Examples: When nominating a candidate, be sure to include the following information: name, PEN, organization, and extension.

- but -

... be sure to include their name, PEN, organization, and extension.

Use a colon after a heading which precedes a grouping of information (such as throughout this packet with the notes and examples).

THE DASH

Use a dash, in place of a comma, to set off a sudden break in thought, an interrupt in dialogue, an introductory series, or a parenthetical element.

Examples: A hypocrite is a person who - oh, but who isn't.

The project will be done in November - if we live 'til then.

"Now if I have it right - " he pondered.

Smart, pretty, quick, fun - she was all of these.

Some old problems - like losing our first design - still plague us.

Two - or is it three? - still need training.

HYPHEN

Use a hyphen to join two or more words serving as a single adjective before a noun (or as a single noun).

Examples: a know-it-all — blue-green eyes
two-year-old boy — chocolate-covered peanuts
small animal-hospital

Use a hyphen with compound numbers from 21 to 99 and with fractions

Examples: twenty-two — nine-tenths
one hundred thirty-one

Use a hyphen to avoid confusion or awkwardness between a prefix/suffix and its root word.

Examples: re-creation (not recreation)
semi-independent
shell-like

Note: A hyphen is generally used with the prefixes ex-, self-, all-, great-; the suffix -elect; and between a prefix and a proper name

ex-judge — great-aunt
mayor-elect — pro-French

THE APOSTROPHE

Use an apostrophe to indicate possession (except with personal pronouns).

For singular nouns and indefinite pronouns, add an apostrophe and 's'.

Laura's idea anyone's guess a dime's worth

For plural nouns ending in 's,' add only an apostrophe; for others add both an apostrophe and 's.'

boys' shoes the Joneses' ax men's clothing

For compounds and groups of words, add an apostrophe and 's' to the last word.

sister-in-law's house Al and Sue's car

To indicate individual ownership, add an apostrophe and 's' to each name.

Al's and Sue's cars the doctor's and dentist's offices

Use an apostrophe to note omissions in contracted words and numerals.

Examples: it's he'll don't in '76 there's

QUOTATION MARKS

Use double quotation marks to set off all direct quotes; use single quotation marks to note a quote within a quote.

Examples: "I was at the right place," she explained. "but they had moved the meeting."

She said, "Earl keeps calling my idea 'an impossible dream.'"

Use quotation marks for minor titles (short stories, essays, songs, short poems, and articles from periodicals) and for subdivisions of books

Note: Other punctuation and quotation marks -

Place a period and comma within the quotation marks.

Place the colon and semicolon outside the quotation marks.

Place other punctuation inside the marks when it applies only to the quoted matter, and outside when it applies to the whole sentence.

THE SLASH

Use a slash to indicate options.

Examples: The pass/fail system is working well here.
The judge was (uninterested/disinterested).
Your choice is coffee and/or tea.

PARENTHESES

Use parentheses to set off supplementary or illustrative matter.

Examples: The QA (Quality Assurance) organization...
Some states (Kansas, for instance) have passed...
John Jones (1878-1899) accomplished...

Use parentheses to enclose numbers or letters used for organization within a sentence.

Examples: We request management direction on (1) spec compliance, (2) task sheets, (3)...

Our design features (a) reliability, (b) maintainability, (c) low LCC, (d)...

Note: If an entire sentence is enclosed in parentheses, all punctuation for that sentence is also inside the parentheses.

Example: Is democracy possible there? (Is it possible anywhere?)

BRACKETS

Use brackets to set off editorial corrections or explanations in quoted matter.

Example: "...indicated they [the IRS] would refund..."
"...personal fool [sic] was against Smith."

CAPITALIZATION

The following is a brief style guide on capitalization. It should apply and be helpful to most writing situations: however, when special situations come up or this guide is not available, any good college dictionary can help you decide whether to capitalize or not. If the word is regularly capitalized, its entry will be capitalized. The dictionary may also list capitalized abbreviations and options on capitalization.

Most capitalized words fall into three major categories: proper names, key words in titles, and first words of sentences.

PROPER NAMES

Capitalize proper names, words used as an essential part of proper names, and in most cases, derivatives and abbreviations of proper names.

> Tome Jones, the Olympics, Jews, Southern Democrat, the Midwest, the Jaycees, Wichita, Labor Day
>
> Madison Avenue, Cape Cod Bay, Yale University, Long Island, Simm Park, Cessna Stadium
>
> Americanize, Darwinism
>
> T.A. Wilson, JFK, USAF, NATO

When proper names become general class distinctions, they are no longer capitalized.

> kleenex, scotch tape, chauvinistic

In general, capitalize titles that precede a proper name, but not those that follow it.

Governor Jim Smith	Jim Smith, the governor
Aunt Betsy	Betsy, my aunt

KEY WORDS IN TITLES

In the title of books, plays, reports, etc., capitalize the first and last words and all other words except articles (a, and, the), short conjunctions, and short prepositions. (Short conjunctions and prepositions usually refer to those with less than five letters.)

> Midnight on the Desert, A Code to Live By,
> Man Without a Country

FIRST WORDS OF SENTENCES

Capitalize the first word of every sentence, as well as the first word of a fragment in dialog.

> My father asked me how I liked my new job.
> "It's ok," I replied, then added, "On weekends."

Capitalization Style Examples

Capitals	No Capitals
Southeast High School	in high school
Dr. Haynes	my doctor
two Democratic candidates	democratic procedures
the Lord I worship	a lord amoung his peers
Wilson's disease	the flu, asthma, leukemia
the War of 1812	a space war in 1999
May, July, Monday, Saturday	summer, fall, winter
the West	a western wind
Zionism, Marxism	capitalism
the University Players	freshmen, sophomores

Acronyms

- I work for Boeing Military Airplane Company (BMAC).
- I need this as soon as possible (ASAP).
- They are having equipment trouble on the line replaceable units (LRUs).
- Our new system makes leave without pay (LWOP) more attainable for all.

YOU DON'T CAPITALIZE IT JUST BECAUSE IT IS REPRESENTED BY AN ACRONYM

Let's look at Webster's two cited examples on capitalization of words represented by acronyms.

- PST Pacific standard time
- WASP white Anglo Saxon Protestant

Capitalize the term as you would if the acronym did not follow it in parentheses.

The acronym should not follow the term at all unless it appears again in the paper alone.

SELECTED SPELLING RULES

Never double or drop letters when adding a prefix.

disappear unusual unnecessary

Drop final 'e's before a suffix or ending that begins with a vowel, but not before one that begins with a consonant.

come - coming value - valuable safe - safety

If a one-syllable word or a word that is acceented on the last syllable ends with a single consonant preceded by a single vowel, double the consonant before adding a suffix or ending. Otherwise do not double the consonant.

sad - sadder drop - dropped
plant - planting bait - baiting

Except for -ing endings, a final 'y' is usually changed to 'i' before adding a suffix or ending.

happy - happiness hurry - hurried study - studying

'i' before 'e' except after 'c' or when sounding like 'a' as in neighbor or weigh.

chief niece receive vein eight

When the sound is other than /ē/, usually write 'ei'

height stein foreign

but there are exceptions:
seize fiery species weird financier

Use orthodox spelling

night, not nite through, not thru

Self-Editing

SELF-EDITING

Editing your own work is one of the hardest things to do, so whenever possible, have someone else read through your writing. Even if they don't know the topic, they can still catch punctuation and spelling, and can let you know if something really doesn't make sense or is organized poorly.

In general, you can help yourself edit by reading aloud and listening carefully. You'll automatically speak most of the punctuation that should be there - is it? You'll stumble over awkward phrases and sentences that are too complex - can you change them? And you'll notice poor organization in both your paragraphs and the entire piece - how would it flow better?

But maybe you have one or two specific worries. Here are some hints to get you on track.

spelling	- read it backwards so you look at the words individually, not as part of phrases or sentences
punctuation	- tell yourself why you used what you did for every type - identify your basic phrases to catch what you left out
sentences	- locate your subject and verb: make sure they are close enough to be easily associated
paragraphs	- find your theme sentence and make note of its idea, then find that idea in each supporting sentence
organization	- try to rewrite the outline from your writing - check off your outline topics, making sure they are in the order you planned

Obviously these take some time, and to really be objective about your own writing, it's best to set it down for at least a day before you try to self-edit it. So if you have some lead time, or are scheduling an important report, be sure to allow a day or two just for editing.

Choosing Words

ABUSED AND CONFUSED WORDS

These words are often incorrectly or inexactly used, or confused with nearly similar words.

ABILITY
CAPABILITY
CAPACITY

Ability and capability mean the quality or state of being able, or the power to perform. Capacity means the power of receiving or containing. (Only in electrical terminology does capacity indicate maximum power of output.)

> The group had the ability to organize. Its capabilities were enormous.

ABOUT
APPROXIMATELY
AROUND

Approximately suggests an attempt at calculation or accuracy. About makes no such suggestion. Don't use around as colloquial for about.

ABOVE

Above should not be used in the sense of more than.

> The combined booster power was more than (not above) the estimate.

ACCEPT
EXCEPT

Accept means to receive or to agree with. Except conveys the idea of omitting. (Use omitted or deleted where possible.)

> The design was accepted.
> The redundant systems were excepted (omitted).

ACCOMPLISHED

Though this word is useful in some contexts, sometimes it is simpler that a thing be done, or completed.

ACQUAINT

Instead of acquainting someone with the facts, tell or inform them.

AFFECT
EFFECT

To affect is to modify or to have influence upon (or to pretend). To effect is to bring about some result. The noun meaning result is always effect.

ALL OF

The of is redundant. The exception is when followed by a pronoun.

> All the work..., but
> All of us...

ALL RIGHT

Write as two words.

ALLUDE
REFER

Allude means to refer to indirectly; refer means to mention something specifically.

ALTERNATIVE
CHOICE

Alternative refers to two only; choice refers to two or more. The common error is saying the only other alternative; it should be simply the alternative.

AMONG
BETWEEN

Choose between two things; choose among three or more.

AMOUNT
NUMBER

Amount refers to bulk or mass; number refers to individuals or units. One has an amount of material, a number of errors.

AND

this simple and useful word cannot be substituted for to in such phrases as they will try to (not and) do it.

APPEAR
SEEM

Appear properly suggests what is visible. It should not be substituted for seems.

The object appears to be made of iron.
The machine seems to be functioning properly.

APPROACH

This is vague and ambiguous. Don't say approach when you mean speak to, ask, or consult.

APT

Apt suggests predisposition, capability, skill level. Don't use it for likely.

AS

Do not use as for since or because.

AS
LIKE

Though often found in printed matter, the use of like for as is unacceptable in formal writing. Like, when used before phrases and clauses, is simply error; it is not a conjunction.

It acted as if (not like) it would explode.

ASSURE
ENSURE
INSURE

Insure is properly used for - and best limited to - financial applications. Ensure means to make certain of something; assure normally indicates the assuring of someone.

I assure you that ...
This will ensure the success of the program.

If the choice is still controversial or not understood, it can be resolved-at the same time eliminating in technical writing the "soft-soaping" sound that these words have acquired-by use of the phrase make certain, or make sure. The use of assure in all applications is rapidly making a hackneyed term, and therefore should be avoided.

AS TO

This commonly used expression is vague. Use instead the simpler and more direct about.

Nothing was reported about (not as to) plans for testing the new rocket.

BACK OF

Back of and in back of are colloquial, and should not be substituted for behind.

BALANCE

Balance carries with it the idea of equilibrium. In strictly commercial expressions it indicates amount; it is colloquial in all other uses when substituted for rest or remainder.

BETTER THAN

Better than should never be used for more than.

CAN
MAY

Can means able to; may (in the present tense) means to have permission, and also indicates possibility.

Their organization can handle the job.
You may offer suggestions.
They may be the only ones who can handle it.

CLAIM
ASSERT
MAINTAIN

Claim means to demand something that is due. Do not use as a substitute for declare, maintain, assert, or say.

COGNIZANCE

This word has a legal meaning of jurisdiction and a common meaning of heed or notice. To say"being cognizant" is, however, not nearly so clear as saying "being aware".

COMMUNICATE

This is a very general and, in its place, useful term and should not be used for telephone or write or speak to.

COMPARE WITH
COMPARE TO

To compare to is to state or imply resemblances between different kinds of things. To compare with is to point out differences between objects of the same kind.

COMPLEMENT
COMPLIMENT

Complement means to add to or complete; compliment means to flatter or admire.

COMPROMISE

Literally, this word means embrace: therefore, the Boeing payroll comprises (embraces, or includes) engineering, manufacturing, maintenance, and other kinds of personnel. Engineering, manufacturing, etc., constitute (not comprise) the Boeing payroll. Comprise further indicates that all parts have been named.

CONCLUDE
DECIDE
DETERMINE

A conclusion is the logical result of careful consideration and the exercise of judgment. A decision is reached after a period of debate, discussion, doubt, etc. A determination is the end product of study, experimentation, etc., aimed at establishing facts or truth.

CONSENSUS

A good word, by itself, but a general consensus of opinion is as redundant a use as exists in the language; even consensus of opinion is unnecessarily redundant. Use the consensus is...

CONTACT

Contact is slang and should not be used as a substitute for the more specific words spoke to, talked with, made an appointment with, met.

CONTINUOUS
CONTINUAL

Continuous means uninterrupted, unbroken. Continual means continuing frequently, or in a steady fashion.

DATA

The argument about this word is being eliminated by practice. Webster is now admitting that data, a plural noun, is "often used with a singular verb." Use in technical literature has all but eliminated the singular form datum. Treating it as a collective noun, then, is correct; context dictates whether to use the singular or the plural verb.

DECREMENT
INCREMENT

The common increment is an increase made as one of an ordered series of increases; a decrement is one decrease in a series of such decreases. Increment is not a synonym for, and should not be substituted for, part or division.

DEFECTIVE
DEFICIENT

Defective, derived from defect, means having imperfections. Deficient, from deficit, means lacking completeness.

DEFINITIVE

This word means fixed, unalterable, final, and not subject to revision, debate, or alteration. It should not be confused with definite, which means clear, unmistakable, precise.

DEMONSTRATE

this is incorrectly used when one merely wants to show something.

DESIRES

This is a poor choice of word for use in technical or factual writing. Try will, wants, intends.

DEVELOP

Don't substitute this word for the more exact happen, occur, or take place. Use it only when evolution is implied.

DIFFER FROM
DIFFER WITH

To differ from is used in the sense of being different. To differ with means to disagree.

DISCREET
DISCRETE

Discreet means showing discernment or good judgment in conduct. Don't use it when you mean discrete: separate or individually distinct.

DISSIMILAR	A thing is dissimilar to rather than dissimilar from something.
DIVIDED INTO	Don't use this phrase when you mean composed of/
EFFECTUATE	This is a pompous way of saying to bring about. Effect or cause can be used.
EMPLOYED	This word is overworked when it means used.
ENCLOSE **INCLOSE**	Enclose is preferred.
EQUIPMENT	Equipment is both singular and plural. There is no added meaning conveyed by spelling it equipments.
ETC.	Use should be limited to references, lists, and other places where space is at a premium. If the reader might wonder how complete the preceding list was, or why it was not completed, the sentence might better be rewritten so that the list begins with such as. This is preferable if only for the reason that endings such as etc. tend to weaken construction in what is normally an emphatic position (i.e., the ending).
EVENT	Another example of a word losing meaning through incorrect use. When substituted for incident, affair, or happening, the particularly noteworthy connotation of event is lost.
EXERCISE CARE	Why ask someone to exercise care instead of be careful?
EXPECT	Expect is properly used only in connection with some future event; it is not a synonymous with think or believe.
EXPEDITE	Another example of a three-syllable word often used when a one syllable one, such as rush, would do the work. In a multisyllable word context, this seemingly legitimate word only makes for reading difficulty.
EXPERIENCED	Experienced is often incorrectly used for encountered.
ENCOUNTERED	Encountered means met, with an implication of difficulty, or opposition. This connotation of difficulty is being mistakenly attributed to experience, which correctly means only to undergo or live through something.
EXPIRATION	Ditto the above. End is just as final and more quickly understood.

EXPLICIT
IMPLICIT

Both explicit and implicit have come to be used loosely as synonyms for complete, absolute, or full. Strictly, explicit means outspoken, plainly stated, having no hidden meaning. Implicit means implied, understood though not expressed, inherent though not realized or shown.

> They had complete (not explicit nor implicit) faith in the report.

FABRICATE
MANUFACTURE

Very little if any difference exists today; however, there are different connotations. To say that "The 707 prototype was fabricated in the Renton plant" connotes skillfulness in the construction and stresses the uniting of many parts or materials to form the whole. "To manufacture" stresses laboriousness rather than skill, as well as the following of a set pattern.

FACILITATE

Although facilitate means to make easy, it is another of those words that make difficult contests more difficult.

FARTHER
FURTHER

Farther is best limited to expressions involving distance; further involves time, quality, quantity, or degree.

FEASIBLE
POSSIBLE

Both words mean capable of being realized. Possible (usually followed by that) implies that the thing may exist or occur, given the right conditions. Feasible means capable of being done or of being dealt with.

FEWER
LESS

Fewer has to do with number of units or individuals. Less has to do with quantities or amounts of mass or bulk.

FIELD

Technical people should want to preserve the correct meanings of this word: The field of a magnet or of an electric current. The possible ambiguity of the field of engineering condemns such use.

FINALIZE
FINALIZATION

To try to combat such fast-growing manufactured words would be useless, and there may be some added meaning beyond conclude, or complete, or finish in the word finalize. But the added syllables make finalization ridiculously longer than necessary. (We might soon be speaking of "finalizationability" in a product.)

FOLLOWING

Why not use after when all that we mean is the next happening in time?

FOR

Don't use this word for because.

FORECAST

Forecast (not forecasted) is the correct past tense of the verb.

FOREWARD

Don't spell this foreward; there is no such word; don't spell it forward, unless you mean the word the next example illustrates.

FORWARD

This word has its well-understood meanings, but why use it when you only mean send?

FREQUENTLY

Do not use frequently to mean in many cases. Things occurring frequently occur at short intervals.

FURNISH
GIVE

Another example of loss of meaning. Why not give us the information instead of furnish us with it?

GENERAL RULE
USUALLY

Either as a rule or generally is acceptable here,but not the use of both words.

HARDLY
SCARCELY

These words are both negative. Their use with a negative constitutes a double-negative and should be avoided.

> The motion passed with (not without) scarcely a comment.

IDENTICAL

Use the preposition with the identical; don't use to
Its capability is identical with ....

IF
WHETHER

Whether is preferred after such verbs as say, learn, know, understand, and doubt. It implies whether or not.

> If the testing had been completed ....
> He did not know whether the testing had been completed.

IMPLY
INFER

Not interchangeable. Imply means to express indirectly. A writer implies (hints) something by his words. Infer means to induce or surmise. A reader infers something from what he reads.

INDEPENDENT OF

Don't use independent from.

INSIDE OF
INSIDE
WITHIN

The words inside of are misused in two ways. The of is redundant if the phrase means inside a thing.

> The model was installed inside the building.

In expressions of time, inside of is colloquial.

> It will be installed within (not inside of) the year.

IRREGARDLESS

The word is <u>always</u> regardless.

ITS
IT'S

Its is the possessive of the pronoun it. It's is a contraction of it is.

LAST
LATEST

These words are not interchangeable. Last means final; latest means most recent.

LIABLE
LIKELY

Although both words convey the idea of probability, there is a distinction. Liable means exposed to risk (therefore, a negative or undesirable connotation); likely has the broader meaning of probable or giving evidence of probability. (See APT)

LINE
ALONG THESE LINES

Though line in the sense of course of procedure or thought is correct, use of the phrase usually indicates indefinite thinking.

MATTER

This word is often used ambiguously where a more accurate word could be found, such as question, subject, request, delay.

> The delay (not matter) should be given your attention.

MAXIMUM
MINIMUM
MINIMIZE

Maximum means the greatest possible and minimum the least possible. Do not use maximum to mean very much or very great, or minimum to mean very small. Strictly speaking, then minimize should not be used to mean merely to decrease or to reduce, but to reduce to the smallest possible degree or quantity.

MODIFY
MODIFICATION

These words have clear and specific technical meaning Don't use them where change will do as well.

> We will have to change (not modify) our thinking.

NATURE

Nature used for character in technical writing is jargon and should be eliminated.

> Because the readings were erratic (not "Because of the the erratic nature of the readings") they could not be plotted.

NEITHER-NOR
EITHER-OR

Neither is followed by nor; either by or. Neither and either are always followed by a singular verb if they connect singular nouns. If they connect singular and plural nouns, their verb agrees with the closest noun.

> Either he or she is to blame.
> Neither I nor they are to blame.

NEW
NOVEL

New applies to things that did not exist before; novel to something unusual.

NOMINAL
SMALL

Nominal is more commonly misused than not. Its primary meaning is in name; it also means existing in name only, thereby implying smallness or slightness (because a thing is "hardly worth the name"). This is certainly a devious way to say that a thing is small.

NONE IS
NONE ARE

None is the contraction for no one and is singular. Common use has made it either singular or plural, and, depending on whether the word or idea for which it stands, is followed by a singular or plural verb.

None of the positions are open.
None of the work is done.

NUMBER OF

A number of requires a plural verb. The number of requires a singular verb.

A number of test were made.
The number of tests has increased.

OBJECTIVE
AIM

Objective is not always needed; aim will do as well, and will decrease the number of larger words.

OBSERVANCE
OBSERVATION

These words have different meanings and are not interchangeable. Observance means keeping up, always implying the performance of a duty, custom, or rite; this is probably out of place in technical writing. Observation, technically used, has a watch attentively meaning and implies a conscious notice-taking.

OCCASION
CAUSE

Occasion is not a good substitute for the verb cause. (When occasion is used for cause, contrary to common mistaken use, it means to cause incidentally.)

OF

In expressions designating position, of is redundant.

Outside (not outside of) the building, a 24-hour security guard was maintained.

ONLY

Only (as well as the word just) is the cause of much error and ambiguity when it is misplaced in a sentence. Only and similar words must be place next to the words they describe.

Changes can be approved by the supervisor only. (Nobody but the supervisor can approve changes.)

ONLY (Cont.)

The supervisor can only approve changes. (He can approve them, but that is all he can do.)

Only changes can be approved by the supervisor. (He cannot approve anything else.)

ON THE PART OF

Probably originally used only in legal writing (which is notoriously wordy), this vague and awkward phrase is best removed by rewriting.

Good results depend on alert reactions on the part of the monitoring engineer. (This can be rewritten to eliminate the phrase.)

Good results depend on the monitoring engineer's alertness.

ON
UPON

Despite much controversy, there is (Webster) no difference in meaning between these words. Some sources claim an element of motion for upon. The best sources claim euphony as the deciding factor, i.e., how it sounds. For technical writing, the preferred use is the shorter on.

OPTIMUM

Optimum, used in its specific meaning, "the best or most favorable degree, quantity, or number," is a good word. When it is only used in general discussion to mean best, however, best is the best word.

OUTSIDE OF
EXCEPT FOR

Outside of is a colloquial and cannot be substituted except for.

Except for (not outside of) a few minor modifications, the prototype was ready for testing.

OVER

Over should not be used when one means more than in referring to numbers

More than (not over) 500 attended.

OVERALL
OVER-ALL

Over-all has now evolved to overall. The hyphenated version should not be used.

PART
PORTION

Part carries the idea of an individual item or things and some of; portion carries the added connotation of allotted; share.

That part of the motor needs replacing.
Part of the time the motor ran.
Their portion of the contract is small.

PARTLY
PARTIALLY

Partially is often colloquially substituted for the partly

The job is partly (not partially) completed.

PARTICIPATE

This is a good word, but for some uses take part is shorter and simpler.

PENDING

Pending is often misused in the sense of waiting or until, but it means in the process of being decided or adjusted.

> The decision is still pending.
> While awaiting the decision (not pending the decision), the company suspended work on the project.

PER
AS PER

Per has a sound technical use in terms like miles per hour, feet per second. Per should not be used when the English a will do as well in test. As per should not be used for according to.

> The project will increase in manpower 50 percent per year.
> According to (not As per) your letter...

PERCENT
PERCENTAGE

Percent is written as one word (never per cent), and it is used with an exact number. Percentage is never used with a number.

PERFORM

Why use perform where the good basic English word do will do? However, use it in stances such as, "The 707 performed well at all altitudes."

PERSONS
PEOPLE

The generally accepted rule for using persons for individual human beings (or a specified number of them) and using people for large groups of them should be rigidly adhered to in technical writing. This is best illustrated - and can be remembered - by this example:

> In using people with numbers, talking about five people sounds all right, but how many do we have if four people are taken away: one people?

PHASE

The precise meaning of phase for the engineer or scientist is a transitory state between changes in appearance, structure, etc., usually in connection with a time relation: the phase of the Moon, the last phase. It should not be used a synonym for aspect, part, division, topic, phenomenon, or general appearance. Such careless use is not only ambiguous and inexact, but it tends to destroy the specific definition of the word.

PHONE
PHOTO
PLANE

These are colloquial terms in their uses for telephone, photograph, and airplane. Don't use them in technical writing where plane and phone, for example, have specific formal meanings.

POSSESS

If have or own will cover your meaning, don't use possess, which has stronger connotations.

PRACTICAL
PRACTICABLE

The differences between these words are more pronounced than commonly thought. Practical means useful, serviceable, sensible, efficient, and may be used in speaking about persons as well as things. Practicable means capable of being put into practice, of being worked out or developed, of working; it should be applied to things recently projected, devised, or invented.

> While once the airplane was not thought practicable, it is fast becoming one of man's most practical means of transportation.

PRACTICALLY

This form of the word practical has its use, but do not use it for virtually or almost.

PRECEDE
PROCEED

Precede means to go before. Proceed means to commence or begin. The spelling is the thing to watch here.

PRECLUDE
PREVENT

Don't use preclude - it is far less common - when prevent will carry your meaning.

PREDISPOSITION

This is another long one; try tendency.

PRESENT

Avoid this one of give will suffice.

PREVENTIVE
PREVENTATIVE

Use preventive as both noun and adjective. The extra syllable in preventative does not give it more meaning.

PRINCIPAL
PRINCIPLE

As a noun, principal indicates head or leader of a school, or a working sum of money. The confusion between these words is probably because the adjectival use of principal - chief, main, highest, first in rank of importance - is confused with the meanings of principle - a fundamental truth, a basic law, or an established rule of action.

PROCEDURE

Method will do in many applications.

PROCURE

Overworked; try get.

PROMOTE

Has a definite connotation of something wanted. Don't use it simply for cause.

Exposure to the weather causes (not promotes) corrosion.

PROOF
EVIDENCE

Evidence is an outward sign or indication and is the medium of proof. Proof is arrived at through evidence. Don't use the verb evidenced, as in "As evidenced by..."

Proof of his theory is based on evidence he gathered.

PROPOSITION
PROPOSAL

A proposition is offered for discussion.
A proposal is offered for acceptance or rejection.

PROVED
PROVEN

Proved is the more accepted form of the past participle of prove. Proven may be used as the adjective.

It proved to be satisfactory.
Its proven performance caused the selection.

PROMULGATE

An overlong word for declare or issue.

PROVIDING
PROVIDED

Providing is often misused for provided and if.

Providing (correct use) the components is a big problem, but it can be solved provided (not providing) the subcontractors get supplies.

If (not providing) they want the parts...

PURCHASE

Buy is a strong, short, meaningful verb.

QUALITY

Quality is a noun and cannot be used in technical writing as an adjective except when coupled with another word. (Its added advertising use is colloquial - and meaningless.)

It is a high-quality product (not, It is a quality product.)

QUITE
SOMEWHAT

Quite means completely or wholly. It should not be used for somewhat, rather, or very, and especially, it should not be used with words like unique, perfect. It adds noting specific in phrases like quite a few.

The meaning was somewhat (not quite) vague.
It was unique (not, it was quite unique).

RARELY EVER

Don't use this instead of hardly ever, seldom, or rarely.

The company seldom (hardly ever) (rarely) (but not rarely ever) accepts a development contract.

RETAIN

Will keep convey the same meaning?

SECURE
OBTAIN

To secure means to fasten down or make fast; it should not be used for obtain or get.

SEGMENT

Part often will suffice for this one.

SELDOM EVER

The ever in this phrase is always to be avoided. (See RARELY EVER.)

SHALL, WILL

The old formal distinctions are nearly lost. Authorities say that in speech and writing in the United States the simple future tense is expressed by will, that many editors seldom change copy to conform to the old rules, and that efforts of the purists to maintain the rules are waning.

An added element to common use that must be considered by firms doing business with government agencies is the influence of bureaucratic terminology. Shall is fast becoming-especially to government and military agencies-the emphatic future use. That is "The company shall..." or "The builder shall..." or "You shall...," all are understood to mean that "The company," "The builder," or "You" are being told to do something.

Because will has usurped uses in nearly all cases, and shall is rarely used in those cases, shall has (even outside this bureaucratic meaning) taken on the emphatic (future) use.

In technical writing-writing for agencies that are usually asking for certain work to be done-this new use is easily applied: "...we will do what we have been told we shall (must) do."

SHORTLY

Don't use for soon; use a more specific and measurable term.

SOLUBLE
SOLVABLE

Confusion still arises about these words, especially with "soluble problems." The distinction in meaning is clear; that which can be dissolved is soluble; that which is solvable can be solved, such as a problem.

SOMEWHERE NEAR

Don't use in the sense of approximately.

STANDARDIZED

The word should stand alone; don't add on.

The company has standardized (not standardized on) this procedure.

STATIONARY
STATIONERY

The -ery ending denotes paper.

SUBSEQUENTLY

Later.

SUBSTANTIATE

Prove can generally serve as well.

SUBTRACT
DEDUCT

Subtract is used with numbers; deduct with amounts and quantities.

SUFFICIENT

Enough often means the same thing.

TERMINATE

End often expresses the same thing.

THAT
WHICH

That defines or restricts; which is nondefining, nonrestrictive. Nonrestrictive means that it does not serve to identify or define the antecedent noun; it merely adds something about that noun. Restrictive means that it limits its noun; it tells something that makes the noun a specific kind of thing.

The part that was broken was discarded. (This tells which part was discarded.)

The part, which was broken, was discarded. (This merely adds a fact about the part that was discarded.)

THAT WHICH

This looks and sounds clumsy. Usually, the sentence containing these two words can be rewritten.

TOWARD

Use this word, rather than towards.

TRANSMIT

Send may be sufficient for your use.

TRANSPIRED

Not to be used in the sense of happen, or come to pass. (It is correct in the sense of become known.)

TRY TO

Don't use try and.

UNAVAILABILITY

Seven syllables to communicate this four-letter word: lack.

UNIQUE

Unique means without the like or equal, the only of its kind; consequently, there are no degrees of uniqueness and no proper modifiers of the word unique.

UNIVERSAL

Not to be used unless what is meant is, literally, in all cases, or in all places, etc.

UNKNOWN

Don't use unknown when you mean unidentified.

UNSUITABLE

Unfit will fit many applications of this word.

USABLE

The policy of selecting the simplest or shortest word where choice is available makes usable proper; avoid usable.

USAGE

Don't use usage unless you mean long-continued practice or customary procedure or action. Its substitution for every application of its perfectly sound root-word, use, is a burden for the reader.

USE
USES

Don't use this word in a vague application when you mean something more specific.

The motor has (not uses) ball bearings.

UTILIZE
UTILIZATION

Both the verb utilize and the noun utilization can be eliminated in most uses by the root word use.

We will use (not utilize) whatever is available.
Use (not utilization) of the part is widespread.

VARIOUS

This word is not a pronoun.

Some (not various) of the managers have considered the idea.

VERBAL
ORAL

Verbal applies to words, whether written or spoken; oral is limited to spoken words.

VERIFICATION

Proof is shorter if it does the job.

VERSUS

Always spell out in text; don't use vs.

VERY

Avoid this word in technical writing; if emphasis is needed, find specific, strong words that do the job without this useless crutch.

VICINITY

The phase in the vicinity of is a weak and wordy substitute for about or nearly; don't use it.

VISITATION

Despite its obviously nontechnical connotations, this word is still used for visit.

VOLUMINOUS

Bulky is still a well-understood word; why use this four-syllable freak?

WHEN
WHERE

These words are both used improperly most commonly in introducing explanations. Where implies physical location and when indicates temporal relation.

not: A crash program is when everyone works at a fast pace.
but: In a crash program, everyone works...

not: Sketching is where a curve is drawn from just a few reference points.
but: In sketching, a curve is drawn...

WHETHER

(See IF.)

WHICH (See THAT.)

WHILE While means at the same time. It should not be used for and, but, or whereas.

> He is an engineer, whereas (not while) his brother is a mathematician.

When substituted for and or but between equal parts, the semicolon may be substituted.

> The administrative and engineering areas are at the north end of Plant 2; (not while) the manufacturing facilities are at the south end.

WHOSE Whose may properly be used-instead of which-to denote possession on the part of an inanimate object. This is preferable to the clumsy construction sometimes called for by use of the of which phrase (though the of which is usually better when the word modified denotes an inanimate object).

> It is a company whose employees...
> It is a company the employees of which...

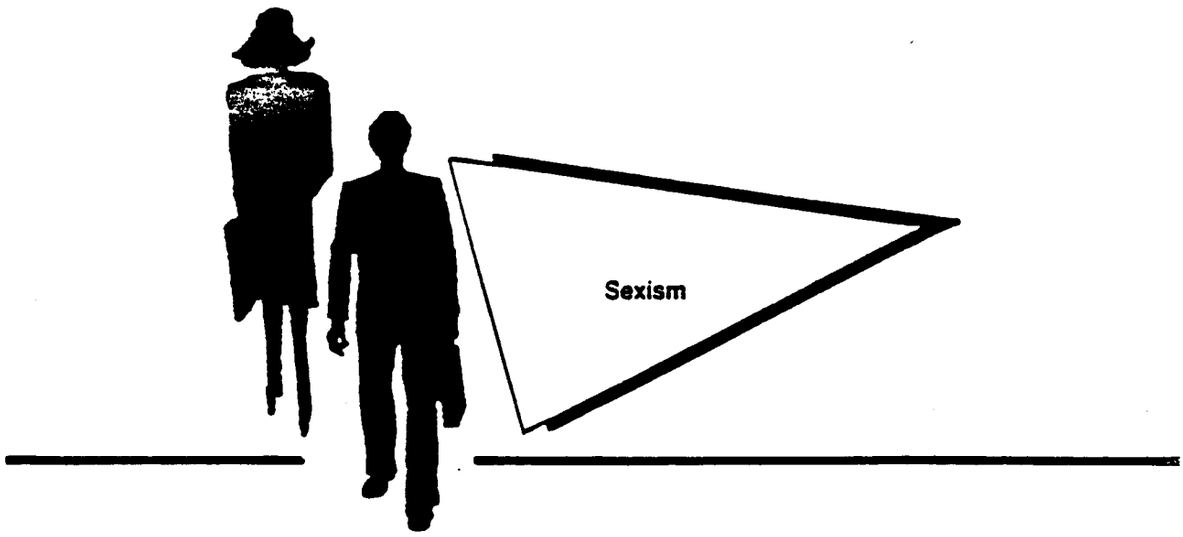
WITHIN (See INSIDE OF)

WORDS THAT IMPLY OR EXPRESS CONTRIBUTION

ANALYZE	CONTRIBUTE	INSTALL	REQUIRE	ACHIEVE
APPLY	COMMUNICATE	INSTRUCT	REFLECT	ACCOMPLISH
ASSIGN	CONFER	JUDGE	RECOMMEND	EVALUATE
ASSEMBLE	DEVELOP	LEAD	RELEASE	RECONCILE
ASSIST	DECIDE	LAYOUT	REVISE	
ASSURE	DESIGN	MONITOR	SOLVE	
AUDIT	DETERMINE	MAINTAIN	STTART	
ACT	DEVISE	MANAGE	SUPERVISE	
AWARD	DEAL	NEGOTIATE	SUPPORT	
ATTEND	DOCUMENT	OBTAIN	SCHEDULE	
ADMINISTER	ESTABLISH	OVERSEE	SUBMIT	
ACCEPT	EXPLAIN	ORGANIZE	SUPPORT	
ACTIVATE	ENTER	ORDER	SURVEY	
BEGIN	ENSURE/INSURE	PERFORM	SUPPLY	
BUDGET	ESTIMATE	PRODUCE	SELL	
CONSIDER	ENGAGE	PREPARE	STUDY	
CONTROL	FORECAST	PROCESS	SCREEN	
COLLECT	GUIDE	PLAN	SPECIALIZE	
CREATE	INITIATE	PROJECT	TEST	
COMPLETE	INFLUENCE	PROVIDE	TRAIN	
CHANGE	INTERPRET	QUALIFY	TRACK	
CALCULATE	INVOLVE	QUANTIFY	TRACE	
CONDUCT	ISSUE	REVIEW	TRANSACT	
CONFIRM	INSPECT	RESEARCH	UTILIZE	
CLARIFY	IMPLEMENT	RESOLVE	UNDERSTAND	
CLASSIFY	INVESTIGATE	REFER	VALIDATE	
COMPLY	IDENTIFY	RECORD	WORK	

Sexism

(how to avoid it in writing)



The unconscious bias that stems from cultural attitudes toward women and men.

SOME UNFORTUNATE INFORMATION

From the *New College Edition of the American Heritage Dictionary* (1978):

Man: (1) An adult male human being, as distinguished from a female; (2) any human being, regardless of sex or age; (3) the human race, mankind

Youth: (1) The part of life between childhood and manhood + a young person, especially a young man

In Old English, man meant person or human being

Consider the following sentences:

"Such a deplorable havoc is made in the minds of men," Edmund Burke

"All men are created equal . . . Governments are instituted among men . . ." Thomas Jefferson

". . . It is now thought that a million years ago and more, earth was populated with more or less manlike creatures, descended not from apes but some forefather of both apes and men."

Englishmen are said to prefer tea to coffee.

"The Marines build good men."

Wave after wave of immigrants arrived from Europe, bringing with them wives and children.

Who is this elusive creature, the reader? He is assailed on every side by forces competing for his time: by newspapers and magazines, by television and the radio and the stereo, and of course, by his wife, children and pets.

The changing face of nature can never be understood unless her metabolism is also studied.

When an adolescent starts to define himself as a person, he does so by separating his likes and dislikes from those of his parents.

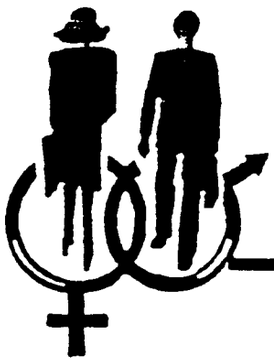
"I pronounce you man and wife."

"Those whom God has joined together let not man put asunder."

"Engagement Announced: Lee Radziwill, 46, fine-boned, shapely young sister of Jacqueline Onassis; and Newton Cope, San Francisco hotel and real estate millionaire . . ."

The only water supply is a manmade pond, which the villagers created by damming a small stream.

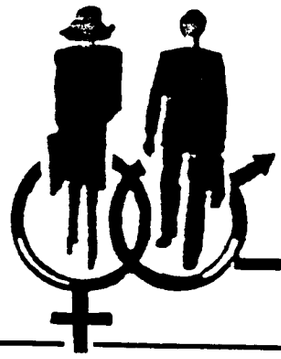
Will mankind murder Mother Earth or will he redeem her?



KEEPING SEXISM OUT OF WRITING

Some Ideas

- Be consistent in your manner of referring to males and females
- Do not describe characteristics of women that you would not describe if the people were men
- Avoid patronizing references to women
- Recognize that decision makers in most fields today are female and male
- Use nondescriminating occupational terms
- Don't go to ridiculous extremes



DEALING WITH THE PRONOUN PROBLEM

Original: **When an investor buys common stock, he receives a certificate of ownership indicating the number of shares he purchased and their par value.**

1. Pluralize: "When investors buy a common stock, they . . ."
2. Recast in the passive voice: "When an investor buys common stock, a certificate of ownership is received . . ."
3. Use "you:" "When you invest in common stock, you . . ."
4. Use "We:" "When we invest in common stock, we . . ."
5. Use "One:" "When one invests in common stock, one . . ."
6. Use a relative pronoun: "An investor who buys common stock receives a certificate . . ."
7. Use a participle: "An investor buying common stock . . ."
8. Recast without pronouns: "An investor in common stocks receives a certificate of ownership indicating the number of shares purchased and their par value . . ."
9. Repeat the noun: "When an investor buys common stock, the investor receives a . . ."
10. Rephrase

PRONOMENCLATURE

When she/he told him/her of her/his three new words
For the pronouns in singular third,
They were sure that this slashing each other could stop,
And the language would be less absurd.

For the words showed no bias in gender at al,
As their letters were chosen with care;
And they rhymed with their plurals for easy recall,
If one only knew "they," "them," and "their."

In the nom. there was shey, which has both "she" and "he,"
While the acc., shem, was equally fair
("m" from him, "e" from her, and the "h" from them both),
And possessive his/her both in sheir.

So shay gave shem a hug and kiss on sheir lips,
Just to show shem that shey was aware
That the hermaphroditic neologisms
Were some pronouns the sexes could share.