NJIT
New Jersey Institute of Technology

Editorial Style Guide

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Consistency and clarity of language is integral to maintaining NJIT's strong reputation and commitment to high communications standards.

The Office of Strategic Communications has adopted The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law, commonly referred to as the AP Stylebook, as the university's primary reference manual on grammar, punctuation, usage, spelling, capitalization and other rules pertaining to print and electronic communications.

This NJIT Editorial Style Guide is a concise resource that addresses common questions that arise when writing for NJIT publications and audiences. It provides a quick reference to key rules established by the AP Stylebook as well as a few rules that are unique to NJIT and some exceptions that supersede AP style. It also covers the preferred nomenclature for the university and its colleges, centers, institutes, academic departments and buildings.

For more details on capitalization, grammar, punctuation, abbreviations and other guidelines, please refer to the current edition of the AP Stylebook, which is available in print, online or via an iOS app at www.apbookstore.com. (On its site, AP also offers a product called AP StyleGuard that integrates with Microsoft Word and provides automatic checking of documents for AP style.)

For spelling, style, usage and foreign geographic names not covered in the AP Stylebook, please consult the current edition of Webster's New World College Dictionary.

Style guides are evolving entities that are revised and updated periodically. This NJIT Editorial Style Guide will be adapted over time by the Office of Strategic Communications to reflect changes in rules, language and nomenclature as well as the needs of its users. We encourage you to contact us with suggestions or for additional guidance at 973.596.3438 or email Christina Crovetto at crovetto@njit.edu.

A

Abbreviations and Acronyms

In general, avoid abbreviations and acronyms, especially those that aren't universally known or recognizable to your audience.

Abbreviate titles before a name:

> Dr. John Smith
> Ms. Jane Doe

Abbreviate *junior* or *senior* after a name; do not use a preceding comma:

> Ted Jones Jr.

Abbreviate *company, corporation, incorporated* and *limited* when used after the name of the entity.

Generally, use periods in most two-letter abbreviations but omit periods in longer abbreviations when each letter is pronounced:

> U.S.
> FBI

Use an initial cap and then lowercase for acronyms longer than six letters (unless listed otherwise in AP or Webster's).

See also **Academic Degrees and Titles, Addresses, Dates, Months, Numerals, States, Time, Titles,** and **Weights and Measures.**

Academic Degrees

Avoid abbreviations when possible:

> Sarah Reynolds has a bachelor's degree.

Use abbreviations (with periods) only after a full name. Set them off with commas and do not precede the name with a courtesy title:

> Robert Walker, Ph.D., gave the keynote speech.

Use an apostrophe for *bachelor's degree* and *master's degree.* Note that *associate degree, Bachelor of Arts, Master of Science,* etc. are not possessive.

Abbreviate certain titles when used preceding a name. Do not use *Dr.* before the name of someone whose only doctorate is honorary:

> Dr. Ellen Jones

Honorary degrees should explicitly specify that the degree is honorary.

Following is a list of degrees conferred by NJIT and their abbreviations:

Bachelor of Architecture	B.Arch.
Bachelor of Arts	B.A.
Bachelor of Science	B.S.
Master of Architecture	M.Arch.
Master of Business Administration	MBA
Master of Infrastructure Planning	MIP
Master of Science	M.S.
Master of Science in Architecture	M.S.Arch
Doctor of Philosophy	Ph.D.

Academic Departments

Don't capitalize informal names of departments unless they include proper nouns or adjectives:

history department
English department

See also **NJIT Academic Departments.**

Academic Titles

Capitalize and spell out certain titles when they precede a name; lowercase when they follow the name:

Chancellor Thomas Colby attended the annual meeting.
Jeffrey Stone, department chairman, announced the policy change.

Abbreviate certain titles when used preceding a name. Do not use *Dr.* before the name of someone whose only doctorate is honorary:

Dr. Ellen Jones

Addresses

Mailing Addresses

Abbreviate *avenue, boulevard* and *street* in numbered addresses; spell out when used without a number. Lowercase and spell out when used alone or with more than one street name:

154 Summit St.
Colden Street
Broad and Court streets

Always use figures for address numbers. Spell out and capitalize *First* through *Ninth* when used as street names; use figures for *10th* and above:

1 Third Ave.
545 23rd St.

Abbreviate compass points as part of street names unless the address number is not given. Omit periods in quadrant abbreviations (NW, SE) except to follow local customs:

33 E. Main St.
750 SW Broadway
West 42nd Street

Use periods in the abbreviation for post office box numbers:

P.O. Box 888

Abbreviate certain states when they appear with cities:

Newark, N.J.

See also **States**.

Internet Addresses

Avoid website addresses in running copy. When necessary, use the shortest URL possible set off with commas. (Note that not all addresses work without the www. prefix. Test all addresses before you publish a URL and confirm a URL works without www.) Use a period when an Internet address falls at the end of a sentence. When the URL doesn't fit completely on one line, split after a slash or dot within the address (without inserting a hyphen):

njit.edu (standing alone)

Ages

Use figures instead of spelling out numbers:

The new addition is 5 years old.

Use hyphens when the age is an adjective preceding a noun or fills in for a noun:

The dean's 100-year-old house was recently renovated.
Most incoming freshmen are 18-year-olds.

Don't use apostrophes with decades:

The professor was in her 50s.

C

Capitalization

Avoid unnecessary capitalization.

Capitalize proper nouns:

Mary Ellison
Standard Oil
the United States

Capitalize common nouns when they are part of the full name of a proper noun, but lowercase the common noun elements when they stand alone after the first reference and in plural uses (but plurals of formal titles with full names are always capitalized):

> Central Park (the park)
> Newark College of Engineering (the college)
> Elm and Oak streets
> Presidents George Washington and Abraham Lincoln

Capitalize popular names of certain places and events that aren't official titles but do function as such, including shortened versions of proper names of one-of-a-kind events. But keep in mind the general practice of using lowercase for common nouns that stand alone:

> the Street (Wall Street's financial community)
> the Derby (the Kentucky Derby)
> the Series (the World Series)

Capitalize derivations from proper nouns that continue to depend on them for their meanings:

> American
> Christian
> Marxist

Lowercase derivations that no longer depend on the proper nouns they come from:

> french fries
> herculean

Capitalize the first word in a statement that stands as a full sentence, including full sentences within parentheses and following colons. In poetry, the first word on a line is usually capitalized even if it's not a complete sentence; follow the poet's preference.

In composition titles, capitalize the first, last and principal words. Also capitalize words of four or more letters, including prepositions and conjunctions.

Capitalize formal titles when they precede a name; lowercase titles when they stand alone or are set off with commas. Use lowercase for job descriptions that aren't formal titles, even when they appear before the name:

> Associate Professor of Electrical Engineering Helen Whitman
> Helen Whitman, associate professor of electrical engineering
> letter carrier Henry Klein

Capitalize company names, brand names and trademarks. Follow the preferences of the organization or owner, but don't use all caps unless the letters are pronounced individually:

> eBay (but capitalize the first letter if it begins a sentence)
> Ikea (not *IKEA*)

See also **Abbreviations and Acronyms, Academic Degrees and Titles, Academic Departments, Addresses, Composition Titles, Dates, Foreign Names, Governmental Bodies, Months, NJIT entries, Political Designations, Time,** and **Titles.**

Class Years

As a general rule, avoid using abbreviated class years after the names of students and alumni. Preferred style is to write out:

> Abigail Jones, Class of 2001, was appointed to the Board of Overseers.
> After graduating in August 2013, Abigail Jones joined XYZ Company.

Where space is tight and/or there is a long list, a two-digit class year is acceptable (no comma after the name). Also, note that the direction of the apostrophe when used with class years is always a single closed quotation mark:

> Samantha Taylor '85, Joshua Smith '97

If an alumnus has more than one degree from NJIT, place a comma between the class years. There is no need to use B.S./B.A./B.Arch to note a bachelor's degree because it is assumed, but post-graduate degrees from NJIT should be noted:

> John Doe '83, MBA '87
> Mary Drake M.S. '12
> Henry Klein '85, M.S. '86, Ph.D. '94

The person's major can be included in parentheses following the graduation year, if desired:

> John Doe '83 (Civil Engineering), M.S. '87 (Transportation)

Collective Nouns

Nouns that define a unit take singular verbs and pronouns:

> The committee is meeting next week.
> Our family holds its annual reunion in the summer.

Teams and groups with a plural form (and those with no plural form) take plural verbs:

> The Mets are in the running.
> The Beatles are well known.
> The Miami Heat are fighting for third place.

Most singular names take singular verbs, but some that are plural in form also take singular verbs:

> Newark is the most populous city in New Jersey.
> The Pine Barrens is heavily forested.

Some words that are plural in form are treated as collective nouns and take singular verbs when regarded as a unit. The same words take plural verbs when referred to individually:

> The research data is conclusive.
> The data were contradictory.

Composition Titles

Capitalize principal words, including prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters. Capitalize articles (*a, an* and *the*) and words shorter than four letters when they are the first or last word in the title. Use quotation marks around titles except for the Bible, reference works (including dictionaries, almanacs, encyclopedias and handbooks) and software programs:

> "Citizen Kane"
> "The Bell Jar"
> Webster's New World College Dictionary
> Microsoft Office

Don't use quotes for most websites and apps, except computer game apps:

> Facebook
> "FarmVille"

Translate foreign titles into English unless the composition is known by its foreign name. Exceptions to this are reviews of musical performances, which should be referred to in the language the work was sung in (except Slavic languages, which should be translated to English):

> Mozart's "Le Nozze di Figaro" (if sung in Italian)
> Mozart's "The Marriage of Figaro" (if sung in English)

Use quotation marks with the nicknames of other classical music titles but not with compositions identified by number:

> Dvorak's "New World Symphony"
> Dvorak's Symphony No. 9

D

Dates

Abbreviate *A.D.*, *B.C.* and certain months when used with the day of the month:

> 1920 A.D.
> Jan. 15, 2010

See also **Months**.

F

Fiscal

Fiscal applies to budgetary matters, not money supply:

> The federal government's fiscal year starts three months ahead of the calendar year.

See also **Monetary.**

Foreign Names

Use the individual's preferred spelling for personal names. Otherwise use the closest phonetic equivalent to English or an English spelling that follows the sound of the original language.

In general, lowercase particles (*de, der, la, le, van, von*) unless they begin a sentence, but follow individual capitalization preferences:

> De Beauvoir wrote "The Second Sex."

Foreign Words

Foreign words and abbreviations that are commonly used and understood in English need no special treatment or explanation:

> versus
> etc.
> je ne sais quoi

Those that aren't well recognized should be enclosed in quotation marks and explained:

> "Sic transit gloria mundi" is a Latin phrase meaning "thus passes the glory of the world."

G

Governmental Bodies

Capitalize full proper names of government agencies, departments and offices:

> the New Jersey Department of Education
> the Newark City Council

Capitalize governmental bodies without the name of the jurisdiction when the context makes it unnecessary:

> the Department of Education (in an article about New Jersey)
> the City Council (when the context has been established as Newark)

Lowercase shortened versions:

> the department
> the council

M

Monetary

Monetary applies to money supply, not budgetary matters:

> Monetary policy is a means of controlling inflation.

See also **Fiscal.**

Money

Use figures and the appropriate currency symbol except for casual references, cents or unspecified amounts. Foreign currency should generally be converted to U.S. dollars. Use decimals for amounts over $1:

> $100
> £5
> a dollar a day
> 25 cents
> $49.99

For amounts more than $1 million, use up to two decimal places and spell out *million*, *billion*, etc. Don't use a hyphen even when the amount is used as an adjective before the noun:

> $100.75 billion
> $30 million
> $10 trillion budget

Months

Capitalize the names of months. Abbreviate *Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov.* and *Dec.* (months with six or more letters) when accompanied by a specific date; otherwise spell out when used alone or with only a year:

> August 2005
> Dec. 21, 1995
> March 15
> Sept. 2

Use a comma only with a specific date and year, and use a comma before and after the year in running copy:

> May 5, 1980
> Oct. 10, 2015, marks the official opening of the stadium.

N

New Jersey Institute of Technology

Don't use *the* before *New Jersey Institute of Technology* or *NJIT*. Don't abbreviate or use nicknames such as *NJ Institute of Technology* and *New Jersey Tech* (but the acronym *NJIT* is acceptable).

Newark College of Engineering

Don't use *the* before *Newark College of Engineering* or *NCE*. It is acceptable to use *the college* after the first reference.

NJIT Academic Departments

Department of Biomedical Engineering
Department of Chemistry and Environmental Science
Department of Computer Science
Department of Engineering Technology Department of Humanities
Department of Industrial and Management Systems Engineering
Department of Information Systems
Department of Mathematical Sciences
Department of Mechanical & Industrial Engineering
Department of Physics
Federated Department of Biological Sciences
Federated Department of History
Helen and John C. Hartmann Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering
John A. Reif, Jr. Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering [Note that the inclusion of a comma before *Jr.* in the name of this department is an exception to NJIT style.]
Otto H. York Department of Chemical, Biological and Pharmaceutical Engineering

NJIT Centers and Institutes

The nicknames in parentheses are acceptable only after the first reference to the official name.

Center for Airborne Organics
Center for Applied Genomics
Center for Applied Mathematics and Statistics
Center for Brain Imaging
Center for Building Knowledge
Center for Information Age Technology
Center for Injury Biomechanics, Materials and Medicine
Center for Manufacturing Systems
Center for Natural Resources Development and Protection
Center for Resilient Design
Center for Solar-Terrestrial Research
Electronic Imaging Center
Elisha Yegal Bar-Ness Center for Wireless Communications and Signal Processing Research
Engineering Research Center for Structured Organic Particles
Enterprise Development Center (EDC)
Intelligent Transportation System Resource Center
International Intermodal Transportation Center
Leir Center for Financial Bubble Research
Microelectronics Fabrication Center
National Center for Transportation and Industrial Productivity
New Jersey Center for Engineered Particulates
New Jersey Health Care Innovation Center
New Jersey Health Information Technology Extension Center (NJ-HITEC)
New Jersey Homeland Security Technology Systems Center
New Jersey Innovation Acceleration Center
New Jersey Innovation Institute (NJII)
Northeast Hazardous Substance Research Center
Polar Engineering Development Center
Polymer Processing Institute
Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center
Structural Analysis of Biomedical Ontologies Center
York Center for Environmental Engineering and Science

NJIT Initiatives

NJITNEXT (one word, all caps, with *NJIT* in color and *NEXT* in black or gray) must be used in all banners, headlines, subheads, etc. In running one-color text, the name should appear in all caps as two words:

NJIT NEXT updates are expected at the meeting.

When used as a title in the text of a brochure or presentation, it should appear in italics instead of boldface:

We read about the research in *NJIT NEXT.*

NJIT Interdisciplinary Programs

Interdisciplinary Program in Pharmaceutical Engineering
Interdisciplinary Program in Transportation

NJIT Schools and Colleges

The nicknames in parentheses are acceptable only after the first reference to the official name.

Albert Dorman Honors College (ADHC, the Honors College, the college)
College of Architecture and Design (CoAD, the college)
    New Jersey School of Architecture
    School of Art + Design
College of Computing Sciences (CCS, the college)
College of Science and Liberal Arts (CSLA, the college)
Newark College of Engineering (NCE, the college)
School of Management (SOM, the school)

NJIT University Buildings

Albert Dorman Honors College
Campbell Hall
Campus Center
Central Avenue Building
Central King Building
College of Architecture and Design
Colton Hall
Cullimore Hall
Cypress Residence Hall
Eberhardt Hall NJIT Alumni Center
Electrical and Computer Engineering Building
Enterprise Development Center
Estelle and "Zoom" Fleisher Athletic Center
Faculty Memorial Hall
Fenster Hall
Guttenberg Information Technologies Center
J. Ray and Manuelita Michaud Mechanical Engineering Building
James N. Wise Theatre
Kupfrian Hall
Laurel Residence Hall
Lubetkin Field at J. Malcolm Simon Stadium
Microelectronics Research Center
Naimoli Family Athletic & Recreational Facility
Oak Residence Hall
Redwood Residence Hall
Specht Building
Tiernan Hall
Van Houten Library
Warren Street Village
York Center for Environmental Engineering and Science

Numerals

As a general rule, spell out one through nine. Use figures in tabular copy, in statistical and sequential forms, before a unit of measure, with ages, and for values of 10 or more.

Spell out numbers of 10 or more that start a sentence (except years):

>Fifteen to 20 cars were involved in the accident.
>1920 was a very good year.

Spell out numbers used in casual and indefinite phrases:
>one day at a time
>a thousand thanks
>eleventh-hour reprieve

Spell out numbers in proper names:

>the Fab Four
>Big Three automakers
>Final Four

Spell out numbers in formal writing, rhetorical quotations, and figures of speech:

>Twelve Apostles
>high-five
>fourscore and seven years ago
>Ten Commandments

Academic Courses, Credits and Units
Use figures:

>Biology 101
>5 credits
>1 unit
>a 3-credit course

Addresses
Use figures for building numbers. Spell out numbered streets under 10:

>7 Main Street
>108 10th Avenue
>5 Second Street

Ages
Use figures:

>40-something
>The professor is in his 60s.
>The boy, 9, has a sister, 11.
>Her daughter is 4 years old.

Use hyphens with ages that function as adjectives before a noun or as substitutes for a noun:

>5-year-old house
>The science fair is for 9-year-olds.
>7-year-old boy

Centuries

Spell out numbers under 10. Use figures for 10 or more:

> fifth century
> 21st century

For proper names, use the organization's official title:

> Twentieth Century Fund

Court Decisions

Use figures:

> The Supreme Court ruled 5-4.

Dates, Years and Decades

Use figures (even for years that begin a sentence):

> Jan. 11, 1965
> 1970s (or *the '70s*)
> mid-1950s
> class of 2017

For the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, this shortened version is acceptable:

> 9/11

For graduation years, use an apostrophe before the two-digit class year (no comma after the name):

> Samantha Taylor '85

Decimals and Fractions

Use figures:

> 5½ weeks
> 7.9 magnitude earthquake
> 4 percent interest

Decimals shouldn't exceed two places in most text material. An exception is blood alcohol content, which is expressed with three places:

> 0.055

For decimal amounts less than one, precede decimals with a zero:

> 0.5 percent

When the decimal is one or less, the unit of measure should be singular:

> 0.75 kilometer
> 0.25 inch

Spell out fractions less than one, and use hyphens between the words:

> one-third
> three-fifths

In quotations, use figures for fractions:

> "Burroughs was 4½ miles behind with two to go."

Dimensions

Use figures, with hyphens for adjective forms preceding the noun and substitutes for nouns:

> 5-foot-10 man (inches are understood)
> The basketball player is 7 feet 2 inches tall.
> The fish was a 4-footer.
> 8.5-by-11 paper (inches are understood)

An exception is a length of building lumber used as a noun:

> two-by-four

Distances and Lengths

Use figures:

> 5 miles
> 2-foot shelf

Highways

Use figures:

> U.S. Highway 25
> Interstate 95
> Route 66

Mathematics

Use figures:

> Add 2 and 2 to get 4.
> Multiply by 7 and divide by 2.

Military Ranks, Terms and Weapons

Use figures for military ranks used as titles preceding names (spell out when they appear after the name or alone). Use figures for military terms and weapons:

> Petty Officer 2nd Class Alan Monroe
> Hendricks was a second lieutenant.
> Johnson wants to make first sergeant.
> 5th Fleet
> M16 rifle
> 9 mm pistol

Millions, Billions, Trillions

Use a combination of figures and words. Don't use hyphens with the words *millions*, *billions* and *trillions*:

> 1 million people
> $8 billion

Money

Use figures:

> 25 cents
> $20 bill
> 9 euros
> 2 pounds

Odds, Proportions and Ratios
Use figures:

> 10-1 longshot
> 3 parts vodka to 1 part vermouth
> a 1-4 chance (but *one chance in three*)

Ordinals
Spell out first through ninth. Use figures starting with 10th:

> fifth grade
> first base
> 19th Amendment

Percentages
Use figures, but spell out the word *percent*:

> 5 percent interest

Political Districts
Use figures:

> Ward 9
> 8th Precinct
> 3rd Congressional District

Ranks
Use figures and abbreviate the word *number*:

> Jennings is the No. 1 choice.

Do not use the word *number* in school names or street addresses:

> Public School 57

An exception is the residence of Britain's prime minister:

> No. 10 Downing Street

Recipes
Use figures:

> 4 teaspoons
> 2 cups

Roman Numerals
Use sparingly except for wars, names of people and animals, and certain legislative acts:

> World War II
> King George V
> Title IX

School Grades
Spell out grades under 10. Use figures for grades 10 and over. Use hyphens for adjective forms preceding the noun and substitutes for nouns:

> third grade
> 10th grade
> seventh-grade teacher
> 12th-grader

Sequential Designations

Use figures (note exceptions):

> Chapter 5
> size 9
> line 2 (but *second line*)
> magnitude 6 earthquake
> Rooms 9 and 10
> Page 8
> Act 5, Scene 1 (but *fifth act, first scene*)
> Game 7 (but *best of seven*)

Speeds

Use figures:

> 6 knots
> 9 mph

Sports

Use figures for scores:

> The Highlanders beat the Scarlet Knights 4-2.

Spell out numbers under 10 except yard lines in football and individual and team statistical performances:

> seventh hole
> three-point play (but *3-point shot*)
> The ball was on the 5-yard line.

In statistical performances, hyphenate modifiers:

> Schmidt completed 8 of 12 passes.
> Conway was 3-for-5.

For professional football Super Bowls (except in formal reference), use the year instead of Roman numerals:

> 1969 Super Bowl (not *Super Bowl III*)

Use figures for golf, with hyphens for adjectives preceding the noun:

> 3 up
> a 3-up lead
> par 3
> 5 handicap
> 5-under-par 67 (but *Burkes was 5 under par* or *5 under*)

For golf clubs, use figures with hyphens:

> 3-wood
> 7-iron

Temperature

Use figures except for zero:

> 5 degrees below zero
> minus 9

Thousands

Use a comma with numbers of 1,000 or more:

5,000 miles

Time

Use figures except for noon and midnight:

10:30 p.m.
11 a.m.
6 o'clock
15 seconds
a winning time of 2:20.5 (two hours, 20 minutes, five seconds)

Spell out numbers under 10 that stand alone or are modifiers:

five minutes
two seconds
eight-hour day
two-minute warning

Vessels

Use figures for the names of planes, ships and spacecraft. Use Roman numerals if they are part of the official title:

B-2 bomber
Apollo 9
Queen Elizabeth 2
Titan II

An exception is the presidential plane:

Air Force One

Votes

Use figures except for modifiers:

The bill was defeated by a vote of 6 to 4.
The bill passed by a two-vote margin.

Weights

Use figures:

3 ounces
5 pounds

See also **Addresses, Class Years, Money, Political Designations, Time,** and **Weights and Measures.**

P

Plural Forms

Most plurals are formed by adding an S. Words ending in CH, S, SH, SS, X and Z are formed by adding ES (except *monarchs*). Words ending in IS should be replaced with ES. Words ending in Y should be replaced with IES if the Y follows a consonant or QU; otherwise just add S. Most words ending in O call for the addition of ES, but there are exceptions (such as *pianos*). Most words ending in F should be replaced with VES (*roofs* is an exception):

> boy/boys
> church/churches
> lens/lenses
> dish/dishes
> glass/glasses
> box/boxes
> buzz/buzzes
> ellipsis/ellipses
> army/armies
> monkey/monkeys
> potato/potatoes
> leaf/leaves

Words with a Latin root ending in US should be replaced with I (except those that have taken on English endings through common usage). Most ending in A are changed to AE (*formulas* is an exception). Most ending in UM are formed by adding S (*curricula* is an exception):

> alumnus/alumni
> prospectus/prospectuses
> alumna/alumnae
> memorandum/memorandums

Some words are irregular and change form. When S is used with these words, it indicates possession and follows an apostrophe:

> man/men/men's
> child/children/children's
> mouse/mice/mice's

Some words are spelled the same in both singular and plural form. In these cases, the verb indicates which form is meant:

> deer
> corps

Some words are plural in form but singular in meaning. Most take singular verbs (*news*), but others take plural verbs (*scissors*).

Compound words that are written as a single word with no hyphen are made plural with the addition of an S at the end. Those that are written separately or with a hyphen make the most significant word plural:

> handfuls
> postmasters general
> sons-in-law
> deputy chiefs of staff
> assistant attorneys

For words used as words, use quotation marks with no apostrophe:

> no "ifs," "ands" or "buts"

For most proper names ending in ES, S or Z, add ES. Most ending in Y add S even if preceded by a consonant (exceptions include *Alleghenies* and *Rockies*). For others, add S:

> Joneses
> Gonzalezes
> Kennedys
> Smiths

With figures, plurals are formed with the addition of S and no apostrophe:

> 1980s
> high temperatures in the 90s

With single letters, plurals are formed with the addition of an apostrophe and S. With multiple letters, plurals are formed by adding S:

> the three R's
> ABCs

Political Designations

Affiliations
Include party affiliations only when they're relevant. Generally, capitalize and spell out affiliations and abbreviate titles:

> Democrat Sen. Dianne Feinstein of California chairs the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

Shortened versions set off with commas are acceptable:

> Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., is an outspoken advocate for the middle class.

Divisions
With political wards and precincts, use Arabic figures and capitalize the word unless it stands alone:

> 10th Ward
> 2nd Precinct
> the ward
> the precinct

Parties
When part of the formal name, capitalize both the name of the party and the word *party*:

> the Democratic Party
> the Republican Party

Capitalize adjectives and nouns when they refer to a particular party or its adherents:

> Socialist
> Conservative
> Republican

Use lowercase when these words refer to a philosophy and with noun and adjective forms (except for derivatives of proper names):

> communism
> fascist
> Marxist
> Nazi

Politics as a Word
The word *politics* usually takes a plural verb:

> My politics are personal.

It takes a singular verb when it refers to a science:

> Politics is contentious.

Possessives

For plural nouns ending in S, add only an apostrophe. For plural nouns that don't end in S, add an apostrophe and S:

> the VIPs' room
> women's rights

Nouns that are plural in form but singular in meaning take only an apostrophe (note that inanimate objects preferably follow an *of* construction unless they're treated in a personified sense). Singular entities with plural words are also treated with an apostrophe only:

> sports' rules (preferably *the rules of sports*)
> the United States' laws
> General Motors' stocks

Nouns that take the same form whether they're singular or plural are treated as plurals even when the meaning is singular:

> the two deer's tracks
> one corps' coordinates

Singular nouns that don't end in S take an apostrophe and S:

> the church's steeple

Singular common nouns that end in S take an apostrophe and S unless the next word begins with an S; singular proper names that end in S take only an apostrophe:

> the witness's testimony
> the witness' story
> Moses' tablets

There are exceptions for words that end in an S sound and precede a word that begins with S (use an apostrophe and S otherwise):

> for appearance' sake
> my conscience's voice

Use the appropriate possessive form for personal and interrogative pronouns, which don't use apostrophes (apostrophes used with pronouns are contractions):

> ours
> mine
> yours

Other pronouns form possessives following the rules above:

> someone's objection
> another's belonging

Compound words require an apostrophe (or an apostrophe and S) with the word closest to the object possessed:

> the attorney general's request
> the attorneys general's request

Use the possessive form only after the last word if ownership is shared:

> Sarah and John's house

Use the possessive form after both words if the objects are owned individually:

> Tom's and Paul's collections

Phrases that are mainly descriptive in nature are not possessive. Do add an apostrophe and S for constructions of plural words that don't end in S:

> a writers guide
> a teachers college
> people's republic
> men's club

Follow the organization's preference regarding apostrophes for names with descriptive words:

> Diners Club
> Actors' Equity

Apply the rules above when forming possessives in phrases, but consider using a hyphenated form instead to aid clarity:

> two weeks' vacation
> five years' experience
> a two-week vacation

Double possessives must meet two conditions: The word after *of* must reference a living being, and the word before *of* must involve only a fraction of its possessions. Otherwise don't use the possessive form of the word that follows *of*:

> Sean is a friend of Tom's.
> The friends of Robert Reynolds attended his funeral. (All the friends came.)
> Susan is a friend of the college. (The college is inanimate.)

Although unwarranted and excessive personalization of inanimate objects should be avoided, personification is appropriate in certain literary contexts. Other constructions are improved with *of* phrases:

> the ocean's tug
> at death's door
> shingles' effects (preferably *the effects of shingles*)

See also **Plural Forms**.

Prefixes

In general, prefixes used with words beginning with a consonant should not be hyphenated. Use a hyphen if the prefix ends in a vowel and the following word begins with the same vowel (exceptions are *cooperate* and *coordinate*), if the word that follows the prefix is capitalized, and if two hyphens are joined:

> postgraduate
> re-enlist
> pre-Raphaelite
> sub-subheading

S

Seasons

Lowercase the names of seasons and their derivatives (such as *springtime*) unless they're part of a formal name:

> summer
> autumn leaves
> Winter Olympics
> fall 2014

States

Lowercase the word *state* in *state of* constructions and when used as an adjective:

> the state of New Jersey
> state Sen. Cory Booker
> state budget

Spell out state names when they stand alone in running copy. Use postal codes (shown here in parentheses) only with full addresses including ZIP code. Always spell out *Alaska* (AK), *Hawaii* (HI), *Idaho* (ID), *Iowa* (IA), *Maine* (ME), *Ohio* (OH), *Texas* (TX) and *Utah* (UT). The District of Columbia's postal code is DC. Abbreviate the other states as follows:

Ala. (AL)	Kan. (KS)	Nev. (NV)	S.C. (SC)
Ariz. (AZ)	Ky. (KY)	N.H. (NH)	S.D. (SD)
Ark. (AR)	La. (LA)	N.J. (NJ)	Tenn. (TN)
Calif. (CA)	Md. (MD)	N.M. (NM)	Vt. (VT)
Colo. (CO)	Mass. (MA)	N.Y. (NY)	Va. (VA)
Conn. (CT)	Mich. (MI)	N.C. (NC)	Wash. (WA)
Del. (DE)	Minn. (MN)	N.D. (ND)	W.Va. (WV)
Fla. (FL)	Miss. (MS)	Okla. (OK)	Wis. (WI)
Ga. (GA)	Mo. (MO)	Ore. (OR)	Wyo. (WY)
Ill. (IL)	Mont. (MT)	Pa. (PA)	
Ind. (IN)	Neb. (NE)	R.I. (RI)	

Use a comma between the city and state (and another comma after the state unless it ends a sentence or is part of a full address):

> Newark, N.J.
> Staten Island, N.Y., is a half-hour drive away.

Suffixes

For words not listed in Webster's New World College Dictionary, use two words for the verb form and a hyphen between the word and the suffix for the noun or adjective form.

> The car broke down as soon as we left the highway.
> Vanessa's decision-making abilities suffered when she was under stress.

T

Time

Avoid redundancies (*9 a.m. in the morning*) and *o'clock* constructions. Use the abbreviations *a.m.* and *p.m.* with specific times:

> 7:30 p.m.

Express times in figures except for noon and midnight. Use a colon between hours and minutes and an en dash in ranges:

> 5:15 a.m.
> 2–4:30 p.m.

Time Zones

Abbreviate time zones and include the zone after a clock time only if locality is relevant:

> 3 p.m. EST

Capitalize the full name of time zones that stand alone:

> Central Daylight Time

Capitalize only the region in short forms:

> Pacific time zone

Titles

Academic Titles

Capitalize and spell out formal titles when they precede a name; lowercase elsewhere:

> Chancellor Jane Smith
> Gary Baker, chairman

Lowercase modifiers:

> history department Chairman Leslie Robinson

Courtesy Titles

Omit courtesy titles (*Mr., Ms., Miss, Mrs.*) and refer to both men and women by their full names upon the first reference and their surnames thereafter. Use courtesy titles only in direct quotations or after the first reference if a woman explicitly requests it. To distinguish between two people with the same last name, use their full names without courtesy titles. If gender is unclear, use *he* or *she* in subsequent reference.

Legislative Titles

Capitalize and abbreviate *representative* and *senator* as formal titles before one or more names. Spell out and lowercase in other uses. Spell out other legislative titles in all uses. Capitalize formal titles including *assemblyman, assemblywoman, city councilor* and *delegate* when they appear before a name; lowercase otherwise:

> Sen. Bill Bradley
> Reps. Scott Garrett and Leonard Lance
> The senator will introduce legislation next week.
> John McKeon is the assemblyman from Madison.

Add *U.S.* or the state before a title if it's needed to avoid confusion.

On second reference, use a title before the name only if it's part of a direct quotation.

Lowercase *congressman* and *congresswoman*, which may be used in subsequent references that don't include a name, but *Rep.* (or *U.S. Rep.*) is the preferred term for first references that precede the name. *Congressman* and *congresswoman* should be capitalized formal titles before a name only in direct quotes.

Capitalize titles of formal offices when they appear before a name:

> House Speaker John Boehner
> Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy

See also **Political Designations**.

Military Titles

Capitalize when used as a formal title before the name. Spell out or abbreviate according to Associated Press rules. Use the title along with the full name on first reference. In subsequent references, use only the surname. Spell out and lowercase titles when they substitute for a name:

> Col. Kenneth Briggs
> the general

Each branch has ratings (*machinist, radarman,* etc.) in addition to ranks. These are job descriptions, not formal titles, and should not be used as titles. If a job description is used before a name, don't capitalize or abbreviate it.

Add an S to the principal element in the title to form plurals:

> Majs. Kevin Cruz and Albert Simmons
> Maj. Gens. Todd Watson and Chris Shoemaker

Military rank may be used before the name in the first mention of a retired officer if it's relevant. Don't use the military abbreviation *Ret.*; instead use *retired* as *former* would be used before the title of a civilian:

> The reception honored retired Army Gen. Paul Goodman.

For firefighters and police officers who use military-style titles, follow the same rules above outside direct quotations. Add *fire* or *police* before the title if needed for clarity. Spell out titles that aren't used in the armed forces, such as *detective*:

> The press questioned fire Capt. Jefferson Emory.

Nobility

Capitalize *king, queen, prince* and *princess* (and longer forms of a sovereign's title) when they precede the name. Use lowercase when they stand alone:

> Queen Elizabeth II
> Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth
> the queen

Capitalize titles of rank when they become alternate names in common usage:

> the Prince of Wales
> the Duke of Wellington
> the Duchess of Cambridge

Lowercase shortened titles when they stand alone:

> the duke

Don't form inappropriate constructions combining shortened titles with first names:

> Arthur, Duke of Wellington (not *Duke Arthur* or *Lord Arthur*)

Use *Sir* and *Dame* before the full name on the first reference. Use only the surname thereafter.

Religious Titles

The first reference to a member of the clergy should be a capitalized title before the name. Often the title is *the Rev.* (or *the Rev. Dr.* but only if the person has earned a doctoral degree and reference to the degree is relevant). On second reference, use only the surname unless the individual is known only by the title:

> Pope John XXIII (on first reference)
> John, the pope *or* the pontiff (thereafter)

Cardinal, archbishop and *bishop* are capitalized upon first mention with the full name; use only the surname or the lowercased title afterward.

Ministers and priests use *the Rev.* preceding a name on first reference (or *Monsignor* before the name of a Roman Catholic priest when applicable). Use only the surname with subsequent references. Don't routinely use the terms *curate, father, pastor* and similar words before a person's name. When they appear before a name in a quotation, capitalize them.

Use *Rabbi* before a name on first reference and only the surname afterward.

Nuns use *Sister* or *Mother* before a name:

> Sister Mary Margaret (in all references if she uses only a religious name)
> Sister Ann Kennedy (on first reference if she uses a surname; *Kennedy* thereafter)

Those who hold church office but aren't ordained clergy should preferably have their titles set apart from their name with commas. Capitalize the formal title of an office if it comes directly before the name:

> Peter Harris, deacon, spoke for the parishioners.

W

Weights and Measures

Use figures and spell out *pounds, feet, miles,* etc. Include hyphens with adjectives preceding nouns:

> 5 pounds
> 50-acre property

Use straight single and double quotes (also referred to as minute and second marks or prime and double prime marks — as opposed to what's known as curly quotes or smart quotes) for feet and inches only in technical applications:

> 6'2"

Punctuation Guide

The purpose of punctuation is to aid comprehension. Incorrect punctuation can change the meaning of a sentence or confuse the reader. Keep clarity in mind when choosing punctuation.

Apostrophe [']
The apostrophe is used to form a plural, possessive or contraction:

> Ursula's book
> women's rights
> ladies' night
> witness' testimony
> Socrates' ideas
> for goodness' sake
> money's worth
> the three R's

Use an apostrophe to show omitted letters:

> rock 'n' roll
> don't
> 'tis
> ne'er-do-well
> it's

Use an apostrophe to show omitted figures:

> class of '15
> '70s (for 1970s)

See also **Numerals, Plural Forms, Possessives, Time,** and **Weights and Measures.**

Brackets [ ]
Use brackets for editorial interjections or word substitutions in direct quotes:

> "My first writing class in 1995 [led to my] late professional start."

Colon [:]
Use a colon to introduce lists, tabulations and texts. Capitalize the first word following a colon if it's a proper noun or the start of a complete sentence:

> He promised this: The company will repay all debts.
> There were two problems: time and money.

Use a colon in measurements of time and biblical and legal citations:

> 1:45.20 (one hour, 45 minutes, 20 seconds)
> 6:30 p.m.
> 2 Corinthians 2:14
> New Jersey Code 7:145-160

Use a colon for emphasis:

> She had only one love: books.

Use a colon for dialogue and question-and-answer interviews:

> Meyers: Where were you on the night of September 20?
> Briggs: I was at work.
>
> Q: When did you first realize you wanted to be an artist?
> A: I was a very young child.

Use a colon to introduce a direct quote of one sentence that remains within a paragraph or long quotations within a paragraph. Use a colon to end paragraphs that introduce a paragraph of quoted material.

Use a colon between the place of publication and the publisher in bibliographical references:

> Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Place colons outside quotation marks unless they are a part of the quotation itself.

See also **Time**.

Comma [,]

Use a comma to separate elements in a series. In a simple series, omit the comma before the conjunction. Include the final comma when at least one of the elements requires a conjunction of its own and when the series includes at least one phrase:

> red, white and blue
> wine, butter, and salt and pepper
> honesty, harmony, and peace of mind

See also the **Dash** and **Semicolon** entries.

Use commas to separate a series of equal adjectives (if the commas could be replaced with the word *and* without changing the meaning, the adjectives are equal):

> a dark, lonely street
> a deliberate, thoughtful manner

Omit the comma when the last adjective before the noun is an integral element of the phrase and thus operates as a single noun:

> cheap fur coat
> old wooden desk
> new, blue straw hat

Set off nonessential (nonrestrictive) clauses and phrases with commas. Don't use commas with essential (restrictive) clauses and phrases:

> The baseball game, which took place in New York, ended in a tie.
> Writers who don't follow style guidelines risk confusing their audience.
> David's wife, Rebecca, arrived late.

Use a comma to separate an introductory clause or phrase from the main clause:

> When the frantic pace of the city had finally exhausted him, he moved to
> the suburbs.

The comma may be omitted after short introductory clauses as long as comprehension doesn't suffer, but use it if its absence might cause confusion:

> During the work week Ted resented his alarm clock.
> In the sky above, the clouds gathered.

When a conjunction such as *and*, *but* or *for* joins two clauses that could stand alone as separate complete sentences, use a comma before the conjunction in most cases. In general, use a comma when the subject of each clause is expressly stated:

> He considered several options, but then he settled on the simplest solution.
> We are visiting New York City this weekend, and we plan to travel upstate
> next week.

Don't use a comma when the subject of both clauses is the same and isn't repeated in the second (leaving the second clause unable to stand alone as a separate sentence):

> Cats appreciate routine and grow anxious without it.

The comma may be omitted if two clauses with expressly stated subjects are short, but favor its inclusion unless it would change the meaning of the sentence or a particular literary effect is intended:

> Time flies and time may stand still.

Use a comma to introduce a complete one-sentence quote within a paragraph (use a colon to introduce direct quotes longer than one sentence):

> Wendy said, "My biggest regrets are the things I didn't do."

Don't use a comma at the beginning of an indirect or partial quotation:

> He said the victory was "proof of his popularity."

Use a comma instead of a period at the end of a quote that's followed by attribution. Don't use a comma when the quote ends with a question mark or exclamation mark:

> "Enunciate," Coach Bernstein implored.
> "Do you know how to get to Winslow?" the tourist asked.

Use a comma to set off a hometown when it's placed in apposition to a name (whether *of* is used or not):

> Martin Starkey, Cleveland, Ohio, and Beth Richards, Columbus, Ohio,
> attended the benefit.

Use commas to set off an individual's age:

> Dorothy Chambers, 33, Trenton, N.J., was present.

Use a comma before and after city names that appear with states and nations (but use parentheses when a state name is inserted within a proper name):

> She traveled from Fargo, N.D., to Dublin, Ireland, before graduation.
> The congregation from Atlanta, Ga., enjoyed their welcome.
> The Bangor (Maine) Daily News is struggling with an inadequate
> proofreading staff.

Use a comma before and after the year when it appears with a month and day. Use a comma before and after the date if it appears with a day of the week:

> Jan. 1, 2020, is the target date.
> On Wednesday, July 28, the company will be closed.

Use a comma with the words *yes* and *no* and in direct addresses:

> Yes, the weather is pleasant.
> No, sir, I will not recant.
> Father, please forgive them.

Use a comma for most figures greater than 999. Exceptions are street addresses, broadcast frequencies, room numbers, serial numbers, telephone numbers and years:

> 5,275
> 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
> 1460 kilohertz
> the year 2000

Use a comma to separate repeated words that would otherwise be confusing:

> What the problem is, is not clear.

Always place commas inside quotation marks.

See also **Academic Degrees and Titles, Dates, Months, Numerals, Political Designations, States,** and **Titles**.

Ellipsis […]

Use an ellipsis to mark the deletion of one or more words in condensed quotes and texts, taking care to avoid deletions that distort the original meaning. An ellipsis may also indicate an incomplete thought (but use an em dash for this purpose instead if the context uses ellipses to show that words actually spoken or written have been omitted).

In general, treat the ellipsis as a three-letter word, constructed with three periods and two spaces. Use the special ellipsis character to avoid a line break between the periods.

If the words that precede the ellipsis make up a complete sentence, either in the original or the condensation, use a period (or question mark or exclamation mark) after the last word, then a space, and then the ellipsis:

> The deed was done. …
> Was it a dream? …

If the last word preceding the ellipsis requires a comma or colon, follow the comma or colon with a space and then the ellipsis.

When text is omitted at the end of one paragraph and at the beginning of the next, use an ellipsis in both locations.

Don't use ellipses at the beginning and end of direct quotes.

Em Dash [—]

An em dash (equal to the length of a capital M) is preceded and followed by a space except at the beginning of a paragraph and in sports agate summaries.

Use an em dash to mark an abrupt change, emphatic pause, or interruption in thought (but take care not to overuse dashes to set off phrases when commas would suffice):

> Throughout his two terms, the president has adapted — usually skillfully — to shifting sensibilities.

Use an em dash to set off a phrase containing a series of words separated by commas:

> He listed the qualities — beauty, intelligence, honesty — that drew him to her.

Use an em dash preceding an attribution at the end of a quotation:

> "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice."
> — Martin Luther King Jr.

When using em dashes to separate sections in lists, capitalize the first word following the dash, and use periods (not semicolons) at the end of each section whether it's a full sentence or not:

> Routine maintenance includes:
> — Changing the oil.
> — Replacing the filter.
> — Rotating the tires.

En Dash [–]

An en dash (equal to the length of a capital N) is not surrounded by space.

Use an en dash to express a range of dates or numbers:

> May 15–22, 1990
> $10 million–$100 million
> pages 35–40
> 5:30–7:30 p.m.

Don't use an en dash with the words *from* or *between*:

> from 1861 to 1865 (not *from 1861–1865*)
> between 200 and 205 (not *between 200–205*)

See also **Time**.

Exclamation Point [!]

Use an exclamation point to denote emphatic expressions of surprise, incredulity or other strong emotion. Avoid overuse.

Exclamation points are placed inside quotation marks when they're part of the quoted material:

> "How wonderful!" George shouted.

Place the exclamation point outside quotation marks when it's not part of the quote itself:

> I hated watching "Everybody Loves Raymond"!

Hyphen [-]

Use hyphens to join words to eliminate ambiguity or form a single idea. Hyphenation isn't standardized and is usually a matter of judgment and taste. Avoid overuse.

Use a hyphen with compound modifiers (two or more words that express a single concept) that precede a noun. The exception is the adverb *very* and all adverbs that end in LY:

> first-quarter touchdown
> off-campus housing
> full-time job
> very good time
> easily remembered rule

Most combinations that are hyphenated before a noun aren't hyphenated when they follow the noun they modify:

> The team scored in the first quarter.
> The roommates found an apartment off campus.
> Janet works full time.

When a modifier that would be hyphenated before a noun occurs after a form of the verb *to be*, the hyphen is usually retained to avoid confusion:

> The man is well-known.
> The student was quick-witted.
> The movie is second-rate.

Hyphenate two-thought compounds:

> socio-economic

Use a hyphen to designate dual heritage (no-hyphen exceptions are *French Canadian* and *Latin American*):

> Italian-American
> African-American

Use a hyphen to avoid duplicated vowels and tripled consonants:

> anti-intellectual
> pre-empt
> shell-like

When numbers must be spelled out, use a hyphen to connect a word ending in Y to the next word:

> twenty-five
> fifty-two

Use a hyphen in suspensive forms:

> a 10- to 20-year sentence

See also **Ages, Numerals, Political Designations, Prefixes, Suffixes,** and **Weights and Measures**.

Parentheses [( )]

Use parentheses sparingly. The impulse to use parentheses is a sign that the sentence is becoming contorted; try rewording it to improve clarity. Commas or em dashes are often more effective if a sentence must contain incidental material.

Place ending punctuation (period, question mark or exclamation mark) outside a closing parenthesis if the text inside is not a complete sentence. Otherwise place it inside. When a parenthetical phrase might normally qualify as a complete sentence but depends on the surrounding text, don't capitalize the first word inside the parentheses and don't end the phrase with a period:

>Intaglio (a type of printmaking) originated in Germany.
>(Teaching requires dedication.)
>Creative geniuses (Sylvia Plath is just one example) are not immune from despair.

Use parentheses to insert a state name or similar information within a proper name:

>The Huntsville (Ala.) Times

Period [.]

Use a single space between sentences. Place periods inside quotation marks.

Use a period to end a declarative sentence:

>The day is done.

Use a period to end a mildly imperative sentence (use an exclamation point for greater emphasis):

>Shut the door.

Use a period to end a rhetorical question in which the statement is more a suggestion than a question:

>Why don't we go.

Use a period to end an indirect question:

>Sean asked what the score was.

Use a period with initials, without a space between two initials. Abbreviations using only the initials of a name don't take periods:

>John F. Kennedy
>T.S. Eliot
>LBJ

Use a period after numbers or letters that enumerate elements of a list or summary:

>1. Wake up. 2. Brush your teeth. 3. Take a shower. 4. Get dressed.

See also **Abbreviations and Acronyms, Academic Degrees and Titles, Addresses, Composition Titles, Dates, Months, Numerals, States, Time,** and **Titles.**

Question Mark [?]

Use a question mark to end a direct question:

> Who's there?

Use a question mark with an interpolated question:

> You said — Do I understand you correctly? — that William confessed to plagiarism.

Use a single question mark at the end of a full sentence consisting of multiple questions:

> Did Whitney say, "When's dinner?"
> Did he do the dishes, take out the trash, and sweep the floor?

Or, to emphasize each element, separate the phrases and use a question mark at the end of each sentence:

> Did Stephen pack up his belongings? Drive 500 miles? Start anew?

Don't use a question mark with indirect questions:

> It's futile to ask where the madness began.
> Gracie asked who let the dogs out.

Place a question mark inside quotation marks if it's part of the quote. Otherwise place it outside:

> The little boy wailed, "Are we there yet?"
> Who wrote "Between the Bars"?

Quotation Marks [" "]

Use quotation marks with direct quotations to enclose the exact words of the speaker or writer:

> Albert Schweitzer said, "There are two means of refuge from the miseries of life: music and cats."

When a full paragraph of quoted material is followed by a paragraph that continues the quote, don't end the first paragraph with closing quotation marks. Do use opening quotation marks at the beginning of the second paragraph. Continue this way for any successive paragraphs, using closing quotation marks only at the end of the quoted text.

When a paragraph doesn't begin with quotation marks but ends with a quote that's continued in the next paragraph, don't use closing quotation marks at the end of the introductory paragraph if the quoted material constitutes a complete sentence. But do use closing quotation marks if the quote isn't a full sentence.

In dialogue or conversation, place each person's words, no matter how brief, in a separate paragraph with quotation marks at the beginning and end of each person's speech.

Use quotation marks around words used in an ironic sense:

> The "debate" turned into a free-for-all.

Use quotation marks around the first mention of unfamiliar terms:

> Zen riddles are called "koans."

Don't use quotation marks to report a few ordinary words used by a speaker or writer:

> The dean announced a tuition cap for the next three years. (not *The dean announced a "tuition cap" for the next three years.*)

Don't use quotation marks around words the speaker could not have said when using partial quotes. When practical, use the full quote.

For quotes within quotes, alternate between double and single quotation marks. Use three marks together if two quoted elements end at the same time (differentiate between the single and double quotes with a thin space):

> Sarah said, "Ben told me, 'I love you.' "

See also **Composition Titles, Foreign Words, Plural Forms,** and **Weights and Measures**.

Semicolon [;]

Use a semicolon to indicate a greater separation of thought and information than a comma but less than the separation of a period. Place the semicolon outside quotation marks.

Use a semicolon to separate elements of a series when the items are long or when individual segments contain text that must also be set off by commas (note that the semicolon is used before the final conjunction in such a series):

> He was accompanied by his son, Andy Hinson, of Chicago; two nieces, Michelle Tynan, of Wichita, Kan., and Rebecca Gray, of Portland, Ore.; and a brother, Nelson Hinson, of Boston.

Use a semicolon to link independent clauses when a coordinating conjunction such as *and, but* or *for* isn't present:

> The assignment was due on Monday; it was received on Tuesday.

If a coordinating conjunction is present, use a semicolon before it only if extensive punctuation is also required in one or more of the individual clauses:

> They checked the oil, filled up the gas tank, and inflated the tires; but even with these tasks accomplished, the vehicle was unprepared for the trip.