

UMKC Editorial Style Guide

The official writing-style reference for university communications is the AP Stylebook, produced by the Associated Press. Some university guidelines depart from the AP Stylebook and are outlined in the UMKC Style Guide. These guidelines are intended to assure consistency in the creation of the university's periodicals, press releases, brochures, newsletters and publications of this sort. They also should be applied to Web copy and advertisements where practical. Although these guidelines are not intended to be rules for composition of correspondence or articles for publication in scholarly journals, the University Style Guide is provided as an optional resource for faculty, staff and students to use if they wish.

Table of contents

Proper UM System Titles	2
UMKC Building Names	4
UMKC Editorial Standards	
Titles	5
A-Z	7
Language about Disabilities.....	15
Avoiding Sexist Wording.....	16
Grammar; Punctuation.....	17
Writing for the Web	23

Proper UM System Titles

The word "university" no longer needs to be capitalized unless used in a proper name. Capitalize the names of colleges, schools, divisions and centers when using their full, proper names. Capitalize a shortened form of the name when referring to an entity on this campus. (An exception to AP style.) "Office" is capitalized when it is the full, proper name of an office: "Office of University Communications." In second reference, when not using the full name, it's "the UMKC communication office."

First Reference

Second Reference

The Curators of the University of Missouri

The University of Missouri of Missouri Board of Curators, board of curators, board, curators

University of Missouri-Columbia

UMC, UM-Columbia or Columbia campus

University of Missouri-Kansas City

UMKC, UM-Kansas City or Kansas City campus

Missouri University of Science

Missouri S&T, S&T and Technology

University of Missouri-St. Louis

UMSL, UM-St. Louis or St. Louis campus

University of Missouri System

UM, UM System, university system, university

NOTE: University of Missouri System includes the Office of the President and staff, research not administered by campus, non-campus administrative units, and support services for the entire UM system.

Official Name/First Reference

Second Reference

University of Missouri-Kansas City	UMKC; the university
College of Arts and Sciences	the College
School of Computing and Engineering	Computing and Engineering School, SCE, the school
Conservatory of Music and Dance	the Conservatory
Henry W. Bloch School of Business and Public Administration	the Bloch School
School of Dentistry	the Dental School; the school
School of Education	the Education School; the school
School of Graduate Studies	Graduate Studies
School of Law	the Law School; the school
School of Medicine	the Medical School; the school
Kansas City Repertory Theatre	KC Rep; the Rep
School of Biological Sciences	Biological Sciences School; the school
School of Nursing	the Nursing School; the school
School of Pharmacy	the Pharmacy School; the school
Department of	Department; the department
Office of	Office; the office
Center of	the center
Swinney Recreation Center	Swinney Rec, SRC
University of Kansas City (UMKC predecessor)	UKC

UMKC Building Names

Also important to a strong institutional identity is the use of correct names and consistent references to campus buildings. Listed below are the official names of UMKC buildings and the building location. The building location is important to use when shipments are being delivered to a department or school by a delivery service or commercial shipper.

Building	Location
Administrative Center	5115 Oak St.
Animal Facilities Building	1015 E. 50th St.
Berkley Child & Family Development Center	1012 E. 52nd St.
University Bookstore	5000 Rockhill Road
Biological Sciences Building	5007 Rockhill Road
Henry W. Bloch School of Business and Public Administration	5110 Cherry St.
Cockefair Hall	5121 Rockhill Road
Cherry St. Residence Hall	5030 Cherry St.
Education Building	615 E. 52nd St.
Ernest Manheim Hall	710 E. 52nd St.
Epperson House	5200 Cherry St.
Fine Arts Building	5015 Holmes St.
Garage	5444 Troost Ave.
General Services Building	1011 E. 51st St.
Grant Hall	5228 Charlotte
Haag Hall	5120 Rockhill Road
Health Sciences Building (Hospital Hill)	2220 Holmes St.
Johnson Residence Hall	5000 Oak St.
Katz Pharmacy Building	5005 Rockhill Road
Miller Nichols Library	800 E. 51st St.
Newcomb Hall	5123 Holmes St.
Oak Place Apartments	5050 Oak St.
Oak St. Residence Hall	5051 Oak St.
Old Maintenance Building	801 E. 51st St.
Performing Arts Center	4949 Cherry St.
Robert H. Flarsheim Science and Technology Hall	5110 Rockhill Road
Royall Hall	800 E. 52nd St.
School of Dentistry	650 E. 25th St.
School of Law	500 E. 52nd St.
School of Medicine (Hospital Hill)	2411 Holmes St.
Scofield Hall	711 E. 51st St.
Spencer Chemistry Building	5009 Rockhill Road
Student Academic Support Services	5014 Rockhill Road
Student Union	5100 Cherry St.
Swinney Recreation Center (Sweh' - nee)	5030 Holmes St.
University Center	5000 Holmes St.
University House 5101 Rockhill Road	5101 Rockhill Road
4825 Troost Bldg. 4825 Troost Ave.	4825 Troost Ave.
4747 Troost Bldg.	4747 Troost Ave.
51st Street Annex Building	301 E. 51st St.

UMKC Editorial Standards Guide

Titles

Confine capitalization to formal titles used directly before an individual's name. Lowercase and spell out titles used alone: "The vice chancellor for academic affairs issued a memo." Lowercase and spell out titles in constructions that set them off from a name by commas: "The UM System president, Gary Forsee, was available for questions after the meeting."

FORMAL TITLES

Capitalize formal titles when they are used immediately before one or more names: President Teddy Roosevelt, Pope Benedict.

A formal title generally is one that denotes a scope of authority, professional activity or academic accomplishment so specific that the designation becomes almost as much an integral part of an individual's identity as a proper name itself: Gov. Smith. Other titles serve primarily as occupational descriptions: anchorperson Katie Couric, humorist Dave Barry.

ABBREVIATED TITLES

The following formal titles are capitalized and abbreviated as shown when used before a name outside quotations: "Dr., Gov., Lt. Gov., Rep., Sen." and certain military ranks. Spell out all except "Dr." when they are used in quotations.

PAST AND FUTURE TITLES

A formal title that an individual formerly held, is about to hold or holds temporarily is capitalized if used before the person's name, but do not capitalize the qualifying word: former President Carter, interim Vice Chancellor Mary Smith.

LONG TITLES

Separate a long title from a name by a construction that requires a comma: "Agapito Mendoza, vice provost for affirmative action and academic personnel, asked for the application forms."

UNIQUE TITLES

If the title applies only to one person in an organization, insert the word "the" in a construction that uses commas: "Joe Jefferson, the deputy secretary, spoke to the group."

ACADEMIC TITLES

Capitalize and spell out formal titles such as professor, dean, president, chancellor, chairman, etc., when they precede a name. Lowercase elsewhere: "former Chancellor and Provost Eleanor Brantley Schwartz;" or "George Russell, former chancellor, spoke at the event."

Lowercase modifiers such as "political science," as in "political science Professor Ben Martin" or "department" in "department Chairman Burton Dunbar."

COMPOSITION TITLES

- Apply these guidelines to book titles, movie titles, opera titles, play titles, poem titles, song titles, television program titles, and the titles of lectures, speeches and works of art. Capitalize the principal words, including prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters in all examples.

- Capitalize an article - a, an, the - or words of fewer than four letters only if it is the first or last word in the title.

- Italicize major works and the names of magazines, books, journals and newspapers: *Time* magazine.

- Capitalize the names of motion pictures, radio and TV programs: *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Frasier*.

- Quote marks around the names of articles appearing in magazines, newspapers or journals, i.e., "Analysis of Antitoxins in Pharmacology," or the names of art exhibitions, i.e., "Still Life: Photography at Its Best."

COURTESY TITLES

Use "Mr.," "Mrs.," "Miss" only in obituaries, in reference to couples, in direct quotations or where essential for effect, as in editorials and critiques. In particular, do not use the terms with surnames after first reference.

Refer to married women by their first names and surnames and without the term "Mrs." unless only the husband's first name is known. Refer to single women by the first names and surnames without the term "Miss" or "Ms."

DOCTOR, DR.

In news releases and other materials prepared for media use, comply with industry-wide standards of style. "M.D." or "D.D.S." or "Ph.D." after a name makes it clear for the reader. When writing for general audiences, reserve "Dr." only for practitioners of the healing arts (including osteopaths, dentists, psychologists, optometrists and chiropractors).

In general, the preferred form for mention of academic degrees is to use a phrase such as "Jim Phillips, who has a doctorate in physics...."

In articles and materials prepared for academic audiences or on-campus use, or in materials where the credentials of the person are necessary to establish credibility, the title "Dr." may be used for holders of Ph.D. or honorary degrees.

However, care should be taken that the individual's specialty is stated in first or second reference. The only exception would be a story in which the context left no doubt that the person was a dentist, psychologist, chemist, etc.

Do not continue the use of "Dr." in subsequent references.

LEGISLATIVE TITLES

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 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.

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

MILITARY TITLES

Check with the AP Stylebook for specific rules regarding military titles.

MUSIC TITLES

Check with the Conservatory of Music and Dance for specific guidelines on musical composition titles, 816-235-2229.

RELIGIOUS TITLES

Consult the AP Stylebook for specific guidelines on use of religious titles.

A-Z

A

Abbreviations

BEFORE A NAME

Abbreviate the following titles when used before a full name outside direct quotations: Dr., Gov., Lt. Gov., Rep., the Rev., Sen., and certain military designations. Spell out all others except Dr., Mr., Mrs. when used before a name.

AFTER A NAME

Abbreviate junior or senior after a name. Abbreviate company, corporation, incorporated and limited when used after the name of a corporate entity. Do not use a comma after the designation.

Correct: "the Center for Money Studies Inc."

Abbreviations/acronyms in parentheses

Do not follow an organization's name with an abbreviation or acronym in parentheses. If an abbreviation or acronym would not be clear on second reference, do not use it.

Academic degrees

In general usage, spell out the degrees in lowercase letters, using an apostrophe: bachelor's degree, master's degree. For a doctorate, use "doctorate in <name of field>." Use degree abbreviations only when the need to identify individuals by degree on first reference would make the preferred form cumbersome. Use abbreviations only after the full name of a person. "Mike Jones, M.F.A."

Generally, most grammar and style guides indicate periods for all academic degrees. In the academic world, however, MBA is preferred over M.B.A.

In UMKC publications, the degree/year format preferred is a parenthetical phrase with degree abbreviation followed by the last two digits of the year.

John Q. Smith (B.A. '81)

Joanne Smith (B.S. '92, M.F.A. '98)

Academic departments

Capitalize the proper names of departments.

Examples: Department of Theatre; the Theatre Department

General references to the same department are not capitalized: "the department."

Academic Titles

See entry under "Titles."

Address

VOLKER CAMPUS

The official mailing address for all UMKC schools, divisions and departments located on the Volker campus is:

5100 Rockhill Road

Kansas City, MO 64110-2499

HOSPITAL HILL CAMPUS

Use these as the return address on all correspondence:

School of Medicine, 2411 Holmes St.

School of Dentistry, 650 E. 25th St.

School of Nursing, 2464 Charlotte St.

EXCEPTION

The only exception to this rule is when mail is delivered by the U.S. Postal Service to the building. Example: UMKC Residence Hall, or in the case of music, dance, theater or Conservatory events that are primarily dependent on people attending a specific location.

Example: "the Performing Arts Center, 4949 Cherry St."

Otherwise, refer in printed materials to "our mailing address" and "our location address," or "our building address."

Address abbreviations

Abbreviate avenue, boulevard and street in numbered addresses.

Correct: Epperson House is on Cherry street. The address is 5200 Cherry St. Room is not capitalized when listing a room number.

Example: The meeting is in the University Center, room 202.

Adviser

Preferred spelling, all uses. Use in place of "advisor."

Alumnus, alumni, alumna, alumnae

Use alumnus (alumni in the plural) when referring to a man who has attended a school.

Use alumna (alumnae in the plural) for similar references to a women. Use alumni when referring to a group of men or women.

Use alumnus when the entity could be either a man or a woman.

Athletic Department

The UMKC Athletics department brand is a parallel, but distinct from the official university brand. Its brand evokes an energy and excitement for motivating student athletes, fans and the community. The Athletics Department also operates its own brand in order to capitalize on the commercial potential common to many collegiate athletic brands.

For more information on authority, trademark and use of the UMKC Athletics' department brand please contact Jessica Dickson, assistant athletic director, at 816-235-5475 or dicksonj@umkc.edu

B

Black

Acceptable in all references. The term "black" is lower case. The term "African American" is used when requested. Don't hyphenate African American unless used as an adjective.

Example: "He is an African-American scholar."

BkMk Press

Capitalize as indicated. Pronounced "bookmark."

Board of directors, board of trustees

Lowercase if not used with the full title of the organization.

Brand, UMKC

UMKC's brand refers to the UMKC brand system, which includes the logo and the characteristics that are authentic to the institution itself and relevant to the needs of students, faculty/staff and alumni. The official guide to specifications and uses is at <http://www.umkc.edu/brand>.

C

Campus designations

Volker campus, Hospital Hill, Columbia campus, Rolla campus, St. Louis campus.

Cellphone

One word.

Chair, Chairperson, Chairman, Chairwoman

"Chair" or "chair person" is suitable for all general references to the person leading a group. If a formal title of a specific group, "chairman," "chairwoman" or "chairperson" may be substituted.

Chancellor Leo E. Morton

Child care, child-care

Two words, unhyphenated, unless used as an adjective.

Examples:

"Child care is a growing industry."

"Glenda is a child-care expert."

Class of...

Class is always capitalized when writing "Class of" followed by year.

Example: Class of 1979

Complement/Compliment

"Complement" means completes something or helps bring it to completeness. "Compliment" refers to an expression of thanks, admiration or appreciation.

Examples:

"That tie complements the suit."

"Thanks for the compliment on the suit."

Compose, Comprise

Think of compose as more general than comprise, which includes specific things. Also, while "composed of" is correct, "comprised of" is not correct.

Examples:

"The salad was composed of strawberry gelatin, cream cheese and crushed pretzels."

"His argument comprised five areas."

Coordinating Board for Higher Education

Sometimes misused as Coordinating Board of ...

Coursework

At UMKC, it's one word.

Crescendo

The Conservatory of Music and Dance's annual fund-raising gala, usually held in October.

Curators

Capitalize the full, proper title of the governing body: "Board of Curators." Do not capitalize "the curators" or "the board."

Curators' Professor

Always a plural possessive, always capitalized, even after a name.

D

Dates

Should be written as follows: time, date and location. Year is not listed.

Example: The meeting begins at 4 p.m., Jan. 14, in Scofield Hall.

Dean

Capitalize only when used as a formal title before the full name.

Example: "Dean Mike McIntosh."

When a formal title follows a name, the title is lower case because it serves the purpose of adding information about the person rather than emphasizing the title and name relationship.

Example: "Mike Samuel McIntosh, dean of the School of Architectural Studies, says..."

The Dean's Gallery

The official name of the second floor gallery at the Miller Nichols Library.

Despite/In spite of

When referring to something happening even in the face of certain circumstances, "despite" is correct

Dr.

In first reference, UMKC style is to use the academic degree initials. i.e., "Bill Montgomery, M.D." or "Stan Reaser, Ph.D." For clarity to the public, Associated Press and UMKC style is to reserve "Dr." before the name for someone who is a practitioner of healing arts - not for holders of doctoral degrees. Exception: UMKC commencement and Convocation programs.

E

Email

One word; in accordance with the *AP Stylebook*, email is no longer hyphenated. The "e" is not capitalized unless it's the first word of a sentence.

Examples:

- "My e-mail didn't get through."
- "E-mail is a great tool."

Emerita, emeriti, emeritus

Emeritus denotes a male; emerita, a female; emeriti denotes either gender. Place the word after the formal title, capitalizing when used before a name, but not after.

Entrepreneur of the Year Awards

Prestigious awards presented annually by the Bloch School since 1985. Capitalize "Entrepreneur," "Year" and "Awards." Spell out in the first reference; "EOY" is acceptable in subsequent references.

Equal Opportunity statement

UMKC is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution.

- This is a required statement for any published work or website that features the UMKC logo.

Equity biographies

Exceptions to title styles are allowed in accordance with rules of the actors' union. Check with the information specialist for the Rep, 816-235-1579, for more specific guidelines.

E

Faculty

Refers to a teacher or a body of teachers within a school or university. Often, "faculty" is used to indicate more than one. When indicating plural, however, it is clearer to non-academic audiences to say "faculty members are..."

Flarsheim Hall

The official name of this building is the Robert H. Flarsheim Science and Technology Hall. Flarsheim Hall is suitable for most purposes.

Foundation

Use "UMKC Foundation" in the first reference, "Foundation" in subsequent references referring to the UMKC Foundation.

Fundraiser; fundraising,

Current usages of these terms is to not hyphenate them. Correct usage of these word depends on the context and whether it's serving as a noun or as a compound modifier.

Examples:

- "Fundraising is difficult."
- "Let's go to that fundraiser."
- "They planned a fundraising campaign."
- "A fundraiser was hired."

G

Grade Point Average

In general, spell out on first reference; G.P.A. or GPA after that. Usually, the abbreviation GPA can be used with figures: "He earned a 3.99 GPA in biology."

H

Health care

Two words. If used as a modifier, hyphenate.

Example: "He is in favor of health-care reform."

I

Imply, Infer

These similar words are not interchangeable. "Imply" is a suggestion. "Infer" means to decide on something from facts or evidence.

Examples:

"Are you implying that I'm guilty?"

"From what you said, I infer you think I'm guilty!"

Information Exchange Theater

This is the official name of the performance area in the Southeast corner of the first floor of the Miller Nichols Library. "iX Theater", lower case I, upper case X, is also acceptable

Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation

In first reference, use Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation followed by IEI in parenthesis; use IEI in subsequent references.

Institute for Urban Education

In first reference, use Institute for Urban Education followed by IUE in parenthesis; use IUE in subsequent references.

Internet

A reference to a decentralized network of host computers. Always capitalized if referring to the worldwide network.

K

Kansas City, Mo.

This is the proper abbreviation when referring to the city. Don't use KCMO or K.C., Mo. When referring to the city and the area surrounding it, use Greater Kansas City area.

Kansas City Repertory Theatre

Spell as indicated. On second reference, write in entirety or use "the Rep."

L

Logo

There are specific policies regarding the use of the uof Missouri, its official seal and the UMKC logo and its use in conveying the UMKC brand. For specific information, go to www.umkc.edu/brand.

M

Midwest

"Midwest" is preferred: "Missouri is in the Midwest." For adjectives: "Missouri is a midwestern state."

Midnight

This term stands alone. Do not put a "12" in front. "12 a.m." also is acceptable.

Missouri Relay Phone Numbers

When using a university phone number for response or more information in printed materials, a requirement of the Americans With Disabilities Act is that additional phone numbers be listed.

"People with speech or hearing impairments may contact the university by using Relay Missouri, 1-800-735-2966 (TTY)"

Months

Capitalize in all uses. When used with a specific date, abbreviate Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec. Do not abbreviate March, April, May, June or July.

N

Noon

This term stands alone. Do not put a "12" in front of it. "12 p.m." also is acceptable.

O

off of, off

Off will work nicely, as in "Get off my back!" "Off of " is redundant and a bulky construction.

online

Use "online" in all references, rather than "on-line."

Orphans/widows

Orphans and widows should not be used in printed publications. A single word alone on the last line of a paragraph must have five or more letters, or it is considered an orphan. The first sentence at the top of a column must cover at least half the width of the column, or it is considered a widow.

P

Percent

One word. Do not use % unless in tabular material. Percent takes a singular verb when standing alone or when a singular word follows an "of" construction. "She collected 50 percent to win the election." Percent takes a plural verb when a plural word follows an "of" construction. "More than 40 percent of the students came to the meeting."

Pierson Auditorium

Formerly referred to as "Pierson Hall," this room is in the Center. Include reference to University Center to avoid having those unfamiliar with UMKC looking for a "Pierson Auditorium" building.

p.m., a.m.

Lowercase and use periods. Avoid redundancies such as "8 p.m. tonight." If your seminar is from 10 in the morning to 6 in the evening, write "10 a.m. -6 p.m." rather than 10-6. Most people won't show up at 10 p.m., but it always helps to be clear.

Q

Quadrangle, the Quad

A UMKC reference to the area on the Volker campus bounded by Scofield Hall, Newcomb Hall, Royall Hall, Haag Hall and Flarsheim Hall. If used as a general reference to a rectangular green space at a university or college, use as lower case: "Notre Dame's quadrangle."

R

Regnier Family Foundations/Bank of Blue Valley Venture Creation Challenge

A competition held every April by the Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, it's the Regnier Family Foundations/Bank of Blue Valley Venture Creation Challenge on the first reference; Venture Creation Challenge on second reference.

RooBot

The automated storage and retrieval system (aka "the robot") at Miller Nichols Library is named RooBot, with a capital "R" and a capital "B", no space, hyphen or "the."

S

Seasons

Lowercase spring, summer, fall, winter. Capitalize only if part of a formal name: "Kansas City Spring Festival." At UMKC, Fall Semester, Winter Semester and Summer Session are formal names.

Other uses: "Fall 2009; "Winter and Summer 2009"

Smartphone

One word.

State names

When using with an address for mailing purposes, such as when listing a university address, it's acceptable to use the two-letter state codes designated by the U.S. Postal Service.

In running text, use regular (Associated Press) abbreviations, such as Kan., Mo., Ark., Neb., Okla., Ill.

Eight states are never abbreviated in running text: Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas and Utah.

Student Union

Use UMKC Student Union in the first reference, Student Union in subsequent references.

T

That/Which

"That" is used to restrict meaning and "which" is used to elaborate.

Examples:

"The bonds that are to be used for the new building will be paid in 2010."

"The bonds, which were issued in 2000, will be paid off in 2010."

Theatre/Theater

Use "theatre" when referencing the UMKC Department of Theatre. The same spelling should be used in all copy for the Department of Theatre. Use "Theater" in all other publications, unless the proper name is Theatre: Shubert Theatre.

toward, towards

It's "toward," not "towards."

try and/try to

Correct: "She will try to pass the test."

Incorrect: "She will try and pass the test."

U

University of Kansas City

Prior to being UMKC, the university was the private University of Kansas City. UKC (often referred to by its alumni as "KCU,") was chartered in 1929, but classes were first held in Fall 1933. The anniversary year for UKC/UMKC is officially 1933.

U.S., United States

Use the abbreviated form for the United States as an adjective, but the full name when used as a noun.

Examples:

"The U.S. policy is under scrutiny."

"The United States is joining the cause."

use, utilize

Grammar experts note no discernible reason to substitute "utilize" for "use," because they have the same meaning. Rene Cappon, in Guide to Good Writing, says "Why choose the longer and ugly word over the short and crisp one? Use use."

W

Website

Use as one word: "website."

Weeklong

One word.

Widows/orphans

See "Orphans/Widows"

World Wide Web

On second reference, it's acceptable as "the Web."

X

X-ray

It's "X-ray," always capital "x."

Language About Disabilities

A disability is defined as a functional limitation. That includes any physical, sensory or mental condition.

To avoid reinforcing negative images and myths, use words and images that cast persons with disabilities in a positive light. For instance:

- Avoid tear-jerking stories. Instead of writing a story that makes the reader feel sorry for the person with a disability, focus on issues that affect that person's quality of life.

- Avoid portraying someone as a victim. Using phrases such as "victim of" or "suffers from" sensationalizes the situation. A better way of saying the same thing would be "a person who has multiple sclerosis" or "a man who had polio."

- Avoid labeling people. Instead of saying, "the retarded," or "the deaf," say "people with mental retardation" or "people who are deaf." Mention the person first, not the disability. For instance, use "a girl who is deaf," not "a deaf girl."

- Emphasize a person's abilities, not limitation. As an example, say "uses a wheelchair," rather than "confined to a wheelchair." Outdated, negative terms have been replaced with more positive terminology.

Some examples are listed.

Use

cleft lip, cleft palate
congenital disability
Down's syndrome
disability
mental illness
short stature
without speech
blind
persons with disabilities
learning disabilities

Don't Use

hare lip
birth defect
Mongol or Mongoloid
handicap
crazy, maniac, lunatic, demented
dwarf, midget
mute, dumb
partially sighted
special
slow learner, retarded

Also avoid these terms: handicapable, mentally different, physically inconvenient and physically challenged.

Avoid Sexist Wording

Use these guidelines to avoid offending a reading audience:

- Use a gender-neutral term when speaking generically about people.

Instead of	Use
mankind	people
manpower	personnel
mothering	nurturing
to man	to operate

- Avoid gender-marked titles. Use neutral terms when sensible ones are available.

Instead of	Use
chairman	moderator
foreman	supervisor
mailman	postal worker
to man	to operate

- If you are speaking of someone who holds a position and you know the gender, use the appropriate pronoun.

Examples:

"The head nurse filed his report."

"The doctor conducted her study."

- To avoid the awkward "his/her" structure, recast to plural.

From - "Each student must meet with his adviser."

To - "Students must meet with their advisers."

- Address your readers directly in the second person.

From - "The applicant must mail his form by Thursday."

To - "Mail your form by Thursday."

- Replace third person singular possessives with articles.

From - "Each child wrote in his notebook."

To - "Each child wrote in a notebook."

- Write your way out of the problem by using the passive voice. (This should be a last-ditch effort, because it is usually preferable to use the active voice in writing.)

From - "Each trainer developed his tests."

To - "The tests were developed by each trainer."

- Use a third person singular pronoun to refer to a third person singular antecedent, unless you are sure your audience is as willing as you are to break the rules of English grammar.

"Every student should do his or her homework thoroughly."

"All students should do their homework thoroughly."

- Avoid "s/he," "he/she," and "his/her." They look awkward and interfere when someone is trying to read a text aloud. If you can't apply one of the other guidelines, use "he or she," and "his and hers."

Grammar; Punctuation

Bullets

Follow these guidelines:

WHEN MAKING A SENTENCE

Use punctuation as you would in a sentence.

Life can be

- exciting,
- challenging and
- short.

WHEN NOT MAKING A SENTENCE

Do not use punctuation.

Characteristics of life

- exciting
- challenging
- short

USING COLONS

Only use to introduce a bulleted list when using "including" or "such as."

There are many characteristics of life, including:

- exciting
- challenging
- short

Colon

The colon is used most frequently at the end of a sentence to introduce lists, tabulations, texts, etc.

Capitalize the first word after a colon only if it is a proper noun or the start of a complete sentence: "He stated it adamantly: No one will leave until the job is done." "They judged the restaurant's quality by three criteria: food quality, service and cleanliness."

EMPHASIS

"He was good at just one thing: sleeping."

LISTINGS

Use the colon in such listings as time elapsed (3:51.1), time of day (7:30 a.m.), biblical and legal citations (2 Kings 21:4 and Missouri Code: 3246-250).

DIALOGUE

Johnson: Why did you throw that?

Brown: I don't like Mondays.

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.

Comma

The following guidelines regard frequent usage of commas. Refer to Webster's New World for more detailed guidance.

IN A SERIES

Use commas to separate elements, but do not put a comma before the conjunction in a simple series

"He ate ham, turkey and a salad."

Do put a comma before the concluding conjunction in a series if an integral element of the series requires a conjunction:

"For breakfast, we had coffee, orange juice, and biscuits and gravy."

Do use a comma before the concluding conjunction in a complex series of phrases:

"Before hiring him, you need to find out whether he has enough appropriate experience, whether he has an adequate educational background, and whether you think he will work well with the other employees."

Do use a comma before the concluding conjunction if not using the comma would confuse the meaning of the sentence.

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 cool, calm demeanor,"

"a dark, wet night."

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, pink summer hat."

WITH NON-ESSENTIAL CLAUSES AND PHRASES

See entry "essential and non-essential clauses and phrases" in this appendix.

WITH INTRODUCTORY CLAUSES AND PHRASES

Commas usually are used to separate introductory clauses or phrases from the main clauses: "Whenever he had trouble starting his car in the morning, he took the bus." The comma may be omitted if no ambiguity would result:

"While he slept it snowed."

But use the comma if its omission would slow comprehension:

"Up above, the man looked out his window at the crowd."

(Generally, use with introductory phrases of four or more words.)

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:

"He stopped his car, but the dog had already moved from the road."

As a rule of thumb, use a comma if the subject of each clause is expressly stated:

"He drove to the airport, and he caught a flight to New York."

Do not use a comma when the subject of the two clauses is the same and is not repeated in the second clause:

"He drove to the airport and caught a flight to New York."

The comma can be dropped if two clauses with expressly stated subjects are short. In general, however, favor use of a comma.

INTRODUCING DIRECT QUOTES

Use a comma to introduce a complete, one-sentence quotation within a paragraph. Use a colon to introduce quotations of more than one sentence. Do not use a comma at the start of an indirect or partial quotation:

"He said he felt 'just wonderful' to be here."

BEFORE ATTRIBUTION

Use a comma instead of a period at the end of a quote that is followed by attribution:

"I'd like to go to the game," he said.

Do not use a comma if the quote ends with a question mark or exclamation point:

"Don't you think it will rain?" he asked.

NAMES OF STATES AND NATIONS USED WITH CITY NAMES

"He traveled from Paris, France, to Versailles, Mo., and noticed a slight change in dialect."

WITH "YES" AND "NO"

"Yes, you did." "No, I didn't."

IN DIRECT ADDRESS

"Michael, don't you have some homework?"

SEPARATING SIMILAR WORDS

Use a comma to separate duplicated words that otherwise would be confusing: "What he is, is a monster."

IN LARGE FIGURES

Use a comma for most figures higher than 999. Major exceptions are street addresses, broadcast frequencies, room numbers, serial numbers, telephone numbers and years.

PLACEMENT WITH QUOTES

Commas always go inside quotation marks.

Displayed Lists

Lists in running text usually work better as "bulleted" lists. Bulleted items look best when set with hanging indentation, which may appear (as an indented block) ... or with further indentation of runover lines.

Hanging indentation is preferred for numbered list items, but paragraph style is acceptable when

1. every item or almost every item is about one-third of manuscript page long or longer or
2. the page is to be typeset in two or more columns.

USING BULLETED LISTS

What kind of bullets to use? Round, square, diamond, or any other shape that your software can produce - just go easy on the somewhat clichéd icons like checkmarks and pointing fingers, and avoid the asterisks reminiscent of typewriter mock-dingbats.

- A formatting point: Bullets should be checked for positioning - the same amount of space should be used before each bullet and after each bullet throughout the text.

- They should also be checked for consistency - the same types of bullets should be used for the same levels of text throughout the document. For example, a square bullet could be used for the main elements in the list and a star-shaped bullet could be used for the subsections.

PUNCTUATION WITH BULLETED LISTS

Make items parallel in form and grammar. There are various ways to punctuate and consistency is the key. Try the following:

Capitalize the first letter after each bullet, even if it's not a full sentence;

- End each bulleted item with a semicolon;
- Follow the final bulleted item with a period.

Making elements in a list parallel when they're not can be annoying, but it's worth the trouble. Parallelism is the principle that says the parts of a sentence or a list that are parallel in meaning should be parallel in form. Why? To emphasize coordinate relationships.

Ellipsis (...)

- The ellipsis (properly called points of ellipsis or ellipsis periods) is used to indicate omission of words or sentences. It is used most often to remove unimportant or irrelevant matter from quotations or texts. An ellipsis is typewritten as three spaced periods (with a space at beginning and end but no space between periods).

- Use ellipsis to indicate omission in quotations or text: "The first thing ... is to hire him." Use an ellipsis in stylized writing to string together unrelated items:

"John Black is the favorite to start the game at fullback ... the next World Series should be the richest yet ..."

- Do not use an ellipsis in place of commas or dashes to indicate a pause, emphasis or apposition.

- Do not use an ellipsis to indicate an omitted profanity or obscenity use hyphens.

- When an ellipsis is used at the start of a quotation, capitalize the first word:

" ... The first priority for the nation"

- When an ellipsis is used at the end of a sentence, add a fourth point as a period or use other terminal punctuation:

"We have no choice ... !"

Essential and non-essential clauses and phrases

"Essential" and "non-essential" are used instead of "restrictive" and "non-restrictive" to convey the distinction between the two in a more easily remembered manner.

ESSENTIAL

Clauses and phrases cannot be eliminated without changing the meaning of the sentence. Do not set off essential clauses and phrases with commas:

"Students who don't pay their parking tickets won't get their final grades."

(The writer is saying that only those students who haven't paid their tickets won't get their grades, not that all students won't get their grades.)

"He took the cluster course "The American Image."

(No comma, because there are many cluster courses, and the reader wouldn't know specifically which one if it weren't named.)

NON-ESSENTIAL

Clauses and phrases add information, but they can be eliminated without changing the meaning of the sentence:

"Students, who get a lot of parking tickets, will begin asking for free parking."

(The writer is saying that all students will begin asking for free parking, not just those who get a lot of tickets.)

"He took the fall cluster course offered through the English and history departments, 'The American Image.'"

(Only one cluster course was offered. The name of the course is informative, but even without it, no other course could be meant.)

Exclamation point

Use the exclamation point to express a high degree of surprise, incredulity, or other strong emotion. Do not overuse. Place exclamation points inside quotation marks when they are part of the quoted material. Place them outside when they are not part of the quoted material. Do not use a comma or period after the exclamation mark.

Hyphen

Hyphens are joiners. Use them to avoid ambiguity or to form a single idea from two or more words. Hyphens should be used as sparingly as possible.

Use of the hyphen is far from standardized. It is optional in most cases, a matter of taste, judgment and style sense. But the fewer hyphens the better; use them only when not using them causes confusion. (Small-business owner, but health care center.) See individual entries in this book. If not listed here, use the first listed entry in Webster's New World College Dictionary. (amended example from small-businessman, in line with entry below.)

Some guidelines:

AVOID AMBIGUITY: Use a hyphen whenever ambiguity would result if it were omitted: The president will speak to small-business men. (Businessmen normally is one word. But the president will speak to small businessmen is unclear.)

Others: He recovered his health. He re-covered the leaky roof.

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 first-quarter touchdown, a bluish-green dress, a full-time job, a well-known man, a betterqualified woman, a know-it-all attitude, a very good time, an easily remembered rule.

Many combinations that are hyphenated before a noun are not hyphenated when they occur after a noun: The team scored in the first quarter. The dress, a bluish green, was attractive on her. She works full 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 man is well-known. The woman is quick-witted. The children are soft-spoken. The play is second-rate.

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 logically 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 compound 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 and suffixes entries, and separate entries for the most frequently used prefixes and suffixes.

AVOID DUPLICATED VOWELS, TRIPLED CONSONANTS: Examples: anti-intellectual, pre-empt, shell-like.

WITH NUMERALS: Use a hyphen to separate figures in odds, ratios, scores, some fractions and some vote tabulations. 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.

Parentheses

Do not use just one.

Wrong: I)

Right: (1).

Periods go inside or outside parentheses and brackets depending on whether the enclosed statement stands alone or is part of a complete sentence:

"She acted fast. (There's no time like the present.)"

"There's no time like the present (or so she thought)."

Quotation marks

DIRECT QUOTATIONS

Use the quote marks to surround the exact words of a speaker or writer:

"It's none of your business," he said.

RUNNING QUOTATIONS

If a full paragraph of quoted material is followed by a paragraph that continues the quotation, do not put closequote marks at the end of the first paragraph. Do put openquote 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 a complete sentence and continues to the next paragraph, do not use close-quote marks at the end of the paragraph. Do use close-quote marks, however, if the quoted material does not constitute a full sentence.

NOT IN TEXTS

Quotation marks are not required in full texts, condensed texts or textual excerpts.

IRONY

Put quotation marks around word or words used in an ironical sense:

The "game" soon turned into a "slugfest."

UNFAMILIAR TERMS

A word or words being introduced to readers may be placed in quotation marks on first reference: "A 'DVD' is a disk, similar to a CD, used to store computer data." Do not put subsequent references to the word in quotation marks.

PLACEMENT WITH OTHER PUNCTUATION

The period and the comma always go within the quotation marks. The dash, semicolon, question mark and exclamation point go within the quotation marks only when they apply to the quoted matter. They go outside when they apply to the whole sentence.

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.

TO CLARIFY A SERIES

Use semicolons to separate elements of a series when individual segments contain material that also must be set off by commas:

"He has a cousin, Jeff Franks of New York; two uncles, Bob and Jerry Webster of Smithville, Mo.; and a brother, John, in Kansas City."

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

TO LINK INDEPENDENT CLAUSES

Use a semicolon when a coordinating conjunction such as "and," "but" or "for" is not present:

"The package 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:

"The police called airport security, checked the bus stations, and patrolled the highways; even with those precautions, the escapee crossed the state line."

NUMERALS

General

Use Arabic numerals (1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,0) unless Roman numerals (I,V,X,L) are specifically required.

Some cases for Roman numerals are for wars and to show personal sequence for animals and people, such as World War II, King George VI.

For uses not covered by the following listings spell out whole numbers below 10, use figures for 10 and above.

IN A SERIES

Apply the appropriate guidelines, even if that means using two different styles:

"They had 12 hamburgers, five hot dogs and only 10 buns."

"She had three three-hour classes, two four-hour classes, and she bought 10 three-ring binders to keep her notes straight."

LARGE NUMBERS

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 twenty, thirty; twenty-two; thirty-three; two hundred fifty-four.

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: 300 students attended the rally.

Right: On Friday, 300 students attended the rally.

Right: 1976 was the bicentennial.

Casual expressions

Spell out casual expressions:

"I told him a hundred times."

"He walked a half a mile."

Proper names

Use words or numerals according to an organization's practice:

20th Century-Fox, Twentieth Century Fund.

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" 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.

PUNCTUATION EXAMPLES

Act 1, Scene 2

\$1.05, \$650,000

a 5-year-old girl

\$2.5 million

a ratio of 2-to-1

a 4-3 score

L-1011, 767

No. 3 choice

a 5-4 court decision

Public School 3

2nd District Court

6 percent

1970s, '70s

5 cents

Writing for the Web

Structure the text for rapid consumption. Readers scan the headings and links rather than reading all the text (scan in an F shape pattern), so the most important information should jump out at them. Bulleted lists are useful for presenting key points, but don't get carried away; too many lists will make your site read like a PowerPoint presentation.

Write in modules Smaller, conceptually related chunks make it easier for readers who skim to find what they want.

Use anchor links to help users navigate long documents For example, use a table of contents at the top of pages and on separate index pages.

Be careful when using directional words "Above," "below," "top," and "bottom" aren't necessarily meaningful in a hypertext document. Use "next" and "previous" only when you're certain that users have come from the previous page or know that they've landed in the middle of a linear document (as when the document is marked "page 3 of 13" or has other visual or textual cues).

Shorter is better Limit the length of your copy. Text-heavy pages are uninviting, and some readers will skip them altogether. Edit your text down to a reasonable size (under eight hundred words per page), and use white space, graphics and varying type sizes and weights to break up the page.

Use the TITLE tag

Make it easy for users to tell your pages apart by giving each one a distinctive, descriptive title. This is especially important for bookmarking -- try to use titles that are unique (e.g., "Job Openings at HyperMegaGlobalCorp" rather than just "Jobs").

Don't use "click here" or "more"

Links should be as clear as possible to a user who is tabbing through them with a screenreader.

Make pages printable when appropriate

Some types of documents are easier to read off-line (lengthy reports, for example). Offer versions of these designed specifically for printing (pdf, rtf, or HTML with black type on a white background and minimal graphics or navigation) for documents such as resumes, reports, receipts, etc.

Use active language

It's easy to become distracted on the Web, so keep your readers engaged by addressing them directly (whenever that's possible) and using gripping language (wherever that's appropriate).

Give your site a voice

Create a strong identity and sense of place by developing a recognizable editorial tone.

Watch the use of jargon and TLAs

Will everyone in your audience understand these? (A TLA is a three-letter acronym.) Think about offering a glossary (hyperlinked, of course) for readers who aren't familiar with your terms.

Steer clear of buzzwords

Writing on the Web tends to age rather rapidly, so avoid using overworked cliches and trendy buzzwords (just think how dated "Information Superhighway" and "cyber" are!).

updated April 2011