

# The GP Press Style Guide

*How to write right*

The Golden Gazette

*The Jacket Yearbook*

The Hive Literary Magazine

Do not use unfamiliar abbreviations, or those which are not clear from the context of the story. **When in doubt, spell it out.**

**Business firms:** Abbreviate Bros., Co., Corp., Inc., Ltd. Do not place a comma before Inc. or Ltd.: *Warner Bros., Brown Implement Co., Leather Ltd., Smith & Co. Inc.*

**Degrees (Academic):** Abbreviate degrees only when used in a listing. Do not place a space between letters: *bachelor of arts degree (B.A.), bachelor of science degree (B.S.), bachelor's degree, master's degree (M.A., M.S.), doctorate (Ph.D.).*

**Military Titles:** Air Force Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (AFJROTC) ranks are abbreviated as follows:

Cadet Officers

Cadet Colonel—C/Col.

Cadet Lieutenant Colonel—C/Lt. Col.

Cadet Major—C/Maj.

Cadet Captain—C/Capt.

Cadet First Lieutenant—C/1st Lt.

Cadet Second Lieutenant—C/2nd Lt.

Cadet Enlisted Ranks

Cadet Master Sergeant—C/Master Sgt.

Cadet Technical Sergeant—C/Tech. Sgt.

Cadet Staff Sergeant—C/Staff Sgt.

Cadet Sergeant—C/Sgt.

Cadet Airman First Class—C/A1C

Cadet Airman or Cadet Airman Basic—C/Airman

**Money:** Use the \$ and decimal system for amounts larger than one dollar. Spell out the word *cents*, using numerals for amounts less than a dollar: *\$1.01, \$2.50, \$4, 45 cents (not \$.45, 45 cts., 45c or forty-five cents).*

**Months:** Abbreviate names of months of more than five letters *only when followed by the date.*

*Jan. 10, Feb. 14, Aug. 1, Sept. 3, Oct. 31, Nov. 28, Dec. 25; Thanksgiving falls on the last Thursday of November; Feb. 2, 1987, and April 10–12, 1987.*

— After using the correct form for the month, the date is always given in figures. Never use ordinal numbers (1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.) with the date: *November 3, April 1.*

**Ordinal numbers:** Spell out and capitalize *First* through *Ninth* when used as street names; use figures with two letters for 10th and above, i.e. *2125 Second Ave., 102nd and Division.*

**Organizations:** The proper name of an organization is always written out on first reference. The title of such an organization may be abbreviated, without periods, on second reference and thereafter if it will be clearly understood by readers. Do not follow an organization's full name with an abbreviation or acronym in parentheses or set off by dashes. Abbreviate, without periods, if clearly understood: *AFJROTC, PTSA, YFC, and NHS.*

— All words in an organization's name are capitalized except the articles *a, an* and *the* and prepositions of less than five letters.

**Percent:** One word: *45 percent (not 45 per cent, never 45%).*

**Political parties:** Abbreviate when used parenthetically or in election statistics: *Sen. Mark Hatfield, R-Texas, said Republicans were...*

**Religious titles:** In general, spell out titles. The first reference to members of the clergy and nuns should include a capitalized title before the individual's name.

— Use *the Rev.* before a minister's name on first reference.

**Saint:** Abbreviate Saint in the names of saints, cities and other places: *St. Paul, St. Lawrence Seaway, Mount St. Helens.*

**Spell out:** association, department, detective, fort, mount, point or port: *Texas Journalism Education Association, History Department, Fort Hood, Texas, Mount St. Helens, Point Arena, Port of Houston.*

**States:** Abbreviate names of states only when used after the names of cities and towns. Do not use postal abbreviations to identify states. Use these abbreviations:

Ala.	Fla.	Mass.	N.C.	Pa.	Wash.
Ariz.	Ga.	Mich.	N.H.	R.I.	W. Va.
Ark.	Ill.	Minn.	N.J.	S.C.	Wis.
Calif.	Ind.	Miss.	N.M.	S.D.	Wyo.
Colo.	Kan.	Mo.	N.Y.	Tenn.	
Conn.	Ky.	Mont.	N.D.	Tex.	
Del.	La.	Neb.	Okla.	Vt.	
D.C.	Md.	Nev.	Ore.	Va.	

Do not abbreviate Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio or Utah.

**Street addresses:** Abbreviate Ave., Blvd., St. only when used with a numbered address. All similar words are always spelled out: *Drive, Lane, Road, Terrace*, etc. Abbreviate compass points (*E., N.W.*, etc.) in addresses only when used with specific street numbers.

**Time of day:** Abbreviate ante meridian (a.m.) and post meridian (p.m.) using lowercase letters and periods. Eliminate unnecessary figures and redundancies: *7 a.m.*, not 7:00 a.m.; *10 at night*, not 10 p.n. at night; *Thursday night at 10 o'clock*, not Thursday night at 10 p.m.; preferably *Thursday at 10 p.m.*

**Titles:** Abbreviate only the following titles which come before a full name: *Rep. Ron Wyden, Sen. Bob Packwood, Gov. Neil Goldschmidt, Dr. Lendon Smith, the Rev. Dan Pitney*, and certain military designations listed under "military titles" in the *AP Stylebook*. Do not abbreviate or capitalize titles which follow names: *Ron Wyden, representative; Brett Colman and Shelby Ineson, editors; Eugene Douthit, principal.*

ADec	Academic Decathlon	Dbt	Debate Team
Ag	Agriculture	<b>DECA</b>	Distributive Education Club of America
ArtC	Art Club		
AthTr	Athletic Trainer	Drm Maj	Drum Major
AutoMech	Auto Mechanics	DrmC	Drama Club
BasB	Baseball	Ed	Editor
BoG	Band of Gold	EspC	Spanish Club
BoS	Band of Steel	<b>FCA</b>	Fellowship of Christian Athletes
BoySt	Boys State	<b>FCCLA</b>	Family, Career and Community Leaders of America
<b>BPA</b>	Business Professionals of America	FdPrd	Food Production
BskB	Basketball	<b>FFA</b>	Future Farmers of America
CC	Cross Country	FrC	French Club
<b>Choir</b>	Chorale, Choir, etc.	Frs	Freshman
Chr	Cheerleader	FtB	Football
CoCpt	Co-Captain	GeoB	Geography Bee
CoEd	Co-Editor	GirlSt	Girls State
<b>Col</b>	Colonel	Golf	Golf
Cosm	Cosmetology	GrnC	German Club
<b>Capt</b>	Captain	HdChr	Head Cheerleader

HdTr	Head Trainer	ROTC	Air Force Junior Reserve
HIVE	The Hive Literary Magazine		Officers Corps
<b>HECE</b>	Home Economics Coop Education	SAB	Student Advisory Board
<b>HECP</b>	Home Economics Coop Programs	<b>SADD</b>	Students Against Drunk Driving
<b>HERO</b>		SAFE	SAFE Team
<b>Hi-Y</b>	Hi-Y Leadership	Sec	Secretary
Hist	Historian	SecLdr	Section Leader
<b>HOSA</b>	Health Occupations Society of America	SftB	Softball
<b>ICT</b>	Industrial Career and Technology	SgtArms	Sergeant at arms
Jckt	Jacketeer	Socr	Soccer
JcktEc	Jacketeer Escort	Soph	Sophomore
Jr	Junior	SqdLdr	Squad Leader
<b>JV</b>	Junior Varsity	Sr	Senior
<b>Lt</b>	Lieutenant	StuCo	Student Council
Mgr	Manager	Swm	Swimming
<b>NHS</b>	National Honor Society	<b>TAFE</b>	Texas Association of Future Educators
NP	Golden Gazette Newspaper	T&F	Track & Field
Off	Class Officer	Tens	Tennis
<b>PALs</b>	Peer Assistance Leadership	Thsp	Thespian Society
Parl	Parliamentarian	Treas	Treasurer
Pres	President	UnfMgr	Uniform Manager
<b>PRIDE</b>	Pride Team	<b>VICA</b>	Vocational Clubs of America
<b>PTSA</b>	Parent Teacher Student Association	VlyB	Volleyball
Q&S	Quill & Scroll	VP	Vice President
		YB	Yearbook The Jacket
		<b>YFC</b>	Youth For Christ
		YMCALA	YMCA Youth Leadership Academy

In general, avoid unnecessary capitals. Use a capital letter only if you can justify it by one of the principles listed here. When in doubt, don't.

### **Principles**

- Capitalize proper nouns that constitute the unique identification for a specific person, place or thing: *Timothy, Sarah, James Smith, America, Philadelphia, England, Statue of Liberty, Hispanic, African-American.*
- Lowercase the common noun elements of names in all plural uses: *the Democratic and Republican parties, Main and State streets, lakes Erie and Ontario.*
- Capitalize words that are derived from a proper noun and still depend on it for their meaning: *American, Houstonian, Christian, Christianity, English, French, Marxism, Shakespearean.*
- Capitalize the first letter of the first word in a statement that stands as a sentence: *Franklin said, "A penny saved is a penny got."*
- Capitalize the principle words in the names of books, movies, plays, poems, operas, songs, radio and television programs, works of art, etc.: *War and Peace, Moonlighting, Carmen, Rambo III, Little Shop of Horrors.*
- Capitalize words when they are followed by figures: *Highway 101, Chapter 3, Page 29, Room 220.*

### **Guidelines**

**Athletic teams:** *Jackets, Generals, Minutemen.*

**Advanced Placement Program:** *AP, AP tests, Advanced Placement English IV, Pre-AP*

**Buildings:** Capitalize the proper names and their distinguishing modifiers of buildings and official areas within the school and city: *Rountree Auditorium, Dement Field, Math Resource Center, English Resource Center, Room 220.*

**Classes:** Capitalize official class names, but use lowercase when used to identify individuals: *junior, Junior Class, senior Kari Steinbock, Class of 2002.*

**Clubs and organizations:** Capitalize the names of clubs and organizations: *Speech Team, French Club, Varsity Baseball, JV Volleyball, Boys Choir, National Honor Society, Band of Gold.*

**Committees:** Capitalize official titles of school committees: *Graduation Committee.*

**Course titles:** Capitalize only the proper name for a class: *Personal Typewriting, personal typing, English II, sophomore English, Geometry, Algebra II, algebra class.*

**Degrees:** Capitalize abbreviations of college degrees, and put no space between letters: *B.A., M.S., Ph.D., LL.D.*

**Deity:** Capitalize nouns, pronouns and adjectives used to designate the Supreme Being in any monotheistic religion: *God, Holy Spirit, Allah, He, His, Him (denoting deity).*

Lowercase *gods* and *goddesses* in references to deities of polytheistic religions.

Lowercase *god, gods* and *goddesses* in reference to false gods: *He made money his god.*

**Directions:** In general, lowercase *north, south, east* and *west* when they indicate compass directions. Capitalize these words when they designate regions: *Pacific Northwest, Snow fell in the Northeast, east, south.*

**Departments:** Capitalize formal names of high school departments (do not abbreviate the word "department"): *English Department, Science Department, Fine Arts Department.*

**Government bodies:** Capitalize congressional committees, cabinet positions, specific courts, governmental agencies, district and school governing bodies: *Senate, House, U.S. Supreme Court, Legislature (even though not preceded by a state name), Galena Park School Board (but "school board")*

**Holidays and special, historic or school events or days:** *Fourth of July, National Dog Week, New*

*Year's Eve, World War II, Christmas, Homecoming, Spirit Week, Western Day, (but do not capitalize "pep rally").*

**Junior Varsity:** Capitalize and do not use periods when using as a modifier, as in JV team. Otherwise, spell it out: *JV Baseball, JV Volleyball, JV Football.*

**Languages:** Always capitalize: *Spanish, French, English, Swahili.*

**Radio and TV stations:** Use all capital letters. Use hyphens to separate the type of station from the basic call letters: *KINK-FM, KBMY-AM, KNCT-TV.*

**Regions:** The names of specific regions are capitalized: *Pacific Northwest, Midwest, Southwest, Northeast.*

**Titles:** Capitalize specific titles preceding and attached to a name, but lowercase a title if it follows a name or stands by itself: *President Ronald Reagan; Ronald Reagan, president; Principal Eugene Douthit; Eugene Douthit, principal; Vice Principal Don Muno; Adviser Rob Melton; queen of Rosaria; Portland Rose Festival queen; Queen Kelly; Head Coach Jerry Lyons; Jim MacDicken, coach; Head Secretary Elnora Chugg; Manager Kent Kuo; Captain Blake Costello; Editor Shelby Ineson; Brett Coltman, editor.*

Lengthy titles of more than three words should be placed after the name: *Sherry Clyman, English department head (not chairman).*

Do not capitalize false titles or occupational titles: *day laborer James Delaney, junior Joe Bright, south-paw Pete Gomez, attorney John Smith, teacher Tom Unsicker, secretary Pat Johnson; library assistant Virginia Dixon, nurse Tom Ackerman, custodian Kent Boyer, counselor Bette Rhodaback (but "Head Counselor Jean White," since it is an official title).*

**Trademarks:** Use the generic description unless the trademark is essential to the story: *Scotch tape (transparent tape), Coca-Cola (soft drink), Pepsi-Cola (cola), Xerox (photocopy), Kleenex (tissue).*

### **Do NOT Capitalize:**

**Campus terms:** *alma matter, alumnus, alumni, faculty, graduate.*

**Classes:** Do not capitalize senior, junior, sophomore or freshman when used with individual names as identification, but do capitalize official class names: *Junior Class, Senior Class, junior Ruth Urry, senior Jason Luty.*

**Course titles (informal):** If in doubt, use this rule of thumb: if you are referring to a specific class then capitalize; but if you are referring to a subject or class in general, then use lowercase: *World Geograpy, history, French class, biology students, Algebra II, algebra class, Math of Money, business test, math assignment.*

**Degrees when spelled out:** *bachelor of arts degree, master's degree.*

**Directions:** *Dallas is north of Houston.*

**Governmental bodies when not used specifically:** *student body, executive board, exec board, varsity, administration, federal government, federal, nation, the church.*

**Former, ex- or -elect when used with titles:** *The President-elect knows former President Jimmy Carter and ex-President Gerald Ford.*

**Seasons:** These are lowercase except when part of a proper name for an event: *spring, summer, fall, winter, Winter Formal, Spring Fling.*

**Sports teams:** *basketball team, baseball team, Varsity Soccer, JV Soccer.*

**Time:** Figures should always be used with *a.m.* and *p.m.* Do not use double zeroes for times on the hour: *9:35 a.m., 11 p.m., 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., 3–5 p.m.*

**Titles when they follow a person's name:** This also applies in the case of the President of the United States. Lowercase in all instances except when the title comes before the name: *President Reagan (but "the president left for Camp David"); Eugene Douthit, principal.*

(HERO)\*

Academic Decathlon

Advanced Placement (AP) Pre-AP (never Pre-Advanced Placement)

Air Force Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (AFJROTC)

Art Smart Art Club (Art Club)

Athletic Trainers (trainers)

Band of Gold (band)

Band of Steel

Boys Cross Country (only use 'boys' when it is a sport played by both sexes)

Boys Freshman A Basketball

Boys Freshman B Basketball

Boys JV Basketball

Boys JV Soccer

Boys Soccer

Boys Track & Field

Boys Varsity Basketball

Boys' State

Business Professionals of America (BPA)

Cheerleaders

Choir

Chorale

Close-Up

Color Guard

Debate Team

Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA)

Drama Club

Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA)

Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA)

French Club

Freshman Class

Freshman Football

Freshman Volleyball

Future Farmers of America (FFA)

Geography Bee

German Club

Girls Cross Country

Girls Freshman Basketball

Girls JV Basketball

Girls Soccer

Girls Track & Field

Girls Varsity Basketball

Girls' State

Golden Gazette (*newspaper*)

Golf

Health Occupations Society of America (HOSA)

The Hive (literary magazine)

Hi-Y

Home Economics Cooperative Education (HECE)

Home Economics Cooperative Program (HECP)

Industrial Careers and Technology (ICT)

The Jacket (*yearbook*)

Jacketeers (*dance team*)

Junior Class

Junior Engineers & Technicians Society (JETS) \*

JV Baseball

JV Football

JV Volleyball

National Honor Society (NHS)

PALs (Peer Assistance Leadership)

Parent-Teacher-Student Association (PTSA)

PRIDE Team

Quill & Scroll

SAFE Team

Senior Class

Sophomore Class

Spanish Club

Student Advisory Board

Student Council

Students Against Drunk Driving (SADD)

Swim Team

Tennis

Texas Association of Future Educators (TAFE)

Thespians Society

Varsity Baseball

Varsity Football

Varsity Softball

Varsity Volleyball

Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (VICA)

YMCA Youth Leadership Academy

Youth For Christ (YFC)

Use a person's full name on first reference and last name in subsequent references, except for students. Students should be identified by first name beginning with the second reference, except when there are two students with the same first name in the same story, then the full name must be used every time. Identify a person on first reference, if possible, by title, class or position. Age, address, achievements, occupation or special interest may also be the basis of identification if it is relevant to the story. Verify the spelling of all names with the school's directory, and double-check the data used to identify people. In general, people are entitled to be known however they want to be known, as long as their identities are clear.

**-On first reference, identify a person by title, class or position:** *Principal Eugene Douthit, history teacher Nancy Lee, seniors Brett Coltman and Shelby Ineson, center Cindy Murphy.*

Avoid use of double identification in a story, especially in sports, unless it is relevant to know both: *center Cindy Murphy (not "junior center Cindy Murphy"); yearbook adviser Tom Unsicker (not "yearbook adviser and art teacher Tom Unsicker").*

**-Always use a person's first name (or initials) and last name the first time they appear in a story:** *John K. Jamison, Judy Dayton.*

**-When initials are used in place of the first name, a space should not appear between the initials:** *J.T. Tolles, H.L. Mencken, J.R.R. Tolkien.*

**-Courtesy titles such as Mr. or Ms. should only be used when identifying non-students and never use Miss or Mrs.**

**-On second reference of students, you may use their first names, but if there are two persons with the same first name in a story, you must use full names. Never identify a non-student by first name only, always use the last name.**

**-Abbreviate only the following titles when they come before a name:** Dr., Gov., Lt. Gov., the Rev., Rep., Sen., and certain military titles listed under "military titles" in the *AP Stylebook*: *Gov. Neil Goldschmidt, Dr. John Crane, Sen. Mark Hatfield.*

**-Do not abbreviate the following titles:** president, principal, deputy, general manager, secretary-general, secretary, assistant principal, attorney general, treasurer, vice president, superintendent, professor.

**-Do not abbreviate or capitalize titles that stand alone or follow names:** *Ted Kennedy, senator; Ron Wyden, representative; Jennie Acker, editor.*

**-Do not use a business, trade or occupation as a title:** *plumber John Sink, carpenter Vanessa Hammer.*

**-Long titles of three or more words should follow the name:** *Mark Melton, deputy district attorney; Herman Lawson, assistant to the superintendent.*

**-A formal title is used to show authority, professional or academic achievement.** It precedes the full name and is used on first mention only. Formal titles always accompany the full names of U.S. presidents, heads of state and other world figures: *Dr. Matthew Prophet...Prophet said; President Ronald Reagan; Secretary of State George P. Shultz.*

**-Sports titles:** Capitalize titles preceding names, except for player positions. If the title is preceded by a qualifying word, use all lowercase: *Coach Jim MacDicken, head coach Dick Beachell, Coach Beachell, defensive coach Jerry Lyons, center James Williams, defensive lineman John Mack, Captain Ruth Barber, co-captain Carl White, Manager John Tolls, varsity baseball coach Mike Clopton.*

A *numeral* is a figure, letter, word or group of words expressing a number.

**Roman numerals** use the letters I, V, X, L, C, D and M to represent the numbers 1, 5, 10, 100, 500 and 1,000, respectively.

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

**Figures** 2, 4, 20, 204, etc., and their corresponding words two, four, twenty, two hundred four, etc., are called *cardinal numbers*.

**Ordinal number** is the term which applies to 2nd, 4th, 20th, 204th, second, fourth, twentieth, two hundred fourth, etc.

### **Principles**

**In general, spell out numerals one through nine and use figures for 10 (ten) and above:** *nine students; 10 football players; three tests; \$21.5 million; eight cows, 1,200 people; ninth place, 11th place.*

**Spell out numerals when they begin sentences:** *Eight hundred students attended the ILPC High School Press Day Oct. 18 at Texas State University.*

**In a series where both words and figures should be used, use the simplest parallel form:** *They had four 4-room houses, ten 3-room houses and twelve 10-room houses.*

**Use commas in figures above 1,000:** *1,980 horses; 23,528 votes; \$1,700.*

**Use Roman numerals for wars and to show personal sequence for animals, people and acts of plays:** *World War I, Lassie II, King Henry VIII, Pope John Paul II, Act II.*

**Spell out ordinal numbers** *first* through *ninth* when they indicate sequence in time or location, such as street names. Beginning with *10th*, use figures: *2125 Second Ave., 102nd and Division, second base, First Amendment, she was fifth in line, the team finished 11th.*

**When using fractions, spell out amounts less than 1, using hyphens between the numerals:** *one-third, three-eighths, five-sixteenths.*

**Use figures in reporting ages, dates, times, measurements, finances and names with numerals**

**Use No. 1, No. 2 candidate,** *not* number one or number 1.

**Capitalize words when they are used with a figure:** *Page 2, Precinct 24, Room 220.*

### **Guidelines**

**Addresses:** Use figures in numbered addresses: *532 W. Eighth St., 1630 E. 11th Ave.*

**Ages:** Use figures in reporting the ages of people and animals: *Timothy is 5 years old; 18-year-old Sarah; 11-month-old James.*

**Centuries:** Use an ordinal figure to name a century. Capitalize the word *century* when it is preceded by ordinal figures: *2nd Century, 10th Century, 20th Century.*

**Chapters:** Figures are used for identification of a chapter, paragraph, scene, shot, etc. Capitalize chapter, paragraph, scene, etc., when used with a figure if referring to specific sections of a book or legal code. Lowercase when standing alone: *Chapter 4, Paragraph 2, Scene 2, Act II, in this chapter, in that act.*

**Dates:** The date is always given in figures. Never use ordinal numbers (1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.). The current year is never included in a date: *April 1, 1985; The game was Oct. 2.*

**Decades:** Use Arabic figures to indicate a decade, an apostrophe in place of numerals that are left out, and add the letter *s* to form a plural: *the 1980s, the '20s, the Roaring '20s, the mid-1970s.*

**Dimensions:** Use figures, and spell out the words *inches, feet, yards*, etc., to indicate depth, height, length and width. Hyphenate compound adjectives when they come directly before a

noun: *She is 6 feet 4 inches tall, the 6-foot-4-inch woman, the 6-foot-4 woman, the 6-foot woman, the basketball team signed a 7-footer, the rug is 9 feet by 12 feet, the 9-by-12 rug, 5 inches of snow.*

**Distances:** Use figures for 10 and above, and spell out *one* through *nine*. To convert to kilometers, multiply by 1.6 (15 miles x 1.6 equals 24 kilometers): *He hiked four miles; She swam 12 miles; He finished third in the 24K Salmon Run.*

**Money:** Figures are used for sums of money, except for casual references. When money is in the millions, use the dollar sign, figures and decimals as necessary, spelling out the word million. Omit zeroes and punctuation when sums are even: *\$4; \$6.85; 4 cents; \$39.45 million; Dad, please give me a dollar; She is worth exactly \$2,431,985; She is worth \$2.4 million.*

**Percentages:** Percents (one word) are always given in figures: 1 percent, 2.5 percent, 10 percent, .06 percent.

**Ratios:** Use figures and a hyphen. The word *to* should be omitted when the numbers come before the word *ratio*, and a colon should be substituted: *the ratio was 3-to-1, a ratio of 4-to-1, a 5:1 ratio, a 3-for-1 stock split, 3:2 gear ratio.*

**Rooms:** Use figures and capitalize room: *Room 5, Room 220, Room 205A.*

**Scores:** Use figures exclusively. Place a hyphen between the totals of the winning and losing teams. When reporting scores, a parallel form should be used: *It was a 5-0 victory. Trojans 16, Generals 3. Wilson lost the match 4-8. Grant beat Jefferson 48-36.*

**Sizes:** Use figures exclusively: *size 6 shoe, coat size 42 regular, dress size 5.*

**Speeds:** Use figures exclusively. Avoid extensive hyphenation such as 5-mile-per-hour winds: *The posted speed was 55 mph; Winds of 7 to 9 knots are expected; the motorcycle slowed to 5 mph.*

**Telephone numbers:** Use figures. Set off area code with parenthesis: *For more information, call (503)280-5138, except local numbers 713-679-6000.*

**Temperatures:** Use figures for all Fahrenheit temperatures except zero, which is spelled out. Use the word *minus* to indicate temperatures below zero.

**Time:** For time of day, figures should always be used with a.m. and p.m. and a 12-hour clock. Omit minutes when time is on the hour: *7 a.m., 11:36 p.m.*

— For duration of time, such as times in races, use figures and the following form to indicate hours, minutes, seconds, tenths: *He finished the Salmon Run marathon in a record 2:47:25.7 (2 hours, 47 minutes, 25.7 seconds).*

**Year:** Dates in the current year are never followed by the year. When referring to dates in years preceding or following the current one, always use the date and year: *Sept. 15 (of the current year); July 4, 1776; Jan. 1, 2000.*

## Quotation

Anything a person says is open for a quotation. Not everything a person says is equally important or interesting. The best interviewer can not write down every word in an interview.

### Types of quotations

**Direct quotations** are used to report word-for-word what a speaker said, and are placed inside quotation marks. Accuracy in using direct quotes is especially important because any error you make is with someone else's words.

A quote should be absolutely accurate, but not exact. Some writers clean up the grammar and delete the expletives (foul language). Do not do this, if you do not like the quote as it was spoken, rewrite it as *indirect quotation*.

In reporting routine news, not everyone you interview is going to have a prepared statement or speech, particularly when you are quoting offhand remarks in a meeting or interview where the speaker did not have a chance to think through his or her remarks.

*-Few people use perfect grammar when they are speaking to someone else.* Your job is to present your subjects to readers essentially the way they are. You should only touch up a quotation when you are writing a news story, and then only to the extent allowed by the next three rules.

1) *Faulty grammar may be polished if the person you are quoting would recognize the errors in print*—nouns and pronouns may not agree, subjects and verbs may be mismatched, participles may dangle, infinitives may be split, and people may repeat themselves.

2) *If your subject can't put two phrases together without committing mayhem on the language, you will be perpetrating a fraud on your readers if you don't quote the speaker that way—so don't.*

3) *You cannot make up quotations*, not even if you ask permission of the person to quote them the way you've written it. This is unethical, and anyone caught doing it will be summarily dismissed from the staff.

*-A good interviewer is also a good observer.* Verbatim reporting cannot by itself take into account the gestures, inflections, interruptions or body language of the speaker. These require accompanying description with the quotation.

**Indirect quotations** present speakers' ideas mainly in their own words, but not entirely. Quotation marks are not used. The advantages to using indirect quotations are: 1) it permits a modest condensing, 2) it permits the writer to untangle difficult and confusing sentences, 3) it allows the writer to improve grammar, and 4) it takes care of moments when the writer doesn't get the comment down as a direct quotation:

**Paraphrased quotations** are the reporter's own words for what the speaker said. Again, no quotation marks are used.

**Modified quotations** use a combination of direct and paraphrased quotations. They are useful when the speaker has used a few colorful words in an otherwise routine comment. AP says don't overdo this type of quotation, primarily because it is overused by the professional media:

**Dialogue** is used when two or more speakers are quoted exchanging comments. It is common in court trial reporting, and sometimes makes a news article more readable and dramatic.

## **When to use quotations**

**A direct quotation is a dash of spice**, and as all successful writers have discovered, it is most effective when used sparingly. Once writers know when to use quotations, they can use a variety of interviewing techniques to gather quotes which are concrete, colorful, vivid and authentic. In his book *Creative Interviewing*, author Ken Metzler suggests a quotation should be used when it serves at least one of the following 10 functions:

1. Provides color
2. Lends authenticity and realism to the story
3. Increases reader interest in the story
4. Personalizes the story for the reader
5. Moves the story along
6. Reveals something crucial about the subject
7. Expresses a thought better than the writer can
8. Reveals character traits about a subject
9. Captures dramatic moments better than plain text could
10. Suggests universal truths

**If you don't have the raw material, all the advice in the world on how to use quotations is not going to help much.** Great quotations are the mark of successful writers, for without them stories would be flat and lifeless. It's no accident that successful writers consistently come up with lively, startling and revealing quotations. What is their secret? 1) They begin with planning and preparation before the interview; 2) use a variety of strategies in the interview itself to obtain the types of quotations which make for interesting reading; 3) carefully select their quotations from their interview notes, and 4) incorporate them effectively into the story.

**Don't use a quotation if you can't justify its use in the story.** *It's worse to use a poor quote than to use no quote at all.* Editors and advisers expect good quotations, because they demonstrate that the writer had done adequate research. But quotations may not be appropriate for every story. A good writer learns when to use them and when not to.

## **Quotation Rules**

1. **All direct quotations, complete or fragmentary, are enclosed in quotation marks.**
2. **Quotation marks should be placed only at the beginning and end of quotations**, not at the beginning and ending of every sentence, regardless of how many sentences a quotation contains.
3. **Follow normal rules of punctuation within quotations.** That means when you come to the end of a sentence, put a period there and start the next sentence.
4. **Commas, periods and any other punctuation which come at the end of a quotation go inside the quotation marks.**
5. **Quotations within quotations (interior quotes) take single quotation marks and follow the same rules as full quotations in every other respect.** There is no space between the single and double quotation marks.
6. **If the attribution is placed after a quotation, the last sentence in the quotation is followed by a comma, not a period.**
7. **If the attribution is placed before the quotation, the last sentence is followed by a period and close quotation marks.**

8. **Quotations should begin a new paragraph.** Otherwise, the quotation may become buried in a long paragraph. It is almost always better to begin with a quotation instead of the credit line.
9. **Do not reintroduce the source throughout a continuous quotation.** It is necessary to fully introduce the source only once in a block of continuous quotation—at the first natural break.
10. **Quotations that require an excessive amount of explanation should be paraphrased.**
11. **Avoid unnatural breaks that split the sense of the quotation such as the following:**  
“He went to the post office and there,” she said, “he pulled out a gun and started shooting at people.”
12. **Do not place quotation marks around one or two words.**
13. **Quotations should not repeat previously paraphrased information.** Use one or the other—not both.
14. **Don’t put routine data or comments in quotations.**
15. **In quoting someone, use dialect and slang sparingly, unless it adds an essential ingredient to the story.**
16. **Provide transition between quotations by different speakers when they are in adjoining paragraphs.**

### **Attribution**

There are basically two parts to every quotation: 1) the quotation itself, and 2) the attribution. Attribution consists of a **credit line**—a word or phrase that identifies who said what, and the identification of **authority**—a word or phrase that gives the title or position of the speaker. The speaker’s authority should be relevant to the story.

### **Attribution Rules**

1. **Attribution allows readers to decide for themselves how credible a source is.**
2. **The attribution of a quotation should be placed where it fits best**—at the beginning, middle or end of the quotation—but never beyond the end of the first sentence of a quotation, and never at the end of a paragraph.
3. **Attribution should never be placed in the middle of a sentence if it interrupts an idea.**
4. **In direct quotations, the credit line must always be attached to the first sentence of quoted matter, usually in its body or at its close.**
5. **One credit line does the job for any continuous quotation within quotation marks, no matter what its length.**
6. **If attribution comes before a quotation, a comma follows the attribution introducing a one-sentence quotation.**
7. **The subject/verb grammatical pattern is the most common in our language.** Keep to this format with most attribution: *“It’s one game at a time for us,” said head coach Dick Beachell.*
8. **Quotations should be attributed to people, not inanimate objects such as high schools, libraries, hospitals or other institutions or organizations:** *According to a spokesman at Emmanuel Hospital, the hiker was still listed in critical condition.*
9. **If the reporter is an eyewitness, she does not have to cite an authority.** Sports reporting often involves a reporter giving a first-hand account of a game.
10. **For information gathered second-hand, such as the names of victims or damage estimates, the reporter must give the source of this information.**
11. **Avoid beginning one-sentence quotations with attribution.** It is almost always better left at the end of the sentence.
12. **If there are two or more sources in one story, it must be immediately clear to the reader**

**who is saying what.**

13. **Build bridges—or transitions—between quotations, especially when there is more than one source involved.** The reader should always know who is speaking.

14. **Few words are as effective as *said*.** Others are pretentious and distracting, not the mark of a careful writer. Researchers indicate the reader confidence level is much higher with the use of the word *said* than with any other attribution words. *Said* is neutral, concise and appropriate for most remarks.

15. ***Said* should appear often enough to remind the reader that a third party is the source of the information.**

16. **Do not write “when asked.” Simply say what the speaker said.**

17. **Do not wind up a final paragraph attribution with “he concluded.”**

**And/or**

Avoid this shortcut. Instead of writing “You may file change of major forms on Monday and/or Tuesday,” write “. . . on Monday or Tuesday.”

**Etc.**

Etc. is frequently tacked onto a series to mask an imprecise or incomplete thought. It usually may be omitted, but if used, don’t say “and etc.” since et cetera means and the rest.

**Gender References.**

When the context requires gender pronouns, use plural forms of pronouns, or he or she or his and hers, but avoid he/she, him/her, and s/he.

Prefer inclusive references such as humankind and human-made to mankind and man-made; use inclusive verbs such as to staff a table rather than to man a table.

**It’s/its**

Don’t confuse it’s for its. It’s is a contraction meaning it is. Its is a possessive pronoun (hers, his, its). It’s a requirement that each department have its own chair.

**-ize Words**

Use -ize words sparingly and only if they are words found in the dictionary.

**Jargon**

Prefer the simple and direct word or phrase. Consider the following substitutes:

enclosed please find . . . here is or enclosed is  
 in terms of . . . about or other preposition  
 the fact that . . . that  
 owing to the fact that . . . since  
 in order to . . . to  
 in a hasty manner . . . hastily  
 there is no doubt that . . . no doubt  
 the reason why is that . . . because  
 deadline date . . . deadline  
 student body . . . students  
 being as, being that . . . since, because

**Less/fewer**

Use fewer when referring to numbers, less with quantity, value, degree, or amount.

**Redundancy.**

Avoid unnecessary repetition. One clear and precise statement should be enough.

**Shall/will.**

Shall is seldom used. In formal writing, the future tense requires shall for the first person, will for the second and third. The form to express the speaker’s belief regarding future action or state is I shall; I will expresses determination or consent.

**So as Intensifier.**

Avoid, in writing, the use of so as an intensifier.

**Think/believe/feel.**

Use think or believe when the response is intellectual. Use feel when the response is emotional. Instead of writing “We feel that this problem needs to be addressed,” write “We believe . . .”

**Unique.**

Unique means “without like or equal.” Thus, there can be no degrees of uniqueness, as in “the most unique . . .”

**Who/that.**

Use who to refer to persons, that to refer to things.

Professor Jones, who teaches Asian history, spent a year in Japan.

professors who . . .

Buildings that still have asbestos . . .

**Who/whom.**

Who can be used only for subjects and subject complements. Whom can be used only for objects.

School bullies want to take on the guy who they know will not hurt them.

Who is responsible for this decision?

The tutor whom I was assigned to was very supportive. (or “. . . to whom I was assigned . . .”)

Whom did the committee select?

Grammar gives order to the way words *work* in our language. Spelling, on the other hand, gives a uniformity to the way our words *look*. Consistency in the way words are spelled allows readers to easily recognize and understand them.

Spelling is also a reflection of our country's culture. Our founding fathers brought with them the English language as it was written and spoken in Great Britain. In the struggle for political as well as linguistic independence, many British spellings were removed and replaced with American spellings: *theatre* became *theater*, and *judgement* became *judgment* and *humour* became *humor*, for example. Wordsmiths, led by Noah Webster and influenced by Benjamin Franklin, also streamlined a number of other awkward words into their modern equivalents: *publick* became *public*, *centre* became *center* and *licence* became *license*.

History aside, our words are derived and adapted from a number of other languages. This has complicated efforts to come up with clear, simple spelling rules. Good spelling is also difficult to achieve because the rules have a number of exceptions. That leaves writers with only one practical choice: *Look it up*.

By sounding out the word, writers can quickly eliminate incorrect spellings and through a process of elimination will find the correct spelling.

The other alternatives are to memorize the rules and exceptions, or to memorize lists of commonly misspelled words.

Looking it up in a dictionary is the key to successful spelling.

Follow these steps with any words you misspell regularly:

1. Look up the word in the dictionary.
2. Study the spelling of the word and its meaning.
3. Fix in your mind the exact appearance of the word, paying particular attention to its division into syllables.
4. Pronounce the word aloud several times, syllable by syllable.
4. Write the word, using a slash to divide it into syllables.
5. Write the word 10 times to help you remember how to spell it correctly.
6. Study the word again.
7. Underline the parts of the word that give you trouble.
8. Keep a list of your own "spelling demons." Add new words to your list as you come across them. Devote as much time as you believe is needed to reviewing the words which give you trouble. Make sure you can spell the word correctly without using the dictionary.

a cappella (choir)  
**a lot (two words)**  
absence  
accidentally  
accommodate  
accumulate  
acknowledgment  
**acquainted**  
adviser (not advisor)  
advisory  
aisle  
**all right (two words)**  
AP (no periods)  
appetite  
arguing  
assistance  
**athlete**  
athletics  
beggar  
**believe**  
benefited  
blond (male)  
blonde (female)  
bookkeeper  
bouillon  
bus, busses  
biscuit  
bussing  
cafeteria  
canceled  
**career**  
cemetery  
changeable  
committee  
conceive  
conscience  
conscientious  
conscious  
consensus  
cooperate  
coordinate  
**council**  
**counselor**  
criticism  
curriculum  
cymbal  
defense  
definite  
deity  
desperate  
dilemma  
**disappoint**  
**disappear**  
discipline  
disease  
dissipate  
**earring**

ecstasy  
eligible  
**embarrass**  
English  
entrepreneur  
equipped  
erroneous  
exaggerate  
existence  
facility  
**friend**  
flexible  
forty  
fulfill  
gelatin  
grammar  
half-time  
harass  
Homecoming  
inadvisable  
incidentally  
inconsistent  
incredible  
indestructible  
inseparable  
interfere  
intermittent  
intramural  
it's (it is)  
its (possessive)  
judgment  
kidnapped  
liable  
liaison  
lineup  
literature  
loose  
lose (loss)  
maintenance  
mischievous  
minstrel  
**misspelled**  
ninety  
ninth  
notable  
noticeable  
occasion  
occurred  
**occurrence**  
offense  
pamphlet  
parallel  
paraphernalia  
pastime  
pep-rally  
**piece**  
picnic

picnicking  
poll  
precede  
preference  
preparation  
principal (of a school)  
principle (moral)  
privilege  
query  
questionnaire  
quizzes  
rebuttal  
receipt  
**receive**  
recommend  
referee  
rescind  
reversible  
rhythm  
runner-up  
satellite  
schedule  
semifinal  
sensible  
separate  
shepherd  
**sophomore**  
speech  
sponsor  
subtle  
superintendent  
supersede  
syllable  
teenage (no hyphen)  
temperamental  
theater (not theatre, which is British spelling)  
their (possessive)  
there (place)  
they're (they are)  
thorough  
**tomorrow**  
tragedy  
transferred  
traveled  
try out (verb)  
tryout (noun)  
unnerving  
verbatim  
villain  
Wednesday  
weird  
yacht

**Baseball/Softball:** The following are correct spellings for frequently used terms: backstop, ball club, ballpark, ballplayer, base line, bullpen, center field, center fielder, double play, fair ball, fastball, first baseman, foul ball, foul tip, ground-rule double, home plate, left-hander, line drive, lineup, outfielder, put out (v.), putout (n.), pinch hit, pinch hitter, pitchout, RBI, rundown, sacrifice, sacrifice fly, shortstop, shut out, slugger, squeeze play, strike, strike zone, triple play, wild pitch

**Basketball:** The following are correct spellings for frequently used terms: backboard, back court, baseline, field goal, foul line, foul shot, free throw, free-throw line, front court, full-court press, goaltending, half-court press, half-time, hook shot, jump ball, jump shot, lay-up, man-to-man, mid-court, playoff, zone

**Boys and girls:** Use *boys* and *girls* to designate teams. Do not use an apostrophe: the team does not belong to the boys or to the girls, but to the school. In most cases, *boys* or *girls* is used as part of a noun phrase: *The girls basketball team placed third in UIL competition. The boys track team placed fifth in state competition.*

**Compound adjectives:** The hyphen is used to form compound adjectives that precede the noun: *60-yard dash, 23-foot jump, 6-foot-5 center, 20-point lead, first-round loss, come-from-behind victory, 10th-ranked team, seventh-inning stretch.*

**Dimensions:** Use figures for heights and dimensions according to the following style: *6-foot-5 forward, 6-foot forward, 24-foot jump, He is 6-foot-5, He is 6-feet-10-inches tall.*

**District:** Galena Park is a part of UIL District 23-AAAA

District Members are:

CE King ( <i>not C.E.</i> )	Panthers (blue/white)
Channelview	Falcons (blue/gold)
Dickinson	Gators (blue/white)
Friendswood	Mustangs (blue/white)
Galena Park	Yellowjackets (black/gold)
La Marque (two words)	Cougars (blue/gold)
Santa Fe	Indians (green/gold)
Texas City	Stingarees or Stings (black/red)

**Event titles:** Capitalize official titles of districts and meets, but lowercase shortened titles: *District 5AAA Championship, District 5AAA, Mid-western League, Southern Valley League, state, the team went to state, district meet.*

**Field events measurements:** Use figures for track and field events that do not involve running. Type 26-1/2 to express 26 feet, 6 inches (note hyphen between whole number and fraction).

**Football:** The following are correct spellings for frequently used terms: ball carrier, ball club, blitz, end line, end zone, fair catch, field goal, fourth-and-one, fullback, goal line, goal-line stand, halfback, half-time, hand-off, kick off, left guard, linebacker, lineman, line of scrimmage, out of bounds, place, kicker, playoff, quarterback, run back, running back, tight end, tailback, touchback, touchdown, wide receiver

**Golf:** The following are correct spellings for frequently used terms: birdie, bogey, eagle, fairway, tee

**Junior varsity:** Capitalize and do not use periods when abbreviating junior varsity. Always abbreviate JV when it is used as a modifier, as in JV team. Otherwise, spell it out: *JV baseball, JV volleyball, JV football, the junior varsity team.*

**Leagues:** Capitalize and abbreviate — without periods — the names of certain athletic leagues on second and subsequent references: *University Interscholastic League on first reference, UIL on subsequent reference.*

**Numerals:** Spell out *one* through *nine* and use figures for 10 and above for most other numbers. *8-point lead, 19-point lead, first quarter, second-quarter lead, nine field goals, 10 field goals, sixth place, 10th place, fourth-ranked team, first base, seventh inning, No. 1 team, No. 2 player.*

**Play off:** always TWO words

**Reporting scores:** Use figures only. When reporting scores, a parallel form should be used. Place a hyphen between the totals of the winning and losing teams: *Galena Park lost the match 4-8. Grant beat Jefferson 48-36. They won, 7-2. The final score was 1-0. the score was Galena Park 8, Lincoln 6. It was a 5-0 victory.*

**Reporting records:** Use figures only: *The pitcher's record is now 6-5. The team now has a 12-0-2 record.*

**Team names:** Capitalize team names: Trojans, Cardinals, Generals, Green and White.

**Teams:** Do not capitalize team designations: *The varsity team, basketball team, soccer team.*

**Tennis:** The following are correct spellings for frequently used terms: match, double fault, love, deuce, set

**Times events:** A colon is used in writing figures that show time and timed events in sports: *They won in 1:02:45.8 (1 hour, 2 minutes, 45.8 seconds). His time was 2:45.8 (2 minutes, 45.8 seconds).*

**Titles:** Capitalize titles preceding names, except for player positions. If the title is preceded by a qualifying word, use all lowercase: *Coach Jim MacDicken, head coach Dick Beachell, Coach Beachell, defensive coach Jerry Lyons, center James Williams, defensive lineman John Mack, Captain Ruth Barber, co-captain Carl White, Manager John Tolls, varsity baseball coach Mike Clopton.*

**Two-person team:** Use a slash between names of a two-person team: team of Jane Smothers/Jan Lido.

**Varsity:** Do not capitalize varsity unless it is part of a proper name *Varsity Jackets Basketball, varsity basketball.*

**Yardage:** Use figures for yardage: *The ball was on the 5 yard line. He plunged in from the 2. Smith went for a 7-yard gain. He gained 5 yards.*

All-American	goaltending	outscore
All-district	half-court pass	overall
All-state	half-time	play off (verb)
berth	JV	playoff (adj., noun)
bullpen	lay-up	(playoff berth,
category	lay-in	made the playoffs)
cross country	left-hander	pre-season
co-captain	lineup (noun)	quarterback
defender	line up (verb)	runner-up
defensive	long jump	semifinal
definitely	man-to-man	standout
field goal	mid-court	teammate
foul line	offensive	touchback
free throw	opponent	touchdown
free-throw line	outdistanced	tournament/tourney
fullback	outfielder	varsity

Punctuation is meant to help your readers understand a story, and consists mainly of stop, pause and go signals. The standard rules of punctuation learned in high school English classes are also generally applicable in journalistic writing. Even the experts, however, disagree on some points; therefore, treat these entries as guidelines rather than rules (but ones which should be followed consistently). If not covered here, first consult the *AP Stylebook* or a dictionary.

### Period [.]

**Quotes:** A period is *always* placed inside quotation marks (except when a logical or exact distinction is desired in specialized work in which clarity is more important than usual). Other punctuation marks go inside when they are part of the quoted material: *“I saw the play,” he said. He said, “I saw the play.” “Did you see the play?” he asked. Should I see “King Lear”? Replying with the one word “Bunk”, he subsided. When you are ready to save a file, go to the “File” menu and drag down to “Save”.*

**Abbreviations:** Use a period after most abbreviations: *B.A., M.A., Ph.D., Jr., the Rev., Feb. 2, 3001 N.E. 31st Ave.*

**Decimal point:** Use a period as a decimal point: *\$15.45, 25.5 percent, 101.5 degrees, .325 batting average.*

**Ellipsis:** Three periods are used to form an ellipsis, which indicates omission of words. On the Macintosh, the ellipsis is created by using the Option+semicolon (;) keys. Treat it as a three-letter word, with spaces on both sides and no space between the periods within the ellipsis: *Webster defines ellipsis as the “omission of one or more words ... necessary to make the expression grammatically complete.”*

— When words are deleted from the end of a complete sentence, the original period is kept and the ellipsis consists of four periods: *Webster defines ellipsis....*

**Brackets and parentheses:** Put a period inside brackets or parentheses when a complete sentence is enclosed in brackets or parentheses: *(The day was too hot for baseball.)*

— When the parenthetical expression forms only part of the sentence, put the period outside the bracket or parenthesis: *The day was too cold for football (or skiing).*

**Acronyms and organizations:** Do not use a period after initials of commonly accepted or widely known organizations, buildings, activities, etc.: *OSU, FBI, GPHS, PTA, NASA, USDA.*

— Use periods after U.S. and U.N. Remember that U.S. and U.N. are only abbreviated when used as adjectives.

### Comma [,]

**With conjunctions:** A comma is sometimes used to separate two independent clauses joined by the coordinate conjunctions *and, or, nor, but, yet* or *for*; however, the trend is toward eliminating the commas when the clauses are short.

**For clarity:** Commas are used to separate words or figures that might be misunderstood: *What the problem is, is not clear.*

**For indicating omission:** Commas are used to indicate the omission of a word common to both parts of the sentence and easily understood: *Talent is inherited; genius, never.*

— Commas are also used to replace the coordinating conjunction when it is omitted from the series: *He ran to the car, turned on the ignition, sped off down the street.*

**In quotes:** A comma is always placed inside quotation marks.

**In a simple series:** Do not put a comma before the conjunction in a simple series: *The flag is red, white and green.*

**In a complex series:** Commas are used to separate phrases and clauses in a complex series. In such a series, a comma should be placed before the final conjunction in a series: *ILPC provides specific opportunities for students and teachers to learn more about journalism, to improve their skills and*

abilities in actual practice, and to provide enrichment opportunities for all.

**Non-essential clause:** Commas are used to set off a non-essential clause. When referring to a human being or an animal with a name, it should be introduced by *who* or *whom* in either type of clause. *Which* is the only acceptable pronoun to introduce a non-essential clause referring to an inanimate object or animal without a name: *John Brown, who formerly attended the university, enrolled again. The ball, which bounced merrily down the street, was red.*

**Essential clauses:** If it is an essential clause, necessary to the meaning of the sentence, no commas are used. *That* is the preferred pronoun to introduce essential clauses that refer to an inanimate object or an animal without a name: *The man who is standing under the tree is my father. The squirrel that ran across the lawn had an acorn in his mouth.*

**Appositives:** Commas are used to set off words and phrases that are used as appositives. An appositive is a phrase that means the same thing as or explains the word it follows: *John Bagstead, chairman of the Math Department, signed the petition.*

—The only exception to this rule is the use of a single word as an appositive in a sentence such as this: *Her daughter Mary has gone to Florida.*

**Essential and non-essential phrases:** Commas are used to set off parenthetical words and phrases. Use of commas rather than dashes for this purpose is encouraged. Be careful to set off an adverb or adverbial phrase that modifies an entire clause or sentence: *The mother found it impossible, however, to pay the bills. His story, in the first place, is inaccurate. On the other hand, the story is plausible.*

**With dates and states:** Commas are used to set off the year in a date, to set off the date from the day of the week, and the state from the city: *The enemy invaded Aug. 20, 1969, and seized control of the government. The ceremony took place on Friday, May 16, in Los Angeles. She lived in Vancouver, Wash., for 19 years.*

**With titles and degrees:** Commas are used to set off titles or degrees given after a name: *John Jones promoted Wayne J. Jackson, Ph.D., to full professor. He entertained Hugh McKinley, city manager, at a dinner.*

**Introductory phrases:** Commas are used to set off participial and infinitive phrases or long prepositional phrases that precede the main clause. A comma is unnecessary after a short prepositional phrase unless it is needed for clarity: *In Texas, weather prophets are difficult to find. After his years in Washington, Nixon said.... Having suffered heavy losses, the troops withdrew. To win ball games, a team must have good pitching.*

**Introductory clauses:** Commas are used to set off introductory essential clauses. This is one of the most important uses of the comma. Unless the introductory clause is very short, the commas should be used to set it off: *If another widespread coal strike takes place during the next five weeks, the entire country will suffer. If he gets in late he will telephone.*

**When dependent follows independent clause:** No commas is usually needed if the dependent clause follows the independent clause: *He said the community would suffer unless there is an increase in the water supply.*

**With hometowns, ages and addresses:** Use commas to set off ages, hometowns and street addresses, except before *of* phrases indicating the hometown (the generally preferred style). This also applies to vital statistics and to court records: *Jeff Smith Jr. of Portland is missing. Jeff Smith Jr., 23, Portland, is missing. Jeff Smith Jr., 23, 2345 First Ave., Portland, is missing.*

**With Jr. and Sr.:** No commas is used between a person's name and Jr. or Sr.: *James P. Morgan Jr., John James Sr.*

## Semicolon [;]

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

**To link independent clauses:** Use a semicolon to separate independent clauses that are not connected by a coordinate conjunction: *The motion is before the council; the mover cannot withdraw it.*

**To clarify a series:** A semicolon is used to separate phrases and clauses that are punctuated initially with a comma or commas. Note that in this case a semicolon is used before the final conjunction *and*: *The officers are Jack Jones, president; Raymond Nixon, vice-president; Sam Kruch, secretary; and Phil Dons, treasurer.*

**To clarify phrases containing commas:** A semicolon is used to separate phrases that contain commas, particularly when the meaning otherwise would be unclear: *It is well known that Joe Smart is an exceedingly clever, witty and nimble writer; that he has read widely and remembered well; and that he is wonderfully adept at communicating his appreciation to others.*

## Colon [:]

The colon simply means “note what follows.”

**To introduce quotations:** The colon is used to introduce a formal quotation, such as statements and excerpts from speeches or writings. If the quotation is longer than one sentence, it should start a new paragraph.

**To emphasize:** The colon is used to introduce an explanatory statement: *The question is: Where do we go from here?*

**To introduce lists:** The colon is used after a clause that introduces a list. If the words *the following* or *as follows* are not used, the colon need not be used, but it is correct to include it: *Try this menu: roast beef, mashed potatoes, carrots...*

**In citations:** A colon is used with biblical and legal citations: *Genesis 1:1-5.*

**In recording times:** A colon is used in writing figures that show time of day and time-elapsing events in sports: *Martin is expected at 4:30 p.m. Thursday. They won in 1:02:45.8 (1 hour, 2 minutes and 45.8 seconds).*

## Apostrophe [']

**Possessives:** An apostrophe is used to form possessives. The only exception is *its*, which is the possessive form; *it's* with an apostrophe is a contraction meaning “it is”: *Jane's dog; the principal's statement.*

**Omitting letters and figures:** An apostrophe is used in place of omitted letters and figures: *'20s, '80s, Rock 'n' Roll.*

## Quotation Marks [“”]

**Direct quotations:** Double quote marks are used to enclose direct quotations.

**Quote within a quote:** Single quote marks are used for a quotation within a quotation.

**In headlines:** Single quote marks are used in headlines to save space.

**Composition titles:** Double quote marks are used with titles of poems, television programs, speeches, songs, subjects of lectures and magazine articles. (Italics are used for titles of books, plays, albums, movies, operas or works of art: “The Road Not Taken,” “L.A. Law,” “Gettysburg Address,” “Back In The High Life.”)

**Newspapers and magazines:** Do not italicize or use double quote marks around the names of newspapers or magazines: Time Magazine, The Chronicle, The Golden Gazette, The Austin American-Statesman.

**Irony and slang:** Double quote marks are used to set off slang expressions or words that are used with a meaning other than the usual one.

**Running quotations:** When one quotation is broken into paragraphs, each new paragraph starts with

quotation marks. Only the final paragraph (or quoted statement) ends with quotation marks:

Jones said, "I doubt any of this will come out in the hearings.

"Usually these things are covered up by the senators. It's a shame, but it's true."

**Punctuation:** The period and commas always go inside quotation marks

### Dash [—]

**In general:** Dashes should be used to show significant pause, abrupt break in thought, or broken speech. Do not leave space between the dash and adjacent words

**Use the em dash** to indicate missing material; for parenthetical remarks to show a break in thought, or to replace a colon: On the Macintosh, an em dash is created by pressing the Option+Shift+Hyphen keys ( — ): *She screamed—and it was over. Ivan — was caught selling excused absence slips from the attendance office window. "The money — it went toward a good cause: my college education. Here is the list of students who bought the slips —*

**Use the en dash** in place of the word *to* or *through*, or to connect two nouns of equal importance. The word *to*, not an en dash, must be used if the numbers are preceded by the word *from*. An en dash cannot be substituted for the word *and*. The en dash may also be used instead of a colon. On the Macintosh, an en dash is created by pressing the Option+Hyphen keys (–). : *Spirit Week will be Oct. 17–21. The East–West All-Star game is tomorrow. World War II lasted from 1939–1945. Between 1880 and 1910, photography was in its infancy.*

**Series within a phrase:** When a phrase contains a series of words that must be separated by commas and otherwise would be set off by commas, use dashes to set it off: *The judge looked for three standards — quality, competence and style — in choosing the Publications Olympics winners.*

### Parentheses [()]

**Inserted material:** Parentheses are used around inserted material: *Lincoln (Neb.) Star.*

**Explanatory insertions:** Avoid explanatory insertions within direct quotes. Paraphrase or use indirect quotes. It is acceptable to use first and last names on first reference for clarity: *"Pat (Brennan) is expected to win the race," said Tom Smith. (Not acceptable: "She flunked it (Advanced Chemistry)," said the teacher.)*

### Hyphen [-]

**In general:** Do not hyphenate words when preparing a text document in a word processing program. PageMaker will automatically hyphenate copy when it is placed on the page. An incorrect word division is called a "bad break." One way to correct a bad break in PageMaker is to insert a discretionary hyphen at the correct break by pressing the Command+Hyphen keys. Other rules to check when proofreading a page include: Never hyphenate a headline or a one-syllable word. There must be at least two characters on both sides of the hyphen. Make sure there are no more than three hyphens in a row.

**Prepositional phrases:** The hyphen is used in prepositional phrase combinations: *attorney-at-law, mother-in-law, door-to-door.*

**Compound numerals and fractions:** The hyphen is used in compound numerals and fractions: *a three-fourths share, 2-for-1 stock split.*

**Compound adjectives:** The hyphen is used to form compound adjectives that precede the noun: *well-known story, terror-stricken face, 100-yard dash, 34-year-old man, good-looking dress, ready-to-wear clothes.*

**Suspended compounds:** The hyphen is used in suspended compounds: *It will be a 12- to 16-page booklet.*

**Spelling:** The hyphen is used to distinguish different meanings in words of like spelling: *The shoplifter eventually reformed. The line was re-formed at the end of the field.*

**Do not use a hyphen when unnecessary:** The meanings of some words are clear without using the hyphen: *statewide, weekend, sergeant at arms, stepparent.*

### **Italicization [*Italic*]**

**Italicize titles of books, plays, albums, movies, operas or works of art, but not the Bible or its books:** Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, Verdi's *Il Trovatore*, Michelangelo's *David*, Bach's *Brandenburg Concertos*, Walt Disney's *Snow White*, Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*.

**Italicize a word spoken of as a word, a phrase as a phrase, a letter as a letter** (except that a letter indicating a shape is printed in type most nearly depicting the shape; thus, V-shaped, I beam, T shirt).

## Isn't English A Silly Language

Let's face it, English is a crazy language. There is no egg in eggplant, nor ham in hamburger; neither apple nor pine in pineapple. English muffins weren't invented in England or French fries in France.

Sweetmeats are candies, while sweetbreads, which aren't sweet, are meat.

We take English for granted. But if we explore its paradoxes, we find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square, and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig.

And why is it that writers write, but fingers don't fing, grocers don't groce, and hammers don't ham? If the plural of tooth is teeth, why isn't the plural of booth beeth? One goose, two geese — one moose, two meese? And one index, two indices?

Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends but not one amend, that you comb through annals of history but not through a single annal? If you have a collection of odds and ends and get rid of all but one of them, what do you call it?

If teachers taught, why don't preachers praught? If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat? If you wrote a letter, did you brote your tongue?

Sometimes I think all English speakers should be committed to an asylum for the verbally insane. In what language do people recite at a play and play at a recital; ship by truck, and send cargo by ship; have noses that run and feet that smell; park on driveways and drive on parkways?

How can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same, while a wise man and wise guy are opposites? How can overlook and oversee be opposites, while quite a lot and quite a few are alike? How can the weather be hot as hell one day and cold as hell another.

Have you noticed that we talk about certain things only when they are absent? Have you ever seen a horseful carriage or a strapful gown? Met a sung hero or experienced requited love? Have you ever run into someone who was combobulated, gruntled, ruly or peccable? And where are all those people who ARE spring chickens or who WOULD hurt a fly?

You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language in which your house can burn up as it burns down, in which you fill in a form by filling it out, and in which an alarm clock goes off by going on.

English was invented by people, not computers, and it reflects the creativity of the human race (which, of course, isn't a race at all). That is why, when the stars are out they are visible, but when the lights are out they are invisible. And why, when I wind up my watch, I start it, but when I wind up this essay, I end it.