



AP Style guide

Acronyms

- Avoid using, spell out on first mention, use generic terminology (board, division, agency, university, etc.) for subsequent mentions and do not place acronym in parentheses following the first formal reference

Addresses

- Spell out if referencing the entire street without a number address (Main campus is located on Camden Avenue)
- When using specific number addresses, abbreviate avenue (Ave.), boulevard (Blvd.) and street (St.) only, as well as directional indicators of street names (The suspect was found at 1101 S. Camden Ave.)

Capitalization

- Do not capitalize federal, state, department, division, board, program, section, unit, university, etc., unless the word is part of a formal name or title
- Capitalize common nouns such as party, river and street when they are part of a proper name (Wicomico River)
- Capitalize the word room when used with the number of the room (Academic Commons Room 302)
- Lowercase directional indicators unless they refer to specific geographic regions or are popularized names of those regions (Midwest, Northeast)
- Capitalize formal titles when appearing directly before a name (Director for Student Involvement and Leadership Tricia Garvey Smith) See more in the Titles section
- Lowercase formal titles when they appear independently or after a name (Smith is the director of the Center for Student Involvement and Leadership)
- Avoid capitalization of job descriptions at all times (such as shortstop, police officer, attorney)
- Seasons (spring, summer, fall and winter) are also not to be capitalized unless appearing as part of an event, location or other entity's name

Dates, Days and Times

- Always use Arabic numbers without “-st,” “-nd,” “-rd” or “-th”
- When a month is used with a specific date, only abbreviate the months of Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec. (The Student Activities Fair will be held Oct. 8)
- When a date only includes the month and year, spell out the month and do not separate the two with punctuation
- When a particular date specifies the month, day and year, set off the year with a comma (Jan. 15, 2018)
- Use figures at all times, with the exception of noon and midnight; Format times in either a.m. or p.m. (always with periods and in lowercase lettering)

Dates, Days and Times

- Use a person's first and last name on first mention, and only their last name on subsequent mentions without reference to title
- Do not use courtesy titles such as Mr., Mrs., Miss, or Ms., unless they are stated in a quotation and or are needed to differentiate between those with that same last name

Names

- Use a person's first and last name on first mention, and only their last name on subsequent mentions without reference to title
- Do not use courtesy titles such as Mr., Mrs., Miss, or Ms., unless they are stated in a quotation and or are needed to differentiate between those with that same last name

Numbers

- Generally speaking, spell out numbers one through nine and use figures for numbers 10 and greater
- Exceptions that always take the form of figures include: Addresses (1101 Camden Avenue); Ages (not of inanimate objects); Cents (8 cents); Dollars (\$4.50, do not include .00 when referencing even dollar amounts); Dates (Oct. 8); Dimensions (5 foot by 2 foot); Highways (U.S. Route 13); Millions/billions (renovations totaled \$1 million); Percentages (taxes increased by 2.5 percent); Speed (The car decelerated to 10 mph); Temperatures (2 degrees F); Times (do not include :00 for even hours)
- Spell out numbers that appear at the beginning of a sentence
- Always use punctuation to set off a group of three digits of numerals greater than 999 (accept for years and addresses, example: 12,650)
- Use decimals up to two places for amounts in million/billions that do not require a precise figure (\$3.74 billion)
- Add an "s" with no apostrophe to a number to make it plural (She kept rolling 7s, the 1980s)
- Use an apostrophe on a decade only if initial figures are not to be included ('80s)
- Use only hyphens to separate phone number area codes, central office and personal line numbers (410-708-0123)

Punctuation and Quotations

- For plural bounces ending in "s," add only an apostrophe (The students' grades were poor)
- For singular common nouns ending in "s," add "'s" (the witness's answer was odd)
- For singular proper names ending in "s," or ending in s sounds such as x, ce or z, use "'s" (Brandeis' mission; Marx's theories)
- For plurals of a single letter, add "'s" (She received two A's last semester)
- Do not use "'s" for plurals of numbers or multiple letter combinations (1980s)
- AP style is to use dashes, not bullets, for lists that follow a colon only. For purposes pertaining to The Flyer, do not use bulleted or numbered lists (There were three issues with the project: expense, time and feasibility)
- Do not use an Oxford Comma (no comma before "and" at the end of a series)
- Capitalize the first letter of the foremost word after a colon only if it is a proper noun or the start of a complete sentence
- Colons go outside quotation marks unless they are part of the quoted material
- Do not use a comma before a conjunction in a simple series, but do use a comma for a series that includes elements containing "and," or "or"

- Only use hyphens to link all words of a compound adjective (The five-volume report called for renovating Henson Hall and other academic buildings over a 10-year period)
- Do not use a hyphen if the construction includes “very” or an adverb ending in “-ly”
- Avoid using parentheses when possible. If parentheses are required and the parenthetical is a complete, independent sentence, place the period inside the parentheses; if not place the period outside (The fox ran quickly through the woods.)
- Use only one space between each sentence, as well as after the sentence’s ending period
- Single quotation marks should only be used for a quote within a quote, and do not use quotation marks for word emphasis.
- Periods and commas always go inside the last quotation mark
- The dash, semicolon, question mark or explanation point go within the quotation marks when they apply to the quoted matter only. Punctuation is placed outside when it applies to the preceding sentence and quoted matter combined
- Use a semicolon to clarify a series that includes a number of commas, include a semicolon before the conjunction (Parts of the newspaper are made in Salisbury, Md.; Dover, Del.; and Cape Charles, Va.)

Special Spellings and Word Usages

- accommodate
- adviser, not advisor
- amid, not amidst
- afterward, do not add “s”
- among, not amongst
- calendar
- canceled, cancellation
- embarrass
- Use “flier” for a handbill/advertisement, “flyer” refers to some trains or buses (ironic since our paper’s name is “The Flyer”)
- Use generic names for brand name products if unsure (fabric fastener, instead of “Velcro”)
- harass
- homicide, not homocide
- judgment, no “e” after “g”
- livable
- Hyphenate worn-out, best-seller and Wi-Fi, do not hyphenate halftime, businesslike or email
- Use “Champagne” if produced in the Champagne region of France. If produced elsewhere use “sparkling wine”
- “More than” refers to number relationships, “over” refers to spatial/physical relationships
- Use “OK,” “OK’d,” “OK’ing” and “OKs,” not “ok” or “okay”
- privilege, not priviledge
- Use lectern instead of podium (The professor stood behind the lectern). A podium is something one stands upon
- sheriff
- Use toward, do not add “s”
- Know when to use: (1) a, or an; (2) affect, or effect; (3) burglary, or larceny; (4) robbery, or theft; (5) counsel, or council; (6) principal, or principle; (7) lay, or lie; (8) Scots, or scotch; and (9) Marshall, or marshal

State Abbreviations and Cities

- Ala., Ariz., Ark., Calif., Colo., Conn., Del., Fla., Ga., Ill., Ind., Kan., Ky., La., Md., Mass., Mich., Minn., Miss., Mo., Mont., Neb., Nev., N.H., N.J., N.M., N.Y., N.C., N.D., Okla., Ore., Pa., R.I., S.C., S.D., Tenn., Va., Vt., Wash., W. Va., Wis., Wyo.
- Other, non-listed states (Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas and Utah) are not abbreviated
- Cities which do not require following state names include: Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dallas, Denver, Honolulu, Houston, Indianapolis, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, New Orleans, New York, Oklahoma City, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Salt Lake City, San Antonio, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Washington
- City areas (East St. Louis; West Palm Beach, Fla.; northern Los Angeles; South Side; Lower East Side)

Titles

- The following titles are capitalized and abbreviated as shown when used before a name both inside and outside quotations: Dr., Gov., Lt. Gov., Rep., Sen. On second reference, use the subject's last name only
- Generally, capitalize formal titles when they appear before a subject's name. (President-elect Trump) Lowercase titles if they appear before the subject, appear without the subject's name, follow the subject's name or set off before a name by commas (Evan Bayh, a senator from Indiana; the senior senator from Indiana Dick Lugar)
- Lowercase adjectives that designate the status of a title (former President George W. Bush). If a title is long, place it after the subject's name or set it off with commas before the given name
- Abbreviate and capitalize most titles when they appear directly before a subject's name (Pres. Dudley-Eshbach)
- Spell out titles with names used in direct quotes with the exception of Dr., Mr. and Mrs.
- Titles of books, movies, recordings television shows and similar works are set off with quotation marks, with all principal words capitalized ("How I Met Your Mother")
- Titles of magazines, newspapers and reference works receive no special treatment besides principal word capitalization (The New York Times published the article last week)

Technology Terms

Correct spelling and capitalization rules for common technological terms include:

- download
- eBay, Inc. (use EBay if appearing at the beginning of a sentence)
- e-book, e-reader
- email
- cellphone, smartphone
- Facebook, Google, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube
- hashtag
- IM/DM (first reference is to be spelled out as instant/direct message)
- Internet (subsequent mentions are to use "the Net"), World Wide Web
- iPhone, iMac, iPad or iPod (capitalize I if appearing at the beginning of a sentence)
- website
- Web page, webmaster, website

For more information about AP style and formatting, please reference The Flyer's editions in Room 125 W, Center for Student Involvement and Leadership, Guerrieri Student Union; or visit Purdue Owl Online.