APPENDIX 1

THE MECHANICS OF WRITING

This appendix covers:

- A glossary of common grammatical terms.
- An alphabetical list of punctuation guidelines.
- Rules on capitalization of words and symbols.
- Guidelines on using abbreviations and writing numbers in text.

This is not an all-inclusive style manual. It's an Air Force quick-reference desktop guide to cure your most common trouble spots and to encourage standardization and consistency within the Air Force—especially during your professional military education. There are many style manuals and writers' guides available today and no two are exactly alike. Other commonly used style guides are *The Chicago Manual of Style, The Gregg Reference Manual*, *Air University Style Guide for Writers and Editors*, *US Government Printing Office Style Manual*, *Writer's Guide and Index to English*—not necessarily listed in order of preference. **If your organization or command has a "preferred" style of using capitals, abbreviations, numerals and compound words, use it.** If not, this guide is designed to serve that purpose.

... grammar rules
make me queasy
US AIR FORCE

GLOSSARY OF COMMON GRAMMATICAL AND WRITING TERMS

Grammar terminology is useful when we describe and correct problems with writing. Though we've tried to de-emphasize terminology and teach through examples throughout this book, sometimes you need a definition. We've tried to emphasize areas that are both commonly used and commonly misunderstood, such as the use of modal auxiliaries like can, could, shall, should, etc. Punctuation marks are not included in this list; they have a separate section in this Appendix.

> "People who are experts in grammar don't always write well, and many people who write well no longer think consciously about grammar … but when something goes wrong in a sentence, a knowledge of grammar helps in recognizing the problem and provides a language for discussing it."
>
> – H. Ramsey Fowler

a/an Use *a* before *consonant sounds* and *an* before *vowel sounds* <*a* historical event, *an* emergency.>

Active Voice Shows the subject as the actor. <The ***girl*** *sang* a song> (pages 73-74).

Adjective Describes or limits a noun or pronoun. It answers "Which one? What kind? or How many?" <*blue* box, *short* coat, *gregarious* man, *four* stools>

Adverbs Modifies or limits a verb, adjective or another adverb and answers "When? Where? Why? How much? How far? To what degree?" <*quickly* run, *very* dull, *very* loudly>

Conjunctive or Connective Adverb—transition words that often appears to connect clauses. <*however*, *therefore, etc.*>

Antecedent Noun, phrase or clause to which a pronoun refers or replaces. (pages 99-100)

Appositive Word, phrase or clause preceding or renaming a noun. <My dog Maggie.>

Article Small set of words used with nouns to limit or give definiteness to the application. <*a, an*, *the*>

Bibliography A list of books, articles and other works used in preparing a manuscript or other written product. (See "The Mechanics of Research," pages 345-347.)

Bullets Any punctuation symbol used to emphasize specific items. (See "Display Dot" Punctuation Guidelines, pages 289-290.)

Case Forms that nouns and pronouns take when they fit into different functions of the sentence. There are three:

Nominative—for subjects, predicate nominatives and appositives. <*I*>

Objective—for objects and their appositives. <*me*>

Possessive—to show ownership, hence adjectival, functions. <*my*>

Clause A group of related words containing a subject and a verb.

Conjunctions Connects words, phrases, clauses, or sentences (*and, or, but, nor*).

Consonants All letters of the alphabet except the ***vowels*** *a, e, i, o,* and *u.* In some words (*synergy)*, the letter *y* acts as a vowel.

Glossary An alphabetical list of unfamiliar terms and their definitions.

Interjection Words used to express emotion or surprise (*ah, alas, great, hooray, help, etc.)* Strong interjections are punctuated with an exclamation point. (***Wow!*** *That's profound.)* Milder interjections are often set off by commas, usually at the beginning of a sentence. <***Oh,*** *I guess it wasn't.* ***Ouch,*** *that hurts.*>

Modifier — Words or groups of words that limit or describe other words. If improperly placed, modifiers can confuse the reader or suggest an illogical relationship (see **dangling** and **ambiguous** modifiers, page 97).

Modal Auxiliary — Verbs that are used with a principal verb that are characteristically used with a verb of predication and that in English differs formally from other verbs in lacking *-s* or *-ing* forms.

can
could — Primarily expresses ability; *cannot* is used to deny permission. Sometimes the past tense of can. <*We could see the Big Dipper last night*.> Otherwise, *could* expresses possibility, doubt or something dependent on unreal conditions. <*We could see the Big Dipper if it weren't overcast*.>

may — Originally meant "have the power" (compare the noun *might*). Now it means "permission." Also, *may* is used to indicate possibility. <*You may leave if you are finished with your work.*> May is also used in wishes. <*May you recover soon.*>

might — Sometimes functions as simple past tense of may. <*He said he might have time to talk to us.*> Often it is used to express a more doubtful possibility than may does. <*He might returned before then*.> Might is also used after contrary-to-fact conditions. <*If I were off today, I might go fishing*.>

shall/
should — *Shall* expresses futurity in the first person; *should* does also, but it adds a slight coloring of doubt that the action will take place. Notice the difference in meaning in these sentences. <*I shall be happy to call the VA Medical Center for you. I should be happy to call the VA Medical Center for you*.> In indirect discourse *should* replaces the *shall* of direct discourse. <*I shall call at once. I said that I should call at once*.> Many speakers who use *shall* in the first person use *would* in preference to *should*. <*I said I would call at once*.> *Should* is used to express likelihood. <*Sue Sizemore should be able to finish on time*.> *Should* expresses obligation. <*We should file these orders more carefully.*>

will/
would — Will is the common future auxiliary used in the second and third persons. In addition it is used with special emphasis to express determination. <*You will finish by 4 p.m.*> *Would* still indicates past time in expressing determination. <*You thought you would finish by 4 p.m*.> *Would* expresses customary action in past time. <*Our last supervisor would bring us doughnuts every Friday morning*.> *Would* points to future time, but adding doubt or uncertainty. Notice the difference in meaning. <*I will if I can. I would if I could*.> *Would* replaces *will* in indirect discourse. <*He said that he would call.*>

must — Expresses necessity or obligation. It is somewhat stronger than *should*. <*You must call the director's office immediately*.> *Must* also expresses likelihood. <*It must have rained last night.*>

ought Originally the past tense of *owe*, but now it points to a present or future time. *Ought* expresses necessity or obligation, but with less force. See the difference. <*We must go. We ought to go*.> *Ought* is nearly the equivalent of *should*.

dare Originally a modal only, it is now used primarily in negatives or questions. <*He dare not submit the report in that form. Dare we submit the report like this*?>

need Not originally a modal auxiliary, *need* is now used to mean *have to*. <*He need only fill out the top form. He need not get upset about the delay*.> In the meaning "lack," *need* is always a regular verb. <*He needs a little help with this project*.>

Equivalents of modals:

be able to Used instead of *can* or *could* to indicate the ability as a fact rather than a mere potentiality. It is used also to avoid the ambiguity that may result from using *can* to express permission. <*He is able to support his mother*.>

be to Indicates future events but hints at uncertainty. <*He is to have that report to us tomorrow*.>

have to Commonly substitutes for *must*. It is a stronger expression of necessity. <*You have to have that done.*>

Other modals are used in speech, but they are inappropriate in writing.

had rather instead of *would rather*
had better instead of *should* or *ought*
(In speech, *had better* is emphatic in threats.)
have got to instead of *have to*

Modals are used with the infinitive of the perfect or progressive.

Can be going. Could have gone. Ought to be going.
Ought to have gone.

Nouns Names a person, place, thing, action or abstract idea. <*woman*, *office*, *pencil*, *game*, *Ohio, Maxwell AFB, democracy, freedom*>

Abstract Noun—nouns that name qualities rather than material things. <*love*, *danger*>

Collective Noun—nouns that are singular in form but plural in meaning; names a group of persons or things. <*audience*, *army, company, flock, committee, trio*>

Concrete Noun—nouns that can be seen or touched. <*table, book*>

Proper Noun—nouns that are capitalized and name specific persons, places, or things. <*Major Palmisano, Ohio, Air War College*>

Number Shows the singular or plural of nouns, pronouns, or verbs.

Object — Noun or pronoun that is affected by the verb. <*The man read **the book**.*>

Parts of Speech — The basic building blocks of language: nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, prepositions, interjections, and conjunctions

Passive Voice — Shows the subject as receiver of the action. <*A song was sung by **her**.*>

Person — Pronouns that denote the speaker (first person; *I, we*), the person spoken to (second person, *you*), or the person spoken of (third person; *she, they*).

Phrases — Groups of words without a subject or predicate that function as a unit (adjective, adverbial, gerund, or infinitive phases).

Plagiarism — Using someone else's writing as if it were your own. This serious offense can lead to severe professional and legal consequences. If using another person's material, identify the borrowed passage and credit the author. (See "The Mechanics of Research" page 342.)

Predicate — Tells what the subject does or what is done to the subject, or the state of being the subject is in.

Preposition — Shows the relationship between a noun or pronoun to another word in the sentence. <*by*, *at*, *up*, *down*, *between*, *among*, *through*>

Pronouns — Substitutes for a noun. Here are three:

Definite—includes *I*, *you*, *he*, *she*, *it*, *we*, *they*, and all of their forms.

Indefinite—includes words like *someone*, *no one, each*, *anyone, and anybody*.

Relative—includes words like *who*, *whom*, *which*, *that*.

Sentence — Expresses one complete thought with one subject and one verb; either or both may be compound.

Complex Sentence—contains one main clause and at least one subordinate clause. <*When it rains, it pours*.>

Compound Sentence—contains two or more main clauses and no subordinate clauses. <*It rains, and it pours*.>

Subject — Tells what the sentence is about; the person, place or thing that performs the action or that has the state of being indicated by the verb.

Tense — Shows the time of the action, condition or state of being expressed. The three tenses—past, present, future—can be expressed in the simple, perfect, or progressive.

Verbals — Past and present participle forms of the verbs that act as nouns or adjectives. There are three:

Gerund—ends in *-ing* and functions as a noun. <*talking*, *singing*>

Infinitive—simple verb form used as a noun, adjective, or adverb and usually preceded by *to*. <*to go*, *to type*>

Participle—used as an adjective and acts as a modifier in present (*-ing*), past (*-ed*, *lost*), and perfect (*having lost*) forms.

Verbs

Expresses action or state of being of the sentence. There are six:

Transitive—transfers action from the subject to the object.

Intransitive—transfers no action and is followed by an adverb or nothing.

Linking—acts as an equal sign connecting the subject and the complement.

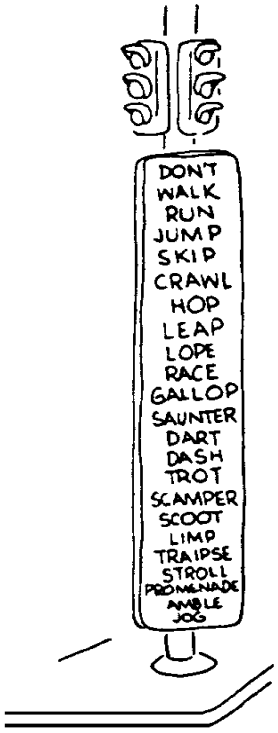
Auxiliary or Helping Verb—verb used with another verb to form voice or perfect and progressive tenses. <We *have eaten* there before.>

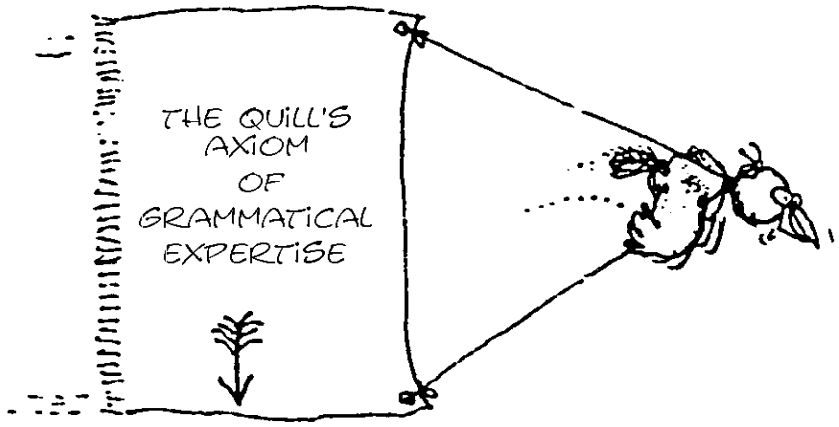
Principal Verb—last verb in a verb phrase.
Irregular Verb—verbs (see below) that form past tense and past participle differently:

PRESENT	PAST	PAST PARTICIPLE
become	became	become
begin	began	begun
bet	bet	bet
blow	blew	blown
break	broke	broken
bring	brought	brought
buy	bought	bought
catch	caught	caught
choose	chose	chosen
come	came	come
cut	cut	cut
draw	drew	drawn
drink	drank	drunk
drive	drove	driven
eat	ate	eaten
fly	flew	flown
forgive	forgave	forgiven
freeze	froze	frozen
give	gave	given
grow	grew	grown
keep	kept	kept
know	knew	known
ride	rode	ridden
ring	rang	rung
rise	rose	risen
set	set	set
shake	shook	shaken
sing	sang	sung
sink	sank	sunk
speak	spoke	spoken
spin	spun	spun

steal	stole	stolen
swear	swore	sworn
sweep	swept	swept
swim	swam	swum
swing	swung	swung
take	took	taken
tear	tore	torn
think	thought	thought
throw	threw	thrown
wear	wore	worn
weep	wept	wept

Vowel—The *a, e, i, o,* and *u*. In some words, the letter *y* acts as a vowel.

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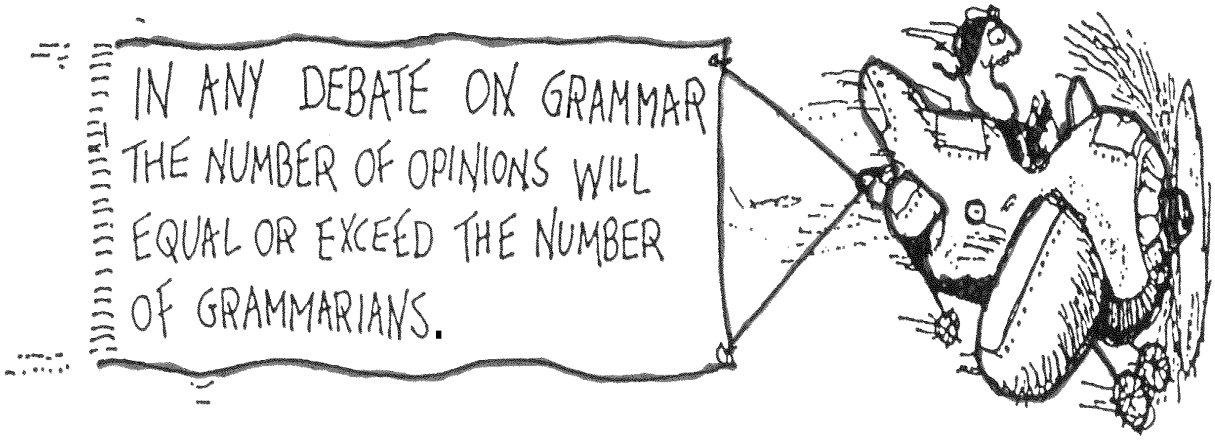
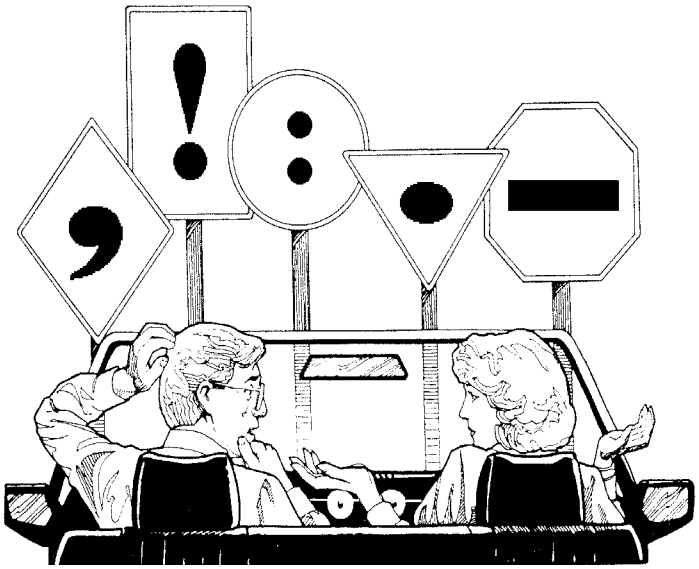

IN ANY DEBATE ON GRAMMAR
THE NUMBER OF OPINIONS WILL
EQUAL OR EXCEED THE NUMBER
OF GRAMMARIANS.

PUNCTUATION GUIDELINES: AN ALPHABETICAL LISTING



Punctuation marks are a writer's road signs they signal stops starts and pauses capitalization also helps writers communicate their meaning to their readers

Say what?! It's a jumbled mess, but with some effort you could grasp the writer's meaning. But look how easy it is when the proper punctuation is used.

Punctuation marks are a writer's road signs. They signal stops, starts, and pauses. Capitalization also helps writers communicate their meaning to their readers.

Punctuation marks are aids writers use to clearly communicate with others. Improper punctuation can confuse the reader or alter the meaning of a sentence. Excessive use of punctuation can decrease reading speed and make your meaning difficult to determine.

OPEN AND CLOSED PUNCTUATION

Open and closed punctuation: general philosophy.

Though many grammar rules are relatively clear-cut, there are some gray areas where the experts disagree. One area of debate is the issue of "open punctuation" versus "closed punctuation." Open punctuation advocates believe that writers should use only what's necessary to prevent misreading, while closed punctuation advocates are more apt to include punctuation whenever the grammatical structure of the material justifies it.

The following sentence illustrates how different writers might punctuate a particular sentence.

> If used incorrectly they may alter an intended meaning, and if used excessively they can decrease reading speed and make your meaning difficult to determine. [**Open punctuation—the meaning is clear without using all the punctuation that's needed by the grammatical structure.**]
>
> If used incorrectly, they may alter an intended meaning, and, if used excessively, they can decrease reading speed and make your meaning difficult to determine. [**Closed punctuation—using all required punctuation does not make meaning clearer and may slow reading speed.]**

In the Air Force, the general trend is to lean towards open punctuation in these types of cases. If you're confused about where to put commas, sometimes the best solution is to restructure the sentence to make the meaning clearer and eliminate the need for extra punctuation:

> If used incorrectly, they may alter an intended meaning; if used excessively, they can decrease reading speed and cause confusion. [**A slight change in sentence structure—fewer words to read and meaning is clear.**]

Open and closed punctuation: punctuating terms in a series.

So far, so good—much of this sounds reasonable to most people. Unfortunately, there IS one area where Air Force writers get conflicting guidance: the use of commas to separate three or more parallel words, phrases, or clauses in a series. Here's the rule and its two variants:

Use a comma to separate three or more parallel words, phrases, or clauses in a series.

In closed punctuation, include the comma before the final *and, or* or *nor.*

Will you go by car, train, or plane?
You will not talk, nor do homework, nor sleep in my class.

In open punctuation, exclude the comma before the final *and, or,* or *nor.*

Will you go by car, train or plane?
You will not talk, nor do homework nor sleep in my class.

Previous editions of *The Tongue and Quill* made a general recommendation to favor **open punctuation**. This **recommendation is unchanged**, but we'd like to acknowledge three reasons why closed punctuation guidelines might be used when punctuating three or more items in a series:

1. Closed punctuation of series is specified in most commercial grammar guides.

2. Closed punctuation of series is specified in some other Air Force references, including the *Air University Style Guide*.

3. The additional comma specified in closed punctuation may help clarify your meaning, especially when the items in the series are longer phrases and clauses.

Check to see which approach is preferred for the writing product you're working on. Award packages, performance appraisals, military evaluations, and other space-constrained formats typically use open punctuation. Research papers, academic publications, and books use closed punctuation. Technically speaking, either approach is acceptable, so consider your purpose and audience when deciding how to proceed.

Always remember that punctuation use is governed by its function: to help communicate the writer's meaning. Use the guidelines in the following section in the manner that best allows you to communicate your message to your readers.

"The only rule that doesn't have its exception is this one."
– *The Quill*

APOSTROPHE

USE AN APOSTROPHE...

- to create possessive forms of certain words
- to form contractions or to stand in for missing letters
- to form plurals for certain letters and abbreviations
- to mark a quote within a quote
- in technical writing to indicate units of measurement

1. Use an apostrophe to create possessive forms of nouns and abbreviations used as nouns.

a. Add *'s* to singular or plural nouns that do not end with an *s*.

officer's rank
ROTC's building
the oxen's tails
the children's room

b. Add *'s* to singular nouns that end with an *s*.

A business's contract
My boss's schedule
Mr. Jones's family tree
Marine Corps's Ball
United States's policy

NOTE: This rule applies to most singular proper nouns, including names that end with an s: Burn's poems, Marx's theories, Jefferson Davis's home, etc. This rule does not apply to ancient proper names that end with an s, which take only an apostrophe: Jesus' teaching, Moses' law, Isis' temple, Aristophanes' play, etc.

c. Add only the apostrophe to plural nouns that end in *s* or with an *s* sound, or to singular nouns ending with an *s* where adding an *'s* would cause difficulty in pronunciation.

The two businesses' contracts
Our bosses' schedule
for righteousness' sake
Officers' Wives Club; Officers' Club

d. Add *'s* to the final word of compound nouns to show possession.

secretary-treasurer's report
attorney general's book
mother-in-law's car; mothers-in-law's cars
eyewitness' comment

e. To show possession for indefinite pronouns (someone, no one, each, anyone, anybody, etc.), add *'s* to last component of the pronoun.

someone's car
somebody else's book

f. To show joint possession for two or more nouns, add the apostrophe or *'s* to the last noun. Add only the apostrophe to plural nouns ending in *s* and *'s* to singular nouns.

girls and boys' club
aunt and uncle's house
Diane and Wayne's daughters LaDonna, Leah, Lynn, and Lori are ...

g. To show separate possession, place the possession indicators on each noun or pronoun identifying a possessor.

soldiers' and sailors' uniforms
king's and queen's jewels
Mrs. Williams's and Mr. Smith's classes
son's and daughter's toys

NOTE: Do not use an apostrophe when forming possessive pronouns (ours, theirs, its, his, hers, yours). One common mistake is using *it's* instead of *its*. Only use *it's* as a contraction of *it is*.

Its paw was caught in the trap.
Your savings account requires a minimum balance.
It's a bloody wound.
The reward was ours to keep.

NOTE: Don't confuse a possessive form with a descriptive form.

The Jones survey [a descriptive form: tells what survey you're talking about]
Jones' survey [a possessive form: shows to whom the survey belongs]

2. Use an apostrophe to mark omissions or form contractions.

can't (can not)	the Roaring '20s	jack-o'-lantern
mustn't (must not)	I've (I have)	you'll (you will)
don't (do not)	won't (will not)	let's (let us)
o'clock	it's (it is)	ne'er-do-well
I'm (I am)	wouldn't (would not)	rock 'n' roll

3. To form plurals of certain letters and abbreviations. Make all individual lowercase letters plural by adding *'s* and make individual capital letters plural by adding *s* alone unless confusion would result. (For example, apostrophes are used with the plurals of A, I, and U because adding an s forms the words *As, Is*, and *Us*.) To plural most abbreviations (upper and lowercase), add a lowercase *s*. If the singular form contains an apostrophe, add *s* to form plural.

dotting the i's	S's, A's, I's, U's	the three Rs	ain'ts
OPRs, EPRs, TRs	bldgs (buildings)	B-52s	ma'ams
1960s	Bs, 1s	six the's	mustn'ts

4. Use apostrophes as single quotation marks for a quote within a quote.

"Let's adopt this slogan: 'Quality first.'"

5. Use an apostrophe in technical writing to indicate a unit of measurement (use the accent mark if the symbol is available).

a. As a length measure, use to specify the measurement of feet.

The room measures 16' by 29'.

b. As an angle measure, use to specify the measure of minutes (60 minutes = 1 degree).

NOTE: Angles identifying geographical latitude and longitude are specified in minutes and seconds (sixty seconds = 1 minute). When using the apostrophe or accent mark so specify minutes, use the quotation (") or double accent mark specify the measure of seconds.

The rendezvous coordinates are 35^{o} 40' 30" N x 60^{o} 20' 30" W.

ASTERISK

USE ASTERISKS ...

1. To refer a reader to footnotes placed at the bottom of a page.* Two asterisks identify a second footnote,** and three asterisks*** identify a third footnote. Number the footnotes if you have more than three, unless in a literary document number if more than one.

2. To replace words that are considered unprintable.

> If the camera was present when Smith called Schultz a *****, tonight's newscast would have had the longest bleep in TV history.

SPACING WHEN USING AN ASTERISK ...

- No space *before* following a word or punctuation mark within sentence or at the end of a sentence—unless replacing unprintable words, then one space before.
- One space *after* following a word or punctuation mark within a sentence.
- Two spaces *after* following a punctuation mark at the end of a sentence—unless manuscript format and using right justified, then one space *after*.
- No space *after* in a footnote.

NOTE: The *Tongue and Quill* favors two spaces after the end of a sentence. Rather to use one space or two is left up to the individual or organization. Either way is acceptable.

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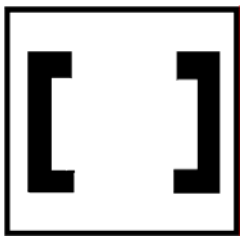
*Asterisk: A mark of punctuation to indicate a footnote. See "spacing."

**Use the asterisk with other punctuation as shown here.

***Number the footnotes if you have more than three—unless a literary document (see "spacing").



BRACKETS

USE BRACKETS ...

1. To clarify or correct material written by others.

> He arrived on the 1st [2d] of June.
> The statue [*sic*] was added to the book of statutes.

***NOTE*:** The italicized word *sic* in brackets tells the reader something is wrong with the word immediately in front of the first bracket but the word is reproduced exactly as it appeared in the original.

2. To insert explanatory words, editorial remarks, or phrases independent of the sentence or quoted material.

> "Tell them [the students] to report to Wood Auditorium now."
> The tank-versus-tank battles of Villers-Brettoneux is the last significant event for the tank in World War I. [Other accounts of this battle give different versions.]

3. To indicate you've added special emphasis (underline, bold type, all capitals, italics) to quoted material when the emphasis was not in the original work. The bracketed material may be placed immediately following the emphasized word(s) or at the end of the quotation.

> "She [emphasis added] seemed willing to compromise, but his obstinate attitude prevailed."
> "Tell them NOW to report to Wood Auditorium. [Emphasis added.]"

4. To enclose a parenthetical phrase that falls within a parenthetical phrase.

> (I believe everyone [including the men] will wear costumes.)
> I believe everyone (including the men) will wear costumes.

SPACING WHEN USING BRACKETS ...

—opening

One space *before* when parenthetic matter is within a sentence.

Two spaces *before* when parenthetic matter follows a sentence (when parenthetic matter starts with a capital and closes with its own sentence punctuation)—unless manuscript format and using right justified, then one space *before*.

No space *after*.

—closing

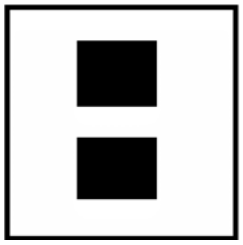
No space *before*.

One space *after* when parenthetic matter is within a sentence.

Two spaces *after* when parenthetic matter is itself a complete sentence and another sentence follows—unless manuscript format and using right justified, then one space *after*.

No space *after* if another punctuation mark immediately follows.

NOTE: The *Tongue and Quill* favors two spaces after the end of a sentence. Rather to use one space or two is left up to the individual or organization. Either way is acceptable.



COLON

USE A COLON ...

1. To separate an introductory statement from explanatory or summarizing material that follows when there is no coordinating conjunction or transitional expression. (Capitalize the first word of the expression that follows the colon if it is the dominant element and is a complete sentence. For additional details, see the "Capitalization" section.)

Living in base housing has many advantages: People can walk to work, shopping is convenient, and there are organized activities for the children.

The board consists of three officials: a director, an executive director, and a recording secretary.

2. When a sentence contains an expression such as *following* or *as follows* or is followed by a list or enumerated items. [Notice the capitalization and punctuation.]

The new directive achieved the following results: better morale and improved relations.

Results were as follows: better morale, less work, and more pay.

Consider these advantages when making your decision:

1. You won't have to be somewhere at 0800 every day.
2. You can get more involved in community activities.
3. You can pursue hobbies you haven't had time for in the last year.

3. To indicate a full stop before an enumerated or explanatory list.

There are several possibilities: (1) the position could remain vacant, (2) it could be converted to a military position, or (3) another civilian within the organization could be temporarily detailed to the position.

4. With a quotation when the word *say* or a substitute for *say* has been omitted, when the introductory expression is an independent clause, and when the quotation is typed in indented form on separate lines from the introductory clause.

The general turned [and said]: "Who gave that order?"

The judge restated her ruling [independent clause]: "The defendant will remain in the custody of the sheriff until the trial begins."

The speaker had this to say: "Please understand what I say here today represents my opinion alone. I am not here as a representative of the company for which I work."

The speaker said:

> The words you will hear from this stage today are the words and opinions of one man—me. I do not come as a representative of my company. I will not answer any question that is in any way related to the company for which I work.

5. To express periods of clock time in figures and to represent the word *to* in proportions. Do not use a colon when expressing time on a 24-hour clock.

8:30 a.m.
1:15 p.m.
1159 (24-hour-clock time)
ratio of 2:1 or 3.5:1

6. When expressing library references to separate title and subtitle, volume and page number, city of publication and name of publisher in footnotes, and bibliographies.

Mail Fraud: What You Can Do About It
10:31-34 (Volume 10, pages 31 to 34)
New York: MacMillan Company

DO NOT USE A COLON ...

1. When the enumerated items complete the sentence that introduces them. [Notice punctuation.]

Liaison officers must
a. become familiar with the situation,
b. know the mission and
c. arrange for communications.
[Not: Liaison officers must:]

2. When an explanatory series follows a preposition or a verb (except in rule 4 on page 280).

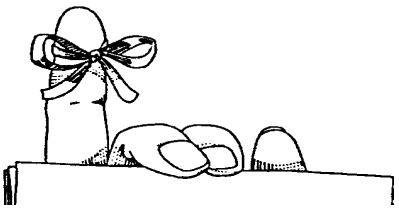
The editorial assistants in Publication Systems are Rebecca Bryant, Lisa McDay, and Yuna Braswell.
[Not: The editorial assistants are:]

3. To introduce an enumerated list that is a complement or the object of an element in the introductory statement.

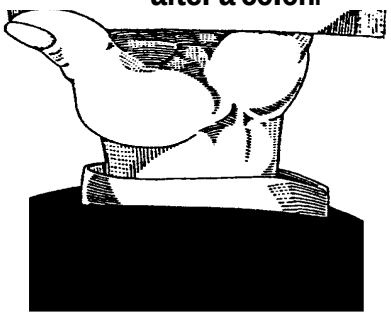
Our goals are to (1) learn the basic dance steps, (2) exercise while having fun, and (3) meet new people.
[Not: Our goals are to:]

4. When the anticipatory expression is followed by another sentence.

The editorial assistants will bring the following items to eat. These food items will be heated and served at noon.
Taco Bake
tossed salad
chips
dip



See *Capitalization* section for more rules on capitalizing after a colon.



SPACING WHEN USING COLONS ...

- No space *before*.
- Two spaces *after* within a sentence—unless manuscript format and using right justified, then one space *after.*
- No space *before* or *after* in expressions of time (8:20 p.m.) or proportions (2:1).

NOTE: The *Tongue and Quill* favors two spaces after the end of a sentence. Rather to use one space or two is left up to the individual or organization. Either way is acceptable.

COMMA

USE A COMMA …

1. With the coordinating conjunctions *and, but, or,* or *nor* when joining two or more independent clauses.

Right: The art of war is constantly developing, but twentieth-century technology has so speeded up the change the military strategist now must run to keep pace.

Wrong: The rapid expansion of the Air Force ensures a continuing need for qualified college graduates to fill existing vacancies, and also ensures ample opportunities for advancement. [This example contains only one independent clause with a compound verb; therefore, no comma is necessary.]

***NOTE*:** No comma is needed if the sentence has one subject with a compound predicate connected with a coordinating conjunction because the second half of the sentence is *not* an independent clause.

Martha Long received her master's degree December 2003 and is now pursuing her career.
I am not only willing to go but also ready to stay a week.

2. To separate three or more parallel words, phrases, or clauses in a series.

In open punctuation, exclude the comma before the final *and, or* or *nor.*

Will you go by car, train or plane? [open punctuation]

In closed punctuation, include the comma before the final *and, or,* or *nor*.

You will not talk, nor do homework, nor sleep in my class. [closed punctuation]

***NOTE*:** For longer phrases and clauses in a series, the additional comma specified in closed punctuation may help readability.

Patients are classified as suitable for treatment at the installation, as requiring evacuation to the regional hospital, or as fit for duty.

***NOTE*:** The use of *etc.* is discouraged in running text, but when used, it must be set off with commas. Do not use *etc.* when using *e.g., for example* or *such as*. These terms indicate you are only giving **some examples**; therefore, there is no need to imply there could be more.

We will bake cookies, bread, cupcakes, etc., for the party.

3. With parallel adjectives that modify the same noun. If the adjectives are independent of each other, if the order can be reversed or if *and* can stand between the words, the adjectives are parallel and should be separated by a comma. However, if the first adjective modifies the idea expressed by the combination of the second adjective and the noun, do not use a comma.

a hard, cold winter; a long, hot summer [the summer was long and hot]
a heavy winter overcoat [winter modifies overcoat; heavy modifies winter overcoat]
a traditional political institution [political modifies institution; traditional modifies political institution]

4. To separate two or more complementary phrases that refer to a single word that follows.

The coldest, if not the most severe, winter Ohio has had was in 1996.

5. To set off nonessential or 'interrupting' words and phrases.

a. To set off nonessential words, clauses, or phrases not necessary for the meaning or the structural completeness of the sentence. You can tell whether an expression is nonessential or essential by trying to omit the expression. If you can omit the expression without affecting the meaning or the structural completeness of the sentence, the expression is nonessential and should be set off by commas. (For more examples, see page 284.)

They want to hire Yuna Braswell, who has 10 years of experience, to run the new center. [The phrase "who has 10 years of experience" is nonessential information.]
They want to hire someone who has at least 10 years of experience to run the center. [The phrase "who has at least 10 years of experience" is essential information.]
There is, no doubt, a reasonable explanation. [This sentence would be complete without "no doubt."]
There is no doubt about her integrity. [This sentence would be incomplete without "no doubt."]

***NOTE*:** This rule includes interrupting words, phrases, or clauses that break the flow of the sentence.

The faculty and staff, military, and civilian, are invited.
She is a lieutenant colonel, not a major, and will be our new executive officer.
The major, a recent promotee, is an experienced pilot.

b. With transitional words and phrases, such as *however, that is (i.e.), namely, therefore, for example (e.g.), moreover, consequently,* and *on the other hand,* when interrupting the flow of the sentence. A comma is normally used after these expressions, but the punctuation preceding is dictated by the magnitude of the break in continuity. However, when these words or phrases are used to emphasize meaning, do not set off with punctuation.

It is important, therefore, we leave immediately.
It is therefore vitally important we don't postpone the trip.
A. Eaves is highly qualified for the job; i.e., he has 16 years of experience!
Rebecca and Julie say they will attend—that is, if Robert and Lisa are attending.
Planes from a number of bases (e.g., Andrews, Lackland, Tyndall) will participate in the flyover.

c. To set off a phrase introduced by *accompanied by, along with, and not, as well as, besides, except, in addition to, including, plus, not even, rather than, such as, together with,* or a similar expression when it falls between the subject and the verb.

The faculty and staff, as well as the students, should be prepared to testify before the panel.
The fifth and sixth graders, plus their parents, will be transported by bus.

***NOTE*:** When the phrase occurs elsewhere in the sentence, commas may be omitted if the phrase is clearly related to the preceding words.

We agree, Miss Johnson, our policy was badly processed as well as lost in the mail.

d. With the adverb too (meaning also) when it falls between the subject and verb. Omit the comma before too if it occurs at the end of a sentence or clause.

You, too, can save money by shopping selectively.
You should try to improve your typing too.
If you want to bring the children too, we'll have room.

e. To set off nonessential appositives. An appositive is a word or phrase appearing next to a noun that identifies it and is equivalent to it. If the appositive is nonessential, set it off by commas. If essential or restrictive in nature, do not set it off by commas.

Our cost analyst, Mrs. Sherri Thomas, will handle the details. [In this hypothetical example, we have only one cost analyst, so *Mrs. Thomas* is "nonessential." If we eliminate her name, the meaning of the sentence would not change.]

The battleship *Pennsylvania* was taken out of mothballs today. [*Pennsylvania* is "essential" to the sentence because there is more than one battleship in mothballs.]

Their daughter Julie won the contest. The other daughters were really annoyed. [Since they have more than one daughter her name is essential to the sentence.]

Edward shares a house with his wife Esther in Prattville, Alabama. [Strictly speaking, **Esther** should be set off by commas because he can have only one wife and giving her name is nonessential information; however, because the words **wife** and **Esther** are so closely related and usually spoken as a unit, commas may be omitted.]

f. To set off the title, position, or organization after a person's name or name equivalent. (Some cases under this rule are appositives; other cases are not.)

Lieutenant General Don Lamontagne, Commander of Air University, will speak at ACSC this Thursday.

The Commander, 42d Air Base Wing, is responsible for ...

g. To set off long phrases denoting a residence or business connection immediately following a name.

Lieutenant Colonel Fernando Ordoñez, of the Peruvian air force in Lima, Peru, will be here tomorrow.

Lt Col Ordoñez of Lima, Peru, will be here tomorrow. [The comma is omitted before *of* to avoid too many breaks in a short phrase.]

6. To set off introductory elements.

a. With introductory elements that begin a sentence and come before the subject and verb of the main clause. The comma may be omitted if the introductory phrase is five words or less except when numbers occur together. If you choose to use a comma following a short introductory phrase, do so consistently throughout the document.

In 1923, 834 cases of measles were reported in that city.
In 1913 the concept of total war was unknown.
Of all the desserts I love, my favorite is the fruit trifle.
Since the school year had already begun, we delayed the curriculum change.

b. After introductory words such as *yes, no,* or *oh*.

Yes, I'll do it.
Oh, I see your point.

7. To set off explanatory dates, addresses and place names.

The change of command, 1 October 1996, was the turning point.
The British prime minister lives at 10 Downing Street, London, England.

***NOTE*:** Use two commas to set off the name of a state, county, or country when it directly follows the name of a city **except** when using a ZIP code. When including the ZIP code following the name of the state, drop the comma between the two (see *Envelope* section), but use one after the ZIP code number if there is additional text.

We shipped it to 2221 Edgewood Road, Millbrook AL 36054-3644, but it hasn't been received yet.

8. To set off statements such as *he said, she replied, they answered,* and *she announced.*

She said, "Welcome to the Chamber of Commerce. May I help you?"
She replied, "I have an appointment with Lt Col Rick Jenkins at 10 a.m."

***NOTE*:** If a quotation functions as an integral part of a sentence, commas are unnecessary.

They even considered "No guts, no glory!" as their slogan.

9. To set off names and titles used in direct address.

No, sir, I didn't see her.
Linda McBeth, you're not changing jobs, are you?
And that, dear friends, is why you're all here.

10. With afterthoughts (words, phrases or clauses added to the end of a sentence).

It isn't too late to get tickets, is it? Send them as soon as possible, please.

NOTE: The word *too* does not require a comma if located at the end of a sentence—see Rule 5d.

11. In the following miscellaneous constructions:

a. To indicate omission of words in repeating a construction.

We had a tactical reserve; now, nothing. [The comma replaces *we have*.]

b. Before *for* used as a conjunction.

She didn't go to the party, for she cannot stand smoke-filled rooms.

c. To separate repeated words.

That was a long, long time ago.
Well, well, look who's here.

d. With titles following personal names. (Jr. and Sr. are set off by commas; 2d, 3d, II, and III are not.)

Lee B. Walker, Sr.
Henry Ford II
William Price, Esq
James Stokes 3d
In text: Lee B. Walker, Sr., is …

***NOTE*:** When you must show possession drop the comma following *Jr*. and *Sr*.

Lee Walker, Sr.'s car is …

e. When names are reversed.

Adams, Angie
Baldwin, Sherwood, Jr.
Brown, Carolyn
Jones, Kevin
Middleton, Mary
Parks, James, III
Price, William, Esq
Walker, Lee B., Sr.

f. With academic degrees.

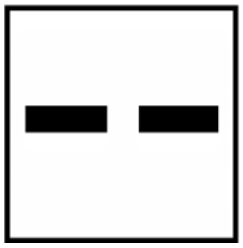
Scott H. Brown, PhD
James Parks III, MBA
In text: Houston Markham, EdD, will …

g. To prevent confusion or misreading.

To John, Smith was an honorable man.
For each group of 20, 10 were rejected.
Soon after, the meeting was interrupted abruptly.

SPACING WHEN USING COMMAS ...

- No space *before*.
- One space *after*, unless a closing quotation mark immediately follows the comma.
- No space *after* within a number.



DASH

USE AN EM DASH (—) ...

1. To indicate a sudden break or abrupt change in thought.

He is going—no, he's turning back.
Our new building should be—will be—completed by June 2004.

2. To give special emphasis to the second independent clause in a compound sentence.

Our new, but used, pickup truck is great—it's economical too!
You'll double your money with this plan—and I'll prove it!

3. To emphasize single words.

Girls—that's all he ever thinks about!
They're interested in one thing only—profit—nothing else matters.

4. To emphasize or restate a previous thought.

One day last week—Monday, I think—Congress finally voted on the amendment.

5. Before summarizing words such as *these, they,* and *all* when those words summarize a series of ideas or list of details.

A tennis racket, swimsuit and shorts—these are all you'll need for the weekend.
Faculty, staff and students—all are invited.

6. In place of commas to set off a nonessential element requiring special emphasis.

There's an error in one paragraph—the second one.
We will ensure all students—as well as faculty members—are informed of the Chief of Staff's visit.

7. To set off a nonessential element when the nonessential element contains internal commas.

Certain subjects—American government, calculus and chemistry—are required courses.

8. Instead of parentheses when a nonessential item requires strong emphasis (dashes emphasize; parentheses de-emphasize).

Call Lieutenant Colonels Kessler, Sims, and Forbes—the real experts—and get their opinion.

9. In place of a colon for a strong, but less formal, break in introducing explanatory words, phrases or clauses.

Our arrangement with the Headquarters USAF is simple—we provide the camera-ready copy and they handle the printing and distribution.

10. With quotation marks. Place the dash outside the closing quotation mark when the sentence breaks off after the quotation and inside the closing quotation mark to indicate the speaker's words have broken off abruptly.

If I hear one more person say, "See what I'm saying!?"—
Thomas Hardy said, "When I get to 25 Barberry Street, I'll —"

11. With a question mark or an exclamation mark:

a. When a sentence contains a question or exclamation that is set off by dashes, put the appropriate punctuation mark before the closing dash.

I'll attend Friday's meeting—is it being held at the same place?—but I'll have to leave early for another appointment.
He's busy now, sir—wait, don't go in there!—I'll call you when he's free.

b. When a sentence abruptly breaks off before the end of a question or exclamation, put the end punctuation mark immediately following the dash.

Shall I do it or —?
Look out for the —!

USE AN EN DASH (–) ...

12. Before the source of a quotation or credit line in typed material (use an en dash in printed material).

The ornaments of a home are the friends who frequent it.
– Anonymous

13. To indicate inclusive numbers (dates, page numbers, time) when not introduced by the word *from* or *between*.

Some instructions are on pages 15–30 of this article and from pages 3 to 10 in the attached brochure.
My appointment is 0800–0900. I will be there between 0745 and 0800.
She worked in the Pentagon from 1979 to 1996 and she said the 1990–1996 period went by quickly.

14. In a compound adjective when one element has two words or a hyphenated word.

New York–London flight Air Force–wide changes quasi-public–quasi-judicial body

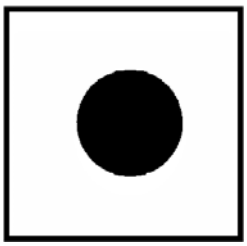
SPACING WHEN USING DASHES ...

- No space *before* or *after* an em dash (—) or en dash (–) within a sentence.
- Two spaces *after* the em dash at the end of a sentence that breaks off abruptly (rule 10)—unless manuscript format and using right justified, then one space *after*.
- No space *before*, *between* or *after* the em dash when inputting material with a typewriter. An em dash is made using two hyphens (--) when typed.

NOTE: The *Tongue and Quill* favors two spaces after the end of a sentence. Rather to use one space or two is left up to the individual or organization. Either way is acceptable.

"All *generalizations are false to a certain extent—including this one.*"

– The Quill



DISPLAY DOT

USE A DISPLAY DOT OR BULLET*...

To emphasize specific items in either complete or incomplete sentences that are parallel in grammatical structure.

1. Use display dots when one item is not more important than the others, and the items do not show a sequence. (If the items show a sequence, a numbered list is recommended.)

2. Capitalize the first word of each item in the list when a complete sentence introduces them. (The complete sentence may end with either a period or a colon.)

The prospect for growing drug abuse worldwide can be correlated with the prevalence of the following ingredients:

- An awareness of drugs.
- Access to them.
- The motivation to use them.

The Coast Guard is a multimission agency with broad, general mission areas in the maritime arena.

- Safety.
- Environmental protection.
- Law enforcement.
- Political-military.

3. Use a period (or other appropriate end punctuation) after each item in a vertical list when at least one of the items is a complete sentence.

After listening intently to the defense attorney's closing remarks, the jury was convinced of three things:

- Witnesses lied.
- False evidence had been presented.
- The defendant deserved a new trial.

Two questions continually present themselves to commanders:

- What is actually happening?
- What (if anything) can I or should I do about it?

*A "bullet" is a generic term for any graphical symbol used to emphasize different items in a list. Display dots, squares, dashes, and arrows are the most common symbols used for this purpose, but today's software makes any number of designs possible. Regardless of your choice of bullet graphic, the above guidelines will help readability.

4. When the list completes a sentence begun in the introductory element, omit the final period unless the items are separated by other punctuation.

There is a tendency to speak of the commander, but there are, in fact, many interrelated commanders, and each commander uses a separate command and control process to

- make information decisions about the situation,
- make operational decisions about actions to be taken, and
- cause them to be executed within a structure established by prior organizational decisions.

5. A colon can be used to indicate a full stop before a list. A colon is often used with expressions such as *the following items* or *as follows.*

Consider the following advantages when making your decision:

1. You won't have to be somewhere at 0800 every day.
2. You can get more involved in community activities.
3. You can pursue hobbies you haven't had time for in the last year.

6. Do not use a colon when the listed items complete the sentence that introduces them.

Liaison officers must

- become familiar with the situation,
- know the mission, and
- arrange for communications. [Not: Liaison officers must:]

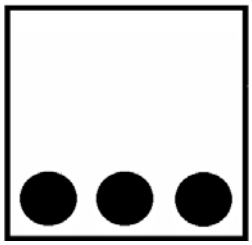
The editorial assistants in Publication Systems are

- Rebecca Bryant,
- Lisa McDay, and
- Yuna Braswell. [Not: The editorial assistants are:]

SPACING WHEN USING DISPLAY DOTS AND BULLETS …

- No space *before*.
- Two spaces *after*—unless manuscript format and using right justified, then one space *after*.
- Hang indent all remaining lines.

NOTE: The *Tongue and Quill* favors two spaces after the end of a sentence. Rather to use one space or two is left up to the individual or organization. Either way is acceptable.



ELLIPSIS

USE AN ELLIPSIS ...

1. To indicate a pause or faltering speech within a quoted sentence or at the end of a sentence that is deliberately incomplete.

"I … I don't know … I mean I don't know if I can go."
Can you tell me what famous document begins with "Four score and seven …"?

2. To indicate an omission of a portion of quoted material.

"Four score and … our … brought forth.…"

a. Use four periods (ending period plus ellipsis) to indicate an omission at the end of a sentence.

Work measurement is the volume of work.…

***NOTE*:** If quotation is intended to trail off, omit ending punctuation.

He could have easily saved the situation by … But why talk about it.

b. When a sentence ends with a question mark or exclamation point, use an ellipsis (three periods) and the ending punctuation mark.

What work measurement tool was used to determine…?

c. To indicate one or more sentences or paragraphs are omitted between other sentences, use the ellipsis immediately after the terminal punctuation of the preceding sentence.

In the last few years, we have witnessed a big change in the age groups of America's violence.… How far and wide these changes extend, we are afraid to say.

d. When a fragment of a sentence is quoted *within another sentence*, it isn't necessary to signify the omission of words before or after the fragment.

Technicians tell us it "requires a steady stream of accurate and reliable reports" to keep the system operating at peak performance.

SPACING WITH PUNCTUATION MARKS ...

- No space *between* the three periods within the ellipsis itself.
- One space *before* and *after* within a sentence.
- No space *before* when an opening quotation mark precedes the ellipsis.
- Two spaces *after* ellipsis with a period, question mark or exclamation point at the end of a sentence—unless manuscript format and using right justified, then one space *after*.

NOTE: The *Tongue and Quill* favors two spaces after the end of a sentence. Rather to use one space or two is left up to the individual or organization. Either way is acceptable.

EXCLAMATION MARK

USE AN EXCLAMATION MARK ...

1. At the end of a sentence or elliptical expression (condensed sentence, key words left out) to express strong emotion (surprise, disbelief, irony, dissent, urgency, amusement, enthusiasm).

Congratulations on your new son!
I suppose you consider that another "first"!
Fantastic show!

2. In parentheses within a sentence to emphasize a particular word.

He lost 67(!) pounds in 6 months.
She said what(!)?

ALONG WITH OTHER PUNCTUATION ...

3. When an exclamation is set off by dashes within a sentence, use an exclamation mark before the closing dash.

Our women's club—number 1 in the community!—will host a party for underprivileged children.

4. Use an exclamation mark inside a closing parenthesis of a parenthetical phrase when the phrase requires an exclamation mark and the sentence does not end with an exclamation mark.

Jerry's new car (a 2004 Nissan Maxima!) was easily financed.
The football game (Alabama versus Auburn) is always a super game!

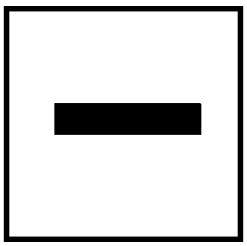
5. An exclamation mark goes inside a closing quotation mark only when it applies to the quoted material.

Lt Col Smith said, "Those rumors that I'm going to retire early simply must stop!"
You're quite mistaken—Jane Palmisano clearly said, "Peachtree Grill at 1215"!
Mark and Todd have both told him, "You had no right to say, 'Kimberly will be glad to teach Acquisition' without checking with her first!"

SPACING WITH PUNCTUATION MARKS ...

- Two spaces *after* the end of a sentence—unless manuscript format and using right justified, then one space *after*.
- No space *after* when another punctuation mark immediately follows (closing quotation mark, closing parenthesis, closing dash).

NOTE: The *Tongue and Quill* favors two spaces after the end of a sentence. Rather to use one space or two is left up to the individual or organization. Either way is acceptable.



HYPHEN

USE A HYPHEN ...

1. When dividing a word at the end of a line. When in doubt about the proper place to divide a word, consult a dictionary and apply the guidelines on page 297.

Use a hyphen to indicate the continua-
tion of a word divided at the end of a line.

2. To join unit modifiers. When you abbreviate the unit of measure, omit the hyphen.

4-hour sortie, 4 hr sortie	long-term loan
rust-resistant cover	24-gallon tank, 24 gal. tank

3. When expressing the numbers 21 through 99 in words and in adjective compounds with a numerical first element.

Twenty-one people attended.
Twenty-one people attended with at least 2 that failed to show up.
Eighty-nine or ninety miles from here there's an outlet mall.
I kept their 3-year-old child while they were away.
There will be a 10-minute delay.

4. To join single capital letters to nouns or participles.

U-boat	H-bomb	X-height	U-turn
T-shirt	T-bone	D-mark	E-mail

5. To indicate two or more related compound words having a common base (suspended hyphen).

It will be a 12- to 15-page document.
The cruise line offers 2-, 3-, and 7-day cruises at special group rates.
Long- and short-term money rates are available.

6. To join capital letter(s) and numbers in system designators and numerical identifiers.

F-117	B-1B	F-16
KC-10	Su-24TK	T-38

7. To form compound words and phrases. Some compound words are written as two words (post office, air brake, Mother Nature, fellow traveler), some as one (manpower, masterpiece, aircraft), some as a combination of words and joined by hyphens (father-in-law, great-uncle, secretary-treasurer, governor-general, men-of-war, grant-in-aid, mother-of-pearl), and some multiple-word compounds that include a preposition and a description (jack-of-all-trades, but flash in a pan and master of none). There's a growing trend to spell compound words as one word once widely accepted and used. However, sometimes the way you use a compound word or phrase will dictate how you write it—as one word, with a hyphen, or as two separate words. When in doubt, **consult an up-to-date dictionary** or treat as two words if the guidelines on the next pages don't fit.

a. Use a hyphen with words and phrases that are combined to form a unit modifier immediately preceding the word modified (except with an adverb ending in *ly*). Do not hyphenate these phrases when they follow the noun.

an up-to-date report; this report is up to date; a $500-a-week salary; a salary of $500 a week
decision-making process; the process of decision making; red-faced man; the man with the red face
X-rated movies; movies that are X rated; the X-ray equipment; the X-ray showed
a well-known author; the author is well known
a first-come, first-served basis; on the basis of first come, first served
a highly organized group; a completely balanced meal

b. Use a hyphen when two or more proper names are combined to form a one-thought modifier and when two adjectives are joined by the word *and* or *or*.

Montgomery-Atlanta-Washington flight
black-and-white terms
yes-or-no answer
life-and-death situation
cause-and-effect hypothesis
go-no-go decision

c. Use a hyphen when spelling the word solid creates a homonym.

re-cover [cover again]; recover [to regain]
re-count [count again]; recount [to detail]
re-create [create again]; recreate [refresh]
un-ionized [substance]; unionized [to organize]
re-sign [sign again]; resign [quit]
re-start [start again]; restart [to start anew]
re-treat [treat again]; retreat [withdraw]
re-creation [create again]; recreation [play]
pre-position [position again]; preposition [word that forms a phrase]
re-mark [mark again]; remark [say]
multi-ply [as in fabric]; multiply [arithmetic function]
co-op [cooperative]; coop [to confine]

d. Use a hyphen to avoid doubling a vowel when the last letter of the prefix "anti," "multi," and "semi" is the same as the first letter of the word. Also, use a hyphen when the second element is a capitalized word or a number.

anti-inflammatory; anti-Nazi; antiaircraft
multi-industry; multielement; multimillion
semi-icing; semi-Americanized; semiofficial
pre-1914, post-World War II; ultra-German

e. Use a hyphen to join duplicate prefixes.

re-redirect sub-subcommittee super-superlative

DO NOT USE A HYPHEN ...

f. In compounds formed from unhyphenated proper nouns.

Methodist Episcopal Church Southeast Asian country Mobile Bay cruise

g. Between independent adjective preceding a noun.

hot water pipe big gray cat a fine old southern gentleman

h. In a compound adjective when the first element of a color term modifies the second.

sea green gown grayish blue car

i. In a compound adjective formed with chemical names.

carbon dioxide formula hydrochloric acid liquid

j. In a unit modifier with a letter or number as its second element.

Attachment 3 pages Article 3 procedures

k. In a unit modifier enclosed in quotation mark unless it is normally a hyphenated term. Quotation marks are not to be used in lieu of a hyphen.

"blue sky" law "tie-in" sale
"good neighbor" policy right-to-work law

l. In a unit modifier to set off some prefixes and suffixes (ante, anti, bi, bio, co, counter, extra, infra, inter, intra, like, macro, meta, micro, mid, multi, neo, non, over, post, per, pre, pro, proto, pseudo, sub, re, semi, socio, super, supra, trans, ultra, un, under), BUT THERE ARE SOME EXCEPTIONS.

All words are hyphenated when used as an adjective compound.

all-inclusive background all-out war all-powerful leader

Best, better, full, high, ill, least, lesser, little, low, lower, middle, and ***upper*** compounds are hyphenated when used as an adjective before a noun; drop the hyphen when used following the noun.

ill-advised action; action is ill advised
lesser-regarded man; he was the lesser regarded
full-length dress; the dress is full length
upper-crust society; she is of the upper crust
high-level water; water is at the high level
best-loved book; the book was best loved
little-understood man; the man was little understood
least-desirable man; the man was least desirable
better-prepared man; the man was better prepared
middle-class house; he lives with the middle class

Cross and ***half*** words are hyphenated, but some aren't. Check your dictionary and, if not listed, hyphenate.

crosswalk cross-pollination cross section
halfback half-dollar half sister

Elect words are hyphenated, *except* when they consist of two or more words.

mayor-elect county assessor elect president-elect

Ex (meaning *former*) words are discouraged in formal writing; ***former*** is preferred. However, when you use *ex* in this context, use a hyphen.

ex-governor	ex-AU commander	ex-convict

Fold words are usually one word, *except* when used with numerals.

25-fold	tenfold	twofold

Like words are usually one word *except* when the first element is a proper name, words of three or more syllables, compound words, or to avoid tripling a consonant.

gridlike	lifelike	Grecian-like
mystery-like	squeeze-bottle-like	wall-like

Mid, Post, and ***Pre*** words are usually one word *except* when the second element begins with a capital letter or is a number.

midstream	post-Gothic	preeminent
mid-June	postgame	pre-Civil War
mid-1948	post-1900s	pre-1700s

Non words are usually one word *except* when the second element begins with a capital letter or consists of more than one word.

nonattribution	noncommissioned officer	nonsurgical
non-Latin-speaking people	non-civil-service position	non-European
non-line of sight		

Over and ***under*** words are usually one word *except* when the compound contains the word *the.*

over-the-counter drug	under-the-table kick	overbusy employee
overdone steak	underdone steak	understaffed office

Quasi words are always hyphenated.

quasi-judicial	quasi-public	quasi-legislative

Self as a prefix is joined to the root word by a hyphen. When *self* is the root word or is used as a suffix, do not use a hyphen.

self-made	selfish	herself
self-respect	selfless	itself
self-explanatory	selfsame	himself

Vice compounds are hyphenated *except* when used to show a single office or title.

a vice president; vice-presidential candidate	vice admiral; vice-admiralty; viceroy
the vice-consul; vice-consulate's office	vice-chancellor; vice-chancellorship

Well compounds are hyphenated when used as an adjective before a noun; drop the hyphen when used following the noun. *Well* used as a compound noun is always hyphenated.

well-made suit; suit was well made	the well-being of the family; consider her well-being
well-known author; author is well known	the well-bred dogs; the dogs were well bred

Wide words are usually one word *except* when long and cumbersome and when follows the noun.

worldwide	university-wide; the virus is university wide

SPACING WHEN USING A HYPHEN ...

- No space *before* or *after* to combine words, punctuation and/or numbers.
- One space *after* when dividing a word (see rule 1) or using suspended hyphen (rule 5).

DIVIDING WORDS AND PARAGRAPHS

WORDS

1. Never divide the last word on the first or last lines on a page; do not hyphenate the last words on two consecutive lines; avoid hyphenating more than five lines each page.
2. Never divide monosyllables (one-syllable words). [friend]
3. Never divide words at a vowel that forms a syllable in the middle of the word. [preju-/dice, **not** prej-/udice]
4. Never divide words at a final syllable whose only vowel sound is that of a syllabic "I." [prin-/cipal, **not** princi-/pals]
5. Never divide words of five or fewer letters even when they contain more than one syllable. [**not** i-/deal or ide-/a]
6. Never divide words by putting a single letter on a line. [**not** a-/round nor militar-/y]
7. Never further divide words that contain a hyphen—break these words at the built-in hyphen. [self-/control, **not** self-con-/trol]
8. Divide words containing double consonants between the consonants only when they do not end root words. [permit-/ted; spell-/ing]
9. When possible, divide words after the prefix or before the suffix rather than within the root word or within the prefix or suffix. [applic-/able, **not** applica-/ble; valu-/able, **not** val-/uable; pre-/requisite, **not** prereq-/uisite].
10. Never divide contractions. [**not** can'/t nor won/'t]
11. When necessary to divide a name, carry over only the surname (never separate a first name from a middle initial, an initial from a middle name or initials used in place of a first name). [Annette G./Walker; Ethel/Hall; R. A./Bowe]
12. Divide surnames, abbreviations and numbers only if they already contain a hyphen, and then divide only at the hyphen. [Johnson-/Roberts, **not** John-/son-Roberts; AFL-/CIO, **not** YM/CA; 249-/3513, **not** $55,-/000].
13. A person's rank or title should be on the same line with first name or initials, when possible. [Miss Duncan/Phillips; Dr. Louise/Miller-Knight; Major Larry/Lee]
14. When it's necessary to divide a date, separate the year from month—do not split the month from the day. [14 September/2004]

PARAGRAPHS

1. Never divide a paragraph of four or fewer lines.

2. When dividing a paragraph of five or more lines, never type less than two lines on either page.

The ITALICS

USE ITALICS ...

1. In printed material to distinguish the titles of whole published works: books, pamphlets, bulletins, periodicals, newspapers, plays, movies, symphonies, poems, operas, essays, lectures, sermons, legal cases, and reports.

The Chicago Manual of Style
AFM 33-326, *Preparing Official Communications*
The *Montgomery Advertiser*
The Phantom of the Opera
Star Trek
United States Government v. Bill Gates

***NOTE*:** When you use these titles in the plural, set the plural ending in Roman type.

There were five *Journal*s and two *Time*s on the shelf.

2. In place of the underscore to distinguish or givbe greater prominence to certain words, phrases, or sentences. Both the underscore and italics are acceptable, but not in the same document. Use sparingly.

Air Force *doctrine* has been the subject of much debate.
Air Force <u>doctrine</u> has been the subject of much debate.

3. In printed material to distinguish the names of ships, submarines, aircraft, and spacecraft. Italicize the name only, not initials or numbers preceding or following the name. (In typed material, the underscore is generally used for this purpose.) Do not italicize the class or make of ships, aircraft and spacecraft; and names of space programs.

USS *America*	*Nautilus*	B-1B *Lancer*	*Friendship* 7
frigate	U-boat	Concorde	*Columbia*
Spruance	KILO	Boeing 707	Gemini II

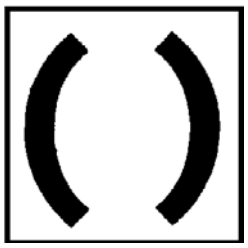
4. In typed material to distinguish foreign words *not* part of the English language. Once an expression has become part of the English language (in the dictionary), italics is unnecessary.

blitzkrieg	*Luftwaffe*	vis-à-vis	com d´étet
vakfiye	*poêle*	*le cheval*	Perestroika

5. When punctuation (except parentheses and brackets) marks immediately follow the italicized word, letter character, or symbol.

What is meant by *random selection?*
Luke 4:16*a;*
Point: one-twelfth of a pica
see *12b!*

"Few men are lacking in capacity, but they fail because they are lacking in application."
– Calvin Coolidge



PARENTHESES

USE PARENTHESES ...

1. To enclose explanatory material (a single word, a phrase or an entire sentence) that is independent of the main thought of the sentence.

The ACSC students (542 of them) will begin classes the second week of June.
The results (see figure 3) were surprising.

2. To set off nonessential elements when commas would be inappropriate or confusing and dashes would be too emphatic.

Mr. Henry Anderson, Jr., is the general manager of the Montgomery (Alabama) branch. [Parentheses are clearer than commas when a city-state expression is used as an adjective.]
All the classes will meet three days a week (Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays). [Parentheses are used in place of commas because the nonessential element contains commas.]
I suggest you contact Edward Clinton (a true professional) for his recommendation. [Parentheses used in place of dashes to de-emphasize the nonessential element.]
Contact Ms. Louise Robinson—the manager of the house in Tuscaloosa—and ask her if a room is still available. [Dashes are used in place of parentheses for emphasis.]

3. To enclose enumerating letters or numerals within a sentence.

Our goals are to (1) reduce the number of curriculum hours, (2) eliminate the 90-minute lunch period, and (3) reduce the number of personnel needed to accomplish the mission.
Also, include the following when you file your medical costs: (a) hotel charges, (b) meal costs (including gratuities), and (c) transportation costs.

4. To enclose numbers or letters identifying certain sections of an outline. In outlining, if you have a paragraph numbered *1,* you must have a paragraph numbered *2*; if you have a subparagraph *a*, you must have a *b* subparagraph.

1. xxxxx
   a. xxxxx
      (1) xxxxx
          (a) xxxxx

5. To enclose a nickname or a descriptive expression when it falls between a person's first and last names. However, when it precedes or replaces a person's first name, simply capitalize it.

George Herman (Babe) Ruth
Major William F. (Clark) Kent
Stonewall Jackson
the Iron Duke

"And what he greatly thought, he nobly dared."
– Homer

ALONG WITH OTHER PUNCTUATION ...

6. If an item in parentheses falls within a sentence, place comma, semicolon, colon, or dash outside (never before) the closing parenthesis.

I'll see you later (probably Friday), but remember to collect your money.
I'll attend the meeting (as I said I would); however, you'll have to go to the next one as I have another commitment.
She's passionate about two important issues (and strives to support them): homeless children and a clean environment.

7. Use a period before a closing parenthesis only when the parenthetical sentence stands on its own or when the closing parenthesis is preceded by an abbreviation containing punctuation.

The results were surprising. (See the analysis at atch 2.)
Many heights of flowers (e.g., 6 in., 12 in., 36 in.) will be featured in the show.

8. Put a question mark or quotation mark before a closing parenthesis only when it applies to the parenthetical item and the sentence ends in a different punctuation.

The Pentagon (you've been there, haven't you?) is a fascinating office building.
Doris Williams said she would go. (In fact, her exact words were, "Go golfing? You bet! Every chance I get!")

9. When using an exclamation mark or question mark to emphasize or draw attention to a particular word within a sentence.

You call this fresh(!) food.
They said they will buy us four(?) machines.

SPACING WHEN USING PARENTHESES ...

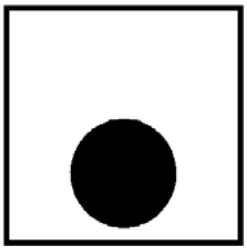
—opening

- One space *before* when parenthetic matter is within a sentence.
- No space *before* when using exclamation or question marks to emphasize or draw attention to a particular word within a sentence.
- Two spaces *before* when parenthetic matter follows a sentence (when parenthetic matter starts with a capital and closes with its own sentence punctuation)—unless manuscript format and using right justified, then one space *before.*
- No space *after*.

—closing

- No space *before*.
- One space *after* when parenthetic matter is within a sentence.
- Two spaces *after* when parenthetic matter is itself a complete sentence and another sentence follows—unless manuscript format and using right justified, then one space *after.*
- No space *after* if another punctuation mark immediately follows.

NOTE: The *Tongue and Quill* favors two spaces after the end of a sentence. Rather to use one space or two is left up to the individual or organization. Either way is acceptable.



PERIOD

USE A PERIOD ...

1. To end declarative and imperative sentences.

His work is minimally satisfactory.
Don't be late.

2. To end an indirect question or a question intended as a suggestion or otherwise not requiring an answer.

She wanted to know how to do it.
He asked what the job would entail.
Tell me how they did it.

3. With certain abbreviations. Most abbreviations today are written without punctuation (see *Abbreviations*, pages 309-315).

Ms.	Miss [not an abbreviation]	Sr.	no. [number; could be confused with the word *no*]
Mr.	Dr.	e.g.	in. [inch; could be confused with the word *in*]
Mrs.	Jr.	i.e.	etc.

4. To form ellipses (three periods that indicate a pause or faltering speech within a sentence, or an omission of a portion of quoted material). (See *Ellipsis* on page 291.)

5. In vertical lists and outlines.

a. Use a period after each item in a vertical list when at least one of the items is a complete sentence. When the list completes a sentence begun in the introductory element, omit the final period unless the items are separated by other punctuation.

After listening intently to the defense attorney's closing remarks, the jury was convinced of three things:
(1) Witnesses lied.
(2) False evidence had been presented.
(3) The defendant deserved a new trial.

After listening to the defense attorney's closing remarks, the jury was convinced that
(1) several witnesses had perjured themselves,
(2) false evidence was presented and
(3) the defendant deserved a new trial.

The following aircraft were lined up on the runway:
B-1B
T-38
F-16
F-117

b. Use periods after numbers and letters in an outline when the letters and figures are not enclosed in parentheses. If you have a numbered *1* paragraph, you must have a numbered *2;* if you have a subparagraph *a,* you must have a *b* subparagraph; and so on. For Air Force publications, follow guidance in AFI 33-360, Volume 1.

1. ⇦outline sample
2.
   a.
   b.
      (1)
      (2)
         (a)
         (b)

ALONG WITH OTHER PUNCTUATION ...

6. With parenthetical phrases. Place a period inside the final parenthesis only when the item in the parentheses is a separate sentence or when the final word in the parenthetical phrase is an abbreviation that is followed by a period.

I waited in line for 3 hours. (One other time I waited for over 5 hours.)
One other committee member (namely, Dr. Glen Spivey, Sr.) plans to vote against the amendment.

7. With quotation marks with the period placed inside a closing quotation mark.

She said, "I'll go with you."

8. With a dash only when used with an abbreviation that contains periods.

Tony Lamar's desk is 48 in.—his is the only odd-sized desk.

SPACING WHEN USING A PERIOD...

- Two spaces *after* the end of a sentence—unless manuscript format and using right justified, then on space *after*.
- No space *before* unless an ellipsis (see *Ellipses*, page 291).
- One space *after* an abbreviation with a period within a sentence.
- No space *after* a decimal point or *before* within two numbers.
- No space *after* when another punctuation mark immediately follows (closing quotation mark, closing parenthesis, comma following an "abbreviation" period).
- Two spaces *after* a number or letter that indicates an enumeration (rule 5b).

NOTE: The *Tongue and Quill* favors two spaces after the end of a sentence. Rather to use one space or two is left up to the individual or organization. Either way is acceptable.

"The pen is mightier than the sword."
– Shakespeare

"... unless you're on one."
– *The Quill*

QUESTION MARK

USE A QUESTION MARK ...

1. To indicate the end of a direct question.

Did he go with you?
Will you be able to attend?

2. With elliptical (shortened) questions and to express more than one question within a sentence.

You rang? For what purpose?
Was the speaker interesting? Convincing? Well versed?
Who approved the sale? When? To whom? For what amount?

3. After an independent question within a larger sentence.

The question "Who will absorb the costs?" went unanswered.
When will the reorganization take place? will surely be asked.

4. To express doubt.

They plan to purchase three(?) new Pentium computers with individual scanners for us.
Jackie Baltzell and Gayle Magill have been associated with her since 1990(?).

ALONG WITH OTHER PUNCTUATION ...

5. Use a question mark before a closing parenthesis only when it applies solely to the parenthetical item and the sentence ends in a different punctuation mark.

At our next meeting (it's on the 16th, isn't it?), we'll elect a new president. As the gun opened fire (was it a .50-caliber gun?), all movement ceased. [Question marks were used within parentheses because sentences require a period at the end.]
Are tickets still available (and can I get two), or is it too late? [Question mark is omitted within parentheses because sentence ends with a question mark.]

6. A question mark is placed inside the closing quotation mark only when it applies to the quoted material or when the same punctuation is required for both the quotation and the sentence as a whole.

She asked, "Did you enjoy the trip?" [Question mark belongs with quoted material.]
Why did he ask, "When does it start?" [Question mark is same as ending punctuation.]
Did you say, "I'll help out"? [Quoted material is not a question; therefore, question mark applies to the sentence as a whole.]

7. When a question within a sentence is set off by dashes, place the question mark before the closing dash.

The new class—isn't it called Super Seminar?—begins tomorrow.

SPACING WHEN USING A QUESTION MARK...

- Two spaces *after* the end of a sentence—unless manuscript format and using right justified, then one space *after* (see page 302, spacing).
- No space *after* when another punctuation mark immediately follows (closing quotation mark, closing parenthesis, closing dash).

NOTE: The *Tongue and Quill* favors two spaces after the end of a sentence. Rather to use one space or two is left up to the individual or organization. Either way is acceptable.

English ... A Changing Language

Awful, terrible **once meant "fear inspiring."**

Barn **once meant "barley-place."**

Doom **once meant "any legal judgment."**

Girl **once was used to refer to a child of either sex.**

Hussy **once meant "housewife."**

Marshall **once meant "stable boy" (one who looked after mares).**

Meat **once meant "food."**

Nice **once meant "ignorant."**

Nimble **once meant "good at taking things."**

Shrewd **once meant "wicked."**

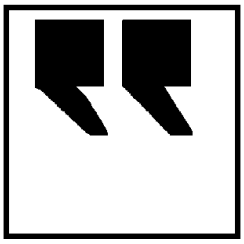
Silly **once meant "fortunate."**

Smart **once meant "causing pain."**

Starve **once meant "die."**

Villain **once meant "farm worker."**

–found in *Building Better English*



QUOTATION MARKS

USE QUOTATION MARKS ...

1. To enclose the exact words of a speaker or writer. With few exceptions, a quotation must be copied exactly as it appears in the original. If the quotation is woven into the flow of the sentence, do not use punctuation preceding the opening quotation mark. When words interrupt a quotation, close and reopen the quotation.

Robert Frost said, "The brain is a wonderful organ; it starts working the moment you get up in the morning and doesn't stop until you get to the office."
Why does she insist on saying "It just won't work"?
"A pint of sweat" says General George S. Patton, "will save a gallon of blood."

***NOTE*:** Do not set off indirect quotations.

Why does she insist on saying that it just won't work?

2. To enclose slogans or mottoes, but not signs or notices.

He had a "do or die" attitude.
"All's well that ends well" is a popular slogan.
He has a No Smoking sign in his car.
There is a Gone Fishing notice on his door.

3. To enclose words or phrases used to indicate humor, slang, irony, or poor grammar.

They serve "fresh" seafood all right—fresh from the freezer!
For whatever reason, she just "ain't talkin'."

***NOTE*:** When using quotation marks with other punctuation, the comma and period are always placed inside the closing quotation marks; the semicolon is always placed outside the closing quotation marks; the dash, exclamation mark, and question mark are placed according to the structure of the sentence (see guidelines on pages 288, 292, and 303).

4. With words and phrases that are introduced by such expressions as *cited as, classified, designated, entitled, labeled, marked, named, signed, the term, the word* when the exact message is quoted. Capitalize the first word when it begins a sentence, when it was capitalized in the original, when it represents a complete sentence, or when it is a proper noun.

The card was signed "Your friend, Diane."
The article was entitled "How to Write English That is Alive."
"Fragile" was stamped on the outside of the package.
The report is classified "secret" and can't be distributed.
Our organization received an "Outstanding" Quality Air Force Assessment (QAFA) rating.

***NOTE*:** Do not enclose these expressions: called, known as, so-called, etc.

The flower was called an American Beauty rose.
The boy whose name is "Bill Kent" was known as Clark Kent.
The so-called secret report can now be distributed.

5. To enclose the title of any part (chapter, lesson, topic, section, article, heading) of a published work (book, play, speech, symphony, etc.). The title of the published work should be underlined in typed material and italicized in printed material.

The Appendix 1 section in AFH 33-337 is "The Mechanics of Writing."
When you read "Air Force Writing Products and Templates" section of *The Tongue and Quill*, keep in mind …

6. To enclose titles of complete but unpublished works such as manuscripts, dissertations and reports.

We need to get a copy of the "The Evolution of a Revolt" document as soon as possible.
The title of his dissertation is "Why Smoking Should be Banned from All Public Places."

7. To enclose the titles of songs and radio and television shows.

They sang "The Star Spangled Banner" before the game began.
"M.A.S.H." is still being shown on TV.

8. To denote inches.

6″ × 15″ [use inch (″) mark and multiplication (×) mark if using typewriter or computer that has these keys]

9. To enclose a nickname or descriptive expression when it falls between a person's first and last names. However, when it precedes or replaces a person's first name, simply capitalize it.

George Herman "Babe" Ruth
the Iron Duke
Stonewall Jackson
Major William F. "Clark" Kent

10. To enclose misnomers, slang expressions, nickname, coined words, or ordinary words used in an arbitrary way.

His report was "bunk."
The "invisible government" is responsible.
It was a "gentlemen's agreement."
but He voted for the lameduck amendment.

SPACING WHEN USING QUOTATION MARKS…

—opening

- Two spaces *before* when quoted matter starts a new sentence or follows a colon—unless manuscript format and using right justified, then one space *before*.
- No space *before* when a dash or an opening parenthesis precedes.
- One space *before* in all other cases.
- No space *after*.

—closing

- No space *before*.
- Two spaces *after* when quoted matter ends the sentence—unless manuscript format and using right justified, then one space *after* (see page 302, spacing).
- No space *after* when another punctuation mark immediately follows (semicolon, colon).
- One space *after* in all other cases.

NOTE: The *Tongue and Quill* favors two spaces after the end of a sentence. Rather to use one space or two is left up to the individual or organization. Either way is acceptable.

SEMICOLON

USE A SEMICOLON ...

1. To separate independent clauses not connected by a coordinating conjunction (*and, but, for, or, nor,* and *so*), and in statements too closely related in meaning to be written as separate sentences.

The students were ready; it was time to go.
It's true in peace; it's true in war.
War is destructive; peace, constructive.

2. Before transitional words and phrases (*accordingly, as a result, besides, consequently, for example, furthermore, hence, however, moreover, namely, nevertheless, on the contrary, otherwise, that is, then, therefore, thus,* and *yet*) when connecting two complete but related thoughts and a coordinating conjunction is not used. Follow these words and phrases with a comma. Do not use a comma after *hence, then, thus, so* and *yet* unless a pause is needed.

Our expenses have increased; however, we haven't raised our prices.
Our expenses have increased, however, and we haven't raised our prices.
The decision has been made; therefore, there's no point in discussing it further.
The decision has been made so there's no point in discussing it.
The general had heard the briefing before; thus, he chose not to attend.
Let's wait until next month; then we can get better result figures.

3. To separate items in a series that contain commas (when confusion would otherwise result).

If you want your writing to be worthwhile, organize it; if you want it to be easy to read, use simple words and phrases; and, if you want it to be interesting, vary your sentence and paragraph lengths.

Those who attended the meeting were Colonels Jim Forsyth, Dean of Education; Michael Harris, Dean of Distance Learning; Mark Zimmerman, Chairman of Leadership and Communications Studies; and Phil Tripper, Chairman of Joint Warfare Studies.

4. To precede words or abbreviations that introduce a summary or explanation of what has gone before in the sentence.

We visited several countries on that trip; i.e., England, Ireland, France, Germany, and Finland.
There are many things you must arrange before leaving on vacation; for example, mail pickup, pet care, yard care.

SPACING WHEN USING A SEMICOLON...

No space before.
One space *after.*

FUNNY SIGNS

1. IN A LAUNDROMAT: Automatic washing machines. Please remove all your clothes when the light goes out.

2. IN A LONDON DEPARTMENT STORE: Bargain Basement Upstairs

3. IN AN OFFICE: Would the person who took the step ladder yesterday kindly bring it back or further steps will be taken.

4. IN ANOTHER OFFICE: After the tea break, staff should empty the teapot and stand upside down on the draining board.

5. ON A CHURCH DOOR: This is the gate of Heaven. Enter ye all by this door. (This door is kept locked because of the draft. Please use side entrance)

6. OUTSIDE A SECOND-HAND SHOP: We exchange anything—bicycles, washing machines etc. Why not bring your wife along and get a wonderful bargain.

7. QUICKSAND WARNING: Quicksand. Any person passing this point will be drowned. By order of the District Council.

8. NOTICE IN A DRY CLEANER'S WINDOW: Anyone leaving their garments here for more than 30 days will be disposed of.

9. IN A HEALTH FOOD SHOP WINDOW: Closed due to illness.

10. SPOTTED IN A SAFARI PARK: Elephants Please Stay In Your Car

11. SEEN DURING A CONFERENCE: For anyone who has children and doesn't know it, there is a day care on the first floor.

12. NOTICE IN A FIELD: The farmer allows walkers to cross the field for free, but the bull charges.

13. MESSAGE ON A LEAFLET: If you cannot read, this leaflet will tell you how to get lessons.

14. ON A REPAIR SHOP DOOR: We can repair anything (Please knock hard on the door—the bell doesn't work).

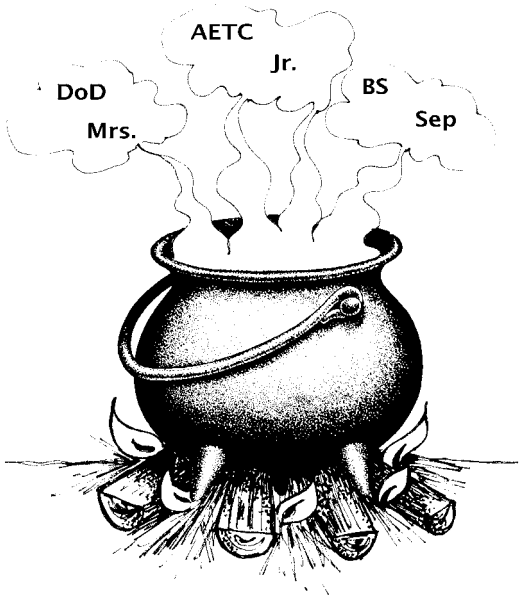
15. SPOTTED IN A TOILET IN A LONDON OFFICE BLOCK: Toilet out of order. Please use floor below.

ABBREVIATING ABCs

ə-ˌbre-ve-ˈa-shən

A shortened form of a written word or phrase used in place of the whole.

– *Webster's Tenth New Collegiate Dictionary*



What's the appropriate abbreviation? Can I abbreviate in this document? How do I write it—all capital letters, all lowercase letters, or caps and lowercase letters? Can I use just the abbreviation or must I spell it out? How do I make it plural—add an *s*, or an *'s*? Where do I go for answers?

Though these questions are insignificant when compared with some Air Force problems, thousands of people confront these issues on a daily basis. To clear the smoke surrounding the use of abbreviations, we've listed some types of abbreviations used in Air Force writing and *some* general guidelines regarding their proper use.

ACRONYMS: Pronounceable words formed by combining initial letter(s) of the words that make up the complete form. Most acronyms are written in all caps without punctuation, but some are so commonly used they are now considered words in their own right.

AAFES (**A**rmy and **A**ir **F**orce **E**xchange **S**ervice)
NATO (**N**orth **A**tlantic **T**reaty **O**rganization)
POW (**p**risoner **o**f **w**ar)
laser (**l**ight **a**mplification by **s**imulated **e**mission of **r**adiation)
Modem (**mo**dular/**dem**odulator)
SALT (**s**trategic **a**rms **l**imitation **t**alks)
scuba (**s**elf-**c**ontained **u**nderwater **b**reathing **a**pparatus)
ZIP code (**Z**one **I**mprovement **P**lan code)

BREVITY CODES: Combinations of letters—*pronounced letter by letter*—designed to shorten a phrase, sentence or group of sentences.

CFC (**C**ombined **F**ederal **C**ampaign)
DDALV (**d**ays **d**elay en route **a**uthorized chargeable as **l**ea**v**e)
DOD (**D**epartment **o**f **D**efense)
PCS (**p**ermanent **c**hange of **s**tation)
TDY (**t**emporary **d**ut**y**)
CNN (**C**able **N**etwork **N**ews)

***NOTE*:** When brevity codes begin with *b, c, d, g, j, k, p, q, t, u, v, w, y,* or *z,* the indefinite article **a** is used. With *a, e, f, h, i, l, m, n, o, r, s,* or *x*, use **an.**

CONTRACTIONS: Shortened forms of words in which an apostrophe indicates the deletion of letters.

can't (cannot)
don't (do not)
I'll (I will)
I'm (I am)
I've (I have)
isn't (is not)
it's (it is)
let's (let us)
mustn't (must not)
they're (they are)
we're (we are)
won't (will not)
wouldn't (would not)
you've (you have)

ABBREVIATIONS IN GENERAL:

- Use in *informal* documents, manuals, reference books, business and legal documents, scholarly footnotes, etc., when needed to save space. Avoid using in formal documents when style, elegance and formality are important.
- In formal writing "United States" is a noun (The United States and Canada were founding …); "US" is an adjective (US policy regarding …).
- Use sparingly, correctly and consistently.
- Spell out the word (or words) the first time used and enough times within the document to remind readers of its meaning.
- Use a figure to express the quantity in a unit of measure (without a hyphen in a unit modifier) when using an abbreviation. [3 mi, 55 mph, 50 lb, 33 mm film]
- Write abbreviations "first," "second," "third," "fourth," etc., as 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, etc.
- Use when there's a choice between using an abbreviation and a contraction. [gov vs gov't]
- Use the shortest form that doesn't jeopardize clarity when there's more than one way to abbreviate a word or phrase. [con, cont, contd]
- Avoid beginning a sentence with an abbreviation (except Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr.), acronyms and brevity codes.
- Avoid using in main headings.
- Avoid using words that are offensive, profane or repulsive when assigning acronyms, brevity codes and contractions.
- Write without punctuation unless confusion would result. [The abbreviation for *inch* (in.) might be confused with the word *in*, the abbreviation for *number* (no.) might be confused with the word *no*, etc.]
- Write abbreviations for single words in lowercase letters. [hospital - hosp; letter - ltr]
- Use the same abbreviation for singular and plural forms after spelling it out. [area of responsibility (AOR) - areas of responsibility (AOR)]
- When ambiguity could result, form the plural with a lowercase *s* and never use an apostrophe to form the plural. [letters - ltrs; travel requests - TRs; area of operations - AO; areas of operations - AOs]
- Do not cap the words just because the acronym or brevity code is capped. Check a source book, the library or the office of responsibility for the correct form. [OJT - on the job training; OPSEC - operations security; JIPC - joint imagery production complex; JCS - Joint Chiefs of Staff]
- Contact the office of primary responsibility for its proper use when writing articles, manuals, handouts, instructions, performance reports, award citations and narratives, and unit histories.
- Find out if your organization has a preference and use it. Otherwise, consult the latest dictionary or use the Joint Publication 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, for terms and definitions.
- Use the "/" (slash) when punctuating some abbreviations. [with – w/ or without – w/o; input/output – I/O]
- **SPELL IT OUT if there's still doubt!**

SOME ABBREVIATIONS USED BY AIR FORCE WRITERS ...

Days	Months		Years	
Sun	Jan	Jul	1999	99
Mon	Feb	Aug	2000	00
Tues	Mar	Sep	2001	01
Wed	Apr	Oct	2002	02
Thurs	May	Nov	2003	03
Fri	Jun	Dec	2004	04
Sat			etc.	

Air Force Ranks

Airman Basic	AB
Airman	Amn
Airman First Class	A1C
Senior Airman	SrA
Staff Sergeant	SSgt
Technical Sergeant	TSgt
Master Sergeant	MSgt
Senior Master Sergeant	SMSgt
Chief Master Sergeant	CMSgt
Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force	CMSAF
Second Lieutenant	2d Lt
First Lieutenant	1st Lt
Captain	Capt
Major	Maj
Lieutenant Colonel	Lt Col
Colonel	Col
Brigadier General	Brig Gen
Major General	Maj Gen
Lieutenant General	Lt Gen
General	Gen

ZIP Code, State and Possession Abbreviations

Alabama	AL	Ala	Montana	MT	Mont
Alaska	AK		Nebraska	NE	Nebr
Arizona	AZ	Ariz	Nevada	NV	Nev
Arkansas	AR		New Hampshire	NH	
California	CA	Calif	New Jersey	NJ	
Colorado	CO	Colo	New Mexico	NM	NMex
Connecticut	CT	Conn	New York	NY	
Delaware	DE	Del	North Carolina	NC	
Florida	FL	Fla	North Dakota	ND	NDak
Georgia	GA	Ga	Ohio	OH	
Hawaii	HI		Oklahoma	OK	Okla
Idaho	ID		Oregon	OR	Oreg
Illinois	IL	Ill	Pennsylvania	PA	Pa
Indiana	IN	Ind	Rhode Island	RI	
Iowa	IA		South Carolina	SC	
Kansas	KS	Kans	South Dakota	SD	SDak
Kentucky	KY	Ky	Tennessee	TN	Tenn
Louisiana	LA	La	Texas	TX	Tex
Maine	ME		Utah	UT	
Maryland	MD	Md	Vermont	VT	Vt
Massachusetts	MA	Mass	Virginia	VA	Va
Michigan	MI	Mich	Washington	WA	Wash
Minnesota	MN	Minn	West Virginia	WV	Wva
Mississippi	MS	Miss	Wisconsin	WI	Wis
Missouri	MO	Mo	Wyoming	WY	Wyo

American Samoa	AS	Northern Mariana Islands	MP
District of Columbia	DC	Palau	PW
Federated States of Micronesia	FM	Puerto Rico	PR
Guam	GU	Virgin Islands	VI
Marshall Islands	MH		

Field Operating Agencies

AF Agency for Modeling and Simulation	AFAMS
AF Audit Agency	AFAA
AF Base Conversion Agency	AFBCA
AF Center for Environmental Excellence	AFCEE
AF Center for Quality and Management Innovation	AFCQMI
AF Civil Engineer Support Agency	AFCESA
AF Communications Agency	AFCA
AF Cost Analysis Agency	AFCAA
AF Flight Standards Agency	AFFSA
AF Historical Research Agency	AFHRA
AF History Support Office	AFHSO
AF Inspection Agency	AFIA
AF Legal Services Agency	AFLSA
AF Logistics Management Agency	AFLMA
AF Medical Operations Agency	AFMOA
AF Medical Support Agency	AFMSA
AF National Security, Emergency Preparedness Office	AFNSEPO
AF News Agency	AFNEWS
AF Office of Special Investigations	AFOSI
AF Operations Group	AFOG
AF Personnel Center	AFPC
AF Personnel Operations Agency	AFPOA
AF Program Executive Office	AFPEO
AF Real Estate Agency	AFREA
AF Review Boards Agency	AFRBA
AF Safety Center	AFSC
AF Service Agency	AFSVA
AF Studies and Analyses Agency	AFSAA
AF Technical Applications Center	AFTAC
AF Intelligence Agency	AIA
Air National Guard Readiness Center	ANGRC
Air Reserve Personnel Center	ARPC
Air Force Weather Agency	AFWA
Joint Services Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape Agency	JSSA

Phonetic Alphabet

A	Alfa	N	November
B	Bravo	O	Oscar
C	Charlie	P	Papa
D	Delta	Q	Quebec
E	Echo	R	Romeo
F	Foxtrot	S	Sierra
G	Golf	T	Tango
H	Hotel	U	Uniform
I	India	V	Victor
J	Juliett	W	Whiskey
K	Kilo	X	Xray
L	Lima	Y	Yankee
M	Mike	Z	Zulu

Academic Degrees

Bachelor of Arts	BA
Bachelor of Science	BS
Master of Arts	MA
Master of Science	MS
Doctor of Philosophy	PhD
Doctor of Law	LLD
Doctor of Medicine	MD
Doctor of Dentistry	DDS

Secondary Address Unit Indicators

Apartment	APT
Building	BLDG
Department	DEPT
Floor	FL
Room	RM
Suite	STE

Latin Abbreviations

A.M.	ante meridiem	before noon
c. or ca	circa	about, approximately
e.g.	exempli gratia	for example, for instance
et al.	et allii, et alia	and other people/things
etc.	et cetera	and so on, and other things
ib, ibid.	ibidem	in the same place
i.e.	id est	that is to say
loc. cit.	loco citato	in the place cited/mentioned
op. cit.	opere citato	in the work cited/mentioned before
P.M.	post meridiem	after noon
P.S.	post scriptum	after writing
Pro tem.	pro tempore	for the time, temporarily
Q.E.D.	quod erat demonstrandum	which was to be shown
Sc.	sic	thus used, spelt, etc.
v.,	versus	vs. against
v.v.	vice versa	the other way around

Direct Reporting Units

AF Doctrine Center	AFDC
AF Operational Test and Evaluation Center	AFOTEC
AF Security Forces Center	AFSFC
United States Air Force Academy	USAFA
11th Wing	11 WG

Units of Measure

gallon	gal
hertz	hz
kilogram	kg
miles per hour	mph
70 Degrees Celsius	70^{o} C
revolutions per minute	rpm
inch	in.
foot	ft
mile	mi
kilometer	km
millimeter	mm
pounds per square inch	psi
nautical miles	NM

Major Commands

Air Combat Command	ACC
Air Education and Training Command	AETC
AF Materiel Command	AFMC
AF Reserve Command	AFRC
AF Space Command	AFSPC
AF Special Operations Command	AFSOC
Air Mobility Command	AMC
Pacific Air Forces	PACAF
United States Air Forces in Europe	USAFE

Researcher's Guide to Abbreviations

app	appendix	l (el)	line (plural: ll) [not recommended because the abbreviation in the singular might be mistaken for "one" and the plural for "eleven"]
art	article (plural: arts)	n	not, footnote (plural: nn)
b	born	nd	no date
bk	book (plural: bks)	no.	number (plural: nos)
c	copyright	np	no place; no publisher
ca	circa, about, approximately	NS	new series
cf	confer, compare [confer is Latin for "compare": *cf* must not be used as the abbreviation for the English "confer," nor should *cf* be use to mean "see")	op cit	opere citato in the work cited
ch	chapter (in legal references only)	OS	old series
chap	chapter (plural: chaps)	p	page (plural: pp) [it always precedes the numbers; when "p" follows a number, it can stand for "pence"]
col	column (plural: cols)	para	Paragraph (plural: pars)
comp	complier (plural: comps); complied by	passim	here and there
d	died	pt	part (plural: pts)
dept	department (plural: depts)	qv	*quod vide*, which see (for use with cross-references
div	division (plural: divs)	sc	scene
e.g.	*exempli gratia*, for example (use without etc.)	sec	section (plural: secs)
ed	edition, edited by editor (plural: eds)	[sic]	so, thus; show erroneous material intentionally kept in text
et al	*et alii*, and others	sup	supplement (plural: sups)
et seq	*et sequens*, and the following	supra	above
etc.	*et cetera*, and so forth	sv	*sub verbo*, *sub voce*, under the word (for use in references to listing in encyclopedias and dictionaries)
fig	figure (plural: figs)	trans	translator, translated by
fl	*flourit* flourished (for use when birth and death dates are not known)	v	verse (plural: vv)
i.e.	*id est*, that is (use with etc.)	viz	videlicet, namely
ibid	*ibidem*, in the same place	vol	volume (plural: vols)
id	idem, the same (refers to persons, except in law citations; not to be confused with ibid)	vs	versus, against (v in law references)
infra	below		

something to consider …

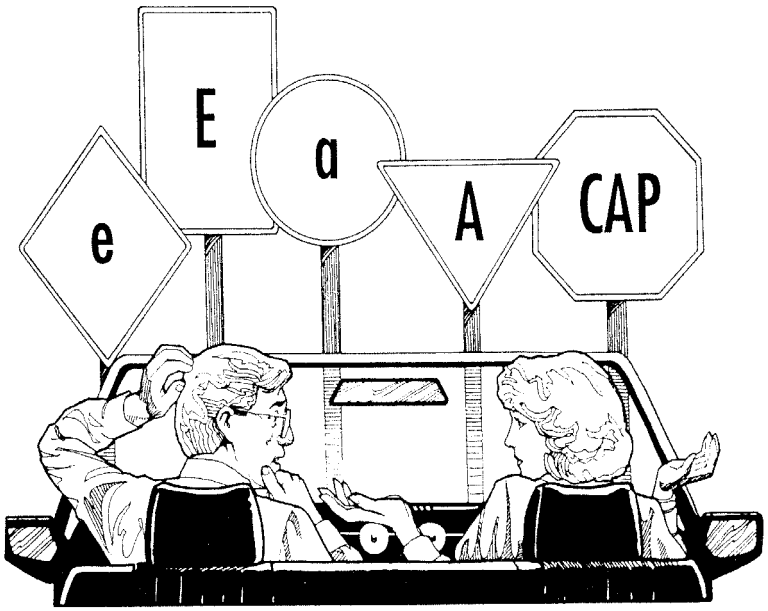
Build effective sentences with active voice, less garbage, positive tone (pages 23-24) and correct words ~ see pages 73-87

Drafting an effective paragraph with transitional devices ~ see pages 68-73

Writing your draft ~ see pages 64-90

Editing your work ~ see pages 91-103

CAPITALIZATION GUIDELINES



Air Force writers and reviewers spend an excessive amount of time trying to determine the appropriate use of capital letters (and abbreviations and numbers, as well). Everybody seems to want it a different way. Authoritative sources don't even agree! Put a half dozen style manuals in front of you and compare the rules—two out of the six might agree in some cases.

The reason for using capital letters is to give distinction or add importance to certain words or phrases. "But," you might say, "I thought it was important and should be capitalized, but the Command Section kicked it back to be changed to lowercase letters." It's unfortunate, but, if someone else is signing the document, that person has the last word. **The best advice we can give you is to find out what style your organization prefers and use it consistently.**

Although we can't possibly cover every situation, what follows is designed to provide some measure of consistency within the Air Force. You must ensure consistency within everything you write or type. *A word of caution:* When you're preparing Air Force publications, performance reports, forms/IMTs, awards, or other unique packages, consult the appropriate manuals or the office of primary responsibility to determine their unique requirements; e.g., Joint Publication 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*.

FIRST WORDS

1. CAPITALIZE THE FIRST WORD…

a. of every sentence.

Twenty-one people attended the secret presentation given by the chief of staff.
Nonessential government employees were furloughed from 14 to 19 November 2002.

b. of every sentence fragment treated as a complete sentence.

Really? No! So much for that.
More discussion. No agreement. Another hour wasted.

c. of direct questions and quotations placed within a sentence even if quotation marks are not used.

The commander asked this question: How many of you are volunteers?
The order read "Attack at dawn."

d. of items shown in a list (using numbers, letters, or display dots) when a complete sentence introduces them.

The commander listed the following responsibilities of liaison officers:
a. Become familiar with the situation.
b. Know the mission.
c. Arrange for communications.

e. in the salutation and complimentary closing of a letter.

Dear Mr. McBride Sincerely Respectfully yours

f. after a hyphen when the hyphenated word is followed by a proper noun or adjective.

non-Latin speaking people

g. after a colon when the

(1) word is a proper noun or the pronoun I.

Two courses are required: English and Economics.

(2) word is the first word of a quoted sentence.

When asked by his teacher to explain the difference between a sofa and a love seat, the nursery school boy had this to say: "Don't reckon I know, ma'am, but you don't put your feet on either one."

(3) expression after the colon is a complete sentence that is the dominant or more general element.

A key principle: Nonessential elements are set off by commas; essential elements are not set off.

(4) material following the colon consists of two or more sentences.

There are several drawbacks to this: First, it ties up our capital for three years. Second, the likelihood of a great return on our investment is questionable.

(5) material following the colon starts on a new line.

They gave us two reasons:
1. They received the order too late.
2. It was Friday and nothing could be done until Monday.

(6) material preceding the colon is an introductory word (NOTE, CAUTION, WANTED, HINT, or REMEMBER).

WANTED: Three editorial assistants who know computers as well as editing and typesetting.

h. each line in a poem. (Always follow the style of the poem, however).

I used to write quite poorly.
My boss said it made him ill.
But now he's feeling better
'Cuz I use *The Tongue and Quill!*
- TSgt Keyes

2. DO NOT CAPITALIZE…

a. the first word of a sentence enclosed in parentheses within another sentence unless the first word is a proper noun, the pronoun *I*, the first word of a quoted sentence, or begins a complete parenthetical sentence standing alone.

The company finally moved (they were to have vacated 2 months ago) to another location.
One of our secretaries (Carolyn Brown) will record the minutes of today's meeting.
This is the only tree in our yard that survived the ice storm. (It's a pecan tree.)

b. part of a quotation slogan or motto if it is not capitalized in the original quotation.

General MacArthur said that old soldiers "just fade away."

c. items shown in enumeration when completing the sentence that introduces them.

Liaison officers must
a. become familiar with the situation,
b. know the mission and
c. arrange for communications.
[Notice punctuation]

d. the first word of an independent clause after a colon if the clause explains, illustrates or amplifies the thought expressed in the first part of the sentence.

Essential and nonessential elements require altogether different punctuation: the latter should be set off by commas, whereas the former should not.

e. after a colon if the material cannot stand alone as a sentence.

I must countersign all cash advances, with one exception: when the amount is less than $50.
Three subjects were discussed: fund raising, membership, and bylaws.

PROPER NOUNS AND COMMON NOUNS

1. Capitalize all proper names (the official name of a person, place or thing).

Porie and Tourcoing	Anglo-Saxon	Cliff Brow
Judy Phillips-McDonald	Rio Grande River	Stratford-on-Avon
the Capitol in DC	the capital of Maine is …	Mönchengladbach
US Constitution	the Constitution	the Alamo

2. Capitalize a common noun or adjective that forms an essential part of a proper name, but not a common noun used alone as a substitute for the name of a place or thing.

Statue of Liberty; the statue	Potomac River; the river
Air War College; the college	Berlin Wall; the wall
Washington Monument; the monument	Vietnam Veterans Memorial; the memorial

3. If a common noun or adjective forming an essential part of a name becomes removed from the rest of the name by an intervening common noun or adjective, the entire expression is no longer a proper noun and is not capitalized.

Union Station; union passenger station	Eastern States; eastern farming states

4. Capitalize names of exercises, military operations, military concepts, etc.

Exercise GLOBAL SHIELD	Operation ENDURING FREEDOM
Principles of War	New Vision; Global Reach, Global Power
Air and Space Superiority	Precision Engagement
Information Superiority	Agile Combat Support

TITLES OF LITERARY AND ARTISTIC WORKS AND HEADINGS

1. Capitalize all words with four or more letters in titles and artistic works and in displayed headings.

2. Capitalize words with fewer than four letters *except*…

a. Articles: the, a, an

b. Short conjunctions: and, as, but, if, or, nor

c. Short prepositions: at, by, for, in, of, off, on, out, to, up

***NOTE*:** Capitalize short verb forms like *Is* and *Be*, but not *to* when part of an infinitive.

How to Complete a Goal Without Really Trying
"Reorganization of Boyd Academy Is Not Expected to Be Approved"

3. Capitalize all hyphenated words, except articles and short prepositions; coordinating conjunctions; second elements of prefixes (unless proper noun or proper adjective); and *flat, sharp* and *natural* after musical key symbols.

English-Speaking	Run-of-the-Mill	Non-Christians	Follow-Through
Large-Sized Mat	Post-Prezhnev	Self-explanatory	Ex-Governor
Over-the-Hill Sayings	Twenty-first Century	One-eighth	E-flat Concerto

4. Capitalize articles, short conjunctions and short prepositions when:

a. the first and last word of a title.

"A Son-in-Law to Be Proud Of"

b. the first word following a dash or colon in a title.

Richard Nixon—The Presidential Years *Copyright Issues of the Air Force: A Reexamination*

c. short words like *in, out* and *up* in titles when they serve as adverbs rather than as prepositions. These words may occur as adverbs in verb phrases or in hyphenated compounds derived from verb phrases.

"IBM Chalks Up Record Earnings for the Year"
"Wilmington Is Runner-Up in the Election"
"Sailing up the Rhein"

d. short prepositions like *in* and *up* when used together with prepositions having four or more letters.

"Driving Up and Down the Interstate"
"Events In and Around Town"

NAMES OF GOVERNMENT BODIES, EMPLOYEES, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL REGIONS, DOCUMENTS

1. Capitalize*, except* when used in a general sense…

a. full and shortened names of national and international organizations, movements, and alliances and members of political parties.

Republican Party
Republican platform; Republican
Eastern bloc; Communist bloc
Democratic Party; Federalist Party
Communist Party; Communist
republicanism, communism
Bolshevik; Bolshevists
Common Market; Holy Alliance
Federalist; Russian Federation; Supreme Soviet

b. full and shortened names of US national governmental and military bodies.

US Government
US Congress, Congress
Department of Defense (DOD)
Defense Department
armed forces, armed services
National Command Authorities
Department of the Air Force
Air Force Reserve, reserve officer, reservist
the Federal Government, government workers
US Air Force, Air Force
US Navy, Navy; Marine Corps, the corps
House of Representatives, the House
Reserve Component, Active Component
Joint Chiefs of Staff, the joint chiefs
executive branch
Air National Guard, the Guard

NOTE: If *Army*, *Navy,* or *Air Force* can be used logically for *Marines*, use *M*. If the word *soldier* or *soldiers* logically fits it, use *m*.

Michael Johnson enlisted in the Marines.
a Marine landing
three marines
a company of Marines

c. titles of government employees.

US President, the President
Presidential campaign
Congressman Everett; a congressman
Navy officer; naval officer
Service component command chaplain
the Bush Administration, the Administration
commander in chief
Russian President
US Senate; a senator; Senator Clinton
Secretary of State
service chiefs; chief of staff
British Prime Minister

d. full titles of departments, directorates and similar organizations.

Department of Labor, the department
Center for Strategic Studies, the agency
Air War College, the college
Directorate of Data Processing, the directorate
Special Plans Division, the division
Squadron Officer School, the school

e. full titles of armies, navies, air forces, fleets, regiments, battalions, companies, corps, etc., but lowercase *army, navy, air force*, etc., when part of a general title for other countries.

Continental army; Union army
Royal Air Force; British air force
Russian government
People's Liberation Army
Fifth Army; the Eighth; the army
British navy; the navy
US Air Force, the Air Force; Navy's air force
Red China's army; the army

f. full names of judicial bodies.

Supreme Court, the Court
California Supreme Court
Circuit Court of Elmore County
Cabinet members
traffic court, judicial court
state supreme court
county court; circuit court

NAMES OF STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT BODIES

1. Capitalize the full names of state and local bodies and organizations, but not the shortened names unless mentioned with the name of the city, county, or state.

Virginia Assembly; the assembly
Montgomery County Board of Health; the Board of Health of Montgomery County; the board of health will …

2. Capitalize the word *state* only when it follows the name of a *state* or is part of an imaginative name.

New York State is called the Empire State.
The state of Alaska is the largest in the Union.
After an assignment overseas, we returned to the States.

3. Capitalize the word *city* only when it is part of the corporate name of the city or part of an imaginative name.

Kansas City; the city of Cleveland, Ohio, is …
Chicago is the Windy City; Philadelphia, the City of Brotherly Love

4. Capitalize *empire, state, country*, etc., when they follow words that show political divisions of the world, a county, a state, a city, etc., if they form an accepted part of it; lowercase if it precedes the name or stands alone.

11th Congressional District	his congressional district
Fifth Ward	the ward
Indiana Territory	the territory of Indiana
Roman Empire	the empire
Washington State	the state of Washington

ACTS, AMENDMENTS, BILLS, LAWS, PUBLICATIONS, TREATIES, WARS

Capitalize the titles of official acts, amendments, bills, laws, publications, treaties and wars, but not the common nouns or shortened forms that refer to them.

Social Security Act	Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty
US Code, Vol 28, Sec 2201-2	Gulf War; Seven Years' War
Fifth Amendment	Tet offensive; Cuban Missile Crisis
the income tax amendment	Korean War; Korean conflict
GI bill; Bill of Rights, food stamp bill	antitrust law; the law
Sherman Antitrust Law	World War II, WWII; the two world wars
Air Force Manual 33-326; the manual	Battle of the Bulge; Berlin Airlift; the airlift
Treaty of Versailles, Jay Treaty; the treaty	

PROGRAMS, MOVEMENTS, CONCEPTS

1. Capitalize the names of programs, movements, or concepts when used as proper nouns, but not when used in a general sense or latter day designations.

Medicare Act; medicare payments	Civil Rights Act; a civil rights leader
Socialist Labor Party; socialism	Veterans Administration; veteran benefits
Warfare Studies Phase; the phase	Nation-States

***NOTE*:** Also capitalize their *imaginative* names.

the New Deal	The New Frontier	Pacific Rim
the Great Society	the War on Poverty	Iron Curtain

2. Capitalize terms like *democrat, socialist* and *communist* when they signify formal membership in a political party, but not when they merely signify belief in a certain philosophy.

a lifelong democrat [person who believes in the principles of democracy]
a lifelong Democrat [person who consistently votes for the Democratic Party]

independent voters	leftists
the right wing	fascist tendencies

3. Do not capitalize nouns and adjectives showing political and economic systems of thought and their proponents, except when derived from a proper noun.

bolshevism	communism	communist
democracy	fascism	fascist
socialism	socialist	Marxism-Leninism

MILITARY RANK, MEDALS, AWARDS

1. Capitalize military rank when it is used with a proper name, but not when it stands alone.

Colonel Larry D. Grant and his secretary, Linda Wilson; the colonel
We have 30 majors and 26 lieutenant colonels.
She's a staff sergeant in the Air Force.

***NOTE*:** After initially identifying by full grade and name, use only the surname with the short grade title. Do not mix abbreviations with full words (Lt Col, not Lt Colonel).

Brigadier General Richard S. Glenn, Brig Gen, General or Gen Glenn
Master Sergeant Stephanie Reed, MSgt or Sgt Reed
Chief Master Sergeant Susan Sharp, Chief Sharp

2. Capitalize specific names of medals and awards.

Medal of Honor	Distinguished Flying Cross	congressional medal
Nobel Prize	Pulitzer Prize	Oscars and Emmys
Purple Heart	Legion of Merit	*Croix de Guerre*

TITLES

1. Capitalize official titles of honor and respect when being used with a proper name or in place of a specific proper name.

a. national officials such as the President, Vice President, cabinet members, the heads of government agencies, and bureaus.

President Bush; the President's speech	every President, Presidential campaigns
Vice President Cheney	Secretary of State
Attorney General	Director of FBI
Commissioner of …	Chief Justice

b. state officials.

the Governor	the Lieutenant Governor
the attorney general	the senator

c. foreign dignitaries.

the Queen (of England)	Prime Minister
The Chancellor of Germany ...	Prince of Wales

d. international figures.

the Pope	the Secretary General of the United Nations.

2. Capitalize any title (even if not of high rank) when it is used in direct address, except *madam*, *miss,* or *sir* if it stands alone without a proper name following.

Please tell me, Colonel, what risks are involved in this campaign.
I need to take some leave today, sir.
I asked the colonel what risks were involved in this campaign.

3. Also capitalize imaginative names used to refer to specific organizations.

Big Blue [IBM]	the Big Board [the NY Stock Exchange]
Ma Bell [AT&T]	the Baby Bells [the US regional phone companies]

4. Do not capitalize:

a. organization officials.

The commander will visit …
The secretary's minutes were read and approved. [formal minutes]

b. job titles when they stand alone.

Marion Conroy has been promoted to the position of senior accountant.

c. general terms of classification.

The Commandant of ACSC; an intermediate service school commandant
Have your director of research call me.
Squadron Leader David Bye of the Royal Air Force
Samuel A. South, USAF, Retired, went …; Samuel A. South retired from …
United States senator
a state governor
every king
any ambassador
The 2d Security Forces Squadron Commander; the squadron commander

d. *former, late, ex-,* or *-elect* when used with titles.

the late President Truman ex-President Bush Mayor-elect Bawley

e. family titles when preceded by *my, your, his, her, our,* and *their* and describe a family relationship.

Let me ask my mother and dad if that date is open for them.
Do you think your brother Bobby would like to meet my sister Fern?
Frank wants us to meet his Uncle John. (Here Uncle John is a unit.)
Frank wants us to meet his uncle, John Cunningham.

f. *the* at the beginning of a title, except when actually part of the title or when used as part of an official name or title at the Secretariat or Air Staff level.

For extensive details check the *Encarta '99*.
Major Gregg's article was published in *The New York Times*.
The Adjutant General The Inspector General
The Judge Advocate General The Surgeon General

5. Do not capitalize when titles follow a personal name or used in place of a personal name.

a. departments within an organization.

Some civilians in Air Command and Staff College that will help you are: Linda Wilson, commandant's secretary; Shirley Keil, protocol officer; Glen Spivey, educational advisor; and Lisa McDay, Yuna Braswell, and Rebecca Bryant, typesetters.
I'm applying for a job in your Directorate of Education and Curriculum.
The vacancy in our directorate has been filled.

b. local governmental officials and those of lesser federal and state, except in writing intended for a limited readership where the intended reader would consider the official to be of high rank.

Francis Fahey, mayor of Coventry, Rhode Island, appeared before a House committee today. The mayor spoke forcefully about the... [national news service release.]
The Mayor promised only last fall to hold the city sales tax at its present level. [editorial in a local newspaper.]
I have written for an appointment with the attorney general and expect to hear from his office soon.
I would like to request an appointment with the Attorney General. [memo to the state attorney general's office.]

COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES, ORGANIZATIONS, COMMITTEES, AGENCIES

Capitalize the proper names of colleges, universities, organizations, committees and agencies, but not the common nouns that refer to them.

University of Alabama; the university
National Labor Relations Board; the board
Veterans Administration; the administration
42d Air Base Wing; the wing
Air Command and Staff College; the college
Organization of American States; the organization
Committee on Foreign Affairs; the committee
the National Security Agency; the agency

NOTE*:** When using the abbreviated form of a numbered organization (e.g., ABW versus Air Base Wing), do not use ***th, ***st,*** or ***d*** with the number. When writing it out in its entirety (Supply Squadron versus SUPS), add the ***th***, ***d,*** or ***st*** to the number.

42d Air Base Wing or 42 ABW
42d Supply Squadron or 42 SUPS
101st Air Refueling Wing or 101 ARW

***NOTE*:** The *preferred style* is to use the long method in written text and the shortened method in address elements, charts, graphs, notes, and bibliography.

Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, has … or Maxwell AFB, Alabama, is …
Maxwell AFB AL 36112-3648 or HQ USAF CO 80840-6254 [address use only]
Maxwell AFB, Ala [notes, bibliography]

ACADEMIC DEGREES AND COURSE TITLES AND SUBJECTS

1. Capitalize the names of specific course titles, but not areas of study.

American History 201 meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
Esther is teaching kindergarten at Daniel Prattville Elementary and is taking EDL 609, Personnel Admin.
Psychology of Career Adjustment will be offered next quarter.
The Leadership and Command course employs an approach to further …

2. Capitalize academic degrees following a person's name and when the complete title of the degree is given, but not when they are used as general terms of classification.

H. A. Schwartz, Doctor of Philosophy
master's degree; bachelor's degree
BA, MA, PhD, LLD, MD, DDS, EdS
Master of Arts
Bachelor of Arts Degree in Computer and Information Sciences
bachelor of arts degree

NOUNS WITH NUMBERS AND LETTERS

Do not capitalize nouns followed by numbers or letters unless using full titles and then the first word and all-important words are capitalized.

annex A	chart 10	page 269	tab 2
appendix D	DD Form 282	paragraph 3	table 10
article 2	exhibit A	part II	task 3.1
attachment 2	figure 7	room 154	verse 3
book XI	line 4	rule 3	volume 1
building 1402	map 1	size 8	Annex A, Components
chapter 5	note 1	subtask 3.1.1	Tab 2, Directory of Terms

COMPASS DIRECTIONS

1. Capitalize compass directions when referring to specific regions or when the direction is part of a specific name, but not when merely indicating a general direction or location:

a. general direction/location.

travel north on I-65
southeastern states
the west side of town
East Side; Twin Cities

b. specific regions or a part of the world.

vacation in the Far East
visit Northern Ireland and New England
Sun Belt; West Coast; North Pole
brought up in the Deep South; but there are clouds forming in the south
Central Europe; the Continent [Europe]

c. part of a specific name.

Southland Dairy Company
Northeast Manufacturing Corporation

2. Capitalize words such as *northern, southern, eastern,* and *western* when referring to people in a region and to their political, social or cultural activities, but not when merely indicating a general location or region.

Southern hospitality
Eastern bankers
the South
southern California
Midwesterner
Western Hemisphere
the Northern vote
northern Maine

CELESTIAL BODIES

Capitalize the names of planets (*Jupiter, Mars*), stars (*Polaris, the North Star*), and constellations (*the Big Dipper, the Milky Way*). However, do not capitalize the words *sun, moon,* and *earth* unless they are used with the capitalized names of other planets or stars.

With this weather, we won't see the sun for a while.
We have gone to the ends of the earth to reorganize this unit.
Compare Mars, Venus and Earth.

DAYS OF THE WEEK, MONTHS, HOLIDAYS, EVENTS, PERIODS, SEASONS

Capitalize the days of the week, months, holidays, historic events and periods. Do not capitalize seasons or latter-day designations.

Sunday; Monday
January; February
Veterans Day; New Year's Day
Battle of the Bulge; World War II
Roaring Twenties; Gay Nineties; Roaring 20s
Dark Ages; Middle Ages; Ice Age; the Restoration
spring, summer, fall, winter
age of steam; nuclear age; space age; rocket age

***NOTE*:** A numerical designation of an era is lowercased if it's not part of a proper noun; i.e., twenty-first century, the nineteen hundreds.

RACES, PEOPLES, LANGUAGES

Capitalize races, peoples, and languages.

the Sioux; Mandarin Chinese
English; French; Finnish; German
African-American; black; Caucasian; white
Hispanic; Latin American; Mexican

COMMERCIAL PRODUCTS

Capitalize trade names, variety names and names of market grades and brands, but not the common nouns following such names.

Elmer's glue; Krazy Glue
Microsoft Windows software
Macintosh computers; McIntosh apples
Xerox; Photostat; photocopy; fax
American Beauty rose
Choice lamb chops; White oats
Kleenex tissue; 501 Levi jeans
Band-Aid; Ace bandage; Ping-Pong, table tennis
Scotch tape; Post-It notes; Magic Maker; White-Out
Ivory soap; Coca-Cola; Coke; cola drink

RELIGIOUS REFERENCES

1. Capitalize all references to a supreme being.

God
the Lord
the Supreme Being
the Messiah
the Almighty
the Holy Spirit
Allah
Yahweh

2. Capitalize personal pronouns referring to a supreme being when they stand alone, without an antecedent nearby.

Give praise unto Him.
His loving care
Thy mercy
Seek the Lord for His blessing.
My Father
Our Father

3. Capitalize references to persons revered as divine.

the Apostles
John the Baptist
the Prophet
Buddha
the Blessed Virgin
Saint Peter

4. Capitalize the names of religions, their members, and their buildings.

Reform Judaism	Mormon	Saint Mark's Episcopal Church
Zen Buddhism	Methodists	Temple Beth Shalom

the Roman Catholic Church [the entire institution]
the Roman Catholic church on Bell Road [indefinite reference to a specific building]

5. Capitalize references to religious events.

the Creation	the Exodus	the Crucifixion
the Flood	the Second Coming	the Resurrection

6. Capitalize names of religious holidays.

Passover	Christmas	Hanukkah

7. In general, do not capitalize references to specific religious observances and services.

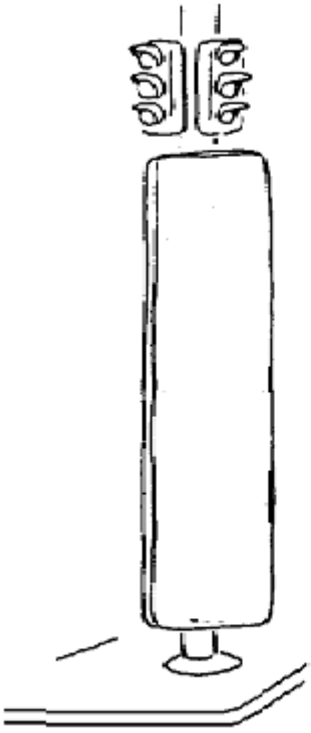
bar mitzvah	baptism	the Eucharist
seder	christening	the Mass

8. Capitalize (do not quote or underscore) references to works regarded as sacred.

the New International Bible	the Koran	the Ten Commandments
biblical sources	the Talmud	the Sermon on the Mount
the Revised Standard Version	the Torah	Psalms 23 and 25; Psalms 23-24
the Old Testament	the Our Father	Kaddish
the Book of Genesis	the Lord's Prayer	Hail Mary
Philippians 1:3	the Apostle's Creed	Psalms 23 and Joshua 9: 1-2, 5

"A man stopped in at a truck stop for a cup of coffee. When the waitress set it in front of him, he decided to strike up a conversation. 'Looks like rain,' he said. The waitress snapped back, 'It tastes like coffee, doesn't it?'"

– Anonymous



STOP, LOOK AND LISTEN

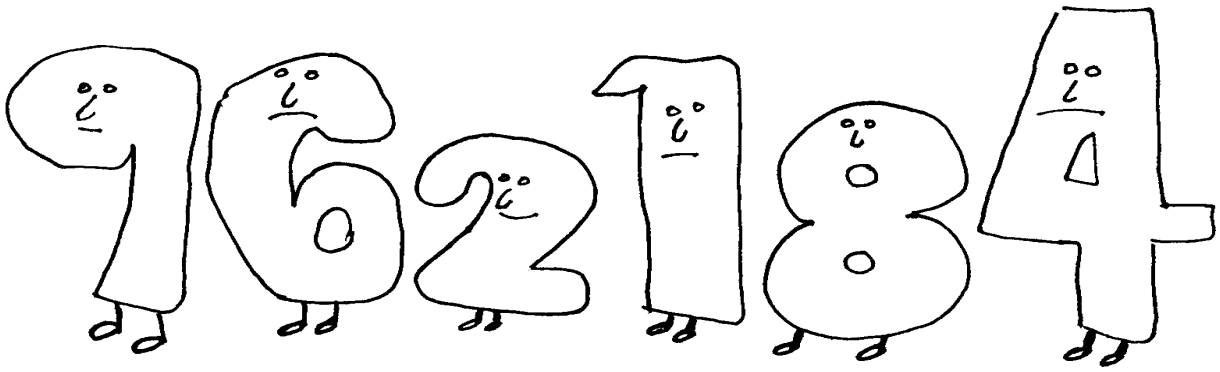
STOP punctuation fluctuation and capitalization frustration

LOOK at pages 273-307—the mechanics of writing

LISTEN for more to come … on numbers

STOP, LOOK AND LISTEN to rule books on punctuation and capitalization.

NUMBERS
NUMBERS
NUMBERS



Should we let the numbers speak for themselves?

It is impossible to establish an entirely consistent set of rules governing the use of numbers—we've tried! When expressing numbers, keep in mind the significant difference in the appearance of numbers. Figures will grab your attention immediately because they stand out more clearly from the surrounding words, while numbers expressed in words are unemphatic and look like the rest of the words in the sentence. **Figures emphasize; words de-emphasize.**

The following guidelines cover the *preferred* Air Force style of expressing numbers. Remember, however, that personal and organizational preference, and appearance may override these guidelines. If your organization has a preferred style—use it. If not, read on.…

- In **general,** numbers 10 and above should be expressed in figures, and numbers one through nine should be expressed in words.
- In **scientific** and **statistical** material, all numbers are expressed in figures.
- In high-level **executive correspondence** and **nontechnical, formal,** or **literary manuscripts, citation, decoration, memo to the general, textbook, and articles,** spell out all numbers through one hundred and all round numbers that can be expressed in two words (one hundred, five thousand, forty-five hundred). All other numbers are written in figures (514). Turn to the next few pages and research the ones with checks (√) to know which to spell out in this style. It is appropriate, though, to use numbers in tables, charts, and statistical material.

FIGURE STYLE

1. The following categories are almost always expressed in figures, unless high-level executive correspondence and nontechnical, formal, or literary manuscripts. Those with checkmarks (√) are to be spelled out if in high-level executive correspondence and nontechnical, formal, or literary manuscripts. Also when you abbreviate a unit of measure in a unit modifier, do not use a hyphen.

TIME √

payable in 30 days
waiting 3 hours
a note due in 6 months
15 minutes later

AGE √

a 3-year-old filly
52 years 10 months 5 days old
a boy 6 years old
a 17-year-old German girl

CLOCK TIME

at 9:30 a.m. Eastern Standard Time; after 3:15 p.m. Greenwich Mean Time, after 1515 Z
6 o'clock [do not use a.m. or p.m. with o'clock]
0800 [do not use the word *hours* when expressing military time]

MONEY

a $20 bill
$5,000 to $10,000 worth; $2 million
$3 a pound
$9.00 and $10.54 purchases
US $10,000
Can $10,000
Mex $10,000
DM 10,000
£10,000
¥10,000
it costs 75 cents [if sentence contains other monetary amounts requiring the dollar sign, use $.75]
a check for $125 [if sentence contains other monetary amounts requiring the cents, use $125.00]
10,000 US dollars
10,000 Canadian dollars
10,000 Mexican dollars
10,000 West German deutsche marks
10,000 British pounds
10,0000 Japanese yen

***NOTE*:** To form the British pound on the typewriter, type a capital *L* over a lowercase *f*. To form a Japanese yen, type a capital *Y* over an equal (=) sign.

MEASUREMENTS √

110 meters long
5,280 feet
about 8 yards wide
23 nautical miles
2 feet by 1 foot 8 inches
8 1/2- by 11-inch paper
200 horsepower
15,000 miles

DATES

5 June 2004 or 5 Jun 04 [when abbreviating the month, also abbreviate the year]
from 4 April to 20 June 2005
July, August and September 2004
21st of July
Fiscal Year 2004, FY04, the fiscal year
Academic Year 2003, AY03, the academic year
Class of 2004 or Class of '04
on the 13th send it to

DIMENSIONS, SIZES, TEMPERATURES

a room 4 by 5 meters
a 15- by 30-foot room
size 6 tennis shoes
thermometer reads 16 degrees

PERCENTAGES, RATIOS, PROPORTIONS, SCORES, VOTING RESULTS

a 6 percent discount [use % in technical writing, graphs, charts]
a 50-50 chance
an evaluation of 85
Alabama 14, Auburn 17
a vote of 17 to 6
a proportion of 5 to 1; a 5-to-1 ratio
20/20 or twenty-twenty vision

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE

a. In nontechnical text:

the polar latitudes
from 10º20´ north latitude to 10º20´ south latitude
longitude 50º west

b. In technical work and tables:

lat 32º25´20˝N
long 85º27´60˝W
The map showed the eye of the hurricane to be at 32º25´60˝N, 85º27´60˝W.

NUMBERS REFERRED TO AS NUMBERS AND MATHEMATICAL EXPRESSIONS

pick a number from 1 to 10
multiply by 1/4
number 7 is considered lucky
No. 1—You're No. 1 in my book.

ABBREVIATIONS, SYMBOLS, SERIAL NUMBERS, DOCUMENT IDENTIFIERS

$25
paragraph 3
serial number 0958760
lines 5 and 13
46-48 AD
attachment 2
Proverbs 3:5-7
pages 273-278

UNIT MODIFIERS AND HYPHENATIONS √

5-day week
110-metric-ton engine
10-foot pole
8-year-old car
1 1/2-inch pipe; 1½-inch pipe; not 1-1/2

2. When a sentence contains numbers used in a related series and any number in the series is 10 or more, express all numbers in the series in figures (except the first word of the sentence if it is a number). √ When a number is always a figure, it doesn't change the other numbers to figures in the same sentence.

Six children ate 9 hamburgers, 14 hot dogs, and 6 Popsicles.
Our office has five officers, two sergeants and six civilians.
Our tiny office, which is only 200 square feet, contains five desks, two bookcases and five people.

3. Numerical designations of military units are written as follows:

a. Air Force units. Use figures to designate units up to and including wings. Use figures for numbered air forces only if using the abbreviation AF.

19th Logistics Group; 19 LG
Ninth Air Force, 9 AF
but 19TH LOGISTIC GROUP (address label)
347th Wing; 347 WG
42d Mission Support, 42 MSS

NOTE*:** Refer to AFMAN 33-326 for proper address elements, and keep in mind when you abbreviate the organizational name (CSG, TFW, AD, AF, etc.) do not use ***st, ***d,*** or ***th*** with the number.

b. Army units. Use figures to designate all army units except corps and numbered armies. Use Roman numerals for corps and spell out numbered armies.

2d Army Group	First Army
III Corps	2d Infantry Division
7th AAA Brigade	92d Infantry Regiment

c. Marine Corps units. Apply same rules as army units.

d. Navy units. Use figures to designate all navy units except fleet.

Seventh Fleet Carrier Group 8	VF31

4. Numbers expressed in figures are made plural by adding *s* alone.

in the 1990s	four 10s in the deck
temperature in the 80s	two F-16s at the base

***NOTE*:** To plural a number that is used as part of a noun, place the *s* on the noun and not the number: DD Forms 282; but "file the 282s."

WORD STYLE

5. Spell out numbers from 1 through 9; use figures for numbers 10 and above in ordinary correspondence.

I need nine copies of this article.
At the conference, we got over 11 comments to start a new ...

6. Spell out numbers that introduce sentences. A spelled out number should not be repeated in figures (except in legal documents).

Twelve people volunteered for the job; not twelve (12) people …
Eight children participated in the relay race.

7. Related numbers appearing at the beginning of a sentence, separated by no more than three words, are treated alike.

Fifty or sixty miles away is Auburn University.
Five to ten people will probably respond.

***NOTE*:** Related numbers in the same set are also treated alike.

The $12,000,000 building had a $500,000 tower. [Not written as *$12 million* because of its relation to *$500,000.*]
We mailed 50 invitations and only received 5 RSVPs.

8. Spell out numbers in formal writing and numbers used in proper names and titles along with serious and dignified subjects such as executive orders and legal proclamations.

the Thirteen Colonies	the first Ten Amendments
The Seventy-eighth Congress	threescore years and ten

9. Spell out fractions that stand alone except with unit modifier.

one-half of the vote; but 1/2-inch pipe (unit modifier) or ½-inch pipe
six-tenths of a mile

***NOTE*:** A mixed number (a whole number plus a fraction) is written in figures except at the beginning of a sentence.

1 1/2 miles; 1½ miles; not 1-1/2 miles — One and a half miles

10. Spell out compound modifiers and numbers of 100 or less that precede hyphenated numbers.

three 10-foot poles — 120 1-gallon cans
one hundred 1-gallon cans — twenty 5-year-old children
three 1 1/2-inch pipes; three 1½-inch pipes — two 4-hour sorties

11. Spell out rounded and indefinite numbers.

the early nineties; but the early 1990s — the twentieth century
hundreds of customers — nineteenth-century business customs
a woman in her fifties — approximately six thousand soldiers

12. For typographic appearance and easy grasp of large numbers beginning with million, use words to indicate the amount rather than 0s (unless used with a related number).

$12 million — less than $1 million
$6,000,000 and later 300,000 … — 2 1/2 billion or 2½ billion
$2.7 trillion — $300,000 (not $300 thousand)

13. Form the plurals of spelled-out numbers as you would the plurals of other nouns—by adding *s*, *es* or changing the *y* to *i* and adding *es*.

ones — twenties
twos — fifties
sixes — nineties

STRIKE A BLOW FOR FREEDOM!!

Are all these rules making you numb? Why don't we put some sense in this silly nonsense and take it upon ourselves as rational men and women to make our *own* rule that will let us win at this numbers game. How about …

> "Always express numbers as figures unless the number starts the sentence, or unless the use of figures would confuse the reader … or would look weird."
> —*The Quill*'s Law of Numerical Bingo

The simplicity of it is downright ingenious. Think how many pages out of the inconsistent grammar books we could eliminate. Save a forest! Be a leader!

ROMAN NUMERALS

Roman numerals are used most frequently to identify the major sections of an outline. They're also used (in lowercase form and in italics—*i*, *ii*, *iii*) to number pages in the front sections of books. The following table shows Roman numerals for some Arabic figures.

A dash above a letter tells you to multiply by 1,000.

ROMAN NUMERALS

I 1	XXIX.....29	LXXV 75	DC 600
II.....2	XXX.....30	LXXIX.....79	DCC.....700
III 3	XXXV.....35	LXXX 80	DCCC.....800
IV 4	XXXIX.....39	LXXXV.....85	CM.....900
V.....5	XL 40	LXXXIX 89	M 1,000
VI 6	XLV 45	XC.....90	MD.....1,500
VII.....7	XLIX.....49	XCV 95	MM.....2,000
VIII.....8	L 50	XCIX.....99	$\overline{\text{MV}}$.....4,000
IX 9	LV 55	C.....100	$\overline{\text{V}}$.....5,000
X.....10	LIX.....59	CL 150	$\overline{\text{X}}$.....10,000
XV.....15	LX 60	CC 200	$\overline{\text{L}}$.....50,000
XIX 19	LXV 65	CCC.....300	$\overline{\text{C}}$ 100,000
XX.....20	LXIX.....69	CD.....400	$\overline{\text{D}}$.....500,000
XXV.....25	LXX 70	D.....500	$\overline{\text{M}}$ 1,000,000

DATES

1600 - MDC	1997 - MCMXCVII
1900 - MCM	2000 - MM

Other combinations of Roman numerals are derived by prefixing or annexing letters. Prefixing a letter is equivalent to subtracting the value of that letter, while annexing is equivalent to adding the value.

49 is L minus X plus IX: XLIX

64 is L plus X plus IV: LXIV