

UCLA Health Style Guide

Your Guide to Digital and Print Content at UCLA Health

Last Updated: 5/22/2013

The UCLA Health Style Guide to Grammar and Style is a reference guide for anyone within the organization who wishes to write or publish digital or print copy for the organization.

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Introduction

UCLA Health's Style Guide is a reference guide for anyone within the organization who wishes to write or publish digital or print copy for the organization.

Much of what you will find in this style guide is from *The Associated Press Stylebook*, as it has been the policy of the organization to use their style guide. We have changed some of the guidelines so that they are more relevant to our organization's needs. This guide is a supplement to *The Associated Press Stylebook*, and does not replace it.

If you have questions on spelling, punctuation or other fine points of grammar, refer to this guide. Use it like a dictionary as well as a guideline for how to write for UCLA Health's publications-- digital or print. Items are listed alphabetically, and include definitions, how to pluralize, and how to use items on a second reference.

UCLA Health Brand Promise

The Brand Promise consists of four attributes:

I. Vision

Advancing health through the power of discovery and collaboration

II. Positioning

To informed people who demand the most advanced medicine and an active role in their healthcare, UCLA Health is the health resource that gives you the confidence that you've found the best partnership for getting and staying healthy.

III. Personality

A compassionate, innovative, dedicated, collaborative expert

IV. Affiliation

Self-advocates

Legally Usable Content

- Everything you write should be your own writing. If you quote another source, insert the source as well as the source URL so people can follow the link back to the original content.

- Only use medically reviewed information from reliable sources, including .org and .gov sites.
- Never post pictures that you found using Google images or a similar search engine. We may not have the copyright, and posting such pictures could pose legal problems.

If you have any questions about these issues, contact Marketing at (310) 794-8173.

Voice and Tone

When we communicate with our audiences, we want to use a voice and tone that establishes our brand, but varies based on context.

- **Voice** = what our brand means to consumers:
 - We want to inform people about their healthcare.
 - We are a team of passionate, dedicated, collaborative experts who serve patients who are self-advocates.
- **Tone** = how we change the sound of “our voice” based on the *context* of the communication. For example, on a Web page about cancer, we will have the same voice about our brand, but we may be softer and more reassuring. On a Web page about having a baby, we will be more excited and congratulatory.

Content Types and Approximate Lengths

There are many different content types in the digital world. Below is a table that summarizes the content types along with how many words each content type should be. Location and services content varies by section.

Remember, keeping your content short and sweet makes it more likely that people will engage with it.

Social media

Blog posts	200-400 words
Tweets	140 characters or fewer
Facebook posts	100 words or fewer

UCLAhealth.org

News release	300-600 words
Event post	300-600 words
Patient story	500 words or fewer
Expert column	500-600 words

Writing Tips

While most of us possess technical writing skills of some kind, we can all use a refresher course in good writing before preparing text for a publication. Here are some tips that will help you write clear, concise, readable copy that will communicate your message to your audience.

Consider your audience

Keep in mind your audience's reading level and knowledge of the subject. Two brochures on the same surgical procedure — one for patients and the other for physicians — require very different writing styles. Put yourself in your target audience's shoes — write in a way that draws the reader's attention to the substance of the writing.

Write at the appropriate reading level for the appropriate audiences; please don't write higher than an 8th grade reading level. Review the user personas in the previous section for details on our audience.

Determine your purpose

Decide what you want your readers to do, think or feel after reading the publication. For example, you may want them to register for a conference, understand more about a service or procedure, think highly of the staff in your department or feel comfortable coming to UCLA Health. Keep in mind your purpose throughout the entire piece.

Begin with an outline

Think about the main points in your message and how you want the information to flow. Draft an outline of your main ideas to help you get started. You may want to share the outline with a colleague for feedback before you begin writing.

Write, rewrite and write again

Revising is part of writing. After you've compiled your first draft, review it with a critical eye and edit it using the guidelines in this manual. Ask co-workers to critique the copy; be willing to incorporate suggestions. Write with nouns and verbs, not with adjectives and adverbs. Consider reading it aloud to yourself to see if it makes sense.

Use the active voice instead of passive voice, and put statements in a positive form

For example, write: "The department sponsored a lecture," rather than "The lecture was sponsored by the department."

Keep it specific and concise. Be clear

Most people have a lot of reading to do each day. Keep your text as concise as possible to make your piece more readable. Use details rather than generalities to explain a main point. Include concrete examples to which your audience can relate. Eliminate repetition, remove unnecessary words and condense long phrases. Avoid jargon, clichés and wordy prepositional phrases. As examples:

Replace

as a matter of fact
 at this point in time
 in close proximity
 true facts
 past history
 mutual cooperation
 is in the process of
 utilized

With

in fact
 now, today
 near
 facts
 past
 cooperation
 is
 used

Avoid using formal or scholarly tone unless necessary

A conversational tone is more readable and usually more effective for UCLA Health publications. Technical documents may require a more formal tone. Again, consider your audience.

Choose verbs carefully

Strong, descriptive verbs add color to copy and eliminate the need for wordy phrases.

Replace

have a need for
 take into consideration
 announcement was made
 have a tendency
 take action
 made a statement

With

need
 consider
 announced
 tend
 act
 stated

Avoid verbs ending in –ing.

For example:

Replace

is planning to hold
 will be leading the committee

With

plans to hold
 will lead the committee

Do not use nouns as verbs. For example:**Replace**

This policy impacts patients
 The hospital partnered with the company.

With

This policy will affect patients.
 The hospital and the company are partners.

Use bullets effectively

Bulleted text helps highlight information and make the text more readable. Overuse of bullets, however, can make brochures and similar pieces look awkward. Bullets and lists are especially useful for digital content, which we will discuss later in this style guide.

Proofread/spell check

Proofread carefully in addition to using your computer's spell check.

Punctuation 101

Apostrophes — Use to indicate possession (*the doctor's, the nurse's*), or omitted letters or figures (*don't, '50s*). Do not use to indicate plurals in numerals or acronyms: *1990s, HMOs, RNs*.

Capitalization — In titles, capitalize principal words, including prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters; capitalize words of fewer than four letters if used as the first or last word in the title.

Commas

In a series — Use commas to separate elements in a series, but do not place a comma before the conjunction in a simple series of three or more: *patients, visitors and staff. The flag is red, white and blue.* Use commas to separate each element: *Webster's New World College Dictionary is the first reference for spelling, style, usage and foreign geographic names.*

Put a comma before the concluding conjunction in a series, however, if an integral element of the series requires a conjunction: *I had orange juice, toast, and ham and eggs for breakfast.*

Use a comma before the concluding conjunction in a complex series of phrases: *The main points to consider are whether the athletes are skillful enough to compete, whether they have the stamina to endure the training, and whether they have the proper mental attitude.*

Parenthetical expressions — Sentences with brief descriptive phrases must use the apposition comma. *The Employee Survey, coordinated by a multidisciplinary task force, will be fielded in September 2010.*

With dates — Use a comma between the day and year and after the year: *July 18, 1902, is the Hospital’s anniversary.* Do not use a comma between the month and year: *July 1902.*

With quotes — Commas and periods always go within quotations: *“Don’t leave the gurney in the hall,” the orderly said.*

With states — Use commas before and after state names when used with city names: *Sacramento, CA, and Los Angeles, CA, are in the metropolitan area.*

Em Dash(—) and En Dash(–) — An em dash is roughly the length of a lowercase letter *m* and is generally used to replace colons, commas, hyphens, semi-colons and parentheses. Our style includes a space between em dashes: *UCLA — an academic medical center in Los Angeles — is respected around the world for research and patient education.*

An en dash is roughly the length of a lowercase letter *n* and is typically used to denote a span of time or in the place of a colon to create compounds (see example below). Follow these guidelines:

Use Em Dashes:

- **Abrupt change** — To denote an abrupt change in thought in a sentence or an emphatic pause.
- **Series within a phrase** — When a phrase that otherwise would be set off by commas contains a series of words that must be separated by commas.

Use En Dashes:

- **To create compounds** — For example, *the California–Mexico border.*
- **Do not use to denote a span of time** — For example, *Monday–Thursday* should be *Monday to Thursday.* Refer to the **Time** entry for further clarification.

Ellipses (. . .) (sing. *ellipsis*) — In general, treat an ellipsis as a three-letter word, constructed with three periods and two spaces.

Use an ellipsis to indicate the deletion of one or more words in condensing quotes, texts and documents. Be especially careful to avoid deletions that would distort the meaning.

Headlines

- When writing for print, capitalize principal words, including prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters
- Capitalize words of fewer than four letters if used as the first or last word in the title. Don't abbreviate unless the readers will understand.
- When writing for digital, only capitalize the first word.

Examples:

Headline in Print	Once Fragile Newborns, They Return Years Later to Give Thanks
Headline in Digital	Once Fragile Newborns, They Return Years Later to Give Thanks
Subhead in Digital	400 families reunite at a reunion

Hyphen (-) — Hyphens are joiners. Use them to avoid ambiguity or to form a single idea from two or more words.

As compound modifier — Use when two or more words that express a single concept precede a noun (use hyphens to link all the words in the compound): *a first-quarter analysis, bluish-green scrubs, a full-time internist, a well-known physician, a well-qualified nurse, a know-it-all attitude*. The only exceptions are words that follow adverbs that end in -ly: *an easily remembered rule*.

Use with a two-thought compound — *socio-economic*.

Use to designate dual heritage — *Italian-American, African-American*.

Quotations — Periods and commas go within quotation marks; dashes, semicolons, question marks, and exclamation points go within the quotation

marks when they apply to the quoted matter only. They go outside when they apply to the whole sentence.

For quotes within quotes, alternate between double quotation marks (“or”) and single marks (‘or’):

Example: *She said, “I quote from his letter, ‘I agree with Kipling that “the female of the species is more deadly than the male” but the phenomenon is not an unchangeable law of nature,’ a remark he did not explain.”*

Use three marks together if two quoted elements end at the same time:

Example: *She said, “He told me, ‘I love you.’”*

Semicolons — Use in a sentence to separate two complete and related thoughts: *Dr. Smith went to Florida; it was her first vacation there.* A semicolon is also used to clarify a series: *The surgical team was made up of Dr. Jones, who has been with the hospital two years; and Dr. Johnson, who just transferred from an Atlanta hospital last month.*

Think of a semicolon as a half pause but that connects two sentences that could grammatically stand on their own.

Digital Content

Planning Your Digital Content

Taking time on the front end to plan and prepare your Web content, and having appropriate expectations for when it will be posted, will help create a win-win situation for everyone involved. Here are a few things to keep in mind.

- All content submitted for posting must first have been reviewed and approved by the appropriate supervisor, manager, and/or legal department, if applicable.
- PDF files cannot be edited once they have been created. Edits must be made to the original document and then that document must be made into a new PDF (a simple step).

- Do not include character spaces in your file names for PDFs or other files destined for the web. You can substitute an underscore character or hyphen for the character space (*file_name* or *file-name*).
- Please allow at least 2-5 business days for changes you submit to be made to the site unless they are needed ASAP.
- Larger projects featuring new content typically take 30-90 days to complete, depending on the volume of content needed.
- Consult a member of the Marketing Web Team if you have questions or need clarification.

5 Rules for Digital Writing

Follow these rules for great digital writing:

1. Be Succinct.

Write fewer words and keep sentences tight. Omit unnecessary words. Use simple sentence structure. Often, people are searching online for a specific piece of information.

Rules of thumb:

- No more than 2 sentences per paragraph
- No more than 14 words per sentence
- No more than 5 syllables per word

2. Write for Scannability.

People rarely read Web pages word by word. Instead, they scan the page, picking out key words and phrases.

- Highlight key words so they'll catch the reader's eye. Hypertext links serve as one form of highlighting and they are a powerful tool for search-engine optimization (SEO). The next section discusses search-engine optimization in detail.
- Label your links within sentences with the title of the page to which it links.

- Use meaningful sub-heads, avoid clever ones. They don't resonate with the search engines.
- Use bulleted or numbered lists.
- Include only one idea per paragraph so users can immediately grasp the concept.

3. Divide Your Information Into Chunks.

You don't need to sacrifice depth of content. Instead, split the information up into multiple paragraphs connected by hypertext links. Each page can be brief and yet the sum of the content can contain as much or more information as a printed article.

4. Use the Inverted Pyramid Style.

Write like a journalist. Put key information (who, what, when, where and how) into the first paragraph. Start by telling readers the conclusion so they can get the main point and move on. Be objective in your writing style. Avoid inflated language like "best ever."

5. Update Facts Frequently. It's your content, so it's your responsibility to keep it current. Once it's there, you should set up a schedule to review and update the content on a regular basis. See "Archiving: Setting End Dates for Content."

Search-engine Optimization Guidelines

The following information is intended to help you improve search-engine ranking of your Web pages. For a more complete introduction to search-engine optimization, see the [Google Search Engine Optimization Starter Guide](#).

Search engines perform three actions to determine the relevance, and therefore the rank, of your content:

1. **Crawling** — Spiders (bits of computer code) crawl around the Web, looking for content — this means you want clean, fast-loading code
2. **Indexing** — Data is stored in a giant database — and helps to determine the relevance of content

3. **Ranking** — The search engine uses a combination of different mathematical factors — an algorithm — to determine which pages to serve back to the user as results

Search engines also pull data from the device you are using. That is why two people using different devices at the same time and location can get completely different search results for the same key phrase. And now with Google+ and other social media websites, search results quickly become personalized for you.

Organic Search

Organic or natural search refers to unpaid listings that show up in search results. Search engines use complex algorithms to determine relevance when users search certain keywords or key phrases.

Rankings are “earned” through relevance and reputation factors. Search engines determine relevance by two major on-page factors: content and meta-data.

The uniqueness of content and engagement metrics plays a significant part in ranking a page. Meta data such as title tags, headings and article text inform search-engine spiders, those robots that crawl through websites looking for keywords and key phrases. These pieces of code determine if these are the pages the user wants.

The algorithm also includes factors such as site speed, architecture and navigation layout to assess if the pages have the information the user seeks. For location-based searches, the goal is to optimize results for relevance to that searcher, based on geography. The search engines pull data from users’ searching habits to provide geo-targeted results.

The following are rules you should follow when creating content and meta-tagging pages:

1. Choose a Primary Keyword Phrase

When choosing a keyword, ask yourself these questions:

- What is the goal and core message of the Web page?
- What keyword phrases would your target audience use to find this Web page?
- Is there a secondary keyword phrase that can be incorporated?

2. Repeat Keyword

Keyword phrase should be repeated in these places:

- Title
- Subhead
- First paragraph
- Second paragraph
- Relevant links

3. Add Metadata

Metadata is code that users don't necessarily see, but search engines do.

- Use a description meta tag that includes your keyword phrase.
- Add a title tag (can be the same as release title)
- Add Alt text for all photos.

Meta-tagging Fields

Title

- Descriptive title that can stand on its own. The title should also include the primary keyword phrase. Example: Brain Tumor Treatment
- Each word of the title should be capitalized.

Title Tag

- This is the title of the page that appears in the dark blue bar on IE and in the tabs in Chrome
- Use same title as the page title, and add UCLA Health. Example: *Brain Tumor Treatment | The Department of Cancer Services | UCLA Health*

Hyperlinks

- Links should always match the page they refer the user to. Example: *Our doctors are experts in [brain tumor treatment](#).* (Note: Follow capitalization rules for the sentence in which the link appears; you don't have to match the capitalization of the linked page title.)
- When linking to facilities, use branded name. When linking to services, try to use a non-branded keyword phrase for the link text.
Example: [cancer services](#)
NOT: [Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center](#)
- Do not put a full URL on the page; always use descriptive text.
Example: [Pituitary Tumor Program](#)
NOT: [pituitary.ucla.edu](#)

Linking Policies

Links may be made to external websites that meet the criteria below (ultimately determined by UCLA Health's Web Content Manager). Please have links to external websites open in a new window.

- Sites that are owned by non-profit health organizations, such as the American Cancer Society (www.cancer.org)
- Sites that are maintained and/or owned by other areas of UCLA Health (such as neurosurgery.ucla.edu, obgyn.ucla.edu)

- Sites that are official content partners with UCLA Health (i.e. content that is linked throughout the site). Any site that ends with ucla.edu is acceptable.
- Sites of businesses that are marketing/community partners with UCLA Health (i.e. Bruin KidsClub, UCLA Athletics, Santa Monica Place/Samo's Clubhouse)
- Sites that will provide a unique online resource to assist in providing health information or other needed information for UCLA Health consumers

External links will not be made to sites that fall within any of the following criteria:

- Sites that are owned or managed by a political party, candidate or special-interest group or are of a political nature.
- Sites containing any materials that may reasonably be considered offensive. Offensive materials are defined as sexual content or images, slurs against race, religious or political beliefs, age, gender, sexual orientation, national origin or physical attributes.

Links may be made to UCLA's website by outside contacts. All hypertext links should point to UCLA's homepage, www.uclahealth.org, unless another URL is otherwise agreed upon. We do not have control over websites who link to us, and the information about UCLA on these sites can become outdated. If you run across such a site, please contact the Content Manager, who will attempt to contact the other website and ask for the information to be updated or removed.

When in doubt about the content on an external website, please err on the side of caution to protect UCLA. Please feel free to contact the Marketing Department at webinfo@mednet.ucla.edu for clarification.

Did You Know?

All links to outside resources on UCLAhealth.org should open in a new, dedicated browser window.

Social Media Policy

Like many organizations, UCLA Health formally participates in [social-media communities](#) to help educate potential patients, current patients and their families about UCLA and its services and programs. We have official designees who have the authority to speak on behalf of the organization on these channels.

We recognize that some employees may wish to participate on an individual basis in various forms of social media. Employees are welcome to participate in social media and discuss UCLA Health, and are encouraged to talk about their good work and make meaningful connections with their readers, but at all times the privacy and confidentiality of patients, families and fellow employees must be respected.

UCLA Health has guidelines for employees who choose to participate in online communications in which they are representing themselves as part of UCLA Health:

- There's no such thing as "delete" on the Web, so think before you post. You are personally responsible for what you publish on social media.
- Respect the privacy of our patients. Don't post any information that could reveal patient identity. That includes photos or videos that could compromise that confidentiality.
- Be respectful and considerate when posting comments. Make it clear you are not a spokesperson for UCLA Health. To that end, you may not include any of our corporate logos in your postings.
- Make sure your posts promote our values and professional standards. That means not violating copyright or trademark information, posting derogatory or inflammatory remarks, or using obscenity or profanity.
- Respect your coworkers. If you comment on other employees' social media sites, be sure your comments could not be construed as discrimination, harassment or other unfitting behavior.

Do the right thing and follow the policy. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action — up to and including termination. [Click here for to read our Employee Social Media Policy.](#)

Employee Blog Guidelines

- **Please stay on topic.** We encourage you to write comments on any articles, however, please keep all comments related to the article and be respectful of the rights and opinions of others.
- **No offensive language or profanity.**
- **No personal attacks.** Please be courteous, polite and respectful to others.
- **Respect your coworkers.** Be sure your comments could not be construed as discrimination, harassment or other unfitting behavior.
- UCLA Health reserves the right to remove or not to post any comments at any time for any reason.
- [Click here for to read our Employee Social Media Policy.](#)

Archiving: Scheduling End-date Guidelines

- Major news items such as *U.S. News* – set to expire in one year
- Minor news, facility opens, new employee announcements, etc., expire after 90 days. If you post them on the homepage, remove them from the homepage (you will need to do this manually) after 1 week
- Events – expire at 12 am the day after the event starts

Naming Conventions for UCLA Health

The ABCs of UCLA

Do you ever feel like you are swimming in a sea of alphabet soup? There's an ocean of acronyms out there: FDIC, ADA, HIPAA, AARP, ADHD and the like.

UCLA Health has its own particular alphabet shorthand. (UCLA is itself an acronym). Recognizing that it's not always practical to write out the full name of our facilities, we offer this guide to acceptable acronyms to use (on second reference) **in internal correspondence.**

RRUCLA:	Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center
SMUCLA:	UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica
RNPH:	Resnick Neuropsychiatric Hospital at UCLA
MCH:	Mattel Children’s Hospital UCLA
FPG:	Faculty Practice Group
DGSOM:	David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

Grammar, Spelling and Styles

A

Abbreviations and Acronyms An *abbreviation* is the shortened form of a written word.

In most cases, only abbreviate names on the second reference. Avoid using abbreviations that would not be easily recognizable for most readers. Try to use abbreviations sparingly. Avoid using more than one abbreviation in a sentence. For information about how to abbreviate specific items, refer to their particular entry in this guide or *The Associated Press Styleguide*.

Examples: *tsp.* is an abbreviation of *teaspoon*.

UK is an abbreviation of the *United Kingdom*.

Acronyms are words formed from the first letter of each word of a name or title. Do not confuse an acronym for an abbreviation. Acronyms are read as one would read any word, not as individual letters.

Example: *UNESCO* (pronounced *you-Ness-co*) is an acronym for the *United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization*.

Academic degrees Use at the end of a full name on the first reference only or in captions. Always use initials. When trying to establish someone’s position as an expert in a story, refer only to their specialty rather than using the initials of

their degree(s). Do not use periods between letters of academic degree. MD, not M.D.; PhD, not Ph.D.

Examples: John Smith, MD, seen here, with his patients Jane Doe and her daughter.

Dr. John Smith, an obstetrician, says that advances in medicine have contributed to a decline in infant mortality rates.

Accept, except *Accept* has several different meanings but in general means one of three things: to willingly receive something, to give permission or approval to or to regard as proper or an ultimate truth.

Except refers to an exclusion or something outside of the ordinary.

Act Capitalize when using act as a piece of legislation.

Example: The Dream Act

Addresses Use abbreviations for street, avenue and boulevard when writing numbered addresses. All other street designations (lane, circle, alley, etc.) should be spelled out.

Do not spell out numbers in addresses. Only use the numeric form for the house or building number. However, street names that use ordinal numbers 1-9 should be spelled out and capitalized.

Examples: 1234 Main St.; 7654 Willow Circle; 745 Fifth Ave.

Affect, effect *Affect* is most commonly used as a verb, meaning *to influence*. There is seldom a need to use affect as a noun in daily language, unless describing an emotion.

Example: Supporting local businesses affects the local economy.

Effect can be used as either a verb or a noun. As a verb, it means *to cause*. In its noun form, it means *a result*.

Examples: Widespread protests effected the fall of the regime.

The fall of the regime was the effect of widespread protests.

Ages Numerals should always be used for living things. For inanimate objects or when used at the beginning of a sentence, spell out the number. When expressed as an adjective before a noun or as a substitute for a noun, use a combination of numerals and hyphens.

Examples: John Doe, 35, is a rising star in the organization.

John Doe is 35 years old.

Thirty-five-year-old John Doe is on the fast-track to success in the organization.

The five-year-old building is already in need of repairs.

AIDS Use the acronym in all references to *acquired immune deficiency syndrome*. Also known as *acquired immunodeficiency syndrome*.

All- Use a hyphen when using this as a prefix.

Examples: all-around; all-encompassing

Alumnus, alumni; alumna, alumnae Alumnus is the singular, masculine form of alumni. Alumna is the singular, feminine form of alumnae. Use alumni when referring to a group of men and women.

American Medical Association Only use initials AMA on the second and subsequent references.

Ampersand (&) Use only when it is part of the name of an organization or a composition.

Examples: *U.S. News & World Report; House & Garden Magazine*

am/pm See **time**. Not a.m. or AM.

Annual Describes an event that happens once every year. Events cannot be considered annual unless they have been held for at least two successive years. If reporting on an event that is the first of an event to be held annually, note that rather than labeling it as an annual event. Do not use the description “first annual.” Use *inaugural*.

Another Do not use as a synonym for additional. Only use when it doubles the original amount mentioned.

Examples: Twenty people have signed up for classes; another 20 are expected to sign up soon.

Fifteen people agreed with the decision while another 15 dissented.

Wrong: Three stores were severely damaged in the flood. Another 10 suffered only minor damages.

Ante- See the **prefixes** entry.

Anti- All words containing this prefix should be hyphenated, **except** those below. Note that all physics terms that use this prefix should not be hyphenated.

- Antibiotic
- Antibody
- Anticlimax
- Antidepressant
- Antidote
- Antifreeze
- Antigen
- Antihistamine
- Antiknock
- Antimatter
- Antimony
- Antiparticle
- Antipasto
- Antiperspirant
- Antiphon
- Antiphony
- Antiseptic
- Antiserum
- Antithesis
- Antitoxin
- Antitrust
- Antitussive

Anticipate/expect When one anticipates something, there is an implied element of preparation for the coming event. Expect does not imply that preparations have been made for what is to come.

Anybody, any body, any one, anyone When writing in general terms, use one word. When the emphasis is placed on a single element, use two words.

Examples: The right smoking cessation program can help *anyone* kick the habit.

Any one of the many programs available could help you quit smoking.

Attorney/lawyer In general, the terms are interchangeable. However, an attorney can technically be anyone who acts on behalf of another. A lawyer is someone who can practice law as an officer of the court.

award-winning

B

Baby boomer Refers to the generation born after World War II who were in their late teens and early 20s during the 1960s and 1970s. Always lower-case and never hyphenated.

Examples: He is a baby boomer.

He is of the baby-boomer generation.

Bachelor of Arts/Science Bachelor of ___ or a bachelor's degree can be used rather than the full title. See the **academic degrees** entry for further guidance.

Bi- Follows the rules under the **prefixes** entry.

Biannual, biennial Something that occurs biannually occurs twice each year. An event that occurs biennially occurs once every two years.

Bimonthly, biweekly Bimonthly and biweekly refer to events that occur once every two months or once every two weeks, respectively. Semimonthly and semiweekly refer to events that occur twice each month or twice each week.

Broadcast Use this for both present and past tense. *Broadcasted* is unacceptable.

By- See the **prefixes** entry for rules.

C

Call letters Capitalize all letters in the name of a broadcast station. Use a hyphen to separate the individual call letters from the base call letters. It is not

always necessary to include the base call letters. They should be excluded on a second reference to the station.

Examples: WRNR-FM; WJZ-TV

Can't hardly Although grammatically correct, it implies a double negative, which is never acceptable. Avoid using this phrase. The preferred form is *can hardly*.

Capital/capitol A *capital* is a city that is the seat of a government. It can also be money, property or equipment used by a company.

A *capitol* is a building or group of buildings where legislative bodies meet and conduct business. Capitalize *capitol* when referring to the building in Washington, D.C., or any of the state capitol buildings. Do not capitalize when referring to multiple buildings or using generalized terms.

Examples: The Capitol building in Virginia was recently renovated.

There are 51 capitol buildings in the United States.

Capitalization The act of making the first letter of a word uppercase. Capitalize the following:

- The first word of a sentence
- The first word after a bullet
- Proper nouns (official names of places, people or companies)
- Proper names (the Democratic Party, Fleet Street, etc.)
- Capitalize the proper names of all UCLA properties.
- Some common names. A common name is used when there is no official name for an area or place, but has a well-known moniker.
Example: The Green Zone; Ground Zero.
- Derivatives (words that are derived from a proper noun) like *American*, *Marxism*, etc.
- Compositions like names of publications, music, works of art, television programs, etc. Capitalization of compositions should match that of the original publication. When writing an original publication, capitalize the first words and all principal words in the title as well as conjunctions and prepositions four letters or more.
- Titles, including but not limited to, Dr., Mrs., Mr., and Ms. Use titles only on the first reference to a person. On second and subsequent references,

use only the last name. Note that medical MDs should have the abbreviation *Dr.* before their last name on second and subsequent references. For clarification, see the **Doctor** entry.

- Abbreviations. CDC. Never use periods between the letters. Exceptions include *D.C.* (when referring to the nation's capital, Washington, District of Columbia).

Caretaker Always one word.

CCU Critical Care Unit (CCU), upper case.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention The abbreviation *CDC* is acceptable on the second and subsequent references.

Certified Registered Nurse Practitioner The abbreviation *CRNP* is acceptable in all references.

City Follow rules of capitalization. When using more generalized terms, always lowercase.

Click here MUST be avoided. Most Web users intuitively know to “click” at a hyperlink. The link should be the part of the text that describes the function. Example: Browse Common Questions. Use terms such as *Read More*, *Learn more*, *View*, *For More Information*, or *Download*.

Co- Hyphenate when creating a word that indicates status. In other combinations, do not hyphenate.

Examples: Co-pilot; co-author; Coexist; Cooperation

Note that *cooperation* and similar words are exceptions to the rule that prefixes should be hyphenated when the following word begins with the same vowel.

Coinsurance Not *co-insurance*.

Coordination of benefits Spell out initial reference. May be shortened to *COB* upon subsequent references in the same article.

Comparison of benefits Always spell out.

Copay No hyphen. Not *copayment*, not *co-pay*, not *co-payment*.

Complementary/Complimentary Complementary refers to the ability of a person or item to enhance or add to another. Complimentary is in reference to something that is free of charge.

Composition titles Put titles of books, chapters, magazine articles, lectures, seminars, films and TV shows in italics. Italicize titles of magazines, journals and newspapers.

Examples: *Good Morning, America; New England Journal of Medicine;*

Chapter 2; The Capital-Gazette.

Comma See **Punctuation**.

CT scan The abbreviation is acceptable for all references. The abbreviation stands for *computerized tomography*. Never write *CAT scan*, which is the popular pronunciation.

D

Dates Only abbreviate the following months: Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec. Always capitalize them. Always use the cardinal number.

Example: Oct. 3, 2011 *not* Oct. 3rd, 2011

Days of the week Always capitalize. Never abbreviate unless they are used in a tabular calendar.

Diseases Never capitalize unless they are known by the name of the person who identified the disease or they come at the beginning of a sentence.

Examples: arthritis *not* Arthritis; Alzheimer's disease

Disabled, handicapped, impaired Never mention a person's disability unless it is crucial to the story. Of the three terms mentioned, the preferred term is disabled.

Doctor Abbreviate to Dr. when describing a medical doctor. All others with doctorate degrees should have their academic credentials follow their names on the first reference only. The abbreviation should be used only on second and

subsequent references, as the abbreviation MD should follow their full name on the first reference. Never write *Dr. John Smith, MD*. See the entry **MD** for further clarification.

Doctor of Obstetrics The abbreviation *DO* is acceptable in all references. See the **Academic Degrees** and **Doctor** entries for further clarification.

Doctor of Dental Surgery The abbreviation *DDS* is acceptable in all references. See the **Academic Degrees** and **Doctor** entries for further clarification.

Doctor of Podiatric Medicine The abbreviation *DPM* is acceptable in all references. See the **Academic Degrees** and **Doctor** entries for further clarification.

Download One word

E

Each other, one another Two people look at each other, more than two look at one another. When the number is undefined, either phrase can be used.

ED Emergency Department (ED)

Either...or; Neither...nor The nouns that follow these words do not constitute a compound subject; they are alternate subjects and require a verb that agrees with the closer subject.

Examples: Neither they nor he is going.

Neither he nor they are going.

E-mail Hyphenate

Everyone/every one Two words when it means each individual item. One word when used as a pronoun meaning all persons.

Extra- Follow the rules of **prefixes**.

F

Facebook A social networking site that allows users to share videos, music and links with friends. When posting to Facebook, follow all grammatical and spelling standards as explained in this guide and *The Associated Press Stylebook*.

First quarter/First-quarter Hyphenate when used as a compound modifier.

Examples: The company released a financial statement for the first quarter.

The company released a first-quarter financial statement.

Form titles Use the proper name at the top of the form to name the .PDF document for online posting. Examples: *Release of Information.pdf*, *Coordination of Benefits.pdf*, *Registration and Prescription Order Form.pdf*. Also, ensure the revision date appears at the bottom left of the document for easy identification. Use the Adobe Acrobat icon or label with [PDF], so the user knows they will download a document.

Full- Hyphenate when used to form compound modifiers

Examples: Full-dress; Full-page; Full-fledged; Full-scale; Full-length

Fully funded Commercial health plans. Use only when necessary. Do not hyphenate -ly adverbs. So avoid fully-funded, fully-insured.

Full time/full-time Hyphenate when used as a compound modifier.

G

Governor Capitalize and abbreviate as Gov. (singular) or Govs. (plural)

H

Healthcare One word

High-tech

HIPAA *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act* of 1996. Not *HIPPA*.

HMO Widely used acronym for health maintenance organization health plan product

Holidays and holy days Always capitalize the name of the holiday or holy day.

Hospitals Write out the full name of each UCLA hospital, except for an internal document, which a consumer will never read.

Hours of operation Spell out days of the week, followed by a colon. Use an en dash to denote a time span. Follow the time construct in the **Time** entry.

Example: Monday-Thursday: 10 am – 4:30 pm

Hyper- Follow the rules of **prefixes**.

I

Impact While grammatically correct to use its verb form when referring to something that has had an effect on one's life, avoid using it in this manner. It can cause confusion in the medical setting as it has a medical definition (when something is *impacted*, it is either blocked or there is something lodged in a bodily passage; it can also mean that two pieces of bone have been driven together or that a tooth is wedged between the jawbone and another tooth.)

Instead, use *affect*.

In/into *In* indicates location. *Into* indicates movement.

Examples: She was in the ER.

Her family walked into her room from the hall.

In network *In-network* (adjective).

Inoculate

Innovative Avoid this term in all health plan content unless it can be sourced to a specific, non-UCLA Health document identifying the program, facility or project noted as innovative.

Inquire/inquiry Never *enquire* or *enquiry*.

Insurance, insurance plan, or insurance product Use health plan or health plan product, avoid insurance product except where required by law.

Inter- Follow the rules in the **prefixes** entry.

Internet/intranet

Intrauterine Device Abbreviate only on the second reference to *IUD*.

It's/Its *It's* is a contraction of *it is* or *it has*. *Its* is the possessive form of the gender-neutral pronoun.

J

Junior/Senior Only abbreviate at the end of a full name. It should be preceded by a comma.

Example: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

L

Languages Capitalize the proper names of languages and dialects.

-less Never use a hyphen before this suffix.

Liaison

Likable Never *likeable*.

-like Do not precede this suffix by a hyphen unless the letter L would be tripled.

Examples: Businesslike; Shell-like

Like Follow with a hyphen when used as a prefix meaning similar to.

Examples: Like-minded; Like-natured

Like v. as Use *like* as a preposition to compare noun and pronouns. It requires an object.

Example: Jim blocks like a pro.

The conjunction *as* is the correct word to introduce clauses.

Example: Jim blocks the linebacker as he should.

Login, logon, logoff Write as two words when using as verbs. As they are written in this entry, they are nouns.

Examples: The login is 12345.

Please log in to your computer.

Long term, long-term Hyphenate when using as a compound modifier.

Examples: We will win in the long term.

He has a long-term assignment.

M

Managed care For health plan use, use *in-network* (adjective) whenever possible.

MD The acceptable abbreviation on all references for *medical doctor*. Do not include periods. Although the abbreviation is acceptable in all references, only use this abbreviation after the first mention of a medical doctor after their full name. For subsequent references, use the abbreviation Dr. before their last name. DO NOT use periods with degrees, as in M.D., Ph.D.

Example: John Smith, MD

Second Mention: Dr. John Smith

Medevac An acceptable abbreviation on all references to *medical evacuation*.

Medicaid Always capitalized, as it is a proper noun.

Medicare Always capitalized, as it is a proper noun.

Mid- Follow the rules of **prefixes**, except when followed by a figure. Ex: *mid-40s*

Military titles Capitalize a military rank when used as a formal title before an individual's name. On the first reference, use the appropriate title before the full

name of a member of the military. Subsequent references should only use the service-member's last name.

Months See the **dates** entry.

N

National Institutes of Health NIH on second reference.

Nationalities and races Capitalize the proper names of nationalities and races. Lowercase *black* and *white*. Never use yellow, red or mulatto to describe a person's ethnicity unless directly quoting.

Numerals Spell out numbers one through nine or at the beginning of a sentence. Use ordinal numbers (1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.) when the sequence has been assigned in forming names (the 4th *Ward*). Only use a number symbol as an abbreviation for number when establishing rank (ex. *We're #1*). When writing out a headline or a chapter name, always use the numeral, even for numbers one through nine.

O

OB/GYN The acceptable abbreviation for *obstetrician/gynecologist*. The abbreviation is acceptable in all references.

Online Not *on-line* or *on line*. Use only when necessary as it is usually implied.

One Hyphenate when used in writing fractions.

Examples: one-half; one-third

Overall A single word when used as an adjective or adverb.

outpatient Not *out-patient*.

out of network *Out-of-network* (adjective), not *non-network*.

Out-of-pocket *Out-of-pocket* (adjective).

P

Page numbers Never abbreviate *page* as *pg.* Follow with figures.

Example: page 13

Password Always one word, never capitalized except at the beginning of a sentence.

PCP *Primary-care physician*. Spell out on initial reference; *PCP* may be used for subsequent references.

PDF Portable Document File. The file format PDF is acceptable; however, it should primarily be used to display a document intact on the Web (such as a newsletter or form). PDF documents should primarily be housed in the download library for the appropriate constituent. When not housed in the library a note to the user about needing Adobe Reader to view the document is recommended and the note should be a link to www.adobe.com.

Percent Not per cent. Use the percent symbol % when numbers appear in a graph or chart.

Personifications Always capitalize.

Examples: Mother Nature; Old Man Winter

Pinterest A social networking site that allows you to “pin” pictures, infographics and other content

Phone numbers and extensions Always use the following format: (310) 794-1000 x1057

Physician Assistant The abbreviation PA is acceptable in all references.

PIN Personal Identification Number. Access code that allows you to set up your username or password.

pm Not *p.m.* or *PM*.

Portal Point of entry for a website or section of a website. A place on website where someone can go to access numerous resources relating to your “audience.”

POS Acronym often used to identify a point of service health plan product

Prefixes In general, do not hyphenate when using a prefix with a word starting with a consonant. The three following rules are consistent, but do have some exceptions:

1. Except for *cooperate* and *coordinate*, use a hyphen if the prefix ends in a vowel and the word that follows also begins with the same vowel.
2. Use a hyphen if the word that follows is capitalized.
3. Use a hyphen to join doubled prefixes (*sub-subcommittee*).

If there are exceptions to any of the above rules, check the specific entry in this guide or *The Associated Press Stylebook* for clarification.

pre-authorization Not *preauthorization*. *Pre-Authorization* (not *Pre-authorization*) when used at beginning of sentence or section

pre-certification Use *pre-authorization*

pre-existing conditions Not *preexisting* or *preex*. Always hyphenate, never shorten.

Preventive Not *preventative*.

Pro- Use a hyphen when coining words that denote support for something.

Examples: Pro-labor; pro-peace; pro-business; pro-war

Do not use a hyphen when *pro-* is used in other instances (*produce*, *pronoun*, etc.)

Punctuation Only use one space after a period at the end of a sentence. Ignore the old rule of "two spaces following a period." This rule is no longer practiced.

R

Referral Occurs when a participating primary care physician refers a covered member (patient) to a participating specialist. Not the same as *pre-authorization*.

S

Seasons Lowercase unless part of a formal name or at the start of a sentence.

States Spell out the names of states when listed alone in textual material. State names may be abbreviated if they appear in groups or to fit typographical requirements for tabular material. Be consistent with whichever format is chosen throughout the publication.

The following states are never to be abbreviated: Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas or Utah. Below are appropriate abbreviations for the rest of the states.

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

T

That/which (pronouns) Use *that* and *which* in referring to inanimate objects and to animals without a name. Use *that* for essential clauses, important to the meaning of a sentence, and without commas: *I remember the day that we met.* Use *which* for nonessential clauses, where the pronoun is less necessary, and use commas: *The team, which finished last a year ago, is in first place.*

Time Use figures except for noon and midnight. Use a colon to separate hours from minutes. Avoid redundancies, like *11 am this morning*. Never use the *o'clock* construct. When describing a span of time that lasts for an hour or more, follow these guidelines:

1. If the span of time falls completely within the morning or completely in the afternoon, only place the time designations on the last time noted.

Examples: 9 to 11 am

4:30 to 6:00 pm

2. If the span of time lasts from the morning to the afternoon, place time designations on both times.

Examples: 10 am to 2 pm

11:30 pm to 1:00 am

See also **Hours of Operation**.

Titles In general, confine capitalization to formal titles used directly before an individual's name. Otherwise, lowercase titles, regardless of the importance of the position.

Examples: The committee told President Obama that they disagreed with him.

The financial director of the hospital, Bob Smith, released the quarterly financial report.

Titles of compositions and broadcasts should always be capitalized and italicized. For more guidance, see the following entries: **Capitalization**; **Composition Titles**.

Trademarks Use trademark for first mention; afterward you don't have to use it.

Example: daVinci™ Surgical System.

Twitter A micro-blogging and social networking site that limits users to posts of 140 characters or less. An individual post is called a "tweet", *not* a "twitter." When posting to Twitter, feel free to abbreviate and truncate words as necessary. Take care to maintain the original meaning of the tweet and to avoid confusing or uncommon abbreviations.

U

Username One word

W

Washington, D.C. May be shortened to *the District* or *D.C.* on second and subsequent references.

Web page Two words. Capital *W*.

Website One word with lowercase *w*.

Weekend

Weeklong

Who's/whose *Who's* is a contraction of *who is*. *Whose* is the possessive form.

Examples: Who's there?

Whose hat is that?

Who/whom *Who* is the pronoun used for references to human beings and to animals with a name. It is grammatically the subject (never the object) of a sentence, clause or phrase.

Examples: The woman who rented the room left the window open.

Who is there?

Whom is used when someone is the object of a verb or preposition.

Examples: The woman to whom the room was rented left the window open.

Whom do you wish to see?

Word-of-mouth

World Health Organization Use the abbreviation *WHO* on the second and subsequent references.

X-Y-Z

X-ray Not *xray* or *x-ray*

Year-end**Yearlong**

Years Use figures without commas: *2011*. Use commas only with a month and day: *Nov. 30, 2011*. Use an s without an apostrophe when referencing spans of decades or centuries. *1900s, 1870s*.