

# A

## Contents

- 1 AAA or triple-A
- 2 abattoir
- 3 abbreviations
- 4 -able
- 5 A-bomb
- 6 abortion
- 7 ABS
- 8 abscess
- 9 academic titles
- 10 accept, except
- 11 access
- 12 accessible
- 13 accidentally, not accidently.
- 14 accolade, not acolade.
- 15 accommodate, not accomodate.
- 16 Achilles heel, tendon
- 17 acknowledgment, not acknowledgement.
- 18 acolyte, not acolite.
- 19 acre
- 20 acronyms
- 21 acting
- 22 activity
- 23 actor
- 24 acute, chronic
- 25 AD
- 26 adage
- 27 adapter, adaptor
- 28 ADB
- 29 additional/in addition to
- 30 adjectives
- 31 ad-lib
- 32 administration
- 33 admiral
- 34 admissible, inadmissible, not admissable
- 35 admit
- 36 ad nauseam
- 37 adoption
- 38 ADR
- 39 adrenaline, not adrenalin
- 40 advance, advancement
- 41 advance planning
- 42 adverbs
- 43 adverse, averse
- 44 advice, advise
- 45 adviser
- 46 aeroplane

- 47 affect, effect
- 48 AFL-CIO
- 49 Afrikaner
- 50 Afrikaans
- 51 aftermath
- 52 AG
- 53 Afterwards, but in American style afterward
- 54 aggravate, annoy
- 55 age
- 56 ageing, but in American style aging
- 57 aged, elderly
- 58 agenda
- 59 AGM
- 60 AIDS
- 61 air base
- 62 Airbus
- 63 aircraft
- 64 air fare
- 65 air force
- 66 Air Force One
- 67 Air France-KLM
- 68 airlift
- 69 airlines
- 70 air raid
- 71 air strike
- 72 alibi
- 73 Al Jazeera
- 74 al Qaeda
- 75 albino, albinos
- 76 alfresco
- 77 alias
- 78 all right
- 79 all rounder
- 80 All Saints' Day
- 81 all-time, all time
- 82 Allahu akbar
- 83 allege
- 84 allot, allotting, allotted
- 85 allude, refer
- 86 allusion, illusion
- 87 Almaty
- 88 almost exactly
- 89 alpine
- 90 altar, alter
- 91 altercation
- 92 alternate, alternative
- 93 altitudes
- 94 Aluminium
- 95 alumnus (man) alumna (woman) alumni (plural)
- 96 Alzheimer s disease

- 97 a.m.
- 98 AM
- 99 ambassador
- 100 ambience, not ambiance.
- 101 American
- 102 American Indian
- 103 American spelling
- 104 Americas
- 105 America's Cup
- 106 amid
- 107 amok, not amock or amuck.
- 108 among, between
- 109 ampersand
- 110 anaemia, anaemic but anemia, anemic is American style.
- 111 analog, not analogue
- 112 analysts
- 113 ancestor
- 114 and
- 115 annex
- 116 annual meeting
- 117 another
- 118 Antarctic, Antarctica
- 119 antennae, antennas
- 120 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty
- 121 anticipate, expect
- 122 anti-
- 123 antitrust
- 124 aneurysm
- 125 anxious, eager
- 126 any more
- 127 anything
- 128 anywhere
- 129 anyone, any one
- 130 APEC
- 131 apostolic delegate
- 132 apostrophes
- 133 appeal
- 134 appraise, apprise
- 135 appreciation
- 136 approximately
- 137 April Fool's Day
- 138 Arab names
- 139 arbitrator, arbiter, mediator
- 140 archaeology, but American style is archeology
- 141 Arctic Sea, Arctic Circle
- 142 Argentina, Argentine
- 143 aroma
- 144 armada
- 145 army

- 146 around
- 147 artefact, but American style is artifact
- 148 arrest
- 149 as
- 150 as, like
- 151 ASEAN
- 152 Asian subcontinent
- 153 assassin, assassination
- 154 assert
- 155 Astana
- 156 Asiatic
- 157 at the present time, at this time
- 158 athlete's foot
- 159 attache
- 160 attempt
- 161 ATM
- 162 audiovisual
- 163 augur, auger
- 164 Australian Labor Party
- 165 Autarchy, autarky
- 166 author
- 167 automaker
- 168 auxiliary, not auxilliary.
- 169 averages
- 170 AU
- 171 averse
- 172 awakened
- 173 awe-struck
- 174 awhile, a while
- 175 axe, axed, axeing; but American style is ax, axed, axing

## AAA or triple-A

Top rating for bonds of the highest quality. Awarded by the main rating agencies: Standard & Poor's, Moody's and Fitch. No quote marks around ratings.

See also credit rating, [www.moodys.com](http://www.moodys.com), [www2.standardandpoors.com](http://www2.standardandpoors.com), [www.fitchratings.com](http://www.fitchratings.com), Moody's, Standard & Poor's

## abattoir

Not abbatoir.

## abbreviations

Avoid inventing acronyms or abbreviations and never invent short spellings of proper company names. We may use some abbreviations for brevity but never at the expense of clarity. A reader should never have to read backwards to find out what an abbreviation means. Use a generic term, e.g. the company or the organisation, rather than stud a story with abbreviations, especially where more than one or two sets of initials are involved.

Space constraints on alerts and headlines make it tempting to invent new short forms for words and create company names, but a better and more accurate headline is almost always possible. It is not acceptable to change the spelling of a proper company name. An abbreviation, if widely known, should be used instead, e.g. IBM not Intl Bus. Mach.. Some very common abbreviations, e.g. AIDS, NATO, may be used alone at first reference with the full name given subsequently. These are listed in the quick reference entries. Abbreviations of two initials take full stops, e.g. U.S. and U.N. The exceptions are EU (European Union) and UK (United Kingdom). The full stops may be omitted in alerts and headlines if there are space constraints. Abbreviations of three or more initials and acronyms (words composed of initials or initial syllables) do not take full stops, e.g. IBM, UNICEF, WEU. If initials are well known, e.g. PLO, you need not bracket the initials after the first full reference. You may write The Palestine Liberation Organisation has sent two envoys ... and then a PLO statement said the two men would ... If the institution is little known, bracket the initials after the first reference, e.g. The Western European Union (WEU) decided on Tuesday. In the case of foreign groups, where the word order changes in the English translation, bracket the initials, e.g. the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). Do not bracket initials after a first reference if you are not going to use the initials again lower in the story. Form the plural of abbreviations by adding a lower-case s without an apostrophe, e.g. ICBMs not ICBM s or ICBMS. Do not use full stops when abbreviating the names of months in datelines. The style is Jan, Feb, March, April, May, June, July, Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov, Dec. In tabulated lists use only the first three letters for all months, e.g. Jan, Jun, Jul. Abbreviate the names of months in text when they are used with a specific date, e.g. Jun. 19, Dec. 25. Use capital letters when abbreviating capitalised words, lower case for uncapitalised phrases, e.g. ASEAN but mph, bpd.

## -able

Words ending in a silent -e normally drop the "e" before the -able, e.g. arguable. Words ending in -ce or -ge do not, e.g. changeable, ageing.

## A-bomb

Use atomic bomb, unless in a direct quote.

## abortion

Unless quoting someone, refer to aborted fetuses rather than unborn babies. Describe those campaigning for a woman's right to have an abortion as abortion rights campaigners and those campaigning against abortion rights as anti-abortion campaigners. Terms such as pro-choice,

pro-life and pro-abortion are open to dispute and should be avoided.

## **ABS**

Asset-backed securities: securities collateralised by assets such as car loans and credit card receivables, which can be seized if the debtor defaults. ABS are created by the process of securitisation whereby banks pool types of loans and use them as collateral or security against a bond issue.

## **abscess**

## **academic titles**

Capitalise when they immediately precede a personal name, otherwise use lower case, e.g. Professor John Smith.

## **accept, except**

Accept is to take or receive; except is to leave out.

## **access**

Do not use as a verb.

## **accessible**

## **accidentally, not accidently.**

## **accolade, not acolade.**

## **accommodate, not accomodate.**

**Achilles heel, tendon**

Note apostrophe and capitalisation.

**acknowledgment, not acknowledgement.****acolyte, not acolite.****acre**

To convert to hectares roughly multiply by 2 and divide by 5. To convert precisely multiply by 0.405.

**acronyms**

Avoid if at all possible. Very few are understandable at first reference. Most are only of use to a specialised audience that has seen them several times before. Where possible replace with a noun such as the committee, the organisation, the inquiry.

**acting**

Do not capitalise before a title, acting Chairman and Chief Executive Paulo Georgio.

**activity**

The word can often be dropped, as in sporting activity, golfing activity, leisure activity, political activity.

**actor**

actor (man), actress (woman).

**acute, chronic**

Acute is coming to a crisis, chronic is lasting a long time or deep-seated. Be specific when writing about disease or problems.

**AD**

Anno Domini (in the year of our Lord). Precedes the date, e.g. AD 73. But 234 BC (Before Christ).

**adage**

A proverb or old saying. Old adage is tautologous.

**adapter, adaptor**

An adapter is the person who adapts something. An adaptor is a device for connecting parts of different sizes. American style uses adapter for both.

**ADB**

Asian Development Bank. A multilateral development finance institution, with headquarters in Manila, dedicated to reducing poverty in Asia and the Pacific. Owned by member countries, mostly from the region.

**additional/in addition to**

Use more or and.

**adjectives**

Use sparingly. Inject colour into copy with strong verbs and facts, rather than adjectives. If you use more than two adjectives before a single noun then rewrite the sentence. A reader struggles with The one-eyed poverty-stricken Greek house painter. Avoid adjectives that imply judgment, e.g. a hard-line speech, a glowing tribute, a staunch conservative. Depending on where they stand, some people might consider the speech moderate, the tribute fulsome or the conservative a die-hard reactionary. When using an adjective and a noun together as an adjective, hyphenate them, e.g. a blue-chip share, high-caste Hindus. When using an adjective and the past participle of a verb together adjectivally, hyphenate them, e.g. old-fashioned morality, rose-tinted spectacles. Do not hyphenate an adverb and adjective when they stand alone, e.g. the artist was well known. If the adverb and adjective are paired to form a new adjective, they are hyphenated, e.g. a well-known artist. Do not do so however if the adverb ends in -ly, e.g. a poorly planned operation.

**ad-lib**

Hyphenated for verb, noun and adjective.



**administration**

Always lower case, e.g. the Bush administration. See also capitalisation.

**admiral**

See capitalisation.

**admissible, inadmissible, not admissable**

Admissions of responsibility is officialese. Did they do it or didn't they?

**admit**

Use with care. If you say someone admitted something you imply that it had previously been concealed or that there is an element of guilt. Plain said is usually better.

**ad nauseam****adoption**

Refer to a child's adoptive status only when the fact is clearly significant. Use the term **birth mother** to refer to the woman who gave birth to a child, if a distinction must be made with the woman who raised the child. **Birth father** and **birth parent** are also preferred style. Do not use **real** or **natural** to describe parents or children. Avoid loaded and dated phrases such as **give away a child**, **give up for adoption** and **unwanted child**. **Adoptive** as an adjective can refer to parents or the general subject of adoption. Try to describe actions instead of creating labels such as **adopted child** e.g. Hollywood actress Sharon Celebriety, who gave birth to a daughter on Friday, has two other children. She adopted Pixie, 4, and Tinkerbelle, 2, during her previous marriage to actor Tim Hunk. Be wary of cultural bias or value judgments in covering international adoptions and disputes over parental rights involving families from different cultures or socio-economic backgrounds.

**ADR**

American Depositary Receipt. Certificates tradeable like shares that allow U.S. investors to buy stock in an overseas company while realising capital gains and dividends in dollars.

**adrenaline, not adrenalin****advance, advancement**

Advance is progress; advancement is promotion.

**advance planning**

A tautology.

**adverbs**

Like adjectives they should be used sparingly. Avoid adverbs that imply judgment, e.g. generously, harshly, and sternly. Put the adverb between the auxiliary verb and the past participle, e.g. France has already refused... not France already has refused ... However, American usage favours keeping the auxiliary verb and past participle together, with the adverb either before or after the compound verb. e.g. France has refused already... or France already has refused...

**adverse, averse**

Adverse is contrary, opposed or unfavourable. Averse is disinclined to or reluctant. I am averse to go camping in adverse weather.

**advice, advise**

Advice is the noun, advise is the verb.

**adviser**

Not advisor.

**aeroplane**

Use aircraft. Do not use the U.S. term airplane. In many cases stories need the specific type of aircraft.

**affect, effect**

affect is a verb meaning to influence, effect is usually a noun meaning outcome or consequence, e.g. The effect of the decision will affect the company's decision. Effect as verb means to

accomplish, e.g. He effected his escape with the aid of his wife. However, affect is a vague word; be more precise. Effect is usually word-spinning. He escaped... is simpler.

## **AFL-CIO**

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations.

## **Afrikaner**

A white South African, usually of Dutch descent.

## **Afrikaans**

The language spoken by Afrikaners.

## **aftermath**

Prefer results. Use after rather than in the aftermath of.

## **AG**

German company title: abbreviation of Aktiengesellschaft, a joint-stock company.

## **Afterwards, but in American style afterward**

## **aggravate, annoy**

Aggravate makes worse. Do not use in the sense of to irritate. Annoy is to cause trouble to someone.

## **age**

Use numerals for all ages, e.g. the 6-year-old girl, the 9-year-old boy. The 66-year-old president or an 18-year-old youth are fine. Avoid the 66-year-old Smith, which suggests he is being distinguished from another, 65-year-old Smith; said instead, in a simple way, Smith, who is 66, or just Smith, 66,.

## **ageing, but in American style aging**

### **aged, elderly**

Avoid, because the terms are always relative. In some societies a 50-year-old is already aged. In others a sprightly 90-year-old who has just written a novel or run a marathon would object to being called aged or elderly.

### **agenda**

Agenda singular, agendas plural.

### **AGM**

Use annual meeting.

### **AIDS**

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome is caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). The term AIDS applies to the most advanced stages of HIV infection. The initials AIDS and HIV are used at first reference with the full name given lower in the story. Do not write HIV virus, which is redundant. See medical stories on the need for caution in handling stories about reputed cures for AIDS.

### **air base**

Two words.

### **Airbus**

One word, capitalised, unhyphenated.

### **aircraft**

Prefer to plane. Most airliners and military aircraft are jets so there is normally no need to specify that an aircraft is a jet. Warplane is one word. Do not use the American term airplane or the term fighter jet. Capitalise but do not put in quotation marks the names of aircraft, e.g. Concorde, Flogger, Tomcat. When the number designating an aircraft is preceded by a letter or letters, hyphenate, e.g. Boeing 747 but DC-10, F-111. Be specific when giving aircraft models in economic stories because there are cost differences, e.g. Boeing 747-400 not just Boeing 747. Use makers names in the form given in Jane's All the World's Aircraft, e.g. MiG-21. Give numerals for aircraft speeds, e.g. Mach 1 not Mach one. Aircraft names use a hyphen when changing from letters to

figures, no hyphen when adding a letter to figures, eg F-15 Eagle/747B, but Airbus 3000 is an exception.

## **air fare**

Two words.

## **air force**

Two words.

## **Air Force One**

This is the radio call sign of any fixed-wing aircraft used by the president of the United States. The U.S. Marine Corps is responsible for presidential helicopter support. Marine One is the radio call sign of any helicopter used by the president.

## **Air France-KLM**

Note hyphen

## **airlift**

Do not use as a synonym for fly, e.g. The injured man was airlifted to hospital. Reserve it for shuttle services, e.g. The United States airlifted 50,000 troops to the Gulf.

## **airlines**

Airlines vary widely in their use of air line(s), airline(s) or airways as part of their name. Check the spelling on the company's Web site.

## **air raid**

Two words.

## **air strike**

Two words.

**alibi**

Not a synonym for an excuse. It means a claim to have been elsewhere at the time of an offence.

**Al Jazeera**

Qatar television station. Use upper case A and no hyphen since this is how the broadcaster describes itself in English. Refer to as an Arab news channel broadcasting in Arabic and in English.

**al Qaeda**

Created by Osama bin Laden in the late 1980s, al Qaeda ("The Base") is a militant movement that supports violent attacks on the West, Israel and governments in Muslim countries allied to the West that it believes prevent the creation of a 'pure' Islamic world. The movement became more diffuse after the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and some key figures were captured or killed. However, new wings have emerged in Saudi Arabia, Iraq and North Africa.

Now the term al Qaeda is used by different people to mean different things. When authorities speak about an "al Qaeda plot", we should try to pin down whether they mean it was ordered and directed by "core al Qaeda" or generally inspired by the anti-Western ideology of bin Laden.

**albino, albinos****alfresco**

Use in the open air, or outdoors.

**alias**

Refers only to assumption of a false name, not an entire false identity or profession.

**all right**

Not alright.

**all rounder**

Two words, e.g. a cricketer who bats and bowls.

## **All Saints' Day**

November 1. Note apostrophe.

## **all-time, all time**

The greatest singer of all time, but an all-time low. Do not write an all-time record. It is simply a record. Always ensure superlatives such as all-time high are checked and sourced..

## **Allahu akbar**

God is Greatest (not, as often written, God is Great), a common Muslim rallying cry. Also chanted when Muslims perform their five daily prayers.

## **allege**

Avoid. Do not report allegations without saying who made them. Use of the word alleged before a defamatory statement does not provide immunity against an action for libel. Do not use allegedly.

## **allot, allotting, allotted**

## **allude, refer**

Allude means to refer to in passing without making an explicit mention. Refer means to mention directly. He alluded to the sins of his past and referred to his criminal record.

## **allusion, illusion**

Allusion is a reference in passing. Illusion is a false impression or a delusion.

## **Almaty**

Not Alma-Ata. The biggest city in Kazakhstan and the country's commercial hub. The capital was shifted to Astana in 1997.

## **almost exactly**

It is either exact, or not.

**alpine**

lower case, except for Alpine skiing.

**altar, alter**

Altar is a table used for religious services. Alter is to change. They altered the altar to make it fit the church.

**altercation**

An altercation is an argument or heated exchange of words, not a fight.

**alternate, alternative**

Alternate means that A and B take turns, alternative that you have a choice between A and B. There can only be two alternatives. Any more and you face choices, options or possibilities.

**altitudes**

Convert metres to feet not yards when giving altitudes.

**Aluminium**

But aluminum in American style.

**alumnus (man) alumna (woman) alumni (plural)****Alzheimer s disease**

A progressive, incurable and disabling disease leading to severe dementia. Although it usually occurs in elderly people it is not synonymous with dementia or senility.

**a.m.**

Time, e.g. 6 a.m., 6:45 a.m.



## **AM**

The amplitude modulation method of radio transmission.

## **ambassador**

Use for a man or a woman.

## **ambience, not ambiance.**

## **American**

As a noun this may be used to describe a U.S. citizen.

## **American Indian**

Acceptable but Native American (capitalised) is preferred, bearing in mind that this includes e.g. Inuit who are not Indians. Where possible, be more specific and give the name of the tribe (eg. Navajo, Cherokee). See race

## **American spelling**

There are two generally accepted spelling systems for the English language. Our global client base are accustomed to reading both. Copy originating in the Americas should follow North American spelling conventions, such as *color*, *defense*, *aging*, *caliber*, etc. Copy originating elsewhere should follow British spelling norms. At all times stick to official spellings for American names and titles, such as U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Watch out for regional words that non-English language services and clients will find difficult to understand and translate. In American sports coverage, use American terms and spellings e.g. *center*, *maneuver*, *defense*, *offense*, *ballclub*, *postseason*, *preseason*, *lineman*, *line up*, *halfback*, *doubleheader*.

## **Americas**

Includes South American states.

## **America's Cup**

The sailing trophy, named after the yacht America, takes an apostrophe.

**amid**

Not amidst. However, amid is a sign of thoughtless writing; there is always a better way to express this.

**amok, not amock or amuck.****among, between**

Between is restricted to two choices or two parties. Among is for several options or parties. Use between in referring to bilateral contacts e.g. relations between France and Germany. Use among for a collective linkage, e.g. relations among the NATO states. Be careful to use between if there are just two groups to choose from, even though it looks like several. It was hard to decide between a touring holiday in France, Belgium and Spain or in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. It was hard to decide among a holiday in France, in Belgium or in Spain.

**ampersand**

Do not use, instead use 'and' in full, even in company names.

**anaemia, anaemic but anemia, anemic is American style.****analog, not analogue****analysts**

Do not use analysts alone, buyt qualify -- policial analysts, stock market analysts.

**ancestor**

One from whome someone is descended. Do not use to mean predecessor.

**and**

Do not start a sentence with 'and'.

**annex**

Not annexe, for both verb and noun.

**annual meeting**

Lower case. For companies use annual meeting rather than annual general meeting.

**another**

Avoid when you are trying to say additional or extra. It should be used only when referring to things of the same type, size and number. Two teams were at full strength; another two were short of players. In most instances it can simply be omitted. Three men died in the crash and three were injured.

**Antarctic, Antarctica**

Not Antartic.

**antennae, antennas**

Antennae are insect feelers. Antennas are aeries.

**Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty**

ABM Treaty on second reference.

**anticipate, expect**

These are not synonyms. If you anticipate something, you not only expect it but take precautionary action to deal with it.

**anti-**

Hyphenate in most cases. Antitrust is an exception..

**antitrust**

One word. Largely an American term that refers to government policy or law that restrains monopolistic or anti-competitive behaviour by businesses. The term originated in late 19th century

United States where businesses were often merged into large industry wide holding companies or trusts.

## **aneurysm**

Not aneurism.

## **anxious, eager**

Anxious means uneasy with fear or desire. Prefer eager if the promised experience is desirable. I am anxious about going to the dentist but eager to go the party.

## **any more**

Two words

## **anything**

One word.

## **anywhere**

One word.

## **anyone, any one**

Anyone can do that, but any one among them is guilty. When it is two words the emphasis is on the second word. Similarly with anybody and any body.

## **APEC**

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, aimed at promoting regional trade and economic co-operation. 21 members.

## **apostolic delegate**

See Roman Catholic Church.

## **apostrophes**

apostrophes: Use the apostrophe according to the following rules, unless to do so would lead to a word that looked or sounded very strange.

Singular words and plural words not ending in s form the possessive by adding s, e.g. Boeing s new airliner, the children s books. Plural words already ending in s form the possessive by adding the apostrophe alone, e.g. the soldiers weapons. There is usually no problem about using the apostrophe with words ending in s. the class s performance, the princesses return, Shultz s car are all acceptable because they can be pronounced easily. Some words would look or sound so odd, e.g. Paris s reputation, Tunis s main prison or Woolworths s results that it best to write your way out of trouble. Recast such phrases, e.g. the son of the Dukasises, the reputation of Paris, the main prison in Tunis and results from Woolworths. Companies which end in s like Qantas or Optus might also appear ugly with the s possessive. The best option is to avoid if possible. Reuters does not take an apostrophe, the only exception being in connection with the founder s name, e.g. Reuter s birthplace in Kassel. Note that it s is a contraction of it is. The possessive form of it is its. Do not use an apostrophe in for example the 1990s or abbreviations such as NCOs. Joint possession: use the possessive form only after the last word if ownership is joint, e.g. Fred and Sylvia's apartment, but the possessive of both words if the objects and individually owned, e.g. Fred's And Sylvia's books.

## **appeal**

The verb takes a preposition. You appeal against a decision, not appeal a decision.

## **appraise, apprise**

Appraise is to set a value on or to price, apprise is to inform.

## **appreciation**

Increase in an asset's value, as opposed to depreciation

## **approximately**

About is shorter and simpler. So is almost or nearly.

## **April Fool's Day**

One fool and one day, but All Fools Day.

## **Arab names**

Reuters style is to end Arab names in *i* rather than *y* (Ali not Aly, Gaddafi not Gaddafy). The words *al* and *el* both mean *the*. They are usually in lower case and followed by a hyphen. We prefer *al-* to *el-* but should use *el-* if that is how the person spells his or her name in English. In personal names starting *al-* or *el-* include the particle only at first reference, e.g. Syrian President Bashar al-Assad at first reference, thereafter Assad. In place and other names the particle is retained at second reference, e.g. al-Arish, (the newspaper) al-Akhbar. Particles that go in lower case are *ait* (Mohamed ait Atta) *bin* and *bint* (Aziza bint Ahmed), *ben* (Ahmed ben Bella), *bar*, *bou* and *ould* (Moktar ould Daddah). See also *sheikh*.

## **arbitrator, arbiter, mediator**

An arbitrator or arbiter is appointed to make a decision and hand down a ruling. A mediator tries to produce a compromise agreed by both parties in a dispute.

## **archaeology, but American style is archeology**

## **Arctic Sea, Arctic Circle**

But arctic wind, arctic cold.

## **Argentina, Argentine**

Not the Argentine as a noun or Argentinian as an adjective.

## **aroma**

Do not use for unpleasant smells. It means a spicy fragrance or something with particular charm. It makes no sense to write the aroma of defeat.

## **armada**

A fleet of armed ships. Do not use for a collection of pleasure boats.

## **army**

Never capitalised when referring to the service as a whole, e.g. the U.S. army, the French army. Exceptions are armies that have a unique name, e.g. the Palestine Liberation Army, the Red Army. Capitalise army when referring to a specific formation, e.g. the U.S. 1st Army, the British 8th Army. Use figures for military units: 1st Army not First Army. However, American style capitalises all references to U.S. forces U.S. Army, the Army, Army regulations.

**around**

Use about for approximation -- about 30, not around 30.

**artefact, but American style is artifact****arrest**

to avoid prejudging the issue, do not say arrested for murder, say arrested on a charge of murder; see also allege.

**as**

An overused conjunction, especially in leads, to link two developments that may have only a distant connection and may occur in different time frames, e.g. Jones issued new threats against Ruritania as Brown considered his options in the region. Use with restraint, preferably when actions are both contemporaneous and closely linked, e.g. Smith leaped out of the window as Jones kicked down the door. As substitutes use and, when, because.

**as, like**

As compares verbs, like compares nouns. He fought as a hero should, but he acted like a hero.

**ASEAN**

Association of South East Asian Nations, which groups Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. See [www.aseansec.org](http://www.aseansec.org)

**Asian subcontinent**

Use South Asia for the region that includes Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

**assassin, assassination**

Restrict to the killing of a prominent person for political motives.

**assert**

It can mean to vindicate, so use with care. Plain said is better.

## **Astana**

The capital of Kazakhstan. Almaty was the capital until 1997.

## **Asiatic**

Use Asian.

## **at the present time, at this time**

Use now.

## **athlete s foot**

## **attache**

Not a formal title: lower case.

## **attempt**

Try is shorter, better

## **ATM**

Automated teller machine, but spell out later. ATM machine is tautologous.

## **audiovisual**

One word, no hyphen.

## **augur, auger**

Augur is a soothsayer, or to foretell by signs. It augurs success. Auger is a carpenter s tool for boring.

## **Australian Labor Party**

(not Labour)



**Autarchy, autarky**

Autarchy means absolute power and autarky is self-sufficiency. Use plain words instead to remove the confusion.

**author**

Man or woman. As a verb use write.

**automaker**

One word (American usage). Also steelmaker, toymaker, drugmaker etc. Similarly autoworkers, steelworkers, etc.

**auxiliary, not auxilliary.****averages**

Place the word average where it correctly qualifies the item or quantity intended, e.g. Reporters drink an average of six cups of coffee a day. (Not: the average reporter drinks six cups of coffee a day). There are three types:(most often used) is calculated by adding all the constituent parts together and dividing by the number of parts.The middle value, meaning the number of values above it is the same as the number below it. The most commonly occurring value.

Average takes a singular or plural verb according to what it refers. The average age is 24, but an average of three men die each day.

**AU**

African Union (Addis Ababa). See [www.africa-union.org](http://www.africa-union.org)

**averse**

See adverse, averse.

**awakened**

Prefer this form to awoken or awaked or awoke.

## **awe-struck**

## **awhile, a while**

I will rest awhile, or I will rest for a while.

## **axe, axed, axeing; but American style is ax, axed, axing**

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

# B

## Contents

- 1 Baath Party
- 2 baby boomer
- 3 baby sitter, baby-sit, baby-sitting, baby-sat
- 4 baccalaureate
- 5 back of
- 6 backhand
- 7 backlash
- 8 backwardation
- 9 backwards, but American style is backward
- 10 backyard
- 11 bacterium, bacteria
- 12 bad news, good news
- 13 Baha i
- 14 Bahamas
- 15 Bahrain
- 16 bail, bale
- 17 bailout
- 18 bait, bate
- 19 Bakhtaran
- 20 balance of payments.
- 21 balance of trade
- 22 balk, not baulk
- 23 ballot, balloted
- 24 ballroom, ballpark, ballplayer
- 25 banister, not bannister.
- 26 bankruptcy
- 27 Bank of China
- 28 Baptist, baptist
- 29 barbecue, not barbeque or bar-b-q
- 30 bar mitzvah, bat mitzvah
- 31 barrel
- 32 barrel, barrelled, barrelling, but American style is barrel, barreled, barreling
- 33 barrel-chested, barrel-house, barrel-organ
- 34 barroom
- 35 Basel
- 36 basically
- 37 basis
- 38 basis point
- 39 Basra
- 40 battalion
- 41 battle
- 42 battledress
- 43 bayonet, bayoneted
- 44 BC
- 45 be with a present participle

- 46 because
- 47 Bedouin
- 48 beg the question
- 49 Beige Book
- 50 Beijing
- 51 beleaguered
- 52 believed
- 53 bellwether
- 54 Belarus, not Belorussia
- 55 Benares
- 56 benefit, benefited
- 57 Benelux
- 58 bereft
- 59 beriberi
- 60 Berlin Wall.
- 61 Bermuda shorts, Bermuda Triangle, Bermuda rig
- 62 Bermudian
- 63 beside, besides
- 64 besiege, not beseige.
- 65 berserk, not beserk.
- 66 best seller, not bestseller.
- 67 bettor
- 68 between, among
- 69 bias, biased.
- 70 biannual, biennial
- 71 Bible, bible
- 72 biblical
- 73 bid, in a bid to
- 74 bight, bite
- 75 billion
- 76 bimonthly, semimonthly
- 77 bin Laden
- 78 bird
- 79 birdie, birdies
- 80 BIS
- 81 biweekly
- 82 black
- 83 black box
- 84 blame
- 85 blast off, blastoff
- 86 blazon, blaze
- 87 blind
- 88 blitzkrieg
- 89 bloc, block
- 90 blockbuster
- 91 blond, blonde
- 92 blue blood
- 93 blueprint
- 94 B nai B rith
- 95 bogey, bogie, bogy

- 96 bond
- 97 bondholder
- 98 Bombay
- 99 bona fide
- 100 book titles
- 101 bored with
- 102 born, borne
- 103 Bosphorus, not Bosporus
- 104 both
- 105 boss
- 106 Botswana
- 107 boy
- 108 Boy Scouts
- 109 boycott, embargo
- 110 brackets
- 111 Braille
- 112 brand names
- 113 breach, breech
- 114 break in
- 115 break point
- 116 breast-stroke
- 117 Brent
- 118 Britain
- 119 British Isles
- 120 British spelling
- 121 broach, brooch
- 122 broccoli
- 123 broken quotes
- 124 brownout
- 125 BSE
- 126 Buddha, Buddhism
- 127 budget, budgeted
- 128 buffalo
- 129 buildup
- 130 bull's-eye
- 131 bungee jump
- 132 buoyant
- 133 bureau
- 134 burgeoning
- 135 burglary
- 136 Burma
- 137 Burmese names
- 138 burnt, or burned in American style
- 139 burqa
- 140 bus, buses, busing
- 141 bushel
- 142 but
- 143 by
- 144 Byelorussia
- 145 Byzantine

**Baath Party**

The pan-Arab political party that has ruled Syria since 1963. Its rival Iraq branch was led by Saddam Hussein and is now believed to be highly active in the insurgency since the 2003 U.S.-led invasion.

**Baathist** An individual or group loyal to the Baath Party.

**baby boomer****baby sitter, baby-sit, baby-sitting, baby-sat****baccalaureate****back of**

Prefer *behind*.

**backhand**

One word when used to describe a tennis or badminton stroke.

**backlash**

Avoid. It is more effective to describe what happened and why.

**backwardation**

In commodity markets, backwardation is a situation where the cash or near delivery price rises above the price for forward delivery. The forward price is normally higher than the cash price to reflect the added costs of storage and insurance for stocks deliverable at a later date. The opposite of backwardation is contango.

**backwards, but American style is backward****backyard**

One word as noun or adjective.

**bacterium, bacteria**

One bacterium, several bacteria. Do not confuse with a virus. Antibiotics are not used to treat viruses.

**bad news, good news**

Avoid suggesting this in stories. There is no bad or good news for a market since it contains both buyers and sellers.

**Baha i**

An adherent of a religion founded by the 19th-century Persian prophet Bahau'llah. Note apostrophe. See religious terms

**Bahamas**

A native of the Bahamas is a Bahamian not a Bahaman.

**Bahrain**

Use MANAMA, Bahrain, as the dateline.

**bail, bale**

You bail out a boat or a company in difficulties, but bale out of an aircraft. You post bail in a court. However, American style is bail for both bailing out a boat and bailing out of an aircraft.

**bailout**

One word.

**bait, bate**

Use bait on a hook and wait with bated breath to catch a fish.

**Bakhtaran**

Not Kermanshah, Iran.

**balance of payments.**

A summary record of a country's net international economic transactions including trade, services, capital movements and unilateral transfers.

**balance of trade**

Monetary record of a country's net imports and exports of physical merchandise. It can be negative, showing that a country is importing more than it exports, or positive, showing it exports more than it imports.

**balk, not baulk****ballot, balloted****ballroom, ballpark, ballplayer****banister, not bannister.****bankruptcy**

A company becomes formally bankrupt or insolvent when a court rules it is unable to meet its debts. The ruling may be sought by the company concerned (voluntary) or by creditors. In England, the court appoints an official receiver to manage and eventually realise the debtor's assets on behalf of the creditors. Terms such as bankruptcy, insolvency and liquidation have different legal meanings in different countries. Be as precise as possible in reporting what a company or court says, especially if a translation is involved. For example, in France the normal form of bankruptcy is *faillite*; the term *banquerote* refers to fraudulent bankruptcy and there is a danger if they are confused. Similarly, in Germany a collapse known as *Bankrott* is more serious than a normal liquidation.

In the United States, a company or individual is designated bankrupt when a court enters an order for relief in either a Chapter 11 reorganisation or Chapter 7 liquidation case. They may become bankrupt by virtue of a voluntary filing on their own behalf, or an involuntary filing by a required number of creditors. Applications under bankruptcy rules may be technical manoeuvres and could lead to libel actions if misinterpreted. Business collapses are often progressive rather than sudden. Over-colourful reporting that implies the situation is hopeless may lead to legal problems if the company recovers and claims the reports were false and damaging.

**Bank of China**

This is a commercial bank, not the central bank. The People's Bank of China is the central bank.



**Baptist, baptist**

A baptist is someone who baptises. A Baptist is a member of the Protestant denomination. With more than 20 separate Baptist church groups in the United States, it is incorrect to refer to the Baptist Church as a singular entity. The correct reference would be to Baptist Churches or to the specific Baptist group involved, e.g. the Southern Baptist Convention.

**barbecue, not barbeque or bar-b-q****bar mitzvah, bat mitzvah**

Lower case. Use bar for males and bat for females.

**barrel**

Volume measurement of liquid in the petroleum industry, equal to 42 U.S. gallons, 35 Imperial gallons or about 0.136 tonnes, depending on specific gravity. Barrels per day (bpd) is a measure of the flow of crude oil production from a field or producing company or a country.

**barrel, barrelled, barrelling, but American style is barrel, barreled, barreling****barrel-chested, barrel-house, barrel-organ****barroom**

One word.

**Basel**

Not Basle, Switzerland.

**basically**

Adds nothing to the meaning or strength of writing. Expunge.

**basis**

On the basis of, on a voluntary basis etc. There is always a shorter and stronger way to express such ideas.

**basis point**

The movement of interest rates or yields expressed in hundredths of a percent, so 0.50 percent is 50 basis points.

**Basra**

Not Basrah, Iraq.

**battalion****battle**

They battled against poverty, or battled with poverty, not battled poverty. Fought is shorter.

**battledress**

One word.

**bayonet, bayoneted****BC**

Before Christ. Write 55 BC, but AD 73.

**be with a present participle**

There is always a stronger form of the verb. He will be coming/he will come, she will be sewing/she will sew.

**because**

Do not replace with since or as.

**Bedouin**

A desert Arab. Same in singular and plural.

**beg the question**

A misused cliché. It does not mean to prompt an inquiry, but to assume what needs to be proved, or more loosely to evade the question.

**Beige Book**

A survey of the outlook for the U.S. economy published eight times a year by the Federal Reserve Board. Also known as the Tan Book.

**Beijing**

Not Peking, China.

**beleaguered**

Not beleagered. Try to use a shorter word.

**believed**

Beliefs must be sourced. Do not write, John Smith was believed to have been killed in an ambush. Say who believes and why.

**bellwether**

The lead sheep in a flock. Not bellweather.

**Belarus, not Belorussia**

Its people are Belarussians.

**Benares**

Use Varanasi, India.

**benefit, benefited****Benelux**

Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. Explain the term in stories.

**bereft**

Bereft comes from bereave and means robbed of or deprived. If you are bereft of friends they have all gone away. You are not just lonely because you never had any friends.

**beriberi**

A disease caused by vitamin deficiency. One word.

**Berlin Wall.****Bermuda shorts, Bermuda Triangle, Bermuda rig****Bermudian**

Not Bermudan for the inhabitant, but prefer Bermuda as the adjective.

**beside, besides**

Beside is near or by the side of. Besides is in addition to.

**besiege, not beseige.****berserk, not beserk.****best seller, not bestseller.****bettor**

Not widely used outside the Americas. Prefer gambler. (American style)

**between, among**

Between is restricted to two choices or two parties. Among is for several options or parties. Use between in referring to bilateral contacts e.g. relations between France and Germany. Use among for a collective linkage, e.g. relations among the NATO states. Be careful to use between if there are just two groups to choose from, even though it looks like several. It was hard to decide between a touring holiday in France, Belgium and Spain or in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. It was hard to decide among a holiday in France, in Belgium or in Spain.

**bias, biased.****biannual, biennial**

No hyphen. It's clearer to write twice-yearly instead of biannual, and every two years rather than biennial.

**Bible, bible**

Upper case when referring to the book itself. Lower case when used as a metaphor.

**biblical**

Not Biblical.

**bid, in a bid to**

Sloppy and verbose. Can usually be removed by rewriting, or replaced with an active verb such as tried to or attempted.

**bight, bite**

Bight is a wide bay or a coil. You bite with your teeth.

**billion**

In Reuters services billion means one thousand million. The word billion must be spelled out, although it can be abbreviated to bln if necessary in headlines. Always use figures before million and billion, e.g. 2 billion, 3 million. When reporting a range of figures, use the style 1.2 billion to 1.4 billion not 1.2-1.4 billion. See also figures, trillion.

**bimonthly, semimonthly**

Avoid. Write every other month for bimonthly and twice a month for semimonthly.

**bin Laden**

Osama bin Laden. Use bin Laden at second reference. He is now stripped of Saudi citizenship so refer to as Saudi-born.

**bird**

A bird is an animal, so birds and mammals or birds and reptiles, not birds and animals.

**birdie, birdies**

One stroke under par in golf.

**BIS**

Bank for International Settlements, an international organisation that fosters international monetary and financial co-operation and serves as a bank for central banks and international financial organisations. The Basel Committee of the BIS sets standards and guidelines for best banking practice. See [www.bis.org](http://www.bis.org)

**biweekly**

This can mean twice a week or once every two weeks. So avoid it.

**black**

Fine as an adjective, eg "Obama will be the first black U.S. president". As a noun, the plural is acceptable where it might contrast with another group, eg doctors found differences between the treatment offered to whites and blacks. Do not use black as a singular noun -- it is both awkward and offensive. "Barack Obama would be the first black to become U.S. president" is unacceptable. Better to say "Barack Obama will become the first black U.S. president". See race

**black box**

Popular term for aircraft recording equipment. Although they are not in fact black, the term can be used if it is made clear that the reference is to a plane's flight recorder or its flight-deck voice recorder.

**blame**

Treat with cation. In accidents, apportioning blame can cause legal problems. Strong sourcing is required here

**blast off, blastoff**

One word for the noun and two words for the verb.

**blazon, blaze**

You blazon, or ostentatiously display, your wealth, and blaze a trail.

**blind**

Describe people as blind only if they are totally without sight. Otherwise write that their sight is impaired or that they have only partial vision.

**blitzkrieg**

German for lightning war or violent attack. Use the short form blitz only for heavy air attacks.

**bloc, block**

A bloc is a combination of units, parties or nations. A block is a lump.

**blockbuster**

Use sparingly, unless you have figures to support profit, return on investment etc.

**blond, blonde**

blond for a man, blonde for a woman. But the adjective is always blond.

**blue blood**

Noun; blue-blooded is the adjective.

**blueprint**

Tired cliché. Use plan or proposal.

**B nai B rith**

A Jewish service and community organisation. Note apostrophes.

**bogey, bogie, bogy**

Bogey is a golf term, meaning one stroke above par for a hole. A bogie is a trolley. A bogy is a bugbear or a special object of dread, hence bogymen.

**bond**

A bond is a legal contract in which a government, company or institution (the borrower) issues a certificate, which promises to pay holders a specific rate of interest for a fixed duration and then redeem the contract at face value on maturity.

**bondholder**

One word.

**Bombay**

Use Mumbai unless it is a proper name e.g. The Bombay Stock Exchange. Similarly we use Chennai (not Madras) and Kolkata (not Calcutta).

**bona fide**

Avoid.

**book titles**

Books, films, plays, poems, operas, songs and works of art: capitalise every word in the title apart from conjunctions, articles, particles and short prepositions, e.g. *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* , *The Merchant of Venice* , *Gone with the Wind* .



**bored with**

Not bored of.

**born, borne**

He was born on Tuesday (passive). She has borne 10 children (active) and borne the burden of raising them.

**Bosporus, not Bosphorus****both**

Both sides agreed is tautology, as is They both went to the same play. Write They went to the same play.

**boss**

This word has pejorative or slang connotations and should not be used in serious contexts, e.g. A presidential aide said his boss... Mafia bosses would be permissible and the word can be used in an informal context, e.g. Bill Smith said he was sick of correcting his boss's spelling. It is acceptable in sports stories as an alternative to manager or coach.

**Botswana**

Its people are Batswana (sing. and pl.).

**boy**

Any male over 18 is a man.

**Boy Scouts**

Now just Scouts.

**boycott, embargo**

A boycott is the refusal of a group to deal with a person or use a commodity. An embargo is a legal ban on trade.

## **brackets**

If an entire sentence is in brackets, put the full stop (period) inside the closing bracket, e.g. (...reported earlier.) If a sentence has a bracketed section at the end, the full stop goes outside the closing bracket, e.g. -reported earlier). If a bracketed section in the middle of a sentence is followed by a comma, it also goes outside the bracket.

## **Braille**

Capitalised.

## **brand names**

A brand is a symbol or word registered by a manufacturer and protected by law to prevent others from using it. Use a generic equivalent unless the brand name is important to the story. When used, follow the owner's capitalisation, e.g. Aspro not aspro but aspirin.

## **breach, breech**

Breach is a break, breech is the lower part. A breach in the wall, but a breech birth.

## **break in**

Verb; break-in is the noun.

## **break point**

Two words in tennis scoring.

## **breast-stroke**

## **Brent**

Brent blend is a benchmark crude oil from the British North Sea against which other crude oils are priced.

## **Britain**

Do not use England as a synonym for Britain or the United Kingdom. Britain comprises England, Scotland and Wales. The United Kingdom comprises Britain and Northern Ireland. Use Britain

unless the Irish context is important.

## British Isles

A geographical, not political term. They comprise the United Kingdom, islands under the British Crown such as the Channel Islands and Isle of Man, and the Republic of Ireland.

## British spelling

There are two generally accepted spelling systems for the English language. Our global client base are accustomed to reading both. Copy originating in the Americas should follow North American spelling conventions, such as *color*, *defense*, *aging*, *caliber*, etc. Copy originating elsewhere should follow British spelling norms. At all times stick to official spellings for American names and titles, such as U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates and U.S. Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. Watch out for regional words that non-English language services and clients will find difficult to understand and translate. In American sports coverage, use American terms and spellings e.g. *center*, *maneuver*, *defense*, *offense*, *ballclub*, *postseason*, *preseason*, *lineman*, *line up*, *halfback*, *doubleheader*.

## broach, brooch

Broach is to pierce or open up. Brooch is an ornamental clasp.

## broccoli

## broken quotes

Do not use if the words quoted are not contentious e.g. He said she was a great soldier. Use if the language is inflammatory or colourful e.g. She said he was a stinking, rotten coward .

## brownout

Temporary voltage reduction to conserve electric power. A shut down is a blackout.

## BSE

bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or mad cow disease.

## **Buddha, Buddhism**

### **budget, budgeted**

### **buffalo**

Plural is buffaloes.

### **buildup**

Noun, but build up as a verb. The adjective is built-up.

### **bull's-eye**

### **bungee jump**

Two words.

### **buoyant**

### **bureau**

plural is bureaux.

### **burgeoning**

An overused adjective. Burgeoning means putting forth shoots or beginning to grow rapidly. Otherwise use growing.

### **burglary**

Legal definitions vary but usually burglary involves entering a building unlawfully to commit a crime

## **Burma**

Use Myanmar. In copy, refer to Myanmar, formerly known as Burma.

## **Burmese names**

Despite the rule about dropping honorifics, keep the full name at second reference. U means Mr and Daw means Mrs. When U is followed by a single name it should be retained, e.g. U Nu.

## **burnt, or burned in American style**

## **burqa**

Not burka. A one-piece head-to-toe covering for Muslim women, with a headband to hold it in place and a cloth mesh to cover the face but allow vision. Most frequent in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Some European languages use burqa for other kinds of covering, but avoid this usage.

## **bus, buses, busing**

Passenger bus is tautologous.

## **bushel**

A unit of measure of dry goods, such as corn, wheat or soybeans equal to 32 dry quarts or 4 pecks or 35.2 litres in metric measurement.

## **but**

Avoid where possible, particularly in leads. It is imprecise, overused and can imply bias if it comes between differing versions of events (e.g. He said this, but she said that). In such cases a full stop and a new sentence is better. Do not start a sentence with but.

## **by**

As a prefix needs no hyphen, except in by-election, by-law, by-product.

## **Byelorussia**

Use Belarus.

## **Byzantine**

Capitalise.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

# C

## Contents

- 1 Cabinet
- 2 cactus, cactuses
- 3 caddy
- 4 Caesarean section
- 5 cafe
- 6 caffeine
- 7 calibre, but American style is caliber
- 8 Calcutta
- 9 call up, call-up
- 10 camaraderie
- 11 Cambodia
- 12 Cameroon
- 13 Camilla Parker Bowles
- 14 can
- 15 Canada goose
- 16 cancer
- 17 cancel, cancelled, cancellation
- 18 cannon, canon
- 19 canvas, canvass
- 20 capable, capability
- 21 capital, capitol
- 22 capital account
- 23 capital-raising
- 24 Capitalisation. American style is capitalization
- 25 capsize
- 26 carat, caret
- 27 carcass
- 28 careen, career
- 29 cargo and cargoes
- 30 carrier
- 31 carry out
- 32 casino
- 33 castor
- 34 catalogue, catalogued, catalogue, cataloguing, but in American style catalog, cataloged, cataloger, cataloging
- 35 Catch-22
- 36 cave in, cave-in
- 37 caution
- 38 Cawnpore
- 39 CD-ROM
- 40 ceasefire, ceasefires
- 41 celebrant, celebrator
- 42 celibacy, chastity
- 43 cellphone
- 44 cement, concrete
- 45 cemetery

- 46 cello, cellos
- 47 censor, censor, censure
- 48 centre, but center in American style
- 49 Centigrade
- 50 cents
- 51 centimetre
- 52 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- 53 centre on
- 54 centuries
- 55 CEO
- 56 Ceylon
- 57 chairman, chairwoman
- 58 Champions League
- 59 changeable channel and channelled.
- 60 charisma
- 61 chat room
- 62 chat show
- 63 cheap, low
- 64 check, cheque, chequebook
- 65 Chennai
- 66 chequered flag, but American style is checkered flag
- 67 cherry pick
- 68 child criminals
- 69 children s
- 70 Chinese names
- 71 chips
- 72 Christ
- 73 Christie s
- 74 chronic
- 75 Church of Christ, Scientist
- 76 Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
- 77 CIA
- 78 circle, centre
- 79 city-state
- 80 civil society
- 81 claimed
- 82 clamour, clamouring, clamorous, but American style is clamor, clamoring, clamorous
- 83 claycourt
- 84 clean up
- 85 clear-cut
- 86 cliches
- 87 click here
- 88 climb up
- 89 close proximity
- 90 coastguard
- 91 coastline
- 92 confectionery
- 93 cognoscente
- 94 Cold War
- 95 collapsible



- 96 collectibles
- 97 collective nouns
- 98 collision
- 99 colloquial contractions
- 100 collusion, collaboration
- 101 Colombia, Columbia
- 102 colour, but American style color
- 103 coloured
- 104 combat, but combated is the American usage as a verb.
- 105 comedian
- 106 commander-in-chief, but in American style commander in chief
- 107 commando, commandos
- 108 commas
- 109 commence
- 110 comment
- 111 commercial paper
- 112 commit
- 113 committee
- 114 communique
- 115 communist
- 116 Comoro Islands
- 117 company names
  - ◆ 117.1 AB
  - ◆ 117.2 AG
  - ◆ 117.3 A/S
  - ◆ 117.4 Cie
  - ◆ 117.5 Co
  - ◆ 117.6 Cos
  - ◆ 117.7 Corp
  - ◆ 117.8 GmbH
  - ◆ 117.9 Inc
  - ◆ 117.10 KK
  - ◆ 117.11 Ltd
  - ◆ 117.12 Plc
  - ◆ 117.13 Pty
  - ◆ 117.14 SpA
  - ◆ 117.15 YK
- 118 company titles
- 119 compare
- 120 comparisons
- 121 comparatively
- 122 compass points
- 123 compatible
- 124 compatriot
- 125 complacent, complaisant
- 126 complement, compliment
- 127 comprise
- 128 compound
- 129 compound adjectives
- 130 compunction

- 131 concerning
- 132 confectionery
- 133 confidant (male), confidante (female)
- 134 confrontation
- 135 Congo
- 136 Congress, congressional
- 137 connote, denote
- 138 -conscious
- 139 consensus
- 140 consequence
- 141 conservative
- 142 considerable
- 143 consortium, consortiums, not consortia.
- 144 consul-general
- 145 consult, not consult with.
- 146 consumer price index
- 147 contagious, not contagious.
- 148 contango
- 149 contemptible, contemptuous
- 150 continue
- 151 continual, continuous
- 152 contractions
- 153 contrast
- 154 control, controlled, controlling
- 155 controversial
- 156 conurbation
- 157 convener
- 158 conversions
- 159 conversions in sports writing
- 160 conveyor
- 161 convince, persuade
- 162 cooperate, cooperation
- 163 coordinate, coordination
- 164 copter
- 165 co-respondent, correspondent
- 166 corporate America
- 167 council, councillor
- 168 Court of St. James s
- 169 court-martial
- 170 courtesy titles
- 171 cover up, coverup
- 172 CPI
- 173 Cracow
- 174 credible, credulous, creditworthy
- 175 crescendo
- 176 credit rating
- 177 Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease
- 178 cripple, crippled
- 179 crisis, crises
- 180 crisscross

- 181 criterion, plural criteria.
- 182 crop year
- 183 cross country
- 184 cross-examine, cross-examined
- 185 cross fire
- 186 cross section
- 187 crown currency
- 188 crowd estimates
- 189 crucial
- 190 cruise missile
- 191 crunch
- 192 cupful, cupfuls
- 193 current account
- 194 currently
- 195 curriculum vitae
- 196 cutback
- 197 cut off, cutoff
- 198 czar
- 199 Czech Republic

## **Cabinet**

Capitalise when referring to a grouping of senior government ministers, heads of department or presidential advisers.

## **cactus, cactuses**

## **caddy**

Not caddie

## **Caesarean section**

## **cafe**

No accent.

## **caffeine**

## **calibre, but American style is caliber**

**Calcutta**

Use Kolkata

**call up, call-up**

Two words for the verb, one for the noun and adjective.

**camaraderie****Cambodia**

Use this official name rather than the Khmer-Rouge-era Kampuchea unless directly quoting. Full names should be used at all references except in the case of royalty.

**Cameroon**

Not Cameroun or the Cameroons, West Africa.

**Camilla Parker Bowles**

No hyphen.

**can**

May is about asking permission and can is about the ability to act. If we may borrow your car we can drive to the beach. May can also be about uncertainty. War may start tomorrow, or may not. War can start tomorrow because all the weapons are in place.

**Canada goose**

Not Canadian.

**cancer**

See medical stories on the need for caution in handling stories about reputed cures for cancer.

**cancel, cancelled, cancellation**

Events that are called off but will be held later are postponed. Report the new date if possible. Only those events scrapped completely are cancelled. American style uses cancel, canceled, canceling but cancellation.

**cannon, canon**

A cannon is a weapon (same singular and plural), a canon is a law or church dignitary.

**canvas, canvass**

Paint on canvas but canvass for votes.

**capable, capability**

Use with restraint. Write that an aircraft can carry 300 passengers not The aircraft is capable of carrying 300 passengers. The United States can launch... not The United States has the capability to launch.

**capital, capitol**

Capital for all uses, apart from capitol for the building where Congress or state legislatures meet, usually capitalised. Capitalisation

**capital account**

An account in the balance of payments that records movements of capital between domestic and foreign residents. The capital account records changes in the asset and liability position of domestic residents. It covers flows such as loans and investments. See also current account, balance of payments.

**capital-raising**

Hyphenated.

**Capitalisation. American style is capitalization**

Putting the first letter of a word in capitals makes it limited and specific, e.g. He was a Communist with conservative instincts.

**Abbreviations** normally follow the capitalisation of the unabbreviated form. e.g. North American Treaty Organisation, NATO, miles per hour, mph, Western European Union, WEU. See also abbreviations.

**Academic, aristocratic, corporate, official, military and religious titles:** Capitalise when they immediately precede a personal name, otherwise use lower case, e.g. Professor John Smith, Admiral Horatio Nelson but the history professor, the admiral. Capitalise titles such as Ruritanian President Tamsin Noble or Global Corp. Chief Executive Jane Dimitriou. See also aristocratic titles and nobility.

**Acronyms** are words formed from the initial letters or syllables of other words, e.g. radar radio detection and ranging. When an acronym is made up of initial letters that are themselves capitalised, then capitalise each letter, e.g. NATO for the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. But if the acronym is formed from initial syllables rather than letters, then capitalise only the first letter. In general avoid acronyms as much as possible.

**Armed forces:** capitalise such specific names as U.S. Marine Corps, Royal Air Force, the Canadian Forces and the (German) Bundeswehr and Luftwaffe. Use lower case when referring generically to the various armed services in cases where nations do not use the word as a proper noun e.g. the French army, the Indonesian navy, the Brazilian air force.

**Astronomical:** Capitalise the names of heavenly bodies such as Betelgeuse, the Great Bear and Jupiter, but not the sun, moon, and earth (except in a phrase such as Mother Earth or Planet Earth or when listing Earth among the planets).

**Drugs:** Capitalise Ecstasy and the names of other synthetic drugs.

**Geographical and geological names:** Capitalise these, apart from particles, articles, and compass references not forming part of the proper name, e.g. the River Plate but the river; North Korea but north London; the Nile Delta but the delta of the Nile, the Upper Pleistocene, the Lower East Side of New York but the lower east bank of the river. However, the Bermuda Triangle, the Triangle.

**Geopolitical:** capitalise nouns and adjectives with a geographic origin but used politically, such as Western influence, the North-South divide, the West, Eastern Europe, Southeast Asia.

**Government ministers:** Capitalise the title when it immediately precedes the person's name. When the title follows the name or is used alone, use lower case, e.g.: French Foreign Minister Jean Blanc; Jean Blanc, the French foreign minister, the foreign minister, President George Bush but The president said: I would like to welcome the Manchukistan prime minister, Stefan Hartzjand.

**Government bodies:** treat government bodies as proper names and capitalise them when they are an integral part of a specific name but not when unspecific as in plurals or standing alone, e.g. the Israeli Foreign Ministry or The Foreign Ministry said Israel would... But The ministry added; the Australian Parliament but the Australian and New Zealand parliaments.

**Hyphenated titles:** When a hyphenated title is capitalised, capitalise both parts, e.g. Lieutenant-General John Smith, Vice-Admiral Tom Brown, Secretary-General Juan Blanco.

**Legislative bodies:** Capitalise the official names of legislative bodies such as Parliament, Senate, the Diet at all references. The one exception is when they are used in the plural: The Norwegian and Danish parliaments.

**Nationality and race:** Capitalise words denominating nationality race or language -- Arab, African, Argentine, Caucasian, Chinese, Finnish.

**Nicknames:** Treat them as proper names when they refer to a specific person or thing, e.g. the Iron Lady; Silvio Berlusconi, nicknamed *Cavaliere* (Knight); the Australian rugby team, the Wallabies.

**Occupations:** Do not capitalise words that informally describe a person's occupation e.g. farmer Jack Thomas, accountant William Smith.

**Politics:** Capitalise the names of political parties and of movements with a specific doctrine, e.g. a Communist official, a Democratic senator. Use lower case for non-specific references, e.g. The communist part of the former Soviet Bloc, but the Communist Party of what was then East Germany; the settlement was run on communist principles; he proposed a democratic vote.

**Proper names:** Common nouns that normally have no initial capital are capitalised when they are an integral part of the full name of a person, organisation or thing, e.g. Queen Elizabeth, the Sultan of Brunei, President Hosni Mubarak, General John Smith, Senator Jack Brown, the River Thames, Christian Democratic Party, the Church Assembly. These nouns are normally lower case if they stand alone or in the plural e.g. the queen, the Malaysian sultan, down the river, Christian Democratic parties. But former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, former Managing Director John Brown. Do not risk ambiguity, e.g. The Speaker told the House of Commons. Retain the capital also when the person remains specific because there is only one or because he or she is preeminent, e.g. the Dalai Lama, the Pontiff, the Pope, the Virgin Mary.

**Proper nouns:** Capitalise words that uniquely identify a particular person or thing, e.g. John Smith, General Motors, Mount Everest, the Sixteenth Century as a noun but 16th-century art, the 1st Infantry Division, the 7th Fleet. Exceptions here are for articles and particles used as auxiliaries in names like Robert the Bruce, Charles de Gaulle. Keep the capital on words that still derive their meaning from a proper noun, e.g. Americanise, Christian, Marxist, Shakespearian, Stalinist. Do not keep it when the connection with the proper noun is remote, e.g. arabic numerals, boycott, chauvinistic, french polish, herculean, pasteurise.

**Publications:** No quotation marks around the title. Whatever the masthead says, do not capitalise articles and particles in the names of English-language newspapers and magazines, e.g. the New York Times, the News of the World. The names of some non-English language newspapers begin with a word meaning the. In such cases write the newspaper O Globo/Le Monde/Die Welt not the O Globo/Le Monde/Die Welt newspaper

**Books, films, plays, poems, operas, songs and works of art:** capitalise every word in the title apart from conjunctions, articles, particles and short prepositions, e.g. The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich, The Merchant of Venice, Gone with the Wind. The same is true of radio and television programmes other than news and current affairs, e.g. American Idol but Meet the Press.

**Quotes:** A statement that follows a colon quote begins with a capital, e.g. Guzhenko said: The conference has ignored the principle of equality.

**Religion:** Names of divinities are capitalised but unspecific plurals are lower case, e.g. Allah, the Almighty, Christ, God, Jehovah, the Deity, the Holy Trinity, but the gods, the lords of the universe. Capitalise religious titles when they immediately precede a personal name, otherwise use lower case, e.g. Bishop Thaddeus Smith, Dean Robert Jones, but the bishop, the dean. Use only the

simplest and best-known titles at first reference, e.g. the Rev. Jesse Jackson, Dr John Smith rather than the Right Rev. John Smith. Capitalise names of denominations and religious movements, e.g. Baptist, Buddhist, Christian, Church of England, Islamic, Jew, Jewish, Muslim, Orthodox. But non-denominational references are lower case, e.g. adult baptism, orthodox beliefs, built a temple. The pope is head of the Roman Catholic Church or of the Church (that is, the whole body of Roman Catholics) but he would celebrate mass in a Roman Catholic church (that is, a building). A baptist is someone who baptises. A Baptist is a member of the Protestant denomination. With more than 20 separate Baptist church groups in the United States, it is incorrect to refer to the Baptist Church as a singular entity. The correct reference would be to Baptist Churches or to the specific Baptist group involved, e.g. the Southern Baptist Convention. See religious terms

**Sentences:** The first word of a sentence is always capitalised, unless it is contained within brackets as part of another sentence (this is an example). **Sports:** Treat specific events as proper names, general references as common nouns, e.g. the Olympic Games, the Belgian Grand Prix, but an athletics meeting, a motor racing championship.

**Software:** Capitalise, without quotation marks, e.g. Windows, Internet Explorer. Use quotation marks for computer games, e.g. Bust a Move: Dance Summit .

**Sports events:** Use lower case for sport names, junior, men's, women's, championship, tournament, meeting, match, test, race, game etc. Use upper case for title of the event e.g. French Open tennis championships, Dutch Open golf tournament.

**Transport:** Names of aircraft, cars, railway trains and ships, are capitalised, e.g. the Cutty Sark, USS Forrestal, a Nimrod, a Ford Mondeo, the Orient Express.

## capsize

## carat, caret

Carat is a measurement of weight in precious stones and of purity in gold. Caret is a proofreader's mark to show an insertion of something missing. In American style, karat is the measurement of gold purity.

## carcass

## careen, career

You careen a ship by turning it on its side to clean the hull. It can be used to mean keeling over. To career is to move rapidly.

## cargo and cargoes



**carrier**

Use only in reference to aircraft carriers, i.e. ships from which fixed-wing aircraft can take off. Helicopter carriers should be referred to by the full name.

**carry out**

A weak synonym for do. Use a stronger verb to describe the action.

**casino**

casinos.

**castor**

For all uses the wheel on a furniture leg, a beaver, bean or oil. in American style, caster is a wheel on a furniture leg but castor is a beaver or a bean or oil.

**catalogue, catalogued, catalogue, cataloguing, but in American style  
catalog, cataloged, cataloger, cataloging****Catch-22**

Capitalised and hyphenated. An absurd no-win situation. From the title of the Joseph Heller novel. Now a cliché; use with restraint.

**cave in, cave-in**

Two words for verb. One word for noun.

**caution**

As a verb prefer warn. Do not write, for instance, He cautioned that war was imminent.

**Cawnpore**

Use Kanpur, India.

**CD-ROM****ceasefire, ceasefires**

One word as a noun. The verb is to cease fire.

**celebrant, celebrator**

A celebrant takes part in a religious ceremony and a celebrator takes part in a revel.

**celibacy, chastity**

Celibacy is unmarried, particularly under the force of a vow. Chastity is sexual purity or virginity. You can be chaste but not celibate, and celibate but not chaste.

**cellphone**

One word.

**cement, concrete**

Cement is just one constituent of concrete. Use concrete block, not cement block.

**cemetery****cello, cellos****censer, censor, censure**

A censer is used to burn incense. A censor removes offensive content . Censure is disapproval.

**centre, but center in American style**

Watch for use in proper names.

**Centigrade**

Use Celsius.

**cents**

Spell out U.S. cents in text.

**centimetre**

Abbreviation cm (no full stop, same singular and plural), acceptable at all references. To convert to inches roughly multiply by two and divide by five, precisely multiply by 0.394.

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

U.S. Public Health Service national agencies based in Atlanta. Note the plural. Not Centres.

**centre on**

You centre on something, not around it. You circle around something.

**centuries**

Spell out numbers one to nine, write 10 and above in figures -- ninth century, 20th century (no capital letter)

**CEO**

Use chief executive officer on first reference.

**Ceylon**

Use Sri Lanka.

**chairman, chairwoman**

not chair.

## **Champions League**

Capitalised and no apostrophe.

## **changeable channel and channelled.**

## **charisma**

A tired and worn out word. Avoid. Very few people have a divinely conferred gift or influence over large numbers of people.

## **chat room**

Two words.

## **chat show**

Two words, no hyphen.

## **cheap, low**

Prices are low not cheap.

## **check, cheque, chequebook**

A restaurant bill is a check, a money order a cheque. In American style, check is used for both.

## **Chennai**

Not Madras.

## **chequered flag, but American style is checkered flag**

## **cherry pick**

To select carefully. A cliché.

## **child criminals**

In many countries it is illegal to identify a defendant under the age of 18. Use sensitivity and be guided by local legal rules.

## **children s**

The possessive is children s, similar to men s and women s.

## **Chinese names**

Use the Pinyin transliteration of Chinese names from China. Thus Guangdong (not Canton), Beijing (not Peking), Mao Zedong (not Mao Tsetung), Zhou Enlai (not Chou Enlai). However, where there are traditional alternatives that are not Chinese e.g., Kashgar, Khotan, Tibet (and its cities of Lhasa and Shigatse), Urumqi, use these. Mainland Chinese do not hyphenate the given name, e.g. Deng Xiaoping. Taiwan Chinese do, with the second part in lower case, e.g. Chiang Kai-shek. In both cases use only the surname at second reference, e.g. Deng, Chiang.

## **chips**

Use french fries unambiguous and universally understood (except for fish and chips).

## **Christ**

Write Jesus Christ or Jesus on first reference and usually Jesus thereafter. Use Christ on second reference only in the context of Christian theology, i.e. in phrases such as "body and blood of Christ" that are clearly taken from Christian beliefs. See Jesus Christ

## **Christie s**

With an apostrophe.

## **chronic**

Acute is coming to a crisis, chronic is lasting a long time or deep-seated. Be specific when writing about disease or problems.

## **Church of Christ, Scientist**

## **Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints**

Use Mormon church unless the story is specifically about the Church's affairs.

## **CIA**

The United States Central Intelligence Agency. The initials may be used alone as an adjective in a lead paragraph if it is clear from the context what is meant.

## **circle, centre**

You circle around something but centre on something.

## **city-state**

hyphenated

## **civil society**

A vague term, not interchangeable with non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The OECD defines it thus: "The multitude of associations around which society voluntarily organizes itself and which represent a wide range of interests and ties. These can include community-based organisations, indigenous peoples' organisations and non-government organisations."

## **claimed**

Use of this word suggests the writer does not believe the statement in question. Prefer plain said. It is acceptable to say that a guerrilla organisation claimed responsibility for carrying out an attack. Do not say that it claimed credit.

## **clamour, clamouring, clamorous, but American style is clamor, clamoring, clamorous**

## **claycourt**

one word as an adjective, e.g. claycourt tournament, but two words as an adjective and noun, e.g. clay courts at the stadium.

## clean up

The verb is clean up, the noun and adjective cleanup.

## clear-cut

Adjective.

## cliches

Avoid metaphors, similes, or other figures of speech that appear frequently in print. If it sounds too familiar then discard it.

**In diplomacy and politics:** face-to-face talks, on key issues, top-level meeting, headed into talks on, spearheaded a major initiative, rubber-stamp parliament, lashed out, landmark agreement.

**In disasters:** mercy mission, airlifted/rushed to hospital, giant C-130 transports, massive aid, an air and sea search was under way, disaster probe, sifted through the wreckage.

**Of violence:** lone gunman, strife-torn province, embattled city, baton-wielding police, stone-throwing demonstrators, steel-helmeted troops braced themselves for, police swoop, pre-dawn raid, staged an attack on, (tautologically) anti-government rebels, (tautologically) armed soldiers. Avoid armed police unless writing about a country where the police are normally unarmed. Then explain.

**Of industrial trouble:** top union leaders, bosses, in a bid to settle, hammer out an agreement.

## click here

Do not use on websites. Tell readers where they are going.

## climb up

In almost all cases just climb will do.

## close proximity

Replace with close to or near.

## coastguard

One word except when referring to the U.S. Coast Guard.

**coastline**

One word.

**confectionery**

Collective noun meaning sweetmeats, candy. Confectionary is one sweetmeat.

**cognoscente**

singular. Plural is cognoscenti. Prefer connoisseur and connoisseurs. They possess not just knowledge, but critical knowledge of a subject.

**Cold War**

Capitalise.

**collapsible****collectibles****collective nouns**

Most collective nouns and names of countries, governments, organisations and companies are followed by singular verbs and singular neuter pronouns, e.g. The government, which is studying the problem said it... not The government, who are studying the problem, said they.. Exceptions are the police (police are), the couple (the couple are) and Reuters sports stories, where teams take plural verbs and pronouns.

**collision**

Beware of the legal danger of imputing blame in a collision but avoid clumsy phraseology such as The Danish freighter was in collision with the German tanker. Better to write The Danish freighter and the German tanker collided. Only two moving objects can collide. It is wrong therefore to write The ferry collided with the jetty. Plain hit is enough.

**colloquial contractions**

Use contractions such as isn't, aren't, can't only in quotes or an informal context. Do not write President Brown can't make up his mind whether to raise taxes or cut government spending. But



you could write For Georgia peanut farmer Fred Jenkins it isn't a question of whether, but when, he will go bankrupt. Use ain't only when quoting someone.

## **collusion, collaboration**

Collusion is to act together to deceive. Do not use it when you mean collaboration or cooperation.

## **Colombia, Columbia**

Colombia is the country, but Columbia Records.

## **colour, but American style color**

There is no conflict between the need for impartiality and concise writing and the need in many stories for colour, description and atmosphere. Correspondents filing witness reports should think visual and write copy that reflects that they have been on the scene of an event rather than picked up the information at second hand. If writing a story from the office they should not hesitate to take descriptive from television ensuring that they distinguish clearly between what television shows (which need not be sourced if the facts are indisputable) and what a television commentator says.

The first person should not normally intrude into Reuters copy. If you have to source a contentious statement based on direct observation write & This correspondent saw & Vivid quotes and lively background details breathe life into a dry story and should be woven in, not inserted in slabs. Colourful stories do not need gaudy adjectives or overdramatic verbs. They require a fresh vision, selection of the right noun to convey a shade of meaning, and vigorous, active verbs.

## **coloured**

Use for people only in the context of South Africa for a person of mixed race. The story should make this clear. Lower case. See section on race

## **combat, but combated is the American usage as a verb.**

## **comedian**

Use for a man or a woman. Not comedienne.

## **commander-in-chief, but in American style commander in chief**

There are no hyphens in U.S. titles.

## **commando, commandos**

### **commas**

Any sentence studded with commas could probably benefit from a rewrite. Use commas as a guide to sense, to break a sentence into logically discrete parts, but do not use them to the extent that they break the flow of a sentence.

Use commas to mark off words and phrases that are in apposition to, or define other words or phrases in the sentence e.g. Herve de Charette, French foreign minister, said ... Rudolf Nureyev, most prominent of the defectors from the Bolshoi, has danced &

Use commas to mark off a clause that is not essential to the meaning of a sentence, e.g. The airliner, which was seven years old, crashed ... But a clause that cannot be removed from the sentence without affecting its meaning is not marked off by commas, e.g. The airliner that crashed on Thursday was seven years old but the plane lost the previous day was brand new.

Use commas to separate items in a list, e.g. cheese, fruit, wine and coffee or Smith despised ballet, hated the theatre and was bored by opera. Note that there is normally no comma before the final and. However, a comma should be used in this position if to leave it out would risk ambiguity, e.g. He admired Irving Berlin, Rodgers and Hart, and Leonard Bernstein.

As in the sentence above, a comma follows an initial however. But as long as there is no risk of ambiguity there is no need for the comma after opening phrases like On Wednesday the committee decided ... In the first four months of 2002 Britain exported ...

### **commence**

Use begin or start.

### **comment**

A short-term debt issued by companies for working capital, typically with 90 days duration

### **commercial paper**

Journalists should not comment but interpret events by reporting the action of others.

### **commit**

Past tense committed, noun commitment.

## **committee**

## **communiqué**

A communiqué is an official announcement. It is tautological to write an official communiqué. Plain statement is usually better.

## **communist**

Lower case except when referring to a specific party e.g. Communist Party of Great Britain.

## **Comoro Islands**

Or simply the Comoros for the Indian Ocean group.

## **company names**

When writing about a company, provide the full legal company name (including Inc, Ltd, Plc etc) at first reference. Where this would be clumsy, e.g. if several companies are named together in a lead paragraph, the full legal name can be given at second reference. Give the name in its original language if that language uses Latin characters unless the company has a preference for its English name.

Many companies in the same group have similar names. It is only by giving the full names that a specialist can distinguish between them. When giving the company's full name observe the spelling, capitalisation and punctuation used by the company, apostrophes, hyphens and slashes (e.g. A/S), but use standard abbreviations to indicate what type of company. Don't use a point (full stop) after the abbreviation eg. Inc not Inc. and Ltd not Ltd. Use the name that the company itself uses. The exception is companies that render their names all in capitals, in which case we make it upper/lower (CIGNA Corp becomes Cigna Corp).

Eliminate exclamation points from company names, such as Yahoo! and Yum!.

Keep lower case in company names except at the start of a sentence, where eBay becomes Ebay.

Do not use the colloquial practice of pluralising company names. It is Ford not Fords; Rothschild not Rothschilds. Similarly do not pluralise the pronouns. Companies are singular, not plural. It is Siemens said its plant... not ...their plant...

The following abbreviations show the kind of registered company. When such abbreviations come at the end of a company name they are not preceded by a comma.

**AB**

Aktiebolaget

**AG**

Aktiengesellschaft

**A/S**

Aktieselskabet

**Cie**

Compagnie

**Co**

Company

**Cos**

Companies

**Corp**

Corporation

**GmbH**

Gesellschaft mit beschaenkter Haftung

**Inc**

Incorporated

**KK**

Kabushiki Kaisha (joint stock company)

**Ltd**

Limited

**Plc**

Public limited company

**Pty**

Proprietary

**SpA**

Societa per Azioni

**YK**

Yugen Kaisha (Ltd.)

## **company titles**

Capitalise corporate titles, e.g. Company Chairman John Smith, not Company chairman John Smith.

## **compare**

When in doubt use compare with, which is used for a comparison to highlight either differences or similarities. Compare to is used when simply stating that two things are similar, e.g. His playing compares to that of Mozart. See contrast.

## **comparisons**

Compare like with like. It is wrong to write The food shortage was not as bad as near-famine years or the weapon's range was twice as great as the Kalashnikov. You cannot compare a shortage with years or a distance with a weapon. Write The food shortage was not so bad as that in the near-famine years or The weapon's range was twice as great as the Kalashnikov's. Special care is needed with statistical comparisons. One month may not be comparable with another because of its length or the number of national holidays it contains. December figures for one country may not be comparable with another's because the countries are in different hemispheres.

## **comparatively**

Only use the word if you are actually comparing something with another thing. Even in those cases you can leave it out and directly say something is bigger than, or smaller than. Do not use comparatively small to

## **compass points**

Capitalise compass points only when they form part of a proper name – North Korea, but north London; the Lower East Side of New York, but the lower east bank of the river. Omit hyphens in the four basic compounds northwest, northeast, southwest, southeast. Use a hyphen in the minor compounds such as north-northeast. You do not write northern Connecticut or southern Kent when you mean to say that Connecticut is a northern state or Kent a southern county. So do not say northern Chiang Mai or eastern Kivu province. It is the northern town of Chiang Mai or the eastern province of Kivu.

## **compatible**

## **compatriot**

But expatriate, not expatriot.

## **complacent, complaisant**

Complacent is smug and self-satisfied. Complaisant is willing and affable.

## **complement, compliment**

To complement is to complete or to provide a matching component to something, e.g. The British submarines complemented the U.S. surface ships. To compliment is to praise.

## **comprise**

Use only when listing all the component parts of a whole: Benelux comprises Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. Do not write comprised of. If listing only some components use include: The European Union includes Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

## **compound**

If you mean to make worse, say so.

**compound adjectives**

Require hyphens, e.g. the first-leg score. If an adverb and an adjective are used together in an adjectival phrase then there is no hyphen e.g. a closely followed competition.

**compunction**

Use pity or remorse in preference. Do not confuse with compulsion.

**concerning**

Prefer about.

**confectionery****confidant (male), confidante (female)****confrontation**

Modish but vague word. Use more specific terms if possible, e.g. war, clash, dispute.

**Congo**

Distinguish between the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), formerly Zaire, and the neighbouring Congo Republic. In most stories, only one Congo is involved so subsequent references can be made simply to Congo or Congolese. In stories about the Democratic Republic of Congo, the acronym DRC may be used in brackets at first mention, and stand alone at later references.

**Congress, congressional**

Capitalise Congress when it is part of the name of an official body. Keep congressional lower case unless it is part of the formal title of an official body.

**connote, denote**

Connote is to imply attributes. Marriage connotes short-term bliss. Denote is to indicate or mark by a sign. A wedding ring denoted his married status. Both words are probably best avoided.

**-conscious**

Hyphenated as in self-conscious, but unconsciousness

**consensus**

General consensus is tautological, as is consensus of opinion because consensus means either unanimity or a general trend of opinion.

**consequence**

Use because rather than as a consequence of.

**conservative**

Lower case unless referring to a specific political organisation.

**considerable**

Avoid. Define by size; show the reader why something is considerable.

**consortium, consortiums, not consortia.****consul-general**

Note hyphen. Likewise consulate-general.

**consult, not consult with.****consumer price index**

The CPI is a measure of retail price inflation. Also known as a retail price index. Usually given as percentage rise or fall in the index.

**contagious, not contagious.**



**contango**

A state of affairs where futures prices are progressively higher the further the maturity date is from spot. Contango is the normal relationship between spot and futures prices and is the opposite of backwardation. See Also backwardation.

**contemptible, contemptuous**

Contemptible is despicable and contemptuous is haughty or scornful. The contemptuous scorn the contemptible.

**continue**

Avoid in lead paragraphs. There is always more lively phrasing available.

**continual, continuous**

Continual means frequent and repeated, continuous means uninterrupted.

**contractions**

Avoid contractions such as isn't, won't, wasn't, can't except in direct quotations. Spell out the phrase in full, is not, will not etc.

**contrast**

Use contrast to for comparisons of dissimilar things, or to underline the difference. His scowl contrasted to her smile. Use contrast with when you want to compare the differences of two similar things. He contrasted the performance of the England cricket team with that of Australia. See compare.

**control, controlled, controlling****controversial**

Avoid. Spell out what is controversial and let the reader decide.

**conurbation**

Not a synonym for an urban area. It means an aggregation of towns, like the New York-Boston or Tokyo-Osaka corridors.

## **convener**

## **conversions**

Convert currencies into U.S. dollars and turn imperial weights and measures into metric equivalents and vice versa. Give the local unit in the country of origin first and then the conversion in brackets. Never give the dollar equivalent without first giving the local currency figure. If a figure for speed, distance, weight, etc., is approximate, the conversion should also be approximate. Write a 2,000-lb (900-kg) bomb not a 2,000-lb (907-kg) bomb. Do not give a conversion to more decimal places than are given in the original figure. When abbreviating metric units use the singular form without a full stop, e.g. kg or km not kgs or kms. If no specific figure is being given, do not go through the motions of converting. Write, for instance, The bomb exploded only yards from the palace entrance not The bomb exploded only yards (metres) from the palace entrance. Conversions are a fertile source of error. Double-check them all. If you make a conversion precisely using a calculator, make a rough backward check to make sure that you have not added or lost a zero.

## **conversions in sports writing**

Use only metric measurements, except for golf where yards and feet are used, and sailing where nautical miles are used. In sports writing there is no need to add conversions in brackets, apart from currencies.

## **conveyor**

Use for conveyor belt and for a person who conveys.

## **convince, persuade**

You convince people of something and persuade them to do something. You do not convince someone to do something.

## **cooperate, cooperation**

An exception to the rule that prefixes are usually hyphenated when the same vowel ends the prefix and starts the main word. But co-op (stores) to distinguish from chicken coop.

**coordinate, coordination**

An exception to the prefix hyphenation rules.

**copter**

Use helicopter.

**co-respondent, correspondent**

A co-respondent appears in a divorce case. A correspondent writes letters.

**corporate America**

Not Corporate America.

**council, councillor**

Not councilor, councilman, councilwoman, but American style is counsel, counseling, counselor.

**Court of St. James s**

The place to which ambassadors are posted in Great Britain. It is St. not St and James s not James Palace.

**court-martial**

courts-martial, to court-martial

**courtesy titles**

Do not use courtesy titles such as Mr, Mrs, Ms or Miss or their foreign equivalents. An exception would be in a story about two people with the same family name when we might refer for instance to Mr Smith and Mrs Smith to avoid confusion. Use at first reference only titles of nobility and military, medical and religious titles, e.g. Lord Ferrars, Dr Christiaan Barnard, the Rev. Jesse Jackson. Except for obvious cases e.g. a king or queen, avoid foreign honorifics; it is difficult to be consistent through various cultures. In general it is better to describe people by their job title or position.

**cover up, coverup**

Two words for verb, one word for noun.

**CPI**

Consumer price index. The CPI is a measure of retail price inflation. Also known as a retail price index. Usually given as percentage rise or fall in the index. In the UK, the main domestic measure of inflation for macroeconomic purposes and equal to HICP.

**Cracow**

Use Krakow, Poland.

**credible, credulous, creditworthy**

If you are credible you can be believed. If you are credulous you will believe anything. If you are creditworthy you are likely to get a loan.

**crescendo**

A gradual increase in loudness. It is wrong to write that something reached a crescendo, which is a probable confusion with reached a climax.

**credit rating**

Credit ratings measure a borrower's creditworthiness and provide an international framework for comparing the credit quality of issuers and rated debt securities. Rating provided by agencies including Moody's and Standard and Poor's and Fitch. See also credit rating, [www.moody.com](http://www.moody.com), [www2.standardandpoors.com](http://www2.standardandpoors.com), [www.fitchratings.com](http://www.fitchratings.com), Moody's, Standard & Poor's

**Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease**

Can be abbreviated to CJD, but needs explanation. There is also variant CJD. Abbreviate to vCJD.

**cripple, crippled**

Avoid using to describe the handicapped.

**crisis, crises**

Try to avoid. It means a turning point or the stage in events at which the trend of all future events is determined. Very overused. A crisis cannot grow or deepen. It just is.

**crisscross**

One word.

**criterion, plural criteria.****crop year**

Take care with crop-year dates because the old crop can be harvested and the new crop planted in the same year. To refer to the 2002 crop can be ambiguous. Commodity producers sometimes have marketing years for produce which differ from the crop year. In such cases spell out which year is referred to and when each starts and ends.

**cross country**

Two words, no hyphen, for the athletics event.

**cross-examine, cross-examined**

Hyphenated.

**cross fire**

Two words.

**cross section**

Two words.

**crown currency**

Use this for the Nordic currencies, not kroner, kronor or kronur.

**crowd estimates**

If the number of people involved in an event such as a demonstration or strike is at all controversial, give the source for the number quoted.

**crucial**

A cliché best avoided. Try instead to show the reader why something is crucial and to whom.

**cruise missile**

Lower case.

**crunch**

A tired cliché. Avoid.

**cupful, cupfuls****current account**

A country's current account balance is the sum of the visible trade balance (exports and imports that can be seen) and the invisible balance (credits and debits for services of one kind or another, such as tourism, banking and insurance). It excludes flows produced by long-term borrowings or investment, which are counted in the capital account. See also balance of payments.

**currently**

Unless comparing the present with the past, the word is usually redundant, as in The United States currently has 20,000 troops in Ruritania. Cut it out.

**curriculum vitae**

Singular. Plural is curricula vitae

**cutback**

Use cut for both verb and noun.

## **cut off, cutoff**

The verb is cut off, the noun is cutoff.

## **czar**

Use tsar.

## **Czech Republic**

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

# D

## Contents

- 1 dachshund
- 2 Daimler-Benz
- 3 dais, lectern, podium, pulpit, rostrum
- 4 Dalai Lama
- 5 dashes
- 6 data
- 7 database
- 8 dates
- 9 daughter-in-law, daughters-in-law
- 10 daylight-saving time
- 11 days of the week
- 12 day to day
- 13 D-Day
- 14 DEA
- 15 deaf
- 16 deathbed
- 17 death toll
- 18 decades
- 19 decided, decisive
- 20 decimals
- 21 decimate
- 22 defeat
- 23 defence, but American style is defense
- 24 defendant
- 25 definite, definitive
- 26 definitely
- 27 defunct
- 28 defuse, diffuse
- 29 degree-day
- 30 deletion
- 31 delight
- 32 demagogue
- 33 demise
- 34 demolished, destroyed
- 35 demonstrator
- 36 denials
- 37 denote, connote
- 38 dependant, dependent
- 39 deprecate
- 40 depreciation
- 41 depression
- 42 depths
- 43 de rigueur
- 44 desiccate
- 45 despatch
- 46 desperate



- 47 despite the fact that
- 48 detente
- 49 designate
- 50 devaluation
- 51 device, devise
- 52 dexterous
- 53 diagnosis, prognosis
- 54 diarrhoea, but diarrhea in American style
- 55 dictator
- 56 dictionary
- 57 die-hard
- 58 dietitian
- 59 differ from, differ with
- 60 different
- 61 from, different to
- 62 diffuse, defuse
- 63 dike
- 64 dilapidated
- 65 dilemma
- 66 diphtheria
- 67 disabled people
- 68 disassemble, dissemble
- 69 disassociate
- 70 disaster
- 71 disc, disk
- 72 discernible
- 73 discomfit, discomfort
- 74 discount rate
- 75 discover
- 76 discreet, discrete
- 77 discriminatory language
- 78 diseases
- 79 disinterested, uninterested
- 80 disorientate
- 81 dispatch
- 82 dispel
- 83 dispensable
- 84 disposal, disposition
- 85 distances
- 86 distinct, distinctive
- 87 district attorney
- 88 DJIA or the Dow
- 89 dive, dived
- 90 divorcee
- 91 Dnestr
- 92 doctor
- 93 DOD
- 94 dollar sign
- 95 domino, dominoes
- 96 do's and don'ts

- 97 double
- 98 doughnut
- 99 douse, dowse
- 100 downhill
- 101 downpayment
- 102 downplay
- 103 Down s syndrome
- 104 downtown
- 105 draft, draught
- 106 dramatic
- 107 driving licence, but American style driver's license
- 108 drop out, dropout
- 109 drop shot
- 110 drown
- 111 drunk, drunken
- 112 Druze
- 113 dual, duel
- 114 dual listing
- 115 due
- 116 due process
- 117 Duesseldorf, Germany
- 118 duffel
- 119 dumb
- 120 Dunkirk
- 121 dwarf, dwarfs
- 122 dyeing, dying
- 123 dyke
- 124 dynamo, dynamos
- 125 dysentery

## **dachshund**

## **Daimler-Benz**

Note hyphen.

## **dais, lectern, podium, pulpit, rostrum**

A speaker stands behind a lectern (a stand for notes) on a podium and in a pulpit. Several speakers can fit on a dais or rostrum or platform.

## **Dalai Lama**

Tibet s most revered spiritual leader, seen by Tibetans as the reincarnation of a long line of Buddhist god-kings. The Panchen Lama is the second highest figure in Tibet s spiritual hierarchy.

## **dashes**

Use dashes sparingly, never to set off relative clauses in a sentence. For the sake of clarity, dashes should be double ( ) and hyphens single (-). A single dash may be used as a separator in alerts and headlines where space is tight, but not in text. Dashes are followed by lower case unless they are used to label sections of a list: The study concluded: Four out of five people said they preferred watching television to playing sport Only one in 10 respondents had played sport in the past month Six out of 10 had watched sport on television in the past month

## **data**

Strictly a plural noun, but treat as if it were singular, e.g. The data was corrupted.

## **database**

One word.

## **dates**

Use the sequence month/day/year, e.g. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on Aug. 2., 1990, led to... or the August 2 invasion or the August 1990 invasion. If a specific date is used, put the year inside commas. Spell out months in text but abbreviate them followed by a full stop when they are used with a specific date Jan.1, Feb. 14, Aug. 5, Sept. 11, Oct. 24, Nov. 5, Dec. 25.

In datelines, use Jan Feb March April May June July Aug Sept Oct Nov Dec with no full stop. If you need to abbreviate for a table use the first three letters of each month: Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec. There is no full stop. When spelling out duration, write the tournament runs from May 22 to 24 not runs from May 22-24. Write arrived on Monday not arrived Monday and on Tuesday, on Wednesday, on Thursday rather than yesterday, today, tomorrow. An exception is made for copy in the Americas, where because of subscriber preferences our style is to drop the on before days of the week. Write the 1939-45 war but from 1939 to 1945 not from 1939-45. Similarly between 1939 and 1945 and not between 1939-45. Write 9/11, not 9-11.

## **daughter-in-law, daughters-in-law**

## **daylight-saving time**

## **days of the week**

Capitalise them and do not abbreviate. If necessary in tabulation abbreviate without a full stop: Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri, Sat, Sun

**day to day**

Hyphenate if used as an adjective. We live from day to day and find our food on a day-to-day basis.

**D-Day**

Allies' invasion of France, June 6, 1944.

**DEA**

Drug Enforcement Administration (U.S.).

**deaf**

Describe people as deaf only if they are totally without hearing. Otherwise write that their hearing is impaired or that they have only partial hearing. Never use deaf and dumb. See [stereotypes and value judgments](#)

**deathbed**

Both noun and adjective.

**death toll**

Two words.

**decades**

1960s not 1960 s. The early forties, sixties, seventies.

**decided, decisive**

If you have decided views which are clear and resolute it is easier to make a decision and be decisive.

**decimals**

Figures are normally rounded to two significant decimals, with halves rounded upwards. Thus 15.564 becomes 15.56, while 15.565 becomes 15.57.

**decimate**

Literally to reduce by one-tenth, loosely to reduce very heavily. Not, however, to virtually wipe out.

**defeat**

You are defeated by something not to something. Do not write West Bromwich Albion's defeat to Wolverhampton Wanderers.

**defence, but American style is defense****defendant****definite, definitive**

Definite means fixed, exact or clear. Definitive conveys elements of limiting or final. The board made a definite decision about its definitive offer.

**definitely**

Usually adds little as either an adverb or an adjective. Avoid.

**defunct**

No need to use, now defunct.

**defuse, diffuse**

To defuse is to make something harmless, to diffuse is to disperse.

**degree-day**

A measurement used in the consumption and trading of energy. It is a difference of one degree for one day compared with a standard average temperature for that day.

**deletion**

Indicate the omission of words from a quoted passage by using three full stops with a space before and after (also known as ellipsis), e.g. 'We will fight ... and we will win.' The word after the dots is

capitalised if it is part of a new sentence, e.g. We will fight and we will win ... We will never surrender . You may drop words in this way only if the deletion does not alter the sense of the quote.

## **delight**

To delight is a transitive verb that requires an object. Jane Bloggs delighted her fans with an easy victory not Jane Bloggs delighted with an easy victory. Delight is a strong verb. Use sparingly and to good effect.

## **demagogue**

Not demagog.

## **demise**

Means death or to transfer on death, not just decline or decay.

## **demolished, destroyed**

Do not write totally demolished, totally destroyed. Both words imply complete destruction.

## **demonstrator**

## **denials**

Never qualify a denial, e.g. flatly denied, categorically denied, unless quoting someone. A no comment is not a denial. Write declined to comment rather than refused to comment, which suggests that the person you spoke to was under an obligation to comment. See rebut, refute.

## **denote, connote**

Denote is to indicate or mark by a sign. A wedding ring denoted his married status. Connote is to imply attributes. Marriage connotes short-term bliss. Both words are probably best avoided.

## **dependant, dependent**

The person in a state of dependency is a dependant. He is dependent. But American style uses dependent as both noun and adjective.

**deprecate**

Express disapproval of, deplore. Do not confuse with depreciate.

**depreciation**

A gradual change in the value of a currency usually as a result of market forces. Do not confuse with devaluation, when a government orders a weakening currency change.

**depression**

A period of low economic activity with high unemployment and numerous business failures. Capitalise when referring to the one in October, 1929: the Great Depression. See also recession, slump.

**depths**

Convert metres to feet not yards. One metre equals 3.28 feet.

**de rigueur**

Not de rigneur. Best avoided.

**desiccate****despatch**

Use dispatch for the noun and verb, although send is a better substitute for the verb.

**desperate****despite the fact that**

Use although.

**detente**

The easing or end of strained relations between countries.

**designate**

Hyphenate. Capitalise the first word, but only if used as a formal title before a name, President-designate Joan Brown but chairman-designate.

**devaluation**

A downwards change in the value of a currency, the opposite of revaluation, and usually imposed by government order. Do not confuse with depreciation which is a more gradual change usually brought about by market forces.

**device, devise**

Device is the noun, devise is the verb.

**dexterous****diagnosis, prognosis**

Diagnose a disease not a person. Prognosis is forecasting, or a forecast, especially of a disease.

**diarrhoea, but diarrhea in American style****dictator**

Use of the word dictator implies a value judgment, so avoid it unless quoting someone.

**dictionary**

Use Chambers 20th Century Dictionary as a reference. Use the first spelling listed. However, America uses Webster's New World College Dictionary.

**die-hard**

Hyphenated.



**dietitian****differ from, differ with**

If you differ from someone you are unlike each other. If you differ with someone then you disagree. The expression differ from can be used in both senses.

**different**

Can often be excised, as in Yorkshire produces six different types of cheese.

**from, different to**

Prefer different from, which is acceptable in all contexts, rather than different to or different than.

**diffuse, defuse**

To diffuse is to disperse, to defuse is to make something harmless.

**dike**

Not dyke.

**dilapidated**

Not delapidated.

**dilemma**

Do not use simply to mean a problem. A dilemma arises when faced with two (or more) undesirable alternatives.

**diphtheria**

Note the h after the p.

**disabled people**

As with a person's race or sex, we should mention physical disabilities only if they are relevant to the story. Report disabilities without sentimentality or condescension. See stereotypes and value judgments

**disassemble, dissemble**

Disassemble is to take apart, dissemble is to conceal or disguise, or be a hypocrite.

**disassociate**

Use dissociate.

**disaster**

Do not devalue this word by overuse. Avoid it in sports reporting.

**disc, disk**

Use disk when writing about computers, disc in all other contexts. Slipped disc but computer hard disk.

**discernible**

Not discernable.

**discomfit, discomfort**

Discomfit is to rout, defeat, balk or disconcert. It is much stronger than discomfort which is to make uneasy or deprive of comfort.

**discount rate**

Most central banks do not use this expression any more, so find out the relevant interest rate they use in a specific country to guide the base level of interest rates.

**discover**

Find is shorter and better.

**discreet, discrete**

Discreet is prudent or modest while discrete is separate.

**discriminatory language**

Do not use language that perpetuates sexual, racial, religious or other stereotypes. Such language is offensive, out of date and often simply inaccurate. A person's gender, race, religion, nationality, sexual orientation or marital status should not be cited unless it is relevant to the story. Even then, consideration must be given to where in the story such information needs to be placed. It is wrong to assume that police, firefighters or soldiers are men. Police is shorter than policemen anyway. Do not describe a woman's dress or hairstyle where you would not describe a man's. Where possible use the same term for men and women, e.g. mayor or poet, not mayoress or poetess. Use chairman, chairwoman not chair; spokesman, spokeswoman not spokesperson.

**diseases**

Do not capitalise e.g. leukemia, pneumonia, except when named after a person e.g. Parkinson's disease.

**disinterested, uninterested**

Disinterested means impartial while uninterested means the opposite of interested. People can be both interested in an issue and disinterested.

**disorientate**

Use disorient, which is shorter.

**dispatch**

Not despatch. Including dispatch rider, mentioned in dispatches, and dispatch box. In most cases send is better, as of troops, aid, etc.

**dispel**

Dispelled, dispelling.

**dispensable**

Not dispensible. Think of dispensation.

**disposal, disposition**

Disposal is get rid of, disposition is arrange or distribute.

**distances**

Use figures for 10 and above, spell out one to nine miles/km.

**distinct, distinctive**

Distinct means separate, clear, well-defined. Distinctive is a distinguishing quality. A distinct mark on his forehead made him distinctive from his twin brother.

**district attorney**

Do not abbreviate to DA. Capitalise before a name: District Attorney Jack Walton.

**DJIA or the Dow**

The Dow Jones industrial average is the main benchmark U.S. stock market index.

**dive, dived**

Not dove for past tense.

**divorcee**

Male or female.

**Dnestr**

Use Transdnestrria for the region of Moldova, not Dnestr.

**doctor**

When used as title for a physician, abbreviate to Dr without a full stop. Do not use Dr for doctors of philosophy, etc.

**DOD**

Department of Defense, the Pentagon (U.S.). Avoid using the acronym.

**dollar sign**

Use the dollar sign \$ before numbers, e.g. \$100. Use upper-case abbreviations A, C, HK etc. immediately before the dollar sign (no space in between) to indicate Australian, Canadian, Hong Kong and other non-U.S. dollars, e.g. C\$6.4 billion. The following non-U.S. dollars can be abbreviated after first reference: Australia (A), Brunei (B), Canada (C), Fiji (F), Hong Kong (HK), Jamaica (J), New Zealand (NZ), Singapore (S), Taiwan (T) and Zimbabwe (Z). If there is no letter before the \$ sign, readers will assume U.S. dollars are meant.

**domino, dominoes****do s and don ts****double**

Double-barrelled, double-breasted, double-cross, but double fault in tennis, doubleheader.

**doughnut**

Not donut, unless it is part of a formal company name.

**douse, dowse**

Douse is to plunge into water, to splash or to extinguish. Dowse is to search for underground water using a divining rod.

**downhill**

One word in Alpine skiing.

**downpayment**

One word.

**downplay**

Write play down.

**Down s syndrome**

Do not use mongol or mongoloid. American style is Down syndrome.

**downtown**

Write central Paris not downtown Paris.

**draft, draught**

Use draft for a sketch, a detachment of men, a money order, draught for a drink or the depth to which a ship sinks in water.

**dramatic**

A much overworked word. If an event is dramatic it should be clear from the story.

**driving licence, but American style driver's license****drop out, dropout**

The verb is drop out, the noun dropout.

**drop shot**

Two words in tennis.

**drown**

He drowned, or he drowned his cat, but not he was drowned, unless by someone else.

**drunk, drunken**

I am drunk, he is drunk, but drunken behaviour, drunken driver, not drunk driver. Also drunkenness, not drunkeness.

**Druze**

Not Druse. A sect of Islam whose adherents live mainly in Lebanon, Syria and Israel.

**dual, duel**

Dual is twofold, e.g. dual-purpose. A duel is a fight between two people.

**dual listing**

A company which is listed on more than one stock exchange.

**due**

Due is an adjective and must modify a noun or a pronoun. It cannot modify a verb. When in doubt replace it with because of, owing to or caused by. It is correct to write The drop in temperature was due to a broken window but not The temperature dropped due to a broken window. The simple rule is if in doubt always use because of.

**due process**

Can mean several things. Make sure the meaning is clear.

**Duesseldorf, Germany****duffel**

Not duffle. From the town of Duffel, near Antwerp.

**dumb**

Use mute.

**Dunkirk**

Not Dunkerque.

## **dwarf, dwarfs**

Not dwarves.

## **dyeing, dying**

Dyeing changes the colour of clothes. Dying is destined for death.

## **dyke**

Use dike.

## **dynamo, dynamos**

## **dysentery**

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide



# E

## Contents

- 1 each
- 2 each and every
- 3 earth
- 4 earthquakes
- 5 Eastern Rite Churches
- 6 EBIT
- 7 EBITDA
- 8 EBITDAR
- 9 EBRD
- 10 ECB
- 11 Ecuadorean
- 12 effete
- 13 Eid al-Adha
- 14 Eid al-Fitr
- 15 Eire
- 16 either
- 17 elderly
- 18 -elect
- 19 election/elections
- 20 elicit, illicit
- 21 ellipsis
- 22 elusive
- 23 email
- 24 embarrass, embarrassed, embarrassing
- 25 embargo, boycott
- 26 embattled
- 27 emerge
- 28 emigrate, immigrate
- 29 emotive words
- 30 employee
- 31 enormity
- 32 encyclopedia
- 33 England
- 34 en route
- 35 enquire, enquiry
- 36 enrol
- 37 ensure, insure, assure
- 38 envelop, envelope
- 39 envision
- 40 epicentre
- 41 EPS
- 42 equal, equalling, equalled
- 43 equable, equitable
- 44 equally as
- 45 escalate, escalation

- 46 escapers, not escapees
- 47 Esfahan, not Isfahan, Iran.
- 48 Eskimo
- 49 espresso
- 50 estimate
- 51 estimated at about
- 52 et cetera
- 53 Ethiopian names
- 54 ethnicity
- 55 euphemism
- 56 EU
- 57 euro
- 58 Eurobond
- 59 European
- 60 European names
- 61 Eurosceptic
- 62 euro zone
- 63 eventuate
- 64 ever
- 65 every day, everyday
- 66 everyone, every one
- 67 evoke, invoke
- 68 ex-
- 69 exacerbate
- 70 exactly
- 71 exaggerate
- 72 exam
- 73 execution
- 74 except, accept
- 75 excerpt
- 76 exchange rates
- 77 exclamation mark, exclamation point
- 78 exorbitant
- 79 exorcise
- 80 expatriate
- 81 expect, anticipate
- 82 expel, expelling, expelled
- 83 explicit, implicit
- 84 exports overseas
- 85 extra
- 86 extra cover
- 87 extramarital
- 88 eyewitness

## each

Each takes a singular verb. Each of us is guilty. Be careful when it follows a noun that is the real subject of the sentence. We each are guilty of theft, which is equivalent to We are all guilty of theft, each one of us.

## **each and every**

Plain each will do, or plain every.

## **earth**

Generally lower case, but capitalise the Planet Earth.

## **earthquakes**

Use plain magnitude to describe earthquakes. This is a measure of ground motion as recorded on seismographs. The scale devised by Charles Richter is not reliable for certain types of earthquake and is no longer widely used. The U.S. Geological Survey favours magnitude, more exactly known as the "moment magnitude", which gives readings consistent with the Richter scale. Magnitude is not an automatic guide to likely damage. This depends on other factors such as the depth of the quake below the earth's surface. The strongest quake ever measured was 9.5 magnitude in Chile in May, 1960, while there are more than 1 million minor tremors of between 2 and 2.9 magnitude every year. Besides Richter, there are other ways to measure earthquakes including the Mercalli scale or the Japanese Shindo scale. These measure the intensity of an earthquake only at particular points on the earth's surface without giving an overall reading. The epicentre is point on the earth's surface above the subterranean centre, or focus, of an earthquake.

## **Eastern Rite Churches**

Eastern Rite Churches returned to communion with Rome after the 1054 East-West split between Rome and Orthodoxy but worship in an Eastern, usually Orthodox rite. Each returned to unity with Rome at a different time in the past 900 years or so.

## **EBIT**

Earnings before interest and tax, also called operating earnings.

## **EBITDA**

Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation, also called core earnings.

## **EBITDAR**

Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation, amortisation and rent. Accounting term used by analysts and companies instead of EBITDA in industries where equipment or asset rentals figure large, such as aircraft rentals by airlines.

**EBRD**

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, set up by the major industrialised countries to help centrally planned economies in 27 countries, from central Europe to central Asia, move to a free market in a democratic environment. It is owned by governments but invests mainly in private enterprise, usually with commercial partners.

**ECB**

European Central Bank, based in Frankfurt, sets monetary policy for the euro zone countries.

**Ecuadorean****effete**

Means exhausted or sterile, not just weak or foppish.

**Eid al-Adha**

A Muslim holiday marking the climax of the annual pilgrimage (haj) on the 10th day of the 12th month of the Muslim calendar.

**Eid al-Fitr**

A Muslim holiday marking the end of the fasting month of Ramadan, the ninth month of the Muslim calendar.

**Eire**

Use Republic of Ireland.

**either**

Either is a choice of two things. You can either come or go. The word can often simply be excised. It cannot be used with a choice of more than two things. You can have ice cream, cake or pudding. Not You can have either ice cream, cake or pudding. Do not use either when you mean each. He had a beautiful girl on each arm, not on either arm.

**elderly**

Avoid, because the terms are always relative. In some societies a 50-year-old is already aged. In others a sprightly 90-year-old who has just written a novel or run a marathon would object to being called aged or elderly.

**-elect**

Hyphenated and lower case. President-elect Frederick Green.

**election/elections**

Singular if it is a single parliamentary election, plural if several votes are taking place contemporaneously. A general election in a country such as Britain is singular, but when the United States votes on the same day for a president, and members of the Senate and the House of Representatives, these are elections.

**elicit, illicit**

Elicit is to draw forth or to evoke. Illicit is not permitted or illegal. A dalliance may elicit an illicit relationship.

**ellipsis**

Indicate the omission of words from a quoted passage by using three full stops with a space before and after, e.g. We will fight ... and we will win. The word after the dots is capitalised if it is part of a new sentence, e.g. We will fight and we will win ... We will never surrender . You may drop words in this way only if the deletion does not alter the sense of the quote.

**elusive**

Usually superfluous and shown by context. Police are hunting an elusive killer.

**email**

One word. Other compound words prefixed with e- should be hyphenated, however, eg e-commerce, e-banking.

**embarrass, embarrassed, embarrassing**

Double r and double s.

**embargo, boycott**

An embargo is a legal ban on trade. A boycott is the refusal of a group to deal with a person or use a commodity.

**embattled**

A tired cliché. Do not use.

**emerge**

News does not just emerge, so it is a nonsense to write It has emerged that. Give the reader a clear source for all your information.

**emigrate, immigrate**

You emigrate when you leave a country and you immigrate when you come to a country. Similarly emigrant, immigrant

**emotive words**

Some words have emotional significance and must be used with special care in the interest of objectivity. Examples of such words are terrorist (see separate entry on terrorism), extremist and mob. Avoid using contentious labels. If we describe a violent act as terrorism we could imply the journalist is judging the action and taking sides. It is not the role of a Reuters journalist to adjudicate. We can use such words when we directly quote named sources. When giving background in a running story on a specific act of violence, refer in general terms to terrorism without attribution to particular groups or making judgment. There are alternatives to terrorist which are more factual, e.g. gunmen, bombers, bomb attacks, assassinations. The word guerrilla can be more readily used when describing forces fighting governments for control of territory, most usually in the countryside. Relatively small groups are best described by their ideologies or politics. The basic rule should be to describe what a movement wants or is aiming for rather than apply a label.

**employee****enormity**

Does not mean just very big, but an outrage, iniquity or great crime.

## **encyclopedia**

## **England**

Do not use England as a synonym for Britain or the United Kingdom. Britain comprises England, Scotland and Wales. The United Kingdom comprises Britain and Northern Ireland. Use Britain unless the Irish context is important.

## **en route**

Two words.

## **enquire, enquiry**

Use inquire, inquiry.

## **enrol**

enrolled, enrolling, enrolment, but in American style enroll, enrolling, enrollment.

## **ensure, insure, assure**

Ensure means to make sure, insure to guarantee against loss. You assure your life.

## **envelop, envelope**

The verb is envelop, enveloping, enveloped. The noun is envelope.

## **envision**

Use envisage.

## **epicentre**

The point on the earth's surface above the centre, or focus, of an earthquake.

**EPS**

Earnings per share. The portion of a company's profit allocated to each outstanding share of common stock. EPS serves as an indicator of a company's profitability.

**equal, equalling, equalled**

Do not write more equal or less equal because things are either equal or not. Use more or less equitable. In American style, equal, equaling, equaled.

**equable, equitable**

Equable is even and without great variation or extremes. Equitable is just or fair.

**equally as**

Do not use together. Either She was equally bright or She was as bright.

**escalate, escalation**

In most cases rise or increase would be simpler and as effective for both verb and noun. Escalate may be used where we are talking of a step-by-step increase.

**escapers, not escapees****Esfahan, not Isfahan, Iran.****Eskimo**

Do not use to refer to the people of northern Canada, who use the term Inuit to describe themselves. There are about 56,000 Inuit in Canada. They live in an area from Labrador to Alaska. The singular is Inuk, the language is Inuktitut.

**espresso****estimate**

When referring to economic trends and business performance, use estimate to refer to an approximate calculation of performance up to the present (or a date in the past). Use forecast when



referring to expected future performance based on available data. Use projection to refer to probable future performance based on current trends or assumptions of likely developments.

## **estimated at about**

Tautology. Plain estimated at will do.

## **et cetera**

Use the abbreviation etc. (with full stop), but try to avoid.

## **Ethiopian names**

The word ato means Mr and should not be used. Use only the first name at second reference, e.g. Mengistu Haile Mariam    Mengistu said ...

## **ethnicity**

See race

## **euphemism**

Euphemism, beloved of bureaucrats, social scientists and the military, seeks to cloak reality, sometimes unpleasant, in innocuous words. Shun it e.g: kill not terminate with extreme prejudice, poor not disadvantaged. Severe storms kill people, not leave them dead.

## **EU**

The European Union. The Treaty on European Union, commonly known as the Maastricht Treaty, came into effect on November 1, 1993 and formally created a new entity, the EU, with responsibilities expanded beyond the EC's focus on economic and trade issues.

## **euro**

No capital letter

## **Eurobond**

Capitalised. Bond issued by a country or company in a currency that is not their own, e.g. a Japanese company issuing a dollar bond. Not to be confused with euro-denominated bonds, which are bonds issued in euros.

## **European**

Do not use as a synonym for white in a racial context.

## **European names**

Use lower case for particles within a personal name, e.g. F. W. de Klerk, Maurice de la Haye, Richard von Weizsaecker, Miguel de la Madrid, Ramon da Silva, Jaime Aragon y Galicia, Hendrik van den Berg. The particles are usually retained at second reference, but in German usage the von is dropped. Upper case is used when such particles occur at the beginning of a geographical name, e.g. Las Palmas, El Salvador, La Raya del Palancar or at the start of a sentence, e.g. De Klerk said ... See also Spanish and Portuguese names

## **Eurosceptic**

One word.

## **euro zone**

Two words, lower case, no hyphen. The group of countries that have the euro as their currency.

## **eventuate**

Prefer result.

## **ever**

tautology when it follows a superlative (as in biggest, best, strongest etc). In such cases, drop it unless in direct quotes.

## **every day, everyday**

Two words for the adverb and one word for the adjective. Every day we remind him not to wear everyday clothes to a wedding.

## **everyone, every one**

Everyone is all the people; every one is every single person. If you can add without exception then you need every one. Everyone in the village loves a party and every one wore fancy dress.

**evoke, invoke**

evoke means to bring to mind, invoke to call upon solemnly, e.g. In a speech evoking memories of the civil war he invoked God's help in preventing fresh bloodshed.

**ex-**

Make sure this prefix is hyphenated to the word it limits. Note the difference between a Conservative ex-minister and an ex-Conservative minister. Prefer former in written text, e.g. Former Brazilian finance minister Jorge Braga was killed on Tuesday when... Ex- may be used for brevity in headlines, e.g. Ex-minister killed in Brazil air crash.

**exacerbate**

A clumsy word devalued by overuse. It means to make bitter or more violent. Usually writers mean simply to make worse.

**exactly**

Cannot be qualified, so 'almost exactly' is not acceptable.

**exaggerate****exam**

Contraction for academic examinations only.

**execution**

Use only for lawful killings after due judicial process.

**except, accept**

Except is to leave out. Accept is to take or receive.

**excerpt**

from, not of.

**exchange rates**

Normally quote only a single rate for the value of one currency against another, usually the middle rate between the bid and offer quotations. For example, if the bid and offer rates of a particular currency against the dollar were 2.6050 and 2.6150 we would take the difference between the two (0.0100), halve it (0.0050) and add to 2.6050. This gives a rate of 2.61. If the difference is an odd number, quote as near to the mid-point as possible. In foreign exchange market reports give the bid and offer rates. Rates are generally carried to four places right of the decimal, except for yen, which goes to two places. However, if both bid and offer are round numbers at fewer decimal places, leave off the extra zeros. Do not repeat recurring numbers when giving the second rate in the sequence, e.g. 1.4845/65 not 1.4845/4865, except when the rate moves to a new higher digit: The dollar rose to 1.4895/4905 marks from 1.4850/60 at yesterday's close. Money market rates and yields are generally quoted in decimals, so if a trader talks of a 6-1/4 percent yield this is best written in copy as 6.25 percent.

**exclamation mark, exclamation point**

Avoid other than in quotations.

**exorbitant****exorcise****expatriate**

Not expatriot. But compatriot.

**expect, anticipate**

These are not synonyms. If you anticipate something, you not only expect it but take precautionary action to deal with it.

**expel, expelling, expelled****explicit, implicit**

Explicit is stated plainly; implicit is implied or suggested.

## **exports overseas**

A tautology. Exports is sufficient.

## **extra**

Do not use a hyphen when it means 'outside of' unless the prefix is followed by a word beginning with 'a' or a capital letter.

## **extra cover**

Two words for the field position in cricket.

## **extramarital**

One word.

## **eyewitness**

prefer witness.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

# F

## Contents

- 1 FAA
- 2 face to face
- 3 facility
- 4 Fahrenheit
- 5 Falklands
- 6 fallacy, fallibility
- 7 Fallopian tubes
- 8 FAO
- 9 Faroes
- 10 farther, farthest
- 11 fast bowler
- 12 faze, phase
- 13 FBI
- 14 FCC
- 15 FDA
- 16 fears, hopes
- 17 fedayeen
- 18 feet, foot
- 19 fellow
- 20 Ferris wheel
- 21 fewer, less than
- 22 fiance, fiancée
- 23 fiasco, fiascos
- 24 fief
- 25 field marshal
- 26 FIFA
- 27 fighter jets
- 28 Figures
- 29 filibuster
- 30 Filipino
- 31 film titles
- 32 finalise
- 33 financial year
- 34 firefighter
- 35 firm
- 36 first lady
- 37 first quarter, first-quarter
- 38 first slip
- 39 First World War
- 40 fiscal year
- 41 flack, flak
- 42 flair, flare
- 43 flaunt, flout
- 44 flay, flail
- 45 Fleet Street
- 46 flight numbers

- 47 flip-flop
- 48 flounder, founder
- 49 flyer
- 50 flyhalf
- 51 focus, focused
- 52 following
- 53 follow up, follow-up
- 54 foodstuffs, supplies
- 55 foot
- 56 foot-and-mouth disease
- 57 forbear, forebear
- 58 forbid, forbidding, forbade
- 59 forced
- 60 forecast
- 61 forego, forgo
- 62 forehand
- 63 foreign language phrases
- 64 foreign exchange rates
- 65 forensic
- 66 foreseeable
- 67 forever, not for ever.
- 68 forex
- 69 former, latter
- 70 format, formatted
- 71 formula, formulas, not formulae.
- 72 Formula One
- 73 forsake, forsaken, forsook
- 74 forswear
- 75 Fort
- 76 fortnight
- 77 fortuitous, fortunate
- 78 forward
- 79 foul, fowl
- 80 four-wheel drive
- 81 Fourth of July
- 82 fractions
- 83 Frankenstein
- 84 Freddie Mac
- 85 free kick
- 86 french fries
- 87 fresco, frescoes
- 88 Frisbee
- 89 front line
- 90 FSA
- 91 FTC
- 92 front-runner, front-running
- 93 fuchsia
- 94 fuel, fuelled, but in American style fuel, fueling, fueled
- 95 fulfil, fulfilling, fulfilled, but fulfilment

- 96 full
- 97 fulsome
- 98 fundamentalist
- 99 fundraiser, fundraising
- 100 fused participles
- 101 furlough, not furrow
- 102 future plans

## **FAA**

Federal Aviation Administration (US).

## **face to face**

Redundant when used to describe a meeting.

## **facility**

A word that can mean almost anything. Avoid and be specific if possible, e.g. a base, a factory, a depot.

## **Fahrenheit**

Use Fahrenheit if it is the scale of the country involved, with Celsius conversion in brackets. Spell in full at first reference, abbreviating to C and F subsequently, 25 Celsius, 40C. Freezing point in Celsius is 0 degrees, in Fahrenheit 32 degrees. Convert from Celsius to Fahrenheit for temperatures above zero by multiplying by 9, dividing by 5 and adding 32, e.g. 20 Celsius (68 Fahrenheit). For temperatures below zero multiply by nine, divide by five and subtract from 32, e.g. minus 15C (5F), minus 20C (minus 4F). Convert from Fahrenheit to Celsius for temperatures above 32 by subtracting 32, multiplying by five and dividing by nine. For temperatures below freezing take the total number of degrees by which the temperature is below 32, multiply by five and divide by nine, e.g. minus 8F is 40 below freezing,  $40 \times 5/9$  gives you 22, therefore minus 22C.

## **Falklands**

This is the internationally accepted name of the Falkland Islands but from an Argentine dateline they may also be called by the Argentine name the Malvinas (Falkland Islands).

## **fallacy, fallibility**

Fallacy is something regarded as true but actually false. Fallibility is a capacity or tendency to make mistakes.



**Fallopian tubes**

Capitalise Fallopian.

**FAO**

Food and Agriculture Organisation (U.N. Rome). See [www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org)

**Faroes**

Not Faeroes.

**farther, farthest**

Use further, furthest except when referring to physical distance.

**fast bowler**

Two words in cricket.

**faze, phase**

Faze is to worry or disturb. Phase is a stage in growth or development.

**FBI**

The Federal Bureau of Investigation is the premier law enforcement agency in the United States. It is part of the U.S. Department of Justice. The FBI investigates violations of federal law, including high-profile cases on espionage, drug cartels, organised violence and crime. FBI may be used alone at first reference. If the full name is used alone at first reference the initials need not be bracketed in.

**FCC**

Federal Communications Commission (U.S.).

**FDA**

Food and Drug Administration. U.S. regulatory body for the safety and effectiveness of foods, human and veterinary drugs, medical devices and cosmetics.

**fears, hopes**

Beware of hopes and fears. Unattributed, they represent opinions. We cannot refer to hopes for a settlement of Middle East problems or fears of another oil price increase without saying who is doing the hoping or fearing. But we can refer unsourced to the common hopes and fears of humanity, e.g. Hopes of reaching the trapped miners rose... or Fears that a new epidemic of cholera might sweep... See also emotive words.

**fedayeen**

Arab or Islamic guerrillas. The singular is feda i so use guerrilla for simplicity s sake when referring to one person.

**feet, foot**

One foot, several feet. Use foot singular as the adjective, e.g. a 12-foot-high wall.

**fellow**

Often unnecessary, especially before countryman or countrywoman.

**Ferris wheel****fewer, less than**

Use fewer when referring to numbers of individuals or individual items, less for quantities, e.g. Fewer than 10 rescuers were hurt but Less than 1,000 tons of coal was lost.

**fiance, fiancée**

fiance is the man, fiancée the woman.

**fiasco, fiascos****fief**

Not fiefdom.

## **field marshal**

Note only one I.

## **FIFA**

International Football Federation, based in Zurich (soccer). See [www.fifa.com](http://www.fifa.com)

## **fighter jets**

Write fighter planes, since modern fighters are almost invariably jets.

## **Figures**

Always check any numbers in a story, and then recheck them. Are they internally consistent? If a number rises to a new number then is the second number larger than the first? Check that the units of measurement are not out by a factor of 10, or a 100, or a 1,000. Try to appreciate the underlying logic of the numbers rather than accepting them at face value. Ask yourself if the numbers are feasible and realistic. Remember that a journalist plus a calculator often equals mistake.

Spell out the digits one to nine in text except for dates and times, when figures should always be used, e.g. The four foreign ministers will meet at 6 p.m. (1700 GMT) on March 3. The same applies to ordinal numbers: first, second, third etc up to ninth, then 10th 100th 144th etc. Use numerals in ages, 4-year-old, and before millions and billions, 2 million, 5 billion. Use numerals before percent, 6 percent. Use numerals for dimensions, He lost 4 cm from the end of his finger.

Write 10 and above as figures except at the start of a sentence, e.g. Fourteen people were killed when 20 tons of ice crashed through the roof. Do not however start a sentence with a complex figure, e.g. Two hundred and forty-three runners finished the Boston marathon ...Where possible rewrite the sentence to avoid starting with a number if it is long and clumsy.

Repeat figures in stories when they are unexpected and err on the side of caution. Place repeated figures in brackets to remove any doubt. Write ... raised bank rate to 6.5 percent (repeat 6.5 percent).

Figures in brackets are generally used only for comparisons. In comparisons always put new figures before old ones, e.g. The U.S. dollar closed at 0.9782 euros compared with 0.9804 at mid-morning.

Do not run two sets of figures together. This can lead to errors. Separate them by a word or spell out one of the two, e.g. 20,000 new 50-cent shares or 20,000 shares with a nominal value of 50 cents each, not 20,000 50-cent shares.

Write fractions as 4-1/2, 8-3/4 etc.

Round off unwieldy figures, e.g. Japan produced 1.45 million cars in the six months ended... not Japan produced 1,453,123 cars... As a rule round off millions to the nearest 10,000, thousands to the nearest 100, hundreds to the nearest 10.

Figures are normally rounded to two significant decimals, with halves rounded upwards. Thus 15.564 becomes 15.56, while 15.565 becomes 15.57.

Do not round interest rates. Give them to the full number of decimal places as given by the source of the information.

Round foreign exchange quotations to four decimal places, e.g. the dollar rose to 0.9784 euros. If a country adjusts its currency, any rate given must not be rounded off, e.g. Manchukistan announced a rate of 5.79831 thaler to the dollar.

Do not round company dividends, e.g. the company announced a dividend of 0.123456 pence per share.

Where totals do not add up because of rounding, this should be explained.

When reporting decimalised figures always use a full stop, e.g. 42.5. Do not follow the practice in continental Europe of using a comma instead of a decimal point. When reporting thousands, use a comma, not a full stop, e.g. 10,000.

When reporting a range of figures use the style 1.2 billion to 1.4 billion not 1.2-1.4 billion or between 400 and 500 miles not between 400-500 miles.

Always spell out billion, except in headlines when it can be abbreviated to bln. Use decimals before million and billion. Write 2.5 million not two and a half million.

Twice not two time or two times. Bigger numbers should be in the plural, e.g. seven times champion.

Ranges Repeat the denominator when describing a range of figures, e.g. \$22 million to \$30 million not \$22 to \$33 million.

## **filibuster**

To delay parliamentary proceedings by making long speeches.

## **Filipino**

A native of the Philippines. Feminine Filipina. Plural Filipinos, Filipinas. The adjective is Philippine.

## **film titles**

Books, films, plays, poems, operas, songs and works of art: capitalise every word in the title apart from conjunctions, articles, particles and short prepositions, e.g. *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Gone with the Wind*. The same is true of radio and television programmes other than news and current affairs, e.g. *American Idol* but *Meet the Press*.

**finalise**

Use complete, finish.

**financial year**

The year used for a company's accounting purposes. It can be a calendar year or it can cover a different period, often starting in April. It can also be referred to as the company's fiscal year.

**firefighter**

Not fireman.

**firm**

Use firm only for business partnerships. Use company for publicly quoted corporations.

**first lady**

Lower case in accordance with American style.

**first quarter, first-quarter**

Two words for the noun, one word for the adjective. First-quarter results will be released shortly after the first quarter.

**first slip**

Two words for cricket fielding position.

**First World War**

Use World War One. Not WWI

**fiscal year**

The one-year bookkeeping period or financial year used by a government. It varies from country to country. In the United States it is October 1 to September 30 and is named as the year in which it ends, so the year ending in September 2005 is fiscal 2005. In Japan the year is April 1 to March 31 and is named as the year in which it starts, so the year ending in March 2005 is fiscal 2004. In text

write out, e.g. fiscal 2003/04 but in alerts and headlines 03/04 may be used for space reasons. Do not shorten to 03/4. The term fiscal year is sometimes used for company accounting periods but it is preferable to say financial or business year.

## **flack, flak**

Flack is an American slang term for a public relations person, to be used only if explained. Flak is anti-aircraft fire or heavy criticism.

## **flair, flare**

A flair is a talent, a flare is an illuminating device.

## **flaunt, flout**

To flaunt is to display ostentatiously (not just to display), to flout is to defy, e. g. By flaunting your wealth you flout convention.

## **flay, flail**

Flay is to flog or subject to savage criticism. Flail is to strike or swing.

## **Fleet Street**

No longer a useful synonym for the British press.

## **flight numbers**

When scheduled flights come into the news – crashes, hijackings, bomb scares. etc. – give the flight number together with other identification such as type of aircraft, airline, destination and route.

## **flip-flop**

## **flounder, founder**

Flounder is a fish or to struggle violently or stumble helplessly. Founder is to subside, sink or collapse in ruins.

**flyer**

Not flier, but it American style flier for both aviator and handbill. Some trains and buses use flyer as part of their proper name.

**flyhalf**

One word for rugby position

**focus, focused**

Use sparingly.

**following**

Prefer after as a preposition, e.g. After the crash... not Following the crash...

**follow up, follow-up**

Two words for the verb, one word for the noun and adjective.

**foodstuffs, supplies**

In most cases food is enough.

**foot**

To convert to metres roughly multiply by 3 and divide by 10. To convert precisely multiply by 0.305.

**foot-and-mouth disease**

Retain the hyphenation even if foot-and-mouth is used alone without the noun it qualifies. Not hoof-and-mouth.

**forbear, forbear**

Forbear means to abstain or keep oneself in check, a forbear is an ancestor.

**forbid, forbidding, forbade****forced**

Do not say troops were forced to open fire, or the company was forced to make staff redundant. It implies a judgment.

**forecast**

Past tense is forecast not forecasted.

**forego, forgo**

Forego is to precede, forgo to do without.

**forehand**

One word in tennis.

**foreign language phrases**

Use such phrases or quotes only in exceptional cases, for instance where no generally recognised English equivalent exists. They must always be explained, e.g. Dismissing the libel action, the judge said, *De minimis non curat lex* (a Latin phrase meaning The law does not concern itself with very small matters ).

**foreign exchange rates**

Use mid-rate in general news stories -- high + low quote divided by 2. See exchange rates

**forensic**

Of or used in courts of law. Do not use forensic examination when you mean examination by forensic scientists.

**foreseeable**



**forever, not for ever.**

**forex**

A widely used abbreviation for foreign exchange. It can be used in headlines if there are space constraints. Elsewhere, use the full description. Forex is also a club grouping foreign exchange dealers and each major foreign exchange dealing centre has its own forex club.

**former, latter**

Avoid these expressions, which force readers to read backwards to understand the meaning.

**format, formatted**

**formula, formulas, not formulae.**

**Formula One**

Capitalised in motor sport.

**forsake, forsaken, forsook**

**forswear**

**Fort**

Do not abbreviate in the names of cities or military installations. e.g. Fort Lauderdale.

**fortnight**

Prefer two weeks.

**fortuitous, fortunate**

Fortuitous means by chance and fortunate means lucky.

**forward**

Not forwards.

**foul, fowl**

Foul is dirty, disfigured or an infraction in sport. Fowl is a bird.

**four-wheel drive**

Not 4x4 unless it is part of a proper name.

**Fourth of July**

Or July Fourth for the U.S. holiday.

**fractions**

Where mathematical precision is not essential, use a quarter, a third, a half rather than 25, 33, 50 percent. In a lead on an opinion poll, for instance, it is better to write Two Germans in three prefer.. than Sixty-nine per cent of Germans prefer.. The precise figure should be given lower in the story. Do not mix decimals and fractions in the same sentence, e.g. do not write 25 per cent of Germans prefer this while two-thirds prefer that... Hyphenate fractions like two-thirds, three-quarters. See also figures.

**Frankenstein**

The creator, not the monster.

**Freddie Mac**

Acceptable at first reference but put the full title Federal Home Mortgage Corp. later in the story.

**free kick**

Two words.

**french fries**

Lower case.

## **fresco, frescoes**

## **Frisbee**

(trade mark)

## **front line**

Two words as noun. But front-line positions.

## **FSA**

Financial Services Authority, the British regulator for most financial services markets, exchanges and firms.

## **FTC**

Federal Trade Commission (U.S.)

## **front-runner, front-running**

## **fuchsia**

## **fuel, fuelled, but in American style fuel, fueling, fueled**

## **fulfil, fulfilling, fulfilled, but fulfilment**

## **full**

Hyphenate when used to form compound words, e.g. full-length, full-service.

## **fulsome**

Not fullsome. It is not a synonym for lavish. Fulsome praise is excessive and fawning.

**fundamentalist**

One who believes in the literal truth of a sacred religious text such as the Bible or the Koran. Now more commonly used to describe extreme political and religious views. It has disparaging overtones, so use with care.

**fundraiser, fundraising**

One word.

**fused participles**

Defuse them. The bank tried to prevent him selling becomes the bank tried to prevent him from selling.

**furlough, not furrow****future plans**

Tautology. Just plans will do. Excise it from future prospects and future hopes.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

# G

## Contents

- 1 G3
- 2 G5
- 3 G7
- 4 G8
- 5 G10
- 6 G24
- 7 G30
- 8 G77
- 9 GAO
- 10 Gaborone
- 11 gaff, gaffe
- 12 gage, gauge
- 13 gales
- 14 gallon
- 15 Gallup Poll
- 16 Gambia
- 17 gambit
- 18 Gandhi
- 19 gantlet, gauntlet
- 20 gaol
- 21 gas
- 22 gay
- 23 gearing
- 24 GDP
- 25 Geneva Conventions
- 26 gender
- 27 general
- 28 Gentile
- 29 generation -- first/second
- 30 geriatrics
- 31 Germany
- 32 German spellings
- 33 get, got
- 34 ghetto, ghetto.
- 35 GI, GIs
- 36 giant
- 37 gibe, gybe, jibe
- 38 Gibraltar, Strait of
- 39 gilt-edge
- 40 Gipsy
- 41 girl
- 42 Girl Guides
- 43 glamour, glamorous, glamorise
- 44 global
- 45 GMT    Greenwich Mean Time
- 46 GNP

- 47 goalkeeper
- 48 gobbledygook
- 49 go-between
- 50 God
- 51 godchild, goddaughter, godfather, godmother, godparents
- 52 Godthaab
- 53 going public
- 54 golden share
- 55 Golden Week
- 56 good, bad
- 57 goodbye
- 58 goodwill
- 59 gorilla
- 60 gourmand, gourmet
- 61 Gospel
- 62 governance
- 63 Government Accountability Office (U.S.)
- 64 governor-general, governors-general
- 65 graffiti
- 66 gram
- 67 grammar
- 68 granddad, granddaughter
- 69 grand jury
- 70 Grand Prix
- 71 grand slam
- 72 grass court
- 73 Great Britain
- 74 great-
- 75 grey, but gray in American style
- 76 grievous
- 77 grisly, grizzly
- 78 gross domestic product
- 79 ground rules
- 80 gross national product
- 81 grovel, grovelled
- 82 grow
- 83 gruelling
- 84 guerrilla, gorilla
- 85 guest
- 86 Gulf
- 87 gully, not gulley
- 88 gunwale
- 89 Gurkha
- 90 guttural
- 91 Gypsy

**G3**

The world's leading capitalist economies – Germany, Japan and the USA.

**G5**

The five largest capitalist economies: the United States, Japan, Germany, France and the United Kingdom.

**G7**

A forum for the world's leading industrial nations to meet and discuss policy. The G7 members are Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Britain and the United States. The G7 finance ministers and central bankers meet to discuss the economic outlook, exchange rate policy and financial markets.

**G8**

The G7 countries plus Russia. Russia was invited to join the 1991 G7 summit and its role has been gradually formalised. G8 meetings are limited to heads of state and government, discussing world affairs. Some issues at this level are still regarded as the preserve of the G7.

**G10**

The G7 leading capitalist countries plus Belgium, The Netherlands and Sweden. Subsequently joined by Switzerland to make 11 but still referred to as the G10. It works within the framework of the IMF to coordinate fiscal and monetary policies for a stable world economic system.

**G24**

An informal group of developing countries formed to represent their interests in negotiations on international monetary matters. Eight members each from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

**G30**

A private, non-profit group of industry leaders, bankers, central bankers and academics that discusses and studies international economic and financial market issues.

**G77**

Originally established with 77 developing countries, but now considerably expanded, to help promote the views of developing countries on international trade and development within the United

Nations.

## **GAO**

Government Accountability Office (U.S.). Formerly the General Accounting Office .Can be abbreviated to GAO in headlines or at second reference.

## **Gaborone**

Not Gabarone, Botswana.

## **gaff, gaffe**

Gaff is a hook, gaffe is a mistake.

## **gage, gauge**

A gage is a pledge or to offer as a guarantee. Gauge is a standard or means of measurement.

## **gales**

Use gales rather than gale-force winds. A gale is less powerful than a storm in nautical parlance.

## **gallon**

To convert Imperial gallons to litres roughly multiply by 9 and divide by 2. To convert precisely multiply by 4.546. To convert US gallons to litres roughly multiply by 4. To convert precisely multiply by 3.785. To convert Imperial gallons to U.S. gallons roughly multiply by 6 and divide by 5. To convert precisely multiply by 1.201. To convert U.S. gallons to Imperial gallons roughly multiply by 5 and divide by 6. To convert precisely multiply by 0.833.

## **Gallup Poll**

## **Gambia**

Not the Gambia, West Africa.



**gambit**

Not simply an opening move (in chess or metaphorically) but one that involves a sacrifice or concession. Opening gambit is tautological.

**Gandhi**

Not Ghandi.

**gantlet, gauntlet**

Use gantlet for the military punishment 'running the gantlet', gauntlet for an iron glove.

**gaol**

Use jail.

**gas**

gases, gassing, gassed. The American gasoline, meaning motor fuel, is referred to as petrol in Europe. Do not use gas as a synonym for gasoline; it could cause ambiguity.

**gay**

The word is now universally used as a synonym for homosexual. Do not use it in other senses.

**gearing**

An indicator of a company's ability to service its debt. Explain if used in financial stories, but best avoided. See glossary of financial terms.

**GDP**

See gross domestic product.

**Geneva Conventions**

Plural.

## **gender**

Do not use language that perpetuates sexual, racial, religious or other stereotypes. Such language is offensive, out of date and often simply inaccurate. A person's gender, race, religion, nationality, sexual orientation or marital status should not be cited unless it is relevant to the story. Even then, consideration must be given to where in the story such information needs to be placed. It is wrong to assume that police, firefighters or soldiers are men. Police is shorter than policemen anyway. Do not describe a woman's dress or hairstyle where you would not describe a man's. Where possible use the same term for men and women, e.g. mayor or poet, not mayoress or poetess. Use chairman, chairwoman not chair; spokesman, spokeswoman not spokesperson.

## **general**

Hyphenate brigadier-general, lieutenant-general, major-general. At second reference just the general. In the U.S. army a brigadier-general has one star, a major-general two, a lieutenant-general three and a general four. The British army has the rank of brigadier but not of brigadier-general.

## **Gentile**

Anyone not a Jew, or not a Mormon. Capitalise.

## **generation -- first/second**

Take care when using to qualify to immigrants, since both terms are ambiguous. First-generation immigrants can mean either people who have immigrated, or the children of immigrants. Similarly, second-generation immigrants may be those whose parents immigrated, or whose grandparents did so.

## **geriatrics**

Medical care of the elderly. The noun is geriatrics, the adjective geriatric. It does not mean just elderly.

## **Germany**

The united Germany, like the former West Germany, is formally called the Federal Republic of Germany. Write East Germany when referring to the former Communist state but eastern or western Germany when referring to the eastern and western parts of the unified Germany.

## German spellings

Indicate the presence of an umlaut in German words by adding an e after the inflected vowel, e.g. von Weizsaecker not von Weizsacker, Fuehrer not Fuhrer

## get, got

There is always a stronger verb. Find it and use it.

## ghetto, ghetto.

## GI, GIs

A U.S. soldier (from the term government issue). Use only in informal contexts.

## giant

Do not use when describing companies. In general avoid this adjective.

## gibe, gybe, jibe

A gibe is a taunt or sneer, to gybe is to swing a sail over or alter course, but in American style a gibe is a taunt or sneer, a jibe is to swing a sail over or alter course, or to be in accord or agree with.

## Gibraltar, Strait of

Not Straits.

## gilt-edge

## Gipsy

See Gypsy

## girl

Any female older than 18 is a woman not a girl. Use woman not lady. A male older than 18 is a man.

## **Girl Guides**

Now simply Guides.

## **glamour, glamorous, glamorise**

## **global**

Beware of excessive use. Global is correct for the threat of global warming, i.e. something that affects the whole globe. However companies sometimes talk of their global network, an exaggeration unless they are represented in all the business centres on the globe. Try using world instead.

## **GMT Greenwich Mean Time**

As the international standard, it is not spelled out but should be capitalised. Western military forces use Zulu to mean GMT. It is only necessary to convert a local time into GMT, e.g. 8:30 a. m. (1330 GMT) when the Greenwich time is relevant to the rest of the world, such as the moment when an earthquake struck. The conversion should also be given when previewing important events or statements by major figures, e.g. Smith to hold news conference at 0800 EST (1300 GMT).

## **GNP**

See gross national product.

## **goalkeeper**

One word in sports reporting. Keeper may be used.

## **gobbledygook**

## **go-between**

## **God**

Capitalise when referring to the God of any monotheistic religion. Lower case any pronoun references. Lower case gods and goddesses for polytheistic religions.

**godchild, goddaughter, godfather, godmother, godparents**

Lower case, no hyphen. Similarly with godsend and godspeed.

**Godthaab**

Use Nuuk, Greenland.

**going public**

The term for a privately owned company that seeks a listing on a stock exchange and issues shares to the general public. Also known as a flotation or as issuing an IPO.

**golden share**

A share that confers sufficient voting rights in a company to maintain control and protect it from takeover.

**Golden Week**

A series of Japanese national holidays from late April to early May. Starts with Greenery Day on April 29 and ends with Children's Day on May 5. Avoid calling it holiday-studded. Write in quotes as **Golden Week** in headlines and at first reference in the text and then without the quotes.

**good, bad**

For financial and commodity markets good news and bad news depends on who you are and what your position is in the market. Avoid them.

**goodbye**

Not good bye or goodby.

**goodwill**

Noun and adjective.

**gorilla**

Gorilla is the animal. Guerrilla, not guerilla, is a member of a small band of independent fighters which harasses an army.

## **gourmand, gourmet**

A gourmand is a glutton, a gourmet an epicure.

## **Gospel**

Capitalise for a specific reference to the books of the New Testament, the Gospels, the Gospel of St Luke. Lower case for gospel music.

## **governance**

Other than in the expression corporate governance, meaning the rules governing the conduct of companies' affairs, this is often used to mean simply government, which is preferable.

## **Government Accountability Office (U.S.)**

Formerly the General Accounting Office. Can be abbreviated to GAO in headlines or at second reference.

## **governor-general, governors-general**

Note hyphen

## **graffiti**

Scribbling on a wall. This is a plural noun. The singular is graffito.

## **gram**

Not gramme. For kilogram use kg (no full stop, same singular and plural) at all references. Convert to ounces for weights up to 400 grams, to pounds for larger weights. To convert to ounces roughly divide grams by 30, precisely multiply by 0.035. To convert grams to pounds roughly multiply by two and divide by 900, precisely multiply by 0.0022.

## **grammar**

**a, an:** Use a before a word that begins with the sound of a consonant, e.g. a gun, a historian, a hotel, a hysterectomy, a NATO member, a one-armed man, a U.N. member. Use an before a word

that begins with the sound of a vowel, e.g. an heir, an honour, an OPEC member.

**adjectives:** Use them sparingly. Avoid adjectives that imply a Reuters judgment, e.g. a hard-line speech, a glowing tribute, a staunch conservative. Some people might consider the speech moderate, the tribute fulsome or the conservative a die-hard reactionary. When using an adjective and a noun together as an adjective, hyphenate them, e.g. a blue-chip share, high-caste Hindus. When using an adjective and the past participle of a verb together adjectivally, hyphenate them, e.g. old-fashioned morality, rose-tinted spectacles. Do not hyphenate an adverb and adjective when they stand alone, e.g. The artist was well known. If the adverb and adjective are paired to form a new adjective, they are hyphenated, e.g. a well-known artist. Do not do this if the adverb ends in -ly, e.g. a poorly planned operation.

**adverbs:** Put the adverb between the auxiliary verb and the past participle, e.g. France has already refused... not France already has refused ...as, like: as compares verbs, like compares nouns. He fought as a hero should. But: He acted like a hero.

**collective nouns:** Most collective nouns and names of countries, governments, organisations and companies are followed by singular verbs and singular neuter pronouns, e.g. The government, which is studying the problem, said it... not The government, who are studying the problem, said they.. Exceptions are the police (police are), the couple (the couple are), and sports stories, teams take plural verbs and pronouns.

**neither:** Used on its own it always takes a singular verb. Neither is available.

**neither ... nor:** Can govern only two elements e.g. Neither Norway nor Sweden voted. Do not write Neither Norway, Sweden nor Denmark voted. If both elements are singular use a singular verb, e.g. Neither France nor Germany welcomes the prospect. If one element is singular and one plural then the verb agrees with the noun nearest to it. e.g. Neither the players nor the referee is fit. Neither Joe nor his parents were able to come. Always use neither ... nor& Do not use neither&or. Always use not ... or. Do not use not&nor.

**participles:** There are cases in which an unattached participle is acceptable, e.g. Considering the risks involved, you were right to cancel the trip. Although it is not you who is considering the risks but the writer of the sentence, the sense is clear. But avoid the unattached participle when it makes the sentence absurd, e.g.: Having disarmed, Ruritania's allies guaranteed its defence. Here the participle having disarmed is wrongly attached to the allies when in fact it is Ruritania that has disarmed. Fetching anything between \$16,000 and \$40,000, only about 2,500 women around the world can afford to buy haute couture dresses. The juxtaposition of fetching and women suggests it is the women not the dresses who are worth \$16,000.

**split infinitive:** Avoid splitting infinitives unless the alternative is an unnatural word order. The president vowed to ruthlessly crush all armed opposition reads better than ruthlessly to crush or to crush ruthlessly.

**that, which:** Use that in defining clauses, e.g. the cup that cheers. Reserve which for informative clauses, e.g. the cup, which was blue, was full of water. Avoid the unnecessary use of that as in He said that he was going to ...

**who, whom:** who is the subject, whom the object of a verb. As a rough guide as to which word to use, substitute he or him for the who or whom and see which makes sense. But we should follow common usage and be ready to use who as the object where this sounds and looks more natural,

e.g. Who she met at the midnight rendezvous was not yet known.

## **granddad, granddaughter**

Similarly grandmother, grandfather, grandson.

## **grand jury**

In the U.S. judicial system a grand jury's main function is to review evidence presented by a prosecutor and determine whether there is probable cause to return an indictment. Under the constitution, a grand jury indictment is required for federal criminal charges. Only about half of the states' judicial systems use grand juries. See U.S. courts

## **Grand Prix**

Capitalise in the title of a race or event, e.g. Monaco Grand Prix, but lower case generally, e.g. Michael Schumacher won his first grand prix. The plural is grands prix.

## **grand slam**

Lower case in description of tennis tournaments.

## **grass court**

Two words as an adjective plus noun, e.g. Wimbledon's grass courts are famous, but one word as an adjective, grasscourt tournament.

## **Great Britain**

Comprises England, Scotland and Wales. The United Kingdom comprises Great Britain and Northern Ireland. In sports reporting use Britain. See United Kingdom

## **great-**

Hyphenate great-grandfather, great-grandmother, great-great-grandson etc.

## **grey, but gray in American style**



**grievous****grisly, grizzly**

grisly means ghastly, grizzly means grey-haired. A grizzly is also a kind of North American bear.

**gross domestic product**

May be expressed as GDP in a headline and at first reference, but copy should spell out the full explanation at second reference. It is the total monetary value of all goods and services produced within a country. GDP does not include income from overseas investments and earnings or from remittances from nationals working abroad. Use in preference to GNP. Usually referred to in the context of GDP growth in percent. Often just called economic growth, but this term needs to be spelled out. GDP per capita may be used to compare countries.

**ground rules**

Rules that apply in particular circumstances, not general or basic rules.

**gross national product**

The total value of goods and services produced by an economy, including income from overseas investments and remittances from nationals working abroad.

**grovel, grovelled****grow**

Farmers grow crops. Companies do not grow revenues.

**gruelling**

A cliché best avoided.

**guerrilla, gorilla**

Guerrilla, not guerilla, is a member of a small band of independent fighters which harasses an army. Gorilla is the animal.

## **guest**

Do not use as a verb.

## **Gulf**

Use for the Middle East Gulf. Do not use Arabian or Persian Gulf. Write the Gulf of Mexico in full at first reference.

## **gully, not gulley**

Cricket fielding position.

## **gunwale**

## **Gurkha**

## **guttural**

## **Gypsy**

Do not use when referring to the Roma people. See Roma. Do not capitalise when used generically to describe someone who is constantly on the move, e.g. She led the life of a gypsy.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

# H

## Contents

- 1 Haarlem, Harlem
- 2 habeas corpus
- 3 Habsburg
- 4 Haiti
- 5 hale, hail
- 6 half
- 7 half-mast
- 8 haj
- 9 haji
- 10 halftime
- 11 hallelujah
- 12 Halley's comet
- 13 halo, halos
- 14 hands off
- 15 Hamas
- 16 Hamilton
- 17 hang
- 18 hangar, hanger
- 19 hara-kiri
- 20 harass, harassment
- 21 hard court
- 22 hard fought
- 23 hardline, hardliner
- 24 hat-trick
- 25 H-bomb
- 26 head of state
- 27 headroom
- 28 healthcare
- 29 hedge fund
- 30 heavenly bodies
- 31 hectare
- 32 heights
- 33 hemorrhage
- 34 hemorrhoid
- 35 here
- 36 heroin
- 37 hertz
- 38 Hezbollah
- 39 hiccup
- 40 HICP
- 41 hi-fi
- 42 high-tech
- 43 high commission
- 44 hike
- 45 hint
- 46 hippie

- 47 Hispanic
- 48 Hispanic names
- 49 Hispaniola
- 50 historic, historical
- 51 hit by
- 52 hitchhike, hitchhiker
- 53 Hitler
- 54 HIV
- 55 Hizbollah
- 56 hoard, horde
- 57 hoary
- 58 Hobson's choice
- 59 hoi polloi
- 60 Holland
- 61 holocaust
- 62 Holy Places
- 63 homemade
- 64 homemaker
- 65 homeopathy
- 66 home schooling
- 67 hometown
- 68 honorifics
- 69 hoof-and-mouth
- 70 hopefully
- 71 horde, hoard
- 72 hospitalise, hospitalisation
- 73 host
- 74 hostile bid
- 75 hot spot
- 76 House of Commons, the Commons
- 77 House of Representatives
- 78 housing unit
- 79 human being
- 80 humorist
- 81 hundredweight
- 82 hung
- 83 hurricanes
- 84 hyphenation
- 85 hydro
- 86 hyperthermia
- 87 hypothermia

## **Haarlem, Harlem**

Haarlem is in the Netherlands, Harlem in New York City.

**habeas corpus**

A writ to produce a prisoner before a court, usually used to establish whether the person's detention is legal. When used in stories, define its meaning.

**Habsburg****Haiti**

Not an island. It shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic.

**hale, hail**

Hale is free from disease, or to pull or haul by force. Hail is to salute or call out, or an ice shower. Hail a cab. A person is hale and hearty.

**half**

Note the following: halfhearted, halftrack; half brother, half size; half-baked, half-cocked, half-hour, half-life, half-moon, half-truth.

**half-mast**

Hyphenate. Strict military protocol distinguishes between half-mast for ships and naval stations and half-staff for other uses on land.

**haj**

Not hadj or hajj. The Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca.

**haji**

Someone who has performed the haj.

**halftime**

One word

**hallelujah****Halley's comet**

Lower case "c"

**halo, halos****hands off**

Hyphenate when a compound modifier. She adopted a hands-off policy and kept her hands off decisions.

**Hamas**

Refer to it as the Islamist Hamas movement. Suggest we include following in most stories on Hamas: Its leaders have offered a long-term truce with Israel in return for a viable Palestinian state in the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The Islamist group continues to say it will not formally recognise Israel and its 1988 founding charter calls for the destruction of the Jewish state.

**Hamilton**

Use the form HAMILTON, Bermuda as a dateline for the Bermudan capital.

**hang**

A person is hanged, a picture is hung.

**hangar, hanger**

hangar is a shelter for aircraft, a hanger for clothes

**hara-kiri**

Japanese ritual suicide. Not hari-kari.

## **harass, harassment**

Not harrass. But embarrass.

## **hard court**

The hard courts were designed for big servers, but one word as an adjective, e.g. hardcourt tournament.

## **hard fought**

Avoid this cliché in sports reporting. Most competitive matches are hard fought and it is a story if they are not.

## **hardline, hardliner**

Spell as one word, without hyphen.

## **hat-trick**

Hyphenated.

## **H-bomb**

Use hydrogen bomb in text unless directly quoting someone. May be used in headlines.

## **head of state**

Be careful, it is not always the prime minister.

## **headroom**

One word.

## **healthcare**

One word.

**hedge fund**

A private investment fund in which institutions and individuals may invest. It typically aims to produce high returns from rapid, short-term market movements, often by taking very leveraged positions and using aggressive strategies such as short selling, swaps, derivatives, program trading and arbitrage.

**heavenly bodies**

Capitalise the names of planets, stars and constellations.

**hectare**

To convert to acres roughly multiply by five and divide by two, precisely multiply by 2.471.

**heights**

Convert the heights of mountains, buildings, etc. from metres to feet, not yards.

**hemorrhage**

Prefer bleeding.

**hemorrhoid****here**

Avoid using here as a device to locate a story. It can lead to confusion, ambiguity and sometimes error. It is often not necessary to give a locator in a lead paragraph. For instance, in a Budapest-dated story on a meeting between the Hungarian and French presidents one would assume that they met in the capital unless the story explicitly said otherwise. In that case the reference to the talks being in Budapest could come in the second or third paragraph.

**heroin****hertz**

A unit of frequency of one cycle per second. It usually requires explanation. e.g. 16,000 hertz (cycles per second).



**Hezbollah**

A Shi'ite Islamist group in Lebanon that is backed by Syria and Iran. It is a political party with a formidable guerrilla army.

**hiccup****HICP**

Harmonised index of consumer prices, a measure of inflation calculated under common rules by all EU member states. In Britain, the HICP is known as the CPI, but the two are the same index.

**hi-fi****high-tech**

Not hi-tech. Use as adjective only. As a noun write high-technology.

**high commission**

Lower case except when specific: British High Commission.

**hike**

Use rise or increase when referring to pay, prices, etc. "Hike" is jargon.

**hint**

Do not use this inadequate word because it risks making a value judgment. Who said what and where and when?

**hippie**

Not hippy. A rebel against conventional standards and values.

**Hispanic**

As a noun or adjective refers to those whose ethnic origin is in a Spanish-speaking country. Be more specific where possible, such as Colombian or Mexican. Note that people from

Portuguese-speaking countries are not Hispanic. See race

## **Hispanic names**

People in Spanish-speaking countries usually include in their full names the family name of their father followed by that of their mother, sometimes linked by y (and), e.g. Ferdinand Maradona Lopez, Pedro Ardiles y Portillo.

Give the full name at first reference, but only the father's family name (Maradona, Ardiles) at second reference, unless the person is normally known by the combination of two names. Portuguese, Spanish and Brazilian soccer players may be known by several names, one name, or a nickname. Follow commonly accepted usage e.g. Pele, Joao Pinto, Edu.

## **Hispaniola**

A Caribbean island shared by Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

## **historic, historical**

A historic event is a major and dramatic one, a historical event is one which, even if in itself quite minor, is part of history. Historic is nearly always the word needed in Reuters copy but use it with care to avoid writing a cliché.

## **hit by**

Do not use when you mean affected by.

## **hitchhike, hitchhiker**

## **Hitler**

First name was Adolf not Adolph. His title was Fuehrer (leader) not Fuhrer.

## **HIV**

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome is caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). The term AIDS applies to the most advanced stages of HIV infection. The initials AIDS and HIV may be used at first reference with the full name given lower in the story. Do not write HIV virus.

**Hizbollah**

Do not use. See Hezbollah

**hoard, horde**

A hoard is a hidden stock or treasure, a horde a multitude.

**hoary**

Not hoarey, for something ancient or white with age.

**Hobson's choice**

Not the lesser of two evils, but no choice at all.

**hoi polloi**

Not the hoi polloi. Prefer the masses, or the common people.

**Holland**

Use the Netherlands except in datelines, where it is just Netherlands, e.g. ARNHEM, Netherlands, May 16 &

**holocaust**

Wholesale slaughter or destruction by fire. Capitalise when referring to the Nazi massacre of European Jewry.

**Holy Places**

The Holy Places of Islam are Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem, in that order. In Mecca the great mosque containing the Kaaba is venerated especially in the annual haj, or pilgrimage. In Medina it is the Prophet Mohammad's mosque where the founder of the Islamic religion is buried. Non-believers are not allowed to enter Mecca or Medina. In Jerusalem it is al-Haram al-Sharif, which Jews call the Temple Mount.

**homemade**

One word.

**homemaker**

One word.

**homeopathy**

Not homoeopathy.

**home schooling**

Two words, but hyphenate home-schooled and home-schooler.

**hometown**

One word.

===homosexual===

The word applies to both men and women, not just to men. Therefore do not write homosexuals and lesbians, although you can refer to homosexual men and women.

**honorifics**

See courtesy titles, nobility, religious titles, royalty.

**hoof-and-mouth**

Use foot-and-mouth.

**hopefully**

Except in quotation do not use to mean it is hoped that &

**horde, hoard**

A horde is a multitude, a hoard is a hidden stock or treasure.

**hospitalise, hospitalisation**

Do not use. Prefer taken to hospital or treated in hospital. On most occasions drop the reference because seriously ill or injured people are usually treated in hospital.

**host**

Acceptable as a verb.

**hostile bid**

A bid for a company that is not supported by its senior management.

**hot spot**

Two words: an area that has wireless computer connectivity, a global trouble spot or a point of intense heat in a fire.

**House of Commons, the Commons****House of Representatives**

Capitalise when referring to a specific body e.g. the U.S. House of Representatives.

**housing unit**

Jargon. Use home or household.

**human being**

Just human will do.

**humorist****hundredweight**

UK/U.S. long = 112 pounds/50.8 kg. U.S. short = 100 pounds/45.4 kg.

## hung

A person is hanged, a picture is hung.

## hurricanes

The most severe of all storms is a cyclone, in which winds blow spirally inwards towards a centre of low barometric pressure. In the Caribbean and on the East Coast of the United States such a storm is called a hurricane. In many countries meteorological offices give tropical storms the names of men and women in alphabetical sequence. Capitalise names once a hurricane has been so designated: Hurricane Katrina. Use it, not he or she, as the pronoun.

## hyphenation

Use a hyphen if its omission might lead to ambiguity, e.g. three year-old horses is quite different from three-year-old horses. Use caution in headlines: False jailing claim delayed. What was meant was False-jailing claim delayed.

Hyphens tend to erode with time and many words once hyphenated are now generally written unhyphenated e.g. ceasefire, cooperation, gunrunner, machinegun.

Use a hyphen to show that two or more words are to be read together as a single word with its own meaning, different from that of the individual words, e.g. extra-judicial duties (duties other than judicial ones) as opposed to extra judicial duties (additional judicial duties).

Do not hyphenate an adjective and a noun when they stand alone, e.g. the left wing of the party. If the adjective and noun are paired to form a new adjective, they are hyphenated, e.g. a first-class result, the left-wing party. Hyphenate numbers and nouns or adjectives when they are paired to form a new adjective, e.g. a six-cylinder car, a one-armed man. Do not hyphenate adjectives used to form comparatives or superlatives, e.g. the most desirable outcome, the least likely result, the more obvious solution.

Do not hyphenate an adverb and adjective when they stand alone, e.g. The artist was well known. If the adverb and adjective are paired to form a new adjective, they are hyphenated, e.g. a well-known artist. Do not do so however if the adverb ends in -ly, e.g. a poorly planned operation.

Hyphenate two adjectives or an adjective and a present or past participle when they are paired to form a new adjective, e.g. a dark-blue dress, a good-looking man, a well-tailored suit.

Do not hyphenate very with an adjective. He is a very good man.

If the second element in a word is capitalised, hyphenate. Transatlantic is an exception.

If pre- or re- is followed by an element beginning with e, hyphenate e.g. pre-empt, re-employ.

If the first element of a word is the negative non-, hyphenate, e.g. a non-aggression pact (but nonconformist).

Where two nouns are paired to form another noun, hyphenate if their original distinct meanings are still clearly retained, e.g. actor-manager. Otherwise do not hyphenate, e.g. housekeeper.

Where a verb and adverb are paired to form a noun, hyphenate if the verb ends and the adverb begins with a vowel, e.g. cave-in, flare-up.

Hyphenate titles when the first word is a preposition, e.g. under-secretary, vice-admiral, or when a noun is followed by an adjective, e.g. attorney-general. (However official U.S. titles are not hyphenated, e.g. the US. Attorney General.) Do not hyphenate when the noun follows the adjective, e.g. second lieutenant.

Hyphenate fractions, e.g. three-quarter, two-thirds.

Hyphenate secondary compass points, e.g. south-southwest but not main ones e.g. southwest.

Hyphenate compound words when not to do so would result in an ugly sound or confusion of meaning, e.g. cross-section, sea-eagle.

Hyphenate both terms in phrases such as short- and medium-range missiles. If a figure being converted is hyphenated make sure that the figure in the conversion is also, e.g. within a 10-mile (six-km) radius.

## **hydro**

In general, no hyphen e.g. hydroelectric.

## **hyperthermia**

Too hot. Think of 'er' as in very.

## **hypothermia**

Too cold. Think that o rhymes with low.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

**I****Contents**

- 1 IAEA
- 2 IATA
- 3 ibn
- 4 ICAO
- 5 ice age
- 6 ICBM
- 7 ICO
- 8 icon
- 9 ICRC
- 10 Id al-Adha, Id al-Fitr
- 11 idiosyncrasy,  
    idiosyncrasies
- 12 IFC
- 13 ill
- 14 illegal immigrant
- 15 IISS
- 16 illicit
- 17 illiquid
- 18 illusion
- 19 ILO
- 20 imam
- 21 IMCO
- 22 IMF
- 23 immigrate
- 24 IMO
- 25 impacted by
- 26 impassable
- 27 impassible/impassive
- 28 impeachment
- 29 imply, infer
- 30 important
- 31 imports from abroad
- 32 impostor
- 33 impresario
- 34 impress
- 35 in addition to
- 36 in, into
- 37 inadmissible
- 38 inasmuch as
- 39 in connection with
- 40 insofar as
- 41 in the past
- 42 inch
- 43 include, comprise
- 44 incredible, incredulous



- 45 incur, incurring, incurred
- 46 Index, indexes
- 47 Indians (U.S.)
- 48 indicated
- 49 indict
- 50 indirect speech
- 51 indiscriminate, indiscriminately
- 52 indispensable
- 53 Indochina
- 54 Indonesian names
- 55 indoor, indoors
- 56 industrial action
- 57 in fact
- 58 infant
- 59 infer
- 60 inflation
- 61 inimitable
- 62 injuries, wounds
- 63 innocent
- 64 innocuous
- 65 inoculate
- 66 in order to
- 67 inquire, inquiry
- 68 inpatient
- 69 insignia
- 70 insolvency
- 71 install
- 72 instil, instilled
- 73 instinctive, instinctual
- 74 in spite of
- 75 insure
- 76 international community
- 77 International Court of Justice
- 78 International Criminal Court
- 79 international date line
- 80 internecine
- 81 Internet
- 82 Interpol
- 83 interpretative
- 84 interval
- 85 Intifada
- 86 into
- 87 intranet
- 88 Inuit
- 89 invariably

- 90 inveigh, inveigle
- 91 invoke, evoke
- 92 IOC
- 93 IOM
- 94 IRA
- 95 irascible
- 96 Ireland
- 97 Irian Jaya
- 98 ironically
- 99 irregardless
- 100 irreparable
- 101 -isation, -zation
- 102 \*\*-ization, -isation
- 103 -ise, -ize
- 104 Islam
- 105 Islamic
- 106 Islamist
- 107 Islamisation
- 108 Israeli names
- 109 it
- 110 its, it s

## **IAEA**

International Atomic Energy Agency (Vienna). The U.N. nuclear watchdog. See [www.iaea.org](http://www.iaea.org)

## **IATA**

International Air Transport Association (Geneva). See [www.iata.org](http://www.iata.org)

## **ibn**

Use bin in Arab names to mean son of.

## **ICAO**

International Civil Aviation Organisation (Montreal). See [www.icao.int](http://www.icao.int)

## **ice age**

Lower case.

## **ICBM**

Intercontinental ballistic missile with a range of about 3,500 miles.

## **ICO**

Organisation of the Islamic Conference. Use OIC. See [www.oic-cio.org](http://www.oic-cio.org)

## **icon**

Best used only to describe a religious image.

## **ICRC**

International Committee of the Red Cross (Geneva). See Red Cross and [www.icrc.org](http://www.icrc.org)

## **Id al-Adha, Id al-Fitr**

See Eid al-Adha, Eid al-Fitr

## **idiosyncrasy, idiosyncrasies**

## **IFC**

International Finance Corporation, private sector financing arm of the World Bank, based in Washington. See [www.ifc.org](http://www.ifc.org)

## **ill**

Hyphenate in compounds e.g. ill-mannered, ill-tempered.

## **illegal immigrant**

Not illegal alien.

## **IISS**

International Institute for Strategic Studies (London).

**illicit**

Elicit is to draw forth or to evoke. Illicit is not permitted or illegal. A dalliance may elicit an illicit relationship.

**illiquid**

Markets or instruments are described as being illiquid, or lacking depth, if there is a shortage of buyers or sellers. This shortage makes it difficult to find a true price for an illiquid security. The opposite of liquid.

**illusion**

Allusion is a reference in passing. Illusion is a false impression or a delusion.

**ILO**

International Labour Organization (Geneva). See [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)

**imam**

Lower case when describing the official who leads devotions in a mosque. Upper case when part of an official title.

**IMCO**

Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organisation (London), succeeded by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). See below.

**IMF**

International Monetary Fund (Washington). A specialised agency of the U.N. which has a brief to oversee the international monetary system. The IMF provides funds to member countries with balance of payments problems, to support policies of adjustment and reform. Its main units are the policy-making International Monetary and Financial Committee and the joint IMF-World Bank Development Committee that usually meet twice a year. Its funds come from subscriptions from member states. See [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

**immigrate**

**IMO**

The International Maritime Organization, the U.N. specialised agency responsible for improving maritime safety, preventing pollution from ships and promoting technical co-operation. See [www.imo.org](http://www.imo.org)

**impacted by**

Ugly and imprecise. Use affected by, or better helped by or hurt by. Similarly, avoid impacted on and replace with affected, helped, hurt etc.

**impassable**

Meaning passage is impossible. Not impassible.

**impassible/impassive**

Both mean insensitive to pain or suffering. Do not confuse with "impassable" (see above).

**impeachment**

In the United States, the process of bringing an official before a court or tribunal on charges of wrongdoing, in an attempt to remove him or her from office. Not the same as being convicted or removed from office.

**imply, infer**

A speaker or writer implies by insinuating or suggesting indirectly. A listener or reader infers by drawing a conclusion from what is said.

**important**

Specify to whom.

**imports from abroad**

A tautology. Just imports will do.

**impostor****impresario****impress**

A transitive verb that requires an object. Jim Smith impressed selectors, not Smith impressed during his two-hour innings. The passive, was impressive /unimpressive, is permissible but weaker and less informative.

**in addition to**

Just 'and' will often suffice, or as well as or besides. Similarly, in order to can become 'to'.

**in, into**

In shows place, into shows movement. He was in the square when the soldiers marched into the town. Into is one word, on to is two.

**inadmissible****inasmuch as****in connection with**

Clumsy and inexact. Did something happen because of something else?

**insofar as****in the past**

Often redundant when used with the past tense. An exception might be a reference to the very distant past.

**inch**

To convert to centimetres roughly multiply by 5 and divide by 2, precisely multiply by 2.54.

## **include, comprise**

Use include only when listing some component parts of a whole: The European Union includes Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. If listing all the components use comprise: Benelux comprises Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

## **incredible, incredulous**

Incredible is unbelievable, incredulous is sceptical.

## **incur, incurring, incurred**

## **Index, indexes**

Use indexes as the plural.

## **Indians (U.S.)**

Native American (capitalised) is preferred, bearing in mind that this includes e.g. Inuit who are not Indians. American Indian is acceptable. Where possible, be more specific and give the name of the tribe (eg. Navajo, Cherokee). See race

## **indicated**

Best avoided because it implies subjective interpretation by the correspondent.

## **indict**

Avoid the suggestion that somebody is being judged without trial. Indicted on a charge of robbing, not indicted for robbing.

## **indirect speech**

Do not retain the present indicative in indirect or reported speech. Change is to was; are to were; will and shall to would; has and have to had. Thus it is: He said it was ... not he said it is ... There is an exception in the case of lead paragraphs with the source at the end instead of the beginning of the sentence, where to avoid the present indicative would lead to lack of clarity or smack of pedantry. For example, it is acceptable to write in a lead paragraph: Giant Oil Corp will order three supertankers from the Pusan shipyard in Korea next month, the company said. If the source were at the beginning, we would write: Giant Oil Corp said it would order three supertankers from the Pusan shipyard ... It is usually unnecessary to follow said with that.

**indiscriminate, indiscriminately****indispensable****Indochina**

No longer used. Now Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam.

**Indonesian names**

Often Indonesians only have one name e.g. Suharto.

**indoor, indoors**

Indoor is the adjective, indoors is the adverb. He stayed indoors to let off the indoor firework.

**industrial action**

Avoid this euphemism. If you mean a strike, say so. If you do not mean a strike, then be specific.

**in fact**

Can almost always be excised.

**infant**

Child up to 12 months old.

**infer**

A speaker or writer implies by insinuating or suggesting indirectly. A listener or reader infers by drawing a conclusion from what is said.

**inflation**

A persistent rise in the prices of goods and services, caused by too much money chasing too few goods. Inflation can be caused by an increase in money supply or demand as a result of government spending or the printing of money, or by a contraction in the supply of goods. Demand-pull inflation is caused by excess demand in the economy, while cost-push inflation is



caused by increased costs of production. The rate of inflation is often a primary policy target of governments, and of central banks given policy independence to achieve a target rate.

## **inimitable**

## **injuries, wounds**

Wounds are suffered in combat or are inflicted by weapons or war, injuries by accident or criminal attack. Be as specific as possible, e.g. His right leg was broken not His leg was broken. Write His left arm was broken not He suffered an arm fracture. Use suffered rather than sustained or received. Avoid hospitalise as a verb.

## **innocent**

Report a plea or a verdict as it was made in court. If it was not guilty, do not report it as innocent.

## **innocuous**

## **inoculate**

## **in order to**

As a prepositional phrase, just 'to' will do.

## **inquire, inquiry**

## **inpatient**

One word.

Not enquire, enquiry.

## **insignia**

Strictly a plural noun but can be treated as singular as well. Each of the guilds had an insignia.

**insolvency**

See bankruptcy.

**install**

Not instal. Installation but instalment.

**instil, instilled**

Instillation but instilment.

**instinctive, instinctual**

Instinctive is prompted by instinct, instinctual is belonging to or related to instincts.

**in spite of**

Use despite.

**insure**

Insure means to guarantee against loss, ensure to make sure.

**international community**

Avoid unless it clearly refers to the body of global diplomatic opinion. Be specific, as in the United States and its allies, or Muslim countries

**International Court of Justice**

This is the proper title of the World Court in The Hague, which is the main U. N. judicial body. Use the term World Court at second reference. The Court has a dual role: to settle international legal disputes submitted to it by states, and to give advisory opinions on legal questions referred to it by international agencies.

**International Criminal Court**

The court set up in The Hague under the auspices of the United Nations to try crimes such as genocide.

**international date line**

Lower case.

**internecine**

Internecine means deadly or murderous as well as conflict within a group. Internecine warfare is tautologous.

**Internet**

Capitalise as a noun meaning the World Wide Web, lower case as an adjective e.g. internet banking, internet cafe.

**Interpol**

The International Criminal Police Organisation (Lyon. France). Interpol can be used at all references.

**interpretative****interval**

An interval is the time between two events. Do not use it to mean simply elapsed time. He studied for an interval of three years is wrong. 'An interval of' can be excised. There was an interval of a year between his two degrees is right.

**Intifada**

Arabic for uprising . It is used to describe two Palestinian uprisings against Israeli occupation. The first began in December 1987 and ran roughly until September 1993 when leaders signed an interim accord under which Israel handed over parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip to Palestinian self-rule. A second Intifada began in September 2000. Capitalise.

**into**

one word. On to, two words.

**intranet**

Lower case.

**Inuit**

The name used by the people of northern Canada to describe themselves. There are about 56,000 Inuit who live in an area from Labrador to Alaska. The singular is Inuk, the language is Inuktitut.

**invariably**

Means fixed and without exception, not usual or frequent or commonly. Invariably the children catch colds is wrong. Invariably spring follows winter.

**inveigh, inveigle**

Inveigh is to revile or to attack with words. Inveigle is to entice, cajole or wheedle.

**invoke, evoke**

Invoke means to call upon solemnly, evoke to bring to mind, e.g. In a speech evoking memories of the civil war he invoked God's help in preventing fresh bloodshed.

**IOC**

International Olympic Committee (Lausanne). See [www.ioc.org](http://www.ioc.org)

**IOM**

International Organization for Migration (Geneva). This is a non-U.N. intergovernmental agency whose main task is to move refugees and migrants to new homes. See [www.iom.int](http://www.iom.int)

**IRA**

Irish Republican Army. May be used alone at first reference from a dateline in the British Isles. If the full name is used at first reference, the initials need not be bracketed in.

**irascible**

Not irascible.

## **Ireland**

Do not use Eire for the Republic of Ireland. See also Northern Ireland.

## **Irian Jaya**

Indonesian province now known as West Papua. It borders Papua New Guinea

## **ironically**

Use only rarely and with the greatest care. The word has several meanings and most are misunderstood and misapplied.

## **irregardless**

This is a double negative. Use regardless.

## **irreparable**

## **-isation, -zation**

For stories outside the Americas when there is a choice between -isation and -ization for a noun ending use -isation.

## **\*\* -ization, -isation**

For stories in the Americas when there is a choice between -ization and -isation for a noun ending use -ization. (American style)

## **-ise, -ize**

For stories outside the Americas when there is a choice between -ise and -ize for a verb ending use -ise. For stories in the Americas when there is a choice between -ize and -ise for a verb ending use -ize. (American style)

## **Islam**

Religion practised by Muslims.

## Islamic

Similar to Muslim as an adjective; often used more widely to describe architecture, art, banking, culture, law etc. An Islamic state is a country ruled by Islamic law (sharia). A Muslim country is one whose population is predominantly Muslim.

## Islamist

A person or organisation advocating a political ideology based on Islam. Islamist is not a pejorative term. Only some Islamists advocate violence to achieve their goals. Describe these as militant Islamists.

## Islamisation

Not Islamicisation. The word should be explained with a phrase, depending on context, such as the imposition of Islamic law (sharia).

## Israeli names

Use ch rather than h in transliterating Israeli names into English, e.g. Chaim not Haim. Use the h form only if we know it is the individual's personal preference.

## it

Use the pronoun it rather than she when referring to ships.

## its, it's

The possessive pronoun has no apostrophe, unlike the contraction it's meaning it is. Avoid the contraction unless quoting someone. Its as a possessive pronoun is often superfluous, e.g. The company is trying to reduce its debt and plans to sell its less-profitable assets.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

# J

## Contents

- 1 Jacuzzi
- 2 jail, jailer
- 3 Jap
- 4 Japanese legal system
- 5 jargon
- 6 Jeddah
- 7 jeep, Jeep
- 8 Jerusalem
- 9 Jesus Christ
- 10 jets
- 11 Jew
- 12 jibe
- 13 jihad
- 14 Jihadi, jihadist
- 15 Jittery
- 16 jodhpurs
- 17 John F. Kennedy Space Center
- 18 join together
- 19 Journalese
- 20 judgment, not judgement.
- 21 judo, ju-jitsu
- 22 jumbo jet
- 23 junkie
- 24 junta
- 25 jury
- 26 just deserts
- 27 justify

## **Jacuzzi**

The registered name of a brand of whirlpool products. Use whirlpool bath.

## **jail, jailer**

Not gaol, gaoler. In the United States, a jail is where a prisoner is held while serving a sentence for a misdemeanour, punishable by a sentence of a year or less, or while awaiting trial or sentencing. Prison is where a person convicted of a felony, a more serious crime punishable by more than a year's detention, serves a sentence.

## **Jap**

Do not use as an abbreviation for Japanese, except in quotation.

## **Japanese legal system**

Libel and slander laws in Japan are vague. Police confirmation of criminal investigations is rare, except for leaks to an exclusive police agency press club from which foreign media are excluded. Reuters pickups of Japanese media reports would probably not be actionable in Japan but they could be the subject of action in other countries with stricter rules if the plaintiff had a reputation that could be damaged abroad. Suspects in Japan can be held for as long as 48 hours before a formal arrest warrant is issued.

The suspect can then be held for a further 72 hours until a prosecutor decides whether there is enough evidence to lay charges. It can then take up to 20 more days before an indictment is obtained.

## **jargon**

Jargon is specialised language unfamiliar to the average reader, e.g. remuneration, de-escalation, methodology, going forward, thought leadership, downside risks. If you have to convert into better English a word such as confrontation, use the most conservative of its various meanings. Beware the language used by financial professionals. Political and military jargon is riddled with euphemisms to conceal meaning. Unless you are directly quoting someone, turn jargon into clear English. Journalism jargon -- newsflow, obits, stringers, paras, rejigs -- should not appear in our stories. Words like obituary should be written in full

## **Jeddah**

Not Jedda or Jiddah, Saudi Arabia.

## **jeep, Jeep**

Lower case for a military vehicle. Upper case for the brand of civilian vehicle.

## **Jerusalem**

Israelis and Arabs dispute the status of the city. Israel regards Jerusalem as its "eternal and indivisible" capital but that is not recognised internationally. Palestinians want to have the capital of an eventual Palestinian state there. Do not use it as a synonym for Israel, as in the Jerusalem government.



## **Jesus Christ**

Be careful using Christ because it is a theological term for Messiah, a title non-Christians would not give him. The combination Jesus Christ is so well known that in most general stories, we can use it on first reference and Jesus after that. Christ on second reference should be limited to strictly Christian theological contexts (see Christ). Using Jesus Christ would not be appropriate in a story about Jewish views of Jesus. In a story about Muslims discussing him, use Jesus Christ only if they do. In no case should we refer to him only as Christ on second reference in general stories or in headlines.

## **jets**

Most modern airliners and military aircraft have jet engines. Do not use such terms as jet airliner or jetliner unless the fact that the aircraft is jet-powered is relevant. It would be more helpful to specify if an airliner or military aircraft is propeller driven.

## **Jew**

Use for both men and women. Do not use Jewess.

## **jibe**

A gibe is a taunt or sneer, to gybe is to swing a sail over or alter course, but in American style a gibe is a taunt or sneer, a jibe is to swing a sail over or alter course, or to be in accord or agree with.

## **jihad**

An Islamic holy war or struggle. It can also refer to individual's moral struggle. Use with extreme care.

## **Jihadi, jihadist**

Do not use, except in quotes. Has become a loaded term.

## **Jittery**

Use anxious or nervous or frightened.

## **jodhpurs**

Not jodpurs.

## **John F. Kennedy Space Center**

Florida, USA. Kennedy Space Center is an acceptable contraction. Mission control is usually at the Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas, and Johnson Space Center is the acceptable contraction.

## **join together**

Just join will do.

## **Journalese**

Trite expressions to avoid:

Thumbs up

Green light

Gravy train

Salami tactics

The bottom line

Crisis

Ground-breaking

Guesstimate

Key

Landmark

Last-ditch

Magic bullet

Major, unless contrasted with something minor

Marathon (talks)

Massive

Meaningful

Oil-rich

Policy wonk

Perceptions

Prestigious

Significant

strongman

## **judgment, not judgement.**

## **judo, ju-jitsu**

judo is a modern form of ju-jitsu, Japanese wrestling.

## **jumbo jet**

Loosely a large, wide-bodied airliner, specifically the Boeing 747.

## **junkie**

Do not use for narcotics addict, unless in quotes.

## **junta**

A political clique or a government formed by such a clique, usually after a revolution or coup.

## **jury**

Singular. The jury has reached its decision.

## **just deserts**

What you deserve, not desserts which you have for pudding.

## **justify**

To defend. The prime minister tried to justify the decision, not the prime minister justified the decision.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

# K

## Contents

- 1 Kaaba
- 2 Kampuchea, use Cambodia
- 3 karat
- 4 Kathmandu, not Katmandu, Nepal
- 5 keenness
- 6 Kermanshah
- 7 kerosene
- 8 ketchup, not catchup or catsup.
- 9 key
- 10 keynote
- 11 KGB
- 12 Khmer Rouge
- 13 kibbutz
- 14 kick-off, kick off
- 15 kidnap, kidnapping, kidnapped, kidnapper
- 16 kids
- 17 kilogram
- 18 kilometre
- 19 km per hour
- 20 kiloton
- 21 kindergarten
- 22 king
- 23 Kiribati
- 24 Kmart
- 25 Knesset
- 26 knowledgeable
- 27 know-how
- 28 knot
- 29 Kolkata
- 30 Koran
- 31 Korean names
- 32 kosher
- 33 kowtow
- 34 kph
- 35 Ku Klux Klan
- 36 kudos

## **Kaaba**

Islam's most sacred shrine at the centre of the great mosque in Mecca. It is a mass of stone 38 feet high, 40 long and 30 wide (11 x 12 x 9 metres).

**Kampuchea, use Cambodia****karat**

A measurement of weight in precious stones and of purity in gold in American style: carat in UK.

**Kathmandu, not Katmandu, Nepal****keenness****Kermanshah**

Use Bakhtaran for both the city of Kermanshah and the province of Kermanshah, Iran.

**kerosene**

Not kerosine. Medium-light distillate used for lighting and heating and to provide fuel for jet and turbo-prop aircraft engines. Called paraffin or paraffin oil in Britain.

**ketchup, not catchup or catsup.****key**

Overused as an adjective and usually superfluous.

**keynote**

One word as in keynote speech or keynote address, but it is a tired cliché and best expressed in another way. Explain why the speech is keynote.

**KGB**

Initials of the former Soviet Committee for State Security (Komitet Gosudarstvennoi Bezopasnosti), split up and renamed in 1991. Since then Russian internal and foreign security agencies have been reorganised several times but can still be referred to as successors to the KGB. This does not include the Interior Ministry in charge of the police, which was separate from the KGB in the post-Stalin Soviet Union.

**Khmer Rouge**

Cambodian Communists.

**kibbutz**

Plural kibbutzim. An Israeli collective settlement.

**kick-off, kick off**

Hyphenated for the noun and two words for the verb.

**kidnap, kidnapping, kidnapped, kidnapper****kids**

Use children

**kilogram**

Use kg (no full stop, same singular and plural) at all references. Convert kilograms to pounds for small weights (below 1,000 kg), to tons for larger weights. To convert to pounds roughly multiply by 22 and divide by 10, precisely multiply by 2.205. To convert to tons roughly divide by 1,000, precisely multiply by 0.000984.

**kilometre**

Use km (no full stop, same singular and plural) at all references, except in a phrase such as hundreds of kilometres. To convert to miles roughly multiply by 5 and divide by 8, precisely multiply by 0.621.

**km per hour**

First reference, kph on second and subsequent references.

**kiloton**

A measure of explosive force, equal to that of 1,000 tons of TNT. The atomic bomb dropped at Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, was a 12.5 kiloton weapon.

**kindergarten****king**

At second reference either the king or the full name, e.g. King Baudouin. Also capitalise the titles of deposed monarchs, e.g. ex-King Zahir Shah.

**Kiribati**

Formerly Gilbert Islands, West Pacific.

**Kmart**

No hyphen and no space.

**Knesset**

Lower house of Israeli Parliament.

**knowledgeable****know-how****knot**

A measurement of speed, not distance. It describes how many nautical miles (1.15 statute miles) a vessel or aircraft has travelled in one hour. Do not convert to miles per hour. Do not write knots per hour.

**Kolkata**

Not Calcutta, India.

**Koran**

Capitalised, the Koran.



## **Korean names**

Koreans put their surname first. The given name follows, hyphenated, and with the initial letter of the first part in upper case and the initial letter of the second part in lower case. Examples: Kim Dae-jung, Roh Moo-hyun, Ahn Jung-hwan. Use the surname only at second reference, e.g. Kim, Roh, Ahn. There are some rare cases where there is just one monosyllabic given name, for example Park Seung, where Seung is the given name.

## **kosher**

Lower case.

## **kowtow**

No hyphen.

## **kph**

Use km per hour on first reference, kph on subsequent references.

## **Ku Klux Klan**

A loose-knit organisation of about 40 U.S. groups which claim the supremacy of the white or Aryan race.

## **kudos**

Fame, credit or renown. Always singular.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

# L

## Contents

- 1 laager, lager
- 2 Labour Party, Labor Day
- 3 lady
- 4 laissez faire
- 5 lambast
- 6 lame duck, lame-duck
- 7 Land
- 8 landmine
- 9 Land Rover
- 10 languid, limpid
- 11 languor, languorous
- 12 Laos
- 13 large-scale
- 14 laser
- 15 last/past/latest
- 16 Last Supper
- 17 late
- 18 latter, former
- 19 lathi
- 20 laudable, laudatory
- 21 launderette
- 22 lay, lie
- 23 lay waste
- 24 lead, leading, led
- 25 leave
- 26 Lebanon
- 27 lectern
- 28 leftist
- 29 left wing
- 30 left-arm spinner
- 31 leg slip
- 32 leg spinner
- 33 legend/legendary
- 34 Legionnaires disease
- 35 legislature
- 36 lesbian, lesbianism
- 37 less
- 38 leukaemia, but in American style leukemia
- 39 level, levelling, levelled, but American style level, leveling, leveled
- 40 Levi's
- 41 leverage
- 42 liaison
- 43 liberal
- 44 licence, license
- 45 lie, lying, lied

- 46 lie in state
- 47 lieutenant
- 48 lifelong
- 49 life-size
- 50 lifestyle, lifetime
- 51 lift
- 52 lift off
- 53 light, lighting, lit
- 54 lightning, lightening
- 55 light-year
- 56 like, as
- 57 like, such as
- 58 like-
- 59 -like
- 60 likeable, but in American style likable
- 61 likely
- 62 lineage, lineages
- 63 linchpin
- 64 liquefy, liquefaction
- 65 liquidation
- 66 liquidity
- 67 lists
- 68 literally
- 69 litre
- 70 livable
- 71 livid, vivid
- 72 Lloyd s
- 73 loaded words
- 74 loans
- 75 loath, loathe
- 76 local
- 77 locate/location
- 78 London Club
- 79 long-off, long-on
- 80 long term, long-term
- 81 long time, longtime
- 82 looking to
- 83 Lord s
- 84 lord-lieutenant, lord-lieutenants
- 85 lorry
- 86 loveable
- 87 low-income
- 88 LNG
- 89 LPG
- 90 LSD
- 91 lumbar, lumber
- 92 Luxembourg
- 93 Luxuriant, luxurious
- 94 Lycra
- 95 Lyon

**laager, lager**

A laager is a defensive encampment, literally or metaphorically. Lager is a type of beer.

**Labour Party, Labor Day**

Follow the convention used for proper names. Note in particular the Australian Labor Party

**lady**

Use woman. Permissible in a team title such as Fulham Ladies football club. Where organisers use the title Ladies Championship, as at Wimbledon, substitute women's championship.

**laissez faire****lambast****lame duck, lame-duck**

Two words for the noun, hyphenated for the adjective.

**Land**

The generic term for a federal state in Germany or Austria. The plural is Laender. Use state.

**landmine****Land Rover**

Trade mark. Capitalised. No hyphen.

**languid, limpid**

Languid means flagging, inert or listless. Limpid is clear or transparent.

**languor, languorous****Laos**

Use Lao for the language. Otherwise the adjective is Laotian, although there is a Lao ethnic group.

**large-scale**

Big is shorter and usually better.

**laser**

Acronym for a device using light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation.

**last/past/latest**

Last refers to times up to the present. Past is vaguer. The striker has been injured for the last (not past) three games but the star relived past glories. Use latest if last might confuse the most recent with the final occasion. His latest attempt may not be his last.

**Last Supper**

Capitalised.

**late**

Do not use to mean "dead".

**latter, former**

Avoid these expressions because they make readers read backwards to discern meaning.

**lathi**

Heavy stick carried by Indian police. Explain if used.

**laudable, laudatory**

Laudable is praiseworthy. Laudatory is giving or expressing praise.

**launderette**

British usage. In the United States, prefer self-service or coin-operated laundry.

**lay, lie**

Lay in the present tense takes an object. I lay down my arms, or I am laying down my arms. He laid down his arms. He has laid down his arms. Lie in the present tense does not take a direct object. I lie down to sleep, or I am lying down. I lay down yesterday. I have lain down for two hours.

**lay waste**

Lay waste a city, not lay waste to a city.

**lead, leading, led**

The past participle is led.

**leave**

As a verb, weak and imprecise. Use a more accurate and active verb. The attack killed three and wounded more than 20, not The attack left three killed. Duffy suffered torn ligaments after two clumsy tackles not Two clumsy tackles left Duffy with torn ligaments.

**Lebanon**

No definite article.

**lectern**

A speaker stands behind a lectern (a stand for notes) on a podium and in a pulpit. Several speakers can fit on a dais or rostrum or platform.

**leftist**

Avoid this term for something more precise.

**left wing**

A left-winger, a left-wing politician, but the left wing of the political spectrum.

**left-arm spinner**

The adjective is hyphenated.

**leg slip**

Two words for cricket fielding position.

**leg spinner**

Two words for bowler in cricket.

**legend/legendary**

Do not use except for legends. No sports person or film star is a legend.

**Legionnaires disease**

Plural, possessive and capitalised

**legislature**

Lower case in all uses.

**lesbian, lesbianism**

Lower case.

**less**

Use fewer when referring to numbers of individuals or individual items, less for quantities, e.g. Fewer than 10 rescuers were hurt but Less than 1,000 tons of coal was lost.

**leukaemia, but in American style leukemia****level, levelling, levelled, but American style level, leveling, leveled****Levi's**

Trademark for a brand of jeans. Note the apostrophe.

**leverage**

The ratio of a company's debt to equity. See glossary of financial terms.

**liaison**

Note the second i.

**liberal**

Capitalise only when part of a proper name.

**licence, license**

Licence is the noun, license the verb, but in American style license is both the noun and verb.

**lie, lying, lied**

To tell untruths.

**lie in state**

Applies only to people having a state funeral.

**lieutenant**

Hyphenate lieutenant-colonel and lieutenant-commander. At second reference just the colonel, the commander. Second lieutenant is not hyphenated but sub-lieutenant is. In the U.S. navy it is Lieutenant (j.g.) John Smith, j.g. meaning junior grade.



**lifelong**

It is wrong to call someone a lifelong alcoholic unless they started drinking in infancy. Make sure the activity or attribute really is lifelong.

**life-size****lifestyle, lifetime****lift**

Do not use as a synonym for raise, as in The Federal Reserve lifts discount rate.

**lift off**

Lift off is the verb, liftoff the noun and adjective.

**light, lighting, lit**

Use lit for the past participle.

**lightning, lightening**

Thunder follows lightning. After the storm the sky will be lightening.

**light-year**

A measure of distance not time. It is the distance light will travel in one year, about 6 million million miles (6 trillion miles) or 9.6 million million km (9.6 trillion km).

**like, as**

As compares verbs, like compares nouns and pronouns. He acted as a hero should, but he acted like a hero.

**like, such as**

Like means similar to. Such is used when offering an example. Politicians like Williams have short tempers and long memories, but Players such as Smith, Patel and Jones are essential in the team.

Do not use like as a synonym for as if. He looks as if he is reviving, not like he is reviving.

## **like-**

Hyphenate the prefix when it means similar to, e.g. like-spirited. No hyphen when it is part of a single word, e.g. likeliness, likelihood.

## **-like**

Do not precede the suffix with a hyphen unless it would create a triplle "l" or the main element is a proper noun. E.g. shell-like, Norwalk-like.

## **likeable, but in American style likable**

## **likely**

Avoid as an adverb modifying a verb, e.g. The prime minister will likely announce the date of the election on Friday. Preferable is The prime minister is likely to announceâ |

## **linage, lineage**

Linage is measurement or payment by the line and lineage is ancestry.

## **linchpin**

Not lynchpin. But lynch law.

## **liquefy, liquefaction**

Not liquify. But liquidate.

## **liquidation**

See bankruptcy.

## **liquidity**

The ease with which financial instruments can be traded on a market and turned into cash. Markets or instruments are described as being liquid, and having depth or liquidity, if there are enough

buyers and sellers to absorb sudden shifts in supply and demand without price distortions. The opposite of illiquid. The term can also be used loosely to describe cash flow in a business, so a company that has fallen into a liquidity trap may have growing orders and production but has run out of cash.

## **lists**

Lists should be in alphabetical order unless there is some other point being emphasised in the text that calls for a different order. So when referring to the G7, for example, say it comprises Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy Japan and the United States.

## **literally**

Use only in quotation since it almost always, in fact, means metaphorically.

## **litre**

To convert to Imperial gallons roughly multiply by two and divide by nine, precisely multiply by 0.22. To convert to U.S. gallons roughly divide by 4, precisely multiply by 0.264. American style is liter.

## **livable**

## **livid, vivid**

Livid can be used colloquially for extremely angry, but it means black and blue or pale and ashen. Do not confuse with vivid, which means full of life or very bright.

## **Lloyd s**

Lloyd s of London association of underwriters and Lloyd s Register of Shipping both have apostrophes. Lloyds TSB Bank has no apostrophe.

## **loaded words**

Avoid using admitted, agreed, according to, revealed, refuted, claimed etc. instead of said. They all contain an element of judgment by the reporter.

## **loans**

Do not use the verb to give when referring to loans; they are paid for through interest. Do not say someone is raising a loan when it is being arranged. Use the word raise only when the amount of a

loan already arranged is being increased. We need the exact name of the borrower, whether the loan is being guaranteed by a parent company or another body, the amount, the maturity and the interest rate. If the interest rate is variable or floating, then we need the specific reference or base rate of interest, e.g. the three-month or six-month London interbank offered rate (Libor), and the margin of interest paid above, or even below it, e.g. 1/4 percentage point.

Abbreviations such as Libor, Sibor, etc., are acceptable on second reference or in headlines. The interest payment might vary with the maturity. A five-year loan could pay 1/8 over Libor for three years, rising to 1/4 over Libor for the last two years. The loan might have a grace period the period during which only interest and no principal is paid.

We should also report the fees paid to the banks, to discover the true cost to the borrower. For loans, there is likely to be a commitment fee payment on any unused funds and a facility fee, which is a payment for arranging the loan.

Before a loan is fully repaid, borrowers can change the terms or replace it altogether. Sometimes a financially healthy borrower will take advantage of an improving market or credit rating to do so; but often requests for changed terms are signs of financial desperation. Of the definitions below, for example, a refinancing or refinancing in itself does not indicate financial health or desperation. More details would be required. The other terms, however, signal trouble.

**Refinancing:** Borrower pays off one loan with the proceeds from another provided by other lenders. If the lenders are effectively the same, bankers might call it a refinancing to disguise a rescheduling.

**Restructuring:** Borrower arranges to replace debt of one maturity with the debt of another.

**Rescheduling:** Borrower delays repayment of principal according to a new schedule. Interest continues to flow, but the rate of interest might be raised or lowered.

**Moratorium:** Borrower declares it needs time to sort out its economic affairs and suspends payments of principal and possibly of interest due. Determine whether interest will be paid. If so, banks can continue to classify the loan as a performing asset.

**Repudiation:** Borrower declares that it does not intend to service or repay existing debts.

**Default:** A loose term best avoided unless technically correct. (It is often used to mean anything from failure to make an interest payment up to an intent never to pay off a debt at all.) Technically, the borrower does not default. The lender declares the borrower in default, e.g. if the borrower does not repay either the interest or principal according to the loan conditions.

The borrower may also be in breach of certain agreements concerning its overall financial health. In either case, an event of default may then have occurred, but the lender can refrain from calling a default, preferring to help the borrower sort things out. Given the imprecision of the phrase, make clear the nature of any default declared. To avoid using the word default, bankers often prefer to call loans sub-standard, nonperforming or value-impaired.

## loath, loathe

Loath (not loth) is the adjective meaning reluctant or unwilling and loathe is the verb to dislike

intensely.

## **local**

Do not use. Local to what and to where? Say exactly where something is if you need to locate it. For example, the phrase local officials can confuse. Say officials in Tokyo, in Montevideo or wherever.

## **locate/location**

Cumbersome and can usually be replaced by a better alternative, e.g. find, place, or by rephrasing the sentence.

## **London Club**

An informal group of commercial creditors that meets to discuss debt problems with a particular country. They will normally set up an advisory committee of banks headed by a major creditor to look into ways to reschedule or write off debt arrears. Meetings are rarely held in London, but the term is bankers' shorthand to differentiate commercial creditors from the official ones which make up the Paris Club. Write an informal group of commercial creditors, called the London Club among bankers ...

## **long-off, long-on**

Hyphenated for cricket fielding positions.

## **long term, long-term**

Two words for the noun, one word hyphenated for the adjective. They had a long-term relationship which endured for the long term.

## **long time, longtime**

Two words for the noun, one word for the adjective. Theirs was a longtime friendship which lasted a long time.

## **looking to**

Japan was looking to Washington for support is all right. Japan was looking to restore good relations with Moscow is not.

## **Lord s**

The London cricket ground. Note apostrophe.

## **lord-lieutenant, lord-lieutenants**

Hyphenated. Note the plural.

## **lorry**

Use truck.

## **loveable**

## **low-income**

If you mean poor, say so.

## **LNG**

liquefied natural gas.

## **LPG**

liquefied petroleum gas (mainly propane and butane).

## **LSD**

Explain: "the hallucinogenic drug LSD."

## **lumbar, lumber**

Lumbar is of the lower back and lumber is timber, stored furniture or to move heavily.

## **Luxembourg**

## **Luxuriant, luxurious**

Luxuriant is growth in rich abundance or excess. Luxurious is given to luxury or furnished with luxuries.

## **Lycra**

A trademark. Use generic terms such as "stretch fabric".

## **Lyon**

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

# M

## Contents

- 1 Maastricht Treaty
- 2 Macau, not Macao
- 3 Mach number
- 4 machinegun
- 5 macroeconomic
- 6 Madagascar
- 7 Madonna
- 8 Madras
- 9 madrasa
- 10 mafia
- 11 Maghreb
- 12 mailman
- 13 maintain
- 14 major
- 15 majority of, vast majority of
- 16 majority, plurality
- 17 majority leader
- 18 Malagasy
- 19 Maldives Islands
- 20 Mali
- 21 Maltese
- 22 mammon
- 23 man, mankind
- 24 manifesto, manifestos
- 25 Manila
- 26 manoeuvre, but in American style maneuver
- 27 mantel, mantle
- 28 manufacture, manufacturer
- 29 maps
- 30 marines
- 31 marquis
- 32 Marseille
- 33 marshal, marshalling, marshalled, but in American style marshal, marshaling, marshalled
- 34 Massawa
- 35 Masters Series
- 36 Masters Tournament
- 37 masterful/masterly
- 38 match point
- 39 materiel
- 40 materialise
- 41 may, can
- 42 may, might
- 43 May Day, mayday
- 44 mayoress
- 45 McDonnell Douglas Corp



- 46 M.D.
- 47 meagre, but in American style meager
- 48 mean
- 49 Mecca
- 50 measures
- 51 Medal of Honor
- 52 Medecins sans Frontieres
- 53 media
- 54 medieval
- 55 medical stories
- 56 Medicaid
- 57 Medicare
- 58 meet, mete
- 59 mega-
- 60 megaton
- 61 megawatt
- 62 Melanesia
- 63 memento, mementos
- 64 memorandum, memorandums
- 65 men s, women s
- 66 Mercalli scale
- 67 Mercedes-Benz
- 68 merchant marine
- 69 merry-go-round
- 70 Messerschmitt
- 71 Messiah
- 72 metal, mettle
- 73 metaphors
- 74 meters
- 75 metre, but meter in American style
- 76 metric ton
- 77 Micronesia
- 78 mid-
- 79 middle initials in names
- 80 middleman
- 81 Mideast
- 82 MiG
- 83 mileage
- 84 mile
- 85 miles per gallon
- 86 miles per hour
- 87 militant
- 88 Military
  - ◆ 88.1 Aircraft
  - ◆ 88.2 Armoured Vehicles
  - ◆ 88.3 Battle
  - ◆ 88.4 Military titles
  - ◆ 88.5 Ships
  - ◆ 88.6 Units, formations
  - ◆ 88.7 Weapons

- 89 militate, mitigate
- 90 millennium, millennia
- 91 milligram
- 92 millimetre, but millimeter in American style
- 93 million
- 94 milquetoast
- 95 minimal
- 96 minuscule
- 97 miracles
- 98 mischievous, mischievously
- 99 mob
- 100 modalities
- 101 moderate
- 102 Mohammad
- 103 Muhammad
- 104 Monaco
- 105 money
- 106 moneyed
- 107 Mont Blanc
- 108 Montessori
- 109 months
- 110 Moonie
- 111 moot
- 112 more than
- 113 moribund
- 114 Mormon
- 115 Morse code
- 116 mortuary, not morgue
- 117 Moslem
- 118 mosquito
- 119 mother-in-law, mothers-in-law
- 120 Mother's Day
- 121 mount
- 122 move
- 123 move to
- 124 mpg, mph
- 125 Ms
- 126 Muhammad
- 127 mujahideen
- 128 Mullah
- 129 multi
- 130 Mumbai
- 131 murder
- 132 Murphy's law
- 133 Muslim
- 134 mute
- 135 Myanmar

## **Maastricht Treaty**

## **Macau, not Macao**

## **Mach number**

Mach 1, Mach 2 etc. The Mach number is the ratio of an aircraft's speed through the air compared with the speed of sound in the same conditions.

## **machinegun**

One word.

## **macroeconomic**

No hyphen.

## **Madagascar**

Use Malagasy for the people and the language.

## **Madonna**

Use this title or the Virgin Mary not Our Lady except in titles such as Our Lady of Czestochowa or in the names of churches.

## **Madras**

Use Chennai, India.

## **madrasa**

Arabic word for school. Used to describe an Islamic religious school in some Muslim countries.

## **mafia**

Lower case unless referring to a specific branch.

## **Maghreb**

Loosely North Africa, less Egypt, and literally the western part of the Middle East. Maghreb is also the official name in Arabic of the Moroccan state.

## **mailman**

Use letter carrier or postal worker (U.S.)

## **maintain**

Use this word with care. As a verb of saying it can, like claim, suggest reporters are sceptical about the statement quoted.

## **major**

Avoid as an adjective. If it is not superfluous find a precise alternative. One exception is golf, where the four biggest tournaments are known as the majors.

## **majority of, vast majority of**

Use most.

## **majority, plurality**

In election results a majority is more than half the votes, or more votes than all others combined. A plurality is more than the next highest number of votes. It may be less than 50 percent. An absolute majority is more than half the votes and a relative majority is more votes than anyone else. When used alone, majority and plurality are usually followed by a singular verb.

## **majority leader**

U.S. political term. Capital when used as a formal title, e.g. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid or House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer.

## **Malagasy**

The people or language of Madagascar.

## **Maldivé Islands**

Adjective Maldivian, South Asia.

## **Mali**

Country in West Africa; adjective Malian

## **Maltese**

People of Malta.

## **mammon**

Lower case.

## **man, mankind**

Humanity is preferable when referring to the human race.

## **manifesto, manifestos**

## **Manila**

Capital of the Philippines. Lower case for paper and envelopes.

## **manoeuvre, but in American style maneuver**

## **mantel, mantle**

Mantel is a frame around a fireplace. Mantle is a cloak or covering.

## **manufacture, manufacturer**

Make or maker is shorter.

## **maps**

Always check distances and directions given in a story by using a map. Check place names, too.

## **marines**

Capitalise when referring to the U.S. Marine Corps or when referring to its members. e.g. Six U.S. Marines, the U.S. Marines, Marine operations. Do not refer to them as "soldiers".

## **marquis**

Not marquess

## **Marseille**

Not Marseilles, France.

## **marshal, marshalling, marshalled, but in American style marshal, marshaling, marshalled**

The noun is an official in charge of ceremonies or military affairs, as in field marshal. The verb is to arrange in order. It is the Marshall Plan and the Marshall Islands in the Pacific. Do not confuse with martial, belonging to war or to the army or navy.

## **Massawa**

Not Massoua, Ethiopia.

## **Masters Series**

Leading tournaments in men's tennis. Capitalised and with no apostrophe, e.g. Rome Masters Series tournament.

## **Masters Tournament**

Golf tournament. No apostrophe, the Masters on second reference.

**masterful/masterly**

Masterly means very skilful and worthy of a master or champion. Masterful is imperious and domineering. The champion put on a masterly display of putting but The CEO had a masterful way with his executives.

**match point**

Two words in tennis and other racket sports    scoring.

**materiel**

Use the English term military equipment.

**materialise**

Unless you mean take bodily form it is simpler to write happen or occur or take place.

**may, can**

May is about asking permission and can is about the ability to act. If we may borrow your car we can drive to the beach. May can also be about uncertainty. War may start tomorrow, or may not. War can start tomorrow because all the weapons are in place. Using may in headlines is overdone.

**may, might**

In the past tense may implies continued uncertainty, while might implies a possibility which did not happen. Manchester United may have signed a new striker (but they may have not). Manchester City might have won the cup (but they did not, because they failed to sign the striker).

**May Day, mayday**

May Day, capitalised, is the holiday, and mayday is the international distress call for ships and aircraft.

**mayoress**

The wife of a mayor, not a female mayor.

**McDonnell Douglas Corp**

Not MacDonnell or McDonnell-Douglas for the U.S. aircraft company.

**M.D.**

Use doctor, physician or surgeon.

**meagre, but in American style meager****mean**

Place the word average where it correctly qualifies the item or quantity intended, e.g. Reporters drink an average of six cups of coffee a day. (Not: the average reporter drinks six cups of coffee a day). There are three types:(most often used) is calculated by adding all the constituent parts together and dividing by the number of parts.The middle value, meaning the number of values above it is the same as the number below it. The most commonly occurring value.

**Mecca**

One of Islam's Holy Places. Do not use in a colloquial sense since it is disparaging e.g. tourist mecca.

**measures**

When abbreviating metric units use the singular form without a full stop, e.g. kg or km not kgs or kms. The following need not be spelled out on first mention: kg, km, lb, cm, mm. See also conversions, pound and ton/tonne.

**Medal of Honor**

The highest U.S. military honor, awarded by Congress. Do not refer to "Congressional Medal of Honor".

**Medecins sans Frontieres**

Literally Doctors without Borders, a group of volunteer doctors and other medical staff of various nationalities who operate with the agreement of the local government where they are needed, e.g. war, epidemics, famine. It has no political line. Spell out in first reference. At second reference abbreviate it to MSF and translate it. Take care when saying where MSF is based. There are different branches which act independently of each other. See [www.msf.org](http://www.msf.org)



**media**

A plural noun.

**medieval****medical stories**

Handle stories about new threats to health or reputed cures for AIDS, cancer and other scourges with great care. They play on the hopes and fears of millions of people. If a story making dramatic claims for a cure for AIDS or cancer does not come from a reputable named source it must be checked with recognised medical experts.

**Medicaid**

U.S. federal state programme that helps pay for health care for the needy, elderly, blind and disabled and low-income families.

**Medicare**

U.S. federal health care insurance program for people 65 and older and for the disabled.

**meet, mete**

He met party leaders, not He met with party leaders. Mete is distribute or apportion, and meet is fitting. You mete out meet punishment. The adjectival use should be avoided unless in direct quotation.

**mega-**

Avoid as a prefix meaning very large. Use only when it means one million.

**megaton**

A measure of explosive force. A megaton is equivalent to the explosive force of one million tons of TNT (trinitrotoluene).

**megawatt**

The capacity of a power station is measured in megawatts and its output in megawatt hours. Do not confuse megawatt MW (a million watts) with a milliwatt mW (a thousandth of a watt).

## **Melanesia**

An island group in the Southwest Pacific. Micronesia is a group north of Melanesia and Polynesia is in the central Pacific.

## **memento, mementos**

## **memorandum, memorandums**

## **men s, women s**

But menswear and womenswear.

## **Mercalli scale**

See earthquakes.

## **Mercedes-Benz**

Note hyphen.

## **merchant marine**

Lower case.

## **merry-go-round**

## **Messerschmitt**

Not Messerschmidt for the German aircraft or in the aerospace and armaments group Messerschmitt-Boelkow-Boehm.

## **Messiah**

Capitalised in religious uses and lower case when used generically to mean a liberator.

## **metal, mettle**

Metal is copper or steel. Mettle is spirit, temperament or courage.

## **metaphors**

A fresh and vivid metaphor can add much to a story. But avoid mixed metaphors, e.g. The Egyptian swimmers walked away with the championships, and metaphors whose literal sense is absurd e.g., a growing bottleneck, which would solve rather than aggravate a problem.

## **meters**

Not metres for gas, electricity and parking meters.

## **metre, but meter in American style**

Spell out in full, e.g. 100 metres. Convert metres to feet for short distances (up to 10 metres), to yards for longer distances. To convert to feet roughly add a zero and divide by three, precisely multiply by 3.28. To convert to yards roughly add a zero and divide by nine, precisely multiply by 1.094. In athletics and swimming results metre, kilometre and centimetre are no longer specified. The figure is enough. In sports reporting do not convert to feet or yards except for golf and U.S. sport.

## **metric ton**

We use both tons and tonnes, without having to give a conversion, but you must make clear what kind of ton(ne) is meant, using the terms long and short where appropriate. The three measures are:

tonne 2,204.6 pounds (1,000 kg), formerly called metric ton long ton 2,240 pounds (or 20 hundredweights, 20 x 112 pounds). short ton 2,000 pounds, American ton

## **Micronesia**

See Melanesia.

**mid-**

No hyphen unless the following word starts with a capital letter, e.g. mid-Pacific, mid-Atlantic. Cricket terms are an exception, e.g. mid-off, mid-on, mid-wicket. Also midterm, no hyphen. .

**middle initials in names**

Do not use them unless they are an essential distinguisher.

**middleman**

One word.

**Mideast**

Never use in a headline or text. Use Middle East.

**MiG**

Note the lower case i. Use this abbreviation for the aircraft, e.g. MiG-25.

**mileage****mile**

To convert to kilometres roughly multiply by 8 and divide by 5, precisely multiply by 1.609. One nautical or sea mile equals 1.853 km.

**miles per gallon**

Use the abbreviation mpg only for second and subsequent references.

**miles per hour**

Use the abbreviation mph only for second and subsequent references.

## **militant**

A non-state group or members of a non-state group who carry arms or believe in using force to achieve aims.

## **Military**

If in doubt, use the generic term or leave it out. Avoid military jargon, which is particularly impenetrable. However, an attempt should be made to understand it. Jargon is encouraged in the armed forces to reduce the emotional element in the business of killing people, to encourage secrecy and to reduce the number of words in issuing orders. Faced by an inquisitive civilian, the military may deliberately obfuscate or evade admissions of defeat or error with an avalanche of esoteric terms and acronyms. Know them, but do not use them. For example **collateral damage**, military-speak for striking unintended targets, whether people or buildings. Also, **friendly fire**, which means attacking your own side by mistake in combat. Do not use either unless in quotes. Prefer plain English. Similarly, avoid military metaphors.

## **Aircraft**

**air base** two words. So also air raid but airspace and airstrike.

**AWACS** Airborne Warning And Control System. Aircraft equipped with search radar, height-finding radar and communications equipment for controlling weapons, generally other aircraft, surveillance and early warning. The United States uses modified Boeing 707s with rotating radar domes above the fuselage. The U.S. Navy uses a smaller AWACS, the twin-engine turboprop E2C Hawkeye with a revolving dome. It flies from aircraft carriers and is built by Northrop Grumman Corp.

**Helicopters** Helicopters are also aircraft. A spokesman who mentions aircraft could be referring to fixed-wing aircraft or helicopters or both.

**stealth** U.S. stealth aircraft are the F-117A Nighthawk fighter which is in fact a small bomber flown by a single crew member and designed for night attack on ground targets, not aerial warfare, and the larger B-2 flying-wing bomber manned by two or three crew and able to carry 16 2,000-pound (900 kg) satellite-guided bombs. Both aircraft are subsonic. They depend for their safety on carbon-based composite building materials and an unusual shape that absorbs radar signals or reflects them at angles which make the aircraft difficult to detect for useful periods of time. Do not capitalise stealth.

**STOL** short take-off and landing. (See also VTOL)

**strafe** to machinegun or rocket from the air. Do not use in referring to aerial bombing or ground-to-ground attacks.

**UAV** Unmanned Aerial Vehicle. The Predator is a U.S.-built UAV costing \$3 million that is primarily used to collect intelligence but can act as an offensive weapon, sometimes equipped with

two Hellfire missiles. The Global Hawk with a wingspan wider than a Boeing 737 s can loiter high above the area it is monitoring for more than 24 hours while the Dragoneye is a tiny unmanned scout aircraft for reconnaissance by ground troops.

**VTOL** vertical take-off and landing. The British-designed AV-8B Harrier jump jet developed in the 1960s is unique among jet fighters in being able to take off vertically.

**warplane** One word. It is a useful one for the lead paragraph but it is better in most cases to be specific (fighter, bomber) although some aircraft can carry out a variety of missions, such as the F16. The Fairchild A-10 Thunderbolt is a ground-attack aircraft designed to support ground forces. The Panavia Tornado is a multi-role combat aircraft. The B-52 is a long-range bomber. In financial stories and when dealing with contracts, sales and development, put the manufacturer s name (and company) before the aircraft type.

## Armoured Vehicles

If in doubt about the name of any of these just call it an armoured vehicle. An artillery piece such as a gun or howitzer may be mounted on tracks or wheels and be self-propelled. Journalists have mistaken self-propelled guns for tanks.

**armoured fighting vehicle (AFV)** neither a tank nor an armoured personnel carrier, but a hybrid evolved in an era of fast-paced warfare in which infantry must keep up with tanks. An AFV like the Bradley Fighting Vehicle used by the U.S. military carries a squad of infantry. The Soviet-designed BMP-1 carries infantry and is armed with an anti-tank missile launcher and a 73mm gun. The British GKN Warrior is a 25-tonne tracked armoured vehicle with a 30mm cannon.

**armoured personnel carrier (APC)** A tracked or wheeled vehicle that carries small groups of infantry into battle. It provides protection against small-arms fire and shell splinters, and may be armed with machineguns. The Soviet designed BTR-60 has gunports down the side.

**tank** The main battlefield weapon, combining firepower, mobility and protection. They are tracked, and usually armed with a large gun of perhaps 105mm, 120mm or 130mm calibre firing with the help of computerised target selection and fire control. Shells hardened with depleted uranium may be used to pierce armour. The secondary armament consists of one or more machineguns. The M1-A1 and M1-A2 Abrams used by the U.S. army have top speeds of 40 mph (60 kph). The British Challenger tank is designed to survive nuclear, chemical and biological attack.

## Battle

**battlefield** one word. Also battlefront and battleground.

**battledress** A loose, drab uniform, comprising a single overall or jacket and trousers, that blends in with the environment, provides protection against extreme weather and allows plenty of movement. Write soldiers in battle gear to refer to soldiers wearing the harness known as webbing that supports ammunition clips, grenades, water bottles, entrenching tools, ground sheet and rations.

**BDA** Military shorthand for Bomb Damage Assessment. Avoid both unless in quotes. Spell out BDA in brackets if used in a quote

**biological warfare** The use in warfare of micro-organisms to cause death or disease.

**ceasefire** one word

**chemical warfare** The use of chemicals other than explosives, e.g. gas.

**fighting** This is relative. It ranges from hand-to-hand combat to the risk of an exchange of intercontinental ballistic missiles. Avoid *fierce fighting* and *heavy fighting* unless casualties are known to be heavy or the fire intense. Spell out what is meant. Avoid using *infantry fighting* simply because combatants are on foot. It implies a set-piece engagement not, for instance, a few militiamen jumping garden walls and blasting away with rifles.

**gunbattle** one word. So also gunfire as well as gunman and gunpoint.

**no man s land** no hyphens

**offensive** An offensive is more specific than an attack. It is an extensive attack over days, weeks or months often on a wide front or an entire theatre of a campaign or war by air, sea or ground forces and sometimes all three.

**raid** Use only when a force attacks and then leaves an objective, as opposed to occupying it.

## Military titles

Ranks should be never be abbreviated and should be capitalised when referring to a specific individual and hyphenated if two words, e.g. Major-General John Brown. At subsequent reference he is either Brown or the general (not the major general). One exception to the hyphenation rule is second lieutenant.

## Ships

**warship** A naval vessel, though not necessarily an armed one. The term does imply the ship is a combatant but a fleet auxiliary – a navy ship carrying stores, fuel and ammunition – is a warship. Warships vary in armament and in size, from a few hundred tonnes to tens of thousands. Identify the type – e.g. fast patrol-boat, corvette, frigate, destroyer, cruiser. Never use battleship as a synonym for warship.

**aircraft carrier** A floating airfield, it carries fixed-wing aircraft on its flight deck and/or helicopters. It should not be confused with other classes of warship, such as frigate, destroyer or cruiser. These may also carry helicopters but they are not aircraft carriers.

**assault ship** A warship designed to support amphibious and air operations against a land-based enemy. They carry helicopters, landing craft, commandos or marines, and may carry amphibious armoured vehicles.

**battleship** A specific class of warship, the battleship is obsolete. It is not to be confused with other classes like corvette, minesweeper, patrol boat, frigate, destroyer. Do not use as a synonym for warship.

**submarine** In naval parlance a boat rather than a ship. A submarine may fight submerged or on the surface, using torpedoes or missiles – the missiles being tactical or strategic. There are two main submarine types depending on the method of propulsion: nuclear and diesel electric.

## Units, formations

**Units, formations, army** Use capitals when you write the title of a specific unit e.g. the 1st Infantry Division but otherwise say division. Also note that there are many national exceptions to these broad definitions.

**squad** The basic building block of an army, equivalent to the British section of eight soldiers. Three squads or sections form a platoon. **platoon** The essential tactical unit in any army, capable of patrolling, attacking and defending independently. Usually about 30-strong, an infantry

**platoon** typically has three sections or squads. The platoon may be led by a sergeant or a junior commissioned officer. It may have its own light machinegun and mortar units of two or three men each as well as anti-tank weapons and possibly shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles. In a cavalry (armoured) unit the platoon is often called a troop of three or four vehicles. Some armies use troop instead of platoon in their artillery units.

**company** usually three platoons commanded by a major or captain. In a cavalry unit the term squadron may be used. Artillery may be organised in batteries of six to a dozen guns, rocket-launchers or mortars. **battalion** the basic building block of any big military formation, a battalion comprises about 500 to 1,000 soldiers, broken down into companies, platoons, squads or sections. It is usually commanded by a lieutenant-colonel. It is the highest single-arm unit in many armies i.e. infantry, armoured or engineer battalion. Higher formations tend to be mixed and comprise, for instance, infantry and tank battalions. Some armies use the term regiment for a tank or artillery battalion.

**brigade** Several battalions or regiments grouped together. Commanded by a brigadier, as in the British Army, or brigadier-general. Some armies confuse reporters by using regiment to mean a brigade.

**division** A group of brigades. Usually commanded by a major-general, it can contain all elements needed to operate independently and is then effectively a small self-contained army.

**corps** Usually at least two divisions. Often commanded by a lieutenant-general.

**army** At least two corps. Tends to be the command of a full five-star general or, a marshal or field marshal. The army group of several armies was a feature of the big land battles of World War Two.

**infantry** Soldiers who fight on foot. Traditionally, infantry marched into battle. Mechanised infantry refers to foot soldiers carried to the battlefield in trucks. In modern armies, infantry is carried into battle in armoured vehicles, supported by tanks and artillery.



**regiment** Be careful with this term. Use varies. Find out precisely what is meant in any particular case. It can be used as a synonym for either a battalion or a brigade. Also, a regiment in the British army may have one or more battalions but these rarely serve together as or in a brigade. The 1st battalion of the Royal Halberdiers may be part of an armoured brigade formed for service in the Middle East while the 2nd battalion of the same regiment is in Scotland.

**special forces** Anything from the U.S. Rangers, Russia's Spetsnaz and Britain's Special Air Service Regiment to thugs with weapons. So-called special forces have been known to carry out such special tasks as ethnic cleansing, i.e. killing civilians. Use with care. Also avoid using the subjective terms crack and elite.

**squadron** As with regiment, be careful. Many but not all cavalry (armoured) regiments are broken down into squadrons and troops. Some air forces are organised on the basis of squadrons each with several flights and grouped as wings. The term squadron may also refer to a group of ships, a small fleet usually put together for some particular task.

**task force** A force organised for a special operation.

**troops** Use in the plural for large, round numbers scores, hundreds, thousands of soldiers, not for small specific numbers. France sent 5,000 troops to the Gulf is right. Guerrillas killed three government troops is wrong. A troop may also be a small unit of armour or guns.

## Weapons

**air-to-ground** hyphenate. Also anti-aircraft.

**artillery** a weapon that provides indirect fire over long distances. It comprises guns, howitzers, large mortars, multiple-rocket launchers, anti-aircraft guns and missiles. Avoid saying big guns or heavy artillery to dramatise events. Some armies use heavy artillery only for guns of a calibre of 203mm and up.

**automatic weapon** -- reloads itself and keeps firing as long as the trigger is pressed. A semi-automatic reloads itself but the trigger has to be pressed for each shot. Many types of rifle offer the option of automatic fire and semi-automatic. A pistol is not an automatic weapon, but a machine-pistol is.

**ballistic missile** A missile that is initially powered and may be guided but falls under gravity on to its target. It is fired upwards and then comes down. Some missiles, although not many, fly on a flat trajectory and are therefore not ballistic missiles, e.g. a cruise missile.

**bullet** the projectile fired from a pistol, rifle or machinegun. It is distinguished from the spent cartridge case ejected from the weapon. The entire cartridge comprises cartridge case, priming charge, propellant and bullet.

**bunker buster** an air-launched, laser-guided U.S. bomb of around 5,000 lb (2,270 kg) used to penetrate hardened concrete structures, often underground.

**calibre** the calibre of a weapon that fires bullets, or rounds, is the internal diameter of its barrel. It is expressed in millimetres or decimal fractions of an inch, e.g. a 12.7mm machinegun is equivalent to the U.S.-designed .50 calibre machinegun. Other examples: a 155mm howitzer, a 105mm field

gun, an eight-inch gun, a .22 pistol, a Colt .45, a .38 revolver.

**cannon** A light, fast-firing weapon used to engage aircraft, ground or seaborne targets. It can be mounted in aircraft or on a truck, a tank chassis, a fast patrol boat or as the main armament on an armoured vehicle. It often has more than one barrel, and typically varies in calibre from 20mm up to 40mm. Cannon as a synonym for artillery is archaic and should be avoided.

**cluster bomb** Released from the air and contains around 200 bomblets that can penetrate armour or kill anyone stepping on them.

**cruise missile** A missile like the U.S. Tomahawk guided to its target using terrain-mapping radar. It can be a ground-launched cruise missile (GL-CM) or air-launched (ALCM). They can also be launched from ships and submarines. Do not capitalise cruise.

**Daisy Cutter** a large 6,800 kg (15,000 lb) U.S. bomb

**e-bomb** energy pulse bomb. This emits high-power microwave signals intended to cripple enemy electronics.

**gun** A long-range artillery weapon that fires shells through a rifled barrel over a considerable distance. A gun may be towed or self-propelled, when it moves under its own power on tracks or wheels, with the crew provided with some degree of armoured protection.

**howitzer** An artillery piece with a relatively short barrel designed to fire at a high angle over hills or fortifications. It may be towed or it may be self-propelled.

**ICBM** Intercontinental ballistic missile with a range of about 3,500 miles.

**IRBM** Intermediate range ballistic missile

**machinegun** A fully automatic weapon. A light machinegun typically provides a squad or section of soldiers with fire support. Although it is called light it may be heavier than a rifle. An example is the U.S. 5.56mm M-60. A heavy machinegun is heavy in terms of its calibre, not its weight. It may be used to provide the main armament on a troop carrier or the secondary armament on a tank. Do not confuse with a sub-machinegun which is lighter and designed for individual rather than group use.

**machine pistol** An old term for a weapon superseded by the sub-machinegun. Use the expression machine pistol only when a weapon is specifically designated as such by the manufacturer or armed forces using it.

**MIRV** Multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicle. Each of the warheads carried by this ICBM can be aimed at a different target.

**MOAB** Massive Ordnance Air Blast. A 9,750 kg (21,500 lb) bomb known as the Mother of All Bombs.

**mortar** a mortar fires a bomb, not a shell, from a tube. It is therefore wrong to say mortars exploded at the airport. It is correct to say mortar bombs or mortar rounds did so. The mortar bomb has fins to stabilise it in flight. It is lobbed at the target, describing a steep parabola and falling almost vertically. It can strike behind a hill, house or wall, or hit troops in trenches. Small mortars

are carried by infantry, larger ones may be mounted or towed.

**multiple-rocket launcher** A number of tubes or racks, usually mounted on a vehicle and capable of firing rockets singly or in salvos.

**recoilless rifle** An anti-tank weapon. Although largely ineffective against most modern tanks, it is still widely used by guerrillas or militias in many countries. It looks like a tube, slightly flared at the rear end, is often mounted on wheels and is recoilless in the sense that gases from the weapon's discharge are allowed to escape from the rear of the weapon. It fires an anti-tank round. Do not confuse it with a mortar or a howitzer.

**rifle** It has a rifled barrel, imparting spin to the bullet to help give range and stability. The trend is towards lighter, shorter and smaller calibre rifles. The automatic rifle is the infantry's standard weapon with an effective range of 300 to 1,200 yards. It may be semi-automatic, automatic or both. Bolt-action rifles, in which each cartridge is manually placed in the breech using a bolt mechanism, are still used by snipers because of their accuracy, range and reliability.

**RPG** Rocket-propelled grenade.

**sub-machinegun** An automatic weapon with many of the characteristics of a machinegun – fully automatic, a high rate of fire – but it is lighter, shorter, of smaller calibre and is designed for the individual rather than the group. It can be easily concealed. Its small size and light weight make it ideal for combat in built-up areas, for guerrilla warfare and for airborne forces. It has a short range, and is less accurate than a rifle or machinegun. Definitions are blurred: a Kalashnikov AK-47 was designated a sub-machinegun by the former Soviet armed forces but is known as an assault rifle in the West.

**SAM** Surface-to-air missile, launched from the surface against an aircraft or another missile.

**SLBM** Ship- or submarine-launched ballistic missile.

**unconventional weapon** Avoid. It is often used by conventional military forces to refer to effective methods or weapons they do not have, do not understand and generally disapprove of. Using a bamboo spike smeared with excrement may have been unconventional to the U.S. soldier impaled on it, but it came naturally to a Vietnamese irregular. Depending on who is speaking, the term 'unconventional weapons' might also mean nuclear, germ or chemical weapons. Be specific.

**WMD** The abbreviation for weapons of mass destruction. Spell out on first reference. Usually taken to mean biological, chemical and nuclear weapons.

## **militate, mitigate**

Militate means to have force or influence and is often used in the phrase to militate against. Do not confuse with mitigate which means to alleviate or to moderate.

**millennium, millennia**

From the Latin mille, a thousand, and annus, a year.

**milligram****millimetre, but millimeter in American style**

Use mm with no space, e.g. 30mm cannon.

**million**

The word is spelled out but the abbreviation mln can be used for the sake of brevity in headlines. Use numerals before million, 6 million. Do not go beyond two decimal places.

**milquetoast**

A character easily dominated, not milk toast.

**minimal**

The least possible size or amount. Do not confuse with small or even tiny.

**minuscule**

Prefer very small or unimportant.

**miracles**

Keep miracles for religious stories. In disaster reports avoid the cliché: It was a miracle no one was killed, said a rescue worker.

**mischievous, mischievously****mob**

Use this word with care and never of a political protest. The neutral crowd is usually better unless there is an outbreak of unorganised violence.

**modalities**

Use means, procedures.

**moderate**

Use with care. Often used to describe Islam or Muslims in a particular country, implying a value judgment.

**Mohammad**

Use this form for the Prophet and for anyone else of this name unless we know that he prefers an alternative spelling or an alternative appears in an official title or name for an organisation.

**Muhammad**

Use Mohammad.

**Monaco**

Not Monte Carlo as dateline.

**money**

Not monies.

**moneyed**

Not monied, but prefer rich or wealthy.

**Mont Blanc**

At 15,771 feet/4,807 metres, this French mountain is the highest in western Europe. But the highest mountain in Europe is Elbrus (18,481 feet/5,633 metres) in the Caucasus.

**Montessori**

## **months**

Abbreviate to Jan. Feb. Aug. Sept. Oct. Nov. and Dec. with a full stop when used with a specific date, Feb. 12, but spell out in full when used alone or with only the year, February 2002. In datelines months are given as follows: Jan, Feb, March, April, May, June, July, Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov, Dec, without full stop.

## **Moonie**

A perjorative term for members of the Unification Church of Rev. Sun Myung Moon. We should not use it in copy and avoid it when possible in direct quotations. See religious terms

## **moot**

Little understood outside the United States. If you use the phrase a moot point in a quote, explain it a debatable point.

## **more than**

Use more than with numbers and over with less specific quantities. More than 100 or over half.

## **moribund**

About to die or in a dying state. It does not mean something is weak or stagnant or not growing.

## **Mormon**

A member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or Mormon Church. Only the **L** is capitalised in **Latter-day**. The church claims eight million members worldwide.

## **Morse code**

## **mortuary, not morgue**

## **Moslem**

Use Muslim in all cases.

**mosquito**

mosquitoes.

**mother-in-law, mothers-in-law****Mother s Day**

Not Mothers Day.

**mount**

give the full name, whether of mountains or communities, e.g. Mount Everest, Mount Vernon.

**move**

Avoid as a noun. Prefer decision, agreement, or another more precise alternative.

**move to**

This phrase is often used to give a spurious sense of physical action when in fact the only action has been verbal, e.g. Clinton moved to head off congressional opposition to his budget plans when he said.... Avoid it.

**mpg, mph**

miles per gallon, miles per hour both acceptable at second and subsequent references, both lower case and without full stops. Spell out miles per gallon and miles per hour in full on first reference.

**Ms**

Not used, as also Mr, Mrs, Miss, Master.

**Muhammad**

Use Mohammad.

**mujahideen**

A term for Islamic guerrilla groups, meaning holy warriors.

**Mullah**

A Muslim scholar. Most often used pejoratively to refer to clerics in Iran, although it is a neutral term for Muslim prayer leaders in Afghanistan. Avoid in Iranian context and never use as shorthand for Tehran's religious-political leadership unless quoting somebody.

**multi**

Words starting with multi are not hyphenated — multilateral, multinational, multicultural, multilingual

**Mumbai**

Not Bombay, India unless in a proper name.

**murder**

Use this word only of violent deaths that have no political overtones and generally avoid unless there has been a conviction. Otherwise stick to killing unless the word murder is used in a criminal charge or trial.

**Murphy's law**

if something can go wrong, it will. Avoid, but explain if in a quote.

**Muslim**

Not Moslem.

**mute**

Describes someone who is physically unable to speak. Do not use dumb. People who have difficulty speaking are speech impaired.

**Myanmar**

Formerly Burma.



Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

# N

## Contents

- 1 NAACP
- 2 NAFTA
- 3 names
- 4 Nanjing
- 5 nano-
- 6 naphtha
- 7 NASA
- 8 nation
- 9 National Guard
- 10 national names
- 11 nationalities
- 12 national security adviser
- 13 nationwide
- 14 Native American
- 15 NATO
- 16 naught, nought
- 17 nauseous, nauseated
- 18 nautical mile
- 19 naval, navel
- 20 nave, knave
- 21 navy
- 22 nearby, near by
- 23 negatives
- 24 neither, nor
- 25 NEPAD
- 26 Nepali
- 27 nerve-racking
- 28 Netherlands
- 29 nevertheless
- 30 new
- 31 news conference
- 32 New Year's Eve, New Year's Day
- 33 newspaper titles
- 34 nicknames
- 35 nighttime
- 36 Nissan, Nissen
- 37 Nobel Prize, Nobel Prizes
- 38 noisome, noisy
- 39 no man's land
- 40 no one
- 41 nobility
- 42 non-
- 43 none
- 44 nonetheless
- 45 Nordic countries

- 46 normalcy
- 47 Northern Ireland
- 48 notable
- 49 noted
- 50 now
- 51 nowadays
- 52 nuclear power
- 53 numbers
- 54 numerous
- 55 numskull

## **NAACP**

National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples (U.S.)

## **NAFTA**

North American Free Trade Agreement. A trade pact between the United States, Mexico and Canada.

## **names**

See personal names, proper names, courtesy titles, nobility, religious titles, royalty.

## **Nanjing**

Not Nanking, China.

## **nano-**

Prefix for one-billionth of a unit.

## **naphtha**

Not naptha.

## **NASA**

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (U.S.). At first reference a form like the U.S. space agency NASA is acceptable. See [www.nasa.gov](http://www.nasa.gov)

## **nation**

Do not write the nation's when you are referring to a specific country. Be specific: Britain's largest airport or Germany's largest airport. The nation's capital is an American cliché for Washington. We should use the U.S. capital.

## **National Guard**

Stories from the United States filed to the rest of the world should explain that this is a militia force. In American style, capitalize for U.S. or state forces, the National Guard, Kansas National Guard. Lower case for the national guards of other countries.

## **national names**

You need not specify a minister's nationality in the first paragraph of a story that names the country and comes from a dateline in that country. Under a Washington dateline, for example, write: Secretary of State Joan Smith said on Friday the United States would... not U.S. Secretary of State Joan Smith said on Friday the United States would ... There is likewise no need to specify the nationality of groups that obviously are of the nationality of the country datelined. Under an Athens dateline it is Police arrested not Greek police arrested.

## **nationalities**

Nationalities are written out in full and not abbreviated in stories and in sports results. The only exception is U.S. for United States. Use Britain and British (not United Kingdom or Great Britain). Use The Netherlands (not Holland) and Taiwan (not Chinese Taipei). Distinguish between North and South Korea.

## **national security adviser**

Not an official title: lower case.

## **nationwide**

Rarely necessary in the phrase nationwide broadcast. If a head of state or government goes on television or radio we can assume the broadcast is nationwide. Specify if it is not.

## **Native American**

The preferred term, bearing in mind that it includes e.g. Inuit who are not Indians. American Indian is acceptable. Where possible, be more specific and give the name of the tribe (eg. Navajo, Cherokee). See race

## **NATO**

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Brussels), the Western military alliance founded in 1949. The initials may be used by themselves at first reference with the full name given lower in the story.  
[www.nato.int](http://www.nato.int)

## **naught, nought**

You come to naught, or set a naught. Nought is the number zero.

## **nauseous, nauseated**

Nauseous is the same as nauseant, producing nausea. Nauseated is sickened. Only very objectionable people are nauseous. Ordinary people are much more likely to be nauseated.

## **nautical mile**

1,852 metres or 1.1515 statute miles. Do not convert the nautical mile used for fishing limits, by ships when reporting distances at sea and by NASA and others reporting space shots. If using nautical miles in space stories, make this clear in text. See also knot.

## **naval, navel**

Naval is pertaining to warships or a navy. Navel belongs to the centre of the abdomen.

## **nave, knave**

Nave is the main part of a church. A knave is a false, deceitful person.

## **navy**

International style is to capitalise if the word appears in the formal title, the British Navy or the Royal Navy, otherwise lower case. In American style, capitalise for U.S. Navy, lower case for other navies.

## **nearby, near by**

Nearby is an adjective, the nearby town. Near by is an adverb. We stayed near by.

## **negatives**

These can be troublesome, for instance if the word not is dropped in a sentence or mutilated to now. Try to avoid using not where other forms can be found, e.g.: decided against rather than decided not to & unnecessary rather than not necessary & declined to comment rather than would not comment. Try to avoid officialese euphemisms containing the word negative, e.g. negative growth is shrinking.

## **neither, nor**

Can govern only two elements e.g. Neither Norway nor Sweden voted. Do not write Neither Norway, Sweden nor Denmark voted. If both elements are singular use a singular verb, e.g. Neither France nor Germany welcomes the prospect. If one element is singular and one plural then the verb agrees with the noun nearest to it. e.g. Neither the players nor the referee is fit. Neither Joe nor his parents were able to come. Always use neither ... nor& Do not use neither&or. Always use not ... or. Do not use not&nor.

## **NEPAD**

New Partnership for Africa's Development (Midrand, South Africa). An agency reporting to African Union leaders with the mission to strengthen Africa's political and economic governance and mobilise external and African financial resources for the continent's development. See [www.nepad.org](http://www.nepad.org)

## **Nepali**

Not Nepalese as adjective.

## **nerve-racking**

## **Netherlands**

In text write the Netherlands, in datelines omit the article, e.g. ARNHEM, Netherlands, May 16 ...

## **nevertheless**

## **new**

Can often be omitted. Companies often announce that they will build a new plant. New is superfluous since, by definition, any plant being built must be new.

**news conference**

Preferred to press conference.

**New Year's Eve, New Year's Day**

But good luck in the new year.

**newspaper titles**

Whatever the masthead says do not capitalise articles and particles in the names of English-language newspapers and magazines, e.g. the New York Times, the News of the World. The names of some non-English language newspapers begin with a word meaning the. In such cases write the newspaper O Globo/Le Monde/Die Welt not the O Globo/Le Monde/Die Welt newspaper.

**nicknames**

Use a nickname instead of a given name if that is the preference of the individual concerned, e.g. Tiger Woods.

**nighttime****Nissan, Nissen**

Nissan cars, Nissen hut.

**Nobel Prize, Nobel Prizes****noisome, noisy**

Noisome is disgusting to the sight or smell. Do not confuse with noisy, which offends the hearing.

**no man's land**

Not no-man's-land.

**no one**

Not noone or no-one.

**nobility**

Hereditary British nobility consists, in descending order of precedence, of dukes, marquises, earls, viscounts and barons. A few women are hereditary countesses or baronesses in their own right. Life peers, whose titles die with them, are also barons. If a well-known person is made a life peer or peeress, you may use their given names at first reference: Lord David Owen and Owen in subsequent references.

The nobility are known collectively as peers (and peeresses), not lords, although the upper house of Parliament is the House of Lords. Dukes get their full title at first reference, e.g. the Duke of Norfolk; second reference Norfolk or the duke. Never Lord Norfolk. His wife is the Duchess of Norfolk, the duchess, never Lady Norfolk.

Refer to all other peers simply as Lord So-and-So, whatever their precise title, and to their wives as Lady So-and-So. But more formal titles may also be used if desired, e.g. the Marquis of Zetland, Earl Cawdor, Viscount Boyd. Barons, whether hereditary or life peers, are always Lord So-and-So. At second reference simply So-and-So, Zetland, Cawdor, Boyd.

Hereditary or life peers, are always Lord So-and-So. At second reference simply So-and-So, Zetland, Cawdor, Boyd. The wife of an earl is a countess, of a viscount a viscountess and of a marquis a marchioness. The children of dukes and marquises and the daughters of earls have the courtesy title of lord or lady before their first names. Do not use the Honorable or the Hon. before the names of the untitled sons of peers.

Baronets (whose titles are hereditary) and knights (whose titles die with them) are known as Sir, e.g. Sir Reginald Barnett. At second reference Barnett. However if you had to distinguish between him and his wife, use Sir Reginald and Lady Barnett respectively. If he is a government minister the preferred style is Sir Reginald Barnett, British health minister, not British Health Minister Sir Reginald Barnett. His wife would be Lady Barnett, whether he was a baronet or a knight.

A dame, equivalent to a knight, is a woman honoured in her own right. At first reference Dame Judi Dench, then Dench.

**non-**

If the first element of a word is the negative non-, hyphenate, e.g. a non-aggression pact. But nonconformist.

**none**

This may take either a singular or plural verb.



**nonetheless****Nordic countries**

Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Scandinavia comprises only Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Because of the danger of confusion, list the countries even if you use Nordic or Scandinavia in a lead for the sake of brevity.

**normalcy**

Use normality.

**Northern Ireland**

Northern is always upper case. Never use Ulster except when quoting someone. The Irish Republican Army, which fought for years to oust Britain from Northern Ireland with an ultimate aim of reunifying the island of Ireland, may be referred to by its initials alone at first reference. It should not be described as a Catholic group. Describe Sinn Fein as the political ally of the IRA. Avoid the word paramilitary and use guerrillas, gunmen or bombers, depending on context. Do not use the word loyalists for Protestant guerrillas unless quoting someone.

**notable**

Not noteable.

**noted**

You can note only established facts, not claims or opinions. Avoid the word.

**now**

A strong and simple word that should always replace flabby phrases such as at the present time and at this time.

**nowadays****nuclear power**

Some frequently used terms:

**becquerel** -- Unit of radiation. Because a becquerel is very small, measurements may be in trillions of becquerels. If the term tera becquerel is used, say it means trillions.

**criticality** -- Point at which a nuclear chain reaction becomes self-sustaining, producing a steady power output.

**curie** -- Unit measuring the rate at which substances lose radioactivity, or the number of disintegrations per second.

**fission** -- Process in which the nucleus of an atom is split in the core of a nuclear reactor. Other atoms are split in a chain reaction, releasing large amounts of energy. (The same process as in atomic bombs.) The rate of fission is controlled in a power plant by rods pushed into the core of the reactor, avoiding a runaway chain reaction. Fission increases when the control rods are raised, and the reactor shuts down when they are pushed in fully. The fuel is uranium. Heat created by fission is used to produce steam which drives turbo-generators.

**fusion** -- Brings atoms together and fuses their nuclei at high temperature to form a single large nucleus, releasing large amounts of energy. The process used in the H-bomb.

**half-life** -- The time it takes for half of a radioactive material to decay, or lose its radioactivity.

**meltdown** -- When a nuclear reactor's core gets so overheated that the fuel melts, raising the possibility of a leakage of radiation.

**plutonium** -- An artificial metallic element formed from uranium and used as fuel in fast-breeder reactors. It forms as the isotope plutonium-239 but disintegrates to become uranium-235.

**rad** -- Unit that measures absorbed radiation.

**radiation, radioactivity** -- Radiation is energy emitted in the form of waves or particles when atomic nuclei disintegrate. Radioactivity is emitted in alpha, beta or gamma rays (the most dangerous) and neutrons. Measured by a Geiger counter. rem (roentgen equivalent man). Measurement of radiation absorbed by humans. An X-ray produces six or seven millirems.

**roentgen** -- Measurement of the radiation from X-rays or gamma rays.

**sievert** -- Measures dose of radiation absorbed by humans. One sievert is 100 rems.

**uranium** -- A radioactive metal. It is enriched by rapid spinning that separates uranium-235, the fuel for nuclear reactors, from uranium-238 (used to make plutonium).

## numbers

See figures, fractions.

## **numerous**

many is shorter, better.

## **numskull**

Not numbskull.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

# O

## Contents

- 1 OAPEC
- 2 OAS
- 3 oasis, oases
- 4 OAU
- 5 obscenities
- 6 obsolescent, obsolete
- 7 occur, occurring, occurred
- 8 ocean
- 9 octopuses
- 10 OECD
- 11 of/of the
- 12 Off-spinner
- 13 official titles
- 14 officials
- 15 OIC
- 16 oil barrels
- 17 oilfield
- 18 oil statistics
- 19 oil strikes
- 20 OK
- 21 old-time, old-timer, old times
- 22 oligopoly
- 23 Olympiad
- 24 on behalf of
- 25 on to
- 26 one word or two
- 27 ongoing
- 28 online
- 29 only
- 30 OPEC
- 31 opera titles
- 32 opinion polls
- 33 optimum
- 34 ordnance, ordinance
- 35 organisations and institutions
- 36 orient
- 37 Orthodox Church
- 38 Osama bin Laden
- 39 Oscars
- 40 others
- 41 Ottawa
- 42 ounce
- 43 oyster

- 44 out of court, out-of-court
- 45 outpatient
- 46 outside
- 47 Oval Office
- 48 over
- 49 overweening
- 50 oxford blue
- 51 oxymoron

## **OAPEC**

Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (Kuwait). Note the z in Organization. Set up in 1968. Aims to improve economic co-operation in the petroleum industry. Members are Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and the United Arab Emirates. The group does not as a rule make decisions on oil output or pricing. See [www.oapecorg.org](http://www.oapecorg.org)

## **OAS**

Organization of American States (Washington). It has 35 active members representing all countries in the Americas except Cuba, which was effectively expelled in 1962 but is still listed as a non-active member. See <http://www.oas.org>

## **oasis, oases**

## **OAU**

Organisation of African Unity (Addis Ababa). Superseded by African Union.

## **obscenities**

Use them only if they are in direct quotes and if the story would be seriously weakened by their omission. Obscenities, if retained, must not be euphemised or emasculated by the use of dots. In general we should not quote mindless obscenities from the person in the street or, say, an athlete or soldier but should consider using them if people prominent in public life use them in a context that gives their remarks great emphasis or throws in question their fitness to hold office.

## **obsolescent, obsolete**

If something is obsolescent it is on the way to becoming obsolete.

**occur, occurring, occurred****ocean**

Lower case when used alone or in plurals, e.g. Indian and Pacific oceans. Upper case in Antarctic Ocean, Arctic Ocean, Atlantic Ocean, Indian Ocean, Pacific Ocean.

**octopuses**

Not octopi.

**OECD**

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD itself uses a hyphen in its formal name) in Paris. Established in 1961 as the successor to Marshall Plan which brought aid to Europe after World War Two. Took on a global role promoting growth and trade in wealthy member states. It gives economic advice to members and non-members. See <http://www.oecd.org>

**of/of the**

Can often be excised. The centre of the town becomes the town centre.

**Off-spinner**

Hyphenated for bowler in cricket.

**official titles**

Be restrained in using idiomatic phrases to describe officials or official bodies rather than their official titles, e.g. planning overlord, watchdog commission. Such terms are often necessary in lead paragraphs where use of the full title would be clumsy, but the official title must be given in the body of the story. Do not use idioms with pejorative overtones like trade union boss.

**officials**

Do not describe government ministers as officials.

**OIC**

Organisation of the Islamic Conference, the principal world organisation of Muslim states, with 57 members. It is funded mainly by Saudi Arabia and based in Jeddah. Among OIC institutions is the Islamic Development Bank which provides soft loans for development projects in Islamic countries. See [www.oic-oci.org](http://www.oic-oci.org)

## **oil barrels**

A barrel of oil is equivalent to 35 Imperial or 42 U.S. gallons or 159 litres or 0.159 cubic metres. To convert cubic metres or kilolitres (1,000 litres) to barrels multiply by 6.29. Japan often quotes oil statistics in terms of kilolitres. The conversion from barrels (volume) to metric tonnes (weight) depends on the specific gravity, or density, of the oil. The lighter the oil, the more barrels per tonne. To convert Brent crude from barrels to tonnes multiply by 7.57, to convert tonnes to barrels multiply by 0.132. U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) has 7.62 barrels per tonne. For Russian Urals crude, usually expressed in tonnes, multiply by 7.33. Refined petroleum product conversions also vary according to specific gravity. As a rule use 8.6 barrels to a tonne of gasoline, 7.9 barrels per tonne of jet/kerosene, 7.59 barrels per tonne of heating oil, 7.4 barrels per tonne of diesel and 6.4 barrels per tonne of residual fuel oil.

## **oilfield**

One word.

## **oil statistics**

Oil production and export figures are usually expressed in terms of barrels per day (bpd) although they are sometimes quoted also in tonnes per year. Standardise on bpd figures, normally giving them as a bracketed conversion after any figure expressed in tonnes per year. When converting from tonnes per year to bpd don't forget to divide the barrel figure by 365 for the daily rate. As with all conversions, give an approximate conversion of an approximate figure and do not convert to more decimal places than are given in the original figure.

## **oil strikes**

It is not correct to report the discovery of a new oil well. Nature does not provide ready-made oil wells awaiting discovery.

## **OK**

Not okay. Try to avoid in alerts and headlines. Do not use in text of stories unless you are quoting someone.

**old-time, old-timer, old times****oligopoly**

A situation where a few firms selling an item control its supply and hence influence its price.

**Olympiad**

Use only to mean the period of four years between two Olympic Games.

**on behalf of**

Use by unless you really do mean acting as a representative of or in the interests of.

**on to**

Two words. Into    one word.

**one word or two**

Contemporary usage is to prefer one word, with hyphenated words becoming increasingly rare. However, common sense applies. Use a hyphen if it helps to clarify. We should avoid double consonants, double vowels or using double letters if they detract from clarity or are difficult to read eg. Profit-taking is more readable than profittaking. As a general rule, words with "pre-" and "post-" prefixes should be one word. [Click here for further guidance on hyphenation and prefixes.](#)

**ongoing**

Usually tautological as in the ongoing crisis. If you need such a word use continuing.

**online**

One word for computer connections and the Internet.

**only**

As a rule only should go immediately before the word or phrase it qualifies. Only SAS flies to the Faroes on Sunday means that on a Sunday SAS is the only airline operating to the islands. SAS flies only to the Faroes on Sunday means that on Sunday the only SAS flight operating is to the islands. SAS flies to the Faroes only on Sunday means that the airline has only one flight a week to



the islands.

## **OPEC**

Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (note definite article and z in Organization). The acronym OPEC can be used at first reference if desired, preferably with a descriptive tag. The title should be given in full at the second reference. Do not use the acronym in brackets immediately after the full reference because it is self-explanatory. It is permissible to refer to OPEC as a cartel because it controls more than 50 percent of world crude trade. OPEC's self-imposed output limit is made up of individual member country supply quotas. Do not say the OPEC quota (singular) to describe the cartel's overall output limit. Use output (or supply or production) ceiling or limit. OPEC members are Algeria, Angola, Ecuador, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Venezuela. See [www.opec.org](http://www.opec.org)

## **opera titles**

See capitalisation.

## **opinion polls**

A story based on the results of an opinion poll should include, as a minimum, the name of the organiser, who published it, the size of the sample, and how and where it was carried out. If available, the margin of error should be given, as well as the survey's history - is it carried out on a regular basis? Do not write stories based on Internet polls, unless they are conducted by a reputable polling organisation. These can be easily manipulated and may be unreliable. For technical reasons, avoid the word poll in the headline, which should be reserved for polls commissioned by Reuters itself.

## **optimum**

Optimum is not a simple superlative which can replace biggest, best or largest. It means the best for the achievement of an aim or result, or the point when any condition is most favourable.

## **ordnance, ordinance**

ordnance is artillery, ordinance a decree.

## **organisations and institutions**

Use the name style that appears on their official websites.

## **orient**

Prefer to orientate. When using to refer to the Far East, capitalise: Oriental cuisine.

## **Orthodox Church**

Eastern Rite Churches returned to communion with Rome after the 1054 East-West split between Rome and Orthodoxy but worship in an Eastern, usually Orthodox rite. Each returned to unity with Rome at a different time in the past 900 years or so.

## **Osama bin Laden**

Use bin Laden at second reference. He has been stripped of Saudi citizenship so refer to as Saudi-born.

## **Oscars**

The statuettes presented annually by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Also known as the Academy Awards.

## **others**

Beware of this word when reporting such things as casualties. It is usually unnecessary, as in 50 people were killed and 200 others injured.

## **Ottawa**

## **ounce**

To convert to grams roughly multiply by 30, precisely multiply by 28.35. Dry ounce = 28.35 grams, ounce troy = 31.10 grams. Liquid or fluid ounce: UK = 28.4 millilitres (20 fluid ounces = 1 pint); US = 29.6 millilitres (16 liquid ounces = 1 liquid pint).

## **ouster**

Except in a legal context the word is ousting. Dismissal or overthrow is better.

## **out of court, out-of-court**

They reached an out-of-court settlement and she was paid out of court.

## **outpatient**

One word.

## **outside**

Never outside of.

## **Oval Office**

White House office of the president.

## **over**

Use 'more than' with numbers. More than 100 rather than over 100. This is often used instead of 'because of' or 'about': Workers are striking over pay. Keep 'over' for place -- over the moon.

## **overweening**

## **oxford blue**

As a colour, lower case. But if an athlete has represented the University, then Oxford Blue.

## **oxymoron**

A figure of speech which deliberately combines opposites, such as bitter-sweet, living dead.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

# P

## Contents

- 1 paedophile, pederast
- 2 pail, pale
- 3 palate, palette, pallet
- 4 Palestine Liberation Organisation
- 5 pan
- 6 panacea
- 7 Panchen Lama
- 8 Panjsher
- 9 Pap smear
- 10 papal nuncio
- 11 paparazzo, paparazzi
- 12 parallel, paralleling, paralleled
- 13 paraplegia
- 14 Paris Club
- 15 Parkinson's disease
- 16 parliament
- 17 parliamentarian
- 18 part time, part-time
- 19 partial, or broken quote
- 20 participate
- 21 participles
- 22 partner
- 23 Pashtun
- 24 passer-by, passers-by
- 25 past, last
- 26 passive
- 27 patrol, patrolling, patrolled
- 28 payroll
- 29 peach Melba
- 30 peal, peel
- 31 pedal, peddle
- 32 peer
- 33 pejorative
- 34 peninsular
- 35 per
- 36 percent
- 37 percentage
- 38 perceptible
- 39 perfect
- 40 period close quote
- 41 period of time
- 42 perk
- 43 Persian
- 44 Persian Gulf
- 45 person, people
- 46 personal, personally, personnel

- 47 personal names
- 48 persuade, convince
- 49 petrol bomb
- 50 Petrodollar
- 51 PGA
- 52 phase, faze
- 53 phenomenon
- 54 phoney
- 55 phosphorus
- 56 picket, picketed, picket line
- 57 picnic, picnicking, picknicked, picknicker
- 58 pidgin English
- 59 pigeonhole
- 60 pilots
- 61 pileup
- 62 PIN
- 63 pious
- 64 plan ahead
- 65 plane
- 66 planets
- 67 plea bargain
- 68 plead, pleading, pleaded
- 69 pled
- 70 PLO
- 71 plough, but American style plow
- 72 plummet
- 73 plurality
- 74 p.m.
- 75 podcast
- 76 podium
- 77 poems
- 78 point-blank
- 79 pointed out
- 80 police
- 81 policymakers
- 82 Polisario Front
- 83 political parties
- 84 politicking
- 85 Polynesia
- 86 pooh-pooh
- 87 Poona
- 88 Pope
- 89 populace
- 90 pore
- 91 port, starboard
- 92 Portuguese names
- 93 posh
- 94 positive
- 95 postmarket

- 96 post mortem
- 97 postpone
- 98 postwar
- 99 potato, potatoes
- 100 pound
- 101 pound sign
- 102 pour, pore
- 103 practice, practise
- 104 pre-
- 105 precautionary measure
- 106 precondition
- 107 pre-dawn
- 108 predominant, predominantly
- 109 predilection
- 110 prefixes
- 111 premarket
- 112 premier
- 113 premiere
- 114 premier league
- 115 premise, premises
- 116 pre-owned
- 117 preplanned
- 118 prepositional phrases
- 119 prescribe
- 120 presently
- 121 President
- 122 Presidents Day
- 123 presidency
- 124 press conference
- 125 press reports
- 126 pressurise
- 127 prestigious
- 128 pretax
- 129 pretence, pretext
- 130 pretension, pretentious
- 131 prevaricate, procrastinate
- 132 prime minister
- 133 prime rate
- 134 primeval
- 135 principal, principle
- 136 prior to
- 137 prise apart, not prize.
- 138 prison officers
- 139 prisoner of war, prisoners of war
- 140 pristine
- 141 prize money
- 142 private equity firm
- 143 privilege, privileged
- 144 proactive
- 145 process

- 146 Procter and Gamble
- 147 proffer, proffered
- 148 profit
- 149 profit-sharing
- 150 profit-taking
- 151 prognosis
- 152 program
- 153 pro-life
- 154 prone, supine
- 155 pronouns
- 156 pronunciation
- 157 propeller
- 158 proper names
- 159 prophecy, prophesy
- 160 proscribe, prescribe
- 161 prostate, prostrate
- 162 protest
- 163 protester
- 164 prototype
- 165 proven
- 166 proverbial
- 167 provost marshal, provost marshals
- 168 public school
- 169 publications
- 170 publicly
- 171 pull back, pullback
- 172 pull out, pullout
- 173 punctuation
- 174 Pune
- 175 punter
- 176 purchase
- 177 push up, push-up
- 178 pygmy
- 179 Pyrrhic victory

## **paedophile, pederast**

A paedophile sexually desires children. A pederast has sexual relations with a boy.

## **pail, pale**

Pail is a small bucket. Pale is wan or light in colour.

## **palate, palette, pallet**

Palate is a sense of taste or part of the mouth. An artist mixes his paints on a palette, and a pallet is a mattress or small bed.

## **Palestine Liberation Organisaton**

Not Palestinian. PLO is acceptable on first reference and spell out in a subsequent reference.

## **pan**

The prefix does not usually take a hyphen. For example panacea, panoply, pantheism. But Pan-American -- hyphenated when referring to the North, Central and South America region, but not in the official title of the Pan America Games. Also pan-African and pan-European.

## **panacea**

A universal medicine or cure.

## **Panchen Lama**

See Dalai Lama, Tibet.

## **Panjsher**

Not Panjshar or Panjshir, Afghanistan.

## **Pap smear**

Capitalise Pap. A smear test for cancer devised by George Papanicolaou.

## **papal nuncio**

The Holy See's ambassadors around the world are known as papal nuncios and its embassies as nunciatures. If the Holy See does not have formal diplomatic relations with a country the Pope's envoy to the church in that country is an apostolic delegate.

## **paparazzo, paparazzi**

## **parallel, paralleling, paralleled**



**paraplegia**

The total or partial paralysis of both legs. Quadriplegia is the paralysis of all four limbs.

**Paris Club**

An informal body of 19 creditor nations plus occasional others. It has met in Paris under the chairmanship of the French Treasury since 1956 to help indebted countries reorganise their finances. It treats debt only for those countries with support agreements with the IMF and does so on the condition that other lenders give comparable terms. See also loans, London Club.

**Parkinson's disease****parliament**

As a general rule refer to legislative assemblies initially as parliaments, regardless of their formal names. These can be given lower in the story, e.g. Prime Minister Tony Blair told parliament ... Replying to questions in the House of Commons, he said ... In American style, capitalise when the name of a formal body, e.g. The British Parliament.

**parliamentarian**

Member of parliament preferable, although parliamentarian is becoming more widely accepted.

**part time, part-time**

Two words for the verb, one word for the adjective.

**partial, or broken quote**

Try to avoid unless the fragment is vital to understanding the importance of meaning.

**participate**

Use take part.

**participles**

There are cases in which an unattached participle is acceptable, e.g. Considering the risks involved, you were right to cancel the trip. Although it is not you who is considering the risks but the writer of

the sentence, the sense is clear. But avoid the unattached participle when it makes the sentence absurd, e.g.: Having disarmed, Ruritania's allies guaranteed its defence. Here the participle having disarmed is wrongly attached to the allies when in fact it is Ruritania that has disarmed. Fetching anything between \$16,000 and \$40,000, only about 2,500 women around the world can afford to buy haute couture dresses. The juxtaposition of fetching and women suggests it is the women not the dresses who are worth \$16,000.

## **partner**

Prefer boyfriend, girlfriend or lover.

## **Pashtun**

Not Pushtun, Pushtoon, Pathan. This tribe in Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province and areas of Afghanistan speaks Pashto, also one of the main languages of Afghanistan.

## **passer-by, passers-by**

## **past, last**

Usually we mean last when we write past. Last refers to the time up to the present. Past is vaguer. Joe Smith has been injured for the last three games not for the past three games, but Eva Petite relived past glories. Also, check for redundancy in phrases such as past history, past record, past achievements.

## **passive**

Avoid the passive voice. It is longer and clumsier than the active voice and often confuses the reader. Write Police arrested five armed men rather than Five armed men were arrested by police. The active voice allows you to push on with the rest of the story. Police arrested five armed men who had stormed a bank in central Paris. If you write Five armed men, who had taken over a bank in central Paris, were arrested by police you ask readers to retain a great deal of information before they know fully who did what to whom. The passive voice is unavoidable when the subject of an action is the main point of the story. President Jane Flow was shot and killed by... is better than A gunman shot and killed President Jane Flow.

## **patrol, patrolling, patrolled**

## **payroll**

One word ("non-farm payrolls" -- U.S.).

**peach Melba****peal, peel**

Peal of bells, orange peel.

**pedal, peddle**

You pedal a bicycle but peddle your wares. A pedaller rides a bicycle, a pedlar sells goods, or peddles door to door. But use the form drug peddler.

**peer**

An equal.

**pejorative****peninsular**

This is the adjective. The noun is peninsula. The Peninsular War was fought on the peninsula.

**per**

Avoid the Latin. Six dollars each rather than six dollars per item.

**percent**

One word, but the abbreviation pct is acceptable in alerts and headlines. Use numerals before percent, 4 percent, 6 percent etc. Use percent after both numbers when writing about a change, rose to 5 percent from 4 percent, not rose to 5 from 4 percent. Do not confuse percentage with percentage points. If a bank rate rises from one percent to two percent it is a rise of one percentage point and an increase of 100 percent not one percent. Note that a 100 percent increase is twice the original figure, 200 percent three times, 300 percent four times, etc. It is a common error to write, for instance, that a 400 percent rise means a quadrupling; in fact it means a fivefold increase. To calculate percentages divide the first figure by the second and multiply by 100. For example 70 as a percentage of 350 is:  $70/350 \times 100 = 20$  percent. Use a calculator for complicated figures and express the result to the nearest two decimal places, e.g. 75 expressed as a percentage of 350 is 21.42857142 or 21.43 percent. Always use decimals not fractions in percentages.

**percentage**

Write many or most rather than a large percentage of.

**perceptible****perfect**

Do not write more perfect or less perfect because things are either perfect or they are not. You can use less than perfect.

**period close quote**

Periods (full points, full stops) always go inside quotation marks.

**period of time**

Use one word or the other, not both together.

**perk**

Shortened form of perquisite. Explain as a fringe benefit.

**Persian**

Generic name for the language spoken in Iran, Tajikistan and northern Afghanistan. It is also known locally as Farsi in Iran, Tajik in Tajikistan and Dari in Afghanistan, but Persian is the preferred overall name.

**Persian Gulf**

Use Gulf

**person, people**

Person singular and people plural. Do not use persons.

**personal, personally, personnel**

Personal or personally, meaning private or individual, is almost always unnecessary, e.g. He personally took his personal belongings. For personnel use people, staff or workers.

**personal names**

Check names, and then check them again, and then check them again. Never presume you know how to spell a name, no matter how common and how familiar it may seem. Is it Smith, or Smyth or Smythe or Smif? Use a given name and surname when first identifying people, and the surname alone on second reference. Only if a given name is not available or if it is known that an individual prefers to be identified by his initials (e.g. Former South African President F.W. de Klerk) should you use initials. First names that look unfamiliar or odd to English-speaking readers need no special treatment but first names that look like misprints of familiar names, such as Joh or Jame or Arturk may call for repetition at first reference, e.g. Joh (repeat Joh) Bjelke-Petersen. Do not write Joh (ed:correct) Bjelke-Petersen. Be careful with e.g. Evan/Ewan, Michel/Michael. Sports stories and results follow the same rule. Use given name and surname at first reference and the surname alone for subsequent references. To help readers not familiar with names, use a he/she or his/her at second reference to make clear the gender of someone whose name could be of either sex or whose name is not readily known to a non-native, e.g. Clare, Hilary. If you see a story with the same name spelled in different ways, do not assume that the first use is right, or the most frequent use is right, or any or all of them are right. Check with the author. Write declined to be identified not declined to be named. The source already has a name but does not wish to publicise his identity. See also Chinese, Ethiopian, European, Hispanic, Korean, Portuguese, Thai, Vietnamese names.

**persuade, convince**

You persuade people to do something, convince them of something or that something is the case. Never write convince to.

**petrol bomb**

A bottle of petrol with a petrol-soaked rag stuffed into the neck. The rag is set alight and the bottle thrown, resulting in a fiery explosion on impact. Do not use Molotov cocktail.

**Petrodollar****PGA**

Professional Golfers Association

**phase, faze**

Phase is a stage in growth or development. Faze is to worry or disturb.

**phenomenon**

Phenomena is the plural form. Do not use phenomenal if you mean extraordinary or remarkable or just big.

**phoney****phosphorus****picket, picketed, picket line****picnic, picnicking, picknicked, picknicker****pidgin English****pigeonhole**

Both noun and verb.

**pilots**

Military aircraft other than strategic bombers and transports normally carry only one pilot. Write the two crew not the two pilots when reporting incidents involving fighter-bombers and the like.

**pileup**

One word as a noun, two words as a verb.

**PIN**

Personal identification number. PIN number is tautologous.

**pious**

Avoid describing someone as e.g. a pious Muslim or a pious Christian. Say practising.

**plan ahead**

Just plan will do.

**plane**

Use aircraft, but higher plane, not higher plain.

**planets**

Capitalise the names of planets.

**plea bargain**

Noun. Plea-bargain is the verb. The verb is only used intransitively, i.e. not The lawyer plea-bargained the case.

**plead, pleading, pleaded****pled**

Legalese. Use pleaded.

**PLO**

Palestine (not Palestinian) Liberation Organisation. PLO is acceptable on first reference. Spell out in a subsequent reference.

**plough, but American style plow****plummet**

Avoid in market reports unless it is a precipitous decline. A 2-percent fall is not a plummet.

**plurality**

See majority, plurality.

**p.m.**

Time, e.g. 3 p.m. or 3:45 p.m.

**podcast****podium**

A speaker stands behind a lectern (a stand for notes) on a podium and in a pulpit. Several speakers can fit on a dais or rostrum or platform.

**poems**

As in other works of art, capitalise every word in the title apart from conjunctions, articles, particles and short prepositions, e.g. *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* , *Elegy in a Country Churchyard* , *The Waste Land* .

**point-blank**

Note hyphen.

**pointed out**

Avoid this term if the statement is in any way contentious since it suggests that the writer accepts that what the speaker is saying is a fact. Plain said is better.

**police**

Use police officers, not policemen.

**policymakers**

One word.



## **Polisario Front**

Algeria-based movement seeking the independence of Western Sahara from Morocco. It fought a low-level war for independence for 16 years after Morocco annexed the territory with the pullout of colonial power Spain in 1975. Its name is the Spanish abbreviation for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Rio de Oro.

## **political parties**

Capitalise the names of political parties and of movements with a specific doctrine, e.g. a Communist official, a Democratic senator. Use lower case for non-specific references, e.g. The communist part of the former Soviet Bloc, but the Communist Party of what was then East Germany; the settlement was run on communist principles; he proposed a democratic vote. The name of a political philosophy should be lower case as noun or adjective, unless it derives from a proper noun: communism, communist, fascism, fascist, but Marxism, Marxist, Nazi, Nazism.

## **politicking**

## **Polynesia**

Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia are island groups in the Pacific and sub-regions of Oceania.

## **pooh-pooh**

## **Poona**

Use Pune, India.

## **Pope**

Capitalise only as a title before a name, not when referring to the pope. See religious titles

## **populace**

The common folk. Does not mean the population

## **pore**

Pour liquid and pore over maps and documents.

**port, starboard**

Port is left, starboard right in nautical parlance. Use left and right.

**Portuguese names**

Portuguese and Brazilians, like the Spanish, include the family names both of their father and their mother in their full names. Unlike the Spanish, they put the mother's name before the father's and they normally retain both names at second reference. Where they use one it would always be the patronymic, i.e. the last name. Thus Jose Cabral Nettim could be either Cabral Nettim or Nettim at second reference.

**posh**

Slang. Avoid.

**positive**

Avoid as a synonym for good or fruitful.

**postmarket**

One word.

**post mortem**

Needs the word examination afterwards -- a post mortem examination. By itself, post mortem means simply 'after death'.

**postpone**

Events that are called off but will be held later are postponed. Report the new date if possible. Only those events scrapped completely are cancelled. American style uses cancel, canceled, canceling but cancellation.

**postwar**

No hyphen.

**potato, potatoes****pound**

The abbreviation lb (with no full stop and the same in the singular and the plural) is acceptable at all references. To convert to grams roughly multiply by 900 and divide by 2, precisely multiply by 454. To convert to kilograms roughly multiply by 9 and divide by 20, precisely multiply by 0.454.

**pound sign**

Use pounds rather than the £ sign to denote sums in pounds sterling, thus 420

**pour, pore**

Pour liquid and pore over maps and documents.

**practice, practise**

Practice is the noun, practise the verb, but in American style practice is both noun and verb.

**pre-**

If the second element of a word beginning with pre- starts with an e, hyphenate, e.g. pre-empt.

**precautionary measure**

Precaution alone will do.

**precondition**

Tautological. Condition is enough.

**pre-dawn**

If something happened shortly before dawn, pre-dawn may be technically correct, but it is a cliché to avoided. Never use it to mean merely that something happened during the night.

**predominant, predominantly**

Not predominate, predominately.

**predilection****prefixes**

As a general rule do not hyphenate. The exceptions are if the prefix ends in a vowel and the word that follows starts with the same vowel, e.g. pre-eminence and pre-establish. Cooperate and coordinate are exceptions. If the word that follows a prefix is capitalised then use a hyphen, e.g. trans-Panamanian. Transatlantic and transpacific are exceptions.

**premarket**

One word.

**premier**

Use premier for heads of government in states that are part of a larger political entity, e.g. the Australian and German states and the Canadian provinces. Reserve prime minister for the heads of government of sovereign states. Premier may be used for brevity in a headline.

**premiere**

The debut, opening or first showing of a TV show or film.

**premier league**

The English premier league is not capitalised.

**premise, premises**

Premises are always plural when referring to property, but legalistic and best avoided. Prefer an exact description – the house, the factory etc. A premise is a proposition supporting an argument.

**pre-owned**

Use second-hand.

**preplanned**

Tautological. Planned is enough.

**prepositional phrases**

Phrases that start and end with a preposition are usually verbose. Avoid expressions like: in order to ... in accordance with ... at this moment ... in respect to ... in receipt of ... with a view to & in connection with ... in the wake of & apprehension as to the outcome.

**prescribe**

Prescribe is to set down as an order, proscribe is to prohibit.

**presently**

Use to mean in a short time or soon, rather than now or at present. Present and presently are usually redundant when used to mean what is happening now.

**President**

Capitalise only when a formal title before a name.

**Presidents Day**

No apostrophe. Unofficial name of the holiday celebrating George Washington's birthday, and observed on the third Monday in February. This usage comes up in our copy at least one day a year.

**presidency**

Lower case.

**press conference**

Use news conference unless broadcast journalists, photographer and camera operators have been excluded.

**press reports**

When picking up newspaper, radio or television reports, name the source. Do not refer just to press reports. Quoting a news report does not exonerate journalists from responsibility to be accurate, balanced and not defamatory. We should make every effort to check a pick-up even ... not available to comment... shows an effort was made. Insert relevant background and give some indication of the political stance, reliability and potential for bias of the source.

**pressurise**

Use press or pressure unless speaking of industrial processes.

**prestigious**

Avoid this pompous and often tautological word. If something is prestigious, or famous, then we need hardly say so.

**pretax**

One word, no hyphen.

**pretence, pretext**

A pretence is a false show, a sham or a false allegation. A pretext is an ostensible motive put forward to conceal the real one. Pretense is the American style.

**pretension, pretentious****prevaricate, procrastinate**

Prevaricate is to mislead or lie. Procrastinate is to delay or defer.

**prime minister**

Capitalise the title when it immediately precedes the person's name. When the title follows the name or is used alone, use lower case, e.g.: French Prime Minister Jacques Dupont; Jacques Dupont, the French prime minister. But The president said: I would like to welcome the Manchukistan prime minister, Stefan Hartzjand.

**prime rate**

In the United States prime rate is a benchmark reference for determining interest rates on short-term loans to high-quality large borrowers. The actual rate could be lower but more often it is higher than the benchmark. Sometimes used erroneously to imply it is the bank's lowest rate.

**primeval****principal, principle**

Principle is always a noun, meaning a fundamental basis or truth. Principal can be an adjective, meaning chief, or a noun meaning chief person, as in principal of a school or capital sum, as in debt principal.

**prior to**

Prefer before.

**prise apart, not prize.****prison officers**

Not jailers or warders.

**prisoner of war, prisoners of war**

Hyphenate when a compound modifier: prisoner-of-war camp.

**pristine**

Pristine means belonging to the earliest period or in its original state. It does not mean just clean.

**prize money**

Two words.

**private equity firm**

Three words.

**privilege, privileged**

Not privileged.

**proactive**

Prefer active or energetic.

**process**

Can usually be excised in phrases such as development process. Prefer active or energetic.

**Procter and Gamble**

Not Proctor and Gamble.

**proffer, proffered**

**profit**

Not profits.

**profit-sharing**

Hyphenated for both noun and adjective.

**profit-taking**

Hyphenated for both noun and adjective.

**prognosis**

Prognosis is forecasting, or a forecast, especially of a disease.



## **program**

Use this spelling only in stories about computers and for stock market program trading. Otherwise programme. In American style, program is for all uses.

## **pro-life**

Use anti-abortion.

## **prone, supine**

Prone, like prostrate, means lying face down. Supine is face up.

## **pronouns**

Use neuter pronouns for countries, ships, cars, aircraft, animals, etc., e.g. Portugal and its territories, Aboard the liner when it sailed. The occasional bright story may be enhanced by the use of a feminine or masculine pronoun to personalise a machine or animal, but these should be rare exceptions.

## **pronunciation**

When a difficult personal or place name appears on the file for the first time, radio and television subscribers by giving a guide to pronunciation. Assume familiarity with the principles guiding pronunciation of European languages like English, French, German, Italian and Spanish and need not provide guides to pronunciation of most names phonetically transcribed from another script, e.g. Arabic or Japanese. Give guidance in brackets after the name, hyphenating the syllables and capitalising the syllable stressed, e.g. General Michel Aoun (pronounced OW-oon), a rail strike in Bydgoszcz (pronounced BID-gosh).

## **propeller**

## **proper names**

If proper names are in English use the style and spelling as it appears on the organisation's own nameplate and business cards, e.g. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Scottish Labour Party, U.S. Department of Defense. If proper names are translated into English use the spelling convention of that region.

**prophecy, prophesy**

I make a phrophecy when I prophesy. The noun is prophecy, the verb is prophesy.

**proscribe, prescribe**

Proscribe is to prohibit, prescribe to set down as an order.

**prostate, prostrate**

Prostate is a gland, prostrate is lying face down.

**protest**

Protest against a government or protest about a policy. If it is a solemn declaration rather than an act of disapproval then protest the faith or protest his innocence. Do not write a protest when you are describing a demonstration. American style drops the adverb for the verb of disapproval, protest the policy.

**protester**

Not protestor. But demonstrator.

**prototype**

The original model. Do not qualify, as in the first prototype or an early prototype.

**proven**

Use proved except in two cases: in writing of oil reserves or of the Scottish legal verdict not proven (neither guilty nor not guilty).

**proverbial**

Best excised. If you are using or describing a proverb then there is no need to say so.

**provost marshal, provost marshals**

## public school

In some countries this term refers to a private or fee-paying school as opposed to a state or government school. Use only when quoting someone and then explain it.

## publications

No quotation marks around the title. Capitalise articles and particles in the names of English-language newspapers and magazines, e.g. The New York Times, The News of the World. The names of some non-English language newspapers begin with a word meaning the. In such cases write O Globo/Le Monde/Die Welt not the O Globo/Le Monde/Die Welt newspaper.

## publicly

Not publically.

## pull back, pullback

Two words for the verb, one for the noun.

## pull out, pullout

Two words for the verb, one for the noun.

## punctuation

- **apostrophes:** Use the apostrophe according to the following rules, unless to do so would lead to a word that looked or sounded very strange.

Singular words and plural words not ending in s form the possessive by adding s, e.g. Boeing s new airliner, the children s books. Plural words already ending in s form the possessive by adding the apostrophe alone, e.g. the soldiers weapons.

There is usually no problem about using the apostrophe with words ending in s. the class s performance, the princesses return, Shultz s car are all acceptable because they can be pronounced easily. Some words would look or sound so odd, e.g. the Dukakis s son, Paris s reputation, Tunis s main prison or Woolworth s results that it best to write your way out of trouble. Recast such phrases, e.g. the son of the Dukasises, the reputation of Paris, the main prison in Tunis and results from Woolworths. Companies which end in s like Qantas or Optus might also appear ugly with the s possessive. The best option is to avoid if possible.

Note that it s is a contraction of it is. The possessive form of it is its.

Do not use an apostrophe in words like the 1990s or abbreviations like NCOs.

- **brackets:** If an entire sentence is in brackets, put the full stop (period) inside the closing bracket, e.g. (...reported earlier.) If a sentence has a bracketed section at the end, the full stop goes outside the closing bracket, e.g. -reported earlier). If a bracketed section in the middle of a sentence is followed by a comma, it also goes outside the bracket.
- **colons:** Use a colon before directly quoting a complete sentence and as a signal that you are about to list things advertised in the preceding words, e.g. ... these were: three French hens, two turtle doves and a partridge in a pear tree. Put the word following a colon in lower case unless the next word is a proper name, a direct quotation or the beginning of a sentence.
- **commas:** Do not over-punctuate, especially with commas. Any sentence studded with commas could probably benefit from a rewrite. Use commas as a guide to sense, to break a sentence into logically discrete parts, but do not use them to the extent that they break the sentence flow.

Use commas to mark off words and phrases that are in apposition to, or define other words or phrases in the sentence e.g. Herve de Charette, French foreign minister, said ... Rudolf Nureyev, most prominent of the defectors from the Bolshoi, has danced &

Use commas to mark off a clause that is not essential to the meaning of a sentence, e.g. The airliner, which was seven years old, crashed ... But a clause that cannot be removed from the sentence without affecting its meaning is not marked off by commas, e.g. The airliner that crashed on Thursday was seven years old but the plane lost the previous day was brand new.

Use commas to separate items in a list, e.g. cheese, fruit, wine and coffee or Smith despised ballet, hated the theatre and was bored by opera. Note that there is normally no comma before the final and. However, a comma should be used in this position if to leave it out would risk ambiguity, e.g. He admired Irving Berlin, Rodgers and Hart, and Leonard Bernstein.

A comma follows an initial however. But as long as there is no risk of ambiguity there is no need for the comma after opening phrases like On Wednesday the committee decided ... In the first four months of 2002 Britain exported ...

- **dashes:** Use dashes sparingly, never to set off relative clauses in a sentence. For the sake of clarity, dashes should be double ( ) and hyphens single (-). Dashes are followed by lower case unless they are used to label sections of a list The study concluded: Almost half had more exports this year than last. In 1995, a third had less imports than in 1994. One in five expects better terms of trade in 1996.
- **hyphenation:** Use the hyphen if its omission might lead to ambiguity, e.g. three year-old horses is quite different from three-year-old horses. Use caution in headlines: False jailing claim delayed or False-jailing claim delayed?

Hyphens tend to erode with time and many words once hyphenated are now generally written unhyphenated e.g. ceasefire, cooperation, gunrunner, machinegun.

Use a hyphen to show that two or more words are to be read together as a single word with its own meaning, different from that of the individual words, e.g. extra-judicial duties (duties other than judicial ones) as opposed to extra judicial duties (additional judicial duties).

Do not hyphenate an adjective and a noun when they stand alone, e.g. the left wing of the party. If the adjective and noun are paired to form a new adjective, they are hyphenated, e.g. a first-class result, the left-wing party. Hyphenate numbers and nouns or adjectives when they are paired to form a new adjective, e.g. a six-cylinder car, a one-armed man. Do not hyphenate adjectives used to form comparatives or superlatives, e.g. the most desirable outcome, the least likely result, the more obvious solution.

Do not hyphenate an adverb and adjective when they stand alone, e.g. The artist was well known. If the adverb and adjective are paired to form a new adjective, they are hyphenated, e.g. a well-known artist. Do not do so if the adverb ends in -ly, e.g. a poorly planned operation.

Hyphenate two adjectives or an adjective and a present or past participle when they are paired to form a new adjective, e.g. a dark-blue dress, a good-looking man, a well-tailored suit.

Do not hyphenate very with an adjective. He is a very good man.

If the second element in a word is capitalised, hyphenate, e.g. anti-Semitism. Transatlantic is an exception.

If pre- or re- is followed by an element beginning with e, hyphenate e.g. pre-empt, re-employ.

If the first element of a word is the negative non-, hyphenate, e.g. a non-aggression pact (but nonconformist).

Where two nouns are paired to form another noun, hyphenate if their original distinct meanings are still clearly retained, e.g. actor-manager. Otherwise do not hyphenate, e.g. housekeeper.

Where a verb and adverb are paired to form a noun, hyphenate if the verb ends and the adverb begins with a vowel, e.g. cave-in, flare-up.

Hyphenate titles when the first word is a preposition, e.g. under-secretary, vice-admiral, or when a noun is followed by an adjective, e.g. attorney-general. (However official U.S. titles are not hyphenated, e.g. the US. Attorney General.) Do not hyphenate when the noun follows the adjective, e.g. second lieutenant.

Hyphenate fractions, e.g. three-quarter, two-thirds.

Hyphenate secondary compass points, e.g. south-southwest but not main ones e.g. southwest.

Hyphenate compound words when not to do so would result in an ugly sound or confusion of meaning, e.g. cross-section, sea-eagle.

Hyphenate both terms in phrases such as short- and medium-range missiles. If a figure being converted is hyphenated make sure that the figure in the conversion is also, e.g. within a 10-mile (six-km) radius.

## Pune

Not Poona, India.

**punter**

Prefer gambler, not bettor which is unfamiliar outside the Americas. Do not use in financial stories as a synonym for investors or speculators unless it is in quotes, in which case explain.

**purchase**

buy is shorter and better.

**push up, push-up**

Two words for the verb, one word for the noun.

**pygmy**

Lower case if you mean small, as in pygmy hippopotamus, but upper case for members of specific human groups in Asia and Africa.

**Pyrrhic victory**

At great cost to the victor.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

## Q

### Contents

- 1 QE2,  
QM2
- 2  
quadriplegia
- 3  
quadruped
- 4 Quakers
- 5  
quandary
- 6  
quantum  
leap
- 7  
quarter-final
- 8 queen
- 9 question  
marks
- 10 quip
- 11 quite
- 12  
quotations

### **QE2, QM2**

The only acceptable abbreviations for the liners Queen Elizabeth 2 and Queen Mary 2. They may be used at first reference. The QE2 is due to end active service in late 2008.

### **quadriplegia**

The paralysis of all four limbs as opposed to paraplegia, the total or partial paralysis of both legs.

### **quadruped**

### **Quakers**

Permissible in stories about the Religious Society of Friends. Spell out the full name if the story is about the religious movement or its activities.

**quandary****quantum leap**

Avoid. It means a sudden and spectacular advance, which is clearer than quantum leap. Strictly quantum simply means a quantity or a specified portion, and in physics the smallest amount of a physical quantity that can exist independently.

**quarter-final**

Hyphenated.

**queen**

Queen Elizabeth at first reference and the queen or Queen Elizabeth at second reference.

**question marks**

Do not use question marks in headlines where, if they are accidentally dropped, the meaning can be changed from a possibility to a fact.

**quip**

The president/prime minister quipped... is a phrase almost invariably followed by something that is not funny. Avoid both quip and third-rate humour.

**quite**

Avoid. It can be expressed more clearly and it is ambiguous. In American usage it means very and in European usage it can mean just a little or only moderately.

**quotations**

Quotes are sacred. Do not alter anything put in quotation marks other than to delete words, and then only if the deletion does not alter the sense of the quote. Quotes personalise stories and give them immediacy. Try to inject a quote into the first three paragraphs of any story where it is appropriate.

Before starting a quote, use a colon. He said: "I don't think so", not He said, "I don't think so".

Delete routine obscenities.



Show deletions from a quoted text with three full stops with a space before and after, e.g. He said:  
We will win by fair means or foul ... and the devil take the hindmost.

If the words omitted are at the end of a sentence and are followed by another sentence in quotation marks, then the next word is capitalised to show the start of a new sentence. We will fight and we will win ... We will never surrender. You may drop words in this way only if the deletion does not alter the sense of the quote.

To background or explain a quote, do so in a separate paragraph or by bracketing a phrase into the quoted remarks, e.g. He said: They (the Khmer Rouge) are bound to fail.

When quoting the same source for a lengthy statement there is no need to repeat the source paragraph by paragraph as long as there is no doubt who is speaking.

Do not run one person's quote into another's. Use a bridging sentence or phrase to make the transition from one source to the next clear to the reader e.g. The world is round, said Smith, but Jones disagreed: It is round, Jones said.

Avoid quotes in colloquial or parochial language not easily translated or understood in other countries. If you do give such quotes, explain what they mean, e.g. He said: Clinton is behind the eight ball (in a difficult situation).

In a quote spell out what is actually spoken rather than using customary style abbreviations. It is better to write The president does not think that Doctor Williams needs to resign, he said, rather than The president does not think that Dr Williams needs to resign, he said.

When translating quotes from another language into English, do so in an idiomatic way rather than with pedantic literalness. However, give a literal translation if a statement is tendentious and likely to be the subject of close analysis.

Avoid excessive use of direct quotes in English when a speaker has spoken in another language.

The full stop goes inside the quotation marks when the quotation is a complete sentence. "The president told us 'I will not raise your taxes.' But he did". It goes outside the quotation marks when the quotation is the final part of the sentence. "The president told us 'I will not raise your taxes',"

When the quotation precedes the source put the comma inside the quotation marks. We have no choice but to increase taxes, the president said.

Quote the titles of films, plays and books but not of ships, aircraft, newspapers or magazines.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

# R

## Contents

- 1 raccoon
- 2 race
- 3 rack, wrack
- 4 racket
- 5 radical
- 6 Ramadan
- 7 rand
- 8 ranges
- 9 rape victims
- 10 rapt, wrapped
- 11 rarefied
- 12 ravage, ravish
- 13 razed to the ground
- 14 re-
- 15 realtor
- 16 reassure
- 17 rebut, refute
- 18 recession
- 19 reckless
- 20 reconnaissance
- 21 record
- 22 recur, recurring, recurred
- 23 Red Cross
- 24 re-elect, re-election
- 25 refer
- 26 referendum, referendums
- 27 refute
- 28 regime
- 29 register office, not registry office.
- 30 reins, reigns
- 31 reiterate again
- 32 relatively
- 33 religion, religious titles
- 34 religious terms
- 35 reluctant, reticent
- 36 remain, remained
- 37 remainder
- 38 rendezvous
- 39 repeat, repetition
- 40 repechage
- 41 repellent
- 42 replica
- 43 reported, reportedly
- 44 report
- 45 reports

- 46 requirements
- 47 resistible, irresistible
- 48 responsible
- 49 restaurateur
- 50 result in
- 51 Reuters name
- 52 reveal
- 53 revenue
- 54 Reverend
- 55 revert back
- 56 rhinoceros, rhinoceroses
- 57 Richter scale
- 58 rifle, riffle
- 59 right wing
- 60 rigmarole
- 61 road map
- 62 rock n roll
- 63 rocks
- 64 Rolls-Royce
- 65 Roma
- 66 Roman Catholic Church
- 67 Romania
- 68 Roman Numerals
- 69 roofs
- 70 roro
- 71 Rosh Hashanah
- 72 round up, roundup
- 73 round robin
- 74 rounding figures
- 75 row
- 76 royalty
- 77 rubber stamp,  
rubber-stamp
- 78 rule
- 79 run for office
- 80 rundown, run down
- 81 runner-up, runners-up
- 82 rush hour, rush-hour
- 83 rushed to hospital

## **raccoon**

## **race**

Reuters stories should be free of conscious or unconscious racism. Avoid racial stereotyping and describe membership of a group, ethnicity or race precisely. For further guidance, go to the sections on value judgments and religious, cultural and national differences under Specialised Guidance.

Mention race or ethnicity only when relevant to the understanding of a story. For example, if someone is facing deportation, it is appropriate to give his or her nationality. Similarly, the ethnic origin of a person who receives racial threats or is the target of a racist attack is essential context.

Take care when reporting crimes and court cases. The race of an accused person is not usually relevant.

Clearly, race is an important factor in stories about racial controversy or immigration, or where an issue cuts across racial lines. For example, if European-born people join Tibetan exiles in demonstrations against China's Tibet policy, this is a point worth mentioning.

Race is pertinent in reporting a feat or appointment unusual for a person of a particular ethnic group, for example someone born in China who becomes an international cricket umpire. In the United States, the terms black and African-American are both acceptable. Black is fine as an adjective, eg "Obama will be the first black U.S. president". As a noun, the plural is acceptable where it might contrast with another group, eg doctors found differences between the treatment offered to whites and blacks. Do not use black as a singular noun -- it is both awkward and offensive. "Barack Obama would be the first black to become U.S. president" is unacceptable. Better to say "Barack Obama will become the first black U.S. president". Native Spanish speakers in the United States may be referred to as Latino or Hispanic, but it is better to be specific (Colombian, Mexican). Also, some people from Latin America are not Hispanic, eg Brazilians. As a general rule, use the term by which the people of a particular ethnic group describe themselves: Inuit (not Eskimo), Roma (not Gypsy), Sami (not Lapp), Native American (not Indian).

Capitalise the names of races and peoples: Asian, Jew, Hispanic. Note that black and white are lower case.

If a racially derogatory expression is used in a direct quote, this should be flagged at the top of the story: (Note racial slur in paragraph 12)

## **rack, wrack**

Use wrack only for seaweed and in the phrase wrack and ruin. Otherwise use rack, e.g. racked with pain.

## **racket**

Not racquet.

## **radical**

Avoid this word in a political context.

## **Ramadan**

The month of fasting when devout Muslims refrain from all food, drink or sex during daylight hours and focus on devotion and good works. The majority Sunnis fast between dawn and sunset, the Shia from dawn to dusk. The start and end of the month for most Islamic countries depends on the sighting of the new moon by the naked eye. It is the ninth and holiest month of the Islamic, lunar calendar. Eid al-Fitr is the holiday celebrated at the end of Ramadan.

## **rand**

No "s" in plural.

## **ranges**

\$22 million to \$26 million, not \$22 to \$26 million.

## **rape victims**

In many countries it is illegal to report the names of victims of sexual crime. Standardise globally to say we do NOT name victims.

## **rapt, wrapped**

Rapt is entranced or wholly engrossed, wrapped is folded together or enfolded.

## **rarefied**

## **ravage, ravish**

Ravage is to lay waste or pillage. Ravish is to abduct or to rape. You ravage a village and ravish a maiden.

## **razed to the ground**

Tautologous. Razed will do.

**re-**

If the second element of a word beginning with re- starts with an e, hyphenate, e.g. re-employ, re-elected.

**realtor**

Use real estate agent

**reassure**

Use this word with caution. It means to give a new assurance. It does not mean (e.g. Hitler reassured Czechoslovakia that he had no designs on its territory) that the person to whom the assurance is given is necessarily reassured. Better to write again assured.

**rebut, refute**

Use with care. Refute means to disprove, not to deny or reject. Rebut has a similar meaning, not just to argue against, so its use implies an editorial judgment. Avoid, except in quotes, unless we are really sure we are using them correctly. Deny or reject may be preferred.

**recession**

A period of low economic activity with high unemployment and numerous business failures. There are varying definitions. In the United States it is two consecutive quarterly falls in gross domestic product.

**reckless**

Not wreckless.

**reconnaissance****record**

By definition any record just set is new, so do not write a new world record.

**recur, recurring, recurred**

## **Red Cross**

The Red Cross movement comprises: the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC); the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (formerly the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies); and more than 160 national societies around the world. Both the ICRC (founded in 1863 and still almost exclusively composed of Swiss citizens) and the federation (1919) are based in Geneva. The ICRC helps victims of war and internal conflicts. The federation, which groups the 160-plus national societies, brings relief to victims of natural disasters and helps care for refugees outside areas of conflict. The ICRC's work in protecting wounded and sick servicemen, prisoners of war and civilians in times of armed conflict is based on international humanitarian law enshrined in the four Geneva conventions of 1949 and two protocols signed in 1977. Give the ICRC title in full at first reference; do not abbreviate to the 'International Red Cross' since such a body does not exist. For the sake of brevity in a lead paragraph you can refer to a Red Cross official or spokesman as long as you make clear lower in the story which organisation he belongs to. See [www.icrc.org](http://www.icrc.org) and [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)

## **re-elect, re-election**

## **refer**

Refer means to mention directly. Allude means to refer to in passing without making an explicit mention. He alluded to the sins of his past and referred to his criminal record.

## **referendum, referendums**

## **refute**

Use with care. Refute means to disprove, not to deny or reject. Rebut has a similar meaning, not just to argue against, so its use implies an editorial judgment. Avoid, except in quotes, unless we are really sure we are using them correctly. Deny or reject may be preferred.

## **regime**

A word with negative overtones in a political context. Use government.

## **register office, not registry office.**

## **reins, reigns**

Reins control a horse. A monarch reigns.

## reiterate again

A tautology. Just reiterate will do.

## relatively

Do not use unless in a comparison. Do not write He is relatively young. Compared to whom? He is younger than the rest of the team.

## religion, religious titles

Religion: Names of divinities are capitalised but unspecific plurals are lower case, e.g. Allah, the Almighty, Christ, God, Jehovah, the Deity, the Holy Trinity, but the gods, the lords of the universe. Capitalise religious titles when they immediately precede a personal name, otherwise use lower case, e.g. Bishop Thaddeus Smith, Dean Robert Jones, but the bishop, the dean. Use only the simplest and best-known titles at first reference, e.g. the Rev. Jesse Jackson, Dr John Smith rather than the Right Rev. John Smith. Capitalise names of denominations and religious movements, e.g. Baptist, Buddhist, Christian, Church of England, Islamic, Jew, Jewish, Muslim, Orthodox. But non-denominational references are lower case, e.g. adult baptism, orthodox beliefs, built a temple. The Pope is head of the Roman Catholic Church or of the Church (that is, the whole body of Roman Catholics) but he would celebrate mass in a Roman Catholic church (that is, a building). A baptist is someone who baptises. A Baptist is a member of the Protestant denomination. With more than 20 separate Baptist church groups in the United States, it is incorrect to refer to the Baptist Church as a singular entity. The correct reference would be to Baptist Churches or to the specific Baptist group involved, e.g. the Southern Baptist Convention.

## religious terms

- **abaya** Full-body overgarment worn by some Muslim women to cover all but their face, feet and hands. Most frequent in Arab countries.
- **adhan**: The Muslim call to prayer
- **Anglican Communion**: The worldwide association of Anglican and Episcopal churches. Not the Worldwide Anglican Communion.
- **Baha'i faith**: A syncretic religion that preaches the unity of all mankind and all spiritual beliefs. It recognises many major religious figures of history -- including Abraham, Moses, Buddha, Krishna, Zoroaster, Jesus, Mohammad and its founder Baha'ullah -- as authentic messengers of God helping to bring humanity to spiritual maturity. Divine revelation continues, according to their teaching, with the Baha'i faith being only the latest religion to emerge from it. The Baha'is, who claim about five million followers, began in 19th century Iran but have since spread around the world.

The Baha'i faith emerged from Shi'ite Islam, but we should not refer to this origin when we describe it. Despite retaining some elements of Shi'ite Islam, the Baha'i faith also took in many other ideas that made it a separate religion on its own. Calling it an offshoot of Islam is



like calling Christianity an offshoot of Judaism; it is correct in a very limited sense but misleading overall. The religious authorities in Shi'ite Iran consider the Baha'is heretics. The Baha'is accuse Iran of oppressing them.

- **basilica:** A major church with special status, not necessarily a cathedral, which is the church of a bishop.
- **burqa:** A one-piece head-to-toe covering for Muslim women, with a headband to hold it in place and a cloth mesh to cover the face but allow vision. Most frequent in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Some European languages use burqa for other kinds of covering, but avoid this usage.
- **cardinal:** Honorary title for Catholic clerics who elect the next pope if they are under 80. Most but not all are archbishops. New cardinals are made at a consistory.
- **cathedral:** Central church of a diocese and seat of the bishop. Not a generic term for any large church.
- **chador:** Full-length cloak for Muslim women that covers the head and body but leaves the face visible. Worn over a loose-fitting blouse and pants, it is open in front and held together by the wearer. Usually worn in Iran, mostly in black.
- **Christian:** Use as an overall term, but not as a substitute for a precise name of a denomination. If possible, it is preferable to name the denomination, e.g. Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Baptist, etc. Protestant and Orthodox are also overall terms and more precision, for example Methodist or Greek Orthodox, is preferable.
- **church, Church:** A church is a house of prayer or a denomination. Capitalise when used in a title. In a story about a single church, the Church can be used to refer to the whole denomination on second reference and Church can be used as an adjective to mean belonging to that church.
- **Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints:** The Mormon church. Mormon church acceptable on first reference, but give the official title soon afterward.
- **cult:** Refers to a faith group far from the religious mainstream, implying a charismatic leader and possibly extreme views. Use very carefully.
- **denomination:** Term for the different Christian churches, usually used for Protestant churches. Catholics and Orthodox object to being called denominations.
- **Eastern Catholic churches:** Eastern Rite churches, the ancient Middle Eastern churches in communion with the Roman Catholic Church.
- **ecumenism:** Cooperation among Christian churches. Inter-faith refers to cooperation among religions.
- **Episcopal Church, Episcopal, Episcopalian:** The Episcopal Church is the U.S. branch of Anglicanism. Episcopal is the adjective referring to it and Episcopalian is the noun referring to its members. Do not refer to its members as Episcopals. This is one of the most frequent mistakes made on the religion file.

- **evangelical:** A term for Protestants who stress personal conversion ( born again ) and the authority of the Bible. Evangelicals embrace modern culture, even if they are socially conservative, while fundamentalists try to avoid what they see as sinful modern ways. Evangelicals are found in several churches. Note in Europe, especially Germany, evangelical is a general term for mainstream Protestant. Uppercase only when in a title.
- **evangelism, evangelising:** A neutral term for spreading the Gospel. Proselytise has negative connotations.
- **evangelist:** Originally, one of the four authors of the Gospels. Also, a preacher whose sermons aim to convert listeners to Christianity. If a cleric heads a church of already converted Christians, call him or her a preacher, not an evangelist.
- **Father:** For Catholic priests, only use if in a quote. Rev. is the proper title for a priest.
- **fundamentalist:** Originally refers to Protestants who stress the fundamentals of their faith and reject liberal interpretations. Often used for conservatives, especially for Muslims, but so overused that it is best avoided. Alternatives are traditionalist, orthodox, conservative, etc.
- **Haj:** Capitalise. A Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca
- **headscarf:** General term for Muslim women s head covering, either the hijab (covering just the hair) or the niqab (covering the face but leaving the eyes open).
- **hijab:** Muslim headscarf for women to cover the hair but leave the face open. Some styles also cover the neck and shoulders.
- **Mass:** The central service of Catholic worship. It is celebrated or said
- **Methodist churches:** Methodist churches are Protestant churches that trace their origins to an 18th-century Church of England revival movement led by John Wesley. There are many separate churches in the Methodist family, which at about 75 million members worldwide is one of the largest Christian traditions. Some but not all Methodist churches are part of the evangelical movement. There are over 40 Methodist denominations in the United States, including the United Methodist Church (the largest) and several African-American Methodist churches. The Methodist Church of Great Britain is the largest one in the United Kingdom.
- **minister:** Term for a cleric in many Protestant denominations. It is not a title and should not be capitalised.
- **Monsignor:** An honorary Roman Catholic title that is better avoided because it has two meanings. In Romance languages, it tends to be a general honorific for all prelates, up to cardinal. In some other languages, it is used as a rank between priest and bishop. Use the cleric s actual title (e.g. bishop, archbishop, cardinal) or Rev. if he is below episcopal rank.
- **new religious movement:** Neutral term to describe a faith group outside the religious mainstream.
- **niqab:** Muslim woman s full head and face covering that leaves only the eyes open.

- **Orthodox, orthodox:** Capitalise in titles such as Orthodox Church or Orthodox Judaism. Lower case to denote strict adherence to the doctrines of a religion.
- **pontiff:** A synonym for the pope, always lower case.
- **Pope, pope:** Upper case for the title, e.g. Pope Benedict, but lower case for the term the pope.
- **proselytise:** To seek converts to a faith. Some Christian denominations say it has a negative connotation, implying the use of aggressive or unethical methods such as threats or rewards, and prefer evangelise as a more neutral term.
- **Roman Catholic Church:** Official title, although Catholic Church can also be used.

The head of the Roman Catholic Church is the pope. Refer to a reigning pope at first reference as e.g. Pope Benedict and at subsequent references as the pope or the pontiff. A reigning pope does not take Roman numerals after his name in Reuters copy unless to omit them would cause confusion. Past Church leaders should take Roman numerals after their name on first reference e.g. Pope Pius XII and may be referred to simply by their name e.g. Pius, on subsequent references unless to omit the numerals would cause confusion.

The pope's closest advisers are known as cardinals, who are appointed by him. Those under 80 can enter a conclave to elect a new pope. At first reference Cardinal John Doe. At subsequent references the cardinal or Doe. A high-ranking member of the Church, such as a cardinal, an archbishop or a bishop, can be referred to subsequently as a prelate. It's best to avoid the term monsignor since it means a rank between priest and bishop (e.g. Monsignor Martin Smith) in some countries but in others, especially Italy, France and Spain and in Latin America, it is a catchall title used for monsignors, bishops, archbishops and cardinals, e.g. the Archbishop of Bogota, Monsignor Enrique Perez. Avoid this usage also. Use Boston Archbishop Charles Dust. For priests, use Rev. John Doe, not Father John Doe (except in quotes). Do not use the Rev., Reverend or Most Reverend.

The Church hierarchy is: priest, pastor, bishop, archbishop, cardinal, pope. The Church government working in the Vatican is known as the Curia, which must be explained if used. The Vatican technically refers to the city-state in Rome and the Holy See to the Church's central administration, but the terms have become interchangeable in common use. The Holy See's ambassadors around the world are known as papal nuncios and its embassies as nunciatures. If the Holy See does not have formal diplomatic relations with a country the Pope's envoy to the church in that country is an apostolic delegate.

- **sect:** A religious group that has broken off from a larger one. Use carefully as it has negative connotations. The neutral term is new religious movement.
- **skullcap:** Preferred generic term for small religious headpiece known as the Jewish kippa, Catholic zucchetto or Muslim kufi. Avoid yarmulke, which is a Yiddish term used mostly in the United States.
- **temple:** A non-Christian house of prayer. Some Jews use it for synagogue, but the latter is preferred.

- **Unification Church:** Founded by Rev. Sun Myung Moon in South Korea in 1954, the Unification Church is a religious movement that has expanded around the world and is believed to have up to three million members. Members have been dubbed "Moonies" by their critics, but this is a pejorative term which we should not use in copy and avoid in direct quotation if possible. The movement's goals include the defence of conservative family values and it regularly organises mass public weddings of couples brought together by the church. It has links to many businesses, especially in publishing (Washington Times, UPI), and has been accused by critics of being a cult, brainwashing members and enriching its leaders, all of which it denies. It teaches that Rev. Moon received private revelations from Jesus, Moses and Buddha to fight communism and promote world peace. "Moonie" is a pejorative term for members of the Unification Church. We should not use it in copy and avoid it when possible in direct quotations.
- **Virgin Mary:** Use this title or the Madonna, not Our Lady except in titles such as Our Lady of Czestochowa or in the names of churches. In Catholicism, do not confuse the Virgin Birth (the dogma that Mary was a virgin when she gave birth to Jesus) with the Immaculate Conception (the dogma that Mary was the only human conceived without Original Sin).
- **yarmulke:** Use skullcap.

## reluctant, reticent

Reluctant is unwilling or resisting. Reticent is sparing in communication. A gossip is reluctant to be reticent.

## remain, remained

Avoid in leads. There is always a more lively way of phrasing.

## remainder

Use the rest.

## rendezvous

Singular and plural. Prefer meeting or appointment.

## repeat, repetition

The noun is repetition, the verb is repeat. John Smith tried to avoid a repetition of his blunder, not a repeat of his blunder. Repeat again is tautologous unless something is being said or done more than twice. Just repeat will do.

**repechage**

In sport, a contest between runners-up, usually for a place in the final (especially in rowing).

**repellent****replica**

An exact reproduction, in size and materials. Do not confuse with model.

**reported, reportedly**

If you use the word reported without stating the source at once, you must give it in the next sentence or paragraph. Do not use reportedly.

**report**

Report on, not into.

**reports**

Do not refer to just to reports, unconfirmed or otherwise. Specify where the reports are coming from or originate.

**requirements**

needs is shorter and better.

**resistible, irresistible****responsible**

Only people are responsible for the effects of their actions. Things cause things to happen. Drought caused famine, not was responsible for famine.

**restaurateur**

One who runs a restaurant.

## **result in**

Use a stronger, more direct verb, such as cause.

## **Reuters name**

Reuters is used as the name of our news organisation and as an adjective, e.g. a Reuters correspondent.

If we need to describe the parent company in copy we should write Thomson Reuters, the global information company.

We should refer to Reuters in exclusive interviews ("told Reuters") and in stories about the news organisation, e.g. one mentioning the activities of AP, AFP and Reuters in covering a war.

Our style permits use of an apostrophe only in connection with the name of the news organisation's founder, e.g. Reuter's birthplace in Kassel ... So write round the problem, e.g. The decision by Thomson Reuters to ... rather than Thomson Reuters decision to ...

Editorial policy is to use Thomson Reuters for all references to the company in the text of stories.

## **reveal**

Use with caution. Use of the word implies (a) acceptance that the statement is true and (b) that the information had previously been kept secret, which may not be the case.

## **revenue**

Not revenues.

## **Reverend**

Capitalise religious titles when they immediately precede a personal name, otherwise use lower case, e.g. Bishop Thaddeus Smith, Dean Robert Jones, but the bishop, the dean. Use only the simplest and best-known titles at first reference, e.g. the Rev. Jesse Jackson, Dr John Smith rather than the Right Rev. John Smith.

## **revert back**

Just revert will do.

**rhinoceros, rhinoceroses****Richter scale**

See earthquakes.

**rifle, riffle**

Rifle is a weapon, or to plunder or ransack. Riffle is to stir lightly and rapidly.

**right wing**

A right-winger, a right-wing politician, but the right wing of the political spectrum. Use with caution, as with all political labels.

**rigmarole****road map**

Two words.

**rock n roll****rocks**

Americans throw rocks, but in most other places use throw stones.

**Rolls-Royce**

Note hyphen.

**Roma**

The name of the people. Prefer to Gypsy, which is not used by the Roma themselves. Their language is Romany.

## Roman Catholic Church

The head of the Roman Catholic Church is the Pope. Refer to a reigning Pope at first reference as e.g. Pope Benedict and at subsequent references as the pope or the pontiff. A reigning Pope does not take Roman numerals after his name unless to omit them would cause confusion. Past Church leaders should take Roman numerals after their name on first reference e.g. Pope Pius XII and may be referred to simply by their name e.g. Pius, on subsequent references unless to omit the numerals would cause confusion.

The Pope s appoints cardinals, his closest advisers. Those under 80 can enter a conclave to elect a new Pope. At first reference Cardinal John Doe. At subsequent references the cardinal or Doe. A high-ranking member of the Church, such as a cardinal, an archbishop or a bishop, can be referred to subsequently as a prelate. Monsignor is someone who has a rank between priest and bishop, e.g. Monsignor Martin Smith. In some countries, such as Italy, France and Spain and in Latin America, monsignor is a catchall title used for monsignors, bishops, archbishops and cardinals, e.g. the Archbishop of Bogota, Monsignor Enrique Perez. Avoid this usage. Use Boston Archbishop Charles Dust. For priests, use Father John Doe. Do not use the Rev., Reverend or Most Reverend. The Church hierarchy is: priest, monsignor, bishop, archbishop, cardinal, Pope. The Church government working in the Vatican is known as the Curia. Avoid using it as it needs to be explained. The Vatican technically refers to the city-state in Rome and the Holy See to the Church s central administration, but the terms have become interchangeable in common use. The Holy See s ambassadors around the world are known as papal nuncios and its embassies as nunciatures. If the Holy See does not have formal diplomatic relations with a country the Pope s envoy to the church in that country is an apostolic delegate.

## Romania

## Roman Numerals

Roman Numeral to Decimal Conversion Table

I	1	XXI	21	XLI	41	LXI	61	LXXXI	81
II	2	XXII	22	XLII	42	LXII	62	LXXXII	82
III	3	XXIII	23	XLIII	43	LXIII	63	LXXXIII	83
IV	4	XXIV	24	XLIV	44	LXIV	64	LXXXIV	84
V	5	XXV	25	XLV	45	LXV	65	LXXXV	85
VI	6	XXVI	26	XLVI	46	LXVI	66	LXXXVI	86
VII	7	XXVII	27	XLVII	47	LXVII	67	LXXXVII	87
VIII	8	XXVIII	28	XLVIII	48	LXVIII	68	LXXXVIII	88
IX	9	XXIX	29	XLIX	49	LXIX	69	LXXXIX	89
X	10	XXX	30	L	50	LXX	70	XC	90
XI	11	XXXI	31	LI	51	LXXI	71	XCI	91
XII	12	XXXII	32	LII	52	LXXII	72	XCII	92
XIII	13	XXXIII	33	LIII	53	LXXIII	73	XCIII	93
XIV	14	XXXIV	34	LIV	54	LXXIV	74	XCIV	94



XV	15	XXXV	35	LV	55	LXXV	75	XCV	95
XVI	16	XXXVI	36	LVI	56	LXXVI	76	XCVI	96
XVII	17	XXXVII	37	LVII	57	LXXVII	77	XCVII	97
XVIII	18	XXXVIII	38	LVIII	58	LXXVIII	78	XCVIII	98
XIX	19	XXXIX	39	LIX	59	LXXIX	79	XCIX	99
XX	20	XL	40	LX	60	LXXX	80	C	100
								D	500
								M	1000

## roofs

## roro

roll on/roll off vehicle ferry.

## Rosh Hashanah

The Jewish New Year festival.

## round up, roundup

Two words for the verb and one word for the noun.

## round robin

Not a newsletter or circular, but a petition where the signatures are in a circle so no individual can be identified as the instigator.

## rounding figures

Round off unwieldy figures, e.g. Japan produced 1.45 million cars in the six months ended ... not Japan produced 1,453,123 cars ... As a rule round off millions to the nearest 10,000, thousands to the nearest 100, hundreds to the nearest 10. Figures are normally rounded to two significant decimals, with halves rounded upwards. Thus 15.564 becomes 15.56, while 15.565 becomes 15.57. Do not round interest rates. Give them to the full number of decimal places supplied by the source of the information. Round foreign exchange quotations to four decimal places, e.g. the dollar rose to 0.9784 euros. If a country adjusts its currency, any rate given must not be rounded off, e.g. Manchukistan announced a rate of 5.79831 manchuks to the dollar. Do not round company dividends, e.g. the company announced a dividend of 0.123456 pence per share. Where totals do not add up because of rounding, this should be explained.

**row**

Do not use for argument or dispute.

**royalty**

Retain the titles of rulers and their consorts at second reference, e.g. King Hussein, Queen Beatrix, the queen. The titles of other members of royal families can be dropped at second reference. In Britain, for instance, Queen Elizabeth's husband is the Duke of Edinburgh, and at second reference the duke or Prince Philip. Her eldest son is Prince Charles, Prince of Wales. Either title can be used at first reference; then Charles or the prince. Use Roman numerals in referring to royalty, e.g. Charles I, Louis XIV not Charles 1st or Charles the First.

**rubber stamp, rubber-stamp**

Two words as a noun, hyphenated as a verb or adjective

**rule**

A word with negative overtones in a political context. Use govern as a verb.

**run for office**

Use for candidates in a presidential election. For those in a parliamentary one, say stand.

**rundown, run down**

Rundown is the noun (but prefer review or summary). The verb is run down and the adjective is run-down.

**runner-up, runners-up****rush hour, rush-hour**

Two words for the noun, hyphenated for the adjective.

**rushed to hospital**

A cliché. Use taken to hospital or treated in hospital.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

# S

## Contents

- 1 saccharin, saccharine
- 2 Sahara
- 3 Sahel
- 4 Sahrawi
- 5 Saigon
- 6 Saint
- 7 Sahrawi
- 8 Saakashvili
- 9 salable, salably
- 10 salutary
- 11 Salvadorean, not Salvadoran.
- 12 salvo, salvos
- 13 sanction
- 14 SARS
- 15 sat
- 16 savings and loans associations (U.S.)
- 17 saviour, savior in American style
- 18 Scandinavia
- 19 sceptic, but in American style skeptic
- 20 scheme
- 21 Scottish names
- 22 screen saver
- 23 SDRs
- 24 SEALs
- 25 seasons
- 26 Seattle
- 27 second guess
- 28 second-hand
- 29 second lieutenant
- 30 Second World War
- 31 Secret Service
- 32 secretary-general
- 33 sector
- 34 Security Council
- 35 see, saw
- 36 seize
- 37 selloff
- 38 semi
- 39 semiannual
- 40 semi-final
- 41 Senate
- 42 sentence length
- 43 separate
- 44 Sephardim
- 45 Sept. 11
- 46 septuagenarian

- 47 Serie A
- 48 serried
- 49 set point
- 50 Sevastopol
- 51 serviceable
- 52 sewage, sewerage
- 53 sexist language
- 54 shake-up, shake up
- 55 shall, will
- 56 sharia
- 57 sheikh
- 58 sheriff (U.S.)
- 59 sherpas
- 60 Shia
- 61 Shimla, not Simla, India
- 62 ship tonnage
- 63 ships names
- 64 shoeshine, shoestring
- 65 shoo-in, not shoe-in.
- 66 short ton
- 67 short-covering
- 68 short-lived, short-sighted
- 69 shutdown
- 70 side effect
- 71 side by side
- 72 siege
- 73 Sierra Nevada
- 74 silicon, silicone
- 75 Simla
- 76 since
- 77 single out
- 78 Sinhalese
- 79 Sinn Fein
- 80 siphon
- 81 sister-in-law, sisters-in-law
- 82 situation
- 83 sizable
- 84 ski, skiing, skied, skier
- 85 skilful
- 86 skills
- 87 skipper
- 88 slam
- 89 slang
- 90 slew
- 91 slump
- 92 Smithsonian Institution, not Institute.
- 93 smoulder, but smolder in American style.
- 94 sneaked, not snuck
- 95 so as to
- 96 so-called

- 97 Social Security
- 98 socialist
- 99 software
- 100 Somali
- 101 some
- 102 song titles
- 103 sophisticated
- 104 sorcerer
- 105 SOS
- 106 South Asia
- 107 space age
- 108 space centre, but American style is space center
- 109 spaceship
- 110 space shuttle
- 111 spacewalk
- 112 Spanish names
- 113 special
- 114 species
- 115 speeds
- 116 spelled, misspelled, not spelt
- 117 spelling
- 118 spill, spilling, spilled, not spilt.
- 119 spin off, spinoff
- 120 spokesman, spokeswoman
- 121 spoonful, spoonfuls, not spoonsful or spoons full.
- 122 sports events titles
- 123 sports metaphors
- 124 sprang, sprung
- 125 square leg, square-leg
- 126 stadiums, not stadia.
- 127 stagehand, one word
- 128 stanch, staunch
- 129 Star Wars
- 130 startup
- 131 star/superstar
- 132 state names
- 133 station wagon, two words
- 134 stationary, stationery
- 135 statute mile
- 136 stepping stone, two words
- 137 stretcher
- 138 stealth
- 139 storey, storeys
- 140 storms
- 141 strait, straight
- 142 straitjacket
- 143 strait-laced
- 144 strategic
- 145 stratum, strata
- 146 stricture

- 147 strike
- 148 strong-arm
- 149 stupefy, stupefying, stupefaction
- 150 stupor
- 151 sub
- 152 submachinegun
- 153 subpoena, subpoenaing, subpoenaed
- 154 subprime
- 155 subsequent to, subsequently
- 156 substitute for
- 157 successive
- 158 successor
- 159 successfully
- 160 such as, like
- 161 Sudan, not the Sudan.
- 162 sufficient
- 163 sue, suing, sued
- 164 suit, suite
- 165 summit
- 166 summon, summons
- 167 Sunni/Shi'ite
- 168 super
- 169 superlatives
- 170 supersede
- 171 supervisor
- 172 supremo
- 173 Surinam, not Suriname
- 174 surrounded
- 175 SUV
- 176 Swastika
- 177 swath, swathe
- 178 swat, swot
- 179 syllabus, syllabuses
- 180 sync
- 181 synthesise, synthesizer, but in American style synthesize, synthesizer
- 182 Szczecin, not Stettin, Poland.

## **saccharin, saccharine**

The noun is saccharin, the adjective is saccharine.

## **Sahara**

Not Sahara Desert    sahara means desert in Arabic.

**Sahel**

A belt of countries across Africa south of the Sahara, comprising Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chad, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Sudan.

**Sahrawi**

The people of the Western Saharan republic proclaimed by Polisario guerrillas fighting for independence from Morocco. Its full name is the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic.

**Saigon**

Now Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

**Saint**

Use St. with full point.

**Sahrawi**

The people of the Western Saharan republic proclaimed by Polisario guerrillas fighting for independence from Morocco. Its full name is the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic.

**Saakashvili**

Mikheil, not Mikhail, is the correct Georgian form of the president's first name.

**salable, salably****salutary**

Not salutory, for promoting health or safety, or wholesome. But salutatory, the adjective for a greeting.

**Salvadorean, not Salvadoran.**



**salvo, salvos****sanction**

Avoid sanction as a verb. It has conflicting meanings, to approve and to punish.

**SARS**

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome. A flu-like and potentially fatal viral disease. Use SARS at first reference and spell out the full name lower in the story.

**sat**

Sat, or was seated, or was sitting, but not was sat.

**savings and loans associations (U.S.)**

Not banks. Use associations on second reference.

**saviour, savior in American style****Scandinavia**

This comprises Denmark, Norway and Sweden. The Nordic countries are these three plus Finland and Iceland. Because of the danger of confusion, list the countries even if you use Nordic or Scandinavian in a lead for the sake of brevity.

**sceptic, but in American style skeptic****scheme**

Use the noun with caution and prefer plan or initiative. The noun has a neutral meaning in British English but can be pejorative in American English.

**Scottish names**

Be particularly careful with names beginning Mac. They could be e.g. MacLaren, Maclaren, McClaren. check and check again.

**screen saver**

Two words.

**SDRs**

Special drawing rights are international reserve assets created by the IMF and member countries to supplement existing reserves. Based on a basket of the major traded currencies and are the IMF unit of account for international transactions. The reference currency basket has specific weightings of major traded currencies. The latest value is on [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org).

**SEALS**

A special operations force of the U.S. Navy. The acronym is for sea, air, land.

**seasons**

Be careful in writing of summer and winter, spring and autumn (fall), since the seasons are reversed north and south of the equator. Seasons are not capitalised unless part of the formal name of an event. Be specific about when something happened rather than use the season. e.g. The transport strike last August ... rather than ... The transport strike last summer.

**Seattle**

Stands alone in datelines.

**second guess**

Noun. Hyphenate as a verb

**second-hand**

With hyphen.

**second lieutenant**

Two words.

## **Second World War**

Use World War Two, not WWII.

## **Secret Service**

In the United States, a federal agency administered by the Department of Homeland Security. The Secret Service Uniformed Division protects the president's residence and offices and embassies in Washington.

## **secretary-general**

Hyphenated. Capitalise if part of a formal title.

## **sector**

Industry is better.

## **Security Council**

The 15-member United Nations Security Council in New York is the body that takes many of the decisions on U.N. action around the world, often through numbered resolutions, e.g. Resolution 649. It consists of five permanent members with the power of veto over any resolution – Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States. There are also 10 non-permanent members of the Security Council, made up of other U.N. countries which serve in rotation, representing different areas of the world. The Security Council presidency rotates monthly, by English alphabetical listing of its member states.

The U.N. Security Council becomes the council (lower case) at second reference.

## **see, saw**

Inanimate objects do not have the power of sight. Do not write The game saw several violent incidents; the club's progress has seen them climb to seventh in the table. The device is less absurd but similarly lazy when overused to apply to people, Bill McGreer saw his shot go wide.

## **seize**

## **selloff**

One word.

**semi**

In general, no hyphen.

**semiannual**

Prefer twice-yearly or twice a year.

**semi-final**

Hyphenated.

**Senate**

Capitalised.

**sentence length**

Sentences should generally be short but, to avoid a staccato effect, vary their length. Avoid complex constructions. A sentence with more than one subordinate clauses can be hard to follow and difficult to translate.

**separate****Sephardim**

Jews of Spanish or Portuguese descent as opposed to Ashkenazim who are Jews of East or Central European descent. Adjectives Sephardic, Ashkenazic.

**Sept. 11**

The date can stand alone without reference to the Twin Towers or the year 2001, as can the alternative reference 9/11.

**septuagenarian**

**Serie A**

Italian first division soccer. Capitalised.

**serried**

Close-pressed, packed, not just organised or in neat rows.

**set point**

Two words in tennis scoring.

**Sevastopol**

Not Sebastepol, Crimea.

**serviceable****sewage, sewerage**

Sewage is waste and sewerage is the system that removes it.

**sexist language**

Do not use language that perpetuates the stereotype of women. Such language is offensive, out of date and often simply inaccurate. Sexist references should be avoided, as should such linguistic absurdities as creating the crime of peopleslaughter. Do not refer to gender, a woman's looks, hairstyle or clothing unless they are details relevant to the story and similar expressions would be used for men.

**shake-up, shake up**

The noun is a shake-up, the verb is to shake up.

**shall, will**

Strictly shall and should are reserved for the pronouns I and we, while will and would are used with you, he, she and they. If the action is performed with decided intention then shall and should can be used with you, he, she and they. They shall go to the ball no matter what their mothers say. The distinction between shall and will varies from country to country and can probably be ignored.

**sharia**

Islamic religious law (note lower case s). Sharia law is tautologous. Write sharia, Islamic law.

**sheikh**

Not sheik or shaikh. A courtesy title in Saudi Arabia but avoid in this context. The real sheikhs there are religious figures and sheikh should be used at first reference. Elsewhere in the Gulf it applies to members of ruling families as well as religious figures and should be used at first reference.

**sheriff (U.S.)**

Capitalise as a title before a name.

**sherpas**

Senior officials from G7/G8 countries who meet three or four times before each summit to agree topics to be discussed and to draft the final communiqué. Named after the Himalayan people renowned for their mountaineering ability who are often employed as guides on expeditions. Best avoided as jargon or explained if you need to use it.

**Shia**

Use Shi'ite unless in a direct quote.

**Shimla, not Simla, India****ship tonnage**

See tonnage.

**ships names**

Do not use HMS or USS to designate British or American warships if the nationality of the ship is already clear. Write the British frigate *Battleaxe* not the British frigate HMS *Battleaxe*. But in datelines write, for instance, ABOARD HMS BATTLEAXE. Routinely check the names of ships in Jane's Fighting Ships, Lloyd's Register or the weekly Lloyd's Shipping Index. Do not put quotation marks round the names of ships. Always use neuter pronouns.

## **shoeshine, shoestring**

**shoo-in, not shoe-in.**

## **short ton**

See ton, tonne.

## **short-covering**

Hyphenated.

## **short-lived, short-sighted**

Hyphenated.

## **shutdown**

One word.

## **side effect**

Two words, no hyphen.

## **side by side**

As an adverb, no hyphens e.g. they walked side by side.. Hyphenate as an adjective, e.g. The stories received side-by-side display.

## **siege**

## **Sierra Nevada**

Not Sierra Nevada mountains (tautologous).

## **silicon, silicone**

Silicon chips but silicone implants.

## **Simla**

Use Shimla, India.

## **since**

Do not use to mean because.

## **single out**

By definition, this phrase should be used only for single examples. Do not write, for instance, He singled out Britain, France and Italy for blame.

## **Sinhalese**

A major ethnic group in Sri Lanka.

## **Sinn Fein**

Do not use Sinn Fein/IRA.

## **siphon**

Not syphon.

## **sister-in-law, sisters-in-law**

## **situation**

The word can usually be dispensed with, as in a crisis situation, a debt situation, a flood situation.

## **sizable**



**ski, skiing, skied, skier****skilful****skills**

Jargon. Avoid if possible.

**skipper**

Use only of fishing vessels. Otherwise captain.

**slam**

Slang. Prefer said.

**slang**

Avoid slang not be readily understood outside the English speaking world or your own country. It creates problems for translators. If a vivid quote contains slang, explain it in brackets or give a paraphrased version, e.g. He *s* in the cat-bird seat (in a favoured position) or Saying Smith was in a favoured position, he added: He *s* in the cat-bird seat.

**slew**

It is colloquial and a cliché. If you are trying to say a large number or amount then express it more precisely.

**slump**

A sudden or serious fall in economic activity or prices.

**Smithsonian Institution, not Institute.****smoulder, but smolder in American style.**

**sneaked, not snuck****so as to**

Use to.

**so-called**

Adjective and adverb.

**Social Security**

Capitalise when referring to the U.S. system.

**socialist**

Capitalise only when part of a proper name.

**software**

Capitalise, without quotation marks, e.g. Windows, Internet Explorer. Use quotation marks for computer games, e.g. *Bust a Move: Dance Summit* .

**Somali**

Not Somalian.

**some**

Write about 500 people rather than some 500 people. As an indication that a figure is an approximation, some is more likely to confuse translators than about.

**song titles**

Capitalise every word in the title apart from conjunctions, articles, particles and short prepositions, e.g. "All You Need Is Love", "Son of a Preacher Man".

**sophisticated**

A modish word when applied to weapons. Most weapon systems are sophisticated. If you just mean modern, say so.

**sorcerer****SOS**

An appeal for rescue. No spaces, no points.

**South Asia**

Use this for the region that includes Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

**space age**

Began with the launch of Sputnik 1 on Oct. 4, 1957.

**space centre, but American style is space center**

Use in stories to describe Cape Canaveral and other spacecraft launch facilities. Do not use spaceport

**spaceship****space shuttle**

Lower case unless part of a proper name.

**spacewalk**

One word

**Spanish names**

See Hispanic names.

**special**

Avoid. It rarely adds value. Instead tell us directly what is special about the person or the event.

**species**

Same word for singular and plural.

**speeds**

Use numerals for speeds 7 mph, 7 to 9 knots.

**spelled, misspelled, not spelt****spelling**

There are two generally accepted spelling systems for the English language. Our global client base is accustomed to reading both. Copy originating in the Americas should follow North American spelling conventions, such as *color*, *defense*, *aging*, *caliber*, etc. Copy originating elsewhere should follow British spelling norms. At all times stick to official spellings for American names and titles, such as U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates and U.S. Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. Watch out for regional words that non-English language services and clients will find difficult to understand and translate. In American sports coverage, use American terms and spellings e.g. *center*, *maneuver*, *defense*, *offense*, *ballclub*, *postseason*, *preseason*, *lineman*, *line up*, *halfback*, *doubleheader*.

**spill, spilling, spilled, not spilt.****spin off, spinoff**

Spin off is the verb, spinoff the noun.

**spokesman, spokeswoman**

not spokesperson. If the sex of the person is not known then use representative.

**spoonful, spoonfuls, not spoonsful or spoons full.**

## **sports events titles**

Use lower case for sport names, junior, men's, women's, championship, tournament, meeting, match, test, race, game etc. Use upper case for an event title e.g. French Open tennis championships, Dutch Open golf tournament. Use singular championship when one title is at stake and plural championships for more than one, U.S. Open tennis championships (men's, women's, doubles). Use the name of the sport before championship, tournament etc.

## **sports metaphors**

Think twice before using a metaphor drawn from sport. They are often particular to a single sport or culture and are difficult to translate. Not everyone knows what you mean by bowling a googly, a full court press or standing up to the plate.

## **sprang, sprung**

Sprang is the past tense. The crew sprang to attention. Sprung is the past participle. Spring has sprung.

## **square leg, square-leg**

Two words for the fielding position in cricket, at square leg, but hyphenated as an adjective, square-leg umpire.

## **stadiums, not stadia.**

## **stagehand, one word**

## **stanch, staunch**

Use stanch for the verb, staunch for the adjective. The staunch supporter stanching the flow of blood.

## **Star Wars**

Use quote marks when it means the U.S. Strategic Defence Initiative.

## **startup**

One word for a new business.

**star/superstar**

Avoid. Do not use in sports reporting.

**state names**

Abbreviate the names of states in the United States only in datelines. In text, spell out the names in full.

**station wagon, two words****stationary, stationery**

Stationary is fixed or still. Stationery is writing material.

**statute mile**

About 1.6 km.

**stepping stone, two words****stretcher**

Do not use as a verb. Bill Bloggs was carried off, not stretched off.

**stealth**

Do not capitalize when describing aircraft or weapons. See military.

**storey, storeys**

The third storey of a building. But tell me a different story. In American style, story for both uses.

**storms**

A storm is more severe than a gale. The most severe of all storms is a cyclone, in which winds blow spirally inwards towards a centre of low barometric pressure. The word cyclone is used of such storms in the Indian Ocean and Australia. In the China Seas and West Pacific such a storm is a typhoon and in the Caribbean and on the east coast of the United States a hurricane. A tornado is a

violent whirling windstorm with a very narrow focus, common in the United States. In many countries meteorological offices give tropical storms the names of men and women in alphabetical sequence. Japan numbers them sequentially, beginning afresh on January 1 each year. To be recognised as typhoon, a tropical storm has to have winds of 17 metres (56 feet) per second or stronger. The Beaufort scale measures wind speed.

## **strait, straight**

a strait is a narrow channel joining two larger bodies of water; in dire straits or in desperate straits is a cliché for someone in distress. The home straight is the final part of a racecourse between the last bend and the finishing post.

## **straitjacket**

## **strait-laced**

Narrow in principles, or prudish. Not straight-laced.

## **strategic**

The distinction between strategy – the conduct of a military campaign – and tactics – manoeuvring in the presence of the enemy – is worth preserving. Do not abuse strategic by making it mean simply important. A mountain pass, a bridge or even a building is of strategic importance if its possession could affect the conduct of a campaign as a whole. If it is only of local importance its value is tactical.

## **stratum, strata**

One stratum, several strata.

## **stricture**

Adverse criticism, or a binding or closure. The first meaning is the one most commonly used.

## **strike**

Do not use as a transitive verb. For strike action say strike.

**strong-arm**

Hyphenated as verb and adjective.

**stupefy, stupefying, stupefaction**

**stupor**

**sub**

In general, no hyphen as a prefix.

**submachinegun**

One word. See also Military

**subpoena, subpoenaing, subpoenaed**

**subprime**

One word.

**subsequent to, subsequently**

Use after or later.

**substitute for**

The verb substitute takes the preposition for. Do not confuse with replace with or replace by.

**successive**

Preferable to straight.

**successor**



**successfully**

Can often be excised, as in They successfully sailed round the world.

**such as, like**

Such is used when offering an example. Like means similar to. Politicians like Brown have short tempers and long memories, but Players such as Smith, Patel and Jones are essential in the team.

**Sudan, not the Sudan.****sufficient**

Generally prefer enough.

**sue, suing, sued**

Not sueing.

**suit, suite**

A suit of clothes or to follow suit in cards. However, a suite of followers, rooms or furniture or play a suite of tunes.

**summit**

Use this term only for meetings of heads of state or government. You cannot have a summit of foreign ministers or of trade union leaders. Do not use mini-summit. Two leaders can make a summit.

**summon, summons**

The verb is to summon. The noun is a summons.

**Sunni/Shi'ite**

Muslims are split into two main groups, Sunni and Shi'ite. Sunnis are estimated about 80 percent of all Muslims and include most Arabs. Sunnis and Shi'ites draw spiritual inspiration from the same source, the Prophet Mohammad, but Shi'ite theologians have much greater freedom of interpretation. As well as adhering to the revelations of the Muslim holy book, the Koran, Sunnis

follow the Prophet Mohammad's rule of life (the Sunna) and traditions based on his sayings. Shi'ites hold that the succession to the Prophet should remain in his own family. Since the direct line was broken not long after the death of Mohammad, Shi'ites believe there is a Hidden Imam (spiritual leader) who will reappear one day. In Iran, where Shi'ites are predominant, the revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini was considered the Imam's deputy on earth. His successor as Supreme Leader holds the same authority. Rivalry between Sunnis and Shi'ites extends back to the years following the death of the Prophet Mohammad, when Islam first split over the question of who was the rightful successor. Some hardline Sunnis regard Shi'ites as heretics and Shi'ite minority communities in some parts of the Middle East complain of discrimination.

## **super**

In general, no hyphen as a prefix.

## **superlatives**

Be careful with first, largest, biggest, highest and oldest because such descriptions are often challenged. Have a source for them, but be particularly sceptical about news releases claiming records, especially auction records. Avoid similar value judgments. Do not call a company giant, because many companies are giants in one way or another. When does a company become a giant?

## **supersede**

## **supervisor**

## **supremo**

Do not use the term for a supreme commander, which is not widely understood outside Britain.

## **Surinam, not Suriname**

Former Dutch colony in South America.

## **surrounded**

Completely surrounded is tautologous, as is surrounded on all sides. It is impossible to be surrounded on two or three sides.

**SUV**

Sport (singular) Utility Vehicle.

**Swastika****swath, swathe**

A swath is a strip cut by a scythe or mowing machine. Swathe is to wrap, or a binding or bandage. Cut a swath, but swathe someone in love.

**swat, swot**

Swat a wasp but swot for your exams.

**syllabus, syllabuses****sync**

Prefer to 'synch' as a way to shorten synchronisation, as in out of sync.

**synthesise, synthesizer, but in American style synthesize, synthesizer****Szczecin, not Stettin, Poland.**

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

# T

## Contents

- 1 table
- 2 tablespoon, tablespoonfuls
- 3 take over (verb), takeover (noun)
- 4 Talib/Taliban
- 5 Tangier, not Tangiers, Morocco.
- 6 tankan
- 7 targeted
- 8 Tatar
- 9 tattoos, tatting, tattooed
- 10 tautology
- 11 tax avoidance/evasion
- 12 Tbilisi, not Tiflis, Georgia.
- 13 teammate
- 14 teams
- 15 teaspoon, teaspoonful, teaspoonfuls
- 16 teenage, teenager
- 17 terminate
- 18 teargas
- 19 Tehran, not Teheran, Iran.
- 20 Tel Aviv
- 21 television station/network
- 22 television series/season
- 23 temblor
- 24 temperatures
- 25 Temple Mount/al-Haram al-Sharif
- 26 temporary respite
- 27 tenses
- 28 terrorism
- 29 Thai names
- 30 that, which
- 31 theatre, but in American style theater
- 32 their, there, they're
- 33 there is, there are
- 34 Thimphu
- 35 Third World
- 36 therefore
- 37 third man
- 38 thrash, thresh
- 39 threshold
- 40 Tiananmen Square, not Tienanmen, in Beijing
- 41 tiebreak
- 42 Tigray
- 43 Timbuktu
- 44 time
- 45 titbit, but in American style tidbit
- 46 titles

- 47 titles of sports events
- 48 titleholder
- 49 together
- 50 told reporters
- 51 told Reuters
- 52 tomato, tomatoes
- 53 ton, tonne
- 54 tonnage of ships
- 55 top
- 56 topspin
- 57 tornado, tornadoes
- 58 torpedo
- 59 tortuous, torturous
- 60 Tory, Tories
- 61 total, totalling, totalled, but in American style total, totaling, totaled
- 62 total annihilation
- 63 Touareg
- 64 towards
- 65 trademark
- 66 trade union, trade unions, not trades unions.
- 67 traffic
- 68 tragedy
- 69 Transdniestria
- 70 trans-
- 71 transfer, transferring, transferred
- 72 transparency
- 73 transpired
- 74 transportation
- 75 transsexual
- 76 transvestite
- 77 travel, travelled, travelling, traveller
- 78 travelogue
- 79 treasury bill
- 80 trillion
- 81 triplets
- 82 Trojan horse, Trojan Wars
- 83 troop, troupe
- 84 troubled
- 85 truck
- 86 true facts
- 87 try and
- 88 Tsar, not Czar
- 89 T-shirt, not teeshirt
- 90 tsunami
- 91 tuberculosis
- 92 TUC
- 93 turgid, turbid
- 94 Tuvalu
- 95 TV

- 96 twice
- 97 typhoon
- 98 tyre
- 99 Tyrol, Austria

## **table**

Do not use as a verb. It has conflicting meanings -- to put a bill forward for discussion and to postpone discussion of it.

## **tablespoon, tablespoonfuls**

## **take over (verb), takeover (noun)**

## **Talib/Taliban**

Radical Sunni Muslim movement that ruled most of Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001. From the Arabic for student (Talib). The plural is Taliban.

## **Tangier, not Tangiers, Morocco.**

## **tankan**

A Bank of Japan report on sentiment among Japanese companies, based on a quarterly survey covering some 10,000 companies.

## **targeted**

Not targetted. Except in a military context, prefer aimed at or directed at, or describe exactly what is being done to whom.

## **Tatar**

Soviet ethnic group. Not Tartar.

## **tattoos, tatting, tattooed**

**tautology**

Saying the same thing twice, as in 'a new record' where the word new is unnecessary. Others are 'originally built', 'future risks', 'weather conditions', 'in a westerly direction'.

**tax avoidance/evasion**

Tax avoidance is legal, tax evasion is illegal. Be specific.

**Tbilisi, not Tiflis, Georgia.****teammate**

One word.

**teams**

Teams and clubs are used as plural nouns, except in American sport. Fulham buy new Dutch striker. Manchester United said they would not rush into the transfer market.

**teaspoon, teaspoonful, teaspoonfuls****teenage, teenager****terminate**

Use stop or end.

**teargas**

one word.

**Tehran, not Teheran, Iran.****Tel Aviv**

Tel Aviv is not the capital of Israel and the status of Jerusalem is contentious. Do not use the name of either city as a synonym for Israel, as in the Jerusalem government, or refer to Jerusalem as the

capital of Israel.

## **television station/network**

A television station is a single, local broadcasting entity whereas a network is a group of affiliated stations that transmit the same programmes during certain hours and whose programmes appears on a single channel in each market.

## **television series/season**

The season of a show is different from a series, e.g. The television series "Friends" is in its third season.

## **temblor**

An American word for earthquake, not trembler.

## **temperatures**

Express in Celsius (the same scale as Centigrade) and Fahrenheit, using the scale of the country involved first, with conversion in brackets. Spell in full at first reference, abbreviating to C and F subsequently, 25 Celsius, 40C. Freezing point in Celsius is 0 degrees, in Fahrenheit 32 degrees. Convert from Celsius to Fahrenheit for temperatures above zero by multiplying by 9, dividing by 5 and adding 32, e.g. 20 Celsius (68 Fahrenheit). For temperatures below zero multiply by nine, divide by five and subtract from 32, e.g. minus 15C (5F), minus 20C (minus 4F). Convert from Fahrenheit to Celsius for temperatures above 32 by subtracting 32, multiplying by five and dividing by nine. For temperatures below freezing take the total number of degrees by which the temperature is below 32, multiply by five and divide by nine, e.g. minus 8F is 40 below freezing, 40 x 5/9 gives you 22, therefore minus 22C.

## **Temple Mount/al-Haram al-Sharif**

A 14-hectare (34-acre) area of the Old City of Jerusalem sacred to Jews and Muslims. It is the site of the biblical Jewish temple destroyed in AD 70. Many Jews believe the Western Wall below the Mount, Judaism's holiest place, is a remnant of the retaining wall of the ancient temple site. Muslims believe the Prophet Mohammad ascended into heaven from this place. They built the al-Aqsa mosque and the gilded Dome of the Rock on the site and called it al-Haram al-Sharif (the Noble Sanctuary). It is the third holiest Islamic shrine after Mecca and Medina.

## **temporary respite**

Tautological. A respite is by definition temporary.



## **tenses**

See writing.

## **terrorism**

We may refer without attribution to terrorism and counter-terrorism in general but do not refer to specific events as terrorism. Nor do we use the adjective word terrorist without attribution to qualify specific individuals, groups or events. Terrorism and terrorist must be retained when quoting someone in direct speech. When quoting someone in indirect speech, care must be taken with sentence structure to ensure it is entirely clear that they are the source's words and not a label. Terrorism and terrorist should not be used as single words in inverted commas (e.g. "terrorist") or preceded by so-called (e.g. a so-called terrorist attack) since that can be taken to imply a value judgment. Use a fuller quote if necessary. Terror as in terror attack or terror cell should be avoided, except in direct quotes.

Report the subjects of news stories objectively, their actions, identity and background. Aim for a dispassionate use of language so that individuals, organisations and governments can make their own judgment on the basis of facts. Seek to use more specific terms like bomber , or bombing , hijacker or hijacking , attacker or attacks , gunman or gunmen etc.

## **Thai names**

The first name is used alone at second reference, e.g. Prime Minister Chatichai Choonhavan said ... Chatichai added ...

## **that, which**

Use that in defining clauses, e.g. the cup that cheers. Reserve which for informative clauses, e.g. the cup, which was blue, was full of water. Avoid the unnecessary use of that as in He said that he was going to &

## **theatre, but in American style theater**

Unless it is part of a proper name.

## **their, there, they're**

Know the difference.

## **there is, there are**

Usually unnecessary, e.g. There are two choices facing the captain can be changed to The captain faces two choices.

## **Thimphu**

Not Thimpu, Bhutan.

## **Third World**

A term to be avoided. Use developing countries or poor countries instead.

## **therefore**

Use so.

## **third man**

Two words for fielding position in cricket.

## **thrash, thresh**

Thrash means to beat soundly, thresh to beat out, e.g. grain, corn.

## **threshold**

Not threshhold, but withhold not withhold.

## **Tiananmen Square, not Tienanmen, in Beijing**

## **tiebreak**

One word in tennis.

## **Tigray**

Not Tigre, Ethiopia. The adjective is Tigrayan.

## Timbuktu

Not Timbuktou or Timbuctoo, Mali.

## time

Abbreviations of time zones are acceptable providing the GMT equivalent is given.

BST (British Summer Time) = GMT +1 CET (Central European Time) = GMT +1 CDT (Central Daylight Time) = GMT -5 CST (Central Standard Time) = GMT -6 EST (Eastern Standard Time) = GMT -5 MDT (Mountain Daylight Time) = GMT -6 MST (Mountain Standard Time) = GMT -7 PST (Pacific Standard Time) = GMT -8

When referring to times first give the local time by the 12-hour clock (without using the words local time) and follow it with a bracketed conversion to a 24-hour clock time for a specified time zone, e.g. ... will meet at 10 a.m. (1600 GMT). Use figures except for noon and midnight. Use a colon to separate hours and minutes, 3:15 p.m.

Use the style on Friday, on Saturday, on Sunday rather than the looser today, yesterday, tomorrow. However, in American style, it is He came Friday, not on Friday.

Do not use phrases like several months ago or recently which suggest we do not know when something happened or are too lazy to find out. Be precise last August, on Feb. 2.

## titbit, but in American style tidbit

## titles

Capitalise an official's title when it immediately precedes the person's name, but when the title follows the name or is used alone use lower case, e.g.: President Tom Smith but The president said: I would like to welcome the British prime minister, Janet Courage.

## titles of sports events

Use lower case for sport names, junior, men's, women's, championship, tournament, meeting, match, test, race, game etc. Use upper case for the event title e.g. French Open tennis championships, Dutch Open golf tournament. Use singular championship when one title is at stake and plural championships for more than one, U.S. Open tennis championships (men's, women's, doubles). Use the name of the sport before championship, tournament etc.

## titleholder

## together

The word can often be dropped, as in meet together, join together and together with.

## told reporters

Use this only when the source is speaking informally to a group of reporters. If he or she is addressing a news conference, say so.

## told Reuters

Use this phrase only when we are being given significant information or an interview on an exclusive basis. Otherwise it is told reporters or told a news conference. If we get information on the basis of a telephone call to an official spokesman/spokeswoman who would make the same information available to anyone who called, we need simply say the spokesman/ spokeswoman said.

## tomato, tomatoes

## ton, tonne

We use both tons and tonnes, without having to give a conversion, but you must make clear what kind of ton(ne) is meant, using the terms long and short where appropriate. The three measures are: **tonne** 2,204.6 pounds (1,000 kg), formerly called metric ton

**long ton** 2,240 pounds (or 20 hundredweights, 20 x 112 pounds).

**short ton** 2,000 pounds, American ton

Use lb for pounds in copy

## tonnage of ships

For passenger liners, cruise ships and other vessels, other than warships, tankers and dry bulk cargo ships, express in gross registered tonnage (grt), a volume measurement expressed in tons, and the first bold-type figure in Lloyd's Register of Shipping. For tankers and dry bulk cargo vessels the measurement is in deadweight tonnes (dwt), the actual weight in tonnes of maximum cargo, stores, fuel and people carried, which can be at least twice the gross tonnage.

A tonnage scale called compensated gross tons (cgt) is used in statistics to show a country's shipbuilding capacity. Cgt factors in manpower and added values. For instance, a very large crude carrier is bigger and may need more steel than a smaller liquefied gas carrier, but the number of hours needed to complete the gas carrier, and its value in the market, may be higher than for the supertanker. In some cases other means of measuring the ship's capacity are used. For liquefied

gas carriers, use cubic metres (feet) more often than dwt to show the ship's capacity. For container ships use teu (twenty-foot equivalent unit) or feu (forty-foot equivalent unit).

## **top**

Use sparingly because it is often tautological, e.g. The president met his top aides ... He would hardly consult junior aides.

## **topspin**

One word in tennis.

## **tornado, tornadoes**

however, note the plural of the fighter-bomber in service with some West European air forces is Tornados.

## **torpedo**

torpedoes but torpedoing.

## **tortuous, torturous**

Tortuous is full of windings or far from straightforward. Torturous is causing torture or violent distortion. Negotiations are often tortuous, rarely torturous.

## **Tory, Tories**

Acceptable alternative for second reference to Conservative Party members in Britain.

## **total, totalling, totalled, but in American style total, totaling, totaled**

A total of is usually redundant. Just give the figure.

## **total annihilation**

Redundant. Annihilation is total.

## **Touareg**

Use Tuareg.

## **towards**

Not toward. But untoward. However, American style is toward.

## **trademark**

A trademark is a brand, symbol or word registered by a manufacturer and protected by law to prevent others from using it. Use a generic equivalent unless the trademark is important to the story. When used, follow the owner's capitalisation, e.g. Aspro not aspro but aspirin.

## **trade union, trade unions, not trades unions.**

## **traffic**

trafficked, trafficker

## **tragedy**

Do not devalue this word by overuse. Avoid in sports reporting.

## **Transdniestria**

A region of Moldova. Do not use Dnestr or other variants unless in quotes.

## **trans-**

When the second element of a word beginning with trans- starts with a capital, hyphenate, e.g. trans-Siberian. Exceptions are transatlantic, transfat, transpacific, transarctic, transalpine.

## **transfer, transferring, transferred**

## **transparency**

A vogue word. Openness will often serve as a substitute.

**transpired**

Use it in the sense of came to be known, not of happened.

**transportation**

Use transport except where part of a title, e.g. U.S. Department of Transportation.

**transsexual**

A person who identifies as, or wishes to live and be accepted as, a member of the opposite sex. Transsexuals usually desire physical alteration of their bodies to bring them closer to the sex with which they identify. See transvestite

**transvestite**

Regarded by many cross-dressers as pejorative and should be avoided. Use a simple description or explanation of how the person prefers to be described. eg "Award-winning potter Grayson Perry, who frequently dresses as a woman and calls himself Claire..." See transsexual.

**travel, travelled, travelling, traveller**

But in American style traveled, traveling, traveler.

**travelogue****treasury bill**

use lower case treasury bill, not Treasury bill

**trillion**

Trillion means one thousand billion. The word must be spelled out, although it can be abbreviated to trln when necessary in headlines. Always use numerals before trillion, e.g. 2 trillion, 4 trillion.

**triplets**

Be careful when linking triple ideas that you have a proper complement of verbs. The following sentence is wrong: Three Iraqis were killed, 22 captured and the crew of the minesweeper tried to scuttle their ship. It should read ... Three Iraqis were killed, 22 were captured and the crew of the

minesweeper tried... i.e. one complete verb for each element.

## **Trojan horse, Trojan Wars**

### **troop, troupe**

A troop is a body of soldiers or a group of people. Use troupe only for performers.

### **troubled**

Be careful in using such a word to describe nouns, especially companies; it can be defamatory. Be specific, e.g. the company that lost \$4 million in its last financial year.

### **truck**

Not lorry.

### **true facts**

Tautological. If a fact is not true it is not a fact.

### **try and**

Use try to.

## **Tsar, not Czar**

## **T-shirt, not teeshirt**

### **tsunami**

Japanese for a tidal wave.

### **tuberculosis**

May be referred to as TB at second reference. The adjective is tuberculous not tubercular.



## **TUC**

Trades Union Congress (UK). Note plural Trades.

## **turgid, turbid**

Turgid is swollen, pompous or bombastic. Turbid is muddy or thick.

## **Tuvalu**

Formerly Ellice Islands, West Pacific.

## **TV**

Acceptable contraction for television.

## **twice**

Not two time or two times. Bigger numbers should be in the plural, e.g. seven times champion.

## **typhoon**

Capitalise when it has been given a name, e.g. Typhoon Mark.

## **tyre**

But in American style tire (on a wheel).

## **Tyrol, Austria**

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

# U

## Contents

- 1 UAE
- 2 UAW
- 3 UEFA
- 4 UFO
- 5 UHF
- 6 UK
- 7 UKAEA
- 8 Ukraine
- 9 ULCC
- 10 Ulster
- 11 ultimatum, ultimatums
- 12 Uncle Tom
- 13 under way
- 14 undersecretary
- 15 unexceptionable,  
unexceptional
- 16 Unification Church
- 17 uninterested,  
disinterested
- 18 unique
- 19 un-Islamic
- 20 United Kingdom
- 21 United Nations
- 22 United States
- 23 unparalleled
- 24 unusual names
- 25 up/down
- 26 upside down
- 27 upsurge
- 28 upcoming
- 29 Uppsala, Sweden.
- 30 uranium
- 31 URL
- 32 USDA
- 33 U.S. Congress
- 34 U.S. courts
- 35 U.S. datelines
- 36 U.S. Marshals Service
- 37 U.S. legislative titles
- 38 user friendly
- 39 utilise
- 40 U-turn

## **UAE**

United Arab Emirates.

## **UAW**

United Auto Workers (U.S.).

## **UEFA**

A singular noun, all in capitals. Explain as European soccer's governing body. See [www.uefa.com](http://www.uefa.com).

## **UFO**

unidentified flying object.

## **UHF**

ultra high frequency

## **UK**

United Kingdom, no full stops

## **UKAEA**

UK Atomic Energy Authority.

## **Ukraine**

Not the Ukraine.

## **ULCC**

ultra-large crude carrier.

**Ulster**

Say Northern Ireland, unless quoting someone. See Northern Ireland.

**ultimatum, ultimatums****Uncle Tom**

A term of contempt applied to a black person, Potentially libellous.

**under way**

Two words. Write began or started rather than got under way unless referring to ships.

**undersecretary**

One word.

**unexceptionable, unexceptional**

Unexceptionable will not cause problems because no one raises an objection. Unexceptional is ordinary or commonplace.

**Unification Church**

Founded by Rev. Sun Myung Moon in South Korea in 1954, the Unification Church is a religious movement that has expanded around the world and is believed to have up to three million members. See religious terms

**uninterested, disinterested**

Uninterested means the opposite of interested. Disinterested means impartial.

**unique**

Cannot be qualified, so do not write almost unique, more unique, rather unique.

## un-Islamic

not unIslamic

## United Kingdom

The United Kingdom comprises Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Great Britain comprises England, Wales and Scotland. Use the full or abbreviated form (UK) only to emphasise the inclusion of Northern Ireland with England, Scotland and Wales or if hard-pressed for headline space.

## United Nations

Spell it out at first reference when used as a noun. It may be abbreviated to U.N. in a headline. As an adjective it can be also be abbreviated at first reference, e.g. the U.N. General Assembly, U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. Security Council: The 15-member United Nations Security Council in New York is the body that takes many of the decisions on U.N. action around the world, often through numbered resolutions, e.g. Resolution 649. It consists of five permanent members with the power of veto over any resolution – Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States. There are also 10 non-permanent members of the Security Council, made up of other U.N. countries which serve in rotation, representing different areas of the world. The Security Council presidency rotates monthly, by English alphabetical listing of its member states.

Some of the main U.N. agencies:

- **UNEP:** U.N. Environment Programme.
- **UNESCO:** U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.
- **UNHCR:** U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. If you wish to avoid using this cumbersome title at first reference, use a form of words like a U.N. agency said or the main U.N refugee agency said, giving the full name lower in the story. Note that there is no U.N. High Commission for Refugees, the correct title of the institution being the Office of the UNHCR.
- **UNICEF:** The acronym can be used for all references to the United Nations Children's Fund.
- **UNIDO:** U.N. Industrial Development Organisation.
- **UNRWA:** U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees.

## United States

Spell it out at all references in text when used as a noun. It may be abbreviated to U.S. in a headline. As an adjective it can also be abbreviated at first reference, e.g. the U.S. State Department. Do not use USA except in quoted passages. Do not use the noun America as a synonym for the United States, although you may use American instead of U.S. as an adjective.

**unparalleled**

Not unparallelled.

**unusual names**

If a name is unusual repeat it in brackets, e.g. Aigail (repeat Aigail) Carter. Do not write Aigail (eds: correct).

**up/down**

In economic and financial reporting avoid saying is up or is down. Use higher, lower or increased, decreased, firmer, weaker, etc. Do not use up as a verb, as in ups dividend. Always report ... rose/fell to ... from, never vice versa.

**upside down**

The car turned upside down, but the book is upside-down.

**upsurge**

Use surge.

**upcoming**

Do not use

**Uppsala, Sweden.****uranium**

A radioactive metal. It is enriched by rapid spinning that separates uranium-235, the fuel for nuclear reactors, from uranium-238 that is used to make plutonium.

**URL**

Any style for website addresses.

## **USDA**

U.S. Department of Agriculture.

## **U.S. Congress**

The U.S. Congress is divided into two bodies: the 100-member Senate, where each state has two members, and the House of Representatives, whose 435 members are allotted in proportion to a state's population. Almost all members of Congress are either Democrats or Republicans with a few independent s who align with one of the two parties.

## **U.S. courts**

The U.S. court system is divided into state courts, which rule on state laws, and federal courts which rule on national laws and the U.S. Constitution. The federal court system consists of district courts, courts of appeal and, at the top, the U.S. Supreme Court whose nine members are appointed for life. The Supreme Court is the final arbiter on constitutional issues.

Grand juries: Their prime function is to review evidence presented by a prosecutor and determine whether there is probable cause to return an indictment. Under the constitution, a grand jury indictment is required for federal criminal charges. Only about half of the states' judicial systems use grand juries.

## **U.S. datelines**

The following U.S. cities stand alone in a dateline without the need to mention their state: Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Honolulu, Houston, Indianapolis, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, New Orleans, New York, Oklahoma City, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Pittsburg, St Louis, Salt Lake City, San Antonio, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Washington.

## **U.S. Marshals Service**

No apostrophe.

## **U.S. legislative titles**

Do not abbreviate legislative titles in the United States. Use Governor, Senator, Representative at first mention and then refer to the politician by surname on subsequent reference.

## **user friendly**

Jargon. Prefer easy to use.

## **utilise**

Prefer use.

## **U-turn**

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide



# V

## Contents

- 1 Valletta, not Valetta, Malta.
- 2 Vanuatua
- 3 Varanasi
- 4 VAT
- 5 venal, venial
- 6 vendor
- 7 ventricle, not ventrical, of the heart
- 8 Very light
- 9 Versus
- 10 veteran
- 11 veto, vetoes, vetoeing, vetoed
- 12 VHF
- 13 via
- 14 vice-
- 15 vice versa
- 16 videogame
- 17 vie, vying, vied
- 18 Viet Cong, not Vietcong
- 19 Vietnam
- 20 Vietnamese names
- 21 Virgin Mary
- 22 vocal cords
- 23 voice mails
- 24 volcano, volcanoes
- 25 Volgograd
- 26 volley, volleys
- 27 Voodoo
- 28 VTOL
- 29 vulgarities

## **Valletta, not Valetta, Malta.**

## **Vanuatua**

Formerly New Hebrides, Southwest Pacific.

## **Varanasi**

Not Benares, India.

**VAT**

Value added tax, a system of taxing products on the value added at each stage of production and exchange, effectively a consumption tax.

**venal, venial**

A venal person is corruptible, a venial sin is pardonable.

**vendor****ventricle, not ventrical, of the heart****Very light**

A signal flare fired from a pistol.

**Versus**

Spell it out in full in text. It can be abbreviated to vs in tables., but American style is to use v. in court cases, e.g. Roe v. Wade.

**veteran**

Overused in sports and general news stories and best avoided. Be more precise. Give the person's age and the details that show why the person is a veteran.

**veto, vetoes, vetoing, vetoed****VHF**

very high frequency.

**via**

Means by way of not by means of. We came via the main roads, but not We came via the bus.

**vice-**

Hyphenate titles such as vice-president, vice-admiral, vice-chairman etc, apart from U.S. titles. In American style, use two words for titles such as vice admiral, vice chairman, vice secretary. Hyphenate vice-president unless U.S. usage, e.g. vice president of the United States or of an American company. Capitalise when immediately preceding the name of a person.

**vice versa**

Not vica versa. No hyphen.

**videogame**

One word.

**vie, vying, vied****Viet Cong, not Vietcong****Vietnam**

Not Viet Nam.

**Vietnamese names**

Use the last name alone at second reference, e.g. Nguyen Co Thach is Thach and Bui Tin is Tin. The only exception to this rule is the late Ho Chi Minh (a nom de guerre). He is Ho at second reference.

**Virgin Mary**

Use this title or the Madonna, not Our Lady except in titles such as Our Lady of Czestochowa or in the names of churches.

**vocal cords**

Not chords.

## **voice mails**

Two words.

## **volcano, volcanoes**

## **Volgograd**

Formerly Tsaritsyn and then Stalingrad.

## **volley, volleys**

## **Voodoo**

Capitalise when referring to the religion, lower case for a magical fix.

## **VTOL**

vertical take-off and landing.

## **vulgarity**

See obscenities.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

# W

## Contents

- 1 wagon
- 2 Wahhabi, Wahhabism
- 3 waistline
- 4 waiver, waver
- 5 wake
- 6 walkie-talkie
- 7 war on terror
- 8 warn
- 9 wartime
- 10 Washington, Washington, D.C.
- 11 Washington's Birthday
- 12 wastebasket
- 13 weather
- 14 weather forecaster, not weatherman
- 15 Web, website
- 16 weekend
- 17 week-long
- 18 well
- 19 West
- 20 West Bank
- 21 Western Hemisphere
- 22 Western Sahara
- 23 Western
- 24 Wheeler-dealer
- 25 Whet, wet
- 26 which
- 27 whiskey, whisky
- 28 white-collar
- 29 White House
- 30 white paper
- 31 whiz-kid
- 32 WHO
- 33 who, whom
- 34 wicketkeeper
- 35 wicketkeeper-batsman
- 36 wide-, -wide
- 37 widow
- 38 Wi-Fi
- 39 withhold
- 40 woes
- 41 word processor, word processing
- 42 workforce
- 43 World Bank

- 44 World Council of Churches
- 45 World War One/Two
- 46 World Wide Web
- 47 worldwide
- 48 worship, worshipper, worshipped
- 49 wrack, rack
- 50 wreaked
- 51 writedown
- 52 writing
  - ◆ 52.1 clichés
  - ◆ 52.2 euphemism
  - ◆ 52.3 jargon
  - ◆ 52.4 long words and clumsy titles
  - ◆ 52.5 Synonyms
  - ◆ 52.6 metaphors
  - ◆ 52.7 repetition
  - ◆ 52.8 reported speech
  - ◆ 52.9 spin
  - ◆ 52.10 verbs
- 53 writeoff
- 54 WTO
- 55 WWF

## **wagon**

not waggon.

## **Wahhabi, Wahhabism**

Referring to the official school of Islam in Saudi Arabia

## **waistline**

## **waiver, waver**

A waiver is an act of renunciation, to waver is to vacillate.

## **wake**

Do not use in the wake of. Use after or following.

**walkie-talkie**

Note hyphen.

**war on terror**

Do not use this phrase unless in a quote. It is poor English and part of the propaganda battle around militant violence.

**warn**

It is acceptable to leave out the object of the verb warn, e.g. Police warned of possible attacks. The object of the verb, the public or travellers or just people, is implied. However, the verb is often stronger and clearer if you spell out exactly who is being warned.

**wartime**

One word.

**Washington, Washington, D.C.**

Do not specify D.C. unless there is a clear need to distinguish between the western U.S. state and the federal district that serves as the U.S. capital.

**Washington's Birthday**

Capitalise for the holiday which falls on the third Monday of February.

**wastebasket**

One word.

**weather**

Write good/poor/stormy weather not good/poor/stormy weather conditions.

**weather forecaster, not weatherman**

## **Web, website**

Capitalise Web, but website and webcast lower case.

## **weekend**

Not week-end. In American style, use over the weekend, not at the weekend.

## **week-long**

Hyphenate as an adjective.

## **well**

Hyphenated when serving as an adjective, but otherwise no hyphen when following a modified noun. The well-read man was well mannered.

## **West**

Capitalise it when used in a political sense.

## **West Bank**

## **Western Hemisphere**

## **Western Sahara**

## **Western**

Capitalise for a book or film type.

Western Wall Not Wailing Wall.

## **Wheeler-dealer**

Note hyphen



**Whet, wet**

Whet means to sharpen, hence whet your appetite.

**which**

See entry for that, which

**whiskey, whisky**

Whiskey is Irish, American and the general term, but whisky is Scotch and Canadian. Scotch as a synonym is acceptable.

**white-collar**

Adjective -- note hyphen.

**White House**

May be used as an alternative to the U.S. administration.

**white paper**

Government information paper. Two words, lower case.

**whiz-kid**

Note hyphen, one z.

**WHO**

World Health Organization (Geneva). See [www.who.int](http://www.who.int)

**who, whom**

Who is the subject, whom the object of a verb. As a rough guide as to which word to use, substitute he or him for the who or whom and see which makes sense. But we should follow common usage and be ready to use who as the object where this sounds and looks more natural, e.g. Who she met at the midnight rendezvous was not yet known.

**wicketkeeper**

One word in cricket.

**wicketkeeper-batsman**

Hyphenated. Cricketer who is a recognised batsman but who also keeps wicket when his side is fielding.

**wide-, -wide**

Industrywide, nationwide, worldwide have no hyphen. Wide-open, wide-bodied, wide-eyed, wide-awake are hyphenated. Widespread is an exception.

**widow**

Either of these is all right: the widow of President John Smith or the wife of the late President John Smith. The widow of the late President John Smith is tautological. Use the late only of those recently dead, not for instance of someone like John Kennedy who has been dead for several decades.

**Wi-Fi**

A popular wireless networking technology that uses radio waves to provide wireless high-speed Internet and network connections for devices such as computers, mobile phones and video games.

**withhold**

Not withhold. But threshold.

**woes**

Acceptable in a headline for the sake of brevity but avoid such journalese as economic woes in text.

**word processor, word processing**

No hyphen.

**workforce**

One word.

**World Bank**

Acceptable contraction for the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. See [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)

**World Council of Churches**

Based in Geneva, the WCC is a Christian organisation dedicated to the search for Christian unity. It brings together some 350 churches, denominations and church fellowships in more than 110 countries and territories, representing more than 560 million Christians. See [www.oikoumene.org](http://www.oikoumene.org)

**World War One/Two**

Not First/Second World War. Not WWI/WWII.

**World Wide Web**

Shorten to Web, but website, but webcast, webmaster.

**worldwide**

No hyphen.

**worship, worshipper, worshipped****wrack, rack**

Use wrack only for seaweed and wrack and ruin. Otherwise use rack.

**wreaked**

Not wrought. She wreaked vengeance.

## writedown

One word as a noun, two words as a verb.

## writing

General principles stated by H.W. and F.G. Fowler hold good:

- Prefer the familiar word to the far-fetched.
- Prefer the short word to the long and the single word to the circumlocution.
- Prefer the concrete word to the abstract.
- Prefer the Saxon word to the Romance.
- Avoid pompous words like ongoing, escalating, prestigious, meaningful, facility. More often than not we can also do without special, key, dramatic, major, giant, large-scale, massive and crisis. Modish words like confrontation substitute polysyllabic vagueness for the crisp precision of (in this case) clash, dispute or even war.

## clicks

News stories relying heavily on phrases that have become stale through over use are like paintings done by number. They convey information but lack life or freshness. Avoid clicks that exaggerate or over-simplify e.g. the postage-stamp country, the oil-rich sheikhdom.

### Some clicks to avoid:

- In diplomacy and politics: face-to-face talks, on key issues, top-level meeting, headed into talks on, spearheaded a major initiative, rubber-stamp parliament, lashed out, landmark agreement.
- In disasters: mercy mission, airlifted/rushed to hospital, giant C-130 transports, massive aid, an air and sea search was under way, disaster probe, sifted through the wreckage.
- Of violence: lone gunman, strife-torn province, embattled city, baton-wielding police, stone-throwing demonstrators, steel-helmeted troops braced themselves for, police swoop, pre-dawn raid, staged an attack on, (tautologically) anti-government rebels, (tautologically) armed soldiers. Avoid armed police unless writing about a country where the police are normally unarmed. Then explain.
- Of industrial trouble: top union leaders, bosses, in a bid to settle, hammer out an agreement.

## euphemism

Euphemism, beloved of bureaucrats and social scientists, seeks to cloak reality, sometimes unpleasant, in innocuous words. Shun it. Except in quotation, write elderly people not senior citizens; kill not terminate with extreme prejudice; poor not disadvantaged, died of cancer not passed away after a fight with cancer.

## jargon

Technical and professional jargon has no place on the Reuters file unless you are writing for a narrow, specialist audience and are certain that your story is not likely to interest a broader readership. Backwardation might have a place without explanation in a report written uniquely for the gold market on a dull trading day, but if gold hits a high in a time of crisis your story should explain it or convey the meaning in simple terms without using the word itself.

Similarly, stories should not contain jargon associated with a specific profession, least of all our own e.g. do not use stringer in a story about a journalist. Use freelance journalist. Think carefully before using quotes laced with jargon. Paraphrase instead.

Journalese stems from importing into the text language used as shorthand in headlines. Some examples to avoid: Aimed at ... amid reports that... burgeoning (growing)... cutback (cut) ... dubbed (called)... due to (when what you mean is because of)... economic/fiscal woes ... embattled... giant (large) ... global (unless we mean literally that)... hit by fears that... lash out.. long-time foe... looks set to... major (big, large) ... massive (big) ... meaningful (real, significant) ... modalities (means, procedures) ... mum (silent)... OKs (approves) ... oil-rich... parameters (limits)... probe (inquiry) ... reportedly.. rocked by .. the statement came as... war-torn.

## long words and clumsy titles

Avoid unnecessarily long words and clumsy strings of names and titles. Foreign Minister Amr Moussa is fine. Under-Secretary for Military Procurement Major-General Abdul Karim al-Razzak is not. Split up such names and titles; either the Under-Secretary for Military Procurement, Major-General Abdul Karim al-Razzak, or Major-General Abdul Karim al-Razzak, under-secretary for military procurement. Here are some long words commonly and unnecessarily used when there is an acceptable shorter and simpler version:

## Synonyms

- additional - more
- alternative - other
- approximately - about
- attempt - try
- confrontation - clash, dispute
- construct - build
- cutback - cut
- demonstrate - show
- dispatch - send
- discover - find
- escalation - rise, increase
- establish - set up
- extinguish - put out
- facility - plant, base etc.
- finalise - complete, finish
- following - after

- large-scale - big
- manufacture - make
- modalities - means
- negotiations - talks
- numerous - many
- participate - take part
- permit - let
- requirements - needs
- sufficient - enough
- target (verb) - aim at
- transportation - transport

## **metaphors**

A fresh and vivid metaphor can add much to a story. But avoid mixed metaphors, e.g. The Egyptian swimmers walked away with the championships, and metaphors whose literal sense is absurd e.g., a growing bottleneck, which would solve rather than aggravate a problem.

## **repetition**

Avoid excessive repetition of words and of stereotyped descriptions of people or things, but do not overdo the search for variations. If you are writing about Myanmar call it Myanmar and not the Southeast Asian country. It is better to repeat the United Nations than to avoid repetition by calling it the world body. It is better to repeat the word base than call it a facility.

## **reported speech**

Do not retain the present indicative in reported speech. Change is to was; are to were; will and shall to would; has and have to had. Thus it is: He said it was ... not he said it is ...

In news agency style, there is an exception in lead paragraphs that have the source at the end instead of the beginning of a sentence, where to avoid the present indicative would lead to lack of clarity or smack of pedantry. For example, it is acceptable to write in a lead paragraph: Giant Oil Corp will order three supertankers from the Pusan shipyard in Korea next month, the company said. If the source were at the beginning, we would write: Giant Oil Corp said it would order three supertankers from the Pusan shipyard ...

## **spin**

Spin can be insidious and subliminal, conveyed in words and phrases that trip off the tongue or flow easily onto the page but disguise an agenda. Operation Iraqi Freedom was the name the United States gave to the military campaign in 2003 that it said was designed to liberate Iraq. We wrote that the United States invaded Iraq to overthrow Saddam Hussein.

**verbs**

Verbs bring action and life to a story but the wrong verb can indicate bias on our part. The verb to say is usually the best, neutral choice in reporting a speech or statement.

Alleged, claimed or maintained could imply that Reuters does not believe a statement and noted, pointed out, recalled or emphasised suggest that we do. Use announced with care. Only competent authorities have the right to make announcements.

Avoid concede, which implies an admission of guilt or previous error. Prefer said. Do not write refute (which means disprove) when you mean deny or reject.

Other potentially partisan verbs to avoid include admitted, asserted, affirmed, contended, stressed, suggested.

Come, leave and give are verbs too often misused in flabby phrases. Go for positive construction. Avoid limp phrases like The demands came when... The fire left six people dead... or The strike left commuters angry... Demands do not come; people make them. Fires do not leave people dead, they kill them. Strikes anger commuters, not leave them angry.

Also avoid continued (or worse, ongoing), especially in the lead paragraph. The word gives the impression of monotonous action. Finally, there is always a better verb than 'to get'.

**writeoff**

One word as a noun, two words as a verb.

**WTO**

World Trade Organisation. Based in Geneva and launched in 1995 to supervise existing international trade accords and provide a forum to negotiate agreements and adjudicate in disputes.

**WWF**

The new official name for the World Wide Fund for Nature. Explain somewhere in the story.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

# XYZ

## Contents

- 1  
Xerox
- 2 yard
- 3  
yardstick
- 4 year  
ends
- 5  
yoke,  
yolk
- 6  
youth
- 7  
zero,  
zeros
- 8  
Zuider  
Zee
- 9  
ZULU

## **Xerox**

A trademark, never a verb. Use photocopy.

## **yard**

To convert to metres multiply by 9 and divide by 10, precisely multiply by 0.914

## **yardstick**

## **year ends**

Financial, fiscal (tax), company and crop years rarely coincide with calendar years so explain clearly in the text which year is referred to, e.g. The budget target deficit for the financial year ended March 2002 was... or Cocoa production rose 14 percent to 100,000 tonnes in the year ended September 2001. Take care with crop-year dates as the old crop can be harvested and the new crop planted in the same year. To refer to the 2002 crop can be dangerously ambiguous. Also, Commodity producers sometimes also have marketing years for produce that differ from the crop year. In such cases spell out the year referred to and when each starts and ends. Organisations such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the International Coffee Organisation produce statistics, based on different years.



## **yoke, yolk**

Yoke for oxen and yolk of an egg.

## **youth**

Boys and girls aged 13 to 18.

## **zero, zeros**

## **Zuider Zee**

Not Zuyder Zee, Netherlands.

## **ZULU**

A term used by Western military forces to mean GMT.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide