The Analyst's Style Manual

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Institute for Intelligence Studies

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2008
Mercyhurst College Institute for Intelligence Studies Press

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For more information, write the
Mercyhurst College Institute for Intelligence Studies Press,
501 E. 38th St.,
Erie, PA 16546-0001.

First Edition
Compiled and edited by Bill Welch
Cover design by Bill Welch
Cover photo by Bill Welch

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Mercyhurst College Institute for Intelligence Studies Press
The Analyst's Style Manual – 1st ed.

ISBN: 978-0-9773881-1-0

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PREFACE

The Analyst's Style Manual is a product intended to assist student analysts with the many perplexing and complex rules they should follow in producing written intelligence products. When to capitalize? When to use numerals? When to spell out numbers? Where does a comma go? How to abbreviate? When to abbreviate? The list of questions goes on. The answers are in this manual.

Follow these rules when you write intelligence products. Doing so keeps decisionmakers from being distracted by poor writing, spelling or grammar. Doing so also keeps products consistent. Inconsistency can be just as distracting as mistakes.

The Mercyhurst College Institute for Intelligence Studies Press developed this manual in large part from the *CIA Writing Manual*, updating some sections and making some modification to a few guidelines that do not involve hard and fast grammar rules. The MCIIS Press also went to the U.S. Army's *Military Writing Reference Book* for additional rules and guidelines regarding writing. The final component in this manual, the MCIIS Style Sheet, reflects best practices in formatting a written product as determined by MCIIS research.

Students should use this in conjunction with a reputable manual on style, such as Strunk's *The Elements of Style* or Diana Hacker's *A Pocket Style Manual*. Be sure to follow this manual if there is a conflict.

We acknowledge the key contributions to this manual made by Diane Chido, Nicolas Gutowski, Jennifer Lee, Julie Policano, Jennifer Wozny, William Welch and Kristan J. Wheaton.

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Capitalization

1.1 When it comes to deciding on capitalization, the best advice is: "If in doubt, don't." Do not, for example, capitalize the first letters of the words explaining an uppercase abbreviation unless the term abbreviated is a proper name.

INF (Intermediate-range nuclear forces),
but: *USPS (United States Postal Service)*

This section covers other areas in which uncertainty about capitalization may arise.

Common Nouns In Proper Names

1.2 Capitalize a common noun when it forms part of a proper name but not when it is used alone as a substitute for the name of the place or thing or when it becomes separated form the rest of the name by an intervening word or phrase.

Social Democratic Party, the party
Atlantic University, the university

This rule does not apply to certain well-known short forms of specific proper names. For example:

the British Commonwealth, the Commonwealth
the Panama (or Suez) Canal, the Canal
the Golan Heights, the Heights

A noun common to two or more proper names is capitalized in the plural form when preceded by the proper adjectives in those names.

Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties
Atlantic and Pacific Universities

Derivatives Of Proper Names

1.3 Do not capitalize words derived from proper names that have acquired independent meanings.

diesel engine
roman type
but:
degrees Fahrenheit
Doppler effect

Articles In Proper Names

1.4 Capitalize the definite article, or its equivalent in a foreign language, when it is part of an official name. When such name is used adjectively, an uncapitalized *the* might be used and would precede a capitalized non-English equivalent.

The Hague, but: *the Second Hague Conference*
El Salvador, but: *the El Salvador situation*

For some country names the definite article is used but is not capitalized because it is not part of the official name (for example, the United Kingdom, the United States, etc.) or because the convention has been to use a lowercase t, as in:

The Philippines (The proper adjective is Philippine; the people are called the Filipinos.)

There is no *the* in *Congo, Ivory Coast, Seychelles, Sudan,* or, unless you are writing about the desert, *Sahara* (properly called *Western Sahara*).

1.5 In certain European personal names, articles such as *d', de, den, du, van,* and *von,* are usually not capitalized unless they begin a sentence.

. . . achieved independence while de Gaulle was President. De Gaulle, however, did. . .

In certain non-European names, articles are often dropped when the family name alone is used.

Anwar El-Sadat, but: *the late President Sadat*

Anglicized versions of foreign names vary in the matter of retaining or dropping articles and in the used of capital letters. In any personal name the preference of the individual, if known, should be followed.

Government Bodies

1.6 Capitalize the full proper name of a national government body as well as the shortened form of a proper name.

the British Parliament, the Parliament, Parliament
the Argentine Congress, the Congress; but: the Argentine legislature, the legislature

For a sub national government body, capitalize only the full proper name and shortened forms.

the Maryland House of Delegates, the state Legislature (not the House)

Military Forces

1.7 Capitalize the full proper name (or reasonable translations of the proper name) of a military force or service as well as the shortened form of that name.

the Egyptian Army, the Army, an Army engineer,
but: *Egyptian artillery units; army, division, or regiment level.*

This rule does not apply to individual units when it comes to capitalizing the shortened form of the name.

the 3rd Army, the army
the 7th Fleet, the fleet

Nor does it apply to a reference, other than a proper name, to military services as a group, to a general reference to one kind of service in the plural form, or to any general reference.

the Russian armed forces
the British military establishment

International Organizations

1.8 Capitalize the full proper name (and the shortened form) of an international organization and its sub elements.

the UN General Assembly, the Assembly

Diplomatic and Consular Units

1.9 Capitalize the full or shortened name of a specific embassy, mission, or consulate, but not those words when used generally.

the British Embassy, the Embassy
but:
reports from African embassies

Political Parties

1.10 Capitalize the full or shortened name of a political party, but do not capitalize the word *party* standing alone.

the Communist Party of China, the Chinese Communist Party, the party, the CPC

Religious Terms

1.11 Capitalize the names of religions, religious bodies, and the terms for their adherents and writings.

Christianity
Methodist Church
an Episcopalian
Bible
Quran

Do not capitalize such terms when they are used in a nonreligious sense.

This style guide, which should be the bible for intelligence writers, attempts to be catholic in its approach to English usage.

1.12 The terms for and titles of religious leaders are capitalized preceding a name but are capitalized following the name or when used alone or in reference to a clergyman of intelligence significance.

Archbishop Glemp … The Archbishop; but appointment of an archbishop

Geographic Term

1.13 A geographic term used to denote mere direction or position on the earth is not a proper name and is not capitalized.

north, south, east, west

1.14 Geographic terms often become part of a proper name for a definite region, geographic feature, or political grouping and are capitalized.

The West, the East, Greater Moscow

North and South, capitalized, are often used as abbreviations of the two Koreas or to refer, respectively, to the developed and underdeveloped nations, as in "the North-South dialogue."

1.15 Some capitalized geographic terms are used to divide the world into groups of countries for purposes of intelligence reporting.

Middle East
North Africa
South Asia

Some countries fall into more than one category, depending on the context. In some reports, countries logically belonging in a geographic category are grouped separately by some other criterion, such as membership in NATO or the EU. The Arab states are frequently treated as a group in papers on the Middle East. And the terms *Middle America* and *Central America* are not synonymous. Be careful to explain any such groupings or any deviations from normal geographic categories in a foreword, preface, or introductory footnote.

Nationalities, Tribes, and Other Groups of People

1.16 Capitalize the names of racial, linguistic, tribal, and religious groupings such as the following:

Amerindian
Arab
Aryan
Berber

1.17 Do not capitalize the following terms based on racial origin, size, and local or other usage.

aborigine
animist
black

1.18 A coined name or short form for a military, economic, political, or other grouping is capitalized.

the Union
the Alliance (for NATO)

1.19 ***Names of holidays*** and religious feats and the names used to designate historic events are also capitalized.

the Holocaust
the Feast of the Passover
New Year's Day

1.20 ***Trade names*** (such as Pepsi and Freon) should be capitalized or, if inappropriate, replaced with a generic term.

tracked vehicle (unless they have genuine Caterpillar treads)

a copy (unless it is known to be a Xerox)
google the term (but you use the Google search engine)

Sometimes an acceptable replacement is hard to find. Usage eventually pushes bestselling trademarks into the generic language — and in some cases, such as *jeep,* the generic preceded the trade name. The Merriam-Webster dictionary now lists *celluloid, deep-freeze, dry ice, lollipop, photostat,* and *zipper* in lowercase.

Titles of Persons

1.21 Capitalize any title (or short form of it) immediately preceding a person's name. The plural form of the title preceding more that one name is also capitalized. Do not capitalize the word *former* or the prefix *ex* in front of a title. Do not confuse a mere description with a title by capitalized it.

President Mitterrand, Acting President Powell, Deputy Premier Smith, Foreign Minister Gromyko

Avoid preceding a name with more than one title. Use the more important one first, and then the other later in the text — if necessary, or desired for variation.

Minister of Defense Ustinov
Marshal Ustinov

Publications

1.22 ***Titles.*** Capitalize the first letter of the initial word, that of the final word, and that of any principal word in titles of publications and the like (books, newspapers, magazines, periodicals, articles, series, reports, speeches, plays, movies, and musical compositions). Principal words include all nouns, pronouns, verbs (including the *to* in an infinitive), adjectives, adverbs, other words of more than three letters, and parts of compounds that would be capitalized standing alone (*Long-Term, Re-Creation,* ***but:*** *Balance-of-Payments Problems, Nine-to-Five Schedule, Co-op Formation*).

1.23 ***Historic Documents.*** This rule also applies to historic documents — for example, to the Balfour Declaration (but not to a British white paper) — as well as to works of art.

1.24 ***Foreign Titles.*** The rule does not apply to titles that must be given in a language other than English; capitalization in these titles should conform to the practice in that language.

1.25 ***Shortened Titles.*** The above rule is sometimes modified to apply to accept shortened titles of some publications and historic documents. The following illustrations show full and shortened titles.

article in **The Washington Post**
quoted in the **Post** *article*
but:
The 1962 Constitution was a vast improvement over earlier constitutions.

1.26 ***Titles of Graphics, Tables, and Chapters.*** The rule in section 1.21 concerning capitalization of titles applies to titles of graphics, tables, chapter and part headings, headlines, and the equivalent, but not to annotations (such as arrowed captions) on a photograph, map, or other graphic – for which only the first letter of the initial word is capitalized. If a number given as a figure begins such a caption the words following it is *not* capitalized.

200-mile limit (not 200-Mile limit)

1.27 ***Cross-References***. The common nouns used in numeral or letter designations of chapters, parts, graphics, tables, etc. are not usually parts of titles and are not capitalized in cross-references.

covered in chapter III
refer to appendix B

1.28 ***Table Headings.*** The capitalization rule in paragraph 1.21 also applies to table headings.

1.**29** ***Indented Bullet or Dash Paragraphs.*** Capitalize the first letter of each block in a series of blocks of text indented for emphasis and introduced by a bullet or an em dash.

1.30 ***Terms dealing with the Internet.***
Capitalize the terms *Internet* and *Net*, as well as
World Wide Web, and *Web* and *Web page*.
Do **not** capitalize *webcam, webcast,* or *webmaster*.

Numbers

2.1 Although the reader comprehends numerals (figures) more readily than numbers spelled out, typographic appearance and other special reasons often call for spelling out some numbers rather than using figures.

Basic Rules

2.2 ***Numbers of 10 or More.*** Except in the first word or a sentence, put numbers of 10 or more in figures (not in spelled-out words.)

Sixteen days of traveling left him exhausted. Re-word to: He was exhausted after 16 days of traveling.

2.3 ***Numbers Under 10***. Spell out (do not use figures for) most numbers less than 10. Do not spell out numbers under 10 if they are decimal numbers, ages of persons, percentages, specific amounts of money, or numbers used with units of measure other than time.

For five years the county has provided free preschool classes for 5-year-olds.
He visited six countries in Asia, three in Africa, and two in Europe, spending an average of 1.45 days in each country.

2.4 ***Mixes of Numbers Above and Below 10.*** Combinations of numbers on either side of 10 follow the basic rules governing numbers set forth above.

The estimate covers the period five to 10 years from now.

Ordinal Numbers

2.5 The rules governing cardinal numbers generally apply to ordinal numbers, except that military units are always designated by figures (again, unless the figure unavoidably comes at the beginning of a sentence), and fractions are usually written out.

First Congress, 102nd Congress
ninth century, 21st century

Special Rules

2.6 ***Indefinite Numbers.*** Except with words such as *about, nearly, more than, and approximately,* references to quantities in an indefinites sense are not usually written with figures.

The project will cost the government tens of millions.
He addressed several thousand people.
but:
He spent about 30 hours on his tribe report and had to wait nearly 15 days to be reimbursed for expenses.

2.7 ***Millions and Billions.*** Numbers over 999,999 are rounded unless an exact amount must be stated. Spell out *million* or *billion* preceded by a figure rounded usually to no more than two decimal places. This form of rounding in never applied to thousands.

The US population is about 300 million.
World population now exceeds 6 billion.

2.8 ***Figures of 1,000 or More.*** Numbers with more than three digits are written with commas, except for years, radio frequencies, military unit designators, clock time, most serial numbers, and the fractional portions of decimal numbers.

There were 1,078,162 casualties by 1945.
The station operated on a frequency of 1800 kHz.

2.9 ***Numerical Unit Modifiers.*** Numerical unit modifiers are written with hyphens.

Third-level decision
20-kilometer march

2.10 ***Possessive Case.*** Numerical expressions in the possessive case require an apostrophe but not a hyphen.

After five years' planning, the project got under way.
He put 16 days' work into the project.

2.11 ***Ranges of Numbers Below the Millions.*** Except in ranges of years, page or paragraph references, and values in the millions, avoid hyphens in ranges of numbers in order to prevent typographical errors or misreading. Use prepositions and conjunctions instead.

The march covered 10 to 15 kilometers (not 10-15 kilometers).
The league membership is between 15,000 and 20,000 (not 15,000-20,000).

Never use combinations of prepositions and hyphens such as *between 15,000-20,000* and *from 847,312-873,214* to express a complete range of values. The third illustration in paragraph 2.12 shows the only circumstance in which such a combination would be appropriate.

2.12 ***Ranges of Numbers in the Millions.*** Hyphens are acceptable (although not required usage) in ranges of numbers in the millions and multimillions.

Natural gas reserves are estimated at 20-30 billion cubic feet.
Production rose to 20-30 million tons annually during the period 2001-2005.
The range of estimated construction costs has increased from USD 500-600 million to USD 2-3 billion.

2.13 ***Numbers in Tables and Graphics and for Pages, Paragraphs, and Footnotes.*** Such numbers are not subject to the general rules for numerals. Nor are numeral designators for tables, graphics, volumes, chapters, and other parts of publications. However, the text portions of footnotes and, unless space limits require otherwise, of tables and graphics are governed by the same rules for numerals used with the text.

2.14 ***References to Numbers as Numbers.*** Any number referred to as a number is given as a figure unless it is unavoidable to begin a sentence with such a reference.

The estimate could be off by a factor of 2 or 3.
The data are rounded to the nearest 5.
but: *Seven is his lucky number.*

2.15 ***References to Numbers in Nonliteral Sense.*** Numbers used in a metaphorical or figurative sense are spelled out without regard for the basic rules covering numbers above and below 10.

The Minister is famous for eleventh-hour decisions.
Moreover, he is often a hundred percent wrong.

2.16 ***Decimals.*** Numbers with a decimal point are expressed in figures. Decimal numbers of less than 1 should have a zero before the decimal point except for designations of gun bore or ammunition. Zeros are omitted at the end of a decimal number unless exact measurement is indicated.

0.25 meter
silver 0.900 fine (exact measurement)
but:
.22-caliber cartridge

2.17 ***Fractions.*** Fractions referring to reasonably specific quantities are written out, with a hyphen in both noun and adjective forms.

three-fourths of a kilometer
but:
a quarter of a lifetime

2.18 ***Mixed Fraction.*** Avoid a combination of a whole number and a fraction by converting the fraction to a decimal quantity if possible.

5.5 percent

In nonstatistical contexts, it is best to use written-out phrases.

two and a half (not one-half) years ago
two-and-a-half-year trial period (better in some contexts: 30 month trial period)

In statistical texts, though, precise reporting may require mixes of whole numbers and fractions (5½ and 4¼).

2.19 ***US Dollars.*** Dollar amounts should be written with USD preceding the number. All money values should be expressed as USD.

The drugs were valued at USD 5 million.
not
4.5 million euros

2.20 ***Foreign Money.*** When there is no option but to use foreign currency values, use figures for all except indefinite amounts. [Typographic limitations may preclude the use of symbols, although many computer fonts include the more common foreign currency symbols, such as British pounds (£) and euros (€) and yen (¥).]

The Israeli-British talks set the unit price at 1,250 pounds sterling (3,065 Israeli pounds).
but:
Meals in London will cost a few pounds more (sterling is understood).

Percentages and Times Phrases

2.21 Numbers showing the relationship of a smaller to a larger quantity are frequently expressed as percentages, which are always given in figures (75 percent, 6.2 percent).

2.22 Numbers showing the relationship of a smaller one are often accompanied by the word *times* and, unless decimals are used, are governed by the basic rules for numbers on either side of 10 (five times as large, 10 times as large, 50 times more frequently, 2.5 times more powerful).

2.23. ***Percentage.*** The word *percent* is preferred in ordinary text. The percent sign (%) is acceptable in tables and graphics. Unless space is tight, the text portions of tables and graphics should use the word and not the sign to express percentage. Figures are always used for percentage except at the beginning of a sentence that cannot be reworded.

The current five-year plan projects a 20 percent increase by 2015.
Voter turnout dropped 5.7 percent in the second round.

Be careful to distinguish between *percent* and *percentage point*.

The inflation rate, which rose only half a percentage point last year, is expected to go up a full 2 or 3 points to 12 or 13 percent in 2008.

2.24 ***Times Phrases.*** Various ways of expressing (or not expressing) proportion with the word *times* are shown below. Note that careful wording is needed to avoid a wrong meaning. Sometimes the message is clearer if expressed as a percentage. One can also use the suffix *fold*, but this is somewhat archaic — and awkward when decimal factors are involved.

The number of tanks increased to five times the prewar level. (This is a 400-percent, or fourfold, increase.)
The number of tanks is five times greater than before the war. (This is a 500-percent, or fivefold, increase.)

2.25 The principal advantage of *fold* is that it sometimes permits a more precise translation of data reported in a foreign language. A 5.75-fold increase, however, can just as easily be expressed as a 575-percent increase, and increase *of* 5.75 times the previous level, or an increase *to* 6.75 times the previous level.

2.26 Never use meaningless expressions such as “four times smaller,” which sometimes is written by an author who means to say “one-fourth as large.”

2.27 ***Ages of Persons.*** These are expressed in figures except at the beginning of a sentence and in approximations by decades.

The general is almost 60 (or 60 years old, not 60 years of age).
General Manley, 60 (not aged 60, or age 60), is retiring at the end of the year.

2.28 ***Ages of Inanimate Things.*** These are given according to the basic rules for numbers above and below 10.

The program is two years old.
The US Navy is scrapping those 30-year-old submarines.

2.29 *Dates.* Write a date without internal punctuation and with day, month, and year in that order.

The United States declared its independence on 4 July 1776.
Switzerland's Independence Day is celebrated on 1 August.

2.30 *Years.* Figures designating a continuous period of two or more years are separated by a hyphen meaning "up to and including." For two years, *and* may be used.

The presidencies of John Adams (1797-1801) and William McKinley (1897-1901) were the only two to span two centuries.
He worked here during the period 1991-2007; but
He worked here in 1991 and 2001.

2.31 Do not combine *from* or *between* with a hyphen instead of *to* or *and*. Such combinations (from 1951-45) are almost always incorrect or too obscure in meaning to be used at all.

2.32 Never use a hyphen instead of a conjunction or a comma between two or more separate years not representing a continuous period, even if the years are consecutive.

The first two submarines were launched in 1960 and 1961 (not 1960-61).

2.33 Use a slash, not a hyphen, in a combining form designating a 12-month period occurring in two calendar years, such as a fiscal year or an academic year, and state the type of year and, if necessary, the period covered.

The farm made a profit in the 1995/96 crop year (1 July-30 June) but not in 1998/99.
Registrations for the academic year 2007/08 are still being accepted.

2.34 *Decades.* Decades are usually expressed with the figures for the initial year followed by an *s* but not an apostrophe.

All those submarines were constructed in the 1980s (not 80s or 80's).
Their estimates intended to cover the early and middle 2020s. Our figures deal with the late 2020s.

2.35 *Centuries.* In certain special contexts, refer to a century in a manner **si**milar to that used for decades (the 1800s, the eighteen hundreds), but, in most intelligence writing, ordinal numbers (in the 19th century, 20th-century progress) would be more appropriate.

2.36 *Clock Time.* The time of day is written in the 24-hour system, without internal punctuation.

The managers met at 0745 hours.
The satellite was launched at 1800 EDT (2400 GMT).

Also acceptable:

The noon meal was the heaviest of the day.

2.37 ***Other Time Expressions.*** Apart from the situations covered in paragraphs 2.36, references to time follow the basic rules for numbers above and below 10.

The protest lasted for eight days.
The aircraft were airborne in 11 minutes.
The pulses were seven seconds apart.

2.38 ***Metric System.*** Since November 1976, use of the International System of Units (commonly called the metric system) has been standard in CIA intelligence reports. The Intelligence Community makes certain exceptions for which metric units are not used.

2.39 Among the most common of the excepted units of measure are the nautical mile (nm) and the knot (kn). These units (or Mach units, if appropriate) continue to be used for certain weapon system parameters.

2.40 Other nonmetric units of measure still in use include barrels (and barrels per day) in reporting on the petroleum industry, the US bushel in reporting on grain production and trade, cubic feet in reporting on natural gas reserves or output, and nonmetric tons in reporting on nuclear weapons (rather than the metric unit joule).

2.41 ***Figures With Units of Measure.*** Figures (not words) are used with any unit of measure (except time) unless an indefinite quantity is stated, in which case the unit is never abbreviated. As a general rule, do not abbreviate units of measure unless they occur frequently in a report.

The project involved the use of pipe 48 inches (about 120 centimeters) in diameter — not 48 inch (about 120-centimeter) pipe.
Police confiscated nearly 50 kilograms of cocaine (50 kg, if abbreviations are warranted in this report).

Other Number Rules

2.42 ***Numbers Close Together.*** When a cardinal number ordinarily given as a figure precedes a numerical unit modifier normally using a figure, consider rewording the sentence. Failing this, change one of the figures, preferable the smaller, up to 100, to a spelled-out word.

15 six-meter trees (*or* 15 trees 6 meters high)
99 two-kilogram slabs (*or* 99 slabs each weighing 2 kilograms)

2.43 ***Ratios, Odds, Scores, Returns.*** Use numbers for each of these numerical situations.

Women outnumbered men 17 to 1.
The doctor patient ratio was 1:17.
He had a 50-50 chance of winning.
The sophomores won, 20-6.
The first vote gave the Democrats 21 seats, the Socialists 9, and the Communists 5.
The measure passed by a 90-3 vote.

2.44. ***Indefinite Expressions Using Figures.*** Illustrated in the following examples are numerical expressions that may sometimes be required in certain contexts (such as a direct quotation) but are not recommended. Note that alternative wording is usually available.

100-odd (better more than 100) species of insects
Reserves of 50-plus (better 50 or more) vehicles

Punctuation

3.1 Punctuation is based on meaning, grammar, syntax, and custom. The trend should always be towards less punctuation, not more.

3.2 The general principles governing the use of punctuation are (1) that if it does not clarify the text it should be omitted and (2) that in the choice and placing of punctuation marks the sole aim should be to bring out more clearly the author's thought. Punctuation should aid in reading and prevent misunderstanding.

Apostrophe

3.3 Two functions of the apostrophe are to show possessive case and sometimes to create plural forms. (The apostrophe is also used to indicate contractions in words such as can't and it's that are appropriate in spoken but not written English.)

3.4. *Possessives.* The possessive case of most nouns and indefinite pronouns is indicated by some combination of the apostrophe and the letter *s*.

- If a word (either singular of plural) does not end in *s*, add an apostrophe to form the possessive.

the woman's book *the women's shoes*
the child's shoe *the children's shoes*
One's home *Roz's efficiency*

- If the singular of the word ends in an *s*, add an apostrophe and an *s* unless the added *s* sound is not present in the word's normal pronunciation; in such cases add only the apostrophe.

Dickens's novels but: *the United States' position*
Nogues's troops but: *the Philippines' outer islands*
Paris's bridges but: *United Arab Emirates' oil*

- If the plural of the word ends in *s*, add only the apostrophe.

the boys' team
the Joneses' address
the two leaders' rift
the Russians' policy

- In compounds, make only the last word possessive.

secretary general's speech
commander-in-chief's decision
Shah of Iran's overthrow
someone else's hat

- In a combination of two or more nouns for which joint possession is to be indicated, make only the last noun possessive; if individual possession, make all or both nouns possessive.
  Pat and Mike's get-together for lunch is scheduled for 17 March.
  Pat's and Mike's lunchtimes never seem to coincide.
  Gable's, Colbert's and McCarey's Oscars were for the same film.

- In geographic names, firm names, the names of organizations and institutions, and the titles of publications, follow the authentic form (i.e. the given form).
  Harpers Ferry
  People's Republic
  Reader's Digest

- Do not use an apostrophe after names of states or countries and other organized bodies ending in *s*, or after words more descriptive than possessive, except when the plural does not end in *s*.
  League of Nations mandate
  Kansas law
  teachers college
  writers guide
  Weight Watchers meeting
  but:
  National Organization of Women's headquarters

- Do not use the apostrophe with the possessive form of personal pronouns.
  ours *his*
  yours *hers*
  theirs *its (Do not confuse with contraction [it's])*

3.5 The possessive case is often used in lieu of an objective phrase even though ownership is not involved.
Two hours' work, a day's pay
Several million dollars' worth, but $10 million worth
for pity's sake
for old times' sake

3.6 The possessive case is used for a noun or pronoun preceding a gerund if this syntax is unavoidable (try to rephrase).
Economy was one reason for George's buying a small car.
(Better: Economy was one reason George bought a small car.)

3.7 As a general rule, the possessive form made up of an apostrophe and an *s* (the Minister's) is used for nouns denoting persons, and the form combining the preposition *of* and a noun object is applied to organizations or inanimate things (a decision of the Ministry). However, the *s* possessive is commonly used for the inanimate in expressions that indicate time (moment's notice, year's labor) and in other familiar phrases (heaven's sake, heart's content).

3.8 ***Plurals.*** The apostrophe is inserted before a lower case *s* to form the plurals of single letters and digits and of abbreviations ending with a period. It is not inserted before the *s* in the plurals of groups of letters or hyphenated letter-number combinations unless needed to enhance comprehension — for example, if the combination ends with a lowercase letter (SS-N-3a's). It is omitted in the plurals of groups of digits designating decades or centuries.

> *dotted i's, 7's, and 8's*
> *(*but *SS-7s and SS—8s)*
> *11s and 13s*
> *H-I and H-IIs*
> *(*but *type I's)*
> *Ph.D.'s and M.A.'s*
> *the 1990s*

3.9 To form the plurals of spelled-out numbers, of most words referred to as words, and of words already containing an apostrophe, add just *s* or *es*. But, add (*'s*) to indicate the plural of words referred to as words if the omission of an apostrophe would cause difficulty in reading.

> *One of Bernstein's best style books is* Dos, Dont's & Maybes of English Usage, *but it fails to point out that most incorrect* due to'***s*** *can be remedied by changing them to* because of's**.**

Note that the ('s) (italicized here according to rule 4.17 in chapter 4) is not italicized when attached to form the plural forms of *due to* and *because of* in the preceding example or in the preceding example or in "dotted *i's*."

Brackets

3.10 Brackets are used:

- To enclose a parenthetical word or expression within a set or parentheses.
  He is well educated (by tutors in Pittsburg [Kansas]).

- To set off editorial remarks within quoted material.
  The Minister stated, "The election [of 3 March] will be reexamined."

- To enclose numbers referring to sources listed at the end of a report. (Such usage, which reserves superior numbers for reference to footnotes, is discouraged, however, and, if essential, should be explained in a preface, foreword, or footnote.)

Bullets

3.11 Bullets may be used instead of or in combination with the em dash. The bullet is more eye-catching.
For example:

- *This would be a primary bullet phrase (or clause).*
- *This would be another primary bullet phrase:*
    - ♦ *This would be a secondary phrase subordinate to the bullet phrase above.*
    - ♦ *This would be another secondary phrase.*

3.12 Capitalize the first letters of all material introduced by a bullet or an em dash and end each phrase with a period (unless a question mark is needed). Introduce the material with a colon at the end of the introductory sentence or phrase.

Colon

3.13 The colon is used:

- Before a final clause or phrase that summarizes or expands preceding matter.
  Food, clothing, fuel, and building materials: These are the critical items.

  The delegation visited four American cities: Baltimore, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, and Detroit.
  Jones served in three Ministries: Economy; Communications, Power, and Industry; and Agriculture.

- To separate two main clauses if the second amplifies or explains the first. (Otherwise, use a semicolon, as shown in the second instruction of paragraph 5.33).
  Railroading is not a variety of outdoor sport; it is a service.

  He is well qualified to serve as foreign minister: He has held posts in the Ministry since 1972 and has served abroad many times.

- To separate titles and subtitles.
  The Tragic Dynasty: A History of the Romanovs

  Editorial Consistency: An Agency Goal

- To show ratios, for which figures are always used. But use a hyphen if the ratio is used adjectively.
  20:1, but a 20-to-1 chance

- To introduce lengthy material set off from the rest of the text by indentation, as in the text on this page. If the material set off is a quotation, the indentation precludes the need for quotation marks.

- Capitalize the first word of the second phrase if it could stand alone as a sentence.

Comma

3.13 The comma is the most frequently used mark of punctuation and the most frequently misused. There is a tendency to use too many commas, but the sin of omission is almost as common as the sin of commission. The comma is used:

- To separate two words or figures that might otherwise be misunderstood.
  Of the total, production was the greatest single item.
  To his younger brother, Murray was a paragon whose every action was to be imitated.
  Instead of thousands, hundreds were built.

- To separate from each other the parts of a series of coordinate modifying words (if you can substitute *and* for the comma, the words are coordinate).
  Short, swift streams
  Long, slender, brittle stems

- If the modifying words are not coordinate —that is, if one modifies another or a unit of which another is a part — the comma is not used.
  Short tributary streams
  Illegal drug traffic

- To set off nonrestrictive words, phrases, or clauses.
  The chairman, George Smith, spoke last.
  The work was, in fact, completed.
  The manager, who was dismissed in 2004, was reappointed in 2005.
  His brother, Joseph, was appointed. (He had only one brother.)
  Mitchell's novel, Gone With the Wind*, was a bestseller. (She wrote only one novel.)*

Whether the element is nonrestrictive, or nonessential, is determined by the intent of the sentence. Note that in the following sentences each of the elements that are nonrestrictive in the sentences above is necessary to the meaning of the sentence in which it appears, is therefore restrictive, and is not set off by commas.

Cochairman Smith spoke last (not Cochairman Jones).
The work must be completed in fact as well as in theory.
The manager who was dismissed in 2004 was rehired in 2005. (The who clause identifies the particular manager being discussed.)
His brother Joseph was appointed. (He had more than one brother.)
Jones's novel From Here to Eternity *was his biggest seller. (He wrote several novels, most of which sold well.)*

- To set off contrasting statements in a sentence.
  Pompidou, not de Gaulle, made the decision.

- After each element expect the last within a series of three or more words, phrases, clauses, letters, or figures used with *and* or *or* (if none of the elements in the series is a phrase or clause with internal commas).

  Copper, lead, zinc, and tin were mined.
  The contestants may dance, play an instrument, or give a recitation.
  The data were collected, estimates were made, and conclusions were drawn.
  Complete forms A, B, and C by writing 1, 2, or 3.

If one or more of the elements in the series is a phrase or clause with internal commas, use semicolons instead of commas between the elements, rearranging the sentence if necessary to put the series at the end. No matter how short the elements, use the semi colon before the *and* or *or*.

The chief exports were brass, which is an alloy; platinum, which is a precious metal; and tin. (Never Brass, which is an alloy, platinum, which is a precious metal; and tine were the chief exports.)

- Before the coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence (a sentence that contains at least two independent clauses).

  He served in the Army until 2003, and then he went to work for the telephone company.
  The country imports copper, iron, and lead, but domestic tin is available.
- In a simple sentence with a compound predicate the comma is not used before the coordinating conjunction unless needed for clarity.

  He served in the Army until 2003 and then went to work in a bank.
  He went to the Russia to study but decided not to stay.
  but:
  People ignore the message in the letter, and insert a token contribution in the return envelope just to get the matter off their minds.

- To separate digits of most numbers in the thousands and unrounded millions.

  1,078,168
  1,000
  5,752,194 (if rounded, 5.75 million)

- To separate from a main clause an introductory clause or phrase that is long or that might cause confusion without a comma.

  Because the corporation derived much of its 2002 income from suburban outlets, it established several new ones in 2003.
  but:
  After his defeat he retired from public life.

- To separate a beginning participial phrase modifying the subject or an absolute phrase before the subject.

  Based on discouraging results, his decision to abandon the experiment was made the following year.

To begin with, Smith worked as an engineer.

- To separate title of person and name of organization in the absence of the words *of* or *of the.*
  director, Coal Division, Ministry of Mines
- To indicate omission of a word or words, unless the construction is clear enough without commas.
  In spring and fall there is hiking there; in summer, sailing; in winter, skiing.
  but:
  The data were collected, estimates made, and conclusions drawn.)

- To separate an introductory phrase from a short direct quotation (for long quotations, use a colon instead.)
  He said, "Now or never."

- To set off a geographic name, such as that of a province, state, or country, from a city name. If the name set off is in mid-sentence, a comma must be used after as well as before.
  He is from London, England, and works in the London, Ontario, area.

Dash (or Em Dash)

3.14 The dash (or em dash, not to be confused with the en dash, explained below) is represented by two hyphens, or by using the control key and number pad hyphen.

3.15 The dash should be used only when it is needed, and not when other punctuation such as a comma, a colon, or parentheses would suffice. Excessive use presents a visual barrier to the reader and interrupts the flow of thought. The dash should never be used immediately after a comma, a semicolon, or, except in the last function described below, a colon. The dash is used:

- To set off parenthetical matter (in this function a pair of dashes can often be replaced by parentheses and should be if there would otherwise be two pairs of dashes within a sentence). If the dash is used to set off material at *the end of* a sentence, only one dash, at the beginning, is needed. If the material is set off *within* the sentence, only another dash (not a comma or a semicolon) can be used to end the setoff phrase or clause.
  He was a key figure in the successes — as well as the problems, both domestic and international — of Japan's trade policies.
  He has three sons — Thomas, 29; Richard, 19; and Henry, 16.

- Before a final clause that summarizes a series of ideas (in this function the dash is often used interchangeably with the colon).
  Freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, freedom from fear — these are the fundamentals of moral world order.

- Instead of a bullet, to mark the beginning of each part of a block of material (other than quotations) set off by indentation from the rest of the text.

Ellipsis

3.16 An ellipsis (the omission of words within quoted material) is represented by three periods. When typing the three consecutive periods in most word processing programs, they will run close together to form a proper ellipsis. When an ellipsis occurs at the end of a sentence that does not end the quotation, a fourth period (or other punctuation, if appropriate) precedes the three consecutive periods. When only part of a sentence is quoted, periods to show omission are required only within the quotation, not at the beginning or the end.

> *The President began his address with the observation that in 1776 "our fathers brought forth … a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition" of equality for everyone.*
> *In his words, "we [cannot] consecrate … this ground. The brave men … who struggled here. . . have consecrated it. … The world … can never forget what they did here."*

En Dash

3.17 The en dash (not to be confused with the dash, or em dash, explained above) is, in effect, a superhyphen, used to "hyphenate" a compound modifier that includes one or more compound elements. It is effective with capitalized compounds but less so with lowercase compounds, for which use of several hyphens is better, even though the lowercase compound is one not normally hyphenated. (The en dash can usually be avoided by rewording.)

> *Winston-Salem–Pointe Claire telephone call (**or** call between Winston-Salem and Point Claire)*
> *Saudi Arabia–United Arab Emirates border (**or** border between Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates)*
> but *E-11–class submarine (Use two hyphens, not a hyphen and an en dash, because this is a special category.)*
> and *defense-industry–based engineers (*not *"defense industry-based engineers," which is confusing.*

Exclamation Point

3.18 The dispassionate tone expected of intelligence reports makes the exclamation point rare, if not nonexistent, in writing for intelligence.

Hyphen

3.19 Often words have to be joined with a hyphen to express ideas that would not be as clear if they were not connected as a compound adjective.

> *Right-of-way*
> *Cross-reference*
> *High-level post*

Yet-undetermined outcome
UN-initiated talks

Parentheses

3.20 Parentheses are used as follows.

- To set off a word, phrase, clause, or sentence that is inserted by way of comment or explanation within or after a sentence but that is structurally independent of it.
  This style guide (unclassified) will be widely disseminated.
  He graduated from Grisly Teachers College (part of the state university system.)
  Three old destroyers will be scrapped. (All three of them have been out of commission for some time.)

Note that the placement of the periods in the last two examples above depends on whether the parenthetical insertion is part of the sentence that occasioned it or is an independent, complete sentence. In the following example, note that the comma follows the parentheses enclosing an insertion made in the middle of a series separated by commas.

He visited Portland (Maine), Baltimore, and Dallas.

- To enclose cross-references.
  Japan's exports have risen steadily for the past 10 years (see Figure 3).
  . . .or *(annex A).*
  . . .or *(see the table).*
  . . .or, *as a separate sentence (See figure 3.)*

- To enclose numbers or letters in a series.
  We must set forth (1) our long-term goals, (2) our immediate objectives, and (3) the means at our disposal. (Do not omit the first parenthesis in this usage.)

- To enclose translations or explanations — if necessary — or foreign words or to enclose the original language following the English version (see also the "Foreign Words" section in Chapter 5, section 4).
  He referred to the document as an estimate **(**otsenka**).**
  Her best known novel is Aimez-vous Brahms? *(Do you like Brahms?)*
  Pointing to the skyline as we neared the capital, he trumpeted the nation's new grandeza *— even as we passed one of the* favelas *(shantytowns) outside the city.*

Period

3.21. The use of the period is so elementary that it hardly needs to be discussed here except to point out that it is not generally used for abbreviations. The placement of the

period in its principal function, to terminate a non-exclamatory or non-interrogative sentence, is discussed and illustrated in other parts of this chapter on punctuation-under "Parentheses" and "Quotation Marks," for example. See also "Ellipsis," which discusses one of the period's sidelines.

Question Mark

3.22 As with the period, a discussion of the function of the question mark borders on stating the obvious. Note, however, that, apart from its principal function of terminating interrogative sentences, the question mark is used:

- To show the writer's uncertainty (or ignorance), as when it is placed next to (or instead of) a figure in a tabulation. Similar application can be made within the text, but this should be kept to a minimum.

  The paper was a hodgepodge, trying to deal with poets as diverse as Omar Khayyam (?-1132?) and Geoffery Chaucer (1240-1400).

- At the end of an appropriate title.

  Osama and the Jihadists: Where Next?
  A Credible Nuclear Deterrent?

Quotation Marks

3.23. Quotation marks come in two sizes, double and single. The latter never appears in American usage unless the former is present. Quotation marks, single or double, must always be used in a pair.

3.24 ***Double Quotation Marks.*** A pair of double quotation marks is used:

- To enclose direct quotations. (If the quotation is a long one — say, half a dozen lines or more — set it off by indentation within the text column, omitting the quotation marks.

  "The President," he said, "will veto the bill."
  Who asked, "Why?"

- To set off titles of poems and songs and of articles, short stories, and other parts of a longer work.

  "Hallelujah" is the best known chorus from Handel's Messiah.
  Who wrote the article "Thermonuclear Processes" in that issue of Survey?

- To set off words or phrases used or cited in a special sense. (In this function, quotation marks are sometimes used interchangeably with italic type. In this style guide, italic type generally is used for cited letters and words, and quotation marks to enclose phrases or clauses used as examples.)

  Do not capitalize the s *in* socialist *in the phrase "most British socialists join the Labor Party."*
  The North Korean press put the blame on "US imperialism."

3.25 Be careful not to overuse or misuse quotation marks. Use them to enclose words used in a special sense (such bureaucratic jargon) but do not use quotation marks to apologize for acceptable English words or in an attempt to redeem slang. And never allow the reader to wonder why they were used. For example, the wording "the Chinese took a 'pragmatic' approach" is obscure, probably meaning "the Chinese took what they called a pragmatic approach"; the reader, however, may assume that the quotation marks around *pragmatic* connote some "special" meaning, and he may waste time looking for an explanation.

3.26 ***Single Quotation Marks.*** As illustrated in examples above and below, a pair of single quotation marks is used to enclose a quotation within a quotation. (Exception: If a quotation is set off by indentation, rather than by quotation marks, a quotation within it would use double, not single, quotation marks.

3.27 ***Punctuation with Quotation Marks.*** Also illustrated in the examples already given are the positions of various punctuation marks inside or outside quotation marks:

- Commas and periods always go inside quotation marks (single or double).
- Semicolons and colons always go outside the final quotation mark.
- Other punctuation marks are placed inside quotation marks at the end of a sentence only if they are part of the matter quoted.

3.28 Here are four more examples, for the proverbial "good measure":

> *He said, "I used the term 'gentlemen's agreement.'"*
> *He asked, "Why label it a 'gentlemen's agreement'?"*
> *"Remember," she said, "what Grandfather used to advise: 'When other people run, you walk.'"*

3.29 ***Terms Precluding Need for Quotation Marks***. Quotation marks are usually not necessary to enclose expressions following terms such as *known as, called,* or *so-called*.

> *Aluminum is known as aluminium in Canada.*
> *Your so-called investigating body has not done much investigating.*
> *If this is called profit and loss, when do we start profiting?*

They may be used even here, however, to give special emphasis to the quoted or verbatim nature of the expression given, especially if sarcasm or bad grammar is involved:

> *He criticized what he called the "looks funny" school of editing.*
> *They are following the so-called "where it's at" lifestyle.*

3.30 Other such terms — *titles, named, endorsed,* and *signed* or their equivalent — clearly call for either italicizing or enclosing in quotation marks the word or words that follow them. Do not use quotation marks or italic type for the names of ships, aircraft, or spacecraft.

The card was signed "You know who."
He was named "chief cook and bottle washer" by his housemates.
The word radar *is an acronym derived from the term "radio detecting and ranging."*

Semicolon

3.31 The semicolon can be regarded to some extent as a super comma because it supersedes the comma in cases where a comma is not clear enough for the function intended. The semicolon is used:

- To separate elements in a series that falls at the end of a sentence and cannot be separated by commas without risk of making the sentence difficult to understand. If such a series is in mid-sentence, reword the sentence to put the series at the end. (See also the "Comma" section.)

  The major inputs are iron ore, which comes from Poland; nitric acid, which is imported from the Czech Republic; magnesium, which is supplied primarily by Russia; and nickel, which is furnished in adequate quantities by domestic producers.

- To separate the clauses of a compound sentence when a coordinating conjunction is not used.

  He received a B.A. degree from Arctic College in 1996; later he attended Antarctic University.
  A fool babbles continuously; a wise man holds his tongue.

- Before an independent second clause introduced by one of the conjunctive adverbs (accordingly, also, furthermore, hence, however, indeed, moreover, nevertheless, otherwise, so, still, then, therefore, thus, yet).

  Some Americans spend millions of dollars for junk food; consequently, their teeth are rapidly deteriorating.
  Smith speaks English, French, German, and Russian well; moreover, he understands Persian, Urdu and Vietnamese.
  You should take your umbrella with you; otherwise, you are likely to get wet.

Slash

3.32 The slash (also called diagonal, oblique, shill, slant, solidus, and virgule) should be used sparingly and never in place of a hyphen or dash. The slash is used:

- To indicate a 12-month period occurring in two calendar years.

  Fiscal year 1995/96
  Crop year 2000/01
  Marketing year 2003/2004

- To represent *per* in abbreviations.

  Km/h (kilometers per hour)
  r/min (revolutions per minute)

- To separate alternatives.

  These designs are intended for high-heat and/or high-speed applications. He sat for hours at his typewriter in a catatonic/frenzied trance trying to cover every possible contingency of style usage in the Agency.

Abbreviations

4.1 Use abbreviations sparingly and only when their meaning is clear. Periods are usually omitted in all but a few categories, such as academic degrees (B.A., Ph.D.), export/import terms (f.o.b., c.i.f.) and ranks and titles (Gen., Prof., Dr.).

When To Spell Out

4.2 ***First Reference.*** An organization, group, international agreement, unit of measure, weapon system, or the like that is referred to throughout a report is abbreviated after it is spelled out at the first reference, most often with its abbreviation following it in parentheses.

less developed countries (LDCs)
Non—Proliferation Treaty (NPT)
nautical mile (nm)

4.3 ***Subsequent References.*** In long reports, as a convenience to the reader, repeat the full designation every so often without respecifying the abbreviation, but continue thereafter to use the abbreviation as before.

4.4 ***Well-Known Abbreviations.*** Some abbreviations are widely recognized and need no explanation, for example, US, UK, UN, EU, NATO, GNP and ICBM. Even these, however, should be spelled out if the context suggests a need to do so or if there is any doubt about clarity.

4.5 ***Foreign Terms.*** The name of a foreign institution is spelled out in English if possible, but the commonly used abbreviation may be used even if it is drawn from the foreign wording.

Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR)

4.6 ***Explanation Following.*** Sometimes it is appropriate to give an abbreviation first, with the full title or other identification in parentheses, or set off by commas, immediately afterward.

WHO (World Health Organization)

4.7 ***Incomplete or Possessive References.*** Avoid wording that would put an abbreviation immediately after an incomplete or possessive form of the name abbreviated.

not *the Non-Proliferation Treaty's (NPT) ban,*
but *the ban under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)*

4.8 ***Plural Forms.*** If the logical place to spell out an abbreviation comes when the term is plural, the abbreviation must also be in the plural form, even though the singular is used thereafter.

multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs)

Italics

5.1 Italic type must be chosen sparingly to avoid the excessive use that defeats the primary purpose of italicizing: to give prominence or emphasis to particular words and phrases.

Prominence or Emphasis

5.2 The paragraph indented below illustrates this most important use of italic type.

> All members of the working group except the representative of the CIA believe that the North Koreans will choose a phased development over the next five years. *CIA holds to its previous position that the North Koreans will try to complete the project by the end of 2010.*

Titles

5.3 Use italic type for titles of books, periodicals, or works of art (including the performing arts).

> Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind*
> a subscription to *The Washingtonian*
> a clipping from *The New York Times*

Foreign Words

5.4 Foreign words in intelligence reports may or not be italicized and may or may not be translated. The need for italicizing or translating depends on whether the non-English word or phrase has been naturalized into English, has not been anglicized but is reasonably familiar to American readers, is a publication or work of art, is the name of an organization, or is otherwise governed by some special consideration.

5.5 ***Anglicized Words.*** Do not italicize foreign words and phrases that have been naturalized into English.

al-Qaeda	**émigré**
attaché	**facade**
coup d'etat	**naiveté**
debacle	**modus operandi**

5.6 ***Familiar Foreign Words.*** Italicize, but do not translate, foreign words and expressions that have not been anglicized but are familiar to American readers or are easily understood by virtue of their similarity to English (an English equivalent is preferred unless the foreign expression has a special meaning).

> As a party ***aktiv***, he was watched closely by the police.
> His experience as ***chef de cabinet*** was a factor in his nomination.

5.7 ***Other Foreign Words.*** When an unfamiliar non-English word is used in ordinary text, italicize it and follow it with a translation in parentheses. This need not be a literal translation if a freer explanation would be more helpful to the reader.

The troops surrounded the ***Jemaah Islamiyah*** (Islamic Community terrorist group) base.
The achievement of ***enosis*** (union) with Greece is the all-consuming goal of one segment of the Cypriot population.
Brandt's ***Ostpolik*** (his policy of seeking harmony with the Communist world) was a hallmark of his chancellorship.
Manzoni's ***I promessi sposi (The Betrothed*)** is required reading for Dr. Caino's course in Italian literature.

5.8 ***Titles of Publications.*** A title in a foreign language may or may not be translated depending on the title and the context. If a translation is given, it should be in parentheses and in italics (see the last example in 5.6 and note that the capitalization style of the original title follows that of the Italian-language press, whereas the translation follows English-language style).

5.9 Some titles — *People's Daily*, for example — have conventionally been cited only in translated form. For this title sometimes and for other titles almost always, an explanation is more relevant and useful than a translation.

People's Daily*, official organ of the Chinese Communist Party*

Format

5.10 Selective use of italic type is also effective in publications design — to give prominence or emphasis, for example, to author attribution, to a subheading or to a line of figures in a table. Guidance in format, however, is not the subject of this manual.

Names Of Craft

5.11 Do not italicize (or enclose in quotation marks) names of ships, aircraft or spacecraft.

Bombing of the USS Cole
a Y-class submarine
The B-2 stealth bomber Spirit of Kansas crashed 23 February 2008

Rules for Effective Intelligence Writing

Rule 1. Put Your Main Point Up Front

1. Let your readers know right away what's important and why. Don't beat around the bush.
Inform the reader of the key points in the first or second paragraph.

2. Create a clear, descriptive title, written as a noun phrase.

SUBJECT: SARS: Lessons From the First Epidemic of the 21st Century (29 Sep 03)

3. Describe your purpose in writing. In a formal statement of purpose, announce your reason for writing (if it's already clear from the title, omit this formal statement).

Purpose. To tell you about the upcoming change to . . .
Purpose. To explain how we'll . . .

4. Put your BLUF at the beginning of your paper**.**

a. Position key information at the beginning for a quick understanding.

b. If no single key idea stands out, create one so your paper doesn't wander aimlessly.

Increasing numbers of mass incidents are likely to destabilize Chinese society.

The Czech Republic is likely to adopt the euro in the next five years.

c. After you present your main ideas, present your supporting information in short, organized paragraphs under clear, logical headings.

Executive Summary (key findings)
Discussion
Comments

Optional:
Summary of Main Points.....General Discussion of Ideas

Rule 2. Write Short Paragraphs

1. Short, well-developed paragraphs keep the reader's interest and reduce the overload of information for the reader.

a. Keep paragraphs to no more than six typed lines long.

b. Start each paragraph with the key point or a topic sentence.

d. Use subparagraphs and lists when possible.

e. Maintain grammatical parallelism.

(1) Keep items in a series or list grammatically balanced.
(2) Create like grammatical constructions.
(3) Ensure that if you have a "1" you also have a "2."
(4) Ensure that if you have an "a" you also have a "b."

2. This is an example of the structure of a typical paragraph:

Sentence 1: Topic sentence (the controlling idea of the paragraph).
Sentence 2: Explanation/elaboration of the topic sentence (if needed).
Sentence 3: Fact/example/illustration #1 to support the topic sentence.
Sentence 4: Fact/example/illustration #2 to support the topic sentence.
Sentence 5: Analysis (a sentence that answers the question "so what?").

3. The paragraphs below show the same information presented in letter (or essay) style and in memorandum style:

a. Letter or essay style.

Cold weather training is important to our success in winter combat. Specifically, we must prepare our men and equipment for winter conditions. Our soldiers must learn how to cope with the cold and prevent injury. They also need to know how their equipment holds up in cold temperatures. If we train them now, they'll be ready for combat during the winter.

b. Memorandum style.

Reasons for cold weather training.
a. To prepare soldiers to cope with the cold and to prevent injury.
b. To show them how their equipment holds up in the cold.
c. To ensure their success in winter combat.

4. Maintain strong parallelism in your subparagraphs and checklists. When creating subparagraphs, keep them grammatically balanced. Use a consistent sentence structure; either write all sentences or all sentence fragments.

Parallel:

Two traits of a strong leader are a dedication to the accomplishment of the mission and a strong sense of caring for the welfare of subordinates.

Not Parallel:

Two traits of a strong leader are dedication to the accomplishment of the mission and to care for the welfare of subordinates.

Rule 3. Use Active Voice.

1. Create mostly active sentences. To write in the active voice, put the doer of the action at the front of the sentence.

Active = DOER→ ACTION→ RECEIVER

Active: *Jones is showing the general around the unit.*
Active: *Smith will teach the maintenance class.*

2. Avoid writing in the passive voice. If the receiver of the action in a sentence is up front, the sentence will be passive. Note that passive sentences aren't necessarily in the past tense. They can be in the past, present, or future tenses.

Passive = RECEIVER → ACTION → DOER

Passive: *The general is being shown the training by Jones.*
Passive: *The class on maintenance will be taught by Smith.*

3. Spot passive sentences by analyzing the verb (the form of “to be”).

A passive verb phrase ALWAYS has these two parts:

A FORM OF "TO BE"	and	**A PAST PARTICIPLE**
am, is, are,		A verb that ends in -d -n , or –t
was, were,		Examples: picked, told, given
be, been, being		shown, taught, hit
Note: "will, has, have, had” are not forms of "to be"		A verb ending in "ing" is a present participle.

Examples:

Passive: *I am required by the first sergeant to report by 0630.*
Passive: *The weekly report will be written tomorrow by the clerk.*
Passive: *The truck was hit yesterday by the tractor.*

Passive: *I am required by the supervisor to report by noon.*
Passive: *The weekly report will be written tomorrow by the clerk.*
Passive: *The truck was hit yesterday by the tractor.*

4. Use one of three techniques to change passive sentences to the active:

a. Put the *doer* up front:
Passive: *The report was submitted by Jones.*
Active: *Jones submitted the report.*

b. Drop part of the verb:
Passive: *The meeting was held at the hotel.*
Active: *The meeting was at the hotel.*

c. Change the verb:
Passive: *He will be required to attend.*
Active: *He will have to attend.*

Rule 4. Use Short, Conventional Words.

1. Use conventional language as much as possible.

a. Use plain English that’s alive. Strive for a conversational tone.
b. Use personal pronouns (I, you, he, she, we, they, us, them) instead of stuffy nouns (this office, all personnel, this headquarters).
c. Try some contractions (I'm, you're, can't, won't).

2. Limit long words to 15 percent of your total. Mark the long words (three or more syllables) and replace them with short words that carry the same meaning.

Long words: *initiate terminate promulgate installation*
Short words: *start end issue post*

3. Use precise, concrete words rather than vague, abstract ones.

Weak: *The applicant's signature on this correspondence is required.*
Better: *Please sign in Block 9.*

4. Cut the confusing jargon and double-talk.

Weak	Strong
to plus up	*to increase*
downsized	*smaller*
civilian residence	*home*
it's a nonstarter	*it won't work*
mission accomplishment	*success*
incomplete success	*failure*

5. Eliminate legalese:

Weak	Strong
Herewith enclosed is	*Here's*
It is incumbent on you	*You must*

Rule 5. Write Short Sentences.

1. Keep most sentences between 12 and 20 words. Strive for an average of about 15 words per sentence. In general, limit each sentence to what you can say aloud in one breath.

2. Shorten needlessly wordy expressions. Strive to cut 30 percent of the words you wrote in the draft.

> Wordy: *Due to the fact that most writers have a tendency to be wordy, we can probably cut approximately 30 percent of the words in a first draft without really affecting the meaning to any serious extent.*
> Better: *Because we tend to be wordy, cut 30 percent of your first draft. It probably won't affect the meaning.*

3. Avoid wordy, smothered verbs (also called "buried verbs").

Smothered	Un-smothered
make a decision	*decide*
give a call to	*call*
conduct an inspection	*inspect*

4. Avoid needless repetition.

Repetitious
His duties and responsibilities
Please review and comment
The importance and significance of

Better
His duties
Please comment
The significance of

5. Cut sentence stretchers (it is, there is, there are, that, which)

Wordy
It is required that you attend the class.

There is a meeting for them tonight.
There are many solutions to the problem.
His plan is the one that we support.

Better
You must attend the class.
They must meet tonight.
The problem has many solutions.
We support his plan.

6. Ask questions occasionally for emphasis.

Weak: *Request that this headquarters be informed whether the conference has been rescheduled.*
Better: *Has the conference been rescheduled?*

Rule 6. Be Correct, Credible, and Complete.

1. Errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and usage many times cause confusion and/or distract the reader. In most cases, you lose credibility. To gain the reader's confidence, make sure your work is generally free of mistakes.

2. Use correct spelling, punctuation, grammar, and word usage.

a. Use standard written English and the conventions of proper spelling, punctuation, and grammar.
b. Consult the dictionary to ensure unfamiliar words are spelled correctly.

3. Be thorough, factual, and logical.

a. Make sure your paper is complete in presenting all necessary information.
b. Make sure your facts are correct.
c. Check the logic and objectivity of your writing.

4. Make sure your paper is neat and legible. Don't make a poor impression with sloppy work.

Intelligence Writing and Presentation Style Sheet

A. General Rules:

1. Unless specifically directed otherwise, use the guidance on this style sheet in the preparation of all remaining assignments.

2. The standard typeface is a serif font (i.e. Times Nw Roman, Garamond, bookman), 12 point for text and a sans serif font (i.e. Arial, Franklin, Helvitica) 12 point for titles. The standard spacing between lines of 12-point type is 15 point.

3. Standard margins for all products are 1.3 inches on left and right sides and 1 inch on top and bottom. This offers the optimum number of characters per line.

4. Paragraphs should be identified by a space and not by indentation.

5. Spacing, paragraphing, use of bold, italics and bullets within text should be consistent.

6. The Standard Heading for products is the heading used in this Style Sheet, as seen above. Analysts should clearly indicate the class, their name and the date. The title of the report should be flush left and boldfaced.

7. All Titles should be in Title Case. Be sure each word is capitalized.

8. All products should also contain contact data for the author.

9. Headers and Footers should only be used for classification data and page numbers.

10. Endnote citations appear outside of periods and quotations, like this.[1] And not this[1].

11. Sources should be clearly identified and endnoted. The way the source will be identified depends largely on the specific form of the product. It often makes the document read more credibly if you cite the source in the text. i.e.: *According to The Economist, the prime minister will oppose the legislation.* Direct quotes from a source should be identified by quotation marks even if endnoted. **Failure to do so will be considered plagiarism.**

12. Web-based sources are identified by a hyperlink (where possible):

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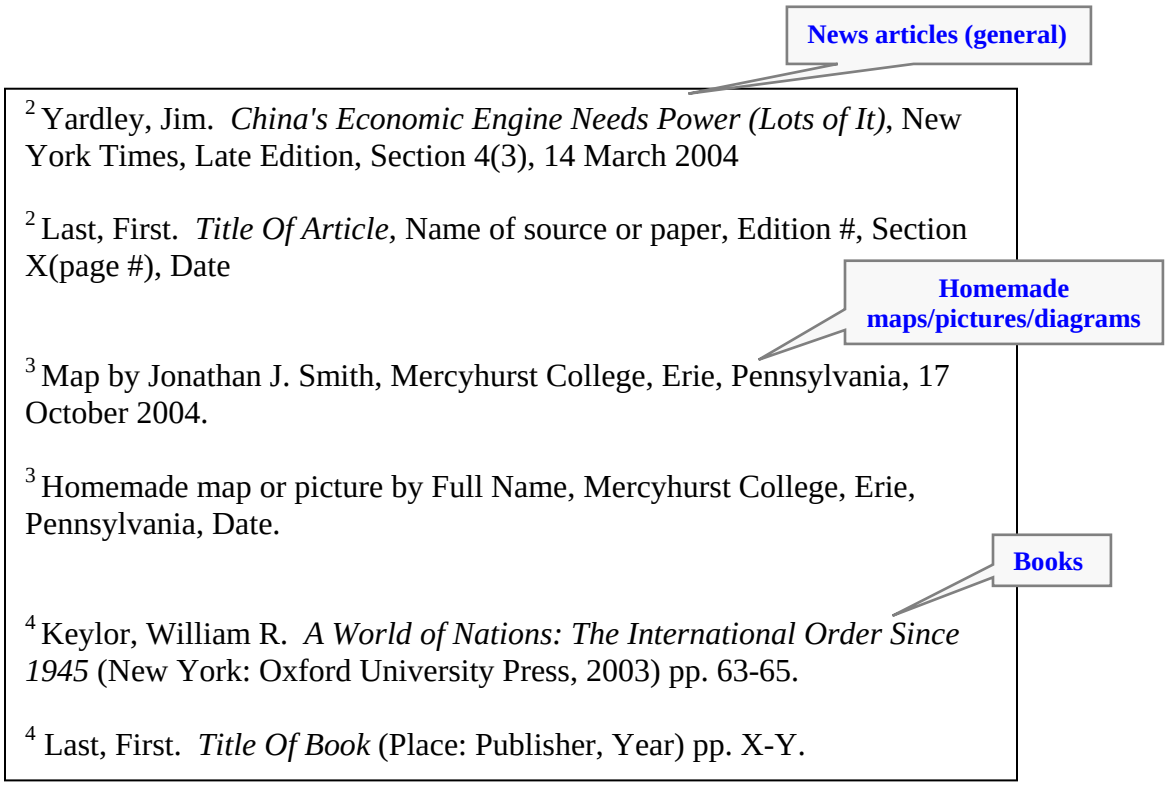
http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2004/special/president/press.pundits/results.html

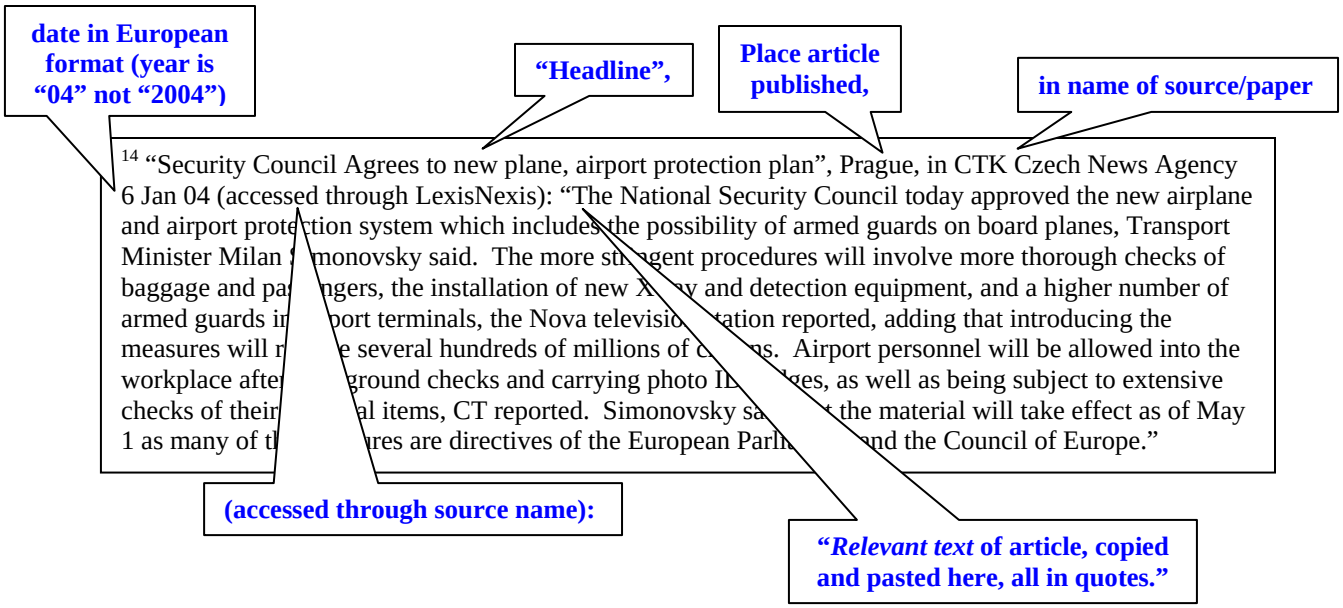
(Note: Hyperlink needs to work!)

OR, in summary products, by a brief description of the source, eg "Economist Intelligence Unit" after the "Source:" line followed by an endnote. This endnote should be formatted as described in B, C or D below. In analytic products other than INFOSUMs or INTSUMs, source data should be identified by an endnote leading either to a hyperlink or to the text of the source as described in B, C, or D below.

B. Citing General News, Homemade Graphics, And Books:



C. Citing Nexis And Access-Only Databases (E.G. Dialog):



D. Other, Less-Common Sourcing: