

## The Guardian and Observer style guide

# Guardian and Observer style guide: K

'I am a poet. I distrust anything that starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop.' **Antjie Krog**

Fri 30 Apr 2021 14.37 BST

**A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z**

**K**



**knots per hour**

Illustration: Jakob Hinrichs

### **Ka'bah**

cube-shaped shrine in the centre of the great mosque in Mecca towards which all Muslims face in prayer; the shrine is not worshipped but used as the focal point of the worship of God

### **Kabbalah**

### **Kadazan-Dusun**

two culturally linked indigenous peoples in Sabah, Malaysia; **Kadazandusun** their language

### **kaffir lime**

use **makrut lime** instead; note that it is makrut and not, as Wikipedia has it, makrud. Used in south-east Asian cooking and to flavour drinks

### **kafir**

derogatory Arabic term for infidel or unbeliever; the plural is **kuffar**

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**Kaiser Chiefs**

band from Leeds (no “the”); **Kaizer Chiefs** football club from Soweto

**Kaiser Wilhelm II**

last German emperor and king of Prussia

**Kajagoogoo**

80s band best known for their silly haircuts and No 1 hit Too Shy. The never-ending story resumed in 2009 when they reformed for a tour

**Kaká**

Brazilian footballer

**Kanye West**

is fine for your headline and first mention, but please then note that he has changed his name to Ye and thereafter call him Ye

**kapok****Kara Suu**

(not Korasuv) town in Uzbekistan

**Kashmir**

adjective **Kashmiri**; but **cashmere** fabric

**Kasparov, Garry**

former world chess champion, born in Azerbaijan in 1963

**Kathmandu**

capital of Nepal

**Kazakhstan**

noun, **Kazakhstani** adjective. Kazakh refers to a particular ethnic group in Kazakhstan and elsewhere, and a language

**KC**

king’s counsel. One of those lawyers who were for so long known as QCs

**kebabs**

a doner kebab is made using meat from a rotating spit; shish kebabs are made from skewered cubes of meat

**Keir Hardie, James**

(1856-1915) first leader of the Labour party

**Kellogg’s Corn Flakes**

but cornflakes in general

**Kentish man, Kentish maid**

born west of the river Medway; **man of Kent**, **maid of Kent** born east of the river Medway

**key**

a useful headline word, but overused

**Keynes**

If you need to pronounce them, John Maynard Keynes is *Kaynz*, Milton Keynes is *Keenz*

**keyring****key stage 1, 2**

etc (education)

**keywords**

used when searching for a specific item on the web: for example, putting the keywords “guardian” and “styleguide” into Google will help a user find the Guardian style guide online

**KFC**

not Kentucky Fried Chicken

**K-For**

stands for Kosovo Force, the Nato peacekeepers who entered Kosovo in June 1999 (and were still there 15 years later)

**Khachaturian, Aram**

(1903-78) Armenian composer

**Khartoum****khaki****Khan Yunis**

not Khan Yunis, for the city in Gaza

**khat**

not qat

**Khrushchev, Nikita**

(1894-1971) Soviet leader

**Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

one of the four provinces of Pakistan, formerly known as North-West Frontier province

**kibbutz**

plural **kibbutzim**. Kibbutzim are intentional communities (not always farms). The Be’eri kibbutz (for example) is preferred, with lowercase k, to Kibbutz Be’eri

**kibosh**

**kick-off**

noun; **kick off** verb

**kickstart**

noun or verb

**Kilimanjaro**

not Mount Kilimanjaro

**kilograms, kilojoules, kilometres, kilowatts**

abbreviate as **kg, kJ, km, kW**

**kilowatt hours**

abbreviate like this: 10kWh

**Kim Keon Hee**

the South Korean first lady

**King Charles III**

or King Charles at first mention, thereafter King Charles, the king or Charles. If it is necessary to say so, he is his majesty or HM, never HRH

**King Edward**

potatoes

**king's birthday honours list****King's College, Cambridge**

comma

**King's College London**

no comma

**King's Cross**

London

**Kings Cross**

Sydney

**King's Lynn****Kings Place**

home of the Guardian, Observer and theguardian.com; a building in King's Cross, north London (it wasn't our idea to leave out the apostrophe)

**Kings Road**

a road in Chelsea, west London; try not to call it "the Kings Road"; no apostrophe, although until 1830 it was a private royal road

**king's speech**

**Kingston upon Hull**

normally just Hull

**Kingston upon Thames****Kirkcaldy**

not Kirkaldy, a town in **Fife**, not Fyfe

**kir royal****kiss’n’tell****kissogram****Kitemark**

TM on items approved by the British Standards Institution

**KitKat**

chocolate; there is a KitKatClub in Berlin, named after the fictional Kit Kat Klub in the musical Cabaret

**kiwifruit**

sometimes called kiwis, which are not the same as Kiwis (see entry below)

**Kiwis**

New Zealanders or New Zealand people is preferable, unless quoting people or referring to the New Zealand rugby league team, who are called the Kiwis. The plural of the native bird is Kiwi

**KLF**

the KLF (thought to stand for “Kopyright Liberation Front”) are perhaps best known for burning £1m and deleting their entire back catalogue. They also recorded as the Justified Ancients of Mu Mu and the Timelords, who had a No 1 hit with Doctorin’ the Tardis

**km/h**

kilometres an hour (not kph)

**kneejerk**

reaction

**knell or knoll?**

A knell is the sound of a bell, hence “death knell”. A bell can be knelled, as well as tolled. A knoll is a small hill, not necessarily grassy

**knife-edge****Knightley, Keira****knockout**

noun; **knock out** verb

**knots**

measure of nautical miles per hour; do not say knots per hour

**knowhow****knowledgable****koala**

not koala bear

**Koh-i-noor**

diamond

**koi**

not “koi carp”

**Kolkata**

formerly Calcutta

**Korea**

It's fine to call North Korea and South Korea “the North” and “the South” in stories about both; Pyongyang and Seoul are useful alternatives

**Korean names**

like Hong Kong and Taiwanese names, Korean names are generally written in two parts with a hyphen, eg Kim Jong-il, Kim Dae-jung; on second mention they become Kim, etc (except in leading articles: Mr Kim, etc). Some people, however, notably the president and first lady, Yoon Suk Yeol and Kim Keon Hee (Yoon and Kim on second mention), prefer to do away with the hyphen. We should follow people's personal preferences when we know of them

**Kosovo, Kosovans**

the adjective is Kosovan, not Kosovar

**kowtow****Krajina**

not the Krajina

**Krakatoa, East of Java**

Despite this 1969 film title, note that Krakatoa is, in fact, west of Java. (Unless you go round the - very - long way)

**krav maga**

lc; form of combat/self-defence

**krona**

plural **kronor** (Sweden); **krona** plural **kronur** (Iceland); **kroner** plural **kroner** (Denmark); **kroner** plural **kroner** (Norway)

**krugerrands**

**Ku Klux Klan**

**kukri**

Gurkha knife

**kung fu**

**KwaZulu-Natal**

**Kwik Fit**

**Kyiv**

not Kiev; but chicken kiev

**Kyrgyzstan**

adjective **Kyrgyz**

**Kyrie Eleison**

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