

The Guardian and Observer style guide

Guardian and Observer style guide: J

'Read over your compositions, and where ever you meet with a passage which you think is particularly fine, strike it out.' **Samuel Johnson**

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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



john dory and John Doe

📷 Illustration: Jakob Hinrichs

J

joules; **kJ** kilojoules

Jabaliya

not Jabalia for the town in Gaza

Jack Daniel's

note apostrophe; technically it is a Tennessee whiskey, not a bourbon

jack-in-the-box

but **jack of all trades**

jack russell

terrier first bred by the Rev John Russell in the early 19th century

Jacuzzi

TM; named after its US inventors, Roy and Candido Jacuzzi; call it a **whirlpool bath** unless you're sure it really is a Jacuzzi

T

jail

not gaol (inexplicably, the Guardian persisted with this style well into the 1980s, long after everyone else had changed)

Jalalabad

city in Afghanistan; **Jalal-Abad** is in Kyrgyzstan

Jamaican Patois**Janjaweed**

Sudanese militia; it means “man with a gun on a horse”

January 6

Contrary to our usual style for dates, you can use this or, for example, “the January 6 attack” to refer to the storming of the US Capitol in 2021

jargon

Originally jargon was “the inarticulate utterance of birds, or a vocal sound resembling it; twittering, chattering”.

The modern sense – defined as “mode of speech abounding in unfamiliar terms, or peculiar to a particular set of persons, as the language of scholars or philosophers, the terminology of a science or art, or the cant of a class, sect, trade, or profession” (OED) – dates from the 17th century.

Bill Bryson describes jargon thus: “The practice of never calling a spade a spade when you might instead call it a manual earth-restructuring implement”

Jay-Z

No longer Jay Z

JCDecaux

sells outdoor advertising space, but has no spaces in its name

Jdam

or joint direct attack munition. A conversion kit that gives precision guidance capability to bombs

Jeep

TM

Jehovah's Witness**jeune**

naive or unsophisticated, not necessarily anything to do with youth. Although *jeune* means young in French, jejune is derived from the Latin for fasting and originally meant deficient or scanty. The OED's first listing of it in the modern sense is from George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*, published in 1898

jellaba

loose cloak with a hood, worn especially in north Africa and the Middle East

Jerez**jerry-builder****Jerusalem**

should not be referred to as the capital of Israel: it is not recognised as such by the international community. While the Knesset has designated the city as the country's capital, a UN resolution of 1980 declared this status "null and void". Jerusalem is the seat of government and Tel Aviv is the country's diplomatic and financial centre

jerusalem artichoke

nothing to do with Jerusalem: this jerusalem comes from the Italian for sunflower

jetski**jewellery**

in British English, not jewelry

jib

triangular sail or arm of a crane; "I don't like the cut of his jib" means you don't like the look or manner of someone

jibe

(not gibe) taunt

jihad

Used by Muslims to describe three different kinds of struggle: an individual's internal struggle to live out the Muslim faith as well as possible; the struggle to build a good Muslim society; and the struggle to defend Islam, with force if necessary

jihadi

noun (plural jihadis) and adjective

Only use this term in the most general sense to apply to a Muslim pursuing jihad, in particular the first two kinds of struggle. If referring to the third struggle, jihadist is preferable (see below).

jihadist

noun and adjective

A person who believes in jihadism, ie, the fundamentalist pursuit of violent jihads to defend the Islamic faith. It can be used to refer to members of formal organisations, such as Islamic State or al-Qaida, as well as those who are not. For example, the Charlie Hebdo killers or Woolwich murderers would be referred to as jihadist terrorists.

jobcentres

are run by Jobcentre Plus

jobseeker's allowance**job titles**

are all lc: editor of the Guardian, governor of the Bank of England, prime minister, etc

jodhpurs**Joe Public, John Doe****Johansson, Scarlett****john dory**

fish

John o'Groats

although the local newspaper is the John O'Groat Journal

Johns Hopkins University

not John Hopkins

jokey

not joky

Jolie, Angelina

Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt ("Brangelina" only when quoting someone) have six children, all of whom have the surname Jolie-Pitt. Their charitable foundation is the Jolie-Pitt Foundation (originally the Maddox Jolie-Pitt Foundation, after one of the children)

Joneses

as in keeping up with the Joneses; also note the Joneses' house (not the Jones' house)

Jonsson, Ulrika**JP Morgan**

but its parent company is styled as JPMorgan Chase

jpeg**jubilee**

diamond jubilee, etc

judgment

Try to resist the temptation to add the word "call"

judges

in England and Wales have different titles according to the courts in which they

work.

Courts below the high court:

Judge Smith, Judge Brown; thereafter Smith, Brown

High court:

Mr Justice Smith, Ms or Mrs Justice Brown; thereafter Smith, Brown

Court of appeal:

Lord Justice Smith, Lady Justice Brown; thereafter Smith, Brown

Supreme court:

Lord Smith, Lady Brown, thereafter Smith, Brown

If a judge appears in a court higher or lower than the one in which they usually work they retain their existing title, eg if Lady Justice Brown of the appeal court appears in the supreme court she does not become Lady Brown; likewise, if she appears in the high court she does not become Ms or Mrs Justice Brown. If the honorific of a female high court judge cannot be ascertained, use Ms.

In Scotland, judges are always Lord or Lady. So Lord Smith, Lady Brown. Sheriffs' first names are given at first mention, so Sheriff Robert Smith, thereafter Smith.

7 July 2005

The London suicide bombings may be referred to as 7/7 in headlines; the bombers were Hasib Hussain, Mohammad Sidique Khan, Germaine Lindsay and Shehzad Tanweer

jumbo jet

but **jump-jet**

the “Jungle”

Refer to it as the Calais refugee camp instead. While the “Jungle” is recognised as the camp's name, it is a derogatory term so its use should be limited

junior

abbreviate to **Jr** not Jun or Jnr, eg Sammy Davis Jr

just deserts

not just desserts, unless you are saying you only want pudding

juvenile

the Criminal Justice Act 1991 replaced this term with “youth”, and raised the age at which you cease to be one from 17 to 18

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