

The Associated Press
STYLEBOOK
and Briefing on
Media Law

Fully Revised and Updated

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Stylebook

and Briefing on Media Law

with Internet Guide and Glossary

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WHAT'S NEW

In this edition of the AP Stylebook

New entries: Bell Labs, bloodbath, children, dad, Drug Enforcement Administration, eerie, Finland, in Internet section (brick-and-mortar, double-click, firewall, LAN, MP3, offline, virus, worm), jihad, mom, mujahedeen, mullah, preventive, Rolodex, Taliban, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, U.S. Marshals Service, Yellow Pages; in Sports: -added (suffix), hole in one (in golf entry), motor sports, offseason; in Business: CEO.

Changes and updates: citizen, subject; citizens band, coast guard, Commonwealth of Independent States, crossfire, datelines (Foreign Cities), Dark Ages, decimal units, disabled-handicapped-impaired, euro, domain names (in Internet terms section), freelance, gypsy, hometown, hot line, Islam, Lloyd's of London, Maoism (changing spelling to Mao Zedong), military academies, minister, names, Nobel Prize, Portuguese names, Quebec, quotations in the news, membership numbers in separate religion entries, 7UP, spelling, teenage, telephone numbers, titles, Trans World Airlines; Correctives and Clarifications (in Briefing on Media Law), Photo Captions, Filing the Wire (category codes), Filing Practices, About the AP.

Deletes: director, host, housing unit, National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

**In Memory
of
CHRISTOPHER W. FRENCH
1940-1989**

FOREWORD

In the Foreword to the first edition of the AP Stylebook in its current format, I cautiously predicted that it might become a lasting work. Several decades and nearly 1.5 million copies later, it seems safe to say that it has.

The Stylebook has not only found its way into newsrooms around the world but has also become a fixture in journalism classes, public relations agencies, newsletter production houses, and wherever else people write about daily events, public affairs and other matters of public interest.

As a guide to usage, and as a reference book for terms and topics commonly encountered in news writing, the Stylebook is now an acknowledged and valued standard, one of the most widely consulted works of its kind.

Many newsrooms have adopted its recommendations as their own, supplementing them with terms unique to their own communities or modifying some Stylebook entries that are superseded by preferred local usage or nomenclature.

That's exactly how the Stylebook is meant to be used, and we've made it even easier with a variety of digital formats for individual desktop use or for access across a local network.

Part of the Stylebook's mission is to sort out right from wrong. In other cases, its purpose is to prescribe choices that will make it easier for writer and reader to meet. And in its expanded form, it also instructs on media law.

Behind it all is a simple belief in accuracy, clarity and consistency. You could call this book a writer's best friend. Or perhaps a reader's.

Speaking of friends, we continue to be grateful to writers and editors throughout AP and its member newspapers and to scores of other individuals and organizations whose suggestions and information made the first Stylebook possible and have helped keep subsequent editions current.

LOUIS D. BOCCARDI
President and
Chief Executive Officer

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Following are reference books used in the preparation of The Associated Press Stylebook. They are the accepted reference sources for material not covered by the Stylebook.

First reference for spelling, style, usage and foreign geographic names:

Webster's New World College Dictionary, Fourth Edition, Hungry Minds, Inc., New York, N.Y.

Second reference for spelling, style and usage:

Webster's Third New International Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, Springfield, Mass.

Second reference for foreign geographic names:

National Geographic Atlas of the World, National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C.

First reference for place names in the 50 states:

National 5-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory; U.S. Postal Service, Washington, D.C.

For aircraft names:

Jane's All the World's Aircraft; Jane's Yearbooks, London, and Franklin Watts Inc., New York.

For military ships:

Jane's Fighting Ships; Jane's Yearbooks, London, and Franklin Watts Inc., New York.

For non-military ships:

Lloyd's Register of Shipping; Lloyd's Register of Shipping Trust Corp. Ltd., London.

For railroads:

Official Railway Guide — Freight Service, and Official Railway Guide — Passenger Service, Travel Edition; Official Railway Guide, New York.

For federal government questions:

Official Congressional Directory; U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington.

For foreign government questions:

Political Handbook of the World; McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York.

For the formal name of a business:

Standard & Poor's Register of Corporations, Directors and Executives; Standard & Poor's Corp., New York.

For religion questions:

Handbook of Denominations in the United States; Abingdon Press, Nashville, Tenn., and New York.

World Christian Encyclopedia; Second Edition; Oxford University Press, New York, N.Y.

Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches; Abingdon Press, Nashville, Tenn., and New York, for the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., New York.

Other references consulted in the preparation of the AP Stylebook:

Bernstein, Theodore M. *The Careful Writer: A Modern Guide to English Usage*. Atheneum, 1965.

Bernstein, Theodore M. *More Language That Needs Watching*. Channel Press, 1962.

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Cappon, Rene J. *The Word*. The Associated Press, 1982; second edition, 1991.

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Newton, Harry. *Newton's Telecom Dictionary*, 15th Edition, Miller Freeman, Inc., 1999.

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Skillin, Marjorie E. and Gay, Robert M. *Words Into Type*. Prentice-Hall Inc., 1974.

Strunk, William Jr. and White, E.B. *The Elements of Style*, second edition. The Macmillan Co., 1972.

Also consulted were the stylebooks of the Boston Globe, Indianapolis News, Kansas City Star, Los Angeles Times, Miami Herald, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Newsday, New York Times, Wilmington (Del.) News-Journal, and the U.S. Government Printing Office.

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STYLEBOOK

STYLEBOOK KEY

This updated and revised version of The Associated Press Stylebook has been organized like a dictionary. Need the acronym for a government agency? Look under the agency's name. Should you capitalize a word? Check the word itself or the **capitalization** entry. What's the format for baseball boxes? See **baseball**.

Following is a key to the entries:

<p>airport Capitalize as part of a proper name: <i>La Guardia Airport, Newark International Airport</i>.</p> <p>The first name of an individual and the word <i>international</i> may be deleted from a formal airport name while the remainder is capitalized: <i>John F. Kennedy International Airport, Kennedy International Airport, or Kennedy Airport</i>. Use whichever is appropriate in the context.</p> <p>Do not make up names, however. There is no <i>Boston Airport</i>, for example. The <i>Boston airport (lowercase airport)</i> would be acceptable if for some reason the proper name, <i>Logan International Airport</i>, were not used.</p>	<p>Entry words, in alphabetical order, are in boldface. They represent the accepted word forms unless otherwise indicated.</p> <p>Text explains usage.</p> <p>Examples of correct and incorrect usage are in italics.</p>
<p>airtight</p>	<p>Many entries simply give the correct spelling, hyphenation and/or capitalization.</p>
<p>air traffic controller (no hyphen.)</p>	
<p>airways The system of routes that the federal government has established for airplane traffic.</p> <p>See the airline, airlines entry for its use in carriers' names.</p>	<p>Abbrev. indicates the correct abbreviation of a word.</p>
<p>Alabama Abbrev.: <i>Ala.</i> See state names.</p>	<p>Related topics are in boldface.</p>

Other abbreviations used in the Stylebook:

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| n.: noun form | adj.: adjectives |
| v.: verb form | adv.: adverbs |

A

AAA Formerly the American Automobile Association. On second reference, *the automobile association* or *the association* is acceptable.

Headquarters is in Heathrow, Fla.

a, an Use the article *a* before consonant sounds: *a historic event*, *a one-year term* (sounds as if it begins with a *w*), *a united stand* (sounds like *you*).

Use the article *an* before vowel sounds: *an energy crisis*, *an honorable man* (the *h* is silent), *an NBA record* (sounds like it begins with the letter *e*), *an 1890s celebration*.

a- The rules of **prefixes** apply, but in general no hyphen. Some examples:

achromatic atonal

A&P Acceptable in all references for *Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Co. Inc.* Headquarters is in Montvale, N.J.

AARP Use only the initials; it's the official name of the American Association of Retired Persons.

abbreviations and acronyms The notation *abbrev.* is used in this book to identify the abbreviated form that may be used for a word in some contexts.

A few universally recognized abbreviations are required in some circumstances. Some others are acceptable depending on the context. But in general, avoid alphabet soup. Do not use abbreviations or acronyms that the reader would not quickly recognize.

Guidance on how to use a particular abbreviation or acronym is provided in entries alphabetized according to the sequence of letters in the word or phrase.

An *acronym* is a word formed from the first letter or letters of a series of words: *laser* (light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation).

Some general principles:

BEFORE A NAME: Abbreviate the following titles when used before a full name outside direct quotations: *Dr.*, *Gov.*, *Lt. Gov.*, *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Rep.*, *the Rev.*, *Sen.* and certain military designations listed in the **military titles** entry. Spell out all except *Dr.*, *Mr.*, *Mrs.* and *Ms.* when they are used before a name in direct quotations.

For guidelines on how to use titles, see **courtesy titles**; **legislative titles**; **military titles**; **religious titles**; and the entries for the most commonly used titles.

AFTER A NAME: Abbreviate *junior* or *senior* after an individual's name. Abbreviate *company*, *corporation*, *incorporated* and *limited*

when used after the name of a corporate entity. See entries under these words and **company names**.

In some cases, an academic degree may be abbreviated after an individual's name. See **academic degrees**.

WITH DATES OR NUMERALS: Use the abbreviations *A.D.*, *B.C.*, *a.m.*, *p.m.*, *No.*, and abbreviate certain months when used with the day of the month.

Right: *In 450 B.C.; at 9:30 a.m.; in room No. 6; on Sept. 16.*

Wrong: *Early this a.m. he asked for the No. of your room.* The abbreviations are correct only with figures.

Right: *Early this morning he asked for the number of your room.*

See **months** and individual entries for these other terms.

IN NUMBERED ADDRESSES: Abbreviate *avenue*, *boulevard* and *street* in numbered addresses: *He lives on Pennsylvania Avenue. He lives at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.*

See **addresses**.

STATES: The names of certain states and the *United States* are abbreviated with periods in some circumstances.

See **state names; datelines;** and individual entries.

ACCEPTABLE BUT NOT REQUIRED: Some organizations and government agencies are widely recognized by their initials: *CIA, FBI, GOP.*

If the entry for such an organization notes that an abbreviation is acceptable in all references or on second reference, that does not mean that its use should be automatic. Let the context deter-

mine, for example, whether to use *Federal Bureau of Investigation* or *FBI*.

See **second reference**.

AVOID AWKWARD CONSTRUCTIONS: Do not follow an organization's full name with an abbreviation or acronym in parentheses or set off by dashes. If an abbreviation or acronym would not be clear on second reference without this arrangement, do not use it.

Names not commonly before the public should not be reduced to acronyms solely to save a few words.

SPECIAL CASES: Many abbreviations are desirable in tabulations and certain types of technical writing. See individual entries.

CAPS, PERIODS: Use capital letters and periods according to the listings in this book. For words not in this book, use the first-listed abbreviation in Webster's New World Dictionary. If an abbreviation not listed in this book or in the dictionary achieves widespread acceptance, use capital letters. Omit periods unless the result would spell an unrelated word.

ABC Acceptable in all references for *American Broadcasting Cos.* (the plural is part of the corporate name).

Divisions are *ABC News, ABC Radio* and *ABC-TV*.

ABCs

able-bodied

ABM, ABMs Acceptable in all references for *anti-ballistic mis-*

sile(s), but the term should be defined in the story.

Avoid the redundant phrase *ABM missiles*.

A-bomb Use *atomic bomb* unless a direct quotation is involved.

See **Hiroshima**.

Aborigine Capitalize when referring to Australian indigenous people.

abortion Use *anti-abortion* instead of *pro-life* and *abortion rights* instead of *pro-abortion* or *pro-choice*. Avoid *abortionist*, which connotes a person who performs clandestine abortions; use a term such as *abortion doctor* or *abortion practitioner*.

aboveboard

absent-minded

absent without leave
AWOL is acceptable on second reference.

academic degrees If mention of degrees is necessary to establish someone's credentials, the preferred form is to avoid an abbreviation and use instead a phrase such as: *John Jones, who has a doctorate in psychology*.

Use an apostrophe in *bachelor's degree*, *a master's*, etc., but there is no possessive in *Bachelor of Arts* or *Master of Science*.

Use such abbreviations as *B.A.*, *M.A.*, *LL.D.* and *Ph.D.* only when the need to identify many individuals by degree on first reference would make the preferred form cumbersome. Use these abbreviations only after a full name — never after just a last name.

When used after a name, an academic abbreviation is set off by commas: *Daniel Moynihan, Ph.D., spoke*.

Do not precede a name with a courtesy title for an academic degree and follow it with the abbreviation for the degree in the same reference:

Wrong: *Dr. Pam Jones, Ph.D.*

Right: *Dr. Pam Jones, a chemist*.

See **doctor**.

academic departments

Use lowercase except for words that are proper nouns or adjectives: *the department of history*, *the history department*, *the department of English*, *the English department*, or when *department* is part of the official and formal name: *University of Connecticut Department of Medicine*.

academic titles Capitalize and spell out formal titles such as *chancellor*, *chairman*, etc., when they precede a name. Lowercase elsewhere.

Lowercase modifiers such as *department* in *department Chairman Jerome Wiesner*.

See **doctor** and **titles**.

academy See **military academies**.

Academy Awards Presented annually by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Also known as the *Oscars*. (Both *Academy Awards* and *Oscars* are trademarks.)

Lowercase *the academy* and *the awards* whenever they stand alone.

accept, except *Accept* means to receive.

Except means to exclude.

accommodate

accused A person is *accused* of, not *with*, a crime.

To avoid any suggestion that an individual is being judged before a trial, do not use a phrase such as *accused slayer John Jones*, use *John Jones, accused of the slaying*.

For guidelines on related words, see **allege**; **arrest**; and **indict**.

Ace A trademark for a brand of elastic bandage.

acknowledgment

acre Equal to 43,560 square feet or 4,840 square yards. The metric equivalent is .4 (two-fifths) of a hectare or 4,047 square meters.

One square mile is 640 acres.

To convert to hectares, multiply by .4 (5 acres x .4 equals 2 hectares).

See **hectare**.

acronyms See the **abbreviations and acronyms** entry.

act Capitalize when part of the name for pending or implemented legislation: *the Taft-Hartley Act*.

acting Always lowercase, but capitalize any formal title that may follow before a name: *acting Mayor Peter Barry*.

See **titles**.

act numbers Use Arabic figures and capitalize *act*: *Act 1*; *Act 2*, *Scene 2*. But: *the first act*, *the second act*.

actor (man) **actress** (woman)

Actors' Equity Association

Headquarters is in New York.

A.D. Acceptable in all references for *anno Domini*: in the year of the Lord.

Because the full phrase would read *in the year of the Lord 96*, the abbreviation *A.D.* goes before the figure for the year: *A.D. 96*.

Do not write: *The fourth century A.D.* *The fourth century* is sufficient. If *A.D.* is not specified with a year, the year is presumed to be *A.D.*

See **B.C.**

addresses Use the abbreviations *Ave.*, *Blvd.* and *St.* only with a numbered address: *1600 Pennsylvania Ave.* Spell them out and capitalize when part of a formal street name without a number: *Pennsylvania Avenue*. Lowercase and spell out when used alone or with more than one street name: *Massachusetts and Pennsylvania avenues*.

All similar words (*alley*, *drive*, *road*, *terrace*, etc.) always are spelled out. Capitalize them when part of a formal name without a number; lowercase when used alone or with two or more names.

Always use figures for an address number: *9 Morningside Circle*.

Spell out and capitalize *First* through *Ninth* when used as street names; use figures with two letters for *10th* and above: *7 Fifth Ave.*, *100 21st St.*

Abbreviate compass points used to indicate directional ends of a street or quadrants of a city in a numbered address: *222 E. 42nd St.*, *562 W. 43rd St.*, *600 K St. N.W.* Do not abbreviate if the number is omitted: *East 42nd Street*, *West 43rd Street*, *K Street Northwest*.

Use periods in the abbreviation *P.O.* for P.O. Box numbers.

See **highway designations**.

adjectives The abbreviation *adj.* is used in this book to identify the spelling of the adjectival forms of words that frequently are misspelled.

The **comma** entry provides guidance on punctuating a series of adjectives.

The **hyphen** entry provides guidance on handling compound modifiers used before a noun.

ad-lib (n., v., adj.)

administration Lowercase: *the administration, the president's administration, the governor's administration, the Reagan administration.*

See the **government, junta, regime** entry for distinctions that apply in using these terms and *administration*.

administrative law judge

This is the federal title for the position formerly known as *hearing examiner*. Capitalize it when used as a formal title before a name.

To avoid the long title, seek a construction that sets the title off by commas: *The administrative law judge, John Williams, disagreed.*

administrator Never abbreviate. Capitalize when used as a formal title before a name.

See **titles**.

admiral See **military titles**.

admissible

admit, admitted These words may in some contexts give

the erroneous connotation of wrongdoing.

A person who announces that he is a homosexual, for example, may be acknowledging it to the world, not admitting it. *Said* is usually sufficient.

ad nauseam

adopt, approve, enact, pass Amendments, ordinances, resolutions and rules are *adopted* or *approved*.

Bills are *passed*.

Laws are *enacted*.

Adrenalin A trademark for the synthetic or chemically extracted forms of epinephrine, a substance produced by the adrenal glands.

The nonproprietary terms are *epinephrine hydrochloride* or *adrenaline*.

Adventist See **Seventh-day Adventist Church**.

adverbs The abbreviation *adv.* is used in this book to identify the spelling of adverbial forms of words frequently misspelled.

See the **hyphen** entry in the **Punctuation** chapter for guidelines on when an adverb should be followed by a hyphen in constructing a compound modifier.

adverse, averse *Adverse* means unfavorable: *He predicted adverse weather.*

Averse means reluctant, opposed: *She is averse to change.*

adviser Not *advisor*.

advisory

Aer Lingus The headquarters of this airline is in Dublin, Ireland.

Aeroflot The headquarters of this airline is in Moscow.

Aeromexico This airline formerly was known as Aeronaves de Mexico.

Headquarters is in Mexico City.

aesthetic

affect, effect *Affect*, as a verb, means to influence: *The game will affect the standings.*

Affect, as a noun, is best avoided. It occasionally is used in psychology to describe an emotion, but there is no need for it in everyday language.

Effect, as a verb, means to cause: *He will effect many changes in the company.*

Effect, as a noun, means result: *The effect was overwhelming. He miscalculated the effect of his actions. It was a law of little effect.*

Afghan (adj.) *Afghani* is the Afghan unit of currency.

AFL-CIO Acceptable in all references for the *American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations*.

A-frame

African Of or pertaining to Africa, or any of its peoples or languages. Do not use the word as a synonym for *black* or *Negro*.

In some countries of Africa, *colored* is used to describe those of mixed white and black ancestry. In other societies *colored* is considered a derogatory word.

Because of the ambiguity, avoid the term in favor of a phrase such as *mixed racial ancestry*. If the word cannot be avoided, place it in quotation marks and provide its meaning.

See **colored**.

African-American The preferred term is *black*. Use *African-American* only in quotations or the names of organizations or if individuals describe themselves so.

See **black**.

after- No hyphen after this prefix when it is used to form a noun:

aftereffect afterthought

Follow *after* with a hyphen when it is used to form compound modifiers:

after-dinner drink after-theater snack

afterward Not *afterwards*.

Agency for International Development AID is acceptable on second reference.

agenda A list. It takes singular verbs and pronouns: *The agenda has run its course.*

The plural is *agendas*.

agent Lowercase unless it is a formal title used before a name.

In the FBI, the formal title is *special agent*. Use *Special Agent William Smith* if appropriate in a special context. Otherwise, make it *agent William Smith* or *FBI agent William Smith*.

See **titles**.

ages Always use figures. When the context does not require *years* or *years old*, the figure is presumed to be *years*.