

AP STYLE & PUNCTUATION

This style guide is to supplement the AP Stylebook. Always consult the AP Stylebook first, however many school-specific topics can only be found here. There might be a rare occurrence when we deviate from the AP Stylebook.

abbreviations and acronyms

In general, avoid the “alphabet soup” created by overusing abbreviations and acronyms. Do not use abbreviations and acronyms when readers won’t quickly understand.

Abbreviate most titles before a name: Gov. Mike Pence.

Abbreviate months that appear with a day of the month, i.e. Jan. 21, not January 21.

Abbreviate street names when numbered, i.e. President Obama lives on 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. Obama lives on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Use periods in most two-letter abbreviations but avoid periods in abbreviations of three letters or more.

Academic Super Bowl

Accents

accept, except

Accept means to receive; except means to exclude.

accused

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

addresses

Abbreviate only with an exact, numbered address. The school address is 1801 E. 86th St. The school is located on 86th Street.

Only abbreviate street, boulevard and avenue. Spell out circle, alley, road, etc.

adopt, approve, enact, pass

Amendments, ordinances, resolutions and rules are adopted or approved.

Bills are passed.

Laws are enacted.

adviser

affect, effect

Affect, as a verb, means to influence. As a noun it should be avoided.

Effect, as a verb, means to cause. As a noun it means result.

African-American

Acceptable for an American black person of African descent. Black is also acceptable. Follow a person’s preference. All black people, though, are not African-Americans.

ages

Always use figures.

aid, aide

Aid is assistance. An aide is a person who serves as an assistant.

ain’t

Use only in quotes or special circumstances.

aka

Also known as.

Allergos

all right

Never alright.

all time, all-time

An all-time high, but the greatest runner of all time.

allude, refer

To allude to something is to speak of it without specifically mentioning it.

To refer is to mention it directly.

allusion, illusion

Allusion means an indirect reference. Illusion means an unreal or false impression.

all-state

Alumni Association

AA is acceptable after first reference.

alumnus, alumni, alumna, alumnae

alumnus = a man who has attended a school (alumni in the plural)

alumna = a woman who has attended a school (alumnae in the plural)

alumni = a group of men and women

Ambassadors

amid

Not amidst.

among, between

Typically, between is used when introducing two items while among is used for more than two items.

a.m., p.m.

Lowercase, with periods, when writing about time.

Angela Britain-Smith

annual

Something cannot be “first annual” until a “second annual” event has taken place.

anonymous sources

Use sparingly. Always seek approval from an editor before using an anonymous source.

another

Another does not mean in addition, it means more of something similar. CORRECT: Ten people took the test, another 10 refused.

WRONG: Ten people took the test, another 20 refused.

CORRECT: Ten people took the test, 20 others refused.

anticipate, expect

Anticipate means to expect and prepare for something; expect does not include the notion of preparation.

app

April Fools’ Day

arrest

Do not convict someone of a crime when they have yet to stand trial. Use “arrested on a charge of...” not, “arrested for...”

assassin, killer, murderer

An assassin is one who kills a politically important person. A killer is anyone who kills with a motive of any kind. A murderer is one who is convicted of murder in a court of law.

assault, battery

Assault, legally, means to threaten violence. Assault and battery means the victim was touched by the assaulter.

athletic director

Capitalized before a name. Rule is the same for assistant athletic director.

atrium

attorney, lawyer

Technically, an attorney, sometimes a lawyer, is someone empowered to act for another person. A lawyer is someone admitted to practice in a court system.

attribution

Only use said.

AVID

Advancement Via Individual Determination. Use AVID for all references.

ax

Baccalaureate

Event the night before Commencement.

Back to School Night

baloney, bologna

Baloney is an expression of foolishness. Bologna is a luncheon meat.

Bankers Life Fieldhouse

because, due

Due is most often used when a sentence is dealing with money or something owed. Be sure not to use due as a synonym for because.

because, since

Use because to denote a specific cause-effect relationship. Since is acceptable in a casual sense when the first event in a sequence led logically to the second but was not the direct cause.

He went because he was told.

They went to the game, since they had been given tickets.

believe, think, feel

A person can believe or think something. A person can feel something, but that is a physical action, not a mental one.

beside, besides

Beside means at the side of. Besides means in addition to.

Blast Off

blond, blonde

Use blond as a noun for males and as an adjective for all applications. Use blonde as a noun for females.

Board of Education

Or, school board.

bookstore

boys/girls

Our school is attended by boys and girls. We do not use an apostrophe when referring to teams played by boys and girls. For example, the boys basketball team and the girls cross country team.

This is a direct conflict with our athletic department’s use of men’s and women’s.

Bloomington High School North

Not Bloomington North High School.

Bloomington High School South

Not Bloomington South High School.

Brain Game

Bridge

Broad Ripple

Bump-a-thon

cafeteria

capital, Capitol

A capital is the city where a seat of government is located. Do not capitalize.

Capitalize Capitol when referring

to the building in Washington: The meeting was held on Capitol Hill in the west wing of the Capitol.

capitalization

Capitalize River, Dam or Street as part of a proper name: Red River, Hoover Dam, Main Street.

In plurals, do not capitalize river, dam or street: the Red and Missouri rivers, Main and Broad streets.

Carmel

Castleton

Castleton Square Mall

CEC

cellphone

cents

Spell out the word cents and lowercase, using numerals for amounts less than a dollar: 5 cents. Use the \$ sign and decimal system for larger amounts: \$1.01, \$2.50.

character, reputation

Character refers to moral qualities. Reputation refers to the way a person is regarded by others.

Chipotle

Christmas

Always spell out. Dot use Xmas. Do not use in reference to winter break.

Chris Vermilion

Circle Centre

cities

Indiana cities do not need to include the name of the state. Some cities never need a state to accompany them, such as Chicago, Dallas, Las Vegas and Los Angeles. Check the full AP Stylebook for a list of cities not needing a state.

citizen, resident, national, native

A citizen is a person who has acquired the full civil rights of a nation either by birth or naturalization. Use resident, not citizen, in referring to inhabitants of states and cities. National is applied to a person residing away from the nation of which he or she is a citizen. Native is the term denoting that an individual was born in a given location.

clinic

clubs

Club names are always capitalized. Club is capitalized when accompanying a name. For example, the Spanish Club will meet tomorrow. The club will discuss dues at that time.

coach

Capitalized before a name. Rule is the same for assistant coaches.

Comedy Sportz

commas

We do not use in a series: Her favorite colors are red, blue and orange.

Commencement

complement, compliment

Complement is a noun and a verb denoting completeness or the process of supplementing something: The ship has a complement of 200 sailors and 20 officers. The tie complements his suit.

Compliment is a noun or a verb that denotes praise or the expression of courtesy: The captain complimented the sailors.

composition titles

- Capitalize the principal words, including prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters.
- Capitalize an article (the, a, an) or words of fewer than four letters if it is the first or last word in a title.
- Put quotation marks around the names of books (except the Bible and catalog references), computer games, TV shows, movies, operas, plays, albums, songs, lectures, works of art, etc.

Conseco Fieldhouse

Now Bankers Life Fieldhouse.

convince, persuade

You may be convinced that something or of something. You must be persuaded to do something.

Kristie Corn

councils

Council names are capitalized: Junior Class Council, Senior Class Council, Student Council. When council is used alone it is not capitalized.

Counterpoints

courtesy titles

We do not use Mr., Miss, Mrs., Ms. or Dr. unless necessary.

cross country

We do not hyphenate. Do not refer to as XC.

Cuts

The November event that determines the four acts to perform at Junior Spectacular.

daily announcements

dates

When specific dates are used, abbreviate the month. Put commas after the day of the week, the month and the year. If you only have the month and day, no commas are required. School started on Wednesday, Aug. 15, 2011. The first meeting will be Oct. 1.

With no specific date, spell out the month. When you have the month

and the year, do not use a comma between them. February is the shortest month. He attended the show in March 2010.

daylight saving time

dean

Capitalized before a name.

decades

The 1890s, the '90s, the 1920s, the mid-1930s.

Democrat

department meeting

departments

Only capitalize English. All other departments are lower case. *The English department will work with the math department on this project.*

Descants

differ from, differ with

To differ from means to be unlike. To differ with means to disagree.

directions

In general, lowercase north, south, northeast, northern, etc. Capitalize when they designate regions, i.e. He arrived just as the storm was leaving the Midwest.

disabled, handicapped, impaired

Avoid describing people as disabled or handicapped unless it is pertinent to a story. If one must be used, try to be more specific and describe the exact disability.

discreet, discrete

Discreet means prudent, circumspect. Discrete means detached, separate.

disinterested, uninterested

Disinterested means impartial, which is usually the better word to convey the thought. Uninterested means that someone lacks interest.

dollar sign

The \$ is the only sign we use in writing.

each other, one another

Two people look at each other. More than two look at one another.

Easter

eBay

editor-in-chief

either

Use it to mean one or the other, not both.

email

English

Etchings in Thought

Evans Branigan, III
He is the principal. His given name is

Evans, however he goes by Bryant. Mike Akers, Tymika Payne and Kristie Corn are assistant principals. Capitalize their titles only before their name. Use last name only after first reference.

every one, everyone

Every one of the clues was worthless. Everyone agreed.

Facebook

farther, further

Farther is a physical distance. Further elongates time. I walked farther than Matt and read further than Chris.

Fashion Mall

felony, misdemeanor

A felony is a serious crime. A misdemeanor is a minor offense against the law.

fewer, less

Fewer is used when comparing individual items. Less is used with mass quantities. I have fewer shirts than Matt, but Chris has less sand than me.

field goal

figuratively, literally

Figuratively means in an analogous sense, but not in the exact sense. Literally means in an exact sense.

finals

first lady

flex day

fractions

Spell out amounts less than 1 in stories, using hyphens between words: two-thirds, seven-sixteenths.

freshman/freshmen

Freshman is singular, freshmen is plural.

fundraiser

god, God

Capitalize God in references to the deity of all monotheistic religions. Lowercase god and goddesses in references to the deities of polytheistic religions.

goodbye

Google+

GPA

Grad Ads

Grad Dance

grades

Great Lakes

The five, from the largest to the smallest: Lake Superior, Lake Huron, Lake Michigan, Lake Erie, Lake Ontario.

Great North Run	is the possessive form of the neuter pronoun.	Madrigal Dinner	9/11
guidance office	IU	makeup	9 week exams
H. Dean Evans Community & Education Center Use CEC for all references.	IUPUI	Marion County Metropolitan Interscholastic Conference Athletic/academic conference NC participates in with Ben Davis, Carmel, Center Grove, Lawrence Central, Lawrence North, Pike and Warren Central. Use MIC in all references.	noon
Habitat for Humanity HH after first reference.	Ivy League Brown University, Columbia University, Cornell University, Dartmouth College, Harvard University, Princeton University, the University of Pennsylvania and Yale University.	MIC Choral Festival	Nora
half-mast, half-staff On ships and at naval stations ashore, flags are flown at half-mast. Elsewhere ashore, flags are flown at half-staff.	Jazz Café	middle initials Use according to a person's preference.	North Central Message
Half-Notes	JCC	midnight	Northernaires
handbook	JEL	Midwest	numbers In general, spell out numbers one through nine, use figures for 10 or above. However, always use figures for ages, dimensions, percentages, time, street numbers and days of the month.
Hinkle Fieldhouse	Jewish Holidays All Jewish holidays begin at sundown of the prior day. The major Jewish holidays are: Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret, Simchat Torah, Hannukah, Tu B'Shevat, Purim, Passover, Lag B'Omer, Shavu'ot and Tisha B'Av.	Mike Akers	numbers Do not start a sentence with a figure unless it is a year.
Homecoming	JROTC	Model United Nations Use MUN after first reference. Don't abbreviate to Model UN.	numbers Rules can be mixed. The 4-year-olds arrive in groups of 10, though they were supposed to arrive in groups of eight.
homeroom	judgment	money Drop redundant zeroes when possible. You may use the dollar sign. \$4, \$5.50, 75 cents.	OK
homerun	junior, senior Abbreviate as Jr. and Sr. only with full names of persons or animals. Do not precede by a comma.	Mother Nature	One Act Plays
homicide, murder, manslaughter Homicide is a legal term for slaying or killing. Murder is malicious, premeditated homicide. Manslaughter is homicide without malice or premeditation.	Junior Spectacular Never Junior Spec.	MSDWT	One School
Hoosier Boys State	junior varsity	myriad Note word is not followed by of: The myriad books in the library.	Open House
Hoosier Girls State	kickoff	names On first reference, use full name. After first reference use last name only. If two people in the same story have the same last name, use the entire name throughout the story.	Orient, Oriental Do not use when referring to East Asian nations and their peoples. Asian is the acceptable term for an inhabitant of those regions.
I	King's Court	natatorium	over Over is a word that relates to positioning. Do not use in place of during.
IB Middle Years Program Use MYP in all references.	Kleenex A trademark for a brand of facial tissue.	National Honor Society Use NHS on all references.	page numbers Page 1, Page 2, Page 3A.
IHSAA	Kwanzaa A seven-day celebration, based on African festivals, from Dec. 26 through Jan 1.	NC Acceptable for all references to our school. Use only when necessary.	Pantherquest
inasmuch as	Ladies First	NCHS Live!	Panthers
Indianapolis	Lady Panthers Do not use. All students are Panthers.	NCHS Live! on Facebook	pardon, parole, probation A pardon forgives and releases a person from further punishment. Parole is the release of a prisoner before the sentence has expired, on condition of good behavior. Probation is the suspension of sentence for a person convicted, but not yet imprisoned, on condition of good behavior.
Indiana State Fair State Fair on future references.	LeAnn Haggard	NC Prix	Paul Loggan Paul Loggan is the athletic director. Andy Elkins is the assistant athletic director.
information center	Leanne Kabrich	NCTV	PC The performance classroom.
Instagram	learning center	Net Night	PDF
interims	lectern, podium, pulpit, rostrum A speaker stands behind a lectern, on a podium or rostrum, or in the pulpit.	nicknames Only use nicknames when a person is primarily known by a nickname. Use quotes when a person has a nickname that is less common than their given name.	Penny Wars
International Baccalaureate IB after first reference.	lettermen	Nikki Woodson The superintendent. Capitalized before her name on first reference. Last name only after first reference.	Pepsi Coliseum
Internet	Light Café		
iPad	long jump		
iPhone	Lynda McQuiston		
iPod			
ISSMA			
italics Do not use italics in news stories. Italics are used in this stylebook to highlight examples of correct and incorrect usage.			
it's, its It's is a contraction for it is or it has. Its			

<p>percent</p> <p>pink pass</p> <p>PLC</p> <p>Presidents Day</p> <p>principal Leader of the school.</p> <p>Principal's Cabinet Use cabinet after first reference. The Principal's Cabinet meets once a week and is comprised of the principal, assistant principals, deans, athletic director and others as directed.</p> <p>principle Rule or standard.</p> <p>prison, jail Prison is a generic term that may be applied to the maximum security institutions often known as penitentiaries and to medium security facilities often called correctional institutions. A jail is normally used to confine people serving sentences for misdemeanors.</p> <p>Prom</p> <p>PSAT</p> <p>quotes Punctuation goes inside of quotation marks.</p> <p>racket</p> <p>Recognition Night</p> <p>Regional</p> <p>registration</p> <p>Rep Theatre An exception to the "theater" rule as this spelling is part of an official name.</p> <p>Republican</p> <p>restroom</p> <p>Riley Hospital for Children</p> <p>Rockin' for Riley</p> <p>rock 'n' roll</p> <p>salutatorian</p> <p>Science Olympiad</p> <p>Sectional</p> <p>Seeing Eye dog</p> <p>Semistate</p> <p>Senior Blood Drive</p> <p>Senior Bonfire</p> <p>senior cafeteria</p> <p>Senioritis Senior class publication.</p>	<p>Senior Luncheon</p> <p>Shakespeare Competition</p> <p>should, would Use should to express an obligation. Use would to express a customary action.</p> <p>Skype</p> <p>snack pack</p> <p>Social Security</p> <p>sophomore</p> <p>Spell Bowl</p> <p>Spirit Week</p> <p>spring break</p> <p>sponsor</p> <p>stage crew</p> <p>State State names should be spelled out in stories.</p> <p>states States are not abbreviated in our writing the same way as the are with the U.S. Postal Service. Indiana is abbreviated as Ind. Illinois is Ill. Some states, like Ohio and Iowa, are never abbreviated. Abbreviate state names in captions, lists and datelines.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Alaska</td> <td>Ala.</td> <td>Ariz.</td> <td>Ark.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Calif.</td> <td>Colo.</td> <td>Conn.</td> <td>Del.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fla.</td> <td>Ga.</td> <td>Hawaii</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Idaho</td> <td>Ill.</td> <td>Ind.</td> <td>Iowa</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kan.</td> <td>Ky.</td> <td>La.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Maine</td> <td>Md.</td> <td>Mass.</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mich.</td> <td>Minn.</td> <td>Miss.</td> <td>Mo.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mont.</td> <td>Neb.</td> <td>Nev.</td> <td>N.H.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>N.J.</td> <td>N.M.</td> <td>N.Y.</td> <td>N.C.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>N.D.</td> <td>Ohio</td> <td>Okla.</td> <td>Ore.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pa.</td> <td>R.I.</td> <td>S.C.</td> <td>S.D.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tenn.</td> <td>Texas</td> <td>Utah</td> <td>Vt.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Va.</td> <td>Wash.</td> <td>W.Va.</td> <td>Wis.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wyo.</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>State of the Union</p> <p>stationary, stationery To stand still is to be stationary. Writing paper is stationery.</p> <p>student center</p> <p>student handbook</p> <p>suit, suite You may have a suit of clothes, a suit of cards or be faced with a lawsuit. There are suites of music, rooms and furniture.</p> <p>Super Bowl</p> <p>superintendent Capitalized before a name as a title.</p> <p>swimming and diving</p> <p>tea party</p>	Alaska	Ala.	Ariz.	Ark.	Calif.	Colo.	Conn.	Del.	Fla.	Ga.	Hawaii		Idaho	Ill.	Ind.	Iowa	Kan.	Ky.	La.		Maine	Md.	Mass.		Mich.	Minn.	Miss.	Mo.	Mont.	Neb.	Nev.	N.H.	N.J.	N.M.	N.Y.	N.C.	N.D.	Ohio	Okla.	Ore.	Pa.	R.I.	S.C.	S.D.	Tenn.	Texas	Utah	Vt.	Va.	Wash.	W.Va.	Wis.	Wyo.				<p>temperatures Use figures for all except zero. Use a word, not a minus sign, to indicate temperatures below zero. Temperatures get higher or lower, but they don't get warmer or cooler.</p> <p>textbook</p> <p>theater This is a direct conflict with our performing arts department's use of "theatre."</p> <p>The Northern Lights</p> <p>The Northerner</p> <p>their, there, they're Their is a possessive pronoun. They went to their house. There is an adverb indicating direction: We went there for dinner. They're is a contraction for they are.</p> <p>time Drop redundant zeroes when possible: 4 p.m. or 2 a.m. Use noon and midnight.</p> <p>timeout</p> <p>tip-off</p> <p>Tootsie Pop Concert</p> <p>Top 100 Night</p> <p>toward</p> <p>track and field</p> <p>transgender Use the pronoun preferred by the individuals who have acquired the physical characteristics of the opposite sex or present themselves in a way that does not correspond with their sex at birth.</p> <p>T-shirt</p> <p>TV</p> <p>tweet</p> <p>20-something</p> <p>Twitter</p> <p>Tymika Payne</p> <p>underscore Do not use the symbol in Internet addresses; write out the word and put it in parentheses.</p> <p>U.S. Use periods when using as a noun or an adjective.</p> <p>valedictorian</p> <p>Valentines Day</p> <p>varsity</p> <p>versus Spell out in normal speech and writing. Use vs. in short expressions.</p>	<p>Use v. for court cases.</p> <p>Veterans Day</p> <p>vice president</p> <p>Vine</p> <p>VIP</p> <p>voice mail</p> <p>volleyball</p> <p>Walmart</p> <p>Washington Township</p> <p>Washington Township Foundation</p> <p>Web</p> <p>website</p> <p>weekend</p> <p>who's, whose Who's is a contraction for who is, not a possessive: Who's there? Whose is the possessive: I do not want to know whose coat it is.</p> <p>who, whom Who is the pronoun used for references to human beings and to animals with a name. It is grammatically the subject (never the object) of a sentence, clause or phrase: The woman who rented the room left the window open. Who is there?</p> <p>Whom is often used when someone is the object of a verb or preposition: The woman to whom the room was rented left the window open. Whom do you wish to see?</p> <p>Wi-Fi</p> <p>Wikipedia</p> <p>winter break</p> <p>WJEL 89.3 Use WJEL after first reference.</p> <p>World Wide Web</p> <p>X-ray</p> <p>YouTube</p> <p>ZIP code</p> <hr/> <p>REMINDERS</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>You're</td> <td>You are.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Your</td> <td>It belongs to you.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>They're</td> <td>They are.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Their</td> <td>It belongs to them.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>There</td> <td>A place.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>We're</td> <td>We are.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Were</td> <td>Past tense of are.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Then</td> <td>A point in time.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Than</td> <td>A method of comparison.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Two</td> <td>The number 2.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>To</td> <td>Indicates motion.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Too</td> <td>Also or excessively.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>It</td> <td>A thing.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>It's</td> <td>It is.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Its</td> <td>Plural of it.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A lot</td> <td>Two words.</td> </tr> </table>	You're	You are.	Your	It belongs to you.	They're	They are.	Their	It belongs to them.	There	A place.	We're	We are.	Were	Past tense of are.	Then	A point in time.	Than	A method of comparison.	Two	The number 2.	To	Indicates motion.	Too	Also or excessively.	It	A thing.	It's	It is.	Its	Plural of it.	A lot	Two words.
Alaska	Ala.	Ariz.	Ark.																																																																																								
Calif.	Colo.	Conn.	Del.																																																																																								
Fla.	Ga.	Hawaii																																																																																									
Idaho	Ill.	Ind.	Iowa																																																																																								
Kan.	Ky.	La.																																																																																									
Maine	Md.	Mass.																																																																																									
Mich.	Minn.	Miss.	Mo.																																																																																								
Mont.	Neb.	Nev.	N.H.																																																																																								
N.J.	N.M.	N.Y.	N.C.																																																																																								
N.D.	Ohio	Okla.	Ore.																																																																																								
Pa.	R.I.	S.C.	S.D.																																																																																								
Tenn.	Texas	Utah	Vt.																																																																																								
Va.	Wash.	W.Va.	Wis.																																																																																								
Wyo.																																																																																											
You're	You are.																																																																																										
Your	It belongs to you.																																																																																										
They're	They are.																																																																																										
Their	It belongs to them.																																																																																										
There	A place.																																																																																										
We're	We are.																																																																																										
Were	Past tense of are.																																																																																										
Then	A point in time.																																																																																										
Than	A method of comparison.																																																																																										
Two	The number 2.																																																																																										
To	Indicates motion.																																																																																										
Too	Also or excessively.																																																																																										
It	A thing.																																																																																										
It's	It is.																																																																																										
Its	Plural of it.																																																																																										
A lot	Two words.																																																																																										