

Style Guide

The purpose of a yearbook style guide is to promote consistency. Creating and using a set style guide can also help to keep different groups working on different sections cohesive throughout. You can have two or more groups assigned to and working on specific school clubs who are able to keep their sections in harmony without previewing each other's work.

VOICE

The voice of the yearbook is one of the most important aspects to establish before any writing begins. All too often, especially in situations where there are multiple groups creating one book, a voice is not established before writing commences and it leads to a non-cohesive story. The voice refers to the tone and language used, such as inspirational, professional, conversational and more. Decide on a voice for your book and ensure all interested parties understand and agree.

SPEECH

The speech used differs vastly from the voice. The voice encompasses tone and direction for the language. The speech is the actual language itself. For example: if you decide to employ technical writing, ensure that all writing follows suit. However, for yearbooks, it is best to use plain English wherever possible. Remember some of the basic rules of writing in general:

- Cut out any language that is group or age-specific. If your yearbook is for high school, remember, these books will be read 30 years from now. It must still speak to the reader then, as it should now.
- Anytime a word can be cut out, cut it out. There is never a need to lengthen a sentence or a point that has already been made clear.
- Whenever possible, use everyday speech to explain a point. Never substitute a smaller word for a longer one.
- Always ask yourself, "What point am I trying to make?" "Have I made my point clear?" "What have I left to interpretation?"

FONT

When it comes to font, experiment. You need to establish your title font, your subtitle font, your body text font, caption font, and subheader font. Once you have decided on

the best looking font for each of those, you must then find the right size for each font group.

COLOR

You should always have a set color palette. This should apply to all text color, content modules, and image frames. Once the palette is established, each group will have a set of guidelines to go by.

LAYOUT

Establishing a layout will help to define where images are to be placed by way of content modules. Content modules also help to separate areas on each page through side bars, etc.

NAMES AND TITLES

1. Use Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms., or the proper title with names of teachers and other adults. Example: Dr. Pearl Johnson, Coach Red Truman, Mr. Charles Anderson.
2. The first time a name appears in a story, use the full name plus a title for adults. Never use a single initial. **Be sure names are spelled correctly.** Example: (adults) Miss Jeanette Jones, Mr. J. Paul Smith, Dr. N. W. Green; (students) George Swanson, Mary Lou McPherson.
3. After the first time a name appears, use Mr., Mrs., Miss, or Ms. with the last name for adults; use only the first name for students, except in sports stories, where only the last name is preferred. Example: Mr. Nolen, Jennifer, Williams.

CAPITALIZATION

Do Capitalize:

1. All proper nouns, months, days of the week, holidays. Example: Denver, May, Monday, Fourth of July.
2. Names of sections of the country but not directions. Example: He visited the Southwest. He ran west.
3. One-word titles when they precede names of adults. Example: Coach Jerry Jones, Principal Gus Allen; but Dr. T. H. Gordon, superintendent.

4. Full names of schools, clubs, organizations, streets, geographical areas, or companies. Example: Roosevelt Junior High School, Washington School, Stamp Club, Girls' Athletic Association, Ninth Street, San Francisco Bay, Shell Oil Company.
5. Proper names for races and nationalities. Example: Caucasian, Asian, American; but black, white.
6. Names of athletic teams. Example: Giants, Cougars.
7. Principal words in titles of books, plays, movies, or songs, including *a*, *an*, or *the* when it appears first in the title. Example: *The House of Seven Gables*, *A Christmas Carol*.

Do Not Capitalize:

1. School subjects, except languages or specific course titles. Example: social studies, algebra, journalism; but French, English, Algebra I.
2. Personal titles used without names. Example: The principal came into the room.
3. Abbreviations for the time of day. Example: a.m., p.m.
4. Seasons of the year. Example: summer, spring.
5. Academic departments, except for words derived from proper nouns: Example: English department, math department.
6. Names of classes. example: ninth grade, junior.
7. Boards and committees, unless given a distinctive name. Example: student council, dance committee, student body, student court; but Bar Association, United States Senate.
8. School rooms and buildings, except for those with special names. Example: auditorium, girls' gym; but Room 106, Harrison Gymnasium.

DATES AND TIMES

1. Dates are written one way only. Example: May 8; never May 8th, 8 May, or the 8th of May.
2. Never use the year for a date within the current year, nor the preceding or coming year unless there would be confusion. Example: December 12, last April 5, next June.
3. Do not use the word *on* before days or dates. Example: They met Sunday. They will meet May 25.
4. Do not use the word *o'clock* in showing time. Omit the zeros for even hours. Example: 3:10 p.m., 2 p.m., 11:45 a.m., 12 noon.

FIGURES

1. Always use figures for ages, dimensions, money, percents, days of the month, degrees, hours of the day, scores, room numbers, page or chapter numbers and street numbers. Example: 16 years old, 6 feet, 10 cents, 200 percent, Chapter 2.
2. Except for those numbers in the rule above, spell out numbers to and including nine and use figures for numbers 10 and over.
3. Use the abbreviations *st*, *nd*, *rd*, and *th* after numbered streets above Ninth but never with dates. Example: First Street, South 21st Street, October 21.
4. For money under \$1, use figures and the word *cents*; for \$1 or over, use the dollar sign. Do not use zeros when they are not needed: 25 cents, \$1.50, \$10.
5. Do not begin a sentence with a figure. Spell it out or rewrite the sentence.
6. In a list containing numbers below and above 10, use figures for all.

ABBREVIATIONS

1. Abbreviate *Jr.* or *Sr.* following a name. Use no comma. Example: Alfred Brent Jr. (This differs from general usage, which demands the comma.)
2. Abbreviate long names of organizations or other familiar names when there can be no confusion. Use no spaces or periods between letters. Example: YMCA, PTA, UN, TV.
3. Do not abbreviate names of states, months, days of the week, or the words *street*, *avenue*, *Christmas*, *railroad*, *company*, *fort*, or *point* in place names. Example: Iowa, March, Friday, Main Street, Union Pacific Railroad, Fort Collins.
4. Abbreviate the word *saint* in place names. Example: St. Louis.
5. Do not use symbols or abbreviations for distances, weights, or the words *percent* and *degrees*. Example: 5 feet 8 inches, 2 pounds, 1 kilo, 25 percent, 27 degrees.

TITLES

1. Enclose in quotation marks the titles of plays, poems, chapters, movies, songs, or radio and TV programs.
2. Underline or italicize book titles

Internet and Technology Related

1. Internet and World Wide Web are capitalized. When shortened to the Web, Web page or Web site it is also capitalized; but webcam, webcast, webmaster are not.

2. The following words are spelled this way: CD-ROM, HTTP, login, logon, logoff, screen saver, home page, offline, online, cyberspace, cell phone, chat room, database, dot-com, double-click, download, DVD.

PUNCTUATION

Colons

1. To introduce a series after *the following* or a similar term but not after verbs such as *are* or *include*: The following officers were elected: Joe Smith, Jane Lutton, and Chris Fields. New officers are Joe Smith, Jane Lutton, and Chris Fields.
2. Use in giving the time of day, but not in even hours. Example: 3:15 p.m., 10 a.m.
3. Use along with a period to separate minutes and seconds in sports times. Example: His time was 6:17.5

Commas

1. Use to separate all words in a series, but not before the conjunction. Example: The national flag is red, white and blue.
2. Use to set off parenthetical expressions or nonessential clauses. Example: John Jones, whom I met yesterday, will be there tonight.
3. Use to set off appositives, nouns of address, or identifications. Example: Mary White, sophomore, was chosen. Linda, will you be there?
4. Use to separate a quotation from the rest of the sentence. Example: "I'll invite you," said John, "to my party tonight."
5. Use in numbers over 999, except for street numbers, telephone numbers or time numbers.
6. Use after an introductory clause. Example: When the boy reached school, he went to his locker. If you go, I will not.

Semicolons

1. Use between main divisions of a listing. Example: Officers are Linda Clark, North, president; Tom Murray, Central, vice-president; and James Crain, West, secretary.
2. Use to divide enumerations when commas would not be clear. Example: the three committees will handle theme and decoration planning; refreshment purchase, serving and cleanup; and finances and sale of items.

Apostrophes

1. Use to form a possessive. Example: Tim's shoes, Miss Burn's room, children's toys, women's hats.
2. Use in contractions or to show omitted letters or figures. Example: it's (meaning *it is*), don't, '74.
3. Use in plurals of letters and figures. Example: S's, 7's.
4. Do not use in possessive pronouns. Example: theirs, its, hers, yours, whose.

Quotation Marks

1. Use to show the **exact** words of a speaker.
2. Periods and commas are always placed within quotation marks, question marks and exclamation points only if they are a part of the quotation. Example: "Did you study your homework?" she asked. Have you seen "Lord of the Rings"?

Hyphens

1. There general rule for the use of hyphens in compound words. You must learn how to spell them or look them up.
2. Use in certain common compound titles. Example: vice-president, all-state team, sergeant-at-arms
3. Do not use in such words as *weekend, copyreader, makeup, textbook, cheerleader, homecoming, lineup or basketball*.
4. Use with compound adjectives but not with the same words used as nouns. Example: 50-yard line, six-day trip, cherry-red dress; but He ran 50 yards. The trip lasted six days.
5. Use in sports scores. Example: North won 6-3.
6. Use between syllables only, to divide words at the end of a line.
7. When two or more adjectives express a single concept, use hyphens to link all the words in the compound. Example: Four-year study, 12-member council, 28-year-old woman.
8. Do not link words with hyphens when the adverb *very* is part of the group. Example: A very-good time.
9. Do not link the words with hyphens when you have adverbs ending in *-ly* as part of the phrase. Example: Not an especially-good time.