

Middlebury College
College Communications
Editorial Style Guide
Updated October 2008

WHEN YOU ARE TRYING TO DECIDE WHETHER TO CAPITALIZE A PERSON'S TITLE, whether to hyphenate certain words, how to format a vertical list, and other questions related to form, refer to this guide. It addresses the most commonly asked questions about Middlebury's editorial style.

Although punctuation and grammar choices are often subjective, we strive to make the College publications stylistically consistent.

Our primary arbiters for matters of style are *The Chicago Manual of Style* 15th Edition (2003, University of Chicago Press) and *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th edition, 2003. Other helpful resources are *The New Fowler's Modern English Usage* (1996, Oxford University Press); and *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk Jr., E.B. White, Roger Angell, 4th edition.

Preferred Spelling/Capitalization List

Many words have alternate spellings and capitalization rules. Deciding which to use can cause headaches (even arguments) and *not* deciding can create inconsistencies within publications. Therefore, we have chosen specific spellings and capitalization requirements for frequently used words or expressions.

A

A (*when referring to a grade, no quotation marks*); grades of A or As

AB (*Artium Baccalaureus*) or BA (*Bachelor of Arts*)

Academy Award winner; Academy Award-winning producer

ACT (*American College Test*)

Americans with Disabilities Act Office, ADA Office

adviser

African American (*no hyphen*)

a.k.a. (*also known as*)

All-American

alpine skiing

Alumni College

Alumni of Color Weekend

Alumni Fund

Alumni Leadership Conference (ALC)

alum(s) (*informal for alumnus/a/i*)

alumnus (*masculine singular*), alumna (*feminine singular*), alumnae (*plural feminine*),
alumni (*plural all, or a group of unknown gender*)

A.M. (*small caps, more formal usage*) or, a.m.

Annual Giving, Annual Fund, Office of Annual Giving

Arabic School (*Language Schools*)

Asian American (*no hyphen; avoid use of Oriental*)

Axinn Center at Starr Library; Donald E. Axinn '51, Litt. D. '89 Center for Literary and
Cultural Studies at Starr Library

B

B (*when referring to a grade, no quotation marks*); grades of B or Bs

BA, Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Arts degree, bachelor's degree

Baccalaureate

BCE (*before common era*)

Bible

biblical

black (*lowercase in reference to race*)

Board of Trustees, the board, the trustees

Brandeis University-Middlebury School of Hebrew

Bread Loaf School of English

Bread Loaf Writers' Conference

C

C (*when referring to a grade, no quotation marks*); grades of C or Cs

café, also cafe

campuswide

Career Services Office, CSO

catalog

Center for International Affairs

CD, CDs

C (*centigrade*); 78 degrees C (*no period used within a sentence*); 78° C (*no spaces*)

CEO, CEOs

chair, chairperson

Château , the Château, le Château

Chinese School (*Language Schools*)

class, Class of 2002 (*cap for specific classes*),

co words (*close up most co words, such as coexistence, cocurricular*)

coauthor, cocurricular, cohead

co-chair

College (*when referring to Middlebury*)

College Advancement (*new name for External Affairs*)

College-wide

Commencement

Commons, Ross Commons, the Commons

Commons dean

Commons system

Convocation

cooperative

course work

cum laude (*roman type, no italics*)

curriculum vitae, CV; curricula vitae, CVs (*plural*); *informal usage: vita, vitae (pl.)*

C.V. Starr-Middlebury Schools Abroad

D–E

D (*when referring to a grade, no quotation marks*); grades of D or Ds

data (*used as a plural noun, i.e. “earnings,” or a singular “mass noun,” i.e. “information”*)

database

Dean's List

dean of the faculty, dean of the College, the dean's office

Degrees granted by Middlebury College:

BA—Bachelor of Arts (*also, AB—Artium Baccalaureus*)

MA—Master of Arts

M.Litt.—Master of Letters

MML—Master of Modern Languages

MS—Master of Science

DML—Doctor of Modern Languages

Department of Physics, physics department, Department of French, French department
dot-com

East, east (*cap when referring to geographic location; lowercase for compass direction*)

Eastern Europe

electronic mail

etc. (*usually followed by a comma*)

e.g. (*use when you mean “for example”; roman type, usually followed by a comma*)

e-mail, e-book, e-commerce, e-shopping. (*Note: Many wish we would omit the “arcane” hyphen with the E-words. Unfortunately, it is not as arcane as most people think and is still hyphenated in Merriam-Webster. Most words that combine an initial with a second word begin with a capital letter and use a hyphen (T-shirt, U-turn, S-curve, X-ray).*)

emerita (*feminine singular*), emeritus (*masc. singular*), emeritae (*fem. pl.*), emeriti (*masc. plural or masc/fem plural*)

environmental studies, environmental studies program, Program in Environmental
Studies

euro

extracurricular

F

F (*when referring to a grade, no quotation marks*); grades of F or Fs

F (*Fahrenheit*) 45 degrees F (*no period used within a sentence*); 45°F (*no spaces*)

faculty head, faculty cohead

faculty is, faculty are (*both okay, depends on context*), faculty members
Middlebury's faculty is recognized nationally for excellence in teaching.
Chemistry faculty are meeting with their students over the weekend.
Twenty faculty members are working to solve the problem.

Fall Family Weekend

fall, fall semester, fall semester courses

fax

fellow; Watson Fellow

filmmaker

first-class mail

first-year seminar

first-years, first-year students

Franklin Environmental Center at Hillcrest; Janet Halstead Franklin '72 and Churchill G.
Franklin '71 Environmental Center at Hillcrest

freshman (*use first-year instead*)

French School (*Language Schools*)

Fulbright Scholar; scholar

full time (*noun*), full-time (*adjective, adverb*)

That new position is full time.

I have a full-time job at the new restaurant.

fund-raiser (*noun*)

fund-raising (*adj.*); fund-raising (*noun*)

G-L

Gordon C. Perine '49 Golf Tournament

Grades: A B C D F; Pass/Fail; Credit/No Credit; Honors; Incomplete (*cap, no quotation marks*)

German School (*Language Schools*)

GP'99 (*grandparent of student from Class of 1999; no space between P and apostrophe*)

Great Hall; Tormondsen Great Hall

high school (*no hyphen as adj. or noun*)

historic (*a historic, not an historic*)

home page

homecoming; Homecoming 2009 (*cap when referring to specific homecoming*)

Homecoming Weekend

i.e. (*use when you mean “that is”; roman type, usually followed by a comma*)

Incomplete (*the grade*)

international students

international studies

Inc. (*It is no longer necessary to separate with a comma: World Recycling Inc.*)

Internet

introductory words or phrases:

First (not firstly)

Second (not secondly)

Most evident (not most evidently)

More important (not more importantly)

its (*possessive*); it's (*contraction for it is*)

The tree is big; its leaves are golden this fall.

It's imperative that you listen.

Italian School (*Language Schools*)

Japanese School (*Language Schools*)

Jr. (*It is no longer necessary to separate with a comma: Michael Johnston Jr.*)

Kathryn Wasserman Davis School of Russian

Knowledge Without Boundaries

Language Schools (*capped and plural in reference to the set of schools*)

Language School (*capped and singular in reference to one person's experience or one school*)

Specific School Names:

Arabic School

Brandeis University-Middlebury School of Hebrew

Chinese School

French School

German School

Italian School

Kathryn Wasserman Davis School of Russian

Japanese School

Portuguese School

Spanish School

library; Middlebury's new library; the main library; the Middlebury College Library

lifelong

literary studies, Program in Literary Studies

M–N

magna cum laude (*roman type, no italics*)

Mahaney Center for the Arts; Kevin P. Mahaney '84 Center for the Arts

majors are lowercased unless they include a word normally capped:

sociology, physics, American literature, French, classics

master's degree, Master of Arts degree

McCardell Bicentennial Hall; John M. McCardell Jr. Bicentennial Hall

middle age (*noun*), middle-aged (*adj.*), the Middle Ages

Middlebury (*it is permissible to hyphenate at line break*)

Middlebury College Alumni Association, MCAA (*no periods*)

Middlebury Magazine (*When used as a title, italicize in running text*)

MiddNet Online

MiddPoints

Midwest

midcareer, midwinter, midterm, mid-August, mid-1990s

mini-reunion

multicultural, multifaceted, multimedia (*most multi words are not hyphenated*)

Museum of Art, the museum

nationwide

Native American (*no hyphen, as adjective or noun*)

need-blind admission

Nobel laureate, Nobel Prize winner

nonacademic, noncertified, nondegree, nonfiction, nonmajor, nonprofit, nonscience, non-Christian, non-Anglo (*Most non words are not hyphenated unless they include a proper noun.*)

nordic skiing

North, north (*cap when referring to geographic location; lowercase for compass direction*)

O–P

off-campus (*adj. before a noun*); off campus (*not a modifier*)
off-campus study; study off campus

off-line

OK, okay

on-campus (*adj. before noun*); on campus (*not a modifier*)

online (*noun & adj.*)

one-fourth, one-half

P'00 (*parent of student in Class 2000; no space between P and apostrophe*)

Parents' Association

Parents' Committee

Parents' Fund

percent (*spell out in text; use % symbol in tables and scientific copy*)

Ph.D., Ph.D.'s (*plural*), doctoral degree, doctorate (*not doctorate degree*)

phonathon

playwright

policy maker

postdoctoral, postwar

P.M. (*small caps, more formal usage*); or p.m.

preadmission, premed, prelaw, preschool (*no hyphen with most pre words*)

President Ronald D. Liebowitz; Ron Liebowitz, the president of Middlebury College

professor; Professor Susan Smith; Susan Smith, professor of chemistry; chemistry
professor Susan Smith; Professor of Chemistry Susan Smith; John Felder, professor
emeritus; James P. Kindlemeier, Briggs Professor of Greek Studies

Program in Environmental Studies

Pulitzer Prize winner; Pulitzer Prize–winning author

R–S

real-life situation (*adj.*); Nothing like that is found in real life (*noun*)

real-world experience; experience in the real world

residence hall (*preferred instead of dorm*)

residence hall adviser

reunion, 25th reunion; Reunion Weekend, Reunion 2008

SAT (*Scholastic Aptitude Test*)

scholar-athlete

semiretired

staff is, staff are (*both okay, depends on context*), staff members

Our staff is among the most experienced in the nation.

Middlebury staff are busy cleaning up after the largest reunion ever.

Several of our staff members are planning to submit their ideas individually.

Snow Bowl

socioeconomic

South, south (*cap when referring to a geographic location; lowercase for compass direction*)

Spanish School (*Language Schools*)

spring, spring break, spring semester, spring semester course

statewide

summa cum laude (*roman type, lowercase*)

summer school , summer Language Schools

T–V

T-shirt, tee

theater (*for all uses except for proper names using alternate spelling*)

theatre (*This is the second spelling in Webster's and a Middlebury department/ major.*);

Department of Theatre; Hepburn Zoo Theatre; Wright Memorial Theatre.

toll-free number

Tormondsen Great Hall; Great Hall

trustee; trustees; John Doe, trustee

two-thirds

up-to-date (*hyphenate in all positions*)

United States; USA, U.S. (*periods*)

user-friendly

vice president (*no hyphen*)

videotape, video recorder

voice mail

W-Z

Washington, DC (*in mailing addresses*); Washington, D.C. (*in running text*)

Web, Web page; Web site (*Web is a proper noun, short for World Wide Web. Merriam-Webster still capitalizes it.*)

Weblog, blog

webcam

webcast

webmaster

West, west (*cap when referring to geographic location; lowercase for compass direction*)

white (*lowercase when referring to race*)

Winter Carnival

winter term

winter term courses

work-study, work-study program

World Wide Web; the Web

worldview

writing program

Xerox (*noun*); xerox (*verb, or use copy or photocopy instead*)

year-round

yearlong

Other Style Concerns

ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS

U.S., USA

Ph.D., BA, AB, MA, M. Litt., MD

NATO, AIDS, CEO

e.g., i.e.

etc.

A.M., P.M.; or a.m., p.m. (use SMALL CAPS for a more formal and easier-to-read look)

Spell out the full name the first time it is used in text, and place the abbreviation or acronym in parentheses immediately following. In lengthy pieces, repeat the name occasionally if the acronym is unfamiliar and the name hasn't been used in several paragraphs or pages.

Capitals versus lowercase? Depends on usage. Longer acronyms tend to become lowercased with repeated use, i.e., WASP vs. Wasp

Abbreviations, Plural

Abbreviations without periods, and numbers take *s*, no apostrophe. Apostrophes may be used if misreading is a possibility.

BA, BAs; in twos and threes; '80s and '90s

Abbreviations with one period usually add the *s* before the period:

ed., eds.; yr., yrs.; Dr., Drs.

Abbreviations with more than one period use apostrophe *s*:

Ph.D.'s

ACCENT MARKS

Foreign words that have been incorporated into English often retain their original accents. Check the dictionary when in doubt—use first spelling.

résumé; café; vis-à-vis

ADDRESSES

Middlebury addresses should spell out the name of the building and the name of the department, or use the box number:

Joe Smith

Jane Jones

Box 0000
Middlebury College
Middlebury, VT 05753

Dining Services, McCullough
Middlebury College
Middlebury, VT 05753

APOSTROPHE

In class years and decades, the apostrophe should point to the left:

'02, P'00, GP'89
'80s, '20s

Note: An apostrophe is the mark to be used here. According to Chicago Manual of Style Q&A online: “In word-processed documents, when apostrophes are preceded by a space (as opposed to those in the middle of a word, like *it's*), the software thinks the writer wants an opening quotation mark and supplies one. When documents aren't proofread carefully, these marks appear in place of apostrophes.”

Avoid using “daggers”: A dagger is a straight, pointed character that can be used as a reference mark or to indicate a death date:

Not OK: '80

How to make a left-facing apostrophe: This character is located in Microsoft Word's “insert” menu > symbols > normal text > special characters. Select the single closing quote. PC users, creating a shortcut is helpful if you use the character often.
Mac shortcut: shift + option + right bracket key

There is no apostrophe in a range of dates:

1985–89

AWARDS

Nobel Prize in physics, Nobel Prize winners
Pulitzer Prize in poetry
Watson Fellow, fellow
Fulbright Scholar, scholar, Fulbright grant

BIAS-FREE CONTENT

We strive to make our publications representative of the community and the target audience. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that words can inflame and divide or welcome and include. Avoid language that is biased toward race, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.

Choose words that do not treat males as the norm and females as a subset—for example, use people, individuals, men and women, humanity instead of mankind. Workers instead of workmen. Chairperson or chair instead of chairman or chairwoman. Head of school instead of headmaster. First-year student instead of freshman.

Acceptable terms for referring to physical and cultural differences seem to change fairly quickly; therefore, it is wise to stay abreast of these changes or get guidance (from professionals who work with the particular group, the ADA Office, relevant Internet sites, peer groups) when in doubt. When writing about someone with a disability, for example, it is now considered unhelpful, even inflammatory, to use language that seems to focus on struggle or that sensationalizes the person's situation, as in words like "suffers from" or "is a victim of." Always ask yourself whether mentioning a particular fact about a person is relevant to the mission of the project.

In choosing photos for your project, try to include a variety that demonstrates the variability among the people at Middlebury (when pertinent to the project), with younger and older individuals, people with disabilities, and various ethnic backgrounds engaged in unстереotypical activity.

CAPITALIZATION

See *Titles for rules about professional and academic titles.*

Names, Associations, Conferences, and Official Policies

As a general rule, official names are capitalized. Unofficial or shortened names are not. This applies to offices, buildings, departments and programs, as well as committees and boards, symposia, conferences, course titles, forms, applications, and so on. For example, the Board of Trustees is shortened to the board. The Residential Life Committee becomes the committee. The Department of French—the French department; Middlebury College Museum of Art—the museum; the Common Application for Admission—admission application.

Exceptions: References to Middlebury College, when shortened, are always capped—College; Language Schools when shortened is Schools; Chinese School when shortened is School, which applies to the other Language Schools as well; Monterey Institute of International Studies when shortened is the Institute; the Middlebury Initiative when shortened is the Initiative.

Names of official policies, such as Institutional Diversity and Undergraduate Honor System, should be capitalized. However, when the concept is being discussed, use the lowercase. Middlebury College is strongly committed to promoting *diversity* on campus. A strict *honor system* is enforced at the College.

In running text, lowercase a *the* that precedes a name:

The Underhille Foundation

When you visit the Underhille Foundation, please check their address.

Holidays

Capitalize holidays and recurring observances:

Winter Carnival, Thanksgiving, Commencement, Baccalaureate, Convocation

Do not capitalize seasons and academic periods:
winter term, fall admission, summer break.

Grades

Capitalize the letters used for grades and grade names. Do not place quotation marks around grades.

A, B, C, D, F, Pass, Incomplete. Grade of B. Grades of B or Bs.

Headlines

Capitalize all words except: articles (*a, an, the*), coordinating conjunctions (*and, but, or, for, nor*), prepositions (*through, on, in, to, etc.*), and the *to* in infinitives.

The River Runs through It.

Exception: Knowledge Without Boundaries

Always capitalize the first and last word, no matter what part of speech it is.

Trying to Find an Answer to But

With hyphenated words: Cap both elements. The only exception is if the second element is one of the parts of speech listed above—articles (*a, an, the*), coordinating conjunctions (*and, but, or, for, nor*), prepositions (*through, on, in, to, etc.*)—or the modifiers *flat, sharp, and natural*.

Self-Sustaining Economics

F-sharp Concerto

Concerto in F-Sharp

Side-by-Side Logistics

A word with a prefix: This is basically one word, not two, so the second element is not capped unless it is a proper noun or proper adjective.

Anti-intellectual Attitudes on the Increase

Non-Christian Organization Donates Books

Original Quotes

When quoting original material, use the capitalization system of the original, even if it does not conform to College style.

As the soldier explained 100 years ago, “We have forgiven Him and the Little Children who did not know what to expect from our Party.”

Exception: when a quote is used as an integral part of a sentence, the initial cap in the original may be dropped.

In his public statements he warns that “we have forgiven Him and the Little Children.”

CLASS YEARS

Present Century

Class of 2004

Suzanne Lunde, Class of 2004

Suzanne Lunde '04

Note: If using smart quotes, the apostrophe points to the left.

1900s

Classes that overlap by numeral with classes in the present century (or will overlap by the time the document is printed) should be written in full.

John Smith, Class of 1906

John Smith II '60 (*referring to 1960*)

John Smith III '06 (*referring to 2006*)

1800s John Smith, Class of 1855

Language Schools and Advanced Degrees

Betty Smith, M.A. French '90

Thomas Horn, M.A. English '02

Parents & Grandparents

Jennifer Jenkins P'90

Jeremiah Long P'80, P'90, GP'07

Combinations of Classes

Lucille Taft '82, M.A. French '85, P'04

Combinations of People

Lucille Major '90 and John Johnson '91

Alice '80 and Benjamin Right

Melissa '02 and James '00 Fredericks

Maiden Names

James '00 and Melissa Smith '02 Fredericks

Name Tags

For the small area on name tags, it's fine to amend these rules to fit the space.

For example, Jeremiah Long P'80, P'90, GP'07 could be changed to

Jeremiah Long P'80 '90 G'07.

Note: In College publications, always mention the alum's class year in the first reference and use the maiden name as shown above.

COLON

The material following the colon begins with a capital letter if it is more than one sentence long, a formal statement, or a quotation.

Follows the salutation in a business letter or address:

Alumni and Friends:

Introduces a list or series:

You will need the following: scissors, tape, glue, and paint.

Wrong: You will need: scissors, tape, glue, and paint. (*no colon between verb and rest of sentence*)

COMMA

There are too many rules about commas to list here. Commas should be used to make text more clear and understandable, but they tend to be overused. Rule of thumb: when in doubt, leave it out!

City, State

After city and after state in running text:

The College is located in Middlebury, Vermont, near Lake Champlain.

Compound Sentence

To separate two sentences connected with a coordinating conjunction, *and*, *but*, *or*—two subjects, two verbs that could be made into two sentences.

Correct: The professor is highly talented, and he will surprise you with his ideas.

Correct: Johnson is highly talented, but Truman isn't.

Wrong: Jones went home, and unlocked the doors. (Just one subject, no comma needed)

Dates

Before and after the year in full dates within sentences:

The president was born on August 9, 1950, in a New York checker cab.

Between day and year in full dates:

May 1, 2002

Introductory Elements

After introductory elements that can be eliminated without changing the meaning of the main clause:

By the time you get this message, you will probably have forgotten our conversation.

If you agree with our decision, please sign and return the contract.

It is not necessary to use the comma after short introductory elements, unless needed for clarity:

Before lunch we work out.

Series

Separating each item in a series, including the item following the conjunction:

He brought bread, potatoes, green beans, and butterscotch.

String of adjectives

Rule of thumb: Two or more adjectives that precede the same noun and that could be joined with the word “and” can usually be separated with commas, unless the noun and adjective are considered to be a unit, e.g., “bad boy.” Use judgment. Too many commas can make writing choppy.

She made a donation to a new political organization.

It will be a frigid, expensive winter.

COMMONLY CONFUSED WORDS, A FEW

Affect (v. to influence, to change)

All ready (everyone is prepared)

Allusion (n. indirect suggestion)

Altogether (adv. completely)

Anyway (adv. in any case)

Decent (adj. proper, respectable)

Desert (n. hot, dry region)

Emigrate (v. to leave one’s country)

Farther (adv. greater physical distance)

Its (pronoun, possessive)

Precede (v. to go in front of someone)

Effect (n. a result, a consequence)

Already (adv. by this time, previously)

Illusion (n. false or misleading idea)

All together (at the same time or place)

Any way (in any manner)

Descent (n. action of going down)

Dessert (n. last course of the meal)

Immigrate (v. to move to a new country)

Further (adj. additional; to an advanced point)

It’s (contraction for “it is”)

Proceed (v. to move forward)

COMPOUND ADJECTIVES AND NOUNS

Two words used as one expression may be written as one word, as a hyphenated word, or as two separate words. Which form to use often depends upon the use or position in the sentence.

We arrived at the football field at *halftime*. (noun)

This ad says it is a *half-time* position. (adjective before noun)

He lives in the *first-floor* apartment. (adjective before noun)

His apartment is on the *first floor*. (follows noun)

When in doubt about whether to hyphenate, check the dictionary. Also, see *Chicago Manual of Style*, section 7.82.

DATES AND TIME

Dates

At Middlebury, we express dates: month/day/year

March 16, 1998

The meeting is on March 7 (not: March 7th, 7 March).

We will see you on the 13th of July.

October 7–17, 1998; October 7–November 5, 1998

Tickets on sale, Wednesday, June 5, at the concert hall.

Note: See “Hyphens and Dashes” for more on en-dash use: An en dash is longer than a hyphen and is used between inclusive numbers, to show a range.

In a sentence, separate the day and year with commas:

The president was born on August 9, 1950, in a New York checker cab.

No comma when the month and year appear without a day:

The weather pattern changed in October 1998 for the better.

Cultural Periods

Some are lowercased; some are capitalized. *Chicago Manual of Style* or dictionary is a useful reference for these.

romantic period, nuclear age, classical period, Victorian era, colonial period
Roaring Twenties; Ice Age; Middle Ages, Renaissance

Centuries and Decades

Spell out centuries, using same numeral rules (spell anything lower than 10).

fourth-century art

life in the 21st century

Several options for identifying decades may be used:

1980s, 1960s, '60s, '80s, eighties, sixties

Note: *no apostrophe between the year and s*

Eras

Abbreviations for eras are set in small caps, with no periods. When small caps aren't available, use full caps without periods:

AD (or AD) *anno Domini* (“in the year of the Lord”)

CE “of the common era” equivalent to AD

BC “before Christ”

BCE “before common era” equivalent to BC

BP “before the present”

AD precedes the year, the others follow it.

150 BC

AD 150

Commas are not used in dates with fewer than five digits.

3200 BC
10,500 BC

What are small caps? They are capital letters about three-quarters smaller than regular caps. Choose them from the font menu in Microsoft Word or from Word's formatting palette.

Time of Day

All of the following are acceptable, depending upon the nature of the project. Consistency is key; don't vary the format within the same document:

Use numerals with A.M. and P.M., and words with the word *o'clock*.

5 A.M.; five o'clock

They may be made with small caps, with periods, or lowercased, with periods:

A.M. and P.M.
a.m. and p.m.

Use numerals when the exact moment is important:

The train departs at 2:08 P.M.

Other uses:

9:00 P.M., 9 P.M.
noon; midnight

Showing ranges:

9:30 A.M.–10:30 P.M. *or*: 9:30 A.M. to 10:30 P.M.
from 9 A.M. to noon (*do not use a dash to show range when also using "from"*)

ELLIPSIS POINTS

Three points, or dots, show that something has been omitted (a word, line, etc.) from the text. The points are placed on the line and are separated equally from each other and the text before and after.

For an omission in mid-sentence:

He has developed many theories . . . most of them complex.

For an omission at the end or beginning of a sentence, a period precedes the ellipsis points:

We have tried to make peace. . . . The forces for change will negotiate sooner or later.

Note: When possible, do not use Word's ellipsis symbol, which does not use equal spaces. Instead, make the symbol yourself.

##.## (space dot space dot space dot space)

FOREIGN EXPRESSIONS

Italicize unfamiliar expressions that have not become part of the English language or that are unfamiliar to most people. Such words often retain their original accent marks after incorporation into English. Check the dictionary and use the first spelling.

Some words no longer needing to be italicized: à la carte, à la mode, ad hoc, bona fide, carte blanche, per se, a cappella, vis-à-vis, magna cum laude.

HYPHENS AND DASHES

Double hyphens

Don't use them. Instead, use the em dash (—).

Em Dashes

These are long dashes, the equivalent length of an M (—), used to set off parenthetical text or digressive elements. There should be no space on either side:

This has been a long haul—to Hades and back—for everyone involved.

En Dashes

Half the length of the em dash (–). Used between inclusive numbers, to show a range.

The cost is \$50–\$55.

My weight has ranged from 125–165 lbs in the last decade.

Sports scores do not indicate a range, and therefore use a hyphen.

To make an em-dash or an en-dash in Word on a PC or Mac:

- place your cursor where the mark will go
- go to “Insert” in the program menu and open up “Symbol”
- highlight the appropriate symbol
- click “insert”

Mac key codes:

em-dash: option/shift/hyphen

en-dash: option/hyphen

PC key codes:

em-dash: shift + alt + hyphen

en-dash: “windows symbol key” + alt + hyphen

Or, create your own shortcuts by following the directions in the Symbol section

Hyphens

With Prefixes & Suffixes

In general, prefixes are not followed by hyphens unless the resulting word can be confused with another word, is difficult to decipher, or precedes a number or a capitalized word.

co: coauthor, cowriter, codirector, coedit, *but* co-chair

fold: threefold

like: no hyphen unless word ends in l. lifelike, funnel-like

mid: midwinter, midyear, midlife, mid-Atlantic, mid-August, mid-1990s

non: nonprofit, nonstudent, nonmajor

pre: preprofessional, premed, prelaw

Suspending hyphens

Use when a series of hyphenated adjectives modifies the last noun in the series:

first- and second-level courses

two- and three-year-old children

With Measurements

Hyphenate measurements that serve as adjectives preceding a noun:

The bandage is a two-inch-long strip of gauze.

Place this two-foot block of wood in the fire.

Connect measurements with hyphens when the numbers represent a range, and they function as an adjective preceding a noun:

We knew that the tsunami might create 80-to-90-foot tidal waves.

With Fractions

Hyphenate spelled-out fractions when used as modifiers, unless the numerator or denominator is already hyphenated. Whole numbers are not linked to the fraction with hyphens.

one-half empty; two-thirds majority

fifty-six hundredths; four twenty-fifths

five and three-tenths inches

With Whole Numbers

Hyphenate from 21 to 99 when spelled out:

twenty-one; ninety-nine; one hundred forty-eight

With Sports Scores

The game ended in a 21-21 tie.

Middlebury won in double overtime, 3-2.

JR., SR., AND III

It is no longer required to use commas before and after these elements, as they are considered part of the name.

Marshall Flint Jr. addressed the crowd.

Jason Milquevay III boarded the flight to New Zealand.

LETTERS—E-MAIL

Keep in mind that people have the tendency to “glaze over” when they open e-mail that looks like it will be a lot of work to decipher. To be reader friendly, be brief, double space between paragraphs, and make paragraphs short.

LETTERS—PREFERRED FORMAT

In general, for typed letters use the font Bembo Regular, 11pt. If Bembo is not available, Garamond is recommended as an alternative.

If you are sending an electronic letter off campus, Times New Roman is recommended. This typeface is the most commonly available typeface on both PCs and Macs, so your letter is most likely to look as you intended on the recipient’s computer.

Microsoft Word templates are available for download on the Middlebury Web site below. The preferred format sets the entire letter flush-left and is aligned with the Middlebury Wordmark.

http://www.middlebury.edu/administration/communications/graphic_identity/templates/

LETTERS USED AS LETTERS OR WORDS

Individual letters used as letters are italicized, and an apostrophe *S* is used to make plural when the lowercase letter is used.

Mind your *p*’s and *q*’s.

Put your *X* on this spot.

Scholastic grades are capped and set in roman type.

I got an A in English and a B in French.

Jan had straight As.

MIDDLEBURY

It is permissible to hyphenate Middlebury at line breaks if it improves the spacing of the printed document.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Middlebury College complies with applicable provisions of state and federal law which prohibit discrimination in employment, or in admission or access to its educational or extracurricular programs, activities, or facilities, on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, marital status, place of birth, service in the armed forces of the United States, or against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability.

NUMBERS

Never start a sentence with a numeral. Spell out the number:

One hundred and thirty-five people attended the conference.

In General

Spell out numbers one to nine in text.

Use numerals for 10 and higher.

Thousands take a comma: 2,450 not 2450.

Large, round, even numbers used as approximations are spelled out:

The history spans some four thousand years of Western civilization.

Very large numbers (million and higher) may be expressed with a combination of numerals and spelled-out numbers.

2 million, 10 million

These same rules apply to ordinals:

seventh place, sixth position, 135th award

Clusters of Numbers

Numbers within a sentence or paragraph that cluster together and are used in the same context should maintain consistency. If one of the numbers would normally be written as numeral, use numerals for all in that same category. It is fine to have one category written with numerals and another with numbers spelled out:

There are 14 graduates, 25 alumni, 3 first-year students, and 1 senior in the program.

Middlebury faculty published 20 books in 1998; 5 were on the bestseller list, and they will be publishing 7 books next month.

When mother came, we found seven dead pigeons outside. That didn't deter us from enjoying our snack. She served 5 kinds of cookies, 11 new beers, and 7 types of goat cheese.

Decimals

Use numerals, even in text:

We are expecting to harvest 5.4 tons of corn

Fractions

Simple fractions: Spell out in text. Hyphenate the fraction if it represents a *single* quantity.

five-sixths of the population

He received two-thirds majority

But: I'm dividing my estate into five fifths to distribute to my heirs.

Whole numbers plus fractions: These can be spelled or expressed in numerals, whichever is most readable. (Do not link whole numbers to the fraction with a hyphen)

Three and three-fourths cups of flour should be enough to make pizza.

The recipe calls for 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups of flour.

Measurements

Hyphenate measurements that serve as adjectives preceding a noun:

The bandage is a two-inch-long strip of gauze.

Place this two-foot block of wood in the fireplace.

Connect measurements with hyphens when the numbers represent a range, and they function as an adjective preceding a noun:

We knew that a tsunami might create 80-to-90-foot tidal waves.

Money

References to money may be written as numerals or spelled out. If spelled, also spell the unit of currency, except when using very large numbers.

fifty cents; six dollars

\$.50; \$125

\$1 million; \$10.3 billion

Percentages

Always express percentages as a numeral-word combination, except in charts and scientific copy, where % is used:

25 percent, 4 percent

Reunion Years

Use numerals for specific reunions: 20th reunion, 10th reunion

Reunion events may be expressed this way: Reunion 2008, Reunion Weekend

Temperature

45 degrees F (no period after the F within a sentence)

45°F (no spaces)

POSSESSIVES

Add 's to create the possessive, even for singular names ending in an *s*, *x*, *z*

Jones's art, Xerox's bill, Bill Buzz's restaurant

If the name is plural, add the apostrophe after the *s*.

the Joneses' art

With a compound subject, put the apostrophe after the second name:

Doug and Linda's house

If the subject is not compound but two separate entities, both take an apostrophe:

students' and faculty's health plans

QUOTATION MARKS WITH OTHER PUNCTUATION

Commas and periods go inside quotation marks:

The name of the article is "Never Try This at Home," and we all read it.

Semicolons and colons go outside if they are not part of the quoted material:

He told her he was "testing the waters"; indeed, he jumped off the bridge.

Question marks and exclamation points go either inside or outside, depending upon whether the quoted statement is part of the question or exclamation:

"I shall overcome!" he shouted.

Did he say, "I will balance the budget"?

SEMICOLON

Use semicolons to separate independent clauses not joined by a conjunction:

The weather is gloomy; we are all very depressed. (This can also be expressed as two sentences.)

May be used between clauses in a long compound sentence, even when they are joined by a conjunction.

The university has won so many awards in these fields that students are on waiting lists for applications, begging for interviews, and trying to bribe the admissions officers for special consideration; but the admissions procedures are not changing as a result of this newfound fame.

To separate clauses linked with the following adverbs: *then, however, thus, hence, indeed, accordingly, besides, and therefore*:

The Nobel Prize winners are most pleased; indeed, they are planning a huge celebration.

The geologist discovered a new mineral; therefore, she is naming it after herself.

To separate items in a series that is long and cumbersome or that contains internal commas:

The students should take one course in math; three in languages; two chosen from political science, history, or art; and one senior capstone course.

SPACING

One space between initials. (*T. H. Smith*)

Exception: C.V. Starr

No spaces or periods for initials that serve as proper names such as LBJ, JFK, AAA

No double spaces at the end of sentences in running text. (*Using double spaces is a holdover from the days of typewriters.*)

SPLIT INFINITIVES

Definition: The insertion of a word or phrase between “to” and the verb.

to madly love; to deliberately lie

Not a split infinitive:

to be always prepared

to be constantly searching

Split infinitives are no longer considered to be an egregious error; however, if they can be avoided by placing the modifier elsewhere without detracting from the impact or readability of the sentence, that is preferable.

STATES

Vermont State, the state of Vermont

Write out the full state name in most text. Postal codes may be used in class notes and some informal lists. For lists in more formal presentations (i.e., lists within President’s Report), traditional state abbreviations should be used (for example, Colo. instead of CO for Colorado and Ariz. instead of AZ for Arizona). See *Chicago Manual of Style* for these abbreviations.

SUPERSCRIPTS

We do not use superscripts. They tend to make the spacing between lines uneven and cause problems with editing, rendering adjacent characters in superscript.

1st, 2nd, 3rd *not*: 3rd or 3rd

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

We now use dots instead of hyphens or parentheses. In most cases, omit the 1 that precedes the area code for landline dialing. However, there may be times when it is important to add it.

802.443.2100

Any phone number involving extra digits or unusual number sequences (such as overseas numbers) should provide every digit the caller needs in order to place the call. Example, a call to Darwin, Australia:

011 International prefix used to dial outside of USA
61 International country code used to dial to Australia
8 Local area or city code used to dial to Darwin
LN The local number

011.61.8.local number

THEY/THEIR/THEM

There may be times when *they*, *their*, or *them* is an appropriate choice as a pronoun for a singular noun of nonspecific gender: most often after the use of *nobody*, *everybody*, *one*, *anyone*, or nouns that may be singular or plural, depending upon their usage: *faculty* or *student body*, for example. But when possible, rewrite the sentence.

The use of *he/she* or *him/her*, although more grammatically accurate in these cases, is often a distraction.

Anyone can take *their* medicine when it tastes like strawberry shortcake.
(*okay*)

Anyone can take his or her medicine when it tastes like strawberry shortcake. (*distracting*)

Most people can take their medicine when it tastes like strawberry shortcake. (*rewritten*)

The *faculty* decided to take *its* resolution to the administration. (*singular sense*)

The *faculty* are very pleased with *their* new students this year. (*plural sense, all members of the faculty*)

We try to let *each student* take *his or her* exam home. (*distracting*)

We try to let *students* in this situation take *their* exams home. (*rewritten*)

TITLES

A, An, The

What to do with an initial, *A*, *An*, or *The* in a title when used in running text. Drop the initial article if it makes the text awkward.

The Town's College is one of our most useful reference books.

His *Town's College* proved to be one of our most useful reference books.

The *the* preceding the name of a society, association, building, or other proper name is lowercased in running text, even when it is part of the title. This also applies to *the* in magazine and newspaper titles.

The project is funded by the Prudential Foundation.

Reading the *New York Times* is great way to start the day.

Academic and Professional

Capitalize the title when it precedes the name and is part of the name:

I would like to introduce Doctor John Smith.

President Ronald Liebowitz will be addressing the audience.

We traveled with Professor Bill Johnson.

Do not capitalize when the title follows the name (almost always a descriptor):

John Smith, professor of biology

George W. Bush, president of the United States

Do not capitalize when the title precedes the name, but is acting as a descriptive title:

Renowned geology professor Andrea Lane will deliver the keynote address.

Happily, designer Randy Russet made the costumes.

Meet our best bass player Lucinda J. Horvick '05.

We saw former president of the United States Bill Clinton.

Friends of Middlebury Music president Jane Darling

Exception: A named professorship is always capitalized, no matter where it falls

William Wilson, John M. Martin Professor of Physics will be there.

John M. Martin Professor of Physics *William Wilson* will be there.

Trustee Emerita Suzanne Simpson; Suzanne Simpson, trustee emerita; the trustee;
the professor; Professor John Jones; John Jones, professor emeritus; Professor
Emeritus John Jones

In vertical lists—such as lists of faculty used in viewbooks, etc.

For the sake of appearance and consistency, it is permissible to cap all titles and departments:

Mary Smith, Professor of Geology

Fred Dartmouth, Milton Johnson Distinguished Professor of Classical Studies

David Jones, Assistant Professor of English

Dorothy Bartlett, William Loadstone Professor of Environmental Studies

Courses

Middlebury courses are designated by course number as well as title. The number combines the department code with a numerical designation: RE 292 Psychology of Religion. Place a space between the department code and the course number. Course titles are printed in roman type, capped, with no quotation marks. It is not necessary to include the course number in general interest texts.

Professor Smith's course the Beginning of the Universe has had a waiting list for several years.

Departments and Offices

Running text—Departments and offices are capped only when the full, correct name is used:

Go to the Office of the Dean of the College if you have questions.

Someone in the dean's office will be able to help.

The Office of Public Affairs has the press kit.

Check with public affairs for the answer.

The Department of Biology will move to the new science center.

All of the science departments, including the biology department, will move.

In lists—see professional titles above. It is permissible to cap all offices and departments for the sake of consistency and readability.

Works (Creative)

Note: All of the rules below apply to running text. Other approaches may be needed for captions, pull-quotes, programs, invitations, etc. to enhance readability or formality.

Movies, Television, Radio

Movies, ongoing television and radio programs, and plays are capped and italicized:

We enjoyed reruns of *Leave It to Beaver*

The blockbuster *Live Free or Die Hard* was not to my liking.

Television/Radio Series

Cap, no quotes:

The American Idol series broke records for viewership three years running.

Television/Radio individual episodes

Cap with quotation marks:

“Survivorman” was one of best episodes of *The Office*.

Music

Instrumental:

Cap generic name, no quotes: Piano Sonata no. 2

Italicize descriptive title: *Dances of the Band of David*

lowercase **n** for no.

lowercase opus, op.

cap Major and Minor: Bach’s Mass in B Minor

Operas and songs

Long compositions are italicized, shorter ones set in quotes, roman type

“The Star Spangled Banner”

The Marriage of Figaro

Recordings:

An album is italicized. Individual tracks, use caps and quotation marks. Performer, set in roman type:

The CD *Home for the Holidays* includes music by the Middlebury Chamber Singers and a solo performance by Jason Judge, singing “Midnight in Vermont.”

Paintings and Sculpture

Titles of works of art of most types are capped and italicized:

The FBI lists Munch’s *The Scream* as one of the most stolen works of art.

If the name is from antiquity and the creator is unknown, usually the title is capped in Roman type:

The museum has the rare Palace Bowl on display

Photographs

Capped, with quotation marks:

“Yosemite Valley, Winter” is one of Ansel Adams’s most striking photos.

Written Works

Books:

Italicize:

Please read *The College on the Hill*.

Book series:

Roman type, capitalize, without quotation marks, the names of book series or editions.

The words *series* and *edition* are lowercased when they are not part of the title:

Norton Books Field Guide series

Periodicals (newspapers, magazines, and newsletters):

Capitalize and italicize, except for a “the” in the title. This is because some periodicals use “the” as part of their title and some do not; the most consistent approach is to leave it out of the title:

The story appeared in the *New York Times*.

Magazine articles & short stories:

Roman type, capitalize, and quotation marks:

The story “The Secret Life of Walter Mitty” was first published in the *New Yorker*, in 1939.

Poems and Plays

Plays and long poems are italicized and capitalized:

Paradise Lost will take you a while to read

We have tickets to *A Christmas Carol*.

Short poems are capped with quotation marks. Poems identified by their first lines are capped, sentence style, with quotation marks.

Frost’s “A Prayer in Spring” seems apt right now.

“Shall I compare thee to a Summer’s day?” is my favorite sonnet.

Unpublished Works

Dissertations, speeches, manuscripts, student work including posters.

Roman type, capitalize as titles and enclose in quotation marks:

“An Investigation into Nomenclature Anomalies in Biological Systems”

Miscellaneous Titles

Museum exhibition: Capped, with quotation marks

Museum exhibition book: Italicized

College Symposium: Capped with quotation marks

Lecture series: Cap only

Lecture: Capped with quotation marks

College course: Capped only

VOICE

Write in the active voice, using as few convoluted modifiers as possible.

Active, not convoluted: The College educates students to become advocates for change.

Passive, convoluted: Students are educated by the College to develop an awareness of their obligation to become advocates for change.

WEB

Addresses

The most common start to an Internet address, “http://”, may be omitted for space or appearance in general interest publications since most browsers will locate the site anyway. However, other expressions at the start (such as “ftp://”) need to be included.

If an Internet or e-mail address falls at the end of a sentence, conclude with a period. This will not confuse most readers.

If an Internet address breaks between lines, break it before a slash or a dot that is part of the address without inserting a hyphen:

```
www.middlebury.edu  
/~dining/rehearsals/
```

“Go addresses” should be written in their entirety.

Web Words

The word Web, referring to the World Wide Web, is uppercased, although the lowercase form will probably become commonplace over time. When referring to Web technology the *W* is usually lowercased.

Web, Web page; Web site

Weblog, blog

webcam

webcast

webmaster

#