

Editorial Style Guide

Acme Company
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style·book *n* (1708) : a book explaining, describing, or illustrating a prevailing, accepted, or authorized style.

Introduction

Many of the conventions of modern language usage vary from authority to authority. And they change continually. New editions of editorial resources are published every few years.

To prevent inconsistencies and to reflect the best and most current style of writing, we have prepared this style guide. This style guide is a tool to help attain a reasonable standard of editorial consistency and correctness in publications, print materials and Web-based information produced by Acme's Marketing Department. It also should be used as a general guide to aid Acme staff in the preparation of letters, memos and other informational materials. Further, it is a tool to save time.

In addition to alphabetic listings of common Acme terms, committee names and locations, general style rules and medical-related terms, there are a number of appendixes at the back of this style guide with information grouped by category. These include:

- Abbreviations & Acronyms**
- Frequently Misspelled Words**
- Proofreaders' Marks**
- Acme Branding Guidelines**
- Acme Departments**
- Acme Locations**

References and authorities

Acme's order of precedence for spelling is 1) *Acme Style Guide*, 2) *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary* and 3) the first listing in *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*.

References

The Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual, Fully updated and rev. Ed.
Reading, Massachusetts: Perseus Books, 1998

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Tenth Edition, 2000

Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary (<http://www.m-w.com/dictionary.htm>)

Numerical entries

401(k)

529

College savings plan, a benefit available for Acme employees.

a, an

Use *a* before words beginning with a consonant sound or the voiced *h*: *a car, a hotel, a historic, a Hitachi, a one-touch system, a unit.*

Choose the article before an abbreviation or number by its pronunciation: *an IBM computer, an 11-year-old girl, a NATO policy, a triple-A rating.* But: *an AAA rating.*

abbreviations

See **Appendix: Abbreviations & Acronyms.**

above-

Usually hyphenated when combined with a participle or an adjective as a temporary compound adjective before the noun: *above-mentioned facts, above-named person, above-average results.*

academic degrees

General references to academic degrees and fields of study are not capitalized: *a doctorate in public health administration, a bachelor's degree, a bachelor of arts degree in accounting, a master's degree, an associate degree.* But: *a bachelor's degree in English, a Juris Doctor degree.*

Academic degrees and honors that follow a name are usually lowercased in general use and abbreviations are capitalized: *John Smith, doctor of law; Tom Jones, B.A., M.A., Ph.D.; Susie Smith, J.D.*

acronyms

See **Appendix: Abbreviations & Acronyms**

addresses**ABBREVIATIONS**

Use the abbreviations *St., Blvd.* and *Ave.* only with numbered addresses, if space does not allow for the word to be spelled out:

9876 Acme Blvd.

123 W. Main St.

DIRECTIONS

Abbreviate directions in street addresses with a period: N., N.E., E., S.E., S. (not *So.*), S.W., W. and N.W.

If you include the address in running text, stylize as follows: *Acme Co., Ltd., 500 S. Main Street, Waconia, MN 55387.*

NUMBERS

Spell out street names that are numbers: 900 S. Sixth Street, 551 Fourth Street N.

POST OFFICE BOXES

If a post office box is part of the address, add that information on the line before the street address:

Acme Depot
P.O. Box 1234
9876 Powers Boulevard
Chanhassen, MN 55317

AIG VALIC

Administrators of Acme's 401(k) and 529 plans. Present in all capital letters.

all-staff

Hyphenate as an adjective: *all-staff e-mail*.

alphabetization

Maiden names and hyphenated last names

Always alphabetize by the first letter of the last name. If a woman uses her maiden name and her married name without hyphenating, alphabetize by the name that comes last. A hyphenated last name is treated as one element and is alphabetized by the first letter of the first word in the pair. The following list is in correct alphabetical order:

Mary T. James
Susan Moor Johnson
John Klein
Ann Marshall
Jane Moore-Johnson

In alphabetized lists with titles: *Doe, John W. MD*

area codes

Put these in parentheses: (952) 555-1234

baby boomer(s)

Two words, no hyphen.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield

Refer to as Blue Cross on second and subsequent references.

bolding (of names)

Bold personal names, including punctuation immediately following, in Acme's employee newsletter.

Bill Smith, president and CEO, will attend the meeting.

capitalization**PERSONAL TITLES**

Capitalize titles only when they appear before a person's name:

President Bill Smith

Lowercase titles when they appear after a person's name:

Bill Smith, president and CEO of Acme, will attend.

Susie Smith, communications specialist, works in the Marketing Department.

HEADLINES/TITLES

Consistently capitalize titles. Acme's style is to capitalize all principal words in titles, proper names (i.e., department names, personal names, names of towns, etc.), and prepositions four or more letters long. Do not capitalize conjunctions or articles unless they are the first or last word. The key is to be consistent:

Social Services Deals with Psychological and Emotional Aspects

Acme Wins Award for Sustainability

Award Goes to Dr. Jones for His Research Efforts

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Note the s on Centers.

century

Lowercase, spelling out numbers less than 10: *the first century, the 20th century.*

co-workers

Hyphenate this word. Exception to *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*.

credentials

Do not use periods in credentials and degrees.

Mary Smith, RN

John Dough, MD

List credentials in the order in which they were received.

Mary Smith, RN, CRNA

Bill Johnson, DDS, MD

dates

Spell out the name of the months when standing alone or with only a year: *the January blizzard; December 2005.*

When a month is used with a specific date, spell out the month if space permits. If space is limited, abbreviate only names of months 6 letters or greater: *Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov.* and *Dec.*

Do not abbreviate March, April, May, June and July.

Use numerals, without the *st, nd, rd* and *th*:

April 18 (*not* April 18th)

In dates giving the month and the year but not the day, omit the comma: *The meetings were held in October 2002 and attended by all managers.*

In the traditional date style (month-day-year), use commas before and after the year: *The Dec. 22, 2002, meeting ...*

daylight saving time

No hyphen; not *savings*.

Starting in 2007, daylight time begins in the United States on the second Sunday in March and ends on the first Sunday in November. On the second Sunday in March, clocks are set ahead one hour at 2 a.m. local standard time, which becomes 3 a.m. local daylight time. On the first Sunday in November, clocks are set back one hour at 2 a.m. local daylight time, which becomes 1 a.m. local standard time.

e.g. (for example)

Use comma after this abbreviation in text. Do not use *etc.*

The class will cover all aspects of childbirth (e.g., labor, delivery).

e-mail

With a hyphen. But *E-mail* (with a capital *E*, lowercase *m*) at the beginning of sentences and in headlines.

Employee Right-to-Know Act (ERTK)

A Minnesota law passed in 1983 that ensures employees are made aware of the effects associated with certain hazardous substances they may be exposed to in their work environment.

et al. (and others)

Use a period only at the end.

Abbreviations & Acronyms

AIM	Action Improvement Method
ALS	Advanced Life Support
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CEO	chief operating officer
COO	chief operating officer
DC	doctor of chiropractic
DO	doctor of osteopathy
ED	Emergency Department
EMR	electronic medical records
EPEC	Education in Palliative and End-of-Life Care
ext.	extension
FNP	family nurse practitioner
HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
HMO	health maintenance organization
HTML	HyperText Markup Language
PTO	Paid Time Off
ZIP	Zoning Improvement Plan

Frequently Misspelled Words

Words in this list are often misspelled. Take extra care and check the dictionary whenever you are not 100 percent certain.

absence	counselor	harass	niece	satellite
accommodate	cumulative	idiosyncrasy	occasion	separate
accumulate	defeasance	indispensable	occurrence	sergeant
acoustic	descendant	inoculate	offered	siege
adapter	desiccation	iridescent	omitted	skeptic
adviser	despicable	irrelevant	paralleled	skillful
all right	diagrammed	judgment	pastime	subpoena
a lot	digitized	knowledge	picnicking	sulfur
analog	dyeing	labeled	precede	supersede
analogous	embarrass	liaison	privilege	theater
analogue	encyclopedia	license	programmable	threshold
apparel	entrepreneur	lightning	programmed	totaled
auxiliary	equivalent	liquefy	receive	toward
believe	exciting	maintenance	recommend	tranquility
benefited	exhilarate	marshal	reconnaissance	transferred
canceled/ canceling	existence	medieval	relevant	vacuum
canister	feasibility	millennium	reminiscent	vilify
catalog	fluorescent	minuscule	remittance	weird
chief	foresee	Mississippi	renaissance	whiskey/ Scotch whisky
collectible	fulfillment	misspell	reservoir	wholly
committee	gauge	mortgagee	resistance	withhold
compatibility	gray	mortgagor	restauranteur	woolly
consensus	guarantee	naphtha	sacrilegious	
councillor	guerrilla	newsstand	salable	