



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Veterinary Medicine  
& Biomedical Sciences

# CVM Style: A Guide





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# Introduction



This guide, adapted from the Texas A&M University System style guide, uses the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual as its primary source for questions of written style. Where the AP stylebook does not address a topic, we prefer *The Chicago Manual of Style* (15th ed. or later), which is generally used in major publishing as well as in literary and scholarly works. Most dictionaries will suffice to address particular word usage, but we recommend Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (11th ed. or later). A supplementary resource regarding style sensitivity is the *Health Writer's Handbook* (second edition) by Dr. Barbara Gastel. Our Editing Checklists card provides quick guidance for editors and proofreaders.

# Exceptions to AP Style



# bulleted lists

## bulleted lists

AP uses dashes instead of bullets to introduce individual sections of a list. In most circumstances, we will use bullets.

## em dash

AP Style puts spaces on either side of an em dash; we do not.

## serial comma

Use the serial comma (also called the Oxford comma). The serial comma is the comma before the coordinating conjunction (usually “and” or “or”) when listing three or more items in a series.

*Example:* The medical center has scanning equipment for cats, dogs, horses, and rabbits.

## USA

The term “USA” for “United States” is allowed in AP style but not by the Texas A&M Written Style Guidelines. Use United States or U.S. instead as appropriate. See also “United States.”

## veterinarian

Although AP style allows for the term “vet” in headlines and on second mention, we never use the term and instead spell out “veterinarian” or “veterinary.”



# Items not Covered in AP Style



# Medical and scientific terms

## Medical and scientific terms

### animals

Use “dog” and “horse” instead of “canine” and “equine” when using the words as nouns (except for in a quote)

### avian bornavirus

Do not italicize or capitalize and refer to as ABV on second mention

## CVM-specific terms

### college, program names

For formal uses and on first reference within written pieces, spell out “Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences”—using the ampersand symbol (&) and not the word “and”—followed by CVM in parentheses. On second (and subsequent) mention, use the abbreviation. Despite the addition of the phrase “Biomedical Sciences” to the name of the college, the abbreviation is still CVM.

An acceptable shortened second reference is “Texas A&M Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences.”

“Texas A&M Veterinary Medicine” or “VetMed” (when referring only to the professional program) is acceptable on second reference.

“Texas A&M Biomedical Sciences” or “BIMS” (when referring only to the undergraduate and graduate programs) is acceptable on second reference.

If you are using “college,” whether for internal audiences or on subsequent mention after you have established which college is referenced, do not capitalize college.

When referring to a department within the CVM, on first reference, always use the full name:

Department of...

Large Animal Clinical Sciences (VLCS)

Small Animal Clinical Sciences (VSCS)

Veterinary Integrative Biosciences (VIBS)

Veterinary Pathobiology (VTPB)

Veterinary Physiology & Pharmacology (VTPP)

On second mention, you may use just the abbreviation. Don’t use any other abbreviated or colloquial way of naming the departments.

Try to avoid terms like “professor of pathology” and instead name the department the professor is in.

### VMTH names

The name of our hospital is the “Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital” and the acceptable abbreviation is “VMTH.” When communicating about the Large Animal and Small Animal sections of the VMTH, please refer to them as the “Large Animal Hospital” (LAH) and the “Small Animal Hospital” (SAH). (Please note that the word “hospital” is correct, while the word “clinic” is not.)

### Carl B. King Dean of Veterinary Medicine

The first mention of someone who is/was the Carl B. King Dean of Veterinary Medicine should be as follows: “Dr. [First name][Last name], the former Carl B. King Dean of Veterinary Medicine.” Capitalize everything except “the former” and “of.”

Dr. Green is always “Dr. Eleanor M. Green, the Carl B. King Dean of Veterinary Medicine” on first mention unless there is a very good reason to refer to her as something else. The “the” helps her title be less confusing to people. On second and subsequent mention, refer to her as “Green.”

## A&M-specific terms

When referencing the A&M System, use “The Texas A&M University System” on first reference (with a capital “T” in “the”) and “the A&M System” or “Texas A&M System” on second mention. In publications for internal audiences, the word “system” can be used alone on second mention. Lowercase “system” unless beginning a sentence. Do not put a space between the letters and the ampersand (i.e.,



## A&M-specific terms

Institution	Preferred Abbreviation
Texas A&M University	Texas A&M
Texas A&M University at Galveston	TAMUG
Texas A&M University at Qatar	Texas A&M at Qatar
Prairie View A&M University	PVAMU
Texas A&M University-Commerce	A&M-Commerce
Tarleton State University	Tarleton
West Texas A&M University	WTAMU
Texas A&M University-Kingsville	Texas A&M-Kingsville
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi	A&M-Corpus Christi
Texas A&M International University	TAMIU
Texas A&M University-Texarkana	A&M-Texarkana
Texas A&M University-Central Texas	A&M-Central Texas
Texas A&M University-San Antonio	A&M-San Antonio
Texas A&M AgriLife Research	AgriLife Research
Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station	TEES
Texas A&M Forest Service	TFS
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service	AgriLife Extension
Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service	TEEX
Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory	TVMDL
Texas A&M Transportation Institute	TTI
Texas A&M System Sponsored Research Services	SRS
Texas A&M System Technology Commercialization	STC
Texas A&M Health Science Center (not “Sciences”)	TAMHSC

A & M). On first mention, use “Texas A&M University” NOT “Texas A&M.” “Texas A&M” is the appropriate abbreviated form on second and subsequent mention. Do not EVER use TAMUS or TAMU.

### referencing other A&M System members

When listing other universities, agencies,

and the health science center, always use the institution’s complete name on first reference and its preferred acronym or abbreviation on second mention. (See table at right.)

### referencing A&M System administration

The following are correct references for the A&M System Board of Regents:

# A&M-specific terms

- Board of Regents
- The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents

University System

- Board of Regents of The Texas A&M University System
- the A&M System Board of Regents (on second reference)

- Texas A&M System Board of Regents (on second reference)

Lowercase “board” and “regents” if used separately. (i.e.: At its regularly scheduled meeting, the board discussed the importance of collaboration between A&M System universities and agencies.)

## chairman

Use chairman or chair in references to positions on the Board of Regents, even for female members.

*Examples:*

- Wendy Gramm was chairman of the Committee on Academic and Student Affairs.
- She also was chair of an ad hoc committee.

## referencing specific members of the Board of Regents

Regent first name last name

*Examples:*

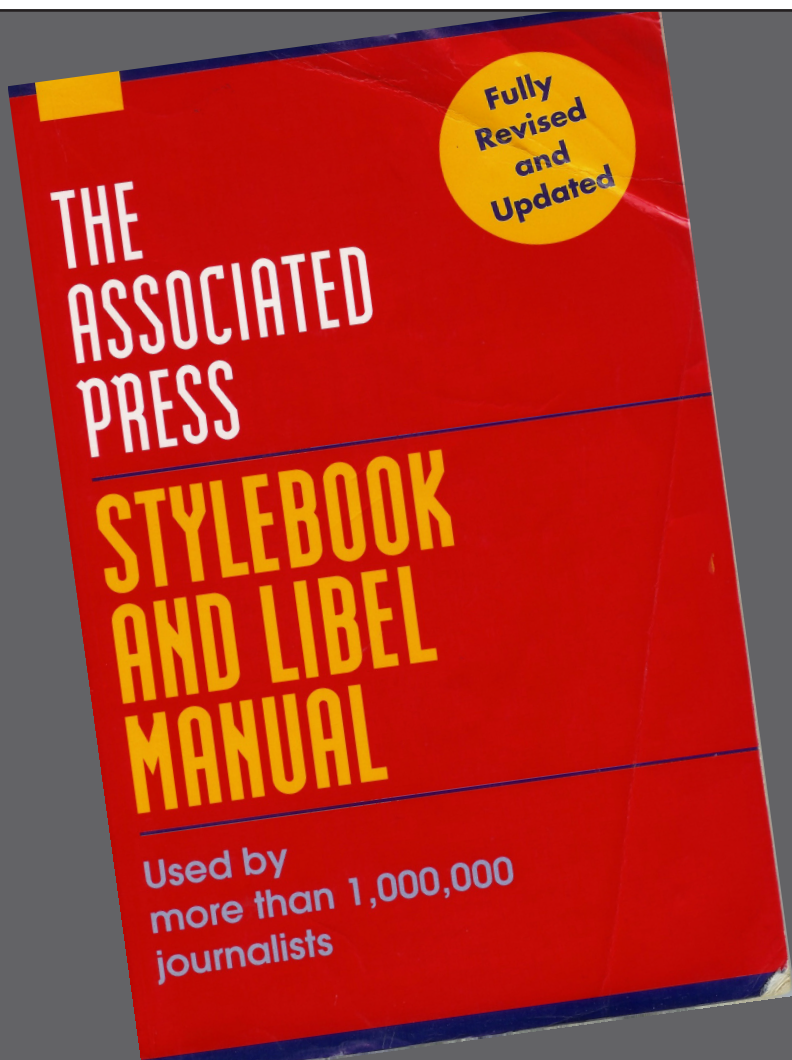
- Regent Joe Smith
- Regent Jane Doe

## referencing system executive officers and offices

The offices in the A&M System building in College Station should be referred to as “System Offices,” and they should be considered a plural noun. *Example:* The System Offices provide support for the members of the A&M System. Capitalize names of offices, such as “Office of the Chancellor” or “Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.”

# Following AP Style

*(Used here as a reminder)*



# Abbreviations and acronyms

## Abbreviations and acronyms

### entities

Never abbreviate university, department, or association. In general, do not use abbreviations or acronyms that the reader would not quickly recognize. The first mention of organizations, firms, agencies, groups, etc., should be spelled out. Place the acronym or abbreviation in parentheses immediately after the expanded version of the term and then use the acronym thereafter. *Example:* “College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences (CVM).

### common abbreviations

Abbreviations of degrees, expressions of time, and names of countries take periods with no space between the elements. *Examples:* M.F.A., a.m., U.K.

### initials

To prevent awkward line breaks, do not put a space between initials used as a first name. However, do use periods. *Example:* B.J. Crain.

### periods & apostrophes

Most abbreviations are spelled without periods: CFO, CIA. Add an “s” but no apostrophe to plural forms of abbreviations. *Example:* The committee was made up of CEOs and CFOs.

### in titles

If the title of the article includes an abbreviation, define it in the article as soon as possible.

### legislation

Refer to bills as House Bill 1 or Senate Bill 1 on first mention, then as H.B. 1 or S.B. 1 (periods but no space between the letters, then a space between the letters and the number).

### “example”

Use “for example” or “such as” instead of “e.g.”

## Academic degrees and titles

Readers may not be familiar with academic degrees. It usually is better to use a phrase instead of an abbreviation.

### doctorate

Use “doctoral” as an adjective and “doctorate” as a noun. *Example:* John Jones, who has a doctorate in psychology, said the study was flawed.

### baccalaureate

In most cases, the less formal bachelor’s degree is preferred.

### use of apostrophe

Apostrophes should be used with degree names: bachelor’s degree, master’s degree, and so on. (Do not just say “...completed his masters.”)

### capitalization

Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts, Doctor of Philosophy, and so on.

### abbreviations

Use B.A., B.S., M.A., M.S., and Ph.D. (with no spaces between letters) only when needed to identify many individuals by degree on first reference or if usage would make the preferred form cumbersome. Spell out all others. Use these only after the person’s full name, and set the abbreviation off by commas. *Example:* John Wimberly, Ph.D., is president of the National Skydiving Association.

### adjunct

Adjunct refers to a temporary faculty appointment; use lowercase, unless used as a title preceding a name.

### extension agent

Uppercase extension agent when used as a title before a name. In other uses, uppercase Extension (because it refers to the agency name) and lowercase agent. *Example:* Extension Agent Tasha Boggs is a 2005 graduate of Tarleton State University. She attended the annual meeting of all Extension agents in College Station.



# Apostrophes

## (Other) Academic terminology

### **adviser**

Use the spelling that ends in -er (not advisor) unless the other spelling is part of an official title.

### **alumnus, alumna, alumni, alumnae:**

Alumnus (alumni in the plural) refers to a man who has graduated from a school. Alumna (alumnae in the plural, but rarely used) refers to a woman who has graduated from a school. Alumni refers to a group of men and women. In general, use “former students” or “graduates” rather than using “alumni.”

When referring to an alumnus in text, include the last two digits of his or her class year after the name with an apostrophe. (See *apostrophes* entry.)

When referring to an alumnus with multiple degrees, list only the undergraduate degree unless the person has a DVM from A&M, in which case list both the undergraduate degree year and the year of the DVM with the undergraduate degree first. If the person has two degrees from A&M, neither of which are a bachelor's or a DVM, list only the most recent year. When referring to a couple who are both alumni of the same university, include the last two digits of the class year with an apostrophe after each person's name.

In our publications, we assume the university in question is Texas A&M, so unless otherwise specified, only put the year of degrees obtained at A&M.

### **credit hours**

Use numerals to refer to credit hours. (*Example: 3 credit hours*)

### **emeritus/emerita/emeritae/emeriti**

An honorary title bestowed on select retired faculty members, use emeritus when referring to men, and emerita for women. Emeritae is the plural feminine form; emeriti is plural for a

group of men, or a group of men and women.

### **grade point average/GPA**

GPA is an acceptable abbreviation in all references.

### **grade point ratio/GPR**

GPR is an acceptable abbreviation in all references.

### **grades**

Use a capital letter when referring to a grade. When pluralizing, use an apostrophe before the s. *Example: She made all A's last year.*

### **graduate program**

Do not use “graduate level program.”

### **faculty**

When used as a collective noun, faculty is singular. *Example: The faculty at Texas A&M International University is known for preparing students for graduate school.*

### **international students**

This phrase is preferred over foreign students.

### **matriculate**

Matriculate means to enroll, not to graduate. Use this term sparingly in external communications since many readers outside academia may not be familiar with the term.

### **work-study**

Lowercase and hyphenate.

## Apostrophes

### **apostrophes**

When using a serif font, make sure that the ball of the apostrophe is at the top, even at the beginning of a word or number. For example:

- She was in the class of '78
- We danced 'til the cows came home

### **apostrophes that indicate ownership**

Use a possessive form after only the last

# Apostrophes

word if ownership is joint:

- Fred and Sylvia's apartment (indicating that they share the apartment)

Use a possessive form after both words if the objects are individually owned:

- Fred's and Sylvia's books (indicating that some books in question belong to Fred, others to Sylvia)

## Capitalization

### general rules

Capitalize the beginning of a new full quote.

Capitalize official names; do not capitalize unofficial, informal, shortened, or generic names.

Do not capitalize in phrases such as the center, the institute, or the recently renovated museum.

Capitalize names of celebrations, such as Founders Day.

Do not capitalize seasons, semesters, or academic periods. (Spring Break is an exception.)

Capitalize if referring to a specific department or other academic unit by its full proper name. Otherwise, use lower case.

*Examples:*

- The College of Engineering, but the engineering school
- Texas Task Force 1, but the task force
- Dr. Ballard will teach the Philosophy and History of Adult Education class next semester. He will teach advanced geology.
- She enrolled in fall 2005 but decided to postpone graduate school after she won the lottery.
- The Department of Veterinary Physiology & Pharmacology hosts this seminar annually.
- The veterinary biosciences department is known for its diverse curriculum.
- The CVM Large Animal Hospital saw the giraffe for treatment. He was released from the hospital the next day.

### capitalization of titles (*see also: academic titles*)

Lowercase and spell out titles when not used with an individual's name. *Example:* The dean is the chair of the admissions committee.

Capitalize and spell out when a title precedes a name. *Example:* Professor Jane Smith is the chair of admissions committee.

### capitalization of committee names

Capitalize the full, proper names of committees. *Example:* The Academic Affairs Committee will meet tomorrow.

### capitalization of course names or program names

Capitalize specific names of programs or courses but not the general names. When talking about the One Health Initiative, capitalize all three words. *Example:* The master's program in Science and Technology Journalism, but the science journalism program

### capitalization of disease names

When a disease is known by the name of a person identified with it, capitalize only the individual's name.

*Example 1:* There has much progress in recent research on Alzheimer's disease.

*Example 2:* The protein may play an important role in Parkinson's disease.

Do not capitalize arthritis, emphysema, leukemia, migraine, pneumonia, etc.

### capitalization of organism names

In scientific or biological names, capitalize the genus name for the class of plant or animal and lowercase the species that follows: *Examples:* *Homo sapiens*, *Tyrannosaurus rex*. In second references, use the abbreviated form: *P. borealis*, *T. rex*.

### capitalization of legislative terms

Capitalize in all references to a particular legislative body, such as the Texas Legislature. Do not capitalize when it is used as a generic term.

*Examples:*

- The law-making body in a democracy is called a legislature.
- That is a legislative matter, not a judicial one.

## capitalize these words

- Internet (Use Internet instead of ‘Net or the Net.)
- Western

## do not capitalize these words and phrases

- commencement
- kindergarten
- honorary membership
- postdoctoral fellowship
- names of subjects or disciplines  
(*Example: theriogenology*)
- veterinary medicine program
- vet school
- unofficial names of laboratories

## Collective nouns

For the most part, American English considers these words (class, committee, crowd, family, group, herd, jury, orchestra, team) as singular and uses singular verbs and the pronoun “it.”

### proper nouns

Many singular names take singular verbs:

- Coldplay is on tour.
- Boston is favored in the playoffs.
- Stanford is in the NCAA Tournament.

But some proper names that are plural in form take a singular verb:

- Brooks Brothers is holding a sale.

Team names and musical group names that are plural take plural verbs.

- The Yankees are in first place.
- The Jonas Brothers are popular.

Team or group names with no plural forms also take plural verbs:

- The Miami Heat are battling for third place.

## plural in form

Some words that are plural in form become collective nouns and take singular verbs when the group or quantity is regarded as a unit.

- A thousand bushels is a good yield. (A unit.)
- A thousand bushels were created. (Individual items.)
- The data is sound. (A unit.)
- The data have been carefully collected. (Individual items.)

## Commas

### essential and nonessential phrases and clauses

A nonessential clause must be set off by commas. An essential clause must not be set off from the rest of a sentence by commas.

- Essential: We saw the award-winning movie “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest.” (No comma, because many movies have won awards, and without the name of the movie the reader would not know which movie was meant.)

- Nonessential: We saw the 1975 winner of the Academy Award competition for best picture, “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest.” (Only one movie won the award. The name is informative, but even without the name no other movie could be meant.)

- Essential: The paper was published in the journal Nature. (No comma, because there are many journals.)

- Essential: She studies the presence of the parasite Eimeria in the Aransas- Wood Buffalo population. (There are many parasites.)

- Essential: They ate dinner with their daughter Julie. (Because they have more than one daughter, the inclusion of Julie’s name is critical if the reader is to know which daughter

# Commas

is meant.)

- Nonessential: They ate dinner with their daughter Julie and her husband, David. (Julie has only one husband. If the phrase read and her husband David, it would suggest that she had more than one husband.)

## descriptive words

Do not confuse punctuation rules for nonessential clauses with the correct punctuation when a nonessential word is used as a descriptive adjective. The distinguishing clue often is the lack of an article or pronoun:

- Julie and husband Jeff went shopping. Julie and her husband, Jeff, went shopping.
- Company Chairman Henry Ford II made the announcement. The company chairman, Henry Ford II, made the announcement.

## including, like, such as

Use a comma before “including,” “like,” or “such as” if the sentence would be complete without the part that follows. No comma is used before “such as” or “including” when a sentence wouldn’t make sense without the words that follow. In other words, the “such as” or “including” phrase is essential to the idea, and therefore does not have commas.

## that, which

Use “that” and “which” in referring to inanimate objects and to animals without a name. If you can drop the clause and not lose the meaning of the sentence, use which; otherwise, use that. In other words:

Use “that” for essential clauses, important to the meaning of a sentence, and without commas:

- I remember the day that we met.

Use “which” for nonessential clauses, where the pronoun is less necessary, and use commas:

- The team, which finished last a year ago, is in first place.

## subordinate clauses

When there is a subordinate clause at the beginning of a sentence followed by a subordi-

nating conjunction (examples of subordinating conjunctions include because, although, while, and if) there needs to be a comma after the end of the clause. However, don’t put a comma after the main clause when a dependent (subordinate) clause follows it (except for cases of extreme contrast).

- While I was getting more soda and popcorn, I missed a really important part of the movie. (Subordinate clause at the beginning of the sentence).
- I missed a really important part of the movie while I was getting more soda and popcorn. (Subordinate clause at the end of the sentence).
- She was still quite upset, although she had won the Oscar. (This comma use is correct because it is an example of extreme contrast.)

## do use commas

- TO SEPARATE A SERIES OF ADJECTIVES EQUAL IN RANK. If the commas could be replaced by the word and without changing the sense, the adjectives are equal:
  - a thoughtful, precise manner
  - a dark, dangerous street
- WITH INTRODUCTORY CLAUSES AND PHRASES
  - When he had tired of the mad pace of New York, he moved to Dubuque.
- BEFORE COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS (FANBOYS: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) that join two independent clauses that could stand apart as separate sentences
  - She was glad she had looked, for a man was approaching the house.
  - We are visiting Washington, and we also plan a side trip to Williamsburg.
  - We visited Washington, and our senator greeted us personally.
- TO SET OFF SOMEONE’S AGE
  - Maude Findlay, 48, was present.
- WITH YES AND NO
  - Yes, I will be there.
- IN DIRECT ADDRESS



# Compound words

- Mother, I will be home late.
- No, sir, I did not take it.

• **SEPARATING SIMILAR WORDS:** Use a comma to separate duplicated words that otherwise would be confusing

- What the problem is, is not clear.

• **IN LARGE FIGURES:** Use a comma for most figures greater than 999. The major exceptions are street addresses (1234 Main St.), broadcast frequencies (1460 kilohertz), room numbers, serial numbers, telephone numbers, and years (1876).

## do not use commas

- **WHEN THE SUBJECT OF THE TWO CLAUSES IS THE SAME AND IS NOT REPEATED IN THE SECOND**
  - We are visiting Washington and plan to see the White House.
- **AT THE START OF AN INDIRECT OR PARTIAL QUOTATION**
  - He said the victory put him “firmly on the road to a first-ballot nomination.”
- **BEFORE “BECAUSE”** unless you need the comma to prevent confusion because your sentence could have two meanings

## Composition titles

Use quotation marks around the titles of books, plays, poems, songs, television shows, movies, operas, works of art, as well as titles of lectures, speeches, book chapters, and magazine or journal articles.

Do not use quotation marks or italics with titles of newspapers, journals, and magazines: the Chicago Tribune, Newsweek, CVM Today.

Do not use quotation marks with descriptive or “generic” titles of musical works: Beethoven’s Violin Concerto, Bach’s Toccata and Fugue in D Minor.

However, use quotation marks for non-musical terms in a title or if the work has a special full title: the “Jupiter” Symphony, “Rhapsody in Blue.”

Capitalize the initial letters of such works,

including the articles a, an, and the, if an article is the first word of the title.

Capitalize prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters in titles.

## compose, comprise, constitute

- **COMPOSE** means to create or put together. The United States is composed of 50 states. The zoo is composed of many animals.
- **COMPRISE** means to contain, to include all or embrace. It is best used only in the active voice, followed by a direct object: The United States comprises 50 states. The zoo comprises many animals.
- **CONSTITUTE**, in the sense of form or make up, may be the best word if neither compose nor comprise seems to fit: Fifty states constitute the United States. A collection of animals can constitute a zoo.
- **USE “INCLUDE” OR “INCLUDING” TO INTRODUCE A SERIES WHEN THE ITEMS THAT FOLLOW ARE ONLY PART OF THE TOTAL.** You needn’t end a sentence like this with “among others” or “and more” or “etc.” because using “include” implies that you’re not providing a complete list.
  - The zoo includes lions and tigers. (No one thinks these are the only animals in the zoo.)

## Compound words

### no space

- backup
- blackout
- blastoff
- breakdown
- breakup
- buildup
- buyout
- countdown
- email
- firsthand
- fundraiser, fundraising

# Compound words

- groundbreaking
- groundwork
- kickball
- pinpoint
- postdoctoral
- underway
- (lab) setup

## use hyphens (see also section on hyphenation)

- break-in
- call-up
- carry-on
- sign-up
- tie-in
- tie-up
- tip-off  
(unless using it as a basketball term)
- trade-in
- trade-off
- walk-in
- walk-up
- work-ups
- write-in

## use spaces

- course work
- health care

## Contractions

Avoid the contractions of he'd and they'd. "He'd" can mean both "he had" and "he would," and "they'd" can mean both "they had" and "they would."

## Dashes

There are two types of dashes (both of which are different than a hyphen; see separate section on hyphenation.)

An **en dash** looks like this – and is longer than a hyphen but shorter than an **em dash** (which looks like this —). (The en dash is about as big as an N, an em dash an M, hence the names.)

## en dash

An en dash is used for showing ranges of numbers, especially time periods (3:00–6:00 p.m.; May–June; November 1–5, 2014).

*For example, use two en dashes in this sentence:* The temperature range in summer is 80–100 degrees, and people ages 60–80 are most likely to get heat stroke.

Microsoft Word will auto-insert an en dash when you write "60 - 80": a hyphen with a space on each side (you have to go back and delete the spaces).

## em dash

An em dash is used in running text like parentheses or a semicolon, or to offset a point for emphasis. *Example:* The caramel-macadamia brownies—which she made from scratch—were still warm when I arrived.

In Microsoft Word, type "scratch--were" (two hyphens together) and then space, and Word will auto correct.

## Dates (Also refer to corresponding checklist)

The order for writing when and where is time, day (date), and place. When referring to month and year, add a comma after the year unless it ends the sentence. However, do not add a comma following the month unless a date is used.

*Examples:*

- Your memo of July 28, 2005, summarized the issue perfectly.
- She graduated in May 2002.
- After three years, she started to consider Stephenville, Texas, home.

## months

Capitalize the names of months in all uses. When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate only Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., and Dec. Spell out when using a month alone or a year, but no specific date. When a phrase lists only a month and a year, do not separate

# Hyphenation

the year with commas. When a phrase refers to a month, day, and year, set off the year with commas.

*Examples:*

- The surgery took place on Jan. 17, 2011.
- The renovated building is scheduled to reopen in September 2013.

## years

In most cases, use the full four digits. Occasionally, the use of only the last two digits is preferred.

Do not use an apostrophe to indicate spans of decades or centuries.

Do not capitalize “fiscal year” when spelled out. When abbreviated, capitalize and put a space between FY and the year.

When referring to an Aggie alumnus (a graduate of Texas A&M University) in text, include the last two digits of his or her class year after the name with an apostrophe before the digits—for more information, see “alumnus” and “apostrophes” entries above.

*Examples:*

- Enrollment for fall 2011 rose sharply.
- He graduated in the 1980s.
- The Legislature is working on appropriations for the 2005–2006 biennium.
- We have plenty of travel money for FY 2006.
- The banner read, “The Class of ‘72 welcomes you to Corpus Christi.”
- She planned to give all of her lottery winnings to the university in fiscal year 2006.
- The university’s FY 2012 budget will reflect her generous donation.
- Mays Business School is the namesake of Lowry Mays ‘57.
- “The campus has changed since I was a student,” said John O’Reilly ‘44, ‘46 (DVM).
- Marvin ‘70 and Marlene Finkelstein Smith ‘70

## Headlines/Story titles

Use present tense in headlines to indicate

events in the past and use the word “to” for indicating events in the future.

*Example 1 (to indicate past event):* Vet students receive scholarships

*Example 2 (to indicate future event):* Vet students to receive scholarships

If the title or headline of the article has an abbreviation, define it in the article as soon as possible.

Use numerals for all numbers and single quotes for quotation marks.

In press releases, only the first word and proper nouns of the headlines are capitalized.

Headlines need to be a complete sentence, with a subject and a verb.

In feature stories in CVM Today, designers may play with the capitalization and sentence structure of story titles.

## Hyphenation

A hyphen looks like this - (a minus sign), and is different than a dash. A soft hyphen is when a word breaks across lines.

Do not divide a proper name at the end of a line using a soft hyphen.

## compound modifiers

In general, hyphenate compound modifiers only if used as an adjective to precede nouns. The same word might be hyphenated when used as an adjective but not when used as a noun. See also section on compound words.

*Examples:*

- run-down (adj.) but rundown (n.)
- take-out (adj.) but takeout (n.)
- wake-up (adj.) but wake up when used as a verb
- washed-up (adj.) but washed up when used as a verb, such as “he washed up on the shore of a deserted island”
- worn-out (adj.)
- hands-off (adj.)
- head-on (adj., adv.)
- far-off (adj.)

# Hyphenation

- large-scale plant
- long-term idea
- under-investigated avenues
- late-stage cancers
- first-hand knowledge
- land-grant university  
(used as an adjective)
- much-needed time off
- hand-painted clay forms
- state-of-the-art laboratories
- world-renowned scientists
- hands-on experience
- internal-auditing classes
- real-world experience
- question-and-answer session
- five-year grant
- 40-year career
- 45-minute drive
- The incubation step in the analysis is a day-long process. BUT: The incubation period takes all day.

## Do NOT hyphenate these phrases

- One Health

## -wide

Do not hyphenate systemwide when referring to the A&M System. Similarly, do not hyphenate statewide or nationwide. Hyphenate if the word preceding -wide is capitalized.

*Example:* His achievements once were known only systemwide; today they are known Texas-wide.

## Italicization

Generally, italicize all generic and specific Latin names of plants and animals.

There is no need to italicize disease names. However, you may italicize when introducing or defining terms, especially technical terms or those used in an unusual or different way.

## algebraic symbols (*constants and variables*)

These symbols may be italicized. *Example:* “The solution is  $x = 2$ .”

## symbols for physical quantities and mathematical constants

These symbols may be italicized. *Example:* “The speed of light,  $c$ , is approximately equal to  $3.00 \times 10^8$  m/s.”

## Lists

In general, separate items in a list using a comma, NOT a semi-colon.

Exceptions are as follows: If items in a list have commas within them, separate items using semi-colons.

*Example:* The names of this year’s awardees are as follows: Jane Smith, an undergraduate student; John Smith, a graduate assistant in the biology department; Jack Smith, postdoctoral fellow at the medical center.

In a bulleted list, capitalize the first word following the bullet. Use periods, not semicolons, at the end of each bulleted item, whether it is a full sentence or a phrase.

When mentioning items in a list (for example, award recipients), present them in a logical sequence—such as alphabetical or numerical—if possible.

## Numbers (*see AP stylebook for more detail*)

Generally, spell out whole numbers below 10; use figures for 10 and above. Do so even when writing a series or a range of numbers or when different numbers appear in a hyphenated word.

*Examples:*

- There were three mice, two dogs, and 18 cats at the imaging center.
- Each cage houses approximately five to 15 rats.
- The 45-minute procedure was successful.

## roman numerals

They may be used for wars and to establish personal sequence for people and animals: World War I, King George V, Reveille XIII. Also for certain legislative acts (Title IX). Oth-



# Photo captions

erwise, use sparingly.

## ordinal numbers

For ordinal numbers, spell out the first through ninth when they indicate sequence in time or location.

*Examples:*

- The second student also received the scholarship.
- They celebrated the 25th anniversary of the clinic.

## other examples of places where figures should be used

Academic course numbers: Philosophy 209

Ages: Always use figures unless beginning a sentence. *Examples:*

- The 19-year-old student took graduate-level courses.
- The student, who switched his major 11 times, is 24 years old.

- 30-
  - The dean is in his 50s. (No apostrophe)
- Planes, ships and spacecraft designations:

B-2 bomber, Queen Elizabeth 2, QE2, Apollo 9, Viking 2

*An exception:* Air Force One, the president's plane. Use Roman numerals if they are part of the official designation: Titan I, Titan II.

Court decisions: The Supreme Court ruled 5-4

Court and political districts: 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals

Decimals, percentages and fractions with numbers larger than 1

Highway designations: Interstate 5

Mathematical usage: Multiply by 4, divide by 6.

Military ranks, used as titles with names, military terms and weapons

Millions, billions, trillions: Use a figure-word combination. 1 million people; \$2 billion

Rank: He was my No. 1 choice.

Units of measure (including tablespoons, miles, feet, inches, miles per hour, hours, de-

grees of temperature, etc.): Always use figures when preceding a unit of measure.

- Monetary units: 5 cents, \$5 bill, 8 euros, 4 pounds.
- Odds, proportions and ratios: 9-1 long-shot; 3 parts cement to 1 part water
- Sequential designations: Page 1, Page 20A. They were out of sizes 4 and 5; magnitude 6 earthquake; Rooms 3 and 4; Chapter 2; line 1 but first line; Act 3, Scene 4, but third act, fourth scene; Game 1, but best of seven.

## when to spell out numbers

At the start of a sentence (The only exception is years: 1992 was a very good year.)

In indefinite and casual uses: Thanks a million. He walked a quarter of a mile.

In fanciful usage or proper names: Chicago Seven, Fab Four, Big Three automakers

In formal language, rhetorical quotations and figures of speech: "Fourscore and seven years ago ..." Twelve Apostles, Ten Commandments, high-five, Day One.

## addresses

Use figures for house numbers, but spell out numbered streets nine and under: 5 Sixth Ave.; 3012 50th St.; No. 10 Downing St. Use the abbreviations Ave., Blvd. and St. only with a numbered address: 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. Spell them out and capitalize without a number: Pennsylvania Avenue.

## Photo captions

• A photo credit should not end with a period.

*Example:* Photo by John Smith

• Employ parallelism when mentioning a number of people and their titles in a caption.

• Use "a" NOT "the" when the same award (or title or other terms) is given to multiple people.

*Example:* Jane Smith receives a Business Communicator Award.

• Don't use quotes when mentioning the name of the award.

# Photo captions

*Example:* Dr. John Smith received the 2010 Continuing Educator of the Year Award.

## Places

### city/county/state/federal

Capitalize when referring to a governmental entity, but not when referring to geographical areas or systems/theories of government.

*Examples:*

- The city is seeking federal aid to help with rebuilding costs.
- The Brazos County Commissioners Court meets on the first Tuesday of each month.
- The current State budget is the largest in history.
- The student is from the state of Virginia.
- The Federal government is not always a supporter of the federal system.

### state of Texas

No matter how great we think Texas may be, do not use “State of Texas!” It is “state of Texas.”

### regarding the term “United States”

Spell out “United States” when used as a noun. When using the term as an adjective, abbreviate to “U.S.” (using periods after both the letters).

*Examples:*

- A number of veterinary colleges in the United States offer these courses.
- The U.S. government encourages these grant applications.

### state abbreviations

Spell out state names in the body of stories. Use state abbreviations (above right) only in datelines, lists, tabular material, short-form identification of political party affiliation, photo captions, and credit lines. Note that Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas, and Utah are never abbreviated. No state name is necessary in the body of the text at all if it is the same as the dateline.

Do not use the two-letter ZIP code abbreviations

in text. Use the two-letter U.S. Postal Service abbreviations only with full addresses, including ZIP code.

Place a comma between the city and the state name, and another comma after the state name, unless ending a sentence.

*Example:* The imaging center located in College Station, Texas, has a group of dedicated specialists working around the clock.

## cities

The following cities may be used without state names.

- Atlanta
- Baltimore
- Boston
- Chicago
- Cincinnati
- Cleveland
- Dallas
- Denver
- Detroit
- Honolulu
- Houston
- Indianapolis
- Las Vegas
- Los Angeles
- Miami
- Milwaukee
- Minneapolis
- New Orleans
- New York City
- Oklahoma City
- Philadelphia
- Phoenix
- Pittsburgh
- St. Louis
- Salt Lake City
- San Antonio
- San Diego
- San Francisco
- Seattle

# Quotation marks

Ala.	Ariz.	Ark.	Calif.	Colo.
Conn.	Del.	Fla.	Ga.	Ill.
Ind.	Kan.	Ky.	La.	Md.
Mass.	Mich.	Miss.	Minn.	Mo.
Mont.	Neb.	Nev.	N.H.	N.J.
N.M.	N.Y.	N.C.	N.D.	Okla.
Ore.	Pa.	R.I.	S.C.	S.D.
Tenn.	Vt.	Va.	Wash.	W.Va.
Wis.	Wyo.			

## Prizes

### Nobel Prize

The correct designations are Nobel Prize in physics (as well as in physiology or medicine). But, it's the Nobel Peace Prize and Nobel Memorial Prize in Economics. A person who has received this prize is a Nobel laureate.

## Quotation marks

### for direct quotations

Use quotation marks to surround the exact words of a speaker or writer when reported in a story.

*Examples:*

- "I have no intention of staying," he replied.
- "I do not object," he said, "to the tenor of the report."
- Franklin said, "A penny saved is a penny earned."
- A speculator said the practice is "too conservative for inflationary times."

### introducing direct quotes

Use a comma to introduce a complete one-sentence quotation within a paragraph: Wallace said, "She spent six months in Argentina and came back speaking English with a Spanish accent." But use a colon to introduce quotations of more than one sentence.

### running quotations

If a full paragraph of quoted material is followed by a paragraph that continues the quotation, do not put close-quote marks at the end of the first paragraph. Do, however, put open-quote marks at the start of the second paragraph. Continue in this fashion for any succeeding paragraphs, using close-quote marks only at the end of the quoted material.

If a paragraph does not start with quotation marks but ends with a quotation that is continued in the next paragraph, do not use close-quote marks at the end of the introductory paragraph if the quoted material constitutes a full sentence. Use close-quote marks, however, if the quoted material does not constitute a full sentence.

*Examples:*

- He said, "I am shocked and horrified by the incident."  
"I am so horrified, in fact, that I will ask for the death penalty."
- He said he was "shocked and horrified by the incident."  
"I am so horrified, in fact, that I will ask for the death penalty," he said.

### attribution of quotes

Use a comma instead of a period at the end of a quote that is followed by attribution: "The study was very effective," Dr. Smith said.

Do not use a comma, however, if the quoted statement ends with a question mark or exclamation point: "Why should I?" he asked.

Quotes should be attributed as "Doe said" unless the person's identification is long, in which case "said" can be first: "said Jane Doe, the assistant to the dean of the Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences."

### dialogue or conversation

Each person's words, no matter how brief, are placed in a separate paragraph, with quotation marks at the beginning and the end of each person's speech:

# Quotation marks

“Will you go?”

“Yes.”

“When?”

“Thursday.”

## not in q-and-a

Quotation marks are not required in formats that identify questions and answers by Q: and A:.

## not in texts

Quotation marks are not required in full texts, condensed texts or textual excerpts.

## irony

Put quotation marks around a word or words used in an ironical sense: The “debate” turned into a free-for-all.

## unfamiliar terms

A word or words being introduced to readers may be placed in quotation marks on first reference:

Broadcast frequencies are measured in “kilohertz.”

Do not put subsequent references to kilohertz in quotation marks.

## avoid unnecessary fragments

Do not use quotation marks to report a few ordinary words that a speaker or writer has used:

*Wrong:* The senator said he would “go home to Michigan” if he lost the election.

*Right:* The senator said he would go home to Michigan if he lost the election.

## partial quotes

When a partial quote is used, do not put quotation marks around words that the speaker could not have used.

Suppose the individual said, “I am horrified at your slovenly manners.”

*Wrong:* She said she “was horrified at their slovenly manners.”

*Right:* She said she was horrified at their “slovenly manners.”

Better when practical: Use the full quote.

## quotes within quotes

Alternate between double quotation marks (“or”) and single marks (‘or’):

She said, “I quote from his letter, ‘I agree with Kipling that “the female of the species is more deadly than the male,” but the phenomenon is not an unchangeable law of nature,’ a remark he did not explain.”

Use three marks together if two quoted elements end at the same time:

She said, “He told me, ‘I love you.’”

*(NOTE: Local style should ensure some differentiation between the single and double quotation marks, either with a “thin” space or by different typography, if not computer-programmed.)*

## placement with other punctuation

Follow these long-established printers’ rules:

- The period and the comma always go within the quotation marks.
- The dash, the semicolon, the question mark and the exclamation point go within the quotation marks when they apply to the quoted matter only. They go outside when they apply to the whole sentence.

## Spacing

Always use only one space between sentences.

## Telephone numbers

Be consistent with usage throughout a document, however you choose to write the number.

- (979) 555-0000
- 979-555-0000
- 979.555.0000 (preferred by Texas A&M University’s Marketing and Communications Department)

## Titles

On first mention, use the person’s full first and last name and title. On later mentions, use just the last name without the title unless a title is needed for clarity. (For example, if you are

# Word placement

talking about a husband and wife in the article, you could say “Mr. Smith” did this, but “Dr. Smith” did that.)

Capitalize a person’s title when it precedes the name. Lowercase and spell out titles when it follows a name or stands by itself. Very long titles are more readable when placed after a name.

*Examples:*

- President Ray M. Keck III
- Governor John Doe Jr. attended the game with his father, John Doe Sr.
- John Sharp, chancellor of The Texas A&M University System, spoke at graduation.
- The president of the faculty senate was late, but the chairman of the Board of Regents was on time.
- The dean provided a list of students.
- The graduate assistant taught a class.
- The chancellor will speak today at noon.
- Terry Dickson, vice president for business and administration, nominated the work-study student for a national award.

Refer to both men and women by their first and last name: Susan Smith or Robert Smith.

## courtesy titles

Use the courtesy titles Mr., Miss, Ms., or Mrs. only in direct quotations or other special situations.

Use “Dr.” on first reference as a formal title before the name of an individual who holds a doctorate in a medical field of study.

If appropriate in the text, “Dr.” also may be used on first reference before the names of individuals who hold other types of doctoral degrees. Since most readers identify “Dr.” only with physicians, make sure that the individual’s specialty is mentioned in the first or second reference. Do not use “Dr.” on subsequent references, but rather, use the individual’s last name.

*However, if upon approval of a story, a referenced subject insists on the use of “Dr.” on second and subsequent references, add courtesy*

*titles before all last names within the story or piece (program, etc.) for consistency.*

Do not use “Dr.” before the names of people who hold only honorary degrees.

Employ parallelism when mentioning a number of people and their titles in a series or a list.

## Trademarks and brands

Generally, try to use generic names (NOT trade names). Do not capitalize them. *Example:* “cotton swabs” NOT “Q-Tips.”

If you must use a trademarked brand name, use the trade name followed by ® or ™ at first mention. After the first mention, use the trade name without the ® or ™.

## Websites

Say “See [www.nameofthewebsite.com](http://www.nameofthewebsite.com)” NOT “Refer to their website at [www.nameofthewebsite.com](http://www.nameofthewebsite.com).”

When mentioning our website, skip the [www](http://www) and just use “[vetmed.tamu.edu](http://vetmed.tamu.edu).”

## 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?

“Whom” is 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?

## Word placement

### only

The word “only” should generally be placed immediately before the word (noun, verb, adjective, etc.) or phrase that it modifies, especially if there’s a chance of being misunderstood.



# Notes





TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

**Veterinary Medicine  
& Biomedical Sciences**

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