

ESL-LIBRARY STYLE GUIDE

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DICTIONARY: *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th edition

STYLE GUIDE: *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th edition

ABBREVIATIONS

- a.m./p.m. not am/pm
- Mon/Tues/Wed not Mon./Tues./Wed.
- Jan/Feb/Mar not Jan./Feb./Mar.
- BA/MA/PhD not B.A./M.A./Ph.D.

CAPITALIZATION

- all titles (lesson, blog post, etc.) should follow headline-style capitalization
 - i.e., everything is capitalized except articles and prepositions, regardless of length
 - hyphenated words with prefixes such as “non” have initial caps on the prefix and the adjoining word (Non-Emergency, Non-Count, etc.)
 - phrasal verb prepositions should be capitalized (Start Off with This)
 - words following a hyphen should be capitalized (Warm-Up)
- capitalization of civil titles only when directly preceding a name (no capitalization with a descriptive phrase)
 - President Obama, the US president
 - former president Clinton
- ocean names are capitalized (South Pacific Ocean)
- page 1 not Page 1 BUT Exercise 1 not exercise 1, Chapter 1 not chapter 1, Unit 1 not unit 1
- sports teams are capitalized but not italicized (the Green Bay Packers, the Packers)
- the not The in running text (a song by the Beatles)
- initial capital letter after colon

DATES

- use superscript (July 21st, 2013)
- BC not B.C., AD not A.D.
 - BC comes after date (35 BC), AD comes before date (AD 1256)
- use en dash between dates for “to” (1956–1964)
- 1960s not 1960’s
- ’60s not 60’s or 60s (watch direction of the apostrophe)
- Mon/Tues/Wed not Mon./Tues./Wed.
- Jan/Feb/Mar not Jan./Feb./Mar.

DIRECTIONS

- not capitalized (west, to the west, western, westward, a westerner)
 - regions are capitalized (the West, the West Coast, Western [for culture])

DISTANCES

- use imperial but have metric in parentheses (It is 14 miles (about 22.5 kilometers) long.)
 - round up or down, but .5 is okay
 - use “about” when rounding off
 - make spelling note on kilometers/kilometres etc. in Teachers’ Notes

EN DASH (–)

- for “to-from” cases (Jan–Mar, 9:00–5:00)
 - no spaces on either side
- for activity titles (Vocabulary Review – Matching)
 - space on either side

EM DASH (—)

- for joining clauses together (where a period or semicolon could be used) (She wondered about him—he wasn’t what he appeared.)
 - no spaces on either side

GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

- place names spelled out (or use common abbreviations with no periods)
 - New York City or NYC
 - United States or US
- ocean names are capitalized (South Pacific Ocean)

HYPHEN (-)

- for compound words (left-handed, in-laws)
- with the prefix mid- (mid-March, mid-1700s)
- for multi-word adjectives before a noun (a well-known artist BUT the artist is well known)

NUMBERS

- one to ten spelled out
- 11 or over use numerical forms
- comma for numbers over one thousand (2,000)
- if a number is the first word in the sentence, it is always spelled out (except in blog post titles)

PERSONAL NAMES AND INITIALS

- initials followed by a period and space (Franklin D. Roosevelt, M. F. K. Fisher)
- names comprised of only initials have no spaces or periods (FDR, MLK)
- Jr. for junior and Sr. for senior, followed by a period but not preceded by a comma (Martin Luther King Jr.)
- capitalization of civil titles only when directly preceding a name (President Obama, the US president)
 - no capitalization with a descriptive phrase (former president Clinton, New York senator Kirsten E. Gillibrand)

POSSESSIVES

- for singular words ending in -s, use 's (Hayes's father)
- for plural words ending in -s, use s' (teachers' notes)

PREFIXES

- non-emergency not nonemergency (use British, not American, spelling in this case to make it easier for students to understand the meaning)
- re-elect not reelect (use British, not American, spelling in this case to make it easier for students to understand the meaning)
 - but redo, reinvent, etc. (some words are always joined; see *Oxford Canadian Dictionary of Current English*)

PUNCTUATION

- one space after period
- use comma not semicolon in all vocabulary definitions (hit – to punch, to strike)
 - BUT use semicolon if definitions are all very long in one exercise (such as Living in English Government lesson: e.g., political party – a group of people with similar political ideas; an organization formed to gain political power)
- no comma before too, either, neither at end of sentence (Me too. / I like movies too.) except for emphasis (You'll have fun and learn a lot, too!)
- comma before though (adv) at end of sentence (I called her. She didn't answer, though.)
- comma after hi, hello (Hi, John.)
- comma after date and place within sentence (He was born on June 14th, 1965, in Dallas, Texas, during a storm.)
- Teachers' Notes not Teacher's Notes or Teachers Notes
- comma after introductory adverb phrases to make it easier for students to see the main clause (However, / In the morning, / In Vancouver,)
- slash (/) used with no space on either side in running text BUT with space on either side for choices in exercises (Bring food and/or something to drink. BUT Circle the odd one out: hot / warm / muggy / cold)

- ellipsis has three dots and no space on either side (Let's see...there are five other books available.)
- no periods for most abbreviations (US not U.S.) except time (a.m. not am) and a.k.a.
- *see also* hyphen, en dash, em dash

SPELLING

- % not percent
- a.k.a. not aka
- anyway not anyways
- bye-bye not bye bye
- coed not co-ed
- cut-up = Adj, cut up = V
- email not e-mail
- gap fill not gap-fill
- good-bye not goodbye
- health care = N, health-care = Adj
- Internet not internet
- non-religious not nonreligious
- okay, not ok or OK or Ok
- oneself not one's self
- postsecondary not post-secondary
- re-elect not reelect
- sister site not sister-site
- thank you not thank-you
- toward not towards
- US not U.S.
- warm-up = N and Adj, warm up = V
- web not Web
- website not Website
- vs. not vs

TIME

- a.m./p.m. not am/pm
- 6:00 not 6 or six o'clock
- 6:00 p.m. not 6 p.m. or six o'clock p.m.

TITLES

- all titles (lesson, blog post, etc.) should follow headline-style capitalization
 - i.e., everything is capitalized except articles, conjunctions, and prepositions, regardless of length
 - hyphenated words with prefixes such as “non” have initial caps on the prefix and the adjoining word (Non-Emergency, Non-Count, etc.)
- song titles enclosed in double quotation marks (“Man in the Mirror” by the Beatles)
- album titles in italics (*Kind of Blue* by Miles Davis)
- book titles in italics (*The Lord of the Rings* by J. R. R. Tolkien)
- movie titles in italics (*Gone with the Wind*)
- artist/author titles in roman (an album by the Beatles, written by Stephen King)
- TV and radio programs and series in italics (*Breaking Bad*)
 - BUT single episodes in roman and double quotation marks (“Blood Money”, an episode of *Breaking Bad*)
- website names in roman (IMDb is a good site for movie ratings.)
 - titled sections, features, or pages of a website in roman and double quotation marks (Google Maps has a great section called “Google Maps Help Center”.)
 - BUT if the website also has a print version, title in italics (*The Chicago Manual of Style Online*)
- sports teams are capitalized but not italicized (the Green Bay Packers, the Packers)