

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

EDITORIAL STYLE GUIDE

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FOREWORD

This University of Miami Editorial Style Guide specifies the University's standards for internal and external written communications. The guide will maintain consistency and accuracy for promotional and informational material—which in turn presents a high-caliber, professional portrayal of the University.

The primary sources used for editorial style for the University should be “The Associated Press Stylebook” and “Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary.” This University of Miami Editorial Style Guide supplements the aforementioned. Sometimes, a listing will supersede an AP rule simply because it works better for our usage and adheres to University policy. This manual is not meant to be comprehensive. However, we hope it helps to maintain a clear and consistent voice for the entire University and foster polished written copy.

The University’s Visual Identity Manual provides guidelines for usage of the official logos, marks, and other elements in the visual identity system, and the Visual Identity for Web and Digital Materials provides essential information for officially branded webpages, mobile apps, and digital signage. All are important tools to reinforce the University’s message and advance its global presence.

How to use this guide

To make the University of Miami Editorial Style Guide easy to navigate, all entries are listed alphabetically. Some are cross-referenced. Additional resources included are:

- A guide on how to use active instead of passive voice.
- A guide for using clear and concise language.
- A guide on how to write good headlines, captions, and cutlines.
- A list of University of Miami schools and colleges.

For additional information, or to submit questions or suggestions, please contact Carol Reynolds-Srot, the university editor, at creynolds-srot@miami.edu or 305-284-4895.

ALPHABETICAL LISTING

abbreviations

In general, abbreviations should be used sparingly or avoided entirely, including the abbreviation *UM*. Never use *U.M.*, *U. of M.*, *UofM*, *U/M*, or *U-M*. Use *University of Miami* or *University*. The *U* is acceptable in certain situations.

Scholarly abbreviations should be used only in footnotes or bibliographies. Abbreviations of parts of a book, article, or series of books should be in lowercase.

- *app.*, *fig.*, *sec.*, *supp.*, *vol.*

Abbreviate familiar governmental divisions, agencies, unions, and associations. Use capital letters, omit periods, and do not insert a space between letters.

- *UNESCO*, *YMCA*

Avoid abbreviations that are unclear or awkward.

- *College of Engineering*, not *CoE*
- *College of Arts and Sciences*, not *A&S* or *CAS*
- *School of Nursing and Health Studies*, not *SONHS*

In some instances, years may be abbreviated by the last two digits preceded by an apostrophe (not the opening single quotation mark). Decades should be written with four numerals and no apostrophe before the pluralizing *s* or spelled out and lowercased. The first through ninth centuries should be spelled out and lowercased; others may use numerals.

- *Class of '81*, not *Class of '81*
- *the twenties* or *the 1920s*, not *the '20s* or *1920's*
- *second century*, *18th century*

Be formal when referring to named units that are part of the University. Many buildings, laboratories, auditoriums, courtyards, endowed chairs, lecture series, etc., are named for individuals, foundations, or corporations whose contributions helped make them possible. Always use the full name on first reference; an official shortened version may be used on second reference, as indicated in the following list.

- *James W. McLamore Plaza* can be *McLamore Plaza*
- *James L. Knight Physics Building* can be *Knight Physics Building*
- *Rosenstiel School of Marine, Atmospheric, and Earth Science* can be *Rosenstiel School*
- *Richard Hausler Endowed Chair* can be *Hausler Chair*
- *Evelyn F. and William L. McKnight Building* can be *McKnight Building*
- *The Jerry Herman Ring Theatre and Alvin Sherman Family Stage* can be *The Jerry Herman Ring Theatre*
- *The Dr. John T. Macdonald Foundation*, on first reference. On second reference, *the foundation* but not the *Macdonald Foundation*.

The only colleges or schools that have approved shortened versions for second reference are the Leonard M. Miller School of Medicine; the Rosenstiel School of Marine, Atmospheric, and Earth Science; the Phillip and Patricia Frost School of Music; and the University of Miami Patti and Allan Herbert Business School. The correct second references are the *Miller School of Medicine* or *Miller School*, *Rosenstiel School*, *Frost School of Music*, and *Miami Herbert Business School*.

- *Rosenstiel School*, not *RSMAS*
- *Frost School of Music*, not *School of Music*
- *Miller School of Medicine* or *Miller School*, not *School of Medicine*
- *Miami Herbert Business School*, not *School of Business*

The approved references for the University's four campuses include:

- *Coral Gables Campus*
- *Medical Campus*
- *Marine Campus*
- *South Campus*

University of Miami athletics teams, faculty and staff members, students, alumni, and all members of the University family are nicknamed *Hurricanes*. *'Canes* can be used instead or on second reference, but it must have a smart apostrophe and the first letter capitalized.

- *Many generations of 'Canes gathered on campus to celebrate Homecoming.*

academic and alumni degrees

Abbreviate and capitalize academic degrees, according to proper editorial style. Use periods and no spaces in abbreviations. Use the degree after the name sparingly, only when it provides more pertinent information or when credentials are necessary (like when alumni are listed in Miami magazine). Note that, unlike AP, we use periods in M.B.A.

- *Ann Smith, B.S.*
- *Margaret Stein, M.B.A.*

Include both degree and the graduation year to indicate University of Miami alumni. Include a space between the degree and year, and use an apostrophe, not a single quote, before the year. When used in a sentence, offset with commas, not parentheses.

- *Ann Smith, M.D. '76, was the guest lecturer at the conference.*
- *Maria Rodriquez, J.D. '01, LL.M. '05*

Also see **capitalizations**.

accreditation

The accreditation statement should appear in material promoting the University and its academic programs. It should be used verbatim as listed.

- The University of Miami is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award bachelor's, master's, educational specialist, and doctoral degrees. For questions about the accreditation of the University of Miami, you may contact the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097, telephone 404-679-4500, or at sacscoc.org.

acronyms

An acronym should follow the term it stands for, and it should be placed in parentheses. The initials can be used alone only after the first reference. Use capital letters, omit periods, and do not insert a space between letters.

- *Cooperative Institute for Marine and Atmospheric Studies (CIMAS)*

addresses

Follow AP's rule for addresses where Ave., Blvd., and St. are abbreviated only with numbered addresses. Always spell out other similar words (drive, road, terrace, alley, circle, etc.). Always use figures for an address number.

- *1540 Corniche Ave.*
- *113 SE Third St.*
- *Turn at the corner of Third Street and Corniche Avenue.*
- *28 Adam Circle*

Do not abbreviate the names of cities, states, or countries in text. An exception is when cities include *St.* as an abbreviation for *Saint*. Spell out state names, unless a state is being listed for mailing purposes (on a postcard or envelope).

- *Miami, Florida*
- *Fort Lauderdale* but *St. Louis*
- *Florida, North Carolina, Georgia*

This style and sequence should be used for addresses:

- *Name of Addressee*
- *Title*
- *College or School*
- *Division or Department*
- *University of Miami*
- *Box Number*
- *Coral Gables, FL ZIP Code*

ZIP codes used with street addresses for delivery of overnight mail and/or packages are as follows:

- *Coral Gables Campus: 33146*
- *Medical Campus: 33136*
- *Marine Campus: 33149*

(Exceptions to the aforementioned apply to business reply mail, which must be prepared according to specifications set by the U.S. Postal Service.)

advisor

Differing from AP style, use "advisor," not "adviser."

a.m., p.m.

Abbreviate and lowercase *a.m.* and *p.m.* Use periods but no spaces. Avoid redundancies, like 8 p.m. this evening.

- *8 a.m.*
- *10:30 p.m.*

Also see **numbers**.

America

Use United States when referring to the United States of America. The use of America usually refers to North America, South America, and Central America.

ampersands

Use an ampersand (&) only when it is part of the correct corporate or organizational title. Never use an ampersand instead of the word *and* in text or in lists.

- *Cherry Bekaert & Holland*
- *Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology*
- *U.S. News & World Report*

apostrophes

No apostrophe is used with dates or when forming plurals of acronyms.

- *1890s, 1920s, 1990s*
- *FTEs, ABCs, CEUs*

When using an apostrophe, be sure to use a smart apostrophe, which has a clockwise curve at the bottom.

- *Patricia's daughter finally got her driver's license.*
Not, *Patricia's daughter finally got her driver's license.*

B.A. not A.B.

The University confers the Bachelor of Arts degree, represented as B.A. and not A.B., when indicating alumni with this degree.

- *John Smith, B.A. '92*

'Canes

See **abbreviations**.

capitalization

Use capitals for the degree title but not for the subject; an exception is when the subject is part of the formal degree title or is a proper noun.

- *Bachelor of Science in physics*
- *Master of Professional Accounting*
- *Doctor of Musical Arts in instrumental performance*
- *Bachelor of Business Administration*
- *Juris Doctor*

No capitals are used when academic degrees are referred to in general terms such as *doctorate*, *bachelor's degree*, or *master's degree*. And it's "doctoral degree" or "doctorate" but not "doctorate degree" or "doctoral."

- *Gina received her bachelor's degree in 1977.*
- *Getting one's doctorate is hard work.*
- *Paolo earned bachelor's and master's degrees in art.*

capitalization and titles

Excessive use of capital letters should be avoided. Capitalize an official name but not part of a name.

- *Department of Chemistry*, but *chemistry department*
- *Faculty Senate*, but *the senate*
- *Commencement Committee*, but *the committee*
- *Board of Trustees*, but *the board*
- *Phillip and Patricia Frost School of Music*, but *the school*
- *Department of Medicine*, but *the department*
- *Diabetes Research Institute*, but *the institute*

Use capital letters for committee names, organization names, endowed chairs, centers, institutes, etc. Always use the full name on first reference; an official shortened version may be used on second reference.

- *M. Minnette Massey Chair in Law* can be *Massey Chair*
- *Bascom Palmer Eye Institute* can be *Bascom Palmer*
- *The Jerry Herman Ring Theatre and Alvin Sherman Family Stage* can be *The Jerry Herman Ring Theatre* (not *Ring Theatre*)
- *L. Austin Weeks Center for Recording and Performance* can be *Weeks Center*
- *Miami Veterans Affairs Medical Center* can be *Miami VA Medical Center* or *Miami VA*

When referring to the University of Miami on second reference, the word *University* is capitalized even when used alone. Do not capitalize *university* when referring to universities in general or to a specific university that is not the University of Miami. Do not capitalize *school* or *college* on second reference, even if it is a University of Miami school or college.

- *Mary Green, a University of Miami graduate, has fond memories of her years at the University. She believes that a private university offers the best education.*
- *The School of Architecture is committed to preserving historic structures. The school is recognized for educating students for success in a range of professional opportunities.*
- *The College of Arts and Sciences has 20 departments. The college is the University's largest academic unit.*

Use capital letters for a course of study or subject only when it is the proper name of the course or when the subject includes a proper noun. No quotation marks are used for course titles.

- *He studies history and English.*
- *History 202*
- *English 215, English and American Literature by Women*
- *She is taking History of Western Civilization.*

Per AP style, *a*, *the*, *but*, and other articles and junction words—as well as prepositions with fewer than four letters—are capitalized only at the beginning or end of a title.

- *Smith presented “An Approach to Urban Revitalization” at the symposium.*
- *The Jerry Herman Ring Theatre will produce “Hamlet.”*
- *The article ran in the Miami Herald.*

In general, capitalize a complete sentence or thought following a colon; lowercase a series or phrase.

- *He provided the following directions: Turn right at the corner, then turn left at the light.*
- *The following classes were listed: mathematics, history, music.*
- *The message was clear: You can't go home again.*

Use capitals for a title preceding a name but not for one following a name. In general, use the person's name first, and follow with the title.

- *President Julio Frenk*
- *Julio Vargas, professor of internal medicine*
- *Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson*
- *Luan Huang, vice president for finance*

Use capitals for named professorships and fellowships. Otherwise, *scholar* and *fellow* are lowercased.

- *Patricia Roberts Harris Fellowship* but *a Harris fellow*

Refer to *Florida* or *the state*; lowercase *state* except when used to denote the official governing body.

- *the Florida Legislature*
- *The state of Florida has a mild climate.*
- *The State of Florida will raise sales taxes.*
- *the state's attorney*

Use capital letters and no apostrophe for Continuing Education Units.

- *Continuing Education Units (CEUs)*

Use lowercase for seasons of the year. Uppercase when tied to a specific academic semester accompanied by a year.

- *spring semester*
- *fall 1997*
- *I think spring and fall are the best seasons.*
- *Fall 2022 semester*
- *Spring 2023 semester*

captions and cutlines

When identifying subjects in photographs, set off locators with commas. Never use parentheses.

- *Ann Smith, left, attended the event.*

Also, see **How to Write Good Headlines, Captions, and Cutlines**, page 23.

cities and states

See **addresses**.

colons

Do not use a colon before a listing when the lead-in ends with a verb. Use a colon before a listing when its preceding clause or words constitute a complete sentence.

- *For additional information, contact University Communications, Newman Alumni Center.*
- *The boss made a promise: hybrid work schedules for everyone.*

commas

Yes, we use the Oxford or serial comma at the University of Miami. Use commas in a series of three or more; a comma should be placed after the next-to-last element in the series.

- *Faculty members represented disciplines that included geography, political science, law, history, and sociology.*

Use a comma between the two independent clauses of a compound sentence. A comma precedes the conjunctions *and*, *but*, *or*, *nor*, *for*, *so*, and *yet* if the second half of the sentence contains its own subject, verb, and object.

- *The Lowe Art Museum is on Stanford Drive, and it contains many interesting examples of Spanish painting.*
but
- *The Rathskeller is on the edge of the lake and is open for the convenience of students.*

Use commas after introductory elements, interjections, and direct addresses.

- *If the research grant is awarded, we will begin at once.*
- *Oh, I have one more question.*
- *In addition, we will write the article.*
- *John, let me see the letter.*

Do not use commas after short, introductory adverbial phrases.

- *Since 1997 I have accrued 30 credits in English.*
- *In May more than 2,500 students graduated from the University.*
- *In 2028 a comet will pass this way again.*

Use a comma between the day and year in dates. Use a comma after the year for dates in sentences.

- *Nov. 7, 1957*
- *She was born Nov. 7, 1957, to a wealthy family in Peru.*
- *In July 1984 I moved to Miami.*

When a city and state or city and country are used in text, use a comma between the two and following the state or country.

- *The University was founded in Coral Gables, Florida, in 1926.*
- *The student chose Paris, France, for summer study.*

No commas are used between month and year or between season and year.

- *April 1983* but *April 21, 1983*
- *fall 1983*

Do not use a comma before Jr. and Sr. when part of an individual's formal name.

- *Michael E. Smith Jr.*
- *Carlos de la Cruz Sr.*

Use a comma in numbers of 1,000 or more.

compose, comprise

Comprise means contain, while compose means make up. Therefore, when describing the elements within an entity, use **is composed of** or **comprises**. Never use the phrase **is comprised of**. These sentences use the phrases correctly:

- The housing complex is composed of apartments, a swimming pool, tennis courts, and a community room.
- The apartment complex comprises 52 units.

computer terminology

Use computer terms properly and consistently. Examples of commonly used terms follow.

- *cyberspace*
- *database*
- *dot-com*
- *download*
- *email*
- *home page*
- *HTML*
- *hyperlink*
- *internet*
- *login (noun)*
- *log in (verb)*
- *online*
- *URL*
- *web*
- *webmaster*
- *webpage*
- *website*
- *World Wide Web*

Use the phrase “log on to” (not “log onto”) to direct readers to a website. While we do not use the complete URL, websites mentioned should be hyperlinked within all online publications.

- *Log on to miami.edu to learn more about the University of Miami.*

or simply say

- *Visit miami.edu to learn more about the University of Miami.*

courtesy titles

Do not use courtesy titles for academic degrees or common titles. *Ted Guntz* not *Mr. Ted Guntz*

- *Sharon Parker* not *Ms. Sharon Parker*

Never use a courtesy title and degree together.

- *John Jones, M.D., presented a paper.*
Not, *Dr. John Jones, M.D., presented a paper.*

We use “Dr.” for medical degrees in all news stories. This follows AP style.

- *Dr. Barth Green has worked in Haiti for decades.*
Not, *Barth Green, M.D., has worked in Haiti for decades.*

disability

Separate the person from the disability and recognize that persons with disabilities have rights, among them the right to privacy.

Treat persons with disabilities with respect in publications and avoid stereotyping persons by occupation or attribute.

As AP states, “Use care and precision, considering the impact of specific words and the terms used by the people you are writing about. When possible, ask people how they want to be described. Avoid writing that implies ableism: the belief that abilities of people who aren’t disabled are superior.”

Doctor/Dr.

We use “Dr.” for medical degrees in all news stories. This follows AP style.

See **courtesy titles**.

doctoral degree or doctorate

Use either of the above degrees but do not use “doctorate degree” or “doctoral”

due to

Use this phrase after a form of the verb to be.

- *The flooding was due to torrential downpours.*
Not, *Due to the torrential downpours, there was flooding.*

ellipsis (...)

Use an **ellipsis** to indicate a missing word or words. It should consist of a space, three dots, and another space.

Do not use ellipses at the beginning or end of direct quotes. Try to avoid using an **ellipsis** as a “trailing off” from a phrase.

- *“She packed three pairs of shoes, five dresses ... and got them all to fit in her suitcase.”*
- *“It is clear to me that I need to give up sweets,” Angela said.*
Not, *“... It is clear to me that I need to give up sweets ... ,” Angela said.*

That said, we should avoid the use of ellipsis whenever possible. This tells the reader something is missing. It makes them question what has been withheld, and wonder why, rather than focus on what is before them in the story.

em (—) and en (-) dashes

The AP stylebook refers to the **em**, or long dash, as just a dash. It is used to indicate a pause in a sentence or set off a series. An **em** dash also is used for attribution at the end of quotations. It can be used instead of bullets in a list, instead of a parenthesis, or to replace a colon. An **em** dash is as wide as the capital letter “M”—hence its name. While the AP puts a space before and after its use of the **em** dash, the University of Miami does not use spaces around the **em** dash.

- *Our alumni—which includes engineers, lawyers, doctors, and teachers—are generous donors.*
- *Dinner was scheduled for 7 p.m.—not 7:59 p.m.*
- *“Who steals my purse, steals trash.” —Shakespeare*

An **en** dash is used to indicate a range in numbers and dates. It is larger than a hyphen and smaller than an **em** dash. The **en** dash is about the width of a capital “N.”

- *1958–2018, 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m., pp. 25–50*
- *We will need 9–12 apples for the pie.*

email

Email is one word, but *e-book*, *e-reader*, and *e-commerce* are hyphenated.

email addresses

Email addresses are in plain text—no underlines and no italics.

emigrant/emigrate

See **immigrant/immigrate**.

faculty

A **faculty** is a collective body of professors or lecturers. When referring to an individual professor or lecturer it should be *faculty member* (singular).

- *The composition teacher is a very popular faculty member.*
- *Faculty members serve on the committee.*
- *The University of Miami has a very experienced faculty.*

Singular: faculty—one group entity; faculty member—one person

Plural: faculties—more than one faculty; faculty members—more than one person (but not the entire group)

farther, further

Farther is distance. **Further** is extension of time or degree.

- *Kelly walked farther into the forest.*
- *Maya will look further into the case of the missing money.*

Use *additional* when referring to information.

- *For additional information, contact University Communications.*

foreign words

Follow AP style: If such a word or phrase is needed, place it in quotation marks and provide an explanation: “ad astra per aspera,” a Latin phrase meaning “to the stars through difficulty.” Italics are not necessary for familiar foreign words like ad hoc, ad lib, in vitro, and cum laude.

freshman

Use the term **first-year student** instead of **freshman** to be more gender inclusive.

front line (n.)/ front-line (adj.)

We follow AP’s style on this word.

fundraising, fundraiser

In University usage, the words **fundraising** and **fundraiser** do not require a hyphen.

- *The job offers fundraising opportunities.*
- *The dean is a good fundraiser.*

gender and sexuality

Broaden diversity

When showcasing the broad diversity of the University community, include not only nationality and race, but also sexual orientations and gender identities.

Abandon the binary

Don’t assume there are only two genders or that family members and relationships are heterosexual. Consider using gender-neutral language.

- *parent* or *caregiver* instead of *mom* or *dad*
- *spouse* or *partner*, not *boyfriend* or *girlfriend*
- *chair* or *chairperson*, not *chairman*
- When referring to the Board of Trustees, it is *chair*, not chairperson

Some people identify their gender as something other than *male* or *female*, so consider using *people of all genders* instead of *men* and *women*. Be sure to ask individuals for the pronouns and terms they prefer; don’t use language based on assumptions.

Always use *sexual orientation* over *sexual preference*.

headlines

Generally, we capitalize the first word and proper nouns only. Also, capitalize the first word after a colon. Use single quotes. Headline styles may differ among University publications. See page **23** for more help with headlines.

hyphens

Use a hyphen between compound modifiers, compound words, or to split a word at the end of a line. Consult the dictionary to confirm hyphenation. In general, avoid the use of hyphens unless the result is awkward or confusing.

- *freelance, cooperate, inpatient, statewide, nonresident, noncredit, nonprofit, biweekly, coauthor, postdoctoral*, but *co-worker*

Consult the dictionary to avoid common spelling errors in compound words.

- *health care* not *healthcare*
- *workplace* not *work place*

Hyphens are used when the base word begins with a capital letter.

- *non-Hispanic*
- *non-American*
- *anti-Semitic*

Never break a hyphenated word in another place.

- *self-knowledge* not *self-knowl-edge*

Do not allow a single letter of a word to stand alone at the beginning or end of a line. Force the entire word to the next line.

- not *E-gyptian*
- not *a-lone*

Hyphenate when the meaning varies with the absence of punctuation.

- *re-cover* varies from *recover*
- *re-create* varies from *recreate*

Use a hyphen for *first-professional* or when referring to levels of residency or enrollment.

- *first-professional degree*
- *second-year resident*
- *third-year law student*

Hyphenate compound adjectives before a noun. Do not hyphenate compound adjectives when the first word ends in *ly*.

- *He is a first-rate golfer.*
- *Her rapidly rising heart rate*, not *her rapidly-rising heart rate*

immigrant/immigrate

We adhere to the AP's style rules. One who enters a country is an immigrant who immigrates into it. And, one who leaves a country is an emigrant who emigrates from it. The term migrant is usually used for people who move within a single country for work. Helpful hint: an "i"mmigrant goes "i"nto a country and an "e"migrant "e"xits a country.

- *Rosalee Hamilton immigrated to the United States when she was a child.*
- *Dawn's family emigrated from their native Jamaica in 1969.*

Leonard M. Miller School of Medicine

See **abbreviations**.

livestream

Use as one word.

magazine and newspaper names

Do not use quotation marks or italics for magazine and newspaper names. Use initial caps, and cap *the* and *magazine* only if the words are part of the official name.

- South Florida Sun Sentinel
- Entertainment Weekly
- The New York Times
- National Geographic Magazine

M.B.A.

Unlike AP, we use periods.

migrant

See **immigrant/immigrate**.

more than vs. over

Use **more than** to refer to an amount. **Over** refers to direction.

- *We have more than 40 full-time staff members.*
- *Zachary saved more than \$5,000 to buy a car.*
- *Duane drove over the coconut in the driveway.*

nondiscrimination statement

The University of Miami's publications should stand up to scrutiny from the perspective of women, minorities, individuals with disabilities, veterans, or any other person whose employment rights are guaranteed by the law. Equal respect and a balanced representation should be given in visual media to gender, race, ethnic group, age, sexual orientation, and ability.

All promotional materials distributed to individuals outside the University community must contain a statement reflecting the University's policy on affirmative action: "An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer."

The following is the University of Miami's nondiscrimination statement. It should appear in material promoting the University's academic and athletic programs.

- *It is the policy of the University of Miami that no person within the jurisdiction thereof shall, on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, veteran status, genetic information, or any other protected factor be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination or harassment (including all forms of sexual harassment and sexual violence) under any program or activity of the University, regardless of whether such program or activity occurs on campus or off campus. Retaliation against an individual who files a complaint of discrimination, opposes a policy/procedure/practice because he/she/they believes it to be discriminatory, or who participates in the investigation of a discrimination complaint, is prohibited.*

numbers

Spell out numbers one through nine except in statistical matter. Use figures for 10 and above. This also applies to ordinal numbers, which should not use superscript.

- *Ninth*
- *10th, not 10th*
- *The first three parking lots will provide spaces for 540 cars.*
- *The new house is 80 percent finished; the interest rate is 9.25 percent.*

If used at the beginning of a sentence, all numbers are spelled out. When possible, avoid beginning a sentence with a number.

- *Thirty-five people attended the seminar.*
- *Fifty percent of the respondents voted in favor of the measure.*
- *Nineteen eighty-four was a very good year.*

Do not abbreviate years in the 21st century.

- *1999–2000, not 1999–00*
- *The new program will commence in fall of 2019.*

Use numbers for parts of a book and for people's ages.

- *For additional data refer to figure 9 and table 2 on page 8.*
- *She is 6 years old.*

Always use numbers for time of day, except noon and midnight. Periods are used in *a.m.* and *p.m.* Avoid redundancy.

- *The meeting is at 9 o'clock in the evening.*
- *The meeting is at 9 p.m.*
- *12 p.m. or noon, not 12 noon*
- *8 p.m., not 8 p.m. in the evening*

When making a reference to time, do not use zeros for the hour in text. An exception may be made when times are used in tabulation.

- *The bus stops here between 3 and 3:30 p.m.*
- *Buses stop running at 9 p.m.*

Spell out decades.

- *the thirties or the 1930s, not the '30s*

Use figures to precede academic credits in catalog course descriptions. Use figures to precede academic credits in text.

- *Beginning French 101*
- *Lecture and Laboratory: 60 hours, 4 credits*

Use figures for phone numbers. Area code is separated by a hyphen, not by parentheses. If an extension is needed, use a comma to separate the main number from the extension, and abbreviate the word.

- 305-284-5600
- 800-555-1212
- 954-444-1000, ext. 123

Also see **telephone numbers**.

In citing percentages or millions of dollars, use the figure followed by percent or *million* spelled out. Remember that *percentage* is the word to use when no figure is cited. Additionally, do not split the numeral from *percent* or *million* on a line or page. Spell out percent unless using tabular material, then the % sign can be used.

- 4 percent
- \$4 million but two million volumes and 54 million people
- Ashley owns 7 percent of the farm; however, Victor owns a larger percentage.

Use of the abbreviation “No.” plus a numeral is acceptable to denote ranking.

- The Miami Hurricanes tennis team was ranked No. 1 during the preseason.

parallelism

When you have a series of phrases in a row, the verbal constructions must be parallel. They must correspond in grammatical structure, sound, and meter.

Incorrect: She likes swimming, playing volleyball, and to cook Asian food. (The first two words use gerunds, or “ing” verbs, and the last one does not.)

Correct: She likes swimming, playing volleyball, and cooking Asian food.

Incorrect: I looked for the missing gift cards in the sock drawer, the nightstand, the utility closet, and under the bed. (In this sentence prepositions are needed with every element.)

Correct: I looked for the missing gift cards in the sock drawer, in the nightstand, in the utility closet, and under the bed.

past tense

News stories should be written in the past tense. While this is not a rigid rule, the most important thing is to not switch between tenses.

percent

See **numbers**.

periods

Always use the period inside quotation marks. Use the period inside parentheses or brackets when the matter enclosed is an independent sentence forming no part of the preceding sentence; otherwise, the period goes outside. Use a single space after a period at the end of a sentence.

- *Philip said, "Go inside, now."*
- *There was no reaction. (The woman could barely hear.)*
- *Buy a vehicle (car, truck, or boat).*

Use periods after abbreviated degrees.

- *B.S., Ph.D., M.Ed.*

Do not use periods after acronyms or broadcasting stations.

- *NAACP, AFL-CIO, NASA*
- *WLRN-FM, WWBT-TV, WCYB*

preposition at the end of a sentence

While it is now acceptable to end a sentence with a preposition, make your writing more powerful by using stronger words to complete your thought. Rephrase, if possible.

- *Editorial style is something this guide can help you with.*
- *This guide can help you with editorial style.*

quotation marks

Use quotation marks for most composition titles, including books, movies, television shows, and works of art.

- *"Game of Thrones"*
- *"War and Peace"*
- *"Mona Lisa"*

Do not use quotation marks for course titles.

- *Fundamentals of Finance*
- *Journalism 101*

Magazine and newspaper titles do not receive quotation marks.

- *Miami Herald*
- *TV Guide*

race and ethnicity

Avoid words, images, and situations that suggest that all or most members of a racial or ethnic group are the same.

Avoid using qualifiers that reinforce racial and ethnic stereotypes. Avoid using ethnic clichés.

Be aware of possible negative implications of color-symbolic words. Choose language and usage that do not offend people or reinforce bias. Avoid the term non-white.

Be aware of language that, to some, has questionable racial or ethnic connotations. Avoid patronizing and tokenism toward any racial or ethnic group.

Review visual and written material to see if all groups are fairly represented.

school

See **capitalization and titles**.

seasons

The seasons are lowercased but uppercase when tied to a specific academic semester accompanied by a year.

- *fall semester classes*
- *fall 2024*
- *I think spring and fall are the best seasons.*
- Fall 2022 semester
- Spring 2023 semester

semicolons

Use a semicolon to separate listings of phrases that contain commas.

- *The library contains an extensive microfilm and microfiche collection; an audiovisual department; facilities for online research, photocopying, and studying; and archives and special collections.*

Use a semicolon to join main clauses not joined by a coordinating conjunction.

- *The new house is almost complete; the interest rate is 9.25 percent.*

serial or Oxford comma

See **comma**.

startup (n.)

Per AP, we do not use a hyphen when referring to a new business venture.

Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center

In all mentions of Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, “Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center” **must** precede the University of Miami or any of its departments, divisions, or other entities. On first mention, write “Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center;” on subsequent mentions use “Sylvester.” Never say UM/Sylvester or the Miller School of Medicine’s Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center. If the content is about research, refer to the center on first reference as “Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine.” If the content is related to clinical services, refer to it as “Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, part of the University of Miami Health System.”

telephone numbers

Use the figures only, without the word “phone” preceding them. Area code is not enclosed in parentheses but is followed by a hyphen.

- 305-284-3082

An exception to the previous rule is when both the telephone number and the fax number are given. Use the following format for such instances. Do not abbreviate the word phone.

- Phone: 305-284-3082
- Fax: 305-284-2035

Use the entire seven digits of the phone number plus the three-digit area code. Do not abbreviate the full seven digits with the internal shortcut denoted by *extension* or the abbreviation *ext.*

- *The editor can be reached at 305-284-4895.*
Not, *The editor can be reached at ext. 8-4895.*

theater

Per AP style, use this spelling unless the proper name of the venue or program includes the word “theatre.”

- *University of Miami Department of Theatre Arts students will write and direct the productions that will be performed at the Jerry Herman Ring Theatre.*
- *Time-limited theater teaches students teamwork.*

time

See **numbers**.

titles

See **courtesy titles** and **capitalization and titles**.

UHealth – University of Miami Health System

UHealth – University of Miami Health System is South Florida’s only university-based medical system and includes three inpatient facilities—Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, UHealth Tower, and Bascom Palmer Eye Institute—and more than 30 outpatient sites in Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, and Collier counties, including The Lennar Foundation Medical Center on the University’s Coral Gables Campus. Use full title on first reference. Use UHealth on subsequent references.

United States

When **United States** is used as an adjective, it may be abbreviated and should have periods, except in headlines. Otherwise, it should be spelled out on first reference.

- *She traveled from the United States to Europe.*
- *Meredith is a citizen of the United States.*
- *United States citizen* or *U.S. citizen*

University of Miami

Spell out the full name on first reference. Use University (with an uppercase “U” when referring only to our institution) in subsequent references. Avoid using “UM.” “The U” can be used sparingly in informal situations.

When referring to the University of Miami on second reference, the word *University* is capitalized even when used alone. Do not capitalize *university* when referring to universities in general.

- *Mary Green, a University of Miami graduate, has fond memories of her years at the University. She believes that a private university offers the best education.*

visual style

The University of Miami Visual Identity Manual provides specific guidelines and standards for the system in all forms of University communication. Adherence to these guidelines is vital for the University to be represented in a uniform and consistent fashion.

Visit miami.edu/umidentity for additional information on our visual identity.

web addresses

Web addresses are listed in plain text, and when the text breaks to the next line, do not add a hyphen. Rearrange the sentence, if possible, so the address stays on one line.

When citing web addresses in University material, **www** and **http://** are usually no longer needed. However, always check to make sure the web address works without the **www** and the **http://**.

- *miami.edu*, not *http://www.miami.edu*

To prevent periods at the end of a web address in call-to-action statements, place the address in the beginning or middle.

- *Visit alumni.miami.edu for additional information or to check out the calendar of upcoming events.*

webinar

No need to use online. All webinars are online.

Zoom

Unless referring specifically to Zoom, which is a trademarked video online platform, please use generic terms like videoconference or teleconference.

ACTIVE AND PASSIVE VOICE

Create clearer, more concise sentences by using the active voice, in which the subject performs the action stated by the verb. In passive voice, the subject is acted upon by the verb.

From: <http://examples.yourdictionary.com/examples-of-active-and-passive-voice.html>

- *Harry ate six shrimp at dinner.* (active)
At dinner, six shrimp were eaten by Harry. (passive)
- *Beautiful giraffes roam the savannah.* (active)
The savannah is roamed by beautiful giraffes. (passive)
- *The staff is required to watch a safety video every year.* (active)
A safety video will be watched by the staff every year. (passive)

Passive voice sentences tend to be wordy and vague but can be useful in some situations—such as formal or scientific writing. Passive voice is also appropriate when the “doer” is unknown: *The house was built in 2013.*

CLEAR AND CONCISE WRITING

It is important when you write (and when you edit) to be clear and concise. Writing that is too wordy and jumbled is confusing. In addition, many grammar problems are often caused by clutter.

Look to write concisely and make sure a sentence flows seamlessly.

- A sentence: *I always have wanted to be a teacher. I'd like to teach young children. That way, I can have an effect on children's learning.*
Can become: *I always have wanted to teach young children so that I can affect their learning.*

Another way to tighten is to eliminate words that don't do their share of work. Some examples are “there is,” “there are,” or “it is.”

- *There are 28 teachers who have expressed interest in the continuing education program.*
Can become: *Twenty-eight teachers are interested in the continuing education program.*

In addition, many “to be” verbs can be replaced by stronger verbs.

- *The child was rebellious against his mother.*
Can become: *The child rebelled against his mother.*
Instead of: *In a cautious manner, the cyclist braked and slowly went down the hill.* Use: *The cyclist cautiously negotiated the hill.*

Another good rule is to avoid multiple modifiers in front of nouns.

- *He was an extremely strong and very bold type of person.*
Can become: *He was strong and bold.*

Avoid redundancy.

- *Many uneducated citizens who have never attended school continue to vote for better schools.* Should be: *Many uneducated citizens continue to vote for better schools.* Also, omit words that add nothing to the meaning of the sentence. *All things considered, Florida's winter weather is wonderful. As a matter of fact, Florida's winter temperatures average in the 70s. As far as I am concerned, there is no place like Florida during the winter months.*

HOW TO WRITE GOOD HEADLINES, CAPTIONS, AND CUTLINES

Headlines

To write a good headline remember the four “U”s:

- Your headline should be useful.
- Your headline should be ultra specific.
- Your headline should convey a sense of urgency (or raise curiosity).
- Your headline should be unique.

You can rarely accomplish all four of the aforementioned in a single headline. But, if you can at least include two, your headline will draw your reader’s attention. Also, remember:

- Use the active voice.
- Keep your headline in present tense.
- Keep it simple. A headline is a short, direct sentence without extra adjectives or adverbs (but when used, the adjectives and adverbs should be interesting and alluring).
- The perfect headline is six words.
- Provide enough information in the headline to give the casual reader an impression of the entire story.

Interesting Facts

- Eight out of 10 people read the headline
- Two out of 10 people read the story

If possible, include a subject or doer and a verb in your headline. Although, your headline does not have to be a sentence and can sometimes take a “label” or “question” style.

Examples:

- Why big numbers boggle the mind
Instead: Researcher addresses why big numbers boggle the mind
- A closer look at the genome
Instead: Scientist takes a closer look at the genome
- Lauren Book’s gift of hope and safety
Instead: Lauren Book speaks out to prevent sexual abuse

Good Captions and Outlines

While a “caption” is a heading or title for a photograph that leads into the “outline,” which is its explanation, the words often are used interchangeably. Here, we will use the word “caption” to define any description of photographs or graphics.

Most captions draw attention to something in the image that is not obvious, such as its relevance to the text. They can consist of a few words or several sentences. But try to avoid lengthy captions. Writing that is clear, crisp, and concise is best. Along with the headline, the lead, section headings, and captions are the most commonly read words in an article.

There are several criteria for a good caption. A good caption:

- *clearly* identifies the subject of the picture (using proper directional), without detailing the obvious.
- tries to avoid “looks on,” “pictured,” and “is shown.”
- addresses the who, what, where, when, and why.
- is succinct.
- establishes the picture’s relevance to the article/provides context for the picture.
- does not editorialize. Does not try to interpret someone’s feelings or thoughts.
- has the correct spelling of all names, which should match the names used in the story. (So, not Mary A. Chin in the story but Mary Chin in the caption.)
- draws the reader into the article without telling the whole story.

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