

## Brandeis University Web Style Guide – Associated Press Style

Text on Brandeis University Web sites should follow the grammar, punctuation and spelling rules outlined in the Associated Press Stylebook. The Office of Communications recommends that you purchase the latest edition of the AP Stylebook at [www.apstylebook.com](http://www.apstylebook.com).

### Quick Reference

#### Numbers

- Spell out the numbers one through nine. Use Arabic numerals for 10 and up. Always use Arabic numerals for ages and percentages, even for numbers less than 10.
- Spell out numbers that start a sentence. If the result is awkward, re-work the sentence: *Seventy-five students attended the symposium yesterday. Yesterday, 635 seniors were awarded degrees.*
- The exception to this rule is a sentence that begins with a calendar year: *2007 was a record-breaking year for fundraising.*
- Use Roman numerals for wars, monarchs and Popes: *World War II, King George VI, Pope John XXIII*
- In the case of proper names, use words or numerals according to the organization's practice: *3M, Twentieth Century Fund, Big Ten*

#### Abbreviations

##### Academic Degrees

- Avoid abbreviations: *Jehuda Reinharz, who has a doctorate in modern Jewish history ...*
- Use an apostrophe in bachelor's degree, master's degree, etc.
- There is no apostrophe in Bachelor of Arts or Master of Science.
- Use abbreviations such as B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. only when the need to identify many people by degree on first reference would make the preferred method cumbersome; use the abbreviations only after a full name and set the abbreviations off with commas: *Dorothee Kern, Ph.D., delivered a lecture on enzymes.*

##### Dates

- Always use Arabic figures, without *st*, *nd*, *rd* or *th*.
- When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate only Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec.: *Fall Open House will be held on Oct. 8.*
- When a phrase lists only a month and year, do not separate the month and the year with commas: *The new Web site will launch in December 2007.*
- When a phrase refers to a month, day and year, set off the year with commas: *Jan. 15 2008, was the first day of the semester.*

##### Time

- Use figures except for noon and midnight
- Use a colon to separate hours from minutes: *3:30 p.m.*
- 4 o'clock is acceptable, but time listings with a.m. or p.m. (with periods) are preferred

## United States

- As a noun, use United States: *Brandeis is one of the youngest private research universities in the United States.*
- As an adjective, use U.S. (no spaces): *A U.S. senator will speak at Brandeis tomorrow.*

## States

- Spell out the names of the states when they appear alone: *The governor of Massachusetts was re-elected.*
- Abbreviate the names of states when they appear with the name of a city, town, village or military base: *Waltham, Mass., Hanscom Air Force Base, Mass.*
- Do not abbreviate Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas or Utah
- Use the following state abbreviations:

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

## Punctuation

### Apostrophe

- For plural nouns ending in *s*, add only an apostrophe: *the students' grades, states' rights*
- For singular common nouns ending in *s*, add 's: *the hostess's invitation, the witness's answer*
- For singular proper names ending in *s*, use only an apostrophe: *Brandeis' mission*
- For singular proper names ending in *s* sounds such as *x*, *ce*, and *z*, use 's: *Marx's theories*
- For plurals of a single letter, add 's: *She received all A's this semester.*
- Do not use 's for plurals of numbers or multiple letter combinations: *the 1960s, USEMs*

### Colon

- Capitalize the first word after a colon only if it is a proper noun or the start of a complete sentence: *She promised this: The team will go to nationals this year. But: There were three issues with the project: expense, time and feasibility.*
- Colons go outside quotation marks unless they are part of the quoted material.

### Comma

- Do not put a comma before the conjunction in a simple series: *Boston, Newton, Cambridge and Lexington*
- Use a comma to set off a person's hometown and age: *John Smith, Newton, was accepted to Brandeis. Jane Smith, 22, graduated yesterday.*

## Hyphen

- Use a hyphen for compound adjectives before the noun: *well-known student, full-time job, 20-year sentence*
- Do not use a hyphen when the compound modifier occurs after the verb: *The student was well known. Her job became full time. He was sentenced to 20 years.*

## Parentheses

- The temptation to use parentheses is a clue that a sentence is becoming contorted. Try to rewrite the sentence, putting the incidental information between commas or dashes, or in a separate sentence. If you must use parentheses, follow these punctuation guidelines:
- Place a period outside a closing parenthesis if the material inside is not a sentence (*such as this fragment*).
- If the material is an independent complete sentence, place the period inside the parentheses.

## Period

- Use a single space after the period at the end of a sentence.
- Do not put a space between initials: *C.S. Lewis; J.K. Rowling.*

## Quotation marks

- In dialogue, each person's words are placed in a separate paragraph, with quotation marks at the beginning and end of each person's speech.
- Periods and commas always go within quotation marks.
- Dashes, semicolons, question marks and exclamation points go within the quotation marks when they apply to the quoted material. They go outside when they apply to the whole sentence.
- Use single marks for quotes within quotes: *Smith said, "She told me, 'I wish I had been accepted to Brandeis.'"*

## Titles

- Titles of **academic courses**:
  - Do not italicize course titles or put quotation marks around them.
- Titles of **books, computer games, movies, operas, plays, poems, albums, songs, radio and television programs, lectures, speeches and works of art**:
  - Capitalize the principal words, including prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters
  - Put quotation marks around all such works except the Bible and books that are primarily catalogs of reference material: "*The Star-Spangled Banner*," "*Gone With the Wind*," NBC's "*Today Show*," *Encyclopedia Britannica*
  - Translate a foreign title into English, unless the American public knows the work by its foreign name: Rousseau's "War," not Rousseau's "La Guerre." BUT: Leonardo da Vinci's "Mona Lisa."

- Titles of **newspapers** and **magazines**:
  - Do not place these titles in quotation marks.
  - Capitalize *the* in the name if that is the way the publication prefers to be known.
  - Lowercase *the* before names if listing several publications, some of which use *the* as part of the name and some of which do not: *Time, Newsweek, the Washington Post and the New York Times*
  
- Titles of **directions/regions**:
  - Lowercase north, south, northeast, northern, etc. when they indicate compass direction: *The cold front is moving east.*
  - Capitalize compass points when they designate U.S. regions: *A storm system that developed in the Midwest is spreading eastward.*
  - With names of countries, lowercase compass points unless they are part of a proper name or are used to designate a politically divided nation: *northern France, western United States, Northern Ireland*
  - With states and cities, lowercase compass points when they describe a section of a state or city: *western Massachusetts, southern Atlanta*
  - Capitalize compass points when used in denoting widely known sections: *Southern California, the Lower East Side of Manhattan*
  
- Titles of **seasons**:
  - Lowercase spring, summer, fall and winter, as well as derivatives like wintertime unless part of a formal name: *the Winter Olympics*