

The house style guide

**International English version
with country of interest quick notes**

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Introduction

Every time a journalist writes an article they have the potential of having their material read by millions of people. It is a privilege that goes with the role of labelling oneself a journalist.

The privilege also carries with it a degree of responsibility. Responsibility to not only report on the subject matter truthfully and without unnecessary bias, but also a responsibility to use clear and concise language free of ambiguity and clichés to ensure the maximum number of people possible have a clear understanding of all of the aspects being reported on.

Clear story-telling and language is at the heart of good journalism. Rather than being a luxury, it is an obligation.

This style guide will help you improve your writing to achieve these goals. It will also help ensure you use the correct word, spelt in the correct way, to maintain the highest standards possible and worthy of someone who calls themselves a professional journalist.

Rather than being a list of “do’s and don’t” it is exactly as the name implies, a guide. It is not a dictionary and it is not a list of what is acceptable and what is not. The aim is to stimulate thought and to highlight areas of potential difficulty.

Newspaper and news agencies use style guides such as this one to help ensure that where there are variants in spelling, the use of acronyms and so forth, a consistent approach is adopted to help in disseminating a sense of rationality and authority in the use of language.

It is of little relevance whether you are writing for a capital city daily newspaper, or a neighbourhood community newsletter, consistency and the use of the correct words and grammar will vastly improve the degree to what you are writing is understood.

Editors and sub-editors (copy editors) should be aware that they can do not greater disservice to the text before them and the writer, the reader, and the publication, than to impose their own preferences for words based on a pedantic insistence on grammar as it used to be taught in school. Doing so runs the risk of destroying nuances and possibly even the flow of a piece.

Editing involves fine judgement, while blanket judgements mean bad editing. The virtues of a good sub-editor include accuracy, consistency, fairness, imagination and suspicion.

This does not preclude tidying up cliché-ridden journalese, verbosity, or tempering the use of the latest vogue words and phrases. However care and judgement need to be exercised so as not to flatten out meaning and anaesthetise the writing.

All journalists who consider themselves professional have an obligation to be familiar with the house style guide. Doing so will ease the burden on the sub-editors, while also significantly reducing the extent to which their articles are altered.

It is doubtful if those who are not sufficiently interested in house style to check, and be familiar with, the guide are very likely to be interested in style at all.

The great mass of linguistic issues that writers and editors wrestle with don’t really concern grammar at all – they concern usage: the collective habits of a language’s native speakers.

It is an arbitrary fact, but ultimately an important one, that *principle* means one thing and *principal* something else. And it seems to be an irresistible law of language that two words so similar in sound will inevitably be confounded by otherwise literate users of language.

In any age, careful users of language will make distinctions, while careless users will blur them. We can tell, by the words someone uses and the way they put them together, something about the education and background of that person.

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We know whether people speak educated English and write what is commonly referred to as Standard Written English, or whether they write at a level less than this.

Because no language stands still – because the standards of good usage change, however slowly – no guide could ever satisfy all professional editors.

What is intended here is a guide that steers writers and editors toward the unimpeachable uses of language – hence it takes a fairly traditional view of usage.

For the writer or editor of most prose intended for a general audience, the goal is to stay within the mainstream of literate language as it stands today.

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Journalism basics

It's a fact that often a journalist sits down and has no idea exactly what he or she is going to write about a certain event or situation. On other occasions there are so many facts and details that its difficult to know exactly what to write in the opening (or lead) paragraph.

As a general rule, the most important facts, or a summary of them, go into the lead paragraph and lesser facts into the subsequent ones. Try and avoid using a quote in the opening paragraph unless it is something of earth shattering importance.

The key to good writing is simple thoughts expressed simply. Avoid quoting a multitude of facts and statistics in the opening paragraph. The use of short sentences and short words that are easily understood are more likely to encourage a reader to read on, than a wordy first paragraph crammed full of lengthy words.

Journalism demands short and concise sentences and paragraphs. A rule of thumb is that a paragraph should not be more than 30 words in length – considerably shorter than those used in academia where the tendency is to write lengthy paragraphs that are often far from concise and therefore difficult to comprehend.

Remember that the aim of writing is to impart information to the reader. Not to show how many big or obscure words you know.

Anything which is confused, complicated, poorly written, or capable of being misunderstood risks losing the reader, and once you have done that, you might as well not have come to work.

Avoid the use of clichés, jargon, slang and acronyms as much as possible. Just because you know what Unesco is doesn't mean that your readers will. Unless an organisation is so well known by its acronym as to be in everyday use give the full name at first reference and then use its short form later. Assume nothing about your audience when you sit down to write a story.

Reporting

The three main ways journalists gather information for a news story or opinion piece are:

- **Interviews:** Talking with people who know something about the story you are reporting.
- **Observation:** Watching and listening where news is taking place.
- **Documents:** Reading stories, reports, public records and other printed material.

The people or documents you use when reporting a story are called your "sources." In your story, you always tell your readers what sources you've used. So you must remember to get the exact spelling of all your sources' names. You want everything in your story to be accurate, including the names of the sources you quote.

Often, a person's name is not enough information to identify them in a news story. After all, lots of people have the same name. So you will also want to write down your sources' ages, their hometowns, their jobs and any other information about them that is relevant to the story.

It is also a good idea to get their contact telephone numbers in case any facts need to be checked when you are writing the story – and to put in your contact book for future reference. A source that has proved useful and informative with one story, may prove to be the same in the future.

Whenever you are interviewing someone, observing something happening, or reading about something, you will want to write down the answers to the "five Ws." The failure to include all of the "five Ws" will mean that your stories are not complete:

- **Who** are they?
- **What** were they doing?
- **Where** were they doing it?
- **When** did it happen?
- **Why** did they do it?

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Writing

The keys to writing good journalism are:

- **Get the facts. All the facts you can.**
- **Tell your readers where you got every bit of information you put in your story.**
- **Be honest about what you do not know.**
- **Don't try to write fancy. Keep it clear.**
- **Don't omit important details.**
- **Disclose anything that might be considered by people to influence your writing, eg, if you travelled somewhere as a guest of an airline or hotel operator, say so.**

Start your story with the most important thing that happened. This is called your "lead." It should summarise the whole story in one sentence.

From there, add details that explain or illustrate what is going on. You might need to start with some background or "set the scene" with details of your observation.

Write the story as if you were telling it to a friend. Start with what's most important, then add background or details.

Each time you introduce a new source, start a new paragraph. Each time you bring up a new point, start a new paragraph. Make sure that you tell the source for each bit of information you add to the story.

Whenever you quote someone's exact words, put them within quotation (" ") marks and provide "attribution." Avoid the tendency to fill a story up with paragraph after paragraph of quoted text. Reserve the use of direct quotes for points that have significant impact on the story.

To condense lengthy and often ambiguous quotes it is often better to "paraphrase" what someone said. That means that you do not use the person's exact words, but reword it to make it shorter, or easier to understand. Quotation marks are not used around a paraphrase, but it is still necessary to attribute the comments.

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Writing a stronger lead paragraph

It's not always easy to get excited about events that seem routine, or to come up with a powerful lead paragraph while the sub-editors are breathing down your neck as deadline gets closer and closer.

For example, why should your umpteenth crime story for the week or the 100th fire for the year be granted editorial space and another story "spiked?" As long as you see your topic that way it probably won't.

Take the time to read that wire copy again. Look at the tape one more time. Read through your notes again. Maybe firefighters battled some extra tough conditions. Maybe that thief the police arrested had just been released from jail, or perhaps it was an unusual item that was stolen.

Every story has a "whoa!" factor. It may not be an earth-shattering revelation that changes civilisation as we know it, but there's always something, even a little thing, that makes you want to get out there and tell everybody.

It may be a couple of poignant words that someone said, a few frames of video that caught your eye, or even an obscure fact that makes the story just a little different. Taking the time to find the "whoa!" in the story helps generate an enthusiasm that carries over into the writing process.

One useful technique for achieving this is "the invisible lead." "The invisible lead is a sentence that's never actually written, but it begins every single story. It works like this:

Think of a friend. Now say to him or her, "Hey! You'll never guess what just happened." That's your starting point ... your "invisible lead." Now you're ready to write the story with some energy.

When you begin this way, it's impossible to follow with something boring like: "Accused mass murderer Joe Brown was back in court today". More likely it will be: "A man accused of killing his family said he can prove he was in Fiji at the time of the murder."

Start with "Hey! You'll never guess what just happened!" and it's impossible to continue with, "Another interest rate rise by the Reserve Bank ..." Rather, the energy flow will pour out something like: "That home you want to buy just got more expensive ..."

The same thing applies to people's ages in stories. Who really cares about: "A 25-year-old man from Westfield has been charged with the armed robbery of a 7-11 store last night"? So what. But if the offender is 10-years-old then his age is relevant and a critical part of the story.

Using the "invisible lead" method you'll probably come up with something like this: "A young robber who could barely see over the counter is accused of holding up a convenience store last night. James Smith who is only 10-years-old ..."

This may seem like a gimmick, but it's much more. It's a powerful mental exercise. It forces us to ditch the old news writing ways, to lose the jargon, the boring overused phrases, the same old formula scripting. It gets us into the habit of "telling" instead of "reporting", person-to-person instead of "news department" to "audience".

It's also a technique that will capture the attention of the sub-editors when it lands on their desks and give your story a greater chance of being published than one with a less eye catching lead.

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Basic grammar

The proper use of grammar is a core element of a journalist's job. While this style guide does not set out to teach you English or grammar, having a basic understanding of the fundamental parts of speech and writing will help you write better.

Grammar concerns the rules that govern how words are formed and put together in written and spoken language. Native speakers learn these rules unconsciously, in the ordinary course of learning to speak, and many of the rules that apply to writing are never explicitly articulated, unless they are learned in school, and then they are promptly forgotten.

Grammar also provides the sub-editor with the vocabulary needed to analyse problems in written language and to explain the problems and their solutions to the writer.

What follows is the basic grammar vocabulary journalists and copy editors use.

Nouns

Are naming words for a person, place, or thing (doctor, ferris wheel, eagle, mother). They can be singular or plural. It is not capitalised unless it begins a sentence or appears in a title. Nouns are usually preceded by an article: "a", "an", "the". Plural nouns often have no article.

Proper nouns

Are a person's name or the official name of a place or thing. It is always capitalised, regardless of how it is used, **eg**, Australia, Jupiter, Graham.

Collective nouns

Sometimes called a mass noun or a noncount noun, are nouns which refer to collections of people and things; the team, the army, the government.

These all take singular verbs, such as "is". They also take the pronoun "it" instead of "they". So, if you are confused about whether a word such as *team* is an "it" or a "they," try making up a sentence using the word followed by "is" or "are".

You wouldn't say: "the team are playing well." Try this instead: "the team is playing well. It may win this game." That's correct

Possessive nouns

The possessive of most singular nouns is formed by adding an apostrophe and an "s", while the possessive of plural nouns (except for a few irregular plurals that do not end in s) is formed by adding an apostrophe only.

This practice reflects the way possessive forms are generally pronounced and is largely faithful to Strunk and White's famous rule 1; "form the possessive singular of nouns by adding 's". This is the case even if the word already ends in "s" **eg**,

the dog's mouth,
the boss's problem,
Victoria Beckham's husband

Harold's crayon,
a zebra's stripes,

Dylan Thomas's poetry,
children's clothes

Possessive case

The possessive case denotes

- (1) ownership, possession, or occupancy: the artist's studio; Peter's room
- (2) a relationship: the manager's secretary
- (3) agency: the company's representative
- (4) an idiomatic shorthand form of an of-phrase,

eg, a one-hour's delay is equal to a delay of one hour.

The possessive of a plural noun that ends in *s* or *es* is formed by adding an apostrophe, **eg**,

- the girls' swing set (the swing set belonging to the girls)
- the students' projects (the projects belonging to the students)
- the Johnsons' house (the house belonging to the Johnsons)

If the plural noun does not end in “s”, add an apostrophe and an “s”, **eg**,

- the women's conference (the conference belonging to the women)
- the children's toys (the toys belonging to the children)
- the men's training camp (the training camp belonging to the men)

The possessive of an irregular plural noun is formed by adding an apostrophe and an “s”, **eg**,

women's rights mice's cage

The possessive of a multiword compound noun is formed by adding the appropriate ending to the last word, **eg**, parents-in-law's message.

Possessives of titles and names

The possessive of a title or name is formed by adding an apostrophe and an “s”, **eg**,

Silver's Circus Telecom's head office Standard & Poor's rating

This is so even when the word ends in a sibilant – a word ending with a hissing effect, **eg**, *s*, *sh* (Dickens's novels; Dow Jones's money report), unless the word itself is formed from a plural (Audi Motors' production; Golden Horses' financial report).

If a word ends in a sibilant, it is acceptable in journalism to use a final apostrophe without the additional “s” (Bill Gates' testimony).

Joint and separate possessives

If two or more nouns share possession, the last noun takes the possessive ending. For example, “John and Aline's correspondence,” refers to the correspondence between John and Aline. If two or more nouns possess something separately, each noun takes its own possessive ending.

For example, “John's and Aline's emails,” refers to John's emails and also to Aline's emails.

Plural nouns

Most nouns form their plural by adding “s” or if they end in *ch*, *j*, *s*, *sh*, *x*, or *z*—by adding “es”, **eg**,

thumbs churches fixes boys

Names of people and other capitalised nouns normally form the plural by adding “s” or “es”, **eg**,

five Johns, four Peters, and three Harrys keeping up with the Joneses
rainy Sundays the two Koreas reunited
Afghans and Pakistanis

An apostrophe is never used to form the plural of a family name: “The Robertsons live here” (**not** Robertson's). With names such as Waters or Rogers, consider rewording to avoid the awkwardness of “Waterses” or “Rogerses”.

Words and hyphenated phrases that are not nouns but are used as nouns form the plural by adding “s” or “es”. To avoid an awkward appearance, an adjustment in spelling (or sometimes an apostrophe) may be needed, **eg**,

ifs and buts dos and don'ts threes and fours thank-yous
but
maybe's yes's and no's.

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Capital letters used as words, abbreviations that contain no interior periods, and numerals used as nouns form the plural by adding “s”, **eg**,

the three Rs

the 1990s

IPOs

NGOs.

Adding “s” or “es”

If a noun ends with a letter whose sound readily combines with the “s” sound, then use “s” to form the plural (alarm – alarms; rub – rubs; hammer – hammers). If the noun ends in a letter that is not euphonious with “s” alone (**eg**, it ends in a sibilant such as *s*, *sh*, *x*, *z*, or a soft *ch*), then use “es” to form the plural, **eg**,

fox – foxes

boss – bosses

house – houses.

Nouns ending in “f” or “fe”

Some nouns ending in *f* or *fe* take an “s” (reef – reefs; dwarf – dwarfs; safe – safes. Other nouns change the *f* to “v” and add “es” (hoof – hooves; knife – knives; wolf – wolves).

A few words have one preferred form in American English (wharf – wharves; per cent – percent) and another in British English (wharf – wharfs; percent – per cent).

Even if one knows a word’s etymology, the correct forms are unpredictable. Consult a reliable dictionary.

Nouns ending in “o”

Some nouns ending in “o” take an “s” (avocado – avocados; memento – mementos; tuxedo – tuxedos). But others take an “es” (mango – mangoes; potato – potatoes; tomato – tomatoes; volcano – volcanoes).

There is no firm rule for determining whether the plural is formed with “s” or “es”, but two guidelines are helpful:

(1) Nouns used as often in the plural as in the singular usually form the plural with “es” (veto~~es~~; hero~~es~~). *Zeros* is an exception (and therefore hard to remember).

(2) Nouns usually form the plural with “s” if they appear to have been borrowed from some other language (intaglio – intaglios); if they are proper names (Fazio – Fazio~~s~~); if they are rarely used as plurals (bravado – bravado~~s~~); if they end in “o” preceded by a vowel (portfolio – portfolio~~s~~); or if they are shortened words (photo – photo~~s~~).

Nouns ending in “y”

Nouns ending in “y” follow one of two rules:

(1) If the noun is common and the “y” is preceded by “qu” or by a consonant, change the “y” to “i” and add “es” to form the plural (soliloquy – soliloquies; berry – berries; folly – follies; baby – babies).

(2) If the noun is proper or if the “y” is preceded by a vowel, add “s” to form the plural (Teddy – Teddys; toy – toys; buoy – buoys).

Nouns plural in form, singular in meaning

When the singular form of a noun ending in “s” looks like a plural and the plural form is the same as the singular, the possessive of both singular and plural is formed by the addition of an apostrophe only. If ambiguity threatens, use “of” to avoid the possessive, **eg**,

politics’ true meaning

economics’ forerunners

this species’ first record (or, better, the first record of this species)

The same rule applies when the name of a place or an organisation (or the last element in the name) is a plural form ending in “s”, such as the United States, even though the entity is singular, **eg**,

the United States’ role in international law

Box Hills’ late mayor

the National Academy of Sciences’ new policy

the Kew Gardens’ former curator

Plural form with singular sense

Some nouns are plural in form but singular in use and meaning, **eg**, the good news is; politics is a complicated subject.

Possessive versus attributive forms

The line between a possessive (or genitive) form and a noun used attributively—as an adjective—is sometimes fuzzy, especially in the plural. The apostrophe should only be dispensed with in proper names (often corporate names) or where there is clearly no possessive meaning, **eg**,

employees' cafeteria	a consumers' group	taxpayers' associations
children's rights	the women's team	a boys' club
<i>but</i>		
Publishers Weekly	Diners Club	Department of Veterans Affairs
a housewares sale		

Compound nouns

Compound nouns that consist of separate words (with or without hyphens) form the plural by adding the appropriate ending to the noun or, if there is more than one, to the main noun (brother in arms – brothers in arms; court martial – courts-martial; hidey-hole – hidey-holes).

Irregular plurals

Some nouns have irregular plurals (child – children; basis – bases; leaf – leaves). With some of these irregular words, the plural form depends on the meaning.

Take the noun *louse*, for example: people may be infested with *lice* (insects), but contemptible people are *louses* (by metaphorical extension).

Some nouns are ordinarily the same in both the singular and the plural, especially those denoting fish, game, and livestock (one fish – two fish, I hoped to see many deer, but I saw only one deer).

Pronouns

Pronouns take the place of nouns and can be **personal** (I, you, she, it, he, they), **indefinite** (anyone, each, either, none, most), **relative** and **interrogative** (that, what, which, who), **demonstrative** (this, that, those), and **adjective** (any, each, that, this, what, which).

Pronouns have different forms depending on whether they are subjects or objects. A pronoun should generally follow the word it refers to and must agree with its antecedent in number, person, and gender.

A pronoun's number is guided by that of its antecedent noun or nouns (a book and *its* cover; the dogs and *their* owner). A collective noun takes a singular pronoun if the members are treated as a unit (the audience showed *its* appreciation) but a plural if they act individually (the audience rushed back to *their* seats).

A singular noun that is modified by two or more adjectives to denote different varieties, uses, or aspects of the object may take a plural pronoun (British and American writing differ in more ways than just *their* spelling).

Two or more singular nouns or pronouns that are joined by “and” are taken jointly and referred to by a plural pronoun (the boy and girl have left *their* bicycles outside).

There are several refinements to these rules:

(1) When two or more singular antecedents connected by “and” together denote a single thing, or each refer to the same thing, the pronoun referring to the antecedents is singular (yellow, red, and blue *is* the colour scheme; an officer and a gentleman received *his* deserved recognition today).

(2) When two or more singular antecedents are connected by “and” and modified by “each”, “every”, or “no”, the pronoun referring to the antecedents is singular (every school and university encourages *its* students to succeed).

(3) When two or more singular antecedents are connected by “or”, “nor”, “either–or”, or “neither–nor”, they

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are treated separately and referred to by a singular pronoun (neither the orange nor the peach tastes as sweet as *it* should).

(4) When two or more antecedents of different numbers are connected by “or” or “nor”, the pronoun’s number agrees with that of the nearest (usually the last) antecedent; if possible, cast the sentence so that the plural antecedent comes last (neither the singer nor the dancers have asked for *their* paycheques).

(5) When two or more antecedents of different numbers are connected by “and”, they are usually referred to by a plural pronoun regardless of the nouns’ order (the horses and the mule kicked over *their* water trough).

Also note that an apostrophe is not used with possessive pronouns because these already show ownership, eg,

yours his hers its ours theirs

However, an apostrophe and an “s” are used to form the possessive of some indefinite pronouns, eg,

anybody’s guess one’s personal responsibility somebody’s wallet

Adjectives

An adjective is a word that adds a new idea to a noun or pronoun either by describing it more definitely or fully (a descriptive adjective) or by narrowing a noun’s or pronoun’s meaning (a limiting adjective).

An adjective that modifies a noun or noun phrase usually precedes it.

When a noun phrase includes a possessive and an adjective, both modifying the same noun, the adjective typically follows the possessive (children’s *athletic* shoes; the company’s *former* president).

When modifying a pronoun, an adjective usually follows the pronoun (the searchers found him *unconscious*; some like it *hot*), sometimes as a **predicate adjective** (it was *insensitive*; who was so *jealous*?).

A **predicate adjective** is an adjective that follows a linking verb but modifies the subject (the child is *afraid*; the night became *colder*; this tastes *delicious*; I feel *bad*).

Some suffixes that distinguish adjectives are *able* (manageable), *al* (mystical), *ary* (elementary), *en* (wooden), *ful* (harmful), *ible* (inaccessible), *ic* (artistic), *ish* (foolish), *ive* (demonstrative), *less* (helpless), *like* (childlike), *ous* (perilous), *some* (lonesome), and *y* (sunny).

Proper adjectives

A proper adjective is one that, being or deriving from a proper name, begins with a capital letter (a Cuban cigar, a German Shepherd, Russian vodka). The proper name used attributively is still capitalised, but it does not cause the noun it modifies to be capitalised.

Where the connection between the proper noun and its attributive use is weak or obscure, the noun is often lowercase (alsatian dog; arab numerals; diesel engine; dutch oven; french fry; india ink; italic type; italicise; morocco leather; wiener etc.).

A place-name containing a comma, such as Toronto, Ontario, or New Delhi, India—should generally not be used as an adjective because a second comma may be deemed obligatory (we met in a Melbourne, Australia, hostel) – the comma after Australia is awkward.

Compare the readability of: “a Jakarta, Indonesia, discotheque” with “a Jakarta discotheque” or a discotheque in Jakarta, Indonesia.” (substituting a prepositional phrase for the proper adjective).

Articles

An article is a limiting adjective that precedes a noun or noun phrase and determines the noun’s or phrase’s use to indicate something definite “the” or indefinite “a” or “an”. An article might stand alone or be used with other adjectives (a road; a brick road; the yellow brick road).

When present, it is always the first word in a noun phrase.

The definite article points to a definite object that:

(1) is so well understood that it does not need description;

(2) is a thing that is about to be described, or

(3) is important.

The definite article may precede a singular or a plural noun. Mass nouns may also take the definite article. An indefinite article points to non-specific objects, things, or persons that are not distinguished from the other members of a class. The thing may be **singular** (a student at Monash University), **uncountable** (a multitude), or **generalised**.

In a few uses, the indefinite article provides a specific reference (*I saw a great movie last night*) and the definite article a generic reference (*the Scots are talking about independence: generalising by nationality*).

Because articles have a demonstrative value, the meaning of a phrase may shift depending on the article used.

For example, “an officer and gentleman escorted Queen Beatrice” suggests (though ambiguously) that the escort was one man with two descriptive characteristics. But, “an officer and a friend escorted Queen Beatrice” suggests that two people acted as escorts.

Similarly, “Do you like the red and blue cloth?” suggests that the cloth contains both red and blue

threads. But “Do you like the red cloth and the blue cloth?” indicates that two different fabrics are being discussed.

Articles with co-ordinate nouns

With a series of coordinate nouns, an article should appear before each noun, **eg**, the rosebush and the hedge need trimming; a letter and a magazine came in the mail today. If the things named make up a single idea, the article need not be repeated, **eg**, in the highest degree of dressage; the horse and rider appear to be one entity.

If the named things are covered by one plural noun, the definite article should not be repeated with each modifier, **eg**, in the first and second years of college.

Participial adjectives

A participial adjective is simply a participle that modifies a noun. It can be a **present participle** (verb ending in *ing*, **eg**, the dining room; a walking stick; a rising star) or a **past participle** (usually a verb ending in *ed*, **eg**, an endangered species; a completed assignment; a proven need).

Some irregular past participles have only this adjectival function (a shaven face; a graven image), the past-participial verb having taken a different form (shaved; engraved).

Dangling participle

A participial adjective often correctly appears before a main clause (watching constantly, the lioness protected her cubs from danger). But such a participial phrase is said to “dangle” when the participle lacks grammatical connection to a noun that performs the action denoted by the participle.

This occurs when a participial form is not immediately followed by the noun it modifies, **eg**, “before receiving the medal, the General congratulated the soldier”. Receiving is meant to apply to the soldier, not the General.

The same problem arises when a possessive follows the participial phrase, **eg**, “dodging the traffic, his cell phone got dropped in the street” – the cell phone wasn’t dodging the traffic.

Recasting the sentence to eliminate the dangler will improve the style, **eg**, “the General congratulated the soldier before awarding the medal”; “dodging the traffic, he dropped his cell phone in the street.”

Degrees of adjectives

An adjective has three degrees of comparison: the **positive** (hard), the **comparative** (harder), and the **superlative** (hardest).

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A positive adjective simply expresses an object's quality without reference to any other thing, **eg**, a big balloon; bad news.

A comparative adjective expresses the relationship between two things in terms of a specified quality they share, often to determine which has more or less of that quality (a cheaper ticket; a happier ending). The suffix "er" usually signals the comparative form of a common adjective having one or sometimes two syllables (light – lighter; merry – merrier).

An adjective with three or more syllables takes "more" instead of a suffix to form the comparative (intelligent – more intelligent; purposeful – more purposeful). Some adjectives with two syllables take the "er" suffix (lazy – lazier; narrow – narrower), but most take "more" (more hostile; more careless).

A superlative adjective expresses the relationship between at least three things and denotes an extreme of intensity or amount in a particular shared quality (the biggest house on the block; the bitterest pill of all). The suffix "est" usually signals the superlative form of a common adjective having one or sometimes two syllables (lighter – lightest; narrower – narrowest).

An adjective with three or more syllables takes "most" instead of a suffix to form the superlative (quarrelsome – most quarrelsome; humorous – most humorous). Some adjectives with two syllables take the "est" suffix (holy – holiest; noble – noblest), but most take "most" (most fruitful; most reckless).

Comparatives and superlative adjectives

There are a few rules for forming a short regular adjective's comparative and superlative forms.

(1) If the adjective is a monosyllable ending in a single vowel followed by a single consonant, the final consonant is doubled before the suffix is attached (pink – pinker – pinkest).

(2) If the adjective ends in a silent "e", the "e" is dropped before adding the suffix (polite – politer – politest).

(3) A participle used as an adjective requires "more" or "most" before the participle; no suffix is added to form the comparative or the superlative (this movie is *more* boring than the first; I am *most* happy to be here).

Many adjectives are irregular—there is no rule that guides their comparative and superlative forms (good – better – best; less – lesser – least). A good dictionary will show the forms of an irregular adjective.

Past-participial adjectives

When a past participle functioning as an adjective has a modifier, that modifier is usually modified with an adverb such as "quite" (quite surprised), "barely" (barely concealed), or "little" (little known), or an adverbial phrase such as "very much" (very much distrusted).

If the past participle has gained a strong adjectival quality, "very" will do the job alone without the quantitative "much" (very tired; very drunk).

But if the participial form seems more like a verb, "very" needs "much" to help do the job (very much appreciated; very much delayed).

A few past participles (such as bored, interested, pleased, satisfied) are in the middle of the spectrum between those having mostly adjectival qualities and those having mostly verbal qualities. With these few, the quantitative "much" is normally omitted.

Uncomparable adjectives

An adjective that, by definition, describes an absolute state or condition—for example, "entire", "impossible", "pregnant", "unique" — is called uncomparable. It cannot take a comparative suffix and cannot be coupled with one of the comparative terms "more", "most", "less", and "least".

It also cannot be intensified by a word such as "very", "largely", or "quite".

Co-ordinate adjectives

A co-ordinate adjective is one that appears in a sequence with one or more related adjectives to modify the same noun. Co-ordinate adjectives should be separated by commas or by "and" (skilled, experienced chess player; nurturing and loving parent).

But if one adjective modifies the noun and another adjective modifies the idea expressed by the combination of the first adjective and the noun, the adjectives are not considered co-ordinate and should not be separated by a comma.

For example, a lethargic soccer player describes a soccer player who is lethargic. Likewise, phrases such as “red brick house” and “wrinkled canvas jacket” are unpunctuated because the adjectives are not co-ordinate:

they have no logical connection in sense (a red house could be made of many different materials; so could a wrinkled jacket).

The most useful test is this: if “and” would fit between the two adjectives, a comma is necessary.

Phrasal and compound adverbs

A phrasal adverb consists of two or more words that function together as an adverb, **eg**, in the meantime; for a while; here and there.

A compound adverb appears to be a single word but is a combination of several words, **eg**, notwithstanding; heretofore; thereupon. Compound adverbs should be used cautiously and sparingly though because they make the tone stuffy.

Verbs

Express action, state of being, or happening. They are the essential element of any sentence (go, be, do, say, hop, walk, run, fly). Almost any verb can be a complete sentence by itself with the subject understood (Run!; Enjoy!; Think!).

Verbs have **tense** (present, past, future), **voice** (active, passive), **number**, **person**, and other forms not commonly found in journalism (mood [subjunctive]; aspect).

Active and passive voice

Voice shows whether the subject acts (active voice) or is acted on (passive voice)—that is, whether the subject performs or receives the action of the verb.

Only transitive verbs are said to have voice. The clause “the judge levied a \$50 fine” is in the active voice because the subject (judge) is acting.

But “the tree’s branch was broken by the storm” is in the passive voice because the subject (branch) does not break itself—it is acted on by the object (storm).

The passive voice is always formed by joining an inflected form of “to be” (or, in colloquial usage, “to get”) with the verb’s past participle.

Compare, “the ox pulls the cart” (active voice) with “the cart is pulled by the ox” (passive voice).

A passive-voice verb in a subordinate clause often has an implied “be”. In “the advice given by the novelist”, the implied (or understood) words “that was” come before “given”; so the passive construction is “was given”.

Although the inflected form of “to be” is sometimes implicit, the past participle must always appear. Sometimes the subject remains unnamed (his tires were slashed).

As a matter of style, passive voice (the matter will be given careful consideration) is typically, though not always, inferior to active voice (we will consider the matter carefully).

Participles

Participles are a verb form that share the features of other parts of speech, such as adjective, nouns (or gerunds), adverbs, or verb phrases, and may be present (appearing) or past (appeared).

The present participle is formed by adding “ing” to the stem of the verb (reap – reaping; wander – wandering).

If the stem ends in “ie”, the “ie” usually changes to “y” before the “ing” is added (die – dying; tie – tying).

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If the stem ends in a silent “e”, that “e” is usually dropped before the “ing” is added (give – giving; leave – leaving).

There are two exceptions: the silent “e” is retained when:

(1) the word ends with “oe” (toe – toeing; hoe – hoeing; shoe – shoeing), and

(2) the verb has a participle that would resemble another word but for the distinguishing “e” (**eg**, dyeing means something different from dying, and singeing means something different from singing).

The present participle is the same for all persons and numbers (I am studying; they are leaving).

With regular verbs, the past participle is formed in the same way as the past indicative – that is, the past-indicative and past-participial forms are always identical (stated – stated; pulled – pulled).

For irregular verbs, the forms are sometimes the same (paid – paid; sat – sat) and sometimes different (forsook – forsaken; shrank – shrunk). A good dictionary will show the past participles.

Transitive and intransitive verbs

Depending on its relationship with objects, a verb is classified as transitive or intransitive.

A transitive verb requires an object to express a complete thought; the verb indicates what action the subject exerts on the object. For example, in, “the cyclist hit a curb”, the verb “hit” expresses what the subject (cyclist) did to the object (curb).

An intransitive verb does not require an object to express a complete thought (the rescuer jumped), although it may be followed by a prepositional phrase (the rescuer jumped to the ground).

Many verbs are both transitive and intransitive. The different uses are distinguishable by their meanings.

For example, when used transitively, as in, “the king’s heir will succeed him”, “succeed” means “to follow and take the place of”.

When used intransitively, as in “the chemist will succeed in identifying the toxin”, it means “to accomplish a task”.

A verb that is normally used transitively may sometimes be used intransitively to emphasise the verb and leave the object undefined or unknown (the patient is eating poorly). How well the patient eats is more important than what the patient eats.

Regular and irregular verbs

Depending on its inflections (changes of form), a verb is classified as regular or irregular.

The irregular verbs are among the most challenging. Although an irregular verb usually forms the present participle in the same way as a regular verb (ride – riding; spring – springing), there are no modern rules on how an irregular verb forms the past tense and past participle (ride – rode – ridden; spring – sprang – sprung). A good dictionary of usage or general dictionary is an essential aid.

Fortunately, the great majority of English verbs are regular and are inflected according to rules.

A regular verb that ends in a double consonant (block), two vowels and a consonant (cook), or a vowel other than “e” (veto) forms the present participle by adding “ing” to its simple form (blocking;

cooking; vetoing). It forms the past tense and past participle by adding “ed” to its simple form (block – blocked – blocked; cook – cooked – cooked; veto – vetoed – vetoed).

If a regular verb ends in a single vowel before a consonant, the consonant is doubled before taking the present or past form’s ending (drip – dripping – dripped).

If a regular verb ends in a silent “e”, the “e” is dropped to form the present participle (bounce – bouncing). Only a “d” is added to form the past tense and past participle (bounce – bounced).

If a regular verb ends in “y” preceded by a consonant, the “y” changes to an “i” before forming the past tense and past participle with “ed” (hurry – hurried).

A few regular verbs have an alternative past tense and past participle formed by adding “t” to the simple verb form (dream – dreamed; dream – dreamt).

When these alternatives are available, American English tends to prefer the forms in “ed”, **eg**, dreamed, learned, spelled. British English tends to prefer the forms in “t”, **eg**, dreamt, learnt, spelt. Here are a few more examples (in the first-person singular).

present	past participle	present	past participle
go	went	going	gone
be	was	being	been
shrink	shrank	shrinking	shrunk

Infinitives

The infinitive has great versatility. It is sometimes called a verbal noun because it can function as a verb or a noun.

The infinitive also has limited uses as an adjective or an adverb. As a verb, it can take:

- (1) a subject (we wanted the lesson to end)
- (2) an object (to throw the javelin)
- (3) a predicate complement (to race home) or
- (4) an adverbial modifier (to think quickly)

As a noun, the infinitive can perform as:

- (1) the subject of a finite verb (to fly is a lofty goal); or
- (2) the object of a transitive verb or participle (I want to hire a new assistant).

The infinitive can be used as an adjective to modify a noun (a compulsion to steal). It can also be used adverbially to indicate a motive or purpose or to denote a result (he’s too nice to do such awful things).

Split infinitive

Although from about 1850 to 1925 many grammarians stated otherwise, it is now widely acknowledged that adverbs sometimes justifiably separate the “to” from the principal verb (they expect to more than double their income next year).

Sometimes it is perfectly appropriate to split an infinitive verb with an adverb to add emphasis or to produce a natural sound. A verb’s infinitive or “to” form is split when an intervening word immediately follows “to” (to bravely *assert*).

If the adverb bears the emphasis in a phrase (to boldly go; to strongly favour), then leave the split infinitive alone.

Recasting a sentence just to eliminate a split infinitive or avoid splitting the infinitive can alter the nuance or meaning: for example, “it’s best to always get up early” (*always* modifies *get up*) is not quite the same as, “it’s always best to get up early” (*always* modifies *best*).

Or an unnatural phrasing can result: “it’s best to get up early always”.

Adverbs

An adverb is a word that qualifies, limits, describes, or modifies a verb, an adjective, phrase, clause or another adverb, **eg**. she studied constantly (*constantly* qualifies the verb *studied*); the juggler’s act was really unusual (*really* qualifies the adjective *unusual*); the cyclist pedalled very quickly (*very* qualifies the adverb *quickly*).

An adverb may also qualify a preposition, a conjunction, or a clause, **eg**, the birds flew right over the lake (*right* qualifies the preposition *over*); this is exactly where I found it (*exactly* qualifies the conjunction *where*); apparently you forgot to check your references (*apparently* qualifies the rest of the clause).

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Many adjectives have corresponding adverbs distinguished by the suffix “ly” or, after most words ending in “ic”, “ally” (slow – slowly; careful – carefully; pedantic – pedantically) **but** (public – publicly. Adjectives ending in “le” or “ly” do not make appealing adverbs (juvenile – juveniley; (silly – sillily).

If an “ly” adverb looks clumsy, **eg**, juveniley or uglily, rephrase the sentence, **eg**, in a juvenile manner, or in an ugly way

Many adverbs do not have an identifying suffix, **eg**, almost; never; here; now; just; seldom; late; near; too. And not every word ending in “ly” is an adverb, some are adjectives **eg**, lovely; curly.

A few nouns form adverbs by taking the ending “ways” (side – sideways); “ward” (sky – skyward), or “wise” (clock – clockwise).

An adverb is distinguishable from an adjective because an adverb doesn’t modify a noun or pronoun, **eg**, “we made an early start and arrived at the airport early” (the first *early* is an adjective modifying the noun *start*; the second is an adverb modifying *arrived*).

Some adverbs are identical to prepositions **eg**, “up” or “off”, but are distinguishable because they are not attached to a following noun (he ran up a large bill; let’s cast off).

A simple adverb is a single word that qualifies a single part of speech (hardly; now; deep). A flat or bare adverb is one that has an “ly” form but whose adjective form may work equally well or even better, especially when used with an imperative in an informal context (drive slow; hold on tight; tell me quick).

Some flat adverbs are always used in their adjective form (work fast) because the “ly” has become obsolete (although it may linger in derived words, **eg**, steadfast and steadfastly).

The flat adverb may also have a different meaning from that of the “ly” adverb. Compare, “I am working hard” with “I am hardly working”.

Most one-syllable adverbs that do not end in “ly” form the comparative by taking the suffix “er” (sooner, harder, later).

Multisyllable adverbs usually form the comparative with “more” or “less” (the foreign jokey rode more professionally today; the patient is walking less painfully today).

A comparative adverb compares the quality of a specified action or condition shared by two things (Ralph worked *longer* than Paul; Aline studied more *industriously* than Thuy).

To avoid miscues, the adverb should generally be placed as near as possible to the word it is intended to modify. For example, in “the marathoners submitted their applications to compete *immediately*”, what does “*immediately*” modify—“compete” or “submitted”.

Placing the adverb with the word it modifies makes the meaning clear (“the marathoners *immediately* submitted their applications to compete”).

A misplaced adverb can completely change a sentence’s meaning. For example, “we *nearly* lost all our camping equipment” states that the equipment was saved; “we lost *nearly* all our camping equipment” states that almost everything was lost.

If the adverb qualifies an adjective, an adverb, a preposition, or a conjunction, it should immediately precede the word or phrase qualified (our vacation was *very* short; the flight took *too* long; your fence is *partly* over the property line; *leave* only when the bell rings).

If the adverb qualifies an intransitive verb, it should immediately follow the verb (the students sighed *gloomily* when homework was assigned, the owl perched *precariously* on a thin branch).

Some exceptions are “always”, “never”, “often”, “generally”, “rarely”, and “seldom”, which may precede the verb (mountaineers *seldom* succeed in climbing K2).

When an adverb qualifies a verb phrase, the natural place for the adverb is between the auxiliary verb and the principal verb (the administration has *consistently* repudiated this view; the reports will *soon* generate controversy; public opinion is *sharply* divided).

There is no rule against adverbial modifiers between the parts of a verb phrase. In fact, it's typically preferable to put them there (the heckler was *abruptly* expelled: the bus had been *seriously* damaged in the crash).

And sometimes it is perfectly appropriate to split an infinitive verb with an adverb to add emphasis or to produce a natural sound

An adverb's placement is also important because adverbs show **time** (we'll meet *again*), **place** or **source** (put the flowers *here*; *Where* did you get that idea?), **manner** (speak *softly*), **degree** or **extent** (sales are very *good*; *How* far is it to the pub?), **reason** (I don't know *how* Patricia found the right answer), **consequence** (I want to be on time *so* we can get good seats), and **number** (fool me *twice*, shame on me).

Irregular adverbs

A few adverbs have irregular comparative and superlative forms, **eg**, badly—worse—worst; little—less—least. A good dictionary is the best resource for finding an irregular adverb's forms of comparison.

Prepositions

A preposition is a word or phrase that links an object (a noun or noun equivalent) to another word in the sentence to show the relationship between them.

Many prepositions are relatively straightforward. A simple preposition consists of a single monosyllabic word such as: as; at; by; down; for; from; in; like; of; off; on; plus; since; through; to; toward; up; or with.

A preposition's object is usually a noun or pronoun in the objective case (between me *and* them), but an adjective, adverb, verb, or phrase may follow instead. Usually a preposition comes before its object, but there are exceptions.

For example, the preposition can end a clause, especially a relative clause, or sentence (this isn't the pen that Steve writes *with*). And a preposition used with the relative pronoun *that* (or with *that* understood) always follows the object (this is the moment [that] I've been waiting for).

It also frequently, but not always, follows the pronouns *which* (Which alternative is your decision based on?: This is the alternative on which my decision is based) and *whom* (there is a banker [whom] I must speak with: I can't tell you to whom you should apply).

A compound preposition has two or more syllables: about; above; across; after; against; around; alongside; before; below; beneath; between; despite; except; inside; onto; opposite; throughout; underneath; until; and without.

It may also be made up of two or more words: into; outside; upon.

A participial preposition is a participial form that functions as a preposition (or sometimes as a subordinating conjunction). Examples include: assuming; barring; concerning; considering; during; notwithstanding; owing to; provided; regarding; respecting; and speaking.

Unlike other participles, these words do not create dangling modifiers when they have no subject (Considering the road conditions, the trip went quickly; Regarding Watergate, he had nothing to say).

A phrasal preposition consists of two or more separate words used as a prepositional unit.

These include: according to; because of; by means of; by reason of; by way of; contrary to; for the sake of; in accordance with; in addition to; in case of; in consideration of; in front of; in regard to; in respect to; in spite of; instead of; on account of; out of; with reference to; with regard to; and with respect to.

Many of these phrasal prepositions are symptoms of officialese, bureaucratese, or other verbose styles.

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If a simple preposition will do in context, use it. For example, if “about” will replace “with regard to”, or “in connection with”, use the simpler expression.

Some words that function as prepositions may also function as other parts of speech. The distinguishing feature of a preposition is that it always has an object. A word such as: above; behind; below; by; down; in; off; on; or up, can be used as either an adverb or a preposition.

When used as a preposition, it takes an object (let’s slide *down* the hill). When used as an adverb, it does not (we sat *down*).

Some conjunctions may serve as prepositions, **eg**, “than” and “but”. The conjunction joins a clause containing an explicit or implied separate action.

Compare the prepositional “but” in: “everyone but Harry travelled abroad last summer” (“but” is used to mean *except*); with the conjunctive “but” in “I like the cut but not the colour” (“but” joins a clause containing an implied separate action: “I don’t like the colour”).

“Like” is probably the least understood preposition. Its traditional function is adjectival, not adverbial, so that “like” governs nouns and noun phrases (teens often see themselves as star-crossed lovers *like* Romeo and Juliet).

As a preposition, “like” is followed by a noun or pronoun in the objective case (the person in that old portrait looks *like* me).

Increasingly (but incorrectly) today in ordinary speech, “like” displaces “as” or “as if” as a conjunction to connect clauses. For example, in “it happened just *like* I said it would happen”, “like” should read “as”, and in, “you’re looking around *like* you’ve misplaced something”, “like” should read as “if”.

Because they are conjunctions, “as” and “as if” are followed by nouns or pronouns in the nominative case (Do you work too hard, *as* I do?).

The use of the preposition “like” as a replacement for “as” or “as if” should be avoided. A strong adverb can often replace a weak prepositional phrase. For example, “the cyclist pedalled with *fury*” is weak compared with, “the cyclist pedalled *furiously*”.

A possessive may replace a prepositional phrase, especially an “of” phrase. For example: “I was dismayed by the complexity of the street map” essentially equals “The street map’s complexity dismayed me”.

Changing from passive voice to active almost always eliminates a preposition whenever the subject appears in a “by” phrase. For example, “the ship was sailed by an experienced crew” equals, “an experienced crew sailed the ship”.

Cutting unnecessary prepositions

A noun ending in *ance*, *ence*, *ity*, *ment*, *sion*, or *tion* is often formed from a verb, **eg**, qualification – qualify; performance – perform. These nouns are sometimes called “nominalisations” or “buried verbs,” and they often require additional words, especially prepositions. “During her performance of the concerto” is essentially equivalent to “while she performed the concerto”.

Using the verb form often eliminates more than one preposition. For example, “toward maximisation of” becomes simply “to maximise” so that: “our efforts toward maximisation of profits failed” should be edited down to “our efforts to maximise profits failed”.

Conjunctions

A conjunction connects sentences, clauses, or words within a clause: “my daughter graduated from college in December, *and* my son will graduate from high school in May” (*and* connects two independent clauses); “I said hello, *but* no one answered” (*but* connects two independent clauses); “we’re making progress slowly *but* surely” (*but* joins two adverbs within an adverbial clause).

The two main classes of conjunctions are co-ordinate and subordinate. Some words that are typically

considered adverbs also serve as conjunctions; among these are: nevertheless; otherwise; and consequently.

Co-ordinating conjunctions join words or groups of words of equal grammatical rank, that is, independent elements such as two nouns, two verbs, two phrases, or two clauses (Are you speaking to him *or* to me?: the results are disappointing *but* not discouraging).

A co-ordinating conjunction may be either a single word or a correlative conjunction.

Correlative conjunctions are used in pairs, often to join successive clauses that depend on each other to form a complete thought.

Correlative conjunctions must frame structurally identical or matching sentence parts (an attempt both to win the gold medal *and to* set a new record); in other words, each member of the pair should immediately precede the same part of speech (they not only read the book *but also* saw the movie: if the first claim is true, *then the* second claim must be false).

Some examples of correlative conjunctions are: as–as; if–then; either–or; neither–nor; both–and; where–there; so–as; and not only–but also.

Copulative (or additive) co-ordinating conjunctions denote addition. The second clause states an additional fact that is related to the first clause.

The conjunctions include: and; also; moreover and no less than (one associate received a raise, *and* the other was promoted; the jockeys' postrace party was *no less* exciting than the race itself).

Adversative or contrasting co-ordinating conjunctions denote contrasts or comparisons. The second clause usually qualifies the first clause in some way.

The conjunctions include: but; still; yet and nevertheless (the message is sad *but* inspiring; she's earned her doctorate, *yet* she's still not satisfied with herself).

Disjunctive or separative co-ordinating conjunctions denote separation or alternatives. Only one of the statements joined by the conjunction may be true; with some conjunctions, both may be false.

The conjunctions include: either; or; else; but; nor; neither; otherwise and other (that bird is neither a heron *nor* a crane; you can wear the blue coat *or* the green one).

Final (or illative) co-ordinating conjunctions denote inferences or consequences. The second clause gives a reason for the first clause's statement, or it shows what has been or ought to be done in view of the first clause's expression.

The conjunctions include: consequently; for; hence; so; thus; therefor; as a consequence; as a result; so that; and so then (he had betrayed the king; *therefore* he was banished: it's time to leave, *so* let's go).

There is a widespread belief – one with no historical or grammatical foundation – that it is an error to begin a sentence with a conjunction such as *and*, *but*, or *so*.

Still, “but” as an adversative conjunction can occasionally be unclear at the beginning of a sentence. Evaluate the contrasting force of the “but” in question and see whether the needed word is really “and”; if “and” can be substituted, then “but” is almost certainly the wrong word.

Consider this example: “He went to school this morning. But he left his lunchbox on the kitchen table”.

Between those sentences is an elliptical idea, since the two actions are in no way contradictory. What is implied is something like this: “He went to school, intending to have lunch there, but he left his lunch behind”.

Because *and* would have made sense in the passage as originally stated, *but* is not the right word.

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To sum up, then, *but* is a perfectly proper way to open a sentence, but only if the idea it introduces truly contrasts with what precedes.

For that matter, *but* is often an effective way of introducing a paragraph that develops an idea contrary to the one preceding it.

Interjection

An interjection or exclamation is a word, phrase, or clause that denotes strong feeling without any other grammatical structure (Wow!; Oh, my!; Help!; Indeed!; Dear me!; If only!; ouch; whew; ugh). It is often the only excuse for using an exclamation point.

It is frequently allowed to stand as a sentence by itself (Oh! I've lost my wallet!; Ouch! I think my ankle is sprained!; Get out!; Whoa!).

Introductory words such as "well" and "why" may also act as interjections when they are meaningless utterances (well, I tried my best; why, I would never do that). The punctuation offsetting the interjections distinguishes them.

Compare the different meanings of: "Well, I didn't know him" with "I didn't know him well" and "Why, here you are!" with "I have no idea why you are here" and "Why? I have no idea".

Interjections should be used sparingly and almost exclusively in direct quotes. Some freedom is provided to headline and banner writers, **eg**, It's War!: Kennedy Dead!: Peace!

oOOo

Some common grammatical errors

Agreement

Subject, verb, and pronoun should agree in number. Common problems include the collective noun (singular or plural?), noun followed by a prepositional phrase (does verb agree with subject noun or with object of prepositional phrase?), apparently singular subject (noun or pronoun) in an independent clause as antecedent for pronoun subject in compound sentence.

Run-on sentence, aka comma splice

Two independent clauses joined only by a comma (The director ordered a complete audit, the accountants spent several weeks in the organisation's office); can usually be fixed by changing the comma to a semicolon or a period, or by adding a conjunction.

Homophones

Perhaps the greatest area that causes problems for journalists are homophones. Homophones are two or more words having the same pronunciation but different meanings, origins, and spelling.

Nothing causes readers more concern and confusion than seeing a word meaning one thing being used to describe something completely different. For that reason there are numerous examples of homophones throughout this style guide.

A good dictionary is therefore a prerequisite for every journalist.

Here are a few more homophones that wait the unwary journalist.

- **trey / tray**
- **caste / cast**
- **jam / jamb**
- **metre / meter**
- **feint / faint**
- **aureole / oriole**
- **reign / rain**
- **dependent / dependant**
- **canvass / canvas**
- **discrete / discreet**
- **affect / effect**
- **discrete / discreet**
- **whet / wet**
- **meet / mete**
- **alternate / alternative**
- **peddle / pedal**

Clichés

It's somewhat of a cliché to tell journalists to avoid clichés in their stories. Every time you have a story about an inquiry the words "in depth" pop up; a bad car accident is always "an horrendous accident"; someone being shot is killed in a "hail of bullets"; politicians have their "back against the wall"; emergency services "rush to the scene".

The regular use of these predictable words and phrases is numbing and indicates a lack of thought and effort resulting in them losing their intended force or novelty.

Some often used clichés are repeated below. While none are banned, try and keep their use to a minimum. If you find yourself using these terms frequently, ask yourself if it really is the best you can do.

- **a question mark hangs over**
- **the situation remains confused**
- **grind to a halt**
- **full-scale search**
- **blessing in disguise**
- **calm before the storm**
- **in the final analysis**
- **shrouded in mystery**
- **ripe old age**
- **vanished into thin air**
- **emotions ran high**
- **sweeping change**
- **strife torn**
- **chequered career**
- **conspicuous by its absence**
 - **combing the area for clues**
- **point blank range**
- **armed to the teeth**
- **spread like wildfire**
- **wealth of experience**
- **in the pipeline**
- **reign of terror**
- **last-ditch effort**
- **limped into port**
- **moment of truth**
- **bated breath**
- **blazing inferno**
- **gory details**

oOOo

Some common journalism errors

Active v's Passive

News is about people doing things and things happening. It logically flows that an active inflection carries with it more interest than a passive one.

Which of the two are more interesting? “A meeting will be held by the Government next week to discuss the problems with the economy” or “The Government will meet next week to discuss problems with the economy.”

The first is an example of what grammarians call the passive voice; the second is the active voice. Don't be put off, it's really very simple.

Active voice: **A does B.**

Passive voice: **B is done** (usually by A).

Using an active voice will help give your stories more vitality and life. It can also make a weak sentence more emphatic and give it greater impact.

Compare these examples. The first is in the passive, the second active:

“Guests at a 21st birthday party in Noble Park were assaulted by a gang of youths armed with sticks and steel stakes last night.”

“A gang of youths armed with sticks and steel stakes assaulted guests at a 21st birthday party in Noble Park last night.”

Governments, politicians, and officials of all kinds love the passive because individual actions are buried beneath a cloak of collective responsibility. They say: “mistakes were made” instead of “we made mistakes” and use phrases such as “in the circumstances it was considered” and “it will be recognised that” and “it was felt necessary that”, rather than “I/we recognise”, “It's necessary to”.

This use of the passive voice serves to absolve responsibility, takes the life out of the action and distances the situation from any identifiable source.

For these reasons a journalist should try to write their stories, and get their interview subjects to phrase their answers in, the active voice.

Attribution

Always identify the source of an assertion before making it – always say *who* before you say *what* they said or did.

The Australian military is unlikely to be capable of defending the country from attack due to increase in the number of its members failing to re-enlist. That's the view of an Australian-based military strategy group which has carried out an audit of Australia's armed forces.

This construction puts impact before information. The reader is in no position to make a judgement on the validity of the assertion until they know who is making it, or they will be so shocked by the assertion that they will not take in the attribution.

In addition it is a more natural and conversational way to write and it avoids confusion. You would not say to a friend: “I am a drunken, lazy, lying failure with no moral character or praiseworthy features. That's what my wife said last night.”

You would naturally put the attribution first: “My wife said I'm a drunken, lazy, lying failure ...”

As that is the way we speak it's the way we should write news stories too.

Verbosity

A valuable lesson taught to me by one of my first editors was, “remember, your readers will die of old age early enough without you boring them to death.” A very valid point it is too.

A professional journalist needs to be economic with their use of words. Print space in publications, as with air time on radio and television, is limited. The pages are not made from rubber and will not stretch to fit the length of your stories.

For this reason a professional journalist needs to be able to get all of the points across using as few words as possible.

There is little to be gained by padding a story out when the facts don't support it. Either source more information or end the story. Never fall into the trap of using two or three words when one will suffice.

Some common examples are:

<i>At this moment in time</i>	now	<i>By virtue of the fact that</i>	because
<i>In the absence of</i>	without	<i>Made good their escape</i>	escaped
<i>Was of the opinion that</i>	thought	<i>Leaves much to be desired</i>	poor
<i>Put in an appearance</i>	appeared	<i>On account of the fact that</i>	because
<i>In conjunction with</i>	and	<i>A large proportion of</i>	many
<i>Placed under arrest</i>	arrested	<i>In the event that</i>	if
<i>With the exception of</i>	except	<i>Temporary reprieve</i>	reprieve
<i>Prior experience</i>	experience	<i>Razed to the ground</i>	razed
<i>Close proximity</i>	close	<i>Exact replica</i>	replica
<i>Patently obvious</i>	obvious	<i>Red in colour</i>	red
<i>Surrounded on all sides</i>	surrounded	<i>Free gift</i>	gift

oOOo

Tips for greater accuracy

The most important characteristic shared by good journalists is curiosity. Good journalists love to read and want to find out as much as they can about the every aspect of the world around them. The following tips will help you to hone this curiosity and produce accurate and informative articles.

1. **Always read your own publication — every day**
Check what's happened to your stories. Changes made? Ask why. You may learn something
Critical reading can enhance your awareness of style
It's also a good way to prevent the same story from getting into the paper more than once
2. **Never assume anything**
3. **Always ask: "Is there anything else I should know?"**
There's nothing worse than having a source let you blunder into an error because:
"Well, you didn't ask."
4. **Always be careful how you ask questions when checking a fact**
Leading questions may lead you into trouble
Ask open questions that ensure complete, open answers
5. **Always use all of the tools available to you**
Dictionary, style guide, spell-checker, reference books, internet sites. etc.
Don't be too busy or too proud to check a fact
6. **Always read the clips**
They can tip you off to sources, assumptions, information that has been reported as fact
They can guide you to possible inconsistencies, contradictions etc. with your information
7. **But: Never trust anything in the clips**
How do you know the first story was correct?
Do you know for sure corrections caught up with the library clip or archive copy?
Has something changed since that story was written?
8. **Never assume that of two spellings for the same name:**
The first spelling is the correct one
The most frequent spelling is the correct one
Either spelling is the correct one
9. **Always do the math**
Don't rely on another person's figures.
Remember that "officials" and "experts" may be as bad at math as journalists.
Don't be too busy or proud to consult a math text or math guide and have one available.
10. **Never trust a PR person's word on spellings or other facts**
11. **Always find the first reference to a person in copy**
Make sure you have first name and title
Double-check to make sure first reference hasn't been omitted, rearranged or deleted in trimming copy
12. **Always follow the Rule of Fair Comment**
A one-sided or one-source story is simply not a complete story and can never be an accurate one
The other side may provide important information that makes the story accurate
You can't know it all, so talk to the people who do know more than you
13. **Always tap colleagues' expertise if you don't know the subject**
14. **Always beware of superlatives**
"The biggest," "the best," "the smallest," "the worst" etc. ... often isn't.
Check it out

15. **Always make sure that the shorter word you use in a head ...**
Means exactly the same thing as the word that won't fit
16. **Always reread the full sentence if you've changed a word or two in copy**
Watch for subject-verb agreement, missing info, duplication, etc.
17. **Never make it someone else's job to make the story perfect**
Nobody should care more about your work than you do
18. **See the forest and the trees. Always:**
Read (at least) once for content and effect.
Read (at least) once for the mechanical errors:
 Grammar
 Punctuation
 Keyboarding
Read (at least) one final time to see where the story can be tightened up
19. **Always immediately show any error you see to a supervisor.**
Especially headline errors
It may save you and your paper embarrassment
Quick corrective action also may be important in defence against a lawsuit
Don't assume somebody else has already caught it
20. **Always give any sensitive, unusual or tricky material ...**
One last look

oOOo

Journalism absurdities

The following are a few examples of where the journalist concerned failed to get the desired point across clearly and where the sub-editor failed to spot the absurdities prior to the stories making it into print.

Journalists and sub-editors must always be on guard against literal and grammatical gaffes such as these.

People can only die once – except in badly worded stories:

“For the second time in six months, a prisoner at Silverwater jail has died after hanging himself in his cell.”

“A suicide bomber has struck again in Baghdad.”

Dead people can not do anything:

“Sixty women have come forward to claim they have been assaulted by a dead gynaecologist.”

“Nobody knew what had happened until she turned up dead.”

Is this really what was meant?:

“Traffic was blocked by an overturned truck heading north on the Eastern Arterial.”

Who fought who?:

This is a great example why copy editors are important and how a single, imprecise word can change the whole meaning of a sentence. Take this BBC News story.

The article began about how Chad's leader Idriss Déby called for the following month's African Union summit to be moved from Sudan (against whom Chad had recently declared war) to Nigeria. Déby accused Khartoum of backing a Chadian rebel group.

But the BBC published: *“Sudan's foreign minister told the BBC that Sudan's army had fought with Chadian rebels when they refused to either disarm or leave Sudan.”*

Does the phrase "Sudan's army had fought with Chadian rebels" mean they fought alongside the rebels or against the rebels?

Only from other parts of the article can you presume that they meant against.

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Words and prepositions

Listed here are some words that often cause writers trouble. Where more than one preposition is given, the bracketed terms show the context where each is appropriate.

Where two prepositions are followed by a single bracketed term, either can be used in a similar context. The notation “none (transitive)” indicates that no preposition is used when a verb is transitive.

Examples of the first item in the list might be: **abide** *with* me; to **abide** *by* an agreement; I can’t **abide** him.

More details of how we use certain words will be found in the detailed alphabetical sections that follow.

- abide** (vb.): *with* [stay]; *by* [obey]; none (transitive)
abound (vb.): *in, with* [resources]
absolve (vb.): *from* [guilt]; *of* [obligation]
accompanied (adj.): *by* (**not with**) [something else]
accord (vb.): *in or with* [an opinion]; *to* [a person]
account (vb.): *to* [a person]; *for* [a thing or a person]
acquiesce (vb.): *in* [a decision]; *to* [pressure]
acquit (vb.): *of* (**not from**) [a charge]; none (transitive)
adept (vb.): *at* [an activity]; *in* [an art]
admit (vb.) (“acknowledge”): none (**not to**) (transitive)
admit (vb.) (“let in”): *to, into*: **admit** (vb.) (“allow”): *of*
agree (vb.): *to, on, upon* [terms]; *about* [concur]; *with* [a person]; *in* [a specified manner (**eg**, in general or in principle)]
answer (vb.): *to* [a person]; *for* [an act]
anxious (adj.): *about* [a concern] (**not to** [do something])
argue (vb.): *with* [a person]; *over, about* [a situation or thing]; *for, against* [a position]
badger (vb.): *into* [doing something]; *about* [a situation]
ban (n.): *on* [a thing; an activity]; *from* [a place]: **ban** (vb.): *from* [a place]
bank (vb.): *on* [rely]; *at, with* [a financial institution]
based (adj.): *on* (**not upon**) [a premise]; *in* [a place; a field of study]
beguile (vb.): *into* [doing something]; *with* [gifts, flattery, etc.]
bestow (vb.): *on* (**not upon**) [a person]
binding (adj.): *on* (**not upon**) [a person]
blasphemy (n.): *against* [a religious tenet]
cajole (vb.): *into* [doing something]; *out of* [a possession]
caution (vb.): *about* [a situation]; *against* [doing something]
centre (vb.): *on, upon* (**not around**) [a primary issue]
coerce (vb.): *into* [doing something]
cohesion (n.): *between, among* [things; groups]
coincide (vb.): *with* [an event]
collude (vb.): *with* [a person to defraud another]
comment (n.): *on* [a thing]; *about* [another person]; *to* [a person]
commiserate (vb.): *with* [a person]
compare (vb.): *with* (literal comparison); *to* (poetic or metaphorical comparison)
comply (vb.): *with* (**not to**) [a rule; an order]
confide (vb.): *to, in* [a person]
congruence (n.): *with* [a standard]
connive (vb.): *at* [a bad act]; *with* [another person]

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consider (vb.): none (transitive); *as* [one of several possible aspects (**not** as a substitute for “*to be*”)]; *for* [a position]

consist (vb.): *of* [components (said of concrete things)]; *in* [qualities (said of abstract things)]

contemporary (adj.): *with* [another event]

contemporary (n.): *of* [another person]

contiguous (adj.): *with, to* [another place]

contingent (adj.): *on* (**not upon**)

conversant (adj.): *with, in* [a field of study]

convict (vb.): *of, for* [**not in**]

depend (vb.): *on* (**not upon**)

differ (vb.): *from* [a thing or quality]; *with* [a person]; *about, over, on* [an issue]

different (adj.): *from* (but when an independent clause follows *different*, the conjunction *than* is a defensible substitute for *from* what: “movies today are different than they were in the fifties”)

dissent (n. & vb.): *from, against* (**not to or with**)

dissimilar (adj.): *to* (**not from**)

dissociate (vb.): *from*

equivalent (adj.): *to, in* (**not with**)

excerpt (n. & vb.): *from* (**not of**)

forbid (vb.): *to* (formal); *from* (informal)

foreclose (vb.): *on* [mortgaged property]

fraternise (vb.): *with* [certain people]

hail (vb.): *as* [an esteemed person]; *from* [a place]

identical (adj.): *with* (preferred by purists); *to* [something else]

impatience (n.): *with* [a person]; *with, at, about* [a situation]

impose (vb.): *on* (**not upon**) [a person]

inaugurate (vb.): *as* [an officer]; *into* [an office]

inculcate (vb.): *into, in* [a person]

independent (adj.): *of* (**not from**) [something else]

infringe (vb.): none (transitive); *on* (**not upon**) [a right]

inquire (vb.): *into* [situations]; *of* [people]; *after* [people]; *about* [a thing]

instil (vb.): *in, into* (**not with**) [a person]

lull (vb.): *into* [deception]; *to* [sleep]

mastery (n.): *of* [a skill]; *over* [people]

meant (vb.): *as* [an intention]; *for* [a destination, literal or figurative]

militate (vb.): *against* [an outcome]

mitigate (vb.): none (transitive)

oblivious (adj.): *of* (preferred); *to* [a danger; an opportunity]

off (prep. & adv.): none (**not of**)

predilection (n.): *for* [a preferred thing]

predominate (vb.) (not transitive): *in* [a field]; *over* [a rival]

preferable (adj.): *to* [not than]

pregnant (adj.): *with* [the child]; *by* [the father]

pretext (n.): *for* [a true intention]

purge (vb.): *of* [bad elements]; *from* [an organisation; a society]

reconcile (vb.): *with* [a person]; *to* [a situation]

reticent (adj.): *about* [speaking; a topic]; *in* [manner]

sanction (n.): *for* [misbehaviour]; *of* [a sponsoring body]; *to* [a person; an event]

shiver (vb.): *from* [cold]; *at* [something frightening]

skilful (adj.): *at, in* [an activity]; *with* [tools]

stigmatise (vb.): none (transitive); *as* [dishonourable]

subscribe (vb.): *to* [a periodical or an opinion]; *for* [stock]

succeed (vb.): *in* [an endeavour]; *to* [an estate]; *as* [a person in some position]

trade (vb.): *for* [swap]; *in* [sell]; *with* [do business with]; *at* [patronise]; *on* [buy and sell at]

trust (n.): *in* [faith]; *for* [beneficial trust]

undaunted (adj.): *in* [a task]; *by* [obstacles]

unequal (adj.): *to* [a challenge]; *in* [attributes]

used (adj.): *to* [accustomed]; *for* [applied]

vexed (adj.): *with* [someone]; *about, at* [something]

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A-A-A

a / an use **a** before all words beginning with a vowel or diphthong with the sound of “u” (as in unit) — a eulogy, a European, etc; *but* use **an** before a silent “h” — an heir, an honest woman, an honour; *but* prefer **a hotel** to an hotel; **an historic** to a historic: **an heroic** rather than a heroic

abattoir

abbreviations Do not use full points in abbreviations, or spaces between initials: BBC, US, mph, eg, 4am, lbw, No 10; *But* use a full point between the initials for people’s names, **eg**, P.J. O’Rourke, W.H. Smith; also prefer not to abbreviate Professor to *Prof*, Father to *Fr* etc.

Spell out less well-known abbreviations on first mention; it is not necessary to spell out well known ones, such as EU, UN, US, BBC, CIA, FBI, CD, Aids, Nasa.

Use all caps only if the abbreviation is pronounced as the individual letters; otherwise spell the word out: the BBC, ICI, VAT, UNHCR *but* Unesco, Nato, Unicef.

Beware of overusing less well-known acronyms and abbreviations; they can look clunky and clutter up text, especially those explained in brackets, but then only referred to once or twice again. It is usually simpler to use another word, or even to write out the name in full a second time.

abbreviated negatives (*can’t, don’t, shan’t* etc, plus similar abbreviations such as *I’ll, you’re*) should be discouraged in all text except in direct quotes

Abdication cap with specific reference to Edward VIII’s; in general sense, use *l/c*.

ability / capability / capacity a person’s physical or mental skill or power to achieve something is their **ability**, “the ability to drive a vehicle”. **Capability** refers more generally to power or ability, “she has the capability to play basketball professionally”, or to the quality of being able to use or be used in a certain way “a jet with long-distance-flight capability”. Capacity refers especially to a vessel’s ability to hold or contain something “a high-capacity fuel tank”. Used figuratively, capacity refers to a person’s physical or mental power to learn “an astounding capacity for algebra”

abjure / adjure to deny or solemnly renounce under oath is to **abjure** (the defendant abjured the charge of murder), or to declare one’s permanent abandonment of a place (abjure the realm). To **adjure** is to require someone to do something as if under oath (I adjure you to keep this secret) or to urge earnestly (the executive committee adjured all the members to approve the plan)

Aboriginal (singular, noun and adjective) and **Aborigines** (plural), for native Australian(s); **aboriginal** (*l/c*) for wider adjectival use

about / approximately when possible use the adverb *about* instead of *approximately*. In science articles however, *approximately* is preferred. Avoid coupling either word with another word of approximation, such as *guess* or *estimate*

Abu means “father of” so must not be separated from the name that follows, **ie**, Abu Qatada at first mention remains Abu Qatada (“father of Qatada”), **not** simply Qatada. *See Arabic names*

accents give French, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Italian and Ancient Greek words their proper accents and diacritical marks; omit in other languages unless you are sure of them. Accents should be used in headlines and on capital letters.

With Anglicised words, no need for accents in foreign words that have taken English nationality (*hotel, depot, debacle, elite, regime, cafe, fete, melee* etc), but keep the accent when it makes a crucial difference to pronunciation – *communiqué, fiancée, mêlée, pâté, protégé, exposé*; *See foreign words; Spanish*

accord / accordance the former means “agreement”, “ASEAN leaders reached an **accord** on climate

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change”, the later means “conformity”, “the work was done in **accordance** with accepted methods”.

accuse / charge a person is **accused** of, or **charged** with, an offence. While a person can be **accused** of something it doesn't necessarily mean they will be charged. Though a person **charged** with committing a crime is referred to as the accused in a court case. **Accused** is less formal than **charged** - which suggests official action, **eg**, Residents accused the developer of negligence: The developer was charged with negligence.

Achilles' heel, but Achilles tendon. *See apostrophes*

acknowledgement

acoustic(s) (not *accoustics*)

Act and **Bill** cap whether fully identified or not

actor male and female, avoid *actress* except when the name of an award, **eg**, Oscar for best actress

actual fact is tautologous. **Do not** use. Say “*actually*” instead if necessary otherwise delete entirely

AD, BC note that AD comes before the date, **eg**, AD35; BC comes after, 350BC. With century, both are used after, **eg**, 3rd century BC/AD.

adapter (person who adapts); **adaptor** (plug, device)

addresses commas after Street/Road etc. 1 Jackson Street, Collingwood etc; Do not abbreviate Street/Road/Avenue etc.

addicted / dependent a person is physically **addicted** to something, but psychologically **dependent** on something. To avoid the harsh connotations of addiction say that sufferers of diseases are physically dependent on medications, some of which can be habit-forming, that they must routinely take.

adequate / sufficient / enough the first refers to the suitability of something in a particular circumstance (an **adequate** explanation). **Sufficient** refers to an amount of material (always with a mass noun - sufficient water, sufficient information). **Enough** modifies both count nouns (enough people) and mass nouns (enough oil).

adherence / adhesion with a few exceptions the first term is figurative, the second literal, **eg**, Your **adherence** to the transportation code requires the **adhesion** of an inspection sticker to your windshield.

adidas (l/c) allow companies the styles they wish to follow

adjectives avoid clichéd adjectives as in *long-felt want, serious danger, widespread concern, substantial majority* etc

Adjutant-General takes the hyphen.

administration (US) l/c the Clinton administration etc.

Admiral do not abbreviate to *Adm* Jones etc. except in lists; subsequent mentions, *the admiral*.

admissible, inadmissible (not *-able*).

admission / admittance admission is figurative, suggesting particularly the rights and privileges granted upon entry (the student won **admission** to a first-rate university). **Admittance** is purely physical (no admittance beyond this point).

ad nauseam (not *ad nauseum*)

Adrenalin is a trademark of **adrenaline** so cap; **adrenaline** is a hormone that increases heart rate and blood pressure, extracted from animals or synthesised for medical uses.

adduce / deduce / induce to **adduce** is to give as a reason, offer as a proof, or cite as an example, **eg**, as evidence of reliability, she adduced her four years of steady volunteer work as a nurse's aide. **Deduce** and **induce** are opposite processes. To **deduce** is to reason from general principles to specific conclusions, or to draw a specific conclusion from general bases, **eg**, from these clues, one deduces that the butler did it. To **induce** is to form a general principle based on specific observations, **eg**, after years of studying eagles, the researchers induced a few of their social habits.

adult magazines avoid this evasive term; say *pornographic magazines* instead.

adverbs when they are used to qualify adjectives, the joining hyphen is rarely needed, **eg**, *heavily pregnant, classically carved, colourfully decorated, genetically modified food*. But in some cases, such as *well-founded, ill-educated, week-long* the compound looks better with the hyphen. The best guidance is to use the hyphen in these phrases as little as possible or when the phrase would otherwise be ambiguous.

adverse / averse adverse means either *strongly opposed* or *unfortunate* and typically refers to things (not people), **eg**, adverse relations between nations, an adverse wind blew the ship off course. **Averse** means *feeling negatively about* and refers to people, **eg**, averse to asking for directions.

advertisement prefer to *advert*, especially at first mention; but *advert* is acceptable (at second mention, in headings etc). Avoid *ad*.

adviser (not *advisor*)

affect / effect as a verb, to **affect** means *to produce an effect on, to touch the feelings of, or to pretend to have or feel* (as in **affectation**), **eg**, the adverse publicity affected the election. To **effect** (usually a noun) is *to bring about, to accomplish*, **eg**, the candidate's attempted explanations had no effect.

It may also be a verb meaning *to make happen, produce* as in "the goal had been to effect a major change in campus politics." If in doubt, always consult the dictionary.

affidavit a written declaration on oath. Such phrases as *sworn affidavit* and "he swore an affidavit" are therefore tautologous.

affinity *with* or *between*, **not** *to* or *for*.

affirmative, in the (in the negative) these are slightly pompous ways of saying *yes* and *no*. They result in part because people are unsure how to punctuate *yes* and *no*. The ordinary way is this: *he said yes; she said no* (**no** quotation marks about *yes*, and **without** a capital).

afflict / inflict sufferers are **afflicted** with or by disease or troubles (agricultural communities afflicted with drought). But events, illnesses, punishments, and such are **inflicted** on living things or entities – an abuser inflicts cruelty.

Afghans (noun or adjective) people; an **Afghani** (u/c) is a unit of currency, not a person.

aficionado plural **aficionados**

African Union (**AU** abbreviated) replaces the Organisation of African Unity (OAU)

Afrikaans, the language; **Afrikaner(s)**, the people.

affront / effrontery the first is a deliberate insult, the second an act of shameless impudence or audacity.

after almost invariably to be used rather than *following*. Also, beware of careless use in sentences such as "The Russian player won a place in the final after beating the seeded German". Say instead " ... by beating the seeded German". See *as; following*.

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after having (plus past participle) though common, this phrasing is redundant. Try instead “after” (plus present participle): change “after having passed the audition, she ...” to “after passing the audition, she ...”; or, “having passed the audition, she ...”.

afterlife (one word)

afterward (adverb) **afterword** (noun) the first means *later*; the second means *an epilogue*. On afterward(s), see toward.

ageing takes the middle “e” — as in **axeing, likeable, mileage, moveable, rateable, sizeable, unlikeable, unshakeable** etc. The most common exceptions are listed separately, **eg, unmistakable**.

ages normal style is “Aline Scott, 33, a florist,” but occasional variations such as “Rex Hunt, who is 74,” are permissible. For children write the age up to nine, **eg**, “the seven-year-old child said,” “the 15-year-old boy” “Susan, seven, went,” “The girl, aged six, attends the local school” but **twentysomething, fortysomething**. *Note*: caps in **Ice Age, Stone Age, the Dark Ages** etc.

aggravate means to *make worse*. It does **not** mean to *annoy* or *irritate*.

AGM caps, but prefer *annual meeting* in text.

agoraphobia (**not** *agaro-*, *agra-* etc) extreme or irrational fear of crowded spaces or enclosed public places. Similarly **agoraphobic** (noun).

ahead of do **not** use. Prefer *before, prior* or *in advance of*.

aide-de-camp singular, **aides-de-camp** plural.

Aids (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) is **not** a disease, but a medical condition. No need to spell it out. Diseases that affect people who are HIV-positive may be called Aids-related diseases. *See HIV*.

Air Force One the US presidential jet.

airbase, airstrip, airspace, airmail, airlift, airstrikes (no hyphens); but *note*: **air fares, air show, air raid**.

aircraft carrier

air-conditioner, air-conditioning (hyphenate)

aircraft prefer to *planes* wherever possible. Remember that not all aircraft are jets — some are still turbo-prop. Also avoid the American *airplanes*. *See planes*.

aircraft names are italicised, as with ships' or locomotive names, **eg**, the *Enola Gay* (Hiroshima bomber).

aircraft types B-52, F-111, C-130, F-18 etc. (hyphens between letter and numbers).

aircraftman, aircraftwoman, not aircraftsman etc.

air force cap in full name such as **Royal Air Force** (thereafter the **RAF**), **US Air Force (USAF)**, **Brazilian Air Force** (thereafter the **air force**, l/c); and l/c in adjectival use, **eg**, an air force raid.

airports as a general rule use the name of the city or town followed by l/c airport, **eg**, Manchester airport, Tokyo airport etc; Where the word is part of the airports name cap, **eg**, Soekarno-Hatta International Airport, Cairns International Airport etc.

air show (two words) cap when specific, **eg**, the Paris Air Show, the Farnborough Air Show.

airstrikes one word in military sense, but **air raids** (two words)

akimbo use only with reference to arms (never legs). It means hands on the hips with elbows turned outwards.

Albright, Madeleine former US secretary of state; Mrs Albright, **not** Ms, after first mention.

Alfa Romeo

alfresco one word, roman.

algebra take great care in writing and presenting algebraic expressions. Individual terms should be in italics. Be sure that superscripts, including squares of numbers, and subscripts are properly rendered, **eg**, $E=mc^2$. As an example in narrative text: "Dr Graham noted that the mass, m , is proportional to Ax where A is the area of the burger and x is its thickness. If all other parameters remain the same (heat of grill, absence of sudden downpour, mood of cook and so on), then t , the total cooking time, is proportional to x^2A ."

Ali, Muhammad

alibi do **not** use as a general alternative to *excuse*. It means being elsewhere at the material time.

al-Jazeera TV and news organisation based in Qatar.

Alka-Seltzer note hyphen and capitals.

all (of) delete the *of* whenever possible (all the houses, all my children). The only common exceptions occur when *all of* precedes a non-possessive pronoun (all of us) and when it precedes a possessive noun (all of Japan's players).

Allah Arabic for **God**. Both words refer to the same concept: there is no major difference between **God** in the Old Testament and **Allah** in Islam. Therefore it makes sense to talk about **God** in an Islamic context and to use **Allah** in quotations or for literary effect.

Allahu akbar (God is great)

all comers

allege avoid the suggestion that the writer is making the allegation, so specify its source. Do **not** use **alleged** as a synonym of *ostensible*, *apparent* or *reputed*.

Allende, Isabel the Chilean novelist (born in Lima, Peru) is the niece and goddaughter of the former Chilean President, Salvador Allende, **not** his daughter.

All England Club home of the Wimbledon Championships (no hyphen).

allies *l/c* the **allies** in the second world war context and **alliance** in *Atlantic alliance*, *Gulf War alliance* etc; *but* use **coalition** when referring to the 2003 Iraq war.

all right (**never** *alright*) *but* prefer **agreed**, **go ahead**.

all-time avoid as in *all-time high*; use **highest** or **record high** instead.

allude / elude / illude to **allude** is to refer to something indirectly (allude to a problem). It is often loosely used where *refer* or *quote* would be better—that is, where there is a direct mention or quotation, **eg**, "we will allude briefly to the main points." To **elude** is to avoid capture (elude the hunters). To **illude** (quite rare) is to deceive, **eg**, he had allowed his imagination to illude him.

allusion / illusion / reference an **allusion** is an indirect or casual mention or suggestion of something (the cockroach in this story is an allusion to Kafka). An **illusion** is a false idea or belief or a deceptive appearance or impression, **eg**, he had no illusions about the trouble he was in," "the illusion of family

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togetherness.” A **reference** is a direct or formal mention (the references in this article have been meticulously documented).

alongside means *at the side of*: therefore “alongside of” is tautologous.

alps an alpine pasture *but* the **Swiss Alps** the **French Alps**; an **Alpine village** (if in the Alps)

al-Qaeda Osama bin Laden's group. *See War on Terror.*

already / all ready the first refers to time (the race has already started); the second refers to people's preparation (we are all ready to leave).

alsatian (l/c, the German shepherd dog); wherever possible, l/c for breeds of dogs; but obvious exceptions include Yorkshire terrier. *See dogs.*

altar (noun); **alter** (verb) an **altar** is a *table* or similar object used for sacramental purposes. To **alter** is *to change*.

AltaVista the search engine

alternate implies substituting for another (we took the alternate route) or taking turns with another (her alternate chaired the meeting).

alternative of two, **choice** or **option** of three or more.

altogether / all together the first means *wholly* or *entirely* (that story is altogether false). **All together** refers to a unity of time or place (we were all together for Christmas).

Alzheimer's disease

Amateur Athletic Association (not *Athletics*)

Amazon.com (use initial cap)

Ambassador l/c, **eg**, the French ambassador,

ambience not *ambiance*

ambiguous / ambivalent language that has more than one reasonable meaning is **ambiguous** (the question is ambiguous). Views that express *contradictory ideas* or *mixed feelings* are **ambivalent** (John expressed an ambivalent opinion about the value of vitamin E, Aline's reaction to the news was ambivalent).

amend / emend the first is the general term, meaning *to change* or *add to* (the city amended its charter. The rule was **amended**). The second means *to correct* (text, etc.) – for the second printing, the author **emended** several typos that had reached print in the first. He emended what he had said. The noun corresponding to **amend** is **amendment**; the one corresponding to **emend** is **emendation**.

America(n) / US in general, try to use **American** as in *American cities*, *American food* etc; *but* US in headlines and in the context of government institutions, such as *US Congress*, *US Navy*, *US military operation*. **Never** use *America* when ambiguity could occur with Canada or Latin America. *See United States.*

American spellings normally use the English spelling except for offices or institutions such as *Secretary of Defense* (not *Defence*), *American Federation of Labor* (not *Labour*), or buildings, **eg**, *the Lincoln Center* (not *Centre*).

American Civil Liberties Union, not *American Civil Rights Union*.

American universities take care: *University of X* is not the same as *X University*; most states have two

large public universities, **eg**, University of Kentucky and Kentucky State University, University of Illinois and Illinois State University, etc. **Do not** call **Johns Hopkins University** “*John Hopkins*” or **Stanford University** “*Stamford*”.

America's Cup, the (yachting)

amiable / amicable both mean *friendly*, but **amiable** refers to people (an amiable waiter) and **amicable** to relationships (an amicable divorce).

amid / among (not *amidst, amongst*). See *between / among / amid*

Amnesty International the charity. Spell out at first mention, **Amnesty** thereafter (and in headlines)

amok (not *amock* or *amuck*)

among (not *amongst*)

among or **between?** contrary to popular myth, **between** is **not** limited to two parties. It is appropriate when the relationship is essentially reciprocal: fighting between the many peoples of Yugoslavia, treaties between European countries. **Among** belongs to distributive relationships: shared among etc.

amphitheatres in classical context are oval or circular (**eg**, the Colosseum in Rome); **do not** confuse with theatres, which are semi-circular or horseshoe-shaped.

Amsterdam treaty (l/c “t”), but the **Treaty of Amsterdam** (caps)

anaesthetic, anaesthetise

analog (in computer context); but keep **analogue** as in an analogous or parallel thing. See *program*.

analysis plural **analyses**

anaphylaxis an extreme, often life-threatening reaction to an antigen such as a bee sting, peanuts, seafood etc. to which the body has become hypersensitive following an earlier exposure. **Anaphylactic** (adj). Note **Anaphylactic shock** (noun) the reaction.

ancestor strictly means a person from whom another is directly descended, especially someone more distant than a grandparent. **Do not** use in the looser sense of predecessor; **eg**, Queen Elizabeth I is **not** the ancestor of the present Queen.

Ancient Briton/Britain, Ancient Greek/Greece, Ancient Egyptian/Egypt, Ancient Roman/Rome

Andersen, the accountancy firm (no longer *Arthur Andersen*); the former Andersen Consulting is now **Accenture**.

Andersen, Hans Christian (not *Anderson*)

aneurysm (not *aneurism*)

Anglicise, Anglophile, Anglophobe, Anglo-American (caps), **anglophone** (l/c)

angst (roman l/c)

animals beware the solecism “birds and animals”; say “birds and mammals” instead.

animal names call an animal *he* or *she* if the sex is definitely known or if called by a masculine or feminine name (**eg**, Felix the cat had only himself to blame). But use *it* if sex is unspecified. On the racing pages, horses are always *he* or *she*.

annexe (noun), but to **annex** (verb)

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anoint (not *annoint*)

Ansaphone (proprietary, cap) Use **answerphone**, or **answering machine**.

Antarctic, the **Antarctic Circle**, the **Antarctic Continent**, **Arctic** (not *Antartic* etc), the **Arctic Circle**, **Arctic waters**, a mass of **Arctic air**, but lowercased when used metaphorically, as in “We are experiencing arctic weather”.

antennae (plural of **antenna**) in zoological sense; **antennas** plural of **antenna** in radio or aerial sense.

Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (all initial caps), ABM Treaty for short.

Antichrist (initial cap)

anticipate do **not** use for *expect*. It means to *deal with*, or *use*, *in advance of*, or *before*, *the due time*. To anticipate marriage is different from expecting to marry.

antidepressant (noun or adjective), no hyphen

antipathy / **empathy** the first is a deep-seated feeling of *dislike* or *aversion* (his fundamental antipathy to capitalism); **empathy** means the ability to *understand* and *share the feelings* of others. **Do not** confuse. See *empathy* / *sympathy*.

Antipodes, **Antipodean** cap “A” when referring to Australia and New Zealand.

anti-Semitic, **anti-Semitism**

antisocial, **anticlimax**, **antitrust**

antisocial (no hyphen) **behaviour order** (ASBO); plural ASBOs.

Anti-Terrorist Branch, **Special Branch** (caps); but police squads in most cases l/c, except **Flying Squad**, and **Royalty** and **Diplomatic Protection Squad**, **Major Crime Squad**. Where it is the only squad of its type use caps.

anxious do **not** use as a synonym for *eager*. It means *worried*, *distressed*, or *nervous*, typically about an imminent event or something with an uncertain outcome.

any more always two words

anyone / **any one** the first is a singular indefinite pronoun (anyone would know that). The two-word phrase is a more emphatic form of *any*, referring to a single person or thing in a group, **eg**, Do you recognise any one of those boys?; I don't know any one of those stories.

anywhere / **any place** the first is preferred for an indefinite location (my keys could be anywhere). But **any place** is narrower when you mean any location (they couldn't find any place to sit down and rest). Avoid the one-word *anyplace*.

Apennines Italy (not *Appenines*)

Apostles, the. See *prophets*, *apostles*, *saints*.

apostrophes with proper names/nouns ending in *s* that are singular, follow the rule of writing what is voiced, **eg**, Keats's poetry, Sobers's batting, *The Blog's* style (or *Blogs* style); and with names where the final *s* is soft, use the “**s** apostrophe”, **eg**, Rabelais' writings, Jones' presidency; plurals follow normal form, as Walton Brothers' loss etc. *Note* that with Greek names of more than one syllable that end in *s*, **do not** use the “apostrophe *s*”, **eg**, Aristophanes' plays, Achilles' heel, Socrates' life, Archimedes' principle.

Take care with apostrophes with plural nouns, **eg**, women's, **not** womens'; children's, **not** childrens';

people's, **not** peoples'. Use the apostrophe in expressions such as *two years' time*, *several hours' delay* etc.

An apostrophe should be used to indicate the plural of single letters - p's and q's. *See grammar section.*

apparatchik an official in a large organisation, typically a political one.

appellations every surname should be granted the courtesy of a title. The exceptions are: convicted offenders, the dead (*but* not the recently dead, except in obituaries), and where common usage omits a title. Sportsmen, artists, authors, film stars, pop stars, actors etc. should **not** be referred to as Mr/Mrs/Ms etc, except in court cases or exceptional occasions where guilt would be implied by omitting the honorific.

General rules:

- a. First mention, Russell Brown, Alison Stern, subsequently Mr Brown, Mrs/Miss/Ms Stern.
- b. Put the name first, then the age (if relevant), then the description; **eg**, Sophia Loren, 62, the Italian actress; avoid the journalese construction "actress Sophia Loren" or the like
- c. Avoid initials and middle initials unless the person is best-known thereby (**eg**, W.G. Grace, with full points).
- d. Ms is nowadays fully acceptable when a woman wants to be called thus, or when it is not known for certain if she is Mrs or Miss.
- e. Dr is no longer confined to medical doctors; if a person has a doctorate from a reputable university, Dr is acceptable.
- f. Court proceedings: accused people should be accorded the appropriate title (Mr, Miss etc) — however guilty they may appear — after name and first name have been given at first mention; only convicted persons should be referred to by surname alone. *But* do be sensitive especially in murder cases, where the accused is given, for example, his "Mr" the victim (despite the dead not usually being given a title) should here be accorded the courtesy of the title. Otherwise the stark contrast of, say, Mr Jones being accused of the murder of Robinson, can appear gratuitously offensive.

appendix plural **appendices**, but **appendixes** in anatomy.

Apple not *Apple Computer(s)*, for the Macintosh manufacturers.

appraise means *evaluate*; **advise** means *inform*. **Never** confuse.

April Fool's Day, **April fool**, *but* **All Fools' Day**

approve / **endorse** the first implies positive thought or a positive attitude rather than action apart from consent (the budget was approved by the Cabinet): **endorse** implies both a positive attitude and active support (the board of directors endorsed the expansion plan).

approve (of) **approve** alone connotes official sanction (the finance committee approved the proposed budget). **Approve of** suggests favour (The victims approved of the jail sentence).

approximately perfectly acceptable in scientific stories though avoid coupling with another word of approximation such as *guess* or *estimate*. *See about / approximately.*

Aqaba, Gulf of (Red Sea)

aqueduct (not *aqueduct*)

Arab at an international level, the 22 members of the **Arab League** can safely be described as Arab countries: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania,

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Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. Use **Arab** (cap) in such phrases as "the Arab world".

Arabic refers to the language; "the Arabic press" means newspapers written in Arabic *but* note **arabic numerals** (l/c).

Arabic names always take care in this difficult area. But remember the basic rule of *al-X* (l/c *al-*, with hyphen, before name; rarely use the *el-* form). **Abu** means *father of* so must not be separated from the name that follows, ie, Abu Qatada at first mention remains Abu Qatada ("father of Qatada"), **not** simply Qatada.

al-, as the prefix to Arabic nouns (including names), prefer the *al-* to the *el-* form, except where the *el-* has become widely accepted. **al** in Arabic means *the* so try and avoid writing "the al ..."; in Saudi royal names, Al Saud is correct (in this case, *al* is actually **aal** and does **not** mean *the*).

abdul, **abu** and **bin** are not self-contained names, but are connected to the name that follows: **abdul** means *slave of ...* and so cannot correctly be used on its own. There are standard combinations, *slave of the merciful one*, *slave of the generous one*, etc, which all indicate that the person is a servant of God. In transliteration, **abd** (slave) is lower case, **eg**, Ahmad abd al-Rahman al-Saqqaf, except when used at the start of a name.

abu (father of) and **bin** (son of) are similar. When they appear in the middle of a name they should be lower case and are used in combination with the following part of the name, **eg**, Faisal abu Ahmad al-Saqqaf, Faisal bin Ahmad al-Saqqaf.

Despite the above, some people are actually named **Abdul**. This is more common among non-Arab Muslims. And some Arabs run **abd** or **abu** into the following word, **eg**, the writer Abdelrahman Munif.

Muhammad use this style for the prophet's name and for most *Muhammads* living in Arab countries, though where someone's preferred spelling is known respect it, **eg**, Mohamed Al Fayed, Mohamed ElBaradei. The spelling *Mohammed* (or variants) is considered archaic and disrespectful by many Muslims.

Muhandis/Mohandes, Qadi be wary of names where the first word is **Muhandis** or **Qadi**: these are honorary titles, meaning *engineer* and *judge* respectively.

Arafat, Yassir (not *Yasser*)

arbitrate, **arbitration** do **not** confuse with *mediate*, *mediation*. An arbitrator hears evidence from different parties then hands down a decision; a *mediator* listens to the different arguments then tries to bring the parties to agreement.

archaeologist, **archaeology**. See *palaeontology*

archbishops

a. Anglican archbishops and diocesan **bishops**: at first mention, the Archbishop of Newcastle, the Most Rev Tim Smith; or the Bishop of Newcastle, the Right Rev Tim Smith, *but* if a doctor, the Bishop of Newcastle, Dr Tim Smith; subsequent references, the Archbishop (Bishop) (caps), or Dr Smith (if so entitled) - **never** Mr Smith;

b. The Archbishop of Canterbury is Primate of All England, the Archbishop of York is Primate of England;

c. Anglican bishops are *consecrated*, Roman Catholic bishops *ordained*;

d. Roman Catholic archbishops, at first mention: the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Essendon, the Most Rev John X, subsequent mentions Archbishop X or the Archbishop; bishops, first mention the Roman Catholic Bishop of Dili, the Right Rev Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, thereafter Bishop Belo or the Bishop, unless he has a doctorate, when he is Dr Belo.

archipelago singular, **archipelagos** plural.

arch rival two words.

area of often a nearly meaningless filler combination, **eg**, “as in the area of partnering skills.” Try deleting *the area of*.

Argentine is the adjective; an **Argentinian** is a person from Argentina (**never** the Argentine).

arguably, unarguably one of the most overused words in the language.

armada be careful with imprecise use of this word; it means a fleet of *armed* ships, so strictly **should not** be applied to any collection of boats or ships.

Armageddon (cap)

armchair, **deckchair** (no hyphens).

Armed Forces, the (u/c) as a noun, **eg**, Indonesian Armed Forces; also the **Services**.

Armistice Day is **not** the same as Remembrance Day (unless November 11 falls on a Sunday). See *two minutes' silence, Remembrance Day*. Note that in Australia a one minutes' silence is observed on Remembrance Day.

Army cap in context of the British Army, the Belgian Army, the Swiss Army (but thereafter the army, l/c); and always l/c when used adjectivally, **eg**, an army helicopter, an American army tank; thus, a US navy pilot etc.

arranged marriages are a traditional and perfectly acceptable form of wedlock across southern Asia and within the Asian community in some countries; they should not be confused with *forced marriages*, which are arranged without the consent of one or both partners, and have been widely criticised.

artefact (**not** *artifact*)

artistic movements cap Art Deco, Baroque, Classical, Neo-Classical, Cubist, Gothic, Impressionist, Minimalist, Modernist, Post-Modern, Pre-Columbian, Pre-Raphaelite, Rococo, Romantic, Surrealist etc. in cultural contexts; but in wider general use, l/c, **eg**, “He had a surrealist sense of humour but a romantic nature”.

arts awards initial cap for titles of awards such as Best Actress, Best Film, Play of the Year etc.

as beware of sloppy use in sentences such as “They were moved out as the blast tore open the building”; say simply “*after* the blast ...”.

as far as almost always wordy. Avoid the nonstandard phrasing that uses *as far as* in place of *as for*. That is, using *as far as* without the completing verb *is concerned* or *goes*. Compare “as far as change is concerned, it's welcome”, with “as for change, it's welcome”.

ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) was founded as an anti-communist Cold War organisation. Its founding members were Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines. It has expanded to include Brunei, Laos, Burma (1997), Vietnam and Cambodia. Surin Pitsuwan, a former foreign minister of Thailand becomes ASEAN secretary-general on January 1, 2008, See *Southeast Asia, Far East*.

Ashura a day of voluntary fasting for Sunni Muslims; Shia Muslims also commemorate the martyrdom of Hussein, a grandson of the prophet. For their community, therefore, it is **not** a festival but a day of deep mourning.

Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation forum (APEC as abbreviation) seven ASEAN member countries also belong to APEC.

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Asian tsunami, the occurred on December 26, 2004.

aspirin

assassin to be used **only** in the murder of a statesman or politician from a political motive (same applies to **assassination**); **not** to be used for the killing of general celebrities or others. *See execution and killer.*

assault, battery these are popularly given the same meaning. But in traditional common law, **assault** refers to a threat that causes someone to reasonably *fear* physical violence, and **battery** refers to a violent or repugnant *intentional physical contact* with another person. Assault **doesn't** involve touching; battery does.

assault rifle be careful when using this term. The British Army SA80 is a rifle, as is the L1A1 SLR (Self-Loading Rifle) the M-16 and the AR-15. The F88 AuSteyr used by the Australian Army is a derivative of the Austrian Steyr AUG, an assault rifle, as is the AK-47 and AK-74.

assemblage / assembly an **assemblage** is an informal collection of people or things, **eg**, some vast assemblage of gears and cogs. An **assembly** is a group of people gathered together for a common purpose.

assent / consent assent connotes enthusiasm; **consent** connotes mere allowance.

assume / presume an assumption is not based on proof or drawn from evidence; it is a hypothesis (you assume the worst about me). **Presume** implies a basis in evidence or on the basis of probability. If not contradicted, a presumption may support a decision (the legal presumption of innocence. The Tasmanian tiger is presumed to be extinct).

assure you **assure** your life; **ensure** means to make certain; you **insure** against risk.

AstroTurf (proprietary; note two caps)

asylum-seekers (hyphenate)

at the present time, at this time use *now*; but avoid the phrase *as of now*.

athletics 1500m but **5,000m** (the former is the "fifteen hundred" **not** "one thousand five hundred" metres).

Atlantic (Ocean), North Atlantic, South Atlantic, but transatlantic

Atomic Energy Authority in the UK (**not Agency**), abbreviated to **AEA**; but note **International Atomic Energy Agency**, abbreviated to **IAEA**.

Attorney-General, Solicitor-General (hyphenated); they are law officers, **not** legal officers.

Auditor-General (with hyphen)

Aum Shinrikyo means *Supreme Truth* sect, but note that the "aum" means sect, so to talk about the *Aum sect* or *Aum cult* is tautologous.

au pair

autism an incurable neurological disorder, to be used only when referring to the condition, **not** as a term of abuse, or in producing such witticisms as "mindless moral autism".

autistic someone with **autism**, **not** someone with poor social skills.

Autocue (proprietary, cap)

automated teller machine l/c but prefer **ATM**: invented by Scot John Shepherd-Barron in 1967. **Never** write ATM machine – it's tautologous.

avian influenza, (no caps. roman) H5N1 is the strain of bird flu and can be used; it is a virus.

avant garde (no hyphen)

avenge / revenge **avenge** (verb) is to afflict harm in return for a wrong or injury done to oneself or another (he avenged the death of his brother). The corresponding noun is **vengeance**. **Revenge** (verb and noun) is the infliction of harm on another out of anger or resentment for an injury or harm suffered at their hands, **eg**, the shooter was seeking revenge for an earlier assault. **Revenge** is much more commonly a noun as in "they didn't want justice, they wanted revenge).

averse / adverse means *feeling negatively about* and refers to people, **eg**, averse to asking for directions. *See adverse / averse.*

avocation / vocation an **avocation** is a hobby (stamp collecting is my weekend avocation). A **vocation** is one's profession or, especially in a religious sense, one's calling (she had a true vocation and became a nun).

Awacs airborne warning and control system, found on board the E-3 Sentry (a modified Boeing); **Awacs** is singular.

Awol absent without leave (**not AWOL**)

AXA (**not Axa**), the financial services group.

axeing (with middle "e") *but* try to avoid in sense of cutting jobs, dismissal etc.

ay (yes), **aye** (ever), **Ayes** (debate)

Ayers Rock now use **Uluru** for the Australian monolith.

Azerbaijan (noun) **Azerbaijani** (adjective); note that there are ethnic **Azeris** living in, for example, Armenia.

Aziz, Tariq former deputy prime minister of Iraq.

oOOo

B-B-B

b (abbreviation for born), no full point, **eg**, b 1906. Likewise **d** for died: d 1997.

Ba'ath party, (**not** *Baath*) The Arab Socialist Ba'th Party; a left-wing, secular Arab nationalist political party.

baby-boomer

baby-walker

baccalaureate use Anglicised spelling with l/c for general use, but cap in specific context of the International Baccalaureate; and note the specifically French examination or degree, the ***Baccalauréat*** (italic, cap, accent, no final "e").

Bacharach, Burt

backache, backbreaking, but back pain

B&B with caps and closed up around ampersand as abbreviation for *bed and breakfast*.

back benches (parliamentary) two words; but **backbenchers, backbench** (adjectival, as in backbench revolt).

back burner (no hyphen), but be sparing of the cliché "on the back burner".

backlash overworked word; always try to avoid.

backstreet(s) noun or adjective, no hyphen; similarly, **backyard**.

"**back to basics**" (quotes, no hyphen)

back-up (noun, hyphenate)

bacteria (plural), **bacterium** (singular) so don't write "the bacteria is"; bacteria and viruses are different and the terms are **not** interchangeable. Make sure the terminology is correct. *Note* that antibiotics are used to treat bacterial but **not** viral infections.

Baghdad

bail out (as in to bail someone out of trouble); but **bale out** a boat or from an aircraft by parachute, or to escape. *Note* **bail-out** (noun).

balk (**not** *baulk*)

ballistic missile has no wings or fins, and follows a ballistic trajectory, **eg**, the Iraqi **Scud**.

ballgown (one word)

balloted, like **benefited, budgeted** etc, has only one "t"

Band-Aid (proprietary, cap); say **plaster** or **sticking plaster**

banister (**not** *bannister*)

banknote

bankruptcy in Britain and Australia people file a petition for bankruptcy; they **do not** file for bankruptcy.

Bar, the (legal); also cap for the Bar of the House of Commons and cap in military honours sense, **eg**, DFC and Bar.

barbecue, barbecuing (not *BBQ*)

barcode

bar mitzvah (l/c, roman); also **bat mitzvah** for girls.

barons, baronesses call them lords and ladies, even at first mention: Lady Thatcher, Lady Robinson, Lady Jones, Lord Carmicheal etc.

Barroso the European Commission President wishes to be known as **José Manuel Barroso**, dropping the Durão. At second mention, he is Senhor Barroso.

Basle (Switzerland) (not *Basel*) *See Berne*.

basically greatly overworked word which rarely adds anything to a sentence. Try to avoid.

basis “on a ... basis” is a cliché and should be avoided. It most properly means *foundation*; for “employment on a part-time basis” say *part-time employment*; say *personally*, not “on a personal basis”; or simply state *daily* not “on a daily basis.” The plural is **bases**.

Basque country (initial caps). *See Eta*.

bated / baited *Note* the important difference — **bated** breath; **baited** hook.

battalion (not *batallion*). Say the 1st Battalion, the 7th Battalion etc. (not *First, Seventh*).

battery refers to a violent or repugnant *intentional physical contact* with another person. *See assault, battery*.

battle avoid using as a transitive verb as in “The protesters battled the police ...”; use *fought* or *battled against* instead.

BBC no need to spell out as British Broadcasting Corporation, though “the corporation” is a useful alternative in text. *Note* the format for its TV channels is BBC One, BBC Two etc; but Radio 1, 2 etc; **Note** BBC Television and BBC Radio (caps).

BC *See AD*

be-all and end-all note hyphens.

beating retreat (not *beating the retreat*).

Beatles, the, no need to cap “the” unless at the start of a sentence; similarly the Rolling Stones and the Backstreet Boys etc, *but* prefer to keep cap “T” with The Who and The The.

Beatrix (not *Beatrice*), Queen of the Netherlands. *See Holland, Netherlands*.

bedouin

beef wellington

Beethoven, Ludwig van (not *von*); normally Beethoven will suffice. *See Van*.

begs the question has a confusing variety of meanings, so is best avoided. Especially, **do not** confuse with *ask* or *raise* the question.

behalf “in behalf of” means in the *interest* or *for the benefit of* (the decision is in behalf of the patient). “On

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behalf of” means acting as *agent* or *representative of* (on behalf of Mr. Scott, I would like to express heartfelt thanks).

Beijing (not *Peking*) See *Chinese names*.

Belarus (not *Belorussia*); its people are **Belarussians** (prefer to *Belarusians*).

beleaguered rapidly becoming a cliché, especially in a political context, so best avoided.

Belfast, North, South, East and West. See *Ireland*.

bellringer, bellringing, belltower (no hyphens). See *peal*.

bellwether (not *bellweather*), a sheep that leads the herd; customarily misspelt, misused, or both.

benchmark (no hyphen)

benefited, benefiting

benzene is a substance obtained from coal-tar; **benzine** is a spirit obtained from petroleum.

-berg, -burg always check spelling of towns with these endings, and those ending in *-burgh, -borough, -brough*.

Berkeley Square, in the West End of London; similarly, **Berkeley**, California.

Berne (not *Bern*) Switzerland.

berserk (not *beserk*)

bestseller (one word); likewise **bestselling**.

bête noire, italic and final “e” on “noire”.

betting odds use a hyphen (16-1, 6-4 etc), **not** a slash (16/1). For odds-on, smaller figure comes first (1-2, 4-11 and so on).

between / amid / among between indicates one-to-one relationships (between you and me). Perfectly appropriate for more than two objects if multiple one-to-one relationships are understood from the context, **eg**, trade between members of the European Union. **Among** indicates undefined or collective relationships (honor among thieves) or plurals of count nouns (among the children). **Amid** is used with mass nouns (amid talk of war). Avoid *amidst / amongst*. See *among or between?*

Beverly Hills

Bhutto, Benazir call her Miss rather than Ms or Mrs at subsequent mentions.

bi- / Semi take care with the “bi” prefix. Its correct use is in Latin compounds, where it has the force of *two*, **not** half, such as **bicentenary/bicentennial** (a two-hundredth anniversary), or **biennial** (recurring every two years). **Biannual** means twice a year. **Semi** means “half” (semi-weekly means “twice a week”) to avoid confusion, write out “*twice a year, twice a month*”.

bias, biased

Bible (cap and roman, not italic), but **biblical** (l/c); **biblical references** thus - II Corinthians ii, 2; Luke iv, 5.

Bible Belt (both cap B)

biceps (singular and plural), there is no such thing as a bicep.

bid do **not** use in text as synonym of *effort*, *attempt* or *try*, though it may be used sparingly in headlines in this context.

bight is a curve in a coastline or river; **bite** involves teeth. **Do not** confuse. *See bite*.

Bill and **Act** caps whether fully identified or not.

Bill of Rights cap even when non-specific (eg, "If the Government were to introduce a Bill of Rights ...").

billion / trillion the meanings vary in different countries. The American definitions are almost universally accepted and we will use those, but writers need to remember there are geographic distinctions. Thus a billion is a thousand million (1,000,000,000), **not** one million million. Write \$5 billion, \$15 billion (\$5bn, \$15bn in headlines), three billion, 15 billion etc. In Great Britain, some parts of Canada, and Germany, a billion is a thousand times more than that (a million millions, or what Americans call a **trillion** - 1,000,000,000,000). In Great Britain a trillion is a million million millions, what Americans would call a **quintillion** (1,000,000,000,000,000,000).

Billy Elliot (hit film), **not** Elliott. *But see Eliot, T.S.*

bindi the name for the painted dot Hindu women wear on their forehead.

bin Laden, Osama note l/c "bin", except where it is the first word of a headline or sentence. Avoid the "Mr" designation, as with Saddam Hussein etc. Bin Laden's organisation is **al-Qaeda** – "*the Base*" (**not** *Qaida*). He has been stripped of his Saudi citizenship, so can be described as Saudi-born but **not** as a Saudi. *See War on Terror*.

bin-liner (use hyphen)

biological terms *See scientific names*, with particular reference to Latin terms - cap letter for first (genus) word, then l/c for the second (species); and italicise for all but the most common.

Biro (proprietary, cap) alternative is **ballpoint pen**.

birthday people and animals have birthdays; everything else has anniversaries. Write 33rd birthday, 65th birthday etc. (any number higher than **ninth**). *See numbers*.

birthrate, birthright, birthplace (no hyphens), but **birth control, birth certificate** etc.

bisexual pronouns "he" and "his" can no longer refer to both sexes equally; "he" or "she" will sometimes do. Always be sensitive in this contentious area.

bishops *See archbishops*

bismillah means "in the name of God" in Arabic.

bite (as with teeth) must not be confused with the computing term **byte** or the geographical **bight**. *See bight, byte, soundbite*.

black economy prefer **hidden** or **parallel** economy.

blacklist one word as noun or verb. *See shortlist*.

blackout (noun, one word).

blackspot (accident, unemployment etc), one word; similarly, **troublespot, hotspot**.

blacks (people), l/c; **do not** use *non-whites* and be sensitive to local usage. **African-American** is now often used in the United States, for instance. *See Coloureds, race*.

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blame take care with this word; blame is attached to *causes*, **not** *effects*. So say “Bad weather is blamed for my bronchitis”, **not** “My bronchitis is blamed on bad weather”.

blastfurnace

bleeper (**not** *beeper*) synonym for **pager**.

blitz, blitzkrieg

bloc use in context such as the former **Soviet bloc**, a **power bloc** etc; *but* **block vote**.

blond for men, **blonde** for women.

bloodied but unbowed; but **red-blooded** etc.

blood sports (two words; similarly **field sports**) *See foxhunt*.

Bloomingdale's

blue-collar workers, as **white-collar workers**.

blueprint avoid this greatly overworked word when all you mean is *plan, scheme* or *proposal*.

bluffers be very cautious. *The Bluffer's Guide/Guides* are trademarks, rigorously protected by their publishers. So generic phrases such as "a bluffer's guide to ..." must be avoided.

Blu-Tack (proprietary, cap)

boat is generally used for a small vessel, including fishing boats up to the size of a trawler; a ship is a large seagoing vessel big enough to carry smaller boats. In the Royal Navy, submarines are called boats. All take the pronoun *she* and the possessive *her*. *See ships*.

Boche, derogatory slang for Germans; **Bosch**, the household appliance or power tools manufacturer.

boffin do **not** use as a synonym of *scientist*, except ironically or in direct quotes.

Bogart, Humphrey, *but* **(Sir) Dirk Bogarde**

bogey (golf), **bogie** (wheels), **bogy** (ghost); *but note bogeyman*.

Bogotá (capital of Colombia).

Bohemian (cap noun), *but* **bohemian** (adj, l/c).

Bolshevik, Bolshevik, Bolshevism a person with politically subversive or radical views; a revolutionary.

bombs, car bomb, fire bomb, nail bomb, petrol bomb etc; *but* hyphenate verbal or adjectival use, **eg**, to **fire-bomb**, a **nail-bomb** attack.

bombshell in metaphorical use, as in “drop a bombshell”, a cliché. Don't use.

bonanza another greatly overworked word that should be avoided wherever possible.

bona fide, bona fides

Bonfire Night initial caps; *see Guy Fawkes Night*.

bored with (**not of**).

born / borne born is used only as an adjective (a born ruler) or in the fixed passive-voice verb to be born

(the child was born into poverty). **Borne** is the past participle of bear (this donkey has borne many heavy loads, she has borne three children). It is also used as a suffix in the sciences, **eg**, *food-borne*, *vector-borne*.

bortsch (Russian or Polish soup).

both unnecessary in most sentences that contain “and”; “both men and women” says no more than “men and women”, and takes longer; if you do use it, it is plural: “both women have reached the tops of their professions”.

bottleneck

Botox (proprietary, cap).

bourgeois (adjective) **bourgeoisie** (noun).

Boutros Boutros Ghali (no hyphens), a former UN Secretary-General; at subsequent mentions, Dr Boutros Ghali. His successor was the Ghanaian **Kofi Annan**.

bow-tie

box office as noun, two words; *but* hyphenate when adjectival (**eg**, **box-office** success).

boyfriend, girlfriend

Boy Scouts are now simply **Scouts** in Australia and the UK. **Scout leaders** have replaced *Scout masters*. Also cap **Scouting** in the context of the movement. In the US there are still **Boy Scouts**. Similarly for **Guides, Girl Guides**.

Braille (cap)

brainchild try to avoid this cliché.

branch (in police context): *but* **Special Branch, Anti-Terrorist Branch** because there is only one.

Brasilia capital of **Brazil**

breach / breech a **breach** (noun & verb) is a gap in or violation of something, **eg**, a breach of contract. To **breach** (noun) is to *break, break open, or break through* (breach the castle walls). A **breech** refers to the lower or back part of something, especially the buttocks, **eg**, a **breech birth**.

breakout, breakdown (as noun, each one word); *but* to **break out** etc, and **break-up** (hyphen).

breast-fed, breast-feed(ing) use hyphen.

Breathalyser (proprietary, cap), *but* to **breathalyse** (l/c, generic).

brehtaking (no hyphen).

Brent Spar is **not** an oil platform, still less a rig. It is a storage buoy and must be referred to in no other way. *Note* that **oil platforms** stand on the seabed; **oilrigs** are small mobile installations for oil exploration.

bridges cap as in Severn Bridge, Sydney Harbour Bridge, Southwark Bridge, Golden Gate Bridge.

bring / take The distinction may seem obvious, but the error is common. The simple question is; Where is the action directed? If it's toward you, use **bring** (bring home the groceries). If it's away from you, use **take** (take out the trash). You **take** (**not** bring) your car to the mechanic.

Britain or **Great Britain** = England, Wales, Scotland and islands governed from the mainland (ie, **not** Isle of Man or Channel Islands). **United Kingdom** = Great Britain and Northern Ireland. **British Isles** = United

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Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, Isle of Man and Channel Islands. **Do not** confuse these entities.

Britannia the decommissioned former Royal Yacht. Refer to her at first mention as *HMY Britannia*, or the *Royal Yacht Britannia*, thereafter *Britannia*.

British Athletic Federation (not *Athletics*).

Brittany (Bretagne in French).

broadsheet is better than *quality* in describing serious newspapers.

Brookings Institution (not *Institute*) in Washington.

brownfield, greenfield (as in building sites). But *note green belt* (two words).

Brylcreem (proprietary, cap).

BSE bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or “**mad cow**” disease (quotes).

BT is the usual abbreviated form of British Telecommunications plc, but it is often convenient to call the company *British Telecom* at first mention, and **BT** subsequently.

Budget cap a country's Budget, otherwise l/c. Note Budget day (l/c "d"); also note **Pre-Budget Report** (caps).

buffaloes (not *buffalos*)

Buffett, Warren, American investment banker.

burglary, larceny, robbery, theft there is a difference between a burglar, a robber and a thief. **Larceny**: If I leave my CD's on the floor outside my office door and you take them, without breaking into my office and without threatening me, then you have committed larceny, also known as simple theft, and you are a **thief**. **Burglary**: If you break into my office (or even enter through the unlocked door without my permission) and take the CD's off my desk, but did not threaten me, you are a **burglar**. **Robbery**: If you see me carrying my CD's and are overcome by an uncontrollable urge to possess them and you demand them from me and make a real or implied threat, you are a **robber**. Sometimes you will see or hear the phrase *aggravated robbery*. The term means that the robber not only made a threat but also displayed a weapon, such as a gun or knife. This person is still called a **robber**.

buglers, trumpeters cavalry regiments have **trumpeters**, infantry regiments have **buglers**. They are **not** interchangeable.

building societies cap when we give the full name, **eg**, St George Building Society, thereafter the St George, or the society etc. Take care with societies that have become banks.

bullion is gold or silver in unminted form.

bull-mastiff, bull-terrier. *See dogs*.

bullring, bullfight(er)

bull's-eye

bungee jumping (no hyphen).

Burma, not *Myanmar* (except in direct quotes); the inhabitants are **Burmese**, while **Burmans** are a Burmese people.

Burns Night (caps, no apostrophe) falls on January 25

burnt / burned burned is the past tense form (he burned the cakes); **burnt** is the participle, an “adjectival” form of the verb (“the cakes are burnt”).

bus, buses (noun); but in verbal use, **busses, bussed, bussing**.

Bush, George do **not** use Jr or George W. President Bush at first mention, then Mr Bush or the President. Refer to his father as the first President Bush or George Bush Sr.

businesslike, businessman, businesswoman. Say **business people or business community** (no hyphen) if that is what you mean.

but / however often redundant, and increasingly wrongly used to connect two compatible statements; “in contrast, however, ...” is tautologous. Popular belief to the contrary, this conjunction usefully begins contrasting sentences, typically better than *however*.

butterflies

buyout and **buyback** (one word); but prefer **buy-in, take-off, shake-out, shake-up, sell-off, sell-out** etc. (with hyphens) wherever the composite looks hideous.

buzzword (one word).

by-election

bylaw

by means of verbose. Use *by* or *with* if either one suffices.

by reason of verbose. Use *because* or *because of* unless “by reason of” is part of an established phrase, eg, by reason of insanity.

bypass (noun or verb).

by-product

bystander

byte is a computer term for a small collection of bits (binary digits), roughly equivalent to one character. **Do not** confuse with **bite** (as with teeth). But *note* **soundbite**.

Byzantine (cap in all contexts)

oOOO

C-C-C

cabbie (not *cabby*) as colloquialism for taxi driver.

cabin attendant, flight attendant, cabin crew, cabin staff, not air hostess, stewardess.

Cabinet u/c for titles, **eg**, Secretary of the Cabinet, a Cabinet briefing.

Caesarean section babies are delivered, **not** born, by this surgery.

cafe (no accent)

caffeine prefer to *caffein*

cagoule, but **kaftan**

Californian a person; the adjective is **California**, or Brian Wilson would have written about “Californian Girls”.

call centre noun, two words; hyphen as adjective, **eg, call-centre manager.**

call-up (noun), to **call up.**

camaraderie (not *cameraderie*).

Camp X-Ray (note caps) at **Guantanamo Bay** (no accent) in Cuba. *See War on Terror, x-ray.*

can / could / may **can** means *to be able to* and expresses certainty (I can be there in five minutes). **Could** is better for a sense of uncertainty or a conditional statement, **eg**, Could you stop at the cleaners today?; if you send a deposit, we could hold your reservation. **May** suggests possibility (the class may have a pop quiz tomorrow) or permission (you may borrow my car) A denial of permission is properly phrased formally with **may not** (you may not borrow my credit card) or with **cannot**. Avoid the abbreviated negative “can’t” unless in direct quotes.

cannabis people smoke cannabis rather than “experiment” with it, despite what politicians might claim.

cancer take care not to describe cancer as “the biggest killer” in the UK/Australia/US etc. Heart disease is, though type 2 diabetes is gaining in importance.

Cancún note accent.

cannon (military, same form for singular and plural); but **canons** (ecclesiastical, both churchmen and church laws), and **canon** as a collection / list of an author.

canvas (as in painting); plural is **canvases**; **canvasses** with two central “ss” is of the verb “to canvass” (ie, polling).

Canton, now **Guangzhou**. *See Chinese names.*

capability refers more generally to power or ability. *See ability / capability / capacity.*

capacity refers especially to a vessel’s ability to hold or contain something. *See ability / capability / capacity.*

Cape Town

capital (not *capitol*) as a noun it refers to the seat of government (usually a city), the other is US terminology for a the building where the legislature meets. Capital also refers to wealth in the form of money or other assets. In its adjective form it refers to an offense liable to the death penalty (murder is a capital crime). **Do not** use to describe just any serious crime.

capitalisation in general, the proper names of people and places, formal titles or titles of important offices, and the names of well-known and substantial institutions, all require capitals. As a rule of thumb, cap specifics (**eg**, the French Foreign Minister), but l/c non-specifics (**eg**, EU foreign ministers). But some terms, **eg, Act, Bill, Cabinet, Civil Service**, always cap. *See initials.*

cappuccino

capsize *See -ise, -isation.*

captions when space is tight, especially on single-column “mug shots”, the name should be just the surname, even when the person is titled, **eg**, Sir Marcus Fox would be simply Fox, as in headlines. Where women are photographed, be sensitive. Where possible, give the woman's first name, though this is not a hard and fast ruling.

When identifying faces with “left” and “right” etc, use commas rather than brackets (**eg**, Fred Smith, left, and his wife leaving the court); make the identification in the caption fit the sequence of faces (left to right) in the photograph.

carat / karat / caret carat measures the weight of a gemstone. **karat** measures the purity of gold (think of 24K gold). **Caret** is a mark on a manuscript indicating where matter is to be inserted.

car bomb

car boot sale (no hyphen).

carcass singular, **carcasses** plural.

cardholder

Carlos the Jackal (no quotes, no commas); always mention his full name, **Ilich Ramírez Sánchez** somewhere in the story.

carmaker (one word)

car park (two words), **multistorey car park**.

carpetbagger (one word).

carry out do **not** use as synonym of *do*.

cashcard (in general sense), **cashflow, cashback**.

Cashpoint is Lloyds TSB Bank's trademarked cash machine system, so takes the cap and must not be used generically; in the general sense, use **cash dispenser** or **cash machine**, or less formally, **hole in the wall**.

Castro, President (Fidel); no longer call him *Dr* after first mention, *but* Señor or the President.

casualties be cautious in use of early and unconfirmed estimates of casualties in instances of terrorism, militia gunfights or disasters. Always give the estimate's source where possible, and be aware of politically inspired exaggeration.

catapult (not *catapult*)

catchphrase (one word)

catch-22 l/c avoid the grossly overworked cliché “*catch-22 situation*”.

cathedrals cap when giving the full name, **eg**, St Paul's Cathedral, Wells Cathedral; similarly the names

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of churches, **eg**, St Mary's Church, Ely, unless we know that the church name specifically excludes it, **eg**, St Stephen's, Ely. The same rule applies to the names of Mosques.

Catherine always check the spelling. A Catherine wheel (firework); St Catharine's College, Cambridge; St Katharine Docks, London.

Catholic in church context, say **Roman Catholic** at first mention, then Catholic, but **Catholic church**.

CAT scan (not *Cat scan*)

cat's eyes should preferably be called "reflecting roadstuds". **Catseye** is a trademark.

caviar no final "e"

CBI spell out as **Confederation of British Industry** at first mention then **CBI** thereafter.

CD-Rom (compact disc, read only memory); **CD-i** (the interactive compact disc system).

ceasefire

Ceausescu, Nicolae (not *Ceaucescu*).

Cellophane (proprietary, cap).

celsius / centigrade use **celsius**, **eg**, "The temperature rose to 16C. Avoid *centigrade* because of its possible confusion with the 100th part of a grade.

sensor prevent publication: **censure** criticise severely; **sensor** a mechanical or electronic detector.

Census cap in specific cases, such as the 1901 Census, the 2001 Census, but l/c generally and adjectivally.

centenarian a person who is 100 or more years old. *See also septuagenarian, octogenarian, nonagenarian.*

centenaries use **centenary, bicentenary, tercentenary**; after that, say four (five) hundredth anniversary.

Central Europe (with cap "C").

Centre, the use the cap in political context of the Centre, as with Left and Right. Similarly, Centre Left, Centre Right as nouns, *but* a centre-left politician (l/c adjectival, as with a right-wing policy). *See Left, Right, Politics.*

Centre Court *See Wimbledon.*

centrepiece (no hyphen).

centring, *but centering* of arches in bridge-building.

centuries the style is the 3rd century BC, the 9th century, the 18th century etc; and adjectivally with the hyphen, **eg**, 20th-century architecture.

CERN (all caps), the European Organisation for Nuclear Research, based in Geneva.

Ceylon now **Sri Lanka**. The people are **Sri Lankan**, the majority group are the **Sinhalese**.

CFC chlorofluorocarbon

cha-cha-cha (not *cha-cha*)

chainsaw (one word).

chairman, chairwoman avoid *chair* and *chairperson* (except in quotes and phrases such as “addressing remarks to the chair”). In most cases, keep chairman l/c, but occasionally cap, as with US Federal Reserve Board and similar significant organisations. Use discretion.

chamber (l/c) of the House of Commons.

champagne (l/c) use only for the product of the Champagne region of France; otherwise write, **eg**, Australian sparkling wine. The champagne producers protect their name rigorously. *See wines.*

Champions League (European football), no apostrophe; the later knockout stage of the competition becomes the European Cup.

Champs Elysées accent but no hyphen for Parisian boulevard leading from Arc de Triomphe; note also **Elysée Palace**.

changeable

Changing the Guard (not ... *of the Guard*). *See Trooping.*

Chanukkah prefer this to variants such as *Hanukkah* etc, for the Jewish festival of lights.

chargé d'affaires

charge implies official action, **eg**, “he was charged with disorderly conduct”. *See accuse.*

charge that an Americanism, **never** to be used as a synonym of *allege that*.

charisma has become a boring cliché; find an alternative such as *presence, inspiration* etc.

Château Lafite (no hyphen, and **not Lafitte**).

chassis singular and plural.

chat room, chat show, chat line, game show, quiz show, talk show etc. (no hyphens when used as noun but use the hyphen when adjectival, **eg**, chat-show host); note also **chat line, sex line**.

cheap goods are *cheap*, prices are **low**.

Chechnya (not *Chechenia*); adjective **Chechen(s)**.

check-in (noun), but **checklist, checkout counter**. *Note* also **checkup** noun; **check up, check out** verb.

cheerleader (one word).

cheese l/c: **brie, camembert, cheddar** (unless made in Cheddar), **cheshire, stilton, gruyère, swiss cheese** (if not made in Switzerland) etc.

Chekhov, Anton

Chemical names and symbols the names of chemical elements and compounds are lowercased when written out. Symbols, however, are capitalised and set without periods and the number of atoms in a molecule appears as a subscript. Be sure that subscripts are properly rendered, **eg**, sulfuric acid, H₂SO₄; sodium chloride, NaCl; tungsten carbide, WC; ozone, O₃; oxygen, O₂, etc.

Cheney, Dick (no longer Richard).

chequebook one word, either as noun or adjective (**eg**, chequebook journalism).

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chess names note **Garry Kasparov, Anatoly Karpov, Judit Polgar**. Note also *Fide* (not *FIDE*) and **grandmaster** (l/c). See *Russian names*.

chickenpox (no hyphen; similarly **smallpox**).

chicken tikka masala

Chief Inspector of Prisons / ... of Schools; also, **Chief Medical Officer**.

Chief Whip (caps).

childcare (as healthcare).

childish / childlike childlike is used positively to connote *innocence, mildness, and freshness*, eg, a childlike smile. **Childish** is pejorative; it connotes *immaturity and unreasonableness* –childish ranting.

child-sex abusers / offenders (use hyphen).

chill out two words as verb; one word, whether noun or adjective, for the music style (**chillout** compilation); hyphenated when referring to lifestyle (**chill-out** session at the spa).

chimpanzees are apes, not *monkeys*.

Chinese names use the Pinyin rather than the traditional Wade-Giles, so write **Beijing, Mao Zedong** (though Chairman Mao or just Mao are acceptable), **Zhou Enlai** etc.

Normal style is to place family name first, then given name, so that the actress Zhang Ziyi, for instance, becomes Zhang at second mention.

For placenames, follow *The Times Atlas of the World* except where older usage is well established ie, the special administrative regions **Hong Kong** (not *Xianggang*) and **Macau** (not *Aomen*); and the autonomous regions **Tibet** (not *Xizang*) and **Inner Mongolia** (not *Neimengu*).

In the following quick guide the names in parentheses should no longer be used except in an historical context:

Municipalities: **Beijing** (*Peking*), **Chongqing** (*Chungking*), **Shanghai**, **Tianjin** (*Tientsin*).

Autonomous regions: **Guangxi** (*Kwangsi*), **Ningxia** (*Ningsia*), **Xinjiang** (*Sinkiang*).

Provinces: **Anhui** (*Anhwei*), **Fujian** (*Fukien*), **Gansu** (*Kansu*), **Guangdong** (*Kwangtung*), **Guizhou** (*Kweichow*), **Hainan**, **Hebei** (*Hopeh*), **Heilongjiang** (*Heilungkiang*), **Henan** (*Honan*), **Hubei** (*Hupeh*), **Hunan**, **Jiangsu** (*Kiangsu*), **Jiangxi** (*Kiangsi*), **Jilin** (*Kirin*), **Liaoning**, **Qinghai** (*Chinghai*), **Sha'anxi** (*Shensi*), **Shandong** (*Shantung*), **Shanxi** (*Shansi*), **Sichuan** (*Szechwan*), **Yunnan**, **Zhejiang** (*Chekiang*).

Note that the official name of the country is People's Republic of China. **Do not** confuse with Republic of China which is the official name for Taiwan. See *Beijing; Hong Kong; Macau; Peking*.

chock-a-block

chocoholic but **shopaholic** and **workaholic**.

chopper and **copter** are **never** to be used as substitutes for *helicopter*, even in headlines.

Christchurch, in Dorset and New Zealand.

christened, christening people are christened; ships and trains etc. are named. Use only when referring to a **Christian** baptism.

Christian, Christianity, unchristian, non-Christian, antichristian, Antichrist.

Christian names take care in context of non-Christians; in such cases, use *forename* or *first name*.

Christian terms cap the **Apostles**, the **Bible**, the (Ten) **Commandments**, the **Cross**, the **Crucifixion**, the **Disciples**, the **Resurrection**, the **Gospels**, **Mass**, **Holy Communion** (and simply **Communion**), **Eucharist**, **Blessed Sacrament**, **Advent**, **Nativity** (*but* a **nativity play**, adjectival), the **Scriptures**; also **He** and **His** when referring to **God** and **Jesus Christ**. Use l/c for **evensong**, **matins**. *Note Antichrist*. *See prophets, apostles, saints*.

Christie's (also Christie's, New York, and now Christie's International, all with apostrophe).

Christmas Day, Christmas Eve

chronic means *lasting for a long time* or *constantly recurring*, too often misused when **acute** (short but severe) is meant.

Church cap in context of the institution (**Anglican, Roman Catholic, Orthodox**, whatever), but not adjectivally. l/c for the established church, **eg**, "the church is no longer relevant today".

churchwarden (one word)

cider (**not cyder**)

Cincinnati, Ohio

cinemagoer, as **concertgoer**, **theatre-goer** etc.

CinemaScope is a trade name and must be capped (note also cap "S" in middle).

cipher (**not cypher**)

circa abbreviate simply as "c" (roman) followed by a space.

circumstances both "in the circumstances" and "under the circumstances" are acceptable, but "under" is now much more common.

cissy, cissies (**not sissy**).

cite / site as a noun, **cite** is colloquial for *citation*, which refers to a source of information (a cite to Encyclopaedia Britannica). A **site** is a place or location.

Cites (**not CITES**) the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species.

Citing a book:

The essential details required in a formal context follow. For newspaper and magazine use, unless performing a review of a scientific or medical publication, the formal format is not followed. The information is included here for the reference of book editors and sub-editors.

The essential details and format are (in order):

1. Name(s) of author(s), editor(s), compiler(s) or the institution responsible.

Where there are six or less authors you must list all authors. After the first six are listed and add "*et al*" (*et al* means "and others").

For editors follow the same methods used with authors but use the word "editor" or "editors" in full (l/c after the name(s)). (**Do not** confuse with "ed." used for edition).

Put a comma and one space between each name. The last author must have a full-stop after their initial(s).

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Format: surname (one space) initial(s) (no spaces or punctuation between initials. Full-stop or if further names comma, one space).

- Example 1.** Smith AK, Jones BC, editors.
Example 2. Smith AK, Jones BC, Bloggs TC, Ashe PT, Fauci AS, Wilson JD et al
Example 3. The Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand.
Example 4. When no author is given "Anonymous" or "Anon" is unnecessary. Use the title of the article or book.

2. Title of publication and subtitle if any

Do not use italics or underlining. Only the first word of journal articles or book titles (and words that normally begin with a capital letter) are capitalised.

Format: title (full-stop, one space).

- Example 1.** Harrison's principles of internal medicine.
Example 2. Physical pharmacy: physical chemical principles in the pharmaceutical sciences.
Example 3. Pharmacy in Australia: the national experience

3. Edition, if other than first edition.

Abbreviate the word edition to: ed. (**Do not** confuse with *editor*).

Format: edition statement (fullstop, one space).

- Example** 3rd ed.

4. Place of publication.

If the publishers are located in more than one city, cite the name of the city that is printed first. Write the place-name in full.

If the place-name is not well known, add a comma, one space and the state or the country for clarification. For places in the USA, add after the place-name the two letter postal code for the state. This must be in upper case **eg**. Hartford (CN), where CN=Connecticut.

Format: place of publication (colon, one space)

- Example 1.** Hartford (CN):
Example 2. Texas (NSW):
Example 3. Kyoto (Japan):

5. Publisher.

The publisher's name should be spelt out in full.

Format: publisher (semi-colon [;], one space).

- Example 1.** Australian Government Publishing Service;
Example 2. Raven Press;

6. Year of publication.

Format: year (full-stop, add one space if page numbers follow).

- Example 1.** 1999.
Example 2. 2000. p. 12-50.

7. Page numbers (if applicable).

Abbreviate the word page to "p". **Do not** repeat digits unnecessarily. Abbreviate.

Format: p (full-stop, one space) page numbers (full-stop).

- Example 1.** p. 122-9.
Example 2. p. 1129-57.
Example 3. p. 333,338,340-5. (when article not on continuous pages)

8. Series title and individual volume (if any).

Put in brackets. Abbreviate the word volume to "vol".

Format: Series title (semi-colon, one space) vol (one space) volume number) full-stop outside brackets.

- Example 1.** (Annals of the New York academy of sciences; vol 288).
Example 2. Bennett GL, Horuk R. Iodination of chemokines for use in receptor binding analysis. In: Horuk R, editor. Chemokine receptors. New York (NY): Academic Press; 1997. p. 134-48. (Methods in enzymology; vol 288).
Example 3. Australian Government Publishing Service. Style manual for authors editors and printers. 5th ed. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service; 1994.

9. Legal Material.

Write the name of the Act in full. Cap the first letter of each word of the Act or legislation. Define the authority for the Act in brackets after the year of the Act. Use the accepted abbreviation "Qld," "Vic," "CN," if a state Act or "Cwlth" (Queensland, Victoria, Connecticut, Commonwealth). Use the letter "s." to define the section of the Act and the letter "r." to define the regulation.

Format: (Name of the Act (one space) year of the Act (one space) authority for the Act (comma) regulation or section identifier (full stop) reference numbers.

- Example 1.** Pharmacy Act 1976 (Qld)
Example 2. Airlines Equipment Amendment Act 1981 (Cwlth), s. 19(1)(a)(ii)
Example 3. Public Service Regulations (Cwlth), r.83(2)(a)(ii)

Note: In newspaper use it is acceptable to refer to the name of the Act and authority. In detailed court reporting the year of implementation or amendment can be cited if required for clarification. Thus a less formal approach is taken and the name of the Act only is usually sufficient. If two Acts or regulations exist and confusion is likely define the authority.

- Example 1.** Pharmacy Act
Example 2. Commonwealth Workplace Relations Act
Example 3. Victorian Health and Safety Act

citizen / subject in a governmental sense, these are near synonyms that should be distinguished. A **citizen** owes allegiance to a nation whose sovereignty is a collective function of the people, **eg**, a citizen of Germany. A **subject** owes allegiance to an individual sovereign (a subject of the queen)
Citizens Advice Bureau (Bureaux) no apostrophe, and final "x" as plural.

Citizen's Charter

Citroën

Civil Guard(s) (Spanish police), use initial caps

Civil List (caps)

civil partnership the legal name for what is commonly referred to as "gay marriage"; should be put in quotation marks (for linguistic clarity) in headings, and in copy at first mention only. In some contexts, quotation marks may be perceived as pejorative, and that is not their purpose here. So avoid writing: "Mr Smith and Mr Brown were 'married' two years ago"; instead write, **eg**: "Mr Smith and Mr Brown have had a civil partnership for two years". Dictionaries currently define marriage as a union between a man and a woman. A suggested shorthand for headings is **civil union**. See "gay marriage".

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civil service, civil servants *l/c.* caps to be applied to the administrative grade, ie, Permanent Secretary, Deputy Secretary and Assistant Secretary; thus, Sir Alfred Beach, Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Defence. For executive grade (ie, below Assistant Secretary), use *l/c.* *Note* also Secretary of the Cabinet and Head of the Home Civil Service.

civil war in literature is taken to mean three things: 1) Violent conflict that lasts for some time (not a few days); 2) At least 1000 deaths per year; and 3) The weaker side inflicts on the stronger side at least 5% of the total fatalities [some say 10%].

claim do **not** use when simply *said* or *declared* would do. The word carries a suspicion of incredulity. Also, avoid the loose construction in sentences such as “The firm launched a drink which is claimed to promote learning ability”. This should read “... a drink which, it is claimed, promotes learning ability”.

claims and facts remember to distinguish between a **claim** and a **fact**

clamour, clamouring *but* **clamorous**

clampdown / crackdown not banned, but use as little as possible.

Class A, B or C drugs (cap “C”)

Claymation (proprietary, cap) movie animation using clay modelling.

clichés have no place in stories. Some of the most common, to be resisted strongly in almost every context, are: **backlash, basically, beleaguered, blueprint, bombshell, bonanza, brainchild, chaos, charisma, clampdown, consensus, crackdown, crisis, crunch, drama/dramatic, escalate, facelift, gunned down, hopefully, ironically, legendary, major, massive, mega-, nightmare, prestigious, quantum leap, reportedly, shambles, shock, shoot-out, situation, trauma/traumatic, unique**

cliffhanger

climactic / climatic climactic is the adjective corresponding to *climax*, **eg**, the fire alarm went off during the movie’s climactic scene. **Climatic** corresponds to *climate*.

climate change use *climate emergency, crisis* or *breakdown*. The use of climate change is not banned

climate change sceptic use *climate science denier*

clingfilm (*l/c*, one word)

closed-circuit television

close proximity verbose. Write either *close* or *in proximity*.

clothing say **menswear, women's wear, children's wear, sportswear**. *See wear*.

cloud-cuckoo-land (two hyphens)

co- the prefix does not normally require a hyphen even before an “e” or another “o” unless confusion might result. Thus **co-operate** (but **uncooperative**), **co-opt, co-ordinate** (but **uncoordinated**), **coeducation, coexist**. *See co-production; hypens*.

coalface, coalfield, coalmine (each one word), **coalminer** (but prefer **miner**). *See gasfield, oilfield*.

coastguard *l/c* and one word, in the British context; *Note* the **US Coast Guard**.

coasts cap South Coast, East Coast and West Coast for defined regions, **eg**, the American East Coast and West Coast *but* the **eastern seaboard**.

coats of arms *see heraldry*

Coca-Cola (hyphen); similarly **Pepsi-Cola**.

cockfight (no hyphen) as **bullfight** and **dogfight**.

Cockney cap for the person or the dialect, *but* l/c for general adjectival use, **eg**, a cockney welcome.

coeducation(al) but permissible to use **co-ed** in headlines as *coed* "would look hideous."
coexist

cognoscenti roman, not italic.

cohabit, cohabitate cohabit is the traditional verb. **Cohabitate**, a back-formation from *cohabitation* avoid.

cold war l/c

collarbone (one word)

collectibles (not *-ables*), items sought by collectors.

collective nouns usually use the singular verb, as with corporate bodies (*the company, the Government, the council* etc). But this rule is not inviolable; the key is to stick to the singular or plural throughout the story. Sentences such as "The committee, which was elected recently, presented their report" are unacceptable. *See grammar section.*

collegial / collegiate collegial answers to *colleague*; **collegiate** answers to *college*.

Colombia is the country, while **Columbia** is the Hollywood studio, university, river and Washington district. Also, *note* **British Columbia** and **Pre-Columbian**.

Colosseum in Rome; **Coliseum** in London.

Colossus the world's first programable computer. Used by the British to decipher encrypted German military transmissions during the Second World War. The encrypted material was encrypted using a **Lorenz** cipher machine. There were ten Colossus (Colossi). All were destroyed at the end of the war. One was rebuilt over 14 years and became operational in October, 2007 and is housed in Britain's National Museum of Computing.

Coloureds (in South Africa), cap

comedienne avoid wherever possible; use **comedian** for both sexes.

comeuppance (no hyphen)

Commander-in-Chief, Officer Commanding (caps)

Commandments cap in biblical context, as the **Ten Commandments**, the **Fourth Commandment**. *See Christian terms.*

commando singular, commandos plural (not *-oes*).

commendable / commendatory something done for a worthy cause is **commendable** (commendable dedication to helping the poor). What expresses praise is **commendatory** (commendatory plaque).

Commission, Commissioner *See European*

Commissioner of Police similarly, cap **City of London Police, Transport Police** and all police forces when the full title is given. *See police forces.*

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committee committees of inquiry etc. should be capped only when the full title is given. cabinet and select committees should be capped, **eg**, Holt Royal Commission.

common / mutual what is common is shared by *two* or *more* people (born into different families but having a common ancestor). What is **mutual** is *reciprocal* or *directly exchanged* by and toward each other (mutual obligations). Write “friend in common” rather than “mutual friend” in reference to a third person who is a friend of two others.

Common Market usually use **EU** or **EC** (see Europe), though *Common Market* is acceptable in its historic context.

common sense (noun), *but commonsense, commonsensical* (adjective)

Commonwealth, the

Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (caps)

communiqué (accent)

communism, communist as with **socialism** and **socialist**, the best rule-of-thumb is to cap **only** when in specific party context, **eg**, a Communist candidate, a Communist rally; *but* communist ideology, communist countries etc. It will help to think of a parallel with conservative/conservatism or liberal/liberalism. *But Marxist, Stalinist, Nazi* and **Fascist** should be capped.

community beware overuse in phrases such as the “international community” etc

companies abbreviate to **Co** in, **eg**, John Brown & Co. Company is singular. Full points in company titles usually unnecessary, as in W H Smith and J Sainsbury. **Do not** confuse the words *company* and *firm*, even in headlines. A **firm** implies a business partnership, as in the legal or accountancy professions, estate agents etc.

comparatively, relatively avoid using as synonyms of *fairly* or *middling*.

compare with/to *compare with* (the more common use) when differences or contrasts are the point - “compare the saints with the devils” or “compared with last year's figures.” The former means *liken to*, the latter means *make a comparison*: so unless you are specifically likening someone or something to someone or something else, use *compare with*.

compass points *l/c* for regions: the north, the south of England, the south-west, north-east England, central Australia, but the **Northern/Eastern/Southern/Western Hemisphere**, the upper reaches of the Thames.

However cap when part of the name of a county or province, **eg, West Sussex, East Java, North Sulawesi** etc);

For geopolitical areas: **the West** (*but* a **westerner**), the **Occident** (*but* an **occidental**), **Western Europe**, *but* **eastern Europe** (**Eastern Europe** when referring to the post Second World War division of Europe) the **Western world** (considered a cultural entity).

The **Middle East** (**never** abbreviate to *mideast*), the **East** (but an **easterner**), the **Far East**, and **Eastern** (referring to the Orient and Asian culture), **Southeast Asia**, the **Middle East**, **Latin America**, **North America**, **South America**, **Central America** *but* **Central American countries**, **central Asia**, **central Europe** (*but* **Central Europe** when referring to the political division of the First World War), **central France**, the **south of France**, **south India** etc.

Similarly the **Midwest** (US) *but* **midwestern**, a **midwesterner**, the **Northwest** (US) the **Pacific Northwest** (US), the **West Coast** (US) **northern California** *but* **Northeast Brazil** (a political division) and **Southern California** (considered a cultural entity as much as a geographical term) also the **North**, the **South**, and a **Southerner** (in American Civil War contexts) and the **Deep South** (US), the **Great Plains** (US), the **northern plains** (US) (*but* **Plains Indians**).

West Africa, North Africa, but North African countries, in **northern Africa, East Africa, Central Africa, South Africa but southern Africa, sub-Saharan Africa, North America, Northern American**, the **North American continent, South America, North and South Atlantic, South Pacific**, the **Northwest Passage**, a **northern Atlantic route**, etc.

Do not use inelegant "geographic possessives" such as London's East End, Colorado's Breckenridge ski resort: write "the East End of London"; "Breckenridge, the Colorado ski resort" etc.

compelled / impelled if you are **compelled** to do something, you have *no choice* in the matter (He was compelled to surrender his passport). If you are **impelled** to do something, you are *forced or urged* to do something, **eg**, he was impelled to steal the chicken due to extreme hunger.

complement (completing something); but **compliment** (praise or tribute); **complimentary** as in free gifts etc.

complete or **finish** better than *finalise*.

complete knock down (CKD)

comprise / compose **comprise** means to *consist of*, to *include*; "comprise of" is **wrong**. To **Compose** is to *make up*, to *form the substance of something* (the parts compose the whole).

Comptroller General

concertgoer (as with **partygoer, theatregoer**), *but concert hall*

condole / console (verbs) these are closely related, but not identical. To **condole** with is to *express sympathy* to (organisers condoled the victims' families). The corresponding noun is **condolence** (they expressed their condolences at the funeral). To **console** is to *comfort* (police consoled the lost child). The corresponding noun is **consolation** (their kind words were little consolation).

confectionery sweets, cakes, etc; **confectionary** is a place where confectionery is made.

conference keep l/c in Labour Party conference, Lib Dem conference etc.

confidant / confidante / confident **confidant** is a *close companion*, someone (male or female) you confide in. **Confidante**, a feminine form, is a fading alternative spelling of **confidant** (used only in reference to a female confidant). It reflects French gender spellings. **Confident** is the adjective meaning *having faith, being certain*.

Congo take care to distinguish between the **Democratic Republic of Congo** (formerly Zaire) and **Congo-Brazzaville** (formerly *French Congo*). *See Zaire*.

Congress (US), but **congressional** and **congressman** l/c except when with a name, **eg**, Congressman John Waldorfburger; but generally try to avoid this construction and say John W, a congressman from Minnesota, etc. *See Senate*.

conjoined twins (not *Siamese twins*).

conman (one word) as **hitman**

connection (not *connexion*).

connive / conspire a person who *secretly allows or deliberately avoids* noticing something objectionable **connives** (the parents connived at the child's misbehaviour). But a person who *makes secret plans* with another to do something harmful or illegal **conspires**, **eg**, he conspired with his friend to spoil the reunion.

Connolly, Billy, the comedian

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connote / denote to connote is to *imply* or *suggest* (an idea or feeling) in addition to the literal or primary meaning (the term “modern science” usually connotes a complete openness to empirical testing). To **denote** means a *sign of* or to *indicate* something, **eg**, the phrase “freezing point” denotes thirty-two degrees Fahrenheit or zero degrees Celsius. Both have figurative uses, **eg**, all the joy that young love connotes, a smile may not denote happiness.

consensus (**never concensus**); the word is a cliché that should be avoided wherever possible.

consent *See assent / consent*

consequent / subsequent the first denotes *causation*; the second does not. A **consequent** event always.

happens after the event that caused it, as does a **subsequent** event. But a **subsequent** event is not necessarily a **consequence** of the first event.

Conservative Party but Conservative chairman, manifesto etc; In British politics Tory is permissible as a less formal alternative, but *note* Tory party (l/c “p”).

considerable avoid its use as a lazy adjective implying *emphasis*.

consortium, plural **consortiums** (**not consortia**); as a general rule, use the *-ums* plural. *See memorandum*.

constitution of a country is capped only when an actual document, **eg**, the American Constitution, but the British constitution.

consult do **not** say *consult with*.

contact (verb) if you mean *write* or *call* or *e-mail*, say so. But **contact** is undeniably a useful way of referring to communication without specifying the means. Also note that *access* is now **contact** (and *custody* is known as **residence**) in Family Court matters. *See legal terms*.

Contact Group the UN group on former Yugoslavia (US, Russia, Britain, France, Italy and Germany), has been replaced by the **Peace Implementation Council**.

contagious / infectious contagious refers to mode of transmission; a contagious disease spreads by *contact*, direct or nearly direct, with an infected person or animal (Ebola is a contagious disease). **Infectious** refers to *cause*; an infection involves invasion by and multiplication of a pathogen, regardless of how transmission occurs. An **infectious** disease may or may not be contagious (influenza is infectious and contagious, while tetanus is infectious but not contagious).

contemporary / contemporaneous The first usually applies to people, and **contemporaneous** to *things* or *actions*. Because contemporary has the additional sense “modern,” it is not suitable for contexts involving multiple times. A reference to Roman, Byzantine, and contemporary belief systems is ambiguous; change “contemporary” to “modern”.

contemptuous / contemptible if you are **contemptuous**, you are feeling *contempt* for someone or something. If you are **contemptible**, others will have that attitude toward you.

content / contents content applies to the *topic* of a written or oral presentation. **Contents** usually denotes *physical ingredients*. If the usage suggests many items, material or nonmaterial, contents is correct, **eg**, table of contents, the report’s contents.

Continent, the, referring to mainland Europe, but l/c **continental** as in **continental breakfast**. Also the **continental United States**, the **continent of Europe**, **Continental cuisine**.

continuous means *without intermission*; **continual** means *frequently recurring*

contract out has no hyphen

Contras, the (cap in Nicaragua context)

contravene is to *conflict with* or *violate*; **controvert** is to *challenge* or *contradict*

controversial delete from 99 stories out of 100

convener (not *-or*)

convertible (not *-able*) noun and adjective.

conveyor belt; a **conveyer** is a person who **conveys**.

convince / persuade having **convinced** someone of the facts, you might **persuade** them to do something. **Convince** is associated with *beliefs* or *understandings* (convinced the auditor of her honesty). *See Persuade*.

cooling towers pictures of these should not be used to illustrate stories about air pollution. They emit water vapour, which is harmless.

cooperate, coordinate (no hyphen) **uncooperative, uncoordinated**; *Note non-cooperation, Co-op.*

co-production, co-producer etc. (use hyphen to avoid ambiguity with *copro-*, as in dung).

Copperfield, David the magician and entertainer his birth name David Seth Kotskin.

copycat (no hyphen)

copyright (sole right in artistic work etc); **copywriter** (advertising)

cornflake (generic), but *see Kellogg's*.

Coronation cap when referring to a specific event, such as Elizabeth II's in 1953, and also cap Coronation Oath; but l/c in most adjectival uses, **eg**, coronation ceremony, coronation broadcast.

coroner's court at inquests, the **coroner** is l/c unless specific. Juries return the **verdict**, the coroner **records** it.

correspondents wherever possible, write the political correspondent of *The Blog*, the Moscow correspondent of *The Blog* etc; but *the Blog's political correspondent, the Blog's Moscow correspondent* etc, is permissible.

cortège (use accent)

coruscating (not *corruscating*) means *sparkling* or *scintillating*, **not** *abrasive* or *corrosive*

Côte d'Azur (no final "e")

could is used when there is a sense of *uncertainty* or for a *conditional* statement, **eg**, Could you stop at the cleaners today?; if you send a deposit, we could hold your reservation. *See can / could / may*.

councillor is one who sits on a *council*; A **counselor** is a person who *gives advice*; **counsel** is a *lawyer* and is both singular and plural in court contexts. **Do not** say "counsels for Mr X and Mrs Y"

councils cap in full title, **eg**, Box Hill City Council, City of Boroondara, otherwise l/c.

counter-productive, counter-attack etc, *but countertenor* (one word).

court martial singular, **courts martial** plural, **Courts-Martial Appeal Court**; verb, to **court-martial**

Court of Appeal always use the full title at first mention and wherever possible thereafter, though *appeal*

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court (l/c) may be used sparingly.

Court of St James's

courts cap all courts **eg**, Birmingham Crown Court, Brisbane County Court, Box Hill Magistrates' Court, NSW Court of Appeal, Manly Local Court, the Supreme Court, the Federal Court, the County Court, a Magistrates' Court, a Children's Court etc.

crackdown not banned, but use as little as possible.

Cracow (not *Krakow* or variations). *See foreign places.*

crèche (not *crêche*)

credible / credulous / creditable a trustworthy person or a believable story is **credible** (believable). A person who will believe anything is **credulous**. Something that brings one honour or deserves respect is **creditable** (meritorious).

creditworthy, creditworthiness (no hyphen)

Creole is a person born in the West Indies or Latin America whose ancestry is wholly or partly European. It **does not** imply *mixed race*.

crescendo means *getting louder, growing in force*. **Nothing** rises to a *crescendo*. Plural is **crescendos**.

Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (abbreviate **CJD**). *Note* also **variant CJD** (with l/c "v") abbreviated to **vCJD**. No longer call it *new variant CJD*.

crevice / crevasse a crack in the sidewalk is a **crevice** (accent on the first syllable); a fissure in a glacier or a dam is a **crevasse** (accent on the second syllable).

criminal *See unlawful / illegal / illicit / criminal*

crisis always try to find an alternative for this greatly overworked word. Its use should be confined to a process reaching a *turning point*. A crisis does **not** *deepen, grow, mount* or *worsen*, and is never a continuous state such as a "housing crisis". Economics are never "in crisis".

criterion singular, **criteria** plural.

Croat for the people and language, **Croatian** for the general adjective. *See Slovak, Slovakian.*

cross benches, *but* **crossbenchers**, **crossbench** opinion.

cross-Channel, *but* **transatlantic**

Crowd estimating Use **about** or **more than**, *not* at least. Identify source of estimation, eg, organisers said. Reporting on crowd size is a challenge. Herbert Jacobs, a University of California, Berkeley, journalism professor in the 1960s, is credited with modernising crowd-counting. According to his widely accepted formulae "light crowd" has one person per 0.929sq.m (10sq.ft) and a "dense crowd" has one person per 0.418sq.m (4.5sq.ft). A heavily crowded, "mosh-pit" density, as Watson and Yip call it, would have one person per 0.232sq.m (2.5sq.ft).

Crown (in constitutional sense) is capped, as in **Crown property**, the **Crown representative**. *See Royal Family.*

Crown Jewels (caps)

cruise missile(s) missile with its own engine; best known is the **Tomahawk**, *but* **Pershing** missiles and the **Stealth bomber**.

crunch avoid phrases such as *reaches crunch point, the situation came to a crunch* - clichés.

Cup cap *Final* only in FA Cup Final (or **Cup Final** for short), but l/c all others such as **European Cup final, World Cup final, Davis Cup final** etc. After first mention *the Cup*.

cupfuls, spoonfuls etc. (**not** *cupful* or *cupfulls*)

currencies always convert to \$US at first mention of the foreign currency. Abbreviate like this \$A50 (Australian), \$HK500 (Hong Kong), Rp50 (Indonesian Rupiah), 5,000 RMB (China).

current avoid wherever possible as synonym of *present*.

curriculums plural (**not** *curricula*); but *note extracurricular* activities); **curriculum vitae**, abbreviated **CV**, plural, **curricula vitae**.

curtsy (**not** *curtsey*) plural **curtsies**.

cusp (**on the**) does not mean *on the brink* but is a *division* between two astrological signs or houses. To avoid confusion prefer "on the brink" or an elegant alternative.

customs use l/c for **customs officer, customs post, customs regulations** etc.

cutbacks avoid; **cuts** is sufficient.

cut-throat use hyphen

cyberspace l/c, no hyphen

Cyprus, northern keep the l/c in northern, as the "state" is recognised only by the Turkish Government; also l/c government in northern Cyprus.

czar although usual style is **tsar** (in Russian context), the *czar* form is permissible in the context of government-appointed co-ordinators such as **drugs czar, mental health czar**. *See tsar*.

Czech Republic use *Czechoslovakia* only in the historic sense. The two countries since their division are the **Czech Republic** and **Slovakia**.

oOOo

D-D-D

d (abbreviation for died), no full point, **eg, d 1997**. Likewise **b** for born: **b 1906**.

D-Day, VE-Day, VJ-Day

D notices issued by the defence, press and broadcasting advisory committee “suggesting” that the media do not publish sensitive information. In other words, **do not publish**.

dad and **mum** l/c in general context, reserve caps for when it is clear that that is/was the family name in use.

Dagestan (not *Daghestan*)

Dail Eireann the lower house of the Irish parliament; usually just the **Dail**.

dancefloor

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (no hyphens). *Note*, capital is **Dodoma**.

Dark Ages caps, but take care; the period after the fall of the Roman Empire is no longer considered wholly obscure and barbaric.

Darwin, Charles write the title of his great work as *On the Origin of Species* (usually omitting the words by *Means of Natural Selection*).

data strictly plural, but can now be used in singular through common usage.

databank, database

date rape beware of this phrase; in most cases *drug rape* is the intended meaning.

dates Monday, April 18, 1994 (never 18th April); but April 1994. When citing periods of years, say 1992-93 (**not** 1992-3); for the new millennium, write 1999-2000, then 2000-01, 2003-09 etc; from 1939 to 1941 (**not** from 1939-41); for decades use figures, **eg**, 1940s, 1980s, 1990s or 40s, 50s, 60s; With people's ages, l/c, as in “she was in her forties, eighties, nineties” etc. Common usage says that the century ended on December 31, 1999. *See millennium*.

Day-Glo (proprietary, cap)

days/months should be abbreviated Mon, Tues, Wed, Thur, Fri, Sat, Sun; Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov, Dec.

daytime, daylong *but* **night-time, week-long, month-long, year-long**.

day trader, day trading (no need to hyphenate)

day trip *but* **day-tripper**

deaf and dumb avoid this phrase, which is nowadays deemed offensive. Likewise, avoid *deaf mute*. The best alternative to either phrase is **profoundly deaf**.

deadly means *capable of causing death* (deadly snake venom); **Deathly** means *deathlike* (deathly silence).

deathbed (no hyphen)

death row (as in American prisons), l/c; hyphen as adjective, **death-row campaigner**.

debacle (no accents)

debatable

Debrett, or full title *Debrett's Peerage*.

debut (no accent) is most widely understood as a noun; avoid using it as a verb.

decades roaring 20s, swinging 60s, etc. *See dates*

decimals do **not** mix decimals and fractions in the same story.

decimate means to kill one in ten; custom has extended its use to indicate heavy casualties, but use sparingly. **Do not** use when you are referring to complete destruction or when a percentage is specified.

deckchair as armchair (no hyphens)

decor (no accent)

decorations *See honours*

deduce to **deduce** is to *reason from general principles* to specific conclusions, or to *draw a specific conclusion* from general bases, **eg**, from these clues, one deduces that the butler did it. *See adduce / deduce / induce.*

de facto roman

defamation, libel, slander, the communication of a falsehood that damages someone's reputation is a **defamation**; If it is in writing, it is **libel**; otherwise it is **slander**.

defensible

definite means *clear, exact*; **definitive** means *conclusive, final, most authoritative*.

deforestation

defuse means to *remove* the fuse from, or *reduce* tension in an emergency etc; never confuse with **diffuse**, which means *to spread in all directions, scatter* etc, or (as adjective) *verbose, not concise, spread over a large area* etc.

degas (no accent)

de Gaulle never cap "de" in this name unless at the start of a sentence or headline.

de Havilland

de Klerk, F.W. *See full points.*

DeLorean

De Niro, Robert

degrees (educational) a masters, a first, a second etc. Abbreviations as follows: doctorates of literature (or letters), **D Lit, D Litt, LitD** etc; Oxford and York have **D Phil** instead of the more usual **PhD**. Oxford has **DM** for the more usual **MD**. Cambridge has **ScD** for doctor of science. No full points in degrees. Put an apostrophe in **bachelor's** degree and **master's** degree. This is to show possession. The degree belongs to the bachelor or master.

degrees (weather) show degree sign in temperatures, **eg**, 35C.

déjà vu (accents but not italic)

The house style guide

delegate means to *authorise* another to act on one's behalf (the captain delegated command in the field to the corporals). *See relegate*.

deliver, delivery perfect for babies, newspapers, milk on the doorstep, but beware meaningless overuse in politician and management-speak, **eg**, "The key indicators of delivery are moving in the right direction". The word has become a cliché, so always try to think of an alternative; **eg**, promises are *kept*, policies are *implemented*, public services are *provided*, improvements are *made*.

Deloitte has been rebranded. Except in historical contexts, **eg**, when accounts have been signed by Deloitte & Touche, simply use **Deloitte** and not, **eg**, *Deloittes; Deloitte Consulting* etc. (**Deloitte & Touche LLP** is the legal entity through which **Deloitte** now provides service in the UK, and to which its UK partners belong; **Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu** is the Swiss association to which each individual member firm belongs. Always check the correct name of the identity you are quoting.

delusion / illusion "That the sun moves round the Earth was once a delusion, and is still an illusion".

demise strictly means the *death* of a person, or the *failure* of an enterprise or institution. Keep to these definitions.

DeMille, Cecil B (1881-1959) Hollywood producer and director.

Democratic Party (US), **not** *Democrat Party*. The adjective is usually **Democrat** in other uses, such as the Democrat spokesman (but *note* the **Democratic convention**).

demonstration never shorten to *demo* except in direct quotes; prefer **protest**.

demonstrator, *but see protester*

Deng, Wendi Rupert Murdoch's wife. *See Murdoch*

De Niro, Robert

Denktas, Rauf (**not** *Denktash*), the president (l/c) of northern Cyprus (l/c because not an internationally recognised state); better to describe him as the *Turkish Cypriot leader*. *See Cyprus*.

denote to denote means a *sign of* or to *indicate* something, **eg**, the phrase "freezing point" denotes thirty-two degrees Fahrenheit or zero degrees Celsius. It can also have a figurative use, **eg**, a smile may not denote happiness. *See connote / denote*.

denounce is either to *criticize harshly* or to *accuse*; To **renounce** is either to *relinquish* or to *reject*.

deny does **not** mean the same as **rebut** (which means *argue to the contrary, producing evidence*) or **refute** (which means to *win* such an argument). *See rebut; refute*.

departments of state, government ministries, and ministers take initial caps, **eg**, **Department of Health, Treasury, Department for Culture** but l/c when departments are abbreviated, **eg**, **environment department, transport department**.

dependant (noun), **dependent** (adjective) **dependence** a person can be **dependant** on a family member for financial support while a person psychologically **dependent** on something can be said to have an alcohol or drug **dependence**. *See addicted / dependent*.

dependable a very overused word for **reliable, trustworthy**, etc

depository person, **depository** place

deprecate is to *disapprove* or *diminish in value over time*. But in the phrase "self-deprecating" means to *belittle*.

Depression, the cap for the 1930s economic slump.

Deputy Prime Minister (caps) is the exception to the rule that deputy posts should normally take the l/c, eg, **deputy editor**.

de rigueur roman; (**not de rigneur**).

deselect

dessert *pudding*, **desert**, *abandon*, a *dry* or *baron* area of land; “He **deserted** the army”; but **just deserts**

desiccate

desktop (computer, publishing), no hyphen. *See laptop*.

despite perfectly acceptable alternative for *in spite* of. But **do not** say “despite the fact that”; use *although* instead.

despoil, **despoiled** (**not despoilt**), **despoliation** or **despoilment** (**not despoilation**).

detente (no accents)

deutschemark/deutschmark prefer not to use either form, nor D-mark. Use simply the **mark**, or with figures, DM500 (all now in historic contexts). *See currencies*.

Deutsche Bank German commercial bank **not** to be confused with **Deutsche Bundesbank**, or **Bundesbank**, the German central bank.

developing countries use this term in preference to *Third World*: “Third World developing country” is tautologous.

Devil, the (cap); but **devils** (many, l/c), **devilish**

dextrous (prefer to *dexterous*)

Dhaka (not Dacca), capital of **Bangladesh**

diabetes: type 1, type 2 etc, no cap, no hyphen.

diagnose, diagnosis take great care: illnesses are **diagnosed**, patients are **not**.

Diana, Princess of Wales, at first mention; subsequently the Princess (cap, as she remained a member of the Royal Family until her death). Never say “Princess Diana” or - even worse - “Princess Di” or “Lady Di” (except in reported speech). Say “the late Princess” where appropriate.

Diaspora cap in Jewish context, but l/c in general sense of a dispersal.

DiCaprio, Leonardo

Dictaphone (proprietary, cap)

diehard (no hyphen)

dietitian (prefer to *dietician*)

different from, or **to**; Never *different than*; likewise, *differ from*.

dignitary, dignitaries

dilapidated (**not delapidated**)

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dilate, dilation means normal widening, as in pupils of the eye; **dilatation** is widening by force, as in child abuse cases. Take care.

dining room (no hyphen)

Dinky Toys (proprietary, cap “D” and “T”) but **Dinky** on its own can be sufficient.

diocese cap in specifics, such as **Diocese of Chichester** or the **Guildford Diocese**, but l/c in general use, and l/c **diocesan**.

diphtheria, diphthong (note “ph”).

diplomatic service (l/c,)

directives (in EU) l/c in general context, caps when specific, **eg**, *Working Time Directive*.

direct speech people we write about are allowed to speak in their own style, *but* be sensitive: **do not**, for example, expose someone to ridicule for dialect or grammatical errors.

Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP)

Directory Enquiries (despite usual style, *inquiries*).

disabled people not *the disabled*. Use positive language about **disability**, avoiding outdated terms that stereotype or stigmatise. Terms to avoid, with acceptable alternatives in brackets, include *victim of, crippled by, suffering from, afflicted by* (prefer **person who has, person with**); *wheelchair-bound, in a wheelchair* (**uses a wheelchair**); *invalid* (**disabled person**); *mentally handicapped, backward, retarded, slow* (**person with learning difficulties**); *the disabled, the handicapped, the blind, the deaf* (**disabled people, blind people, deaf people**); *deaf and dumb* (**deaf and speech impaired, hearing and speech-impaired**).

disburse is to *distribute* money; To **disperse** can be to *distribute* things or to *break up* - as an unruly crowd.

disc (musical, recording, or shape, **eg**, **disc jockey, compact disc, disc brake**; *but* **disk** in general computing context, **eg**, **disk drive, floppy disk**).

discernible (**not** *-able*)

discomfit take great care with this verb; it means primarily to *thwart, defeat* or *rout*, but by extension can mean thoroughly to *embarrass* or *disconcert* (noun **discomfiture**). It has **no** connection with **discomfort**, which means to *deprive of comfort* or *make uneasy*.

discreet means *tactful, circumspect* (noun **discretion**); **discrete** means *individually distinct* (noun **discreteness**).

discriminating (adjective) means *analytical, discerning, tasteful* (a discriminating palate): **Discriminatory** means *reflecting a biased treatment* (discriminatory employment policy).

disfranchise (**not** *disenfranchise*)

disinterested means *impartial, unbiased* (noun **disinterest**); never confuse with **uninterested**, which means having a *lack of interest*.

Disney the theme parks are **Disneyland** (California); **Disney World** (Florida); **Disneyland Paris** (Euro Disney should strictly be confined to the name of the European company); and **Tokyo Disneyland** (owned by a Japanese company, but Disney earns royalties from it).

disorientate (**not** *disorient*) *See orientate*.

dispatch (not *despatch*), including **dispatch box**.

dissociate (not *disassociate*) *disconnect* or *separate*, **eg**, he dissociated himself from the religious radicals.

distil, distilled, distillation

distinctive a distinctive feature is something that makes a person (or place or thing) easy to **distinguish** (pick out) from others. But it does not necessarily make that person **distinguished** (exalted): the distinguished professor wears a distinctive red bow tie so he is easy to distinguish from the others.

dive, dived (verb) (not *dove, dove*)

divorcé, man; **divorcée**, woman; use **divorcees** (no accent) in reference to both men and women.

Diwali the Hindu festival of lights.

DIY spell out do-it-yourself at first mention.

Docklands in London, Melbourne; **docklands** elsewhere.

doctor the title **Dr** should no longer be confined to medical practitioners. If a person has a doctorate from a reputable institution and wishes to be known as Dr Smith, he or she should be so titled. *See appellations.*

Doctor Who the television time traveller. Roman for the character (subsequent mentions, the Doctor), but italics for the programme.

docussoap, docudrama etc. (no hyphens)

dogfight, as **bullfight, cockfight** etc

dogs l/c with most breeds, such as **alsatian, borzoi, labrador, rottweiler**, though there are obvious exceptions such as **West Highland terrier, Yorkshire terrier, Jack Russell, German Shepherd** etc.

D'oh! as Homer Simpson would say, note the apostrophe.

Doha Round of world trade negotiations (as **Uruguay Round**).

Dolby (proprietary, cap)

Dole, Bob (not *Robert*)

dollars with figures use \$US5 (when American), \$A5 (Australian), \$C5 (Canadian), \$S5 (Singapore) etc.

doll's house (not *dolls'*)

Dolly the sheep (l/c "s")

Dome cap "D" in Millennium Dome and when used on its own, whether as noun or adjective. *See millennium.*

Domesday Book (roman, like **Magna Carta**), but **doomsday** in general or biblical sense.

Dominican Republic, neighbour to **Haiti**, while **Dominica** is one of the Windward Islands. Both are sovereign states. *See Haiti.*

donate use *give* or *present* wherever possible

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doppelgänger ghostly duplicate of a living person. *Note l/c and roman, Anglicised version of German *Doppelgänger**

do's and don'ts

dot-com use hyphen for colloquial reference to internet companies.

double bass the instrument.

doubtless (adverb) **never** say *doubtlessly*.

down avoid unnecessary use after verbs, as in *close down, shut down*. *See up*.

Downing Street write 10 Downing Street (or 11...), or simply No 10; note Downing Street policy unit.

downmarket (no hyphen) as **upmarket**.

downplay prefer **play down**.

Down's syndrome **never** say *mongol*.

Down Under cap as a colloquialism for Australasia (especially Australia).

drachmas, (**not** *drachmae* – now historical contexts).

draconian (l/c) Draco was an Athenian judge who ruled that the penalty for almost everything should be death. Try *severe* or *excessively harsh* instead.

draftsman (legal), but **draughtsman** (art, design).

drama, dramatic confine their use to the theatrical context wherever possible; *dramatic events* and the like are among the most tired clichés in the language.

Dr Dolittle (italics for the film, roman for the character)

dreamed prefer to *dreamt*.

dressing room (two words).

driving licence (**not** *driver's licence*).

drier is the comparative of dry; **dryer** is the noun, as in tumble dryer.

drink, drank, drunk but **drink-drive, drink-driver, drink-driving**; **Drunk** describes a current state of intoxication: By contrast, a drunk—like a **drunkard**—is someone who is habitually intoxicated: **Drunken** (adjective) describes either a trait of habitual intoxication or intoxicated people's behaviour, **eg**, a drunken brawl.

drivers no hyphens in **taxi driver, bus driver, car driver** etc.

drop a bombshell cliché never use.

dropout (noun or adjective - as in students); **drop-out** (rugby); and to **drop out** (verb).

drown, drowned

drug dealer, drug dealing, drug smuggler, drug smuggling, drug taking no hyphens as nouns; *but* hyphenate adjectives, **eg**, *a drug-dealing cartel, a drug-smuggling gang*; **never** "a drugs raid".

drugs do **not** confuse narcotics (which include **cocaine** and **heroin**) with other illicit drugs such as **cannabis**, **LSD** and **amphetamines**.

Drug Enforcement Administration (US), thereafter **DEA**.

Druid(s) (cap)

drum'n'bass, DnB

drunkenness

Druze (in Lebanon).

dry-clean, dry-cleaning etc.

drystone wall

dual (of two, **eg**, dual carriageway); **duel** (fight)

Duchess of York she is no longer a member of the Royal Family since her divorce. After her first mention as Duchess of York, refer to "the duchess" (l/c) subsequently; **never** "Fergie" or any such vulgarity. *See titles.*

due to must **not** be used as the equivalent of *because of* or *owing to*. The phrase must be attached to a noun or pronoun: "His absence was due to illness" is correct; "He was absent due to illness" is wrong. **Never** write "due to the fact that": use *because* instead.

duffel bag, duffel coat

Duke of Edinburgh say "the Duke" (cap) or "Prince Philip" after first mention; this cap rule applies only to heads of state, so the Duke of Rutland would become "the duke" (l/c) after first mention. *See Royal Family, heads of state, titles.*

dumb do **not** use; say **speech-impaired**.

dump do not use as synonym of *dismiss* or *sack*.

duty-free (hyphenated, noun or adjective).

dwarf as plural, prefer **dwarfs** (**not** *dwarves*); avoid "politically correct" circumlocutions such as "person of restricted growth".

dying is the present participle of *die* (to cease living); **dyeing** is the present participle of **dye** (to colour with a liquid).

dyke (embankment) **not** *dike*

dysentery (**not** *dysentry* or *disentery*).

dyslexia write "Paul has dyslexia" rather than labelling him "a *dyslexic*" or saying he "suffers from" dyslexia

oOOo

E-E-E

each, every although singular, they are acceptable with plural pronouns, as the plural is increasingly becoming a way of saying “he” or “she” or “his” or “her”. Hence, “everyone has what they want”; “each of us has our secrets”; *but* “everyone has secrets”. *But* note “*each other*” when two things or people are involved and “*one another*” when more than two are involved.

Earhart, Amelia (the 1930s aviatrix).

earlier this word is often redundant, because the tense of the verb says it all; similarly **later**.

Earls Court (no apostrophe).

early hours avoid the phrase “in the early hours of the morning”; say simply “the early hours” or, better, “early yesterday/today”.

earned (not *earnt*).

earring, earshot (no hyphen).

Earth cap only in planetary or astronomical sense, not in phrases such as “down to earth”. The same rule applies to **Moon** and **Sun**. *See Universe, solar system*.

earthquake can abbreviate to *quake* in headings. *See Richter scale*.

east, eastern, easterner *but* **the East** etc. for when to cap in geographical context, *See compass points*.

Easter Day (not *Easter Sunday*) is the Sunday between **Good Friday** and **Easter Monday**. Also note that the Saturday before Easter Day is **Holy Saturday** (not *Easter Saturday*, which is the Saturday after Easter) or **Easter Eve**.

Eastern Europe, but **eastern Germany**. *See Germany*.

easygoing

eBay

Ebola

ebook

EBRD European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

EC must **not** be used as an abbreviation for the European Commission in text or headlines. **EC** remains the shortform **only** of the European Community, although in almost all contexts now, **EU** is preferred. *See European*.

E. coli (italics in text, but roman and no point in headlines).

e-commerce (as **e-mail**).

ecosystem (no hyphen), but **eco-warrior**.

economic means of or relating to large-scale finances (government economic policy): **Economical** means *thrifty, financially efficient* (an economical purchase).

ecstasy the drug; the chemical name is Methylendioxyamphetamine, commonly called MDMA.

Ecuadorean (not *-ian*).

ecumenical (not *oecumenical*) but respect titles.

edible is fit for human consumption (edible flowers): What is **eatable** is at least minimally palatable (the cake is slightly burned but still eatable).

editor *l/c.* Similarly, **editor-in-chief**, but **sub-editor**, **copy editor**. *See job titles; newspapers.*

educationist (not *educationalist*).

, **eg**, is the abbreviation for the Latin *exempli gratia* (for example) no points, but use a comma before and after.

effect / affect *See affect / effect.*

effectively not a synonym for *in effect*: "the Howard campaign was launched effectively in 1992" means the intended effect was achieved; "the Howard campaign was in effect launched in 1992" means this was not the official launch, but the event described did have the effect of launching it, whether intended or not. The word effectively is overused as well as misused, and can often be omitted.

effrontery / affront the first is an act of shameless impudence or audacity: An **affront** is a deliberate insult.

Eid a Muslim word for festival. To write "the Eid festival" is tautologous.

Eid al-Adha (Festival of Sacrifice) **Muslim** festival laid down in Islamic law, celebrates the end of the **hajj**. *Note* that **eid** means festival, so it is tautologous to describe it as the "Eid festival".

Eid ul-Fitr the festival marking the end of the fast of **Ramadan**. *ul-Fitr* means the breaking of the fast: **Hari Raya Idul Fitri**, or informally **Lebaran** in Indonesia (the great day); **Hari Raya Aidilfitri** in Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei.

either takes a singular verb when both subjects are embraced: "Either is good enough." *See neither.*

EI Baradei, Mohamed director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Dr EI Baradei after first mention.

elbowroom (one word), similarly **headroom**, **legroom**.

EI Dorado fabled city of gold.

elderly, aged, old be sensitive in the use of these words. **Do not** use for people under 65 and be aware that there are many over this age for whom *elderly* is not an appropriate adjective. A sensitive consensus is building for the term "older people".

Electoral College cap in US election context.

electrocardiographs are *machines* for measuring heart function; **electrocardiograms** are the *tracings* made by them.

electrocute, electrocution means to kill by electric shock **do not** say survivors of torture were *electrocuted* during their ordeal — rather that they were given electric shocks.

elemental / elementary something that is elemental is an *essential constituent* (elemental ingredients) or a *power of nature* (elemental force). Something that is **elementary** is *basic, introductory, or easy* (an elementary math problem).

elicit means to *evoke, bring to light, or draw out*; **never** confuse with **illicit** (*unlawful, forbidden*).

Eliot, T(homas) S(tearns), usually known as **T.S. Eliot**; also **George Eliot** (real name Mary Ann Evans).

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elite (roman, no accent).

elipsis use spaces before and after ellipses, **eg**, “She didn’t want to go there ... ”; there is no need for a full point. *See punctuation.*

elude *See allude / elude / illude.*

e-mail, but *note E-Stamp*, a registered trademark.

embargo singular, **embargos** plural(**not embargoes**).

embarkation (**not embarcation**). You embark *in* (**not on**) a ship.

embarrass(ment) but note the French *embarras de choix*, *embarras de richesses* (embarrassment of choice, embarrassment of richness).

Embassy same style as for **Ambassador**, **eg**, the French Embassy in Rome, thereafter the embassy.

emend means *to correct* (text, etc.). For the second printing, the author emended several typos that had reached print in the first; He emended what he had said). The noun corresponding to **emend** is **emendation**. *See amend / emend.*

emigrate *leave* a country: **immigrate** *arrive* in one.

émigré

Emmies (plural of the Emmy awards). *See arts awards.*

empathy / sympathy is putting yourself in someone else’s shoes to understand that person’s situation: **sympathy** is *compassion* and *sorrow* one feels for another. *See antipathy / empathy.*

emphasise prefer this to *stress* in phrases such as “he emphasised the importance”; “she emphasised that the ruling was final”. *See stress.*

empire cap as in British, Greek or Roman Empire; similarly, cap **emperor** when specific, **eg**, Emperor Claudius.

EMS European Monetary System.

EMU economic and monetary union (in Europe). *See ERM.*

enamoured of (**not by or with**).

enclose (**not inclose**).

encyclopaedia (**not encyclopedia**).

endorse implies both a *positive attitude* and *active support* (the board of directors endorsed the expansion plan) *See approve / endorse.*

England, English beware of these when the meaning is **Britain, British**.

engineers restrict use to white-collar workers with engineering qualifications; **do not** use with reference to *mechanics, manufacturing workers, platelayers* etc.

en masse

enormity does **not** mean *great size*; it means *quality or character of being outrageous, or extreme wickedness or serious error*. Do **not** misuse. For great size, use **immensity**.

enough / adequate / sufficient *See adequate / sufficient / enough.*

enrol, enrolling, enrolment

en route (no italics).

ensign the **White Ensign** is the ensign of the Royal Navy and the Royal Yacht Squadron; the **Red Ensign** is the British Merchant Navy's flag; the **Blue Ensign** is flown by Royal Fleet Auxiliary vessels and by certain yacht clubs. There is no such thing as the *Royal Ensign*; however, the **Royal Standard** will fly from one of the Queen's homes when she is there. *See Royal Standard.*

en suite (two words, no hyphen, no italics, both as adverb and adjective).

ensure means to *make certain*; you **insure** against risk; you **assure** your life. The verb **ensure** usually needs *that* after it if accompanied by a following verb (**eg**, he tried to ensure that the policy was adopted); but omit *that* if followed by a noun (**eg**, he tried to ensure its success).

enthrall, enthralling

enumerable / innumerable these are nearly opposite near-homonyms. **Enumerable** means "able to be counted"; **innumerable** means "too many to count".

envy is covetousness of another's advantages, possessions, or abilities. *See jealousy.*

epicentre the point on the earth's surface directly above the focus of an earthquake or underground explosion. It is frequently misused to mean the centre or focus itself.

epidemic / endemic / pandemic an **epidemic** disease breaks out, spreads through a limited area (such as a state), and then subsides (an epidemic outbreak of measles). The word is frequently used as a noun (a measles epidemic). An **endemic** disease is perennially present within a region or population (malaria is endemic in parts of Africa). Note that endemic describes a disease and not a region: it is incorrect to say this region is endemic for a disease. A **pandemic** disease is prevalent over a large area, such as a nation or continent, or the entire world (the 1919 flu pandemic).

epilepsy do not define people by their medical condition: **seizures** are **epileptic**, people are **not**; so say (if relevant) "Mr Smith, who has epilepsy ... ", not "Mr Smith, an epileptic ... ".

eponymous means "giving its name to ...". so "Hamlet, the eponymous Prince" (ie, giving his name to the play) is correct; "Hamlet, the eponymous play", is wrong.

equator, the, but **equatorial** in general sense (**equatorial climate**) *but* note **the Equatorial Current** and **Equatorial Guinea** (formerly Spanish Guinea).

Eriksson, Sven-Göran (former England football head coach, **not** manager); note hyphen and umlaut.

ERM exchange-rate mechanism (in European contexts); a part of the wider concept of EMU.

escalate, escalation now clichés, so avoid; use *rise, grow* or *soar*.

escapers (**not** *escapees*).

Eskimo is a language spoken in Greenland, Canada, Alaska and Siberia; Eskimo is now regarded as a derogatory term for a race of people. Use **Inuit** (plural) or **Inuk** (singular) instead, except in occasional historical contexts.

espresso (**not** *expresso*)

Establishment, the; cap in sense of the perceived leaders of society; but l/c as in *the medical establishment, the legal establishment*, when the sense is more restricted

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Eta (not *ETA*), the Basque separatist organisation. Note also **Basque Country** (initial caps).

et al. is the abbreviated form of the Latin “*et alii*” (*and others*)—the others being people, **not** things. Since “al.” is an abbreviation, the period is required.

etc. is the abbreviated form of the Latin “*et cetera*” (*and other things*); Because it is an abbreviation, the period is required. It should **never** be used in reference to people. **Etc.** implies that a list of things is too extensive to recite. But often writers seem to run out of thoughts and tack on *etc.* for no real purpose. Two redundancies often appear with this abbreviation: (“and etc.”, which is a tautology because “*et*” means “*and*,” and “**etc.**” at the end of a list that begins with “**eg**,” – which properly introduces a short list of examples. Use a comma before and after.

ethnic do **not** say ethnic when you mean *ethnic minority*, which leads to such nonsense as “the constituency has a small ethnic population”.

ethnic cleansing do **not** use as a euphemism for **genocide** unless in quote marks.

Eucharist (cap) *See Christian terms.*

euro the European single currency, takes *l/c* (as **franc, pound, mark, peseta** etc).

eurocheques, eurobonds (*l/c*, no hyphen).

euroland (*l/c*) vernacular term for European single currency area; also **eurozone**.

Europe Western, Eastern, Central (all caps). Europe includes the British Isles, so **do not** use the name as equivalent to the Continent. Britain does **not** export to Europe, but to the rest of Europe.

European Commission, Commissioners cap the **Commission** throughout as a noun, but *l/c* when adjectival, **eg, a commission ruling** (the same rule as for **Government/government**); cap the commissioner only when referring to a specific person (**eg, Mario Monti, the Competition Commissioner**; thereafter, the commissioner). The President of the European Commission is capped throughout (as with all foreign Presidents).

European constitution *l/c* until such a document becomes enshrined in law. *See constitution.*

European Convention on Human Rights (caps).

European Economic Area (EEA), the European tariff-free zone, comprises the 15 members of the EU plus Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein. Other EU-EEA areas of co-operation include education, research, environment, consumer policy and tourism.

European Parliament, Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), or **Euro MPs**.

European Union (EU), European Community (EC) the first is now the preferred phrase except where the context is trade. If we have to use the Union, it should be capped throughout, but wherever possible use **EU**. Use Common Market and EEC **only** in historical context.

Eurosceptic (no hyphen), and similarly **Europhobia, Europhiles**. Write Eurosceptic with capital “**E**” for anti-European in general sense, **eurosceptic** (*l/c e*) for those who oppose the euro (single currency).

evangelical(s) keep *l/c* in general church contexts except when part of an official title such as the **Evangelical Alliance**.

evensong (*l/c*). *See matins, Christian terms.*

eventuate avoid; use *happen* instead.

ever is rarely necessary; avoid phrases such as *best-ever, fastest-ever*, and say simply *best* and *fastest*, qualifying (where appropriate) with *yet*. *See first, superlatives, universal claims.*

every day noun and adverb: it happens every day; **everyday** adjective: an everyday mistake.

every one is an emphatic way of saying *each* (every one of them was there); **everyone** is a pronoun equivalent to everybody (everyone was there).

every parent's nightmare cliché; avoid unless in direct quotes.

ex- prefer *former* in most contexts, as in “former Yugoslavia”, though **ex-serviceman** is unavoidable and “ex-” is fine for headlines.

excepting do **not** use when *except* or *except for* is possible.

exceptional / exceptionable what is **exceptional** is *uncommon, superior, rare, or extraordinary* (an exceptional talent). What is **exceptionable** is *objectionable or offensive* (an exceptionable slur).

exclamation marks nearly always unnecessary.

exclusive avoid with story or interview. The phrase “in an interview with *The Blog*” is sufficient.

ex dividend (**not** *ex-dividend*) in financial contexts.

execution take care; as with **assassination**, **do not** use as a synonym of any killing or murder. An execution is a *judicial killing* after due process of law; a terrorist, for example, **does not** execute someone.

exhibitions titles of art exhibitions in italics.

existing use *present* wherever possible as an alternative.

Exocet (cap).

ex parte l/c, roman, no hyphen.

ex officio l/c, means by right of position or office.

expatriate (noun, verb or adjective - **not** *ex-patriate* or *expatriot*); Occasionally **expat** (no hyphen) but use sparingly; this is “**ex**” meaning *out of* (as in *export, extract*), not “ex-” meaning *former* (as in **exhusband**).

explained avoid; write “he said” **not** “he explained”.

explicit is *deliberately spelled out*, as in the writing of a contract or a law. If it is not specifically stated but either is *suggested* in the wording or is *necessary* to effectuate the purpose it is **implicit**. **Do not** use implicit to mean *complete* or *unmitigated*.

extramarital (no hyphen); similarly, **extramural, extracurricular, extrasensory** etc.

extraterrestrial, extraterritorial (no hyphen).

exuberant (**not** *exhuberant*), *but exhilarate, exhort* etc.

eye of a storm do **not** refer to “the calm in the eye of the storm”; the eye, by definition, is the calm area at the centre of a storm or hurricane.

eye level (no hyphen)

eye to eye (no hyphens)

eyeing

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eyewitness use **witness** instead wherever possible (except in direct quotes).

oOOo

F-F-F

F-111s (hyphen). *See aircraft types.*

facade (no cedilla “ç”).

facelift use sparingly in its metaphorical sense, where it has become overworked. In its cosmetic context quite acceptable, however.

fact that almost always an unnecessary circumlocution, so avoid (**eg**, “owing to the fact that” means *because*).

fact sheet

Faeroe Isles, or the **Faeroes**.

fahrenheit convert all temperatures to **Celsius**.

fair trade (l/c, two words) for the general concept.

fairytale no hyphen.

falafel

falangist in Spain; **phalangist** in Lebanon.

fallacy means a *faulty argument*, not an *erroneous belief*.

Fallopian tubes (cap “F”).

fallout (noun).

fantasy the drug. *See GHB.*

FARC the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia.

far, farther, farthest is applied only to *distance* (literal or figurative); **eg**, “nothing could be farther from the truth”. **Further** means *in addition to, another*, **eg**, “a further point”.

Far East encompasses the following: China, Hong Kong, Japan, North and South Korea, Macau, Mongolia, Taiwan. *See ASEAN; Southeast Asia.*

Farsi language spoken by the majority of Iranians (**not Persian**).

fascia (**not facia**).

Fascism, Fascist cap in the political sense, but as a term of abuse, l/c; but **fascism** l/c except in specifically party context. *See communism.*

fatality use *death*.

fat cat no quotation marks, no hyphen. Hyphen as modifier, **eg**, fat-cat salaries.

Father (as in priest) avoid the ugly abbreviation “Fr” before a name.

father of two, mother of three no hyphens. Do not define people by their relationships unequally: don't say “a mother of two was jailed” where you would not say “a father of two ...”; do not say “a grandmother was attacked” – she may be no older than 40.

Father's Day (**not Fathers'**) *See Mother's Day.*

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fatwa (no italic) a Muslim religious *edict*; **not** a sentence of punishment.

fault-line (hyphen).

fax (noun & verb) derived from facsimile transmission, the foreshortened “fax” is almost universally preferred for convenience. The plural is **faxes**. *Note* that the word is governed by the same rules of capitalisation as other common nouns. FAX is incorrect – the word is not an acronym.

faze means to *disturb* or *disconcert* (the Government isn’t fazed by protests). To **phase** (usually in or out) is to *schedule* or *perform* a plan, task, or the like in stages, **eg**, phase in new procedures; phase out the product lines that don’t sell.

FBI Federal Bureau of Investigation, no need to spell out.

FDI foreign direct investment.

Fed, the (US) say Federal Reserve (“Board” not usually necessary) at first mention; cap the Chairman of the Fed, as with Governor of the Bank of England, President of the Bundesbank etc.

fedayeen Arab fighters (the word means “those who risk their lives for a cause”); can be capped up when referring to a specific force, **eg**, the **Saddam Fedayeen** militia which fought coalition forces in the 2003 Iraq war.

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) (in US); **not** *Agency* or *Authority*.

Federation of Small Businesses (**not** *Business*).

feel do **not** use this weak verb as a synonym for *think* or *believe*.

feel-good factor (no quotes).

Fellow cap in specific title such as Dr Arthur Brown, a Fellow of Magdalen, or in the more obvious Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons (**FRCS**); but in general sense, “a group of fellows in the quadrangle”, *l/c*; keep **fellowship** *l/c*.

female do **not** write *female councillors*, *female directors* etc; say **women councillors**, **women directors**.

feminine designations such as *authoress*, *poetess*, *wardress*, should be avoided. But **actress** is such common usage that it is acceptable. *See comedienne*.

Ferris wheel invented by American engineer George W.G. Ferris.

Fez (**not** *Fes* – Morocco).

festivals cap the Edinburgh Festival (cultural), Reading Festival (pop), Cheltenham Festival (racing) etc, thereafter the festival (*l/c*), unless it is part of the name of the event.

fete (no accent).

fewer / less fewer of numbers (fewer people, fewer goals); **less**, of *size*, in *quantity*, or singular nouns (less population, less meat). *See less*.

fiancé (man); **fiancée** (woman). *See divorcé*.

fictional / fictitious / fictive fictional means *of, relating to, or characteristic of imagination* (a fictional story): **Fictitious** means *imaginary, counterfeit, false* (a fictitious name): **Fictive** means *creating or created imagination* (the novel’s fictive universe).

Fide (**not** *FIDE*), the world chess body. *See chess names*.

fifty write **50-50** chance; *note* **Fifties** (cap) for the decade, but “she was in her fifties” (age, l/c).

fighting for his/her life avoid this meaningless phrase. Instead say *critically ill/injured*.

fig leaf (two words).

figures *See numbers*.

filibuster (not *fillibuster*).

Filipinos (males) **Filipinas** (women), **the Philippines**.

film festival l/c (two words).

films titles in italics. *note* **film-maker**.

film star (two words).

Filofax (proprietary, cap). Use **personal organiser** for generic.

finalise, finalised avoid, use **complete, completed** or **finish, finished**.

financial years 2004-05, etc.

fine-tooth comb

firebomb

firearms do **not** confuse bullets with shotgun cartridges (containing pellets); so a gunshot wound is markedly different from a bullet wound.

fire brigade l/c in general context, but cap specifics, **eg**, Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB), Country Fire Authority (CFA).

firefight (or **fire-fight**) should **not** be used as a synonym of *military skirmish* or exchange of fire; **firefighters** try to extinguish flames. *Note* that we should always refer to **firefighters** rather than *firemen*; *fireies*, a colloquialism in the same context as *ambo's* and should be avoided.

firing line — militarily, the group *doing* the shooting. **Do not** confuse with line of fire; if they are aiming at you, you are in the line of fire **not** in the firing line.

firm do **not** use as a synonym of *company*. *See companies*.

first serves as an adverb; avoid *firstly*. If a list of priorities is essential in a story, write **first, secondly, thirdly** etc. **Never** say *first-ever*. Use **first-class** (for service, hotel etc) generally; but because the denomination is specified, **1st-class** and **2nd-class** for stamps. Spell out first to ninth, then 10th, 21st, millionth. *See ever, superlatives, universal claims*.

first aid (noun, no hyphen); but hyphenate when adjectival, **eg**, first-aid qualifications.

First Lady caps, and restrict use primarily to US context - never for the British or Australian Prime Ministers' wives.

First World War (not *World War One*); similarly, **Second World War**. *See wars*.

fit this verb is undergoing a shift. It has traditionally been conjugated **fit-fitted**, but today *fit-fit* is prevalent (when she tried on the dress, it fit quite well). In the passive voice, however, fitted is still normal (the horse was **fitted** with a new harness).

fjord (not *fiord*).

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flair as in *talent*, must never be confused with **flare**, as in *fire*, *fashion* etc.

flammable means the same as **inflammable**; the negative is **non-flammable**.

flat-owners (hyphen), but **homeowners**.

flaunt/flout means to make an *ostentatious* or *defiant display*, **eg**, “she flaunted her jewels”; to **flout** is to *show contempt for*, **eg**, “he flouted the law”.

fledgeling (not *fledgeling*).

fleur-de-lys (not *lis*).

flight numbers cap in stories where the number of the flight is relevant, **eg**, Flight 103 (in the Lockerbie disaster)

flight path (two words).

floodlighting, but **floodlit**

flounder/founder to **flounder** is to perform a task badly, like someone stuck in mud; **founder** means *fail*: a business might be **foundering** because its bosses are **floundering**.

flotation (shares), *but floatation* (tanks).

flout *See flaunt*.

flowerbed (one word); also **flowerpot**.

flu (no apostrophe), acceptable for **influenza**.

Flushing Meadows (not *Meadow*), New York home of the US Open tennis championships.

flyer whether a *pilot* or a *handbill*, **eg**, a high-flyer. **Not flier**.

focus, focused, focussing

foetus, foetal (not *fetus* etc); similarly, **foetid** (not *fetid*).

folk-song, folk-singer (use hyphen).

following avoid as a sloppy synonym of *after*. **Always** use *after* in preference.

Food and Drug Administration (US)

foodstuffs where place-names form part of the phrase, generally only use the cap if the goods originated in the place-named. For example, “an excellent Swiss gruyère” refers to a cheese made in Switzerland, whereas “swiss cheese” is a cheese with holes in it, **eg**, brussels sprouts, cheddar cheese, chicken kiev, cornish pasties, potatoes lyonnaise, hamburger, frankfurter etc.

foolproof (no hyphen)

foot-and-mouth disease

for-, fore- the general rule is that the “e” is added only when the prefix has the meaning of *before*. Thus **forbears** (refrains); **forebears** (ancestors); **forgo** (go without); **forego** (go before, as in foregone conclusion); **foreword** (a book’s introduction); **forward** (toward the front); **foresee** (to be aware of beforehand, predict); **foretell** (predict the future or a future event). Take particular care with **forswear** and **foresee(able)**, both frequently misspelt.

forced to always look twice at this phrase: "The police were forced to call in troops in support ..." Is *forced to* giving the correct impression?

forecastle do not attempt to abbreviate.

foreign appellations use local honorifics for:

France: M, Mme, Mlle and Me (for Maître, legal);

Germany and Austria: Herr, Frau (for all grown women, whether married or not), and Fraülein

Spain and Spanish-speaking, Latin America: Señor, Señora, Señorita;

Italy: Signor, Signora, Signorina;

Portugal and Brazil: Senhor, Senhora (but not Senhorina).

Note that with Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland and Canada, Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms etc. are used because of those countries' linguistic sensitivities (**eg**, Jacques Santer, former President of the European Commission, should subsequently be Mr Santer). Similarly the English forms with Francophone Africa, where French is more the language of the elite rather than the lingua franca.

For all other nationalities, use English except where it is possible to use a local title (**eg**, Ayatollah, Begum, Chief, Pandit, Sheikh), or a military one (**eg**, Colonel Gaddafi); occasionally, where titles are in general use (**eg**, Baron von X in Germany), we should respect such exceptions.

In **Burma**, **U** means Mr, **Daw** means Mrs; in **China**, use the first Chinese name as surname, **eg**, Deng Xiaoping becomes Mr Deng.

Note: The Italian "di" and the Dutch "van" are all l/c when the name is full out, **eg**, Roberto di Matteo, Pierre van Hooijdonk; but Le Saux, Di Matteo, Van Hooijdonk when written without forenames.

foreign places as a general rule, use the spellings in *The Times Atlas of the World*, including Chinese place names (see *Chinese names*). However, use the Anglicised spellings of many familiar (and especially European) cities and countries, such as **Brussels, Cologne, Cracow, Dunkirk, Florence, Geneva, Gothenburg, The Hague, Lyons, Majorca, Marseilles, Mexico City, Minorca, Moscow, Munich, Naples, Prague, Rheims, Rome, Salonika, Venice**. See *Spanish placenames*.

foreign words write in roman when foreign words and phrases have become essentially a part of the English language (**eg**, an **elite**, a **debacle**, a **fête**, **de rigueur**); otherwise, use italic (**eg**, a **bon mot**, a **bête noire**, *the raison d'être*). Avoid pretension by using an English phrase wherever one will serve. See *accents*.

forensic means *pertaining to the courts*. A forensic expert could be a solicitor or a biochemist; make your meaning clear by writing *forensic scientist*, *forensic medicine* etc; it does **not** mean *scientific*.

forego go before **forgo** go without. See *for-*, *fore-*.

for ever means *always*: I will love you for ever; **forever** means *continuously*: he is forever changing his mind.

forklift truck

former Soviet republics

Armenia	adjective Armenian
Azerbaijan	adjective Azerbaijani (though there are ethnic Azeris in, eg , Armenia)
Belarus	adjective Belarussian
Estonia	adjective Estonian (did not join the Commonwealth of Independent States)
Georgia	adjective Georgian
Kazakhstan	adjective Kazakh
Kyrgyzstan	adjective Kyrgyz
Latvia	adjective Latvian (not in the Commonwealth)
Lithuania	adjective Lithuanian (not in the Commonwealth)
Moldova	adjective Moldovan

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Russia	adjective Russian
Tajikistan	adjective Tajik
Turkmenistan	adjective Turkmen (its citizens are Turkmen , singular Turkman)
Ukraine	adjective Ukrainian (not “ <i>the Ukraine</i> ”)
Uzbekistan	adjective Uzbek

former / latter these two adjectives are antonyms They apply *only* to pairs. The **former** is the first of two, the **latter** the second of two.

Formica (proprietary, cap) please be sure **not** to use the brand name in a generic sense to describe *decorative plastic laminates*.

formula singular, **formulas** plural, but **formulae** in mathematical contexts.

for real avoid this cliché when all you mean is *really*. See *free*.

fortuitous does **not** mean *fortunate* or by good fortune. It means *by chance* or *accidental*. **Do not** confuse.

forum singular, **forums** plural. See *referendum*.

four-letter words avoid wherever possible as these obscenities upset most readers. If there is no alternative (**eg**, in direct quotes, where they are essential to the story), soften them with asterisks - f***, f***ing, c*** etc. See *obscenities*.

Fourth of July, or US Independence Day (**not** *4th*).

four-wheel drive (for the power system), *but* a **four-wheel-drive vehicle**; See *motoring terms*.

foxhunt, foxhunting (no hyphens), as **foxhound, foxhole, master of foxhounds** (l/c). See *hunting*.

Fox News, Fox Sports, Twentieth Century Fox (or **20th Century Fox** in logo form).

fractions do **not** mix fractions and decimals in the same story. Compounds such as **half-hour, half-dozen** etc. take a hyphen; half an hour, half a dozen; **Do not** hyphenate when fractions are adjectival - **two-thirds full** - but not as nouns - “two thirds of the bus was empty”. See *two thirds*.

franc l/c, and abbreviate as **Fr40**; specify if not French, **eg, BFr40** (Belgian), **SwFr40** (Swiss) - now often historical contexts.

franchisor (**not** *franchiser*).

Frankenstein foods never use this pejorative phrase to describe genetically modified (GM) foods, except in direct quotations.

fraud squad (l/c). See *Flying Squad*.

free avoid the modern cliché “for free” when the meaning is simply **free**.

“**freebie**” permissible as colloquialism for a **handout, free trip** etc, use inverted commas.

Free Churches, Free Churchman etc. (caps).

Freedom of Information Act spell out in full at first mention, thereafter simply *the Act*. As a concept, freedom of information may be abbreviated to **FoI** but use sparingly.

freefall (one word).

Freemasonry, Mason, Masonic

French names prefer the more Anglicised style for street names etc: Rue Royale, Place de la Victoire, Boulevard des Montagnes. No need to hyphenate place-names such as St Malo, St Etienne etc.

The particles “de” and “d’” are lowercased (except at the beginning of a sentence). When the last name is used alone, de (but not d’) is often dropped. Its occasional retention, in de Gaulle, for example, is suggested by tradition rather than logic. When a name begins with closed-up de, such as Debussy, the d is always capitalized, **eg**, Alexis de Tocqueville (Tocqueville), Alfred de Musset (Musset), *but* Charles de Gaulle (de Gaulle), Jean d’Alembert (d’Alembert).

When “de la” precedes a name, “la” is usually capitalized and is always retained when the last name is used alone. The contraction “du” is usually lowercased in a full name but is retained and capitalized when the last name is used alone. When a name begins with closed-up “Du”, such as Dupont, the “d” is always capitalized, **eg**, Jean de La Fontaine (La Fontaine), René-Robert Cavalier de La Salle (La Salle), Philippe du Puy de Clinchamps (Du Puy de Clinchamps).

When the article “le” accompanies a name, it is capitalized with or without the first name, **eg**, John Le Fevre (Le Fevre).

Initials standing for a hyphenated given name should also be hyphenated, **eg**, Jean-Paul Sartre (J -P Sartre (Sartre)).

Since there is considerable variation in French usage, the guidelines and examples above merely represent the most common forms and it is best to always check.

french fries, french kiss, french letter, french dressing, french polish, french windows (l/c, no hyphen).

fresco, frescoes (not *frescos*).

freudian slip

Frisbee (proprietary, cap).

front bench, the (noun); but **frontbencher, frontbench** power etc.

frontline (adjective, as in the frontline states), but the **front line** (noun).

front-runner

FTSE 100 index (no hyphen); also **FTSE all-share index**; both can be shortened to the **FTSE 100** or the **FTSE all-share**.

fuchsia

fuel is becoming a greatly overworked verb, especially in headlines; always seek alternatives such as *raise, increase, add to, even boost*.

Führer (not *Fuehrer*)

Fujiyama or Mount Fuji (not *Mount Fujiyama*).

fulfil, fulfilment, but **fulfilled, fulfilling**

full points note no space after initials and points, **eg, F.W. de Klerk**. With companies, omit the full points, **eg**, W H Smith. *See companies; initials*.

-ful, -fuls so *cupfuls* (not *cupsful*).

full-time (adj), but **full time** (noun, as in football).

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fulsome be very careful — and sparing — with the use of this word. It means *excessive* or *insincere*; *disgusting by excess* (the cliché *fulsome praise* actually means *excessive* praise, **not** *generous* or *warm* praise). Try to avoid, especially the clichéd (and wrong) use. Do **not** use fulsome to mean *very full*.

fundraising, fundraiser (no hyphen).

fungus singular, **fungi** plural

further *See farther.*

fury please avoid temptation to over-use this short headline word. *Fury* is rarely expressed or intended; *anger* or even *mild disappointment* is more likely.

future, in the near verbose. Use *soon* or *shortly* instead.

oOOo

G-G-G

Gaddafi, Colonel (Muammar), the Libyan leader: **Colonel Gaddafi** after first mention.

gaff is a *hook* or *spar*; **gaffe** is a *blunder* or *indiscretion*. Note to *blow the gaff* (let out a secret).

gambit is a technical term in chess, meaning an opening involving a sacrifice in return for general advantage. Thus *opening gambit* is tautology. Take care with its use as a metaphor, and use sparingly.

game plan

game show as **chat show, quiz show, talk show** etc. (no hyphens).

Gandhi, Mahatma, Indira etc. (**not** *Ghandi*).

Garda, the Irish police force; **garda** (plural **gardaí**) Irish police officer.

garotte (**not** *garrotte* or *garrote*).

gas, gases (noun); **gassed, gassing** (verbal use), and note **gases** (**not** *gasses*) for present tense, **eg**, *doctor gases patient*.

gasfield as **coalfield, oilfield**

Gatt the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. Its successor body is now the World Trade Organisation (WTO). *See Uruguay Round, World Trade Organisation*.

gauge (**not** *guage*).

gay now fully acceptable as a synonym for homosexual or lesbian. Use as an adjective, **eg**, *gay bishops, gay people*, rather than a noun (*gays*) where possible, though "gays and lesbians" is OK. *See straight*.

"**gay marriage**" put in quotation marks at first mention only. *See civil partnership*.

GDP gross domestic product.

GEC Alstom became simply **Alstom** (**no** "h") in mid-1998.

gelatine (rather than *gelatin*).

Geldof, Bob do **not** write *Sir Bob Geldof*, as he is an honorary KBE.

gender is a term of grammar; try not to use as a synonym of a person's sex. The use of language should reflect changes in society. Phrases such as *career girl* or *career woman*, for example, are outdated (more women have careers than men) and patronising (there is no male equivalent): **never** use them.

Businessmen, housewives, male nurse, woman pilot, woman (or lady!) doctor similarly reinforce outdated stereotypes. Use sparingly if no other alternative.

Try rewording; But **businessman, businesswoman, homemaker, stay-at-home mom** or **stay-at-home dad** are acceptable alternatives. Use *nurse, pilot* or *doctor* without gender qualification unless pivotal to the story.

Actor and **comedian** cover men and women; **not** *actress, comedienne*. **Firefighter**, not *fireman*; **police constable** not *female police* or *woman police constable* (most police forces have abandoned the distinction): Similarly **waitstaff** has largely replaced *waiter* and *waitress* and is more preferable, though the latter may still be used as a noun on a gender specific basis.

Use **humankind** or **humanity** rather than *mankind*, a word that, alienates half the population from their own history.

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Never say "his" to cover men and women: use *his* or *her*, or a different construction; in sentences such as "a teacher who beats his/her pupils is not fit to do the job", there is usually a way round the problem — in this case, "teachers who beat their pupils ... "

general election always l/c

General Synod (of the Church of England), thereafter *the synod*.

Generation X (noun) (cap G and X) abbreviate to **Gen X: Generation X-er**. refers to the generation born after that of the baby boomers - roughly from the early 1960s to the mid 1970s. Often perceived as *the disaffected and directionless*.

Generation Y (noun) (cap G and Y) abbreviate to **Gen Y: Generation Y-er**. used to describe those born between approximately 1978 and 2000. Also referred to as *millennials* and *internet generation* (iGen).

Geneva convention

Gentile(s) (cap)

gentleman this word is a vulgarism when used as a synonym for *man*. When used in reference to a cultured, refined man, it is susceptible to some of the same objections as those levelled against lady. Use it cautiously. But note **gentlemen's club** (prefer to *gentleman's*); also **gentlemen's agreement**.

geriatric does **not** mean *elderly*, but is applied to medical treatment for the elderly, **eg, geriatric hospital**. **Never** use as a term of abuse.

Germany's full title is the Federal Republic of Germany. If referring to the area that was East Germany, say **eastern Germany** or **the former East Germany**; similarly, **western Germany** or the **former West Germany**. **Ossis, Wessis** permissible vernacular for inhabitants of the two parts. When plural, use *the two Germanys*, **not** *Germanies*.

german measles prefer **rubella**.

gerrymander

get, got usually a lazy verb for which an alternative should be sought.

Ghanaian (**not** *Ghanian*).

GHB the drug. Commonly called **fantasy** or **grievous bodily harm**. Other names include *liquid ecstasy*. The main chemical ingredient is gamma hydroxybutyrate.

ghetto use only in the sense of an area of enforced or customary segregation, not as an ethnic neighbourhood, **eg, middle-class district, not ghetto**. Note plural **ghettos**.

giant-killer, giant-killing

Gibraltar (**never** *Gibraltar*); and *note* **Strait of Gibraltar** (**not** *Straits*).

gig is now acceptable for a musical event, as **rave**.

gild means to *cover thinly* with gold: a **guild** is traditionally a *medieval association of craftsmen or merchants*, often having considerable power. Now more commonly used for an association of people for mutual aid or in pursuit of a common goal. Note the phrase "gild the lily" is often wrongly used to mean to exaggerate. It literally means to try and improve what is already beautiful or perfect. Try and avoid.

gipsy *See gypsy*.

girl do **not** use as a synonym of *woman*. A female under 18.

girlfriend (one word, as **boyfriend**). Use girlfriend only for young people; otherwise *woman friend* or just *friend* (where the gender is obvious).

girlie (not *girly*).

giro (l/c), as in benefit payments, **cheques** etc.

giveaway (noun or adjective), one word, as **takeaway**; but to **give away**.

glamorise, glamorous, but **glamour**.

glasnost (not italic)

glassmaker

global warming use *global heating*

GlaxoSmithKline, the merged pharmaceuticals company (**GSK** for short).

GM crops, GM food no need to write genetically modified in full at first mention.

go-ahead, give the prefer approve, shorter and preferable to this cliché.

gobbledegook

God cap when referring to just one, in any religion. **He, His, Him** also take cap. Many gods, use l/c, as in the **Greek gods, Hindu gods**. See *Christian terms*.

godforsaken, godless (l/c), but **God-fearing**.

godparents, godfather, godmother, godson, goddaughter, godchild.

Goebbels, Joseph (no umlaut on “oe”). Similarly, **Hermann Goering**.

goer as a suffix, run on as one word, as in **churchgoer, partygoer, theatregoer** etc.

go-kart (use hyphen).

Goldeneye (the James Bond film, not *GoldenEye*).

golden jubilee

goldmine, goldmining

goodbye

goodness, for goodness sake

go-slow noun **go slow** verb

goodwill one word, whether used as a noun or adjective.

Gorazde in Bosnia (not *Goradze*).

Gorbachev, Mikhail

Gordian knot a very difficult or complex problem.

Gore-Tex (caps, trade name)

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gorilla

gourmet / gourmand a **gourmet** knows and appreciates the fine points of food and drink, whereas a **gourmand** simply enjoys eating and is often a glutton.

Gothenburg (not Göteborg).

Gothic (cap), rather than *Gothick*.

Government cap all governments when referring to a specific one, **eg**, “the Government resigned last night”; “the Argentine Government sent troops”; only *l/c* when nonspecific or one that has yet to be formed, **eg**, “all the governments since the war”, or “the next Labour government would raise pensions”.

Also *l/c* government in all adjectival contexts, **eg**, a government minister, a government decision, government expenditure. A further instance of *l/c* use is in phrases such as “the Bosnian government troops” or “the British government-backed trade delegation”, when the use is again principally adjectival.

government departments cap both when giving full title (**eg**, **Department of Trade and Industry**), and even when abbreviated, as in **Health Department**, **Education Department**, **Department of Trade** etc. The same applies to ministries. *See departments*.

Governor cap at first mention only, **eg**, Arnold Schwarzenegger is Governor of California, or John D. Brown Governor of Hawaii. On subsequent mentions of his title, *the governor* (*l/c*).

Governor-General takes a hyphen everywhere **except** Canada.

graduate (verb) means *to grant a diploma to* or *confer a degree on*. **Graduate from** means to receive a diploma or degree from (a school, university, or other institution). A school can graduate a student or a student can graduate from a school, but a student can **never** graduate a school.

gram, not *gramme*; similarly, **kilogram**. *See metric*.

grandad, *but* **granddaughter**, **grandparents**

Grand Jury (caps) in US contexts.

grandmaster (chess) *l/c*. *See chess names*.

grand prix *l/c*, the British grand prix, **grands prix** plural (**not** *grand prixes*, *grand prix's*).

grateful *thankful* or *appreciative*. **Gratified** is to be *pleased*, *satisfied*, or *indulged*.

grassroots (adjective), the **grass roots** (noun). Still a cliché and should be used sparingly.

great and the good, the (all *l/c*, and quotes usually unnecessary).

Great Britain or **Britain** = England, Wales, Scotland and islands governed from the mainland (ie, not Isle of Man or Channel Islands). **United Kingdom** = Great Britain and Northern Ireland. **British Isles** = United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, Isle of Man and Channel Islands. **Do not** confuse these entities.

greater or lesser degree *lesser* is **not** correct but **is** common usage.

Greco-, (**not** *Graeco-*).

green a *green activist*, *the green movement*, but *u/c* when referring to so-named political parties, **eg**, *the German Greens*, *the Green's*.

green belt (*l/c*), but **greenfield sites**, one that has not been built on before, while a **brownfield** site is one that has been built on before.

green line l/c, demarcation line between hostile factions in, **eg**, Jerusalem, Beirut, Cyprus.

Green Paper (caps) a discussion paper. *See also White Paper.*

grenade no need to write *hand grenade*; but qualify if delivered in another way, **eg**, **rocket-propelled grenade**.

grisly means *horrifying, repugnant*; **grizzly** means *greyish, grizzled*, or is a short form of **grizzly bear**.

grottoes a small picturesque cave, particularly an artificial one.

ground(s) in the sense of reason, do not use plural unless more than one is given; **eg**, “he gave up his job on the ground of illness”; but “he gave up his job on the grounds of his failed marriage and illness”.

Group 4 (security company).

Group of Seven (G7) leading industrial countries (Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the US), but no need to spell out.

G8 the G7 plus Russia.

G-string

Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (no accents). *See War on Terror.*

guards of honour are ceremonial troops used to greet visiting dignitaries; like all guards, they are **mounted**, as **sentries** are **posted**.

guerrilla beware of loaded terms for advocates of political violence. Guerrilla’s have guns, gorillas are the largest living primate and do not. *See terrorist.*

guest avoid using as a verb “Lady X will guest on the show”; say “Lady X will be among the guests”, or “Lady X is a guest”. *See host.*

guesthouse (no hyphen).

guidebook similarly, **chequebook**, **formbook**, **stylebook**, **textbook** etc.

Guides (not *Girl Guides*); Girl guiding UK is the new name (April 2002) for the **Guide Association**; the individual members are still known as **Guides**, **Brownies** and **Rainbows**. *See Scouts.*

guild traditionally a medieval association of craftsmen or merchants, often having considerable power. Now more commonly used for an association of people for mutual aid or in pursuit of a common goal. *See gild.*

guinea-pig (hyphen).

Guinness note *The Guinness Book of Records* has “The” as part of the title.

gulag do **not** use when *labour camps* is meant; **Gulag** (cap) was the Soviet organisation that ran the prisons and forced labour camps.

Gulf, the avoid both *Persian Gulf* and *Arabian Gulf* in this politically sensitive area.

Gulf war of 1991.

Gulf Cooperation Council comprise six Sunni-ruled states: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates

gunboat, **gunfight**, **gunfire**, **gunman**, **gunpoint**, **gunshot**, **gunsmith** *but* **gun dog**, **gun battle**.

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gunned down avoid this Americanism, which means *shot*; if you mean **shot dead**, say it.

gung hay fat choy Cantonese greeting for the Chinese new year, or lunar new year, which falls on the first full moon of the lunar calendar. It can occur between late January and mid-February. *Gung hay fat choy* is said to wish someone prosperity.

gunwales (nautical, **not** *gunwhales*).

Gurkhas

guttural (**not** *gutteral*).

Guyana (formerly British Guiana, now independent); do not confuse with **French Guiana** (still a French overseas territory). The adjective from Guyana is **Guyanese**, also the person.

Guy Fawkes Night (no apostrophe, initial caps); similarly **Bonfire Night**.

gybe means to *shift direction* or *change course*, particularly in sailing. **Do not** confuse with **jibe**, a *taunt* or *sneer*.

Gypsy/gypsy (**not** *gipsy*). Use the cap when referring to a specific group of this semi-nomadic people, but l/c in the fashion or general sense, as in "gypsy style is the look for spring". The other wandering groups in Britain are the *Irish tinkers*, who prefer the name **Irish travellers**; the **Scottish Gypsies/travellers**; and the *hippies*, whom are called **New Age travellers**; **travellers** is a useful generic term.

Note (the) **Roma** is the term for Gypsies from the Continent, some of whom have sought asylum in western Europe. The singular and adjectival form is **Romany**, **eg**, a Romany woman, but Gypsy can be used in the same way.

oOOo

H-H-H

Häagen-Dazs the ice-cream invented in America.

habeas corpus a writ requiring a person under arrest to be brought into a court or before a judge, especially to secure that person's release unless lawful grounds are shown for their detention.

Habsburg (not *Hapsburg*).

haemorrhage means *heavy* and *potentially dangerous* bleeding, **not** simply bleeding. Beware of misuse in metaphor.

haemorrhoid

Hague, The

hairdresser, hairdressing, hairbrush, haircut, hairdryer, hairpin, hairstyle

Haiti, Haitian note that Haiti must never be described as an island; it is joined to the Dominican Republic and together they constitute the island of **Hispaniola**.

hajj pilgrimage to Mecca (l/c and roman). It means *the great pilgrimage*.

haka the Maori war-dance (l/c and roman).

half no hyphen when used adverbially: *you look half dead; it was half wine, half water*; hyphen when used adjectivally: a **half-eaten** sandwich; he got it **half-price**.

half (of) delete the "of" whenever possible, **eg**, half the furniture, half the school, half the vote.

half-mast (hyphenate).

half-time in a football match etc; the half time in business context (*but half-time* results).

halfway (no hyphen), *but half-hearted*.

Halley's comet *See heavenly bodies*.

handheld (computers etc), as **desktop, laptop, palmtop** etc.

Hallowe'en falls on the night of October 31, the eve of **All Saints' Day**.

handful if applied to a mass noun, use a singular verb (a handful of trouble is ahead): If handful applies to a plural count noun, use a plural verb (there are only a handful of protesters on the streets today).

handmade, handbuilt, handout, handbook, handbill (no hyphen).

hangar (aircraft), **hanger** (clothes).

hanged "The murderer was hanged at dawn" - **never hung**. Clothes are **hung** on a washing line or a **hanger**. However, if death is not intended or likely, or if the person is suspended by a body part other than the neck, **hung** is correct (he was hung upside down as a cruel prank). In most senses, of course, **hung** is the past form of **hang** (The pork was hung to cure). Note though that hang means to suspend from above so to say "hung up" is an oxymoron.

Hansard

hara-kiri known less vulgarly in Japan as **seppuku**.

harass, harassment

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hardcore (one word as adjective, **eg**, *hardcore pornography*); but the **hard core** of the rebels (two words as noun); similarly, **hard core** (rubble).

hardline (adjective), but *taking a hard line*.

harebrained (not *hairbrained*) after the timid, easily startled animal. Meaning *rash* or *ill-judged*.

Harley-Davidson (hyphenate).

Harm high-speed anti-radiation missile, **anti-SAM** weapon. **Do not** write *Harm missile* as it is tautologous.

HarperCollins, or **HarperCollins Publishers** is owned by News Corporation.

Harrods (no apostrophe).

harvest festival (l/c).

Hawaiian

hay fever (no hyphen).

hazard / risk scientists use **hazard** to mean a *potential* for harm and **risk** to mean the actual *probability* of harm occurring; though headline writers may feel more at home with risk than hazard, the distinction is worth bearing in mind.

headache avoid as a synonym of *difficulty*.

head-butt (noun or verb).

headcount (no hyphen).

headhunt, **headhunting** etc. (no hyphens).

headlines avoid the worst clichés and hyperboles such as **bash**, **crash**, **shock**, **slam** etc; but words such as **bid** (for *attempt*), **crisis**, **hit** (*adversely affect*), **row** (*clash* or *dispute*) - all of which should appear only sparingly in text - are permissible in headlines, provided they are not overworked.

Inverted commas must always be single in headlines, straps and display panels on News, Sport and Business pages. *See quotation marks*.

Use active verbs where possible, particularly in news headlines: “Editors publish new style guidelines” is much better than “New style guidelines published”. Avoid tabloidese such as *bid*, *brand*, *dub*, and *slam*, and broadsheet clichés such as *insist*, *signal*, and *target*.

Be careful when making references to popular culture. Puns are fine but do not overuse, or resort to tired puns such as “flushed with success” (this story has got a plumber in it!).

headquarters can be used as a singular (a large headquarters) or plural (our headquarters are in Sydney); **HQ**, however, takes the singular.

headmaster, **headmistress**, but **head teacher** one word and l/c except in the formal, official title (and then cap at first mention only).

headroom (one word), as **elbowroom**, **legroom**.

heads of state when these are royals, such as **King Abdullah** of Jordan, after the first mention refer to them as *the King* (cap). The cap at subsequent mentions applies only to heads of state; ie, Prince B. of Thailand (a minor royal) would become *the prince* thereafter.

head up (an organisation etc) avoid; write simply, **eg**, "she will head the organisation".

healthcare (one word).

heartbroken, heartbreaking, heartfelt, heartstrings, but hyphenate **heart-rending, heart-throb**.

heat wave two words.

Heaven, Hell cap in religious context only. *See Devil*.

heavenly bodies cap the proper names of planets, stars, constellations etc: **Venus, Arcturus, the Plough, Aries**; for comets, l/c the word *comet* in, for example, **Halley's comet. The Sun, the Moon, the Earth, the Universe** are capped in their planetary or astronomical sense (*see Earth*). Use l/c for the adjectives **lunar** and **solar**, but cap **Martian** both adjectivally and as a noun.

Heep, Uriah (not *Heap*).

Hell's Angels

help to (plus verb), **eg**, "he helped to make the cake" (not "he helped make the cake").

helping the police with their inquiries avoid this phrase - suspects rarely willingly help the police. Say "were being interviewed" instead.

helpline (one word). *See hotline*.

Hemisphere *Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western*.

heraldry do not confuse **crests** with **coats of arms**. Most arms consist of a shield and a crest; crests are the topmost part of the coat of arms (think of the crest of a bird or a wave).

herculean (l/c) a task requiring great strength or effort but **Herculeus** (cap) the greek god.

Her Majesty's pleasure (detained at).

Herzegovina (as in **Bosnia-Herzegovina**), (not *Hercegovina*). *See Yugoslav*.

Hezbollah (Party of God) in Iran and Lebanon; soft-hyphenate (on a break) as **Hezb-ollah**.

Hibernian means *of or concerning* Ireland, **not** Scotland - despite the Edinburgh football club of that name.

hiccup (not *hiccough*).

hi-fi is an acceptable abbreviation (noun or adjective) of *high fidelity* (as **wi-fi** is for *wide fidelity*). Also **hi-tech**.

high acceptable usage as a noun, **eg**, "she was on a high". But avoid clichés such as *all-time high* and *hits new high*.

Higher School Certificate

highland fling

highbrow, lowbrow

high command avoid its clichéd use, as in "Tory high command".

High Commissioner (with caps) when specific, **eg, the Indian High Commissioner**; there-after, *the high commissioner*. Remember that Commonwealth countries and the UK have high commissioners

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serving in high commissions in each other's countries, **not** ambassadors serving in embassies. *See Ambassador.*

High Court

highfalutin

high-flyer

high street is l/c and no hyphen in general sense, as in *high street prices*. But cap in specifics, **eg**, High Street Collingwood.

hijab covering for the head and face worn by some Muslim women. **Jilbab** in some countries including Indonesia. Also **chador** and **abayah**.

hijack of movable objects only, **not** of *schools, embassies, etc.*

hike never use in the American sense of *a rise* or *to raise* (rates etc); permissible only in direct quotes, or in the context of walking (**hitch-hike** etc).

Hindi for language context (the Hindi language); but use **Hindu** for religious or ethnic contexts (an adherent to Hinduism, or relating to Hinduism).

hippopotamus plural **hippopotamuses**

hippy, hippies nowadays as old-fashioned as *beatniks*. *See Gypsy, travellers.*

historic, historical prefer **an historic** event rather than *a historic*. Take care. **Historical** can refer only to past history, while **historic** can refer to a contemporary event likely to be of long-term significance. But an **historic building** is now in common usage as a synonym of an old building. *See a / an.*

hit avoid in text in sense of *affected*, **eg**, "Homeowners were hit last night by an interest rate rise", or in the sense of attack, **eg**, "The minister hit out at his critics". Sparing use of the verb in headlines is permissible.

hitch-hiker, hitch-hiking etc.

hitlist, hitman (no hyphens).

HIV is a virus, **not** a disease. **Do not** write *HIV virus* (tautologous), but use a phrase such as **HIV-infected, HIV-positive**. *See Aids.*

Hmong (**not** *Mong* or *Mung*) an ethnic group in southern China, Vietnam, Laos and Thailand.

hoards are *stocks* or *stores* (of treasure, for example); to hoard is to *amass* and *store* food, money etc; **hordes** are *large groups* or *gangs* (of wild beasts, tourists, etc).

hoi polloi l/c roman; *the masses, the common people*.

holidaymaker (one word).

Holland use **the Netherlands** (no longer cap "The") for all contexts except sports teams, historical uses, or when referring to the provinces of North and South Holland. The adjective is **Dutch**. *See Netherlands.*

Holocaust (the) the Second World War campaign by the Nazi's that killed more than six million Jews. When not capitalised it refers (literally or figuratively) to extensive devastation caused by fire, or to the *systematic and malicious killing* of human beings on a vast scale. Use sparingly in the latter context.

Holy Communion (caps) *See Christian terms.*

Holy Grail (caps) when referring to the Last Supper; **holy grail** (l/c) when used figuratively (as mecca).

homebuyers, homeowners (no hyphens).

home-made (hyphenate).

homepage

home in what homing pigeons do; “to come closer and closer to a target”.

home town (two words), but hyphenate in adjectival use, **eg, home-town memories.**

homoeopathy (**not** the American *homeopathy*).

homogeneous means having parts all of the same kind; **homogenous** means *similar* owing to common descent.

Homo sapiens *See scientific names.*

homosexual *See gay.*

homosexual rape do **not** use; say *rape* or *male rape* if necessary.

Hon, the normally use this form of address (the Hon So-and-So) only in court stories.

Hong Kong, but **Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC)**. Until July 1, 1997, when Britain handed the colony over to China, Hong Kong had a Governor (cap); now it has a Chief Executive. Hong Kong is a special administrative region of China; it may be referred to as “the territory” for variation. Its Government is capitalised. *See Chinese names.*

honours people are appointed **Privy Counsellor, Baronet, KBE, CBE, OBE, MBE** etc; **never** say they were *made, received, were awarded, or got* the OBE etc. **Peers** and above (viscounts etc) are **created**, not *appointed* etc.

At investitures, those honoured receive the insignia of the award, **not** the award itself. Normally omit honours and decorations after names, but the following can be used where relevant; *KG, KT, VC, GC, OM, CH, MP, QC, RA, FRS* etc. *See titles.*

honours lists. *See New Year Honours.*

hoody singular, **hoodies** plural.

Hoover (proprietary, cap) as a noun; use **vacuum cleaner**, or to **vacuum**. But as a verb use l/c, **eg**, “he hoovered up his food”.

hopefully try to avoid in the sense of *it is hoped that*, even though this usage is so widespread: like many other adverbs, such as *frankly, happily, honestly* and *sadly*. **Hopefully** can be used as a “sentence adverb” indicating the writer's view of events — “hopefully, we will reach the summit” — or as a “manner adverb” modifying a verb — “we set off hopefully for the summit”.

Horse Guards Parade

horse race/racing two words, but **racing** alone is preferable.

horticulturist (**not** *horticulturalist*).

hospital use “a” not “an”.

hospitalise, hospitalisation always avoid these Americanisms; say *taken to hospital*; never “rushed”.

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host avoid using as a verb as in “Arsenal will host Aston Villa on Saturday”; use *play host to* instead. But a person can host an event.

hotpants, hotdog, hotspot (one word).

hotline (one word); similarly, **helpline**.

hot-water bottle (hyphen).

hour and a half “an” no hyphens. Similarly, **two and a half years, two thirds, but twenty-three**.

housebuilder, housebuilding, houseboat, housebreaker, housebuyer, housekeeper.

however when used in the sense of *nevertheless*, always needs a comma after it (and before, when in the middle of a sentence, **eg**, “It was said, however, that the agent ...”) Avoid using at the beginning of a sentence; **Don’t** write; “However, we at last succeeded in reaching camp.” Instead reword to: “At last, however, we succeeded in reaching camp.” When however comes first, it means *in whatever way* or *to whatever extent*, **eg**, “However you advise him, he will probably do as he thinks best.” *See but / however*.

Hubble Space Telescope (caps).

human beings rather than just *humans*, at first mention.

Human Genome Project (initial caps).

human rights European Convention on Human Rights; European Court of Human Rights; both operate under the aegis of the Council of Europe, **not** the European Union (or EC).

hummus you eat, **humus** you put on the garden.

humour, humourous *but* **humorist** (**not** *humourist*).

Hundred Years' War, the *note* the apostrophe.

Huntington's chorea — now properly known as **Huntington's disease**.

hunting with hounds (**not** with *dogs*). *See foxhunt*.

Hussein, the late King (**not** *Husain*) of Jordan; similarly **Saddam Hussein**.

Hutus, Tutsis, the plural of the Rwandan tribes (**not** simply *Hutu, Tutsi*). The Hutu are the largest of the three ethnic groups in Burundi and Rwanda (84% of Rwandans and 85% of Burundians). *See Rwanda*.

hydroelectric (no hyphen)

hyphens generally be sparing with hyphens and run together words where the sense suggests and where they look familiar and right; **eg, blacklist, businessman, goldmine, knockout, intercontinental, motorcycle, takeover, and walkover**.

Unusual hyphenations will be listed separately in this *Style Guide*. However, a few guidelines can be specified: usually run together prefixes except where the last letter of the prefix is the same as the first letter of the word to which it attaches: **prearrange, postwar, prewar, nonconformist; but pre-empt, co-ordinate, co-operate, re-establish**.

Hyphenate generally in composites where the same two letters come together, **eg, film-makers**, but an exception should be made for double “r” in the middle: **override, overrule** (**not** *over-ride* etc), and note **granddaughter** and **goddaughter**.

Do use hyphens where not using one would be ambiguous, **eg**, to distinguish “black-cab drivers come under attack” from “black cab-drivers come under attack”.

Do not use after adverbs ending in “-ly”, **eg**, politically naive, wholly owned, but hyphens are needed with short and common adverbs, **eg, ill-prepared** report, **hard-bitten** hack, **much-needed** grammar lesson, **well-established**.

Do use hyphens to form compound adjectives, **eg, two-tonne vessel, three-year deal, 19th-century artist**.

Generally do not use dangling hyphens – say *full* and *part-time employment* etc; but this does not apply to prefixes – pre- or post-match drinks.

For hyphenation when qualifying adjectives. *See adverbs*.

Always use a hyphen rather than a slash (/) in dates etc. - 1982-83 (not 1982/83).

hypothermia excessively cold body temperature; **hyperthermia** excessively hot body temperature. But note that pyrexia is an elevated body temperature or fever.

oOOo

I-I-I

IATA (all caps), the International Air Transport Association.

ice-cap (use hyphen).

ice-cream (hyphen), similarly **ice-lolly**. See *Häagen-Dazs*.

ICRC is the **International Committee of the Red Cross** (not *for*). Equivalent in Islamic countries is the **Red Crescent**. See *Red Cross*.

Identikit proprietary, cap; generic **photofit** (l/c).

idyllic is **not** synonymous with *ideal* (perfect). **Idyll** means an *extremely happy, peaceful, or picturesque* episode or scene. By extension **idyllic** means *charming* or *picturesque*.

, **ie**, is the abbreviation for the Latin *id est* (that is). Use comma either side and no points between. See, *eg*.

illegal / **illicit** an **illegal** act is something that society formally *condemns*, and an illicit act calls to mind *moral degeneracy* (illicit drug use). See *unlawful* / *illegal* / *illicit* / *criminal*.

illegal asylum-seeker is a legally inaccurate phrase and must not be used. An asylum-seeker is someone currently seeking refugee status or humanitarian protection, so cannot in law be "illegal". He or she can become an *illegal immigrant* only if remaining in the country after failing to respond to a removal notice.

illegible / **unreadable** handwriting or printing that is illegible is not clear enough to be read (illegible scrawling). Writing that is **unreadable** is so poorly composed as to be either *incomprehensible* or *intolerably dull*.

illegitimate do not use to refer to children born outside marriage (unless in a historical context, **eg**, "the illegitimate son of Charles the Good").

ill-health (hyphen); similarly **ill-feeling**, **ill-intentioned** etc.

illude See *allude* / *elude* / *illude*.

illusion / **allusion** an **illusion** is a *false idea* or *belief* or a *deceptive appearance* or *impression*, **eg**, "he had no illusions about the trouble he was in", "the illusion of family togetherness". See *allusion* / *illusion* / *reference*; *delusion* / *illusion*.

iPod beware tendency to use this trade name as a generic term for all MP3 players.

IMAX (all caps) cinemas.

immigrate to *arrive* in a country, **emigrate** to *leave* one. An **emigré** is also an *emigrant*, but especially one in political exile.

immune to (not *immune from*).

Immigration Service (caps, as **Prison Service**, **Probation Service**).

impacted on avoid this Americanism. Resist using the verb *impact* unless in a physical context. Try *affect* or *influence* instead. Besides being hyperbolic, impact is widely considered a solecism.

impelled *forced* or *urged* to do something, **eg**, he was impelled to steal the chicken due to extreme hunger. See *compelled* / *impelled*.

impinge, **impinging**

imply the writer or speaker implies (*hints, suggests*). See *infer*.

Implicit means something is not specifically stated but either is *suggested* in the wording or is *necessary* to effectuate the purpose. **Do not** use implicit to mean *complete* or *unmitigated*. See *explicit*.

impostor (not *imposter*).

impracticable *impossible*, it cannot be done; **impractical** *possible* in theory but not workable at the moment.

impresario

Impressionist, Post-Impressionist. See *artistic movements*.

in addition to prefer *as well as* or *besides*.

in connection with this is a vague, fuzzy phrase (she explained the financial consequences in connection with the transaction; a liking for everything in connection with golf). Try replacing the phrase with *of, for, related to, about, or associated with*. **eg**, “she explained the financial consequences of the transaction”; “a liking for everything about golf”.

inadmissible (not *-able*).

inasmuch as *because* or *since* is almost always a better choice.

incident be wary of this word, another — *attack* or *clash*, for example — will often stand better in its place; within a couple of years of the massacre in Tiananmen Square the Chinese Government was referring to it as an “incident” or even “alleged incident”.

include do not confuse with *comprise*; “breakfast includes toast and coffee”, but “breakfast comprises cereals, toast, butter, marmalade, and coffee” (ie, where the full list of elements is given).

inculcate / indoctrinate one **inculcates** values into a child but **indoctrinates** the child with values. That is, **inculcate** always has a value or values as its object, followed by the preposition *into* (inculcate courage into soldiers). **Indoctrinate** takes a person as its object (indoctrinate children with the habit of telling the truth).

income tax

incommunicado

incredible / incredulous incredible properly means *unbelievable*. Colloquially, it is used to

mean *astonishing* (in a good way), **eg**, “it was an incredible trip.” **Incredulous** means *disbelieving, skeptical*, **eg**, “people are incredulous about the rising petrol costs.”

indestructible (not *-able*).

index plural is **indices**, but **indexes** for books.

Indian place-names use **Mumbai** rather than *Bombay*, **Kolkata** rather than *Chennai*, **New Delhi** rather than *Delhi* but **Madras** rather than *Chennai*, except where the new names form part of an official company name or similar title. If in doubt, put the alternative name in brackets.

indispensable (not *-ible*).

Indo-China

induce is to form a general principle based on specific observations, **eg**, after years of studying eagles, the researchers induced a few of their social habits. See *adduce / deduce / induce*.

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Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) hearings end with a *judgment* or a *decision*, **not** a *verdict*. Only juries in court hearings, or magistrates hearing cases summarily, deliver a verdict. *Note* that **immigration adjudicators** and **immigration appeal tribunals** deliver *determinations*.

Industrial Revolution, the (caps).

inevitable do not use as a synonym of *customary*, *usual* or *predictable*.

in fact can almost invariably be omitted.

infectious refers to cause; an infection involves invasion by and multiplication of a pathogen, regardless of how transmission occurs. An **infectious** disease may or may not be contagious (influenza is infectious and contagious, while tetanus is infectious but not contagious). *See contagious / infectious*.

infer do not confuse with *imply*; to infer is to draw a conclusion from a suggestion, to **imply** is to make the suggestion. A quick mnemonic; we *imply* things when we speak, we *infer* things when we listen. Use the verb *draw*, **not** *make*, with **inference** (they drew the wrong inferences). Otherwise, readers may confuse **inference** with *implication*.

infighting (one word), *but* **in-house** and **in-flight** (both with hyphen).

inflict *events, illnesses, punishments*, and such are **inflicted** on living things or entities (an abuser inflicts cruelty). *See afflict / inflict*.

infra-red

infinite *without limit*; it does **not** mean *very large*.

ingenious *intelligent, clever, and original* (an ingenious invention): **Ingenuous** describes what is *candid, naive, and without dissimulation* (a hurtful but ingenuous observation).

initials where totally familiar, no need to spell out at first mention (**eg, BBC, FBI, Nato** etc). Otherwise, usually give name in full followed by initials in parentheses, and the abbreviated form thereafter (though sometimes a phrase such as “the organisation” or “the group” will be preferable to avoid a mass of initials in the same story). Also, with a body as well known as the **UN**, it would be absurd to write “the United Nations (UN)”, so use discretion.

Where the initials can be spoken as a word, normally write them as upper and lower case, **eg, Nato, Gatt, Unesco, Eta** - but there are some exceptions to this.

With people's names, put points between the initials (but no space between), though omit points in names of companies such as W H Smith, J Sainsbury.

injure, injury implies something more serious than *hurt*. Do not normally say someone “received an injury” — prefer to say they *suffered* or *sustained* an injury, or (simply) *were injured*. Injured or sick people should **not** be described as *satisfactory* or *critical* — it is their condition that is satisfactory etc.

inner city noun two words; adjective hyphen: “inner-city bus crashes into shop”.

innocent take great care with this word, and avoid phrases such as “the innocent victim of the attack” and clichés such as “innocent children”. Best to stick to its literal sense of *not guilty*.

innocuous

innuendo singular, **innuendoes** plural.

inoculate (**not** *innoculate*).

in order to simply wastes two words. Delete *in order*.

inpatients, outpatients (no hyphen).

inquests *See coroner's court.*

inquire, inquiry (not *enquire, enquiry*). But *note* the exception, **Directory Enquiries**.

inshallah means "God willing" in Arabic.

insignia plural. *See honours.*

in so far as use the four words in this expression; *insofar* is the American version.

install *but instalment*

instil, instilled, instilling followed by *into*.

insure you insure against risk; you **assure** your life; **ensure** means to make certain.

insurgents, insurgency *See war on terror.*

Intelligence cap as a noun in the context of the security services, **eg**, "he was in British Intelligence", *but* l/c in non-specific contexts, **eg**, "she provided useful intelligence to ASIO"; also l/c for adjectival uses, **eg**, "she was interviewed by intelligence officers".

intelligentsia *intellectuals* or *highly educated* people as a group.

intensive do **not** confuse with *intense* or *extreme*. It means *concentrated*, as in **intensive care**.

inter-city

interdependence of two or more people or things dependent on each other.

interesting avoid as an adjective in text; let the reader decide.

interest rate cuts/rises (no hyphens); **never** use *hikes* for *rises*.

interfaith

intergovernmental conference no hyphen. Abbreviation is **IGC**.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (not *for*): The four major reports issued are titled IPCC 1990; IPCC 1996; IPCC 2001 and IPCC 2007a.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) (not *Authority*).

International Criminal Court, the (ICC), based in The Hague, has jurisdiction to prosecute individuals for the most horrific of crimes: genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Its jurisdiction is complementary to national courts, and it will act only when countries are unable or unwilling to investigate or prosecute. Established by multilateral treaty, it is independent of the UN and replaces the current UN system of ad hoc tribunals, **eg**, for Rwanda, the former Yugoslavia. *See Courts section.*

International Monetary Fund (IMF) the current head (2007) is former French Socialist finance minister Dominique Strauss-Kahn, Mr Strauss-Kahn after first mention.

International Olympic Committee (not *Olympics*), **IOC** as abbreviation. *See Olympics.*

International Space Station (initial caps).

Internazionale, the **Milan** football club; now call it **Inter Milan** at first mention, thereafter **Inter**. The other big club in the city is **AC Milan** (shortened to **AC** thereafter).

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internet l/c, also **the net** for short. *See world wide web.*

interpretative (not *interpretive*).

Interpol

interred = *buried*; **interned** = *imprisoned*. **Do not** confuse.

intifada (religious struggle or uprising), l/c and roman.

into *but on to*

introducing people never use the following construction to introduce a speaker or a subject: "Education Minister David Ross said ... "; Instead, use the definite article and commas to separate the job from the name, like this: "The Education Minister, David Ross, said ... " (there is only one person with this specific post).

Inuit (not *Eskimo*); an individual is an **Inuk**. *See Eskimo.*

innumerable means *too many to count*. *See enumerable / innumerable.*

invalid means *not valid* or *of no worth*; **do not** use to refer to disabled or ill people.

invariable, invariably *unchanging*; often used wrongly to mean *hardly ever changing*.

inverted commas should be used as sparingly as possible in text: **eg**, unnecessary in constructions such as *he described the book as "turgid"*. Do not use with works of art. *See also italics, quotation marks.*

invite is a verb; **do not** use as a substitute for **invitation**.

Iran, not Persia (though Persia in historical context). The language is **not Iranian** or *Persian*; it is **Farsi**.

Iraqi placenames Use these spellings for Iraq's biggest cities and towns: **Amara, Baiji, Baghdad, Baquba, Basra, Diwaniya, Dohuk, Falluja, Haditha, Hilla, Irbil, Kerbala, Kirkuk, Kut, Mosul, Najaf, Nassiriya, Ramadi, Rutba, Samarra, Samawa, Sulaimaniya, Tikrit** (*Note that these transliterations do away with "al-" prefixes and the final "h"*).

irascible (not *irascible*).

Ireland the two parts should be called the **Republic of Ireland** or **the Irish Republic** (avoid *Eire* except in direct quotes or historical context), and Northern Ireland or Ulster; loyalist with a l/c "I" (and no quotes) - to balance republican and nationalist;

- a. **the North, the South** (caps in this specific Irish context);
- c. **the Republic**, likewise, **the Province**;
- d. **the Garda** (the police force; but **garda/gardai** for policeman/policemen); but the phrase *Irish police* is acceptable;
- e. **Belfast**: cap **North Belfast** and **South Belfast** as well as **East** and **West Belfast**;
- f. the **Taoiseach** is an acceptable alternative for Irish Prime Minister;
- g. Irish counties should be written as Co Donegal, Co Down etc.
- h. **Orange Order, Orangemen** (caps)
- i. **Paisley**, the Rev Ian, on subsequent mention Mr Paisley (**not Dr**; his doctorate is honorary). His son is Ian Paisley Jr

iridescent (not *irr-*).

Iron Curtain, but ironfounder, ironmonger, ironworks

ironic beware of misuse. It means *using or displaying irony*, or *in the nature of irony*; it **does not** mean *strange, coincidentally, amusingly or paradoxical*.

irreconcilable

irredeemable means *not able to be redeemed, saved or reformed*; **do not** confuse with **irremediable**, which means **not** able to be *remedied, incurable, or irreparable*.

irresistible (**not** *-able*).

ISAF the International Security Assistance Force (in Afghanistan); **not** Security *and* Assistance. See *War on Terror*.

-ise, -isation avoid the “z” construction in almost all cases, **eg, apologise, organise, emphasise, televise**. But *note* **capsize, synthesizer**.

Islam (means submission to the will of God) is the religion of the Muslims. Islamic is interchangeable with **Muslim** as the adjective, though normally use **Islamic** with religion and fundamentalism, Muslim with architecture, politics, people etc. Do not use the term *Mohammedans*.

Allah is Arabic for God. Both words refer to the same concept: there is no difference between God in the Old Testament and Allah in Islam.

The holy book of Islam is the ***Qur'an*** (**not** *Koran*). Muslims perform **salat** (pray) at a **Mosque** or **Musholla** and are lead by an **Imam** and pay **zakat** a form of tax based on personal wealth **not** income.

Islamist an advocate or supporter of Islamic fundamentalism; the likes of Osama bin Laden and his followers should be described as **Islamist terrorists** and **never** as *Islamic terrorists*.

Islamophobia a person with a hatred, fear, or discriminatory attitude towards Islam or Muslims.

Israeli is a citizen of Israel; **Israelite** refers to Ancient Israel. Bear in mind that *Jew* is **not** an appropriate alternative; many of Israel's citizens are not Jewish.

italics avoid in headlines and be as restrained as possible in their use in text. However, certain areas do always take italics:

- a. all works of art; thus, italics for titles of books, long and short poems, short stories, newspapers (*see separate list under newspapers*), magazines, pamphlets, chapter headings, White Papers, Green Papers, official reports and studies, programmes on radio and television, films, plays, computer games, musical works including operas, songs, hymns, album titles etc. (*See musical vocabulary*), paintings, drawings, sculptures, titles of exhibitions
- b. less common, non-Anglicised foreign words go in italics, but err on the side of roman (**eg, in extremis, hors d'oeuvre, angst, de rigueur**) *See foreign words*
- c. names of ships, aircraft, locomotives, spacecraft etc;
- d. take care in presenting algebraic expressions: individual terms should be in italics, and be sure that superscripts, including squares, and subscripts are properly rendered, **eg, $E=mc^2$** ;
- e. a word may be italicised for emphasis, but be sparing with this.

ITN (**never** say *ITN news*) *See television*.

its / it's use the apostrophe version only as an abbreviation for *it is/has*; no apostrophe in possessive form.

ITV1, ITV2, ITV3 and ITV News Channel are separate independent television channels under the ITV banner.

Ivory Coast (**not** “*the Ivory Coast*” or *Côte D'Ivoire*) its nationals are **Ivorians**.

oOOo

J-J-J

jack-knife (use hyphen).

Jacuzzi (proprietary, cap); the company objects to use of the name as a noun, so say *Jacuzzi bath* only if certain of attribution, **whirlpool bath** or **spa bath** if in doubt.

jail, jailer (not *gaol, gaoler*): remember that an offender aged 15 cannot be "jailed"; he or she is sentenced to *detention* in a young offender institution.

jail sentences totting up the total number of years to which a number of defendants have been jailed is meaningless. Give the sentences of named individuals. If room does not allow, list the sentences of principal offenders and report that so many other people were jailed or whatever.

janjaweed pro-government nomadic Arab militia active in the **Darfur** region of the **Sudan**.

jargon like journalese and slang, to be strictly avoided; specialised areas always need explanations for our readers.

jealousy connotes feelings of resentment toward another, particularly in matters relating to an intimate relationship. *See envy*.

Jedda (no *h*).

Jeep is proprietary, so must be capped; use only if strictly applicable, otherwise *cross-country vehicle, small military truck* etc.

Jehovah's Witness(es).

Jekyll and Hyde (*The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, by R.L. Stevenson).

Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) is a Southeast Asian militant Islamic organisation dedicated to the establishment of a **Daulah Islamiyah** (Islamic State) in Southeast Asia incorporating Indonesia, Malaysia, the southern Philippines, Singapore and Brunei. The phrase means "Islamic Group" or "Islamic Community". JI was added to the United Nations 1267 Committee's list of terrorist organisations linked to al-Qaeda or the Taliban on October 25, 2002. JI was formally founded on January 1, 1993 by JI leaders, Abu Bakar Bashir and Abdullah Sungkar while hiding in Malaysia from the persecution of the Suharto Government. The group killed hundreds of civilians in the Bali car bombing on October 12, 2002. *See War on terror*.

jeremiad (l/c) a long, mournful complaint or lamentation; a list of woes. With reference to Jeremiah in the Old Testament.

Jerusalem l/c for east/west Jerusalem. Jerusalem **must not** be used as a variant for Israel. It is **not** internationally recognised as the capital, and its status is one of the central controversies in the Middle East. Although the **Knesset**, the Israeli parliament, sits in Jerusalem, most embassies are in **Tel Aviv**

jet lag (two words).

jetliner avoid; say **airliner** or simply **jet**.

jet ski two words as noun, but to **jet-ski** (verb, hyphen).

jeweller, jewellery

Jewish congregations Jews have **temples** and **synagogues**, **not churches**. Never write "a Jewish rabbi" or "a Jewish synagogue". Both terms are redundant.

jib triangular sail or arm of a crane; "I don't like the cut of his jib" means you don't like the look or manner of someone.

jibe a *taunt* or *sneer* (**not** *gibe*).

Jiffy bag (proprietary, cap).

jihad (roman, l/c) used by Muslims to describe three different kinds of struggle:

1. an individual's internal struggle to live out the Muslim faith as well as possible;
2. the struggle to build a good Muslim society; and
3. the struggle to defend Islam, with force if necessary.

It **does not** mean *Holy War*; Holy War does not exist in Islam nor will Islam allow its followers to be involved in a Holy War. There is an explicit verse in the *Quran* that says "There is no compulsion in religion," *Al-Quran: Al Baqarah* (2:256).

Jihad is a war against any unjust regime. If such a regime exists, a war is to be waged against the leaders, but not against the people of that country.

job titles the general rule is that most church titles, senior civil servants, diplomatic and political leaders, civic leaders, Vice-Chancellor and academic titles, police ranks, military titles, President of a small number of high-profile national institutions (**eg**, President of the Law Society, etc), all take the cap at first mention and then — usually — l/c thereafter.

Exceptions where the cap is retained are Prime Minister, President (of a state), Archbishop and Bishop. However, *chief executive*, *chairman*, *director*, *managing director* (of a company), *general secretary* (of a union), *artistic director* (of a theatre) etc. are l/c; so are most *presidents* and *chairmen* of societies and institutions.

jodhpurs

Joe Public, John Doe

Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore (**not** *John Hopkins*).

Joint Chiefs of Staff (US).

Joneses as in "keeping up with the Joneses"; also note "the Joneses' house" (**not** the *Jones'* house).

joyrider (no hyphen) but use as little as possible as the term gives offence to many readers; the last emotion these car thieves bring to their victims is joy. An alternative could be *young car thief*.

JP (Justice of the Peace) acceptable alternative for non-stipendiary magistrate. *See magistrates' courts; courts.*

jubilee strictly a *fiftieth* anniversary, though Queen Victoria had a golden and a diamond one; so the word can be used as a periodic celebration, especially of royalty. *Note* the Queen's **Golden Jubilee** in 2002.

Judaea (**not** *Judea*).

judges' names always include their first name at first mention. In lower level courts, such as the County Court or District Court write as "Judge Fred Potts" at first mention; thereafter "Judge Potts" or simply "the judge".

For higher level courts include their first name at first mention and write, "Supreme Court Judge, Justice Fred Potts" at first mention, subsequently "Justice Potts" or simply "the judge" or "the judges" if more than one.

If one of the judges is the Chief Justice the format is "Chief Justice Fred Potts" at first mention and thereafter "Justice Potts".

judging by is one of the most frequently misused unrelated (or disconnected) participle constructions. Remember, the phrase must have a related subject to follow (*I, we, she* etc). A convenient alternative is

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“to judge from ...” (**eg**, “Judging by this report, the country is in a mess” is **wrong**; “To judge from this report, the country is in a mess” is correct; so is “Judging by this report, we conclude that the country is in a mess”). *See participles; grammar section.*

judgment (not *judgement*).

jukebox (no hyphen).

jump-jet (hyphen), *but jumbo jet* (no hyphen).

junior abbreviate to **Jr** (not *Jnr*) in the American context, **eg**, Brian McDonald Jr. *See senior.*

Justices' Clerks' Society (two apostrophes).

oOOo

K-K-K

k avoid for 1,000 except in direct quotes.

Ka'bah cube-shaped shrine in the centre of the great mosque in Mecca towards which all Muslims face in prayer; the shrine is not worshipped but used as the focal point of the worship of God.

kabbalah initial “k” and l/c for the spiritual movement based on ancient Jewish mystical tradition.

kaftan, *but* **cagoule**.

Karpov, Anatoly; Kasparov, Garry. *See chess names; Russian names*.

karat a measure of the purity of gold, **eg**, 24K. *See carat / karat / caret*.

Kathmandu capital of Nepal.

Kazakhstan adjective **Kazakh**.

Kerobokan the Indonesian prison in Bali.

Kellogg's Corn Flakes, *but* **cornflakes** (generic).

Kentucky Fried Chicken has been rebranded as **KFC**, so do not use the full capped version for the company or restaurant chain except in historical context. Permissible to refer to the product as Kentucky fried chicken or Southern fried chicken (l/c).

kerosene is American for paraffin.

Kevorkian, Dr Jack (the American euthanasia doctor; **not** *Kervorkian*).

K-for, the Nato-led force in Kosovo (**not** *KFOR*). It is short for Kosovo Force, (**not** *Kosovo Protection Force*).

Khan Imran Khan and Jemima Khan are happy to remain known as Mr Khan and Mrs Khan despite their divorce. In most cases, beware of *Khan* as the family name; it is usually a title given to officials or rulers in Central Asia.

Khartoum

Khmer Rouge the name of a Cambodian faction. A **Khmer** is a Cambodian.

kibbutz plural **kibbutzim**

kick-off (noun), *but* to **kick off**

kick-start (hyphenate, noun or verb).

Kiev (**not** *Kyiv*), capital of **Ukraine** (**not** the *Ukraine*).

killer can be used for **murderer** but **do not** use *assassin* as a synonym.

kilogram(s) (**not** *kilogramme*). also **kilojoule/s**, **kilometre/s**, **kilowatt/s** abbreviate as **kg**, **kJ**, **km**, **kW**. *See metric*.

kilometres per hour correct abbreviation is **km/h** rather than “kph”. *See metric*.

kilowatt-hour correct abbreviation is **kWh**. The cost of generating electricity at a power station is usually expressed in dollars per kilowatt-hour (\$1.25/kWh). *See megawatts*.

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King's Cross London.

King Edward potatoes.

kitchen cabinet l/c cabinet in this informal context.

Kit Kat (proprietary, cap, two words).

kiwi the flightless bird. But note **Kiwi**, colloquialism for New Zealander; and **kiwi fruit** (l/c).

Kmart the US retailer.

kneejerk (*reaction* etc) no hyphen; but beware of overuse.

knockout (noun), *but* to **knock out**.

knots measure of **nautical miles an hour**; **do not** say "knots per hour".

knowhow (one word as noun), **knowledgeable**.

Knowles, **Beyoncé** note accent.

Kodak (proprietary, cap).

Koh-i-noor diamond.

Koran, the (cap and roman, like the Bible).

Korean names like Hong Kong and Taiwanese names, Korean names are written in two parts with a hyphen, **eg**, Kim Jong-il, Kim Dae-jung.

Kosovo, **Kosovan(s)** (**not** *Kosova*, *Kosovar*).

kowtow (no hyphen).

Ku Klux Klan (no hyphens).

kukri Gurkha knife.

KwaZulu-Natal (**not** *KwaZulu/Natal*). *See South Africa*.

Kyi, Aung San Suu Burmese Nobel peace laureate. The formal Burmese preface is Daw.

Kyoto Protocol (cap "P").

Kyrgyzstan (no longer *Kirghizia*) adjective **Kyrgyz**.

oOOo

L-L-L

Labor Day (in US).

Labor Party (Australia) but **Labour Party** (UK).

lady, ladies prefer to write **woman, women**

Lagos is **not** the capital of Nigeria; **Abuja** is.

lahar a destructive mudflow on the slopes of a volcano.

laid-back hyphen for noun and adjective.

laissez faire do not use the *laisser* version (no italics).

lambast (not *lambaste*).

lamé (to distinguish it from *lame*).

lamp-post (hyphen).

lance corporal

Land Rover (no hyphen); similarly **Range Rover**.

landmine (no hyphen).

landslide (political), **landslip** (earth).

languor, languorous (not *-our*).

lap dancer, lap dancing (nouns), but a **lap-dancing club** (adjectival, hyphenate).

laptop (computer) no hyphen. *See desktop*.

largesse (not *largess*).

last / past last **should not** be used as a synonym of *latest*; “the last few days” means the final few days; “the past few days” means the most *recent* few days.

Last Post (not *the*) like **Reveille**, is *sounded*, **not played**.

Latin be sparing in its use. When Latin phrases are in common usage, use roman rather than italics, **eg, quid pro quo, ex parte** injunction, **habeas corpus**.

modus

latter applies only to pairs, the second of two. *See former / latter*.

Latin dancing cap Latin in this and all other contexts, whether the Latin language or history, *Latin music, Latin temperament* etc.

Latin Mass must **not** be used as a synonym for the older **Tridentine rite**.

latitude, longitude write 45 deg 32 min N, 40 deg 17 min W etc.

La traviata (note l/c “t”).

laudable *praiseworthy* (a laudable effort): **laudatory** *expressing praise* (laudatory phone calls).

launch a book/film/housing; development is **launched** (not *launches*).

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launch pad (two words).

launderette (not *laundrette*).

lavatory prefer to *toilet* (or even worse, *loo*).

law lords, law officers (l/c). *See judges; courts.*

lawnmower (one word).

lay, lie a person **lays** a carpet (transitive verb), but **lies** on a carpet (intransitive). **Never** confuse.

lay-by, lay-bys *but layout.*

lay off **does not** mean to *sack* or make *redundant*, but to send workers home on part pay because of a temporary lack of demand for their product.

lay waste means to *devastate* or *destroy*, so it does not need a following "to". Goats can lay waste a field, not lay waste to a field.

Leader of the Commons/House of Lords/Senate; Leader of the Opposition (ie, caps); however, Labour leader (l/c), Tory leader (l/c) etc.

lean, leap past tenses **leant, leapt** (not *leaned, leaped*) *but leap year.*

Leaning Tower of Pisa (initial caps).

Learjet (one word).

learnt (past tense and past participle of *learn*); **learned** (adjective, as in *scholarly*).

leave, leaving prefer to *depart, departing.*

Lebanon, not "the Lebanon" (except occasionally in historical context). *See Sudan.*

le Carré, John

leech = a *bloodsucker* (both literal and figurative): **leach** = to *percolate* or to *separate* out solids in solution by percolation. **Never** confuse.

Lee Kuan Yew (Singapore).

Left, the, cap in the political context when referring to a group of like-minded individuals, **eg**, "The Left added to John Howard's worries"; but l/c in "the party swung to the left". When the Left.

is qualified, keep the adjective l/c, **eg**, the **hard Left**, the **far Left**. Also, **the left wing, left-wing contenders, leftwingers.** *See Right.*

legal aid l/c and never hyphenate, even adjectivally in phrases such as legal aid cases.

legal terms in general, use l/c for titles etc. **except** when in full or specific; thus, the Recorder of Liverpool (thereafter *the recorder*), the West London Magistrate, Chelmsford Crown Court, Box Hill Magistrates' Court (caps on first mention), etc; but "the court was told", "the judge said", "the magistrate ordered" etc.

The **Bench** is capped only when referring to the judges as a group; a bench of magistrates is always l/c. *See magistrates' courts.* Always cap the **Bar** (even when used on its own).

In camera is now known as **in secret** and *in chambers* is now **in private**; a *writ* is a **claim form** and a *plaintiff* a **claimant**; *leave to appeal* is **permission to appeal**. *Access* is **contact** and *custody* is known as

residence. See *defamation, libel, slander: burglary, larceny, robbery, theft.*
legendary avoid its clichéd use.

legionella, listeria, salmonella are all bacteria, **not** viruses.

legionnaires' disease named after an outbreak at a conference of American Legionnaires.

Legion of Honour or **Légion d'honneur**; either form is acceptable, according to context.

legroom (one word), *also* **elbowroom, headroom**

Leonardo da Vinci; at second mention always **Leonardo**, (**never** *da Vinci*).

leprosy patient “a person with/affected by leprosy,” prefer to *leper*. **Always** avoid defining people by condition or illness: a *schizophrenic, a diabetic, a paraplegic* etc.

lèse-majesté (*treason, or insult to a monarch*) takes italic and accents.

less in quantity, **fewer** in number; Thus eight items or *fewer* is correct.

lesser opposite to **greater** (eg, the lesser evil); not to be used as a synonym of *less*.

letdown, let-up nouns, **let down, let up** verbs.

letter bomb (hyphenate only in adjectival use).

letterbox, postbox (no hyphens).

leukaemia

Levi's (jeans) proprietary, cap. Note the apostrophe; *but* use **Levi Strauss** for the company.

liaison, liaise the word *link* would often be better. The verb to *liaise* has forced its way into the language; however, use sparingly and only in its correct sense — to *establish co-operation, to act as a link with*, **not** as a synonym of *meet* or *talk*.

Liberal Democrats Lib Dems is an acceptable alternative in either headlines or text. But **do not** shorten simply to “Liberals”. Abbreviate in lists etc. to *LD*.

licence (noun), **license** (verb), but beware of **licensee** (noun), **licensed, licensing**. See *practice, practise*.

Liechtenstein

Lieutenant Colonel, Lieutenant General (no hyphens).

life-and-death / life-or-death logic aside (life and death being mutually exclusive), the first phrase is the standard idiom (a life-and-death decision).

lifeguard (on a beach); **Life Guardsman** (on a horse).

lifelong (one word as adjective).

liferaft (one word), as **lifeboat, lifebelt** etc.

lifesize(d) (no hyphen).

lift-off (spacecraft etc), as **take-off** (hyphenated).

light bulb two words as noun, but hyphenate adjectivally.

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light year

lightning (as in *electrical storm*), **lightening** (as in *making lighter*).

light-year

like do not use as a synonym of *such as* (**eg**, say “cities such as Jakarta are ambitious”, **not** “cities like Jakarta ... ”); nor as a synonym of *as if*, **eg**, say “he looks as if he is succeeding”, **not** “he looks like he is succeeding”.

likable (**not** *likeable*).

likely he *is* likely to win or he will *very* likely win, **not** “he will likely win” — if you want to use that form, say “he will probably win”.

lily of the valley

linchpin (**not** *lynchpin*).

line of control l/c, boundary in Kashmir between Indian and Pakistani-controlled areas.

line of fire — militarily, in the flight path of a fired missile. **Do not** confuse with **firing line**.

liner take care with this word, which no longer applies to passenger cruise ships. Liners nowadays are cargo vessels trading regularly between designated ports, **eg**, container ships. Confine use of “liner” for passenger ships to historical contexts.

line-up (noun), *but* to **line up** (verb).

Lions (rugby) officially the touring rugby union team is known as the **British Isles**; alternatively, the **Lions**. They are **not** the *British Lions*.

liquefy (**not** *liquify*), *but* **liquidate**

liquorice, (**not** the American *licorice*).

lira (singular), **lire** (plural), the former Italian currency.

literally avoid as expression of emphasis; “he literally exploded with anger” is absurd. It means *actually, without exaggeration*. It should not be used oxymoronically in figurative senses, as in they were literally glued to their seats – unless glue had in fact been applied.

Liuyang City home to China’s largest firecracker production base.

living room (no hyphen, as **dining room** etc.).

Lloyds TSB, the bank, but **Lloyd's of London** (insurance). Lloyd's of London now use this full name at first mention, **Lloyd's** thereafter. *Note Lloyd's names*.

Lloyd Webber all family members (father William and sons Andrew and Julian) have no hyphen except in reference to Andrew as **Lord Lloyd-Webber**.

loan is a noun (ie, **never** say “I loaned him \$20” etc); the verb is **lend/lent**.

loathe (verb), **loath** (adjective; **not** *loth*), To loathe something is to *detest* it or to regard it with *disgust*: Someone who is **loath** is reluctant.

local government cap councils when full title, **eg**, Box Hill City Council, City of Boroondara (thereafter “the council”); but l/c when title is not in full, **eg**, Box Hill council; all council committees in l/c; although we

cap Mayor at first mention (**eg**, Albert Hobart, Mayor of Ringwood), l/c for council officials.
lochs in Scotland, **loughs** in Ireland.

Lockerbie suspects the convicted man is **Abdul Baset Ali al-Megrahi** (after first mention, **al-Megrahi**); his co-accused was **Al-Amin Khalifa Fhimah** (thereafter **Mr Fhimah**).

lockin, lockout (in industrial disputes etc), one word; *but* to **lock in, lock out** as verbs.

locomotive names are italicised, as with ships' or aircraft names, **eg**, *Mallard*. Do not use "the" unless certain it is part of the name.

log jam two words.

London cap the **East End**, the **West End**, **North London**, **South London**, **East London**, **West London**, **Central London**, **Inner London**; *but* l/c southeast London, southwest London etc.

Londonderry (Ireland).

Long Island iced tea

Longchamp (not *Longchamps*), the French racecourse.

longstanding, longtime do not use hyphen.

lookout (noun, no hyphen).

Lord Mayor (caps) as in Lord Mayor of London, Sydney etc; thereafter, "the lord mayor"; the same applies to Mayor of Noble Park etc.

Lord of the Rings, The, by J.R.R. Tolkien. *Note* "The" is part of the title. The second film in the cycle is called *The Two Towers* (not *Twin Towers*). *See Middle-earth; Tolkien.*

Lord's (cricket ground).

Lords, House of Lords takes singular verb, **eg**, the Lords is sitting ...

lose / loose / loosen to **lose** something is to be *deprived* of it. To **loose** (verb) something is to *release* it from fastenings or restraints. To **loosen** is to make *less tight* or to *ease* a restraint. **Loose** conveys the idea of *complete release*, whereas **loosen** refers to only a *partial release*.

loss-maker, loss-making

lovable, likable (not *loveable, likeable*).

lowbrow (as **highbrow**).

lowlife single, **lowlifes**, (not *lowlives*) plural.

Lower House, Upper House (of Parliament).

low-key

Loya Jirga (roman, initial caps), the Afghan national council that meets irregularly. *See War on Terror.*

Ltd can usually be dropped from company names (as can *plc.*).

Lula da Silva, President of Brazil, then **Senhor Lula da Silva**.

lullaby (not *-bye*).

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lumbar as in the *lower back* (**eg, lumbar puncture**); **lumber** as in *junk furniture, lumberjacks*, or (verbally) *moving clumsily* about etc.

Lurex (initial cap).

Luton airport (l/c airport), and resist pressure to insert “international”. *See airports.*

Luxembourg (**not -burg**); the inhabitants, **Luxembourgeois**. should be called *Mr, Mrs* etc, rather than *M* or *Mme* (*see foreign appellations*, and *Santer*); but note **Rosa Luxemburg** (leader of Berlin uprising in 1919).

luxuriant means *lush and grows abundantly* (a luxuriant head of hair): **luxurious** means *lavish and extravagant* (a luxurious resort).

Lycra (proprietary, cap).

lying in state (noun, no hyphens; nor the verb, to **lie in state**).

Lyons (**not Lyon**). *See Marseilles; foreign places.*

-lyse the style is **analyse, paralyse** etc. (**not -ize**). *See -ise, -isation.*

oOOo

M-M-M

M1 do not say M1 motorway. **M6 Toll** the new road in the Midlands.

Maastricht treaty (*l/c treaty*), *but Treaty of Maastricht*; for an unofficial name for the updated version of the treaty, write **Maastricht II** (not *2* or *Two*).

Macau (not *Macao*); the **Macau Government** (capitalised as the administration of a special administrative region; as Hong Kong). *See Chinese names.*

Mac, Mc always check spelling of these prefixes in alphabetical lists, treat *Mc* as *Mac*.

McCarthy, Senator Joseph; McCarthyism

McCartney, (Sir) Paul

McDonald's the hamburger chain.

McDonnell Douglas (no hyphen).

MacLaine, Shirley.

Maclean, Donald.

Macpherson, Elle.

mace, the (parliament) **Mace** riot control spray but **pepper** or **capsicum spray**.

Macedonia the correct (and politically sensitive) title of the new republic is the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** (caps as shown). Accept no variations. *See Yugoslav.*

Machiavelli(an)

machine gun noun, **machine-gun** verb but **submachine gun, semi-automatic gun.**

Machu Picchu accept no alternative. A fortified Inca town in the Andes Mountains in Peru that the invading Spaniards never found. It is noted for its dramatic position, perched high on a steep-sided ridge.

mackintosh (raincoat) **Macintosh** (computer).

macroeconomic, microeconomic (no hyphen).

Macy's (New York store).

Madame Tussauds (no apostrophe).

“**mad cow**” **disease** *See BSE; Creutzfeldt-Jakob.*

Madison Square Garden, New York (not *Gardens*).

Madonna her maiden name is **Cicccone** (not *Ciccione*).

madrassa Islamic school. (No “h” one “s”) plural **madrassas**.

maestros plural of **maestro**; (not *maestri*).

Mafia cap only in Italian or US context; *l/c mafia* in countries such as Russia when used as a synonym of gangsters. Use **mafia** as either a singular or plural.

Mafikeng the new name (since 1980) of *Mafeking*.

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maghreb Islamic prayer time just after sunset.

Magic Circle cap for the magicians' organisation.

Maginot line French fortifications against Germany before the Second World War

Magistrates' Association, the, note apostrophe

magistrates' courts, the, *l/c*. An acceptable alternative for a non-stipendiary (ie, lay) magistrate is **JP** (Justice of the Peace). When the accused is appearing before the bench, he appears before the **magistrates** (plural) unless a **Stipendiary Magistrate**. The full name of the court is capped, as in Brisbane Magistrates' Court.

Magna Carta (not "the" Magna Carta).

maharajah

mahout the carer and/or rider of elephant in India and Asia.

mailshot, **mailbag**, **mailvan** but **mail train**.

al-Majid, **General Ali Hassan** member of Saddam Hussein's revolutionary command council, nicknamed **Chemical Ali** for his atrocities against Iraq's Kurds (**Majid** on second reference).

major do not use as a lazy alternative for *big*, *chief*, *important* or *main*. **Major**, **Major General** (cap, military).

Majorca, **Minorca** use the Anglicised forms. *See Spanish place-names*.

majority of (do not use as alternative for *most of*).

majority / plurality a majority is at least a tiny bit more than 50 percent. A **plurality** is the largest percentage of something that is divided at least three ways, and yet is below 50 percent, **eg**, if John Howard wins 48 percent of the vote, Kevin Rudd wins 44 percent of the vote, and John Anderson wins 6 percent of the vote, then Howard has a plurality, **not** a majority.

makeover (one word as noun; but try to avoid this cliché — say *remodelling* instead).

make-up (cosmetics or typography), **not** *makeup*.

Málaga note accent.

Malagasy inhabitant or inhabitants of **Madagascar** and the name of their language; the adjective for the country is **Madagascan**.

Malaysia generally the last name comes first, so Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the former Prime Minister; thereafter "Dr Mahathir". His title while the Prime Minister was **Datuk Seri**. His wife is **Tun** Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, thereafter "Dr Siti Hasmah".

In Malaysia, honorary titles are: **Tun**, approximately equivalent to a life peerage, but with numbers restricted to about 25, with wives who are not Tun in their own right titled **Toh Puan**; **Tan Sri**, a federal award similar to *Sir*, with wives titled **Puan Sri**; **Datuk** (preferred to *Dato*) is a state award, somewhat like a local/regional knighthood, with wives titled **Datin**.

malevolent means *evil in mind* (with malevolent intent): **Maleficent** means *evil in deed* (a maleficent bully).

Mammon (initial cap).

Man cap in the context of **humankind**. *See Nature*.

management buyout spell out first time, though **MBO** (plural **MBOs**) is acceptable in business stories.

manifesto singular, **manifestos** plural (not *-oes*).

Manila capital of the **Philippines** *but* **manila envelope** (l/c).

Manningham-Buller, Elizabeth Director-General of MI5, prefers to be known as **Eliza**. Second mention, “Ms Manningham-Buller”.

manoeuvre, manoeuvring, manoeuvrable

mantel is a wood or stone *structure* around a fireplace and note **mantelpiece** (not *mantlepiece*): a **mantle** is a long, loose *garment* like a cloak.

manuscript(s)

Maori singular and plural.

Mao Zedong (no longer *Mao Tse-tung*). *See Chinese names.*

marathon avoid in clichéd sense of a *long time* as in “a marathon session”. Cap as in London Marathon, New York Marathon.

march past (noun; two words in military context).

Mardi Gras for the Shrove Tuesday festival, but note the self-styled **Mardi Gra bomber**.

Margrethe Queen of Denmark (not *Margarethe*).

Marines cap in both Royal Marines and US Marines; also, a Marine.

marketplace (one word), but market-maker.

Marks & Spencer use the ampersand rather than “and” in text; can abbreviate to *M&S* in headlines and after first mention.

marquis (not *marquess*) except where it is the correct formal title, **eg**, Marquess of Blandford. *Note* **Marquee(s)** is the tent like covering.

Marrakesh (not *Marrakech*).

Marriott hotels (not *Marriot*).

Mars bar(s) (l/c “b”)

Marseille (not *Marseilles*); also call the football club *Marseilles* (not *Olympique de Marseille*).

Marshal (military rank) **not** *marshall*: “Air Chief Marshal Marshall presided at the court martial of the martial arts instructor”.

masterful describes a person who is *dominating* and *imperious*. **Masterly** describes a person who *has mastered* a craft, trade, or profession; the word often means “authoritative” (a masterly analysis).

martial law (l/c).

Martini proprietary, cap.

Marxist, Marxism derived from Karl Marx, so cap. **Do not** use as a loose variant of *communism*. *See communism.*

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Mary Celeste (not *Marie Celeste*).

Maryinsky (not *Mariinsky*, despite internet evidence to the contrary) for the name of the theatre home of the **Kirov Ballet**.

Masai prefer to *Maasai*.

Mass (cap in its religious context), also **Holy Mass**, **Requiem Mass** etc.

massacre the savage killing of large numbers of people, **not** Manchester United beating Liverpool 4-0.

Massachusetts

massive massively overused; avoid; **Not** a synonym of *big*.

MasterCard

masterclass (musical etc; no hyphen).

masterful *powerful* and able to *control* others; **masterly** *skillful*.

master of foxhounds (l/c) *See foxhunt*.

Matabele singular and plural (a Matabele, the Matabele people) The Ndebele people collectively, particularly those of Zimbabwe.

materialise avoid as a synonym of *appear*, *come about* or *happen*.

matinee (no accent), as *premiere*, *debut*, *decor* etc.

matins (l/c). *See evensong*, *Christian terms*.

matt (not *mat*), as in **matt paint**, **matt black** etc.

Mauretania, the *liner*; **Mauritania**, the *country*.

may / might do **not** confuse; use **might** in sentences referring to *past possibilities* that did not happen, eg, "If that had happened 10 days ago, my whole life might have been different". A clear distinction is evident in the following example: "He might have been captured by the Iraqis — but he wasn't", compared with "He may have been captured by the Iraqis — it is possible but we don't know." *See can / could / may*.

Maya, one of the Indian people of Central America; **Mayas**, plural; and **Mayan**, adjective.

Mayday (distress signal from the French "m'aidez!) cap; but **May Day** (May 1 holiday).

mayor for when to cap, *see local government*, **Lord Mayor**. But note that the **Mayor of London** becomes "the mayor" (l/c) after first mention.

Maze prison in Northern Ireland; **do not** use *Long Kesh* except in quotes or historical context.

MCC, short for Marylebone Cricket Club or Melbourne Cricket Club. **Do not** say "the" MCC. MCG is the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

mealtimes write **breakfast time**, **lunchtime**, **teatime**, **dinner time**, **supper time** (*but* use hyphens in compounds when adjectival).

means-test, **means-tested** etc. (hyphenate whether as noun, verb or adjective).

means to an end is singular; *but* "his means are modest".

meanwhile is almost always misused to mean “here’s a slight change of subject”: It means “at the same time”

Meat Loaf *sings meatloaf doesn't*

mecca l/c as in "mecca for tourists", *but Mecca* u/c, the holiest city in Islam

Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) international medical aid charity (**don't** describe it as *French*)

media, plural as in mass media, *but mediums* (spiritualists)

medical officer of health MoH acceptable in headlines

medical terms never use these metaphorically or as terms of abuse (*geriatric, paralytic, schizophrenic*). In words ending in “-tomy” (**appendectomy, hysterectomy** etc), the word “operation” is tautologous and must not be used.

medications give the generic name (lower case, parentheses) as well as the brand name, **eg**, Casodex (bicalutamide) for those new or not familiar. Omit in reference to well-known medications, **eg, Valium, Viagra**

medieval (*not mediaeval*)

Mediterranean

meet / met never say “meet with”, say “met with”

mega- be very sparing with this as a colloquial prefix meaning *big*

megawatts the capacity of a power station is measured in megawatts; the output is measured in **megawatt hours**. The correct abbreviation of megawatt is **MW** (*not mW*, which means **milliwatt**). See *kilowatt-hour*

mêlée a confused *fight, skirmish, or scuffle* or a confused mass of people

Meles Zenawi is Prime Minister, (**not President**) of Ethiopia. Mr Meles at second mention

Member of Parliament (cap Member), but **MP** almost always preferable

mementoes (*not -os*)

memoirs (*not memoires*)

memorandum, plural **memorandums** (*not memoranda*), memorandum of understanding (**MoU** singular, **MoUs** plural)

menagé á trois (no hyphen, note accents), plural **menagés á trois**

meningitis distinguish whether bacterial or viral; the headline cases are *usually* bacterial

meningococcal disease, is a bacterial infection that spreads among humans and can result in limb amputation or death

menswear, womenswear (noun)

mental handicap, mentally handicapped, mentally retarded **do not** use: say “person with learning difficulties”

mental health take care using language about mental health issues. In addition to such clearly offensive and unacceptable expressions as *loony, maniac, nutter, psycho* and *schizo*, terms to avoid — because

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they stereotype and stigmatise — include; *victim of*, *suffering from*, and *afflicted by*; “a person with” is clear, accurate and preferable to “a person suffering from”. Never use *schizophrenic* to mean “in two minds”. And avoid writing “the mentally ill”— say “mentally ill people”, “mental health patients”, or “people with mental health problems”

Mercedes-Benz (proprietary, cap. Hyphen)

Merchant Navy (caps)

Messerschmitt (not *-schmidt*)

mete out (not *meet out*), in context of punishment

methamphetamine a synthetic drug with more rapid and lasting effects than amphetamine. Commonly called **ice** or **crystal Meth**

Method acting use cap "M"

metres, as in *distance*, *poetry* etc; **meters**, as in *gas*, *electricity* or *parking* etc

metric for temperatures use degree **Celcius**, **eg**, temperature on the South Coast hit the low **30s**; where specific, **16C**. Similarly, for area **hectares** and **square metres**, or **square kilometres**, not *acres*, *square yards*, or *square miles*; For speeds use **kilometres**. It is nonsense to express, for instance, an estimated 15ft as an excessively detailed 4.57m. If the first figure is no more than an estimate, the conversion may safely be rounded to a similarly approximate 4.5m.

1. Distances convert to **kilometres per hour (km/h)**.
2. Personal measurements in height and weight; Use **metres** and **centimetres**, **eg**, 1.7m and weights in **kilograms** **62kg**.
3. Altitude and depth: The main exception to metric should be aircraft altitude, where a pilot will announce that "we are now flying at 33,000ft"; metric conversion to 10,058m may be used in brackets here. But specify mountain heights in metric, **eg**, Ben Nevis is the highest peak in Britain at **1,343m**.
4. Volume: Use metric, **eg**, US\$1 a litre

The most common metric abbreviations are **mm** (millimetre), **cm** (centimetre), **m** (metre) and **km** (kilometre); **mg** (milligram), **g** (gram), **kg** (kilogram); **sq m** (square metre), **ha** (hectare), **sq km** (square kilometre), **cu m** (cubic metre); **ml** (millilitre), **cl** (centilitre), **l** (litre); **W** (watt), **kW** (kilowatt). **Never** add a final "s" to any of these abbreviations, **eg**, 48km (not *48kms*).

metrosexual note that the term was coined by Mark Simpson, a British journalist, **not** by Marian Saltzman, a US writer

mexican wave l/c

Michelangelo

mic (not *mike*), as abbreviation for *microphone*

microchip

microgram do not abbreviate, and certainly **not** to *mcg*, which is meaningless under international scientific standard abbreviations

microlight (prefer to *microlite*)

mid-90s, **mid-60s**, etc. (hyphen, no apostrophe)

mid-air (hyphenate, noun or adjective).

midday, midweek (no hyphens).

Middle Ages, the, (caps).

middle America, middle England, etc.

Middle-earth. *See Lord of the Rings; Tolkien.*

Middle East comprises Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Yemen. In a general sense, it also takes in the countries of the Maghreb: Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, Western Sahara. **Never** abbreviate to the Americanism *Mideast*.

Middlesbrough (not *Middlesborough*).

midlife crisis but **do not** overuse this cliché.

midnight (not *12 midnight*). *See noon.*

midsummer, midwinter, midweek, midterm.

Midwest (US).

MiG the former Soviet aircraft.

migrant do not use in place of *emigrant* or *immigrant*. It means one who is in the process of **migrating**.

Milad al-Nabi Islamic festival celebrating the birth of the prophet Muhammad; many Muslims disapprove of celebrating this event.

mileage

military ranks do not use hyphens in compounds such as **Major General, Lieutenant Colonel, Rear Admiral** etc. **Do not** abbreviate ranks except in lists.

For British brigades and divisions use cardinal numbers: 7 Armoured Brigade, 1 Light Armoured Division, 40 Commando, etc; for Australian and British battalions and regiments use ordinals, **eg** , 2nd Battalion Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, 1st Armoured Regiment, 2nd/14th Light Horse Regiment (for US divisions the style is as follows: 101st Air Assault, 82nd Airborne).

Note also that British ships are written *HMS Ark Royal*, **not** “*the*” *HMS Ark Royal*, (italics) Australian naval ships are prefaced by **HMAS**, New Zealand by **HMNZS**, and the United States of America by **USS**. You go **aboard** a ship and when you are **on board** you may be welcomed **aboard**, *but you sail, serve or travel in* a ship.

As a rough guide to British and Australian Army units note the following:

section: eight to 12 soldiers commanded by an NCO (**Corporal**).

platoon: 25-40 soldiers commanded by a Lieutenant, aided by a **Sergeant**.

company: three platoons and a HQ, 150 officers and men commanded by a **Major**.

battalion/regiment: three companies, a support company and a HQ company, 500-800 soldiers commanded by a **Lieutenant Colonel**, assisted by an adjutant (usually a **Major**). Some regiments have several battalions.

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Armoured units

- troop:** four tanks, 12 **troopers**, commanded by a **First** or **Second Lieutenant**, a **Sergeant** and two **Corporals**, each of whom commands a tank.
- squadron:** 14 tanks, commanded by a **Major** (but there are reconnaissance squadrons with light armoured cars, etc).
- regiment:** 58 tanks, about 550 officers and troopers, commanded by a **Lieutenant Colonel**.
- brigade:** three to four battalions/regiments grouped together with added support troops, commanded by a **Brigadier** (in historical terms a brigade would be three infantry battalions but most of them are now made up of a wide range of fighting and support units of various sizes).
- division:** two to four brigades grouped together with added support troops, 16,000-30,000 soldiers commanded by a **Major General** (30,000 may be theoretical, but the biggest is about 18,000, and others are as low as a couple of thousand. In addition, regiments are grouped in divisions).
- US aircraft:** take the style: F-14 Tomcat, F-15 Eagle, F-16 Fighting Falcon, F/A-18 Hornet/ Super Hornet, F-117 Nighthawk stealth fighter, B-52 Stratofortress, B-2 stealth bomber etc.

militate / mitigate to militate against something is to *influence* or *have a marked effect* on it (his record **militated** against his early release); to **mitigate** like its synonym *extenuate*, means to *lessen* an offence (in **mitigation**, her counsel argued that she came from a broken home).

millennium common usage says that the millennium ended on December 31, 1999, though technically it should have been December 31, 2000. We should accept the former. The plural of millennium is **millennia** (unlike memorandums etc; *see referendum*). *Note* also **millenarian** (only one middle “n”) meaning *of, or related to*, the millennium.

millions write out millions from one to nine, thereafter 10 million etc. Abbreviate to “m” only for headlines. For currencies, spell out in text, **eg**, \$15 million, but abbreviate to \$15m in headlines. With decimal notations, best to restrict to two decimal points in text, rounded up or down (**eg**, \$1.53 million), though in headlines try to avoid decimals altogether. In text, write 2.5 million rather than spelling out two and a half million; *but* “three million shares changed hands” (not 3 million shares) etc.

mimic, mimicked, mimicking

mindset is a cliché; prefer *mentality*.

mineworker

minimal **do not** use as a synonym of *small*; it means *smallest*, or the *least possible* in size, duration etc. *Note* the plural of **minimum** is **minima**.

miniskirt (no hyphen); also, **minicab, minibus, minivan**

ministers (political) cap all ministers, whether in the Cabinet or not. The same applies to ministers in overseas governments: give name and full title (capped) first time, thereafter name or just “the minister”.

Minnelli, Liza

minuscule (**not** *miniscule*). Originally, a medieval script. Use sparingly, as it is heavily overworked as a synonym of *very small* or *unimportant*.

mis-hit (hyphen), **mis-sell**; *but see misspell*.

Miss, Ms Ms is nowadays fully acceptable when a woman (married or unmarried) wants to be called thus, or when it is not known for certain if she is Mrs or Miss. Ms is increasingly common in American and UK contexts. *See appellations.*

missiles Pakistan's missiles are the **Hatf** (short-range), **Shaheen** (short), **Ghaznavi** (medium) and **Ghauri** (medium). India's are the **Prithvi** (short-range) and **Agni** (medium). Most of the above may have numerals after them, **eg, Shaheen2**.

Mississippi

mistakable, unmistakable

mistreatment is the more general term: **maltreatment** denotes a harsh form of mistreatment, involving abuse by *rough* or *cruel* handling.

misuse, misused (no hyphen).

Mitterrand, François the late French President.

Moab massive ordnance air blast, nicknamed mother of all bombs.

mobile phone do not abbreviate to *mobile* even after first mention; **cellphone** in US only.

Moby-Dick Herman Melville's classic is, believe it or not, hyphenated.

moccasins (not *mocassins*).

MoD acceptable abbreviation for Ministry of Defence, especially in headlines.

Moët & Chandon (no longer Moët et Chandon – proprietary, cap. ampersand and umlaut).

Mogul (not *Mughal*) for the empire and art.

Mohammed. *See Muhammad.*

Moldova (no longer *Moldavia*).

Mona Lisa (not *Monna Lisa*).

monarch; (l/c) for the British monarch; but *the Sovereign, the Crown.* *See Royal Family.*

moneys (plural of money, **not monies**), but money will usually serve. Also, **moneyed**, (**not monied**).

money laundering two words as noun; *but* hyphenate adjective, a **money-laundering** gang.

Mongol, Mongolian, for the race. **Never** refer to a Down's syndrome sufferer as a *mongol*.

Monsignor (**Mgr** abbreviated) can now be used for Roman Catholic archbishops or bishops in Britain (where appropriate), as well as in foreign contexts.

Montenegrin is the adjective from **Montenegro** (not *Montenegran*)

months abbreviate (only in lists or listings) as follows: Jan, Feb, March, April, May, June, July, Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov, Dec.

Moon cap in planetary context, otherwise l/c. *See Earth, Sun, Universe.*

more than always use rather than "over" with numbers, **eg**, "more than 2,500 people attended the rally", **not** "over 2,500 ...".

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mortgagor / mortgagee the person *borrowing* the money is the **mortgagor**, the *lender* is both the **mortgagee** and the mortgage holder; to avoid confusion, call the **mortgagor** the mortgage borrower and the **mortgagee** the mortgage lender.

Morissette, Alanis

morning-after pill (l/c, hyphen).

Morse code

mortar do not use by itself when the meaning is *mortar bomb*; the mortar is the launcher from which the shell is fired. But **mortar attack** is perfectly correct.

mortuary (not *morgue*).

mosquitoes (not *-os* as plural).

most favoured nation status (l/c).

Mother Nature (initial caps). *See Nature*.

Mother Teresa (not *Theresa*).

Mother's Day, or Mothering Sunday (not *Mothers'*)

motocross (not *motorcross*) *but* **motorcar, motorcycle, motorcyclist, motorbike**

mottoes

motoring terms the following terms should be standardised thus: **carburettor, wheelspin, four-wheel drive** (shorten to 4x4 or 4WD), but a **four-wheel-drive vehicle** (two hyphens when adjectival), **power steering, anti-lock brakes, 3-litre car, 1.9 diesel** (hyphenated when adjectival), **four-door, hatchback, four-star petrol, E-type Jaguar, Mercedes-Benz E-class** etc, **airbag, seatbelt, numberplate, sports car**.

motor neuron (no final "e") **disease** but note the Motor Neurone Disease Association.

Motor racing

the **Australian Grand Prix, Japanese Grand Prix** etc. (cap as specific); *but* grand prix racing etc. (l/c, unspecific); plural **grands prix**.

Formula One motor racing (two caps, "One" spelt out).

pitstop (one word).

motorway junctions styled Junction 6 (cap, numeral) of the M40, I66 etc.

movable (not *moveable*)

Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) Islamist rebel group in northern Mali

, **MP, QC**, commas each side when used after name. Plural **MPs** (never "MP's"). *See Member of Parliament; politics; courts*.

Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms. *See appellations*.

much / very much generally intensifies past-participial adjectives (*much obliged, much encouraged*) and some comparatives (much more, much worse, much too soon). **Very** intensifies adverbs and most adjectives (*very carefully, very bad*), including past-participial adjectives that have more adjectival than

verbal force (*very bored*).

mugging strictly means theft by violence in the open air. Take care not to overuse.

Muhammad use this spelling for the Prophet, but respect the other spellings of the name according to individuals' preference; if in doubt, use Muhammad. *Note* also **Muhammad Ali** but **King Mohammed VI of Morocco**. *See names*.

Muhammad al-Masari (Saudi dissident); then Dr Masari.

Mullah Muhammad Omar supreme leader of the **Taliban**; Mullah Omar at subsequent mention. *See War on Terror*.

Mujahideen (cap), collective noun for guerilla fighters in Islamic countries; the singular is **mujahid**.

Mukhabarat Saddam Hussein's secret police.

multi incline towards making *multi* compounds one word wherever possible, whether used as a noun or as an adjective, **eg**, *multimillionaire*, *multinational*, *multilateral*, *multimedia*, *multiracial*, *multispeed*, *multistorey*, *multitrack*. *However*, when the compound appears too hideous, such as *multi-ethnic*, hyphenate.

multimillion-dollar deal, etc

mum. *See dad and mum*.

Mumbai (formerly Bombay) use this phrase at first mention.

Murdoch, Elisabeth; refer to her as Ms Murdoch at subsequent mentions.

Murdoch, Rupert; chairman and chief executive of News Corporation.

Murphy's law "If there are two or more ways to do something, and one of those ways can result in a catastrophe, then someone will do it"; also known as **sod's law**.

Musharraf, General Pervez (not Pervaiz), President of Pakistan from 2001. Refer to him as General Musharraf after first mention.

Musical vocabulary

- a. song titles (classical or pop), album titles, operas (including arias), take italics;
- b. symphonies Symphony No 3 (roman, caps); but where symphonies have numbers and popular alternative titles (Eroica, Pastoral) the titles, when used, are in italics, **eg**, *Eroica*;
- c. concertos First Violin Concerto (roman caps)

music-hall

Muslim (not Moslem or Mohamedan). *See Islam; Muhammad*.

Mussorgsky, Modest (prefer to *Moussorgsky*).

mutual means *reciprocal* or *directly exchanged* by and toward each other (mutual obligations). Write "friend in common" rather than "mutual friend" in reference to a third person who is a friend of two others. *See common / mutual*.

Muzak (proprietary, cap).

Myanmar continue to call the country **Burma**.

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mynah bird (prefer to *mina*, *myna*).

myself avoid using as a pronoun in place of *I* or *me*. Use it reflexively (I did myself a favour). Avoid the emphatic use (I myself have have tried to repair it) as it is verbose

oOOo

N-N-N

9/11 is permissible, but please try to use the full date elsewhere for clarification, **eg**, "the events of September 11, 2001". Reference to **the 9/11 commission** (strictly, the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States) also acceptable.

nailbomb

Nafta North American Free Trade Agreement (**not** *Area* or *Association*).

naive, naively, naivety (no diaeresis ").

names as a general rule, people are entitled to be known as they wish to be known, provided their identities are clear. Thus **Cassius Clay** became **Muhammad Ali**; but in such changes, give both names until the new one is widely known. *Note Lloyd's names* (l/c). *See appellations; Lloyd's*.

Avoid writing "Foreign Affairs Minister Gordon Brown": write "Australian Foreign Affairs Minister, Gordon Brown, said". At subsequent mentions "the minister" or "Mr Brown".

Where it is necessary to explain who someone is, write "Neil Warnock, the Sheffield United manager, said" or "the Sheffield United manager, Neil Warnock, said". In such cases the commas around the name indicate there is only one person in the position, so write "the Labour leader, Gough Whitlam, said" (only one person in the job), but "the former Liberal prime minister Malcolm Fraser said" (there have been many).

names starting stories cap the first name only, as GORDON Brown said last night.

narcotics take care to use this word correctly. *See drugs*.

Nasa National Aeronautics and Space Administration (US); rarely necessary to spell out.

nation Do **not** use when you mean *country* or *state*; reserve nation to describe people united by language, culture and history so as to form a distinct group within a larger territory. And beware of attributing the actions of a government or a military force to a national population (**eg**, "The Israelis have killed 400 children during the intifada"). Official actions always have opponents within a population; if we don't acknowledge this, we oversimplify the situation and short change the opponents.

national avoid as a synonym of *citizen*, as in "a French national".

National Anthem initial caps for **Advance Australia Fair, God Save the Queen**, etc.

National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States — an acceptable short form is **9/11 commission**. *See 9/11 above*.

national curriculum (l/c).

National Health Service the NHS, or the **healthservice** (NHS for headlines).

national missile defence (NMD), the US missile defence project (l/c when spelt out).

National Parks should be capped only with specific names (**eg**, Snowdonia National Park; *but* "the policy applies particularly to national parks").

National Security Adviser cap this top post in US political context.

National Service (caps).

nationalist l/c except when referring to name of a political party. Thus Scottish National Party (SNP) and Scottish Nationalists. But in Irish contexts, l/c. *See Ireland*.

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nationwide no hyphen, but use sparingly as it borders on being a cliché; prefer **national** or **nationally**.
See wide.

Native American cap the "N" when referring to American Indians; *Geronimo* was a **Native American** (not an *American Indian* or *Red Indian*) but note **Plains Indians** a member of any of various North American Indians who formerly inhabited the Great Plains; George Bush is a **native American**.

NATO the **Secretary-General**, is **Jaap de Hoop Scheffer**, former Dutch Foreign Minister. At subsequent mention, Mr de Hoop Scheffer.

Nature cap sparingly, only in the context of personifying the power that creates and regulates the world. Also, **Mother Nature**.

naught, come to (not *nought*, which means the digit 0).

nave is a central space in a church; journalists who misspell the word are **knaves**.

navy, naval the Royal Navy, Royal New Zealand Navy, the Merchant Navy, the US Navy, the Brazilian Navy etc. (thereafter the **navy**, l/c, for all of these); **naval** is l/c except in titles such as Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (RNVR) etc.

navy ships classes are capped, (*but* roman **not** italics) **Collins Class, Leander Class** etc.

Nazi, Nazism (caps). *See communist.*

Neanderthal (cap, and **not** *-tal*).

nearby, near by the first is adjectival, **eg**, "the nearby school was convenient"; the second is adverbial, **eg**, "he sat on a bench near by".

near-demise hyphenate this and other constructions with near.

nearly one in three ... is prefer singular to plural *are* in these constructions. *See one.*

nearsighted, nearsightedness

nauseous whatever is nauseous induces a feeling of **nausea**—it makes us feel sick to our stomachs. To feel sick is to be **nauseated**. The use of nauseous to mean nauseated may be too common to be called error anymore, but strictly speaking it is poor usage. Because of the ambiguity in nauseous, the wisest course may be to stick to the participial adjectives **nauseated** and **nauseating**.

necessary means "required under the circumstances", **eg**, the necessary arrangements: **necessitous** means *impoverished* (living in necessitous circumstances).

negative, in the. *See affirmative, in the.*

Neighbourhood Watch

neither takes a singular verb, **eg**, "neither is ...", "neither Bert nor Fred has any idea". **Do not** use the construction "neither ... *or* ... " (**must** use *nor*). *See none.*

neoconservative, neocon (no hyphen).

Nepad the New Partnership for Africa's Development (**not** *African*).

Nepalese for both people and language of **Nepal**.

nerve-racking (**not** *-wracking*). *See racked, wrack.*

Nestlé (proprietary, cap).

Netanyahu, Binyamin (not *Benjamin*), Israeli politician.

Netherlands, the (no cap for “the”). Do not use *Holland* as an alternative except in sporting or historical contexts. **Dutch** is the adjective.

nevertheless (one word, as **none the less**).

new / now frequently redundant. Try the sentence without it and see if it really adds any meaning; always omit in “setting a new record”. Avoid employing phrases such as “white is the new black”.

New Age travellers (no quotes). See *Gypsy; travellers*.

newborn (as in babies, no hyphen).

newfound (no hyphen).

new Labour /c “n”, quotes not usually necessary, except when the writer or speaker is making a particular, perhaps ironic, point. But keep caps in slogans such as “New Labour, New Danger”.

news agency but **newsagent, newsprint, newsreel, newsreader**.

News International Rupert Murdoch is chairman and chief executive of **News Corporation** (second mention, **News Corp**), a name changed in November 2004 from The News Corporation Limited after incorporation in the United States.

A subsidiary of **News Corp** is **News International** (its full title is News International Ltd). **News Ltd** is the Australian arm of News Corp.

Twentieth Century Fox (or 20th Century Fox in logo form), Fox News, Fox Sports etc. are part of the **Fox Entertainment Group**.

newspapers and journals; use italics for titles and make sure to use “The” in the title whenever appropriate. The lists that follow, though not exhaustive, are some frequently mentioned:

- a. **With “The” in the masthead:** *The Boston Globe, The Times, The Sun, The Guardian, The Independent, The Daily Telegraph, The Observer, The Mail on Sunday, The People, The European, The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, The Times of India, The Straits Times* (Singapore), *The Australian* (Australia), *The Age* (Melbourne), *The Sydney Morning Herald* (Sydney), *The Jerusalem Post* (Israel)
- b. **Without “The” in the masthead:** *News of the World, Financial Times, Daily Mirror, Chicago Sun-Times, Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times, Daily News* (New York), *New York Post, New Yorker, USA Today, International Herald Tribune, Bild am Sonntag, Stern, Der Spiegel, Die Welt, Svenska Dagbladet, Izvestia, El País, Le Monde, Le Figaro, L'Espresso* (Italy), *Corriere della Sera, Far Eastern Economic Review* (Hong Kong), *South China Morning Post* (Hong Kong), *New Straits Times* (Malaysia), *Herald Sun* (Melbourne), *Al-Ahram* (Cairo)

When the journal's name is used adjectivally, omit “The”, **eg**, the *Times* reporter was attacked ...

Always properly attribute material from another newspaper: **never** say “a report in another newspaper ...” but “a report in *The Guardian* ...” etc. However, the general phrases media reports or press reports are acceptable when material has been widely disseminated

New Year Honours or **New Year's Honours List** (caps); also the **Queen's Birthday Honours**. See *honours*

New Year's Day, New Year's Eve, *but* the **new year, new year's resolutions** and **Chinese new year**

New York City, New York State (caps), to distinguish them; usually *New York* will be sufficient for the

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city, “upstate New York” is permissible. Normally, *l/c state* in contexts such as “the state of Virginia”. See *Washington*.

New Zealand (**never NZ**, even in headlines).

Nicholson, Jack the actor.

Nietzsche

Nigerian names surnames do not exist in the north of Nigeria: a typical name would be Isa Sani Sokoto (Isa the son of Sani who comes from the town of Sokoto); so best to write in full.

nightclub, nightcap, nightdress, nightfall, nightgown, nightshade, nightshirt

nightmare use only in its proper sense of an *unpleasant dream*, **not** as a lazy cliché for something that goes wrong.

night-time (hyphen), but **daytime** (one word).

Nikkei average

Nimby(ism) acronym for "not in my backyard", initial cap.

Nissan cars, but Nissen hut

No 1 in the charts, the world tennis No 1, etc.

No 10, or 10 Downing Street (**not** *Number 10* or *Downing St*).

no campaign, yes campaign (**not** *No campaign*, “*no*” *campaign* or any of the other variants).

no-fly zone

no man's land

no-no

no one (two words, no hyphen)

“**no**” **vote**, “**yes**” **vote**. But *See affirmative, in the*.

“**no win, no fee**” legislation/agreement etc.

Nobel Prize for Literature, Medicine etc; or Nobel Peace/Literature Prize, **but Nobel prize** (unspecific), **Nobel prizewinner, Nobel laureate** (*l/c “l”*), **Nobel prize-winning, author** etc.

no-brainer means something along the lines of “this is so obvious, you don't need a brain to know it” **not** “only someone with no brain would think this”.

noisome has nothing to do with *noise*. It means *noxious, offensive, foul-smelling* (a *noisome* factory).

nonagenarian (**not nono-**) a person who is from 90 to 99-years-old.

non-commissioned officer (no hyphen).

noncommittal (no hyphen).

nonconformist, **but the Nonconformist Church** and Nonconformist churches (buildings).

non-cooperation *See co-operate*.

none it is a (very persistent) myth that “none” has to take a singular verb, but plural is acceptable and often sounds more natural, **eg**, “none of the current squad *are* good enough to play in the Premiership”; “none of the issues *have* been resolved”. If followed by a singular noun, treat it as singular (none of the building was painted); if by a plural noun, treat it as plural.

none the less (no hyphen) *but nevertheless*

non-existent

non-profitmaking

non-stop (hyphenate).

noon (**not** *12 noon*); and **never** say *12am* or *12pm*. *See midnight*.

normalcy avoid; say **normality** instead

north, northeast, northern *but Northern Hemisphere* etc; for when to cap *see compass points*.

northerner, southerner, easterner, westerner (l/c).

Northern Ireland. *See Ireland*.

northern lights (aurora borealis) l/c. Similarly aurora australis, the southern lights.

North West Frontier Province in Pakistan (**NWFP** acceptable after first mention); *note* initial caps, no hyphens.

notable / noticeable / noteworthy notable (no middle “e”) means *readily noticed* and applies both to physical things and to qualities (notable sense of humour). **Noticeable** means *detectable* with the physical senses (a noticeable limp). **Noteworthy** means *remarkable* (a noteworthy act of kindness).

notwithstanding one word. Avoid. Try using *despite, although, and in spite of*.

notebook, notepaper, noticeboard

nuclear terms should be used with precision. Take special care not to confuse **fission** and **fusion**.

numbers write from one to nine in full, 10 upwards as numerals except when they are approximations, **eg**, “about thirty people turned up”. Keep consistency within a sentence: say “the number injured rose from eight to fourteen”, and do not mix fractions and decimals. At the start of a sentence, write all numbers in full. **ordinals**: write out up to twentieth, then 21st, 33rd, 95th etc. *But* birthdays and anniversaries, write out up to ninth, then 10th, 45th etc. *Note* 42nd Street, 38th parallel etc. *See birthday; millions; currencies; fractions*.

numberplate (on vehicles etc; one word). *See motoring terms*.

numerous try *many*.

Nuremberg (**not** *-burg*).

oOOo

O-O-O

Oath of Allegiance as sworn by new MPs; the oath at subsequent mentions.

oblivious of (not "to"); means forgetful of, unaware of. It **does not** mean *ignorant* or *uncomprehending*.

obscenities “four-letter words” and profanities should be avoided because they upset many readers. However, in direct quotes and where they are essential to the story, style obscenities thus with asterisks; f***, f***ing, c*** etc.

observance means *obedience to a rule or custom* (the family’s observance of Christmas): **observation** means either *a study of something* or *a remark based on such a study* (a detailed observation about the stock market). Each term is sometimes used when the other would be better.

obtuse “mentally slow or emotionally insensitive”; often confused with **abstruse** (hard to understand) or **obscure**.

occupied territories, the (all l/c).

occurred (not occured).

Oceans, Seas uc, eg, **Atlantic Ocean, Red Sea**

o'clock. See *times*.

octogenarian a person who is from 80 to 89-years-old.

octopuses (plural of **octopus**, not *octopi*).

Oder-Neisse Line (the boundary between Poland and Germany).

odious / odorous / odoriferous / malodorous odious means *hateful* (odious apartheid laws). It is not related to the other terms, but it is sometimes misused as if it were. **Odorous** means *detectable by smell* (either pleasant or foul). Odoriferous means essentially the same thing, but primarily an *unpleasant* or *distinctive* (spicy) one. **Malodorous** means *smelling quite bad*.

OECD, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

of avoid expressions such as "all of the people attending", "half of the children replied"; say simply "all the people", "half the children" etc. Never put after the word “off”, **eg**, “he got off of the bus” is wrong.

of all time do not use this meaningless phrase, as in “best golfer of all time”, in any circumstances.

offbeat (no hyphen).

offhand, offside but **off-licence**.

officious is not a synonym of *official*. A person who is **officious** is *aggressively nosy* and *meddlesome*. The word has nothing to do with an *officer* and should not be confused with *official*.

officers (naval, military, police) do not call ratings or NCOs “*officers*”, especially in headlines and captions. See *Armed Forces*.

Oh! (not O!)

oil is generally referred to as barrels or drums. There are 55 gallons in a drum and 42 gallons (1 US gallon = 3.78541178 liters) in a barrel (ie, 1 barrel = 158.9872948 liters). Originally there were 40 gallons to a barrel. However, that was changed in the mid-19th century to give a little extra so consumers wouldn’t feel 'cheated.' A little over 23 gallons of gasoline can be refined from a

barrel of oil. Other products (jet fuel, lubricants, etc.) make up the rest. The easy way to remember the number of gallons in a barrel of oil: There are seven letters in (the word) gallons and six letters in barrel, 7X6 = 42 gallons.

oil-drilling, oil-fired, oil-slick, oil-tanker, but oil drum, oilfield, oilrig, oil platform.

oil painting

oil-seed rape (use hyphen).

OK is OK; *okay* is not

Oktoberfest a traditional Autumn festival held in Munich, Germany but now generally applied to German beer drinking festivals whether held in Germany or not.

old *See elderly.*

Old Masters (caps to avoid confusion).

Olympics can be used as a short form of the **Olympic Games**. Similarly, **the Games** (always capped) can be used (same rule for 'Games' in **Commonwealth Games** etc). Always cap Olympics and Olympic even when used adjectivally, **eg**, an Olympic athlete. *Note International Olympic Committee* (no final "s" on Olympic).

ombudsman, ombudswoman keep l/c in general context, **eg**, "he referred the matter to the ombudsman"; but cap for specifics, as in the Local Government Ombudsman, the Legal Services Ombudsman, and even the unofficial title of Parliamentary Ombudsman (the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration).

omega-3, omega-6 etc, l/c and hyphen, for fatty acids.

omelette

on behalf of is a frequently misused phrase. It means *in the interest of* (a person etc) or *representative of* (**eg**, "acting on behalf of his client" is correct). It must not be used as a verbose way of saying *by*; **eg**, "the book betrays a lack of understanding on behalf of the author" is wrong.

one use the singular verb in structures such as "one in three says that ..." *See nearly*. In first-person pieces, try to avoid the use of one as a synonym of *1*.

one member, one vote (no hyphens).

oneself one word (**not** *one's self*).

one-time do not use as synonym of *former* as in "one-time chairman" etc.

ongoing avoid this ugly adjective; say *continuing*, or *continual* if anything is necessary.

online one word in computer context.

only take great care to place only before the word or phrase it qualifies; "she only touched the key, but did not press it" is wrong; "she touched only the key, not the switch" is correct: Similarly, "he only played cricket" is wrong; "he played only cricket" is correct.

on to unlike **into**, two words invariably better than one, as in "she moved on to better things", though "he collapsed onto the floor" is just acceptable. As a general rule, try to stem the advance of **onto**.

Opec, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. It has thirteen member states; **African**; Angola (January 1, 2007), Libya (December 1962), Nigeria (July 1971) Algeria (1969): **Middle East**; Iran (September 1960), Iraq (September 1960) (Excluded from Opec production quotas since 1998), Kuwait (September, 1960), Qatar (December 1961), Saudi Arabia (September 1960), United Arab Emirates

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(November 1967): **South America**; Ecuador (1963–1993, since 2007), Venezuela (September 1960); **Southeast Asia**; Indonesia (December 1962; *Note*: membership is under review as Indonesia is no longer considered a net oil exporter by Opec): Former Members; Gabon (full member from 1975 to 1995) **Prospective Members**; Bolivia, Mexico, Sudan and Syria have been invited by Opec to join.

Opec Quotas and Production in thousands of barrels per day as a guide. Current as of January 2007

Country	Quota (7/1/05)	Production	Capacity (1/07)
Algeria	894	1,360	1,430
Angola	N/A	1,490	1,490
Indonesia	1,451	860	860
Iran	4,110	3,700	3,750
Iraq	1,481		
Kuwait	2,247	2,500	2,600
Libya	1,500	1,650	1,700
Nigeria	2,306	2,250	2,250
Qatar	726	810	850
Saudi Arabia	10,099	8,800	10,500
United Arab Emirates	2,444	2,500	2,600
Venezuela	3,223	2,340	2,450
Total	28,000	31,981	32,230

opencast mining

open-heart surgery; **open-door** policy (if this overworked phrase has to be used); **open-plan** living room.

"**open skies**" (l/c, quotes at first mention only), international airline bilateral access agreements.

operations. *See medical terms.*

opossum an American marsupial but **possum** an Australian marsupial.

ophthalmologist, ophthalmic etc. (**not ophthalmic**).

Opposition, the same cap or l/c rules apply as to Government - cap as a noun but generally l/c as adjective; **eg**, "He accused the Opposition of lying", but "He said it was an opposition lie".

oppress means to *persecute* or *tyrannize* and is more negative than **repress**, which means to *restrain* or *subordinate*.

or need not be preceded by *either*, though it is strengthened thereby if two options are mentioned. Usually avoid a comma before it

oral must not be confused with **verbal**; it means pertaining to the *mouth*, often in the spoken context (**eg**, the oral tradition, by word of mouth); **verbal** means pertaining to *words* (contrasted with, **eg**, physical or choral). Take care. *See verbal.*

organic food never say that organic farmers use no chemicals; they frequently use a limited range.

ordinals *See numbers.*

Ordnance Survey, and **ordnance** in military contexts; *but* **ordinance** as in regulations.

Orient, the wherever possible, say **the East**. The adjective is **oriental**, (l/c).

orientate, orientation prefer this to *orient, oriented* etc. *See disorientate.*

Orkney or the Orkney Islands, (**not** the *Orkneys*) *See Shetland*.

Oscar Award(s) or **the Oscars** caps, as they are registered trademarks. *See arts awards*.

OSCE the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

ought / should both express a sense of duty, but *ought* is stronger. Unlike *should*, *ought* requires a fully expressed infinitive, even in the negative (you ought not to see the movie).

Ouija (board) takes the cap as it is proprietary.

Outback, the (in Australia).

outdoor (adjective); *but* the **outdoors**.

outed, outing take care with these terms: if we say, for example, that a **paedophile** was **outed**, we are equating him with a gay person being **outed**; use *exposed* or *revealed* instead.

outgrow, outgun, outmanoeuvre, outpatients, inpatients (no hyphen).

OutRage! the homosexual “outing” group.

outside (**never** say *outside of*).

-out suffixes in nouns, generally join up rather than hyphenate, as in **fallout, knockout, printout, callout, dropout, bailout** etc. (*but* to **fall out** etc).

Outward Bound must be used **only** when referring specifically to the work or courses of the Outward Bound Trust Ltd, and never in general use in phrases such as outward bound-style activities. Use alternatives such as *outdoor pursuits, adventure training, outdoor adventure courses* etc. Outward Bound's lawyers pounce on every perceived infringement of its service mark. Take care.

over do not use as a synonym of “*more than*” when followed by a number, **eg**, “she waited over four hours for the train” should be “... more than four hours ...”; “there were over 60 victims” should be “... more than 60 ...”. *See more than*.

over as prefix wherever the word does not look too ugly, dispense with the hyphen, even when this leads to a double “r” in the middle; thus, **overcapacity, overestimate, overreact, override, overrule, overuse, overvalue**; an obvious exception where the hyphen is essential is **over-age**.

overall one word as adjective, but use sparingly.

overly do not use as an alternative for “*over*” or “*too*”.

owing to *See due to*.

Oxford comma a comma before the final “**and**” in lists: straightforward ones (he ate ham, eggs and chips) do not need one, but sometimes it can help the reader (he ate cereal, kippers, bacon, eggs, toast and marmalade, and tea).

oxymoron does not just vaguely mean self-contradictory; an oxymoron is a figure of speech in which apparently contradictory terms are used in conjunction, such as *bittersweet, living death, “darkness visible” (Paradise Lost), “the living dead”* etc. Be careful.

oOOo

P-P-P

p's and q's. *See apostrophes.*

Pacific Rim, South Pacific, North Pacific etc.

paedophile, an adult sexually *attracted* to children, but **pederast**, a man who *has* sexual relations with boys. **Do not** confuse.

page 1, page 3, page 187 etc, *but* a **Page 3 Girl**

paintings titles in italic.

Pakistani can be used both for the people of Pakistan and adjectivally, **eg**, Pakistani culture.

pair singular, **pairs** plural.

palace cap in full names, such as Blenheim Palace, thereafter “the palace” — except that “**the Palace**” is to be used for Buckingham Palace in stories about royalty. *See Royal Family.*

palaeo- (not *paleo-*), so **palaeography** etc.

palaeontology concerns the study of *fossils* and must not be confused with **archaeology**, which concerns *human* cultural remains.

Palestinian National Authority (not *Palestine*) — usually the **Palestinian Authority** will suffice; but the **Palestine Liberation Organisation** (the **PLO**).

Palme d'Or top prize at the Cannes Film Festival.

palmtop (computers etc).

pandemic a disease that is prevalent over a large area, such as a nation or continent, or the entire world (the 1919 flu pandemic, the 2009 H1N1 “swine flu” pandemic). Pandemics are rated on a scale of one to five by the WHO. *See epidemic / endemic / pandemic; WHO*

Pandora's box

pantyhose or **tights** – **not** to be used as a synonym for stockings.

paparazzo singular, **paparazzi plural**; named after a character in Fellini’s 1960 film *La Dolce Vita*.

paperboy, papergirl

papier-mâché (note accents).

pappadam (not *poppadam, poppadum*)

parade troops *march* through the streets; they **do not** *parade*.

paraffin *See kerosene.*

paralleled

parameters pretentious when it is used in nontechnical contexts. Stick to *boundaries, limits, guidelines, grounds, elements*, or some other word.

paraphernalia (not *paraphanalia*).

paratroops a general term for troops dropped by parachute; a **parachutist** is a specialist in the activity. *Note, The Parachute Regiment* in England.

Pardo Palace is a royal palace on the outskirts of **Madrid**; the Madrid art gallery is the **Prado**.

Paris some of the more familiar placenames prone to error are the **Champs Elysées**, the **Elysée Palace**, the **Quai d'Orsay**, the **Jardin du Luxembourg** (not *de*), the **Jardin des Tuileries** (not *de*) and the **Jeu de Paume** (not *Pomme*).

Parker Bowles, Camilla (no hyphen).

Parkinson's disease

Parkinson's law "Work expands so as to fill the time available for its completion".

Parliament cap when the word forms part of the institution, **eg**, the **European Parliament**, **Canadian Parliament**, the **British Parliament**, the **Australian Parliament**. However, l/c in such as:
the **Spanish** parliament (the **Cortes** - a plural form in Spanish but used as a singular in English);
the **Russian** parliament (**Duma**);
the **Israeli** parliament (**Knesset**);
the **Polish** parliament (**Sejm**);
the **Mexican** parliament (the **Cámara de Diputados**);
the **German** parliament (**Bundestag**), the **German** upper house (**Bundesrat**), Imperial Germany (the **Reichstag**);
the **Indonesian** parliament (the **Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat** (DPR) or House of Representatives and the **Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat** (MPR) or People's Consultative Assembly, etc; and l/c when it is only a mooted body, such as the English parliament.

Also, l/c **parliamentary**, even in parliamentary private secretary because there are many of them; but note **Parliamentary Labour Party**, of which there is one, and similarly **Parliamentary Ombudsman**. *See ombudsman; politics.*

partake in is to *participate* in. To **partake of** is either to *get a part of* (partake of the banquet) or to have a quality, at least to some extent (this assault partakes of revenge).

Parthenon marbles official name, recognised by both Britain and Greece, for the **Elgin marbles**.

partially / partly partially is of *degree*, **eg**, "partially deaf", "partially eaten"; **partly** is of *extension*, **eg**, partly under water.

participles beware the grammar trap of the disconnected (or unrelated) participle; **eg**, "Judging by the lingering camera shots, X's luck was not about to change" is **wrong** — the present participle *judging* has to have a following noun or pronoun in agreement (in other words, X's luck is not doing the judging). So the sentence has to be rephrased, as "Judging by the lingering camera shots, I saw that X's luck ...", or "To judge from the lingering camera shots, X's luck ...".

parties (political) Labour Party, Conservative Party, or any other party, with cap; also overseas, such as Republican Party, Democratic Party (though usually Republicans and Democrats will suffice).

part-time, part-timer (hyphens).

partygoer *See -goer.*

Pashtuns make up about 40% of the Afghan population (called **Pathans** during the British Raj); singular **Pashtun**; they speak **Pashtu**.

passerby singular, **passersby** plural.

passive voice strive for active verbs: compare "the mat was sat upon by the cat" with "the cat sat on the mat".

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password

past use rather than *last* in such phrases as “the past two weeks”. *See last.*

pastime

pasteurise *but* **Pasteur**

pâté *See accents*

patients are **discharged** from hospital, **prisoners** are **released**.

Patriarch Aleksiy II (not *Aleksei*), head of the Russian Orthodox Church.

PAYE (caps for pay as you earn).

payback, payday, payout, payoff (no hyphens).

peaceable a peaceable person or nation is inclined to avoid argument or violent conflict (peaceable country, the mainly peaceable daily protests). A **peaceful** person, place, or event is *serene, tranquil, or calm* (a peaceful day free from protests).

Peace Implementation Council in the former Yugoslavia.

peacekeeping, peacemaking etc. (no hyphens).

peak / peek / pique a **peak** is an *apex*, a **peek** is a *quick or illicit glance*, and a fit of **pique** is an episode of *peevishness* and *wounded vanity*. To **pique** is to *annoy or arouse*: an article piques (**not peaks**) one’s interest.

peal of *bells*, **peel** of an *orange* etc.

Pearl Harbor (not *Harbour*).

pedal as in *bicycle*; **peddle** as in *selling* drugs or advocating ideas. Thus a **pedaller** is someone who pedals a bike; a **pedlar** is the (often shady) small trader; and a drug-pusher is a **peddler**.

pedalo (not *pedallo*), plural **pedalos**.

peers a **peer** or a **peeress** has a seat in the House of Lords. A female life peer is a **peeress** usually referred to as Baroness Smith etc. After the first mention of the Marquess of Paddington.

Earl of Euston, Viscount Pimlico or Lord Holborn, call them all Lord Paddington, Lord Euston etc. *See titles.*

pejorative expressing *contempt* or *disapproval* (**not perjorative**).

Peking only in phrases such as **Peking duck** or **Peking man**. The city is **Beijing**. *Note pekinese* dogs. *See Chinese names.*

peloton the main group of cyclists in a race.

pendant adjective **pendent**

peninsula (**never peninsular**) when used as a noun; **peninsular** is the adjective, as in the **Peninsular War**.

pendant is an item of dangling *jewellery*, especially one worn around the neck. What is **pendent** is *hanging* or *suspended*.

penknife (no hyphen).

pension funds (not *pensions funds*, as plural).

pensioners take care with this word. Some readers take exception to ambiguous usage, so it should strictly be confined to people drawing their state pension (men at 65, women at 60). If in doubt, write **the elderly** or **older people**, or as a last resort, **senior citizen**. See *elderly*.

penultimate means *the next to last*. It is **not** a fancy equivalent of *ultimate*.

people use rather than *persons* wherever appropriate; exceptions would be “the law is no respecter of persons” or the ubiquitous **missing persons**. Take care with the apostrophe: remember that **people** is a plural, so the normal use is apostrophe “s”, **eg**, “it is the **people's** wish”; very occasionally, **peoples** in the sense of races can take an “s” apostrophe, **eg**, “the African **peoples'** common heritage”.

people-trafficking hyphenate noun and adjective.

Pepsi-Cola (hyphen, as **Coca-Cola**).

per try to avoid in phrases such as “six times per year”; “six times a year” is better. If you must use it, the Latin preposition is followed by another Latin word, **eg**, *per capita*, **not** *per head*.

per cent always takes figures rather than the word, **eg**, 3 per cent, **not** three per cent. Usually use decimals rather than fractions (3.25 per cent **not** $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent). Use % sign in headlines, **never** *pc*, and spell out *per cent* in text. See *percentage points*.

percentage / proportion do not use as a synonym of *part* or *many* if that is all they mean in a sentence; **eg**, instead of “a large percentage of parents objected” say “many parents objected”.

percentage points take care. If the mortgage rate rises from 8 per cent to 10 per cent, it does **not** rise by 2 per cent, but by two *percentage points* (or points). Similarly if a political party's support drops from 50 per cent to 40 per cent in an opinion poll, it has lost 10 percentage points or 20 per cent of its support. Likewise if support increases from 40 per cent to 50 per cent it has gained 25 per cent. **To calculate subtract the old value from the new one and then divide by the old values.**

perestroika (not italics).

performance-related pay

Performing Right Society (not *Rights*).

period of time / time period Avoid these phrases. Try *period* or *time* instead.

Permanent Secretary when specific, *l/c* when general reference.

permissible (not *-able*).

perpetuate / perpetrate to **perpetuate** something is to *sustain* it or *prolong* it indefinitely (perpetuate the myth): To **perpetrate** is to *commit* or *perform* an act, **eg**, perpetrate a crime.

Persia use **Iran** for the modern state, and **never** *Persian Gulf* except in historical context. See *Gulf*.

personally three points to note.

First, use this word only when someone does something that would normally be done through an agent (the Prime Minister personally signed the Bill), or to limit other considerations (Jean was affected by the decision but was not personally involved in it).

Second, personally is redundant when combined with an activity that necessarily requires the persons presence (the minister personally shook hands with the constituents).

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Third, personally shouldn't appear with "I" when stating an opinion; it weakens the statement and doesn't reduce the speaker's liability for the opinion. The only exception arises if a person is required to advance someone else's view but holds a different personal opinion (the minister said he voted to lower taxes because of pressure from his constituents, but said he personally believed that taxes should have been increased).

personnel prefer **people** or **employees** or **workers** wherever possible.

Perspex (proprietary, cap).

persuade is associated with *actions* (persuade him to buy a suit). The phrase "persuade to" (do) has traditionally been considered better than *convince to* (do). But either verb will take a "that" clause (the committee was persuaded that an all-night session was necessary: my three-year-old is convinced that Santa Claus exists). *See convince*.

peshmerga Kurdish opposition fighters.

Pet Rocks, (proprietary, cap) a 1975 fad started by Californian salesman Gary Dahl.

petfood (no hyphen); similarly, **catfood**, **dogfood**

petrol bomb (not *Molotov cocktail*).

phalangist (in Lebanon). *See falangist*.

Pharaoh (not *-oah*), **pharaonic** (adjective l/c).

Pharisee a member of an ancient Jewish sect, distinguished by strict observance of the traditional and written law and commonly held to have pretensions to superior sanctity; Colloquially a self-righteous person; a hypocrite *but pharisaic, pharisaical*.

phase (usually in or out) is to *schedule* or *perform* a plan, task, or the like in stages, **eg**, phase in new procedures, phase out the product lines that don't sell. *See faze*.

phenomenon, plural **phenomena**: *beware* the use of **phenomenal** a cliché meaning *remarkable* or *big*.

Philippines, the, inhabited by **Filipinos** (male) and **Filipinas** (female); adjective **Filipino** for both sexes, but **Philippine** for, say, a Philippine island or the Philippine president.

Philips, the Dutch electronics company (proprietary, cap) but **Phillips** screwdriver.

philistine a person who is hostile or indifferent to culture and the arts.

Phnom Penh

phoney (not *phony*).

phosphorus (noun), but **phosphorous**, **phosphoric** (adjectives); **phosphorescence**

photo-finish, *but photo call* (two words); likewise, **photo opportunity**

photocopy not *Photostat* or *Xerox* (the latter are trade names).

photofit (l/c), but **Identikit** (proprietary cap).

pidgin English (not *pigeon*).

piecemeal, **piecework**

pigeonhole(d) (no hyphen).

pigheaded but **pigsty** singular and **pigsties** plural.

Piggott, Lester (jockey).

Pilates the exercise method takes a capital.

pilgrims are l/c, but the **Pilgrim Fathers**; note *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

Pill, the (contraceptive), but **morning-after pill** (l/c).

Pimm's (the drink).

PIN (not *Pin*), personal identification number. **Do not** write *PIN number*, which is a tautology.

pinstripes, pinstriped

pipebomb

pique to pique is to *annoy* or *arouse*: an article piques (**not peaks**) one's interest. See *peak / peek / pique*.

pitbull (terrier).

pitiable worthy of *pity*: **pitiful** to be *contemptible*.

pitstop (motor racing).

pizzazz

PKK, the Kurdish Workers' Party (**not Kurdistan ...**).

plane, on a higher (**not plain**).

planes always prefer **aircraft** or **jets** (where applicable). Avoid *airplanes*. See *aircraft*.

plaster of paris

plateau singular, **plateaux** plural

plateglass

playbill, playgoer, playwright

playing the race card an overused phrase.

Play-Doh (proprietary, cap).

play down to be preferred to *downplay*.

play-off

plays titles in italics.

PlayStation (proprietary, cap).

plc (all l/c) can usually be dropped from company names. See *Ltd*.

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pleaded is the standard past-tense and past-participial form (he pleaded guilty, they pleaded with the kidnappers). Avoid *pled*.

plurals make corporate bodies and institutions singular unless this looks odd. Thus “The National Trust is...”, but sports teams are plural, **eg**, “Arsenal were worth their 8-0 lead”. Whether singular or plural, always maintain consistency within a story.

plus / minus do not use as variants of *and* or *without*. *Note*, **pluses** and **minuses**
pocketbook, pocketknife

Poe, Edgar Allan

point-to-point

poetess avoid (say **poet**)

poet laureate (l/c unless a persons title); plural is **poets laureate**

Pokemon (no accents).

Polaroid (proprietary, cap).

pole l/c for an end of the Earth, and, adjectivally, **polar** (**polar regions**) ; but the **North Pole**, the **North Polar ice cap**, the **South Pole**; also the **magnetic North Pole**, the geographical **North Pole**.

Polgar, Judit *See chess names.*

police forces cap the word *Police* when it is part of the full name of the force, **eg** the Metropolitan Police, the Victorian Police, the Australian Federal Police. More commonly, say Cambridgeshire police, Box Hill police etc.

policemen take care with this word. Certain senior officers, men and women, regularly chide us for using **policemen** when we mean **police officers** or **police constable**. If in doubt, use the latter or just **police**.

police ranks wherever possible outside lists, avoid the inelegant abbreviated forms such as *Det Con, Det Chief Insp*. Spell out, even if inconvenient sometimes. Use **constable** or **police** for members if the rank is not known. PC is acceptable in headlines. Compound titles do not take hyphens in the police force. Detective Sergeant, Chief Inspector etc.

policyholder, policymaker, but policy document

Politburo (usually cap).

politics treat as singular when talking of the form or process of government; plural when meaning a particular set of principles, ideas etc. **eg**, "Politics is a popular subject at many universities"; "What are your politics?".

polo-neck shirt (adjectival) *but* **poloneck** when used as noun.

Pontifex Maximus, the Holy Roman Pontiff (cap) *See Pope.*

Pope, not usually necessary to give his full name, **eg**, Pope John Paul II (unless several popes are mentioned in a story), but always cap when used specifically. Benedict XVI succeeded John Paul II on 19 April 2005. Born Joseph Ratzinger, he was raised in Bavaria and entered seminary in 1939. *Note* **papacy, pontiff** (l/c). A new pope is elected by secret ballot of eligible **cardinals** at a **papal conclave** and requires a two-thirds majority of votes. Four ballots are held each day, two in the morning and two in the evening, until a result is obtained.

populist should **not** be confused with, or used as a synonym of, *popular*; it means supporting the interest of ordinary people, or pandering to mass public taste.

pore to **pore** over something written is to read it intently. **Do not** confuse with *pour*.

Portakabin, Portaloo (proprietary, cap).

portland cement, portland stone

possessives do **not** use inelegant "geographic possessives" such as London's East End, Colorado's Breckenridge ski resort: write the East End of London, Breckenridge, the Colorado ski resort. Similarly, **do not** use the possessive in phrases such as BBC One's *Panorama programme*: write the BBC One *Panorama programme*, or simply *Panorama* on BBC One.

To make something that is singular into a possessive, add 's'; to make something plural into a possessive, first make sure it is plural, usually by verifying that it ends in an "s", and then add an apostrophe. Here's a nonsense sentence that illustrates the idea: One dog's bone is worth two dogs' ears.

possibly like most qualifiers, this word can (usually) be omitted.

postcode (no hyphen)

postgraduate, undergraduate (noun and adjective both one word, l/c).

Post-it Notes (proprietary, cap P and N).

Post-Modern (caps, hyphen) when used to describe a style of art; **postmodern** to describe an attitude to life. *See artistic movements.*

post mortem wherever possible write *post-mortem examination* in reports, though **post mortem** is acceptable nowadays in headlines.

Post Office cap for the Post Office *but* l/c **post office** for the branches, sub-post office.

postwar, prewar (adjectives, commonly referring to the Second World War). Do not use adverbially (as in "there were a million unemployed prewar").

potatoes (plural, as **tomatoes**)

pothole (as in caving or road surfaces), **potholer**

pound / dollar / Euro / Yen do **not** use £, \$ €,¥ by themselves, except in headlines.

PoW (prisoner of war); plural **PoWs**

Powell, General Colin (keep the General despite his civilian political status).

PPE the university degree is philosophy, politics and economics (**not** *politics, philosophy* etc).

practical / practicable / possible do **not** confuse. **Practical** means adapted to actual conditions or (of a person) able to make things function well. It can be done; **practicable** means capable of being effected or accomplished; **possible** means might be capable of happening or being done, but there is some doubt.

practice (noun); **practise** (verb). It is an inexcusable **practice** for sub-editors to confuse the two; writers should **practise** getting it right.

Prado gallery, Madrid. *See Pardo*

praying mantis (**not** *preying*).

praesidium (**not** *presidium*).

prearrange

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Pre-Budget Report (initial caps).

pre-Columbian before Columbus.

precipitate occurs *suddenly* or *rashly*; it describes demands, actions, or movements: **precipitous** is *dangerously steep*; it describes cliffs and inclines.

precondition try *condition* or *prerequisite* instead.

predilection (not *predeliction*).

predominant / predominate like *dominant*, **predominant** is an adjective (a predominant point of view). Like *dominate*, **predominate** is a verb (grape growers predominate in the south).

pre-empt, pre-eminent *but* **prefab, prefabricated**

prefixes such as **super, mega, multi, eco, over, under, micro, mini** rarely need a hyphen: **supersize; megarich; multifaceted** (*but* exceptions when two vowels fall together: **multi-ethnic, ecofriendly, ecowarrior; overrule, oversensitive, overuse** (exception is **over-age, underperforming, underreact** (exception **under-age**); **macroeconomic; microskirt; miniskirt**. See *multi: over as a prefix*.

pregnant avoid the infelicitous phrase "she fell pregnant".

prejudice is a perfectly normal English noun to denote an all too common trait, and **prejudiced** is an unobjectionable adjective. However the verb *to prejudice* is a legalism. For a plain English equivalent, use *harm* or *hurt*.

Premier do **not** use in text as a synonym of **Prime Minister**, though very occasionally its use in the headline may be permitted. Generally, confine the word to heads of government of the Canadian provinces or Australian states, when it should take a cap. **Premiership** is preferable to *prime-ministership*. Note that the Chinese traditionally give their head of government the title of *premier*, **eg, Premier Wen Jiabao** (Mr Wen on second mention).

premiere of a *play, ballet* etc. (no accent).

Premiership (football) refer to the Barclaycard Premiership at first mention, "the Premiership" thereafter, for the top division in English football; the organisation that runs it is the **FA Premier League**. Take care not to confuse the competition and the organisation.

premise is an *assumption* in an argument; **premises** (property) take the plural verb, **eg**, "the premises are well positioned".

Premium Bonds (caps).

prepositional verbs avoid wherever possible. Examples such as *measure up to, get on with* are acceptable on the odd occasion. Others such as *consult with, meet with* (where the preposition is tautologous) are hideous and must **never** be used. *appeal against, protest against/over/at*, **not** "appealed the sentence"; "protested the verdict" etc.

Presbyterian beware, especially with the adjective Scots. See *Church*.

prescribe / proscribe to prescribe is to *appoint* or *dictate* a rule or course of action (John Howard prescribed the order of succession after his planned retirement) or to *specify* a medical remedy (the doctor prescribed antibiotics); To **proscribe** something is to *prohibit* it. See *proscribe*.

present / presently better than *current* but often redundant: **presently** means *soon*, **not** *at present*.

President (of any country, also **President of the European Commission**), cap at first and all subsequent mentions when used as a variation for a specific person, **eg**, "George W. Bush said that ... the President said that ... "; "Richard Nixon was the President until 1974". Lower case when using

president more generally, **eg**, "Richard Nixon was the 37th president of the United States". Also *l/c* presidency (as in the French presidency of the EU), and *note* that presidents of companies or organisations take *l/c*.

press always *l/c* and singular.

pressurised use **pressured**, put *pressure on*, or *pressed*, to mean apply pressure.

prestigious try to avoid this much-overworked word and find an appropriate substitute such as *highly regarded, admired, eminent, esteemed, leading, noted, outstanding, powerful* etc.

presume implies a basis in evidence or on the basis of probability. If not contradicted, a presumption may support a decision (the legal presumption of innocence; The Tasmanian tiger is presumed to be extinct). *See assume / presume.*

preteen (no hyphen).

pretension but **pretentious**

prevaricate must **not** be confused with **procrastinate**. The first means *to speak or act evasively*; the second to *defer* action, to be *dilatory*.

preventive (**not** *preventative*).

previous to change to **before**

PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC for short), the merged accountants.

prima donna plural **prima donnas**

prima facie (roman *l/c*) means based on the first impression.

prime meridian (*l/c*).

Prime Minister cap for every country, but only in reference to a specific person, **eg**, "Tony Blair said that ... the Prime Minister said that ... "; "Margaret Thatcher was the Prime Minister from 1979 to 1990". Thus lower case when using prime minister more generally, **eg**, "Being prime minister has affected many men's health"; "This is a prime minister with much still to prove". Similar capitalisation and lower-case rulings for **President/president** when referring to a head of government. **Never** use *Premier* as a substitute for **Prime Minister**. Use *PM* sparingly in headlines. *See Premier, President.*

primeval resembling the earliest ages in the history of the world unless referred to feelings and emotions in which case it means based on *primitive instinct, raw* and *elementary*.

Prince avoid the familiar forms of Prince Charles and Prince Philip until they have been given their full designation of the **Prince of Wales** and the **Duke of Edinburgh**; even then, prefer "the Prince" and "the Duke" at subsequent mentions. **Prince William** at first mention, thereafter simply **William** (or for variation **the Prince**, if not ambiguous); similarly, **Prince Harry** at first mention, thereafter simply **Harry**.

Princess of Wales. *See Diana, Princess of Wales.*

principal (noun or adjective) means *chief, main, important, head* etc; **eg**, the **principal** of a college, or the team's **principal** objective. It must **never** be confused with **principle**, which is a noun meaning *concept, ideal, rule, moral* etc; **eg**, her Christian principles.

Principality, the, cap in Welsh or Monaco context.

printout

prior to avoid wherever possible; use **before** or **until**.

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prise apart (not *prize*).

Prison Service (caps); **Prisons Board** (caps and note “s”); **Director-General of the Prison Service** (caps); **Chief Inspector of Prisons** (caps).

private sector, **public sector** do not use hyphens even when employed adjectivally, **eg**, public sector pay (as high street shopping).

privatised industries

Privy Council, *but* **Privy Counsellors** (not *Councillors*).

prize-money (use hyphen)

prizewinner (one word); a Nobel prizewinner (unspecific Nobel award), but winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature (a specific award); also, a Nobel prize-winning novel. *See Nobel.*

pro-democracy

probe use only in a scientific, medical or space context. **Never** to be used as *inquiry*, even in headlines.

problem be sparing with use of this overworked word.

process of, (**in the**) you can almost always delete this phrase without affecting the meaning.

procrastinate means to *defer* action, to *be dilatory*. *See prevaricate.*

Procter & Gamble (-er and ampersand).

profanities. *See obscenities, four-letter words.*

Professor of History, Psychology etc. (cap when given as specific designation after a name); thereafter, the professor or Professor X.

proffer, **proffered** (not *profer*, *proffered*).

profits, especially in business stories, should always state the basis of the figure (pre-tax, operating etc).

program (computers); **programme** (the arts etc).

prohibition l/c for US prohibition.

pro-life beware this contentious phrase for the anti-abortion lobby (especially in US context); use the phrase **anti-abortion** wherever possible, but when “pro-life” is unavoidable always quote it.

prone means lying *face-down*; **supine**, *face-up*.

proofread, **proofreader**, **proofreading**

propaganda singular noun (propaganda was everywhere); **propagandas** plural. It means information, chiefly of a *biased* or *misleading* nature used to promote or publicise a particular political cause or point of view.

propeller (not *-or*)

prophets, **apostles**, **saints** and other revered persons are capitalised as in the **Buddha**; the **prophet Isaiah**; **Jesus (Christ)**, the **Good Shepherd**, the **Son of man**; **John the Baptist**; the **Messiah**; **Muhammad** (the **Prophet**); **Saint John** (the **Beloved Apostle**); the **Virgin Mary** (the

Blessed Virgin, Mother of God), the **Apostles**, but l/c for general terms such as the **patriarchs**, the **psalmist**.

prophecy (noun) “their prophecies did not materialise”; **prophesy** (verb) “the leader of the cult prophesied the end of the world. *Prophesise (-ize)* is wrong.

proportion *See percentage.*

pros and cons

proscribe means to *prohibit* (legislation that proscribes drinking while driving). *See prescribe.*

protagonist means a *supporter* (of either side) in a debate or quarrel; it **does not** mean *advocate* or *proponent*.

protégé male. If female **protégée**

protester (**never** *-or*); but see demonstrator. Note a **protester** *protests*, a **demonstrator** shows how something works **ie** gives a *demonstration*. People **protest against, over or about** not, for example, “protest the election result”.

Protestant beware of using for all Christians who are not Roman Catholic.

proven / not proven is **not** the normal past tense of prove. It is a legal verdict. In general use, prefer **proved** to *proven*.

provided that (**not** *providing that*)

provinces, provincial take great care using these words. Many regard them as patronising; use **regions** or **regional** wherever possible.

prurient means having an *unhealthy obsession* with sex; it does **not** mean **puritanical** which means affecting strict religious or moral behaviour while a **puritan** is a person with *ensorious moral beliefs*, especially about pleasure or sex.

public house, pub is fully acceptable in text or headlines.

publicly (**never** *publically*).

public sector *See private sector.*

Puffa jacket (proprietary, cap P); use **padded** or **quilted** jacket as the generic.

Pulitzer prizes. *See Nobel for when to cap.*

pullout (noun, one word); **but** to **pull out**

punctuation some important reminders:

a. Commas: keep commas inside quotes in the following type of “broken” sentence: “The trouble is,” he said, “that this is a contentious issue.” Omit the comma before **if, unless, before, since, when** unless the rhythm or sense of the sentence demands it.

b. Dashes: should not be used in place of commas. Too many dashes can be ugly and disruptive.

c. Note that **punctuation marks** go inside the inverted commas if they relate to the words quoted, outside if they relate to the main sentence, **eg**, She is going to classes in “health and beauty”. If the whole sentence is a quotation, the final point goes inside, **eg**, “Beauty is truth, truth beauty.”

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d. Interrogation marks are never used with indirect questions or rhetorical questions, **eg**, “She asked why he did not laugh.”

e. Parentheses () should be used sparingly; try to use commas instead.

f. And and **but**, both **conjunctions**, may occasionally be used at the beginning of a sentence, especially for emphasis.

g. With **ellipses**, use three points with full space after last word, then no spacing between points, then full space before next word; for example, *not only ... but also*; there is no need for a full point “She didn’t want to go there ...”.

h. Square brackets [] use to insert information left out of quoted text where the meaning might be unclear, **eg**, He said, “I have no intention of appointing him [Paul Brown] to the bench.”

pundit a self-appointed expert.

puns are an enjoyable device for headline writers. Restrict their use to funny or light stories or features and if in doubt, avoid; but if irresistible, make sure they are in good taste.

purchase as a noun, perhaps, but use **buy** as a verb.

Puritan do **not** use the word for the 16th/17th-century religious group as a contemporary adjective; **puritanical** is just permitted but use sparingly.

purposely is done *intentionally*, or *on purpose*: What is done **purposefully** is done with a certain goal in mind. An action may be done purposely without any particular interest in a specific result—that is, **not** purposefully.

putsch, a military seizure of power, as in **coup**.

pygmy, pygmies

pyjamas

Pyramids the three main Pyramids at Giza (including the Great Pyramid) should be capped. But there are many other pyramids (l/c) throughout Egypt.

Pyrenees no need for accents unless referring specifically to the French département.

pyrrhic (as with victory), l/c, a victory won at too greater cost to be worthwhile to the victor.

oOOo

Q-Q-Q

Qantas (not *Quantas*).

qat rather than *kat* or *khat*, the hypnotic drug.

, **QC, MP**, commas each side when used after name.

QE2 normally spell out *Queen Elizabeth 2* at first mention, thereafter **QE2** or simply the ship. **Do not** describe her as a liner (say *cruise ship*). See *liner*.

Qom (not *Qum*) Iranian city.

quadriplegia, quadriplegic (not *quadra-*).

quality press prefer **broadsheet**.

quango (short for quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisation), no need to spell out or to quote.

quantum leap avoid this cliché wherever possible.

Quebeckers rather than *Québécois*.

Queen, the, note the Queen's Speech (to Parliament), caps; also the Queen's Birthday Honours. *Note, the Queen* is not "introduced" to people; people are introduced, or (even more correctly) *presented*, to **the Queen**. if it is necessary to say so, she is **Her Majesty** or **HM**, **never HRH**.

Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother (no commas); at first mention now write **the late Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother**, thereafter **the Queen Mother**.

Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London (not **QE2** or any other variant).

Queens, New York

Queensberry, Marquess of, and **Queensberry Rules** (not *Marquess of*).

queueing (with middle "e").

questionnaire

Question Time, Prime Minister's Questions (caps), but questions (I/c) to the **Prime Minister, Foreign Secretary** etc.

quicker never use as an adverb — always say **more quickly**. Quicker must be confined to adjectival comparison, **eg**, "he started at a quicker pace".

quicklime, quicksand, quicksilver

quid pro quo (not italic).

quixotic exceedingly *idealistic; unrealistic and impractical*.

quiz a suspect is **questioned**, **not quizzed** (may be used sparingly in headlines).

quiz show, as **chat show, game show, talk show** etc. (no hyphen).

quokka a small, short-tailed wallaby with some tree climbing ability native to Western Australia.

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quotation marks (inverted commas ‘ ’ : “ ”) remember, **single quotes in headlines, straps and standfirsts; double quotes in captions.** The only other use for single inverted commas is quotations within quotations, **eg**, “Mary said, ‘Your style guide needs updating,’ and I said, ‘I agree.’”.

Avoid inverted commas in sentences where they are clearly unnecessary, **eg**, He described the attack as “outrageous”. Quotation marks are not to be used for works of art. *See inverted commas, italics. See also punctuation* (paragraph c) for when punctuation goes inside or outside quotation marks.

quotes direct quotes should be corrected only to remove the solecisms and other errors that occur in speech but look silly in print. Always take care that quotes are correctly attributed; and especially that literary or biblical quotations are 100 per cent accurate.

Introduce the speaker from the beginning, or after the first sentence: it is confusing and frustrating to read several sentences or even paragraphs of a quote before finding out who is saying it.

Qur’an, the the holy book of Islam (**not** *Koran*); regarded as the word of God, having been dictated **by** (**not to**) the prophet Muhammad, so in the eyes of Muslims it is wrong to suggest the prophet “wrote” the Qur’an.

oOOo

R-R-R

race references to race should be used only when relevant to the sense of the story. The word is often better replaced by *people, nation, group* etc.

Do not use ethnic to mean black or Asian people. In a British, Australian, American, Canadian etc. sense, they are an ethnic minority; in a world sense, of course, white people are an ethnic minority.

Just as in the Balkans or anywhere else, internal African peoples should, where possible, be called **ethnic groups** or **communities** rather than “tribes”.

Avoid the word “immigrant”, which is very offensive to many black and Asian people, because it is often incorrectly used to describe people who were born in Britain, Australia, America, Canada etc.

racecourse, racehorse, racetrack.

racked by *doubts, pain* etc; (**not** *wracked*) Similarly **rack and ruin** (no hyphen).

racket for tennis (**not** *racquet*) The game is also **rackets**.

radio compounds are hyphenated in the wireless context (**eg**, radio-telephone); *but* one word when they concern rays (**eg**, radioactive, radioisotope, radiotherapy). *Note* that a **radiographer** *takes* x-rays but a **radiologist** *reads* them.

Broadcasting frequencies are measured in **megahertz** (MHz) and **kilohertz** (kHz).

radio ham this term should strictly be applied only to licensed amateur radio operators, who are offended when it is used to apply to unlicensed “eavesdroppers” spying on private phone calls etc. Take care.

Radio 1, 2, Radio 5 Live; Classic FM etc. But with foreign stations, usually *l/c*, **eg**, Israel radio, Haiti radio, Moscow radio, Singapore radio etc; cap only if we know it is the specific name of the station or organisation.

radius singular, **radii** plural

railway(s) railway station (**not** *railroad*) **Train station** acceptable if necessary but try to avoid.

raincoat, rainfall, rainproof, rainforest (one word).

raison d'être (use italics).

rajah / maharajah take the final “h”.

Ramadan month of fasting from sunrise to sunset for Muslims; the ninth month of the Muslim calendar year.

Range Rover (no hyphen, proprietary, cap) **Do not** use as a synonym for a **four-wheel-drive vehicle**. Use cross-country vehicle etc.

R&B abbreviation for rhythm and blues.

rand the South African unit of currency. Plural **rands**. Write, **eg**, 12.1 billion rands at first mention; subsequently, R2.3 billion etc. *See currencies*.

ranging from overworked and often unnecessary phrase. There must be a scale in which the elements might be ranged: “ranging from 15 to 25 years” is correct, “a crowd ranging from priests to golfers” is not.

Rann of Kutch (prefer to *Kachchh*), area on India-Pakistan border.

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Rapid Reaction Force cap in Nato context as the force already exists, but l/c in European or African army context until it is made official — or not.

rarefy, rarefied (not *rarified*).

rateable

rave acceptable in context as a musical event.

Ray-Ban, Ray-Bans (proprietary, cap).

razzmatazz

re- whenever possible, run the prefix on to the word it qualifies, **eg, readmission, remake, rework**, etc; but there are two main classes of exceptions:

where the word after **re-** begins with an "e", or "u" (not pronounced "yu"), **eg, re-election, re-emerge, re-examine, re-enter, re-urge** etc; Use **re** (no hyphen) when followed by the vowels *a, i, o* or *u* (pronounced as "yu"), or any consonant: **eg, rearm, rearrange, reassemble, reiterate, reorder, reuse, rebuild, reconsider**.

where there could be serious ambiguity in compounds such as **re-creation** (*recreation*), **re-cover** (*recover*), **re-dress** (*redress*), **re-form** (pop groups) **re-sign** (*resign*). See *hyphens*.

reafforestation (not *reforestation*).

rebut means to *argue to the contrary, producing evidence*; to **refute** is to *win* such an argument. Neither should be used as a synonym of *reject* or *deny*, both of which are good, straightforward words. Nor should they be used for *dispute* or *respond* to.

receive "receiving an injury" is to be discouraged, though not banned. Prefer to say *sustained* or *suffered*; and **never** say someone received a broken leg etc. — prefer *suffered a broken leg* or, better still, *broke a leg*. See *injure*.

recent avoid: if the date is relevant, use it.

reckless (as synonym for *rash* or *foolhardy*); (not *wreckless*).

record **never** say "set a new record", "was an all-time record" etc, where both the qualifiers are tautologous.

recrudescence do **not** confuse with *resurgence* or *revival*. It means *worsening*, in the sense of reopening wounds or recurring diseases.

redbrick (university), but a **red-brick** building.

Red Cross full name **International Committee of the Red Cross** (not *for*). Equivalent in Muslim lands is the **Red Crescent**. See *ICRC*.

Red Planet (caps), informal name for Mars.

referendum singular, **referendums** plural, as with **conundrums, stadiums, forums** and most words ending in "-um". But *note* **millennia, strata**.

reference See *allusion / illusion / reference*.

re-form to *form again*, **reform** to *change for the better*; we should not take initiators' use of the word at its face value, particularly in cases where we believe no improvement is likely.

refrain is to *restrain* yourself (or refrain from doing something); it is typically an act of self-discipline.

Other people **restrain** you (if you don't *refrain* from the acting disorderly, the police will restrain you).

refute take care with this word. use this much-abused word only when an argument is disproved; otherwise **contest, deny, rebut**.

regalia plural, of royalty; "royal regalia" is tautologous.

regimen should be restricted to medical contexts, a prescribed course of exercise, way of life, diet etc. **Do not** use as a synonym of *regime* (government or administrative contexts).

Registrar-General

regrettable what is **regrettable** is *unfortunate* or *deplorable*. A person who is **regretful** feels *regret* or *sorrow* for something done or lost. The adverb **regrettably, not regretfully**, is the synonym of *unfortunately*.

reinstate

reject *See rebut*

relatively *See comparatively*.

relegate means to assign *a lesser position* (the pilot was relegated to desk duty pending an investigation) or *to hand over* for decision or execution (the decision was relegated to the human resources branch): To **delegate** is to *authorise* another to act on one's behalf (the Captain delegated command in the field to the Corporals).

religions there are hundreds of organised religions but the following are a few of the larger ones. All take a cap as in **Buddhism** (Buddhist); **Christianity** (Christian); **Confucianism** (Confucian); **Hinduism** (Hindu); **Islam** (Muslim); **Judaism** (Jew: Jewry: Jewish); **Shinto** (Shintoism: Shintoist); **Taoism** (Taoist: Taoistic); *but* **atheism, agnosticism**.

Religious Right (caps) in American politics. *See Right*.

remainder avoid as a synonym of *the rest*.

REME the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (**never Reme**) England; RAEME the Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Australia.

Remembrance Day The services and parades are in *memory* of the dead, **not** in honour of them, and it's not just the casualties of two world wars who are remembered. Other conflicts such as Korea, Vietnam as well as UN peacekeeping missions are included.

Renaissance, the; but *l/c* renaissance as synonym of *revival* or *rebirth*.

renounce is either to *relinquish* or to *reject*. *See denounce*.

reopen

reorganise

repellant noun **repellent** adjective: you fight **repellent** insects with an insect **repellant**.

repertoire an individual's range of skills or roles; **repertory** a selection of works that a theatre or dance company might perform.

replacements in rugby union (**not substitutes**).

report *l/c* in titles of official documents such as "Taylor report". Use **report on** or **inquiry into** but **not report into**, ie **not** "a report into health problems".

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reportedly avoid this slack word, which suggests that the writer is unsure of the source of the material.

reported speech when a comment in the present tense is reported, use past tense: “She said: ‘I like chocolate’” (present tense) becomes in reported speech “she said she liked chocolate” (**not** “she said she likes chocolate”).

When a comment in the past tense is reported, use “had” (past perfect tense): “She said: ‘I ate too much chocolate’” (past tense) becomes in reported speech “she said she had eaten too much chocolate” (**not** “she said she ate too much chocolate”).

Once it has been established who is speaking, there is no need to keep attributing, so long as you stick to the past tense: “Anne said she would vote Labor. There was no alternative. It was the only truly progressive party”, etc.

repress means to *restrain* or *subordinate*. See *oppress*.

Republic of Ireland, or Irish Republic. See *Ireland*.

republican l/c except when in an official name, such as the **Republican Party** or **Republicans** in the US. See *Ireland*.

rerun

research shows... in many cases it does **not**. Like most polls, it merely *indicates, suggests, hints at, implies...* so beware.

resistance, resistance fighters

Resolution cap in context of UN, **eg**, Resolution 688.

respect of avoid “in respect of” whenever possible; **never** say “*in respect to*”.

responsible people bear responsibility, things do **not**. Storms are **not** responsible for damage; they *cause* it. Avoid the phrase “the IRA claimed responsibility for the bombing”; say instead “the IRA admitted causing the bombing”.

restaurateur (**never** *restauranteur*).

restrain See *refrain*.

result in avoid this lazy phrase and always find an alternative, such as *cause, bring, create, evoke, lead to* etc.

reticent Do **not** use as a synonym for *reluctant*. It means *inclined to be silent, reserved, taciturn* (when asked about the incident, the Chief Commissioner became uncharacteristically reticent).

re-use one of the “re-” words where the hyphen is essential as *reuse* is hideous.

Reuters (no longer *Reuter*) for the news agency but ThompsonReuters is the business information arm and parent company.

Reveille, like **Last Post**, is sounded, **not** played.

Revelation, Book of (**not** *Revelations*).

revenge is the infliction of harm on another out of anger or resentment for an injury or harm suffered at their hands, **eg**, the shooter was seeking revenge for an earlier assault. Revenge is much more commonly a noun as in “they didn’t want justice, they wanted revenge). See *avenge / revenge*.

Reverend at first mention, the style is “the Rev Tom Jones”, then Mr Jones. **Never** say “the Rev Jones” or

(even worse) “Rev Jones” (which is as great a solecism as calling Sir Bobby Charlton “Sir Charlton”). A parson and his wife are referred to as “the Rev Tom and Mrs Jones”.

Review takes the cap in names of government programmes, such as Strategic Defence Review, Comprehensive Spending Review etc.

Reykjavik, Iceland

rhinoceroses (plural).

Rhodes scholar / scholarship (l/c s).

Richter scale measures the energy released by an earthquake. It runs from 0 to 8; say “the earthquake measured 6 on the Richter scale”. Since the Richter scale and magnitude measurements are not completely interchangeable, use the scale that is filed in an individual story.

riffle, riffling, as in flicking through a *book, newspaper* etc; **rifling** *ransacking, searching or stealing*. Also the grooves in the barrel of a gun to make a bullet spin and be more accurate.

Right, the, cap in the political context when referring to a group of like-minded individuals, **eg**, “The Right added to John Major’s dilemma on the EU”; but l/c in “the party swung to the right”. When the Right is qualified, generally keep the adjective l/c, **eg**, the far Right (but note the Religious Right in the US). Also, the **right wing, right-wing contenders, rightwingers**. See *Left, Politics*.

rigmarole (not *rigamarole*).

ringtone one word.

Riot Act (initial caps), as in “read the Riot Act”.

rip off (verb), **rip-off** (noun or adj) avoid this cliché except in quotes.

riverbank (one word).

rivers cap in context of River Thames, the Mississippi River (or simply the Thames, the Mississippi etc). Similarly, cap **estuary** when part of the name.

riveting, riveted try to avoid its clichéd use as a metaphor.

roadblock, roadbuilding, roadbuilder, roadside etc.

“**road map**” quoted at first mention and in headlines for the two-state Middle East peace formula.

road rage no longer any need to quote, even at first mention

roads as tautologous to write “the M5 motorway” as “the A435 road”, but correct to say “the M40 London to Birmingham motorway”. Generally, define a road geographically unless context is clear.

rob you rob a *person* or a *bank*, using force or the threat of violence; *but* you **steal** a car or a bag of money. See *burglary, larceny, robbery, theft*.

Robert the Bruce (not *Robert Bruce*); subsequent mentions, **the Bruce**.

rock'n'roll

Rogge, Jacques president of the International Olympic Committee. He is Belgian, so is Mr Rogge at second mention.

Rohypnol must **not** be referred to as the “date rape drug”.

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roll call two words.

Rollerblade (proprietary, cap); The American company's lawyers insist that even **Rollerblading** takes the cap; use *in-line skates/skating* instead.

rollerskate, rollercoaster

roll-on, roll-off (as in ferries), abbreviated to "**ro-ro**".

rollover, no hyphen.

Rolls-Royce (proprietary, cap., note hyphen); Rolls-Royce objects to use of its exclusive marque in a descriptive sense, **eg**, online advertising service spoken of as "The Rolls-Royce of Car Locators".

Romania (not Rumania). *See Ceausescu.*

Roman numerals usually no full points; thus Edward VIII, Article XVI, Part II, Psalm xxiii. *But* in official documents, to designate sub-sections, use the points, **eg**, i., ii., iv., etc.

roofs (not *rooves*).

rooms say **living room, drawing room, laundryroom** (no hyphens except when adjectival, **eg**, living-room carpet), *but* **bathroom, bedroom, tearoom**

Rorschach test psychological test based on the interpretation of inkblots.

rottweiler (l/c) *See dogs.*

round-up (hyphenate as noun).

row be sparing in the use of this word, especially in headlines. Alternatives are **rift, split, clash** etc, and **dispute** in text. However, row is **not** banned.

royal, royalty l/c for royalty *but* cap the **Royal Family**; royal is usually l/c when used adjectivally, as in **royal couple, royal baby, royal approval, royal visit, the royal wave**, but takes the cap in titles such as **Royal Assent, Royal Collection, Royal Household, Royal Yacht** etc.

royal commissions should be capped when the full title is given, **eg**, the **Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution**, but otherwise l/c, the **royal commission**.

Royal Corps of Signals, or Royal Signals (not *Royal Corps of Signallers*).

Royal Family takes caps, give names fully at first mention, **eg**, the Duke of Edinburgh, thereafter the Duke (cap) or occasionally Prince Philip; Prince William and Prince Harry, thereafter the Prince or simply William, Harry. In royalty context, the cap after first mention should be confined to the British Royal Family and overseas heads of state.

Royal Military Academy Sandhurst; similarly, **Royal Air Force College Cranwell** and **Royal Naval College Dartmouth** (no commas).

Royal Standard is only for the Sovereign. Other members of the Royal Family have a personal standard. *See ensign.*

RPI, the retail prices index (*note plural and l/c*).

rpm (l/c), revolutions per minute.

RSPCA no points.

rubbish do **not** use as a verb.

Rue Royale. *See French names.*

rugby league / rugby union rugby league comprises teams of 13 players; rugby union has 15 players a side.

run-down (adjective), as in decaying or exhausted; **rundown** (noun) as in briefing; to **run down** (verb)

run up as a verb; but **run-up** for the noun.

running-mate (hyphen).

rupee Indian currency, **rupiah** Indonesian currency.

rush hour (noun), but **rush-hour** (adjective, hyphen, as in **rush-hour** traffic).

rushed to hospital avoid this cliché. Say simply taken to or driven to; similarly, say a victim was flown to hospital rather than *airlifted to ...* Always avoid the American *hospitalise*.

Russia take care not to designate parts of the former Soviet Union as Russia when they no longer are, **eg**, Ukraine, Georgia. The same applies to the people (though there are millions of ethnic Russians throughout the former Soviet Union). So always specify the republic concerned and do not use Russian in the inclusive sense except in the phrase **Russian vodka, Russian caviar etc.** Use Soviet and the Soviet Union only in their historical contexts — and avoid USSR wherever possible. *See Soviet.*

Russian names use “i” as first name ending, *but* “y” for surnames, **eg, Arkadi Volsky, Gennadi Yavlinsky** (but note the exception **Rutskoi**); and use “k” rather than “x” in the middle, **eg, Aleksei, Aleksandr**; also *note* **Viktor**. We should use the “-ya” rather than “-ia” in **Natalya and Tatyana (not Natalia, Tatiana)**. But *note* that the styles of **Garry Kasparov** and **Anatoly Karpov** are sufficiently Westernised to be spelt thus. *See chess names.*

Rwanda the Republic of, Rwanda is a small landlocked country in the Great Lakes region of east-central Africa, bordered by Uganda, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Tanzania. The Hutu are the largest of the three ethnic groups in Rwanda [and Burundi] (84% of **Rwandans** (85% of **Burundians**).

During the Rwandan Genocide of April to July 1994 – largely believed to have been perpetrated by the French – UN peacekeepers from the undermanned and poorly equipped UN Assistance Mission for Rwanda (**Unamir**) stepped back as Hutu extremists (**Interahamwe** militia groups) killed around 800,000 Tutsis as well as moderate Hutu politicians after an aircraft carrying Rwandan President **Juvenal Habyarimana** and the Hutu president of Burundi **Cyprien Ntaryamira** was shot down. About 30% of the Twa population of Rwanda also died in the fighting. The total death toll was around 1 million people. Ten Belgian peacekeepers were also killed attempting to protect (Ms) **Agathe Uwilingiyimana**, the prime minister of Rwanda's interim government.

oOo

S-S-S

saccharin (noun), **saccharine** (adjective)

sack avoid in the sense of *dismiss* except in headlines (and **never** say *axed* or *fired* in this context)

sacrilegious from **sacrilege** (not *sacreligious*)

Saddam Hussein, Saddam after first mention; if required in full: **Saddam Hussein al-Majid al-Tikriti**. Accused with him are **Barzan Ibrahim Hassan al-Tikriti**, **Taha Yassin Ramadan**, **Awad Hamed al-Bandar**, **Abdullah Kazim Ruwayyid**, **Mizhar Abdullah Ruwayyid** (son of the latter), **Ali Dayim Ali** and **Mohammed Azawi Ali**. Members of the Iraq special tribunal include **Rizgar Mohammed Amin**, presiding judge, and **Raid Juhi**. Saddam's lawyer is **Khalil Dulaimi** (not al-Dulaimi), and his UK-based defence co-ordinator is **Abdel-Haq al-Ani**. See *War in Iraq*

said prefer the construction Mr Brown said rather than *said Mr Brown*. See *writes*

Saint in running text should be spelt in full: Saint John, Saint Paul. For names of towns, churches, etc, abbreviate **St** (no point), **eg**, St Mirren, St Stephen's church. In French place-names a hyphen is needed, **eg**, St-Nazaire, Ste-Suzanne, Stes-Maries-de-la-Mer

St John Ambulance Brigade/Association

St John's, Newfoundland, but **Saint John**, New Brunswick

St Paul's Cathedral

saints See *prophets, apostles, saints*

saké Japanese rice wine. Use accent to avoid confusion with **sake**

saleroom (one word)

Salonika, rather than *Thessaloniki*. See *foreign places*

salutary (not *salutory*)

Salvadorean (not *-ian*)

Salvation Army (never the *Sally Army*)

Sam-7 missiles

Sana'a capital of Yemen (not *Sanaa, Sana* etc)

sanatorium, sanatoriums (plural) (not *sanitorium*)

sandpit (one word)

Sao Paulo (not *Sao Paolo*) Brazilian city

sarin (as in nerve gas), *l/c*

Sars the viral respiratory complaint is **severe acute respiratory syndrome** (*l/c*), **Sars** on subsequent mention and in headlines.

SAS Special Air Service is a regiment and counts as part of the Australian and British infantry, but it is also designated *special forces*.

sat is the past tense and the past participle of "to sit". **Never** write that somebody "was sat" in his car, her

living room etc; write "was seated" or "was sitting"

Satan, Satanism (initial caps) *but satanic*

sat-nav l/c and hyphen for acceptable abbreviation for **satellite navigation system**

Saudi must **never** be used as short form for the country, **Saudi Arabia**. Confine its use to the adjectival, eg, Saudi Royal Family

saw, as in a date "which saw" some event ("...the Louisiana Purchase Treaty, which saw French land sold..."). Days/months/years/incidents **cannot** "see" anything; please choose a more elegant alternative construction

SBS Special Boat Service (**not Squadron**)

Sca Fell, Scafell Pike are two separate mountains in the Lake District. Scafell Pike, at 978m (3,209ft), is the highest in England

Scalextric (**not Scalectrix**) proprietary, cap

Scandinavia (**never Scandanavia**)

scarify take care; its meaning is to *cut into*, to *cut skin from*; its colloquial meaning of "to terrify" should be avoided wherever possible

scars do **not** heal (even metaphorically); wounds heal, scars remain

Schadenfreude (cap, italic) means the malicious enjoyment of another's misfortunes; **do not** misuse

Schiphol airport, Amsterdam

schizophrenia, schizophrenic **never** use as a term of abuse and avoid as a metaphor.

schools cap when full title is given

schoolchildren (one word), **schoolgirl, schoolboy, schooldays, schoolmaster, schoolmistress** and **schoolteacher**, *but school-leaver*

school years year 2, year 10, etc

Schwarzenegger, Arnold the Governor of California. On subsequent mentions of his title, the governor (l/c), as in mayor. Similarly for US states, capitalise specific title mention of John Doe, Lieutenant Governor of Hawaii, l/c thereafter. *See Governor*

Schweitzer, Albert

scientific measures Take care: "m" in scientific terms stands for "milli" (1mW is 1,000th of a watt), while "M" denotes "mega" (1MW is a million watts); amps (A), volts (V), watts (W), megawatts (MW), milliwatts (mW), joules (J), kilojoules (kJ).

scientific names when employing the Latin terminology, we must use the internationally accepted convention of initial cap on the first (generic) word, then l/c for the second (specific); eg, **Homo sapiens**, **Branta canadensis** (Canada goose) etc. For all but the most common we should also italicise

ScotchTape (proprietary, cap) say **sticky tape**

Scotch, the whisky **not** to be used as a substitute for the adjectives Scottish and Scots. But note **Scotch broth, Scotch mist, Scotch egg** and **Scotch terrier**; also *note Scots pine*

scot-free without harm, loss or penalty

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Scouts no longer called *Boy Scouts* in the UK. *See Boy scouts; girl guides*

Scrabble (initial cap)

scrapheap (one word)

scratchcard (one word), as **smartcard**, **swipecard**

Scripture(s) cap as in Holy Scripture, but **scriptural** (l/c). *See Christian terms*

scriptwriter

sculptures in italic. With photographs of sculptures always give the sculptor's name.

seabed, seabird, seacoast, seahorse, seaplane, seagull, seasick, seaside, seaweed (no hyphens); but *note* also **sea lion, sea shanty, sea snake, sea urchin** etc

seasonal, but **unseasonable** (not *unseasonal*). *Note* also **seasonal affective disorder** (l/c), abbreviated to **SAD**

seasons always l/c when unattached, *ie*, spring, summer, autumn, winter; but *Winter Olympics* etc. *Note* also **summertime, wintertime, springtime**, but **British Summer Time** (BST), and **Greenwich Mean Time** (GMT). *See times*

seatbelt

second-hand (hyphenated)

Second World War, not *World War II/Two* etc

Secret Intelligence Service (SIS, or MI6) takes caps. *See Security Service (MI5)*

Secret Service in the US protects the President and Vice-President. As a colloquial phrase in the UK it **must** be l/c, but prefer (to avoid confusion) to use *Secret Intelligence Service* (MI6 or SIS)

Secretary-General of the United Nations, Nato

Securities and Exchange Commission, the US regulator; do not use "&". Write **SEC** after first mention

Security Service (MI5) takes caps; but l/c for the **security services** in non-specific use. *See Secret Intelligence Service*

see-saw (hyphenate)

seize (never *sieze*)

select committees and parliamentary committees capped at first mention, or when full title is given, *eg*, the **Foreign Affairs Select Committee**; thereafter, the **select committee**, or the **committee**.

sell-off, sell-out (*but see buyout*)

self-control, self-defence, self-esteem, self-respect

Sellotape (proprietary, cap) use **sticky tape** or **adhesive tape**

semi knock down (SKD)

semicolon the following sentence illustrates perfectly how to use the semicolon: "Some reporters were brilliant; others were less so"

semiconductor

Semtex (proprietary, cap) the explosive

Senate (US); Senator Edward Kennedy, then “the senator”; alternatively, Mr Kennedy, the Massachusetts senator. *Note* caps in titles of **Senate Majority Leader**, **House Minority Leader** etc

senior abbreviate to Sr (**not** *Snr*) in the American context, **eg**, Henry Ramstein Sr; see junior. Avoid the cliché senior executive when you mean executive - nine times out of ten the adjective is redundant (as major)

sensor a mechanical or electronic *detector*. *See* *sensor*

sensual involves indulgence of the senses – especially sexual gratification. What is **sensuous** usually applies to aesthetic enjoyment – sensuous surroundings

septic tanks (**never** *sceptic*)

septuagenarian a person who is from 70 to 79-years-of-age

Serb for the people *but* **Serbian** can be used (sparingly) as an adjective

Serbia and Montenegro the loose confederation formed (February 2003) from the remainder of the former Republic of Yugoslavia

Serious Fraud Office (SFO), *but* fraud squad. *See* *Flying Squad*

Serious Organised Crime Agency — UK-wide squad combining responsibilities of the National Criminal Intelligence Service, National Crime Squad, Home Office responsibilities for organised immigration crime and Customs and Excise intelligence responsibilities in tackling serious drug trafficking

Serjeant at Arms *but* **sergeant major**

serve in a warship (*but on* a merchant ship), and **serve in** (**not on**) a submarine, even though subs are boats, **not ships**. Important to make this distinction

Services, the (cap); or the Armed Services or the Armed Forces; also cap Service when used adjectivally as in a **Service family** (where meaning might otherwise be ambiguous); *but* *l/c*

serviceman, servicewoman

setback (noun); *but* to **set back**

sett the lair or burrow of badgers

set-up try to find a synonym such as *arrangement, organisation, structure, system* etc

sewage is the waste matter; **sewerage** for the disposal system

Sex and the City the TV show (**not** *Sex in the City*)

sexism always be aware of sensitivities and be careful to avoid giving offence to women. It is often difficult to draw the line between sexism and political correctness

sex offenders register (*l/c*, **no** apostrophe)

Shadow use of the titles may be applied to the main opposition party for example, the Shadow Chancellor. Cap in all cases, ie, **Shadow Cabinet**, **Shadow Environment Secretary**, a **Shadow spokesman**

shake-out, shake-up (*but* see **buyout**)

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Shakespeare titles as *Henry IV (Part One)* to avoid use of two sets of Roman numerals. And *note Shakespearean* (not *-ian*)

shall / should keep up the vigorous defence of these against the encroaching *will* and *would*. Good practice is that **shall** and **should** go with the first person singular and plural (I shall, we shall), **will** and **would** with the others (he will, they will). **Shall** with second and third persons singular and plural has a slightly more emphatic meaning than will

shambles take care not to overwork this strong word, which means a slaughterhouse and, by extension, a scene of carnage

shanks's pony (l/c)

Shangri-La

shantytown (one word)

SHAPE, Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers, Europe (all caps)

share a joke banned in captions on photographs showing people laughing

Sharia means *Islamic law*; **never** use the tautology *Sharia law*. **Syariah** is the court system in Malaysia responsible for administering Islamic law. *See* Syariah

Sharm el-Sheikh, Egyptian resort in Sinai

sheikh (not *shaikh*)

shell suit (two words); *but* see **tracksuit**

sheriff (never *sherrif*)

Shetland or the Shetland Islands (not *the Shetlands*)

Shi'a not *Shi'ite* or any such variation; write **Shi'a Muslims** (as opposed to **Sunni Muslims**)

ships italicise the HMS when first mention of warship, *eg*, *HMS Sheffield*. Ships should **not** be treated as feminine; thus it ran aground, **not** she ran aground.

shipbuilder, shipbuilding, shipmate, shipowner, shipyard

ships' tonnage for passenger ships, give gross tonnage in tonnes; for cargo ships, deadweight tonnage. It is simply wrong to say that "the *QM2* weighs 150,000 tonnes" (in fact, she actually displaces [*ie*, weighs] around 82,000 tonnes). But it is possible to say, using the gross tonnage: "the *QM2* is a 150,000-tonne ship" or "the 150,000-tonne *QM2*".

shock avoid in headlines unless in the electric context; in text, use the word as little as possible and **never** as a modifier, *shock revelations* etc. (unless the context is ironic)

shock waves (two words), but use sparingly as a metaphor as it is becoming a cliché

shoo-in (not *shoe-in*), if you have to use this American phrase

shoot-out (hyphen), as in penalty **shoot-out**; but avoid in the sense of gunfight

shopkeeper, shopowner, shopfront, shoplift etc; *but* **shop assistant** and **shop steward**

shortlist (one word as noun or verb)

short-lived, short-sighted

should / ought both express a sense of duty, but *ought* is stronger. Unlike *should*, *ought* requires a fully expressed infinitive, even in the negative (you ought not to see the movie)

showbusiness (one word); **showbiz** is an acceptable abbreviation in quotes and informal context

showcase avoid using as a verb. Use **display** or **exhibit** instead

showjumping, showjumper

shrink, shrank (past tense), **shrunk** (or **shrunken**), past participle. *See sink*

Shroud of Turin (caps), or the **Turin Shroud**; subsequently, “the shroud” (l/c)

Siamese cats; for Siam use Thailand except in historical context (adjective Thai)

Siamese twins do **not** use: they are **conjoined twins**

Sichuan (not *Szechuan, Setzuan, Szechwan* or any other variant). *See Chinese names*

sickbed, as **deathbed**

side-effects

sidestreet

siege (never *seige*)

Siena only one “n” the Tuscan city *but* **sienna** pigment

sight / site a **sight** may be something worth seeing (the sights of London), or a device to aid the eye (the sight of a gun) while a **site** is a place, whether physical (a supermarket will be built on this site) or electronic (website). The figurative expression meaning “to focus on a goal” is to *set one’s sights*. *See also cite; cite / site*

sign language not deaf-and-dumb language

Silicon Valley, silicon chips, *but* **silicone implants** (for breasts etc)

silk barristers take silk and become silks (all l/c).

Sim card the subscriber identity module card in a mobile phone

Simon's Town, South Africa (not *Simonstown*). *See South Africa*

sin-bin (use hyphen)

singalong

Singaporean names in three parts, **eg**, Lee Kuan Yew

singeing (from *singe*), to distinguish it from *singing*

sink / sank the past participle is **sunk**, the adjective **sunken**: he sinks, he sank, he has sunk

Sinn Féin

siphon (not *syphon*)

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Sistine Chapel (not *Cistine*)

sitcom (no hyphen) permissible abbreviation for *situation comedy*

site a place or location. *See cite / site*

sit-in

situation avoid wherever possible; such phrases as “crisis situation; “ongoing situation” and “no-win situation” are banned unless a direct quote positively demands them

Six Nations Championship (rugby): England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, France and Italy

sizeable

ski, skier, skied, skiing

skipper usually only of a trawler

skulduggery

Slavic must **not** be used; the noun and adjective are **Slav**

slander *See defamation, libel, slander,*

slay is a biblical word. Dragon's are slain, people are killed. **Never** use even in headlines for *kill* or *murder*

slimline (one word)

Slovak for the people and language, *Slovakian* for the general adjective. *See Czech Republic, Croat, Croatian*

smallholding

smart aleck (not *Alec*)

smartcard (one word), as **scratchcard, swipecard**

smelt (not *smelled*)

smidgin

Smith & Wesson (proprietary, cap and ampersand)

Smithsonian Institution, in Washington (**never** *Institute*); can be shortened to “the Smithsonian”

snarl-up do not use as a synonym of *traffic jam, confusion* etc

sniffer dogs, tracker dogs avoid these clichés wherever possible; usually **dogs** is sufficient, *but* if the context is unclear, say **police dogs, customs dogs, etc**

snowball, snowbound, snowdrift, snowfall, snowman, snowplough etc

soap opera normally use rather than just *soap*,

social chapter (l/c, as it is an informal title)

socialism, socialist for when to cap, *see communism, communist*

social security benefits all *l/c* but note the **Department of Social Security (DSS)**

soi-disant means *self-styled*, **not so-called**

soirée (use acute accent)

solar system *l/c*, the same for **cosmic ray** (noun), **cosmic-ray** (adjective) *See Earth; Universe*

solicitor-advocate takes a hyphen

Solicitor-General (hyphen, as **Attorney-General**)

Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr no longer use *Alexander*. *See Russian names*

sorcerer (not *-or*)

SOS

Sotheby's the auction house

soundbite

south, southeast, southern, Southern Hemisphere, Southeast Asia etc. *See compass points*

South, Southern, Southerner (cap in US contexts)

South Africa **never** use the abbreviation SA, even in headlines. The capital is **Pretoria**, which has the embassies (branches sometimes in **Cape Town** when Parliament is sitting) and government ministries. The legislature meets in **Cape Town**, and the Appeal Court sits in **Bloemfontein**. **Pretoria** can be referred to as the seat of government. Each of the new South African provinces has its own capital.

Say the **Eastern/Western/Northern Cape** (caps); note also **KwaZulu/Natal** and **Simon's Town**. Take care; several provinces have been renamed since the apartheid era, **eg, Mpumalanga** (formerly Eastern Transvaal); **Free State** (formerly Orange Free State); **Gauteng** (formerly Transvaal).

Say **southern Africa** when referring to Africa south of the Congo and Zambezi rivers

sources Journalists should use anonymous sources sparingly. We should — except in exceptional circumstances — avoid anonymous pejorative quotes. We should avoid misrepresenting the nature and number of sources, and we should do our best to give readers some clue as to the authority with which they speak. We should **never**, betray a source.

Likewise, once it is agreed that information a journalist is told is off-the-record it **must not** be repeated, **ever**. This does not stop the journalist from attempting to source the same information from other people though.

South Asia encompasses Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka

Southeast Asia comprises the 10 ASEAN states — Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, Brunei, Vietnam, Burma, Laos and Cambodia. Avoid calling Burma *Myanmar* (except occasionally in direct quotes). *See ASEAN*

South of France

Southern Ocean (caps)

southerner *l/c* as **northerner**

Sovereign, the (cap). *See monarch; Royal Family*

Soviet Union **never** refer to *the Soviets* for the people or the Government, even in the historical context.

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The phrase is an Americanism often with disparaging overtones; a soviet is a committee, not a person. Refer instead to the **Soviet people** or the **Soviet Government** in historical context. *See Russia; USSR*

space avoid the phrase “outer space”. *See Earth; Moon; Sun; Universe*

Spanish seek to render Spanish words correctly with their accents.

Be aware that the surname is normally the second last name, **not** the last, which is the mother's maiden name, **eg**, the writer Federico García Lorca – known as García in Spain rather than Lorca – should be García Lorca on second mention. Note also that the female name Consuelo ends with an “o” not an “a”.

The most common accent is the stress or emphasis mark over an otherwise weak or indeterminate vowel, for example, Málaga, Verón.

The mark, which indicates which syllable to emphasise, is an integral part of the spelling. Words ending in “-an”, “-en”, “-in”, “-on” and “-un” frequently have the terminal syllable emphasised, thus: Hernán, Belén (Bethlehem), *Clarín* (Argentine newspaper), Perón (the 20th-century Argentine leader), *atún* (tuna).

Many names and words ending in a vowel and “-ez” attract an emphasis on the penultimate (otherwise weak) vowel, **eg**, Hernández. Note that once an accented word is put into a longer word, **eg**, *peronista* (a follower of Perón), the accent may be lost or move because the emphasis shifts to a stronger vowel (in this case, the “i”). Note also that names ending “-es” do not take the accent, **eg**, Martines, Rodrigues.

The next most common accent is the tilde, giving the “nya” sound in words such as España, Coto de Doñana (the nature reserve in southern Spain).

As “el”, “la”, “los” and “las” are the masculine and feminine singular and plural definite articles, respectively, try not to write, for example, “the *El País* Madrid daily newspaper reported ...”, but rather “*El País*, the Madrid daily newspaper, reported...”

In Spanish some combinations of letters must not be broken at a line-end: rr, ll, ch.

Surnames

Aristizabal, Beltrán, Cáceres, Calderón, Cañizares, Chevanton, Couñago, Cúper, Dalí, De la Peña, Díaz, Forlán, García, Gaudí, Miró, Muñoz, Olazábal, Pavón, Sáenz, Sáinz, Valdés, Valerón, Verón. Benítez, Fernández, Giménez, Gómez, González, Gutiérrez, Hernández, Jiménez, López, Márquez, Martínez, Núñez, Ordóñez, Pérez, Quiñónez, Ramírez, Rodríguez, Sáez, Vásquez, Vázquez, Velázquez.

Exception: Alvarez;

Forenames

Adán, Alán, Andrés, César, Darío, Elías, Fabián, Ginés, Héctor, Hernán, Iñaki, Iñés, Iván, Jesús, Joaquín, José, Lucía, María, Martín, Matías, Máximo, Michel, Raúl, Ramón, Róger, Rubén, Sebastián, Víctor

Note the forenames Ana, Angel, Alfredo, Alvaro, Cristina, Diego, Domingo, Emilio, Ernesto, Federico, Fernando, Ignacio, Jorge, Juan, Julio, Luis, Marta, Mario, Miguel, Pablo and Pedro **do not** usually take accents

Place names

Asunción, Bogotá, Cádiz, Catalonia, Córdoba, La Coruña, Guantánamo Bay, Guipúzcoa, Jaén, Jerez, León, Medellín, Potosí, San Sebastián, Valparaíso.

Note: Spanish is an official language in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Spain, Uruguay and Venezuela,

spastic never use figuratively or as a term of abuse when describing a person with **cerebral palsy** or other disabilities. Muscles, **not** people, are *spastic*

Speaker, the always cap in parliamentary context but **deputy speaker**

Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park (**not** *Speaker's*)

Special Branch (caps, but no “the”). *See branch*

special forces in the UK or US, generically l/c. But cap, **eg**, 5th Special Forces Group in US for specific units. *See War on Terror*

species both singular and plural in plant and animal sense. *See scientific names*

spellcheck, spellchecker (l/c, no hyphens) — but use with extreme care

spelled / spelt she spelled it out for him: “the word is spelt like this”: *note misspelt*

spiders are **not** insects, although like insects they are arthropods

Spice Girls Victoria Beckham was Posh Spice; Melanie Brown was Scary Spice; Emma Bunton was Baby Spice; Melanie Chisholm was Sporty Spice; Geri Halliwell was Ginger Spice
spicy (**not** *spicey*)

Spider-Man

spiral prices (and other things) can spiral down as well as up; try a less cliched word that doesn't suggest a circular movement

Spielberg, Steven

spiky (**not** *spikey*)

spilt (**not** *spilled*)

spin, spun do not use *span* as past tense

spin-doctor (hyphen)

Spiritualism, Spiritualist

split infinitives it is perfectly acceptable to sensibly split infinitives, and stubbornly to resist doing so can sound awkward and make for ambiguity: the example, “the workers are declared strongly to favour a strike” raises the question of whether the declaration, or the favouring, is strong.

spoiled / spoilt she **spoiled** her son: in fact he was a **spoilt** brat; *but despoiled*

spokesman, spokeswoman is preferable to “spokesperson” but if possible attribute a quote to the organisation, “the ministry said”, “the airline said”, rather than “a ministry spokesman said”. **Official** is a useful alternative. *See chairman*

sponsorship try to avoid: we are under no obligation to carry sponsors' names. So London Marathon, **not** Flora London Marathon, etc. When a competition is named after a sponsor, it is unavoidable: Nationwide League, AXA League

sports clubs for when to use singular or plural, *see teams*

sportsmen, sportswomen omit the Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms etc. unless they are in news reports (**eg**, court hearings) in a specifically non-sporting context. *See appellations*

spots; blackspot, hotspot, troublespot, etc

sprang is the past tense of the verb to spring, **eg**, “she sprang into action”; **sprung** is the past participle, **eg**, “the wind has sprung up”

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Spratly Islands, they are claimed either partially or entirely by China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Taiwan. Chinese media refer to them as the **Nansha Islands**

sprightly (not *spritely*)

spring-clean (hyphen)

squads in police context, usually *l/c*, *but* see Flying Squad; also note **Royal and Diplomatic Protection Squad**

square brackets use for interpolated words in quotations, **eg**, Mr Howard said: "Iain [Duncan Smith] has my full support"

square metres are **not** the same as metres squared: **eg**, 300m squared is 90,000 sq m which is very different to 300 sq m

Sri Lanka do **not** use Ceylon for the country except in historical context. *But* **Ceylon tea** etc

SSSI site of special scientific interest (*l/c*)

Stability and Growth Pact (in the EU), can be shortened to the Stability Pact (keep caps)

stadium singular, plural **stadiums**. *See referendum*

stained glass, *but* a **stained-glass window** (hyphen)

stalactites cling from the *ceiling* **stalagmites** grow from the *ground*

stalemate do **not** use to mean *deadlock* or *impasse*; a **stalemate** is the *end* of the game, and cannot be broken or resolved

stamp (not *stomp*)

Stalinist, Stalinism *See communism*

stanch (verb), as "to stanch a flow of blood"; **staunch** is an adjective meaning *loyal* or *firm*

stand-off (noun, hyphen), *but* **standby** (noun, no hyphen)

stand-up is **not** acceptable as an abbreviation for **stand-up comedian/comic**, **stand-up act**

stargazers, stargazing

Star Trek (two words, italic)

Start I, II, III etc. (not *Start 1, 2, 3*), strategic arms reduction talks

State cap (sparingly) in context of the State as a wide concept, but not in the *welfare state*, or used adjectivally such as *state benefits*

state of the union address (US)

state owned enterprise (SOE)

stationary not moving; **stationery** (writing materials)

stations *l/c* in Bayswater station, Box Hill station, but where possible, simply Euston, Waterloo etc.

statistic(s) do **not** use as a fancy word for figure(s) or number(s)

status quo (roman) means the *existing* state of affairs, *but* the less familiar **status quo ante** meaning the *previously* existing state of affairs (italics)

statute book

stay home avoid this Americanism; say “stay at home”

steadfast
Stealth bomber

steamboat, steamhammer, steamship but **steam engine**

steelworks, steelworker etc

sten gun

stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, *but* **step-family, step-parents**

Stephenson, George (trains), **Stevenson, Robert Louis; Adlai Ewing**

Stetson (initial cap)

stiletto singular, **stilettos** plural

still avoid writing the tautologous "still continues", "still remains" etc

stilton

stimulus plural **stimuli**

stock in trade

Stock Exchange caps where the term is part of the name of the exchange, **eg**, Sydney Stock Exchange, New York Stock Exchange etc; *note* l/c for the **stock market**

stony (not *stone*y)

storey (of a building); plural **storeys**

storm clouds two words, but try to avoid the cliché of "gathering storm clouds"

storms use the pronoun *it*, **not** “he” or “she”, when referring to named storms such as hurricanes, cyclones and the like

storyteller, storytelling

straight be sparing in the use of this word to mean heterosexual. *See gay*

straight-faced, straight-laced in **dire straights**, but **straightforward, straightjacket**

Strait of Hormuz (not *Straits*), **Strait of Gibraltar, Strait of Dover**

stratum singular, **strata** plural

streetwise

Streisand, Barbra

stress prefer *emphasise* as in “he emphasised the importance”

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stretchered off do **not** use; say “carried off on a stretcher”
stricture means adverse *criticism* or *censure*, **not** *constraint*. Take care

stumbling block

stylebook one word, as with **guidebook**, **textbook** etc. (*but style guide*)

sub- like **multi-**, the hyphen here is often a question of what looks better. A random sample gives us **subdivision**, **sublet**, **subnormal**, **subsection**, **substandard**, **subtext**, **subcontract(or)**; in contrast, **sub-committee**, **sub-editor**, **sub-postmaster**, **sub-post office** etc. *See hyphens; multi-*

sub-continent, the (l/c) for India, Pakistan and Bangladesh

subject a **subject** owes allegiance to an individual sovereign (a subject of the queen). *See citizen / subject*

subjects, academic use l/c for most subjects studied at school or university, **eg**, “she was reading modern history with philosophy”; but where a proper name is involved, the cap is retained, **eg**, “he got a first in English literature and German after he dropped Latin in his second year”; and always cap Classics and PPE (short for philosophy, politics and economics). But *note*, **eg**, Professor of History when the phrase accompanies a name. *See Professor*

sub-let (as in property)

submachine gun. *See machine gun*

submarine always a boat, **not** a *ship*,

subplot, **subtext**, **subtitle**

subpoena, **subpoenas**, **subpoenaing**, **subpoenaed**

sub-Saharan Africa

subsequent / subsequently coming after something in time, but prefer *afterwards* or *later*, and **never** say “subsequent to” when the meaning is *after*. *See consequent / subsequent*

subtropical (one word). *See Tropics*

such as do not confuse with *like*. *See like*

Sudan (**not** *the Sudan*) except occasionally in historical context

sudden oak death caused by a fungus, *Phytophthora ramorum*

sufficient refers to an amount of material (always with a mass noun - *sufficient water*, *sufficient information*). *See adequate / sufficient / enough*

suffragan lower case

suffragette l/c, double “f”, double “t”; Emmeline Pankhurst; her daughters Dame Christabel Pankhurst and Sylvia Pankhurst

Suharto (**not** Soeharto; this is the old spelling not used officially since 1947) held the position of President of Indonesia from March 1967 to May 21, 1998. Like many Javanese, Suharto has only one name. **Suharto** served in both the Royal Netherlands East Indies Army (KNIL) and the Indonesian National Army. In 1962 he was appointed commander of **Kostrad** (Strategic Reserve). In 1966 he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant general by President Sukarno.

Suharto seized power from his predecessor, the first president of Indonesia **Sukarno** through a mixture of

force and political maneuvering against the backdrop of foreign and domestic unrest. He was named Acting President on March 12, 1967 and formally elected for the first of his five-year terms as President on March 21, 1968.

By the 1990s, his New Order administration's authoritarian and increasingly corrupt practices had become a source of much discontent. Dissension within the ranks of his own **Golkar Party** and the military, together with widespread protests and riots throughout the country finally weakened Suharto, and on May 21, 1998 he resigned.

He now lives his post-presidential years in virtual seclusion. Attempts to try him on charges of genocide and corruption have failed due to his failing health. In May 1999, *Time Asia* estimated Suharto's family fortune at US\$15 billion.

suicide *exercise particular care* in reporting suicide or issues involving suicide, bearing in mind the risk of encouraging others. This applies to presentation, including the use of pictures, and to describing the method of suicide. Any substances should be referred to in general rather than specific terms. When appropriate a helpline number should be given. The feelings of relatives should also be carefully considered

suing (not *sueing*), from *to sue*

Sukarnoputri, Megawati (*Note:* the alternate spelling Soekarnoputri. The official spelling since 1947 is the "Su" variant and we should follow this) the first female and fifth president of Indonesia (July 2001 to October 2004) and the first Indonesian leader born after independence. The daughter of Indonesia's first president, **Sukarno** (prior to 1947 spelt as Soekarno), who declared Indonesia's independence from the Netherlands in 1945 Sukarnoputri means "daughter of Sukarno" (Sanskrit) and it is not the family name: Javanese do not have family names. She is simply referred to as 'Megawati' (or '**Mega**') which is derived from Sanskrit meghavatī = "she who has a cloud", ie. a raincloud, as it was raining when she was born

summit avoid calling every high-level meeting a summit. Restrict its use to meetings of heads of government

summon the verb is to **summon**, the noun a **summons** (plural **summons**). A person is **summoned** to appear before a tribunal etc; but a person in receipt of a specific **summons** can be said to have been **summonsed**

Sun *note* l/c for **ultraviolet rays** (noun), **ultraviolet-ray** (adjective). *See Earth; Moon; Universe*

sunbathing, sunburn, sunglasses, suntan etc. *but* **sun-care** (products etc)

Super Bowl (as in American football)

supercasino, supermarkets one word

superhighway (as in information superhighway); similarly, **superconductor**

superjumbo (one word), the new Airbus Industrie A380

superlatives beware of calling any person, event or thing *the first, the biggest, the best* etc. without firm evidence that this is correct. Also, **never** say *first-ever, best-ever* etc. *See ever; first; universal claims*

supermodel every new face who makes a name for herself these days is labelled a supermodel; **model** is sufficient

supersede (**never** *supercede*)

supersonic (of speeds); for waves use **ultrasonic**

super-union (hyphen)

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supervisor (not *supviser*)

supine means lying *face-up*. See *prone*

Supreme Court (US, Australia)

surge prefer *rise* or *increase*, if that is the meaning; but **surge** is preferable to “upsurge”

Surinam (not *Suriname*) formerly Dutch Guiana

surprising (not *suprising*)

suspenseful do not use this abomination

Suvarnabhumi Airport also known as the New Bangkok International Airport opened for commercial flights on September 28, 2006. The former international airport was named **Don Mueang International Airport**

swansong (one word)

swap (not *swop*) do not use unless a mutual exchange is involved and **never** for organ transplants

swaths (not *swathes*) as in “cutting swaths through”; **swathes** to be used only as *bandages*

swatting flies, mosquitoes, **swotting** study

swearword (not hyphenated)

sweet pea (not *sweetpea*) unless referring to Popeye's adopted daughter; in which case, initial cap

swingeing (as in *severe* or otherwise *extreme* cuts), to distinguish it from **swinging**

swimming, freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly (no hyphens)

Swinging London, Swinging Sixties (caps)

swipecard, as **scratchcard, smartcard**

symbol, symbolic, symbolism, symbology a **symbol** is a letter, figure, or other character or mark to *designate something else*; **symbolic** is expressing a *thought, idea* or *action* by means of **symbols** or a **symbol**. **Symbolism** is the practice of *representing* things by symbols while **symbology** is the *study* or *interpretation* of symbols or symbolism

sympathy is compassion and sorrow one feels for another. See *empathy*

sync prefer to *synch*, as in the phrase “out of sync”

synod l/c on its own, but **General Synod** (caps)

syntax beware of ambiguous or incongruous sentence structure: “a man was charged with exposing himself in court yesterday”

synthesis, synthesise, synthesiser

Syariah is one of two court system in Malaysia. It is responsible for administering Islamic law, **Sharia**, only and can generally only pass sentences of not more than three years imprisonment, a fine of up to RM5,000, and/or up to six strokes of the cane. See *Sharia*

systematic means *according to a plan or system, methodical, or arranged in a system*: **systemic** is limited in use to physiological systems (a systemic disease affecting several organs) or, by extension,

other systems that may be likened to the body (systemic problems within the corporate hierarchy)

oOOO

T-T-T

tableau singular, **tableaux** plural

tactics singular and plural

tad heavily overworked as synonym of *a little* or *a bit*; avoid

Taiwanese names like Hong Kong and Korean names, these are in two parts with a hyphen, **eg** Lee Teng-hui

Tajikistan adjective **Tajik**

take / bring if the action is away from you, use *take* (take out the trash). You take (**not** bring) your car to the mechanic. *See bring / take*

takeaway (meals)

takeoff noun **take off** verb (aircraft)

takeover (noun), *but* to **take over** (verb)

takeover code *but* **Takeover Panel**

take part prefer to *participate*

Taliban now refer to “the Taliban” (means “students of Islamic knowledge”); the **Taliban authorities** etc), and prefer the plural verb (“are” rather than “is” etc). *See War on Terror*

talk show, as **chat show**, **game show**, **quiz show** etc

talk to (**not** *talk with*)

Tallinn, Estonia

Tamil Tigers (caps) short form for the **Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam**. A militant group in **Sri Lanka** that has been at war with the government since the early 1980s, seeking a homeland for the Tamil ethnic minority

Tampax (proprietary, cap); say **tampon**

Tangier no final “s”

Tannoy (proprietary, cap); use **loudspeaker** as alternative

tantalizing a tantalizing thing *torments* us because we want it badly and it is always just out of reach: a **titillating** thing *tickles* us pleasantly, either literally or figuratively

Taoiseach (always cap) Irish Prime Minister. *See Ireland*

taramasalata (**not** *taramo-*)

target beware the lazy use of this word as a verb; **eg**, a campaign is *aimed at* or *directed at* children (rather than targeting children). Try to restrict its use to military (hostile acts) contexts. *Note* **targeted** (**not** *targetted*)

Tarmac is a trade name, but confine the cap version to the civil engineering company. Common usage

allows the road surface or airport runway to be written as **tarmac**

Tartars prefer to *Tatars*

task force (as in Falklands)

tattoos, tattooed, tattooing

taxman one word as colloquialism for Inland Revenue, Australian Taxation Office (ATO); similarly, no hyphen in **taxpayer**

tax avoidance is legal, **tax evasion** is illegal

taxi, taxiing of aircraft

Tbilisi capital of Georgia

Tchaikovsky

tea bag (two words), *but* **teacup, teapot, teaspoon**

teams normally plural, **eg**, "Manchester United *were* disappointing when they lost to Barcelona". But sports clubs usually take the singular, especially in news stories, **eg**, "Manchester City Football Club *was* fined heavily for crowd disturbances". There is some room for variation in this format, but whatever is decided, never mix singular and plural in the same story. *Note* hyphen in **team-mates**.

teargas, *but* **tear-gassed**

tearoom one word and *l/c*; similarly, **teashop**.

Technicolor is a trade name. It should be used only in the context of the making of colour motion pictures and not as a descriptive adjective or synonym for **multicoloured**

Teddy boy

Teflon (proprietary, cap); say **non-stick pan**

Tehran (not *Teheran*)

telephone numbers write the area code or prefix as two or three numbers and the balance in groups of three numbers with a space between each group. Avoid ending a number as a single digit. No hyphens, **eg**, 014 831 234 56, 02 256 7088.

Teletubbies (not *Tellytubbies*): Tinky Winky (purple), Dipsy (green), Laa-Laa (yellow), and Po (red). Singular is **Teletubby**

television TV is acceptable both in headlines and text. BBC, CNN are acceptable in their abbreviated form. Write BBC Television, BBC One, BBC Two, Cable News Network, etc; but Argentine television, Norwegian television, etc. (*l/c* unless we know it is the station's specific name). Television and radio programmes are italicised.

telltale (one word)

temazepam is a non-proprietary sedative, so *l/c*

temperatures the style is 16C and minus 15C. Prefer "minus" to minus-sign in text. **Do not** refer to temperatures as *hot* or *cold*; they are **high** or **low**.

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tendinitis (not *tendonitis*)

ten-minute rule (Bill) etc.

Tennessee

tenpin bowling

tenses *We've Only Just Begun* was playing on the radio. He *began* to drink; in fact he *drank* so much, he was *drunk* in no time at all. He *sank* into depression, knowing that all his hopes had been *sunk*. Finally, he *sneaked* away. Or perhaps *snuck* away (according to Pinker, the most recent irregular verb to enter the language).

Terminal 1, Heathrow (and Terminal 2, 3, 4, 5 etc). *See airports*

term-time (hyphenate)

Terrorism Bill reference may be made to the *terror Bill*, but **not** *the Terror Bill*

terrorist take care with this word and the associated **terrorism**; **guerrilla**, **militant**, **radical**, or **separatist** are less loaded words in the context of violent political struggle. Never use as a synonym of any dissident group that uses violence, **eg**, hunt saboteurs, and always try to specify groups as **paramilitaries**, **gangster organisations** or whatever. Remember, one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter

Test match should apply only to cricket (**not** *rugby*); for other sports, use the term international (match): the third Test, etc

Texan a person; the adjective is **Texas**: **Texas Ranger**, **Texas oilwells**, etc

textbook one word, as **guidebook**, **stylebook**, **rulebook** etc. *but* note **style guide**

TGV, *train à grande vitesse* (**not** *de*), the French high-speed train

thalidomide (l/c) the sedative drug withdrawn in the 1960s after it was linked to birth defects

that do not be shy of this word after *said*, *denied*, *claimed* etc; **eg**, "he denied that the evidence was confusing" is more elegant than "he denied the evidence was confusing". **That** is almost always better than *which* in a defining clause, **eg**, "the train that I take stops at Slough". As a general rule, use *which* for descriptive clauses and place it between commas, **eg**, "the night train, which used to carry newspapers, stops at Crewe".

Thatcher first mention Baroness Thatcher, thereafter Lady Thatcher. In historical context, preferable to say Mrs Thatcher or Margaret Thatcher, **eg**, "Mrs Thatcher took quick action in sending the task force to the Falklands". It would be wrong to say that her party forced Lady Thatcher from office in 1990. *Note* the late **Sir Denis** Thatcher (**not** *Dennis*)

the, leaving "the" out often reads like jargon: say the conference agreed to do something, **not** "conference agreed"; the government has to do, **not** "government has to"; the Super League (rugby), **not** "Super League".

theatre always attach Theatre (cap) to names at first mention

theatregoer

theirs no apostrophe

the then do **not** use expressions such as "*the then Prime Minister*" or (worse) "*the then Mr Callaghan*"; say "then Prime Minister"; "who was Prime Minister at the time" or "Lord

Robinson of Cardiff (then Mr Robinson)"

The Daily Blog almost always use italics for the name of the newspaper, except in headlines.

In text, in the difficult area of correspondents' and executive titles, it is permissible to say "the *Blogs* political correspondent" etc, although "political editor of *The Daily Blog*", "Nairobi correspondent of *The Daily Blog*" etc. are preferable. Always say "editor of *The Daily Blog*", "deputy editor of *The Daily Blog*" etc.

It is permissible to say "a *Blog* reader", "*Blog* readers", but prefer "readers of *The Daily Blog*". Similarly, adjectival uses such as "a *Blog* article", "a *Blog* offer" are acceptable. Keep phrases such as "told *The Daily Blog*" to a minimum: *said* is usually preferable.

thermonuclear

Thermos (proprietary, cap): say **vacuum flask**

they should always agree with the subject. Avoid sentences such as "If someone loves animals, they should protect them". Say instead "If people love animals, they should protect them"

thinktank(s)

Third Reich

Third World (caps) **developing countries** is preferable: *but Third World developing country* is tautologous

thoroughbred, thoroughgoing

threefold, threescore

threshold

throne cap sparingly, only in terms of the institution, **eg**, "he deferred to the wisdom of the Throne"; in other contexts, as with the chair itself, use l/c, **eg**, "The Queen came to the throne in 1952"

thunderbolts are mythological and **do not** exist; **lightning bolts** and **thunderclaps** do exist and can also be used metaphorically. *Note thunderstorm*

thus far avoid; prefer **so far**

Tiananmen Square, Beijing

tidal wave just what it says it is

"tiger" economies of Southeast Asia and the Pacific; use quotes where possible for first mention, subsequently without quotes, and always l/c

time bomb, *but timescale, timeshare. See bombs*

times never write, **eg**, 6pm last night; 9am tomorrow morning; say **6 o'clock** last night or (if the context allows) **6pm**, or **9am tomorrow**. If expressing time using the 24-hour clock write **01.55, 14.00** etc, no "H"

Tinseltown (as in Hollywood), one word

Tipp-Ex (proprietary, cap); say **correcting fluid**

titles the most common mistake is to write Lady Helen Brown etc. when we should say simply Lady Brown

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titles of books, films, discs, programmes etc. avoid initial caps for every word (**eg**, do not write *The Hound Of The Baskervilles*). As a rule of thumb, use l/c for prepositions, conjunctions, definite and indefinite articles; **Do not** cap ‘for’, ‘a’, ‘and’, ‘for’, ‘from’, ‘in’, ‘of’, ‘the’, ‘to’

to be fair, this phrase is a waste of space and its introduction might be seen as casting a hint of doubt on what went before. Please avoid

to-do as in “*what a to-do!*”

toilet write **lavatory** wherever appropriate

together with avoid; prefer simply **with**; also beware such tautology as *blend together*, *meet together*, *link together* etc

Tolkien, J.R.R. (not *Tolkein*)

tomatoes plural (as *potatoes*)

tons, tonne(s) use **tonne(s)** the metric tonne is 1,000kg (2,204.62lb), the British ton is 2,240lb, and the US ton is 2,000lb; usually there is no need to convert
Tonton Macoute (in Haiti); plural **Tontons Macoute**

Top 10, Top 20, Top 40 etc. (in musical or other lists)

top hat

tornado, plural **tornados** (storms); also **Tornado, Tornados** (aircraft)

torpedo, but plural **torpedoes**

tortious / tortuous / torturous what is **tortious** relates to torts (civil wrongs) or to acts that give rise to legal claims for **torts** (tortious interference with a contract). What is **tortuous** is full of *twists* and *turns* (a tortuous road). A **torturous** experience is one that involves *pain* or *suffering*

Torvill (Jayne) and Dean (Christopher)

Tory, Tories acceptable alternative for **Conservative(s)**. **Do not** write *Tory Party* with cap “P”, but **Tory party** is permissible.

totalisator, tote take l/c, no quotes; the **Tote** refers to the organisation

touchdown, touchpaper

towards (not *toward*) with the “s” is the style in British English, without it in American English. The same is true for other directional words, such as **upwards, downwards, forwards**, and **backwards**, as well as **afterwards**.

townhouse (one word) but **town councillor, town hall**

Toys 'R' Us

tracker dogs, sniffer dogs avoid these clichés wherever possible; usually **dogs** is sufficient, but if the context is unclear, say **police dogs, customs dogs**

tracksuit (one word), but **shell suit**

trade-in (noun or adjective), but to **trade in**

trademark (one word)

trade names many names of products in common use are proprietary. They should **not** be used as generics and must be given a capital letter. There is a risk of legal action for failure to do so.

Examples include **Biro, CinemaScope, Dictaphone, Hoover, iPod, Jeep, Kodak, Land Rover, Lycra, Perspex, Polaroid, Portakabin, Portaloo, Rollerblade, Tannoy, Technicolor, Thermos, Walkman, Xerox, Yale lock**; there are many more: use a generic alternative unless there is a very good reason not to. Be especially careful about drugs; try to use non-proprietary words such as **aspirin, sleeping pills** etc

trade unions (plural), (**not** *trades unions*); **trade unionist**

trainspotter, trainspotting (no hyphens)

tranquilliser, tranquillity

transatlantic, transcontinental; *but* **cross-Channel**

transcript a **transcript** is a written record, as of a trial or a radio program: **transcription** is the act or process of creating a transcript

transistor *do not* use on its own in sense of transistor radio

Transit Van (proprietary, caps)

transpire means *to come to light* or *to leak out*. Do not use as an alternative of *to happen* or *occur*

transsexual (no hyphen); *but* **trans-ship**

Trans-Siberian Railway

Transvaal, *but* a **Transvaler**. *See South Africa*

trauma, traumatic avoid in the clichéd sense of *deeply upsetting, distressing* etc; it should be confined to its medical meaning of *severe shock* after an accident or stressful event

travellers, New Age travellers. *See Gypsy, hippy*

traveller's cheques (**not** *checks*)

Trekkers how to refer to *Star Trek* fans unless you want to make fun of them, in which case they are **Trekkies**

trenchcoat

Triads (cap) in Chinese gangster context

Tricolour cap for the French flag, *l/c* in more general context

trillion American for a thousand billion (or a million million, 1,000,000,000,000). *See billion / trillion*

triple crown in rugby.

trolleys plural of **trolley** (**not** *-ies*)

Trooping the Colour (**not** *of the Colour*); also, **beating retreat**

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trooper a soldier in a cavalry regiment or the SAS, but **trouper** a member of a troupe, or dependable worker

Tropics, the (cap); note also the **Tropic of Capricorn / Cancer**, the **Neotropics**, **Neotropical**, *but tropical, subtropical* (l/c)

troubleshooter (one word); also **troublespot**

Truman, Harry S. (former US President)

trumpeters, buglers cavalry regiments have **trumpeters**, infantry regiments have **buglers**. They are **not** interchangeable

try to the verb **try** must be followed by **to** before the next verb, **never** by *and*, **eg**, “I will try to cross the road”, **not** “I will try and cross the road”

Tsar (not *czar*), **Tsarevich**, **Tsaritsa** (not *czarina*); caps with the name, l/c in general sense. But note exceptions for government-appointed co-ordinators such as **drugs czar**, **mental health czar**

tsetse fly

T-shirt (not *tee-shirt*)

tsunami a long high sea wave caused by an underwater earthquake

Tube (cap) acceptable in context on its own for the London Tube, or London Underground. Also cap the various lines such as Central Line, Metropolitan Line, Victoria Line etc

tuberculosis noun, the adjective is **tuberculous** (not *tubercular*)

tug-of-war

tunku (Malaysian prince); cap before name, otherwise l/c. *See Malaysia*

turbo-jet, turbo-prop. *See aircraft*

turgid does **not** mean *apathetic* or *sluggish* — that's **torpid** — but *swollen, congested*, or (when used of language) *pompous* or *bombastic*. **Turbid** water is thick and opaque from churned-up mud (a turbid pond); by extension, **turbid** means *unclear, confused, or disturbed* (a turbid argument)

Turin Shroud (caps), then the **shroud** (l/c)

Turkey parties take the cap, as in Motherland Party, Welfare Party, True Path Party etc

turkish delight

Turkmenistan noun, the adjective is **Turkmen**; its citizens are **Turkmen**, singular **Turkman**

Turkomans (singular noun and adjective is **Turkoman**) are a formerly nomadic central Asian people who now form a minority in Iraq; they speak **Turkmen**

turn down prefer **reject** or **refuse** (except of beds)

turnlines are in bold, set right on the front page (and on inside pages where the story begins and spills) - **eg, Continued on page 2, col 7** - and set left on inside pages, **eg, Continued from page 1**

turn-off, turn-on (nouns), *but* **turnout, turnaround, turnabout**

turnover noun **turn over** verb

Tussaud's, Madame but note the Tussauds Group (no apostrophe), which also includes the London Planetarium, Warwick Castle, Alton Towers and Chessington World of Adventures

Tutankhamun never permit a break as *Tutan-khamun*; if the name has to be broken on a turn, it may be hyphenated as **Tut-ankhamun** or **Tutankh-amun**

Tutsis *See Hutus, Rwanda*

TV *See television*

Twentieth Century Fox (or 20th Century Fox in logo form), **Fox News, Fox Sports** etc. are part of the Fox Entertainment Group

twentysomething, thirtysomething, and fortysomething etc. (if this modern cliché has to be used at all)

21st century

twin towers (of the former World Trade Centre); the **northern tower** and the **southern tower** (all l/c). *See War on Terror*

twofold, threefold, fourfold, tenfold etc

two minutes' silence (the). *See Armistice, Remembrance*

two thirds, three quarters etc, *but* a **two-thirds** share (hyphenate adjectival use). Such expressions usually take the plural verb, **eg**, “three quarters of the children prefer horror films”; the same applies even in “a third of the children prefer swimming”. But *note* “**two thirds** of the bus was empty”

typify, typified etc. (**not** *typefy*)

tying

Tyrol (**not** *Tirol*)

oOOo

U-U-U

U no full point after Burmese prefix, **eg, U** equivalent to Mr; **Nu**

über, ur German prefixes, meaning super and original respectively, no hyphen and lower-case in constructions such as **überbabe**

Uefa (not *UEFA*), Uefa Cup.

Uighur, Uighurs the **Uighur** people, particularly of the Xinjiang region in China

UK acceptable abbreviation for United Kingdom in both text and headlines. But be careful that it is strictly applicable. **United Kingdom** = Great Britain and Northern Ireland. **Britain** or **Great Britain** = England, Wales, Scotland and islands governed from the mainland (ie, **not** Isle of Man or Channel Islands). **British Isles** = United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, Isle of Man and Channel Islands.

Ukraine omit *the*; adjective **Ukrainian**

Ulster permissible, especially in headlines, but use **Northern Ireland** or **the Province** when possible. *See Ireland*

ultimate use sparingly. "Ultimate limit" *means limit*

ultimatums (not *ultimata*) *See referendum*

ultraviolet

Uluru new name for Ayers Rock

umlaut (¨) In German placenames, "ae", "oe" and "ue" should almost always be rendered "ä", "ö", "ü" Family names, however, for the most part became petrified many years ago and there is no way of working out whether the "e" form or the umlaut should be used; you just have to find out for each individual

unbiased

unchristian (l/c) *See Christian terms*

uncooperative

uncoordinated (*but co-ordinate*). *See hyphens*

under-age (hyphenated, as **over-age**)

underestimate, understatement take care that you don't mean **overestimate** or **overstate**

Underground, London. *See Tube*

underreact

under-secretary use hyphen; same caps or l/c rules as for ministers. *See ministers, Politics*
undervalue

underwater one word as adjective, **eg, underwater exploration**; but two words as adverb, **eg, the couple were married under water**

under way (always two words)

underwent surgery a hackneyed term. Avoid. People *have* surgery. Doctors *operate* on them.

Unesco, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation. *See United Nations*

UNHCR the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. *See United Nations*

Unicef the United Nations Children's Fund

uninterested means *not taking an interest*; **not** synonymous with *disinterested*, which means *unbiased, objective*

Union Jack, except in most naval and some ceremonial contexts, when **Union Flag** is correct; *note* that in the Royal Navy, the Union Jack is used only when flown at the **jackstaff**

Unionist cap in Ulster political context. *See Ireland*

unique means *only one*, having *no like or equal*. Do not use except in this specific sense. Phrases such as *very unique, even more unique*, are thus nonsense and are banned

United Nations, or the **UN**; usually no need to spell out even at first mention. Other points:

a. **Secretary-General** of the UN (now **Ban Ki-moon**)

b. **UN Security Council, UN General Assembly** at first mention, and thereafter keep the caps, as in the **Security Council, the General Assembly**

c. UN derivatives such as **Unesco, Unifil, Unprofor** etc. are written thus where the word can be voiced. *See initials*

d. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (**never Commission**) is the organisation, as well as a person. Abbreviate to **UNHCR** after first mention

e. The United Nations World Food Programme, **UNWFP**

United Reformed Church (not *Reform*)

United States (of America) is always followed by a singular verb. Common usage allows abbreviation to **US** in text as well as headlines, but do not ignore the word America. *See America(n), New York, Washington*

universal claims always beware of claiming that something is *the first* or *the last* of its kind, or that someone is *the first person to ...* or *the last surviving member of ...* or *the oldest inhabitant* etc. *See ever, first, superlatives*

Universe cap in planetary context, as Sun, Earth, Moon etc, but *l/c* in phrases such as "she became the centre of his universe". *l/c* for **cosmic ray** (noun), **cosmic-ray** (adjective) *See Earth, solar system*

universities always cap as in Birmingham University (or the University of Birmingham), La Trobe University, the University of East Anglia etc; thereafter, the university *l/c*.

Unknown Soldier, tomb of the

unlawful an unlawful act may be morally innocent (for example, letting a parking meter expire). But an **illegal** act is something that society formally condemns, and an **illicit** act calls to mind moral degeneracy (illicit drug use). Unlike **criminal**, the first three terms can apply to civil wrongs.

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unlikeable, unloveable

unmistakable (not one of those with the middle “e”)

unparalleled

unreadable means writing that is so poorly composed as to be either “incomprehensible” or “intolerably dull.” *See illegible / unreadable*

unshakeable

Untouchables (in Indian caste system), cap

unveil take care with this word, which means to *remove a covering* from something, or (by extension) to *disclose*. It should **not** be used in phrases such as **unveiling** a ship, or **unveiling** a flag

up avoid unnecessary use after verbs, as in *meet up, rest up, end up*. *See down*

upbeat, upgrade, upfront

upcoming despite increasing number of sightings, prefer **forthcoming** or **coming soon**

upmarket, as downmarket

upon take care with use of **up, upon, up on,** and **on**; **eg,** “The cat jumped on the floor, upon the mouse, up on the table, then up the tree”

up to date *but* in an **up-to-date** fashion

Upper House, Lower House

Uruguay Round (caps), the world trade deal. *See Gatt, World Trade Organisation*

US *See America(n), United States*

USAid note capitals

USSR avoid wherever possible; say **Soviet Union** instead (and now only in historical context). *See Russia*

utilise almost always prefer **use**

Utopia, Utopian (cap)

U-turn is an overworked phrase, especially in the political context. Be sparing in its use, particularly when only a minor change of policy direction is involved

Uzbekistan adjective **Uzbek**

oOOo

V-V-V

v (roman, l/c) for versus, **not** vs: England v Australia, Pakistan v India etc

vacuum in common use as a verb, but avoid *Hoover*, a trade name. See *Hoover*, trade names

vagaries means aimless wanderings or eccentric ideas, **not** *vicissitudes* or *changes* (as in weather)

Vajpayee, Atal Behari (Indian politician)

Valentine's Day (normally omit the St), and keep cap for **Valentine card** etc

Valium (proprietary, cap)

Valletta (capital of Malta)

valley cap in full name, such as the Latobe Valley, the Wye Valley etc.

Van in Dutch names is cap when surname alone is given, as in **Van Gogh**, but l/c when used in full, **eg, Vincent van Gogh**. Note Ludwig van Beethoven (**not** *von*), although the composer was German. See *von*

vandyke beard

Vanessa-Mae, the violinist (note hyphen)

various do not use as a pronoun as in "various of the countries protested"; write "**several / many** of the countries ..."

Vaseline (proprietary, cap): use **petroleum jelly**

VE-Day May 8, 1945; **VJ-Day** August 15, 1945

Velcro (proprietary, cap)

veld (**not** *veldt*)

venal open to bribery, but **venial** easily forgiven

venetian blind

Ventricles (**not** *ventricals*) anatomical

veranda (**no** final "h")

verbal means pertaining to *words*, **oral** means pertaining to the *mouth*. Do not confuse. Sadly, corrupted phrases such as *verbal abuse* and *verbal warning* have permeated sports journalism to the point of our having to accept them occasionally, but always try to restrict such use and find an alternative. See *oral*

verbosity watch out for, and eliminate, wordy phrases such as "on the part of" (use **by**), "a large number of" (**many**), "numerous occasions" (**often**), "this day and age" (does not even demand an alternative). Such meaningless expressions have no place with us

verdict do **not** use for civil hearings - **verdicts** come at the end of criminal trials; verdicts are recorded by coroners *but* returned by inquest juries

verger, **virger** the latter to be used in context of St Paul's and Winchester Cathedrals

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vermilion (not *vermillion*)

verruca (not *verucca*)

very one of the most overworked words in English. Always try to do without. It intensifies adverbs and most adjectives (very carefully, very bad), including past-participial adjectives that have more adjectival than verbal force (very bored). *See much / very*

veto, vetoes, vetoed, vetoing

viable do not use as a synonym of *feasible* or *practicable*; it means capable of independent existence

vicar take care not to use as a generic word for *priest*, *parson* or *clergyman*. Vicar means specifically the incumbent of an Anglican Church parish (unless a **rector** or **curate**); if in doubt, **clergyman** is usually a safer word.

vice always hyphenate in its deputy context (**vice-chairman**, **vice-president** of a company etc) but not in its depravity context, **eg, vice squad**. Do not confine the meaning of vice to sex; it is the opposite of virtue and has a correspondingly wide range of meaning

Vice-Chancellor of a university should be capped at first mention, then l/c.

vice versa (roman, no hyphen)

videoconference, videoconferencing (no hyphen)

videotape (one word); but **video cassette, video link, video recorder/recording**. A **video** (for the film recording) is now common usage and permissible

vie, vying

Vietcong who fought the South Vietnamese Government forces and later the US, Korean and Australian allies from 1954-75, similarly **Vietminh** who fought the French for independence; formed in 1941

vintage car is one made between 1919 and 1930; **veteran car** is one made before 1919

Virgil (not *Vergil*)

Virtuality (proprietary, cap); it must **not** be used as a synonym of **virtual reality**

virtuoso singular, **virtuosos** plural

vis-à-vis (roman, hyphens, with accent)

viscounty describes the rank.

vitamin A, B, C etc. (l/c "v")

viz prefer **namely, that is**, or even **ie**,

VJ-Day August 15, 1945, **VE-Day** May 8, 1945

vocal cords (not *chords*)

vocation one's profession or, especially in a religious sense, one's calling (she had a true vocation and became a nun). *See avocation / vocation*

Vodafone (not *Vodaphone*, proprietary, cap)

voiceover (no hyphen)

volcano singular, **volcanoes** plural; similarly **volcanologist** (**not** *vulcanologist*); A volcanologist studies volcanoes while **Vulcan's** are only in the TV and movie versions of Star Trek. *Note* to **vulcanise** (l/c). *See lahar*

volte-face (roman, hyphenated)

von (German) is usually l/c in the middle of a name, and capped only at the beginning of a sentence. *See Van*

vortex singular, **vortexes** plural

VP **never** use as abbreviation of **Vice-President** of the US or other state, or vice-president of a company

oOo

W-W-W

wacky (not *whacky*)

wagon

Wahhabi (not *Wahabi*) Muslim sect

Wahid, Abdurrahman the fourth President of Indonesia (October 20, 1999 to July 23, 2001) and founder of the National Awakening Party (PKB). Also known as **Gus Dur**. In a show of force with the Indonesian military (TNI) the army placed 40,000 troops in Jakarta and placed tanks with their turrets pointing at the Presidential Palace. On 23rd July, 2001 the parliament (MPR) unanimously voted to impeach Wahid and to replace him with Megawati Soekarnoputri as President. Wahid continued to insist that he was the President and stayed for some days in the Presidential Palace but bowed down to reality and left the residence on 25th July

Wales cap North Wales, South Wales, Mid Wales, West Wales.

walked free from court avoid this lazy cliché

Walkman (proprietary, cap); use **personal stereo**

walkout, walking stick

Wall's (ice-cream etc)

Wal-Mart

Wap (as in mobile telephones), short for wireless application protocol (**not WAP**)

war crimes tribunal cap only when using the full title, **the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia**. It sits at The Hague and has a President and a Chief Prosecutor. Be specific in dealing with war crimes: they relate only to the treatment of prisoners in the custody of a military force

war game(s) (two words)

warfarin is not a trade name, so l/c

War in Iraq (1993) Guidance includes: **Arabic names** al-X (l/c "al", with hyphen); **Ayatollah Muhammad Baqr al-Hakim**; "Chemical Ali" **Ali Hassan al-Majid**; **Fedayin** ("men of sacrifice, martyrs"), guerrilla fighters; **flak jacket**; **gas mask**; **the Gulf** (**not Persian Gulf**); **Hojatoleslam Moqtada al-Sadr**, leader of the militia known as **al-Mahdi Army**, on second mention, **Hojatoleslam al-Sadr**; Iraqi Information Minister **Muhammad Said al-Sahhaf**; **Iraqi Governing Council** (governing council, l/c, after first mention); Kurdish region or Kurdish-controlled region, (**not Kurdistan**); **the New Iraqi Army**; **oilfield**, **Oil-for-Food programme**; **Republican Guard** divisions: Medina, Hammurabi and Nida (armoured divisions), Nebuchadnezzar and Baghdad (infantry divisions) and Adnan (mechanised division); **Sunni Triangle**.

Some Iraqi place names: Abu al-Khasib, al-Amarah, Arbil, Diwaniyah, Fallujah, al-Faw, al-Hillah, al-Hindiyyah, Iskandariyah, Karbala, Kirkuk, al-Kufah, al-Kut, Mosul, Najaf, al-Nasiriyah,

al-Numaniyah, Ramadi, Rumaila, al-Shatrah, Sulaimaniyah, Tikrit, Umm Qasr, Zakho. *See War on Terror*

warn is a transitive verb that requires a direct personal object; in other words, a person has to warn somebody about something. **Do not** say "The Chancellor warned that taxes would rise"; say "The Chancellor gave warning that/issued a warning that ...", or alternatively, "The Chancellor warned MPs that ...". Try always to find an object with the verb; **eg**, X warned the City that ... , Y warned voters that ... , rather than the somewhat cumbersome "gave warning" formula. As an alternative that can be transitive or intransitive, use **caution**: "He cautioned that warn could not be used here." We can afford some flexibility in headlines where, **eg**, "Teachers warn of school closures" would be acceptable.

War on Terror if the caps on War on Terror look obtrusive or overused, adopt a l/c alternative such as war against terrorism. Frequently used names and terms arising from the terrorist attacks against the US on September 11, 2001, include: **Osama bin Laden**; **al-Qaeda** (his terrorist group); **al-Jazeera** (news network); **burka** (prefer to *burqa*); **Pashtuns** (biggest ethnic group in Afghanistan — they speak **Pashto**); **Loya Jirga** (Afghan national council that meets irregularly); **special forces** (l/c) of the US or UK in generic sense; **twin towers** (of the former World Trade Centre; *note* the **northern tower** and the **southern tower**, all l/c); **Ground Zero**; **King Zahir Shah** (returned Afghan King; King Zahir at subsequent mentions); **Mullah Muhammad Omar** (supreme leader of **the Taliban**; Mullah Omar at subsequent mentions). *Note* also **Camp X-Ray** at **Guantanamo Bay** (no accent), Cuba (replaced by **Camp Delta** in April 2002)

warrant officers in the British, Australian and New Zealand Armies, regimental sergeant major and company sergeant major are warrant officer ranks (between the NCOs and commissioned officers)

wars cap the First World War, Second World War, Cold War, Crimean War, Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Six Day War (no hyphen), the Gulf War (1991) etc; *but* prefer the **Falklands conflict** because war was never formally declared; if the phrase has to be used, write Falklands war (l/c)

warships take care with the following distinction: to serve **in** a warship, but **on** a merchant ship; a naval officer is **appointed** to serve **in** *HMS Sheffield*, and **not** *posted* to serve.

wartime

Washington not usually necessary to add DC (as in Washington DC), but occasionally useful to distinguish it from Washington State (caps). The same applies to New York City and New York State

washout (one word)

waste usually better to write **waste** than *wastage*, which means *the process of loss*, or its amount or rate

wastepaper bin / basket

watchdog

watercolour, watercolourist, watercourse, watermark, waterproof, waterworks
water lily (two words), but artistic convention uses one word in Monet's *Waterlilies* paintings

wear say **menswear, women's wear, children's wear, sportswear**

web, webpage, website, world wide web

week, weekend the week ends on Saturday night. Common sense will dictate whether to say **last week, this week, next week** etc. Beware of references to "at the weekend" in Monday papers: always make clear whether you mean the weekend just past or next Saturday and Sunday. The phrase "this weekend" should refer only to the coming weekend

weigh anchor means to raise a vessel's anchor, **not** to *drop it*.

weights and measures abbreviations context will determine when to shorten kilometres, grams etc. "He was 1.5m" (**not** *ms*, and no space between number and abbreviation); *but* "she stood one metre from the kerb". Similarly, "she weighed 85kg" (**not** *kgs*); *but* "he was several kilograms overweight".

Weight Watchers (proprietary, cap)

Welch / Welsh take care with **The Royal Welch Fusiliers**, but **Welsh Guards** (part of The Guards Division); but **welch** to fail to honour an obligation, **not** *welsh*

welfare state (l/c);

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wellbeing

wellington boots (l/c)

wellwisher (do not hyphenate)

west, western, westerner, but the West, the West Coast (US), a **westerner** etc; for when to cap in geographical context, *see compass points*

West Bank

West, the (in global political sense); similarly, **Western leaders, Western Europe** etc

western (l/c for cowboy films)

wheelchair say (if relevant) that someone uses a wheelchair, **not** that they are “in a wheelchair” or “wheelchair-bound” — stigmatising and offensive, as well as inaccurate

whence means “from where”. **Never** write “from whence”

whereabouts is singular, **eg**, “his whereabouts is not known”. Prefer “nobody knows where he is”

whether rarely needs *or not* to follow it

which *See that*

while (not *whilst*)

whingeing (with middle “e”)

whips cap **Chief Whip, Whips' Office**, but l/c the unspecific, **eg**, a government whip.

whisky (from Scotland), **Scotch** as alternative; but **whiskey** (from Ireland and America). *See Scotch*

whistle-blower

whistle-stop (tour etc)

Whitbread Round the World Race (note caps, no hyphens)

White Cliffs of Dover (caps)

white-collar workers

White Paper (caps), as with **Green Paper**; these should not be capped, however, with anything other than a White Paper/Green Paper issued by the Government. A “white paper” from the Opposition should be styled thus — quotes and l/c first mention, thereafter just l/c. *See Green Paper, Politics*

whiz-kid only one “z”, but use this colloquialism sparingly

WHO spell out at first mention, World Health Organisation, then **the WHO**

who, whom which of these to use is determined solely by its function in the relative clause. Remember that **whom** has to be the object of the verb in the relative clause. Thus, “she is the woman whom the police wish to interview” (ie, the police wish to interview HER, not SHE); the other most common use of **whom** is after a preposition such as “by”, “with” or “from”, **eg**, “the person from **whom** he bought a ticket”.

Beware of traps, however: “**Who** do you think did it?” is correct (**not** *whom*, because who is the subject of

“did it”, not the object of “do you think”); and “Give it to **whoever** wants it” is correct (**not** *whomever*) because **whoever** is the subject of the verb wants.

Beware too of constructions such as “he squirted ammonia at a van driver **who** [correct] he believed had cut him off” (where “he believed” is simply an interjection; “who” is not the object of “he believed” but the subject of the subordinate clause, “who ... had cut him off”)

whodunnit (**not** *whodunit*)

who's is a contraction (Who is first?), **whose** is a possessive (Whose car is that?). Unlike *who* and *whom*, **whose** may refer to things as well as people (the FBI, whose jurisdiction includes intellectual property crime)

why usually superfluous after “reason”, **eg**, “the reason he did it was ...”, **not** “the reason why he did it was ...”

wicketkeeper

wide no hyphen in compounds such as **countrywide**, **nationwide**, **worldwide**, **wideranging** *but* **wide awake**

widow (woman), **widower** (man); never say “widow of the late John Jones”; she is the “widow of John Jones”

Wi-Fi (proprietary, cap); use **wireless computer network**

wildfowl, **wildlife**

Wild West

Wimbledon caps for the Centre Court, No 1 Court, No 14 Court etc.

wind with strong winds, give a description as well as force number (in numerals), **eg**, storm force 10 (add "on the Beaufort scale" where appropriate. The scale grades wind speeds from 0 to 12; Americans use the scale to 17). So write, **eg**, force 4 (l/c, numeral), up to force 7; thereafter; gale force 8, severe gale force 9, storm force 10, violent storm force 11 and hurricane force 12

wind farm (two words)

wines l/c in most cases, for both the type and the grape, except where it would look out of place; so say, **eg**, bordeaux, burgundy, champagne, claret, moselle, alsace, rioja, but a Côtes du Rhône, a Hunter Valley chardonnay. Cap when referring specifically to the wine-growing region, **eg**, “I prefer a good burgundy to an alsace, but I think the best wines still come from Bordeaux”; “he preferred to buy his champagne only in Champagne”

wine bar (two words)

Winnie-the-Pooh has hyphens

Winslet, Kate

wipeout noun **wipe out** verb

wish list (no hyphen)

wistaria (**not** *wisteria*)

witch-hunt, *but* **witchcraft** and **witchdoctor**

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withhold (not *withold*)

witnesses in British and Australian courts witnesses go into the witness box and give evidence; they **do not** take the stand and testify. In the general sense, prefer **witness** to *eyewitness* wherever possible. See *eyewitness*

wits' end

wiz as in “she’s a total **wiz** at maths”, (not *whiz* or *whizz*)

woebegone, woeful

women doctors, women teachers etc. adopt the plural through common usage. See *feminine designations*

Woolworths no apostrophe either in formal name for business contexts or colloquial use for the store and products

word-processor, word-processing (hyphens)

workaholic, as **shopaholic**, but *note chocoholic*

workers; farmworkers, metalworkers and **roadworkers** each one word, *but* two for **car workers, oil workers, office workers** etc

workforce, workshop, work-to-rule

workout (one word); also **workrate**

world avoid, wherever possible, phrases such as the fashion world; the theatre world; the cricket world etc

World Bank its President is Robert Zoellick (2007)

World Cup (football, cricket, rugby)

World Heritage Site (caps)

World Trade Centre, Ground Zero *but* the twin towers

World Trade Organisation (WTO), the successor body to Gatt. See *Gatt, Uruguay Round*

worldwide but **world wide web**

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) (not *Worldwide*; nor *World Wildlife Fund*, its old name); the general adjective is **worldwide**. See *WWF*

worthwhile (one word) often used where simply **worth** would be better, **eg**, “the programme was worth recording”

wrack means *seaweed* or *wreckage* and must not be used as a synonym of *torture*; thus, **racked by doubts** etc. See *racked*

wreaked (not *wrought*) *havoc, heavy damage, vengeance* etc

write-off (noun), **write-up** (noun), *but* a **writedown** (in business context)

writes with written-in bylines, prefer the construction **Ann Jones writes** to *writes Ann Jones*. Use the

singular with, **eg**, (Our Foreign Staff writes). Normal style is to use the brackets on news and sports pages, the italics on features

wrong / wrongful these terms are not interchangeable. **Wrong** means *immoral, unlawful* (it's wrong to bully smaller children), and *improper, incorrect, unsatisfactory* (the answers are wrong). **Wrongful** means *unjust, unfair* (wrongful conduct) and *unsanctioned by law* or having no legal right (it was a wrongful demand on the estate)

wrongdoer, wrongdoing, but wrong-footed, wrong-headed

WWF is now the name of what was the World Wide Fund for Nature and for legal reasons must not be used for the *World Wrestling Federation* (say **the federation** if a shorter form for the wrestling group is needed). See *World Wide Fund for Nature*

ooo

X-X-X

X chromsome (no hyphen)

xenophobe, xenophobia, xenophobic, xenophile

Xerox (proprietary, cap)

Xhosa singular (**not Khosa**), **Xhosas** plural, the Bantu tribe in South Africa

Xi'an city in China where the Terracotta Warriors are located

Xmas must **not** be used (unless part of special title or in a direct quote etc)

X-rated

x-ray, x-rayed while fully acceptable as an abbreviation of *x-ray examination* in a general context, is not normally used in medical literature, where writers would more likely speak of *obtaining an x-ray film*, or a **radiograph**. To irradiate refers to **radiation therapy**. It can also be used as a verb, **to x-ray** someone. *Note*, however, **Camp X-Ray** at **Guantanamo Bay**, Cuba (now replaced by **Camp Delta**). *See War on Terror*

oOOo

Y-Y-Y

Y chromosome (no hyphen)

Yahoo! (the internet company. Note exclamation mark)

Yangtze (not *Yangtse*)

Yardies (West Indian criminal gangs)

Year 1, Year 3, Year 12 etc. in schooling contexts

Yellow Pages italics for the book; proprietary, cap, but roman for the organisation

Yemen (not *the Yemen*)

“**yes**” vote, “**no**” vote. But *See affirmative, in the (in the negative)*

yeti (l/c), the abominable snowman

YMCA, YWCA

yoghurt

yo-yo

yoke (oxen), **yolk** (egg); **never** confuse

Young Turks (caps)

your / yours / you're the possessive adjective form of you is **your**: **yours** is the possessive pronoun (no apostrophe): **you're** is the contraction for *you are*

yuan, the Chinese currency, rather than the *renminbi*

Yudhoyono, Susilo Bambang (Dr) the sixth President of Indonesia. Yudhoyono won the presidency in September 2004 and was sworn into office on October 20, 2004. He is a retired military general. He is widely known by the initials **SBY**. Javanese do not have surnames in the Western sense and the name Yudhoyono was not inherited. He is referred to as Dr. Yudhoyono. **Susilo** is apparently derived from *Susila* in Sanskrit which means “well-behaved”

Yugoslav is the adjective from **Yugoslavia** (not *Yugoslavian*). Write **Yugoslav Army**, not *Serb Army*. The remaining portions of Yugoslavia combined (February 2003) into a loose confederation named **Serbia and Montenegro**

yuletide (l/c)

yuppie, noun or adjective

Yves Saint Laurent (not St)

oOOo

Z-Z-Z

Zahir Shah, the returned Afghan King; **King Zahir** at subsequent mention. *See War on Terror*

Zaire after the overthrow of **President Mobutu** in May 1997 call the country at first mention the **Democratic Republic of Congo** (formerly Zaire), and thereafter simply **Congo**. The former **French Congo** should be called **Congo-Brazzaville**

Zambezi (not *Zambesi*)

Zanu (PF) (not *Zanu-PF*) party in Zimbabwe

Zapatero, José Luis Rodríguez the Spanish Socialist leader and Prime Minister. Contrary to convention, **Señor Zapatero** on second mention

-ze in almost all cases use the “-ise” ending rather than the “-ize”. Two of the main exceptions are **capsize** and **synthesizer**

Zeitgeist (cap, italic), means “the spirit of the times”

zeppelin (l/c for the airship)

zero singular **zeros** plural

Zeta-Jones, Catherine (hyphen)

ziggurat

zigzag, zigzagging

Zimmer frame is a trademark, so cap

zloty Polish unit of currency

zodiac, zodiacal (l/c, as in signs of the zodiac)

zoo cap as in London Zoo, Dudley Zoo; thereafter, **the zoo**

oOOo

Proofreading and manuscript editing

The advent of the personal computer has seen significant changes in the way in which publications are produced. While the majority of proofing and editing is done directly on screen nowadays, there is still a need to be familiar with the traditional proofreading marks used in the publishing industry.

This brief section has been included for those who work beyond the level of writing and editing.

Although this chapter is addressed largely to those who proofread on paper, works to be published in a form other than print on paper must be checked with equal care.

No matter who checks proofs, painstaking reading and consistent marking remain essential.

A record must be kept of when each stage of proof has been corrected and by whom; the best record is a set of carefully marked proofs, preferably dated and signed.

Master proofs

The master proofs are the single set of proofs marked and returned to the typesetter. If proofs other than the master set are corrected, all marks should be transferred to the master set.

Some publishers send the master set to the author; others send a duplicate and then transfer the author's corrections to the master set. After the typesetter has made the corrections, the publisher should retain the master set as a record until the work has been published.

The person responsible for the editing of the publication is also advised to keep a set of the final set he or she has prepared should there be any dispute at a later date over what was and what was not marked up.

Reading against copy

In proofreading parlance, "copy" refers to the edited manuscript. If type has been set from electronic files, proofs should be checked against the version of the manuscript that contains the author's final changes and responses to queries.

If type has been set from a paper-only manuscript, hence totally rekeyed, the proofreader must read word for word against the edited manuscript, noting all punctuation, paragraphing, capitalisation, italics, and so forth and ensuring that any handwritten editing has been correctly interpreted.

Whether type has been set from electronic files or from paper, the proofreader must mark only the proofs, never the manuscript, which is now known as a "dead" (or "foul") copy.

Spelling

The proofreader should watch for the kind of errors missed by computer spell checkers—"it's" where "its" is meant, "out" where "our" is meant, "hat" instead of "that", "you're" instead of "your" and so forth—as well as any other misspellings.

Typeface and font

All material in italics, boldface, small capitals, or any font different from that of the regular text should be looked at to be sure the new font starts and stops as intended.

Page numbers and running heads

Page numbers and running heads must be checked to ensure that they are present where they are supposed to be and absent where they are not, that the correct page number appears following a blank

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page, and that the typesetter (or designer) has followed instructions as to what should appear on a recto (right-hand or facing page), a verso (left-hand or trailing page), or a double-page spread.

Running heads must be both proofread and checked for placement

Illustrations and tables

The proofreader must verify that all illustrations appear in the correct location in the text, in the right size, right side up, not “flopped” (turned over left to right, resulting in a mirror image), and with their own captions.

Captions should be read as carefully as the text. Tables must be proofread both for content and for alignment. Where an illustration or a table occupies a full page, no running head or page number should appear; but if several full pages of illustrations or tables appear in sequence, the proofreader may request that page numbers, and sometimes running heads as well, be added to better orientate readers.

If an illustration or a table is still to come, the proofreader must mark the proof (e.g., “fig. 2 here”) and ensure that enough space is left in the text to accommodate it. If there are lists of illustrations and tables, all captions and titles should be checked against the lists, and page numbers must be added.

At this stage, someone must check that all needed permissions and credits for illustrations are in hand. If any are missing, material may have to be dropped or replaced.

Overall appearance

Each page or, better, each pair of facing pages should be checked for length, vertical spacing, position of running heads and page numbers, and so forth. Conformity to design must be verified.

Such apparent impairments as fuzzy type, incomplete letters, and blocks of type that appear lighter or darker than the surrounding text may be due to poor photocopying. If in doubt, the proof reader may query “Type OK?” or “Too dark?”

When four or more lines end with a hyphen or the same word, word spacing should be adjusted to prevent such “stacks.” A page should not begin with the last line of a paragraph unless it is full measure and should not end with the first line of a new paragraph.

Nor should the last word in any paragraph be broken—that is, hyphenated, with the last part of the word beginning a new line. To correct any of these occurrences, page length may be adjusted. (A very short line at the top of a page is known as a “widow”; a single word or part of a word at the end of a paragraph is an “orphan.”)

Adjusting page length

Although facing pages of text must align, it is usually acceptable for each page in a two-page spread to run a line or two long or short to avoid “widows” and “orphans” or to accommodate corrections.

For example, if a correction on page 68 requires an added line, the typesetter may be asked to add space above a subhead on page 69 so that the two pages finish up the same length. Type can sometimes be rerun more loosely or more tightly to add (“save”) or eliminate (“lose”) a line.

Sense

The proofreader must query—or correct, if possible—illogical, garbled, repeated, or missing text. Any rewriting, however, must be limited to the correction of fact or of gross syntactical error, since all source checking and substantive and stylistic changes should have been done at the editing stage.

No change should be made that would alter page makeup, since repagination not only is expensive but, for books, can affect the index

Assigning responsibility for error

The proofreader may be asked to distinguish between errors introduced by the typesetter and errors that were left uncorrected in the manuscript or even introduced during editing.

In such cases, corrections should be accompanied by codes determined by the publisher or typesetter, such as PE (printer's error), AA (author's alteration), and EA (editor's alteration). All such codes should be circled

Author's alterations (AAs)

A publisher's contract may allow an author to make, without penalty, alterations in proof in terms of a percentage of the initial cost of the typesetting.

Since the cost of corrections is far higher relatively than that of the original typesetting, an AA allowance of (for example) 5 percent does not mean that 5 percent of the proof may be altered.

An author may be asked to pay the cost of AAs beyond the AA allowance stipulated in the contract. Page numbers added to cross-references in proof are usually considered AAs.

Corrections of errors uncaught in editing are considered AAs if the author reviewed and approved the edited manuscript.

Correction of an error introduced into the manuscript by the publisher after the author's review—made by the manuscript editor, for example, in entering the author's final adjustments—is an editor's alteration (EA) and not chargeable to the author.

Supplying page numbers in lists of tables and illustrations and in running heads to notes constitutes an EA.

Galley proofs

Galley proofs are rarely now used. Traditionally they are proofs from a printer in a long, single-column strip, not in page or sheet form. Traditionally this is the way that typesetting was supplied and it was then cut and waxed down for shooting to film and then platemaking.

Nowadays proofs are likely to require many corrections they will generally be supplied in sheet or page format. Generally these modern day "galleys" do not include illustrations or running heads (which will be inserted when corrected galleys are made up into page proofs).

They do include text, chapter or article headings, subheads, tables, notes, and all other typeset matter. They should be read and marked with the same care as any other first proofs.

Revised proofs

After corrections have been entered on first proofs, a set of revised proofs is usually issued. They should be clearly marked as "revised proofs" to distinguish them from the first set which are now termed "foul" proofs.

This second set must be compared with the first set to be sure all corrections have been properly typeset.

Only the passages that contain corrected or new material need be proofread, but the proofreader should scan whatever has been rerun (lines whose opening and closing words do not correspond to the first proofs), since hyphenation or even page makeup may have been changed.

If all rerun copy has been circled or bracketed, the proofreader can check revised proof more efficiently. Any corrections that have resulted in repagination may require adjustment to the index.

To maintain a proper record, nothing must be marked on the "foul" proofs at this stage; any final corrections must be marked only on the revised proofs. The proofreader should bear in mind that any

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errors not caught at this stage may have to go uncorrected

Where to mark

Corrections to proof must always be written in the left or right margin, next to the line concerned. A mark must also be placed in the text—a caret for an addition, a line through a letter or word to be deleted or replaced—to indicate where a correction is to be made.

Never should a correction be written between the lines, where it could be missed. If a line requires two or more corrections, these should be marked in the margin in the order in which they occur, separated by vertical lines.

A guideline should be used only when a correction cannot be written next to the line in which it occurs.

Major changes

Where many errors occur in a line or two, the whole passage should be crossed out and rewritten correctly in the margin. Longer changes should be typed on separate sheets, clearly labeled to show where they are to be inserted, and attached to the proof. A note in the margin should refer to the attachment.

Every effort must be made to match the number of words in the new material to the number deleted from the old, so as not to affect page length. Material to be transposed from one page to another should be so marked in the margin; proofs must never be literally cut and pasted.

Color and legibility

Red proof markings are often preferred for visibility, but any color will do as long as the corrections are distinct from any typesetter's query. All corrections must be written clearly in upper- and lowercase letters.

Either a pen or an erasable pencil may be used; in either case, the proofreader must be prepared to eradicate unwanted marks. Messy corrections may lead to further errors.

If a small number of late-stage proof corrections must be transmitted to the typesetter by fax, the marks must be dark enough to transmit clearly, and they must not extend to the edges of the paper lest they be incomplete on the recipient's copy.

For this purpose a blue pencil is not advisable as many fax machines will not detect blue.

Proofreader's marks

The marks explained in the following paragraphs and illustrated in at the end of this chapter are commonly understood by typesetters working in English. Other instructions provided by printers and publishers are unlikely to differ much from what is given here.

Note that all verbal instructions to the typesetter—such as “see attached typescript” as well as “ital” or “rom”—are best circled. Otherwise such words, even if abbreviated, may be erroneously keyed in.

Deleting copy

To remove a letter, a word, or more, draw a diagonal line through a letter or a straight line through a word and write the “delete” mark in the margin. No part of the text should be obliterated.

A punctuation mark that is to be removed should be circled rather than crossed through, so that it is still visible to the typesetter. The form of the delete mark in the margin should be made in such a way as not to be confused with a “d”, an “e”, or an “l”.

The mark for “delete and close up” should be used when a letter or a hyphen is deleted from within a word. The delete mark is used only when something is to be removed. When something is to be substituted for the deleted matter, it is simply written in the margin next to the line or lines that have been

struck through.

Deleting space

To delete space between letters or words, use the “close-up” mark in the text as well as in the margin.

Adding or adjusting space

To call for more space between words or letters, insert a vertical line in the text where the space is to be inserted and make a space mark (#) in the margin. The “space” mark is also used to show where more vertical space (or “leading,” a term derived from the lead that was used in hot-metal typesetting) is needed between lines.

All words in the same line should be separated by the same amount of space, though the spacing will vary from line to line in justified setting. When word spaces within a line are unequal, insert carets in the problem areas of the text and write the “equal-space” mark (eq, #) in the margin.

Paragraphs

To indicate a new paragraph, insert an L-shaped mark in the text to the left and partly under the word that is to begin a new paragraph and write the “paragraph” mark (¶) in the margin. To run two paragraphs together, draw a line in the text from the end of one paragraph to the beginning of the next and write “run in” in the margin.

Indentation

To indent a line one em space from the left or right margin, draw a small square (□) to the left of the material to be indented and repeat the square in the margin. To indent two or more ems, draw a rectangle divided into two or more squares. To indent more than one line, draw a line down from the square.

Moving type

Use the marks for moving type right (]) or left ([) or for centering ([]) when a line of type, a title, an item in a table, or a letter appears too far to the left or right. Use the marks for moving type up () or down () when something appears vertically out of place. All these marks must be inserted in the text as well as in the margin.

Marking for flush left or right

To indicate that an indented line of type should start flush left (at the left-hand margin), insert a move-left ([) mark at the left of the first word in that line and write “fl” (flush left) in the margin, circled. To indicate that an element should appear flush right, do the same thing but with the move-right (]) mark and marginal “fr.”

Alignment

The mark for vertical alignment (||) is used mainly to indicate inaccurate alignment in tabular matter.

Transposing

To move letters, words, phrases, lines, paragraphs, or any other material from one place to another, use the “transpose” mark in the text and write “tr” (circled) in the margin.

Spelling out

When abbreviations or numerals are to be spelled out, circle them in the line and write the

“spell-out” mark (circled “sp”) in the margin. If there is any ambiguity about the spelling write the full word in the margin.

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“Stet”

To undelete or restore something that has earlier been marked for deletion or correction, place a row of dots in the text under the material that is to remain, cross out the marginal mark or correction, and write “stet” (“let it stand”)—or to avoid any ambiguity, “stet as set”—in the margin, circled.

Capitalization and font

To lowercase a capital letter, draw a slash through the letter and write “lc” in the margin. To capitalise a lowercase letter, draw three lines under it and write “cap” in the margin.

For small caps, draw two lines under the letters or words and write “sc” in the margin. For italics, draw a single line under the word or words and write “ital” in the margin. To remove italics, circle the italicised word or words and write “rom” in the margin.

For boldface, draw a wavy line under the word or words and write “bf” in the margin. To remove boldface, circle the boldface word or words and write “not bf” in the margin. All these marginal instructions must be circled.

Punctuation and accents

To change a punctuation mark, circle it and write the correct mark in the margin. To add a mark, insert a caret and write the mark in the margin.

Lest they be missed or misinterpreted, all punctuation marks in the margin may be clarified thus: a comma should have a caret over it; an apostrophe or a quotation mark should have an inverted caret under it; a parenthesis should have two short horizontal lines through it; a period should be circled; semicolons and colons should be followed by a short vertical line; question marks and exclamation points should be accompanied by the circled word “set”; and hyphens, en dashes, em dashes, and minuses should be differentiated by their appropriate symbols).

If an accent or a diacritical mark is missing or incorrect, the entire letter should be crossed out in the text and written in the margin with its correct accent; never must the accent alone appear in the margin.

For clarity, the name of any unusual accent or diacritical mark (eg, “breve”) should also be written and circled in the margin.

Bluelines

Bluelines, or “blues,” are photographic proofs in the form of unbound signatures furnished not by the typesetter but by the printer. They are normally checked only for completeness of contents; page sequence; margins; location, sizing, position, and cropping (if any) of illustrations; and any spots or smudges.

Any correction that would involve typesetting should be avoided at this stage for reasons of schedule and expense.

Bluelines should therefore not be treated as revised proofs. Only to avoid such a grave error as an incorrect title or a misspelled author’s name should a typesetting correction be made in blues.

Digital proofs, generated by a technology different from that used for bluelines, should be checked in the same way as blues except that it is not necessary to check for spots and smudges (film imperfections that result from handling), which do not occur in digital proofs.

Folded and gathered sheets

Folded and gathered sheets (F&Gs), also called “press sheets”, are not proofs but the first printed sheets of a book or journal. (For full-color illustrations, press sheets are occasionally sent to the publisher to

approve before the entire work is printed.)

By the time the publisher sees a complete set of F&Gs, copies of the work are off the press and may be in the bindery. Since any correction at this stage would involve reprinting an entire signature, the publisher may prefer to turn a blind eye or, if absolutely necessary, resort to an errata sheet

oOOo

Traditional proofreaders' marks

Operational Signs

	Delete
	Close up; delete space
	Delete and close up (use only when deleting letters <i>within</i> a word)
	Let it stand
#	Insert space
	Make space between words equal; make space between lines equal
	Insert hair space
	Letterspace
	Begin new paragraph
	Indent type one em from left or right
	Move right
	Move left
	Center
	Move up
	Move down
	Flush left
	Flush right
	Straighten type; align horizontally
	Align vertically
	Transpose
	Spell out

Typographical Signs

	Set in italic type
	Set in roman type
	Set in boldface type
	Set in lowercase
	Set in capital letters
	Set in small capitals
	Wrong font; set in correct type
	Check type image; remove blemish
	Insert here or make superscript
	Insert here or make subscript

PUNCTUATION MARKS

	Insert comma
	Insert apostrophe or single quotation mark
	Insert quotation marks
	Insert period
	Insert question mark
	Insert semicolon
	Insert colon
	Insert hyphen
	Insert em dash
	Insert en dash
	Insert parentheses

A proofed page marked up by hand

This is how a page of a manuscript would look after being proofread and marked up by hand.

] Authors /s Proofreaders [

(fl) ["I don't care what kind of type you use for my book," a myopic author once said to the publisher, but please print the proofs in large type. With current technology, such a request no longer sounds ridiculous to those familiar with typesetting and printing.¹ Yet even today, type is not reset except to correct errors. Proofreading is an ~~art and a craft~~. All authors should know the rudiments thereof though no proofreader expects them to be masters of it. Watch proofreader expects them to be masters of it. Watch not only for misspelled or incorrect words (often a most illusive error but also for misplaced spaces, "unclosed" quotation marks and parenthesis, and improper paragraphing; and learn to recognize the difference between an em dash—used to separate an interjectional part of a sentence—and an en dash [used commonly] between continuing numbers e.g., pp. 5–10; & d. 1165(70) and the word dividing hyphen. Whatever is underlined in a (MS) should, of course, be italicized in print. Two lines drawn beneath letters or words indicate that these are to be reset in small capitals/three lines indicate full capitals. To find the errors overlooked by the proofreader is the author's first problem in proofreading. The second ~~problem~~ is to make corrections using the marks and symbols, devised by professional proofreaders, that any trained typesetter will understand. The third—and most difficult—problem for authors proofreading their own works is to resist the temptation to rewrite in proofs.

(caps + sc)

Manuscript editor

¶ 1. With electronic typesetting systems, type can be reduced in size, or enlarged.

Hand edited manuscript page

How an Editor marks a Manuscript

EDITING A MANUSCRIPT, whether in the form of a typescript or a computer printout, requires a different method ^{from} that used in correcting proof. A correction or an operational sign ^{is} inserted in a line of type, ^{not} in the margin as in proof reading. The operator ^{follows each} looks at every line of the manuscript word for word, ^{and} so any editor's change must be in its proper place and clearly written.

Ans: Ok?

□ Specific Marks

□ A caret ^{between two words} shows where additional material is to be inserted. ^{three} lines under a lowercase letter tell the typesetter to make it a capital: ² lines mean a small capital (A.D.); one line means italic; a wavy line means boldface; and a stroke through a capital letter means lowercase. Unwanted underlining ^{is removed} thus. A small circle around a comma indicates a period. A straight line between parts of a closed compound, or between two words accidentally run together, will request space between the two words ^{to be doubly sure, add a spacemark as well}. ^{two short} parallel lines mean a hyphen is to be added between two words, ^{as in two-thirds of a welldone fish.}

run in

A circle around an abbrev. or numeral instructs the typesetter to spell it out. ^{that are} Abbreviations, ambiguous or not likely to be recognized by a typesetter should be spelled out by the editor (Biol. || Biology or Biological; gen. || gender, genitive, or genus) as should figures that might be spelled out more than one way (2500 || twenty-five hundred or two thousand five hundred). Dots

equals signs

equals sign

under a crossed-out word or passage mean stet (let it stand). Hyphens appearing when dashes should be used ^{except double hyphens} representing an em dash--should always be marked; otherwise a hyphen may be used between continuing numbers like 15-18 or may confusingly be used to set off parenthetical matter. Whenever it is ambiguous or likely to confuse the typesetter, an end-of-line hyphen should be underlined or crossed out so that the typesetter will know whether to retain the hyphen in the line or close up the word.

A manuscript marked up on a computer

A *redlined* manuscript page, illustrating some alternative ways to show editing. Changed or added words are underlined, double-underlined, or highlighted; deletions are shown by horizontal strike-through lines or by slashes. In a manuscript, changes would be expressed in a uniform manner, usually determined by the software used. A manuscript may be almost literally redlined if a color printer is used; substituted words will appear in red or some other color

~~<ct>How and an Editor marks Marks an Electronic Manuscript</ct>~~

~~EDITING~~ Editing an electronic manuscript is a more straightforward process than editing on paper. One could say it's a binary process; most markup is a matter of indicating one of two things: delete, or add. The trick is showing an author what you've done to an author and communicating stylistic instructions to the compositor.

~~<a>Specific Marks Showing Your Work~~

An electronic manuscript should first be cleaned up to get rid of extra spaces, errant hard returns, and superfluous formatting. This may be done "silently." Subsequent modifications can be communicated using the features built into most word-processing programs. Deleted text is most often struck through, like this; added text, underlined or double underlined. Often, a vertical line will appear in the margin next to a line that has been altered. Some programs have been designed to slash through ~~deleted~~ text or to highlight additions or other changes. Make sure your presentation is legible (a hyphen, for example, cannot be struck through with a midlevel horizontal line; ~~strike out~~ strike out the whole compound instead and replace it with the corrected text). Choose a method that is easy to clean up. An editor should be able to remove redlining in just a few steps, certain that words will not be "glued together" or inadvertently deleted. Though the dream of a universal standardization for electronic text has yet to be achieved, what you see is what you get. SMALL CAPITALS, ~~boldface~~, boldface, *italics*—even em dashes and en dashes (e.g., 2003–2010)—not to mention special characters of an ever-increasing variety, may be communicated by software rather than description or coding. If you do need to comment, there are a variety of options for inserting "marginal" comments to authors. Built-in comment-annotation functions or embedded footnotes,^A being easiest to remove from a manuscript before publication, are often preferred to bracketed comments inserted in the text.

~~<a>Markup~~

The other aspect of online editing involves markup, described by a longtime copyeditor as follows:

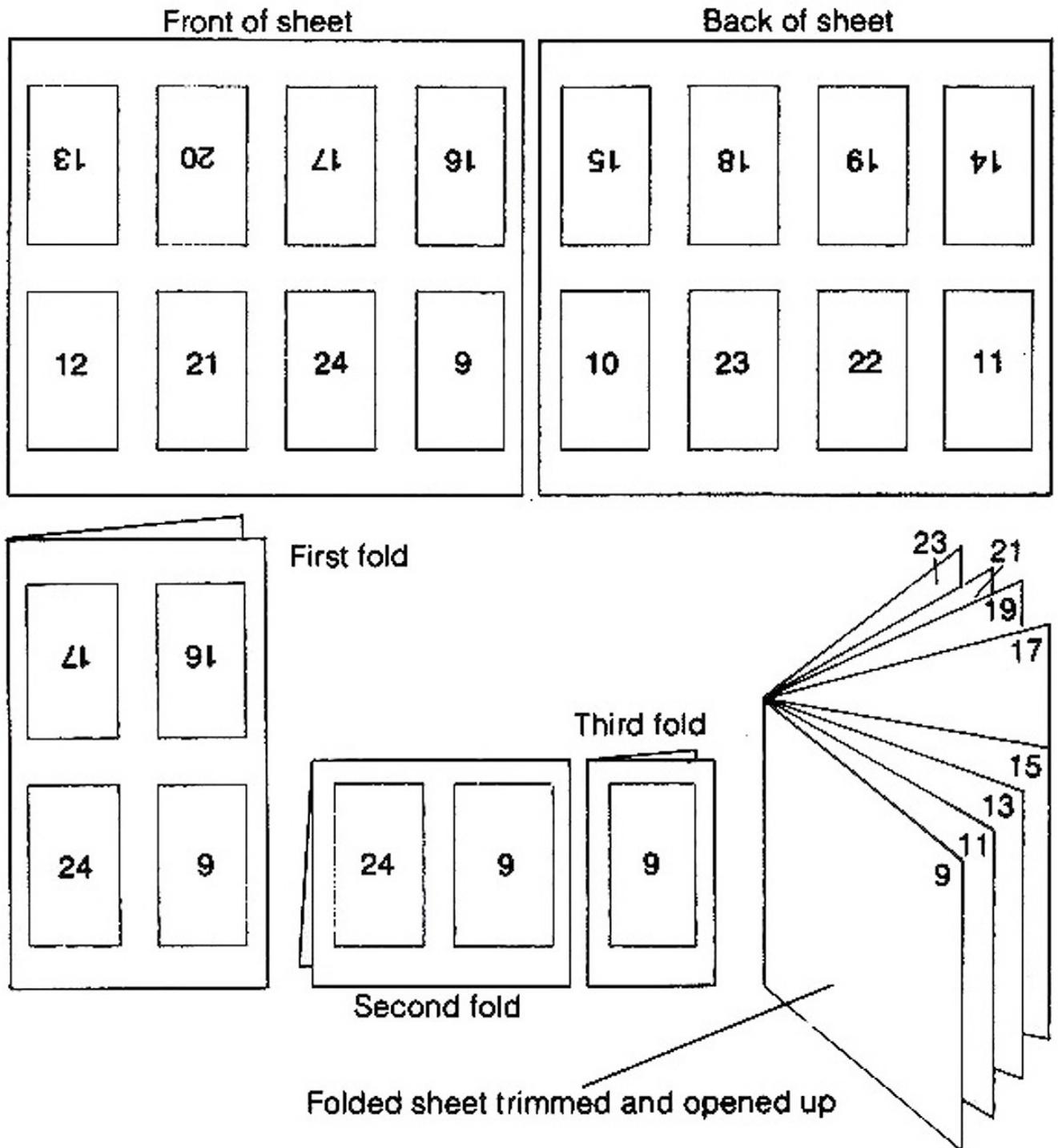
~~<ext>Mark the various elements of a manuscript with your word processor's "style palette," defining and assigning discrete names to chapter titles, subheads, prose extracts, and the like, or delimit such things manually with angle-bracketed codes (e.g., "<ext>" and "</ext>" for an extract, "<a>" and "" for a first-level subhead). Consistent manual markup can always be converted across software platforms by some form of pattern recognition, and it can also form the basis for more sophisticated tagging in dedicated markup languages such as XML (for "Extensible Markup Language").</ext>~~

Whatever method you choose, include a list of styles or codes with the edited manuscript.

^AThis is a sample of a footnoted comment or query to an author.

Imposition flat-plan

The layout for the imposition of a publication that will be printed on a large sheet consisting of 16 printed pages per sheet (eight pages to show). The pages will fall into the proper numerical sequence when folded in the manner shown below.



Australia; Commonwealth of

Head of State:	Michael Jeffer	Governor-General
Head of Government:	Kevin Rudd	Prime Minister
Government type:	Parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy	
Admin divisions:	Six states, two mainland territories, and other minor dependants	
Capital:	Canberra	
Land area:	7,617,930 sq km (6th)	
Coastline:	25,760 km	
Roadways:	336,962 km (paved); 473,679 km (2004) unpaved	
Population:	21,180,000 (2008 est. - 53rd)	
Ethnic groups:	white 92%; Asian 7%;; aboriginal and other 1%	
Language:	English	
Religion:	Catholic (26%); Anglican (20%); other Christian (20%); Buddhist (2%); Muslim (2%); none (15%)	
Military:	the Australian Defence Force (ADF) comprise the Royal Australian Navy (RAN), the Australian Army, and the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). Total: 51,000	
Military budget:	2.4% (2006) of GDP	
GDP:	\$US 889.7 billion (15th)	
GDP per capita:	\$US 42,553 (DFAT) (16th)	
Major Industries:	Mining; industrial and transportation equipment; food processing; chemicals; steel	
Major Exports:	Coal; gold; meat; wool; alumina; iron ore; wheat; machinery and transport equipment	
Major Imports:	Machinery and transport equipment; computers and office machines; telecommunication equipment and parts; crude oil and petroleum products	

Agricultural: Wheat; barley; sorghum; cottonseed; canola; oats; sugarcane; oranges; apples; bananas; chestnuts; potatoes; carrots; tomatoes; bananas; mangoes; pineapples; wine; pork lamb; beef

Natural resources: Bauxite; coal; iron ore; copper; tin; gold; lead; silver; uranium; nickel; tungsten; diamonds; mineral sands; zinc; natural gas; petroleum

Notes: Tasmania is one of the world's major



The house style guide

suppliers of licit opiate products

Burma (Myanmar; Union of)

Head of State: Than Shwe Senior General
Head of Government: Lt. Gen. Soe Win Prime Minister

Government type: Military junta
Admin divisions: Seven divisions and seven states
Capital: Rangoon (Yangon)
Admin capital: Nay Pyi Taw
Land area: 678,500 sq km (40th)
Coastline: 1,930 km
Roadways: 3,200 km (paved); 23,800 km (2005) unpaved
Population: 47,373,958 (2007 est. - 24th)
Ethnic groups: Burman (68%), Shan (9%), Karen (7%), Rakhine (4%), Chinese (3%), Indian (2%), Mon (2%), other (5%)
Language: Burmese
Religion: Buddhist (89%), Baptist (3%), Catholic (1%), Muslim (4%), animist (1%)
Military: The Tatmadaw – Army, Navy, and Air Force. Total 344,000
Military budget: 2.1% (2005 est.) of GDP
GDP: \$US 9.6 billion (2006 est.)
GDP per capita: \$US 1,800 (2006 est.) PPP methodology
Major Industries: Agricultural processing; wood and wood products; copper, tin, tungsten,

iron; steel; cement, construction materials; pharmaceuticals; fertilizer; natural gas; garments, jade and gems
Major Exports: Gas; wood products; teak, pulses; beans; rice; clothing; jade and gems; rubber; coffee; minerals; marine products
Major Imports: Power tillers; hand tractors; fertilizer; cement; water pumps; fabric; crude oil; petroleum products; plastics; machinery; transport equipment; construction materials; food products; edible oil
Agricultural: Rice, pulses, beans, sesame, hardwood; groundnuts, sugarcane; fish and fish products
Natural resources: Oil, gas, timber, tin, antimony, zinc, lead; copper, tungsten, coal, marble, natural gas; limestone, precious stones, hydropower

Note: Burma is the world's second largest producer of illicit opium with an estimated production in 2005 of 380 tonnes.

National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma or NCGUB (self-proclaimed government in exile - "Prime Minister" Dr. Sein Win).



Cambodia; Kingdom of

Head of State: King Norodom Sihamoni
Head of Government: Hun Sen Prime Minister

Government type: Multiparty democracy under a constitutional monarchy
Admin divisions: 20 provinces and 4 municipalities
Capital: Phnom Penh
Land area: 176,520 sq.km (89th)
Coastline: 443 km
Roadways: 2,406 km (paved); 35,851 km (2004) unpaved
Population: 13,995,904 (2007 est. - 63rd)
Ethnic groups: Khmer 90%; Vietnamese 5%; Chinese 1%; other 4%
Language: Khmer (official) 95%, French, English
Religion: Theravada Buddhism (95%), Islam (3%), Christianity (2%)
Military: Royal Cambodian Armed Forces; Army, Royal Khmer Navy, Air Force and the military police. Total: 140,000 (33rd)
Military budget: 3% (2005 est.) of GDP
GDP: \$US 6.6 billion (2006 est.)
GDP per capita: \$US 2,600 (2006 est.) PPP methodology (133rd)
Major Industries: Tourism; garments; beverages; rice milling; fishing; wood and wood products; rubber; cement; gem mining; textiles
Major Exports: Clothing; timber; rubber; rice; fish; tobacco; footwear
Major Imports: Petroleum products; cigarettes; gold; construction materials; machinery; motor vehicles; pharmaceutical products
Agricultural: Rice; rubber; corn; vegetables; cashews; tapioca
Natural resources: Oil; gas; timber; gemstones; iron ore; manganese; phosphates

Notes: Cambodia is a source, destination, and transit country for men, women, and children trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation and forced labor. A significant number of women and children are trafficked to Thailand and Malaysia for commercial sexual exploitation and forced labor.

Men are trafficked primarily to Thailand for forced labor in the construction and agricultural sectors, particularly the fishing industry, while women and girls are trafficked for factory and domestic work. Children are trafficked to Viet Nam and Thailand for forced begging.

Cambodia is a transit and destination point for women from Viet Nam trafficked for sexual exploitation.



Chad

Head of State:	Idriss Déby	President
Prime Minister:	Delwa Kassiré Koumakoye	
Government type:	Republic	
Admin divisions:	18 regions	
Capital:	N'Djamena	
Land area:	1,259,200 sq km (21st)	
Coastline:	0 km	
Roadways:	267 km (paved); 33,133 km (1999) unpaved	
Population:	9,885,661 (2007 est. - 75th)	
Ethnic groups:	Sara 27.7%; Arab 12.3%; Mayo-Kebbi 11.5%; Kanem-Bornou 9%; Ouaddai 8.7%; Hadjarai 6.7%; Tandjile 6.5%; Gorane 6.3%; Fitri-Batha 4.7%; other 6.4%	
Language:	French (official), Arabic (official), Sara (in south), more than 120 different languages and dialects	
Religion:	Islam (54%), Catholic (20%), Protestant (14%), Animist (10%)	
Military:	Chadian National Army (Armée Nationale Tchadienne, ANT), Chadian Air Force (Force Aérienne Tchadienne, FAT), Gendarmerie. Total	
Military budget:	4.2% (2006) of GDP	
GDP:	\$US 4.981 billion (2006 est.) (128th)	
GDP per capita:	\$US 1,500 (2006 est.) PPP methodology (163rd)	
Major Industries:	Oil; cotton textiles; meatpacking; beer brewing; natron (sodium carbonate); soap; cigarettes; construction materials	
Major Exports:	Oil; cotton; cattle; gum arabic	
Major Imports:	Machinery and transportation equipment; industrial goods; foodstuffs; textiles	
Agricultural:	Cotton; sorghum; millet; peanuts; rice; potatoes; manioc (tapioca); cattle; sheep; goats; camels	
Natural resources:	Petroleum; uranium; natron; kaolin; fish (Lake Chad); gold; limestone; sand and gravel; salt	

Notes: Chad as the fifth poorest country in the world. 80 per cent of the population live below the poverty line.

Since 2003, Janjawid armed militia and the Sudanese military have driven hundreds of thousands of Darfur residents into Chad.

There are an estimated 234,000 refugees from Sudan, 41,246 from Central African Republic and 100,000 IDPs (2006).



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commercial sexual exploitation in Taiwan, Thailand, Malaysia, and Japan

There are an estimated 300,897 refugees from Viet Nam, 30,000 to 50,000 from North Korea and 90,000 IDPs (2006).

Indonesia; Republic of

Head of State: Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono President
Vice President: Muhammad Jusuf Kalla

Government type: Presidential Republic
Admin. divisions: 30 provinces, 2 special regions, 1 special capital city district
Capital: Jakarta
Land area: 1,826,440 sq km: Total 1,919,440 sq km (17,508 islands) (16th)
Coastline: 54,716 km
Roadways: 213,649 (paved): 154,711 km (2002) unpaved
Population: 234,693,997 (2007 est. - 4th)
Ethnic groups: Javanese 40.6%; Sundanese 15%; Madurese 3.3%;
 Minangkabau 2.7%;
 Betawi 2.4%; Bugis 2.4%; Banten 2%; Banjar 1.7%
Language: Bahasa Indonesia (official, modified form of Malay), English,
 Dutch, local
 dialects (the most widely spoken of which is Javanese)
Religion: Islam (86%); Protestant (6%); Catholic (3%); Hindu (2%)
Military: Indonesian Armed Forces (Tentara Nasional Indonesia, TNI):
 Army (TNI-AD), Navy (TNI-AL, includes marines, naval air arm), Air Force (TNI-Angkatan Udara (TNI-AU)), National Air Defense Command (Kommando Pertahanan Udara Nasional, Kohanudnas). Army about 220,000. Total estimated 297,000 (16th)

Military budget: 3% (2005 est.) of GDP
GDP: \$US 408 billion (2006 est.) (21st)
GDP per capita: \$US 4,356 (2007 est.) PPP methodology (114th)
Major Industries: Petroleum and natural gas; textiles; apparel; footwear; mining; pulp and

paper; cement; chemicals; basic metals; fertilizer; power generation; telecommunications; plywood; rubber; food; transportation; tourism

Major Exports: Textile, electrical appliances; electronic goods; footwear; oil & gas; sawn timber; rubber; plywood

Major Imports: Chemicals and pharmaceutical; fertilizer; cotton yarns; textile fabric;

machines; machinery and equipment; motor vehicles; fuels; foodstuffs

Agricultural: Rice; cassava (tapioca); peanuts; rubber; cocoa; coffee; palm oil; conra: poultry: beef: pork: eggs



Iran; Islamic Republic of

Head of State:	Ayatollah Ali Hoseini-Khamenei	Supreme Leader
Head of Government:	Mahmud Ahmadi-Nejad	President
Government type:	Theocratic republic	
Admin. divisions:	30 provinces	
Capital:	Tehran	
Land area:	1.636 million sq. km. Total Area 1.648 million sq km (18th)	
Coastline:	2,440 km	
Roadways:	120,782 km (includes 878 km of expressways) (paved): 58,606 km (2003) unpaved	
Population:	65,397,521 (July 2007 est. - 18th)	
Ethnic groups:	Persian 51%; Azeri 24%; Gilaki and Mazandarani 8%; Kurd 7%; Arab 3%; Lur 2%; Baloch 2%; Turkmen 2%; other 1%	
Language:	Farsi	
Religion:	Muslim (98% – Shi'a 89%, Sunni 9%), other (includes Zoroastrian, Jewish, Christian, and Baha'i) 2%	
Military:	Islamic Republic of Iran Regular Forces (Artesh): Ground Forces, Navy, Air Force of the Military of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Niru-ye Hava'i-ye Artesh-e Jomhuri-ye Eslami-ye Iran; includes air defence); Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (Sepah-e Pasdaran-e Enqelab-e Eslami, IRGC): Ground Forces, Navy, Air Force, Qods Force (special operations), and Basij Force (Popular Mobilization Army); Total: 540,000 (8th)	
Military budget:	2.5 % (2006) of GDP	
GDP:	\$US 206.7 billion (2007 est.) (15th)	
GDP per capita:	\$US\$12,300 (2007 est.) PPP methodology	
Major Industries:	car-manufacture and transportation; cement and other construction materials; home appliances; food and agricultural goods (particularly sugar refining and vegetable oil production); ferrous and non-ferrous metal fabrication; textiles; armaments; pharmaceuticals; information technology; mining; petrochemicals; and agriculture	
Major Exports:	petroleum products, chemical and petrochemical products; carpets and handicrafts; military supplies; cars; agricultural products (fruit and nuts); foodstuff; construction materials (iron, steel, copper) and services; technical services; consumer goods.	
Major Imports:	Industrial raw materials and intermediate goods; capital goods; foodstuffs and other consumer goods; technical services; electronics and computers.	
Agricultural:	Wheat; rice; barley; corn; cotton; sugar beets; tea; hemp; tobacco; fruits (including citrus); potatoes; legumes (beans and lentils); vegetables; fodder plants (alfalfa and clover); spices (including cumin, sumac, and saffron); nuts (pistachios, almonds, and walnuts); dates; flowers; pistachios	
Natural resources:	Coal; iron ore; copper; lead; zinc; chromium; barite; salt; gypsum; molybdenum; strontium; silica; uranium; manganese; sulphur; gold	
Web source:	https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ir.html	

Note: Iran is a source, transit, and destination country for women and girls trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation and involuntary servitude; Women and girls are trafficked to Pakistan, Turkey, the Persian Gulf, and Europe for sexual exploitation, while boys from Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Afghanistan are trafficked through Iran en route to Persian Gulf states where they are ultimately forced to work as camel jockeys, beggars, or laborers; Afghan women and girls are trafficked to the country for forced marriages and sexual exploitation; women and children are also

The house style guide

trafficked internally for the purposes of forced marriage, sexual exploitation, and involuntary servitude

Iran remains a key trans-shipment point for Southwest Asian heroin to Europe; It has the highest percentage of the population in the world using opiates.

There are an estimated 662,355 refugees from Afghanistan, and 54,000 from Iraq living in Iran (2006).

Iran ranks second in the world in natural gas reserves and third in oil reserves. Oil industry output averaged 4 million barrels per day in 2005, compared with the peak of six million barrels per day reached in 1974.

Iran has the largest operational stock of industrial robots in West Asia.



Philippines; Republic of the

Head of State: Gloria Macapagal Arroyo President
Vice President: Noli de Castro

Government type: Unitary presidential constitutional republic
Admin divisions: 17 regions, 81 provinces, 131 cities, 1,497 municipalities
Capital: Manila
Land area: 298,170 sq km. Total area: 300,000 sq km (72nd)
Coastline: 36,289 km
Roadways: 19,804 (paved): 180,233 km (2003) unpaved
Population: 91,077,287 (July 2007 est. – 12th)
Ethnic groups: Tagalog 28.1%; Cebuano 13.1%; Ilocano 9%; Bisaya/Binisaya 7.6%; Hiligaynon Ilonggo 7.5%; Bikol 6%; Waray 3.4%; other 25.3%
Language: Filipino (Tagalog), English, Spanish
Religion: Catholicism (81%), Islam (5%), Protestantism (2%), Philippine Independent Church - Iglesia ni Kristo (11%)
Military: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Navy Special Warfare Group (SWAG). Total: 106,000 (39th)
Military budget: 0.9 % (2005 est.) of GDP
GDP: \$US 142.3 billion – 2007 estimate
GDP per capita: \$US 3,300 (2007 est.) PPP methodology
Major Industries: construction materials, electronics, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, food, giftware and holiday decor, home furnishings, IT & IT-enabled services, marine products, motor vehicle parts and components, organic and natural products, clothing, footwear, petroleum refining
Major Exports: Electronic products; garments; wiring sets used in vehicles, aircrafts, and ships; coconut oil; woodcrafts and furniture; petroleum products; chemicals; machinery; metal components; fruits
Major Imports: Electronic products; petroleum products; industrial machinery and equipment; transport equipment; iron and steel; textile yarn; telecommunications equipment and electrical machinery; plastics; organic and inorganic chemicals
Agricultural: rice; coconuts (copra); maize; sugarcane; bananas; pineapples; mangoes; pork; eggs; beef; fish
Natural resources: timber; oil; gas; cobalt; salt; gold; nickel; copper; chromite; silver; coal; gypsum; sulfur
Note: There are an estimated 60,000 IDPs as a result of fighting between government troops and MILF and Abu Sayyaf groups (2006).

Thailand; Kingdom of

Head of State:	His Majesty	King Bhumibol Adulyadej
Head of Government:	Prime Minister	Samak Sundaravej
Government type:	Parliamentary democracy and Constitutional Monarchy	
Admin divisions:	76 provinces	
Capital:	Bangkok	
Land area:	511,770 sq km. Total area: 514,000 sq km (49th)	
Coastline:	3,219 km	
Roadways:	56,542 (paved): 861 km (2000) unpaved	
Population:	65,068,149 (July 2007 est. – 20th)	
Ethnic groups:	Thai 75%; Chinese 14%; other 11%	
Language:	Thai, English (secondary language of the elite), ethnic and regional dialects	
Religion:	Theravada Buddhism (95%), Islam (4.6%), Christian 0.7%	
Military:	Royal Thai Army (RTA), Royal Thai Navy (RTN, includes Royal Thai Marine Corps), Royal Thai Air Force (Knogtap Agard Thai, RTAF). Total 301,000 (15th)	
Military budget:	1.8 % (2005 est.) of GDP	
GDP:	\$US 211.1 billion – 2007 estimate	
GDP per capita:	\$US 8,000 (2007 est.) PPP methodology	
Major Industries:	Automobiles and automotive parts; financial services; electric appliances and components; tourism; cement; heavy and light industries; computers and parts; furniture; plastics; textiles and garments; agricultural processing; beverages; tobacco; gems; jewellery; footwear	
Major Exports:	Textiles and footwear; fishery products; rice; rubber; jewellery; automobiles; computers and electrical appliances; gems; footwear; processed foods	
Major Imports:	Machinery and parts; vehicles; electronic integrated circuits; chemicals; crude oil and fuels; iron and steel	
Agricultural:	rice; cassava (tapioca); rubber; corn; sugarcane; coconuts; soybeans; pineapples; sugar; wheat	
Natural resources:	oil; gas; tungsten; tin; rubber; timber; tantalum ; lead; gypsum; lignite; fluorite; fish	
Note:	Thailand is the number one exporter in the world rice market, the second-largest tungsten producer, and third-largest tin producer. It leads the Asian region in exporting chicken meat. It leads the world in producing and exporting rubber, canned pineapple, and black tiger prawns	

Vietnam; Socialist Republic of

Head of State: Nguyễn Minh Triết President
Head of Government: Nguyễn Tấn Dũng Prime Minister

Government type: Socialist Republic
Admin divisions: 59 provinces
Capital: Hanoi
Land area: 325,360 sq.km. Total area: 325,360 (65th).
Coastline: 3,444 km (excludes islands)
Roadways: 42,167 km (paved): 180,012 km (2004) unpaved
Population: 87,375,000 (July 2007 est.) (13th)
Ethnic groups: Kinh (Viet) 86.2%; Tay 1.9%; Thai 1.7%; Muong 1.5%; Khome 1.4%; Hoa %; Nun 1.1%; Hmong 1%; others 4.1%
Language: Vietnamese (official) English (increasingly favoured as a second language), some French, Chinese, and Khmer; mountain area languages (Mon-Khmer and Malayo-Polynesian)
Religion: Buddhism (9%), Catholicism (7%), Hoa Hao 1.5%, Cao Dai 1.1%, Protestant 0.5%, Muslim 0.1%
Military: People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN) (includes People's Navy Command (with naval infantry, coast guard), Air and Air Defense Force (Kon Quan Nhan Dan), Border Defense Command), People's Public Security Forces, Militia Force, Self-Defense Forces. Total 484,000 (9th)
Military budget: 2.5% (2005) of GDP
GDP: \$US 53.61 billion (2007 est.)
GDP per capita: \$US \$2,600 (2007 est.) PPP methodology
Major Industries: Food processing; garments; shoes; machine building; mining; cement; chemical fertiliser; glass; tires; oil; coal; steel; paper; agriculture; forestry, fishery, industrial construction
Major Exports: Crude oil; marine products; rice; coffee; rubber; tea; garments; shoes; pepper; coal; chromium; tin; cements; woollen carpet; cinnamon
Major Imports: Machinery and equipment; petroleum products; fertiliser; steel products; raw cotton; grain; cement; motorcycles
Agricultural: rice; corn; potatoes; rubber; soybeans; coffee; tea; bananas; poultry; pigs; cotton; pepper; cashews; sugar cane; peanuts; seafood; fish
Natural resources: Oil; gas; coal; phosphates; manganese, bauxite; chromate; hydropower
Note: Vietnam is the world's largest robusta coffee, cashew nuts and pepper exporter, and the world's second largest rice exporter

Democratic Republic of Congo

Head of State: Joseph Kabila President
Head of Government: Antoine Gizenga Prime Minister

Government type: Semi-Presidential Republic
Admin divisions: 11 provinces expanding to 26 by February 2009
Capital: Kinshasa
Land area: 2,267,600 sq km. Total area: 2,345,410 sq km (12th)
Coastline: 37 km
Roadways: 2,794 km (paved): 150,703 km (2004) unpaved
Population: 65,751,512 (July 2007 est.) (21st)
Ethnic groups: Over 200 African ethnic groups of which the majority are Bantu; the four largest tribes - Mongo, Luba, Kongo (all Bantu), and the Mangbetu-Azande (Hamitic) make up about 45% of the population
Language: French: Lingala (a lingua franca), Kingwana (a dialect of Kiswahili or Swahili), Kikongo, Tshiluba
Religion: Catholic (50%), Protestant (20%), Kimbanguist (10%), Islam (10%)
Military: The Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (FARDC)
primarily comprises land forces but also includes a small air force and navy. Total estimated 130,000. There is also a presidential force called the Republican Guard.
Military budget: 2.5% (2006) of GDP
GDP: \$US 8.738 billion (2007 est.)
GDP per capita: \$US 300 (2007 est.) PPP methodology
Major Industries: mining (diamonds, gold, copper, cobalt, coltan, zinc); mineral processing;
consumer products (including textiles, footwear, cigarettes, processed foods and beverages); cement; commercial ship repair
Major Exports: diamonds; copper; crude oil; coffee; cobalt
Major Imports: foodstuffs; mining and other machinery; transport equipment; fuels
Agricultural: coffee; sugar; palm oil; rubber; tea; quinine; cassava (tapioca); palm oil;
bananas; root crops; corn; fruits; wood products
Natural resources: cobalt; copper; niobium; tantalum; petroleum; gold; industrial and gem
diamonds; silver; zinc; manganese; tin; uranium; coal; hydropower;
timber

Note: The Congo remains the world's largest producer of cobalt and a significant producer of copper and industrial diamonds. It has significant deposits of tantalum, which is used in the fabrication of electronic components used in computers and mobile phones. Malnutrition affects approximately two thirds of the country's population. The formally named Belgian Congo supplied the uranium that was used in the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945

India

Head of State: Pratibha Patil President
Head of Government: Manmohan Singh Prime Minister

Government type: Federal republic Parliamentary democracy
Admin divisions: 28 states and 7 Union Territories
Capital: New Delhi
Land area: 2,973,190 sq km. Total area: 3,287,590 sq km
Coastline: 7,000 km
Roadways: 1,603,705 km (paved):1,779,639 km (2002) unpaved
Population: 1,129,866,154 (July 2007 est.)
Ethnic groups: Indo-Aryan 72%; Dravidian 25%; Mongoloid and other 3%
Language: Hindi is the national language and primary tongue of 30% of the people;
there are 21 other official languages. English enjoys associate status and is the most important language for national, political, and commercial communication
Religion: Hindu (80%), Muslim (13%), Christian (2%), Sikh (2%), other (2%)
Military: Army, Navy (includes naval air arm), Air Force, Coast Guard, various security or paramilitary forces (includes Border Security Force, Assam Rifles, National Security Guards, Indo-Tibetan Border Police, Special Frontier Force, Central Reserve Police Force, Central Industrial Security Force, Railway Protection Force, and Defense Security Corps)
Military budget: 2.5% (2006) of GDP
GDP: \$US 894.1 billion (2007 est.)
GDP per capita: \$US \$2,700 (2007 est.) PPP methodology
Major Industries: textiles; chemicals; food processing; steel; transportation equipment; cement; mining; petroleum; machinery; software
Major Exports: petroleum products; textile goods; gems and jewellery; engineering goods; chemicals; leather manufactures
Major Imports: crude oil; machinery; gems; fertiliser; chemicals
Agricultural: rice; wheat; oilseed; cotton; jute; tea; sugarcane; potatoes; cattle; water buffalo; sheep; goats; poultry; fish
Natural resources: coal; iron ore; manganese; mica; bauxite; titanium ore; chromite; natural gas; diamonds; petroleum; limestone

Note: India has the fourth largest reserves of coal in the world

East Timor

Head of State:

Head of Government:

Government type:

Admin divisions:

Capital:

Land area:

Coastline: 00 km

Roadways: 000 (paved): 000 km (2004) unpaved

Population:

Ethnic groups:

Language:

Religion:

Military:

Military budget: 0 % (20) of GDP

GDP:

GDP per capita: \$US 0 (20?? est.) PPP methodology

Major Industries:

Major Exports:

Major Imports:

Agricultural:

Natural resources:

Web source:

Note:

North Korea

Head of State:

Head of Government:

Government type:

Admin divisions:

Capital:

Land area:

Coastline: 00 km

Roadways: 000 (paved): 000 km (2004) unpaved

Population:

Ethnic groups:

Language:

Religion:

Military:

Military budget: 0 % (20) of GDP

GDP:

GDP per capita: \$US 0 (20?? est.) PPP methodology

Major Industries:

Major Exports:

Major Imports:

Agricultural:

Natural resources:

Web source:

Note:

Pakistan

Head of State:

Head of Government:

Government type:

Admin divisions:

Capital:

Land area:

Coastline: 00 km

Roadways: 000 (paved): 000 km (2004) unpaved

Population:

Ethnic groups:

Language:

Religion:

Military:

Military budget: 0 % (20) of GDP

GDP:

GDP per capita: \$US 0 (20?? est.) PPP methodology

Major Industries:

Major Exports:

Major Imports:

Agricultural:

Natural resources:

Web source:

Note:

Somalia

Head of State:

Head of Government:

Government type:

Admin divisions:

Capital:

Land area:

Coastline: 00 km

Roadways: 000 (paved): 000 km (2004) unpaved

Population:

Ethnic groups:

Language:

Religion:

Military:

Military budget: 0 % (20) of GDP

GDP:

GDP per capita: \$US 0 (20?? est.) PPP methodology

Major Industries:

Major Exports:

Major Imports:

Agricultural:

Natural resources:

Web source:

Note:

Sudan

Head of State:

Head of Government:

Government type:

Admin divisions:

Capital:

Land area:

Coastline: 00 km

Roadways: 000 (paved): 000 km (2004) unpaved

Population:

Ethnic groups:

Language:

Religion:

Military:

Military budget: 0 % (20) of GDP

GDP:

GDP per capita: \$US 0 (20?? est.) PPP methodology

Major Industries:

Major Exports:

Major Imports:

Agricultural:

Natural resources:

Web source:

Note:

Turkey

Head of State:

Head of Government:

Government type:

Admin divisions:

Capital:

Land area:

Coastline: 00 km

Roadways: 000 (paved): 000 km (2004) unpaved

Population:

Ethnic groups:

Language:

Religion:

Military:

Military budget: 0 % (20) of GDP

GDP:

GDP per capita: \$US 0 (20?? est.) PPP methodology

Major Industries:

Major Exports:

Major Imports:

Agricultural:

Natural resources:

Web source:

Note:

Blank

Head of State:

Head of Government:

Government type:

Admin divisions:

Capital:

Land area:

Coastline: 00 km

Roadways: 000 (paved): 000 km (2004) unpaved

Population:

Ethnic groups:

Language:

Religion:

Military:

Military budget: 0 % (20) of GDP

GDP:

GDP per capita: \$US 0 (20?? est.) PPP methodology

Major Industries:

Major Exports:

Major Imports:

Agricultural:

Natural resources:

Web source:

Note:

Blank

Head of State:

Head of Government:

Government type:

Admin divisions:

Capital:

Land area:

Coastline: 00 km

Roadways: 000 (paved): 000 km (2004) unpaved

Population:

Ethnic groups:

Language:

Religion:

Military:

Military budget: 0 % (20) of GDP

GDP:

GDP per capita: \$US 0 (20?? est.) PPP methodology

Major Industries:

Major Exports:

Major Imports:

Agricultural:

Natural resources:

Web source:

Note:

Blank

Head of State:

Head of Government:

Government type:

Admin divisions:

Capital:

Land area:

Coastline: 00 km

Roadways: 000 (paved): 000 km (2004) unpaved

Population:

Ethnic groups:

Language:

Religion:

Military:

Military budget: 0 % (20) of GDP

GDP:

GDP per capita: \$US 0 (20?? est.) PPP methodology

Major Industries:

Major Exports:

Major Imports:

Agricultural:

Natural resources:

Web source:

Note: