

Much of this information was gathered from the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual. Entries have been selected according to their relevance to NDRN work. The information in each entry may have been amended to be specific to NDRN style.

NDRN-specific guidelines

Official fonts are Charlotte Sans and Avenir families; Arial and other accessible sans serif fonts [Verdana; Tahoma; Helvetica] are acceptable substitutes (please use at least 12-point font for accessibility purposes – 18-point for large print) Logos can be found on the NDRN server in the folder labeled letterhead_standards/graphics.

disability terms *see Guidelines specific to this...*

NOTES: *use “People First” language – individuals with disabilities, not disabled individuals
medical terms are generally lowercase unless named for a specific person (i.e. amyotrophic lateral sclerosis versus Lou Gehrig’s disease)*

the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) After first reference followed by the acronym in parentheses, you may refer to the National Disability Rights Network as NDRN if it suits your purposes.

DO NOT capitalize the *the* in the title and DO NOT use *the* with the abbreviation.

If referring to the Network, capitalize Network to signify reference to the specific entity

www.ndrn.org Write www.ndrn.org when referencing our website address and try not to place the address at the end of the sentence, as this necessitates a period to end the sentence. (*see “internet” section below for more information*)

COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS

ACF	Administration for Children and Families
AC	Advisory Council
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADD	Administration on Development Disabilities
ATC	Assistive Technology Center
BOD	Board of Directors
CAP	Client Assistance Program
CCD	Consortium of Citizens with Disabilities
CMHS	Center for Mental Health Services
CMS	Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (formerly Health Care Financing Administration - HCFA)
DD	Developmental Disabilities
DD Act	Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act
DDC	Developmental Disabilities Council
DSA	Designated State Agency
FY	Fiscal Year
IDEA	Individual with Disabilities Education Act
ILC	Independent Living Center

Much of this information was gathered from the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual. Entries have been selected according to their relevance to NDRN work. The information in each entry may have been amended to be specific to NDRN style.

LD	Learning Disability
MI	Mental Illness
MR	Mental Retardation
MTARS	Monitoring and Technical Assistance Review System
NDRN	National Disability Rights Network (formerly NAPAS - National Association of Protection & Advocacy Systems)
NIDRR	National Institute on Disability Rehabilitation Research
OMB	Office of Management & Budget
OSERS	Office of Special Education Rehabilitation Services
PAAT	Protection & Advocacy for Obtaining Assistive Technology
PABSS	Protection & Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security
PADD	Protection & Advocacy for Persons with Developmental Disabilities
PAIMI	Protection & Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness
PAIR	Protection & Advocacy for Individual Rights
PPR	Program Performance Report
PR	Public Relations
RSA	Rehabilitation Services Administration
Rehab Act	Rehabilitation Act
SAMHSA	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
SOP	Statement of Objectives & Priorities
TASC	Training and Advocacy Support Center
TASR	Technical Assistance Site Review (CMHS)
Tech Act	Technology-Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Act
UAP	University Affiliated Program
UCE	University Centers for Excellence in Development Disabilities Education, Research and Service

Much of this information was gathered from the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual. Entries have been selected according to their relevance to NDRN work. The information in each entry may have been amended to be specific to NDRN style.

addresses Use the abbreviations *Ave.*, *Blvd.* and *St.* only with a numbered address: *1600 Pennsylvania Ave.* Spell them out and capitalize when part of a formal street name without a number: *Pennsylvania Avenue*. Lowercase and spell out when used alone or with more than one street name: *Massachusetts and Pennsylvania avenues*.

All similar words (*alley*, *drive*, *road*, *terrace*, etc.) always are spelled out. Capitalize them when part of a formal name without a number; lowercase when used alone or with two or more names.

Always use figures for an address number: *9 Morningside Circle*.

Spell out and capitalize *First* through *Ninth* when used as street names; use figures with two letters for *10th* and above: *7 Fifth Ave.*, *100 21st St.*

Abbreviate compass points used to indicate directional ends of a street or quadrants of a city in a numbered address: *222 E. 42nd St.*, *562 W. 43rd St.*, *600 K St. N.W.* Do not abbreviate if the number is omitted: *East 42nd Street*, *West 43rd Street*, *K Street Northwest*.

adopt, approve, enact, pass Amendments, ordinances, resolutions and rules are adopted or approved.

Bills are *passed*.

Laws are *enacted*.

affect, effect *Affect*, as a verb, means to influence: *The game will affect the standings*.

Affect, as a noun, is best avoided. It occasionally is used in psychology to describe an emotion, but there is no need for it in everyday language.

Effect, as a noun, means result: *The effect was overwhelming. He miscalculated the effect of his actions. It was a law of little effect.*

a.m., p.m. Lowercase, with periods. Avoid the redundant *10 a.m. this morning*.

among, between The maxim that *between* introduces two items and *among* introduces more than two covers most questions about how to use these words: *The funds were divided among Ford, Carter and McCarthy*.

Between is the correct word when expressing the relationships of three or more items considered one pair at a time: *Negotiations on a debate format are under way between the network and the Ford, Carter and McCarthy committees*.

As with all prepositions, any pronouns that follow these words must be in the objective case: *among us*, *between him and her*, *between you and me*.

Assembly Capitalize when part of the proper name for the lower house of a legislature: *the California Assembly*. Retain capitalization if the state name is dropped but the reference is specific.

If a legislature is known as a general assembly: *the Missouri General Assembly*, *the General Assembly*, *the assembly*. *Legislature* also may be used as the proper named, however. See **legislature**.

Lowercase all plural uses: *the California and New York assemblies*.

Much of this information was gathered from the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual. Entries have been selected according to their relevance to NDRN work. The information in each entry may have been amended to be specific to NDRN style.

awhile, a while *He plans to stay awhile. He plans to stay for a while.*

bad, badly *Bad* should not be used as an adverb. It does not lose its status as an adjective, however, in a sentence such as *I feel bad*. Such a statement is the idiomatic equivalent of *I am in bad health*. An alternative, *I feel badly*, could be interpreted as meaning that your sense of touch was bad.

See the **good, well** entry.

bi-

biannual, biennial *Biannual* means twice a year and is a synonym for the word semiannual.

Biennial means every two years.

bimonthly Means every other month. *Semimonthly* means twice a month.

biweekly Means every other week. *Semiweekly* means twice a week.

capital, capitol

capital The city where a seat of government is located. Do not capitalize.

When used in a financial sense, *capital* describes money, equipment or property used in a business by a person or corporation.

capitol Capitalize *U.S. Capitol* and *the Capitol* when referring to the building in Washington: *The meeting was held on Capitol Hill in the west wing of the Capitol.*

Follow the same practice when referring to state capitols: *The Virginia Capitol is in Richmond. Thomas Jefferson designed the Capitol of Virginia.*

capitalization In general, avoid unnecessary capitals. Use capital letters only if you can justify it by one of the following principles:

PROPER NOUNS

PROPER NAMES

POPULAR NAMES

DERIVATIVES

SENTENCES

COMPOSITIONS

TITLES – capitalize a formal title when used immediately before a name

ABBREVIATIONS -- in some cases

compose, comprise, constitute

Compose means to create or put together. It commonly is used in both the active and passive voices: *She composed a song, The United States is composed of 50 states.*

Comprise means to contain, to include all or embrace. It is best used only in the active voice, followed by a direct object: *The United States comprises 50 states. The jury comprises five men and seven women.*

Constitute, in the sense of form or make up, may be the best word if neither *compose* nor *comprise* seems to fit: *Fifty states constitute the United States. Five men and seven women constitute the jury.*

Much of this information was gathered from the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual. Entries have been selected according to their relevance to NDRN work. The information in each entry may have been amended to be specific to NDRN style.

congress Capitalize *U.S. Congress* and *Congress* when referring to the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. Although *Congress* sometimes is used as a substitute for the House, it properly is reserved for reference to both the Senate and the House.

Lowercase when used as a synonym for *convention* or in second reference to an organization that uses the word as part of its formal name: *the Congress of Racial Equality*, *the congress*.

DATES

DATES – Always use Arabic figures, without *st*, *nd*, *rd* or *th*.

DAYS OF THE WEEK – Capitalize them. Do not abbreviate, except when needed in a tabular format: Sun, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat (three letters, without periods, to facilitate tabular composition).

MONTHS – Capitalize the names of months in all uses. When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate only *Jan.*, *Feb.*, *Aug.*, *Sept.*, *Oct.*, *Nov.*, *Dec.* The three- to five-letter months, *March* through *July*, are not abbreviated. Spell out all months when using alone or with a year.

When a phrase lists only a month and a year, do NOT separate the year with commas. When a phrase refers to a month, day and year, set off the year with commas.

January 1972 was a cold month.

Jan. 2 was the coldest day of the month.

The press conference is March 13.

Feb. 14, 1987, was the target date.

decision maker(s)

District of Columbia Abbreviate as *D.C.* when the context requires that it be used in conjunction with *Washington*. Spell out when used alone.

The district, rather than *D.C.*, should be used in subsequent references.

Washington alone refers to the state, unless used in a dateline on press material: *(WASHINGTON) The president held a press conference today on Capitol Hill.*

e-mail Short form of *electronic mail*. Many email or internet addresses use symbols such as the “at” symbol (@) or the tilde (~) that cannot be transmitted correctly in some member computing systems. When needed, spell them out and provide an explanatory editor’s note.

ensure, insure, assure Use *ensure* to mean guarantee: *Steps were taken to ensure accuracy.*

Use *insure* for references to insurance: *The policy insures his life.*

Use *assure* to cause to feel safe or secure, as to remove doubt: *He assured us that the train would be on time.*

Much of this information was gathered from the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual. Entries have been selected according to their relevance to NDRN work. The information in each entry may have been amended to be specific to NDRN style.

farther, further *Farther* refers to physical distance: *He walked farther into the woods.*

Further refers to an extension of time or degree: *She will look further into the mystery.*

fewer, less In general, use *fewer* for individual items, *less* for bulk or quantity.

Wrong: *The trend is toward more machines and less people.* (People in this sense refers to individuals.)

Wrong: *She was fewer than 60 years old.* (Years in this sense refers to a period of time, not individual years.)

Right: *Fewer than 10 applicants called.* (Individuals.)

Right: *I had less than \$50 in my pocket.* (An amount.) But: *I had fewer than 50 \$1 bills in my pocket.* (Individual items.)

good, well *Good* is an adjective that means something is as it should be or is better than average.

When used as an adjective, *well* means suitable, proper, healthy. When used as an adverb, *well* means in a satisfactory manner or skillfully.

Good should not be used as an adverb. It does not lose its status as an adjective in a sentence such as *I feel good*. Such a statement is the idiomatic equivalent of *I am in good health*. An alternative, *I feel well*, could be interpreted as meaning that your sense of touch was good.

See the **bad, badly** entry and **well**.

his, her Do not presume maleness in constructing a sentence, but use the pronoun *his* when an indefinite antecedent may be male or female: A reporter attempts to protect his sources. (Not his or her sources, but not the use of the word *reporter* rather than *newsman*.)

historic, historical A *historic* event is an important occurrence, one that stands out in history.

Any occurrence in the past is a *historical* event.

house of representatives Capitalize when referring to a specific governmental body: *the U.S. House of Representatives, the Massachusetts House of Representatives.*

Capitalize shortened references that delete the words *of Representatives*: *the U.S. House, the Massachusetts House.*

Retain capitalization if U.S. or the name of a state is dropped but the reference is to a specific body.

Lowercase plural uses: *the Massachusetts and Rhode Island houses.*

Much of this information was gathered from the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual. Entries have been selected according to their relevance to NDRN work. The information in each entry may have been amended to be specific to NDRN style.

internet

addresses Always include the www part of web addresses, as not all start this way. Try to include the address within a sentence and avoid placing it at the end. RIGHT: Please visit www.NDRN.org for more information. WRONG: For more information, please visit www.NDRN.org. *This prevents a period from mistakenly becoming part of the address, thereby not allowing the user to access the site.

browser software used to navigate the *internet*.

http An acronym for hypertext transport protocol.

lay, lie The action word is *lay*. It takes a direct object. *Laid* is the form for its past tense and its past participle. Its present participle is *laying*.

Lie indicates a state of reclining along a horizontal plane. It does not take a direct object. Its past tense is *lay*. Its past participle is *lain*. Its present participle is *lying*.

When *lie* means to make an untrue statement, the verb forms are *lie, lied, lying*.

LEGISLATIVE TITLES

REPRESENTATIVE AND SENATOR: On first reference, use *Rep., Reps., Sen., Sens.*, as formal titles before one or more names in regular text (*deletion of a title on first reference is frequently appropriate when the individual becomes well known*)

In subsequent reference – **congressman, congresswoman** may be used

*U.S. or state with legislative titles – **only add U.S. or state before a first reference title to avoid confusion:** *U.S. Sen. Nancy Kassebaum spoke with state Sen. Hugh Carter*

Direct quotation – spell out and capitalize these titles

Letters / Addresses – A letter is addressed to *The Honorable Nancy Kassebaum* while the greeting reads *Dear Sen. Kassebaum:*

OTHER LEGISLATIVE TITLES:

Before a name – Capitalize and spell out formal titles, such as *assemblyman, assemblywoman, city councilor, delegate*

All other uses – spell out and lowercase other legislative titles

Much of this information was gathered from the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual. Entries have been selected according to their relevance to NDRN work. The information in each entry may have been amended to be specific to NDRN style.

legislature Capitalize when preceded by the name of a state: *the Kansas Legislature*.

Retain capitalization when the state name is dropped but the reference is specifically to that state's legislature.

Capitalize *legislature* in subsequent specific references and in such constructions as: *the 100th Legislature, the state legislature*.

Although the word *legislature* is not part of the formal, proper name for the lawmaking bodies in many states, it commonly is used that way and should be treated as such in any story that does not use the formal name.

If a given context or local practice calls for the use of a formal name such as *Missouri General Assembly*, retain the capital letters if the name of the state can be dropped, but lowercase the word *assembly* if it stands alone. Lowercase *legislature* if a story uses it in a subsequent reference to a body identified as a general assembly.

Lowercase *legislature* when used generically: *No legislature has approved the amendment*.

Use legislature in lowercase for all plural references: *The Arkansas and Colorado legislatures are considering the amendment*.

In 49 states the separate bodies are a *senate* and a *house* or *assembly*. The *Nebraska Legislature* is a unicameral body.

listserv no hyphens, spaces or "e"s on the end (*pl. listservs*)

magazine names Capitalize the name but do not place it in quotes. Lowercase magazine unless it is part of the publication's formal title: *Harper's Magazine, Newsweek magazine*

nationalities and races Capitalize the proper names of nationalities, peoples, races, tribes, etc.: *Arab, Arabic, African, American, Caucasian, Cherokee, Chinese* (both singular and plural), *Eskimo* (plural *Eskimos*), *French Canadian, Gypsy* (*Gypsies*), *Japanese* (singular and plural), *Jew, Jewish, Latin, Nordic, Sioux, Swede*, etc.

Lowercase *black* (noun or adjective), *white, red*, etc.

Do NOT use *oriental* or *Asian* or other sweeping generalizations.

newspaper names Capitalize *the* in a newspaper's name if that is the way the publication prefers to be known.

Lowercase *the* before newspaper names if referencing several newspapers, some of which use the as part of the name and some of which do not.

When location is needed but is not part of the official name, use parentheses: *The Huntsville (Ala.) Times*

Much of this information was gathered from the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual. Entries have been selected according to their relevance to NDRN work. The information in each entry may have been amended to be specific to NDRN style.

numerals

write out number one through nine; use numerals for 10 and above;
EXCEPTION: *if citing several numbers within a given sentence or paragraph, chose to **either** use numbers or write the out for the sake of consistency*

LARGE NUMBERS: When large numbers must be spelled out, use a hyphen to connect a word ending in y to another word; do not use commas between other separate words that are part of one number:

twenty; thirty; twenty-one; thirty-four;
one hundred forty-three;
one thousand one hundred fifty-five;

SENTENCE START: Spell out a numeral at the beginning of a sentence. If necessary, recast the sentence. (**EXCEPTION** – *a numeral that identifies a calendar year.*)

WRONG: *993 freshmen entered the college last year.*

RIGHT: *Last year 993 freshmen entered the college*

RIGHT: *1976 was a very good year.* *However, it is still preferable to place the year within the sentence.

online One word in all cases for the computer connection term

page numbers Use figures and capitalize *page* when used with a figure. When a letter is appended to the figure, capitalize it but do not use a hyphen:

Page 10, Page 14A

EXCEPTION: *It's a Page One story.*

party affiliation Let relevance be the guide in determining whether to include a political figure's party affiliation.

GENERAL FORMS: When party designation is given, use any of these approaches as logical in constructing a document:

--Sen. Hubert Humphrey (D-MN) said... *Standard political usage

--Sen. Hubert Humphrey, D-Minn., said...

--Democratic Sen. Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota said...

--Sen. Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota said...

--Sen. Hubert Humphrey also spoke. The Minnesota Democrat said...

--Rep. Morris Udall of Arizona is seeking the Democratic presidential nomination. Not: Rep. Morris Udall, D-Ariz., is seeking the Democratic...

SHORT-FORM PUNCTUATION: Set short forms such as *D-Minn.* off from a name by commas, as illustrated above.

Use the abbreviations listed in the entries for each state. (No abbreviations for *Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas* and *Utah.*)

Use *R-* for Republicans, *D-* for Democrats, and three-letter combinations for other affiliations: *Sen. James Buckley, R-Con-N.Y., spoke with Sen. Harry Byrd, D-Ind-Va.*

*SEE **state names** entry

Much of this information was gathered from the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual. Entries have been selected according to their relevance to NDRN work. The information in each entry may have been amended to be specific to NDRN style.

people, persons Use *person* when speaking of an individual: *One person waited for the bus.*

The word *people* is preferred to *persons* in all plural uses. For example: *Thousands of people attended the fair. What will people say? There were 17 people in the room.*

Persons should be used only when it is in a direct quote or part of a title as in *Bureau of Missing Persons*.

People is also a collective noun that takes a plural verb when used to refer to a single race or nation: *The American people are united.* In this sense, the plural is *peoples*: *The peoples of Africa speak many languages.*

political parties and philosophies Capitalize both the name of the party and the word *party* if it is customarily used as part of the organization's proper name: *the Democratic Party, the Republican Party.*

Capitalize *Communist, Conservative, Democrat, Liberal, Republican, Socialist, etc.*, when they refer to a specific party or its members. Lowercase these words when they refer to political philosophy.

Lowercase the name of a philosophy in noun and adjective forms unless it is the derivative of a proper name: *communism, communist; fascism, fascist. BUT Marxism, Marxist; Nazism, Nazi.*

The liberal Republican and his Conservative Party colleague said they believe that democracy and communism are incompatible.

possessives following are refresher examples. **For more info, please ask.**

The alumni's contributions, the women's rights

The girls' toys, the horses' food

Mathematics' rules, the United States' wealth

The fox's den, Xerox's profits

The hostess's invitation BUT the hostess' seat; the witness's answer BUT the witness' story

*The difference in the above line refers to when you have a possessive word ending in "s" followed by a word that begins with an "s" – in this case, you only add an apostrophe to make the first word possessive. *Jim sat in the hostess' seat. BUT the hostess's invitation.*

Achilles' heel, Dickens' novels, Jesus' life, Kansas' schools, Moses' life

*The rule with the above line is that a proper name or proper noun ending in "s" needs only to receive an apostrophe to make it possessive.

Fred and Sylvia's apartment (joint possession) BUT Fred's and Sylvia's books (individual possession)

Much of this information was gathered from the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual. Entries have been selected according to their relevance to NDRN work. The information in each entry may have been amended to be specific to NDRN style.

prefixes Generally do not hyphenate when using a prefix with a word starting with a consonant.

Three rules are constant, although they yield some exceptions to first-listed spellings in Webster's New World Dictionary:

- Except for cooperate and coordinate, use a hyphen if the prefix ends in a vowel and the word that follows begins with the same vowel.
- Use a hyphen if the word that follows is capitalized
- Use a hyphen to join doubled prefixes: *sub-subparagraph*

principal, principle *Principal* is a noun and adjective meaning someone or something first in rank, authority, importance or degree: *She is the school principal. He was the principal player in the trade. Money in the principal problem.*

Principle is a noun that means a fundamental truth, law, doctrine or motivating force: *They fought for the principle of self-determination.*

seasons Lowercase *spring, summer, fall, winter* and derivatives such as *springtime* unless part of a formal name: *Dartmouth Winter Carnival, Winter Olympics, Summer Olympics.*

senate Capitalize all specific references to governmental legislative bodies, regardless of whether the name of the nation is used: *the U.S. Senate, the Senate, the Virginia Senate*

Lowercase plural uses: *the Virginia and North Carolina senates*

sound bite(s)

state names

Standing alone: spell out the names of the 50 U.S. states when they stand alone in textual material

EIGHT NOT ABBREVIATED: The names of eight states never abbreviated in text: *Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas and Utah*

Abbreviations required in conjunction with name of city, town, village in text; in short-form listings of party affiliation: *D-Ala., R-Mont.*

The following are state abbreviations for use in *textual material*:

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

Much of this information was gathered from the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual. Entries have been selected according to their relevance to NDRN work. The information in each entry may have been amended to be specific to NDRN style.

Supreme Court of the United States Capitalize *U.S. Supreme Court* and also *the Supreme Court* when the context makes the *U.S.* designation unnecessary.

The chief justice is properly the *chief justice of the United States*, not of *the Supreme Court: Chief Justice William Rehnquist*.

The proper title for the eight other members of the court is *associate justice*. When used as a formal title before a name, it should be shortened to justice unless there are special circumstances: *Justice Sandra Day O'Connor*. *Associate Justice Sandra Day O'Connor*.

take over (v.), **takeover** (n. and adj.) A military coup can be defined as a *takeover* of governmental power. BUT I've asked my coworker to *take over* writing the reports.

telephone numbers Use figures. For NDRN, we will use the form: 202.408.9514. If extension numbers are given: *ext. 2, ext. 364, ext. 4071*.

television program titles Put quotation marks around *show* only if it is part of the formal name. The word *show* may be dropped when it would be cumbersome, such as in a set of listings.

In text or listing, treat programs named after the star in any of the following ways: "*The Mary Tyler Moore Show*," "*Mary Tyler Moore*" or *the Mary Tyler Moore show*. *Be consistent, though.

Use quotation marks also for the title of an episode: "*Chuckles Bites the Dust*," *an episode of "The Mary Tyler Moore Show."*

that (conjunction) Use the conjunction *that* to introduce a dependent clause if the sentence sounds or looks awkward without it. There are no hard-and-fast rules, but in general:

--*That* usually may be omitted when a dependent clause immediately follows a form of the verb *to say*: *The president said he had signed the bill*.

--*That* should be used when a time element intervenes between the verb and the dependent clause: *The president said Monday that he had signed the bill*.

--*That* is usually necessary after some verbs. They include: *advocate, assert, contend, declare, estimate, make clear, point out, propose* and *state*.

--*That* is required before subordinate clauses beginning with conjunctions such as *after, although, because, before, in addition to, until* and *while*: *Haldeman said that after he learned of Nixon's intention to resign, he sought pardons for all connected with Watergate*.

that, which, who, whom (pronouns) Use *who* and *whom* in referring to people and to animals with a name: *John Jones is the man who helped me*. See the **who, whom** entry.

Use *that* and *which* in referring to inanimate objects and to animals without a name. *Place a comma before a clause beginning with *which*; do not place a comma before a clause starting with *that*.

Much of this information was gathered from the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual. Entries have been selected according to their relevance to NDRN work. The information in each entry may have been amended to be specific to NDRN style.

titles In general, confine capitalization to formal titles used directly before an individual's name: *Executive Director Rino Aldreggetti said...*, *The reporter asked President Bush...*

Lowercase and spell out titles when they are not used with an individual's name: *The president issued a statement. The pope gave his blessing. The executive director asked for a staff report.*

Lowercase and spell out titles in constructions that set them off from a name by commas: *The vice president, Nelson Rockefeller, declined to run again.*

toward Not *towards*

United Nations/U.N. Spell out when used as a noun. Use *U.N.* only as an adjective

Use *U.N. General Assembly, U.N. Secretariat* and *U.N. Security Council* in first references; *General Assembly, the Secretariat* and *Security Council* are acceptable in subsequent references.

United States/U.S. Spell out when used as a noun. Use *U.S.* only as an adjective.

U.S. Air Force; U.S. Army; U.S. Conference of Mayors; U.S. Court of Appeals; U.S. Customs Court; U.S. District Courts; U.S. Information Agency; U.S. Military Academy; U.S. Navy; U.S. Postal Service; U.S. Supreme Court

vote tabulations Always use figures for the totals.

Spell out below 10 in other phrases related to voting: *by a five-vote majority, with three abstentions, four votes short of the necessary two-thirds majority.*

For results that involve fewer than 1,000 votes on each side, use these forms: *The House voted 230-205, a 230-205 vote.*

To make totals that involve more than 1,000 votes on a side easier to read, separate the figures with the word *to* to avoid hyphenated adjectival constructions.

website When referring to our internet site, use the term *website*: *Please visit our website at www.NDRN.org for more information.*

who, whom *Who* is the word when someone is the subject of a sentence, clause or phrase: *The woman who rented the room left the window open. Who is there?*

Whom is the word when someone is the object of a verb or preposition: *The woman to whom the room was rented left the window open. Whom do you wish to see?*

World Wide Web In later references, *the Web* is acceptable.

Web addresses should be a self-contained paragraph at the end of a story

Much of this information was gathered from the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual. Entries have been selected according to their relevance to NDRN work. The information in each entry may have been amended to be specific to NDRN style.

years Use figures without commas: 1975. Use an s without an apostrophe to indicate spans of decades or centuries: *the 1990s, the 1800s*. (Years are the lone exception to the general rule in numerals that a figure is not used to start a sentence, but it's still better to avoid.)

PUNCTUATION

NOTE ON SPACING: *only use a single space after any kind of punctuation; introducing two spaces is unnecessary with current technology and causes problems: (1) it is inefficient, requiring an extra keystroke for every sentence; (2) there is no proof that an extra space actually improves readability; (3) two spaces are harder to control for than one in electronic documents (with those using two spaces, I am finding a smattering of instances of both three spaces and one space after a period, and two spaces in the middle of sentences); and (4) two spaces can cause problems with line breaks in certain programs.*

colon (:) The most frequent use of a colon is at the end of a sentence to introduce lists, tabulations, texts, etc.

***Text before the colon must be a complete sentence!!**

Capitalize the first word after a colon ONLY IF it is a proper noun or the start of a complete sentence:

He promised this: The company will make good all the losses.

There were three considerations: expense, time and feasibility.

EMPHASIS: The colon often can be effective in giving emphasis: He had one hobby: eating.

LISTINGS: Use the colon in such listings as time elapsed, time of day, biblical and legal citations.

QUOTATIONS: Use a colon to introduce quotations longer than one sentence within a paragraph and to end all paragraphs that introduce a paragraph of quoted material.

comma (,) the following guidelines treat some of the most frequent questions about the use of commas.

IN A SERIES: *use terminal commas to provide consistency and avoid confusion*

BETWEEN EQUAL ADJECTIVES: *a thoughtful, precise manner, a dangerous, dark street*

TO SET OFF NONESSENTIAL CLAUSES/PHRASES

AFTER INTRODUCTORY CLAUSES AND PHRASES

BEFORE CONJUNCTIONS introducing a second clause that could stand alone

WITH HOMETOWNS AND AGES:

Mary Richards, Minneapolis, and Maude Finley, Tuckahoe, N.Y., were there.

Maude Finley, 48, Tuckahoe, N.Y., was present.

PLACEMENT WITH QUOTES: Always place commas inside quotation marks.

Much of this information was gathered from the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual. Entries have been selected according to their relevance to NDRN work. The information in each entry may have been amended to be specific to NDRN style.

hyphen Hyphens are joiners. Use them to avoid ambiguity or to form a single idea from two or more words.

Some guidelines:

AVOID AMBIGUITY: Use a hyphen whenever ambiguity would result if it were omitted: The president will speak to small-business men. (Businessmen normally is one word. But the president will speak to small businessmen is unclear.)

Others: He recovered his health. He re-covered the leaky roof.

COMPOUND MODIFIERS: When a compound modifier – two or more words that express a single concept – precedes a noun, use hyphens to link all the words in the compound except the adverb *very* and all adverbs that end in *-ly*: *a first-quarter touchdown, a bluish-green dress, a full-time job, a well-known man, a better-qualified woman, a know-it-all attitude, a very good time, an easily remembered rule.*

Many combinations that are hyphenated before a noun are not hyphenated when they occur after a noun: The team scored in the first quarter. The dress, a bluish green, was attractive on her. She works full time. His attitude suggested that he knew it all.

But when a modifier that would be hyphenated occurs instead after a form of the verb *to be*, the hyphen usually must be retained to avoid confusion: *The man is well-known. The woman is quick-witted. The children are soft-spoken. The play is second-rate.*

The principle of using a hyphen to avoid confusion explains why no hyphen is required with *very* and *-ly* words. Readers can expect them to modify the word that follows. But if a combination such as *little-known* man were not hyphenated, the reader could logically be expecting *little* to be followed by a noun, as in *little man*. Instead, the reader encountering *little known* would have to back up mentally and make the compound connection on his own.

TWO-THOUGHT COMPOUNDS: serio-comic, socio-economic

COMPOUND PROPER NOUNS AND ADJECTIVES: Use a hyphen to designate dual heritage: *Italian-American, Mexican-American, African-American.*

No hyphen, however, for *French Canadian* or *Latin American*.

PREFIXES AND SUFFIXES: See the prefixes and suffixes entries, and separate entries for the most frequently used prefixes and suffixes.

AVOID DUPLICATED VOWELS, TRIPLE CONSONANTS: Examples: *anti-intellectual, pre-empt, shell-like.*

WITH NUMERALS: Use a hyphen to separate figures in odds, ratios, scores, some fractions and some vote tabulations. See examples in entries under these headings.

When large numbers must be spelled out, use a hyphen to connect a word ending in *-y* to another word: *twenty-one, fifty-five, etc.*

SUSPENSIVE HYPHENATION: The form: *He received a 10- to 20-year sentence in prison.*

period (.)

PLACEMENT WITH QUOTES: Always place periods inside quotation marks.

Much of this information was gathered from the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual. Entries have been selected according to their relevance to NDRN work. The information in each entry may have been amended to be specific to NDRN style.

semicolon (;) In general, use the semicolon to indicate a greater separation of thought and information than a comma can convey but less than the separation that a period implies.

The basic guidelines:

TO CLARIFY A SERIES: Use semicolons to separate elements of a series when individual segments contain material that also must be set off by commas:

He leaves a son, John Smith of Chicago; three daughters, Jane Smith of Wichita, Kan., Mary Smith of Denver, and Susan, wife of William Kingsbury of Boston; and a sister, Martha, wife of Robert Warren of Omaha, Neb.

Note that the semicolon is used before the final *and* in such a series.

Another application of this principle may be seen in the cross-references at the end of entries in this book. Because some entries themselves have a comma, a semicolon is used to separate references to multiple entries, as in: **See the felony, misdemeanor entry; pardon, parole, probation; and prison, jail.**

See the **dash** entry for a different type of connection that uses dashes to avoid multiple commas.

TO LINK INDEPENDENT CLAUSES: Use semicolon when a coordinating conjunction such as *and*, *but* or *for* is not present: *The package was due last week; it arrived today.*

If a coordinating conjunction is present, use a semicolon before it only if extensive punctuation also is required in one or more of the individual clauses: *They pulled their boats from the water, sandbagged the retaining walls, and boarded up the windows; but even with these precautions, the island was hard-hit by the hurricane.*

Unless a particular literary effect is desired, however, the better approach in these circumstances is to break the independent clauses into separate sentences.

PLACEMENT WITH QUOTES: Place semicolons outside quotation marks.