



NPS Editorial Style Guide

March 2003

Introduction

The purpose of Harpers Ferry Center's *NPS Editorial Style Guide* is to create a standard for writing and editing in our interpretive media and to define policy regarding recurring questions about grammar and editorial style. Questions commonly encountered are addressed here, with emphasis on terms and phrases specific to national parks.

Answers to style questions not addressed here can be found in standard style reference books, specifically: *Chicago Manual of Style, 14th Edition*, *United States Government Printing Office Style Manual, 2000*, *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk and E. B. White, and *The Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual*. For general writing guidance see William Zinsser's *On Writing Well*.

For decisions about spelling, hyphenation, and compound words, we use *The American Heritage Dictionary of The English Language, Third Edition*.

References often disagree, and questions of style must be decided with the visiting public foremost in mind. The visiting public is the audience for whom exhibits and publications are produced, not scholars, historians, scientists, or bureaucrats. It is important that the editorial style used throughout your document or exhibit be consistent.

New entries are added to this guide about twice a year. If you have comments or suggested revisions, send an email to <NPS Editorial Style Guide >. If you have questions about editorial style that cannot be resolved by using this guide or the references listed above, you may call HFC Interpretive Media Institute at 304-535-6057. Your comments and questions are always welcome.

- ***a* or *an* when used before *h*** Use *a* before a pronounced h; use *an* before a silent h.

a historic moment	an honor
a hysterical patient	an heir
a hoary marmot	an honest man

- **abandoned** Avoid when writing about American Indian dwellings.
The ancestral Puebloan people left their homes about 800 years ago.

- **access** Avoid as a synonym for “reach” or “get to” (word is too similar to accessible). You can get to the park from the south via I-95.

- **accessible** It means that facilities can be used by persons with disabilities. *see* disabled.

- **A.D.** *see* dates.

- **addresses** Spell out street, road, avenue; may abbreviate in a narrow column but only if address includes a number. For clarity, whenever possible, place address (and phone number) at end of paragraph. Write NW, SW, NE, SE (no periods). *see* state abbreviations.

1234 Cypress St.
The White House is on Pennsylvania Avenue.
16th Street NW

- **administrative statement format**
[Bryce Canyon] is one of more than 380 parks in the National Park System. The National Park Service cares for these special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage. Visit www.nps.gov to learn more about national parks and National Park Service programs in America’s communities.

- **African American** (or black) No hyphen.
African Americans traveled north on the Underground Railroad.
the African American soldier

- **a.m.** *see* time of day.

- **America** Generally avoid as synonym for the United States of America; use American to describe the people.

- **American Indian** Use specific tribal name (use singular noun,) i.e. Navajo, Lakota, Tlingit. Or use American Indian. If possible avoid using Native American (it is ambiguous and least desirable of alternatives); but some tribes prefer Native American—use the park’s preference.

The Navajo entered Canyon de Chelly about 300 years ago.

- **American Revolution affiliations** Do not capitalize patriot, loyalist, or tory (except if in quoted material); *but* Whig and Tory as members of political parties; Continental army troops.

- **Anasazi** Avoid, but can clarify at first mention; *see* ancestral Puebloan people.
These ancestral Puebloan people, often called Anasazi, used ladders made of ponderosa pine to reach the canyon’s ledges.

- **ancestral Puebloan people** Predecessors of today’s Pueblo and Hopi Indians; try to avoid Anasazi except at first mention.
- **archeology** *not* archaeology.
- **arms (small)** Firearms that can be carried in the hand, such as muskets, pistols, rifles, carbines, and shotguns. *see* artillery.
- **artillery** Large-caliber weapons, such as cannon, howitzers, and missile launchers, usually supported on a carriage and operated by crews. *see* arms (small).

The Napoleon 12-pounder (*not* 12-pound) cannon was the most popular smoothbore artillery piece in the Union and Confederate armies.
- **audiovisual**
- **backcountry**
- **B.C.** *see* dates.
- **B.C.E./C.E.** Before current era (or before common era) and current era; not widely used in popular publications. If using, clarify at first mention.
- **biosphere reserve (wording)** “(Park name), part of a major ecosystem that protects the diversity of life, was named a biosphere reserve in (date).”
- **bison** Commonly called buffalo. If writing bison, clarify at first mention. Use park’s preference.

Bison, commonly called buffalo, graze on this prairie.
- **black** *see* African American.
- **boat launch** Preferred over boat ramp (ramps are paved—boat launches include paved and unpaved entrances). Be consistent with park signage.
- **ca.** Avoid writing “ca.” or “circa” in general text for publications and exhibits—rewrite or use “about” instead; *but* use abbreviation *ca.* in credit lines.

The pearlware bowl found at Ninety Six National Historic Site dates to about 1810.
F. Gabriel painting ca. 1850. Courtesy: Cedar River Historical Society.
- **campstove**
- **Canada goose** *not* Canadian goose.
- **cannon** Usually cannon can be both singular and plural (same word, no s), but cannons is also correct. Be consistent; use the park’s preference. *see* artillery.

- **capital, capitol** Spelled with an *a*—the city where a seat of government is located; do not capitalize. Spelled with an *o*—the building where the business of government takes place. Capitalize when referring to the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., and when referring to state capitols.

Annapolis is the capital of Maryland.

The Virginia Capitol is in Richmond.

- **capitalization** Avoid unnecessary capitals. Animal and plant names are lower case, unless they contain a proper name. Nouns are capitalized if part of a formal name, lower case if they stand alone. If a term is plural following more than one proper name, it is lowercase (style guides differ; HFC style is to use fewer capitals). For Spanish words see *Chicago Manual of Style*.

sea otter Kentucky warbler Douglas fir great blue heron

New York City *but* the city of New York

Acadia National Park *but* the park's policy

Wisconsin Ice Age *but* during the ice age

Ranger Baker *but* Ask a ranger.

Superintendent Levy *but* The superintendent is here.

Apache Visitor Center *but* at the visitor center

water from the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers

emigrants on the California and Oregon trails

- **captions** Captions or labels forming clauses (complete sentences) end with a period. If they are phrases (incomplete sentences) do not use a period.

Major Ferguson addresses his troops before the battle.

Colonel Shelby, three hours before the battle

- **century** The 16th-century fort; 20th century.

- **chronology or timeline format** Begin with initial cap and end with period—even if entry is a sentence fragment.

1882 Born January 30, Hyde Park, New York.

1883 Organizes black student school strike, the first such response in the United States to unequal treatment.

- **circa** Avoid; *see ca.*

- **Civil War** Confederates—members of the Confederate army. Federals—members of the Union army. The North—use sparingly in referring to the United States Government during the Civil War, use Union or Federal Government. The South—use sparingly in referring to the 11 states that seceded; use the Confederate States of America (formal name) or the Confederacy. Yankee—do not use as a synonym for Union soldiers; avoid except in quoted material. Unionist—do not use as a synonym for Union soldiers; avoid except in quoted material. Rebel—do not use as a synonym for Confederate; avoid except in quoted material. *see* federal.

- **colon** Use to introduce a series of items that are closely related to the subject; the colon is followed by one space.

Make bread with these ingredients: flour, water, salt, sugar, and yeast.

- **commas** In a series of three or more items, separate the items with commas. Use a comma before a conjunction that joins two independent clauses (and, but, or, as). Unless needed for clarity, omit comma after short introductory phrases.

Our dessert choices are pie, cake, and ice cream.

John lost the keys to the car, and the family is helping him search every cranny.

In this valley glaciers carved a U-shaped swath into the bedrock.

- **compass directions** Lower case; capitalize only specific geographic regions, but try to limit capitals. *see* east, north, south, west, geographic regions.
- **concessioner**
- **Confederate** *see* Civil War.
- **convince that** *but* persuade to.
- **cougar** mountain lion; panther; cougar; puma. Use the park’s preference.
- **credit lines and copyright symbol usage** © *Note: copyright usage*
Copyright usage has precise, legal regulations. Always verify with source of the image about use of the copyright symbol ©.
For more information email: HFC Reference Services
or check U.S. Copyright Office website: www.loc.gov/copyright

Format—credit line. Name of photographer, artist, or creator should be in small type size (5pt). Place credit so it is not mistaken as interpretive text. If credit can be placed next to the image (often vertically on side of image), it is not necessary to add a title or label.

1) GIVE CREDIT—name of creator of image and USE the copyright symbol ©.

- Professional photographer, artist, or creator of image (someone who is paid by NPS for the use only of image—and original creator retains all property and all rights).

©Jane Doe [credit next to photo]

- Stock house manages the image provided by photographer, artist, or creator of image (stock house is paid by NPS for the use only of image—and stock house, as agent, retains property and rights). Often stock house is listed first and photographer second; sometimes only stock house is credited—credit according to request.

©Images For You/Jack Doe

- Amateur photographer, artist, or creator of image (someone who donates use of the image to NPS but retains all property rights)—this includes park volunteers, professionals who are often called “friends of the park,” and NPS employees who created the image/product on their own time, with their own equipment, and with their own money (no reimbursement).

©Jack Doe [for his stone wall illustration]

2) GIVE CREDIT—NPS and person’s name and USE the copyright symbol ©.

- Photo or illustration is owned by NPS but photographer, artist, or creator retains copyright (requested in writing, approved, and granted).

NPS/©Louis S. Glanzman [British troops occupy Boston]

- 3) GIVE CREDIT—NPS and person’s name. DO NOT use copyright symbol ©.

- Photo or illustration is commissioned by NPS, and NPS owns the finished product (photo, illustration) unconditionally with no restrictions.

NPS/L. Kenneth Townsend [Saint Gaudens illustration]

- NPS hires a professional to photograph or draw objects in NPS collection; (professional may be credited if requested)

NPS Collection/Jane Doe

- 4) CREDIT NPS ONLY (do not credit name of creator). DO NOT use copyright symbol ©.

- Photo, illustration, artifact is owned by the park or is part of NPS collection—this includes photo, illustration, other image or product created by park employees while on duty.

NPS [sketch of muskrat by park employee]
NPS Collection

- 5) CREDIT INSTITUTIONS. DO NOT use copyright symbol ©.

- Historic photos, illustrations, images from museums, institutions, libraries, and more. *Note:* If artist or photographer is of historical importance, try to use the name in the caption—not in the credit.

Smithsonian Institution [photo credit, gold nugget]
Library of Congress [photo credit, wagon train]
Edward Curtis photographed these Navajo riding east into
Canyon de Chelly in 1904. [*caption* for photograph]

- 6) CREDIT PERSON (owner of image/product). DO NOT use copyright symbol ©.

- Historic photo, illustration, image, artifact is privately owned but was not created or produced by the owner (person donates use of the image to NPS but retains ownership and property rights).

Courtesy: Jane Doe [use of historic postcards]
Jack Doe [photo of Navajo chief blanket]

- **cross-country**

- **dashes** 1) Em dash — Longer than en dash or hyphen, often called simply “the dash;” used to indicate a sudden change in thought or to add emphasis. 2) En dash – half the length of an em dash and longer than a hyphen; used in a combination of figures, capital letters, or figures and capital letters. *see* hyphens.

Kings Mountain—named for an early settler and not for King George III—is a rocky spur of the Blue Ridge. (em dash)
4-H club WAMU-FM KOMO-TV
pp. 38-45 1998-2003

note: Do not use en dash for the word “to” if “from” precedes the expression; do not use en dash for “and” if “between” precedes it.

The visitor center is closed from October 15 to April 1.
not The visitor center is closed from October 15-April 1.
You may rent canoes between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m.
not You may rent canoes between 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

- **dates** Write in this order: month, day, and year. Use a comma before and after the year in sentences with full dates. No comma if using only month and year in a sentence. Do not use an apostrophe to indicate plural dates .

On December 7, 1941, Japanese bombers struck Pearl Harbor.

Five companies garrisoned Fort Sumter in June 1863.

1900s *not* 1900's

1950s and 1960s *not* 1950s and 60s (informally, '50s and '60s)

spirit of '76

A.D.—Avoid; use only if year reference is so vague as to be misunderstood; A.D. precedes the year and is separated by one space. A.D. 1250.

B.C.—Use only if year reference is vague; instead of 1000 B.C. say "about 3,000 years ago." B.C. follows the year and is separated by one space. 500 B.C. *see* B.C.E.

- **day-use** If used as an adjective; day use, if a noun.
- **degree** *see* temperature.
- **Depression** For the Great Depression during the 1930s.
- **Directions to reader in text and in captions** Set off in parentheses and italicize entire item including parentheses.

The coat of the American black bear can be black, brown, or auburn (*left*).
The core of L'Enfant's 1791 plan is the triangle created by the Capitol, the White House, and the Mall (*see map above*).
- **disabled** Avoid "handicapped" or "the disabled"— put the "person" before the disability; write "persons or visitors with disabilities."

The Longstocking Trail is accessible for visitors with disabilities.
The visitor center has video tours of the park for persons with disabilities.
The Pelican Trail is wheelchair-accessible.
- **discover (territory)** Avoid; use explore, chart, venture, scout, etc.
- **Douglas fir** *not* Douglas-fir. (Opinions vary; use the park's preference.)
- **Earth, earth** The Earth is our planet; earth is soil or dirt.
- **east, eastern** Lowercase compass directions; minimize use of capital letters except for specific regions (or popular place names); Eastern Shore of Maryland; East Coast; the East is east.
- **elk** Commonly used name for wapiti (a large North American deer).
- **ellipsis** Indicates omission of a word, phrase, line, paragraph, or more from a quoted passage. Use ellipsis at beginning and end of a quotation only if necessary for context—avoid if possible.
 - 1) Three dots. Within a sentence, use three dots to indicate deleted material; typesetting form is "em space . em space . em space . em space."
 - 2) Four dots. Four ellipsis points (a period, followed by three dots) "em space . em space . em space . em space." indicate the omission of (a) the last part of a sentence, (b) the first part of the next sentence, (c) a whole sentence or more, or (d) a whole paragraph or more; if sentence ends with question mark or exclamation mark, use it and three dots.

"If a stop cannot be put to these massacres, the country will be depopulated . . . as neither Whig nor Tory can live." *Nathanael Greene, 1780*

- **email addresses** Do not use capital letters unless address is case sensitive.
mobydick@ocean.edu
- **em dash, en dash** *see* dashes; *see* hyphens.
- **en route**
- **ensure, insure** Ensure means to make certain; insure means to provide for insurance.
Careful planning can help ensure an enjoyable cross-country hike.
The policy insures his life.
- **Euro-American** Avoid; be specific when possible.
Sir Francis Drake, English mariner
Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, Portuguese explorer
French missionaries
settlers from the East Coast
- **explorers** People venturing into territory unknown to them; (area may be already populated, avoid “discoverers”); rewrite, consider others’ points of view.
- **farther, further** Farther refers to physical distance, further to an expression of time or quantity.
The farther he walked along Cumberland Island’s shore, the further his mind strayed from his problems.
- **federal** *but* Federal Government. Also Federal soldier, Federal forces, and Federal fort when writing about the Civil War.
- **Federalist** Federalist Party; Federalist Papers.
- **fewer, less** Fewer refers to number and individual items, less to quantity and bulk.
Fewer birds came to the feeder because Yuriko put out less food.
- **firewood**
- **first-come, first-served**
- **Forest Service** *see* U.S. Forest Service.
- **four-wheel-drive vs. 4-wheel-drive** Use numeral—4-wheel-drive vehicles; *not* four-wheel-drive (unless it is the first word of a sentence).
- **fractions** In text spell out if amounts are less than one, if standing alone, or if followed by “of a” or “of an”—use a hyphen between the words. Use fractions in unit modifiers (even if amount is less than one). Try to stack numbers in the fraction $\frac{5}{8}$ *not* 5/8
In March one-third of the lake is open to anglers. *not* In March $\frac{1}{3}$ of the lake is open to anglers.
The beetle is three-quarters of an inch long.
The $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile hike takes about one hour. *but* The trail is three-fourths of a mile long.
- **freshwater** One word if an adjective. Two words if nouns.

- **frontcountry** Avoid if possible; it is bureaucratic jargon.
- **genus, species** *see* scientific names.
- **geographic names** For text in publications and exhibits and on maps—the U.S. Board on Geographic Names (BGN) determines the federally recognized place names and spellings of geographic features in the United States and its territories.

For general information: Geographic Names Information System (GNIS)
<http://geonames.usgs.gov>

For specific information: To find federally recognized names
http://geonames.usgs.gov/pls/gnis/web_query.gnis_web_query_form

- 1) Federally recognized names—as a U.S. Government agency, we are mandated to use federally recognized place names as listed in the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS).
- 2) Variant name—these often include historic, locally used names, and misspellings; if using a variant name, show the federally recognized name **first** and the variant name **second**; the variant name must be clearly distinguished as a variant (for example, put variant name in parenthesis or different type size or type face).
- 3) Historic names —historic place names can be used in a historic context; watch out for names that use ‘s (apostrophe and s) and names that may be one or two words.

Sierra Nevada *not* Sierra Nevada Mountains
 The Narrows *not* Verrazano Narrows (the water channel) *but*
 Verrazano-Narrows Bridge crosses The Narrows.
 At 20,320 feet Mount McKinley is the highest mountain
 in North America.
 The Battle of Wilson’s Creek took place along Wilsons Creek.
 The courthouse in the village of Appomattox Court House was
 built in 1846.

- **geographic regions** Minimize use of capital letters except for specific regions (or popular place names); northern California, southern Appalachians; the Bay Area; the Upper Peninsula; Pacific Northwest; West Coast; East Coast; Midwest.
- ***Giardia lamblia*** The organism; may be abbreviated *G. lamblia*.
- **giardiasis** The illness caused by the *Giardia lamblia* organism.
- **Gila monster**
- **guide dogs** “Service animals” is currently the preferred designation for guide dogs or signal dogs.
 Except for visitors with service animals, pets are not allowed in the campground.
- **guided hikes** *see* self-guiding trail.
- **Harpers Ferry Center** *not* the Harpers Ferry Center (no article).

- **Hawaiian words** Do not add 's (apostrophe and s) to Hawaiian words to form possessives.

The island of Pele *not* Pele's island.

- **highcountry**

- **highways** Use official designation (as noted on maps); list official designation first and local name second in parentheses. In addresses follow post office form.

I-75 (Alligator Alley) Nebr. 7 *not* State Route 7 *not* NE 7
U.S. 1 *not* U.S. Highway 1 *but* 39063 U.S. Highway 95 (park address)

- **holidays** Use actual dates not traditional names *but* Thanksgiving Day.

The park is closed December 25 and January 1.

- **hyphens** Generally use a hyphen between two or more words combined to form a modifier preceding the word modified, *except* when the first word ends in *ly*. *see* dashes.

rust-resistant alloy
The long-awaited bridge replaced a series of ferry crossings.
The backed-up water behind Hoover Dam forms a 110-mile-long lake.
but a federally funded project

When two or more hyphenated compounds have a common basic element, the hyphens are all retained.

4- to 5-ton trucks 8-, 10-, and 16-foot boards
moss- and ivy-covered walls, *not* moss and ivy-covered walls
In Lake Mead you can catch largemouth bass at 5- to 20-foot depths.

- **ice age** *but* Wisconsin Ice Age; Ice Age Reserve.

- **icefield**

- **Indian** *see* American Indian.

- **initials** Franklin D. Roosevelt; FDR and JFK (no periods and no spaces); W.E.B. DuBois (periods and no spaces if substituting initials for given first and middle names); P.O. Box (space between O. and Box only).

- **insure** *see* ensure.

- **Internet address** Do not use capital letters unless address is case sensitive.

www.google.com

- **italics** *see* quotations (display and headline type examples); measurements (English and metric differences); ships and more.

- **Joshua tree** *but* Joshua Tree National Park.

- **lifesaving station** One word unless proper name or park usage requires otherwise.

By the 1890s lifesaving stations were located every 3.5 miles along the New Jersey coast.
The Old Harbor Life-Saving Station at Cape Cod was built in 1897–98.

- **livestock** *but* pack animals.

- **loyalist** *see* American Revolution affiliations.
- **map symbols and terminology** Be precise when choosing terminology for map symbols; be aware of subtle differences—gas station (sells gas only) and service station (sells gas and does repairs).

For up-to-date symbols that you can use on your maps:
www.nps.gov/carto/symbols.html

- **measurements on maps** Measurement labels are abbreviated; no period is used after the abbreviation; there is no space between numeral and symbol (set name of feature in italics; measurements in Roman).

Mount Rainier
 14411ft
 4392m

- **measurements in text** Measurements are given in English measure; units of measurement are spelled out, not abbreviated.

The trout weighed three pounds.

1) In text with specific measurements or when measurements are unit modifiers, the English measure is first, followed by the abbreviated metric equivalent in parentheses. Set metric in lowercase Roman, use one space between the figure and the metric unit. Periods are not used with the metric abbreviation. Abbreviated symbol is always singular.

At 20,320 feet (6,194 m) Mount McKinley is North America's highest.
 The 0.9-mile-long trail leads to Patterson lighthouse.

2) Metric is used in text only if circumstances call for it—such circumstances might include parks with a high number of foreign visitors, scientific usage, or a specific request by a park.

- **metric** *see* measurements.
- **military ranks** Abbreviate rank if used with complete name; spell out rank if used with last name only; in subsequent references, may use last name without rank (if specifically requested by a park, rank can be spelled out when first used with complete name).

Gen. Robert E. Lee General Lee Lee advanced

Do not use the term “Brevet” in connection with any rank unless there is a reason for it and the term can be explained. Otherwise it will only create confusion.

Military Officers—ranks and equivalents

Army	Navy
[5 Stars] General of the Army	Fleet Admiral
[4 Stars] Gen. (General)	Adm. (Admiral)
[3 Stars] Lt. Gen. (Lieutenant)	Vice Adm.
[2 Star] Maj. Gen. (Major)	Rear Adm. [upper]
[1 Star] Brig. Gen. (Brigadier)	Rear Adm. [lower]
	Commo. [wartime] (Commodore)
Col. (Colonel)	Capt. (Captain)
Lt. Col.	Cmdr. (Commander)
Maj.	Lt. Cmdr.
Capt.	Lt.
1st Lt. (First Lieutenant)	Lt. jg (Junior Grade)
2nd Lt.	Ens. (Ensign)

- **mission statement** The mission of the Department of the Interior is to protect and provide access to our nation’s natural and cultural heritage and honor our trust responsibilities to tribes. The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The National Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.

- **money** \$35 million; \$35,000,000.

- **More Information format** Stack information on separate lines for easier reading.

For More Information
 Cabrillo National Monument
 1800 Cabrillo Memorial Drive
 San Diego, CA 92106-3601
 TDD/619-224-4140; 619-557-5450
 www.nps.gov/cabr

- **more than** Use for quantity. If possible, use precise quantity; (*see over*).

More than 1,100 men died in the battle. *not* Over 1,100 men died in the battle.
 Most of the ship’s 1,800 sailors lost their lives.
 We encountered winds of more than 50 miles per hour as we flew over Snoqualmie Pass.

- **mountain lion** *see* cougar.

- **mountaintop**

- **nation** *but* the Nation’s Capital.

- **National Park Service** *not* “the Park Service” (to avoid confusing with state parks).

- **National Park System**

- **national seashore** *but* Fire Island National Seashore.

- **Native American** Avoid unless requested by park. *see* American Indian.

- **north, northern** Lowercase compass directions; minimize use of capital letters except for specific regions (or popular place names). Acadia is northeast of Boston; California’s North Coast.

- **North (the)** *see* Civil War.

- **numbers** Spell out numbers one through nine; use figures for 10 or greater; if a series of numbers appears in a sentence, use above guidelines. Spell out a numeral at the beginning of a sentence (regardless of amount), or rewrite.

Yesterday two mules slid off Bright Angel trail.
 The three hikers passed by eight overlooks and 15 waterfalls.
 Forty-five species of birds are found in the park.

(*numbers continued*) Use commas within numbers greater than 999.

More than 1,000 bats live in Black Hole Cave.

Note: use judgment and be consistent throughout the document or exhibit. Style guides disagree; some spell numbers one through nine and use figures for 10 and greater; others spell numbers one through ninety-nine and use figures for 100 and greater—all have exceptions.

- **one-way** If used as an adjective; one way if noun; *never* write 1-way. *see* round-trip.

Cedar River Gorge is a one-way loop road that winds through old-growth forest.

There is more than one way to reach the campground.

- **over** A position—over and under. *see* more than.

Brown pelicans flew over Anacapa Island.

Trailers more than 30 feet long are prohibited on Corkscrew Pass.

not trailers over 30 feet.

- **pack animals** *but* livestock.

- **panther** *see* cougar.

- **park** *but* Olympic National Park.

- **park area in more than one state** list states in alphabetical order separated by commas.

Blue Ridge Parkway North Carolina, Virginia

Cumberland Gap National Historical Park Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia

exceptions: some parks may prefer to list the first state according to the park's acreage—use the park's preference

Yellowstone National Park Wyoming, Idaho, Montana

- **parklands**

- **patriot** *see* American Revolution affiliations.

- **percent** Spell out “percent” in text (one space between numeral and spelled-out form); use % symbol in scientific writing and in tables (no space between numeral and symbol).

In summer about 80 percent of the park's elk migrate to alpine meadows.

2002 Hantavirus Report

Deer mice population on Minnie Island	1,000
Population captured and tested for hantavirus	850
Cultures resulting in positive testing	60%

- **possessive** If a singular noun, add 's (apostrophe and s) whatever the final consonant. *see* ships, *see* Hawaiian words. *see* *Elements of Style* by Strunk and White.

the cat's tail

Harris's chickens

the hostess's seat

(*possessive continued*)

1) If a plural noun ends in s, add only an apostrophe.

The visitors' entrance is on the left.

Cannon fire set the officers' quarters ablaze.

2) Plural nouns not ending in s, add 's (apostrophe and s).

women's rights

alumni's feelings

• **p.m.** *see* time of day.

• **President** Capitalize U.S. Presidents.

President Clinton visited Harpers Ferry NHP on Earth Day, April 1998.

Lincoln was President during the Civil War.

but The president of Alderwood Manor Corporation resigned.

• **Presidency**

Roosevelt assumed the Presidency at a time of great social ferment.

• **presidential**

but Rosa Gonzales received the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

• **prickly pear cactus**

• **pronghorn** Pronghorn not a true antelope; clarify at first mention with "often called antelope."

• **quotations** Display or headline type: set quotation in italics with no quotation marks (author credit in Roman type).

A curious ensemble of wonderful features. John Wesley Powell, 1869

1) Capitalize first word: if quotation is a complete sentence or introduced with a colon or comma; or dialog; also lines of poetry.

Chief Joseph said, "From where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever."

2) Do not capitalize first word: if quotation is fragmentary and placed in running text (without comma or colon).

Chief Joseph said he would "fight no more forever."

• **quotation marks** Place period and comma within quotation marks. The dash, semicolon, and question mark go within if they apply to the quoted material; they go outside if they apply to the whole sentence.

Why did Alfred call it a "foregone conclusion"?

but Gayle asked, "What shall we do?"

Bill shouted, "The house is on fire!"

The unexpected collapse of the smoke stack gave new meaning to "it fell like a ton of bricks."

• **rainforest**

• **ranger** *but* Ranger Baker.

• **rebel** *see* Civil War.

• **Revolutionary War** Avoid. *see* American Revolution affiliations.

- **rivers** Columbia River *but* Columbia and Snake rivers.
- **round-trip** Hyphenated if used as an adjective; round trip is the noun.
- **ruin** Avoid unless included in proper name; use dwelling, site, structure. *see* abandoned.

Ancestral Puebloan people built these dwellings more than 1,000 years ago.
The 2.5-mile trail to White House Ruin is on the canyon's South Rim Drive.

- **saltwater**

- **scientific names** Latin names of plants and animals (genus and species) are set in italic type. Always capitalize genus names, but never capitalize species names even if they are in a capitalized title. Divisions higher than genus (phylum, class, order, family) are set in Roman type and are capitalized.

In late spring Atlantic horseshoe crabs, *Limulus polyphemus*, climb ashore in Delaware Bay where females deposit eggs.

- **sea life, sea star** *but* seabird, seaside, starfish.
- **self-guiding trail** *not* self-guided; avoid writing "nature" (most trails are nature trails in some way) or "interpretive" trail (visitors may expect a ranger-led tour).
- **Servicewide (NPS)** The director issued a Servicewide announcement that all NPS employees will receive a 50 percent raise.
- **sexist language** Not appropriate. Rewrite gracefully to avoid awkwardness; avoid "he/she."

work force *not* manpower surname *not* maiden name
founders *not* founding fathers

- **she** A female; use "it" not "she" for a country, ship, or nature.
Portugal raised its flag for the last time over Macao in December 1999.

- **Shenandoah Valley** *but* the valley.

- **ships, aircraft, trains, spacecraft, vehicles** Names of ships, aircraft, spacecraft, and artificial satellites are set in italics. Abbreviations before the name, if used, are set in Roman. Do not use periods in the abbreviation preceding a ship name. When forming the possessive, the "s" is set in Roman. *Note about ships:* Use "it" not "she." A ship is a seaworthy vessel too large to dock unassisted, *but* write ferryboat and gunboat.

USS *Arizona* or *Arizona* *Challenger's* crew
Spirit of St. Louis *Missouri's* turret
Sputnik motivated the United States to take action.

1) If the name occurs in text that is already set in italics, such as some quotations and captions, then the name is set in Roman.

Sputnik motivated the United States to action.
The greatest loss was on board USS Arizona.

(ships, aircrafts, trains, spacecrafts, vehicles continued)

2) Designations of class or make, names of trains, and space programs are capitalized but not set in italics.

Chrysler Imperial Project Mercury Boeing 747
the train they call the City of New Orleans

3) Generic terms for vessels, aircraft are neither capitalized nor italicized.

submarine space shuttle

- **shuttle bus** *not* shuttlebus. Be consistent with park signage.
- **slackwater**
- **spaces—one or two in text composition** On a typewriter use two spaces after a period. On a computer (or for typesetting) use one space after a period; *see Chicago Manual of Style, 14th Edition*.

- **Spanish language, accents, special characters, punctuation**

Many Spanish words include accented vowels and the ñ with a tilde. The spelling is wrong without these marks. Questions and exclamations require inverted leading punctuation marks.

see Chicago Manual of Style, 14th Edition and other sources.

en los años de 1760 el Río Bravo
¿Dónde está el parque nacional, por favor?
¡ Toma un galón de agua por persona por día!

- **Spanish language, capitals** Capitalize only the first word in titles (books, exhibits). Forms of address (Mr., Dr. etc.) before names are lowercase. *see Chicago Manual of Style, 14th Edition* and other sources.

El desierto chihuahuense (The Chihuahuan Desert)
Golondrinas puebleras (Cave Swallows)
el señor Tomás López el doctor Garcia

- **Spanish language, compound names** If a Spanish name contains “de”, which means “of” or “from,” it must be lowercase. Avoid dividing compound names of persons and places at the end of lines. *see Spanish language, word division*.

see Chicago Manual of Style, 14th Edition and other sources.

Hidalgo de Parral
San Antonio de Béxar
don Juan Ponce de León
Hernando de Soto *but* De Soto National Memorial (park name)

- **Spanish language, word division** Divide Spanish words after a vowel or group of vowels; do not divide two or more adjacent vowels. A single vowel may not stand alone at the end of a line. Spanish *ch*, *ll*, and *rr* are considered single characters—do not divide. Avoid dividing proper names. Compound place names are considered one word—do not divide.

see Chicago Manual of Style, 14th Edition and other sources.

bue-no mu-*jer*
ene-ro *not* e-nero uni-dad *not* u-nidad
San Diego Cabrillo

- **Spanish, Spaniard** Either is correct if referring to the people; Spanish is used commonly today; Spaniard is more formal; use the park’s preference. Avoid using “the Spanish” as a collective noun if you mean “the Spanish governor,” “the Spanish authorities,” or “the Spanish colonists.”

- **south, southern** Lowercase compass directions; minimize use of capital letters except for specific regions; southern Appalachians.

- **South (the)** *see* Civil War.

- **state** state government, state regulations.

- **state abbreviations**

1) in addresses only Use U.S. Postal Service two-letter abbreviations in addresses with ZIP codes.

AZ ME WA

2) in brochure and exhibit text Use these state abbreviations (if not addresses):

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

Seven states are not abbreviated:

Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, and Utah.

3) In publication handbooks Write out full names for all states (except in addresses).

- **streets** Maple Street; but Cypress and Larch streets.

- **subject/word agreement** “Everyone (singular) will get their (plural) chance to see the cave,” is becoming more accepted to avoid gender-specific language—but try to rewrite!

Every visitor will get a chance. *or*
All visitors will have a chance.

- **superintendent** *but* Superintendent Benally.

- **surnames** Avoid Mr. and Mrs.; use full name (including initials), first and last names together, or last name alone.

Maggie L. Walker organized the first black student school strike in the U.S. (*never* Maggie organized).
Carl and Lilian Sandburg lived in North Carolina.
Greene slipped away before dawn on June 20, 1781.

- **TDD** Telephone device for the deaf; precedes regular voice number, “Call TDD/301-123-4567; 301-123-8910.” If number is the same, “Call TDD/voice 301-412-1212.”

- **telephone numbers** 123-456-7890 is preferred style (hyphens), but (123) 456-7890 is acceptable (be consistent within the document or exhibit).

- **temperature** 32°F or 20–32°F in winter (no space after degree symbol).

Expect temperatures in the 80s and 90s°F in summer.

- **timberline** Avoid, use tree line.

- **time of day** 8 a.m., 2 p.m.; spell out noon and midnight.

At 4:30 a.m. a mortar shell from Fort Johnson arched across the sky.
President Lincoln arrived at noon, and the meeting began.
She took the midnight train to Georgia.

- **Tory** *see* American Revolution affiliations.
- **trailhead**
- **turn of the century** Ambiguous; avoid unless meaning is absolutely clear.
- **underground** *but* Underground Railroad.
- **Union** *see* Civil War.
- **unique** Avoid; use only if truly one of a kind.
- **United States, U.S.** United States, a noun (spell out). U.S. an adjective (no space).

Lyndon B. Johnson was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1948.
The United States is part of the North American continent.
- **U.S. Forest Service** In text—Try to use specific name or title of the forest service area; spell out U.S. Forest Service or Forest Service (depending on available space). Do not abbreviate; eliminate "Department of Agriculture." On maps—spell out if space is available and if labeling a ranger station or visitor center; abbreviate as USFS.

Campgrounds are in Mount Baker National Forest.
The visitor center in Escalante, Utah, houses National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, and Bureau of Land Management offices.
- **visitor center** *but* Mount Rainier Visitor Center.
- **wapiti** *see* elk.
- **website** *but* Internet (capitalized).
- **west, western** Lowercase compass directions; minimize use of capital letters except for specific regions (or popular place names); the Pacific Northwest; the West is west; West Coast.
- **western red cedar**
- **wetland** *not* wet land.
- **wheelchair** *see* disabled.
- **Whig** *see* American Revolution affiliations.
- **white settlers** Avoid; *see* Euro-American; *see* explorers.
- **white-tailed deer** *not* whitetailed or whitetail deer.
- **word division** *see* *Word Division, 1987, Supplement to United States Government Printing Office Style Manual* and *The American Heritage Dictionary of The English Language, Third Edition*.
 - 1) Divide according to natural pronunciation so that the part of the word left at end of line suggests the whole word.

capac-ity *not* capa-city serv-ice *but* Robert Ser-vice

- **world heritage site** “(Park name) is listed as a world heritage site, the principal international recognition for natural and cultural areas of global significance.”
- **Yankee** *see* Civil War.
- **year-round**
- **ZIP code** In addresses use ZIP + 4 when possible; contact parks, local post offices, or the Internet.