Tip Sheet
Writing

1. Reference Manuals
      (Used by Roseanne; therefore, should be used by Division)
   b. The Chicago Manual of Style
   c. The New York Time Manual of Style and Usage
   e. Merriam Webster’s Standard American Style Manual

2. Proof Reading and Editing
   a. Read your document out loud to yourself.
      (1) Ask yourself, “Does my sentence make sense”?
      (2) Ask yourself, “Do I use complete sentences”?
      (3) Ask yourself, “Would someone who does not know the background know what I intended to say”?
   b. Refer to this tip sheet and Gregg Reference Manual.
   c. Avoid personal pronouns (e.g., I, we, he, and she).
   d. Spell out abbreviations the first time used.
      (1) With a lot of edits, sometimes the first time the word is spelled out ends up deleted. Therefore, recheck final document.
      (2) Use your “find” feature to check out all the abbreviations and words/phrases.

3. Age and Anniversaries
   a. Express ages in figures (including 1 through 10) when they are used as significant statistics or as technical measurements.
      (1) Ethel Kassarina, 38, has been promoted to director of marketing.
      (2) The attached printout projects the amount of the monthly retirement benefit payable at the age of 65.
      (3) A computer literacy program is being offered in the schools to all 8- and 9-year-olds.
      (4) This insurance policy is specially tailored for people in the 50-plus age group.
      (5) You cannot disregard the job application of a person aged 58.  (Not: age 58)
   b. NOTE: When age is expressed in years, months, and days, do not use commas to separate the elements; they make up a single unit.
      (1) On January 1 she will be 19 years old 4 months and 17 days old.  (The and linking months and days may be omitted.)
   c. Spell out ages in nontechnical references and in formal writing.
      (1) My son is three years old, and my daughter is two.
      (2) Shirley is in her early forties; her husband is in his mid-sixties.
      (3) Have you ever tried keeping a group of five-year-olds happy and under control at the same time?
   d. Spell out ordinals in references to birthdays and anniversaries except where special emphasis or more than two words are required.
      (1) on my thirtieth birthday
      (2) our twenty-fifth anniversary
      (3) her forty-first class reunion
      (4) the company’s 135th anniversary.
4. **Comma**
   a. Use a comma to separate the two main clauses in a compound sentence when they are joined by *and, but, or, or not*.
      (1) Example: We can’t accept the marketing restrictions you proposed, *but* we think there is some basis for a mutually acceptable understanding.
   b. Use a comma to separate three or more items in a series—unless all the items are joined by *and or or*.
      (1) Example: It takes time, effort, *and* a good deal of money.
      (2) **BUT:** It takes time *and* effort *and* a good deal of money.
   c. Do not use a comma between two independent clauses that are not joined by a coordinating Conjunction (*and, but, or, or nor*).
      (1) **WRONG:** Please review these spreadsheets quickly, I need them back by tomorrow.
      (2) **RIGHT:** Please review these spreadsheets quickly; I need them back by tomorrow.
      (3) **OR:** Please review these spreadsheets quickly. I need them back by tomorrow.

5. **Decimals**
   a. When a decimal stands alone (without a whole number preceding the decimal point), insert a zero before the decimal point. (Reason: The zero keeps the reader from overlooking the decimal point.)
      (1) 0.55 inch
      (2) 0.08 gm
      (3) Exceptions: a Colt .45; a .36 caliber revolver.
   b. Ordinarily, drop the zero at the end of a decimal (for example, write 2.7887 rather than 2.7870). However, retain the zero (*a*) if you wish to emphasize that the decimal is an exact number or (*b*) if the decimal has been rounded off from a longer figures. In a column of figures add zeros to the end of a decimal in order to make the number as long as other numbers in the column.
   c. Do not begin a sentence with a decimal figure.
      (1) Example: The temperature at 8 a.m. was 63.7.
      (2) **NOT:** 63.7 was the temperature at 8 a.m.

6. **Degrees, academic**
   a. Abbreviations of academic degrees require a period after each element in the abbreviation but not internal spaces.
      (1) Examples: B.S., M.P.H., Ph.D., M.D., D.D.S., and R.N.
   b. Do not capitalize academic degree used as general terms of classification. However, capitalize a degr3ss used after a person’s name. Examples:
      (1) A bachelor of arts degree
      (2) A master of science degree
      (3) Received her bachelor’s
      (4) Working for a master’s
      (5) Will soon receive her doctorate
      (6) Clair Hurwitz, Doctor of Philosophy
   c. The specialty is lowercase unless it's a proper noun. Examples
      (1) bachelor's degree in French history
      (2) doctorate in English literature
      (3) master's degree in public health
7. **Enumerated Items**
   a. **Within a sentence.** Use parentheses to enclose numbers or letters that accompany enumerated items within a sentence.
      (1) Example: We need the following information to complete our record of Ms. Pavlick’s experience: (1) the number of years she worked for your company, (2) a detailed description of her duties, and (3) the number of promotions she received.
      (2) **NOT:** . . . our record of Ms. Pavlick’s experience: 1) the number of years she worked for your company, 2) a detailed description of her duties, and 3) the number of promotions she received. (The only acceptable use of a single closing parenthesis is in an outline.)
      (3) **NOTE:** Letters are used to enumerate items within a sentence when the sentence is part of a numbered sequence.
         Example: 3. Please include these items on your expense report: (a) the cost of your hotel room; (b) the cost of meals, including tips; and (c) the amount spent on transportation.
   b. **In a Displayed List.** If the enumerated items appear on separate lines, the letters or numbers are usually followed only by periods.
      
      Example: Please get me year-end figures on:
         1. Domestic sales revenues.
         2. Total operating costs.
         3. Net operating income.
   c. No periods are needed after short phrases in a list if the introductory statement is grammatically complete (as in the first example below) or if the listed items are like those on an inventory sheet or a shopping list.
      (1) Example:
         The computer offers features that are typically found on much more expensive models:
         1. Built-in graphics capability
         2. A space-saving configuration
         3. An up-front power switch for each access.
      (2) Example:
         When you come to take the qualifying examination, please bring:
         2 No. 2 pencils
         1 ballpoint pen
d. **Outlines.** Subdivisions in outlines are often enclosed in parentheses. It is sometimes necessary to use a single closing parenthesis to provide another level of subdivision. Use your bullet feature to create outlines. Examples

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1)</td>
<td>......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a)</td>
<td>......</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** At every level of an outline there should be at least two items. If an item is labeled A, there must be at least one more item (labeled B) at the same level.

8. **Figures, items consisting of**
   a. If a column of table text consists of items expressed in figures:
      (1) Align columns of whole numbers at the right.
      (2) Align columns of decimal numbers on the decimal point.
      (3) In a column that contains both whole numbers and decimals, add a decimal point and zeros to the whole numbers to maintain a consistent appearance.
      (4) Omit commas in four-digit numbers unless they appear in the same column with larger numbers contains commas. Never insert commas in the decimal part of a numbers.
         (a) Example:

         | 325   | 465.2137 |
         |-------|---------|
         | 1     | 1250.0004 |
         | 152,657 | 1.0000 |
         | 1,489 | 37.9898 |

         (b) **NOTE:** Some writers prefer to retain the comma in four-digit numbers under all circumstances.
      (5) You can easily align the figures in a column by using the right align function (in tool bar) then moving the tab triangle to the left. This lines up everything exactly (rather than using the space key)
9. **Numbers**
   a. Spell out numbers from 1 through 10; use figures for numbers above 10.
   b. Use all figures—even for the numbers 1 through 10—when they have technical significance or need to stand out for quick comprehension. This all-figure style is used in tables, in statistical matter, and in expression of dates (May 3), money ($6), clock time (4 p.m.), proportion and ratios (a 10-to-1 shot), scores (3 to 1), and percentages (8 percent).
   c. Use the same style to express related numbers above and below 10. If any of the numbers are above 10, put them all in figures.
      (1) Example: We used to have two dogs, one cat, and one rabbit.
      (2) **BUT:** We now have 5 dogs, 11 cats, and 1 rabbit.
      (3) Example: Our four sons consumed a total of 18 hamburgers, 5 large bottles of Coke, 12 Dove Bars, and about 2000 cookies—all in one sitting. (Figures are used for all related items of food; the other numbers—four and one—are spelled out because they are not related and are not over 10.)

10. **Numbers Referred to as Numbers**
    a. Always use figures (even 1 through 10) to express numbers referred to as numbers
       (1) pick a number from 1 to 10
       (2) divide by 16
       (3) the number 7 is considered lucky
       (4) multiply by $\frac{1}{2}$

11. **Number or # With Figures**
    a. If the term number precedes a figure, express it as an abbreviation (singular: No.; plural: Nos.). At the beginning of a sentence, however, spell out Number to prevent misreading.
       (1) Our check covers the following invoices: Nos. 8592, 8653, and 8654.
       (2) **Number** 82175 has been assigned to your new policy (Not: No. 82175…)
    b. The symbol # may be used on business forms (such as invoices) and in technical matter.

12. **Percentages**
    a. Express percentages in figures, and spell out the word percent.
       (1) Carpenter Industries has increased its prices by only 3 percent this year.
       (2) My client had been expecting at least a 25 percent discount from you
           (Not: a 25-percent discount)
       (3) Our terms are 2 percent 10 days, net 30 days.
       (4) Note: The % symbol may be used in tables, on business forms, and in statistical or technical matter.
    b. Fractional percentages under 1 percent may be expressed as follows:
       (1) one half of 1 percent OR 0.5 percent
       (2) Note: The zero before the decimal point in 0.5 percent prevents misreading the amount as 5 percent.
    c. Fractional percentages over 1 percent should be expressed as figures.
       (1) 7½ percent OR 7.5 percent.
       (2) 9¼ percent OR 9.25 percent
    d. In a range or series of percentages, the work percent follows the last figure only. If the symbol % is used, it must follow each figure.
(1) Price reductions range from 20 to 50 percent (BUT: from 20% to 50%)
(2) We give discounts of 10, 20, and 30 percent (BUT: 10%, 20%, and 30%)
e. If all the figures in a column represent percentages, type a percent sign (%) directly after each figure unless the column heading clearly indicates that these are percentages.
f. Percentages involving decimals should align on the decimal point. If necessary, add zeros after the decimal point on the number so that each figure will align at the right. If any percentage is less than 1 percent, add one zero to the left of the decimal point.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increase</th>
<th>Percent of Increase (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>55.48%</td>
<td>11.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.80%</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.09%</td>
<td>25.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.00%</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. Period
a. Leave two spaces between the period and the start of the next sentence (this is difference from AP style, which uses only one period).
b. Periods (and commas) always go inside quotation marks.
   (1) Example: The sign changed from "Walk," to "Don't Walk," to "Walk" again within 30 seconds.
   (2) Example: She said, “Hurry up.”

14. Race, ethnicity, nationalities, and regions
a. 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, Japanese (singular and plural), Jew, Jewish, Nordic, Sioux, Swede, etc. (AP Style)
b. Examples from The New York Times:
   (1) Of the cases for which ethnicity could be determined, a quarter are of Arab descent, while 10 percent are African-American, 13 percent are Caucasian, 18 percent are South Asian, 20 percent are of Somali descent, and the rest are either mixed race or of other nationalities.
   (2) And Atlanta, for the first time, has replaced Chicago as the metro area with the largest number of African-Americans after New York.
   (3) About 17 percent of blacks who moved to the South in the past decade left New York State, far more than from any other state, the census data show.
   (4) Its white population increased as well, though whites grew substantially in the West as well, something that was not the case for blacks.
   (5) Growth of Asian and Hispanic populations—which grew the fastest over all—was widely distributed throughout the nation.
   (6) There are now a million African-born blacks living in the United States…
   (7) Northern blacks were a big part of Southern gains.
   (8) The third most common pairing was Asian and white, followed by American Indian and white.
(9) For Michelle Hosenbackez, who is white and Hispanic and is married to a black Cuban man, the data suggests a future for her 16-month-old daughter that may be much different from her own childhood.

(10) In addition, Professor Logan said, “New York’s labor market has been strongly organized by race and ethnicity, and that may have contributed to the boundaries of where people live.” (the words race and ethnicity are used as nouns.)

(11) Even when factoring in members of disparate racial and ethnic groups who share similarities in characteristics like income and education, said Professor Logan, “the differences in where people live are very stark. (the words racial and ethnic are used as adjectives.)

(12) More than 160 foreign citizens, most of them illegal immigrants with criminal records, were arrested in Northern Virginia over a three-day enforcement surge

15. **Ratios and Proportions**
   a. As a rule, write ratios and proportions in figures.
      (1) a proportion of 5 to 1 OR 5-to-1 ratio OR 5:1 ratio
      (2) the odds are 100 to 1 OR a 100-to-2 shot
      (3) 7 parts benzene to 3 parts water
   b. **NOTE:** A nontechnical reference to a ratio or a proportion may be spelled out.
      (1) a fifty-fifty change of success OR a 50-50 change of success.

16. **Semicolon**
   a. When a coordinating conjunction (and, but, or, or nor) is omitted between two independent clauses, use a semicolon—not a comma—to separate the clauses.
      (1) **RIGHT:** Most of the stockholders favored the sale; the management and the employers did not.
      (2) **WRONG:** Most of the stockholders favored the sale, the management and the employers did not.

17. **Telephone Numbers**
   a. Insert a hyphen after the first three digits of a telephone number; for example, 646-0224.
   b. When the area code precedes a phone number, use a hyphen or a diagonal (with no space on either side) between the two elements, or enclose the area code in parentheses (followed by one space). Examples:
      (1) 707-555-3998 (AP Style) OR
      (2) 707/555-3998 OR
      (3) (707) 555-3998
   c. When the area code and the telephone number as a unit have to be enclosed in parentheses, use either a hyphen or a diagonal after the area code. Examples:
      (1) You can always reach me by phone (517-555-6939) between 8:30 and 11:30 a.m. OR
      (2) You can always reach me by phone ((517)-555-6939) between 8:30 and 11:30 a.m.
   d. When an access code precedes the area code and the phone number, it is customary to use a hyphen to connect all the elements. Example:
      (1) Please use our toll-free, 24-hour phone number: 1-800-555-6400.
   e. When providing a telephone extension along with the main number, use the following form: 555-4890, Ext. 6041. (In formal correspondence, spell out Extension.)
18. **Time, periods of**

a. Use figures (even from 1 through 10) to express periods of time when they are used as technical measurements or significant statistics (as in discounts, interest rates, and credit terms).
   (1) a 35-hour workweek
   (2) a 30-year mortgage
   (3) a note due in 6 months.

b. Spell out nontechnical references to periods of time unless the number requires more than two words.
   (1) a twenty-minute wait
   (2) eight hours later
   (3) twelve days from now
   (4) in twenty-four months
   (5) in the last thirty years
   (6) forty-odd years ago
   (7) two thousand year ago
   (8) three hundred year ago
   (9) **BUT:** 350 years ago

c. Centuries may be expressed as follows:
   (1) the 1900s **OR:** The nineteen hundreds
   (2) the twenty-first century
   (3) twentieth-century literature

d. Decades may be expressed as follows:
   (1) the 1990s **OR** the nineteen-nineties **OR** the nineties **OR** the ’90s
   (2) the mid-1960s **OR** the mid-sixties **OR** the mid-’60s
   (3) during the years 1985-1995 **OR** from 1985 to 1995 **OR** between 1985 and 1995
   (4) **NOTE:** Decades are not capitalized except in special expressions such as *the Gay Nineties, the Roaring Twenties.*

e. Dates and Numeral Possessives
   (1) Do not use “th,” “st” or “rd” with dates, nor numeral possessives.
   (2) Example: instead of the Jan 25th meeting, use meeting on Jan. 25 or the Jan. 25 meeting (using the date as a modifier).

f. Date Range (“to” or “dash”)
   (1) “The event takes place April 15 to 17,” or "The event takes place April 15-17"? Either is acceptable, but *April 15-17* is preferred for precision.

19. **Time, clock**

a. With a.m., p.m., Noon, and Midnight
   (1) Always use figures with a.m. or p.m.
      (a) We take off at 8:45 a.m.
      (b) The bus is due at 2 p.m.
      (c) By 8 p.m. CST, the first election returns should be in. **OR** By 8 p.m. (CST) the first election returns should be in.

b. The abbreviations a.m. and p.m. should appear in small letters without internal spaces. (In printed matter they usually appear in small capitals: A.M., P.M.)

c. For time “on the hours,” zeros are not needed to denote minutes.
(1) Our store is open from 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. (note 6:00 p.m.)
(2) **But:** Our store is always open until 6:00
(3) We always close from 12 noon to 1:30 p.m.
(4) You can buy your tickets between 9 and 10 a.m.

d. Do not use *a.m.* or *p.m.* unless figures are used.
   (1) this morning (**Not** this a.m.)
   (2) tomorrow afternoon (**Not:** tomorrow p.m.)

e. The times *noon* and *midnight* may be express in words alone. However, use the forms *12 noon* and *12 midnight* when these times are given with other times expressed in figures.
   (1) Dinner is served in the main dining room until *midnight*.
   (2) **But:** Dinner is served from 6 p.m. until 12 midnight.

20. **Titles**
   a. In titles of literary and artistic works and in displayed headings, capitalize all words with *four or more* letters. Also, capitalize words with fewer than four letters **except**
      (1) Articles: *the, a, an*
      (2) Short Conjunctions: *and, as, but, if, or, nor*
      (3) Short Prepositions: *at, by, for, in, of, off, on, out, to, up*
   b. **Note:** Be sure to capitalize short verb forms like *Is* and *Be.*
Common Mistakes

1. **Age–aged–at the age of**
   I interviewed a man *aged* 52 for the job. (NOT: a man age 52.)
   I don’t plan to retire *at the age of* 65. (NOT: at age 65.)

   **NOTE:** Elliptical reference to age—for example, *at age 65*—should not be used except in technical writing such as human resources manuals.
   See the chart on page 6-4 for the schedule of retirement benefits for employees who retire *at age 65*.

2. **And.** Retain *and* before the last item in a series, even though that last item consists of two words joined by *and*.
   (1) Example: We need to increase our expense budgets for advertising, staff training, and research and development.
   (2) **NOT:** We need to increase our expense budgets for advertising, staff training, research and development.

3. **And/or.** Try to avoid this legalistic term in ordinary writing.

4. **Etc.** This abbreviation of *et cetera* means “and other things.” Therefore, do not use *and* before it. A comma both precedes and follows *etc.* In formal writing, avoid the use of *etc.*; use a phrase such as *and the like* or *and so on* instead.
   (1) Example: Tomorrow morning we will start our sale of suits, coats, hats, etc.)
   (2) Example: Our sale of suits, coats, hats, and so on, starts tomorrow

   **NOTE:** Do not use *etc.* or an equivalent expression at the end of a series introduced by *such as.* The term *such as* implies that only a few selected examples will be given; therefore, it is unnecessary to add *etc.* or *and so on*, which suggests that further examples could be given.
   (3) Example: As part of its employee educational program, the company offers courses in report writing, business correspondence, grammar and style, and so on.
   (4) **OR:** As part of its employee educational program, the company offers courses *such as* report writing, business correspondence, and grammar and style.
   (5) **BUT NOT:** As part of its employee educational program, the company offers courses *such as* report writing, business correspondence, grammar and style, *and so on.*

5. **Which and That.** *Which* (rather that *who*) and *that* are used when referring to places, objects, and animals
   a. *Which* is always used to introduce nonessential clauses.
      (1) Example: Laura’s report on employee benefits, *which* I sent you last week, should be of some help. (*Which* introduces a nonessential clause.)
      (2) **NOTE:** A nonessential clause is not necessary for the meaning or the structural completeness of the sentence and is set off by commas.
   b. *That* is ordinarily used to introduce essential clauses.
      (1) Example: The report *that* I sent you last week should be of some help. (*That* introduces an essential clause.)
      (2) As Charlie Ford once said, “The witch rides the broom and the comma is the broom.”
# Neologisms and Other Common Grant Writing Text

(A neologism is a newly coined word or phrase)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>e-mail or email</th>
<th>e-mail is lower case with hyphen. (AP Style)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet or internet</td>
<td>Internet is capitalized (AP Style)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• There is only one Internet and only one World Wide Web.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Note:</strong> More recently, a significant number of publications have switched to not capitalizing the noun &quot;internet.&quot; Among them are <em>The Economist</em>, <em>The Financial Times</em>, <em>The Times</em>, the <em>Guardian</em>, the <em>Observer</em> and the <em>Sydney Morning Herald</em>. (However, please continue to capitalize for now.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>online or on-line</td>
<td>online is one word, no hyphen. (AP style)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Note: others spell the word as on-line whether used as an adjective or an adverb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polycom™</td>
<td>Polycom, Inc. (Polycom™) is a provider of unified communications (UC) solutions that enable enterprise government, education, and healthcare customers to collaborate. Therefore, do not use the word polycom by itself when referring to audio and video conferencing. Try to use a generic phrase. Examples:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The advisory group will meet using a video conferencing system, which will enable more productive meetings and real-time decision making.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web or web</td>
<td>Web is capitalized (when referring to the World Wide Web) should always be capitalized because they are proper nouns. (AP Style)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• There is only one World Wide Web.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The World Wide Web can be called the Net in later references.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web site or website</td>
<td>Web site is two words, with Web capitalized. (AP Style)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webinar or webinar</td>
<td>• Note: The new AP stylebook will use website but will still use Web. (Therefore, use either but be consistent.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• For example, <em>Web page</em> is still a two-word construction with Web capitalized, but website, webinar, webmaster, and some others are lowercase.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web site address</td>
<td>Start a Web site address with http:// (or equivalent like https://) (AP Style)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If a Web site address falls at the end of a sentence, end it with a period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wi-Fi</td>
<td>Wi-Fi for the wireless networking standards. (AP Style)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>