



**VIRGINIA
PENINSULA**

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

OUR MISSION: YOUR SUCCESS.

Editorial Style Guide

Editorial Style

ABBREVIATIONS:

Do not use periods between acronyms.

Examples: VCCS, SCHEV, SACS, PWDC

Explain acronyms on first reference. Acronyms are not used alone on first reference.

Example: The Virginia Community College System (VCCS) consists of 23 institutions.

When referring to Virginia Peninsula Community College as “the College,” capitalize “C.”

Examples: The College has an enrollment of more than 7,000 students.

Use periods in abbreviations of academic degrees.

Examples: A.A., A.S., A.A.A., A.A.S., M.B.A., Ph.D., D.Ed., M.Ed., D.C.D., D.P.A., Psy.D.

When referring to degrees in general, uppercase the first letter of the degree and use an ‘s.

Example: Seventy people hold an Associate’s Degree in Mathematics.

When citing a city and state, either spell out the name of the state or use the Associated Press abbreviation.

Example: Bobby had driven from Hampton, Va., to Boston, Mass.

When citing a state alone, do not abbreviate.

Example: Bobby had driven from Virginia to Massachusetts.

ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS:

Use lowercase except for words that are proper nouns or adjectives.

Examples: the department of history
the History Department
the department of English

ACADEMIC TITLES:

Basic academic ranks include professor, associate professor, assistant professor and instructor. Capitalize these as formal titles before and after a name. In the interest of accuracy, confirm academic rank through a dean’s office.

Examples: Professor Roy Hyle is teaching Ecology.

Dr. Thomas Long, Professor of English, received a prestigious Virginia Community College System award.

Assistant Professor Melissa Coleman-White is teaching that class.

Michael Weiser is an Associate Professor of English.

Wenda Ribeiro, Instructor of Biology, belongs to a national consortium of Science educators.

Instructor John Park teaches Music Appreciation.

ADDRESSES:

When writing an entire mailing address, use the two-letter U.S. Postal Service abbreviation for the state.

Example: Virginia Peninsula Community College
99 Thomas Nelson Drive
P.O. Box 9407
Hampton, VA 23670

Abbreviate direction (*N.*, *E.*, *S.W.*, etc.) before streets and abbreviate only *Ave.*, *Blvd.*, and *St.* when used with a specific numbered address. Spell out and capitalize when used without a numbered address. Lowercase when referring to more than one street.

Examples: At the intersection of Hastings and Griffin drives.
1420 N. Armistead Ave.
Thomas Nelson Drive
525 Butler Farm Rd.

If the proper address is: 4th Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 08524,

The address is written as is unless “Fourth” begins a sentence.

AGES:

Use figures and hyphenate when used as modifiers.

Examples: My son is 36 years old.
 Andy, 36, lives in Virginia.
 A 43-year-old woman is the culprit.

ALUMNI:

Use *alumnus* for an individual male, *alumna* for an individual female, *alumni* for a group of males or when referring to a group of men and women, *alumnae* for a group of females.

APOSTROPHE:

In writing the plural of numbers and letters do not use an apostrophe.

Examples: Early 1900s
 The Three Rs
 The SATs

BI:

The rule in prefixes applies, generally, no hyphen.

Example: The visitors' bimonthly meeting has been cancelled.

BUILDINGS:

For press releases and periodicals, the shortened name of a campus building is acceptable. For more formal uses, the longer name may be appropriate.

Examples: Templin Hall
 Hampton III

CAPITALIZATION:

Titles such as dean, vice president or associate vice president should be capitalized when presented before and after the full name of the individual.

Examples: President Charles A. Taylor addressed the College.
 Cyndie Callaway, Vice President of Institutional Advancement, is speaking now.

Capitalize department names and fields of study.

Examples: Phyllis has an Associate's Degree in Accounting.
 Jeff earned certification in Communications.
 Susan completed two years in the Liberal Arts Department before transferring.

CATALOG:

Not catalogue

COMMENCEMENT:

Uppercase as part of title.

Example: Virginia Peninsula Community College's Commencement was held May 5, 2002.

Lowercase when used as an adjective.

Example: More than 5,000 people attended Virginia Peninsula Community College commencement ceremonies.

COMPUTER TERMS:

Many computer terms are familiar English words or word combinations with specific new meanings. A few such terms are as follows:

- access (verb)
- bit, byte
- database (often data base)
- debug
- format; formatting; formatter
- hard copy; hard code; hardwired
- input (verb)
- log on (verb); logging on (noun)
- on-line; off-line (sometimes online; offline)
- program; programming; programmer
- realtime (or real time)
- Internet
- e-mail
- World Wide Web
- Microsoft Word
- WordPerfect

DATES AND TIMES:

Do not use ordinal suffixes such as *th* or *nd* with numerals in dates.

Examples: We baked five fruitcakes on November 12, and by December 5 we had eaten all of them.
 There was a parade on July 3 an early celebration for the Fourth of July.

When referring to decades, either spell them out in words or else use numerals preceded by an apostrophe (to indicate the missing *19* or *20* prefix) and followed by an *s*.

Examples: For them, the sixties were exciting.
 For them, the '60s were exciting.

When decades refer to people's ages rather than calendar years, always use the words.

Example: People in their twenties rarely have arthritis.

For times of day, use lowercase abbreviations with periods.

Example: 12:30 p.m. 10:30 a.m.

To list a range of dates or times, use either *from* and *to* or *between* and *and* or a hyphen (-).

Examples: This fall, registration will take place from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
 Basketball practice will be held between 12:00-3:00 p.m., from Oct. 12 through Feb. 28.
 The museum is open Monday-Friday.

DATES AND TIMES (continued):

Spell out months and days of the week. Abbreviate Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec. when used in a date. Use no punctuation if listing only a month and the year, but set the year off with commas if listing the day of the month as well.

Examples: May 24, 2002
May 2002
the class of '02
the '90s
the 1990s (note there is no apostrophe between the last digit of the year and the s)
Jan. 4, 2002, was the first day for the new program.
The concert is scheduled for Monday, April 5.

DEGREES AND MAJORS:

Capitalize the full degree title.
Examples: Associate of Arts Degree in Business
Associate of Science Degree in Mathematics
Associate of Applied Arts Degree in Health
Associate of Applied Science Degree in Communications

DOLLAR AMOUNTS:

Always use figures for amounts of \$1 and over.
Examples: \$50
Not \$50.00

EDITING:

We are all sensitive about our writing, which is an extension of ourselves. Therefore, if you edit someone else's work, don't change his or her style unless it is appropriate. Also be sure not to change the meaning. Sometimes changing a word or inserting or deleting punctuation can change the writer's intent.

E-MAIL:

Lowercase e-mail

EMERITUS / EMERITI PLURAL (MEN AND WOMEN):

Lowercase when used after a name with a title, uppercase before a name.
Examples: Professor Emeritus John Jones is the keynote speaker.
The professors emeriti gathered to celebrate the opening of a new building on campus.

FUND RAISING (N.); FUND-RAISING (MODIFIER); FUND RAISER:

Examples: Fund raising is difficult during a recession.
The fund-raising event was very successful.
He works as a fund raiser for the College.

HOME PAGE:

Not homepage

JR., SR.:

Abbreviate and do not separate with a comma; apply also to numerical designations.

Examples: Anderson Benson Jr.
Charles Bryant III

LTD:

In straight text it is best to give a firm name in its full form.
Example: A.G. Becker and Company

MEDIA AND MEDIUM:

Media is plural and takes a plural verb, whereas medium is singular:

Examples: The media work hard for their money.
This medium is better than the rest.

MULTIMEDIA:

No hyphen, all one word.

NAMES, TITLES AND OFFICES:

Civil, military, religious, and professional titles and titles of nobility are capitalized when they immediately precede a personal name, as part of the name.

Examples: President Buchanan
Cardinal Newman
Prince Charles
General Eisenhower

The title is also capitalized if it refers to more than one name.
Example: Mayors Cremack and Walker were the grand marshals.

When such titles are used in apposition to a name they are not part of the name and so are lowercased.

Example: Cremack and Walker, the mayors, enjoyed the parade.

In formal usage, such as acknowledgements and lists of contributors, titles following a personal name are usually capitalized. A title used alone, in place of a personal name, is capitalized in such contexts as toasts or formal introductions.

Example: Ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States

Civil titles and offices are customarily capitalized when used alone or after a personal name to avoid ambiguity.

Example: The governor of Virginia, Governor Warner

Among professional titles, named academic professorships and fellowships are usually capitalized wherever they appear, especially if they are accompanied by a personal name.

Example: The professor; Professor Tom Long

NAMES, TITLES AND OFFICES (continued):

Terms designating academic years are lowercased.

Example: freshman

Honorific titles and forms of address should be capitalized in any context.

Example: Honorable

The names of specific racial, linguistic, tribal, religious, and other groupings of people are capitalized.

Examples: African-American
Asian
Native American

Designations based only on color, size, habitat, customs, or local usage are often lowercased. Some designations that are capitalized when referring to specific peoples are lowercased when applied more generally.

Examples: black
white

Such terms as avenue, boulevard, bridge, building, church, fountain, hotel, park, room, square, street, or theater are capitalized when part of an official or formal name. When the plural form is used before or following more than one name and constitutes, albeit in the singular part of each name, the term is capitalized. Standing alone, however, such terms are lowercased.

Example: Adler Planetarium; the planetarium

Full names, and often the shortened names of legislative, deliberative, administrative, and judicial bodies, departments, bureaus, and offices are capitalized. Adjectives derived from them are usually lowercased, as are paraphrastic designations, except abbreviations.

Examples: United Nations Security Council
Senate
House of Representatives
Committee on Foreign Affairs

Not usually capitalized are the following:

administration
cabinet
church
government

Full titles of institutions and companies and their departments and divisions are capitalized. In some cases, especially when they might otherwise be mistaken, shortened versions of those titles, even solitary generic terms, are also capitalized. Otherwise such generic terms as school, company, and press are lowercased when used alone (an exception will be the word “College” when used alone in reference to Virginia Peninsula ... see page 15).

Full official names of associations, societies, unions, meetings, and conferences are capitalized.

Example: Boy Scouts of America

Names of days of the week and months of the year are capitalized. The four seasons are lowercased.

Examples: Tuesday
November
spring

The names of religious holidays and seasons are capitalized.

Examples: Ash Wednesday
Christmas
Passover
Pentecost

The names of most secular holidays and other specially designated days are also capitalized.

Examples: All Fool’s Day
Fourth of July
Labor Day

When spelled out, designations of time and time zones are lowercased, except for proper nouns. Abbreviations are capitalized.

Examples: Greenwich mean time (GMT)
Daylight saving time (DST)
Central daylight time (CDT)
Eastern standard time (EST)

Dictionaries indicate registered trademark names. A reasonable effort should be made to capitalize such names.

Examples: Anacin
Coca-Cola
Frigidaire
Levi’s

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.

Examples: Thirty-one
Twenty

Spell out a numeral at the beginning of a sentence. If necessary, recast the sentence. There is one exception—a numeral that identifies a calendar year.

Examples: Last year 993 freshmen entered the College.
Nine hundred and ninety-three freshmen enrolled last year.

Spell out casual expressions.

Examples: A thousand times no!
Thanks a million.

Spell out first through ninth when they indicate sequence in time or location.

Examples: First base
First Amendment

For uses not covered by these listings: Spell out whole numbers below 10, use figures for 10 and above.

Examples: They had three sons and two daughters.
They had 10 dogs, six cats, and 97 hamsters.

TITLES:

When a civil or military title is used with the surname alone, the title must be spelled out.

Example: General Washington

With full names, most such titles may be abbreviated.

Example: Brig. Gen. Thronton W. Bluster

The following are abbreviations for a few commonly used civil and military titles (not Armed Forces branch specific).

Examples:

Adm. or ADM	Admiral
Gen.	General
Col.	Colonel
Capt.	Captain
Gen.	General
Gov.	Governor
Lt. Col.	Lieutenant Colonel
Lt. Gov.	Lieutenant Governor
Comdr.	Commander

Always abbreviated, whether with the full name or the surname are such social titles as the following:

Examples: Mr. Mrs.
Ms. Dr.

The abbreviations *Jr.*, *Sr.*, *II*, *III*, and so forth after a person's name are part of that name and so are retained in connection with any titles or honorifics.

Example: Mrs. James Jefferson Sr., widow of the governor

These abbreviations are used only with the full name—never, for example, Mr. Kelly Jr.

The abbreviation *Esq.* is never used when any other title is given, either before or after.

Example: Anthony Wright Esq.

The following list includes frequently used abbreviations for academic degrees and professional and honorary designations:

A.A.	Associate of Arts
A.S.	Associate of Science
A.A.A.	Associate of Applied Arts
A.A.S.	Associate of Applied Science
Esq.	Esquire
J.D.	Doctor of Law
J.P.	Justice of Peace
LL.B.	Bachelor of Laws
M.A.	Master of Arts
M.D.	Doctor of Medicine
M.F.A.	Master of Fine Arts
M.S.	Master of Science
Ph.D.	Doctor of Philosophy

The following abbreviations are frequently used as parts of firm names:

Bro.	Bros.
Co.	Corp.
Inc.	Ltd

In straight text it is best to give a firm name in its full form.

Examples: A.G. Becker and Company

Official personal titles immediately preceding a name are capitalized; those following a name are capitalized; those following a name or set off by commas are not. This rule applies to both academic and administrative titles.

When someone has a long, unwieldy title, place it after the name.

Example: Ted Johnson, Associate Vice President of Development, is not here today.

Exact titles of campus publications should be italicized.

Example: *eFlagstaff*
Nelson Online
Nelson Link

PUBLICATIONS:

(also journals, magazines, newspapers)

In periodicals and publications, italicize.

In press releases, do not use italics or include in quotations.

INTERNET:

Online/On-line: Do not hyphenate when used as an adjective but it's online; otherwise, write on line:

Examples: Virginia Peninsula offers a variety of online courses. He instructed students to go on line.

PERCENT:

Use the word, not the symbol.

Example: Statistics show that 85 percent of our students are pleased with Virginia Peninsula Community College.

SEASONS:

Lowercase, even when referring to a semester.

Example: Mary registered for her spring 2003 classes.

STATES:

Abbreviate when used with a city, except for Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas and Utah.

Do not use postal abbreviations; use AP style:

State Name	Chicago Manual of Style	AP Style Manual	U.S. Postal
Alabama	Ala.	Ala.	AL
Alaska			
Arizona	Ariz.	Ariz.	AK
Arkansas	Ark.	Ark.	AS
California	Calif.	Calif.	CA
Colorado	Colo.	Colo.	CO
Connecticut	Conn.	Conn.	CT
Delaware	Del.	Del.	DE
Washington, D.C.	D.C.	D.C.	DC
Florida	Fla.	Fla.	FL
Georgia	Ga.	Ga.	GA

STATES (continued):

State Name	Chicago Manual of Style	AP Style Manual	U.S. Postal
Hawaii			
Idaho			
Illinois	Ill.	Ill.	IL
Indiana	Ind.	Ind.	IN
Iowa			
Kansas	Kans.	Kan.	KS
Kentucky	Ky.	Ky.	KY
Louisiana	La.	La.	LA
Maine			
Maryland	Md.	Md.	MD
Massachusetts	Mass.	Mass.	MA
Michigan	Mich.	Mich.	MI
Minnesota	Minn.	Minn.	MN
Mississippi	Miss.	Miss.	MS
Missouri	Mo.	Mo.	MO
Montana	Mont.	Mont.	MT
Nebraska	Nebr.	Neb.	NE
Nevada	Nev.	Nev.	NV
New Hampshire	N.H.	N.H.	NH
New Jersey	N.J.	N.J.	NJ
New Mexico	N.Mex.	N.M.	NM
New York	N.Y.	N.Y.	NY
North Carolina	N.C.	N.C.	NC
North Dakota	N.Dak.	N.D.	ND
Ohio			OH
Oklahoma	Okla.	Okla.	OK
Oregon	Ore. or Oreg.	Ore.	OR
Pennsylvania	Pa.	Pa.	PA
Rhode Island	R.I.	R.I.	RI
South Carolina	S.C.	S.C.	SC
South Dakota	S.Dak.	S.D.	SD
Tennessee	Tenn.	Tenn.	TN
Texas	Tex.		
Utah			
Vermont	Vt.	Vt.	VT
Virginia	Va.	Va.	VA
Washington	Wash.	Wash.	WA
West Virginia	W.Va.	W.Va.	WV
Wisconsin	Wis. or Wisc.	Wis.	WT
Wyoming	Wyo.	Wyo.	WY
American Samoa	Amer. Samoa		AS
Canal Zone	C.Z.		CZ
Guam			GU
Puerto Rico	P.R.		PR
Virgin Islands	V.I.		VI

SUBJECT/VERB AGREEMENT:

Agreement is the correspondence in form between subjects and verbs and between pronouns and their antecedents, the nouns or other pronouns they refer to.

Subjects and verbs agree in number (singular and plural) and in person (first, second, and third).

Examples: Sarah often speaks up in class. (Both subject and verb are in the third-person singular form.)
Even though we understand, we still dislike it. (Both subjects and verbs are in the first-person plural form.)

Pronouns and their antecedents agree in person, number, and gender (masculine, feminine, and neuter).

Example: Claude resented their ignoring him. (Both the pronoun him and its antecedent Claude are masculine and third person singular.)
The dogs stand still while they are judged. (The pronoun they and its antecedent dogs are both third-person plural.)

Make subjects and verbs agree in number. The following conventions cover these and other problems that affect subject-verb agreement.

Use the verb ending **-s** or **-es** with all third-person singular subjects. Use the noun ending **-s** or **-es** to make most nouns plural.

Adding **-s** or **-es** to a noun usually makes the noun plural, whereas adding **-s** or **-es** to a present-tense verb makes the verb singular. Thus, if the subject noun is plural, it will end in **-s** or **-es** and the verb will not. If the subject is singular, it will not end in **-s** and the verb will.

Singular	Plural
The boy eats.	The boys eat.
The bird soars.	The birds soar.

Subject and verb should agree even when other words come between them.

When the subject and verb are interrupted by other words, particularly other nouns, then we may make agreement errors because we tend to connect the verb to the nearest noun rather than to the actual subject.

Example: A catalog of courses and requirements often baffles (not baffle) students. (The verb must agree with the subject, catalog, not the nearer word requirements.)
The profits earned by the cosmetic industry are (not is) high. (The subject is profits, not industry.)

Note: Phrases beginning with as well as, together with, along with, in addition to, and similar expressions do not change the number of the subject.

Example: The governor, as well as his advisers, has (not have) agreed to attend the protest rally.

SUBJECT/VERB AGREEMENT (continued):

Subjects joined by **and** usually take a plural verb, whether one or all of the subjects are singular.

Examples: Frost and Roethke are her favorite poets.

The dog, the monkey, the children, and the tent were in the car.

Exceptions: When the parts of the subject form a single idea or refer to a single person or thing, then they take a singular verb.

Examples: Avocado and bean sprouts is my favorite sandwich.

The winner and new champion was in the shower.

When a compound subject is preceded by the adjective **each** or **every**, then the verb is usually singular.

Examples: At customs, every box, bag, and parcel is inspected.

Each man, woman, and child has a right to be heard.

But when a compound subject is followed by **each**, the verb is plural.

Example: The man and the woman each have different problems.

When parts of a subject are joined by **or** or **nor**, the verb agrees with the nearer part. When all parts of a subject joined by **or** or **nor** are singular, the verb is singular; when all parts are plural, the verb is plural.

Examples: Neither the teacher nor the student knows the answer.

The rabbits or the woodchucks have eaten my lettuce.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

Use parentheses, and hyphens between digits in phone numbers.

Example: (757) 823-9087

VIRGINIA PENINSULA COMMUNITY COLLEGE:

When referring to Virginia Peninsula as the College, capitalize "C."

TIME OF DAY:

Include periods and use lowercase letters for the time of day.

Examples: 4:00 p.m., not 4:00 PM

Do not write 12 noon or 12 midnight.

In announcements of upcoming events, time should precede day and date for clarity.

Do not separate the time from the day with a comma.

Example: The lecture is scheduled for 3:00 p.m. Saturday, April 11, at Mary T. Christian Auditorium.

UNITED STATES:

In text, spell out when used as a noun.

Abbreviate when used as an adjective.

Example: I love living in the United States.

We exchanged all of our U.S. currency.

Punctuation

BULLET POINTS:

Where the bullet points comprise a list of single words or short statements, there is no need to punctuate the list.

Example:

A positive working environment is defined by the following characteristics:

- teamwork
- creativity
- trust
- opportunities for career development
- a sense of loyalty.

Where the bullet points comprise longer statements that are not discrete sentences, punctuate with semicolons.

Example:

On the bright side:

- two thirds of survey respondents felt proud to work for the College;
- two thirds felt a strong sense of loyalty to their faculty or division;
- three quarters felt they were encouraged to use their initiative;
- two thirds felt there was equal access to training and development opportunities.

Where the bullet points comprise discrete sentences, punctuate with full stops.

Example:

The key findings of the survey are as follows:

- The most popular reason for choosing the College is its academic reputation.
- Nearly 90 percent of the respondents feel they have chosen the right course or program.
- More than 75 percent of respondents are satisfied with the facilities provided (office and laboratory space, computers, etc.).

Whichever type of list you use, introduce it with a colon and end with a full stop.

COLON:

The colon is used to mark a break in grammatical construction equivalent to that marked by a semicolon, but the colon emphasizes the content relation between elements. The colon is used, for example, to indicate a sequence in thought between two clauses that form a single sentence or to separate one clause from a second clause that contains an illustration or application of the first.

Example:

The official had been in conference most of the night: this may account for their surly treatment of the reporters the next meeting.

In a contemporary usage, however, such clauses are frequently separated by a semicolon are treated as a separate sentence.

Example:

The officials had been in conference most of the night; this may account for their surly treatment of the reporters the next morning.

COMMA:

The following guidelines treat some of the most frequent questions about the use of commas. Additional guidelines on specialized uses are provided in separate entries such as dates and scores.

In a series: Use commas to separate elements in a series; a comma separates the elements. When a conjunction joins the last two elements in a series, a comma is used before the conjunction.

Examples:

The flag is red, white, and blue.

He would nominate Tom, Dick, or Harry.

PUNCTUATION

COMMA (*continued*):

Put a comma before the concluding conjunction in a series, however, if an integral element of the series requires a conjunction.

Example:

I had orange, juice, toast, and ham and eggs for breakfast.

Care should be taken to distinguish between a compound sentence (two or more independent clauses) and a sentence having a compound predicate (two or more verbs having the same subject). Preferably, the comma should not be used between the parts of a compound predicate.

Example:

He had accompanied Sanford on his first expedition and had volunteered to remain at Port Loyal.

On Thursday morning Kelleger tried to see the mayor but was told the mayor was out of town.

A comma may be added, however if misapprehension or difficult reading is considered likely without such punctuation.

A comma should usually set off a dependent clause that precedes the main clause whether it is restrictive or nonrestrictive.

Example:

If you accept our conditions, we shall agree to the proposal.

An adverbial phrase or clause located between the subject and commas should usually set off the verb.

Example:

Wolinski, after receiving his instructions, left immediately for Algiers.

A distinction has traditionally been made between the relative pronouns which and that, the latter having long been regarded as introducing a restrictive clause, and the former, a nonrestrictive one. Although the distinction is often disregarded in contemporary writing, the careful writer and editor should bear in mind that such indifference may result in misreading or uncertainty, as in the sentence below.

Example:

The report, which Marshall had tried to suppress, was greeted with hilarity.

A comma should set off an introductory participial phrase unless it immediately precedes the verb.

Example:

Having forgotten to notify his generals, the king arrived on the battlefield alone.

Parenthetical elements that retain a close logical and syntactic relation to the rest of the sentence should be set off by commas; those whose relation to the rest of the sentence is more remote should be set off by dashes or parentheses.

Example:

Wilcox, it was believed, had turned the entire affair over to his partner.

Commas should be used to set off interjections, transitional adverbs or adverbial phrases, and similar elements that effect a distinct break in the continuity of thought.

Example:

Yes, I admit that Benson's plan has gained the following.

With these elements are used in such a way that there is no real break in continuity and no call for any pause in reading, commas should be omitted.

Example:

Their credibility has consequently been seriously challenged.

Use commas to set off words in direct address:

Example:

Friends, I am not here to discuss personalities.

Coordinate adjectives – that is, two or more adjectives each of which modifies the noun itself – are traditionally separated by commas.

Example:

Shelly had proved a faithful, sincere, and supportive friend.

If the first adjective modifies the idea expressed by the combination of the second adjective and the noun, no comma should be used.

Example:

He had no patience with the traditional political institutions of his country.

Although they are not necessary, commas may be used to set off a phrase indicating place of residence immediately following a person's name. If the phrase is in the middle of the sentence, it is both preceded and followed by a comma.

Example:

She was a Farnsworth, from Texarkana, and married Andy Portola, of Toronto.

Use commas to set off words identifying a title or position following a person's name.

Example:

Merewether Benson, former president of Acquisition Corporation, had been appointed to the commission.

Use commas to set off individual elements in addresses and names of geographical places or political divisions.

Examples:

Please send all proofs to the Office of Marketing and Communications, 99 Thomas Nelson Drive, Hampton, VA 23670, as soon as they arrive from the printer.

In the date style, commas must be used before and after the year.

Example:

On October 6, 1924, Longo arrived in Bologna.

PUNCTUATION

DASH:

Series within a phrase: When a phrase that otherwise would be set off by commas contains a series of words that must be separated by comma, use dashes to set off the full phrase.

Example:

He listed the qualities—intelligence, humor, conservatism, and independence—that he liked in an executive.

Dashes should be used to introduce individual sections of a list. Capitalize the first word following the dash. Use periods, not semicolons, at the end of each section.

Example:

-He never ordered the package
-If he did, it didn't come.
-If it did, he sent it back.

HYPHEN:

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*.

Example:

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.

Example:

The team scored in the first quarter.

But when a modifier that would be hyphenated before a noun occurs instead after a form of the verb **to be**, the hyphen usually must be retained to avoid confusion.

Examples:

The man is well-known.
Two-thought compounds: Serio-comic, socio-economic

Compound proper nouns and adjectives: Use a hyphen to designate dual heritage.

Example:

Italian-American, Mexican-American.

No hyphen, however, for: French Canadian or Latin American

SEMICOLON:

Though the semicolon is less frequently employed today than in the past, it is still occasionally useful to mark a more important break in sentence flow than that marked by a comma. It should always be used between the two parts of a compound sentence (independent, or coordinate, clauses) when they are not connected by a conjunction.

Example:

The controversial portrait had been removed from the entrance hall; in its place had been hung a realistic landscape.

Coordinate clauses may, of course, be separated into individual sentences.

The following words are considered adverbs rather than conjunctions and should therefore be preceded by a semicolon when used transitionally between clauses of a compound sentence: then, however, thus, hence, indeed, accordingly, besides, therefore. A comma usually follows the adverb, but if there is no risk of misreading, and if a pause is not desired, the comma may be omitted.

Example:

The controversial portrait had been removed from the entrance hall; indeed, in its place had been hung a realistic landscape.

When items in a series are long and complex or involve internal punctuation, they should be separated by semicolons for the sake of clarity.

Example:

The membership of the international commission was as follows: France, 4; Germany, 5; Great Britain, 1; Italy, 3; the United States, 7.

A semicolon may be used before an expression such as **that is**, **namely**, **i.e.**, **e.g.** if the break in continuity is greater than that signaled by a comma.

Example:

He had put the question to several of his friends; namely, Jones; Burdick; and Fauntleroy.

QUOTATIONS:

Quoted material in the form of dialogue or conversation is usually the direct object or a transitive verb denoting speaking or thinking, and although commas do ordinarily not set off direct objects, dialogue traditionally is. The following examples illustrate the principles governing the use of commas to set off dialogue.

Example:

Vera said calmly, "I've no idea what you mean."

If the quotation follows the introductory material, as in the first example, the comma is placed at the end of the introduction. If, as in the next two examples, the quotation comes first, the comma precedes the closing quotation mark.

Examples:

"Morgenstern refuses to drive us home," replied Eberly.
"They're all fools," Vera told herself.

Finally, if the introductory material interrupts the quotation, as in the fourth example, a comma precedes the closing quotation mark of the first part of the quotation, and another comma comes at the end of the intervening introduction.

Examples:

"I'm afraid," suggested Croft, "that we've offended Morgenstern somehow."
"I don't care if we have," thought Vera, although she said nothing.

Unspoken or imagined dialogue may be similarly treated.

Example:

I should have said, "Not with me, you won't!"
I bet she's saying to him right now, "Morgenstern thinks he's too good for us."
Barnacle heard a loud crash and told himself, "Viola's drunk again!"

