

# Style Manual

## A

**academic degrees:** academic degrees are lowercase when spelled out, capitalized when abbreviating (no periods are necessary between or after letters, Le., BA, MA, PhD). Use these abbreviations only after a full name – never after just a last name. When used after a name, set off with commas: (e.g. *Daniel Moynihan, PhD, spoke.*) Do not precede a name with a courtesy title for an academic degree and follow it with the abbreviations for the degree in the same reference: (e.g. Wrong: *Dr. Pam Jones, PhD*; Right: *Dr. Pam Jones, a chemist.*)

NOTE: General references to academic degrees and fields of study are not capitalized, except when referring to a formal language or nationality. *A doctorate in public health; a bachelor's degree; a master's degree in English*

**acronyms** (NJSFWC, GCI, GFWC, ESO) Give full name of acronym at first usage in a document or letter, followed by the acronym in parentheses. Do not use periods between letters. *The GFWC Anyname Club funded several delegates to attend the Annual Girls' Career Institute (GCI).*

**addresses:** spell out *Avenue, Street, Court*, etc. Compass directions are abbreviated with no periods and do not require a comma before them (*NW, NE, SW, SE*). Use postal abbreviations for states when giving full address with zip code. The exception to this rule would be in formal correspondence, in which case the state is spelled out. *GFWC Headquarters, 1734 N Street NW, Washington DC 20036*

**affect/effect:** *affect* the verb means "to produce an effect upon"; *affect* as a noun means "the conscious subjective aspect of an emotion considered apart from bodily changes." Basically, this means that *affect* is nine times out of ten used as a verb and only used as a noun by psychiatrists referring to a patient's mood. *Effect* as a verb means "to cause to come into being" or "to bring about"; *effect* the noun means "something that inevitably follows an antecedent (as a cause or agent)." This means that *effect* is used more often as a noun than as a verb, the opposite of its cousin, *affect*.

*Noun:*

*Dr. Jones noted that Muffy displayed a depressed affect.*

*The sequins created a stunning effect on Gladys' dress.*

*Verb:*

*Trudy's reticence affected her ability to address the assembly with enthusiasm.*

*The new president was eager to effect changes in the reporting procedures.*

**ALMANAC:** each letter of the title is capitalized

**among/between:** *between* is always used when talking about two things; *among* implies more than two objects. *They distributed the gifts among the children in the class. The tasks were divided between the President and Vice President 13.*

**amount/number:** *amount* is used when talking about quantities that cannot be counted; *number* is used when referring to items that can be counted. *E.g.: an amount of milk; a number of bottles of milk*

## B

**because/since:** Avoid using *since* when you mean *because*, as *since* refers to a point in time, rather than as a conjunction referring to cause and effect. These words may often be used interchangeably. *Helen was unable to be at the meeting because she had another appointment. Helen has been unable to attend meetings since June.*

**Board of Directors:** always capitalized

## C

**Chairman:** not chair or chairperson. Capitalize in GFWC context, otherwise capitalize only in formal title preceding name. GFWC Clubwoman Chairman Jane Member; Jane Member, Chairman

**Congressional titles:** Representative, Senator, members of Congress. The term *Congressman* refers to either a Senator or Representative, so try to be more specific (just remember to address a representative as "Mr. Doe" and not "Representative Doe," per the Green Book). Uppercase as part of an official title preceding a name; otherwise lowercase. *Senator Menendez took the floor. Several representatives gathered in the hallway.*

**club:** remember to keep the subject and verb in agreement when discussing a club. *Club* is singular; *club members*, plural; *clubs*, plural. *The Woman's Club of Anytown celebrated its 100th anniversary.*

**club names:** Although state federations and GFWC use the plural Women's in titles, most local clubs are written with the singular Woman's. *The GFWC Woman's Club of Anytown held a bake sale yesterday.*

**clubwoman** and *clubwomen* are written as one word, but *club member* requires two.

**commas:** NJSFWC style is to omit the serial comma in lists (the comma before "and" at the end of a series). *Clubwomen collected quilts, food and teddy bears for the homeless.*

**Community Service Programs:** formally departments are capitalized; Arts/Creative Community Service Program, Home Life Community Service Program

## D

**dashes:** All dashes do not require spaces before or after their placement. The *en-dash* is used with numbers and substitutes for the "to...from..." construction: *The next convention is being held June 12-15.*

The *em-dash* is used to separate two distinct but related thoughts in a sentence or phrase (often typed in as two hyphens, but typeset as one long dash). The *em-dash* is the longest of the dashes, and should be used sparingly for emphasis. If commas are more appropriate, use them before resorting to the high drama of the *em-dash*. *The next convention – the one in San Francisco – will be June 12-15.*

The *hyphen* is used to connect compound modifiers and verbs. The general rule is that, when two words are put together that can stand alone and still make sense, they require a hyphen. If either word cannot stand alone (such as prefixes and suffixes) the words are joined with no hyphen. *The nonprofit, all-volunteer organization's next convention – being held in San Francisco – will be June 12-15.*

**dates:** in text, spell out the month and place commas after the date and year. If only the date and year is stated, no commas are needed. *When the committee met on August 15, 2004, they decided to meet again in the winter. They met again in January 2005.*

**departments:** have been changed to Community Service Programs; see Community Service Programs.

## E

**e.g./i.e.:** e.g. means “for example”; i.e. means “that is” or “in other words”

**E-words:** Use hyphen for all e-words; capitalize only at the beginning of a sentence.  
Acceptable use of e-words: *The information was sent via e-mail on Thursday.*  
*Please include this note in the next e-newsletter.*

**Emblem:** NJSFWC and GFWC emblems/logos should be used on club letterhead as well as all flyers, posters, etc.

## F

**FAX:** not Fax or fax

**Federation:** capitalize when referring to NJSFWC and/or GFWC

**fundraising:** Always one word without a hyphen. Not fund-raising or fund raising.

## G

**gender-specific titles:** falling out of common usage. Avoid terms such as *actress, poetess*; instead use *actor, poet*.

## H

**Headquarters:** always capitalize in reference to GFWC and/or NJSFWC Headquarters

**hyphenations:** long-range planning. See *dashes*

## I

**imply/infer:** *imply* means to suggest or state indirectly; *infer* means to draw a conclusion.  
*She did not imply that conclusion, but the members inferred it nonetheless.*

**its/it's:** *its* is a possessive adjective; *it's* is a contraction of the verb phrase “it is.” *The groundhog saw its shadow. It's a beautiful, sunny day.*

**its/their:** watch your subject/verb agreement (see *club*).

**Internet:** Always capitalize

## J

**Juniors:** always capitalize

**Juniorettes:** always capitalize

## K/L

**legislation:** capitalize titles of bills and amendments. *The Americans with Disabilities Act*

**less/fewer:** *less* refers to degree or quantity; *fewer* refers to number. *There were fewer than sixty present. That was less than the previous meeting.*

## M/N

**nonprofit:** one word, no hyphen

**not-for-profit:** hyphens when using as a compound adjective. *The organization has maintained its not-for-profit status.*

## O

**over vs. more than, older than:** *over* refers to location (*The cow jumped over the moon*). *More than* and *older than* are more precise modifiers for indicating quantity and age, and are therefore preferred usage. *The club sold more than two dozen cookies today. All participants older than 60 received a senior citizen's discount.*

## P

**parentheses:** as part of a sentence, the period falls outside of parentheses; as a complete sentence, the period is inside parentheses. *The cow jumped over the moon (but the dish ran away with the spoon). The cow jumped over the moon. (The dish, however, ran away with the spoon.)*

**photo captions:** always keep text in present tense

**publications:** italicize books and periodicals when citing in text. Articles taken from periodicals are put in quotes. *The President was interviewed for the article, "New Leader of Women's Clubs", which appeared in The Star Ledger.*

## Q

**quotations:** carefully attribute all quotes. Lengthy quotes taking up three or more lines of text should be set apart and indented in the paragraph. No quotation marks are necessary in this case. Otherwise, use quotation marks. Quotes within a quote are set off by single quotation marks ('...') If a quote requires editing or paraphrasing, place brackets around any added words. *Club President Bernice Jones said, "This [fundraiser] was the best we've had. I know our founder, Gladys Simcox, would say, 'Way to go, girls!'. I thank you all for your enthusiasm and hard work."*

## R

**regardless/irregardless:** *regardless* is correct, however *irregardless* is not considered good usage.

# S

**seasons:** summer, spring, fall and winter are lowercase unless part of a formal name

**semicolons:** Between main clauses without a coordinating conjunction:

A semicolon can take the place of *and*, *but* and other coordinating conjunctions in compound sentences—those with two main clauses. *The mourners began to arrive not long after the first rose was plundered from the bush; a light breakfast of coffee and freshly baked, buttered rolls was laid out in the small dining room – Colleen McCullough, The Thorn Birds*

Between main clauses with a coordinating conjunction:

Even though a comma followed by a coordinating conjunction is sufficient for connecting two main clauses in a compound sentence, some writers prefer to use a semicolon instead, especially if the sentence contains other commas. However, writers should be careful not to overuse the semicolon in this instance. A good rule of thumb is to use the semicolon if it will improve clarity for the reader. *However, she added, Mr. Joseph was very fond of him, had called him James; and it was said, talked to him as if he were a rational being – Virginia Woolf; “The Widow and the Parrot”*

**staff titles:** precede with GFWC or NJSFWC and capitalize. *Carol J. Sas is NJSFWC Executive Director.*

# T

## **that vs. which**

The word *that* is used to introduce a restrictive or defining clause – one that defines the noun it is attached to and cannot be omitted (e.g., *The car that I want to buy is a Maserati.*).

The word *which* introduces a nonrestrictive or parenthetical clause – one that adds information but could be omitted without changing the sense of what is being said (e.g., *My car, which is in the shop right now, is a Maserati.*).

The *which* clauses generally take commas; *that* clauses do not. (From *Dos, Don'ts and Maybes of the English Usage*, Theodore M. Bernstein.)

**there/their/they're:** *there* is generally an adverb specifying place (I put it there.); *their* is a possessive pronoun (Jon and Neil washed their car.); *they're* is a contraction of 'they are' (They're in the boat.)

## **titles:**

**persons:** in GFWC or NJSFWC, always capitalize; try to place before name if possible; titles outside GFWC or NJSFWC, capitalize directly before proper name only (see also *congressional titles*). *Mary Jones, Chairman of the GFWC Membership Committee, Chairman Mary Jones, the Chairman* but *President George W. Bush; President Bush; the president, Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice; Secretary Rice; the secretary*

**publications:** book and newsletter titles are in italic, with principal words capitalized, including *a*, *the*, and *and* if they are the first words of the title. Quotation marks are used before and after lecture and speech titles and handbook titles.

**time:** use lowercase letters with periods for a.m. and p.m., with a space separating letters from time numerals, as in 10:00 a.m. or 8:45 p.m.

# U

**United States vs. US:** spell out when used as a noun; *US* can be used for an adjective  
Adjective: *The current state of the US stock market is causing concern worldwide.*  
Noun: *Prime Minister Blair will visit the United States next week.*

**United Nations vs. UN:** *UN* is an adjective, *United Nations* is a noun. Adjective: *The UN building has tightened its security.* Noun: *I have always been a supporter of the United Nations.*

# V

**versus:** spell out whenever possible. When abbreviated, use *vs.* (lowercase).

# W

**website, webpage:** Always write as one word.

**while:** avoid using this word when you mean ‘although’, or ‘whereas’. It means ‘at the same time that’. Correct: *Some members prepared tray favors while others assembled hygiene kits.*

**who vs. whom:** *who* is a subject; *whom* is an object. Think of *he* and *him*; usage is the same for *who* and *whom*. *He* is the subject; *him* is the object. *He gave the book to him. Who gave the book to whom?*

**World Wide Web:** capitalize all words

# X

**Xerox:** capitalize when referring to the company; otherwise use the verb *photocopy*.

# Y

**Your/you're:** *your* is a possessive pronoun (‘Pick up your coat, please!’); *you're* is a contraction of ‘you are’ (‘You’re in the top ten candidates for the award.’)

# Z