



# Editorial Style Guide

**University Publications**  
**UCSF Public Affairs**

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## introduction

The UCSF Editorial Style Guide is designed to help answer some common questions that arise when writing for campus publications, whether in print form or on the web. It is intended for use with publications providing news and information for campus and community audiences.

Here, you'll find some tips on usage and basic standards for terms and style. The emphasis is on utility and readability, not rules for rules' sake. The guide is designed to supplement basic usage as found in the *Associated Press Stylebook* and spelling as found in *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*.

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## UCSF campus and organizational names

### campus name

When spelling out the full name of the campus – University of California, San Francisco – use a comma between *California* and *San Francisco*, except in display type or logo form.

Abbreviate as *UCSF*.

### organizational names

When referring to a UCSF entity, don't use an ampersand unless it is part of a formal name:

Benefits & Financial Planning

Bixby Center for Reproductive Health Research & Policy

Institute for Health & Aging

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#### UCSF Institute for Regeneration Medicine

- UCSF Program in Developmental and Stem Cell Biology
  - Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research Center
- UCSF Program in Craniofacial and Mesenchymal Biology

---

#### UCSF Medical Center at Mount Zion or UCSF Mount Zion campus

Use full name at first mention; in subsequent mentions, shorten to *Mount Zion*.

## UCSF-affiliated institutions

### the J. David Gladstone Institutes or the Gladstone Institutes

Gladstone comprises three institutes: the Gladstone Institute of Cardiovascular Disease, the Gladstone Institute of Virology and Immunology, and the Gladstone Institute of Neurological Disease. Although an independent research entity, Gladstone is formally affiliated with UCSF, and Gladstone investigators hold University appointments.

Do not capitalize *the* in the name. Used collectively, it takes a singular verb:

Since its founding, the Gladstone Institutes has been renowned for its research.

Also at – or soon after – first mention, include a reference to the institutes' affiliation with UCSF:

At the UCSF-affiliated Gladstone Institutes, investigators participate in many University activities, including the teaching and training of graduate students.

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### San Francisco General Hospital (SFGH) also known as San Francisco General Hospital Medical Center (SFGHMC)

An academic community hospital under the auspices of the San Francisco Department of Public Health's Community Health Network, SFGH integrates into its operations UCSF School of Medicine faculty and other personnel engaged in patient care, teaching and research.

Spell out at first mention; abbreviate as *SFGH* thereafter.

Also at – or soon after – first mention, include a reference to the hospital's affiliation with UCSF:

Through its longstanding affiliation with UCSF, SFGH serves as a training ground for one of the top medical programs in the country.

---

### San Francisco Veterans Affairs Medical Center (SFVAMC)

SFVAMC, a major tertiary care referral center for veterans throughout Northern California, has been affiliated for more than 30 years with the UCSF School of Medicine. All physicians are jointly recruited by SFVAMC and UCSF School of Medicine.

Spell out at first mention; abbreviate as *SFVAMC* thereafter.

Also at – or soon after – first mention, include a reference to the medical center's affiliation with UCSF:

The UCSF-affiliated SFVAMC continues to receive the most research funding of any Veterans Affairs Medical Center in the nation.

## general organizational names

### Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

(formerly Agency for Health Care Policy and Research)

A part of the US Department of Health and Human Services, it is the lead federal agency on health care quality research.

### California Institute for Quantitative Biosciences (QB3)

Research institute of UCSF in partnership with UC Berkeley, UC Santa Cruz and private industry. One of four California Institutes for Science and Innovation. The other three are:

- California Nanosystems Institute (UCLA/UC Santa Barbara partnership),
- California Institute for Telecommunications and Information Technology (UC San Diego/UC Irvine partnership), and
- Center for Information Technology Research in the Interest of Society (UC Berkeley/UC Davis/UC Merced/UC Santa Cruz partnership).

### California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM)

Institute funded by Proposition 71 (2004), the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Initiative.

### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Spell out at first mention; abbreviate as *CDC* thereafter.

A collective noun, it is singular in construction:

The CDC announces new guidelines.

### Institute of Medicine

Part of the National Academies. The other three organizations in the academies are the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering and the National Research Council.

### Institute on Aging

Formerly the Goldman Institute on Aging, it includes the Institute on Aging Research Center.

### Joint Commission

Formerly the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO).

### Kaiser Permanente San Francisco Medical Center

Use *Kaiser Permanente* as a shortened form in reference to one of the hospitals or to the health plan. Avoid using *Kaiser* alone, to avoid confusion with other Kaiser entities.

### National Institutes of Health

Spell out at first mention; abbreviate as *NIH* thereafter.

A collective noun, it is singular in construction:

The NIH announces new guidelines today regarding stem cell research.

## abbreviations and acronyms

**When abbreviating a name or term, spell out at first mention, followed by the abbreviation in parens:**

Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC)

City College of San Francisco (CCSF)

Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

atrial fibrillation (AF)

---

**Don't use periods with acronyms or abbreviations formed by two or more words:**

AIDS

MD

PhD

US

---

**Add s without apostrophe to plural forms of abbreviations:**

CEO, CEOs

HMO, HMOs

---

**University of California can be abbreviated:**

UC Davis

UCLA (*not* UC Los Angeles)

UC Berkeley (*not* UCB)

## academic degrees

**Don't use periods when abbreviating a degree:**

BA

PhD

MD

MBBS

---

**Lowercase names of degrees, areas of academic concentration and subject areas:**

bachelor of science degree in physiology

doctorate in nursing

---

**When referring to the degree by the initials, include the word *degree*, as well:**

Eleanor Brown has a PhD degree.

## addresses, telephone numbers and URLs

### addresses

When citing numbered street addresses, abbreviate the common descriptor (*street, avenue, boulevard*):

350 Parnassus Ave.

1200 Sloat Blvd.

---

When citing the name of the street only, without a numbered address, spell out the descriptor:

2nd Avenue and Irving Street

Parnassus and 4th avenues

---

When citing campus addresses, use the building name or abbreviation followed by the room number, with a space (not a hyphen) in between:

Medical Sciences Building, room S 20

room N 431

### telephone numbers

Always include the area code with a telephone number, even if local, separating the area code and prefix with periods, parens and hyphen, or slash and hyphen, depending on the publication:

415.476.2577 or

(415) 476-2577 or

415/476-2577

## addresses, telephone numbers and URLs

### internet addresses

All domain names in Internet addresses are lowercase. Names of websites (as opposed to their URLs) may include intercaps:

(URL) `www.breastcancertrials.org`

(website name) `BreastCancerTrials.org`

---

If the Internet address (Uniform Resource Locator, or URL) includes *www.* (abbreviation for World Wide Web), always use it as part of the address:

`www.ucsf.edu`

---

If the Internet address does not include *www.*, omit the transfer protocol (*http://*) as part of the address, since it is automatically interpolated by web browsers:

`lifelonglearning.ucsf.edu`

## capitalization

### titles of UCSF organizations, entities:

In all instances, capitalize *University* when referring to the University of California.

---

**Capitalize the complete formal names of schools, departments, institutes, programs, offices and course titles:**

UCSF School of Dentistry  
UCSF School of Medicine  
UCSF School of Nursing  
UCSF School of Pharmacy  
Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery  
Department of Surgery  
Department of Community Health Systems  
Department of Pharmaceutical Chemistry  
Division of Orthodontics  
Program in Biomaterials, Biophysical Sciences and Engineering  
Center for Drug Development Science  
Institute for Health Policy Studies  
Nurse-Midwifery Management II

---

**When the descriptor, which formally precedes the entity name, instead follows it, capitalize the entity name but lowercase the descriptor:**

Pharmaceutical Chemistry department  
Pediatric Surgery division  
Biomaterials, Biophysical Sciences and Engineering program

---

**Capitalize the names of departments, divisions and programs when the entity descriptor is excluded:**

Pharmaceutical Chemistry (referring to department)  
Pediatric Surgery (referring to division)  
Biomaterials, Biophysical Sciences and Engineering (referring to program)

## capitalization

### Lowercase fragmentary or informal names:

the school (referring to a specific school at UCSF)

UCSF nursing school

USF law school

---

### Lowercase any names of departments or other entities in a series of two or more:

departments of medicine, neurology and anatomy

---

### When mentioning all four schools at UCSF, list them alphabetically:

the schools of dentistry, medicine, nursing and pharmacy

---

### titles of persons:

#### Capitalize titles preceding names:

Assistant Professor of Stomatology John Black

Associate Vice Chancellor Joan Green

---

#### Lowercase titles following a name or standing alone:

Joan Green, professor of biochemistry

assistant professor of stomatology

---

#### Lowercase titles if they are not part of an organizational entity:

James Gray, vice chancellor for medical affairs

chief executive officer, clinical enterprise

---

#### If a title does contain the name of an organizational entity or the word *University*, capitalize only that portion:

senior vice chancellor, Financial and Administrative Services

vice chancellor, University Advancement and Planning

---

#### Lowercase title, but capitalize name of department or division following the title, when used without the descriptor, such as *department* or *division*:

chair, Surgery

director, Publications

---

#### Always abbreviate *doctor* when used as an honorific:

Dr. John Black

## capitalization

### titles of periodicals, books, articles, films, CDs and TV series:

**When a periodical name begins with *The*, lowercase the definite article and treat as separate from the title:**

*the New York Times*

*the New England Journal of Medicine*

---

**When italics are available:**

For the titles of periodicals, books, films, CDs and TV series, use initial caps in italic type:

*San Francisco Chronicle*

*Moby Dick*

*Casablanca*

*Thriller*

*Get Smart*

---

**When italics are not available:**

For the titles of periodicals, use initials caps. For the titles of books, films, CDs and TV series, use initial caps and enclose in quotation marks:

San Francisco Chronicle

“Moby Dick”

“Casablanca”

“Thriller”

“Get Smart”

## dates and time

**When referring to decades, use an apostrophe in the contracted form and an s after both forms:**

'90s

1990s

---

**Include each entire year when describing a range:**

2005-2006, *not* 2005-06

---

**Abbreviate the following months when using with a specific day:**

Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.

---

**Do not abbreviate the following months:**

March, April, May, June, July

---

**Use cardinal numbers, not ordinal numbers, with dates:**

Nov. 13, *not* Nov. 13th

---

**Spell out the month when used alone or with only the year:**

She took off the month of December for an extended vacation.

He was due to return sometime in January 2007.

---

**Always spell out the day of the week:**

Wednesday was the last day to apply.

Monday, Feb. 14

---

**Always use numerals and omit the zeros for on-the-hour times.**

Use the abbreviations *a.m.* and *p.m.* with periods:

7:45 a.m.

10 p.m.

---

**Use words to describe the time meridians, omitting the 12 as redundant:**

noon

midnight

## geographical references

### Don't use periods with abbreviations:

US

Washington, DC

UK

UAE

---

### Geographic designations and cardinal points are not usually capitalized unless known as distinct areas:

the West

Northern California

Bay Area

Bayview-Hunters Point

Mission District

## numbers

### cardinal numbers:

Spell out *one* through *nine*.

Use numerals for *10* and above.

#### *Exceptions:*

- people's ages
- scores (grade-point averages, exam results)
- time of day
- money
- percentages and
  - numbers higher than 999,999 when expressed as round numbers or in decimal form
    - By 2 p.m. only 4 percent of the 8 million early applicants and 2.6 percent of the 3.2 million late applicants with a test score of 6, all of whom were at least 18 years old, had appeared to pay the \$5 fee.

#### *Additional exceptions:*

- chromosome and gene numbers, proteins, cytokines, etc.  
chromosome 24
- HER2
- interleukin-2
- ratios  
4:1
- people's weights  
123 pounds, 12 ounces
- dimensions  
8-by-12 room
- speed  
15 mph

---

Spell out any of the above only when beginning a sentence:

Fifty percent of them paid later.

---

Use a combination of numerals and spelled-out words for *millions*, *billions* and higher:

8 million  
3.2 billion

## numbers

Include the entire figure in a range of numbers, even if a word or series of zeros has to be repeated:

8,000 to 10,000, *not* 8-10,000

3 million to 5 million, *not* 3-5 million

10 percent to 20 percent, *not* 10-20 percent or 10-20%

---

### ordinal numbers:

Spell out *first* through *ninth*.

---

Use numerals for *10th* and above.

---

Do not use superscript with *th*.

---

### numbers with measures (volumes, doses, etc.):

#### noun forms

Use numerals and abbreviations without periods, with a space between:

3 cm of intravenous fluid

pressure of 160 mmHg

---

#### adjectival forms

Use numerals and abbreviations without periods, with *no* space between:

140cc dose

35mm film

---

### numbers with measures (distance, duration):

Spell out numbers *one* through *nine*, and hyphenate adjectival forms:

eight-mile run

12-mile hike

four-hour procedure

24-hour day

## possessives

**In the case of singular nouns ending in s, omit the s after the apostrophe when the following word begins with s:**

the witness' story

the hostess' seat

---

**In the case of nouns that are the same in singular and plural, treat them as plural:**

the corps' location

the deer's tracks

---

**In the case of nouns plural in form but singular in meaning, add only an apostrophe:**

measles' effects

herpes' resistance

---

**In the case of joint possession, add 's to the name closest to what is being possessed:**

Mary and John's apartment

---

**In the case of separate possession, add 's to all names:**

Mary's and Nancy's and John's books

## possessives

### possessives and eponymous disease or syndrome names:

Convention is rapidly changing with regard to whether or not the possessive 's should be appended to disease or syndrome names.

*Down syndrome* and *Tourette syndrome* have been well established for some time.

Many names, like *Parkinson's disease* and *Huntington's disease*, are now in transition, with some organizations using the possessive form and others not. For now, use *Parkinson's disease* and *Huntington's disease*.

Here's a representative sample of current usage:

Addison's disease	Huntington's disease
Alzheimer's disease	Kaposi's sarcoma
Barrett's esophagus	Klinefelter syndrome
Chagas' disease	Lesch-Nyhan syndrome
Charcot's disease	Marfan syndrome
Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease	Meniere's disease
Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease	Munchausen syndrome
Crohn's disease	Parkinson's disease
Cushing's syndrome	Rendu-Osler-Weber disease
Down syndrome	Reye's syndrome
Duchenne muscular dystrophy	Sjögren's syndrome
Ewing's sarcoma	Tay-Sachs disease
Graves' disease	Tourette syndrome
Guillain-Barré syndrome	Turcot syndrome
Hansen's disease	Turner syndrome
Hodgkin's disease	

## punctuation

### colon

**Capitalize the word following a colon if it starts a complete statement, or is a proper noun:**

The lecture held a big surprise for the audience: The guest speaker dismissed conventional thinking on the subject as antediluvian.

---

**Don't capitalize the word following a colon if it starts a phrase or list:**

The lecture held a big surprise for the audience: introduction of a revolutionary theory upending scientific convention.

---

### comma

**Series:**

Don't use a comma before *and* or *or* in a simple series of three or more items:  
The nominees were Dick, Jane and Sally.

Use a comma before the conjunction in a series containing another conjunction:  
She ordered iced tea, salad, and a ham and cheese sandwich.

Also use a comma before the conjunction in a series when the meaning is unclear without it:  
They enter the building, meet the student, remind him that he needs to study, and leave the campus.

The honoree thanked her parents, Elvis Presley, and Janis Joplin.

When the series itself contains commas, set each element off with a semicolon:  
The dates to remember are Oct. 12, 1492; May 5, 1862; and Feb. 6, 1944.

---

**Geographical references:**

Use commas to separate the respective parts of place names:  
Manteca, California, is in San Joaquin County.

---

**Nonrestrictive and restrictive elements:**

Use commas to set off nonrestrictive terms, phrases or clauses:  
The dean, Mary Worth, is back in town.

Students, who attend the lab on a regular basis, are growing in number.  
(This sentence means that the number of students is growing and that they also attend the lab on a regular basis.)

Don't use commas to set off a restrictive term, phrase or clause:  
Dean Mary Worth is back in town.

Students who attend the lab on a regular basis are growing in number.  
(This sentence means that the number of students attending the lab is growing.)

## punctuation

### dash

Because of often short line measures and in keeping with a growing trend in typography, use the en-dash (–), as opposed to the em-dash (—):

The measure – designed to get around restrictions in funding – puts California at the forefront.

---

### ellipses

Again, because of short line measures, do not add spaces when using ellipses:

“The honor roll hospitals are an elite group.... Just 176 hospitals scored high enough this year...out of all 6,007 US medical centers.”

---

### hyphen

Hyphens are generally used in compound modifiers when they precede the noun:

first-year student  
second- and third-year residents  
grade-point average  
16-chair clinic  
full-time position  
well-known person

---

A prominent exception is with use of the word *care*, because such compound adjectives are in common use, and therefore are commonly understood:

acute care nursing  
primary care specialty  
intensive care ward  
health care setting

---

Also use hyphens to avoid ambiguity or to form a single idea from two or more words:

The scene was a re-creation of the original tableau.  
The seminar exemplified a small-group setting.

## punctuation

### prefixes

In general, do not hyphenate compounds with well-known prefixes such as *anti-*, *bi-*, *multi-*, *non-*, *post-*, *pre-*, *pro-*, *re-*, *uni-*, etc.:

antihistamine  
bicoastal  
multidisciplinary  
nonprofit  
postgraduate  
predoctoral  
proactive  
reappoint  
unidirectional

---

Use a hyphen when the addition of a prefix results in duplicated vowels or consonants that impede readability:

anti-inflammatory  
intra-articular  
pre-eclampsia  
post-traumatic

---

Also use a hyphen when the addition of a prefix results in two conjoined vowels or repeated letters that impede readability:

bio-adhesive  
pre-registration

---

Also use a hyphen with common prefixes when the following word is initial cap:

non-English-speaking

---

When using the prefix *co-*, include the hyphen when the word describes occupation or status, or when the hyphen is needed for readability:

co-author  
co-chair  
co-locate

## punctuation

Omit the hyphen in other words with the prefix *co-*:

coordinate

cooperate

---

When using the prefix *self-*, always use a hyphen:

self-care

self-evident

---

The former prefix *vice-* now usually appears as a separate word:

vice chairman

vice president

---

## suffixes

In general, do not hyphenate compounds with common suffixes such as *-less*, *-long*, *-out*, *-over*, *-wide*, *-wise*, etc.:

clueless

yearlong

walkout

carryover

departmentwide

clockwise

---

Hyphenate when using *-in*:

break-in

---

Hyphenate *-like* only when the stem word ends in *l* or is a proper noun:

childlike

bell-like

Ebola-like

---

Do not hyphenate most constructions using *-maker* or *-making*:

policymaker

decisionmaking

troublemaker

## punctuation

For unusual or cumbersome constructions containing *-maker* or *-making*, use two words for readability:

tea maker

furniture maker

---

Do not hyphenate most constructions using *-up*:

cleanup

makeup

roundup

---

But there are exceptions:

start-up

follow-up

grown-up

close-up

shake-up

---

## quotation marks

Closing quotation marks follow commas and periods ending the statement being quoted:

“Close the door,” he said.

He said, “Close the door.”

---

The dash, semicolon, colon, question mark and exclamation point go inside the quotation marks when they apply to the quoted matter only, and go outside when they apply to the whole sentence:

“To be or not to be?” he wondered aloud.

Why don't they play “Misty”?

The board declared that “students must register first”; additional regulations are listed below.

---

When using quotes within quotes, place single quotation marks inside double quotation marks:

“With five members present, the examining board and ‘auxiliary guests’ may proceed.”

## punctuation

**When a quote is broken up into two or more paragraphs, add double quotation marks at the beginning of each paragraph continuing the quote:**

...Professor Black agreed completely: "I concur with the chancellor's decision, as it is based on sound reasoning.

"The long-term consequences are of immeasurable importance to each member of the faculty..."

---

### slash / slant / diagonal / solidus / virgule

**Use a slash only in common expressions or with numerals in fractions:**

HIV/AIDS

9/11

24/7

1/24

1/256

---

**Do not use a slash in dates:**

May 1, 2005, *not* 5/1/05 or 1/5/05

---

**Whenever possible, avoid constructions in which a slash substitutes for a conjunction:**

telecommunications and data rooms

*not* telecommunications/data rooms

## terminology and usage

### adviser

This is the preferred spelling in American English, as opposed to the British *advisor*.

---

### affect vs. effect

*Affect*, as a verb, means to influence:

The game will affect the standings.

*Effect*, as a verb, means to cause:

He will effect many changes in the department.

*Effect*, as a noun, means result:

The effect was overwhelming.

---

### alumnus

In general, use *alumnus* (singular) and *alumni* (plural). But when referring to graduates who are women, use *alumna* (singular) and *alumnae* (plural).

---

### and/or

Avoid this ambiguous, awkward construction. Use *and* or *or*.

---

### anniversary

Since the meaning includes *year*, use ordinal numbers for recurrences of a date:

first anniversary, *not* one-year anniversary

25th anniversary

---

### assure vs. ensure vs. insure

*Assure* means to set the mind at rest:

The physician assured the patient that the procedure was painless.

*Ensure* means to make something secure or certain:

The committee's methodical work helped to ensure the outcome.

*Insure* means to guarantee persons or property against risk:

She insured the parcel's contents for \$1,000.

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### birthweight

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### breastfeed, breastfeeding

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### cement vs. concrete

*Cement* (noun) means a binding element or something serving to unite firmly;

(verb) means to make firm or unite by or as if by cement:

The clinician and researcher met regularly to cement their collaborative relationship.

*Concrete* is a building material made of cement, a mineral aggregate, such as sand and gravel, and water:

The committee's ideas were exploratory, not set in concrete.

## terminology and usage

### chair

Title of the executive of a University academic department; do not use *chairman* or *chairwoman*.

---

### child care (noun)

---

#### compare to vs. compare with

*Compare to* means to liken one thing to something similar:  
She compared the heart to a sophisticated pump.

*Compare with* means to look at similarities and differences:  
The study compared the defibrillators made by Acme with those made by Nadir.

---

#### compose vs. comprise

*Compose* means to form by putting together or to constitute:  
The committee is composed of 13 members of the Academic Senate.

*Comprise* means to include or be made up of:  
The committee comprises 13 members of the Academic Senate.

---

#### continual vs. continuous

*Continual* means repeating steadily at intervals:  
He was troubled for days by continual coughing.

*Continuous* means uninterrupted:  
The healthy heart beats in a continuous rhythm.

---

### coursework

---

### data

A plural noun when used in a medical or scientific context; the singular is *datum*.  
The data were validated by subsequent research.

---

### dietitian

---

#### dilatation vs. dilation

*Dilatation* means the condition of being stretched:  
The MRI showed extensive dilatation of the vessel.

*Dilation* means the process of stretching:  
The catheter expedited dilation of the right coronary artery during the procedure.

---

#### disc vs. disk

Use *disc* when referring to an optical storage medium, such as a compact disc or videodisc, or to part of a vertebra.

Use *disk* when referring to a magnetic storage medium, such as a computer disk.

## terminology and usage

### e.g. vs. i.e.

*e.g.* (*exempli gratia*) means *for example*:

Her research encompasses neurodegenerative diseases; e.g., Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease and multiple sclerosis.

*i.e.* (*id est*) means *that is*:

He wrote to clarify his intent, i.e., to postpone the meeting until a more suitable date.

---

### email

---

### emeritus

This is the singular, masculine form. The plural is *emeriti*. When referring to women, the singular is *emerita*; the plural is *emeritae*.

---

### every day vs. everyday

The phrase *every day* is adverbial:

She taught the biochemistry class every day.

The word *everyday* is an adjective, and means ordinary or used routinely:

He wore his everyday shoes to the conference.

---

### fax

A shortened form of *facsimile*, it is lowercase.

---

### fewer vs. less

Use *fewer* for individual items, *less* for bulk or quantity:

Fewer than 10 applicants called.

He had less than \$50 in his pocket.

She had fewer than 10 one-dollar bills in her pocket.

---

### fewer vs. under; less than vs. under

Do not use *under* unless the intended meaning is physically underneath or subject to the control of:

She played outdoors under sunny skies.

They worked under the constraints of the deadline.

*Exception*: He is under 30.

When referring to a lesser quantity or amount, use *less than*. For individual items, use *fewer*:

The budget was less than \$4 million.

Fewer than 10 cars were parked in the lot.

## terminology and usage

### flush vs. flesh

*Flush* (intransitive verb) means to flow suddenly, to produce new growth, or to glow brightly or blush:

During the rigorous oral examination, he flushed self-consciously as he responded.

*Flesh* (intransitive verb) means to become fleshy or substantial:

They worked on the preliminary plan to flesh out the details.

---

### Founders Day

Annual UCSF event; no apostrophe.

---

### full time, part time

Each of these terms is two words, except when used as a compound adjective preceding a noun, in which case they are hyphenated:

She was working full time in her office job.

He is a full-time professor at the university.

Doctor White teaches pediatrics part time.

She is a part-time student.

---

### full-time equivalent (FTE)

The phrase is adjectival:

The department has 45 FTE positions.

She is an FTE employee.

Avoid using as jargon; i.e., *FTE* as a noun or in plural form.

---

### fundraising

One word as both a noun and an adjective.

---

### grade 2 tumor

Grades progress from 1 through 3.

---

### health care

Spell as two words in either noun or adjectival form.

---

### home vs. hone

*Home* (verb) means to go or return home, or to proceed or direct attention toward an objective:

Scientists are homing in on an understanding of the workings of stem cells.

*Hone* means to sharpen, or to make more intense or effective:

The department chair had spent many years honing her public speaking skills.

## terminology and usage

### house staff

---

#### if vs. whether

*If* means in the event that or on the condition that:  
If the preliminary results hold up over time, the research will be a success.

*Whether* means an indirect question involving alternatives:  
The investigator asked whether the results were valid.

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### level II trauma center

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### level II ultrasound

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### life span

---

### lifestyle

---

#### like vs. as

Like (preposition):  
She acted like a seasoned professional.

As (conjunction):  
Do as he says.

---

### media

The plural form takes a plural verb:  
The mass media were publicizing the incident.

The singular form is *medium*:  
It proved a useful medium in which to express herself.

---

#### more important, most important

When used as an qualifying phrase, these constructions are a shortened form of the clause *what is more important* or *what is most important*. Use of *more importantly* and *most importantly* is misleading, since it can mean self-important:

We are concerned about cost and, most important, the quality of care.

---

#### more than vs. over

Do not use *over* unless referring to a spatial relationship. For figures and months, the correct phrase is *more than*:

More than 50 students were enrolled.

*Exception*: She is over 30.

---

### needlestick

## terminology and usage

### off campus, on campus

Spell as two words, except when used as an adjective before a noun:

Professor Green spent last week off campus.

Her office is located in an off-campus building.

---

### offline, online

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### percent, percentage

*percent*: adjective.

*percentage*: noun.

Spell out *percent* as one word; avoid the use of % except in charts or where space is at a premium:

43 percent accuracy rate

Use the word *percent* with every citation of a percentage:

40 percent to 50 percent, *not* 40-50 percent

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### phase III clinical trial or phase III trial

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### radio frequency, radiofrequency

Use the phrase *radio frequency* in noun form:

The radio frequency for the station is 89.5 MHz.

Close up when using as an adjective:

The instrument makes use of radiofrequency pulses.

---

### Regent, Regents

Always capitalize when referring to one or more of the Regents of the University of California.

---

### small cell lung cancer, nonsmall cell lung cancer

Common usage makes the meaning clear enough without the use of a hyphen.

---

### specialty

This is the preferred word in American English, as opposed to the British *speciality*.

---

### stage 3 cancer

Stages progress from 1 through 4.

---

### start-up

Hyphenate when used as a noun or adjective.

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### T cell

Hyphenate only when used as an adjective.

## terminology and usage

### that vs. which

Use *that* to introduce a restrictive clause – a clause essential to the meaning of the noun it modifies – so that the meaning will change if the clause is left out:

She wants a copy of the book that just came out today.

Use *which* for an unrestricted clause – a clause that can be omitted without changing the meaning – and set it off with commas:

She wants a copy of his latest book, which she'll read tonight, and a cup of coffee.

---

### toward

This is the preferred usage in American English, as opposed to the British *towards*.

---

### tPA

Use this shortened form of *tissue plasminogen activator* without a hyphen.

---

### University

Always capitalize *University* when referring in shortened form to *University of California*.

---

### vice vs. vise

*vice*: a moral fault or failing; a foible.

*vise*: a tool with two jaws that close, used for holding work.

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### web, website, webpage

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### who vs. whom

Use *who* when the person is the subject of the statement:

The student who scored the highest won a prize.

Who will be the winner?

His brother, who will send him the money, is out of town.

Use *whom* when the person is the object of a verb or preposition:

The student to whom the prize was given had scored the highest.

Whom should I ask for?

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### X-ray

Initial cap; hyphenate as both a noun and an adjective.

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### zebrafish

In scientific usage, it is one word.

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### zip code

Originally an acronym (Zone Improvement Plan), common usage makes it easily understood in lowercase form.