



United Press  
International

# Broadcast Stylebook

1974  
\$20.00

# the UPI Broadcast Stylebook

a handbook for writing and  
preparing broadcast news

By  
The Editors of  
UPI Broadcast Services

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**United Press International**

220 E. 42nd St.

New York, N.Y. 10017

## FOREWORD

Broadcast style has been a major consideration in our newsrooms for more than 40 years. United Press was the first news agency to serve radio stations back in 1936, and U-P's editors and writers became pioneers in the art of writing news "to be heard."

Since those early days, U-P and United Press International have trained literally thousands of newsmen and newswomen to write for the "ear" and helped the broadcast industry develop its own distinctive style of delivering news to its growing audience.

The first edition of this stylebook was published in 1943 under the title "*United Press Radio Style Book*." It was the first comprehensive manual on how to write broadcast news.

This is the sixth complete rewrite of that manual. It is now titled, "*United Press International Broadcast Stylebook*."

There have been many changes, including our "style" on stylebook, and many additions. However, many of the elements of the 1943 manual have been retained as they are now basics in the industry.

U-P-I is proud of its role as a pioneer in broadcast news and is determined to remain on the leading edge.

Phil Newsom, United Press Radio Manager in 1943, edited the first stylebook. Michael Kaeser, a news editor in the national broadcast department in 1978, edited this latest edition. Many other U-P and U-P-I staffers have made vital contributions.

Bill Ferguson  
Editor, Broadcast Services  
United Press International

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## AUTHORITIES

U-P-I publishes two stylebooks, one for broadcasters and one for print journalists. But this does not imply that there are two different kinds of journalism. There is only one kind, that kind concerning itself with reporting accurately news that independent journalists consider to be important for everyone to know. This Broadcast Stylebook expands on the special techniques electronic delivery systems demand.

This Stylebook is designed for use in conjunction with the U-P-I Stylebook, which is a joint U-P-I and A-P manual. Selected entries from the U-P-I Stylebook, some adapted to broadcast usage, appear in the alphabetical section of this book.

This stylebook's primary reference source for spelling and phonetics of ordinary words is *Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language, Second College Edition*. The backup dictionary, with more entries, is *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*. The primary reference source for phonetics for place names is *The Columbia Lippincott Gazetteer of the World*. The backup source is *Webster's New Geographical Dictionary*.

The mechanical rules, such as punctuation, set forth in this book are based on practices that evolved over the years. An attempt has been made to make these rules as logical and exception-free as possible . . . resulting in some changes from past practice. In some cases, uniformity gives way to the restrictions imposed by technology . . . as well as the needs of the broadcaster.

## THE UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL BROADCAST NEWSWIRE

A lot of people in this world spend the day hearing what's "**said**" on this newswire.

It delivers scripts to nearly four-thousand radio and television stations around the world. Editorial direction is from the Broadcast Headquarters desk . . . U-P-R . . . in Chicago.

The product is news around the clock: be it the latest developments in Congress, baseball scores, tornado warnings, stock market trends, or a communique from some distant war front. The aim is to present this information accurately, quickly and directly in a way that interests and informs.

Approximately half the time on the Broadcast Newswire is devoted to world and national news from the U-P-R desk. The other half is devoted to delivery of regional and state reports prepared in various regional news centers (such as Boston in the Northeast, Atlanta in the Southeast, Chicago in the Midwest, Dallas in the Southwest and San Francisco in the Far West).

Individual state bureaus also have the capability of filing directly to the broadcast wire — especially for quick delivery of urgent, breaking news.

The copy comes in a variety of wrappings — one-minute scripts, five-minute scripts, 15-minute scripts, in-depth reports, backgrounders. It describes a wide range of activities: money, education, sports, health, religion, politics, science, farming, foibles — anything that is of interest.

It's a river of information in ever-changing form. It has to be. People won't listen to the same old thing presented in the same old way.

## THE UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL AUDIO NETWORK

The U-P-I Audio Network provides the excitement and realism of on-the-scene sound, the authority of professional broadcast journalists, the drama of the event as it happens. The network operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, serving radio stations through feed centers in New York, Washington, Chicago, Los Angeles and London.

The Audio Network parallels the Broadcast Newswire. Its product can be used as a fully independent network news source or as a supplement to the script wire.

U-P-I Audio serves radio stations in two main ways:

—Providing hourly newscasts and frequent sportscasts and market reports completely produced and voiced by U-P-I personnel. Stations can broadcast these programs live, as they are received from U-P-I.

—Providing actualities of newsmakers and voice reports by U-P-I correspondents for stations choosing to produce their own newscasts, sportscasts and other programs. Major news events such as presidential news conferences, political conventions, elections and space shots are carried live.

Audio also produces a number of special reports and programs on a daily, weekly, monthly and yearly basis.

The aim is to add authenticity to station newscasts without demanding editorial control. It's the anonymous network.

## PREFACE

### **Read this book aloud.**

To understand the medium of sound, listen to the words and the sentences. And listen to people talk — yourself . . . friends conversing . . . broadcasters reading the news. Listen not just to what is said but how it is said — how the medium of sound is used.

Broadcast-style writing is nothing more than contemporary spoken English. It's not the complex construction of the scholar . . . nor is it the slang of the street. It's the way the language is used informally in conversation today by the typical American. It is short and simple because it has to be. Someone reading the printed word can re-read a long, complex sentence repeatedly until its meaning is fully understood. In broadcasting, there is only one chance for the meaning of a spoken sentence to make itself clear to the listener.

Broadcast copy is written to be heard. If it does not “hear” well, then it is a failure. If you keep firmly in mind that your writing is to be read aloud, some of the traditional problems of broadcast writing will disappear.

Broadcast writing is more alive, more imaginative than straight newspaper or print wire style. United Press was the pioneer broadcast service and always has prided itself on the quality of its writing.

Writing to make people listen is a difficult, and ever-changing profession. Electronic journalism is becoming more dominant and this skill becomes more competitive, more refined, more creative.

This booklet concentrates on that skill. It's not a rulebook. Rules tend to make ruts . . . ruts that make it hard to adapt to change. What was once considered “the” way of handling broadcast news is now old hat . . . and “styles” which were unthinkable 40 years ago are widely accepted. The booklet does deal with problems peculiar to writing the “spoken word” and preparing news for broadcast. Its aim is to provide a foundation for the writer. It is only a foundation — that's why so much emphasis is placed on the contemporary. Broadcast style is only a means to an end — the goal of telling people what's happening in a way they'll understand.



## BROADCAST WRITING

Communication by the written word is a subtle and beautiful thing. But writing the spoken word . . . so that it will be listened to *and* understood . . . is an art that depends largely on simplicity.

Readers decide what to read, when to read it, how fast to read it, how much to read and whether to re-read for comprehension. A listener has only one option if the flow of words out of the radio or television speaker doesn't make sense immediately. That option is to tune out. Your finished product has to grab that listener's attention and hold it.

There are four ways to learn to write for broadcast:

1. Listen to broadcasts. Note items that give announcers difficulty. Remember . . . you are writing for announcers in small as well as large markets. The copy must be simple, clear, easy to read aloud and easy to understand when heard.

2. Listen to people talk. Notice the way quotations, attribution and numbers are handled in conversation. Broadcast news writing is still formal enough that we must avoid most of the slang, but it does not have to be stilted. Normal conversation isn't.

3. Write with attention to detail. Write so it is clear. Have someone else critique your copy.

4. Read what you have written out loud. If you have trouble with it, imagine what kind of trouble someone unfamiliar with the story is going to have — especially hitting it cold in front of an open microphone. Some people say that when they read silently, they hear the words out loud in their mind. While it is true that with enough experience you automatically know what phrases are allowed, the only way you get that experience is from reading your copy aloud.

There can be a vast difference between how something reads on paper and how it "*listens.*" One news show almost carried this introduction, which referred to the top five stories:

IN THE NEWS TONIGHT: FOUR HOSTAGES IN INDIANA . . . PRESIDENT FORD . . . VICE PRESIDENT ROCKEFELLER . . . INDIRA GANDHI . . . AND POPE PAUL. U-P-I REPORTS.

Looks fine, doesn't it? But when you *listen* to that sentence, it sounds like Ford, Rockefeller, Mrs. Gandhi and the Pope were the four hostages.

As a broadcast writer, you've got to be able to tell the difference between what something *means* and what it *says*.

The broadcast writer is telling a friend about something that happened — not writing a story. In telling a story, you give your impression of what happened. Not each and every detail. You tell different facts one at a time. You sometimes repeat. For example, in the following story a number of things happened — yet they are taken one by one:

(Sam)

David Berkowitz stood before the bench in the New York Supreme Court in Brooklyn today and admitted he was the notorious "Son of Sam" murderer.

In three appearances . . . the pudgy, 24-year-old former postal worker said he committed all six of the "Son of Sam" murders.

And in a surprise disclosure . . . authorities revealed that Berkowitz had kept a secret diary . . . in which he says he set nearly two-thousand fires in New York City over the past three years. There had previously been no hint that Berkowitz might be an arsonist.

In his initial court appearance today, Berkowitz described how he gunned down

20-year-old Stacy Moskowitz and her boyfriend as they sat in a car on a quiet street in Brooklyn in the early morning hours last July 31st.

Miss Moskowitz died of a gunshot wound to the head . . . and her boyfriend was virtually blinded. They were the last victims of "Son of Sam."

Berkowitz pleaded guilty to all six of the seemingly senseless night-time ambushes that left New York police baffled for a year. All but one of those killed . . . and four of the seven wounded . . . were young women.

Berkowitz has said that howling demons spoke to him through a dog named "Harvey," demanding "young blood" and ordering him to kill neat, clean and well-groomed young people. The killer displayed a marked preference for long-haired girls.

Berkowitz' attorneys say they urged their client to plead innocent by reason of insanity, but he ignored their advice . . . and today, Justice Joseph Corso ruled Berkowitz knew he was doing wrong at the time of the Moskowitz attack.

Berkowitz faces a prison term ranging from 25 years to life for the killings. He'll be sentenced May 22nd.

That broadcast piece was written from this print wire story:

NEW YORK (UPI) — David Berkowitz, the lonely postal worker who said he was driven by howling demons, pleaded guilty Monday to all six "Son of Sam" murders in a year-long reign of terror with his .44-caliber revolver.

Berkowitz, 24, of Yonkers, N.Y., wearing a light blue suit and pinstriped shirt, appeared calm and kept quiet throughout the 2-hour, 28-minute proceeding as he entered the pleas before three different judges.

Sentencing was scheduled May 22 at which time he faces a maximum of 25 years to life in prison for each murder.

Although the guilty pleas were expected, the courtroom was startled by the revelation that Berkowitz, who terrorized New York for over a year, may have been responsible for more than 2,000 fires in the city since 1974, using the pseudonym "The Phantom of the Bronx."

The stocky defendant entered the pleas in an unprecedented session that was presided over in succession by judges from Brooklyn, the Bronx and Queens — the three boroughs where the Son of Sam attacks occurred between July 29, 1976, and July 31, 1977.

None of the judges asked Berkowitz why he had shot the Son of Sam victims — who included seven others who were wounded — with a .44-caliber Charter Arms Bulldog Revolver.

Following his arrest, Berkowitz had said demons spoke to him through a dog named Harvey, ordering death to "neat, clean and well-groomed" young people.

One reasonably sure way to interest the listener is to be interested in the story yourself . . . not just as a writer, but as a person. You must feel the urgency, the pathos, the excitement or the humor that makes an event newsworthy. And you must make the listener feel it too.

Good writing is not necessarily tricky, off-beat leads. If a fancy lead doesn't fit, avoid it. Writing is good and "*listens*" well if it is tight, angled correctly and written in active voice, not passive. Make it active and make it move with your choice of verbs. Action verbs make the story jump without inflating it. Use words that trigger an image in the listener's mind — a smell, a sound, anything that involves the listener. If your words enable the listener to visualize the scene or background of the story, the item will hold the listener's attention.

A word of caution. The need to "*hold*" listeners does not give the writer license to sensationalize or distort. It does mean the writer must find **THE** interest-compelling angle . . . pin the lead to it . . . then drive it home with pertinent detail.

There is not necessarily a right or a wrong way to write something. The following

suggestions result from years of trial and error — and can provide a platform from which to build your own approach.

1. Understand your source copy, your story. Not just the lead, but the whole story. Then put the source copy aside.

2. Never paraphrase a print wire lead for broadcast. Some are good enough — but invariably you wind up parroting, not paraphrasing. You are paid to re-write . . . not to re-type.

3. Listen to different newscasters. Try to be detached and figure out how they and-or their writers do it. Tape and transcribe some. Sounds wondrously wise but prints out very simply.

4. Dial hop until you find someone who reads your copy unchanged. Try to be detached about that too. Did it really sound interesting? How could it have sounded better?

5. Note changes in your copy by newscasters or editors. Why the change? Did it sound better? Clearer?

6. When you type, talk to the keyboard like an old friend . . . hear and speak your copy. Don't just read your copy aloud — that's a mumbler's art. Speak it . . . project it . . . punch it. That's the only way you find the pauses, the inflections. A good pause is a speaker's way of underlining.

7. Tune in on every phase of what's going on. You're going to describe it, interpret it, evaluate it — so know it, feel it. Understand the politicians and professional thinkers, but also find out about "alternate lifestyles."

8. Mostly, be able to think "this is a hell of a story." If you don't, no listener will.

Two of the above points cannot be emphasized strongly enough: Hearing the copy . . . and putting aside the source copy and then telling the story as you would to your neighbor. Refer back to the source copy only to check facts.

In working from long print wire stories on speeches or on complex programs there is a tendency to paraphrase and excerpt from the print wire story rather than to summarize or highlight. The result often is confusing and boring rather than succinct.

Ask yourself what is the major theme of a speech, what is the main effect or purpose of a complex court decision or legislative program . . . and how does it affect the listener.

## ACCURACY

The most important ingredient of any story you move is accuracy. One of U-P-I's mottos is "get it first, but get it right." Never forget it.

Check and then recheck all facts, figures and names. In broadcasting, nine out of 10 corrections reach an entirely different audience. The time to make one is **BEFORE** the copy hits the wire.

All writers **must** read back copy as soon as it is moved. Correct any errors immediately.

All copy **must** be edited by someone other than the person writing it, even if the writer is the editor in charge.

Desks may set or recommend limits on a given story. The medium itself sets limits. The normal newscast contains three and one-half minutes of news — thus, if it covers 10 stories, that leaves only 21 seconds an item . . . roughly five lines of copy.

The tendency on radio and television today is for individual stories to be very short — unless they are accompanied by sound or video tape. Items in headline or briefs packages must be extremely tight. Save the details for a roundup or a takeout. Those longer items give stations the necessary background to write their own versions for use with tape.

Any journalist has a personal commitment to tell the whole story. For the broadcast writer to tell a one-thousand-word print wire story in six lines is inherently impossible. So it becomes necessary to summarize.

Don't let extraneous details get in the way of a clearly told story. Get the facts right . . . but don't overload your story with them. On a complex story, it is better to summarize clearly than to add elements that cannot be expanded or backgrounded enough because of the medium's time limitation.

For example, you have a story about a senator accusing a judge of financial misconduct. You write about this in four lines. Then you add two lines about the specific accusation that the judge received 120-thousand dollars from an outside source.

The story might be completely accurate in a technical sense. But if space limitations prevented you (and in this case they would) from adding the information that the money was paid over a 12-year period and all was spent on an educational project rather than on the judge's personal pleasure, you will have left the listener with a distorted view of the story.

In this case it would have been more accurate not to introduce the specific money charge. (In a roundup item, or takeout, where time and space limitations are not so stringent, you would add it with proper background detail.)

The rule is to write tightly, but always at sufficient length to prevent distortion. At the same time there are realities of the medium . . . and your handling must bear these in mind.

## IMMEDIACY

Broadcasting is the **NOW** medium. Broadcast writing must reflect the immediacy that only broadcasting can provide. Immediacy means telling the listener what the situation is right now. It does **NOT** mean having to put "today" — or any time element at all — in the lead. It's better to say "PRESIDENT CARTER AND THE RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR ARE HOLDING A WORKING DINNER AT THE WHITE HOUSE AT THIS HOUR" than "PRESIDENT CARTER AND THE RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR SAT DOWN TO A WORKING DINNER AT THE WHITE HOUSE TONIGHT." Save that past tense lead for later, when you can add information on what they said or accomplished. For instance: "PRESIDENT CARTER AND THE RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR REPORTEDLY MADE PROGRESS ON A NUCLEAR TEST BAN TREATY DURING A WORKING DINNER AT THE WHITE HOUSE TONIGHT. SOURCES TELL U-P-I THEY WILL HOLD MORE TALKS TOMORROW."

Often a wire service or newspaper reporter must fashion an advance lead that will hold up after the event, such as: "The Pope **was scheduled** to say Easter mass at the Vatican today." But remember: nobody talks that way — and broadcast writing is contemporary spoken English with a NOW sound. Write it like this: "THE POPE **WILL SAY** EASTER MASS FOR THOUSANDS OF PILGRIMS AT THE VATICAN THIS MORNING" or "THE POPE **SAYS** EASTER MASS FOR THOUSANDS OF PILGRIMS AT THE VATICAN THIS MORNING."

It's essential to read the file of what's been sent on the wire in the previous few hours — to know what stories are in the news . . . and how long they've been on the wire. A new shift of writers or newscasters must take extra care to keep a story updated. Don't be tempted to revert to a near-original print wire version of the story just because *you* haven't seen the story before. Note how many times your source copy has been used by the previous shift. If it's a print wire lead for a new newspaper cycle, check back to see how long the story has been on the wire. The story may be new to *you* but it can be hours old to the listeners. Keep the story moving forward. If the plane crashed several hours ago, don't keep saying there has been a crash in which so many died. The listeners know that. Use different material — the eyewitness descriptions, the arrival of investigators or whatever may be happening **NOW**.

If there are no fresh developments, make the story sound different by highlighting different elements. Use the non-essential but intriguing aspects . . . in combination with the elements that made it a story in the first place . . . to give the piece a fresh sound.

After eight or nine newscasts you should **NOT** still be saying:

"EIGHT PERSONS WERE KILLED IN A FIRE THAT SWEEPED THROUGH CENTRAL MALL SHOPPING CENTER, DAMAGING MILLIONS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF MERCHANDISE."

### Advance the story like this:

“INVESTIGATORS ARE SIFTING THROUGH THE DEBRIS OF THE SHOPPING CENTER MALL WHERE EIGHT PERSONS DIED IN A FIRE EARLIER TODAY.”

“INVESTIGATORS SAY THE FIRE THAT KILLED EIGHT PERSONS AT CENTRAL MALL APPARENTLY WAS DELIBERATELY SET.”

“MAYOR SMITH SAYS HE WILL VISIT THE CENTRAL MALL WHERE EIGHT PERSONS DIED IN A STILL-UNEXPLAINED FIRE THIS MORNING.”

“BUSINESSMEN WHOSE STORES WERE RUINED BY THIS MORNING’S FATAL FIRE AT CENTRAL MALL ARE ORGANIZING TO BRING TENT BAZAARS TO THE SHOPPING CENTER.”

Only a stupendous event — such as a presidential death, or the first moon landing — justifies sticking with essentially the same lead over several hours.

The first moon walk was one of those stupendous events. Here are two leads which were carried on the Broadcast Wire within an hour of each other on July 20th, 1969:

“(SPACE CENTER) — IN AN EERIE WORLD OF BRIGHT LIGHT AND SHADOW MAN STOOD ON THE MOON TONIGHT . . . THE FIRST TIME A HUMAN HAS MOVED ON THE SOIL OF AN ALIEN WORLD.”

“(SPACE CENTER) — TWO AMERICAN SPACEMEN STOOD . . . WALKED . . . HOPPED AND WORKED ON THE SURFACE OF THE MOON TONIGHT . . . AND THE WORLD WATCHED THE CLIMAX OF CENTURIES OF DREAMS AND AMBITIONS.”

## HUMANIZATION

Remember: Your listeners are real, live people. They’re interested in other people. Tell your stories to these people in terms of people . . . not cold, robot ciphers. Bureaucracy has eliminated the emotional elements from everything from unemployment statistics to tragic accidents. “People” have become “urban dwellers,” “householders,” “illegal aliens,” “upper income persons,” “disadvantaged minorities,” “career professionals,” and the like. Translate those stories back into human, “people” terms.

Tell news stories in human terms. The big fire that levels a downtown block doesn’t just cause millions of dollars in damage . . . it displaces people.

Statistics are news . . . but so are the reactions of people to those statistics.

You could say “THE LATEST GOVERNMENT FIGURES SHOW THE COST OF LIVING IS UP AGAIN, PACED BY A 16 PERCENT INCREASE IN THE COST OF BREAD.” It might be better to say: “A LOAF OF BREAD IS COSTING YOU MORE THESE DAYS. THE GOVERNMENT SAYS A 16 PERCENT RISE IN THE COST OF BREAD WAS THE BIGGEST FACTOR IN PUSHING THE COST OF LIVING HIGHER THIS MONTH.”

A sure way to lose a listener is to over-emphasize statistics, percentages and technical detail. Unless they are essential to the meaning of the story, avoid them.

**A note on casualties:** Casualty figures often change as a story develops. That’s why every casualty figure must be sourced until your figure is solid fact. Phrase the first death or injury figures to indicate they are preliminary and likely to change. Pin the figures on a source from the outset, and continue to source figures until they are solid. If the report of a plane crash or a mine disaster is just that — a report without a definite name as source — say that, too.

## BROADCAST STYLE

The conversational—and transient—quality of a newscast dictates broadcast style. The listener may have turned on the radio in the middle of a newscast or something may cause a

momentary diversion of attention. For those reasons a good broadcast news story will tell the listener what is going to be heard, tell the facts of the story, and then tell the listener what has just been said.

Normal conversation, even among professors of English, differs from the written word in most instances. It is more informal and consists at most of only a few thousand words. Rules of grammar are bent — sometimes even ignored.

Broadcast news must be written in a way that lets the newscaster speak without being pompous or stilted. This is **NOT** to imply that broadcast copy should ignore grammar. However, many of the rules of grammar may hamper a good speaking account rather than help it. Consider:

GOVERNOR SIDNEY J. JONES HAS ACCUSED STATE TREASURER ALEXANDER ROBINSON OF HELPING SECRETARY OF STATE OSCAR SMITH LAND A JOB FOR HIS SON, DEPUTY SHERIFF WILLIAM SMITH, IN THE STATUTORY REVISION SECTION OF THE OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL ROBERT BROWN.

Conceivably, most of that could be crowded into the lead paragraph of a story for a newspaper. A newscaster would be out of breath, out of listeners, and out of patience after trying to read that on the air. A broadcast version:

POLITICS

(ATLANTA)— A BIG CONTROVERSY THIS MORNING AT THE STATE CAPITOL... GOVERNOR JONES HAD SOME STRONG CRITICISM OF ALEXANDER ROBINSON, THE STATE TREASURER. THE GOVERNOR ACCUSED, ETC.

The lead sentence is not grammatical. But it sounds like normal conversation. And it takes the place of the missing newspaper headline to guide the listener into the story that is to follow. Also, it does not require newscasters to fill their lungs to capacity before plunging in.

#### —TENSES:

Use the present tense when appropriate, but don't belabor it. There is **NO** need for every story to sound as though it happened the moment before the newscaster went on the air. If it happened last night and there's **NO** graceful way to leave out the time element, say it flatly. Try to avoid past tense in a story without a specific time element.

One sure way to slow down a newscast is to use the passive voice. The active voice tells it better and quicker. (See: *TIME ELEMENT*)

#### —LEADS:

Don't cram everything into leads on the broadcast wire.

The five-W rule doesn't hold when you're telling a story. Often it's best to use a soft lead . . . a lead with little or none of the essentials of the story.

A soft lead can hit on the feel of a story . . . or the humor of an event . . . or simply set the stage for telling the story.

For example, when communist troops in South Vietnam opened their 1968 Tet offensive with an attack on Saigon, the broadcast wire began:

SAIGON IS NOT JUST A DATELINE AT THIS HOUR. IT'S A BATTLEFIELD.

It didn't tell the story of the Lunar New Year offensive . . . but it set the stage for telling the story.

Or, to start off a complicated account of building tensions between the Arabs and Israel, U-P-R put it:

PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST HANGS BY THE SLENDER THREAD OF LAND KNOWN AS THE GAZA STRIP.

## —QUESTION AND QUOTE LEADS:

Use question leads sparingly. They sound like commercials. Quote leads also should be avoided because they can be misleading.

## —BACKGROUNDING THE LISTENER:

Each takeout, headline, WIB or Roundup piece must be complete in itself. If necessary to get the desired brevity, eliminate unessential, new developments to make room for necessary background material. New developments are wasted unless the listener has something on which to hang them mentally.

## —BACKGROUNDING STATIONS:

The Broadcast News Desk has more responsibility to the clients at the other end of the newswire than just the accurate, fast filing of breaking news.

It must also keep broadcasters tuned in on anything that will help their programming. If a substitute story is in the works, advise them of this and the reason why. If a casualty figure changes, up or down, give an editor's note saying so. If the Attorney General changes the hour of a news conference from 5 P-M to 3 P-M, don't wait for the next WIB or Roundup to relay this information. Let stations know immediately in an advisory so assignment desks can get their reporters and technical crews to the right place at the right time.

Newscasters aren't the only people who use what we write for our service. Don't limit your thinking to newscast scripts. Remember the deejays or the host of that talk show you tune into sometimes. That offbeat story about a rock star might not seem like much of a news story worth carrying in a WIB more than once . . . but turn it into a takeout and chances are every disk jockey in America will love it.

## —TRANSITIONS:

It's important to have each paragraph flow into the next one. Do it with ideas and skillful organization of facts . . . not "**crutch**" words or phrases. Perhaps the most overworked words in news are MEANWHILE, MEANTIME and INCIDENTALLY. Forget them, especially "incidentally." If something is incidental, it doesn't belong in a tight newscast.

When a transition is required, read *aloud* what is already written — be it two sentences or two paragraphs. This will help assure that the transition "**flows**" naturally.

## —OVERWRITING:

High-flown adjectives, formal words and fuzzy writing have no place in broadcast news copy. They trip the newscaster and irritate the listener. Particularly avoid technical words, professional jargon and obfuscation by bureaucrats and public relations flaks.

Since broadcast news basically is conversation, its meaning must come through to the ear. "*The champion fainted a left..*" is all right for the printed page. To a radio listener it may come through as "the champion fainted and left." Normal conversation is simple and direct.

If one of the Detroit automakers announces the recall of one-million cars because of "a potential defect which could result in separation of the directional control," translate that into every-day English. It means "the steering wheel falls off."

If one of your friends, describing a trip to the mountains, should speak of the "ephemeral blue of the heavens gleaming faintly on the red and golden foliage" you would find another friend.

Strings of adjectives possibly may enthrall a reader. They are apt to confuse a listener. The best adjective or adverb invented is no match for an active verb.

## —BREVITY:

Keep sentences short. That doesn't mean a sentence can't be long . . . like this one — just make sure it reads well aloud — that there is plenty of breathing room so an announcer doesn't run out of breath before the sentence ends. The real test is whether it can be read aloud. Long sentences like this without adequate pauses should be avoided because they certainly will cause announcers across the country to suffocate before being able to complete reading them on the air. Unless a sentence is broken, it shouldn't exceed two typed lines. A series of short, punchy sentences gives the story a feeling of action and urgency. However, there should be a variation in sentence length to avoid giving the item a "See the cat, see the cat run" sing-song quality.

## —SIMPLICITY:

Good broadcast copy is easy to understand . . . like good conversation.

For the most part, simplicity is the answer. Write it the natural way . . . the way you would say it.

In complex stories, particularly ones which could affect the listener's pocketbook, don't be afraid of repetition. You want to make sure the listener knows what you are talking about.

Write it the natural way . . . and speak it out loud to make sure.

For example:

(Dollar)

THE ONCE-ALMIGHTY DOLLAR IS REELING LIKE A PUNCH-DRUNK FIGHTER TODAY . . . TRAPPED AND BATTERED SENSELESS IN A BARE-KNUCKLE ATTACK BY SPECULATORS ON MONEY MARKETS AROUND THE WORLD.

IN A VICIOUS SELLING CIRCLE THAT BEGAN LAST FRIDAY AFTER REPORTS CIRCULATED THAT OPEC MIGHT STOP USING THE GREENBACK TO CALCULATE OIL PRICES . . . THE DOLLAR HAS FALLEN TO ALL-TIME LOWS AGAINST FOREIGN CURRENCIES.

YESTERDAY . . . IT PLUMMETED BELOW THE 200-YEN MARK ON THE TOKYO EXCHANGE FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE WORLD WAR TWO. THAT WAS FOLLOWED BY SIMILAR DROPS ON EUROPEAN MONEY MARKETS, DROPS THAT CONTINUED UNTIL CENTRAL BANKS STEPPED IN TO BUY MILLIONS OF UNWANTED DOLLARS AT SUPPORT PRICES.

NOW . . . THE SPIRAL HAS GONE AROUND AGAIN.

IN TOKYO TODAY, THE BANK OF JAPAN STEPPED OUT OF THE PICTURE . . . AND THE DOLLAR TOOK A SPECTACULAR PLUNGE, CLOSING AT YET ANOTHER POST-WAR LOW OF 195 AND ONE-HALF YEN. TO PUT THAT IN PERSPECTIVE, CONSIDER THAT FOR 20 YEARS AFTER THE WAR ENDED, THE DOLLAR WAS OFFICIALLY PEGGED AT 360 YEN.

ONE SENIOR OFFICIAL OF THE BANK OF JAPAN SAYS THAT UNLESS THE UNITED STATES AND JAPAN TAKE SERIOUS AND POSITIVE STEPS . . . THE DOLLAR MAY DROP ALL THE WAY TO 180 YEN.



## —WORDS AND PHRASES

The prime newsroom hazards are the florid writer . . . the trite writer. Please:

- BIG or LARGE, not always MASSIVE.
- HURRY or just plain GO, not always RUSH.
- SEND something, don't always TRANSMIT or DISPATCH.
- CALL people, don't SUMMON them.
- BUY something, rather than PURCHASE it.
- LEAVE a place, not just DEPART or EVACUATE.
- ACT, don't always TAKE ACTION.
- TRY, instead of ATTEMPT.
- ARREST, not always TAKE INTO CUSTODY.
- SHOW, rather than DISPLAY or EXHIBIT.
- GET, don't always OBTAIN.
- DOCTOR, not always PHYSICIAN.
- BREAK, instead of always FRACTURE.

Some over-worked phrases: "all-out-fight," "stems from," "burned up the course," "fiery little man," "dapper little man."

The "takes the" sentence is a common word-waster. How many times have you heard: "Senator Smith took the floor to accuse Senator Jones of slander"? Why not: "Senator Smith accused Senator Jones of slander"?

Always try to save words. "Police fired on rioters" instead of "Police opened fire on rioters."

Avoid the use of "press" as in "press conference" or "press secretary." It's not broadcast. Say news conference, news secretary.

People enter pleas of guilty or innocent. Never write it: "Not guilty." It is too easy to drop the word "Not."

## —CLICHES:

Avoid cliches "like the plague." You are paid to be a CREATIVE writer . . . not a hack. "Centers around" is a logical impossibility akin to "mid-air." Watch out for phrases such as "the storm claimed the life" . . . "negotiators hammered out an agreement during a marathon all-night bargaining session" . . . "clamped a lid of secrecy" . . . and "the lawmakers closeted themselves behind closed doors."

Writers using cliches will be "pounded mercilessly," "completely destroyed" and then "brutally murdered."

## —HUMOR:

Humor is fragile stuff. It can be the icing on the cake . . . but any humorous story must tell itself.

There should be a continuous effort to lighten all heavy news reports with a note of levity — preferably at the close of a roundup or WIB to offset the dark tales of crisis that have gone before. But attempts to be cute or to needle an unfunny story are deplorable.

Never make sport of infirmities . . . and never relate injury or death to humor. There's nothing funny in a man breaking his neck by tripping over a book of safety hints.

State the facts. If the facts are funny, somebody somewhere will smile.

# MECHANICS OF STYLE

## — PUNCTUATION:

Punctuation is the only part of broadcast style that involves writing for “the eye” instead of the ear. Punctuation is a visual aid to the announcer. The somewhat strange broadcast style of punctuation—dashes and ellipses instead of commas, semi-colons and colons—is there to indicate copy clarity, mood and speed of delivery. The dots and dashes warn an announcer that pauses for dramatic effect or emphasis—or breath—are coming up. Many newscasters will not have time before going on the air to familiarize themselves with the copy... so each pause and each point of emphasis must be clearly indicated.

As with grammar, the rules of punctuation get bent in the process.

Dashes are used instead of parentheses to set off a phrase. A series of three dots is preferable to the comma in setting off connected phrases.

Here is an example of a print wire story and how it was re-punctuated for broadcast:

VOLUNTOWN, Conn. (UPI) — Beechdale Avenue residents have renamed their street Transylvania, hoping the government will come to the rescue and rid their homes of bats.

A number of bats, at least one reportedly found to be rabid, have taken up residence on Beechdale. Exterminators refuse to use DDT poisoning, fearing a possible \$100,000 fine as well as a jail sentence.

Town Health Director Dr. Albert Gosselin, acknowledging to about 30 residents his order was “unrealistic,” Sunday told town selectmen to get rid of the bats within 72 hours.

“It is inconceivable that all of these homes should be condemned,” Gosselin said.

State sanitarian Donald Capellaro suggested one way to oust the bats would be to block their points of access. But, he couldn’t say how the bats would react or where they would go for new shelter.

(VOLUNTOWN, Connecticut)— Residents of Beechdale Avenue in Voluntown, Connecticut, have renamed their street Transylvania. They’re hoping the town government will come to the rescue and help rid their homes of bats.

A number of bats... at least one reportedly found to be rabid... have taken up residence on Beechdale. Exterminators refuse to use D-D-T poisoning—fearing a possible 100-thousand dollar fine as well as a jail sentence because D-D-T is illegal.

Town health director Dr. Albert Gosselin yesterday told town selectmen to get rid of the bats within 72 hours. But Gosselin acknowledged his order was unrealistic. As Gosselin said... “It is inconceivable that all of these homes should be condemned.”

A state sanitary official has suggested trying to block the bats’ points of access. But, he couldn’t say how the bats would react or where they would go for new shelter.

So the residents of Transylvania will just have to keep ducking. At least there are no reports that anyone has started growing fangs.

## Some guidelines:

- Use an ellipsis ( . . . ) to indicate a pause . . . a dash ( - - ) to indicate a longer pause.
- Hyphenate a word if it will make the word easier to read. For instance, make it “anti-trust” rather than “antitrust,” “over-react” rather than “overreact.”
- Use hyphens, not periods, between letters in abbreviations. (See: ABBREVIATIONS.) U-S representative not U.S. representative.
- Use hyphens, not periods, with abbreviations and double initials. It is U-S rather than U.S., E-D-T rather than EDT, a-m rather than a.m., and J-W Edwards rather than J.W. Edwards.

—Use a period, not a hyphen, with a single initial preceding a name, such as J. Edgar Hoover. (Where possible, however, drop single initials. Make it Treasury Secretary Michael Blumenthal rather than W. Michael Blumenthal.) (See: NAMES, TITLES AND INITIALS.)

—Do **NOT** use commas around senior, junior, the third and so forth in names (because there is no pause when the name is read aloud). Example: Judson Collier Junior says, rather than Judson Collier, Junior, says.

—Use commas before and after the name of a state. Example: Joliet, Illinois, exists. Not Joliet, Illinois exists.

—Use quotation marks around direct quotes, nicknames and the names of animals throughout an item. Use quotation marks around the names of ships, planes or spacecraft only when necessary to aid the announcer in understanding the copy. (The Coast Guard official J-W “River Rat” Edwards says “the Old Mother” sank off Cape Cod.)

—Use parentheses around material that is either an optional part of the text or something which is not to be read separately, such as a phonetic. When bracketing optional material, it must read smoothly into the sentence. For instance: The fire occurred on Chicago’s near north side (at 14 West Elm Street). Not: The fire occurred on Chicago’s near north side (14 West Elm Street).

—Avoid use of an ellipsis to indicate omission of quoted words. Instead, restructure the sentence from a direct quote to a paraphrase. Example: A full quote saying “The American people, unlike their Russian counterparts, or peoples in many lands around this vast globe, eat a lot of fried chicken” would be: The president says the American people eat a lot of fried chicken.

—Capitalize names, first words of sentences and elsewhere, as appropriate. U-P-I broadcast copy is delivered to most clients on all-caps teletype machines . . . but it also is available on upper-and-lower case high-speed printers. Therefore, capitalization is necessary to make the copy look literate . . . but it also now may be used for emphasis. For instance: U-M-W President Arnold Miller says **THIS** time he thinks miners will approve the tentative coal contract. However, writers must **NOT** rely on the capitalization alone for emphasis — the sentence must be written — not just typed — so the emphasis is apparent to all-caps clients as well as those on Datanews.

—Capitalize **NO** and **NOT** to call the editor’s attention to them.

—Capitalize **M** in Million and all of **BILLION** to call the editor’s attention to them.

### —NAMES, TITLES AND INITIALS:

Do **not** begin a lead sentence with an unknown name unless it is preceded by an identifying phrase or short title. Otherwise the listener might miss it . . . and the point of the story.

However, long and involved titles should follow, rather than precede a name.

Nobody will listen to a sentence that begins: “The deputy attorney general in charge of the Justice Department’s civil rights division . . . A-H Levi . . . quit today.” Better make it: Deputy Attorney General A-H Levi . . . the head of the Justice Department’s Civil Rights division . . . quit today.” Better yet, make him “A top official of the Justice Department . . . A-H Levi . . . quit today” and work in the exact title later.

Familiar names, such as the President, Secretary of State, Chief Justice of the United States, do **not** always need the first name if the title is used. It makes for easier listening if you write it: President Carter . . . Chief Justice Burger.

Generally, drop middle and first initials. Gerald Ford rather than Gerald R. Ford . . . Treasury Secretary Michael Blumenthal rather than W. Michael Blumenthal.

Skip all courtesy titles except where they are needed to avoid confusion, such as a story involving a man and woman with the same last name.

When a second reference courtesy title is needed for a woman, use Miss, Mrs. or Ms. depending on the preference of the individual.

Do **NOT** use Mr. on second reference to the President of the United States. (The U.P.I. Audio Network does use Mr. on second reference to the president since it is possible for

stations to cut out the taped "Mr." if preferred.)

Professional titles, such as Doctor, the Reverend, etc., may be used on first reference.

Minor foreign names, unless essential to the story, should be avoided. It's better to just use a title. Few people will recognize the names . . . fewer will remember them. They are just an unnecessary fact getting in the way of the story.

It's the same with names of obscure foreign towns. Rather than confuse the listener with unwanted facts, locate such towns in relation to a familiar name. Instead of "Yugoslavian authorities evacuated the town of Slavonski Brod because of heavy flooding," write it: "Yugoslavian authorities evacuated a town 125 miles west-northwest of Belgrade because of heavy flooding."

Most trade names should be bracketed unless essential to the story.

Example:

"A major food chain (The A-and-P) says its coffee sales have fallen 20 percent since prices skyrocketed."

There are exceptions to this rule. Commercial names are essential in business news items or when Ford, General Motors or U-S Steel are involved in labor problems, recalls, price increases and the like. The name of an airline involved in a plane crash is important.

#### —WOMEN:

News copy concerning women should be written exactly the same as news copy concerning men.

Do not use unnecessary physical descriptions and do not add such irrelevant information as the occupation of a woman's husband, etc.

Females over 18 should be referred to as women. Females under 18 may be called girls.

#### —PERSONAL PRONOUNS:

Beware of personal pronouns. When using HE, SHE or THEY make certain there can be no doubt as to the reference. The ear can't go back and pick up identification. Repeat the name or title if there is any question.

#### —ATTRIBUTION:

The source belongs at the beginning of the sentence. Let the ear tune in on the source before you hit it with the charge, statement or prediction. Otherwise, listeners who tune out before hearing the source may think the announcer was editorializing. Placing the source first puts the story into proper "ear-sequence." It should be "President Carter says God will smite federal employees living in sin" . . . rather than "God will smite federal employees living in sin — that's what President Carter says."

The source may be used as a break in a quote but **NEVER AFTER** controversial material. Thus: "Congress," the president says, "must take the blame for any recession." Never: "Congress must take the blame for any recession," the president says.

Be sure the listener knows that it is the **newsmaker** saying it— **NOT** U-P-I or the **newscaster**.

If U-P-I **IS** the source of a news report, that should be made clear. Don't be afraid to attribute U-P-I itself, and . . . in some instances . . . even knowledgeable staffers — especially if the story is an exclusive. For example: "U-P-I has learned the energy bill is in trouble" or "U-P-I White House Reporter Helen Thomas says Carter administration officials are at odds with each other on gas pricing." Such usage can be overdone, but there are times when it is warranted.

The source of a story has considerable bearing on its credibility. What a negotiator at a peace conference has to say about what's happening at the conference table probably carries more weight than what a member of Congress says in Washington about the same

story. Remember that in evaluating stories. When using unidentified sources, qualify them as best you can: informed sources, authoritative diplomatic sources, sources at the scene, and the like.

Attributing reports to a competitor is not the taboo it once was. "The Washington Post reports in a copyright dispatch" is perfectly acceptable. "A Washington newspaper (the Post) reports" is archaic.

If you must bracket material . . . make sure that the bracketed material reads smoothly into the full sentence so it can be read either way. It should be "Egyptian President Sadat told broadcast interviewers (on N-B-C's "Meet the Press") that he likes chicken soup" rather than "Egyptian President Sadat told broadcast interviewers (N-B-C's "Meet the Press") that he likes chicken soup."

The big-three networks' interview programs, "Issues and Answers" on A-B-C, "Face the Nation" on C-B-S and "Meet the Press" on N-B-C, frequently are referred to in print wire stories as "television interviews" but they should be referred to as "broadcast interviews" on the Broadcast wire.

### —QUOTATIONS:

Quotes require special treatment since a listener can't see the quotation marks. In effect, you write in a warning to the announcer and the listener that an exact quotation is coming up.

For example: The senator attacks **what he calls** — "Needless and irresponsible use of federal powers." He says he believes this is our most serious problem. Then he adds — **in these words** — "the tentacles of the state are closing around the individual."

Note the phrases in bold face. They are the listener's quotation marks.

Quotes generally are used more sparingly than in print copy because they tend to slow the pace of a newscast. Paraphrases are shorter and smoother. A really good quote, however, adds authority to any story.

Avoid quotes with "I" or "we" in them — they sound like the announcer is making an editorial statement.

In paraphrasing quotations, retain the speaker's exact meaning. Use neutral verbs in writing into direct quotations containing controversial material. SAYS or DECLARES comes through objectively. CLAIMS, POINTS OUT, MAKES CLEAR, INSISTS, SLAPS DOWN, CRACKS have an editorial flavor.

### —RED-FLAG WORDS:

Attorneys for United Press International have drawn up a list of "red-flag" words which, if not used properly, could lead to libel.

Be extremely careful when using the following words:

Adulteration of products, adultery, altered records, ambulance chaser, atheist, attempted suicide, bad moral character, bankrupt, bigamist, blackguard, blacklisted, blackmail, block-head, booze-hound, bribery, brothel, buys votes, cheats, collusion, communist (or red), confidence man, co-respondent, corruption, coward, crook, deadbeat, deadhead, defaulter, disorderly house, divorced, double-crosser, drug addict, drunkard, ex-convict, false weights used, fascists, fawning sycophant, fool, fraud, gambling house, gangster, gouged money, grafter, groveling office seeker, humbug, hypocrite, illegitimate, illicit relations, incompetent, infidelity, informer, intemperate, intimate, intolerance, Jekyll-Hyde personality, kept women, Ku Klux Klan, liar, mental disease, moral delinquency, narcotics addict, Nazi, paramour, peeping Tom, perjurer, plagiarist, price cutter, profiteering, pockets public funds, rascal, rogue, scandalmonger, scoundrel, seducer, sharp dealing, short in accounts, shyster, skunk, slacker, smooth and tricky, sneak, sold his influence, sold out to a rival, spy, stool pigeon, stuffed the ballot box, suicide, swindle, unethical, unmarried mother, unprofessional, unsound mind, unworthy credit, vice den, villain.

Also . . . any words expressing or imputing: a loathsome disease; a crime, or words falsely charging arrest, or indictment for or confession or conviction of a crime; anti-semitism or

other imputation of religious, racial or ethnic intolerance; connivance or association with criminals; financial embarrassment (or any implication of insolvency or want of credit); lying; involvement in a racket or complicity in a swindle; membership in an organization which may be in ill repute at a given time; poverty or squalor; unwillingness or refusal to pay or evading payment of a debt.

## —LIBEL

U-P-I's lawyers also have come up with the following guidelines on how to avoid libel and invasion of privacy lawsuits:

1. Avoid slipshod, indifferent or careless reporting. Whenever a statement could injure someone's reputation, treat it like fire. The facts of a story should be confirmed and verified, as far as practicable and in accordance with usual newsgathering procedures.

2. Truth is a defense, but good intention in reporting an untruth is **NOT**. Remember, there may be a vast difference between what's true and what can be **proved** to be true to a jury. When in doubt whether a story is libelous, do **NOT** publish or broadcast it until you are sure it's not. Retraction is **NOT** a defense to a libel action . . . it serves only to mitigate or lessen damages.

3. Make reports of arrests, investigations and other judicial or legislative proceedings and records precisely accurate, full, fair and impartial. Limit comment or criticism to matters of public interest based on facts which are fully stated in the comment and which are true.

4. Try to get the "other side of the story." A good reporter sticks to the facts and NOT to some bystander's opinion of what might be the truth if the facts were known. The story should be objective and never colored by the enthusiasms or opinions of the reporter.

5. Particular care should be taken with quotations. The fact that a person is quoted accurately is **NOT** in itself a defense against libel if the quoted statement contains false information about someone.

6. Never railroad a story onto the wire. Write it, check it and edit it carefully to make sure it is accurate and says precisely what you want to say.

7. Avoid borderline cases of invasion of privacy since the law of right of privacy is still developing.

8. Avoid gossip and the unauthorized use of names and pictures for advertising or promotional purposes. Use the name or picture of a person only when identified and relative to the subject matter of the publication. **Never** use unidentified pictures to illustrate social or other conditions when pictures of people who expressly consent will suffice and are readily obtainable.

9. If an error has been made, always have legal counsel handle demands for retractions which come from a lawyer for a potential plaintiff. A well-meaning but unnecessary or poorly worded correction may actually prejudice a defense in a subsequent lawsuit.

For additional information on the law of libel and invasion of privacy, consult "Synopsis of the Law of Libel and the Right of Privacy," by Bruce W. Sanford of Baker, Hostetler & Patterson, published by Scripps-Howard Newspapers and Scripps-Howard Broadcasting Company.

If you are threatened with a libel suit or if someone demands a retraction, take the following steps *immediately*.

—Receive all threats and demands politely and without comment. If someone gets insistent, say the matter is out of your hands.

—Gather all the facts and contact your bureau manager or supervisor immediately.

—Don't admit any fault or error on your own or on anyone's part.

—Don't defend what has been done. There is a very human tendency to be apologetic or defensive when someone is angry, but this may only make things worse.

—Don't release any news or picture copy or audio tapes to anyone.

—Don't discuss what you did with anyone but management or counsel.

—Don't write letters or memos describing what you did unless explicitly requested by counsel.

—Don't wait until you've made a mistake. If you think a story, caption or picture may involve potential libel or invasion of privacy problems, talk to management. Don't be shy about asking questions.

### —TIME ELEMENT:

Do not over-use the word "today" since listeners usually assume something happened today unless you tell them differently. Occasionally, break it down: This morning . . . at mid-day . . . this afternoon . . . late this evening.

Be sure that "today" where the story is occurring also is "today" in the client area. This is a problem when dealing with foreign copy . . . especially if you want a specific time element in the story, such as dawn or dusk. That can even be a problem in the United States where dawn on the East Coast is still the middle of the night in Hawaii.

Use specific times when necessary — but remember, they aren't always necessary. "President Carter meets this morning (10, E-S-T) with top-level advisers" is better than "President Carter meets at 10 a-m, E-S-T, with top-level advisers." On many stories, you may drop the time zone. If a robbery occurs at 3 a-m, the important point is that it occurred in the middle of the night — regardless of time zone.

Watch out for misleading time references that may make a listener ignore a story because it sounds dated even when it has the latest available information. This applies especially to government statistics, which usually are issued for the month prior to the one in which they are released. When the February Consumer Price Index comes out in March, call it "the latest" report . . . then pin down the exact details later.

### —LOCATION:

Location is important to listeners and it must be made clear. Never use the phrase "here today" — it's meaningless. It signifies only the location of the listener— and your listeners are everywhere from Bangor, Maine, to Honolulu.

The words CAME, DOWN, OUT and THERE are disasters for newscasters. It may be "out West" to a "back East" newscaster, but what's the San Francisco announcer going to do with your copy? The same goes for "down South" or "up North."

### —NUMBERS:

For clarity, broadcasters have their own style for figures.

From one to nine — write out: one, two, three, and so forth, unless used to indicate sports scores, sports records, time, dates and sequences of aircraft, spacecraft and missiles.

From 10 to 999 — use numerals: 10, 35, 989, and so forth.

Write out hundred, thousand, Million, BILLION thus: 15-hundred, five-thousand, 12-thousand 500, eight-Million, and nine BILLION 200-Million.

Large numbers, which used to be hyphenated solids such as six-million-210-thousand-456, should be broken up with spaces (located where commas would be if Arabic numerals had been used). Example: 6,210,456 would be six-million 210-thousand 456.

For aircraft, spacecraft and missile sequences, hyphenate the numbers and letters. Examples: B-1 bomber, Salyut-6 spacecraft, D-C-3, C-5-A.

In dealing with numbers, remember you are writing conversationally. Sixteen-hundred dollars sounds better than one-thousand 600 dollars.

Round out figures unless the exact one is necessary to the story. For all practical purposes \$1,613 becomes "16-hundred dollars." Bracket in exact figure where desired: "16-hundred dollars (\$1,613)."

Never say “a million.” The “a” can be heard as “eight.” Write it “one-Million.”

If it is necessary to begin a sentence with a figure, follow above rules for use of numerals and spelling out: “Three students won.” “13 people were killed.”

Do **NOT** spell out or hyphenate years: “1978 was a lousy year.” It is 1978, not 19-78. Write it: the year 2000, not the year two-thousand or the year 2,000.

In writing dates, it is: December 1st, 9th, 31st, and so forth.

Use only figures and hyphens in sports scores, odds, votes and ratios. The “to” is implied by the hyphen. Examples: The Senate voted 51-49. “Secretariat” is a 2-1 favorite. New York shut out Los Angeles 5-0. (Do **not** write out the zero as “oh,” “nothing” or “zip”)

Use only figures and hyphens in sports records. The “and” is implied by the hyphen. Examples: Atlanta is now 3-2. Dallas holds a 5-4-3 record.

In farm market reports, abbreviations used in print wire style are acceptable to save wire space. However, generally eliminate all abbreviations after first use except where necessary for clarity. Eliminate the abbreviations “u-s” or “no” for number (as in U-S 1-2 or No 1-2) except for a single grade (U-S 1 or No 3).

Print style: Hogs 25-50 higher; No 1-2 200-240 lb 48.25-48.75, around 100 head 48.85; No 1-3 240-260 lb 47.50-48.50; No 2-3 250-270 lb 46.75-47.50, 270-280 lb 46.00-46.75; No 4 280-300 lb 45.25-46.00.

Broadcast style: HOGS 25-50 HIGHER. 1-2 200-240 LBS 48.25-48.75, AROUND 100 HEAD 48.85; 1-3 240-260 47.50-48.50; 2-3 250-270 46.75-47.50, 270-280 46.00-46.75; NO 4 280-300 45.25-46.00.

#### —ABBREVIATIONS:

Hyphens are used between the letters in abbreviations, NOT periods.

Broadcast copy seldom contains abbreviations other than those intended to be read as abbreviations. Because they are well enough known to be recognized, Y-M-C-A and U-N may be used. The same is true of A-M, P-M, E-S-T, C-S-T, M-S-T, P-S-T, Dr., Mrs., Ms., Mr., and St. when used for saint (as in St. Louis and St. Paul). But it would be Fort Dix, New Jersey, or Mount Prospect, Illinois.

In the case of government agencies, abbreviate only when the agency is readily identifiable by the initials, like F-C-C. Even then, an abbreviation is not always necessary. If it fits the occasion, use *Federal Bureau of Investigation*, for example, rather than *F-B-I*.

Some abbreviations do not take hyphens because they are acronyms pronounced as a name. UNESCO, NATO, OPEC and USAC are examples.

Never abbreviate names of states, cities, countries, political parties (except G-O-P), days of the week, months, titles of officials and address identifications such as street, avenue and boulevard.

Never abbreviate junior or senior after a person’s name. Never abbreviate company, corporation, incorporated and limited after a company name.

In general, avoid alphabet soup. Do **NOT** reduce names to unfamiliar acronyms or abbreviations solely to save a few words.

#### —MEANINGLESS WORDS:

Never use LATTER, FORMER and RESPECTIVELY when referring to persons, places or things already mentioned. A listener can’t refer back to a previous sentence or paragraph, so those words are meaningless.



## —DATELINES:

Much of the copy transmitted over the U-P-I Broadcast Newswire no longer carries datelines. WIBs now are largely scripted . . . and few stations had been reading datelines. Takeout items and most local-regional WIB-type news shows are datelined. In the national-international report, only takeouts carry bracketed datelines.

Bracket datelines thus:

(ROME)— Italian Premier Lorenzo Bandini (loh-rehn'-zoh bahn-dee'-nee) has resigned.

Datelines must be unmistakably clear. "Cleveland" and "Detroit" are. "Geneva" could be in New York or Switzerland... "Portland," in Oregon or Maine. Carry complete designations when there is possibility of confusion.

Despite datelines, the "where" of the story belongs in it.

On state-regional copy, do **NOT** use (UNDATED) as a dateline. Either use nothing or something like (Around Texas) or (Across Ohio) so it reads into the text.

## —AGE:

There seems to be a universal law — at least among journalists — that the age of every person mentioned in a story must be supplied. Nonsense. Use age only when it has a direct bearing on a story.

There is little point in giving the age of a woman whose pet cat found its way home after being given to a nephew who lives 186 miles away.

When age is part of the story, it's generally better to write it: "A 19-month-old boy — Malcom Todhopper— has won 86-thousand dollars on a T-V game show."

# GUIDELINES

Broadcasters have a responsibility to the public. We at U-P-I share this responsibility because it is our written product that most stations are airing.

Radio and television provide instant journalism. What a person hears over the airwaves can startle . . . anger . . . or calm. A violent descriptive phrase or an inflammatory statement on radio or television has a great emotional impact on the listener — much more so than the same phrase or statement on the newspaper reader.

News dealing with civil disorders . . . especially involving race . . . must be handled with extreme caution.

U-P-I Broadcasting has set these guidelines for dealing with civil disturbances:

1. Stick to the facts. Never commit rumors or unverified reports to the wire.
2. Exercise extreme caution in use of words such as "riot," "rioting," "rioters," "violence," "nightrider," "looter," "looting," "sniper" or "sniping."

On the Broadcast Newswire do **NOT** use racial identification unless such identification is an integral part of the story.

An example: "President Johnson appointed the first black to the Supreme Court."

The United Press International Broadcast Advisory Board recommends the following guidelines to help broadcast news operations deal with the dilemma of covering acts of kidnapping and terrorism:

1. Each station should have established procedures for coverage of such events, which should include prompt notification of management.
2. Judge each story on its own and if the story is newsworthy, cover it.
3. Coverage should be thoughtful, conscientious and show restraint, and be carried out with an awareness of the potential danger to life and person.

4. Report demands made as an essential point of the story but do not provide an excessive platform for those demands.
5. Reporters should avoid deliberately injecting themselves into the story as intermediaries or negotiators.
6. If there has been no mention of a deadline, no one should ask the terrorist-kidnappers if there IS one.
7. Above all, apply the rules of common sense.

Be just as careful in the handling of hurricanes, floods, tornadoes. You can panic entire communities by sensationalizing. Never go beyond the words of official sources or your own correspondents at the scene.

Hurricane coverage is especially tricky. Remember always to:

1. Stick with Weather Service facts. Never predict where the storm will hit unless you are passing along a Weather Service prediction. Avoid adjectives like "major" unless used by the N-W-S.
2. Revise promptly on the basis of new advisories.
3. Bracket in exact times Weather Service advisories were released.
4. Past-tense all but general statements.
5. Distinguish between the velocity of the wind and the speed of the storm's forward movement.

No medium demands closer attention to good taste than broadcasting.

Parents usually select the papers or magazines for the home, so it is their responsibility if a child runs across an item of questionable taste.

This is **NOT** so in radio or television. A broadcast is heard by all members of the family. Make certain, then, your words or news judgment don't embarrass listeners, the announcer or United Press International.

In the early days of broadcasting, certain stories were verboten: suicides, spicy divorce cases and trials, rape, abortion and the like. But in recent years, more and more stations are using such stories.

The U-S Supreme Court upheld an F-C-C ban against airing seven "filthy" words when children might be listening. Other similar words pose an equal problem to broadcasters.

There are several ways to warn a station about what is coming in an item. Questionable stories can be filed as "takeouts" with appropriate sluglines. An example:

RRR (USE AT YOUR DISCRETION)

THREAT

(NEW YORK)— AN INTERPLANETARY AIRWAYS BOEING 747 JUMBO JET MADE AN EMERGENCY LANDING AT KENNEDY AIRPORT THIS AFTERNOON AFTER THE AIRLINE RECEIVED A TELEPHONED BOMB THREAT. ALL 365 PASSENGERS AND CREW MEMBERS WERE EVACUATED SAFELY AND NO BOMB WAS FOUND. THE PLANE WAS ON A FLIGHT FROM LONDON TO CHICAGO.

(END DISCRETIONARY MATERIAL) YYY

When a questionable item is of such importance that it must be included in Roundups and WIBs, it must be enclosed by the same discretionary slugs with the R-Y coding to keep it off C-A-T-V circuits.

Most airlines require stations to take their advertising off the air following crashes or hijackings. Obviously major crashes and hijackings are going to receive heavy coverage. However, be sure that takeouts on lesser accidents — such as training flights with NO passengers aboard — move expeditiously so stations are aware of them and can pull commercials if necessary.

Do **NOT** carry routine bomb hoaxes and the like on the Broadcast Wire. If it is necessary to carry such an item — because of the unusually large number of people affected or injuries that result— run it as a takeout with discretionary flags. Do **NOT** include it in a WIB or roundup.

### MEASURING COPY

Time is precious to a broadcaster. Don't waste it by over-writing.

When the desk asks for a four-line story, tell it in four lines, not five.

While announcers read at varying speeds, the average newscaster reads approximately 150 words of copy per minute. And the average five-minute newscast has only three and a half minutes of news. At 30 seconds a story, the newscast would have only seven stories — and most try to average eight to 10.

To measure copy remember this: The average full line on a conventional teletype machine contains 10 words. On the video display terminals now used by U-P-I, four full lines will come out as five lines on the wire.

### SIBILANTS

The letter "S" is murder on announcers. Whistling and speaking are distinct and separate arts and should remain so. Avoid items like this . . . one that actually appeared on the wire:

(Moscow)— Nobel Prize winner Alexander Solzhenitsyn (sawl-zhehn-eet'-sihn) is in prison again. Dissident sources say Solzhenitsyn was jailed for disseminating slanders about the Soviet State system.

### PHONETICS (foh-neht'-ihks)

It's just as important for newscast copy to carry pronunciations of difficult words as it is for newspaper copy to be spelled correctly. Phoneticize (in brackets) immediately after the word in question, usually proper or place names.

All writers are responsible for inserting pronunciations. They must be correct and consistent. Consult the daily "Today's Pronunciation Guide," the bureau phonetics files, the Columbia Lippincott Gazetteer of the World, Webster's New Geographical Dictionary (noting the differing phonetic systems used by the two), the nearest U-P-I bureau, and embassies, consulates or other legitimate sources.

The key to the United Press International broadcast pronunciation style:

#### VOWELS

##### —A—

AY for long A (as in mate)

A for short A (as in cat)

AI for nasal A (as in air)

AH for soft A (as in father)

AW for broad A (as in talk)

##### —E—

EE for long E (as in meat)

EH for short E (as in get)

UH for hollow E (as in the, or French prefix le)

AY for French long E with acute accent (as in Pathe)

IH for middle E (as in pretty)

EW for EW diphthong (as in few)

—I—

IGH for long I (as in time)  
EE for French long I (as in machine)  
IH for short I (as in pity)

—O—

OH for long O (as in note, or “ough” as in though)  
AH for short O (as in hot)  
AW for broad O (as in fought)  
OO for long double O (as in fool, or “ough” as in through)  
UH for short double O (as in foot, or “ouch” as in touch)  
OW for OW diphthong (as in how, or “ough” as in plough)

—U—

EW for long U (as in mule)  
OO for long U (as in rule)  
U for middle U (as in put)  
UH for short U (as in shut)

### CONSONANTS

K for hard C (as in cat)  
S for soft C (as in cease)  
SH for soft CH (as in machine)  
CH for hard CH or TCH (as in catch)  
Z for hard S (as in disease)  
S for soft S (as in sun)  
G for hard G (as in gang)  
J for soft G (as in general)  
ZH for soft J (as in French version of Joliet)

Some words defy a logical phoneticization. In such cases, use a rhyming technique. Thus:  
Chairman Roger Blough (like now).

### SLUGS

Broadcast copy always carries a slug alerting newsroom editors to the immediacy and nature of the item.

The following are some frequently used slugs and the style in which they are carried:

#### —FLASH:

An earthshaker. A good rule of thumb — a story that can be told in three words and understood by any listener. Sent only by national desks.

#### —BULLETINS:

(A) Bulletin — A program-breaking story. One paragraph. Double spaced. Carries a subject slug word.

(B) Sports Bulletin — A program-breaking sports story. One paragraph. Double spaced. Carries a subject slug word.

(See computer manuals for priority-handling code instructions.)

#### —URGENTS:

This slug is carried on a breaking story that is hot, but not necessarily a program-breaker. Carries a subject slug word. The URGENT slug also is used for a new development on a previous bulletin. One-paragraph urgents may be double spaced . . . like bulletins. However, because of computer programming restrictions, urgents — or any material — longer than one paragraph should NEVER be double-spaced.

(See computer manuals for priority-handling code instructions.)

**—WORLD IN BRIEF:**

(A) Scripted WIB. A scripted WIB normally contains 10 items, but the length of each varies according to the story. One may be 10 lines, the next two lines may handle three stories. It is written as a scripted program and the stories lead from one to the next.

(B) Standard. A standard WIB normally contains 10 items, each approximately five lines in length. It is designed for use in five minute newscasts (normally three and one-half minutes of news). Items written to stand alone are separated by a date dash. Related items or items which are scripted to read together are separated by an extra paperfeed.

(C) Headline WIB. A headline WIB normally contains 14 to 15 items, each approximately three lines in length. It is designed for use in five minute newscasts. Items written to stand alone are separated by a date dash. Related items or items which are scripted are separated by an extra paperfeed.

**—ROUNDUP:**

Designed for 15-minute newscasts. RUPs carry a summary of the news plus detailed accounts of 10 to 20 stories. Each item is written to stand alone.

**—TAKEOUTS:**

Individual items, carrying subject slugwords and datelines, written to stand alone. Designed for stations wishing to devote more time to a particular story than is provided in a normal WIB script.

**—THE BROADCAST SPECIAL:**

A three-and-one-half-minute script on a top story.

**—CORRECTIONS:**

For a WIB item it would be:

CORRECTION

In 2nd World In Brief, 4th item (strike) xxx but a union spokesman said, etc. (union sted company).

For a roundup item:

CORRECTION

In 2nd World News Roundup, Defense item, 2nd paragraph xxx for an immediate defense speedup, etc. (fixing speedup).

For a takeout item:

CORRECTION

In Beer item from Frankfurt, Germany, last paragraph xxx with the citizens of Frankfurt, etc. (citizens sted cities).

For a feature item:

NEWSFEATURE-CORRECTION

In Today's Commentary, 3rd paragraph xxx sentences of up to three years, etc. (three sted two).

For sports copy:

SPORTS-CORRECTION:

In 2nd-Sports Roundup, Football item, last paragraph xxx by the end of this week. (week sted month).

**—SUBS:**

The following form is used for roundups, WIBS, features and takeouts, substituting for the necessary paragraph and giving the opening words.

Substitute:

In the 3rd-World News Roundup, Walker item, substitute for second paragraph beginning xxx The Walker Report etc.

The Walker report says the police over-reacted at times.

**—MISCELLANEOUS:**

All takeouts and all sections in roundups are topped by a slug word denoting the subject. Separate elements of a slug line with single hyphens, rather than a double hyphen-space.

If a takeout subs a bulletin or urgent or is an important late-breaker, slug it:

Carter-Sub

(Washington) — President Carter has named, and so forth.

(The word “sub” goes after the subject slug, rather than before, to make the item easier to find in the computer directory later.)

If a takeout is of interest to farm or business editors, slug it:

Trade-Farm News or Bankruptcy-Business News.

Broadcast Row material — news of interest to station news and management personnel — should carry an appropriate subject slug and the words “Broadcast Row.” “FCC-Broadcast Row” or “Emmy-Broadcast Row,” Lists of FCC applications and actions should be slugged simply “Broadcast Row.”

When hold-for-release slugs are carried the embargoed section is preceded and followed by the slug:

RRR (For automatic release at 10 A-M, EST) (paperfeed) (Speech) and (Above for release at 10 A-M, EST) YYY. The R-Y coding keeps the item off C-A-T-V.

## PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

Previous chapters covered the theory, style and do’s and don’ts of writing broadcast copy.

Now, let’s examine what you may face in preparing copy for broadcast. The most dramatic story, of course, is the flash or bulletin. One of the more dramatic stories was the landing of the Apollo-11 astronauts on the Moon. Here are some examples of how a big, breaking story was handled on the Broadcast Newswire:

FLASH— THEY’VE LANDED.

B U L L E T I N (If) APOLLO

(SPACE CENTER)— THE APOLLO-11 IS ON THE MOON. ASTRONAUTS NEIL ARMSTRONG AND EDWIN ALDRIN HAVE SOFT-LANDED THE “EAGLE” ON THE LUNAR SURFACE.

U R G E N T (If) APOLLO-SUB

(SPACE CENTER)— THEY’VE LANDED ON THE MOON.

TWO MEN OF THE PLANET EARTH . . . IN A GANGLY LOOKING SPACE-CRAFT CALLED “EAGLE” . . . HAVE CONQUERED ONE OF THE TREASURES OF SPACE.

APOLLO-11 ASTRONAUTS NEIL ARMSTRONG AND EDWIN ALDRIN IN THEIR 17-TON LUNAR LANDER SUCCESSFULLY SOFT-LANDED ON THE MOON’S SEA OF TRANQUILITY AT 4:17 P-M, E-D-T.

### —LEADS:

They are the “attention-getters,” the key to the story in most cases.

Some examples...

When Notre Dame snapped the Oklahoma football team’s string of 48 wins, the writer put it this way:

THE INEVITABLE FINALLY CAUGHT UP WITH THE INVINCIBLE.

This one on an anniversary celebration of the liberation of Paris from the Nazis:

FRANCE IS CELEBRATING THE MEMORY OF THE DAY GROWN MEN CRIED FOR JOY IN THE STREETS OF PARIS.

## BROADCAST SPECIALS

The Broadcast Newswire frequently carries a "Broadcast Special" on the major story of the day — be it news, sports or business. The U-P-R editors decide the subject and assign a top writer. The finished product usually runs about 400 words — about two and a half minutes of air time.

Here is the start of a special on the 1968 Poor Peoples' Crusade:

THERE WERE ONLY 100 OF THEM.

BUT UP THE GRASSY MALL THEY CAME . . . SINGING FREEDOM SONGS AND CHANTING ALL THE WAY.

AFTER MONTHS OF PLANNING, THE FIRST PUBLIC DEMONSTRATION OF THE POOR PEOPLES' CRUSADE WAS UNDER WAY. 100 MARCHERS WERE GOING TO CAPITOL HILL.

Another:

IF YOU HAVE AN OLD EISENHOWER JACKET HANGING IN THE BACK OF THE CLOSET . . . YOU REMEMBER HIM.

YOU REMEMBER THAT GRIN . . . THAT BIG SMILE . . .

NORTH AFRICA . . . SICILY . . . LONDON . . .

THAT PICTURE OF HIM . . . GRIM-FACED NOW . . . TALKING TO THE PARATROOPERS BEFORE THEY TOOK OFF FROM ENGLAND TO DROP INTO FRANCE BEFORE THE LANDING.

YOU REMEMBER HIM AND THE STORIES OF MAKING THAT DECISION TO GO THAT D-DAY . . . THE SIXTH OF JUNE '44 . . . THE YEAR HIS SON GRADUATED FROM WEST POINT.

AND FROM NORMANDY HE LED THE GREAT ALLIED FORCE ACROSS FRANCE AND INTO GERMANY FOR VICTORY IN WORLD WAR TWO.

AND THEN THE WORLD KNEW HIM AS IKE . . .

HE CAME HOME TO THE BLARE OF BANDS AND, ETC.

Here are a few paragraphs from a special on O-J Simpson winning the Heisman Trophy as the top college football player of 1968:

THEY CALL HIM "ORANGE JUICE" . . . OPPONENTS MAY HAVE CALLED HIM OTHER THINGS IN THE LAST TWO SEASONS.

ONE THING FOR SURE . . . HE CAN RUN WITH A FOOTBALL.

TODAY HE WAS RECOGNIZED AS THE TOP COLLEGE PLAYER IN THE LAND. THE HEISMAN TROPHY BELONGS TO O-J SIMPSON OF SOUTHERN CAL.

And finally, the lead of a second-day special on the moon landing.

(SPACE CENTER) — THE MOON HAS FELT THE WEIGHT OF MAN AND WILL NEVER BE THE SAME.

## REWRITES

One of the more demanding tasks is putting a new sound on an old story. Big stories sometimes run in 15 to 20 news shows during a single day . . . without new developments. It's up to the U-P-R writers and editors to take new approaches, develop new angles and make the story sound fresh . . . all, without distorting the story.

Here is how the Broadcast Wire reported the election of Pope John Paul the First:

These examples are NOT the complete items . . . only the first few sentences of each to demonstrate how the same basic facts were reworded hour after hour.

*Initial bulletin:*

(VATICAN CITY)—The College of Cardinals meeting in secret conclave in the Vatican today elected the 263rd Roman Catholic pope and successor to Pope Paul the Sixth. That from official Vatican Radio reports. He is Italian Cardinal Albino Luciani.

*1st sub:*

(VATICAN CITY) — A new pope has been elected.

In the shortest conclave in modern history . . . the 111 members of the College of Cardinals today elected Italian Cardinal Albino Luciani as the 263rd Roman Catholic Pope . . . and the successor to Pope Paul the Sixth.

The 65-year-old Cardinal Luciani — from Venice — will be known as Pope John Paul the First.

*2nd sub, in 2nd World News Roundup:*

The world's 700-Million Roman Catholics have a new spiritual leader.

He is Pope John Paul the First . . . formerly Cardinal Albino Luciani of Venice.

The 65-year-old Luciani was elected by 111 cardinals from 49 countries on the fourth ballot of the shortest secret conclave in modern Vatican history.

*3rd sub, in 11th World in Brief:*

The son of a poor Italian bricklayer has been elected to the throne of St. Peter. Pope John Paul the First . . . formerly Cardinal Albino Luciani (ahl-be'-noh Loo-chah'-nee) . . . is the new spiritual leader of the world's 700-Million Roman Catholics.

The shortest election conclave in modern history came to an end less than nine hours after the first balloting today . . . on the fourth ballot . . . when 111 cardinals elected Luciani the church's 263rd pontiff.

The 65-year-old churchman has been serving as patriarch of Venice . . . the same position that vaulted two previous cardinals to the papacy—including Pope John the 23rd.

*4th sub:*

The new pope of the Roman Catholic Church is 65-year-old Cardinal Albino Luciani (ahl-bee'-noh Loo-chah'-nee). He is the son of an Italian bricklayer, a conservative—and a surprise choice.

*5th sub:*

In one of the briefest conclaves in modern history . . . the College of Cardinals today elected the archbishop of Venice to succeed the late Pope Paul the Sixth as the spiritual leader of the world's 700-Million Roman Catholics. Sixty-five-year-old Cardinal Albino Luciani (ahl-bee'-noh loo-chah'-nee) was selected as pope on the first day of the conclave. Many church leaders had predicted perhaps days of balloting by the 111 cardinals sequestered in the Vatican's Sistine Chapel. Luciani's election came on the fourth ballot.

*6th sub, in the 14th World in Brief:*

The cardinals of the Roman Catholic Church today made the swift, surprise choice of 65-year-old conservative Albino Luciani (ahl-bee'-noh loo-chah'-nee) to succeed the late Pope Paul the Sixth as leader of the church. He took the name of John Paul the First.

## AUDIO

### Equipment and All That Stuff

Dials, knobs, plugs, sockets, cassettes, editing blocks, automatic gain control, level checks, mike clamps, alligator clips. Wow! What a forbidding bunch of gadgetry you have to put up with in broadcasting. It can be a real turn off to a print reporter who carries a pencil, a pad and perhaps a small tape recorder for note taking.

Actually it's silly to let equipment intimidate you. Professional recorders and equipment are just about fail-safe. It's the home brew high fidelity gear that's really complicated. So even if you missed out on years of broadcast lab courses and never did manage to get your ham radio license, you too can easily master whatever mechanical monster that's necessary to collect the news for radio or television.



## GUIDELINES

Here are some general guidelines for preparation of material for the U-P-I Audio Network.

### TAPE RECORDERS

The portable tape recorder serves as the pencil and paper for the radio reporter. Here are some tips about tape recorders:

—Use a professional quality machine. In fact, it's a good idea to carry two — in case one dies . . . or to allow you to do voice-actuality mixing at the scene or continue recording the event while feeding tape to the network. If you have any questions about equipment, check with the Audio engineering staff.

—The microphone should be placed as close as possible to the mouth of the person you are recording. In one-on-one interviewing, this is not a problem. In covering speeches, rallies, formal news conferences, and other events, accessory equipment such as mike stands and long cables are frequently needed. In such a case, enough time should be allowed to set up equipment before the event begins.

—Batteries should always be checked for freshness before recording. It's a good idea to carry extras.

—60-minute cassettes are recommended . . . that's 30 minutes to a side.

—“Alligator clips” for feeding tape from the field are mandatory.

### AUDIO COPY

Reporters filing audio reports from the scene of a major story should word their copy so it stands up for the longest possible time. Avoid the words “today,” “this morning,” “this afternoon,” “tonight” and “tomorrow.”

On second reference to a person, continue to use the proper name. For example, if it's a trial and you're talking about “prosecutor John Jones” call him “Jones” on second reference, not “the 34-year-old district attorney.” This makes for easier re-editing of your tape for standup use.

Avoid direct quotations. Paraphrase instead.

Avoid specific casualty figures. Those can be taken care of by the newscaster with a “hard lead” introduction to your spot. Example:

“A British ferry boat sank today . . . killing 86 people — most of them children. U-P-I's Linda Wolf reports. (tape) SLOWLY . . . TRAGICALLY . . . THE DEATH TOLL IS MOUNTING IN THE BRITISH FERRY BOAT DISASTER. AT LEAST 50 OF THE 75 REPORTED DEAD IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE TRAGEDY ARE CHILDREN . . . TEENAGERS ON A SCHOOL HOLIDAY ABOARD THE ANCIENT FERRY “REGINA,” PLYING THE FOGGY MERSEY RIVER MADE FAMOUS BY THE BEATLES. BUT THE TOLL IS GOING UP. THE CHIEF OF THE RESCUE TEAM — CAPTAIN JIM MCDONOUGH — WARNS IT COULD REACH THE 100 MARK . . . OR AS MCDONOUGH PUTS IT HIMSELF: (actuality.) BUT THE CHIEF OF THE RESCUE OPERATION SAYS HE'S AT A LOSS AS TO HOW THE FAMOUS FERRY ACROSS THE MERSEY WENT DOWN . . . DRAGGING SCORES OF CHILDREN AND TEACHERS TO THEIR DEATHS. LINDA WOLF, LIVERPOOL.

End all voice reports with your name and location.

Since Audio voice reports always end with the reporter's location . . . and the location also can be written into the newscaster's introduction . . . the ban on the use of the word "here" can be ignored. Example:

"The Navy isn't commenting on reports of trouble aboard the aircraft carrier 'Midway.' U-P-I's Dan Carmichael has a report from Pearl Harbor." (tape) TOP U-S NAVY OFFICIALS HERE REFUSE TO RESPOND TO ALLEGATIONS OF BRUTALITY . . . LONG WORKING HOURS AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION ABOARD THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER "MIDWAY." A SPOKESMAN FOR THE UNITED STATES PACIFIC NAVAL COMMAND SAYS THE CHARGES WON'T BE INVESTIGATED UNTIL A LIST OF GRIEVANCES IS DELIVERED TO U-S OFFICIALS . . . NOT THE NEWS MEDIA. 52 MEN REFUSED TO SHOW UP FRIDAY WHEN THE HUGE AIRCRAFT CARRIER LEFT ITS JAPANESE HOME PORT FOR PACIFIC MANEUVERS. SOME OF THE MEN HAVE REPORTED BEING BEATEN . . . FORCED TO WORK 18-HOUR DAYS, AND TO EXPERIENCE DISCRIMINATION BECAUSE OF THEIR RACE. DAN CARMICHAEL, PEARL HARBOR.

When writing introductions into newscast actualities or voice reports, make sure you are covered for a possible tape equipment failure.

Don't write: The governor says . . . (cart).

Write it this way: The governor says he's upset with the legislature . . . (cart)

However, don't make your cover intro redundant with the tape . . . even though you may hear this frequently on networks. If the quote on the tape has the governor saying "I'm upset with the legislature. Those loafers are wasting the public's money by meeting for months on end without accomplishing anything," then write a non-redundant intro like this: The governor isn't happy with what the legislature is accomplishing. (cart)

## VOICING

A great photograph is worthless if it isn't printed correctly . . . a fine reporting job goes down the drain if the writing and desking are poor. In the same way, voicing—delivery — often makes the difference in an audio spot.

You don't have to have a deep baritone or a trained voice. But you should sound like you know what you're talking about. Sound natural, but in the way actors sound conversational while projecting their voices.

Get the feel of your story before you tape it by speaking the story aloud. Don't just read it or mumble . . . put punch into the voicing. Underline key words you need to hit to help convey the meaning. A brief pause emphasizes for the listener the word that follows. Get some natural rise and fall in your voice to avoid a monotone.

Give each word and each syllable its full value. Besides providing clarity, this gives full resonance and authority.

One common fault is speaking too fast. If you cannot say it in 40 seconds, then edit.

The quality of some broadcast and phone circuits leaves a lot to be desired . . . so enunciate clearly. It's surprising how many people say "git" for "get," "jist" for "just," "fur" for "for," "pleece" for "police," and who drop the "g's" in "ing."

Take a natural breath at a comma or a dash rather than at a full stop . . . and try not to drop your voice at the end of a sentence. If you rarely do audio spots, you'll often find yourself running out of breath halfway through. Relax. Don't be afraid to take a long pause for a deep breath. The pauses can be edited out of the tape . . . but there isn't much that can be done with a voice that's strained from nerves and lack of breath.

Remember, there is no substitute for knowing your story. When U-P-I started in the sound field others in the business laughed and said forget it, we had no trained voices, just reporters. But in seven years we became the largest radio news network in the world. Now it is generally accepted that listeners would rather hear someone who knows what he or she is talking about than a baritone any day.

## FILING FOR AUDIO

Most material is filed by phone to the nearest Audio feed bureau. It's better to phone from the scene of a major story rather than waiting until you return to the office.

Feature material can be mailed most of the time.

Sometimes Audio will ask you to ship original quality tapes of material that was phone fed. Always make a copy of anything you ship.

To make a connection with the telephone, the plastic covering on the mouthpiece must be unscrewed and the small dish-shaped microphone removed. When the microphone of an ordinary business telephone is removed, two metal prongs will remain. The "alligators" are simply clipped to those prongs, and the reporter is ready to transmit tape at the best possible audio quality. It is important for the reporter to remember that this kind of feed usually can only be done on business phones, because most telephone companies glue the mouthpieces of telephone booth instruments in order to prevent theft. So an electronic connection between a recorder and a phone is generally possible only in an office or apartment unless you carry a monkey wrench along.

Taking a feed by telephone in the field is done similarly. Unscrew the ear piece, pull out the small speaker and you'll find it's connected to two wires. Just attach your "alligators" to the wires, connect the other end to the recorder input, and you're ready to record.

Once equipped to add sound to the script, through tape recordings, the broadcast reporter then must add judgment. Sound should be added only when it enhances the story and does not distract. Noise for the sake of noise . . . or in television, an interview for the sake of a "talking head" and not information . . . impedes the flow of news and should be avoided.

## WHEN TO CALL

Our stringers often wonder whether they've got a story worthy of U-P-I's attention.

Here are a few guidelines:

—If there's any element of the story with potential interest for listeners — or newspaper readers — outside your immediate area, we probably need it. By all means, call.

—We're not just interested in bad news, we like good news, including kickers.

—On big stories, telephone as soon as possible, giving your source. We can then work together in developing the full story.

—On less urgent stories, telephone as soon as you have the entire story.

—Try to be first, but don't let that keep you from being accurate too. Get all the pertinent facts. Make sure both sides in any controversy are represented.

—Try **NOT** to call with a less-than-urgent story if you notice that a major story is breaking in the coverage area of the bureau you were going to call. Chances are every available body will be extremely busy coping with the big story. When it looks like the dust has settled, please **DO** call in.

## SETTING UP SHOP

The efficiency of a local news operation does not necessarily depend upon a big staff or the latest equipment. One energetic reporter or newscaster . . . with little more than a telephone and a tape recorder . . . can sometimes be more than a match for better-equipped competitors.

There are minimal needs for even the most basic broadcast news operation. These would include a U-P-I Broadcast wire . . . a well-stocked contact book or card file . . . and some broadcast hardware.

What kind of hardware and how much? The basics for a production studio can be purchased for around three-thousand dollars. The equipment includes a 10 channel mixer, two cart machines with cue disable, a two channel reel-to-reel tape recorder with solenoid

control, telephone patching equipment (voice couplers) for receiving and sending, A-G-C (automatic gain control) for telephone and record equipment, voltage stabilizer, filter and transformer.

The production package can fit into one table-top rack with room to spare for another cart machine, a two-way radio system or network alert equipment. It weighs about 50 pounds and can be completely portable. The voltage filter and transformer . . . used to clean up electronic noise on power sources . . . are separate from the production package and also weigh about 50 pounds.

The cart machines and solenoid reel-to-reel machines allow for perfect editing to be done quickly, electronically . . . without the use of razor blades and splicing tape.

The studio itself: Table top rack, mixers, cart machines, reel-to-reel recorder, A-G-C, voltage stabilizer, transformer-filter and telephone equipment. Add such things as microphones, carts and reel tape and you're in business.

If the station is a subscriber to U-P-I Audio or an affiliate of one of the other networks there would be the additional input of lines feeding network material . . . either for live broadcasts on the station's main program consoles, or for easy recording in the newsroom.

United Press International has a wide variety of services available to radio and television stations besides the Broadcast wire and Audio network.

Radio stations with heavy news commitments — such as all-news operations, or stations in large metropolitan areas — and television stations often buy U-P-I's A-wire, the main national print wire, for copy which generally is more detailed than the Broadcast wire version. Regional, state and — in some areas — metro print wires also are available along with sports, financial and Spanish-language print wires.

U-P-I's highspeed Broadcast Datanews circuit carries not only the Broadcast wire but all other specialized services such as the A-wire and Sports wire, enabling stations to choose which supplementary services they wish to buy.

For television, U-P-I has a Newspictures service, providing worldwide still-picture coverage of breaking news events, and UniSlides, a constantly updated color slide library.

U-P-I also operates Newstime, a satellite-delivered, slow-scan television newscast service combining pictures, slides and audio. Newstime is designed especially for cable television use as well as conventional television stations desiring a fully automated sign-on, sign-off news program.

For locally produced newscasts, the Broadcast wire has to serve as the backbone for international, national and some regional stories. The teletype printer should be placed in a position which is close enough to the newsroom's main working area to allow easy and quick access to the copy. Its bulletin warning bells should be clearly audible.

For operation "in the field," the cassette recorder has become the key piece of equipment. Add a microphone, a few small accessories and "alligator clips," and the competent field reporter is ready for just about any kind of story eventuality.

The "alligators" are merely a special cable, which connects the output of the tape recorder and the mouthpiece of the telephone.

Other accessories which field reporters should carry include additional patch cords to allow them to dub tape from one recorder to another or to take sound "feeds" from public address or "mult" systems in situations where individual microphones are not permitted . . . and extension cables and clamps for those situations where the reporter has to set up a microphone on a stand or table.

Inside the station, the reel-to-reel recorder is a newsroom necessity. Of all the modes of tape recording, it remains the most versatile in terms of editing. Cassettes and cartridges are difficult, if not impossible, to edit. But an editing block, a razor blade and some splicing of reel-to-reel tape can shorten that too-long one-minute tape to the 30-second actuality that clearly enhances the quality of an otherwise dull-sounding report.

Once that editing has been done, the reel-to-reel machine generally gives way to the cartridge machine. The edited tape is dubbed on to standard broadcast carts for easy playback during the live newscast. The cartridge does not need to be cued to a particular point, because, recorded properly, it recues itself, by stopping at the start of the audio material after recording or playback. It thus becomes very convenient for the newscaster

who also is doing engineering. The cartridge is placed in a cart player, and a remote-control “start” button is pushed at the appropriate time during the newscast.

Production equipment should always be maintained by station engineers or by technically minded news department personnel. Tape recorder heads, cassette, reel-to-reel and cartridge, should be cleaned and demagnetized according to set schedules, depending upon usage. But the cleanings should be frequent. Production consoles, used for mixing sound or recording voice reports also should be checked regularly for defective transistors or tubes. More serious maintenance work should always be left to trained technicians.

Perhaps the most important piece of “non-hardware” equipment a newsroom must have is its contact book or card file. Whatever its format, it should contain a comprehensive list of up-to-date phone numbers for newsmakers in the station’s area . . . not only the police and fire departments or the mayor’s office, but all obtainable home numbers for local officials and influential private citizens. The list should include those numbers that are the hardest to get in the case of breaking news — such as local airport control tower numbers.

Here’s a list of some of the other things that come in handy in a newsroom:

Large-type typewriters.

Zone weather maps.

Congressional, legislative, county district maps.

City ward maps.

State, county and city road maps.

E-B-S procedures chart.

Staff list.

Government directories.

School closing list and codes.

Phone numbers for police, fire and sheriff’s departments and state police.

Scanners for at least main police, fire, county police and area state police, with frequencies posted.

Home phone numbers for local officials and prominent or influential private citizens.

Phone numbers for airport control towers and airlines.

Clip boards (or spikes) for separating national-international, regional-state, local, feature, sports, financial, and advance copy.

Daybook, a 31-day, 12-month filing system to keep track of upcoming events.

Daily coverage checklist (who’s where; stories to check today).

Files for saving important stories for future background use.

National Weather Service unlisted telephone numbers.

## **WEATHER**

### **Warning: Watch it!**

One of the most important services broadcasters provide to the public — and U-P-I provides to its clients — is weather information. Broadcast writers should be familiar with various weather terms and the differences between them.

Two terms which frequently get confused are “watch” and “warning.” Know the correct definitions and use the correct terminology — it could mean the difference between life and death for your listeners.

A “watch” means that conditions are right for severe weather to occur. A “warning” is an alert that severe weather has developed or is imminent and the public should take shelter.

The terms “watch” and “warning” are NOT interchangeable. Always follow the terminology used by the National Weather Service.

The Weather Service also has definitions for what conditions must exist before a storm can be called a “blizzard” or a “hurricane.” Again, follow N-W-S usage. If the N-W-S isn’t calling it a blizzard or a hurricane, then you must NOT either.

Here are the N-W-S definitions of weather terms:

**SEVERE BLIZZARD:** Wind speeds of 45 miles an hour or more; heavy falling and-or blowing snow, visibility near zero and temperatures of 10 degrees Fahrenheit or lower — all conditions expected to prevail for an extended period of time.

**BLIZZARD:** Winds of 35 miles an hour or more; considerable falling and-or blowing snow; temperatures of 20 degrees Fahrenheit or lower; and low visibilities — all conditions expected to prevail for an extended period of time.

**HEAVY SNOW:** A fall of four or more inches expected in the next 12 hours, or six inches or more in 24 hours.

**COLD WAVE:** A rapid fall in temperatures within a 24-hour period that will require emergency protective action.

**FREEZE:** A surface temperature below 32 degrees Fahrenheit.

**SEVERE FREEZE or HARD FREEZE:** A cold spell exceeding two days is expected.

**SEVERE THUNDERSTORM:** Frequent lightning accompanied by damaging winds with localized surface gusts greater than 52 miles an hour . . . and-or hail at the surface measuring three-fourths of an inch or more in diameter.

**FLASH FLOOD:** A sudden, violent flood, as after a heavy rain or the melting of heavy snow.

**SEICHE (saysh):** Free oscillation of an enclosed body of water causing the rise of water levels for a specific area.

**HURRICANE:** A rotating wind system with a minimum sustained surface wind of 74 miles an hour or more.

**TROPICAL STORM:** A rotating wind system with a sustained surface wind of 39 to 73 miles an hour inclusive.

**TROPICAL DEPRESSION:** A rotating wind system with a sustained surface wind of 38 miles an hour or less.

**GALE:** Sustained winds of 39 to 54 miles an hour.

**HURRICANE WARNING:** A hurricane or its dangerous effects, dangerously high water perhaps with exceptionally high waves, are *expected* in a coastal area within 24 hours.

**HURRICANE WATCH:** A hurricane *may* pose a threat in a specific area.

**TORNADO WARNING:** A tornado has been sighted or is indicated by radar. People in the path of the storm should take immediate safety precautions.

**TORNADO WATCH:** Conditions are right for the possible formation of a tornado in a specific area for a specific time period.

**SEVERE WEATHER WARNING:** Severe weather — either already existing or imminent — is moving into an area.

**SEVERE WEATHER WATCH:** Severe thunderstorms and-or tornadoes are expected to develop.

**FLASH FLOOD WARNING:** Flash flooding is imminent or in progress.

**FLASH FLOOD WATCH:** Flash flooding is possible.

The Weather Service tends to be wordy — worse yet, bureaucratically wordy — in some of its weather warnings. Here's how two came in from N-W-S, followed by examples of how they should be streamlined:

“The National Weather Service has issued a tornado warning effective until 330pm for Tazewell County in central Illinois.

“At 240pm a funnel cloud was reported to the Weather Service between Tremont and Pekin.

“This storm will be moving eastward.

“If threatening conditions are sighted . . . be prepared to move to a place of safety. To report a tornado or other severe weather . . . place an emergency collect call to the Peoria Illinois National Weather Service office at 555-5555 . . . or ask the

nearest law enforcement agency to relay your report to the nearest National Weather Service office.”

WEATHER B U L L E T I N (pf) TORNADO-WARNING  
(PEORIA)— THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE HAS ISSUED A TOR-  
NADO WARNING UNTIL 3:30 P-M FOR TAZEWELL COUNTY IN CENTRAL  
ILLINOIS. AT 2:40 P-M A FUNNEL CLOUD WAS REPORTED BETWEEN TRE-  
MONT AND PEKIN... MOVING EASTWARD.

(The weather bulletin should be sent as one paragraph and double-spaced.)

“The National Weather Service has issued a severe thunderstorm warning effective until 500 PM CDT for persons in Cass Menard and Morgan counties in Illinois.

“Radar showed a line of strong thunderstorms from Quincy Illinois to just south of Peoria Illinois at 400 PM CDT. At 350 PM CDT Beardstown experienced 50 to 60 MPH winds resulting in some trees being blown down.

“This line of thunderstorms is moving toward the southeast at around 35 MPH.”

WEATHER U R G E N T (pf) SEVERE-THUNDERSTORM-WARNING  
(SPRINGFIELD)— THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE HAS ISSUED A  
SEVERE THUNDERSTORM WARNING UNTIL 5 P-M FOR CASS, MENARD  
AND MORGAN COUNTIES. RADAR SHOWS A LINE OF STRONG THUNDER-  
STORMS FROM QUINCY TO JUST SOUTH OF PEORIA... MOVING SOUTH-  
EASTWARD AT ABOUT 35 MILES AN HOUR.

# LEXICON

U-P-I broadcast news writers and editors use terms peculiar to their trade. The most important:

1. **WIB:** This is short for "World in Brief," U-P-I's five-minute newscast. It can refer to the entire newscast or to an individual item within it. There are three types of WIBs, all for five-minute programming. The regular WIB runs 10 to 12 items with 50 to 60 words per item. There are also "headline WIBs" which hit just the highlights of each story and cover more ground, sometimes as many as 20 items. The third type is called the "Scripted WIB." This show is written for continuity, with each item reading into the next. The number of stories and the size of each is completely open. Most WIBs now are scripted.
2. **ROUNDUP:** Short for U-P-I's World News Roundup, the 10-to-15-minute newscast.
3. **HEADLINES:** This is U-P-I's one-minute news show, summing up the top four or five stories of the hour. We move one each hour.
4. **TAKEOUT:** A story handled outside the regular news-show format.
5. **AUDIO:** Short for U-P-I's Audio Network.
6. **ACTUALITY:** The voice of someone involved in an event, such as an excerpt from a speech, a policeman's description of an accident, the voice of a wounded man crying for help.
7. **BILLBOARD:** Printed description for each cut (see below) transmitted on the Audio Network. Billboards move on the Broadcast Wire and include a dateline, a number for the cut, its length in seconds, whether it is a voice report or actuality, the name of the reporter or individual, a slug word and brief description of the subject matter.
8. **CUT:** Any report moved on the Audio Network for inserting in station-produced newscasts.
9. **FEED:** A transmission on the Audio Network.
10. **FIX:** A correction, insert or substitute matter.
11. **HFR:** Short for "hold for release." Sometimes called a "heifer." Copy moved in advance of its release time is slugged with the release hours to guard against premature use. Newswire stories frequently are slugged "For Sunday AM's" or "For Friday PM's." Any story for use in morning (A-M) newspapers automatically may be used on the broadcast wire at 6:30 P-M (E-S-T or E-D-T) the preceding night. Any story for use in afternoon newspapers (P-M's) automatically may be used at 6:30 A-M (E-S-T or E-D-T) that day.
12. **RAW SOUND:** The sound of an event, as contrasted with a spoken statement by an eyewitness or an excerpt from a speech. The shouts of demonstrators, the wail of police sirens.
13. **READBACK:** The "proofing" of the broadcast wire for typographical or other errors.
14. **SKED-4:** UPI's multi plex Teletype communications system. The broadcast wire is on Channel-7 of the Sked-4 system. Under the previously used wire system, the broadcast wire was known by number, as 7551.
15. **SLUGS:** Signposts preceding copy. They identify the copy and serve to alert editors to its nature.
16. **SPLIT:** Regional sending period on the Broadcast Wire.
17. **SUB:** A story containing new developments.
18. **ON-SCENE REPORT:** A voice report taped on the scene of a major event. These reports sometimes have an "ad lib" quality to them. The raw sound of the event can often be heard in the background. (Some people call an on-scener a "rosr" . . . an acronym for "radio on-scene report.")
19. **VOICE REPORT:** A report on a news story written and voiced by a broadcast reporter. Designated "v" on billboards. Ends with a sign-off giving name and place of reporter.
20. **VOICE-ACTUALITY REPORT:** A voice report with actuality inserted. Designated "v-a" on billboards. Ends with a sign-off giving name and place of reporter.
21. **VOICE-COMBO REPORT:** A voice report by reporters in different locations. Designated "v-c" on billboards. Ends with a sign-off giving name and place of last reporter.



## A

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**A-B-C** Acceptable in all references for American Broadcasting Companies. (The plural is part of the corporate name).

**accused** One is accused *of*, not *with*, a crime. Avoid any suggestion that someone is being judged before a trial. Do not use **accused slayer** John Jones. Make it: John Jones . . . who is **accused of the slaying**.

See *allege, arrest and indict*.

**admit, admitted** These words may in some contexts give the erroneous connotation of wrongdoing. A person who **announces** he is a homosexual, for example, may be **proclaiming** it, not **admitting** it. **Said** is usually sufficient.

**adopt** Amendments, ordinances, resolutions and rules are **adopted** or **approved**. Bills are **passed**. Laws are **enacted**.

**adviser** Not advisor.

**affect, effect** **Affect**, as a verb, means to influence: The game will **affect** the standings. As a noun it is best avoided. It occasionally is used in psychology to describe an emotion, but there is no need for it in everyday language.

**Effect**, as a verb, means to cause: He will **effect** many changes in the company. As a noun it means result: The **effect** was overwhelming. He miscalculated the **effect** of his actions. It was a law of little **effect**.

**A-F-L C-I-O** Preferred in all references for the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations.

**ages** Spell out ages one through nine, use figures for 10 and above. **The boy is five years old . . . his sister is 12.**

**Hyphenate as a compound modifier before a noun or as a noun substitute. A five-year-old boy, The race is for three-year-olds.**

Avoid print wire style of putting ages in apposition set off by commas. **The boy, 17, has a sister, 10.**

Use figures without apostrophe for decades of life. **The woman is in her 30s.**

**air base** Two words. Use **air force base** in the United States and **air base** abroad. Do not abbreviate as A-F-B in datelines.

**aircraft** Use figures for commonly known aircraft numbers, never hyphenating between numerals: **Boeing 707, 727, 747, D-C-9, Lockheed L-1011, B-A-C-111** rather than **seven-oh-seven, seven-27, seven-47, D-C-nine, L-10-11, B-A-C One-11**. (When necessary, the Broadcast Wire will carry an advisory giving the manufacturer's pronunciation of a new aircraft type.)

For sequence of aircraft, spacecraft and missiles, use Arabic numerals and hyphens: **Apollo-10**.

For plurals: **D-C-10s, 727s**. But: **747-B's**.

For other elements of a name, follow the terminology adopted by the manufacturer or user. If in doubt, consult *Jane's All the World's Aircraft*.

Do not use quotation marks for aircraft names *Air Force One, the Spirit of St. Louis, Concorde*.

Use **engine**, not **motor**, for the units that propel aircraft: a **twin-engine** plane (not twin-engined). Use **jet plane** or **jetliner** to describe only those aircraft driven solely by jet engines. Use **turboprop** to describe an aircraft on which the jet engine is geared to a propeller. Turboprops are sometimes called **propjets**.

**air force** Do not use **USAF**.

**Air Force One** The Air Force applies this name to any aircraft the president of the United States may be using. In ordinary usage, however, **Air Force One** is the airplane normally reserved for the president's use.

**Al Fatah** A Palestinian guerrilla organization. Drop the article **Al** if preceded by an English article: **the** Fatah statement, **a** Fatah leader.

**All-America** Not All-American. U-P-I recognizes only one All-America team in football and basketball annually — the team chosen for U-P-I. Do not call anyone an All-America player unless listed on the U-P-I roster.

**allege** The word must be used with great care. Guidelines:

—Avoid any suggestion that the writer or announcer is making an allegation.

—Specify the source of an allegation. It should be an arrest record, an indictment or the statement of a public official connected with the case.

—Use **alleged bribe**, etc., to make it clear that an unproved action is not being treated as fact.

—Avoid redundant uses of **alleged**. It is proper to say: The district attorney **alleged** that she took the bribe. Or: The district attorney **accused** her of taking a bribe. But not: The district attorney **accused** her of **allegedly** taking a bribe.

—Do not use **alleged** before an event known to have occurred when the dispute is over who participated in it. Do not say: He attended the **alleged meeting**, when what you mean is: He **allegedly attended** the meeting.

—Do not use **alleged** as a routine qualifier. Instead, use **apparent, ostensible, reputed**, etc.

See *accuse, arrest, and indict*.

**A-M** Acceptable in all references for the amplitude modulation system of radio transmission.

**a-m, p-m** Lowercase, with hyphens. Note: **10 a-m this morning** is redundant.

**American Federation of Television and Radio Artists** **AFTRA** is acceptable on second reference.

**Americanisms** Words and phrases that have become part of the English language as spoken in the United States are marked in Webster's New World Dictionary with a star. They are acceptable in news stories if they fit the occasion.

**American Motors Corporation** **A-M-C** is acceptable on second reference. Headquarters is in Southfield, Michigan.

**American Telephone and Telegraph Company** **A-T-and-T** is acceptable on second reference.

A-T-and-T has adopted the name **Bell System** (not Bell Telephone Company) to describe the corporate complex composed of its manufacturing unit, Western Electric Company . . . its research and development unit, Bell Laboratories . . . and the telephone companies it owns in whole or in part.

**ampersand (&)** Spell out *and* in place of an ampersand: *Baltimore and Ohio Railroad* not *Baltimore & Ohio Railroad*.

**Amtrak** This acronym, from *American travel by track*, is acceptable in all references to the National Railroad Passenger Corporation.

**animals** Capitalize and put quotation marks around the name of a specific animal, and attach numerals with hyphens to show sequence: "*Bowser*," "*Jellybean*," "*Whirlaway-Two*".

Do not apply a personal pronoun to an animal unless its sex has been established or the animal has a name: *The dog was scared . . . it barked.* "*Rover*" *was scared . . . he barked.* *The cat . . . which was scared . . . ran to its basket.* "*Susie*" *the cat . . . who was scared . . . ran to her basket.* *The bull tossed his horns.*

**anybody, any body, anyone, any one** One word for an indefinite reference: *Anyone* can do that. Two words to single out one element of a group: *Any one* of them may speak up.

**apostrophe ( ' )** Use an apostrophe to show possessives. Elsewhere:

1. Use the apostrophe to show omitted letters or figures: *I've, it's, don't, rock 'n' roll.* *'Tis* the season to be jolly. He is a *ne'er-do-well*. The class of *'62*. The Spirit of *'76*. The *'20s*.

2. Use the apostrophe to show the plurals of letters: Mind your *p's* and *q's*. They were *P-O-W's*.

**apparently** Avoid an ambiguous usage.

Ambiguous: *He apparently killed himself.* (Is he dead?)

Better: *He died, apparently a suicide.*

**arbitrate, mediate** These terms of labor negotiations are not interchangeable. One who *arbitrates* hears evidence from all persons concerned, then hands down a decision. One who *mediates* listens to arguments of both parties and tries by the exercise of reason or persuasion to bring them to an agreement.

**arrest** To avoid any suggestion that someone is being judged before a trial, do not use *arrested for killing*, etc. Make it: *arrested on a charge* of killing. See *accuse*, *allege* and *indict*.

**Atomic Age** It began December 2nd, 1942, at the University of Chicago, with the creation of the first self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction.

## B

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**backward** Not backwards.

**bankruptcy** The legal sense of the word applies only if a court has told a person or organization to liquidate assets and distribute the proceeds to creditors.

The action may be involuntary, as the result of a suit by creditors, or it may be a voluntary effort to deal with bills that cannot be paid.

When a company's financial problems become public, however, it usually announces it is trying to reorganize itself under federal or state bankruptcy laws. In such a case, it is incorrect to describe the company as bankrupt.

**black** Acceptable in all references for Negro. Do not use "colored" as a synonym.  
See *colored*.

**blackout, brownout** In electrical terms, a **blackout** is a total power failure over a large area. **Rotating blackout** describes the cutting off of power to some sections on a rotating basis to assure that voltage will meet minimum standards elsewhere. A **brownout** is a small, temporary reduction, usually from two to eight percent, to save power.

**blond, blonde** Use **blond** as a noun for males and as an adjective for both sexes: She had **blond** hair. Use **blonde** as a noun for females.

**boats, ships** A **boat** is a watercraft of any size. A **ship** is a large, seagoing vessel, big enough to carry smaller boats. The word boat is used, however, in some words that apply to large craft: **ferryboat, P-T boat, gunboat**. Use quotation marks around names of vessels if necessary for clarity. **The Delta Queen sank. "Bertha's Aunt" is huge..**

**boy** Applicable until 18th birthday is reached. Use **man** or **young man** afterward.

**boycott, embargo** A **boycott** is an organized refusal to buy a product or service, or to deal with a merchant or group of merchants. An **embargo** is a legal restriction against trade. It usually prohibits goods from entering or leaving a country.

**brand names** Brand names normally should be used only if they are essential to a story. When a company sponsors an event such as a golf tournament to obtain publicity, use either a generic term for the event or the sponsor's name— depending on which is more widely known. The **Eastern-Doral open, or the Doral** open.

**broadcast** Use **broadcast** also for the past tense, not broadcasted.

**brunet, brunette** Use **brunet** as a noun for males, and as the adjective for all applications: She had **brunet** hair. Use **brunette** as a noun for females.

**bug, tap** Surreptitious listening devices: You **bug** a room and **tap** a telephone.

**bulletin** Bulletins are used for important events where fast delivery is vital. A bulletin has the priority to break into any story except a flash or another bulletin.

**bus, buses** Vehicles. The verbs: bus, bused, busing. See *buss*.

**buss, busses** Kisses. The verbs: buss, bussed, bussing. See *bus*.

**bylines** Broadcast copy does not carry bylines as such. However, some material — especially features — may warrant attribution to the writer or the reporter at the scene. In such cases, the attribution must be scripted.

**Examples:**

**From the World Report newsfeature:**

(Today's Commentary)

The new Guatemalan administration faces serious problems. U-P-I's Carol Cook has a report in Guatemala City:

**From a U-P-I Broadcast Special:**

You have been listening to a special report by Tom McGann of U-P-I Broadcast in Chicago.

**From the newsfeature "On The Lighter Side":**

One of the most popular bars in Dallas has run out of liquor. U-P-I's Dan Carmichael has the story.

## C

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**call letters** Use all caps and hyphens. Separate the type of station from the basic call letters with a space: **W-C-N-S A-M**, **W-C-N-S F-M**, **W-C-N-S T-V**.

**capital, capitol** The city is the **capital**, the building is the **capitol**. Capital also is **money** and **major** things like crime.

**C-B-S** Acceptable in all references for C-B-S Incorporated, the former Columbia Broadcasting System.

**Celsius** Use this metric term rather than centigrade. Named for Swedish astronomer Anders Celsius, who designed it. Zero is the freezing point of water and 100 the boiling point at sea level.

To convert to Fahrenheit, multiply a Celsius temperature by 9, divide by 5 and add 32 (25 x 9 equals 225 divided by 5 equals 45 plus 32 equals 77 degrees Fahrenheit).

The form: **40 degrees Celsius**.

**Central Intelligence Agency C-I-A** is acceptable in all references.

The formal title for the person who heads the agency is director of central intelligence. The forms: **C-I-A Director** Stansfield Turner; Stansfield Turner, who is **director of Central Intelligence**.

**charge d'affaires (s.), charges d'affaires(pl)** A diplomatic officer, ranking below an ambassador or minister, who represents a government to a foreign nation, or who temporarily takes the place of an ambassador or minister. Phonetic: **shahr-zhay' duh-fair'**.

**chief justice** The officeholder is the chief justice **of the United States**, not **of the Supreme Court**.

**China** When used alone, it refers to the mainland nation. Use **People's Republic of China**, **Communist China** or **mainland China** only when needed to distinguish the mainland and its government from Taiwan. Use **Nationalist China** only when needed to distinguish the island from the mainland. Use the formal name of the government, **Republic of China**, only when required for legal precision. Restrict **Red China** to quoted matter.

**citizen** A **citizen** is a person who has acquired specific civil rights of a nation either by birth or naturalization. Cities and states in the United States do NOT confer citizenship. To avoid confusion, use **resident**, NOT citizen, in referring to inhabitants of states and cities.

**Subject** is used when the government is headed by a monarch or other sovereign.

**National** is applied to a person residing away from the country of which he is a citizen or to a person under the protection of a specified country.

**Native** is the term denoting that an individual was born in a given location.

**Civil Aeronautics Board C-A-B** is acceptable on second reference.

**collective nouns** Nouns that denote a unit take singular verbs and pronouns: **class**, **committee**, **crowd**, **family**, **group**, **herd**, **jury**, **orchestra**, **team**. The **committee is** meeting to set **its** agenda. A **herd** of cattle **was** sold.

Words plural in form become collective nouns and take singular verbs when the group or quantity is regarded as a unit.

**A thousand bushels were created.** (Individual bushels.)

**A thousand bushels is a good yield.** (A unit.)

**The data have been carefully collected.** (Individual items.)

**The data is sound.** (A unit.)

**Meat and potatoes are the two items we sell most.** (Individual items.)

**Meat and potatoes is a tasty dish.** (A unit.)

**collide, collision** Two objects must both be in motion before they can collide. An automobile cannot collide with a utility pole, for example.

**colored** In some societies, including the United States, the word is considered derogatory and should not be used. In some African countries, "colored" denotes those of mixed racial ancestry. If "colored" is used, place it in quotation marks and explain its meaning.

**Columbia Lippincott Gazetteer of the World** The reference source for the pronunciation of foreign place names. See *geographic names*.

**comma (,)** See Page 11.

**Common Market** Acceptable in all references for European Economic Community. The ten members, as of 1979: Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands (the original six), Denmark, Ireland, United Kingdom, Greece.

**Congress** Although it sometimes is substituted for *the House*, it properly applies to both the House and Senate.

**contractions** Contractions reflect informal, conversational speech and are acceptable in broadcast news stories. Follow the spellings in Webster's New World Dictionary.

**copyright (n., v., adj.)** The disclosure was made in a **copyright** story. Use **copyrighted** only as the past tense of the verb: He **copyrighted** the article.

**corrections** See page 22.

**coup d'etat Coup** is usually sufficient. Phonetic: *koo*.

**cyclone** A storm with strong winds rotating about a moving center of low atmospheric pressure. In the United States it often means a tornado. In the Indian Ocean it means a hurricane. Because of the ambiguity, avoid cyclone in favor of the more precise terms.

## D

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**dateline** Datelines have been eliminated from World in Brief scripts since news shows are just that — scripts — and few stations still read datelines. The "where" element must be written into the copy. In the national-international report, only takeouts carry datelines. State and regional news in brief packages on some wires continue to carry datelines to assist stations in spotting stories of interest to their area.

When a newswire story has been assembled from sources in widely separated areas, use no dateline. It is referred to as an "undated" story. However, do NOT use "undated" as a dateline. There is no such place. "Across Texas," "around the Midwest," or "In Ohio" are preferable.

If a script carries several stories with the same dateline, repeat the dateline alone. Do NOT precede it with “again,” as in “Again, Washington.”

Include state names in datelines to avoid confusion among similarly named cities. Do NOT abbreviate states in datelines.

**dates** Use figures with letters: *April 1st*. Not: *April first*. Spell out months. When a phrase lists only a month and a year, do not separate with commas. When a phrase refers to a month, day and year, set off the year with commas. *January 1972 was a cold month. January 2nd was the coldest day of the month. February 14th, 1976, was the target date.*

**daylight-saving time** Not *savings*. Note the hyphen. A federal law specifies that daylight time applies from 2 a-m on the last Sunday of April until 2 a-m on the last Sunday of October in areas that do not specifically exempt themselves. See *time*.

**days** Use *today*, *yesterday* and *tomorrow* rather than days of the week, except for “overnight” copy used around midnight when the day may be confusing to listeners in different time zones across the country. U-P-R uses days of the week from midnight Eastern time until 3 a-m Eastern time—which is midnight in the Pacific time zone.

Avoid an unnecessary use of *last* or *next*. Past, present or future tense are an adequate indication of which day is meant.

Wordy: It happened *last* Tuesday.

Better: It happened Tuesday.

**D-D-T** Preferred in all references for the insecticide dichloro diphenyl trichloroethane.

**decimal units** Use *-point-* in place of a period to indicate decimal amounts. Carry decimals to two places.

**degree-day** Used to calculate the amount of heating and cooling needed for buildings. An uninsulated building will maintain an inside temperature of 70 degrees if the outside temperature is 65 degrees. A degree-day is one-degree difference for one day (say, 64 degrees for 24 hours), or its equivalent such as two degrees for half a day (63 degrees for 12 hours).

A temperature of 10 below zero for 24 hours yields 75 degree-days. A temperature of 85 degrees for six hours yields five degree-days.

**demolish, destroy** Both mean to do away with completely. Something cannot be partially demolished or destroyed. It is redundant to say totally demolished or totally destroyed.

**depart** It requires a preposition: He will depart *from* LaGuardia. She will depart *at* 11:30 p-m. Do not drop the preposition as some airline dispatchers do.

**derogatory terms** Do not use derogatory terms such as *Krauts* (for Germans) or *nigger*, except in direct quotes and when their use is an essential part of the story.

**dialect** There are some words and phrases in everyone’s vocabulary that are typical of a particular region or group. Quoting dialect, unless used carefully, implies substandard or illiterate usage. Avoid dialect, even in quoted matter, unless it is clearly pertinent.

When there is a compelling reason to use dialect, use phonetic spellings.

**dictionaries** For spelling, style and usage questions not covered in this stylebook, consult the print wire stylebook and Webster’s New World Dictionary of the American Language, Second College Edition.

Use the first spelling listed. If spellings differ in separate entries (*tee shirt* and *T-shirt*, for example), use the spelling that has a full definition (*T-shirt*). If each entry has a full definition

(*although* or *though*, for example), either is acceptable.

For spelling and usage not covered in the print wire stylebook or in Webster's New World Dictionary, consult Webster's Third International Dictionary, which has more entries.

**dimensions** Follow style for numbers and spell out inches, feet, yards, and so forth to indicate depth, height, length and width. Hyphenate adjectival forms before nouns.

*He is five feet six inches tall, the five-foot-six-inch man, the five-foot-six man, the five-foot man, the basketball team signed a seven-footer. The car is 17 feet long, six feet wide and five feet high. The rug is nine feet by 12 feet. The nine-by-12 rug. The storm left five inches of snow.*

**disc jockey** *D-J* is acceptable on second reference.

**discreet, discrete** *Discreet* is prudent; *discrete* is detached, separate: "I'm afraid I was not very *discreet*," she wrote. There are four *discrete* sounds in a quadraphonic system.

**disinterested, uninterested** *Disinterested* means unbiased or impartial. *Uninterested* means bored or indifferent.

**disposable personal income** The income that a person retains after deductions for income taxes, Social Security taxes and for such other payments as fines and penalties to various levels of government.

**District of Columbia** If used with Washington, abbreviate as D-C. Spell out when used alone. Use *the district*, not *D-C*, on second reference.

**divorce** Report that a person is divorced only if it is clearly pertinent. Even when relevant, it seldom belongs in the lead. If relevant, report in the body of the story that someone is divorced.

**doctor** Do not use *Dr.* for those who hold only honorary doctorates. With other doctorate degrees, use *Dr.* with care . . . the public often identifies *Dr.* only with physicians.

**dollars** Do NOT use the \$ sign in broadcast copy except when bracketing a specific amount. *The car cost 16-hundred dollars (\$1,631.78).*

*For specified amounts, it takes a singular verb: He said 500-thousand dollars is what they want.*

**downstate, upstate** Avoid using these words because they may imply a location of the announcer or listener that is not necessarily correct for a given story.

**drowned** If a person suffocates in water or other fluid, say the victim *drowned*. To say that someone *was drowned* implies that another person caused the death by holding the victim's head under the water.

**drugs** Because *drugs* is often used as a synonym for narcotics, *medicine* is better in reference to medication.

**drunk, drunken** Use *drunk* after the verb: *He was drunk*. Use *drunken* before a noun: *a drunken driver*.

**dyeing, dying** *Dyeing* refers to changing colors. *Dying* refers to death.



## E

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**earthquake** The two important scales in measuring earthquakes are the Richter and the Mercalli.

The **Richter scale**, the more common, measures the magnitude, or inherent strength. The **Mercalli scale** describes the intensity, or the degree that it is felt in a given area.

Every increase of one on the Richter scale . . . say from magnitude five-point-five to magnitude six-point-five . . . means the ground motion is 10 times greater.

Theoretically, there is no upper limit to the scale. Readings of eight-point-nine . . . the highest on record . . . were obtained from a quake off the coast of Ecuador in 1906 and from a quake off the coast of Japan in 1933.

The potential for damage in a populated area:

—A quake of magnitude three-point-five can cause slight damage.

—Magnitude four: The quake can cause moderate damage.

—Magnitude five: The quake can cause considerable damage.

—Magnitude six: The quake can cause severe damage.

—Magnitude seven: A major earthquake, capable of widespread, heavy damage.

—Magnitude eight: A “great” earthquake, capable of tremendous damage.

The Mercalli scale, which runs from one to 12, gauges intensity at a specific location.

**Tembler** (not tremblor) is a synonym for earthquake. **Epicenter** means the center of an earthquake.

**ecology** The study of the relationship between organisms and their surroundings. It is not synonymous with environment.

Right: The laboratory is studying the **ecology** of man and the desert.

Wrong: Even so simple an undertaking as maintaining a lawn affects **ecology**. (Use **environment** instead.)

**Emmy, Emmys** The annual awards by the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

**engine, motor** An **engine** develops its own power: *an airplane engine, an automobile engine, a jet engine, a steam engine, a turbine engine*. A **motor** gets power elsewhere: *an electric motor, a hydraulic motor*.

**escapee, escaper** Preferred is **escaped convict** or **fugitive**.

## F

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**Fahrenheit** The temperature scale commonly used in the United States, after Gabriel Daniel Fahrenheit, a German physicist who designed it. In it, the freezing point of water is 32 degrees and the boiling point is 212 degrees at sea level.

**father** Do not use father as a religious title for priests except in quoted material.

**Federal Aviation Administration F-A-A** is acceptable on second reference. The agency responsible for licensing pilots and airplanes and controlling air traffic. While the F-A-A may participate in crash investigations, the National Transportation Safety Board is responsible for running the investigation.

**Federal Bureau of Investigation F-B-I** is acceptable in all references.

**Federal Communications Commission F-C-C** is acceptable in all references.

**Federal Highway Administration** Do not abbreviate. Reserve **F-H-A** for the Federal Housing Administration.

**Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service** Do not abbreviate. The Federal Mediation Service is acceptable.

**Federal Reserve Board, Federal Reserve System** On second reference: *the Federal Reserve, the Fed, the system, the board*. Also: *the Federal Reserve Bank of New York* (Boston, and so forth), *the bank*.

**Federal Trade Commission** **F-T-C** is acceptable on second reference.

**fiscal year** A 12-month period used for bookkeeping purposes. The federal government's fiscal year starts three months ahead of the calendar year. Fiscal 1978, for example, runs from October 1st, 1977, to September 30th, 1978.

**flash** An emergency signal to stations that outstanding news is breaking. No more than 10 words, a flash has priority to break any other wire story. A flash stands alone . . . does not have a more slug . . . and is followed by a bulletin.

Example of a flash:

**Flash – Nixon resigns.**

**flood, floodwaters** It is always pertinent to say where flood water comes from and where it runs off.

Stories about floods usually tell how high the water is and where it is expected to crest, but make sure it also gives flood stage and how high the water is above, or below, flood stage.

Incomplete: The river is expected to crest at 39 feet.

Better: The river is expected to crest at 39 feet, *12 feet above flood stage*.

**flounder, founder** A **flounder** is a fish; to **flounder** is to move clumsily or jerkily, like a fish on land. To **founder** is to bog down or sink: The ship **floundered** in the heavy seas for hours, then **foundered**.

**F-M** Acceptable in all references for radio's frequency modulation.

**Food and Drug Administration** **F-D-A** is acceptable on second reference.

**Ford Motor Company** Use **Ford**, not **F-M-C**, on second reference. Headquarters is in Dearborn, Michigan.

**forecast** The same in present and past tense.

**fort** Do not abbreviate for cities or for military installations.

**fractions** Whenever practical, convert fractions to decimals. See *decimals*. Fractions are preferred, however, in stories about stocks and in recipes. Spell out and hyphenate fractions. **two-thirds, three-fourths. 27-hundredths.**

**free world** An imprecise description. Use only in quoted matter.

**fundamentalist** As a religious designation, use the word with care. It can suggest a closed mentality rather than a theological position.

**F-Y-I** For your information. Do not use it in news copy.

## G

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**gay** Avoid this slang term for homosexual unless it appears in the formal name of an organization or in quoted matter.

**General Motors Corporation.** **G-M** is acceptable on second reference. The company makes a distinction between its corporate headquarters, in New York, and its main office, in Detroit, where the president and chairman are based.

**geographic names** The authority for spelling place names in the United States and its territories is the U-S Postal Service Directory of Post Offices. But do not use the postal abbreviations for state names, and abbreviate saint as St. and sainte as Ste. in U-S names.

Follow the print wire spellings of foreign place names. Also:

1. Use West Germany, East Germany, and so forth for divided nations.
2. Use Cameroon, not Cameroons or Cameroun.
3. Use Maldives, not Maldiv Islands.
4. Use Sri Lanka, not Ceylon.

The last three exceptions conform with the practices of the United Nations and the U-S Board of Geographic Names.

Follow the styles adopted by the United Nations and the U-S Board of Geographic Names on new cities, new independent nations and nations that change their names. If the two do not agree, the news services will announce a common policy.

**G-I (s.), G-I's (pl.)**

**girl** Applicable until 18th birthday is reached. Use woman or young women afterward.

**government** A **government** is an established system of political administration: **the U-S government**.

A **junta** is a group or council that often rules after a coup: A military **junta** controls the country. A junta becomes a government after it establishes a system of political administration.

Regime is a synonym for political system: **a democratic regime, an authoritarian regime**. Do not use it to mean government or junta. For example, use Franco **government** in referring to the government of Spain under Francisco Franco. Not: Franco **regime**. But: The Franco **government** was an authoritarian **regime**.

An **administration** consists of the officials who make up the executive branch of government: the Carter **administration**.

**Grand Old Party** **G-O-P** is acceptable as a second-reference synonym for Republican Party without first spelling out Grand Old Party.

**gray** Not grey. But: **greyhound, Greyhound bus**.

**gross national product** G-N-P is acceptable on second reference. It is the total retail value of a nation's output of goods and services in a specified period. The U-S G-N-P, calculated quarterly by the Department of Commerce, is considered the broadest available measure of the nation's economic activity.

## H

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**her** Do not use this pronoun to refer to nations or ships, except in quoted matter. Use *it* instead.

**here** It is meaningless. “Here” is where the listener is — and our scripts are voiced by announcers all over the country. Write the location into the copy.

**hertz** The international unit of frequency, or one cycle per second, is the same in singular and plural.

**highways** Always use figures for numbers. The forms, as appropriate: *Illinois Route 34, state Route 34, Route 34, Interstate Highway 495, Interstate 495.*

Hyphenate if a figure follows or precedes a letter other than U-S: *I-495, Route 1-A.*

**his, her** Do not presume maleness in stories . . . but do NOT use double pronouns to avoid sexism. Avoid: A reporter attempts to protect *his* sources (or *his or her* sources). Re-write the sentence: Reporters attempt to protect *their* sources; or A reporter attempts to protect sources.

**hockey** *N-H-L* is acceptable in all references for National Hockey League . . . *W-H-A* for the old World Hockey Association.

**homicide** The killing of one human by another.

*Murder* is malicious or premeditated homicide. Do not say a victim was murdered until someone is convicted of murder. Instead, use *killed* or *slain*. Do not describe someone as a *murderer* until convicted of the charge in court.

*Manslaughter* is homicide without malice or premeditation.

A *killer* is anyone who kills with a motive of any kind.

An *assassin* is a killer of a politically important person.

To *execute* is to kill in accordance with a legally imposed sentence.

**honorary titles** Disregard such titles as those bestowed by British honors lists (Sir Charlie Chaplin, Dame Margot Fonteyn) unless clearly pertinent to a story.

**horses** Capitalize proper names of horses and races: “*Secretariat*,” *Kentucky Derby*, *the Preakness*. Use quotation marks around names of horses to avoid confusion.

**hurricanes** Do not use the presence of a feminine name as an excuse to invoke sexist images.

Wrong: *Fickle Hazel teased the Louisiana coast.*

Hurricane stories should include the storm’s location in relation to a recognizable landmark.

A *hurricane* is a rotating wind system with a minimum sustained surface wind speed of 74 miles an hour or more. Hurricanes are spawned east of the international dateline. *Typhoons*, which have the same criteria, develop west of the line. When a hurricane loses wind speed below 74 miles an hour, it becomes a *tropical storm*.

A *hurricane eye* is the relatively calm area in the center of the storm.

The *hurricane season* is the part of the year with a relatively high number of hurricanes, June through November.

The *National Hurricane Center* in Miami provides information about hurricanes in the Atlantic, Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico. The *Eastern Pacific Hurricane Center* is in San Francisco; the *Central Pacific Hurricane Center* in Honolulu.

**hyphens** Hyphens are joiners. Use them to join words to express a single idea or to avoid ambiguity. Guidelines:

1. Use a hyphen whenever ambiguity would result if it were omitted: She will speak to **small-business men**. (The normal spelling is **businessmen**, but **small businessmen** is unclear.) Also: He **recovered** his health. He **re-covered** the leaky roof.

2. If a compound modifier—two or more words that express a single concept—is listed separately as an adjective with hyphens in Webster's New World Dictionary (Example: **well-known**), the compound is always hyphenated: She is a **well-known** woman. She is **well-known**. Also: The child is **soft-spoken**. The censor is **self-appointed**. The children are **quick-witted**.

3. Compounds not listed separately in the dictionary usually take a hyphen before a noun, no hyphen after it: A **first-quarter** touchdown, a touchdown in the **first quarter**; a **bluish-green** dress, the dress is **bluish**.

But never use a hyphen when the compound includes the word **very** or an adverb ending in **ly**: a **very good** time, an **easily remembered** rule.

4. Some prefixes and suffixes are hyphenated. See *prefixes*.

5. Some numerals, odds, ratios, etc., are hyphenated. See *numerals*.

6. Suspensive hyphenation: **the 5- and 6-year-olds attend morning sessions**.

7. Hyphenate nouns made from verb-adverb combinations (such as: **This is a speed-up**) but do not hyphenate the verb form (such as: **He tried to speed up the tempo**).

## I

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**incorporated** It usually is not needed but, if used, do not set off with commas: **J-C Penney Company Incorporated**.

**index (s.), indexes (pl.)** Not indices.

**Index of Leading Economic Indicators** A composite of 12 economic measurements developed to help forecast likely shifts in the whole economy, compiled monthly by the Department of Commerce.

**indict** To avoid any suggestion that someone is being judged before a trial, do not use **indicted for** killing, etc. Use **indicted on a charge** of killing. See *accuse*, *allege* and *arrest*.

**initials** Use hyphens and no space: **H-L Mencken**. Eliminate middle initials and avoid first initials where possible: **J. Edgar Hoover**, not **J-Edgar**.

**injuries** They are suffered or sustained, not received.

**innocent** Use **innocent**, rather than **not guilty**, to describe a defendant's plea or a jury's verdict, to guard against **not** being dropped.

**intercontinental ballistic missile(s)** **I-C-B-M** (or **I-C-B-M's**) is acceptable on second reference.

**intermediate range ballistic missile(s)** **I-R-B-M** (or **I-R-B-M's**) is acceptable on second reference.

**Internal Revenue Service** **I-R-S** is acceptable on second reference.

**International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers** **I-B-E-W** is acceptable on second reference. Do not call this union the **Electrical Workers union**, a term reserved for the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America.

**International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation.** Note the *and*, not an ampersand. *I-T-T* is acceptable on second reference.

**intra-uterine device *I-U-D*** is acceptable on second reference.

**Ireland** Usually acceptable for the Irish Republic. But use the full name if needed to differentiate it from Northern Ireland, a part of the United Kingdom.

**Irish Republican Army** A group that fights to wrest Northern Ireland from British rule and unite it with the Irish Republic. *I-R-A* is acceptable on second reference.

## J

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**jargon** The special vocabulary of a particular class or occupational group. If jargon is used, explain it.

**Jaycees** Formerly the Junior Chamber of Commerce. A member is a Jaycee.

**jumbo jet** Any very large wide-body jet plane, including the 747, D-C-10, L-1011 and C-5-A.

**junior, senior** Spell out. Do NOT set off by a comma: **James Pecora Junior**.

**junta** Phonetic: *hoon'-tah*. See *government*.

**juvenile delinquent** In addition to violations of the law, juveniles may be declared delinquents in many states for anti-social behavior. Some states prohibit publishing or broadcasting the name of a juvenile delinquent.

Follow the local practice unless there is a compelling reason to the contrary. Consult the general desk if you believe such an exception is warranted.

## K

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**Kansas City** Use Kansas City, Kansas, or Kansas City, Missouri, in datelines to avoid confusion between the two.

**K-G-B** Acceptable on first reference, but the story should identify it as the Soviet intelligence agency. The initials stand for the Russian words meaning Committee for State Security.

**kidnap, kidnapped, kidnapping, kidnapper** Not kidnaped, and so forth.

**kills** Inaccuracy or other factors may require that an entire item be eliminated from the news report. A kill order takes bulletin priority and must show what is being killed and why.

**kilocycles** The correct term is now **kilohertz**.

**kilohertz** Equals one-thousand hertz (cycles per second), replacing kilocycles as the correct term in such applications as broadcast frequencies.

**kiloton** The explosive force of one-thousand tons of T-N-T. The atomic bomb dropped August 6th, 1945, on Hiroshima, Japan, in the first use of the bomb as a weapon, had an explosive force of about 20 kilotons.

**kilowatt-hour** The amount of electrical energy consumed when one-thousand watts are used for one hour or the equivalent, such as 500 watts for two hours.

**Knesset** The Israeli parliament.

**knot** A knot is one nautical mile (six-thousand 76-point-10 feet) per hour; *knots per hour* is redundant.

**Ku Klux Klan** There are 42 organizations known in America as the Klan.

Some of them do not use the full name Ku Klux Klan, but each may be called that, and the K-K-K initials may be used for any of them on second reference.

The two largest Klan organizations are the National Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, based at Stone Mountain, Georgia . . . and the United Klans of America, based at Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

## L

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**late** Do not use it to describe someone's actions while alive. Omit *late* in: Only the (*late*) senator opposed this bill. He was not dead at the time.

**legislature** In 49 states the legislature consists of two bodies, a Senate and another body such as House or Assembly. The Nebraska Legislature is a unicameral body.

**lie in state** Formally, only those who are entitled to a state funeral may "lie in state," which occurs in this country in the rotunda in the Capitol. In a less formal sense, say the body will "be on public view" or will be "displayed publicly."

Those entitled to a state funeral are a president, a former president, a president-elect, or any other person specifically designated by the president.

Members of Congress also may lie in state, and a number have done so. The decision is either house's to make, although the formal process normally begins with a request from the president.

Those entitled to an official funeral, but not to lie in state, are the vice president, the chief justice, Cabinet members and other government officials when specifically designated by the president.

**local** Avoid its irrelevant use. Omit *local* in: The injured were taken to a (*local*) hospital.

**located** Often not needed. Omit *located* in: It is (*located*) in Houston. The Empire State Building is (*located*) in New York City.

**L-S-D** Acceptable in all references for lysergic acid diethylamide.

## M

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**machine gun (n.), machine-gun (adj., v.), machine-gunned.**

**Mach number** Named for Ernst Mach, an Austrian physicist, the figure represents a multiple of the speed of sound. A body traveling at Mach-one would be traveling at the speed of sound. Mach-two would equal twice the speed of sound.

**majority, plurality** Majority means more than half of a certain number. If candidate A gets 100-thousand votes, candidate B, 200-thousand, and candidate C, 350-thousand, then C has a majority of 50-thousand votes.

Plurality means more than the next highest number. If candidate A gets 65-thousand votes, candidate B gets 40-thousand and candidate C gets 35-thousand then A has a plurality of 25-thousand, but does not have a majority.

When majority and plurality are used alone, they take singular verbs and pronouns: ***The majority has made its decision.***

With an "of" construction they take either a singular or plural verb, whichever fits the occasion: ***A majority of two votes is not adequate to control the committee. The majority of the houses on the block were destroyed.***

**man, mankind** Acceptable to mean all human beings or the human race. Avoid their use when they could give sexist connotations, favoring an alternate such as ***people*** or ***humanity***. See *women*.

**mass** It is celebrated, said or sung. Lowercase in all uses: ***high mass, low mass, requiem mass***. In Eastern Orthodox churches, the term is ***liturgy*** or ***divine liturgy***.

**Medal of Honor** Not Congressional Medal of Honor, though the nation's highest military honor is given by Congress for risk of life in combat beyond the call of duty.

**media** Usually plural: ***Radio and television are the electronic media***. But as a collective noun to refer to a unit: ***The news media is resisting attempts to limit its freedom***.

**Medicaid** A federal-state program that helps pay for health care for the needy, aged, blind and disabled, and for low-income families with children.

**Medicare** The federal health care insurance program for people aged 65 and over, and for the disabled. In Canada, Medicare refers to the national health insurance program.

**metric system** A decimal system of weights and measures. The basic units are the gram, the meter and the liter. Larger and smaller units are defined by prefixes, such as "kilo." Thus, a kilogram is one-thousand grams.

Larger units include deka- (10), hecto- (100), kilo- (one thousand), mega- (one Million), giga-(one BILLION) and tera-(one Trillion).

Smaller units include deci-(one-tenth), centi-(one-hundredth), milli-(one-thousandth), micro-(one-Millionth), and pico-(one-trillionth).

Do not abbreviate metric terms.

See also the tables of weights and measures in the back of Webster's New World Dictionary.



A conversion table for frequently used terms (approximations):

**INTO METRIC**

<i>When you know</i>	<i>multiply by</i>	<i>to find</i>
<b>Length</b>		
<i>inches</i>	2.54	<i>centimeters</i>
<i>feet</i>	30.0	<i>centimeters</i>
<i>yards</i>	0.9	<i>meters</i>
<i>miles</i>	1.6	<i>kilometers</i>
<b>Area</b>		
<i>sq. inches</i>	6.5	<i>sq. centimeters</i>
<i>sq. feet</i>	0.09	<i>sq. meters</i>
<i>sq. yards</i>	0.8	<i>sq. meters</i>
<i>sq. miles</i>	2.6	<i>sq. kilometers</i>
<i>acres</i>	0.4	<i>hectares</i>
<b>Weight</b>		
<i>ounces</i>	28.0	<i>grams</i>
<i>pounds</i>	0.45	<i>kilograms</i>
<i>tons</i>	0.9	<i>metric tons</i>
<b>Volume</b>		
<i>teaspoons</i>	5.0	<i>milliliters</i>
<i>tablespoons</i>	15.0	<i>milliliters</i>
<i>fluid ounces</i>	30.0	<i>milliliters</i>
<i>cups</i>	0.24	<i>liters</i>
<i>pints</i>	0.47	<i>liters</i>
<i>quarts</i>	0.95	<i>liters</i>
<i>gallons</i>	3.8	<i>liters</i>
<i>cubic feet</i>	0.03	<i>cubic meters</i>
<i>cubic yards</i>	0.76	<i>cubic meters</i>
<b>Temperature</b>		
<i>Fahrenheit</i>	<i>minus 32 x 5-9 Celsius</i>	

**OUT OF METRIC**

<i>When you know</i>	<i>multiply by</i>	<i>to find</i>
<b>Length</b>		
<i>millimeters</i>	0.04	<i>inches</i>
<i>centimeters</i>	0.4	<i>inches</i>
<i>meters</i>	3.3	<i>feet</i>
<i>meters</i>	1.1	<i>yards</i>
<i>kilometers</i>	0.6	<i>miles</i>
<b>Area</b>		
<i>sq. centimeters</i>	1.16	<i>sq. inches</i>
<i>sq. meters</i>	1.2	<i>sq. yards</i>
<i>sq. kilometers</i>	0.4	<i>sq. miles</i>
<i>hectares</i>	2.5	<i>acres</i>
<b>Weight</b>		
<i>grams</i>	0.035	<i>ounces</i>
<i>kilograms</i>	2.2	<i>pounds</i>
<i>metric ton</i>	1.1	<i>tons</i>
<b>Volume</b>		
<i>milliliters</i>	0.03	<i>fluid ounces</i>
<i>liters</i>	2.1	<i>pints</i>
<i>liters</i>	1.06	<i>quarts</i>
<i>liters</i>	0.26	<i>gallons</i>
<i>cubic meters</i>	35.0	<i>cubic feet</i>
<i>cubic meters</i>	1.3	<i>cubic yards</i>
<b>Temperature</b>		
<i>Celsius</i>	<i>x 9-5 plus 32 Fahrenheit</i>	

**Middle East** The term applies to southwest Asia west of Pakistan, northeastern Africa and the island of Cyprus. Avoid **Near East**, an outdated term that once designated part of the region. Mideast is also acceptable, but Middle East is preferred.

**midnight** Do not put a 12 in front of it. It is part of the day that is ending, not the one that is beginning.

**MiG** The "i" in this designation for a type of Soviet fighter is lowercase because it is Russian for "and." The initials are from the last names of the designers, Arten Mikoyan and Mikhail Gurevich. The forms: **MiG-19**, **MiG-21s**.

**military titles** Drop the title on second reference. Do not abbreviate any title.

**minus sign** Spell out any reference in copy: **12 below zero**. However, a minus sign is acceptable in tabular material:

**Anchorage** -12 Partly cloudy  
**Atlanta** 67 Clear

**MIRV (s.), MIRVs (pl.)** Acceptable on first reference for multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicle(s). But explain in the text that it is a missile with several warheads and each can be directed to a different target.

**mount** Spell out in all uses, including the names of communities and of mountains: *Mount Clemens, Michigan; Mount Everest.*

**Mutual Broadcasting System Incorporated** *Mutual Radio* is acceptable in all references. Use *Mutual*, not *M-B-S*, in subsequent references.

## N

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**N-Double-A-C-P** Acceptable in all references for National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

**names** People are entitled to be known however they want to be known, as long as their identities are clear.

When someone changes personal names, such as Cassius Clay's transition to Muhammad Ali, provide both names in stories until the new name is widely known. After that, use only the new name unless there is a specific reason for including the earlier identification.

**National Aeronautics and Space Administration** The *space agency* is acceptable on first reference to avoid a cumbersome lead. *NASA* is acceptable second reference.

**National Council of the Churches** Acceptable in all references for National Council of Churches of Christ in the U-S-A.

**National Organization for Women** Not "of." "*NOW*" (with quotation marks) is acceptable on second reference.

**National Transportation Safety Board** The federal agency responsible for investigating transportation accidents such as train derailments and plane crashes. While other agencies, such as the Federal Aviation Administration, may be involved in a plane crash investigation, the N-T-S-B is in charge. *N-T-S-B* may be used on second reference.

**National Weather Service** No longer the U-S Weather Bureau, although *the weather bureau* may be used as an alternate reference.

**N-B-C** Acceptable in all references for the National Broadcasting Company, a subsidiary of R-C-A Corporation (formerly Radio Corporation of America).

**N-C-Double-A** Acceptable in all references for National Collegiate Athletic Association.

**Negro** Use *black* or *Negro*, as it fits the occasion, for men and women. Do not use *Negress*. See *race*.

**newsman** A sexist term. Use *reporter, editor, journalist*, and so forth, instead.

**New York City** In datelines: *(NEW YORK)*—  
Identify the borough or individual community in the body of the story if pertinent.

**nicknames** Use a derivative of a proper name only when it is the way the individual prefers to be known: *Jimmy Carter*.

A descriptive nickname, if used, takes quotation marks, not parentheses: *Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson*. Also: *Jackson is known as "Scoop."*

In sports stories, widely used nicknames are acceptable without quotation marks: *Woody Hayes, Bear Bryant, Catfish Hunter*. But if the given name is used, and in all news stories: *Paul "Bear" Bryant*.

Avoid excessive use of nicknames. For instance, Henry Jackson's nickname would rarely be used in routine news copy.

**No.** Spell out the abbreviation for number, except in farm market quotations where the period may be dropped. **No 1-2 240-250 lb heifers.**

**none** Either singular or plural, but make sure the verbs and pronouns agree.

Right: None **are** so blind as **those** who will not see.

Right: None **is** so blind as **he** who will not see.

**noon** Do not put a 12 in front of it.

**number** Takes a plural verb in such constructions as: **A number of plans have been scrapped.** But make every effort to obtain precise figures. See *No.*

**numerals** A numeral is a figure, letter, word or group of words expressing a number.

**Do NOT use Roman numerals. Make it World War Two, "Native Dancer Two," King George the Sixth, Pope John the 23rd.**

Guidelines:

Spell out casual expressions: **A thousand times no! Thanks a Million. He walked a quarter of a mile.**

Follow an organization's practice in using words or numerals in proper names: **20th Century Fox, Twentieth Century Fund, Big Ten.**

## O

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**obscenity** Do not use obscenities, profanity, vulgarities, and so forth, in stories unless they are part of direct quotations and there is a compelling reason for them. When they are used, flag the story at the top:

STATIONS: USE AT YOUR DISCRETION

Then confine the offending language to a separate paragraph that can be easily deleted by announcers who do not want it.

In reporting profanity that normally would use the words damn or God, do NOT change the offending words to euphemisms. Do not, for example, change **damn it** to **darn it**.

When the subject matter of a story may be considered objectionable, even though it may not contain offensive language, flag the story at the top:

STATIONS: USE AT YOUR DISCRETION

**O-K (s.), O-K's (pl.), O-K'd, O-K'ing** Do not use **okay**.

**old** Avoid such a phrase as **a 12-year-old murder**, when what is meant is **a murder 12 years ago**.

**Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries OPEC** is acceptable on first reference, but identify it as the oil cartel in the story. The 13 OPEC members, as of 1977: Algeria, Ecuador, Gabon, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela.

## P

**pardon** A **pardon** forgives and releases a person from further punishment. It is granted by a chief of state or a governor. By itself, it does not expunge a record of conviction, if one exists, and it does not by itself restore civil rights. **Amnesty** is a general pardon, usually for political offenses.

**Parole** is the release of a prisoner before the sentence has expired, on condition of good behavior. It is granted by a parole board, part of the executive branch of government, and can be revoked only by the board.

**Probation** is the suspension of sentence for a person convicted, but not yet imprisoned, on condition of good behavior. It is imposed or revoked only by a judge.

**parentheses ( )** Parentheses — brackets — are used to surround words which are NOT part of the script . . . such as a phonetic spelling of a difficult name or word . . . or words which may be considered optional. Optional material must be written so the sentence reads correctly with or without the bracketed material. For instance: **The President's remarks are contained in an interview published today (by the Washington Post).** That sentence reads with or without the parenthetical material. Wrong: **The President's remarks are contained in an interview (Washington Post) published today.**

Use parentheses if a location is inserted in a proper name: **The Huntsville (Alabama) Times reports.** But use commas if no proper name is involved: **The Selma, Alabama, group saw the governor.**

Use quotation marks, not parentheses, around a nickname. See *nicknames*.

Do not use parentheses to indicate that an unusual spelling or term is correct. Include the confirmation in a bracketed editor's note under a jim-dash at the bottom of a story.

-0-

(Stations: The spelling *Jorja* is correct.)

**passenger lists** If necessary a list of victims in a major disaster should be carried on state or regional wires — rather than the national wire — as soon as it is available. Use a separate paragraph for each name and begin the paragraph with a figure. List the last name first and include street addresses if available.

1. **Jones, Joseph, 260 Town Street, Sample, New York.**

2. **Williams, Susan, 780 Main Street, Example, New Jersey**

The use of the figure is designed to make it easier to identify the paragraph to be subbed in the event additional information becomes available.

As additional names become available, add them to the bottom of the list.

**people, persons** Use **people** when speaking of a large or uncounted number of individuals: Thousands of **people** attended the fair. Some rich **people** pay no taxes. What will **people** say? Do not use **persons** in this sense.

**Persons** is usually used in print wire copy for a relatively small number of people who can be counted, but **people** often can be substituted— in fact it may be more conversationally correct.

Right: There were 20 **persons** in the room.

Better: There were 20 **people** in the room.

**People** is also a collective noun that requires a plural verb and is used to refer to a single race or nation: The American **people** are united. In this sense, the plural form is **peoples**: The **peoples** of Africa speak many languages and dialects.

**percent** One word. It takes a singular verb when standing alone or when a singular word follows an "of" construction: The teachers said 60 percent **was** a failing grade. He said 50 percent of the membership **was** there.

It takes a plural verb when a plural word follows an "of" construction: He said 50 percent of the members **were** there.

**period ( . )** Use a period at the end of a declarative sentence, an indirect question, a polite request phrased as a question and most imperative sentences: *The book is finished. He asked what the score was. Why don't we go. Shut the door.* Elsewhere:

1. Use three periods to construct an ellipsis mark.
2. Use a period in initials within a name: *John F. Kennedy*. But use hyphens and no period in initials before a surname: *T-S Eliot* Use hyphens and no period if initials are used instead of a name: *J-F-K, L-B-J*.
3. Periods always go inside quotation marks.

**perk** Short for perquisite, often used by legislators to describe fringe benefits. In New York state, legislators also use *lulu* to describe the benefits they receive in lieu of pay. If either term is used, define it.

**-persons** Do not coin new words such as chairperson or spokesperson in regular text. They may be used in direct quotations or when they are an organization's formal title for an office. Words listed in Webster's New World, however, are acceptable: *salesperson*.

In general, use *chairwoman*, *spokeswoman*, and so forth, to refer to a woman; *chairman*, *spokesman*, and so forth, to refer to a man. Or use a neuter word, such as *leader* or *representative*.

**pistol** A pistol can be either an automatic or a revolver, but automatic and revolver are not synonymous. A revolver has a revolving cylinder that holds the cartridges; an automatic does not. See *weapon*.

**politicking** Note the *k*.

**polls** Consider the following questions, based on guidelines suggested by the National Council on Public Polls, before using a story about a canvass of public opinion.

1. Who paid for the poll?
2. When was the poll taken? (Most pollsters concede that rapid, last-minute changes in voter sentiment can take place.)
3. How were the interviews obtained? (Some pollsters think people are less candid on the telephone than in person.)
4. How were the questions worded? (They can be loaded to achieve a desired result. Even the sequence of questions should be considered.)
5. How were the people chosen? (At random, or by some other procedure?)
6. How many people responded? (The larger the number of responses, the smaller the margin for error in projecting the results.)
7. How big was any smaller group on which conclusions are based? (A nationwide survey of 15-hundred people might show one set of figures on overall attitudes about abortion, while also reporting on the attitude of Catholics toward abortion. If the attitude of Catholics is cited, ask how many Catholics were interviewed.)

**pore, pour** To *pore* is to gaze steadily or intently; to *pour* is to cause to flow: I'll *pour* the coffee if you'll *pore* over the tax forms.

**prefixes** Three rules are constant, although they yield some exceptions to listings in Webster's New World Dictionary:

- Hyphenate with a capitalized word: *trans-Atlantic*.
  - Hyphenate to avoid a duplicated vowel or tripled consonant: *pre-exist*, *shell-like*.
  - Use a hyphen to join doubled prefixes: *sub-subparagraph*.
- In addition, most words beginning with *anti-* and *non-* are hyphenated.

**Prime minister** is preferred as the English equivalent of various titles identifying the first minister in a national government that has a council of ministers or similar group.

For consistency, use it throughout the world, except:

- Use **premier** for France and its former colonies.
- Use **premier** for the communist nations of Eastern Europe and Asia.
- Use **chancellor** in Austria and West Germany.
- Use **premier** for the leaders of provinces in Australia and Canada.

**premiere** A first performance.

**president** Drop the title after the first reference.

The first name of a present or former U-S president usually is not needed, but may be used in feature or personality stories. Use a first name if needed to avoid confusing one with another: **President Andrew Johnson**, **President Lyndon Johnson**.

**press conference** Use **news conference** unless part of a direct quotation.

**press secretary** Seldom a formal title. The formal title for the presidential aide is **assistant to the president for press relations**. Use **news secretary** or **spokesman**, **spokeswoman**.

**Protestant** In general, it applies to any Christian not belonging to the Roman Catholic or Orthodox Eastern churches. Mormons, however, do not accept the designation Protestant.

**protester** Not protestor.

**P-T-A** Acceptable in all references for parent-teacher association.

**Public Broadcasting Service** It is not a network, but an association of public television stations organized to buy and distribute programs selected by a vote of the members. **P-B-S** is acceptable on first reference, but provide the full name in the story.

**punctuation** Think of it as a courtesy to your only reader—the announcer. Punctuation is designed to help the announcer understand and voice a story.

There are many gray areas. For this reason, all the punctuation entries in this book are guidelines rather than rules.

## Q

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**question mark ( ? )** Use a question mark at the end of a direct question.

1. Use a question mark at the end of a full sentence that asks a multiple question. **Did you hear him say, "What right have you to ask about the riot?"**

2. In a series, use a question mark after each item if you wish to emphasize each element. If no emphasis is intended, use a comma.

Right: **Did he plan the riot? Employ assistants? Give the signal to begin?**

Right: **Did he plan the riot, employ assistants and give the signal to begin?**

3. Do not use a question mark at the end of an indirect question. **He asked who started the riot.**

4. Do not use a question mark in parentheses to express doubt about a word, fact or number, or to indicate humor or irony.

5. Do not use a question mark for an interpolated question.

**You told me – Did I hear you correctly – that you started the riot.**

6. Place a question mark inside quotation marks if it applies to the quoted material, outside if they apply to the whole sentence.

**Who wrote "Gone with the Wind"?**

**He asked, "How long will it take?"**

## R

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**race** Use a racial identification only if it is clearly pertinent, such as:

—In biographical and announcement stories, particularly when they involve a feat or appointment that has not been routinely associated with members of a particular race.

—When it provides the listener with a substantial insight into conflicting emotions known or likely to be involved in a demonstration or similar event.

—When describing a person sought in a manhunt.

In some stories that involve a conflict, it is equally important to specify that an issue cuts across racial lines. If, for example, a demonstration by supporters of busing to achieve racial balance in schools includes a substantial number of whites, that fact should be noted.

Do not use racially derogatory terms unless they are part of a quotation that is essential to the story.

**radical** In general, avoid this term in favor of a more precise description of an individual's political views.

**range** The forms: *12-Million to 14-Million dollars*. Not: *12 to 14-Million* dollars.

**ravage, ravish** To *ravage* is to wreak great destruction or devastation: Union troops *ravaged* Atlanta. To *ravish* is to abduct, rape or carry away with emotion: Soldiers *ravished* the women.

Although both words connote an element of violence, they are not interchangeable. Buildings and towns cannot be ravished.

**R-C-A Corporation** Formerly Radio Corporation of America. *R-C-A* is acceptable in all references.

**record** Avoid the unnecessary *new record*.

**red haired, redhead, redheaded** All are acceptable for a person with red hair.

**release times** Follow these guidelines:

1. If a source provides material on condition that it not be published or broadcast until a specific time, the story should contain a slug to that effect:

(Advance for 10 a-m E-S-T)

2. If a source provides material on condition that it not be moved on any wire read by clients until a specific time, respect the request.

3. If a source does not specify a particular time but says material is for release in A-M's, the automatic release time for print and broadcast is 6:30 p-m Eastern time.

If a source says only that material is for release in P-M's, the automatic release time for print and broadcast is 6:30 a-m Eastern time.

In either case, the story should contain a slug to that effect.

If a source gives a release date but not a specific time or cycle, treat the material as an advance for A-M editions with that release date, available for use at 6:30 p-m Eastern time the day before.

4. Stories sent in advance for a specified cycle and date may be released for broadcast use at 6:30 p-m. if the advance was sent for A-M's, or at 6:30 a-m if the advance was sent for P-M's.

**reportedly** Avoid the word in favor of saying who reported. If the word must be used, avoid an awkward placement.

**retail sales** The sales of retail stores, including merchandise sold and receipts for repairs and similar services.

A business is considered a retail store if it is primarily engaged in selling merchandise for personal, household or farm consumption.

**Reverend** Use *the Reverend*, not Reverend alone.

**revolver** See *pistol*.

**rightist** In general, use a more precise description of someone's political philosophy. As popularly used today, particularly abroad, rightist often applies to someone who is conservative or opposed to socialism. It also often indicates an individual who supports an authoritarian government that is militantly anti-communist or anti-socialist.

Ultra-rightist suggests an individual who subscribes to rigid interpretations of a conservative doctrine or in forms of fascism that stress authoritarian, often militaristic, views. See *radical*.

**right-to-work (adj.)** A right-to-work law prohibits a labor contract that would require workers covered by the contract to be union members.

There is no federal right-to-work law, but Section 14-B of the Taft-Hartley Act allows states to pass such a law if they wish. Many have done so.

**Rio Grande** Not Rio Grande River. (Rio means river.)

**rock 'n' roll** An exception to Webster's New World.

**Russia, Soviet Union** Russia is only one, but the largest, of 15 republics of the Soviet Union. Each republic has its own language, culture and history, although the Russian language is becoming more common throughout.

The distinction is often not observed. Most dictionaries, including Webster's New World, recognize *Russia* as the popular name of the Soviet Union.

As long as the meaning is clear, either name is acceptable. If needed, specify a particular republic, Russia, Georgia, Armenia, Lithuania, and so forth, in the text. The Ukrainian and Byelorussian republics are separate members of the United Nations.

## S

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**SALT** For Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty. This acronym evolved from title of Strategic Arms Limitation **TALKS** to designate the resulting treaty.

**scores** Use numerals exclusively, placing a hyphen between the totals of the winning and losing teams: *The Reds defeated the Red Sox 4-3. The Giants scored a 12-6 football victory over the Cardinals.*

*In other situations, use regular rules for numbers: **The golfer had a five on the first hole but finished with a two-under-par score of 70.***

*Eliminate the comma in this format: **Boston 6 Baltimore 5.***

**Scot (s.), Scots (pl.), Scottish (adj.)** A native of Scotland is a **Scot**. The people are the **Scots**, not the Scotch. Somebody or something is **Scottish**.

**Securities and Exchange Commission S-E-C** is acceptable on second reference. The related legislation is the Securities Exchange Act.



**semicolon ( ; )** In general, the semicolon is replaced by an ellipsis . . . which is easier for an announcer to spot.

**sex changes** Follow these guidelines in using proper names or personal pronouns when referring to an individual who has undergone a sex-change operation:

—If the reference is to an action before the operation, use the proper name and gender of the individual at that time.

—If the reference is to an action after the operation, use the new proper name and gender.

**she** Do not use this pronoun in references to ships or nations. Use *it* instead.

**ships** See the *boats, ships* entry.

**sic** Do not use **sic**. To show that an error, peculiar usage or spelling is in the original . . . and not an error in transmission . . . use an advisory at the end of the story, under a jim-dash.

-0-

(Stations: The spelling Jorga is correct.)

**Sierra Nevada** Not Sierra Nevada Mountains. (Sierra means mountains.)

**sister** If no surname is given for a nun, the name is the same in all references: **Sister Agnes Rita**. If a surname is used in first reference, drop the given name on second reference: **Sister Clare Regina Torpy** on first reference, **Sister Torpy** in second.

Handle **mother** the same way when referring to a woman who heads a group of nuns.

**Skid Road, Skid Row** Use **Skid Road** for the section in Seattle and elsewhere in the Pacific Northwest, **Skid Row** elsewhere.

It originated as **Skid Road** in the Seattle area, where greased roads were used to skid logs to the mill. Over the years, Skid Road became a synonym for the area where loggers gathered, usually among the rooming houses and saloons.

In time, the term spread to other cities as a description for havens for derelicts. In the process, **row** replaced **road** in many references.

**Soviet Union** Acceptable in all references in the body of a story for Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. See the *Russia, Soviet Union* entry.

**Space Age** It began October 4th, 1957, with the launching of Sputnik-1.

**spacecraft** The plural also is spacecraft. Hyphenate numbers in sequence: **Gemini-7, Apollo-11**.

**space shuttle** A spacecraft designed to transport people and equipment between earth and an orbiting space station.

**spelling** For words not in this stylebook, consult the print wire stylebook, then Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language. See *dictionaries* and geographic names.

**spokesman, spokeswoman** Not **spokesperson**. Use **a representative** if you do not know the sex of the individual.

**sports stories** They are not exempt from normal style rules, unless specifically permitted in this stylebook.

**S-S-T** Acceptable in all references for a supersonic transport.

**Stalin, Josef** Not Joseph.

**state(s)** Four states — Kentucky, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Virginia — are legally known as commonwealths rather than states. Make the distinction only in formal uses: The *commonwealth of Kentucky* filed a suit. Elsewhere: Tobacco is grown in the *state of Kentucky*.

**sub** A revised, corrected or updated version of a previous dispatch.

**subpoena, subpoenaed, subpoenaing** Not subpoena.

**supersonic transport S-S-T** is acceptable in all references.

**Supreme Court of the United States** Also: *the U-S Supreme Court, the Supreme Court*. The chief justice is properly the *chief justice of the United States*, not of the Supreme Court: *Chief Justice Warren Burger*.

For the other eight members: *Justice William Rehnquist* or *Associate Justice William Rehnquist*.

**supreme courts of the states** If a court with this name is not a state's highest tribunal, the fact should be noted. In New York state, for example, the Supreme Court is a trial court. The state's highest court is the Court of Appeals.

**Supreme Soviet** The principal legislative body of the Soviet Union.

**surface-to-air missile SAM** acceptable on second reference. Avoid the redundant *SAM missiles*.

## T

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**teen, teen-ager (n.), teen-age (adj.)** Do not use teen-aged. *Teenage*, without a hyphen, is a shrub.

**tee shirt** Spell it *T-shirt*.

**telecast (n.), televise (v.)**

**Teletype** A trademark for a brand of teleprinter or teletypewriter.

**television** Resist the temptation to write: Her speech will be on *national television* when it will also be on radio. Better: Her speech will be *broadcast nationally on radio and television*.

Use a figure when specifying channel number: *He tuned to Channel 3*. To avoid confusion, always refer to a station by its call letters, not its channel: *A spokesman for W-L-S T-V*, not *A spokesman for Channel 7*.

For shows, use quotation marks for both the series and for individual episodes: *"The Trouble with Tribbles," is a popular episode of "Star Trek."*

T-V is acceptable in any informal reference for television if it fits the occasion. Also: *a T-V dinner, cable T-V*.

**temperatures** Use figures for all except zero. In stories, use a word, not a minus sign, to indicate temperatures below zero. Not: *The day's low was -10*.

Right: *The low was minus 10. The low was 10 below zero. The temperature rose to zero by noon. The high was expected to be 9 or 10*.

The minus sign is acceptable for below-zero temperatures in tabular material.

Temperatures get higher or lower, not warmer or cooler:

See *Fahrenheit and Celsius*.

To convert Fahrenheit to Celsius subtract 32 degrees and multiply by 5, divide by 9; to convert Celsius to Fahrenheit, multiply by 9, divide by 5 and add 32 degrees. Some typical conversions:

F	C	F	C	F	C
-40	-40.0	34	1.0	86	30.0
-30	-34.4	40	4.4	90	32.2
-20	-28.9	50	10.0	95	35.0
-10	-23.3	60	15.6	98	36.7
0	-17.8	68	20.0	100	37.8
10	-12.2	70	21.1	104	40.0
20	-6.7	75	23.9	110	43.3
30	-1.1	80	26.7	120	49.0
32	0 0	85	29.4		

**that, which** Use the pronouns *that* and *which*, not *who* and *whom*, to refer to inanimate objects and to animals without a name. See the *who, whom* entry.

Use *which* to introduce a parenthetical clause. Set the clause off with commas:

The books, *which have no salvage value*, will be destroyed. (All the books will be destroyed. The parenthetical clause, though it adds information, could be dropped from the sentence without changing its meaning.)

Use *that* to introduce a clause essential to a sentence. Do not set the clause off with commas.

The books *that have no salvage value* will be destroyed. (Only those books with no salvage value will be destroyed. The clause is essential to the sentence.)

A guideline: If *that* will fit comfortably, use it, and do not set the clause off with commas.

**theft** Theft is the general term and *larceny* the legal term for stealing.

**Burglary** implies entering a building (not necessarily by breaking in) with the intention of committing a crime.

**Robbery**, in a legal sense, implies violence or intimidation in committing a theft. In its popular sense, it means any way to deprive someone of something: His house was *robbed* while he was away. The accident *robbed* him of his health.

Remember, too, that you *rob* a person, bank, or house, but you *steal* the money or the jewels.

**their, they're** *Their* is possessive: It is *their* house. *They're* is a contraction for they are: *They're* on the way.

**then** Do not use *then* before a title to denote the action of a person who formerly held the title.

Wrong: *In 1968 then-Governor Nelson Rockefeller ran for president.*

Right: *In 1968 Governor Nelson Rockefeller ran for president.*

**Third World** The economically developing nations of Africa, Asia and Latin America. Not to be confused with *non-aligned nations*, a political term.

**time** Specify the time in a story if it is pertinent: *a wreck at 3 a-m* gives a clearer picture than simply *a wreck today*.

Time zones usually are not needed: *a wreck at 3 a-m* provides a clear picture without the time zone.

U-P-R uses Eastern time as the standard in national-international copy. State and local copy uses the local time zone and should specify which zone. (*Stations: Indiana Governor Bowen will hold a news conference in his office at 3 p-m E-S-T.*)

The forms:

1. Use figures except for noon and midnight. Use a colon to separate hours from minutes: **11 a-m EST, 1 p-m today, 3:30 p-m Monday**. Avoid redundancies such as **10 a-m this morning**. Also, if clear: **4 o'clock**.

2. For sequences, use figures, colons and hyphenate the decimal: **2:30:21-point-6** (hours, minutes, seconds, tenths).

3. The time zones in the United States and Greenwich Mean Time may be abbreviated as **E-S-T, P-D-T, G-M-T**, and so forth, if linked with a clock reading: **noon E-D-T, 9 a-m M-S-T, midnight G-M-T**. Do not abbreviate if there is NO clock reading. Do not abbreviate other time zones outside the United States.

**traffic, trafficked, trafficking** Note the *k*.

**tropical storm** A rotating wind system with a sustained surface speed from 39 to 73 miles an hour (34 to 63 knots) inclusive. When a tropical storm's wind speed falls below 39 miles an hour, it becomes a **tropical depression**. See *hurricane*.

## U

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**U-F-O (s.), U-F-O's (pl.)** Acceptable in all references for unidentified flying object(s).

**U-H-F** Acceptable in all references for ultra high frequency.

**Ulster** An imprecise designation for Northern Ireland. Ulster properly encompasses six counties in Northern Ireland and three in the Irish Republic. Avoid it except in quotations.

**under way** Two words in virtually all uses: The project is **under way**. The naval maneuvers are **under way**. But it is one word as an adjective before a noun in a nautical sense: an **underway** flotilla.

**UNESCO** Acceptable on first reference for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, but provide the full name in the story.

**UNICEF** Acceptable in all references for the United Nations Children's Fund. The words International and Emergency, originally part of the name, have been dropped.

**United Auto Workers union** Acceptable in all references for United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America. **U-A-W** is acceptable on second reference. Use **autoworkers** — one word — when no specific reference to the union is intended.

**United Mine Workers union** Acceptable in all references for United Mine Workers of America. **U-M-W** is acceptable on second reference. Use **mineworkers** — one word — when no specific reference to the union is intended.

**United Press International** **U-P-I** is acceptable in all references for the privately owned news agency formed in 1958 in a merger of United Press and International News Service.

The address is 220 East 42nd Street, New York, New York 10017. The telephone number is (212) 682-0400. The Broadcast Services headquarters is 360 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, 60601. The telephone number of the U-P-R desk is (312) 781-1634.

**United Steelworkers union** Acceptable in all references for United Steelworkers of America.

**urgent** Used for important events where fast delivery is important. It has priority to break into any story except a flash, bulletin or another urgent.

**U-S Information Agency U-S-I-A** is acceptable on second reference.

**U-S-S** For United States Ship, Steamer or Steamship, before the name of a vessel: *the U-S-S Iowa*.

## V

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**verbs** The splitting of compound verb forms, including infinitives, is not necessarily an error, but often is awkward.

An infinitive is a verb form containing the word **to**: **to go**. It is split when something separates the word **to** from its partner: **to** quickly **go**.

Avoid awkward constructions that would damage the rhythm or meaning of a sentence.

Awkward: She was ordered **to** immediately **leave** on an assignment.

Better: She was ordered **to leave** immediately on an assignment.

The sense often requires that a compound verb be split. Examples:

The budget **was** tentatively **approved**.

He wanted **to** really **help** his mother.

**versus** Spell out, except in tabular where the abbreviation **vs** (without period) is acceptable.

**Veterans Administration** No possessive. **V-A** is acceptable on second reference.

**V-H-F** acceptable in all references for very high frequency.

**vice** Two non-hyphenated words in all uses: *vice admiral, vice chairman, vice chancellor, vice consul, vice president, vice principal, vice regent, vice secretary, a vice presidential candidate*. (Several are exceptions to Webster's New World.)

**V-I-P (s.), V-I-P's (pl.)** Acceptable in all references for very important person(s).

**Voice of America V-O-A** is acceptable on second reference.

## W

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**weapon** Gun is an acceptable term for any firearm. Both *automatic* and *revolver* designate a type of pistol, but the words are not interchangeable. See *pistol* for a comparison. Note also:

*caliber* Measures the inside diameter of a gun barrel, except for most shotguns. Measurement is in either millimeters or decimal fractions of an inch. The word *caliber* is not used with the metric measurement and is often dropped in popular usage with the decimal fractions. It may also be dropped in a news story if it is clearly understood in the context. The forms: *a 9mm pistol; a .22-caliber rifle; a .22 rifle; It is a .22; a .357 Magnum; a Colt .45 automatic; a .38 police special*.

*gauge* Measures the inside diameter of most shotgun barrels. The bigger the number, the smaller the shotgun. The form: *a 12-gauge shotgun*. (Means 12 round lead balls of that size weigh one pound). Other uses: *The shotgun is 12 gauge; a .410 shotgun; It's a .410*. (The .410 is a caliber, but commonly is called a gauge.)

*shot* Small lead or steel pellets fired by shotguns. A shotgun shell usually contains one to

two ounces of shot. (In this context, **shot** is the same in singular and plural). Do not use **shot** interchangeably with **buckshot**, which refers only to the largest shot sizes.

**weather bureau** Acceptable in any reference for the National Weather Service.

**weatherman** Weather forecaster is preferred, because some are women.

**Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language, Second College Edition** The primary source for phonetics of common words and spelling and usage questions not covered in this and the print stylebook.

**Webster's Third International Dictionary** The backup source for phonetics of common words and spelling and usage questions not covered in this and the print stylebook or in Webster's New World.

**whiskey (s.), whiskeys (pl.)** Not whisky.

**Woman's Christian Temperance Union** (Note the singular **Woman's**.) **W-C-T-U** is acceptable on second reference.

**women** Women should receive the same treatment as men in all areas of coverage. Physical descriptions, sexist references, demeaning stereotypes and condescending phrases should not be used.

To cite some examples, this means that:

—Copy should not assume maleness when both sexes are involved, as in: **Jackson told newsmen . . .** or in **the taxpayer . . . he** when it can easily be said **taxpayers . . . they**, etc.

—Copy should not express surprise that an attractive woman can also be professionally accomplished, as in: **Mary Smith doesn't look the part but she's an authority on . . .**

—Copy should not gratuitously mention family relationships when there is no relevance to the subject, as in: **Golda Meir, a doughty grandmother, told the Egyptians today . . .**

—Use the same standards for men as for women in deciding whether to include specific mention of personal appearance or marital and family situation.

In other words, treatment of the sexes should be evenhanded and free of assumptions and stereotypes. This does not mean that valid and acceptable words such as **mankind** or **humanity** cannot be used. They are appropriate if they fit the occasion.

**words as words** A word or group of words occasionally occurs in a special sense, to illustrate a word spoken of as a word rather than as the means of conveying the thought it usually represents. Because italics are not available to highlight this type of use on newswires, place such words or groups of words in quotation marks: "**There**" is never the **subject of a sentence**.

## X

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**Xerox** A trademark for a photocopier. Never a verb.

**X-ray (n., v., adj.)** Use for both the photographic process and the radiation particles themselves. Capitalize and hyphenate in all uses.

## Y

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**years** Use figures: **1975**. Use an **s** and no apostrophe to indicate spans: **the 1890s, the 1800s**. See *dates* for punctuation guidelines.

**Young Men's Christian Association Y-M-C-A** is acceptable in all references. Headquarters is in New York.

**Young Women's Christian Association Y-W-C-A** is acceptable in all references. Headquarters is in New York.

**youth** Applicable to boys and girls from age 13 until the 18th birthday is reached. Use **man** and **woman** for those 18 and older.

## Z

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**zero (s.), zeros (pl.)** Not zeroes.

**ZIP codes** Use all-caps **ZIP** for Zone Improvement Program, but always lowercase **code**. Run the five digits together without a comma, and do not put a comma between the state name and the ZIP code: **New York, New York 10017**.

# UPI Regional NewsCenters

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## Atlanta

(Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee)  
United Press Building  
1211 Williams St., N.W.  
Atlanta, Ga. 30309  
Telephone: (404) 875-7631

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Dallas, Texas 75247  
Telephone: (214) 980-8300

## Kansas City

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5700 Broadmoor  
Mission, Kansas  
66202  
Telephone: (913) 677-1212

## New York

(New York State, New York City, New Jersey)  
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Telephone: (212) 682-0400

## Pittsburgh

(Pennsylvania and West Virginia)  
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Pittsburgh, Pa. 15219  
Telephone: (412) 566-1011

## San Francisco

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9th & Market Streets  
San Francisco, Calif. 94102  
Mail address: P.O. Box 4329, 94101  
Telephone: (415) 525-5900

## Washington

(Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Washington, D.C.)  
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