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Writing Style & English Usage

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ACQUISITION RESEARCH HANDBOOK SERIES

Writing Style & English Usage

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ACQUISITION RESEARCH PROGRAM
NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

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To request Defense Acquisition Research, please contact:

NPS Acquisition Research Program
Graduate School of Business and Public Policy
Naval Postgraduate School
555 Dyer Road
Monterey, CA 93943

E-mail: arp@nps.edu

Copies of the Acquisition Sponsored Research Reports may be printed from the publication tab of our website www.acquisitionresearch.net



ACQUISITION RESEARCH PROGRAM
NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

Preface

This handbook is one of a series of four produced for the Acquisition Research Program (ARP) at the Naval Postgraduate School. The purpose of the ARP Handbook Series is to provide helpful information in a user-friendly format to assist graduate students and others in improving their research and writing skills.

The ARP Handbook Series includes the following:

- Analysis Planning Methodology: For Theses, Joint Applied Projects, & MBA Research Reports
- Writing Style & English Usage
- APA Citation Style (6th edition)
- Effective Tables, Figures, & Frequently Used Terms

For additional copies, please visit the Acquisition Research Program Office at the Graduate School of Business & Public Policy in Ingersoll 372. The handbook series can also be downloaded from our website (www.acquisitionresearch.net).



Table of Contents

What is Style in Writing?.....	4
Style: The Basics	4
A. Punctuation.....	4
1. Apostrophe (')	4
2. Brackets ([])... ..	5
3. Colon (:)	6
4. Comma (,).....	7
5. Ellipsis (...).....	8
6. Em Dash (—).....	9
7. En Dash (–).....	9
8. Exclamation Point (!).....	10
9. Hyphen (-).....	10
10. Parentheses ()	10
11. Percent Symbol (%).....	11
12. Period (.)	11
13. Question Mark (?)	12
14. Quotation Marks (“ ” or ‘ ’).....	12
15. Semicolon (;).....	13
16. Spacing With Punctuation Marks	14
B. Capitalization	14
C. Italics	15
D. Numbers	15
1. Numbers Written as Numerals	15
2. Numbers Written Out in Words	16
3. Percentages and Decimals.....	16
What is Usage?.....	17
Usage: The Basics.....	17
A. General Usage.....	17
1. Point of View/Voice.....	17
2. Verb Tense	17
3. Verb Voice	18
4. Pronouns.....	18
5. Relative Pronouns	19
6. Parallel Structure	19



7. Prepositions	19
B. ARP-Specific Usage	19
1. Abbreviations	19
2. Academic Degrees	20
3. Articles (the, a, an).....	20
4. Bulleted and Numbered Lists	21
5. Equations	23
6. Figures in Millions or Billions	23
7. Military Terms and Rank.....	23
8. Names and Titles	24
9. Ships and Aircraft	24
10. State Names	25
11. Times and Dates.....	25
C. Words Commonly Confused	26



What is Style in Writing?

In writing, style refers to the way you write—the way you use writing tools such as punctuation and word choice. For example, the style of academic writing is much different than the style of poetry or prose. In academic writing, it is important to use a writing style that ensures clear, consistent presentation of your scholarly research. The Acquisition Research Program (ARP) follows the style guidelines outlined in *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (sixth edition). By adhering to these rules, the ARP improves the writing quality of its research and creates consistency among all of its published products.

Style: The Basics

The following guidelines are taken from the *APA Publication Manual* (sixth edition). These guidelines are an abbreviated version of those given in the *Publication Manual*. For more information or for more examples of any of the rules discussed in this handbook, please consult the *Publication Manual*. Copies of the *Publication Manual* are available to check out in the ARP office.

For spelling questions—including when to hyphenate and when to capitalize—consult *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (2005). In general, the first spelling listed in an entry is the preferred spelling. For the correct use of terms specific to ARP publications, see the student handbook *Effective Tables, Figures, & Frequently Used Terms*. Consult the online version of the Defense Acquisition University's *Glossary of Defense Acquisition Acronyms and Terms* (<https://dap.dau.mil/glossary/Pages/Default.aspx>) for the correct use of military-specific terms and acronyms.

A. Punctuation

1. Apostrophe (')

Use an apostrophe

- to show possession. (*Note.* To show joint possession, use an apostrophe after only the last word: Fred and Sylvia's apartment. To show individual possession, use an apostrophe after both words: Fred's and Sylvia's faces.)
the company's procedures, women's rights, Xerox's profits
- to indicate omitted figures.
the class of '62, the Spirit of '76, the '20s
- in contractions to show omitted words.



It's your fault we lost.

Do not use an apostrophe

- for plural abbreviations and designations that are not possessive.

MBA's, CEOs, IOUs, POs, VIPs

not

MBA's, CEO's, IOU's, PO's, VIP's

- for the possessive pronouns *its* and *your*.

The company's executive cancelled the trip because its stocks were down.

not

The company's executive cancelled the trip because it's stocks were down.

To show possession, add an 's after singular nouns, including those that end in s.

The contract's terms are vague.

The boss's response was surprising.

Dickens's novels

Kansas's schools

Note. An exception to this rule is to use only an apostrophe with the singular form of proper nouns ending in an unpronounced s.

Descartes' writings

Marine Corps' strategy

Add only an ' after plural nouns ending in s.

the members' suggestions

the bosses' salaries

the Williamses' (referring to more than one Williams)

2. Brackets ([])

Use brackets

- to identify words inserted into the quote by someone other than the original author.
- Jones suggested, "You [program managers] must include several conditions in the contract" (2007, p. 44).
- to enclose material inside parentheses that cannot be set off with commas.



(The USD[AT&L] was in charge.)

Note. This rule does not apply to subparts or sections of documents such as the FAR or statute references.

(FAR Subpart 9.405(b))

(as described in 41 U.S.C. § 421(c)(1))

Do not use brackets

- to mark the change from a capital to a lowercase letter or vice versa in the first word of quoted material.

3. Colon (:)

Use a colon

- to emphasize the connection between the information in an independent clause (a complete sentence) and another phrase or clause (incomplete or complete sentence). Capitalize the first word after a colon only if it is a proper noun or the start of a complete sentence.

The company had three main considerations: expense, time, and feasibility.

The instructions were clear: Officers should report back to the ship.

- in ratios and proportions.

The ratio was 10:2.

Do not use a colon

- to link two dependent clauses.

The role of the manager includes evaluating employee performance, attending status meetings, and implementing policy changes.

not

The role of the manager includes: evaluating employee performance, attending status meetings, and implementing policy changes.

- to introduce a quote if what precedes the colon is not a complete sentence.

Smith and Jones (2003) argued that “case studies were essential to solving the problem” (p. 5).

not

Smith and Jones (2003) argued that: “case studies were essential to solving the problem” (p. 5).



4. Comma (,)

Use a comma

- to separate elements in a series of three or more.
The flag is red, white, and blue.
He would nominate Tom, Dick, or Harry.
- to set off nonessential phrases (phrases that add extra information but do not change the meaning of the sentence).
The committee, which meets in the morning, will vote on the notion.
- to set off conjunctive adverbs and transitional expressions (*however, therefore, as a result, for example, for instance, in the past, instead, etc.*).
The contract, however, was signed.
Therefore, they signed the contract.
- to separate an introductory clause or phrase from the main clause.
When he had tired of the mad pace of New York, he moved to Denver.
- to separate two independent clauses (complete sentences) that are linked by a coordinating conjunction (*and, nor, but, or, yet, so*).
We visited Washington, and our senator greeted us personally.
- to separate the names of states and nations used with city names.
She will begin her journey in Dublin, Ireland, and then travel by airplane to Fargo, ND, the following week.
- to set off an exact date (but not to set off an incomplete date, such as month and year only).
On June 25, 2007, the contract was awarded.
not
On June 25, 2007 the contract was awarded.
The contract was awarded in June 2007 to the highest bidding firm.
not
The contract was awarded in June, 2007 to the highest bidding firm.
- in numbers greater than 999, except when referring to page numbers in the reference list and in-text citations.
He purchased 1,507 widgets.
(Jones, 2005, p. 1492)



- in bulleted or numbered lists when the items in the list form an incomplete sentence. The final two items should be separated by a comma and a conjunction (e.g., *and*, *or*). If the listed items are only one or two words, the comma may be omitted.

The process entails

1. hiring new personnel,
2. training new hires, and
3. evaluating the performance of each employee.

Note. See Bulleted and Numbered Lists in the ARP-Specific Usage section for more examples of lists.

Do not use a comma

- to set off an essential phrase (a phrase that restricts the meaning of the sentence).
- David Wood’s memo “How to Accept Track Changes in Word” was profound.
- to separate a compound predicate (two verbs that rely on the same subject).
- The DoD issued a new statement and expected it to be received well.
- between parts of measurement.
- The experiment took 2 weeks 10 days to complete.

5. Ellipsis (...)

Use ellipses

- to signify where you have removed material from the original source in a quotation.
- with spaces before and after it.

Miller argued, “The data requires more analysis ... before it can be implemented.”

Do not use ellipses

- at the beginning or end of direct quotes.
- as a period to end a sentence within a quote. Punctuate the sentence, put a space, and then insert the ellipses, followed by another space and the start of the next sentence.

I no longer have a strong enough political base. ... It is important that I improve my poll numbers before the next election.



- within your own sentence to indicate a stylistic pause. This usage is too informal for academic writing.

6. Em Dash (—)

Use an em dash (—)

- to denote an abrupt change in thought or an emphatic pause.
We will fly to Paris in June—if I get a raise.
Smith offered a plan—an unprecedented one—to raise revenues.
- when a phrase that would be set off by commas contains a series of words that must be separated by commas.
He listed the qualities—intelligence, humor, conservatism, independence—that he liked in an executive.

Do not use an em dash

- with spaces around it.
- excessively because it disrupts the flow of the writing.
Note. Microsoft Word will automatically replace two hyphens typed with no spaces between them with an em dash once you hit the space bar after the word following the two hyphens. For example, type “He--the chief executive officer--came with us,” and once you hit the space bar after “the” and “came,” Word will autoformat the hyphens into an em dash. If you add spaces after the hyphens, the autoformatting will not work.

7. En Dash (–)

Use an en dash (a punctuation mark shorter than an em dash but longer than a hyphen)

- to show a range between dates, numbers, or locations.
The war lasted from 1881–1886.
The argument was first made by Hendrix (1969, pp. 122–129).
- between words of equal weight in a compound adjective.
The Clinger–Cohen Act is extremely important.
Government–industry contracts are an essential element of her proposal.
- to indicate a specific division of a company or organization.
FISC–Norfolk was the first to employ the new policy.

Do not use an en dash

- with spaces around it.



- in place of an em dash or hyphen (see the rules for correct uses of em dashes, Section 5, and hyphens, Section 9).

8. Exclamation Point (!)

Use exclamation points rarely, if ever, in academic writing.

9. Hyphen (-)

Use a hyphen

- to avoid ambiguity or to form a single idea from two or more words.
The president will speak to small-business owners.
She had a know-it-all attitude.
- to connect compound adjectives.
The contractor submitted a proposal for a cost-reimbursement contract.
It was necessary to consult a subject-matter expert.

Do not use a hyphen

- to link the adverb *very* or any adverb that ends in *ly* to an adjective.
Be careful with highly explosive material.
- if the compound adjective follows the noun, unless the hyphen is needed to add clarity to the sentence.

The actor is well known.

but

If the PM chooses a service that is contract-out only, the management will be cumbersome.

Note. For a more complete discussion of when to hyphenate terms, consult the *Publication Manual* (pages 97–100). For guidance on hyphenating a specific term, consult the DAU's *Glossary of Defense Acquisition Acronyms and Terms* for military-specific terms or *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (2005) for general terms.

10. Parentheses ()

Use parentheses

- to introduce an abbreviation or acronym.
The Department of Defense (DoD) is the agency in charge.
- to set off structurally independent elements.
The results confirmed our suspicions (see Figure 2).

Do not use parentheses



- to enclose material within other parentheses.
(She wanted him, her brother, to come.)
not
(She wanted him (her brother) to come.)
- back to back. Join the information with a semicolon instead.
For more information, consult the study (Carter, 2004; see Figure 1).
not
For more information, consult the study (Carter, 2004) (see Figure 1).
Note. Place the period outside a closing parenthesis if the material inside is not a sentence (such as this fragment). When a phrase placed in parentheses (this is one example) might normally qualify as a complete sentence but is dependent on the surrounding material, do not capitalize the first word within the parentheses or end the parenthetical phrase with a period. (An independent parenthetical sentence such as this one requires a period before the closing parenthesis.)

11. Percent Symbol (%)

Use a percent symbol instead of the word *percent*.

The data showed a 30% increase in cost over five years.

12. Period (.)

Use a period

- to end a complete sentence.
The president will not speak today.
- inside quotation marks unless a citation is necessary.
She called the event a “phenomenal success.”
She called the event a “phenomenal success” (Jones, 2007, p. 78).
- with initials of names (include a space after each initial).
J. P. Doe
- to abbreviate *United States* when it is used as an adjective and to abbreviate Latin terms.
The U.S. Navy deserves our praise.
a.m., cf., i.e., et al.



- to punctuate items in a bulleted or numbered list when the individual items listed form a complete sentence.

Each person in the organization has a specific function:

1. The manager supervises daily tasks.
2. The sales staff promotes the products.
3. The HR department handles individual employee problems.

Do not use a period

- for abbreviations of state names, acronyms, or measurements (except *in.* for *inches*).

CA, NY, DoD, GAO, USD(AT&L), PhD, MBA, cm

not

C.A., N.Y., D.o.D., G.A.O., U.S.D.(A.T.&L.), Ph.D., M.B.A., c.m.

13. Question Mark (?)

Use a question mark

- inside or outside of quotation marks, depending on the meaning.
Who said the mission was “not critical”?
He asked, “How long will it take?”

14. Quotation Marks (“ ” or ‘ ’)

Use double quotation marks (“ ”)

- to introduce a word or phrase used ironically, as slang, or as an invented or coined expression. Use quotations marks around such words or phrases on their first use only.

We termed the behavior we observed from different PMs as “negaboostive” because it negatively affected employee attitude but boosted end-of-quarter numbers.

- to enclose the title of a journal article or chapter in a book mentioned in-text (but not in the reference list).

His article “The Fall of the Empire” created a lot of controversy in Washington, DC.

- to indicate that material is being directly quoted from a source. The period and the comma ending a sentence fall within the quotation marks, unless the sentence requires a citation. The dash, semicolon, question mark, and exclamation mark go within the quotation marks when they apply to the quoted matter only. They go outside when they apply to the whole sentence.

One researcher remarked, “The data were correct” (Black, 2008, p. 24).



The survey respondent suggested that the “company culture was at fault.”

Do not use double quotation marks

- to indicate anchors of scale (italicize these).

The scale ranged from 1 (*not acceptable*) to 10 (*very acceptable*).

- to format a letter, word, phrase, or sentence used as a linguistic example (italicize these).

She explained the difference between *effect* and *affect*.

- to introduce a new, technical, or key term (italicize these).

The term *rescission* describes an important action available to the executive branch.

- on quotes longer than 40 words. Such quotes should be in block-quote format.

Jane E. Aaron (2004) explained,

Do not rely on a grammar and style checker to identify missing or misused end punctuation. Although a checker may flag missing question marks after direct questions or incorrect combinations of marks (such as a question mark and a period at the end of a sentence), it cannot do much else. (p. 241)

Use single quotation marks (‘ ’)

- for quotes within quotes.

She said, “I will begin by repeating what the president said yesterday: ‘Shareholder confidence is down, but I know this situation is reversible.’ We can turn things around.”

Do not use single quotation marks

- unless citing a quote within a quote.

Note. Use a single quotation mark and a double quotation mark together if two quoted elements end at the same time.

He said, “I feel like yelling, ‘I deserve a raise!’”

15. Semicolon (;)

Use a semicolon

- to indicate greater separation of thought and information than a comma and a coordinating conjunction (*and*, *but*, *so*, etc.) convey, but less separation than a period implies.

The package was due last week; it arrived today.



- to separate elements of a series if individual segments are main clauses (i.e., complete sentences) or if individual segments contain material that also must be set off by commas.

The committee was created because errors had been found on the company books; the inventory had not been maintained; communication between departments had not been made a priority; and many files had been lost by poorly trained personnel.

The committee included John Smith, vice president of marketing for Acme, Inc.; Deborah Jones, supply manager for XYZ Corp.; and Michelle Olsen, vice president of finance for Majors Co.

16. Spacing With Punctuation Marks

Use only one space after

- a period, comma, semicolon, and colon.

Use no spaces before or after

- dashes, hyphens, en dashes, or slashes

B. Capitalization

Capitalize

- the names of proper nouns (use the dictionary to determine whether something is a proper noun).
- the names of specific departments and specific academic courses.

Most business departments offer an introductory course in accounting. The Financial Management Department at NPS offers Accounting 100 for first-level students.

- major words in titles and headings (words of four letters or more) and all verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and pronouns.

Results of the Students' Self-Reports

Factors That Are Important

Research With Mobile Ad Hoc Networks

- nouns followed by numerals or letters that indicate a specific place in a numbered series.

In the study, Component 3 proved to be the most important.

Do not capitalize

- the names of laws, theories, models, statistical procedures, or hypotheses.
- the names of conditions or groups in an experiment.

The control group was first to participate in the study.



- prepositions in titles, unless they are longer than four letters.
- second words of compound adjectives unless the second word is a proper noun or is used in a title or heading.

Cycle-time consistencies, anti-German warfare

Note. For more information on capitalization, including specific examples, see pages 101–104 of the *Publication Manual*. For information about when to capitalize terms specific to ARP publications, consult the student handbook *Effective Tables, Figures, & Frequently Used Terms*.

C. Italics

Use italics

- to indicate anchors of scale.
The scale ranged from 1 (*not acceptable*) to 10 (*very acceptable*).
- to format a letter, word, phrase, or sentence used as a linguistic example.
She explained the difference between *effect* and *affect*.
- to introduce a new, technical, or key term.
The term *rescission* describes an important action available to the executive branch.
- to set off the titles of journals and books.
- for letters used as statistical symbols or algebraic variables.
The *y* variable is shown in the graph.

Do not use italics

- to emphasize a point (the writing itself should do this).
- to set off foreign phrases or abbreviations common in English (i.e., found as main entries in the dictionary).
The employee's ad hoc approach led to problems for the company's reputation.

D. Numbers

For more information on how to write numbers in the text of a document, see pages 111–114 of APA's *Publication Manual*.

1. Numbers Written as Numerals

In general, use numerals

- to report statistical data, including numbers between zero and nine, and for numbers 10 and above.



Although 10 departments incorporated the changes, only 4 succeeded (40% success rate).

- for numbers expressing exact times, dates, ages, scores, and sums of money. (However, for approximations of numbers of days, months, and years, write the numbers out).

By June 2, 2004, the total deficit came to \$5.7 billion.

but

After about three months, the total deficit increased by \$2 million.

- for numbers that come immediately before units of measurement.

The block measured 3 in. on one side.

Note. Use US\$1.5 million, AUS\$10, and so on if more than one type of dollar is discussed in the document. Otherwise, the symbol should differentiate the currency (£, €, etc.)

The amount totaled US\$5.7 billion, not including the AUS\$4 billion contract or the €2 billion loan.

2. Numbers Written Out in Words

Write numbers out when they are used

- at the beginning of a sentence.

Fifty-two students participated in the seminar.

- for whole numbers from zero to nine (when the numbers are not reporting statistical data), even if used with numbers 10 or above.

Over the course of 12 weeks, four participants sent in their surveys.

- for common fractions.

We needed a two-thirds majority to win.

3. Percentages and Decimals

Use figures and decimals

- for all percentages except zero.

zero percent, 0.7%, 1%, 2.5%, 10%

- for amounts less than 1, precede the decimal with a zero unless the number is a statistic that cannot be greater than one (e.g., correlations, proportions, and levels of statistical significance).

The cost of living rose 0.6%.

The average was 0.34 cm.

$p = .05$



What is Usage?

Usage refers to the correct use of words and phrases in standard English. Just as with style guidelines, the ARP follows the guidelines for usage outlined in the APA's *Publication Manual* (sixth edition). Proper usage enhances your credibility and focuses your reader's attention on the quality of your content instead of distracting them by poor writing quality.

Usage: The Basics

The guidelines in the General Usage section are taken from the APA's *Publication Manual* (sixth edition). These guidelines are an abbreviated version of those given in the *Publication Manual*. For more information or for more examples of any of the rules discussed in this handbook, consult the *Publication Manual*. Copies of the *Publication Manual* are available to check out in the ARP office.

The guidelines in the ARP-Specific Usage section were established to create consistency among ARP publications.

A. General Usage

1. Point of View/Voice

To ensure clarity, use first person (“I” if you are an individual thesis writer and “we” if you are working in a group) throughout the paper. Avoid using third person (e.g., “the researchers” or “the authors”) because this creates confusion when discussing the work of other researchers.

Do not use second person (“you”) at any time in the paper.

Do not use anthropomorphism (e.g., “Chapter III argues...,” “This report shows that...,” etc.). Instead, write in first person (e.g., “In Chapter III, I argue...,” “In this report, we show that...,” etc.).

2. Verb Tense

To keep verb tenses consistent throughout the document, use past tense

- when referring to a source.
Greene (2009) mentioned his program's success in his text.
- to show that an action has occurred at a specific time in the past (i.e., to report your results).

We evaluated the results of our survey in order to determine which organization was most efficient.



Use present tense, not future tense, to describe the purpose of a thesis or what it contains or argues.

In Chapter III, we analyze the data.

not

In Chapter III, we will analyze the data.

3. Verb Voice

In academic and technical writing,

- use active rather than passive voice. Only use passive voice when it is important to focus attention on the person or thing being acted on rather than on the person or thing performing the action.

Active: We analyzed the results of the survey.

Passive: The results of the survey were analyzed.

4. Pronouns

Use *who* to refer to human beings.

Patricia, who conducted the research, is coming to the base.

The employees who worked overtime were paid \$200.

Use *that* or *which* to refer to things and animals.

The reports that she wants filed are on the table.

Avoid second-person pronouns (*you, your*) in academic writing.

Match singular pronouns with singular antecedents and plural pronouns with plural antecedents. To refer to agencies and corporations, use singular pronouns.

The GAO published its opinion in its recent report.

Avoid using pronouns when the noun to which they are referring is unclear or unstated.

Use *who* as the subject of a verb and *whom* as the object. If *who* is correct, you should be able to use *he* or *she* in its place. If *whom* is correct, you should be able to use *him* or *her* in its place.

Vote for the employee who you think demonstrated the best attitude. [You think she is the employee with the best attitude.]

The employee whom I chose is kind to everyone. [I chose him because he is kind to everyone.]



5. Relative Pronouns

That introduces essential information.

The company that signed the agreement is based in Chicago.

Which introduces nonessential information. Because *which* links nonessential information, it is set off by a comma.

The company, which is based in Chicago, will sign the agreement next week.

6. Parallel Structure

Use parallel structure to present items in a list and to maintain similar forms in a sentence.

The team was asked to run a statistical analysis, to evaluate the findings, and to present the results in a report.

not

The team was asked to run a statistical analysis, carefully evaluate the findings, and that they not share the results with anyone.

7. Prepositions

Use *in which* rather than *when* or *where* unless referring to a specific location or time.

Directive 1015.5, in which the policy was established, was updated in 1991.

This is the base where the Humvees are stored.

B. ARP-Specific Usage

1. Abbreviations

Write out a term that has an abbreviation the first time it is used and follow the term with the abbreviation in parentheses. After the first use, do not write the term out again; instead, consistently use the abbreviation from that point on. Do not alternate between writing a term out and abbreviating it. However, if an abbreviation is not used for several chapters, it may be helpful to redefine the abbreviation.

The employees failed to account for commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) merchandise.

Only use abbreviations for terms that are cumbersome to write out each time and that a reader will be familiar with. Using abbreviations for terms that are more commonly written out creates confusion for readers.



Do not introduce abbreviations in titles or headings. The first use of abbreviation should be in the actual text.

Abbreviations that are introduced in an abstract or executive summary must be reintroduced in the main body of the paper.

Do not use the abbreviation *U.S.* in front of the names of government agencies or departments in either the text or in the reference list.

The EPA and the DoT have different responsibilities.

Spell out *versus* in text. The lowercase abbreviation *vs.* may be used in a heading or subheading or in a table or figure title.

The abbreviation *e.g.* means *for example* and *i.e.* means *that is*. These abbreviations should always be followed by a comma and should only come in parenthetical asides. Use these abbreviations sparingly.

Some departments (e.g., finance, accounting, and marketing) may be audited.

He was the “keeper of the secrets” (i.e., he was responsible for safeguarding the organization’s proprietary information), so his role was considered critical to the council.

Write out *fiscal year* on the first use. After that, use the abbreviation (FY).

The report was published in fiscal year (FY) 1999; however, it was updated in FY2000.

2. Academic Degrees

Use PhD, MA, MS, MBA, BA, and so forth (not Ph.D., M.A., etc.).

Degree information should be capitalized when the proper name of the degree is written but lowercased when the name of the degree is given generally.

He received a Bachelor of Science degree and a Master of Business Administration degree.

She graduated with a bachelor’s degree in finance and a master’s degree in economics.

3. Articles (the, a, an)

Include *the* in front of abbreviations when they are used as nouns or when they refer to an entity, such as the DoD and the GAO—if you can replace the abbreviation with the agency or the department, use an article in front of it. When abbreviations are used as adjectives, they should not be preceded by an article.



The DoD issued a memo.

GAO employees are known for their integrity.

Use *a* before words or abbreviations that begin with consonant sounds. Use *an* before words and abbreviations that begin with vowel sounds—even if *an* would not make sense if the abbreviation were written out.

An SOW is the first element required.

A POW should always be respected.

4. Bulleted and Numbered Lists

Numbered lists should only be used when the information in the list has ordinal importance (e.g., chronology or importance). Otherwise, use bulleted lists.

In general, follow the same rules of grammar to punctuate a list as if the information were written in sentence form. Refer to the following table for samples of lists.



Table 1. Sample Punctuation for Bulleted and Numbered Lists

Description of List	Example
List introduced by a colon that requires punctuation between items	<p>The key capabilities include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • robust, reliable communications to all nodes; • reliable, accurate, and timely information on all friendly forces; and • new capabilities that do not disrupt the performance of the system.
List introduced with no punctuation	<p>The Navy is reducing spending by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • canceling deployments, • grounding aircraft, and • reducing flight operations.
List containing full sentences	<p>This thesis has three objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify DoD spending habits. • Review strategies to reduce spending. • Produce an action plan.
List that does not require punctuation between items	<p>The DoD is designing new aircraft to be carried by or launched from submarines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aichi M6A • Caspar U.1 • Piaggio P.8 • Watanabe E9W <p>The web service administration function includes the following capabilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer list—allows the current agent to list the peers with which it shares models • One-click mining—uses only one click to index and mine the data stored locally • Properties—specifies parameters used in the one-click mining • Dashboard monitor—displays lexical links discovered from the mining process • Back to search—provides the capability to allow a basic search
Description of List	Example
Numbered list (items are presented in a specific order)	<p>The source selection process includes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. developing initial criteria for the award; 2. negotiating with suppliers based on those criteria; 3. determining the most qualified bidder; and 4. awarding the contract.



5. Equations

Equations can be formatted either within a paragraph as part of the text or set off from the paragraph. In general, equations included in a paragraph are not labeled and are usually simple equations, and more complex equations are set off from a paragraph and are labeled consecutively throughout the paper.

For equations included in the text,

- add spaces around math symbols.
 $a + b = c$
- use mathematical symbols instead of letters (e.g., \times instead of x).

For equations set off from the text,

- label each equation with a consecutive number placed in parentheses to the right of the equation.

$$a + b = c \qquad (1)$$

- write references in the text to equations set off from the text as Equation 1, not equation (1) or Equation (1).

6. Figures in Millions or Billions

Spell out the terms *million* and *billion*. Do not capitalize these terms.

The total deficit came to \$5.7 billion.

Use decimals where practical.

The company's net profit was \$1.5 million.

Round figures to two decimal places (unless it is imperative to give the exact figure).

It is worth \$4.35 million. It is worth exactly \$4,351,242.

Do not drop *million* or *billion* in the first figure of a range.

He is worth from \$2 million to \$4 million.

Do not use a hyphen to join figures and the words *million* or *billion*, even to describe something.

The president submitted a \$300 billion budget.

7. Military Terms and Rank

When used to refer to the military branches, the terms *service* or *services* should be lowercased. The names of each of the services should be capitalized.

All services were included in the ceremony: Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard.



The terms *armed forces* and *naval* are not usually capitalized unless they are used with an agency or department title.

The U.S. Armed Forces deserve our respect.

The armed forces are an essential part of the national defense strategy, especially the naval forces.

Military rank is capitalized only when used with a specific person's name.

Others, such as Captain Kathy L. Johnson, will be present at the symposium.

He was promoted to the rank of lieutenant general.

The terms *Sailor*, *Soldier*, *Marine*, and *Airman* (and their plural forms) are capitalized when used to refer to the members of the services.

Do not use all caps on the names of operations, ships, or aircraft.

Operation Enduring Freedom

USS *Ronald Reagan*

In general, military rank should only be included in a military context.

Williams (2004) analyzed the data with his research team.

but

Lt Gen Williams commanded a battalion during OEF.

8. Names and Titles

A job title is capitalized only when used as a title for a specific person's name.

The secretary of defense issued a memorandum.

Vice President of Public Relations Kathy L. Johnson will attend the seminar.

The director of sales at Smith Corporation will attend the conference.

She was the chief of the Advanced Projects Office for Missions Operations.

The president delivered the State of the Union address today.

The first time you refer to a person in text, use his or her full name. In subsequent references, use his or her last name only. Never refer to a person by his or her first name only. In general, do not use the courtesy titles *Dr.*, *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Ms.*, and *Miss* in academic writing.

9. Ships and Aircraft

Do not use articles (a/an/the) in front of the names of ships or aircraft.



Do not write ship or aircraft names in all caps.

Italicize the names of ships, aircraft, and weapons systems, but do not italicize the types or models of ships or aircraft. Use quotation marks around the nicknames of ships or aircraft.

USS *LaSalle* (AGF 3), the “Great White Ghost,” sailed into San Diego.

The *Enola Gay* was a B-29 Superfortress; it dropped the atomic bomb to end World War II.

On the first mention of a ship name, always include USS (not in italics), the ship’s name, and the hull number (which has no hyphen in it). Subsequent mentions can use the ship name only.

In January, USS *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75) set sail.

For aircraft squadrons, use a hyphen in the squadron name only after first giving the full name.

Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 97 deployed aboard USS *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70). During their deployment, VFA-97 maintained a perfect safety record.

10. State Names

Use state code abbreviations for all state names used in conjunction with city names. When used alone, write out state names.

The weapons were located in Norfolk, VA, and Seattle, WA.

The shipyard in Rhode Island was the largest.

11. Times and Dates

Do not put a 12 in front of *noon* or *midnight*.

For dates, always write figures without rank (*st*, *nd*, *rd*, or *th*). Capitalize and spell out calendar months in all uses. References to dates in the text should be written month, day, year and should never include *of* (i.e., November of 2011).

He will arrive on October 21, and stay until November 2011.

The policy was issued on May 5, 1977.

For decades, show the plural form by adding *s* (no apostrophe); use an apostrophe in front of the number only to indicate numerals that are left out.

the 1890s, the '90s, the mid-1930s



C. Words Commonly Confused

adopt	choose to follow an idea
adapt	adjust one thing to another
affect	(v) to cause change in something
effect	(n) something brought about by change, a result
allude	to hint
refer	make direct reference
alot	not a word
a lot	to informally describe a quantity of something
already	previously
all ready	all are prepared
among	in association with three or more things
between	separates two things
anxious	nervous
eager	looking forward to
assume	to take as true without evidence
presume	to take as true for a specific reason
assure	to make confident
ensure	to make certain something happens
insure	to buy insurance
because	the reason for something
since	relation in time (substitute “after that”)
capital	city
capitol	building
compliment	to praise
complement	to complete
complimentary	given free as a courtesy
complementary	acting as a complement; completing
continual	happening in steady succession
continuous	uninterrupted
credible	believable, trustworthy
creditable	deserving credit, praiseworthy
discreet	prudent
discrete	distinct
disinterested	impartial
uninterested	not interested



e.g., i.e.,	<i>exempli gratia</i> , for example <i>id est</i> , that is, that is to say
emigrate immigrate	to leave a country for residence elsewhere to take residence in a country where one is not a native
eminent imminent	distinguished or outstanding about to happen
everyday every day	(adj) normal, not out of the ordinary, occurring every day refers to when something is happening
evoke invoke	bring out call upon
farther further	to extend in regard to physical distance to extend in regard to everything but physical distance
fewer less	quantities that can be counted quantities that must be measured
fortunately fortuitously	an unforeseen good thing happening by chance
function functionality	operate; occupation or employment contribution to the development and maintenance of a larger whole
good well	(adj) describes something (adv) describes how something was done
hanged hung	done at criminal executions (people) past tense of hang (objects)
incredible incredulous	unbelievable not believing
individual person or someone	use when distinguishing a person from a group or a corporation can usually be used instead of <i>individual</i>
infer imply	to conclude by reasoning from something known or assumed hint or suggest
instinct intuition	a natural, subconscious impulse to do something subconscious knowledge gained through personal experience



irregardless regardless	not a word without regard for objections
its it's its'	shows the possessive of pronoun <i>it</i> contraction meaning <i>it is</i> not a word
last latter	being after all others being the last mentioned of two
lay lie	to place something to recline
libel slander	damaging public statement made in print damaging public statement made orally
like as	comparison followed by a word or phrase comparison followed by a clause (a subject + verb)
list listing	a group of items or names categorized together something that is listed
literally figuratively	following the exact order of the real not in its usual/exact sense
majority plurality	more than 50% the largest groups without regard to percentage
marketing merchandising	all aspects of selling sales promotion and advertising; function of marketing
material materiel	relating to, derived from, or consisting of matter equipment, apparatus, and supplies used by an organization or institution
method methodology	a way of doing something study, or system, of methods
may can	expresses permission expresses ability
militate mitigate	to fight or argue to soften or moderate
notable notorious	compliment to a person of distinction widely known in an unfavorable manner
oral verbal	spoken related to words



parameters perimeters	a variable value that stays constant boundaries or limits
persecute prosecute	harass, treat unfairly take legal action through a court
perspective prospective	point of view probable or expected
persuade convince	to succeed in causing another to act a certain way to cause another to believe something
precede proceed	go before advance to
presumptive presumptuous	based on a probability or an assumption arrogant, unduly confident
principal principle	the most important, the main fundamental idea
raise rise	to lift something (transitive verb that takes an object) things/people that lift by themselves (intransitive verb that does not take an object)
stationary stationery	not moving writing paper
take bring	carry away come with
their there they're	possessive of pronoun <i>they</i> refers to a place or expletive contraction of <i>they are</i>



Notes





ACQUISITION RESEARCH PROGRAM
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS & PUBLIC POLICY
NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
555 DYER ROAD, INGERSOLL HALL
MONTEREY, CA 93943

www.acquisitionresearch.net