
ARL EDITORIAL STYLE GUIDE

June 20, 2007

Generally, ARL publications follow the rules in *The Chicago Manual of Style* (15th ed., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003) and Merriam-Webster <http://www.m-w.com/>. However, there remain many points that are not addressed by these sources and/or are left to the discretion of the author or the editor. The following serves as a general grammatical and stylistic guideline for the preparation of ARL print and online publications, attempting to ensure consistency across external communications. Portions of this text were taken from the *Chicago Manual* as well as from the *MLA Style Manual* (Joseph Gibaldi, ed., 2nd ed., New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1998).

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Formatting

Font and character size

- The house serif font for body text is Palatino.
- The house sans-serif fonts for distinctive headings, captions, and footers are Frutiger Light, Trebuchet MS, and Verdana.
- Font size varies among and within documents.

Line spacing

- Generally, single space lines.
- Double space lines before and after bullet points.

Spacing after periods and colons

Insert a single (not double) space after periods and colons (with the exception of ARL newsletter articles).

Lists

When the listed items are complete sentences:

- The introductory sentence ends with a colon or a period, as appropriate.
- Each listed item begins with a capital letter.
- Each listed item ends with a period.

When the listed items are long phrases (but not complete sentences), each item begins with a capital letter and has no ending punctuation. For example:

- Going to the comic-book shop
- Reading *manga*
- Watching *anime*

Optionally, when the listed items complete the introductory sentence,

- the introductory sentence may end with a comma, semicolon, em dash (—), or no punctuation;
- the list items begin with lowercase items;
- all but the last list item ends with a semicolon;
- the second to last item ends with *and*; and
- the last item ends with a period.

Single-word lists are presented as in the following example:

My favorite ice cream flavors are:

- strawberry
- pistachio
- coffee

URLs and e-mail addresses

Per the *Chicago Manual of Style*, we do *not* enclose URLs and e-mail addresses in angle brackets, for example: <http://www.arl.org/>, kaylyn@arl.org.

If a URL does not end with a filename it should end with a slash, for example:
<http://www.arl.org/libqual/>

In most cases, it is important to include “<http://>” at the beginning of URLs because it clarifies that a URL is a Web address rather than an FTP or other address.

Punctuation

Commas

In a series consisting of three or more elements, all of the elements are separated by commas, for example: We produce books, press releases, and newsletters.

Dashes

- There are no spaces surrounding dashes.
- Em dashes (— [option + apple + dash]) may be used in places where a comma or colon would ordinarily separate clauses. Examples:
 - The cost was too high—both morally and financially—for her to agree to it.
 - We could see a movie, eat dinner, or go skating—whatever we do will be fun.
- En dashes (– [apple + dash]) are used to indicate continuing, or inclusive, numbers:
 - 1968–1972 (but: from 1968 to 1972)
 - 6:00–11:00 p.m. (but: between 6:00 and 11:00 p.m.)
 - pp. 38–193 (but: between pages 38 and 193)
- Hyphens (-) are used when hyphenating words or non-inclusive numbers (like telephone or social security numbers).

Hyphenation

Many compound words have been officially closed and are listed in the dictionary as single words. In most cases, compound words that have not been closed yet are left open when used as a noun or as an adjective *after* a noun but are hyphenated when used as an adjective *before* a noun, for example:

A closed compound (listed in the dictionary as a single word):
 policymaking (noun), policymaker (noun), the policymaking (adj.) process, the process was
 policymaking (adj.)

Open compounds:
 decision making (noun), decision maker (noun), the decision-making (adj.) process, the process
 was decision making (adj.)
 the full text (noun), a full-text (adj.) database, the database is full text (adj.)

We are now following *Chicago* and not Merriam-Webster in leaving out the hyphen in the names of ethnic and national groups (hyphenation is regarded by some as being suggestive of bias). Examples:

African Americans
 Asian American culture
 French Canadian population

Parentheses

Punctuation that is part of a parenthetical remark belongs inside the parentheses; punctuation that is *not* part of the parenthetical remark belongs outside. Examples:

Visitors love our conference room (almost as much as we love the cake!).
 She walked to the kitchen (coffee cup in hand), and then to the elevator.

Quotation marks

When a quotation ends with a comma or period, place the comma or period *inside* the quotation marks. Place semicolons, exclamation points, and question marks *outside* the quotation marks, unless they are part of the quotation. Examples:

Bob asked, "Why are you so early?"
 Did Bob state, "You are early"?"
 Joe said, "It's too warm in the office"; Bob disagreed.
 Bob disagreed when Joe declared, "It's too warm in the office."
 "It's too warm in the office," Joe said.

Always use smart quotes ("like this" and 'this'), not straight quotes ("like this" and 'this').

Spelling and distinctive treatment of words

Abbreviations

When abbreviating US state names, e.g., in a bibliography, the *Chicago Manual* now prefers the US Postal Service abbreviations rather than the traditional, longer abbreviations:

Washington, DC: Association of Research Libraries, 2003.
 Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997.

Note that, in running text, it is preferable to spell out state names:

Stepford, Connecticut, is a fictional town.

In general, we are no longer using periods in such abbreviations as DC, US, UK, BA, MS, PhD. But we do use periods in "a.m." and "p.m." because they are lowercase and we still use periods in initials in a person's name (T. S. Eliot, for example).

ARL and its member libraries

Write "the Association of Research Libraries" or "ARL" (without "the").

For the preferred forms of member institution names, see the list of ARL members on the Web site. When abbreviating member institution names, drop the words "University" and "Library/ies" to create the abbreviations, e.g., University of Arizona Library becomes Arizona, Arizona State University Libraries becomes Arizona State, Boston College Libraries becomes Boston College, Boston University Libraries becomes Boston, Boston Public Library becomes Boston Public, etc. Exceptions to this rule: CISTI, CRL, Georgia Tech, LC, Library and Archives Canada, MIT, NAL, NLM, and Smithsonian.

Capitalization

As a general rule, proper nouns (including professional titles) are capitalized:

President Clinton
 Executive Director Duane Webster
 Duane Webster, Executive Director, came to ARL in 1970.
 The ARL Board of Directors met on Saturday.

However:

The club needs a new president.
 She is an executive director.

Association and Board: Always capitalize when referring to ARL or the ARL Board of Directors, e.g., the Association is located at 21 Dupont Circle; the Board convenes quarterly. Also capitalize when the words are part of another proper noun, e.g., the American Library Association, the ALA Board of Directors. Do not capitalize when referring to an already named association or board other than ARL, e.g., the association is located in New York; the board met on Monday.

Program vs. program: Do not capitalize when used in the names of ARL programs, e.g., the Statistics and Measurement program. Capitalize when part of a proper name, e.g., the Global Resources Program.

In titles of works in English, capitalize the initial words and all following words except articles and prepositions. In foreign-language titles, follow the conventions of that language (sentence-style capitalization in most cases.)

“Data is” or “data are”?

ARL observes the distinction that Merriam-Webster makes between specific data (plural) and data as an abstract concept (singular), e.g., “The survey data show....” but “Data is available upon request.”

E-terminology

Web site vs. website, Internet vs. internet: Follow Merriam-Webster, which calls for “Web site” and “Internet”. Also use: blog, dot-com, e-book, e-journal, e-mail, home page, HTML, online, Web administrator, Web manager, Web page, Web-based, webcast, weblog, Webmaster. When in doubt, look it up at <http://www.m-w.com/>.

Instead of using “listserv” as a generic term, use “electronic mailing list” or something similarly descriptive. Listserv is the name of a specific mailing list processor—like Coke is the name of a specific cola—and should only be used when referring to that specific software.

Pluralization of letters, numbers, and abbreviations

Do not use apostrophes to pluralize letters, numbers, or most abbreviations:

the three Rs
in twos and threes
the early 1920s
YMCAs across the country
comps. and eds.

However, when it would be confusing without an apostrophe, use one:

Last semester I got two A’s and two B’s.

Possessives

Singular words always take ’s even if they end in s, for example:

the car’s engine
the press’s advertising
Charles Dickens’s novels
the Library of Congress’s catalog

Plural nouns that end in s receive only an apostrophe:

the studies’ results
the stores’ hours
the Joneses’ party

Irregular plural nouns that do not end with an s receive an ’s. For example:

men’s shoes
cacti’s thorns

Numbers and dates

Number formats

Generally, spell out whole numbers from one to nine, and put others in numeric form, for example:

three
third
10
10th
5,003
4.28

But do not begin a sentence with a digit (spell out the number), for example:

Thirty-three books fell off the shelf.

And bend the general rule in favor of consistency:

The library's Henry James collection includes nine novel manuscripts, one play manuscript, and over one hundred letters.

Add commas between the third and fourth digits from the right (etc.): e.g., 12,394,583. Exceptions include:

- Page/Line Numbers: "On page 1893...."
- Addresses: "My address is 2235 Altamirano Drive."
- Four-Digit Years: "My father was born in 1942." (Commas are added in year numbers greater than four digits: "In 20,000 BC....")

Date formats

July 1999
July 1, 1999
Thursday, July 1, 1999
Thursday, July 1, 1999, was my first day of work.

Citations

In citing a work from a series, do not spell out the series number, do not preface the series number with a "#" or "no.," and do not italicize the series title:

George Soete, *Preserving Digital Information*, Transforming Libraries 5 (Washington, DC: Association of Research Libraries, 1997).

Cite the *ARL Bimonthly Report* like a journal without a volume number but with an issue number:

Colleen Cook, Fred Heath, and Bruce Thompson, "LibQUAL+: One Instrument in the New Measures Toolbox," *ARL: A Bimonthly Report on Research Library Issues and Actions from ARL, CNI, and SPARC*, no. 212 (October 2000): 4-7, <http://www.arl.org/newsltr/212/libqual.html>.

In citing a Web page that does not have a print counterpart, use the following pattern for a footnote (omit fields for which you don't have information):

Author, "Page Title," *Title of Larger Work*, Location of Organization: Organization, Date, URL.

Use the following pattern in a bibliography:

Author. "Page Title." *Title of Larger Work*. Location of Organization: Organization, Date. URL.

Web site style

Formatting text

Use Markdown to format text of Web pages. Tips for using Markdown:

- Use underscores and asterisks to *_italicize_* and ****boldface**** words.
- Use pound signs to format headers (see next item).
- Insert two spaces at the end of a line to create a hard return.
- Use asterisks (instead of bullet symbols) to create bulleted lists.
- Markdown allows the use of HTML tags if you want to use them.

Headers

In Markdown, simply type a pound sign (#) or pound signs (##, ###, ####) before a header in the text of a page. The number of pound signs indicates the level of header. For example:

```
# This is an H1.  
## This is an H2.  
### This is an H3.  
#### This is an H4.
```

Logos

No logos are to be added to Web pages. The only logo that will appear on Web pages is the ARL logo in the header. Additional logos may be present in PDFs that are linked to from Web pages themselves.

Other images

You may add images such as publication covers or photos of people to Web pages. In most cases, until Beth reinstalls Image Magick on the server for Big Medium to automatically size images, the image will need to be 200 x 200 pixels (or smaller) and classified as “Small” when uploaded in Big Medium.

Slugnames

When creating a new Web page, enter a slugname under “Page Preferences.” The slugname will become the prefix of the filename, e.g., if you assign a slugname of “webpage” the filename will be “webpage.shtml”. Please use short but descriptive slugnames. It is helpful if you can devise a slugname that gives us a chance of identifying the file by name if we need to later, e.g., we could tell that br223activities.shtml is the “Activities” section of the *Bimonthly Report* no. 223.

Please use the same guidelines when naming PDFs and other files to be uploaded to the site.

Weeding

Documents should be weeded on a date-created basis. Most of the site will contain two-year-old and newer documents; some exceptions are:

- Publications and similar documents
- Public Policies: four-year-old files to allow for the prior as well as the current Congress
- Members Only > Governance > Board Minutes: past five meetings