

GNA Style Guide

For reports, books, and other formal prose, GNA follows the Chicago Manual of Style, available at the desk of Tan Grimes, Creative Manager, for reference. The most commonly applied styles, as well as guidelines for questions not defined by the CMS, are listed below.

GENERAL

- Spaces after periods: one.
[We ran. They followed.](#)

ABBREVIATIONS

- Always capitalize acronyms.
[CEO, NASA, NATO, UFO, PDF](#)
- Do not use periods in abbreviations.
[US, SHIELD, BA, BS, MBA, PhD](#)
- If you are not sure that the reader will be familiar with an acronym, or use of the acronym seems too informal for your readership, spell it out.
[chief executive officer](#)
- Spell out state names in prose.
[California, not Calif. or CA](#)
- If an acronym will be used multiple times, spell it out the first time with the acronym in parentheses. Thereafter, use the acronym.
[Gladstein, Neandross & Associates \(GNA\)](#)
- The article before an abbreviation depends on whether the abbreviation sounds like a consonant (a) or a vowel (an).
[a BS, an AA meeting, an MBA, a UFO](#)
- Use toward, forward, or backward; not towards, forwards, or backwards.
[We are moving toward a renewable energy future.](#)
- When specifying times, use a.m./p.m., not AM/PM or am/pm.
[5:30 p.m.](#)
- Since 12 p.m. and 12 a.m. can be misinterpreted (and are technically incorrect), use noon and midnight.
[10 a.m to noon or 10 a.m. to 12 noon](#)

CAPITALIZATION

- Capitalize titles only when they appear immediately before an individual's name.
[The president entered. "Greetings," said Queen Elizabeth.](#)
- When a corporate title appears after a name, the title is lower case.
[Michael Babikian, executive vice president and chief marketing officer, UPS](#)
- Capitalize titles of organizations or departments when they are used as such.
[She went to Administration. The administration of their office is in good hands.](#)
- When writing a title, capitalize the first word, last word, and all other words except a, an, the, and, but, and prepositions with fewer than five letters.
[Coming to the New World: the Long Voyage Over](#)

NUMBERS

- When referring to numbers, spell out numbers zero through ten, but use numerals for numbers 11 and above.
- Never start a sentence with a numeral.
- When numerals have more than three digits, use commas.
[2,000 rather than 2000](#)

COMMAS

- Serial commas: include before last "and" in a list.
[apples, bananas, and pears](#)
- Do not include a comma before an ampersand in a title.
[Gladstein, Neandross & Associates](#)
- In lists where individual items include commas, separate items with semi-colons instead of commas.
[Tan Grimes, creative manager; Erik Neandross, CEO; and Cliff Gladstein, president](#)
- Use commas to set off dates, years, and states when they are used as interruptions.
[I was born on August 19, 1972, in Webster, Texas. On Thursday, August 22, my parents brought me home for the first time.](#)
- Do not use commas in a date when the day is not specified.
[The June 2012 transit of Venus corresponded with the conclusion of Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee.](#)

OTHER PUNCTUATION

- When making years, numerals, and abbreviations plural, just add an "s," except when doing so makes the meaning confusing, such as with single letters.
[In the 1980s, we would walk in twos and threes to school where we all got A's and B's.](#)
- Hyphenate when two words function as one adjective before a noun.
[well-known writer, heavy-duty truck](#)
- Do not hyphenate when the first word is an adverb (ends with -ly) or when the words follow the noun.
[heavily laden camel, the book was well known](#)
- Although both are correct, GNA prefers to use 'website' rather than 'web site,' 'webpage' rather than 'web page,' and 'email' rather than 'e-mail.' However, we use 'e-newsletter' and 'e-commerce.'

The GNA style guide is an evolving document. If these guidelines need clarification, or you have a question that is not answered above, please notify Tan Grimes (tan@gladstein.org).