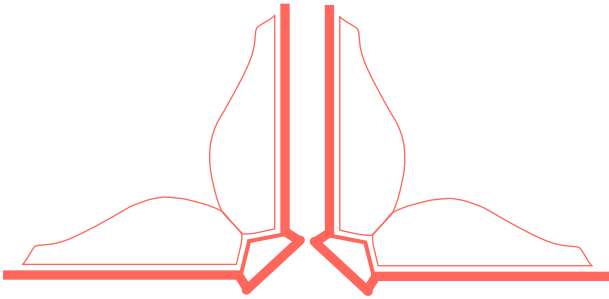


Vassar College
Editorial



Style Guide

The Office of Communications often fields questions about style, grammar, and usage. We have compiled this style guide to answer some of the more frequently asked questions. With some exceptions, we adhere to *The Chicago Manual of Style* from the University of Chicago Press.

Our intention in compiling these recommendations is to encourage college-wide consistency of style in both print and electronic communications directed to broad, external audiences. Departments and offices with specialized audiences will, of course, follow the style appropriate to their disciplines.

CAPITALIZATION

The basic principles outlined below are adapted from *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th edition. In official Vassar publications, we adhere to *Chicago's* “down” style—“the parsimonious use of capitals.” Proper names are, of course, capitalized, as are the full titles of programs, departments, and buildings, but generic terms (the college, for example) are lowercased. In general, when a word is being used as part of a name, it is capitalized (New York City), but when it is being used descriptively, it is lowercased (the city of New York).

Titles and Offices

When a person's official title comes before or after the person's name, it is uppercased. When a person's job *description* comes before or after the person's name, it is lowercased. When a person's job description is used in conjunction with their surname, as in Professor Higgins, it is uppercased.

Assistant Professor of History Julie Hughes; Professor Hughes; Julie Hughes, Assistant Professor of History; history professor Julie Hughes
men's and women's varsity soccer coach Andrew Jennings; Coach Jennings; Andrew Jennings, men's and women's varsity soccer coach; the coach

Dean of the Faculty Jon Chenette; Dean Chenette; Dean Jon Chenette; Jon Chenette, Dean of the Faculty; the dean

Director of Wimpfheimer Nursery School Julie Riess; Director Riess; the director

Named professorships and other titles denoting civic or academic honors are capitalized at all times.

Susan Donahue Kuretsky, Professor of Art on the Sarah G. Blanding Chair; Maria Mitchell, Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences

Institutions and Organizations

The full names of institutions, organizations, offices, departments, committees, and the like are capitalized. Shortened names are also often capitalized to avoid confusion. However, when used alone, generic terms such as “college” or “committee” are not capitalized. Also, if the word “the” precedes the shortened name, it is not capitalized, even though it may be part of the official name.

Vassar College; Vassar; the college

the Board of Trustees of Vassar College; the Board of Trustees; the board
the Priorities and Planning Committee; Priorities and Planning; the committee

the Program in American Studies; the American Studies Program;
American studies (when referring to the field of study) or American
Studies (when referring to the program)

the Department of Philosophy; the Philosophy Department; philosophy;
the department

the Office of Human Resources; Human Resources Office; Human
Resources; the office

Places

The same principles apply.

the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center; the Lehman Loeb Art Center;
the Loeb; the Art Center; the museum

the Vassar College Libraries; the Frederick Ferris Thompson Memorial
Library; the Thompson Library; the library

the Hudson River; the Hudson; the river; the Hudson Valley; the valley
the Shawangunk Mountains; the Shawangunks; the Gunks

the State of New York; New York State; Upstate New York

the United States of America; the United States; the U.S.

the West; the Wild West; west (direction or compass point); Westerner

the Rose Parlor; the parlor

Academic Terms

first-year student; sophomore; junior; senior

the class of 2006; the legendary class of 1974

a master's degree; a doctorate; a bachelor's degree; BA; MA; PhD

the Alex Krieger Memorial Lecture; the Krieger Lecture

a course in political science; the Department of Political Science;
majoring in political science; a degree in political science; Introduction
to Political Science (course title)

alumnae, alumni, alumnae/i, alumna, alumnus (In more casual or
colloquial writing, such as Class Notes, alum or alums is fine.)

emerita, emeritus, emeriti

Titles of Works

The titles and subtitles of books, pamphlets, periodicals, newspapers, articles,
poems, plays, movies, television shows, radio shows, musical works, art works,
and dance works are capitalized, except for articles (a, an, the), conjunctions
(and, or, but, nor), and prepositions unless they are the first word in the title
or subtitle. Please note: the decision to capitalize is not based on the length of

the word but on its function. “It,” for example, is a pronoun and is capitalized. “Between” is a preposition and is lowercased.

The following titles are italicized:

books	<i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>
newspapers	<i>the New York Times</i>
periodicals	<i>Time</i> magazine
plays	<i>A Man for All Seasons</i>
collections of poems	<i>What Light There Is</i>
movies	<i>The Exorcist</i>
television series	<i>All in the Family</i>
radio series	<i>All Things Considered</i>
long vocal compositions	<i>Handel’s Messiah</i>
long instrumental compositions with descriptive titles	<i>the Pastoral Symphony</i>
CD or DVD titles	<i>the White Album</i>
works of art	<i>Michelangelo’s David</i>
comic strips	<i>Doonesbury</i>
art exhibition titles	<i>For the People: American Mural Drawings of the 1930s and 1940s</i>
concerts with descriptive titles	<i>Back from Cuba</i>
long-form dance works	<i>The Nutcracker</i>

The following are enclosed in quotation marks:

short stories	O. Henry’s “The Last Leaf”
chapter titles	“Names and Terms,” <i>The Chicago Manual of Style</i>
newspaper articles	“Fierce Fighting Erupts in Baghdad,” <i>the New York Times</i>
periodical articles	“Looking for Mr. Right,” <i>Time</i> magazine
episodes of television series	“To Market, to Market,” an episode of <i>MASH</i>
songs	“All You Need Is Love”
poems	Yeats’s “The Wild Swans at Coole”
photographs	“Kiss by the Hotel de Ville,” by Robert Doisneau
short dance works	“Frontier,” by Martha Graham

The following are set in roman (no formatting):

instrumental works	Sonata in E-flat, op. 31, no. 3
television networks	the Discovery Channel
radio networks	National Public Radio

generic parts of a book
book series
newspaper or periodical awards

foreword, table of contents, index
a Modern Library edition
the Los Angeles Times Book Award

PUNCTUATION

In compiling the following guidelines, we left out what we consider to be commonly understood and accepted elements, such as the period, the question mark, and the exclamation point.

Comma

According to *The Chicago Manual of Style*, a comma “denotes a slight pause.” Actually, this is misleading because we often pause in spoken English where no comma would be required in writing, and vice versa. It may be more useful to think of commas—and other punctuation marks, for that matter—as equivalent to road signs. They let the reader know what to expect and where to go next.

Items in a series: Use commas to separate three or more elements in a series, including a comma before the conjunction.

She’s taking courses in chemistry, art history, and philosophy.
I cooked the meal, Linda cleared the table, and Bill did the dishes.

Introductory words and phrases: Unless the introductory element is one word or a very short phrase, use a comma. Even if it is only one word or a short phrase, use a comma if needed to avoid confusion.

Before the break, she returned the book to the library.
Then she returned the book.
After eating, the teacher and her students got back on the tour bus.
For Angela, Harry reworked the numbers.

Yes, no, and well:

Yes, I think it’s a good idea.
No, I haven’t.
Well, why don’t we ask them?

Parenthetical elements:

He did, however, look a bit shaken.
Garcia, after looking everywhere for her, finally gave up.

Restrictive and nonrestrictive phrases: Restrictive phrases are not set off by commas, whereas nonrestrictive phrases are. (Restrictive=essential to the meaning; nonrestrictive=not essential to the meaning)

Restrictive: The boy carrying the suitcase is Michael McGee.
Nonrestrictive: The boy, carrying the suitcase, climbed up the steps.

Restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses: Again, restrictive clauses are not set off by commas, whereas nonrestrictive clauses are. (Restrictive=essential to the meaning; nonrestrictive=not essential to the meaning)

Restrictive: The book that I borrowed from you was already overdue.

Nonrestrictive: The book, which was already overdue, was falling apart.

Restrictive: The man who returned my umbrella was very embarrassed.

Nonrestrictive: The man, who was very embarrassed, returned my umbrella.

Restrictive and nonrestrictive appositives: An appositive is a word, abbreviation, phrase, or clause that is in apposition to a noun. If restrictive (essential to the meaning), then do not set it off by commas; if nonrestrictive (not essential to the meaning), then do.

Cathy Baer, Vice President for Development, spoke at the meeting.

The executive assistant, Bridget Suhre, placed the order.

David Kennett, PhD, introduced the panel.

My youngest daughter, Rachel, fell off the swing.

His first novel, *All in a Day's Work*, was published by Bantam.

But:

My daughter Rachel fell off the swing.

His novel *All in a Day's Work* was published by Bantam.

Compound sentences: When two independent clauses are joined by a conjunction, a comma precedes the conjunction.

Nancy asked for a raise, and Harold said that he'd think about it.

George took the long way home, for he wanted time to think.

But for short clauses:

He sat and I paced.

Dependent clauses: If a dependent clause comes at the beginning of the sentence, it is followed by a comma. If it comes at the end, no comma is needed.

If you thought it was wrong, you should have said so.

You should have said so if you thought it was wrong.

And if and that if:

I waited for an hour, and if he hadn't shown up, I would have cried.

We decided that if we were going to leave, we had to do it then.

Not and not only:

The professor himself, not his assistant, will attend the conference.

They asked for additional funding, not only to extend the project but also to hire additional staff.

But:

They considered not only his conduct but also his reputation.

The more, the less:

The more I think about it, the less I like it.

The faster you go, the sooner you'll be back.

But:

The more the merrier.

The sooner the better.

Two or more adjectives before a noun: If you can insert the word “and” between the adjectives without altering the meaning, then separate the adjectives with a comma.

coeducational, residential liberal arts college

a sunny, warm spring day

an obnoxious, overbearing, narcissistic attitude

a traditional religious upbringing

Dates: If the date includes the month, day, and year, put commas before and after the year. If the date includes only the month and year, no comma is necessary. In Class Notes or Announcements, the shortened version of months (for example, Aug.) is preferred as a space-saving measure.

The May 24, 2006, commencement was held outdoors.

The May 2006 commencement was held outdoors.

The play will be performed on Tuesday, June 6, at 4:00pm in the Villard Room.

Places: In running text, separate the elements with commas.

The film will be screened in the Rosenwald Theater, Vogelstein Center for Drama and Film, at Vassar College.

The exhibition traveled from Paris, France, to Washington, DC, to Seattle, WA.

The train crashed in Mobile, AL, on January 3.

Semicolon

Independent clauses: The most common use of the semicolon is to separate two independent clauses, closely connected in meaning but not joined by a conjunction.

The verdict was announced; the defendant wept openly.

Her decision had been made; indeed, it had been made months before.

We need to proceed with caution; that is, we must plan the operation to the last detail.

Items in a series: If the items in a series have commas within them, semicolons are used between them to avoid confusion.

The piece was performed by Max Aldrich, trumpet; Harold Wei, saxophone; and Henry Wheeler, trombone.

Colon

Series of elements: Use a colon at the end of an independent clause that formally introduces a series of elements.

She asked for three things: work to do, a place to do it, and the strength to do it.

The steps are as follows: answer the questions, fold the paper, and hand it in.

He was concerned about the following: time, money, and expertise.

But not:

Her request included: work to do, a place to do it, and the strength to do it.

The steps are: answer the questions, fold the paper, and hand it in.

He was concerned about: time, money, and expertise.

Related questions or sentences: Use a colon to introduce related questions or sentences. When the colon introduces a sentence, the first word after the colon is capitalized.

Ask yourself: Will you be happy? Or will you regret that you said yes?

The signs were unmistakable: a rash and a fever.

Hyphens and Dashes

Hyphens are used in compound words and to separate numbers that are not inclusive, such as telephone numbers.

a middle-class neighborhood

845-437-7000

The en dash (created by typing space-two hyphens-space or using option + hyphen) is used with numbers to indicate a range.

Vassar beat Williams 35–23.

Editing workshop, 10:00am–noon

During the planning period, May–July, we hope to set priorities for the campaign.

But:

The play runs from June 3 to July 7.

I will be away from the office between June and July.

The em dash (created by typing shift + option + hyphen) is most often used to set off an explanatory or amplifying element.

Three writers—Faulkner, Irving, and Atwood—continue to inspire her.

After the debacle—he insisted on calling it that—he called his mother.

A nose for story, scrupulous attention to detail, and curiosity—these were the qualities we were looking for.

Quotation Marks with Other Punctuation

We assume a general familiarity with the uses of single and double quotation marks, but there is sometimes confusion about whether end punctuation marks should be inside or outside the quotation marks.

Periods and commas: Periods and commas are inside the quotation marks.

His article, “The Final Days of Dogzilla,” was read over the loudspeaker.
First she said, “I don’t have time,” and then she stomped out the door.
He is the author of the poem “Finders Keepers.”

Colons, semicolons, question marks, and exclamation points: If these punctuation marks belong with the quoted material, they are placed inside the quotation marks. If not, they are placed outside.

Which one of you said, “I will never tell a lie”?
She repeatedly asked, “Did you tell a lie?”
The first excerpt was from “All the Days of My Life”; the second was
from “He Who Laughs Last.”
He warned her three times: “Look before you leap!”
You put them to sleep with “Tales from the IRS”!

A-Z GUIDE

A

abbreviations

Generally, no periods with abbreviations: URSI, ALANA Center, MD
Exceptions: U.S., U.N., U.K., U.S.S.R.
Form the plural by adding an s (no apostrophe): DVDs, PhDs.

ACDC

All Campus Dining Center; preferred: the Dining Center.

acronyms

If unfamiliar to the general public, spell out in the first use:
Undergraduate Research Summer Institute (URSI).

administrative offices

Uppercase: the Admission Office, the Office of Admission.

administrators

Vice President Catherine Baer; Vice President Baer; Vice President
for Development Cathy Baer; Cathy Baer, Vice President for
Development

advisor

Not adviser

African American

No hyphen

ALANA Center

African American/Black, Latino/a, Asian/Asian American, and
Native American Student Cultural Center

alumna/alumnus

Alumna is a female graduate; the plural is alumnae. Alumnus and
alumni are the singular and plural for male graduates. When referring
to a group of male and female graduates, alumnae/i is preferred.

ampersand

Don't use in running text except when part of the name of a firm:
Lloyd, Webb & Rangle.

Archives and Special Collections

Catherine Pelton Durrell '25 Archives and Special Collections

Asian American

No hyphen

Athletics and Fitness Center

Athletics, not Athletic

B

bachelor's degree

AB (at Vassar), BA, BS, BFA, bachelor of arts

Baldwin House

Ballintine Field

Bayit

Jewish Student Center

Bible

Capitalize, but don't italicize; lowercase "biblical."

Black

Lowercase when referring to race: His area of expertise is black cultural movements.

Blodgett Hall

Board of Trustees

Vassar College Board of Trustees, Board of Trustees, the board

Bridge for Laboratory Sciences

Buildings and Grounds Services Center

C

capitalization

See section on capitalization.

captions

End with a period if the caption is a complete sentence. Don't end with a period if it is not a complete sentence, regardless of length.

century

Lowercase; spell out numbers less than 10; hyphenate when used as an adjective: ninth century; 20th century; 19th-century Dutch painters.

chair

Not chairman, chairwoman, or chairperson

Chapel

The Vassar Chapel, the Chapel

Chicago Hall

Class of 1951 Observatory

class years

Lowercase: Susan Wilkes, class of 1978; Susan Wilkes, class of '78. When using the apostrophe, be mindful that it is an apostrophe and not a single quote.

college

Unless used as part of the official name of the institution, lowercase: Vassar College; “The college’s policy is to lowercase ‘college.’ ”

commas, serial

Use serial commas (see section on punctuation).

committee

Uppercase official committee names: the Priorities and Planning Committee; The committee meets on Thursday.

Computer Center

comprise

Synonym for include, contain; do not use with preposition “of”: The document comprises 15 sections. But not (please!): The document is comprised of 15 sections. (We suggest that you avoid this word altogether as it is so often misused.)

course titles

Set in roman with title caps—no italics, no quotation marks: Introduction to Political Science.

Cushing House

D

dates

In running text, use month-day-year format: They signed the contract on March 15, 1982, after extensive negotiations.

If the year is obvious (in a calendar listing, for example), it may be omitted.

If the day of the week is specified, it precedes the date: On Tuesday, January 2, the conference will begin at 8:30am in the Multipurpose Room.

No comma is used when only the month and year are specified: She graduated in May 2005.

There is no apostrophe before the s in reference to decades: the 1970s, the '60s

Davison House

departments

Uppercase the official names of academic departments and programs, but not general references to majors or fields of study: the Political Science Department; the Department of Political Science; Mary Shanley, political science professor; She’s majoring in political science.

degrees

No periods when abbreviated: BA, AB, MA, MBA, PhD, DR
Lowercase when spelled out: master's degree

Division III

Vassar's athletic classification

Doubleday Studio Arts Building

Russell and Janet Doubleday Studio Arts Building; Doubleday

E

Edith Roberts Ecological Laboratory

Roberts Ecological Laboratory

Environmental Cooperative at the Vassar Barns

Environmental Coop

Ely Hall

e-book, e-commerce, but email

emerita/emeritus/emeriti

emerita (feminine singular); emeritus (masculine singular); emeriti (plural)

events

To avoid ambiguity, capitalize references to annual Vassar events, such as Convocation, Commencement, and Reunion: She planned to come back for Reunion. Last fall's Convocation speaker was Professor DeMaria.

F

faculty

Professor Brigham; Professor Bob Brigham; Professor of History Bob Brigham; Robert Brigham, Shirley Ecker Boskey Professor of International Relations; Robert Brigham, Professor of History on the Shirley Ecker Boskey Chair of International Relations; Robert Brigham, history professor at Vassar

Ferry House

Dexter M. Ferry Cooperative House

field station

Priscilla Bullitt Collins '42 Field Station, Bullitt Collins Field Station

first-year students

Avoid "freshmen" and "freshman" when possible.

field work

Not fieldwork

FLLAC

Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Lehman Loeb Art Center, the Art Center

Frances Daly Fergusson Quadrangle

full-time / part-time

Hyphenate when used as an adjective preceding a noun: I am a part-time volunteer even though I work full time.

fund-raising

Hyphenate all forms (verb, adjective, noun).

G

geographical designations

the East Coast; go east on Main Street; he'd grown up in the West; the Mid-Hudson Valley; the Hudson Valley; the Hudson River; the Catskill Mountains; the Catskills

H

hyphenation

Hyphenate compound adjectives preceding a noun: a thought-provoking lecture, a well-known author.

Do not hyphenate when the adjective follows a noun: The poem is well known. His project was mind boggling.

Do not hyphenate well-established compound modifiers: an elementary school teacher, a liberal arts college.

Do not hyphenate after an adverb ending in "ly": a wildly enthusiastic crowd, a terribly urgent need.

Suspensive hyphenation: The exhibition includes 18th- and 19th-century Dutch works.

I

Inc.

Do not use a comma: Deon Graphics Inc.

Ingram Library

Martha Rivers and E. Bronson Ingram Library

Integrated Science Commons

Internet terms

the Internet; email; online; the World Wide Web; the web; web page; website; webcast; web designer; URL; URLs; podcast; IM (v.); text message (n.), text-message (v.)

issue dates

fall issue, Fall '01 issue, Fall 2001

J

Jewett House

Milo P. Jewett House

Josselyn House

Olivia Josselyn House

Jr.

Do not use a comma: Martin Luther King Jr.

K

Kautz House

Carol and James Kautz Admission House

Kendrick House

Kenyon Hall

L

Lathrop House

LGBTQ Center

Center for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Students

library

the library; the Vassar College Library; the Vassar College Libraries; the Frederick Thompson Memorial Library; the Thompson Library; the Martha Rivers and E. Bronson Ingram Library; the Ingram Library; the George Sherman Dickinson Music Library; the Dickinson Library; the Music Library; the Van Ingen Art Library; the Vassar Art Library; the Art Library; the Catherine Pelton Durrell '25 Archives and Special Collections; Archives and Special Collections; the archives

Lockwood Library

Helen D. Lockwood Library

M

Main Building

majors

Lowercase: She entered college thinking she would major in history, but by the end of her first year, she was leaning toward Africana studies.

magazine and newspaper titles:

If the newspaper or magazine title begins with the word “the,” lowercase the “the” and set it in roman: the *New York Times*, the *New Yorker*, the *Washington Post*.

If the word “magazine” is not part of the official title but is characteristically included, lowercase it and set it in roman: *Time* magazine, *Life* magazine.

Maria Mitchell Observatory

Martel Recital Hall

Mary Anna Fox Martel Recital Hall (in the Skinner Hall of Music)

Martel Theater

Mary Anna Fox Martel Theater (in the Vogelstein Center for Drama and Film)

Metcalf House

Music Library

Dickinson Library; George Sherman Dickinson Music Library;
Dickinson Library; Music Library

N

Native American

Or, American Indian

nicknames

Enclose in quotation marks, not parentheses: Judy “JJ” Jackson.

nonprofit

nonsexist and non-gender-specific language

Masculine nouns and pronouns are not generic. Suggestions:

Use “his or her,” or “s/he” or rewrite the sentence to eliminate the pronoun.

Use generic nouns: chair, not chairman or chairwoman.

Replace titles stereotyping women or men: nurse, not male nurse; flight attendant, not steward or stewardess.

When writing about a particular person, use that person’s pronouns of choice.

Nora Ann Wallace '73 Auditorium

Noyes House

Emma Hartman Noyes House

numbers

In running text, spell out numbers one through nine, and use figures for 10 and up: the first three semesters; the 10th president of the college.

According to *Chicago*, if you must use numerals for one of the numbers in a given sentence, then use them for all of the numbers: 12 majors and 3 minors.

If a sentence begins with a number, spell it out, or recast the sentence: Thirty-five employees selected the 10-40 plan. Or: During the open enrollment period, 35 employees selected the 10-40 plan.

Follow the style for ages as well: a six-year-old boy, a 47-year-old man.

O

Old Laundry Building

Olmsted Hall

Olmsted Hall of Biological Sciences

online

No hyphen

Outdoor Amphitheater

P

Palmer Gallery

James W. Palmer III Gallery; Palmer Gallery

percent

Spell it out, and follow the style for numbers: seven percent; 10 percent.

Prentiss Sports Complex

Prentiss Baseball Field, Gordon Field, Weinberg Turf Field

possessives

Singular common nouns ending in s: the class's legacy

Singular proper nouns ending in s: Travis's backpack, Jesus's crucifixion

Plural common nouns ending in s: the boys' scout leader

Plural proper nouns: General Motors' new prototype

Note: in cases where possession is not indicated, omit the apostrophe:

Teachers College, the ladies shoe department, Parents Weekend.

Post Office

Powerhouse Theater

Hallie Flanagan Davis Powerhouse Theater

Pratt House

professorships

Capitalize official titles of named and unnamed professorships:
John Ahern, Professor of Italian on the Dante Antolini Chair; Chris Smart, Associate Professor of Chemistry.

prefixes

The prefixes co-, pre-, un-, post-, mini-, and multi- are almost always closed, unless they precede a proper noun: coauthors Frankel and Thomas; the pre-Raphaelites; multidisciplinary. Exception: mini-reunion.

President's House

Q

quotation marks with punctuation

Place commas and periods inside the quotation marks: He wrote a great story titled "The Rocking Horse Winner."

Place exclamation and question marks inside if they belong with the quoted material, and outside if they don't: Nancy asked, "Mother, may I?" What did you think when he said, "Not on your life"?

Place colons and semicolons outside: Let's consider the so-called "rules of engagement": Whose rules are these?

R

Raymond House

Residence Halls

Residence halls at Vassar are called houses: Raymond House, Cushing House, etc. When the context is clear, Raymond, Cushing, etc., is fine.

résumé

Use the accents to avoid confusion with the verb "resume."

Rockefeller Hall

rooms

Uppercase official room names: the Rose Parlor.

Lowercase locations and informal names: Joss beach, the gym, Blodgett auditorium.

S

Salve

A Latin greeting or salute meaning "hello" or "goodbye."
Pronounced "sal-way." No italics or accent marks.

Sanders Classroom

Eleanor Butler Sanders Classroom Building

Sanders Physics

Sanders Physics Building

Skinner Hall

Belle Skinner Hall of Music

South Commons

sports

Lowercase names of individual sports and teams: rugby, volleyball, the women's volleyball team, the Vassar College men's basketball team.

Use en dashes, not hyphens, in scores: Vassar defeated Hamilton 15–3.

state names

Spell out in running text, except when used in conjunction with a city, in which case it is acceptable to abbreviate: The junior math major grew up in San Francisco, CA, but chose to leave California for college.

Strong House

Students' Building

Sunset Lake

Shiva Theater

Susan Stein Shiva Theater

Swift Hall

Swift Hall of History

T

Taylor Hall

Terrace Apartments

theater

Except: Vassar Repertory Dance Theatre

Third World

Uppercase both noun and adjective forms.

Thompson Library

Frederick Ferris Thompson Memorial Library

time of day

Use am and pm without periods or spaces.

Use noon and midnight, not 12 noon or 12 midnight.

Use an en dash to indicate inclusive times.

Examples: 8:30am–noon; from 8:00 to 9:00pm;

The library closes at 10:00pm.

titles

For examples and fine points, see capitalization section.

Italicize: books, magazines, newspapers, films, television series, plays, works of art, and exhibitions.

Put in quotes: book chapters, magazine articles, newspaper articles, television episodes or specials, poems, short stories, songs, photographs, and dance works.

Set in roman (no formatting): instrumental works.

Town Houses

U

United States

Spell out when using as a noun (...her first visit to the United States).

Abbreviate when using as an adjective (...the U.S. delegation).

upperclassmen

Replace with “returning students” or “sophomores, juniors, and seniors.”

Avoid “upper class students” for obvious reasons.

URL (Uniform Resource Locator)

www.vassar.edu, not <http://www.vassar.edu>

V

Van Ingen Art Library

Vassar College Store

Vassar Farm and Ecological Preserve

Vogelstein Center for Drama and Film

W

Walker Field House

Washington, DC

In running text, set “DC” off with commas on both sides: The visit to Washington, DC, was productive.

Watson Houses

Weinberg Field Sports Pavilion

which/that

“That” is a restrictive pronoun, “which” is nonrestrictive.

“Restrictive” means “essential to the meaning of the sentence”;

“nonrestrictive” means “nonessential.”

Examples:

Restrictive: The hat that I lost was my favorite. (“that I lost” is essential; the sentence is only about the hat that I lost.)

Nonrestrictive: The book, which I had honestly forgotten I still had, was seriously overdue. (“which I had honestly forgotten I still had” is extra information; the main point is that the book was overdue.)

Wimpfheimer Nursery School

Mildred R. Wimpfheimer Nursery School

World Wide Web

WWW, the web, website, web page, webcam, webcast

**This document was last updated in October 2016.*