Cosmonaut Style Guide

Please submit your articles on edit-enabled Google docs in Georgia font, size 12 (serif fonts are easier to proofread).

Full-length articles should be around 2,000 words. This is a soft limit. If you go too far over you might be asked to pare it back. All submissions will go through our editing process.
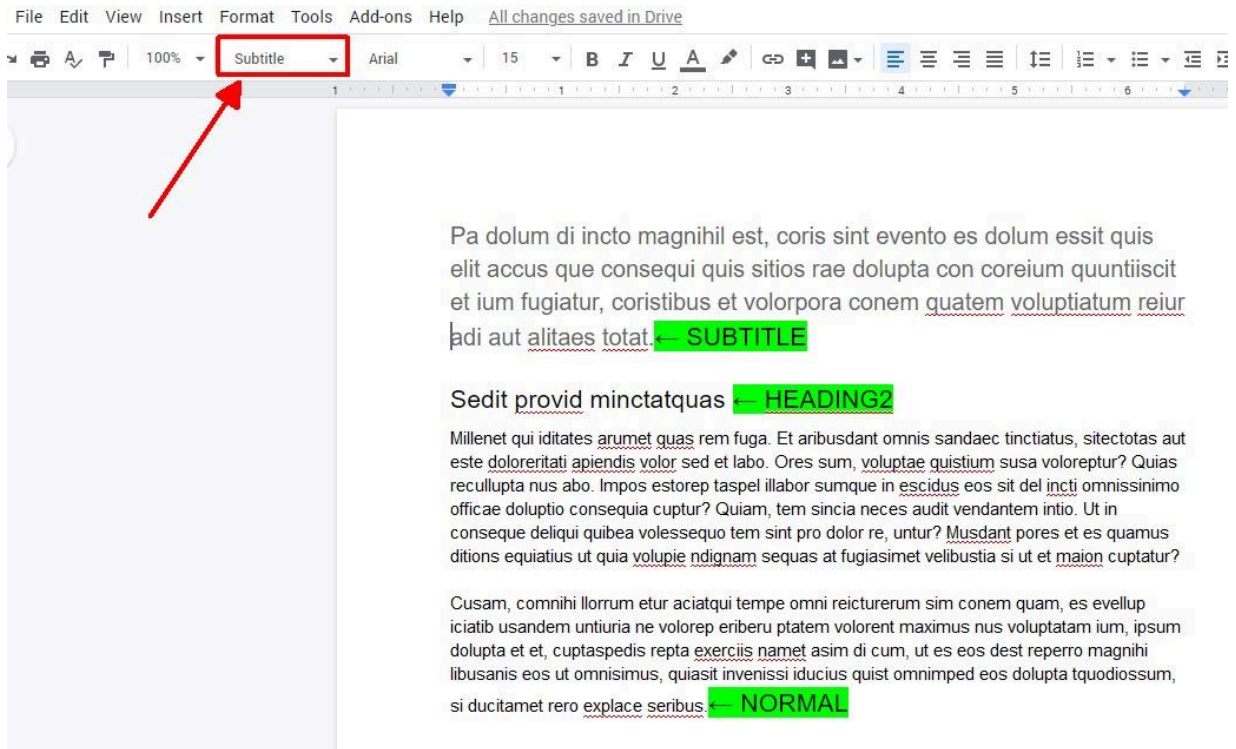
Some of the formatting requests may seem arbitrary, but they help the designer when laying out the text.

Style

- Credits (which should be uncapitalised unless it begins a sentence) can be referred to as UECs or the colloquialism 'imperials'.
- Very common abbreviations, like 'UEE', do not have to be expanded. For lesser-known abbreviations, like 'TDD', write the name of the entity out longhand the first time you mention it followed by the abbreviation in brackets. Subsequently in that article you can simply refer to it by the abbreviation. Eg: 'The Trade and Development Division (TDD) oversees all trade in the UEE.'
- Articles shouldn't contain too much 'I'. We are roleplaying as journalists, not diarists — write about the subject, not yourself. Use 'this writer' or 'your correspondent' instead of 'I' where possible.
- Although in lore it's 'ORIGIN Jumpworks', this is ugly. We can just write 'Origin Jumpworks'.
- Companies, governments, and other organisations are plural entities. So it's 'Red Wind Linehaul **offer** contracts…' (not 'offers') and 'Hurston Dynamics **state** that their new weapons…' (not 'states').

Format

- The first paragraph of an article (the intro paragraph) should be in the google docs Subtitle format, and subheadings should be in the Heading2 format.

- Species names, including our own, are capitalised. Eg: Humans, Banu.
- 'Verse' is uncapitalised unless it begins a sentence.
- 'Citizen' is capitalised. 'Civilian' is not.
- Use [sentence case](#) for everything: headings as well as subheadings. We do not use title case at Cosmonaut.
- Numbers up to 20 should be written longhand — ie 'eighteen'. Numbers 20 and above should be written as digits. The exception is technical specifications, which should always be written as digits (ie 'the nose sports a size 4 mount').
- Don't indent the first line of paragraphs.
- 'Spectrum' is capitalised.
- 'Quantum' (as in 'quantum travel') is uncapitalised. 'Travel' or 'drive' following it are not.
- 'Empire' is capitalised when referring to the UEE.
- 'Cosmonaut' should be italicised when referring to the magazine.

Punctuation

- Use the Oxford comma. Penultimate list items should be followed by a comma.
- Em dashes can be used to divide a sentence, like a comma with more emphasis, or parenthetically. Use a space on either side.

- Hyphens are for hyphenation only.
- Single spaces after full stops, not double.
- Speech marks should only be used for <u>direct</u> quotes and dialogue. Everything else should have inverted commas.
- Use commas to separate groups of thousands. Eg: '22,450'.
- Hyphenate compound adjectives. Eg. 'ground-based'.
- The first letter after a colon is not capitalised. Eg: 'Her main campaign goal is in precise alignment with her party: to declare Terra the new capital of the Empire'.