Style Guide: *The Kennedy Beacon*

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SPELLING

Use preferred American spellings in either *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (11th ed.) or https://www.merriam-webster.com/) (with some exceptions). A spelling (correction) suggested by Google or Word, particularly in regard to hyphens, is not always the best/correct choice.

See also FREQUENTLY USED WORDS, PHRASES, NAMES

HYPHENATION

In most cases, follow *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. (or https://www.merriam-webster.com/); for rules and examples, see *Chicago Manual of Style*, 17th edition, 7.81–7.89.

Most common words that begin with a prefix are not hyphenated: **antipoverty**, **postcolonial**, **cofounder**, **nongovernmental**, **underrepresented**, **reimagine, reelection**. See FREQUENTLY USED WORDS, PHRASES, NAMES for more examples.

Compound adjectives that are hyphenated when placed before the noun they modify are not hyphenated when placed after the noun: **They made a short-lived promise** *but* **Their promise was short lived**; **There were long-term consequences** *but* **The consequences were long term**; **It's a well-oiled machine** *but* **The machine is well oiled**.

Don't use a hyphen after adverbs ending in *ly:* **privately owned utilities**, *not* privately-owned; **politically sensitive questions**, *not* politically-sensitive; **highly charged issues**, *not* highly-charged.

NAMES

Robert F. Kennedy Jr., **RFK Jr.** (no commas); just "Kennedy" is fine after first mention, unless differentiating between multiple Kennedys mentioned in the piece.

After introducing a person's full name when first mentioned in the text (excluding in the article title or headings), use just the last name or the title (e.g., Senator) plus the last

name thereafter. Don't use *Mr./Mrs./Ms.* with the last name (Smith said, *not* Mrs. Smith said), unless needed to differentiate individuals in a family. Use *Dr.* preceding the name (or include, e.g., *MD* after the name if this is relevant to the subject matter; for less familiar medical degree abbreviations, identify in words instead); after the first mention of "Dr. Jones," use either "Dr. Jones" or just "Jones" thereafter.

Space between initials: **W. E. B. Du Bois**; but not for company names: **J.B. Hunt Transport Services**, **JPMorgan** [*sic*] **Chase**.

Use *'s* to form the possessive of names and nouns ending in *s*: **Gates's**, **Soros's**, **Congress's, the boss's**, **Dallas's,** *but* **the United States'**. Use an apostrophe after the *s* to form the possessive of a name used in the plural: **the Joneses'**, **the Smiths'**, *not* the Smith's or the Smiths's.

ACRONYMS

In most cases, don't introduce an acronym unless it will be used again in the article.

Introduce the acronym in parentheses after your first use of the full name within the text (excluding title and headings) and use it consistently in place of the full name thereafter.

Don't use periods in acronyms.

Capital letters are used for acronyms regardless of whether they refer to a common or a proper noun; don't change a common noun to a proper noun because you're introducing the acronym: artificial intelligence (AI), *not* Artificial Intelligence (AI).

NUMBERS

Spell numbers zero through nine. Use numerals for 10 and higher, except at the beginning of a sentence (for numbers that are cumbersome to spell out, recast the sentence so that the number is not the first word). Use numerals for all percentages and use the symbol rather than the word *percent*: 1%, 20%. Use commas in thousands: 1,000 *not* 1000. For millions, use the numeral followed by the word: 10 million *not* 10,000,000.

PUNCTUATION

Use American punctuation style: periods and commas within quote marks (but colons and semicolons outside).

Commas

For use of commas in introducing quotations, see QUOTATIONS AND SOURCES.

Serial comma

Use a comma before the word *and* in concluding any list of three or more items or attributes: **He is a lawyer, activist, and writer**, *not* He is a lawyer, activist and writer; **Our system is based on equal representation, the rule of law, and property rights**, *not* … equal representation, the rule of law and property rights; **She has proven herself to be honest, caring, and forthright**, *not* … honest, caring and forthright.

Commas in pairs

Whenever a comma is placed before an element to set it off from the surrounding text, a second comma is required after that element if the phrase or sentence continues beyond it: **August 18, 1920, was a good day for American women** (*not* August 18, 1920 was); **She began her campaign in Freedom, New Hampshire, before heading south** (*not* in Freedom, New Hampshire before); **enrollment is high at the University of California, Davis, this semester** (*not* at the University of California, Davis this semester). This principle applies to many of the uses of commas described below. An exception is made for commas within the title of a work: **He said that *I, Claudius* was his favorite book** (*not* He said that *I, Claudius*, was his favorite book).

Commas with independent clauses

When independent clauses are joined by a coordinating conjunction such as *and*, *but*, *or*, *so*, or *yet*, a comma usually precedes the conjunction: **The bus never came, so we hailed a taxi**; **Voters are feeling disaffected, and that's reflected in the polling**. If the clauses are very short and closely connected, the comma may be omitted: **Raise your hand and repeat after me**; **He finished the speech and we left the hall**.

Commas with multiple clauses that share a verb

A comma is not normally used to separate a two-part compound predicate (i.e., where a subject is shared by two or more clauses but not repeated after the first clause): **We counted the votes and certified the results**; **She contacted the DNC but was told that nothing could be done**; *but* **He recognized the man who entered the room, and gasped**. When the adverb *then* is used for *and then*, a comma usually precedes it: **He put the food away, then went to bed**; *but* **He put the food away and then went to bed**.

Commas with relative clauses: restrictive vs. nonrestrictive, *that* vs. *which*

A relative clause is *restrictive* (defining) if it provides information that is essential to understanding the meaning of the rest of the sentence. Restrictive clauses are usually introduced by *that* (or *who/whom/whose*) and are never set off by commas: **The manuscript that the writer submitted needed no editing** (*and note that* "that" can be omitted if the sentence is just as clear without it: **The manuscript the writer submitted needed no editing**.

A relative clause is *nonrestrictive* (nondefining or parenthetical) if it could be omitted without obscuring the identity of the noun to which it refers or otherwise changing the intended meaning of the rest of the sentence. Nonrestrictive clauses are usually introduced by *which* (or *who/whom/whose*) and are set off from the rest of the sentence by commas: **The article, which needed little editing, was submitted on time**.

Use of *that* vs. *which*: Although *which* can be substituted for *that* in a restrictive clause (The manuscript which the writer submitted needed no editing), as is commonly done in British English and sometimes in American English, many writers (and editors) prefer to keep the useful distinction between restrictive *that* (with no commas) and nonrestrictive *which* (with commas).

More examples of both kinds of relative clauses: **The candidate who had declared first won** *but* **The candidate, who declared early, began campaigning this week**; **I prefer voters who are well informed** *but* **The voters we focused on, who tend to be well informed, showed up in droves**; **The result that we had long awaited was announced** *but* **The result, which we had long awaited, was slow in coming**.

Commas with phrases like *such as* and *including*

Nonrestrictive phrases (as defined above) beginning with these terms are set off by commas, but restrictive phrases are not: **All the leading polls, such as Gallup and Pew, agreed** *but* **Leading polls such as Gallup and Pew agreed**; **Several of the terms used, including *misinformation*, were themselves misleading** *but* **Terms such as *misinformation* and *disinformation* were used misleadingly**; **He is leading in several states, including Iowa, Michigan, and New Hampshire**; *but* **He is leading in swing states such as Ohio**.

Commas with words in apposition to names

Again there is a distinction between restrictive and nonrestrictive usage as defined above, in this case with words, phrases, and clauses that *precede* names and other proper nouns as explanatory equivalents. The following examples will make this distinction clear.

Examples (*restrictive*): **by the noted author David Talbot**, *not* by the noted author, David Talbot (*Talbot is not the only noted author*); **in Melville's book *Moby-Dick***, *not* in Melville's book, Moby-Dick (*this is not Melville's only book*); **AV2024 co-chair Tony Lyons**, *not* AV2024 co-chair, Tony Lyons (*there is more than one co-chair*); **comedian Tim Dillon**, *not* comedian, Tim Dillon; **well-known comedian Tim Dillon**; **Kennedy's son Bobby** (*not* Kennedy's son, Bobby, *which would indicate that Bobby is his only son*).

Examples (*nonrestrictive*): **the author of that book, David Talbot, now writes for *The Kennedy Beacon*; Melville's most famous work, Moby-Dick**; **as one comedian, Tim Dillon, said**; **Kennedy's wife, Cheryl Hines,** (*not* Kennedy's wife Cheryl Hines).

En dash

We use an en dash (–) with a space on each side (–) instead of an em dash (—): **This issue is important – unlike the others mentioned**. We also use an en dash (with no spaces) in year ranges and number ranges: **during 1970–1980** (*but* **from 1970 to 1980**; *not* from 1970–1980). Don't use a hyphen (-) instead of an en dash.

To insert an en dash in Google Docs:

(1) Type two hyphens in a row on your keyboard, and Google will automatically change the two hyphens to an en dash (if you then press the backspace key, the en dash will change back to two hyphens). If this method doesn't work, use method 2 below.

(2) Click Insert and choose Special Characters from the dropdown menu; under "Insert special characters," choose (using left or middle button) Punctuation and (using right button) Dash/Connector, then choose the en dash. Thereafter, the en dash should appear under "Insert special characters" as one of your "Recent characters"

To insert an en dash in Microsoft Word:

(1) Type **2013** then press the **Alt** and **x** key at the same time. The unicode 2013 should turn into an en dash. If this method doesn't work, use method 2 below.

(2) Under the Insert tab, click on Symbol, then on More Symbols, and find the en dash on the menu to insert it in the text (also in this menu window, you can use the Shortcut Key option to set up a key combination that will insert an en dash from your keyboard.

Quotation marks and apostrophes

Use single quotation marks only to replace double quote marks within a quotation: She replied, "That's what I mean when I say, 'We need reform.'" For all other uses of quote marks, they should be the double kind.

Use "smart" (curved) quotation marks and apostrophes (not '' and ') in headlines, in text, and within all quotations.

Decades: **1970s**, *not* 1970's; *or* **the seventies**, *not* the Seventies; **1960s and ′70s** (note the apostrophe, not an opening quote mark, in ′70s).

ITALICS

Use italics sparingly for emphasis within the text of your article (don't use capital letters for this purpose; bold can be used occasionally for this purpose, but it's preferable to

reserve the use of bold for headings). In most cases, don't add italics to quotations for emphasis.

Words *as words* are italicized: **the term *gerrymandering***; *not* the term "gerrymandering" *or* the term gerrymandering.

Italicize the titles of books and movies and the names of websites, newspapers, magazines, academic journals, and TV shows. Place in quotation marks and *don't italicize* the titles of articles, poems, songs, short stories, TV episodes, and videos.

Don't italicize commonly used non-English words and phrases: **status quo**, **de facto**, **lingua franca**, **à la**, **quid pro quo**, **en masse**, **per se**, etc.

CAPITALIZATION

See also HEADLINES

Titles and offices – the general rule

Civil, military, academic, and professional titles are capitalized when they immediately precede a personal name and are thus used as part of the name. The same titles are normally not capitalized when following the title holder's name, when used in place of that name, or in general references to the title or office itself.

Examples (titles, offices, governmental bodies, etc.)

Running for president, the president of the United States, the president's cabinet, the presidency, presidential; President Joe Biden, *but* former president Joe Biden; future president Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, *but* JFK's attorney general, Robert F. Kennedy; then attorney general RFK Sr. (no hyphen between *then* and the title); the attorney general, former attorneys general

Congressman Kucinich, former congressman Dennis Kucinich, the congressman

Mayor Eric Adams, Mayor Adams, *but* New York mayor Eric Adams, the mayor

Colonel Douglas Macgregor, retired US Army colonel Douglas Macgregor, the colonel

US Supreme Court, the Supreme Court, the Court (*but* "the court" for all other courts)

Left and Right: the Left, the Right (as subject or direct object of a verb); *but* on the left/right; moved to the left/right; left wing, right wing; Far Left, Far Right.

Democrat, Republican, independent: He is considering running as an independent. The candidate has appeal for both Democrats and Republicans, as well as for independents.

Biden administration, the administration

For more examples and guidelines, see Chicago Manual of Style*, 17th edition, chapter 8.*

HEADLINES

Capitalize all nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in the title of an article (also apply this style to any quoted words, phrases, or sentences used within the headline, as well as to any titles of books, articles, or other works mentioned in the text).

Short prepositions (**in**, **of**, **with**, **to**, **for**, etc.), conjunctions (**and**, **but**, **or**, etc.), and articles (**a**, **an**, **the**) are uncapitalized in titles and headlines; **as** is also uncapitalized; short words of other kinds (including **Is**, **Are**, **It**, **Its**, **It's**, and **Up**) are capitalized.

A common misconception in the application of this style is that all two- or three-letter words are uncapitalized and all longer words are capitalized. All verbs, nouns, and pronouns, including two-letter forms, should be capitalized.

Capitalize both elements in a hyphenated word or phrase: **Full-Page Ads**, *not* Full-page Ads; **Cover-Up**, *not* Cover-up; *except* when the first element is a prefix: **Pro-democracy Reforms**, *not* Pro-Democracy Reforms.

No period at the end of a headline.

QUOTATIONS AND SOURCES

We prefer to cite primary sources when available – for example, an original court document instead of a *Washington Post* article about the decision. Quote the secondary source only when you are depending upon the author's analysis. Provide hyperlinked sources (not footnotes or endnotes) within the sentence for quotations, paraphrases, and citations of others' words or ideas. Commonly known or readily verifiable facts can be stated without quotation or attribution unless the wording is taken directly from another source. Famous quotes and proverbs need not be sourced. Easily verifiable yet controversial facts may need to be sourced.

When hyperlinking a quotation to a source, identify that source in the sentence: As Aaron Maté writes in *The Grayzone*. When citing a newspaper article, include the author's name: As Miranda Devine reported in the *New York Post*, *not* As the *New York Post* reported.

Consider whether a paraphrase will be more effective than a direct quotation. Avoid too many quotations with too little commentary. Readers may skip over too long or too frequent quotations. A pithy and well-written quote will bolster your argument; a long-winded quote or one that contains errors (unless that's the point you're making) is probably better paraphrased.

In introducing a quote, identify the speaker/writer quickly, either before the quote begins or by interrupting it after a phrase or two: "I wrote this book," writes RFK Jr. in the introduction, "to help Americans."

When introducing one or more quoted sentences with a word such as *said*, *wrote*, *replied*, or *asked*, use a comma (or sometimes a colon) following that word. Also use a comma following an introductory phrase like *As the proverb says* or *In the words of Kennedy*. Do not use a comma when introducing a quoted phrase or sentence fragment as in the following examples: **The journalist claimed that "the sky is not blue"** (*not* The journalist claimed that, "the sky is not blue"); **She said she would "prefer not to**

comment"; She said the law could be called "a win for big business"; A protester scrawled "End the Wars!" on the wall.

Carefully edit quotations of speeches and interviews to ensure that they are properly transcribed, both in terms of accuracy and so that all words are correctly spelled and sentences are correctly punctuated, following our house style and the rules of punctuation.

Do not use an ellipsis (…) at the beginning or the end of a quotation. Do not enclose the ellipsis in parentheses or square brackets. Insert a space on each side of an ellipsis within a sentence (…) to indicate that you have omitted intervening words. Add a period *before* the ellipsis (….) *with no space before or after the period* to indicate the omission of the end of a sentence. Similarly, retain a period at the end of a sentence in the original before the ellipsis to indicate the omission of material immediately following the period (i.e., indicating that one or more intervening sentences have been omitted).

Quotations shorter than 50 words should be "run in" to the paragraph. Longer quotations should be set off as block quotes. A block quote should not begin with a paragraph indent, but the entire quote should have a hanging indent (specific spacing and formatting will be determined in Substack).

Permitted/preferred changes to a quotation:

(1) When introducing a quotation, change the first letter of the quote to uppercase or lowercase as needed to conform to the syntax of the surrounding sentence (do not use brackets to introduce this change). For example, if the quotation is a full sentence, "The sky is not blue," the sentence that includes it might read: **The journalist claimed, "The sky is not blue"** *or* **The journalist claimed that "the sky is not blue,"** *not* The journalist claimed that "The sky is not blue," *and not* The journalist claimed that "[t]he sky is not blue." On the other hand, if the phrase "the sky is not blue" appears midsentence in the original, capitalize *the* if using the quoted phrase to begin your sentence: **"The sky is not blue," he said.** Don't use an ellipsis to indicate that more words follow or precede the phrase in the original: *not* "The sky is not blue …," he said.

(2) Change double quote marks that occur within a quotation to single quote marks.

(3) Change any vertical quote marks and apostrophes (" ' *and* ') to “smart” ones (“ ” *and* ’) (usually you can do this simply by selecting the mark with your cursor and retyping the apostrophe/quote mark on your keyboard).

(4) At the end of the quotation, a period or other punctuation in the original may be omitted or changed to a period or comma as required by the surrounding text; a question mark or exclamation point may be retained if it continues to apply to the word or words as quoted.

(5) Change em dashes (—) or hyphens (- or --) used as em dashes to an en dash with a space on each side (–).

(6) Obvious typographic errors may be corrected silently (without comment or *sic*).

FREQUENTLY USED WORDS, PHRASES, NAMES

adviser
African American (n. and adj.)
American Values 2024, AV2024
anticorruption
anti-Democrat
antidemocratic
antidiscrimination
antidrug
anti-environmental
anti-establishment
anti-fascist
antigovernment
antipoverty
anti-science
anti-scientific
anti-union
antiwar
artificial intelligence (AI)

Associated Press (not italic)
Big Ag
Big Pharma
biolab
bipartisan
black (race)
catalog
censorship industrial complex
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
coauthor, coauthored
co-chair, co-chairperson, co-chairwoman, co-chairman
codefendant
co-found, co-founder
co-host
common sense (n.)
commonsense (adj.)
Congress
congressional
cosponsor, cosponsorship
constitution (generic)
Constitution (specific)
constitutional
counternarrative
counterrevolutionary
COVID-19
Cuban American (n. and adj.)
decision-maker
decision-making (n. and adj.)
Democratic Party, the party
deplatform
DNC-aligned
e.g. (not italicized; followed by comma; use sparingly, only within parentheses; instead use phrases like *for example*, *such as*)
etc. (not italicized; use sparingly, only within parentheses; instead use phrases like *and so on*, *and others*)

First Amendment
gain-of-function research
grassroots
hard-line
hard-liner
health care (n. and adj.)
homeowner, homeownership
i.e. (not italicized; followed by comma; use sparingly, only within parentheses; instead use phrases like *that is*, *in other words*)
independent voters, independent candidate
Irish American (n. and adj.)
Kennedy Beacon (see below at *The Kennedy Beacon*)
lifelong
long-standing
longtime
military-industrial complex
multibillion
multimillion
multiyear
New York Times (see below at *The New York Times*)
naive
nonaffiliated
nonanswer
nondemocratic
nongovernmental
nonincumbent
nonpartisan
nonprofit
nonunionized
nonviolent
nonvoter
number (*don't abbreviate to* no. *or #*)
over-policing
overreach
overreliance

overrepresentation
policymaker
policymaking (n. and adj.)
post-campaign
post-trial
postvaccination
postwar
pre-campaign
preexisting
pretrial
prevaccination
prewar
pro-Democrat
pro-democratic
protester
rank and file (n.)
rank-and-file (adj.)
ranked-choice voting
reelect
reelection
Reuters (not italic)
RFK Jr.
reimagine
rewrite, rewritten
Robert F. Kennedy Jr.
Second Amendment
side effect
socioeconomic
southern border, US southern border
super PAC
supermajority
superpower
The Kennedy Beacon reports; an article in *The Kennedy Beacon* (*not* in the *Kennedy Beacon*); *but*: a *Kennedy Beacon* writer, a *Kennedy Beacon* article; *and* (only after full title is used at first mention): in the *Beacon*, the *Beacon* article

The New York Times reports; an article in *The New York Times* (*not* in the *New York Times*); *but*: a *New York Times* writer, a *New York Times* article; *and* (only after full title is used at first mention): in the *Times*, the *Times* article, *Times* writer

The Washington Post reports; an article in *The Washington Post* (*not* in the *Washington Post*); *but*: a *Washington Post* writer, a *Washington Post* article; *and* (only after full title is used at first mention): in the *Post*, the *Post* article, *Post* writer

unconstitutional

underrepresent

Uniparty

US (United States), *not* U.S.

US Empire, the Empire

US Establishment, the Establishment

war on drugs (or "war on drugs")

war on terrorism (or "war on terrorism")

Washington, DC, *not* D.C.

Washington Post (see above at *The Washington Post*)

white (race)