

FamilyFun

STYLE GUIDE

July 2007

Writing Style

FamilyFun's writing style is cheerful but not saccharine, straightforward but not without humor. Our goal is to inspire our readers with an engaging style, personal anecdotes, a good story, or humor, then provide them with nuts and bolts information. We try to be entertaining and include playful sidebars whenever possible. We avoid jargon, and we don't preach or make judgments (about, for example, stay-at-home mothers versus working mothers). When necessary, articles provide step-by-step directions; when possible, they cite resources that allow the reader to explore a subject further.

Resources

Style guide: *Words Into Type*, backed up by *The Chicago Manual of Style* 15th Edition and *The Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual*

Dictionary: *Webster's Collegiate* 11th (use main entry, not variant), backed up by *Webster's* 3rd

Food: *Recipes Into Type*, *International Dictionary of Food and Nutrition*, *Claiborne's Food Encyclopedia*

General Style Points

alphabetizing: Dictionary/letter-by-letter style (see WIT 90): consider all letters in sequence up to a comma. Thus, for example, *coffee cake* comes before *coffeeshouse*, and *coffee, decaf*, before *coffee cake*. Arrange all lists alphabetically — for example, a list of books or places to visit — unless there is a distinct reason for doing otherwise (going chronologically, for example).

articles, in titles and names:

- **Companies, institutions, associations, societies, unions, conferences:** *The* preceding a name is lowercased in running text — that is, treated as part of the sentence — even if it is part of the official title (CMOS 8.73, 8.75)
- **Buildings and monuments:** *The* preceding a name is lowercased in running text, even if it is part of the official name (CMOS 8.61)
- **Names of places:** *The* should be capped with a city name, but not other names: The Hague, the Vatican (CMOS 8.61)
- **Newspapers and periodicals:** *The* preceding a name is set in roman type and lowercased, even if it is part of the official title (CMOS 8.180): the *New York Times*, the *Christian Science Monitor*
- **Titles of works:** Initial articles that are part of book, film, and other titles of works should in most cases (see “All titles” below) be styled as part of the title
- **All titles:** An initial article in a title (*A*, *An*, or *The*) may prove awkward in running text, especially if it follows a possessive noun or possessive pronoun. If such an article will not gracefully fit, it should be dropped. An initial article should also be dropped if an adjective or another article (that is part of the sentence) precedes it. Also, if a work is merely referred to as already mentioned or as familiar to the reader, or if the title is abridged, an initial article may be omitted or left outside the italics. (CMOS 8.179, WIT 136)

An *Oxford Universal Dictionary* definition ...

That unsavory *Lord of the Rings* character ...

He read Dickens's *Tale of Two Cities*.

This statement is made by Adam Smith in his *Wealth of Nations*.

captions: No period, unless the caption is more than one sentence

company/Web site names: Use standard capitalization — all proper nouns take an initial cap, and an initial cap only — regardless of the company's treatment of its name, unless an unconventional treatment is very strongly identified with the company, e.g. eBay, M&M's. Go to theslot.com/caps.html for a good discussion of this.

- All-cap names are permitted only if the letters are individually pronounced (see AP 45) or if the name is a true acronym
- Individual caps are allowed in the middle of a run-together name if they effectively serve as initial caps: *FamilyFun*, *GoCityKids*
- A cap may follow the hyphen in a name: Day-Glo, Con-Tact
- Decorative punctuation is not permitted: Yahoo, not Yahoo!
- Ampersands may be used as part of a company's formal name (AP 268)

credits:

- Flyspec runs in the gutter, opposite the page number; introduce people with colons, separate them with semicolons: From top: Ed Judice (stylist: Amy Hamel); Peter N. Fox (2)
- For wardrobe and prop suppliers, distinguish between maker and store as follows: Children's clothing *by* OshKosh, dinnerware *from* Pinch Pottery
- Avoid abbreviations for stock houses: Liaison International (not Int.)

directions: Do not write in an elliptical style. See also Craft Style and Terms section.

drop caps: Usually followed by small cap lead-ins; designer's discretion unless clarity is compromised

e-mail addresses: No hyphen at a line break; break after the @ or any dot or slash, if you must

endnote: Use in place of bio for staff writers and some contributing editors; set flush to period; be sure to place it at the true end of the article, which is not following a sidebar, and which is not necessarily following jump

headlines: When using up/down style:

- Cap prepositions of four or more letters (WIT 147)
- Cap both elements of hyphenated compounds that are temporary (i.e., would not be hyphenated if not used as a modifier; e.g. Time-Sensitive Material) and both elements of coordinate terms; if a compound would ordinarily be hyphenated, lowercase the second element (e.g. Self-help Book) (WIT 147)
- Prepositions that are an inseparable part of the verb (verb tails) are capped: Lay Off the Sugar Already

he or she, him or her: Not he/she, him/her; write around if possible, or alternate gender by project, or match picture if pertinent

homestyle (adj., adv.): No dictionary authority, but like homespun

italics: Use for titles of newspapers, movies, plays, TV series, book series, albums, art objects, ships (see Ship Names), spaceships, roller coasters, foreign words, sounds, words as words, letters as letters. Do not use the toolbar for italics; choose an italic font from the font menu

jump lines: Continues on page xxx [FR, no period]/From page xxx [FL, no period] when the article is truly interrupted, and incomplete without the jump. See page xxx/From page xxx when the jumped portion is not the end of the article, or when the article is readable and virtually complete without the jump, but a relevant section is located on another page: a recipe that goes with a craft article, or directions for a craft pictured on an opener. Be specific when helpful: Directions on page xxx/Candle directions from page xxx.

Latin abbreviations: None (no i.e., e.g.; etcetera is spelled out)

lead-ins: If in small caps, watch for capital letters. Spec a full phrase: I was sorry or I was sorry to read, *not* I was sorry to. Avoid running the lead-in should all the way across the column.

logo (FamilyFun): Do not italicize as logo; do not hyphenate if it breaks between words (avoid break when practical)

materials lists: Use prepositions (unlike recipe ingredients lists); list items in the order they appear in the instructions

kid-friendly: Hyphenated regardless of position

kid testers

-like: Usually solid with word, except when the root word ends with two *l*'s or is a proper noun or adjective: magazinelike, snaillike, ball-like, Pan-like (WIT 228)

like: Avoid using for *as*: It happened just *as* I said it would. *Like* requires an object and is used as a preposition to compare nouns and pronouns; use *as* to introduce a clause. (CMOS 5.173, AP 119)

like vs. such as: Interchangeable within limits. Thoughtful flexibility is the rule here: maintain the distinction between the two where clarity demands it, but there's no need to offend idiom. Strictly speaking, *like* excludes what follows it from the group being discussed, while *such as* includes the people or things in the group being discussed, indicating that they are examples of it. However, *like* is widely used and understood to mean *including*; it's okay to let it stand if the meaning is clear, especially in informal contexts such as reader letters. *Like* is also idiomatic for informal restrictive uses where the example is actually the topic of the sentence.

Examples of correct usage:

-*She wants to be a great composer like Mozart.* (that is, like Mozart specifically, not for example, which excludes him from the larger group of composers)

-*She admires great composers such as Mozart and Berlioz.* (They are included in, are examples of, the group "great composers")

-*He's lucky to have a friend like Will.* (Idiomatic; informal restrictive use)

numbers:

General Rule: Spell out zero to ten; use figures for 11 and up (WIT 125), including ordinals (CMOS 9.8). When several numbers appear in the same context, the style for the larger numbers governs the smaller (WIT 126, CMOS 9.7).

Ages: Figures for all (see Ages)

Dates: Figures for all, centuries and decades excepted (see Dates)

Degrees: Figures only: 325° oven (only use for symbol), 40-degree angle, temperatures of 75 degrees

Dialogue: Spell out all, except year dates: "In 1990, thirteen of us traveled to Europe" (WIT 130)

Fractions: Spell out for nonspecific quantities: Fold half of the egg whites into the chocolate mixture. Spell out as modifiers: Two thirds of the way (WIT 131). A fraction expressed in figures should not be followed by *a* or *of an*: $\frac{3}{8}$ inch, not $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch.

Instructions: In recipes and craft pieces, use figures for quantities directly related to the ingredients or materials, times, dimensions, and degrees. Spell out isolated numbers used in a general sense. So: Bake in a 9-inch square pan at 300° for 20 minutes; Add 2 cups of the cabbage, the remaining 2 teaspoons of salt, and 1 bay leaf. But: Cut in the butter with two knives; Ladle the soup into four bowls. Spell out *one* in the sense of one or the other. (See *Recipes Into Type* 107)

Large numbers: Specific numbers over 100 are set in numerals; isolated and round numbers may be expressed in words where appropriate. Insert commas (1,236), except for years (1500 B.C.). A hybrid of figures and spelled-out words may be used for millions: 4 million, 525 million. (WIT125–126)

Measurements/Dimensions: Use figures: a 6-foot 11-inch Hall of Famer; a 2-by 11-foot plank; in simple narrative, however, apply General Rule: He was standing six feet away (WIT 130, but with more emphasis on use of figures given the nature of our text)

Money: Apply General Rule to isolated sums: eight cents, 16 cents, five dollars, \$11 (with dollars expressed in figures, use the symbol); use figures for all when several sums are mentioned; spell as adjective: a five-dollar bill; spell out all in dialogue (WIT 132); for very large sums, express the zeros as a word: \$3 million, \$16 billion (WIT 126).

Percent: Always use figures; don't use symbol (WIT 134)

Plurals: Just add s: 360s (CMOS 7.15, 9.58)

Scores: Use figures when the situation indicates, particularly for tallying points

Speeds: 65 mph, 78 rpm, but 35mm (film); spell out miles per hour when not accompanied by a numeral

Time: Always use figures with A.M. and P.M. (small caps): 7 P.M., 7:30 P.M. In straight text, use words when the expression is simple: four-thirty, five o'clock, half past one (See WIT 135–136)

“number” symbol: No. 6 (cap with period), Nos. 6 through 12 (WIT 115)

plus: Followed by a comma at the beginning of a sentence: Plus, lots of great recipes. Not followed by a comma when used in place of *and*: Fun games and crafts, plus travel tips. Followed by a comma when linking clauses (similar to *moreover*): He was a cretin, plus, he smelled of sauerkraut.

small caps: Usually 2 points smaller than the body type

taglines: Em dash followed by full name usually in caps/sc, or by initials only in caps

titles of works, capitalization and punctuation: Treat per *FamilyFun* style, regardless of publisher's style

- Cap prepositions of four or more letters (WIT 147)
- Cap both elements of hyphenated compounds that are temporary (i.e., would not be hyphenated if not used as a modifier; e.g. Time-Sensitive Material) and both elements of coordinate terms; if a compound would ordinarily be hyphenated, lowercase the second element (e.g. Self-help Book) (WIT 147)
- Prepositions that are an inseparable part of the verb (verb tails) are capped: Lay Off the Sugar Already
- Subtitles are preceded by a colon

- Ampersands are spelled out (AP 268)
- An initial article is not always treated as part of the title. See this section's Articles, in Titles and Names
- An exclamation point or question mark that is part of a title should be retained (WIT 180)

URLs: An initialism for Uniform Resource Locators (CMOS 15 17.9–11.) For information

on URLs, see the World Wide Web Consortium, www.w3.org.

- **The parts of a URL** are the abbreviation of the "protocol" (such as "http," short for "hypertext transfer protocol"), followed by a colon and a double slash, then the domain name (e.g. www.familyfun.com), followed by the path to the resource. The parts following the domain name are separated from it and each other by single slashes. A "trailing slash" at the end of a URL is part of the address.
- **URL vs. name:** Referred to as an "address," a URL is an expression of the location of a file; it is not the name of the Web site or business. A URL can stand alone, but make sure it is not implied to be the name of the site or business, as they may not be the same. Many Web-based businesses do not include ".com" as part of their name. Take the Web site known as Go Mom, whose URL is gomominc.com. You may write, "For more information, go to gomominc.com," but the following sentence demands both name and address: "Molly Gold, founder of the family organizing Web site Go Mom (gomominc.com), said ..."
- **Abbreviating URLs:** Always drop the protocol if it's "http"; include if it's "ftp" or any other. Drop the "www" as matter of space-saving style, but be aware that it is not necessarily superfluous: two otherwise identical addresses, one with and one without, may point to different servers. Keep in mind too that some browsers automatically add it.
- **Case:** In general, lowercase, but some URLs are case sensitive, so don't blindly edit for style. If the URL works either way, some flexibility is permitted (e.g., we cap FamilyFun.com for the quick name-brand recognition, and would consider internal caps in a very long domain name for general readability).
- **Line breaks:** Avoid if possible; if not, break after a slash, between words, before a symbol, or, as a last resort, *before* a dot (i.e. carry the dot to the next line). Never insert a hyphen at the end of a line, as some URLs do contain hyphens as part of the address; and a hyphen that is part of an address should not fall at the end of a line.
- **No need to boldface or otherwise style,** unless you wish to call special attention to a URL, such as one that appears in a stand-alone link. If you do boldface or color spec, exclude any punctuation that follows (contrary to the general rule for typeface of punctuation; see Basic Punctuation section).

Web links: Words and phrases to be clicked on are in quotes: For more holiday craft ideas, go to craftycrafts.com and click on "Holiday Decorations."

Basic Punctuation

- colon:** When it's used within a sentence, the first word of what follows is lowercased; when it introduces two or more sentences, a speech in dialogue, an extract, or a question, the first word is capitalized (CMOS 6.64)
- comma:** A comma may or may not follow an introductory phrase (In the old days, ...). Use the serial comma (red, white, and blue). Use the parenthetical comma (Her slippery dog, Walter, got away). Do treat a name that follows daughter, son, etc. as parenthetical if it is unclear whether the person is the only daughter, son, or whatever: My daughter, Madi, ... Drop the commas regardless if the name is used in the possessive: My youngest daughter Madi's birthday. Be sure to omit from restrictive appositives (WIT 191).
- dash, em** (option-shift-hyphen): Takes a space on either side (AP 272). It's more common to close up on either side (CMOS), but apparently, Web browsers cannot detect an em dash and will read it as part of a word. With so much of our content being repurposed for the Web, we should use the spaces.
- dash, en** (option/hyphen): Close up. Use in a compound instead of a hyphen when two words modify an adjective or participle, or when one of the components already contains a hyphen: New York–based company, peanut butter–lover, English–Scotch–Irish parentage. Also represents the word *to*, such as for number ranges in close text (in most cases, use the word). (WIT 210)
- hyphen:** Open style — avoid hyphens unless clarity demands them. Thus: toilet paper tube doll; construction paper project; tissue paper wreath; credit card debt. Do not hyphenate proper names with interior caps (e.g. *FamilyFun*) when they break between words, or Web and e-mail addresses (see Style Points section, URLs).
- quotation marks:** None around messages and mottoes, which simply take an initial cap (WIT 145); none to indicate “so-called” in crafts: Add a carrot nose and raisin eyes. Use around any quote from printed material, including signs and other projects: I spelled out “My Big Sisters Love Me” with stick-on letters; We put the pages in a binder, which we titled “Hannah’s Phone Book.”
- typeface for:** Commas, colons, semicolons, dashes, and periods are set in the same style as the preceding word (italics, bold, color; WIT 172)

Trademarks

Use a generic equivalent to a trademarked brand unless there is a good reason to cite a brand. This comes up most often in crafts and recipes. If you must use a trademark, note that trademarks are proper adjectives; they should virtually never be used as verbs or in the plural or possessive form. There is no need to use ™ or ® (CMOS 8.162).

See also: General Style Points section, Company/Website Names, for guidelines on capitalization and punctuation; WIT 171; CMOS 7.125

Resources: The INTA (International Trademark Association) Web site, <http://inta.org/tmchk1st1.htm>, and its trademark hot line, 212-768-9886 (2–5 pm EST) or tmhotline@inta.org.

Recipe Style & Terms

General Style:

- Go by *Recipes Into Type* for most style questions.
- Do not write in an elliptical style: Unlike many if not most cooking and other magazines, we style directions with more or less full use of articles, prepositions, pronouns, and other potentially dispensable words. So: "Slice the apples and combine them in a large bowl," not "Slice apples and combine in large bowl." Our magazine has so many recipes and projects that the overall tone would be quite stilted if we wrote directions in shorthand. We aim to sound friendly, readable, and conversational. That said, we are not absolute sticklers on this point. That's partly because brevity is also a consideration. A few words may indeed be dropped, most often near the end of a sentence. In short, we're not obsessed, but we want the overall cast of directions to be consistent with the rest of our text. For example: "Beat the eggs, brown sugar, oil, and vanilla extract in a mixing bowl until smooth" is fine instead of "... until *they're* smooth," or "Place the cookies on ungreased baking sheets and bake for 9 minutes," instead of "... bake them for 9 minutes."
- Assume that the reader more or less knows her way around the kitchen; don't write down to her.

Bundt (TM): The cake and the pan

butter: Assumes salted; specify unsalted (not sweet); note distinction between softened and room temperature

cheeses: Cap all except feta, cottage cheese, cream cheese, chèvre, mozzarella, ricotta; drop the word *cheese* in ingredients lists except in cases such as cream cheese, or with an obscure cheese

chickpeas (not garbanzos, per main entry in Web 11)

confectioners' sugar (not powdered)

cut-up foods: Sliced? Roughly chopped? Quartered? Diced? Minced? Be specific; 1 cup of diced food is not the same quantity as 1 cup minced. Also, "1 cup zucchini, grated," is not the same as "1 cup grated zucchini."

decorators' icing

degrees: Use symbol for oven temperature (see Temperature); spell out other uses: Rotate the pan 90 degrees

doneness: Emphasize the desired result, not the time: Broil the tomatillos until they are soft and slightly charred, about 7 minutes, *not* Broil about 7 minutes, until they are soft and slightly charred

egg: Assumes large; specify otherwise

flour: All-purpose flour is assumed; specify other types; specify all-purpose when accompanied by other types

foil: Okay in recipes; use aluminum foil elsewhere; avoid tinfoil

ingredients lists:

- No prepositions for items in ingredients lists, with few exceptions (we *do* use them in craft materials lists): 1 cup sugar, *not* 1 cup of sugar.

Prepositions may come in if you go beyond the item into explanation: 1 pound sausage of your choice.

- Ingredients should be listed in the order they appear, without exception
- Anything used for greasing is not usually included in the ingredients list, as it is not part of the food
- Water is included in the ingredients list only if it is a specific amount that becomes part of the food: 10 cups of water for a soup, not water for boiling
- Form for close numbers in ingredients lists: 1 (3-inch) cinnamon stick
- Combine different quantities of the same ingredient (*Recipes Into Type* 25): If the recipe calls for 1 cup of flour at one stage and 2 cups more later on, both amounts should appear in a single entry in the ingredients list, with the larger amount first: 2 cups plus 1 cup flour. (Exception: solid butter and melted butter should appear in separate entries.)

heat: Not preheat (contrary to RIT but in keeping with logic and, for one, *Cooks Illustrated*); but preheated for the adj.: a preheated oven

microwave-safe: Omit as self-evident

milk: Assumes whole, specify otherwise

“A pinch of salt” and the like: Include as a separate measurement in ingredients list

numbers: Use figures for measurements and quantities directly related to the ingredients or materials: amount, times, dimensions, servings, degrees. Spell out isolated numbers used in a general sense. So: Bake in a 9-inch square pan at 300° for 20 minutes; Add 2 cups of the cabbage, the remaining 2 teaspoons of salt, and 1 bay leaf. But: Cut in the butter with two knives; Ladle the soup into four bowls. Spell out *one* in the sense of one or the other, or this one as opposed to that one: Spread frosting on each one; Remove one of the balls of dough from the refrigerator. (See *Recipes Into Type* 107)

plastic wrap

prepositions: None in ingredients lists, but directions are styled as any other body text, with more or less full use of articles and prepositions (See General Style, above)

scallions: Usually what's meant; green onions are somewhat more mature and slightly bulbous

spices: Specify as ground only those commonly purchased whole, including cloves, ginger

sugar: Assumes granulated white; specify otherwise; specify white when accompanied by other types

tablespoon, teaspoon: Always spell out

temperature: Use symbol, 350°; Fahrenheit is assumed

vanilla extract: Not vanilla, which is best used as an adjective

wire rack: Rather than cooling rack, for consistency

Craft Style & Terms

General Style:

Don't write directions in an elliptical style. That is, they are styled like any other body text, with more or less full use of articles, prepositions, pronouns, and other potentially dispensable words. So: "Glue the strip of paper into a loop, overlapping the ends," not "Glue strip of paper into loop, overlapping ends." Our magazine has so many recipes and projects that the overall tone would be quite stilted if we wrote directions in shorthand. We aim to sound friendly, readable, and conversational. That said, we are not absolute sticklers on this point. That's partly because brevity and space limitations are also concerns. A few words may be dropped if necessary, preferably near the end of a sentence. In short, we're not obsessed, but we want the overall cast of directions to be consistent with the rest of our text.

boldface: Where items are boldfaced in running text in lieu of a materials list, do not boldface articles

directions: On the first reference, materials should be cited as they appear in the materials list; a 2-inch paintbrush should be cited as such, not as "your large brush"

materials lists: Use prepositions (unlike recipe ingredients lists); list items in the order they appear in the instructions

quotation marks: None to indicate "so-called" in crafts: Add a carrot nose and raisin eyes