



Zooquaria Style Guide

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This document should be used by those writing articles and features for Zooquaria. If a particular question is not addressed here please contact david.williams-mitchell@eaza.net.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Write acronyms/abbreviations out in full on the first occurrence with the abbreviation in brackets afterwards: eg the Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG). In subsequent mentions use only the abbreviation.

Any acronym over three letters that reads as a word eg Aids, Nafta, Tamba, Naafi, Saafa, Unicef, is written with upper case initial.

No dots/fullstops to be used in the abbreviations: eg NUM not N.U.M.

There are many abbreviations that are widely known and have taken on the status of a noun in their own right and therefore need no clarifying phrase, eg BBC, IBM, USA/US.

Abbreviations such as laser and radar are exceptions and should be in lower case.

ACCENTS

In anglicised foreign words use accents only when they make a crucial difference in pronunciation (café, soupçon, émigré) and/or to avoid ambiguity (exposé not expose, pâté not pate). Foreign words are also usually italicised.

In proper nouns (names of institutions, places or people) special characters and/or accents should be used unless an accepted English version of the name is available.

ADDRESSES

The correct way is: The man lived at 17 Sandiford Road, Sutton, for five years. Note the comma after the town. The following are wrong: The man lived at 17, Sandiford Road, Sutton, for five years. The man lived at 17, Sandiford Road, Sutton for five years. Note the commas used incorrectly.

Words such as street can be abbreviated to St, or road to Rd.

AMERICANISMS

Use the English spelling of proper names and quotes, eg Pearl Harbour, World Trade Centre. Standardise on ise: ie familiarise not familiarize.

APOSTROPHES

Use in the possessive; eg an MP's view or James' dog. No apostrophe is needed in short forms in common usage like phone or flu.

No apostrophe is needed for plural forms of acronyms. For example use EEPs and TAGs rather than EEP's and TAG's.

BANNED WORDS

Always use while, amid and among rather than whilst, amidst and amongst which are archaic. Remember that 'in' works just as well as 'within' sometimes.

CAPITALS / lowercase

Avoid capitals wherever possible.

Job titles take the lowercase, eg head zookeeper. Where there is only one such job title, eg Prime Minister, then capitals are used. Government is always lower case, eg the British government. Brand names used as nouns take capitals: eg Hoover, Sellotape, Kleenex but vacuum cleaner, sticky tape, tissue. (Check out the regular listing of brand names in Press Gazette). Words do not take capitals just because they are new: eg use internet not Internet and fax not Fax.

Seasons of the year (spring, summer, autumn, winter) do not take capitals, nor do north, south, east, west. If you are talking about 'the south of England' then it is best to use a capital 'S'. Also it should be south London, but the West End. Do not hyphenate.

Use for name of an organisation when it is given in full: eg Richmond Council, not Richmond council. But use lowercase in shortened referenced: eg the council, the court, the club, the centre. You can use Richmond council if that is not the proper name of the body. This is also the case in headlines.

COLLECTIVE NOUNS

A collective noun is followed by a singular verb: eg the council is, the club is, the committee is.

COMMAS Some examples of correct usage: The bus driver, Paul Hutchings, said . . . The Prime Minister, Tony Blair, said . . . No commas needed here: Drainage engineer James Brown works in the sewer . . . Queen Mary's Hospital in Roehampton is in need of cash . . .

COMPANIES

Use the company name as the company writes it. Observe the spelling, capitalisation and punctuation used by the company, including ampersands (&), apostrophes, hyphens and slashes. But don't slavishly follow styles for Toys R Us.

Companies are singular nouns because a company is a single entity: eg Virgin is about to launch a new air service.

In quotes it's OK to use "we are" (it refers to the people of the company), but always turn mentions of the company to singular: "We are expanding our routes and Virgin is about to launch a new air service."

Do not pluralise company names. It is Ford not Fords, Rothchild not Rothchilds, Tesco not Tescos. The only exception is Sainsbury's.

CURRENCY

A\$ - Australian Dollars

US\$ - American Dollars

Euro should be lower case e and never plural.

DATES AND TIMES

Dates should always be written: 1 January 2003. Do not add st, nd or th to the day. Note no

commas.

If the weekday is required it precedes the day and with no commas: eg Saturday 1 January 2003.

Try not to write 1980-4, 1980-84, or 1980 to 85 unless sometimes in listings. Use 1990s not 90s, '90s or 1990's, but you can occasionally make an exception in prose. These are correct: 6pm, 8am, noon, midnight (not capped), 6pm to 7.30pm. Do not write 6.00pm, 12noon, midday, 6-7.30pm or 6pm-7pm.

DISPLAY COPY

Display copy – no full stops in standfirst, pull quotes, captions.

FIGURES AND NUMBERS

Always write one to nine in words, 10 and upwards in figures – except at the start of a sentence when words should be used.

Millions: use the correct figure or word followed by the word million(s): eg two million, nine billion, 14 million, 59 billion, etc. Thereafter use 2m, 9bn, 14m 59bn. (Note – the m or bn is closed up next to the figure in these subsequent mentions). Use £2m for two million pounds.

Again, note no spaces between number and m. For thousands, use 1,000 and not 1000.

Use % not per cent. Where possible, try to avoid starting sentences with figures. Use figures for centuries (eg 20th century) unless before 10th century (note, no capitals and only hyphenate if adjectival). Use figures for ages, eg 5-year-old.

FOREIGN WORDS, NAMES AND PLACES

Use English spelling for all foreign names except where the foreign version is the universally accepted or only version. Rome not Roma, The Hague not Den Haag, but do use Beijing. Look out for use of Holland – this is an area within The Netherlands, which is the correct term for the country. Wherever possible, use national characters, such as accented vowels.

GENDER

Refer to someone as he/him or she/her if you know who you are talking about. Otherwise it is now accepted to use they/them: eg the students did not know if they could use the staff bar.

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Politicians should only have MP (or equivalent) affixed to their name if the story deals directly with politics or parliament. In such a case, the use of MP should be confined to the first mention of the politician. Other instances should use only the person's name and not their elected status.

Political titles: Secretary of State for Education (caps for official title) but not for education secretary.

HYPHENS

Use hyphens to clarify points for the reader: eg extra-marital sex differs from extra marital sex
4-year-old boys differ from 4 year-old boys.

Use in words that could confuse the reader, such as co-pilot, re-elect. Do not use in coordinate or cooperate. Use to distinguish words like re-form and reform.

Use after prefixes: eg vice-chairman and ex-chairman.

Use in ages when saying 5-year-old. Do not use when describing age as four years old.

Remember to use an em dash (–) rather than a hyphen (-) when using in place of brackets.

PUNCTUATION

Inside or outside? Full stop goes inside brackets when it completes a full sentence: (He said this on a full stomach.) Full stops go inside quotes when the quote is the full sentence: He said: 'This is a fine time to leave me, Lucille.' Full stops go outside quotes if the quote is only a part of the full sentence: Lucille had, he said, chosen 'a fine time'.

QUOTATION MARKS

Single or double? Always use single quotes except for quotes within quotes: eg 'The pope asked me to say "Good morning, your grace",' he said. Always ensure that quotation marks are placed at the beginning of each paragraph but ONLY at the end of the whole quotation – these are often missed when a quote is cut to fit the story.

The correct way to introduce a full quote is with a colon, followed by a single space, then the quote marks and an upper case initial.

SPECIES NAMES

Lower case for species names, such as willow warbler, unless a proper noun is being used, such as Dartford warbler. The first time a species is referred to, it should be followed in italics, and within brackets, by its scientific name, eg badger (*Meles meles*). SPELLINGS Practice is the noun; practise is the verb.

TEMPERATURES

Temperatures should be written 78°C or 119°F.

TITLES

Dr – Dr Hilary Jones.

Professor – use in full then abbreviate to Prof plus surname (note no full stop).

Job titles – always lower case eg managing director of Hengstler, Graham Reinelt and the managing directors of the FTSE 100 companies.

Spokesman/woman/person – use this for anyone with the title press officer, communications executive, PR manager, media liaison operative, head of public affairs.

Councillor – use in full the first time it is mentioned and then use Cllr. And don't confuse it with counsellor.

TRACKING

Always track line by line, not paragraph by paragraph, and go by increments of -1 rather than -5. The whole point of tracking is to invisibly fit something in. Features should be as close to the default tracking as possible. Preferable not to track out ie +5 to fill space. Better to pad or turn lines down, otherwise typeface looks too inconsistent.

ODDS AND ENDS

Use adviser, not advisor.

& is banned (except in titles of publications and so on). Use 'and' instead.

No subject can ever be 'centred around', it is an impossibility. Use 'centred on'.

Avoid the phrase 'more and more'.

Aquariums, not aquaria, except in the name of the organisation: European Association of Zoos and Aquaria. (Note that WAZA uses Aquariums in its title.)