



Official Style Guide

Want to send your writing to Westside Publications?

Increase your chance of being published and develop your grammatical skills:

Use these Westside Publications Guidelines before you submit your work!

Spacing and Layout

Westside Publications uses standard spacing for layout when writing:

Use only ONE space after every comma, question mark, hyphen, ellipsis or full stop.

e.g.

Michael. John, Ali – Jill? John ... Jack.

Use a standard indent for every new paragraph – 10 spaces. (Do not drop a line)

e.g.

Ali ran all the way to the park and then came back home. He had been gone for almost twenty hours and no one knew where he was. In the end he decided he should return.
When Ali walked through the door, his mother and father were waiting for him.

Drop a line for when there is a **section break such as a time lapse, shift or change of events or perspective.**

e.g.

Ali was in bed. He didn't know where he was or how he got there. He wasn't sure if he'd even come home the night before. Suddenly a flash shot through his head. Memories began to pour in. It was like he'd been someone else a long time ago.

Ali was in jail. He stood in front of the bars.

Ali was in bed. What was he doing back here?

Fonts

The standard font for Westside Publications is:

Garamond

Sizes

Often the best font size to use, especially with Garamond, is **11**

Numbering

When using numbers, it is often difficult to know when to write it out in letters and when to write it out in numerals:

When to use letters:

Ages

e.g. I am **ten** years old / I'm a **ten**-year-old boy

Amounts / Quantity

e.g. I ran around the block **twenty** times / I gave him **twenty** punches / It cost me **twenty** dollars

Times in o'clock

e.g. I woke up at **five o'clock** / I will meet you there at **six o'clock**.

Temperatures

Write out the temperature in letters when it is a **turn of phrase** and not a measurement:

e.g. Jill wiped the sweat from her brow. 'Jeez, it's a hundred degrees today,' she mumbled.

When to use numerals:

Times in am/pm

When you say what time it is:

e.g. It was **5am** when I woke up / We will meet you there at **6pm**.

*(Remember to put **am** and **pm** in lower case. Do not use capitals)*

Temperatures:

Write temperatures in numerals when they are specific measurements:

e.g. I looked at the thermometer and it said: **40°** / When cooking, preheat the oven at **160°**

Writing Dates

This is the recommended format for writing dates:

Month written in words / Day written in numerals / Year written in numerals

e.g. The carnival happened on *May 7th 2010*

Note: This convention is mainly used in reports, articles and essays. It is not compulsory.

When to use Italics

Italics are only used when referring to the name of a complete text: book, film, album, play, newspaper, magazine, etc.

You do NOT use italics when referring to the name of a shop, or school, etc.

e.g. I was reading *Lord of the Rings* on the train / I watched *Superman III* last night with my brothers and sisters.

Note: Italics are NOT used for the titles of texts that make up part of a collection such as a short story or a poem, or newspaper article. For these, use single quotes:

e.g.

Text: *Westside: Fill Your Bucket*

Text that makes up part of this collection: 'The Revelation of Shane'

Thus:

The anthology, *Westside: Fill Your Bucket*, features the story, 'The Revelation of Shane' by Andrew Ma.

Italics can also be used for emphasis:

e.g. It's not that I want peace, it's that I *am* peace / He doesn't want chocolate, he *needs* chocolate.

Italics can also be used to highlight when someone is thinking (instead of speaking)

e.g. 1 Jill ran down the empty city street. *There are no people at all*, she thought to herself.

e.g. 2 *Life shouldn't be so hard*, John thought to himself before he jumped.

When to use single quotation marks

Single quotation marks are used when one or more people are talking:

e.g.

'Hi,' said Jill.
'Hi,' said Jonh.
'How are you?'
'I'm good. How are you?'

Single quotation marks are also used when referring to something said:

e.g. 1 Every time I bump into Bassem he always tells me he 'hates life'.

e.g. 2 I remember my mum always telling me 'life is like a box of chocolates', and she was right.

Single quotation marks are also used when referencing something said or written:

e.g. 1 I read a sign that said, '*est. 1981*'.

e.g. 2 It's not like every time we sing we have to say, '*Jack and Jill went up the hill*'.

When to use double quotation marks

Only use double quotation marks when quoting within a quote or within something spoken:

e.g.

1 Fiona said, 'Yesterday John said "I don't like people" when he was in the supermarket.'

2 Tim said, 'I'll quote the Bible when I say, "all men are created equal."'

Where to put stops and commas when using quotes:

Punctuation goes on the **outside** of a quote when the quote is **part of** a larger sentence:

e.g. Samantha's always running and shouting out, 'I hate my life'.

e.g. While John was speaking he quoted Martin Luther King's, 'I have Dream Speech'.

Punctuation goes on the **inside** of a quote when the quote is a **complete** sentence:

e.g. Samantha was running. She shouted out, 'I hate my life.'

e.g. 'Hello,' John said. 'How are you?'

Hyphenating

When and how to use a hyphen (dash):

There are 2 main kinds of hyphen (dash): **Long Dash** and **Short Dash**

What do they look like?

Long dash: -

Short Dash: -

When to use a long dash:

A long dash is mostly used when there is shift, break or pause in a sentence:

e.g. My life is great - taking a turn for the worse.

e.g. There was a strange smell - like rotting vegetables - in the alley.

A long dash is also used when speech is interrupted:

e.g.

Jim said, 'Hey, I want to go to -'
'The movies?' interrupted John.

When to use a short dash:

Short dashes are used in compound words:

e.g.

sixty-six, I am an eighteen-year-old girl, sun-soaked, Spider-Man, gap-toothed, wide-mouthed

BYDS

Bankstown Youth Development Service