**AP STYLE BASICS**

**JOB TITLES**

Job titles that come **before** a name and show **hierarchy** are capitalized.

State Sen. Ellen Doe says . . .

GM President John Smith believes . .

She told attorney Nora Bloom . . .

Titles that come after a name are not capitalized.

Ellen Doe, a state senator from South Bend, says . . .

John Smith, president of GM, believes . . .

**NUMBERS**

Numbers one through nine are normally spelled out, while 10 and above are figures.

Exceptions:

Ages are always figures: She was 8 months old.

Measurements are figures: The snake was 5 feet long.

Addresses are figures: She lived at 123 Main St.

Numbers at the start of a sentence are always spelled out: Eight hundred students went to the concert.

**TITLES OF COMPOSITIONS**

(Books, movies, plays, poems, songs, TV shows, speeches and works of art).

Capitalize principal words, including prepositions and conjunctions with four or more letters.

“Gone With the Wind”

Capitalize an article – the, a or an – or words of fewer than four letters if it is the first or last word of the title.

“As Time Goes By”

Use quotation marks around all compositions except the Bible and reference books such as dictionaries, encyclopedias and handbooks.

“The Social Network”

“The Star-Spangled Banner”

“Desperate Housewives”

The Bible

Webster’s Dictionary

Magazine names should be capitalized, but **not** put in quotes. Lowercase the word magazine unless it is officially part of the title.

Time magazine

Harper’s Magazine

**ADDRESSES**

Abbreviate the words St. Ave., and Blvd. with a numbered address. Think StAB. Alley, Road, Drive, Lane and Terrace are always spelled out.

Walnut Street

101 Walnut St.

26 Rosebud Lane

Capitalize these words if they are part of the formal street name.Lowercase these words if you’re listing more than one street.

College Avenue and Fourth Street

College and Kirkwood avenues.

(This is also true for rivers and lakes and counties.)

Spell out and capitalize numbered street names from First through Ninth. Use figures for 10th and above.

Fourth Street

11th Street

Abbreviate directions before the street name with a numbered address.

10 E. Ninth St.

**ABBREVIATIONS**

Spell out the names of the states when they appear alone.

Wildfires continued to rage through California yesterday.

In datelines, lists, or tabular material, abbreviate states when they appear in conjunction with the name of a city, town, village or military base.

Needham, Mass.

Grissom Air Force Base, Ind.

Exceptions: Do not abbreviate Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas and Utah

To remember: the two states that are not part of the contiguous U.S., plus those with five letters or fewer

In the body of a story, spell out states – Do not ZIP code abbreviations.

Columbus, Ohio. Heavener, Oklahoma.

**ACADEMIC DEGREES AND DEPARTMENTS**

Avoid abbreviations when you can.

She has a doctorate in philosophy.

Use an apostrophe in bachelor’s and master’s degrees, but not in Bachelor of Arts or Master of Science.

Use Dr. before a name for medical professionals, but generally not for those with Ph.D. degrees.

Areas of study are lower case, with the exception of languages and proper nouns.

He taught English and French, but she taught American history and political science.

Capitalize only the official names of schools at a university.

She taught in the Kelley School of Business.

He taught at the IU School of Journalism in Ernie Pyle Hall.

They taught journalism and business courses.

They taught in the history department.

They taught in the IU Department of History.

**DATES AND TIMES**

Use Arabic figures.

July 1, not July 1st or July first

Spell out months without specific dates, but abbreviate months with dates.

School begins in August.

School begins Aug. 31.

Use commas to set off months with dates and years.

School began Aug. 29, 2011, and will continue through May 6, 2016.

Use figures for times other than noon and midnight. Use a colon to show a time with minutes, but not with zeros.

2:35 p.m.

2 p.m.

Don’t use both a.m. or p.m. and morning or evening in the same reference.

He got up at 8 a.m.

He got up at 8 this morning.

Lowercase seasons of the year.

Indiana is beautiful in spring, summer, fall and winter.

**CHANGING WORDS**

The word email is now one word.

How many emails did you get today?

Twitter is capitalized, but “tweet” is not.

He sent out six tweets from the courtroom.

The word website is one word, lower case.

Will you post your story on the web?

The word blog is lower case.

She’s been writing her blog for 10 years.