

**INSTRUCTIONS ON STYLE**  
**FOR THE WASHINGTON ADMINISTRATIVE CODE**

(1) **PUNCTUATION**

(a) **Commas.** In a series of three or more words or phrases, a comma is used after each item.

For example: I am going to the store, bank, library, and home.

Always place commas around the year when used in a date, thus: For the period from December 1, 2005, through December 1, 2007, the rate must . . .

(b) **Semicolons.** A semicolon is not used where a comma will suffice, but is to be used to separate phrases already containing commas. A semicolon, not a period, is used following each item in a series listing that is introduced by a colon, thus:

The board has the following powers and duties:

(1) Inspection of all dental appliances for safety, durability, and ease of operation;

(2) Licensing of all dental appliance manufacturers; and

(3) Regulation of dental appliance retailers.

(c) **Italics.** Italics are used in these instances:

(i) Case names. The case name is italicized, but the location information is not. For example: *Citizens Council v. Bjork*, 84 Wn.2d 891 (1975); and

(ii) Scientific names. For example, the state fossil is the Columbian mammoth of North America (*Mammuthus columbi*). The scientific name is always italicized, with the first word capitalized and the second and subsequent words, no matter what their derivation, not capitalized. If only the genus name is used (in this case, *Mammuthus*), it is still capitalized and italicized. The scientific name is placed in parentheses after the popular name, if used, but may also be referred to alone. Groups of higher ranks, such as phyla, classes, or orders, such as in "the phylum Brachiopoda," are not italicized.

(iii) Names of publications.

(2) **NUMBERS**

(a) **Quantities and amounts.**

Cardinal and ordinal whole numbers from zero to nine should be written in words, not Arabic numerals. Numbers 10 or greater, and any decimals or fractions, should be written in Arabic numerals. Categories of numbers should be written as words.

Examples:

zero, one, two, three

two percent

third Sunday

.0071

Population of 20,000

30 parts per million

When referring to money, use Arabic numerals. When referring to "cents" or other categories, use the words for those categories.

\$3.02

\$10,000

5 cent tax

Any omnibus appropriations act, other appropriations, tax rates, and tables are exceptions to this rule.

Do not repeat numbers in bracketed words or numerals.

(b) **Dates.**

April 1, 2023,

April 1st

first day of April

first of April

April 2nd

March 31st

September 30th

the 2023-24 academic year

the 2023-24 school year

the 2023-2025 fiscal biennium

January 2023 (no commas)

January 2023 through June 2023 (no commas)

January 1, 2023, through June 1, 2023,  
(commas on each side of year)

2020s

### (3) **CAPITALIZATION**

If using the scientific name of a plant or animal, capitalize the genus but not the species. See RCW 77.08.030.

#### **Do not capitalize**

chapter	chapter 19.86 RCW	city	civil rate
civil rule	county	department	director
eastern Washington	fax	federal	governor
internet	legislature	medicaid	medicare
names of boards, bureaus, commissions, departments, officers, or state agencies	spring quarter	state (Washington state or state of Washington)	supplemental security income
western Washington			

#### **Capitalize**

All acts e.g., Administrative Procedure Act	Alaska Native	Cascade Mountains	Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (federal)
Congress	Columbia River	Columbia and Snake rivers	C.F.R. Part 84
First word after a colon	Geographical names	Indian	Names of colleges and universities
Names of nations, states, cities, towns, and counties	National Drug Code (NDC)	Native American	Pacific Northwest
Puget Sound	Revised Code of Washington	Sec.	Social Security number
Thurston County	Thurston and Pierce counties	Title 67 RCW	Washington Administrative Code
Washington State Register	X-ray		

## Spelling

accidentally	acknowledgment	a.m.	archaeological
attorneys' fees	attorneys general	benefited	benefiting
canceled	canceling	cancellation	capital (meaning city or money)
capitol (meaning buildings)	C.F.R.	commitment	exceedance
fulfill	gases	judgment	integration
knowledgeable	master's degree	moneys	p.m.
rescission	requestor	therefor (for)	therefore (only if meaning consequently)
totaling	traveled	traveling	U.S.C.
useable	veterans' administration	willful	

## The following are written as one word

aircraft	backflow	benchmark	biannual
biannually	bimonthly	biweekly	bloodborne
bottomfish	bylaw	campsite	cannot
caregiver	caregiving	carpool	carryover (noun)
casework	checkbox	checkpoint	childbirth
cleanup (noun)	cochair	coextensive	collocate
copy	copayment	councilmember	counterclaim
courthouse	crosswalk	cutoff	cyberbullying
cyberstalking	database	deenergized	dropout
email	facepiece	finfish	fingerprint
firefighting	firefighter	fishmeal	floodwater
framework	gillnet	greywater	groundwater
handbill	handwashing	hoistway	insofar
instream	intercounty	landowner	layoff (noun)
letterhead	marketplace	midcourse	motorboat
muzzleloader	nighttime	nonjudicial (most words containing "non")	ongoing

**The following are written as one word**

online	parimutuel	payoff (noun)	pickup
policymaker (noun or adjective)	postconsumer	postgraduate	postharvest
postmortem	postproject	postponement	postrecovery
postretirement	postsecondary	posttrial	preemployment
pretext (most words containing "pre")	punchcard	quitclaim	racetrack
ratemaking	ratepayer	rearview	recordkeeping
runoff	safekeeping	setoff (noun)	shoreland
semiannually	semitruck	shutdown	sightseeing
spenddown	standby	statewide	stepparent
textbooks	tidelands	timeline	trademark
underserved	watercourse	wastewater	waterworks
website	weighmaster	worldwide	workday
workforce	workload	workplace	worksite
workspace			

Note: All "multi" words, except those beginning with an "i," are written as one word.

**The following are written as two words**

air space	at large	birth date	bore hole
candle power	cash out	case finding	certificate holder
child care	course work	cut off (verb)	cyber misconduct
day care	decision making (noun)	de minimis	en route
ex officio	face shield	fact finder	first aid (noun)
first class	flood plain	food fish	food handling
forest land	free fall	full time (adverb)	game fish
gray water	hand delivery	hard copy	health care
horse racing	lien holder	in situ	job site
motor home	life span	on board	park owner
part time	pay off (verb)	per annum	per capita

poll site	post anesthetic	post office	power line
pro rata (but prorated)	punch board	ride sharing	rule making (noun)
semi tractor	Sol Duc	stock water	storm water
stream flow	stream bank	street car	timber land
time frame	time loss	to wit	traffic control
vice chair	vice president	water body	work group
work station			

Note: Some of these two-word phrases should be hyphenated if used as compound adjectives. For examples, see hyphenated words below.

**The following are written as three words**

as needed basis	attorney at law	attorney in fact	findings of fact
miles per hour	out of country	out of region	reduction in force
right of way			

**The following are written as hyphenated words**

before-and-after-school	by-product	cannabis-infused	case-by-case
clean-up (adjective)	co-hosted	coin-operated	co-owner
cost-of-living	court-martial	co-responsibility	co-worker
cross-examined	cross-pollination	cross-reference	decision-making (adjective)
district-wide	even-numbered	ex-spouse	fact-finder
fact-finding	first-aid (adjective)	full-facepiece	full-time (adjective)
fund-raiser	fund-raising	half-facepiece	hands-on
in-kind	in-service	in-state	limited-access (highway)
limited-English-speaking	long-acting	long-range	man-made
nine-month period	non-Indian	one-half	odd-numbered
off-road	off-site	on-road	on-site
one hundred-year flood	out-of-state	post-closure	post-eligibility
post-test	pull-tabs	quasi-judicial	quasi-municipal
ride-sharing (adjective)	rule-making (adjective)	run-on	second-hand (adjective)
self-esteem	self-incrimination	self-insurance	self-insurer

**The following are written as hyphenated words**

self-service	semi-trailer	so-called	start-up
state-funded	toll-free	trade-off	Tri-Cities
up-to-date	well-being	X-ray (adjective)	year-round

Note: In AP Style, you should hyphenate all words beginning with "anti," except the following: All of the below words have specific meanings of their own. Antibiotic; Antibody; Anticlimax; Antidepressant; Antidote; Antifreeze; Antigen; Antihistamine; Antiknock; Antimatter; Antimony.

Adjectives composed of two or more words are usually hyphenated when they precede a noun, even though the phrase would not be hyphenated if standing alone, such as "low income," "one year," "full time," and "part time." Example:

Low-income persons may serve three-year terms.

This is necessary to avoid ambiguity. Compare the following sentences:

A patron may purchase two dollar tickets.

A patron may purchase two-dollar tickets.

The ill educated man sold a little used car.

The ill-educated man sold a little-used car.

He came across a man eating tiger.

He came across a man-eating tiger.

Do not hyphenate between an adverb ending in "ly" and the adjective it modifies. For example, "substantially new construction" does not need a hyphen.

**(4) SUBSECTIONS**

(a) Subsections and subparagraphs are enumerated as follows:

(1)

(2)

(a)

(b)

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

(A)

(B)

(I)

(II)

Subsections (1), (2), (3)

Subdivisions (a), (b), (c)

Items (i), (ii), (iii)

Subitems (A), (B), (C)

(b) Internal references to these subdivisions may be made as follows:

subsection (1) of this section

subsection (2)(a)(i) of this section

subsections (1) and (2) of this section

subsection (1) or (2) of this section

subsection (1)(a) and (b) of this section

subsection (1)(a) or (b) of this section

(a) of this subsection

(a)(iii) of this subsection

(5) **CITATIONS**

(a) **To the Washington Administrative Code.**

(i) **WAC sections.**

WAC (no periods between letters)

WAC 1-21-010

WAC 1-21-010(3) (not "subsection (3) of WAC 1-21-010")

WAC 1-21-010 (3)(a)(ii)

WAC 1-21-010 (3) and (5)

WAC 1-21-010 and 1-21-015

WAC 1-21-010, 1-21-016, and 1-21-037

WAC 1-21-010 through 1-21-140 (for an inclusive string)

(ii) **WAC chapters.**

chapter 1-21 WAC

chapter 1-04 or 1-21 WAC

chapters 1-04 and 1-21 WAC

chapters 1-04, 1-06, and 1-21 WAC

(iii) **WAC titles.**

Title 1 WAC

Titles 1 and 16 WAC

Titles 1, 16, and 246 WAC

(b) **To the Revised Code of Washington.**

(i) **RCW sections.**

RCW (no periods between letters)

RCW 1.08.010

RCW 1.08.010(3) (not "subsection (3) of RCW 1.08.010")

RCW 1.08.010 (3) (a) (ii)

RCW 1.08.010 (3) and (5)

RCW 1.08.010 and 1.08.015

RCW 1.08.010, 1.08.016, and 1.08.037

RCW 1.08.010 through 1.08.140 (for an inclusive string)

(ii) **RCW chapters.**

chapter 34.05 RCW

chapter 24.03 or 24.06 RCW

chapters 24.03 and 24.06 RCW

chapters 24.03, 24.06, and 34.05 RCW

(iii) **RCW titles.**

Title 43 RCW

Titles 43 and 44 RCW

Titles 34, 43, and 90 RCW

(iv) **Session laws.**

section 3, chapter 113, Laws of 1935

section 2, chapter 5, Laws of 1994 sp. sess.

section 45, chapter 2, Laws of 1995 1st sp. sess.

section 5, chapter 93, Laws of 1967 ex. sess.

section 9, chapter 176, Laws of 1975 1st ex. sess.

Sessions that are not regular sessions are referred to as "special" sessions. Before 1991, these sessions were referred to as "extraordinary" sessions.

See discussion in Part II (2) (c) (iv) of the Bill Drafting Guide as to which years require the special session to be designated 1st or 2nd.

(c) **To the state Constitution.**

Article VII, section 2 of the state Constitution  
Article II, section 1(b) of the state Constitution  
section 2 of this article

(d) **To federal law.**

(i) Federal statutes. If possible, cite both the Statutes at Large and the United States Code:

26 U.S.C. Sec. 501(c) (3) of the federal Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended

the G.I. Bill of Rights (58 Stat. 284; 38 U.S.C. Sec. 693)

the federal Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (87 Stat. 839; 29 U.S.C. Sec. 801 et seq.)

Do not cite the unofficial U.S.C.A.

(ii) Public Laws.

P.L. 94.115

(iii) *Federal Register.*

47 C.F.R. Sec. (year)

(e) **Other citations** should conform to A Uniform System of Citation (Harvard Law Review Association, 17th ed. 2000).

In case of doubt as to word or punctuation styles other than those listed in this guide, the most recent publication of the U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual may be consulted.

(6) **MISCELLANEOUS**

Punctuation is always included in bold.

Punctuation is not included in italics.

Title, chapter, and section captions are written with the first word of the caption and the first word after a dash capitalized.