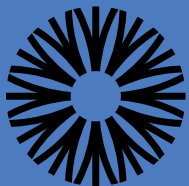


Content Style Guidelines



Winnetka-Northfield
PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT



Table of Contents

General Guidelines	003
---------------------------	------------

Applications	007
---------------------	------------

Commonly Troublesome	010
-----------------------------	------------

The Source	016
-------------------	------------

Website Content Flowchart	017
----------------------------------	------------

Why is this important?

Consistency of style across all communications created by an organization builds identity. Each piece of communication is a small part of the public image of the library. When these pieces are consistent and comprehensible, the public image comes into sharp focus. The Winnetka-Northfield Public Library District adheres to its own style in communications in order to convey professionalism, enhance clarity and maintain a consistent public image.



General Guidelines

There's no single set of rules when it comes to writing content. The following is simply a guide for standardizing spelling, grammar, formatting, word usage, etc.

AP Style

The library follows The Associated Press Stylebook. In areas where there are no guidelines, Communications staff consult The Chicago Manual of Style, dictionaries and online resources for best practices. Deviations from those rules, items not included in that reference book and items to which library employees should pay particular attention are listed in this Style Guide in alphabetical order.

Merriam-Webster

For questions of spelling, please use the online Merriam-Webster Dictionary and use the first spelling listed. If spellings listed here differ from spellings in the AP Stylebook, please use the spelling in the dictionary.

Spacing

Use one space at the end of a sentence, no matter the punctuation. Also, use one space after a colon.

Formatting Titles of Materials

Please note: we differ from AP Style in this area.

Place titles of short works (songs, poems, articles) in quotation marks and italicize titles of long works (books, movies, albums, magazines). Capitalize all principal words in the title, including prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters. Capitalize an article (a, an, the) or words of fewer than four letters if it is the first or last word of the title. When italics are not available, place titles in quotations.

Book Title:

Yes: *To Kill a Mockingbird*

No: To Kill a Mockingbird

Movie Title:

Yes: *Saving Private Ryan*

No: “Saving Private Ryan”

Song Title:

Yes: “Stairway to Heaven”

No: *Stairway to Heaven*

Dates

Do not use st, nd, rd or th (1st, 2nd, etc.) with dates.

Times

Use numbers for times, except noon and midnight. Use a.m. or p.m. (with periods). If the time is a round hour, do not include :00.

Yes: 9 a.m.

Yes: 4:30 p.m.

Yes: Lunch is served at noon.

Yes: 11 a.m. – Noon (Capitalize when listing times of a program)

Ages

Always use figures. Ages expressed as adjectives before a noun or as substitutes for a noun need hyphens.

Example:

A 5-year-old boy

Example:

The boy is 5 years old

Example:

A program for 5-year-olds

Ampersand

Only use an ampersand when part of an official name (Procter & Gamble), otherwise use “and.”

Exception: dates and times for *The Source*

Commas

Nothing is more abused than the use of commas, whether there are too few, not enough or misplaced. Commas can help avoid confusion:

Let’s eat Grandma.

vs.

Let’s eat, Grandma.

In the first example, Grandma is an entrée. In the second example, we want Grandma to join us at the table for a meal.

For library publications, don't add the final serial comma in a listing (usually before the word "and"), unless there will be confusion in the sentence's meaning.

Example:

John had a ball, bat, glove and uniform.

Example:

We ate pizza, frog legs and caviar for dinner.

Note: While it is grammatically correct to add a comma between "glove" and "and" it isn't necessary and takes up extra space in print publications.

Insert a comma before the concluding conjunction in a series, if an integral element of the series requires a conjunction.

Example:

Did you have toast, bacon, and green eggs and ham for breakfast?

When using commas within a series, use semicolons to separate items.

Example:

Among those present at the meeting were Moe Howard, county executive; Don Knotts, library director; and Jerry Mathers, associate director.

Decades

When referring to a decade, do not insert an apostrophe between the zero and the "s." In informal

contexts, it is acceptable, to shorten the decade by removing the first two numbers of the year and adding an apostrophe before the last two numbers.

Example:

That program was developed in the 1990s.

Example:

That program was developed in the '90s.

Quotation Marks

Place a dash, semicolon, question mark, exclamation point and period inside quotation marks when it applies to the quoted matter only. Place it outside when it applies to the whole sentence.

Example:

"Have you read *Gone with the Wind*?"

Example:

"Did you like it?"

Applications of Library Brand

Having a consistent voice, look, and feel across all our assets strengthens our brand as patrons are met with a consistent experience every time they engage.

~~Standards for tone and personality should be reflected in copy.~~

Voice And Tone

We strike a friendly, accessible, conversational tone, and use uncomplicated phrasing and jargon-free wording for newsletters, website text, and emails.

For social media, we also incorporate humor and irony, including ironic hashtags.

For external communication, we use a larger vocabulary and try to be succinct.

It's worth noting that we aim to keep the use of exclamation points to a minimum in our messaging.

Our written communications should resemble the conversations we, as staff, have with our patrons:

Professional

Outgoing

Inclusive

Curious

Engaging

Lively

Helpful

Educated

Spaces Within the Library

It's important that we all use the same terms when referring to distinct areas of the Library. This ensures our patrons have a clear understanding of where to go for assistance and to utilize our services. Please use the terms identified here when referring to specific areas within our organization.

Winnetka Library

First Floor, Mezzanine Level, Lower Level
Welcome Desk/Information Desk
Youth Department
Reference Desk
The Studio
Quiet Room
Study Rooms
Lloyd Room
Winnetka Community Room

Northfield Library

Desk
Glass Room
Northfield Community Room

Tagline

The approved tagline for the library is:

Discover Something New

Approved Fonts

The approved font for documents is **Bookman Old Style**.

Web fonts are **TBD by Library Market**

For external materials the Marketing & PR department uses the brand approved fonts of **Laca** (for headlines) and **PT Serif** (body copy). Beyond those approved fonts, the Marketing & PR department may select additional fonts that fit within the guidelines for the library.

Email

When typing an email address, use all lowercase letters. Email addresses can be sent to

@winnetkalibrary.org or
@wnpld.org (preferred).

Example:

jsmith@wnpld.org

Email Signature

Kathy Skiba
(she/her)

Graphic Designer
(847) 386-5270 | wnpld.org



Winnetka-Northfield
PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

Referring to the Winnetka-Northfield Public Library District

The name of the organization should always be referred to for the first time as **Winnetka-Northfield Public Library District**.

After first reference, the word “library,” when used alone, is lowercase in library publications. If abbreviating Winnetka-Northfield Public Library District, use WNPLD, following its full name.

Whenever possible, please use the full name: Winnetka-Northfield Public Library District.

There are times when it’s necessary to use the building location, both in text and verbally, please use Winnetka Library or Northfield Library.

Yes: Northfield Library

No: Northfield Branch Library

Yes: Winnetka Library

No: Winnetka Branch Library

If you must shorten the organization name, please use WNPLD, Library, or the library.

In conversations with patrons, it’s also appropriate to use first person plural: we or our.

Commonly Troublesome Words And Phrases

This section is included to standardize district-specific words and phrases. It guarantees consistency of terminology, no matter which department or writer it's produced by. And that helps our patrons easily understand and learn about our libraries and services.

African-American

The word is always hyphenated and is used in referring to African-American History Month. “Black” is also acceptable, but not recommended.

After school & after-school

Not hyphenated when used as an adverb describing a time. Hyphenated when modifying a noun.

Example:

Join us after school for homework help.

Example:

Join us for ~~Teen Time~~, an after-school program.

Audiovisual

One word, lowercase

Award-winning

Hyphenated when modifying a noun, lowercase.

Blu-ray

Not Blu-Ray

Board of trustees

Do not capitalize “board of trustees” or “trustees,” unless referring to the full name.

Example:

Winnetka-Northfield Public Library
District Board of Trustees

Checkout vs. check out

One word, lowercase when used as a noun. As a verb, “check out.”

Example:

Checkout begins at 5 p.m. Visit the checkout counter before leaving.

Example:

Be sure to check out your materials.

DIY

Abbreviation for Do-It-Yourself, no periods

Drop-in vs. drop in

One word, lowercase when used as a noun. As a verb, “drop in.”

Example:

This is a drop-in program.

Example:

Drop in to this program.

Please note: also applies to check-in vs. check in, sign-up vs. sign up.

Electronic Terms

The American Library Association and its divisions use a variety of spelling for e-books. These include E-book, ebook and eBook. Similarly, e-mail and email are both accepted terms. The approved use for the Winnetka-Northfield Library District is:

email

e-book

e-resource

e-audiobooks

e-newsletter

Do not capitalize the “e” unless it is the first word in the sentence. Hyphenate all except email.

Ellipsis (...)

Ellipsis are three typed periods used to indicate a deletion of one or more words when condensing quotes or texts. An ellipsis can also be used to indicate a thought the speaker or writer does not complete. Ellipsis are typed with a space before and after the three periods.

Example:

It was the worst of times ... best of times.

Em dash (—)

It is a symbol used in writing and printing to indicate a break in thought or sentence structure, to introduce a phrase added for emphasis, definition, or explanation or to separate two clauses. It separates the parenthetical phrase from the sentence.

Example:

John walked down the road and around the corner – taking his time and whistling as he went – to get to school.

En dash (–)

Origin of the word is from the printing world meaning the “width of an N” and is “1/2 the width of an em dash.” A symbol used in writing and printing to connect continuing or inclusive numbers or to connect elements of a compound adjective when either of the elements is an open compound.

Example:

1880–1945

Example:

New York–Princeton trains

~~First-come, first-served~~

Kickoff

One word, no hyphen

The Source

Italicize in paragraph. Always include “The” and capitalize both words.

The Studio

Always include “The” and capitalize both words.

Login vs. log in

One word, lowercase when used as a noun. As a verb, “log in.”

Logon vs. log on

One word, lowercase when used as a noun. As a verb, “log on.”

Logout vs. log out

One word, lowercase when used as a noun. As a verb, “log out.”

Patrons

Refer to people who visit the library as “patrons.”
Avoid “customers,” “readers” or “members.”

Nonfiction

Not hyphenated, lowercase

Nonprofit

Not hyphenated, lowercase

Nonresident

Not hyphenated, lowercase

Numbers

Spell out numbers one through nine. For numbers 10 and above, use the numeral. If a number begins a sentence, spell it out. The same rule applies to ordinal numbers: First through ninth are spelled out; 10th and above use numerals.

On-site

Hyphenated, lowercase

Online

Not hyphenated, lowercase

Off-site

Hyphenated, lowercase

Percent

One word, do not use the symbol %, unless using in charts or graphs.

Pick up vs pickup

Two words when used as a verb. One word when used as a noun or adjective.

Pre-K

Abbreviate for pre-kindergarten.
Uppercase P and K with hyphen.

Preschool

One word, lowercase

Professional, government and religious titles

Capitalize a person's title only when
used directly before their name.

Yes: Library Director Monica Dombrowski

Yes: Monica Dombrowski is our library director.

No: Monica Dombrowski is our Library Director.

Read-alikes

Use for all references

School-age

Not school-aged. When used as an adjective
preceding a noun, it requires a hyphen.

Setup vs. set up

One word, lowercase when used as a
noun. As a verb, two words.

Self-checkout

Hyphenated

Sign-up vs. sign up

Hyphenate as a noun or modifier. As a verb, two words.

Storytime

We always write this as one word.

Toward

Not “towards”

U.S.

Period after U and S

Use/Utilize

Use the more simple “use.” “Utilize” is the awkward
verb form of the obsolete adjective “utile.”

Wi-Fi

Hyphenated, uppercase W and F

World Wide Web/Internet

Use “www” as part of a web address when the address is listed in a sentence. You do not need to use “www” if the web address is standing alone. Capitalize the first letter if at the beginning of a sentence. If a web address appears at the end of the sentence, include a period at the end of the sentence.

Example:

library.org OR You can find us at www.itpld.org.

Websites

Do not list http://, www, or the / at the end of the url.

Yes: wnpld.org

No: http://www.wnpld.org/

URLs

Better known as internet addresses. When a URL does not fit on one line, return to the next line so that the complete address is on one line whenever feasible. In text the “www” is not necessary. Use a period if a URL ends a sentence.

Example:

Log on to library.org.

Example:

For more information, see library.org/books.

The Source Descriptions and Details

The Source is one of our greatest marketing tools and the following is intended to help us write program descriptions that are exciting and consistent and will result in higher program enrollments.

Headline

The headline should be simple and attention grabbing.

Description

Be clear and concise and keep it to 50 words or less. Include “who,” “what,” “where” and “why.” Write in the present tense and include a call to action (register, explore, discover). Write from the perspective of potential attendees. Edit to ensure that it is free of grammatical, punctuation and spelling errors.

Details

Must include: location, day, date, time and (R) if registration is required.

Adults example:

Winnetka Library: Tuesday, May 16, 7 PM (R)

Kids example:

Northfield Library: Fridays, March 17 & 31, April 14, May 12, 10:30 AM • Ages 0–4 with Adult (R)

Tenacious Tour du Mont Blanc

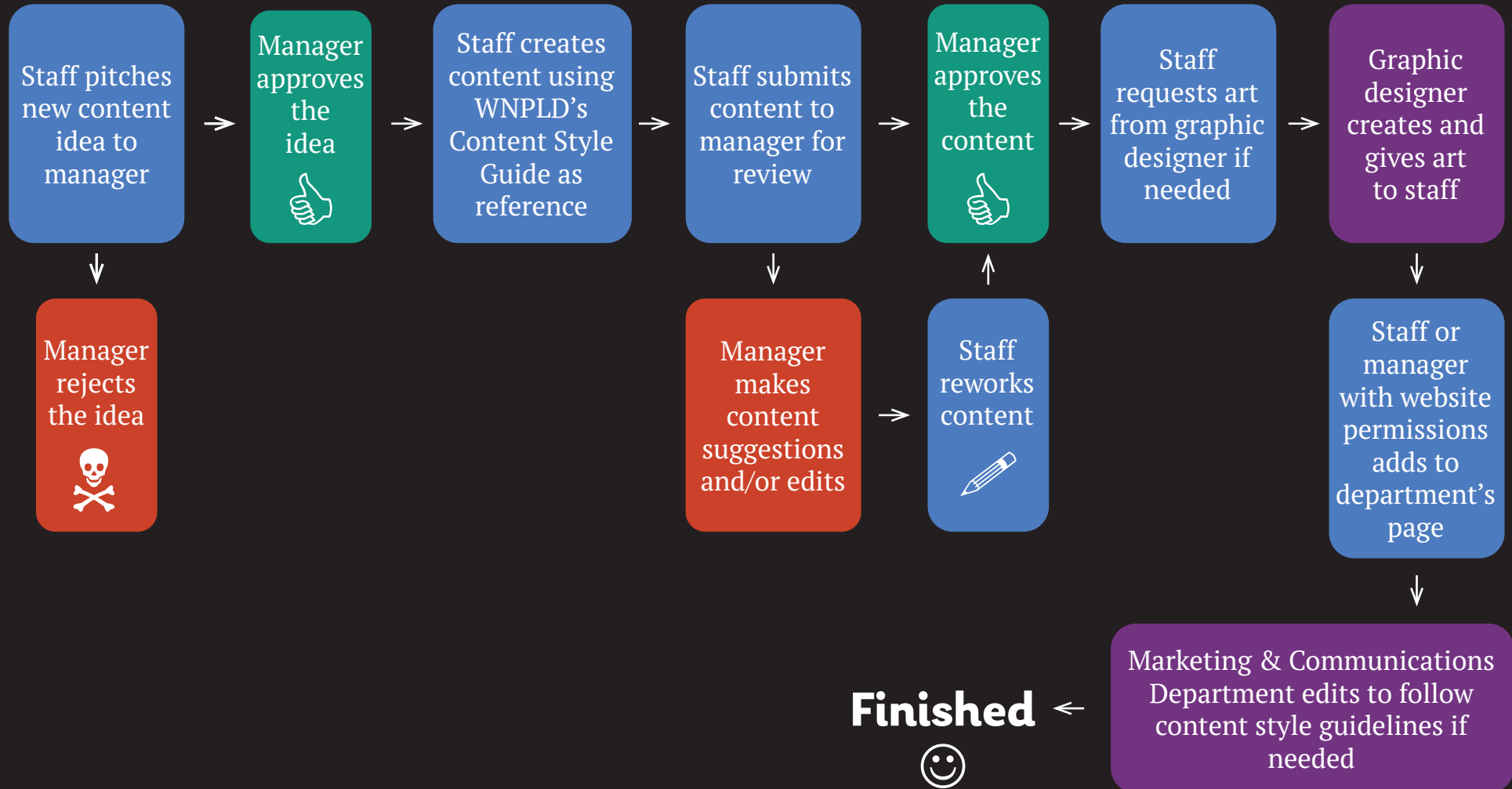
Trek 105 miles through the Alps with Brian Michalski as your guide to Europe’s world-famous Tour du Mont Blanc. Learn about practical planning tips, challenges along the trail, cultural tidbits, accommodation logistics, and more, all seen through the lens of Michalski’s gorgeous original photography and entertainingly adventurous retellings.

Winnetka Library: Thursday, May 11, 7PM (R)

Website Content Flowchart

This flowchart is designed to help staff update the website in a way that follows an established process and meets our brand and content style guidelines.

Start



Contact

For questions about the Winnetka-
Northfield Public Library District
Content Style Guidelines, please contact:

Sarah Quish

Head of Marketing & Communications
sjquish@winnetkalibrary.org

Rathy Skiba

Graphic Designer
kskiba@winnetkalibrary.org

