



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

BRAND STANDARDS

March 2018

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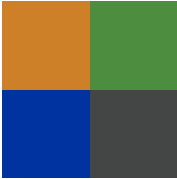
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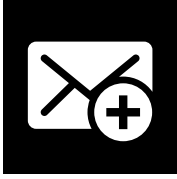
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AAFP Brand

Why Brand Matters

Brand is much more than a look or voice. Brand is what we think about an organization. It is the idea that lives behind the thing. It is our reputation. We shape our brand to do and say the things that will help people understand and appreciate the AAFP. Brand standards help us communicate efficiently and consistently.

Brand Unity, Strength, and Value

All Academy employees reside within a division and a department, but we all speak for the AAFP. When our members and other audiences see and hear one consistent brand (messages, colors, designs, experiences, and quality) our brand is reinforced and strengthened. Brand management is everyone's job. With consistent and correct use, the perceived value of the AAFP brand will increase with our members and other important audiences.

Our Brand Promise

We are family physicians: The foundation of health care in America. We provide continuing and comprehensive medical care to patients, regardless of gender, age, or issue. We are passionate, highly skilled professionals who are dedicated to serving our patients, their families, and the communities in which we live.

Standing together—more than 129,000 strong—we are the American Academy of Family Physicians. We are a membership organization in the purest sense: An association of family physicians, led by family physicians. With our colleagues throughout the country, we work to solidify family medicine as the cornerstone of a functioning health care system. We lobby government, negotiate with payers, partner with employers, educate patients, and champion family medicine on the national stage. Together, we ensure that every family physician is represented, respected, and rewarded.

AAFP Seal



The Seal Defined

The AAFP is a guiding light for its members, building respect and awareness for family physicians. The flame begins with the representation of the serpent wrapped around the torch signifying the Aesculapius staff, the symbol of healing and the renewing power of life.

Placement

Print and digital communications should prominently feature the seal, although placement is situational and at the discretion of the Marketing Division. AAFP staff should use existing templates for all other communications.

External Seal

The external AAFP seal contains “American Academy of Family Physicians” below “AAFP.” It is used when the audience may contain non-members and must be published with the torch larger than 5/8” tall. (See Internal Seal use below.) The external seal exists in three versions: two colors of orange and gray; white only, and gray only.

Internal Seal

The internal AAFP seal does not contain “American Academy of Family Physicians” and is used for communications directed to members and/or staff. It may also be used for non-member/staff audiences when the torch is smaller than 3/8” tall. The internal seal exists in three versions: two colors of orange and gray; white only, and gray only.

Tag Line

The “Strong Medicine for America” tag line is used strategically to convey the AAFP’s bold champion position with members and other audiences. It should be used only once in a communication. The decision to use the tag line is made by the Marketing Division and is dependent on objective, strategy, and audience.

AAFP Seal Use

Use of the Seal

The AAFP seal (or any AAFP logo that includes the torch graphic) is a registered service mark and may not be used or altered in any way without permission as described in these Brand Standards and in the AAFP's use of the seal guidelines available at <https://staff.aafp.org/staff/policies/conduct/use-of-the-aafp-seal-guidelines.html>.

The seal is not intended for use by individual members.

Use of the Torch

The torch (which is a separately registered trademark and copyright) may only be used sparingly as a design element, with each use requiring approval from either the senior manager of creative services or the director of marketing.

Staff Use of the Seal

AAFP staff should use updated templates featuring the seal for all communications. Current template guidelines are available at <https://staff.aafp.org/staff/forms.html>.

Permission for any alteration or addition to the AAFP seal must be obtained from either the senior manager of creative services or the director of marketing.

Chapters' Use of the Seal

Use of the AAFP seal by the chapters should generally be limited to references to AAFP communications and programs. Chapters requesting permission or seeking assistance with respect to the AAFP seal should contact the chapter relations staff.

Third Party's Use of the Seal

As the use of the AAFP seal by a third party is considered a significant transaction under AAFP policy and may be construed as endorsement by or affiliation with the AAFP, its use is strictly governed.

AAFP staff proposing any such significant transaction involving the use of the AAFP seal are required to:

- Obtain permission from the EVP or DEVP
- Work with the general counsel's office to document the permission
- Obtain the correct seal image from the marketing division

Vendor Referrals/Recommendations

On occasion, vendors and others who provide goods or services to the AAFP will request written references, reviews, quotes, testimonials, recommendations, or use of the AAFP name or seal to promote their businesses. As its historical and current practice, the AAFP does not grant such requests.

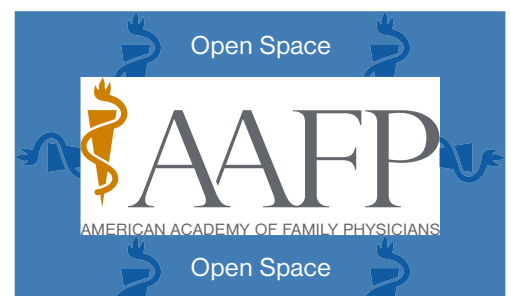
AAFP Seal

External Audiences	External Audiences	Internal Audiences *

* The internal seal may be used for external audiences if the torch is produced smaller than 5/8" high.

Open Space

The open space around the seal equals the space of the top of the flame. No imagery or text can exist in the open space.



Minimum Size of Seal

The minimum size for the seal is determined by the height of the torch. The external seal's torch must be at least 5/8" and the internal seal's torch must be at least 3/8".

External Seal Minimum Height



Internal Seal Minimum Height



Other Logos and Wordmarks

Additional logos and wordmarks have been created to represent the many components of our work. Many of these sub-brands have unique branding guidelines. Contact the Marketing Division for more information.

Creation of New Logos and Wordmarks

The creation of new logos and wordmarks (and redesign of existing logos and wordmarks) will be determined and executed by the Marketing Division.

AAFP Divisions



Programs and Groups



Events



Other Logos and Wordmarks

Use of Other AAFP Logos with the AAFP Seal

The AAFP seal is paired with AAFP brands when association with the Academy strengthens or enhances the communication material. The AAFP seal should be placed first when used with other AAFP logos and wordmarks.

Use of Outside Logos with the AAFP Seal

The AAFP seal and AAFP logos are frequently used in collaboration with other organizations, affiliates, and vendors. The placement and positioning of logos is dependent on the situation. The AAFP senior manager of creative services or the marketing director should be consulted for guidance. As always, usage should adhere to the standards presented in this guide.



Brand Colors

Communicating with Color

The color palette was chosen for its strong, bold, and rich colors. As a visual representation of the AAFP, the palette represents bold action and assertiveness about our activities and results.

By limiting the number of colors used in our communications, we will make a connection in the viewer's mind of our brand colors with the AAFP. With repeated exposure to our primary color, the viewer will instantly recognize our communications, products, and services as part of the AAFP.

Additional Colors

Large conferences, events, and products may use additional colors outside the AAFP palette to support campaigns and sub-brands.



Brand Colors

Digital Colors - RGB

Primary Colors

Secondary Colors

PMS 145	PMS 7686	PMS 7741	COOL GRAY 10	PMS 704	RICH BLACK	PMS 7405
100% #CF7F00 R207 G127 B0	100% #004F97 R0 G79 B151	100% #4D8D40 R77 G141 B64	COOL GRAY 10 #63666A R99 G102 B106	100% #9E2A2F R158 G42 B47	100% #000000 R0 G0 B0	100% #FFC908 R255 G201 B8
75% #DB9F40 R219 G159 B64	75% #407BB1 R64 G123 B177	75% #79A970 R121 G169 B112	75% #6A6E77 R106 G110 B119	75% #B65F63 R182 G95 B99	WEB GRAY 7 #444444 R68 G68 N68 10	60% #FFDE6B R255 G222 B107
	50% #80A7CB R128 G167 B203	50% #A6C6A0 R166 G198 B160	50% 92959D R146 G149 B157		WEB GRAY 6 #666666 R102 G102 B102	
	20% #CCDCEA R204 G220 B234	20% #D8E8D9 R216 G232 B217	20% CCCDD0 R204 G205 B208		WEB GRAY 5 #AAAAAA R170 G170 B170	
					WEB GRAY 4 #DADADA R218 G218 B218	
					WEB GRAY 3 #E3E3E3 R227 G227 B227	
					WEB GRAY 2 #ECECEC R236 G236 B236	
					WEB GRAY 1 #F6F6F6 R246 G246 B246	

Brand Colors

Print Colors - CMYK

Primary Colors

PMS 145	PMS 7686	PMS 7741	COOL GRAY 10
100% C4 M53 Y100 K8	100% C100 M77 Y10 K1	100% C74 M23 Y100 K8	100% C40 M30 Y20 K66
	75% C78 M47 Y10 K0	75% C57 M16 Y71 K1	75% C61 M51 Y42 K13
	50% C51 M25 Y8 K0	50% C37 M9 Y44 K0	50% C46 M36 Y31 K1
	20% C18 M7 Y3 K0	20% C14 M2 Y16 K0	20% C19 M15 Y13 K0

Secondary Colors

PMS 704	RICH BLACK	PMS 7405
100% C8 M97 Y76 K31	100% C30 M30 Y30 K100	100% C0 M21 Y100 K0
		60% C1 M10 Y69 K0

Brand Fonts

Digital Fonts

Aa

Arial family

Aa

Times family

Print Fonts

Aa

Nimbus Sans D family

Aa

Livingston family

Additional Fonts

The creative department may use additional fonts, outside the AAFP brand fonts, to support campaigns, sub-brands, large conferences, and products.

Email Signatures

The signature attached to staff emails should be consistent across our organization. The signature should consist of the following:

AAFP logo (hyperlinked)

Staff Name (no courtesy titles used)
Position Title, Department or Division
Division (if not listed above)
American Academy of Family Physicians
office phone number with extension
aafp.org (hyperlinked)

Additional information, such as quotes or personal information, should not be included. Your email signature should appear in all new emails but not in replied or forwarded emails. The signature block should appear as below.



Create a Signature Block for PC

Download the AAFP logo for email at: S Drive > AAFP Shared > AAFP_email_logo.jpg and save it to your desktop.

1. Open a new message and then select Signature > Signatures.
2. Choose New, and in the New Signature dialog box, type a name for the signature.
3. Place your cursor at the top of the signature block.
4. Select the Image icon > Insert an image from your device icon, locate the AAFP logo, and select Insert. The logo should not be resized or altered in any way once it has been placed.
5. Within your signature block, enter a hard return after the logo and type the information listed above. All text should be in the Arial font, size 10. All text should be in

regular with the exception of your name, which should be bold.

6. To add a hyperlink to the AAFP logo, highlight the logo within your signature block, select the Hyperlink icon (next to the image icon) and enter <https://www.aafp.org/home.html> in the address field. Click OK.

7. Follow the same steps to add a hyperlink to the AAFP url text in your signature block.

8. To add your signature to all new messages by default, choose Default Signature, select New Messages, and select the signature you just created.

9. Choose OK to save your new signature and return to your message. Exit out of your message.

Create a Signature Block for Mac

Download the AAFP logo for email at: Shared > AAFP Shared > AAFP_email_logo.jpg and save it to your desktop.

1. On the Outlook menu, select Preferences.
2. Under E-mail, select Signatures.
3. Select Add a signature .
4. Double-click Untitled, and then type a name for the signature.
5. Copy and paste or drag the AAFP logo from your desktop to top position in the signature. The logo should not be resized or altered in any way once it has been placed.
6. Enter a hard return after the logo and type the information listed above. All text should be in the Arial font, size 10. All text should be in regular with the exception of your name, which should be bold.
7. To add a hyperlink to the logo and the AAFP url text in your signature block, highlight the logo or text, and then on the Format menu, select Hyperlink and enter <https://www.aafp.org/home.html> in the address field.
8. In the Signatures window, under Choose Default Signature, select the signature you just created for the New messages field. Replies/forwards should be set at None.
9. Close the Signatures window.

AAFP Voice

The AAFP voice exists to ensure communications to members are consistent and cohesive—across all channels, on all subjects, and with all audiences. This helps the AAFP:

- Provide a shared foundation for messaging strategy
- Serve as a resource for AAFP communicators and partners when discussing and developing member communications
- Ensure adherence to the AAFP voice through internal review and approval

This guide is just that—a guide. This is not a checklist or tool to formalize AAFP communications, which must be adaptable and versatile. Rather, this is a resource for guidance. By working from this foundation, AAFP staff can ensure every message resonates with members, demonstrates the value of membership, and ultimately builds trust and long-term loyalty.

Key Attributes

The AAFP voice is direct, authentic, and empathetic. Although these attributes will not always be present in equal measure, they should always be evident in AAFP communications—helping define the specific path, while allowing for adaptation and nuance.

Direct

AAFP communications must clearly convey how the AAFP, and its more than 129,000 members, are boldly leading family medicine into the future. This means explaining the “why” behind AAFP decisions and actions, as well as the “what,” by translating actions into language that depicts obvious value for the member. AAFP communications should clearly state what we do, why we do it, and what it means for the member.

Authentic

The AAFP’s authenticity comes from being true to who it is as an organization. This is an association of family physicians and support staff working for the betterment of the specialty. When the AAFP speaks to its members, it is a trusted colleague.

Empathetic

AAFP staff have to know who they serve. As a trusted colleague, the AAFP—and its staff—understands the challenges and rewards of family medicine. Communications should convey the feeling the AAFP is speaking directly to members, offering solutions for their unique needs.

Contact Information

Assistance and Information

Contact the senior manager of creative services at:

John Whiteman
jwhiteman@aafp.org
913-906-6000, ext. 1742

AAFP House Style Guide | March 2018

The American Academy of Family Physicians House Style Guide comprises a list of exceptions to the Associated Press (AP) Style Guide as well as formatting and voice guidelines for all communications to audiences both inside and outside the AAFP.

Because of the breadth and complexity of our work, it is challenging to make all communications consistent and cohesive across all channels, on all subjects, and with all audiences. The AAFP House Style Guide is a resource for addressing these challenges. Please use it for all documents you prepare to ensure all Academy communications are professional in appearance.

To support uniformity and ease of use, this update endeavors to include commonly used portions of AP and the dictionary in the “Spelling and Usage” section. However, this document primarily exists to delineate AAFP-specific style, formatting, and voice instructions, which are available in the other portions of the guide. For questions that are not AAFP-specific and not addressed in this guide, employees should refer to either the AP Style Guide or the dictionary (as appropriate). For style questions, the AP Style Guide is easily navigable through its [online version](#).^{*} For spelling and hyphenation questions, please refer to the [Merriam-Webster dictionary](#).

We recognize Journal Media, Communications, and the AAFP Foundation adhere to style guidelines that differ from both AP and house style. These areas should continue to follow established department guidelines.

Please keep in mind that the AAFP House Style Guide is a living document that will change over time. This update reflects a compilation of best practices, style and voice guidelines, and exceptions to the AP Style Guide that have been updated, streamlined, and reorganized for clarity and ease of use for all AAFP communications. Subsequent versions of this document will be issued as needed to keep the guidelines up to date. Please contact the Copy Development Department, Marketing Division with any questions.

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* For AP Style Guide Access, AAFP employees should use the login:
aafplibrary@aafp.org. Password: library.

Note: For this manual, “internal audiences” include AAFP members and staff. “External audiences” include anyone who is not an AAFP member or on the AAFP staff, including external partners, vendors, and other third parties.

Part 1: Style

Stylistic exceptions to the AP Style Guide along with abbreviations and names specific to the AAFP.

AAFP, abbreviation

For external audiences: Spell out “American Academy of Family Physicians” on first reference followed by “(AAFP)” immediately after it. Use “the AAFP” on the second and subsequent references. On third and subsequent references, “the Academy” may be used as an alternative to “the AAFP” to avoid redundancy.

- The American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) represents more than 124,900 physicians and medical students nationwide. The AAFP advocates on behalf of family physicians and the specialty of family medicine. Learn more about the Academy.

Do NOT use “the Academy” in news releases, leadership biographies, etc., that will be distributed or made available to the news media and/or external public.

For internal audiences: Always spell out “American Academy of Family Physicians” on first reference (you do not need to put anything in parentheses afterward). It’s fine to alternate use of “the AAFP” or “the Academy” on subsequent references.

- We recognize your years of service and commitment to the American Academy of Family Physicians. Each employee adds great value to the AAFP. Thank you for your commitment to the Academy.

Always use the article “the” before “AAFP” and “Academy,” except when using either as an adjective before a noun.

- Noun: According to the AAFP...
- Adjective: AAFP members value CME.

AAFP Assembly

No longer used. See [AAFP Family Medicine Experience](#).

AAFP Commissions

Use the complete commission name (capitalized) on first reference. If subsequent references

are necessary, put the abbreviation in parentheses after the full name on first reference and abbreviate it in subsequent references.

- First reference: Commission on Continuing Professional Development (COCPD)
- Second reference: COCPD
- You may also use the (lowercased) term “the commission” in subsequent references, providing it is contextually clear to which commission you are referring.
- Do not use ampersands (&) in official commission names.
- Official commission names and approved abbreviations:
 - Commission on Continuing Professional Development (COCPD)
 - Commission on Education (COE)
 - Commission on Finance and Insurance (CFI)
 - Commission on Governmental Advocacy (CGA)
 - Commission on Health of the Public and Science (CHPS)
 - Commission on Membership and Member Services (CMMS)
 - Commission on Quality and Practice (CQP)

AAFP Congress of Delegates

The Congress of Delegates is the policy-making branch of the AAFP—two delegates and two alternates from each chapter. Delegates serve for one year, and meet annually just prior to FMX (formerly the AAFP Assembly).

Use Congress of Delegates (COD) on first reference. COD, Congress, or Congress of Delegates is acceptable on subsequent references.

AAFP Division Names

Preferred titles and format of division names:

- AAFP Foundation
- Accounting Division
- Administration Division
- Center for Global Initiatives
- Communications Division
- Communications and Membership Executive Division
- Continuing Medical Education Division
- Finance Division
- Finance Executive Division
- Accounting Division
- Government Relations Division
- Health of the Public & Science Division (HOPS)
- HealthLandscape (Note: No “Division”)
- HOPS & Interprofessional Activities Executive Division
- Human Resources Division

- Information Technology Division
- Interprofessional Activities Division
- Journal Media Division
- Marketing Division
- Medical Education Division
- Meetings & Conventions Division
- Membership Division
- Office of General Counsel (Note: No “Division”)
- Practice Advancement Division
- Strategic Partnerships Division
- The Robert Graham Center (Note: No “Division”)

AAFP Family Medicine Experience (FMX)

Formerly AAFP Assembly, the AAFP’s annual meeting is now called “AAFP Family Medicine Experience (FMX).”

For internal and external audiences: Except in informal internal communications, always use “AAFP Family Medicine Experience” on first reference. “AAFP FMX” or “FMX” is acceptable on subsequent references. It’s also acceptable to refer to the event as the organization’s annual meeting (always lowercase).

- AAFP Family Medicine Experience (FMX) is more than a CME event.
- FMX is a great opportunity to network with your peers.

When referencing a specific year’s meeting, use either “the (year) AAFP FMX” or “the (year) FMX.” Do not use “the” before AAFP FMX without a year.

- The 2017 AAFP FMX will be held in San Antonio, TX.

AAFP Foundation

For external audiences: Always spell out “American Academy of Family Physicians Foundation” on first reference. Use “AAFP Foundation” on subsequent references.

- The American Academy of Family Physicians Foundation advances the values of family medicine by promoting humanitarian, educational, and scientific initiatives that improve the health of all people. The AAFP Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization.

For internal audiences: Use “the AAFP Foundation” on first reference. Use “the Foundation” on subsequent references.

- The AAFP Foundation relies on donations from family physicians, corporations, and others who provide voluntary financial support. The Foundation regularly communicates with AAFP members to provide information on programs and grant opportunities.

AAFP Leadership Conference for Current and Aspiring Leaders

Two tracks: Annual Chapter Leader Forum (Formerly called Annual Leadership Forum [ALF]) and National Conference of Constituency Leaders (formerly called National Conference of Special Constituencies [NCSC]).

For internal and external audiences: Except in informal internal communications, always spell out “AAFP Leadership Conference for Current and Aspiring Leaders” on first reference.

When referring to a specific conference, include the year as part of the meeting name.

- The 2017 AAFP Leadership Conference for Current and Aspiring Leaders will take place in Kansas City, MO.

AAFP National Research Network

For external audiences: Always spell out “American Academy of Family Physicians National Research Network” on first reference and put “(AAFP NRN)” immediately after it. Use “AAFP NRN” on subsequent references.

- The American Academy of Family Physicians National Research Network (AAFP NRN) is recruiting family physician practices for a study on oral health care and screening.

For internal audiences: Use “AAFP’s National Research Network” on first reference. Use “AAFP NRN” on subsequent references.

- The AAFP National Research Network (AAFP NRN) is recruiting family physician practices for a study on oral health care and screening.

AAFP News

Always italicize and spell out “AAFP News.”

- AAFP News is the official news publication of the American Academy of Family Physicians. It is an online publication, with news stories posted continually.

aafp.org

Do not capitalize “aafp” when listing the AAFP website, aafp.org.

- Take a look at the AAFP’s website, aafp.org, for more information.

abbreviations and acronyms

Spell out on first reference (in almost all instances) followed immediately by the abbreviation or acronym in parentheses.

- The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) represents all 135 accredited U.S. medical schools and 17 accredited Canadian medical schools. The AAMC supports the entire spectrum of medical education, research, and patient care activities.

There is no need to spell out the following on first reference:

- ICD-10
- CPT
- CD, CD-ROM
- DNA
- IQ
- AIDS
- URL
- UV (ultraviolet)

For acronyms used only twice in a document, you may spell out the phrase/organization name at each occurrence instead of using the acronym for clarity. Check the [AAFP's acronym document](#) to be sure that you are using the correct acronym.

academic degrees

In sentences and paragraphs (especially within biographies), write out the full name of the specific degree.

- He earned a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Iowa, a Master of Arts degree from the University of Maine, and a medical degree from the University of Kansas School of Medicine.

The terms “medical degree” and “bachelor’s degree” are lowercase, common nouns. Use an apostrophe in “bachelor’s degree,” “master’s degree,” etc. There is no possessive in “Bachelor of Arts” or “Master of Science.”

- He earned a bachelor’s degree from Iowa State University and a medical degree from the University of Kansas School of Medicine.

When listing a degree after a person’s name, do not use periods.

- Examples: MD, PhD, JD, MPH, DO, PharmD

List graduate-level degrees after a person’s name. A bachelor’s degree may be listed in biographical information, but never after a person’s name.

- Correct: John Smith, MBA
- Incorrect: John Smith, BS, MBA

A person “earns” a degree; they do not “complete” a degree.

- Correct: He earned a bachelor’s degree from Iowa State University.
 - Incorrect: He completed a bachelor’s degree from Iowa State University.
- Never precede a name with a courtesy title for an academic degree.

- Correct: John Smith, PhD, will be speaking at the conference.
- Incorrect: Dr. John Smith will be speaking at the conference.

Academy, abbreviation

(see [AAFP, abbreviation](#))

acronyms

(see [abbreviations and acronyms](#))

Advanced Life Support in Obstetrics (ALSO®)

Except in informal internal communications, always spell out “Advanced Life Support in Obstetrics,” followed by “(ALSO®)” in parentheses on first reference. Use “ALSO” on subsequent references.

- Advanced Life Support in Obstetrics (ALSO®) helps physicians and other health care providers develop and maintain the knowledge and skills they need to effectively manage potential emergencies during the perinatal period.
- ALSO emphasizes labor and delivery room emergencies.

AFP

American Family Physician should be referred to by its full title on first reference, with the abbreviation in parentheses (“American Family Physician (AFP)”). AFP is acceptable on second reference.

- American Family Physician (AFP) is the AAFP’s editorially independent, peer-reviewed and evidence-based clinical journal. Published semimonthly in print and online, AFP delivers concise, easy-to-read clinical review articles for physicians and other health care professionals.

ALF

(see [AAFP Leadership Conference for Current and Aspiring Leaders](#))

Alliance for eHealth Innovation

(formerly Center for Health IT)

Spell out on first reference. Use “Alliance” in subsequent references.

- The AAFP Alliance for eHealth Innovation assists AAFP member practices.

ALSO®

(see [Advanced Life Support in Obstetrics](#))

American Academy of Family Physicians

(see [AAFP, abbreviation](#))

American Family Physician

(see [AFP](#))

Annals of Family Medicine

Always italicize and spell out “Annals of Family Medicine” on first reference. Use Annals (always with italics) on second reference. Do not refer to the journal as AFM.

- The new issue of Annals of Family Medicine will be released at the end of January.

Basic Life Support in Obstetrics (BLSO®)

Except in informal internal communications, spell out “Basic Life Support in Obstetrics” on first reference, followed by “BLSO” in parentheses. Use BLSO on subsequent references.

- The Basic Life Support in Obstetrics (BLSO®) program prepares participants to manage normal labor and obstetrical emergencies. BLSO is appropriate for several audiences.

BLSO®

(see [Basic Life Support in Obstetrics](#))

CCR standard

Capitalize and spell out “Continuity of Care Record” on first reference, followed by “CCR” in parentheses. Use CCR on subsequent reference. “CCR standard” is not hyphenated.

- The Continuity of Care Record (CCR) standard is a way to create flexible documents that contain the most relevant and timely core health information about a patient. More than a dozen nonprofit organizations currently sponsor or endorse the CCR standard.

CDHE

The Center for Diversity and Health Equity (CDHE). Spell out on first reference with acronym in parentheses; acronym appropriate on second references. “The Center” is appropriate for internal use only.

chapter identification

Spell out the full name of each chapter on first reference. On subsequent references, abbreviate

by spelling out the state name, followed by “AFP” (except New York).

- First reference: Iowa Academy of Family Physicians
- Subsequent references: Iowa AFP
- First reference: New York State Academy of Family Physicians.
- Subsequent references: New York State AFP.

Never capitalize the word “chapter” when referring to an AAFP chapter.

- The Michigan Academy of Family Physicians is sponsoring the conference.
- The Michigan chapter is sponsoring a conference.

Never use “constituent” or “state” when referencing AAFP chapters as a whole. Some chapters are territories or otherwise (e.g., Uniformed Services, Guam, Virgin Islands, Washington, DC, Puerto Rico).

- The AAFP has 55 chapters.

There are also local or regional chapters, such as the Los Angeles local chapter, called component chapters.

- Component chapters, such as the San Diego Academy of Family Physicians serve the needs of the local family medicine community.

CME, AAFP

The following AAFP CME products should be italicized and include the trademark symbol (™) on first reference:

- AAFP Family Medicine Board Review Express™;
- FP Audio™;
- FP Essentials™.

CME, accreditation

Accreditation describes the designation given to an organization from an accrediting body and refers to the CME provider organization, not to the CME activities provided by that organization.

- The AAFP has earned accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education to provide CME.

CME, accrediting body

An accrediting body certifies organizations, and provides them with credentials, after said organizations demonstrate compliance with established criteria. With regard to CME, accredited

organizations may, following appropriate standards, certify CME activities produced within the organization.

- The Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education is an accrediting body through which the AAFP is accredited.

CME certification

Certification describes the act of awarding CME credit to an individual CME activity.

- FMX has earned certification whereby it was awarded CME credit.

CME, credit system

A credit system is the entity through which an organization administers its established eligibility criteria for awarding CME credit. The AAFP, through its credit system, certifies activities for CME credit.

CME credits vs. hours

Always use the term “credits” for CME.

- Active AAFP members must complete a minimum of 150 credits of approved CME every three years to retain membership.

CME credit statements

No changes or edits to the AAFP’s CME credit statements may be made. The credit statements must be followed exactly as written by the AAFP. See the AAFP webpage on CME credit statements.

CME, Elective credit

Always use the term “AAFP Elective credit” in full. “Elective” is always capitalized; “credit” is not.

- This activity is available for one AAFP Elective credit.

CME, AAFP Prescribed credit

Always use the term “AAFP Prescribed credit” in full. “Prescribed” is always capitalized; “credit” is not.

- This video, which is approved for 12 AAFP Prescribed credits, costs \$75 for members and \$65 for residents.

commission

(see [AAFP commissions](#))

component chapter

(see [chapter identification](#))

continuing medical education (CME)

(see [CME, AAFP](#))

Spell out and lowercase on first reference and follow with “(CME)”. Use “CME” on subsequent references.

Continuity of Care Record (CCR) Standard

(see [CCR Standard](#))

CPT (Current Procedural Terminology)

Spell out and italicize when referring to the published manual.

- I will have to look that up in my copy of *Current Procedural Terminology*.

When referring to a “CPT code,” do not spell out or italicize.

- You can bill that visit as CPT code 99215 if the proper criteria is met.

When referring to CPT levels, use Arabic numerals (e.g., Level 1)

Degree of Fellow

The fellow designation is used to denote that a physician has been awarded the Degree of Fellow by the American Academy of Family Physicians. List “FAAFP” after his/her professional title(s).

- Arthur T. McGillicuddy, MD, MPH, FAAFP

Department of Family Medicine

These words should only be capitalized when referring to a specific entity.

- Smith is chairman of the Department of Family Medicine at the University of Kansas Medical School.
- Does the University of Kansas Medical School have a department of family medicine?

digital printing

When working with AAFP's digital printing office, adhere to their guidelines.

division names

(see [AAFP Division Names](#))

doctor

(see [courtesy titles](#))

Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)

Use "DEA" on second reference.

EHR (electronic health record)

Use the term "electronic health record" instead of terms such as "computerized patient records (CPR)," "computerized medical records (CMR)," "chartless records," etc.

Spell out "electronic health record" on first reference and put "(EHR)" in parentheses after.

Use "EHR" on subsequent references.

- The bedrock of successful electronic health record (EHR) implementation is preparation. There are several issues to consider to selecting the right EHR for you.

Do not capitalize "electronic health record" unless it begins a sentence or heading or when it is part of a proper noun/official name.

- Electronic health records (EHRs) can help improve physicians' ability to access and communicate needed clinical information.
- Practice Partner Electronic Health Record is made by McKesson.

Electronic health records (EHRs) and electronic medical records (EMRs) are not the same and should not be used interchangeably.

Because of recent developments in the industry and based on AAFP Alliance for eHealth Innovation preference, do not use EMR in any communications.

Elective Credit

(see [CME, Elective Credit](#))

Electronic Health Record

([see EHR \(Electronic Health Record\)](#))

enrollment date

“Enrollment date” is the proper terminology. Do not use “join date.”

- New student members receive the print version of the journal for the first three months following their enrollment date.

E-Prescribe/E-Prescribing

Should be hyphenated. Capitalize the first two letters only when it begins a sentence or is part of a heading.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

EPA is acceptable on second reference.

E-Visits

Hyphenate. Capitalize the first two letters only when it begins a sentence or is part of a heading.

Evaluation and Management (E/M)

Always spell out “evaluation and management” on first reference with “(E/M)” in parentheses immediately after. Use “E/M” on subsequent references.

- The distinction between new and established patients applies only to certain categories of evaluation and management (E/M) services. Most of the E/M codes family physicians submit fall into these categories.

EveryONE Project, The

The EveryONE Project is an AAFP project that aims to help members identify and address social determinants of health (SDOH).

On first reference, always use the full title of this project—“The AAFP’s The EveryONE Project,” followed by a specific portion of the project, if necessary.

- The AAFP’s The EveryONE Project offers a variety of resources to help physicians identify and address the social determinants of health (SDOH) that affect their patients.

On second reference, “the Project” or “the EveryONE Project” may be used.

For external audiences: The EveryONE Project should not be referred to as a program of the Center for Diversity and Health Equity (CDHE), but rather as a program of the AAFP. See also CDHE.

Do not make individual components of the EveryONE Project synonymous with the Project as a whole. For example, “The EveryONE Project Toolkit” is a portion of the Project, but the EveryONE Project will encompass more than just the toolkit.

- The AAFP’s The EveryONE Project launched its Toolkit portion at the beginning of 2018. The EveryONE Project Toolkit assists physicians in screening for SDOH. Features of The EveryONE Project may be referred to as tools, resources, or features.

Exposition Hall

Always use Exposition Hall on first reference, and Expo Hall on subsequent references. Do not use Exhibition Hall.

Family Doctor vs. Family Physician vs. Family Practitioner

In 2005, The American Board of Family Medicine, the independent certification board for our specialty, officially updated the commonly used terminology to better describe the specialty of family medicine in an ever-changing and diverse American health care system. The original terminology was outdated, and there was a need to more accurately portray the roles and responsibilities of family doctors in today’s modern medical world. Since the change, “family physician” is used instead of “family practitioner.”

Use the term “family physician” with internal audiences or an external audience of health care professionals.

The term “family doctor” may be used for communication to a patient/consumer audience (e.g., patient education handouts on FamilyDoctor.org). “Health care professional” is also acceptable. Do not use the word “practitioner.”

“FP” is an abbreviation for family physician; however, AAFP staff members should only use this abbreviation in informal communications with internal audiences (e.g., an email to colleagues in your division).

familydoctor.org

Use “familydoctor.org” (all lowercase, no “www.”) when referring to the entire website as a business entity or when listing the URL for the site. Use an initial cap—“Familydoctor.org”—only at the beginning of a sentence. For example:

- The AAFP maintains complete editorial control over the content developed for familydoctor.org to ensure creation of balanced, evidence-based content that can help consumers make informed decisions.
- Find more information to help your patients at familydoctor.org.

- Familydoctor.org is the AAFP’s award-winning consumer website, featuring physician-reviewed patient education materials, that includes care for the physical, mental, and emotional health of the whole family from newborns to older adults.

Family Medicine

Since 2005, the correct name of the specialty is “family medicine,” not “family practice.” The specialty name is lowercase unless used as part of a proper noun. For example:

- As one of the first family medicine residencies in the country, Wesley’s curriculum served as a model for many programs that followed.
- Proper noun: Wesley Family Medicine Residency Program is based in Wichita, KS. [Note: The proper names of some residency programs still include the term “family practice” (e.g., Shenandoah Valley Family Practice Residency Program). The term “family medicine” should not be substituted in these residency names. This also applies to the AAFP journal Family Practice Management.]

family physician

(see [Family Doctor vs. Family Physician vs. Family Practitioner](#))

family practice

(see [Family Medicine](#))

Family Practice Management

Always use the acronym FPM when referring to the journal. A “the” before the acronym is not generally necessary. If it is not clear enough from the context what FPM is, use the following on first mention only, and capitalize as appropriate.

Do not use “journal” in italics, or indicate that it is a journal “of” FPM. Using italics and/or the word “of” suggests that “Journal” is part of the journal’s name, but it is not:

- Correct: FPM journal
- Correct: FPM Journal
- Correct: the journal FPM
- Incorrect: FPM Journal
- Incorrect: FPM journal
- Incorrect: Journal of FPM
- Incorrect: Journal of FPM

Family Practice Management should only be used in three places: On the cover of the journal, in the FPM eTOC and e-newsletter, or in the print edition TOC.

FMX

(see [AAFP Family Medicine Experience](#))

FPM

(see [Family Practice Management](#))

Graham Center

Always use “The Robert Graham Center for Policy Studies in Family Medicine and Primary Care” on first reference. Use “the Graham Center” on subsequent references.

"in"

When employed to indicate that something is in vogue, use quotation marks only when followed by a noun.

- It was the "in" thing to do. Raccoon coats are in again.

Join Date

(See [Enrollment Date](#))

Do not use “join date.” “Enrollment date” is the proper terminology.

life-eligible members

The proper terminology is “life-eligible members.” Do not use “potential life members.”

- Life-eligible members have held continued membership for a minimum of 20 years and have either reached the age of 70 or completely retired from the practice of medicine.

Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act (MACRA)

Use “Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act (MACRA)” on first reference and “MACRA” on all subsequent references.

Match, the

Use “the Match” on all references.

- The National Resident Matching Program provides a uniform system by which residency candidates simultaneously "match" to first- and second-year postgraduate training positions accredited by the Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). The Match is uniform in that all steps of the process are done in the same fashion and at the same time by all applicants and participating institutions.

meaningful use

The term “meaningful use” is not a proper noun and does not need to be capitalized. Use “meaningful use (MU)” on first reference and MU on subsequent references.

medical home (see also Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH))

A “medical home” is not the same as a “patient-centered medical home (PCMH)” and the two terms may not be used interchangeably. A medical home is most-often used to describe a patient-centered, comprehensive, team-based, coordinated, and accessible model or philosophy of primary care that is focused on quality and safety. “Medical home” is also a term that providers or payers can use, without a patient’s knowledge, to indicate where a patient receives care.

member interest group (MIG)

Member interest groups (MIGs) are designed to define, recognize, and engage groups of AAFP active members with shared professional interests. MIGs allow members to network, participate in interest-specific continuing professional development activities, deliver a unified message to AAFP leadership, develop and/or provide input on AAFP policies and positions, pursue professional leadership development within the AAFP, connect to existing AAFP resources, and connect face-to-face at AAFP Assembly. Each member interest group will have a topic listed that clearly identifies the interests of that group (e.g., independent solo/small group practice, hospital medicine, emergency medicine, direct primary care, etc.).

The full name of each group is a formal title. On first reference, spell out the full name of the group (i.e., Member Interest Group–Emergency Medicine). In subsequent references, use MIG–topic (i.e., MIG–Emergency Medicine).

membership categories

A membership category does not need to be capitalized unless it begins a sentence or is used in a header. Members are categorized using one or more of the following groups:

- Active member (Practicing Physicians)
- Resident member
- Student member
- Supporting member
- International member
- Inactive member
- Life member
- Honorary (this is considered an award rather than a type of membership)

National Conference of Family Medicine Residents and Medical Students

Spell out “National Conference of Family Medicine Residents and Medical Students” on first reference. Use either “National Conference” or “AAFP National Conference” on subsequent references, but pick one and be consistent.

Do not use the abbreviation “NC” to refer to National Conference.

Do not include “annual” in the meeting name. However, when referring to a specific National Conference, include the year as part of the meeting name.

- The 2012 National Conference of Family Medicine Residents and Medical Students will take place in Kansas City, MO. Information regarding housing for AAFP National Conference participants is available online.

OR

- The 2012 National Conference of Family Medicine Residents and Medical Students will take place in Kansas City, MO. Information regarding housing for National Conference participants is available online.

National Resident Matching Program

(See also “[Match, the](#)”)

Spell out “National Resident Matching Program” on first reference with “(NRMP)” immediately after. Use “NRMP” on subsequent references.

NCSC

(see [AAFP Leadership for Current and Aspiring Leaders](#))

patient-centered medical home (PCMH)

Spell out “patient-centered medical home” on first reference with “(PCMH)” immediately after. Use “PCMH” on subsequent references.

- A patient-centered medical home (PCMH) is an approach to providing comprehensive primary care for people of all ages and medical conditions. The PCMH is a way for a physician-led medical practice, chosen by the patient, to integrate health care services.

Do not capitalize “patient-centered medical home” unless it begins a sentence or heading or when it is part of a proper noun/official name.

- The Kaplan and Associates Patient-Centered Medical Home...

The PCMH house logo is a registered trademark. Always put the ® symbol next to it (at the bottom right corner of the roof). See an example on the AAFP PCMH webpage.

Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

Capitalize and spell out “Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act” on first reference with (Affordable Care Act or ACA) in parentheses afterward. Use “Affordable Care Act” or “ACA” on subsequent references. Avoid the use of the term “Obamacare”.

- Passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) in 2010 created a number of challenges for primary care, not the least of which was providing enough primary care physicians to care for the millions more patients that would be insured due to provisions in the ACA.

potential Life members

(See [Life-eligible members](#))

pre- and post-test and pre- and post-assessments vs. pre/post-assessments vs. pre-&post- assessments

Pre- and post-test and pre- and post-assessments are preferred.

- After completing the pre- and post-assessments, a user may claim credit.

Prescribed Credit

(see [CME, Prescribed Credit](#))

preventive vs. preventative

Never use “preventative.”

- Family physicians believe in the value of preventive medicine.

primary care

Two words, no hyphen.

PDW and RPS Residency Education Symposium

When referring to the event as a whole, “PDW and RPS Residency Education Symposium” on first reference. Use “PDW and RPS” on subsequent references.

- For PDW-specific information, use “Program Directors Workshop” on first reference. Use “PDW” on subsequent references.
- For RPS-specific information, use “Residency Program Solutions” on first reference. Use “RPS” on subsequent references.

registration dates

Always use “[register/respond/sign up/etc.] by [date]”, rather than “[register/respond/sign up/etc.] before [date].”

- Make sure to register for National Conference by October 10, 2012.

Robert Graham Center for Policy Studies in Family Medicine and Primary Care

(see [Graham Center](#))

self-study vs. self study

Hyphenate when using as an adjective.

- The AAFP offers many self-study CME options.
- Residents are able to complete their CME via self study.

state chapters

(see [chapter identification](#))

Translation to Practice®

Capitalize and spell out “Translation to Practice®” on first reference with (t2p™) in parentheses afterward. t2p is trademarked, but not yet registered.

Triple Aim

Always capitalized, the term “Triple Aim” encompasses improving the patient experience of care, the health of populations, and reducing the per capita cost of health care.

URLs

Please use the following guidelines when using URLs in AAFP copy:

Do not include “http://” but always include “www.”

Exception: Do not include “www.” as part of the URL for familydoctor.org.

- Find more information to help your patients at familydoctor.org.

Punctuation after a URL when writing for print:

If document spacing forces you to break a web address over two lines, only do so after a period or slash.

- Find the professional biographies of all the AAFP board members here:
www.aafp.org/online/en/home/aboutus/governance/officersetc/directors.html

When linking to AFP and FPM articles, use the full article URL, not just the URL for their respective home pages.

- A review of the acute uncomplicated cystitis is available in the October 1, 2011 issue of American Family Physician: www.aafp.org/afp/2011/1001/p771.html.
- An article on accountable care organizations (ACOs) is in the September/October 2011 issue of Family Practice Management: www.aafp.org/fpm/2011/0900/p17.html.

Include the punctuation after a URL or rewrite the sentence so it doesn't come at the end.

- The CDC recently launched an online resource center, available at www.cdc.gov/tobacco/media_campaigns/index.htm.
- The CDC's online resource center—www.cdc.gov/tobacco/media_campaigns/index.htm—was unveiled last month.

Punctuation after a URL when writing for online use:

All efforts should be made to avoid writing punctuation next to a hyperlink. If that is not an option, then the punctuation should not be included in the link.

- Learn more about AAFP membership [here](#).
- Take advantage of AAFP membership!
- AAFP membership, while valuable for many reasons, is especially important for networking with other family physicians.

If the URL must be written out and not linked directly to a word or words in the sentence, options include rewriting the sentence so the URL doesn't come at the end, or one of the following:

- Setting off the URL with a colon and a line break: The CDC offers online resources about cancer prevention:
www.cdc.gov/tobacco/media_campaigns/index.htm
- Putting the URL in parentheses: The CDC provides information about cancer prevention through an online resource center (www.cdc.gov/tobacco/media_campaigns/index.htm).

Voice, AAFP Brand

Be consistent, cohesive, and clear across all channels, on all subjects, and with all audiences. In communications to members, use the key attributes: direct, authentic, and empathetic.

Wonca

Always spell out "World Organization of Family Doctors (Wonca)" on first reference. Use "Wonca" on subsequent references.

- The World Organization of Family Doctors (Wonca) was founded in 1972. Wonca holds its world conference every three years.

Part 2: Spelling and Usage

A list of common spelling and usage errors in professional communication as well as certain important entries from the AP Style Guide.

academic departments

Capitalize departments that are proper nouns or adjectives (e.g., part of an official or formal name).

- University of Connecticut Department of Economics

Lowercase all common nouns or adjectives.

- the department of history
- the history department
- the department of English
- the English department

academic titles

Capitalize and spell out all formal titles (e.g., “chancellor,” “chairman,” etc.) when they precede a name. Lowercase elsewhere. Lowercase all modifiers (e.g. “department Chairman Jerome Wiesner”).

age

Do not use “over” and “under” with age. Instead, use the more precise “older than” or “younger than.”

- The AAFP president is older than the student board member.
- The AAFP resident board member is younger than the AAFP board chair.

When describing an adult, there is no need to add the word “years” or the phrase “years of age” after the age if the context is clear.

- Persons older than 38...
- Members younger than 40...

Differentiate months and years for children.

- Children six years and younger...
- Children between three weeks and six months of age...

Use “school-aged” and “teenaged,” rather than “school-age” and “teenage.” Provide a precise age or age range whenever possible.

Use hyphens for ages expressed as adjectives before a noun or as substitutes for a noun.

- A 5-year-old boy...
- The race is for 3-year-olds.

Use hyphens when describing a length of time.

- The two-day CME course.

ampersand (&)

Use the ampersand only when it is part of an organization's formal name or composition title.

- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid
- Health of the Public & Science

award

Capitalize formal titles.

- Thomas W. Johnson Award for Career Contributions to Family Medicine Education
- Correct: The award was for...
- Incorrect: The Award was for...

board and board of directors

Capitalize when part of a proper noun. Lowercase when part of a common noun.

- AAFP Board of Directors
- Incorrect: The Board met...
- Correct: The board met...

boards, board exam, and board review

Boards, board exam, and board review should be lowercase unless beginning a sentence or part of a headline.

canceled vs. cancelled

Both spellings are correct, but the AAFP uses “canceled” because it is the American spelling, whereas “cancelled” is the British spelling.

- The AAFP Board of Directors canceled its conference call tonight.

capitalization of titles, subtitles, and headings

Capitalize all major words in titles, subtitles, and headings. Do not capitalize a conjunction (e.g., and, or, but), article (e.g., the, a, an), or preposition of three letters or less, except when it is the first or last word in the title or subtitle.

- Common Dermatologic Lesions in Ambulatory Care
- Emergency and Urgent Care

For hyphenated words, if they are shown in the [dictionary](#) as hyphenated, treat as one word (i.e., lowercase the word after the hyphen). If words are not hyphenated in the dictionary, treat as two words (i.e., capitalize the word after the hyphen).

- Full-time Employment Following Residency
- Patient-Based Care in a Solo Practice

cities and states

Cities

Always indicate the state after the city. For Canadian cities, list the city, followed by province and country.

- AAFP member Deb Clements, MD, practices in Kansas City, KS.
- The College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) is headquartered in Mississauga, Ontario, Canada.

States

Abbreviate the state using the postal abbreviation with no periods.

- The AAFP is headquartered in Leawood, KS.
- The AAFP's 2012 Assembly will be held in Philadelphia, PA.

When referring to the District of Columbia, do not include periods. Put a comma after "Washington."

- The AAFP's Division of Government Relations is located in Washington, DC.

Cities and States in bios

Include the city and state unless city and/or state are included in the institution's name. Spell out the state name.

- Include city and state at the end of the bio:
Nicole Boersma, MD, Resident, Memorial Hospital Family Medicine Residency, South Bend, Indiana
- Include city, but not state at the end of the bio:
Wilfred Alonso, MD, Resident, University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston
(Note: state is included in the name of the institution)
- Include state, but not city at the end of the bio:
Stephen Schulz, MD, FAAFP, Assistant Professor, Family Medicine; Residency Directory, University of Rochester Family Medicine Residency, New York (Note: city is included in the name of the institution)
- Do not include city and state at the end of the bio:

Kate Rowland, MD, Resident, University of Illinois at Chicago, Illinois Masonic Family Practice Residency (Note: city and state are included in the name of the institution)

Colon (:)

The most frequent use of a colon is at the end of a sentence to introduce lists, tabulations, texts, etc. Do not capitalize the first word after a colon unless it is a proper noun or starts a complete sentence.

- He had only one hobby: eating.

Use the colon in such listings as time elapsed (1:31:07.2), time of day (8:31 p.m.), biblical and legal citations (2 Kings 2:14; Missouri Code 3:245-260).

Use a comma to introduce a direct quotation of one sentence that remains within a paragraph. Use a colon to introduce long quotations within a paragraph of quoted material.

Colons go outside quotation marks unless they are part of the quotation itself.

comma

Except in informal internal communications, always use a comma before the words “and” and “or” in a series in all. (This is known as the serial/terminal/Oxford comma.)

- Please clean your room, the kitchen, and the bathroom.

Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction (e.g., and, but, or, so, yet, for) to link two independent clauses.

- I’m going to the grocery store, but I only have time to get a few items.

Clause

A series of words that contains a subject and a verb.

independent clause: An independent clause can stand as a complete sentence.

- The election will be held on November 2.

dependent clause: A dependent clause needs to be attached to an independent clause in order to be a complete sentence.

- While the voters do not like to go out on a cold day. (Because it does not have an independent clause, this is a sentence fragment.)

composition titles

Apply the guidelines listed here to book titles, computer and video game titles, movie titles, opera titles, play titles, poem titles, album and song titles, radio and television program titles, and the titles of lectures, speeches, and works of art.

capitalize:

- principal words, including prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters
- articles (**the, a, an**) or words of fewer than four letters if it is the first or last word in a title

italicize (in text or a bibliography):

- AAFP News
- American Family Physician (AFP)
- Annals of Family Medicine
- Family Practice Management (FPM)
- titles of books, journals, newspapers, plays, and other freestanding works

use quotation marks to enclose:

- titles of articles, chapters, and other shorter works

Put quotation marks around the names of all such works except the Bible and books that are primarily catalogs of reference material. In addition to catalogs, this category includes almanacs, directories, dictionaries, encyclopedias, gazetteers, handbooks, and similar publications. Do not use quotation marks around such software titles as Windows.

courtesy titles

Except in informal internal communications and direct quotations, as well as when addressing a person in a formal letter, do not use courtesy titles. Refer to men and women by first and last name, followed by applicable academic title, on first reference. Use last name, without courtesy title, in subsequent references.

- Correct: Just ask Amy Mullins, MD, to guide you through the regulation jungle. Mullins, the AAFP's medical director of quality improvement...
- Incorrect: Just ask Amy Mullins, MD, to guide you through the regulation jungle. Dr. Mullins, the AAFP's medical director of quality improvement...

dashes

Em dash: A dash the width of an m (—). Use sparingly in formal writing. In informal writing, em dashes may replace commas, semicolons, colons, and parentheses to add emphasis, an interruption, or an abrupt change of thought. There is no space before or after an em dash.

- Hearing your story—the story of your experiences as a family physician—can convince

Congress to act.

En dash: A dash roughly the width of an n (–). Used for periods of time instead of “to.” Do not include a space before and after an en dash.

- Correct: The meeting will take place from 2–3 p.m. CT.
- Incorrect: The meeting will take place from 2 – 3 p.m. CT.

dates and times

Spell out the day and month. Use numerals for dates and year. Always include the year when you list a date or a date range.

For date ranges, use either an en dash (–) or the “from/through” construction. Pick one and be consistent throughout the document.

- En dash: The conference will be held October 10–15, 2011.
- From/through: The conference will be held from October 31, 2011, through November 2, 2011.

When you write times, make “a.m.” and “p.m.” lowercase with periods. Cite the hours and minutes (unless time is on the hour, then just list the hour, e.g., 2 p.m.), separated by a colon.

For time ranges, use either an en dash (–) or the “from/to” sequence, but not both. Pick one and be consistent throughout the document. If time range is all in a.m. or all in p.m., listing a.m. or p.m. is not necessary after first hour listed in time range.

- En dash: The meeting will be 2–3 p.m. CT.
- From/to: The meeting will be from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. CT.

Always denote the time zone.

- Whenever you mention a time, always denote the time zone using two capital letters to eliminate confusion regarding daylight savings time: Eastern Time (ET); Central Time (CT); Mountain Time (MT); Pacific Time (PT).
- For documents or web pages that include numerous time ranges, it is acceptable to add a note at the bottom of the page (such as, “All times noted are CT”) rather than listing the time zone with each individual time range.

When announcing or referring to an event, use this format: day, month date, year, time. The year can be omitted if obvious given the context.

- Friday, October 7, 2011, 7 p.m. CT at the Super Dome

Webinars and webcasts should be listed in the CT time zone in print and web references for

consistency, as the AAFP headquarters is located in the CT time zone.

days of the week

Capitalize and do not abbreviate, except when needed in a tabular format: Sun, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat (three letters, without periods, to facilitate tabular composition).

day to day, day-to-day

Hyphenate when used as a compound modifier.

- They have extended the contract on a day-to-day basis.

degrees

(see [academic degrees](#))

department

See the [AP list of U.S. Department titles](#).

denote

(see [connote, denote](#))

diabetes

There are two main forms of this disease.

- Type 1, formerly called juvenile diabetes
- Type 2, the most common kind, formerly called adult-onset diabetes

dimensions

Use figures and spell out inches, feet, yards, etc., to indicate depth, height, length, and width.

Hyphenate adjectival forms before nouns.

- He is 5 feet 6 inches tall, the 5-foot-6-inch man, the 5-foot man, the basketball team signed a 7-footer.
- The car is 17 feet long, 6 feet wide and 5 feet high. The rug is 9 feet by 12 feet, the 9-by-12 rug.
- The storm left 5 inches of snow.
- The building has 6,000 square feet of floor space.

Use an apostrophe to indicate feet and quote marks to indicate inches (5' 6") only in very technical contexts.

Diseases

Do not capitalize arthritis, emphysema, leukemia, pneumonia, etc. When a disease is known by the name of a person or geographical area identified with it, capitalize only the proper noun element: Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, Ebola virus, etc.

Avoid such expressions as these.

- He is battling cancer.
- She is a stroke victim.

Use neutral, precise descriptions such as these.

- He has stomach cancer.
- She is a stroke patient.

DNA

Acceptable for all reference to deoxyribonucleic acid, which carries genetic information in the cell.

door to door, door-to-door

Hyphenate when used as a compound modifier.

- He is a door-to-door salesman.
- He went from door to door.

down-

The rules in prefixes apply, but in general, no hyphen.

-down

Follow Merriam-Webster online [dictionary](#). Some examples include all nouns and/or adjectives.

- breakdown
- rundown
- countdown
- sit-down

All are two words when used as verbs.

Dr.

(see [courtesy titles](#))

drop-down

(Adjective) Hyphenated.

eBooks/eNewsletters

Use eBooks and eNewsletters when referring to electronic books and newsletters. The term iBooks should only be used when referring to products in the Apple Store.

e.g., i.e., etc., and et al

Please avoid overuse of these abbreviations.

Use “e.g.,” in place of “for example.” Always follow it with a comma.

- Obesity is a risk factor for many chronic health problems (e.g., diabetes).

Use “i.e.,” in place of “in other words” or “that is.” Always follow it with a comma.

- The total cost of the procedure will be \$50 (i.e., a \$60 charge minus \$10 negotiated savings).

Use “etc.” in place of “and other things.”

- I need to pick up sandwich ingredients at the store (meat, cheese, etc.).

Use “et al” in place of “and other people.”

- This article, written by Sarah Carter, Paul, Martin, et al, gives practical tips for starting your own medical practice.

Do not use conjunctions (e.g., and, or) in an “e.g.” list. Conjunctions may be necessary in an “i.e.” list.

each other, one another

Two people look at each other. More than two look at one another. Either phrase may be used when the number is indefinite.

- We help each other.
- We help one another.

easygoing

One word, no hyphen.

effect

(see [affect, effect](#))

e.g.

(see [e.g., i.e., etc., and et al](#))

either...or, neither...nor

The nouns that follow these words do not constitute a compound subject. They are alternate subjects and require a verb that agrees with the nearer subject.

- Neither they nor he is going.
- Neither he nor they are going.

-elect

Always hyphenate and lowercase.

- President-elect William Howard Taft.

eleventh

Spell out only in the phrase “the eleventh hour,” meaning at the last moment. Otherwise, use the numeral.

ellipses (...)

Use an ellipsis to indicate omission of one or more words, lines, paragraphs, or data from quoted material. Be careful to avoid deletions that would distort the meaning.

email

Acceptable in all references for electronic mail. Capitalize only when it begins a sentence or heading. Use a hyphen with other e-terms: e-book, e-business, e-commerce.

emergency room (ER)

ER is acceptable on second reference.

emeritus, emerita

This word often is added to formal titles to denote that individuals who have retired retain their rank or title. When used, place emeritus after the formal title, in keeping with the general practice of academic institutions.

- Professor Emeritus Samuel Eliot Morison
- Dean Emeritus Courtney C. Brown
- Publisher Emeritus Barnard L. Colby

OR

- Samuel Eliot Morison, professor emeritus of history

- Courtney C. Brown, dean emeritus of the faculty of business
- Barnard L. Colby, publisher emeritus

Use “emerita” for similar references if a woman prefers it.

empty-handed

Hyphenated, one word.

enact

(see [adopt, approve, enact, pass](#))

end user (noun), end-user (adjective)

A phrase commonly referred to by technology developers when imagining the audience for software or hardware. End-user experience.

enquire, enquiry

The preferred words are “inquire,” “inquiry.”

et al.

(see [e.g., i.e., etc., and et al](#))

etc.

(see [e.g., i.e., etc., and et al](#))

ensure, insure, assure

Use “ensure” to mean guarantee.

- Steps were taken to ensure accuracy.

Use “insure” for references to insurance.

- The policy insures his life.

Use “assure” to mean to make sure or give confidence.

- She assured us the statement was accurate.

epidemic or pandemic

An epidemic is the rapid spreading of disease in a certain population or region. A pandemic is an epidemic that has spread worldwide. Use sparingly and follow declarations of public health officials.

equally as

Do not use the words together. One is sufficient. Omit the “equally” shown here in parentheses.

- She was (equally) as wise as Marilyn.

Omit the as shown here in parentheses.

- She and Marilyn were equally (as) wise.

every day (adverb), everyday (adjective)

every one, everyone

Two words when it means each individual item.

- Every one of the clues was worthless.

One word when used as a pronoun meaning all persons.

- Everyone wants his life to be happy. (Note that everyone takes singular verbs and pronouns.)

ex-

Use no hyphen for words that use ex- in the sense of out of

- excommunicate
- expropriate

Hyphenate when using ex- in the sense of former.

- ex-convict
- ex-president

Do not capitalize ex- when attached to a formal title before a name.

- ex-President Richard Nixon

The prefix modifies the entire term. Usually, the former example below is better.

- ex-New York Gov. Mario Cuomo; not New York ex-Gov.

exclamation point (!)

Use the mark to express a high degree of surprise, incredulity, or other strong emotion. Avoid overuse and use a comma after mild interjections within a sentence and end mildly exclamatory sentences with a period.

Place the mark outside quotation marks when it is not part of the quoted material. Do not use a comma or a period after the exclamation mark.

executive branch

Always lowercase.

executive director

Capitalize before a name only if it is a formal corporate or organizational title.

extra-

Do not use a hyphen when extra means “outside of” unless the prefix is followed by a word beginning with ‘a’ or a capitalized word.

- extralegal
- extraterrestrial
- extramarital
- extraterritorial

Follow extra- with a hyphen when it is part of a compound modifier describing a condition beyond the usual size, extent or degree.

- extra-base hit
- extra-large book
- extra-dry drink
- extra-mild taste

eye to eye, eye-to-eye

Hyphenate when used as a compound modifier.

- an eye-to-eye confrontation

Fahrenheit

In cases that require mention of the scale, use these forms: 86 degrees Fahrenheit or 86 F (note the space and no period after the F) if degrees and Fahrenheit are clear from the context.

farther, further

“Farther” refers to physical distance: He walked farther into the woods.

“Further” refers to an extension of time or degree: She will look further into the mystery.

FAQ

Acceptable in all uses for frequently asked questions.

favorite

A button that a Twitter user can click to express approval for a tweet and/or to bookmark that tweet, and any associated links, for later consumption. Also, the act of clicking on this button.

FDA

Spell out “U.S. Food and Drug Administration” on first reference followed immediately by “(FDA)”. FDA is acceptable on second reference.

federal

Use a capital letter for the architectural style and for corporate or governmental bodies that use the word as part of their formal names: the Federal Trade Commission. (See separate entries for governmental agencies.)

Lowercase when used as an adjective to distinguish something from state, county, city, town, or private entities: federal assistance, federal court, the federal government, a federal judge.

Also: federal court (but U.S. District Court is preferred) and federal Judge Ann Aldrich (but U.S. District Judge Ann Aldrich is preferred).

federal court

Always lowercase. The preferred form for first reference is to use the proper name of the court.

female

Use female as an adjective, not woman. She is the first female governor of North Carolina.

fetus

In human development, from the eighth week to birth.

fewer, less

In general, use fewer for individual items, less for bulk or quantity.

- Incorrect: The trend is toward more machines and less people. (People in this sense refers to individuals.)
- Incorrect: She was fewer than 60 years old. (Years in this sense refers to a period of time, not individual years.)
- Correct: Fewer than 10 applicants called. (Individuals)
- Correct: I had less than \$50 in my pocket. (An amount.) But: I had fewer than 50 \$1 bills in my pocket. (Individual items)

First aid, first-aid

first aid (n.) first-aid (adj.)

first class, first-class

Hyphenate as a modifier before a noun. The restaurant was first class. It was a first-class restaurant.

firsthand

Use one word, no hyphen as both noun and adjective.

first lady

Not a formal title. Do not capitalize, even when used before the name of a chief of state's wife.

Flare-up, flare up

flare-up (n.) flare up (v.)

flier, flyer

"Flier" is the preferred term for a person flying on an aircraft or for a handbill. "Flyer" is the proper name of some trains and buses (e.g., The Western Flyer).

flu-like

Adjective, one word, hyphenated.

-fold

No hyphen: twofold, fourfold and hundredfold

following

The word usually is a noun, verb, or adjective:

- (Noun) He has a large following.
- (Verb) He is following his conscience.
- (Adjective) The following statement was made.

Although Webster's New World College Dictionary records its use as a preposition, the AAFP prefers the use of the word "after," which is more colloquial: He spoke after dinner. Not: He spoke following dinner.

follow-up

adjective and noun

Use two words (no hyphen) in verb form (follow up).

foodborne

adjective, one word, no hyphen

fractions

Generally, spell out amounts less than 1 in stories, using hyphens between the words: two-thirds, four-fifths, seven-sixteenths, etc.

Use figures for precise amounts larger than 1, converting to decimals whenever practical. When using fractional characters, use a forward-slash mark (/): 1/8, 1/4, 5/16, 9/10, etc.

For mixed numbers, use 1 1/2, 2 5/8, etc. with a full space between the whole number and the fraction. AP systems may automatically replace some fractions with single-character versions: 1/2 may be replaced by ½. These can be left in the form the system changes them to. (You may also choose to set the options on your system so that these replacements are not made.)

friend, follow, like

Acceptable in a social media context as both nouns and verbs. Actions by which users connect to other users on social networks and engage with their content.

Front line, front-line

front line (n.) front-line (adj.)

full-

Hyphenate when used to form compound modifiers

full time, full-time

Hyphenate when used as a compound modifier: He works full time. She has a full-time job.

genus, species

Italicize. First letter of genus is capitalized; first letter of species is lowercase (e.g., *Helicobacter pylori*). Spell out “species” if no species is listed (*Helicobacter species*, not *Helicobacter sp.*). In second references, use the abbreviated form: *H. pylori*.

GIF

Acronym for Graphics Interchange Format, a compression format for images. GIF is acceptable in copy but should be explained in the story. Use lowercase in a file name.

Google

Internet company that runs a search engine and digital advertising network. Google, Googling and Googled are used informally as a verb for performing an internet search.

government

Always lowercase, never abbreviate: the federal government, the state government, the U.S. government

Government Accountability Office

The Government Accountability Office is a nonpartisan congressional agency that audits federal programs. (Formerly the General Accounting Office.) GAO is acceptable on second reference.

governmental bodies

Follow these guidelines:

FULL NAME: Capitalize the full proper names of governmental agencies, departments, and offices: The U.S. Department of State, the Georgia Department of Human Resources, the Boston City Council, the Chicago Fire Department.

WITHOUT JURISDICTION: Retain capitalization in referring to a specific body if the context makes the name of the nation, state, county, city, etc. unnecessary.

Lowercase further condensations of the name: the department, the council, etc. For additional guidance see [assembly](#); [city council](#); [committee](#); [Congress](#); [legislature](#); [House of Representatives](#); [Senate](#); [Supreme Court of the United States](#); and [supreme courts of the states](#).

FLIP-FLOPPED NAMES: Retain capital names for the name of a governmental body if its formal name is flopped to delete the word of: the State Department, the Human Resources Department

GENERIC EQUIVALENTS: If a generic term has become the equivalent of a proper name in popular use, treat it as a proper name: Walpole State Prison, for example, even though the proper name is the Massachusetts Correctional Institute-Walpole. For additional examples, see [legislature](#); [police department](#); and [prison, jail](#).

PLURALS, NONSPECIFIC REFERENCES: All words that are capitalized when part of a proper name should be lowercased when they are used in the plural or do not refer to a specific, existing body. Some examples:

All states except Nebraska have a state senate. The town does not have a fire department. The bill requires city councils to provide matching funds. The president will address the lower houses of the New York and New Jersey legislatures.

NON-U.S. BODIES: The same principles apply.

Capitalize the names of the specific governmental agencies and departments, either with the name of the nation or without it if clear in the context: French Foreign Ministry, the Foreign Ministry. Lowercase the ministry or a similar term when standing alone.

graduate

(verb)

Graduate is correctly used in the active voice: She graduated from the university.

It is correct, but unnecessary, to use the passive voice: He was graduated from the university.

Do not, however, drop from: John Adams graduated from Harvard. Not: John Adams graduated Harvard.

gray

Not “grey.”

greater

Capitalize when used to define a community and its surrounding region: Greater Boston.

group

Takes singular verbs and pronouns: The group is reviewing its position.

half-

Follow [Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary](#). Hyphenate if not listed there.

Half day, half-day

half day (n.) half-day (adj.)

Handheld, hand-held

handheld (n.) hand-held (adj.)

hand-washing

One word, hyphenated.

headquarters

May take a singular or a plural verb.

health care

Always two words, not one.

his, her

Do not presume maleness in constructing a sentence. When possible, revise the sentence to avoid gender: Reporters try to protect their sources.

home page

Two words.

hometown

Use a comma to set off an individual's hometown when it is placed in apposition to a name, whether of is used or not: Tim Johnson, of Vermillion, South Dakota; Mary Richards, Minneapolis.

honorary degrees

(see [courtesy titles](#))

All references to honorary degrees should specify that the degree is honorary.

hotel

Capitalize as part of the proper name for a specific hotel: the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel.
Lowercase when standing alone or used in an indefinite reference to one hotel in a chain: The city has a Sheraton hotel.

hot spot

Two words, for descriptions of the area where computers can connect wirelessly, or for global trouble spots, or areas of intense heat in general.

hourlong, hourslong

House of Representatives

Capitalize when referring to a specific governmental body: the U.S. House of Representatives, the Massachusetts House of Representatives.

Capitalize shortened references that delete the words of Representatives: the U.S. House, the Massachusetts House.

Retain capitalization if U.S. or the name of a state is dropped but the reference is to a specific body.

BOSTON (AP) – The House has adjourned for the year.

Lowercase plural uses: the Massachusetts and Rhode Island houses.

Apply the same principle to similar legislative bodies such as the Virginia House of Delegates.

HPV

Acceptable on first reference for human papillomavirus, which can cause cervical and other types of cancer. HPV virus is redundant.

hyphen (-)

Hyphens are joiners. Use them to avoid ambiguity or to form a single idea from two or more words.

Use of the hyphen is far from standardized. It is optional in most cases, a matter of taste, judgment, and style sense. But the fewer hyphens the better; use them only when their absence causes confusion. (Small-business owner, but health care center.) See individual entries in this book. If not listed here, use the first listed entry in [Merriam-Webster's Dictionary](#). (amended example from small-businessman, in line with entry below.)

Some guidelines:

AVOID AMBIGUITY: Use a hyphen whenever ambiguity would result if it were omitted: The president will speak to small-business men. (Businessmen normally is one word. But the president will speak to small businessmen is unclear.)
Others: He recovered his health. He re-covered the leaky roof.

COMPOUND MODIFIERS: When a compound modifier—two or more words that express a single concept—precedes a noun, use hyphens to link all the words in the compound except the adverb very and all adverbs that end in -ly: a first-quarter touchdown, a bluish-green dress, a full-time job, a well-known man, a better-qualified woman, a know-it-all attitude, a very good time, an easily remembered rule.

Many combinations that are hyphenated before a noun are not hyphenated when they occur after a noun: The team scored in the first quarter. The dress, a bluish green, was attractive on her. She works full time. His attitude suggested that he knew it all. But when a modifier that would be hyphenated before a noun occurs instead after a form of the verb to be, the hyphen usually must be retained to avoid confusion: The man is well-known. The woman is quick-witted. The children are soft-spoken. The play is second-rate.

The principle of using a hyphen to avoid confusion explains why no hyphen is required with very and -ly words. Readers can expect them to modify the word that follows. But if a combination such as little-known man were not hyphenated, the reader could logically be expecting little to be followed by a noun, as in little man. Instead, the reader encountering little known would have to back up mentally and make the compound connection on his own.

TWO-THOUGHT COMPOUNDS: serio-comic, socio-economic.

COMPOUND PROPER NOUNS AND ADJECTIVES: Use a hyphen to designate dual heritage: Italian-American, Mexican-American.

No hyphen, however, for French Canadian or Latin American.

PREFIXES AND SUFFIXES: See [prefixes](#) and [suffixes](#), and separate entries for the most frequently used prefixes and suffixes.

AVOID DUPLICATED VOWELS, TRIPLED CONSONANTS: Examples: anti-intellectual, pre-empt, shell-like.

WITH NUMERALS: Use a hyphen to separate figures in [odds](#), [ratios](#), [scores](#), some [fractions](#) and some [vote tabulations](#). See examples in entries under these headings. When large numbers must be spelled out, use a hyphen to connect a word ending in -y to another word: twenty-one, fifty-five, etc.

SUSPENSIVE HYPHENATION: The form: He received a 10- to 20-year sentence in prison.

Do not hyphenate “primary care,” “health care,” or “managed care.” These compound modifiers do not need to be hyphenated because each modifier could stand alone, and the connection between the words is clear without a hyphen.

- I have an appointment with a primary care physician.
- The health care reform debate has implications for physicians and their patients.
- Managed care organizations negotiate agreements with various providers.

Use hyphens for ages expressed as adjectives before a noun or as substitutes for a noun.

- A 5-year-old boy.
- The race is for 3-year-olds.

IM

Abbreviation for instant message; sometimes used as a verb: IM'ing, IM'd. Acceptable on second reference for instant messaging.

in-

No hyphen when it means not.

inaccurate insufferable

Other uses without a hyphen:

inbound infighting

indoor inpatient (n., adj.)

infield

A few combinations take a hyphen, however:

in-depth in-house

in-group in-law

Follow [Merriam-Webster's Dictionary](#) when in doubt.

Inbox

One word, no hyphen.

include

Use include to introduce a series when the items that follow are only part of the total: The price includes breakfast. The zoo includes lions and tigers.

Use comprise when the full list of individual elements is given: The zoo comprises 100 types of animals, including lions and tigers.

incorporated

Abbreviate and capitalize as Inc. when used as a part of a corporate name. Do not set off with commas: Time Warner Inc. announced...

infant

Applicable to children through 12 months of age.

injuries

They are suffered, not sustained or received.

input

Do not use as a verb in describing the introduction of data into a computer.

in spite of

Despite means the same thing and is shorter

inter-

The rules in [prefixes](#) apply, but in general, no hyphen.

Some examples:

inter-American interstate

interracial

internet

A decentralized, worldwide network of computers and other devices that can communicate with each other. The web, like email, is a subset of the internet. They are not synonymous and should not be used interchangeably in stories. See [web](#).

INTERNET ADDRESSES: In stories, use the name of the website rather than the web address – so it's Facebook, not Facebook.com. Use ".com" only if it's part of the legal name, as in Amazon.com Inc.

When a story prominently mentions a specific website or web service, include the full address, unless the site contains content considered graphic or otherwise objectionable under AP's standards.

intra-

Within, inside. The rules in [prefixes](#) apply, but in general, no hyphen. Some examples:

Intracity, intraparty

initials

Use periods and no space when an individual uses initials instead of a first name: H.L. Mencken. Do not give a name with a single initial (J. Jones) unless it is the individual's preference or a first name cannot be learned.

IT

Abbreviation for information technology; IT is acceptable on second reference.

IV

Acceptable in all references for "intravenous."

JPEG, JPG

Acronyms for Joint Photographic Experts Group, a common image format used on the World Wide Web. Acronyms acceptable in all references.

junior, senior

Abbreviate as Jr. and Sr. only with full names. Do not precede by a comma: Martin Luther King Jr.

The notation "II" or "2nd" may be used if it is the individual's preference. Note, however, that II and 2nd are not necessarily the equivalent of junior; as they often are used by a grandson or nephew.

If necessary to distinguish between father and son in second reference, use the elder Smith or the younger Smith.

K

Use K in references to modem transmission speeds, in keeping with standard usage: a 56K modem (no space after numeral).

The K abbreviation is now acceptable in headline and statistical references to kilometers, such as a 10K race; in baseball for strikeouts: pitcher records 12 Ks; and monetary amounts in thousands: employee earns \$80K

keynote address

Also: keynote speech.

kudos

To credit or praise for an achievement. The word is singular and takes singular verbs.

login, logon, logoff

Use as two words (log in, log on, log off) when used as a verb: I log in to my computer.

measurement/length

Put the unit of measurement after the numeral and a single space (i.e., 10 cm). The unit should be lowercase with no periods. Never allow a line break to separate the numeral and its unit of measurement.

medical titles

(also see [courtesy titles](#))

On first reference, identify a physician with MD or DO (no periods) after his/her full name and a comma. In subsequent references, use the physician's last name.

- Robert Graham, MD, will give the keynote address. Throughout his career, Graham has spoken extensively about a number of critical topics in health policy.

middle initials

Use only when the person mentioned (e.g., a faculty member, author, quoted source) asks you to do so. It is best to ask for the individual's preference. [Note: Dr. Henley prefers to have his middle initial used in formal communications.]

- "The Consumer Alliance Program helps fulfill the AAFP's objective of improving the health of the public, in that it allows new opportunities for excellent patient education through familydoctor.org," said AAFP Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer Douglas E. Henley, MD, FAAFP.

military titles

There are many nuances with titles in different branches of the military. Do not use periods in rank/degree abbreviations. When addressing a letter or email communication, use the following format:

First Name, Last Name, MD Rank (e.g., Lt Col, USAF, MC)
City, State Zip Code

Dear Dr. Smith:

nonmember

One word, no hyphen

- Any recipient of American Family Physician (members and nonmember health care professionals) can take the CME quiz.

nonprofit

One word, no hyphen

- A nonprofit organization does not issue stock shares or distribute its surplus funds to owners or shareholders, instead using the funds to achieve its goals.

numbers

Spell out numbers under 10 (including 0) and use numerals for 10 and above, except in measurements, dimensions, percentages, ratios, ratings, and scores.

- Do Not Use: The 4 mission areas...
- Use: The four mission areas...
- Do Not Use: The sixteen small chapters...
- Use: The 16 small chapters...

Exception: If a single-digit number is in a series with numerals, cite all as numerals.

- "...2.6, five, and 0.5..." In this case, "five" would be changed to 5.

It is acceptable to use all numerals in tables for consistency.

- If a column lists 2, 16, and 45, do not spell out "two."

Do not begin a sentence with a number. Spell it out or reword the sentence to avoid beginning with a number.

- Incorrect: 18 family physicians serve on the AAFP Board of Directors.
- Correct: Eighteen family physicians serve on the AAFP Board of Directors.
- Correct: The AAFP Board of Directors comprises 18 family physicians.

Numbers used to indicate order (e.g., first, second, 10th, 25th) are called ordinal numbers. Spell out first through ninth: first base, fourth grade, the Ninth Amendment. Use numbers starting with 10th (the "th" should not be superscript).

Correct usage of over versus more than:

- Over generally refers to spatial relationships: The plane flew over the city.
- More than is preferred with numerals: The dues increased more than \$20 a year.

online

One word, no hyphen. Do not capitalize unless it begins a sentence or heading.

on-site vs. on site

(referring to a meeting location)

Should be “on-site” (with hyphen) when used as an adjective. Should be “on site” (two words, no hyphen) when used as a noun.

- Adjective: On-site registration is located in the main foyer.
- Noun: Food and beverage will be available on site.

Oxford comma

(see [commas](#))

percent/percentage

Spell out “percent” or use the percent sign (%), but be consistent throughout.

- AAFP membership consists of 63 percent men and 37 percent women.
- According to our 2010-2011 member census, 61.6% of active members are currently using an EHR in their practice.

Always use numerals to express percentages, except when they appear at the beginning of a sentence. In this case, the number should be spelled out.

- Incorrect: 92 percent of the candidates receiving FamMedPAC contributions won their elections.
- Correct: Ninety-two percent of the candidates receiving FamMedPAC contributions won their elections.

percentile

Use with ordinal numbers (e.g., 1st percentile).

phone numbers

For local numbers, the format should always be as follows: (913) 906-6000, ext. 5178. Leave a space following the parenthesis after the area code.

For toll-free numbers, the format should always be as follows: (800) 274-2237. Leave a space following the parenthesis after the area code. Do not use the long-distance “1”.

Communications listing the AAFP’s phone numbers should include both the toll-free (800) number and the local number.

plus vs. +

Always use “-plus” to modify a numerical amount. Do not use the “+” symbol.

- The research department offers 200-plus case studies.
- The AAFP offers 400-plus Board-style questions.

policy maker

Two words, no hyphen.

Prefixes

Most common prefixes do not require a hyphen, but there are exceptions. Three rules are constant:

- Except for “cooperate” and “coordinate,” use a hyphen if the prefix ends in a vowel and the word that follows begins with the same vowel.
- Use a hyphen if the word that follows is capitalized.
- Use a hyphen to join doubled prefixes.

non-

The rules of prefixes apply, but in general no hyphen when forming a compound that does not have special meaning and can be understood if “not” is used before the base word. Use a hyphen, however, before proper nouns or in awkward combinations, such as non-nuclear.

pre-

The rules of prefixes apply. A hyphen is used if a prefix ends in a vowel and the word that follows begins with the same vowel.

When in doubt, look up the word in the [dictionary](#).

rank, military

(see [military titles](#))

Semicolons

It is appropriate to use semicolons to separate a complicated series that would otherwise be confusing: The conference will feature a number of speakers, including James Smith, PhD, of Virginia; Mary Ann, MD, of Missouri; and John Doe, MA, MSc, of Pennsylvania.

It is also appropriate to use a semicolon to link two independent clauses without a coordinating conjunction (but, and, or, etc.): Annual membership fees were due last week; today is the last day they will be accepted.

serial comma

(see [commas](#))

social media

Verbs referring to social media (i.e., tweet, tweeting, googling) should be lowercased unless beginning a sentence.

states

(see [cities and states](#))

subcommittee

One word, no hyphen.

- Goertz spoke with AAFP News Now shortly after his presentation to the RUC subcommittee.

Telemedicine

One word, no hyphen.

terminal comma

(see [commas](#))

times

(see [Dates and Times](#))

titles, capitalization of

(see [capitalization of titles, subtitles, headings](#))

titles, official

Capitalize the official title of a person when it precedes the person's name. Do not capitalize when the title follows the name or is set off from the name by commas. Exception: When a word such as "former" is used in conjunction with a title and name, the title is not get capitalized (e.g., former president George W. Bush).

- Rhode Island Chapter Executive John Q. Doe and Board President Sue Z. Smith will participate in the conference call.
- We will schedule a conference call with the Rhode Island chapter executive and the board president to gain a better understanding of the initiatives.
- John Doe, the Rhode Island chapter executive, made a motion.

The official titles of commissions and committees, conferences, congresses, courses, organizations, institutions, business firms, and governmental agencies, and their departments and other divisions should only be capitalized when referring to a specific entity. However, the names of specific languages (e.g., English, French, Japanese) are always capitalized, even when not referring to a specific entity.

- The Congress of Delegates will begin following the keynote address.
- Membership organizations may wish to convene a congress of delegates.
- Does your company have a publications division that produces the journal?
- The Publications Division will host an open house on Thursday.
- The AAFP Board of Directors approved the budget.

- Oversight by a board of directors can be helpful.
- He enrolled in the Department of Civil Engineering at MIT.
- He enrolled in the civil engineering department at MIT.
- He enrolled in the Department of English at NYU.
- He enrolled in the English department at NYU.

titles, unofficial

Do not capitalize unofficial titles.

- This semester, the course will be taught by instructor John Anderson.
- For this article, I will be interviewing family physician Joe Smith, MD.

trademark

A brand, symbol, word, etc., used by a manufacturer or dealer and protected by law to prevent a competitor from using it. A generic product descriptor should follow a trademarked word on first reference (e.g., Kleenex™ tissues) when applicable.

trademark symbols (TM, ®)

Although there is no legal requirement to include trademark symbols, when they are included, they should be superscript with no other special type treatment (e.g., italics, bold). The symbol does not change the treatment of the title itself; rules for titles apply (e.g., titles of works are italicized; titles of a member chapter or a meeting are not italicized).

United States

Always spell out when used as a noun. Use the abbreviation “U.S.” (with periods) when used as an adjective.

- Noun: In 2005, there were nearly 320,000 primary care physicians in the United States.
- Adjective: Family medicine gained 133 U.S. medical school graduates in the 2011 Match.

up-to-date

Hyphenate only when using as an adjective.

web

(see [World Wide Web](#))

webcam/webinar/webmaster/webpage/website/etc.

“Website” is one word and should be lowercased except when beginning a sentence. The term is generic and can be used to describe many different locations.

This rule also applies to other descriptive compound words that include “web,” such as “webpage,” “webcam,” “webinar,” and “webmaster.”

- The AAFP website receives more than 100,000 page views each day.
- AAFP webpages are created and maintained through an online content management system called CQ.

- Some tech-savvy physicians use webcams to conduct e-visits with patients who are located far away.

well-being

One word, hyphenated.

Wi-Fi

A proper noun, “Wi-Fi” is always capitalized.

- Many local coffee shops offer free Wi-Fi to customers.

World Wide Web (web)

Note the difference between the internet and the World Wide Web (the web):

- The internet is a massive decentralized, worldwide network of computers and other devices that can communicate with each other.
- The World Wide Web (web), like email, is a subset of the internet. Web and internet are not synonymous and should not be used interchangeably.

Part 3: Formatting Guidelines

Instructions for formatting various documents for internal and external use.

AAFP seal

All external and internal documents should carry the AAFP seal. See the [AAFP Brand Guidelines](#) for direction on when to use the capital or the written seal and the “Strong Medicine” tagline.

External audiences must receive permission from the AAFP Office of General Counsel to use the seal, as well as follow the AAFP Brand Guidelines.

agenda format

(see [templates](#))

blast emails

Use the AAFP blast email system when emailing many external recipients at once. Follow the Blast Email System Instructions & Guidelines.

Use the following formats for these commonly used signatures:

Douglas E. Henley, MD, FAAFP
Executive Vice President / CEO

Elaine Jastram Conrad, CAE
AAFP Membership Division Director

Stan Kozakowski, MD
Division Director, Medical Education

branding

Follow the [AAFP Brand Guidelines](#) for direction using the AAFP seal, color palette, font, and layout.

bulleted lists

When writing a bulleted list:

- Capitalize the first word of each item.
- Keep each list item short and simple.
- Try to keep the number of items to more than two and less than nine.
- Add punctuation only when items are complete sentences.
- Do not use sub-bullets.
- Use parallel construction. (e.g., beginning each bulleted item in the same way, with or without a verb. If you begin with a verb, each verb must be of the same tense.)

Correct:

Here are just a few ways the AAFP can help you right now:

- Access specialty-specific resources.
- Find CME options that fit your schedule.
- Share with your peers through AAFP Connection.

Incorrect:

Here are just a few ways the AAFP can help you right now:

- Access specialty-specific resources
- CME options that fit your schedule
- Offering AAFP Connection, a secure online community

capitalization of titles, subtitles, and headings

Capitalize all major words in titles, subtitles, and headings. Do not capitalize a conjunction (e.g., and, or, but), article (e.g., the, a, an), or preposition of three letters or less, except when it is the first or last word in the title or subtitle.

- Common Dermatologic Lesions in Ambulatory Care
- Emergency and Urgent Care

For hyphenated words, if they are shown in the [dictionary](#) as hyphenated, treat as one word (i.e., lowercase the word after the hyphen). If words are not hyphenated in the dictionary, treat as two words (i.e., capitalize the word after the hyphen).

- Full-time Employment Following Residency
- Patient-Based Care in a Solo Practice

document names

All documents should include a date to indicate when they were published, finalized, or approved. Shared documents should be dated and version noted. This information should appear on the bottom right of the last page of the document, unless there is a cover page, in which case the information should appear on the bottom right of the cover page.

email auto signature

To be consistent, email auto signatures should follow the following format. Including fax and mobile phone numbers is optional. The office phone number can be either (913) 906-6000 or (800) 274-2237.

Name | Title

American Academy of Family Physicians

11400 Tomahawk Creek Parkway | Leawood, KS 66211

Office: (913) 906-6000, ext. 1111 | Mobile: (000) 000-0000 name@aafp.org

email communications

Email communications should be as clear, concise, and grammatically correct as any written communication. The audience will dictate how formal or not the email should be. If action is required of the recipient, the request should be clear and included in the subject line if room allows.

Emails to members should include a clear subject line and feature a salutation and signature including contact information. Generally, email subject lines should be formatted like sentences (initial cap only). For blast emails, follow the Blast Email System Instructions & Guidelines.

Email, Content Guidelines

There are several factors that play into strong content for email. In addition to remaining consistent with our brand and writing style, email has deliverability and user experience to consider. Unlike some other channels, email is a scannable medium. Approximately 39% of emails are viewed for 3 seconds or less; only about 36% are read for more than 15 seconds (see Q1 2015 Moveable Ink Consumer Device Preference Report).

From Name

Sometimes referred to as the “friendly from”—this is the name the email says it’s from. This is typically the most visible part of the message in the inbox and greatly influences a reader’s decision on what action to take (or not take) with the message. Use a name that is going to be recognized by recipients.

- If using a division or service name, always lead with AAFP (i.e., AAFP CME)
 - Using a division or service name is recommended for email audiences who particularly opted-in to or interact with the message in a unique manner (i.e., AAFP Member Insight Exchange).
- If using an individual’s name, ensure that the audience is going to recognize the individual. If even some of the audience may not recognize the individual’s name as a safe sender, identify them as AAFP (i.e., AAFP First Name Last Name, MD or First Name Last Name, MD at AAFP).

- If the email is being sent with an individual's from name, ensure the body copy matches that personal style (letter format with a signature line from that individual).
- Use of an individual's name must be preapproved and the individual must have given consent for the message to utilize his/her name.
- Do not have a separate contact listed in the email from an individual (i.e., an email from "Dr. Smith" should not say "Contact Betty (betty@aafp.org) with questions."). This may appear suspicious and create a confusing user experience.

Subject Line

- Make sure the most important part of the subject line is in the first 35 characters.
 - The most restrictive mobile clients show about 35 characters of a subject line.
 - As long as the first 35 characters get the message across, the subject line can be longer in order to strengthen the message's resonance with recipients who can view longer subject lines.
 - The key is to never sacrifice clarity for length on the subject line. Wordiness is generally unclear.
- Make sure the subject line clearly aligns with the message in the email.
 - Anti-spam legislation legally requires that the subject line not be misleading.
 - Email is not the appropriate channel for click bait style messaging. If a recipient's expectations from the subject line are not met, he/she will not take the desired action (and may be frustrated) and the email is not fulfilling its purpose.
 - Emails with vague or confusing subject lines tend to create a higher spam complaint rate.
- Avoid language or tactics that appear spammy,
 - Email spam filtering has evolved to rely more on engagement and sender reputation than on specific content filtering. However, content filtering does still play a role, and having a proper subject line plays into deliverability, visibility, and engagement.
 - Using exclamation marks, excessive punctuation, or all caps (acronyms are okay) are typically red flags for spam.
 - When possible, avoid using words that could appear to be sexually suggestive (i.e., "vaginal delivery").
- Avoid special characters in the subject line.
 - Special characters often render incorrectly in the subject lines.
 - While not exhaustive, commonly used special characters that should be avoided in subject lines are ™, ®, and &.
 - Plain text versions as (R), (TM), and "and" are good alternatives.

Pre-header

- The pre-header should give a short preview or summary of the body content. This is an opportunity to expand on the subject line as this text is usually visible in the inbox before opening an email.
- Every email should include pre-header text at the very top of the email.
- Text should be approximately 90 characters long.

Headline

A headline should be used as a short introduction to the email body content. This text is stylized at the beginning of the email.

- The subject line, pre-header, and headline should not be identical.
- Have the headline, pre-header, and subject line all build off one another. For example:
Subject line: Conference Invitation from AAFP

Pre-header: First-ever Family Physician Health and Well-being Conference open for registration.

Headline: Develop an action plan for professional well-being at new AAFP conference in Naples, FL

Body Content

Written content in the email should be concise and scannable.

- Bulleted lists are great for scannable content. When using a bulleted list, keep list items to a single line (approximately 75 characters).
- Promotional or news-oriented email content should be written as an introduction only. Give a short intro or description to get interest, then provide a “learn more” link to a more descriptive web or landing page.
- To aid scanning, include only one idea per paragraph.
- Optimally, paragraphs should be 2-3 short sentences.
- Minimize repetition of information.
- Avoid circumlocution—keep the content relevant and concise.

Avoid using ALL CAPS in the email copy, exceptions being acronyms.

- For emphasis, try stylizing the text in lieu of using all caps.

Links and URLs

- Do not spell out URLs in the copy. Due to tracking used by the email deployment system, this can appear to be obfuscating a link—a phishing technique where a link is designed to look like it goes to a trusted site but actually directs to a harmful or untrusted site.
- If a vanity URL is necessary to reinforce other marketing efforts, include it in an image in the email.
- Hide all links in body copy (linking words rather than spelling out URLs).
- Avoid using “click here” CTAs. Use product names or CTAs specific to the product or service (“register now”) which provide a more natural flow of content and minimize risk of getting caught in a content filter.
- Include at least one text link, even if including a button.
- Do not provide URLs that are vanities (most should end in .html or .aspx) or that already have a tracking string appended (?cpmid=...).

Calls to Action (CTA)

- Attendee messages or similar informative emails where no action is needed do not require a CTA.
- Emails should have a call-to-action that can be completed online.
 - If a phone call is required for the end desired action (purchase an item), it is recommended to still include a “learn more” link that directs to a form or webpage.
 - An alternative contact method, whether through a form or by including a contact email address/link, should also be included to allow communication outside the contact center’s business hours.
 - Send time should be considered for these as well to send during operational hours.
- The CTA should be highlighted with a button, image, and/or stylized link text.

Content within a campaign

Email is often one part of larger marketing effort and campaigns often contain multiple messages to the target audience. Special consideration should be given to these emails for an optimal user experience.

- Ensure the emails are appropriate to where the recipient is in the communication and conversion funnels.
 - For specialized target audiences, reflect the audience segment (i.e. abandon cart or New Physicians) in the subject line and/or pre-header.
 - Make sure subsequent messaging to the same audience is different from previous messages and conveys a new unique, or timely aspect of the featured product/service.
- Keep messaging consistent with other campaign materials.
 - Dates, deadlines, and benefits should mirror those featured in other mediums.
 - Use content that is unique but related to other communications the recipients interact with as part of the campaign.

Email templates, General guidelines

Email templates are used to streamline an email build process with pre-established layouts and codes to save time and money. They also help recipients recognize the AAFP brand and know what to expect from email communications from the AAFP.

- All email designs must fit within a standard layout for AAFP
- Exceptions are campaigns that already have a unique template build for them (i.e. ChexMix and FMX)
- Templates with customized header images and graphic elements can be requested as needed. These requests should be submitted well in advance of the affected sends. The email team will evaluate new template requests based on needs and priorities then provide an estimate of the cost and timeline.
- Templates that have images outside of the standard image sizes below should be limited as much as possible for consistency. Some exceptions that are already in place include:
 - National Conference
 - FMX

- FPM/AFP Renewal and Retention series
- MedEd Student Interest Series

Email templates, Images

Readability on both mobile and desktop screens should be considered when designing an image.

- For images with text, a simple background is preferred for readability.
 - Typeface used in images should be at least 24 px for readability on mobile devices.
 - Many desktop clients do not display images by default, so refrain from including important text in images only.
 - Rectangular graphics should be used. Round images do not work well in email's table.
- Images must fit within the size specs of the template in use. There are standard sizes used by the AAFP templates, but please check with an email specialist for a specific image location's specs. Standard sizes (wide x high, in pixels):

- Banner: Size for Retina at 1200x250 px. Height can vary, but the width is absolute. Image will resize to 600 px wide in finished email.
 - Recommend; will be resized to 600 px wide when placed in the template
 - Ensure the image will remain readable at 300 px wide, the mobile rendering size.
 - Do not use "AAFP" or the AAFP seal in the secondary header as that is included in the header already. If AAFP is part of a product name, it can be included in the banner image copy.
 - Avoid the use of large areas of orange, which is reserved for AAFP as a brand.
 - Design images to go flush under an orange divider line. Especially for design elements with colored lines/stripes or images extending beyond the color blocks, this can greatly affect aesthetics.
- Thumbnail: 80x60
- Event thumbnail: 140x105
- Featured Image: 220x165
- Skyscraper Image: 125x300
- Buttons: Size at 64 px high; width will vary as needed. Buttons will resize to 32 px high.
 - Copy in buttons should be Title Cased and include two carets at the end.
 - Corner radius should be consistent with current button images.
 - Save buttons as png files with transparent background.

Formatting web safe images

- For large images such as banner images, jpgs are the preferred image format.
- When an image has shadow effects or other pieces that require a transparent background, or contains primarily text, png images are preferred. Note, only png and gif files accommodate transparent backgrounds.
- Colors should be based on digital colors in the style guide and formatted as hexadecimal to accommodate file size restrictions.
- Recommend saving at 72 dpi.
- File size cannot exceed 400 KB.
- No padding or bleed should be included in images for emails.

Calls to Action (CTA)

- Can be highlighted using a button image or stylized text.
- Only one orange button should be used in an email, indicating the primary CTA.
- Additional CTAs can be highlighted using a gray button or stylized text.

Video

- At this time, video is not supported in email.
- For video features, a video still with an overlaid play button is recommended to link directly to the feature.

Formatting and Spacing

Follow these general guidelines with written communication:

- Use only one space between sentences.
- Use left justification.
- Do not indent new paragraphs.
- Avoid widows (short line at the top of a paragraph) and orphans (short line at the bottom of a paragraph).

Fonts (see the [AAFP Brand Guidelines](#))

Headings, Capitalization of

(see [Capitalization of Titles, Subtitles, Headings](#))

letterhead

Use only for the first page of a letter. (See also [Templates](#))

letter format

Letters should be addressed using recipient's formal title and last name. If you typically address the recipient by his/her first name, it is acceptable to use it in the salutation (e.g. Dear Doug,).

Douglas E. Henley, MD
American Academy of Family Physicians
11400 Tomahawk Creek Parkway
Leawood, KS 66211

Dear Dr. Henley:

If more than one page is required for a letter, the second and all subsequent pages should include the recipient's name, the date, and page number in the upper left.

Douglas E.
Henley, MD
July 31, 2011

Page Two

memo format

Memo letterhead should only be used for the first page. (See also [Templates.](#))

If more than one page is used, the following pages should include the topic of the memo, the date, and the page number.

Board of Directors
July 31, 2011
Page Two

Because the creator's name is shown in the FROM section, only the initials of the creator and the person typing the memo should appear at the end of a memo.

DEH/dh

Copied recipients should be shown on a memo using lowercase "cc" and be listed immediately below the TO section. Although "cc" no longer stands for "carbon copy" it is still standard for "copies were made".

DATE: August, 1, 2001
TO: Lori Heim, MD
cc: Doug Henley, MD
FROM: Todd Dicus
SUBJECT: Board Report A

PowerPoint presentations

(See also [Templates](#))

Instructions for using the AAFP-branded PowerPoint template are included in the slides.

salutations

For informal/personal letters and emails, use a comma after the salutation.

- Dear Warren,

For formal/business letters and emails, use a colon after the salutation.

- Dear Dr. Jones:

spacing

(see [formatting and spacing](#))

Templates

Template guidelines have been established for proper use of the AAFP brand. As a staff member of the AAFP it is essential to use the brand appropriately when communicating internally and externally. All communications must follow the Guidelines or use the established branded templates.

To use a template with the appropriate formatting, layout, and font settings:

1. Open PowerPoint or Word.
2. Under "File" click on "New."
3. Click on "My Templates." Several types of templates are available, including:
 - a. AAFP Fax template
 - b. AAFP Intra-organization memo
 - c. AAFP Meeting agenda
 - d. AAFP Electronic Letterhead
 - e. AAFP PowerPoint
4. [View visual directions and branded template samples.](#)

Note: The generic templates and reports provided by Microsoft are not branded. Find further directions on the [AAFP staff site](#).

Text Messaging

See the [CDC guidelines](#) for best practices on crafting text messages.

Part 4: Voice

Principles, suggestions, and specific guidelines for direct, authentic, empathetic voice in writing.

Affordable Care Act

(see also [Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act](#))

Affordable Care Act (ACA) is shorthand for the formal title of the health care overhaul that President Barack Obama signed into law in 2010. Do not use the term "Obamacare."AIDS

Acceptable in all references for acquired immune deficiency syndrome. AIDS is caused by human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). Do not use "HIV virus," which is redundant.

Use the HIV/AIDS construction with caution. People can be infected with the virus and not have AIDS. They do not have AIDS until they develop serious symptoms.

cultural proficiency vs. cultural competency

Use "cultural proficiency" instead of "cultural competency," as the latter implies that those without cultural sensitivity are incompetent. Use of terms such as "cultural issues" is permitted.

death, die

Do not use euphemisms like “passed on” or “passed away” except in a direct quote.

definitely

Overused as a vague intensifier. Avoid it.

disabled, handicapped

In general, do not describe an individual as disabled or handicapped unless it is clearly pertinent to a story. If a description must be used, try to be specific.

- An ad featuring actor Michael J. Fox swaying noticeably from the effects of Parkinson's disease drew nationwide attention.

Avoid descriptions that connote pity, such as afflicted with or suffers from multiple sclerosis. Rather, use “has multiple sclerosis.”

Some terms include:

- **blind** – Describes a person with complete loss of sight. For others, use terms such as **visually impaired** or **person with low vision**.
- **cripple** – Considered offensive when used to describe a person who is disabled.
- **deaf** – Describes a person with total hearing loss. For others, use **partial hearing loss** or **partially deaf**. Avoid using **deaf-mute**. Do not use **deaf and dumb**.
- **disabled** – A general term used for a physical, mental, developmental or intellectual disability. Do not use **mentally retarded**.
- **handicap** – It should be avoided in describing a disability.
- **mute** – Describes a person who cannot speak. Others with speaking difficulties are **speech impaired**.
- **wheelchair user** – People use wheelchairs for independent mobility. Do not use **confined to a wheelchair**, or **wheelchair-bound**. If a wheelchair is needed, say why.

Down syndrome

Not Down's, for the genetic, chromosomal disorder first reported in 1866 by J. Langdon Down, DS

elderly

Use this word carefully and sparingly. Do not refer to a person as **elderly** unless it is clearly relevant to the story. It is appropriate in generic phrases that do not refer to specific individuals.

- **concern for the elderly**, **a home for the elderly**, etc.

If the intent is to show that an individual's faculties have deteriorated, cite an example and give attribution for it. Use age when available and appropriate.

Apply the same principle to terms such as **senior citizen**.

Email, transactional vs. commercial

Many national and international laws recognize two classes of emails—transactional and commercial. Different rules apply to an email depending on its classification.

Commercial emails are emails whose primary purpose is to promote a commercial product or service. These emails are legally required to have an opt-out link, which gives recipients the option to stop all commercial messages from the organization. Opt-out request must be honored within 10 days.

Transactional emails are those which facilitate an agreed-upon transaction or update the customer about an ongoing transaction. Transactional emails do not have to honor commercial opt-outs nor provide an opt-out mechanism. However, an email can only be classified as transactional if there is no commercial content.

Under anti-spam legislation, the following electronic messages are exempt from commercial requirements if they solely:

- Facilitate, complete, or confirm a previously agreed-on commercial transaction
- Provide factual information about an ongoing subscription, membership, account, or similar relationship
- Provide factual information about an ongoing use or ongoing purchase of a product, good, or service offered under a subscription, membership, account, or similar relationship
- Deliver a product, good, or service, including a product upgrade under a previously agreed-on transaction
- Provide a requested quote or estimate
- Provide warranty, recall, safety, or security information about a previously-purchased product, good, or service

Language that should be avoided includes:

- Statements requesting the recipient to pass this email along to a friend or colleague
- Opinionated statements
 - For example, something to the effect that the AAFP is the most respected organization in helping advance the specialty of family medicine.
 - This also includes statements that give your opinion on a specific product or service, thereby hinting that the reader should make a purchase—this would be considered “selling.”
- Advertising or promote another (albeit related) interaction.
 - For example, saying, “Since you purchased X CME product, check out Y CME product, which has the very same features.”
- Hyperlinks to promotional products
 - An email that had been factually explaining how a person can report CME should not include a hyperlink to various AAFP CME products or events to help the person fulfill his or her CME requirements.

Discussing the features of the product the recipient brought is okay as long as the details of the features are factual and about that very product.

Implementation

HighRoad Solution's global opt out list, which it maintains to help ensure compliance among its clients, is enabled for the Academy at an account level. This is preventing some transactional emails from reaching all of their intended audience. A second account without a global opt-out list is being set up to allow our transactional emails to have greater reach.

Important Note: It will still be possible for people to globally opt-out via their email service provider and feedback loops. Invalid email addresses will also continue to be processed.

This new transactional account will be a separate account from the existing commercial account. Users will have separate logins for each account, and emails and reports can't transition between accounts. The transactional nature of these emails reduces many of the complications that arise from separate and unsynced accounts.

Since it is not possible for emails to be transitioned between accounts, it will be important to know an email's classification before it is built. Partners should consult these guidelines each time and ask with respect to every part of the email message: is this completing or confirming a previously agreed-on transaction; is this providing factual information about ongoing membership; is this providing factual information about a specific purchase? If there is something questionable in proposed copy that is causing concern, please feel free to consult with the email team. As a general rule: "When in doubt, leave it out."

CME's sweater emails, Membership's dues and CME email, and ALSO/BLSO's program update emails will be the first emails to migrate into the transactional account.

Data Management

The data structure of this account is intended to be a pared-down version of the existing commercial account. This is being done to facilitate efficiency when managing multiple accounts.

Three syncs between the transactional account and NetForum have been created. One sync will add and update member records. A second sync will run the queries so members who match the criteria get pulled in and members who no longer match the criteria are removed. A final sync will pull any event registrants for the current and past 2 years into the system. These syncs will run nightly. IT will delete out-dated queries and events on a quarterly basis.

A reporting sync to pull statistics from the email platform into NetForum and Tableau was not part of the approved scope and thus was not set up. A separate project request for this can be created at a later date. Email level stats can be pulled manually from the email system.

Lists of existing queries and custom fields that will be migrated are outlined in the configuration section of this entry. Any new transactional queries or custom fields that are needed will be added to both accounts. The existing naming contention for these items has been updated so we can identify in which accounts of the components reside.

girl

Applicable until 18th birthday is reached. Use woman or young woman afterward.

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