NAVC Publication
Style Guide

today's veterinary
nurse

TVP
TODAY'S VETERINARY PRACTICE
An Official Journal of the NAVC

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Section 1: Preparing an Article for Publication

Introduction

The North American Veterinary Community (NAVC) has provided this editorial style guide to assist writers and editors in preparing materials for publication.

AMA Style

Today's Veterinary Practice (TVP) and *Today's Veterinary Nurse* (TVN) follow American Medical Association (AMA) style guidelines.

Spelling Standards

The following references should be used for spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

- **General terms:** *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*
- **Medical terms:** *Dorland's Medical Dictionary*
- **Geographic area terms:** *Oxford Dictionary* (oxforddictionaries.com/us)

New Guidelines

Notable changes from previous NAVC style guidelines include:

- Use AMA style, not Associated Press style (TVP and TVN; TVB uses AP Style).
- Do not use ampersands (TVP).
- Capitalize 4-letter prepositions in headlines (TVP and TVN).
- Follow new guidelines for dosage style (TVP).
- Follow new spacing guidelines within references (TVP).

Section 2: Style Guidelines

Grammar

- **Active vs. passive voice:** When giving directions or how-to instructions, use active voice.
- **Comparisons:** Follow these general guidelines for using *compare with* vs. *compare to*:
    - When stressing similarities between items use *compare to*.
    - If examining similarities and differences, use *compare with*.
    - When in doubt, use *compare with*.
- **Third person:** Use *the author[s]* . Do not use *I* and *we.*
- **Gender:** Avoid use of gender-specific pronouns for animals, such as *he* or *she*. Use *it* instead. However, in case studies it is acceptable to use the animal's name along with *he* or *she.*
- **Lists:** Avoid mixing sentences and sentence fragments in a bulleted list. If this is unavoidable, all items should end in a period.
- **Second person:** In less technical writing or in how-to sections, use of *you* may make sense and sound less stilted; however, use sparingly.

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Punctuation

- **Brackets:** If needed, use brackets within parentheses ([ ]) rather than parentheses nested within other parentheses.
- **Lists:** In bulleted lists within text passages, do not use commas or semicolons at the end of each item. However, if some or all items in the list are complete sentences, then every item ends in a period.
- **Prefixes/suffixes:** Do not hyphenate prefixes or suffixes (e.g., *nonsurgical*) unless the addition of the prefix or suffix creates a double vowel (e.g., *anti-inflammatory*).
- **Scientific names:** No period after genus when abbreviating (*S aureus*).
- **Serial commas:** TVP and TVN use serial commas; TVB does not.
- **Spacing after punctuation:** Use a single space after the end punctuation of sentences.

Capitalization

- **Colons:** In running text, the word after a colon should be lowercase. If a list of complete sentences follows the colon, create a bulleted list.
- **Lists:** Capitalize the first word of each item in a bulleted list.
- **Titles and headers**
    - Capitalize prepositions or conjunctions 4 letters or longer.
    - Hyphenated words should have both words capitalized (e.g., *Long-Term*). The exception is when the hyphen is for a prefix (e.g., *Anti-inflammatory*).
    - **Time:** Use
- *am* and *pm* with lowercase letters and no periods.
- **URLs:** The text of a URL should be all lowercase. The back slash (/) is not necessary at end of a URL.
- **Small Caps: Use small caps for prefixes such as L-carnitine/L-theanine. If at beginning of sentence or a hed, use small caps for "L-" and capitalize second part of hyphenation.**

References

Reference Formatting

- **Authors:** If 4 or fewer authors, list all. If 5 or more, list the first 3, ending with *et al*.
- **DOI:** A digital object identifier can be used to cite and link to electronic documents. A DOI is guaranteed never to change, so you can use it to link permanently to electronic documents.
- **Elements of a reference:** References should follow this sequence:
    - Author last name and initial(s)
    - Title of article/manuscript
    - Title of book/periodical/etc.
    - Date of publication (day/month/year, if applicable)
    - Volume (issue)
    - Page numbers

Reference Examples

Reference Type	Example
DOI (digital object identifier)	doi:10.1016/j.physletb.2003.10.071.

Journal	Vareia AS, Moore VA, Little SE. Sleep fragmentation. *Sleep* 2002;9(2):116-119.
Book	Kiss G, Radvanyi SZ, Szigeti G. Cryptococcosis infection in the cats. In: Green CE, ed. *Infectious Diseases of the Dog and Cat*. 2nd ed. Philadelphia: Mosby; 1998:399-402.
Conference proceeding	Vareia AS, Moore VA, Little SE. Disease agents in the lone star tick from northeastern Georgia. *AAVP Proc* 2002:44.
Online document	Author(s). Title. web address. Accessed month year. DOI.
Epub	Author(s). Article title. *Journal abbreviation* April 2011 [epub ahead of print].

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In-Text Citations/Reference Numbers

- **Order:** In-text citations of references are numbered consecutively from the beginning of the article and through boxes and tables according to the box or table's first mention in text. For example, in the following excerpt, the first use of references 4 and 5 is in Table 1.

  The half-life of AST is about 22 hours in dogs and 80 minutes in cats.[3] Conditions that can cause an increase in AST activity include those listed in **Table 1**. However, AST is less specific than ALT for liver injury.[6]

- **Placement of the citation in the text/article:** When placing a citation, place the reference number outside all punctuation marks such as periods and commas, including semi-colons
- **Placement for lists:** When a reference refers to all items in a bulleted list, place the reference number inside the colon that introduces the list, not at the end of the last bulleted item.
- When more than 2 references are cited at a given place in the manuscript, use hyphens to join the first and last numbers of a closed series; use commas without space to separate other parts of a multiple citation. Ex. As reported previously,[1,4-7,19,24]

Section 3: Terminology

Abbreviations

General Guidelines

- Use abbreviations sparingly.
- Define abbreviations at first use of the full term in text and in boxes and tables.
- Do not use abbreviations in titles and headers.
- Avoid nonstandard abbreviations (e.g., *BG* for *blood glucose*).
- Do not abbreviate single words (e.g., *US* for *ultrasonography*). However, an exception is routes of administration, which may be abbreviated (e.g., *IV*, *GI*.)

Specific Abbreviation Preferences

- **Journals**

- o JAVMA not *Journal of the American Medical Association*.
        - o JAAHA not *Journal of American Animal Hospital Association*.
- **Measurements**
    - o Use *mL* instead of *cc*.
    - o Use *µg* for microgram instead of *mcg*.
    - o Use *versus* instead of *vs*.
    - o Use Greek symbols for alpha/beta/gamma/etc. . in Garamond Premier font
    - o The symbol for inches is the double prime ("), not double quotation marks (") or straight quotation marks (") or two single quotation marks in a row ('').
- **NAVC:** The word *the* should precede the NAVC (i.e., *the NAVC*, not *NAVC*).
- **Scientific names**
    - o Abbreviate the genus in genus and species names after first mention. However, if the genus is ambiguous, spell out at every mention; for example, during discussions of *Streptococcus* and *Staphylococcus*.
    - o Do not abbreviate species (i.e., *spp*).
- **Titles**
    - o Do not spell out *Diplomate* (e.g., *DACVECC, DACVS*).
    - o Use periods with abbreviations of titles and suffixes, such as *Dr.* (and other forms of address), *Jr.* or *Sr.*
- States
    - o Bylines: Use AMA style (ex. Fla., N.Y., Calif., etc.)
    - o In-text: Spell out full state if one, use postal code if multiple
- OTHER
    - o Do not abbreviate *e-collar*; spell out Elizabethan collar.
    - o United States and U.S. can be used interchangeably.

Abbreviations That May Be Used Without Expansion

- AIDS
- PO, IV, IM, SC (not SQ)
- dL, mL, L, mcL
- mEq/L
- mcg
- mcmol/L
- tsp (teaspoon) and tbsp (tablespoon)

Nomenclature

(Previously titled "Useful Lists")

Anatomy

- **Caudal**: toward the tail
- **Cranial:** toward the head
- **Dorsal:** toward the back
- **Lateral:** toward the side
- **Medial:** toward the midline
- **Ventral:** toward the belly/abdomen

- **Rostral:** toward the oral or nasal region

Breed Names

To verify spelling, use the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*.

- Akita
- Alaskan malamute
- basset hound
- beagle
- bichon frise
- Boston terrier
- Bouvier des Flandres
- boxer
- cardigan Welsh corgi
- cavalier King Charles spaniel
- Chihuahua
- chow chow
- cocker spaniel
- crossbreed
- dachshund
- Dalmatian
- Doberman pinscher
- domestic longhair, domestic shorthair
- English cocker spaniel
- English springer spaniel
- Great Dane
- Irish setter
- Leonberger
- Lhasa apso
- Norwegian elkhound
- Pembroke Welsh corgi
- Papillon
- Pomeranian
- pug
- Rottweiler
- Samoyed
- schnauzer
- Shar-Pei
- Shiba Inu
- Shih Tzu
- Siberian husky
- Vizsla
- West Highland white terrier
- wire-haired fox terrier

Communication Terms

- email, fax, web, Internet

Cancer

- Give the stage in Roman numerals, give the grade in Arabic numerals (e.g., *stage II, grade 2*).

Candidatus

- *Candidatus* is placed before the genus and species name of bacteria that cannot be maintained in a bacteriology culture collection. Names included in the category *Candidatus* are written as follows: *Candidatus* (in italics), the subsequent name(s) in Roman type (with an initial cap for the genus name) and the entire name in quotation marks (e.g., "*Candidatus* Phytoplasma" or "*Candidatus* Phytoplasma allocasuarinae").

ic vs *ical*

- Use the suffix *ic* as opposed to *ical* if possible (i.e., *neurologic* versus *neurological*); however, watch for meaning changes (e.g., *biologic* versus *biological*).

Limb

- **Distal:** away from the body
- **Palmar:** the front footpads
- **Plantar:** the rear footpads
- **Proximal:** toward the body

Medical

- ACE inhibitor (*ACE* should be defined)
- adrenocorticotropic (no *h* after the *p*)
- analog not analogue
- autoregulatory

- beats/min
- breaths/min
- bloodstream
- blood analysis (not *blood work*)
- brainstem
- checkup
- clinical sign (not *symptom* for animals)
- cyclosporine
- disk (not disc) (i.e., *intervertebral disk disease*)
- distention (not *distension*)
- exotics (noun)
- exotic (adjective)
- footpad
- forelimb
- Gram's stain (uppercase *G*) but gram negative, gram positive
- hair coat
- hermaphroditism
- hindlimb
- health care (not *healthcare or health-care*)
- home care (not *homecare*)
- house soiling
- house-train
- IFN-alpha, TNF-alpha
- labwork (Do not use.)
- large breed (no hyphen)
- life span
- litterbox
- mm Hg (space between *mm* and *Hg*)
- nail bed
- nutraceutical
- omega-3, omega-6
- patient (not *case*)
- prescribed (not *placed on*)
- preventive (instead of *preventative*)
- prosthetic (adj)
- prosthetics (meaning the field of using prostheses)
- prosthesis (noun)
- purse-string suture
- radiopaque (one *o*)
- risk for (not *risk of* or *risk from*)
- rule out (verb); rule-out (noun)
- Schirmer's tear test
- seizuring (Do not use.)
- serum biochemical profile (not *biochemistry*)
- stylet (not *stylette*)

- suffer (Do not use.) Use *have* instead.
- tooth resorption (not *resorptive lesions*)
- ultrasound (adjective); ultrasonography (noun)
- veterinary nurse (not *veterinary technician*) This applies to text, titles, and headers.
- vitamin D1
- website
- weight bearing (use *weight-bearing* if adjective)
- well-being
- Wright-Giemsa stain (not *Wright's Giemsa*).
- workup

Ophthalmic

- **Anterior:** to the front of the eye (in horses, *anterior* also means toward the head)

Product Names

- Avoid brand names if possible. If unavoidable, use the following style: Prescription Diet k/d (hillspet.com).
- For generic drug names, use the following style: generic name (tradename, web address).
- If a web address is different from the manufacturer name, list both the manufacturer and web address.
- For Diff Quik and Wright-Giemsa stain, no manufacturer listing is necessary.

University References

- In an author biography, use *University of Xyz.* (Do not include *the* in front of the word *university.*) Do not include dates.

URLs

- Do not use *www.* or *http//* (e.g., *tvpjournal.com*).

Section 4: Measurement and Quantitation

Dosages

- Express dosages like this: 8 mg PO q12h.
- Use *q12h, q24h, q8h,* and *q6h* instead of *bid, sid, tid,* and *qid*; "every 12 hours, every 24 hours", etc.
- All doses should include route of administration (PO, SC, IM, IV).

Numbers

- **Numerals:** In general, use numerals; however, *one* can be used instead of *1* if editor deems necessary. Spell out numeral if begins a sentence.
- **Ordinal numbers:** Spell out first through ninth, then abbreviate 10th, 11th, 12th, etc.). An exception is when referring to intercostal spaces; then use 2nd, 3rd, etc.
- **Decimals:** Only use a decimal point if there are numbers to the right of it; for example, 1 instead of 1.0. Do not use *0* as the last digit to the right of the decimal point; for example, 100 not 100.0 or 100.2 not 100.20.
- **Percentages and temperatures:** Use percent and degree symbols (% and °). Do not spell out *percent* and *degree*. In ranges, repeat the symbol for each number; for example, 99% to 100%; or 95.6°F to 97.1°F.

- **Fractions**: Avoid stacked fractions, such as ½. In running text, spell out fractions (e.g., one-half of patients) or use decimal format (e.g., 3.5 days).
- **Range:** When using range, mean, and similar terms, use *range of 3 to 5 days.*
- **Use of *to* or an en dash between numbers:** Use *to* between numbers in a range unless the numbers are in a box/table/figure; in those instances, use an en dash.

Section 5: Technical Information

Special Features

Figures, Boxes, and Tables
- **Definitions**
  - *Boxes* contain running text or bulleted lists and sometimes their own figures.
  - *Tables* are matrices of rows and columns.
  - *Figures* may be diagrams, charts, photographs, or illustrations.
- References to figures, boxes, and tables in text are bolded and initial capped. The word *and* or *to* between figure numbers is bold.
- All figures, boxes, and tables should be numbered and called out in text.
- All boxes and tables should have titles, and all figures should have captions.
- For micrographs, provide magnification when possible (e.g., magnification, 200×).
- For figure credits, follow this format: Courtesy of John Smith, DVM.
- Footnote definitions should be closed around the = sign (e.g., cPL=canine pancreas-specific lipase) and be in order of appearance.
- Glossaries: Do not use colon after the word being defined and capitalize the first word in the definition.

Sidebars
- Sidebars do not need to be numbered; however, they should be called out in text.

Formatting
- Use Word automatic bulleting/numbering for lists except reference lists.