# AP Stylebook F‑N Editing and Publishing, 2/7/19

# F:

* family names: I wrote my mother a letter. I wrote Mother a letter.
* farther (distance), further (conceptually)
* faze; It didn’t faze me when I went through a phase.
* FBI acceptable in all references (look for others e.g. CIA)
* female (adjective) rather than woman (appositive noun); female voters
* Ferris wheel
* fiance, fiancee (note French origins, but no accents)
* figuratively, literally. Not He literally flew over the crowd.
* flack (slang for press agent but OK in Hollywood stories, e.g.), flak = criticism (flak gun)
* flair (talent), flare (n. is a warning flame, v. is to burn quickly)
* flaunt (If you’ve got it, flaunt it.), flout (disregard the law)
* flyer (handbills, aviators); Philadelphia Flyers; “take a flier” (a recent change in AP)
* fluorescent (florescent is botanical, as in a florescence, flourescent not a word. Exaggerate the pronunciation here).
* food. Special stylebook section. Food Lover’s Companion useful. Caps for most geographical origins or proper nouns, e.g. Swiss cheese, English muffin, also Caesar salad, French toast, but cheddar cheese, french fries, graham crackers. Caps for brand names such as Tabasco, Velveeta, Coke.
* forego (go be*fore*, a foregone conclusion), forgo (do without)
* foreign legislative bodies: Caps when referring to a specific one: In Ottawa, a law was passed in Parliament.
* foreign words: Usually a style at each publication. Italicize, for us if it’s not known in English. Resume, e.g. OK as is, and no accents (it’s actually résumé), jalapeno.
* forward (not forwards, as in rule to use simpler form e.g. afterward)
* fracking: acceptable “with brief explanation” (or use “hydraulic fracturing”)
* fractions: spell out with hyphen. One-third. If greater than one use figures 1½
* freelance (v. and adj.), freelancer (n.) [change in AP]
* French Canadian. Note use of African American writer at AA‑S, to be consistent with this, and Latin American in AP. “Hyphenates” are looked down on.
* Frisbee
* FTP acceptable on second reference
* full time: He works full time. It’s a full-time job.
* fundraiser, fundraising campaign, fundraising is easy [also a change]. Also true of full-time job, etc.

# G:

* gamut, gantlet, gauntlet: Watch for cliches here. He ran the gantlet (a flogging ordeal). She threw down the gauntlet (a glove, a challenge). Her tastes ran the gamut (a range).
* gay: Now generally accepted as reference for homosexuals, usually male. Note that it’s now style most places to refer to sexual orientation rather than sexual preference giving the benefit of the doubt to those who say it’s genetic.
* geographic names: Each publication usually makes a policy on when to change. For example, Burma is now Myanmar for AP.
* gibe, jibe: Gibe means taunt as verb or noun (His gibes went unnoticed). Jibe is a sailing term but also means to agree: Their stories didn’t jibe (not jive).
* GIF; acceptable if it’s explained in the copy
* giga-: 1 billion units. Used in computers as gigabytes (Recall that megabyte is 1,024 kilobytes, kilobyte is 1,024 bytes).
* Google (n.) (not in the trademark list; maybe they don’t care) Googling, Googled. Was in separate Social Media section, now back.
* governmental bodies: Caps in U.S. Department of Agriculture. Reverse formations (AP calls them flip-flopped) also capped: Agriculture Department.
* governor: Gov. Tom Wolf, D-Pa., does not have a strong handshake.
* GPS acceptable in all references
* grammar, not grammer
* gray not grey, but greyhound. British stories (e.g. from Reuters news agency) will spell it grey. Watch for other Briticisms.
* guerrilla: Not guerilla (or gorilla)

**H:**

* half: More familiar words e.g. halfback get no hyphen. Generally AP uses no hyphen for many of these prefixes, but you still need to check Webster’s.
* harass: Not harrass. But recall “embarrass.”
* Hawaii: don’t abbreviate, no diacritical mark
* her: Do not use in reference to countries or ships. Use “it” instead.
* heroin: the drug, not heroine, the female hero. Can be embarrassing error.
* his: AP used to say it’s OK to use as an indefinite pronoun. But better to write around it (put it in the plural) use his or her (not AP-approved) if not awkward, or *perhaps* the singular “their.”
* holidays, holy days: Generally capitalize, including the word “day”: Valentine’s Day, Mother’s Day.
* homicide (legally, any slaying or killing), murder (premeditated homicide with violence), manslaughter (not premeditated); say someone was killed or slain, not murdered.
* hopefully: AP finally relented on this to mean I hope, or It is hoped that
* host: Don’t use as a verb: NOT She will host the event. Watch these sorts of words (verbification, making a verb out of a noun , also input, gift, etc.) especially in headlines. May be forced to use at some times there, but avoid if possible, unless you work for *Variety*.

**I:**

* imply, infer: I infer from your remarks. You imply.
* in-: generally no hyphen (indoor); -in: generally a hyphen (write-in).
* initials: Periods, no space as in J.K. Rowling
* internet: no longer capped. See also. e-mail, the web, etc.
* inoculate: Not innoculate
* iPhone, iPod, iPad, but IPod to start a sentence
* its, it’s: You know by now. Remember, it’s hers, not her’s, his, not hi’s, yours not your’s (possessives, no apostrophe).

**J:**

* JavaScript
* Jell-O: A trademark, note the capital O
* JPEG, JPG
* judgment: not judgement (rare case in which AP differs from common spelling)
* Jr., Sr.: No comma before it: Martin Luther King Jr.

**K:**

* ketchup, not catsup (see Food Guidelines)
* kindergarten: Not kindergarden (remember it’s a German word)
* Kleenex: a trademark
* Kmart: It’s not up to the publication to rewrite company or brand names.

**L:**

* last: Avoid use meaning the most recent. Use most recent (Their most recent album) or past in referring to a period of time (The past two weeks have been busy). Otherwise it can give the connotation of “final” (The last two years were eventful for him: i.e., he’s dead).
* lay, lie. Generally, lay is the action word (transitive), lie is passive (intransitive).Watch past tense: He lay (has lain) out there all day. He laid (has laid) the book down already.
* lectern: the item of furniture that speakers stand behind (but they’re on a podium, rostrum or in a pulpit; note common root in podiatrist)
* legislative titles: Use abbreviated forms before word: Sen. Patrick Toomey. None on second reference. With party affiliation, it’s Sen. Bob Casey, D–Pa., said …
* liaison (French origin).
* likable: Not likeable. There are several of these e.g. judgment without the “e.”
* like: to connect to an object: Bill eats like a horse. as: To connect to a phrase: Bill eats as much as possible.
* like- and -like: hyphen as prefix when it means similar: like-minded; generally no hyphen as suffix businesslike.
* loath (adj.); loathe (v.); She is loath to leave. He loathes bureaucracy.
* local: Often redundant.
* Los Angeles: Try to avoid LA, at least on first reference. More or less OK in features.
* lose (v.) loose (adj.) [not in AP]

**M:**

* magazines: Caps, no quotes (for all periodicals; some publications use italics)
* majority, plurality: Majority is >50 percent; plurality is largest total but <50 percent (e.g. when more than two candidates). Take singular verb form: The majority is in favor.
* mantel (shelf), mantle (cloak; also the Earth’s mantle part of the crust)
* master’s degree, not masters’
* memento(s), not momento(es)
* mid-: Guess what? No hyphen unless proper noun follows: mid-Atlantic (also trans-Atlantic)
* middle initials: Papers differ. Use generally for locals and for those known to use them John F. Kennedy, but not for anyone else.
* midnight: not 12 midnight or 12 a.m.
* military titles: Caps, abbreviate many before names: Adm. John Perry, Maj. Mary Smith; [these don’t follow the six-plus-letters rule]
* millions, billions: Use numbers: less than 5 million. (But “about a billion.”). Decimals preferred: India has over 1.3 billion people.
* minuscule: not miniscule
* months: Caps, abbreviate longer ones if a date given, even if no year: Jan.9; Sept. 23, 2099. But January 2099. Don’t abbreviate if five letters or fewer.
* Mount: Spell out (Mount Airy, not Mt.) Also Fort (not Ft. Worth)
* mph, mpg. Always use figures The car crawled along at 9 mph. [But is it The old truck got only nine mpg.]
* Muhammad: founder of Islam also Muhammad Ali.
* Muslim: A change from old AP (Moslem) for followers of Islam.

**N:**

* names: last name on second reference (Mary Malone … Malone); Q: When is that a problem?
* navy: Caps when referring to the U.S. Navy, the Navy (if known to be referring to U.S.); but the Canadian navy.
* newspaper names: Capitalize “The” if the paper does (check the nameplate). I read in The Philadelphia Inquirer, but the Los Angeles Times. No “ ” or italics (many publications italicize, as with composition titles).
* newsstand (think: news stand)
* numerals: A big one. Recall exceptions to the rule that you spell out those below 10 (or 10th, i.e. for ordinals). Spell out if number begins a sentence. Use No. 2 in copy for the phrase “number two.” Hyphens after y in forty-three (as you would write a check). Phone number is now 800-555-1212. See telephone numbers entry.
* nylon [formerly Nylon, made by DuPont]