



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Harpers Ferry Center

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## 2021 HFC Editorial Style Guide

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The writer-editors at Harpers Ferry Center (HFC) maintain this guide for HFC staff, park and program staff, contractors, and others who prepare NPS interpretive media. It aims to minimize distractions caused by variations in spelling, capitalization, hyphenation, etc. While not intended to impose a strict house style, it includes recommended usages and style decisions developed in the interest of servicewide consistency.

This edition also honors HFC's 50th anniversary in 2020. The HFC writer-editors reviewed every entry and added more than 30 new terms—over half from the national reckoning of racial injustice. Our advisors are listed on the next page; staff from across the NPS also reviewed a draft of this document.

New or substantially revised entries are marked with a plus sign:

**+ ice age**

Entries that could change before the next edition are marked with an asterisk or star:

**\* Indigenous**

### Remember your audience

When you produce NPS interpretive media, your audience is usually the general public. This includes people with and without disabilities and with varying education, backgrounds, and experience. Keep language and sentence structure as simple as possible. Use shorter and/or common words when meanings are interchangeable. Apply Plain Language principles ([www.plainlanguage.gov](http://www.plainlanguage.gov)), which are designed to make all government publications more understandable.

Examples of simple changes that make a big difference:

hours *not* current hours, hours of operation  
many *not* numerous  
get *not* obtain  
at *not* located at

### How decisions are made

When we have a question about editorial style or word usage, we follow this hierarchy:

1. HFC Editorial Style Guide
2. *The Chicago Manual of Style*
3. *Associated Press Stylebook*
4. GPO Style Manual

For spelling we use *The American Heritage Dictionary*, with some exceptions listed in this guide.

### Ask us!

We welcome your questions. You can submit questions and suggestions in the Common Learning Portal, HFC Publications Group ([mylearning.nps.gov/groups/nps-publications](https://mylearning.nps.gov/groups/nps-publications)), or send them to [hfc\\_editorial\\_style\\_guide@nps.gov](mailto:hfc_editorial_style_guide@nps.gov).

### Your own editorial style

We recommend you develop a style sheet for items specific to your park or office.

### Recommended references

The links to these resources are current as of February 1, 2021. Check the online version of the style guide for updated links: [go.nps.gov/hfc-style-guide](https://www.nps.gov/hfc-style-guide).

*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 5th edition

Also available as an app and online at [ahdictionary.com](https://ahdictionary.com)

*Associated Press (AP) Stylebook*, 53rd edition

Updated annually; get one and stick with it for a few years. Also available online by subscription at [www.apstylebook.com](https://www.apstylebook.com)

*The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS)*, 17th edition

Also available online by subscription at [www.chicagomanualofstyle.org](https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org)

Denver Service Center Editorial Style Guide, 2014

Use for technical and management publications like environmental assessments, policy guidelines, etc.

[www.nps.gov/orgs/1804/upload/DSC\\_EditingStyleGuide\\_2014\\_AF.pdf](https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1804/upload/DSC_EditingStyleGuide_2014_AF.pdf)

Editorial Style Guide for Park Science and Natural Resource Year in Review, 2006.

Good for technical and scientific styles and usage not included in CMOS or the HFC style guide. [Irma.nps.gov](https://irma.nps.gov); Report NPS/NRPC/NRR-2006/004.

HFC Editorial Style Guide

[www.nps.gov/subjects/hfc/hfc-editorial-style-guide.htm](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/hfc/hfc-editorial-style-guide.htm)

Also part of the Interpretive Media Toolkit on the Common Learning Portal: [mylearning.nps.gov/library-resources/interpretive-media-toolkit](https://mylearning.nps.gov/library-resources/interpretive-media-toolkit).

HFC Spanish Editorial Style Guide

[www.nps.gov/subjects/hfc/upload/Spanish-HFC-Style-Guide-2015-1.pdf](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/hfc/upload/Spanish-HFC-Style-Guide-2015-1.pdf)

Interpretive Media Toolkit

NPS source for resources and information, such as accessibility guidelines, for producing interpretive media.

[mylearning.nps.gov/library-resources/interpretive-media-toolkit](https://mylearning.nps.gov/library-resources/interpretive-media-toolkit)

Plain Language Guidelines

[www.plainlanguage.gov](https://www.plainlanguage.gov)

“Terminology and the Mass Incarceration of Japanese Americans during WWII,” 2021

NPS Japanese American Confinement Sites (JACS) Advisory Council. Available upon request from

[MANZ\\_Superintendent@nps.gov](mailto:MANZ_Superintendent@nps.gov)

US Board on Geographic Names (BGN)

[geonames.usgs.gov](https://geonames.usgs.gov)

*US Government Publishing Office Style Manual: An official guide to the form and style of Federal Government publishing*, 2016 (Also known as GPO Style Manual.) Available as a pdf from [gpo.gov](https://gpo.gov) or for purchase at [bookstore.gpo.gov](https://bookstore.gpo.gov).

### NPS Advisors

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## A

**a or an** Use *a* before words beginning with a consonant sound, including *y* and *w*, no matter how the word is spelled. Use *an* before words beginning with a vowel sound.

a National Park Service regulation	an NPS regulation
a historic site	an honor
a hoary marmot	an heir

**abandoned** Avoid when writing about Native American dwellings. *See* ruin.

Ancestral Puebloan people left their homes in Chaco Canyon about 800 years ago.

**+ aboriginal** Not recommended for NPS interpretive media, unless in a quotation or anthropological context. *See* First Nations, Indigenous, Native American, tribes.

**access** Avoid as a verb for “reach” or “get to.” *See* accessible.

You can get to Prince William Forest Park from the south via I-95.

**accessibility** Most new or revised Unigrid brochures include an accessibility statement. *See* service animals.

We strive to make facilities, services, and programs accessible to all. For information go to a visitor center, ask a ranger, call, or check the park website.

**accessible** Use this adjective when referring to facilities, trails, campsites, services, and more that people with disabilities can use. Do not use when giving directions. *See* access, disabled, hearing loss, wheelchair, wheelchair-accessible.

The national seashore has accessible shelters for waterfowl hunters in wheelchairs.

**acknowledgment** *Not* acknowledgement.

**acronym** An acronym is an initialism that is a pronounceable word, such as NATO or AIDS. Spell out the name or term at first use with acronym in parentheses. *See* alpha code, initialism, NPS.

The United States and Russia completed the START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) requirements.

### Act, act of Congress

Adding these properties will require an act of Congress.

*but* The Wilderness Act was signed into law in September 1964.

**A.D.** *See* CE, eras.

**addresses** Spell out street, road, way, and avenue in running text; abbreviate in a stacked address (each item on a separate line). Whenever possible, place address (and phone number) at end of paragraph. Write NW, SW, NE, SE. *See* state names.

20120 Cypress Ave.  
The White House is on Pennsylvania Avenue.  
16th Street NW

**administrative statement format** *See* National Park Service identity statement.

**adverbs** Flat adverbs, which were out of favor for many years, are back. HFC does not use flat adverbs.

Drive safely *preferred to* Drive safe.  
Go slowly *preferred to* Go slow.

**African American** Noun or adjective, no hyphen. *See* Black, Black American.

**agencywide**

**+ aircraft, remotely piloted** Preferred over drones or unmanned aircraft, but OK to use drone to clarify, like in the standard brochure statement.

Using remotely piloted aircraft like drones is prohibited.

***Air Force One, Marine One, etc.*** “One” indicates any military aircraft carrying the US president. Italicize. *See* ship.

**+ Alaska Native** *Not* Alaskan Native.

**alpha code** The four-letter code for a park. Do not use in running text in publications for the general public.

**am** No periods, small letters (no capitals), space between number and am. *See* time of day.

**America** Avoid. *See* United States.

**America the Beautiful National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass** *See* National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass.

**American** Can refer to people living in other countries of North and South America. Use cautiously when referring to heritage or cultural identity.

**+ American Indian** Use if park and its associated tribes request, or if you are writing about federal law where American Indian has a specific legal meaning and standing. Otherwise use Native American if you are referring collectively to indigenous people of the United States. *Note:* The former NPS American Indian Liaison Office was renamed in 2020 to the Office of Native American Affairs. *See* Indigenous, Native American, tribal names.

**+ American Revolution, American Revolutionary War** Two different events. The former includes the latter, which occurred 1775–83. In text, use the full title of the period or the war first; “Revolution” acceptable thereafter.

**American Revolution affiliations** Lowercase patriot, loyalist, regulars, or tory (unless capitalized in quoted material). Capitalize Whig and Tory as members of political parties; Continental Army troops; Provincial regiments; British Army. Use park staff’s preference for capitalizing these terms. *Note:* Use patriot and loyalist cautiously; they can refer to people on either side. Consider using revolutionary and royalist instead.

**Anasazi** Avoid, or clarify at first mention, *but* use the preference of specific groups or parks. *See* ancestral Puebloan people.

These ancestral Puebloan people, often called Anasazi, used ladders made of ponderosa pine to reach the canyon’s ledges.

**ancestral Puebloan people** Predecessors of today’s Pueblo and Hopi people. *See* Anasazi.

**and, &** HFC does not use the ampersand (&) in Unigrid brochures unless it is part of a formal or trademarked name or title.

**angler** A person who fishes with hook and line. Avoid fisherman. *See* fisher.

**+\* Anglo** Multiple definitions; some objectionable. Avoid unless in a quotation or used in a historic context. *See* Hispanic, Latina, White, etc.

**app** Lowercase unless part of a proper name like iTunes App Store. *See* iPhone, smartphone.  
Use the NPS National Mall app to learn about memorials in our Nation’s Capital.

**archeology** Preferred over archaeology. The preferred spelling is widely accepted and is used throughout the NPS in interpretive and scientific publications and media, office names, etc.

**arms (small)** Firearms that can be carried in the hand, like muskets, pistols, rifles, carbines, and shotguns. *See* artillery. Remember your audience: The average person may not know this term, so explain or name the weapon if you can.

**Army, army** Capitalize when referring to an official, organized group and if it is part of a proper name; lowercase if used as a generic term.

Geronimo resisted the US Army for 16 years.

The federal government ordered army scouts to stand 24-hour watch.

The Army of the Cumberland was one of the principal US forces.

**+ Arrowhead** Capitalize when referring to the trademarked National Park Service emblem.

The Arrowhead appears on page one of this style guide.

In 1951, NPS architect Herbert Maier began working with the idea of an arrowhead as the NPS emblem.

**artillery** Large-caliber weapons like cannon, howitzers, and missile launchers, usually supported on a carriage and operated by crews. The average person may not know this term, so explain or name the weapon if you can. *See* arms (small). *Note:* When size is a descriptor, HFC style is to hyphenate.

The Napoleon 12-pounder cannon was a popular artillery piece in the US and Confederate armies.

*See* the Japanese 14-cm coastal defense gun at the Piti Gun Unit.

**ATV** All-terrain vehicle; no need to spell out. *See* ORV for more details about using correct acronyms for the various off-road vehicles.

**audiovisual, AV** Avoid. *See* film, movie, multimedia, program.

## B

**backcountry**

**bald cypress**

**+\* BBPOC** Abbreviation for Black, Brown, People of Color. Do not use; instead use BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color). *See* BIPOC, Indigenous, POC.

**B.C.** *See* BCE, eras.

**BCE** Before common era; replaces B.C. Clarify at first mention. BCE and CE are preferred because they are not based on a religion. *See* BP (before present), CE (common era), dates, eras.

At Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site the earliest known people date from 11,000 to 6,000 BCE (before common era).

**biannual, biennial** Use biannual to mean twice a year (like semiannual). Use biennial to mean every two years.

**big game** Do not use. Use wildlife, animals, or be specific. *See* game, wildlife.

**biological soil crust** Formerly called cryptobiotic crust.

**Biosphere Reserve** Also International Biosphere Reserve. Capitalize this United Nations designation for areas that belong to an international network of reserves. *See* World Heritage Site.

Mammoth Cave National Park, part of a major ecosystem that protects the diversity of life, was named an International Biosphere Reserve in 1990.

**+\* BIPOC** Abbreviation for Black, Indigenous, People of Color. Use instead of BBPOC and POC because it is more inclusive. Spell out in first use. *See* BBPOC, Indigenous, POC.

**birch bark, birchbark** Two words if a noun; one word if an adjective.

You can see a birchbark storage basket at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore.

Ojibwe taught French explorers how to build canoes from birch bark.

**birder, birding** *Not* birdwatcher or birdwatching.

Gateway National Recreation Area is a popular spot for birding, especially during the spring and fall migrations.

**bison** Commonly called buffalo. If writing bison, clarify at first mention.

Bison, commonly called buffalo, graze on this prairie.

**+\* Black** Capitalize when related to culture or identity.

Esteban de Dorantes, a Black man, is one of the most fascinating figures of the Coronado Expedition.

By 1895 South Carolina had a new state constitution that disenfranchised Black voters.

In 1950 Black Americans made up about half of Dallas County's voting-age population.

In 1950 Blacks made up about half of the voting-age population.

*but* She wore a black and green dress.

**+\* Black American** OK to use instead of African American.

**black-eyed Susan**

**boat launch** Preferred over boat ramp (ramps are paved; boat launches include paved and unpaved entrances).

Be consistent in park signage.

**boundary, boundaries** A *boundary* encloses a single, contiguous area. *Boundaries* enclose park areas that are not connected to each other; they may be separated by towns, sea channels, even states.

Today you can trace the paths of people seeking gold within the boundaries of Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park.

The California condor is just one of the endangered species that is protected within the park boundary.

**+ BP** Before present, "present" being 1950 CE. May use for geologic or archeological time, especially in a timeline. Clarify at first mention. *See* BCE, CE, eras.

12,000–10,000 BP (before present): Paleo-Indians quarry novaculite in the Ouachita Mountains for tools and weapons.

**braille** Lowercase.

## C

**ca.** Avoid writing “ca.” or “circa” in running text. Rewrite or use “about” *but* acceptable to use abbreviation in short caption or credit lines.

The pearlware bowl found at Ninety Six National Historic Site dates to about 1810.  
Clara Barton ca. 1856; photo by Mathew Brady (*left*).

**cacti** Plural of cactus.

### **campsite, campstove**

**Canada goose** *Not* Canadian goose.

**cannon** Cannon can be both singular and plural (same word, no s). Cannons is correct but used less often. Be consistent; use local preference. *See* artillery.

Many of the fort’s cannon were the type used on ships.

**capital, capitol** Spelled with an *a*—the city where a seat of government is located; do not capitalize except when referring to the Nation’s Capital. Spelled with an *o*—the building where the business of government takes place. Capitalize when referring to the US Capitol in Washington, DC.

Annapolis is the capital of Maryland.  
The Virginia capitol is modeled after an ancient Roman temple.  
Washington, DC, is the Nation’s Capital.  
They stood on the steps of the US Capitol.  
Capital Beltway *but* beltway

**capitalization** Avoid unnecessary capitals. Animal and plant names are lowercase unless they contain a proper name. Nouns are capitalized if part of a formal name, lowercase if they stand alone. If a term is plural following more than one proper name, it is lowercase (style guides differ). *See* geographic regions, specific words. For Spanish words, consult the HFC Spanish Editorial Style Guide and *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

Douglas fir, Kentucky warbler  
sea otter, great blue heron  
Acadia National Park *but* the park  
American colonies  
the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers  
on the Oregon and California trails  
Cypress Street *but* Cypress and Larch streets  
De Soto *but* Hernando de Soto  
New York City *but* the city of New York  
Wisconsin Ice Age *but* during the ice age  
Apache Visitor Center *but* at the visitor center  
US Constitution, the Constitution  
Constitution of the State of South Carolina, the state constitution  
US government *but* federal government

### **caprock**

**captions** Captions end with a period, labels usually do not. Be consistent within a document.

Major Ferguson addresses his troops before the battle.  
Pinelands tree frog

**CE** Common era; replaces A.D. Clarify at first mention. *See* BCE, BP, dates, eras.

These dwellings were built about 950 CE (common era).

**centennial, Centennial** Lowercase when used alone or as an adjective *but* capitalize the official name of the event “National Park Service Centennial” or “NPS Centennial” when used as a proper noun or adjective.

The National Park Service Centennial was celebrated in 2016.  
 All parks, partners, and programs participated in the centennial.  
 Park rangers developed interpretive programs for the NPS Centennial.

**century** Use actual dates—the 1500s *not* the 16th century.  
 Since the mid-1800s the West had held out the promise of gold and boundless opportunity.  
*not* Since the mid-19th century the West had held out the promise . . . .

**chief justice** Lowercase unless used before a proper name.  
 William Howard Taft, 27th US president, later became the 10th chief justice of the United States.

**chronology or timeline format** Capitalize first word and end with period—even if entry is a sentence fragment.  
 Write in present tense. Abbreviate words and eliminate articles when possible without introducing confusion.  
 Separate the year and content using your office’s preferred style. Unigrids use the style below.  
**1883** Organizes Black student school strike, first such response in United States to unequal treatment.

**circa** See *ca.*

**citations** HFC usually does not cite references in park brochures. Consult *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

### **civil rights movement**

The Selma to Montgomery march in 1965 was a climactic event of the modern civil rights movement.

**+\* Civil War terminology** See capitalization and individual entries such as enslaved, slavery.

Civil War, US Civil War: Include US in the name if writing about international conflicts or in context of other countries’ civil wars. Otherwise use Civil War.

Confederacy: Alternative for Confederate States of America; capitalize in that context.

George Meade finally launched an offensive that marked the beginning of the end of the Confederacy.

Confederate States of America: Spell out at first use; OK to use Confederacy thereafter. See CSA below.

Confederates: Members of the Confederate Army

For the Confederates, the triumph helped establish Lee and his army as the Confederacy’s greatest hope for ultimate victory.

**+ Contraband**: Avoid except in historical references or direct quotations, such as in brochures for NPS sites that had “contraband camps.” When referring to people, use “formerly enslaved” or “freed people” (which is broader), or in second and later instances, “ex-slaves.”

CSA: Abbreviation for Confederate States Army, not for Confederated States of America. Most commonly used after a person’s name.

Lt. Gen. John Bell Hood, CSA, had a reputation for bravery and aggressiveness.

Federals: Members of the US Army. See Union, Unionist, United States Army below.

Federal army, forces, troops: See United States Army below.

North: Use sparingly to refer to the US government during the Civil War; use United States of America or Federal government.

Rebel: Do not use as a synonym for Confederate soldiers except in quoted material. See Confederate States of America, CSA, Federal above.

A Confederate soldier *not* A rebel soldier

South: Use sparingly to refer to the 11 states that seceded; use Confederate States of America (formal name), the Confederacy, or the states in rebellion.

Yankee: Do not use as a synonym for US soldiers except in quoted material.

Union: Avoid when referring to the United States. See United States Army below.

Unionist: Do not use as a synonym for US soldiers except in quoted material.

United States Army, US Army: First reference should be United States Army or US Army. OK to use Federals, Federal thereafter.

### **Cold War**



**colon** Use sparingly. A colon introduces something closely related to the sentence preceding the colon. Use a full sentence before the colon. Capitalize the first word of a sentence following a colon; do not capitalize the first word of a list following a colon.

The president promised results: “My new program, the War on Poverty, will help families in America.”

**commander in chief** No hyphens. Lowercase unless used before a proper name.

**commas** Separate three or more items with commas (a style known as the serial or Oxford comma). Use a comma before a conjunction that joins two independent clauses (and, but, or, as). Unless needed for clarity, omit comma after short introductory phrases.

Our dessert choices are pie, cake, and ice cream.

Alfred lost the car keys, and the family is helping him search every cranny.

Around him the rolling hills and woods of the battlefield sprawl for miles.

**compass directions** Lowercase; capitalize specific geographic regions, but try to limit capitals. *See* east, north, south, west, geographic regions, capitalization.

**compound words** Aim to eliminate hyphens once a compound word is in common use. Generally, follow *The American Heritage Dictionary*. *See* over two dozen individual entries in this guide *and* compound words as modifiers.

**compound words as modifiers** Use a hyphen when combining two or more words to modify a noun, *except* when the first word ends in *ly*.

rust-resistant alloy *but* federally funded project

When two or more hyphenated compounds have a common basic element, retain all the hyphens.

4- to 5-ton trucks

8-, 10-, and 16-foot boards

moss- and ivy-covered walls

**concessioner**

**Confederacy, Confederate, Confederate States of America** *See* Civil War terminology.

**Congressional Medal of Honor** *See* Medal of Honor.

**convince that** *But* persuade to.

**+ contraband** *See* Civil War terminology.

**coordinates** *See* GPS coordinates.

**copyright** Government publications are subject to copyright. Copyright usage has precise, legal regulations. Don't assume anything. Learn the basics at US Copyright Office website at [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov); information also in the Interpretive Media Toolkit. *See* credit lines.

**+ cougar** Also mountain lion, panther, puma. Use park preference.

**+ coronavirus, COVID-19** One word, no hyphen, not capitalized. COVID-19 is also acceptable reference to coronavirus 2019, which is the disease caused by the new coronavirus. Do not shorten to COVID.

**credit lines in publications** HFC credits images used in Unigrid brochures and other publications, including those by NPS employees. We may edit a provider's preferred credit. All caps, small size, simple style. *See* copyright. Credits usually take one of these forms:

1. Creator of photo or artwork retains all rights:

© KATHLEEN NORRIS COOK

*Note:* This applies to Creative Commons images because HFC contacts the photographer directly for permission.

2. Owner retains all rights:  
© THE GRANGER COLLECTION
3. Stock house supplied photo:  
© iStock / LAURENCE PARENT *or* iSTOCK / © LAURENCE PARENT
4. NPS commissioned photo or artwork but creator retains all rights:  
NPS / © LOUIS GLANZMAN
5. NPS commissioned photo or artwork and owns all rights:  
NPS / KEITH ROCCO
6. NPS employee made it as part of their duties:  
NPS / JANE SMITH
7. NPS employee takes a photo or creates art on their own time with their own equipment:  
© JANE SMITH
8. NPS owns photo or artwork, which is in its collection, but original maker is unknown:  
NPS
9. NPS owns photo or artwork, which is in its collection, and original maker is known:  
NPS / MARY JONES
10. Institution allows use of a photo or artwork that they own:  
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
  - a. Artist or photographer has historical importance: Use name in caption (preferred) or in credit:  
Edward Curtis photographed these Navajo riding east into Canyon de Chelly in 1904. (NATIONAL ARCHIVES  
NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY / GEORGE HAYWARD)
  - b. If contemporary photographer of an artifact or artwork is known:  
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION / CHIP CLARK
11. Individual other than the creator owns the photograph or artwork and donates the use of the image:  
COURTESY BOB SLEDD
12. Multiple credits. Separate descriptor and credit with em dash; separate credits with semicolon.  
BALD EAGLE—NPS; NAVAJO RUG—© LAURENCE PARENT; PORTRAIT—SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION  
LEFT—VALENTINE MUSEUM; CENTER—NATIONAL ARCHIVES; RIGHT—LIBRARY OF CONGRESS  
ALL IMAGES—NPS UNLESS OTHERWISE CREDITED

**credit lines in waysides and other exhibits** The park and the exhibit designer should decide where to place credits—with each image or together in a separate acknowledgment panel or notebook. Follow the style for brochures, above.

1. When the credits are on the exhibit to fulfill a requirement of the image's use rights license and it has no other interpretive value, use a font size smaller than the smallest interpretive text.
2. If the credit includes other information or has interpretive value (like crediting a famous photographer), treat it more like a caption.
3. If the credits are placed on a separate acknowledgment panel, the font should be at least as large as the smallest interpretive text. They also should be repeated in a credit notebook containing details about the images, which is available at the information desk.

### **crosscountry**

**cryptobiotic crust** *See* biological soil crust.

**CSA** *See* Civil War terminology.

## **D**

**Dall sheep** Preferred; Dall's sheep, variant.

### **dashes**

1. Em dash—Longer than en dash or hyphen, often called simply “the dash.” Indicates a sudden change in thought or adds emphasis. *Do not* put a space before or after the em dash.  
Kings Mountain—named for an early settler and not for King George III—is a rocky spur of the Blue Ridge.
2. En dash—Longer than a hyphen and shorter than an em dash. Means “to,” “up to and including,” or “through.” *Do not* put a space before or after the en dash.

1924–2005 *but* 1924–25

8 am–5 pm

pp. 38–45

**Note:** Watch parallel construction; don’t mix and match written words and the en dash.

The visitor center is closed from October 15 to April 1.

*or* The visitor center is closed October 15–April 1.

*not* The visitor center is closed from October 15–April 1.

You may rent canoes between 9 am and 2 pm.

*or* You may rent canoes 9 am–2 pm.

*not* You may rent canoes between 9 am–2 pm.

**dates** Write dates in this order: month, day, year. Use a comma before and after the year in sentences with full dates; no comma if using only month and year in a sentence. No apostrophe in plural dates. *See* BCE, BP, CE, century, eras.

On December 7, 1941, Japanese bombers struck Pearl Harbor.

Early in February 1861, delegates met in Montgomery, Alabama.

1900s *not* 1900’s

1950s and 1960s *not* 1950’s and ‘60’s

**daylight saving time** *Not* daylight savings time.

The Navajo Reservation observes daylight saving time, but the rest of Arizona does not.

**day use, day-use** Two words if a noun; hyphenated if an adjective.

**degree** *See* temperature.

**departmentwide**

**Depression** *See* Great Depression.

**+ directions to reader** Unigrids put these inside parentheses, which are styled as follows:

1. If sentence is set in roman, the parentheses are roman but the directions are italicized.  
The core of L’Enfant’s 1791 plan is the triangle created by the Capitol, the White House, and the Mall (*see map above*).
2. If sentence is set in italics, both the parentheses and directions are in roman.  
*The coat of the American black bear can be black, brown, or auburn* (left).
3. Parentheses in a parenthetical phrase should be in roman even if the letters are italicized.  
(*The map shows the range of mammoths in North America.*)

**disabled** Put the person before the disability; write persons or people with disabilities. *Do not* write handicapped. *See* accessible, hearing loss, wheelchair.

The Longstocking Trail is wheelchair-accessible.

The C&O Canal National Historical Park has large-print brochures for people with low or limited vision.

**discover, discoverers** Avoid in reference to lands already populated; rewrite in a way that includes multiple points of view. Explore, chart, venture, scout are acceptable synonyms.

**disfranchise, disenfranchise** Either is acceptable.

**Douglas fir, Douglas-fir** The hyphenated word is scientifically accurate because the species is not a true fir, *but* the unhyphenated name is more commonly used and OK if park prefers.

**drone** *See* aircraft, remotely piloted.

**during** Use “in” rather than “during,” if possible.

## E

**Earth, earth** Earth is our planet; earth is soil or dirt.

**east, eastern** Lowercase compass directions; minimize use of capital letters except for specific regions or popular place names. Eastern Shore of Maryland; East Coast. *See* geographic regions.

**+ ellipsis** Indicates the omission of one or more words from a quoted passage. Use glyphs for ellipsis when available, which ensures that screen readers interpret them correctly. If not available, use three evenly spaced dots. To indicate deleted material in paragraphs, use the preceding sentence’s punctuation, followed by one space, then the ellipsis. The three dots must appear together on the same line.

**email addresses** Do not use capital letters unless address is case-sensitive.

**em dash, en dash** *See* dashes, hyphens.

**emergency statement** Park brochures use this style: bold, no colon, no period.

**Emergencies call 911**

**+ emigrate, emigrant** People moving from somewhere, usually permanently. *See* immigrant.

Many US emigrants traveled the Oregon Trail to reach western territories.

Some emigrants leave behind family and businesses.

They emigrated from the east.

**en route**

**Engelmann spruce**

**\* enslaved** noun or adjective. Enslaved acknowledges the dignity of a human being; slave is a non-person, property. In text, first use “enslaved.” Use slave sparingly thereafter or if in quoted material. *See* enslaver, slaveholder.

The first ship carrying “20 and odd” enslaved Africans arrived at Point Comfort in Virginia, where Fort Monroe is today.

Nick Toogood was said to be a spiritual leader among the enslaved at Hampton.

**+ enslaver** *Not* slaveholder, slave master, slave owner.

**ensure, insure** Ensure means to make certain; insure means to provide for insurance.

Careful planning can help ensure an enjoyable crosscountry hike.

The policy insures her life.

**eras** Use BCE (before common era) and CE (common era) instead of B.C. or A.D. *See* BCE, BP, CE, dates.

The first people to settle permanently in the Tonto Basin arrived between 100 and 600 CE.

**European American** *Not* Euro-American. No hyphen even if a modifier. Be specific when possible.

European Americans began mining . . .

European American settlers moved into Native American territory.

Sir Francis Drake, English mariner

Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, Portuguese explorer  
French missionaries and settlers from the East Coast

**explorers** Refers to people venturing into territory unknown to them. Avoid “discoverers” unless that is truly the case. In certain cases, the term “travelers” may be appropriate. *See discoverers.*

## F

**farther, further** Farther refers to physical distance, further to an extension of time or quantity.

Lydia walked farther than Mark along Cumberland Island’s shore.  
Thomas will look further into the disappearance of the office laptop.

### **federal, Federal**

1. Capitalize:  
in Civil War context (Federal soldier, Federal forces, Federal fort, Federal government)  
the architectural style (Federal-style architecture of the late 1700s)  
when part of a name (Federal Express, the Federal Trade Commission)
2. Lowercase: federal government, federal law, federal property, federal funds.

**Federalist** Federalist Party; Federalist Papers.

**fewer, less** In general use *fewer* for numbers or individual items that can be counted; *less* for quantity and bulk.  
Fewer birds came to the feeder because Yuriko put out less food.

**film** Interchangeable with movie. Avoid audiovisual, presentation. *See multimedia, program.*

**firearms regulations** Unigrid brochures usually include this statement because federal, state, and local laws apply and can vary.  
For firearms regulations check the park website.

### **firepit**

### **firewood**

**first-come, first-served** No need to write “are on a first-come, first-served basis.” Keep it short, be direct.  
Wolverine Campground is open year-round, first-come, first-served.

**first lady** Lowercase unless used before a proper name.

**First Nation, First Nations** Indigenous people who are neither Inuit (people of the Canadian Arctic) nor Métis (descendants of First Nation people who married Europeans). Often used in the plural in the collective sense, as in a program for First Nations youth. These terms are widely used in Canada, but use in the United States is limited to Métis whose homelands include northwest Minnesota, North Dakota, and other northern states. *See aboriginal, American Indian, Indigenous, Native American.*

**fish, fishes** Fish (no *es*) can be singular or plural. Fishes (plural) is correct but used less often; it usually refers to more than one species.

We went fishing for brook trout and caught six fish.  
Ichthyology is the study of fishes.  
The Smithsonian Institution’s fish collection, about four million specimens, is the largest in the world.

**fisher** Acceptable replacement for “fisherman” or reword to say how people are taking what kind of fish. *See* angler, fisherman, gender-neutral language.

We went net-fishing for salmon.

Tribes on the Columbia River caught salmon with nets.

Those people are trawling for shrimp.

**fisherman** Avoid. *See* fisher, angler, gender-neutral language.

## flash flood

## footwear, footgear

**foreign words** Italicize foreign words or phrases not in the dictionary; enclose translation in quotes or parentheses, depending on context. *See* The American Heritage Dictionary *and* The Chicago Manual of Style.

The word she wanted was *pêcher* (to sin) *not* pêcher (to fish).

The Kansas state motto is *ad astra per aspera*, commonly translated “a rough road leads to the stars.”

**Forest Service** *See* US Forest Service.

**four-wheel drive, 4-wheel drive, 4WD** Four-wheel drive is preferred in interpretive text that modifies a trail or vehicle; on a map use the 4WD symbol or label as 4-wheel drive. *See* ORV, OSV.

Text: Most unpaved roads to the summit require four-wheel drive.

*but* Most unpaved roads to the summit require a four-wheel-drive vehicle.

Map: Unpaved road. 4-wheel drive only.

## + fractions

- Amounts less than one: Spell out if in narrative text; use figures if in concise text, lists, or charts.
  - By 1870 one-fourth of the population of Nebraska was foreign born.
  - The Garden of Eden Tour is  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile. Natural Entrance and Fairgrounds tours are each  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile.
  - Roundtrip hike:  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile
- All fractions: Hyphenate if acting as a modifier.
  - The steep two-mile hike takes about one hour roundtrip.
  - Take the  $2\frac{1}{2}$ -mile-long auto tour *but* Take the auto tour, which is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours long.
- Use glyph or symbol if available. Otherwise, try to stack figures in the fraction:  $\frac{5}{8}$  instead of 5/8.
  - Roundtrip hike:  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile
- When using figures, no space between whole number and fraction.
  - The beetle is  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches long.
  - Thickness of outer shell:  $1\frac{1}{4}$  in.

**freed, free** In the context of slavery, free refers to people never enslaved, freed refers to formerly enslaved people. *See* enslaved, freedmen, slave/slavery.

**+ freedmen** A historical term for men, or sometimes men, women, and children, freed from enslavement. It reflects the gender biases of 1800s language. Except in quotations and proper names, substitute “freedpeople” when it doesn’t change the meaning. *See* enslaved, freed, slave/slavery.

The US government established the Freedmen’s Bureau to help formerly enslaved African Americans.

Freedpeople gathered on St. Helena Island at the Brick Church.

**+ French and Indian War** Use to mean the portion of the Seven Years’ War (1756–63) fought in the British colonies. Option to include parenthetical reference to the global war. *See* Seven Years’ War.

**fresh water, freshwater** Two words if a noun; one word if an adjective. *See* salt water.

**frontcountry** Avoid if possible; it is jargon.

## G

**game** Do not use when referring to animals. Say wildlife, animals, or be specific.

**+\* gender-neutral language** Use where possible. See fisher; fisherman; Latino, Latina, Latinx; names, personal; she. Common examples include:

craftsman, maker, *not* craftsman  
 founders *not* founding fathers  
 Representative *not* Congressman, Congresswoman  
 workforce *not* manpower  
 staffed *not* manned

*Note:* Plural pronouns are acceptable for singular subjects, but rewriting is preferable.

Everyone will get their chance to see the cave.  
*not* Everyone will get his/her chance to see the cave.  
*better* Every visitor will get a chance to see the cave.

**genus, species** See scientific names.

**geographic names** As a US government agency, the National Park Service must use federally recognized place names in the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS). The US Board on Geographic Names (BGN) standardizes names of places, features, and areas in the 50 states and areas under US sovereignty, and for features in US territorial waters. See [geonames.usgs.gov](http://geonames.usgs.gov)

1. Variant name: Often historical or local names and misspellings; if using a variant, show the federally recognized name *first* and the variant *second*; the variant must be clearly distinguished as a variant (for example, put the variant name in parentheses or different type size or typeface).
2. Historical names: Place names can be used in a historical context; watch out for names that use apostrophes and names that may be one or two words.
  - Sierra Nevada *not* Sierra Nevada Mountains
  - The Narrows *not* Verrazano Narrows (the water channel)
  - but* the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge crosses The Narrows.
  - The Battle of Wilson’s Creek took place along Wilsons Creek.
  - The courthouse in the village of Appomattox Court House was built in 1846.

**geographic regions** Minimize use of capital letters except for specific regions or popular place names.

Northern California; Southern Appalachians; Bay Area; Upper Peninsula;  
 Pacific Northwest; Southwest; West Coast; East Coast; Midwest; Gulf Coast.  
*but* the southern part of Louisiana; north of the national monument; etc.

***Giardia lamblia*** The organism; may be abbreviated *G. lamblia*.

**giardiasis** The illness caused by the *Giardia lamblia* organism.

**Gila monster**

**GPS coordinates** Use decimal measurements, not minutes, etc. Add to park address in Unigrids if park requests and confirms the street address. Place after park website URL.

[www.nps.gov/hfc](http://www.nps.gov/hfc); Lat. 39.323265, Long. -77.741109

**gray** The color *but* greyhound.

**Great Depression** Preferred. Use “Great Depression of the 1930s” if further clarification needed.

**groundhog**

**groundwater**

**guidebook**

**guide dogs** Do not use. *See* service animals.

**guided hikes** *See* self-guiding.

**gull** *Not* seagull.

**guns** Can refer to anything from pistols to cannon, depending on context. Be specific. *See* arms (small), artillery.

**H**

**+ handicapped** Do not use. *See* accessible, disabled.

**Harpers Ferry Center** *Not* the Harpers Ferry Center (no article).

**Hawai`i, island of** Use okina (glottal stop). *See* Hawaiian fonts.

**Hawaii, state of** Do not use okina (glottal stop). *See* geographic names, Hawaiian fonts.

**Hawaiian fonts** NPS Rawlinson (the font used here) has the vowels with Hawaiian macrons. Regular Frutiger Lt Std does not; use HFrutiger Lt Std. NPS employees with VPN access can download this font from [npgallery.nps.gov](http://npgallery.nps.gov).

**Hawaiian words** Avoid adding apostrophe and s ('s) to Hawaiian words to form possessives. You must use Hawaiian fonts to spell Hawaiian words with macrons over vowels (ā, ē, ī, ō, ū) and okina (glottal stops) (‘) in certain cases. These appear in several official park names and brochures. *See* Hawaiian fonts.

The island of Pele *not* Pele’s island.

The visitor center for the USS Arizona Memorial is a 45-minute drive from Waikīkī.

The trail will lead you past the Kaloko-Honokōhau and `Aimakapā fishponds and the `A`ōpio fishtrap.

**+ hearing impaired** Use “hearing loss” instead.

**hearing loss** Or hard of hearing. *Not* hearing impaired. *See* disabled.

Audio guides and neckloops are available for people with hearing loss.

**highcountry**



**highway** Use official designation (as noted on maps); list official designation first and local name second in parentheses. For state route abbreviations use US postal codes. Abbreviate: Hwy.

I-75 (Alligator Alley)	NE 7 or NE Rt. 7 <i>not</i> State Route 7
I-75 exit 2	MO Hwy. 19
US 1 <i>not</i> US Highway 1	39063 US Hwy. 95
US 1 (Highway 1)	

**+\* Hispanic** Used by the federal government since the 1970s. Current definition: “a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race.” Currently interchangeable with Latino in government publications, but Latinx is an emerging alternative to both terms. Consider your audience and seek park guidance when deciding which term to use. *See* Latino, Latina, Latinx.

**historic** Important, notable, or significant in history; usually refers to famous people, events, or sites. *See* historical.

The Old Courthouse was the site of the historic Dred Scott trials in the 1840s and 1850s.  
FDR’s historic declaration on December 8, 1941, launched the United States into World War II.  
Historic preservation is an important way for us to transmit our understanding of the past to future generations.

**historical** Refers to whatever existed in the past; also refers to anything concerned with history or the study of the past. *See* historic.

The ranger gave a historical lecture on Western trails at the campfire ring.  
Jamie loves historical novels.

**holidays** Use actual dates, not names, *but* Thanksgiving.

The park is closed Thanksgiving, December 25, and January 1.

**hookups** Common campground feature; no adjectives or hyphen needed.

**hyphens** *See* compound words, compound words as modifiers, dashes, word division; or consult *The Chicago Manual of Style*, which has a hyphenation table.

## I

**ice age** Lowercase if using as a general term; there was more than one “ice age.”

Columbian mammoths lived during the Pleistocene Epoch, a time also called the ice ages.  
The Ice Age National Scenic Trail is in Wisconsin.

**icefield**

**image** Avoid in text and credits. Be specific—photograph, illustration, painting, etc.

**image credits** *See* credits.

**+ immigrate, immigrant** For people moving to somewhere, usually permanently. *See* emigrate.

US missionaries immigrated to Oregon during the 1800s.  
The new immigrants brought a different kind of agriculture.

**in, within** Recommend “in” rather than “within” when they can be used interchangeably.

**Indian** *See* American Indian, First Nation, Native American.

**+\* Indigenous** Emerging as a common, collective term for native people whose ancestors populated North America before European contact. Capitalize when related to culture or identity. Consider your audience and seek park guidance. *See* aboriginal, American Indian, BIPOC, native, Native American, tribal names.

**initialism** Abbreviation formed from initials of a name, title, or long term that is read as a series of letters: BBC, FDR, NPS. Avoid bureaucratic use of obscure initialisms. *See* acronym, ATV, NPS, ORV.

**initials** Franklin D. Roosevelt; FDR and JFK (no periods and no spaces); *but* W.E.B. Du Bois, P.D. James (periods, no spaces between initials); *but* Harry S Truman or Harry S. Truman—both are correct, be consistent.

**insure** *See* ensure.

**International Biosphere Reserve** *See* Biosphere Reserve.

**international visitors** *Not* foreign visitors.

**internet** Do not capitalize.

**internet address** Do not use capital letters unless address is case-sensitive. Avoid breaking at the end of a line; if you must, break in a logical place and do not add a hyphen. Include [www](http://www.google.com) but avoid <http://> unless necessary to open the webpage. *See* URL, webpage.

[www.google.com](http://www.google.com); [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)

For information about the National Wilderness Preservation System and wilderness, visit [www.wilderness.net](http://www.wilderness.net).

**interpretive, interpreter** Define or avoid. Do not assume the average person knows these terms. Use “park staff” instead.

Historical interpreters in period dress . . .

Park staff in period dress . . .

**invasive species** Do not use alien or foreign (these have negative connotations and can offend resident immigrants and international visitors). *See* [www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov](http://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov).

Invasive plants like faya and kahili ginger displace areas of Hawaiian forests.

**iPhone, iPod, iPad** Brand names beginning with a lowercase letter retain the lowercase even at the beginning of a sentence or heading. *See* app, smartphone.

**italics** *See* foreign words, quotations, measurements, ships, and more.

## JK

**+ Japanese American** No hyphen.

### **+ Japanese American WWII incarceration terminology**

*Note:* The US government used euphemisms to disguise the harsh reality of its actions toward Japanese Americans during WWII. Do not use them except in historical quotations or an official name. Consult “Terminology and the Mass Incarceration of Japanese Americans during WWII,” 2021.

assembly center: Euphemism used by the US government during WWII for temporary detention centers that held Japanese Americans before sending them to incarceration centers. Use temporary detention center.

camp: Used by many Japanese Americans to refer to the incarceration centers. Use only in quoted material or in context after establishing it refers to an incarceration center.

concentration camp: Occasionally used historically to refer to incarceration centers. Be careful using this sensitive term.

confinement site: Refers to any of the WWII Japanese American incarceration sites.

evacuate, evacuation, evacuee: Euphemisms used by the US government during WWII for forcibly removing Japanese Americans from the West Coast and Alaska. Use incarceration or forced removal. *See* relocate.

forced removal: Accurate term for the exclusion of Japanese Americans from the West Coast and Alaska. *See* evacuate, relocate.

incarcerate, incarceration, incarceration center or site, incarcerated: Preferred terms to describe the unjust confinement of Japanese Americans during WWII.

intern, internee, internment: Accurate when referring to the Department of Justice or US Army legally detaining resident aliens of warring nations. Inaccurate when referring to the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans during WWII; instead, use incarceration. *Note:* Do not confuse internment with interment, which means burying the dead.

Japanese American: Most-accepted term to refer to people of Japanese ancestry in the United States, regardless of citizenship status.

Nikkei: Refers to people of Japanese ancestry residing outside Japan, regardless of generation or citizenship status.

relocate, relocation, relocation center: Euphemisms used by the US government during WWII for forcibly removing Japanese Americans from the West Coast and Alaska. Use incarceration or forced removal.

**+ Jet Ski** Avoid, but if used, must capitalize because it is a registered trademark. *See* personal watercraft, registration mark.

**+ Jews, Jewish** OK to use in appropriate context. Capitalize. Do not use “the Jews,” which can imply a monolithic group with an agenda.

Touro Synagogue, one of the most historically significant Jewish buildings in America, was designated a National Historic Site in 1946.

**job titles** *See* capitalization, gender-neutral language, president, ranger, representative, senator, superintendent.

**john boat, jon boat** A small flatbottomed boat with square ends used to navigate shallow rivers. Either spelling is correct; use park preference.

**Joshua tree** *But* Joshua Tree National Park.

**Jr., Sr., III** Abbreviations like these are part of a person’s full name. *Do not* use a comma before Jr. or Sr. unless it is required as part of the park’s official name. If you do use a comma before Jr. or Sr.—and the sentence continues—follow the abbreviation with another comma.

The park is Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site. *But* Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was born, lived, worked, worshipped, and is buried here.

James Earl Carter, Jr., 39th president of the United States, ... brought about change, compassion, and a belief that a government is only as good as its people.

**judgment** *Not* judgement.

**Kemp’s ridley sea turtle**

**kiva** Hopi word now in common use. Do not italicize.

## L

**+\* Latino, Latina, Latinx** In Spanish, Latino includes male and female, and is used interchangeably with Hispanic in government publications. Latinx (lah-TEEN-ex) is emerging as a gender-neutral term. Consider your audience and seek park guidance when deciding which term to use. *See* gender-neutral language, Hispanic.

**\* LGBT, LGBTQ** Acceptable abbreviations for “lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender” and “queer” or “questioning.” Seek park guidance before using. Spell out at first use.

**lifeguard** An expert swimmer on duty to watch other swimmers; lifeguarded is acceptable adjective.

Seasonal lifeguard services are provided at Herring Cove.

Cape Cod National Seashore has lifeguard-protected beaches in summer.

Use lifeguarded beaches when possible.

**life jacket** OK to use instead of PFD if park prefers. *See* PFD.

**lifesaving [station]** One word unless it is a historic or proper name or if local signage requires otherwise.

By the 1890s lifesaving stations were located every 3.5 miles along the New Jersey coast.

The Old Harbor Life-Saving Station at Cape Cod was built in 1897–98.

**-like** Spell solid when used as a suffix unless the word ends with the letter “l.”

birdlike, warlike, leaflike *but* tail-like, hill-like

**livestock** *But* pack animals.

**-log or -logue** Catalog, dialog, *but* monologue.

**logos** HFC generally does not use agency, partner, or social media logos in Unigrid brochures. Some exceptions, like the National Park Foundation logo that is mandated by WASO.

**loyalist** *See* American Revolution affiliations.

## M

**map labels** See geographic names.

**map symbols, map terminology** Be precise when choosing terminology for map symbols. Be aware of subtle differences—gas station (sells gas, may sell snacks) and service station (sells gas and does repairs, may sell snacks). Download map symbols at [www.nps.gov/carto/app/#\\*/maps/symbols](http://www.nps.gov/carto/app/#*/maps/symbols).

**measurements in text** Use English measure; spell out units of measure, but OK to abbreviate in charts, bullets. Abbreviations are lowercase and without punctuation. See numbers.

The shark weighed 32 pounds and was 80 inches long.

New hike: 5 mi (8.1 km)

1. Metric is used in text only if circumstances call for it—such as scientific usage, parks with a high number of international visitors, or a specific request by a park.
2. In running text, the English measure is first, the metric is abbreviated and in parentheses. Set metric in lowercase roman, use one space between the figure and the metric unit. Periods are not used with the metric abbreviation. Abbreviated symbol is always singular.

At 20,320 feet (6,194 m) Mount McKinley is North America's highest peak.

**measurements on maps and charts** Name of topographic feature in italics; measurements in roman; no comma between thousands; no space between numeral and symbol; no period after the abbreviation; and no comma between thousands.

*Mount Rainier*

14411ft

4392m

**Medal of Honor** The official title for the highest honor awarded by the president of the United States to members of the US armed forces. *Not* the *Congressional* Medal of Honor.

**media** This plural noun takes a plural verb.

**metric** See measurements.

**Mexican War** See US-Mexican War.

**milepost** Lowercase. Abbreviation: mp.

**military ranks** Do not use “Brevet” in connection with any rank unless there is a reason for it and the term can be explained. See military ranks in brochures *and* military ranks in wayside exhibits.

### Army

[5 Stars] General of the Army

[4 Stars] Gen. (General)

[3 Stars] Lt. Gen. (Lieutenant)

[2 Stars] Maj. Gen. (Major)

[1 Star] Brig. Gen. (Brigadier)

Col. (Colonel)

Lt. Col.

Maj.

Capt.

1st Lt. (First Lieutenant)

2nd Lt.

### Navy equivalent

Fleet Admiral

Adm. (Admiral)

Vice Adm.

Rear Adm. [upper]

Rear Adm. [lower]

Com. (Commodore)

Capt. (Captain)

Cmdr. (Commander)

Lt. Cmdr.

Lt.

Lt. jg (Junior Grade)

Ens. (Ensign)

**military ranks in brochures** Abbreviate rank when used with complete name, unless park requests it be spelled out. Spell out rank if used with last name only; in subsequent references, OK to use last name without rank. *See* military ranks *and* military ranks in wayside exhibits.

Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower; General Eisenhower; Eisenhower

**military ranks in wayside exhibits** Spell out rank; subsequently OK to abbreviate or use last name without rank. When quoting someone use this formula: name, rank, military unit. *See* military ranks *and* military ranks in brochures.

Fort Rosecrans was named for Major General William S. Rosecrans. His troops called Rosecrans “Old Rosy.”

**military terms** Avoid words or expressions unfamiliar to the general public, or define.

troops *or* fort *not* garrison

stationed *not* garrisoned

troop *or* soldiers *not* dragoon *or* regulars

**mission statement** The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The National Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.

**money** Nine million dollars; \$35 million; \$35,000,000; \$35; \$1.

**More Information format** Standard format for Unigrid brochures: Stack information on separate lines for easier reading. If a park name and designation needs two lines, keep proper name on first line and designation on second line. Abbreviate road designations. Do not add email or GPS coordinates unless a park requests; both should be on the park website. The NPS identity statement usually follows the park contact information. *See* GPS coordinates, National Park Service identity statement, PO Box, social media.

**More Information**

Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania

National Military Park

120 Chatham Ln.

Fredericksburg, VA 22405-2508

540-373-6122

[www.nps.gov/frsp](http://www.nps.gov/frsp)

**more than** *See* over.

**mountain lion** Also cougar, panther, puma. Use park preference.

**mountaintop**

**movie** Interchangeable with film. Avoid audiovisual, presentation. *See* multimedia, program.

**mph** Abbreviation for miles per hour. No periods. Acceptable in all references.

**+ multimedia** Use if a program combines several media. Be specific if you can. *See* film, movie, program.

Tonight’s multimedia program includes film clips, musical performance, and spoken word.

**mya** Million years ago. Spell out at first use.

## N

**+\* names, personal** Be aware of gender bias, stereotypes, and changing preferences. Discuss options with the park and then be consistent. *See* surnames; titles, personal.

1. Avoid naming men by their last names and women by their first names, especially in the same publication or set of exhibits.
2. If titles are used for one gender, use them for both.
3. For people who have names in two languages, use the preferred name first with the second in parentheses.
4. For transgender people, use the name and gender that they use, not those given or assigned at birth. Consider carefully whether there is legitimate need to use their previous name/name given at birth. If so, use once in parentheses.

**nation** Do not capitalize *except* when referring to the Nation's Capital. *See* capital.

**national park, national parks, national monuments** Lowercase unless part of a proper name. *See* capitalization.

Many national parks charge entrance fees.  
Congaree National Park is in South Carolina.  
Cabrillo and Lava Beds national monuments are in California.

**National Park Service** *Not* "the Park Service" (to avoid confusing with state and county parks).

**National Park Service identity statement** (Standard statement in Unigrid brochures, but make sure the park in question actually is an NPS unit before including this statement.) This may be shortened. It usually follows the park contact information. *See* More Information format.

North Cascades is one of over 400 parks in the National Park System. To learn more about national parks and National Park Service programs in America's communities, visit [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).  
*or* To learn more about national parks, visit [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).  
*or* Learn about national parks at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).

**National Park System** *But* "the system."

**National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass** This is sufficient; it is not necessary to preface with America the Beautiful.

**National Register of Historic Places, National Historic Landmark** Landmarks are listed in (*not* on) the national register (*not* registry).

Obsidian Cliff is listed in the National Register of Historic Places; it was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1996.

**national seashore** *But* Fire Island National Seashore.

### nationwide

**+\* native** Consider capitalizing when related to culture or identity; OK to leave lowercase. Be consistent within the publication.

Components of Native and Spanish cultures can be found throughout the missions.  
Drought, disease, and increasing competition with other tribes led some native people to enter the missions.

**+ Native American** Preferred over American Indian when collectively referring to the indigenous people of the United States. Otherwise use the correct, specific tribal names. *See* aboriginal, American Indian, Indigenous, tribal name.

**+ Native Hawaiian** *Not* Hawaiian Native.

**+ neckloops**

**9/11** Acceptable in all references to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States.  
*Also* Sept. 11, 2001.

**nonprofit** Refers to an organization with 501(c)3 status from the IRS. *Not* synonymous with not-for-profit; not all not-for-profit organizations have 501(c)3 status.

+ **nonnative**

**North (the)** *See* Civil War terminology.

**north, northern** Lowercase compass directions; minimize use of capital letters except for specific regions or popular place names. *See* geographic regions.

Acadia National Park is northeast of Boston.  
 California's North Coast.

**NPS** Takes the article "the" if used as a noun. No article if used as an adjective. *See* acronym, initialism.

The Friends Foundation funds programs that are beyond the financial capacity of the NPS.  
 Parks acquire new acreage in accordance with applicable law and NPS policy.

## numbers

- In narrative text, spell out cardinal numbers one through nine; use figures for 10 or greater; spell out at the beginning of a sentence (regardless of amount), or rewrite. Sometimes OK to vary this rule, depending on context. Be consistent in the publication. *See* fractions, measurements in text, measurements on maps, percent.
 

Yesterday two mules slid off Bright Angel Trail.  
 The three hikers passed by eight overlooks and 15 waterfalls.  
*or* The three hikers passed by 8 overlooks and 15 waterfalls.  
 Forty-five species of birds are found in the park.
- In hike descriptions and other concise text, use figures regardless of amount.
 

The hike is 3½ miles roundtrip.  
 Begin your driving tour 5 miles south of the visitor center.
- Use commas within numbers greater than 999 (but not within dates). *See* dates.
 

Over 1,000 bats live in Black Hole Cave.  
 Northern Plains Indians lived along the Upper Missouri River for over 9,000 years.  
 The smallpox epidemic of 1837 killed thousands of Northern Plains Indians.
- Spell out ordinal numbers less than ten, except use figures when in one sentence with larger ordinals.
 

Lake Chelan is the 3rd deepest lake in the United States and the 26th deepest in the world.

## O

**one way, one-way** Two words if noun; hyphenated if an adjective. *Never* 1-way.

Cedar River Gorge is a one-way loop road that winds through old-growth forest.  
 You have more than one way to reach the campground.

+ **OHV** Off-highway vehicle. Use ORV or park preference. *See* ORV.

**ORV** Off-road vehicle; no need to spell out. *See* ATV, OSV and always check with park law enforcement or equivalent.

**OSV** Over sand vehicle. Avoid. Use ORV unless park requests it, and then use park's spelling with or without a space.

The Over Sand Vehicle (OSV) zone at Assateague National Seashore provides an adventurous getaway.  
 Oversand vehicle operation at Fire Island National Season is regulated.



**over** Traditionally “over” referred to spatial relationships and “more than” referred to quantity and numerals. Today, “over” is preferred for both unless variety in wording is needed (*see last example*).

Over 1,100 men died in the battle.

Trailers over 30 feet long are prohibited on Corkscrew Pass.

More than 800 brown pelicans flew over Anacapa Island.

## P

**pack animals** *But* livestock.

### + Paleo-Indian

**panther** *See* cougar, mountain lion.

**park** Refers to any unit in the National Park System.

1. Capitalize only when part of full name; lowercase when used alone.
  - Dry Tortugas National Park lies at the western end of the Florida Keys.
  - The national park needs your support to help protect the manatee.
2. Do not use to describe park staff activities and policies.
  - The park staff clears the roads in spring.
  - not* The park clears the roads in spring.

**park area in more than one state** In the black title banner of NPS graphic identity publications, list states in alphabetical order separated by a space, forward slash, and a space.

Cumberland Gap National Historical Park Kentucky / Tennessee / Virginia

**park boundary** *See* boundary, boundaries.

**+ park name in translated NPS media** *See* HFC Spanish Style Guide, sections 7.37, 7.43, and 7.45.

1. Unigrid brochures and other park documents: Use the full legislated name in English in the black band or cover and title pages. Do not translate. Exception: If the second language uses a different character set, the translated park name may appear like a subtitle beneath the English title.
2. In running text, use the full legislated park name in English (not a translation) the first time; OK to follow with a translation in parentheses and to shorten thereafter.
  - White Sands National Monument conserva más de la mitad de este oasis.
3. In address blocks, like the “More Information” section of most Unigrid brochures, use the full English name and do not translate the mailing address.

### parklands

**park’s** Do not use this possessive (apostrophe and s) when writing about the park website, policies, or facilities.

Check the park website.

The park firearms policy is posted in the visitor center.

### parkwide

**patriot** *See* American Revolution affiliations.

**people, persons** Traditionally *persons* was used for small groups (three persons) and *people* with large groups (hundreds of people). Today it is acceptable to use *people* for small groups. *See* The Chicago Manual of Style.

Three people signed up for Spanish classes at Saguaro National Park.

**percent** Spell out “percent” in text (one space between numeral and spelled-out word); use % symbol in scientific writing and in tables (no space between numeral and symbol).

Visitation to the hot springs increased this year by 25 percent.

**personal watercraft** In text spell out at first mention with PWC in parentheses; on map legends use symbol and spell out. *See* Jet Ski.

Personal watercraft (PWC) are considered vessels; you are responsible for knowing and observing regulations governing their use.

**PFD** Personal flotation device; spell out at first mention with PFD in parentheses. *See* life jacket.

Always wear a personal flotation device (PFD) when boating on Lake Roosevelt.

**photo credits** *See* credits.

**pinyon** Preferred; variant: piñon.

**pit house**

**pm** No periods, small letters (no capitals), space between number and pm. *See* time of day.

**PO Box** Abbreviation for Post Office Box. No periods, space only between O and Box.

**+\* POC** Abbreviation for People of Color. Do not use; instead use BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color). *See* BBPOC, BIPOC, Indigenous.

**poisonous** Preferred for all plants and animals, even those that are venomous. *See* venomous.

Poisonous snakes live in the canyon. Watch where you put your hands and feet.

**possessive** Singular nouns take 's (apostrophe and s) unless final consonant is "s." Be consistent. *See* Hawaiian words, ships, *and* The Chicago Manual of Style.

the cat's tail

Grant Kohrs' longhorns roamed the open range.

1. If a plural noun ends in s, add only an apostrophe.

The employees' entrance is on the left.

Cannon fire set the officers' quarters ablaze.

2. Plural nouns not ending in s, add 's (apostrophe and s).

women's rights

alumni's feelings

**postcard**

**presentation** Avoid. *See* film, movie, multimedia, program.

**presidency**

Franklin D. Roosevelt assumed the presidency at a time of great social unrest.

**President, president** Lowercase unless used before a proper name.

President Clinton visited Harpers Ferry National Historical Park on Earth Day, April 1998.

Lincoln was president during the Civil War.

**presidential** Lowercase unless used as part of a proper name.

Rosa Gonzales received the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

**prickly pear cactus** *See* cacti.

**program** Be specific if you can. Avoid audiovisual, presentation. *See* film, movie, multimedia.

The campfire program will be this evening.

The ranger-led program begins at noon.

**+ projectile point** Archeological term for all points used on weapons. Avoid or define; be specific if possible. Archeologists found this arrowhead (*at right*) during a site survey. Projectile points for spears and arrows are shaped out of bone or other material.

**pronghorn** Pronghorn is not a true antelope; clarify at first mention with “often called antelope.”

**protecting park features** The standard Unigrid statement is below; elaborate as necessary. See resource.

Federal laws protect all natural and cultural features in the park.

**PWC** See Jet Ski, personal watercraft.

## Q

**quotation marks** The period and comma always go within the quotation marks. The dash, semicolon, question mark, and exclamation mark go within the quotation marks if they apply directly to the quoted material; they go outside if they apply to the whole sentence. *Note:* Hanging punctuation is used by some designers; be consistent in your publication or program.

Gayle asked, “When does the next tour begin?”

Do you agree with the saying, “All is fair in love and war”?

Avoid overusing quotation marks to emphasize words and phrases. Acceptable uses include:

1. Familiar word used in an unfamiliar way  
Press the “Submit” button.
2. Translation of a foreign phrase (which is italicized, not in quotes); See foreign words  
The Kansas state motto is *ad astra per aspera*, commonly translated to “a rough road leads to the stars.”
3. Ironic use of word  
The “debate” turned into a free-for-all.
4. Nickname inserted into the identification of a person  
Sen. Henry M. “Scoop” Jackson  
*but* Babe Ruth, Dizzy Dean, Satchel Paige
5. Unfamiliar word or expression  
Trappers were after “soft gold”—the pelts of fur-bearing animals.
6. Unfamiliar word, on first use but not thereafter  
Broadcast frequencies are measured in “kilohertz,” but do you know what kilohertz means?

**quotations in exhibits** Avoid italics. Use quotation marks instead, especially for quotations of more than a few words. When italics are used, be sure the italic font is easy to read. Quotes can also be distinguished from other text by using a different font, a different weight of the same font, a different color, or some other graphic treatment.

**quotations in publications** Always provide attribution (examples below) and date, if known, and source, if verified and the layout has room.

1. Capitalize first word if quotation is a complete sentence or introduced with a colon or comma.  
Lincoln said, “Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak out and remove all doubt.”
2. Do not capitalize first word if quotation is fragmentary and placed in running text (without comma or colon).  
Private Joseph Plumb Martin said troops at Valley Forge were “in danger of perishing.”
3. When the quotation serves as a graphic element, quotation marks are unnecessary if the font, style, and weight distinguish it visually. An em dash before the attribution is optional.  
*A curious ensemble of wonderful features.* John Wesley Powell, 1869

## R

**racist language** Do not use. See Civil War, enslaved, freedmen, and other entries.

**rainforest** Preferred; rain forest, variant.

**ranger, park ranger** *But* Ranger Baker.

**rebel** *See* Civil War terminology.

**red-tailed hawk**

**+ registration mark** ® Not legally required and increases reading complexity. *See* trademark.

**relic** Acceptable *but* consider specific words like artifact, fossil, shard. *See* relict.

**+ relict** Avoid; often mistakenly used for “relic.” In park media, relict usually refers to a species isolated by geologic or climatic change. Synonyms, depending on context, include survivor, remnant, fragment, legacy.  
As the climate warmed, fragments of this forest survived in the higher elevations.

**representative** Lowercase unless used before a proper name. OK to abbreviate before a full name *but* spell out before a surname. *See* gender-neutral language, initials, job titles, military ranks, surnames.  
Representative Pinkerton began his first term in 1909.  
Rep. Grant Pinkerton encouraged President Taft to sign the Arizona Statehood Act in 1912.  
*but* The representative from Naboo is out of order.

**resource, resource protection** Use sparingly and in context when writing for the general public. Many people know only its primary meaning: “A material source of wealth . . . that occurs in a natural state and has economic value.”

Kivas are archeological features.  
*not* Kivas are archeological resources.

**Revolutionary War** *See* American Revolution, American Revolutionary War.

**Rio Grande** Rio Grande *River* is redundant; *río* means river in Spanish. OK to clarify word at first mention.  
The Rio Grande (river) in Big Bend National Park is a designated National Wild and Scenic River.

**rivers** Columbia River *but* Columbia and Snake rivers.

**+ rock art** *See* rock markings.

**+ rock markings** Appropriate general term for pictographs and petroglyphs, but using the specific terms is best. Do not use “rock art” unless the park’s associated tribes approve its use; it has negative connotations for some tribes.

**roundtrip**

**ruin** Acceptable *but* consider a specific word like dwelling, site, structure unless used in a specific name. *See* abandoned.

Ancestral Puebloan people built these dwellings over 1,000 years ago.  
The 2.5-mile trail to White House Ruin is on the canyon’s South Rim Drive.

**RV** Abbreviation for recreational vehicle; no need to spell out.

## S

**salt marsh, saltmarsh** Two words if a noun; one word if an adjective.

**salt water, saltwater** Two words if a noun; one word if an adjective. *See* fresh water.

**+ scientific names** Avoid, generally. Italicize and capitalize genus; italicize and lowercase species—even in a capitalized title. Capitalize phylum, class, order, family names, and set in roman.

A now-extinct member of the beech family, *Fagopsis longifolia*, was common.

**seagulls** Incorrect. *See* gull.

**sea life, sea star** *But* seabird, seaside, starfish.

**self-guiding** *Not* self-guided.

**senator** Lowercase unless used before a proper name. Spell out before a surname; OK to abbreviate before a full name. *See* capitalization, job titles, titles.

Senator Truman began his second term in early 1941.  
Sen. John Quincy Adams supported Thomas Jefferson in the Louisiana Purchase.

**service animals** Preferred term for guide or signal animals. *See* accessibility, guide dog.

Service animals are allowed in the campground and on trails, but pets are not.

## servicewide

**settler** Avoid. It implies the area was uninhabited before that time. Emigrant may be an acceptable alternative, depending on context. *See* Anglo, emigrant, European American, explorers, immigrant.

**+ Seven Years’ War** The Seven Years’ War refers to a global war in the 1700s and is used for confrontations in Spain’s North American colonies. *See* French and Indian War.

Spain cedes Florida to Great Britain as a result of the Seven Years’ War (1756–63).

**sexist language** Avoid. *See* gender-neutral language.

**shard** A piece of broken pottery or glass, especially one found at an archeological site. Preferred over sherd. *See* relic.

Archeologists found Pueblo black mesa pottery shards strewn in the creek bed.

**she** A female. Use “it” *not* “she” for a country, ship, or nature. *See* gender-neutral language.

**ships, aircraft, spacecraft, trains, vehicles**

- Names of ships, aircraft, spacecraft, and artificial satellites are set in italics. Abbreviations before the name, if used, are set in roman and do not have periods. When forming the possessive, the “s” is set in roman. *Note about ships: Use “it” not “she.”*  
*USS Arizona* or *Arizona*, the ship  
*but* USS Arizona Memorial, the place  
*Missouri’s* turret, *Challenger’s* crew  
*Sputnik* motivated the United States to take action.  
*Air Force One* refers to any aircraft that carries the US president.
- If the text is already set in italics, like some quotations and captions, then set the name in roman.  
*Sputnik motivated the United States to take action.*  
*The greatest loss was on board USS Arizona.*
- Names of trains, vehicle classes or makes, and space programs are capitalized but not set in italics.  
 They rode the train called the City of New Orleans.  
 Chrysler Imperial  
 Project Mercury
- Generic terms for vessels and aircraft are lowercase and roman.  
 submarine  
 space shuttle

**shuttle bus** *But* be consistent with local signage.

**slack water, slackwater** Two words if a noun; one word if an adjective.

**slave, slavery** *See* enslaved.

**+ slaveholder, slave master, slave owner** Do not use except in quoted material. Instead, write enslaver for someone who possessed enslaved people. *See* enslaved, enslaver.

**slickrock**

**small game** Do not use. Use wildlife, animals, or be specific. *See* game, wildlife.

**smartphone** Generic term for a mobile phone with computing ability and internet connectivity.

*See* app, iPhone.

At Manassas National Battlefield Park use your smartphone to download a battle app that features animated maps, photos, and videos.

**smoothbore**

**snake** *See* poisonous, venomous.

**social media** HFC generally does not list social media by name or logo in the Unigrid brochures.

Follow us on social media.

**song titles** Enclose in quotes.

Popular songs caught the temper of the times, from “jump” songs like “Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy.”

**South (the)** *See* Civil War terminology.

**south, southern** Lowercase compass directions; minimize use of capital letters except for specific regions or popular place names. *See* compass directions, geographic regions.

**spaces after subheads (titles) that start paragraphs** Use an en space after a subhead in a running paragraph. (Em spaces are usually too long.)

**Ranger-led Tours** Sign up for the wild cave tour at the visitor center.

**spaces at end of sentence** One space follows all closing punctuation.

**Spanish language** Use the HFC Spanish Editorial Style Guide *and* The Chicago Manual of Style. See capitalization; foreign words; Latino, Latina, Latinx; park names in translated NPS media; quotation marks; Rio Grande; Spanish, Spaniard.

**Spanish, Spaniard** Capitalize. Either is acceptable when referring to people. Spanish is used commonly today; Spaniard is more formal. Do not use “the Spanish” as a collective noun if you mean “the Spanish colonists” or “the Spanish people.”

**species** See scientific names.

**Sr.** See Jr.

**Star-Spangled Banner** The national anthem of the United States. See song titles.  
Francis Scott Key wrote the lyrics to the “Star-Spangled Banner” in 1814.

**state** Use lowercase for state government, state regulations, the state of Montana.

**+ state abbreviations** Use two-letter US postal codes in highway names, chronologies, captions, and on maps. Can also be used in subtitles, depending on context. See highway, state names.

**state names** In running text spell out the names of states, territories, and possessions (except DC) when they follow the name of a city. See state abbreviations.

San Juan Island National Historical Park near Friday Harbor, Washington, also has beaches.

The War in the Pacific National Historical Park visitor center in Hagåtña, Guam, has exhibits about WWII.

Over three million people visit the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC, each year.

**stewardship** Avoid or define if context does not clarify.

**such as** Use “like” instead.

**summer** Be specific if possible; your visitors might come from a different climate or hemisphere. See winter.  
Be prepared for extreme heat in June, July, and August.

**sun** Lowercase in all uses except in a proper name like Going-to-the-Sun Road.

**superintendent** Lowercase unless used before a proper name.

Superintendent Jones is retiring; an acting superintendent will be named soon.

**superlatives** Avoid. If using, confirm accuracy.

**+ supervolcano** Not a synonym for any large volcanic eruption. It is a specific term for eruptions over Volcanic Explosivity Index (VEI) 8. Scientists have identified only 60 worldwide.

You can learn about Yellowstone’s supervolcano at Canyon Visitor Education Center.

**surnames** Avoid Mr. and Mrs.; use full name (including initials), first and last names together, or last name alone. See titles, personal.

Maggie L. Walker organized the first Black student school strike in the United States.

*not* Maggie organized . . .

Carl and Lilian Sandburg lived in North Carolina.

Greene slipped away before dawn on June 20, 1781.

## T

**+ takeout, take out** When referring to water vehicles and entry/exit points, use one word if a noun or adjective, two words if a verb. Do not capitalize.

Canoe trips on the Green River end at the Bubbly Spring takeout.

The takeout site is Bubbly Springs.

Take out your canoe at Bubbly Springs.

**telephone numbers** 123-456-7890 is preferred style (hyphens), but (123) 456-7890 is acceptable. Do not write “1” before phone numbers. Be consistent. *See* TTY.

**temperature** 32°F or 20–32°F in winter (en dash; no space after degree symbol).

Expect temperatures in the 80s and 90s°F in summer.

**+ timber** A tree cut and trimmed for human use; *not* synonymous with tree. *See* treeline.

**timeline format** *See* chronology.

**time of day** 8 am, 2 pm; spell out noon and midnight. *See* am, pm.

At 4:30 am a mortar shell from Fort Johnson arced across the sky.

The film is shown at 10 am, 12 noon, and 4 pm.

**time zone** Lowercase the time zone name except for Pacific, which is a proper noun.

Both Nez Perce National Historical Park and Minidoka National Historical Site are in Idaho, but NEPE is on Pacific time and MIIN is on mountain time.

**tipi, tipis** Use tipi unless a park’s associated tribes prefer another spelling.

**titles, personal** Lowercase unless used before a proper name. OK to abbreviate before a full name *but* spell out before a surname. Avoid Dr., Mr., Mrs., Ms., Rev., etc., *except* Dr. King for Martin Luther King Jr. Generally, follow *The Chicago Manual of Style*. *See* individual entries in this guide and initials, military ranks, ships, surnames.

**Tory** *See* American Revolution affiliations.

**+ trademark™** Not legally required and increases reading complexity. *See* registration mark.

**+ traditional knowledge** Appropriate term when referring to the knowledge and practices of Indigenous people. It is sometimes capitalized and may be abbreviated (TK) after first use. More inclusive than TEK (traditional ecological knowledge) and TIK (traditional indigenous knowledge). Consider your audience and seek park guidance for its use.

### trailhead

**+ treeline** Use instead of timberline in NPS media for the general public. In other media, “timberline” may be appropriate in specific contexts. *See* timber.

**+ tribal name** Use specific tribal names whenever possible, accurate, and appropriate. Seek guidance from the park and its associated tribes about which name is preferred and how to present it. (*See examples below.*) Be consistent within the publication. Tribal names are collective nouns that take a singular verb. *See* American Indian, Indigenous, Native American.

The Navajo (Diné) entered Canyon de Chelly about 300 years ago.

From time immemorial, the weyiletpuu (Cayuse) have called this valley and this region home.



**+ tribe, tribes, tribal** Lowercase unless part of a proper name or if park or associated tribes request capitalization. *See* capitalization, federal.

**TTY** Text Telephone Service. Do not use TDD. Voice number precedes TTY number; if number is the same, follow the second example.

Call 301-123-4567, TTY 301-123-8910.

Call TTY/voice 301-412-1212.

## UV

**Union** *See* Civil War terminology. Do not use, instead write United States or US.

**unique** Avoid; use only if truly one of a kind.

**United States, US** United States, a noun (spell out); US an adjective. *Note:* No periods in US, except in the black title banner of NPS graphic identity publications, then: U.S. Department of the Interior.

The United States is part of the North American continent.

US Constitution

**US Department of the Interior, Interior** *But* U.S. Department of the Interior in the black title banner of NPS graphic identity.

**US Forest Service, Forest Service, USFS** US Forest Service in first use to distinguish the federal agency from state agencies; Forest Service or USFS thereafter. *Not* USDA Forest Service.

**US Geologic Survey**

**US House of Representatives, the House, the lower house of Congress**

**US-Mexican War (1846–48)**

**US Senate, the Senate, the upper house of Congress**

**+ unmanned** Do not use. *See* aircraft, remotely piloted *and* gender-neutral language.

**+ URL** Capitalize, no italics. *See* internet address.

**+ utilize** Not a synonym for “use.” Appropriate only when you mean “to use to best effect.”

**venomous** Use only if park insists on using this specific subset of poisonous creatures. *See* poisonous.

**+ visitor** Appropriate to use for people visiting parks, whether in person or digitally, or consider using second-person or neutral words like “people.”

Guided tours are limited to 15 people.

*or* Guided tours are limited to 15 visitors.

**visitor center** Lowercase unless used before a proper name.

North Cascades Visitor Center opens soon.

Check at the visitor center for program times and descriptions.

## W

**wapiti** Avoid; use elk. If using, be specific about its origin—it is a Shawnee word.

**wayside** Avoid; use exhibit or outdoor exhibit, depending on context.  
Exhibits along the trail introduce you to wildlife who make this lake their home.  
Outdoor exhibits explain everyday life of the fort during the 1800s.

**+ webpage, website, the web** Do not capitalize when referring to the internet. *But* World Wide Web. *See* internet, internet address, URL.

**west, western** Lowercase compass directions; minimize use of capital letters except for specific regions or popular place names. Pacific Northwest; West Coast. *See* geographic regions.

**western red cedar**

**wetland** *Not* wet land.

**wheelchair** *Not* wheel chair. *See* accessible, disabled.

**wheelchair-accessible** Hyphenate even when not a modifier.

**Whig** *See* American Revolution affiliations.

**white-tailed deer** *Not* whitetailed or whitetail deer.

**wilderness statement** This is the standard statement for Unigrid brochures. Use the first sentence; OK to shorten rest.

Congress has protected [acres or percent] of [park name] as wilderness under the 1964 Wilderness Act. Preserving wilderness shows restraint and humility, and benefits generations to come. Wilderness designation protects forever the land's wilderness character, natural conditions, opportunities for solitude, and scientific, educational, and historical values. In wilderness people can sense being a part of the whole community of life on Earth.

**+\* White, white** Consider capitalizing when related to culture or identity; OK to leave lowercase even if capitalizing Black. Be consistent within the publication.

In 1861, White residents of the Sea Islands fled to the mainland, leaving their homes and property behind.

**wildfire**

**wildlife** Can be singular or plural depending on context, but consider rewriting to avoid plural because it can seem incorrect. *See* big game, game, small game.

**winter** Be specific if possible; your visitors might come from a different climate or hemisphere. *See* summer.  
Be prepared for extreme cold in December, January, and February.

**within, in** Use “in” rather than “within” when they can be used interchangeably.

**word division** Minimize line breaks (also called word breaks) to increase readability. Divide so that the part of the word left at end of line suggests the whole word. Consult *The American Heritage Dictionary*. *See* compound words, compound words as modifiers, dashes.

capac-ity *not* capa-city

**World Heritage Site** Capitalize this United Nations designation for internationally significant areas around the world. *See* Biosphere Reserve.

Mammoth Cave National Park was named a World Heritage Site in 1991.

**World War I, First World War, WWI**

**World War II, Second World War, WWII** World Wars I and II; the two world wars.

## **XYZ**

**Yankee** *See Civil War terminology.*

**year-round**

**zip code**