How to use the Arrowhead and other graphic elements

To get the National Park Service identity right for your audience, you need to orchestrate three elements: the Arrowhead, the black band, and the type that identifies our agency, the department, and your park or program. This flyer helps you succeed in making all three elements work together to build strong public recognition.

Fifty years of use fixed the Arrowhead in the public mind as our symbol. The full-color flyer Graphic identity built on tradition tells you how to use the recently revised Arrowhead artwork successfully.

Over twenty years of use made the Unigrid publication program’s black band say “National Park Service” to the public. This flyer helps you to use the black band and its variant black bar to assure strong identity.

Consistent use of the third element—typography—puts the full NPS signature on your product. Only the consistent and proper use of all three elements gives your product and park or program clearly recognizable NPS identity.

How to use the type with the Arrowhead

You will often use the Arrowhead with type that lists the agency and department and your park or program and its partners.

- always set such type in Frutiger Bold, upper and lower case, flush left and ragged right, i.e. not justified.
- place such type right or left of the Arrowhead. If those positions don’t work, it can be put below the Arrowhead.
- never center such type.

How the black band and its variations work

Think of the black band as part of the identity that also holds the other graphic elements together.

- the type may be located away from the Arrowhead, depending on the product and how the black band, bar, or rule is used.
- do not center the type.

The motto

The motto should be set in Frutiger Bold, all caps, with wide letter spacing. It can be used alone, or it may be centered in one or three lines below the Arrowhead. It should never appear next to the Arrowhead when typographic elements of the identity are present.

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Incorrect use of the Arrowhead artwork

Don't alter the type elements

The typographic elements were carefully designed as a part of the master artwork. Do not alter them in any way. Do not reset the type in another type face. Do not place the type elements outside the Arrowhead. Do not replace the type with any other full or abbreviated text.

Don't alter the visual elements

Exact consistency in the form of the artwork is important. Do not alter the overall shape of the Arrowhead. Do not alter the art by adding additional elements. Do not change or remove any of the elements in the Arrowhead.

Don't alter the digital file formats

Reproduction quality of the mark can be severely diminished if you alter the file formats. Do not convert color files into grayscale formats. Do not convert grayscale files into B&W formats. Always use the original files. Do not photocopy or scan from copies of the original artwork.

Don't apply special effects

Avoid the temptation to alter the digital artwork by applying the various special effects filters of photo-editing software. For example, do not add drop shadows, emboss, texturize, recolor, or apply gradations to the artwork.

Don't reverse, distort, or mis-align

Use the artwork as intended. Do not alter or add an additional outline. Do not reverse the digital files or distort the proportions of the artwork. Use only the proper horizontal and vertical alignment of the Arrowhead.