

THE NEWGRADMEDIA STYLE GUIDE

WORD COUNTS

- Infographics: 300+ words
- Listicles: 600+ words
- Articles: 1500+ words
- Longform: 2500+ words

AP STYLE, AMA CITATION

NEWGRADMEDIA HOUSE STYLE:

- **This should go without saying, but: original content. We will not publish *either* previously published content or plagiarized material.**
- Welcoming, informal tone that never sounds like a sales pitch
- Readable sentences: if this means shorter, fine
 - **Best practices:** sentences are under 20 words
- Be consistent with punctuation, verb tense, list style, etc.
- Titles do not use end punctuation, except for questions
- Subheadings do not use end punctuation, except for questions or exclamations
 - Subheadings can be longer than titles, but should stay short
 - **Best practices:** make subheadings questions that the following sections answer!
- Shorter paragraphs: 2-3 sentences
 - Single-sentence pulls are also good for quotes/callout boxes
- Each topic can be identified by one specific, key phrase
- Correct, comprehensible grammar usage
- Avoid clichés as much as possible!
- Ends with a clear call to action
 - This can be “Have you had this experience? Tell us in the comments below!” but it can also be an invitation to visit [CovalentCareers.com](https://www.covalentcareers.com), or to read the next piece in the series, and so on

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- **Clear and accurate citations: researched claims are backed up with citations and/or hyperlinks to articles/definitions. This does not apply to common (or “general” field-specific) knowledge. Make it easy for me to fact-check your claims!**
 - CovalentCareers and associated publications are spelled thusly:
 - CovalentCareers
 - NewGradOptometry
 - NewGradOccupationalTherapy
 - NewGradSpeechTherapy
 - NewGradPhysicalTherapy
 - When typing out URLs, as in newgradphysicaltherapy.com, the URL is all lowercase
 - The sites are capitalized but non-branded groups (e.g., “optometrists,” “new grad physical therapists” or “new grad PTs”) are not
 - Plurals of acronyms (OTs, STs, etc.) do not have an apostrophe (unless possessive: an OT’s guidebook versus a guidebook for OTs)
 - Only one space after a period
 - When using a dash, use an m-dash (a long dash; the keyboard shortcut on a Mac is Shift-Option-dash: —)
 - **Do not** capitalize the first word after a colon (:)
 - All punctuation goes **inside** any quotation marks
 - We like [the Oxford comma!](#)
 - Numbers 0-10 are spelled out (one, two, three) while any numbers above ten are written as numerals (12, 75, 302), except in titles or subheadings

IMAGES

- In-text images to be **created** by writer when necessary (diagrams, etc.)
- Graphics/Featured images to be provided by NGM

LINKS

- Include a minimum of 2 inbound (to other articles on the site) and 2 outbound (to other sites) links, attached to descriptive text (such as a brand name or the title of the page, not, e.g., “click here”).

SAMPLE OUTLINE TEMPLATES

Listicles

1. 1-3 sentences outlining the topic and purpose of this list
 - a. Things to know before writing:
 - i. Who is this for?
 - ii. Why should they care?
 - iii. In 5 words or less, what is the topic?
2. The List
 - a. Things to know before writing:
 - i. Which is your **strongest** point? This should go first.
 - ii. Which is your firmest or funniest point? This should go last!
 - iii. OR: Is there a chronological order to this list—things you must do in a certain order? Then obviously that should be the structure!
3. Conclusion: 1-3 sentences wrapping up. What do you want your reader to leave thinking?

Articles

1. 1-3 sentences outlining the topic and purpose of this article
 - a. Things to know before writing:
 - i. Who is this for?
 - ii. Why should they care?
 - iii. In 5 words or less, what is the topic?
2. Internal Organization!
 - a. Chronological (a walkthrough)
 - b. Inverted Pyramid (general -> specific)
 - c. Scientific (background, reasoning, testing, results)
 - d. These are all *possible* types: the important thing is to make sure it *has* a coherent internal structure! This means outlining!
3. Conclusion
 - a. What's the takeaway?
 - b. What do you want your reader to **do** with this information?

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- AP Stylebook
- Strunk & White: *The Elements of Style*
 - Emphasizes brevity and clarity
- Purdue OWL for AMA citation style

SOME NOTES ON STYLE

A basic structural design underlies every kind of writing. Writers will in part follow this design, in part deviate from it, according to their skills, their needs, and the unexpected events that accompany the act of composition. Writing, to be effective, must follow closely the thoughts of the writer, but not necessarily in the order in which those thoughts occur. This calls for a scheme of procedure. In some cases, the best design is no design, as with a love letter, which is simply an outpouring, or with a casual essay, which is a ramble. But in most cases, planning must be a deliberate prelude to writing. The first principle of composition, therefore, is to foresee or determine the shape of what is to come and pursue that shape. (Strunk & White, *The Elements of Style*, 15)

There are a number of blogs about grammar and style, but most of them are either trivia-based or very hit-or-miss. While we do have a style guide for NewGradMedia and in all other things follow AP Style, I don't want writers getting hung up on individual errors: it doesn't matter if your apostrophe usage is impeccable if your sentences are incomprehensible.

Aim for clarity and accuracy, and grammatical correctness will follow.