

THE ROYAL GAZETTE STYLE GUIDE

Updated July 2015

A

a, an use before all words beginning with a vowel or diphthong with the sound of *u* (as in unit) – a eulogy, a European, etc; but use *an* before unaspirated *h* – an heir, an honest woman, an honour; also, prefer an historic to a historic; an heroic rather than a heroic

abattoir

abbreviation prefer not to abbreviate Professor to Prof; Father to Fr

abbreviated negatives (can't don't, shan't, won't and similar abbreviations/contractions such as I'll, you're, we'd, they'd) should be discouraged in ALL text except in direct quotes. However, in chatty pieces such as in Lifestyle and some other features, they are permissible when the full form would sound pedantic

aboard prefer on board

Aboriginal (singular, noun and adjective) and

Aborigines (plural), for native Australian(s);

Aboriginal (l/c) for wider adjectival use

Abu means “father of” so must not be separated from the name that follows, ie, Abu Qatada at first mention remains Abu Qatada (“father of Qatada”), not simply Qatada.

accents give French, Spanish, Portuguese, and German words/names their proper accents; omit in other languages unless you are sure of them. Accents should be used in headlines and on capital letters (they can be found in glyphs under Type in Saxo). With anglicised words, no need for accents in foreign words that have taken English nationality (hotel, depot, debacle, elite, rerime, etc), but keep the accent when it makes a crucial difference to pronunciation or understanding - café, communiqué, détente, émigré, façade, fête, fiancée, mêlée, pâté, protégé, raison d'être; also vis-à-vis.

Achilles' heel but Achilles tendon

acknowledgement

acoustic(s) not accoustics

acquiesce

Act and **Bill** cap whether fully identified or not

AD, BC note that AD comes before the date, eg, AD35; BC comes after, 350BC. With *century*, both are used after, eg, 3rd century BC/AD

adapter (persons who adapts); **adaptor** (plug, device)

adidas (l/c) but at beginning of a sentence, it will be Adidas

adjectives avoid clichéd adjectives as in *long-felt* want, *serious* danger, *widespread* concern, *substantial* majority etc

Attorney-General takes the hyphen

Administration (US) cap when specific, eg, Obama Administration; generic, l/c, eg, a lame-duck administration, also l/c adjectival, eg, an administration official

admissible, inadmissible (not –able)

ad nauseam (not ad nauseum)

adrenalin (prefer to adrenaline)

adult films, adult magazines avoid this circumlocution; write pornographic films, pornographic magazines instead

adverbs when they are used to qualify adjectives, the joining hyphen is rarely needed, eg, heavily pregnant, classically carved, colourfully decorated. But in some cases, such as well founded, ill treated, when used before the noun, eg, a well-founded rumour, write the compound with the hyphen. The best guidance is to use the hyphen in these phrases as little as possible or when the phrase would otherwise be ambiguous. Thus, “the island is well regulated”, but “it is a well-regulated island”.

advertisements prefer to **advert**, especially at first mention; but advert is acceptable (at second mention, in headlines, etc). Avoid ad

adviser (never advisor)

-aemia not –emia, for blood conditions such as anaemia, leukaemia; thus anaemic, leukaemic

affect, effect as a verb, to affect means to produce an effect on, to touch the feelings of, or to pretend to have or feel (as in affectation); to effect is to bring about, to accomplish. If in doubt, always consult the Collins English Dictionary

affidavit a written declaration on oath. Phrases such as “sworn affidavit” and “he swore an affidavit” are therefore tautologous

Afghan noun or adjective; an **afghani** (l/c) is a unit of currency, not a person

Africa note **North Africa, East Africa, Southern Africa, West Africa** (caps) for the four main regions

African-American hyphenate

Afrikaans, the language; **Afrikaners**, the people

after almost invariably to be used rather than *following*. Also, beware of careless use in sentences such as “The Bermudian player won a place in the final after beating the seeded American”. Say instead “... by beating the seeded American”.

afterlife one word

ages normal style is “Joe Brown, 33, a porter,” but occasional variations such as “Andrew Hunt, who is 74,” are permissible. Similarly, keep children’s ages as a figure, “Emma Watson, 7, who ...”, and “children aged 5 to 14” (not “five to 14”); but the seven-year-old child said ...” (up to and including ten). Other examples where a figure should be used: “At the age of 7, he moved to Southampton”; “The girl, aged 6, attends primary school”. Note caps in **Ice Age, Stone Age, the Dark Ages** etc

ageing takes the middle “e” – as in **likeable, mileage, moveable, rateable, sizeable, unlikeable, unshakeable** etc. The most common exceptions are listed separately, eg, **axing, unmistakable**

aggravate means to make (an evil or complaint) worse. It does not mean to annoy or irritate

AGM caps, but prefer *annual meeting* in text

agoraphobia (not agaro-, agra- etc)

ahead of do not use in the sense of timing to mean before/prior to/in advance of

Aïda use the diaeresis for the opera by Verdi

Aids (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) is not a disease, but a medical condition. Diseases that affect people who are HIV-positive may be called Aids-related diseases; but through custom and practice we can be relaxed in saying “died of Aids”. Write HIV/Aids when appropriate regarding the virus and the condition together

AIM the Alternative Investment Market; keep caps in abbreviation

airspace, airstrip, airbase (no hyphens)

airborne warning and control system (Awacs) in full at first mention if possible, subsequently Awacs

air conditioner, air conditioning no hyphen as noun but hyphenate adjectivally, eg, an air-conditioning unit

aircraft prefer to *planes* wherever possible. Remember that not all aircraft are jets – some are still turbo-prop. Also, always avoid the American *airplanes*.

aircraft types B52 F111 etc (no hyphens between letters and numbers)

air fares (two words, as rail fares, bus fares etc)

air force cap in full name such as Royal Air Force (thereafter RAF), US Air Force (USAF), Brazilian Air Force (thereafter the air force, l/c); and l/c in adjectival use, eg, an air force raid

Air Force One the US presidential jet

airports as a general rule, for British airports, use the name or the city or town followed by l/c airport, eg, Manchester airport, Leeds/Bradford airport, Luton airport; But simply Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted. Note at Heathrow, **Terminal 1, 2, 3, 4, 5** etc

air raid (two words)

air show (two words); cap when specific, eg, the Paris Air Show, the Farnborough Air Show

airstrikes one word in military sense, but air raids (two words)

al- as the prefix to Arabic nouns (including names), prefer the *al-* to the *el-* form, except where the *el-* has become widely accepted

Albert Hall generally omit Royal

A level no hyphen as a noun, but A-level results etc (hyphenate when adjectival)

Alfa Romeo

alfresco one word, roman (not italicised)

alibi not a general alternative to excuse; it means being elsewhere at the material time

al-Jazeera TV station in Qatar

Alka-Seltzer not hyphen and capitals

all in phrases such as “all the President’s men” there is no need to write “all of the President’s men”

allcomers one word

allege avoid the suggestion that the writer is making the allegation, so specify its source. Do not use *alleged* as a synonym of *ostensible*, *apparent* or *reputed*

All England Club home of the Wimbledon Championships (no hyphen)

Allies cap the Allies in the Second World War context; generally, *l/c* **alliance**, as in the *Atlantic alliance*, Gulf War alliance, etc

all right never *alright*

all-time avoid as in *all-time high*; use *highest* or *record high* instead

al-Qaeda

Alsatian (*l/c*, the German shepherd dog); wherever possible, *l/c* for breeds of dog; but obvious exceptions include Great Dane; Yorkshire terrier

alternative of two; **choice** of three or more

Amazon.com (use initial cap)

ambassador cap when specific, eg, French Ambassador, thereafter the ambassador

ambience prefer to the French spelling *ambiance*

amendment spell out in relation to the US Constitution, eg, the First Amendment, the Fifth Amendment etc

America(n)/US in general, try to use *American* as in “American cities, American food” etc; but US in headlines and in the context of government institutions such as US Congress, US Navy, US military operation. Never use *America* when ambiguity could occur with Canada or Latin America

American spellings normally use the English spelling, even with offices or institutions such as Secretary of Defense (change to Defence), American Federation of Labor (change to Labour), or with buildings, eg, the Lincoln Center, the World Trade Center, Staples Center, Barclays Center (change to Centre); but Labor Day (which has no UK equivalent) and thus Labor Department, etc, are exceptions, as is Pearl Harbor

amid not *amidst*; similarly **among**, not *amongst*

Amnesty International the charity. Spell out at first mention, Amnesty thereafter (and in headlines)

amok not *amock* or *amuck*

amphitheatres in classical context are oval or circular (eg, Colosseum in Rome); do not confuse with theatres, which are semi-circular or horseshoe-shaped

Amsterdam treaty (l/c “t”), but the Treaty of Amsterdam (caps)

analog (in computer context); but keep **analogue** as in analogous or parallel thing

anathema meaning accursed, consigned to perdition; there is no need for an article, thus “it is anathema to me”. Although a noun, it is quasi-adjectival in usage

ancestor strictly means a person from whom another is directly descended, especially someone more distant than a grandparent. Do not use in the looser sense of predecessor; eg, Queen Elizabeth I is not the ancestor of the present Queen. Clearly, an ancestor is not a descendant, so do not mix them up

ancillary

and may be used at the beginning of a sentence, especially for emphasis. Likewise for “but”. However, avoid beginning paragraphs as such.

Andersen, the accountancy firm (no longer Arthur Andersen); the former Andersen Consulting is now **Accenture**

Andersen, Hans Christian not Anderson

Andrews Air Force Base capped

androgynous not androgenous in reference to having both male and female characteristics; **androgenic** refers to male hormones, eg, testosterone

aneurysm not aneurism

Angel of the North (not The) by Antony Gormley

angioplasty is a procedure carried out by cardiologists and is not surgery

Anglesey (never Anglesea)

anglicise (l/c), **Anglophile, Anglophobe, Anglophone** (caps)

angst (roman l/c)

animals beware the solecism “birds and animals”; says “birds and mammals” instead

animal names call an animal “he” or “she” if the sex is definitely known or if called by a masculine or feminine name (eg, Felix the cat had only himself to blame). But use “it” if the sex is unspecified. In racing, horses are always “he” or “she”

annexe (noun), but to **annex** (verb)

anniversary by definition, is the date on which an event occurred in some previous year. So avoid such nonsense as the “nine-month anniversary” or the “300-day anniversary” of something

anoint not *annoint*

answerphone or answering machine

Antarctic, Arctic never *Antartic* etc

antennae (plural of antenna) in zoological sense;

antennas in radio or aerial sense

Antichrist (initial cap, no hyphen)

anticipate not to be used for *expect*. It means to deal with, or use, in advance of, or before, the due time. To anticipate marriage is different from expecting to marry

antidepressant (noun or adjective), no hyphen

antihero

Antipodes, Antipodean cap A when referring to Australia and New Zealand

anti-Semitic, anti-Semitism

antisocial, anticlimax, antitrust

antiviral one word

any more always two words

apart from do not use the Americanism “aside from”

ape, aping, apish

apostrophes with proper names/nouns ending in “s” that are singular, follow the rule of writing what is voiced, eg, **Keats’s poetry, Sobers’s batting**; and with names where the final “s” is soft, use the “s” apostrophe, eg, **Rabalais’ writing, Delors’ presidency**; plurals follow normal form, as **Lehman Brothers’ loss** etc. Note that with Greek names of more than one syllable that end in “s”, generally do not use the apostrophe “s”, eg, **Aristophanes’ plays, Achilles’ heel, Socrates’ life, Archimedes’ principle**; but note **Jesus’s** (not Jesus’) **parables**. Use the apostrophe in expressions such as **two years’ time, several hours’ delay**, etc. An apostrophe should be used to indicate the plural of single letters – **p’s and q’s**

appellations on news pages, although not on features, Lifestyle and Sport, almost every surname should be granted the courtesy of a title. The exceptions are convicted offenders, the dead (but not the recently dead, except in obituaries), and – mostly in the arts, sport and reviews – cases where common usage omits a title. On news pages, similarly, sportsmen, artists, authors, entertainers should **not** be referred to as Mr/Mrs/Ms etc, except in court cases or exceptional circumstances where guilt would be implied by omitting the honorific

General rules:

- First mention Kevin Brown, Juliette Worth, subsequently Mr Brown, Mrs/Miss/Ms Worth.
- Put the name first, then the age (if relevant), then the description; eg, Penélope Cruz, 34, the Spanish actress; **avoid the journalese construction “actress Penélope Cruz” or the like**
- Avoid initials and middle initials (as in American names) unless the person is best known thereby (eg, W.G. Grace, with full points)
- Ms is fully acceptable when a woman wants to be called thus, or when it is not known for certain if she is Mrs or Miss
- Dr is no longer confined medical doctors; if a person has a doctorate from a reputable university, Dr is acceptable. Generally, as for Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms, do not use Dr at first mention.
- Court proceedings, professional body disciplinary hearings etc; accused people should be accorded the appropriate title (Mr, Miss etc) – however guilty they may appear – after name and first name have been given at first mention; only convicted persons or those who have

admitted guilt in recognised legal or disciplinary proceedings should be referred to by surname alone. But do be sensitive especially in murder cases, where the accused is given, for example, his “Mr”; the victim (despite the dead not usually being given a title) should here be accorded the courtesy of a title. Otherwise, the stark contrast of, say, Mr X being accused of the murder of Stevens, can appear gratuitously offensive

appendix plural *appendices*, but *appendixes* in anatomy

Apple Computer, not *Computers*, for the Mac company

appraise means evaluate; **advise** means inform. Never confuse

appurtenance

April Fool's Day, **April fool**, but **All Fools' Day**

Aqaba, Gulf of (Red Sea)

aqueduct (not *aqueduct*)

Arab Spring cap for the uprisings at the start of 2011 in North Africa and the Middle East

Arabic names always take care in this difficult area of transliteration. Remember the basic rule of al-X (l/c al, with hyphen, before name; rarely use the el- form)

Arafat, **Yassir** not *Yasser*

arbitrate, **arbitration** do not confuse with *mediate*, *mediation*. An arbitrator hears evidence from different parties then hands down a decision; a mediator listens to different arguments then tries to bring the parties to agreement

arch-rival hyphenate in the sense of chief rival. For combinations using the prefix *arch-*, some will look better hyphenated while others can be a single word, eg, *archbishop*

Arctic Monkeys no “the” in the band's name

Argentine is the adjective; an **Argentinian** is a person from Argentina (never the *Argentine*)

armada be careful with imprecise use of this word; it means a fleet of *armed ships*, so strictly should not be applied to any collection of boats or ships

Armageddon (caps)

armchair, **deckchair** (no hyphens)

Army cap in the context of the British Army (thereafter the *Army*, capped), and foreign armies, as in US Army, the Belgian Army (but thereafter the *army* l/c); and always l/c when used adjectivally, eg, an *army* helicopter, a British *army* tank; thus a US navy pilot etc

arm's length as in “he was kept at arm's length” but hyphenate as a modifier, eg, “the former partners now have an arm's-length relationship”

around do not use as an alternative to *about*

artefact do not use *artefact*

artistic movements cap Art Deco, Baroque, Classical, Neo-Classical, Cubist, Gothic, Impressionist, Minimalist, Modernist, Post-Modern, Pre-Columbian, Pre-Raphaelite, Rococo, Romantic, Surrealist etc in cultural contexts; but in wider general use, l/c, eg, "He had a detailed sense of humour but a romantic nature"

Arts and Crafts movement

arts awards initial caps for titles of awards such as Best Actress, Best Film, Play of the Year etc

as beware of sloppy use in sentences such as "They were moved out as the blast tore open the building"; say simply "*after* the blast ... ". The sport headline "Martis makes crucial mistake as Mowbray's men go down" suggests wrongly that the blunder by Shelton Martis, the West Bromwich Albion defender, was unconnected to his team's relegation from the Premier League in May 2009. In fact, it was his error that led to a first Liverpool goal. After that, his team lost and went down to the Championship. Avoid the temptation of rashes of headlines using "as", and ensure here as well as in copy that its precise meaning of "when" is retained. It is not a synonym for "before" or "after"

ascendant, ascendancy prefer to ascendent, ascendancy

Asdic an early sonar device for detecting submarines. The name is an acronym for Antisubmarine Detection Investigation Committee

Asean (Association of South East Asian Nations): Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, Brunei, Vietnam, Burma, Laos and Cambodia

aside from do not use this Americanism. Write "apart from"

assassin to be used only in the murder of a statesman or politician from a political motive (same applies to assassination; not to be used for the killing of celebrities or others)

assure you **assure** your life; **ensure** means to make certain; you **insure** against risk

as to avoid in the sense of the much preferred **about**. Sometimes, "as to" is safely omitted and not replaced, eg, "The girl asked her father (as to) when she would be allowed to travel on her own"

Astroturf proprietary (two caps)

asylum seeker (no hyphen)

at the present time, at this time use *now*; but avoid the phrase *as of now*

Atlantic (Ocean), North Atlantic, South Atlantic, but **transatlantic**

Attlee, Clement not Atlee

Attorney-General, Solicitor-General

Auditor-General

awayday one word

Awol, absent without leave, not AWOL

AXA (not Axa) the financial services group

axing (no middle "e"); but try to avoid in sense of cutting jobs, dismissal, etc

ay (yes), **aye** (ever), **Ayes** (debate)

B

baby-boomer

Babygro (cap, proprietary)

baby-walker

baccalaureate use anglicised spelling with l/c for general use, but cap in specific context of the International Baccalaureate

Bacharach, Burt

backache, backbreaking, but **back pain**

bacterium singular **bacteria** plural

B&B with caps and closed up around ampersand as abbreviated for bed and breakfast

back benches (parliamentary) two words; but backbenchers, backbench (adjectival, as in backbench revolt)

back burner (no hyphen), but be sparing of the cliché “on the back burner”

backlash overworked word; always try to avoid

backstreet(s) noun or adjective, no hyphen; similarly **backyard**

back-up (noun, hyphenate)

bacteria and viruses are different, and the terms are not interchangeable. Make sure the terminology is correct. Note that antibiotics are used to treat bacterial but not viral infections

Bafta (not BAFTA), the British Academy of Film and Television Arts

Baha’i

bail out (as in bail someone out of trouble; also bail water from a boat); but bale out of an aircraft by parachute, to escape. NB, **bailout** (one word, as noun)

balk (not baulk)

Balkans prefer to Balkan states. This region includes the former Yugoslav republics, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, Greece and the European part of Turkey

ballgown

balloted, like benefited, budgeted etc, has only one “t”

Baltic states (l/c states) from north to south, and coincidentally in alphabetic order, they are Estonia (capital Tallinn), Latvia (capital Riga) and Lithuania (capital Vilnius). Do not use the abbreviated Baltics

Ban Ki Moon (no hyphen)

bandana prefer to bandanna

banister not bannister

bankruptcy in Britain, people file a petition for bankruptcy; they do not file for bankruptcy

baptistry prefer to baptistery

barbecue, barbecuing

barcode one word

bar mitzvah (l/c, roman); also **bat mitzvah** for girls

Basle (Switzerland), not Basel

basically greatly overworked word that rarely adds anything to a sentence. Always try to avoid

basis “on a ... basis” is a cliché and should be avoided; for “employment on a part-time basis” say “part-time employment”

Basque Country (initial caps)

bated/baited Note the important difference – **bated** breath; **baited** hook

battalion (never battalion). Say the 1st Battalion, the 7th Battalion etc (not First, Seventh)

battle avoid using as a transitive verb, as in “The students battled the police...”; use “fought” or “battled against” instead

battle cry two words

battleship a heavily armoured warship of the largest type, with many large-calibre guns. Battleship is not synonymous with warship; eg, cruisers and destroyers are warships but not battleships.

Baylis, Trevor the inventor (single “s”)

BBC no need to spell out British Broadcasting Corporation, although “the corporation” is a useful alternative in text. TV channels are BBC One, BBC Two, BBC Three, BBC Four, However the radio stations are Radio 1, Radio 1 Xtra, Radio 2, Radio 3, Radio 4, Radio 5 Live, Radio 5 Live Sports Extra, Radio 6 Music and Radio 7. BBC Television and BBC Radio (caps).

BC See AD

be-all and end-all note hyphens

beanbag one word

Beatles, the. No need to cap “the” unless at the start of a sentence

bedizened archaic but lovely word meaning dressed or decorated gaudily or tastelessly

Beduin is plural. The singular is **Bedu**

Beethoven, Ludwig van (not von); normally Beethoven will suffice

beg the question has a confusing variety of meanings, so is best to avoid. Especially, do not confuse with “ask” or “raise” the question

Beijing (no longer Peking)

Belarus Its people are Belarussians (prefer to Belarusians)

beleaguered a cliché, especially in the political sense, so best avoided

Belfast, North, South, East, West

bellringer, bellringing, belltower (no hyphens)

bellwether (not bellweather)

benchmark (no hyphen)

Bénédictine accents for the French liqueur

benefited not benefitted

Ben-Hur (hyphen), the 1959 movie, but **Ben Hur Live** (no hyphen), the 2009 extravaganza

Bennet the family in *Pride and Prejudice*

benzene is a substance obtained from coal-tar;

benzine is a spirit obtained from petroleum

-berg, -burg always check spelling of towns with these endings, and those ending in –burgh, --borough, -brough

Bermuda Broadcasting Company There is only one BBC, so Bermuda Broadcasting at subsequent mention.

Bermudian is not a language so all attempts should be made to prevent double negatives and similar abuses of the English language from appearing in print

Berne (Switzerland), not Bern

berserk not beserk

Berwick-upon-Tweed (the northernmost town in England). Its football club competes in the Scottish Football League

beseached prefer to besought

best loved, best-loved ensure there is a hyphen if you mean a best-loved writer best loved writer

bestseller (one word); likewise **bestselling**

bête noire no need to italicise; final “e” on noir

betting odds use a hyphen (16-1, 6-4 etc), not a slash (16/1). For odds-on, the smaller figures comes first (1-2, 4-11 and so on)

Beverly Hills in California (only two e's)

Beyoncé Knowles note accent

bi- take care with this difficult prefix. Its correct use is in Latin compounds, where it has the force of two, not half, such as bicentenary/bicentennial (a 200th anniversary), or biennial (recurring every two years). Biannual means twice a year; to avoid confusion, write out *twice a year*

biased

Bible cap and roman, not italic, in the religious context; but biblical(l/c); **biblical references** thus – II Corinthians ii, 2; Luke iv, 5. Write bible (l/c) in a metaphorical sense, eg, “For many, *Vogue* is the fashion bible”

Bible Belt (both cap “B”)

biceps, triceps same form for the singular and the plural of these muscles

bid do not use in text as synonym of *effort, attempt* or *try*, although it may be used sparingly in headlines in this context

big bang l/c for the event postulated by cosmological theory relating to the beginnings of the Universe; note **big-bang theory** (hyphen as modifier) but ***Big Bang Theory***, the hit TV show

bight is a curve in a coastline or river; **bite** involves teeth. Do not confuse

Bill and **Act** caps whether fully identified or not

Bill of Rights cap even when non-specific (eg, “If the Government were to introduce a Bill of Rights ...”)

Billion one thousand million; not a million million. Write \$5 billion, \$15 billion (\$5bn, \$15bn in headlines), three billion, 15 billion

bin Laden, Osama note l/c “bin”, except where it is the first word of a headline or sentence. The organisation founded by bin Laden is **al-Qaeda** (not al-Qaida). Bin Laden was killed in Abbottabad, Pakistan, in the early hours on Monday, May 2, 2011 (time difference means it was still May 1 in Bermuda)

bin-liner (use hyphen)

biological terms with particular reference to Latin terms, cap letter for first (genus) word, then l/c for the second (species); and italicise for all but the most common, eg, *Turdus merula*, the blackbird

Birds Eye the manufacturer of frozen food, but **bird’s-eye view**

Biro is a trade name, so cap; generic alternative is *ballpoint pen*

birthday people and animals have birthdays; everything else has anniversaries

birthrate, birthright, birthplace (no hyphens), but **birth control, birth certificate** etc

Bishopsgate in the City of London (not Bishopgate)

Bishop’s Stortford

bit abbreviate to b, thus kilobit (kb), megabit (Mb) etc

bite (as with teeth) must not be confused with the computing term *byte* or the geographical *bight*

BlackBerry the mobile phone; plural BlackBerrys

blacklist one word as noun or verb

blackout (noun, one word)

blacks (people) l/c

blame take care with this word; blame is attached to causes, not effects. So say "Bad weather is blamed for my bronchitis", but not "My bronchitis is blamed on bad weather"

Blanchett, Cate

bloc use in context such as the former **Soviet bloc**, a **power bloc** etc; but **block vote**

blond for men; **blonde** for women

blood groups write O negative, B positive (no hyphens)

bloodied but unbowed; but **red-blooded** etc

blood sports (two words; similarly field sports)

bloody mary l/c for the cocktail of tomato juice and vodka

Bloomingdale's

Blue cap both for an Oxbridge (Oxford) sportsman or woman and for the award itself

blue-chip hyphen as modifier, eg, a blue-chip company

blue-collar workers, as white-collar workers

blueprint avoid this greatly overworked word when all you mean is plan, scheme or proposal

bluffers be very cautious. *The Bluffer's Guide/Guides* are trademarks, rigorously protected by their publishers. So generic phrases such as "a bluffer's guide to ..." must be avoided

Blu-ray the optical disc format. It uses blue-violet laser, rather than the red of earlier technologies

Blu-Tack proprietary so cap

Boat Race caps for the annual Oxford-Cambridge race

Bobcat should not be used in a generic sense as a description of skid-steer loaders or other equipment

Bodyline one word, no quotes; use lower case in general usage such as bodyline bowling but cap for the Bodyline tour of 1932-33

boffin do not use as a synonym of *scientist*, except ironically or in direct quotes

bogey (golf), **bogie** (wheels), **bogy** (ghost); but note **bogeyman**

Bogotá (capital of Colombia)

Bohemia, Bohemian cap in reference to the geographical entity, but l/c **bohemia, bohemian** metaphorically

bolt hole two words

bombs car bomb, nail bomb, petrol bomb, suicide bomb etc, but hyphenate verbal or adjectival use, eg, to fire-bomb, a nail-bomb attack

bombshell in metaphorical use, as in “drop a bombshell”, a cliché that should have no place in this paper

bonanza another greatly overworked word that should be avoided wherever possible

bookshop

Boötes diaeresis on the name of the constellation

Border cap the one between England and Scotland

-born normally prefer to use nationality, rather than country, eg, English-born, Bermudian-born, but there are exceptions, eg, Singapore-born; for counties, cities etc, normally use the noun, egl, London-born, Manchester-born, but again there are exceptions, eg, Cornish-born

bored with/by, not of

bortsch (Russian or Polish soup)

Bosphorus

Botox trade name, so must cap

Boutros Boutros Ghali (no hyphens), the former UN Secretary-General; at subsequent mentions, Dr Boutros Ghali. His successor was the Ghanaian **Kofi Annan**, in turn replaced by **Ban Ki Moon**

bow tie (no hyphen)

box office as noun, two words; hyphenate when adjectival (eg, box-office success)

boxed sets prefer to box sets for CDs, DVDs, etc

boy band two words. Note also **girl band**

Braille cap

brainchild try to avoid this cliché

branch (in police context): **Special Branch**, **Anti-Terrorist Branch**

Brands Hatch

brasserie may be uplifting but not to be confused with **brassiere**

breakthrough avoid describing every bit of medical and scientific progress as a breakthrough – “a significant development or discovery, especially in science”. It isn’t

breakout, **breakdown** (as noun, each one word); but to *break out*, etc, and **break-up** (hyphen)

breastfeed(ing) no hyphen

breaststroke no hyphen

Breathalyser (cap, proprietary), but **to breathalyse** (l/c, generic)

brehtaking no hyphen

breech birth

Breughel (the painters); note **Bruegel** is a Brussels-based think tank

Bric Brazil, Russia, India and China collectively, all relatively fast-growing developing economies; thus, eg, the Bric countries

Bridge over Troubled Water not *Waters*; the Simon and Garfunkel song and album

Bridges cap as in London Bridge, Golden Gate Bridge, Somerset Bridge, Watford Bridge

Bridget Jones's Diary (not *Jones*), novel and film

Britain is now widely used as another name for the United Kingdom and Great Britain, and pragmatically that usage is to be accepted. Strictly, **Great Britain** = England, Wales, Scotland and islands governed from the mainland (ie, not Isle of Man or Channel Islands); **United Kingdom** = Great Britain and Northern Ireland; **British Isles** = United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, Isle of Man and Channel Islands

British overseas territory eg, Anguilla, Bermuda, British Antarctic Territory, British Indian Ocean Territory, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Falkland Islands, Monserrat, Pitcairn Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, St Helena and its dependencies, Turks & Caicos Islands. They have premiers and prime ministers, so please check.

Brittany (Br tagne in French)

broadsheet is losing currency as a way to describe the serious British press. Most British newspapers are now of a smaller format (tabloid, compact, Berliner, etc). Quality or upmarket may be used as appropriate

Brownie, Brownie points cap "B"

Brummie (not Brummy), **Geordie, Scouse**, etc; people and dialect, all capped

Brussels sprouts the ever-popular Christmas vegetables

Brylcreem

BSE bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or mad cow disease

Bubble Wrap trademark, so cap

Budget cap

buffalo plural buffaloes

Buffett, Warren, American investment banker

Buggins's turn (not Buggins')

bulletproof adjective or verb, one word

bullion is gold or silver in unminted form

bull-mastiff, bull-terrier

bullring, bullfight(er)

bull's-eye

bumf prefer to **bumph**

bungee jumping (no hyphen)

burka prefer to **burqa** for the long, enveloping garment worn by Muslim women in public. The **niqab** is a piece of cloth that they use to cover the face. The **hijab** is a covering for the head and the face

Burma, not Myanmar (except in direct quotes); the inhabitants are Burmese, while Burmans are a Burmese people

Burns Night (caps, no apostrophe) falls on January 25

burnt not **burned**

Burton upon Trent (no hyphens); and note the colloquial **gone for a burton** (l/c)

Bush, George W, do not use Jr. Refer to him subsequently as Mr Bush or the former President (cap). Refer to his father as the first President Bush or George Bush Sr

But may be used at the beginning of a sentence, especially for emphasis. However, avoid using at the beginning of paragraphs

buyout and **buyback** one words as nouns; but prefer **buy-in, take-off, shake-out, shake-up, sell-off, sell-out** etc with hyphens, wherever the composite noun looks hideous

buzzword (one word)

by-election

bylaw

byline

bypass (noun or verb)

by-product

bystander

byte is a computer term for a small collection of bits (binary digits), roughly equivalent to one character. Do not confuse with *bite* (as with teeth). But note **soundbite**

Byzantine

C

cabbie (not **cabby**) as colloquialism for taxi driver

Caesarean section babies are delivered, not born, by this surgery

café (with accent)

caffeine prefer to caffeine

call-up (noun), to call up

camaraderie (not cameraderie)

Canada nationally there is a prime minister; in the provinces, there are premiers

CanalPlus, the French TV channel

canapé accent

Cancún note accent for the Mexican resort

cannon (military, same form for singular and plural); but **canons** (ecclesiastical, both churchmen and church laws), and **canon** as a collection/list of an author

canvas (as in painting); plural is **canvases**; **canvasses** with two central s's is of the verb "to canvass" (ie, polling)

capitalisation in general, the proper names of people and places, formal titles or titles of important offices, and the names of well-known and substantial institutions, all require capitals. As a rule of thumb, **cap specifics** (eg, the French Foreign Minister) but **l/c non-specifics** (eg, EU foreign ministers). But some terms, eg, **Act, Bill, Cabinet, Civil Service**, always cap

capsize

captions when space is tight, especially on single-column "mug shots", the name should be just the surname, as in headlines. When identifying faces with *left* and *right* etc, **use commas rather than brackets** (eg, Fred Smith, left, and his brother leaving court); make the identification fit the sequence of face in the photograph. Note that, as in text, double quotation marks are used in captions. If there is no caption space under the photograph and the reference needs to appear in the story, italicise, *right*, or *left*. It is unnecessary in a lone caption, if two photographs are stacked one on top of the other, to refer to the one above, given that it is expected to be the main subject of the caption. The distinction should be made only for the photograph below

carabiniere l/c, an Italian police officer; plural **carabinieri**

carat a measure of purity in gold (24-carat is 100 per cent); in precious stones and pearls, a measure of weight. The international carat is standardised at 200mg

car boot sale (no hyphen)

carcass

cardholder

careen to sway or cause to sway dangerously over to one side; **career** to move swiftly along, rush in an uncontrolled way

cargo prefer cargos as the plural

carmaker (one word)

car park (two words), **multistorey car park**

carpetbagger (one word)

carry out do not use as a synonym of *do*

cashcard (in general sense), **cashflow**, **cashback**

Cashpoint is Lloyds TSB Bank's trademark cash machine system, so takes the cap and must not be used generically; in the general sense, use cash dispenser or cash machine, or less formally, hole in the wall

Castilian (castellano) is the standard spoken and literary Spanish of Spain; **Catalan** is the distinct language of Catalonia

casualties be cautious in use of early and unconfirmed estimates of casualties in instances of terrorism, militia gunfights or disasters. Always give the estimate's source where possible, and be aware of exaggeration

catapult (not catapault)

catchphrase (one word)

Catch-22 avoid the grossly overworked cliché *Catch-22 situation*

cathedrals cap when giving the full name

Catholic in church context, say Roman Catholic at first mention, if that is what is meant, then Catholic

CAT scan not Cat scan

ceasefire

Cellophane is proprietary so cap

Celsius, **centigrade** use either term. In news stories, use Fahrenheit first, then Celsius in brackets at first mention, eg, "The temperature rose to 61F (16C)"

Census cap in specific cases, such as the 1901 Census, the 2001 Census, but l/c generally and adjectivally

centenarian, and see also **septuagenarian**, **octogenarian**, **nonagenarian**

centenaries use centenary, bicentenary, tercentenary; after that, say 400th (500th) anniversary

Central Europe (with cap C); likewise **Northern Europe**, **Eastern Europe**, **Southern Europe**, **Western Europe**

Centre, **the** use the cap in political context of the Centre, as with Left and Right. Similarly, Centre Left, Centre Right as nouns, but a centre-left politician (l/c adjectival, as with right-wing policy)

Centre Court at Wimbledon. **No 1 Court**, **No 2 Court** and so on

centrepiece

Centres for Disease Control and Prevention use the English spelling of centres for this American health institution

centring, but centering of arches in bridge-building

centuries the style is 3rd century BC, the 9th century, the 18th century etc; and adjectivally with the hyphen, eg, 20th-century architecture

Cephalonia the Greek island location of *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*

Ceylon the former name for Sri Lanka. The people are Sri Lankan; the majority group are the Sinhalese

Cézanne accent. The artist's first name was Paul

cha-cha-cha (not cha-cha)

chainsaw (one word)

chairman is the preferred usage for men and women, but chairwoman is acceptable. Avoid chair and chairperson (except in quotes and phrases such as "addressing remarks to the chair")

Chaitén note accent; volcano in southern Chile

chamber (l/c) of the Senate

champagne (l/c) use only for the Champagne region of France; otherwise write, eg, Russian sparkling wine. The champagne producers protect their name rigorously

Champions League (European football) no apostrophe

Champs Élysées note accents but no hyphen for Parisian boulevard leading from Arc de Triomphe; note also **Élysée Place**

changeable

Changing the Guard (not .. of the Guard)

Channel Tunnel (with cap T), but thereafter l/c tunnel if the context is clear; also, **Channel Tunnel Rail Link** (caps)

Chanukkah prefer this to variants such as Hanukkah etc, for the Jewish festival of lights

charge that an Americanism, never to be used as a synonym of *allege that*

charisma has become a boring cliché; find an alternative such as *presence, inspiration* etc

Charity Commission (not Charities)

château plural châteaux

Château Lafite no hyphen, and not Lafitte

chat room (two words) but **chatline** one

chat show, game show, quiz show, talk show etc (no hyphen when used as noun but use the hyphen when adjectival, eg, chat-show host); not also **chatline, sexline**

cheap goods are cheap; prices are low

Chechnya; adjective **Chechen**

check-in (noun), but **checklist, checkout counter**. Note also **checkup** noun; **check up** verb

cheerleader (one word)

chequebook one word, either as noun or adjective (eg, chequebook journalism)

chess names note **Garry Kasparov**, **Anatoly Karpov**. Note also Fide (the acronym for the International Chess Federation), not FIDE, and grandmaster (l/c)

Chester-le-Street, in County Durham (referred to as Co Durham). The cricket ground is Emirates Durham (formerly the Riverside)

chestnut old chestnut is a tautology

chi prefer qi for the vital energy in oriental medicine, martial arts etc, believed to circulate around the body in currents

chickenpox (no hyphen; similarly **smallpox**)

Chief Medical Officer

childcare (one word; as healthcare)

childminder (one word)

children's names generally for those under 18, write, eg, John Jones at first mention and then simply John at subsequent mention

child-sex abusers/offenders (use hyphen)

chilli prefer to chili

chill out two words as verb; one word, whether noun or adjective, for the music style (**chillout** compilation); hyphenated when referring to lifestyle (**chill-out** session at the spa)

chimera prefer to chimaera

chimpanzees are apes, not monkeys

Chinese is the written form of the Mandarin language

Chinese names place family name first, then given name so that the actress Zhang Ziyi, for instance, becomes Zhang at second mention. (Special care is to be taken because American copy generally ignores this rule) In the following quick guide, the names in parentheses should no longer be used except in an historical context. Municipalities: **Beijing** (Peking), **Chongqing** (Chungking), **Shanghai**, **Tianjin** (Tientsin). Autonomous regions: **Guangxi** (Kwangsi), **Ningxia** (Ningsia), **Xinjiang** (Sinkiang). Provinces: **Anhui** (Anhwei), **Fujian** (Fukien), **Gansu** (Kansu), **Guangdong** (Kwangtung), **Guizhou** (Kweichow), **Hainan**, **Hebei** (Hopeh), **Heilongjiang** (Heilungkiang), **Henan** (Honan), **Hubei** (Hupei), **Hunan**, **Jiangsu** (Kiangsu), **Jiangxi** (Kiangsi), **Jilin** (Kirin), **Liaoning**, **Qinghai** (Chinghai), **Sha'anxi** (Shensi), **Shandong** (Shantung), **Shanxi** (Shansi), **Sichuan** (Szechwan), **Yunnan**, **Zhejiang** (Chekiang). Note that, given China's size, it is always helpful to locate where a province is, eg, "in the northwestern Xinjiang province"

chip-and-PIN hyphenated as a noun or adjectivally

chocoholic, but **shopaholic** and **workaholic**

chopper and **copter** are never to be used as substitutes for helicopter, even in headlines

christened people are christened; ships are named

Christian, Christianity, unchristian, non-Christian, antichristian, Antichrist

Christian names take care in context of non-Christians; in such cases, use *forename* or *first name*

Christian terms cap the Apostles, the Bible, the (Ten) Commandments, the Cross, the Crucifixion, the Disciples, the Resurrection, the Gospels, Mass, Holy Communion (and simply Communion), Eucharist, Blessed Sacrament, Advent, Nativity (also a Nativity play, adjectival), the Scriptures; also He and His when referring to the persons of the Trinity, God (the Father), Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Church cap in the context of the institution (Anglican, Roman Catholic, Orthodox, whatever), but not adjectivally

churchwarden (one word)

cinemagoer, as concertgoer, operagoer, theatregoer, etc

cipher (not cypher)

circa abbreviate simply as c (roman) followed by a space

cissy, cissies not sissy

Citroën

City of London, the City, City prices

City and Guilds of London Institute (abbreviated to **City & Guilds**, with ampersand)

ciudad not cuidad; the Spanish for city, commonly used (and far too often misspelt) in places names, eg, Ciudad Bolívar, Ciudad Juárez

civil partnership the legal name for what is commonly referred to as “gay marriage”

Civil Service, but **civil servants**. Always cap Civil Service, even in adjectival use, eg, a Civil Service memorandum. Caps for the administrative grade, ie, Permanent Secretary, when used as part of the full title, thus Randy Rochester, Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Home Affairs. Otherwise l/c

civil war the American Civil War, the English Civil War, and by convention capitalise these two subsequently, eg, the Civil War. Otherwise, the Spanish Civil War is subsequently the civil war

claim do not use when simply *said* or *declared* would do. The word carries a suspicion of incredulity. Also, avoid the loose construction in sentences such as “The firm launched a drink that is claimed to promote learning ability”. This should read “... a drink that, it is claimed, promotes learning ability”

claims and facts remember to distinguish between a claim and a fact, particularly in headlines/standfirsts. Witnesses to rioting telling amid confusion of up to 600 people dead did not justify an unequivocal standfirst death toll of 600

clamour, clamouring but **clamorous**

clampdown use as little as possible

Clapham Junction is not Clapham. They are separate places, and their names are not interchangeable. Clapham is in the London Borough of Lambeth, while Clapham Junction is in the Battersea part of Wandsworth

clarinettist

Class A, B or C drugs (cap C)

clichés ought to have no place in our newspaper. Some of the most common, to be resisted strongly in almost every context, are: **backlash, basically, beleaguered, blueprint, bombshell, bonanza, brainchild, chaos, charisma, clampdown, consensus, crackdown, crisis, crunch, drama/dramatic, escalate, facelift, gunned down, high-profile, hopefully, ironically, legendary, major, massive, mega-, nightmare, prestigious, quantum leap, reportedly, shambles, shock, shoot-out, situation, trauma/traumatic, unique**

clingfilm (l/c one word)

cliquey

clock tower two words, but the Clocktower Building in Dockyard

closed-circuit television

clothing says menswear, women's wear, children's wear, sportswear

cloud-cuckoo-land (two hyphens)

clouds no need to italicise the names. Four main types: **nimbus** produce rain; **stratus** resemble layers; **cumulus** resemble heaps; and **cirrus** resemble strands or filaments of hair. Prefixes denote altitude, ie, **strato** (low-level), **alto** (mid-level) and **cirro** (high-level)

clubbable

co- the prefix does not normally require a hyphen even before an "e" or another "o" unless confusion may result. Thus **co-operate** (but **uncooperative**), **co-opt**, **co-ordinate** (but **uncoordinated**), **coeducation**, **coexist**

CO² use subscript

coalface, coalfield, coalmine (each one word), **coalminer** (but prefer miner)

coalition l/c noun or adjective, eg, the coalition Government

coastguard l/c and one word, in the British context; but note the US Coast Guard

coasts cap South Coast, East Coast, West Coast and North Coast in British and Irish contexts; also East Coast and West Coast of the US

Coca-Cola (hyphen); note also the trademark **Coke**. Similarly, **Pepsi-Cola**. If in doubt about the identity of the beverage, write the l/c generic cola

cock a snook not snoop

cockfight (no hyphen), as bullfight and dogfight

Cockney cap for the person, the dialect and adjectival use

codebreaker, codebreaking (one word)

coeducation(al), but permissible to use co-ed in headlines as coed would look hideous

coexist

cognoscenti roman, not italic

Cold War

collarbone (one word)

collectibles (not –ables), items sought by collectors

collective nouns usually use the singular verb, as with corporate bodies (the company, the Government, the council etc). But this rule is not inviolable; the key is to stick to the singular or plural throughout the story – sentences such as “The committee, which was elected recently, presented their report” are unacceptable. Prefer plural use for the couple, family, music groups and bands, the public and sports teams (but not sports clubs)

collision means a violent impact of moving objects. In accident reports, do not accept “A car collided with a wall”. Rewrite the statement in reported (or indirect) speech

Collins English Dictionary the first point of outside reference for *The Royal Gazette*. Where the Style Guide and *Collins* are at odds, the Style Guide takes priority

Colombia is the country, while **Columbia** is the Hollywood studio, university, river and Washington district. Also note **British Columbia** and **Pre-Columbian**

Colosseum in Rome; **Coliseum** in London

comedienne avoid wherever possible; use comedian for both sexes

comeuppance (no hyphen)

Commandments cap in biblical context, as the Ten Commandments, the Fourth Commandment

commando, plural **commandos** (not –oes)

commit do not use as an intransitive verb without a direct object, eg, “he wants to commit to the reforms”; write “he wants to commit himself to the reforms” or “he wants to make a commitment to the reforms”

committee committees of inquiry should be capped only when the full title is given. Cabinet and select committees should be capped. But the committee (l/c)

common sense (noun), but commonsense, commonsensical (adjective)

Commons takes singular verb, eg, “the Commons is debating ... “

Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting caps

communautaire relating to the EU or European Community – not *communitaire*

communiqué

communism, communist as with socialism and socialist, the best rule-of-thumb is to cap only when in specific party context, eg, a Communist candidate, a Communist rally, the Communist Mayor of Lille; but communist ideology, communist countries. It will help to think of a parallel with

conservative/conservatism or liberal/liberalism. But Marxist, Stalinist, Nazi and Fascist should be capped

community beware overuse in phrases such as the international community, etc

companies abbreviate to Co in eg, John Brown & Co. Company is singular. Full points in company titles are usually unnecessary, as in W H Smith. Do not confuse the words *company* and *firm*, even in headlines. A firm implies a business partnership, as in the legal or accountancy professions

compare with/to *compare with* (the more common use) when differences or contrasts are the point – “compare the saints with the devils” or “compared with last year’s figures” etc; *compare to* for likenesses – “compare this image to a damsel fair”

compass points in the UK, regional phrases, if well established and in common use, take caps, as in the **North**, the **South**, the **West**, the **South East**, the **North East**, the **North West**, the **South West**, the **West Country**, the **West Midlands**, the **East Midlands**, **East Anglia**, **Mid Wales**, **North Wales**, **South Wales**, **West Wales**, the **East/West End of London**. Likewise, the **West of Scotland**, the **North of Scotland** etc. But adjectivally, **southeast England** (although still the **South East of England**). Elsewhere, cap the following: the **Midwest** (US), **Central America**, **West Africa**, **North Africa**, **East Africa**, **Central Africa**, **South Africa**, **Southern Africa**, **North** and **South Atlantic** and **Pacific**, the **Middle/Far East**, but **sub-Saharan Africa** and **south India** etc. Do not use inelegant “geographical possessives” such as London’s East End, Colorado’s Breckenridge ski resort: write the **East End of London**; **Breckenridge**, the **Colorado ski resort**

complement (completing something); but

compliment (praise or tribute); **complimentary** as in free gifts

comprise means to consist of, be composed of

concertgoer (as with cinemagoer, operagoer, partygoer, theatregoer), but concert hall

confectionery sweets, cakes, etc; **confectionary** is a place where confectionery is made

conference keep l/c in Progressive Labour Party conference, One Bermuda Alliance conference

Congo take care to distinguish between the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire, and before that Belgian Congo) and the far smaller Republic of Congo, which may also be referred to as Congo (Brazzaville), and was formerly a French colony.

Congress (US, cap), but **congressional** l/c, and **congressman** also l/c except when with a name, eg, Congressman John Smith; but generally try to avoid this construction and say John Smith, a congressman from Minnesota, etc

conjurer prefer to conjurer

conjoined twins the proper medical term for Siamese twins

conman (one word, as hitman)

consensus the word is a cliché that should be avoided wherever possible. Furthermore, since consensus means general or widespread agreement, do not use tautologies such as general consensus, broad consensus, wide consensus, consensus of opinion, etc

considerable avoid its use as a lazy adjective

consigliere

consortium, plural *consortiums* (not consortia); as a general rule, use the *–ums* plural

consult never say *consult with*

Continent, the, referring to mainland Europe, but l/c **continental**

continuous means without intermission; **continual** means frequently recurring

controversial delete from 99 stories out of 100

convener, not convenor

convertible (not *–able*), noun and adjective

conveyor belt; a **conveyer** is a person who conveys

co-operate, **co-ordinate** etc; but uncooperative, uncoordinated, non-cooperation

co-production, **co-producer** etc (use hyphen to avoid ambiguity)

copycat (no hyphen)

copyright (sole right in artistic work, etc);

copywriter (advertising)

cornetist

cornflakes (generic)

Coronation cap when referring to a specific event, such as Elizabeth II's in 1953 and also cap Coronation Oath; but l/c in most adjectival uses, eg, coronation ceremony, coronation broadcast

coroner's court at inquests, the coroner is l/c unless specific. Juries return the verdict; the coroner records it. Note that an inquest, like a trial or a hearing, cannot be "told". Write "the court was told"

cortège (use accent)

coruscating (not coruscating) means sparkling or scintillating, not abrasive or corrosive. The word often meant by this malapropism is *excoriating*

Côte d'Azur no final "e"

counsel is both singular and plural in court context. Do not say "counsels for Mr X and Mrs Y"

coup d'état (note roman, accent) normally simply write **coup**. Note **coup de grâce** (roman, accent), **coup de théâtre** (roman, accents)

couple treat this collective noun as a plural, eg, "The couple are coming to terms with their plight"

Courchevel, the Alpine ski resort (not Courcheval)

court martial plural, courts martial; verb, to court-martial

Court of Appeal always use the full title at first mention and wherever possible thereafter, although appeal court (l/c) may be used sparingly

courts cap all courts when specific

Coward, Noël use the diaeresis

crack is a type of cocaine, so the phrase crack cocaine is tautologous

crackdown use as little as possible

Cracow (prefer to Krakow or variations)

crèche (not crêche)

creditworthy, creditworthiness (no hyphen)

Creole is a person born in the West Indies or Latin America whose ancestry is wholly or partly European. It does not imply mixed race

crescendo means getting louder, growing in force. Nothing *rises* to a *crescendo*. Plural is *crescendos*

Cresta Run

Criminal Records Bureau (not Record)

crisis always try to find an alternative for this greatly overworked word. Its use should be confined to a process reaching a turning point. A crisis does not deepen, grow, mount or worsen, and is never a continuous state such as a “housing crisis”. Economies are never “in crisis”; “crisis situations” are never to appear in our paper

criterion plural criteria

Croat for the people and language; **Croatian** for the general adjective

crosier prefer to crozier

Cross, the (cap)

cross benches, but crossbenchers, crossbench opinion

cross-Channel, but transatlantic

Crown (in constitution sense) is capped, as in Crown property, Crown counsel, the Crown representative

Crown dependency eg, Jersey, Guernsey, the Isle of Man

Crown Jewels (caps)

crucifix a cross or an image of a cross with a figure of Jesus Christ on it

Cruella De Vil the character in *One Hundred and One Dalmations* (the Disney cartoon, 1961) and *101 Dalmations* (1996, with Glenn Close)

cruise missiles, but Pershing missiles and the Stealth bomber

crunch avoid phrases such as *reaches crunch point*, *the situation came to a crunch* – clichés that should have no place in our paper

crystallise

cul-de-sac (hyphens) a road that leads to a dead end; plural cul-de-sacs

Cup cap *Final* only in Fa Cup Final (or Cup Final for short), but l/c all others, such as World Cup final, Champions League final, Davis Cup final

cupfuls, spoonfuls etc (not cupsful or cupfulls)

currencies always convert to Bermuda or US dollar on news, sport and features pages – usually at first mention of the foreign currency. Write £1.5 million (about \$2.25 million). “About” is used because of the fluctuating nature of foreign exchange markets. On business pages, commonly used foreign currencies need not be converted unless to help the flow, and the headline should reflect the article’s original currency rather than a dollar equivalent. Do not convert meaninglessly, eg, a number of pounds spent in 1995 to a number of dollars at a 2015 exchange rate

current avoid wherever possible as a synonym of *present*

curriculums (plural, not curricula; but note extracurricular activities); **curriculum vitae**, **CV** abbreviated (plural, **curricula vitae**)

curtsy (not curtsey); plural **curtsies**

cusp, on the in astrology, a cusp is any division between houses or signs of the zodiac, eg, he was Scorpio on the cusp of Sagittarius”. More generally, it has come to mean a point of transition between two different states, eg, “their children are on the cusp of adolescence”

customs officer, customs regulations (l/c)

cut-throat use hyphen

cybercafé, cybercrime, cyberpet, cyberpunk, cybersex, cyberspace, cybersquatting, cyberterrorism, cyberwar all one word; some new words with the prefix cyber- may need a hyphen if they look (even more) hideous without one

Cyprus, northern keep the l/c in northern, as the “state” is recognised only by the Turkish Government; also l/c government in northern Cyprus, as with provincial or state governments in Australia or Canada etc

czar although it is tsar (in Russian context), the czar form is permissible in the context of government-appointed co-ordinators such as drugs czar, mental health czar

Czech Republic use Czechoslovakia only in the historical sense. The two countries since their division are the Czech Republic and Slovakia

D

Dagestan (not Daghestan)

Dakar capital of Senegal

dal prefer to dhal etc for a curry made from lentils and other pulses

danceband

dancefloor

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (no hyphens). Note, capital. Is Dodoma

Dark Ages caps, but take care; the period after the fall of the Roman Empire is no longer considered wholly obscure and barbaric. But “return to the dark ages” l/c

Darwin, Charles write the title of his great work as *On the Origin of Species* (usually omitting the words *by Means of Natural Selection*)

dashes while - on occasion – an effective device, they can quickly – and frequently – become ugly and tiresome. As a rule of thumb, one pair per 500 words is enough

data strictly plural, but can now be used in singular through common usage

databank, database

dates Monday, April 18, 1994 (never 18th April) ; but April 1994. When citing periods of years, say 1992-93 (1992-3); for the new millennium, write 1999-2000, then 2000-01 etc; from 1939 to 1941 (not from 1939-41); the **Forties, Eighties, Nineties** (or 1940s, 19980s, 1990s); but with people’s ages, l/c, as in “she was in her forties, eighties, nineties” etc).

da Vinci, Leonardo; but note *The Da Vinci Code* for the book and the film

Day 1 cap and figure because there is no specific date, as in “it’s been happening since Day 1”

DayGlo caps, no hyphen, proprietary

days/months if abbreviated, and only in listings etc, not in general body copy, use: Mon Tues Wed Thur Fri Sat Sun; Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sept Oct Nov Dec

daytime, but **night-time**

day trader, day trading (no need to hyphenate)

D-Day was on June 6, 1944

deaf and dumb avoid this phrase, which is nowadays deemed offensive. Likewise, avoid deaf mute. The best alternative to either phrase is “profoundly deaf”

deafblind (no hyphen) unable to hear or see

deathbed no hyphen, one word, as in sickbed

death row (as in American prisons), l/c; hyphen as adjective, death-row campaigner

debacle (accents unnecessary)

debatable

debut (no accent) is most widely understood as a noun; avoid using as a verb, and write, eg, “He made his debut ...”

decades use either the Sixties or the 1960s. The Noughties were from 2000 to 2009

decimals do not mix decimals and fractions in the same story

decimate literally means to kill one in ten; custom has extended its use to indicate heavy casualties, but use sparingly

deckchair, as armchair (no hyphens)

decor (no accent)

de facto roman

defuse means to remove the fuse from, or reduce tension in an emergency etc; never confuse with **diffuse**, which means to spread in all directions, scatter etc, or (as adjective), not concise, spread over a large area

de Gaulle never cap the *de* in this name unless at the start of a sentence or headline

degrees (educational) a bachelor's, a master's (l/c), a first, a second, an upper second (2:1), a lower second (2:2), a third etc

degrees (weather) omit degree sign in temperatures

de Klerk, F.W.

déjà vu (accents but not italic)

deliver, delivery perfect for babies, newspapers, milk on the doorstep, but beware meaningless overuse in politician and management-speak, eg, "The key indicators of delivery are moving in the right direction". The word has become a cliché, so always try to think of an alternative; eg, promises are kept, policies are implemented, public services are provided, improvements are made

Deloitte the rebranded name. Except in historical contexts

Demise strictly means the death of a person, or the failure of an enterprise or institution. Keep to these definitions. It is wrong to refer to the demise of Glenn Hoddle or, on several occasions, Peter Mandelson

denouement no accent

deny does not mean the same as **rebut** (which means to argue to the contrary, producing evidence), or **refute** (which means to win such an argument)

Depression, the cap for the 1930s economic slump

de rigueur roman; not *de rigueur*

descendant not to be confused with ancestor

desiccate

desktop (computer, publishing), no hyphen

despite perfectly acceptable, and virtuously shorter, alternative to *in spite of*. But do not say "despite the fact that"; use *although* instead

despoiled (not despoilt)

despoliation or **despoilment** (not despoliation)

détente accent

deutschemark/deutschmark prefer not to use either form, nor D-mark. Use simply the mark

Deutsche Bank German commercial bank not to be confused with Deutsche Bundesbank, or Bundesbank, the German central bank

Devil, the (cap); but **devils** (many, l/c), **devilish**

dextrous prefer to dexterous

Dhaka (not Dacca), capital of Bangladesh

diabetes: type 1, type 2 etc, no cap, no hyphen

diagnose take great care: illnesses are diagnosed; patients are not. Thus, do not write, eg, “He was diagnosed with cancer”; rather, “He had cancer diagnosed” etc

Diana, Princess of Wales, at first mention; subsequently the Princess (cap, as she remained a member of the Royal Family until her death). Never write Princess Diana or – even worse – Princess Di or Lady Di (excepted in reported speech). Say the late Princess where appropriate. Note **the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund** (one comma only)

Diaspora cap in Jewish context, but l/c in general sense of a dispersal

dice use as both singular and plural except in historic contexts, eg, “the die is cast”

Dickens’ preferred possessive without the –s’s ending, eg, “Charles Dickens’ health began to fail.”

Dictaphone is a trade name and must be capped

Diddy for legal reasons, always write **P. Diddy** (full point) for the producer and rapper Sean Combs

didgeridoo

die prefer to write “to die of cancer/heart failure” rather than “to die from ...”

diehard no hyphen

dietitian prefer to dietician

different from, and never different *to* or *than*; likewise, differ from

dignitaries

diktat

dilapidated (not delapidated)

dilate dilation means normal widening, as in pupils of the eye; dilatation is widening by force, as in child abuse cases. Take care

dining room (no hyphen)

diphtheria, diphthong (note “ph”)

directly, direct adverbs with long histories. In most senses use directly; reserve direct for meaning “straight in direction or aspect, without deviation”, eg “the taxi took him direct to the airport”; or “without intermediaries”, eg, “she appealed direct to the mayor”. Always use directly before an adjective, eg, “directly liable”. To travel “direct to Flatts” implies no deviation; to travel there “directly” implies immediately

disc (musical, recording, or shape, eg, disc jockey, compact disc, disc brake); but **disk** in strict computing context, eg, disk drive, floppy disk. When, eg, government data has been lost on what is a CD, write disc

discernible (not –able)

discomfit take great care with this verb; it means primarily to thwart, defeat or rout, but by extension can mean thoroughly to embarrass or disconcert (noun discomfiture). It has no connection with discomfort, which means to deprive of comfort or make uneasy

discreet means tactful, circumspect (noun discretion); **discrete** means individually distinct (noun discreteness)

disinterested means impartial, unbiased (noun disinterest); never confuse with **uninterested**, which means having a lack of interest.

Disney the theme parks are **Disneyland** (California); **Disney World** (Florida); **Disneyland Paris** (Euro Disney should strictly be confined to the name of the European company); and **Tokyo Disneyland** (owned by a Japanese company, but Disney earns royalties from it)

disorientate (not disorient)

dispatch (not despatch)

dissociate (not disassociate)

distil, distilled, distillation

divorcé, man; **divorcée**, woman; use **divorcees** (no accent) in reference to both men and women

Diwali the Hindu festival of lights

DIY spell out do-it-yourself at first mention

Dobermann breed of dog; more fully, **Dobermann pinscher**

Docklands in London; docklands elsewhere

doctor do not confine the title Dr to medical practitioners. If a person has a doctorate from a reputable institution and wishes to be known as Dr Smith, he or she should be so titled. But only at second mention

ducosoap, **docudrama** etc (no hyphens)

dogfight, as in bullfight, cockfight etc

dogs l/c with most breeds, such as basset hound, bloodhound, borzoi, boxer. But German shepherd, Dobermann, Great Dane, Jack Russell, Yorkshire terrier

dog whistle noun; **dog-whistle** (hyphen) for adjective, eg, dog-whistle politics, and verb

dollars with figures use \$5 (when American), A\$5 (Australian), C\$5 (Canadian), S\$5 (Singapore) and so on

doll's house (not dolls')

Dome cap "D" in Millennium Dome and when used on its own, whether as noun or adjective

Domesday Book (roman, like Magna Carta), but **doomsday** in general or biblical sense

dominatrix plural **dominatrices**

Dominican Republic, neighbour to Haiti on the island of Hispaniola, while

Dominica is one of the Windward Islands. Both are sovereign states

donate use *give* or *present* wherever possible

doppelgänger ghostly duplicate of a living person. Note l/c and roman, anglicised version of German *Doppelgänger*

Doran, Seán former artistic director of the English National Opera spells his name with an accent

do's and don'ts

Dostoevsky

dot-com use hyphen for colloquial reference to internet companies, eg, the dot-com bubble

double bass the instrument

double entendre plural **double entendres**

dovish not doveish

down avoid unnecessary use after verbs, as in close down, shut down. See **up**

Downing Street write 10 Downing Street, or simply No 10

downmarket (no hyphen), as upmarket

downplay prefer **play down**

Down's syndrome never say mongol

down to a T

downtown a North American term, and also now somewhat Antipodean as well, for the central or lower part of a city, especially the main commercial area. Do not use inappropriately, except for deliberate comic effect. The phrase downtown Manhattan is meaningful, given the geography and culture, but downtown London and downtown Baghdad, for example, are not

Down Under cap as a colloquialism for Australasia (especially Australia)

drachmas, not drachmae (now historical contexts))

draconian (l/c)

draftsman (legal), but **draughtsman** (art, design)

drama, dramatic confine their use to the theatrical context wherever possible; *dramatic events* and the like are among the most well-worn clichés in the language

dreamt not dreamed

drier is the comparative of dry; **dryer** is the noun, as in tumble dryer

drily prefer to dryly

drink-drive, drink-driver, drink-driving

drivers no hyphens in taxi driver, bus driver, car driver

drop a bombshell never to be used

dropout (noun or adjective – as in students);

drop-out (rugby); and to **drop out** (verb)

drug dealer, drug dealing, drug smuggler, drug smuggling, drug taking no hyphens as nouns; by hyphenate adjectives, eg, a drug-dealing cartel, a drug-smuggling gang

drug names cap trade name, eg, Valium; l/c generic name, eg, diazepam

drugs do not confuse narcotics (which include cocaine and heroin) with other illicit drugs such as cannabis, LSD and amphetamines. See **narcotics**

Drug Enforcement Administration (US), thereafter DEA

Druid(s) (cap)

dry-clean, dry-cleaning etc

drystone wall

dual (of two, eg, dual carriageway); **duel** (fight)

dual nationals avoid this official speak for **people with dual nationality**

Du Beke, Anton the dancer

du Cann, Sir Edward

Duchess of York she ceased to be a member of the Royal Family upon her divorce in 1996. After her first mention as Duchess of York, refer to the duchess (l/c) subsequently – not “Fergie” or “Princess Ferguson”. See **Titles** special section

duct tape

due to must not be used as the equivalent of *because of* or *owing to*. The phrase must be attached to a noun or pronoun. “His absence was due to illness” is correct. “He was absent due to illness” is wrong

duffel bag, duffel coat

Duke of Edinburgh say the Duke (cap) or Prince Philip after first mention; but this cap rule applies only to the British Royal Family and overseas heads of state, so the Duke of Rutland would become the duke (l/c) after first mention. See **Royal Family, heads of state, Titles** special section

Dumbarton for the Scottish town but **Dunbartonshire** for the county

dump do not use as synonym of dismiss or sack

Durham say Co Durham for the county and Durham city for the city

Durham University not the University of Durham

Düsseldorf umlaut

Dutch East India Company, the (not Indies)

duty-free (hyphenated, noun or adjective)

dwarf as plural, prefer dwarfs (not dwarves)

dyke (embankment), not dike

dysentery (not dysentry or disentery)

dyspepsia

E

each, every(one) although singular, there is a growing tendency to use them with plural pronouns, as the plural is increasingly becoming a way of saying *he* or *she*, or *his* or *her*. Hence, “everyone has what they want”, “each of us has our secrets”, but “everyone has secrets”

Earhart, Amelia (the 1930s aviator)

earlier this word is often redundant because the tense of the verb says it all; similarly **later**

Earls Court (no apostrophe)

early hours avoid the phrase “in the early hours of the morning”; say simply “the early hours” or, better, “early yesterday/today”

earned never *earnt*

earring (no hyphen)

Earth cap in planetary or astronomical sense, eg, “The greatest show on Earth”; but not in phrases such as “down to earth”. The same rule applies to the Moon and Sun

earthquake can abbreviate to *quake* in headings. See **Richter scale**

east, eastern etc, for when to cap in geographical sense, see **compass points**

East End, West End of London; also East, West, North, South, Central, Great London (all caps)

EastEnders the TV soap opera

Easter Day (not Easter Sunday) is the Sunday between Good Friday and Easter Monday. Also note that the Saturday before Easter Day is **Holy Saturday** (not Easter Saturday, which is the Saturday after Easter) or **Easter Eve**

Eastern Europe, but eastern Germany for what was East Germany before reunification. See **Germany**

easygoing one word

easyJet note also bmi, bmibaby, flybe,

eau de parfum, plural **eaux de parfum**; likewise, **eau de vie**, plural **eaux de vie**

eBay avoid at the start of a sentence, as it looks strange typographically, but if there is no alternative, then write EBay in that context. However it is permissible to write eBay at the start of a headline. Apply these rules to trademarks such as **iPod**

ebitda earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation; where possible spell out at first mention

e-book

EC must NOT be used as an abbreviation for the European Commission in text or headlines. EC remains the short form ONLY of the European Community, although in almost all contexts now, EU is preferred. See **European Commission**

Eccleston, Christopher the actor

Ecclestone, Bernie the Formula One president and CEO

E. coli (italics in text, but roman and no point in headlines); in full, *Escherichia coli*. Note the O157 strain (letter O, not a zero)

e-commerce (as e-mail)

ecofriendly, ecoregion, ecospecies, ecosphere, ecosystem, ecoterrorist, ecotourist, ecotype (no hyphen), but **eco-hotel, eco-town, eco-warrior**

Ecstasy (cap) the drug

Ecuadorean (not -ian)

editor cap first mention of editors of well-known leading publications; subsequent mentions, revert to l/c. Assistant editors, deputy editors and below retain l/c

educationist (not educationalist)

, **eg**, no points, but use a comma before and after. See , **ie**,

Eid al-Adha literally the festival of sacrifice, marking the end of the annual pilgrimage, the **haj**, to Mecca. Write Eid al-Adha in full at first mention, not simply Eid

Eid al-Fitr literally the festival of fast-breaking, marking the end of the fast of Ramadan. Write Eid al-Fitr in full at first mention, not simply Eid

Eire do not use except in historical context. See **Ireland**

either takes a singular verb when both subjects are embraced. "Either is good enough". See **neither**

eke, eking

elbowroom (one word), similarly headroom, legroom

elderly, aged, old be sensitive in the use of these words. As a guide, do not use for people under 65 and be aware that there are many over this age for whom "elderly" is not an appropriate adjective. A consensus is building for the term "older people"

-elect hyphenate, l/c, as in "the President-elect of the United States" in the period between the election and the inauguration

Electoral College cap in US election context

electrocardiographs are machines for measuring heart function; **electrocardiograms** are the tracings made by them

electrocute means to kill by electric shock, not “merely” to suffer an electric shock

elicit means to evoke, bring to light, or draw out; never confuse with **illicit** (unlawful, forbidden)

Eliot, T(homas) S(tearns), usually known as T.S. Eliot; also **George Eliot** (real name Mary Ann Evans)

elite (roman, no accent)

elk see **moose**

e-mail but note E-Stamp, a registered trademark; note e-commerce

embarkation (not embarkation). You embark *in* (not on) a ship

embarrass, embarrassment

embassy same style as for Ambassador, eg, the French Embassy in Rome, thereafter the embassy

émigré (two accents)

Emin, Tracey (not Tracy)

éminence grise (accent)

Emmies (plural of the Emmy awards)

emphasise no longer any preference for this to *stress* in phrases such as “he emphasised the importance”, “she emphasised that the ruling was final” See **stress**

empire cap as in British Empire or roman Empire; similarly cap **emperor** when specific, eg, Emperor Claudius

encyclopaedia (not the American encyclopedia)

endgame one word. See **gambit**

energy measured in watt-hours etc, whereas power is measured in watts, megawatts etc, eg, a 60W light bulb. Beware confusing energy and power. See **megawatts, power**

England, English beware of these when the meaning is **Britain, British** and vice versa

England and Wales Cricket Board, is abbreviated as **ECB**

English-Speaking Union hyphen

engineers restrict use to white-collar workers with engineering qualifications; do not use with reference to mechanics, manufacturing workers, platelayers etc

enormity does NOT mean great size; it means quality or character of being outrageous, or extreme wickedness or serious error. Do not misuse. For great size, see **immensity**

en route (not italics)

ensconce spelt with two c's (not ensconse), derived from a **sconce**, a small protective fortification

ensign the **White Ensign** is the ensign of the Royal Navy and the Royal Yacht Squadron; the **Red Ensign** is the British Merchant Navy's flag; the **Blue Ensign** is flown by Royal Fleet Auxiliary vessels and by certain yacht clubs. There is no such thing as the Royal Ensign; however, the **Royal Standard** will fly from the Queen's homes when she is there. See **Royal Standard**

en suite (two words, no hyphen, no italics, both as adverb and adjective)

ensure means to make certain; you **insure** against risk; you **assure** your life. The verb **ensure** usually needs "that" after it if accompanied by a following verb (eg, "he tried to ensure that the policy was adopted"); but omit "that" if followed by a noun (eg, "he tried to ensure its success")

enthral

Environment Agency (caps)

E.ON the energy company

Épernay (accent) the champagne (the wine, l/c) town in Champagne (cap, the region). See **wines**

Epicentre the point on the Earth's surface directly above the focus of an earthquake or underground nuclear explosion

Epley manoeuvre used to treat benign positional vertigo

eponymous means "giving its name to ..." so "Hamlet, the eponymous Prince" (ie, giving his name to the play) is correct; "*Hamlet*, the eponymous play", is wrong

Equator (cap), but **equatorial** in general sense

Eriksson, Sven-Göran (the former England football head coach, not manager); note hyphen and accent

escalate, escalation avoid these clichés; use *rise, grow* or *soar*

escapers NEVER *escapees*

Eskimo is widely regarded as a derogatory term. Use **Inuit** instead, except in occasional historical contexts. Note Inuit is the singular and plural noun.

Establishment cap in sense of the perceived leaders of society; but l/c as in the medical establishment, the legal establishment, when the sense is more restricted; also l/c in the context of the establishment of the Church

Eta (not ETA), the Basque separatist organisation. Note also Basque Country (initial caps)

"ethnic cleansing" always use quotation marks in writing this euphemism for the enforced removal of people from a place based on their ethnicity

Eucharist (cap) See **Christian terms**

euro the European single currency takes l/c (as franc, pound, mark, peseta). See **currencies**

eurocheques, eurobonds (l/c, no hyphen)

euroland (l/c) vernacular term for European single currency; also **eurozone**

Europa League see **Uefa**

Europe Western, Eastern, Central, Northern, Southern (all caps). Europe includes the British Isles, so do not use the name as equivalent to the Continent. Britain does not export to Europe, but to the *rest* of Europe

European arrest warrant

European Commission, Commissioners cap the Commission throughout as a noun, but l/c when adjectival, eg, *a commission ruling* (the same rule as for Government/government); cap the commissioner only when referring to a specific person (eg, Mario Monti, the Competition Commissioner; thereafter, the commissioner). The President of the European Commission is capped throughout (as with all foreign Presidents)

European Union (EU), European Community (EC) the first is the preferred phrase except where the context is trade.

Eurosceptic (not hyphenated), and similarly cap **Europhobia, Europhiles** etc

Eurotunnel (one word) is the company that owns and operates the Channel Tunnel. **Eurostar** operates the passenger trains that run through the tunnel

Eurovision Song Contest caps

eurozone the single currency area. See also **euroland**

euthanasia no need to quote mercy killing as its synonym. If used in a direct quote, prefer **euthanase** (to euthanise) but otherwise avoid this verb

evangelical(s) keep l/c in general church contexts except when part of an official title such as the Evangelical Alliance

evensong (l/c) See **Christian terms**

eventuate avoid this ghastly word; use *happen* instead

ever is rarely – nay, hardly ever – necessary; avoid phrases such as *best-ever, fastest-ever*, and say simply *best* and *fastest*, qualifying (where appropriate) with *yet*. See **first, superlatives, universal claims**

ex- prefer *former* in most contexts, as in *former Yugoslavia*, although ex-serviceman is unavoidable and ex- is fine for headlines

examinations 11-plus, 7-plus etc; also A levels, but A-level results etc (hyphenate only when adjectival); also AS levels. Abbreviate to *exam* only in headlines. GCSE, the General Certificate of Secondary Education, need not normally be spelt out. See **A level, GCSE, SATs**

Excel the Microsoft spreadsheet software

ExCel centre conference and exhibition venue in the London Docklands

excepting do not use when *except* or *except for* is possible

exclamation marks nearly always unnecessary!!!!

exclusive avoid with story or interview. The phrase “in an interview with *The Royal Gazette*” is sufficient

excoriating the word that may be required when **coruscating** is written. See **coruscating**, **malapropism**

ex dividend (not *ex-dividend*) in financial contexts

execution take care; as with assassination, do not use as synonym of any killing or murder. On occasion, the phrase “summary killing” may be appropriate. Legally, an execution is a judicial killing after due process of law

exhibitions titles of art exhibitions in italics

existing use *present* wherever possible as an alternative

Exocet (cap)

ex parte l/c, roman, no hyphen

expatriate (noun, verb or adjective – not *ex-patriate* and never *expatriot*). Expat may be used in headlines only

expert if someone is, eg, a lawyer, then avoid writing the imprecise “legal expert”; on the other hand, a phrase such as “an expert on constitutional law” could be appropriate and precise

extinct means, of an animal or plant species, having no living representative; having died out. Biologists do talk of local extinctions, ie, when a species has died out in a particular habitat, and we can follow that usage, eg, “The creature is extinct in Britain.” In the UK context, the smallest area specified would normally be a county. More generally, extinction means the total elimination of a species worldwide, eg, the dodo

extramarital (no hyphen); similarly, **extramural**, **extracurricular**, **extrasensory** etc

exuberant (never *exhuberant*), but **exhilarate**, **exhort** etc

eye of the storm do not refer tautologically to “the calm in the eye of the storm”; also note that the eye, as a quiet area, is a singularly inappropriate metaphor for a focus of high activity or frenetic action. See **hurricane**

eye to eye no hyphens adverbially, as in “seeing eye to eye”; but hyphenate *eye-to-eye* adjectivally

eyeing

eyewitness use *witness* instead wherever possible (except in direct quotes)

Eyjafjallajökull the Icelandic volcano from which ash grounded aircraft in 2010. Note also prefer *volcanology*, *volcanologist* to *vulcan-* spellings

F

F111s (no hyphen). See **aircraft types**

Fàbregas, Cesc (note accent) the footballer

façade (use the cedilla)

Facebook

facelift use sparingly in its metaphorical sense, where it becomes overworked. In its cosmetic context, quite acceptable, however

faceted, faceting prefer single “t”

fact that almost always unnecessary circumlocution, so avoid (eg, “owing to the fact that” means *because*). See **verbosity**

fact sheet

Fahrenheit See **Celsius**

faïence (diaeresis) tin-glazed earthenware

fairy tale no hyphen

Faithfull, Marianne

falangist in Spain; **phalangist** in Lebanon

Falklands conflict, the l/c preferred formula because war was never formally declared; if the word war has to be used write Falklands war (l/c)

fallacy means a faulty argument, not an erroneous belief

fallback (noun) one word

fall pregnant avoid this phrase; write **become pregnant**

Fallopian tubes (cap “F”)

fallout (noun) one word

family one of the collective nouns that is preferable as a plural, eg, “the family are rearranging their holiday”. Likewise, use the plural for **couple**, music bands and groups, **public**, sports teams. See also **collective nouns**

Far East encompasses the following: China, Hong Kong, Japan, North and South Korea, Macau, Mongolia, Taiwan, See **South-East Asia**

farmers’ market

Faroe Islands or the Faroes

farther is applied to distance (literal or figurative); eg, “nothing could be farther from the truth”; **further** means *in addition to, another, more*, eg, “a further point”

fascia (not *facia*)

Fascist cap in the political sense, but as a term of abuse, l/c; but **fascism** l/c except in specifically party context. See **communism**

fat cat no quotation marks, no hyphen. Hyphenate as modifier, eg, fat-cat salaries

Father (as in priest) avoid the ugly abbreviation Fr before a name

father of two, mother of three no hyphens. Do not define people by their relationships unequally; don't say "a mother of two was jailed" where you would not say "a father of two ..."; do not say "a grandmother was attacked" – she may be no older than 40

Father's Day (not Fathers'). See **Mother's Day**

fatwa (not italic) a Muslim religious edict, not a sentence or punishment, eg, not synonymous with a death sentence

fault l/c when referring to a specific fault in the Earth's crust, eg, San Andreas fault; also note **fault line** (two words)

Fayed, Dodi (Dodi Al Fayed), the late elder son of Mohamed Al Fayed, the former owner of Harrods, who died in the same crash that claimed the life of **Diana, Princess of Wales**

Fed, the (US) say Federal Reserve at first mention; cap Chairman of the Fed, as with Governor of the Bank of England, President of the Bundesbank

feel-good factor

Feild, JJ (no full points)

Fellow cap in specific title such as Arthur Brown, a Fellow of Magdalen, or in the more obvious Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons; but in general sense, "a group of fellows in the quadrangle" "a research fellow", l/c; keep fellowship l/c

female do not write female councillor(s), female director(s) etc; write woman councillor, women councillors, woman director, women directors

feminine designations such as authoress, poetess, wardress should be avoided. But actress is such common usage that it is acceptable. See **comedienne**

feng shui two words, roman

Ferris wheel

Fez not Fes (Morocco)

Festival Hall generally omit Royal

festivals cap the Edinburgh Festival (cultural), the Reading Festival (pop), the Cheltenham Festival (racing) etc, thereafter the festival (l/c)

fête (with accent)

fewer, of numbers (fewer people, fewer goals); **less**, of size, in quantity, or singular nouns (less population, less meat); note construction in the singular, eg, "one genius fewer" cf "two fewer geniuses". See **less**

financé (man) **financée** (woman). See **divorcé**

Fide (not FIDE), the world chess body. See **chess names**

Fifa (not FIFA), the governing body of world football

Fifth Avenue generally write out such street names (not 5th Avenue). See **New York**

fifty write 50-50 chance; note Fifties (cap) for the decade, but “she was in her fifties” (age, l/c, not 50s)

fighting for his/her life avoid this cliché. Instead say *critically ill/injured*

fig leaf (two words)

figures See **numbers**

file sharing (noun); **file-sharing** (adjective), eg, a file-sharing program

filibuster (not filibuster)

Filipinos, Filipinas (women), **the Philippines**

film festival Cannes Film Festival, then subsequently the festival (l/c)

films titles in italics; note **film-maker**. See **movies**

film star (two words)

Filofax is a trade name and must be capped. Use “personal organiser” for generic

fingers the finger next to the thumb is the index finger (also known as the forefinger), then comes the middle finger, the ring finger and the little finger

firearms do not confuse bullets with shotgun cartridges (containing pellets); so a gunshot wound is markedly different from a bullet wound

firefight should not be used as a synonym of military skirmish or exchange of fire; **firefighters** try to extinguish flames. Note that we should always refer to firefighters rather than firemen, as a substantial number of in the Fire Service are now women

firing line militarily, the group doing the shooting. Do not confuse with **line of fire**

firm do not use as a synonym of company. See **companies**

first serves as an adverb; avoid *firstly*. If a list of priorities is essential in a story, now write *first*, *second*, *third* etc as the shorter adverbial form. Never say *first-ever*. Use **first-class** (for service, hotel etc) generally; but because the denomination is specified, **1st-class** and **2nd-class** for postage stamps

first aid (noun, no hyphen); but hyphenate when adjectival, eg, first-aid qualification

First Lady caps, and restrict use primarily to US context – never for the British Prime Minister’s wife

First World War (not World War One); similarly, Second World War. See **wars**

fishfinger one word for the generic filleted or minced piece of fish in breadcrumbs

fjord (not fiord)

flair, as in talent, must never be confused with

flare, as in fire, fashion etc

flatfish eg, brill, dab, megrim, plaice, sole, turbot and other species of bony fish that are asymmetrical as adults; but write **flat fish** to describe skates, rays, monkfish and other species, whether cartilaginous or bony, that are symmetrical but compressed dorsoventrally

flat-owners (hyphen), but **homeowners**

flat-screen hyphen as in flat-screen television

Flatts (not Flatt's)

flaunt means to make an ostentatious or defiant display, eg, "she flaunted her finery"; to **flout** is to show contempt for, eg, "he flouted the law"

flavonoid any of a group of organic compounds that pigment fruit and flowers

fledgeling with the second "e"

fleur-de-lys (not lis)

flight numbers cap in stories where the number of the flight is relevant, eg, Flight 103 (in the Lockerbie disaster), Flight 93 (on 9/11)

flight path (two words)

floodlighting, but floodlit

floodwater (one word)

flotation (shares), but **floatation** (tanks)

flout See **flaunt**

flowerbed (one word); also **flowerpot**

flu (no apostrophe), acceptable for influenza

flunky prefer to flunkey; plural flunkies

Flushing Meadows (not Meadow), New York home of the US Open tennis championships

flier whether a pilot or a handbill. As **high-flier**

focused

foetus, **foetal** not fetu, etc; similarly, **foetid** not fetid

fogey plural fogeys

folk song, **folk singer** (no hyphens)

following avoid as a sloppy synonym of *after*. ALWAYS use *after* in preference

font prefer in the typographical sense to fount

Food and Drug Administration (US)

foodie

foodstuffs where place names form part of the phrase, generally use the cap, eg, Brussels sprouts, Cheddar cheese, chicken Kiev, Cornish pasties; but potatoes lyonnaise, and keep l/c for hamburger, frankfurter etc

foolproof (no hyphen)

foot-and-mouth disease

for-, fore- the general rule is that the “e” is added only when the prefix has the meaning of *before*. Thus **forbears** (refrains), **forebears** (ancestors); **forgo** (go without), **forego** (go before, as in foregone conclusion). Take particular care with **forswear** and **foresee(able)**, both frequently misspelt

forced to always look twice at this phrase: “The police were forced to call in troops in support ...” Is “forced to” giving the correct impression?

forecastle please do not attempt to abbreviate

Foreign and Commonwealth Office use full term at first mention; thereafter Foreign Office or FCO (abbreviation permissible in headlines). Historically, it was known as the Foreign Office pre-1968

foreign words write in roman when foreign words and phrases have become essentially part of the English language (eg, elite, debacle, fête, de rigueur, soirée); likewise, now use rodman rather than italic, but retain accents, in a bon mot, a bête noire, the raison d’être. Avoid pretension by using an English phrase wherever one will serve. See **accents**

forensic means pertaining to the courts. A forensic expert could be a solicitor or a biochemist; make your meaning clear by writing *forensic scientist*, *forensic medicine* etc. Note that forensics is not acceptable as a shorthand for forensic science tests or the like. It means the art or study of formal debate

for ever means always; **forever** means continuously

for free do not tolerate this absurd yet popular construction of preposition and adjective. “For cheap” or “for expensive” would not be contemplated. Write simply “free” (adjective) or “for nothing” (preposition and noun). See **for real**

forklift truck

Formica (cap, proprietary) do not use the trade name in a generic sense to describe decorative plastic laminates

formula plural usually formulas, but formulae in mathematical and scientific contexts

Formula One

for real avoid this cliché when all you mean is “really”. See **for free**

Fortnum & Mason (note ampersand)

fortuitous does not mean *fortunate*. It means *by chance* or *accidental*. Do not confuse

forum plural forums. See **referendum**

four-letter words avoid wherever possible as these obscenities upset most readers. If there is no alternative (eg, in direct quotes, where they are essential to the story), soften them with asterisks – f***, f***king, c***. See **obscenities**

Fourth Estate caps referring to the press in Britain, as part of the body politic (the first three being the lords temporal, lords spiritual and commons)

Fourth of July, or US Independence Day (not 4th)

four-wheel drive (for the power system), but a **four-wheel-drive vehicle**

foxhunt, foxhunting (no hyphens), as **foxhound, foxhole**

fractions do not mix fractions and decimals in the same story. Compounds such as half-hour, half-dozen etc take a hyphen; half an hour, half a dozen do not. Hyphenate when fractions are adjectival – “two-thirds full” – but not as nouns – “two thirds of the bus was empty”.

franc l/c for the currency, and abbreviate as, eg, Fr40; specify in historic and other contexts if not French, eg, BFr40 (Belgian), SwFr40 (Swiss)

franchisor (not franchiser)

fraud squad (l/c)

freak waves always treat this phrase with profound scepticism. Coasts can be dangerous, and people may drown because of their lack of familiarity with how big normal waves are. Scientifically, there are such things as freak waves, but they are far less common than many ignorant and sensationalist landlubberish media reports suggest. Beware

“**freebie**” permissible as colloquialism for a handout, free trip etc, but use inverted commas

Freedom of Information Act the British equivalent of the Pati (Public Access to Information) Act, which was launched in Bermuda in April 2015

free fall (two words)

Freemasonry, Mason, Masonic

French horn

french windows (l/c)

frescoes (not frescos)

“**friendly fire**” this euphemism should be in quotes in headings and at first mention in copy

Frisbee (cap, proprietary)

front bench, the (noun); but **frontbencher, frontbench** power etc

frontline (adjective, as in the frontline states), but the **front line** (noun)

frontman (one word) a nominal leader of an organisation or group. Not to be confused with a forward in football

front-runner (hyphen)

fuchsia

fuel is becoming a greatly overworked verb, especially in headlines; always seek alternatives such as raise, increase, add to, even boost

Führer (not Fuehrer)

Fujiyama or Mount Fuji, not Mount Fujiyama

Fukushima site of the Level 7 nuclear disaster in Japan caused by the earthquake and tsunami in March 2011

fulfil, fulfilment, but **fulfilled, fulfilling**

full points note thin space after initials and points, eg F. W. de Klerk. But with companies, omit the full points, eg, W H Smith. See **companies, initials**

-ful, -fuls so cupfuls, not cupsful

full-time (adjectival), but **full time** (noun, as in football)

fulsome be very careful – and sparing – with the use of this word. It means excessive or insincere (the cliché *fulsome praise* actually means excessive praise, not generous or warm praise). Misuse of this word is common in journalism. Try to avoid it, especially the clichéd (and wrong) use

fundraising, fundraiser (no hyphen)

further see **farther**

fury avoid the temptation to overuse this short headline word. “Fury” is rarely expressed or intended; anger or even mild disappointment is more likely

fusillade

G

Gaddafi, Colonel (Muammar), the deposed and executed (2011) former Libyan leader; Colonel Gaddafi at second mention. Note that he was not president

gadwall a species of duck; plural is gadwalls

gaff is a hook or spar; **gaffe** is a blunder or indiscretion. Note to *blow the gaff* (let out a secret)

Galápagos islands note accent and l/c

gallon the US gallon is 3.785 litres; the (British) imperial gallon is 4.547 litres

Gambia, The always use the cap

gambit is a technical term in chess, meaning an opening involving a sacrifice in return for general advantage. Thus *opening gambit* is tautology. Take care with its use as a metaphor, and use sparingly. Note endgame (one word)

game plan

game show, as **chat show, quiz show, talk show** etc (no hyphens for nouns); but **game-show** etc for adjectival use

Gandhi, Mahatma, Indira etc (never Ghandi)

gaol, gaoler do not use these spellings apart from historic references such as *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*. See *jail, jailer*

garrotte

gas, gases (noun); **gassed, gassing** (verbal use), and note **gases** (not gasses) for present tense, eg, *doctor gases patient*

gasfield, as coalfield, oilfield

gastropub

gateau

Gatt the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. Its successor body is the World Trade Organisation (WTO)

Gatwick sufficiently well known not to need airport in title. See **Heathrow**

gauge (not guage)

Gaultier, Jean Paul (no hyphen)

gay fully acceptable as a synonym for homosexual or lesbian. See **openly gay, straight**

GCSE See **A level, examination**

GDP gross domestic product. In most contexts, sufficiently well known not to need spelling out

gelatine (rather than gelatin)

Geldof, Bob do not write Sir Bob Geldof, as he is an honorary KBE (Knight of the British Empire)

General Synod (of the Church of England), thereafter the synod

Gentile(s) (cap)

gentlemen's club (prefer to gentleman's); also **gentlemen's agreement**

geriatric does not mean *elderly*, but is applied to medical treatment for the elderly, eg, geriatric hospital. Never use as a term of abuse

German Bight

Germany full title is the Federal Republic of Germany. If referring to the area that was East Germany, say eastern Germany or the former East Germany; similarly, western Germany or the former West Germany. When plural, use the two Germanys, not Germanies, Reunification was in 1990, so in the postwar period, sporting teams represented West Germany and East Germany separately

gerrymander

get, got often a lazy verb for which an alternative should be sought

Getty, Sir Paul (do not use John or J. in his name)

Ghanaian (not Ghanian)

ghetto use only in the sense of an area of enforced or customary segregation, not as an ethnic neighbourhood, eg, middle-class *district*, not *ghetto*. Note plural ghettos

giant killer, giant killing (nouns), but **giant-killing** (adjective)

gibe means taunt or sneer; **gybe** means to shift direction or change course, particularly in sailing. For the sake of clarity, jibe (a variant of both) should not be used

Gibraltar (never Gibralter); and note Strait of Gibraltar (not Straits)

gillie (rather than ghillie)

gipsy See **Gypsy/gypsy**

girl do not use as a synonym of *woman* except in informal contexts

girl band two words. Note also **boy band**

girlie not girly

Giuseppe the standard spelling for the Italian equivalent of Joseph

giveaway (noun or adjective), one word, as takeaway; but to give away

glamorise, glamorous, but **glamour**

glasnost (not italic)

glassmaker

GlaxoSmithKline, the merged pharmaceutical company (GSK for short)

glisters, all that ... Shakespeare did not write glitters in reference to what is not gold, so better to quote the Bard precisely or not at all (*The Merchant of Venice*, Act II, scene vii)

Glen Coe, the valley; but **Glencoe** for the battle, the village and the pass

glueing prefer to gluing

glühwein l/c, roman, accent

glycerin no need for terminal “e”; likewise nitroglycerin and trinitroglycerin

go-ahead, give the prefer **approve**, shorter and preferable to this cliché

goatherd one word

gobbledegook

God cap when referring to just one, in any religion. He, His, Him also take cap. Many gods, use l/c, as in *the Greek gods*.

goddam

godforsaken, godless (l/c), but **God-fearing**

godparents, godfather, godmother, godson, goddaughter, godchild

godslot

Goebbels, Joseph -oe- not umlaut. Similarly, **Hermann Goering**

-goer as a suffix, run on as one word, as in **churchgoer, cinemagoer, operagoer, partygoer, theatregoer**

go-kart (use hyphen)

Gok Wan the television fashion adviser is Wan subsequently

Goldeneye (the James Bond film, not GoldenEye)

Golden Globes note that, contrary to the cliché, these film awards are not reliable points to Oscar success. See **Oscar Awards**

Golden Jubilee caps for the Queen's celebration in 2002, l/c in general context

Golders Green (no apostrophe)

goldmine, goldmining

gold rush two words as noun, but hyphenate adjectivally, eg, gold-rush fever

Goldsmiths College, London (no apostrophe)

gold standard l/c

goodbye

good-time Charlie

goodwill one word, whether used as noun or adjective

Google cap noun; **google** l/c verb, **googling, goggled** etc, as per **Hoover**/hoover

Gorazde in Bosnia (not Goradze)

Gorbachev, Mikhail

Gore-Tex (caps, hyphen, trade name)

gorilla

Gormley, Antony (the sculptor)

Gothenburg (not Göteborg)

Gothic (cap), rather than *Gothick*, for whatever meaning, including architectural, artistic, fashion, literary, musical and tribal; likewise, always cap **Goth**

gourmandise

Government cap all governments, Bermuda and overseas, when referring to a specific one, eg, "the Government resigned last night", "the British (not UK) Government sent troops", and specific past administrations such as "the Brown Government"; only l/c when unspecific or for one that has yet to be formed, eg, "all the governments since the war", "the next PLP government would raise pensions", "here is a government running out of credibility with the voters". Also l/c government in all adjectival contexts, eg, a government minister, a government decision, government expenditure. A further

instance of l/c use is in phrases such as “the British government troops” or “the Bermudian government-backed trade delegation”, when use is again principally adjectival

government departments cap only when giving full title, eg, Department of Health, but l/c when abbreviated, eg, health department, planning department etc

graffito singular; plural **graffiti**

gram not gramme; similarly, **kilogram**

Grammy, Grammys

grandad, but **granddaughter**

Grand Jury (caps) in US contexts

grandmaster (chess) l/c. See **chess names**

grand slam (noun) l/c; **grand-slam** adjective, l/c, hyphen

Grand Tour, the caps (cycling)

Grappelli, Stéphane use accent

Grass, Günter umlaut

grassroots (adjective), the **grass roots** (noun). Try to use this cliché sparingly

grave, turn in his/her a somewhat hackneyed phrase anyway, but definitely not to be used if the person is not dead or has not got a grave (ie cremated)

gravlax

great and the good, the (all l/c, and quotes usually unnecessary)

Great Britain or **Britain** = England, Wales, Scotland and islands governed from the mainland (ie, not Isle of Man or Channel Islands). **United Kingdom** = Great Britain and Northern Ireland. **British Isles** = United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, Isle of Man and Channel Islands. Do not confuse these entities. See **Britain**

Great Dane cap; see **dogs**

Greater London Authority (GLA at subsequent mention) is the strategic government for London, consisting of the Mayor of London and the London Assembly, backed up by a staff of some 400. The **London Assembly** (not the Greater London Assembly) is an elected body of 25 members providing checks and balances on the Mayor of London

greater or lesser degree *lesser* is not correct but is common usage. See **lesser**

Great Train Robber(s), Great Train Robbery on August 8, 1963, in Buckinghamshire

green belt l/c, but greenfield sites (similarly **brownfield**)

green issues l/c for generic environmental matters

green line l/c, demarcation line between hostile factions in, eg, Jerusalem, Beirut, Cyprus; likewise, **green zone**

Green Paper caps in official government sense. See **White Paper**

grenade no need to write hand grenade; but qualify if delivered in another way, eg, **rocket-propelled grenade**

griffin prefer to griffon or gryphon

grisly means horrifying, repugnant; **grizzly** means greyish, grizzled, or is a short form of grizzly bear

grottoes

ground(s) in the sense of reason, do not use plural unless more than one is given; eg, “he gave up his job on the ground of illness”; but “he gave up his job on the grounds of his failed marriage and illness”; “on the ground of diminished responsibility” etc

ground-breaking hyphenate adjectivally

G-string

Guantánamo Bay, Cuba (accent). See **War on Terror**

Guayaquil the Ecuadorean port city on the Pacific Coast is 170 miles southwest of Quito, the capital (not southeast)

guerrilla note double “r” and double “l”; beware of loaded terms for advocates of political violence. See **terrorist**

guest avoid using as a verb (Lady X will guest on the show; say Lady X will be among the guests, or Lady X is a guest). See **host**

guesthouse (no hyphen)

Guguletu township on the outskirts of Cape Town, where the honeymoon bride Anni Dewani was murdered in 2010

guidebook similarly, **chequebook**, **formbook**, **stylebook**, **textbook** etc

Guildhall (London); never *the* Guildhall

guinea pig

Guinness *Guinness World Records* (formerly *The Guinness Book of Records*)

Gujarati person or language (not Guje-)

gulag loosely, labour camps; Gulag (cap) was the Soviet organisation that ran the prisons and forced labour camps

Gulf, the avoid both Persian Gulf and Arabian Gulf in this politically sensitive area

Gulf War, the do not write “the first Gulf War”. Refer to the subsequent conflict as the Iraq war (l/c)

gunboat, gunfight, gunfire, gunman, gunpoint, gunshot, gunsmith, but gun dog

gunned down avoid this Americanism, which means shot; if you mean **shot dead**, say it

gunrunner, **gunrunning** one word

Guns N’ Roses

gunwales (nautical, not gunwhales)

gurdwara (l/c, roman) a Sikh temple

Gurkhas

guttural (not guttural)

Güveççi note accents on the name of the Turkish border town where refugees fled from **Syria** in 2011

Guyana (formerly British Guiana, now independent); do not confuse with **French Guiana** (still a French overseas territory). The adjective from Guyana is Guyanese, also the person. Note also **Surinam** (not Suriname), the former Dutch Guiana

Guy Fawkes Night no apostrophe, initial caps; similarly **Bonfire Night**

Gwyn, Nell

Gypsy/gypsy (not gipsy). Use the cap when referring to a specific group of this semi-nomadic people, but l/c in the fashion or general sense, as in “gypsy style is the look for spring”.

H

H5N1 bird flu virus

Häagen-Dazs the ice cream invented in America

Habsburg (not Hapsburg)

Hadrian's Wall is not literally the Border between England and Scotland, so take care in writing phrases such as “north of Hadrian's Wall” when “north of the Border” is meant precisely. But in lighter and/or historical pieces, of course, mention of the wall as a frontier may be appropriate. See **Border**

haemolytic uraemic syndrome the condition, eg, in the *E. coli* outbreak in continental Europe in 2011

haemorrhage means heavy and potentially dangerous bleeding, not simply bleeding. Beware of misuse in metaphor

Hague, Ffion

Hague, The

hairbrush, haircut, hairdresser, hairdressing, hairdryer, hairpin, hairstyle

Haiti, Haitian note that Haiti must never be described as an island; it is joined to the Dominican Republic and together they constitute the island of Hispaniola. The Haitian capital is Port-au-Prince (hyphens); note also Gonaïves (diaeresis), the northern city

haj pilgrimage to Mecca (l/c and roman). See **Eid al-Adha**

haka the Maori war dance (l/c and roman)

half-mast (hyphenate)

half-term (hyphenate)

half-time in a football match etc; the half time in business context (but half-time results)

halfway (no hyphen), but **half-hearted**

Halley's comet see **heavenly bodies**

Hallowe'en

Hamas is an acronym in Arabic for the Islamic Resistance Movement; the Arabic word *hamas* means, zeal, courage

handheld (computers etc), as desktop, laptop, palmtop

handmade, handbuilt (no hyphen)

handout as a noun, no hyphen; likewise **hangout**

hangar (aircraft), **hanger** (clothes)

hanged "The murderer was hanged at dawn" – never *hung*. Clothes are hung on a washing line or a hanger

Hansard

"**happy slapping**" always quote this euphemism for gratuitous, recorded violence

hara-kiri

harass, harassment

hardcore (one word as adjective, eg, hardcore pornography); but the **hard core** of the rebels (two words as noun); similarly, **hard core** (rubble)

hardline (adjective), but *taking a hard line*

harebrained

harem

Haringey is a London borough and council

Harringay a London neighbourhood

Harley-Davidson (hyphenate)

HarperCollins, or **HarperCollins Publishers**

Harris Tweed cap as a trademark

Harrods (no apostrophe)

harvest festival (l/c)

Hasidic prefer to Hassidic, Chassidic etc

Havisham, Miss (not Miss Haversham) in Dickens' *Great Expectations*

Hawaiian

Hawk-Eye note hyphen in electronic sports equipment for leg-before (cricket), line decisions etc

hay fever (two words, no hyphen)

headache avoid as a synonym for *difficulty*

head-butt noun or verb; this is preferable to *butt*, although it may appear tautologous. While *butt* can mean to strike or push (something) with head or horns, its variety of other definitions, including the anatomical, means that *head-butt* is allowed for clarity

headcount (no hyphen)

headed avoid the Americanism *he is headed, she was headed* etc; write *he is heading, she was heading*

headhunt, headhunting (no hyphens)

headlines avoid the worst clichés and hyperboles such as *bash, crash, shock, slam* etc; but words such as *bid* (for attempt), *crisis, hit* (adversely affect), *row* (clash or dispute) – all of which should appear only sparingly in text – are permissible in headlines, **provided they are not overworked**. Inverted commas must always be single in headlines, straps and display panels. See **quotation marks**

headmaster, headmistress one word and l/c except in the formal, official title (and then cap at first mention only).

headroom (one word), as *elbowroom, legroom*

heads of state when these are royal, such as King Abdullah of Jordan, after the first mention refer to them as the King (cap). The cap at subsequent mentions applies only to overseas heads of state and the British Royal Family

head up (an organisation etc) avoid; write simply, eg, “she will head the organisation”

healthcare (one word)

heartbroken, heartbreaking, heartfelt, heartstrings, but hyphenate **heart-rending, heart-throb**

-hearted hyphenate, eg, **light-hearted**

Heathrow sufficiently well known not to need airport in title. See **airports, Gatwick**

heatstroke one word. A condition resulting from prolonged exposure to intense heat. Do not confuse with **sunstroke**, which is heatstroke caused by prolonged exposure to intensely hot sunlight.

heatwave one word

Heaven, Hell cap in religious context only. See **Devil**

heavenly bodies cap the proper names of planets, stars, constellations etc: Venus, Arcturus, the Plough, Aries; for comets, l/c the word *comet* in, for example, *Halley's comet*; the Sun, the Moon, the Earth, the Universe are capped in their planetary or astronomical sense (see *Earth*). Use l/c for the adjective *lunar and solar*, and phases, eg, *full moon, new moon*; but cap *Martian* both adjectivally and as a noun. See **Earth, Moon, Sun, Universe**

hellhole one word

Hell's Angels apostrophe, despite evidence on jackets to the contrary

help to (plus verb), eg, "he helped **to** make the cake" (not "he helped make the cake")

helping the police with their inquiries avoid this phrase – suspects rarely willingly help the police. Say "were being interviewed" instead

helpline (one word). See **hotline**

Hemingway, Ernest

hemisphere, northern, southern, eastern, western (l/c)

Heraklion

heraldry do not confuse **crests** with **coats of arms**. Most arms consist of a shield and a crest; crests are the topmost part of the coat of arms (think of the crest of a bird or a wave)

Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh

Her Majesty's pleasure (detained at)

Hersh, Seymour (journalist)

Herzegovina (as in Bosnia-Herzegovina), not Hercegovina. See **Yugoslav**

Heyhoe Flint, Rachael (no hyphen, not Rachel)

Hezb-i Islami in Afghanistan

Hezbollah (Party of God) in Iran and Lebanon; soft-hyphenate (on a line break) as Hezb-ollah

Hibernian means of or concerning Ireland, not Scotland – despite the Edinburgh football club of that name

hi-fi is an acceptable abbreviation (noun or adjective) of high fidelity, as **wi-fi**

high acceptable usage as a noun, eg, "she was on a high". But avoid clichés such as *all-time high* and *hits new high*

highbrow, lowbrow

high command avoid its clichéd use

High Commissioner (with caps) when specific, eg, Indian High Commissioner; thereafter, the high commissioner

High Court

highfalutin

high-flyer see also **flyer**

high jinks

high-profile one of the many clichés to be avoided

high street is l/c and no hyphen in general sense, as in high street prices. But cap in specifics, eg, Putney High Street

high-tech (adjective); spell out in text, but hi-tech is acceptable in headlines

hike permissible in the sense of a *rise* or *to raise* (rates etc)

hingeing prefer to hinging

Hindi for language context (the Hindi Language); but use **Hindu** for religious or ethnic contexts (an adherent to Hinduism, or relating to Hinduism)

hip-hop hyphenate

hippopotamuses plural

hippy, hippies almost as old-fashioned as beatniks

Hirst, Damien (not Damian), the artist

historic, historical prefer *an historic event* rather *a historic*. See **a, an**. Also take care with use of *historical* and *historic*; the former can refer only to past history, while the latter can refer to a contemporary event likely to be of long-term significance.

hit avoid in the sense of *affected*, eg, "Homeowners were hit last night by an interest rate rise", or in the sense of an attack, eg, "The minister hit out at his critics". Sparing use of the verb in headlines is permissible

hitchhike, hitchhiker, hitchhiking etc (no hyphens). Note *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, by Douglas Adams

hitlist, hitman no hyphens

HIV is a virus, not a disease, Do not write *HIV virus* (tautology), but use a phrase such as *HIV-infected*. Write **HIV/Aids** when appropriate regarding the virus and the condition together. See **Aids**

HMS italicise in a ship's name, eg, *HMS Ark Royal*, but roman when part of a shore-based establishment, eg, HMS Collingwood

hoards are stocks or stores (of treasure, for example); to hoard is to amass and store food, money etc. **hordes** are large groups or gangs (of wild beasts etc)

hobbit generic l/c, but *The Hobbit*; see **Middle-earth, The Lord of the Rings, Tolkien**

hobo prefer **hoboes** as plural

Hogmanay cap

hoi polloi do not use "the" (it means, literally, "the many"). Roman, not italic

holidaymaker (one word)

Holland use the Netherlands for all contexts except sports teams, historical uses, or when referring to the provinces of North and South Holland. The adjective is Dutch. See **Netherlands**

homebuilder, homebuilding (one word)

homebuyers, homeowners (no hyphens)

Home Counties, the (caps)

home-made (hyphenate)

homeopathy (not homoeopathy). Similarly, for other words with the prefix homeo-, meaning like, similar, eg, **homeobox**, **homeostasis**, **homeotherm**

home town (two words), but hyphenate in adjectival use, eg, home-town memories

homogeneous means having parts all of the same kind; **homogenous** means similar owing to common descent

Homo sapiens italicise, as any other **scientific names**

homosexual see **gay**

honeybee one word

honeytrap one word

Hong Kong, but **Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation** (HSBC). Until July 1, 1997, when Britain handed the colony back to China, Hong Kong had a Governor (cap); now it has a Chief Executive. Hong Kong is a special administrative region of China; it may be referred to as the territory for variation. Its Government is capitalised

“honour” killing use quote marks in this euphemism at all mentions

honours people are appointed **Privy Counsellor, Baronet, KBE, CBE, OBE, MBE** etc; never say they were made, received, were awarded, or got the OBE etc. **Peers** and above (viscounts etc) are created, not appointed etc. At investitures, those honoured receive the insignia of the award, not the award itself. See **Titles**

honours lists See **New Year Honours**

hoody plural **hoodies**

hoof plural **hoofs**

Hoover is a trade name so must be capped as a noun; generically, use **vacuum cleaner**, or to **vacuum**. But as a verb use *l/c*, eg, he hoovered up his food. See **Google, Twitter**

hopefully try to avoid in the sense of *it is hoped that*, even though this usage is so widespread

Horse Guards Parade

horse race/racing two words, but *racing* alone is preferable

horse trading two words

horsey

horticulturist (not horticulturalist)

hospitalise, hospitalisation always avoid these Americanisms; say *taken to the hospital, treated in hospital* etc

host avoid using the verb as in “West Ham will host Aston Villa on Saturday”; use **play host to** instead. But a person can host an event

hotchpotch (no hyphen). Not hodgepodge (US)

hotline (one word); similarly, **helpline**

hotpants one word

hotspot one word. See **spot**

hot-water bottle (not hyphen)

hour and a half, **an** no hyphens as a noun; but hyphenate adjectivally, eg, an hour-and-a-half break.

housebuilder, **housebuilding**

Housman, A. E. not Houseman

however when used in the sense of nevertheless, always needs a comma after it (and before, when in the middle of a sentence, eg, “It was said, however, that the agent ...”). Note also the comma in the extended clause: “However many times I say this, there are people who ignore it”

Howzat? The cricket appeal (from “How’s that?”)

Hubble Space Telescope (caps)

Hudson Bay, but Hudson’s Bay Company; note also **Hudson River**

The Huffington Post cap The, not italics because it is a website

human acceptable as noun as well as adjective; alternatively, **human being**

Human Genome Project (initial caps)

human rights European Convention on Human Rights; European Court of Human Rights; both operate under aegis of the Council of Europe, not the European Union (or EC)

humongous

humorist not humourist

Hundred Years’ War, **the** note apostrophe

hung Parliament (cap P)

Huntington’s disease (formerly Huntington’s chorea)

hurricane cap as part of title, eg, Hurricane Fay; similarly, Tropical Storm Fay (caps). See **tropical storm**

Hutus, Tutsis, the plural of the Rwandan tribes (not simply Hutu, Tutsi). See **Rwanda**

hydroelectric (no hyphen)

hyena prefer to hyaena; but note that *Hyaenais* the scientific genus name

hyphens be sparing with hyphens and run together words where the sense suggests and where they look familiar and right; eg, **blacklist**, **businessman**, **goldmine**, **knockout**, **intercontinental**, **motorcycle**, **takeover** and **walkover**. Unusual hyphenations will be listed separately in this style guide. However, a few guidelines can be specified: usually run together prefixes except where the last letter of the prefix is the same as the first letter of the word to which it attaches: **prearrange**,

postwar, prewar, nonconformist; but **pre-empt, co-ordinate, co-operate, re-establish**; hyphenate generally in composites where the same two letters come together, eg, **film-makers**, but an exception should be made for double "r" in the middle: **override, overrule** (not over-ride etc), and note **granddaughter** and **goddaughter**; generally do not use dangling hyphens – *full and part-time employment* etc; but this does not apply to prefixes – pre- or post-match drinks; for hyphenation when qualifying adjectives, see **adverbs**; always use a hyphen rather than a slash (/) in dates etc – 1982-83 (not 1982/83)

hypothermia state of being too cold; **hyperthermia** too hot

I

IATA (all caps), the International Air Transport Association

Iberian Peninsula (cap) see **peninsula**

Ice Age see **ages**

ice cap no hyphen

ice cream no hyphen. Similarly **ice lolly**. But hyphenate adjectivally, eg, ice-cream cone. See **Häagen-Dazs**

ice skate (noun), **ice-skate** (verb), **ice skating** (noun), **ice-skating** (modifier), **ice-skater** (noun)

icon beware overuse in the sense of a person regarded as a sex symbol or a symbol of the latest fashions, trends etc; likewise with the adjective **iconic**

ICRC is the **International Committee of the Red Cross** (not for). The equivalent in Muslim lands is the **Red Crescent**. See **Red Cross**

Identikit is proprietary, so cap; but photofit l/c

, **ie**, use comma either side. See **eg**

if use the subjunctive after this, eg, "if I were a rich man" (not "if I was a rich man"); more generally, preserve the correct use of the subjunctive

Igbo prefer to Ibo for the ethnic group and language chiefly of southern Nigeria; note also **Yoruba** and **Hausa** for other predominant groups within Nigeria

Iguaçu cedilla and terminal accent

Ikea

Île circumflex whether l/c or cap, as in **Île-de-France**

illegal asylum seeker is a legally inaccurate phrase and must not be used. An asylum seeker is someone seeking refugee status or humanitarian protection, so cannot in law be "illegal". He or she can become an *illegal immigrant* only if remaining in a country after having failed to respond to a removal notice

ill health (no hyphen); similarly, **ill feeling** etc and any other simple adjective-and-noun construction

ill intentioned etc (no hyphen) in, eg, “He was ill intentioned”; but **ill-intentioned** etc (hyphen) in, eg, before a noun, “He had ill-intentioned motives”

I’m a Celebrity ... Get Me Out of Here!

IMAX (all caps) cinemas

immensity do not use **enormity** as a synonym

impacted on avoid this Americanism

Imperial College London (no comma) is no longer part of the University of London (when it was known formally as Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine). It became a university in its own right in July 2007.

Imperial Family cap, eg, in the Japanese and Russian contexts

Imperial War Museum North (use only this style) is in Trafford, which is a metropolitan borough within Greater Manchester. Do not locate it simply as in Manchester

imply see **infer**

impostor (not imposter)

impresario

Impressionist, Post-Impressionist

impugn to challenge or attack as false; assail; criticise; do not confuse with **impute** to attribute or ascribe (something dishonest or dishonourable, especially a criminal offence) to a person; to attribute to a cause or source; commercially, to give (a notional value) to goods or services when the real value is unknown

in addition to prefer *as well as* or *besides*

inadmissible (not –able)

inasmuch as two words

inauguration; but **Inauguration Day** (US)

include do not confuse with *comprise*; “breakfast includes toast and coffee”, but “breakfast comprises cereals, toast, butter, marmalade and coffee” (ie, where the full list of elements is given)

incommunicado

indestructible (not –able)

index plural is indices, but indexes for books

Indian place names prefer Mumbai to Bombay, Chennai to Madras, Kolkata to Calcutta, Pune to Poona, New Delhi to Delhi

indispensable (not –ible)

Indo-China

Industrial Revolution

Inevitable do not use as a synonym of *customary, usual or predictable*

in fact can, in fact, almost be invariably omitted

infer do not confuse with *imply*; to infer is to draw a conclusion from a suggestion; to imply is to make the suggestion. Thus, we imply things when we speak; we infer things when we listen

infighting (one word), but **in-house** and **in-flight** (both with hyphen)

infrared one word

in happier times self-evident cliché that is banned for captions of photographs showing grinning people now divorced, gravely ill or dead etc; likewise, **share a joke** is banned for pictures of people smiling or laughing

initials where totally familiar, no need to spell out at first mention (eg, BBC, Nato etc). Otherwise, usually give name in full followed by initials in parentheses, and the abbreviated form thereafter (although sometimes a word such as “the organisation” or “the group” will be preferable to avoid a mass of initials in the same story). Also with a body as well known as the UN, it would be absurd to write United Nations (UN), so use discretion. Where the initials can be spoken as a word, write them as upper and lower case, eg, Sage, Nato, Gatt, Unesco, Unicef, Concacaf, Fifa, Uefa, Eta, but not BEST, given that it is a familiar surname. With people’s names, put points between the initials (with thin space between them), but omit points in names of companies

injure, injury implies something more serious than *hurt*. Do not normally say someone received an injury – prefer to say they suffered or sustained an injury, or (simply) were injured. Injured or sick people should not be described as *satisfactory* or *critical* – it is their condition that is satisfactory etc. note that in a military context, eg, on a battlefield, it is more normal to refer to **wounded** rather than injured; although a soldier would be injured in, eg, a straightforward vehicle accident

innocent take care with this word, and avoid phrases such as “the innocent victim of the attack” and clichés such as “innocent children”. Best to stick to its literal sense of not guilty

innocuous

inoculate

in order to simply wastes two words. Delete “in order”

inpatients, outpatients (no hyphen)

inquests see **coroner’s court**

inquire, inquiry not enquire, enquiry

insignia, plural. Do not confuse insignia, eg, for an MBE appointment, with regalia – strictly emblems of royalty. See **honours**

in so far as use the four words in this expression; insofar is the American version

install, but **instalment**

instil

insure you **insure** against risk; you **assure** your life; **ensure** means to make certain

Intelligence cap as a noun in the context of the security services, eg, “he was in British Intelligence”, but l/c in non-specific contexts, eg, “she provided useful intelligence to MI6”; also l/c for adjectival uses, eg, “she was interviewed by intelligence officers”

intelligentsia

intensive do not confuse with *intense* or *extreme*. It means concentrated, as in *intensive care*

inter to bury. Not to be confused with **intern**, to detain

inter- as a prefix, normally no need to hyphenate, eg, intercountry, interracial

interdependence

interesting avoid this as an adjective in text; let the reader decide

interest rate cuts/rises (no hyphens); never use *hikes* for *rises*

interfaith

intern see **inter**

International Criminal Court, the based in The Hague, has jurisdiction to prosecute individuals for the most horrific of crimes: genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Its jurisdiction is complementary to national courts, and it acts only when countries are unable or unwilling to investigate or prosecute. Established by multilateral treaty, it is independent of the UN and was designed to replace the UN system of ad hoc tribunals, eg, for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia

Internazionale, the Milan football club; simply **Inter Milan** at first mention, thereafter Inter. The other big club in the city is AC Milan (shortened to Milan thereafter)

internecine can mean: (1) mutually destructive or ruinous; maiming both or all sides; (2) of or relating to slaughter or carnage; bloody; (3) of or involving conflict within a group or organisation

internet l/c, also the **net** for short. See **world wide web**

interpretive (prefer to interpretative)

interred = buried; **interned** = imprisoned. Do not confuse

intifada (religious struggle or uprising), l/c and noun

intro see **it is**

Inuit singular and plural. See **Eskimo**

iPod beware tendency to use this trade name as a generic term for MP3 players; capitalise the Nano and the Shuffle. Note also **iPhone**, **iPlayer**. See note on typography under **eBay**

Iraq war l/c

Iran not Persia, except in historical sense. The language is Farsi, not Iranian or Persian. Write the **Islamic republic** (l/c) as a synonym

irascible not irascible

Ireland the two parts should be called the Republic of Ireland or the Irish Republic (avoid Eire except in direct quotes or historical context), and Northern Ireland, or less formally Ulster. The historic four counties are Connaught, Leinster, Munster and Ulster. **For Sport, Ireland and Northern Ireland**

iridescent (not irr-)

Irish put accents on **Sinn Féin, Siobhán**

Iron Curtain

ironic beware of misuse. It means using or displaying irony, or in the nature of irony – the opposite of what is normally meant, incongruity etc; it does not mean strange or paradoxical

irreconcilable

irredeemable means not able to be redeemed, saved or reformed; do not confuse with **irremediable**, which means not able to be remedied, incurable, or irreparable

irresistible (not –able)

-ise, -isation avoid the “z” construction in almost all cases, eg, apologise, organise, emphasise, televise. But note capsizer, synthesizer

Islam is the religion of Muslims. Islamic is interchangeable with Muslim as the adjective, although normally use Islamic with religion and fundamentalism. Islamist (noun, adjective) refers to support or advocacy of Islamist fundamentalism.

Islamic terms note preferred spellings of **fatwa**; **Hadith** (cap; the body of tradition and legend about Muhammad and his followers, used as a basis of **Sharia**); **haj**; **halal** (“lawful”, eg, ritually slaughtered meat); **Kabba** (the most sacred pilgrim shrine in Mecca); **kafir** (non-Muslim, “unbeliever”, “infidel”); **umma** (the community of Muslims). The five daily prayer times, sequence, are **fajr, duhr, asr, maghrib** and **isha** (use italics). See **Eid al-Adha, Eid al-Fitr**

islands use the preposition “in” rather than “on”, except for the tiniest foothold of an islet; thus “in the Isle of Wight” rather than “on the Isle of Wight”

isotope hyphenate the element name and the atomic mass number, eg, polonium-210, uranium-232, uranium-238 etc. (The atomic mass of a given element’s isotopes varies because, while the number of protons is the same, the number of neutrons varies)

Israeli is a citizen of Israel; Israelite refers to Ancient Israel. Please bear in mind that *Jew* is not an appropriate alternative; many of Israel’s citizens are not Jewish

Italian names note that surnames with Di (cap), D’ are generally always capped at all mentions, eg, D’Ancona, Di Canio

italics never in headlines (inverted commas are not an acceptable alternative) and be as restrained as possible in their use in text. Italics are acceptable in captions but not in sub-headings and standfirsts. In text, certain areas always take italics: all works of art; thus, for titles of books, poems, short stories, newspapers (see separate list under **newspapers**), magazines, pamphlets, chapter headings, White Papers, Green papers, official reports and studies, programmes on radio and television, films, plays, computer games, musical works including operas, songs, hymns, album titles etc, paintings, drawings, sculptures, titles of exhibitions; uncommon or non-anglicised foreign words go in italics, but err on the side of roman (eg, in extremis, hors d’oeuvre, angst, de rigueur); names of ships, aircraft, locomotives, spacecraft etc. A word may be italicised for emphasis, but be extremely sparing with this device: let good writing show the reader where the emphasis is

it is avoid hackneyed use of pretentious constructions, especially in intros, such as “It is one of the most famous London landmarks but yesterday Tower Bridge was closed to traffic.” Write simply “Tower Bridge, one of the most famous London landmarks, was closed to traffic yesterday.”

its/it’s use the apostrophe version, sparingly, only as an abbreviation for “it is/it has”; no apostrophe in possessive form (the OJB rule)

ITV1, ITV2, ITV3 and ITV4 are separate independent television channels under the ITV banner

Ivory Coast not Côte d’Ivoire. Note the noun and adjective **Ivorian**

J

jack-knife hyphen

Jackson, Michael died on June 25, 2009, age 50. No need to quote his sobriquet, the King of Pop. Note the Jackson 5 (figure, not spelt out). Drugs mentioned in connection with his death are Demerol and Valium (cap), trade names for pethidine and diazepam respectively, See **drug names**

Jacuzzi is a trade name, so cap; the company objects to use of the name as a noun, so write Jacuzzi bath only if certain of attribution; **whirlpool bath** or **spa bath** if in doubt

jail, jailer (not **gaol, gaoler** generally; but note *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*); remember that an offender aged 15 cannot be “jailed”; he or she is sentenced to detention in a young offender institution

jail sentences note that totting up the total number of years for which a number of defendants have been jailed is meaningless. Give the sentences of named individuals.

Jeep is a trade name, so must be capped; use only if strictly applicable

Jehovah’s Witness(es)

Jekyll and Hyde

jellybean one word

jet lag two words

jetliner avoid; say *airliner* or simply *jet*

jet ski two words as noun; but to jet-ski (verb, hyphen)

jet stream two words as noun, but jet-stream (hyphen) adjectivally

jeweller, jewellery

jibe avoid this spelling. See **gibe**

Jiffy bag (cap, trade name)

jihad holy war (roman, l/c)

job titles the general rule is that for the most senior high-profile jobs we should cap at first mention, and thereafter l/c. Thus most church titles, senior civil servants, diplomatic and political leaders, civic leaders, Editor (of well-known leading publications), academic titles, police ranks and military titles all takes the cap at first mention **if the full version is given** and then – usually – l/c thereafter. Exceptions where the cap is retained are Premier, Prime Minister, President (of a country)

jodhpurs

Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore

Joint Chiefs of Staff (US)

jokey prefer to joky

Jones, Vinnie (not Vinny), the footballer turned actor

joyrider (no hyphen), but use as little as possible because the term gives offence to many readers; the last emotion these car thieves bring to their victims is joy. An alternative could be *car thief*

Judaea (not Judea)

judging by one of the most frequently misused unrelated (disconnected) participle constructions. Remember, the phrase must have a related subject to follow (I, we, she etc). A convenient alternative is “to judge from ...” (eg, “Judging by this film, the country is in a mess” is wrong; “To judge from this film, the country is in a mess” is correct; so is “Judging by this film, we conclude that the country is in a mess”. See **participles**

judgment (not judgement)

jukebox (no hyphen)

jump-jet (hyphen), but **jumbo jet** (no hyphen)

junior abbreviate to Jr (not Jnr in the American context) eg, John Eisendorf Jr

junta by definition, a military government, so do not write tautologies such as “ruling military junta”

just deserts things that are deserved. Not to be confused with just desserts, when only puddings are on the menu

K

k avoid for 1,000 except in direct quotes, eg, “He used to earn 200k”

kabbalah initial k and l/c for the spiritual movement based on ancient Jewish mystical tradition

Kadima party or simply Kadima, which was founded by Ariel Sharon. Kadima means “Forward”

Kafkaesque no need for a hyphen. More generally, a hyphen is rarely needed for words with the –esque suffix

kaftan, but **cagoule**

Kakutani, Michiko the eminent American literary critic is a woman

Kanchenjunga preferred variant for the third-highest mountain on Earth

Kant, Immanuel not Emmanuel

Kathmandu

Kellogg's Corn Flakes, but **cornflakes** (l/c, generic)

Kentucky Fried Chicken was rebranded as **KFC**, so do not use the full capped version for the company or restaurant chain except in historical context. Permissible to refer to the product as Kentucky fried chicken (l/c)

kerosene is American for **paraffin** in a domestic British setting; but note that kerosene is the commoner synonym globally for aviation fuel, jet fuel etc; also note that kerosene is the far more frequently used word for the heating/cooking fuel, eg, in Africa

kettling the police tactic of containment

Kevorkian, Dr Jack (the late American euthanasia doctor; not Kervorkian)

Kfor, the Nato-led force in Kosovo (not KFOR). It is short for Kosovo Force

Khartoum

kibbutz plural **kibbutzim**

kibosh

kick-off (noun), but to *kick off*

kick-start (hyphenate, noun or verb)

Kiev not Kyiv, capital of **Ukraine** (not the Ukraine)

killer can be used for *murderer* but do not use *assassin* as a synonym

kilobyte abbreviate to kB; note also megabyte (MB), gigabyte (GB), terabyte (TB). See **byte**

kilogram (not kilogramme). See **gram**

kilometres per hour correct abbreviation is km/h rather than kph

kilowatt-hour correct abbreviation is kWh

King's College London

Kings Road, Chelsea (no apostrophe)

Kingston upon Hull (no hyphens) is the official name for Hull; normally just say **Hull**

Kingston upon Thames (no hyphens); say southwest London, rather than Surrey; but note that Surrey County Council is still based in Kingston

Kit Kat two words

kiwi the flightless bird. But note **Kiwi**, colloquialism for New Zealander; and **kiwi fruit** l/c

Kmart the US stores corporation

kneejerk (reaction etc), no hyphen; but beware of overuse

knick-knacks prefer to nick-nacks. This reduplicative word is derived from *knack*, an obsolete 17th-century word for toy

knockout (noun), but to *knock out*

knowhow (one word as noun)

knowledgeable

Knowles, Beyoncé note accent

Knox-Johnston, Sir Robin (yachtsman)

Koh-i-noor diamond

Koran, the (cap and roman, like the Bible)

Korean names, unlike Chinese, take all initial caps but no hyphens, eg, Roh Tae Woo, Ban Ki Moon.

Kosovo, Kosovan do not use Kosova, Kosovar

kowtow (no hyphen)

KwaZulu-Natal (not KwaZulu/Natal)

Kyoto Protocol (cap P)

Kyrgyzstan

L

Labor Day, Labor Department, Bureau of Labor Statistics (in US), but anglicise, eg, the Defence Department etc. See **American spellings**

Labor Party (in Australia)

Labour Party (in UK)

lackadaisical

lacuna a gap or space, especially in a manuscript, plural lacunas; biologically, a cavity or depression, eg, in bone, plural lacunae

Ladbroke's, the betting shop, but Ladbroke plc; note also Will Hill and Coral (neither takes final "s")

lad mag plural **lad mags**

lady, ladies prefer to write *woman, women*

Lafite, Château. See **wines**

Lagos is the biggest city but not the capital of Nigeria; Abuja is

laid-back hyphen for noun and adjective

laissez faire do not use the *laissez* version

La-La land noun; extra hyphen as adjective, eg, La-La-land mentality

lambast (not lambaste)

lamé (to distinguish it from lame)

lamppost

Land Rover (no hyphen); similarly **Range Rover**

Land's End

landmine (no hyphen)

landslide (political), **landslip** (earth)

languor, **languorous** (not -our)

lap dancer, **lap dancing** (nouns), but a lap-dancing club (adjectival, hyphenate); likewise pole dancer, pole dancing, but a pole-dancing club

largesse (not largess)

lasagne prefer the plural to lasagna

last, **past** *last* should not be used as a synonym of *latest*; “the last few days” means the final few days; “the past few days” means the most recent few days. Also, do not write, eg, “last June” in December if you mean “June last year”

Last Post, like Reveille, is sounded, not played

Latin be sparing in its use. When Latin phrases are in common usage, use roman rather than italics, eg, caveat emptor, quid pro quo, ex parte injunction, habeas corpus

Latino, **Latina** (cap)

latitude, **longitude**

launch a book/film/housing development **is launched** (not launches)

launch pad (two words)

launderette (not laundrette)

law cases italicise, eg, *Regina v Turnbull*

law lords, **law officers** (l/c)

lawnmower (one word)

lay, **lie** a person lays a carpet (transitive verb), but lies on a carpet (intransitive). Never confuse

lay-by noun

layoff (noun) **lay off** (verb) refer to the suspension of workers from employment with the intention of re-employing them at a later date, or the temporary suspension of work introduced by an employer as an economic measure, so should not be used as a synonym for permanent job losses

layout (noun) **lay out** (verb)

lay person, lay people (two words) in church or professional contexts

lay waste means to devastate or destroy, so it does not need a following “to”. Goats can lay waste a field, not lay waste to a field

leach do not confuse removing from a substance by a percolating liquid with **leech**, the blood-sucking creature or a metaphor for taking the life out of somebody or something

Leader of the Opposition but Opposition leader

lean, leap past tenses leant, leapt (not leaned, leaped)

Learjet (one word)

learnt (past tense and past participle of learn);

learned (pronounced “learn-ed”, adjective, as in *scholarly*)

leave, leaving prefer to depart, departing

le Carré, John the author’s birth name is David Cornwell

Le Corbusier render the architect as thus (not Corbusier) at all mentions. This is the nom d’artiste of Charles-Édouard Jeanneret-Gris

leech do not confuse with **leach**

Left, the cap in the political context when referring to a group of like-minded individuals, eg, “The Left added to Tony Blair’s worries”; but l/c in “the party swung to the left”. When the Left is qualified, keep the adjective l/c, eg, the hard Left, the far Left. Also, **the left wing, left-wing contenders, leftwingers**. See **Centre, Right**

leftist, left-leaning try to avoid these, and also rightist, right-leaning, which are particularly liked by news agencies, not least in the Americas, and opt for left-wing, right-wing, left-of-centre, right-of-centre etc

leg despite several attempts to rewrite the anatomy books, stick with femur for the thigh bone and the tibia and fibula in the shin. Like fibs, the fibia is not true

legal aid l/c and never hyphenate, even adjectivally in phrases such as “legal aid cases”

legendary avoid its clichéd use

legionella, listeria, salmonella are all bacteria, not viruses. See **bacterium**

legionnaires’ disease

legroom one word, also elbowroom, headroom

Lehman Brothers Lehman at second mention

Leigh, Vivien

leitmotiv (l/c, roman), prefer to leitmotif

Leonardo da Vinci at second mention always Leonardo, never da Vinci; but note *The Da Vinci Code* for the book and the film

leprosy patient in modern context, prefer to leper. Always avoid defining people by condition or illness: a schizophrenic, a diabetic, a paraplegic

Leptis Magna in 200BC, Leptis Magna and Carthage were Punic, while Alexandria was Greek. AD200 was the zenith for Leptis Magna as a Roman city and its benefactor was Septimius (not Septimus) Severus

lèse-majesté (treason, or insult to a monarch) takes roman and accents

less in quantity, **fewer** in numbers. See **fewer**

lesser opposite to greater (eg, the lesser evil); not to be used as a synonym of less. See **greater or lesser degree**

lech (after) prefer to lech for informal verb meaning to behave lecherously towards, lust after

letdown one word as noun; but **let down** (verb)

letter bomb (hyphenate only in adjectival use)

letterbox, postbox (no hyphens)

leukaemia see **-aemia**

liaison, liaise the word *link* would often be better. The verb *liaise* has forced its way into the language; however, use sparingly and only in its correct sense – to establish co-operation, to act as a link with, not as a synonym of *meet* or *talk*

licence (noun) **license** (verb), but beware of **licensee** (noun), licensed, licensing. See **practice, practise**

lie of the land, the (not lay)

Liechtenstein

Liège note the accent on the Belgian city

life cycle

life form

lifeguard (on a beach); Life Guardsman (on a horse)

lifelong (one word as adjective)

liferaft (one word), as **lifeboat, lifebelt** etc

lifesize(d) (no hyphen)

lift-off (spacecraft etc), as take-off (hyphenated)

light bulb two words as noun but hyphenate adjectivally

light-hearted see **-hearted**

lightning (as in electrical storm), **lightening** (as in making lighter)

light-year (hyphenated) a measure of distance, not time

like do not use as a synonym of *such as* (eg, say “parishes such as St George’s are ambitious”, not “parishes like St George’s ...”); nor as a synonym of *as if* (eg, say “he looks as if he is succeeding”, not “he looks like he is succeeding”)

likeable

likely do not use the Americanism “He will likely send out another e-mail soon”. Write “He is likely to send out another e-mail soon”; or “Most likely he will send out ...”; “Very likely he will ...”

lily of the valley

linchpin (not lynchpin)

line l/c, as in **Maginot line**

line of fire militarily, in the flight path of as fired missile. Do not confuse with **firing line**

liner take care with this word, which strictly no longer applies to passenger cruise ships. Liners nowadays are cargo vessels trading regularly between designated ports, eg, container ships. Confine use of “liner” for passenger ships to historical contexts, eg, the transatlantic liner *Queen Mary*

line-up (noun), but to line up (verb)

Lions (rugby) officially the touring rugby union team is known as the British Isles; alternatively, the Lions. At a pinch, they may be referred to as the British and Irish Lions. They are not the British Lions

Lipizzaner horses (prefer this version to Lippizaner)

liquefy (not liquify), but **liquidate**

liquorice, not the American licorice

lira (singular), **lire** (plural), the former Italian currency

Lisbon treaty (l/c treaty); likewise **Amsterdam treaty**, **Maastricht treaty** etc

lissom prefer to lissome (or lithesome); means supple in the limbs or body; lithe; supple; agile; nimble

literally avoid as expression of emphasis; “he literally exploded with anger” is absurd

little ‘un, big ‘un apostrophe shows absence of the “o” producing the “w” sound

living room (no hyphen, as dining room etc)

Lloyds TSB, the bank, and **Lloyds Banking Group**; but **Lloyd’s of London** (insurance)

Lloyd’s of London use this full name at first mention; Lloyd’s thereafter

LLP (limited liability partnership) as for Ltd or plc, there is not normally a need to add LLP at the end of a firm’s name

loan is a noun (ie, never say “I loaned him \$20” etc); the verb is lend/lent

loathe (verb), **loath** (adjective; not *loth*)

lochs in Scotland; **loughs** in Ireland

lockout (in industrial disputes etc), one word; but *to lock out*

lodestar, **lodestone** prefer to load-

log jam two words

London cap the **East End** and the **West End** of London. Also **North London**, **South London**, **East London**, **West London**, **Central London**, **Inner London**; but l/c southeast London, southwest London etc

London Clinic, **The** (cap T)

Longchamp (not Longchamps), the French racecourse

longstanding do not use hyphen

Lord of the Rings, **The**, by J.R.R. Tolkien. Note **The** is part of the title. The second film in the cycle is called *The Two Towers* (not *Twin Towers*).

Lord's Self-styled home of cricket in England. Misspelt "Lords" in St David's

Lords takes singular verb, eg, the Lords is sitting

lords justices (both words take the plural)

loss-maker, **loss-making**

Lothario cap, whether the character in *The Fair Penitent* (1703) by Nicholas Rowe or figuratively

Lotto the renamed main game of the national lottery in Britain. See **national lottery**

lour prefer to **lower**, as in *louring sky*

Loutchansky, **Grigori** not Lutchansky

loveable takes the middle "e", as likeable

lowbrow (as highbrow)

lower prefer **lour**, as in *louring sky*

lowest common denominator mathematically, this can be a big number (the lowest common multiple of denominators of several vulgar fractions). However, the use of the term in a derogatory sense to mean the level of the least discriminating audience is in common usage and is acceptable

low-key

Ltd can usually be dropped from company names (as can plc). See **LLP**

Lugovoy, **Andrei** (not Luguvoi). He is a former KGB officer, not a former KGB agent

lullaby (not -bye)

lumbar, as in the lower back (eg, lumbar puncture); **lumber** as in junk furniture, lumberjacks, or (verbally) moving clumsily about etc

Lurex (initial cap)

Luton airport (l/c airport)

Luxembourg (not –burg)

Lycra (cap, trade name)

lying in state (noun, no hyphens; nor in the verb, to lie in state)

Lyons (not Lyon)

-lyse the style is analyse, paralyse etc (not –ize). See **–ise, isation**

M

M25 do not say M25 motorway

Maastricht treaty (l/c treaty), but Treaty of Maastricht. See **Amsterdam treaty, Lisbon treaty**

Macau (not Macao); the **Macau Government**

Mac, Mc always check the spelling of these prefixes

MacArthur, General Douglas

Macaulay, Lord the 19th-century poet, essayist and historian

McCartney, (Sir) Paul

McClaren, Steve, the football coach and manager; but **McLaren-Honda**, the Formula One motor racing team

MacDowell, Andie

McGregor, Ewen

MacLaine, Shirley

Maclean, Donald

Macmillan, Harold, and the publishers

McMillan, Ian the poet

Macpherson, Elle

Macedonia the correct (and politically sensitive) title of the new republic is Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (caps as shown). Macedonia and FYR Macedonia in Sports listings

Machiavelli(an)

machinegun, but sub-machinegun

mackintosh (raincoat)

macroeconomic, microeconomic (no hyphen)

Macy's (New York store)

Madame Tussauds no apostrophe. It is part of the Merlin Entertainments Group, which also includes Warwick Castle, Alton Towers and Chessington World of Adventures

mad cow disease See **BSE**

Madejski Stadium, Reading (not Madjeski)

Madonna her maiden name is Ciccone (not Ciccione). She divorced Guy Ritchie in 2008

maestros (plural of maestro; maestri)

Mafia cap only in the Italian, specifically Sicilian, context and its direct derivatives, eg, the US; l/c mafia in countries such as Russia when used as a synonym for gangsters.

Mafikeng the new name (since 1980) of Mafeking. Spell according to historical context

Magdalen College, **Oxford**; but **Magdalene** College, **Cambridge**

Maginot line French fortifications against Germany before the Second World War

Magna Carta, not *the* Magna Carta, imposed on King John at Runnymede in June 1215

maharajah prefer to maharaja

mailshot

major avoid as a lazy alternative for *big, chief, important* or *main*

Majorca, Minorca use the anglicised forms

majority of do not use as alternative for *most of*

makeover one word as noun

make-up (cosmetics or typography), not makeup

Málaga not accent

malapropism misuse of a similar-sounding word, eg, "an allegory on the banks of the Nile", when "alligator" is meant. See **coruscating**, often mistaken for **excoriating**

Mall, The (cap "T"), the road in London. In Washington DC, the national park is the (l/c) Mall, more fully, the National Mall

Mammon (initial cap)

Man cap in the context of humankind, the species. See **Nature**

management buyout spell out first time, although MBO (plural MBOs) is acceptable on Business pages

Mandarin is a spoken form of Chinese, as is Cantonese. It is incorrect to refer to their common written form as, say, Mandarin or Cantonese: it is simply Chinese

mangos preferred plural

manifestos (not –oes)

Manila capital of the Philippines

man-made hyphenated

manoeuvre, manoeuvring, manoeuvrable

mantelpiece (not mantlepiece)

Maori noun, adjective, singular and plural

Mao Zedong (not Mao Tse-tung)

marathon avoid in clichéd sense of a long time, as in “a marathon session”. Cap as in London Marathon, New York Marathon

march past (noun; two words in military context)

Mardi Gras for the Shrove Tuesday festival, but note the self-styled **Mardi Gra bomber**

Margrethe, Queen of Denmark (not Margarethe)

Mariinsky for the name of theatre home of the Kirov Ballet

Marines cap in both Royal Marines and US Marines; also a Marine

marketplace (one word), but market-maker and **MarketPlace** stores in Bermuda

Marks & Spencer use the ampersand rather than *and* in text; can abbreviate to M&S in headlines; the formal legal title is Marks and Spencer plc, but this form needs to be used only rarely

marquess, not marquis

Marrakesh (not Marrakech); write **Djemaa el-Fna** for the big square

Marriott hotels (not Marriot)

Mars bar(s) (l/c “b”)

Marseilles prefer the anglicised version to Marseille; also call the football club Marseilles (not Olympique de Marseille). See **Lyons**

martial law rule by the military, eg, under a junta, in the absence of civil law; do not confuse with **military law**, eg, that exercised at a **court martial**

Martini is a trade name, so always cap

Marxist, **Marxism** derived from Karl Marx, so cap. Do not use as a loose variant of communism. See **communism**

Mary Celeste (not *Marie Celeste*)

M*A*S*H use asterisks in the titles of the satirical film and the TV series set in a mobile army surgical hospital during the Korean War

Masai prefer to Maasai

Mason-Dixon line state boundary between Maryland and Pennsylvania, regarded as the dividing line between the North and the South, especially between the free and the slave states before the American Civil War. See **line**

Mass (cap in its religious context), also Holy Mass, Requiem Mass etc

Massachusetts

massive avoid as a synonym of *big*

MasterCard

masterclass (musical etc; no hyphen)

Matabele singular and plural (a Matabele, the Matabele people)

materialise avoid as synonym of *appear, come about or happen*

matériel note accent

matinee (no accent), as premiere, debut, decor, etc

matins (l/c). See **evensong, Christian terms**

matt (not mat), as in matt paint, matt black etc

Mauretania, the liner. **Mauritania**, the country

may/might do not confuse. 1. *Might* is the past tense or subjunctive mood of may. Thus, "He might have come last night"; 2. Often followed by "well", expressing theoretical possibility, "He might well come". In this sense, *might* looks to the future and functions as a weak form of may. **Thus, use *might* in sentences referring to past possibilities that did not happen**, eg, "If that had happened ten days ago, my whole life might have been different". A clear distinction is evident in the following example: "He might have been captured by the Iraqis [but he wasn't]", compared with "He may have been captured by the Iraqis [it is possible but we don't know]". In the sentences "You may be correct" and "You might be correct", *might* implies a greater degree of tentativeness. In this context, *could* may provide an alternative of degree. Thus, "There may be trouble ahead" implies more certainty than "There could be trouble ahead", which in turn is more certain than "There might be trouble ahead"

Maya, one of the Indian people of Central America; **Mayas**, plural; and **Mayan**, adjective

mayday (as in SOS), l/c; but **May Day** (holiday)

Mayfair, but the May Fair Hotel

Mayor of Hamilton/St George but l/c as in "the mayor called a town hall meeting".

Mazar-i-Sharif

mealtimes write breakfast time, lunchtime, teatime, dinner time, supper time (but use hyphen in compounds when adjectival)

means-test, means-tested etc (hyphenate when as noun, verb or adjective)

Meat Loaf the rock musician; **meatloaf**, the minced meat dish

mecca lc only as in "mecca for tourists"

Medal of Honor use the American spelling for the award and the game. See **American spellings**

Médecins sans Frontières

media plural as in mass media, so do not write, eg, “a media that is full of rumour”. Note mediums (spiritualists). See **press**

medical terms never use these metaphorically or as terms of abuse (geriatric, paralytic, schizophrenic). In words ending in –tomy (appendectomy, hysterectomy etc) the word “operation” is tautologous and must not be used. See **–aemia, bacterium, X-ray**

medications give the generic name (lower case, parentheses) as well as the brand name, eg, Casodex (bicalutamide) for those new or not familiar. Omit in reference to well-known medications, eg, Valium, Viagra

Medici note apostrophe in, eg, Catherine de’ Medici

medieval (not mediaeval)

Mediterranean

meet never write *meet with*

mega- be very sparing with this as a colloquial prefix means *big*

megawatts the capacity of a power station is measured in megawatts; the output is measured in megawatt-hours. The correct abbreviation of megawatt is MW (not mW, which means milliwatt). See **kilowatt-hour**

mêlée

Member of Parliament but MP almost always preferable

mementoes (not –os)

memorandum, plural memorandums (not –a)

meningitis, distinguish whether bacterial or viral; the headlines cases are usually bacterial

Mercedes-Benz (hyphen)

Merchant Navy (caps)

Merthyr Tydfil in South Wales (a unitary authority) must never be shorted to Merthyr, which is a village in Carmarthenshire

Messiah cap in the religious context, eg, in Judaism the awaited redeemer of the Jews; in Christianity in reference to Jesus Christ. But l/c in a more general sense, eg, “Many managers at Newcastle have been hailed as messiahs”

Messerschmitt (not –schmidt). Note that aircraft types are, eg, Me109, Me262. See **aircraft types**

mete out (not meet out), in context of punishment

Method acting use cap M

métier accent

metres, as in distance, poetry, etc; **meters**, as in gas, electricity or parking, etc

Métro in Paris; note accent

Metropolitan Police subsequently may be abbreviated sparingly to the Met (or Met Police in sporting terms)

metrosexual note that the term was coined by Mark Simpson, a British journalist, not by Marian Saltzman, an American writer

MI5 is the British Security Service; **MI6** the British Secret Intelligence Service

miaow the catty sound; note also **miaow-miaow** as the street name for mephedrone, which is a Class B drug

Michelangelo

mickey, take the

microchip

microgram do not abbreviate

microlight (prefer to microlite)

mid-air (hyphenate, noun or adjective)

midday, midweek (no hyphens)

Middle Ages, the (caps)

Middle-earth (note hyphen and u/c, l/c); see ***The Lord of the Rings***

Middle East comprises Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Yemen. In a general sense, it also takes in the countries of the Maghreb: Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, Western Sahara. Never abbreviate to the Americanism **Mideast**

Middle England (caps, in political context)

Middlesbrough

Middlesex is not a county in England

Mideast unacceptable as abbreviation of **Middle East**

Midland Bank no longer exists as a trading entity. It is part of HSBC, so use Midland only in historical context

midlife crisis but do not overuse this cliché

midnight See **noon**

midsummer, midwinter

midterm

Midwest (US)

MiG, the former Soviet aircraft

migrant do not use in place of *emigrant* or *immigrant*. It means one who is in the process of migrating

mike (not mic), as abbreviation for microphone

mileage

military law not to be confused with **martial law**

militate (against or in favour of); do not confuse with **mitigate**

millennium common usage says that the millennium ended on December 31, 1999, although technically it should have been December 31, 2000. We accept the former. The plural of millennium is **millennia** (unlike memorandums etc; see referendum). Note also **millenarian** (only one middle “n”) meaning of, or related to, the millennium

millionaire a person whose personal assets are worth at least one million of the standard monetary units of his or her country. Historical inflation means that, while not exactly paupers, millionaires are not as rich as they used to be. If someone can be described as a multimillionaire, that is obviously somewhat more impressive and valid now

millions write out from one to ten, thereafter 11 million etc. Abbreviate to “m” only for headlines. For currencies, spell out in text, \$15 million, but abbreviate to \$15m in headlines. With decimal notations, best to restrict to two decimal points in text, rounded up or down (eg, \$1.53 million), although in headlines, try to avoid decimals altogether. In text, write 2.5 million rather than spelling out two and a half million; but “three million shares changed hands” (not 3 million shares) etc

mindset

minimal do not use as a synonym of *small*; it means smallest, or the least possible in size, duration etc

miniskirt (no hyphen); also **minicab**

ministers (political) l/c unless specific, in which case cap. Give name, followed by full title (capped) first time, eg, Grant Gibbons, the Minister of Economic Development, or Michael Weeks, the Shadow Minister for Community, Culture and Sport; thereafter, name or just “the minister” or “the shadow minister”. Same rule applies for senators

Minnelli, Liza

minuscule (not miniscule). Use sparingly, as it is heavily overworked as a synonym of *very small* or *unimportant*

Mishcon de Reya, solicitors (l/c “de”)

mis-hit (hyphen), **mis-sell**; but see **misspell**

Miss, Ms Ms is fully acceptable when a woman (married or unmarried) wants to be called thus, or when it is not known for certain if she is Mrs or Miss. Ms is increasingly common in American and British context, with Miss the exception. See **appellations**

missiles

Mississippi

misspell (no hyphen; see **spelt**)

mitigate means to *make milder, moderating* (as in mitigating circumstances in a law case); not to be confused with **militate**

Mitterand, François, the late French President

Mladic, Ratko the former Bosnian Serb general on trial in The Hague for war crimes.

mobile phone do not abbreviate to mobile even after first mention; **cellphone** in US only

moccasins (not mocassins)

mockumentary a parody of documentary, eg, *This is Spinal Tap*

Moët & Chandon no longer Moët et Chandon

Mohammed see **Muhammad**

Moldova no longer Moldovia

Molotov cocktail do not use this euphemism. Write **petrol bomb**

Mona Lisa (not *Monna Lisa*) the portrait also known as *La Gioconda*, painted by **Leonardo da Vinci**

monarch (l/c) for the British monarch; but the Sovereign, the Crown. See **Royal Family**

Mönchengladbach note accent (not –oe)

monetise not moneytise

moneys (plural of money), but money will usually serve. Also, **moneyed**, not monied

money laundering two words as noun; but hyphenate adjectivally, eg, a money-laundering gang

Mongol, Mongolian, for the race. Never refer to a Down's syndrome sufferer as a mongol.

Montenegrin is the adjective from Montenegro (not Montenegrin)

months for abbreviations, eg, in lists or listings, see **days/months**

Moon cap in planetary sense, otherwise l/c. Also l/c phases, eg, full moon, new moon. See **Earth, Sun, Universe**

moose plural moose, name of the large North American deer that in Europe and Asia is known as the elk; plural elks

more than use rather than **over** with numbers, eg, "more than 2,500 people attended the rally", not "over 2,500 ..." Relating to age, "he is over 50" sounds better than "he is more than 50". But "their pay went up more than \$300 a week" is preferable to "... over ..."

Morissette, Alanis

Mormon a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (note hyphen and l/c –day). Also note the Book of Mormon (roman)

Morse code

Mortar do not use by itself when the meaning is mortar bomb; the mortar is the launcher from which the shell is fired. But mortar attack is perfectly correct

mortuary not the American morgue

mosquitoes (not -os as plural)

Mother Nature (initial caps). See **Nature**

mother of five etc no hyphens. See **father of two**

mother ship

Mother's Day (Mothering Sunday in Britain)

Mother Teresa not Theresa

mother-to-be hyphens

motocross (not motorcross)

motorcycle, motorcyclist, motorbike

motoring terms the following terms should be standardised throughout the paper thus: **carburettor**, **wheelspin**, **four-wheel drive** (preferred abbreviation is 4x4 rather than 4WD), but a **four-wheel-drive vehicle** (two hyphens when adjectival), **power steering**, **anti-lock brakes**, **3-litre car**, **1.9 diesel** (hyphenated when adjectival), **four-door**, **hatchback**, **four-star petrol**, **E-type Jaguar**, **Mercedes-Benz E-class** etc, **airbag**, **seatbelt**, **numberplate**, **sports car**

motor neuron (no final e) **disease** but note Motor Neurone Disease Association

Mourinho, José note accent on first name

mousy prefer to mousey

moustached having a moustache; but **moustachioed**, having a moustache, especially when bushy or elaborately shaped

moveable (keep middle "e")

movies although an Americanism, is now so common as to be an acceptable synonym of *films*; but use *films* wherever possible

Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms see **appellations**

much no need to hyphenate when used as a modifier, eg, much treasured gift; much needed vacation

mugging strictly means theft by violence in the open air. Take care not to overuse

Muhammad use this spelling for the Prophet. Use it also as the default spelling of the name, but respect variants according to individuals' preference; however, if in doubt, use Muhammad

Muharram the first month of the Islamic year. See **Eid al-Adha**, **Eid al-Fitr**

Mujahidin (cap), the fighters in a jihad or holy war. The singular is Mujahid

Mullah Muhammad Omar supreme leader of the Taleban; Mullah Omar at subsequent mention. See **War on Terror**

multi incline towards making *multi* compounds onr word wherever possible, whether used as noun or as an adjective, eg, multimillionaire, multinational, multilateral, multimedia, multiracial, multispeed, multistorey, multitrack. However, when the compound appears too hideous, such as multi-ethnic, hyphenate

multimillionaire see **millionaire**

multimillion-dollar (multimillion-pound) deal etc. Note the hyphen

Mumbai see **Indian place names**

Munchausen syndrome (no umlaut, one “h”)

muntjac

Munster (Ireland) **Münster** (Germany)

musical vocabulary song titles (classical or pop), album titles, operas (including arias) take italics; see **titles of books, films, discs, programmes, songs**; symphonies Symphony No 3 (roman, caps); but where symphonies have numbers and popular alternative titles (Eroica, Pastoral) the titles, when used, are in italics, eg, *Eroica*; concertos First Violin Concerto (roman caps)

music hall no hyphen as noun; **music-hall** hyphenate adjectivally, eg, music-hall act

Muslim not Moslem. See **Islam, Islamic terms, Muhammad**

Mussorgsky, Modest prefer to Moussorgsky

moustachioed see **moustached**

Muzak (cap proprietary)

Myanmar continue to call the country Burma

mynah bird (prefer to mina, myna)

N

9/11 is perfectly acceptable, but it may be helpful on occasion to use the full date elsewhere for clarification, eg, “the events of September 11, 2001”

Nabataean

Nafta North American Free Trade Agreement (not Area or Association)

naïve, naivetey (no diaeresis)

names as a general rule, people are entitled to be known as they wish to be known, provided their identities are clear. Thus Cassius Clay became Muhammad Ali; but in such changes, give both names until the new one is widely known

names starting stories Where the name is too long to contain in the first line, reconstruct the sentence to place the name away from the start

narcotics take care to use this word correctly. Narcotics are drugs that produce numbness and stupor, eg, cocaine, heroin, morphine, pethidine. See **drugs**

narcotrafficker one word; likewise, **narcoterrorist**

narrow boat two words

Nasa National Aeronautics and Space Administration (US); rarely necessary to spell out nowadays

national avoid as a synonym of *citizen*, as in French national

National Anthem initial caps for the British anthem, *God Save the Queen*

nationalist l/c except when referring to name of a political party

National Lottery changed the name of its main game to **Lotto** in May 2002, but continues to use the phrase National Lottery, or l/c national lottery as a generic. See **Lotto**

National Security Adviser cap this top post in US political context. The US National Security Adviser is preferable to writing, eg, President Obama's National Security Adviser

nationwide no hyphen, but use sparingly as it borders on being a cliché; prefer national or nationally. See **–wide**

Native American cap the “N” when referring to people historically and stereotypically referred to as Red Indian

Nato (never NATO). Its Secretary-General is Jens Stoltenberg, the former Prime Minister of Norway. He replaced Anders Fogh Rasmussen, the former Danish Prime Minister, in October 2014. Note that in full Nato is the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (following our style on –isation). It was set up in April 1949 and has 28 member countries

Nature cap sparingly, only in the context of personifying the power that creates and regulates the world. Also, **Mother Nature**. See **Man**

naught come to (not nought, which means the digit 0)

nave is a central space in a church; journalists who misspell the words are knaves

Naypyidaw the new capital of **Burma**

Nazi, Nazism (caps) see **communism**

Neanderthal (cap, and not –tal); note **Neanderthal Man** (cap). See **Man**

nearby, near by the first is adjectival, eg, the nearby school was convenient”; the second is adverbial, eg, “he sat on a bench near by”

near-demise hyphenate this and other constructions involving a word with near

nearly one in three ... is prefer singular to the plural *are* in these constructions. See **one**

Needles, The at the western end of the Isle of Wight. See **Solent**

neither takes a singular verb, eg, “neither is ...”, “neither Bert nor Fred has any idea”. Do not use the construction neither ... or ... (must use nor). See **none**, **either**

nemesis l/c any agency of retribution and vengeance

neoconservative, **neocon** no hyphen

neoprene l/c as it is a generic

Nepalese prefer to Nepali for both people and language of Nepal

nerve-racking (not –wracking). See **racked**, **wrack**

Nestlé

Netanyahu, **Binyamin** (not Benjamin)

Netherlands, the (no longer cap The). Do not use Holland as an alternative except in sporting or historical contexts. See **Holland**

nevertheless (one word, as nonetheless)

new frequently redundant. Try the sentence without it and see if it really adds any meaning; always omit in “setting *new* record”. Avoid employing phrases such as “white is the new black”

newborn (as in babies, no hyphen)

Newcastle upon Tyne, **Newcastle-under-Lyme**

new-found hyphen

Newhaven, East Sussex, but New Haven, Connecticut. See **Sussex**

newscaster prefer newsreader

newspapers and journals; use italics for titles and make sure to use *The* in the title whenever appropriate. The lists that follow, although not exhaustive, should cover the most frequently mentioned (and some that have fallen by the wayside): **In the UK and Ireland with The in the masthead:** *The Times*; *The Sunday Times*; *The Sun*; *The Guardian*; *The Observer*; *The Independent*; *The Independent on Sunday*; *The Daily Telegraph*; *The Sunday Telegraph*; *The Mail on Sunday*; *The People*; *The European*; *The Scotsman*; *The Herald*; *The Sunday Post*; *The Birmingham Post*; *The Journal* (Newcastle); *The Northern Echo*; *The Argus* (Brighton); *The Irish Times*; *The Belfast Telegraph*; *The Spectator*; *The Economist*; *The Sporting Life*; *The Big Issue*; *The Lancet*; *The New England Journal of Medicine*; *The Illustrated London News*. **In the UK and Ireland with The in the masthead:** *News of the World*; (final edition published on July 10, 2011); *Financial Times*; *Daily Mirror*; *Daily Mail*; *Daily Express*; *Daily Star*; *Daily Sport*; *Sunday Sport*; *Sunday Mirror*; *Sunday Express*; *Evening Standard*; *Scotland on Sunday*; *Yorkshire Post*; *Daily Post* (Liverpool); *Manchester Evening News*; *Western Daily Press* (Bristol); *Western Mail* (Cardiff); *Western Morning News* (Plymouth); *Evening Mail* (Birmingham); *Evening Post* (Bristol); *Express & Star* (Wolverhampton); *Telegraph & Argus* (Bradford); *Oxford Mail*; *Sunday Herald* (Glasgow); *Sunday Independent* (Dublin); *New Statesman & Society* (although just *New Statesman* is acceptable); *British Medical Journal* (the *BMJ*); *Church Times*; *Jewish Chronicle*; *Which?*; *Which Car?*; *Racing Post*; *Hello!*; *OK!*; *Heat*; *Wallpaper*. **North America:** *The Boston Globe*; *Boston Herald*; *Chicago Sun-Times*; *Chicago Tribune*; *The Denver Post*; *Los Angeles Times*; *The Miami Herald*; *The New York Times*; *Daily News* (New York); *New York Post*; *The New Yorker*; *San Francisco Chronicle*; *The Washington Post*; *The Washington Times*; *USA Today*; *The Wall Street Journal*; *International Herald Tribune*; *The Christian*

Science Monitor; *The Globe and Mail* (Toronto). **Latin America:** *Granma* (Cuba); *La Nación*; *Clarín* (Argentina); *O Globo* (Brazil). **Middle East:** *The Jerusalem Post*; *Haaretz*; *Yediot Aharonot*; *al-Ahram* (Cairo); *The Daily Star* (Beirut); *Kuwait Times*. **Africa:** *The Herald* (Harare); *The Star*; *Sunday Times* (Johannesburg). **Asia:** *The Times of India*; *People's Daily* (Beijing); *Far Eastern Economic Review* (Hong Kong); *South China Morning Post* (Hong Kong); *The Straits Times* (Singapore); *New Straits Times* (Malaysia). **Australasia:** *The Australian* (Sydney); *The Sydney Morning Herald*; *The Age* (Melbourne); *Herald Sun* (Melbourne); *The Dominion Post* (Wellington). When the publication's name is used adjectivally, omit *The*, eg, the *Times* reporter was attacked ... Always properly attribute material from another newspaper or source: never say "a report in another newspaper ..." but "a report in *The Guardian* ..." etc. However, the general phrases media reports or press reports are acceptable when material has been widely disseminated

news stand two words

New Year Honours or **New Year's Honours List** (caps); also **the Queen's Birthday Honours**. See **honours**

New Year's Day, **New Year's Eve**, but the **new year**, **new year's resolutions** and **Chinese new year**

New York City, **New York State** (cap), to distinguish them; usually New York will be sufficient for the city, and upstate New York is permissible. Normally, l/c state in contexts such as the state of Virginia, but see **Washington**. Generally write out street names such as Fifth Avenue (not 5th Avenue)

New Zealand never NZ, even in headlines

Nietzsche

nightclub

nightmare an unpleasant dream; avoid its use as a lazy cliché for something that goes wrong

night-time (hyphen), but **daytime** (one word)

Nikkei average

Nilsen, Dennis despite considerable claims for other spellings

Nimby(ism) acronym for "not in my backyard "; initial cap

Nissan cars, but **Nissen hut**

nitroglycerin no terminal "e"; hence trinitroglycerin. See **glycerine**

No 1, **No 2**, **No 45** etc for songs in a pop chart, bestselling books etc

No 10, or **10 Downing Street** not Number 10 or Downing St. See **Downing Street**

no noun, plural **noes**

"no" campaign (note quotes and l/c), the anti-euro lobby that also believes Britain should remain in the EU; likewise for other campaigns opposed to something

Nobel Prize for Literature, Medicine etc; Nobel Peace/Literature Prize, Nobel prize (unspecific), Nobel prizewinner, Nobel laureate (l/c "l"), Nobel prize-winning author etc. Note that the Nobel Prize for Literature is awarded for a body of work, not an individual novel etc

Noël use the diaeresis in the synonym for Christmas. See **Coward**

noes noun, plural of no

no-fly zone

no man's land

no-no

no one two words, no hyphen

nonagenarian (not nono-)

noncommittal no hyphen

nonconformist

non-cooperation see **co-operate**

non-dom hyphen

none almost always takes the singular verb, eg, "none is available at present". However, very occasionally a plural is permissible, eg, "None of them are better singers than the Welsh" or "none of them have done their best" (where the inelegant alternative would be "none of them has done his or her best"). See **neither**

nonetheless (one word)

non-existent

nonfiction one word

non-profitmaking

non sequitur (roman, no hyphen)

non-stop (hyphenate)

noon (not 12 noon); and never say 12am or 12pm. See **midnight**

normalcy avoid; say normality instead

north, north east, northern etc; for when to cap, hyphenate, make one word etc, see **compass points**

northerner, **southerner** (l/c) in most contexts; but **Southerner** (cap) in the United States

Northern Ireland see **Ireland**

North Korea note that **Korean names** are rendered as three capitalised words, no hyphens. Take care to differentiate between people with the surname Kim, which is extremely common, not least in the ruling dynasty.

North West Frontier Province, in Pakistan, is now known officially as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

nosey

notable (no middle "e")

not only ... to be followed by **but** (and usually) **also**; often better to say simply **both ... and**

Noughties the decade 2000-09. This is not strictly speaking “the first decade of the 21st century” (2001-10); but the celebration of the new millennium at the end of 1999 and the start of 2000 (both years actually in the old millennium) has no doubt contributed to widespread misunderstanding and misuse of the phrase. Since the Christian era began with the year 1AD (not 0AD), it follows that the first year of any century ends in the figure -1 and its last year -00

“no” vote, “yes” vote

nuclear terms should be used with precision. Take special care not to confuse **fission** and **fusion**

Nuits-St-Georges two hyphens for the Burgundian wine town

number one, Number 10 use **No 1, No 10**

numbers with the exception of **ages**, write from one to ten in full; 11 upwards as numbers except when they are approximations, eg, “about thirty people turned up”. Try to keep consistency within a sentence: say “the number injured rose from eight to fourteen, and do not mix fractions and decimals. At the start of a sentence, write all numbers in full. For ordinals, write out up to twentieth, then 21st, 33rd, 45th etc. But for birthdays and holes in golf, stick with numbers throughout, eg, 1st, 6th, 12th

numberplate (on vehicles etc; one word). See **motoring terms**

Nuremberg (not –burg)

O

Oath of Allegiance as sworn by new MPs; the oath at subsequent mentions

oblivious of (not “to”); means forgetful of, unaware of. It does not mean ignorant or uncomprehending

O’Briain, Dara the comedian

obscenities “four-letter words” and profanities should be avoided because they upset many readers. However, in direct quotes and where they are essential to the story, style obscenities thus with asterisks; f***, f***ing, c***, p***y, t*** etc. See **four-letter words**

occupied territories, the (all l/c).

occurred (not occured)

o’clock see **times**

ocker a boorish person

Occam’s razor (prefer to Ockham’s) aka the principle of economy

octogenarian

octopuses (plural of octopus; not octopi)

Oder-Neisse line the boundary between Poland and Germany

OECD the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

oedipal (l/c) as pyrrhic, oriental

of avoid expressions such as “all of the people attending”, “half of the children replied”; say simply “all the people”, “half the children” etc

of all time do not use this meaningless phrase, as in “best golfer of all time”, in any circumstances

offbeat no hyphen

off stage but off-stage (hyphenated) as a modifier. See **on stage**

oil-drilling, oil-fired, oil-slick, oil-tanker, but **oil drum, oilfield, oilrig, oil platform**

OK do not write *okay*

old See **elderly**

Old Boy caps for former pupil of a school' likewise **Old Girl**

Olde Towne u/c and terminal e's when referring to St George

Olivier, Laurence (not Lawrence), Lord Olivier

Olympiacos (not Olympiakos) the Greek sports club

Olympics can be used as short form of the Olympic Games. Similarly, the Games (always capped) can be used (same rule for Games in Commonwealth Games etc). Always cap Olympics and Olympic even when used adjectivally, eg, an Olympic athlete. Note International Olympic Committee (no final “s” on Olympic)

ombudsman keep l/c in general context, eg, “he referred the matter to the ombudsman”; but cap for specifics

omega-3, omega-6 etc, l/c and hyphen, for fatty acids

on behalf of is a frequently misused phrase. It means *in the interest of* (a person etc) or as *representative of* (eg, “acting on behalf of his client” is correct). It must not be used as a verbose way of saying b; eg, “the book betrays a lack of understanding on behalf of the author” is wrong

on board prefer to aboard

ondes Martenot the electronic keyboard instrument

one use the singular verb in structures such as “one in three says that ...”. Also use the singular in “Nearly one in three is ...”. In first-person pieces, try to avoid the use of *one* as a synonym of *I*

one member, one vote no hyphen unless used adjectivally, as in one-member, one-vote system

one-time do not use as a synonym of *former* as in “one-time chairman” etc

ongoing avoid this ugly adjective; say *continuing* if anything is necessary

online one word in computer context

only take great care to place “only” before the word or phrase it qualifies; “she **only** touched the key, but did not press it; she touched **only** the key, not the switch; she touched the **only** key”. Similarly, “he only played cricket” is wrong; “he played only cricket” or, if emphasising he, “Only he [ie, not any of the others] played cricket”

on stage two words, as in “She dominates on stage”; if it has to be used as a modifier, hyphenate; “The on-stage arrangements are bizarre”. Likewise, **off stage, off-stage**

on to unlike *into*, two words generally better than one, as in “she moved on to better things”, although “he collapsed onto the floor” is acceptable

Opec the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries. See **acronym**

opencast mining

open-heart surgery; **open-door** policy (if this overworked phrase has to be used); **open-plan** living room, office

openly gay do not use this phrase. We do not “out” gays, so it is a redundant term. Mention that someone is gay only if it is relevant

open skies (l/c for adjective and noun), international airline bilateral access agreements; hyphenate adjectivally, eg, **open-skies** policy

ophthalmologist, ophthalmic etc (ophthalmic)

Öpik, Lembit accent

Opposition the came cap or l/c rules apply as to Government – cap as a noun but generally l/c as adjective; eg, “He accused the Opposition of lying” but “He said it was an opposition lie”

Opus Dei the conservative organisation is a personal prelature of the Pope, and so should not be referred to as a sect

or need not be preceded by *either*, although it is strengthened thereby if two options are mentioned. Usually avoid a comma before it

oral must not be confused with **verbal**; it means pertaining to the mouth, often in the spoken context (eg, the oral tradition, by word of mouth); verbal means pertaining to words (contrasted with, eg, physical or choral). Take care, See **verbal**

orang-utan hyphen

Orders in Council are approved, not signed, by the Queen

organic food never say organic farmers use no chemicals; they frequently use a limited range

ordinals see **numbers**

Orient, the; wherever possible, say the East. The adjective is **oriental**, l/c. The East London football club is Leyton Orient, but was known as Orient from 1966 to 1987, and Clapton Orient from 1898 to 1939

orientate, orientation prefer this to *orient, oriented* etc. See **disorientate**

Orkney or the Orkney Islands, not the Orkneys. See **Shetland**

Oscar Award(s), or **the Oscars** caps. Note that as the word Oscar and the Oscar statuette are both trademarks belonging to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, we should not use the word in such phrases as “the annual beauty Oscars” to describe unrelated competitions of excellence

OSCE the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Ouija (board) takes the cap as it is proprietary. See **séance**

Outback, the (in Australia)

outdoor (adjective); but the outdoors

outpatients, inpatients (no hyphen)

OutRage! The homosexual “outing” group

outside never say *outside of*

-out suffixes in nouns, generally join up rather than hyphenate, as in **fallout, knockout, printout, callout, dropout, bailout** etc (but to fall out etc)

Outward Bound must be used only when referring specifically to the work or courses of the Outward Bound Trust Ltd, and never in general use in phrases such as *outward bound-style activities*. Use alternatives such as *outdoor pursuits, adventure training, outdoor adventure courses* etc. Outward Bound’s lawyers pounce on every perceived infringement of its service mark

over do not use as a synonym of *more than* when followed by a number, eg, “she waited over four hours for the train” should be “... more than four hours ...”; there were over 60 victims” should be “... more than 60 ...”. See **more than**

over as prefix wherever the word does not look too ugly, dispense with the hyphen, even when this leads to a double “r” in the middle; thus, **overcapacity, overestimate, overreact, override, overrule, overuse, overvalue**; an obvious exception where the hyphen is essential is **over-age**; similarly, for words beginning with under; see **under-age**

overall one word as adjective, but use sparingly

overestimate often confused with underestimate: note that the importance of writing “Its importance cannot be overestimated” cannot be overestimated

overly do not use as an alternative for *over* or *too*

owing to see **due to**

P

p’s and q’s see **apostrophes**

pace italicise preposition meaning “with due deference to”

pacey

Pacific Rim, South Pacific, North Pacific etc

paedophile an adult sexually attracted to children, but **pederast**, a man who has sexual relations with boys. Do not confuse

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paintings titles in *italic*

Paiute prefer to Piute for the North American peoples related to the Aztecs

Pakistan Islamabad is the capital; Karachi, the former capital, is the biggest city

Pakistani can be used both for the people of Pakistan and adjectivally, eg, Pakistani culture

palace cap in full names, such as Blenheim Palace, thereafter the palace (l/c) – except that “the Palace” is to be used for Buckingham Palace in stories about royalty. See **Royal Family**

palaeo- (not paleo-), so palaeography etc

palaeontology concerns the study of fossils and must not be confused with archaeology, which concerns human cultural remains

Palestinian National Authority (not Palestine) – usually the Palestinian Authority will suffice; but the **Palestine Liberation Organisation** (PLO)

Palme d’Or top prize at the Cannes Film Festival

palmtop computers etc

pan-African note **pan-African movement; Pan-Africanist Congress** in South Africa

panama l/c for the hat, traditionally made in Ecuador but then taken to Panama for international distribution

pantyhose but normally write tights

paparazzi plural; singular is paparazzo

paperboy, papergirl

papier-mâché

papyrus plural **papyruses**

paraffin prefer to the American kerosene

paraphernalia (not *paraphanalia*)

paratroops prefer to paratroopers; a general term for troops dropped by parachute

Pardo Palace is a royal palace on the outskirts of Madrid; the Madrid art gallery is the **Prado**

Parker Bowles, Camilla no hyphen. With her marriage to the Prince of Wales, she became of Duchess of Cornwall. When in Scotland, and when he is identified as the Duke of Rothesay, she is officially the Duchess of Rothesay and may be referred to as such

Parkinson's disease

Parliament cap always in the British/Bermudian context, and in overseas contexts when the word forms part of the institution, eg, European Parliament, Canadian Parliament and in many Commonwealth countries. However, l/c in such as the Spanish parliament, the Russian parliament. Also l/c **parliamentary**

Parsee prefer to **Parsi**

partially, partly partially is of degree, eg, partially deaf; partly is of extension, eg, partly under water

participles beware the grammar trap of the disconnected (or unrelated) participle; eg, "Judging by the lingering camera shots, X's luck was not about to change" is wrong – the present participle *judging* has to have a following noun or pronoun in agreement (in other words, X's luck is not doing the judging). So the sentence has to be rephrased, as "Judging by the lingering camera shots, I saw that X's luck ...", or "To judge from the lingering camera shots, X's luck ...". Dangling participle constructions seldom cause real ambiguity, but they jar and can distract the reader, and are to be avoided; eg, "Being a vegan bisexual who's into Nicaraguan coffee picking and boiler suits, you could safely assume that I vote Labour"; "Driving near home recently, a thick pall of smoke turned out to be a bungalow well alight"; "After being whipped fiercely, the cook boiled the egg"; "Flitting gaily from flower to flower, the footballer watched the bee"; and this from the BBC: "Sentenced to 100 hours' community service for assault, Cantona's actions made worldwide headlines". Similarly, avoid what may be termed dangling clauses, eg, "As a gay woman, the Second World War has nothing to do with Kay – every country fighting would disown her." It is hard to find any reputable historian who thinks that the Second World War was a gay woman.

Partition cap for the division of the sub-continent into India and Pakistan. See **sub-continent**

part-time, part-timer (hyphens)

partygoer see **-goer**

Pashtuns biggest ethnic group in Afghanistan. Prefer this designation to Pathans, by which they are also known. The language is **Pashto**. See **War on Terror**

Passchendaele

passer-by, passers-by

past use rather than *last* in such phrases as "the past two weeks". See **last**

pastime

past tense of verbs: almost always prefer the shorter form using final *-t* where appropriate; eg, **spelt** not spelled, **dreamt** not dreamed, **learnt** not learned, **leapt** not leaped (although never *earnt* for earned)

patchouli

pâté accents

Pati upper-lower for the Public Access to Information Act, which came into law in April 2015

Pavlikovsky, Paul not Pawel Pawlikowski for the Polish director

PAYE (caps for pay as you earn)

payoff, payout no hyphens

P. Diddy for legal reasons, never refer to the producer and rapper Sean Combs as Diddy

peacekeeping, peacemaking etc (no hyphen)

peal of bells; **peel** of an orange etc

Pearl Harbor (not Harbour). See **American spellings**

peccadillo plural **peccadillos**

pedal as in bicycle; **peddle** as in selling drugs or advocating ideas. Thus a **pedaller** is someone who pedals a bike; a **pedlar** is the (often shady) small trader; and a drug pusher is a **peddler**

pedalo (of Andrew Flintoff fame; not pedallo), plural **pedalos**

Peirce, Gareth the human rights lawyer is female

pekinese l/c for the dog breed. See **dogs**

pejorative not perjorative

Peking only in phrases such as Peking duck or Peking Man. The city is now **Beijing**. Note **pekinese** dogs. See **Chinese names**

Peloponnese

peninsula never *peninsular* when used as a noun; peninsular is the adjective, as in the **Peninsular War**; note the **Iberian Peninsula** (cap) for geographical features

peony (not paeony)

people use rather than *persons* wherever appropriate; exceptions would be “the law is no respecter of persons” or the ubiquitous *missing persons*. Take care with the apostrophe: remember that people is a plural, so the normal use is apostrophe “s”, eg, “it is the people’s wish”; *peoples* in the sense of *races* can take an “s” apostrophe, eg, “the African peoples’ common heritage”

people-trafficking hyphenate noun and adjective

Pepsi-Cola (hyphen, as Coca-Cola)

per try to avoid in phrases such as “six times per year”; “six times a year” is preferred

per cent (two words) always takes figures rather than the word, eg, 3 per cent, not three per cent. Usually use decimals rather than fractions (3.25 per cent rather than 3¼ per cent). Use % in headlines

percentage, proportion do not use as a synonym of *part* or *many* if that is all they mean in a sentence; eg, instead of “a large percentage of parents objected”, say “many parents objected”

percentage points take care. If the mortgage rate rises from 8 per cent to 10 per cent, it does not rise by 2 per cent, but by two percentage points. Similarly, if a political party’s support drops from 50 per cent to 40 per cent in an opinion poll, it has lost ten percentage points or 20 per cent of its support

percentages take care in their calculation, a frequent pitfall for journalists; and note that if there is a 50 per cent rise in the value of the orange against the apple, say from \$1 to \$1.50, that translates to a 33 per cent fall in the apple against the orange (and not a 50 per cent fall), from \$1.50 to \$1

perestroika roman

performance-related pay

perfumier prefer to perfumer

Pergau Dam (in Malaysia)

perihelion the point in a planet or comet's orbit when it is nearest to the Sun. **aphelion**, when it is farthest from the Sun

permanent secretary cap only when given with full title

Persia use Iran for the modern state, and never Persian Gulf except in historical context. See **Gulf**

personnel prefer *people* or *employees* or *workers* wherever possible

Perspex is a trade name, so must cap

peshmerga ("those who face death"), roman, l/c, for the Kurdish fighters in Iraq

petrol bomb not Molotov cocktail

phalangist (in Lebanon). See **Falangist**

pharaoh (not –oah), l/c generic, cap when referring to a specific king; adjective **pharaonic** (l/c); but **American Pharoah**, the Triple Crown-winning thoroughbred (2015)

phenomenon, plural phenomena: beware the use of *phenomenal* as a cliché meaning remarkable or big

philistine l/c noun, adjective re boorishly uncultured etc; **Philistine** cap noun, adjective; re Philistia and its inhabitants, eg, Goliath

Philip beware this and its variant Phillip

Phillips (no apostrophe), the auction house; but **Philips**, the Dutch electronics company

phone hacking two words as noun; hyphenate adjectivally, eg, phone-hacking scandal. Regarding the judge presiding over the inquiry into phone hacking and media regulations, as he is a Court of Appeal judge and his title is Lord Justice, he is **Lord Justice Levenson** at all mentions

phoney (not phony)

phosphorus (noun), but **phosphorous**, **phosphoric** (adjectives); **phosphorescence**; also note **white phosphorus**; **white phosphorus bomb** for adjective and noun, and its adjectival use

photo-finish, but **photo call** (two words); likewise, **photo opportunity**, **photoshoot**

photofit (l/c), but Identikit (cap)

phytophthora l/c and roman generically for the tree fungal infection; but note *Phytophthora ramorum* and *Phytophthora kernoviae*, subsequently *P. ramorum* and *P. kernoviae*, for the definitive species

Picketts Lock in North London (no apostrophe)

Picture of Dorian Gray, **The** (not Grey), Oscar Wilde's novel

pidgin English (not pigeon)

piecemeal, piecework

pigeonhole(d) (do not hyphenate)

Pigott-Smith, Tim (not Piggott), the actor, but **Lester Piggott** (the jockey)

Pilates cap for the exercise method

pilgrims are l/c, but the Pilgrim Fathers; note *The Pilgrim's Progress*

Pill, the (the contraceptive), but **morning-after pill** (l/c)

Pimm's the drink

PIN (not Pin), personal identification number. Do not write PIN number, a tautology. Note **chip-and-PIN** is hyphenated as a noun or adjectivally

pinch point

ping-pong use only in the context of, eg, ping-pong diplomacy. The sport is table tennis

pinstripe(-s) (-d)

pitbull (terrier)

pitstop (motor racing)

pizzazz

plain-clothes hyphenate adjectivally

plane on a higher (not plain)

planes always prefer *aircraft* or *jets* (where applicable). Avoid *airplanes*. See **aircraft**

Plasticine trademark

Play-Doh proprietary

play down preferred to downplay

play-off

plays titles in italics

PlayStation

plc (all l/c) can usually be dropped from company names. See **LLP, Ltd**

plimsoll the footwear; **Plimsoll** (cap) **line** the load line on the hull of a ship

plurals make corporate bodies and institutions singular unless this looks odd. Thus "The National Trust is ...", but sports teams are plural, "Real Madrid were worth their 8-0 lead". Whether singular or plural, always maintain consistency within a story. But treat nouns such as couple, family and public as plurals

plus, minus do not use as variants of *and* or *without*. NB, pluses and minuses

Poe, Edgar Allan

poetess avoid (say poet)

Poet Laureate (caps) for a specific one, l/c for the generic; as for chancellors, prime ministers, presidents etc, the plural is poets laureate, l/c

poetry or blank verse quotes spacing should be as follows around the slash to separate the lines:
The play's the thing/ Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king

poinsettia the showy coloured parts of this Christmas plant are not flowers but bracts (modified leaves)

point-to-point

Polaroid is a trade name, so must cap

Pole l/c for an end of the Earth, and, adjectivally, polar; but the North Pole, the South Pole; also the magnetic North Pole, the geographical North Pole

police cap the word Police when it is part of the full name of the force

policemen do not use this word if we mean police officer, including women; likewise, firefighters rather than firemen

police ranks wherever possible outside lists, avoid the inelegant abbreviated forms such as Det Con, Det Chief Insp. Spell out, even if inconvenient sometimes. The use of WPc (Woman Police Constable) is allowed historically, but contemporarily, use Pc. More generally, use Pc for all constables. Compound titles do not take hyphens in the police force. Detective Sergeant X becomes Sergeant X after the first mention. Inspector and all ranks above, eg, chief inspector, superintendent, chief superintendent, assistant chief constable, deputy chief constable, chief constable, assistant commissioner, commissioner are Mr/Mrs/Ms/Dr after first mention

policyholder, policymaker, but policy document

Politburo (cap)

polka dot but hyphenate the modifier, eg, a polka-dot dress

pollock prefer to Pollack for the fish

polo-neck shirt (adjectival) but **poloneck** when used as a noun

polonium-210 hyphenate as for any isotope

Pom, Pommy, plural **Pommies** cap the Antipodean slang for an English person

Poncey

Pond cap as a sobriquet for the Atlantic

Pope, the not usually necessary to give his full name unless several popes are mentioned in a story. Note **papacy, pontiff** (l/c)

poppadum

populist should not be confused with, or used as a synonym of, popular; it means supporting the interest of ordinary people, or pandering to mass public taste

Portakabin, Portaloo trade names; always use the capital. If in doubt, use generic phrases such as portable building, toilet, lavatory

possessives do not use inelegant “geographic possessives” such as London’s East end, Colorado’s Breckenridge ski resort: write East End of London, Breckenridge, the Colorado ski resort.

possibly like many qualifiers, this word can (usually) be omitted

postage stamps write 1st-class and 2nd class for stamp denominations

postcode (no hyphen)

postgraduate, undergraduate (noun and adjective both one word)

Post-it Notes (proprietary, cap P and N)

Post-Modern (caps, hyphen) when used to describe a style of art; **postmodern** to describe an attitude to life.

post mortem wherever possible write *post-mortem examination* in reports, although *post mortem* is acceptable nowadays in headlines

postwar, prewar (adjectives, commonly referring to the Second World War). Do not use adverbially (as in “there were a million unemployed prewar”)

potatoes (plural, as tomatoes)

pothole (as in caving or road surfaces), **potholder**

pound do not use the £ symbol by itself, except in headlines

PoW (prisoner of war); plural POWs

Powell, General Colin keep the General despite his civilian political status

power measured in watts, megawatts etc, eg, 60W light bulb. Beware confusion with consumption of energy, measured in watt-hours etc. How much energy it consumes depends on how long it is on. See **energy, megawatts**

power sharing (noun), **power-sharing** (adjective)

practical, practicable do not confuse. Practical means adapted to actual conditions or (of a person) able to make things function well; practicable means capable of being effected or accomplished

practice (noun) **practise** (verb). It is an inexcusable practice for sub-editors to confuse the two; writers should practise getting it right

Prado gallery, Madrid. See **Pardo Palace**

praesidium not presidium

Praetorian relating to the Praetorian Guard, or resembling it, especially with regard to corruption

praying mantis (not preying)

prearrange

precede hence **preceded**

précis use accent

pre-Columbian before Columbus

predilection (not predeliction)

pre-empt

prefixes such as super, mega, multi, eco, over, under, micro, mini rarely need a hyphen: supersize; megarich; multifaceted (but exceptions when two vowels fall together: *multi-ethnic*, see **multi**); eco-friendly; eco-warrior; overrule, oversensitive, overuse (exception is *over-age*, see entry for **over as prefix**); underperforming, underreact, (exception *under-age*); macroeconomic; microskirt; miniskirt

pregnant avoid the infelicitous phrase “she fell pregnant”. Write instead “she became pregnant”

Premier it is no longer a requirement to refer to Bermuda’s head of government as Premier Michael Dunkley. His is the most commonly used name in Bermuda politics and should be synonymous with his position. “Michael Dunkley ...” Subsequent mention “the Premier” or “Mr Dunkley”. Never say, eg, Premier Michael Dunkley or even Michael Dunkley, the Premier (readers will know who he is); and not “Premier Dunkley” under any circumstances. If he is to be referred to in a ministerial capacity, it is “Mr Dunkley, who also serves as the Minister of National Security ...”

premiere, of a play, ballet, etc (no accent)

premise is an assumption in an argument;

premises (property) take the plural verb, eg, “the premises were well positioned”

Premium Bonds caps

prenuptial (no hyphen); likewise the informal **prenup**

prepay, prepaid etc no hyphens

prepositional verbs avoid wherever possible. Examples such as *measure up to, get on with* are acceptable on the odd occasion. Others such as *consult with, meet with* (where the preposition is tautologous) are hideous and must never be used

Pre-Raphaelite see **artistic movements**

present better than *current* but often redundant

President of any country, also **President of the European Commission**, cap at first and all subsequent mentions when used as a variation for a specific person, eg, “President Obama said that ... the President said that ...”. Lower case when using president more generally, eg, “Richard Nixon was the 37th president of the United States”. Also l/c **presidency, presidential, vice-presidential**

press always l/c except in titles. See **broadsheet, media**

prestigious try to avoid this much overworked word and find an appropriate substitute such as *highly regarded, admired, eminent, esteemed, leading, noted, outstanding, powerful* etc

pre-tax hyphenate

pretension, but **pretentious**

prevaricate must not be confused with **procrastinate**. The first means to speak or act evasively; the second to defer action; to be dilatory

preventive not preventative

pricey prefer to pricy

prime meridian (l/c)

prime time noun; **primetime** adjective

primeval

Prince avoid the familiar forms of Prince Charles and Prince Philip at least until they have been given their full designation of **the Prince of Wales** and **the Duke of Edinburgh**; even then prefer the Prince and the Duke at subsequent mentions. **Prince William, Duke of Cambridge**; thereafter the Duke; **Prince Harry**; thereafter Harry. See **royal, Royal Family**

Princess of Wales see **Diana, Princess of Wales**

Princes Street, Edinburgh

Principal (noun or adjective) means chief, main, important, head etc; eg, the principal of a college, or the team's principal objective. It must never be confused with **principle**, which is a noun meaning concept, ideal, rule, moral etc; eg, her Christian principles

the Principality cap in Welsh context; but not for Monaco

printout one word as noun

prior to avoid wherever possible; use *before*

prise apart not prize

private sector, public sector do not use hyphens even when employed adjectivally, eg, public sector pay

privatised industries see **regulators**

Privy Council, but **Privy Counsellors** (not Councillors)

prize money no hyphen, but hyphenate adjectivally, eg, prize-money donors

prizewinner (one word); eg, Nobel prizewinner (unspecific Nobel award), but winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature (a specific award); also, a Nobel prize-winning novel. See **Nobel Prize, Turner Prize**

probe use only in scientific, medical or space context. Never to be used as *inquiry*, even in headlines

problem be sparing with use of this overworked word

procrastinate means to defer action, to be dilatory. See **prevaricate**

Procter & Gamble (-er and ampersand)

prodigal, the Prodigal Son take care, as the precise essence of prodigality is wastefulness, squandering (rather than going far away from home and coming back). Other words, such as wayward or wandering, may be more appropriate in some contexts

profanities see **four-letter words, obscenities**

proffer, proffered not *profer*, *proffered*

profits especially in Business stories should always state the basis of the figure (pre-tax, operating etc)

program (computers) **programme** (the arts etc)

“**pro life**” beware this contentious phrase for the anti-abortion lobby (especially in US context); use the phrase **anti-abortion** wherever possible, but when “pro-life” is unavoidable, always quote it

prone means lying face down; **supine**, face up

proof legally, the **standard of proof** is the level of proof required of a party to discharge its **burden of proof**. In a criminal context, the burden is with the prosecution to prove the facts essential to its case and the standard of proof is beyond reasonable doubt; in a civil context, the burden rests with the party bringing the action and the standard of proof is on a balance of probabilities

proofread one word; also proofreader, proofreading

propeller (not –or); **propellent** (prefer to propellant)

prophecy (noun), **prophesy** (verb)

property see **real estate**

proportion see **percentage**

pros and cons

protagonist means a supporter (of either side) in a debate or quarrel; it does not mean advocate or proponent

protégé if female, **protégée**

protester never –or; but demonstrator

Protestant beware of using for all Christians who are not Roman Catholic

proven prefer *proved*; but *proven* and *unproven* may be used as a colloquial alternative

provided that (not *providing that*)

provinces, provincial take great care of these words in the context of “outside London”. Many regard them as patronising; use *the regions* or *regional* wherever possible

prurient means having an unhealthy obsession with sex; it does not mean puritanical

public one of the few collective nouns where the plural is preferred, eg, “the public are concerned about their safety”. See **collective nouns**

public house pub is fully acceptable in text or headlines

publicly (never publically)

public-private partnership (PPP) sometimes known as a private finance initiative (PFI); note no caps when spelt out

public school independent school is now a preferable term; say public schoolboys, public schoolgirls, if we have to use the phrase

public sector see **private sector**

Puffa jacket (must cap P, trademark); used padded or quilted jacket as the generic

Pulitzer prizes. See **Nobel** for when to cap

pullout (noun, one word); but to **pull out** (verb)

punctuation some important reminder: **a, Commas** keep commas where they should be logically in “broken” sentences. Thus, the comma goes outside in the following example: “The trouble is”, he said, “that this is a contentious issue.” Omit the comma before *if, unless, since, when* unless the rhythm or sense of the sentence demands it. Avoid the so-called *Oxford comma*; write “he ate bread, butter and jam” rather than “he ate bread, butter, and jam”. There is no need to put a comma between adjectives that form a kind of unit where the last adjective is in closer relation to the noun than the preceding one(s), eg, fine dry evenings, a good little boy. **b, Dashes** should not be used in place of commas. Too many dashes can be ugly and disruptive. **c,** Note that **punctuation marks** go inside the inverted commas if they relate to the words quoted, outside if they relate to the main sentence, eg, She is going to classes in “health and beauty”. If the whole sentence is a quotation, the final point goes inside, eg, “Beauty is truth, truth beauty.” **d, Interrogation marks** are never used with indirect questions or rhetorical questions, eg, “She asked why he did not laugh.” **e, Parentheses** should be used sparingly’ try to use commas instead. Use **square brackets** when writing words into a direct quote that were not said, but which explain context or meaning, eg, “I condemn [this totalitarianism]” when a speaker has said “I condemn it”. **f,** With **ellipses**, use three points with full space after last word then full space before next word, eg, *not only ...but also*

puns an enjoyable device for headline writers. Restrict their use to funny or light stories or features. If in doubt, avoid but if irresistible, make sure they are in good taste.

Punxsutawney the location of Groundhog Day festivities is in Pennsylvania but not at all near Philadelphia, about 290 miles away

Puritan do not use the word for the 16th/17th-century religious group as a contemporary adjective; write puritanical

putsch a military seizure of power, as in coup

PwC the rebranded PricewaterhouseCoopers, the merged accountants

pygmy, pygmies

Pyramids the three main Pyramids at Giza (including the Great Pyramid) should be capped. But there are many other pyramids (l/c) throughout Egypt

Pyrenees no need for accents unless referring to the French département

pyrrhic (as with victory), l/c

Q

Qantas (not Quantas)

qat rather than kat or khat, the hypnotic drug

, **QC**, commas each side when used after name

QE2 normally spell out *Queen Elizabeth 2* at first mention, thereafter *QE2* or simply *the ship*. Do not describe her as a liner (say *cruise ship*). See **liner**

qi prefer to chi for the vital energy in oriental medicine, martial arts, etc, believed to circulate around the body in currents

QinetiQ

Qom not Qum, the Iranian city

quad bike

quadriplegia, quadriplegic (not quadra-)

Quadrophenia by The Who

quality press see **broadsheet**

quango (short for quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisation), no need to spell out or to quote

quantum leap avoid this cliché wherever possible

quarterdeck

quasi- normally hyphenate, as in quasi-judicial, quasi-stellar

Quebecker a native or inhabitant of the province of Quebec; **Québécois**, likewise but especially French-speaking

Queen, the note the Queen's Speech (to Parliament), caps; also the Queen's Birthday Honours. NB, the Queen is not "introduced" to people; people are introduced, or (even more correctly) presented, to the Queen. See **Royal Family, New Year Honours**

Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother (no commas); at first mention write **the late Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother**, thereafter the Queen Mother

Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London (not QE2 or any other variant)

Queens, New York

Queensberry, Marquess of, and Queensberry Rules

Queen's Club, West London, home of the Aegon Championships, the last big grass-court tournament before Wimbledon

Queens' College, Cambridge but **The Queen's College, Oxford**

Queens Park Rangers no apostrophe for the West London football club; thereafter QPR

queueing with middle "e"

“question mark hangs over” an especially poor-going-on-bizarre metaphor. “There are questions about” is straightforward and far more acceptable

questionnaire

Question Time, Prime Minister’s Questions (caps)

Quetzalcoatl the god of the Aztecs and Toltecs represented as a feathered serpent

quicker never use as an adverb – always say *more quickly*. Quicker must be confined to adjectival comparison, eg, “he started at a quicker pace”

quid pro quo not italic

quincunx

quiz show as chat show, game show, talk show etc (no hyphen)

Quorn cap, trademark

quotation marks (inverted commas) remember **single quotes in headlines, straps and standfirsts; double quotes in captions**. The only other use for single inverted commas is quotations with quotations. Avoid inverted commas in sentences where they are clearly unnecessary, eg, *He described the attack as “outrageous”*. See **inverted commas, italics**. See **also punctuation** marks for when punctuation goes inside or outside quotation marks

quotes direct quotes should be corrected only to remove the solecisms and other errors that occur in speech but look silly in print, **ie, poor grammar is to be corrected to give the intended meaning. No more double negatives should appear in this newspaper**. Always take care that quotes are correctly attributed; and especially that literary or biblical quotations are 100 per cent accurate

qwerty l/c for the arrangement of the standard English language keyboard

R

race references to race should be used only when relevant to the sense of the story. The word is often better replaced by *people, nation, group* etc

racecourse, racehorse, racetrack see **horse race**

Rachmaninov, Sergei not Rachmaninoff

racked by doubt, pain etc; but *wracked*. See **wrack**

racket for tennis, not racquet. The game is also **rackets**

racoan prefer this shorter spelling to raccoon

RADA (all caps), the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art

radio compounds are generally one word in the wireless context (eg, **radiotelephone**) or when they concern rays (eg, **radioactive, radioisotope, radiotherapy**). Broadcasting frequencies are measured in megahertz (MHz) or kilohertz (kHz). But note **radio telescope**

railway station do not use the Americanism train station except, eg, in direct quotes, preferably from North Americans

rain, rein, reign beware!

rainforest one word

raison d'être roman

rajah takes the final -h, as does **maharajah**

ram raid two words

R&B abbreviation for rhythm and blues

rand the South African unit of currency. Plural rands. Write 12.1 million rands at first mention; subsequently R2.3 billion etc. See **currencies**

ranging from overworked and often unnecessary phrase. There must be a scale in which the elements might be ranged: "ranging from 15 to 25 years" is correct; "a crowd ranging from priests to golfers" is not

Rann of Kutch (prefer to Kachchh), area on Indian-Pakistani border

rarefied, rarefy (not rarified)

ratcatcher one word

rateable

rating agency prefer to ratings agency

rave acceptable in context as a musical event

razzmatazz

re- whenever possible, run the prefix on to the word it qualifies, eg, readmission, remake, rework, etc; but there are two main classes of exceptions: where the word after the re- begins with an "e", eg, re-election, re-emerge, re-examine, re-enter etc; where there could be serious ambiguity in compounds such as re-creation (recreation), re-cover (recover), re-dress (redress), re-form (pop groups) v reform (delinquent). See **hyphens, re-use**

real estate acceptable as a synonym for (real) property in a North American context, but write property wherever possible. Technically, the "real" means immoveable property, eg, land and tenements, to distinguish it from personal property

realpolitik roman

reason "the reason why he did this" is a tautology; write "the reason that he did this" or "why he did this is that ..."

rebut means to argue to the contrary, producing evidence; to **refute** is to win such an argument. Neither should be used as a synonym of *reject*, *deny* or *counter*, all good, straightforward words. Nor should they be used for *dispute* or *respond to*

receive "receiving an injury" is to be discouraged, although not banned. Prefer to say *sustained* or *suffered*; and never say someone received a broken leg etc – prefer suffered a broken leg or, better still, broke a leg. See **injure**

reckless (as synonym for rash or foolhardy); not wreckless

record never say “set a new record”, “was an all-time record” etc, where both the qualifiers are tautologous

recrudescence worsening, in the sense of reopening wounds or recurring diseases

Red Army Faction do not use RAF as an abbreviation; use the faction (l/c) at subsequent mention

redbrick (university), but a **red-brick** building

Red Cross full name **International Committee of the Red Cross** (not for). Equivalent in Muslim lands is the **Red Crescent**. See **ICRC**

Red Planet (caps) informal name for Mars. See **solar system**

Red Sea note the ports of Duba, Safaga

reductio ad absurdum (note not reduction, absurdam or italics) proving a premise is false by showing its logical consequence to be contradictory or absurd

referendum, plural referendums, as with conundrums, stadiums, forums and most words ending in –um. But note millennia, strata

refute take care with this word. See **rebut**

refusenik

regalia, plural Prefer insignia, eg, for an MBE appointment, regalia – originally and strictly emblems of royalty. See **honours**

Regent's Canal

Regent's Park

regimen should be restricted to medical contexts – prescribed course of exercise, way of life, diet etc. do not use as synonym of **regime** (government or administrative contexts)

register office not registry office

Registrar-General

Reith Lecture(s)

reject see **rebut**

relatively see **comparatively**

relic something left from the past, hence “relic from the past” is a tautology

Religious Right (caps) in American politics, See **the Right**

remainder avoid as a synonym of *the rest*

Renaissance, the; but l/c renaissance as a synonym of revival or rebirth

reorganise

repellant noun; **repellent** adjective

replacements in rugby union, not substitutes

report l/c in titles of official documents such as the Taylor report

reportedly avoid this slack word, which suggests that the writer is unsure of the source of the material

Republic of Ireland or Irish Republic. Except in sporting terms; then, simply Ireland. See **Ireland**

Republican l/c except when in an official name, such as the Republican Party or Republicans in the US

rerun

research shows that ... in many cases it does not. Like most polls, it merely indicates, suggests, hints at implies ... so beware

resolution cap in context of a specific UN one, eg, Resolution 688

respect of avoid "in respect of" whenever possible; never say "in respect to"

responsible people bear responsibility, things do not. Storms are not responsible for damage; they cause it. Avoid the clause "the rebels *claimed responsibility* for the bombing"; say instead "the rebels admitted causing the bombing"

restaurateur (never restauranteur)

result in avoid this lazy phrase and always find an alternative, such as *cause, bring, create, evoke, lead to* etc

retail prices index (RPI); also **consumers prices index** (not price)

re-use one of the "re-" words where the hyphen is essential as *reuse* is hideous

Reuters use this form for the news agency founded by Paul Julius Reuter

Reveille like the Last Post, it is sounded, not played

Revelation the final book of the Bible (not Revelations)

reverend at first mention, the style is "the Rev Tom Jones", then Mr Jones. Never say "the Rev Jones" or (even worse) "Rev Jones" (which is as great a solecism as calling Sr Bobby Charlton "Sir Charlton"). A parson and his wife are referred to as "the Rev Tom and Mrs Jones"

Review takes the cap in names of government programmes such as Comprehensive Spending Review

Reykjavik the Icelandic capital

rhinoceroses for the plural

Rhodes scholar/scholarship (l/c)

Richmond upon Thames (no hyphens). Postally, it is in Surrey; administratively, it is in southwest London

Richter scale measures the energy released by an earthquake. It runs from 0 to 8; say “the earthquake measured 6 on the Richter scale”. The Richter scale and magnitude measurements are not completely interchangeable, so use the scale that is filed in an individual story

riffle, riffling as in flicking through papers or clothes on a rail; rifling only in the sense of ransacking

Rifkind, Sir Malcolm

Right, the cap in the political context when referring to a group of like-minded individuals, eg, “The Right added to John Major’s dilemma on the EU”; but l/c in “the party swung to the right”. When the Right is qualified, generally keep the adjective l/c, eg, the far Right (but note the Religious Right in the US). Also, the **right wing, right-wing contenders, rightwingers**. See **Left**

rightist, right-leaning try to avoid these, and also leftist, left-leaning, which are particularly liked by news agencies, not least in the Americas, and opt for left-wing, right-wing, left-of-centre, right-of-centre etc

right-to-buy hyphenate whether noun or adjective in relation to the British policy first introduced by Margaret Thatcher allowing tenants to buy council-owned properties

rigmarole not rigamarole

ring-fence hyphen

ringtone one word

Riot Act initial caps; but metaphorically, use l/c, as in “read the riot act”

rip off verb, **rip-off** noun or adjective. Avoid this cliché except in quotes such as “rip-off Britain”

riverbank (one word)

Riverside, the cricket ground in Chester-le-Street, officially called Emirates Durham

riveting try to avoid its clichéd use as a metaphor

roadblock roadbuilding, roadbuilder etc

road rage

rock a stone is a small lump of rock that can be thrown by someone, eg, hypothetically, by an alleged protester at the police. In British English, a rock is too big to be thrown effectively in that way; however, chiefly in North American and Australian English, a stone that can be thrown is called a rock. As we aspire to British English, please make sure that we do not refer to a rock when we mean a **stone**

rock’n’roll no spaces

Roddenberry, Gene the creator of *Star Trek*

Rohypnol must not be referred to as the “date rape drug”

roll call

Rollerblade is a trade name. so must be capped. The American company’s lawyers insist that even Rollerblading takes the cap; use in-line skates/skating instead

rollerskate, rollercoaster

roll-on, roll-off

rollover (as in Lotto, the renamed National Lottery), no hyphen. See **National Lottery**

Rolls-Royce note hyphen; Rolls-Royce objects to the use of its exclusive marque in a descriptive sense, eg, online advertising service spoken of as “the Rolls-Royce of Car Locators”

Roman Catholic see **Catholic**

Romania, not Rumania

Roman numerals usually no full points; thus Edward VIII, Article XVI, Part Ull, Psalm xxii. But in official documents, to designate sub-sections, use the points, eg, i., ii., iv. Etc

Romanov prefer to Romanoff for the surname of the Russian Imperial Family. See **Imperial Family, Royal Family**

rom-com hyphenate. Acceptable shorthand for romantic comedy, especially in cinematic context

roofs (not rooves)

rooms say living room, drawing room, laundry room (no hyphens except when adjectival, eg, living-room carpet), but bathroom, bedroom, tearoom

ropey prefer to ropy

rottweiler (l/c). See **dogs**

Rough Guide a trademark, rigorously protected by the publishers. So generic phrases such as “a rough guide to ...” must be avoided

round-up hyphenate as noun

row be sparing in the use of this word, especially in headlines. Alternatives are *rift*, *split*, *clash* etc, and *dispute* in text

royal, royalty l/c for royalty but cap for Royal Family; royal is usually l/c when used adjectivally, as in royal couple, royal baby, royal approval, royal visit, the royal wave, royal wedding, but takes the cap in titles such as **Royal Assent, Royal Collection, Royal Household, Royal Yacht** etc

Royal Family takes caps, British and overseas; with names of the British Royal Family, give fully at first mention, eg, the Duke of Edinburgh, thereafter the Duke (cap) or occasionally Prince Philip; In England and Wales, refer to **the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall** (the Prince and Duchess at subsequent mention). The Duchess is technically the Princess of Wales but does not use the title, partly out of respect to the late **Diana, Princess of Wales**

royal wedding l/c for the event on April 29, 2011, and previous ones. Note **Kate Middleton**, but her given name is spelt Catherine. Her parents are Michael and Carole Middleton.

Royal Welch Fusiliers, The; but Welsh Guards

RPI the retail prices index (note plural and l/c); note also the consumer prices index (CPI)

RPM (caps) resale price maintenance (not retail); and **rpm** (l/c), revolutions per minute

rubbish do not use as a verb

Rubens, not Reubens (the Flemish painter)

Rubik's Cube subsequently cube (l/c)

Rubinstein, Arthur the late pianist preferred to be called Arthur rather than the oft-written Artur

Rudolph not Rudolf, the red-nosed reindeer

run-down (adjective), as in decaying or exhausted; **rundown** (noun) as in briefing; to **run down** (verb)

run up as a verb; but **run-up** for the noun

running-mate hyphen

Runyon, Damon

rush hour (noun), but rush-hour (adjective, hyphen, as in rush-hour traffic)

rushed to hospital avoid this cliché. Say simply *taken to* or *driven to*; similarly, say a victim was *flown to hospital* rather than *airlifted to* ... Always avoid the American *hospitalise*

Russell Group of Britain's so-called 20 elite universities and university colleges are: Oxford; Cambridge; Imperial College London; King's College London; London School of Economics; University College London; Birmingham; Bristol; Cardiff; Edinburgh; Glasgow; Leeds; Liverpool; Manchester; Newcastle; Nottingham; Queen's University, Belfast; Sheffield; Southampton; and Warwick

Russia take care not to designate parts of the former Soviet Union as Russia when they no longer are, eg, Ukraine, Georgia. Use Soviet and the Soviet Union only in their historical contexts – and **avoid USSR** wherever possible. See **Soviet Union**

Rwanda tribally, the majority are Hutus, the minority Tutsis. The other tribal group are the pygmy Twa

S

saccharin (noun), **saccharine** (adjective)

Sachs, Gunter not Gunther

sack avoid in the sense of *dismiss* except in headlines (and never say *axed* or *fired* in this context)

sacrebleu one word (l/c, italics) for the French exclamation

sacrilegious (from sacrilege; not sacreligious)

Saddam Hussein Saddam after first mention

said prefer the construction *Mr Brown said* rather than *said Mr Brown*. See **writes**

Saint is nearly always abbreviated to St

St Andrews, the town and university. Home of golf; but **St Andrew's** home of Birmingham City Football Club

St Catharine's College, Cambridge; but **St Catherine's College**, Oxford

St James' Park the ground of Newcastle United Football Club; but **St James's Park** Central London

St John Ambulance the modern designation for the first-aid charity. Historically, note St John Ambulance Bridge, St John Ambulance Association

St John's, Newfoundland; but **Saint John**, New Brunswick

St John's Wood, northwest London (home of Lord's Cricket Ground)

St Neot, Cornwall; but **St Neots**, Cambridgeshire

Saint-Saëns, the composer

saké Japanese rice wine. Use the accent to avoid confusion with sake

saleroom one word

Salonika rather than Thessaloniki

salutary not salutory

Salvadorean not –ian

Sam-7 missiles

Sanaa capital of Yemen (not Sana'a, Sana etc)

sanatorium, sanatoriums plural (not the Americanism *sanitorium*)

sandpit one word

sarcophagus plural –gi

sari prefer to saree

sarin the nerve gas, l/c

Sars the viral respiratory complaint is **severe acute respiratory syndrome** (l/c); spell out in copy at first mention if deemed necessary. See **Aids**

Saskatchewan

sat is the past tense and the past participle of “to sit”. Except in deliberate use of regional dialect, never write that somebody “was sat” in his car, her living room etc; write “was seated” or “was sitting”

Satan, Satanism (initial caps), but **satanic**

sati prefer to suttee

sat-nav l/c and hyphen for acceptable abbreviation for **satellite navigation system**

Saudi must never be used as a short form for the country, Saudi Arabia. Confine its use to the adjectival, eg Saudi Royal Family

sautéed prefer this variant for fried quickly in a little hot fat

saveable use the variant with the middle “e”

Savile Row, Savile Club

Savile, Jimmy

Saville Theatre

saw, as in a date “which saw” some event (“.... the Louisiana Purchase Treaty, which saw French land sold ...”). Days/months/years/incidents cannot “see” anything; choose an elegant alternative construction. Contrast, eg, the indirectness of “The latest album, *Guitar Heroes*, has seen Santana collaborate again with some of the music industry’s most recognised talents” with the straightforward “For his latest album, *Guitar Heroes*, Santana has collaborated again with some of the music industry’s most recognised talents”

scaremonger

scarify take care; its meaning is to cut into, to tuck skin from; its colloquial meaning of to terrify should be avoided wherever possible

scarlatina (not scarletina) the medical name for scarlet fever

scars do not heal (even metaphorically); wounds heal, scars remain

schadenfreude l/c, roman; means the malicious enjoyment of another’s misfortune

Schiphol airport, Amsterdam

schizophrenic never use as a term of abuse and avoid as a metaphor

Schleswig-Holstein

schmaltz prefer with the “t”

Schoenberg, Arnold

schoolchildren (one word), schoolgirl, schoolboy, schooldays, schoolmaster, schoolmistress and schoolteacher (rarely); but school-leaver

Schweitzer, Albert

scientific measures write out first time with abbreviations in parentheses; shorten thereafter. The abbreviation takes no point and no “s” in the plural, eg, 14km, not 14kms.

scientific names when employing the Latin terminology, we must use the internationally accepted convention of initial cap on the first (generic) word, then l/c for the second (specific); eg, *Homo sapiens*, *Branta Canadensis* (Canada goose) etc. All should be italicised

Scilly, Isles of do not use Scilly Isles

Scorsese, Martin

scot-free without harm, loss or penalty; derived from the 13th-century scot, meaning a tax

Scottish place names never say, eg, Motherwell, Scotland; instead say Motherwell, North Lanarkshire. Regions such as Central, Grampian and Strathclyde should be referred to only in their historical context or if they persist in official titles. Write the West of Scotland, the North of Scotland, the West Coast of Scotland etc but western Scotland, northern Scotland. See **compass points**. The same principle about counties applies to Wales and Northern Ireland; give the county unless the town or city is big enough or well enough known for the county to be unnecessary

Scott Thomas, Kristin no hyphen

Scrabble initial cap

scrapheap one word

scratchcard one word, as **smartcard**, **swipecard**

screen two words, eg, **smoke screen**

Scripture(s) cap as in Holy Scripture, scriptural (l/c). See **Christian terms**

scriptwriter

sculptures in italic. With photographs of sculptures, always give the sculptor's name

Sderot town in Israel

seabed, seabird, seahorse, seagull, seasick, seasickness, seawater no hyphens; but note also **sea lion, sea shanty, sea snake, sea urchin** etc

Seals (u/lc) are part of the US Navy, so are not soldiers. The acronym stands for sea, air and land teams

seance no accent

seasonal relating to, occurring at a particular time of the year; note **unseasonable** meaning not suitable, appropriate to the season. Note also **seasonal affective disorder** (l/c), abbreviated to SAD

seasons always l/c when unattached, ie, spring, summer, autumn, winter; but Winter Olympics etc. Note also **summertime, wintertime, springtime** but **British Summer time** (BST) and **Greenwich Mean Time** (GMT). Write, eg, "in the spring of 2009", not in "in spring 2009". See **times**

seatbelt

seawater see **seabed** etc

second as an adverb, prefer to secondly; thus write "first ... second ... third ..." etc

second-hand (hyphenated)

Second World War, not World War II/Two etc

Secret Intelligence Service (SIS or MI6) takes caps. See **Security Service** (MI5)

Secret Service in the US protects the President and the Vice-President

Secretary-General of the United Nations, Nato

Securities and Exchange Commission, the US regulator; do not use &. Write SEC after first mention

Security Service (MI5) takes caps

see see **saw**

see-saw (hyphenate)

seize (never sieze)

select committees and parliamentary committees capped at first mention, or when full title is given, eg, the Foreign Affairs Select Committee; thereafter, the select committee, or the committee

Selfridges

sell-off, sell-out (but see buyout)

Sellotape is a trade name; otherwise, write *sticky tape* or *adhesive tape*

semiconductor

Semtex (cap)

Senate (Bermuda and US) Senator Michael Fahy, then the senator; alternatively, Sen Fahy

senior abbreviate to Sr (not Snr) in the American context, eg, Henry Ramstein Sr; see **junior**. Avoid the cliché *senior executive* when you mean *executive* - nine times out of ten the adjective is redundant (as *major*)

septic tanks never sceptic

septuagenarian

sequined

Serb for the people and the ethnic adjective; but **Serbian** for the adjective and nationality for Serbia. See **Croat**

Serbia and Montenegro the loose confederation formed in 2003 from the rest of the former Yugoslavia. The two countries left the confederation in 2006, with Montenegro and Serbia becoming separate states

Sergeant at Arms no hyphens

setback noun; but to **set back** verb

set piece two words; but **set-piece** (hyphenated) in a sporting context, ie, football

sett, as with badgers

settlement by definition, not possible in a contested divorce, in which case there will be a decision, order or judgment

Setúbal note accent

set-up try to find a synonym such as arrangement, organisation, structure, system etc

sewage is the waste matter that is carried in sewers; a system of sewers is **sewerage**

sex see **gender**

Sex and the City the TV show and film (not *Sex in the City*)

sex change avoid this inaccurate and potentially offensive shorthand for the process of gender reassignment by surgical and other medical procedures. Note that from a legal perspective, people in the process of gender reassignment should be called by whatever name and honorific they prefer, and that the appropriate personal pronouns reflecting that change should also be used. Note that

transgender and transgendered (adjectives, never nouns) are terms used by people with this condition and by the medical profession in preference to the older term transsexual

sex offenders register (l/c, no apostrophe)

Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band note the point after Sgt. In the title of the album by **the** (l/c) **Beatles**, released on June 1, 1967

Shadow use of the titles may be applied to the main opposition party, eg, Shadow Minister of/for Finance (not Shadow Finance Minister), Shadow Minister of/for Tourism Development and Transport.

shake-out, shake-up as nouns; but see **buyout**

Shakespeare titles as *Henry IV (Part One)* to avoid use of two sets of Roman numerals. And NB **Shakespearean** (not -ian)

shall, should keep up the vigorous defence of these against the encroaching *will* and *would*. Good practice is that *shall* and *should* go with the first person singular and plural (I shall, we shall), *will* and *would* with the others (he will, they will). *Shall* with second and third persons singular and plural has a slightly more emphatic meaning than *will*

shambles take care not to overwork or devalue this strong word, which means a slaughterhouse and, by extension, a scene of carnage

Shankill Road, Belfast (not Shankill). See **Ireland**

shanks's pony

Shangri-La

shantytown (one word)

share a joke self-evident cliché banned in captions on photographs showing people laughing; likewise **in happier times**, for photographs showing grinning people now divorced, gravely ill or dead etc

Sharia means Islamic law; "Sharia law" is a tautology. See **Islam, Islamic terms**

Sharm el-Sheikh Egyptian resort in Sinai

shell suit two words; but see **tracksuit**

shemozzle

Shepherds Bush

sheriff never sherrif

Shetland or the Shetland Islands, not the Shetlands

Shia, not Shiite or any such variant; write Shia Muslims, in contrast to Sunni Muslims. The four holiest shrines in Shia Islam are all in Iraq: Karbala, Najaf, Kazimain and Samarra. See **Islam, Islamic terms, Sharia**

shiitake prefer to the single "i" variant

ships italicise the HMS when first mention of warship, eg, *HMS Sheffield*. Ships should generally be treated as feminine; thus *she* and *her* rather than *it* and *its*. See **boat, HMS**

ships' tonnage for passenger ships, give gross tonnage in tonnes (rather than tons); for cargo ships, deadweight tonnage. It is wrong to say that "the QM2 weighs 150,000 tonnes" (in fact, she actually displaces [ie, weighs] about 82,000 tonnes). But it is possible to say, using the gross tonnage: "the QM2 is a 150,000-tonne ship"

shock avoid in headlines unless in the electric context; in text, use the word as little as possible, especially as a modifier, eg, *shock revelations* etc (unless the context is ironic)

shock waves (two words), but use sparingly as a metaphor as it is a cliché

shoo-in (not shoe-in), if you have to use this American phrase

shoot-out hyphenate the noun, as in penalty shoot-out; but avoid in the sense of gunfight

shopkeeper, shopowner, shopfront, shoplift etc; but shop assistant and shop steward

short cut noun, two words

shortlist one word as noun or verb

short-lived, short-sighted

short-selling, short-seller hyphens

showbusiness (one word); **showbiz** is an acceptable abbreviation in quotes and informal context

showcase avoid using as a verb. Use *display* or *exhibit* instead

showjumping one word except when it appears in a title or is part of the name of an event that uses it as two words; similarly, **showjumper**

shrink, shrank (past tense), **shrunk (or shrunk)**, past participle. See **sink**

Shroud of Turin (caps), or the Turin Shroud; subsequently, the shroud (l/c)

shtetl

shtick prefer to schtick

shtoom

Siamese cats, twins; for Siam, use Thailand except in historical context (adjective Thai). Note that Siamese twins is the non-technical names for **conjoined twins**

Sichuan (not Szechuan, Szechwan or any other variant). See **Chinese names**

sickbed one word, as deathbed

side-effects

siege (never seige)

Siena only one "n" for the Tuscan walled city; but **sienna** for the natural earth used as a pigment colour; and note **Sienna Miller**, the actress

Silicon Valley, silicon chips, but **silicone implants** (for breasts etc)

Sim card (u/c) the subscribe identity module card in a mobile phone

sin-bin (hyphenate) where an offending rugby player is sent for ten minutes after being shown a yellow card by the referee. A second yellow card for a persistent reoffender, as in football, equates to a sending-off

singalong

singeing from singe, to distinguish it from singing

sink, sank the past participle is **sunk**, the adjective **sunken**

Sinn Féin accent

siphon not syphon

Sistine Chapel (not Cistine)

sitcom no hyphen; permissible abbreviation for situation comedy

sit-in hyphenate noun

situation avoid wherever possible; such inelegant and lazy phrases as *crisis situation*, *ongoing situation* and *no-win situation* are banned unless a direct quote positively demands them

Six Nations Championship (rugby union), previously the Five Nations Championship (England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, France and Italy)

sizeable

ski, skier, skied, skiing

skulduggery

slay is a biblical word, not to be used in headlines for *kill* or *murder*

slither to slide **sliver** a thin piece

slimline one word

slow motion render the informal abbreviation, whether noun or adjective, as **slow-mo**

Small Isles, the off the West Coast of Scotland: Rum, Eigg, Muck, Canna and Sanday. Note that there is also a Sanday in the **Orkney Islands**

smart aleck (not Alec)

smartcard (one word), as scratchcard, swipecard

smelt (not smelled)

smidgin

Smith, W H (no hyphen). See **companies**, **initials**

Smithsonian Institution, in Washington (never Institute); can be shortened to the Smithsonian

smoke screen two words. See **screen**

smoky also the Great Smoky Mountains

smorgasbord avoid its clichéd metaphorical use

snarl-up do not use as synonym of *traffic jam*, *confusion* etc

snowball, **snowbound**, **snowdrift**, **snowfall**, **snowman** etc

Snowdon (not Mount Snowdon) in Wales is the highest mountain in England and Wales

soap opera normally use rather than just *soap*, although the latter may have its place in less formal pieces, as in diary items or reviews

Sobers, **Sir Garfield**; informally, and on the cover of *My Autobiography*, the cricketer is **Garry Sobers** (not Gary)

sobriquet prefer to soubriquet

so-called normally there is no need to write the following noun etc in quote marks, as context will make it clear, eg, “The so-called disaster has turned into something of a triumph”

soccer is an alternative for football to be avoided except in direct quotes, or in the American context, eg, Major League Soccer, United States Soccer Federation

socialism, **socialist** for when to cap, see **communism**

softie prefer to softy

Soho in Central London

SoHo the area “south of Houston Street” in Lower Manhattan, New York.

soirée use accent

solar system l/c. In order from the Sun, its planets are Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune. Pluto, formerly classified as a planet, has been downgraded to a dwarf planet by the International Astronomical Union. See **Earth**, **Red Planet**, **Universe**

Solent, the (l/c)

Somali (noun, adjective) prefer to Somalian

soothe to make calm, hence **soothing**; but **sooth** truth, reality, real, hence **soothsayer**

sorcerer (not –or)

SOS

Sotheby's

soundbite

south, south east, southern etc; for when to cap, hyphenate, make one, see **compass points**

South, **Southern** (cap in US contexts)

South Africa never use the abbreviation SA, even in headlines. The capital is Pretoria. Say the **Eastern/Western/Northern Cape** (caps); note also **KwaZulu-Natal** and **Simon's Town**. Take care; several provinces have been renamed since the apartheid era, eg, **Mpumalanga** (formerly Eastern Transvaal); **Free State** (formerly Orange Free State); **Gauteng** (formerly Transvaal). Other provinces

are **North West** and **Limpopo**. Write **Southern Africa** (cap) when referring to Africa south of the Congo and Zambezi rivers; likewise, North Africa, West Africa and East Africa

South Asia encompasses Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka

South-East Asia (note hyphen) comprises the ten Asean States – Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, Brunei, Vietnam, Burma, Laos and Cambodia. Avoid calling Burma **Myanmar** (except occasionally in direct quotes). See **Asean**

south Kara Sea note l/c south; part of the Arctic Ocean north of Siberia and a site of oil exploration

South of France

Southern Ocean caps

southerner, l/c as **northerner**, in most contexts, including Britain; but **Southerner** (cap) in the United States

South Side of Chicago

Sovereign, the (cap). See **monarch**, **Royal Family**

Soviet Union never refer to *the Soviets* for the people or the Government, even in the historical context. The phrase is an Americanism often with disparaging overtones; a soviet is a committee, not a person. Refer instead to the *Soviet people* or *the Soviet Government* in historical context. See **Russia**, **USSR**

soya bean two words, not soybean

space avoid the phrase *outer space*. See **Earth**, **Moon**, **solar system**, **Sun**, **Universe**

Spam the foodstuff is an American invention; but **spam** unsolicited e-mail or other communication

Spanish We should seek to render Spanish words correctly with their accents. The most common accent is the stress or emphasis mark over an otherwise weak or indeterminate vowel, eg, Málaga, Verón. The mark, which indicates which syllable to emphasise, is an integral part of the spelling. Words ending in –an, –en, –in, –on and –un frequently have the terminal syllable emphasised, thus: Hernán, Belén (Bethlehem), *Clarín* (Argentine newspaper), Perón (the 20th-century Argentine leader), *atún* (tuna). Many names and words ending in a vowel and –z attract an emphasis on the penultimate (otherwise weak) vowel, eg, Gámez, Hernández. Note that once an accented word is put into a longer word, eg, *peronista* (a follower of Perón), the accent may be lost or may move because the emphasis shifts to a stronger vowel (in this case, the i). The next most common accent is the tilde, giving the “nya” sounds in words such as España, Coto de Doñana (the nature reserve in southern Spain). As el, la, los and las are the masculine and feminine singular and plural definite articles, respectively, try not to write, for example, “the *El País* Madrid daily newspaper reported ...”, but rather “*El País*, the Madrid daily newspaper, reported ...” In Spanish some combinations of letter must not be broken at the end of a line: ch, ll, rr. A selected list of names: Adolfo; Álava (Basque regional capital); Alemán; Almería; Álvaro; Andalusia (use the English rather than Spanish Andalucía form); Andrés; Ángel; Atlético Madrid; Ávila (birthplace of St Teresa); Aznar, José María (the former Spanish Prime Minister); Barcelona (football club; nickname Barça); Bernabéu (stadium of Real Madrid); Cádiz; Carlos; Católico; César; Chávez; *Clarín* (Argentine newspaper); Colón; Cristóbal (Columbus, Christopher); Domingo, Plácido (the opera singer); Córdoba; Cortés, Hernán; Dalí, Salvador; Dióscoro; Domingo; *El País*, Madrid daily newspaper; Felipe; Galadí; García; Gaudí; Gloria; Hernán; Hernández; Inés; Isabel; Jerez (the sherry town); Jerónimo; Jiménez; Joaquín; José; Juan; Luis; Málaga; María; *marqués* (marquis); Méndez; Miñón; Montt, Efraín Ríos (Guatemalan politician);

Péron, Juan Domingo (the 20th-century Argentine leader); his wife (María) Eva (Duarte) de Perón, known as Evita; *político*; Rafael; Real Madrid; Rodríguez; Rubén; Simón; Suárez; Tomás; Valencia; Verón, Juan Sebastián

Spanish surnames conventionally, someone called Juan García López at first mention would be Juan García subsequently, using the patronym as the shortened surname (López being the matronym)

Spanish regions use the anglicised forms such as Andalusia (not Andalucía); Catalonia (not Cataluña or Catalunya); Navarre (Navarra); Majorca (not Mallorca); Minorca (not Menorca) etc

spastic never use figuratively or as a term of abuse

Speaker always cap in parliamentary context, whether in Bermuda or elsewhere

Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park (not Speaker's)

special forces generically l/c. But cap 5th Special Forces Group in the US for specific units

species both singular and plural in plant and animal sense

spellcheck, spellchecker (l/c, no hyphens)

spelt (not spelled); note misspelt

Spider-Man hyphenate and caps for the wall-crawling superhero

spiders are not insects, although like insects they are arthropods

Spielberg, Steven

spiky not spikey

spilt not spilled

spin, spun do not use *span* as past tense

spin doctor two words

Spinning, Spinner trade names for stationary bicycle exercise

Spiritualism, Spiritualist

split infinitives are to be avoided but are not banned. A typical example is when the infinitive, eg, to be, to complain, is split by an adverb, eg, to always be, or an adverbial phrase, eg, to constantly and bitterly complain. The split infinitive has been variously in and out of favour with English grammarians over many centuries. On occasion, avoiding the split infinitive can lead to an unnatural or ambiguous construction. But generally try to keep the infinitive intact, except in famous quotes such as “to boldly go where no man ...” or in limited emphatic constructions such as “I want to live – to really live”

spoilt (not spoiled); but despoiled

spokesman, spokeswoman avoid where possible, eg, “the ministry said” rather than “a ministry spokesman said”. *Official* is a useful alternative. Never use *spokesperson*.

spongeing prefer to sponging

sports clubs for when to use singular or plural, see **teams**

sportsmen, sportswomen omit the Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms etc unless they are in news reports (eg, court hearings) in a specifically non-sporting context. See **appellations**

sportswriter one word

spot one word for **blackspot, hotspot, troublespot** etc; but **spot check, spot marker** etc

sprang prefer to sprung as the past tense of the verb to spring, eg, “she sprang into action”; **sprung** is the past participle, and has no alternative, eg, “the wind has sprung up”

sprightly not spritely

spring-clean hyphenate noun and verb

squads in police context, usually l/c but, Flying Squad

square brackets see **punctuation**

Sri Lanka do not use Ceylon for the country except in historical context. But Ceylon tea etc

SSSI site of special scientific interest (l/c)

Stability and Growth Pact (in the EU) can be shortened to Stability Pact (keep caps)

stadium plural stadiums. See **referendum**

stagy the adjective from stage, meaning excessively theatrical or dramatic; stagey is the American spelling

stained glass noun; but hyphenate adjectivally, eg, a **stained-glass window**

Stalin, Joseph

Stalinist, Stalinism see **communism**,

stanch (verb) as “to stanch the flow of blood”; **staunch** is an adjective meaning loyal or firm

stand-off (noun, hyphen), but **standby** (noun, no hyphen)

Stanford, Allen

Stansted airport (never Stanstead). See **airports**

stargazers, stargazing

Star Trek two words, italic

State cap in context of the State as a wide concept, but not in the welfare state, the nanny state or used adjectivally, such as state benefits

State of the Union address see **Union**

stationary (not moving), **stationery** (writing materials)

statistic(s) do not use as a fancy word for *figure(s)* or *number(s)*

statue depicts a person or an animal, normally life-size or bigger; the diminutive is a statuette

status quo in roman; likewise **status quo ante**

statute book

stay home avoid this Americanism; say “stay at home”

Stealth bomber

steamroller one word

steelworks, steelworker etc

stem cell thus for the noun, but hyphenate adjectivally, eg, the stem-cell procedure

stepchild, stepfather, stepson, stepdaughter, but **step-family, step-parents**

Stephenson, George (trains), **Robert** (bridges); **Stevenson, Robert Louis, Adlai**

Stetson initial cap

still do not write the tautologous “still continues”, “still remains” etc

Stilton initial cap. See **cheeses**

stir-fry hyphenate noun and verb; **stir-fries** plural noun (and third-person singular verb)

Stock Exchange caps for London and New York Stock Exchange, l/c for all others; note l/c for the **stock market**

Stockhausen, Karlheinz

stony not stoney

storey (of a building); plural storeys

storm clouds two words, but try to avoid cliché of “gathering storm clouds”

storyteller, storytelling

straight be sparing in the use of this word to mean heterosexual. See **gay**

straightaway

straight-faced, but **straightforward**

strait and narrow not straight

Strait (not Straits) **of Dover, Strait of Gibraltar, Strait of Hormuz, Strait of Magellan, Strait of Malacca**; likewise **Bering Strait** (singular). But **Straits of Florida, Straits of Mackinac** (Michigan)

straitjacket

strait-laced; in **dire straits**

Stratford-upon-Avon except in the parliamentary constituency, which is Stratford-on-Avon

stratum plural strata

street value beware of using this inappropriately, eg, in the context of drugs. Raw poppies in Afghanistan do not have a meaningful value in Bermuda; heroin seized off the Hamilton docks does

Street View (caps) the Google application

Streisand, Barbra

stress prefer *emphasise* as in “he emphasised the importance”

stricture means adverse criticism or censure, not constraint. Take care

strippagram

stripy prefer to *stripey*

strive note the past tense “he strove to get things right”, and the past participle *striven*

students union

stylebook one word, as with *guidebook*, *textbook* etc; but **style guide**

sub- like *multi-*, the hyphen here is often a question of what looks better. A random sample gives us **subdivision**, **sublet**, **subnormal**, **subsection**, **substandard**, **subtext**, **subcontract(or)**; in contrast, **sub-committee**, **sub-editor**, **sub-postmaster**, **sub-post office** etc. See **hyphens**, **multi-**

Subbuteo

sub-continent, the (l/c) for India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. See **Partition**

subjects, **academic** use l/c for most subjects studied at school or university, eg, “She was reading modern history with philosophy”; but where a proper name is involved, the cap is retained, eg, “he got a first in English literature and German after he dropped Latin in his second year”; and always cap Classics and PPE (short for philosophy, politics and economics). But note, eg, Professor of History when the phrase accompanies a name. See **Professor**

sub-let (as in property)

sub-machinegun see **machinegun**

submarine always a boat, not a ship

subplot, **subtext**, **subtitle**

subpoena, *subpoenas*, *subpoenaing*, *subpoenaed*

sub-prime

sub-Saharan Africa see **Africa**, **South Africa**

subsequently prefer *afterwards* or *later*, and never say *subsequent to* when the meaning is *after*

subtropical (one word). See **Tropics**

sub-zero

such as do not confuse with *like*. See **like**

Sudan not the Sudan, except occasionally in historical context. Note **South Sudan**

sudden oak death caused by a fungus, *Phytophthora ramorum*

Su Doku caps

suffragan l/c

suffragette l/c, double f, double t

suicide bomb, bomber, bombing two words

suing not sueing, from *to sue*

summit avoid calling every high-level meeting a summit. Restrict its use to meetings of heads of government

summon the verb is to summon, the noun a summons (plural summonses). A person is summoned to appear before a tribunal etc; but a person in receipt of a specific summons can be said to have been summonsed

Sun see **Earth, Moon, solar system, Universe**

sunbathing, sunburn, sunglasses, sunlounger, suntan etc but **sun-care** (products etc)

sunstroke one word. See **heatstroke**

super- as a prefix, use a hyphen only if the compound looks hideous

Super Bowl (as in American football)

superbug note that someone can be a carrier of/colonised by, say, MRSA (methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) and suffer no ill effects because they are not infected

supercasino one word

superhighway (as in information superhighway); similarly **superconductor**

superinjunction one word; likewise hyperinjunction. Injunctions always prevent publication of something. A superinjunction prevents publication even of the basic information that the particular order exists. A hyperinjunction is a superinjunction that additionally seeks to gag Parliament

superjumbo one word

superlatives beware of calling any person, event or thing *the first, the biggest, the best* etc without firm evidence that this is correct. Also, never say *first-ever, best-ever* etc. See **ever, first, universal claims**

supernova plural supernovas

supersede never supercede

supersonic (of speeds); for waves, use ultrasonic

super-union hyphen

supervisor not superviser

supine means lying face up. See **prone**

Supreme Court caps

Surinam (not Suriname), the former Dutch Guiana. See **Guyana**

surprising (not suprising)

Surrey places such as Kingston upon Thames and Richmond upon Thames are not in Surrey administratively, but in southwest London. Confusingly, the headquarters of Surrey County Council is in Kingston.

suspenseful do not use this abomination

Sussex always specify in modern times whether a place is in **East Sussex** or **West Sussex**, separate administratively with the formation of two county councils since 1889. Boundaries were changed in 1974 under further local government reorganisation

suttee prefer sati

swansong one word

swap not swop; do not use unless a mutual exchange is involved and never for organ transplants

swaths, not swathes (as in “cutting swathes through”); **swathes** to be used only as bandages

swatting (flies), **swotting** (study)

swearword (not hyphenated)

sweet pea not sweetpea (unless referring to Popeye’s adopted daughter; in which case initial cap)

swim past tense “he swam across St George’s Harbour” and the past participle “the Sound was swum by him”

swingeing (as in cuts), to distinguish it from *swinging*

Swinging Sixties (caps)

swipecard, as scratchcard, smartcard

Swiss roll initial cap

sync prefer to synch, as in the phrase “out of synch”

synod l/c on its own, but General Synod (caps)

synthesizer (musical), but **synthesise** (chemical)

T

3-D

20/20 as in 20/20 vision

24/7

-t in nearly all cases, where there is a choice of past tense between a final *-t* or *-ed*, use *-t*, as in *burnt*, *spelt* etc. But never *earnt*

tad avoid as a synonym of “a little” or “a bit”

t'ai chi note apostrophe

tailback

Tajikistan

takeaway (meals)

take-off (aircraft)

takeover (noun), but to **take over** (verb)

take part prefer to participate

Taleban refer to **the** Taleban (or the Taleban authorities), and use the plural verb ("are" rather than "is" etc). See **War on Terror**

talk show, as chat show, game show, quiz show etc

talkSPORT the British radio station

Tallinn the Estonian capital. See **Baltic states**

tally-ho hyphenate; plural **tally-hos**

Tamiflu (cap, trade name) is an antiviral drug. It is administered in capsule form. It is not an injection

Tamil Tigers this is generally sufficient, although the separatist rebels in Sri Lanka are known more formally as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). See **Sri Lanka**

Tánaiste (always cap, accent) the Irish Deputy Prime Minister. See **Taioseach**

Tangier no final "s"

Tannoy is a trade name; use *loudspeaker* as a generic alternative

Taioseach always cap. See **Ireland, Tánaiste**

taramasalata (not taramo-) a creamy pale pink pâté, made from the roe of grey mullet or smoked cod and served as an hors d'oeuvre

target beware lazy use of this word as a verb; eg, a campaign is *aimed at* or *directed at* children (rather than targeting children). Try to restrict its use to military (hostile acts) contexts. Note **targeted** (not targeted)

Tarmac is a trade name but confine the cap version to the civil engineering company. Common usage allows the road surface or airport runway to be written as tarmac

Taser cap (trademark) for the stun gun. Avoid saying someone was "tasered". Rather "shot with a Taser"

task force two words

Tate Gallery the original gallery on Millbank is known as Tate Britain, and the new one on Bankside as Tate Modern. Tate Liverpool and Tate St Ives retain their names

tattoos, tattooed, tattooing

taxman one word; similarly no hyphen in **taxpayer**

Tchaikovsky

tea bag (two words); **tea biscuit, tea break, tea cloth, tea cosy, tea dance, tea garden, tea kettle, tea lady, tea leaf, tea light, tea maker, tea party, tea towel, tea trolley**; but one word for **teacup**; likewise **teabread, teacake, teahouse, teapot, tearoom, teashop, teaspoon, teatime**

teams normally plural, eg, “West Ham United are in outstanding form”. But sports clubs usually take the singular, especially in news stories, eg, “Manchester City was fined heavily for crowd disturbances”. Note hyphen in **team-mates**

teargas

Technicolor is a trade name. It should be used only in the context of the making of colour motion pictures and not as a descriptive adjective or synonym for *multicoloured*

teen avoid use as substitute for the adjective teenage

Teesside no hyphen, double “s” in middle; but note **Deeside** in both Scotland and Wales

teetotal

Tehran not Teheran. See **Iran**

Telefónica note accent

television TV is acceptable both in headlines and in text. Bermuda Broadcasting Company is not to be abbreviated to BBC. For the unique BBC, write BBC Television, BBC One, BBC Two etc; but Spanish television, American television, unless we know the station’s specific name

television and radio programmes are italicised

telltale (one word)

temazepam is a non-proprietary sedative (l/c)

temperatures the style is 61F (16C) and minus 2F (-15C). Prefer “minus” to the minus-sign in text.

Tennessee

tenpin bowling

tepee the Native American tent

Teresa see **Mother Teresa**

Terre’Blanche, Eugene

terrorist take care with this word. One man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter

Test match should apply only to cricket (not rugby union or rugby league); for other sports, use the term international (match)

tête-à-tête for the plural, prefer **tête-à-têtes**

textbook one word, as guidebook, stylebook, rulebook etc

TGV, *train à grande vitesse*, the French high-speed train

thalidomide (l/c) as the generic name of the sedative that was found in the early 1960s to cause birth defects. Recently, it has been developed as an anti-cancer drug

thallium the highly toxic heavy metal

Thames Barrier, Thames Estuary (caps)

that do not be shy of this word after *said, denied, claimed* etc; eg, “he denied that the evidence was confusing” is more elegant than “he denied the evidence was confusing”. *That* is almost always better than *which* in a defining clause, eg, “the bus that I take stops at Collectors Hill”. As a general rule, use *which* for descriptive clauses and place it between commas, eg, “the night bus, which used to carry newspapers, stops at Duck’s Puddle”. See **ensure**

Thatcher first mention **Baroness Thatcher**, thereafter **Lady Thatcher**. In historical context, it is preferable to say Margaret Thatcher at first mention, then Mrs Thatcher, eg, “Margaret Thatcher took quick action in sending the task force to the Falklands”. It would be wrong to say that her party forced Lady Thatcher from office in 1990. Note her late husband **Sir Denis Thatcher** (not Dennis); their twin children are **Carol Thatcher** and **Sir Mark Thatcher**, his title being by virtue of an hereditary baronetcy (**Sir Mark** at second mention)

Theresa see **Teresa**

theatre always attach Theatre (cap) at first mention where it is part of the title

theatregoer see –goer

the then then is not an adjective, so do not use expressions such as “the then Premier”; say “then Premier”, “who was Premier at the time”

thermonuclear

Thermos must take the initial cap; it is a trade name that must always be observed

The Sunday Times Rich List

they should always agree with the subject. Avoid sentences such as “If someone loves animals, they should protect them”. Say instead “If people love animals, they should protect them”

think avoid quotes that begin “I think”, “We think” etc. If people are being interviewed, it is very obvious that their thoughts are being conveyed without reminding us

think-tank hyphen

third adverb; prefer to thirdly

Third World caps

threshold

throne cap sparingly, only in terms of the institution, eg, “he deferred to the wisdom of the Throne”; in other contexts, as with the chair itself, use l/c, eg, “The Queen came to the throne in 1952”

thunderbolts are mythological and do not exist; lightning bolts and thunderclaps do exist and can also be used metaphorically

thus far avoid; prefer *so far*

Tiananmen Square, Beijing. The massacre took place on June 4, 1989

“tiger” economies of South-East Asia and the Pacific; use quotes for first mention, subsequently without quotes, and always l/c

time bomb, time frame, but **timeline, timescale, timeshare**. See **bombs**

time warp

times never write, eg, 6pm last night, 9am tomorrow morning; say six o'clock last night or (if the context allows) 6pm , or 9am tomorrow. 7.30pm and not 7:30pm, point instead of the colon. See **seasons**

Tinseltown (as in Hollywood) one word

Tipp-Ex

Tirgu Mures preferred variant for the city in Transylvania, Romania

Titles the most common solecism is to write Baroness (or Lady) Margaret Thatcher etc when we should say simply Baroness (Lady) Thatcher. **No wife of a baronet or knight takes her first name in her title unless she is the daughter of a duke, marquess or earl**

titles of books, films, discs, programmes, songs etc avoid initial caps for every word (eg, do not write *The Hound Of The Baskervilles*). As a rule of thumb, use l/c for prepositions, conjunctions, definite and indefinite articles, eg, *Don't Cry for Me, Argentina; Rikki Don't Lose That Number; Phantom of the Opera*

tmesis interpolation of a word or group of words between the parts of a compound word, eg, abso-f***king-lutely

to be fair/to be honest these phrases are often a waste of space and their introduction, even in quotes, could be seen as casting a hint of doubt on the fairness/honesty of what went before

toilet can be used interchangeably with lavatory as appropriate

together with avoid; prefer simply *with*; also beware such tautology as *blend together, meet together, link together* etc

Tolkien, J. R. R. (not Tolkein)

toll used with *of* or *on*, depending on their context: “The war took its toll of the inhabitants”, “Years of pumping iron have taken their toll on his body”

tomatoes plural, as potatoes

Tomb of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey (not the Unknown Soldier)

tons, tonnes prefer to use *tonnes* in most contexts, although in historical passages, tons would be more appropriate; and note “tons of help” metaphorically

too does not need a comma preceding it, eg, at the end of a clause or sentence

Topshop, Topman one word for these fashion emporiums

Top Ten, Top 20, Top 40 etc caps for official or semi-official musical or other lists; but l/c for more generic uses

tormentor prefer to tormenter

tornado, plural **tornados** (storms); also Tornado, Tornados (aircraft)

torpedo, but plural **torpedoes**

Tory, Tories acceptable alternative for Conservative(s), especially after first mention. Do not write Tory Party with cap "P", but Tory party is permissible

touchpaper

Tourette syndrome

towards not toward

townhouse one word; but **town hall**

Townsend, Peter the group captain linked with Princess Margaret in the 1950s

Townshend, Pete guitarist of The Who

Toys 'R' Us

tracheostomy, tracheotomy note no "a" in the middle. The –ostomy is the surgical formation of an opening into the trachea that follows an (emergency) incision, the –otomy

tracksuit one word; but shell suit

trade-in (noun or adjective); but **trade in** (verb)

trademark one word

trade names many names of products, services and organisations in common use are proprietary. They should not be used as generics and must be given a capital letter. There is a risk of legal action for failure to do so. Examples include **Baby Bonds, Biro, Catseye, CinemaScope, Dictaphone, Filofax, Formica, Hoover, Jacuzzi, Jeep, Kodak, Lycra, Perspex, Polaroid, Portakabin, Portaloo, Rollerblade, Scrabble, Sellotape, Tannoy, Technicolor, Thermos, Walkman, Xerox** and many others. Be especially careful about drugs; try to use non-proprietary words such as aspirin, sleeping pills etc. See **thalidomide**

trade unions (plural), not trades unions; but Trades Union Congress

trainspotter, trainspotting (no hyphens)

Traitors' Gate at the Tower of London

tranquilliser, tranquillity two l's

transatlantic, transcontinental; but **cross-Channel**. See **Channel**

Transdnestrria area in eastern Moldova that unilaterally declared independence in 1992. Its western boundary is the Dniester river

transgender see **sex change**

transistor do not use on its own in sense of transistor radio

transpire means to come to light or to leak out. Do not use as an alternative of to happen or occur

transsexual no hyphen; but see **sex change**

Trans-Siberian Railway

Transvaal, but a Transvaler. See **South Africa**

trauma, traumatic avoid in the clichéd sense of *deeply upsetting, distressing* etc; it should be confined to its medical meaning of severe shock after an accident or stressful event

travellers

traveller's cheques

Travellers Club (no apostrophe)

treaty l/c in **Amsterdam treaty, Lisbon treaty, Maastricht treaty** etc

Triads cap in Chinese gangster context. See **Mafia, yakuza**

Tribeca the “Triangle below Canal Street” area of Lower Manhattan in New York; note **SoHo**

Tricolour cap for the French flag, l/c in more general context

trillion one thousand billion. In headlines, abbreviate to trn, eg, \$1trn

Trinidad & Tobago for the sports teams but **Trinidad and Tobago** politically etc

triple crown l/c

trinitroglycerin no terminal “e” needed. See **glycerin**

trolleys (plural of trolley; not –ies)

Tromsø (terminal letter ø) northern Norwegian city

Troödos mountains in Cyprus (diaeresis on second “o”)

Trooping the Colour (not of the Colour); also **beating retreat**

tropical storm cap as part of title, eg, Tropical Storm Fay; similarly, and belatedly more accurately, Hurricane Fay (caps)

Tropics, the (cap); note also the **Tropic of Capricorn/Cancer**, but **tropical, subtropical** (l/c)

Troubles, the see **Ireland**

troubleshooter (one word); also **troubleshoot**

try to the verb *try* must be followed by *to* before the next verb; never by *and*, eg, “I will try to close to cross the road”, not “I will try and cross the road”

Tsar (not czar), caps with the name, l/c in general sense. But note exceptions for government-appointed co-ordinators such as drugs czar, mental health czar

T-shirt

Tube (cap) acceptable in context on its own for the London Tube, or London Underground. Also cap the various lines such as Central Line, Victoria Line, Metropolitan Line

tuberculosis prefer **tuberculous** as the adjective for the disease, rather than tubercular

Tucson Arizona

tug-o-war

tumbrel prefer to tumbrel

turbo-jet, turbo-prop see **aircraft**

Turin Shroud (caps), then the shroud (l/c)

Turkestan prefer to Turkistan

Turkish Use accents as long as they are correct and available on our publishing system, eg, ç, ö, ü

Turkoman plural **Turkomans**

turn down prefer *reject* or *refuse* (except of beds)

Turner Prize but note Turner prizewinner, Turner prize-winning artist etc; see **Noble Prize**

turn-off, turn-on (nouns), but no hyphens in **turnout, turnaround, turnabout**

Tussauds, Madame see **Madame Tussauds**

Tutankhamun never permit a line break as Tutan-khamun; if the name has to be broken on a turn, it may be hyphenated as Tut-ankhamun or Tutankh-amun

Tutsis see **Hutus**

TV see **television**

Twentieth Century Fox (or **20th Century Fox** in logo form)

twentysomething, thirtysomething, fortysomething etc

Twenty20 the limited-overs cricket format

Twin Towers (of the old Wembley Stadium)

twin towers (of the former World Trade Centre in New York, destroyed in the 9/11 attacks); the **northern tower** and the **southern tower** (all l/c). See **War on Terror**

Twitter cap the name of the website; but **tweet** (noun and verb)

twofold, threefold, fourfold, tenfold etc

two minutes' silence (the).

two thirds, three quarters etc, but a two-thirds share (hyphenate adjectival use). Such expressions usually take the plural verb, eg, "three quarters of the children prefer horror films"; the same applies even in "a third of the children prefer ketchup". But note "two thirds of the bus was empty"

Tyne and Wear (not &)

typify, typified etc (not typefy)

tyrannosaurus roman, l/c when used as the common name of the dinosaur. But write *Tyrannosaurus rex* (italics), and **T. Rex** at subsequent mentions, for the scientific name

Tyrol (not Tirol)

TITLES

the Queen not necessary to write Her Majesty or HM the Queen

Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother no commas; at first mention now write **the late Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother**, thereafter the Queen Mother. She died aged 101 on March 30, 2002

the Duke of Edinburgh, thereafter the Duke or (sparingly) Prince Philip

the Prince of Wales, thereafter the Prince or (sparingly) Prince Charles

Parker Bowles, Camilla no hyphen. With her marriage to the Prince of Wales on April 9, 2005, she became **Duchess of Cornwall**. When in Scotland, and when he is identified as the Duke of Rothesay, she is officially the **Duchess of Rothesay** and may be referred to as such. If the Prince succeeds to the throne, she will be known as the Princess Consort

the Duke of Cambridge, thereafter the Duke or (sparingly) Prince William. He is second in line to the throne; but **Prince Harry** at first mention, thereafter simply **Harry**

the Duke of York, thereafter Prince Andrew or the Duke

the Earl of Wessex, thereafter the Earl or Prince Edward

the Princess Royal, thereafter the Princess; "Princess Anne" is no longer acceptable in historical context

Vice-Admiral Tim Laurence, the Princess Royal's husband

Diana, Princess of Wales, at first mention, thereafter the Princess (cap); the late Princess wherever appropriate. Never refer to Princess Diana or (even worse) Princess Di or Lady Di

Duchess of York she ceased to be a member of the Royal Family on her divorce. After her first mention as Duchess of York, refer to the duchess (l/c) subsequently --- not "Fergie" or any other vulgarity

Royal dukes keep the cap at subsequent mentions; other dukes do not

U

UAE acceptable at first mention for the United Arab Emirates. The seven emirates in order from west to east are Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al-Quwain, Ras al-Khaimah and Fujairah. The UAE has a president

über, ur German prefixes, meaning super and original respectively, generally no hyphen; umlaut and lower-case in construction such as überbabe

Uefa the governing body of European football (upper-lower acronym)

Uighur prefer to Uyghur

UK acceptable abbreviation for United Kingdom in both text and headlines. But be careful that it is strictly applicable. **United Kingdom** = Great Britain and Northern Ireland. **Britain** or **Great Britain** = England, Wales, Scotland and islands governed from the mainland (ie, not Isle of Man or Channel Islands), but **Britain is now widely used as another name for the United Kingdom or Great Britain, and pragmatically we accept this usage**; **British Isles** = United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, Isle of Man and Channel Islands

UKIP retain caps for the UK Independence Party

Ukraine omit *the*.

Ulster permissible, especially in headlines, but use Northern Ireland or the Province when possible. See **Ireland**

ultimately use sparingly. *Ultimate limit* means *limit*

ultraviolet

Uluru new name for Ayers Rock

uncharted as in waters; not unchartered

unchristian (l/c) see **Christian**

uncoordinated (but co-ordinate). See **hyphens**

under-age (hyphenated, as **over-age**)

underestimate often confused with overestimate: note that the importance of writing “Its importance cannot be overestimated” cannot be overestimated

Underground, London. See **Tube**

underreact

under-secretary use hyphen; same caps or l/c rules as for ministers. See **ministers**

under the hammer avoid this cliché for auctions

undervalue

underwater one word as adjective, eg, underwater exploration; but two words as adverb, the couple were married under water

under way always two words

Unesco the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. See **United Nations**

unforgivable

Union Jack except in most naval and ceremonial contexts, when **Union Flag** is correct; Context is everything, eg, a tourist waves a Union Jack; the coffin of a British soldier is draped in the Union Flag

unique means only one, having no like or equal. Do not use except in this absolute specific sense, and do not accept gradations, as in “almost unique”, for which words such as *rare* or *remarkable* suffice. Phrases such as *very unique*, *even more unique* are nonsense and are banned

United Nations, or the UN; usually no need to spell out even at first mention. Other points: the UN Secretary-General; now Ban Ki Moon (see **Korean names**); his predecessor was Kofi Anna. UN Security Council, UN General Assembly at first mention, and thereafter keep the caps, as in the Security Council, the General Assembly. UN derivatives such as Unesco, Unicef, Unifil, Unprofor etc are written thus where the word can be voiced. See **initials**. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (never Commission) is the organisation as well as a person. Abbreviate to UNHCR after first mention

United Reformed Church (not Reform)

United States (of America) is always followed by a singular verb. Common usage allows abbreviation to US in text as well as in headlines, but do not ignore the word America. See **America(n)**

universal claims always beware of claiming that something is the first or last of its kind, or that someone is the first person to ... or the last surviving member of ... or the oldest inhabitant etc. See **ever, first, superlatives, unique**

Universe cap in the planetary context, as Sun, Earth, Moon etc, but l/c in phrases such as “she became the centre of his universe”. See **Earth, solar system**

unlikeable, unloveable

unmistakable (not one of those with the middle “e”)

unparalleled

unprecedented never done or known before. Beware the common trap of misusing this word

unshakeable

until as a shorter variant, prefer till to til

unveil take care with this word, which means to remove a covering from something, or (by extension) to disclose. It should not be used in phrases such as unveiling a ship, or unveiling a flag. In football, a new coach or player cannot be unveiled if he has been the subject of vigorous speculation. The public already know and would not be surprised; in which case *presented* is the preferred alternative

up avoid unnecessary use after verbs, as in meet up, rest up, end up. See **down**

upbeat, upgrade, upfront

upcoming despite a depressingly increasing number of sightings, prefer **forthcoming** or **coming soon**

upmarket, as downmarket

upon take care with use of *up*, *upon*, *up on* and *on*; eg, “The cat jumped **on** the floor, **upon** the mouse, **up on** the table, then **up** the tree”

Upper House (Senate); **Lower House** (House of Assembly)

US see **America(n)**, **United States**

USAid note caps

useable prefer to usable

USSR avoid wherever possible; say Soviet Union instead (and now only in historical context). See **Russia**

US Supreme Court

utilise almost always prefer *use*

Utopia, Utopian cap

U-turn is an overworked phrase, especially in the political context. Be sparing in its use, particularly when only a minor change of policy direction is involved. Avoid in headlines, as they look ugly

Uzbekistan note the Ferghana (not Fergana) Valley

V

vacuum in common use as a verb. See **Hoover, trade names**

vagaries means aimless wanderings or eccentric ideas, not vicissitudes or changes (as in weather)

Valentine's Day normally omit the St, and keep cap for **Valentine card** etc

Valium proprietary name of diazepam, so cap

Valletta capital of Malta

Van in Dutch and Belgian names is cap when surname alone is given, as in **Van Gogh**, but l/c when used in full, eg, **Vincent van Gogh**. Note Ludwig van Beethoven (not von), although the composer was German. See **von**

Van Dyke, Dick but vandyke brown, vandyke beard etc (l/c)

Varsity match acceptable colloquialism for Oxford-Cambridge sporting contests

Vaseline proprietary, so cap

VAT value-added tax, no need to spell out

V-chip electronic chip for TV

VE-Day May 8, 1945. Likewise **D-Day, VJ-Day**

Velcro proprietary, so cap

veld, not veldt

Vélib (cap, roman) a bicycle available under the public cycling scheme in Paris

Venice Biennale (caps), biennale (l/c) at subsequent mentions

ventricles (anatomical), not ventricals

Venus flytrap

veranda (no final “h”)

verbal means pertaining to words; oral means pertaining to the mouth. Do not confuse. Sadly, corrupted phrases such as *verbal abuse* and *verbal warning* have permeated sports journalism to the point of our having to accept them occasionally, but always try to restrict such use and find an alternative. See **oral**

verbosity watch out for, and eliminate, wordy phrases such as “on the part of” (use *by*), “a large number of” (*many*), “numerous occasions” (*often*), “this day and age” (does not even demand an alternative). Such meaningless expressions have no place in the paper. See **fact that**

verdict do not use for civil hearing --- verdicts come at the end of criminal trials

verger, virger the latter to be used in context of St Paul’s and Winchester cathedrals

vermilion prefer to vermillion

verruca not verucca

versus abbreviation is v (l/c, no point)

very one of the most overworked words in English. Always try to do without

vet(s) at first mention, write veteran(s), veterinary surgeon(s), veterinary scientist(s) etc as appropriate; vet(s) is allowed in headlines for veterinary surgeons and scientists

veto plural noun and third-person singular

viable do not use as a synonym of feasible or practicable; it means capable of independent existence

vice always hyphenate in its deputy context (vice-chairman, vice-president of a company etc) but not in its depravity context, eg, vice squad. Do not confine the meaning of vice to sex; it is the opposite of virtue and has a correspondingly wide range of meaning

vice-chancellor of a university should be capped at first mention if given in full

vice versa (roman, no hyphen)

Victoria and Albert (Museum) use the ampersand only in the abbreviated **V&A**

videoconference, videoconferencing no hyphen

video game

videotape one word; but video cassette, video link, video recorder/recording. A video (for the film recording) is common usage and permissible

Vietcong prefer to Viet Cong; also **Vietminh** rather than Viet Minh

vintage car is one made between 1919 and 1930; a **veteran car** is one made before 1919

Virginia Tech university l/c university; write Virginia Tech at second mention. Formally, it is the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. The campus killer on April 16, 2007 was Cho Seung Hui (Cho at second mention, following Korean naming convention). See **Korean names**

Virtuality is a trade name and must be capped; it must not be used as a synonym of virtual reality

vis-à-vis roman, hyphens, with accent

vitamin A, B, C etc l/c “v”

viz (abbreviation for videlicet) prefer *namely, that is*, or simply *ie*

VJ-Day August 15, 1945. Likewise **D-Day, VE-Day**

vocal cords not chords

Vodafone not Vodaphone

voiceover no hyphen

volcanoes plural of volcano. Note also prefer volcanology, volcanologist to vulcan- spellings. See **Eyjafjallajökull**

volte-face roman, hyphenated; plural remains volte-face

von (German) is usually l/c in the middle of a name, and capped only at the beginning of a sentence. See **Van**

VP never use as abbreviation of Vice-President of the United States or any other state (or vice-president of a company)

W

wacky not whacky

wagon

WAGs wives and girlfriends (especially of sports teams); singular **WAG**

Wahhabi (Muslim sect), not Wahabi. See **Saudi**

Wales cap North Wales, South Wales, Mid Wales, West Wales

walked free from court avoid this lazy cliché

Walkman is a trade name, so must cap; in general sense, use *personal stereo*

walkout

Wallace & Gromit (ampersand, not Grommit)

Wall's (ice cream etc)

Walmart (no hyphen) for the supermarket itself; the business entity is styled Wal-Mart Stores, Inc

Wap as in mobile telephones, short for wireless application protocol (not WAP)

war crimes tribunal cap only when using the full title, **the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia**. It sits at The Hague and has a president and a chief prosecutor. Be specific in dealing with war crimes: they relate only to the treatment of prisoners in the custody of a military force

war dance two words

war game(s) two words

warfarin is not a trade name, so l/c

warn can be used transitively or intransitively. A caveat is not to create an epidemic of “he warned” etc if we only mean “he said”. However, we are at liberty to write intransitively, ie, without the verb having an object, eg, “Mr Nutt warned that 2009 would be a telling year for the widget industry”; “Mr Nutt warned of difficulties for the widget industry”; although on occasion “gave warning/issued a warning/cautioned” etc may still be preferable. For variety, do use transitive constructions as appropriate, eg: “The Speaker warned MPs that ...”

War on Terror if the caps on War on Terror look obtrusive or overused, adopt a l/c alternative such as war against terrorism. Frequently used names and terms arising from the terrorist attacks against the US on September 9, 2001 include: **Osama bin Laden**; **al-Qaeda** (his terrorist group); **al-Jazeera** (TV station in Qatar); **burka** (prefer to burqa); **Pashtuns** (biggest ethnic group in Afghanistan --- they speak **Pashto**); **Loya Jirga** (Afghan national council that meets irregularly); **special forces** (l/c) of the US or UK in generic sense; **twin towers** (of the former World Trade Centre; note the **northern tower** and the **southern tower**, all l/c); **Ground Zero**; **King Zahir Shah** (returned Afghan king; King Zahir at subsequent mentions); **Mullah Muhammad Omar** (supreme leader of the Taleban; Mullah Omar at subsequent mentions). Note also **Camp X-Ray** at **Guantánamo Bay** (accent), Cuba (replaced by **Camp Delta** in April 2002)

Wars cap the First World War, Second World War, Cold War, Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Six Day War (no hyphen), the Gulf War etc; but prefer **the Falklands conflict** because war was never formally declared; if the phrase has to be used, write Falklands war (l/c); also the Iraq war

warships take care with the following distinction: to serve **in** a warship; but **on** a merchant ship; a naval officer is **appointed** to serve **in** *HMS Sheffield*, and not *posted* to serve

wartime

war zone two words

Washington not usually necessary to add DC (as in Washington DC), but occasionally useful to distinguish it from Washington State (caps). Washington State and New York State re the only two states we need to cap, to avoid confusion

washout one word

waste usually better to write *waste* than *wastage*, which means the process of loss, or its amount or rate

wastepaper bin/basket

watchdog

watercolour, watercolourist

water lily two words, but artistic convention uses one word in Monet’s *Waterlilies* paintings

Waterstone’s singular with apostrophe, the booksellers founded by Tim Waterstone

watt unit of power, eg, a 60W lightbulb. Beware confusion with consumption of energy, measured in watt-hours etc. See **energy, megawatts, power**

weapons no hyphens for AK47 (although Kalashnikov is preferred), M16, M79 etc

weapons of mass destruction spell out at first mention, the WMD

wear write menswear, women's wear, children's wear, sportswear. See **clothing**

weather stories should always take a cross-reference to the weather page, Style is, eg, **Forecast, page 12** (Franklin Gothic demi, set left, under half-point rule)

website one word. Unlike, say, computer games, do not routinely italicise websites in normal copy. In some contexts, eg, listings pages, italics or other type changes may be appropriate for display purposes

week, weekend the week ends on Saturday night. Common sense will dictate whether to say last week, this week, next week etc. Beware of references to *at the weekend* in Monday papers: always make clear whether you mean the weekend just past or next Saturday and Sunday, although the tense of the verb may be enough to indicate this. The phrase "this weekend" should refer only to the coming weekend, but if it is likely to cause any ambiguity, then do not use it

weigh anchor means to raise a vessel's anchor, not to drop it

weights and measures abbreviations context will determine when to shorten kilometres, grams, feet, inches, stone, pounds, ounces etc. "He was 6ft 7in" (not ins, and no space between number and abbreviation); but "she stood two feet from the kerb". Similarly, "she weighed 8st 12lb" (not lbs); but "he was several pounds overweight". See **scientific measures**

Welch, Welsh take care with **The Royal Welch Fusiliers**, but **Welsh Guards**

well or **well-** with adjective: no hyphen needed if construction is after the noun, but use a hyphen if before the noun. Thus "the island is well regulated", but "it is a well-regulated island". See **adverbs**

wellbeing

wellington boots l/c

wellwisher no hyphen

west, western etc; for when to cap in geographical context, see **compass points**

West, the (in global political sense); similarly, **Western** leaders, Western Europe etc

western l/c for cowboy films

wharf prefer **wharfs** as plural

whence means "from where". Never write "from whence"

whereabouts is singular, eg, "his whereabouts is not known". Prefer "nobody knows where he is"

whether rarely needs *or not* to follow it

which see **that**

while not whilst

whingeing with middle “e”

whips cap Chief Whip, but l/c the unspecific, eg, a government whip

whisky from Scotland, **Scotch** as alternative; but **whiskey** (from Ireland and the US)

whistleblower no hyphen

whistle-stop hyphenated, as in whistle-stop tour

Whitbread Round the World Race caps, no hyphens, renamed the Volvo Ocean Race

White Cliffs of Dover caps

white-collar workers

White House Chief of Staff caps

White Paper caps, as with Green Paper; these should not be capped, however, with anything other than a White Paper/Green Paper issued by the Government. A “white paper” from the Opposition should be styled thus --- quotes and l/c at first mention, thereafter just l/c

white phosphorus; white phosphorus bomb for adjective and noun, and its adjectival use. See **phosphorus**

whiz-kid only one “z”, but use this colloquialism sparingly

WHO spell out at first mention, World Health Organisation, then the WHO

who, whom which of these to use is determined solely by its function in the relative clause. Remember that *whom* has to be the object of the verb in the relative clause. Thus, “she is the woman whom the police wish to interview” (ie, the police wish to interview her, not she); the other most common use of *whom* is after a preposition such as *by*, *with* or *from*, eg, “the person from whom he bought a ticket”. Beware of traps, however: “Who do you think did it?” is correct (not whom, because who is the subject of “did it”, not the object of “do you think”); and “Give it to whoever wants it” is correct (not *whomever*) because *whoever* is the subject of the verb wants. Beware too of constructions such as “he squirted ammonia at a van driver who [correct] he believed had cut him up” (where “he believed” is simply an interjection; “who” is not the object of “he believed” but the subject of the subordinate clause, “who ... had cut him up”)

whodunnit (not whodunit)

why usually superfluous after *reason*, eg, “the reason he did it was ...”, not the reason why he did it was ...”

Widdecombe, Ann not Anne

-wide no hyphen in compounds such as **countrywide, nationwide, worldwide**, but needed in **island-wide**

wideawake one word

wideranging one word

widow (woman), **widower** (man); never say “widow of the late John Jones”; she is the “widow of John Jones”

wi-fi l/c, hyphen, as hi-fi

WikiLeaks note cap L in middle

wildfowl, wildlife

Wild West

Wimbledon caps for Centre Court, No 1 Court, No 14 Court etc

wind with strong winds, give a description as well as force number (in numerals), eg, storm force 4 (l/c, numeral), up to force 7; thereafter, gale force 8, severe gale force 9, storm force 10, violent storm force 11, hurricane force 12. But the vernacular “force 11 winds” is acceptable

wind farm two words

wines l/c in most cases, for both the type and the grape, except where it would look out of place; so say, eg, alsace, bordeaux, burgundy, champagne, claret, moselle, prosecco, rioja, but a Côtes du Rhône, a Hunter Valley chardonnay. Cap when referring specifically to the wine-growing region, eg, “I prefer a good burgundy to an alsace, but I think the best wines still come from Bordeaux”; “he preferred to buy his champagne only in Champagne”

wine bar (two words)

Winnie-the-Pooh hyphens

Winslet, Kate

Winter of Discontent (of 1978-79), initial caps

wintry prefer to wintry (or indeed winterly)

Wisden Cricketers' Almanack italics; it can also be called **Wisden**

wish list no hyphen

witch-hunt, but **witchcraft** and **witchdoctor**

withhold not withhold

witnesses in the British/Bermudian court system, witnesses go into the witness box and give evidence; they do not take the stand and testify

woebegone, woeful

women doctors, women teachers etc adopt the plural through common usage. See **feminine designations, lady**

Woolworths no apostrophe either in formal name for business contexts or colloquial use for the store and products

word hyphenate in C-word, S-word etc. See **four-letter words, obscenities**

word processor; word processing noun, **word-processing** hyphen, adjective

workaholic, as shopaholic, but note chocoholic

workers farmworkers, metalworkers and **roadworkers** each one word, but two for **car workers, oil workers, office workers** etc

workforce, workshop, work-to-rule

workout (one word); also **workrate**

world avoid, wherever possible, phrases such as the fashion world, the theatre world, the cricket world etc

world-beater hyphenate

World Trade Organisation (WTO), the successor body to Gatt. See **Gatt**

world view two words

worldwide one word for general adjective, but see next two entries

World Wide Fund for Nature now the WWF. See **WWF**

world wide web (as with internet) l/c; and the **web** for short, also **website**. See **internet**

Worrall Thompson, Antony TV chef

worthwhile (one word) often used where simply *worth* would be better, eg, “the programme was worth recording”

wound(ed) see **injure**

wrack means seaweed or wreckage and must not be used as a synonym of *torture*; thus *racked by doubts* etc. See **racked**

wreaked (not *wrought*) havoc, heavy damage, vengeance etc

wristwatch one word

write-off noun, **write-up** noun, but a **writedown** in business context

writer generally write compounds as one word, eg, copywriter, hymnwriter, songwriter, unless they look especially hideous, in which case opt for two words

writes with written-in bylines, prefer the construction *Ann Bloggs writes* to *writes Ann Bloggs*

wrongdoer, wrongdoing, but **wrong-footed, wrong-headed**

WWF is the name of what was the World Wide Fund for Nature and for legal reasons must not be used for the World Wrestling Federation (say *the federation* if a shorter form for the wrestling group is needed). See **World Wide Fund for Nature**

Wyndham's Theatre in London takes the apostrophe

X

Xbox

xenophobe, xenophobia never *zenophobe* etc

Xerox is a trade name, so must cap

X Factor, The no hyphen for the television talent show

Xhosa (not Khosa), plural Xhosas, the Bantu tribe. See **South Africa**

Xmas must not be used unless part of a special title or in a direct quote etc

X-ray fully acceptable abbreviation of X-ray examination. It can also be used as a verb, to X-ray someone. Note, however, Camp X-Ray at **Guantánamo Bay**, Cuba (later replaced by Camp Delta). See **War on Terror**

Y

Yahweh vocalisation of Tetragrammaton, YWWH, the Hebrew name of God

Yale lock trade name, so must cap

Yangtze not Yangtse. See **Chinese names**

yard the metre and the yard are sufficiently similar that conversions such as 500 metres (547 yards) are generally unnecessary. Conversions between metres and feet are often far more useful

Yardies cap. West Indian criminal gangs

Yarmouth is on the Isle of Wight; the town on the Norfolk coast is Great Yarmouth

yakuza l/c for Japanese criminal organisation or one of its members. The plural is also yakuza. See **Mafia, Triads**

yee haw preferred rendition of the cowboy exclamation

Yemen not the Yemen; note the preferred variant **Jaber al-Faifi** for the Saudi who joined al-Qaeda in Yemen and told Saudi officials in 2010 about a cargo bomb plot

“yes” vote, “no” vote

yeti (l/c), the abominable snowman

YMCA, YWCA

yoghurt

yoke (oxen), **yolk** (egg)

Young Turks (caps)

youth courts not juvenile courts

YouTube close up, caps

yuan the Chinese currency, rather than the renminbi

Yugoslav (meaning southern Slav) is the adjective from Yugoslavia (not Yugoslavian). Historically, write **Yugoslav Army**, not Serb Army. The remaining portions of Yugoslavia combined (February

2003) into a loose confederation named **Serbia and Montenegro**. The two countries left the confederation in 2006, with Montenegro and Serbia becoming separate states

yuletide (l/c)

yuppie noun or adjective

Yves Saint Laurent not St, no hyphen

Z

Zahir Shah, the returned Afghan king; King Zahir at subsequent mention. See **War on Terror**

Zaire after the overthrow of President Mobutu in May 1997, refer to the country as the Democratic Republic of Congo at first mention, and thereafter simply as DR Congo. The former French Congo is the Republic of the Congo, which may be referred to as Congo (Brazzaville). See **Congo**

Zambezi not Zambesi

Zanu (PF) (not Zanu-PF) party in Zimbabwe

-ze in almost all cases, use the –ise ending rather the –ize. Two of the main exceptions are *capsize* and *synthesizer*

zeitgeist (l/c, roman) means the spirit of the times

zeppelin (l/c for the airship)

zeros (prefer to zeroes as plural)

Zeta-Jones, Catherine (hyphen)

Zhang Ziyi the Chinese actress, Zhang at second mention. See **Chinese names**

ziggurat

zigzag, zigzagging

Zimmer frame is a trade name, so must cap

zodiac, zodiacal (l/c, as in signs of the zodiac)

zoo cap as in Bermuda Aquarium and Zoo; thereafter, the zoo