

National Style Guide

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

aboard—use on all references.

academy and headquarters—Coast Guard Academy, New London, Conn., and Coast Guard Headquarters, Washington, D.C.

active duty—this terminology should be used when referring to the Coast Guard, not regular, or regulars. One might ask, who then are the irregulars?

afterward—not afterwards.

aircraft names—use a hyphen when changing from letters to figures; no hyphen when adding a letter after figures. For Coast Guard aircraft use: C-130, H-3, HU-25, H-65, H-60.

Aircraft Repair and Supply Center—spell out on first reference and then abbreviate as AirRep & SupCen aircrew—one word.

Air Station—spell out on first reference and then abbreviate as AirSta. If second reference is to a different air station, spell out.

Atlantic Area—spell out on first reference and then abbreviate as LantArea.

AM—acceptable in all references for the amplitude modulation system of radio transmission. Unacceptable to mean morning. Same with PM for afternoon.

a.m., p.m.—lowercase with periods. Avoid the redundant 10:00 a.m., this **morning**.

America's Cup—refers to the Yacht Race.

amid—not amidst.

ampersand—use only when part of a title, company, unit or vessel's formal name only; Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, R&D Center or BS&S.

annual—an event cannot be described as annual until it has been held at least two successive years.

Atlantic Area—on first reference, then LantArea.

ATON—acceptable on second reference for aids to navigation.

Auxiliary—capitalize, the Coast Guard Auxiliary, the Auxiliary sponsored

Auxiliary titles— use the following:

flotilla vice commander—VFC

flotilla commander—FC

division vice captain—VCP

division captain—DCP

district rear commodore—RCO

district vice commodore—VCO

district commodore—DCO

national vice commodore—NAVCO

national commodore—NACO

All titles with the exception of commodore follow the person's name, i.e., Robert Smith, district vice commodore; or Robert Smith, VCO 17. For commodore use Commodore Raymond Smith, or COMO Raymond Smith, DCO 13.

barrel—a standard barrel in U.S. measure contains 31.5 gallons.

biannual, biennial — biannual means twice a year and means the same thing as semiannual; biennial means every two years.

boats, ship—a boat is a watercraft of any size. A ship is large enough to carry smaller boats. Coast Guard boats should be designated by size and type on first reference. Use 44-foot motor life boat, 41-foot utility boat, 21-foot rigid hull inflatable. On second reference, use size only; 41-footer, unless more than one boat of any size are described in the same story. Do not use 44' or 41' instead of 44-foot or 41-foot. To differentiate between different boats, use the station; Chatham's 41-footer. Do not use brand names of Coast Guard boats such as Boston Whaler or Avon.

call letters—use all caps and use a hyphen to separate type of station: WBZ-TV.

chief—capitalize as a formal title when used before a name: He spoke to Police Chief Michael Codd. He spoke to Chief Michael Codd of the New York police. Titles are not capitalized when used after the person's name on in standard text. Michael Codd, police chief, New York, or the chief of police said . . .

Coast Guard—capitalize when referring to the U.S. force: the U.S. Coast Guard, the Coast Guard, Coast Guard policy. Use lower case for similar forces of other nations. Do not use 'Guard' standing alone, it infers the National Guard.

Coast Guardsman—capitalize as a proper noun when referring to some one, no matter which sex, in the Coast Guard.
Do not use the slang "Coastie."

coastline—one word.

commandant—full name and title on first reference: Commandant ADM Robert E. Kramek, the commandant visited . . .

commodore— full name and title on first reference: Commodore Everette V. Tucker Jr., the commodore visited . . . When abbreviated, use **COMO**, not COMMO or Como.

COMDTINST, COMDTNOTE— spell out on first reference, all other references, abbreviate with no periods ...
Commandant Instruction M16790.1.

commanding officer—spell out on first use and abbreviate CO on second reference.

communications center—spell out on first use and then abbreviate as CommCen.

communications station—spell out on first use and then abbreviate as CommSta.

courtesy titles—do not use the courtesy titles Miss, Mr., Mrs., Ms., unless it is included in quoted material.

crewman, crewmember, crewmembers—use crewman only when the person in question is a male.

cutter names—on first reference write: the CGC CHASE. On subsequent references, you may write: the cutter CHASE, the high endurance cutter CHASE, the buoy tender BITTERSWEET etc. Always use an article; the CHASE. Never use the pronoun she in references to ships. Use **it** instead.

dashes—dashes emphasize key material and can set off expository information in a sentence. Dashes can link introductory or concluding thoughts to the rest of a sentence. Dashes can interrupt a sentence for insertion of thoughts related to, but not part of, the main idea of the sentence. *The new boat had been in the design phase—hull studies were being done by the Neversink Group—for six years before its contract was canceled.* You can create dashes on a typewriter by typing two unspaced hyphens. When using a dash between two words, leave NO space on either side of the dash.

dates—when using a month with a special date, abbreviate only Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec. Spell out all others. When using only a month and year, do not set the year off with a comma: He arrived in May 1990. When a phrase

contains a month and year, do not set off year from the rest of the story: January 1984 was when

Department of Defense—use DOD on second reference.

Department of Transportation— use DOT on second reference.

district—always spell out when used in text. Use a figure and capitalize when forming a proper name: the 2nd District. Lowercase when used in text without specific reference; the district is planning. Use of D1 or other district identifiers is acceptable in headlines and when used to identify where a flotilla or Auxiliariist is located, i.e., Mary Smith, FC, Flotilla 91, D14.

division—always spell out when used in text. Use a figure and capitalize when forming a proper name; Division 2, otherwise use lower case when not referring to a specific division.

drowned, was drowned—if a person suffocates in water or other fluid the proper statement is, the individual drowned. To say that someone was drowned implies that another person held the victim's head under water.

Electronic Mail— e-mail on second reference. Do not capitalize E-Mail, or E-mail. It is not a proper noun and is only capitalized when used at the beginning of a sentence or in a headline. Proper use in text is e-mail.

ellipsis — a series of three periods with a space between each period (. . .). Used to indicate omissions of words, sentences or paragraphs, primarily in quoted material.

emergency medical technician—EMT on second reference.

Environmental Protection Agency—EPA on second reference.

fiscal year—spell out when used with or without a year: fiscal 1994.

flotilla—always spell out when used in text. Capitalize only when used in reference to a specific flotilla: Flotilla 38. Do not capitalize when used in text without referencing a specific flotilla number.

fort—do not abbreviate when used for cities or military installations.

Fourth of July, July Fourth—also Independence Day.

gray—not grey.

GMT—abbreviation for Greenwich Mean Time.

half-mast, half-staff—on ships and naval stations ashore, flags are flown at half-mast, elsewhere ashore, flags are flown at half-staff.

hangar, hanger—a hangar is a building, a hanger is used for clothing.

helicopter—spell out on all references., helo is acceptable in headlines, never use copter.

homeported/homeport—one word.

infant—applies to children less than 12 months old.

injuries—are suffered or sustained, not received.

island—capitalize as part of a proper name: Nantucket Island. Lowercase when they stand alone or when the reference is to islands in a given area: the Hawaiian islands.

junior, senior—abbreviate as Jr. and Sr. only with full names. Do not precede with a comma, i.e., John Smith, Jr. Use John Smith Jr.

knot—a knot is one nautical mile per hour. To convert to mph, multiply knots by 1.15. Do not use knots per hour, that is redundant.

Latitude and longitude—latitude is the distance north and south from the equator. Longitude is the distance east or west of Greenwich, England, measured by meridians.

Light Station—spell out on first reference and then abbreviate as LightSta.

loran—lowercase except with formal name: Loran-C, Loran Station Baudette, the loran unit, on second reference use, LorSta

magazine names—capitalize and use italics but do not put in quotes, i.e., *The Navigator*; *Coast Guard Magazine*; *The Coast Guard Reservist*; *National Geographic*.

manuals—on first reference of a Coast Guard manual, give full name with instruction number (Coast Guard Personnel Manual, COMDTINST M100.6A)

military titles—Coast Guard and Navy titles are listed here. For other services, refer to same listing in the Associated Press Style Book: Do not use the AP Style Book for Coast Guard and Navy military titles.

admiral — ADM

vice admiral — VADM

rear admiral — RADM

rear admiral (lower half) — RADM

captain — CAPT

commander — CDR

lieutenant commander — LCDR

lieutenant — LT

lieutenant (junior grade) — LTJG

ensign — ENS

warrant officer — CWO

For chief petty officers and petty officers, use rate with numeral; BM2, MK1, YNCS, do not use CPO or PO.

For non-rates, use SR, SA, FA, SN and FN.

mishap—a minor misfortune. People are not killed in mishaps.

noon—do not put 12 or 12:00 in front of it.

officer in charge—spell out on first use and then abbreviate as OINC.

off shore, off-shore—off-shore is used as an adjective; the off-shore oil rig. Otherwise; The cutter remained off shore.

OOD—officer of the day on first reference.

on scene, on-scene—on-scene is used as the adjective: on-scene commander. Otherwise; The cutter arrived on scene.

Pacific Area—spell out on first use and then abbreviate as PacArea.

percentages—use numerals, do not use the symbol %; use 5 percent, 2.5 percent.

president—capitalize only as a title with full name on first reference; President Bill Clinton. Use lowercase or last name in all subsequent references; the president; Clinton said.

reserve—capitalize when used with the full name, the Coast Guard Reserve, the reservist, he joined the reserve.

rigid-hull inflatable boat—RHIB on second reference.

search and rescue—spell out on first reference and then abbreviate as SAR.

seasons—lowercase spring, summer, fall and winter unless part of a formal name—Winter Ice Carnival, Spring Flower Show, Summer Issue.

sexist language— Do not substitute *s/he, he/she, hisorher*, or other hybrid forms for standard personal pronouns. These hybrid forms are unpronounceable and are not universally accepted by English users. They are a form of sexist language. Avoid them and instead, either remove pronouns or change the sentence to plurals, i.e., *their, theirs or they*. Avoid using *he or she, his or hers*. It is at best, clumsy when read in text. -*Commandant Policy*

she—do not use this pronoun in references to ships or nations. Use **it** instead.

smallboat—one word, 44-foot motor lifeboat, 41-foot utility boat, 17-foot rigid hull inflatable.

SOS—no periods for distress signal.

spokesman, spokeswoman—but never spokesperson.

state abbreviations—do not use United States Postal Service (USPS) abbreviations in text. Use the proper state abbreviations, i.e., Mass., Vt., Pa., N.H., N.Y., N.M., Mont. Do not abbreviate Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas and Utah. Postal abbreviations are used only in addresses. **Easy to remember**, do not abbreviate the two states that are outside the continental United States and those states that are five letters or fewer.

state—do not capitalize when simply used as an adjective to specify a level of jurisdiction: state Rep. Smith, the state Transportation Department, state funds, state boating, the state of Maine.

station—spell out on first reference and then abbreviate as Sta Do not capitalize unless used with the name of a specific station, i.e., Station Point Allerton, Station Portsmouth Harbor, Station Cape Cod Canal.

teen, teen-ager—do not use teen aged.

toward—not towards.

training center—spell out on first reference and then abbreviate as TraCen.

UHF—acceptable in all references.

under way, underway—two words in virtually all uses: The boat is under way. One word when used as an adjective before a noun in a nautical sense: The underway flotilla

U.S.—used as an adjective, not as a noun. The U.S. Embassy, the United States sent representatives.

Vessel Traffic Service—spell out on first reference and then abbreviate as VTS.

watchstander—one word.

ZIP code—ZIP always in upper case, but always lowercase code. Do not put a comma between the state name and the ZIP code: Boston, MA 02114.

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