



# WRITING & GRAMMAR

## A WORKING GUIDELINE

Note: Below are recommended guidelines for creating and editing content. Some may go against rules you've learned. The following are based on accepted best-practices for modern publishing and typesetting. **Please consider these for all pieces of communication from your club for the most professional and consistent communication.** As always there are exceptions to the rules and minor stylistic adjustment can be made for your specific club.

- ☐ **IMPORTANT: Ask yourself with EVERY communication, is this on brand with our club?** Be critical. Review word and art choices and ask yourself, "does this reflect the club?" It might be cool, funny, interesting to you and others...but does it match the club or the club's vibe? You are the voice of the club and even small choices help build and support your club's identity and reputation.
- ☐ **Remove double spaces** at the end of each sentence. This is from the era of typewriters and considered incorrect by many editors today.
- ☐ **Commas at the end of a list:** It is recommended not using an additional comma at the end of a list, For example, "red, blue and green." However, if you prefer the comma, please be consistent in its use.
- ☐ **Ampersands.** Spell out "and" instead of using ampersands in sentences, headings or titles. Use of ampersands should generally be limited to proper nouns or inside tables or parentheses when space is limited.
- ☐ **Avoid writing in first person unless in a letter form or in a quote.**
- ☐ **Be consistent with periods at the end of bullet points.** Use periods with after every bullet point or don't use them at all.
- ☐ **Use quotes only when quoting someone or something or with nicknames.** Opt for single quotes, italics or bold to add emphasis to other content.
- ☐ **Don't use zero minutes.** Delete :00. Typically, not necessary.
- ☐ **Zero cents should be removed.** Delete .00. It's not necessary unless you are using in charts or tables.
- ☐ **No multiple exclamation points.** This can appear amateurish. One will suffice.
- ☐ **Avoid sentence case in long lines** (capitalizing every first letter). It is hard to read. Short lines are okay.
- ☐ **Articles and conjunctions (such as a, and, the), typically, should not be capitalized.** For example: "Buffet And A Movie At The Pool" should be "Buffet and a Movie at the Pool"
- ☐ **Be consistent in using traditional standard dashes OR trendy dots in phone numbers.** Pick one or the other and stick with it.
- ☐ **Please use p.m. or a.m.** NOT 'PM' or 'AM' or 'pm' or 'am.'
- ☐ **Please spell out numbers under 10.** For example, 'three' instead of '3,' unless hyphenated like 'par-3.' Age is also an exception.
- ☐ **Avoid putting rules or negative items on the cover or first thing.**
- ☐ **Avoid abbreviations.** Some abbreviations are okay (i.e. 'ext.' for extension but not 'Wed.' for Wednesday). If you are going to abbreviate, write the full or more formal abbreviation. i.e. instead of 'x' for extension write 'ext.'
- ☐ **Never put ALL CAPS in body copy (capitals).** This indicates yelling.
- ☐ **Use tabs instead of extra spaces.** A small thing that will help in production and keeping things aligned properly.
- ☐ **COMMON ERROR: Dates should NOT have rd, th, or st behind them.** This can be considered old-fashioned typesetting. The exception would be for ordinal numbering. For instance, "4th annual..." is okay but 'October 4th' should be written 'October 4.'
- ☐ **COMMON ERROR: Please review your use of capitals.** Use capitals for the first letter of a sentence, proper nouns or adjectives, initials, abbreviations or first-person pronoun 'I' and some phrases. **Especially check capitals in menu/food items.**
- ☐ **SPELL CHECK before posting, mailing, emailing etc.**
- ☐ **Don't bury basic information within paragraphs.** List 'when' or 'where' or contacts etc. at the beginning or end of a paragraph so the reader can extract easily.