

## Squirrel Hill Magazine® Style Guide

### March 20, 2017

Squirrel Hill Magazine uses the *AP Stylebook* as the primary reference on punctuation, grammar and capitalization. This style guide summarizes the AP Stylebook, but it also lists several exceptions. Note that Squirrel Hill Magazine is a print publication, and space is always at a premium.

1. Be concise, and be clear.
2. Limit use of adverbs; choose a better verb.
3. Our tone is informative, but friendly.
4. All articles should be written in second person, with the exception of first-person Squirrel Hill Stories and the President's Message.
5. Use an active voice whenever possible: the subject performs the action.
6. When quoting a source, use present tense with attribution, e.g. "Squirrel Hill is great," says Jane (not "said").

#### Punctuation

7. Do not use the "serial" comma before the final "and" or "or" in a list.
8. Do use a comma before the concluding conjunction in a complex series of phrases: *The main points to consider are whether the athletes are skillful enough to compete, whether they have the stamina to endure the training, and whether they have the proper mental attitude*
9. Use a hyphen when two or more words that express a single concept precedes a noun, except the adverb *very* and all adverbs that end in *-ly*: *a first-quarter touchdown, a bluish-green dress, a full-time job, a well-known man, a better-qualified woman, a know-it-all attitude, a very good time, an easily remembered rule.*
10. Punctuation is placed within quotation marks.
11. Use an em-dash (or two consecutive hyphens that will be translated to an em-dash) to denote an abrupt change in thought in a sentence or an emphatic pause: *Through her long reign, the queen and her family have adapted--usually skillfully--to the changing taste of the time.* Do not use a space before or after the em-dash. Avoid overuse of dashes when commas would suffice.
12. Omit extra spaces: one space between sentences.

#### Dates & Times

13. Do not use TH or ST with dates, e.g. "May 4 and June 21" is correct, but "May 4th and June 21st" is not correct.
14. For months used with a specific date, abbreviate Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec. Spell out all months when standing alone or with a year alone.
15. Use an apostrophe for omitted figures: The class of '62. The Spirit of '76. The '20s.
16. Use "am" and "pm" (no caps and no periods) 9am, 3:30pm, (no spaces) 9-11am 9pm-3pm (no spaces around hyphen). Use noon or midnight.

## Addresses

17. Abbreviate Ave., Blvd. and St. only with a numbered address: 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. Spell them out and capitalize when part of a formal street name without a number: Pennsylvania Avenue. Lowercase and spell out when used alone or with more than one street name: Forbes and Murray avenues.
18. Spell out and capitalize First through Ninth when used as street names; use figures for 10th and above: 7 Fifth Ave., 240 45th St.

## Names

19. Abbreviate and capitalize *Dr.*, *Gov.*, *Lt. Gov.*, *Rep.*, *Sen.* when used before a name. Spell out and lowercase *representative* and *senator* in other uses. Spell out other legislative titles in all uses. Capitalize formal titles such as *assemblyman*, *assemblywoman*, *city councilor*, *delegate*, etc., when they are used before a name. Lowercase in other uses.
20. Add U.S., state, county or city before a title only if necessary to avoid confusion.
21. Use legislative titles upon first reference, but not on a second reference unless it is part of quotation.
22. Give a person's full name on first reference. Either the first or last name can be used on subsequent mention depending on tone, but be consistent throughout an article.