*The Bruin News* Style Manual

* Plan on doing eight issues this year. A tentative production schedule will be given. Use this schedule to organize your life! You are expected to be present during layout and know the days of all deadlines. There shouldn’t be any reason for missing deadlines!
* Use the freedom you are allowed in Bruin News wisely. The class is not a time to meander around the halls talking with friends, nor is it a time to make a Java run. You must sign out in the book by the pencil sharpener and carry your press pass with you. This is so I know where you are and can find you if someone needs to talk to you. Anyone abusing this privilege ***will*** have it revoked.
* If you know you are going to be gone for a deadline or during layout week, let me know and get your work turned in **ahead** of time. When one person’s story is not finished, an entire page can be held up during layout week. If you are absent during layout week, you should plan on coming in another time to work on your page, especially if you don’t think you can get it done during class time.
* Strive to uphold the integrity of our paper. **You are journalists!** You need to follow the same rules and expectations a national newspaper would have for its staff.
* You represent Twin Falls High School. People in the community read the paper and expect a certain amount of quality. While our paper may be on the edge, it should always be tasteful.

You hold the power to create an outstanding newspaper. I look forward to sharing ideas this year and producing a high quality newspaper!

Bruin News Staff

2013-2014

(see appendix for chain of command)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Managing editor  Eva Lopez  Assistant managing editor  Victoria Sefcsik  Art and Photography editor  Amanda Ireton  News editor  Victoria Sefcsik  Features editor  Brooke Fitzgerald  Arts & Entertainment editor  Lane Fassett  Sports editor  Jacob Johnson  Opinion editor  Julie Ruth Malone  Humor editor  John Williams  Internet/media editor  To be announced | Staff writers/ Photographers  Alyssa Brann  Sydney Cota  Mehli Marcellus  Chase Gartner  Austin Hafer  Bryce Lee  Delaney Jensen  Taylor Cooper  Brooklyn Scholes  Samantha Reeves  Brandon Pilling  Peyton Karl  Haleigh Allen  Chelsey Debie  Dominique Johnston  Morgan Anderson  Hanna Dishaw  Emma Wills  Maren Ransom  Mariah McMurtry  Joseph Leishman |

Production Schedule

* Pod assignments will be given. Each pod is responsible with the assigned section. The managing editor and assistant managing editor have final say in pod decisions.
* Each pod will discuss story ideas. One full class period will be devoted to brainstorming, developing, and drafting an idea sheet to be presented to the managing editor and assistant managing editor for approval on the following day. The pod editor needs to turn in a typed story idea sheet **at the beginning of class. This needs to be turned into the adviser and will be taken as a grade.**
* A story idea day should look like:

Each pod assembles and discusses story ideas. The pod editor is responsible for writing down ALL ideas and directing the pod meeting. During this time, photographers are responsible for listening to story ideas and taking notes on the story ideas on the photo notes worksheet. **This worksheet will be turned in for a grade.**

* After story ideas are decided. The staff has the responsibility to decide on three staff derived parts of the paper. These three items that will need to be voted on are:

Letter to the Editor

Student Feature

Double Truck

A day will be given to decide on the letter to the editor and the student feature. A separate day will be given to produces double truck ideas. Double truck will be decided the last ten minutes of class. If a person is gone on this day, then his or her vote will ***not*** count.

**Days between story ideas and A deadline**

Pod leaders/editors responsibilities:

1. Make sure everyone is working on the paper. This can be in the form of beat sheets, photos, interviews, page design, mini lessons, story writing, etc. If you cannot think of something for your staffers to do, see me. **EVERY DAY WILL BE A BRUIN NEWS DAY!**
2. Pages that will not have ads can be done well before A deadline. Do them!
3. **EVERY DAY**, the editor should gather the pod and communicate the tasks needed. The editor is in charge of keeping the staffers busy and constructive. There is no reason students cannot be doing something that will benefit the paper on a DAILY basis. Keep a journal of what is assigned to whom it is assigned. This notebook is due to me for points. It should reflect what is being done in your pod to make the issue the best it can be. The goal is to have the paper ready long before layout night.
4. Managing editor and assistant managing editor responsibilities during between days:
5. Make sure everyone is on task.
6. Visit each pod daily. See if there are questions and concerns. Your suggestions should be taken seriously; report any attitude, apathy, or problems to the adviser.
7. Set up perm pages, ads, and any needed folio changes.
8. Be **AVAILABLE** for the staffers and photographers.

**Deadlines that are graded**.

* **A Deadline**: Stories must be turned in to editors for corrections. The stories are due at the **BEGINNING OF CLASS.** Stories are to be turned in to the editor (the editors will provide a report to the adviser in terms of who and who has not turned in stories).. Staff writers should REDISCUSS stories with assigned photographers on this day. Editors will make corrections and give the stories back to writers the **following day**.
* **B Deadline:** Writers have one day to make corrections and give their stories to the adviser by 3:30 on B deadline. **STORIES MUST BE TURNED IN ON TIME! LATE STORIES WILL RECEIVE A LETTER GRADE DEDUCTION FOR EACH DAY LATE!** Stories will be graded and returned by the following day. **PHOTOS ARE ALSO DUE B DEADLINE. LATE PHOTOS WILL RECEIVE A LETTER GRADE DEDUCTION FOR EACH DAY LATE. I AM THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN APPROVE EXTENSIONS.**
* The Ad Deadline will be before A Deadline. .
* Layout night will typically be the Tuesday of layout week. All stories and art must be placed on the page and the page should be complete. Editors will need to check their section before leaving for the night. It is important to place a text box next to the page describing what needs to be done in the following days. Help out staff members by providing insight and suggestions. **LAYOUT NIGHT IS A GRADE; if you cannot be at layout night, then you will incur a grade of zero out of 30 points in the major category. The second part of the grade comes by having your page done by Thursday of layout week at the end of class. Your page will then be graded by the adviser for quality and completion. This grade is 50 points major category. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS!**
* The print deadline is Friday at 3:10. All pages must be saved as PDFs and everything for the issue must be saved to a jumpdrive or emailed as a FTP. The managing editor will deliver the PDFs to the Times News for printing (if the editor cannot make this happen, the assistant managing editor must complete the drop off).
* A staff member (managing/ will need to pick the papers up Monday prior to class. The circulation manager will give distributing assignments for distribution during 8th period. This list must be completed prior to distribution day.

**Grading Policy**

Assignments: In order to earn the highest grades possible, students should meet A Deadline, B Deadline, and make corrections on time. Make the changes indicated by your editors and adviser. Save the original(s) in case there is a difference of opinion.

**Stories:**

Stories will be graded using a rubric. Each story is worth 50 points in the minor category. If more than one story is written for an issue, each grade will be entered into the gradebook. If only one story is written, then one grade will be entered. The story grade will average out over the course of the year, so do not worry about the one to three story difference with each issue. Remember, stories are due at the **beginning of class A deadline** and at **the end of class B Deadline.**

A letter grade deduction for **each** missed deadline will drastically reduce your grade.

**Story grading breakdown:**

Total story grade: 50 points

**Photos from photographers:**

Photos will be graded using a rubric. Each photo is worth 50 points in the minor category. If more than one photo is to be used for an issue, each grade will be entered into the gradebook. If only one photo is to be used, then one grade will be entered. The photo grade will average out over the course of the year, so do not worry about the one to three (or more) difference each issue may make. Remember, photos are due at the beginning of class B deadline. A letter grade deduction for **each** missed deadline will drastically reduce your grade. **ALL PHOTOS ARE DUE TO THE PHOTO EDITOR B DEADLINE!**

**Photo/art grading breakdown:**

Photo assignment sheet with printed photo

Quality/timeliness/sophistication of photo (based on rubric) 50 points

Total photo grade: 50 points

**Pages:**

Creative, well-done pages are imperative to making the newspaper a professional looking product. The pages are what the public sees and oftentimes, are what the public judges the paper on. So, with that said, there will be a grading emphasis on the quality of pages generated. Pages will be graded on the second part of the layout grade and the page is worth 50 points in the major category. The grade will be based on journalistic style, development, creativity, and completion of your assigned page(s).

**Page grading breakdown:**

Attendance layout night: 30 points

Quality of page and completion of page: 50 points

Total layout grade: 80 points

**If the page is not done on the Thursday of layout week, then a grade of zero will be given.**

Grading breakdown

Stories/pictures minor category 30%

Pages completed in a timely manner and of quality major category 40%

Projects/tests/quizzes/tasks/ 20%

Attitude/behavior 10%

Job Descriptions

# **Managing editor**

* Serve as spokesperson for the staff, sets its tone and represent the paper in dealings with administration and community.
* Conduct staff meetings, story idea days, critiques, and post assignments.
* Oversee staff assignments and check with other editors to resolve problems and verify that work is progressing and deadlines are met.
* Consult with the adviser at least once a week outside of class (negotiable).
* Responsible for overseeing progress and production for the paper.
* May also write stories, give staff guidance and make suggestions for improvement.
* Approve or rewrite headlines, photo captions and cutlines for stories and corrects layout as needed.
* Work with the Layout Editor and Assistant Managing Editor in drawing ad spaces and give the ad list with page numbers to the adviser.
* Oversee production of the doubletruck during layout week.
* With the Assistant Managing editor prepare paper to be taken to The Times News.
* Are encouraged to be creative leaders who determine the direction the paper takes during their tenure as managing editors.
* Oversee all aspects of Bruin News making sure each issue is done according to ethical standards, Bruin News policy and good taste.
* Motivate staff to meet deadlines and do quality work.
* Bring staff issues to adviser’s attention.
* Drop off disks at printer and pick up newspapers or arrange to have them picked up for distribution.
* Sets up style sheets for each page.
* Sets up templates for each page and prepares pages for each issue with correct dates and page numbers.
* With the Managing Editor and Assistant Managing Editors draws ad spaces on pages.
* Makes sure staff knows the basics of Quark XPress.
* Makes sure that each staff member knows layout basics.
* Communicates with editors, writers, photographers and artists about visual needs for each page.
* Assigns pages to staff.
* Continually works with staff members to assure quality layouts.
* Checks each layout for consistency and Bruin News style: All text should be in correct size, font.
* Verifies that photos and art credit lines are present when needed.
* Prepares distribution list **prior** to the distribution day
* Prepares newspapers to be sent to parents, alumni and schools immediately after distribution

# **Assistant Managing editor**

* Collaborates with Managing Editors in assigning stories to staff writers.
* Approves or rewrites headlines, photo captions and cutlines for stories and corrects layout as needed.
* Acts as a liason between the advertising department and Bruin News. Secures an ad list for each issue to give to the Layout Editor. Assists in drawing ad boxes.
* With the Managing Editor, prepares the paper to be taken to The Times News and put to bed

# **Photography/Art editors**

* Works closely with editors and seeks suggestions on elements desirable in photo illustrations to accompany stories.
* Consults on photos and art to photographers.
* Makes sure proper identification is obtained for the all photos.
* Works closely with editors to provide artwork needed to enhance pages, including cartoons, sketches, graphics and choice of clip art.
* May also create computer-based illustrations and infographs.
* Has responsibility for seeing that all types of artwork are complete, acceptable and ready for deadline, whether done by another staff artist or self—this is especially important if the managing editor needs assistance.

# **Section editors**

* Participate in staff brainstorming sessions.
* Coordinate articles, infographics and photography/art for all pages within.
* Communicates with other section editors about story redundancy and issue unity.
* Writes articles and columns as needed.
* Collects rough drafts on A deadline, corrects and returns for revision.
* Makes sure deadlines are met.
* Consults with staff writers during story writing and layout
* Helps choose photographs and makes sure captions are correct.
* Proofs pages.

# **Staff writers**

* Take part in the development of articles with editors, photographers and artists
* Meet criteria and deadlines
* Communicate with editor throughout writing process
* Contribute to brainstorming sessions
* Conduct appropriate research and interviews for articles from a true diversity of sources and points of view
* Develop interesting angle
* Provide accurate and impartial news coverage
* Complete in-depth reporting
* Communicate with editors, photographers and artists about the visual aspects of the articles
* Arrange infographics, sidebars, etc with section editor
* Write in Bruin News style and in a manner appropriate for subject matter and in line with ethical principles
* Have draft conference with section editor and quickly fix any problems
* Finish draft on time, turning in a finished copy to the adviser on B deadline. Include two suggested headlines and two suggested pull quotes.

# **All staff**

* Assist in copy and proofreading
* When finished early assist others so they can meet their deadlines as well
* Assist with distribution of the completed newspaper, checking back during the distribution period to see if additional help is needed.
* Understand the legal implications of journalistic efforts
* Complete an assigned page during layout.
* Meet all deadlines.

# **Photographers**

* Contribute to brainstorming sessions
* Worth with the writer, editor and artists to come up with photo ideas
* Take photos that reflect the concept of the article
* Take photos that are filled with action/reaction, reflect the diversity of Twin Falls High School, are well-framed and are taken in a variety of sizes, orientations and perspectives. (Do not stage a photo unless it is appropriate to the article.
* Take photos in a variety of locations around the school/community
* Record full names, class or every subject in every photo. (Double check spelling of names.)
* Be willing to redo photos when necessary
* Be willing to write stories when necessary.

# **Artists**

* Contribute to brainstorming process
* Communicate with writers, editors and photographers about visual concepts
* Develop ideas and share concepts with those involved; take active part in the communication loop
* Create high quality visual products
* Complete miscellaneous artistic assignments as needed

# **Adviser**

* Is an adviser, not a staff member
* Along with technology support, acquires and maintains computer equipment
* Coordinates computer use
* Grades the staff
* Assists in setting meeting agendas, if needed
* Crowd control
* Backs up editor in deadline and quality disputes
* Organizes staff handbook
* Rewards excellence and provides positive feedback
* Helps staff members who have difficulty remembering style rules, deadlines, etc.
* Arranges to participate in contests, field trips, seminars and workshops
* Looks out for and advises students concerning legal/ethical problems with articles and photographs

Typical Chain of Command in Bruin News

**Layout Night Grading—All pages are due by the end of class Thursday. No exceptions!**

Bruin Newser: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Page: \_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Page is completed by the end of class the Wednesday of Layout week. Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. Attendance during layout. If the person is unable to be at layout night, the page should be done (stories inserted in correct format, page laid out, yellow sheet completed and signed off) to receive full points. Be sure to communicate with the adviser prior to being gone on layout night. Good communication is the key.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/30 points

1. Creativity—page should have a professional look. It should be laid out in correct journalistic layout, have strong design elements, good use of color if appropriate, and have a strong visual presence. Avoid pagers that have too much text. Stories should have good headlines and photo captions.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/50 points

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Design Guide

***To all staff members:***

This design guide will direct you in making the right choices during layout of Bruin News.

# **Font**

All body copy is typed in plain Times New Roman.

10 point

11 point leading

## Headlines

Headlines are Gloucester MT Extra Condensed.

At least 30 point

### Captions

Captions are typed in Arial, left justified.

9 point

### Photo credits

**PHOTO CREDITS ARE TYPED IN BOLD ARIAL IN ALL CAPS.**

**5 point**

Headline, Caption and Pullout tips

* **Headlines**
* Use the active voice
* Be accurate
* Use abbreviations sparingly
* Avoid headlines with weak verbs
* Avoid clichés
* Use attribution when needed
* Always have a subject and verb (except in rare circumstances)
* **Captions**
* Should add to a story
* Do not repeat headline
* Write in the active voice avoiding forms of “to be.”
* Align the caption to the right
* Be connected to the story the photo accompanies
* **Pull outs**
* Should contain important information or an important quote
* Should not misrepresent the actual intent of the quote being used
* Should include an attribution

**Photo Guidelines**

The following guidelines will keep everyone on staff (especially Brandon) sane during layout week.

* **Do not upload every photo from the camera into the photos folder. Pick the ones you need.**
* **ALL photos that go in the paper MUST be saved in the Photos folder in Bruin News on the S: drive. Photos saved in U: drives will cause pages to be saved improperly, thus causing problems.**
* **ALL color photos must be in CMYK format. (See below for specific instructions.)**

**How to save photos in Photoshop:**

1. Open up the picture in Photoshop.
2. Click on Image and then Mode
3. If the picture is on a black and white page, click on Grayscale.

If the picture is on a color page, click on CMYK.

1. To save the picture, click File and then Save a Copy.
2. Make sure you are in the correct photos folder in the Bruin News folder.
3. Before you click save, click on the drop down menu by “Save As” and change the file type to TIFF. Change the name of the picture to something appropriate and informative.
4. Click Save. A window pops up with the title “TIFF Options.” In the Byte Order area, make sure IBM PC is checked. Also check LZW compression.
5. Click OK.
6. Your picture is now saved. When you close the original picture, you do not need to save it.

***Style Guide***

***To all staff members:***

This style manual will direct you making the right choices where there is a question of usage or when common errors need special attention. For problems not covered in this manual consult the *AP Style Guide*.

The manual is divided into categories:

**Capitalization**

**Proper use of names**

**Numbers**

**Abbreviations**

**Punctuation**

**Special points about usage**

#### Capitalization

For all capitalization, the acceptable choice is *down style*, which means the minimum use of capital letters.

**Do’s:**

1. Do capitalize the initial letter of a sentence, headline or caption in addition to all proper nouns.

*Example:* Anyone can belong to Booster Club.

1. Do capitalize proper names of groups and clubs.

*Example:* Student Council, Council president, French Club

1. Do capitalize proper name of events.

*Example:* Homecoming, Junior-Senior Prom

1. Capitalize a person’s title, including coach or assistant principal, used before a person’s name.

*Example:* Ms. Helen Swift, Dr. Daniel Dove, Principal Kevin Claypoole

*Note*: a. Capitalize *only* proper nouns when used after the name as identification.

*Example:* Mr. Kevin Claypoole, Twin Falls High School principal

1. Do not capitalize such identification as teacher or faculty member, even when used preceding a person’s name.
2. Do capitalize principal words of literary, theatrical, art or musical titles, as well as prepositions of four or more letters and all initial letters, including *The, A,* and *An*.

*Example:* “A Tale of Two Cities,” “You Can’t Take It With You,” “Where the Wild Wind Blow”

*Note:* Use quotes around all but the Bible and catalogs of reference materials in body copy; use only single quotes in headlines.

1. Do use capital letters with proper names and titles, whether of a place, group or organization, but do not use them otherwise.

*Example:* French Club—Chess Club

Student Council—Council committee

Twin Falls Board of Education—the board

1. Do capitalize the days of the week. Do not abbreviate unless in tabulated forms, then use without periods at end.
2. Always capitalize trademarked names of products such as Nintendo, Nike and so on. Use generic name instead of trademark if possible.

**Do Not’s:**

1. Do not capitalize classes—senior, junior, sophomore, freshman—except when part of a proper noun.

*Example:* Senior Week

The senior class elected officers.

1. School subjects such as math, biology, and history do not take capital letters; however, those words referring to national identities do.

*Example:* English, American history

1. So capitalize proper names of specialized subjects.

*Example:* Contemporary Living

1. Do not capitalize club offices: president, vice-president, etc., when used after a name.
2. Do not capitalize a word just because it sometimes is part of a proper word to which it relates.

*Example:* Twin Falls High School—when the high school is opened

##### Roper Auditorium—the new auditorium

principal’s office—German language teacher

English department

1. Use capital letters without periods for common abbreviations, even though not capitalized when written out.

*Example:* DECA—Distributive Education Clubs of America

JV—junior varsity

1. Capitalize *room* when used with its number.

*Example:* Something Room 333 is the school’s busiest.

1. Do not capitalize *a.m., p.m.* Write in lower case with periods.
2. Do not capitalize the descriptive names of athletic teams.

*Example:* The junior varsity basketball team overcame a…

### Proper use of names

1. Include first and last names, with identification, on first reference to an adult.

*Example:* Mrs. Lillian Howard, Latin teacher

1. On following references, use title and last name.

*Example:* Mrs. Howard, Mr. Claypoole, Coach Kraft

1. For students, use first names, with significant identification, on first reference.

*Example:* Ron Freeman, Chess Club president

Tressa Jordan, sophomore

1. On following references, use first names for students.

*Example:* Ron, Tressa

*Note:* Avoid using unorthodox nicknames by which a student is known familiarly by friends.

1. When listing names, adopt a definite pattern and stick to it.
2. With no other determining factor, use alphabetical order.
3. If grouped by class, list seniors first, then juniors, sophomores, freshman.
4. When listing officers, give names first, followed by office.

*Example:* Juan Lopez, president; Shannon Smucker, vice-president; Marv Crawford, secretary; Audrey Wilkins, treasurer.

1. When listing winner of honors or awards, begin with highest places.

### Numbers

1. Write out words for numbers one through ten, except in scores, dates and street numbers.

*Example:* No more than ten will be chosen.

Twin Falls defeated Central 27-3.

The play debuts March 10.

1. Use numerals for numbers 11 and higher.

*Example:* Twin Falls’ senior class has 450 members.

1. Spell out a number at the beginning of a sentence. Rephrase the sentence if number is large. A year can be in numerals, however.

*Example:* Twenty students received superior ratings.

##### A record $1,596 in pledges…

2001, not 2000, marks the century’s beginning.

EXCEPTIONS

1. When numbers are mixed, use the same form for both.

*Example:* Students in grades 9 through 12 are eligible.

1. Do not use *rd, th, st* or *nd* after dates or other numbers.

Wrong: The meeting will be Feb. 10th.

Right: The meeting will be Feb. 10.

1. When writing dates of a current event, do not include the year.
2. Spell out words for numbers and write out *cents* instead of using cent sign for amounts less that $1. Use dollar sign ($) with decimal system for larger amounts. Do not use zeroes after decimal point with even numbers.

*Example:* Your two cents worth counts for little.

This book costs $19.95. That one is $17.

1. Use of ordinal numbers, such as tenth or 112th, is the same as for cardinal.

*Example:* Their new address is 10 Tenth St.

**Abbreviations**

1. Write out the names of clubs, organizations, tests and other words on first reference, even though commonly know by their acronyms.

*Example:* Distributive Education Clubs of America, not DECA

Scholastic Aptitude Test, not SAT

*Note:* a. It is at times permissible to use the acronym in a headline or lead, but the full name should be written out in full as early as possible.

1. On further reference, a shortened form of the name may be used in addition to the acronym.

*Example:* In distributive education, students…

1. Abbreviate E. for East with numbers; don’t without.

*Example:* 5 E. Milbury Lane

East Milbury Lane is just one block long.

1. With street addresses, capitalize and abbreviate the words *avenue*, *street,* and *boulevard* when included with numbers.

*Example:* 528 Bacon Blvd.

She lives on Bacon Boulevard.

*Note:* Always spell out words for other types of thoroughfares, such as *drive, alley, circle* or lane, and capitalize as above.

*Example:* 7614 Radcliffe Circle

1. Without dates, names or months are written out.

*Example:* September no longer means the first day of school is at hand.

1. Months of more than five letters are abbreviated when written with dates.

*Example:* Jan. 15, Feb. 15, March 15

1. Do not abbreviate *Christmas* nor use the unacceptable X.
2. Do not abbreviate *assistant, associate, association*.
3. Do not abbreviate the names of academic degrees, unless used in a listing.

*Example:* He holds a doctorate in history.

1. Use the abbreviated form of the word *versus*, which should never be used as a verb as in “The Blazers are versing the saints.”

*Example:* Twin Falls vs. Borah

**Punctuation**

1. Write correctly punctuated sentences. Use periods and commas carefully to avoid run-ons and fragments.
2. Remember the importance of paired commas when setting off dates, nouns in apposition and phrases. This usage requires commas before *and* after.

*Example:* A deadline of Monday, May 4, has been set for applications.

Mr. Kevin Claypoole, Twin Falls High School principal, led the discussion.

*Blazer Follies*, the annual student musical, will open May 17.

1. When using quotations, use end punctuation inside quotation marks.

*Example:* “Surprised?” Mrs. Perkins said. “I was overwhelmed.”

She added, “It was a moment I’ll never forget.”

1. Do not use quotation marks with indirect quotations.

*Example:* Mrs. Perkins said she was not just surprised, she was overwhelmed.

According to Mrs. Perkins, it was a moment she’ll always remember.

1. Do not use commas before the last “and” in a series, unless needed to avoid confusion.

*Example:* Sophomores, juniors and seniors are eligible.

1. When listing a series of names and identifications, follow names with commas and groupings with semicolons.

*Example:* Superior ratings went to Tom Anderson, Bill Jennings and Cybil Hubbard, violin solos; Loria Davis and Dave Beck, flute solos; and Lynn Renna, drum solo.

1. Avoid excessive use of contractions.

*Poor:* Mr. Claypoole doesn’t expect the ruling until next week.

*Preferred:* Mr. Claypoole does not expect the ruling until next week.

1. Make use of hyphens (-) and em dashes (—) in the following ways.
2. Use a hyphen at the end of a line to divide a word that will not fit. Generally created by auto hyphenation.
3. Use a hyphen to join modifying words that precede a noun.

*Example:* The senior guard played a near-perfect game.

1. Use a hyphen to show the relationship of numbers in scores, ratio, some fractions and vote tabulations.

*Example:* The recipe called for 2-1/2 cups of flour.

The last-minute touchdown put Twin Falls ahead, 14-13.

1. Do not use a hyphen when writing editor in chief.
2. Use an em dash instead of a pair of hyphens to denote a break in sentence continuity. Include a space both preceding and following each em dash used.

*Example:* The ugly duckling—or so the story goes—often turns out to be a swan.

*Note:* a. Do not overuse this kind of punctuation.

b. Create the em dash on a computer by using the shift-option-hyphen keys.

1. Use the bullet to call attention to items in an unnumbered list.

*Example:* This year’s student council goals include:

* More student participation in Council planning
* Greater recognition of all sports at pep rallies
* Further study of…

*Note:* Although not strictly punctuation, the bullet or a similar type of dingbat helps differentiate items and also has graphic appeal. Do not overuse.

**Special points about usage**

1. Do not use the word *on* before a day or date unless its absence creates confusion.

*Example:* Play tryouts begin Monday.

1. Avoid using times such as *today, tomorrow* or *yesterday* in newspaper stories, since their meaning depends upon when a paper read.
2. When starting times, specify a.m. or p.m.—do not use the vague *o’clock*.
3. Do not write 12 midnight or noon; the 12 is redundant.
4. Omit zeroes for even hours or prices.

*Example:* Doors open at 5 p.m.

Student tickets are $5.

1. The words *boy* and *girl* apply until someone’s eighteenth birthday. After, *man* and *woman*, *young woman* and *young man* are appropriate.
2. According to the *AP Stylebook*, prefer his as the choice with singular indefinite pronouns (or rewrite to avoid the decision).

*Example:* Everyone has his own opinion of that.

1. Use obscenity only if necessary to prove a point. Do not use euphemism in place of taboo words.
2. When using quotations, do not alter wording or use abnormal spelling to indicate speaker’s dialect or mispronunciation.
3. Strive for correct use of plurals. A dictionary provides most of the answer. If no form is shown after a noun, the word forms its plural regularly by adding as s.

*Exceptions:* words as words—*ifs, ands, buts*

proper names—add *s* if they don’t end in s, and add *es* if they do not end in *s*

figures—add *s*—*1950s*

multiple letters—*ABCs*

individual letters—*A’s*

1. Avoid squinting modifiers—adverbs able to modify more than one word.

*Example:* Someone who tells a joke often gets a groan, not a laugh.

1. In referring to those in their teens, use *teenager* as the noun form and *teenage*, not *teenaged*, as the adjective.

*Example:* A teenager is often stereotyped.

The teenage chess champion defeated his adult challenger.

1. The phrase *a total of* is often redundant but sometimes useful when beginning a sentence with a large number.