



A Quick Reference to Recommended Writing Style for RWJF Publications

This *Quick Reference* is a convenient resource, especially for terms that are often misspelled or misused. For complete style recommendations for writing, spelling, formatting, punctuation, and citations, see the comprehensive online *RWJF Writing Style Guide*, sixth edition.

Terms That Are Often Misspelled, Misused (Major changes and additions are in **bold**.)

A

ableism

accommodate
accreditation
acknowledgment
activity-friendly (adj.)
add-on (adj. and n.)
ad hoc
adolescent
advice (n.)
advise (v.) adviser
(not *advisor*)
Affordable Care Act
African-American (black preferred)

ageism

ages 2 to 12 (not aged)
AIDS-related (adj.)
à la carte
allot; allotted; allotting (v.)
all right (NEVER alright)
a lot (never alot)
Alzheimer or Alzheimer's disease
antitrust
associate degree
at-risk children; children at risk

B

beneficence

benefited or benefitted
bikeable
bingeing or binging
bipolar affective disorder
biweekly (use *every other week*)

black (preferred over

African-American)
breakthrough (n.);
break through (v.);
break-through (adj.)
built-in (adj.); built in (v.)
burnout (n.)

buy-in (n.); buy in (v.)
buyout (n.)
by-product (hyphen pref)

C

cannot
capacity-building (adj.);
capacity building (n.)
caregiving (adj., n.)
caseworker
catalog
catchphrase
cellphone
chair (preferred over
chairperson)

changemaker;

changemaking (adj.)
chartbook
check in (v.);
check-in (n., adj.)
checkout (n. and adj.);
check out (v.)
check up (v.);
checkup (n., adj.)
child care (n.);
child-care (adj.)
childhood obesity prevention
citywide
co-director
coexist
co-funded
commonsense (adj.);
common sense (n.)
community-based
community-building (n., adj.)
community-wide
comorbidity
consensus-building
consortium (sing.);
consortia (pl.)
consumer-driven
co-occurring
co-pay; co-payment
co-sponsor

cost benefit (adj., n.)
cost-cut (v.);
cost-cutting (adj., n.)
cost-effective;
cost-effectiveness
cost-reimburse (prefer
reimburse the cost)
cost-sharing
counselor
countermeasure
countrywide
countywide
co-worker
crosscut; crosscutting
cross-dresser (preferred
over transvestite)
cross section (n.);
cross-section (v.);
cross-sectional (adj.);
cross-sector (adj.)
Culture of Health (CoH
may be used only in internal
communications.)
cutback (n.); cut back (v.)
cutting edge (n.);
cutting-edge (adj.)

D

dashcam

data *were* (pl. v.)
day care (n.); day-care
provider (adj.)
daylong (adj.); daytime
day-to-day (adj.)
dead-end (adj.); dead end (n.)
decision-maker;
decision-making
diabetes
dialogue
dietician or dietitian
distance-education;
distance-learning (adjs.)
doctoral (adj.); doctorate (n.)
doctor-patient (adj.)

Down syndrome
drive-through (adj.)
dropout (n. and adj.);
drop out (v.)
drug-free (adj.)
drug testing (n.);
drug-testing (adj.)

E

e-book; e-commerce;
e-health; e-reader; e-trade
elder care
email
emphysema
end of life (n.);
end-of-life (adj.)
end user (n.); end-user (adj.)
entrée
entry-level (adj.)
English-speaking (adj.)
et al. (period, no italics)
ethnocentrism
ever-growing
every day (adv.);
everyday (adj.)
evidence-based (adj.)

F

face-to-face
faith-based
far-off (adj.)
fast food (n.); fast-food (adj.)
fast-forward (n., v.)
fast-track (adj., v.);
fast track (n.)
farmers' market
farm-to-school
fee-for-service
fine-tune (v.)
first aid (n.)
firsthand;
secondhand (adjs., advs.)
but left-hand; right-hand
(adjs.)

Terms That Are Often Misspelled, Misused

first-time (adj.)
5-year-olds
flu-like; flu-related (adj.)
follow-up (n., adj.);
follow up (v.)
food-borne (adj.)
for-profit (adj.)
forego or forgo
freelance
freestanding
front line (n.); front-line (adj.)
full-time (adj., adv.);
full time (n.)
fund-raiser;
fund-raising (n., adj.)

G
goal-setting (n., adj.)
goodwill
grantmaking; grant writer;
grant writing
grass roots (n.);
grassroots (adj.)
guidebook
Gulf Coast; Gulf States

H
half-day (n. and adj.);
half-hour (n.); half-life (n.)
handheld (n.);
hand-held (adj.)
hand in hand (adv.)
handoff (n.); hand off (v.);
hands-off (adj.);
hands-on (adj.)
handout (n.); hand out (v.)
head-on (adv., adj.)
health care (See exceptions
in *Writing Style Guide*)
health care provider
health reform
health-related
health services program
helpline (equivalent of hotline)
hepatitis C
high-cost (adj.)
high-quality (adj.)
high-risk (adj.)
high school (n., adj.)
high school-age (adj.)
HIV-negative; HIV-positive;
HIV/AIDS
Hodgkin's disease
home-based
home care (n., adj.);
home page; homesite;
hometown
hotline
Huntington's disease

I
ibid.
IM, IM'ing, IM'd (for instant
messaging)
in-depth (adj.)
indoor air
industry-wide
influenza-like (adj.)
in-house
in-kind (adj.)
inner city (n.); inner-city (adj.)
inpatient (n. and adj.)
in person (used after the n.);
in-person (used before
the n.)
Institute of Medicine (IOM)
interdepartmental
internet
intranet

J
joint-use
judgment or judgement
jump-start (n. and v.)
junk food (n.); junk-food (adj.)

K
kickoff (n.); kick off (v.);
kick-off (adj.)
kindergartner
knowledgeable

L
lawmaker; lawmaking
Legionnaires' disease
life cycle (n.); life-cycle (adj.)
lifelong (adj.)
lifesaver; (adj.)
lifesaving (n., adj.)
life span
lifestyle
line item (n.); line-item (adj.)
long-standing (adj.)
long-term;
long-term-care (adjs.)
long time (n.); longtime (adj.)
lookout (n.)
low-birthweight (adj.)
low-cost; low-risk; low-fat;
low-income (adj.)
lunchroom
Lyme disease

M
makeup (n., adj.);
make up (v.)
measurable
media *were* (pl. v.)
meme

memorandum (sing.)
memorandums (preferred
plural usage)
mental health (cmpd. adj.)
meta-analysis
metadata
methicillin-resistant
Staphylococcus aureus
(MRSA)
midcareer
mid-day
middle age; middle-aged;
middle-ager
middle-class (adj.); middle
class (n.)
middle school (n. and adj.)
mind-set
minigrant
misuse (v., n.)
multi-city
multicultural; multi-ethnic;
multiracial

N
1990s
9th-grader; 12th-grade
student
non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
nonmaleficence
nonprofit
nonsmoking
not-for-profit
nurse-midwife
nursing-sensitive

O
offshore
off-site
old-time
omit; omitted
onetime (adv., adj.)
ongoing
online
on-site (adv., adj.)
out-of-pocket
outpatient
output

P
Parkinson's disease
part-time (adj.);
works part time
patient-centered;
patient-doctor
payer
pay-for-performance
pneumonia
podcast
policyholder

policymaker; policymaking
postdoctoral
post-traumatic stress
disorder (PTSD)
pre-eminent; pre-emption
pre-existing
pretax
pretest
primary care (n., adj.);
primary-care-based (adj.)
prime time (n.);
prime-time (adj.)
privilege
proactive
problem-solving
provider-patient
public health (n., cmpd. adj.)

Q
quality care; quality
improvement (cmpd. adjs.)
quiltline

R
real-life (adj.)
re-align
re-assess
recession-proof (v., adj.)
record-keeping
re-enroll; re-entry; re-evaluate
regardless (not irregardless)
relevant
respondent
return-on-investment
retweet (or RT after first
full reference)
risk-adjusted;
risk-adjustment (adj.);
risk adjustment (n.)
risk-taker
road map
rollout (n.); roll out (v.)
round-trip (n., adj.)
roundup (n.); round up (v.)
rundown (n.); run-down (adj.);
run down (v.)
rwjf.org (or *www.rwjf.org*)

S
safety-net (adj.);
safety net (n.)
scale-down;
scaled-back (adj.)
school-age (adj.);
school-based;
schoolchildren; schoolroom;
schoolteacher; schooltime;
schoolwork
secondhand

semifinalist

separate
serviceman; service member;
servicewoman
setup (n.); set up (v.)
severe acute respiratory
syndrome (SARS)
short-term (adj.)
short run (n.); short-run (adj.)
side effect
smoke-free (adj., adv.)
sociodemographic
socioeconomic
spokesperson
stakeholder
stand-alone (adj.)
startup (n., adj.)
state-level (adj.)
state-of-the-art (adj.)
statewide
status quo
substance-use (adj.)
supervisor
swine flu (H1N1)
symposium (sing.);
symposia (pl.)
systemwide

T

take-away (adj., n.)
takeout (n. and adj.)
take-up (adj., n.)
task force
tax-exempt
tax-free
teen, teenager (n.);
teenage; teenaged (adjs.)
telltale (adj., n.)
think tank
three-year grant
third party (n.);
third-party payer (adj.)
time-consuming
time frame
time line
timetable; timeworn
tobacco control (n.),
tobacco-control (adj.)
tobacco-free; -related (adjs.)
toolbox; toolkit
top-down; -ranked (adjs.)
toward (not towards)
trade-off
tradeshow
trans fat
transgender
t-shirt
turnaround; turnover
\$2 million award (no hyphen)

U

underfunded
underserved
underway (adj.);
under way (adv.)
up-front (adj.); upstream
up-to-date; up-to-the-
minute (adj.)
usage
user-friendly
username

V

value-added; value-based;
value-driven (adj.)
videoconference
voicemail (one word)

W

waitlist
wake-up (adj.)
walkable
walk-through (n.)
web-based
web browser
webcam; webcast;
webfeed; webinar;
webmaster; **webpage**;
website
weeklong (adj.)
welfare-to-work (adj.)
well-being (n.)
well-thought-out (adj.)
white (regarding race)
white paper
whole grain
willpower
work-based
workday; workforce;
workflow; workgroup;
workload; workplace;
workplan; worksite
world-class; world-view
worldwide
wrap around (v.);
wraparound (n. or adj.)

X Y Z

X-ray

year-end
yearlong (adj.)
year-round

zero-base (adj.)
ZIP code

Abbreviations, Acronyms, Initialisms

- All academic degrees and professional certifications (no periods: MA, PhD, RN)
- An initialism for Culture of Health (CoH) may be used for internal communications only.
- Spell out *United States* as a noun, but abbreviate and use periods as an adjective: *living in the United States BUT: concern over U.S. unemployment rates.*

Ethnic Terms

- *American Indian* preferred over *Native American*
- *Asian-American*
- *black* preferred over *African-American*
- *Hispanic* or *Latino(a)*
- *Mexican-American*
- *white* recommended over *Caucasian*
- See *dual heritage/citizenship* and *ethnicity/race* in online *RWJF Writing Style Guide, Sixth Edition*.

Hyphenation

- Hyphenate a compound modifier when it comes before the noun: *community-supported agriculture; low-income communities*. There are exceptions. See *hyphen* in online *RWJF Writing Style Guide, sixth edition*.

Internet

- Use italics for an email address and a URL: *www.rwjf.org*.
- For all hyperlinks, whether they are words in running text or URLs: Use blue type and no underscore.
- Exclude the words *available at* before the URL is given. Use a comma before the URL instead.
- In a visible hyperlink, if *www.* is not used, include *http://* before the first letters of the URL. Otherwise, omit *http://* preceding *www.* in the visible link.

Punctuation, Spacing

- **Dashes:** Leave no space between words/numerals and the em or en dashes: *a long—albeit fruitful journey*
- **Dates:** No comma between month and year: *January 2003*. Include a comma after year with full dates in running text: *The deadlines are January 10, 2015, for brief proposals and March 1, 2015, for full proposals.*
- **Headlines and titles:** Uppercase the words that follow the hyphen in compound adjectives in headlines and titles: *Long-Term-Care Changes Are Necessary*.
- **Lists:** Use semicolons within a running list of terms for clarity: *a community organizer; educator; leader; local government worker; or health care worker*. See *semicolon* and *lists* in online *RWJF Writing Style Guide, sixth edition*.
- **Page span:** For spans of pages, use an en dash without spaces: *pgs. 24–26*.
- **Periods:** Use one space after periods between sentences.
- **Serial commas** may be used for clarity.
- **Time span:** For clarity, denote spans of time with words instead of dashes: *The meeting is scheduled from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.*; the program will run *from January 1 through December 31, 2012*.

States and Dateline Cities

State	AP	Postal	Dateline Cities (U.S.)
Alabama	Ala.	AL	Atlanta
Alaska	Alaska	AK	Baltimore
Arizona	Ariz.	AZ	Boston
Arkansas	Ark.	AR	Chicago
California	Calif.	CA	Cincinnati
Colorado	Colo.	CO	Cleveland
Connecticut	Conn.	CT	Dallas
Delaware	Del.	DE	Denver
Florida	Fla.	FL	Detroit
Georgia	Ga.	GA	Honolulu
Hawaii	Hawaii	HI	Houston
Idaho	Idaho	ID	Indianapolis
Illinois	Ill.	IL	Las Vegas
Indiana	Ind.	IN	Los Angeles
Iowa	Iowa	IA	Miami
Kansas	Kan.	KS	Milwaukee
Kentucky	Ky.	KY	Minneapolis
Louisiana	La.	LA	New Orleans
Maine	Maine	ME	New York
Maryland	Md.	MD	Oklahoma City
Massachusetts	Mass.	MA	Philadelphia
Michigan	Mich.	MI	Phoenix
Minnesota	Minn.	MN	Pittsburgh
Mississippi	Miss.	MS	St. Louis
Missouri	Mo.	MO	Salt Lake City
Montana	Mont.	MT	San Antonio
Nebraska	Neb.	NE	San Diego
Nevada	Nev.	NV	San Francisco
New Hampshire	N.H.	NH	Seattle
New Jersey	N.J.	NJ	Washington
New Mexico	N.M.	NM	
New York	N.Y.	NY	
North Carolina	N.C.	NC	
North Dakota	N.D.	ND	
Ohio	Ohio	OH	
Oklahoma	Okla.	OK	
Oregon	Ore.	OR	
Pennsylvania	Pa.	PA	
Rhode Island	R.I.	RI	
South Carolina	S.C.	SC	
South Dakota	S.D.	SD	
Tennessee	Tenn.	TN	
Texas	Texas	TX	
Utah	Utah	UT	
Vermont	Vt.	VT	
Virginia	Va.	VA	
Washington	Wash.	WA	
West Virginia	W.Va.	WV	
Wisconsin	Wis.	WI	
Wyoming	Wyo.	WY	

Rules for State Names

- Always spell out state name when the state stands alone: *The program is unique in Massachusetts* (not *Mass.*)
- In running text, use the AP state abbreviation after a city name: *The grantee is located in Newark, N.J.*

Exception: Do NOT add state names after dateline cities: *Five grants were awarded in Seattle.*

RWJF national program names

- In all instances, RWJF national program names will no longer be italicized.

Lowercase/Uppercase

- Use lowercase for expanded versions of these commonly used terms, but all caps for their acronyms: *national advisory committee (NAC)*; *call for proposals (CFP)*; *national program office (NPO)*.

Numbers, Percentages

- Spell out numbers through nine, then use numerals for 10 and above. But spell out a number used as the first word of a sentence. (There are exceptions.)
- Use of superscript is optional for ordinal numbers: *2nd* or *2nd*.
- Use *percentage* as a noun, not *percent*: *A large percentage of the population...*
- In running text, spell out *percent* in conjunction with numerals: *12 percent*.
- Use % symbol only in charts and within parenthetical phrases: *(12% of the population)*.
- Some punctuation and usage examples involving numbers:
 - a fleet of 10 cars and two vans
 - a 4 to 3 score
 - 12 percent to 15 percent (repeated and spelled out in running text)
 - 0.6 percent, 1 percent, 6.5 percent;
 - (57%): Use % in parentheses and charts
 - from \$12 million to \$14 million
 - a ratio of 2-to-1; 2–1 ratio (en-dash)
 - children ages 2 to 12 (not *aged*; use numerals)
 - \$15 million grant
 - 50/50 chance
 - 5 cents, \$1.05, \$650,000, \$2.45 million
 - 1 in 4 voters
 - grades K–12 (note en dash) or grades K to 12
 - the 1980s or the '80s (choose one OR the other)
 - three-year grant