# Virginia Cooperative Extension

Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

Virginia Cooperative Extension Brand and Style Guide

**Virginia Cooperative Extension**

Virginia Tech  •  Virginia State University

# Why do we need VCE brand guidelines?

There is only one Virginia Cooperative Extension in the world.

No other organization has our unique and crucial mission: to bring the resources of Virginia's land-grant universities — Virginia Tech and Virginia State University — to the people of the commonwealth and the world.

Due to this inherent uniqueness, it is vital that we communicate the impact and values of our organization in a cohesive and unified voice that tells the world what makes us special. This is what a brand is for.

A brand seeks to encapsulate the distinctive nature of who we are, what we do, and what we offer to our stakeholders. A powerful brand helps define our specific story and allows people to instantly recognize the organization for which it represents. The logo and colors represent the larger message we are trying convey about Virginia Cooperative Extension.

This document can serve as a guide for how to use the Virginia Cooperative Extension brand in a host of various communications and marketing materials. To maximize the impact of our brand, it is crucial that our logo, colors, and other details have a consistent look and feel.

Use this document as a tool to increase the power of your communication efforts and help your stakeholders immediately identify that you are part of a powerful and impactful organization.

# BRAND GUIDE

## Mission

Virginia Cooperative Extension helps lead the engagement mission of Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, the commonwealth's land-grant universities. Building local relationships and collaborative partnerships, we help people put scientific knowledge to work through learning experiences that improve economic, environmental, and social well-being.

## Core Values

- **Inclusion of all stakeholders and partners** in programming and discussions related to issues that affect agricultural enterprises, the family, and the local community.

- **Integrity of information** is maintained through unbiased and relevant research.

- **Science-based knowledge** is gathered from the research of highly respected scientists.

- **Engagement of each partner** in developing solutions for the challenges faced by the family, on the land, or in the community.

- **Partnerships** with all universities, state and federal agencies, community organizations, local and state governmental representatives, and other groups that provide access to vital resources.

- **Individual relationships** between Extension educators and specialists and with farmers, families, and local community representatives.

- **Good stewardship of public trust** where investments of time, money, and intellectual resources are effectively applied to local issues.

Extension is committed to providing access to unbiased, scientific information related to locally defined issues, a presence in local communities, the establishment of strong partnerships and collaborative coalitions, and innovative service to the commonwealth.

## Official Name

In Virginia, the Cooperative Extension Service Program is operated cooperatively by Virginia Tech and Virginia State University. When the overall extension system within the Commonwealth of Virginia is referenced, the official name is Virginia Cooperative Extension to represent the partnership of Virginia Tech and Virginia State University.

Use "Virginia Cooperative Extension" on first mention. "VCE" or "Extension" may be used after it is spelled out.

Capitalize "Extension" when used as an abbreviation for Virginia Cooperative Extension.

# GRAPHIC STANDARDS

## VCE Logo

The Virginia Cooperative Extension logo is approved by both Virginia Tech and Virginia State University and is the official primary logo to use when representing Extension.

The official Virginia Cooperative Extension logo is required on

- All print media (fliers, brochures, newsletters, etc.).
- All advertising.
- Websites.
- All other media and external communications, according to appropriate guidelines.

The logos may only be used in accordance with the guidelines provided here.
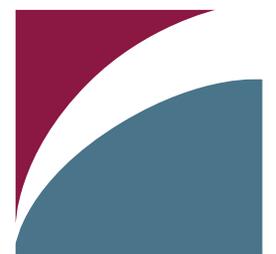
### Preferred Logo



### Secondary Logos

The use of these alternative configurations is limited to formats where space constraints make it difficult to use the primary logo.





*Horizontal version*

*Vertical version*

## Proportions

If there is a need to reduce the size of the VCE logo, please be sure that all the words remain legible.

When scaling the logo, use caution to preserve the accurate proportions of the image.

*Missing university subtext*

*Incorrect proportions*

*Incorrect proportions*

## Placement

The placement of the VCE logo and its size should be determined by the nature of the material being produced. The logo should be placed in the most visually prominent area of printed materials, and it should be the most dominant logo on the document.

Do not place the logo over the subject of a photo because the logo will be unreadable and will obstruct the photo.

*Acceptable*

*Acceptable*

*Unacceptable*

## Protected Area

A protected area equivalent to one-tenth the width of the logo — as represented in the grid — surrounds all versions of the logo. However, the logo may overprint or be reversed on photos as long as the background does not render the logo difficult to distinguish or interfere with its detail.

The protected area also precludes the addition or juxtaposition of any additional type, graphics, or images in such a way that the effect is to create a combined logo.



## Colors

The logo is provided in full-color and black and white versions. The PMS colors are

• Maroon – PMS 208.

• Blue – PMS 5405.

When sending something to a commercial printer, request that the printer use these official colors.

Design or color alterations or additions to the specifications outlined in this manual are prohibited without consent.



*PMS 208*



*PMS 5405*

# Programmatic Logos

The following logos have been approved for use on Virginia Cooperative Extension marketing materials. Please refrain from creating or using programmatic logos other than the ones listed below.

## 4-H Emblem and Logo

These are the 4-H program's identifying marks. Refer to the 4-H Brand Book that can be downloaded from the 4-H Marketing and Communications Resources page [www.intra.ext.vt.edu/4h/marketing.html] on the VCE intranet for guidelines for using the emblem and logo on your materials.

For more information on 4-H marketing and branding guides, visit the National 4-H Council page at http://4-h.org/professionals/marketing-resources/. You must log into access marketing materials.



*Emblem*



*Logo*

## Family Nutrition Program Logo

# Eat Smart·*Move More*
### Virginia Cooperative Extension • Family Nutrition Program
#### www.eatsmartmovemoreva.org

## Virginia Master Gardener Logo

## Logo Lockup

When locking up the VCE logo with another approved logo, make sure that they rest on the same baseline. Logo sizes should feel balanced between the two.

*Acceptable*

*Acceptable*

*Acceptable*

*Unacceptable − 4-H clover on wrong side and too close to the logo.*

## File Type

Large, print-resolution JPG files images for download can be found on the VCE intranet Marketing Images page. [http://www.intra.ext.vt.edu/marketing/logos2.html] You should be able to make them smaller for use in your documents with good results. **Do not attempt to make them larger.**

Files with ".ai" after the file name are Adobe Illustrator (vector) files. Vector-formatted files are scalable files commonly requested by vendors for signs, displays, etc.

# Tagline

Virginia Cooperative Extension has adapted the use of the National Extension tagline:

### Extending Knowledge, Changing Lives

The tagline can be used in conjunction with the VCE logo on marketing materials and websites.

# Use of Official Publication Statements

Virginia Cooperative Extension operates according to policies established by federal, state, and local governments; Virginia Tech and Virginia State University; and VCE administration. Policies related to proper language and statements must be considered when preparing VCE documents.

All publications, fliers, posters, and other materials produced by VCE must include an Equal Opportunity statement, a cooperative statement, and a publications statement. Together, they are known as the "indicia."

Check the following link for the most up-to-date version of the indicia and more specific information on required statements: www.intra.ext.vt.edu/policies/indicia.html.

## Full Indicia

Include the following statement on all documents (printed and electronic) that are distributed publicly.

> Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Edwin J. Jones, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; M. Ray McKinnie, Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State University, Petersburg.

## ADA Statement for Events

The following ADA Statement must be used in all methods of promotion, including written, verbal, and electronic, for workshops, events, seminars, classes, organizational meetings, etc.

> If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services, or other accommodations to participate in this activity, please contact _____ [name, office] at [phone number/TDD*] during business hours of ____ a.m. to ____ p.m. to discuss accommodations five days prior to the event. *TDD number is 800-828-1120.

## ADA Statement for Services

The following ADA Statement must be used in all methods of promotion for accessing VCE services, including written, verbal, and electronic, and on any materials placed conspicuously in the public service area or distributed.

> If you are a person with a disability and desire assistance or accommodation, please notify _____ [name, office] at [phone number/TDD*] during business hours of ____ a.m. to ____ p.m. *TDD number is 800-828-1120.

# BRAND APPLICATION

## Brand Visual Style

The visual standards for publications and other marketing materials ensure that Virginia Cooperative Extension communications from all both universities, colleges, departments, local unit offices, and program areas speak with a clear and uniform voice that best represents the image and brand of Virginia Cooperative Extension.

The official VCE logo, indicia, and other required statements must be used on all marketing and advertising materials.

Templates for several marketing tools including the official letterhead, brochures, PowerPoint presentations, and cards can be downloaded from the Marketing Tools page [www.intra.ext.vt.edu/marketing/] on the VCE intranet.

When VCE is the primary organizer/sponsor of an event/program, the VCE logo should be prominently displayed on the page (preferably at the top) with secondary sponsors and partners listed.

The following are examples of properly branded communication and marketing materials.
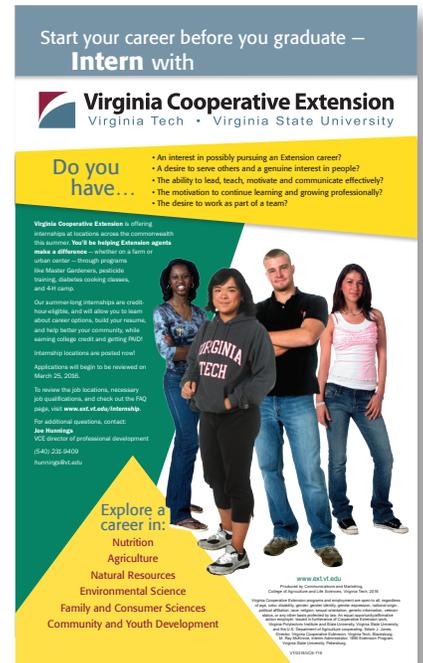
*Poster*

## Publications

*11" x 8.5" report cover*

*8.5" x 11" trifold*

*11" x 8.5" Calendar*

*8.5" x 11" non-peer-reviewed publication*
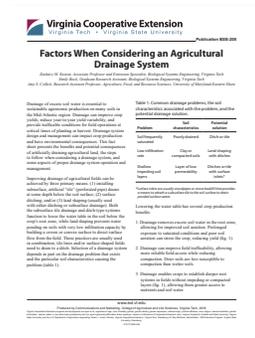
*8.5" x 11" peer-reviewed publication*
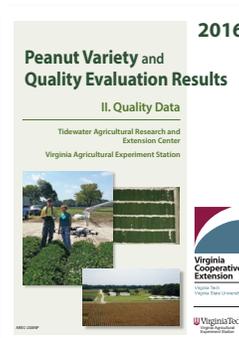
*8.5" x 11" Report cover (stacked logo)*
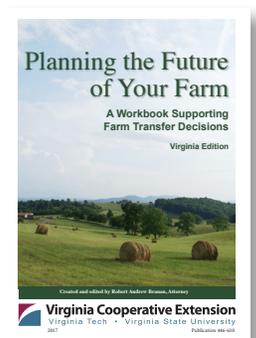
*8.5" x 11" Report cover*

# Stationary and Envelopes


*VCE letterhead*


*VCE notecard 5.5" x 8.5" folded*
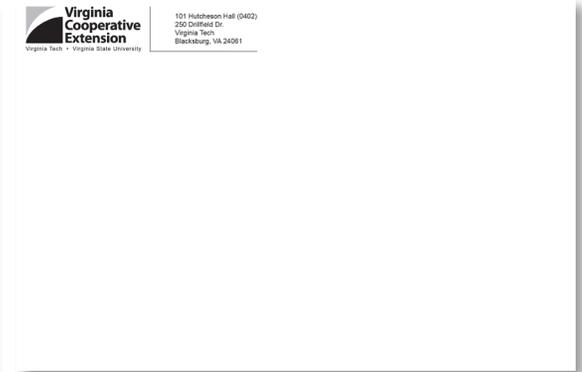

*VCE envelope 6" x 9"*


*VCE notecard 8.5" x 5.5"*

# Brochures and Fliers
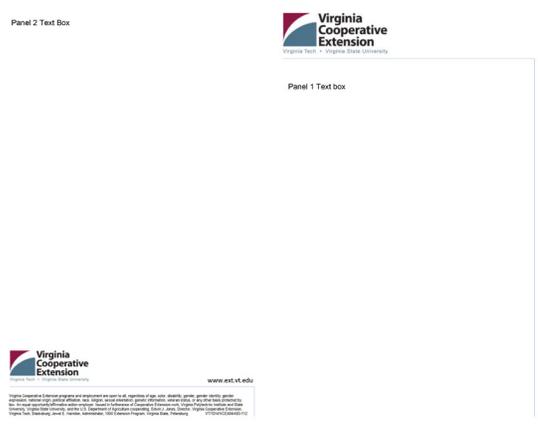

*VCE bi-fold brochure 8.5" x 11"*


*8.5" x 11" flyer*

# Presentations
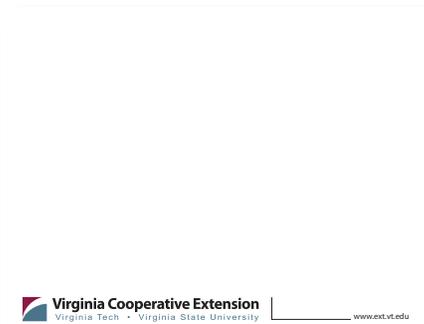

*VCE standard slides*
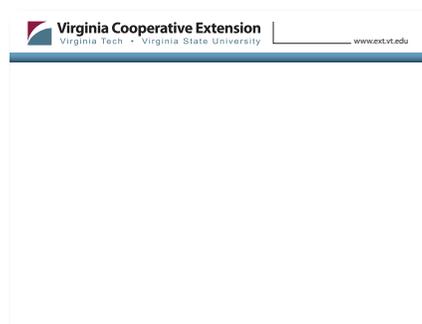

*VCE standard slides*

# Building Signs



*VCE vertical sign*



*VCE horizontal sign*

# Videography

Videos should include the VCE preferred logo at the beginning and the end to reinforce the VCE brand. The video producer/creator should be listed in the credits at the end of the video along with the VCE indicia statement.

If images are being used that are not originally produced and come from another source, a permission statement from the granting entity should also be included.

For example: Footage of the Chesapeake Bay provided by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

Using copyrighted music in a video is against the law.



*VCE video opening*



*VCE video closing*

# Business Cards and Nametags

Business cards should be ordered through the VCE State Office using the VCE Business Card Order Form. [https://tinyurl.com/ybh3owgo] Nametags should be ordered through the VCE State Office using the VCE Nametag Order Form. [https://tinyurl.com/y73ykjtg]

Links to these sites can be found on the Marketing page [www.intra.ext.vt.edu/marketing/] on the VCE intranet.



VCE/4-H business card front
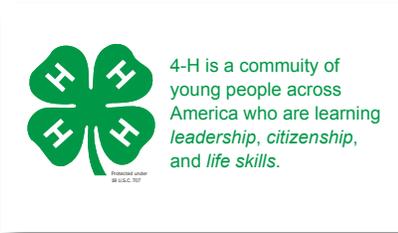


4-H business card back



VCE name tag

# Promotional Items and Clothing

Artwork for clothing and other promotional items should be approved by the Director of Communications and Marketing before it is sent to a Virginia Tech licensed vendor.

All vendors should have an active licensing agreement in place (listed at www.unirel.vt.edu/licensing).



# Web Guidelines

## Homepage

The Virginia Cooperative Extension homepage provides the framework and mechanism for users to locate and retrieve official news and resources.

## Ensemble Content Management System Templates

CALS Communications and Marketing has adapted and customized the university's family of templates for use with the VCE public website, the local unit websites, and the publication and resources site.

VCE faculty and staff members are strongly encouraged to use these official sites for the dissemination of official VCE communications and resources to ensure a consistent user experience and support VCE's brand.

**All VCE local unit offices are required to maintain an official site in the university's content management system.**

Virginia Cooperative Extension organizational units — county unit offices (county government sites), program areas, volunteer programs — that choose to not use family templates and CMS provided by Communications and Marketing are asked to follow these design guidelines:

- On the organizational unit's homepage, the approved VCE logo and indicia statement must be placed on the page. No other mark or logo may appear more dominantly than the VCE logo. Appropriate logos and the most current indicia statement can be downloaded here. [http://www.intra.ext.vt.edu/marketing/logos2.html]

- On sub-level pages within their websites, units must display the approved VCE logo and indicia statement.

- Use colors from the VCE color palette, which include blue (hex #3C5B67) and maroon (hex #660000). Secondary web color choices are available at the Virginia Tech branding website's Web Color Palette page. [www.unirel.vt.edu/web/web-guidelines/guidelines-colors.html]

- The primary website navigation should be placed horizontally below the header. This will ensure consistency with family templates. Best practices for navigation prioritize links relative to usage patterns and importance. We advise against organizing links alphabetically, as usability studies have shown that doing so is essentially the same as random organization.

- The preferred font family for navigation, body text, and headers is Arial.

## VCE Website Scope and Target Audiences

The Virginia Cooperative Extension main website (www.ext.vt.edu) serves as its most prominent face to the college community and its many publics. It encompasses the homepage and gateway pages linked from main navigation, including

- Topics

|  |  |  |  |
|---|---|---|---|
| - Agriculture | - Natural Resources | - Food & Health | - 4-H/Youth |
| - Community & Leadership | - Family | - Lawn & Garden | |

- Jobs

- Volunteering

- Internships

- Giving to Extension

- Local Offices

- News

- About Virginia Cooperative Extension

- Publications and Resources

- Events and Calendars

The main website also includes other content areas housed directly under the ext.vt.edu domain or one of its gateway pages. Collectively, these pages constitute the top- and second-level pages referenced in this manual.

The target audiences of the main website, as defined by Extension, are

- Agriculture industry professionals.
- Community members.
- Families.

# Social Media

Virginia Cooperative Extension uses social media to build relationships with public and share information from its research and programs.

VCE has a presence on most major social media platforms.

- Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/VirginiaCooperativeExtension
- Twitter - https://twitter.com/VCE_news
- Instagram - https://www.instagram.com/virginia_cooperative_extension/
- Pinterest - https://www.pinterest.com/vaextension/
- YouTube - https://www.youtube.com/user/VAExtension

It also supports programmatic social media sites. A complete listing of social media platforms and sites can be found at http://ext.vt.edu/about/social-media.html.

Virginia Cooperative Extension organizational units — county unit offices, program areas, volunteer programs — that choose to create and maintain social media sites are asked to follow these recommendations:

- On each social media site, general Virginia Cooperative Extension boilerplate information including the approved indicia statement should be included, if possible. For example, on a Facebook page, this information can be included on the About page.

  Virginia Cooperative Extension reaches more than 1.8 million people every year with education from Virginia's land-grant universities — Virginia Tech and Virginia State University.

  Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Edwin J. Jones, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; M. Ray McKinnie, Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State University, Petersburg. http://ext.vt.edu/about/accessibility.html

- The social media site should link back to the unit's website and/or the Virginia Cooperative Extension main website.

- It is recommended that the VCE official logo be displayed on the social media site as part of the profile or banner image.

- When promoting events and programs make sure the information provides the appropriate ADA information. It should be on the website or flier. If not, it should be included as part of the social media post. The official ADA statement information can be found at www.intra.ext.vt.edu/policies/indicia.html.

- Extension employees who serve as account administrators for social media efforts are responsible for ensuring proper branding, frequent maintenance, and currency of the information posted, and for monitoring comments posted by others.

# CONTENT STYLE GUIDE

In order for materials to look professional and credible, they should be consistent in style, formatting, and branding. Style guides document decisions about capitalization, punctuation, numbers, names, and other style choices so that each person writing a publication, press release, or email announcement doesn't have to make those decisions.

This style guide for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and Virginia Cooperative Extension contains style decisions that are specific to the college and to VCE, such as the names of the academic departments and the six 4-H educational centers. It should be used in conjunction with The Brand Guide: Virginia Tech Identity Standards and Style Guide. [http://branding.unirel.vt.edu/content/dam/branding_unirel_vt_edu/2015-brand-guide.pdf]

## Style Guides

Virginia Tech uses the Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law as the basis for its style decisions. However, the university makes exceptions to AP style — such as the use of the serial comma — so The Brand Guide: Virginia Tech Identity Standards and Style Guide is the first place to look for questions about style and formatting.

For questions that are specific to the College of Agriculture and Life Science or Virginia Cooperative Extension, use this style guide.

If you can't find an answer in either the Virginia Tech or CALS style guide, go to the most recent edition of the AP Stylebook. Finally, for more specific information about grammar, references and text citations, tables and figures, and permission to use the work of others, consult the Chicago Manual of Style.

When consulting style guides, use the following order of priority:

1. The Brand Guide: Virginia Tech Identity Standards and Style Guide (style guide starts on page 53). [http://branding.unirel.vt.edu/content/dam/branding_unirel_vt_edu/2015-brand-guide.pdf]
2. Style Guide for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and Virginia Cooperative Extension.
3. Associated Press Stylebook 2016 and Briefing on Media Law (updated annually). [https://www.apstylebook.com/]
4. Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition. [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html]

## Dictionary

Dictionaries differ, so for consistency we use the dictionary recommended by the Associated Press: Webster's New World College Dictionary, 5th edition. [https://www.amazon.com/Websters-World-College-Dictionary-Fifth/dp/054416606X]

## Abbreviations and Acronyms

Use Virginia Cooperative Extension on first mention. "VCE" or "Extension" may be used in subsequent uses after it is spelled out.

Capitalize "Extension" when used as an abbreviation for Virginia Cooperative Extension.

> **Note:** There is no need to put VCE in parentheses after it is spelled out the first time.

# Agency 229

Agency 229 is the name of the state agency that comprises Virginia Cooperative Extension and the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station.

## Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station

Spell out on first use. "VAES" may be used on subsequent references, as can "the Experiment Station."

> **Note:** Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station is always singular; do not use "Stations."

# Agricultural Research and Extension Centers

## Names and Locations

VCE has 11 agricultural research and extension centers:

Alson H. Smith Jr. Agricultural Research and Extension Center (Winchester)

Eastern Shore Agricultural Research and Extension Center (Painter)

Eastern Virginia Agricultural Research and Extension Center (Warsaw)

Hampton Roads Agricultural Research and Extension Center (Virginia Beach)

Middleburg Agricultural Research and Extension Center (Middleburg)

Reynolds Homestead Forest Resources Research Center (Critz)

Shenandoah Valley Agricultural Research and Extension Center (Raphine)

Southern Piedmont Agricultural Research and Extension Center (Blackstone)

Southwest Virginia Agricultural Research and Extension Center (Glade Spring)

Tidewater Agricultural Research and Extension Center (Suffolk)

Virginia Seafood Agricultural Research and Extension Center (Hampton)

> **Note:** Do not use "AREC" with Reynolds Homestead.

## Usage

Spell out on first use; "AREC" is acceptable for subsequent uses.

> Ex: Hampton Roads AREC

Lowercase if referring to the centers in general; capitalize when referring to a specific center.

> Ex: agricultural research and extension centers, Eastern Shore Agricultural Research and Extension Center

# Brand Name Statement

Use the following statement in VCE publications that mention brand-name products:

Disclaimer: Commercial products are named in this publication for informational purposes only. Virginia Cooperative Extension does not endorse these products and does not intend discrimination against other products that might also be suitable.

# 4-H Youth Development

## Names and Locations

There are six 4-H educational *centers* in Virginia:

Airfield 4-H Educational Center (Wakefield)

Holiday Lake 4-H Educational Center (Appomattox)

Jamestown 4-H Educational Center (Williamsburg)

Northern Virginia 4-H Educational Center (Front Royal)

W.E. Skelton 4-H Educational Conference Center at Smith Mountain Lake (Wirtz)

Southwest 4-H Educational Center (Abingdon)

## Usage

Use the figure 4; do not spell out "Four."

> Ex: 4-H, 4-H'ers, 4-H Youth Development

# Indicia/Equal Opportunity Statement/ADA Statement

All publications, fliers, posters, and other materials produced by VCE must include an Equal Opportunity statement, a cooperative statement, and a publications statement. Together, they are known as the "indicia."

Check the following link for the most up-to-date version of the indicia and more specific information on required statements: www.intra.ext.vt.edu/policies/indicia.html.

## Full Indicia

Include this statement on all documents (printed and electronic) that are distributed publicly.

Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Edwin J. Jones, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; M. Ray McKinnie, Interim Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State University, Petersburg.

## ADA Statement for Events

The ADA Statement must be used in all methods of promotion, including written, verbal, and electronic for workshops, events, seminars, classes, organizational meetings, etc.

> If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services, or other accommodations to participate in this activity, please contact _____ [name, office] at [phone number/TDD*] during business hours of ____ a.m. to ____ p.m. to discuss accommodations five days prior to the event.
> *TDD number is -800-828-1120.

## ADA Statement for Services

The ADA Statement must be used in all methods of promotion for accessing VCE services, including written, verbal, and electronic, and on any materials placed conspicuously in the public service area.

> If you are a person with a disability and desire assistance or accommodation, please notify _____ [name, office] at [phone number/TDD*] during business hours of ____ a.m. to ____ p.m.
> *TDD number is 800-828-1120.

# Job Titles

Use Virginia Cooperative Extension agent or Extension agent.

Use Virginia Cooperative Extension specialist or Extension specialist.

# Local Offices

There are 107 local unit offices across Virginia. The great majority are county offices and should be referred to as Virginia Cooperative Extension [name of county] County Office.

Ex: Virginia Cooperative Extension Montgomery County Office

**Exceptions:** Fourteen of the local offices do not follow this format.

Virginia Cooperative Extension Albemarle County/Charlottesville Office

Virginia Cooperative Extension City of Alexandria Office

Virginia Cooperative Extension City of Chesapeake Office

Virginia Cooperative Extension Greensville County/City of Emporia Office

Virginia Cooperative Extension City of Henry County/Martinsville Office

Virginia Cooperative Extension City of Lynchburg Office

Virginia Cooperative Extension City of Newport News Office

Virginia Cooperative Extension City of Norfolk Office

Virginia Cooperative Extension City of Petersburg Office

Virginia Cooperative Extension City of Portsmouth Office

Virginia Cooperative Extension City of Richmond Office

Virginia Cooperative Extension Roanoke County/Roanoke & Salem Office

Virginia Cooperative Extension City of Virginia Beach Office

Virginia Cooperative Extension York County/City of Poquoson Office

# People

Edwin J. Jones – director, Virginia Cooperative Extension; associate dean, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

M. Ray McKinnie - dean, College of Agriculture, Virginia State University; administrator, 1890 Extension Program

Bobby Grisso Jr. - associate director, agriculture and natural resources, Virginia Cooperative Extension

Cathy M. Sutphin - associate director, 4-H Youth Development, Virginia Cooperative Extension

# General Style Guide for CALS and VCE

## Abbreviations

In general, limit the use of abbreviations in order to make the writing clearer and less confusing to readers. Abbreviations may be used when they are well-known or where space is at a premium — such as within a table.

Abbreviate titles used before a name.

Ex: Gov. Terry McAuliffe, Sen. Tim Kaine, the Rev. Billy Graham

**Note:** Do not use honorifics such as Mr., Miss, or Dr. before a name.

Abbreviate junior or senior after a name.

Ex: Adam Jones Jr.

**Note:** Do not insert a comma between the name and the suffix.

Abbreviate company, corporation, incorporated, or limited after the name of a company.

Ex: Aetna Inc., Comcast Corp., Best Buy Co.

**Note:** Do not insert a comma between the company name and the abbreviation.

See the sections on Academic Degrees, Acronyms, Dates, Street Addresses, and States for additional information about abbreviations.

## Academic Degrees

See The Brand Guide: Virginia Tech Identity Standards and Style Guide [http://branding.unirel.vt.edu/content/dam/branding_unirel_vt_edu/2015-brand-guide.pdf] for guidance on academic degrees.

## Acronyms

With few exceptions, spell out the complete term before using an acronym. There is no need to put the acronym in parentheses after the term, but the acronym should be first used in close proximity (in the text) to where the term is spelled out so that readers don't have to look back to see what the acronym refers to.

Avoid the overuse of acronyms; excessive use of acronyms is confusing to the reader and can make text look like alphabet soup. Only use acronyms that are either well-recognized or that are repeated throughout a text.

**Note:** See Commonly Used Acronyms at the end of this style guide.

In general, do not use periods except for two-letter acronyms and in cases when removing the periods would spell an unrelated word.

Ex: U.S., M.D., U.K., P.O.

**Exceptions:** Depending on the context, there is usually no need to spell out the terms for acronyms such as FBI, CIA, ID, CD-ROM, and CBS, among others

# Alphabetizing

Alphabetize letter by letter — ignoring spaces and punctuation — for alphabetized lists, such as glossaries.

Ex: newborn before New England

# Capitalization

The rule of thumb is to style down (use lowercase). While proper names are capitalized, their common cousins are not. For example, capitalize "Virginia Tech" and "Commonwealth of Virginia" but lowercase "the university" and "the commonwealth."

Ex: Gov. McAuliffe, but "the governor"; United States, but "the nation" or "the country"; Professor Jones, but "the professor"

# Composition Titles

Use quotation marks around the titles of books, articles, reports, stand-alone publications such as Extension publications, movies and plays, TV shows, songs, and lectures and presentations when the title is used in text.

Do not use quotation marks around the titles of journals or magazines, newspapers, newsletters, conferences, catalogs, reference books (dictionaries, handbooks, manuals), software, websites and apps, and the Bible.

## Capitalization of Titles

In general, use title-style capitalization for the titles of books, journals, articles, lectures, movies, etc. That means that the following rules apply:

- Capitalize the first and last words of composition titles.
- Capitalize the first word following a colon (i.e., the first word of the subtitle).
- Capitalize all main words: nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs.
- Capitalize all prepositions of four letters or more.
- Capitalize both parts of a hyphenated word when used in a title.

Ex: "Gone With the Wind," "The War: An Intimate History," "The Star-Spangled Banner," "What Is Soil Health?"

**Note:** Keep in mind that "is," "are," and "was" are verbs; as such, they should be capitalized in titles, regardless of their length.

## References

The guidelines for composition titles in reference lists differ from the guidelines provided above. See References section.v

# Courtesy Titles

In general, do not use Mr., Ms., Mrs., etc., before a person's name. Use the first and last name on first mention and then use the last name only. If a document refers to more than one person with the same last name, use first and last name on each mention.

Virginia Tech style is not to use "Dr." before the name of any individual, including M.D.s, veterinarians, Ph.D.s, etc. This is an exception to AP style.

# Dates

## Months

Spell out months if they are used alone.

> Ex: She will graduate in December.

## Month and Day

Abbreviate months of six or more letters when followed by the specific date.

> Ex: Jan. 31, April 19

## Month, Day, Year

Follow the rules for abbreviation of months of six letters or more. Enclose the year in commas unless it appears at the end of a sentence, in which case follow the year with the appropriate closing punctuation.

> Ex: at the Jan. 31, 2015, presentation

## Month and Year

Spell out the month when it is used with the year only. Do not place a comma between the month and the year.

> Ex: She graduated in December 2014.

## Years

Years are the sole exception to the rule that sentences cannot start with a figure.

> Ex: 2014 was a good year.

## Year Spans

Use a closed hyphen to separate a range of years or write out using "from" and "to." University preference is to use two digits for the second year of the range when using a hyphen.

> Ex: 2000-12, from 2000 to 2012

# Diction

Diction refers to word choice. In general, choose simpler, shorter words rather than longer, more obscure words that mean the same thing in order to make the writing more accessible.

Ex: "use" rather than "utilize"; "show" in place of "demonstrate"; "said" instead of "articulated"

# Email Addresses

Do not use italics.

# Emphasis

Boldface is preferred for emphasis. Do not use italics or small caps; do not underline text. All caps should be used sparingly.

# Figures/Photos

Figures can be graphs, charts, photographs, diagrams, or drawings. Any figure that was not created by the author(s) requires (1) permission for its use and (2) complete source/publishing information.

## Figure Captions

Place figure captions below the figure.

Use the figure number, followed by the caption, and ending with a period. No boldface.

Ex: Figure 3. Description of figure.

Use sentence-style capitalization (capitalize only the first word of sentences and proper nouns).

## Figure Location

Figures should be located close to where they are mentioned in the text, on the same page if at all possible.

## Source

If a figure is taken from another publication or a website, permission must be acquired. Indicate the source of the figure under the caption, in parentheses.

Ex: (Reprinted by permission from M. Sarrantino, Northeast Cover Crop Handbook [Kutztown, PA: Rodale Institute, 1994], 52.)

**Note:** The source information can be abbreviated to the author and year of publication if the complete source information is included in a reference list.

Ex: (Reprinted from Fortunato [2014, fig. 2].)

## Text Mention

All figures should be mentioned in the text of a publication. Spell out "figure" (lowercase) with the figure number in the text, or abbreviate "fig." (lowercase) if the mention is in parentheses.

Ex: In figure 6, As shown (fig. 6)

# Font Styles

## Italics

AP style does not use italics because this font style does not translate correctly across the AP wire. We follow that guideline with exceptions for scientific/Latin names and reference lists.

Use italics for the scientific (Latin) names for genus and species.

Ex: Staphylococcus aureus

In reference lists, place the titles of books and journals in italics.

Do not use italics for emphasis or to indicate foreign phrases in text.

## Superscript

Use superscript for footnote numbers in text and for notes in tables.

Do not use superscript for ordinal numbers.

Ex: 20th, 22nd; not 20th or 22nd

# Glossaries

When a publication includes a glossary, all glossary terms should be used in the publication.

Alphabetize glossary terms letter by letter, ignoring spaces and punctuation.

Lowercase the glossary term unless it is a proper noun.

Put the glossary term in boldface, followed by a spaced en dash ( - ) that is not in boldface.

Begin the definition with a capital letter and end it with a period. Separate definitions with semicolons.

Format each glossary team with a hanging indent.

Ex:

capital - One of the three factors of production in addition to land and labor; the net worth of a business or household; the fund or sum of money that one is willing to or already has invested.

# Initials

In text, do not put a space between initials of a person or business. Include a period after each initial.

Ex: J.J. Hardy

**Exception:** Reference/resource lists generally use initials rather than first and middle names; these lists include a space between an author's or editor's initials.

# Job Titles

Capitalize formal titles when they are used immediately before a person's name.

Ex: President Barack Obama, Pope Francis, Prime Minister Trudeau

**Note:** Lowercase formal titles when they are not immediately followed by a name or when a comma separates the title from the name.

Ex: the president; the pope; Barack Obama, president of the U.S.; the vice president, Joe Biden, was re-elected …

Abbreviate and capitalize political titles such as governor, lieutenant governor, senator, representative, and delegate when they are used immediately before a person's name.

Ex: Gov. Terry McAuliffe, Lt. Gov. Ralph Northam, Sen. Tim Kaine, Del. Sam Rasoul

**Note:** Lowercase political titles when they are not immediately followed by a name or when a comma separates the title from the name.

Ex: the governor; the senator; Tim Kaine, senator; the senator, Mark Warner, said …

Lowercase titles that are primarily job or occupational descriptions used before or after a name.

Ex: astronaut Scott Kelly, quarterback Tyrod Taylor, author Anne Tyler

**Exception:** The university style guide makes an exception for academic titles. Capitalize "professor," "associate professor," etc., when used directly before a name.

Ex: Professor Thompson, Associate Professor William Shields

# Lists

Lists of items can be either horizontal (within the text of a paragraph) or vertical (set apart from the text).

## Horizontal Lists

A short list of items can be incorporated into a paragraph of text with the items separated by commas or semicolons. These items can also be numbered to help designate the listed items or to clarify how many items are listed and/or their correct order. If numbering the items, place each number within parentheses.

Ex: The teacher told them to read the book, write a report, and be ready to discuss their conclusions.

Ex: The teacher told them to do three things: (1) read the book, (2) write a report, and (3) be ready to discuss their conclusions.

**Note:** A colon can be used to introduce a list if what precedes the list is a complete sentence.

## Vertical Lists

Vertical lists work well for longer or more complex lists, and they can be used to draw attention to the information. Each item can be designated with a number, a bullet, or an em dash, followed by one space. Use numbers when the list is a series of steps that should be completed in order, such as instructions or directions, and when the number of items is included in the text (e.g., There are five ways to …). Numbers should be followed by a period, without parentheses.

Use a colon to introduce the list if the information that precedes the list is a complete sentence.

Capitalize the first word of each list item.

Use a period at the end of each item, whether or not it is a full sentence.

Make the items consistent; for example, make each item an action beginning with a verb, or make each item a complete sentence.

Ex: To get to the school

1. Turn left out of the driveway onto Main Street.
2. Travel 2 miles.
3. Turn right onto Airport Road at the Wendy's.
4. Drive three blocks and the school is on the right.

Ex: The conference will feature nonstop activities:

- Workshops with best-selling authors.
- Exhibits by more than 100 vendors.
- Opportunities to network.
- Complimentary lunches and happy hours.
- Trips to local landmarks.

**Note:** The first example does not use a colon to introduce the list because "To get to the school" is not a sentence. "The conference will feature nonstop activities" is a sentence, so a colon is used before the list in the second example.

# Numerals

## General Rule

Spell out numbers one through nine. Use figures for 10 and greater.

Ex: nine students, 10 children

Exceptions: Always use figures (1, 2, 10, 500) for

- Percentages.
- Ages.
- Dimensions.
- Measurements.
- Millions, billions, etc.
- Recipes.
- Table data.
- Temperatures (except for 0; use "zero degrees" instead).
- Odds/ratios.

Ex: 3 percent, the 5-year-old house, a 3 foot by 5 foot rug, 5 acres, 1 cup

## Ages

Always use figures for the ages of people, animals, and inanimate objects.

Ex: 5-year-old girl, the house is only 2 years old

## Decimals

Use decimals in place of fractions when more precise numbers are needed and in charts and tables.

If the number is less than one, insert a "0" before the decimal point.

Ex: 0.25, 0.667

## Fractions

Spell out fractions that are less than one. Use figures for fractions greater than one.

Ex: one-third of students, 2 1/2 times as many

## Millions, Billions

Use figures and spell out millions, billions, etc.

Ex: 3 million people, $15.5 million

When using ranges, repeat million or billion, if applicable, to avoid confusion.

Ex: $2 million-$5 million, not $2-$5 million, which could be confused for a range of $2 to $5 million

## Ordinal Numbers (first, second, third)

As a general rule, spell out ordinal numbers first through ninth. Use figures for 10th and above.

Ex: fifth place, 12th place

**Note:** Do not use superscript for ordinal numbers.

# Percentages

Always use figures. Spell out "percent" except when used in tables or figures where space is tight and in some technical publications.

   Ex: 2 percent, 98 percent, 8-10 percent

Use decimals rather than fractions when referring to percentages.

   Ex: 7.5 percent

If less than 1 percent, add a 0 before the decimal point.

   Ex: 0.98 percent

# Phone Numbers

Preferred format: Use hyphens for phone numbers.

   Ex: 555-321-1234; 555-321-1234, ext. 18

Acceptable format: Use parentheses around the area code and one hyphen.

   Ex: (555) 321-1234; (555) 321-1234, ext. 18

Acceptable format: Use two periods.

   Ex: 555.321.1234; 555.321.1234, ext. 18

Unacceptable format: Do not use slashes in a phone number.

   **Note:** The style of phone numbers and fax numbers in a publication or website should be consistent.

# Ratios

Use figures for odds and ratios.

   Ex: a ratio of 2-to-1, a 2-1 ratio

# Temperatures

Following AP style, there are two choices for indicating temperature:

1. Spell out "degrees" and the temperature scale (Celsius or Fahrenheit).

   Ex: 42 degrees Celsius, 72 degrees Fahrenheit

2. Abbreviate the temperature scale, leaving a space between the figure and the letter.

   Ex: 42 C, 72 F

   **Note:** In cases where readers might not recognize the abbreviations for temperature scales, spell out the temperature scale on first use and use the abbreviation thereafter.

Exception: In recipes, use the temperature, followed by the degree symbol (°), followed immediately by an "F" for Fahrenheit.

Ex: Heat oven to 350°F.

Use the word "zero" rather than the figure 0 for zero degrees.

# Photos

Photos are usually assigned figure numbers (figure 1, figure 2) unless they do not have a caption or the caption is limited to the name of the person in the photo.

## Photo Captions

Photo captions are placed below the photo. Caption placement can vary (such as to the side of the photo) according to design choices.

Use present tense to describe photos.

Use roman, not italics. Use italics only for the scientific (Latin) names of species.

Use sentence-style capitalization (capitalize the first word of sentences and proper nouns only) and end with a period. If the caption is simply a person's name, do not use a period.

When identifying people in a photo, use directional information:

Ex: From left, Dean Grant presents the award to members of the Soil Judging Team, X, Y, and Z.

## Photo Credit/Permissions

Authors must obtain permission to use photos that are not their own. Credit should be noted in parentheses following the photo caption.

Ex: (Photo courtesy of Mike Smith, Virginia State University.)

Agencies that sell images might require that specific wording be used to credit them for photos. If not, a more generic credit line can be used.

Ex: (Photograph by XYZ Photos.)

# Prefixes

Most words containing a prefix do not require a hyphen. Check the AP Stylebook or Webster's New World College Dictionary for specific words.

Do not hyphenate when the word following the prefix starts with a consonant.

Ex: prehistoric, semicolon

Use a hyphen when the prefix ends with a vowel and the word begins with the same vowel.

    Ex: pre-existing, semi-invalid

    **Exceptions:** cooperate, coordinate

Use a hyphen when the word begins with a capital letter.

    Ex: post-World War II

Use a hyphen when the prefix precedes a figure.

    Ex: pre-20th century

# Punctuation

## Apostrophes

Apostrophes are used to show possession.

    Ex: Bob's car, Ed Jones' office

    **Note:** Adding an apostrophe and "s" ('s) does not make a noun plural.

    **Exception:** Use an apostrophe to make letters of the alphabet plural.

    Ex: He got two A's and three B's.

## Colons

Use one space after a colon.

Colons can be used to introduce a list when what precedes the list is a complete sentence (see the entry for Lists) or to provide further information or explanation.

## Commas

Virginia Tech uses the serial comma, also called the Oxford comma. In a list, include a comma before the conjunction that precedes the last item in the list.

    Ex: Virginia Tech competes in football, basketball, baseball, and wrestling.

    **Note:** If the items in the list include commas or if commas may cause confusion, substitute semicolons.

Do not place a comma between a person's name and a suffix (Jr., III).

    Ex: Alson H. Smith Jr. Agricultural Research and Extension Center

Do not use a comma to set off business designations such as Inc., Ltd., LLC, PC, etc.

    Ex: Aetna Inc., Reliance Industries Ltd.

Use commas to set off a state when used with a city in text.

Ex: located in Blacksburg, Virginia, the university …

Use commas to set off a year when used with a month and day.

Ex: Monday, Sept. 5, 2015, is the date of the game.

Use commas in numbers of four digits or more (except for page numbers, room numbers, ZIP codes, street addresses, and phone numbers).

Ex: 2,336 pages, page 2336, room 1610

# Dashes

## Em Dashes

Equivalent to the width of the letter "m" (hence the name) or three hyphens.

Virginia Tech style is to include a space on both sides of the em dash (called a spaced em dash).

Use spaced em dashes to separate an independent/nonessential clause within a sentence or to set off a list or explanation at the end of a sentence.

Ex: By far the most effort is spent in detailing fertility programs for all the macronutrients — nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, magnesium, and sulfur.

## En Dashes

Equivalent to the width of the letter "n" or two hyphens.

Use spaced en dashes to separate a term from its definition in a glossary or to separate an organization's name from its URL in a list. Do not use to designate ranges; use a hyphen for that purpose.

Ex: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – www.cdc.gov

## Ellipsis

An ellipsis is made up of three periods with a space before and after them ( … ). Its purpose is to indicate that text has been removed.

# Exclamation Points

Use exclamation points sparingly. They should rarely, if ever, be used in business or academic writing.

# Hyphens

## Compound Modifiers

Use a hyphen in compound modifiers that are located before the noun they modify.

Ex: the blue-green leaves

Compound modifiers placed after the noun they modify are usually not hyphenated unless the verb is a version of "be."

    Ex: the leaves are blue-green

    **Note:** Do not use a hyphen between an adverb that ends in "ly" or the adverb "very" and an adjective.

    Ex: electrochemically active bacteria, not electrochemically-active bacteria

## Prefixes/Suffixes

Most words containing a prefix or suffix do not require a hyphen. Check the AP Stylebook or Webster's New World College Dictionary for specific words.

    Ex: midterm, preharvest, biofuel, citywide

Use a hyphen when the prefix or suffix causes the repetition of a vowel or causes a consonant to be repeated three times in a row.

    Ex: pre-election, anti-intellectualism

    **Exception:** cooperate, coordinate – check the dictionary for correct spellings.

Use a hyphen between a prefix and a word that starts with a capital letter and between a prefix and a number.

    Ex: post-World War II, pre-20th century

Use a hyphen when not using one would cause confusion to the reader.

    Ex: recreation versus re-creation

## Ranges

Use closed hyphens (with no spaces on either side) to indicate a range of numbers, times, dates, pages, or other items.

    Ex: pages 171-213, 8-10 p.m., July 11-13, 500-1,000 acres

    **Note:**    When using the word "from" before the range, substitute "to" or "until" for the hyphen.

    Ex: from 2 to 4 p.m., not from 2-4 p.m.

# Period

Use a period followed by one space at the end of a sentence.

Use a period at the end of each item in a vertical list whether or not it is a sentence.

    Ex: The students were told to

- Read pages 457-543.
- Complete the worksheet exercises.
- Return their midterm exams.

Use periods following initials and abbreviations.

    Ex: M.E. Welby, M.D.

## Quotation Marks

### Double Quotation Marks

Use double quotation marks around direct quotes, terms being introduced, and letters of the alphabet (except for grades).

Use quotation marks around the titles of books, articles, reports, stand-alone publications such as Extension publications, movies and plays, TV shows, songs, and lectures and presentations when the title is used in text.

Periods and commas go inside the closing quotation mark. Other punctuation (colons, semicolons, dashes) goes outside the closing quotation mark.

### Single Quotation Marks

Use for quoted material within a quote (i.e., single quotation marks go within double quotation marks).

Use single quotation marks for quoted material in a title or article heading.

# Quotes

**Note:** "Said" is a perfectly fine verb to use when introducing or attributing a quote, and it's OK to repeat it. Don't get too creative in an effort to avoid "said"; it can be distracting and annoying.

Ex: the dean said, not the dean offered thoughtfully or the dean smoothly articulated

# Ranges

Either spell out "from" and "to" to indicate a range or use a closed hyphen. If using "from," do not use a hyphen.

Ex: from noon to 2 p.m., noon-2 p.m.

# References and Text Citations

**Note:** Each reference must be cited in the text at least one time, and there must be a matching reference for each text citation.

## References

Most peer-reviewed publications include a reference list that comprises the journal articles, books, and websites cited in the publication. Because reference lists are not covered in the university style guide or the AP Stylebook, we use the Chicago Manual of Style's author-date style for reference lists and text citations (see chapter 15).

Alphabetize the reference list by the last name of the first author. If an author is not listed, alphabetize by the last name of the editor or by the name of the company or organization.

Invert the name of the first author only.

Ex: Jones, A., D. O'Day, and C. Davis.

Following are some examples of basic author-date format for references.

## Book With One Author

Sarrantino, M. 1994. *Northeast Cover Crop Handbook.* Kutztown, PA: Rodale Institute.

Text citation: (Sarrantino 1994)

## Book With Multiple Authors

Brady, N. C., and R. R. Weil. 2007. *The Nature and Properties of Soils.* 14th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Text citation: (Brady and Weil 2007)

## Book With Editors in Place of Authors

Doran, J. W., D. C. Coleman, D. F. Bezdicek, and B. A. Stewart, eds. 1994. *Defining Soil Quality for a Sustainable Environment. Soil Science Society of America Special Publication No. 35*. Madison, WI: SSSA.

Text citation: (Doran et al. 1994)

## Chapter in a Book With Authors and Editors

Doran, J. W., and T. B. Parkin. 1996. "Quantitative Indicators of Soil Quality: A Minimum Data Set." In Methods for Assessing Soil Quality, edited by J. W. Doran and A. J. Jones, 25-38. Soil Science Society of *America Special Publication No. 49.* Madison, WI: SSSA.

Text citation: (Doran and Parkin 1996)

## Journal Article With One Author

Clason, T. R. 1998. "Silvopastoral Practices Sustain Timber and Forage Production in Commercial Loblolly Pine Plantations of Northwest Louisiana, USA." *Agroforestry Systems* 44:293-303.

Text citation: (Clason 1998)

## Journal Article With Multiple Authors

Edelman, L. B., C. Uggen, and H. S. Erlander. 1999. "The Endogeneity of Legal Regulation: Grievance Procedures as Rational Myth." *American Journal of Sociology* 105:406-54.

Text citation: (Edelman, Uggen, and Erlander 1999)

## Dissertation or Thesis

Buergler, A. L. 2004. "Forage Production and Nutritive Value in a Temperate Appalachian Silvopasture." M.S. thesis. Virginia Tech.

Text citation: (Buergler 2004)

## Standalone Report or Publication

National Research Council. 1989. Nutrient Requirements of Dairy Cattle. 6th ed. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Text citation: (National Research Council 1989)

### Website or Online Publication

Higdon, J. 2004. "Soy Isoflavones." Oregon State University. Linus Pauling Institute, Micronutrient Information Center. http://lpi.oregonstate.edu/mic/dietary-factors/phytochemicals/soy-isoflavones.

Text citation: (Higdon 2004)

## Text Citations

Any idea, conclusion, data, or information taken from another source requires a text citation that matches an item in the reference list.

Text citations include the last name of the author(s) and the year of publication. If there are three or fewer authors, include all last names before the year of publication. If there are four or more authors, use only the last name of the first author followed by "et al." (Latin for "and others"). Citations are usually in parentheses, but if the author's name is used in the text, only the year of publication goes in parentheses.

Ex: One author: (Jones 2014) or Jones (2014) concluded

Ex: Two authors: (Jones and O'Day 2000) or Jones and O'Day (2000) studied

Ex: Three authors: (Jones, O'Day, and Davis 2012) or Jones, O'Day, and Davis (2012) reported

Ex: Four or more authors: (Jones et al. 2016) or Jones et al. (2016) collected data

**Note:** Do not add a comma between the author name(s) and the year in a parenthetical text citation.

# Regions/Directions

Capitalize regions.

Ex: the South, Southwest Virginia, Northern Virginia, Mid-Atlantic States

Lowercase directions.

Ex: located east of the city, he traveled south

# Spacing

Use one space between sentences and after colons. Do not use individual spaces to line up text because the text will no longer be lined up when margins or text size changes, and the spaces have to be removed before the publication can be designed.

# States

Spell out the names of states in text except in mailing addresses that include ZIP codes.

Ex: a Virginia native

Enclose states in commas when the follow the name of a municipality.

Ex: the Hampton, Virginia, native

There is no need to include the state for the major cities listed in the dateline section of the Associated Press Stylebook. The state can also be left out when it is included in the dateline of a press release.

Ex: Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Philadelphia, etc.

Use the two-letter uppercase U.S. Postal Service abbreviation for a state only in a mailing address that includes a ZIP code.

**Note:** The USPS abbreviation is also used in the city/state of publication in a reference list.

# Street Addresses

Abbreviate St., Ave., and Blvd. when used with a numbered address.

Ex: 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.

Spell out Drive, Road, Circle, Terrace, Lane, Court, and similar terms.

Ex: 9 Morningside Circle

Use the two-letter U.S. Postal Service state abbreviation only when a ZIP code is provided.

Ex: Located at 185 Ag Quad Lane, Blacksburg, VA 24061.

Ex: Located at 185 Ag Quad Lane, Blacksburg, Virginia.

Use periods when abbreviating "Post Office" in an address.

Ex: P.O. Box 1947

# Suffixes

Check the most recent edition of the AP Stylebook to see if the word combination in question is listed. If it is not listed there, check Webster's New World College Dictionary. For word combinations not listed in either resource, use two words for verb forms but hyphenate if used as noun or adjective forms.

Ex: foodborne, twofold, line up (verb) but lineup (noun), flu-like

# Symbols

## Ampersand (&)

Use the ampersand symbol only when it is part of a company or organization's formal name. Do not substitute an ampersand for "and."

Ex: Proctor & Gamble; Department of Food Science and Technology

Never use a comma before an ampersand.

# Dollar Sign ($)

Use the dollar symbol rather than spelling out "dollars."

> Ex: $2.50, $50, $5.2 million

> **Note:** For amounts less than $1, use a figure and spell out "cents" except in figures and tables and some technical publications.

> Ex: 79 cents, not $0.79

# Number Sign (#)

Do not use the number sign; spell out "number" or use "No." as an abbreviation.

> Ex: room number 452, No. 12 in the nation, a No. 2 pencil

# Percent (%)

Spell out "percent" after a figure rather than using the percent symbol.

> Ex: 7 percent, 95 percent

> **Exception:** Use "%" in tables or figures where space is an issue. The % symbol is also preferred in some technical publications.

# Registered Trademark (®, ™)

AP style does not use either trademark symbol for trademarked terms or products. Capitalize the term only. If possible, use generic names in place of trademarked names.

> Ex: facial tissue, not Kleenex; wheat cereal, not Chex

# Temperature Symbol (°)

In general, spell out "degrees" rather than using the temperature symbol. See Temperatures section for more information.

> **Exception:** Use the temperature symbol in recipes.

> Ex: Heat oven to 350°F.

# Tables

## Table Headings

The table heading is placed above the table.

Do not use boldface; use table number, followed by a period, the heading, and ending with a period.

> Ex: Table 2. Description of data in table.v

Use sentence-style capitalization.

Use Roman type (no italics except when the heading includes the scientific [Latin] names of species).

## Text Mention

Each table should be referred to in the text. Lowercase "table" in the text.

Ex: (table 3) or in table 3

## Table Location

If possible, a table should be located on the same page where it is first mentioned in the text unless the author indicates a different location.

# Tense

In general, use past tense for quote attributions.

Ex: said Dean Grant, the professor explained

Use present tense for photo captions.

Ex: Dean Grant presents the award

# Time of Day

Use figures and indicate a.m. or p.m., which should be lowercase and include periods (not PM or pm).

Remove the minutes when the time is on the hour.

Ex: 2 p.m., from 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., 4:30-5 p.m.

**Exception:** To avoid confusion, use "noon" or "midnight" — without a 12 in front of it — rather than 12 a.m. or 12 p.m.

Ex: at noon, from 10 p.m. to midnight

# Miscellaneous Usage

Key to parts of speech: adj = adjective, adv = adverb, n = noun, v = verb

## A

**acres** – always use figures: 1 acre, 3.4 acres

**advisor**

**agri** – as a prefix, no hyphen is needed: agribusiness, agriscience, agritourism

**associate degree** – do not use "s" or " 's"

## B

**bahiagrass**

**bermudagrass** – one word, lowercase is an exception to AP style

**biannual or biennial** – every two years

**bio** – as a prefix, no hyphen is needed: bioactive, biobased, bioenergy, bioreactor

**-borne: airborne, bloodborne, foodborne, mosquito-borne, seed-borne, soil-borne, vector-borne, waterborne, wind-borne**

**brewhouse, brewmaster**

**byproduct**

## C

**Capitol building**

**Celsius** – for temperature using the Celsius scale: 42 degrees Celsius or 42 C

**Commonwealth of Virginia** – otherwise lowercase "commonwealth": across the commonwealth

**cross-contact, cross-contaminate, cross-country**

## D

**decision-maker (n), decision-making (adj)**

**dietitian**

**dimensions** – use figures, use "by" (not "x"): 4 feet by 10 feet, a 4-foot by 10-foot table

**double major (n), double majoring (v)**

## E

**e-book, e-commerce, e-nose, e-portfolio**

**E. coli bacteria** – Escherichia coli O157:H7 bacteria

**East Coast, the East, eastern United States, Eastern Virginia**

**email**

**enology**

# F

**fact sheet**

**Fahrenheit** – for temperature using the Fahrenheit scale: 72 degrees Fahrenheit or 72 F; for recipes, use the temperature symbol followed by "F": 350°F

**farmers market** – no apostrophe

**farmland**

**Fellow** – capitalize when used to designate an honor given by a professional organization

**first-come, first-served basis**

**first lady Dorothy McAuliffe**

**first-year student** – use in place of "freshman"

**foodshed**

**forego** – to go before; forgo – to abstain from

**4-H, 4-H'ers 4-H Youth Development** – always use the figure

**freshwater**

# G

**General Assembly**

**goal setting (n), goal-setting (adj)**

**good agricultural practices** – usually lowercase, but capitalize Good Agricultural Practices certification

**Gov. Terry McAuliffe**

**graywater**

**groundcover, ground floor, ground level, groundspeed, ground surface, groundwater**

# H

**health care** – always two words, no hyphen: health care insurance

**heat** – use "heat," not "preheat," for recipes

**hepatitis C**

**high-fructose corn syrup**

**high school student**

**homegrown, homestyle, homeowners insurance**

**House of Delegates - Virginia**

# I

**in-depth, in-house (adj or adv), inground**

**Indiangrass**

**internet - lowercase**

**italics** – do not use except for the scientific (Latin) names for genus and species: Staphylococcus aureus; italics are also used for book and journal titles within reference lists

## J

**Johnsongrass**

## K

## L

**land** – as a suffix, generally no hyphen: farmland, forestland, grassland, hayland

**land-grant (adj): land-grant university**

**lawn care (n), lawn care operators (adj), lawn mower**

**letter grades** – do not use quotation marks; use apostrophe-s for plurals of grades: three A's

**letters, individual** – Use quotation marks except for letter grades: the "X" chromosome

**life cycle, lifelong, life skills**

**low-fat (adj)**

## M

**magazine titles in text** – title-style caps, no italics, no quotation marks

**magnification** – use "times," not "X": five times magnification, 10 times magnification

**Master Gardener, Master Naturalist, etc.** – always capitalize

**master's degree**

**measurements/quantities** – use figures, spell out unit of measure: 3 tons; 5 years old; 7 feet, 3 inches; 6 miles; 4 acres; 5 cents

**mid** – as a prefix, no hyphen: midday, midsemester, midspring

**Mid-Atlantic, Mid-Atlantic States** – the region is capitalized; "mid-Atlantic" is the middle of the Atlantic Ocean

**multi** – as a prefix, no hyphen: multidisciplinary, multigrain, multimedia, multipurpose

## N

**newsletter titles** – title-style caps, no italics, no quotation marks

**nitrogen-fixing (adj)**

**no-till**

**nonfat** – not "fat-free"

**norovirus**

## O

**offline**

**off-site - hyphenate all uses**

**OK** – not "okay"

**omega-3 fatty acids**

**on hand**

**on-site** - hyphenate all uses

**operators manual, owners manual**

**over** - as a prefix, no hyphen: overapply, overburden, overexposure, overseed, overturn

# P

**per capita (adj)** – no hyphen: per capita income

**policymaker**

**postcalving, postdoctoral, postgraduate, post-World War II**

**pre-eminent, pre-k, precalving, prepartum, preteen**

**preventive** – not "preventative"

**problem-solving**

# Q

# R

**record-breaking (adj)**

**record-keeping (n, v)**

**runoff (n, adj), run off (v)**

# S

**seedbed, seed-borne, seedhead**

**semicolon, semiliquid, semisolid**

**Senate** - capitalize state or U.S.

**service-learning project**

**shelf life**

**shellfish**

**snowstorm**

**soil-borne, soil moisture sensor networks, soil water-holding capacity**

**soybean, soy milk**

**species** – generally two words (genus and species); italicize both terms, capitalize the genus but lowercase the species: Gallus domesticus

**staph** – lowercase unless it's a particular bacteria, such as Staphylococcus aureus

**startup (n or adj), start up (v)**

**stink bug**

**stormwater**

**straightforward**

**surface water**

**switchgrass**

# T

**toward** – not "towards"

**troubleshooting**

**turfgrass**

**Type 1 diabetes, Type 2 diabetes**

# U

**U-pick**

**underapply, underinflate**

**up-to-date (adj), otherwise "up to date" with no hyphens: up-to-date policy, stay up to date**

# V

**vector-borne**

**vitamin C, vitamin B-12, B vitamins**

**viticulture**

**voicemail**

# W

**waste site, wastewater**

**waterborne, water cycle, water-holding capacity, water use efficiency**

**web, the web, web address, web browser**

**webcam, webcast, webfeed, webmaster, webpage, website**

**West Nile virus**

**whole-milk products**

**wind-borne, windbreak**

**winemaking**

**World Wide Web**

# X

**X-ray**

# Y

# Z

# Commonly Used Acronyms

With few exceptions, spell out a complete term before using an acronym. There is no need to put the acronym in parentheses after the term, but the acronym should be first used close (in the text) to where the term is spelled out so that readers don't have to look back to see what the acronym refers to.

Avoid the overuse of acronyms; excessive use of acronyms is confusing to the reader and can make text look like alphabet soup. Only use acronyms that are either well-recognized or that are repeated throughout a text.

Exceptions: Depending on the context, there is usually no need to spell out the terms for acronyms such as FBI, CIA, ID, CD-ROM, and CBS.

Acceptable acronyms after the term has been spelled out on first reference include

**AAEC** – Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics

**ALCE** – Department of Agricultural, Leadership, and Community Education

**APSC** – Department of Animal and Poultry Sciences

**BIOCHEM** – Department of Biochemistry

**BSE** – Department of Biological Systems Engineering

**CALS** – College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

**CDC** – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

**CNRE** – College of Natural Resources and Environment

**CSES** – Department of Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences

**DASC** – Department of Dairy Science

**EFNEP** – Expanded Food and Nutrition Program

**ENTO** – Department of Entomology

**EPA** – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

**FNP** – Family Nutrition Program

**FST** – Department of Food Science and Technology

**HNFE** – Department of Human Nutrition, Foods, and Exercise

**HORT** – Department of Horticulture

**NIH** – National Institutes of Health

**PPWS** – Department of Plant Pathology, Physiology, and Weed Science

**SNAP** – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

**SNAP-Ed** – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education

**USDA** – U.S. Department of Agriculture

**VAES** – Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station

**VALOR** – Virginia Agriculture Leaders Obtaining Results

**VCE** – Virginia Cooperative Extension

**VDACS** – Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

**VDF** – Virginia Department of Forestry

**VDH** – Virginia Department of Health

**VSU** – Virginia State University

**VTPP** – Virginia Tech Pesticide Programs