

AEG NEWS

STYLE GUIDE

Revised 2025

Acronyms & Initialisms:

- Spell out on first use in each article, followed by abbreviation in parentheses (unless well known, e.g., USGS, FEMA). Always abbreviate:
 - » AEG, U.S.,
 - » certified positions (PG, PE, CPG), or common professional terms (ASBOG, GSA, GNSS, InSAR, lidar, NSF, PFAS, PDH, TWG, USGS),
 - » degrees (PhD, BS, MS),
 - » year markers (Ka, Ma, Ga, BP [before present]),
- **State Names:** Spell out in prose. *Exception: abbreviate state to 2-letter abbreviation in addresses, in references, and when used in parentheses to indicate a Congress member's state or district.*

Capitalization Rules

- **AEG Chapters and Regions:**
 - » Capitalize formal names (e.g., "The Mile High Chapter," "The Purdue University Student Chapter," Elson "Chip" Barnett (Region 3)).
 - » Use lowercase when referring generally (e.g., "our chapter meets monthly").
- **Annual Meeting:**
 - » Capitalize only when referring to the formal event title (e.g., "AEG 2025 Annual Meeting in Chicago" but "AEG's 2025 annual meeting will be held in Chicago").
 - » Other meeting types are lowercase (e.g., midyear BOD meeting).
- **Class of membership:** Capitalize membership types, (e.g., "the class type will be called 'Educator'"; but "all educators will assemble").
- **Colons:** Capitalize after a colon only if what comes after the colon is a complete sentence.
- **Degrees and Licenses:**
 - » No periods in abbreviations (e.g., BS, PhD, PG).
 - » Formal Degree Names: Capitalize the full name of a degree (e.g., "Bachelor of Science," "Master of Science").
 - » General References: When referring to degrees generically, lowercase them (e.g., "bachelor's degree," "master's degree").
 - » Lowercase all parts of degree names when used generically and in running text (e.g., "She earned a bachelor's degree in geology from Beloit College").
- **Fields of Study:**
 - » General case: lowercase (e.g., bachelor's degree in geology).
 - » Specific case: capitalize formal titles or abbreviations of formal titles (e.g., Bachelor of Science in Geology; BS in Geology).
- **Figures and Tables:**
 - » Lowercase "figure" and "table" in text.
 - » Uppercase in captions (e.g., "Figure 2. Example caption.").

- **File Types:** capitalize, (e.g., PDF).
- **Formal Names of Bodies and Organizations:** Always capitalize (e.g., Executive Council, Board of Directors, AEG Foundation, Student & Young Professional Support Committee). Often abbreviated (e.g., BOD) on second use within article.
- **Government Entities:**
 - » When referring to the government or official entity of a city or state, capitalize “City of” and “State of”; however, when referring to the place or area, lowercase “city of” and “state of.” Kentucky, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Virginia refer to themselves as “commonwealths” instead of states.) Examples:
 - “The City of Chicago” (refers to the city government).
 - “The State of Illinois” (refers to the state government).
 - “the city of Chicago” (refers to the location).
 - “the state of Illinois” (refers to the location).
- **Organization Terms:**
 - » Lowercase terms such as “operating policies,” “bylaws,” “special publication,” “AEG management.” Capitalize award names when referring to a specific award (“an AEG Special Award”).
- **Titles of People:**
 - » Capitalize only when used directly before a name *except in article bylines*. Examples:
 - “President Jane Doe” but “the president of AEG is Jane Doe”.
 - “Region 11 Director John Doe” but “John Doe is director of Region 11 (International).”
 - “Chapter Chair Jane Doe” but “Jane Doe is chair of the Puget Sound Chapter.”
 - “Associate Professor Jane Smith presented her research” but “Our speaker was Jane Smith, associate professor of geology at Rutgers University.”
 - » Use “Co-chair” (capitalizing only the first “C” when before a name).
 - » Always capitalize a named professorship whether used before or after the holder’s name (e.g., “Jane Doe is the Helen Jupnik Endowed Research Professor at the University of Wisconsin”).
 - » Always capitalize a named lectureship (e.g., “John Doe is the 2024-25 Jahns Distinguished Lecturer”).
 - » Lowercase “member” and “non-member,” including “honorary member.”
 - » Use only two academic or professional titles behind a name, set off with commas.
- **Titles of Sources in text:** Capitalize headline-style. Do not capitalize any prepositions, articles (a, an, the), or coordinating conjunctions (and, but, for, nor, so, yet). *Exception: titles of sources on reference page follow different rules. See below.*
- **University Departments:**
 - » Capitalize full, official department names (e.g., “Department of Geology”).
 - » Lowercase shortened or informal versions of the department: (e.g., “the geophysical sciences department at the University of Chicago”).
- **Young at Heart:** capitalized like this. No @ in name.

Geographic Names:

- **Capitalize** proper names of geographic entities, including continents, countries, states, provinces, cities, bodies of water, mountains, regions, political divisions, populated places, localities, physical features. Example types of geographic entities listed above:
 - » North America, South America, Africa, Antarctica.
 - » East Tennessee (but lowercase in “eastern Tennessee”).
 - » Canada, France, Mexico, The Bahamas.
 - » Texas, Oregon, Arizona, California, New York, Washington.
 - Capitalize “State” when used as part of a proper name or referring to the state government but not when used generically:
 - New York State (proper name)

- State of New York (refers to state government)
- The Hudson River flows southward through the state of New York. (generic use).
- » Quebec, Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador, British Columbia.
 - Capitalize “Province” when used as part of a proper name but not when used generically:
 - Province of Quebec (proper name or refers to government)
 - Montmorency Falls is situated within the province of Quebec. (generic use).
 - “Government” is used to refer to provincial governments in Canada (e.g., “Government of Quebec”).
- » San Antonio, Portland, Philadelphia, Chicago, Chattanooga, New York.
 - Capitalize “City” when used as part of a proper name or referring to the city government but not when used generically:
 - New York City (proper name).
 - City of New York (refers to city government).
 - During our tour of the city of New York, we observed outcrops of the Manhattan Schist in Central Park. (generic use). (Revising to “our tour of New York City” would be more concise.)
- » Erie Canal, Mississippi River, Lake Michigan, Hudson Bay, Pacific Ocean.
- » Rocky Mountains, Blue Ridge, Half Dome, Mount Ranier.
- » Gulf States, Great Lakes, Driftless Area, High Plains, Upper Peninsula.
- » Pine Ridge Reservation, Marin County, Centre Township, Bloomfield Borough.
- » Greenwich Village, Marina District, Little Havana, Chinatown.
- » Fall Line, Continental Shelf, Allegheny Front, Front Range, Grand Banks, Sequim Fault.
- **Capitalize** a descriptive term used consistently to denote a definite region, locality, or geographic feature (e.g., “the West Coast,” “East Tennessee,” “North Atlantic (Ocean),” “Upstate New York,” “East Africa”).
- **Lowercase** articles and prepositions within multiple-word proper names (e.g., “Fond du Lac,” “Red River of the North,” “Gulf of Alaska”).
- **Lowercase** descriptive terms used to denote general or less well-defined areas or regions:
 - » The report describes relationships between land uses and rainwater quality in a south-central Pennsylvania watershed.
 - » The Mahomet aquifer underlies a portion of east-central Illinois.
- **Lowercase** general terms when used descriptively and not as part of a proper name (e.g., “the river flows south,” “the mountains are tall”).
- **Capitalize** only the proper name portion of named quadrangles (e.g., “Hollidaysburg quadrangle”).
- Geographic names like the District of Columbia and British Columbia may be abbreviated using periods (e.g., “Washington, D.C.” and “Vancouver, B.C.”).
- For comprehensive guidelines, refer to pages 87–90 of the *Suggestions to Authors of the Reports of the United States Geological Survey* (Seventh Edition).

Geologic Terms:

- **Capitalize** formally recognized chronostratigraphic units, which designate the *position* of the material unit in geologic time. Examples of chronostratigraphic terms (listed in order of decreasing stratigraphic rank) are Phanerozoic Eonothem, Mesozoic Erathem, Cretaceous System, Upper Cretaceous Series, Maastrichtian Stage.
- **Capitalize** formally recognized geochronologic units, which designate the *age* of material units within geologic time. Examples of geochronologic units (listed in order of decreasing stratigraphic rank) are Phanerozoic Eon, Mesozoic Era, Cretaceous Period, Late Cretaceous Epoch, and Maastrichtian Age.
- **Capitalize** formal geochronometric units of the Precambrian (>570 Ma). Examples (listed in order of decreasing stratigraphic rank) are Proterozoic Eon, Neoproterozoic Era, Ediacaran Period.
- **Capitalize** the first letter in all words used in formal stratigraphic nomenclature. Examples of formal stratigraphic names (listed in decreasing stratigraphic rank): Newark Supergroup, Culpeper Group, Balls Bluff Siltstone, Leesburg Member.

- **Informal stratigraphic names** must be used with care. Informal names are those names applied to stratigraphic units that were not defined according to standards in use at the time of their first publication.
 - » Informal units may be named for:
 - Color, e.g., Mahogany bed, orange marker, red marker.
 - Position, e.g., lower member, upper unit.
 - Lithology, e.g., shale member, sandstone unit.
 - Type of deposit, e.g., terrace gravel, alluvium, Anderson coal.
 - Letter, e.g., J sandstone, member A.
 - Number, e.g., unit 2.
 - Locality, e.g., Dupuyer Creek unit, Sauk sequence.
 - » If a place name is combined with a stratigraphic rank or descriptive term, the word order should be inverted, e.g., sandstone at Pine Creek, tuff of Stony Point, limestone of Doe (1956), granite of Baldy Peak.
 - » After the informal status is defined and described, a geographic name may be used as a subject nominative provided the lithologic term is kept lowercase, e.g., Pine Creek sandstone, Stony Point tuff, Baldy Peak granite.
 - » After a unit's formal name (e.g., Pierre Shale) has been introduced, an unnamed part of the unit may be designated informally by using a lithologic term with the geographic name provided the lithologic term is lowercase (e.g., Pierre sandstone).
- **Capitalize** only the first letter of the first word of local or commercial names of stratigraphic units of economic interest (such as oil sands, coal beds, and construction or ornamental stone), e.g., Felix coal bed, Yule marble, Big lime, Ottawa sand.
- **Facies and sequence:** These terms are not parts of the formal stratigraphic classification scheme and are not capitalized, e.g., Catskill facies and Sauk sequence.
- **Glacial-climate unit classifications:** The initial letters of terms such as interglaciation and glaciation are lowercase, e.g., Wisconsin glaciation, Olympia interglaciation.
- **Igneous intrusions:** Form terms, e.g., dike, sill, stock, pluton, batholith, and laccolith, applied to intrusive masses of igneous rocks should be lower case, e.g., Sierra Nevada batholith.
- **Capitalize** physiographic divisions, provinces, and sections (e.g., "Intermontane Plateaus," "Colorado Plateaus," "Grand Canyon Section").
- Names of features having both geographic and geologic significance, if used consistently to refer to specific entities, may be regarded as proper names and should be capitalized (e.g., "Northern Anthracite Field," "Matchless Mine").
- If a geographic name is linked consistently to a specific non-stratigraphic feature, the combined name should be regarded as a proper name and both parts should be capitalized (e.g., "Cincinnati Arch," "Golden Fault," "Wyoming-Utah Thrust Belt," "Mount Taylor Volcanic Field").
- **Geological phenomena:** Events such as earthquakes, landslides, and volcanic eruptions are typically named by year (or date), location, and type of event. For earthquakes, the magnitude may be also given. Examples:
 - » The magnitude 6.7 January 17, 1994 Northridge, California earthquake. Or 6.4 M_w foreshock.
 - » The 2014 Oso, Washington landslide.
 - » The May 18, 1980, eruption of Mount St. Helens.
- **Lowercase** informal geologic terms and descriptors not part of a formal name (e.g., "granite outcrops," "sedimentary basin").
- Capitalize Earth science, not "mounds of earth."
- For comprehensive guidelines, refer to pages 43-49 (stratigraphic units) of the *Suggestions to Authors of the Reports of the United States Geological Survey* (Seventh Edition).

Hyphenation Notes

- Generally follow *Chicago Manual of Style*.
- Keep hyphen in “non-member.”
- Hyphenate “elect” roles, e.g., “president-elect,” “chair-elect.”
- No hyphen in “past president” and “vice president.”
- Use hyphen for co- titles, such as co-author.

Lists

- Use numbered lists in-text in this format: (1), (2), (3), etc.
- Do not use numbered or bulleted lists unless absolutely necessary. When used, manually insert a tab after the written indicator. Do not use auto-list feature.

Names

Standardize use of names within an article. Give full name including “Dr.” on first use; then use last name, (e.g., first—Dr. John Doe; subsequently, Dr. John Doe). *Exceptions include memorials, Executive Council Reports, or articles written from first-person perspective.*

Numbers

- Spell out one through ten; use numerals for 11 and above.
- Use numerals to refer to time (6 a.m.), units of measurement (4 years; 3 miles), money (\$10 million), dates (March 23), percentages (12 percent), and age (10 years old).
- Use commas in large numbers (1,200).
- For date ranges, use “2023–24” over “2023–2024” for brevity.
- Use en dashes in number ranges.
- Do not use superscripts in ordinals (e.g., 11th, 20th).

Plurals

- **Data and Strata:** Treat “data” and “strata” as plural and “datum” and “stratum” as singular.

Punctuation

- **Bills:** (H.R.9375) do not include spaces.
- **Commas:** Use commas to set off years and states in running text. (E.g., He was born October 23, 1989, in Minooka, Illinois, to parents Gordon and Cathy.)
- **Dates:** Generally no apostrophe, e.g., 1990s not 1990’s, unless the decade is shortened, in which case an apostrophe is used to indicate missing digits, e.g., ‘90s. If you spell out the decade, capitalize it, e.g., the Nineties.
- **Em dashes:** Use em dashes (—) without spaces in narrative text.
- **En dashes** for multiword phrases that need hyphenation (“molecular physics–quantum mechanics intersection”).
- **Oxford comma:** Always use.
- **Parentheses:** If two parentheses occur in a row, separate the two parentheticals with a comma. E.g., (HSU), (now California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt)
- **Percent vs. %:** Use “percent” in text but “%” in column headings, tables, and figures.
- **Time format:** Use periods in “a.m.” and “p.m.”

References

- Cite references alphabetically by author(s) and date (e.g., Garrison, 2001; Hooper, 2021).
- Editors: “eds.” Edition comes after title in parentheses: “(3rd edition).”
- Examples below; full guide found here: <https://www.geosociety.org/GSA/GSA/Pubs/ref-guide-examples.aspx>
- In references needing month of access, use shortened names: Jan., Feb., Mar., May, June, July, Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.
- Italicize names of publications in text (e.g., *AEG News* is number one).
- Maps include note on scale and number of sheets/files.
- Translated texts will have a note on language of origin and original publication [in brackets].
- Websites should be mentioned in-text and without a reference entry *if* the website is being referenced as a whole.
- For URLs in text, include full URL if the URL is feasible to type. If URL is too excessive to be typed out, opt instead for directions for access (“Download the Request Webinar Form under “Resources” on AEG’s website”). Hyperlink URLs in both cases for ease of digital access.

Book

Author surname, Author first initial(s), Year, Book Title: Publisher location, Publisher name and type of publication (if applicable) v# (if applicable), # p., DOI [language notes (if applicable)].

Allmendinger, R.W., Cardozo, N., and Fisher, D., 2011, *Structural Geology Algorithms: Vectors and Tensors in Structural Geology*: New York, Cambridge University Press, 304 p.

Chapter in a Book/Paper in a Multiauthor Volume

Author surname, Author first initial(s), Year, Chapter title, *in* Editor surname, Editor first name initial(s), ed(s)., Book Title: Publisher location, Publisher Name and series (if applicable) v# (if applicable), p. #-#, DOI [language notes (if applicable)].

Elburg, M.A., Smet, I., and De Pelsmaeker, E., 2014, Influence of source materials and fractionating assemblage on magmatism along the Aegean Arc, and implications for crustal growth, *in* Gómez-Tuena, A., Straub, S.M., and Zellmer, G.F., eds., *Orogenic Andesites and Crustal Growth: Geological Society, London, Special Publication 385*, p. 137–160, <https://doi.org/10.1144/SP385.1>.

Journal Article

Author surname, Author first initial(s), Year, Article title: Journal title, v. #, (issue) no. #, p. #-# (or article number), DOI [language notes (if applicable)].

Coogan, L.A., and Hinton, R.W., 2006, Do the trace element compositions of detrital zircons require Hadean continental crust?: *Geology*, v. 34, p. 633–636, <https://doi.org/10.1130/G22737.1>.

Website

Author surname, Author first initial(s), Year, Website Title: URL (date last accessed [Month Year]).
Helmuth, L., 2009, The ten most spectacular geologic sites: *Smithsonian Magazine*: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/the-ten-most-spectacular-geologic-sites-38476122/> (May 2024).

Resources

- Dictionary: *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary* (<https://www.merriam-webster.com>)
- GSA reference guidelines: <https://www.geosociety.org/GSA/GSA/Pubs/ref-guide-examples.aspx>
- Geologic Terms: *Suggestions to authors of the Reports of the United States Geological Survey, 7th Edition*. <https://doi.org/10.3133/7000088>
- Style elements undefined by this guide: *Chicago Manual of Style, 18th Edition*