# STYLE GUIDE

Workers' Safety and Compensation Board

Yukon

## Contents

## Message from the Executive Committee

Our communications matter. Whether you are communicating with the public, the Board of Directors, our stakeholders, other government departments or each other, you are representing our organization.

We demonstrate our three core values of partnership, accountability and compassion in what we say and what we do. Our goal to be transparent and empathic is shown by our words and actions.

For these reasons, we are pleased to present a new edition of our Style Guide. This guide and the associated brand standards are essential in creating and maintaining our professional identity, speaking with one voice and communicating with sensitivity and clarity.

The Executive Committee strongly endorses the Style Guide and its use to maintain our brand guidelines and standards.

## Style Guide second edition

Style is alive! Language and writing style are in a constant state of change. Since the first edition of the Style Guide, new words have been added to our everyday language, like COVID-19. As well, how we refer to the territory has changed to "the" Yukon. Last but not least, we have a new name: Workers' Safety and Compensation Board and the new Workers' Safety and Compensation Act.

## Introduction

The Style Guide is here to help everyone:

- to follow our style—so that your writing demonstrates the professionalism of our organization;

- to write clearly and inclusively—so that you respectfully say what you need to say and your reader has a clear understanding.

Use this guide for all your internal and external communications. The guide is for all employees and for contractors writing material on our behalf. This guide follows the Government of Yukon (YG) Style Guide and writing standards, which is available at guide.yukon.ca/en/content-and-design/style-guide. The style standards here and in the YG guide are based on existing reference materials such as *The Canadian Press Stylebook, Caps and Spelling* and Writing Tips Plus, Government of Canada.

As an organization that is arm's length from YG, we are in a position to set our own style.

You can find our Style Guide and Brand Standards on our website at wcb.yk.ca/styleguide and via a link on SafetyNet.

We review and update this Style Guide regularly. When we do, we will notify employees of changes. Let us know your suggestions and feedback by email at wcb-cs@wcb.yk.ca.

When you have a style question, follow the list below to find what you are looking for.

1. This Style Guide—follow what is in here first

2. The YG Style Guide

3. The Canadian Press Stylebook, and Caps and Spelling—every branch has a copy of each

4. Writing Tips Plus, Government of Canada

Please ask the Corporate Services Branch communications team—we welcome your questions!

When you have a question about spelling, refer to the Canadian Oxford Dictionary. It is available online and at the Corporate Services Branch.

**A comment on grammar shaming:** many of us had a difficult time learning grammar at school, if we were taught it at all. Consequently, some people learned more than others. No one needs to be anything close to an expert in grammar to work here or use this guide.

We humbly offer this guide for support and guidance, and to stimulate discussion, never to cause shame, embarrassment or feelings of inadequacy.

## Writing clearly and inclusively

Go to Writing in plain language and the YG Style guide.

## Writing for your audience (reader)

We have an obligation to communicate clearly and effectively with the people we serve. This means always keeping the reader in mind.

Before you begin writing, ask yourself:

- Who is reading my document?

- What does the reader need and want to know?

- Is the reader already familiar with the issue I am dealing with?

- What is the best way to present the information to make it easy to understand?

## Writing in plain language

Plain language is writing your readers can understand the first time they read it. It avoids the use of complex terms, technical jargon and dense phrasing that makes it difficult to understand the message. We've all experienced inflated, bureaucratic language that we can't understand.

As employees in a bureaucracy, we need to take care to avoid that kind of writing. The Yukon government Communications Policy states:

> "The use of clear, plain language is required in all government materials, including legislation and regulations, in order to support the greatest understanding of government programs, services, decisions and actions."

Writing in plain, comprehensible language applies to all WSCB communications including correspondence, policies, forms and directives.

*Writing can use plain language without losing its intent*. Legal writing is among the most complex and poses a particular challenge for plain communication. but, as quoted above, we are expected to use plain language so that our readers—mainly employers and workers—can understand the laws that affect them.

We can do this by making sure the language is clear, legal concepts are explained and technical terms are defined.

See the Resources section at the end of this guide, which has links to some plain writing resources.

**Some plain language tips**

- Use contractions like "we're" and "you're."

- Avoid words ending in "–ion" and "–ment" as they tend to make sentences longer and more complicated than they need to be.

  The committee considered how to improve workflow, ***not*** The committee took into consideration potential improvements to workflow.

- Use short sentences: aim for no more than 25 words.

- Use the active rather than passive voice. The active voice makes it clear who is responsible. In the active voice the subject performs the action expressed by the verb.

  Register for Optional Coverage online, ***not*** Registration can be made online.

- Address the reader as "you" where possible, for example, Send your form to us.

- Use "we" as long as you're making it clear as much as possible who the "we" is. Do not assume the audience will know.

*The Canadian Press Caps and Spelling* has a list of plain words at the back. Here are some examples:

| Long/formal/unfamiliar word | Shorter/more familiar alternatives |
|---|---|
| • advise | • tell, write, inform |
| • cease | • stop, end |
| • complete | • fill out, finish |
| • demonstrate | • show, prove |
| • for the purpose of | • to |
| • require | • need, call for, ask for |
| • utilize | • use |

Every branch has a copy of *The Canadian Press Caps and Spelling* book.

**Readability**

A plain-language approach should result in high readability. Microsoft Word has a useful tool to [test your document's readability](#).

**To measure readability in a Word 2013 document:**

1. In your open document, click on the **File** tab and select **Options** on the left.

2. Select **Proofing**.

3. Under "When correcting spelling and grammar in Word," check **Show readability statistics**.

4. Click **OK**.

5. In your document, click on the **Review** tab and select **Spelling & Grammar**.

6. After the spelling and grammar check has finished, a pop-up window will appear. Under **Readability** are three pieces of information:
   a. Percentage of passive sentences in your document
   b. Flesch Reading Ease score
   c. Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level

If you are writing for a general audience, aim for:
- a low percentage of passive sentences;

- a reading-ease score of 60 or higher; and

- a Grade 8 or 9 reading level.

As well as referring to [Writing in plain language](#), you can find helpful resources at the [Plain English Campaign](#), which has downloadable free guides, for example:
- [How to write in plain English](#)

- [The A to Z of financial terms](#)

- [The A to Z guide to legal phrases](#)

## Readability example

Below is an example of a (made up) sentence using complex language and passive verbs, along with its readability scores. It's followed by a plain language version and its scores.

**Version with complex language:**

Yukoners are required to submit their forms as soon as practicable for determination of eligibility and ongoing authorization for utilization of our currently available services.

- The Flesch Reading Ease test rates text on a 100-point scale. The higher the score, the easier it is to understand the document. This sentence scores zero, which is defined as, "Extremely difficult to read. Best understood by university graduates."

- The Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level test rates text on a U.S. school grade level. This sentence has a grade level of 20.5, which is obviously way higher than a high school education.

**Version with plain language:**

Please send your form to us. We'll review it and let you know which services you may use and for how long.

- This sentence has the highest possible score for ease of reading and needs a Grade 1 or 2 reading level to understand it.

| Readability Statistics | ? × |
|---|---|
| **Counts** | |
| Words | 25 |
| Characters | 154 |
| Paragraphs | 1 |
| Sentences | 1 |
| **Averages** | |
| Sentences per Paragraph | 1.0 |
| Words per Sentence | 25.0 |
| Characters per Word | 6.1 |
| **Readability** | |
| Passive Sentences | 0% |
| Flesch Reading Ease | 0.0 |
| Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level | 20.5 |
| | OK |

| Readability Statistics | ? × |
|---|---|
| **Counts** | |
| Words | 22 |
| Characters | 85 |
| Paragraphs | 1 |
| Sentences | 2 |
| **Averages** | |
| Sentences per Paragraph | 2.0 |
| Words per Sentence | 11.0 |
| Characters per Word | 3.7 |
| **Readability** | |
| Passive Sentences | 0% |
| Flesch Reading Ease | 100.0 |
| Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level | 1.5 |
| | OK |

## Writing inclusively

Go to YG Style Guide

According to the YG Communications Policy:
- *"Language in public communications must be inclusive and respectful."*

- *Inclusive language is "respectful and is not biased based on race, gender, culture, class, ability, age, religious beliefs or sexual orientation."*

Part of writing inclusively is making sure text is gender-neutral wherever possible.
- they, their **not**, he/she, his or her

Increasingly, the use of "they/theirs" is not considered neutral. If you don't know the preferred pronouns of the person you are addressing or referring to, try to rephrase the sentence to avoid personal pronouns altogether. Alternatively, use neutral terms such as "a person" or "a worker."
- The worker will receive the following benefits, **not** She will receive the following benefits.

Other helpful resources:
- Government of Canada → *"Gender and sexual diversity glossary"*
- Canadian Press Stylebook, 18th edition, pages 21 to 27. (Every branch has a copy)

## Writing for social media

On social media, the audience is scrolling. In order to capture their attention in just a few seconds, plain, active language is a must. This kind of writing helps our audience understand our messaging quickly, easily, and completely.

It's important to keep text limited to a few sentences, even less if possible. The goal is for our posts to grab our audience's attention, then point them to our website or another source to get all the information.

## Writing for the web

We want our website to be accessible and easy to understand. Plain language, again, is incredibly important. Reading on a screen is different than reading on a page. To help our audience understand our information, breaking up the text with bold subheadings can be very useful. Anchor links—a link at the top of the page to a particular section within a page —are helpful for pages that have many paragraphs and different ideas.

Web users spend, on average, less than one minute on a single webpage. Writing that is clear and concise will help better communicate our messages during this short time frame.

# WSCB matters

## Our name

Our organization's full, formal name is the Workers' Safety and Compensation Board.

Use one or other of the following abbreviations for our full name:

WSCB (omit "the," for example, Send your form to WSCB); or

the board.

Be consistent—use one abbreviation or the other in a document or related documents.

Use "and" **not** an ampersand (&).

Workers' Safety and Compensation Board, **not** Workers' Safety & Compensation Board

It is fine to refer to our organization as "we," "our" or "us" as long as it's clear who you are referring to and the context doesn't ask for formality.

Call us at 867-667-5645. We welcome your questions.

Our office is open from 8 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday.

We calculated your premiums.

## Contact information

Workers' Safety and Compensation Board

401 Strickland Street

Whitehorse, Yukon  Y1A 5N8

867-667-5645 or toll-free 800-661-0443

worksafe@wcb.yk.ca

wcb.yk.ca

## Job titles

Go to YG Style Guide on titles

All job titles are in lowercase, except deputy minister and "above," which are capitalized.

- safety officer, manager and claims assistant, **not** Safety Officer, Manager and Claims Assistant
- the Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Board

**Be specific when referring to officers**

WSCB has multiple officer roles, so always use the title to avoid confusion.

- Write **safety officer** or **finance officer**, not just **officer**.

**When to capitalize job titles**

In documents for internal government use and in your email signature box, you may prefer to capitalize all job titles. Use a consistent style within a document or related documents.

## Board of Directors

Generally, we refer to the Board of Directors in full to avoid confusion with the "the board," which is an abbreviation for our organization.

Use "the board" as an abbreviation, but only in the context of writing that is specific to the Board of Directors.

Board members' positions are capitalized:

- Chair, Alternate Chair

- Representative of Employers, Representative of Workers

## Branches, units

Capitalize the names of branches and units at the board and use the correct, full names.

- Claimant Services Branch
- Corporate Services Branch
- Employer and Client Services Branch
- Executive Branch
- Workplace Health and Safety Branch

- Operations Branch
- Finance Unit
- Information Management Unit
- Policy Unit

Examples:

Every branch sent a representative to the meeting.

Employer and Client Services and Claimant Services branches sent representatives to the meeting, **not** Employer and Client Services and Claims sent representatives to the meeting.

The President/CEO represented the Executive Branch.

## Programs

Capitalize the titles of specific programs, but not programs in general.

- Optional Coverage, COR Program
- health and safety programs, a return-to-work program

## Signature box

Your signature box should follow this format:

**Name** (pronouns)
Branch | Program area or unit
Workers' Safety and Compensation Board
m 867-667-0000 | f 867-335-0000 | e first.last@wcb.yk.ca | wcb.yk.ca

*The content of this email is confidential. If you are not the intended recipient of this email, please notify the sender immediately and delete the email and any attachments from your system without making copies in any format.*

*I respectfully acknowledge that I work within the Traditional Territories of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.*

To create and format your signature box, follow the instructions on SafetyNet.

We follow YG style for adding an acknowledgment of traditional territories to your signature box.

## Pronouns

Go to the YG Style Guide on writing inclusively

By adding your pronouns to your signature, you:

• communicate you're aware this is an important piece of information; and

• help create a work culture where it's the norm to inquire about people's pronouns so you do not accidentally use the wrong ones.

If you are adding a pronoun, do so directly beside your name.

## Traditional territories

Go to the YG Style Guide on Indigenous Peoples

You may want to acknowledge the traditional territories where we work in your email signature. If you choose to do this, some wording options include:

• I respectfully acknowledge that I work within the Traditional Territories of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.

• I respectfully acknowledge that I work within the traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples. (If you work throughout the territory).

## The A to Z of WSCB style

### Introduction

As much as possible, our style is consistent with the YG Style Guide. Follow the links.

### Abbreviations

Go to YG Style Guide on abbreviations and acronyms

### Abbreviations

In general, avoid abbreviations in writing, especially in formal documents.

the government, **not** the gov't

Avoid using the abbreviations "i.e." and "e.g." whenever possible because their meanings are often confused.

- Instead of "i.e." write "that is" or "in other words"
- Instead of "e.g." write "for example" or "such as"

If you do need to use abbreviations, there's no need for a comma afterwards.

There are a range of work options, e.g. reduced hours and modified duties.

Employers must send their EPR by the deadline, i.e. by the last day of February.

See also Writing Tips Plus on abbreviations

### Acronyms and initialisms

YG style recommends avoiding acronyms and initialisms altogether if you can. It can be hard work for readers to keep track of them.

Although formed the same way, acronyms and initialisms are pronounced differently. An acronym is pronounced as a word.

NSNY, pronounced niz-nee (Northern Safety Network Yukon)

WHMIS, pronounced wim-iss (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System)

In an initialism, each letter is pronounced separately.

WSCB

PDF

Don't add an apostrophe to plural acronyms and initialisms.

PDFs, Qs and As, **not** PDF's, Q's and A's

If you need to use an initialism or acronym, write the name in full the first time, with the initialism or acronym in brackets. After that, you may use the initialism or acronym alone, but make sure you're not causing your reader to keep checking what an acronym stands for. As well, remember that capital letters are harder to read.

Workplace Health and Safety (WHS), **not** (WH&S) or (WH and S)

post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

Exceptions:

- CHOICES Program, which is always treated as an acronym and never spelled out. See the Spellings section.
- Acronyms and initialisms that have become part of the culture, for example, RCMP, CBC.

If you use several acronyms, consider including them in a glossary at the beginning of your document. Make it as easy as possible for your readers to understand what you have written.

See also Writing Tips Plus on acronyms and initialisms especially for details on when to use an article (the, a/ an) with and acronym or initialism, and which one to use (a or an).

## Acts and regulations

Go to YG Style Guide on acts and regulations

We administer the *Workers' Compensation Act*, the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and the *Workplace Health and Safety Regulations*.

Once you have used the full name of an act or regulation, you can refer to it as "the Act" or "the Regulation" (not italicized, no quotation marks).

The *Workplace Health and Safety Regulations* are now available in a single publication. You can still request an individual part of the Regulations in small-booklet form.

The Government of Yukon is proposing to make changes to the regulations.

If you abbreviate the acts and regulations we administer, don't use italics.

The WSC Act and the WHS Regulations, **not** the *WSC Act* and the *WHS Regulations*

The *Workplace Health and Safety Regulations* (WHS Regulations), not the *Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) Regulations*

If you refer to a part of the WHS Regulations, don't put the title in italics and don't add "Regulations."

Part 2- Confined Spaces, **not** *Part 2 - Confined Spaces Regulations*

Please refer to Part 18- Minimum First Aid Requirements of the WHS Regulations.

Refer to the YG list of Acts and regulations for correct names. Note that very few acts have "Yukon" in their names.  Add "Yukon" for clarity.

The *Yukon Workers' Safety and Compensation Act* is very similar to Saskatchewan's legislation.

## Addresses

Go to YG Style Guide on contact information

See also Canada Post for various standardized address formats

## And (ampersand)

Write the word "and" rather than an ampersand (&) except in very informal writing or when the ampersand is part of a name or title.

occupational health and safety, **not** occupational & safety

H&R Block, A&W

## Appendices

Go to YG Style Guide on appendices

Capitalize the word "Appendix" when cross-referencing it.

See Appendix 1 for detailed financial data.

## Capital letters (upper case)

Go to YG Style Guide on capitalization

See also YG Style Guide on government references including Indigenous Peoples

Use lower case whenever it's possible and appropriate, because it's easier to read.

**Units, branches, departments**

Capitalize (use a capital for the first letter) for YG departments and branches, for example:

Mental Wellness and Substance Use Branch, Health and Social Services

**Titles of office or rank**

Capitalize the titles of office or rank.

Premier Jane Doe, Minister Jane Doe, Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Board Jane Doe

The Premiers, Ministers and Chiefs will meet tomorrow with the Prime Minister

**Titles of publications**

Go to YG Style Guide on titles

Capitalize the principal words (nouns and verbs) in titles of reports, guides, strategies, policies, forms and plans. Do not use italics or quotation marks.

Return-to-Work Guide for Employers

WSCB Safety Plan

Payment of Assessments policy

Capitalize the principal words in titles of books and put them in italics.

- The *Canadian Press Caps and Spellings* is a handy reference for Canadian spellings

## Dates

Go to YG Style Guide on date and time

**Word form**

Use the day-month-date-year format.

Friday, October 1, 2021

Put a comma after the year in a sentence. Omit the comma when you write only the month and year.

The last Christmas party was held on Saturday, December 1, 2020, on Zoom!

A news release in June 2021 announced the winners of the Safety Culture Contest.

Do not use the **ordinal suffixes**: st, nd, rd, th except where the date comes before the month or stands alone.

February 14, *not* February 14th or February 14th

She is acting from the 3rd to the 15th of March.

Microsoft Word changes ordinal suffixes into superscripts (1st, 22nd, 43rd, 60th) by default.

To avoid this:

1.  In your open document, click on the **File** tab and select **Options** on the left.

2.  Select **Proofing**.

3.  Click the **AutoCorrect Options** button and select the **AutoFormat As You Type** tab.

For date ranges, use the word "to" between the two dates.

   December 4 to 6

In a table or chart, use an en dash (not a hyphen), with no spaces on either side.

   Dec. 4–6

**Numeric form**

Use the international style (yyyy-mm-dd). Use hyphens, not slashes.

   2022-01-14, *not* 2022/01/14

For date ranges, separate overlapping years with en dashes, not slashes.

   2019–2020 or 2019–20, *not* 2019/2020 or 2019/20

Go to the Punctuation section for information about hyphens, en dashes and em dashes.

## Digital style

Go to YG Style Guide on internet and digital terms

Go to Guidelines on Yukon.ca on links

**Digital terms**

For the spelling of common digital terms such as web page, website, see the Spellings section

**Camel case**

Camel case is where capital letters are embedded in compound words. If in doubt, look up the spelling.

   eBay, FedEx, iPhone, PowerBook, WorkSafeBC

**Using links**

If a sentence ends with an email address or website URL, put a period at the end and make sure it's not part of the hyperlink.

   My email address is firstname.lastname@wcb.yk.ca.

   For further information visit wcb.yk.ca/rates.

Do not include the prefixes http:// or www.

   awcbc.org, *not* https://awcbc.org.

Make sure hyperlinks are not active in documents intended to be printed.

## First Nations

See Indigenous Peoples

## Government of Canada

Go to YG Style Guide on Government of Canada

the Government of Canada, ***not*** the government of Canada

the federal government, ***not*** the Federal Government

## Government of Yukon

Go to YG Style Guide on government references

Formal name: the Government of Yukon, ***not*** the government of Yukon

the territorial government, ***not*** Yukon Territorial Government

the governments of Canada and Yukon, ***not*** the Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon

Yukon government can be abbreviated to "YG," but the government prefers "to limit "YG" to internal use. Don't forget to use "the" government.

The Government of Yukon announced changes to the WHS Regulations, ***not*** Yukon government announced...

The President met with colleagues from YG, ***not***...colleagues from the YG.

## Headings

Go to YG Style Guide on headings

Use sentence case (capital letter on only the first word), unless one of the words is a proper noun.

How to conduct a risk assessment, ***not*** How to Conduct a Risk Assessment

Optional Coverage benefits, ***not*** optional coverage benefits or Optional Coverage Benefits

## Indigenous Peoples

Go to YG Style Guide on Indigenous Peoples

There is a lot of helpful information and guidance in the YG Style Guide.

**Yukon First Nations governments**

- Carcross/Tagish First Nation
- Champagne and Aishihik First Nations
- Kluane First Nation
- Kwanlin Dün First Nation
- Liard First Nation
- Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation
- First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun

- Ross River Dena Council
- Selkirk First Nation
- Ta'an Kwäch'än Council
- Teslin Tlingit Council
- Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in
- Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation
- White River First Nation

To insert an umlaut, either go to the Insert tab and Symbols, or use the keyboard shortcut (press and release Ctrl + Shift + semicolon (in other words, Ctrl + colon), and then press the vowel). See the Symbols section in this guide.

## Job titles

See Capitalization section

Go to YG Style Guide on titles

See also Writing Tips Plus on capitalization: titles of office or rank

Generally, use lower-case for job titles. This includes titles such as analyst, manager and director. Use capital letters for all executive level jobs, which includes the President/CEO, Chief Financial Officer, Board Manager and Board of Directors.

## Lists (vertical)

Go to YG Style Guide on bullet point lists

YG style follows guidance from the Plain English Campaign on how to punctuate lists.

There are two main types of lists. Punctuate your list based on the type of list it is.

**List items are complete sentences**

Begin each item with a capital letter and finish it with a period.

Our five strategic goals are as follows:

1. All Yukoners participate in a culture of safety and prevention of physical and psychological injury.
2. Injured workers recover successfully and sustainably.
3. WSCB stakeholder relationships are positive and strong.
4. Yukon employers and workers know and understand their rights and responsibilities under the legislation we administer, and they work with WSCB to fulfill those rights and responsibilities.
5. WSCB consistently demonstrates corporate excellence and is a leader in complying with the acts, regulations, policies and directives that govern its operations.

Use numbers, rather than bullets, when the order of the list items matters.

**List items are words or phrases (not full sentences or complete the introductory words)**

If you use the kitchen, the fees are:

- coffee or tea: $125 per year or $15 per month;
- tea only: $50 per year;
- neither coffee nor tea: $10 per year; or
- occasional single cup of coffee or tea: $1.

## Parallel structure

Create a parallel structure so that each item or idea in your list matches. In other words, it should follow the same grammatical pattern. By creating word patterns your list is easier to read.

| You can use the dictionary to find these: | *Not* You can use the dictionary to find these: |
|---|---|
| word meanings; | word meanings; |
| pronunciations; | to check pronunciations; |
| correct spellings; and | find correct spellings; and |
| irregular verbs. | looking up irregular verbs. |

See also Writing Tips Plus on vertical lists

## Ministers

Go to YG Style Guide on titles

## Numbers

Write numbers one to nine in letters and numbers 10 and above in figures.

If your sentence has a combination of related numbers below and above 10, use figures for all of them.

Where a **sentence starts with a number**, spell it out (or rework the sentence so it doesn't begin with a number).

> Two thousand students participated in our outreach programs.
>
> *or*
>
> We reached 2,000 students with our outreach programs.
>
> *not*
>
> 2,000 students participated in our outreach programs.

## Punctuation

See Writing Tips Plus and search for your punctuation question

**Apostrophe**

Apostrophes are used for possessive nouns and contractions.

> We will use the boardroom for Tuesday's meeting.
>
> they've (they have), it's (it is)

While we try to avoid contractions (such as I'd, won't) in the most formal documents, they add conversational warmth to writing. As well, plain language experts recommend using them for better readability.

Apostrophes are **not** used in the following.

> 1950s, '50s, *not* 1950's, '50's
>
> WSCB distributed a percentage of its surplus, *not* WSCB distributed a percentage of it's surplus.
>
> Dos and don'ts, *not* do's and don't's

**Colon**

A colon signals that what comes next is directly related to the previous sentence.

> The WSCB building has several entrances: one entrance is for the public and the others are for staff. (In this example, a semicolon could be used instead.)
>
> The WSCB building has the following kitchen areas:
>
> • Training Room
> • West wing near the Executive offices
> • West wing near the OHS offices
> • East wing on the second floor

A colon is used in a formal letter after the salutation. If you use a colon after the salutation, for consistency, use a comma after the closing.

> Dear Ms Jones: … Sincerely,
>
> *or*
>
> Dear Ms Jones … Sincerely
>
> *not*
>
> Dear Ms Jones: … Sincerely

**Comma**

Go to YG Style Guide on commas

Like YG, we don't use the serial (Oxford) comma, so when listing items in a series, do not put a comma before the "and" or "or."

> Send your form by mail, fax or in person, *not* Send your form by mail, fax, or in person.

Sometimes it makes sense to add the comma for clarity.

> The departments of Economic Development, Health and Social Services, and Community Services took part.

**Dashes**

Go to YG Style Guide on hyphens and dashes

*Em dash (long dash)*

An **em dash** is the width of a capital M. It can be used as a substitute for a colon, semicolon or for commas to set off an area of text (parenthetical text) and to create a more emphatic or abrupt break in the sentence.

> The job needs to be done—and it needs to be done today!
>
> The job—filing the documents—needs to be done today.

To insert an em dash in a Word document type two hyphens (--) between two words without spaces. The computer will autocorrect the hyphens to form an em dash.

*En dash (short dash)*

We mainly use an **en dash** to connect numbers in a range—such as dates, times and page numbers—but only in a table or chart. Use "to" rather than a dash in sentences.

> May 6 to 10, *not* May 6–10.
>
> $2,500 to $3,000, *not* $2,500–$3,000.

To insert an en dash in a Word document hold down the control key and type a hyphen on the number keypad. Alternatively, go to the Insert tab and select **Symbols**, then **More Symbols**… and select the **Special Characters** tab. You'll see en and em dashes listed.

**Hyphens**

Go to YG Style Guide on hyphens and dashes

A hyphen has a variety of uses. Two common ones are:

  To separate numbers that are not inclusive such as phone numbers and dates in numeric form.

  •  867- 667-5645

  •  2021-11-22

  To join two or more words, such as compound adjectives.

  •  An up-to-date report, but the report was up to date

  •  A return-to-work plan, but a plan to return to work

**Period**

Go to YG Style Guide on periods

Nowadays, the convention is to put only one space after a period at the end of a sentence. Using two spaces dates from manual typewriter days, when every letter took up the same horizontal space.

If a sentence ends with an email address or website URL, put a period at the end and make sure it's not part of the hyperlink.

**Quotation mark**

Use double quotation marks. Place periods and commas inside the closing quotation mark.

  What he actually said was, "We will announce the new rates in September."

Place semicolons and colons outside the closing quotation mark.

  Last Tuesday you said, "Your cheque has been mailed"; I have yet to receive it.

See also Writing Tips Plus on quotations: punctuation with quotation marks

Use single quotation marks for a quotation within a quotation.

  In the WHS Regulations, "IDLH means 'Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health'."

**Semicolon**

A semicolon links two full sentences (independent clauses) that are closely related and aren't separated by one of the following seven words—for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so (coordinating conjunctions). The two could be sentences on their own if you put a period between them instead.

  I'll be making an important presentation to the Board of Directors tomorrow; I need a good night's sleep.

  I'll be making an important presentation to the Board of Directors tomorrow, so I need a good night's sleep.

Semicolons can also be used to separate items in a complex list.

  The team includes Sally from the Finance Unit, Operations Branch; Jack from CST, Employer and Client Services Branch; and Morgan from the Policy Unit, Corporate Services Branch.

## Symbols

**Per cent (%)**

Only use the per cent sign. Leave no space between the figure and the sign.

It was an increase of 9%, ***not*** It was an increase of nine per cent.

Write "per cent" in full if the number is spelled out because the sentence begins with a number.

Fifty per cent of staff were working from home, ***not*** 50% of staff were working from home, nor Fifty % of staff were working from home.

**Diacritics (accents, umlauts)**

Some letters in French words have accents and some First Nations' names contain umlauts. To insert:

- go to Insert then Symbol; or

- press and release Ctrl + Shift + semicolon (in other words, Ctrl + colon), and then press the vowel.

**Measurements**

Use the degree symbol as follows:

Temperatures dropped to-32 °C, ***not*** Temperatures dropped to-32°C.

- There is a space between the number and the Celsius symbol.

To insert the degree symbol:

- Go to Insert then Symbol and More Symbols…

- Select Latin-1 Supplement from the Subset drop-down menu.

- Once you've used the degree symbol, it automatically appears in the Recently Used Symbols list in the Symbol Menu.

## Telephone numbers

Go to YG Style Guide on contact information

Use hyphens, **not** brackets and hyphenate toll-free.

Phone: 867-667-5645 or toll-free in Yukon 1-800-661-0443

## Time

Go to YG Style Guide on date and time

In most written material we use the 12-hour clock when referring to time.

- Use am and pm, **not** AM and PM. There's no need to add periods.

- Use 3 pm **not** 3:00 pm, but use 3:00 pm to 3:30 pm, **not** 3 pm to 3:30 pm.

- Use 12:00 noon and 12:00 midnight, **not** 12:00 pm and 12:00 am, as these are ambiguous.

**Time zones**

The Yukon observes Pacific Daylight Saving Time year-round. It's called Yukon Standard Time.

Yukon Standard Time, UTC-7, ***not*** Yukon Time, Yukon time

For abbreviating other time zones, we follow Writing Tips Plus

4:30 pm EST

### Titles

Go to YG Style Guide on titles

For reports and other publications, capitalize the main words (title case). Do not use italics or quotation marks. Use italics for book titles.

Find the Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention Guide on our website.

Refer to *The Canadian Press Caps and Spelling* for an A to Z of Canadian words.

### Yukon

Go to YG Style Guide on Yukon and the Yukon

When referring to the territory, use "the" Yukon.

Get information about COVID-19 in the Yukon, ***not*** Get information about COVID-19 in Yukon.

### Yukon government

Go to YG Style Guide on Government of Yukon

Go to Government of Yukon in this document

## Spellings

Go to YG Style Guide on spelling

See also Writing Tips Plus and search for your commonly misused word.

See also *The Canadian Press Caps and Spelling* book (there's a copy in your branch)

Use **Canadian spellings**, for example:

colour, neighbour, counsellor, traveller, ***not*** color, neighbor, counselor, traveler,

These tools can help you with spelling and following Canadian spelling:

- The *Canadian Press Stylebook* and *The Canadian Press Caps and Spelling*.

- The Canadian Oxford Dictionary always gives the Canadian spelling first, with the US spelling in parentheses. For example, "**per cent** (also **percent**)."

- Microsoft Word's spellchecker flags common spelling mistakes (you're vs. your; its vs. it's; they're, their, there), but it is not foolproof. Make sure your version of Word is set to Canadian English.

- Go to YG Style Guide on spelling for helpful lists including the following:

  Words we commonly use, such as:

  - health care (noun) health-care (adjective), ***not*** healthcare
  - north (direction), North (region), northerner, ***not*** Northerner

  Associations and non-government organizations, such as:

  - Les EssentiElles
  - Learning Disabilities Association of Yukon (LDAY)

  Businesses, such as:

  - ATCO Electric Yukon
  - Integra Tire (formerly Yukon Tire)

  Facilities and buildings, such as:

  - École Émilie-Tremblay
  - Yukon Beringia Interpretive Centre

  Municipalities, such as:

  - City of Dawson, ***not*** Dawson City

  Place names, such as:

  - Arctic Circle, the Arctic, **but** arctic wildflowers
  - Whistle Bend subdivision

## Some WSCB spelling preferences

advisor, **not** adviser

CHOICES Incentive Program

Compensation Fund (capitalized), abbreviated to "the Fund"

coordinate, **not** co-ordinate

cooperate, **not** co-operate

counsellor (a person who gives guidance)

COVID-19, **not** Covid-19 or Covid

co-worker, **not** coworker

cyberbullying, **not** cyber-bullying

cyberspace

decision making, decision makers, decision-making process, a decision-making body

e-commerce

email

Employer Advisor, Employer Advisor Service (at the Yukon Chamber of Commerce)

e-waste

Facebook

Grade, for school grades, Grades 1 to 12

hashtag

health care, **not** healthcare

home page

Instagram

internet, intranet

joint health and safety committee (but Joint Health and Safety Committee when referring to the specific JHSC at WSCB)

licence (noun), a driver's licence

license (verb), licensed for Class 1 vehicles

livestream

loss of earnings, loss of earnings benefit

musculoskeletal

per cent

practice (noun), doctor's practice

practise (verb), licensed to practise

return to work, return-to-work program

SafetyNet

selfie

SharePoint

St. John Ambulance, **not** St. John's Ambulance

Twitter, tweet

web, web browser, webcam, webcast, web-enabled, web page, web server, website

well-being

well-meaning, well-liked

Workers' Advocate Office

*Workers' Safety and Compensation Act*

*Workplace Health and Safety Regulations*

workplace, **not** work place

worksite, **not** work site

WorkSafeBC

Yukon.ca (capitalize Y)

Zoom

## Abbreviations, initialisms and acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| AAP | alternative assessment procedure |
| AWCBC | Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada |
| AYC | Association of Yukon Communities |
| CAALL | Canadian Association of Administrators of Labour Legislation |
| CAALL-OHS | Canadian Association of Administrators of Labour Legislation–Occupational Safety and Health |
| CCL | Cabinet Committee on Legislation |
| CHOICES | **C**hoose **H**ealthy workplaces, **O**wnership of prevention and return to work, **I**njury management, **C**onsensus-based programs, **E**mployers of choice and **S**afety as job 1. |
| CICA | Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants |
| CMA | Canadian Medical Association |
| COR | Certificate of Recognition |
| COREL | Certificate of Recognition equivalency letter |
| CSA | Canadian Standards Association |
| CYFN | Council of Yukon First Nations |
| DMRC | Deputy Minister Review Committee |
| EMO | Emergency Measures Organization |
| EPR | Employer's Payroll Return and Contract Labour Report |
| ERM | enterprise risk management |
| FAF | functional abilities form |
| FIAC | Finance, Investment and Audit Committee |
| IAIABC | International Association of Industrial Accidents Boards and Commissions |
| IAQ | indoor air quality |
| IFRS | International Financial Reporting Standards |
| IJA | interjurisdictional agreement |
| IME | independent medical examination |
| KPMA | Klondike Placer Miners' Association |
| NAOSH | North American Occupational Safety and Health |
| NIDMAR | National Institute of Disability Management and Research |
| NSNY | Northern Safety Network Yukon |
| NWISP | National Work Injuries Statistics Program |
| OAG | Office of the Auditor General of Canada |
| OCOP | Owner/Operator Certificate of Proficiency |
| WH Regs | Workplace Health Regulations |
| WHS | Workplace health and safety |
| OPCOR | Optional Coverage Certificate of Recognition |
| PIDWA | *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* |
| PPE | personal protective equipment |
| PPD | permanent partial disability |
| PPI | permanent partial impairment |

| | |
|---|---|
| PRC | Policy Review Committee (YG) |
| PWG | Policy Working Group |
| Prev Gr | Prevention and Safety Advisory Group |
| PSAC | Public Service Alliance of Canada |
| PTSD | post-traumatic stress disorder |
| RSI | repetitive strain injury |
| RTW | return to work |
| SAC | Stakeholder Advisory Committee |
| SECOR | Small Employer Certificate of Recognition |
| TIAY | Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon |
| TLC | Temporary Letter of Certification |
| TTD | temporary total disability |
| WAO | Workers' Advocate Office |
| WHMIS | Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System |
| YCA | Yukon Contractors Association |
| YCC | Yukon Chamber of Commerce |
| YEU | Yukon Employees' Union |
| YFL | Yukon Federation of Labour |
| YG | Government of Yukon |
| YMTA | Yukon Mine Training Association |

## Resources

Canada Post

*Canadian Oxford Dictionary* (Corporate Services Branch has copies)

*The Canadian Press Caps and Spelling*, 21st edition

*The Canadian Press Stylebook*, 18th edition

Clarity International promotes plain legal language and design

Government of Yukon Style Guide

Hemingway Editor app

NWT Literacy Council/GNWT Write for Your Reader: A Plain Language Handbook includes examples of complex writing made plain

plainlanguage.gov is the United States government's guide to using plain language. It includes:

- A plain language checklist

- Evidence plain language saves time and money

Writing Tips Plus Government of Canada style