

AP Style “Cheat Sheet” for PR Professionals

1. Abbreviate months that are six or more letters in length if they are followed by a date.

- Jan. 1, 2016
- January 2016
- March 1, 2016

2. When writing the time, use lowercase letters and periods for a.m. or p.m. and always include a space between the last number and the first letter. Also, do not use extra zeros when writing the time.

- 7 a.m.
- 2:45 p.m.
- Midnight/noon

3. Only capitalize formal titles if they appear before the person’s name.

- President Obama
- Michael H. Schill, president of the University of Oregon
- Director Courtney Mains

4. Spell out numbers under 10 with the exception of: addresses, ages, money, measurements, temperature, millions and billions, and percentages. Also, spell out numbers higher than ten if it is the beginning of the sentence.

- Nine ducklings crossed the street
- 1585 E. 13th Street
- 5 percent
- Forty cats need homes

5. When referring to sports: The team is singular, but the mascot is plural.

- The team is winning.
- The Oregon Ducks are winning.

6. Apostrophes show possession, so only use them when you are trying to express possession.

- Bob’s apples went bad.
- Jane got all As this term.
- World War II was in the 1940s.

7. Place quotation marks around all titles except for the titles of reference books, newspapers and magazines.

- I loved the movie “Frozen.”
- I read Time magazine every morning.
- I cannot wait for the new episode of “Scandal.”

These are just a few AP style rules we felt could help everyone better his or her writing skills as public relations professionals. There is no replacement for the AP Style Handbook. However, if it's not within reach, be sure to remember these seven rules and you'll soon be on your way to becoming an AP style pro!