

# LANGUAGE STYLE GUIDE

COMPILED BY

**THE LANGUAGE SERVICES UNIT**

VERSION 5: FEBRUARY 2017



CITY OF CAPE TOWN  
ISIXEKO SASEKAPA  
STAD KAAPSTAD

Making progress possible. Together.

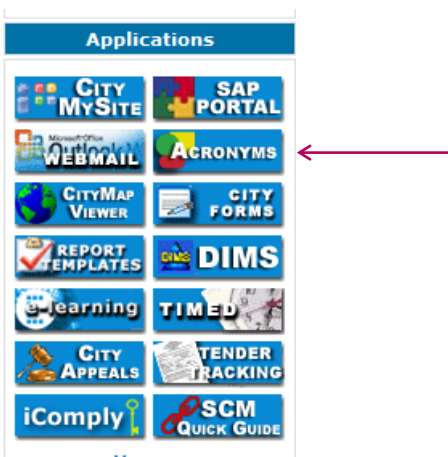


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# ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

- Write the name or series of words in full when used for the first time followed by the abbreviation or acronym in brackets. From then on only use the abbreviated version. If you have many abbreviations in your document, supply a list as well.
- When writing out the abbreviated form it is not necessary to capitalise every word unless it is a proper noun, e.g. human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).
- Do not use full stops with titles such as [Mr](#), [Mrs](#), [Ms](#) and [Cllr](#).
- Do not use full stops with initials, e.g. Mr DW Abrahams.
- Use a full stop when the last letter of the abbreviated title is not the last letter of the word, e.g. Prof. Ramsay.
- Use full stops in abbreviations such as e.g., etc. and i.e. (Do not use the abbreviation 'i.e.' if you mean 'for example'.)
- **Do not** use an apostrophe when writing abbreviations and acronyms in the plural, e.g. ATMs, RFQs and SOPs. (Also see APOSTROPHE.)
- For sums of money 'million' and 'billion' may be abbreviated: R1,2 m, R1,2 bn. (In other cases, write it out: 13 million people.)
- Refer to Cityweb for a comprehensive list of abbreviations and acronyms that are used regularly in our working environment. The list is found under **Applications**.



- Some examples are the following:

CCT: City of Cape Town (**not** CoCT)  
EPWP: Expanded Public Works Programme  
IDP: Integrated Development Plan  
IPM: Individual Performance Management  
ODTP: Organisational Development and Transformation Plan  
SDBIP: Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan  
SLA: service level agreement  
SRA: special rating area

## A OR AN

- Use 'a' before a **consonant sound**: a US dollar (sounds like 'you'), a unique situation, a Unisa student, a unilateral agreement.
- Use 'an' before a **vowel sound** (a, e, i, o, u): an SMME (sounds like 'es'), an MP; an NGO; an RFQ (sounds like 'are'), an hourly rate (sounds like 'our').
- Use 'a' before words like **history**, **historical** and **hotel** since the 'h' is pronounced. Centuries ago the 'h' was silent, and people spoke of 'an historical event'.
- Use 'an' before words like **honour**, **honorary**, and **honorarium** since the 'h' is silent, thus creating a vowel sound (o).

## APOSTROPHE (')

### Contraction

- The apostrophe is used to indicate a contraction: **it's** (it is), **don't** (do not), **who's** (who is, who has), **you're** (you are).

### Possessive form

- Apostrophes indicate the possessive form of nouns: an intern's duties (singular), the interns' duties (plural).
- If the proper noun ends in an -s, add an apostrophe -s to indicate the possessive form: Ms Abrams's department, Mr Ras's instruction, Dolores's workstation.
- If a word already ends in an -s (a plural form), add an apostrophe only to indicate possession: **the executive directors' new offices**, **councillors' earnings**, **voters' roll**, **the Williamses' application**.
- Plural forms that do not end in an -s, get an apostrophe -s to indicate possession: **children's laughter**, **People's Housing Project**, **Women's Day**.
- **Do not** use apostrophes in possessive pronouns: its, theirs.
- **Do not** use an apostrophe in the following: **honours degree**, **Achilles heel**.

### Plurals

- **Do not** use apostrophes to form plurals of abbreviations or time indications. Simply add an -s: **EDs**, **NGOs**, **SLAs**, **SMSs**, **VIPs**, **the 1980s**.
- **Do not** use an apostrophe -s to make a noun plural. (Refer to the section on PLURAL FORMS.)

## ARCHAIC EXPRESSIONS

- Do not use archaic expressions, such as 'amongst', 'whilst' and 'upon'. Rather use **among**, **while** and **on**.

## BRITISH VS AMERICAN ENGLISH

In South Africa we follow the British spelling conventions. Make sure your computer's default setting is set on English (South Africa or UK). **Select your document**; click on **Review**, click on **Language**, then **Set Proofing Language**, select **English (South Africa or English UK)**. Here are a few guidelines regarding British English:

- Use **-our**: **labour** (instead of labor), **colour**, **behaviour**, **endeavour** and **honourable** (but **honorarium**, **honorary**, **arbor**).
- Use **program** only in relation to computer software, otherwise use **programme**: **Substance Abuse Awareness Programme**.
- Use **-ise** instead of **-ize** (therefore **-isation** instead of **-ization**): **apologise**, **capitalise**, **centralisation**, **conceptualisation**, **prioritise**, **recognise**, **scrutinise**, **utilise** and **utilisation**.
- Use **-sance** instead of **-zance**: **cognisance**.
- Use **-yse** instead of **-yze**: **analyse**.
- Words ending in **-l** get a double consonant as soon as they are inflected: **compelling**, **enrolled** (but **enrolment**), **fulfilled** (but **fulfil**, **fulfilment**), **labelled**, **totalling**, **councillor**, **unequalled**, **unravelling**.
- Use **-re** instead of **-er**: **centre**, **metre** (but meter for a measuring instrument), **kilometre**, **theatre**.
- Use **-ce** for nouns, but **-se** for verbs and **-sing** for participles:
  - the director's advice, but he was advised
  - a driver's licence, but licensed premises, licensing authority
  - corrupt practices, but practising attorney
- Use **sceptic** and **scepticism**. The US spelling would be **skeptic** and **skepticism**.
- Insert an **-e** in words such as **acknowledgement**. The US spelling would be **acknowledgment**.
- **Note**: Judgment is correct when it refers to a court ruling; else use judgement.

## BULLETS

- If there is an opening line, make sure that each bulleted line reads from that line. For example, if your opening line is 'It is recommended that:' don't start your bullet with 'that'.
- Use full stops if your bulleted items are full sentences; otherwise avoid punctuation if possible.
- Use the same bullets throughout your document. Only change the style if you're using second-level bullet points.

# CAPITAL LETTERS

- Capitalise 'City' when referring to the City of Cape Town, in other words the organisation or municipality, and use 'city' (lower case) when referring to Cape Town itself.
- Write subject headings of reports in capitals: [DRAFT CAPITAL BUDGET 2016/17](#).
- Use sentence case (not title case) for headings: Budget implications (not Budget Implications).
- Use title case in the following instances:
  - for titles of documents: [Recognition and Reward Policy Framework](#)
  - for the names of directorates, committees, units, etc: [Directorate: Safety and Security Services](#); [Asset and Facilities Transversal Committee](#)
  - for place names: [Gordon's Bay](#)
  - for programmes, projects, etc.: [World Design Capital](#)
- Use capitals when referring to someone with a specific title: the [Director: Corporate Services](#), but use lower case when preceded by 'a': [Council appointed a new director](#).
- **Do not** use capitals when referring to an entity when you are not using the full title: [the bank, the committee, the subcouncil, the director](#).  
**Note:** the Mayor, the City Manager.
- **Do not** use capitals when referring to common (ordinary) nouns: [application, departure, rezoning, consent use, erf/erven, project, programme, project manager, process, table, annexure, fees, tariffs, rates, valuation, sketch, draft capital and operating budgets, revision, collaboration agreement, memorandum of agreement, ward allocations, library](#), etc.
- Capitalise abbreviated titles such as [Mr, Ms, Cllr](#) and [Dr](#).
- Personal-name particles must be spelled as follows:
  - With a small letter (i.e. in lower case) if the name or initial is included: [Ms Patricia de Lille; Mayor P de Lille](#).
  - With a capital letter if not preceded by a name or initial: [Ms De Lille; Mayor De Lille](#).
- Write the following words with a capital letter in legislation: [Schedule, Part, Chapter, Regulation, Subregulation, the Act, By-law](#).
- Our house style is to write the words [internet](#) and [intranet](#) in lower case.
- Try not to start a sentence with a figure or a symbol. If you do, the next word must be written in lower case: [35 arrests were made](#).

# CONCORD (SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT)

## Either ... or, neither ... nor, or

- When you use 'either ... or', 'neither ... nor' or 'or', **the verb should agree with the noun nearest to it**:
  - Either the Council or the officials **are** responsible for this.
  - Either the councillors or the organisation **is** responsible for this.
  - Neither the Mayor nor the executive directors **were** willing to comment.
  - Do you know whether the Mayor or Premier **was** present?

**Note:** When you use 'neither' or 'either' on its own, the verb should always be **singular**:

- Neither of the officials was on time.
- Either of us is available for the meeting.

## Linking words and phrases

- When words and phrases such as **as well as**, **along with**, **including**, **like** and **together with** are used to link noun subjects, **the verb agrees with the first noun**:
  - Council **as well as** its political structures **is** delegated to make these decisions.

## Number and total

- When used with **the**, 'number' and 'total' take a **singular** verb:
  - The number of people who are complaining, **is** increasing.
  - The total was 56.
- When used with **a**, 'number' and 'total' take a **plural** verb:
  - A number of people **are** complaining. A total of 56 complaints **were** received.

## One and more than one

- In a straightforward construction 'one' takes a **singular** verb:
  - One out of eleven children **is** illiterate.
- When extra words are attached to 'one' the sense become **plural**:
  - Inside each folder **are** one or more documents.
- If you use 'more than one' with a singular noun, the verb is **singular** (even though the underlying meaning is plural):
  - More than one subject **is** confusing.
- If you use 'more than one' with a plural noun, the verb is **plural**:
  - More than one in four homes **have** been flooded during the storm.

## Nouns of quantity

- Plural nouns of quantity (mass, amount, distance, number, fraction, percentage) take a **singular** verb when they are regarded as a unit:
  - Only twenty per cent of the project was completed by the due date.
- When a fraction is followed by 'of the' and a plural noun, the verb is in the **plural** form:
  - One third of the attendees **were** late due to the train strikes.



## Separated subject and verb

- Even when the subject and verb become separated because of intervening words, they have to agree. Therefore:
  - The impact of recent higher valuations has yet to be determined.
  - The manual containing the latest policies is being printed.
  -

## Subjunctives in 'that'-clauses

- The subjunctive form (which looks like the infinitive or simple form of the verb) follows on constructions such as 'recommend that'. Therefore:
  - It is recommended that the Committee note (not notes) the report.
  - It is recommended that the report be (not is) noted.
  - It is recommended that Council approve (not approves) the recommendation.

## CONFUSING WORDS

- **adopt** (means accept formally): The committee has **adopted** a new leave policy.  
**adapt** (means change): It is difficult to **adapt** to the noise levels in open-plan offices.
- **affect** (verb, means influence or have an effect on): The new draft bill may **affect** shebeens.  
**effect** (verb; mostly in a formal context, means achieve or bring about): Staff must ensure that sound labour relations are **effected**. Please **effect** the changes on the document.  
**effect** (noun; means result, consequence or change): The new draft bill will have an **effect** on shebeens. The law will come into **effect** soon. One **effect** of the new draft bill will be the closure of many shebeens.
- **amount** (a total or mass; never used to describe people): A large **amount** of money has disappeared.  
**number** (can more or less be counted): The official has already received a **number** of warnings.
- **biannual** (occurring every six months)  
**biennial** (refers to a two-year period)  
**semi-annual** (occurring twice a year)
- **compliment** (verb or noun; means praise): The unit was **complimented** on its performance.  
**complement** (verb; means enhance or complete): The new software will **complement** the existing system.  
**complement** (noun; number to complete): We have a full **complement** of staff.  
**complimentary** (without charge): He won **complimentary** tickets for a soccer match.
- **compose** (followed by 'of'): The Audit Committee is **composed** of five members.  
**comprise** (means contain; **not to be followed by 'of'**): The Audit Committee **comprises** five members.
- **impractical** (can be done but is not feasible): Building a stadium in Graafwater is **impractical**.  
**impracticable** (cannot be done at all): Building a stadium in the marshes is **impracticable**.
- **irregardless** (not a real word, so **do not use it**).  
**regardless**: Everyone should take part, **regardless** of their level of skill.
- **less** (use with singular nouns): **Less** money was allocated to the directorate.  
**fewer** (use with plural nouns): This means that **fewer** houses will be built.

- **lose** (pronounced with a **long sound**; opposite of 'find' and 'win'): We cannot **lose** the trust of the residents.  
**loose** (pronounced with a **short sound**; opposite of 'tight'): The pages came **loose** and fell to the floor.
- **practical** (can be done and is worth doing).  
**practicable** (can be done, whether or not it is worth doing).
- **refute** (show conclusively that an allegation is wrong): The investigators **refuted** the claim that the fires were caused by arson.  
**dispute** (question): The manager **disputed** the allegations.
- **regard**: with regard to  
**regards**: as regards
- **revert** (return to a previous state, practice, topic, etc.): I want to **revert** to a previous version of this document.  
**Note**: Do not use 'revert back' if you mean 'reply'.
- **than** (to indicate comparison): Her working day is longer **than** mine.  
**then** (to indicate a time-based sequence): She clocked in, **then** started working.
- **their** (plural pronoun indicating possession): Attendees must submit **their** evidence files.  
**there** (adverb indicating place): Place all the files **there** in the corner.

## DATE AND TIME

- Write dates as follows: **1 September 2009** *not* 01 September 2009, the 1 September 2009, the 1st of September 2009, or September 1, 2009.
- Do not break dates at the end of a line. (Use Ctrl + Shift + Spacebar to make a hard space.)
- Use the 24-hour system: **09:00, 11:15, 23:00**. (Use a colon and not a full stop.)
- If you need to write the date numerically use the order of **dd/mm/yyyy**. Computers use the American preference which is yyyy/mm/dd, so 11/11/06, would mean 6 November 2011 and not 11 November 2006.

## FIVE PILLARS

The City's mandate for service delivery is reflected in the five pillars, namely:

- an opportunity city
- a safe city
- a caring city
- an inclusive city
- a well-run city

# HOMOPHONES

Homophones are words that **sound similar**, but mostly differ in spelling, meaning and origin. Spell checkers usually do not pick them up as they are recognised words which are simply used incorrectly.

- **councillor** (member of a council): The **councillor** was fired after his fraudulent activities came to light.  
**counsellor** (adviser): Traumatised crime victims need to see a **counsellor** immediately.
- **foreword** (introduction to book): Who will write the **foreword** of the annual report?  
**forward** (onward): The way **forward** is being mapped out.
- **role** (noun): What is their **role** in the project?  
**roll** (verb): They will **roll** out the project soon.  
**roll** (noun): Check whether everyone on the **roll** is present. When will the valuation **roll** be published?
- **stationary** (immobile): **Stationary** vehicles cause congestion.  
**stationery** (think e for envelope): **Stationery** orders must be placed in time.
- **principle**: I agree to the idea in **principle** (i.e. in theory).  
**principal** (noun): The new **principal** was welcomed at a ceremony.  
**principal** (adjective meaning 'main'): The **principal** cause of the disaster was negligence.

# HYPHENS

**Hint:** Always check the spelling of a word in the dictionary.

- Our house style is to spell the word **email** without a hyphen.
- The house-style guideline is **not** to use hyphens after prefixes such as:

Prefix	Example
bi-	biannual; bilateral
co-	cooperation, coexist, coordinate
<b>Exception:</b> co-owner	
de-	deactivate, demerit, demoralisation
inter-	interdepartmental, intergovernmental
macro-	macroeconomic
micro-	micromanagement
multi-	multipurpose, multilingual, multipronged, multiparty
<b>Exception:</b> When the word following multi- starts with a vowel	multi-ethnic
para-	paralegal, Paralympics
pre-	prepaid
pro-	proactive
re-	realign, recollect, remix, revisit
<b>Exception:</b> When the word following re- starts with an <b>e</b>	re-enter, re-engineering, re-evaluate, re-elect
sub-	subcouncil, subcommittee, substandard, subdivide, subsection

- The prefixes *ex-*, *self-* and *all-* are usually followed by a hyphen: *ex-colleague*, *self-awareness*, *self-sufficient*, *all-encompassing*.
- Our house style is to use a hyphen after the prefix *non-*: *non-motorised transport*, *non-attendance*, *non-communicable diseases*, *non-governmental organisations*.  
**Note:** shorter words can be written without the hyphen: *nonentity*, *nonstarter*.
- Use a hyphen to avoid confusion or mispronunciation: *re-use*, *re-creation*.
- Use hyphens in compound adjectives that are followed by a noun: *a five-year plan*; *24-hour service*; *high-level talks*; *area-based model*, *transit-oriented development*, *work-related injuries*.
- Hyphenate two or more modifiers when they *precede* a noun (to form a compound adjective), but when they *follow* the noun the hyphen falls away.

Preceding the noun	Following the noun
cost-of-living indicator	indicator related to the cost of living
long-standing agreement	an agreement of long standing
long-term solution	a solution over the long term
low-income housing	housing for those with a low income
round-table discussions	they sat around a table to discuss
six-year-old building	a building which is six years old
two-day course	a course running for two days
two-thirds majority	a majority of two thirds
up-to-date report	the report is up to date
well-known politician	the politician was well known
well-run city	a city that is well run

- As compound nouns become more familiar, the hyphen often falls away: *database*, *healthcare*, *homeowner*, *printout*, *website*, *workstation*.
- Use hyphens in some compound nouns to show that they are single entities: *load-shedding*, *whistle-blowing*, *coal-face*.  
**Note:** The noun *role player* is not hyphenated (yet) but the adjectival form is hyphenated: *role-playing exercise*.
- Hyphenate a phrasal verb when it is made into a noun or write it as a single word. (The normal phrasal verb should not be hyphenated.) A few examples are:

Noun	Phrasal verb
give the <i>go-ahead</i>	to go ahead
the <i>roll-out</i> of the project	to roll out
looking for <i>handouts</i>	to hand out
your <i>login</i> , <i>logon</i> , <i>logoff</i>	to log in, log on, log off
a manual <i>clock-in</i>	to clock in

- Use a hanging (suspended) hyphen to indicate a common element that has been omitted in a series: *three- to four-year-olds*, *the top warm- and cold-weather winter getaways*; *medium- to long-term changes*.
- The preferred house style spelling for *by-law* is with a hyphen.
- The following Latin expressions are **not** written with hyphens: *ad hoc*, *vice versa*, *de facto*.
- **Do not** use a hyphen when the adverb in a modifier ends in *-ly*: *overly ambitious plans*, *newly elected council*.
- Wi-Fi is a registered trademark and must be spelled with a hyphen (and with two capital letters).

## IF

- When 'if' introduces a notion that is improbable, hypothetical or untrue, the verb should be in the **subjunctive**: If that were the case, we would have acted.
- When 'if' introduces a notion that is true or possibly true, the verb should be in the **indicative**: If the hall was clean then, it is not the case now.

## LEGISLATION

- Write general references to acts as follows: Consumer Protection Act, Act 68 of 2008. In legislation it must be written as follows: Consumer Protection Act, 2008 (Act 68 of 2008).
- Write the following words in lower case: section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph and clause.
- Write the following words with a capital letter: Schedule, Part, Chapter, Regulation, Subregulation, the Act.
- Replace 'shall' with 'must' or 'will' as appropriate: The scrapyard shall (**replace with 'must'**) not be operated outside of the property boundaries. The lease shall (**replace with 'will'**) endure for a period of 10 years.

## NUMBERS AND AMOUNTS

- Write out numbers from one to nine; use figures for the rest.
- Use hyphens in written-out numbers from twenty-one to ninety-nine.
- Hyphenate 'million' when used as an adjective: **R6,4-million loss**, but **a loss of R6,4 million**.
- Use a hard or non-breaking space (press **Ctrl + Shift + space bar**) to indicate thousands: **12 760**.
- If you have a combination of single- and double-digit figures in a sentence, write them all as figures: **Between 9 and 15 people attended the course**.
- Do not insert a space after the rand symbol or any currency symbol; therefore **R12 760**.
- In South Africa the comma (not a point) must be used as a decimal marker.  
(See DECIMAL COMMA under PUNCTUATION.)
- Use a comma to indicate cents, e.g. **R12 760 300,85**. **Do not** use commas to separate thousands.
- Don't use zeros after an amount of money, therefore **R115 000**, *not* R115 000,00.
- Amounts may not be split across two lines. Use hard spaces to keep the figures together.
- The plural form of our currency is also 'rand'.

## PLACE NAMES

Note the correct spelling of the following:

Bonnytoun	Khayelitsha
Buitengracht	Mitchells Plain (no apostrophe)
Dunoon (one word)	Philippi
Gugulethu	Gordon's Bay

## PLURAL FORMS

**Hint:** Check your dictionary because plurals are formed in many ways.

- **Do not** use an apostrophe to form the plural.
  - Use round brackets to indicate the plural form as alternative: **plan(s)**.
  - Often one would just add an -s to form the plural: **the two Koreas, ins and outs, dos and don'ts**.
  - Add -es for nouns ending in:
    - s: the **Lewises, the Williamses, minuses**
    - sh: the **Bushes**
    - ch: **branches, churches, switches**
  - Nouns ending in -o mostly get an -s in the plural: **memos, photos, silos**.
- Exceptions:** **embargoes, heroes, vetoes**.
- Add -s to nouns that have a vowel before the final -o: **studios, videos**.
  - Singular nouns that end in -is, end in -es in the plural: **crisis – crises; analysis – analyses**.

## PORTFOLIO AND OTHER COMMITTEES

Some of the committees formed in 2017 are named as follows:

- Area-based Oversight Committee
- Assets and Facilities Committee
- Communities Development Committee
- Corporate Services Committee
- Economy and Environment Committee
- Finance Committee
- Municipal Public Accounts Committee (MPAC)
- Rules Committee
- Safety and Social Services Committee
- Sustainability and Resilience Committee
- Transport and Urban Development Committee
- Utilities and Energy Services Committee

# PUNCTUATION

**Note:** Use a **single space** after full stops, colons, question marks and exclamation marks.

## Ampersand (&)

Avoid using the ampersand if you can. Use 'and' instead.

**Exception:** Retain the ampersand in registered names such as **V&A Waterfront**.

## Apostrophe (see APOSTROPHE)

## Brackets (round)

- Do not insert a space between the brackets and the contents within the brackets.
- In legislation write the number or letter in round brackets close up to the section number: **section 116(3)**, **section 5(1)(a)**. Use a hard space between the word 'section' and the figure(s).
- If a whole sentence is enclosed by brackets, the final punctuation mark is inside the closing bracket: **(The City is sponsoring event-related costs to the value of more than R2 million.)**
- If the part enclosed by brackets is a phrase, number or letter, the punctuation mark will follow the closing bracket: **The City is sponsoring event-related costs (to the value of more than R2 million).**

## Brackets (square)

Avoid using square brackets, except in amended legislation.

## Colon

- Do not use colons after headings.
- Do not insert a space before the colon.

## Comma

Using commas with the conjunction 'however'

The conjunction 'however' must always have:

- commas around it when it occurs inside a sentence: The speaker, however, was of a different opinion.
- a comma after it when it starts a sentence: However, they did not share the same opinion.
- a comma before it when it ends a sentence: The speaker was of a different opinion, however.
- a semicolon before and a comma after it when it joins two sentences: They met regularly; however, they continued to disagree.

Using commas with relative clauses

- Do not use a comma before a defining relative clause (one which conveys essential information): **The drain that leads to the main is blocked.**
- Place a non-defining relative clause (one which conveys incidental information describing something or someone) between a pair of commas:
  - My colleague, whom I respect, was not right in this case.
  - We attended the inaugural match, which was between Ajax Cape Town and Santos, at the Cape Town Stadium.

## Decimal comma

With the publication of South African Government Notice R.1146 on 5 June 1974 the comma became the only recognised decimal indicator in South Africa for all numbers. There is no space after the decimal mark. However, there is a space before the metric symbol, e.g. **1,2 m**.

**Note:** Also refer to SYMBOLS.

## Forward slash (or solidus)

- Do not use a forward slash in a sentence to substitute 'and' or 'or'. The slash **always means 'or'**. Write either 'and' or 'or'. If you mean both, use 'and/or'.
- Indicate financial years as follows: 2016/17.
- Do not use the forward slash to add the letter indicating the plural as alternative as in 'space/s'. Use round brackets around the letter: space(s).

**Note:** Backslashes are only used for computing.

## Hyphen (see HYPHENS)

## Quotation marks

- Our house style is to use single quotation marks.
- Use double quotation marks for quotations within quotations and direct speech.

## Semicolon

- Use semicolons to separate items in a list of items which themselves contain commas: In the meeting we have Joe Mfini, HR Director; Bill Watson, Finance Director; Jessica Ferreira, Communications Manager and Nosipho Ndlovu, Marketing Manager.
- Use a semicolon to replace a conjunction: Further protest was pointless; the decision had already been taken. (In this case the conjunction 'because' had been omitted.)
- Use a semicolon before 'however' when it joins two sentences: They met regularly; however, they continued to disagree.

## REDUNDANCY

- Make sure you do not use expressions in which the same thought is repeated. Cut out all superfluous words. Examples of expressions containing redundancies are: **advance planning, close proximity, exact replica, general consensus, planning ahead.**
- HIV stands for human immunodeficiency virus, therefore it would be redundant to say HIV virus. Use **HIV** or the **HI virus**.

## SIMPLE LANGUAGE

Use plain and easy language to enhance readability and understanding.

**Note:** Refer to the *Guide for Using Plain Language* on Cityweb.

## SPELLING HOUSE STYLE

Some words have alternative spelling forms. For the sake of consistency, the following versions will be used for our house style:

- Use one s in words such as **buses, focused** and **bonuses**.
- Write the following as one word: **cellphone, database, nonetheless, recordkeeping** and **website**.



# STREET NAME CHANGES AND OTHER NEW NAMES

## Streets

Was	Now
Coen Steytler Avenue	Walter Sisulu Avenue
Eastern Boulevard	Nelson Mandela Boulevard
Harrier Street (Parklands)	Blue Crane Street
Hendrik Verwoerd Drive	Uys Krige Drive
Lansdowne Road	Imam Haron Road (between Turfhall Road and Palmyra Road)
	Japhtha K Masemola Road (between Wetton Road and Swartklip Road)
	Govan Mbeki Road (between Swartklip Road and Baden Powell Road)
Modderdam Road	Robert Sobukwe Road
NY 1	Steve Biko Drive
Oswald Pirow Street	Christiaan Barnard Street
Western Boulevard	Helen Suzman Boulevard

## Buildings

Was	Now
Wittebome Civic Centre	Wynberg Civic Centre
Athlone Civic Centre	Dulcie September Civic Centre

## Suburbs

Was	Now
Schotschekloof	Bo-Kaap

## Footbridges

The seven footbridges along Nelson Mandela Boulevard and Rhodes Drive are named as follows:

1. /Alkunta (Klaas Stoffel)
2. Dawid Kruiper
3. Father Basil van Rensburg
4. Father John Oliver
5. Ingrid Jonker
6. Taliep Petersen
7. Tuan Guru (Imam Abdullah ibn Abdus Salaam)

## STYLE GUIDES ON THE INTERNET

On the internet there are several style guides, especially of newspapers, that explain certain grammar and stylistic issues quite comprehensively.

You can consult these style guides:

- [www.guardian.co.uk/styleguide](http://www.guardian.co.uk/styleguide)
- The editorial style guide for the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) found at [www.gcis.gov.za](http://www.gcis.gov.za). Click on **Resource Centre**, then **Guidelines**, where you can select the latest style guide.
- <http://www.economist.com/styleguide/introduction>
- <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/topics/about-us/style-book/>
- [http://www.ox.ac.uk/public\\_affairs/services\\_and\\_resources/style\\_guide/index.html](http://www.ox.ac.uk/public_affairs/services_and_resources/style_guide/index.html)
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/academy/journalism/news-style-guide/article/art20131010112740749>

## SYMBOLS

- Do not insert a space between the number and percentage symbol; therefore **15%**.
- Numerals and metric symbols are separated by a space; therefore **64 kg, 8 ha, 39 m<sup>2</sup>**.
- Use the **ℓ** symbol to indicate litre. Go to INSERT > SYMBOL. If you use it regularly, create a shortcut.

**Note:** a millilitre (**mℓ**) is one thousandth of a litre, while a megalitre (**Mℓ**) is one million litres.

## TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Group the digits in telephone and cellphone numbers as follows: 3, 3 and 4 (with spaces in between); therefore **021 400 3642**.

**Exception:** Toll-free numbers start off with a group of four digits: 0800 323 130.

## WORDS ENDING IN -ABLE AND -IBLE

There is no specific rule, but here are a few examples:

-ABLE	-IBLE
indispensable	admissible
innumerable	accessible
measurable	destructible
predictable	discernible
unmistakable	dismissible
	feasible
	plausible

## WORDS THAT ARE EASILY MISSPELLED

Auxiliary	discrepancy	per cent ( <i>but</i> percentage)
benefited	harass <i>but</i> embarrass	questionnaire
calendar	inasmuch as	remunerate
cannot	install, installation <i>but</i> instalment	renowned
census	levelling	supersede
combating	no one ( <i>but</i> nobody)	unparalleled
committee	notwithstanding	
consensus	ongoing	

**Note:** Refer to the list of problem words and the Grammar Guru publications under Language Services on Cityweb.

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## CONTACT DETAILS

### LANGUAGE SERVICES UNIT

Manager	021 400 3642	Elise.Engelbrecht@capetown.gov.za
Translation and editing services	021 400 5436	Translation@capetown.gov.za
Interpreting services	021 400 5439	Interpreting.Services@capetown.gov.za