

PROSE AT **ITS FINEST**

A WRITING STYLE GUIDE

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A GUIDE TO THE GUIDE

All materials distributed by Newmark Knight Frank are considered company materials and represent our firm, whether they are corporate brochures developed by the marketing department, market reports developed by the research team, or sales pitches developed by the presentations department or a broker team. These materials should be consistent with one another, so always proofread for consistency in style as well as for spelling and grammatical issues.

This writing style guide is a compilation of the most frequent grammatical and stylistic issues we encounter in our materials—a combination of rules from the **AP Stylebook** and standards unique to Newmark Knight Frank. Use this guide as a first point of reference, and defer to the AP Stylebook for issues that are not covered here. Remember, the AP Stylebook is our parent guide.

Spell check does not recognize all real estate terms, so for terms that are not frequently used, search online and take the word of the majority of reputable sources (i.e., edited web pages, such as *The New York Times* or *The Wall Street Journal*, which should be consulted over lesser-known sources).

If you encounter a frequent issue that is not covered here, please contact marketinggroup@ngkf.com so that we can update this guide. This guide has been modified over time and will be updated on an ongoing basis.

ADDRESSES AND ABBREVIATIONS

For state abbreviations, street suffixes and secondary unit designators, use the USPS abbreviation standard as your official guide. Refer to: nkf.re/postal-standard

In general, spell out numbers within avenue names (e.g., Fifth Avenue, not 5th Avenue), but use digits to indicate numbers within street names (e.g., 13th Street, not Thirteenth Street).

Note the correct abbreviation and comma usage for city and state references in the following examples: *Joe traveled from Nashville, TN, to Birmingham, England. The Westchester, NY, voters met with a representative in Washington.*

ATTRIBUTION - NEW TEAMS AND OFFICES

Case Studies

In general, for deals completed entirely outside of Newmark Knight Frank, please keep their corresponding case studies separate for your use only. If they are to be used in a presentation, refer to the deals using terms such as **team experience** or **prior experience**, rather than attribute them to company experience, which could be misleading.

Bios

For entities that have recently partnered with Newmark Knight Frank, references to past events that apply to both a prior and current situation will likely arise. When attributing such events, use general terms such as **the firm** or **the company**. Write, for example, *Ms. Smith joined the firm in 2002 (although she technically joined Cornish & Carey Commercial in 2002, before it became Newmark Knight Frank).*

CAPITALIZATION

Geography

Capitalize recognized geographic entities, such as West Coast, the South (as in the U.S. South) or the Midwest. However, do not mistakenly capitalize adjectives that simply describe cardinal directions. For example, *the city lies south of Detroit. He headed southwest to reach it.*

Capitalize popular references to locations that have become a part of the regional vocabulary, such as the South Central District (Los Angeles), New York's Lower East Side and Chicago's South Side.

Titles

A subject's title should only be capitalized if it is placed immediately before his/her name. If the title follows the subject's name, however, write it in lowercase. For example, *Managing Director Phillip Lee joined the firm in 2008, or Phillip Lee joined the firm as a managing director.*

MORE TIPS ON CAPITALIZATION

Remember to verify the correct spelling and capitalization of an entity name. **The** is often mistakenly capitalized. For example, *he attended the University of Houston—not The University of Houston.*

Class A is capitalized. Note it is never written as class A, "Class A" or Class-A.

District, as part of a name that formally contains it, should be capitalized (e.g., Financial District, Garment District). Otherwise, it should be written in lowercase.

Capitalize **principal units** of the government, such as the White House, Congress, Senate, Supreme Court, Justice Department and the U.S. Consulate.

Do not capitalize **state of** or **city of** in contexts such as the following: *He is relocating to the city of Chicago. He is a citizen of the state of New York.*

Do not capitalize **federal** when it is simply used as an adjective to distinguish from municipal, state, etc., but capitalize when it is used as part of a formal unit name (e.g., the Federal Trade Commission, the Federal Aviation Agency).

COMMON MISTAKES

Affect vs. Effect

Affect is a verb meaning “to influence.” **Effect** is a noun meaning “result or outcome.” **Effective** is a word—**affective** is not. To demonstrate, *the effect of an excellent sales pitch is to affect a change in real estate strategy.*

Comprise vs. is Comprised of/Comprising of

Comprise means “to include or contain.” Do not write **is comprised of** or **comprising of**, which literally means “is included of” and “is including of,” respectively, and does not make sense. Examples of correct usage: *The team comprises the most experienced brokers and property managers. Comprising 20 floors of prime office space, the building is currently one of the most coveted properties on the market.*

e.g. vs. i.e.

Commonly confused terms **e.g.** and **i.e.** claim a subtle yet notable difference. **i.e.** is the abbreviation for the Latin “*id est*,” which means “that is” and is always followed by a comma. **e.g.** means “for example” and should also be followed by a comma.

Premier vs. Premiere

Premier means “first in rank” or “leading, earliest, oldest.” To demonstrate, *we are selling Chicago’s premier Class A building.*

Premiere means “to present publicly for the first time.” To demonstrate, *the building’s premiere on the market resulted in an oversupply of Class B space.*

Proximity vs. Close Proximity

Proximity is defined as “the state of being near.” Do not pair **proximity** with **close** (as in **close proximity**) because it is redundant, literally translating into “close state of being near.” Example of correct usage: *The building’s proximity to three major transportation hubs influenced the tenant’s decision to relocate.*

The Reason is That vs. The Reason is Because

The correct phrase is **the reason is that**. For example, *the reason the room appears extremely old is that the building was built more than a century ago.*

LLP vs. LLP (or LLC vs. LLC)

Most companies do not use a comma before **LLP** or **LLC** in their names. However, because some companies do use a comma before these abbreviations, check the spelling of each company’s name before deciding whether or not to use a comma.

SPACING

Insert one space after any punctuation, such as a period, colon or semicolon, which ends a sentence.

HYPHENATION

A compound adjective is a single adjective comprising two or more words (e.g., brand-new, best-in-class or in-depth). As long as they are two separate words, compound adjectives should be separated by a hyphen. When compound adjectives have been in use long enough, they often become one word (e.g., wraparound, trustworthy). When in doubt, consult a dictionary.

Common compound adjectives separated by a hyphen: two-story, 11-month, state-of-the-art, turn-key, built-to-suit,* year-to-date,* year-over-year.* Common compound adjectives that are not separated by a hyphen: longstanding, ongoing, wraparound. When in doubt about whether or not to hyphenate, consult the dictionary.

*Note that some of these words can also be used as adverbs or verbs, in which case they are not hyphenated. For example, the team will build to suit. Year over year, the average has remained fairly consistent.

LISTS AND COMMAS

Use commas to separate the elements of a series or list, but drop the comma before the last conjunction. For example, *our services include retail advisory, strategic planning, consulting and property management. Additionally, we offer industrial services, transaction management and marketing support.*

Traditionally, commas separate elements within a series, but we permit the use of the semicolon in place of the comma

where there is extensive punctuation in the clauses within a list—to help clear up the series. For example, *select clients include Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP; Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP; LeClairRyan; and Davidow, Davidow, Siegel & Stern LLP.*

NAMES AND TITLES

In all bios and marketing collateral, use the subject's full name in the first reference only. After the first mention, he/she should be referenced by the appropriate prefix (i.e., Mr. or Ms.) followed by his/her last name throughout the rest of text. For example, *Lisa Bell joined Newmark Knight Frank in 2008. Ms. Bell is best known for her intimate knowledge of the market. To date, Ms. Bell has closed 489,430 square feet in transactions.* In press releases, use the last name by itself after using the subject's full name for the first time.

As mentioned previously, a subject's title should only be capitalized if it is placed immediately before his/her name. If the title follows the subject's name, the title should be in lowercase. For example, *Managing Director Phillip Lee joined the firm in 2008, or Phillip Lee joined the firm as a managing director.*



NUMBERS

General Rules

In general, numbers under 10 should be spelled out. Numbers greater than nine should be written with digits. For example, *there are 23 assets in the portfolio. Nine of the assets require infrastructural upgrades.*

Include commas in larger numbers requiring one unless you are referencing an address or another proper name (e.g., 1,520 SF, 1520 Ashberry Street).

Referencing Data in Market Reports

For average asking rents, use two decimal places and add /SF (e.g., \$12.34/SF, \$42.40/SF).

For price per square foot in building sales, round to the nearest whole number, forgo the decimal and add /SF (e.g., \$123/SF, \$43/SF).

For net absorption and generally all whole numbers under 1.0 million, use the full number with commas (e.g., 123,456, 2,480).

For whole numbers over 1.0 million, drop the numbers after the first comma and use one decimal place followed

by the units (e.g., 1.2 million, not 1,234,567; 1.0 million, not 1 million).

For all percentages, including availability, vacancy and cap rates, use one decimal place accompanied by the percent symbol (e.g., 1.2%, not 1.2 percent). If the rounded decimal place indicates a zero, do not drop it off (e.g., 12.0%, not 12%), unless stating an approximation (e.g., approximately 12%).

Write out the word **negative** when quoting negative figures (e.g., negative 123,456, not -123,456; negative 1.2%, not -1.2%).

The abbreviated form **3Q10** should be used to indicate the third quarter of 2010 in table column titles, graphs, etc. This rule applies for all quarters and years. However, when dealing with full sentences, spell everything out.

QUOTATION MARKS AND ITALICS

Use quotation marks for titles of TV shows, articles, white papers, reports and speaking engagements (e.g., lecture series, talks, seminars, etc.).

Use italics for titles of publications (e.g., books, magazines, newspapers, journals, online publications, etc.).

OUR COMPANY NAME

In corporate brochures and collateral material, the full **Newmark Knight Frank** is always written out. In other materials, our full company name should also be spelled out wherever possible, but where an abbreviation is necessary, **NKF** is the only acceptable form (never use "Newmark" only), and **Newmark Knight Frank** should still be spelled out in the first reference. For example, *Newmark Knight Frank (NKF) has arranged the sale of a triple-net leased retail store in Long Island. NKF represented both sides in the transaction.*

Note that commas and periods always go inside quotation marks. For example, *Chairman Joe Smith argued that the amendment to the rule was “unnecessary and superfluous.” The issue will be discussed tomorrow in “The Stoler Report.”*

SQUARE FEET

Spelling out

- In formal documents and within full sentences, spell out **square feet**.
- When spelling out **square foot** as an adjective, it should be hyphenated. *E.g., Newmark Knight Frank secured a 3,250-square-foot building on behalf of the client.*
This rule applies for other units such as acres, watts and inches.

Note that when referring to square feet, the verb immediately following should be singular. *E.g., In the third quarter of 2006, 300,000 square feet was absorbed in the submarket.*

Abbreviation

- The abbreviation of square feet is always SF (never s.f. or sq.ft.).
- The abbreviation for rentable square feet is always RSF.
- The abbreviation for per square foot is /SF. *E.g., Average asking rents in Kansas City have reached \$35/SF.*
- The correct abbreviation of months is /mo (e.g., \$1,93 SF/mo).

To indicate a triple-net lease or other additional information, separate abbreviations with a slash. For example, to represent triple net square feet per month, write nnn/SF/mo.

Capitalization

Except for bios and market reports, in which SF is always capitalized, capitalization for sf, /sf and rsf should follow the context in which the word is being used. For example, in an advertisement, announcement, sidebar, graph or table, you may capitalize sf as you would other words in that context.

THINGS TO SPELL OUT

In general, spell out full words in formal documents. Use Street instead of St., corporation instead of corp. and international instead of int'l. However, in informal documents, including graphs, charts and tables, words like street, road and highway may be abbreviated and capitalized.

Spell out **and**. Do not use the ampersand (&), particularly within formal documents and full sentences, unless it is a part of a name that formally contains it (e.g., a company name, a person's title or a division name).

Spell out numbers under 10. Refer to “Numbers” for further specifications.

Do not write **st**, **nd** or **rd** in superscript. They should reflect the font size of the rest of the text (e.g., 181st Street, 22nd floor).

TONE

When writing any type of company material, try to stay positive. In market reports, this means not using overly emphatic terms to describe a slow market. For example, instead of writing that the industrial space market in Des Moines was stone-cold this quarter, write that the industrial space market in Des Moines hit a speed bump this quarter with high negative absorption rates. This not only keeps us

from sounding pessimistic about the market but also ties the statements made in market reports directly to the research on which they are predicated. The same rule applies to other marketing materials.

To ensure a professional, confident tone in formal documents, avoid subjective or informal words and phrases.

- **Instead of:**

seems

Use:

appears to be

- **Instead of:**

The client wanted high ceilings and large windows

Use:

Desired features included high ceilings and large windows.

- **Instead of:**

He felt that listing the property with Newmark Knight Frank would lend it more legitimacy in the marketplace.

Use:

In order to lend the property more legitimacy in the marketplace, he listed it with Newmark Knight Frank.



For questions/comments, please contact:
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