



Rutgers Editorial Style Guide

This quick reference sheet addresses common questions about editorial style at Rutgers. It complements the complete *Rutgers Editorial Style Guide*, which lists school names, preferred style, grammar, word usage, etc. Find it at communications.rutgers.edu/styleguide.

- Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, originated as Queen’s College in 1766.
Note: Cap “The” and insert commas after “Rutgers” and “Jersey”; use apostrophe in Queen’s.
- The appropriate Rutgers name should appear on official Rutgers communications.
 - Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
 - Rutgers–New Brunswick
 - Rutgers Health
 - Rutgers–Newark
 - Rutgers–Camden
- Use an en dash and close up spaces before and after it in university names as indicated above. To insert en dash:
Mac: hold down Option and press Minus key
PC: hold down Ctrl and press Minus key
- Possessive form: Rutgers’ professors (not “Rutgers’s” or “Rutger’s”)
- Adjective form: the Rutgers professors (but never “the Rutgers’ professors”)
- Use one space between sentences and after a colon. Lowercase word after colon in a sentence.
- Use a series comma (also known as the Oxford comma or serial comma).
- Avoid capitalizing words unless part of a formal name.
- Spell out numbers zero through nine, except for ages, percentages, academic credits, heights, weights.
- Use an en dash in ranges: pages 2–16, 1965–2019; close up spaces before and after en dash.
- Use first entry for a word spelling in the dictionary. (Sometimes a variation is listed second; e.g., use “toward” not “towards.”)
- When using headline style, cap all words except conjunctions, prepositions, and articles, unless they are the first or last word. Cap even short verbs like “Is” and “Be” in a heading.
- Generally, close up words that have a prefix (email, postgraduate, coauthor).
- Avoid abbreviations, acronyms, and credentials whenever possible.
- Spell out academic degrees: bachelor’s degree instead of B.A. or B.S., master’s degree instead of M.A. or M.S., doctoral degree instead of Ph.D., medical degree instead of M.D. Use either “doctorate” or “doctoral degree,” never “doctorate degree.” Note that the proper construction is “bachelor of arts degree” or “bachelor’s degree.” It is never “bachelor’s of arts degree.” Use abbreviations only if spelling out the degree is unwieldy or space is limited.
- If using abbreviations for degrees, use periods: B.A., Ph.D., etc. (If deleting periods is a strong preference, i.e., MBA, be consistent and delete periods in all like abbreviations.)
- Capitalize short professional titles before a full name (Vice Chancellor Jane Jones; Professor Juan Gonzalez; Dean Marta Michaels). For readability, put long titles after a full name and lowercase (Rhonda Mills, executive vice president for operations).

Rutgers editorial style is based on the *The Chicago Manual of Style (17th edition)*.

Exceptions of style preferences are made for communications materials prepared for the media and websites.

See the complete *Rutgers Editorial Style Guide* at communications.rutgers.edu/styleguide.