



Spacing

Use one space between words and sentences.

Biblical Citations

Do not put spaces before or after the colon that separates chapter number and verse (Matthew 6:26).

Separate chapter number and verse by a colon, not spaces (John 8:15).
Within a chapter, use an en dash between verses (John 8:14–15).
From one chapter or book to another, use an en dash with a space on both sides (John 8:14 – 9:3).

The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) is the official Bible standard for the PCC. Note references to other versions.

Comma

Use commas to separate the items in a series. Omit the comma before the final *and* or *or* in a series unless it may cause a misunderstanding.

Semicolon

The semicolon connects two complete sentences. Usually these two sentences are fairly short and closely linked in meaning.

Hyphen

Hyphens separate groups of numbers (telephone numbers, financial accounts, etc.)

Generally, if you use a phrase before a noun (as an adjective), you would hyphenate it. If you use that phrase after a verb, you would not.

Barb and James had a face-to-face meeting.
Barb and James met face to face.

No hyphen is needed when an *-ly* adverb precedes an adjective.
Pat compiled the randomly gathered comments.

En Dash

En dashes indicate a range or difference, a span of years, a range in monetary amounts, sports scores and votes.

City council approved the project with a 5–2 vote
Luke 5:27–28

Em Dash

Em dashes represent an abrupt change in thought and parenthetical comments. Spaces are not needed between the text and the em dash.

Ellipsis

Do not insert spaces at either end of the ellipsis, except when a new sentence begins after the ellipsis. Always uses three points.

In the beginning... darkness covered the face of the deep... Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.

Quotation Marks

Use double quotation marks for quoted matter; use single marks when quoted matter appears within a quotation. Always use "smart quotes," not straight quotes. Set periods and commas inside quotation marks. Set semicolons and colons outside quotation marks.

Capitalization

Always start a sentence with a capital letter. For that reason, avoid starting a sentence with a numeral.

For headings and subheadings, either capitalize the first letter of the first word only or capitalize the first letter of all nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs. Consistency is key. Lowercase articles, coordinating conjunctions and prepositions unless they are the first word in a heading or subheading. Also lowercase *to* in infinitives.

If any quoted statement can stand on its own as a sentence, start it with a capital. If it is an excerpt from a sentence or a continuation of a sentence, do not start it with a capital.

I would call this a "highly specialized item."
Pat said, "This kit is a highly specialized item."
What are the implications of saying "Yes"?

In general, capitalize formal titles that directly precede a name, but lowercase them when they stand alone or are set off by commas. Lowercase occupational titles and job descriptions.

We invited Moderator David Sutherland to speak at our church.
We invited the moderator to speak at our church.

Capitalize the proper names of committees. Lowercase the word *committee* when it is not part of a proper name.

the Rev. Duncan Jeffrey, convenor of the Dr. E. H. Johnson Memorial Fund Committee

Reverend (Rev.)

Always include *the* before *Reverend* or *Rev.* If the person also has a doctorate, use the abbreviated method (*the Rev. Dr. David Sutherland*); use the title with first mention of the person's name, and include the person's first name (do not write *the Rev. Sutherland*); after first mention, refer to the minister as Mr., Ms., Miss, Mrs. or Dr. and last name, or by first name only.

The Reverend Stephen Kendall works at the national office.
Mr. Kendall is also a member of the band called Lost Pilgrims.
We welcomed the Rev. Dr. Rick Fee. Rick said he was happy to join us.

Possessives

Almost all singular nouns become possessive by adding apostrophe *s*, including singular nouns that end in *s*.

the man's hat, Mary's purse, James's coat, the witness's testimony

Do not add apostrophe *s* to biblical and classical names that end in *s*.

Jesus', Moses'

Most plural nouns already have an *s* on the end, so you simply add an apostrophe after the *s*. For plural nouns that do not end in an *s*, add apostrophe *s*.

citizens' rights, elders' meeting, men's breakfast, people's choice

Where the usage is more descriptive than possessive, omit the apostrophe.

a board of directors meeting

Use a single apostrophe for joint possession, separate apostrophes for separate possession.

Bill and Susan's store, Pierre's and Marie's shoes

A group of words used to express a single idea takes an apostrophe on the last word only.

the government of Canada's policy, her mother-in-law's car

Keyboard Commands

– (en dash)

Windows: Alt + 0150
Mac: Option + hyphen

— (em dash)

Windows: Alt + 0151
Mac: Shift + Option + hyphen

... (ellipsis)

Windows: Alt + Ctrl + period
Mac: Option + semicolon