

PEG style guide for *PEGboard* and PEGblog

Revised: April 2024

NOTES:

- Proofreaders and editors are to please anonymise themselves before beginning their edit.
- To find a specific reference in this guide, use ctrl f (pdf) or Navigation pane (MS Word).
- Use [member resources](#) on PEG website, eg dictionaries, *New Hart's Rules*, e-guides, FAQs, etc.
- In MS Word, make sure language is set to English (United Kingdom) and not English (South Africa).

Structure of articles

Headline

Preferably keep below 10 words.
Use sentence case.

Byline

Insert writer's full name, no credentials.

Stand-alone (standfirst)

Sum up the article in one to two sentences. These can usually be extracted from the first paragraph.
Include these in most articles unless the article is short or an announcement of some kind.
Where an Afrikaans article is published, an English standfirst should be included for reference.

Pull quotes

Use full stops for full sentences and ellipses to indicate omissions. Do not italicise. Include one to three pull quotes, depending on the length of the article.
Only include quotations if necessary (uncluttered look preferred).
Preferably keep to 15 words or less.

Paragraph style

Use an open line to indicate a new paragraph.

Paragraph headers

Include two or more paragraph headers, depending on the length of the article.
Set in bold or indicate which level heading it is.

Font (for articles)

Check for consistency only. The font varies with each issue, depending on layout and length.

Hyperlinks

Insert hyperlinks where necessary (eg to previous *PEGboard* editions, organisation names, pages on the website, etc).

Word styles

Do not use Word styles. The *PEGboard* designer uses a template for the various design elements.

Author biographies

Preferably keep to no more than 50 words.

Ensure that the information is clear and precise.
Use only the author's first name.
Include a hyperlink to their website, if available.
The biography must be in the third person.
Include a high-resolution head-and-shoulders photograph.

Coding

Main heading of article
Full author name
Pull quote(s): [pull quote]
Stand-alone para: [intro]
First paragraph: [body]
Level 1 heading: [h1]
Level 2 heading: [h2]
Author bio: [author bio]
Ending: [ends]

General editing

Use *PEGboard* (note small 'b', italicised, no article, never 'the *PEGboard*').
Avoid using words like 'very' and 'really'.
Avoid using multiple adverbs that mean the same thing.

Abbreviations

When introducing an abbreviation, if necessary, write out the name/ word in full followed by the abbreviation in (brackets). Some abbreviations are well enough known not to warrant writing out in full.
No full stop (eg established – est, street – str, population – pop)
If the name is not used again in the text, it is not necessary to insert the abbreviation.

Acronyms

When introducing an acronym, write out the name in full followed by the acronym in (brackets).
If the name is not used again in the text, it is not necessary to insert the acronym.

Acts

POPI Act, 2013 (Act No. 4 of 2013)
South African Language Practitioners' Council Act, 2014 (Act No. 8 of 2014)

Ampersands

Do not use an ampersand except where it is part of a name or in references.

Block quotes

Use for quotes of five lines or more, but use discretion, depending on author's use and type of article.
Add in-text reference outside of punctuation or at the end of the introductory sentence.

Brackets

Use parentheses ().
Use square brackets to indicate added words in a quote.

Bullets

Use the following bullet styles:

- Level 1
 - Level 2 (indent further)

Start each bullet with a capital.
Use a full stop at the end of bullets.
Keep formatting the same for all the bullets in a list (all statements, all imperatives, etc).
Make sure each bullet point is an accurate response to the lead-in sentence.

Captions

Except for captions that name people in a photograph, preferably keep to only one sentence.
A caption does not need to be a full sentence.

Do not end captions in full stops unless there is more than one sentence in the caption.

Currency

Do not insert a space between the currency symbol and the value (eg R1 000 and \$1 000).

Use a decimal comma, not a full stop.

Insert a non-breaking space to indicate thousands (ctrl + shift + space bar)

(See also *Numbers*.)

Dash

Use an en rule, spaced, to indicate a dash.

Data

Treat as plural: data are ...

Dates

Use the following format: day, date month year (eg Monday, 17 October 2022).

Dictionary

Refer to the Oxford Dictionaries (available through the PEG portal) for spelling and other online reference resources such as New Hart's Rules (NHR).

Ellipsis

Use the ellipsis preceded and followed by a space (eg why ... there).

Do not add a full stop when the ellipsis is at the end of a sentence (eg the list goes on and on ... We will explain as we progress.).

Endnotes

Preferably do not include endnotes but, where they are present in an article, use Arabic numbering.

Footer

Check that the footer contains the page number plus the caption (Newsletter of the Professional Editors' Guild) and date (mirror left/right on alternate pages).

Footnotes

Avoid footnotes.

Note that endnotes are permissible.

Foreign words

Italicise foreign words and add the English translation in (brackets) if necessary.

Heading style

Sentence case for all headings.

When the heading has a colon, first letter after the colon to start with a capital letter.

Inclusive language

Use gender-neutral language and pronouns.

Avoid the language of gender opposites (eg 'his/her', 'men and women').

Avoid language that reduces people to their birth-assigned sex or assumed biology.

Use language carefully when it describes aspects of identity related to, for instance, age, ability, race, language, ethnicity.

Examples of sensitive language

Setswana-speaking learner; older people; Zambian citizen; mobilises using a wheelchair; suffers from epilepsy.

In-text references

Insert a comma between the author and the year (eg Ngube, 2021).

Insert a colon followed by a space between the year and the page number (eg Ngube, 2021: 7).

List authors alphabetically and use et al for four or more authors.

Measurements

Use abbreviations for commonly used units of measure, such as kg, km, g, mg, m, cm.

Use the percentage sign rather than writing out per cent.

Use the percentage sign or unit of measure, unspaced, next to the value (eg 80%, 30km, 10mg).

When using numbers below 10 with a measurement, use numerals and not words (eg 3km, 5g).

Degrees should not be spaced when they refer to temperatures (eg 26°C) or to angles (eg 90° angle).

Names

Use the following format: IF Stone (no full stops or spaces).

Numbers

Write out numbers one to nine and use numerals for 10 and above.

Use a thin space as a thousand separator, eg 40 000 (ctrl + shift + space bar).

Use words for numbers that don't represent specific facts or data (eg I have imagined it a thousand times instead of I have imagined it 1 000 times).

Use first, second, etc and not firstly, secondly, etc.

Use numerals for significant digits and use words for the magnitude, eg 21 billion, not twenty-one billion or 21 000 000 000; 3 trillion, not 3 000 000 000 000 (it is difficult to interpret that many zeros).

Use the decimal comma (not the full stop) eg R4,5 billion.

For PEGblog, use numerals when the number is the first word in a sentence or bullet point (eg 8 ways to improve your social media presence).

Do not use superscript for 1st, 2nd, etc.

People groups

Use Black, Indian, Coloured, White, African.

Photographs

Ensure that the photographs for the PEG publications have a good resolution (ideally 800KB or more).

Portfolios

Use lower case (eg Alexis Grewan, national chair).

Punctuation

General rule: keep commas and hyphens to a minimum.

Do not use the serial (Oxford) comma.

Use scare quotes around a term the first time it appears only.

Use italics for emphasis and to refer to a specific word (eg the word *artisanal* ...).

Use upper case after colons in headings and titles (eg Getting concord right: A very singular matter).

In running text, use lower case after a colon unless it is a stand-alone sentence (use discretion).

Qualifications

Do not use full stops (eg BSc).

Quotation marks

Use single quotation marks.

Use double quotation marks for quotes within quotes.

Insert punctuation inside the quotation marks when the quote is a full sentence, or punctuation immediately precedes the quote. Eg, 'It cannot be done,' he concluded, 'we must give up the task.'

Insert punctuation outside the quotation mark if no punctuation immediately precedes it. Eg, He asserted that 'Americans don't understand history', and that 'intervention would be a disaster'. (NHR, p164)

Ranges

Use an en rule, unspaced, to indicate a range (eg 6–10, 2010–2014).

Spelling

Use the Oxford Dictionary online (via the PEG portal) or [Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary](#).

Ensure that the dictionary is set to British English.

Times

Use the following format: 8:30, 12:00, 16:30, 24:00 (no 0 before single digit times).

Titles

Italicise and use sentence case for published works: poetry, books, music, ballet, artwork.

The PEG guide to grammar and punctuation; Für Elise; Swan Lake; Mona Lisa.

Voice

Note that this is a members' newsletter so the tone should be informal without being casual. Use contractions such as *don't* and *shouldn't* rather than *do not* and *should not*.

Apply Plain Language principles and avoid archaisms.

References

Add heading: References.

Use informal Harvard style: Surname, Initials, Date, *Title in italics: Subtitle*. City: Publisher.

No hanging indent.

Books with one author

Garner, BA 2016 *Garner's modern English usage: The authority on grammar, usage, and style*. Oxford: OUP.

Linnegar, J 2013 *Engleish, our Engleish: Problems in South African English and how to resolve them*. Cape Town: Pharos.

Books with multiple authors

Linnegar, J & McGillivray, K 2019 *Grammar, punctuation and all that jazz ...* Cape Town: MLA Publishers.

Strunk, W, White, EB & Kalman, M 2000 (4th ed) *The elements of style*. London: Penguin.

Books without an author

South African Concise Oxford Dictionary 2010. Oxford: OUP.

Concise Oxford English Dictionary 2011 (12th ed) New York: OUP.

Edited books

Ritter, RM (ed) 2014 *New Oxford dictionary for writers and editors*. Oxford: OUP.

Books with editions

Swan, M 2005 (3rd ed) *Practical English Usage*. London: OUP.

Book chapters

Farkas, DK 2002 Managing headings in print and online documents. In *Proceedings: IEEE International Professional Communication Conference, Portland, Oregon, 17–20 September*. New York: IEEE International, pp 283–296.

No date

CENGAGE Learning Author Guidelines:

https://college.cengage.com/reviewers_authors/ra_author_guidelines_part04.html# vpid_58

Journal articles

Davis, M 2013 Is public administration a profession? *Public Administration Research*, 2(2): 26–36.

Faulconbridge, JR & Muzio, D 2012 Professions in a globalizing world: Towards a transnational sociology of the professions? *International Sociology*, 27(1): 136–152.

Web pages

Business Tech 2022 *How much money you need to be middleclass in South Africa*.

<https://businesstech.co.za/news/finance/589558/how-much-money-you-need-to-be-middle-class-in-south-africa-2/>

Chartered Institute of Editing and Proofreading 2022 *Suggested minimum rates*.

<https://www.ciep.uk/resources/suggested-minimum-rates>

Newspaper articles

Frizzell, N 2014 'Beyond cuts: The many roles of a writer's editor', *The Guardian*, 12 March.

Blogs

Arends, U 2023 PEGblog [Editing for conscious and inclusive language](#)

Afrikaans references

If the book title is in Afrikaans, capitalisation of the title should occur according to Afrikaans style principles, including whether to use capitalisation after the colon or not.

Carstens, WAM 2018 (6e uitgawe) *Norme vir Afrikaans: Moderne Standaardafrikaans*. Pretoria: Van Schaik. (NVA)

Faasen, N 2018 *Afrikaansgids*. Kaapstad: Pharos. (AG)

Word list

Preferred online dictionary: Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary / Lexico

Numbers 21st century 2nd	A Accreditation Test Accreditation Scheme Accredited Text Editor among (not amongst) amid (not amidst) Associate Member	B BA degree bachelor's	C-D cell phone chairperson copy editor copy-edit/copy-editing coordinate Covid-19 Coffee Conversations
E Eastern Cape region ebook e-reader email egroup eg etc Exco Executive Committee	F Full Member first (not firstly) focuses/focusing	G Gauteng region global North global South	H honours
I ie internet isiNdebele isiXhosa isiZulu	J-K KwaZulu-Natal region	L language practitioner loadshedding	M-N master's
O okay	P <i>PEGboard</i> (not the <i>PEGboard</i>) PEGblog (not the PEGblog) Plain Language Professional Editors' Guild	Q-S Second World War/WWII secretary Sesotho Sesotho sa Leboa Setswana siSwati standard operating procedures (SOPs) subeditor	T Tshivenda
U US (not USA or America) UK or Britain (not the UK)	V-Z website web web page West/Western Western Cape region while (not whilst) Wi-Fi	Provinces of SA: Gauteng North West Limpopo Mpumalanga Free State KwaZulu-Natal Eastern Cape Western Cape Northern Cape	Languages of SA: isiNdebele isiZulu isiXhosa Sesotho Sesotho sa Leboa Setswana siSwati Tshivenda Xitsonga English Afrikaans

For graphic design only

PEG colour specification
R0 G149 B121 (LOGO)
R98 G167 B149 (TEXT SHADING Option 1)
R229 G237 B233 (TEXT SHADING Option 2)

PEG style sheet	
Abbreviations and acronyms	ATE (Accredited Text Editor) CIPC (Companies and Intellectual Property Commission) CPD (continuing professional development) Exco (Executive Committee) NPC (non-profit company) NPO (non-profit organisation) PEG (Professional Editors' Guild) SOP (standard operating procedure)
Body text	Calibri: This is an example
Colours	See colour code above. To apply the colours: Click on the 'A' in fonts or in paragraph shading. The downward arrow will give an option for more colours. Click on custom. In the RGB option click on the arrows to increase/decrease or insert the correct specifications. Click okay and it will appear under 'recent colours'.
Font	Roman: body text <i>Italics: PEGboard</i> Bold: Level 2 headings
Headings	OPTION 1: Level 1: Sentence case, Eras. This is an example of Eras Black font used for internal documents (SOP, Constitution, Code of Conduct, etc) Dark green (logo) when document is named: Annual report , AGM invitation , Registration form , etc Level 2: Calibri bold , sentence case (Example: Annual Report template) OPTION 2: Level 1: UPPER CASE, Eras, black. This is an example of Eras Dark green (logo) when document is named: ANNUAL REPORT , AGM INVITATION , REGISTRATION FORM , etc Level 2: Calibri bold , UPPER CASE Level 3: Calibri bold , Sentence case (Example: PEG constitution)

Language convention	South African English/British English
Numbers	One to nine written out, 10 and above in numerals 30th (no superscript)
<i>PEGboard</i>	<i>PEGboard</i> in italics when used in text. Never use 'the' in front. See <i>PEGboard</i> style sheet below also
Punctuation	Keep commas and hyphens to a minimum (see <i>PEGboard</i> style guide above) Lower case: all portfolios (chairperson, secretary, accreditation coordinator, etc) Hyphenation: copy-edit but copy editor PEGforum No punctuation in eg, ie, vs, etc
Typeface	Heading Level 1: Eras Body text and Level 2 headings: Calibri

Editorial checklist	
Footers	Newsletter of the Professional Editors' Guild ▪ Month year
Captions	Italics, no full stop
Coding	Main heading of article Full author name Pull quote(s): [pull quote] Stand-alone para: [intro] First paragraph: [body] Level 1 heading: [h1] Level 2 heading: [h2] Author bio: [author bio] Ending: [ends]