

Style Guide for the Center for Land Use Efficiency, the Florida Master Gardener Volunteer Program, and the Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Program

(Currently in revision; refer to UF and UF/IFAS links under “Resources”)

About

This style guide is intended for use by the writers and editors of the Center for Land Use Efficiency (CLUE), the Florida Master Gardener Volunteer Program, and the Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Program at the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS). These guidelines are to be applied to any and all material written and/or edited by the center, the MGVP program, or the FFL program, including web documents.

As a general rule, the center adheres to the Chicago Manual of Style. Where we deviate from this, it is because UF faculty specialists or administrators prefer a different usage. Below are some of the most commonly looked-up rules. For other questions, please consult the Chicago Manual of Style and/or the UF Writing Stylebook (see “Resources”).

NOTE: For press releases and news stories, we adhere to the Associated Press Stylebook, again except where UF mandates a different usage.

Resources

[The Writing Style Guide](#) – From the UF Brand Center (for official degree titles, offices, institutes, centers, etc.).

[The UF/IFAS Communicators Handbook](#) – From [IFAS Communications \(ICS\)](#), including guidance on wordmarks and logos (pdf).

Glossary

The following are our preferences for certain words often used in UF/IFAS print and online publications.

- **build-up** (when a noun; when a verb, *build up*)
- **cleanup** (when a noun; when a verb, *clean up*)
- **crapemyrtle** (not *crape-myrtle* or *crape myrtle*)
- **drought-tolerant** (before a noun; *drought tolerant* after a noun)
- **E-mail** or **e-mail** (not *Email* or *email*)
- **Florida-Friendly** (not *Florida-friendly* or *Florida Friendly* or *Florida friendly*) in text and headings, whether used as noun or adjective; always capitalize the initial F. Do not include the trademark (™) symbol.
- **Florida-Friendly Landscaping™** (whether a noun or verb, use initial caps on all three words and use the trademark (™) symbol after “Landscaping.”)
- **freshwater** (not *fresh water*)
- **golf course** (not *golfcourse*)
- **Green Industry** (not *green industry*)

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- **green-up** (when a noun; when a verb, *greenup*)
- **groundcover** (not *ground cover*)
- **groundwater** (not *ground water* or *ground-water*)
- **handwater** (not *hand water* or *hand-water*)
- **homeowner** (not *home owner* or *home-owner*)
- **home lawn** (not *homelawn*; hyphenate when using as a compound adjective, as in *home-lawn care*; when using as a triple compound adjective, as to describe the noun “professional” or “worker,” hyphenate the last two words only: *home lawn-care professionals*)
- **honey bee** (not *honeybee*; per the Entomological Society of America)
- **horticulturist** (not *horticulturalist*)
- **houseplant** (not *house plant*)
- **Internet** (not *internet*)
- **landscape** (not *land scape*)
- **lawn care** (not *lawncare*; hyphenate when using as a compound adjective, as in *lawncare professionals* or *lawn-care practices*)
- **lawn grass** (not *lawngrass*)
- **low-** (when adjective, as in *low-maintenance*). For more information on hyphenation, see *Chicago* 7.82–7.90.
- **macronutrient** (not *macro-nutrient*)
- **microirrigation** (not *micro-irrigation*)
- **micronutrient** (not *micro-nutrient*)
- **micro-spray** (as in *micro-spray jets*)
- **non-** (as in *non-absorbent*, *non-damaging*, etc.; see *Chicago* 7.82–7.90).
- **nonpoint** (as in *nonpoint source pollution*)
- **North/Central/South Florida**: Capitalize the first letters when referring to them in the context of landscaping or horticultural regions. Otherwise use *north-east Florida*, *south-central Florida*, etc.
 - Boundary zones. The following is taken from the Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Plant List 2006:
 - North Florida = north of Ocala
 - Central Florida = south of Ocala to line between Vero Beach and Sarasota
 - South Florida = south of that line
- **online** (not *on-line*)
- **outcompetes** (not *out-competes*)
- **overseeding** (not *over-seeding*)
- **overwater** (not *over-water*)

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- **pesticide-free/maintenance-free/etc.** (not *pesticide free, maintenance free*, etc.; see *Chicago* 7.82–7.90).
- **postemergence** (not *post-emergence*)
- **preemergence** (not *pre-emergence*)
- **regrow/regrowth** (not *re-grow, re-growth*; see *Chicago* 7.82–7.90).
- **runoff** (when a noun; when a verb, *run off*)
- **slow-release** (as in *slow-release fertilizer*)
- **sports turf** (not *sportsturf*)
- **spot-treat** (not *spot treat*)
- **stormwater** (not *storm water* or *storm-water*)
- **turfgrass** (not *turf grass*)
- **UF/IFAS** (not *UF-IFAS* or just *IFAS*)
- **vs.** (not *versus* or *v.*)
- **wastewater** (not *waste water*)
- **water bodies** (not *waterbodies*)
- **web site** (not *Website* or *Web site*)
- **World Wide Web** (not *the worldwide web*)

Scientific/Extension Documents Rules (UF-specific)

- All grass species are lowercase and compounded (e.g., *centipedegrass* and *bermudagrass*), except for *St. Augustinegrass* and *seashore paspalum*.
- All botanical cultivar names, including grasses, are capitalized and take single quotation marks, when needed, before the period or comma: ‘Floritam’ *St. Augustinegrass*, ‘Bracken’s Brown Beauty’ magnolia, *Agastache* ‘Apricot Sunrise’, ‘Sea Isle I’ *seashore paspalum*, etc. Any other punctuation goes outside the single quotes. See *Chicago* 8.138.
- When writing the two-word Latin name of a botanical cultivar, italicize the genus and species name and capitalize the genus name: *Corylus avallana*. In subsequent notations, abbreviate the genus name: *C. avallana*. For other scientific terminology rules, see *Chicago* 8.127–8.161.
- Common names of plants should not be capitalized unless they derive from a proper noun: Harry Lauder’s walking stick, *St. Augustinegrass*, Job’s tears.
- “Extension” should always be capitalized if you are referring to the Extension organization: *For more information, call your county Extension office; the Cooperative Extension System; University of Florida Extension.* (You can simply use *Extension* alone if it is clear that you are referring to a specific Extension System such as UF/IFAS Extension).
- Lowercase “extension” if you are referring to extension education, extension educators, extension programming, etc.

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- County should always be lowercase, unless you are referring to a specific county: *Call the Gilchrist County Extension office*. Many UF/IFAS publications will say *call your local county Extension office*, but we find this redundant and prefer *county Extension office* alone.
- Solutions for Your Life: *for* should always be lowercase, except in the URL: *SolutionsForYourLife.com*
- Florida Yards & Neighborhoods should take *ℳ* and *program* should be lowercase in text. When abbreviated, use *FYN* (no “&”). *Florida Yards ℳ Neighborhoods*, *the Florida Yards ℳ Neighborhoods program*, *FYN*, and *the FYN program* are all acceptable.
- The Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Program always takes the trademark (™) symbol between “Landscaping” and “Program,” and “Program” should always be uppercase. When abbreviated, use *FFL* or *the FFL Program* and do not use ™.
The Center for Landscape Conservation and Ecology does not take *ℳ* and “center” is lowercase when not used in the full title (“the center”). It is abbreviated CLCE.

Numerals/Measurements

The guidelines in this section apply to non-technical, Information Office-generated documents. (Note: For press releases, refer to the *AP Stylebook* rules, which differ from *Chicago*.) For use of numerals and measurements in technical or scientific publications, including EDIS documents, see *Chicago* Chapter 9 (“Numbers”).

- Numbers up to one hundred, round numbers, and numbers beginning sentences should be spelled out: *She gave me one plant, a single insect can lay four thousand eggs, one hundred and fifty-six participants toured the Envirotron*. An alternative method is to re-word the sentence so that it does not begin with a number. See *Chicago* 9.3–9.5.
- Ordinals up to one hundred, round ordinals, and ordinals beginning sentences should be spelled out: *First, hundredth, thousandth, and Thirty-third out of forty top golf courses*, but *131st or 25th*. See *Chicago* 9.8.
- Use commas in numbers with four or more figures (e.g., *1,000*), but use a mix of numerals and spelled-out numbers for very large numbers (e.g., *4 billion years ago*).
- Use numerals for measurements (*3 inches*, but *three days*), but do not abbreviate the unit of measurement (*5 inches* not *5 in* or *5*). See *Chicago* 9.14.
- Time (seconds, minutes, hours) is a unit of measurement and should also be written as a numeral (*60 seconds, 5 minutes, 3 hours*). “Days,” “weeks,” “months,” and “years” are not considered units of measurement.
- Use numerals for percentages, but always spell out the word *percent*, e.g., *47 percent*. See *Chicago* 9.19.
- Simple fractions are spelled out: *three-quarters* or *two-thirds*. Quantities with whole numbers and fractions, or complex fractions, are better expressed in numerals (with no space between the whole number and the fraction): *6¾ yards* or *5/7, 3/5*. See *Chicago* 9.15–9.16.

Academic Titles

Academic titles should be lowercased unless they immediately precede the person's name. For more information, see *Chicago* 8.31.

- *the professor* or *Frank Burt, professor of comparative literature* or *Professor Burt*
- *the dean* or *Joyce Johnson, dean of the College of Continuing Education* or *Dean Johnson*
- *the chair* or *James Norris, chair of the Department of Chemistry* or *Professor Norris*
- *the provost* or *Richard Saller, provost of the University of Chicago* or *Mr. Saller*
- *the president* or *Patricia Mack, president of the University of Montana* or *Ms. Mack* or *President Mack*

Grammar & Punctuation

- Use serial commas in text: *The main environmental stresses on turf are shade, drought, and traffic*, and not *The main environmental stresses on turf are shade, drought and traffic*. Use the comma between every word in a series. See *Chicago* 6.19.
Use a single space between all words in all documents, including after periods, colons, and semi-colons. See *Chicago* 6.13, 6.57, and 6.63.
- The correct use of hyphens, en dashes, and em dashes is explained in *Chicago* 6.80–6.96. Unless otherwise specified, use a single hyphen for both a hyphen and an en dash; use two hyphens for an em dash. For punctuation in ranges of numbers, see *Chicago* 9.62–9.63. If *from* or *between* precedes the first of the two numbers in the range, use the words *to*, *through*, or *and* between the numbers. If neither of these words precedes the range, use an en dash between the numbers.
- Hyphenate all compound adjectives which precede but not which follow a noun, with the exception of adverbs ending in “-ly.” For more information on hyphenation, see *Chicago* 7.82–7.90.
- Write acronyms without periods (e.g., *UF* and *USDA*). Exception: *U.S.* See *Chicago* 15.25.
- If you must abbreviate the word *Florida*, use *Fla.* *FL* is a postal abbreviation only. See *Chicago* 15.29 for other state name abbreviations.
- When using a colon within a sentence, the first word after the colon is lowercased unless it is a proper noun. But when a colon introduces one or more complete sentences, or when it introduces a speech in dialogue, the first word after the colon is capitalized. See *Chicago* 6.63–6.69.
- When writing out an ellipsis, write it as a word, space, three periods, space, and then the next word. See *Chicago* 11.57. E.g., “The speaker asserted that grass grew better in full sun . . . later countering his own argument with other evidence.”
- Do not use periods in *BA*, *MA*, and *PhD*. For rules on other degrees and usage thereof, see *Chicago* 15.21 and/or the *UF Writing Stylebook*.

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- When parenthesizing a phrase within a sentence, keep the period outside the parentheses: *Lawn grass should be fertilized only during the growing season (except in South Florida).*
- When parenthesizing an entire sentence, keep the period inside the parentheses: *Lawn grass should be fertilized only during the growing season, except in South Florida. (Check with your county Extension office for information on your specific cultivar.)*
- In text, do not capitalize a word following a hyphen unless it is a proper noun: *thirddegree* but *un-American*. See *Chicago* 8.168-8.170. In headings, capitalize all words following hyphens.
- Quotation marks go after the comma or period. Exception: botanical cultivars. When using a semicolon, the quotation marks may go after or before the semicolon, but preferably before, except for botanical cultivars, where the quotation marks always come before the semicolon. See *Chicago* 6.53, 6.66, 6.8–6.10, 11.33–11.35.

Formatting

- *And* should always be spelled out in text. Exception: *Florida Yards & Neighborhoods* (but *FYN* when abbreviated). In all web headings, *&* (ampersand) should be used.
- Use a serial comma with *and* but not with *&*: *Fruits, Veggies & Edibles* as heading, but *fruits, veggies, and edibles* in text.
- Acronyms are spelled out and then shortened: *Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association* on first use, and thereafter *FCGSA*. See *Chicago* 15.25.
The Center for Landscape Conservation and Ecology (CLCE) takes a lowercase *the* except in a title/heading or if it begins a sentence. It always takes *and* not *&*.

Scientific Documents

- Use numerals for all fractions (even simple fractions like $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$).
- Use numerals for round numbers even up to the thousands and millions.
- Use numerals for physical quantities and units of time, whether whole numbers or fractions.
- Units of measurement are abbreviated (*lb*, *min*) without punctuation (*lb.*, *min.*), except when used without a numeral (*the number of kilojoules per hour*).
- Use % symbol.

Any suggestions for additions should be sent to Jennifer Sykes (jsykes@ufl.edu). Each addition is thoroughly researched according to academic standards, industry standards, and prevailing usage.