

Fringe Programme Style Guide

We have put together a Style Guide to help participants write their copy, and to answer some frequently asked questions along with The Fringe Guide to Registering a Show. The Style Guide is here to ensure that we are consistent in the way we do things across the printed programme and website and to make sure that your listings are clear, correct and user friendly. The Guide acts as the default for the way we present your listing's copy but we also want performers and companies to be able to present their work in the way that they wish. We are therefore always happy to discuss any specific requests, questions or deviations from the Guide when you are registering your show. The Fringe Society is the publisher of the listings and holder of the copyright for the content in the official Fringe Programme and on edfringe.com. As such we reserve the right to edit copy or refuse images in order to comply with the Style Guide, or if we believe them to be inappropriate in any way. We endeavor to work with the performer, company or venue when making changes but please note, as the publisher, the Fringe Society's decision is final. Please feel free to contact the programme team if you have any questions. You can reach them on programme@edfringe.com or +44 (0)131 226 0034.

Style Guide – Programme Production 2015

This is the official style manual for use in creating and editing a listing for the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Programme. It lists topics alphabetically, interspersing broader subjects with clarifications of spelling, punctuation and formatting in specific cases. Throughout this manual, 'lc' stands for lower case and 'uc' for upper case. We also refer to the Oxford Dictionary for spelling and use their online service <http://oxforddictionaries.com/>. These should be considered your primary sources for the rules and tools to make listings as clear, correct and user-friendly as possible.

Accents

These should be used on French, German, Spanish, Gaelic words etc, but not anglicised words like **cafe** (unless in the name of an establishment that uses an accent) or **naive**, apart from:

à la carte	résumé
exposé	roué

Institut français d'Écosse

Acronyms, abbreviations, initialisms

Do not use full stops in abbreviations or spaces between initials.

UK	mph	WH Smith
USA	4am	Op 58

Use all capitals if an abbreviation is pronounced as the individual letters.

BBC	AKA (also known as)
VAT	
CD	

Common awards:

BAFTA – British Academy of Film and Television Award

Tony – Antoinette Perry Award for Excellence in Theatre

Use lower case in for awol or pin code as these are now recognised words.

Ages

Ages eight years old, but an eight-year-old; the 56-year-old actor; she was in her 20s (but twentysomething, thirtysomething, etc).

And/but

It is acceptable to start a sentence with 'and' or 'but', however be careful.

'n' – a contraction of 'and' that results in one word

as in rock'n'roll should be written as one word with apostrophes around the 'n'.

Ampersands

Ampersand (&) use in company names when the company does: Marks & Spencer, P&O. Otherwise, 'and' is always preferable.

Eg, Marketing and Sponsorship

Do not treat the word after an ampersand as if in initial position: Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers.

Apostrophes

Apostrophes indicate a missing letter or letters (can't, we'd) or a possessive (David's book). Don't use an apostrophe to indicate a plural (pea's), but be sure not to omit one where it's required.

The possessive in words and names ending in S normally takes an apostrophe followed by a second S (eg, Jones's), but be guided by pronunciation and use a plural apostrophe where it helps: Mephistopheles' rather than Mephistopheles's.

Two years' experience (I have two years of experience)

Plural nouns that do not end in 's' take an apostrophe and 's' in the possessive: children's games, old folk's home, etc. Phrases such as butcher's knife, goat's cheese, hangman's noose, etc are treated as singular.

Be careful as not all plurals require a possessive. Sometimes the relationship is adjectival, not possessive:

eg, Fringe Schools Poster Competition, Boys School, sports car

Sometimes there's no thing to possess or be possessed (possessive phrases need two nouns), ie:

Twenty weeks pregnant

Awards and acknowledgments

Awards, prizes, medals generally uc, eg, Fringe First Awards (exception: if.comedy Awards)

Award-winning, Prize-winning hyphenated, unlike award winner, prize winner. Also applies with reference to specific awards, eg, **Fringe First-winning**.

Best Newcomer nominee Initial caps on Best and Newcomer, lc for nominee

Critic's Choice upper case when referring to an acknowledged feature in a publication, notably the Time Out London Critics' Choice (note the plural possessive); lc when implying that a critic has chosen to favour something with a good review.

Critically acclaimed - two words, no hyphen

Hackney Empire a theatre in London, but typically short for the Hackney Empire New Act of the Year award for stand-up comedy.

Herald Angel - italicise the first word as it is a publication, cap up both words

if.comedy Awards - initial cap only if used at the start of a sentence.

Time Out London Critics' Choice

Babes in arms

Babes in arms, in running text 'babes in arms', no initial caps, no hyphenation.

BBC

BBC One, BBC Two, BBC Three, BBC Four

BBC Radio 1, 2, 3, 4, Five Live, Radio 6 Music

Numerals only used for radio

Brackets

Brackets if the sentence is logically and grammatically complete without the information contained within the parentheses (round brackets), then punctuation stays outside brackets. (A complete sentence that stands alone in parentheses starts with a capital letter and ends with a stop.)

Square brackets [s]*/[/s] are used to tag star ratings in printed programme copy. Do not use square brackets for any other purposes.

Star [s]*/[/s] tags are not required for web copy.

Brand names

If you are writing to, or for, a brand, then spell the brand name as they do.

A few commonly used brand names we style as they do:

EventScotland

PortaKabin

SoundCloud

VisitScotland

However, if you are writing about a brand, then use an initial cap but otherwise style the word(s) normally.

British/American English

Please use British spellings. Retain North American and Australian spelling (ie, theater) for companies that elect to apply it.

Caps versus lower caps

Capitalisation should be reserved for proper grammatical usage and for certain abbreviations (see Abbreviations and Acronyms). Nothing else should be written in all-caps.

In the Fringe Programme, title case is used. Show titles and group names take initial capitals except for a, an, and, at, for, from, in, of, the, to (apart from initial position, after a colon or dash). An exception to normal capitalisation is St Mark's artSpace.

Cathedrals cap up, eg, Canterbury Cathedral

in association with – all lower case.

Collective nouns

Collective nouns such as company, duo, team and troupe take a singular verb or pronoun when thought of as a single unit, but (more commonly) a plural verb or pronoun when thought of as a collection of individuals:

'The company is well-known for its hit-and-miss updates of Aristophanes';

'The company are back in Edinburgh after their triumphant tour of the US'.

'The Fringe Society staff are happy to help.'

'The Board are meeting later this month.'

If you are unsure, please at least be consistent.

This also applies with reference to proper nouns:

'Rogue Shakespeare are back in Edinburgh after their triumphant tour'.

Colons and semi-colons

Colon use between two sentences, or parts of sentences, where the first introduces a proposition that is resolved by the second, eg, Fowler put it like this: to deliver the goods invoiced in the preceding words. A colon should also be used (rather than a comma) to introduce a quotation: 'He was an expert on punctuation', or to precede a list – 'He was an expert on the following: the colon, the comma and the full stop.'

Semicolon is used to join two complete sentences into a single sentence when the two sentences are too closely related to be separated by a full stop, there is no connecting word which would require a comma, such as and or but, and the conditions requiring a colon are absent. The semicolon must be both preceded by a complete sentence and followed by a complete sentence. Use sparingly and only when convinced you are correct.

Commas

Commas should be used to separate clauses, not connect them.

Comma Splice

This is when a comma is used to separate two independent clauses, when a conjunction should really be used. Please avoid.

Eg,

I love to travel, I go on holiday whenever I can.

This sentence should read:

I love to travel *so* I go on holiday whenever I can.

I love to travel – I go on holiday whenever I can.

Oxford comma should only be used if it is essential to the reader:

'I dedicate this book to my parents, Martin Amis, and JK Rowling'

'I dedicate this book to my parents, Martin Amis and JK Rowling'.

Sentences containing simple lists of nouns do not generally need an Oxford comma:

'The flag is yellow, green and red'.

However, more complex lists may require the use of a comma for clarity:

'He had bacon, eggs, toast and marmalade, and tea'.

Use sparingly.

Compass points

Geographically distinct areas are capped up but areas defined by compass points are lower case: the north, the south-east, the south-west, etc. Equally: eastern culture, western music, etc.

east Asia; eastern, but the East End of London

north London, north Wales, north-west England, etc. northern, northerner

south London, south-west England, the south-east, south Wales, etc.

Highlands and Islands

Borders

Central Belt
East Anglia
Lake District
Midlands
West Country

Currency

Prices should be written in whole pounds and pence if required.
The programme registration fee is £295.20.
Lanyards cost £1.

Dashes

Dashes we use en dashes to surround subordinate clauses with one space before and after.

Dates and times

Dates par ex: 03 August 2015 (no commas). In the 21st century but a 21st-century boy; 10,000BC; references to decades use figures: eg, the swinging 60s or 1960s.

Centuries should be hyphenated when used adjectivally: a 17th-century play dealing with life in the 10th century.

Times 1am, 6:30pm; half past two, quarter to three; for 24-hour clock, 00:47, 23:59.

Please try to be consistent and preferably use the 24-hour clock.

Dictionary

Please use the [Oxford English Dictionary](#).

Edinburgh Festival Fringe

Edinburgh Festival Fringe not Fringe Festival. Note that, apart from proper names, festival takes lc. Also, a show can be at the Fringe or on the Fringe, but not in the Fringe.

Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society the organisation that helps organise the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

Edinburgh

Auld Reekie
Canons' Gait (pub)
Canongate (street/area name)
Canongate Kirk
Holyrood
New Town
Old Town
George's Square (Assembly)
George Street (The Assembly Rooms)
St Giles' Cathedral

Either/or, neither/nor

Do you have either an apple or a pear?
I have neither an apple nor a pear.

Ellipses

If you are continuing a sentence, use three dots before the first word, no space ('...the cast is perfection'). If the sentence is missing its end, three dots after the final word, no space ('She didn't want to go there...'). If the missing bit is in the middle, three dots, spaces on both ends ('She didn't want to go there ... the cast is perfection').

Exclamation marks

Generally avoid, and if you must, only use one.

Explicit words

Please bear in mind your audience when considering the use of any explicit or potentially offensive words. Explicit words may be included in a show's title or copy. However, f*ck and c*nt will be represented as such by replacing the key characters of the word with * symbols. This is reflective of the general offense caused by these words.

Half

Half no hyphen when used adverbially: his trousers were at half mast; the scores were level at half time. Hyphen when used adjectivally: a half-price ticket; a half-eaten sandwich. The boy is six and a half; a six and a half-year-old boy.

Half hour but a **half-hour** performance.

Headings

For show titles in the Fringe Programme, title case should be used. Also use for titles of other plays, novels, poems etc used in show copy.

Capitalise the first word of the title/heading and of any subtitle/subheading:

The Fringe Guide to Registering Your Show

Use lowercase only for conjunctions (words like and, or, nor, and but), articles (the words a, an, and the), and prepositions (words like as, at, by, for, in, of, on, per, and to), as long as they aren't the first word in a title or subtitle.

Hyphenation

Hyphen there is no need to use hyphens with most compound adjectives where the meaning is clear and unambiguous without (eg, civil rights movement, financial services sector, etc). Hyphens should be used to form short compound adjectives (eg, stand-up comedian, 19th-century artist, etc). Also use hyphens where not using one would be ambiguous (eg, to distinguish 'black-cab drivers come under attack' from 'black cab-drivers come under attack'). Do not use hyphens after adverbs ending in -ly (eg, internationally acclaimed), but when an adverb is also an adjective (eg, hard), the hyphen is required to avoid ambiguity (it's not a hard, pressed person, but a hard-pressed one; an ill-prepared report, rather than an ill, prepared one). Use hyphens with short and common adverbs: well-established principle of style (note though that in the construction 'the principle of style is well established' there is no need to hyphenate).

Words definitely not hyphenated:

Cooperate

Coordinate

Email

Website

Online

Rewrite

subtotal

MC, Emcee

Both accepted as alternative for Master of Ceremonies. Emcee is the derivative now commonly used to describe a vocalist performing to a beat in hip hop music.

Measurements

Please use metric whenever possible.

cm - centimetre
kph – kilometres per hour
kg – kilos
km - kilometre
mm - millimetre
mph – miles per hour
m – metre
mile
M – million
K – thousand

Miss, Mr, Mrs, Ms

Alphabetise as Miss, Mister, Mrs and Ms respectively. Do not use a full stop.

Multicultural, multimedia, multimillion but multi-ethnic, multi-talented

Music

A cappella should be lower case ‘a cappella’ in running text. Alphabetise under A.

Band names Check online for reference - Editors, not The Editors. The Beatles, not Beatles. The Rolling Stones, not Rolling Stones etc. Bands take a plural verb (Editors are overrated, Iron Butterfly were the loudest band of the 60s, etc).

Classical music Mozart’s 41st Symphony (or Symphony No 41) in C, K551; Rachmaninov’s Piano Concerto No 2; Schubert’s Sonata in A minor for Piano, D845; Op 58, No 2. No quotation marks required.

Genres All music genres are generally lower case, unless being used in a title.

Hip hop - two words

Honky-tonk is one word with a hyphen

Rock star - two words when referring to an individual performer who has high profile standing within the rock genre.

Singer/songwriter - one word

Newspapers and magazines

Press sources published press sources take initial caps, are italicised and omit the prefatory ‘the’ when cited in brackets. So: (*Edinburgh Evening News*), (*List*), (*Scotsman*), (*ThreeWeeks*), (*Times*). Press sources otherwise retain their ‘the’, lc and without emphasis, in running text: the *Guardian*, the *New York Times*, etc. When referring to the city where a press source is published (when this is not part of the title), place it after the publication and a comma, eg, (*Advertiser*, Adelaide). Citing television or radio press sources, stations require no emphasis. Websites, when used as cited sources, should list the registered domain name of the site homepage (no http:// or www.) without emphasis, using initial caps on the name (no spaces) but not suffix string. So: Guardian.co.uk, Scotsman.com, TimeOut.com.

ThreeWeeks is one word, the ‘T’ and ‘W’ both take full caps. It is a printed publication.

No one

Not no-one

Numbers

Spell out from zero to nine.

Numerals from 10 to 999,999.

Thereafter use m or bn for sums, quantities or inanimate objects in copy, eg, £10m, 5bn tonnes of coal; but million or billion for people or animals, eg, 1 million people, 3 billion rabbits, etc. Also: 1,000 (no spaces), not 1000.

Adjectives of sequence follow the same rules:
spell out first to ninth, then 10th - 21st, millionth.

In show titles and group names, numbers should be alphabetised, except when putting a series of listings in a numeric sequence. However, no sentence should start with a numeral. (Eg, 'Seventy people applied for your job.')

Ages eight years old, but an eight-year-old; the 56-year-old actor; she was in her 20s; twentysomething, thirtysomething; under fives, under 18s.

Centuries should be hyphenated when used adjectivally: a 17th-century play dealing with life in the 10th century.

Dates par ex: 03 August 2008 (no commas).

In the 21st century but a 21st-century boy; 10,000BC;

References to decades use figures: eg, the swinging 60s or 1960s.

60s, 70s, 80s – no possessive apostrophe.

First, second, third rather than firstly, secondly, thirdly, etc; spell out up to ninth, then 10th, 21st, millionth.

Half no hyphen when used adverbially: his trousers were at half mast; the scores were level at half time. Hyphen when used adjectivally: a half-price ticket; a half-eaten sandwich. The boy is six and a half; a six and a half-year-old boy.

Half an hour but a **half-hour performance** or 30 minute show.

Heights 6' 7" with a space between 6 and 7 is acceptable, otherwise six feet, seven inches.

Times 1am, 6:30pm; half past two, quarter to three; for 24-hour clock, 00:47, 23:59.

Phone numbers

Telephone numbers are unhyphenated. Check if a three-, four-, or five-digit area code applies, then format respectively: 012 3456 7890, 0123 456 7890, 01234 567890.

If placed after the last sentence in the copy, they require no full point, unless they are part of a sentence: eg, for booking details, call 0123 456 7890.

Possessive apostrophe

See [Apostrophes](#)

Quotations

Quotation marks use single quotes (' ') at the start and end of a quoted section, with double quotes (" ") for quoted words within that section. Place full points and commas inside quotes for a complete quoted sentence, otherwise the point comes outside. Anna said: 'Your style guide needs updating,' and I said: 'I agree.' But: Anna said updating the guide was 'a difficult and time-consuming task'.

(Sic)

If there is an error /unusual spelling, archaisms, grammar, punctuation in the original text, you can indicate this using (sic) next to the word. This tells your reader that this 'error' is deliberate and part of the original quoted text, rather than a typo.

Star ratings

Star ratings should not be enclosed in quotation marks when listed on their own. Always cite the source of the rating. Separate an extended series of star ratings from various sources with semicolons. A star should be rendered in edfringeware as [s]*[/s] for Programme copy. Use just * for web copy, no tags are required.

‘It was a five-star, award-winning show’.

‘They received five stars from the *Scotsman*’.

Programme style for quote, star rating and attribution:

‘Amazing’ ***** (*Scotsman*).

That or which?

‘that’ defines, ‘which’ gives extra information (often in a clause enclosed by commas): This is the house that Jack built, but this house, which John built, is falling down; The Guardian, which I read every day, is the paper that I admire above all others. Note that in such examples the sentence remains grammatical without ‘that’, but not without ‘which’.

Theatre

Retain North American and Australian spelling (ie, theater) for companies that elect to apply it.

Traverse Theatre

Royal Lyceum Theatre

Festival Theatre

King’s Theatre

Bedlam Theatre

Titles

The titles of printed publications should be in italics. The names of websites/web pages are not italicised.

Do not use quote marks.

Newspapers – the *Scotsman*, the *Times*, the *Economist* etc.

Online sources do not use italics.

Tricky words

acknowledgement not acknowledgment.

any more is always two words.

any time or anytime? Use it as one word like this: Jo said the meeting can be scheduled anytime. But if you’re using it as an adjective to modify a noun it should be two words: Bee won’t have any time until Thursday.

dependent or dependant? A dependant is someone who’s dependent on someone else.

effect or affect? Most of the time you use affect as a verb and effect as a noun: ‘When you affect something, you have an effect on it.’

biannual can mean twice a year or once every two years.

Biennial means once every two years. Best to spell out which one you mean.

compliment – an expression of praise or admiration

complement – a thing that contributes extra features to something else in such a way as to improve it

email is one word with no hyphen.

EventBrite

EventScotland

every day is two words except when it’s an adjective

Facebook

focusing not focussing, focused not focussed

internet – no initial cap

iOS – lower case ‘i’, caps OS

judgement not judgment (except in legal terms: a judge makes a judgment. But he can show bad judgement when making that judgment).

learnt or learned? Learnt is traditionally British so if you’re writing for a non-UK audience, you’ll be safer using learned. Otherwise your audience might think you can’t spell.

licence is the noun

license is the verb, Edinburgh Licensing Board, a Premises Licence, Theatre Licence etc.

‘I am going to apply for a **licence**’.

The council will **license** your venue.

live-stream/live-streamed

live-tweet

online (one word, no hyphen).

on season/off season – as a noun, two words

opt in/opt out – as a noun, two words

pageview – one word

PowerPoint (one word, capital P in the middle).

practice is the noun

practise is the verb

principle – a fundamental truth or proposition ‘the guiding principle of the Fringe Society...’

principal – first in order of importance

real-time

SoundCloud

stationary means standing still.

stationery is pens and pencils and all that (‘e for envelope’ is an easy way to remember it).

straight away not straightaway.

ThreeWeeks

Tumblr

Twitter

VisitScotland

web page is two words

website is one word

wifi – one word

Wordpress

YouTube

Web and email addresses

Websites: should be written in lower case with the www/https etc, omitted (as appropriate). If placed alone after the last sentence in the copy, they require no full point, unless they are part of a sentence: If a web or email address comes at the end of a sentence, it should have a full stop after it. Even if it’s at the end of a paragraph.

For details, visit edfringe.com.

Websites as citations in copy should take initial caps to make them readable:

BroadwayBaby.com

One4Review.co.uk

Words definitely not hyphenated...

Cooperate

Coordinate

Email

Website

Online

Rewrite

subtotal