Alzheimer's Research UK
Defeating Dementia

Language guidelines

Our language

Alzheimer's Research UK is the UK's leading dementia research charity. As research experts, we fund world-class pioneering scientists to find preventions, treatments and a cure for dementia. Our findings improve the lives of everyone affected by dementia now and in the future and we help people to understand dementia and the progress we are making.

This style guide is intended to complement Alzheimer's Research UK's brand guidelines. While the brand guidelines focus on how we look, the style guide is concerned with how we sound. Both come together to represent our brand.

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This style guide is intended to complement Alzheimer's Research UK's brand guidelines. While the brand guidelines focus on how we look, the style guide is concerned with how we sound. Both come together to represent our brand.

Consistency

Consistency is the core principle behind a style guide. Any public-facing (written or spoken) communication should be instantly recognisable as coming from Alzheimer's Research UK. It should clearly convey who we are and what we do. This helps raise awareness and understanding.

If we are consistent in our use of language and tone of voice, people will have confidence that we are well-organised, unified and credible.

Inconsistency can make an organisation look careless, disjointed and amateurish. If, for example, we write frontotemporal in one place, fronto-temporal in another and Fronto-temporal in yet another, we will come across as sloppy and people will question the quality of what we are saying. There is often more than one correct way to write something, so making a choice and sticking to it tells people that we know and have thought about what we are saying.

Using this guide

This guide is intended as a reference. It is recommended that you are familiar with sections 1-3, and aware of the type of content in sections 4-10, so that you know it is there when you need it.

The glossary lists words as they should be written. Clarification or extra information is provided where this might be helpful.

Every effort should be made to use these guidelines for all public-facing materials originating from Alzheimer's Research UK as an organisation. However, we all develop one-to-one relationships with supporters, fundraisers, agencies, scientists etc. and our personal communications with them will of course be less formal. To avoid coming across as too mechanical when communicating or responding to these contacts, you may need to bend the rules a little. Use your judgement, and always be aware that what you say still reflects on the organisation as a whole.

Guidelines for writing clearly

'Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication'
(Leonardo da Vinci)

✔ A few tips for writing clearly	✘ Try to avoid
• Before you write anything, ask yourself: 1. Who am I writing for? 2. What do I want to say? 3. What purpose do I want to achieve? This applies as much to a Facebook post as it does to a 30-page report.	• **Avoid** using the passive voice. The active is more direct and can provide more information, e.g.: • You may be referred to a memory clinic or specialist (passive). • Your GP may refer you to a memory clinic or specialist (active).
• Consider your target audience carefully and keep them in mind at all times. Are you communicating to existing donors, the general public, journalists, politicians, scientists or another group? They may all respond differently.	• **Avoid** stereotypes, clichés and any language that people might find offensive.
• Be sure you understand what you are writing about.	• **Do not** use abbreviations to define people, e.g. PWD (people with dementia) or BME (black and minority ethnic).
• Plan what you are going to say and organise the points you need to make into a logical order. Keep your words, sentences and paragraphs short. One thought for every sentence is a helpful guideline. Choose the shorter option, e.g. use rather than utilise, start rather than commence. When possible, use a single word rather than a phrase.	

Guidelines for writing clearly

✔ A few tips for writing clearly	✘ Try to avoid
• Use language that is simple, concise and inclusive. Being research experts does not mean showing how much we know by speaking in jargon. This excludes most audiences. Our role is to make this expertise as widely understood as possible and thus broaden support for research.	• **Cut out** redundant words, e.g. in 'we are hosting an event later this month', later adds nothing and even dilutes the effect. 'We are hosting an event this month' is more immediate and engaging. Other words that are often (but not always) redundant include: • also • both (in phrases that contain and), e.g. in 'both researchers and doctors agree' it is unnecessary and ambiguous • earlier, e.g. a paper released earlier this week • famous/famously, e.g. the famous singer, Sir Cliff Richard • new, e.g. a new report released this week • very, e.g. very positive.
• Using a more unusual word or more complex sentence construction can sometimes be effective, but make sure it achieves your purpose and is appropriate for your audience.	
• When you have finished: • Always read your work back to yourself (aloud if possible), and look at it from your audience's point of view. If you would not say what you have written, it probably needs rethinking. • Have you used words that everyone will understand? • Is there anything that needs explaining or could be put into more everyday language, e.g. scientific terms. • Are there any unnecessary words that can be cut out? • Have you checked your facts? • Are your spelling, grammar and punctuation correct? • Have you proofread for errors and inconsistencies? • If possible, ask somebody else to read it. If your work is going to be printed in a public document, proofreading is essential, either by a colleague who has not seen it before, or someone external.	
• Remember, it is more difficult to write simply. Every word should be there for a reason.	

About Alzheimer's Research UK and dementia

Terms specific to Alzheimer's Research UK

Write our name out in full. Only abbreviate to ARUK when you are mentioning it several times and using the full name repeatedly is cumbersome. In a long document, repeat the full name at suitable intervals, the first mention in each new section. This occasional repetition of our name in full helps improve awareness of our brand.

- ARUK can be used when space is limited, e.g. on Twitter.
- Pronounce ARUK out loud as individual letters rather than as one word (Arruck).
- Preface our initiatives with our full name, for example:
  - Alzheimer's Research UK's Big Walk, not ARUK's Big Walk.
  - Alzheimer's Research UK Research Network, not ARUK's Research Network.
- Do not shorten our name to Alzheimer's Research
- Capitalise names of
  - Fundraising initiatives, e.g.: Battle of the Brains, Big Walk, Cook for a Cure, Target Twelve Hundred.
  - Other project names specific to Alzheimer's Research UK, e.g.: Brains for Dementia Research (BDR), Brain Tour, our Champions, our Research Network (also capitalise Network Centre), Scientific Advisory Board.
  - The first part of team/department names, e.g. Fundraising team, Research department.
  - Grant schemes: PhD Scholarship, Equipment Grant, Network Cooperation Grant,
    Pilot Project Grant, Preparatory Clinical Research Fellowship, Sabbatical/Secondment,
    Extension Grant, Major Project/Programme Grant, Clinical Research Fellowship,
    Research Fellowship, Senior Research Fellowship, Travelling Research Fellowship,
    Travelling Research Fellowship US, Scientific Conference Grant, Emergency Support Grant
- Use lower case for grant and fellowship, but upper case when referring to one of the above specifically, e.g.:
  - How to apply for a grant.
  - How to apply for an Extension Grant.

Our vision, mission and values

Our vision

A world free from dementia

Our mission

- We conduct world-class research to prevent, treat and cure dementia.
- We help people to understand dementia and the progress we are making.
- We forge partnerships with Government and other key organisations to make dementia research a national priority.

Our values

- We are fast-moving, optimistic and ideas-driven.
- We are innovative, we manage risk around our research funding and use our expertise to achieve the best results.
- We work with people with and at risk of dementia, as well as those affected by dementia, to reflect their concerns.
- We are evidence-based so our decisions and activities are based on fact.
- We work together with the UK's leading dementia scientists.
- We are skilled in partnership working and acting as a catalyst to defeat dementia.

Boilerplates

Overall

In about 10 words:

Alzheimer's Research UK is the UK's leading dementia research charity.

In about 15 words:

Alzheimer's Research UK is the UK's leading charity specialising in finding preventions, treatments and a cure for dementia.

In about 50 words:

Alzheimer's Research UK is the UK's leading dementia research charity. As research experts, we fund world-class pioneering scientists to find preventions, treatments and a cure for dementia. Our findings improve the lives of everyone affected by dementia now and in the future and we help people to understand dementia and the progress we are making.

In about 75 words:

Alzheimer's Research UK is the UK's leading dementia research charity. As research experts, we fund world-class, pioneering scientists at leading universities to find preventions, treatments and a cure for dementia. Our findings improve the lives of everyone affected by dementia now and in the future. We forge partnerships with government and other key organisations to make dementia research a national priority. We encourage everyone to join us in supporting research and achieving a world free from dementia.

In about 100 words:

Alzheimer's Research UK is the UK's leading dementia research charity. As research experts, we specialise in funding world-class, pioneering research at leading universities to find preventions, treatments and a cure for dementia. We believe science and innovation hold the key to defeating dementia and invest in the scientists learning more about the condition and its causes.

Our findings improve the lives of everyone affected by dementia now and in the future. We forge partnerships with government and other key organisations to make dementia research a national priority. We encourage everyone to join us in supporting research and achieving a world free from dementia.

About dementia

The term dementia describes a group of symptoms that arise from a decline in brain function. This decline has a number of possible causes, the most common being Alzheimer's disease. The symptoms described by the term dementia can include memory loss, confusion, mood changes and problems with reasoning and communication. Dementia is progressive, meaning the symptoms get worse.

Dementia and Alzheimer's disease: avoid the confusion

The terms dementia and Alzheimer's disease are sometimes used interchangeably. This is wrong and, as experts, we should take care not to do this. Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia. Other diseases that cause dementia include:

- vascular dementia
- dementia with Lewy bodies (DLB)
- frontotemporal dementia (FTD).

Note: some scientists will use the term frontotemporal lobar degeneration (FTLD). This is the collective term for several different conditions that affect the frontal and temporal lobes of the brain. Frontotemporal dementia (FTD), a behavioural variant, is one of these. Others include semantic dementia, progressive non-fluent aphasia and dementia associated with motor neurone disease. We use frontotemporal dementia (FTD) to refer to all of these conditions as this is what people with dementia are most likely to hear from their doctor.

Rarer causes of dementia include Creutzfeldt-Jacob disease (CJD), HIV/AIDS and alcohol-related dementia. Severe depression, thyroid deficiencies and vitamin deficiencies can produce similar symptoms to dementia.

About dementia

Abbreviating disease names

Use the full name in the first instance, with the abbreviation in brackets. In a long document, repeat the full name at appropriate intervals, e.g., the first mention in each new section.

Alzheimer's disease can be abbreviated to Alzheimer's. Do not abbreviate to AD.

Causes/types/forms of dementia

While Alzheimer's disease and the above are strictly speaking causes of dementia, they are often referred to as a type or form of dementia. Use your judgement here as causes can sound awkward in some contexts, e.g. James was diagnosed with a rare cause of dementia. Form or type would sound better here.

Frequently used drug names

In each example below, the generic drug name is given with the brand name in brackets:

- donepezil (Aricept)
- rivastigmine (Exelon, Abix)
- galantamine (Reminyl)
- memantine (Ebixa, Axura).

Positive and appropriate language

Speaking about people with dementia

✔ The do's	✘ The don'ts
• Describe people how they describe themselves. For example, although we should avoid terms like housewife or single mum (this can have negative connotations; single parent is better), if someone describes themselves in this way, it is acceptable for us to do so.	• Do not define people by their condition or situation with labels such as 'the aged', 'the disabled' and 'the mentally ill'. Use, for example, older people, people with a disability, people with mental health problems. Use wheelchair user rather than describing someone as being 'in a wheelchair'.
• Only refer to people's situation, occupation, race, sexuality etc. if it is relevant to what you are saying.	• Do not use abbreviations to define people, e.g. PWD (people with dementia) or BME (black and minority ethnic).

Speaking about people with dementia

• Use person or people with dementia, but take care to avoid overuse of the phrase. Try to vary with alternatives, e.g. John, who has dementia; Mrs Brown, who has Alzheimer's disease.	• Do not describe someone as a dementia sufferer, victim or patient, or as 'suffering from' dementia.
	• Avoid making people with dementia sound passive or childlike, e.g. Jean cared for Robert, dressing and feeding him. Instead, say: Jean cared for Robert, supporting him to get dressed and eat.
	• Do not use senile or pre-senile.

Speaking about people with dementia

Black and minority ethnic people

✔ The do's	✘ The don'ts
• South Asian people are people from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.	• Do not say South Asians or Asians
• Black people are of African, Caribbean and South Asian origin.	• Do not say blacks
• Ethnic minority is acceptable.	• Do not use the terms coloured, immigrant, ethnic or oriental to describe people.

Gender and sexuality

• When the sex of the person is unknown, use 'he or she' or they, e.g. When you see your GP, they will ask you about your medical history.	
• Try to use gender-neutral terms, such as actor, comedian, firefighter, Chair etc	• Do not say Chairman
• Use terms concerning sexuality (e.g. homosexual, gay, heterosexual) as adjectives rather than nouns, e.g. describe someone as homosexual not 'a homosexual'.	

Presentation

Abbreviations, acronyms and capitalisation

Abbreviations and acronyms

- Do not use full points in abbreviations or after initials. Do not leave spaces between initials, including those in proper names, e.g. UCL, AMRC, WH Smith.
- Give the full name first, with the abbreviation in brackets, and use the abbreviation for subsequent mentions. Alternatively, use the abbreviation with a short description, e.g. the doctors' union the BMA.
- Do not assume that readers know a well-known abbreviation, unless it has entered the language as an everyday word, e.g. pin number, laser, sim card.
- If an organisation is mentioned only once, there is no need to give the abbreviation or acronym.
- In web copy do not use the abbreviation on one page because the full name has been given on another. Someone might only visit this page.
- Abbreviations can be used on social media when space is limited.

Capitalisation

- Many words that used to be capitalised are now written in lower case, e.g. government. Capitalisation should be kept to minimum, but we need to try and be as consistent as possible. When in doubt, use lower case, unless it looks very odd. Also check individual entries in the glossary.
- Use lower case for diseases and medical conditions, e.g. dementia, except when named after someone, e.g. Alzheimer's disease.
- Use capitals for names of specific organisations, institutions and official bodies, e.g. Alzheimer's Research UK, House of Lords/ Commons, Treasury, Department of Health, US Congress, Charity Commission, University of Cambridge.
- Use lower case when speaking more generally about a type of organisation, e.g. university, government department, research council.
- Use lower case for parliament, government, cabinet, opposition, civil service, the department, the commission etc.
- Use capitals for job titles and ranks, e.g. the Chair of Alzheimer's Research UK, the Chief Executive, Professor Browne. Use lower case, when used in a purely descriptive way, e.g. Paul Burstow is a minister in the Department of Health, James Browne is a university professor.
- Titles (Mr, Mrs, Dr, Lord, Baroness etc.) have a capital letter and do not need a full stop after them. Use Prof for Professor.
- Mum and Dad are upper case when used instead of someone's name, e.g. Mum was diagnosed in 2005. Otherwise, use lower case, e.g. my mum was diagnosed in 2005.
- Geographical terms: use lower case for words that are directions, rather than part of the place name, e.g. south London, north-east Scotland, the south-east. Use upper case when part of the place name, e.g. East Anglia, South Africa.

Dates, times, headings, measurements & numbers

Dates and times

- Write dates with no commas or ordinals (i.e. 1st), e.g. Sunday 18 March 2012.
- For time periods, use an en dash e.g. 18–20 March, 21 April–31 May, 2012–13 (shortening the second year like this is acceptable).
- Write decades in full and without an apostrophe, e.g. in the 1980s (not in the 80s). However, you can shorten the second decade, e.g. in the 1980s and 90s.
- Write times in figures followed by am or pm, with no space in between, e.g. 3pm, 9–11am.

Headings

- Use sentence case for headings, i.e. only capitalise the first word and any proper nouns.
- In a long document, you may need different levels of heading (font size or weight) to distinguish the main sections from subsections.

Measurements

- Use the metric system wherever possible: kilometres (km), metres (m), centimetres (cm), grams (g), kilograms (kg). However, older people might be more familiar with imperial measures (miles, feet, inches, pounds and ounces), so consider using these or including them in brackets in writing aimed at older people.
- If something is described in imperial measure, e.g. 10-mile run, there is no need to convert it to metric.
- Do not leave a space between number and measurement, e.g. 10km, 60kg.

Numbers

- Spell out numbers from one to nine and use figures for 10 and above.
- Always use figures for
  - numbers with a decimal point
  - percentages (use %, not per cent)
  - measurements and quantities
  - sums of money
- page and chapter numbers.
- Write out fractions, e.g. two-thirds, three-quarters. Use figures for tables, e.g. 1⁄3, 3⁄4.
- Millions and billions:
  - For press releases and social media, thousand, million and billion can be shortened to k, m and bn for sums of money, quantities or inanimate objects, e.g. £2m, 30m doses of vaccine.
  - Use 000 (thousand), million and billion in all other written material.
  - Use million and billion for people or animals in all cases.
- Do not start a sentence with a figure – rearrange the sentence so it does not come first, or write the number in words.
- Use commas in figures over 999, e.g. 1,000 or 4,560,234.
- One in six, one in 10 etc. should be treated as plural, e.g. one in 4 people in hospital are likely to have dementia.

Quotes and references

Quotes

- Take care to report direct speech accurately and always attribute quotes, preferably at the start. Use a colon to introduce quotes and start the quote on a new line. Use an ellipsis to indicate where material has been left out, e.g.: Prof Green said he was hopeful about the results:
  "These findings indicate that there is a link between this gene and Alzheimer's. This offers hope for developing future therapies ... We will be taking this research further."
- Give the person's full name on first mention, then surname (usually preceded by their title), or first name only, depending on the context. Fundraising and personal stories would use the first name. News stories about high profile figures would use the surname.

References

- If you quote or refer to a journal or newspaper article, report, book or website, you will need to acknowledge your source. Use the Oxford referencing system (footnotes) for this:

Use the Insert Footnote function under the References menu in Word to insert a small number (in superscript) after the quote/relevant text (and punctuation). Word will insert the same number at the bottom of the page, where you should insert the full reference. Word will also automatically adjust the numbering if you go back to add or delete a footnote.

Journal articles:
Author initials and Surname, 'article name', Journal Name, volume no., issue no., date of publication, page nos, e.g.:
1 C Anderson-Hanley et al, 'Exergaming and Older Adult Cognition: a cluster randomized clinical trial', American Journal of Preventive Medicine, volume 42, issue 2, February 2012, pp. 109-19.
Note: et al is used for more than three authors; otherwise list all three. The second page number can be shortened as above.

Books:
Author Initials and Surname, Book Title, Edition (if not the first edition), place of publication: publisher, year of publication, page reference, e.g.: M Talbot, Keeping Mum: caring for someone with dementia, London: Hay House, 2011, p. 12.

Websites:
Authorship or Source, 'Title of web document or web page', year [type of medium] (date of update if available). Available at: <website address/URL> [date accessed], e.g.:
Department of Health, 'Living Well with Dementia: a national dementia strategy', 2009 [PDF]. Available at: <http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2011/07/dementia-strategy/> [Accessed 26 March 2012].
Avoid breaking website addresses across more than one line. If necessary, start a new line to keep it all together.

Salutations and spelling

Salutations/forms of address

- These are upper case and do not need a full stop after them. At the start of a letter, or when mentioning someone in the third person, use the following, followed by their surname:
  - Mr, Mrs, Ms, Miss
  - Dr
  - Prof
  - Lord
  - Baroness/Lady (a female peer can be called either, but Baroness is most widely used).
- Sir and Dame are followed by the person's first name, e.g. Sir Cliff, Dame Sally.
- When addressing a letter or when listing people, e.g. as patrons, write their title followed by their full name. This is different for peers, whose names are often preceded by 'The' and often followed by their territorial designation, e.g. The Baroness Perry of Southwark. Some peers have a different title, e.g. The Earl Howe. This is written in the address, but the letter would begin Dear Lord Howe.
- Rt Hon before someone's name indicates that they are a member of the Privy Council. All past and present cabinet members have this title, e.g. Rt Hon The Baroness Thatcher.
- Letters after people's names should be included in the address or when listing them, e.g. as patrons. But, at the start of a letter, or when referring to them in the third person, use their title and name, e.g.

  address: Sir Terry Pratchett OBE

  salutation: Dear Sir Terry.
- Letters to MPs should be addressed with MP after their name, but the salutation would again just be their title and name, e.g. Paul Burstow MP, Dear Mr Burstow.

Spelling

- Use –ise instead of ize in words like organise or materialise.
- Avoid –st endings in words like amidst, whilst, amongst. Use amid, while, among.

Telephone numbers, titles & web/email addresses

Telephone numbers

- Telephone numbers should be spaced, e.g.:
  - 01223 843899 (number with regional area code)
  - 020 7954 8999 (London number)
  - 00 1 800 272 3900 (international number – US)
  - 0845 257 9406 (helpline).

Titles

- Use italics for book, film, journal and newspaper/magazine names. In newspaper names, use a lower case the: the Guardian.
- Use quotation marks for articles, reports and academic papers.
- Capitalise each word of the main title, but use lower case for a, an, and, at, for, from, in, of, the, to (unless this is the first word of the title). Use lower case for subtitles (usually after a colon), e.g. 'Defeating Dementia: building capacity to capitalise of the UK's research strengths'.

Websites/email addresses

- If these come at the end of sentence, do not end with a full stop. This can be mistaken for part of the address.
- Avoid breaking these across two lines. If necessary, start a new line to keep it all together.
- There is no need to write http:// before a web address.

Punctuation

Apostrophes, brackets, bullet points & lists

Apostrophes

- Use apostrophes to indicate a missing letter (can't, doesn't) or a possessive noun, e.g. the team's lab, the scientists' observations (plural).
- Names ending with s usually take the possessive followed by another s: Jones's, Amis's. However, be guided by pronunciation and use the plural apostrophe where the singular sounds awkward, e.g. Richards', Waters'.
- Plural nouns not ending in s take a possessive apostrophe followed by an s, e.g. people's opinions, children's books.
- Phrases like goat's cheese, and collector's item are treated as singular.
- Use apostrophes in phrases like three week's time, four month's break, where the time period (four months) modifies the noun (break). Do not use in phrases like 30 years old, where the time period is adverbial, modifying an adjective (old).
- Alzheimer's always has an apostrophe as it is named after someone.

Brackets

- If the sentence is correct without the information in brackets, the punctuation stays outside the brackets. (A complete sentence that stands alone in brackets starts with a capital and ends with a full stop.)

Bullet points and lists

- Bullet points help break up text and make each item in a list stand out.
- Leave a space between the bullet point and text, as well as above and below the list.
- If each item in the list contains only one or two words, do not begin each line with a capital letter or use punctuation at the end of the lines. End the complete list with a full stop, e.g. You should see your GP if you or your family and friends are worried about any changes in your
  - memory
  - general mental functioning
  - ability to carry out daily tasks
  - personality.

If each item is a complete sentence, introduce your list with a colon and begin each bullet point with a capital letter and end with a full stop, e.g.:

Symptoms of dementia with Lewy bodies can include:

- Variation in attention, alertness and confusion. These fluctuations can be very noticeable from hour to hour or day to day.
- Visual hallucinations. These can often involve seeing people or animals that are not really there.
- Parkinson's-type symptoms, like slow movement or difficulty walking, stiffness in the limbs and sometimes tremor.
- Movements during sleep and vivid dreams.
- Symptoms similar to Alzheimer's, including memory loss and disorientation.
- Fainting and falls.

- If the items on the list need to appear in a certain order, number them, e.g. To apply for funding:
  1. Register for an account on our grant applications website.
  2. Log in and view the open grant rounds.
  3. Complete an application.:

PUNCTUATION PART 5

Colons and commas

Colons

Use a colon:

- Between two sentences or parts of sentences where the first introduces a proposition that is resolved by the second, e.g. There is only one way to address the dementia crisis: greater investment in research.
- To introduce a quotation, e.g. Susan talked about her motivation for running the marathon:
  "This is an issue close to my heart."
- To precede a list, e.g. Typical symptoms of early Alzheimer's include:
  - Regularly forgetting recent events, names and faces.
  - Regularly misplacing items or putting them in odd places.
  - Confusion about the time of day.
- Between a main title and subtitle, using lower case for the subtitle, e.g. Keeping Mum: caring for someone with dementia.

Commas

Use commas:

- To give the reader a breathing space in a sentence, e.g., If we could delay the onset of dementia by just five years, we could halve the number of people dying with dementia.
- To separate items in lists, e.g. The pack contains a Cook for a Cure booklet, invitations, a Gift Aid form, a donation return form and a feedback form.
- Instead of parentheses, e.g . Our privacy policy is published on our public website, on this page, and any changes made to it are promptly reflected in the content of this page.
- Before and after a subordinate clause or extra information, e.g. The pub's landlord, Sam Clark, is excited about the quiz night.

Note: Use commas if there is only one person in this position. Do not use commas if there is more than one, e.g. The bar assistant Rob Chambers is also looking forward to the night.

- To avoid ambiguity, e.g. We would like to thank our marathon runners who raised over £50,000 on the day. This implies that we would only like to thank those who raised over £50,000. However, the following makes clear that the total raised by all the runners was over £50,000: We would like to thank our marathon runners, who raised over £50,000 on the day.
- The Oxford comma, also known as the serial comma, is an optional comma before the word and at the end of a list. It can clarify the meaning of a sentence, especially when the items in the list are not single words, e.g. This report is intended for anyone with an interest in dementia research, including policymakers, research funders and researchers, and people affected by dementia.

Dashes, ellipsis, exclamation marks & hyphens

Dashes

Use an en dash:

- For parentheses, e.g. A number of studies suggest how lifestyle choices – such as eating a healthy diet, not smoking and cutting back on alcohol consumption – may reduce the risk of dementia if started in midlife.
- Between figures and dates, with no space either side, e.g. 80–100 people and dates 23–24 June, 2012–2013.

The keyboard shortcut for an en dash is: Ctrl + minus key on the number pad.

Ellipsis

- Use three dots, with a space either side, to indicate that material has been left out of a direct quote from direct speech or from a written source, e.g. “I was exhausted when I finished ... the climb was difficult but exhilarating.”
- When writing for the media, try to avoid use of ellipses unless you are editing out truly superfluous details.

Exclamation marks

Avoid using these, except when thanking somebody on social media. Use single exclamation marks only.

Hypens

- Use hyphens for short compound adjectives like a three-year study or post-stroke dementia. Do not use for constructions such as 85 year old man.
- Do not use a hyphen after adverbs ending in –ly, e.g. a highly respected scientist.
- Use hyphens with short and common adverbs, e.g. a well-respected scientist. There is no need for a hyphen when the description comes after the noun, e.g. this scientist is well respected.
- Also use a hyphen where not using one would be ambiguous, e.g. black-cab driver rather than black cab driver.

Quotation marks, semicolons & square brackets

Quotation marks

- Use double quotation marks for direct speech or quoted text.
- Use single quotation marks for quotes within quotes.
- Single quotation marks can be used to highlight an unusual term, e.g. the normal, healthy form of tau forms part of the ‘scaffolding’ of brain cells.
- Put full stops and commas inside the quotation marks for a complete quoted sentence. Otherwise, put them outside, e.g.:
    - He talked about his motivation for raising money for Alzheimer’s Research UK:
      “I love the thought of a challenge and if I can do that combining music and running in memory of my granny, all the better!”
    - She emphasised the need for scientists to work together “so they can marry their knowledge and come up with new ideas”.

Semicolons

Use when a comma is not enough and a full stop is too much, e.g. There are no treatments to cure Alzheimer’s; our research could change this.

Square brackets

Use for words inserted into a quote for clarity, e.g. “It has always been my dream to run the [Paris] Marathon.”

Grammar

An or a before H? collective nouns, contractions & spilt infinitives

An or a before H?

- Use an before a silent h, e.g. an heir, an honorary fellow.
- Use a before an aspirated h, e.g. a headline.
- Be guided by pronunciation for abbreviations, e.g. an MRC grant.

Collective nouns

Nouns such as team, committee and family are singular when thought of as a single unit, but plural when thought of as a group of individuals, e.g.:

- The team plans to sequence every gene in 500 people with Alzheimer's.
- The team were cheered by supporters when the match was over.

Contractions

Try not to use contractions, such as aren't, doesn't, isn't, we've etc., except in direct quotes and social media.

Split infinitives

The classic example is 'to boldly go', where the adverb boldly splits the infinitive form of the verb 'to go'. These used to be a no-no in traditional grammar teaching, but are now acceptable. In fact, they can often make a phrase less awkward or old-fashioned, e.g. the government has pledged to more than double funding for dementia research.

Terms that are often confused

affect/effect: affect is a verb, e.g. Dementia affects over 820,000 people in the UK. Effect is a noun, e.g. the effect dementia has on the brain. Effect can also be a verb, e.g. we hope to effect a change.

among/between: use between when the relationship is reciprocal, e.g. cooperation between researchers. Among is for distributive relationships, e.g. this was shared among the group.

amount/number: amount refers to a quantity, e.g. food that contains a large amount of salt. Number refers to something that can be counted, e.g. a large number of applicants for funding.

as/since: as is causal, e.g. We cannot be sure that these findings will lead to new treatments as more research is required. Since is temporal, e.g. The promise of new treatments has been growing since this research began.

benefactor/beneficiary: a benefactor gives something; a beneficiary receives it.

compare to/compare with: compare to is used to liken something/someone to something/someone else, e.g. Dementia research can be compared to cancer research 30 years ago. Compare with is to make a comparison, e.g. Compared with cancer, dementia research is underfunded.

complement/compliment: to complement is to make complete; to compliment is to praise.

continual/continuous: something that is continual happens repeatedly but not constantly; something that happens continuously is constant.

councillor/counsellor: a councillor is a member of a council; a counsellor gives advice.

dependant/dependent: dependant is a noun, e.g. She has five dependants. Dependent is an adjective, e.g. We are dependent on your donations.

disinterested/uninterested: disinterested means impartial or unbiased; uninterested means not interested.

effectively/in effect: Effectively describes something being done in an effective way, e.g. the campaign was launched effectively. In effect means in reality or in fact, e.g. The campaign was in effect launched before the launch event.

enquiry/inquiry: enquiry is a request for information; inquiry is a formal investigation.

ensure/assure/insure: We will ensure that your donation goes directly into research. We can assure you that your donation will go directly into research. Insure relates to insurance policies.

everyday/every day: everyday is an adjective meaning ordinary, e.g. an everyday mistake. Every day is an adverb meaning something happens daily or often.

forever/for ever: forever means continually, e.g. The support for dementia research is forever growing. For ever means for always, e.g. We would like to defeat dementia for ever.

forgo/forego: forgo means to go without; forego means to go before.

impracticable/impractical: impracticable means not possible; impractical means not workable or not easily achieved.

infer/imply: infer is to deduce or conclude, e.g. we infer from this evidence that UK research is world-class. Imply means to hint or suggest.

Terms that are often confused

into/in to: The speaker came into the room. The speaker came in to give her presentation.

it's/its: it's is a contraction of it is. Its is possessive, e.g. the club celebrated its victory.

less/fewer: use less with uncountable nouns, e.g. less support. Use fewer for countable nouns, e.g. fewer supporters.

no doubt that, no question that: these are opposites. There is no doubt that we will see an increase in funding (there will be an increase). There is no question that there will be an increase in funding (there will not be an increase).

one another/each other: use one another if there are more than two subjects, e.g. members of the team congratulated one another for a good result. Use each other for two subjects, e.g. Matt and Cathy hugged each other when they crossed the finish line.

practice/practise: practice is a noun, e.g. a GP practice. Practise is a verb, e.g. to practise medicine.

principal/principle: principal means first in importance, e.g. Our principal aim is defeat dementia. Principle is a rule or standard, e.g. this guide contains principles for writing clearly.

program/programme: program should only be used in the context of computer software.

stationary/stationery: stationary means not moving; stationery means writing materials.

that/which: that defines, e.g. the study that produced these promising results was carried out at UCL. Which provides extra information, often in a clause enclosed by commas, e.g. this study, which was carried out at UCL, produced promising results.

Glossary

Glossary

act: a bill that has passed into law. Use lower case, except in names of acts, e.g. this act strengthens anti-discrimination legislation. The Equality Act 2010 strengthens anti-discrimination legislation.

adviser: not advisor.

alpha-synuclein: a protein that forms toxic spheres in the brain in dementia with Lewy bodies.

ageing

all right: not alright.

ampersand (&): only use in company names, when the company does, e.g. Johnson & Johnson. Can also be used in social media when space is limited.

Alzheimer's disease: capital A. can be shortened to Alzheimer's after first mention, but do not shorten to AD.

AM: assembly member, National Assembly for Wales.

America/Americans: use United States or US. US Citizens are Americans, but America includes North and South America.

AMRC: Association of Medical Research Charities. Refer to as AMRC rather than 'the AMRC'.

amyloid: not amyloid-beta or amyloid. On first mention, explain that it is a protein involved with Alzheimer's disease.

analysis: plural is analyses.

antidepressant

antipsychotics: also known as neuroleptics or major tranquillisers. There are several different drug names, including haloperidol, risperidone (Risperdal), aripiprazole, olanzapine, ziprasidone, quetiapine.

any more: two words, not anymore.

appendix: plural is appendices.

APPG: all-party parliamentary group. Lower case except when using a groups' name. e.g. the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Dementia.

Aricept: brand name for Alzheimer's drug donepezil hydrochloride.

around: use about or approximately.

astrocyte: star-shaped support cell in the brain.

bottleneck

backbench/backbencher/backbenches: one word, lower case.

bacteria: plural of bacterium.

basic research: research that seeks to understand fundamental biological systems.

BBC1, BBC2: no spaces.

BBC Radio 4

bill: draft of proposed law. Lower case except in names of bills, e.g. Health and Social Care Bill.

biomarker: a biological trait that can be measured. Biomarkers can change in response to normal biological processes, but abnormal changes can be a warning sign of disease. They can help to track a disease over time or to monitor people's response to treatments. One example of a biomarker is blood sugar levels. These peak after we eat, but if they rise too high, this could be a sign of disease such as diabetes. If people with diabetes use insulin to control their blood sugar levels, they can use small finger-prick tests to monitor the sugar levels in their blood and check that the insulin is working.

biotech/biotechnology: lower case. The biotech industry usually refers to small life sciences companies.

blog: noun, a collection of online articles; verb, the action of publishing online articles, e.g. I blog about my research.

Glossary

blogpost: a single article on a blog.

British Medical Association (BMA): doctors' union.

body mass index (BMI)

BPSD: behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia. Often used to refer to 'challenging behaviours' associated with dementia.

Britain, UK: These mean the same and refer to England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Great Britain only includes England Scotland and Wales. Try to say 'in the UK' rather than 'here' as some readers (particularly of the website) might be in another country.

Budget: upper case when referring to the government's annual financial statement. Pre-Budget Report is also upper case.

build-up: noun, e.g. During Alzheimer's there is a build-up of amyloid and tau in the brain.

build up: verb, e.g. During Alzheimer's amyloid and tau build up in the brain.

cabinet/shadow cabinet: lower case.

Can not/ cannot: these are different: You can not go if you don't want to. We cannot guarantee you a place.

carer: an unpaid family member, partner or friend who helps someone disabled or frail with the activities of daily living; not someone who works in a caring job or profession – a professional carer. This is important because carers are entitled to a range of benefits and services that depend on them recognising themselves as carers. Caregiver is an alternative.

CT scan: computerised (axial) tomography. Sometimes called a CaT scan. Use CT

CD/CDs

Chair: use instead of Chairman, Chairwoman or Chairperson, unless someone describes themselves as one of these.

Charity Commission

check-up: noun, e.g. to have a check-up.

check up: verb, e.g. to check up on someone.

cholesterol

cholinesterase inhibitors (ChEIs): these include donepezil (Aricept), rivastigmine (Exelon, Abix), galantamine (Reminyl).

Christmas Day, Christmas Eve

chronic: lasting a long time or recurring. Can be confused with acute, which means short but severe.

CJD: Creutzfeldt-Jacob disease, the human form of BSE (do not use mad cow disease).

cerebrospinal fluid (CSF): fluid that bathes the brain and spinal cord.

clinical research: research that uses humans.

clinician: a medical professional specialising in the treatment of patients.

coalition government: lower case.

cognitive stimulation, cognitive training, cognitive rehabilitation: these mean different things and should not be confused. Cognitive stimulation is a range of activities, often group based and with an emphasis on enjoyment, designed to stimulate thinking skills and engage people who have dementia. It is recommended by NICE. Cognitive training, often called 'brain training', is designed to improve certain aspects of memory and thinking by practising tasks that involve these skills, such as pen and paper or computerised tests. More research is needed into the potential benefits of cognitive training for dementia. Cognitive rehabilitation is a more personalised approach, where a therapist will work with a person and their family to devise strategies to help them compensate for areas of weakness. The aim is to help improve day-to-day life rather than cognitive performance. More research is needed into the potential benefits of cognitive rehabilitation for dementia.

Glossary

Commons, House of Commons, the House

Commons committees: lower case except when using the committee's name, e.g. Science and Technology Select Committee.

consortium: use consortia as plural.

consult: not consult with.

coordinate/coordination: one word.

cooperate/cooperation: one word.

credit card/debit card

criterion: plural is criteria.

data: this is plural but often treated as singular, as no one uses the singular datum. Use the singular, e.g. this data shows, for general audiences, but the plural (these data show) for more specialist audiences.

Dementia Action Alliance (DAA)

dementia: lower case

dementia with Lewy bodies: Lewy always has a capital L. Can be shortened to **DLB** after first use.

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)

Department of Health (DH): do not shorten to DoH or D of H.

detection: not to be confused with diagnosis. Detection means identifying features of the disease in someone. Diagnosis is what you are told you have, in a clinic.

developing countries: not third world.

diagnostic: this is an adjective that is now often used as a noun referring to the practice of medical diagnosis or a technique used in medical diagnosis. Avoid using as a noun.

diagnosis: not to be confused with detection.

dissociate/dissociation: not disassociate or disassociation.

DNA: deoxyribonucleic acid. There is no need to write this out in full as DNA is commonly used.

docudrama/docusoap

Down's syndrome: sometimes called Down syndrome by scientists. Use Down's syndrome. Say, for example, 'someone with Down's syndrome' rather than 'a Down's syndrome sufferer'.

drug companies: not drugs. Pharmaceutical companies (lower case) might be more appropriate for a more specialist audience.

DVD/DVDs

early-onset Alzheimer's/dementia: hyphen. Sometimes referred to as 'young onset' or 'working age'. Use early-onset.

ebook/email: but e-petition.

EEG: electroencephalograph, a 'brain wave test'.

embargo/embargos/embargoed

enormity: refers to something wicked or monstrous, not big.

en route

Europe: this includes Britain, so we should not say something is widespread in Europe unless it is widespread in Britain too. To distinguish between Britain and the rest of Europe, you could say 'other parts of Europe' or 'continental Europe'.

Glossary

film-maker: hyphen, but film star (two words).

first, second, third: rather than firstly, secondly, thirdly. Spell out until 10th and then use figures.

First Minister: Welsh Assembly, Scottish Parliament, Northern Ireland Assembly.

first name: rather than forename, given name or Christian name.

focus, focused, focusing

forensic: means for legal purposes. It does not mean scientific.

foresee, foreseeable

frontbench/frontbencher/frontbenches: one word, lower case.

frontline/frontman/frontrunner: one word.

frontotemporal dementia: one word. Can be shortened to FTD after first use.

fulfil, fulfilling, fulfilment

full-time/full time: a full-time job. I work full time.

fundraiser/fundraising

gene and protein names or symbols: these are written in lower case, but their symbols are written in upper case, e.g. the protein apolipoprotein E is written as APOE. APOE is also a gene and the variant risk gene for Alzheimer's is APOE4. Use upper case roman for both gene protein symbols, but be careful to make clear whether you are referring to the gene or the protein.

genetics

general election: lower case.

General Medical Council (GMC): doctors' disciplinary body.

Geriatrics: a branch of medicine dealing with elderly people. Not a namefor elderly people themselves.

gift: a noun. Do not use as a verb.

gifts in Wills: use this rather than legacies. Upper case for Will.

GlaxoSmithKline (GSK)

granddad: but granddaughter.

grandparent

great-aunt, great-grandfather, great-great-grandmother

Great Britain: refers to England, Scotland and Wales. Use Britain or the UK to include Northern Ireland use.

grassroots

government: lower case, even in reference to the particular people in office, i.e. the government.

helpline: one word.

hippocampus the part of the brain that makes new memories.

HIV-related cognitive impairment: do not say AIDS-related.

Holyrood Scotland's parliament in Edinburgh.

hospital upper case in actual hospital names, e.g. Guy's Hospital

hospitalised do not use. Say someone was taken or admitted to hospital.

Human Genome Project

Huntingdon's disease

immune to: not immune from

internet: lower case

Glossary

invalid: means not valid. Not an ill person.

invite: a verb. Do not use as a noun, e.g. to send an invite. Say invitation.

issue: do not use as a synonym for problem, e.g. describing someone who has anxiety issues.

ITV1, ITV2, ITV3

judgement

kickstart: one word, noun or verb.

kilogrammes, kilojoules, kilometres, kilowatts: abbreviate as kg, kJ, km, kW.

King's College, Cambridge: comma.

King's College London: no comma.

late-onset: hyphen.

lay bare: past tense is laid bare.

learned: not learnt.

led: past tense of lead.

Liberal Democrats: can be abbreviated to Lib Dems after first mention.

lifelong, lifesize: one word.

longtime: adjective, e.g. longtime companion.

lumbar puncture: put (spinal tap) in brackets after first use.

MAGDR: Ministerial Advisory Group on Dementia Research.

midlife: one word.

mild cognitive impairment (MCI)

MLA: member of the legislative assembly, Northern Ireland.

more than: generally better than over, e.g. more than 70,000 people; but, she is over 75.

motor neurone disease (MND)

MP,MPs: upper case. Lower case if spelling out member of parliament.

Medical Research Council (MRC)

MRI scan

MSP: member of the Scottish parliament.

myriad: a large unspecified number. Can be used as an adjective or a noun, e.g. there are myriad examples. There is a myriad of examples. Do not use myriads of.

National Health Service: NHS or health service is normally sufficient

neurone: use brain cell or nerve cell for non-specialists. Do not use neuron, which is the American spelling.

nevertheless

new year: lower case, but New Year's Day and New Year's Eve.

next of kin

NICE: National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence

NIHR: National Institute for Health Research

non-drug treatments: hyphen.

No 10 (Downing Street)

nonetheless

no one: two words.

occurred

OK: not okay.

online

Glossary

omega-3 fatty acids: lower case with hyphen.

on to: two words.

opposition: still lower case in a political context.

oriented, disoriented: not orientated or disorientated.

outpatient

outside: not outside of.

Parkinson's dementia: also known as Parkinson's disease dementia. Use Parkinson's dementia.

Parkinson's disease: Upper case A. Do not shorten to PD

parliament/parliamentary: lower case.

part-time/part time: see full-time/full time.

party: (political), lower case.

PDF

peers

pensioners: use older people.

per: avoid, e.g. we fund millions of pounds worth of research per year. Say each year instead.

per cent: use %.

percentage rises: an increase from 3% to 5% is a 2 percentage point increase or a 2-point increase, not a 2% increase; take care when saying something has risen by X%.

persons: do not use. Say people

PET scans

pharmaceutical company/pharmaceutical industry: lower case. Can be referred to as Pharma (upper case) for more specialist audiences.

PhD

policymaker: one word.

Comment [ma3]: Link to full-time/full time

postcode: one word

postdoc: use postdoctoral researcher for non-specialist audiences.

postgraduate

posterior cortical atrophy (PCA)

pound: use £ symbol only with figures.

presently: means soon, not at present.

prevalence

preventive: rather than preventative.

Prime Minister

prior to: use before.

Prof: use this as someone's title rather than Professor.

proved: not proven.

re-/re: use re- (with hyphen) when followed by the vowels e or u (not pronounced as 'yu'), e.g. re-entry, re-examine, re-urge. Use re (no hyphen) when followed by the vowels a, i, o or u (pronounced as 'yu'), or any consonant, e.g. rearm, rearrange, reassemble, reiterate, reorder, reread, reuse, rebuild, reconsider, retweet.

with regard to: not regards to.

RSVP

Glossary

run-up: noun, e.g. in the run-up to the big day.

seasons (spring, summer, autumn, winter): all lower case.

side effect: two words.

social media: plural.

some: do not use before a figure instead of approximately, e.g. some 20 people.

straightforward

sure-fire

synapses

synopsis: plural is synopses.

targeted/targeting

tau: on first mention, explain that it is a protein involved with Alzheimer's disease.

timebomb/timescare: one word.

totalled

translational research: applies basic research to a disease.

try to: not try and.

T-shirt

turnover/to turn over

21st century: hyphen if an adjective, e.g. 21st-century medicine.

Twitter/tweeters/to tweet

twofold: one word.

UK: see Britain/UK.

under: when used as a prefix, it is usually one word, e.g. underachieve, undervalue.

underestimate/understate: do not confuse with overestimate or overstate, e.g. we cannot underestimate the contribution of our donors (should be overestimate).

under way: two words.

unfollow/unfriend: Twitter/Facebook.

university: check the website of a particular institution to confirm name, e.g. University of Cambridge, Sheffield Hallam University.

University College London (UCL)

unmistakable

until: not up until.

up to date/up-to-date: the news is up to date. We have up-to-date news.

US: not USA or America.

versus: do not abbreviate to v or vs.

Valentine's Day

vascular dementia: lower case.

vice-chair, vice-chancellor

vitamin B/B vitamins

web, website, webpage, world wide web

wellbeing: one word.

Comment [ma4]: Link to Britain/UK

well-known

Wellcome Trust

West Country

white paper

Glossary

who/whom: who refers to the subject of a sentence, e.g. Chris, who is running the marathon in memory of his mum. Whom refers to the object: Chris's mum, for whom he is running the marathon. Whom is rarely used these days and most people use who instead. Only use whom if you are sure of the correct usage and who really does not sound right.

Will: use upper case when referring to the legal document where a person states what he or she would like to happen to their estate in the event of death.

wishlist: one word.

woman/women: nouns not adjectives. Use female as the adjective, e.g. female doctor rather than woman doctor.

world-class: hyphen.

Xmas: use Christmas.

Alzheimer's Research UK
Defeating Dementia

For questions about language use, please contact the ARUK Communications Team on 01223 843899.

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