



## The News Style Guide

- When referring to our newspaper, we should be The News, not the News.
- Our style is to follow New Zealand or UK English language styles, not US or Australian.
- This means organisation (not organization), programme (not program – although this is optional when it refers to computer software), centre (not center), colour (not color).
- Style should be month, day year – February 8, not 8 February consistent with NZME and Stuff. Month first, then date, then year, e.g. February 8, 2022. Not “the 8th of September”.
- No commas or contractions needed such as 1st, 3rd, 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Use pm and am with no space after the numeral, e.g. 2pm, 4.30am.
- Avoid using o’clock.
- Use noon not 12 noon or 12pm. Use midnight not 12 midnight or 12am.
- Use numerals when you write a time, even for those numbers below 10.
- Put am and pm immediately after the hour e.g. 3.50pm, 8am (not 8.00am). Most people are more familiar with the 12 hour clock.

- In text, spell out numbers from one to nine, but use numerals for all numbers from 10 onwards. The exceptions are:
  - when a number starts a sentence, in which case always spell it out
  - when a number contains a decimal point, e.g. 2.38
  - when referring to a page number or to a percentage, or when a unit of measurement accompanies the number, e.g. 6mm, page7, 2 per cent.
  - when referring to times, e.g. 5pm
  - when referring to someone's age, e.g. Sally, 9, entered the race.
- Hyphenate fractions (three-quarters) and spelled out in words even if more than 10, e.g. he gave a tenth of his salary to the church and a twentieth to the SPCA.
- Thousands: in text there is no need to add a comma until you reach the 10,000 mark, e.g. 2000 but 25,000.
- Millions: write the word million out in text, e.g. \$6 million. Be aware that a US billion is a thousand million and a UK billion is a million million. We lean towards the US version because it is the most used.
- Per cent: per cent not percent.
- Plurals for abbreviated words or numbers do not include an apostrophe, e.g. 1990s not 1990's
- use fewer capital (upper case) letters. Generally, this means restricting the use of capital letters to full and proper names.

- No capital letters for job roles and titles when used in the flow of text e.g. chief executive, cleaner, bottle washer, team leader
- No capital letters for things that are general descriptions or professions (community, iwi, health sector).
- Capital letters for full and proper names of services, departments, specialties, facilities, projects and committees e.g. Governance, Facilities, Marketing – then the title that follows it is lower case e.g. team leader, manager etc.
- We have a more relaxed style than mainstream media on honorifics, and are comfortable using them at the discretion of the writer, though where we are presenting hard news “Bill and Jenny” will not work - you can simply use their last name.
- Titles are not used at the first mention ... so Bob White at the first mention, Sir Bob or Prof White or White after that.
- Use capital letters where a name and/or title stands alone, i.e. a signature at the end of a letter to the editor
- Watch your plurals and singulars e.g. the council is singular the council members are plural.