



ADCES House Style Guidelines

(Version 1.3)

The Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists (ADCES) has specific guidelines regarding spelling, grammar, and language. ADCES follows *The Associated Press Stylebook*, 57th Edition | 2024-2026—see exceptions below. These guidelines should be consistent across all communication to ensure ADCES maintains a positive brand image and professionalism in the industry.

EXCEPTIONS:

- Refer only to the *AMA Manual of Style* (11th edition) when writing content for any ADCES *journal*, *publication*, or related *scientific work*.
- **Footnotes call out deviations between AP and AMA styles;** otherwise, assume AP and AMA follow the same style.
- Apply these guidelines regardless of Grammarly or other grammar software alerts.

Table of Contents

ADCES Preferred Style and Language 3

The Use of Language in Diabetes Care and Education..... 8

Punctuation Guidelines10

Capitalization Guidelines12

Basic Style Guidelines14

Web Writing Guidelines15

Send questions or updates to publications@adces.org

ADCES Preferred Style and Language

A1C, HbA1c

- Always capitalize the c in A1C
- Always lowercase c in HbA1c

ADCES logo – Use the registered trademark symbol ®, not the trademark symbol ™

ADCES website – adces.org (*Note: the old domain, diabeteseducator.org, still navigates to the new domain*)

ADCES7 – Replace any references to AADE7 with ADCES7

ADCES7 Self-Care Behaviors – Show the ® symbol with the logo on the first mention; okay to omit thereafter.

- Do not use the ® symbol in a headline or title.
- Use the ® symbol with ADCES7® when it appears alone; only on the first mention.

Adherence/adherent/nonadherence – Avoid these terms.

- Replace adherence with *medication-taking* or *medication-taking behavior* (preferred terms).
- *Persistence* is less common but may be used by pharmacists.

African American, Asian, Black, Hispanic, White – Do not hyphenate these terms when used with *American*.

- Always capitalized African American, Black, White
- When used with the prefix *non*, always hyphenate (e.g., *non-White*, *non-Hispanic*)
- *Black people* or *White people* are preferred to Blacks and Whites

Antidiabetic medications – Avoid this term.

Replace with *glucose-lowering medications*; avoid antihyperglycemics and other “anti” or “ic” words

Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists (ADCES)

- Name the name of the organization with an ampersand (&) not *and*.
- Use the full name on the first reference; use ADCES (all caps) thereafter.
- Both the full name and abbreviation are always uppercase.
- ADCES’s **not** ADCES’ is the possessive form of ADCES.

Blood Glucose, Blood Glucose Monitoring (BGM), Glucose – Avoid blood sugar *or* sugar

- ADCES prefers *glucose* because it is a scientifically correct term (sugar is not).
- Use glucose regardless of the audience.
- If sugar is used to introduce or explain glucose, say, “*Glucose (sometimes called blood sugar or sugar) ...,*” and then use only glucose thereafter.
- When talking about monitoring or continuous glucose monitoring (CGM), omit *blood* and use *glucose*, because CGM measures interstitial and not blood glucose levels.

Compared to, compared with

- Use *compared to* when comparing the similarities between two things. Example: Few medical discoveries can compare to the discovery of penicillin. (Medical discoveries *like* penicillin are being compared.)
- Use *compared with* when comparing the differences between two things. Example: Participants in one group who had routine medical care made improvements in functioning compared with participants who did not receive routine medical care. (Group one made improvements, *unlike* the second group.)

ADCES Preferred Style and Language *continued*

Compliance/Comply – Avoid these terms; rewrite the copy if necessary

- Avoid: She complies with taking her medication.
- Preferred: *She takes her medication. She has inconsistent medication-taking behavior.*

Condition *versus* Disease – Diabetes is a disease.

- Use *disease* when referring to diabetes; diabetes is a chronic disease. Diabetes is *not* a condition.
- Complications are *diabetes-related*, not *diabetic-related* (e.g., diabetes-related neuropathies).
- Use *condition* when referring to prediabetes or complications (retinopathy).

Continuing Education (CE)/Continuing Medical Education (CME) Hours

- Use CME when it is known there is a physician audience (continuing medical education).
- CE/CME Credits or CE/CME Hours. Abbreviate as CE, *not* CEs.
- When not credential-specific, use *continuing education hours* not continuing education units.
- Bold the number when used with CE (**6 CE**).

Control (noun); Control (verb)

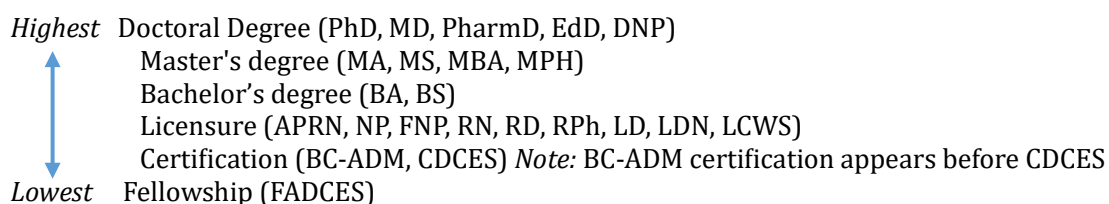
Which term to use will always be driven by the context in which the word is being used.

- Control (noun): Replace it with whatever is being referenced (A1C, glucose levels, glycemic variability, glucose targets). Glycemic outcome is a good replacement.
Note: If someone is paraphrasing the results of a study, they should go to the study and find out what was the outcome ("glycemic control" is not an outcome). Oftentimes it's A1C, but more recent studies may be looking at time in range (TIR); if both use glycemic outcomes.
- Control (verb): Example, how are you *controlling* your diabetes; it is appropriate to replace control with *manage* because management is a behavior. What are you doing to *manage* your diabetes (like managing weight, blood pressure, stress)? In these cases, a noun is okay, such as diabetes management, weight management, or stress management (referring to behaviors). **Avoid:** glucose management, glycemic management, or diabetes management as a catchall term for glucose levels. (Hint: If it reads "improve glucose management," it is referring to glucose levels.)

Credentials, Degrees

- Add a comma after the last name and commas between each credential (Mary Jones, RN, DCES)
- Do *not* include periods within credentials: Sue Day, PhD, RN, DCES, *not* Sue Day, Ph.D, RN, DCES
- Use *master's degree*, *bachelor's degree*, *bachelor's*, or *master's*. These are all acceptable in any reference; avoid Master of Arts, Master of Science, or Bachelor of Science.

The preferred order of credentials is highest to lowest unless the individual prefers otherwise.
(*Best practice:* Always confirm an individual's credentials are correct and up to date).



ADCES Preferred Style and Language *continued*

danatech, dantatech.org

danatech is **lowercase** when displayed as a logo, any visual marketing representation, or when referring to the website name. Capitalize danatech if it starts a new sentence.

Diabetes (by type) ¹(Global – Follow AMA Style if writing for a journal/publication)

Spell out Type 1 or Type 2 on the first reference; T1D and T2D are acceptable thereafter

Example: *People with Type 1 diabetes (T1D) and people with Type 2 diabetes (T2D) participated in the study.*

Diabetes care and education specialists

- Spell out on the first reference; DCES (singular) or DCESs (plural) are acceptable thereafter.
- Capitalize all letters when DCES is abbreviated. (**Avoid:** Abbreviating DCES in press releases, consumer content for persons with diabetes, or other consumer-specific content; *always* spell out.)
- Capitalize diabetes care and education specialists when used in formal communication.

Diabetes Education versus DSME versus DSMES versus DSMT

- Use diabetes education primarily when writing for a consumer audience with diabetes.
- Use diabetes self-management education and support (DSMES) when writing for health professionals.
- Use diabetes self-management training (DSMT) when referring to legislative activity or reimbursement/billing; or in the context of government agencies (this term is used by Medicare).

Diabetes educator – Avoid this term; replace it with *diabetes care and education specialist, DCES, or specialist*.

diabetic – Do not use this term. Use a *person with diabetes, an individual with diabetes, or people with diabetes*.

die of, die from – *die of* is preferred when referring to a specific disease as the cause of death

diet – Replace diet with *eating patterns* or *meal plans* (e.g., Ketogenic eating patterns, low-calorie eating patterns)

dietitian *not* dietician – dietitian is the preferred spelling

e-book – hyphenated

e.g. (means *for example*), **i.e.** (means *to say, in other words*) ²(AMA Style) are always followed by a comma. ²(AMA Style)

gender, sex

- *Sex* is used to classify living things as male or female, defined via the biological and genetic components
- *Gender* refers to social, environmental, cultural, and behavioral factors and choices that influence a person's self-identity and health

glucose monitor *or* glucose meter

- Monitor is appropriate when referring to monitoring glucose
- Avoid using the brand name glucometer

¹ Follow AMA style for journals and publications. AMA does not capitalize *type* (type 1 diabetes, type 2 diabetes) unless it starts a new sentence.

² Follow AMA style for journals and publications. AMA does not use periods in the abbreviation and a comma follows the abbreviation (eg, or ie,)

ADCES Preferred Style and Language *continued*

Glucose monitoring

- *Glucose monitoring* is preferred to blood glucose monitoring because some devices that monitor glucose use interstitial fluid not blood to determine the glucose level.
- The word *check* is preferred to the test when referring to glucose monitoring.
- Replace test strips with *glucose strips*
- Replace diabetes testing supplies with *glucose monitoring supplies*.

Health care (2 words). *Exception:* When health care is part of the formal name of a company or organization, follow the spelling it uses.

Health care professional/s, Health professional/s

- Avoid provider; *professional, clinician, or practitioner* is preferred
- Spell out health care professionals on the first reference; HCP (all caps) acceptable thereafter
- Spell out HCPs if readability becomes awkward.

Hyperglycemia – high glucose is the preferred term

Hypertension – high blood pressure is the preferred term

Improve/better/good/bad – Avoid these terms.

Replace with *achieve* when referring to achieving glucose targets or *effective* when legitimately talking about behaviors.

mm Hg (with SPACE): millimeters (mm) of mercury (Hg)

Manage *versus* Control (These terms will always be driven by the context in which the word is used.)

- If glycemic control is used to refer to study outcomes, use *glycemic outcomes* as a catch-all, or use the specific outcome that was studied (e.g., A1C, time in range, etc).
- Use *manage* or *management* when referring to behavior (management, like control, is not an outcome)
- Avoid "manage children with diabetes;" replace with "manage diabetes in children."

Management, treatment

- Cases are managed; people are cared for or treated.
Exception: "The clinical management of the seriously ill patient" and "the management of patients with HIV infection" are acceptable when used to refer to a general treatment protocol.
- *Management* is applicable when the care of the patient does not involve specific interventions but may include, for example, watchful waiting (eg, for prostate cancer or mitral regurgitation). *Management* may also be used to refer to the monitoring or periodic evaluations of the patient.

ADCES Preferred Style and Language *continued*

People with diabetes (PWD), a person with diabetes (PWD) – Avoid PWD’ and PWDs

- Spell out on the first reference; PWD acceptable thereafter
- Do not refer to a person as a PWD
- Capitalize all letters of PWD
- The abbreviation PWD takes a singular or plural form; ensure correct verb use.

Prediabetes

- Prediabetes means blood glucose levels are higher than normal, but not high enough for a diabetes diagnosis.
- Prediabetes is **one** word; not hyphenated.

Prevention *versus* Reduce the Risk for, Delay the Onset of

- Avoid *prevention* when referring to diabetes. There is no guarantee of prevention, so language should focus on behavior that can reduce the risk or delay the onset of the disease.
- When appropriate, in context, replace prevention with *reduce the risk for* or *delay the onset of*.

Proper Names

- National Standards for Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support
- ADCES Diabetes Prevention Program
- ADCES Career Path Certificate Program (no “s”)

Reduce the risk for *versus* Reduce the risk of

Reduce the risk for is preferred, but these terms are often used interchangeably; ensure consistency

Sodium – salt is preferred for a consumer audience; sodium (scientifically correct) is preferred for a health care professional audience.

Suffer – Avoid this term; replace with *experience*, *live with*

Workgroup *versus* Work Group

Use workgroup (one word) when referring to ADCES committees or groups (e.g, Technology workgroup)

The Use of Language in Diabetes Care and Education

The following chart provides recommendations for language related to diabetes that is respectful, inclusive, person-centered, and strengths based.

Language With Potentially Negative Connotations	Suggested Replacement Language	Rationale
Compliant/compliance/noncompliant/noncompliance Adherent/nonadherent/adherence/nonadherence	"He takes his medication about half the time." "She takes insulin whenever she can afford it." "He eats fruits and veggies a few times per week." Engagement Participation Involvement Medication taking	The words listed in the first column are inappropriate and dysfunctional concepts in diabetes care and education. Compliance and adherence imply doing what someone else wants (ie, taking orders about personal care as if a child). In diabetes care and education, people make choices and perform self-care/self-management. Focus on people's strengths, what they are doing or doing well, and how can we build on that? Focus on facts rather than judgments.
Control (as a verb or an adjective)		
Controlled/uncontrolled, well controlled/poorly controlled	Manage "She is checking blood glucose levels a few times per week." "He is taking sulfonylureas, and they are not bringing his blood glucose levels down enough."	Control is virtually impossible to achieve in a disease where the body no longer does what it is supposed to do. Use words/phrases that focus on what the person is doing or doing well. Focus on intent and good faith efforts, rather than on "passing" or "failing." Focus on physiology/biology and use neutral words that don't judge, shame, or blame.
Control (as a noun)		
Glycemic control, glucose control, poor control, good control, bad control, tight control	A1C Blood glucose levels Blood glucose targets Glycemic target/goal Glycemic stability Glycemic variability	Focus on neutral words and physiology/biology. Define what "good control" means in factual terms and use that instead.
Diabetic (as an adjective)		
Diabetic foot Diabetic education Diabetic person "How long have you been diabetic?" Diabetes patients	Foot ulcer, infection on the foot Diabetes education Person with diabetes "How long have you had diabetes?" Patients with diabetes	Focus on the physiology or pathophysiology. "Diabetic education" is incorrect (education doesn't have diabetes). Put the person first. Avoid using a disease to describe a person. Avoid describing people as a disease.
Diabetic (as a noun)		
"Are you a diabetic?"	"Do you have diabetes?" Person living with diabetes Person with diabetes Person who has diabetes	Person-first language puts the person first. Avoid labeling someone as a disease. There is much more to a person than diabetes. When in doubt, call someone with diabetes by their name.
Nondiabetic, normal	Person who does not have diabetes Person without diabetes	See above. The opposite of "normal" is "abnormal"; people with diabetes are not abnormal.
Imperatives		
Can/can't, should/shouldn't, do/don't, have to, need to, must/must not	"Have you tried . . ." "What about . . ." "May I make a suggestion . . ." "May I tell you what has worked for other people . . ." "What is your plan for . . ." "Would you like to consider . . ."	Words and statements that are directives make people with diabetes feel as if they are being ordered around like children. They can inflict judgment, guilt, shame, and blame.
Regimen, rules	Plan Choices	Use words that empower people, rather than words that restrict or limit them.
Words/phrases that focus on the provider		
"I got him/her to . . ." "I want you to . . ." "Let people . . ."	"He started taking insulin . . ." "She lost 25 pounds . . ." "May we make a plan for . . ."	Give the person with diabetes credit for what they accomplished. Make it about the person with diabetes and their choices

Words/phrases that focus on the provider <i>cont'd</i>		
Setting goals for . . .	Facilitating identified goals and creating a plan with . . . Self-directed goals	
Prevent/prevention	Reduce risk(s)/risk reduction Delay	There is no guarantee of prevention (disease or complications); therefore, focus on what the person can do, which is lower their risks and/or delay onset. This also limits blame if the person does develop diabetes or complications eventually, despite efforts to prevent it.
Refused	Declined	Use words that build on people's strengths and respect the person's right to make their own decisions.
Victim, suffer, stricken, afflicted	. . . lives with diabetes . . . has diabetes . . . diagnosed with diabetes	We cannot assume someone is suffering. This puts them in victim mode, rather than empowering them. Build on people's strengths instead.
Words or phrases that imply judgment		
Lifestyle disease	Diabetes	
Difficult patient	"Ms. Smith has a foot sore that is not healing and is having a difficult time with offloading." "I'm having a difficult time with Ms. Smith."	Describe behavior factually rather than labeling the person.
In denial	"Dan understands that diabetes can harm him; he does not see diabetes as a priority with everything else that's going on in his life right now."	"In denial" is inaccurate. Most people described this way know they have diabetes and are not denying that they have it. This is a reflection that the person does not see diabetes as an important and/or immediate concern.
Unmotivated/unwilling	"John has not started taking insulin because he's concerned about weight gain. He sees insulin as a personal failure."	Few people are unmotivated to live a long and healthy life. The challenge in diabetes management is there are many perceived obstacles that can outweigh the understood benefits. As a result, many people concluded that changes are not worth the effort or are unachievable.
"What did you do?"	"Tell me about . . ." "May I make a suggestion?"	The idea is to encourage the person to move away from "why?" to "what now?" Discussion of successful responses can be a more effective teaching tool than pointing out mistakes and erratic numbers.
Cheating, sneaking	Making choices/decisions	Use strengths-based language.
Good/bad/poor	Numbers Choices Food Safe/unsafe	Good and bad are value judgments. Focus on physiology/biology and tasks/actions using neutral words.
Fail, failed, failure "She failed metformin."	"Metformin was not adequate to reach her A1C goal."	People don't fail medications. If something is not working, we choose a new direction.
Test Test blood glucose Test strips	Check blood glucose/blood glucose monitoring Strips; glucose strips	A test implies good/bad or pass/fail. Blood glucose monitoring/checking blood glucose is a way to gather information that is used to make decisions.

Source: Dickinson JK, Guzman SJ, Maryniuk MD, et al. *The use of language in diabetes care and education. Sci Diabetes Self-Manag Care.* 2017;43(6):551-564.

Other Language Resources

1. Dickinson JK, Guzman SJ, Wooldridge JS. *The emotional impact of negative language in people with diabetes: A descriptive study using a semantic differential scale. Sci Diabetes Self-Manag Care.* 2023;49(3):193-205.
2. Language Matters Diabetes. Visit www.languagemattersdiabetes.com/#LanguageMattersDiabetes
3. dStigmatize. Visit www.dstigmatize.org
4. ADCES Professional Practice Resources. Visit www.adces.org/practice for professional handouts, tools, and practice papers.

Punctuation Guidelines

For all punctuation guidelines in this section, follow the AP style for marketing communications and consumer materials.³(AMA Style)

Semicolon

Use a semicolon to indicate a greater break in thought than a comma but less break than a period.

- Use a semicolon to separate elements of a series when the items are long or when the individual segments contain information set off by commas.
Example: State and regional meetings were held in Pittsburgh, on May 3, 2025; in Denver, on June 8; and in Columbus, on June 25.
- Use a semicolon to connect two independent clauses that do not have a connecting word.
Example: The package was due last week; it arrived today.
- Use a semicolon between two independent clauses joined by a conjunctive adverb: furthermore, however, otherwise, accordingly, moreover.
Example: The conference was in Florida; therefore, the weather was warm.
- Use a semicolon with two main clauses connected by a coordinating conjunction. While a comma is sufficient, a semicolon can help the reader through complex sentences with other commas.
Example: The members voted to approve the change in the governance structure, the diversity plan, and the new professional development opportunities; but they kept the conference date.
- Place a semicolon outside of quotation marks when referencing quoted text.

Colon

A colon is used at the end of a sentence to introduce lists, tabulations, and text.

- After a main clause to signify an explanation or description. *To prepare for the conference, we need two things: plenty of rest and comfortable shoes.*
- After an independent clause to introduce a quotation. *She announced the award winners in the microphone: "This year's essay contest winners are Jane and Richard."*
- Note: If there is a main clause after the colon, the first word is capitalized like a new sentence.

Commas⁴(AMA Style)

Use commas to separate elements in a series, but do not put a comma before the conjunction in most simple series: *The flag is red, white and blue. He would nominate Tom, Dick, Harry, or Jeannette.*

- Do include a final comma in a simple series if omitting it could make the meaning unclear.
- *The governor gathered his most trusted advisers, economist Olivia Schneider and polling expert Carlton Torres.* (If Schneider and Torres are his most trusted advisers, do not use the final comma.)
- *The governor convened his most trusted advisers, economist Olivia Schneider, and polling expert Carlton Torres.* (If the governor is convening unidentified advisers plus Schneider and Torres, include the final comma).
- Insert a comma before the concluding conjunction in a series if an integral element of the series requires a conjunction: *I had orange juice, toast, and ham and eggs for breakfast.*
- Use a comma before the concluding conjunction in a complex series of phrases: *The main points to consider are whether the athletes are skillful enough to compete, whether they have the stamina to endure the training, and whether they have the proper mental attitude.*

³ Refer to AMA style for general punctuation guidelines for a journal or publication.

⁴ Refer to AMA style for comma usage for a journal or publication; AMA style uses the serial comma in *most instances*.

Punctuation Guidelines *continued*

Bullets⁵(AMA Style)

Use bullets to clarify a list within a sentence and add a period at the end of the list.

Each attendee received a:

- *registration bag*
- *resource booklet*
- *coupon*
- *pen.*

Use bullets to list items under a heading. Do not add punctuation to the end of this list of items.

Items to bring on vacation:

- *passport*
- *sunscreen*
- *cash*
- *clothing*

Use bullets to list complete sentences under a heading. Punctuate the end of each complete sentence.

Actions we will take:

- *The Communications Department will send out a notice.*
- *The various departments will submit their articles.*
- *The Communications Department will edit and layout the newsletter.*
- *The IT Department will fulfill the publishing request.*

Italics⁶(AMA Style)

Do not italicize books, magazines, journals, movies, or television titles.

When formatting a book, magazine, journal, movie, or television title follow these recommendations:

- Capitalize all words in a title. *Exception:* Articles (a, an, the), prepositions less than 3 letters.
- Capitalize prepositions and conjunctions of four or more letters.
- Place quotation marks around all titles (*Refer to AP Style for exceptions.*)

Trademarks⁷(AMA Style)

Hyphens⁸(AMA Style)

Use hyphens to avoid ambiguity or to form a single idea from two or more words.

Both words in a hyphenated word are capitalized when appearing in a title.

Pre-conference – use a hyphen

Nonmember – no hyphen

⁵ AP uses dashes instead of bullets to introduce lists, but AP recognizes bullets are often preferred. Refer to AMA style for a journal or publication; AMA uses a period at the end only if it is a complete sentence; capitalize only the first word as a matter of preference if it is not a full sentence.

⁶ Refer to AMA style for a journal or publication; AMA style *does* use italics for book or movie titles.

⁷ Refer to AMA style for a journal or publication; AMA style does not recommend using the ^R, TM, SM symbols in publications, journals, or references.

⁸ Refer to AMA style for a journal or publication; see Section 10.2.2 for hyphenation use in titles.

Capitalization Guidelines

Headlines and Subheads

- Use title case for heads and subheads.
- Capitalize all words in a title UNLESS the title starts with a proper name that is trademarked as lowercase (e.g., iPhone eBay).
Acceptable *iPhones are More Popular Than Androids*.
Better: *The Popularity of iPhones is Outpacing Androids*.

Exceptions

- Do not capitalize articles (a, an, the) or conjunctions (*and, but, for*) unless they begin a headline or title.
- Do not capitalize prepositions of 4 letters or more (e.g., *From, Into, With*).

Professional Titles

- Capitalize titles that appear before a name: *ADCES President Jane Doe will present at the meeting*.
- Lowercase titles that appear after a name: *Jane Doe, ADCES president, will present at the meeting*.

Departments, Committees, Associations⁹(AMA Style)

- Lowercase academic departments except for words that are proper nouns or adjectives (the department of English or when the *department* is part of the official and formal name (eg, University of Connecticut Department of Communications).
- Capitalize committee when it is part of a formal name (e.g., The House Appropriations Committee); if not part of a formal name, lowercase the word committee.
She works with the research committee. He thanked thecommittee.
- Capitalize membership groups if referring to a specific group (e.g., *California Coordinating Body, Advanced Practice Community of Interest*); otherwise, use lowercase.
- Do not abbreviate or capitalize the word association when it is not part of an organization's proper name, including when referring to ADCES.

Seasons

- Lowercase seasons, *spring, summer, fall, winter, springtime*.
Exception: When referring to a specific year for easier readability (e.g., *Fall 2012*), or when part of a formal name (e.g., *Summer Olympics*).

⁹ Refer to AMA style regarding the treatment of academic departments when writing content for a journal or publication.

Capitalization Guidelines *continued*

ADCES Communication

Email Subject Lines

Capitalize the first word in the subject line. All other words follow the style indicated in these Guidelines.

Always Capitalize

- Board of Directors (*board* if not used with full name)
- Award titles
- National conference titles (*ADCES Annual Conference & Exhibition* or *2023 ADCES Annual Conference*)
- Lowercase conference titles if referencing past conferences (e.g., *Last year's annual conference was a success.*)
- ADCES Bylaws (bylaws when used alone)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (*Note: Centers is always plural*)
- When referring to the U.S. Congress
- Department of Health and Human Services
- National Diabetes Education Program
- National Standards for Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support
- When referring to the U.S. House of Representatives or U.S. House
- When referring to the U.S. Senate

Basic Style Guidelines

Percent

Use the percent symbol (%) when used with a number: *Nearly 45% of people with diabetes experience depression. About 45% to 60% report satisfaction with their current medication.*

- No space between a number and the % symbol.
- Avoid starting a sentence with a percentage. If unavoidable, spell out both the percentage and number:

Eighty-five percent of writers do not begin a sentence with a number.

Numbers¹⁰(AMA Style)

- Spell out numbers one through nine and use figures for 10 and higher.
- Write large numbers (million, trillion) with a figure/word combination. *The grant is for 2 million dollars.*
- Spell out all numbers if they start a sentence. *Twelve men and 15 women attended the meeting.*
- Use commas to separate number groups of three digits or more...*1,000 or more.*
- Do not use a comma between a month and year.
- Use numerals with percentages, figures, measurements, and ages: *3%; 7 inches, aged 5 years.*

Abbreviation and Acronyms

On the first reference, spell out the full name followed by the abbreviation or acronym in parentheses. It is acceptable to use only the abbreviation or acronym on the second reference.

Example: The Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists (ADCES) was pleased with the attendance at the annual conference. Next year, ADCES plans to offer more networking opportunities.

Commonly used terms

- Spell as **one word**: email, homepage, online, offline, smartphone, website, webpage
- Spell as **one word**: *login, logon, logoff* if used as nouns; two words when used as a verb: *log in, log on, log off.*

Common Errors

- Do not underscore (underline) text unless it is a text hyperlink or email address.
- Do not use uppercase letters (all caps) for EMPHASIS.
- Do not use an ampersand (&) unless it is in the legal title.
U.S. News & World Report; Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists
- Avoid the passive voice. Generally, verbs ending in *ing* have a passive tone and are not strong verbs.
Passive voice: *Managing the expectations of the staff is difficult.*
Active voice: *It is difficult to manage the expectations of the staff*

¹⁰ Refer to AMA style for journals or publications; AMA uses numbers in *all instances*, except at the start of a sentence.

Web Writing Guidelines

How people use the web

- They browse, offering quick glances and occasionally very brief stops.
- According to one study, the majority of users, 79%, scan the page instead of reading word-for-word.
- Numerous resources report that reading on screens is 25% slower than reading from paper.

The web writing golden rule:

Less is more. With each sentence you write for the Web, ask yourself: Do users want or need this? Then ask: Can I write this more succinctly?

Making web pages reader-friendly word count

- Online word count should be about half the word count used when writing for print.
- A sentence should contain no more than 20 words.

Lists – bulleted, numbered

Lists are essential. They break up copy, slow down a scanning eye, and draw attention to important points.

- Use **numbered lists** when the order of entries is important; limit items in a single list to no more than nine.
- Use **bullet lists** when the sequence of the entries is not important. The ideal length of a bullet list is three to five items.

Headings, subheadings

Headings create an immediate context for users exploring a website. Users scan headlines to grasp the meaning and often expect them to summarize an entire block of text.

- Ensure visitors always see at least one headline on the screen.
- Ensure headings clearly indicate the content of the section where they appear.
- Avoid using all CAPS for heads. It slows reading and takes up too much space.
- Use *Title Case* (capitalized first letter of each word; *see exceptions noted in these Guidelines*).

Sentence structure and style

- Place important information at the top of a webpage to avoid visitors scrolling through blocks of text.
- Keep the writing informal and casual: social media is an informal and immediate medium, compared with print.
- Use simple words/sentences; complex words/sentences are more difficult to comprehend while reading on a screen.
- Phrases and fragments are acceptable when writing content for the web.

Use **active voice**, personal pronouns, and action verbs (*what you would say to them if you were talking on the phone*). Use simple words.

Writing Web Content Guidelines *continued*

Paragraphs


- Each paragraph should contain one main idea. Readers tend to skip any second point as they scan over the paragraph.
- A paragraph should not contain more than three or four sentences.
- A one-sentence paragraph is okay and often preferable.

Hyperlinks

A hyperlink is a URL link from one part of a webpage to another webpage (e.g., a product promotion with a hyperlink to its order form).

- Insert a hyperlink* to the desired webpage when you want to navigate the reader to additional information on another webpage or another website.
- This is especially important when you want your reader to go to a product order form.

*Creating a hyperlink:

1. Select the text or object that you want to be hyperlinked to. Right-click.
2. Select the link icon  from the dropdown menu.
3. The “Insert hyperlink” box opens.
 - Text display: Type whatever you want the link text to display; for example, [Join ADCES membership](#). If this is the display text, when the visitor clicks the link, they will be navigated to the membership webpage.
 - Address: The **URL address** field at the bottom of the hyperlink box *must be* the URL address where you want the visitor to navigate.

URLs

When providing web addresses, you do not need to include [http://](#) or [www](#)

- If a URL ends a sentence, do **not** add a period. It could be mistaken as part of the web address.
- Use a text link in web content that includes a keyword phrase in the link to improve search engine optimization (SEO).

Avoid: For more information on the ADCES Certificate Program, please visit [adces.org/certificate](#)

Preferred: The [ADCES Certificate Program](#) is a great way to advance your career.

Search Engine Optimization

Search engine optimization is the process of improving the visibility of a website or webpage in a search engine’s *natural*, or unpaid, search results. There are a few ways to improve the prominence of a webpage on Google results:

- Write content that includes frequently searched **keyword phrases** to ensure content appears in a wide variety of search queries.
- **Keyword examples:** *Diabetes, diabetes care and education specialist, diabetes education, diabetes resource, diabetes certification, ADCES programs, ADCES certification, ADCES accreditation*
- Cross-link between important web pages of the same website.
- Frequently update content to keep search engines continually crawling back.
- Add relevant keywords to metadata, including the title tag and meta description.

Writing Web Content Guidelines *continued*

Search Engine Optimization

Search engine optimization is the process of improving the visibility of a website or webpage in a search engine's *natural*, or unpaid, search results. There are a few ways to improve the prominence of a webpage on Google results:

- Write content that includes frequently searched **keyword phrases** to ensure content appears in a wide variety of search queries.
- **Keyword examples:** *Diabetes, diabetes care and education specialist, diabetes education, diabetes education, diabetes resource, diabetes certification, ADCES programs, ADCES certification, ADCES accreditation*
- Cross-link between important web pages of the same website.
- Frequently update content to keep search engines continually crawling back.
- Add relevant keywords to metadata, including the title tag and meta description.

Bullets^{11(AMA Style)}

AP Styles uses dashes, not bullets to introduce lists, but the author can choose to use bullets.

- Ensure parallel construction, including consistent use of active voice, verb tense, and sentence format.
- Use periods, not semicolons, at the end of each entry, whether or not it is a full sentence or a phrase^{12(AMA Style)}
- Introduce the list with a short phrase followed by a colon.

*The purpose of the meeting:
Establish goals for 2024.
Identify teams we want to involve.
Consider alternative plans.*

List/headers

Use a colon when a list represents a complete sentence. Use a header for all other circumstances.

Modes are:

- *self-paced.*
- *online.*
- *available 24/7.*

Locations – List the city *and* state when referring to a location (Las Vegas,NV).

Currency

- Spell out and lowercase the word cents; use numbers for amounts less than a dollar (e.g., 5 cents, 12 cents).
- Always use the dollar sign \$ and a decimal for larger amounts (e.g., \$1.01, \$2.50, \$5).
- Do not list \$12.00, list \$12.

¹¹Refer to AMA style for journals or publications; AMA *does* recommend using bulleted and numbered lists.

¹² Refer to AMA style for journals or publications; AMA *only* uses periods for full sentences in lists.