

# Content Style Guide

**virtusa**  
Engineering First



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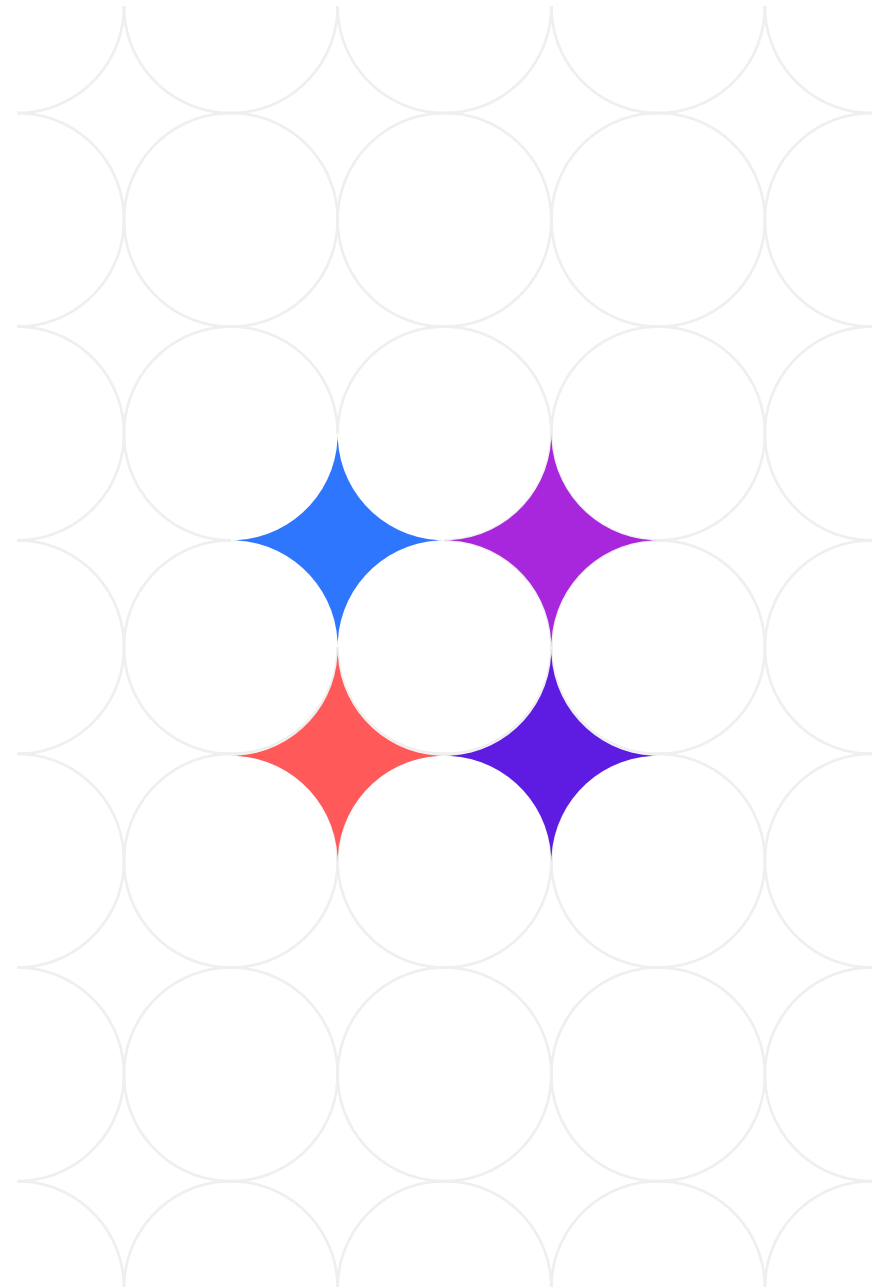
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# Citation guidance

Virtusa uses The Associated Press Stylebook for most grammar, language, and phrasing concerns. We use a combination of The Associated Press Stylebook and **The Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS)** for citations and references.

## AP Style uses in-text citations.

### In-text:

[Digital Banking report](#) found that 38% of organizations that believed they had deployed digital banking transformation solutions at scale were not receiving the level of results expected.

While CMOS uses two citation methods. Virtusa follows the Notes and Bibliography method, which involves footnotes (inserted at the bottom of the page where the reference is made) and endnotes (inserted at the end of the document).

We've included some examples of this method, in the form of a footnote paired with an endnote. They were pulled from one of our white papers.

### Footnote:

<sup>5</sup> **Abhishek Singh et al**, "Salesforce Healthcare Services – State of the Market," [State of the Market report](#), published March 19, 2021.

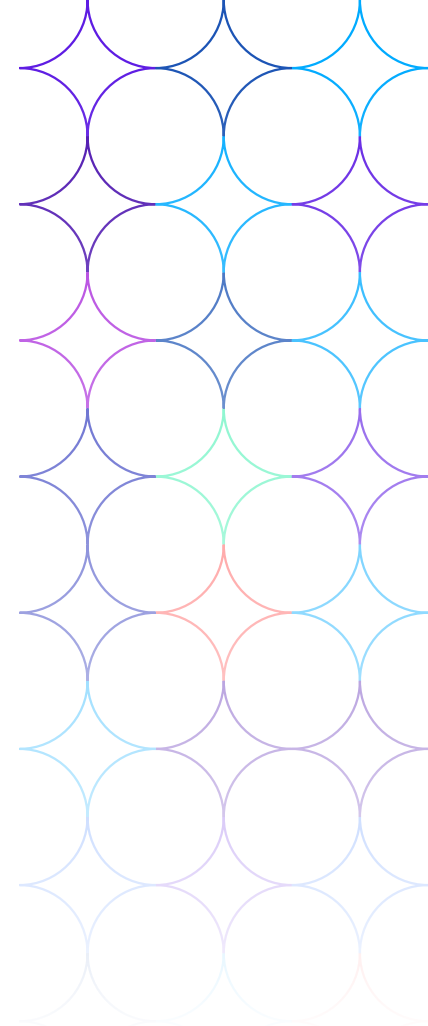
### Endnote (accompanying):

**Abhishek Singh et al**, "Salesforce Healthcare Services – State of the Market," [State of the Market report](#), published March 19, 2021.

The footnote and endnote each include the author's name (along with co-authors, represented here with the abbreviation "et al."), the title of the report, the name of the publisher, publication date, and URL.

Though the footnote is marked with a "5," to indicate that it is the fifth footnote within the document, it appears first within the list of endnotes, which are organized alphabetically.

Please refer to the [Virtusa Brand Center](#) for more information on typography. For fonts, we default to Arial body copy and Georgia headlines.



## Notes

“[Business Subject Guide: Citing Business Sources](#).” LibGuides. The University of Connecticut, December 9, 2022.

**Turabian, Kate L, Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, Joseph Bizup, William T. FitzGerald,** and The University of Chicago Press Editorial Staff. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Ninth Edition: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2020.

“Whose Business Is the Chicago Manual of Style?” CMOS Shop Talk. [The Chicago Manual of Style](#), December 15, 2017.

# Misplaced modifiers

A misplaced modifier is a word, or a collection of words, that is located in the wrong part of a sentence.

The grammatical error occurs when a modifier, such as an adjective or adverb, is placed in a sentence in a way that makes the sentence ambiguous, unclear, or confusing. The modifier is said to be “misplaced” because it modifies a word other than the one it was intended to modify.

For our content purposes, misplaced modifiers can be a problem if they cause confusion or ambiguity in Virtusa instructions or recommendations.

This guidance will focus on the most common misplaced modifiers you will encounter at Virtusa. They are dangling modifiers.

Dangling modifiers typically begin a sentence. They often precede a comma. Below are a few dangling modifiers, which fall under the umbrella of misplaced modifiers.

### **Dangling modifiers (examples):**

A new solution to the problem of Big Data, the company is introducing a platform this June.

While implementing the solution, a lot of errors and bugs might find their way into the code.

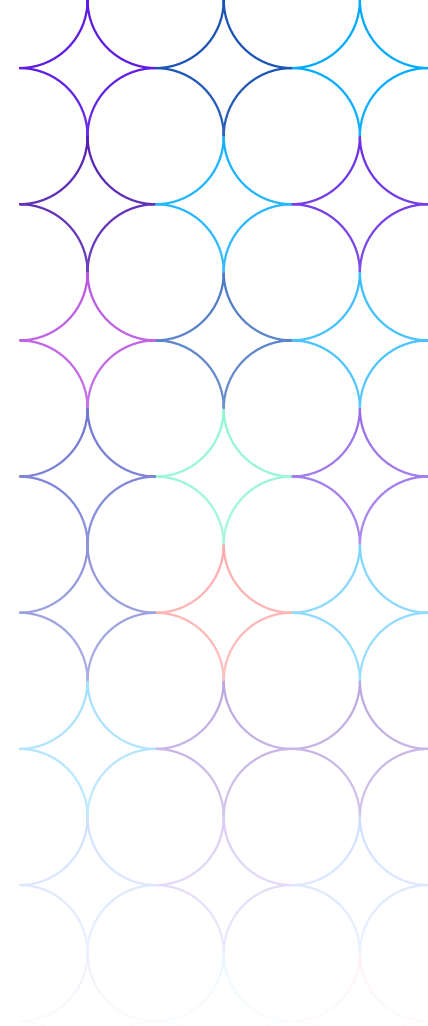
The best solution is to place the modifier closest to the thing, person, or subject that it is modifying.

In the sentence above, the subject is the unmentioned and implied “you.”

With this knowledge – that the “you” is missing and that the sentence is actually an instruction to the reader – you can implement your own grammatical solution!

While implementing the solution, you may see a lot of errors and bugs that find their way into the code.

This sentence is now correct.



# Colons

**The colon (:)** is a punctuation mark that has several purposes. A colon can connect two sentences or two thoughts. It can also prepare the reader for a list of items or for an emphasized word.

If a colon is used to separate two thoughts, you should capitalize the first letter after the colon. This rule applies even if the following phrase is not a complete sentence. (In this regard, we differ from the advice of AP Stylebook.)

A good night's sleep has many benefits: It keeps your mind alert, it improves your physical health, and it helps your body recover from injuries.

A good night's sleep produces results: An alert mind, improved physical health, and resilient muscles.

Even though the phrase following the colon in the second sentence ("An alert mind, improved physical health, and resilient muscles") is not a complete sentence, it is capitalized according to Virtusa policy.

# Bullet points

Items in a bullet series should always be capitalized. This is true even if they form an incomplete sentence or consist of just one word.

Use end punctuation (a period) for bullet items that are complete sentences.

Companies will quickly realize the benefits of the solution:

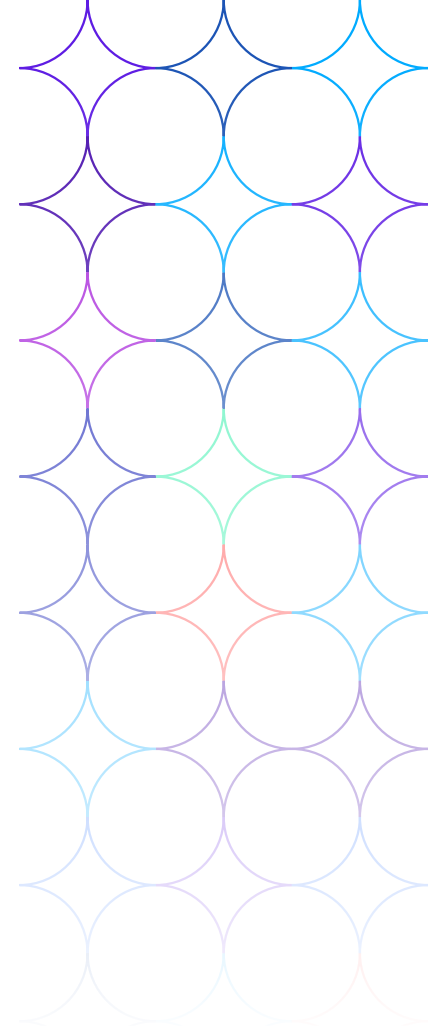
- It works seamlessly with legacy systems that have not been replaced.
- It's user-friendly.
- It reduces manual labor with the use of intelligent chatbots.
- It uses customer data to build accurate consumer profiles.

Do not use end punctuation if the bullet items are fragments or incomplete sentences.

## Example 1

The solution carries many benefits:

- Cost savings
- Increased customer engagement
- Improved ROI
- Improved time to market



## Example 2

Before you make the piece ready for publication, alert the following stakeholders:

- Your manager
- The design team
- The SME
- The web team

### **Below is another example of a bulleted list.**

There are many benefits associated with cloud transformation.

- Accelerating business processes
- Bolstering data security
- Optimizing costs

The above three bullets (re: accelerating, bolstering, optimizing) follow our guidance regarding both capitalization and punctuation. Every bullet item is capitalized. However, because the bullet items are fragments, not complete sentences, they do not have end punctuation (a period).

In general, choose either fragments or full sentences for your bullet items, and adhere to the appropriate punctuation and capitalization guidelines.

### **Parallel structure in a bulleted list**

The bulleted items should follow a similar structure.

Here is an example of a list that does not follow parallel structure.

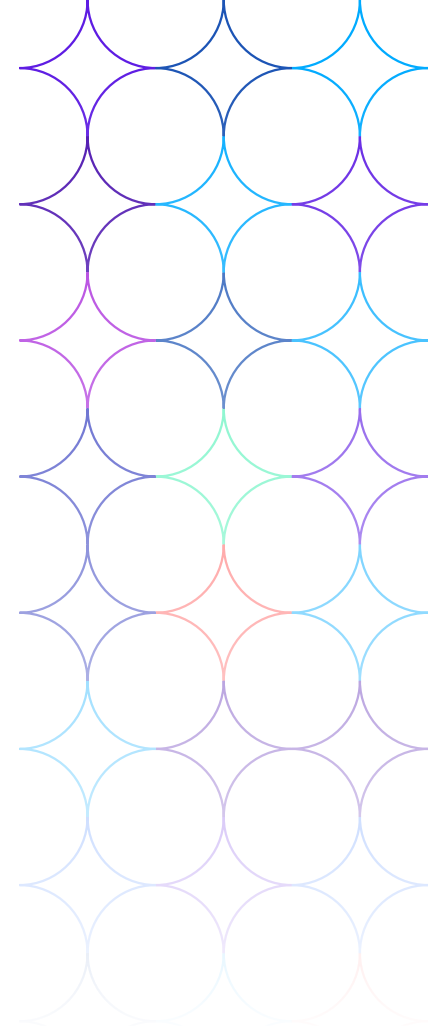
This solution does the following:

- It can be hosted on your current platforms.
- Cost-effective
- Introduces automation

The above list lacks parallel structure and should be rewritten.

Even though the bulleted items all describe the solution's benefits, the first item is a complete sentence. It has a subject ("It") and a verb, and it is also a complete thought. It does not match the format and structure of the second two bullet items, which are fragments.

Similarly, punctuation in one bulleted item should match the other bullets. If you are making a list of instructions, make sure that the instructions share the same sentence structure and punctuation (e.g., all items are sentence fragments with no closing punctuation, or all items are complete sentences and therefore include closing punctuation).



Below is a correct version of the list above. Each item follows parallel structure, and it is punctuated and capitalized correctly.

This solution does the following:

- It can be hosted on your current platforms.
- It's cost-effective.
- It introduces automation into each step of the process.

Virtusa often uses bullet lists that make further specifications within each item. Below is an example.

The solution has many benefits:

- **Improved automation:** End-to-end automation throughout the life cycle
- **Increased efficiency:** Connected siloed systems that facilitate seamless operations

The above example adheres to our punctuation/capitalization guidance. Both items are capitalized, even though they are fragments (incomplete sentences). However, because they are fragments, they do not end with a period.

Note that the “first word is capitalized” rule extends to the above example, when a colon is contained within an individual bullet item. Both the first word after the bullet (e.g., “Improved”) and the first word after the colon (e.g., “End-to-end”) are capitalized.

## Numeral

In general, spell out numbers one through ten, and use an integer (a numeral) for 11 and above.

With that being said, there are many exceptions to this rule. It is important to familiarize yourself with all scenarios below. Each of the below examples is inspired by actual Virtusa content and writing. As a Virtusa employee, you will encounter the below scenarios many times over the course of your career. Before inserting a numeral or figure (“numeral,” “figure,” and “integer” are used interchangeably below) or spelling it out, make sure to review the following guidance.

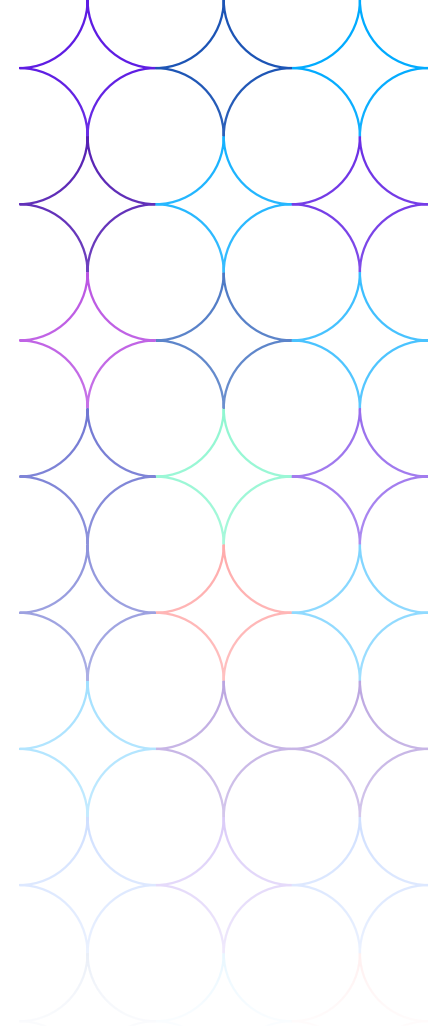
### The general rule

Here are some examples that follow the general rule.

There were seven stakeholders present at the meeting.

More than 12 people showed up to the launch event.

We have three initiatives to implement this quarter.



## Percentages

Always use numerals for percentages. The only exception is when the percentage begins a sentence.

We've seen a 3% increase in profits.

Forty percent of the New York branch came to the launch event.

We're seeing an 8.5% uptick in responses.

Don't forget: Forty percent of you are responsible for bringing drinks and food.

(Note that because "Forty percent" marks the beginning of an independent clause within a sentence [see our colon guidance], it is treated like other independent clauses that follow colons.)

## Numerals, no exceptions

Always use Arabic numerals (0-9) for time, measurement, percentage (see above), and age.

The first speaker was an impressive 12-year-old from Ohio.

Only 3% of the participants raised a hand.

During the team-building exercise, put at least 6 feet of space between you and your partner.

You'll need three people to carry the rope; it's 10 pounds.

We have about 10 seconds left on the clock!

Lunch is early; it will begin at 11:40.

(Note: Do NOT say, "twenty minutes to four.")

Note: Units of measurement are often geo-specific and should be written according to your audience.

## Dates and time

Always use numerals for expressions of time.

We have 10 minutes left until we convene in the boardroom.

There are only 4 minutes remaining on the clock; hurry up!

It took her 2 minutes and 10 seconds to run back here.

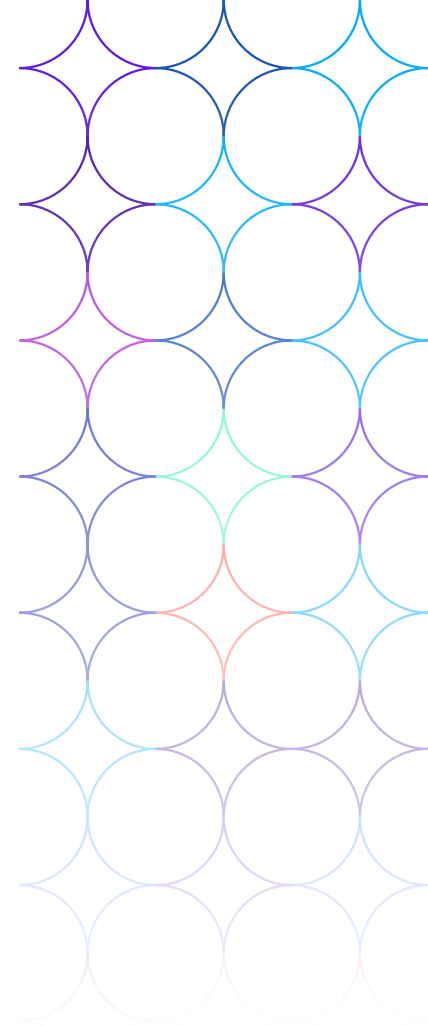
Follow the below examples for writing dates. The date guidance follows the general logic of this document and of the broader numeral guidance. Do not use ordinals (st, th, rd) for dates.

We have an all-hands meeting on the second of the month.

On February 2, please be present for the all-hands.

The second of February is Groundhog Day. It's also our first all-hands meeting of the year.

Welcome back from winter break!





On January 30, 2008, we welcomed our new CEO to the company.

Note: Use abbreviations only for the following months: Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct. Nov., and Dec.

Do not use abbreviations without numerals. (Do NOT say, "It's the third day of Sept.")

All other months – March, April, May, June, and July – should always be spelled in full.

We're aiming to throw the holiday party during the week of Dec. 17.

May 31 is our hard deadline.

The first of March is always a bit stressful; we file taxes just two weeks later.

### **Sequential phrasing**

At Virtusa, we have a lot of designations. There's Step 1 of the project, Stage 3 of the launch, Phase 1 of the roll-out, and so on.

For these sequential designations, it is important to be consistent. Please review this guidance carefully.

When describing steps of a launch, roll-out, initiative, or other multi-layered project, stick to numerals.

Ordinal numbers are the only exception: Spell out ordinal numbers (7th, 8th, 9th) under 10. Do not use superscript for the "th."

We're beginning Step 1 this week.

On Day 1, we'll go over your convention schedule.

In the second room on the right, Challenge 2 is taking place.

On your third day, you'll feel a bit more comfortable with the routine.

On Day 3, you'll feel a bit more comfortable with the routine.

Sometime during your 12th week at the company, you'll meet with your manager and HR.

The most critical part of the project is Step 1. During this first step, you'll learn the standards.

Also: Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4.

### **Currency and money**

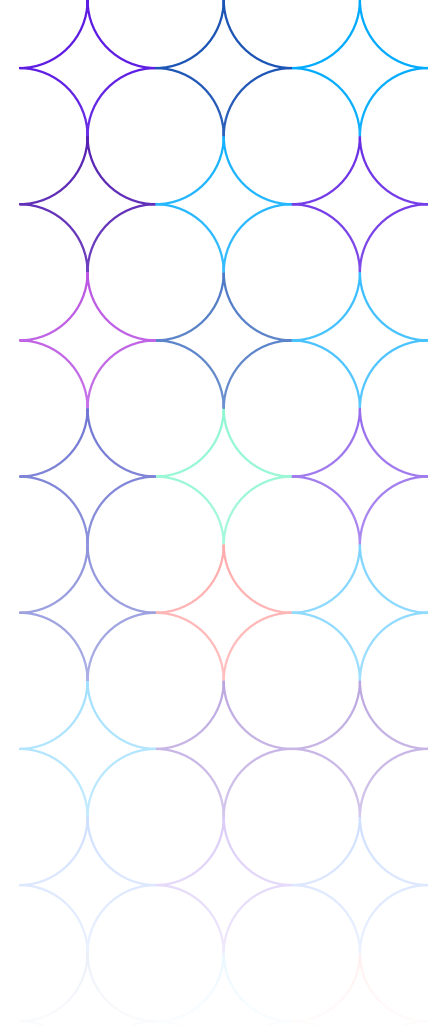
Always use numerals for currency, even when discussing an amount under 10.

Always write out the words "millions" and "billions." Instead of placing a currency symbol (\$) before the numeral, use the correct, country-appropriate abbreviation.

We spent 4.5 million USD on the project.

The vendor was told to reimburse the client with 90,000 INR.

The cost was 6 USD per share.



## Suspended hyphenation

Numerals in suspended hyphenation (also called “suspensive hyphens”) follow the above guidance.

Our fourth- and sixth-grade visitors will be arriving at midday.

The New York office is considering a 10- or 15-year lease.

We can build a three- or four-story building.

## Exceptions to the rule

Consecutive numerals are confusing and overwhelming. Do not express two numerals side by side, even if that means flouting the above rules. For determining when an exception to the rule is necessary, please use your own judgment. However, refer generally to the writing conventions in the following examples.

There were twelve 100-year-old war veterans at the Memorial Day event.

In 2000, thirteen executives determined a course of action for the next two decades.

Note: The above sentence cleaves from the guidance surrounding the use of numerals for numbers 10 and above. Even though “thirteen” is usually expressed as “13,” doing so would make the sentence too integer-heavy: “In 2000, 13 executives determined a course of action for the next two decades.”

**For clarity’s sake, there are other appropriate modifications, or exceptions, to the above guidance.**

**However, until you feel confident about going “by the book,” ask a member of the content team or editorial team member for input.**