2019

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BRAND VOICE
STANDARDS

NORDSTROM

TRUNK CLUB

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01

PURPOSE

To guide and excite each customer, wherever they are on their style journey.

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VOICE + TONE

02 // **Voice + Tone**

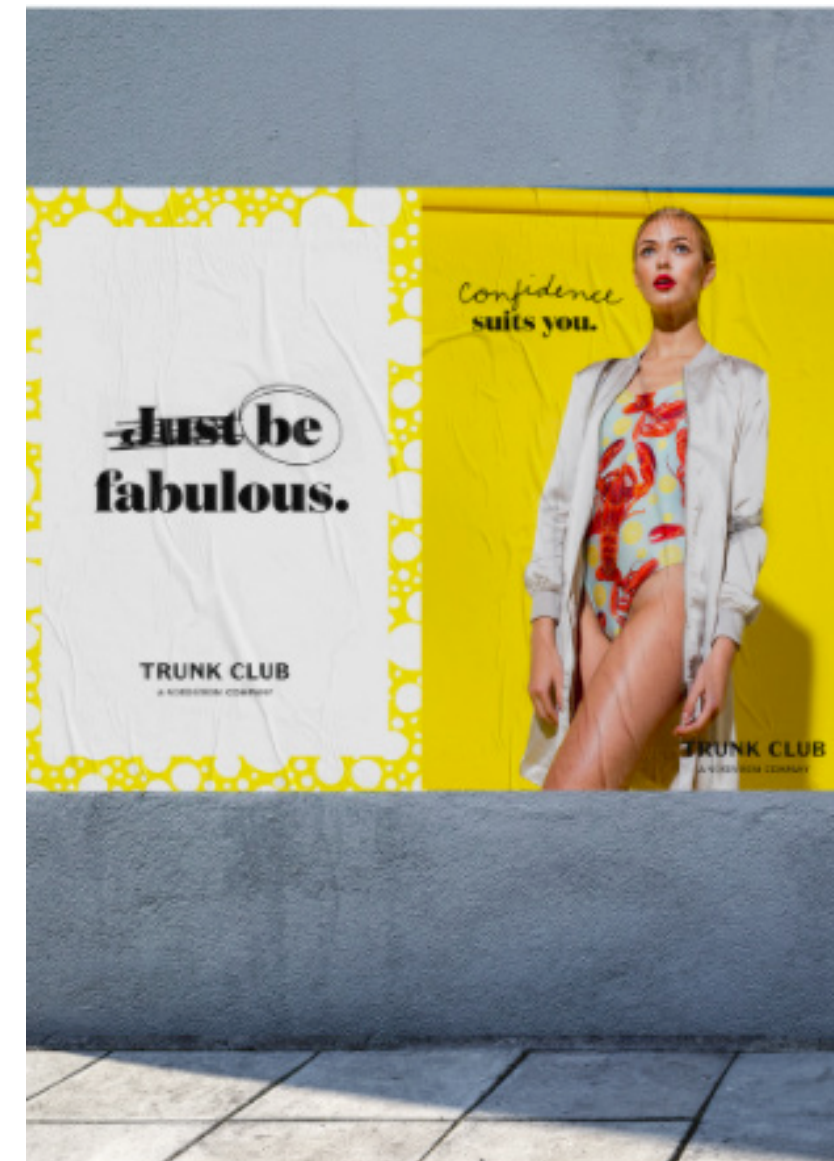|	**BOLD**	**MAGNETIC**	**WELCOMING**
VOICE This is constant. It's our brand personality, our most fundamental characteristics.	We're confident and positive, but never bossy. We're of-the-moment and fresh, but not colloquial or slangy.	There is energy in our voice. We are interested and interesting. We have a passion for what we do and a commitment to do it well.	We're friendly and approachable, but not trying to be anyone's bestie. We're comfortable in our skin to help our customers feel confident in theirs.
TONE This shifts, accounting for nuances in the audience, situation, and channel.	*Authoritative + Witty*	*Positive + Engaging*	*Conversational + Relatable*

02 // **Voice + Tone**

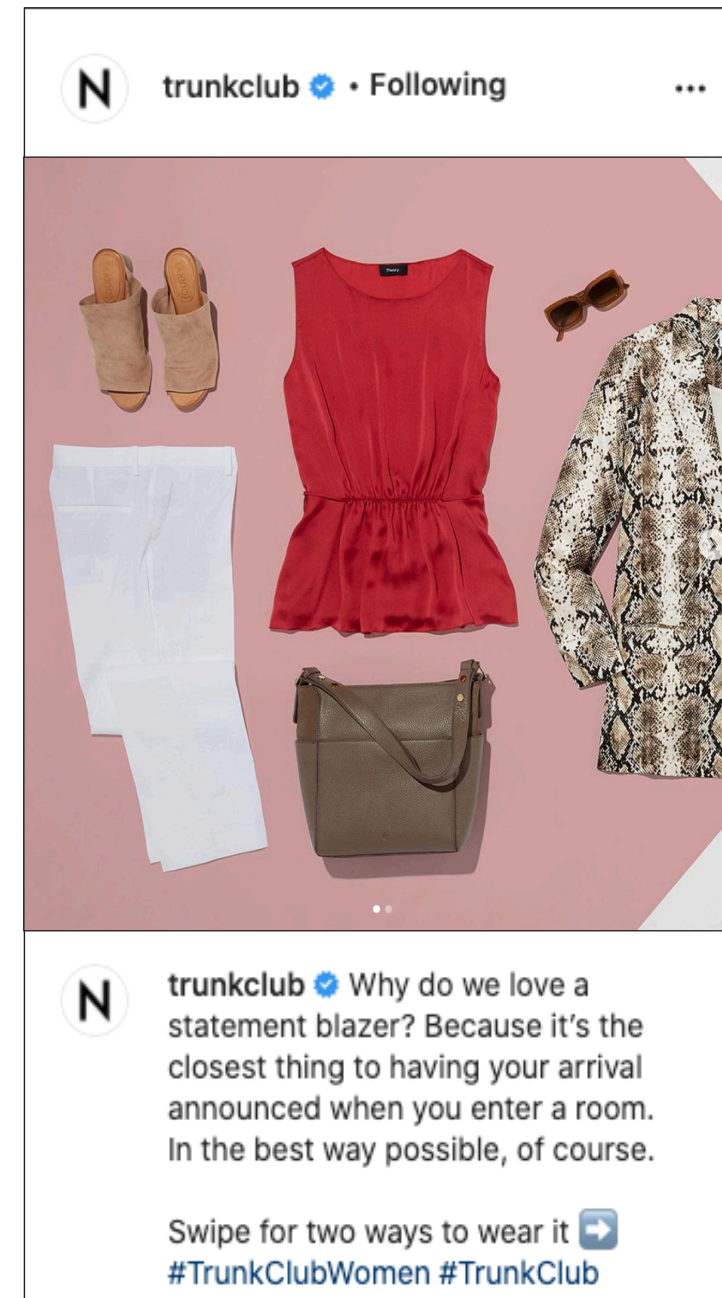|		
VOICE	BOLD	
TONE	Authoritative	Witty
DO	Be confident and helpful. Make declarations and advise.	Be clever (and maybe a little cheeky). Break the rules to surprise and delight.
DON'T	Be bossy or overbearing. Waffle.	Force humor. Be sarcastic or negative.
TIPS	Write actively, not passively. Think about pace, and keep it simple and informative. Have a unique POV.	Be culturally aware. Use wordplay when it's clever and effortless. Choose language that's joyful, but not silly.

VOICE	**MAGNETIC**	
TONE	**Positive**	**Engaging**
DO	Write with energy. Encourage, celebrate, and empower.	Keep it current. Intrigue the customer.
DON'T	Be fake. Be overzealous.	Try too hard. Overcomplicate.
TIPS	Choose language that is upbeat and lighthearted. Vary energy levels so that enthusiasm sounds genuine.	Prioritize one or two messages so as not to exhaust anyone. Limit use of exclamation points and don't gush.

trunkclub ✔ • Following

trunkclub ✔ Why do we love a statement blazer? Because it's the closest thing to having your arrival announced when you enter a room. In the best way possible, of course.

Swipe for two ways to wear it ➡️
#TrunkClubWomen #TrunkClub

VOICE	WELCOMING	
TONE	**Conversational**	**Relatable**
DO	Write as you speak. Be warm and easygoing.	Know and understand our customer. Be honest and direct.
DON'T	Use clichés. Be too casual.	Overpromise. Be overly familiar or presumptuous.
TIPS	Choose natural, everyday words to make a connection with the customer. If you wouldn't say it, don't write it.	Use first and second person to bring the customer along. Always remember that your experience is not necessarily the customer's.

Styled by us, delivered just for you.

TrunkClub.com

NORDSTROM
TRUNK CLUB

02 // Voice + Tone Recap

VOICE	TONE	DO	DON'T	TIPS
BOLD	**Authoritative**	Be confident and helpful. Make declarations and advise.	Be bossy or overbearing. Waffle.	Write actively, not passively. Think about pace, and keep it simple and informative. Have a unique POV.
	Witty	Be clever (and maybe a little cheeky). Break the rules to surprise and delight.	Force humor. Be sarcastic or negative.	Be culturally aware. Use wordplay when it's clever and effortless. Choose language that's joyful, but not silly.
MAGNETIC	**Positive**	Write with energy. Encourage, celebrate, and empower.	Be fake. Be overzealous.	Choose language that is upbeat and lighthearted. Vary energy levels so that enthusiasm feels genuine.
	Engaging	Keep it current. Intrigue the customer.	Try too hard. Overcomplicate.	Prioritize one or two messages so as not to exhaust your audience. Limit use of exclamation points and don't gush.
WELCOMING	**Conversational**	Write as you speak. Be warm and easygoing.	Use clichés. Be too casual.	Choose natural, everyday words to make a connection with the customer. If you wouldn't say it, don't write it.
	Relatable	Know and understand our customer. Be honest and direct.	Overpromise. Be overly familiar or presumptuous.	Use first and second person to bring the customer along. Always remember that your experience is not necessarily the customer's experience.

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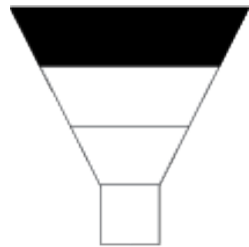

CHANNEL STRATEGIES

When it comes to writing for different channels, it's important to think about which brand traits to lean into.

Who is the primary demographic for that channel? How familiar are they with the NTC brand? What is the occasion?

**Here's how we generally apply our voice to the four stages of the marketing funnel.**

AWARENESS channels, such as paid media and OOH advertising, reach customers at the top of the funnel.

This is likely the first time the customer has been exposed to our brand, so it's best to be **BOLD** in order to quickly and memorably grab their attention.

Brevity, punchy language, and directly addressing the customer are all techniques that can achieve this goal. It's important to remember that graphics, photography, and styling should also support the message whenever possible.
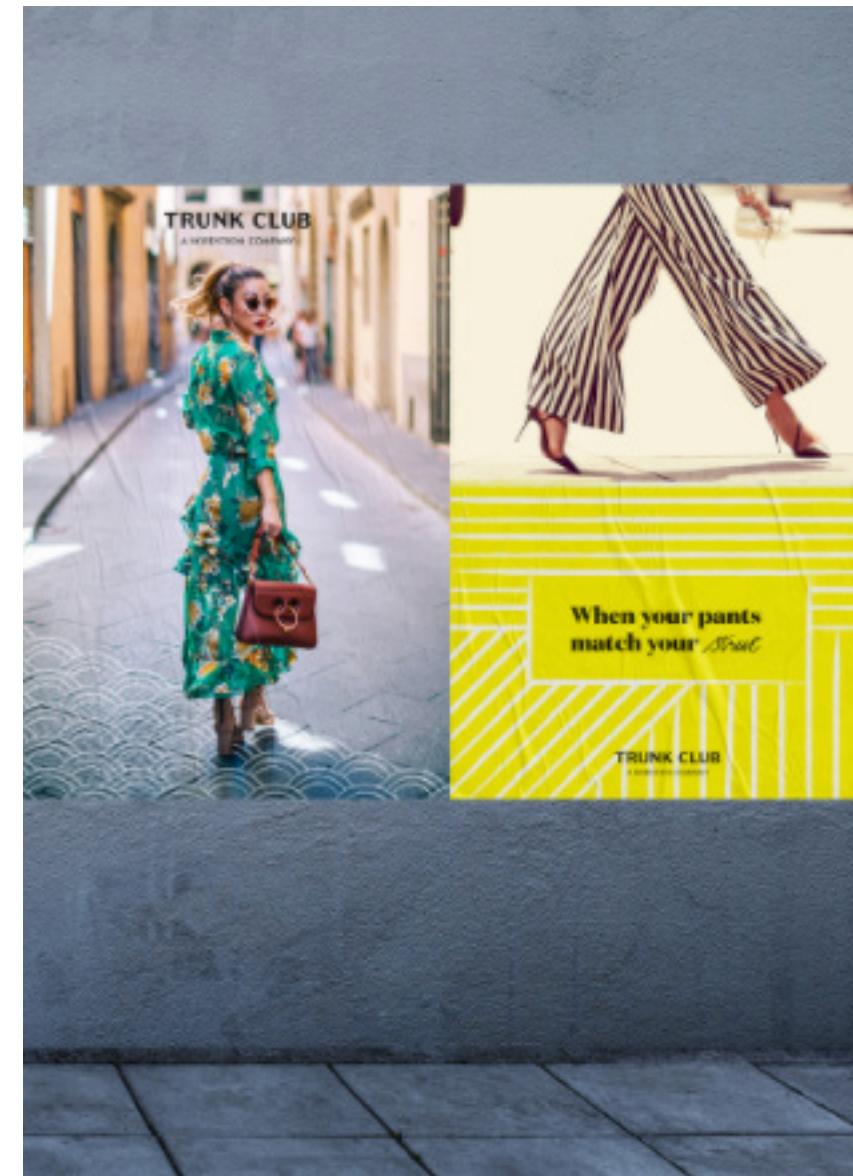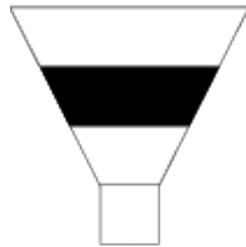
ACQUISITION channels, such as retargeting ads, our website, and referral campaigns, reach customers in the middle of the funnel.

The customer should have already been exposed to our brand at this point, so it's best to be **WELCOMING** in order to win them over.

Friendly language and high-level education about our service are techniques that can achieve this goal. Again, graphics, photography, and styling should also support the message.

We're so glad your friend sent you our way.

Sign up and receive a $50 credit* on your account.

Get Started

Style at every price

We have a range of prices to fit your budget–our stylists can even shop Nordstrom sales for you.
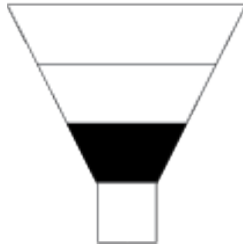
RETENTION channels, such as email campaigns, app notifications, and blog content, reach active customers in order to keep them in the funnel.

These customers have already purchased with us, so it's best to be **MAGNETIC** in order to keep them interested in our service.

Intriguing the customer with styling advice, new product offerings, and other updates can achieve this goal. Again, graphics, photography, and styling should also support the message.
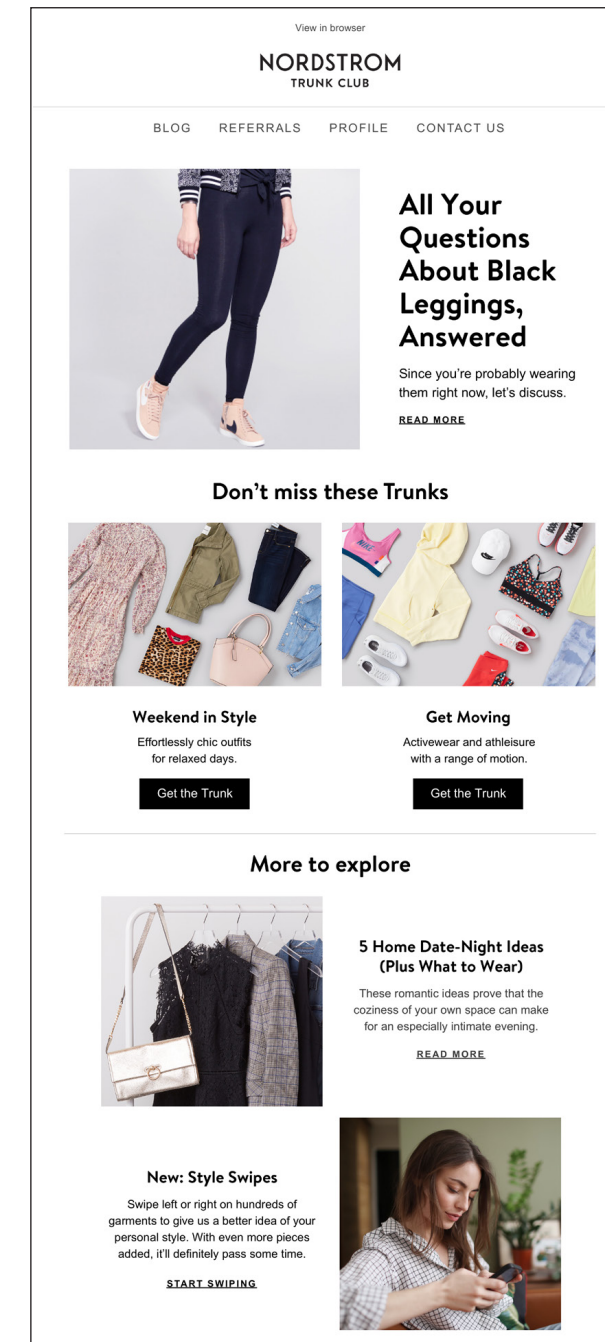
ENGAGEMENT channels, such as organic social and events, encourage active or even lapsed customers to, well, engage with us.
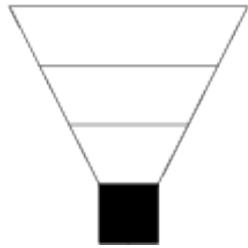
These customers have already purchased with us, so it's best to be **MAGNETIC** in order to keep them interested in our service.

Focusing on a strong call to action (sharing a post or attending an event, for instance) achieves this goal. Again, graphics, photography, and styling should also support the message.

04

TERMINOLOGY

Clubhouse

Always capitalized.

Custom

Only capitalized when it's part of the complete phrase "Trunk Club Custom". As a general term, "custom" is not interchangeable with "bespoke" or "made-to-measure". We do not offer bespoke or made-to-measure garments. (See page 17 for more details.)

Nordstrom

Never make it possessive (Nordstrom's). Recast your phrasing however is necessary.

> NO: Nordstrom's Anniversary Sale
> YES: The Nordstrom Anniversary Sale

Titles

Unless it's a VP or member of the C-suite, don't capitalize.

> Our VP of Engineering loves bow ties.
> Our stylists are always here to help.

Trunks

Always capitalized, both in our name and in reference to the product offering.

NOTE: In customer-facing copy, Nordstrom Trunk Club should always be spelled out, not abbreviated as TC or NTC. Refer to the company as "we" not "it".

04 // Terminology // Brand Names

We often amend stylized brand names for the sake of readability. Don't use all caps in brand names with more than four letters. Otherwise, follow the brand's capitalization styling. Avoid stylized punctuation in body copy. We will generally honor a brand's choice of using an ampersand or plus sign in place of the word "and".

- 1.State
- 7 For All Mankind
- Adidas
- ALDO
- Alice + Olivia
- Asics
- BB Dakota
- BlankNYC
- Børn
- BOSS; Hugo BOSS
- Chloé
- Coach
- Comme des Garçons
- Cupcakes and Cashmere
- Current/Elliott
- Diane von Furstenberg; DVF
- DL1961
- Elizabeth & James
- Felicity & Coco

- Frame
- Gorjana
- Herschel Supply Co.
- IRO
- Ivy Park
- J Brand; J Shoes
- J.Crew (no space after the period)
- Kate Spade New York
- Kut From The Kloth
- Levi's
- Louise et Cie
- Marc Jacobs
- Mother
- Nic + Zoe
- Oscar de la Renta
- Pam & Gela
- PUMA
- Rachel Comey
- Rag & Bone; Rag & Bone\JEAN

- Rails
- Ray-Ban
- Rodd & Gunn
- RVCA
- Scotch & Soda
- Sorel
- Spanx
- The North Face
- TOMS
- Topshop; Topman
- Treasure & Bond
- UGG
- Velvet by Graham & Spencer
- Vince (no caps, no period)
- Wings + Horns
- Wit & Wisdom
- Zanerobe

NOTE: Refer to any brand or company as "they", "them", or "their", never "it" or "its".

Below, you'll find the preferred options for terms that have spelling or formatting variants.

- activewear
- A-line (capital "A")
- bow tie (two words)
- button-down (not "button-up"; don't use the word "shirt" after)
- crossbody; crossbodys
- formalwear
- grey
- handpick; handpicked
- hand-select; hand-selected
- henley (lowercase "h")
- lookbook
- monkstrap
- necktie
- shirtdress
- skinny jeans; skinnys
- sport coat
- sportswear
- tortoise shell (hyphenated when used as a modifier: "tortoise-shell glasses")
- trench; trench coat
- T-shirt (capital "T"); tee; tees
- V-neck (capital "V")
- wide-leg
- workwear

04 // Terminology // Industry Terms

Activewear vs. athleisure
These are <u>not</u> interchangeable. The former you sweat in, the latter you don't. Activewear is functional, often technically enhanced apparel for the gym or other exercise. Athleisure is a category of sport-inspired apparel designed for running errands, relaxing at home, or casual socializing.

Bespoke vs. custom vs. made-to-measure
Also <u>not</u> interchangeable. Bespoke clothing is made with an extremely high level of expertise, more hand-sewing, and other technical elevations. It costs much more than traditional custom apparel. Conversely, made-to-measure clothing is a more affordable option generated from patterns that are minimally customized to an individual's frame. At this time, NTC only offers custom clothing.

Blazers vs. sport coats vs. suit jackets
Yes, these are different! Simply put, blazers are solid-color with contrasting buttons. Sport coats generally have patterns and are often made from more textured fabrics. Suit jackets have a smoother hand, buttons that match the fabric, and matching trousers sold either together or separately. (For more distinctions, <u>read this</u>.)

Fashion vs. style
We are a service that helps people tap into their personal style. "Fashion" is OK in certain editorial contexts, but when it comes to messaging our service, always choose "style" over "fashion".

Knits vs. wovens vs. dress shirts
An important distinction in menswear. Knits refer to casual garments such as T-shirts, sweaters, and sweatshirts. Wovens refer to casual button-downs. Dress shirts are semi-formal to formal garments worn for work or special occasions.

Plus size / Big and tall
Do <u>not</u> use these terms. For women, we use the category term "Curvy" and descriptors such as "inclusive sizing" and "more sizes available". For men, we use the category term "Extended" and descriptors such as "extended sizing" or "more sizes available".

05

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STYLE + MECHANICS

Active voice

The subject of the sentence—which will often be the reader—should generally be performing the action. This results in more engaging copy.

    NO: Skinny jeans can be worn with just about anything, from sneakers to stilettos.
    YES: Wear your skinny jeans with anything: sneakers, stilettos, or sandals.

Capitalization

For headlines and CTAs, we use Title Case. For subheads and captions, use Sentence case, though this depends on word count and what looks best in the layout.

Contractions

They're great. They give your writing an informal, friendly tone. Use 'em as you see fit to create the appropriate vibe in your writing. Just don't go overboard.

Emojis

Please don't use them unless it's in conjunction with an approved creative execution. Organic social may also be an exception, but again, don't go overboard.

Names

The first time you mention someone in your writing, refer to them by their first and last name. On all subsequent mentions, use only their last name.

Prepositions

We're not opposed to ending a sentence with a preposition—sometimes it's just the most efficient and natural way to write. However, using more than one preposition at a time is often superfluous.

    NO: Off of // over top // in between
    YES: Off // over // between

Addresses
Street direction and type should be abbreviated and punctuated with periods. (Exception: directionality after a street type.) Numbered streets should follow Google Maps formatting. (For instance, it's Third Ave. in San Diego, but 3rd Ave. in New York.) Always put a comma between city and state.

Dates
Spell out the day of the week and the month. Always use a comma between the date and the year. Do <u>not</u> use ordinal numbers. Use en dashes for date ranges.

Fractions and decimals
Spell out fractions to avoid awkward formatting. Use decimal places when a number can't be easily written out as a fraction.

Numbers
In headlines or placements where character count is limited, use numerals. In body copy, write out numbers one through nine and start using numerals at 10. Spell out any number when it begins a sentence. Always use an en dash when expressing a range. Use a comma with four-digit numbers.

    <u>Caveat:</u> When there are multiple numbers in a single section or passage and any of those numbers are 10 or more, stick with all numerals for simplicity. (So yes, technically the above entry is written incorrectly.)

Phone numbers
Format as follows: (312) 801-7200 // (800) 385-1000

Time
Use numerals and uppercase AM or PM without a space (9:30AM). Don't use minutes for on-the-hour time (7PM). Use en dashes with time ranges (9AM–10:30PM). Specify time zones (ET, CT, MT, or PT) when writing about an event or anything people would need to schedule.

Ampersands

For the most part, only use them as part of a stylized brand name. Writers may use them as a last resort when constricted by character counts, and designers may use them for aesthetic purposes within the context of a layout.

Apostrophes

Most commonly used for making nouns possessive.

    Use with the letter "s" with singular subjects, whether or not they end with the letter "s": Anna's, Luis's
    Use on its own with plural subjects ending with the letter "s": customers' houses
    Omit with third-person, plural, or non-binary subjects that do not end in the letter "s": hers, theirs, its

Colons

Can be used to introduce a list or join two related phrases. If a complete sentence follows the colon, capitalize the first letter of the first word.

    Alex requested three washes of denim: white, dark blue, and black.
    We've said it before and we'll say it again: White pants are a year-round option.

Commas

Use them before conjunctions, to introduce quotes, to set off nonessential clauses, after introductory clauses, and to separate interchangeable adjectives. <u>Always</u> use an Oxford comma.

Ellipses

These are very useful when editing down or paraphrasing quotes. Put one space afterward for legibility. Do not use them for emphasis, drama, or in headlines.

Em dashes (Command: shift + option + hyphen)

A style device that offsets phrases or creates a natural pause. While effective, they're quite emphatic, so don't overuse them. They do <u>not</u> need spaces before or after.

05 // **Style + Mechanics // Punctuation**

En dashes (Command: option + hyphen)
Used for numeric ranges (March 11–15) and in compound modifiers with proper nouns (CFDA Award–winner).

Exclamation points
They should be used <u>very</u> sparingly. Never use more than one at a time, or multiple times within the same placement.

Hyphens
Used for compound modifiers, except when the first word ends in "ly". When using multiple modifiers that share the same suffix, do not repeat the suffix. (This is the only case in which you'd use a space on either side of a hyphen or dash.)

> Light-wash denim a big trend this season.
> Lightly distressed denim is also very popular.
> Mid- and high-rise denim is flattering on most body types.

Periods
They go inside quotation marks or parentheses when the quote or parenthetical is a complete sentence, outside when not. Leave one space after a period, never two.

Quotation marks
Use quotes to when referring to a word or a letter, and with direct quotations.

Semicolons
Can be used to link two complete sentences that support the same point, or to separate complex items in a lengthy list. This can quickly get unwieldy, so if you find yourself using one, consider recasting your sentence(s).

Still have questions? Read more about punctuation usage in <u>the AP Stylebook</u>.

06

RESOURCES

06 // **Resources**

Still have questions? Here are some links to helpful content resources:

content@trunkclub.com
Have a question about voice or copy guidelines? The NTC content team is your first resource.

AP Stylebook
Our primary resource for specifics regarding grammar, mechanics, and more.

Lessonly
Tutorials for our sales teams that are incredibly useful for any employee looking to learn more about brands, technical language, clothing styles, and more.

American Heritage Dictionary
Defer to their primary spelling of a specific word if you're not sure what we use.

Nordstrom Trunk Club blog
Discover content you can use for your own reference or share with customers.

Nordstrom.com
Particularly useful if you're unsure about a specific brand, product, or technical term.