

# TSV Style Guide

The following style and formatting guidance applies to all TSV print, web, and social media content. Individual specifications (concerning layout, word count, etc.) for each type of content and relevant to each of TSV's channels (e.g., Workshops, Programming, Post-Production) to be included on each platform (web, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter) are provided in the relevant templates. In general, spelling adheres to the *Canadian Oxford English Dictionary*, and textual style and formatting conventions follow [The Chicago Manual of Style](#). Additional guidance has been adapted from *The Yahoo Style Guide* (2010), [The Diversity Style Guide](#), and *Elements of Indigenous Style: A Guide for Writing By and About Indigenous Peoples* (2018). Accessibility guidance for best social media writing practice is based on [The Cooper Hewitt Guidelines for Image Description](#) (for additional guidance and examples, see: [WebAIM](#), [Perkins eLearning](#), and [Accessible Influence](#)).

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## Section 1

### Grammar

- “all right” instead of “alright”
- “that” vs “which”: “that” should be used if the clause is restrictive (the clause cannot be eliminated without changing the sentence); “which” should be used if the clause is not restrictive (can be eliminated and the sentence would mean the same thing)
- if a foreign word or a coinage term is not in any published dictionary, then the word should be enclosed in quotes
- the possessive “ ’s ” should be used for names ending in an “s”:  
e.g., Tacitus’s
- avoid using prepositions ending in “-st”:  
e.g., “among,” instead of “amongst”
- if “-ment” is used to turn a noun into a verb, remove the “e”:  
e.g., abridgment
- compounds containing a prefix and suffix are treated as one word (also see the list of frequently used words, under Spelling, below):  
e.g., antislavery

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### Spelling

Spelling should follow the [Canadian Oxford English Dictionary](#).

#### Spelling of TSV frequently used words:

(Note that exceptions can be made for special terms/usage on the request of an artist or curator; ensure consistency of usage throughout a single document and related documents.)

A            acknowledgement (no “e”)  
              advisor  
              aesthetic  
              aging  
              analogue  
              analyze (with “z”) (\*analyse is accepted, but “z” is preferred for consistency with other terms)  
              anti-colonial

anti: close compound, except when word begins with “i” or capital letter, or if word may

be unclear or looks awkward)

aperture  
archetype  
art-house  
artwork  
aspect ratio  
asynchronous  
avant-garde

B  
backdrop  
backlighting  
back projection  
backup (as noun or adjective)  
behaviour  
benefited (one "t")  
Biennale (capitalized)  
biopic  
bitmap, bitmapped  
blacklisted, blacklisting  
blockbuster  
blow-up (noun)  
blue screen  
B-movie  
bookend(s)  
boom shot  
bootleg  
by-product

C  
café  
calibre  
catalogue  
catchphrase  
CD-ROM  
cellphone  
centre  
CGI ("computer-generated imagery")  
change-over cue  
cheyanne turions (always lower case)  
chiaroscuro (no italics)  
cineaste  
Cinéma Vérité  
cinematographer  
CinemaScope  
clear-cut (as adjective)  
cliché (with accent)

close-up (as noun)  
coexist, coexisting  
colour  
cooperate  
coordinate  
co-presented  
copy edit ("copy-edited," if adjective)  
copyright  
counselling, counsellor  
cross-cutting  
cutoff (adjective)

D       data (can be plural or singular, but be consistent)  
database  
decolonize, decolonization  
de facto (no italics)  
defence (noun)  
desktop  
destabilize  
dialogue  
dos and don'ts  
dpi ("dots per inch")

E       e-learning  
email (no hyphen, lower case)  
emphasize  
endeavour  
end-user  
enroll, enrolled, enrollment  
epilogue

F       favour  
fibre optic  
fieldwork  
Film Noir  
firsthand  
fish-eye lens  
flashback  
flash-forward  
focused, focusing  
framework

G       GIF (Graphics Interchange Format)  
grey

H       halfway  
hand-cut

handmade  
hands-on  
honour, honorary

I           IMAX  
instalment, installation  
interdisciplinary  
internet (lower case)

J           JPEG  
judgment (no “e”)

L           labelled, labelling  
labour  
latecomer  
leitmotif  
letterbox, letterboxing  
licence (noun), license (verb) (e.g., driving licence)  
lifestyle  
litre  
livestream (no hyphen)  
login (noun), log in (verb)  
long-term, longer-term (adjective)

M           makeup (noun)  
manoeuvre  
media art(s) (as noun or adjective)  
meme  
megapixel  
metre  
mise-en-scène (hyphenate, as noun or adjective)  
mockumentary  
Montréal (include accent)  
multidisciplinary (no hyphen)  
multimedia (no hyphen)  
multimodal

multi: close compound when word begins with consonant (“multimedia,”  
“multidisciplinary”; hyphenate when precedes a vowel (“multi-authored”))

N           neighbour  
Neo-Realism (capitalize “Neo” as a prefix)  
newcomer  
new media  
non-fiction  
nonprofit

nonsmoker

O  
offence (noun)  
OK (capitalized, no periods)  
ongoing  
online  
oriented (not “orientated”)  
organization  
overexpose  
overrepresented  
overuse, overused

P  
payoff  
per se (no italics)  
pixilation, pixilated  
post-colonial  
postgraduate  
postmodern, postmodernism  
post-production  
postsecondary  
post-traumatic  
P.O.V. (“point of view”)  
PowerPoint  
ppi (“pixels per inch”)  
practice  
pre-existing

pre: close compound except when word begins with “e” or if word may be unclear or looks awkward

pre-production  
prologue  
program, programming, programmed  
prototype, prototyping  
publicly

Q  
quasi: hyphenate compound, except in rare cases (e.g., “quasicrystal”)

R  
raison d’être (no italics)  
raster image  
realize (with “z”)  
real-time (adjective, no quotation marks)  
reassessment

re: close compound except when word may be unclear or looks awkward; re-emerge, reissue)

rebuild  
re-create  
reshoot

S  
screenplay  
screenwriter  
secondhand  
side effect (always open)  
site-specific (as adjective)  
skillful (two l's)  
smart phone  
sociocultural  
socioeconomic  
soundscape  
specialized  
storyboard, storyboarding  
subtext  
subtitle(s)  
subtype(s)

T  
telehealth, telemedicine  
TIFF (for file format)  
time frame  
time lapse  
toward (no "s")  
transdisciplinary  
transmedia  
transgenerational  
T-shirt(s) (capital "T" and hyphen)  
tumour  
TV

U  
underexposure  
underfunded  
under-represented  
under way (adverb), underway (adjective)  
up-to-date  
usable  
user name

V  
video art, video work  
videoconferencing  
videography  
video-imaging  
vignette

	vis-à-vis
	visualize (with “z”)
	voicemail
	voice-over
W	wavelength
	web, the
	website
	well-being
	widescreen
	widespread
	Wi-Fi
	workday, workforce, workload, workout, workup
	work of art
	works (when used in general sense)
	worldwide
X	X-ray
Y	
Z	

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## Usage

### Indigenous guidelines:

- “Indigenous Peoples” is the preferred term over “aboriginal” or “first nations.” “First Nations community” is also preferred over “First Nations.” “Aboriginal” is not the preferred term to refer to Indigenous Peoples within Ontario or Canada, more generally. If using this term to refer to people in other parts of the world, be as specific as possible—using specific clan, tribe, or reserve names—and capitalize when in doubt. Adhere to self-articulated preferences for naming.
- the term “Indian” should only be used in direct quotes and when it appears in the titles of books, works of art, or legal/constitutional documents being cited as sources
- “Inuk” refers to an individual Inuit person while “Innu” refers to two
- Inuit are not the same as Innu (who live in Northeastern Quebec)
- “native” is only to be used if the term is a self-identifier or is in an organization title or official document being cited
- capitalize the following: Indigenous Peoples, Aboriginal Peoples, First Nation Communities, Inuit, and Métis



- avoid possessive phrases that infer Canadian nationality for all people who live in the country, such as “Canada’s Indigenous Peoples”
- plural possessive for “First Nations” does not include an apostrophe:  
e.g., “First Nations land” instead of “First Nations’ land”

## Diversity, inclusivity, and accessibility guidelines:

- avoid allusions, assumptions, or stereotypes based on age, disability, ethnicity, gender, and religion:  
e.g., countries and ships are not feminine; “chair” should be used instead of “chairman”
- use terms like “assigned male at birth,” “assigned sex at birth,” or “assigned female at birth,” instead of “biological woman” or “biological man”
- use terms like “before the common era” and C.E. for “common era,” and avoid using terms defined by their relation to Christianity (See also “Abbreviations and Acronyms,” below)
- avoid overly complex sentence structures
- use the active instead of passive voice whenever possible
- avoid capitalizing entire words for emphasis; instead, use bold or italics (but also see the guidance relevant to specific web and social media platforms, below)
- avoid archaic language, such as “thus” or “alas”
- “boomers” and “boomer generation” are preferred over “baby boomers,” which is perceived as condescending
- “biracial” refers to people of two races; “multiracial” refers to people of two or more racial backgrounds. Preferred terms include multiracial, biracial, multiethnic, polyethnic. Use “mixed” and “mixed-race” with caution.
- “Black”: Blackness is an ethnicity, a culture with many subcultures, and should always be capitalized.
- “white”: when used in reference to race, should *never* be capitalized (unless starting a sentence)
- BIPOC: a noun that includes “people” (it’s redundant to say “BIPOC people”)
- “queer”: has been appropriated by some people as a self-affirming umbrella term; it is not universally accepted within the LGBTQ+ community and should be avoided unless used in a direct quote or to describe someone who self-identifies with this term<sup>1</sup>
- gender-neutral pronouns (“they/them,” “ze/hir”) in the singular: conjugate each pronoun as you would a singular or plural in any other context (“they are happy; ze is happy”); always confirm and use the pronoun preferred by the individual or group in question. See the useful pronoun chart from the Diversity Style Guide (entry for “gender neutral pronouns”), below:

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<sup>1</sup> Diversity Style Guide: <https://www.diversitystyleguide.com/glossary/queer/>.

PRONOUNS					
Nominative (subject)	Objective (object)	Possessive determiner	Possessive pronoun	Reflexive	Example
<b>Traditional male/female pronouns</b>					
she	her	her	hers	herself	She is happy. I heard her. The book is hers.
he	him	his	his	himself	He is happy. I heard him. The book is his.
<b>Gender-neutral pronouns</b>					
they	them	their	theirs	themselves	They are happy. I heard them. The book is theirs.
ze (or zie)	hir/zir	hir/zir	hirs/zirs	hirsself/zirself	Ze is happy. I heard hir. The book is zirs.
e/ey	em	eir	eirs	eirself	E is happy. I heard em. The book is eirs.
xe	xem	xyr	xyrs	xyrself	Xe is happy. I heard xem. The book is xyrs.
per	per	per	pers	perself	Per is happy. I heard per. The book is pers.
it*	it	its	its	itself	It is happy. I heard it. The book is its.
*While some people use the pronoun "it," others find it offensive. Be sure to check with people before using these pronouns					

## Section 2

### Formatting

#### Italicization:

Titles of publications, artworks, and exhibitions should be italicized:  
(see also the guidance under "Citation and bibliographic formats," below)

e.g., *Bead and Bitch*

Use italics for foreign words and phrases.

#### Capitalization:

Titles and headings for Workshops, Exhibitions, and other events:

- capitalize the first letter of each word (except for prepositions); titles should be rendered in a font larger than the body text:  
(See the additional formatting and layout guidance in the relevant templates.)

e.g., A Brief Introduction to Video Installation Online in 2 Parts

Workshop parts and dates: capitalize each word, and maintain consistency of capitalization, throughout:

e.g., Part 1: Thursday, 28 October 2021, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Part 2: Thursday, 4 November 2021, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Only proper nouns, or nouns beginning a line, require capitalization:

e.g., Accepted payment (not Accepted Payment)

Capitalize:

- generally accepted names of historical periods or artistic movements:  
e.g., Rococo, Baroque, Abstract Expressionism  
(don't capitalize period concepts/historical period terms when used in generic sense:  
e.g., romantic vs. Romantic)
- a generic term if it refers to two or more proper nouns (e.g., Pacific and Atlantic Oceans)
- the name of an institution, organization, or company
- an individual's title when their position precedes their name
- "City": the word "City" should be capitalized when referring to the entity of the corporation (council members, mayor, etc.), but rendered in lower case when referring to the people of the city or the city itself  
e.g., The City of Rijeka has invested a significant amount of money . . .  
The city of Rijeka is one with a rich cultural history . . .
- terms that denote regions of the world or of a particular country are often capitalized, so "the North," but "northern" and "north" (the direction)
- after a colon, only when the sentence is a complete one and not a fragment:  
e.g., Email: Send all emails to the correct address.  
Email: send to correct address

## Font size:

Print content: The *Chicago Manual of Style* doesn't require a specific font or font size, but for print content recommends using 12 point Times New Roman. Use margins of at least 1 inch on all sides of the page. The main text should be double-spaced, and each new paragraph should begin with a ½ inch indent.

Online content: A minimum of 16 px is recommended for body text. In online content, consider using larger fonts and/or font varieties, to draw attention to the most important content on the page (such as headings) or to distinguish between different sections of text to better help users to read and find information more easily.

Ensure that font size is consistent within a single element of a document.

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## Section 3

### Punctuation

#### Commas and periods:

- use Oxford (serial) commas in lists of three or more items (before “and” and “or”):  
e.g., black, red, and blue  
e.g., cat, dog, or mouse
- commas and periods precede an end quotation mark
- use only one space after a final period

#### Hyphens:

- if the root word is a proper noun, number, or compound, hyphenate the word:  
e.g., un-American (proper noun), pre-1945 (number), re-create (compound)
- past tense noun-adjectives should be hyphenated:  
e.g., bright-hued banner, water-soaked ground
- avoid hyphenating adverbs ending in “-ly”:  
e.g., sharply written account
- use hyphens to separate numbers that are not in a range (e.g., phone numbers: 905-111-2222)

#### Ampersands (&):

- should not be used unless part of a published title, title of artwork, or company/organization name

#### Dashes: en dashes and em dashes:

(see also the guidance under “Numbers,” below)

- an en dash (–), rather than a hyphen (-), should be used for all number ranges (dates, times, etc.), that is, only when “to” can be substituted instead
- an em dash (—) should be used to set off an explanatory element:  
e.g., Mr. Parker—the head of the math department—never drinks coffee alone.
- no spaces should appear either side of an en or em dash

#### **Brackets:**

- brackets [ ] should be used for parenthetical phrases that occur within parentheses ( ):  
e.g., (The first exhibition [1992] and the last [2021] . . .)

#### **Quotation marks:**

- use double quotation marks (commas and periods fall within the final quotation mark)
- avoid using scare quotes (quotation marks used around a word or phrase that doesn’t require them, for emphasis or to express doubt or sarcasm)

#### **Ellipses:**

- use an ellipsis . . . when omitting text in a quotation (without brackets [ ], and with a full space between each dot and before and after the ellipsis, as above)

#### **Slashes:**

- if a slash is used to divide two words, no space is needed  
e.g., and/or
- if a slash divides two phrases or sentences, or a single word and a phrase, leave a space before and after the slash

## **Section 4**

### **Numbers**

#### **Numerals vs. spelled-out numbers:**

Numbers can be rendered as numerals or spelled out in full. In general, aim for consistency within a single text or document and maintain the same usage across all instances (e.g., Workshop headings). In web and social media content, numerals are preferable in headings and lists. Spelled-out numbers are preferable within prose body text (within prose, spell out numbers from zero through nine, and use numerals for 10 and above<sup>2</sup>). In passages containing two or more numbers referring to the same category, where one is 10 or higher, use numerals for all numbers for the sake of consistency.

e.g., Workshop listing:

[Title] A Brief Introduction to Video Installation Online in **2** Parts

Hours of instruction: **3** hours of instruction in **2** parts

Maximum capacity: **30**

e.g., Workshop description:

Lana Lovell came off a **six**-year hiatus with a surge of work. In 2017, she wrote the play *Elbow Room*, which went into pre-development in 2018 with Toronto's Obsidian Theatre and was produced at Fringe 2019. Then she wrote the short play *The First 100 Years of Sophia Pooley* for Fringe 2020, during COVID-19 she began developing her play into a full-length production.

**Larger numerals** take commas (e.g., 33,000). For very large numbers, use a numeral followed by "million," "billion," etc.:

e.g., 5 billion people; \$6 million lawsuit

**Age** is always rendered as a numeral:

e.g., a 4-year-old child

**Ordinals:** Render the letters that occur in ordinal numbers (**2nd**, **1st**, **3rd**) in regular case rather than superscript (superscripts may also not display correctly online or on certain devices).

**Money:** Use numerals, preceded by the currency symbol. A decimal and two zeros are only necessary if they make sense in the context (e.g., a price list requiring cent amounts) or provide consistency within a list (e.g., \$2.75, \$3.00).<sup>3</sup> If referring to foreign currency, use the appropriate punctuation convention (e.g., European convention uses a comma in place of a decimal):

e.g., Cost: \$10 (member)

**Dates:** Render dates (for events) with the format: "day, date month year." Spell the day and month in full, for clarity. In cases where space is limited (e.g., content meant to be viewed solely on a mobile

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<sup>2</sup> Yahoo, 261.

<sup>3</sup> Yahoo, 279.

device), abbreviate the day and/or month (Mon., Tues.; M, Tu; Jan., Feb.).<sup>4</sup> Avoid abbreviating months with five or fewer letters (March, April, May, etc.).

e.g., Thursday, 1 November 2021

If a year is abbreviated—as for example within a title (e.g., *The Spirit of '76*), or within informal writing (e.g., the class of '85)—an apostrophe can be used. Ensure that the character is an apostrophe instead of an opening single quotation mark.

Date ranges: See below, under “Number ranges.”

*Circa*: use the abbreviation c., unitalicized and followed by a period and a space:  
e.g., c. 1955

For events taking place “daily,” provide the specific day range for clarity: “Monday through Sunday,” or “Mon. through Sun.” if abbreviating for space.

**Time:** Use numerals to render all times, except for “noon” and “midnight,” which are preferable in order to avoid confusion between 12 a.m. and 12 p.m. Avoid “12 noon” and “12 midnight.” On-the-hour times don’t require a decimal (3 p.m.), but minutes should be included when required. Consistency should be maintained across all items within a sentence or larger list (e.g., 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.). Use periods within abbreviations (a.m., p.m.), with a preceding space (8 p.m.). For spans of time, use an en dash; leave a space before and after the en dash.<sup>5</sup>

e.g., Thursday, 28 October 2021, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Units of time (minutes, hours, days, months, years) should be abbreviated in lists, followed by a period, but spelled out in full within prose text. An exception is “centuries,” which should always be spelled in full:

e.g., 1 sec., 5 secs.; 1 min., 45 mins.; 1 hr., 100 hrs.

**Measurements:** Use numerals and the abbreviated unit of measure, with one space between the two.

Metric units don’t require a decimal, and the singular form applies to both singular and plural quantities:

e.g., 5 cm, 1 mm, 30 m, 25 km (not “cms, mms, kms”)

English (Imperial) unit abbreviations take a decimal, and the singular form applies to both singular and plural quantities:

e.g., 10 ft., 50 in., 30 lb.

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<sup>4</sup> Yahoo, 266.

<sup>5</sup> Yahoo, 269–70.

**Number ranges:** Include the full numbers in each instance, separated by an en dash, and render all numbers below 100 in full in the first instance, followed by an abbreviation (numbers following an en dash should be abbreviated, with the exception of 101, 201, 301, 1001, etc.):

e.g., 15–16, 50–67, 100–101, 225–46, 1000–1003, 3052–45

The same rules apply to date ranges:

e.g., 1985–2006, 1575–89

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## Section 5

### Names, Addresses, and Contact Information

#### Names:

First names, or first and middle initial, rendered as initials should include periods and spaces:

e.g., L. S. Lowry

#### Surnames:

Surnames with particles (Van, De, Da, D', L', etc.) should be rendered according to the convention adopted for the language of origin or the individual preference/usage of the individual in question, if known. If in doubt, capitalize. Particles should always be capitalized when they begin a sentence. When a surname with particle occurs in isolation within prose text (without a forename), the choice of capitalization or lower case will depend upon the relevant language convention or preference/usage of the individual:

e.g., Daphne du Maurier

Du Maurier was an English novelist and playwright.

Among the various novelists was du Maurier, who was also a playwright.

#### Addresses:

Titles for addressees (Mr., Dr., Mrs., etc.), when known, should be followed by a period. When titles are unknown or not required, or in instances in which the addressee's gender is unknown, use the addressee's full name; the gender-neutral courtesy title "Mx." can be used if desired. Include the addressee's professional position, if known.

Spell out street names in full (Street, Road, Avenue).



Use the two-character abbreviation convention for Canadian and US postal codes (with exceptions for international codes). No punctuation is needed within provincial abbreviations or postal codes.

Use the two-letter abbreviation for Canadian provinces (ON, AB, BC, etc.) and US states (AZ, CA, NY, etc.), without periods.

e.g., Milada Kovacova  
Office Manager and Workshop Coordinator  
Trinity Square Video  
401 Richmond Street West, Suite 121  
Toronto, ON M5V 3A8

### Phone numbers:

Render phone numbers in full, including the area code, with hyphens (not en dashes) between the prefix and four-digit line number. The “1” preceding the area code, for North American phone numbers, is not necessary. For international numbers, use the formatting convention habitual to the relevant country, preceded by the relevant prefix for calling from Canada:

e.g., 416-555-5555

e.g., +44 (0) 20 0000 0000 [for a UK phone number]

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## Citation and Bibliographic Formats

For references to published works (e.g., within an artist’s or curator’s biography), use the following examples as a guide (these follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*):

**Book:** Cheryl Strayed, *Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Coast Trail* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), 87–88.

Brian Grazer and Charles Fishman, *A Curious Mind: The Secret to a Bigger Life* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 2015), 188.

Alexander Berkman, Henry Bauer, and Carl Nold, *Prison Blossoms* . . .

**Article:** Benjamin Bagley, “Loving Someone in Particular,” *Ethics* 125, no. 2 (January 2015): 484–85.

For items with four or more authors, use “and others” instead of “et al.”:

Claire Hacek and others, *Mediated Lives: Reflections on Wearable Technologies* . . .

As with “et al.,” above, try to avoid using archaic Latin abbreviations (ibid., cf., etc.) as these are often misused and/or easily misunderstood by readers unfamiliar with them. If a reference needs to be repeated on a subsequent line (in a set of footnotes, for example), it can be written in an abbreviated form.

Page prefixes (p., pp.) are not necessary.

Remember to include an en dash within page, date, or other number ranges.

## **Titles**

- Blogs (analogous to periodicals): italicized
- Blog entries (analogous to articles in a periodical): in quotation marks
- Book titles: italicized
- Declarations, protocols, treatises: italicized
- Event titles: title case
- Exhibitions: italicized
- Magazines: italicized
- Magazine articles: in quotation marks
- Name of institution: title capitalization
- Works of art: italicized

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# **Social Media Content Guidelines**

(See also the relevant templates for each platform and TSV channel, for additional style and formatting guidance.)

## **Word-count/ Length of content**

### **Facebook:**

The first line of text should be 40–50 characters max., followed by additional information in separate, short paragraphs. Total limit for a full post is 63,206 characters.

Workshop posts: See the templates under “Workshops: Social Media Templates.”

Main Gallery posts: See the templates under “Main Gallery Exhibition: Social Media Templates.”

### **Instagram:**

The first paragraph of text should be 138 to 150 characters max., followed by additional information in separate, short paragraphs. Total limit for a full post is 2,200 characters.

Workshop posts: See the template under “Workshops: Social Media Templates.”

Main Gallery posts: See the templates under “Main Gallery Exhibition: Social Media Templates.”

## Twitter:

The total limit for a full post is 280 characters.

Workshop posts: See the guidance under “Workshops: Social Media Templates.”

Main Gallery posts: See the guidance under “Main Gallery Exhibition: Social Media Templates.”

## Titles:

### Instagram, Facebook, Twitter:

Titles of **events** (Workshops, Exhibitions, etc.) should be in capitals:  
e.g., ARCHIVAL AFFECTIONS

Titles of **works of art** should be in quotation marks:  
e.g. “TV Buddha”

Titles of **blogs, books, magazines, declarations, protocols, treatises** should be rendered with the first letter capitalized:  
e.g., Painting Revolution

Titles of **articles** and **blog entries** should be in quotation marks:  
e.g., “Video Storytelling: Best Practices and Emerging Trends”

## Punctuation:

### Instagram, Facebook, Twitter:

For number ranges, use a **hyphen** in place of an en dash.  
Use **double** quotation marks (when these are needed).

## Image/Video Captions and Credits:

### Instagram, Facebook, Twitter:

Image credit: Courtesy of Holly Chang.  
Video credit: Candice Hopkins.

Avoid the use of special characters (© , ™, ®). If these are required, it might be preferable to spell them out as a word instead (“copyright, trademark, registered”); certain characters may not render correctly on some devices and may not be acknowledged by electronic screen readers.

## **Image/Video Descriptions and Accessibility Guidance:**

Include both **Alt Text (Alternative Text)** and **Image Descriptions** for images, videos, and other visual content posted on the web, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter.

**Alt Text** descriptions are not visible but are embedded within the image. If the user is using an electronic screen reader, the Alt Text will be read aloud after the username or location tag, and before an image caption. This is a very short (approx. 15 word/125-character) line of text that helps the user understand the image’s content.

**Image Descriptions** are manually written within the text of the post, as part of or alongside the image caption or credit. For consistency, place this text after the image caption or credit (see the “Image/Video Captions and Credits” section, below) and before the hashtags. An Image Description’s style, length, and depth might vary somewhat depending on the image or the author of the description, but writers should generally aim to follow the guidelines below. Image Descriptions are useful for users who require content translation: Alt Text can only be read aloud by electronic screen readers in the language of origin, while Image Descriptions can be translated. Alt Text can also not be included in certain social media content, like Instagram Stories.

Write the image caption/credit first (see the “Image/Video Captions and Credits” section, below) and then write the Alt Text and Image Description.

### **Alt Text** general guidelines:

- be as descriptive as possible, but stick to the most relevant details
- keep the description brief; limit it to approx. 30 words in total, or 125 characters in total (to ensure compatibility with most screen readers)
- punctuate with a period, as this allows screen readers to read the text with a more “human” and natural voice
- begin the description with words that describe the most important content of the image and then move on to the details that provide additional information
- the tone of writing can be informal; this approach also makes the content easier to listen to when read aloud
- the description should follow a natural visual “reading” pattern, singular direction, or spatial order of viewing: e.g., top to bottom, left to right, foreground to background
- choose simple words that clearly describe what can be seen in the image or video
- don’t begin with “This is an Image of . . .,” “Image of . . .,” or “Picture of . . .,” as this is redundant information that the user will already presume; but do use contextual words that help the user understand the *type* of image, if this is relevant or necessary (e.g., “headshot,” “chart,” “screengrab,” or “illustration”)

- use SEO (search engine optimization) keywords sparingly, if incorporating these in the description
- if the image or video also includes text (as in the case of a textual overlay), transcribe this text in the Alt Text
- if the image includes text as part of the objects within the image (e.g., an image of an Exit sign on a highway), include that text in double quotation marks  
e.g., A reflective green highway sign with white text that reads “EXIT 27”
- if a detailed caption (or another form of descriptive text) already appears on the same page as the image, Alt Text may not be required
- decorative images (brand graphics, dividers, etc.) don’t require Alt Text
- avoid jargon, acronyms (unless part of the image, in which case place in double quotation marks), and any other terms that might be easily misunderstood, create confusion, or require additional information
- limit the description to what can be seen in the image; avoid interpretation (unless it will help the user better understand the image’s content); avoid subjective observations
- when describing people within an image, provide information about: physical features (prominent features, physical stature, physical disabilities), age, gender (use “they” when gender is unknown, or the individual’s preferred pronoun if known; avoid using “masculine” and “feminine”), ethnicity, and skin tone (use non-ethnic terms like “light-skinned” or “dark-skinned,” or one of the emoji terms for skin tone, as recommended in the Cooper Hewitt guide, via the link at the top of the Style Guide)
- don’t use the “automatic” Alt Text feature of social media platforms, which is usually too generic

NOTE: If creating image/video content that includes overlaid text, consider including an additional version of the image without the text (as for example in a multi-image swipe screen sequence in Instagram), and repeat the text within the Alt Text itself.

### Image Description general guidelines:

Image Descriptions can be longer than Alt Text descriptions, but try to limit them to approx. 100 words/ 400 characters. In all other respects, they should adhere to the same general guidance as for Alt Text, above, with additional considerations as follows:

Core elements of an Image Description:

1. **Subject:** Start with the elements that are essential to understanding the image; the first thing that strikes you about the image.
2. **Size:** Describe the scale of the key elements in the image and their size in relation to one another; use phrases like “smaller than” or “larger than.”
3. **Colour:** Use common names for colours, which can be easily identified by most users.

4. **Orientation and relationships:** Describe the orientation of and relationships between the elements within the image.

5. **Medium and style:** If a particular material, medium, or style is featured, identify it but also briefly describe its physical qualities (only in as much detail as is necessary for the user to understand the image).

- if there is space to do so, and it is relevant to the image, consider enriching your description by: making reference to alternative senses (touch, scent, sound, taste); using the embodiment technique of description, which uses the second person (“you” or “us”) (see the example below) (use the first-person plural “we” when describing tours, audio, or live events); using metaphor or comparison, to enhance understanding of the image’s material aspects

### Instagram:

To create Alt Text when creating a new post, go to “Advanced Settings,” then “Accessibility,” and click on “Write Alt Text”. To add Alt Text to an existing post, go to the “Add Alt Text” option at the lower right-hand side of the image.

Example:



**Alt Text:** A man stands across from us in a wallpapered room atop an area rug between a chair and end-table.

**Image Description:** A video still of a light-skinned man with dark hair and a beard wears all black with a light grey overcoat. He is standing in a wallpapered room, directly across from us, just in front of the far wall on a small light-hued woven rug in between a small Victorian armchair and end table with a lamp. He stands somewhat in front of the furniture making it appear slightly smaller than normal due to his tall stature and our perspective. The wallpaper is a light blue pattern with off-white trim and doors. On the right is a large window that illuminates the room.

Post layout (with image description below post):



Lorem ipsum lorem ipsum lorem ipsum  
lorem ipsum lorem ipsum lorem ipsum  
lorem ipsum lorem ipsum lorem ipsum  
lorem ipsum lorem ipsum lorem ipsum  
lorem ipsum lorem ipsum lorem ipsum  
lorem ipsum lorem ipsum lorem ipsum  
[post content]

Image caption: Vincent Rouffiac, "The Wikisinger,"  
2015, YouTube video.

Image credit: Courtesy of TOUCHE Videoproduktion  
Creative.

Image Description: A video still of a light-skinned man with dark hair and a beard wears all black with a light grey overcoat. He is standing in a wallpapered room, directly across from us, just in front of the far wall on a small light-hued woven rug in between a small Victorian armchair and end table with a lamp. He stands somewhat in front of the furniture making it appear slightly smaller than normal due to his tall stature and our perspective. The wallpaper is a light blue pattern with off-white trim and doors. On the right is a large window that illuminates the room.

#  
#  
#

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# Image/Video Captions and Credits, and In-Text Image/Video References

If an explanatory image caption is required, the following format should be used:

Artist, title (italicized), date, medium, dimensions (if relevant/known), institution, city (and country, if city is not well known)

If any of the above categories are unknown they can be omitted.

e.g., Image caption: Nam June Paik, *TV Buddha*, 1974, video sculpture (mixed media), Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.

References to artworks within prose text: only the title (italicized) and date (in brackets) are required:

e.g., Lana Lovell directed the documentary *The Incomparable Jackie Richards* (2008).

## Image/video credits and citation conventions:

**Image/video credits:** image credits should be listed at the bottom of the page:

e.g., Video credit: Rhonda Lucy.

If copyright permission is required for image usage, and has been obtained, include the relevant information as stipulated by the licensor:

e.g., Image credit: British Museum, by permission of the Trustees of the British Museum.

Avoid the use of special characters (©, ™, ®) and spell these out as words instead (“copyright, trademark, registered”); certain characters may not render correctly on some devices and may not be acknowledged by electronic screen readers.

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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

(For abbreviations relevant to numbers (dates, time, money, measurements, etc.), see “Numbers,” above.)

Abbreviated terms should be followed by a period, whether plural or singular:<sup>6</sup>

vol., vols.

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<sup>6</sup> Chicago, 753, 901.



fig., figs.  
ed., eds.  
p., pp.

**etc., i.e. and e.g.:** Include a period between each character; each should be followed by a comma (and preceded by a comma, as well, if occurring in the middle of a sentence). No additional period is required if appearing at the end of a sentence. Best to avoid in formal writing. “Etc.” can alternatively be spelled out (*et cetera*). These abbreviations don’t need to be italicized.

i.e., (*id est* = “that is”; use when you want to rephrase something you’ve already said; best to avoid in formal prose)

e.g., (*exempli gratia* = “for example”; use when giving an example of something)

etc., (*et cetera* = “and other things”; should never be used in reference to people; implies that a list of things is too extensive to recite in full; avoid “and etc.” (“et” means “and”); don’t include at the end of a list that begins with “for example,” “such as,” or “e.g.,” as these properly introduce a short list of examples; should be punctuated in the same way as “and” (with a comma preceding, if using the serial/Oxford comma convention)

Use the nonsecular C.E. and B.C.E. (“common era” and “before the common era”), instead of B.C. and A.D. These should follow the numerical year (e.g., 193 C.E.; 25 B.C.E.)

Initialisms and abbreviated institutional/company names should be rendered in capitals (even when they aren’t derived from proper nouns) and don’t require intervening periods:

e.g., TSV, CPU, NAFTA, KFC, OCD, URL

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## Section 6

### Hyperlinks/Permalinks and Email Links

Ensure that all hyperlinks are underlined/highlighted for ease of user recognition, and that the link is operational and connects to the correct content. Any emails should also include a hyperlink.

If the hyperlink text contains meta-characters (accents, diacritics, non-Latin characters), edit the permalink to contain the closest unaccented Latin character transliteration, and for glottal stops (ʔ) use the number 7:

e.g., <https://belkin.ubc.ca/xyz/ĉesnaʔəm> becomes <https://belkin.ubc.ca/xyz/cesna7em>  
<https://belkin.ubc.ca/xyz/xʷməθkʷəy̓əm> becomes <https://belkin.ubc.ca/xyz/xwmethkweyem>

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# Logos

Typeface for TSV logo: Courier Sans

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## Additional Style and Formatting Guidance (for print, web, and social media):

### **Lists (vertical):**

- all items in a list should be constructed of parallel elements
- subdivisions should contain at least two items
- a vertical list is best introduced by a complete grammatical sentence (often easy to accomplish by adding “the following”), followed by a colon (and in this case, items carry no punctuation unless they consist of complete sentences; each item will begin with a capital letter)
- in a vertical list that completes a sentence begun in an introductory fragment, and that consists of phrases or sentences with internal punctuation, semicolons may be used between items; a period should follow the final item. Each item begins with a lower case letter. A conjunction before the final item is optional.

### **Superscript and subscript:**

- avoid using superscript and subscript in all cases, including for symbols and abbreviations such as trademark indicators (<sup>™</sup>), as this format may not render correctly on all devices

### **En dashes:**

- for all numbers in a range, on a website or in a social media post, ensure that either an en dash or a hyphen is used consistently throughout

### **Symbols and special characters:**

- Avoid using special characters (©, <sup>™</sup>, ®); if they are required, it's preferable to spell these out in full (“copyright, trademark, registered”) as they may not render correctly on some devices. Avoid copying and pasting special characters into a document directly from your computer as these will likely result in display problems. Test the online display of any special characters before publishing.

**Repetition of information:**

- Ensure that information is listed only once within a single document, to avoid confusion. It might be preferable to include content in only one location and to embed links to this content when repetition/reference is required.