

TfL's editorial style guide

This guide explains when and how to use abbreviations, punctuation, numbers, branding, and terms related to equality and inclusion. It indicates which words need to be favoured or avoided, as well as when to use upper or lower case. When a word is listed without an explanation, it has been included to show how it should be spelt. Accepted abbreviations are given in brackets.

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This guide is updated regularly. Go to tfl.gov.uk/style-guide for the most recent version. If you would like more copies, email publishing@tfl.gov.uk

A-Z of style rules

able-bodied	Do not use this term See also disability
abbreviations/ acronyms	<p>Spell out on first mention in body text, including the abbreviation or acronym in brackets. Use upper case for all abbreviations and acronyms (except TfL and the Met): LU; BBC; RMT</p> <p>After the first mention, always use the abbreviation or acronym: United Nations (UN). If the possessive is used, the abbreviation must also be possessive in the first mention: Transport for London's (TfL's)</p> <p>If a term is only used once in a document, you don't need to include the abbreviation afterwards</p> <p>Do not use full stops or include spaces between initials: TfL; BBC; mph; eg; No 10; WH Smith etc</p> <p>Use 'm' (for millions) and 'bn' (for billions) for sums of money and measurable quantities: £10bn; 1bn litres of water. However, spell out for people and countable nouns: three billion commuters; 10 billion tickets</p> <p>Use lower case for standard measurements: kg; km; lb; mph but use upper case for KB; GB; MB</p> <p>Exception Spell out metres to prevent confusion with abbreviation for million</p>

abbreviations/ acronyms (continued)	<p>Do not include a space between the number and the unit: 20km; 50kph; 100KB</p> <p>Never add an 's' to measurements: 20km, not 20kms</p> <p>Use lower case for ie and eg. Avoid using these where possible. Use 'that is' or 'for example' instead</p> <p>Online rule There are a few recognisable acronyms that we do not always spell out in full in the first mention. These include TfL, DLR, DVLA and BBC</p>
accents	<p>On words commonly accepted as English, use only when they make a difference to pronunciation: cliché, exposé</p> <p>Foreign words should be given their accents</p>
accessibility	<p>The ease with which all passengers can gain access to our services</p> <p>See also disabled access</p> <p>Online rule Specify whether you are referring to 'transport accessibility' or 'website accessibility' in every case</p>
active voice	Avoid the passive voice. 'A hit B' describes the event more concisely than 'B was hit by A'
additional space	Should only be used when referring to a new feature, for example more space on new trains

addresses	Always write out addresses as follows: Transport for London Windsor House 42-50 Victoria Street London SW1H 0TL See also contact details and phone numbers
adult-rate	Include a hyphen when using adjectivally: I need to buy an adult-rate ticket
adult-rate annual Travelcard (Gold Card) holder	It is also acceptable to use Gold Card holder
adult-rate season ticket	
adult-rate Travelcard	
adverbs	Do not use a hyphen after adverbs ending with 'ly': rapidly growing economy, carefully crafted answer
adviser	Not advisor
aeroplane	Not airplane
age	under-XXs (n): under-16s under XX (adj): if you are under 16 over-XXs (n): over-60s over XX (adj): if you are over 60 XX-years-old See also older people and youngsters

Americanisms	Favour British spelling and phrases: programme, not program (except for computer programs); realise, not realize; centre, not center. The only exception is proper nouns: World Trade Center; US Defense Department
among	Not amongst
ampersand (&)	Use only when included as part of a proper name: Hammersmith & City line; Waterloo & City line; Elephant & Castle station Do not use as an abbreviation in titles or text, except in page titles on our website Online rule We use the ampersand in headings that appear in site navigation. We never use the ampersand in text unless it is a recognised title/brand such as Hammersmith & Fulham, Marks & Spencer
an	'An' precedes any word beginning with a vowel and any word beginning with an 'h' if the 'h' is silent, so 'a hotel' but 'an honour'
Android Pay	
anticipate	Does not mean 'expect'. If you 'expect' to have a busy day, you can 'anticipate' it by getting up early
antisocial	Not anti-social
Anytime Day Travelcard	Replaces Day Travelcard (Peak)

Apple Pay	
Apprentice Oyster photocard	
Art on the Underground	Formerly 'Platform for Art'
Asian communities	Use when referring to Chinese, Far East Asian, Indian, Japanese and Pakistani communities. If referring to an individual, it should be used as an adjective, not a noun: an Asian woman, not an Asian; Asian people, not Asians See also race and ethnicity
ATM	Do not use. Refer to cashpoint instead
Auto top-up	

bank holiday	Always use lower case Use only when referring specifically to bank holidays, otherwise use the more general term 'public holiday' See also public holiday
benefit	Benefitted/benefiting Not benefitted/benefitting
billion	Use 'bn' for sums of money and measurable quantities: £10bn; 1bn litres of water Do not include a space between the number and the unit: £1bn; £20bn Spell out for people and countable nouns: three billion commuters; 10 billion tickets See also numbers
bio-diesel	Not biodiesel
bisexual	See also sexuality
black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME)	Spell out whenever space allows, rather than using BAME See also race and ethnicity
black cab	Use 'taxi' instead Black cab can be referred to at the first mention of 'taxi' if it is helpful to readers: we license taxi (black cab) services in London

blind	<p>This term implies total sight loss. Consider using visually-impaired person/ customers etc if referring to people with some sight loss</p> <p>It is acceptable to use specific terms such as blind or partially sighted if it is relevant to the topic</p> <p>See also disability</p>
Blue Badge holders	
board	Use lower case unless referring to a named board: BBC Board members
borough	Use lower case unless referring to a specific (named) borough: London boroughs; the London Borough of Brent
Borough Spending Plans (BSPs)	Do not use. Now the Local Implementation Plans (LIPS)

brand names	<p>Our products and brands should follow this style guide to ensure consistency: Oyster card, not Oystercard; Congestion Charge, not Congestion charge</p> <p>For other brands, do not use design or typographical elements that, in effect, turn a name or brand into a logo. This is to prevent confusion, especially for visually impaired readers</p> <p>Do not use the ©, ® or ™ symbols unless legally required to</p> <p>However in print and online, where a recognised brand name includes a capital letter in the middle or a lowercase at the beginning, we usually retain those styles. For example, LinkedIn, YouTube and easyJet</p>
Bridge	Generally upper case when referring to a specific bridge
British Transport Police (BTP)	<p>Like 'police', the BTP should be treated as a collective noun and followed by a plural verb: the BTP are not the BTP is</p> <p>See also police</p>
bulleted lists	Start each point with a capital letter but do not use any punctuation at the end (not even at the end of the final point)
Bus & Tram Pass	Not Bus Pass

buses	Use lower case when referring to buses as a mode of transport: London's buses also accept Travelcards See also London Buses
Bus Pass	Do not use. Refer to Bus & Tram Pass
bus Saver	No longer issued except for corporate sales
bus station	Use lower case: Finsbury Park bus station; Edmonton bus station
business	Use lower case unless referring to a named organisation or firm: we support the business; the Small Business Bureau
Byelaws	

©	Do not use the © symbol unless legally required to
cab	In most cases 'taxi' should be used instead. 'Cab' must not be used when referring to private hire services. Normally 'taxis' and 'private hire services' should be listed separately. However, in some cases 'cab' can be used as a generic term to cover both taxi and private hire services This will normally be when referring to minicabs rather than all private hire services (for example 'don't risk taking an illegal cab', 'illegal cabs are unsafe')
capacity	The volume of services we are able to run or the amount of room available for customers. When referring to increases, be specific about what is being boosted (for example the number of trains or space for additional passengers)
Capital	Use 'Capital' (with an upper case C) when referring to London Use lower case when referring to other capital cities See also London
capital letters	Avoid where possible as it is more difficult to read and can imply shouting
CCTV	
central London	See London
check before you travel	Phrase used to encourage checking for disruption before travelling

Child photocard	Only issued for National Rail Our photocards issued to under-16s are 5-10 Zip Oyster photocard and 11-15 Zip Oyster photocard
child-rate season ticket	Not child rate season ticket (without hyphen)
child-rate Travelcard	Not child rate Travelcard (without hyphen)
City of London	Upper case when referring to the central area of London/Square Mile
closed-circuit television (CCTV)	
collective nouns	Treat as singular, except staff and police: the committee has but the staff are; the police want A pair and a couple are both plural
colons	Use lower case after a colon unless the words are a quote or a proper name Use instead of a dash to introduce a list Never use colon and dash together (:-)
commas	Use sparingly. There is no need for commas within addresses (23 Tooley Street) or dates (4 June 2018).
Commission for Racial Equality (CRE)	Do not use. Now the Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

committee	Use lower case unless referring to a named committee: Transport Committee for London
companies/ organisations	Always treat as singular: 'TfL is' not 'TfL' are' See also abbreviations/acronyms and brand names
compass points	Use lower case except when including as part of a proper noun: north; east; south; west but South East England See also London
Conditions of Carriage	
Congestion Charge/ Charging	Use upper case except when using charge or charging on their own: pay the charge online; when you enter the charging zone Online rule Use Congestion Charge not Congestion Charging. For example: Congestion Charge scheme, Congestion Charge zone However it is acceptable to refer to the charging zone
Congestion Charge Auto Pay	
Congestion Charging scheme	Use lower case when referring to 'the scheme' on its own
Congestion Charging zone	Use lower case when referring to the zone on its own: people living within the zone are eligible for a discount

contact details	<p>See addresses and phone numbers</p> <p>Online rule Order your contact points as below (your list may only include some of these):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search our common questions • [Link to specific contact form if available] • Email address ('Email:') • Phone ('Phone:') • Fax ('Fax:') • Postal address ('Address:' or 'Post:') <p>The layout on the page should follow this format:</p> <p>Label in bold, colon, details on one line except for Address/Post, where it will follow the usual address style and start on the next line</p> <p>For example:</p> <p>Guild of Registered Tourist Guides Email: guild@blue-badge.org.uk Phone: 020 7403 1115 Fax: 020 7378 1705 Address: Guild House 52d Borough High Street London SE1 1XN</p>
contactless	Not Contactless

contractions	Contractions – such as 'don't', 'isn't' or 'can't' – can be used sparingly to make communications more friendly and less corporate. However, don't use them to such an extent that your text appears sloppy or rude
cooperate/ cooperation	Not co-operate/co-operation
coordinate/ coordination	Not co-ordinate/co-ordination
costs	Refer to 'costs' within our organisation where possible rather than 'spend'
Countdown	
Crossrail	Not Cross Rail or Cross rail
customers	Refer to customers rather than passengers
Cycle Superhighways	<p>Write out in full when possible. It is acceptable to refer to 'Superhighways' in longer documents to avoid repetition</p> <p>The scheme should always be referred to as safer rather than safe</p> <p>Online rule You don't need to add the colon and full route in every reference, particularly if it breaks character limits in heading</p>

dates

Day, month, year, in that order, with no commas: 1 December; 1 January 2018; Sunday 1 January 2018; 01/01/18

Do not abbreviate days or months if there is space for them to be written out in full

If necessary, abbreviate days and months to three letters (exception: Thursday – use five letters)

Do not use 1st, 2nd, 3rd etc

Do not add spaces on either side of hyphens when listing inclusive dates: 11-15 April, 2017-2018, 10 May-10 June

A forward slash is used when listing years in reports or titles: 2017/18

Don't use the full second year, so 2017-18, not 2017-2018

Use hyphens for longer periods: 2017-21

Use commas for non-consecutive years: 2017, 2019, 2021 and 2023

Note: no spaces on either side of the forward slash

If abbreviating individual dates, also use forward slashes: 01/12; 01/12/17 not 01-12; 01-12-17

dates

(continued)

Do not use an apostrophe for decades, except when using the possessive form: the station opened in the 1960s but it is a 1960s' station

See also **plurals** and **possessives**

Online rule

Always include the year as it isn't always obvious online

09:00-17:00, Monday to Friday (put different days on a new line, don't separate with a comma)

When space is an issue, such as in tables and publication titles, you can use truncated months: Jan, Feb, Mar, Aug, Oct, Nov, Dec

Don't use 'quarter' for dates; use the months, for example: '[dept] expenses, Jan to Mar 2017'

daytime

But night-time

Day Travelcard (Peak)**Day Travelcard (Off-Peak)**

deaf	<p>This term implies total hearing loss. Consider using hearing-impaired people/ customers etc as it is a more inclusive term. However, it is acceptable to use the term ‘deaf’ or ‘hard of hearing’ if it is relevant to the topic or if referring to the deaf community as a whole</p> <p>The deaf and hard of hearing community should be identified separately from the disabled community: disabled and deaf communities</p> <p>See also disability and hearing-impaired</p>
departments	Use upper case for named departments: Corporate Finance; Group Communications
departure boards	Live information showing next train time at specific stations
dependent	The word ‘dependent’ is an adjective meaning reliant on or supported by. Not to be confused with the noun ‘dependant’ which refers to a person who is reliant on someone else (usually a child or spouse)
de-train	
Dial-a-Ride	<p>Now London Dial-a-Ride. Write out in full on first mention. It is acceptable to refer to Dial-a-Ride in longer documents to avoid repetition. Do not refer to DaR</p> <p>Online rule Refer to Dial-a-Ride not London Dial-a-Ride</p>

disability	<p>Use positive language about disability, avoiding outdated terms that stereotype or stigmatise. Do not use ‘handicapped’ or ‘wheelchair-bound’ and avoid referring to people as nouns (eg ‘the disabled’) or as suffering from, or afflicted by, a condition</p> <p>It is preferable to use ‘xxx’ people rather than people with ‘xxx’: disabled people (not people with disabilities); hearing-impaired customers; visually-impaired users; wheelchair user; people with learning difficulties; mobility-impaired customers</p> <p>It is acceptable to use specific terms, such as blind, deaf or partially sighted if it is relevant to the topic</p> <p>However, whenever possible, it is preferable to describe the barriers that disabled people experience rather than impairments linked to a person’s medical condition: hearing-impaired passengers or people who use our services who may experience communication barriers; customers who experience communication barriers; passengers who experience physical barriers</p> <p>This can also include people with luggage, pushchairs, bulky items or similar</p> <p>The deaf community should be identified separately from the disabled community: the disabled and deaf communities</p> <p>See also able-bodied, blind and deaf</p>
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Dd

disabled access	Use this term when referring to disabled accessibility, as ‘accessibility’ has a wider meaning. See also accessibility
disabled person’s Freedom Pass	
Disability Rights Commission (DRC)	Do not use. Now the Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)
discount-rate ticket	
disruptions	Interruption to normal weekday or weekend services as a result of improvement work or other incidents
DLR	It is acceptable to use DLR in all instances
double-deck bus	
draft documents	When drafting documents, use Arial, 12pt with 1.5 line spacing for ease of readability and making amendments
DVLA	Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency; not normally necessary to spell out

Ee

11-15 Zip Oyster photocard	Refer to 11-15 Zip Oyster photocard on first mention. After that, it can be shortened to Oyster photocard or Zip Oyster photocard
18+ Student Oyster photocard	
Earl’s Court station	The Tube station has an apostrophe
Earls Court	The area doesn’t have an apostrophe
earn your travel back	
eastbound	
East End of London	See London
east London	See London
eg	Not e.g. See also abbreviations/acronyms
elderly	Refer to older people rather than elderly people
eLearning	
Elephant & Castle station	The Tube station has an ampersand (&)
Elephant and Castle	The area doesn’t have an ampersand (&) Online rule Use the ampersand (&) for both station and area

Elizabeth line	The Elizabeth line is the service that will open through London from December 2018. The service, route, trains and stations are or will fall under the term Elizabeth line Only mention Crossrail when referring to the company Crossrail Limited or the Crossrail construction work
email	Not e-mail Always give the full email address when providing a hyperlink For example, 'email: enquiries@tflcroydon.co.uk' not 'email: Red routes'
Emissions Surcharge	Use T-Charge on first mention
emphasis	Do not use capital letters or italics to emphasise text
employees	Refer to our 'employees', 'colleagues' or 'teams' rather than 'staff'
Emirates Air Line	Sponsored by Emirates Airline
endorsement	We cannot be seen to endorse external companies/suppliers

equality and inclusion	See individual entries: able-bodied; black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME); blind; deaf; disability; gender; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT+) community; older people; race and ethnicity; sexuality; transgender/trans
Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)	EOC/DRE/CRE have all been amalgamated
Equality Act 2010	Replaced most of the contents of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)
Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs)	As a public body, we have a duty to demonstrate that we have taken into account the needs of all groups covered by the Equality Act 2010. An EqIA allows us to demonstrate how this has been taken into account
Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC)	Do not use. Now the Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)
etc	Avoid using when possible
ethnicity/ethnic group	See race and ethnicity
external suppliers	We cannot be seen to endorse external companies/suppliers

5-10 Zip Oyster photocard	It can be shortened to Oyster photocard or Zip Oyster photocard after the first mention
factsheet	one word
faith and belief	Use 'people of faith', 'people of belief' or 'faith communities' when referring to groups of people with a shared faith or belief. Do not use the term 'religious communities' as this has a different meaning and refers to organised religious communities (eg monastic communities) It is acceptable to be specific if it is relevant: a Sikh temple; a Muslim festival
FAQs	Acceptable abbreviation for frequently asked questions Avoid the common error of adding an apostrophe: (FAQ's) Online rule <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We don't use FAQs on our website. There are three main reasons for this: • Generally, we find FAQs duplicate other content on the site • You can't front-load FAQs so we are not helping usability • You could unnecessarily add to search results with duplicate, competing text <p>Content should not be in FAQs form if there is another, appropriate format. If you have genuine FAQs, they should be added to the Help & contact database</p>

fare payers	Not farepayers (but taxpayers)
fax numbers	Use 020 XXXX XXXX
fewer	'Fewer' is used for countable nouns and means smaller in number: fewer coins; fewer passengers; fewer tickets Do not confuse with less, which is used with singular nouns or quantity: less money; less time; less fat
figures	Never start a sentence or title with a figure. If a sentence or title begins with a number, it must be spelt out See also numbers
find out more	Use 'find out more' or 'for more information'. Do not use 'for further information'
fire service	Use lower case unless referring to a named brigade: the fire service has been called; a letter from the London Fire Brigade
First Class ticket	

first person

Use 'we', 'us' or 'our' rather than 'TfL' as it's more personal. Write as if you 'are' TfL.

In most cases we use 'we' to mean TfL and 'you' to mean the user. In some circumstances, such as terms and conditions, we use the third person for clarity – for example 'TfL and its subsidiaries'

Online rule

We use first person descriptions for personalisation, particularly on transactional buttons, so:

- Find a station near me
- Show me where I am on this map
- My account
- My profile
- Plan my journey (not plan your journey)

It is acceptable to use second person when you are giving instructions in text. For example, 'You can pay the Congestion Charge in a number of ways. It's quickest and easiest if you register for a customer account online'

flyover

Generally lower case

focus

Focuses/focused/focusing

Not focusses/focussed/focussing

Freedom Pass

Use upper case when referring to the Freedom Pass in text

See also **disabled person's Freedom Pass** and **older person's Freedom Pass**

frontline

Not front line, when referring to employees

fuel cell bus**full stops**

Do not use full stops after word contractions, titles or Latin abbreviations, such as Dr, Mr, Ltd, am, pm or eg

Online rule

Standard Teaser text should not end in a full stop

For text links within copy, use a full stop at the end of the sentence, even if the sentence ends in a link (do not link the full stop)

Page description for metadata should not have a full stop

funding

Refer to our 'income' where possible rather than 'funding'

Games	See London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games
gay	See sexuality
GB	Acceptable abbreviation for gigabyte. Do not include a space between the number and the measurement: 2GB
gender	Use gender-neutral language where possible, only including references to gender where necessary. Refer to 'they' rather than 'he/she', 'everyone' not 'ladies and gentlemen', 'people' not 'mankind', 'chairperson' or 'chair' not 'chairman' or 'chairwoman', 'workforce' not 'manpower', 'staffed' not 'manned'. See also sexuality and transgender/trans
GLA Group	Not GLA group
Gold Card holder	It is also acceptable to use adult-rate annual Travelcard (Gold Card) holder

government	Use upper case only when referring to a specific government: we work with the Government. Use lower case when referring to local government or when using in an adjectival context: government expenditure; government funding
Greater London	See also London
Greater London Authority (GLA)	
Green Line coaches	
Greenways	
group	Use upper case only when referring to a named group: the TfL Group
Group Day ticket	
Group Travel ticket	
gyratory	Generally lower case

handheld	
headings	See titles of sections/sub-headings etc
hearing-impaired	See also disability and deaf
Heathrow Express	
Help Point	
Hopper fare	Allows bus and tram passengers to make two journeys for the price of one within an hour
hyphens	<p>Use hyphens to form compound adjectives (blue-chip company, father-in-law). Do not use hyphens after adverbs ending in 'ly'</p> <p>Hyphens are most often missed when they link two adjectives together. If the two adjectives only make sense together (because one describes the other), then they need to be hyphenated. For example: the strategy was discussed with borough-based, community-led organisations.</p>

iBus	
ie	Not i.e. See also abbreviations/acronyms
income	Refer to our 'income' where possible rather than 'funding'
inner London	See also London
intelligent transport system (ITS)	
interchange	Use lower case: Vauxhall Cross interchange; strategic interchange
internet	Not Internet
into	Is one word but 'on to' are two separate words
intranet	Not Intranet
-ise endings	Use 'ise', not 'ize': emphasise, realise (not emphasize, realize). The only exceptions are capsized and proper nouns (for example, company names)
italics	Do not use italics in print or on our website
iTrace	

Jam Cams	Acceptable term to use when referring to the traffic cameras that observe and report live traffic congestion on major roads
job titles	<p>Use upper case when referring to a specific role or named person: the Managing Director; Joe Bloggs, Press Officer</p> <p>Use lower case if writing generally: service assistants, station managers</p> <p>When quoting a named individual, no comma is required if referring to a person by title: Prime Minister Theresa May said: '...'. However, commas must be used to separate a descriptive title: Theresa May, Prime Minister, said: '...'</p> <p>Online rule Use lower case wherever possible (still capitalise at the start of a sentence or bullet). Although there may be certain exceptions, generally when there is only one holder of the particular office, such as Mayor of London, Commissioner or Queen</p>
Journey Planner	Our travel tool that assists real-time route-planning across our network

KB	Acceptable abbreviation for kilobyte. Do not include a space between the number and the measurement: 120KB
kilometres	Refer to km instead of miles where possible See also abbreviations/acronyms



learnt	Past tense and past participle of learn. Do not use learned unless using as an adjective
lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT+) community	The '+' serves to include all other associated communities
less	'Less' is used with singular nouns and quantities: less money; less time; less fat Do not confuse with fewer, which is used with countable nouns and means smaller in number: fewer coins; fewer passengers; fewer tickets
level access	A route from street to train that doesn't require the use of stairs or escalators See also step-free access
licence	Noun: you will need a licence
license/d	Verb/adj: a body authorised to license drivers; he is a licensed driver
Limited/Ltd	Can usually be dropped from company names (except for legal documents and similar)
line	Use lower case when referring to Tube lines: Hammersmith & City line; Northern line

lists	Do not add a comma before 'and' at the end of a sequence unless one of the items includes another 'and': we ate oranges, apples and bananas but we ordered chocolate cake, cheese and biscuits, and ice cream Semi-colons can be used to clarify meaning and separate items listed in a catalogue-type sentence: Refurbishment works will include new lighting at the station entrance and on the platforms; new escalators at the North Lane and South Way entrances; and the instalment of CCTV cameras See also bulleted lists
live travel news	Our travel tool that shows live and planned service disruption Where possible, refer to 'live' instead of 'realtime'
Local Implementation Plans (LIPs)	
local season ticket	Do not use
log in/login	Do not use. 'Sign in' is preferred

London	<p>Use upper case for Greater London; the East End and West End of London. Use lower case for central inner/outer London; north/south/east/west London; northeast/southwest London etc</p> <p>Use upper case when referring to London and the South East or London and the North</p> <p>See also Capital</p>
London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games	<p>Refer to as the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the 2012 Games or the Games</p>
London Buses	<p>Do not use 'Buses' (on its own) when referring to London Buses, our subsidiary responsible for overseeing contracts with private bus operators</p> <p>See also buses</p>
London Dial-a-Ride	<p>Formerly Dial-a-Ride. Write out in full on first mention. It is acceptable to refer to Dial-a-Ride in longer documents to avoid repetition. Do not refer to DaR</p> <p>Online rule Use Dial-a-Ride, not London Dial-a-Ride</p>

London Overground	<p>Use 'London Overground'. Do not refer to as 'Overground'</p> <p>'North London line is now 'Richmond/Clapham Junction – Stratford'</p> <p>'West London line' is now 'Willesden Junction – Clapham Junction'</p> <p>'DC line/Watford Euston DC' is now 'Watford Junction – Euston'</p> <p>'Gospel Oak to Barking (GOB)' is now 'Gospel Oak – Barking'</p> <p>'East London line' is now 'Dalston/Highbury & Islington – West Croydon/Crystal Palace/New Cross'</p> <p>All directional references should be referred to as the destination they are travelling towards, for example the 'Richmond/Clapham Junction – Stratford' can be referred to as the 'London Overground to Richmond', the London Overground to Clapham Junction' or the 'London Overground to Stratford'</p> <p>Do not abbreviate to LO</p>
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London River Services (LRS)

London Service Permits (LSPs)

London Taxi and Private Hire (LTPH)	Formerly the Public Carriage Office (PCO).
London Trams	
London Transport Museum	Not London's Transport Museum
longer-period Travelcard	Do not use. However, there are some instances when references are made to longer period Travelcard season tickets See also season ticket
Low Emission Zone (LEZ)	

Mayor of London	Use 'Mayor' (with capital M) on second mention
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)	MOPAC has replaced the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA)
MB	Acceptable abbreviation for megabyte. Do not include a space between the number and the measurement: 2.2MB
measurements	Use lower case for standard measurements: kg; km; mph; kph but use upper case for KB; GB; MB Spell out metres to prevent confusion with abbreviation for millions Do not include a space between the number and the unit: 20km; 50mph; 100KB Never add an 's' to measurements: 20km, not 20kms
meet, met	Not meet with or met with
meet the manager events	Local events staffed by operational/head office employees to publicise planned improvements/closures
metres	Write out in full to prevent confusion with millions
Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA)	Do not use. Now the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)

Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)	Do not refer to the Metropolitan Police or the Met Service Like 'police', the Metropolitan Police Service should be treated as a collective noun and followed by a plural verb: the Met are not the Met is
Mike Brown MVO	When mentioning the Commissioner of Transport always refer to Mike Brown MVO
miles	Refer to kilometres (km) instead of miles if possible. If referring to miles is unavoidable, spell out in full where possible to prevent confusion
million	Use 'm' for sums of money and measurable quantities: £10m, 1m litres of water Do not include a space between the number and the unit: £1m; 20m Spell out million for people and countable nouns: three million commuters, 10 million tickets See also numbers
minicab	Not mini-cab or mini cab Use 'private hire vehicle' unless referring specifically to a minicab or minicab service. 'Minicab' can be used at the first mention of private hire vehicles if it is helpful to readers: all private hire vehicles (including minicabs) are licensed by us See also private hire vehicles

Mini-Hollands	
mobile travel alerts	Our travel tool that passengers subscribe to which provides daily text message alerts in the event of disruption on their route
money	When referring to round sums of money, do not add '.00': £3, not £3.00; £10, not £10.00 Use 'm' and 'bn' for sums of money and measurable quantities: £10bn; 1bn litres of water. However, spell out for people and countable nouns: three billion commuters; 10 billion tickets Do not include a space between the number and the unit: £20m; £10bn See also numbers
more accessible	An improvement to an asset that makes it easier for customers to use See also accessibility and disabled access
more than	Use 'more than' rather than 'over' when referring to a quantity. For example, more than one billion passenger journeys are made on the Tube each year

names	Use upper case for named departments, initiatives, networks, organisations, projects and schemes: Group Services; London Bus Initiative; Low Emission Zone See also capital letters, job titles and titles of sections/sub-headings etc
National Rail	Use upper case in all instances
Network Railcard	
Night bus	Upper case for 'Night'
night-time	But daytime
Night Tube	Refer to 'the Night Tube'
none	How many companies are going to make a profit? None of them are When 'none' is meant to indicate 'not one', it is singular: none of them is bigger than any other
northbound	
northeast London	See also London
north London	See also London
numberplate	Not number plate

numbers	In body text, write out numbers from one to nine; use figures from 10 upwards Never start a sentence or title with a figure. If a sentence or title begins with a number, it must be spelt out. Numbers between twenty-one and ninety-nine, when written in words, should be hyphenated. This does not apply to sums of money: £5m a year Chapter/section headings do not need to be spelt out: Chapter 5; Section 2.1 Use 'm' and 'bn' for sums of money and measurable quantities: £10m, 1bn litres of water. However, spell out million and billion for people and countable nouns: three million commuters; 10 billion tickets Do not include a space between numbers and units: 20km not 20 km; £10bn not £10 bn Numbers larger than three figures require a comma: 1,000; 20,500 Decimals should be rounded to a maximum of two decimal spaces: 2.75 not 2.748
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numbers
(continued)

If there is a decimal point in a number, always use figures. For example, write 'five metres of track' but '5.3 metres'

Do not use an apostrophe when referring to decades or plurals as this makes them possessive: 1980s not 1980's; under-16s not under-16's

See **punctuation** in the **Using plain English** section

See also **dates, measurements, money** and **punctuation**

off-peak

Use lower case and include a hyphen when using adjectivally: an off-peak ticket

Use upper case and include a hyphen when using in conjunction with a product: Travelcard (Off-Peak)

older people

Refer to older people rather than elderly people

older person's Freedom Pass**Olympics**

Do not use

See also **London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games**

Olympic Family**Olympic Park****Olympic Route Network****Olympic Stadium****Olympic Village****ongoing**

Do not use. Use continuing instead

online

One word when referring to the internet or a website. Do not use 'on-line' or 'on line'

on to

But into

open data

Not Open Data or open-data

opt in/out

Verb: I would like to opt in

opt-in/out

Adjective: an opt-in clause

outer London	See also London
Overground	Do not use. Refer to 'London Overground' See also London Overground
Oyster card	
Oyster photocard	5-10 Zip Oyster photocard, 11-15 Zip Oyster photocard, 16+ Oyster photocard, 18+ Student Oyster photocard, 60+ London photocard and Veterans Concessionary Travel Scheme Oyster photocard are currently issued
Oyster Ticket Stop/s	

paragraph	Only use left aligned text (not fully justified)
Paralympic Games	
passengers	Refer to 'customers' rather than 'passengers'
pay as you go	Do not hyphenate and always use lower case Use 'credit' or 'balance' when referring to Oyster cards with a stored pay as you go balance. Do not use 'pay as you go travel value (cash)' or 'pay as you go cash value'
pay as you go credit	Use to describe Oyster cards with a stored cash value Do not use 'pay as you go travel value (cash)' or 'pay as you go cash value'
payband	
PDF	Accepted abbreviation for Portable Document Format When using online, include the file format and file size as part of the link to aid accessibility: Underground map (PDF 850KB)
Penalty Charge Notice (PCN)	

per cent	Two words. Do not use % except in tables or advertising copy (eg posters) Online rule Use the % symbol and do not write per cent in words. There is no space between the number and the symbol. For example, 1%, 5%, 10%, etc. Not five % or 5 %
Period	Use capital 'P' plus numerals (not spelt out) when referring to specific financial/ administrative periods, for example, Period 3. It is acceptable to abbreviate after first mention, for example P3
period ticket	Do not use. See season ticket
personal pronouns	Personal pronouns can be used to establish a conversational tone We are planning to invest £10bn over the next five years; If you would like more information, please contact us See also tone

phone numbers	Phone numbers should be split into at least three groups of digits for readability, ideally with no more than four digits in any single group. For example: 020 7378 1705; 0343 222 6666; 0762 480 4299 For phone numbers with international dialling codes, the convention is to write in this format: +44 (0)20 8216 6666. Only include numbers for dialling from overseas when message is directed specifically at an overseas audience Online rule If you have multiple phone numbers on the same page, you may want to asterisk each instance and refer to a line at the bottom of the page instead: *Find out about TfL call charges See also contact details
photocard	
PHV (private hire vehicle)	Write out in full on the first mention. Although usually used as an acronym for private hire vehicle(s), it can also be used to refer to the private hire industry in general, eg 'representatives from the PHV industry attended the meeting' Online rule Do not use except on pages addressing this specific audience. Even then, it must be written out in full on the first mention on each page

pink card reader	Use when referring to Oyster card readers Do not refer to validators
Planned works calendar	Our online tool (part of Live Travel News) that shows a six-month look ahead of planned closures
Platform for Art	Do not use. Now Art on the Underground
plurals	Avoid adding an apostrophe when making a word or abbreviation plural as this makes it possessive: under-16s not under-16's; DVDs not DVD's; 1990s not 1990's See also punctuation
police	Use lower case unless referring to a specific force: British Transport Police; call the police Police is a collective noun that is usually preceded by 'the' and followed by a plural verb: the police are not the police is

possessives	For proper nouns ending in '-s', add 's: St. James's Park Do not confuse with plurals, especially when referring to ages or decades: • under-16s (plural) • under-16's (possessive) Take care with plural nouns: use women's not womens'; children's not childrens'; people's not peoples' See also punctuation
practice	Noun: it is standard practice; piano practice
practise	Verb: he practises playing the piano every day; she is a practising doctor
Pre Pay	Do not use. See pay as you go
price capping	
private hire drivers	This term refers to drivers of all private hire vehicles, including minicabs, executive cars, limousines, chauffeur services and any other vehicle licensed for private hire use It does not include taxi (black cab) drivers
private hire vehicles	This term refers to minicabs, executive cars, limousines, chauffeur services and any other vehicle licensed for private hire use It does not include taxis (black cabs) See also black cab; taxi

Public Carriage Office (PCO)	Do not use. Now called London Taxi and Private Hire (LTPH)
purdah	Do not use. Refer to the pre-election period
Private Finance Initiative (PFI)	
public holiday	Always use lower case A public holiday can refer to any national holiday, including bank holidays See also bank holiday

Public Private Partnership (PPP)

punctuation	<p>Apostrophe (')</p> <p>Can be used to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show the omission of letters: we'll (we will); don't (do not); it's (it is or it has) • Show possession: Singular: place the apostrophe before the 's' to show possession by one person/body: the Mayor's decision; the company's history
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punctuation (continued)

Plural: place the apostrophe after the 's' to show possession by more than one person/body: the teachers' room; the directors' decision

The possessive form of 'it' is its, not it's:
The cat licked its paw

A common error is to form the plural of a noun by adding 's' to the singular form eg: a dozen DVD's; several Tube's. This is wrong and should be avoided as it makes the word possessive

Comma (,)

Can be used to:

- Indicate a short pause: having finished the newspaper, I sat down to work
- Separate listed items: he ordered apples, oranges, grapes and mangoes. A comma is not required before 'and' at the end of a list unless one of the listed items includes another 'and': we ordered chocolate cake, cheese and biscuits, and ice cream
- Separate clauses: the boy, who hated my sister, was very rude
- Separate a series of adjectives: a long, rambling, pompous letter
- Prevent confusion. Compare:
Paul hit Harry, and George then ran away
Paul hit Harry and George, then ran away

punctuation
(continued)**Colon (:)**

Can be used to:

- Introduce a list
- Introduce a quote: Mr Smith said: 'I don't like beetroot'

Use lower case after a colon unless the following words are a quote, question or proper name

Dash (–)

Can be used to:

- Separate an explanatory or related comment: the union members agreed to the new terms – even the shortened lunch breaks – but said that if their holiday pay was affected they would walk out
- Emphasise a point or indicate a change of thought: what he said was true – or so I thought

Full stop (.)

It is no longer used after abbreviations, so use Mr not Mr. and eg not e.g.

punctuation
(continued)**Hyphen (-)**

Can be used to:

- Create compound nouns: father-in-law
- Link compound adjectives: blue-chip company, up-to-the-minute news
- Prevent confusion. Compare:
The station has no smoking areas (ie there are no areas where smoking is allowed)

The station has no-smoking areas (ie there are designated areas where smoking is allowed)

- Differentiate between verbs and nouns:
set up (v): please set up a meeting
set-up (n): it was a set-up

Semi-colon (;)

Can be used to:

- Separate items in a list if the elements within it already include commas: members of the band include Ben Jefferson, singer; Tony Williams, drummer; Edward Ellis, trumpeter
- Separate two independent thoughts that would otherwise be linked by a word such as 'and' or 'but': a heart attack is a medical emergency; prompt care is required

quantities See **money; numbers**

Quietway

quotation marks Use single quotation marks in all cases
Use double quotation marks if using a quote within a quote
If a quote runs on longer than one paragraph, include quotation marks at the beginning of each subsequent paragraph but only at the end of the final paragraph
Place full stops and commas inside quotes when they are complete sentences, otherwise place them outside: 'I want to buy a ticket,' said Mr Smith; When he said 'I promise', he didn't really mean it

® Do not use the ® symbol unless legally required to

race and ethnicity Include references to race only when it is relevant. The words 'black' and 'Asian' should not be used as nouns, but adjectives: 'black people' rather than 'blacks'; an 'Asian woman' rather than an 'Asian', for example. However, it is acceptable to be specific if it is relevant: local Somalian community; Bangladeshi community leaders

See also **black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME)**

real time/ realtime Where possible, refer to 'live' instead of 'realtime'. Real time (noun): this information is being updated in real time
realtime (adj): realtime service information

red route Not Red Route

reduced journey times The reduction in the time taken to complete an average journey as a result of upgrade work. Should only be used when referring to a specific change, for example greater reliability/capacity/more trains on the system per hour. Should only be used in a general sense (such as a benefit of Tube improvements) rather than in reference to a specific journey (as passengers are unlikely to experience a noticeable difference)

reduce overcrowding	Alleviating crowding and congestion at stations and on trains, for example when referring to increased capacity
reduced service	Where we offer a service that is noticeably less than normal (could apply to train frequency or escalators/lifts in operation)
refurbish	To renovate or restore
reliability	Consistency of maintaining a good service
relive	Not re-live
re-open	Not reopen
re-route	
Road Modernisation Plan	
roadworks	
roundabout	Generally lower case
Routemaster	

7 Day Travelcard	
16+ Zip Oyster photocard	'Zip' can be removed after the first mention
16-17 Oyster photocard	This term should no longer be used. Use 16+ Zip Oyster photocard instead
St. James's Park station	
Santander Cycles	<p>Must be written in full and capitalised on first mention. After that, 'cycle hire scheme' and 'scheme' is acceptable</p> <p>Santander Cycles is singular. Use 'Santander Cycles is...'; not 'Santander Cycles are...'</p> <p>Docking station is the collective name for a terminal and the row of docking points within Zone 1</p> <p>Docking point is the device that allows a user to dock/undock a cycle</p> <p>Terminal is the device at each docking station that allows a user to hire a cycle</p>
schemes	Use lower case unless the word 'scheme' is included as part of a title: Fleet Automated Scheme
-ise endings	Use 'ise' instead of 'ize': emphasise, realise (not emphasize, realize). The only exceptions are capsized and proper nouns (such as company names)
seasons	Lower case: spring; summer; autumn; winter

season ticket	Previously 'period ticket'. Refers to any ticket valid for seven days, one month or a longer period up to one year
sentence spacing	Use a single space between sentences as double spaces make text more difficult to read
service guide	Use lower case unless referring to a named document: a range of service guides is available; the Riverboat Spring/Summer Service Guide is out next week
sexuality	<p>Include references to sexuality only when it is essential. The words 'gay', 'bisexual' and 'transgender' should not be used as nouns, but adjectives: 'gay people' rather than 'gays'; a 'bisexual man' rather than a 'bisexual'. The term 'lesbian' is an exception as it can be used as a noun or adjective</p> <p>Note: do not use the term 'homosexual'. Use the term 'gay' instead: a gay man or lesbian</p> <p>See also gender; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT+) community; transgender/trans</p>
short-distance season ticket	Do not use. Refer to Point-to-Point season ticket instead

sign in	<p>Online rule</p> <p>We use sign in, not log in. For example, 'Sign in to my account' (not log in or login, not sign into)</p> <p>When the account has not yet been set up, we use 'Sign up' or 'Create an account'</p>
single-deck	
60+ London Oyster photocard	
small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)	
smartcard	
smartphone	
South East	When referring to London and the South East of the country
south London	See also London
southbound	
southwest London	See also London
spacing	<p>Use only a single letter space to separate sentences.</p> <p>In both print and online, do not add extra spaces either side of a forward slash. For example, April/May not April / May</p>
speech marks	See quotation marks

spend	Refer to 'costs' within our organisation where possible rather than 'spend'
staff	Do not use. Refer to employees, colleagues or teams
stakeholders	Avoid using this term where possible
station	Use lower case for Tube, bus and DLR stations: Marble Arch station. However, it is often not always necessary to use the word 'station' at all: the Northern line is suspended between Euston and Waterloo See also interchange
step-free	A route between street and platform that doesn't require the use of stairs or escalators See also level access

step-free access	Use when referring to either step-free or level access but include context to prevent misunderstanding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step-free access to platform/s • Step-free access to train/s • Step-free access to platform/s and train/s
Strategic Road Network (SRN)	
strategy	Use lower case unless the word 'strategy' is included as part of a title: Integrated Transport Strategy
Student Oyster photocard	Do not use. Refer to 18+ Student Oyster photocard
Student-rate Bus & Tram Pass	Available to holders of an 18+ Student Oyster photocard
Student-rate Travelcard	Available to holders of an 18+ Student Oyster photocard
Superhighways	See Cycle Superhighways
Surface Transport	

24-hour	Include a hyphen when using as an adjective: 24-hour travel, 24-hour alert, 24-hour service
target	Targeted/targeting. Not targetted/targetting
taxi	Use only when referring to licensed taxis (black cabs) This term must not be used when referring to private hire services or vehicles, including minicabs See also black cab; minicab; private hire vehicles; London Taxi and Private Hire (LTPH)
Taxicard	
T-Charge	
terms and conditions	Not Terms and Conditions or terms & conditions Online rule In navigation use terms & conditions, in text use terms and conditions

telephone numbers	Phone numbers should be split into at least three groups of digits for readability, ideally with no more than four digits in any single group. For example: 020 7378 1705; 0343 222 6666; 0762 480 4299 For phone numbers with international dialling codes, the convention is to write in this format: +44 (0)20 8216 6666. Only include numbers for dialling from overseas when the message is directed specifically at an overseas audience Online rule If you have multiple phone numbers on the same page, you may want to asterisk each instance and refer to a line at the bottom of the page instead: *Find out about TfL call charges See also contact details
terms and conditions	Not Terms and Conditions or terms & conditions Online rule In navigation use terms & conditions. In text use terms and conditions
TfL Group	Not TfL group
TfL Pension Fund	Use 'Fund' (upper case F) on second reference

TfL Road Network (TLRN)

that/which	Generally, 'that' defines while 'which' informs: this is the house that Jack built; this house, which Jack built, is now falling down See also which
the Night Tube	
third person	Use 'we', 'us' or 'our' rather than 'TfL' as it's more personal. Write as if you 'are' TfL
Ticket Stop/s	No longer used. All have been converted to Oyster Ticket Stop/s
ticket office	
time	Use the 24-hour clock in all circumstances (unless legally required to use the 12-hour clock): 08:00; 12:15; 00:01
titles of sections/sub-headings etc	Use upper case for the first letter of the first word and proper nouns only; Finance and Planning induction pack not Finance and Planning Induction Pack
™	Do not use the ™ symbol unless legally required to

tone of voice

Every journey a customer makes matters to them – so it should matter to us. This comes across in the words we use and how we use them

It's important to strike a balance between a tone that is authoritative and formal, and one that is friendly and engaging. If we get it right, we're an understanding organisation that values our audiences and provides accurate, relevant information in the way people want it, when they want it. Get it wrong, and we run the risk of confusing and alienating them

Personal

Your communications should adopt a tone that shows we care about improving people's experiences on our network

Make sure it sounds like it comes from an individual, not an anonymous organisation

Write as if you are speaking

All correspondence, for both internal and external audiences, should be in the first person rather than the third person. For example, 'we', 'our' or 'us' rather than 'TfL', 'our services' rather than 'TfL services'

Clear

It's important that we speak in the same language as our customers so they understand what we're saying; never use jargon or technical terms

**tone of voice
(continued)****Honest**

When writing about issues that affect our customers, such as improvement work disrupting services, show that we recognise the inconvenience caused and give people the information and advice they need to continue their journeys. Be open, honest and factual. Similarly, when writing about consultations, for example, show that we care about people's views

Lively

If we're celebrating our successes, write in an upbeat and engaging style that grabs people's attention

**touch in/
touch out****touchscreen ticket
machine**

trade names See **brand names**

tram Use lower case when referring to trams as a mode of transport: children can travel free on trams

tram stop

**Transforming the Tube/
Transforming your Tube** Do not use

**transgender/
trans**

Do not use 'transsexual'. Instead, refer to transgender people as trans

See also **gender; sexuality**

**Transport for
London (TfL)**

Never TfL (with italicised f)

Spell out in full on first mention in body text, including the abbreviation TfL in brackets. For all subsequent mentions, it is acceptable to use the abbreviation

Use 'we' rather than 'TfL' where possible as it's more personal

The abbreviation may be used in document and section headings

We can be described as London's integrated transport authority. We are also a functional body of the Greater London Authority. Do not describe us as a government body or authority

Online rule

Use TfL. It is not necessary to spell out in full on the first mention. It may be written in full if there is space and it adds clarity

**Transport for
London Road
Network (TLRN)**

Transport Policing and Enforcement Directorate (TPED) Do not use. Now Community, Safety, Enforcement and Policy (CSEP)

Travel Assistance Scheme	
TravelBot	One of our social media travel tools
Travelcard	
Travel Information Centre (TIC)	Do not use. Now Visitor Centre
travel support card	Not Travel Support card
Trixi mirrors	Blind spot safety mirrors to help improve the visibility of cyclists to HGV drivers at left turns
Tube	'The Tube' (with a capital T) is acceptable colloquial shorthand for the London Underground
Tube improvement plan	Do not use. Refer to Tube improvements
Tube upgrade plan	Do not use. Refer to Tube improvements
Tunnel	Generally upper case when referring to a specific tunnel
Twitter feeds	

Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ)

Underground	'The Underground' (with a capital U) is acceptable colloquial shorthand for London Underground See also Tube
under-14s	Requires a hyphen in all cases. This is true whenever referring to age-groups: under-14s; under-18s; over-60s Avoid adding an apostrophe when making a word or abbreviation plural as this makes it possessive: under-16s not under-16's See also plurals
Under-14 Oyster photocard	No longer issued. The current schemes are 5-10 Zip Oyster photocard and 11-15 Zip Oyster photocard
URL	Accepted abbreviation for 'uniform resource locator'. It refers to the web address of a particular page See also website addresses

validator	Do not use when referring to Oyster card readers. Use yellow card reader or pink card reader instead
variable message signs (VMS)	
Victoria Coach Station (VCS)	
Visitor Oyster card	
visually-impaired	See also disability and blind

war(s)	Avoid mentioning wars in communications where possible. For example, rather than referring to 'post World War II' instead write 'since the late 1940s' or 'for generations'
web	Lower case
website	Not web-site or web site

website addresses

Referring to our website: When hyperlinking to our website in the body text of electronic documents don't include the www. You can instead write tfl.gov.uk/roads and insert the full hyperlink (<https://tfl.gov.uk/campaign/our-plan-for-londons-roads?cid=roads>) behind it

Referring to other websites: When referring to the address of a specific web page (including a site's homepage) in body text, write out the full address, but do not include <http://> unless the address begins with something other than www: www.london.gov.uk but <http://thesaurus.reference.com>

Only use single forward slashes within the link text (tfl.gov.uk/roads). Note that some addresses (tfl.gov.uk/modes/buses/) require an additional forward slash at the end to work

Online rule

When including web addresses as links on web pages, use descriptive text or the title of the site, not the full web address:

- ♦ The TfL website not <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/>
- ♦ The GOV.UK website not <https://www.gov.uk/>

If linking to an external site, you should include the word 'website' in the link. For example: 'Book a guide on the Guide London website', not 'Book a guide from Guide London'

weekend closures email

Our travel tool that passengers subscribe to which provides a weekly email detailing planned service disruption affecting the coming weekend's travel

westbound**West End of London**

See also **London**

west London

See also **London**

which

Generally, 'that' defines while 'which' informs: this is the house that Jack built; this house, which Jack built, is now falling down

As a general rule, use 'which' for descriptive clauses and place it between commas: the station, which has been closed for a year, will re-open on Monday

while

Not whilst

WiFi

Not wi-fi or Wi-Fi

work/life balance

years	<p>A forward slash can be used when listing years in reports or titles: 2015/16 (no spaces on either side of hyphen or forward slash)</p> <p>Do not use an apostrophe for decades unless they are possessive: the 1960s; a 1960s' station</p> <p>See also dates, numbers and plurals</p>
yellow card reader	<p>Use when referring to Oyster card readers</p> <p>Do not use validator</p>
youngsters	<p>Refer to young people rather than youngsters</p>

-ize endings	<p>Use 'ise', not 'ize': emphasise, realise (not emphasize, realize). The only exceptions are capsize and proper nouns (eg company names)</p>
Zip	<p>Collective term for 5-10, 11-15 and 16+ Zip Oyster photocard</p>
Zone/s	<p>Use upper case only when referring to specific zones: Zones 1-3, the station is in Zone 3. Use lower case if writing generally: single-zone tickets; two zones</p> <p>See also Congestion Charging zone and Low Emission Zone</p>

Using
plain
English

Principles

Writing in plain English doesn't mean over-simplifying your message or patronising your readers. It means using everyday words in place of jargon to help readers understand your message quickly and more easily.

Principles:

- Try to keep sentences no longer than 20-25 words
- Include only one main idea in each paragraph
- Establish a conversational tone by imagining you are speaking to someone
- Use 'we', 'us' or 'our' rather than 'TfL' as it's more personal. Write it as if you 'are' TfL
- Avoid jargon, acronyms and impersonal corporate language (See **Plain English: Jargon and legalese**)
- Use simple words rather than their longer equivalent: 'if' not 'in the event that' (See **Plain English: Superfluous words and phrases**)
- Don't try to include every single detail – only write what readers need to know
- Write in the active, not passive voice. 'A hit B' is more direct than 'B was hit by A'
- Use bullets to break up text and make information more accessible
- Keep your readers in mind. Remember, if you're bored or confused by what you've written, they probably will be too

Accessibility for print

Type size

Use a minimum of 12pt for all printed documents

Type styles

Avoid using italics or all capital letters as these make it more difficult for visually impaired readers to recognise word shape. Also, avoid underlining to prevent confusion with hyperlinks

Reverse type

If using white or coloured type, make sure the background colour is dark enough to provide sufficient contrast

Text alignment

Text should be left aligned. Avoid justifying text as irregular word spacing can make it more difficult to read

Sentence spacing

Use a single space at the beginning of sentences as double spaces make text more difficult to read

Line length

The ideal line length is between 60-70 characters (except when using columns)

Hyphens and split words

Splitting words over lines should be avoided as it disrupts the reading flow and can be confusing

Navigational aids

Leave a space between paragraphs and sections as dividing the text up gives the eye a break and makes reading easier

Contrast

The better the contrast between the background and the text, the more legible the text will be. Black text on a white background provides the best contrast

Images

Avoid placing text over images as it can be both easy to miss and difficult to read

Basics of good writing

The fundamental elements of good writing are traditionally taught to journalists but, in fact, are valuable to anyone.

Good advice

George Orwell, in an essay on journalistic style, once offered this advice:

- Never use a metaphor, simile or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print
- Never use a long word where a short word will do
- If it is possible to cut out a word, always cut it out
- Never use the passive where you can use the active
- Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent

Orwell's advice was given in 1946 but it is as relevant to communicators today.

Getting the message across

Whatever the information – whether news or not – and whoever the intended audience – internal or external – our best chance of conveying it successfully lies in keeping it clear, simple and concise.

Always bear in mind: your readers don't have to read it. If it is confusing, over-complicated or just too long and boring, the readers will quickly turn to something else.

Know your audience

The first questions before you start must be:

- Who are the target readers?
- What do we need to tell them?
- What will they want to know?
- What do they already know (and therefore what else do we need to add)?

When writing for internal audiences, refer to the tone of voice guidelines on Source.

Structuring the message

Journalists talk about news 'stories' – so called because they are constructed to interest the readers rather than presented as an unstructured list of facts. Trainees are sometimes advised to tell the story just as they might to friends in the pub. This means they start by grabbing attention with the most important facts – the point of the story – before substantiating it with more detail, observations and background information.

There are plenty of ways to write a news story but the most common approach is:

1. Assert
2. Substantiate
3. Attribute

In other words: state the facts; expand and explain; support with quoted/reported speech (comment) and background information.

This is often described as the news (or inverted) pyramid. It simply means the biggest, most important facts of the story appear at the top. The rest of the details then follow in descending order of importance.

The advantage of this approach is that it helps the readers to understand what the story is about straight away. They can then read on if they are interested or move on to something else if not.

The pyramid generally works well for most kinds of written communication.

Important questions

A useful guide before you start writing is to ask yourself these six basic questions: who, what, when, where, how and why.

These are the questions your readers will want answered.

- What is this about?
- Who is responsible/involved?
- Where and when is this happening?
- Why is it being done?
- And how?

To make your introduction as interesting as possible, the opening sentence should:

- Start with the main point
- Grab attention
- Be short, crisp and concise (not vague or cryptic)

Dos and don'ts and other observations

- Write the piece, then return to the intro. Can you improve it?
Can you write a title/headline from it?
- Read and re-read as you go. If you read it aloud, awkward words or disjointed sentences will become clear
- With longer messages, prepare and plan before you start writing
- Have you answered the six basic questions?
- Get someone else to check the piece when it is finished. It's no good relying on proofreading your own work – you are likely to miss your own mistakes

Simplicity is the key to understanding. Short words in short sentences get your message across more quickly, more easily and in a friendlier way.

Jargon and legalese

However, some legal terms have specific legal meanings/ implications that may be lost if replaced with plain English alternatives. If you have any questions about the use of legal terms, contact TfL Legal.

accede	agree, allow
accordingly	so
accustomed to	used to
ad hoc	informal, unplanned
additional	more, extra
assist, assistance	help
attain	reach
attempt	try
cease	stop, end
commence	start, begin
component	part
concerning	about
consequently	so
constitute	make up, form
defer	postpone
determine	decide
discontinue	stop
enable	allow, permit

endeavour	try
establish	set up, create, find out
et al	and the others, the rest
expire/expiration	end
generate	make
henceforth	from now on
initially	at first
manufacture	make
notify	tell
numerous	many
obtain	get, receive
per annum	a year
possesses	has, owns
purchase	buy
regarding	about, on
request	ask
subsequently	later
terminate	end, stop
utilise	use
verify	check, prove

Superfluous words and phrases

Another way of saving time and avoiding confusion is by discarding unnecessary words. Information can often be made simpler – and less corporate – if words that either add nothing or mean the same thing are replaced with simpler alternatives:

a large proportion of	many
appropriate measures	measures, steps
at this moment in time	now
by virtue of the fact that	because
close scrutiny	scrutiny
despite the fact that	although, despite
for the duration of	during, while
for the purpose of	to
future plans	plans
in accordance with	as, in line with
in conjunction with	and, with
in the event that	if
in order to	to
in the majority of	most, usually
on account of the fact that	because
on behalf of	for
revert back	revert
the fact that	that
was of the opinion that	thought
with the exception of	except

Frequently misused words

Words that sound very similar can mean very different things. Here is a list of frequently misused words. If you are not confident about their meaning, look them up or use an alternative.

affect	effect
alternate	alternative
appraise	advise
biannual	biennial
complementary	complimentary
continual	continuous
dependent	dependant
disinterested	uninterested
distinctive	distinguished
enquiry	inquiry
explicit	implicit
flounder	founder
flout	flaunt
fortuitous	fortunate

inflammable	inflammatory
licence	license
loathe	loathe
luxuriant	luxurious
meter	metre
peddle	pedal
practice	practise
practical	practicable
principle	principal
refute	rebut
regretful	regrettable
resistant	resilient
stationary	stationery
systematic	systemic

Writing for online

People visit our website to get something done or to answer a question – they are task oriented. They are also impatient and will leave a page quickly if they can't see at a glance what they are looking for or don't understand it.

Don't waste time with long introductions. Be direct and specific in what you need to tell people. Put the most important information at the top of the page and only include information that is essential. Use short paragraphs, clear headlines, bulleted lists and words and phrases people are likely to search for.

Longer pages should include an 'on this page' menu to help readers scan the page, get an overview and find what they are looking for quickly (or decide the page is not what they are looking for).

Mobile first

We've designed our website to work on most devices whatever their size because an increasing number of people are using our site on a mobile. Our aim is to make the most important information visible on the first screen.

Useful books and websites

There are many books and websites on using English. The following list includes some of the most helpful and accessible. It also includes useful reference guides, including dictionaries, encyclopaedias, maps and conversion calculators.

AskOxford: Compact Oxford English Dictionary and online guide to better writing

www.askoxford.com

Encyclopaedia Britannica

www.britannica.com

Maps and directions

www.maps.google.co.uk

Metric conversion calculator

www.metric-conversions.org/conversion-calculators.htm

OneLook Dictionaries: Provides online access to several hundred dictionaries

www.onelook.com

Online currency converter

www.xe.com/currencyconverter

Plain English Campaign

www.plainenglish.co.uk

The Economist Style Guide

www.economist.com/research/StyleGuide/introduction

Also published by The Economist Books, London, 2003

The Guardian stylebook

www.guardian.co.uk/styleguide

Also published by Guardian books, 2004

The New Fowler's Modern English Usage

www.bartleby.com/116/

Also published by RW Burchfield, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 2004

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