



AISP style guide for publications

Premise

The AISP Style Guide is designed to provide guidance to authors writing works for publication by AISP as articles in *CURSORES*, Review or as books. It aims to ensure that all its publications conform to a consistent AISP house style and reinforce the AISP as brand signifying high quality philatelic research.

This Guide does not tell you how to write. It describes how a publication, article or review on philatelic scholarship should be put together and be useful to its readers and reflects best practice in writing any scholarly research.

All this translates into a few simple rules to be observed, and it is important to know under what conditions and with what reservations articles are published in 'Cursores', as listed below:

- the article must not be submitted to another journal at the same time;
- must be sent to the Editor-in-Chief and will be submitted to the 'Editorial Committee', which will assess it and may request a reworking of the text. If this is not accepted by the author, the publication of the article in 'Cursores' may be jeopardised, and the author may be forced to withdraw his article. In this case, he may propose it for publication to other journals;
- 'Cursores' publishes unpublished articles; however, the 'Editorial Board' may consider articles already published in foreign journals, if they are of such importance and scientific rigour as to merit republication;
- 'Cursores' has a six-monthly cadence, so several months may pass between the acceptance of the article and its publication;
- the articles of 'Cursores' are published under the responsibility of their authors;
- total or partial reproduction of the texts and illustrations (except for legal citations) is subject to the prior authorisation of the author and the editor of 'Cursores'.

Two copies of the journal in which the article is published will be provided to the author.

1. Preparing your manuscript

The text – general

Assuming that your submission is in electronic form, it is necessary to produce and submit it preferably in the following order:

1. Microsoft Word document.
2. Any other Windows compatible format.

Whichever program you use, please use the following facilities on your computer:

- Set up your computer dictionary default to British English: i.e. English (UK), or International English.
- Do not use the Arial Narrow typeface in any part of your manuscript, for technical and copyright reasons.
- If footnotes are used, please ensure a non-breaking space is used before the number or do not have a space. Otherwise, the number may be pushed to the next line if it is at the end of a line:

Footnote[non-breaking space]¹

Tables

Tables should be included within the text as part of a normal word-processing document or provided as a separate spreadsheet file. The preferred spreadsheet format is Microsoft Excel. They may also be inserted as images.



Illustrations

Illustrations should be scanned in CMYK (cyan, magenta, yellow, and key (black) colour at 300 dpi and saved as .tif files. They should be included within the text as part of a normal word-processing document. Alternative file formats can be accepted, but please advise us beforehand. Some will provide slightly lower quality than others, e.g. .jpg (JPEG), which is acceptable but provides a lower quality of reproduction. Before being scanned, the letters must be removed from any protective envelopes and/or holders, and the scan must have a white border of at least 2 cm. on all four sides. Individual images must also be sent as separate files.

Each illustration must be clearly identified by an appropriate file title. A figure number and short caption must be included with each illustration. The figure number should be by chapter and sequential number within the chapter (Fig. 1.1, Fig. 1.2, etc).

If you are using illustrations belonging to another person, you must ensure that you have his/her permission to use that illustration in your book. It is always the author's responsibility to obtain copyright permissions from third parties and pay any fees required. You should also acknowledge the owner of the illustration in your caption.

Editing

The Editor may edit the script, for readability and to avoid repetition or format problems. Minor changes to the text to ensure conformity to the RPSL house style instructions and to correct spelling and punctuation will normally be made without reference to the author.

References

- AISP require full bibliographic information to be provided for all references.
- Use footnotes if needed. At the end of the book a list of the references should be provided in the following form:

Primary sources, consisting of laws, decrees, circulars, government documents including official notices, inter-departmental correspondence and so on:

name of place of storage title of document, archive, name of fonds, number (if possible) of document or sheet for a register, archive in which it is stored.

Example: Paris, Archives Nationales (A.N.), *Délibération du Conseil de la Ferme générale des Postes du 29 juin 1764*, F90 20.002 f° 97.

Secondary sources: consisting of articles, periodicals, books and internet sites consulted to write the publication. In the case of consulting Internet sites, **avoid Wikipedia**: it does not indicate scientific rigour in study and research.

Books: full name and surname of the author, exact title of the work (in italics), place of publication, name of the publisher, date of publication and, if applicable, indication of the pages used. If it is a manuscript or a rare work: place of conservation and catalogue number.

Example: Pierre Jaccottey, *Traité de législation et d'exploitation postale*, Paris, Paul Dupont, 1891, pages 222-226;

Magazines: first and last name of the author, title, name (not abbreviated) of the periodical, number, year, volume and indication of pages used.

Example: Eugène Vaillé, *La Surintendance générale des postes*, Bulletin d'Information de Documentation et de Statistiques (BIDS) n° 11, 1935

Own studies and research: the author's publications (articles and/or books) on the subject. Give references as indicated above, depending on whether it is a book or an article.

Internet sites: title, URL, date of consultation must be indicated (as the text may change).

Example: Naval History and Heritage Command - <https://www.history.navy.mil/> (July 25th, 2024)



Check the text for consistency

Please check your text for consistency. In particular, please check that:

- All bullet points are ended with a full stop.
- Where you have used brackets, they are consistent: (such as), not (such as], (such as), (such as), (such as).
- All captions are ended with a full stop.
- Abbreviations are used correctly (see 2.1 below).
- Remove any spaces before commas and full stops, e.g. Nearly the end , but not quite. The end .

2. Stylistic rules

Capitalisation

Generally, do not use a capital letter unless essential, e.g. with proper names. For book titles, capitalize the first word and all subsequent words except articles (a/an/the), prepositions (to/on/for etc) and conjunctions (but/and/or etc). Use 'Post Office' with capitals for the organisation, but without capitals for a particular post office (e.g. *The Austrian Post Office issues stamps...* but *there is a transit mark of the Liverpool post office*).

Please note that:

- the points of the compass do not have upper-case letters except in the names of countries and territories, e.g. *North Borneo*, but *north of Australia*.
- military ranks should only have a capital letter if they relate to a specific individual, e.g. *a major in the Royal Marines*, *Major R Johnson of the Royal Marines*.
- Seasons of the year do not have a capital letter: *summer*, not *Summer*.

Names

- Use italics for book and magazine titles without any quotation marks (e.g. *Cursores, 1867 – 1870 Da Mentana a Porta Pia*) and for the names of ships, trains and aircraft: *the Colombo*, *the Pharamond*, *the Concorde*.
- When an acronym appears before a ship name (HMS, RMS, SS, MV) it should be in upright capitals without full stops: *HMS Dragon*, *RMS Queen Mary*.
- For a philatelic mark, use whatever it says.

Numbers

- Spell out whole-number words for one to ten; use figures for numbers above ten.
- Spell out words for 'first', 'second', up to and including 'tenth'; use numbers and 'st'/'th' etc, as appropriate, for larger numbers.
- Use figures for percentages, measurements and currency, and commas in large numbers – for example 20%, £25.75, and 10,560,027; use commas for thousands. A million is 1,000,000, and a billion is 1,000,000,000.
- When using ranges, avoid using forms such as 67-9, 1993-95 or 1993-5, which must instead be written 67-69, 1993-1995. Numbers representing single words (e.g. 10-19) should be given in full. Avoid common mistakes such as using 2-3.000 when 2.000-3.000 is intended.
- Avoid Roman numerals unless this is traditional historical usage: Alphabet 2, not II. Roman numerals are difficult to interpret when large numbers, and readers may not understand how they work. This does not apply to monarchs (e.g. King Vittorio Emanuele III).



Times and dates

- For times, use either the 12- or 24-hour clock, but not both. Please note that the 12-hour clock uses a colon between the hour and minute (e.g. 6:30 a.m. *colon, space, stops*). Using a point instead of a colon would imply a decimal value. Do not use 'am' or 'pm' with 24-hour clock.
- For dates, use day/month/year format. The day (number only, no 'th' or preceding 'the') always precedes the month. The year should be specified in full: 1956 not 56. Months are not to be abbreviated except in tables. February 2th, 1955 is correct; the 2 February 1955 and 02 February 1955 are incorrect, except when quoting dates of postmarks, extracts of letter etc.
- Date ranges should be expressed using the words 'from' and 'to': from 6 to 8 May not from 6-8 May. There are two exceptions to this general rule:
 - in tables where the month can be shortened to the first three letters, and
 - when quoting, for example, "the postmark reads 6.5.40".
- Decades are either given in numerals with a plural s without an apostrophe or in words with an initial capital: 1890s not 1890's, and Twenties not twenties.
- A number that is the first word of a sentence is always spelled out: Fifteen not 15.

Weights and measures

- Weights and measures should be given in metric units unless you are quoting historical information. For example, the size of a postmark will be given in millimetres.
- Units should be abbreviated as follows, always without full stops (except for inches, where a full stop should be used to avoid confusion with the word "in"):

gram g	ounce oz	pound (weight) lb
millimetre mm	inch in.	foot ft
- Unlike ordinary numbers, figures up to ten will be given in digits, not spelled out. One space should be present between the number and the unit. No 's' will be added for plurals: 15 mm not 15mm, 5 oz not 5ozs.

3. Punctuation

Apostrophe

- Use 's after singular nouns and plural nouns which do not end in s, as in John's collection. Use ' only after plural nouns ending in s.

Colon and semicolon

- Use a colon to introduce a clause that logically depends on and follows the preceding text, but not if the two parts of the sentence are not logically connected.
- Use a semicolon to link two related parts of a sentence if each part could stand alone as a complete sentence.

Comma

- Use commas to surround a non-defining word or phrase (which adds information but could be omitted without changing the meaning). Use a single comma if it begins the sentence: Thomas Tapling, the eminent philatelist, died in 1891. However, do not use a comma where a defining word or phrase begins a sentence: Eminent philatelist Thomas Tapling died in 1891.
- Do not use a comma to join two main clauses; use a semicolon or a word such as 'and' or 'but'.



Hyphens

- Use a hyphen in an adjectival phrase before (and sometimes after a noun):
the up-to-date list, acid-free.
- Only use a hyphen with prefixes to avoid confusion or mispronunciation, e.g. where the prefix itself or letters are repeated, e.g. *pre-eminent.*
- Use a hyphen before a proper name, number or date, e.g. *anti-capitalist.*
- Do not use a hyphen to create a new compound noun; if it is a recognisable concept, make it one word: *website, webpages, email*, not *e-mail*.
- In a sentence in which several commas have already been used and you want to highlight an incidental phrase.

Example: To facilitate trade relations, in addition to the granting of tariff concessions for the shipment of goods and parcels - very useful, these, and almost necessary contributions to the welfare of the population - the administration of the Kingdom adopted a series of measures

Quotation marks

- Use double quotation marks for quotations, except where whole paragraphs are set in indented italics. Use single quotation marks for a quotation within that.
- Quotation marks should be placed after a comma or full stop if referring to the whole phrase or sentence, but before if referring to the last word only.

Bold and italic text

- Use bold text to emphasise any part of your text that should stand out and be noted: a name, a date or other important information. Use bold text very sparingly.
- Use italics for a section of your text that is different from that surrounding it. Please note that:
 - the title of a book or journal should be in italics if it is a complete published work. An individual illustration, story or article within a publication should be in double quotation marks.
 - italics should be used for foreign words and phrases embedded within your text, including species and Latin phrases.

4. How and what to send once the article has been accepted

Once the Editorial Board has decided on the publication of the paper, the author must send large files to the Editor via Wetransfer or similar delivery systems:

-  A file with only the text in word of the article;
-  A file with only the text of the captions;
-  Single images files.

Milan, October 2025