

A publication of the
**National Wildfire
Coordinating Group**



NWCG Style Guide

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Introduction

This Style Guide exists to save time, reduce stress, and brand NWCG publications and documents with a professional, consistent look.

Refer to the NWCG Publication and Web Portal Management page, <https://www.nwcg.gov/publication-portal-management>, for complete guidance on publications development, revision, and technical considerations.

For help using Styles and other features of Word, or creating Section 508 Accessible documents, reference the *NWCG Guidelines for Creating Accessible Electronic Documents*, <https://www.nwcg.gov/notices#accessibility>.

For questions on proper form and style not included in this document, NWCG follows the U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO) Style Manual, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-STYLEMANUAL-2016/pdf/GPO-STYLEMANUAL-2016.pdf>.

NWCG General Style Guidance

Writing Style

Tone of Voice

- Informative – NWCG strives to instruct and inform by focusing on standards and qualifications needed to perform critical tasks in wildland fire operations. Information disseminated is accessible, of the highest quality, useful, and current.
- Confident – NWCG is committed to safe, effective, and coordinated wildland fire operations. Our brand embodies the mission of interagency collaboration, teamwork, honesty, and professionalism in complex and often high-stress environments.
- Effective – NWCG evaluates historical wildland fire events to identify patterns and improve processes in order to provide clear direction. Information should be factual, written in plain language, and not based on interpretation.
- Active – NWCG communicates in active voice to make information concise and clear, which keeps sentences from becoming too complicated or wordy. The active voice conveys energy, is straightforward, and is easy to read. Examples include:
 - *Passive voice:* The wildfire was contained overnight by the fire crew.
 - *Active voice:* The crew contained the wildfire overnight.
 - *Passive voice:* Additional aviation resources were ordered by the Incident Commander.
 - *Active voice:* The Incident Commander ordered additional aviation resources.

Capitalization

Always capitalize the following:

- Proper names (e.g., places, names)
- Names of specific positions or references to a position (e.g., Operations Section Chief)
- Derivations of proper names (e.g., Alaskan)
- Names of organized bodies (e.g., Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of Agriculture)
- Civil, professional, military titles when immediately following the person's name or used alone as a substitute (e.g., Colonel, Director, Project Manager)
- Names of specific positions (e.g., Division/Group Supervisor, Incident Commander)
- Named locations (e.g., Division A, Structure Protection Group, Branch X)
- The word "Tribal" or "Tribe"
- NWCG forms and plans (e.g., Incident Action Plan)
- Key meetings that are part of the incident planning process (e.g., the Planning Meeting of the Planning P)

Do not capitalize the following:

- Cardinal directions (e.g., north, south, northerly, northern) unless used in a proper name (e.g., Pacific Northwest Training Center)
- Non-named locations such as division/group when used generally (e.g., attend division/group briefing versus attend Division A briefing)
- The first letter after a hyphen if the sentence starts with a hyphenated word (e.g., Instructor-Led training)

Heading capitalization uses the following rules:

- Capitalize the first and last word (e.g., Build the Team).
- Capitalize nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, verbs, and helping verbs (e.g., Felling a Large Diameter Tree).
- Capitalize the first letter after a hyphen in title case (e.g., Ignition-Resistant Structures).
- Do *not* capitalize short prepositions, articles, or short coordinating conjunctions (e.g., the, of, and).

Note: Many terms used by the wildland fire community are capitalized only depending on usage—for example, “operations” is capitalized when referring to the Operations Section Chief, but not when discussing general firing operations.

Compound Adjectives

- Hyphenate compound phrases when they are used as adjectives but not when they are used as verbs. Examples include:
 - *Used as an adjective to describe a noun:* The intent of IPTM is to move learning to on-the-job training.
 - *Used as a verb:* On the job, it is expected that trainees will reference the Incident Position Standards.
 - *Used as an adjective to describe the process:* During the check-in process, list all crew member names.
 - *Used as a verb:* When checking in, list all crew member names.

Punctuation

- Use the Oxford comma.
- Type only one space between sentences.
- Spell out measurements. However, if abbreviations are needed, use an apostrophe (') for feet and a quotation for inches (").
- Avoid slashes (e.g., and/or).
- Use e.g., (exempli gratia [for example]) when providing examples. Use of i.e., (id est [that is]) should be used lightly and only when clarifying or restating a specific issue or topic.
- Avoid using etc. (et cetera [and other things or and so forth]).

- Use a comma or a semi-colon before a conjunctive adverb in the middle of a compound sentence and a comma after (e.g., The sky is blue, however, it is raining. Or, the sky is blue; however, it is raining). Whether using a comma or semi-colon, be consistent throughout a document.
- For nested parentheses, use parentheses for the outer set and brackets for the inner set (e.g., Single Engine Airtanker Manager [SEMG] or Amphibious Water Scooper Manager [AWSM]).

Acronyms

- Spell out acronyms the first time they are used. Then, use only the acronym for second and future mentions. Examples include Incident Action Plan (IAP) and Incident Management Team (IMT).
 - If the acronym is used in a heading later in the document (e.g., chapter, or section), spell out the acronym again and include the acronym (e.g., After Action Review [AAR])
- Phrases that have acronyms are typically capitalized (e.g., Position Task Book [PTB]).
- Define common acronyms even if only used once.
- Do *not* pluralize position acronyms. For example, say “HECM personnel” not “HECMs.”

Numerals

Numbers can be written as figures (e.g., 2) or words (e.g., two), using the following rules.

- Use a figure for numbers 10 or greater, unless the number is the first word of a sentence.
- If 2 or more numbers appear in a sentence and 1 of them is 10 or greater, use figures for all numbers (e.g., Division A needs 4 staple guns and 500 staples).
- Express time, money, percentages, and measurements as figures. This does not affect use of words for other numbers in the sentence (e.g., Five firefighters walked 50 miles).
- Use commas in numbers that are four digits or greater (e.g., 1,500 feet).

Time

- Choose one time format and be consistent throughout the entire document.
- Use 24-hour or military time, however, if ante meridiem (a.m.) or post meridiem (p.m.) indication is needed, use lower case letters (e.g., a.m. or p.m.) with a space after the numbers indicating time.
- For 24-hour time, use a colon (e.g., 12:30, 06:00).
- For military time, use a four-digit number with *no* colon and the word “hours” after the time (e.g., 0700 hours, 1605 hours).

Lists

- Do not use a single bullet point below a stem sentence. Instead, merge text with the stem sentence to make a full sentence.
- Use consistent punctuation within each list (punctuation can vary between lists in a document).
 - If any of the items in a list are a complete sentence, use periods at the end of all items.
 - Lists of items or short phrases do not require periods at the end of each item.
- Numbered lists (versus bulleted) should be used only when the list is identifying steps that must occur in succession, identifying prioritization, or similar. Otherwise, use bullets.
- For learning materials such as a PowerPoint presentation, PTBs, or asynchronous web-based training units:
 - Use at least three bulleted or numbered list items but not more than five, when possible.
 - Start with an active verb, when possible.
 - Include a stem sentence before beginning a bulleted or numbered list.
- Do not split bullet items across pages. Use “keep text with next” or orphan/window controls in Paragraph settings.

Other Style Notes

- Avoid using the same word multiple times in a sentence or paragraph.
- Do not reference other places in the document using text — such as “in the next module” or “on the previous page.” This is not Section 508 compliant.
 - **Exception:** Instructor Guides. It is acceptable to say, “in Unit X,” referencing the specific title of the unit rather than its location or number.
- Use “that” when you cannot remove the subsequent clause without changing the meaning of the sentence. Use “which” if you can remove the clause from the sentence (e.g., The dozer that has a broken track is in staging. The excavator, which is fully operational, is on the line.)
- Do not end a sentence in a preposition (e.g., at, by, for, in, of, on, per, to).

Citations

NWCG Products

Each entry should include end punctuation consistent with its grammatical context. Use a comma when the citation is used mid-sentence, and a period when the citation concludes a sentence.

- NWCG Publications:
Title (italicized), PMS number — e.g., *NWCG Standards for Aerial Ignition*, PMS 501
- Courses:
Course number, course title — e.g., S-190, Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior

- **WFSTAR Modules:**
Course number, course title (course acronym): module name — e.g., RT-130, Wildland Fire Safety Training Annual Refresher (WFSTAR): Grant West

Note: Second and future mentions of WFSTAR in a product or unit can be shortened to RT-130, WFSTAR: Module Name
- **ICS Forms:**
Form name (ICS number) — e.g., Activity Log (ICS 214)
- **GSA Forms (OF and SF forms):**
Form name, form designator (OF or SF) and number—e.g., Incident Time Report, OF 288; Emergency Equipment Shift Ticket, OF 297
- **Job Aids:**
Job aid number, *Title (italicized)*—e.g., J-212, *Felling Operations and Tree Analysis Job Aid*; J-004, *How to Correctly Fill Out the Emergency Equipment Shift Ticket, OF 297, (PSM-004)*

URLs

- When referencing a website, include the full URL upon *first* mention followed by the shortened phrase that will be used for future mentions.
 - *Correct:* Visit <https://www.nwcg.gov/publications> (NWCG Publications) for a full list of NWCG publications.
 - *Incorrect:* Visit the NWCG [website](#) for a full list of NWCG publications.
- If the URL is mentioned again, use the shortened phrase with a hyperlink to the URL (e.g., Visit the [NWCG Publications](#) catalog for a list of current publications).
- Link to the attributes page of an NWCG publication (<https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/pmsxxx>) not directly to the PDF.

Incident Position Names

Use the following convention for incident position names. Use official names as written in the *NWCG Standards for Wildland Fire Position Qualifications*, PMS 310-1.

- Incident position names are always capitalized.
- Capitalize incident position name and position type with no commas. Examples include:
 - Public Information Officer Type 3
 - Incident Commander Type 5
 - Incident Commander Complex
- Capitalize incident position name followed by the descriptor separated by a comma. Examples include:
 - Resource Advisor, Fireline
 - Helicopter Manager, Single Resource
- Only Firefighter Type 2 (Crewmember) and Firefighter Type 1 (Squad Boss) incident position names should include parentheses.

Glossary

Do *not* include a separate glossary. The *NWCG Glossary of Wildland Fire Terminology*, PMS 205, <https://www.nwcg.gov/glossary>, is the sole source for NWCG-approved terms.

Note: If you have an issue using the glossary, clear the web browser cache, then try again. If the issue continues, please notify the NWCG Webmaster.

Other Citations

Follow the [GPO Style Manual](#) for guidance on all other citations.

NWCG Document Creation

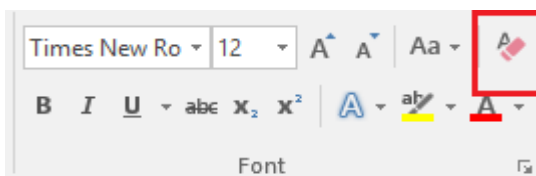
How to Use NWCG Templates

1. Read all instructions below.
2. Save the template as a new document. This will leave the template intact to reference later.
3. Avoid merging or pasting other document content into templates.
 - a. If pasting from another document, the best practice is to remove all formatting before copying or by pasting using the **Keep Text Only** paste option.

To Remove Styles

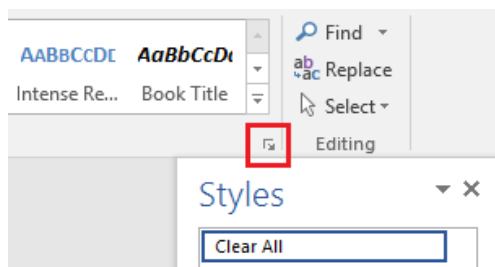
1. Create a copy of the original document.
2. Open the document copy, select all text (Ctrl +A), and select **Clear Formatting**. Set this document aside for now.

Figure 1. Clear Formatting Button in Font Group.



3. Working in the newly saved template document, delete all sections while retaining the title page through the Table of Contents and the final page. The document is now ready to type or paste content on the blank pages between the Table of Contents and the final page.
4. Next, open the **Styles Group** (click on the double-down arrow) and apply the correct Headings and Styles to the text.

Figure 2. Styles Panel in Styles Group.

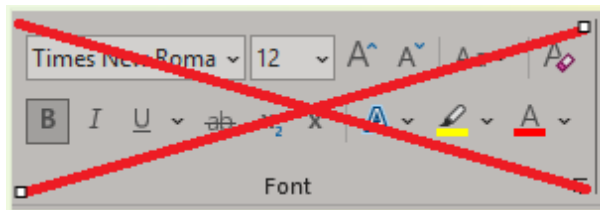


Styles

Use simplistic Styles to achieve accessibility for those using assistive technology and to create consistency of the layout, appearance, and readability for all users. Templates have very carefully set Styles. **Do not modify Styles or alter fonts, sizes, or positions.**

Use the Styles found in the Styles Group for Headings, Body Text, etc. A wide variety of Styles have been created and should be sufficient for any NWCG publication. If the existing options do not work for the publication under revision, contact the NWCG Publications Manager to address concerns and discuss options. Do *not* use the Font Group in the Home ribbon to edit the font style, size, or position, as this will affect the document's accessibility.

Figure 3. Avoid using the Font group and instead, use Styles.



Headings

Follow the numeric sequence below for Headings; do not skip heading styles. Headings enable the automatic creation of the Table of Contents (TOC), creates uniformity and consistency in the document, and assists with accessibility. Numbering or lettering can be applied to headings but should be avoided in small documents. If unfamiliar with the process to apply sequencing, seek assistance.

Chapter numbers will be assigned a heading style. Chapter numbers will use a number without a zero (e.g., Chapter 1 not Chapter 01).

For help using Styles and other features of Word, reference the *NWCG Guidelines for Creating Accessible Electronic Documents*, <https://www.nwcg.gov/notices#accessibility>. If for any reason the Headings in the **Styles** Group do not work, the following style guidance is provided:

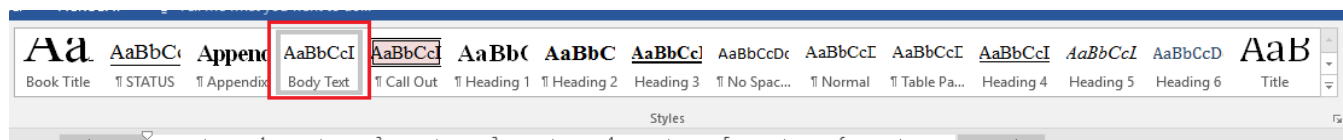
- Heading 1: Times New Roman, Size 28, Bold, Left aligned
- Heading 2: Times New Roman, Size 14, Bold, Left aligned
- Heading 3: Times New Roman, Size 12, Bold, Left aligned
- Heading 4: Times New Roman, Size 12, Underlined, Left aligned
- Heading 5: Times New Roman, Size 12 Italicized, Left aligned

Limit the use of Heading 5, as readers may lose their place when the hierarchy becomes too deep.

Body Text

Body text is also a set style. To use or return to a regular **Body Text**, select it from the **Styles** Group.

Figure 4. Body Text selection in Styles Group.

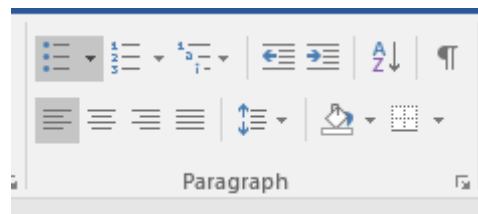


Lists

Four levels of bullet points are set in NWCG templates. To start a bulleted or numbered list, place the cursor on the line where the list will begin. Remember, only use numbered lists for successive processes or prioritized lists.

- Select the appropriate style (**List Bullet** or **List Number**) from the **Styles** Group to automatically begin at the first list level.
 - Use the increase and decrease indent buttons in the **Paragraph** group or the tab key to set a new level bullet.
 - Limit going beyond the third bullet.
 - ❖ Use the fourth bullet only if necessary.

Figure 5. Paragraph Group.



Only use automatic numbering when there are at least two ordered steps. Select **List Number** from the **Styles** Group. Remember, only use numbered lists for successive processes or prioritized lists.

Numbered lists follow this sequence:

1. Level one
 - a. Level two
 - i. Level three
 - (1) Level four

To convert existing document text to a list, select the text, and then select the appropriate list type (bulleted or numbered). Then, adjust the list levels with the tab key or the increase and decrease indent buttons in the Paragraph group.

Do not adjust bullet margins by using the indent features on the ruler. This can misalign the indents on other pages if not done carefully and will result in a disorganized looking document.

Special Features

Call Out Box

Use to highlight a particularly important section of information, to make a fact stand out, or to otherwise draw the reader's attention to something significant.

Do not overuse the call out box, as this will make it less important.

Quotes

Use the *Quote Style* to insert a quote.

Ensure the quote is properly attributed and permission has been given to use the quote. Do not edit a quote without the speaker's permission. If the speaker wishes to be anonymous, use an identifier such as "Firefighter A."

Use a single quote when an interior quote is inside the quote. Example:

"My instinct said, 'you've got to get up, and you've got to get out of here because it's too hot.' Then my training kicked in."

Figures and Tables

Use captions on all figures and tables. Images or photos are figures. Place caption above the item and include a period after the item number and at the end of the caption (see captions on this page). Align figures and tables and their captions to the center of the page.

A table summary describes how data is organized in a table. It is required if there is no title, if the table structure is complex, or if data is laid out in an unusual order. If a table is set up correctly and includes a sufficient caption or title, a table summary is not required.

Alternative Text is required on all images for accessibility, including images on cover pages. Indexes can be set after the document is complete. They do require individual linking of specific words and are time consuming, so use only if necessary.

All tables must have a header row. Avoid colored cells simply for color's sake — save for tables and charts where color is truly a necessary component, as in Risk Analysis or certain aircraft forms, and include a pattern for accessibility. Do not allow rows to break across pages. Do not insert images of tables.

Figure 6. Example of what a caption and image.



Table 1. Example of a table with a caption. A title could be used as well.

Name	Qualification	Phone Number
Joe Smith	CRWB, ICT3, DIVS	(123) 456-7890
Sue Doe	FFT1, HECM	(123) 456-7891
Bill Johnson	FFT1, EMTF	(123) 456-7892

For more detailed information on properly setting up tables, reference the Word or Excel chapters of *NWCG Guidelines for Creating Accessible Electronic Documents*:

<https://www.nwcg.gov/notices#accessibility>.

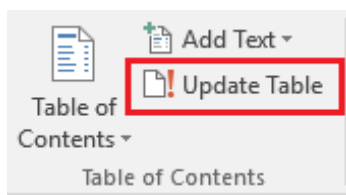
Updating the Table of Contents (TOC)

Do not type in or manually change the TOC.

When a document is finished and all text is formatted, graphics or tables are captioned, and styles are applied:

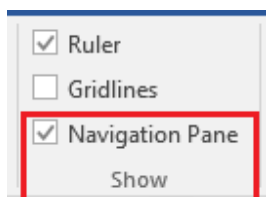
1. Go to the **References** ribbon. In the **Table of Contents Group**, select **Update Table**. Then, select **Update Entire Table** when prompted.

Figure 6. Update Table selection in Table of Contents Group.



2. Go to **View** ribbon and select the **Show Group** checkbox.

Figure 7. Navigation Pane selection in Show Group.



All the Headings listed in the TOC will be listed in the left-hand panel. If Headings are not visible or are out of place, go to that line of text in the document and make sure the correct style is selected.

Document Specific Guidelines

Draft Documents Style

Draft documents are indicated by adding “_DRAFT” to any of the below naming conventions.

NWCG Publications (PMS, PDFs)

Avoid spaces in filenames. Use underscores instead to support accessibility, consistent publication management, and compatibility across system and web platforms.

- PMS File Naming Convention: PMS position number_YearMonth
Example: PMS900_2026Jun.pdf
- File Properties:
 - Title: Full publication title (properly capitalized) and PMS number
 - Author: NWCG
 - Subject: Same as title
 - Keywords: Full publication title, PMS number, subcommittee (if applicable), and committee; separate each by comma and capitalize properly
- Note: Ensure alternative text is added to any cover photo(s).

Classic Position Task Books (PTB)

- PTB File Naming Convention: PMS311-position number_YearMonth_mnemonic acronym
Example: PMS311-17_2026Jun_AOBD.pdf
- File Properties:
 - Title: Full PTB title (properly capitalized) and PMS number
 - Author: NWCG
 - Subject: Same as title
 - Keywords: Full PTB title, PMS number, position mnemonic acronym(s), subcommittee (if applicable), and committee; separate each by comma and capitalize properly

Next Generation Position Task Books

- PTB File Naming Convention: PMS311-position number_YearMonth_mnemonic acronym
Example: PMS311-14_2025Jun_FFT1.pdf
- File Properties:
 - Title: Full PTB title (properly capitalized) and PMS number
 - Author: NWCG
 - Subject: Same as title
 - Keywords: Full PTB title, PMS number, position mnemonic acronym(s), subcommittee with acronym (if applicable), and committee with acronym; separate each by comma and capitalize properly
- Next Gen PTB Task Coding:
 - The Next Gen PTB allows the use of multiple codes indicating what situations determine a task evaluation, however, the following considerations must be made:
 - Separate multiple codes with slashes (e.g., W/S).

- Code Other (O) includes all situations and cannot be used with any other codes.
- Code Incident (I) includes Wildfire (W) and Prescribed fire (RX), so, these codes should not be used in conjunction.
- Be careful with the use of code Simulation (S) without any additional codes.
- Suggested code combinations:
 - W/RX
 - W/RX/S
 - I/S
 - R/S

Incident Position Standards (IPS)

- IPS File Naming Convention: PMS350-position number_YearMonth_mnemonic acronym
Example: PMS350-14_2025Jun_FFT1.pdf
- File Properties:
 - Title: Full IPS title (properly capitalized) and PMS number
 - Author: NWCG
 - Subject: Same as title
 - Keywords: Full IPS title, PMS number, position mnemonic(s), subcommittee with acronym (if applicable), and committee with acronym; separate each by comma and capitalize properly
- IPS numbers should use the same position number as the corresponding position PTB

Training Materials

- All training materials should follow applicable guidance contained in this Style Guide and should meet Section 508 accessibility requirements.

PowerPoint Slides

- PowerPoint File Naming Convention: course identifier-course number-unit number
Example: s-190-01.ppt
- File Properties:
 - Title: Course number, unit number, and full unit title (properly capitalized)
 - Author: NWCG
 - Subject: Same as title
 - Keywords: Course number, full course name, unit number and full unit title, subcommittee with acronym (if applicable), and committee with acronym; separate each by comma and capitalize properly
- Note: Ensure alternative text is added to the slide master for the cover image and first slide image in each PowerPoint file.

Instructor Guides

- Instructor Guide File Naming Convention: course identifier-course number_ig unit number
Example: s-190_ig01.pdf
- File Properties:
 - Title: Course number, unit number, and full unit title (properly capitalized)
 - Author: NWCG
 - Subject: Same as title
 - Keywords: Course number, full course name, unit number and full unit title, subcommittee with acronym (if applicable), and committee with acronym; separate each by comma and capitalize properly

Course Overview

- Instructor Guide Naming Convention: course identifier-course number-Course Overview
Example: s-190_CourseOverview.pdf
- File Properties:
 - Title: Course number, course overview (properly capitalized) (e.g., S-190 Course Overview)
 - Author: NWCG
 - Subject: Same as title
 - Keywords: Course number, full course name, course overview, subcommittee with acronym (if applicable), and committee with acronym; separate each by comma and capitalize properly

Combined Instructor Guide (Delivered with Test Course and Final Materials)

- Naming Convention: course identifier-course number-Instructor Guide
Example: m-280_InstructorGuide.pdf
- File Properties:
 - Title: Course number, instructor guide combined (properly capitalized) (e.g., M-280 Instructor Guide Combined)
 - Author: NWCG
 - Subject: Same as title
 - Keywords: Instructor guide, course number, full course name, combined, subcommittee with acronym (if applicable), and committee with acronym; separate each by comma and capitalize properly (e.g., Instructor Guide, M-280, Resource Advisor, Fireline, Combined, Resource Advisor Subcommittee [READSC], Interagency Fire Planning Committee [IFPC])

Handouts

- Handout File Naming Convention: course-identifier-course number_ho unit number_handout number
Example: s-190_ho01_1.pdf

- File Properties:
 - Title: Handout name, course number, and unit number (if applicable) (properly capitalized)
 - Author: NWCG
 - Subject: Same as title
 - Keywords: Handout name, course number, full course name, unit number and full unit title (if applicable), subcommittee with acronym (if applicable), and committee with acronym; separate each by comma and capitalize properly

Activity Packets

- Activity File Packet Naming Convention: course identifier-course number_ap unit number_activity packet number
Example: s-190_ap01_1.pdf
- File Properties:
 - Title: Activity packet, course number, and unit number (if applicable) (properly capitalized)
 - Author: NWCG
 - Subject: Same as title
 - Keywords: Activity packet, course number, full course name, unit number, and full unit title (if applicable), subcommittee with acronym (if applicable), and committee with acronym; separate each by comma and capitalize properly

Combined Activity Packet (Delivered with Test Course and Final Materials)

- Naming Convention: course identifier-course number-Activity Packet
Example: m-280_ActivityPacket.pdf
- File Properties:
 - Title: Course number, activity packet combined (properly capitalized) (e.g., M-280 Activity Packet Combined)
 - Author: NWCG
 - Subject: Same as title
 - Keywords: Activity packet, course number, full course name, combined, subcommittee with acronym (if applicable), and committee with acronym; separate each by comma and capitalize properly (e.g., Activity Packet, M-280, Resource Advisor, Fireline, Combined, Resource Advisor Subcommittee [READSC], Interagency Fire Planning Committee [IFPC])

Agenda

- Agenda Naming Convention: course identifier-course number_Agenda
Example: s-190_Agenda.pdf
- File Properties:
 - Title: Course number, agenda (properly capitalized)
 - Author: NWCG

- Subject: Same as title
- Keywords: Full agenda title, subcommittee with acronym (if applicable), and committee with acronym; separate each by comma and capitalize properly

Skill Assessment

- Skill Assessment Naming Convention: course identifier-course number_sa
Example: s-219_sa.pdf
- File Properties:
 - Title: Course number, skill assessment (properly capitalized) (e.g., S-219 Skill Assessment)
 - Author: NWCG
 - Subject: Same as title
 - Keywords: Skill assessment, course number, course title, subcommittee with acronym (if applicable) and committee with acronym; separate each by comma and capitalize properly

Exam (Final, Pre- or Post – Course, or Unit)

- Exam Naming Convention: course identifier-course number_exam type (final, pre- or post – course, or unit)
Example: s-219_Final Exam.pdf)
- File Properties:
 - Title: Course number, exam type (properly capitalized) (e.g., S-219 Final Exam)
 - Author: NWCG
 - Subject: Same as title
 - Keywords: Exam type, course number, course title, subcommittee with acronym (if applicable), and committee with acronym; separate each by comma and capitalize properly

Exam Key (Final, Pre- or Post – Course, or Unit)

- Exam Key Naming Convention: course identifier-course number_exam type (final, pre- or post – course, or unit) key
Example: s-219_Final Exam_Key.pdf
- File Properties:
 - Title: Course number, final exam key (properly capitalized) (e.g., S-219 Final Exam Key)
 - Author: NWCG
 - Subject: Same as title
 - Keywords: Exam type key, course number, course title, subcommittee with acronym (if applicable), and committee with acronym; separate each by comma and capitalize properly

Print List

- Print List Naming Convention: course identifier_print_list (e.g., S-212_print_list)
- Title: Course number, full course title (properly capitalized) Print List (e.g. S-420, Intermediate Incident Management Print List)
- Author: NWCG
- Subject: Same as title
- Keywords: Course number, full course name, print list, subcommittee with acronym (if applicable), committee with acronym; separate each by comma and capitalize properly

Job Aids

- Job Aid File Naming Convention: J-number_YearMonth
Example: J-001_2025Mar.pdf
- File Properties:
 - Title: J number, full job aid title (properly capitalized)
 - Author: NWCG
 - Subject: Same as title
 - Keywords: J number, full job aid title, position acronym(s), subcommittee (if applicable), and committee with acronym; separate each by comma and capitalize properly

NWCG Forms

- PMS File Naming Convention: PMS number_YearMonth
Example: PMS249_2026Mar.pdf
- File Properties:
 - Title: Full publication title (properly capitalized) and PMS number
 - Author: NWCG
 - Subject: Same as title
 - Keywords: Full publication title, PMS number, subcommittee with acronym (if applicable), and committee with acronym; separate each by comma and capitalize properly
- Format:
 - Footer: left align the PMS number, date in parentheses (MM/YY), and NFES (if applicable); right align the URL to attributes page

ICS Forms

- ICS Form File Naming Convention: ICS number_WF_YearMonth
Example: ICS204_WF_2026May.pdf
- File Properties:
 - Title: Full form title (properly capitalized) and ICS number

- Author: NWCG
- Subject: Same as title
- Keywords: Full form title, ICS number, subcommittee with acronym (if applicable), and committee with acronym; separate each by comma and capitalize properly
- Format:
 - Footer: left align the ICS number, date in parentheses (MM/YY), and NFES (if applicable); right align the URL to attributes page
- New ICS forms must be coordinated with the steward committee and the National Incident Management System Integration Committee (NIMSIC)

Publications Tools

Microsoft Spelling/Grammar

It is expected that all documents and written material produced in Microsoft Office by NWCG staff will be run through the Microsoft Editor spelling and grammar checker.

Microsoft has tools built in to assist with grammar and usage. For example, in Microsoft Word, you can add additional checkpoints when completing spelling and grammar checks. To do so, open the desktop version of Microsoft Word and use the following steps:

1. Select the **Review** ribbon → go to the **Language** group → then to **Set Proofing Language** → check “Do not check spelling and grammar” → select **Ok**.
2. Select the **File** ribbon → go to the **Options** group → then to **Proofing** → check “Frequently confused words” and uncheck “Hide spelling errors in only this document” and “Hide grammar errors in only this document.”
3. Then in **Proofing** under **Writing Style**, select “Grammar & Refinements” and set the following **Settings**:
 - a. Under Clarity, check “Passive voice.”
 - b. Under Conciseness, check “Wordiness.”
 - c. Under Punctuation Conventions:
 - i. Check “Oxford Comma”
 - ii. Set “Punctuation Required with Quotes” to “inside”
 - iii. Set “Space Between Sentences” to “one space”

PerfectIt

NWCG uses PerfectIt software as an additional proofreading step. PerfectIt does not capture all errors, and diligent proofreading is still essential. It is expected that all documents and written material produced in Microsoft Word by NWCG staff will be run through PerfectIt using the most current PerfectIt Style Sheet, as provided by the NWCG Publications Manager.

NWCG Guidelines for Creating Accessible Electronic Documents

All materials published to the NWCG website or the Wildland Fire Learning Portal must be consistent with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

A comprehensive overview of how to create accessible electronic documents is available on the NWCG website, <https://www.nwcg.gov/notices#accessibility>.

Microsoft Office and Adobe products have built in accessibility checking that can help ensure documents meet Section 508 guidelines. Other resources include:

- Adobe Accessible Color Palette Generator Tool: <https://color.adobe.com/create/color-accessibility>
- Contrast Ratio Checker: <https://contrast-ratio.com/>

NWCG Branding Guidelines

NWCG Style and Branding Guidelines found at <https://www.nwcg.gov/nwcg-branding-guidelines> outlines colors, logos, and typography appropriate for NWCG publications.

NWCG Proofreading Checklist

- ☐ Proof all material(s), including associated appendices or supplements.
- ☐ Ensure numbered and lettered paragraphs are in correct order.
- ☐ Only use automatic numbering where there are at least two levels, such as 1 and 2 or A and B.
- ☐ Check that correct styles are applied.
- ☐ Check document formatting and layout according to NWCG standard templates.
- ☐ Verify web addresses online.
- ☐ Ensure links to NWCG publications are directed to the attributes page (<https://www.nwcg.gov/publications/pmsxxx>), not directly to the PDF.
- ☐ Check cross-references and other verifiable details.
- ☐ Check publication, course, and form names as well as the associated numbers.
- ☐ Check for grammatical and punctuation errors.
- ☐ Check acronym use and ensure consistency within a document.
 - Spell out first occurrences followed by the acronym in parentheses. Second occurrences should be only the acronym.
 - Include common acronyms even if only used once.
- ☐ Assure page breaks are placed appropriately (no widows or orphans).
- ☐ Check all figures (images and graphics) and tables.
 - Provide appropriate alternative text for all images.
 - Table summaries are only required if the table does not have enough context provided through titles, headers, or other existing content.
- ☐ Run spell check.
- ☐ Run PerfectIt.
- ☐ Check Table of Contents; ensure links work.
- ☐ Check page numbers for accuracy.

Common Spellings, Capitalizations, and Terms

The correct way to spell, capitalize, hyphenate terms is included in the NWCG PerfectIt Style Sheet, which should be used by all NWCG employees during document creation. The below list does not include all terms but is included as an easy reference for common errors.

NWCG Correct Uses	Incorrect Uses
air crew	aircrew
air-to-ground (adjective) Air to Ground channel	air to ground
all hazard incident (per glossary) all-hazard (adjective)	all-hazard incident or All-Hazard Incident
backburn	back burn
burnout (noun) burn out (verb)	burn-out
burnover (noun or adjective) burn over (verb)	burn over, burn-over
cancelled	canceled
channel names: Command channel, Tactical (Tac) channel, Air to Ground channel	
check-in (noun) check in (verb)	check in, check-in
check-out (noun or adjective) check out (verb)	checkout
checkpoint (authorized location) check point (geographic reference point)	
closeout (noun or adjective) close out (verb)	close out, close-out
colocation (noun) co-locate (verb)	collocate or colocate
copilot	co-pilot
crew member except when applied to positions	crewmember

NWCG Correct Uses	Incorrect Uses
dipsite	dip site
Division/Group Supervisor (DIVS) (person or position)	DIVSs, Division Supervisor
division/group (location)	Division/Group, division when talking about a location or group of resources, division/group is not capitalized unless a named division/group (e.g., Division Alpha)
drop off (verb, noun, or adjective)	dropoff, drop-off
en route	enroute
firefighter	fire fighter
fireline	fire line
fixed-wing except when applied to position	fixed wing, fixedwing
flare-up	flare up
follow-up (noun or adjective) follow up (verb)	follow up
frequency (as in, radio frequency, Default, generic term)	channel (use if referring to a specific channel, e.g., Command channel)
go or no-go	go/no go
hand crew	handcrew
handheld radio	hand-held radio, handheld-radio
handline	hand line
hand tool	handtool
hardcopy (noun or adjective)	hard copy, hard-copy
home unit	home-unit
hot loading	hotloading
in-brief	inbrief

NWCG Correct Uses	Incorrect Uses
Incident Qualification Card (Red Card)	red card
Incident Within an Incident	incident within an incident, Incident within an Incident
leadplane	lead plane
log in to	log into
mop up (noun, verb, or adjective)	mop-up, mopup
non-emergency	nonemergency
on-scene (adjective) on scene (adverb)	
on-site	onsite
on-the-job (adjective) on the job (adverb)	on the job
pickup (noun or adjective) pick up (verb)	pick up, pick-up
post-test	posttest
post-course exam	
powerline	power line
pre-course (pre-course exam)	precourse
pre-position	preposition
pretest	pre-test
pre-trip	pretrip
preselection	pre-selection
rappellers	rapelers
real time (noun) real-time (adjective)	realtime
record keeping	recordkeeping

NWCG Correct Uses	Incorrect Uses
Red Flag Warning	Red Flag warning
Risk Management Process	risk management process
role-play (verb, noun) role-playing (adjective)	role play, roleplay
Section names: Logistics, Operations, Planning, Information	
short-haul	shorthaul
single resource (noun or adjective)	single-resource
single resource boss (not capitalized when used generically)	
Spot Weather Forecasts	
size up (noun or adjective) size-up (verb)	sizeup
Tribal or Tribe (always capitalized)	tribal
turn back (verb or adjective)	turnback, turn-back