

ARCTIC ADVENTURES STYLE GUIDE

Arctic Adventures offers tours and practical information on Iceland. On our website, we offer locally sourced, lively, authoritative, accurate and to-do-date information on our tours and destination. As language and the digital sphere are constantly evolving, so too will some aspects of the glossary below – however, as consistency of thought and expression helps build trust and authority in a brand, please endeavour to apply the following consistently across all content until further notice.

As for Arctic Adventures’ overall tone of voice, please ensure that all content (video, social, website, commercial, etc.) conveys the following:

- Active, not passive;
- Expansive, not reductive;
- Defined by positivity and inclusion,
- lively, curious, global-minded, adventurous, authentic, reliable

If you have questions for grammar or spelling that aren’t addressed here, try the [AP Style Guide](#).

A

Abbreviations: Always spell out in first instance, then put in parentheses/brackets afterwards, then use the abbreviation only. Add periods (full stops) in abbreviations: U.S., Dr., Prof., Washington, D.C., etc., e.g. (see Currency, Numbers, Measurements and Units of Measure for specific treatment of abbreviations). An exception to rule is BC, see

COMMON MISTAKES.

About/around: Use ‘approximately’ when discussing distances or currency exchange estimates

Academic: Avoid sounding too academic when describing scientific processes (e.g. Northern Lights) – the content needs to be well-written but accessible

Accent marks: Use with foreign words and names, or where included for sense/pronunciation with words common in English use: café, décor, façade, émigré, etc. – but don't use for place names: Cordoba, etc.

UNLESS Icelandic (see Regions/locations). You can install an Icelandic keyboard directly to your computer or copy/paste from a google search

Actually: it's okay to use this in social posts at the start of a sentence, or as per normal conversational speech (but don't overuse, as over-repetition of any word or term can get boring)

American English: Use US spellings, punctuation styles and terminology consistently throughout all articles. If you are unsure about US spelling, refer to www.merriam-webster.com.

Amid (not amidst), among (not amongst), while (not whilst)

Ampersand: Don't use unless part of official group, company or product name: Viktor & Rolf, Procter & Gamble

Apostrophes: The English apostrophe should curve to the left. Watch out for other punctuations, like the Icelandic acute accent or *broddur* [´], which frequently goes under the guise of an apostrophe, e.g. girl's [sic]

Use apostrophes to show possession: Claudia's bag, the children's book, the company's turnover, and in contractions: don't, can't won't, shouldn't, etc.

- For plural possession, the apostrophe goes after the 's': many countries' governments, the pilgrims' way, two cats' dinners
- In words ending in 's' or an 's' sound, don't add it: James' book, never James's book [sic]
- Do NOT use apostrophes with normal plurals, e.g. discos
- DO use apostrophes with decades: '70s, '80s

Articles: The definite article is used to describe a specific noun. The indefinite article is used to describe a general noun or statement. Further reading on the usage of articles can be found in [this post](#).

Assumptions: Never assume knowledge on the part of a reader when introducing a term or phrase not in common use, or using a region- or industry-specific term or acronym – always spell these out first and/or explain.

Attributions: Make sure all quotes, etc are correctly attributed

B

Bespoke: Try to avoid this word. It is a term appropriated from the tailor industry to mean “custom-made” and regurgitated in the travel industry to imply tailor-made tours and luxury. It doesn’t pertain to our small group trips.

Bold: Use for headings [H1], sub-headings {H2} and sub-sub-headings [H3-H5] (see notes on sub-headings and formatting under Subheadings). if you want to add emphasis or highlight within the text body, use bold only sparingly as it detracts from SEO

Brackets (aka Parentheses): if you need to use a second set of brackets or parentheses within a section of text already enclosed in brackets, use square brackets [] inside the round brackets/parentheses ().

Bullet lists: If using bullet or numbered lists within a text body (not applicable to tour details f.ex.), remember that if the list is preceded by a colon, the text in the list is still effectively part of the sentence, and therefore the items should be lowercase and punctuated with a semicolon, with an ‘and’ in the penultimate item on the list. If the items are only a short (e.g. one to three words) list, there’s no need for punctuation; if the items are each a standalone sentence, they should be uppercased and punctuated with a period at the end.

C

Capital letters: Use with proper names/regions/titles/headings (in title case, as above). Do not capitalize the names of restaurant dishes. Do not capitalize the names of art movements, e.g. surrealism, abstract

expressionism, impressionism, unless there is any ambiguity (e.g. Realism, Futurism, Romanticism) or the name contains a proper noun: Pre-Raphaelite); Art Deco, Art Nouveau, Dadaism and Op Art are exceptions. Common capitalization mistakes include:

- Seasons are NOT: spring, summer, fall
- Terrain is NOT: arctic, arctic tern
- Directions if general are NOT: north, northern
- Directions if definite region ARE: the North

More rules on capitalization [here](#).

Captions: Picture captions should add value to the story by being entertaining and/or informative, and especially including keyword-rich, basic information to identify the subject (who, what, where, when, how, etc) that is in the picture – particularly for short picture stories, e.g. social media stories. Don't use periods at the end of captions. Include a credit – if an image is copyrighted to an individual or group, write as: [caption] | © John Doe/Flickr

Clauses: A clause is a word or group of words containing a subject and predicate; they are often used to add extra meaning or additional information to a sentence. “When it rained, they went inside” is two separate clauses: *When it rained + they went inside*. Sometimes it's preferable to reword or break up a complex sentence made up of many clauses into two or more sentences so that the meaning is clearer and the text flows better.

Colloquialisms: Please be aware of any colloquial language, terms or references that may not translate outside your region – or at least explain these clearly for the reader.

Colons: A colon is used to indicate that what follows pertains (is immediately relevant) to or explains what went before. It is often used in titles (especially academic titles) as a kind of sub-heading to add fuller meaning the title. It is also used before bullet points or other kinds of lists, particularly one that may contain either other punctuation or full sentences

(in which case there is usually a semicolon at the end of each item, with an 'and' at the end of the penultimate item and a period at the end of the list.

Commas: Use commas to separate clauses and items in a list, also wherever there is a natural pause in speech. If using to offset a clause, make sure you use a comma on both sides: "In England, however, the first day of spring can still feel quite wintry." "Jim Feeney, CEO of Company XYZ, said, 'This year, we're right on track to deliver.'" [Please note: no commas are necessary when prefacing the person with their job title: "Company XYZ CEO Jim Feeney said...."]

Commas after "Then,": When you are writing: "Then, go to..." Analyze the sentence as to whether you really need the comma after *Then*. Larry Trask's advice in cases like this is to see what happens if you remove from the sentence the words marked off by the comma. If you are left with a meaningful sentence, then the comma is appropriate. If no meaningful sentence remains, you don't need the comma. If it's a continuation of a movement or idea, you definitely do not need a comma.

Companies: are always singular, so take a singular verb: *Arctic Adventures is*, *Company XYZ says it will...* Also, companies should never be referred to as 'who', but use 'that' instead

Comprise/Compose: People often get confused about this, but remember that comprise is a direct action, not a reflexive action, so 'The tent kit comprises 10 pegs, an internal tent, three ropes, a ground sheet, and two poles' or 'The tent kit is composed of...' but it is **NEVER** *comprised of* anything.

Contractions: Don't be afraid of contractions. Contractions demonstrate a personable, friendly voice without sacrificing politeness. Don't use a "You will be amazed" when you can simply write, "You'll be amazed."

Copyrights and credits: Pictures, text and etc from a published, copyrighted source should be correctly credited and contain a © symbol.

Arctic Adventures: Arctic Adventures is the official legal title for adventures.is.

Currencies: In general, spell out the currencies if discussing these within the body of the text generally, however in all instances where rates or costs are described using figures – for example in an infographic, chart or list – write US\$ or ISK. Use the euro symbol (€) with the figure for countries still inside the eurozone that do use the euro (check if unsure); use £ with the figure in reference to UK sterling and ¥ for yen; for all other currencies, use the international currency code joined up to the figure (no space): ZAR26, AED45, etc (see [XE Exchange](#) for any queries). Always write the currency in the local amount first, then put the equivalent in US\$ or UK£ in brackets after.

D

Dashes: Please use a spaced en dash – which looks like this – or unspaced em dash—in all cases where you are breaking off to add an aside/extra information, etc. However, be careful not to overuse it – sometimes a colon or actual parentheses are better

Note: both en – and em dashes—*which American writers often use with no spaces, like this—are in the symbol section on WordPress (found under the tab that looks like an Omega symbol: Ω)*

Dates: Apart from the automatic date configuration in WordPress, we use the American date style of month/day/,/year, with no ordinals: June 10, 2019 [**NOT** June 10th]

Degrees: If you are talking about a panorama, use ‘360-degree view’ as opposed to the symbol; if temperatures, use Celsius first and then give the Fahrenheit equivalent in brackets – use

<http://convertit.com/Go/ConvertIt/Measurement/Converter.ASP> for conversions.

Note: You may have to copy and paste the degree symbol from another program, e.g. Word, unless it is found in the WordPress symbol palette.

Decimals: It’s okay to use decimals where necessary; they are preferable to fractions. In general, round up/down to two decimal points.

E

Ellipsis: Ellipsis (...) are generally used to show an omission of text, which can be preferable if some parts are obscure or irrelevant; occasionally, they are also used at the end of sentences to indicate that the writer's thoughts are trailing off. An ellipsis should be followed by a space... unless it is the end of the sentence, in which case it should be followed by a period....

Emojis/Emoticons: Fine to use in social media posts sparingly, and where expression of emotion is encouraged, but not on the website

Enroute/En route: Can appear in both forms, but the accepted dictionary orthography is 'en route.'

En and Em dashes: Use a spaced en dash for parenthetical dashes (see Dashes above); also, use an unspaced en dash to signify numerical and distance ranges, e.g. 10–14, 2010–2016, the 14th–16th centuries, the Birmingham–London train, the Paris–Rome route.

Exclamation marks: Use sparingly, only if really warranted for articles on the website; okay for use in video and social media posts.

F

Flowery language: Avoid

Food venues: Please follow the correct format regarding these (as per the Editorial checklist) – also, as restaurants and nightclubs can change chefs, menus, names, ownership and location frequently, please be diligent in checking to ensure these are up to date.

Foreign words and phrases: Use sparingly, where it is particularly relevant to the article, and put in italics with the correct accent marks (see accents, above); always ensure its meaning is in context and that you provide a correct explanation.

G

God/gods: 'God' in the Judeo-Christian sense is a proper name, therefore the \g\ should be uppercased. If you are referring to a multiplicity of gods as

in the Old Norse pantheon, or referring to something as an idol or object of worship, use a lowercase \g\.

H

Hyperbole: Useful for social media; adds flair

Hyphens: As someone once said, “He who would study hyphens must be mad” – it’s true it can be maddening at times to know where to put them; here are a few points and examples for clarity:

- Use hyphens with compound modifiers before a noun (when two words join together to describe a thing), especially where the meaning would be ambiguous without a hyphen, e.g.: a three-legged horse; a slow-moving train; a short-term solution, a ring-necked pheasant; a once-in-a-lifetime event
- Use hyphens with some compound phrases: he’s a two-timer; it’s a win-win; she’s a goody-two-shoes
- Use hyphens with ages/years/time constructs: a 20-year-old man; a 40-year itch; a centuries-old phenomenon, a 10th-century church
- **DON’T** use hyphens with adverbial compounds: an imperfectly formed nose; a rightly spotted mistake; a densely populated town
- **DON’T** use hyphens with a normal verb phrase: open up the door (**NOT** open-up the door)
- *As a rule, use hyphens with compound prefaced by the prefixes self-, anti-, inter-, re-, de-, co-, pre-, post-, under-, etc, or particularly where two vowels are joined together: anti-inflammatory, re-enter (Note: These are now run together as one word generally in the US, but hyphens can still be better for clarity of meaning/pronunciation – however, as this is an area of frequent change, check Webster’s online dictionary and follow the style given there, as relevant).

**Note: In the evolution of English, being a Germanic language, words that are compounds usually start off as two words; then become hyphenated; then eventually turn into one word with frequency of use – hence:*

groundbreaking, which was originally ground breaking, then ground-breaking and now groundbreaking (although you may still see it in the hyphenated version, this is the current dictionary version)

I

Italics: Use Italic for titles of films/movies, newspapers, books, ballets, operas, works of art, record albums, etc – use double quotes for titles of poems, chapters, articles, song titles, essays, etc (eg shorter works). Also use italic for less-well-known foreign words and phrases, including Latin or Icelandic [*jökull* should probably still be italicized, but not geyser or berserk]. Jökulhlaup has been adopted into English as a proper geological term and therefore it's unnecessary to capitalize this word.

J

Jargon: Do not use; avoid

Judgment/Judgement: Use judgement

K

K: Avoid using 'K' as an abbreviation for thousand(s)

L

Lay vs. Lie: 'Lay' is a transitive verb and requires a direct object. *You 'lay' the book down.* Lie is an intransitive verb and does not require a direct object. *You 'lie' down.* However, in past tense,

- Then 'lay' becomes 'laid'. *Yesterday, you laid the book down.*
- And 'lie' becomes 'lay'. *Yesterday, you lay down.* (Isn't English fun??)

Led/Lead: The correct past tense for the verb 'to lead' is led. Lead (pronounced like led) is a mineral.

M

Measurements: In American English, give units in imperial first, and then put the metric equivalent in brackets (parentheses) after: 12 ft. (3.65 meters). For help with metric–imperial conversions, consult [this page](#), but remember to use American spellings (meters, millimeters, etc).

N

Numbers: Figures are fine in headings, in infographics, and in distances/measurements. However, in body copy, always spell out from one to nine, first to ninth (except centuries), and then use figures for 10 (10th) and up. Use commas to separate thousands from 10,000 and up. Use an unspaced en dash between figures in ranges (from xx–xx).

Number: Number is a grouping noun, so it requires use with a plural. Write “There are a number of” or “There were a number of.” Do not use singular unless you are writing it with an article, “The number of cats is tripling.”

O

P

Paragraphs: Try not to make paragraphs over-long – 2–3 sentences in each paragraph is ideal. If a new subject or point of view is introduced, it should always begin as a new paragraph. Leave one line of space between paragraphs, and break up the text with images and subheadings (roughly every 2–3 paragraphs)

Prepositions: Take great care when using prepositions (of, in, on, about, around, behind, up, down, etc.), especially when appearing together:

- *Up on* is used differently than *upon*,
- *In to* is used differently than *into*, and so on.

Punctuation: Generally, ensure you use – neither under- or overuse – punctuation for clarity of meaning. If a sentence has to be read several times to understand it, it is probably missing some key punctuation. Avoid

excessive use of exclamation marks unless for a social media post. In American English, the punctuation is always inside the quotation mark.

Q

Quotation marks: If writing in American English:

- use double quotes (with single quotes inside if quoting additionally within a quote).
- Use double quotes in American English for titles of short works, eg poems, songs, essays, chapters, articles, etc.
- Also, use double quotes for ironic or 'so-called' meaning
- If quoting a lengthy section from a book, indent the passage and enclose it in quotes for clarity.
- If quoting a person, either preface with a comma (US); if the quote is embodied in the sentence, punctuate as above; if not, treat as a separate sentence, with quote marks either side.
- If a quotation continues onto the next or several paragraphs, include the opening quotation marks, but do not add the end quotes until the quoted passage is finished.
- Also, please ensure the use of straight quotes ""/curly quotes "" is consistent throughout the article – it's a little thing, perhaps, but this does impact the visual quality of the text (and remember to correct this in all of the headings, subheadings and captions/credits also).

R

Ratios: Write with colon and no spaces, as 2:1.

Regions/locations: Please always check to ensure you have used the correct spelling – particularly, the upper- and lowercase – of geographical regions. When spelling Iceland place names, use both English spelling and Icelandic spelling for SEO (Eyjafjörður / Eyjafjörður) throughout the body. For titles and headers, ONLY the English spelling. ð should be transliterated as 'd', Ææ as 'ae' and þp as 'th', and eliminate *broddur* (*stafmerki*), a.k.a. the acute accent.

S

Semicolon: A semicolon (;) is exactly what it looks like – a cross between a colon and a comma. Use it to include another sentence and/or clause that is related, but a separate/additional thought to what went before. Semicolons are also used to separate items in a bullet, numbered or normal list embedded in the body copy; always include an ‘and’ after the penultimate item in the list

Sentences: Avoid clunky, unclear sentences, and take care especially with subject–verb agreement (see below)

Serial commas: Aka ‘Oxford commas’, the serial comma can be added after the penultimate item in a list: light, color, and sound. However, it is not obligatory to use.

Spacing: Please try to make the spacing between paragraphs, subheadings and images as consistent as possible – although be aware that when you are copy-editing articles in the backend of Wordpress, they may look different when previewed.

Spelling: American spelling is standard. Always check spellings are correct, including whether they should be capitalized or hyphenated, as per the relevant dictionary or company website, or a Google search -- particularly of names of people, places, regions/areas/geographical features, companies, products, films, books, restaurants, etc. The first resource should always be [Merriam Webster](#). If there is a range of variant spellings seen on a google search, go with that which seems most common. Take extra care with the spelling of words ending in consonants, eg fuelled, fulfill, installment, skillful, benefitting.

Subheadings: Articles – particularly longer-form, feature-type articles, should be broken up roughly every two to three paragraphs with subheadings – these should be in H2 format, however this may need some adjusting; currently subheadings are in H3 format.

Subject–verb agreement: If a sentence reads awkwardly, it is usually because the wrong verb tense is being used -- for example, ‘A group of

teenagers were playing hopscotch' is wrong because the subject is 'group' not 'teenagers', so to be correct it should be: 'A group of teenagers was playing hopscotch' (or just reword to 'The teenagers were playing hopscotch' if that is more palatable). Also, 'An initiative is being developed that insists on delivering better care to hospitals' is wrong because an initiative cannot insist on a course of action; it's an inanimate thing – therefore, reword to: 'An initiative is being developed that will deliver better care to hospitals'.

Suspensive hyphens: Use in conjunctive constructions such as: the long- and short-haired dogs

T

Time:

For morning: 8:00 a.m.

For noon: 12:00 p.m.

For afternoon/evening: 20:00 (8:00 p.m.)

Title case: All Arctic Adventures header titles should be in title case: the first and main words (excluding small/shorter articles [a, an, the], prepositions [of, in, with, from, on] and conjunctions [and, or, but]). **Chase the Northern Lights.**

Titles: Use italics for titles of films/movies, books, ballets, works of art, album titles, newspapers/periodicals, or longer published works; use double quotation marks for shorter works, eg poems, articles, songs, etc

That: The word 'that' is often unnecessary to the meaning of a sentence, so if you're looking for ways to trim your text and make it snappier, start with removing any unnecessary 'that's.

That/Which: 'Which' introduces a relative clause, so should be prefaced with a comma; otherwise, use 'that': Change 'The table which leans against the wall' to 'The table that leans against the wall' unless it contains a clause: 'The table, which leans against the wall when not in use, is always filled with fruit.'

Toward/towards: US spelling does not include an 's'.

U

Units of measure: The numerical value always precedes the unit, and a space is always used to separate the unit from the number.

- Put periods after abbreviations for Imperial units of measure such as feet, inches and pounds.
- Do not use periods after abbreviations with the metric system: *5 mi. (8 km) down the road.*
- If using the unit of measurement as a compound modifier, it should be hyphenated without a period: *5-ft drop*. Abbreviation is optional in this case. Compound modifiers always be singular regardless of numerical value: *10-foot drop* (not 10-feet drop).
- The abbreviation for pound, lb, should appear without a ‘-s’ suffix.

W

Western, the West: Uppercase when referring to the cultural/ideological region

X

X-ray: The ‘x’ is usually lowercase in American English

Y

You: It’s acceptable to use the familiar ‘you’ occasionally when addressing a reader on the website or blog.

Z

Zero/zed: Refer to all instances of zero/nothing as a quantity as zero

COMMON MISTAKES / STYLISTIC IDIOSYNCRASIES

Aurora borealis: no capitalization needed except at the beginning of the sentence. Italics are optional. Strictly speaking, as it is a scientific name, it should be italicized, but this form has entered the English dictionary as a proper English phrase.

Aurora: no capitalization needed except at the beginning of the sentence. No italics.

Northern Lights: While capitalization is not necessary in the grammar here, for marketing purposes, let's agree that Northern Lights as a phrase should be capitalized for our tours, to stand out in the text.

Articles: \a\ and \the\ <https://www.grammarly.com/blog/articles/>

Which vs. That: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/usage/that-or-which>

A.D. versus CE: anno domini versus common or current era. Use BCE/CE as it's more universal and popular in publications. Write the year before: 1000 CE. These are usually written with capital letters and no punctuation (CE). If you do write them as small letters, use punctuation (c.e.) for clarity. Do not combine capitals and punctuation as it is unnecessary.

Infamous/Notorious: do not mean famous.

Very / Really: overused words, which might weaken the modified adverb. Whenever you're tempted to use it, try dropping it to see if any meaning is lost. There's a good chance your sentence will benefit from its removal.

TRY TO NOT OVERSATURATE THE TEXT WITH THESE WORDS

Beautiful

Awe-inspiring

Place

Replete

Very/Really

Bucket List

- Experience
- Beautiful
- Awe-inspiring
- Mesmerizing
- Stunning
- Breathtaking
- Place
- Replete
- Enjoy
- *Bespoke

PICKUP/PICK-UP: Pickup as a noun to mean 'act of picking up someone' should be either 'pickup' or 'pick-up', NOT 'pick up' > this is verb only

White water should be separate words, according to the dictionaries and SEMRush. NOT Whitewater.

Whale watching is not hyphenated.

River jet boat has spaces between all three words. Jet boat appears in Merriam-Webster. There seems to be no clear definition of a river jet but when it is used in tourism jargon, it should be two separate words.