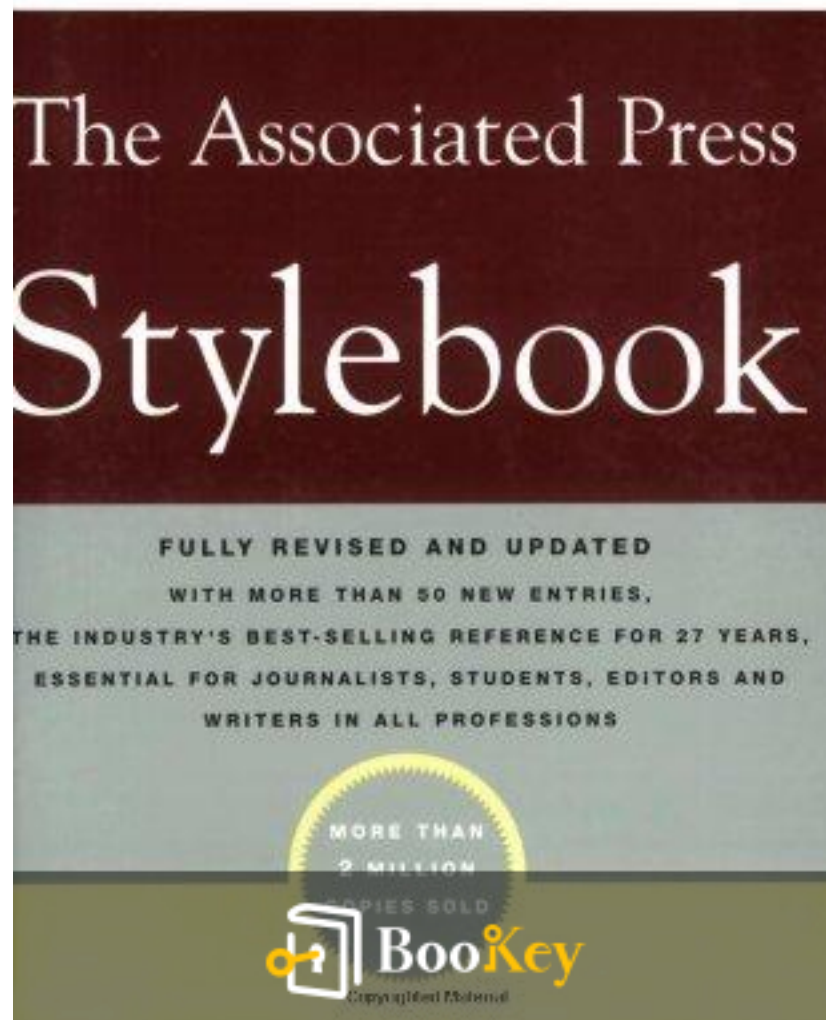


# The Associated Press Stylebook PDF (Limited Copy)

Norm Goldstein

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## **The Associated Press Stylebook Summary**

Your essential guide to precise and professional writing standards.

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## About the book

The Associated Press Stylebook serves as the definitive resource for writers seeking clarity and professionalism in their communication. This essential guide has undergone thorough revisions and updates, presenting over 5,000 entries from A to Z, including more than 50 new additions. It meticulously covers the AP's guidelines on various aspects of writing, such as grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and word usage.

One of the key strengths of the Stylebook is its focus on clarity. Writers are equipped to accurately report on a range of subjects, from international affairs to specific industries like business and sports. This versatility is essential for maintaining relevance in an ever-changing media landscape.

In addition to writing mechanics, the Stylebook provides crucial insights into media law, offering guidance on complex issues like libel and copyright infringement. Understanding these legal nuances is vital for writers who navigate the often-challenging waters of public communication.

By combining comprehensive features with practical advice, The AP Stylebook continues to be an indispensable tool for journalists and professional writers alike. Its user-friendly format ensures that writers of all skill levels can effectively utilize its information to enhance their craft and uphold high standards in their work.

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## About the author

In this chapter, we delve into the influential world of journalism, spotlighting Norm Goldstein, a distinguished figure who has left an indelible mark on writing and editing standards. Armed with a robust background in news reporting and editing, Goldstein has dedicated his career to enhancing the clarity and effectiveness of communication in journalism.

As the author of "The Associated Press Stylebook," Goldstein has developed essential guidelines that serve as a cornerstone for journalists, writers, and editors seeking to maintain consistency in their work. His emphasis on clear reporting has been crucial in an era where effective communication is vital in disseminating information to the public. Through his contributions, Goldstein has equipped both aspiring and seasoned professionals with the tools needed to refine their writing and adhere to high journalistic standards.

This chapter not only highlights Goldstein's significant achievements but also underscores the importance of rigorous editing and clarity in news reporting. By adhering to the principles laid out in his stylebook, writers can cultivate their craft and contribute to a well-informed society, thereby honoring the long-standing traditions of journalism. Goldstein's legacy serves as a guiding light for future generations, emphasizing the critical role of standards in the art of communication.

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# Summary Content List

Chapter 1: Business Guidelines And Style

Chapter 2: Guide To Punctuation

Chapter 3: Bibliography

Chapter 4: Briefing On Media Law

Chapter 5: Photo Captions

Chapter 6: Filing The Wire

Chapter 7: Filing Practices

Chapter 8: U.S. Bureaus

Chapter 9: AP Publications

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# **Chapter 1 Summary: Business Guidelines And Style**

## **Chapter 1 Summary: Business News Coverage**

This chapter of the Stylebook is tailored to assist Associated Press (AP) reporters in effectively covering business and economic news, providing essential guidelines on writing financial reports, especially quarterly earnings for publicly traded companies.

### **Purpose of the Stylebook Section**

The Stylebook aims to enhance the clarity and precision of business journalism. It outlines the necessity for reporters to communicate complex business ideas in an accessible manner, ensuring that audiences without a finance background can understand the content.

### **Avoiding Jargon**

The chapter emphasizes the importance of avoiding technical jargon. Reporters are encouraged to define key terms clearly, promoting inclusivity

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in understanding amongst readers from diverse backgrounds.

## **Covering Corporate Earnings Reports**

Publicly traded companies are legally mandated to disclose their financial performance on a quarterly basis, detailing revenues and profit or loss figures. When crafting earnings reports, journalists should include critical elements such as:

- A brief description of the company.
- Percentage changes in profit, as well as absolute figures.
- Revenue statistics compared to the previous year.
- Earnings per share, specifying "fully diluted" measurements.
- Year-to-date figures, excluding the first quarter for clearer insights.
- Relevant quotes from company executives or financial analysts to provide additional context.

The chapter further highlights the distinction between net earnings and operating earnings. While AP traditionally prioritizes net earnings in reporting, there is a growing emphasis on operating earnings, which exclude extraordinary items. Reporters should juxtapose actual earnings with analysts' consensus predictions for a comprehensive narrative.

## **Important Financial Metrics in Stories**

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Key financial indicators such as stock price movements are vital. Reporters should note how stock prices react to earnings reports, influenced by whether a company meets or exceeds analyst forecasts, as well as any recent trends in stock performance.

## **International Reporting Considerations**

For international earnings reports, the chapter advises that domestic currency figures should be presented first, with conversions to U.S. dollars following. It is also crucial to consider varying accounting standards across different countries, striving to include reconciliations to U.S. norms when feasible.

## **Examples of Earnings Stories**

The chapter offers illustrative examples of earnings reports:

1. Wal-Mart's profit increase, juxtaposed with future growth concerns.
2. Eli Lilly's profit rise, balanced against declining Prozac sales, adjusted to account for one-time gains or losses.

## **Business Terminology Definitions**

To aid clarity and understanding, the chapter includes a glossary of essential business terms, such as "accounts receivable," "bankruptcy," and "bear market." This resource supports reporters in conveying accurate information



while fostering a better comprehension of financial concepts for readers.

Overall, this structured approach guarantees that business news coverage remains comprehensive, clear, and accessible, upholding journalistic integrity while serving the public's need for informed financial insights.

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# Chapter 2 Summary: Guide To Punctuation

## Punctuation Importance

Understanding proper punctuation usage is essential for clear communication in writing. Correct punctuation not only clarifies meaning but also prevents confusion for readers. Simplifying complex sentences and utilizing appropriate punctuation can enhance overall clarity and readability of the text.

## Guide to Punctuation Marks

This guide outlines key punctuation marks and their specific applications:

- **Ampersand (&):** This symbol should be reserved for formal names, such as "Baltimore & Ohio Railroad," and not used in general writing.
- **Apostrophe ('):** It has several functions:
  - Use it to form possessives with plural nouns by adding 's or just an



apostrophe, depending on the word.

- Singular nouns that do not end in 's' always take an 's.
- Compound possession requires a careful approach to indicate ownership accurately.
- **Brackets [ ]**: These should be avoided in transmitted materials; opt for parentheses instead.
- **Colon (:)**: Colons are used to introduce lists or elaborate details. If what follows is a complete sentence, capitalize the first word.
- **Comma (,)**: Commas separate elements in a series, distinguish equal adjectives, and help separate clauses. Their use varies based on conjunctions and quoted material.
- **Dash (—)**: A dash indicates a shift in thought or creates emphasis within a sentence.
- **Ellipsis (...)**: This mark signifies omitted text. Ensure correct spacing, and refrain from using it at the beginning or end of quotes.
- **Exclamation Point (!)**: To express strong emotion, exclamation points should be used judiciously to maintain their impact.



- **Hyphen (-):** Hyphens are critical for linking words to eliminate ambiguity, particularly in modifiers and compound adjectives.
- **Parentheses ( ):** Their use should be limited; if necessary, consider substituting commas or dashes.
- **Periods (.):** Periods denote the end of sentences and signify certain indirect statements.
- **Question Mark (?):** A question mark concludes direct inquiries but does not punctuate indirect questions.
- **Quotation Marks (“ ”):** These marks enclose direct quotes, with punctuation placement varying depending on the surrounding sentence structure.
- **Semicolon (;):** Semicolons are used to link related independent clauses without conjunctions and clarify complex lists. Always place them outside quotation marks.

This summary encapsulates the fundamental aspects of punctuation as outlined in Chapter 2 of "The Associated Press Stylebook," emphasizing their importance in achieving clarity and coherence in writing.



## Chapter 3 Summary: Bibliography

### ### Bibliography Summary

The bibliography outlines the reference materials utilized in the preparation of The Associated Press Stylebook, highlighting major sources for spelling, style, and usage. The primary reference is \*Webster's New World College Dictionary, Fourth Edition\*, complemented by \*Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language\* for additional clarity. Geographic information is sourced from the \*National Geographic Atlas of the World\* and place names are verified using the \*National 5-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory\*. For aviation and maritime topics, \*Jane's All the World's Aircraft\* and \*Jane's Fighting Ships\* are key references, respectively, with non-military shipping details found in \*Lloyd's Register of Shipping\*. Railroads and government inquiries are cross-referenced with the \*Official Railway Guide\* and the \*Official Congressional Directory\*. Business names are sourced from \*Standard & Poor's Register of Corporations, Directors, and Executives\*, while religious affiliations are detailed in the \*Handbook of Denominations in the United States\* and the \*Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches\*. Additional authoritative references include works by Theodore M. Bernstein and the \*Chicago Manual of Style\*, reinforcing the credibility of the Stylebook as a

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comprehensive guide for journalists.

### ### Foreword Summary

The foreword serves as an important introduction to the manual, outlining its purpose and the significance of understanding libel law and First Amendment principles for The Associated Press staff. It emphasizes that awareness of libel issues is crucial to avoiding legal disputes in journalism. The varied nature of libel laws across different states and the universal applicability of First Amendment principles are highlighted, indicating that while certain legal frameworks apply across the nation, specific state laws must also be considered. The foreword draws attention to recent developments in libel law, particularly in relation to digital journalism, stressing the necessity for accuracy and fairness in reporting practices. Final acknowledgment is given to Samuel G. Blackman for his contributions, underlining the collaborative effort involved in producing this manual. Louis D. Boccardi, the President and CEO, reinforces the commitment of The Associated Press to uphold journalistic integrity while navigating complex legal landscapes.

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# Chapter 4: Briefing On Media Law

## FOREWORD

This guide is tailored for The Associated Press staff to provide essential knowledge on libel law and First Amendment considerations relevant to writers and editors. It underscores the necessity of consulting the General Desk for legal matters and acknowledges the variations in libel laws across states. The guide aims to enhance awareness about libel while advocating for accurate and fair reporting as the foundation of responsible journalism.

## INTRODUCTION

Historically, libel claims often arise from routine reports concerning allegations of crime or moral shortcomings. Many lawsuits stem from factual inaccuracies in these stories. Journalists are urged to meticulously verify any accusations and maintain balance in their reporting, bearing in mind that they can be held accountable for repeating libelous statements.

## Chapter 1: WHAT IS LIBEL?

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Libel refers to the harm caused to a person's reputation through written statements, with definitions varying by state. The distinction is drawn between libel (written statements) and slander (spoken statements). For instance, New York defines libel as statements that incite hatred or contempt, while Texas focuses on the harm to reputation. This chapter highlights how variations in definition can affect legal outcomes.

## **Chapter 2: LIABILITY FOR REPUBLICATION**

Publishers carry a liability for republishing potentially defamatory statements, even if they accurately quote others. However, certain privileges, such as the fair report privilege—applicable in legal contexts—can offer protection, though these privileges are not uniform across states.

## **Chapter 3: PRIVILEGES**

Several important privileges in libel law include:

1. **Opinion:** Generally protected unless they suggest false factual content.



2. **Fair Comment and Criticism:** Permits public commentary on significant issues without legal repercussions.
3. **Fair Report:** Accurate and honest reporting on public proceedings is protected from liability.
4. **Neutral Reportage:** Protection for accurate reporting of newsworthy events involving public figures.

## **Chapter 4: DEFENSES**

Defenses against libel claims can include:

1. The statement is not defamatory.
2. The truth of the statement serves as an absolute defense.
3. A requirement for public figures to prove actual malice, while private figures need to demonstrate negligence or gross irresponsibility.

## **Chapter 5: SUPREME COURT DECISIONS REGARDING LIBEL LAW**

Supreme Court rulings have bolstered press protections, mandating that public figures prove actual malice in libel claims. Recent decisions have shown a trend toward refining the criteria for public figures and lessening the burden of proof required in these cases.



## Chapter 6: PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PLAINTIFFS

Public figures and officials face a steeper hill in libel claims compared to private individuals. The definitions of who qualifies as a public figure vary by state, and courts evaluate a plaintiff's role and the public's interest in determining liability.

## Chapter 7: MISCELLANEOUS

1. **Defamation of the Dead:** Cannot typically be claimed against deceased individuals, although exceptions exist.
2. **Group Libel:** Usually denied unless specific harm can be proven by identifiable individuals.
3. **Identifiable Individuals:** A defamation claim necessitates that an identifiable person is linked to the critical publication.

## Chapter 8: APPLYING THE RULES

Writers should assess whether statements could be defamatory, if identifiable individuals are mentioned, and what privileges might apply.

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Diligent reporting is crucial, as fairness is often judged by jury assessments.

## **Chapter 9: POINTS TO REMEMBER**

Key considerations include identifying the potential for defamatory statements, recognizing applicable privileges, establishing individual status (public or private), and ensuring thorough investigations are conducted prior to publication.

## **Chapter 10: PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING KILLS AND CORRECTIVES**

This chapter specifies the procedures for retracting or correcting published content, highlighting the need for consultation with the General Desk and effective communication regarding the nature of the issues involved.

## **Chapter 11: ACCESS TO PLACES AND INFORMATION**

This section outlines First Amendment protections regarding access to court proceedings and details the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), which facilitates access to governmental records for journalists.

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## Chapter 12: THE RIGHT OF PRIVACY

This chapter addresses the origins and classifications of privacy claims,

as well as the various theories of privacy and the right of privacy.

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# Chapter 5 Summary: Photo Captions

## Photo Captions Summary

Captions for Associated Press (AP) photos follow a structured formula to ensure clarity and information delivery. Each caption typically consists of two sentences: the first describes the image's content, location, and date in present tense, while the second provides context or significance pertinent to the news event depicted. This concise format caters to the needs of both editors and readers. For instance, a caption might read: "The Mississippi River flows through a hole in the Sny Island, Ill., levee, flooding farmland and homes 10 miles south of Quincy, Ill., Sunday, July 25, 1993. About 2,000 people were evacuated from the 44,000 acres that flooded." (AP Photo/Bill Waugh)

To enhance clarity, AP employs specific overline instructions such as "FILE" for archived images and "ADVANCE" for photos with future publication dates. Essential elements in the captions include the date and day of the event, avoiding vague terms like "recently." For example, if the date is unknown, the caption should indicate "undated photo."

Photographer attribution varies based on the type of photo, with distinctions

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made for staff, member, handout, and pool images. If corrections are necessary, such as fixing inaccuracies or adding crucial background information, these changes should be documented clearly within the captions and context of the photo. In cases where legal issues arise, a photo kill is enacted, while an elimination is applied to objectionable images that do not involve legal risks.

The NAA/IPTC header fields provide a structured way to organize various details relating to the photo, including byline, caption, city, country, credit, and object name. Supplemental categories facilitate the detailed searching of photos, with designations allowing for easy reference, such as "ADV" for advanced photos and "FILE" for archive images. This systematic approach to photo captions ensures that content is informative, accessible, and organized for diverse readership needs.

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## Chapter 6 Summary: Filing The Wire

### ### Summary of "FILING THE WIRE" and "CODING REQUIREMENTS"

This section serves as a comprehensive guide for editors tasked with managing copy submissions efficiently. The guidelines emphasize the need for a systematic approach to categorizing and prioritizing news stories to enhance clarity and organization within editorial processes.

#### #### File Name Structure

Editors must adhere to a specific file naming convention, beginning with a letter representing the Service Level Designator, followed by a four-digit number. This designator indicates the nature of the service and helps identify the urgency and format of the news piece:

#### - **Common Designators:**

- **a** — Spot news
- **b** — Advances



- **s** — Sports copy
- **f** — Financial news
- **Additional Designators** for specialized content include **h** for special sports reports, **p** for packaged spot news, and **r** for race reports.

#### #### Transmission Number Categories and Priority Codes

To convey the urgency of news stories, various priority codes have been established:

#### - **Priority Codes:**

- **f** — Flash (highest urgency)
- **b** — Bulletins
- **u** — Urgent
- **r** — Rush
- **d** — Deferred





- **a** — Weekday advances
- **s** — Sunday advances
- **w** — Release at will

Sorting stories according to specific **Category Codes** aids in organizing submissions into distinct areas like domestic news, entertainment, international affairs, and sports.

#### #### Keyword Slug Line

Each submission must include a structured keyword slug line, which presents critical details such as the cycle designator (e.g., AM, PM, BC), a concise keyword, and the word count. Keywords need to be succinct, limited to a maximum of 21 characters, and they may include recognized abbreviations for easy identification.

#### #### Version Section

This section categorizes submissions based on their versions, indicating where a new item fits among prior submissions. Editors are encouraged to use systematic terminology to distinguish between different types of submissions, including correction and clarification terms.



#### #### Reference Number Section

To enhance tracking and ensure proper organization, this section specifies the transmission number of previously submitted stories, facilitating easy retrieval and reference.

#### #### Format Identifier

The format identifier is crucial in dictating how a news item should be presented, including details like body type and agate type, tailored to the content type. While these identifiers may not appear on the DataStream, they play a pivotal role in ensuring that submissions are properly formatted for processing.

#### ### Special Note to Members

Members are reminded that the format identifiers, although essential for editorial formatting, are not visible in the DataStream interface and therefore require careful attention during submission preparation to ensure consistency and clarity in presentation.

This organized approach not only streamlines the submission process but also enhances the overall efficiency of editorial operations in the fast-paced news industry.



## Chapter 7 Summary: Filing Practices

In the chapter on **Filing Practices**, a systematic approach to content submission and formatting is detailed, providing essential guidelines for reporters and editors to ensure consistency and clarity in news reporting.

**Add Filing** practices necessitate reporters to list the community name, followed by a colon, and indicate an UNDATED status if no specific dateline is available. Importantly, the last two words from the preceding report should also be included as part of this filing.

The chapter outlines procedures for **Advance Slugs**, which require the inclusion of two additional slugs: a dollar sign followed by "Adv" and a specific release date to inform readers about upcoming news.

**Advisories**, characterized as brief, informative notes, carry a category code and serve to highlight relevant news items succinctly. For **Boldface for Slugs**, reporters are instructed to utilize the upper-rail key for emphasis on slug lines to draw attention to crucial information.

In regard to **Bulletins**, the chapter emphasizes brevity and directs that they should conclude with an "APNewsAlert," omitting unnecessary details



such as word count and bylines. A **byline** must consist of the writer's name in uppercase letters, and dual bylines should be used sparingly to avoid clutter.

**Centering Symbols** are introduced as a formatting tool to be placed at the end of bylines, adding visual clarity. The chapter also addresses **Changing Datelines**, which must adhere to a sequence that continues with additional datelines specified in the slug line.

Further clarification of prior stories is accomplished through **Clarifications**, which require approval for accuracy. Instances where corrections are necessary must detail the error and its corresponding paragraph for transparency.

**Dashes** are used to delineate multiple story items, while **Disregards** require advisories to notify recipients to ignore mistakenly sent materials. **Flashes**, though infrequently used, denote significant developments and should follow an APNewsAlert promptly.

**Glances** present short, undated information on main stories, serving as a quick reference. Headlines are crafted to capture the essence of the story, following specific capitalization rules for uniformity.

Guidelines also dictate how to handle **Hold-for-Release Slugs**, which must

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be clearly noted with an "HFR" designation. The chapter explains the process for **Inserts**, specifying where additional text should be located within ongoing stories.

**Kills** are handled according to libel protocols when canceling stories, while **Leads** must follow precise formatting for submitting updates, particularly for significant changes. The use of the AP logo post-dateline is a key identifier.

The chapter provides a structure for indicating any **More Lines** of additional copy required, along with the implementation of **NewsAlerts**, which consist of one-line headlines for soon-to-be-published information.

For editorial clarity, **Nonpublishable Editor's Notes** are marked appropriately, ensuring they do not begin with paragraph symbols, while **Publishable Editor's Notes** follow specific formats for content intended for public release.

**Tables** are constructed according to defined rules, with necessary tab line indicators for visual organization. **Urgents** indicate stories of immediate interest, necessitating careful designation.

Lastly, the chapter explains that **Word Counts** should be included if not automatically generated, and **Writethrus** must be filed for leads in



national services, adhering to guidelines for both state and regional submissions.

Overall, these filing practices create a cohesive framework for managing news content efficiently and accurately, facilitating clear communication within the journalistic community.

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## Chapter 8: U.S. Bureaus

The chapter presents a comprehensive directory of U.S. Associated Press (AP) Bureau locations, with each state listed alongside its primary city and contact details. This directory serves as a valuable resource for individuals seeking news-related services or information from the AP, one of the largest and most trusted news organizations in the world.

Starting in Alaska, the directory lists Anchorage and provides its address and phone number, maintaining a consistent format throughout. The list continues through states such as Arizona with Phoenix, Arkansas with Little Rock, and California, which features major bureaus in both Los Angeles and San Francisco.

As the reader progresses through the directory, more populous regions are highlighted, including the District of Columbia where the Washington D.C. bureau is located. Southern states such as Florida (Miami) and Georgia (Atlanta) are also included, demonstrating the AP's widespread presence throughout the country.

The list methodically includes midwestern states like Illinois (Chicago), Indiana (Indianapolis), and Iowa (Des Moines), illustrating the AP's commitment to covering every corner of the nation. Eastern states such as Maryland (Baltimore) and Massachusetts (Boston) follow, with contact

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details enhancing accessibility for those who might wish to reach out for news inquiries.

In the southern part of the central U.S., Mississippi (Jackson) and Missouri (Kansas City) are listed alongside western locales like Montana (Helena) and

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# Chapter 9 Summary: AP Publications

## AP Publication Pricing and Ordering Information Overview

The AP Publication offers a variety of educational resources tailored for journalism professionals and students, with pricing structured to accommodate members and school bookstores while also providing options for non-members.

### Key Publications and Pricing:

1. **AP Stylebook:** A standard reference for journalists, priced at \$7.75 for AP members, \$9.75 for member school bookstores, and \$11.75 for non-members. Shipping costs are \$4.00 for 1 to 9 copies and \$8.00 for orders of 10 or more.
2. **The Word** by Jack Cappon: A guide focusing on language use in journalism, available for \$4.50 to AP members and \$6.00 for others. Shipping is \$1.00 for up to 5 copies and \$2.00 for 6 or more.
3. **The Picture** by Brian Horton: This book delves into visual storytelling and is priced at \$6.95 for members and \$8.95 for non-members, with a

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similar shipping structure.

4. **Manual de Técnicas de Redacción Periodística** This resource offers writing techniques in Spanish, priced at \$11.95 for AP members and \$13.95 for others. Shipping varies with \$2.95 for up to 10 copies and \$5.95 for larger orders.

5. **Broadcast News Handbook** by Brad Kalbfeld: A comprehensive guide to broadcast journalism, priced at \$14.95 including shipping.

### **Ordering Instructions:**

To place an order, full payment is required via check or money order. It is crucial to note that returns are not accepted, so accuracy in quantity is essential. You can order online at [AP Bookstore](<http://www.apbookstore.com>) or by submitting a mail-in order using the provided order form.

### **Order Form Requirements:**

Ensure your order form includes your name, organization, address, contact information, product quantities, and total costs. Keep in mind to only order

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the required amounts to avoid delays or issues with your order.

This streamlined pricing structure and clear ordering process aim to support journalists and educators in accessing vital resources to enhance their skills and knowledge in the field.

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