



City of Portland Parks & Recreation

# Translation Style Guide for English

*Updated 11/14/2023 by Mindlink Resources, LLC*

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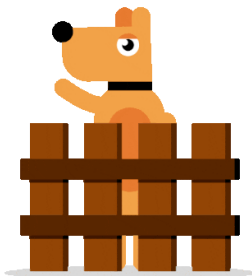
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## Welcome

Welcome to the Style Guide for English. This guide will help you understand how to create source content that will be successfully translated in a way that best reflects the Portland Parks & Recreation voice.

The Style Guide is a reference tool for content developers such as writers, translators, editors, reviewers, graphic designers, and project coordinators. The purpose of this Style Guide is to ensure all content leads follow the guidance outlined here to keep voice, tone, and style consistent in all multilingual communications.

## Portland Parks & Recreation Voice



Some principles form the foundation of our voice:

- **Warm and relaxed:** We're natural. Less formal, more grounded in honest conversations. Occasionally, we're fun. (We know when to celebrate.)
- **Ready to lend a hand:** We show customers we're on their side. We anticipate their real needs and offer great information at just the right time. (Think: "Friendly Neighbor")

## Translation goals

Our goal with website translation is for the language to closely match what is in the source material. It may not be an exact match because it also needs to sound natural and most importantly, as though it was written in the language it is in. It should never sound awkward or strange.

Translators should feel free to change the flow of sentences in longer form web content. Combining two sentences into one (or turning one sentence into two) might be necessary as part of the translation and this is fine as long as the overall intent of the content is maintained.

We want to use neutral language translation for style, syntax, and vocabulary. Use the language acceptable to the widest possible audience that speaks the language.

## Guidelines

We generally follow what's in our content style guidelines and the voice and tone guidelines when writing for users that speak other languages. Although we often use complex terms and definitions, **we strive for an eighth grade reading level** in all our new content. **We use plain language whenever possible.** We also try to be conversational and very straightforward in the language we use.

However, we know that in some cultures, informal language might be considered offensive, or it won't be taken seriously. We'll work with the translators to decide whether informal or formal language is best for our audience that speaks the language.

When possible, we should strive to create quality source material to help translators make the best use of their knowledge and tools. The following lists some guidelines that can help create consistent source material.

## Guidance for Common Phrases

### Where?

#### Addresses with house numbers

*Helensview Community Garden  
8678 NE Sumner Street  
Portland, OR 97220*

*East Portland Community Center  
740 SE 106th Ave  
Portland, OR 97216*

*Portland Parks & Recreation Customer Service Center  
1134 SW 5th Ave, Portland, OR 97204*

For addresses with house numbers, abbreviate the direction (NE, NW, SE, SW, N., E., S., W.) and the words St., Ave. and Blvd.

Do not abbreviate Drive, Circle, Road, Terrace, Lane, Highway or any other street types.

Sometimes the location will include just the address and no city, state, or zip:

*Ventura Park  
460 SE 113th Avenue*

#### Street names without house numbers

*NW 20th Ave.*

*SE McLoughlin Blvd*

*Interstate 84*

When mentioning the proper name of a street without a specific address, spell out and capitalize both the direction and the street type.

*SW 42nd Ave*

#### Intersections

*Alberta Park, NE 19th Avenue and Ainsworth Street*

*Gateway Discovery Park, NE 106th Avenue and Halsey Street*

Follow the same guidelines as addresses without house numbers with the exception that if the street type is the same, pluralize and do not capitalize.

#### States

*Oregon*

*Hillsboro, Ore.*

*Portland, OR 97211*

### Who?

Use people or residents, not citizens.

#### Contact information

*For more information, email [jane.citizen@gmail.com](mailto:jane.citizen@gmail.com) or call 800-555-1234, ext. 12.*

*Learn more at [www.portland.gov/parks/parks-levy](http://www.portland.gov/parks/parks-levy)*

Area codes are set off by a hyphen, not parentheses.

Toll-free numbers do not require a 1- at the beginning.

Don't use the word please if it isn't needed for emphasis or tone.

Either refer to the website or give the URL, not both. Omit http:// unless the URL does not begin with www.

Email addresses are lowercase.

What do you mean "we"?

*We value clean air and water.*

*The Advisory Council wants to hear from you.*

Avoid using first person unless you are writing a letter or from a very specific point of view with an obvious speaker.

"We" means "the people of the region," not the City or a particular department or program.

Speaking directly to you is fine (and often good).

Titles

*Commissioner Carmen Rubio*

*Director Adena Long*

Generally, only elected officials have capitalized titles.

When?

Time

*9 a.m. to noon*

*1:30 to 4 p.m.*

*8 a.m. to 5 p.m.*

The abbreviations a.m. and p.m. need periods.

Time that is on the hour does not need :00.

Use noon and midnight.

In a time span use to not a dash.

If both times in a span are either a.m. or p.m., just use it once at the end of the span.

Date

*September 2008*

*April 23, 1970, was a good day.*

*Monday, Aug. 25*

*the 1980s*

Do not abbreviate the month or use a comma when not including the day of the month.

When a phrase refers to a month, date and year, set off the year with commas.

When including the date, use Jan., Feb., March, April, May, June, July, Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec.

Don't use an apostrophe when describing a decade.

How many?

*three blind mice*

*8 percent*

*a five-mile hike*

*She is 5 years old.*

*a 2-acre property*

*A 13-year-old boy*

*a three-story building*

*\$3 fee*

*2 acres of wetlands*

*\$227.4 million bond measure*

*4 square miles*

Generally, one through nine and first through ninth are spelled out and figures are used for 10 and above.

Exceptions include percents, age, dollar amounts and dimensions, which always use figures.

Use \$ and not dollar for monetary amounts.

For area (e.g. acres) always use figures; for distances (e.g. miles) only use figures for 10 and above.

Fewer cars on the road will create less pollution over the city and save the region more than \$10 million in transportation funds.

Over is a spatial term; more than is preferred for numerals and amounts; use fewer for individual items and less for bulk or quantity.

What else?

Commas

Drop the comma before "and" and "or" in a series unless the sentence is confusing without it.

Spaces

Use one space, not two, between sentences.

Acronyms

We'd like to avoid the use of acronyms when translating as much as possible, but we know they'll inevitably come up. The use of acronyms in other languages is not ideal since they are not used as often or in the same way. How acronyms are localized depends on what is being translated.

If the acronym is not widely recognized, it should be fully translated with the acronym in parenthesis.

After that, just the acronym can be used.

*Example: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) would be translated as Ley de Estadounidenses con Discapacidades (ADA)*

If the acronym has international recognition (UN), translate with the source and acronym in parenthesis.

After that, just the acronym can be used.

*Example: Naciones Unidas (ONU)*

#%&@!

Avoid symbols.

Spell out percent unless used in a table.

Do not use ampersands unless part of a formal name (e.g. Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District and Portland Parks & Recreation).

Be very sparing with exclamation points.

### Links

When a link takes the reader to an English page, hyperlink the (en inglés) also:

Do this: [Ahorra tiempo y dinero \(en inglés\)](#)

## Do not translate

Don't translate footers, headers or application or website (portland.gov) names.

## Inclusive Language

### Avoid ableist language

When trying to achieve a friendly and conversational tone, problematic ableist language might slip in. This can come in the form of figures of speech and other turns of phrase. Be sensitive to your word choice, especially when aiming for an informal tone. Ableist language includes words or phrases such as crazy, insane, blind to or blind eye to, cripple, dumb, and others. Choose alternative words depending on the context.



*Focus on people, not disabilities. Don't use words that imply pity, such as stricken with or suffering from. Don't mention a disability unless it's relevant.*

### Avoid unnecessarily gendered language

In addition to being mindful of the pronouns used in narrative examples, be sensitive to other possible sources of gendered language.

Use gender-neutral alternatives for common terms. Avoid compound words containing man or men, or similar constructions in your language. Don't use gendered pronouns (she, her, he, him, etc.) in generic references. Instead:

- Rewrite to use the second or third person (you or one).
- Rewrite the sentence to have a plural noun and pronoun.
- Use articles instead of a pronoun (for example, the document instead of his document).
- Refer to a person's role (reader, employee, customer, or client, for example).
- Use person or individual.

Example:



*Equipment installation takes around 16 man-hours to complete.*



*Equipment installation takes around 16 person-hours to complete*

Use people-first language:

- Use "people with disabilities" and not "the disabled," "disabled people," or "victim of."

- Spanish: Use “personas con discapacidades,” not “discapacitados.”

Inclusive Language Resources:

<https://content-guide.18f.gov/our-style/inclusive-language/>

<https://consciousstyleguide.com/>

## File Preparation

If possible, provide the following when requesting translation:

For general word document

You can submit documents without graphics as a word file. It’s ideal to create a two-column table breaking up paragraphs. Ask the translation supplier to deliver a bilingual file as well as a final formatted file.

For PDF, Graphics

Translators prefer to work with the native files and not PDF’s. If at all possible, refrain from sending PDF’s for translation.

When sending InDesign files, send the “package” files including fonts and all assets used. The translators will be able to create a print-ready file from these files.

Fonts

Fonts should stay the same size unless special permission to reduce font size has been granted. There are no font preferences if the target language is not supported by the source font. This discussion should be initiated by the translator if it becomes an issue.



*Keep in mind that text can expand and contract depending on the language pair. When you make a request for multiple languages project, please be aware that the final translation can be longer or shorter than the source document.*

Source	Target	Expansion/Reduction
<b>English</b>	Russian	15%
<b>English</b>	Spanish	15 -30%
<b>English</b>	Chinese	-10% (or more)

Images

Images and illustrations may carry another meaning in some cultures. Translators may decide to change media that does not work with localization.

Tips

Before finalizing the translation, be sure to do the following:

- Use spell-checker or a similar software to check for content that has not yet been translated.



- Check to make sure numbered lists have maintained the correct numbers or been updated. These can change during the translation process.
- Look at the overall content once it has been translated. Does it fit in the modals, popovers, tooltips and other areas of the application correctly? Is the content aligned, so the text isn't running off the screen?

## Review process

Once content has been professionally translated, our preference is to have designated bilingual employees do a deep dive into the translated content. If available, these employees will provide an internal review of the translation company's work, looking for grammatical and factual errors.

## Timeframe

Allow plenty of time for preparing your document and think about details such as budget and timeline.

Make realistic time expectations. As a rule, we need **up to two weeks** to process an order and go through all the stages.

Plan ahead so you don't have to send "RUSH" projects (which usually incur additional fees).

## Terms to Know

### Computer-Aided Translation (CAT)

Translation made with a tool that provides tools to aid in providing quality translations. Our CAT Tool of choice at Mindlink is "WordBee Translator".

### Localization

Localization (also referred to as "l10n") is the process of adapting a product or content to a specific locale or market.

### Machine Translation

Machine Translation is translation carried out by a computer.

### Post Editing

Post-editing (or postediting) is the process whereby humans amend machine-generated translation to achieve an acceptable final product. A person who post-edits is called a post-editor. The concept of post-editing is linked to that of pre-editing.

### Translation

Translation is the communication of meaning from one language (the source) to another language (the target). Translation refers to written information, whereas interpretation refers to spoken information.

### Translation Memory

A **translation memory** (TM) is a database that stores "segments", which can be sentences, paragraphs or sentence-like units (headings, titles or elements in a list) that have previously been **translated**, in order to aid human translators.