

# NAAI 1450.3, Guidelines and Standards for NASA Letters and Memorandums

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# Introduction

This document, NASA Advisory Implementing Instructions (NAII) 1450.3, *Guidelines and Standards for Effective Communication and Correspondence*, provides detailed guidance on the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) correspondence standards and requirements and is to be used in correlation with NPR 1450.10E, Office of the Administrator Correspondence, Actions, and Clearance Procedural Requirements.

The purpose of this document is to ensure consistency, professionalism, and accuracy in all forms of written communication across the Agency. These standards are critical in maintaining the high level of clarity and precision expected of NASA correspondence, both internally and externally.

This NAII applies to all NASA personnel and contractors involved in the preparation, review, and distribution of written communications. It covers all forms of official correspondence, including, memoranda, letters, and materials.

The following sections will outline the specific formatting requirements, language guidelines, and approval processes for all types of correspondence, ensuring that every communication reflects NASA's quality standards.

# Chapter 1: Formatting

The following guidelines outline NASA's key standards for formatting. For more detailed writing guidelines and examples, please refer to this document's Writing Guidelines chapter.

## 1.1 What are NASA's General Formatting Guidelines?

**Font.** Times New Roman 12-point font is preferred. A similar serif font will be permitted if circumstances require. Use script or italic only for occasional emphasis and publication titles.

**Spacing.** Two spaces after periods and colons is preferred. For correspondence, line spacing should be single-spaced and margins should never be justified.

**Indents.** When writing a letter, use a half-inch indent or use the Tab key.

**Margins.** Set the left margin two spaces to the right of the printed caption "Reply to Attn of:" Set the top margin at one inch on the second and succeeding pages. Margins should align with letterhead margins.

**Stationery.** All official correspondence initiated by the Office of the Administrator, Headquarters offices, and Centers will be prepared on letterhead containing the red, white, and blue "meatball" NASA logo. Additional guidance on letterhead and stationery is provided in chapter 10. Use plain bond paper for succeeding pages.

For letterhead ordering procedures, contact the Headquarters or Center Printing Office.

**Reply to Attn of: line.** For Headquarters letters, include the writer's organization on all correspondence. Centers should use office codes.

**Hyperlinks.** Hyperlinks within text should be dark blue to identify the text as linked, but not be distracting to the reader.

The preferred blue in Microsoft Word is [Blue](#), HEX Code [#3333CC](#).

If the document may be printed, it is best to provide the web address in the text or in the footnotes, so that readers can still refer to the web address.

**Bullets.** Always use the same solid black bullet for bulleted lists. Do not use any other bullet style for official correspondence.

**Commas.** Always add a serial comma before "and" and "or" in a series of three or more. Always use a comma to combine two independent clauses combined by the word "and."

*Example: I would like an Agency honor award, and she would like a Headquarters honor award.*

**Numbers.** Always spell numbers ten or less. Do not use the symbol %; instead use “percent.”

**Dating Correspondence.** Center the date two lines above the “Reply to Attn of:” line (e.g., August 20, 2024). Do not use military style (e.g., 20 Aug 2024) or endings such as “st” or “th” after the day (e.g., Aug 20th). Type the date on all letters. A date in the electronic signature does not replace the need for a typed or stamped date.

**New Paragraphs at the End of a Page.** Do not begin a paragraph near the end of a page unless there is room for at least two lines on that page. Do not continue a paragraph on the following page unless two lines of that paragraph can be carried over to that page.

**Succeeding Pages.** Letterhead should be used for the first page only. Succeeding pages should not be on letterhead, and page numbers should be on succeeding pages only, in the top right corner.

**Enclosures.** When an enclosure accompanies a memo or letter, type the word “Enclosure” flush with the left margin, two lines below the last line of the signer’s name or title. For consistency, identify either all or none of the enclosures in the text.

**Enclosures Identified in the Text.** When possible, identify enclosures in the text in as few words as possible or by title. If there is more than one enclosure, indicate the number as follows:

3 Enclosures

**Enclosures Not Identified in the Text.** When enclosures are not identified in the text, type the list at the left margin. List each enclosure on a separate line as in the following examples:

Example of unnumbered enclosures:

4 Enclosures:

Form Letters Handbook

Plain Letters Pamphlet

Organizational Chart

The NASA Scientific and Technical Information System

or

Example of numbered enclosures:

3 Enclosures:

1. Form Letters Handbook
2. Plain Letters Pamphlet
3. Organizational Chart

### **Marking Enclosures.**

On the first page of each enclosure, type the word “Enclosure” in the lower right corner, e.g., Enclosure, Enclosure 1, or Enclosure 2.

Before distributing the memo or letter, ensure the number of enclosures shown in the enclosure notation agrees with the number cited in the body of the letter and with the number of items actually enclosed or attached.

## **1.2 Concurrences**

### **Obtaining and Documenting Concurrences**

If concurrences are required, type the office titles and names of concurring officials on the bottom of the memo or letter, following the signature block. Concurring officials sign and date in the space provided.

Use the following format when preparing a document for concurrence or approval:

Concurrence:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name and Title)                      (Date)

Approval:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name and Title)                      (Date)

*Note: You will encounter this most often for memos.*

## 1.3 Courtesy Copies

**Adding Courtesy Copies (cc).** Include a distribution list for courtesy copies on the original letter when the recipient should know who else received copies. Type “cc:” at the left margin two lines below the signature block or enclosure line. Directly below “cc:” single space the list of recipients using office or organizational codes.

**Titles.** For internal and external communications, titles are preferred but can be omitted as long as names are consistently formatted. Here are examples listed in order of preference:

cc:

Office of the General Counsel/Mr. Brown  
Office of the General Counsel/Mr. E. Brown  
Office of the General Counsel/E. Brown

Examples of a designated official in an “Acting” capacity:

cc:

CIO/Mr. Smith (Acting)  
CIO/Mr. W. Smith (Acting)  
CIO/W. Smith (Acting)

A dual-column “cc:” distribution list is permitted when the list is too long to fit in a single column on one page.

**Acronym use.** Using acronyms in the “cc” list is permitted for internal use only. This means only memos should be permitted to use acronyms in the “cc” list. Letters, which are generally external, should spell out the names of organizations.

**Preferred Order.** Before typing the list of recipients of courtesy copies, study the example below for the correct order. If the letter has enclosures, indicate any recipients who were not sent enclosures by typing the notation “(w/o encls.)” after their names.

Example of a “cc” list on correspondence originating from GSFC:

cc:

GSFC/100/Mr. Gonzales

1. Originator’s addressees first\*



GSFC/100/Ms. Pierpoint

HQ/Chief Education Officer/Ms. Roberts

2. Headquarters addressees next.\*

HQ/CFO/Ms. Warren

HQ/CIO/Ms. Orrell

HQ/Ofc of the Administrator/Ms. Johnson

ARC/200-1/Ms. Chenier

3. Centers' codes next.\*

JSC/AA/Ms. Lopez

\*\*EPA/Mr. Johnson (w/o encl.)

4. Federal agencies next.\*

\*\*GSA/Mr. Brown (w/o encl.)

AT&T/Ms. Smith

5. Non-Federal organizations last.\*\*

\*All lists should be in seniority order. If seniority is unknown, list in alphabetical and numerical order.

\*\*If an organizational acronym is used without first spelling it out, it should be well known to the recipient of the letter.

## **1.4 What are NASA's Guidelines on Accessibility**

### **Where can I find the guidelines for 508 compliance?**

508 requirements for specific types of documents can be found at [What is Accessibility and 508 Compliance? \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

For further detailed information on 508 Compliance and Accessibility, please visit [Accessibility & Section 508 \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

## Chapter 2: NASA's Guidelines on Memoranda

NASA policy is to use memos for internal (Agency-wide) use only. Letters are used for external and internal formal use; (e.g., congratulations, retirement, or condolence). Before preparing memos, study the examples in this chapter. These guidelines provide standard attributes for correct memo formatting within and among all NASA Centers, including Headquarters.

### 2.1 Standard Memo Attributes

**Address.** Always type the “TO:,” “THRU:,” “FROM:,” and “SUBJECT:” in all caps.

**TO:** Type “TO:” at the left margin, three typing returns below the “Reply to Attn of:” line. Seven spaces after “TO:,” type the title of addressee. The use of titles is preferred; however, if an individual does not use a title, it is acceptable to have a memo from a title to a name or from a name to a name (use full name; e.g., Office of STEM Engagement/John A. Smith).

**THRU:** Use the “THRU:” line when one or more addressees are needed to endorse (i.e., approve, concur, coordinate) the document prior to its receipt by the addressee and when the endorsement needs to appear on the original document. The “THRU:” line addressee signs and dates the memo next to his or her name before forwarding. Type “THRU:” directly below the last line of the “TO:” line. Align the addressee information with the “TO:” line above. Single-space between each “THRU:” line addressee.

**FROM:** Type “FROM:” at the left margin, two typing returns below the “TO:” or “THRU:” line. The text aligns with the “TO:” or “THRU:” line. The “FROM:” line includes the office name and title of the signer and should align with the “TO:” or “THRU:” lines. The use of titles is preferred; however, if an individual does not use a title, it is acceptable to have a memo to a title from a name or from a name to a name (use full name; e.g., Office of STEM Engagement /John A. Smith).

**SUBJECT:** Type “SUBJECT:” at the left margin in all caps, two typing returns below the last line of the “FROM:” line. Begin the text of the subject line two spaces after the colon. If more than one line is needed for the subject, begin succeeding lines aligned with the first character of the subject. State concisely the main topic of the memo. If acronyms or abbreviations are used in the subject, spell them out, followed by the acronym in parentheses. If an abbreviation or acronym is frequently used in a memo, establish it in the subject line so that only the shortened form is necessary in the body of the correspondence. Capitalize the first letter of only key words within the subject line.

**Reference Line.** Avoid a reference line in a business memo, except when it contributes to the understanding of the correspondence and when the number of references is too great to be

reasonably incorporated in the first paragraph of the memo. Type “REF:” at the left margin, blocked, two typing returns below the last line of the subject, followed by an itemized listing of the references. Abbreviate items as much as possible; e.g., type dates in numerical figures (4/5/22). List references as (a), (b), (c), single spaced in chronological order with the most recent date listed first. Align the paragraphs with the text in the “SUBJECT:” line. See Figure 2-2 of this chapter.

**Body of Memo.** Begin typing the body of the memo two lines below the “SUBJECT:” or “REF:” lines. Use single spaces between rows of text, and use double-space between paragraphs. Type text paragraphs in block form. When a paragraph is broken into subparagraphs, number and letter the subparagraphs as shown in Chapter 3, Figure 3-2. Hyphenate sparingly to ensure a uniform right margin. If you must hyphenate, avoid hyphenating at the end of the first line or the end of the last full line of a paragraph.

### **Signature Blocks**

**Format.** Type the signature information at the left margin, five typing returns below the last line of text. Type the name of the signing official only. Do not use Mr., Mrs., Ms., or Dr., in the signature block.

**Acting Official.** If it is known before typing the letter that an acting official will sign the memo, type that person’s name and the word “Acting” before the title in the “FROM:” line. If the memo has been prepared for the signature of the signing official but is actually signed by another, the person signing will write “for” in front of the typed name. Include the memo’s actual signer as a courtesy copy.

## **2.2 Multiple-Addressee Memos**

Memos are often addressed to more than one individual and require a variety of formats. Study the figures in this chapter before preparing a multiple-addressee memo.

**Addressing Recipients.** For memos addressed to more than three individuals, categorize the recipients. If they do not fall under a specific category, address the memo to “Distribution.” Refer to Figures 2-6 through 2-11 for examples of addressing various multiple-addressee memos.

**Distribution List.** Type the name of the specific group or “Distribution:” two lines below the signature block or enclosure line. List all recipients directly underneath the heading. Use single spacing for the list, arranging names in alphabetical order by Center/Code (or organization), prioritizing names from the signer’s Center. If the distribution list is too lengthy to fit on the same page as the memo, create a separate page for the list, or consider using a dual-column format. After the memo is signed, attach the distribution list to the memo. See Figure 2-7.

## **2.3 Memorandum for the Record**

A memorandum for the record is an informal memo used to establish an official record of telephone conversations, meetings, conferences, or travel. See Figure 2-12.

The original is filed by the author for future reference; therefore, a “TO:” line is not required.

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## **2.4 Memo Figure List**

Figure 2-1 - Standard Memo

Figure 2-2 - Memo w/ “Thru” and “Ref”

Figure 2-3 - Memo from HQ to Center

Figure 2-4 - Memo from Center to HQ

Figure 2-5 - Memo with Approval Line

Figure 2-6 - Memo with Multiple Addressees to OICs and CDs

Figure 2-7 - Multiple Addressee Memo to Specific Group

Figure 2-8 - Multiple Addressee Memo to Distribution

Figure 2-9 - Multiple Addressee Memo to HQ and Center

Figure 2-10 - Multiple Addressee Memo to Three Individuals within a Center

Figure 2-11 - Multiple Addressee Memo Not to Exceed Three Individuals at HQ

Figure 2-12 - Memo for the Record

Figure 2-13 - Multiple Signing Officials

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



(Center date)

Reply to Attn of: NASA Office Name

TO: Associate Administrator for Your Office

FROM: Assistant Administrator for Another Office

SUBJECT: Format for NASA Standard Memorandum

This is the standard format used for preparing memos within NASA. Memos are typed in block style. The "Reply to Attn of:" line is the first line of the memo and establishes the top and left margins.

Use all caps to type TO, FROM, and SUBJECT. Double-space and align each item. The use of titles is preferred; however, a full name is also acceptable.

If more than one line is required for the subject line, begin succeeding lines flush with the first character of the subject. If responding to a memo, use the same subject as the incoming memo. Spell out acronyms or abbreviations and follow them with the acronym in parentheses if they are used in the body of the memo. Capitalize the first letter of key words within the subject line. Do not use a salutation or complimentary close.

Signer Name

Enclosure

cc:  
Division Name/Ms. Doe

**Figure 2-1**  
**Standard Memo**

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



(Center date)

Reply to Attn of: NASA Office Name

TO: Associate Administrator for Your Office  
THRU: Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer  
  
FROM: Assistant Administrator for Another Office  
  
SUBJECT: "THRU" and "REF" Lines in Standard Memos  
  
REF: (a) U.S. Government Correspondence Manual, May 2024  
(b) NAI, NASA Writing Standards

This is an example of a one-paragraph memo that consists of less than 10 lines.

Note that it can be double-spaced. Use this format when "THRU" and "REF" lines are used in the memo.

Signer Name

Enclosure

cc:  
Division Name/Ms. Doe

**Figure 2-2**  
**Memo w/ "Thru" and "Ref"**

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



(Center date)

Reply to Attn of: NASA Headquarters Office

TO: Kennedy Space Center  
Attn: Director

FROM: Office of Communications

SUBJECT: Update of Planned Foreign Dignitary Attendance at Upcoming Launch

This is an example of a standard memo from Headquarters to a Center.

Signer Name

Enclosure

**Figure 2-3**  
**Memo from HQ to Center**



National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



(Center Date)

Reply to Attn of: NASA Shared Services Center (This identifies a Center-specific code or organization)  
(Three typing returns)

TO: NASA Headquarters  
Attn: Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer

FROM: NSSC/Correspondence Program Manager

SUBJECT: Standard Memo  
(Three typing returns)

This is an example of a memo from a Center to a Headquarters Office.

*\*HQ letterhead is used for illustrative purposes only. The Center will use its own letterhead.*

**Figure 2-4**  
**Standard Memo from a NASA Center to Headquarters**

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



(Center Date)

Reply to Attn of: Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer (This identifies a Center-specific code or organization)  
(Three typing returns)

TO: Chair, Incentive Board Committee

FROM: Executive Secretary, Incentive Board Committee

SUBJECT: Designation of Expert Panel Members  
(Three typing returns)

I request your approval of the nominations I received from the Incentive Board Committee members for individuals to serve on the expert panel for this year's honor awards nominations (see enclosure).

As soon as your response is received, I will send a formal notification memo to the approved panel members.

Antonio T. Rodriguez

Enclosure

Approval:

\_\_\_\_\_  
James L. Hyde  
Chair, Incentive Board Committee

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

**Figure 2-5**  
**Memo with an Approval Line**

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



(Center Date)

Reply to Attn of: Office of the Mission Support Directorate (This identifies a Center-specific code or organization)  
(Three typing returns)

TO: Officials-in-Charge of Headquarters Offices  
Directors, NASA Centers

FROM: Director, Headquarters Operations and Support

SUBJECT: 2023 Combined Federal Campaign  
(Three typing returns)

The 2023 Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is under way with the opening of the Online Giving System.

Every year our NASA family works together to generously support worthwhile organizations providing much needed services in our communities and worldwide, giving happiness and making a difference through our donations.

There are a number of ways to give. You can make a one-time donation or a recurring gift. You can contribute by convenient payroll deduction or donate your time supporting your favorite CFC charity that accepts volunteer hours.

We appreciate your generosity and help as we begin our 2023 CFC campaign.

Thank you for your support!

Jane Smith

**Figure 2-6**  
**Memo with Multiple Addressees to OICs and CDs**

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



(Center Date)

Reply to Attn of: Office of the Mission Support Directorate (This identifies a Center-specific code or organization)  
(Three typing returns)

TO: Contracting Officer Technical Representatives

FROM: Associate Administrator, Mission Support Directorate

SUBJECT: Multiple Addressee Memo to Specific Group  
(Three typing returns)

When a memo is intended for a specific group of individuals, enter a categorical address on the "TO" line. Do not abbreviate or use acronyms in either the "TO" or "FROM" lines. Establish the use of the acronym by spelling it out first, followed by the acronym in parentheses, either in the "SUBJECT" line or the first time it is used in the text.

List all recipients at the bottom of the memo under the heading of the categorical address.

Jane Smith

NASA Contracting Officer Technical Representatives:  
Space Operations Mission Directorate/Ms. Hart  
Office of the Chief Engineer/Mr. Jasper  
Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate/Dr. Carmen  
KSC/Ms. Pierce

**Figure 2-7**  
**Multiple Addressee Memo to Specific Group**

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



(Center Date)

Reply to Attn of: Office of the Mission Support Directorate (This identifies a Center-specific code or organization)  
(Three typing returns)

TO: Distribution

FROM: Associate Administrator, Mission Support Directorate

SUBJECT: Multiple-Addressee Memo to Distribution  
(Three typing returns)

When no categorical address can be identified, the "TO:" line should be addressed to  
"Distribution."

List all recipients at the bottom of the memo under a separate heading of "Distribution."

Jane Smith

Distribution:  
Office of STEM Engagement/Ms. Green  
Science Mission Directorate/Dr. Turner  
Office of Communications/Mr. Miller  
GSFC/Dr. Rice

cc:  
Office of the Administrator/Ms. James

**Figure 2-8**  
**Multiple Addressee Memo to Distribution**

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



(Center Date)

Reply to Attn of: Space Operations Mission Directorate  
(Three typing returns)

TO: Chief Safety and Mission Assurance Officer

Marshall Space Flight Center  
Attn: DA01/Director

FROM: Associate Administrator for Exploration Systems Development Mission Directorate

SUBJECT: Multiple Addressee Memo to Headquarters and Center from Headquarters  
(Three typing returns)

Use this format when addressing a memo to an individual at Headquarters and to an individual at a NASA Center.

**Figure 2-9**  
**Multiple-Addressee Memo to Headquarters and a NASA Center**

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



(Center Date)

Reply to Attn of: Space Operations Mission Directorate  
(Three typing returns)

TO: Goddard Space Flight Center  
Attn: 151/Chief, Financial Management Division  
201/Chief, Institutional Support Office  
331/Chief, Facilities Division

FROM: Associate Administrator for Science Mission Directorate

SUBJECT: Multiple-Addressee Memo to Center from Headquarters  
(Three typing returns)

When a memo is addressed to no more than three individuals at the same NASA Center, list the individuals either alphabetically or numerically (single-space between addressees). If four or more individuals are being addressed, address the memo to "Distribution" as depicted in Figure 2-8.

**Figure 2-10**  
**Multiple-Addressee Memo to Three Individuals Within a NASA Center**

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



(Center Date)

Reply to Attn of: Office of Strategic Infrastructure  
(Three typing returns)

TO: Associate Administrator for Exploration Systems Development Mission Directorate  
Associate Administrator for Science Mission Directorate  
Associate Administrator for Space Operations Mission Directorate

FROM: Associate Administrator for Procurement

SUBJECT: Multiple-Addressee Memo  
(Three typing returns)

Memos may be addresses to up to three individuals within Headquarters or a NASA Center. If the number of addressees exceeds three, address the memo to "Distribution" as depicted in Figure 2-8.

**Figure 2-11**  
**Multiple Addressee Memo not to Exceed Three Individuals Within Headquarters**



National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



(Center Date)

Reply to Attn of: **MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD**  
(Three typing returns)

Form March 8 through March 12, 2025, William F. Johnson may approve use of the autopen for the Administrators correspondence.

Paul B. Johnson  
Director, Flight Operations

cc:  
Office of the Administrator/Ms. Johnson  
Office of the Administrator/Mr. Smith  
Office of the Administrator/Ms. Webb

**Figure 2-12**  
**Memorandum for the Record**

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



(Center Date)

Reply to Attn of: Office of STEM Engagement  
(Three typing returns)

TO: Associate Administrator for Exploration Systems Development Mission Directorate

FROM: Associate Administrator for Procurement  
Associate Administrator for Science Mission Directorate  
Associate Administrator for Space Operations Mission Directorate

SUBJECT: Multiple Signing Officials Memo  
(Three typing returns)

Memos signed by more than one signing official should use this example as reference. It will ensure your office uses the proper format.

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an example of the signature format associated with multi-signatory memorandums. This will help streamline the process and ensure that documents adhere to NASA's requirements.

James Doe  
Associate Administrator for  
Procurement

Jane Williams  
Associate Administrator for  
Science Mission Directorate

Janice Smith  
Associate Administrator for  
Space Operations Mission Directorate

**Figure 2-13**  
**Multiple Signing Officials Within Headquarters**

# Chapter 3: NASA’s Guidelines on Letters

## 3.1 Standard Letter

Before writing any letters, please review the guidelines in this chapter. They outline the standard formatting for NASA letters.

Indents. When writing a letter, use a five-inch indent or use the Tab key. All letters should be indented.

## 3.2 Inside Address

Type the address at the left margin, three typing returns below the “Reply to Attn of:” line. Type the addressee’s full name and title. Do not abbreviate names or use nicknames. If the sex is unknown, address the individual by first and last name in the salutation line; e.g., “Dear Kris Szaniawski.” Do not address the individual by title. Single-space the address and arrange it in block style.

Type the elements of the address information as follows:

- a. Line 1: Name of Recipient;
- b. Line 2: Title, if applicable;
- c. Line 3: Company, Federal Agency, Organization;
- d. Line 4: Delivery or Street Address;
- e. Line 5: City, State, and ZIP Code.

The following examples show the various acceptable order of the address information:

<b>Non-NASA Addressee</b>	<b>Non-NASA with Nine-Digit ZIP Code</b>
Mr. Paul B. Smith President and Chief Executive Officer United Space Alliance 1150 Gemini Avenue Houston, TX 77058	Mr. Thomas R. Wittor Director of Personnel Providence Software Company, Inc. 892 Market Street Chicago, IL 60601-1234
<b>Non-NASA Addressee</b>	<b>NASA Addressee</b>
Mr. J. Richard Brown President National Aviation Club 1500 N. Johnson Street, Suite 104* Alexandria, VA 22311 *Preferred Suite Placement	Mr. Kevin Garrett Director Kennedy Space Center National Aeronautics and Space Administration Kennedy Space Center, FL 32899

	(Shows "NASA" written out)
<b>NASA Addressee</b>  Mr. James. R. Johnson Director NASA Glenn Research Center 21000 Brookpark Road Cleveland, OH 44135 (Shows "NASA" and "Center" on one line)	<b>NASA Addressee</b>  Dr. Parker A. Roberts Director, NASA Management Office NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory 4800 Oak Grove Drive Pasadena, CA 91109-8099 (Shows "NASA" and "Center" on one line)
<b>International Addressee with Unidentifiable Sex</b>  Kris Szaniawski Editor World Statesman 1 Great Cumberland Place London W1 H7AL ENGLAND** **Preferred for inside address but mandatory for addressing the envelope.	<b>International Addressee with Delivery Zone</b>  Mr. W. MacDonald Evans President Canadian Space Agency 6767 route de l'Aeroport Saint-Hubert, Quebec J3Y 8Y9 CANADA** **Preferred for inside address but mandatory for addressing the envelope.
<b>NASA Addressee</b>  Ms. Jane Smith Chief Information Officer Suite 4E36 NASA Headquarters Washington, DC 20546-0001	<b>Non-NASA with Nine-Digit ZIP Code</b>  Mr. N. T. Saunders Chairman, Ethics Committee U.S. Department of Transportation 2100 Second Street, SW Washington, DC 20593-0001

**Address Lines.** No line of the address should be longer than 3 1/2 inches. If an item requires two lines, indent the second line two spaces from the left margin. Limit the address to five lines if possible.

**Address Salutation.** Chapter 9, Mailing Addresses and Envelopes, contains proper salutations for domestic and international addresses. The incoming document usually contains the correct address format and is also a good reference.

### 3.3 Body of Letter

Single-space between rows of text and double-space between paragraphs. Type text paragraphs in block form. When a paragraph is separated into subparagraphs, number and

letter the subparagraphs as shown in Figure 3-2 of this chapter. Hyphenate sparingly to ensure a uniform right margin.

### 3.4 Complimentary Close

A personalized business letter requires a complimentary close. Use “Sincerely,” for all NASA correspondence. Use “Respectfully,” when the letter is addressed to the President of the United States.

### 3.5 Signature Blocks

**Format.** Type the signature information 3 inches from the left margin, four or five typing returns below the complimentary close. Type the name, title, and office of the signing official. Do not use titles such as Mr., Mrs., Ms., or Dr. in the signature block. Indent runover title lines two spaces.

Example 1:

Cheryl L. Ellison  
Correspondence Control  
Assistant  
Office of the Chief Engineer

Example 2:

Susan D. Minor  
Chief of Staff  
Office of the Administrator

**Dual-Signature Blocks.** If two people are to sign a letter, arrange the two signature blocks side by side or one beneath the other.

If signature blocks are to be placed side by side, begin the first signature block at the left margin and the second block at center. If this arrangement is used, the complimentary close should also begin at the left margin. (This arrangement is appropriate for all letter styles.) When NASA is the originating Agency, the signature block for the NASA official should be at the left margin. Example:

Sincerely,  
Robert T. Morgan  
Administrator  
National Aeronautics and Space  
Administration

Margaret Garvey  
Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration

If the signature blocks are positioned one beneath the other, begin typing the second block on the fourth line below the end of the first block, aligned at left.

Example:

Sincerely,

Robert T. Morgan  
Administrator  
National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration

Margaret Garvey  
Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration

Acting Official. If it is known before typing that an acting official will sign the letter, type that person's name and the word "Acting" before the title in the signature block. If the letter has been prepared for the signature of the signing official but is actually to be signed by another, the person signing will write "for" in front of the typed name. Include the actual signer as a courtesy copy.

### **3.6 Nonpersonalized Business Letter**

Study the examples in this section before preparing nonpersonalized business letters. The nonpersonalized business letter is a format for specific types of communications with organizations outside NASA. Use this format when the addressee's name is unknown or when a letter is addressed to an organization with attention to a specific individual for special handling.

Attention Line. In the nonpersonalized business letter, an attention line generally follows the first line of the address at the left margin.

Salutation. There is no salutation.

Subject. Type the word "Subject:" at the left margin, three typing returns below the last line of the address. One-line subjects are preferred. If more than one line is needed for the subject, begin succeeding lines flush with the first character of the subject. Keep the subject short; state concisely the main topic of the letter. Lengthy subjects are discouraged. If responding to a letter with a "Subject:" line, use the same subject. If acronyms or abbreviations are used in the subject, spell them out, followed by the acronym in parentheses. If an abbreviation or acronym is frequently used in a letter, establish it in the subject line so that only the shortened form is necessary in the body of the correspondence. Capitalize the first letter of only key words within the subject line.

**Reference.** Avoid a separate reference line in a business letter, except when it contributes to the understanding of the correspondence and when the number of references is too great to be reasonably incorporated in the first paragraph of the letter. Type “Ref:” at the left margin, blocked, two typing returns below the last line of the subject, followed by an itemized listing of the references. Abbreviate items as much as possible; e.g., type dates in numerical figures (4/15/22). List references as (a), (b), (c), single-spaced, in chronological order with the most recent date listed first. See Figure 3-3 of this chapter.

**Text.** Prepare the text portion in indented format, the same as the standard business letter.

**Complimentary Close.** There is no complimentary close.

### **3.7 Legal Letter**

The Office of the General Counsel, the Office of the Inspector General, and the Offices of the Chief and Patent Counsel at NASA Centers use the legal letter format. Use this format solely for legal correspondence relating to a specific case, protest, patent, or license.

**Format.** The legal letter format is based on the standard business letter with the exception of a caption as explained in paragraph 3.5.3 below. All other elements are the same as the standard business letter.

**Caption.** Begin the caption by typing “Re:” indented five spaces from the left margin. Use the caption to cite the specific case which is the topic of the letter; e.g., protest, patent, or license. If more than one line is needed, begin succeeding lines flush with the first line of the caption. Indent the entire caption five spaces from the right margin of the letter.

### **3.8 Multiple-Addressee Letters**

Study the figures in this chapter before preparing a multiple-addressee letter. Use this format for addressees outside NASA or when a more personalized format is needed for addressees within NASA; e.g., award, thank you and congratulatory letters, or personal invitations.

**Format.** Prepare identical letters to more than one individual in the same format as the standard business letter.

**Original and Copies.** Prepare an original letter for each recipient. Document the list of addressees as follows:

a. When identifying multiple recipients. When the recipient of a letter needs to know who received identical letters, type “Identical letter to:” two typing returns below the signature block

or enclosure line. On the next line, begin the list of recipients of the letter. If there is not enough space at the bottom of the page, type the list on a separate sheet, after the letter.

b. When not identifying multiple recipients. Multiple recipients do not have to be listed on or within the letter. In this instance, the names should not be listed and a copy of the letters sent should be kept in the official record.

Exception. When the list of addressees is mostly within NASA, but includes a few individuals from outside NASA, use the multiple-addressee letter as shown in this chapter. An example would be when non-NASA individuals participate in NASA committees or advisory groups.

### **3.9 Condolence Letters**

A condolence letter will be prepared by the applicable office for the Administrator's signature upon notification of the death of an employee or upon the death of a former employee or immediate family member of a current or former employee.

The Office of the Administrator requests that the letter be completed and mailed within three business days after receipt of notification of the death.

A condolence letter, signed by the Administrator, does not preclude office members and colleagues from sending other condolence communications.

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### **3.10 Letter Figure List**

Figure 3-1 - Standard Business Letter w/ Enclosures and Courtesy Copies

Figure 3-2 - Standard Business Letter with Subparagraphs

Figure 3-3 - Nonpersonalized Business Letter with Reference

Figure 3-4 - Legal Letter Format

Figure 3-5 - Multiple Addressee Letter to Non-NASA Addressees

Figure 3-6 - Letter to Dual Addressees

Figure 3-7 - Dual Signature Letter

National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



(Center Date)

Reply to Attn of: Office of Communications (Should align with "Reply to Attn of:")

Ms. Jane Doe  
Resident  
Street Address  
City, State Abbreviation 12345 (Zip code two spaces after state abbreviation)

Dear Ms. Doe:

This is the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA's) standard business letter with enclosures and courtesy copies. This letter is used to correspond with addresses outside of NASA. It is also used within NASA when a more personalized format is appropriate (e.g., award and congratulatory letters, or personal invitations).

The "Reply to Attention Of:" is the originators office name which is located at left margin followed by three spaces. It is also two spaces below the centered date. The date should be in standard format (e.g., October 1, 2024) not military style (e.g., 01 October 2024). It should not include st or th (e.g., October 1<sup>st</sup>, September 8<sup>th</sup>).

A standard business letter includes a salutation (Dear) and a complimentary closing (Sincerely). It does not include attention or subject lines. The text should begin two returns after the salutation. The text is single spaced with double spacing between paragraphs. Do not begin a paragraph near the end of a page unless there is enough space or two lines of the paragraph. Do not begin an additional page unless there is a minimum of two lines on that page. If there is not enough text to begin an additional page. One inch margins should be maintained left, right, top, and bottom of all correspondence.

Enclosed is the updated NASA Correspondence Manual. It provides detailed instructions on the preparation of letters.

The "cc" list should be in order of preference as follows: Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs /Ms. A. Brown, Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs/A. Brown, or Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs/Ms. Brown. List all names in a consistent format.

Page numbers should be used for letters of more than one page. Use an additional page for two or more lines. Page numbers should be used as a header on top right of each page following page one.

Sincerely,

John Doe (Return five spaces after closing.)  
Program Analyst

Enclosure

cc:  
Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs/Ms. Brown

**Figure 3-1**  
**Standard Business Letter w/Enclosures and Courtesy Copies**

National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



(Center Date)

Reply to Attn of: Office of Communications (Should align with "Reply to Attn of:")

Ms. Jane Doe  
CEO, Jane Doe Enterprises  
Street Address  
City, State Abbreviation 12345 (Zip code two spaces after state abbreviation)

Dear Ms. Doe:

In long and complicated letters, subparagraphs may be used for clarity and may be helpful as a reference aid. Main paragraphs should be indented.

1. Subparagraphs. Subparagraphs should be single spaced between lines and double spaced between paragraphs.
  - a. Observe the following sequence when using numbers and letters for subparagraphs; e.g., 1., a., 1), a).
  - b. When referring to numbered and lettered paragraphs, reference the numbers and letters without spaces. For example, see 1a above. Do not reference as 1 a.
2. Headings. Use short headings in lengthy correspondence for ease of reading.

Sincerely,

John Monroe  
Program Analyst

**Figure 3-2**  
**Standard Business Letter with Subparagraphs**

National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



(Center Date)

Reply to Attn of: Office of Communications (Should align with "Reply to Attn of:")

Dr. Alex Gilmore  
University of Houston  
Space Vacuum Research Center  
4800 Calhoun Road  
Houston, TX 77204-1234

Subject: Nonpersonalized Business Letter with Reference

Ref: (a) XYZ Corp. ltr. from J. Doe to John Brooks, dated 5/24/2024  
(b) NASA ltr. from D. Brooks to NASA Colleagues, dated 5/8/2024

NASA uses this format when writing to a corporation. The nonpersonalized business letter is a format for specific types of communications with organizations outside NASA. Use this format when the addressee's name is unknown or when a letter is addressed to an organization with attention to a specific individual for special handling.

Prepare the text portion in the same format as the standard business letter. There is no complimentary close. There is no salutation.

Type the word "Subject:" at the left margin, three typing returns below the last line of the address. One-line subjects are preferred. If more than one line is needed for the subject, begin succeeding lines flush with the first character of the subject. Keep the subject short; state concisely the main topic of the letter. Lengthy subjects are discouraged. If responding to a letter with a "Subject:" line, use the same subject. If acronyms or abbreviations are used in the subject, spell them out, followed by the acronym in parentheses. If an abbreviation or acronym is frequently used in a letter, establish it in the subject line so that only the shortened form is necessary in the body of the correspondence. Capitalize the first letter of only key words within the subject line.

Avoid a separate reference line in a business letter, except when it contributes to the understanding of the correspondence and when the number of references is too great to be reasonably incorporated in the first paragraph of the letter. Type "Ref:" at the left margin, two typing returns below the last line of the subject, followed by an itemized listing of the references. Abbreviate items as much as possible, e.g., type dates in numerical figures (4/15/05). List references as (a), (b), (c), single-spaced, in chronological order with the most recent date listed first.

If more than one enclosure is included with the letter but not mentioned in the body of the letter, include the number of enclosures and list as shown below. The “cc” list should list the office name(s) only. Use page numbers if the letter is more than one page. All page numbers should begin as a header on page two of correspondence.

John Doe (Return five spaces after closing.)  
Program Analyst

2 Enclosures

1. Organization Chart
2. Forms Letter Pamphlet

cc:

Office of Executive Operations

**Figure 3-3**  
**Nonpersonalized Business Letter with Reference**

National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



(Center Date)

Reply to Attn of: Office of the General Counsel

The Honorable Merrick Garland  
Attorney General of the United States  
Department of Justice  
Washington, DC 20546-1234

Re: Doe vs. United States  
Civil Action No. 4-24-405

Dear Attorney General:

This is the legal letter format that may be used by the The Office of the General Counsel and the Office of the Inspector General at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Headquarters, and the Offices of the Chief Counsel at NASA Centers. Use this format solely for legal correspondence relating to a specific case, protest, patent, or license.

The legal letter format is based on the standard business letter with the exception of a caption. All other elements are the same as the standard business letter. Begin the caption by typing "Re:" indented five spaces from the left margin. Use the caption to cite the specific case which is the topic of the letter, e.g., protest, patent, or license. If more than one line is needed, begin succeeding lines flush with the first line of the caption. Indent the entire caption five spaces from the right margin of the letter.

A salutation and complimentary closing are included in a legal letter. Also included are the sender's name and title.

Sincerely,

Edward Morgan  
General Counsel

**Figure 3-4**  
**Legal Letter Format**





National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



(Center Date)

Reply to Attn of: Office of Communications

Ms. Jane Doe  
Director  
Multimedia Space Agency  
1450 K Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20546-1234

Dear Ms. Doe:

This is the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA's) standard business letter sent to multiple addressees. Use this format for addressees outside NASA or when a more personalized format is needed for multiple letters.

Prepare identical letters to more than one individual in the same format as the standard business letter. Document the recipients of the letter on the Action Document Summary (ADS). On page two of the ADS, below the final question, type "Identical letters sent to:" listing each recipient. If there is not enough space at the bottom of the page, type the list on a separate page and place it behind page two of the ADS.

A letter sent to multiple addressees commonly uses identical text and only the addressee information is changed or minimal text within the body of the letter. It includes a salutation (Dear) and a complimentary closing (Sincerely). It does not include attention or subject lines.

Sincerely,

Morgan A. Vines  
Senior Analyst

Enclosure

**Figure 3-5**  
**Multiple Addressee Letter to Non-NASA Addressees**

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



(Center date)

Reply to Attn of: (Insert Office Name)

Ms. Jane Doe  
Chief Executive Officer  
XYZ Corporation  
125 Any Street, SW  
City, ST 12345-6789

Mr. John Stuart  
Chief Financial Officer  
ABC Foundation  
678 Main Street, NE  
City, ST 12345-6789

Dear Ms. Doe and Mr. Stuart:

This is a helpful template for typing letters with dual addresses to be signed by your office.

For all correspondence, use the font Times New Roman 12pt. When sending the document electronically for review, include the word "Draft" in the title of the document.

For this letter, there are three lines between the inside address and salutation, two lines between salutation and the body of the letter, and two lines between each paragraph.

The closing, Sincerely, should start at the center of the page. After typing Sincerely, press the Enter key five times to begin the signature block.

Sincerely,

Name  
Title

**Figure 3-6**  
**Letter to Dual Addresses**

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



(Center date)

Reply to Attn of: (Insert Office Name)

Ms. Jane Doe  
Chief Executive Officer  
XYZ Corporation  
125 Any Street, SW  
City, ST 12345-6789

Dear Ms. Doe:

This is a helpful template for typing draft letters to be signed by your office.

For all correspondence, use the font Times New Roman 12pt. When sending the document electronically for review, include the word "Draft" in the title of the document.

For this letter, there are three lines between the inside address and salutation, two lines between salutation and the body of the letter, and two lines between each paragraph.

The closing, Sincerely, should start at the center of the page. After typing Sincerely, press the Enter key five times to begin the signature block.

Sincerely,

James M. Free  
Associate Administrator

Pamela A. Melroy  
Deputy Administrator

**Figure 3-7**  
**Dual Signature Letter**

# Chapter 4: Writing Standards

## 4.1 Using NAI 1450 and GPO Writing Guidelines Together

At NASA, our NAI is tailored to meet our specific needs and priorities, and it supersedes the Government Publishing Office (GPO) guidance in most cases. However, GPO's guidelines are still valuable for their detailed rules and additional insights. Here is how to effectively use both guides:

### 1. Follow NASA's Guidance as Primary

- **Priority:** Always adhere to this NAI for overall formatting, structure, and content organization. Our guide reflects the Agency's unique requirements and preferences.
- **Supersession:** NASA's rules take precedence over GPO guidelines. If there's a conflict between the two, NASA's guidance should be followed.

### 2. Consult GPO for Additional Detail

- **Supplementary Information:** Use GPO's style guide for detailed rules and examples that may provide clarity or additional options not covered in this NAI.
- **Specific Situations:** If NASA's guidance provides a general approach but lacks specifics, refer to GPO for more in-depth information or templates that might enhance your understanding.

## 4.2 Understanding NASA's Writing Standards

Effective communication is crucial at NASA, where precision and clarity are key. This section provides essential guidelines for producing high-quality documents that meet our Agency's standards.

You will find practical advice on tone, structure, and formatting, along with examples and templates to help you apply these standards effectively. Following these guidelines will ensure your documents are clear, professional, and aligned with NASA's mission.

## 4.3 Organized Writing

Format is important, but clarity is more important. The following techniques and guidelines can help make your writing more organized, natural, and concise.

Open with the most important information and decrease to the least important. Avoid mere chronology.

Start fast, explain as necessary, then stop. When writing correspondence, think about the one key sentence that expresses the main idea. Do not waste the opening – the strongest place in correspondence. Begin with the key sentence, if appropriate; if not, be sure it appears by the end of the first paragraph. Put requests before justifications, answers before explanations, conclusions before discussions, and summaries before details.

Arrange key points. In a complex proposal or a reply to various questions, there may be many key points. In these cases, begin with a general statement of purpose, such as the policy directives.

Examples:

- a. We inspected the Office of the Chief Engineer on June 24, 2024, and found its overall performance satisfactory.
- b. We request authorization to hire a full-time clerk typist or to reassign someone from the document management center.
- c. This memorandum summarizes initial plans for reorganizing the Office of the Chief Engineer.

Be direct. Occasionally, you may delay a main point to soften bad news or to introduce a controversial proposal. In most cases, though, it is best to be direct.

*Persuade vs. Inform.* When writing to persuade rather than to inform, end strongly with a forecast, appeal, or implication. When feelings are involved, exit gracefully--with an expression of good will. When in doubt, offer assistance and the name and contact information of a contact.

## 4.4 Spoken Style

Because readers hear writing, the most readable writing sounds like people talking to people. To achieve a spoken style, imagine your reader is sitting across the desk from you. If you are writing to many readers but none in particular, talk to one typical reader. Then write with personal pronouns, plain language, and other techniques provided in this NAII. Once you have a draft, read it aloud.

Do not use contractions in formal writing, e.g., say “did not” instead of “didn’t.”

Speak directly to your readers. Use the imperative mood when preparing administrative documents, especially procedures, "how-to" instructions, and lists of duties. Directness also avoids the passive voice. This style results in shorter, crisper letters and memos.

Example:

- a. Sign all copies. Provide the draft by Monday.

Focus on your readers' needs. Analyze your audience in light of your purpose. You should be able to answer these next questions before you begin to write:

- a. What is my purpose?
- b. Who are my readers?
- c. What are their interests?
- d. How much do they know already?
- e. What will make it easy for them to understand or act?

## 4.5 Compact Writing

Give your ideas no more words than they deserve. Shorten paragraphs to sentences, sentences to clauses, clauses to phrases, phrases to words, words to pictures, or strike the idea entirely. Keep only what contributes to the meaning.

Avoid “it is,” unless “it” refers to something mentioned earlier. The use of “it is” constructions tangles sentences, delays meaning, encourages passive verbs, and hides responsibility. Use only natural expressions such as “it is time to” and “it is your job to.”

Examples:

Poor:	Better:
It is my understanding that your program covers medical expenses from such injuries.	I understand that your program covers medical expenses from such injuries.
It is recognized that as the project evolves, there likely will be changes in task definitions and priorities.	We recognize that as the project evolves, task definitions and priorities are likely to change.

Limit the use of “there is” and “there are.”

Examples:

Poor:	Better:
There are some deadlines that cannot be changed.	Some deadlines cannot be changed.

Shorten wordy expressions. Instead of adding impressive bulk to writing, wordy expressions clutter it by getting in the way of the words that do the important work.

<b>Do not say:</b>	<b>Say:</b>
a number of	some
at the present time	now, at present
due to the fact of	because
for a period of	for
for the purpose of	for, to
in an effort to	to
in a timely manner	promptly, on time
in order to	to
in the amount of	for
in the near future	soon
on a quarterly basis	quarterly
the month of June	June

Avoid legalistic language in nonlegal documents.

<b>Do not say (awkward):</b>	<b>Say (spoken):</b>
aforementioned	the, that, those
heretofore	until now
herewith is	here is

## 4.6 Tone

A writer's attitude toward the subject or readers causes relatively few problems in routine letters. The rules are straightforward.

A neutral tone is preferred.

Because much writing is routine, tone sometimes causes problems when the matter is delicate. The more sensitive the reader or issue, the more careful we will be to promote good will. Tactlessness in writing suggests clumsiness in general. When feelings are involved, one misused word can offend the reader.

Be mindful of rubberstamp endings. They do not improve good letters or save bad ones. To the reader whose request has been denied, an offer of further assistance promises further disappointment. As an example, the following closing sentence should be dropped entirely or incorporated with the rest of the letter.

Example: “This setback aside, we hope that you will take advantage of other courses available to you.”

## 4.7 Write Positively

Unless you have a special reason to caution against something, use positive language instead of negative language. If you can accurately express an idea either positively or negatively, express it positively.

The positive statement is usually clearer and briefer; however, a negative statement can also be clear. Use it if you are cautioning the reader.

<b>Do not say (negative):</b>	<b>Say (positive):</b>
The Administrator may not appoint persons other than those qualified by the Office of Personnel Management.	The Administrator shall appoint a person qualified by the Office of Personnel Management.
It will not be ready until Monday.	It will be ready on Monday.
You failed to sign the other copy.	You need to sign the other copy.
Opportunity is limited.	Competition is keen.

Avoid several negatives in one sentence.

<b>Do not say:</b>	<b>Say:</b>
A demonstration project will not be approved unless all application requirements are met.	A demonstration project will be approved only if the applicant meets all requirements.

It is better to express even a negative in positive form.

<b>Do not say:</b>	<b>Say:</b>
not honest	dishonest
did not remember	forgot
did not pay attention to	ignored



did not remain at the meeting	left the meeting
did not comply with or failed to comply with	violated

“Yes” answers need little explanation. A letter of denial should be explained in enough detail to avoid any hint of a brush off. - Most “no” answers need some explanation.

Use a positive approach to remove some of the sting from the response.

Examples:

<b>Poor:</b>	<b>Better:</b>
Given the limited number of spaces available for the management training program, we will take employees who meet the grade-level requirements before considering others.	Because of the keen competition, we are unable to select you for the management training program at this time. Those who met the grade-level requirements were considered first.

Open a letter by acknowledging the favorable endorsements, and close by thanking the applicant for his or her years of service. This technique helps to soften the bad news.

## 4.8 Write Short, Disciplined Sentences

Readable sentences are simple, active, affirmative, and declarative. The more a sentence deviates from this structure, the harder the sentence is to understand. Short sentences will not guarantee clarity, but they are usually less confusing than long ones.

State only one main topic in each sentence.

Divide long sentences into two or three short sentences. Average 20 words or less when mixing long and short sentences.

Use parallel structure. In parallel structures, sentences and phrases use the same parts of speech to express different ideas. Arrange two or more equally important ideas so that they appear equal. Parallel structure is especially important when you use a list. Parallelism saves words, clarifies ideas, and provides balance.

Examples:

<b>Non-parallel sentence:</b>	<b>Parallel sentence:</b>
By purchasing this equipment, we would cut down on errors, and expenses in the long run would be reduced.	By purchasing this equipment, we would reduce errors and expenses.

<b>Non-parallel list:</b>	<b>Parallel list:</b>
<p>The duties of the Executive Secretary of the Administrative Committee are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. To take minutes of all the meetings. (infinitive phrase)</li> <li>b. The Executive Secretary answers all the correspondence. (sentence)</li> <li>c. Writing of monthly reports. (gerund phrase)</li> </ul>	<p>The duties of the Executive Secretary of the Administrative Committee are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. To take minutes of all meetings.</li> <li>b. To answer all correspondence.</li> <li>c. To write monthly reports.</li> </ul>

Remove all unnecessary words. Strive for a simple sentence with a subject and verb. Eliminate unnecessary modifiers.

Place key ideas deliberately. Begin and/or end a sentence with the most important point because ideas gain emphasis when they appear at either end. To mute an idea, place it in the middle. To improve sentences that mumble, place ideas deliberately, place less emphasis on minor ideas, use more parallelism, and use concise sentences.

Examples:

<b>Muted</b>	<b>Stressed</b>
It has been determined that moving the computer, as shown in Enclosure 1, would allow room for another cabinet to be installed. (“moving the computer” muted)	Moving the computer, as shown in Enclosure 1, would allow room for another cabinet. (“moving the computer” stressed)
I would like to congratulate you on your selection as our Employee of the Month for December. (“congratulations” muted)	Congratulations on your selection as our December Employee of the Month. (“congratulations” stressed)

Place minor ideas in secondary clauses; do not make them the main subject of a sentence.

Examples:

- a. The revised housing allowance tables, which have been mailed to all pay offices, are effective October 1, 2023. (“date” stressed)
- b. The revised housing allowance tables, which are effective October 1, 2023, have been mailed to all pay offices. (“mailing” stressed)

Be concise. An occasional sentence of six words or fewer grabs the reader’s attention. This is an excellent way to make a key point.

Example:

I can get more information if each of you gives me less. Here is why. In a week, around 50 staff actions appear in my inbox. I could handle that if all I did was work the In box. Yet 70 percent of my time is dedicated to attending briefings. I could handle that dilemma, too--listening to briefings and thinking about staff papers at the same time. However, I do not.

## **4.9 Use Short Paragraphs**

Long paragraphs overwhelm ideas and slow the reader’s progress. Improve clarity by using short, compact paragraphs. Each paragraph should deal with a single, unified topic. Present lengthy, complex, or technical discussions in a series of related paragraphs or as an appendix.

Use short paragraphs, especially at the beginning of letters. Long first paragraphs discourage reading.

Call attention to lists of items or instructions by displaying them in subparagraphs or bullets. However, do not use so many levels of subparagraphs that the writing becomes difficult to follow.

Occasionally, use a one-sentence paragraph to highlight an important idea.

## **4.10 Use Personal Pronouns**

Personal pronouns are immediate and easy to understand. They help clarify the “who.”

Use the following techniques to help retain the reader’s interest:

- a. When referring to the Agency, office, or group, use “we,” “us,” “our,” but not “it.”

- b. When speaking for yourself, use “I,” “me,” and “my.”
- c. When referring to the reader, stated or implied, use “you.”

## 4.11 Use Active Voice

The active voice eliminates confusion by forcing you to name the actor in the sentence. Use a who-does-what order.

The passive voice makes sentences longer and roundabout. Who is responsible is much less obvious. Passive verbs have a form of the verb “to be” plus the past participle of a main verb.

Examples:

Passive:	Active:
The orbiter was inspected by the worker.	The worker inspected the orbiter.

Examples of passive verb forms include the following words: am, is, are, was, were, be, and been, plus, a main verb usually ending in “en” or “ed.” These include “was received,” “is being considered,” and “has been selected.”

The passive voice reverses the natural, active order of sentences. In the following passive example, the receiver of the action comes before the actor. Using active voice corrects the order.

Examples:

Passive:	Active:
The regulation [receiver] was written [verb] by the drafter [actor].	The drafter [actor] wrote [verb] the regulation [receiver].

Passive constructions are confusing. Active sentences will have actors, but passive ones are complete without them.

Putting the actor before the verb forces you to be clear about responsibility.

Examples:

Passive:	Active:
The material will be delivered. <i>By whom?</i>	The messenger will deliver the material.
The start date is to be decided. <i>By whom?</i>	The contractor will decide the start date.
The figures will be approved. <i>By whom?</i>	The Administrator will approve the figures.

Use the passive voice only when the actor is unknown, unimportant, or obvious. This does not usually apply in administrative writing.

Examples:

- a. Small items are often stolen.
- b. The applications have been mailed.

## 4.12 Use Action Verbs

Action verbs are shorter and more direct and make the sentence clearer.

<b>Do not say:</b>	<b>Say:</b>
give consideration to	consider
is applicable to	applies
make payment	pay
give recognition to	recognize
as concerned with	concerns

Weak writing uses general verbs, which require extra words to complete their meaning.

<b>Do not say:</b>	<b>Say:</b>
make preparations for	prepare for
make use of	use
is indicative of	shows, indicates
undertake an analysis	analyze
as stated in	states

## 4.13 Use Plain Language Words

Government writing should be dignified, but it should also rely on plain language.

Avoid jargon and pretentious expressions. To make your writing clearer and easier to read and, thus, more effective—use simple words.

<b>Do not say:</b>	<b>Say:</b>
construct, fabricate	make, initiate
commence	begin
terminate	end
utilize	use
substantial part	large part

Omit needless words. Do not use compound prepositions and other wordy expressions when the same meaning can be conveyed with one or two words.

<b>Do not say:</b>	<b>Say:</b>
because of the fact that	since, because
call your attention to the fact that	remind you
for the period of	for
in many instances	often
in the nature of	like
the question as to whether	whether

Avoid redundancies. Do not use word pairs, if the words have the same effect or where the meaning of one includes the other.

<b>Word pairs to avoid:</b>
any and all
authorize and direct
cease and desist
each and every
full and complete
order and direct
means and includes

necessary and desirable
at this point in time

Use concrete words. Government writing is often about abstract subjects. But abstract words can be vague and open to different interpretations. Put instructions in simple, concrete words.

<b>Do not say:</b>	<b>If you mean:</b>
vehicles	automobiles
firearms	rifles
aircraft	helicopters

Do not use words that antagonize. Words can attract or repel readers. Choose words in your writing that do not make the wrong impression or antagonize your readers. Use words to which people react favorably rather than words that they resent.

Try to avoid sex-specific terminology and sexgender-specific job titles.

<b>Do not say:</b>	<b>Say:</b>
crewman	crewmember
draftsman	drafter
enlisted men and women	enlisted personnel
fireman	firefighter
foreman	supervisor

Know the difference between who, which, and that. “Who” and “that” refers to people. Use “who” when referring to an individual. Use “that” when referring to a group. “Which” refers to places, objects, or animals. “That” refers to either people or places, objects, or animals.

Expression of numbers. In general, spell out numbers that are ten or less in a sentence. Refer to the U.S. Government Publishing Office Style Manual for exceptions.

## 4.14 Acronyms

Do not use acronyms more than necessary. Spell out an acronym the first time it appears, followed by the acronym in parentheses unless the acronym is common knowledge; e.g., the use of FAA or NASA in a letter to the National Transportation Safety Board. If the full title is used only once, do not identify the acronym.

When the plural form of an acronym appears in parentheses, a lowercase *s* is included within the parentheses.

Examples:

- (IPOs)
- (SUVs)
- (EVs)

## 4.15 U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO) Style Manual

Though primarily a printer's stylebook to standardize word and type treatment, the GPO Style Manual remains a useful resource for writers and editors for guidance on written language. The GPO Style Manual should be considered as a general guide. In this section, we have collated guidance from the Manual that is particularly useful for NASA communications. The complete Manual can be found on GPO's [website](#).

## 4.16 Unit Modifiers and Hyphens

Use a hyphen between words combined to form a unit modifier immediately preceding the word modified. If the words are used to modify or describe something, a hyphen should be used between the modifying words. However, hyphens should not be used in non-modified terms.

<b>Modified:</b>	<b>Not modified:</b>
A drought-stricken area	The area is drought stricken
Fine-grained paper	The paper is fine grained
Higher-priced cars	The cars are higher priced
Fire-resistant materials	The materials are fire resistant
Well-established criteria	The criteria are well established



## 4.17 Apostrophes and Possessives

The possessive case of a singular or plural end not ending in *s* is formed by adding an apostrophe and *s*. The possessive case of a singular or plural noun ending in *s* or with an *s* sound is formed by adding an apostrophe only.

Examples:

- boss' *and* bosses'
- child's *and* children's
- citizen's *and* citizens'
- woman's *and* women's
- Jones' *and* Joneses'
- Mars'
- Schmitz'

In compound nouns, the 's is added to the element nearest the object possessed.

Examples:

- The Attorney General's decision
- The Inspector General's report

Possessive pronouns do not take an apostrophe.

Examples:

- its
- ours
- theirs
- yours
- hers
- whose

Possessive indefinite or impersonal pronouns require an apostrophe.

Examples:

- each other's opinions
- another's idea
- someone's estimate

## 4.18 Comma

The comma is a punctuation mark indicating a pause between parts of a sentence. It is also used to separate items in a list. Using commas is warranted in the following common scenarios:

- When separating items in a series of three or more words, phrases, letters, or figures. Use of the serial comma is preferred (i.e., immediately before the coordinating conjunction, such as *and* or *or*).

Examples:

- The delegates are from France, Italy, and Spain.
  - Appointments are available on Monday, Tuesday, or Thursday.
- After each of a series of coordinate qualifying words.

Examples:

- short, swift stream
  - verified, applicable data
- Between an introductory phrase and the subject modified.

Example:

- Despite the setbacks, the team met the deadline.
- When setting off parenthetical words, phrases, or clauses.

Examples:

- Dr. Jones, the Chief Scientist, agreed with the study's conclusion.
  - It must be remembered, however, that the Government had no guarantee.
  - It is obvious, therefore, that this office cannot function.
- Before the conjunction in a compound sentence containing two or more independent clauses, each of which could have been written as a simple sentence.

Examples:

- Fish, mollusks, and crustaceans were plentiful in the lakes, and turtles frequented the shores.
  - The boy went home alone, and his sister remained with the crowd.

- Between the title of a person and the name of an organization in the absence of the words *of* or *of the*.

Examples:

- John Doe, Program Specialist, Office of Protective Services, submits the subject report.
  - Jane Doe, Director, Office of Personnel Management, provided guidance on Federal teleworking policy.
- After the year in complete dates (month, day, year) within a sentence

Examples:

- This responds to your June 18, 2024, letter on behalf of Mr. John Doe.
- The committee agreed with the March 19, 2023, report.
- The dates of September 9, 2022, to April 11, 2024, were erroneous.

However, a comma is not necessary when referring to a month and year.

Example:

- The Chief Human Capital Officer acknowledged receipt of the July 2024 report.

## 4.19 Semicolon

Use a semicolon when separating clauses containing commas.

Example:

- The subject memorandum provides guidance on annual, sick, and parental leave; use of leave for civil servants, contractors, and political appointees; and policies related to teleworking, on-site requirements, and hybrid working environments.

Do not use semicolons where commas will suffice.

## 4.20 Percent

Spell out *percent* unless it is part of a table, graph, or another similar representation.

## Chapter 6: Compound Words

Use resources like the Merriam-Webster dictionary and the GPO Style Manual as references for compounding words. As you will notice, certain words are illustrated differently in various sources. In these cases, defer to the more commonly used version.

Word forms are constantly changing. Two-word forms often require the hyphen initially, then later become one word. Current language trends point to closing up words which, through frequent use, have become associated in the reader's mind as units of thought.

Generally, whenever a word form (or applicable rule) cannot be found in the GPO Style Manual or dictionary, it should be two words.

The following represents commonly used compound words. The abbreviations indicate function: noun (n.), adjective (adj.), verb (v.), adverb (adv.). Keep in mind that many words can function as different parts of speech, depending on the context. Most hyphenated words require hyphens if they precede the word they're describing, but they are usually written without hyphens if they follow the described word. This listing is a representation of commonly used words at NASA. It is not intended to be an inclusive listing.

**across-the-board** (adj., adv.) This is an across-the-board reduction. Reductions will occur across the board.)

**ad hoc** (Latin phrase) (adj.) (...an ad hoc committee).

**aero** (a prefix that will combine with other words such as aerodynamic)

**aerospace** (n., adj.) (aerospace medicine), but National Aero-Space Plane (this term exception to the rule)

**Agency-wide** (NASA preference-adj., adv.) This is Agency-wide policy.

**African-American** (adj.) (...African-American history)

**African American** (n.) (Louise is an African American.)

**airfare** (n.)

**airmail** (n.,v.)

**all hands** (n.)

**Anglo-American** (n., adj.)

**assemblyperson** (n.)

**backup** (n., adj.)

**back up** (v.) (Please back up your data on a diskette.)

**baseline** (n., v.)

**benchmark** (n., v.)

**biweekly** (adj., adv.)

**bona fide** (adj.)

**breakthrough** (n., adj.)

**broadminded** (adj.)

**buildup** (n.) (There was a gradual buildup of that military base.)

**build up** (v.) (They are trying to build up their reputations.)

**businessperson** (n.)

**buyout** (n.) (Are you applying for the buyout?)

**buy out** (v.) (We want to buy out your company.)

**callup** (n.) The callup for nominations was received yesterday.

**call up** (v.) I can call up any subject on the computer.

**cannot** (combination of verb (can) and adverb (not))

**carryout** (n.) (We will eat carryout tonight.)

**carryout** (adj.) (Are you ordering carryout food tonight?)

**carry out** (v.) (The office will carry out the plan to transfer...)

**carryover** (n.) (The carryover from 2005...)

**carry over** (v.) (The funds will carry over into 2006.)

**checklist** (n.)

**checkout** (n.) Please proceed to checkout.

**checkout** (adj.) (There are several checkout buildings at KSC.)

**check out** (v.) (The primary objective was to check out the Shuttle system.)

**class action** (n.) (The employees are considering a class action.)

**class-action** (adj.) (The employees filed a class-action suit.)

**clear-cut** (adj.) (It was a clear-cut decision.)

**closedown** (n.) (The closedown will last two hours)

**closeout** (n.) It is time to prepare this year's closeout.

**close out** (v.) We will close out overdue actions by Monday.

**close-up** (adj.) (That is a nice close-up picture of you.)

**co** (prefix), e.g., coauthor, cochairman, copilot, but co-investigator, co-op

**cost-effective** (adj.) (...in the most cost-effective method...)

**countdown** (n.)

**crewmember** (n.)

**crewmen** (use crewmember)

**cross section** (n.) (...a cross section of employees...)

**cutoff** (adj.) (The cutoff date was April 1.)

**database** (n.)

**decision making** (n.) (I will rely on you for the decision making.)

**decision-making** (adj.) (You are the decision-making authority.)

**double space** (n.) (Leave a double space between paragraphs.)

**double-space** (v.) (Please double-space the draft.)

**downsize** (v.)

**downtime** (n.) (Shuttle "downtime")

**drawback** (n.)

**e-mail** (n.,v.)

**early out** (n.) (Did you take an early out during the buyout season?)

**early-out** (NASA preference-adj.) (NASA has achieved early-out authority.)

**earthborn** (adj.)

**ex officio** (n.) (foreign phrase)

**fine-tune** (v.) (...to fine-tune the format...)

**first-class** (adj.) (...a first-class individual...; ...a first-class seat...)

**first-class** (adv.) (...to travel first-class...; (...mailed first-class...)

**firsthand** (adj.) (He has firsthand knowledge of the situation.)

**flowchart** (n.,v.)

**flyby** (n.) (The asteroid flyby will occur next year.)

**fly by** (v.) (The Galileo spacecraft will fly by the planet.)

**follow-on** (n.,adj.)

**followup** (adj.) (A followup meeting will occur.)

**followup** (n.) (We will do a followup next week.)

**follow up** (v.) (We will follow up the meeting with a discussion.)

**free flight** (n.)

**free-flight** (adj.)

**freeflyer** (n.) (...to service freeflyers...)

**free-flying** (adj.) (see free-floating in dictionary.) (...a free-flying spacecraft...; ...robotic spacecraft are free-flying...)

**full-cost** (NASA preference) (adj.) (NASA has implemented full-cost accounting procedures at Headquarters.)

**full-time** (adj.) (...full-time position...)

**full time** (adv.) (She works full time.)

**FY 2006** (n.) (NASA preference)

**GS-15** (n.) (NASA preference)

**Government-wide** (NASA preference) (adj., adv.) (U.S.); government-wide (state, city)

**Government-owned** (adj.) (U.S.); government-owned (state, city)

**ground-based** (adj.) (The ground-based data...)

**ground based** (adj.) (The information was ground based.)

**ground rule** (n.)

**groundwork** (n.)

**hand-carry** (v.) (...hand-carry the document)

**handout** (n.) (Please send me a copy of the handout.)

**hand out** (v.) (We will hand out the schedules tomorrow morning.)

**hard-working** (adj.)

**heavy-lift** (adj.) (...heavy-lift launch vehicle...; ...heavy-lift requirements...)

**high-quality** (adj.) (That picture is a high-quality image taken from the Hubble Space Telescope.)

**high-speed** (adj.)

**home page** (n.) or Home Page (NASA preference)

**humankind** (n.) (NASA preference)

**hundredfold** (n., adj.)

**in-depth** (adj.)



**in-flight** (adj.) (...in-flight experiment...)

**infrastructure** (n.)

**in-house** (adj.) (We will participate in an in-house study.)

**in-orbit** (adj.) (...in-orbit repair mission...)

**in orbit** (adv.) (The repair in orbit was successful. The satellite was placed in orbit.)

**inter** (...between, among...as prefix, generally one word) (interagency, intercenter, interoffice)

**intra** (...within, inside...as prefix, generally one word) (intraoffice, but intra-Agency)

**kickoff** (n.) The kickoff for launch activities will occur Monday, June 23.

**kick off** (v.) We will kick off the activities at noon.

**lakebed** (n.) (The lakebed at Edwards AFB is dry.)

**land-based** (adj.)

**lead time** (n.) (The lead time for responding...)

**lifetime** (n., adj.)

**lift-off** (n.,adj.)

**lightweight** (n., adj.)

**light-year** (n.)

**long-range** (adj.) (...long-range plan...)

**long-term** (adj.) (...long-term commitment...)

**long term** (n.) (The committee member served a long term.)

**longstanding** (adj.) (longstanding relationship)

**low-Earth** (adj.) (...low-Earth orbit...) NASA preference

**macroeconomics** (n.)

**mainframe** (n.,adj.)

**marketplace** (n.)

**markup** (n.) (...OMB markup...)

**mark up** (v.) (OMB will mark up the budget request.)

**member at large** (n.)

**mid** (prefix, usually combines to form one word) (midafternoon...midday...midpoint)

**mid-1990s** (n.)

**mid-August** (n.)

**mockup** (n.,adj.)

**multi** (prefix, usually one word) (multicultural...multiyear)

**NASA-wide** (NASA preference)

**Nationwide** (adj.,adv.)

**near-term** (adj.) (...near-term plans...)

**near term** (n.) (We will evaluate it in the near term.)

**non** (...not... prefix, generally one word) (nonadvocate...nongovernment) but non-Government or non-Federal )

**no one** (n.)

**northeast, northwest** (adv.,adj.,n.)

**Officials-in-Charge** (NASA preference) (The memo will be sent to Officials-in-Charge of Headquarters Offices.)

**offline** (adj.,adv) (adj...offline discussions) (adv. Discussions will be held offline.)

**offsite** (NASA preference)

**onboard** (adj.) (...onboard experiment)

**on board** (adv.) (The experiment will take place on board.)

**ongoing** (adj.)

**online** (n.,adj) (NASA is now online for Internet connections.)

**on-orbit** (adj.) (...on-orbit repair...)

**onorbit** (n.; NASA preference)

**onsite** (n.) (NASA preference)

**order of magnitude** (n.) (...the Earth's mass is on the order of magnitude...)

**O-ring** (n.)

**over** (can combine to form another word) (overstress)

**paperwork** (n.)

**part-time** (adj.) (A part-time position...)

**part time** (adv.) (She works part time for the agency.)

**per diem** (n.)

**phaseout** (n.,adj.) (The phaseout of the activities...Phaseout activities will begin...)

**phase out** (v.) (We will phase out the aircraft beginning next year.)

**point of contact** (n.) (Vanessa is the point of contact for the project.)

**post** (prefix, generally one word) (postdoctoral...postflight...postlaunch... postwar) (but post-Cold War)

**pre** (prefix, generally one word) (preflight...prelaunch...premeeting...preorbital)

**President-elect** (n.)

**problem solving** (n.)

**program-wide** (adj.,adv) (NASA preference)

**real-time** (adj.) (...real-time data...)

**real time** (n.) (The decision will be made in real time.)

**reengineer** (v., adj.) (NASA preference) (NASA has completed its reengineering activities.)

**reentry** (n.)

**re-register** (v.)

**return to flight** (v.) (NASA preference) (When we return to flight, ...)

**return-to-flight** (adj.) (NASA preference) (...return-to-flight activities)

**rollout** (n., adj.)

**roll out** (v.) (NASA preference)

**roundtable** (adj.) (roundtable discussions)

**round trip** (n.) (He will take a round trip to Paris.)

**round-trip** (adj.) (He purchased a round-trip ticket.)

**rulemaking** (n.,adj.)

**runway** (n.)

**Secretary-designate** (n.)

**self-confidence** (n.)

**shortfall** (n.)

**short-term** (adj.) (A short-term loan...)

**short term** (n.) (She will begin in the short term.)

**shutdown** (n.) (The nuclear power plant averted a shutdown.)

**shut down** (v.) (We will shut down the plant next week.)

**side-mount** (adj.) (...side-mount concept...)

**single-space** (v.) (I will single-space the document.)

**single-spaced** (adj.) (This is a single-spaced document.)

**space-based** (adj.) (...the space-based experiment...)

**spaceborne** (adj.,adv.)

**spacecraft** (n.)

**spacefaring** (adj.) (refer to seafaring)

**space-related** (adj.) (This is a list of space-related words.)

**space related** (adj.) (The material is space related.)

**space flight** (n.) (NASA preference is two words.)

**spacesuit** (n.)

**spacewalk** (n.)

**stand-alone** (adj.) (...stand-alone computer...)

**standdown** (n.) (We will conduct a safety standdown next Monday.)

**stand down** (v.) (We will stand down the flight simulator Wednesday.)

**startup** (n., adj.) (The startup of the activity...; the startup date...)

**start up** (v.) (The activity will start up next week.)

**state of the art** (adj.) (The technology is state of the art.)

**state-of-the-art** (adj.) (...state-of-the-art technology...)

**stationkeeping** (n.) (see housekeeping)

**STS-114** (n.) (NASA preference)

**sub** (...under, below...) (prefix..subagency... suborbital...substandard...)

**takeoff** (n.)

**teamwork** (n.)

**time-consuming** (adj.) (...a time-consuming task...)

**time consuming** (adj.) (Logging the mail is very time consuming.)

**timeframe** (n.)

**timeline** (n.)

**timetable** (n.)

**tradeoff** (n.)

**troubleshooting** (v.)

**turnaround** (n., adj.)

**under** (prefix, generally one word) (undergone...underway)

**under way** (adv.) (We will get under way next month.)

**upfront** (adj.) (upfront payment)...adv. (to pay upfront)

**up-to-date** (adj.) (...an up-to-date report...)

**up to date** (adj.) (Please provide information that is up to date.)

**videotape** (n., v.)

**videotape recorder/recording** (n.)

**voice mail, voice-mail message** (NASA preference) but voice mailbox (n.)

**walk-through** (n.)

**Web page, Web site** (n.) (NASA preference)

**webpage, website** (n.) (NASA preference) (webpage and website are widely used as one word now)

**well-being** (n.)

**well-received** (adj.) (It was a well-received speech.)

**well received** (adj.) (The speech was well received.)

**whistle-blower** (n.) (The employee had a reputation as being a whistle-blower.)

**wide-angle** (adj.) (...wide-angle lens...)

**wind-shear** (adj.) (The wind-shear conditions concerned the pilot.)

**wind shear** (n.) (The presence of wind shear concerned the pilot.)

**workaround** (n.)

**workforce** (n.) (workhour...workload... workplan...workstation...workyear)

**workplace** (n.)

**world-class** (adj.)

**worldwide** (no longer needed since the initials **WWW** are widely used) (adj.,adv.)

**World Wide Web** (always capitalized, NASA preference)

**x-ray** (adj.) (...an x-ray tube...)

**x-ray** (v.) (The technician will x-ray the components.)

**x ray** (n.) (The x ray penetrates solid substances.)

**zero-base, zero-based** (adj.) (...zero-base budget...; The budget is zero-based.)

**zero gravity** (n.) (NASA preference in formal correspondence)

**zero-g** (n.) (NASA preference...for informal correspondence only)

**zero-sum** (adj.) (...the zero-sum amount...)

**zero sum** (n.) (The calculations had a zero sum.)

## Chapter 7: Capitalization of Frequently Used Words

Capitalize specific names of things and lowercase general terms of classification. This listing represents commonly used words at NASA. When in doubt about whether to capitalize, consult the GPO Style Manual.

**Agency:** capitalize if part of complete name or if a short form of complete name; e.g., Central Intelligence Agency; National Aeronautics and Space Administration; the Agency (NASA preference), but lower-case agency when used as term of general classification; e.g., independent Federal agency.

**Attachment:** (when specifying); e.g., Attachment 1 (NASA preference); but attachment; e.g., the attachment.

**\*\*Associate Administrator:** e.g., the Associate Administrator for Aeronautics and Research

Mission Directorate; the Associate Administrator invites you to an open house. A meeting involving all the Associate Administrators is scheduled for Monday.

**Board:** capitalize if part of name or when used alone in place of full name, e.g., Performance

Review Board, the Board consists of... Space Studies Board, the Board's recommendation..., but the boards of the National Research Council.

**Branch:** capitalize if part of complete name, or when used alone in place of full name; e.g., the International Program Policy Branch; the Branch will hold a staff meeting; but the branch offices...each branch will.

**\*\*Branch Chief** (when referring to a specific person): e.g., Chief, International Program Policy Branch; the Branch Chief will authorize, but the branch chiefs....

**budget:** (Federal budget, President's budget, NASA's budget).

**budget line items:** capitalize exact titles of budget line items (NASA preference); e.g., Space Flight, Control and Data Communications; Research and Program Management.

**Building** (when specifying): e.g., Building 10B (NASA preference); but...the building and room locations will be forwarded to you.

**calendar year**



**Center(s):** capitalize if referring to NASA Centers; (e.g., Goddard Space Flight Center; the Center; a representative from each Center).

**\*\*Center Director:** e.g., the Center Director., a meeting with all of the Center Directors.

**century:** (e.g., the 21st century).

**Chair,** the (if personified); e.g., Madam Chair).

**chairman, chairperson:** (general); e.g., the chairman of the Appropriations Committee; but Chairman Davis: we need to designate a chairperson.

**Chairman, Committee on Appropriations** (title-see above).

**Chief,** if part of official title: e.g., Chief, Flight Programs Branch.

**college degrees:** bachelor of arts, master's, but capitalize abbreviations: B.A., M.A., Ph.D.

**Committee:** capitalize if part of complete name or when used alone in place of full name; e.g., Aeronautics Advisory Committee; the Appropriations Committee; the Committee; but each committee will report; the committees of Congress.

**Congress** (legislature): the Congress of the United States; the 101st Congress; the Congress;...when Congress returns.

**congressional** action; congressional committee. (often capitalized)

**Congressional District:** (if a specific district; e.g., 20th Congressional District) but the congressional district.

**congressionally:** e.g., a congressionally mandated report.

**Congressman; Congresswoman; Member of Congress.**

**Council:** capitalize if part of name or when used alone in place of full name; e.g., NASA Advisory Council; the Council will meet.

**\*\*Director,** if part of official title: e.g., Director, Solar System Exploration Division; the Director will issue, but the directors....

**Division** (if part of complete name, or when used alone in place of full name); e.g., the Advanced Program Development Division; there will be a Division staff meeting; but each division will.

**\*\*Division Director** (when referring to a specific person): e.g., the Division Director, but the division directors are....

### **division heads**

**Earth** (planet). solar system, universe, (always lower case).

**Enclosure** (when specifying): e.g., Enclosure 1 (NASA preference); but enclosure; e.g., the enclosure.

### **executive branch**

**fall** (season).

**Federal** (synonym for United States): e.g., Federal personnel regulations; but a federal form of government; Federal Government (U.S.).

**fiscal year** (abbreviate FY); e.g., in fiscal year 2006; FY 2006.

**Government** (if proper name, part of proper name, or as proper adjective): e.g., the U.S./National/Federal Government; the Japanese government; but, government (in general sense); e.g., a federal form of government; the Communist government; European governments.

**Government-owned, Government-wide** (if U.S.); but government-owned, government-wide (if State, city).

**International Space Station** (when referring to the multinational Space Station); but space station (generic); e.g., the Russian space station.

### **judicial branch**

**lead secretary**: e.g., the incumbent serves as lead secretary. legislative branch

**Member** (congressional): e.g., a Member of Congress; but at the request of many members of the Congress; a member of the congressional committee.

**Memorandum of Agreement, Memorandum of Understanding**: if part of full name or when used alone in place of full name.

**mission**: e.g., Ulysses mission.

**Moon**, referring to Earth's Moon: but the moons of Jupiter; Titan is the name of Jupiter's moon.

**Nation** (synonym for U.S.): but a nation will defend its boundaries.

**national:** e.g., national space program.

**National Government** (U.S.)

**Office:** e.g., the Office of the Administrator; the Office of External Relations; but this office is planning.; I would like your office to prepare the report.

**Officials-in-Charge of Headquarters Offices**, referring to heads of all Headquarters offices or directorates.

**orbiter** (preferred lower case): e.g., Shuttle orbiter, Atlantis orbiter.

**Presidential directive, authority, order**

**Program** (if part of official name): e.g., NASA Honor Awards Program; but the Shuttle program: the EOS program; the program budget.

**Program Manager or Project Manager**, if part of title: e.g., but the program manager.

**Program Office(s)**

**project:** e.g., HST project; the project budget is...

**Room** (when specifying): e.g., Room 9S51 (NASA preference); but the building and room numbers will be provided later.

**space** (universe): e.g., the U.S. space program.

**Space Shuttle** (NASA's preference when referring to U.S./NASA Space Shuttle); but space shuttle (generic); e.g., the space shuttles.

**State**, when it follows the name of a particular State: e.g., New York State, but state (general); e.g., state and local government groups, the forty-second state.

**Subcommittee**, if part of name, or part of name when used alone in place of full name: e.g.,

Subcommittee on Aviation Safety Reporting System: the Subcommittee: but subcommittees will be established.

**summer** (season).

**white paper:** e.g., prepare a white paper on.

**winter** (season).

**Work Package 1, 2, 3, and 4;** but the Space Station work packages.

**x-ray, x ray**

\*In legal documents, many words that ordinarily would be written in small letters are written with initial capitals; e.g., the name of the document (or part of the name when used alone in place of the full name).

\*\* Official titles of high-ranking national, state, and international offices are capitalized. Titles of lesser Federal and state officials and local governmental officials are not usually capitalized.

However, these titles are sometimes capitalized in writing intended for a specific readership, in which the person in question would be considered to have very high rank by the intended reader (i.e., the Associate Administrators, the Center Directors); NASA's preference is to capitalize.

# Chapter 8: Mailing Addresses and Envelopes

## 8.1 Mailing Addresses

The forms of address in this section are the conventional forms as determined by social and official custom.

## 8.2 Titles of Addressees

“The Honorable” is a title used to address current and former officials; e.g., Presidential appointees, Federal and state elected officials, and mayors. “Honorable” is not used by itself. “The Honorable” is not used before a last name alone. When appearing within the text of a letter or other communication, “the” is not capitalized.

“The Honorable” may be replaced by a title such as “Dr.” or “General,” but it is not used in combination with another title.

After leaving a titled position, an individual may opt to retain that distinctive title (“Judge,” “General,” or “The Honorable”) throughout his, her, or their lifetime.

## 8.3 Abbreviation of Titles and Degrees

With the exceptions of “Mr./Ms./Dr.,” do not abbreviate titles preceding full names in an address. Long titles such as “Lieutenant Colonel” and “Brigadier General” may be abbreviated for the sake of balance and appearance in the address when necessary; e.g., Lt. Colonel John L. Smith. Note that the basic rank is not abbreviated. The salutation should read, “Dear Colonel Smith.”

Abbreviate designations of degrees, religious and fraternal orders, and military service branch titles after a name. Type the initials of a degree or order with periods but no spaces between them. Type military service designations in capital letters without periods.

Do not use scholastic degrees in combination with complimentary titles of address or with military service ranks, except in the case of “The Reverend.” When a name is followed by abbreviations, their sequence is as follows: religious orders first, theological degrees, academic degrees earned in course, and honorary degrees in order of the bestowal. Using more than two degrees is unnecessary. Examples:

- John Doe, D.D., D.Lit.
- Patricia Smith, M.D.
- Henry Brown, LL.D., Ph.D. Lt. Colonel Mary Hill, USAF
- The Reverend George Green, D.D.

## Spouse of Distinguished Individual.

- An individual does not share a spouse's official title and, therefore, should be addressed individually by his or her own appropriate title and last name.

The American Ambassador and Mrs. Doe

- In cases of the titled spouse being a female, the following rule applies: Justice Sandra Morgan and Mr. Morgan
- Not all married women use their husband's name, especially if they use another name professionally.

Senator Diane Strickland and Mr. Richard Blum

The Honorable Patrick Reed and Ms. Brooke Saxon

*NOTE: The forms of address listed in this section are the conventional forms of address as determined by social and official custom. If an individual has requested to be addressed otherwise, their preference supersedes the following guidance. For information on the use of pronouns, please refer to Chapter 5: Inclusive and Accessible Content of this NAIL.*

ADDRESSEE	ADDRESS	SALUTATION AND COMPLIMENTARY CLOSE
<b>THE WHITE HOUSE</b>		
The President	The President The White House Washington, DC 20500	Dear Mr./Madam President: Respectfully,
Spouse of the President	Mrs., Mr. (full name) The White House Washington, DC 20500	Dear Mrs./Mr. (surname): Sincerely,
Assistant to the President	The Honorable (full name) Assistant to the President Executive Office of the President Washington, DC 20500	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Former President	The Honorable (full name) (local address) (ZIP Code)	Dear President, Madam President (surname): Sincerely,
The Vice President	The Vice President United States Senate	Dear Mr./Madam Vice President: Sincerely

Washington, DC 20510

	The Honorable (full name) The Vice President of the United States Washington, DC 20501	
Former Vice President	The Honorable (full name) (no title) (local address) (ZIP Code)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Director, Office of Management and Budget	The Honorable (full name) Director Office of Management and Budget Executive Office of the President Washington, DC 20503	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
	The Honorable (full name) Director Office of Science and Technology Policy Executive Office of the President Washington, DC 20500	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,

## THE FEDERAL JUDICIARY

The Chief Justice	The Chief Justice The Supreme Court of the United States Washington, DC 20543	Dear Chief Justice: Sincerely,
Associate Justice	Justice (surname) The Supreme Court of the United States Washington, DC 20543	Dear Justice (surname): Sincerely,
The Clerk of the Supreme Court	The Clerk of the Supreme Court The Supreme Court of the United States Washington, DC 20543	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,

## THE CONGRESS

President of the Senate	The Honorable (full name) President of the Senate Washington, DC 20510	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
President of the Senate	The Honorable (full name)	Dear Mr./Madam President:

Pro Tempore	President Pro Tempore United States Senate Washington, DC 20510	Sincerely,
Speaker of the House of Representatives	The Honorable (full name) Speaker of the House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515	Dear Mr./Madam Speaker: Sincerely,
Majority Leader or Minority Leader United States Senate	The Honorable (full name) Majority or Minority Leader United States Senate Washington, DC 20510	Dear Mr./Madam Leader: Sincerely,
United States Senator	The Honorable (full name) United States Senate Washington, DC 20510	Dear Senator (surname): Sincerely,
	OR	
	The Honorable (full name) United States Senator (Congressional District office address) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	
United States Representative	The Honorable (full name) House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): or Dear Congresswoman (surname): Sincerely,
	OR	
	The Honorable (full name) Member, U.S. House of Representatives (local address) (ZIP Code)	
Committee Chair Chairman, Chairwoman, Chair	The Honorable (full name) Chairman, (or Chair or Chairwoman) Committee on (name) United States Senate Washington, DC 20510	Dear Mr. Chairman/ Madam Chair/Chairwoman: Sincerely,
	Or	Dear Mr. Chairman/Madam Chair/Chairwoman: Sincerely,



	<p>The Honorable (full name)  Chair (or Chairman or  Chairwoman)  Committee on (name)  House of Representatives  Washington, DC 20515</p>	
Subcommittee Chairman Chair	<p>The Honorable (full name)  Chairman, (or Chair or  Chairwoman) Subcommittee on  (name of parent Committee)  United States Senate  Washington, DC 20510</p>	<p>Dear Mr. Chairman/Madam  Chair/Chairwoman:  Sincerely,</p>
	OR	
	<p>The Honorable (full name) Chair  (or Chairman or Chairwoman),  Subcommittee on (name) (name  of parent Committee) House of  Representatives Washington, DC  20515</p>	
Joint Committee Chairman	<p>The Honorable (full name)  Chairman (Chair, Chairman,  Chairwoman)  Joint Committee on (name)  Congress of the United States  Washington, DC (ZIP Code)</p>	<p>Dear Mr. Chairman/Madam  Chair:  Sincerely,</p>
Senator-elect	<p>The Honorable (full name)  United States Senator-elect  State of (State name)  (State office address)  City, State ZIP Code</p>	<p>Dear Senator-elect (surname):  Sincerely,</p>
	OR	
Representative-elect	<p>Care of the United States Senate  Representative-elect  (address, if known)  OR  Care of the House of  Representatives</p>	<p>Dear Congressman-elect:  (surname):  Sincerely,</p>
Office of a Deceased	Office of the late Senator	*Sir: or Madam: Senator

Senator	(full name) United States Senate Washington, DC 20510	Sincerely,
Office of a Deceased Representative	Office of the late Representative* (full name) House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515	*Sir: or Madam: Senator Sincerely,
Chaplin of the United States Senate	The Reverend (full name) Chaplin of the United States Senate Washington, DC 20510	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname):** Sincerely,
House of Representatives	The Reverend (full name) Chaplain of the House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname):** Sincerely,
Secretary of the United States Senate	The Honorable (full name) Secretary of the Senate United States Senate Washington, DC 20510	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Clerk of the House	The Honorable (full name) Clerk of the House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Resident Commissioner	The Honorable (full name) Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Delegate	The Honorable (full name) Delegate from (location) House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Comptroller General	The Honorable (full name) Comptroller General of the United States General Accounting Office Washington, DC 20548	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Librarian of Congress	The Honorable (full name) Librarian of Congress	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname):

	Library of Congress Washington, DC 20540	Sincerely,
Public Printer	The Honorable (full name) Public Printer Government Printing Office Washington, DC 20401	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,

\* If the name of the late Senator's or Representative's secretary or administrative assistant is known, the letter may be addressed to that person by name.

\*\* The title is Mr. or Dr., as appropriate. Reverend is not used with the surname alone.

### **EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES**

Cabinet Members	The Honorable (full name) Secretary of the Interior* Washington, DC 20240	Dear Mr., Madam Secretary:* Sincerely,
	The Honorable (full name) Attorney General of the United States Department of Justice Washington, DC 20530	Dear Mr., Madam Attorney General: Sincerely,
Deputy Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, Under Secretaries	The Honorable (full name) Deputy Secretary of Energy Washington, DC 20585	Dear Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
	The Honorable (full name) Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs Department of Defense Washington, DC 20301	
	The Honorable (full name) Under Secretary of Housing and Urban Development	
Postmaster General	The Honorable (full name) Postmaster General United States Postal Service Washington, DC 20260	Dear Mr./Madam/Postmaster General: Sincerely,
Head of a Independent Agency, Authority, or Board	The Honorable (full name) (Title) (Agency name) (Address) (City) (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,

Head of a Major Organization within an Agency, if a Presidential Appointee	The Honorable (full name) Under Secretary/Administrator National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (Address) (City) (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Secretary of the Navy Secretary of the Army Secretary of the Air Force	The Honorable (full name) Secretary of the (Navy, Army, Air Force) Department of Defense The Pentagon Washington, DC (ZIP Code)	Dear Mr./Madam Secretary: Sincerely,
Chairman of a Commission or Board	The Honorable (full name) Chairman Federal Trade Commission Washington, DC 20580	Dear Mr./Madam Chairman: Sincerely,

### **AMERICAN MISSIONS**

American Ambassador	The Honorable (full name) American Ambassador (City), (Country)	Dear Mr./Madam Ambassador: Sincerely,
American Consul General or American Consul	The Honorable (full name) American Consul General (or American Consul) (City), (Country)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Personal (Special) Representative of the President	The Honorable (full name) Personal Representative of the President of the United States of America to (Country) (Address) (City, State/Country)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,

### **INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS/ORGANIZATIONS**

Foreign Ambassador in the United States	His (Her) Excellency (full name) Ambassador of (country) (local address) (ZIP Code)	Dear Mr./Madam/ Ambassador: Sincerely,
United States Representative to the United Nations or Organization of American States	The Honorable (full name) United States Representative to the United Nations (or Organization of American States)	Dear Mr./Madam/Ambassador: Sincerely,

	(local address) (ZIP Code)	
Foreign Minister in the United States	The Honorable (full name) Minister of (country) Washington, DC (ZIP Code)	Dear Mr./Madam/Minister: Sincerely,
(Head of a Legation)		
Foreign Minister Counselor in the United States	The Honorable (full name) Minister Counselor Embassy of (country) Washington, DC (ZIP Code)	Dear Mr./Madam/Minister: Sincerely,

## STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Governor	The Honorable (full name) Governor of (State) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Governor (surname): Sincerely,
Lieutenant Governor	The Honorable (full name) Lieutenant Governor of (State) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
State Senator	The Honorable (full name) (State) Senate (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
State Representative, Assemblyman, or Delegate	The Honorable (full name) (State) House of Representatives (or Assembly or House of Delegates)* (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Mayor	The Honorable (full name) Mayor of (name of city) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Mayor (surname): Sincerely,
President of a Board of Commissioners	The Honorable (full name) President Board of Commissioners of (name of city) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,

\*In most States, the lower branch of the legislature is the House of Representatives. In States, such as California, New York, New Jersey, Nevada, and Wisconsin, the lower house is known as the Assembly. In others, such as Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia, it is known as the House of Delegates. Nebraska has a one-house legislature; its members are designated as Senators.

## CHURCH OFFICIALS

Minister	The Reverend (full name, degrees) (address) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Dr. (surname): Sincerely,
Pastor		
Rector		

(with doctoral degree) Minister Pastor Rector (without doctoral degree)	The Reverend (full name) (name of church) (address) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Presiding Episcopal Bishop	The Reverend (full name) (name of church) (address) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Episcopal Bishop	The Right Reverend (full name, degrees) Bishop of (diocese) (address) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Bishop (surname): Sincerely,
Methodist Bishop	The Reverend (full name, degrees) Methodist Bishop (address) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Bishop (surname): Sincerely,
Mormon Bishop	Mr. (full name) The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (address) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Mr. (surname): Sincerely,
Catholic Cardinal	His Eminence (given name) Cardinal (surname) (address) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Cardinal (surname): Sincerely,
Catholic Archbishop	The Most Reverend (full name) Archbishop of (diocese) (address) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Archbishop (surname): Sincerely,
Catholic Bishop	The Most Reverend (full name) Bishop of (City) (address) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Bishop (surname): Sincerely,
Catholic Monsignor (higher rank)	The Right Reverend Monsignor (full name) (address) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Monsignor (surname): Sincerely,
Catholic Monsignor (lower rank)	The Very Reverend Monsignor (full name) (address) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Monsignor (surname): Sincerely,
Catholic Priest	The Reverend (full name) (add initials or Order, if any) (address)	Dear Father (surname): Sincerely,

Catholic Mother Superior of an Institution	(City), (State) (ZIP Code) The Reverend Mother Superior (initials of Order, if used) (name of institution) (address) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Reverend Mother: Sincerely,
Rabbi (with doctoral degree)	Rabbi (full name) (Synagogue) (address) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Dr. (surname): Sincerely,
Rabbi (without doctoral degree)	Rabbi (full name) (Synagogue) (address) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Rabbi (surname): Sincerely,
Orthodox Archbishop	His Eminence Archbishop (full name) (address) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Your Eminence: Sincerely,
Orthodox Bishop	His Grace (full name) Bishop of (name of Diocese) (address) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Your Grace: Sincerely,
Orthodox Priest	The Reverend (full name) (name of church) (address) (City), (State) (ZIP Code)	Dear Father: Sincerely,

## EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

President of Chancellor of a College or University	Dr. (full name) President (name of institution) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Dr. (surname): Sincerely,
President of a College or University (without doctoral degree)	Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms. (full name) (name of institution) (address) (City), (State), (Zip Code)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Dean of a School	Dean (full name) School of (name) (name of institution) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Dean (surname): Sincerely,
Professor	Professor (full name)	Dear Professor (surname):

	Department of (name) (name of institution) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Sincerely,
Ph.D.	Dr. (full name) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Dr. (surname): Sincerely,

## PHYSICIANS AND LAWYERS

Physician	(full name), MD (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Dr. (surname): Sincerely,
Lawyer	Mr. Mrs., Miss, Ms. (full name) Attorney at Law (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Judge	The Honorable (full name) Judge, Appellate Division The Supreme Court of the State of (insert State name) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Judge (surname): Sincerely,

## OTHER

Widow	Mrs. (husband's first and last name) or Ms. (wife's full name)	Dear Mrs., Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Widower	Mr. (full name) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Mr. (surname): Sincerely,
Unknown Sex	Leslie Smith (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Leslie Smith: Sincerely,

## MULTIPLE ADDRESSES

Two or More Men	Mr. (full name) and Mr. (full name)	Dear Mr. (surname) and Mr. (surname):
-----------------	-------------------------------------	---------------------------------------



	(address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	or Dear Messrs. (surname) Sincerely,
Two or More Women	Mrs., Miss, Ms. (full name) and Mrs., Miss, Ms. (full name) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Mrs./Ms./Miss (surname): Sincerely,
One Woman and One Man	Mrs., Miss, Ms. (full name) and Mr. (full name) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname) and Mr. (Surname): Sincerely,

## MILITARY SERVICES

### Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps Officers

General Lieutenant General Major General Brigadier General	(full rank, full name, abbreviation of service) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear General (surname): Sincerely,
Colonel Lieutenant Colonel	(full rank, full name, abbreviation of service) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Colonel (surname): Sincerely,
Major	(full rank, full name, abbreviation of service) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Major (surname): Sincerely,
Captain	(full rank, full name, abbreviation of service) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Captain (surname): Sincerely,
First Lieutenant Second Lieutenant	(full rank, full name, abbreviation of service) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Lieutenant (surname): Sincerely,

Chief Warrant Officer	(full rank, full name, abbreviation of service) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Chief Warrant Officer (surname): Sincerely,
Warrant Officer	(full rank, full name, abbreviation of service) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Warrant Officer (surname): Sincerely,
Navy and Coast Guard Officers Admiral Vice Admiral Rear Admiral	(full rank, full name, abbreviation of service) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Admiral (surname): Sincerely,
Captain	(full rank, full name, abbreviation of service) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Captain (surname): Sincerely,
Commander Lieutenant Commander	(full rank, full name, abbreviation of service) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Commander (surname): Sincerely,
Lieutenant Lieutenant Junior Grade	(full rank, full name, abbreviation of service) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Lieutenant (surname)” Sincerely,
Ensign	(full rank, full name, abbreviation of service) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Ensign (surname):
Chief Warrant Officer	(full rank, full name, abbreviation of service) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Chief Warrant Officer (surname): Sincerely,

## ALL SERVICES

Retired Officer	(full rank, full name, abbreviation of service), (Ret.) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear (rank, surname): Sincerely,
Chaplain	Chaplain (full name) (rank, service designation) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Chaplain (surname): Sincerely,

## SERVICE ACADEMY MEMBERS

Army or Coast Guard Cadet	Cadet (full name) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Cadet (surname): Sincerely,
Navy Midshipman	Midshipman (full name) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Midshipman (surname) Sincerely,
Air Force Air Cadet	Air Cadet (full name) (address) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Air Cadet (surname) Sincerely,

## MILITARY SERVICES ABBREVIATIONS

In some instances, military abbreviations may be used as a form of address, e.g., distribution lists, courtesy copy lists, and envelopes. Refer to the GPO Style Manual's chapter entitled Abbreviations.

### 8.4 Envelopes and Mailing

This section explains how to address letter-sized envelopes and other mailers for unclassified correspondence.

Use only Government-approved envelopes and mailers. All official Government mail is placed in approved mailers and processed by a NASA Mail Center.

Do not use U.S. Postal Service (USPS) deposit boxes or USPS Centers to transmit official Government mail.

Obtain information for bulk or mass mailings and use of the NASA mailing permit indicia from your Center's Mail Manager.

Consult your Center's Mail Manager or mail handbook about types, costs, and restrictions for special mail services, including registered, certified, and express and expedited mailing or shipping requirements, bulk and mass mailings, and messenger services.

## **Envelopes**

Use NASA-printed envelopes to send official mail through the USPS (via the NASA Mail Center) and to other NASA Centers.

Use the smallest sized envelope necessary to reduce postage costs.

- Letter-sized envelopes (4 1/8 x 9 1/2 inches). Fold from one to five pages of correspondence to a 1/4-inch maximum thickness.
- Flat envelopes. Flat envelopes are rectangular in shape and exceed one or more of the maximum dimensions for letter-sized envelopes but do not exceed 15 inches in length, 12 inches in height, or 3/4 inches in thickness. The NASA standard flat-sized envelopes are brown, 9 1/2 x 12 inches, and brown, 10 x 12 inches. Use flat envelopes for communications that cannot be folded or, if folded, will exceed the 1/4-inch maximum thickness permitted for letter-sized envelopes.

Do not use any other envelopes or mailers other than those described above. Consult with your Center's Mail Manager before using any other envelope or mailer to ensure they comply with NASA policy and USPS restrictions.

Do not use window envelopes to mail general correspondence. Window envelopes cannot be used to mail material that:

- Contains national security information.
- Is highly confidential to NASA or the addressee.
- Is being sent registered mail via the USPS.
- Is being sent to international addresses.
- Is being sent to high-level officials in the Government or private sector.

Do not use staples to secure any size mailer, including padded mailers.

## Address Information and Placement

Addresses will include, at a minimum, the five-digit ZIP Code and, when available, ZIP Code and four digits.

Place the address information on a standard letter-sized envelopes within the automatic machine-readable area, as seen below.

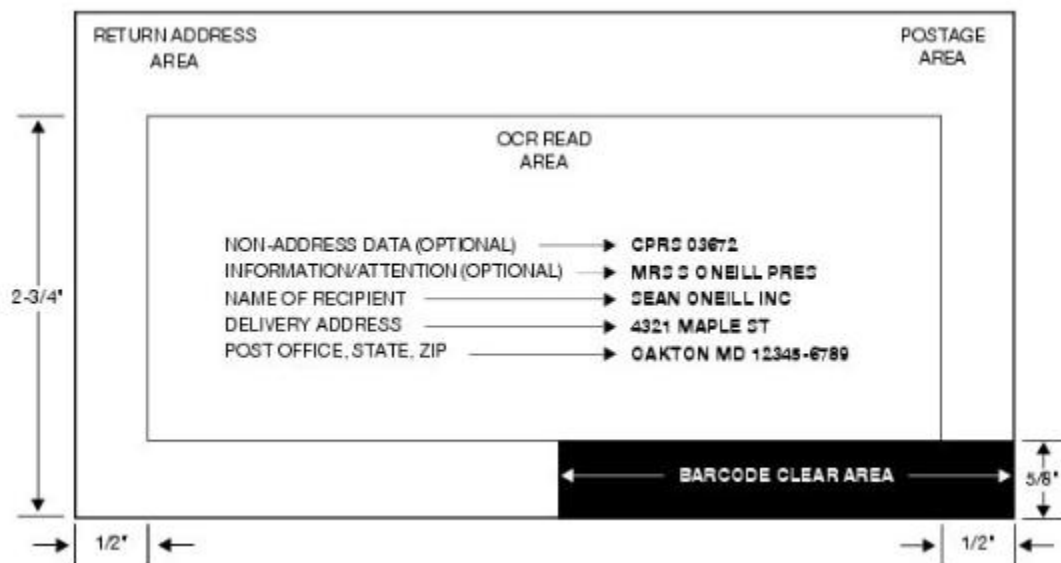


Figure 1: Envelope example provided by USPS.

Preferably type the address directly on the envelope, but a label is also permissible. Avoid script or other fancy font styles.

Use all uppercase letters. The USPS prefers no punctuation (except the hyphen in the nine-digit ZIP Code).

Use only the approved two-letter state abbreviations in addresses. Do not use these abbreviations in the body of the correspondence.

**International Destinations.** Place the name of the country on the last line in all-capital letters.

The mail code of the originating office (suite number for HQ mail) is placed in the top left corner of the envelope or mailing label. This is a mandatory requirement and is used to identify items returned for nondelivery.

Avoid attention lines if possible. If one is necessary, placement is on the first line of the address information.

The address information should be in proper sequence. Address information should be limited to five lines if possible. Examples:

NASA

DR DONALD HENRY  
DIRECTOR  
NASA AMES RESEARCH CENTER  
MAIL STOP 200  
MOFFETT FIELD CA 94035-1000

Industry

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# Chapter 9: NASA Stationery Usage and Specification Standards

This section outlines standardized templates and product specifications for stationery components as defined in the NASA Style Guide. These templates serve as a reference for NPR 1450.10 and are intended for the reproduction of the specified products.

## 9.1 Usage Guidelines for NASA Letterhead

**NASA Headquarters/Center Letterhead.** This letterhead should be used for general correspondence related to NASA's operations, projects, or initiatives that are not signed by Principals in the Office of the Administrator. It is appropriate for communications related to official NASA business, signed by NASA employees that are not designated Principals in the Office of the Administrator.

**Office of the Administrator Letterhead.** NASA letterhead for the Office of the Administrator may only be used when the signatory is the Administrator, Deputy Administrator, Associate Administrator, Chief of Staff, or Deputy Associate Administrator.

By using the appropriate letterhead, you help maintain clarity and professionalism in NASA's communications, ensuring that the intended message aligns with the correct level of authority.

## 9.2 Obtaining Electronic and Printed Letterhead

**Printed Letterhead.** Printed NASA Office of the Administrator letterhead, if needed, should be requested directly from the Office of the Executive Secretariat at [nasaexecsec@nasa.gov](mailto:nasaexecsec@nasa.gov).

Printed NASA Headquarters letterhead should be requested from Communications Support Service Center (CSSC) at: <https://nasa.sharepoint.com/sites/cio/SitePages/hq-cssc.aspx>.

**Electronic Letterhead.** Electronic letterhead along with letter and memo templates can be obtained at the Executive Operations website at: <https://nasa.sharepoint.com/sites/OA/SitePages/Office-of-the-Executive-Secretariat.aspx>.

## 9.3 Letterhead and Envelope Examples

The following products represent standardized templates, including product specifications for stationery, including NASA letterhead and envelopes and comply with the NASA Style Guide.

- Headquarters/Center Letterhead
- Office of the Administrator Letterhead

- NASA Headquarters Mailing Label
  - NASA #10 HQ Envelope
  - NASA #10 Center Envelope (Mail Code and Stop)
  - NASA #10 Office of the Administrator Envelope
  - NASA 9x12" Envelope – Headquarters
  - NASA 9x12" Envelope – Center (Code)
  - NASA 9x12" Envelope – Center (Stop)
-



## Headquarters/Center Letterhead

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters**  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



Reply to Attn of:

Final Size: Letter Size 8"x10"

Agency Name: Arial 10pt (prints black)

Center Name: Arial 10pt (prints black)

City, State, Zip Code: Arial 10pt (prints black)

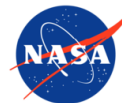
NASA Insignia: 5/8" sphere (color)

Reply Line: Helvetica 8pt (prints black)

## Office of the Administrator Letterhead

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**Office of the Administrator**  
Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



Final Size: Letter Size 8"x10"

Agency Name: Arial 10 pt (prints black)

Office of the Administrator: Arial 10 pt (prints black)

Center Name: Arial 10 pt (prints black)

City, State, Zip Code: Arial 10 pt (prints black)

NASA Insignia: 5/8" sphere (color)

## NASA #10 Office of the Administrator Mailing Envelope

**National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration**  
Office of the Administrator  
Washington, DC 20546-0001



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Official Business  
Penalty for Private Use, \$300

Final Size: 4 1/8 in x 9 1/2 in, the standard business envelope size

NASA Insignia: .70" sphere, prints color (blue, white, red)

Agency Name: Helvetica 9 pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints black


Office of the Administrator: Helvetica 9 pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints black

City, State, Zip Code: Helvetica 9 pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints black

Rule Line: 1pt extending to end of penalty line, prints black

Official Business: Helvetica 6 pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints black

## NASA Mailing Label (NHQ 150A)

National Aeronautics and Space Administration Code _____ Washington, DC 20546-0001	
<b>Official Business</b> Penalty for Private Use, \$300	

Final Size: approximately 5" x 2.875"

NASA Insignia: approximately 0.625" sphere, prints color (blue, white)

Agency Name: Helvetica 6pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints black

Center Name: Helvetica 6pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints black

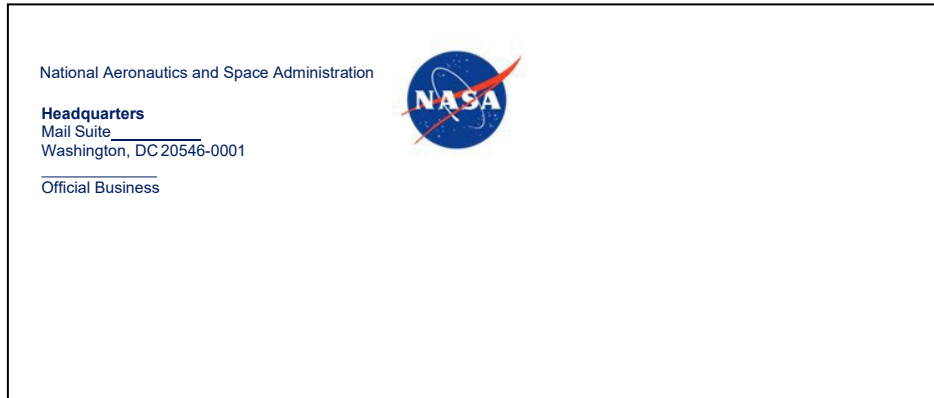
Code: Helvetica 6 pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints black

Rule Line: 1 pt extending to Zip Code

City, State, Zip Code: Helvetica 6 pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints black

Official Business, Penalty: Helvetica 6 pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints black

## NASA #10 HQ Envelope



Final Size: 4 1/8 in x 9 1/2 in, the standard business envelope size NASA Insignia: .70” sphere, prints color

Agency Name: Helvetica 9 pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints blue

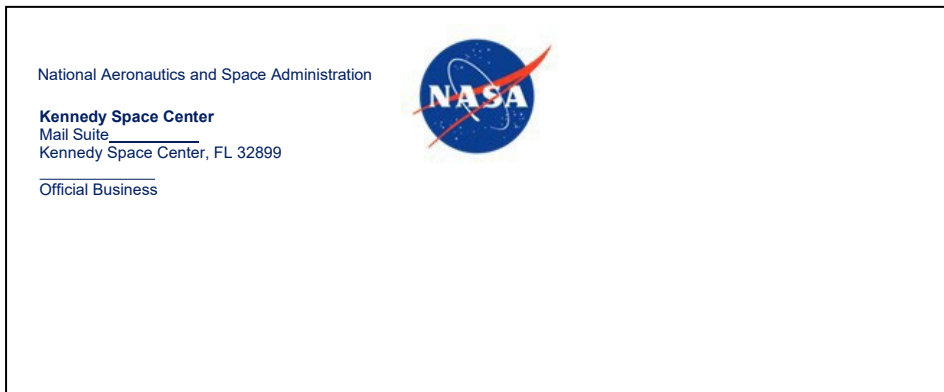
Center: Helvetica 9 pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints blue

Mail Suite, City, State, Zip Code: Helvetica 9 pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints blue

Rule Line: 1pt extending to last “s” in “Business”

Official Business, Penalty: Helvetica 9 pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints blue

## NASA #10 Center Envelope (Mail Code and Stop)



Final Size: 4 1/8 in x 9 1/2 in, the standard business envelope size NASA Insignia: .70" sphere, prints color

Agency Name: Helvetica 9 pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints blue

Center Name: Helvetica 9 pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints blue

Mail Suite, City, State, Zip Code: Helvetica 9 pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints blue

Rule Line: 1pt extending to last "s" in "Business"

Official Business, Penalty: Helvetica 9 pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints blue

## NASA 9"x12" Envelope - Headquarters

National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration



Mail Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Washington, DC 20546-0001

Official Business  
Penalty for Private Use, \$300

Final Size: 9"x12"

NASA Insignia: .70" sphere, prints black

Agency Name: Arial 8pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints black

Mail Code, City, State, Zip Code, Official Business, Penalty: Arial 8 pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints black

Rule Line: 1pt x 7/8", left alignment, extending to last "s" in "Business"

## NASA 9"x12" Envelope – Center (Code)

National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration



**KennedySpace Center**

Mail Code \_\_\_\_\_

Kennedy Space Center, Florida 32899

\_\_\_\_\_  
Official Business

Final Size: 9"x12"

NASA Insignia: .70" sphere, prints black

Agency Name: Arial 8 pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints black

Center Name: Arial 8 pt bold font, U/L case, left alignment, prints black

Mail Code, City, State, Zip Code, Official Business, Penalty: Arial 8 pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints black

Rule Line: 1pt extending to last "s" in "Business"



## NASA 9"x12" Envelope – Center (Stop)

National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration



**KennedySpace Center**

Mail Stop \_\_\_\_\_

Kennedy Space Center, Florida 32899

\_\_\_\_\_  
Official Business

Final Size: 9"x12"

NASA Insignia: .70" sphere, prints black

Agency Name: Arial 8 pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints black

Center Name: Arial 8 pt bold font, U/L case, left alignment, prints black

Mail Stop, City, State, Zip Code, Official Business, Penalty: Arial 8 pt font, U/L case, left alignment, prints black

Rule Line: 1 pt extending to last "s" in "Business"