

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Court of Appeals Judges, Staff Attorneys, AAs
FROM: Reporter of Decisions Office
RE: Style of Opinions
DATE: February 2001

While we recognize the impossibility of coordinating absolute uniformity among the individual offices regarding abbreviations, spelling, capitalization, and citation forms, we have nevertheless prepared this memorandum as a guide in an attempt to attain as much uniformity as possible. Some styles of abbreviation and citation differ among different style books; however, in the interest of continuity of style, we suggest not adopting different styles where we have successfully been using other forms for many years. If the following guidelines can be integrated into each office, a great amount of time spent in changing manuscript and page proofs will be saved.

ABBREVIATIONS: (For further abbreviations, see **CITATIONS**, *infra*.)

In captions in style of cases, spell out: "Association," "Company," "Corporation," etc. Inc., Ltd., LLC, L.P., and P.C. are always abbreviated. See *STYLE OF OPINIONS*, *infra*.

In citation of cases and where appropriate within opinions, always abbreviate as follows:

affirmed to "aff'd"	Footnote to "fn." or "n." (either correct, but uniform within opinion)
Associate or Associates to "Assoc."	General to "Gen."
Association to "Assn."	Government to "Govt."
Authority to "Auth."	Headnote to "hn."
Bank is <u>never</u> abbreviated. But abbreviate <u>C & S Nat. Bank</u> .	Hospital to "Hosp."
Board to "Bd."	Incorporated to "Inc."
Brothers to "Bros."	Indemnity to "Indem."
Building to "Bldg."	Industry, Industries, Industrial to "Indus."
Casualty to "Cas."	International to "Intl."
Commission to "Comm."	Judgment notwithstanding the verdict to "judgment n.o.v." or "j.n.o.v."
Commissioners to "Commrs."	Limited to "Ltd."
Company to "Co."	Management to "Mgmt."
Condominium to "Condo."	Manufacturing to "Mfg."
Construction to "Constr."	Memorial to "Mem."
County is never abbreviated.	Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority to "MARTA."
Department to "Dept." (as in Dept. of Transp. <u>not</u> DOT; Dept. of Natural Resources <u>not</u> DNR; Dept. of Family &c. Svcs. <u>not</u> DFCS.)	miles per hour to "mph"
Development to "Dev."	Mortgage to "Mtg."
Distributor or Distributing to "Distrib."	Mutual to "Mut."
District to "Dist."	National to "Nat."
Division to "Div."	Railroad, Railway to "R."
Driving Under the Influence to "DUI"	reversed to "rev'd"
Education to "Ed."	Savings to "Sav."
Electric to "Elec."	Service or Services to "Svc." or "Svcs."
Equipment to "Equip."	Southern is <u>never</u> abbreviated.
Executive to "Exec."	Transportation to "Transp."
Federal to "Fed."	University to "Univ."

CAPITALIZATION, SPELLING AND FORMS OF FREQUENTLY USED WORDS:

alco-sensor
attorney fees (no "s" on attorney" -- used as adjective)
bank in never abbreviated (but abbreviate C & S Nat. Bank)
boyfriend (one word)
cancelled
cannot (one word)
case law (two words)
Case No. (cap first letters)
centerline (one word)
co-defendant (hyphenated)
count (Count 1, capitalize "C"; but, petition in four counts)
counterclaim (one word)
court (not capitalized unless name of court specified -- Troup Superior Court; but, the superior court held . . .)
courtroom (one word)
cross-appeal (hyphenated)
cross-examination (hyphenated)
federal (as an adjective, generally lowercase, as in "the federal courts have uniformly held . . .")
girlfriend (one word)
kidnapping
landowner (one word)
lawsuit (one word)
Long Arm Statute (cap first letters of statutes cited by name)
nonresident (one word -- "non" prefixes -- no hyphen)
pat-down (hyphenated)
prehearing or pre-hearing (either, but uniform within opinion)
presentence or pre-sentence (either, but uniform within opinion)
pretrial or pre-trial (either, but uniform within opinion)
quitclaim (one word)
Reports (cap when referring to Ga. Reports or Ga. App. Reports)
roadblock (one word)
roadway (one word)
state (either case, but uniform within opinion)
State of Georgia (cap first letters)
statute (not capitalized unless statute cited by name)
Statute of Frauds (cap first letters)
statute of limitation (lower case -- no "s" on limitation. Note: This is not capitalized, as there is no one historic "statute of limitation" as is the case with the Statute of Frauds.)
Supreme Court -- Court of Appeals -- Superior Court of Fulton County (cap first letters)
to wit (two words)
totaling (one "l")
traveling (one "l")
wilful (one "l")

CITATIONS:

Georgia citations: Thomas v. Best Mfg., 234 Ga. 787 (218 SE2d 68) (1975).

All unofficial citations in parentheses, separated by commas where more than one; Ga. and Ga. App. case names — names in italics, numbers and Reports are not)

Georgia Appeals citations: Guthrie v. Boose, 134 Ga. App. 282, 286 (213 SE2d 924) (1975).

Same as Georgia citations. Always space between Ga. and App. (Ga. App. not Ga.App.).

Georgia Constitution of 1983: Ga. Const. of 1983, Art. I, Sec. II, Par. III.

Use roman numerals in place of arabic numerals.

Georgia Laws: Ga. L. 1982, p. 910, § 1.

OCGA: OCGA § 9-11-56.

Always space between section symbol and number. (OCGA § 9-11-54 (b).) Omit comma before et seq. and use only one section symbol. (OCGA § 9-11-54 et seq.) When citing more than one OCGA section, set off sections with semicolons, not commas. (OCGA §§ 12-5-2; 12-5-34; 12-5-80.) When citing more than one subsection, set off subsections with commas (OCGA § 15-11-94 (a), (b) (4) (A).)

U. S. Supreme Court citations: Loper v. Beto, 405 U. S. 473 (92 SC 1014, 31 LE2d 374).

U. S. citation; then unofficial citations in parentheses, separated by commas.

Cases referred to by name: "decided in the Thomas case, supra, whereas in Loper, supra, it was held . . ."

In all cases referred to by name, use italics.

Short citation forms: (all are acceptable)

Thomas v. Best Mfg., supra.

Thomas v. Best Mfg., supra, 234 Ga. at 788.

Thomas v. Best Mfg., 234 Ga. at 788.

Thomas, 234 Ga. at 788.

234 Ga. at 788.

Id. and supra: Id. at 4. (no commas; "Id." is never italicized)

Thomas, supra at 788 (no comma after supra)

&c.: Where case name is long, use &c. as follows:

Big Bear Ranches v. Ga. Farm Bureau Mut. Ins. Co.

Big Bear Ranches v. Ga. Farm &c. Ins. Co.

In style of case, always use ampersand instead of "and." See *STYLE OF OPINIONS*, infra.

Accord, see, but see, see generally, cf., compare: There are no commas.

Accord Thomas, 234 Ga. 787.

See Thomas v. Best Mfg., supra.

Exception: See, e.g., Thomas, 234 Ga. 787. (set off by commas)

Business firm designations: Omit "Inc.," "Ltd." and similar terms (when citing in body of opinion) if the name clearly indicates that the party is a business firm. Omit "the" in captions and citations where it begins name. In captions only, include "the" with "state"; otherwise omit (ALLEN v. THE STATE, but Allen v. State, 140 Ga. App. 828 (232 SE2d 250) (1976)). Always include "Ins." when citing an insurance company (see "&c.," supra).

Citation abbreviations:

AC - Annotated Cases (close up; no periods)

ALR, ALR3d - American Law Reports (close up; no periods)

AmJur, AmJur3d - American Jurisprudence (cap "A" and "J"; close up; no periods) (e.g., 3 AmJur2d 41, Contracts, § 8)

CJS - Corpus Juris Secundum (close up; no periods) (e.g., 9 CJS 86, Negligence, § 4)

ed. - edition (lower case; period, as in 2d ed.)

F2d - Federal Second (close up; no period)

FSupp. - Federal Supplement (close up; period stays)

LE2d - Lawyers' Edition, Second (close up; no period)

S2d - Southern Second (close up; no period)

SC - Supreme Court Reports (caps; no space or period)

SE2d - Southeastern Second (close up; no period)

U. S. (in citations as in 443 U. S. 307 or U. S. Fidelity &c. Co. v. American Fidelity Ins. Co.) (periods and space); but United States v. Jones (spell out)

USC, USCA, USCS - United States Code (close up; no period)

FORMAT:

STYLE OF OPINIONS:

Always type caption in ALL CAPS, except "et al.," "and vice versa," or "(two cases)."
There is no comma before et al. Et al. always has a period. (JOHNSON et al. v. SMITH et al.)
There is a semicolon before "and vice versa." (JOHNSON v. SMITH; and vice versa.)

Do not abbreviate in caption, except INC. and LTD. always abbreviated; ampersand (&) replaces "and" in case names. (JONES & MILLER, not JONES AND MILLER.)

Omit first names and titles, such as executor, commissioner, d/b/a, a/k/a, b/n/f.
(JOHNSON v. SMITH, not JOHNSON, EXECUTOR v. SMITH, d/b/a CLIMATROL..)

Include "THE" with "STATE" only in caption. (JONES v. THE STATE. But JONES v. HARTFORD ASSURANCE COMPANIES, not JONES v. THE HARTFORD ASSURANCE COMPANIES.)

Omit "Georgia" in title where case refers to city, county, or other municipal body.
(CITY OF SAVANNAH v. JONES, not SAVANNAH, GEORGIA v. JONES. FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF ATLANTA v. JONES, not FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF ATLANTA, GEORGIA v. JONES.)

In opinions styled "In the Interest of . . ."; "In re . . ."; or "In the Matter of . . ." never use colons. In juvenile cases, for example "In the Interest of M.P. H., J. J. H., D. L. H." should be changed to read: "In the Interest of M. P. H. et al., children." or if one child, "In the Interest of M. P. H., a child."

DIVISIONS: Within opinions, numbered divisions are never set off in parentheses; however, lettered subdivisions should always be in parentheses.

Example:

2. In appellant's first claim of error . . .
 - (a) Appellant contends . . .
 - (i) The evidence is . . .
 - (ii) The testimony by . . .

FOOTNOTES: Use numerals when footnoting (even if only one footnote is used). Numerals are used in place of asterisks so that in the event the footnote is cited in another opinion we will not have "See Jones v. State, 256 Ga. 40, 41, n. * . . ."; but instead a numerical footnote reference.

JUDGMENT LINES: Abbreviate titles.

Judgment affirmed in part and reversed in part. McMurray P. J., Cooper and Andrews, JJ., concur.

DISSENTS: Always spell out titles.

I am authorized to state that Presiding Judge McMurray, Judge Cooper and Judge Andrews join in this dissent.

QUOTATIONS:

QUOTATION MARKS:

Comma, period, exclamation point and question mark should be inside quotes. Semicolon and colon should be outside quotation marks unless part of quoted material.

Examples: The defendants participated in a gambling game known as "the Bug," but it was not shown that they played for money. (comma inside quotation marks)

The defendants participated in a gambling game known as "the Bug." (period inside quotation marks)

The defendants participated in a gambling game known as "the Bug"; however, it was not shown that they played for money. (semicolon outside quotation marks)

BLOCK QUOTATIONS:

The Court of Appeals uses block quotations when the quote comprises more than four lines (one word drops to the fifth line) before the quote is blocked. Unless the punctuation is omitted, the punctuation in the quote remains the same as in the original text. However, it may be necessary to add open and/or close quote marks if the new quote is only part of a quote from the original text.

Example:

Original adapted from Robinson v. State, 215 Ga. App. 125, 126 (1) (449 SE2d 679) (1994).

"[T]here was no uncontradicted evidence which demanded a finding that [defendant] was the thief. 'The facts in the instant case are therefore distinguishable from those in Dyer v. State, 150 Ga. App. 760 (258 SE2d 620) (1979), as the State did not produce conclusive evidence that [defendant] committed theft by taking. . . .' [Cit.] 'Guilt of either theft by taking or receiving could be inferred. (Cit.)' In a theft by receiving stolen property case, where the principal thief is unknown, there is no burden on the State of proving that such thief was not the defendant."

New quote:

" 'The facts in the instant case are . . . distinguishable from those in Dyer v. State, 150 Ga. App. 760 (258 SE2d 620) (1979), as the State did not produce conclusive evidence that (defendant) committed theft by taking. . . .' (Cit.) 'Guilt of either theft by taking or receiving could be inferred. (Cit.)' In a theft by receiving stolen property case, where the principal thief is unknown, there is no burden on the State of proving that such thief was not the defendant."

BRACKETS AND ELLIPSES:

Use brackets to show a changed word (from singular "defendant" to plural "defendant[s]"); changed or added text ("defendants were charged with trafficking in methamphetamine in Fulton Superior Court" to "defendants were charged with [possession of cocaine with intent to distribute] in Fulton Superior Court"); and changed or added punctuation ("defendants were charged with trafficking and possession" to "defendants were charged with[:] trafficking[,] possession and obstruction of an officer") (brackets and an ellipsis together are not necessary; the brackets around the comma alert the reader that the text has been changed). Use an ellipsis for omitted words.

Brackets in original text become parentheses in a new quote.

Do not use an ellipsis when beginning quote in mid-sentence. (The Court of Appeals held that "parents . . . of an illegitimate child . . ." Not The Court of Appeals held that ". . . parents . . . of an illegitimate child . . .")

An ellipsis — three dots and no period — is used at the end of a quoted sentence left deliberately and grammatically incomplete.

A period and ellipsis — four dots — are used to indicate an omission following a sentence. The first dot — the period — should be placed immediately after the last word (letter). In a period/ellipsis-type situation, the period should be closed up to the last word (no space). ("Questions lurking in the record are not to be considered. . . .")

EMPHASIS NOTATION: Use (Emphasis supplied.) Do not use "Emphasis added" or "Italics added," etc

PARAGRAPH INDENTS: Omit paragraph indents from original text. Run in text in new quote.

MISCELLANEOUS:

LATIN WORDS OR PHRASES: Do not italicize.

CONTRACTIONS: Do not use.

NUMBERS: Within opinion, numbers one to ten are spelled out. When numbers 11 and greater are used, numerals should be used. When you have one of each example, spell out numbers zero through ninety-nine. (She was convicted of one count of robbery and twelve counts . . .) When numbers 100 and greater are used, always use numerals.

MONEY: Use dollar sign or cent symbol with numeral. Omit ".00" for even dollar amounts. (\$1, \$10, \$100, \$1,000 but \$2,000,000 or \$2 million)

PERCENT SYMBOL: In body of opinion spell out percent rather than use symbol. (They charged 18 percent interest.)

DATES: No comma between month and year. (April 1985. But April 24, 1985.) A comma follows the year within a sentence except when the month/date/year is used as an adjective preceding the noun. (Plaintiff's letter was dated June 5, 1995, and stated. . . . But plaintiff's June 5, 1995 letter stated. . . .)