



Style Sheet and Writing Guidelines for CAI – Orange County Regional Chapter *OC View* Magazine

Thank you for making *OC View* one of the finest publications for Homeowner Leaders, Community Managers and Business Partners throughout Orange County, CA. Every two months our readers learn more and more about common interest developments by reading your interesting and informative articles in the *OC View*.

The purpose of the *OC View* and your article is to be educational, instructional, informative and interesting. Therefore, when writing your article, please do not include any self-promotional information about yourself or your company.

To maintain a sense of uniform writing style among the magazine's articles, please consider the style and spelling tips provided in this document. We have also provided instructions for submitting your articles and will only consider those that adhere to that format. You may refer to the "Sample Article Layout" provided at the end of this document.

Due to space constraints and other editorial concerns, final edits and adjustments may be made to your article.

Thank you again for all your help in making *OC View* such a great magazine. It is greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions, please contact:

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Revision History:
March 2026

Instructions on Submitting Articles

Previously Published Articles

Authors who submit articles must provide a description of any prior publication, including the date and location (e.g., social media, company blog, another magazine).

By submitting an article, an author is representing that the original publisher/copyright holder has given reprint permission in writing. This reprint permission must be submitted with the article, along with any special text to be used in the attribution.

OC View primarily publishes original material. However, previously published articles are occasionally accepted if:

- The article otherwise meets OC View standards, including relevancy, grammar, and punctuation;
- The article is not simultaneously being published in another trade journal; and
- Prior publication was for a different audience (e.g. national publication) or for company promotion (e.g. website blog).

Submission Policy Regarding Artificial Intelligence

All submitted articles must be original works created by the author(s). Articles suspected of plagiarism or AI generation will be subject to editorial review and may be rejected. Submissions must not:

- Be copied or plagiarized from other sources;
- Be substantially derived from previously published material, unless explicitly disclosed and approved by the Publications Committee;
- Contain any content generated primarily by artificial intelligence (AI) tools (e.g. ChatGPT,).

While the Committee does not accept primarily AI-generated content for publication, we encourage authors to utilize AI-based tools such as Grammarly or Microsoft Editor for grammar and spell-checking and sentence structure improvement. The Committee discourages any tools that prevent an author from writing in their own words or that act as a substitute for the author's own expertise and perspective.

Authors are solely responsible for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of their work. By submitting an article, the author is deemed to confirm that the article is original and not written or co-written by AI. AI tools, if used, should be limited to proofreading and organization, not generating content or performing substantial rewriting.

Formatting and General Notes

We only accept articles in WORD and TEXT-ONLY formats (no PDFs). **Please e-mail your article along with any relevant pictures to the committee chairs and ocview@caioc.org.** Faxed articles will not be considered. Please also inform us if the article you are submitting has previously been published

elsewhere and include the date, place and name of the publication. (Remove this last sentence, as it is repetitive.)

As a guideline, articles should be between 700 and 1,200 words.

Do not format (images, colors, graphics, etc.) or layout your article in any way. The Publications Committee and the graphic designer will format the article for you. Everything needs to be left-justified and the same font size. See the "Sample Article Layout" at the end of this document.

Do not add pictures or graphs directly into your WORD document. All pictures and graphs you would like to include in your article need to be attached as a separate high-resolution file. You may want to supply a photo or two representing the subject matter of your article. **Please** include only 300 dpi high-resolution pictures and graphs.

All articles must include the following:

1. A Short Descriptive Title - use an active voice to grab the readers' attention. Example: Tennis Anyone? How To Rebuild Your Old Courts
2. A byline with your name, CAI designation(s), and company name. Your byline **MUST** be in the actual WORD doc, and not simply in your email. Example: By: Robert Smith, CMCA, PCAM, Follow The Bouncing Ball Construction
3. Notice that nothing is centered, highlighted, bold, or abbreviated, not even the title. Just keep adding your text until the paragraph is complete.
4. To start a new paragraph, skip a line after the paragraph above and continue on, keeping everything flushed left. A paragraph should be at least three complete sentences. Example:

Updates on Balcony Bill Inspect Reports Recommended [in Light of New Disclosure Requirements](#) (SB 410)

By Denise Iger, Esq. of Iger Wankel, LLP

California has enacted Senate Bill 410, which expands disclosure obligations for homeowners associations and sellers in common interest developments. Effective January 1, 2026, SB 410 amends several provisions of the *Davis–Stirling Common Interest Development Act* to require that exterior elevated elements inspection reports prepared pursuant to *Civil Code* section 5551 be provided to prospective purchasers by sellers as part of the statutory resale disclosure process. Homeowners associations, in turn, will need to provide the required inspection reports to sellers so that sellers can comply with their disclosure obligations.

Civil Code section 5551, enacted through Senate Bill 326 and commonly referred to as the "Balcony Bill," requires associations to conduct periodic inspections of certain exterior elevated elements, which can include balconies, decks, stairways, and walkways. These inspections must be performed by a licensed structural engineer or architect and documented in a written report that is retained by the association.

5. PULL QUOTE (copied directly from article text). "Every tennis court should be playable and safe, even in the rain.

Industry-Related Writing and Spelling Tips

General Note: When in doubt regarding style, please refer to the **Associated Press Stylebook** for clarity.

The: Do not use “the” before CAI or Community Associations Institute unless you are writing specifically about *the CAI board* or *the CAI conference*, etc.

CAI: CAI is a membership organization, not a company.

Order of Certification Designations: CMCA, AMS, LSM, PCAM, RS, CIRMS CMCA certification is awarded by CAMICB.

AMS, LSM, PCAM, RS, CIRMS designations are awarded by CAI.

Assessments: Homeowners pay assessments not dues. When a homeowner is late paying assessments, they are delinquent.

Capitalization: These words, when used in the body of the article, should be capitalized when speaking specifically. NO UPPER CASE WORDS, not even within the title.

Example: Ocean Sky Board of Directors, Ocean Sky Association, Ocean Sky's Community Manager. HOA, CC&Rs, CAI, Internet.

Example: Capitalize Southern California, but not southern Irvine. Capitalize Midwest, West, South, Southland and Southwest.

Lower Case Words: These words, when used in the body of the article, should be lower case when speaking in general terms.

Example: bylaws, chapter, governing documents, community manager, community association, association, board of directors, a board, business partner (unless part of a title or a bulleted list of member types), spring, summer, winter, and fall

Abbreviations:

1. Do not abbreviate condominium as condo nor cooperative as co-op.
2. United States is abbreviated as U.S. not US.
3. “i.e.” means “in other words”; “e.g.” means “for example”

Lists:

1. Capitalize the first letter of each word in a bulleted or numbered list.
2. Do not use periods at the end of a bulleted item unless the item as it stands alone is a complete sentence. Do not use a period at the end of a bulleted item even if the item completes the sentence introducing the bulleted list.
3. Do not use a semi-colon at the end of bulleted items.

Plural Words: Dogs, 1980s, HOAs, CDs, DVDs, homeowners associations (not homeowner's associations)

Example: The number of HOAs in California has increased every year. I have 27 CDs in my car.

Possessive Words: Dog's, 1980's, HOA's, CD's, DVD's, Its

Example: The HOA's sidewalks were colorful. The CD's artwork was colorful. Its artwork was colorful.

Possessive Words should be a bolded category like plural words and be lined up with the left margin.

Websites:

1. Do not use http:// when listing web addresses unless it is necessary to access the site. *Example:* www.caionline.org
2. Do not use a hyphen for "online."
3. "Website" is one word.

Self-Serving Thoughts To Avoid: "In my experience..." or "At our company we advise..." or "The best valve to buy is the ReadyMade brand..." (which the author sells or promotes.)

Self-serving content or content primarily serving as marketing tools or promotional information will not be accepted. An author is encouraged to refer to his or her own work when applicable to the article and may also include relevant experience to explain why the author is uniquely qualified to write about the topic. However, blatant advertising or promotional content is discouraged.

Hyphens, Dashes, and Spaces:

1. Use a hyphen to create compound words or numbers. Example: Large-scale manager
2. Use a dash to signal an abrupt change in sentence structure or add impact. Example: The venue—a community clubhouse in Orange County.
3. Do not place a space between dashes and the words on either side of the dash.

Numbers and Dates:

1. Spell out numbers one through nine, unless the same object appears in a sentence with an object 10 or over (5 apples and 100 oranges). Use figures for numbers 10 and above.
2. Spell out numbers when they start a sentence. When a number or a date is required to open a sentence, spell it out. Example: One hundred five girls and sixteen boys tried out for the varsity soccer team.
3. Spell out percent in text, do not use %. Example: Fifty percent of homeowners are part of a community association.
4. Hyphenate numbers from twenty-one through ninety-nine, but *only* those numbers. Example: one hundred eighty-three.
5. When referencing the year of an event, place the year before the title of the event as it is not part of the title itself. Example: The 2016 CAI Annual Conference and Exposition.

6. Spell the number if you spell the currency. Example: twenty-five dollars.
7. **Do not** add the numeral in parentheses after you have written it in words: seven thousand nine hundred fifty-two (~~7,952~~).
8. **Do not** place an apostrophe before the “s” in a plural year or century: The 1960s, or the 1800s.

Italics:

1. Keywords. Emphasize a keyword or phrase in your text by placing it in italics. The next time the term or phrase is used it should be in plain text.
2. Titles. Use italics for titles of books and names of periodicals in your text and references, including when referencing statutes. Example: *Davis-Stirling Common Interest Development Act, Civil Code Section 4710*. Use the word “Section” or the symbol § by inserting the special character in the symbol font.
3. Words as words. Words and letters that are referred to as words or letters are set in italics. Example: the term *American Indian* is inclusive of over 500 ethnic communities.
4. Foreign terms. Non-English words or terms used in your text are set in italics. Example: *Hola* is a form of greeting in the Spanish language. This practice excludes those words that have become incorporated into the English language, such as *laissez-faire*.

Quotation Marks:

1. Periods and commas go inside quotation marks. All other punctuation (i.e., question marks, semi-colons, colons, and exclamation points) should be outside quotation marks, unless it is a part of the original source.
2. Place quotation marks around a word or phrase given in a special sense or purposefully misused. Example: The City Council criticized the "outrageous" position of the store owner on his sidewalk signage.
3. Use quotation marks for nicknames. Example: George “Babe” Ruth.

Punctuation: Use the Oxford comma before “and” in uncomplicated lists. Example: The United States flag is red, white, and blue.

I hope this document has been helpful to you. If you have any questions or comments, please contact me. Thanks again for all your help in making *OC View* such a great magazine.

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