

# US Chess Usage Style Guide

rev. 02-23-2022

## I. Overview

US Chess is the preferred reference to our organization. Whenever possible, **avoid** using:

USCF  
USCF's  
United States Chess Federation

Do not use U.S. Chess — always use US Chess. (No periods in “US.”)

**EXAMPLE 1: The U.S. government supports US Chess.**

## II. Legal and Press Release Usage

For official documents, such as postal statements filed with the U.S. Postal Service, our corporate name should be used: United States Chess Federation.

In press releases and other communications outside of US Chess, use: US Chess Federation (US Chess) in the first instance and simply US Chess in following instances.

## III. Replacing Older Usages

When replacing older references (web pages, forms), be careful to avoid awkward constructions, such as “US Chess’s” or “US Chess” to replace “USCF’s.” It may be necessary to rewrite a sentence to achieve this goal.

### **EXAMPLE 2:**

“The USCF’s goal is to enrich ...”

might be rewritten as:

“The goal of US Chess is to enrich ...”

Pay careful attention to the use of articles. “The USCF ...” sounds OK because you are actually referring to the “F” in USCF. “The US Chess ...” does not sound natural because you would be referring to “chess” and we don’t say “The Chess.”

It would be OK to use “the” if for any reason you were to use the entire branding name: The US Chess Federation.

**EXAMPLE 3:**

“We ask you to support the 501(c)(3) USCF.”

might be rewritten as:

“We ask you to support US Chess, a 501(c)(3) organization.”

There will be a lot of instances of people providing us with direct quotes using “USCF.” In these cases, follow the same guidelines for substituting US Chess, but add brackets. Brackets indicate an editorial change to a direct quote.

**EXAMPLE 4:**

“The USCF has been an important part of my life since childhood. I am grateful for all that the USCF has done for me.” ~Daniel Lucas

can be changed to:

“[US Chess] has been an important part of my life since childhood. I am grateful for all that [US Chess] has done for me.” ~Daniel Lucas

**Additional examples**

1. To qualify, an event must be USCF-rated.

can be changed to:

To qualify, an event must be US Chess-rated.

or

To qualify, an event must be rated by US Chess.

2. Conditions concerning USCF GP tournaments are subject to review and adjustment by the USCF executive director.

can be changed to:

Conditions concerning US Chess GP tournaments are subject to review and adjustment by our US Chess executive director.

3. Your official USCF rating can be found at [uschess.org/msa](http://uschess.org/msa).

can be changed to:

Your official US Chess rating can be found at [uschess.org/msa](http://uschess.org/msa).

4. Such certification does not in itself render any tournament director an agent of the USCF, nor is any affiliate an agent of the USCF.

can be changed to:

Such certification does not in itself render any tournament director an agent of US Chess, nor is any affiliate an agent of US Chess.

#### **IV. CHESS LIFE EDITING STANDARDS**

##### **Game annotation**

1. Capitalize White and Black for the moves when referring to a person.

**Example:** White played 1. e4. (capitalize White because it is the subject replacing the player's name)

Use white or black (lower case) when referring to the moves or pieces.

**Example:** The capture of the white queen led to White's demise.

2. When used to indicate a rook-for-minor piece exchange, the word Exchange is capitalized. Also, Exchange sacrifice.

3. "Sac" acceptable after first usage as "sacrifice." NEVER use "sack" or "sacked."

4. Use a space after the move numbers and between the leader dots.

**Example:**

1. e4 e5

1. ... e5

5. Pieces should be lowercase: king, queen, knight, rook, pawn.

6. When a pawn promotes, our style is to include the equal sign.

52. b8=Q

not

52. b8Q

7. Bold the chess moves in an actual game and use lighter font for annotations.

8. In general, don't start an annotation with a move. Start with a word: "The bishop belongs on the c2-square." [NOTE: this is loosened now, although it's still best to follow it.]

Keep *Informant* symbols to a bare minimum; usually you should use descriptive language. ? and ! are usually acceptable, as are ?! and !?.

9. Hyphenate moves with the names of the pieces as in f4-pawn.

10. When using the symbols for castling (0-0 or 0-0-0), use zeros not ohs.

11. Armageddon

12. light-square and dark-square bishop, not light-squared or dark-squared — outdated. Go with dark-squared (or light-squared) for now - JH (2022.02.23)

## Game headers

1. use ECO (Encyclopedia of Chess Openings) code for complete games; use a subtitle for game fragments.

2. **Complete games:**

Opening name in capitals, followed by ECO code in parentheses

Player Credits / Player ratings with identifier (country, team, etc., if applicable). White always listed first. For team events, include the team abbreviation within the rating parentheses.

Event, Round (in parentheses), Location, Date

Notes in italics (if applicable). Our style is to list the annotator only if he/she is not the main article author. Otherwise, no annotator is listed; it's assumed it's the main author.

*For events held in the U.S.:*

Opening, Variation (ECO code)

Player credits / Player ratings (Use US Chess rating as first choice, but FIDE rating if it is an international event)

Event, Round (in parentheses), Location, Date

Notes (if applicable)

**Example:**

ENGLISH OPENING (A22)

Billy Monk (1311)

Tom Barkais (1130)

Boca Raton Chess Club B Group, (3), Boca Raton, Florida, 04.07.2014

*For events held outside the U.S.:*

Opening, Variation (ECO code)

Player credits / Player ratings and identifiers (FIDE XXXX, 3-letter country code)

Event, Round (in parentheses), Location, Date

Notes (if applicable)

**Example:**

SEMI-SLAV DEFENSE (D45)

GM Levon Aronian (FIDE 2793, ARM)

GM Magnus Carlsen (FIDE 2832, NOR)

altibox Norway Chess 2017 (4), Stavanger, Norway, 06.10.2017

*Annotations by....*

**3. Game fragments:**

Fragment subtitle in capitals

Player Credits / Player ratings, listed as above for U.S. and non-U.S. events

Event, Round (in parentheses), Location, Date

Notes in italics (if applicable)

**Example:**

## STALEMATE SWINDLE

GM Wesley So (FIDE 2812, USA)

GM Sergey Karjakin (FIDE 2781, RUS)

altibox Norway Chess 2017 (4), Stavanger, Norway, 06.10.2017

*Annotations by....*

13. Use exact titles as found in either Member Services Area (1<sup>st</sup> choice) or on the FIDE website (second choice).

14. The end of a game should be indicated by White resigned, White lost on time, Black resigned, Black lost on time, Draw, Draw agreed, or Stalemate.

### Diagrams

1. Indicate “[Side] to move” under the diagram when beginning with a diagram only.
2. Don't use “Analysis Diagram.”
3. For continuations on to another column when a diagram will not fit in the normal space (always in parentheses and in **bold**):

**(see diagram top of next column)**

**(see diagram next column)** – use when there is a photo or other item at the top of the page

**(see diagram next page)**

**(see diagram on page XX)**

### Tournament and other abbreviations

1. Reference list for major tournaments (officially and in chess shorthand)

### Example:

Formal: Pan American Youth Chess Championship

Informal: Pan Ams

### General editing

1. Any items not covered by this document should be checked in the *AP Stylebook*.

2. Dek: intro text 3/lines, max 30 words. Full sentences have a period at the end, sentence fragments do not.
3. Columns: first line is all caps, no indent.
4. Women's and Girls' (with apostrophes). **EXCEPTION: References to the Girls Club do NOT have an apostrophe.**
5. Elo
6. Use oxford commas.
7. Spell out "versus" – king versus rook, not king vs. rook
8. Names after first mention: Last name only OK.
9. In general use St. Louis, except when referring to the Saint Louis Chess Club or Saint Louis Archbishops
10. Italicize names of books, movies, websites, e-mail addresses. Podcast titles and article titles are in quotes. Brand names (Chess24) are not italicized.
11. Website is one word.
12. Titles preceded by names should be capitalized (for example, President John Smith) but if they appear after the name, they should be lowercased (for example, John Smith, president of the chess club).
13. Use capitalization sparingly, e.g.:  
  
executive board, not Executive Board  
delegates, not Delegates  
grandmaster, not Grandmaster
14. Use phone numbers in this format: (xxx) xxx-xxxx. The number 1 should almost never be used in front of the phone number. (The logic behind that is each region is different in regard to the use of prefixes before the numbers).
15. Use the closing icon to finish all articles. (See separate section on logo usage.)

16. Bylaws committee, not Bylaws Committee
17. Under-10 section, not under-10 section. Second usage can be U-10 section.
18. If a name like McCurdy appears in all caps, then add a space: MC CURDY.
19. chess master
20. chess player, not chessplayer
21. Lists: Spell out place through ninth (first, second, etc.). Use numbers from 10<sup>th</sup> place on.
22. Use “smart quotes” not "dumb quotes."
23. First reference to anything (place, title, etc.) should be spelled out, with the common abbreviation included in parentheses. After that, use abbreviations in the same article.

**Example:** GM tktk, IA tktk, World Championship Challenger GM Ian Nepomniachtchi (“Nepo”)

NB: This can be loosened for voice reasons depending on the type of article that is under discussion. Still, general practice should have full titles / names on first mention. (2022.01)

**Example:**

Initial reference: Saint Louis Chess Club (SLCC)

Subsequent references: SLCC

24. U.S. with periods, but USA without
25. AP Stylebook uses postal codes only with full addresses, including ZIP codes (find under **state names** in the AP stylebook). Otherwise they abbreviate traditionally (i.e., Fla., not FL). See page 261 of 2016 AP Stylebook.
26. It is OK to use US Chess on first time use in Chess Life or Chess Life Kids.
27. Don’t assume: look up players’ names on US Chess or FIDE websites and verify spelling.
28. Sidebar notes: use lower case for all: (see sidebar), not (See sidebar).
29. Style guide for the STL Chess Club when thanking or acknowledging is **Dr. Jeanne and Rex**

## **Sinquefield.**

30. Saint Louis Chess Club/World Chess Hall of Fame: When you are only referring to the Saint Louis Chess Club or World Chess Hall of Fame refer to each individually. When you are referring to both organizations you can also use the Saint Louis Chess Campus. The abbreviation, as per the club, is SLCC.

31. Capitalize and italicize *Chess.com*.

The \$100,000 gift for US Chess Women should be phrased as from the Saint Louis Chess Club though of course it's great to point out the generosity of the Sinquefields if mentioning it.

32. Capitalize Black and Indigenous:

<https://abcnews.go.com/Business/wireStory/ap-writing-style-capitalize-black-71354613>

33. US Chess Trust (no periods)

34. Light-squared, not light-square. (Contravenes old IV.12).

35. Em-dashes have spaces on both sides.

— Vachier-Lagrave —

36. En-dashes used in scores (5–1), etc. Use ½ instead of .5 for half-points. (2022.02.11)

37. Hyphens are joiners. Use in e5-square, h7-bishop, etc. (2022.02.22)

38. Nicknames for invitationals:

- Irwin: Seniors (50+)
- Denker: HS (9-12)
- Haring: Girls (K-12)
- Barber: MS (6-8)
- Rockefeller: ES (K-5)
- Ashley: ES (K-3)
- Morphy: ES (K-1)
- Weeramantry: Blitz

39. PHOTO CREDITS - work in progress

Photos: Photog 1 (x), Photog 2 (y), Courtesy subject (z)

40. Spell out rounds - round two, second round, etc.

41. **White / Black versus white / black as refers to colors / pieces:**

\*this is tricky, but think of this like a TD with color allocation to decide if capitalizing\*  
with White  
as White  
has White  
the white pieces.  
the white king  
the black rook

42. Scare quotes: ‘for *Chess Life*,’ “for *Chess Life Kids*” (2022.01)

43. Ital product (video, pgn, book) titles. Chapters go in quotes. (2022.02.23) This is an extension of #10 above.