

ATM 400: Synoptic Meteorology I Guidelines for Scientific Writing

1. Times and dates are written as 1200 UTC 11 November 2022 with the time (in UTC) followed by the day, the month, and the year.
2. Always use metric, a.k.a. SI or MKS (meter, kilogram, seconds) units; i.e., no inches, feet, miles per hour, or knots.
3. Acronyms need to be defined the first time they are used; e.g., “I will use the Storm Prediction Center’s (SPC’s)...”.
4. Avoid imprecise wording, colloquial terminology, and common phrases such as, “in one way or another”, “more-or-less”, “in general”, “a few”, “some”, “about”, “probably”, “around”, “so”, “eventually”, or “very”. Always **quantify** your statements **with numbers**.
5. Avoid writing in the first person.
6. Since you are writing about past events, it’s best to write using past tense.
6. “category three” hurricane is not capitalized. Nor is “tropical storm” when used without a proper storm name. Examples: “Katrina was a category three storm prior to dissipating as a tropical storm.”, and “Tropical Storm Katrina dissipated after being classified as a hurricane.” Other terms to watch for capitalization are, “Northeast”, “Midwest”, “Nor’easter”, and “Arctic”.
7. Dates are best appended to the end of a sentence, rather than at the beginning. For example, write, “Hurricane Floyd wreaked havoc along the East Coast of the U.S. on 16 and 17 September 1999.”, rather than, “On 16 and 17 September, Hurricane Floyd...”.
8. Numbers should be spelled out if less than ten.
9. Commas are not your friend. Avoid writing sentences that require more than two.
10. Do not start a sentence with “It”. Other words to be cautious of for sentence starters are “And”, “However”, “As such”, and “Then”.
11. You **MAY** start a sentence with “This”, but only if it is succeeded by what the statement qualifies. For example, “The storm surge caused major damage. This storm surge was caused by strong onshore winds in the right front quadrant of Hurricane Brady.” It is not correct to say, “This was caused by strong onshore...”.

***** Proofread and spell check! *****