



Kentucky Highway Marker Style Guide

To ensure consistency among state markers, KHS staff will revise and edit texts. The goal is to provide accurate, compelling information in a limited space. Sponsors can assist KHS staff by following these requirements when writing their statements of significance and fact sheets:

- Markers are ten (10) lines of thirty-three (33) characters on each side.
- Spell out numbers less than ten; otherwise use Arabic characters.
- On Civil War subjects, write "Civil War" no "War Between the States." Give an individual's rank at the time of the event being discussed on the marker.
- On first use, provide a person's full name as he or she used it or as it is best known (e.g. Daniel Boone, Georgia Davis Powers), but on subsequent use give only the last name.
- Avoid uncommon abbreviations and acronyms
- KHS will not support marker text that hedges with phrases such as "one of the first," "maybe," and "likely only." KHS will work to avoid "first," "only one," etc., especially without strong documentation to support such claims.
- Markers must include proper punctuation, which count against the character requirements
- Marker text will include full sentences that advance a narrative with two-sided markers creating connected paragraphs of text.
 - Two-sided markers must have related information.
- Marker language must be clear, concise, and defensible
 - Interpretation follows leading historians' arguments and will be based on the most up-to-date research. Where consensus does not exist in the historical record, the Kentucky Historical Society has final say on interpretation.
- Marker language will not perpetuate the marginalization of non-white, non-male subjects. It will not reinforce racist, sexist, classist, or ethnocentric notions of history.
- Capitalization: certain regions, eras, events, and political parties should be capitalized. Examples include:
 - Bluegrass, Southside, South, North, East, and West, Old South, New South, Deep South, Upper South, Rebel and Federal (in Civil War context), Cold War (when referring to era/struggle against communism, but not when describing type of conflict), Mississippi Valley, Ohio Valley, Progressive (as in era or movement), Great Depression, Black Power, Radical Republicans, Democratic Party, Democrats, Republican Party, Republicans
 - However, do not capitalize: northern(ers), southern(ers), lower South, antebellum South, border South, border states, early republic, civil rights movement, democratic/republican (as in form of government), Atlantic world, titles without names attached (secretary of state, for example), directional regions (western Kentucky, eastern Kentucky).
- Dates: Use month, day, year sequence
- Decades: Use numbers without an apostrophe—1920s

KHS uses the 17th edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style* as its authority on copy style.