Guidelines for Professional Desktop Publishing in English
What to do and what not to do when putting together your documents.
Mistakes are in red text.

Overall tips:

❖ Remember that in most situations **image is as important as substance** (if not more important). Pay very close attention to the look of what you write. Getting your documents to look really great may, at first, be as time-consuming as doing the writing itself.

❖ **Don't allow any careless mistakes in grammar, syntax or spelling to survive to the final draft of your documents.** They make it look as if you don't care enough to create work that's free of annoying distractions.

❖ It's always a good idea to **have someone read over what you write**.

❖ **Make sure your page design is consistent** throughout documents (especially font faces, font sizes, line breaks, indentation, justification).

The specifics:

❖ **The indentation at the beginning of a paragraph should be only five spaces long.** Often Swedish word processors make the indentation longer—you'll have to experiment with settings until it looks right. Simply pressing the space key five times usually doesn't work on a computer.

❖ **Justify the body of the text to the left of the page**. Don't *marginaljustera* so that the right margin seems to be a straight line.

❖ It's also a good idea to **use 2.5 cm (1 inch) margins on all sides of every page.**

❖ **Avoid hyphenating words at the end of a line.**

❖ **Turn off links** before printing so that email addresses and URLs look like normal text (and are not underlined) in the hardcopy. (In MS Word you can right-click the link, then go to *aktuell hyperlänk*, then *redigera hyperlänk*, then *ta bort länk*.) Only leave links in a document if it's going to be distributed digitally, for example on the web.

❖ In formal, written English non-fiction (especially research papers), **paragraphs must contain at least three sentences**. (An exception is journalism.)

❖ Be careful to **avoid repetition** of words and phrases in your writing. Some words you can't help but repeat (like *the, a*, etc.), but if you repeat less common words, even just twice on the same page, it can be distracting. I'll point out repetition in your text if I see it. Also avoid saying "as I said before," or any other equivalent of "som sagt." If you said it before, why repeat yourself?

❖ Be careful not to use *it, this, that, they, them, their* and *those* ambiguously. Only use these words when it's completely clear what or whom you're referring to.

   Example: Johnny and Bill hadn't gone to see any of the movies, even though they were playing downtown. [What does "they" refer to?]

- ❖ You can either **italicize or underline titles of major works**, but now that we're in the computer age it's far more common to italicize.

  Italicize titles of:

  - books
  - movies
  - albums
  - newspapers
  - magazines
  - journals
  - television shows
  - radio shows

  Put titles of smaller works—songs, poems, stories and articles—**in quotation marks.** Examples:

  - *War and Peace* (novel), *Schindler's List* (film), *Songs of Faith and Devotion* (album), *Newsweek* (magazine)
  - "Blunder Buys Time for Killer" (article), "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds" (song), "A Good Man is Hard to Find" (short story), "Bereft" (poem).

- ❖ *Only* **italicize**

  - titles of major works
  - statements and words that you wish to receive special attention
  - people's thoughts, things they say only in their head
  - foreign words and phrases

- ❖ **Do not italicize every word in a quotation.** Also, don't italicize words in a quotation that weren't italicized in the original unless you add the phrase [my emphasis], in brackets, at the end of the quote.

- ❖ Always **capitalize**

  - **days** of the week (Monday, Tuesday, etc.)
  - **months** (January, February, Ramadan, etc.)
  - **holidays** (Christmas, Valentine's Day, Thanksgiving, etc.)
  - **languages** (English, Swedish, Fortran, etc.)
  - **personal titles** (Dr., Mrs., Mr., Professor, Reverend, etc.)

- ❖ **In titles, capitalize the first word and all other words *except*:**

  - **articles** (*a, an, the*)
  - **prepositions** (words describing how a plane can fly in relation to clouds: *to* clouds, *between* clouds, *at* clouds, *with, from, for, among*, etc.)
  - **coordinating conjunctions** (*and, but, for, yet, so, or, nor*)

  Examples: The Content of Our Character; How to Make an American Quilt; The Language of the Land: Living Among the Hadzabe in Africa.

- ❖ **Be careful not to have more than one space between words.** (I point these extra spaces out to you by circling them and writing *sp.*) These stand out more in printouts than on computer monitors. On the other hand, it's very common—and a good idea—to have two spaces after a period at the end of a sentence (this can make the text clearer).

- ❖ **Spell out numbers zero through nine.** Always spell out numbers at the beginning of a sentence.

- ❖ Write **ordinal numbers** like this: **23rd** and **45th**. Don't allow your computer to automatically print the letters in superscript (like this: 45th). Disable this feature in Word by going to *Verktyg > Autokorrigering > Autoformat vid inskrivning > Engelska ordningstal med upphöjda tecken*, and removing the checkmark. Spell out ordinal numbers between *first* and *ninth*.

- ❖ **When referring to landmarks, places, groups, etc. that are always referred to with** *the* (like the White House, or the Factory where Andy Warhol painted)**, don't capitalize** *the* unless it comes at the beginning of the sentence.

- ❖ **Acronyms** like USA, WWW, WYSIWYG, DSL, etc., are always written in all capital letters in American English, even if the acronym is pronounced as a single word (AIDS, KFOR, NATO, NASA).

  In British English, if the acronym is pronounced as a word, only the first letter is capitalized (Aids, Kfor, Nato). Otherwise it's all caps (HIV, USA).

  Normally no periods are used in acronyms these days; however, *if* periods are used, they go behind every letter (including the last one).
  Wrong: The U.S.A has been the home of Albert Einstein, Linus Pauling and Cher.
  Right: **U.S.A., N.A.T.O., C.I.A.**

  be aware that **certain acronyms are preceded by** *the:*

  - the USA (or US), the WWW, the FBI, the EU, the CIA, the IRS, the UN, the WHO; the/a URL, UFO
      as opposed to
  - NATO, AIDS, HIV, DSL, KFOR, SFOR, MIT, WYSIWYG

- ❖ Non-Europeans might have a hard time interpreting **dates** written like 990523 or 2000.03. Be sure to write them out: A standard way is, for example, November 10, 2000; June 1999.

- ❖ Avoid using **week numbers** (week 15, etc.). These are extremely rare in English.

- ❖ Be sure to use tenses (past, present, future) consistently. If you're talking about the past or the future, be sure to use another tense only when you're sure it's appropriate.