



# *Style Guide*

THE 2020 KAUR LIFE STYLE GUIDE

# Style Guide *Writing about Sikhi*

*Keep the following rules of language in mind while writing your article for Kaur Life. This guide helps keep our language consistent throughout the magazine. It also helps shape a more sovereign mindset about Sikhi. This is an evolving document; if you have any suggestions, let us know!*

## *Amrit*

- When writing about Amrit, use the verb “accept”.
- Amrit is not something Sikhs “take” but rather it is a gift we receive from Guru Sahib.
- Yes: “I accepted Amrit”
- No: “I took Amrit”

## *Capitalization*

- Capitalize words related to Gurmat:
  - Amrit
  - Gurmat
  - Gurbani
  - Gurus
  - Guru Granth Sahib
  - Khalsa
  - Nitnem
  - Rehras
  - Shabad
  - Waheguru

## *Geography*

- Since the nation-state of India was arbitrarily carved out by the British and since the Indian government is hostile towards Sikhs, we try to avoid any usage of the term India (or Indian) unless it is absolutely necessary.
- When writing about the birthplace of Sikhi, refer to the region as “Punjab”.
- When writing about the larger region of India/Pakistan/Afghanistan, refer to it as South Asia

## *Gurbani*

- When writing about a shabad, be sure to note that it was “revealed to Guru Sahib” not “written by”. It’s okay that it is in passive voice; Sikhs understand that Shabad was revealed to the Gurus by the Divine and they themselves were not the authors.
  - Yes: “Mool Mantar was revealed to Guru Nanak Sahib.”
  - No: “Guru Nanak Sahib wrote Mool Mantar.”
- When quoting Gurbani, be sure to include:
  - the Gurmukhi/original Bani
  - the English transliteration/pronunciation
  - English interpretation/translation
  - Ang (page) of Guru Granth Sahib
  - Raag
  - Which Guru it was revealed to
  - A link to the Shabad online

## *Gurdwara*

- Do not capitalize unless referring to a specific Gurdwara
  - Yes: “My favorite gurdwara, Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib, is located in India.”
  - No: “There are many Gurdwaras in India.”
  - Yes: “There are many gurdwaras in India.”
- Unless writing about a specific gurdwara, use the word “gurdwara” without “the”.
  - Yes: “I like going to gurdwara”
  - No: “I like going to the gurdwara.”
  - Yes: “I like going to the local New York gurdwara.”

## *Guru Granth Sahib*

- Guru Granth Sahib is not an “it” so do not use “the” in front of it.
- Yes: “When reading Guru Granth Sahib..”
- No: “When reading the Guru Granth Sahib..”

### *Gurus*

- When referring to the single Gurmat/jot/entity of the Gurus, use the word “Guru” singular.
  - For instance, “Bani is a gift from Guru Sahib”
  - Unless referring to a specific Guru, use this convention.
- Do not use any suffix of “Dev”, as it has Hindu connotations
- Use the honorific "Sahib" when referring to the Gurus
  - Yes: "Guru Nanak Sahib"
  - No: "Guru Nanak Dev Ji"

### *Sikhi*

- Use the term “Sikhi” not “Sikhism”
- The term ‘Sikhism’ is a Western term coined by Europeans during the nineteenth century.

### *Spellings*

- Punjab (not Panjab)
- Waheguru (not Vaheguru)
- Gurdwara

### *Turban vs Dastar*

- When writing about the Sikh turban, use word “dastar”.
- The word "dastar" is Persian in origin and means "Hand of God" whereas "turban" has roots in the Turkish word "tülbent" meaning "gauze, muslin or tulle"
- Yes: “I tie my dastar every morning.”
- No: “I tie my turban every morning.”

### *Waheguru*

- When writing about Waheguru, use terms such as “Waheguru”, “the Divine,” “Ik onkar” or any Gurbani term for Waheguru.
- Do not use Judeo-Christian terms like “God”, “Lord”, or “Savior”.
- Waheguru is “they”.
  - Do not use “he” or “she”
- Capitalize all words referring to Waheguru

# Questions?

Questions? Comments?  
Concerns? Suggestions?

Send them to [Hello@KaurLife.org](mailto>Hello@KaurLife.org)



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