

Writing with Numbers

APA General Rule:

Zero – nine = written
10+ = numerals

percentages



Use the numeral and % symbol:

1% 75% 63%

fractions



Uncommon fractions use numerals:

1/77 7/30 8/11

Common fractions are written:

a half
two thirds
three quarters

measurements



When using a number, abbreviate the unit of measurement and use numerals:

6 mi, 110 kg, 9 cm

Include metric equivalents for nonmetric units in parentheses:
6 mi (9.6 km)

dates

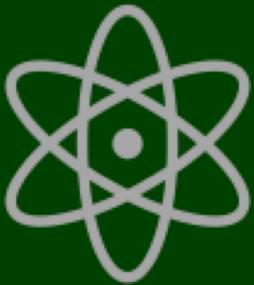


Month day, year
April 6, 1990

Decades
1990s, '90s, the nineties

Follow the general rule for centuries:
the 21st century

very small numbers



Use scientific notation:
 422×10^{-7}

Or use prefixes:
micro-, nano-, pico-, etc.

large numbers



Numeral + million
billion
trillion

5.3 million
7 billion
1 trillion

very large numbers



Use scientific notation:
 83×10^{15}

Or use prefixes:
mega-, giga-, tera-, etc.

except

Do not start a sentence with a numeral. Spell out the number or reword the sentence to start with a different word. (E.g., 472 soldiers came to the memorial. → Four-hundred seventy-two soldiers came to the memorial. → The memorial welcomed 472 soldiers.)

When the general rule gives you a combination of numbers in numerals and written-out numbers within the same phrase, change them all to numerals. (E.g., There were four to 13 variables. → There were 4 to 13 variables.)

If a chunk of text has many written numbers or a combination of both forms in a small space, to facilitate reading, opt to change them to numerals despite the general rule.

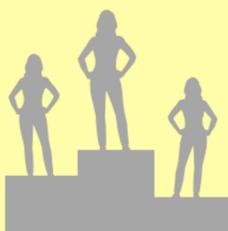
Other Number Tips

Ordinals (first, second, third, etc.)

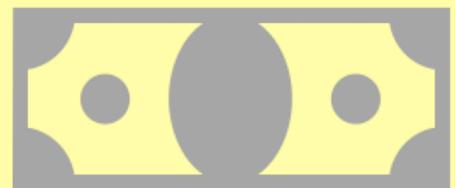
Follow the general rule for writing out or using numerals.

Letters in ordinals (-st, -nd, -rd) can be superscripts, but be consistent!

For military units, follow the general rule.
The 28th Brigade
The Second Armored Brigade Combat Team



Currency



Write out the long-hand name of uncommonly known currencies at first use, and then use the abbreviation for that currency.

300 hundred Canadian dollars = C\$300 *or* Can\$300
\$749 New Zealand dollars = NZ\$749
\$15.69 Australian dollars = A\$15.69
98 Mexican pesos = Mex\$98

50 euros = €50 (EUR 50)
332 yen = ¥332 (JPY 332)
55.5 bitcoins = BTC 55.5 (XBT 55.5)
100 yuan renminbi (100 yuan) = ¥100 *or* RMB 100 (CNY 100)

Add “s” for plural

Add an “s” to a numeral, or “es” or “s” to the written out form.

twos, sixes, 60s, 13s, the 1980s



Sources:

American Psychological Association. (2020). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.).
The University of Chicago Press. (2017). The Chicago manual of style.

