

Abbreviations

FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES WHEN USING ABBREVIATIONS:

USE PERIOD WITH SINGLE – WORD ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations of single words usually take periods.

vols. Volumes

ft. foot

Feb. February

Dr. Doctor

WRITE INITIALISMS WITHOUT PERIODS

Initialisms are abbreviations made from the first letter of each of the words in a title or name.

ATM Automatic Teller Machine

FBI Federal Bureau of Investigation

CIA Central Intelligence Agency

AL American League

OSHA Occupational Safety and Health Administration

Initialisms normally do not contain periods. If you think that the initialism may be unfamiliar to one or more of your readers, spell out the full term followed by the initialism in parenthesis the first time you mention that term. In subsequent references, you can use the initialism alone.

Here's an example:

The Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for his Web Site is somewhat uninviting. His URL is <www.dontbotherme.com >.

WRITE ACRONYMS WITHOUT PERIODS

Acronyms are words formed from the first letters of major words in a title or phrase.

SCUBA Self – Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus

RADAR Radio Detecting And Ranging

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
SARS	Severe Acute Respirator Syndrome
LASER	Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation

Acronyms that are used as words do not require periods. Note that words such as *laser* and *scuba* are no longer capitalized because they have been accepted as words in their own right.

AVOID ABBREVIATIONS FOR TITLE BUT USE THEM FOR DEGREES

Use the spell – out version of a title in formal prose:

Not: The pres. Of our graduating class has a straight A average.

But: The president of our graduating class has a straight A average.

Use the abbreviation for the title in the inside address to a letter.

	Text of Letter	Address
President	President George W. Bush	Pres. George W. Bush
Captain	Captain Arnold	Capt. Mary Arnold
Rabbi	Rabbi Stein	Rabbi Vincent Stein

Use abbreviations for academic degrees.

Ph.D	MS	MA	BA	BS	DDS
------	----	----	----	----	-----

NOTE: Place academic titles before a name and academic degrees after a name, but do not use both at the same time.

Not: Dr. Alice Conway, Ph.D

But: Dr. Alice Conway

Or: Alice Conway, Ph.D

USE FAMILIAR ABBREVIATIONS

Use technical, government, or other such abbreviations when you are sure that your readers understand what they stand for. If you are unsure, follow the advice in 2., and spell out the term first followed by the abbreviation in parentheses.

APR	Annual Percentage Rate
-----	------------------------

CAD	Computer Aided Design
GHz	Gigahertz
GPO	Government Printing Office

AVOID ABBREVIATIONS WITH DATES

Write out days of the week and months of the year.

Not: The meetings are usually held on the first Mon. of each month. In Sept., however, we will meet on the third Mon.

But: The meetings are usually held on the first Monday of each month. In September, however, we will meet on the third Monday.

USE ABBREVIATIONS FOR WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

Use abbreviations when the words that stand for weights and measures appear with numbers.

Heat the beaker of liquid for no more than 10 min.

The city is 29 km. ahead.

We bought an 8 ft. pine board.

My new car gets 45 mpg.

However, when such words appear without numbers, write them out.

The beaker should be heated for only a few minutes.

We still have several kilometers to drive.

He wanted to know how many miles per gallon my new car gets.

USE ABBREVIATIONS FOR TEMPERATURE AND TIME

238 B.C. 432 A.D. 5:52 P.M. 98.6° F

AVOID ABBREVIATIONS WITH MOST PLACE NAMES EXCEPT THOSE IN ADDRESSES

Generally, do not use abbreviations in formal writing when mentioning places. For example, you should write *Fifth Avenue*, not *FifthAve.*, in the body of your paper.

However, you can use abbreviations for place names in addresses, lists, bibliographical references, and other specialized cases. Here are a few examples:

U.S. (or USA)

U.K.

Mt. (Ranier)

St. (Augustine)

Terms used in street names should also be spelled out in the text, but abbreviations can be used in addresses:

Ave. (Avenue)

St. (Street)

Pkwy. (Parkway)

Rd. (Road)

Rte. (Route)

In addresses use standard postal abbreviations for states and possessions:

State/Possession Abbreviation

ALABAMA	AL
ALASKA	AK
AMERICAN SAMOA	AS
ARIZONA	AZ
ARKANSAS	AR
CALIFORNIA	CA
COLORADO	CO
CONNECTICUT	CT
DELWARE	DE

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	DC
FLORIDA	FL
GEORGIA	GA
GUAM	GU
HAWAII	HI
IDAHO	ID
IOWA	IA
KANSAS	KS
KENTUCKY	KY
LOUISIANA	LA
MAINE	ME
MARSHALL ISLANDS	MH
MARYLAND	MD
MASSACHUSETTS	MA
MICHIGAN	MI
MINNESOTA	MN
MISSISSIPPI	MS
MISSOURI	MO
MONTANA	MT
NEBRASKA	NE
NEVADA	NV
NEW HAMPSHIRE	NH
NEW JERSEY	NJ

NEW MEXICO	NM
NEW YORK	NY
NORTH CAROLINA	NC
NORTH DAKOTA	ND
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS	MP
OHIO	OH
OREGON	OR
PALAU	PW
PENNSYLVANIA	PA
PUERTO RICO	PR
RHONE ISLAND	RI
SOUTH CAROLINA	SC
SOUTH DAKOTA	SD
TENNESSEE	TN
TEXAS	TX
UTAH	UT
VERMONT	VT
VIRGIN ISLANDS	VI
VIRGINIA	VA
WASHINGTON	WA
WEST VIRGINIA	WV
WISCONSIN	WI
WYOMING	WY

Military “State” Abbreviation

Armed Forces Africa	AE
Armed Forces Americas (except Canada)	AA
Armed Forces Canada	AE
Armed Forces Europe	AE
Armed Forces Middle East	AE
Armed Forces Pacific	AP

USE ABBREVIATIONS OF COMMON LATIN EXPRESSIONS

i.e.	(<i>idest</i> -- that is)
e.g.	(<i>exempligratia</i> -- for example)
et al.	(et. <i>alii</i> -- and others)
cf.	(<i>confer</i> -- compare)
N.B.	(<i>notabene</i> -- note well)

USE ABBREVIATIONS IN BIBLIOGRAPHIC CITATIONS

Use the appropriate abbreviations for elements in books, magazines, journals, and other publications:

p. (page)	pp. (pages)	para. (paragraph)	pars. (paragraphs).
vol. (volume)	vols. (volumes)	ch. (chapter)	bk. (book) sec. (section)

AVOID SYMBOLS IN FORMAL WRITING

In general, avoid symbols in academic writing. Some symbols, however, are acceptable. For example, the dollar sign (\$) should be used if followed by a number.

Avoid using both the dollar sign and the word *dollar*.

Not: The car costs \$45,000 dollars.

But: The car costs \$54,000.

Avoid the ampersand (&). Instead use the word *and*, unless the ampersand appears in the actual term or title:

Smith and Jones Imports

But

Johnson & Johnson

Sample Quiz questions:

1. Click on the sentence that uses abbreviations correctly.
 - a. On the third Fri. in October, Jamestown will hold its annual Harvest Fair.
 - b. On the third Friday in Oct., Jamestown will hold its annual Harvest Fair.
 - c. On the third Friday in October, Jamestown will hold its annual Harvest Fair.

Answer: c. On the third Friday in October, Jamestown will hold its annual Harvest Fair.

2. Click on the sentence that uses abbreviations correctly.
 - a. We paid over \$140 dollars for an encyclopedia of classical mythology and a copy of Homer's *Iliad*.
 - b. We paid over \$140 for an encyclopedia of classical mythology & a copy of Homer's *Iliad*.
 - c. We pay over \$140 for an encyclopedia of classical mythology and a copy of Homer's *Iliad*.

Answer: c. We pay over \$140 for an encyclopedia of classical mythology and a copy of Homer's *Iliad*.