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Yonna Abdelaziz EXCERPTS

7.0 Numerical Expressions

In technical writing, we express numbers with clarity—the goal is to make numerical expressions understandable to our readers. This section covers the style rules for numerical expressions in written communication.

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7.1 General Rules

- Generally, spell out numbers less than ten within sentences. For greater numbers, write them in numerals.
- If several numbers appear close together within a sentence, express them all in numerals.
- Do not begin a sentence with a numeral. It is better to rephrase a sentence so that the number doesn't occur at the beginning.

7.2 Decimal Numbers Less Than Ten

A general rule is to spell out numbers in their word form within sentences if they are less than ten. However, if the number is a decimal, express it in its numeral form.

Incorrect: The Ethernet cable measured four and a half metres.

Correct: The Ethernet cable measured 4.5 m.

Do not begin or end a number with a decimal point. For numbers less than one, place a zero before the decimal point.

0.07 *not* **.07**

7.3 Long Numbers

Always write out long numbers in their numeral form. When writing out long numbers, separate each section of three digits with a comma.

There were 34,000 attendees at the global IT conference.

Our network infrastructure project cost a total of \$120,000.

7.4 Numbers Used as Adjectives

When using a number (in the adjectival form) to describe something, use a hyphen.

an eight-hour workday a 40-hour work week

Exception: Do not hyphenate neither a possessive noun preceded by a number, nor the word *percent* preceded by a number.

Incorrect: She completed 48-hour's work; a 20-percent increase in time this week.

Correct: She completed 48 hour's work; a 20 percent increase in time this week.

When a number is combined with an adjectival number, spell out the first or smaller number, and express the other in numerals.

Incorrect: 4 6 m long cables

Correct: four 6 m long cables

Incorrect: twenty-three ten-page reports

Correct: 23 ten-page reports

7.5 Units of Measurement

Express numbers in their numeral form when combining them with abbreviated or symbolic units of measurement.

a 6 m long cable 20°C

Write the number out in full if you are writing out the unit of measurement in full. Do not combine a numeral with a fully written unit of measurement, or vice versa.

six metres *or* 6 m

not 6 metres *or* six m

\$13.45/m²

not \$13.45 per metre square

79¢/L *or* \$0.79/L *or* 79 cents per litre

not 79¢ per litre *or* 79 cents/L

Day (d) and Hour (h)

The same rules apply to day (d) and hour (h) as units of measurement. Refer to the following correct examples.

\$1,000/d

\$200/h

\$1,000 per day

\$200 per hour

7.6 Digital Units of Measurement

Bits and Bytes

One byte is equal to a group of eight bits. Use an upper case B to symbolize bytes, and a lower case b for bits. $1 \text{ B} = 8 \text{ b}$.

The IP address contains 32 bits (b), or four bytes (B).

Units and Their Values in Bytes

Refer to the following table for digital units and their symbols.

Unit	Value (in bytes)	Symbol
kilobyte	1000	kB
megabyte	1000^2	MB
gigabyte	1000^3	GB
terabyte	1000^4	TB
petabyte	1000^5	PB
exabyte	1000^6	EB
zettabyte	1000^7	ZB
yottabyte	1000^8	YB

7.7 The International System of Units (SI)

In Canada, it is the standard to use the International System of Units (SI). This is a decimal system founded on seven base quantity types.

The following table lists the base quantity types.

Quantity type	Unit name	Symbol
Time	second	s
Length	metre	m
Mass	kilogram	kg
electric current	ampere	A
thermodynamic temperature	kelvin	K
amount of substance	mole	mol
luminous intensity	candela	cd

8.0 Abbreviations and Initialisms

This section establishes some guidelines in dealing with abbreviations in written communication. Abbreviations are shortened words (Dr. is the shortened version of Doctor) and shortened word versions created from initialisms (IM is formed from the first letters of information management). Remember, your goal is to make your writing as understandable as possible to your audience. Never assume that your audience knows the meaning of what you deem to be a common abbreviation.

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8.1 General Rules

- Always spell out abbreviations at first mention, followed by the abbreviation within parentheses.
- Be consistent in your use of abbreviations—use the same abbreviation for the same term or phrase all the time, in the same way.
- Whenever you are in doubt about a certain abbreviation, it is always better to spell it out fully.
- A few abbreviations are so common that you wouldn't need to spell them out, such as i.e., IQ, and email. Such abbreviations are acceptable to use as they are.
- Some abbreviated words (such as phone, ad, and lab) have become common, however, they should not be used in formal writing. (Use telephone, advertisement, and laboratory instead.)

8.2 Capital Letters

Generally, capitalize abbreviations, whether they correspond to common or proper nouns.

Common noun: **IM** (information management)

Proper noun: **UWO** (University of Western Ontario)

Do not fully capitalize some types of abbreviations like the ones listed below.

email Dr. Mr. Mrs. a.m. p.m. cm m kg L Hz

Paragraphs

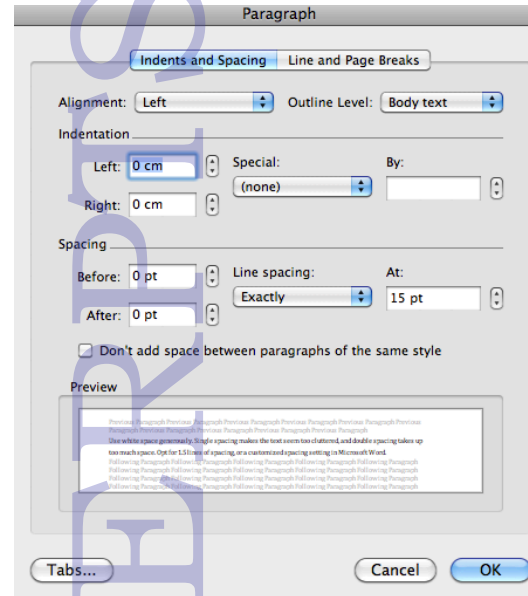
Using the block style for your documents, place an appropriate amount of white space between each paragraph. Do not indent paragraphs.

Line Spacing

Single spacing makes the text seem too cluttered, and double spacing takes up too much space. Opt for 1.5 lines of spacing, or a customized spacing setting in Microsoft Word. The body text of this style guide uses a 15-pt line spacing.

To customize the line spacing of your document:

1. In the **Format** menu, click **Paragraph**.
2. Choose **Indents and Spacing**.
3. Under **Line Spacing**, choose **Exactly**.
4. Under **At:**, enter your desired spacing value.



9.4 Vertical Lists

Be consistent in the way you write bulleted and numbered lists. As a general rule, indent vertical lists. Pick one style for each and be consistent throughout the entire document.

Numbered list

1. first item
2. second item
3. third item

Bulleted list

- first item
- second item
- third item

9.5 Tables

Table borders should be grey, and the text should be black. Distinguish the table headings by using bold font. Align tables to the centre.

Table Heading: Example

Heading	Heading
Cell text	Cell text
Cell text	Cell text

8. Appendices:

- a. Additional information.
- b. Samples of previous work.
- c. Glossary of technical terms, etc.

11.2 How to Write an Executive Summary

To attract business clients, it is critical to write an effective executive summary because the person reading your proposal will likely not read beyond it. Keep the following guidelines in mind:

- The job of the executive summary is to sell, not describe.
- Reflect on the client and centre the proposal, and thus the executive summary, around their needs and goals.
- Demonstrate why our company is unique and why we are the right team for the job.
- Use clear language.
- Do not repeat the client's business or company every time you address them. Use pronouns throughout the proposal to refer to yourself and to the potential client in order to establish a personal connection.
- Do not use sentences to fill space; write only meaningful sentences. Make your executive summary concise and effective.
- Keep the executive summary at a maximum of one page in length.

Evaluate Your Executive Summary

- Does it demonstrate our understanding of the client and their needs and goals?
- Does it give the client an understanding of our company's qualifications to solve their problem(s)/meet their goal(s)? Does it bring forth our competitive advantage?
- Does it explain how we will go about meeting the client's goals?
- Does it sell our solution to the client, or simply describe it?

13.10 User Interface Elements

Spell the names of UI elements exactly the same way they appear within the software, including the way in which they are capitalized. Use bold font when mentioning UI elements, including

- icon names;
- page names;
- command names;
- menu items;
- link names; and
- labels.

Refer to the following examples:

Click the **Delete Document** button.

Access the recycle bin by clicking the **Settings** icon.

Clear the **Always Ask** check box every time.

Under the **Files** tab on the ribbon, click the **Version History** button.
or
Under the **Files** tab on the ribbon, click **Version History**.

13.11 Terminology

This section covers common terminology relevant to user manuals. Refer to [6.0 Terminology](#) for more technical terms.

Commonly Misused Terms

Note the following commonly misused terms and their appropriate alternatives.

Do not use	Use instead
deselect turn off unmark uncheck	cancel the selection <i>or</i> clear the checkbox
in the ribbon	<u>on</u> the ribbon
click on	Click
copy <u>onto</u> the Clipboard	copy <u>to</u> the Clipboard
point on	point to

Active vs. Current

Use *active* or *open* to refer to open or operating

- windows;
- programs;
- files;
- documents;
- portions of the screen (such as an active cell); or
- devices.

Use *current* to refer to a

- drive;
- directory;
- folder; or
- an element that doesn't change within the discussion.

Choose, Select, Click

- Use *choose* when the user must make a decision.
- Use *select* when the user is selecting an item from a list to carry out a decision already made.
- Use *select* to refer to:
 - marking text (refer to such marked text as the *selection*);
 - marking cells (refer to such marked cells as the *selected cells*);
 - adding a check mark to a check box; and
 - selecting an item in a list box.
- Generally, use *click* instead of *select* to refer to:
 - the user action of setting an option;
 - the user action of issuing a command; and
 - the user action of selecting options in a dialog box.

Close, Exit, End

- Use *close* for windows, documents, and dialog boxes.
- Use *exit* for programs.
- Use *end* for network connections.

Enter vs. Type

Do not use *enter* as a substitute for *type*. You may use *enter* when the user can interact with the UI in more than one way to input a value.

| In the **Font Size** box, enter the font size you want to use.

Use *type* when the user's only option of input is to type the information/value.

| To log on, type your username and password.

- If you are producing hard copies, choose your binding method (stapling, spiral binding, etc) and design your margins accordingly.

13.13 Evaluating Your User Manual

To evaluate your user manual after its completion, use the following checklist:

- Does the manual use clear, unambiguous language?
- Are procedures outlined in clear, parallel numbered steps in the imperative tone?
- Are all the UI elements, icon names, and link names written in bold font?
- Is the manual designed to be used rather than to simply describe the software?
- Does the manual teach the user how to control the software?
- Does the manual address useful activities in the user's workplace?
- Will the manual help the user use the software to solve problems?
- Do the pages of the manual follow a logical design that emphasizes what the user needs to know?
- Does the visual design contribute to the manual's usability? Is there enough white space?
- Maximum 65 characters per line.
- Does the manual help the user connect with other users of this software?

Yomna Aboc...
EXCERPT

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