



APSU Writing Center

Numerals

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Spell out the number—no matter how large—when they begin sentences. The exception to this rule is when the sentence begins with a year. However, avoid beginning any sentence with a number.

Use figures for all numbers above nine; spell out all numbers nine and under.

- **Example:** Nine out of 12 students

Use figures for ordinal numbers above ninth; spell out ordinals under 10th.

- **Example:** She finished ninth in the first race and 27th in the second race.

Use a mixture of words and numbers when discussing millions, billions, and trillions.

- **Example:** 21 million

Avoid unnecessary ciphers.

- **Example:** \$1, not \$1.00 6.

Avoid using Roman numerals except when they are part of a title or a name.

- **Example:** World War I
- **Example:** King Henry VIII

Insert commas with four or more figures, except in years.

- **Example:** In 1990, shoppers bought 1,576 skateboards.

Use figures and spell out inches, feet, yards, etc. However, use apostrophes (5'6") to indicate inches and feet in technical contexts.

- **Example:** He is 5 feet 6 inches tall.

Spell out degrees when referring to temperature rather than using the symbol.

- **Example:** 49 degrees

Fractions standing alone are spelled out.

- **Example:** One-fourth of the students