

7th Edition

Abbreviations Quick Guide

Abbreviations

see *Publication Manual* Sections 6.24–6.26 on using and defining abbreviations

- An abbreviation is a shortened form of a word or phrase. Use abbreviations sparingly and only when they are well-defined, are familiar to readers, and make your writing clearer.
- Abbreviations listed as words in the dictionary (without the label “abbr.”) do not need to be defined in the text.
- Define all other abbreviations.
- On first use, write out the full term (or group author name) and follow with the abbreviation.
 - For a term in the narrative, put the abbreviation in parentheses after the term: response time (RT)
 - For a term in parentheses, put the abbreviation in brackets after the term: (response time [RT])
- Group author names may be abbreviated in the text (e.g., American Psychological Association [APA]), but should not be abbreviated in references.
- In general, if you abbreviate a term, use the abbreviation at least three times in a paper. However, a standard abbreviation for a long, familiar term may be clearer and more concise even if used fewer than three times.
- Use abbreviations consistently. Do not switch between an abbreviation and its spelled-out version.

Units of Measurement

see *Publication Manual* Section 6.27 on unit of measurement abbreviations

- Abbreviate a measurement unit when it appears with a numerical value (e.g., 80 m). See the table for common abbreviations.
- Write out a measurement unit when it appears without a numerical value (e.g., measured in meters).
- When writing unit of measurement abbreviations, do not
 - place a period after the abbreviation (except “in.” for inch or inches)
 - add an “s” to make the abbreviation plural (e.g., use 90 m for 90 meters, not 90 ms, which means 90 milliseconds)
 - repeat units when expressing ranges or multiple amounts (e.g., 16–30 kHz; 0.3, 1.5, and 3.0 mg/dl)

Abbreviation	Meaning
cm	centimeter
ft	feet
g	gram
in.	inch
kg	kilogram
L	liter
m	meters
ml	milliliter
mm	millimeter

Time

see *Publication Manual* Section 6.28 on time abbreviations

- Use the time abbreviations shown in the table when they appear with a numeral.
- However, do not abbreviate the following larger units of time, even with numerals:
 - days
 - weeks
 - months
 - years

Abbreviation	Meaning
hr	hour
min	minute
s	second
ms	millisecond

Latin

see *Publication Manual* Section 6.29 on Latin abbreviations

- Use the Latin abbreviations shown in the table only in parentheses.
- In narrative text, write out the English meaning.
Parenthetical text: (i.e., authoritative parenting)
Narrative text: that is, authoritative parenting
- Do not italicize or define Latin abbreviations.
- Punctuate Latin abbreviations as if they were spelled out (shown in the table).
- Use the abbreviation “et al.” (meaning “and others”) in both parenthetical and narrative in-text citations.
Parenthetical text: (as examined by Pak et al., 2020)
Narrative text: Pak et al. (2020) examined

Abbreviation	Meaning
cf.	compare
e.g.,	for example,
, etc.	, and so forth
i.e.,	that is,
viz.,	namely,
vs.	versus