

12. NUMERALS

(See also "Tabular Work" and "Leaderwork")

12.1. Most rules for the use of numerals are based on the general principle that the reader comprehends numerals more readily than numerical word expressions, particularly in technical, scientific, or statistical matter. However, for special reasons, numbers are spelled out in certain instances, except in FIC & punc. and Fol. Lit. matter.

12.2. The following rules cover the most common conditions that require a choice between the use of numerals and words. Some of them, however, are based on typographic appearance rather than on the general principle stated above.

12.3. Arabic numerals are preferable to Roman numerals.

NUMBERS EXPRESSED IN FIGURES

12.4. A figure is used for a single number of *10* or more with the exception of the first word of the sentence. (See also rules 12.9 and 12.23.)

50 ballots
10 guns
24 horses

nearly 13 buckets
about 40 men
10 times as large

Numbers and numbers in series

12.5. When 2 or more numbers appear in a sentence and 1 of them is *10* or larger, figures are used for each number. (See supporting rule 12.6.)

Each of 15 major commodities (9 metal and 6 nonmetal) was in supply.
but Each of nine major commodities (five metal and four nonmetal) was in supply.

Petroleum came from 16 fields, of which 8 were discovered in 1956.
but Petroleum came from nine fields, of which eight were discovered in 1956.

That man has 3 suits, 2 pairs of shoes, and 12 pairs of socks.
but That man has three suits, two pairs of shoes, and four hats.

Of the 13 engine producers, 6 were farm equipment manufacturers, 6 were principally engaged in the production of other types of machinery, and 1 was not classified in the machinery industry.
but Only nine of these were among the large manufacturing companies, and only three were among the largest concerns.

There were three 6-room houses, five 4-room houses, and three 2-room cottages, and they were built by 20 carpenters. (See rule 12.21.)

There were three six-room houses, five four-room houses, and three two-room cottages, and they were built by nine carpenters.

but If two columns of sums of money add or subtract one into the other and one carries points and ciphers, the other should also carry points and ciphers.

At the hearing, only one Senator and one Congressman testified.
There are four or five things which can be done.

12.6. A unit of measurement, time, or money (as defined in rule 12.9), which is always expressed in figures, does not affect the use of figures for other numerical expressions within a sentence.

Each of the five girls earned 75 cents an hour.

Each of the 15 girls earned 75 cents an hour.

A team of four men ran the 1-mile relay in 3 minutes 20 seconds.

This usually requires from two to five washes and a total time of 2 to 4 hours.

This usually requires 9 to 12 washes and a total time of 2 to 4 hours.

The contractor, one engineer, and one surveyor inspected the 1-mile road.

but There were two six-room houses, three four-room houses, and four two-room cottages, and they were built by nine workers in thirty 5-day weeks. (See rule 12.21.)

12.7. Figures are used for serial numbers.

Bulletin 725
Document 71
pages 352–357
lines 5 and 6
paragraph 1
chapter 2
290 U.S. 325

Genesis 39:20
202–512–0724 (telephone number)
the year 2001
1721–1727 St. Clair Avenue

but Letters Patent No. 2,189,463

12.8. A colon preceding figures does not affect their use.

The result was as follows: 12 voted yea, 4 dissented.

The result was as follows: nine voted yea, seven dissented.

Measurement and time

12.9. Units of measurement and time, actual or implied, are expressed in figures.

a. Age:

6 years old

52 years 10 months 6 days

a 3-year-old

at the age of 3 (*years* implied)

b. Clock time (see also Time):

4:30 p.m.; half past 4

10 o'clock *or* 10 p.m. (*not* 10 o'clock p.m.; 2 p.m. in the afternoon; 10:00 p.m.)

12 a.m. (noon); 12:15 p.m. (15 minutes past noon)

12 p.m. (midnight); 12:25 a.m. (25 minutes past midnight)

4^h30^m *or* 4.5^h, in scientific work, if so written in copy

0025, 2359 (astronomical and military time)

08:31:04 (stopwatch reading)

c. Dates:

June 1985 (*not* June, 1985); June 29, 1985 (*not* June 29th, 1985)
 March 6 to April 15, 1990 (*not* March 6, 1990, to April 15, 1990)
 May, June, and July 1965 (*but* June and July 1965)
 15 April 1951; 15–17 April 1951 (military)
 4th of July (*but* Fourth of July, meaning the holiday)
 the 1st [day] of the month (*but* the last of April or the first [part] of
 May, *not* referring to specific days)
 in the year 2000 (*not* 2,000)

In referring to a fiscal year, consecutive years, or a continuous period of 2 years or more, when contracted, the forms 1900–11, 1906–38, 1931–32, 1801–2, 1875–79 are used (*but* upon change of century, 1895–1914 and to avoid multiple ciphers together, 2000–2001). For two or more separate years not representing a continuous period, a comma is used instead of a dash (1875, 1879); if the word *from* precedes the year or the word *inclusive* follows it, the second year is not shortened and the word *to* is used in lieu of the dash (from 1933 to 1936; 1935 to 1936, inclusive).

In dates, *A.D.* precedes the year (*A.D.* 937); *B.C.* follows the year (254 *B.C.*).

d. Decimals: In text a cipher should be supplied before a decimal point if there is no whole unit, and ciphers should be omitted after a decimal point unless they indicate exact measurement.

0.25 inch; 1.25 inches	<i>but</i> .30 caliber (meaning 0.30 inch,
silver 0.900 fine	bore of small arms); 30 calibers
specific gravity 0.9547	(length)
gauge height 10.0 feet	

e. Use spaces to separate groups of three digits in a decimal fraction. (See rule 12.27.)

0.123 456 789; *but* 0.1234

f. Degrees, etc. (spaces omitted):

longitude 77°04'06" E.	<i>but</i>
35°30'; 35°30' N.	two degrees of justice; 12
a polariscopic test of 85°	degrees of freedom
an angle of 57°	32d degree Mason
strike N. 16° E.	150 million degrees Fahrenheit
dip 47° W. <i>or</i> 47° N. 31° W.	30 Fahrenheit degrees
25.5' (preferred) <i>also</i> 25'.5	

g. Game scores:

1 up (golf)	7 to 6 (football), etc.
3 to 2 (baseball)	2 all (tie)

h. Market quotations:

4½ percent bonds	gold is 109
Treasury bonds sell at 95	wheat at 2.30
Metropolitan Railroad, 109	sugar, .03; <i>not</i> 0.03
Dow Jones average of 10500.76	

i. Mathematical expressions:

multiplied by 3	a factor of 2
divided by 6	square root of 4

j. Measurements:

7 meters	15 cubic yards
about 10 yards	6-pounder
8 by 12 inches	80 foot-pounds
8- by 12-inch page	10s (for yarns and threads)
2 feet by 1 foot 8 inches by	f/2.5 (lens aperture)
1 foot 3 inches	
2 by 4 (lumber) (<i>not</i> 2 x 4 or 2x4)	<i>but</i>
1½ miles	tenpenny nail
6 acres	fourfold
9 bushels	three-ply
1 gallon	five votes
3 ems	six bales
20/20 (vision)	two dozen
30/30 (rifle)	one gross
12-gauge shotgun	zero miles
2,500 horsepower	seven-story building

k. Money:

\$3.65; \$0.75; 75 cents; 0.5 cent	<i>but</i>
\$3 (<i>not</i> \$3.00) per 200 pounds	two pennies
75 cents apiece	three quarters
Rs32,25,644 (Indian rupees)	one half
2.5 francs <i>or</i> fr2.5	six bits, etc.
65 yen	
₱265	

l. Percentage:

12 percent; 25.5 percent; 0.5 percent (*or* one-half of 1 percent)
 thirty-four one hundredths of 1 percent
 3.65 bonds; 3.65s; 5–20 bonds; 5–20s; 4½s; 3s
 50–50 (colloquial expression)
 5 percentage points
 a 1,100-percent increase, *or* an 1100-percent increase

m. Proportion:

1 to 4 1–3–5 1:62,500

n. Time (see also Clock time):

6 hours 8 minutes 20 seconds	<i>but</i>
10 years 3 months 29 days	four centuries
7 minutes	three decades
8 days	three quarters (9 months)
4 weeks	statistics of any one year
1 month	in a year or two
3 fiscal years; third fiscal year	four afternoons
1 calendar year	one-half hour
millennium	the eleventh hour

o. Unit modifiers:

5-day week	a 5-percent increase
8-year-old wine	20th-century progress
8-hour day	
10-foot pole	<i>but</i>
½-inch pipe	two-story house
5-foot-wide entrance	five-member board
10-million-peso loan	\$20 million airfield

p. Vitamins:

B₁₂, B_T, A₁, etc.

Ordinal numbers

12.10. Except as indicated in rules 12.11 and 12.19, and also for day preceding month, figures are used in text and footnotes to text for serial ordinal numbers beginning with *10th*. In tables, leaderwork, footnotes to tables and leaderwork, and in sidenotes, figures are used at all times. Military units are expressed in figures at all times when not the beginning of a sentence, except *Corps*. (For ordinals in addresses, see rule 12.13.)

29th of May, <i>but</i> May 29	12th Regiment
First Congress; 102d Congress	9th Naval District
ninth century; 20th century	7th Fleet
Second Congressional District;	7th Air Force
20th Congressional District	7th Task Force
seventh region; 17th region	
eighth parallel; 38th parallel	<i>but</i>
fifth ward; 12th ward	XII Corps (Army usage)
ninth birthday; 66th birthday	Court of Appeals for the Tenth
first grade; 11th grade	Circuit
1st Army	Seventeenth Decennial Census
1st Cavalry Division	(title)
323d Fighter Wing	

12.11. When ordinals appear in juxtaposition and one of them is *10th* or more, figures are used for such ordinal numbers.

This legislation was passed in the 1st session of the 102d Congress.
 He served in the 9th and 10th Congresses.
 From the 1st to the 92d Congress.
 He represented the 1st, 4th, and 13th wards.
 We read the 8th and 12th chapters.
but The district comprised the first and second precincts.
 He represented the first, third, and fourth regions.
 The report was the sixth in a series of 14.

12.12. Ordinals and numerals appearing in a sentence are treated according to the separate rules dealing with ordinals and numerals standing alone or in a group. (See rules 12.4, 12.5, and 12.24.)

The fourth group contained three items.
 The fourth group contained 12 items.
 The 8th and 10th groups contained three and four items, respectively.
 The eighth and ninth groups contained 9 and 12 items, respectively.

12.13. Beginning with *10th*, figures are used in text matter for numbered streets, avenues, etc. However, figures are used at all times and *street*, *avenue*, etc. are abbreviated in sidenotes, tables, leaderwork, and footnotes to tables and leaderwork.

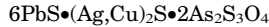
First Street NW.; *also* in parentheses: (Fifth Street) (13th Street); 810 West 12th Street; North First Street; 1021 121st Street; 2031 18th Street North; 711 Fifth Avenue; 518 10th Avenue; 51–35 61st Avenue

Punctuation

12.14. The comma is used in a number containing four or more digits, except in serial numbers, common and decimal fractions, astronomical and military time, and kilocycles and meters of not more than four figures pertaining to radio.

Chemical formulas

12.15. In chemical formulas full-sized figures are used before the symbol or group of symbols to which they relate, and inferior figures are used after the symbol.



NUMBERS SPELLED OUT

12.16. Spell out numerals at the beginning of a sentence or head. Rephrase a sentence or head to avoid beginning with figures. (See rule 12.25 for related numbers.)

Five years ago * * *; *not* 5 years ago * * *

Five hundred and fifty men hired * * *; *not* 550 men hired * * *

“Five-Year Plan Announced”; *not* “5-Year Plan Announced” (head)

The year 1965 seems far off * * *; *not* 1965 seems far off * * *

Workers numbering 207,843 * * *; *not* 207,843 Workers * * *

Benefits of \$69,603,566 * * *; *not* \$69,603,566 worth of benefits * * *

1958 REPORT *change to* THE 1958 REPORT

\$3,000 BUDGETED *change to* THE SUM OF \$3,000 BUDGETED

4 MILLION JOBLESS *change to* JOBLESS NUMBER 4 MILLION

12.17. In testimony, hearings, transcripts, and question and answer matter, figures are used immediately following Q. and A. or name of interrogator or witness for years (e.g., 1999), sums of money, decimals, street numbers, and for numerical expressions beginning with *101*.

Mr. BIRCH, Junior. 1977 was a good year.

Mr. BELL. \$1 per share was the return. Two dollars in 1956 was the alltime high. Nineteen hundred and seventy-eight may be another story.

Colonel DAVIS. 92 cents.

Mr. SMITH. 12.8 people.

Mr. JONES. 1240 Pennsylvania Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20004.

Mr. SMITH. Ninety-eight persons.

Q. 101 years? *But* Q. One hundred years?

A. 200 years.

Mr. SMITH. Ten-year average would be how much?

12.18. A spelled-out number should not be repeated in figures, except in legal documents. In such instances use these forms:

five (5) dollars, *not* five dollars (5)

ten dollars (\$10), *not* ten (\$10) dollars

12.19. Numbers appearing as part of proper names, used in a hypothetical or inexact sense, or mentioned in connection with serious and dignified subjects such as Executive orders, legal proclamations, and in formal writing are spelled out.

Three Rivers, PA, Fifteenmile Creek, etc.

the Thirteen Original States

in the year nineteen hundred and eighty-four

the One Hundred and Sixth Congress

millions for defense but not one cent for tribute

threescore years and ten	back to square one
Ten Commandments	behind the eight ball
Air Force One (Presidential plane)	our policy since day one

12.20. If spelled out, numbers larger than 1,000 should be set in the following form:

two thousand and twenty
 one thousand eight hundred and fifty
 one hundred and fifty-two thousand three hundred and five
 eighteen hundred and fifty (serial number)

12.21. Numbers of less than 100 preceding a compound modifier containing a figure are spelled out.

two $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch boards	<i>but</i>
twelve 6-inch guns	120 8-inch boards
two 5-percent discounts	three four-room houses

12.22. Indefinite expressions are spelled out.

the seventies; the early seventies; <i>but</i> the early 1870s or 1970s	midthirties (age, years, money) a thousand and one reasons
in his eighties, <i>not</i> his '80's <i>nor</i> 80's	<i>but</i>
between two and three hundred horses (<i>better</i> between 200 and 300 horses)	1 to 3 million
twelfefold; thirtefold; fortyfold; hundredfold; twentyfold to thirtyfold	mid-1971; mid-1970s 40-odd people; nine-odd people 40-plus people 100-odd people $3\frac{1}{2}$ -fold; 250-fold; 2.5-fold; 41-fold

Words such as *nearly*, *about*, *around*, *approximately*, etc., do not reflect indefinite expressions.

The bass weighed about 6 pounds.
 She was nearly 8 years old.

12.23. Except as indicated in rules 12.5 and 12.9, a number less than 10 is spelled out within a sentence.

six horses	<i>but</i>
five wells	$3\frac{1}{2}$ cans
eight times as large	$2\frac{1}{2}$ times or 2.5 times

12.24. For typographic appearance and easy grasp of large numbers beginning with *million*, the word *million* or *billion* is used.

The following are guides to treatment of figures as submitted in copy. If copy reads—

\$12,000,000, *change to* \$12 million
 2,750,000,000 dollars, *change to* \$2,750 million
 2.7 million dollars, *change to* \$2.7 million
 $2\frac{3}{8}$ million dollars, *change to* \$2 $\frac{3}{8}$ million
 two and one-half million dollars, *change to* \$2 $\frac{1}{2}$ million
 a hundred cows, *change to* 100 cows
 a thousand dollars, *change to* \$1,000
 a million and a half, *change to* 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ million
 two thousand million dollars, *change to* \$2,000 million
 less than a million dollars, *change to* less than \$1 million
but \$2,700,000, *do not convert to* \$2.7 million
also \$10 to \$20 million; 10 or 20 million; between 10 and 20 million
 4 millions of assets
 amounting to 4 millions

\$1,270,000
 \$1,270,200,000
 \$2¾ billion; \$2.75 billion; \$2,750 million
 \$500,000 to \$1 million
 300,000; *not* 300 thousand
 \$½ billion to \$1¼ billion (note full figure with second fraction); \$1¼ to \$1½ billion
 three-quarters of a billion dollars
 5 or 10 billion dollars' worth

12.25. Related numbers appearing at the beginning of a sentence, separated by no more than three words, are treated alike.

Fifty or sixty more miles away is snowclad Mount Everest.

Sixty and, quite often, seventy listeners responded.

but Fifty or, in some instances, almost 60 applications were filed.

Fractions

12.26. Mixed fractions are always expressed in figures. Fractions standing alone, however, or if followed by *of a* or *of an*, are generally spelled out. (See also rule 12.28.)

three-fourths of an inch; <i>not</i> ¾	two one-hundredths
inch <i>nor</i> ¾ of an inch	one-thousandth
one-half inch	five one-thousandths
one-half of a farm; <i>not</i> ½ of a farm	thirty-five one-thousandths
one-fourth inch	<i>but</i>
seven-tenths of 1 percent	½ to 1¾ pages
three-quarters of an inch	½-inch pipe
half an inch	½-inch-diameter pipe
a quarter of an inch	3½ cans
one-tenth portion	2½ times
one-hundredth	

12.27. Fractions ($\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{3}{8}$, $\frac{5}{8}$, $\frac{7}{8}$, $\frac{1}{2954}$) or full-sized figures with the shilling mark ($\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2954}$) may be used only when either is specifically requested. A comma should not be used in any part of a built-up fraction of four or more digits or in decimals. (See rule 12.9e.)

12.28. Fractions are used in a unit modifier.

½-inch pipe; *not* one-half-inch pipe ¼-mile run ⅞-point rise

Roman numerals

12.29. A repeated letter repeats its value; a letter placed after one of greater value adds to it; a letter placed before one of greater value subtracts from it; a dashline over a letter denotes multiplied by 1,000.

NUMERALS

I	1	XXIX	29	LXXV	75	DC	600
II	2	XXX	30	LXXIX	79	DCC	700
III	3	XXXV	35	LXXX	80	DCCC	800
IV	4	XXXIX	39	LXXXV	85	CM	900
V	5	XL	40	LXXXIX	89	M	1,000
VI	6	XLV	45	XC	90	MD	1,500
VII	7	XLIX	49	XCV	95	MM	2,000
VIII	8	L	50	IC	99	MMM	3,000
IX	9	LV	55	C	100	MMMM or M \bar{V}	4,000
X	10	LIX	59	CL	150	\bar{V}	5,000
XV	15	LX	60	CC	200	M	1,000,000
XIX	19	LXV	65	CCC	300		
XX	20	LXIX	69	CD	400		
XXV	25	LXX	70	D	500		

DATES

MDC	1600	MCMXX	1920	MCMLXX	1970
MDCC	1700	MCMXXX	1930	MCMLXXX	1980
MDCCC	1800	MCMXL	1940	MCMXC	1990
MCM or MDCCCC	1900	MCML	1950	MM	2000
MCMX	1910	MCMLX	1960	MMX	2010

