



NUREG-1379  
Revision 3

# **NRC Editorial Style Guide**

Office of Administration

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Revision 3

# NRC Editorial Style Guide

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## ABSTRACT

NUREG-1379, Revision 3, “NRC Editorial Style Guide,” presents style guidance for U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) documents. It addresses editorial issues that the staff and NRC contractors often handle, and it contains guidance specific to the language of nuclear technology and regulation.

This style guide also links writers and editors to external authorities and agency resources for additional information on the topics covered, including the principles of plain writing, which support the agency’s goals of transparency and accessibility. Additionally, the guide modernizes agency guidance on typography, updates the spelling and use of computer-related terminology, and guides the staff to use more inclusive language.

This revision substantially aligns NRC style with these well-known authorities: *The Chicago Manual of Style Online (Chicago)*, the *GPO Style Manual*, and *Federal Plain Language Guidelines*. It is important to note that these references often present more than one acceptable way to write; moreover, they do not always agree. In most cases, *Chicago* style is used. In those cases where *Chicago* is not followed, the preferred or required source for certain types of agency documents is usually identified.

This guidance will make agency documents more accessible to those for whom they are written and support the Commission’s values of openness and clarity.



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## PREFACE

The Office of Administration is issuing Revision 3 to NUREG-1379, “NRC Editorial Style Guide,” to promote consistency in NRC writing. In addition to aligning with updated guidance from *Chicago*, the *GPO Style Manual*, and *Federal Plain Language Guidelines*, the revision addresses many comments and suggestions made by the staff since the publication of NUREG-1379, Revision 2.

We have tried to make this revision a more compact, easy-to-use reference for NRC authors while still providing helpful examples of the style rules discussed. For a more in-depth discussion of the topics covered, we direct the staff to *Chicago*. All agency staff members now have access to *Chicago* through the Technical Library, and we have provided direct links to specific sections of *Chicago* in this guidance.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We wish to acknowledge the contributions of the NRC staff members who worked on this guidance, as well as the staff members who authored and revised NUREG-1379, Revision 2, on which this revision is based.

Two working groups participated in this latest revision, and we would like to thank the members in both of them for their valuable time and effort.

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## USING THIS GUIDANCE

NRC staff and contract authors should follow this editorial guidance for most of the documents they prepare. Keep in mind, though, that the NRC produces everything from adjudicatory decisions to public service announcements. This means that sometimes other editorial guidance applies. For example, NRC press releases are written for the media, and because most media outlets follow *The Associated Press Stylebook*, so do NRC press releases. Legal pleadings, too, are prepared according to rules set by each jurisdiction. Similarly, *Federal Register* notices are prepared in accordance with a document drafting handbook that invokes the *GPO Style Manual*. Also, conferences and other journals often have styles that govern contributions by NRC staff.

Therefore, as an author, you should identify your intended audience and write for them, using this guide in addition to any other guidance that may be required for the type of document you are preparing. Regardless of your intended audience, though, remember that the NRC serves the public. We want the public to be able to understand our regulations, policies, and correspondence. Even when writing for a technical audience, we should make our writing as accessible as possible. To that end, you can use the tips in the section on plain language to make your writing clearer, more direct, and more powerful.

Throughout this document, you will find hyperlinks to relevant sections of *Chicago*. These are labeled “CMOS,” colored blue, and followed by specific paragraph numbers that address the topic. Additional information may be supplied in brackets to identify the relevant section of a link that covers a broader topic. All other internal and external hyperlinks are presented in the Segoe UI Semibold typeface and colored blue.



# 1 ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

An abbreviation is a shortened form of a word or phrase used to make text easier to read or understand. In general, NRC documents should follow *The Chicago Manual of Style* (*Chicago*) guidance on the use of abbreviations (see [CMOS 10 \[Abbreviations\]](#)). Note that *Chicago's* guidance is consistent with *Federal Plain Language Guidelines*, which state that commonly recognized abbreviations may be used without definition, dependent upon the document's audience. For example, internal agency documentation typically does not need to spell out the name of an office or the agency. Above all, abbreviations should make text easier to read or understand, not more difficult.

For commonly used NRC abbreviations, see [NUREG-0544, Revision 5, "Collection of Abbreviations."](#)

Chapters 9 and 10 of the [GPO Style Manual](#) present comprehensive lists of abbreviations, signs, symbols, and guidance.

For numbered items below that do not provide a *Chicago* link, [Federal Plain Language Guidelines](#) provide additional information.

1. Spell out the term from which an abbreviation not commonly known is formed, followed by its abbreviation in parentheses if the term will be used several more times in a document. Subsequently, use the abbreviation instead of the term. Redefine abbreviations in every major section, each chapter of a lengthy document, and each enclosure to a document.

- National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU)
- high confidence in low probability of failure (HCLPF)
- integrated leak-rate testing (ILRT)

(See [CMOS 10.3](#), [CMOS 10.6 \[capitalization/lowercase\]](#))

2. Use periods in abbreviations for foreign phrases (et is Latin for "and"; therefore, it is not an abbreviation).

- et al. (et alii, meaning "and others")
- e.g. (exempli gratia, meaning "for example")
- i.e. (id est, meaning "that is")
- et seq. (et sequentia, meaning "and the following [things]")

(See [CMOS 10.4](#))

3. The abbreviations "**e.g.**" and "**i.e.**" (followed by a comma) should be used only inside parentheses; otherwise, write out the English equivalents. Do not italicize e.g. and i.e.

- Today we received specific instructions for preparing the report (i.e., its due date, contents, and format).
- Today we received specific instructions for preparing the report, that is, its due date, contents, and format.

(See [CMOS 6.51](#))

4. In running text, always spell out the names of states and territories (except DC). Enclose the state name with commas.
  - Prince George’s County, Maryland, is east of the Nation’s capital.
  - Atlanta, Georgia, has been the State capital since 1868.(See [CMOS 10.27](#))
5. Use the U.S. Postal Service two-letter state and province abbreviations in any address.
  - Mailing address: 20852 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20854(See [CMOS 10.27](#), [CMOS 10.29 \[tabular matter or lists\]](#))
6. The same abbreviation should not be used to mean more than one thing in a given document or enclosure.
  - independent design review (IDR)
  - inspection discrepancy report (IDR)
7. The same term should not be defined with two different abbreviations in the same document.
  - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (CoE)
  - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
8. Normally, use no periods with abbreviations that include two or more capital letters.
  - PhD
  - VP
  - CEO
  - MD
  - *but*—U.S. for United States. This is a departure from *Chicago*.(See [CMOS 10.4](#), [CMOS 14.276 \[cases and court decisions\]](#))
9. Do not define abbreviations in titles or headings. You may, however, use abbreviations in titles or headings if they are more easily recognized than the spelled-out term or if they are helpful to the reader in some other way (e.g., shortening the heading so it doesn’t wrap on the page or in the table of contents).
10. You may use abbreviations in figures and tables as follows:
  - When abbreviations are used in a figure, define them in a key, legend, or in notes to the figure, defined separately from any footnotes to the text and placed directly below the figure. Use letters or symbols for these notes instead of numerals to avoid confusing these definition notes with footnotes.
  - When abbreviations are used in a table, define them in notes to the table, numbered separately from footnotes to the text and placed at the end of the table, not at the bottom of the page. Use letters or symbols instead of numerals to define these notes to avoid confusing these definition notes with footnotes.(See [CMOS 3.45 \[in labels\]](#), [CMOS 3.56 \[column heads\]](#), [CMOS 3.7 \[captions, legends, keys\]](#))



11. If an abbreviation is used in a heading before it has been defined in the text, spell out the term in the first paragraph after the heading, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses.
12. Contractions are another common form of abbreviation. *Federal Plain Language Guidelines* suggest using contractions with discretion. Use them where they sound natural.
  - let's
  - it's
  - doesn't
13. An alternate way to abbreviate an entity or term is to use a simplified term or "nickname." This is usually a key word or two excerpted from the longer term. Nicknames are often easier for readers to remember than a new acronym or initialism.
  - Westinghouse Electric Company, LLC, was one of the first nuclear steam supply system vendors. Westinghouse requested certification for the AP600 design.
14. Use the same form of an abbreviation for both the singular and plural forms of a unit of measure.
  - 1 m
  - 3 m
  - 1 kg
  - 5 kg
15. Omit internal and terminal punctuation unless its omission would cause confusion.
  - 1 in. (The period avoids confusion with the word "in.")
  - 5 cm
16. Use abbreviations for units of measure when they are combined with numbers to express a quantity. Spell out the name of a unit when it is not immediately preceded by a number.
  - 2.200 r/min
  - The test would determine the number of revolutions per minute.



## 2 ACRONYMS AND INITIALISMS

An acronym is a pronounceable term formed from the initial letters of a compound expression (e.g., LOCA for loss-of-coolant accident). An initialism is a nonpronounceable term formed from the initial letters of a compound expression; the initial letters are pronounced as separate letters (e.g., NRC for the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission).

Most acronyms are capitalized except for certain well-known acronyms that are lowercase by convention. For a list of commonly used NRC acronyms, see [NUREG-0544, Revision 5, "Collection of Abbreviations."](#)

1. Use an acronym or initialism if the term it represents will be used several more times in a document. Initially, spell out the term from which the acronym is formed, followed by the acronym itself in parenthesis. As a general rule, you can subsequently use the acronym instead of the term.
  - The Resource Advisory Council (RAC) has reviewed this plan. The RAC advised the staff to revise three sections.
  - The Resource Advisory Council has reviewed this plan. The council advised the staff to revise three sections.
2. In a lengthy document, redefine abbreviations in every major section, each chapter of a lengthy document, and each enclosure to a document.
3. Avoid using several acronyms together in a single sentence whenever possible.
4. Do not define acronyms or initialisms in headings and titles. An exception is when space is constrained, as with some figure and table headings. In such cases, you may use previously undefined acronyms, defining them in a footnote beneath the figure or table.
5. Although an acronym or initialism is capitalized, do not capitalize the term it represents unless the term would ordinarily be capitalized.
  - Office of the General Counsel (OGC)
  - technical specification (TS)
  - crack opening displacement (COD)
  - renewed facility operating license (RFOL)(See [CMOS 10.6](#))
6. To form the plural for most acronyms and initialisms, add a lowercase "s" without an apostrophe. When the plural form of an acronym appears in parentheses, a lowercase s is included within the parentheses.
  - 12 NPPs
  - 2.0 FTEs
  - URLs
  - BSs, MAs, PhDs(See [CMOS 7.15](#))

7. To form the possessive of an acronym or initialism, use an apostrophe plus “s,” just as you would for a normal word. For the first appearance of an acronym, it is preferable to avoid using the possessive form of the term to be abbreviated; if used, the possessive form of the acronym should be put in parentheses.

- the EDO’s report
- the IAEA’s May conference
- RES’s funding (also—funding from RES; RES funding)
- O<sub>3</sub>’s chemical instability (also—ozone’s chemical instability; the chemical instability of O<sub>3</sub>)
- guidance issued by the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR) (*avoid*—the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation’s (NRR’s) guidance)

(See [CMOS 7.17, Chicago FAQ on defining possessives](#))

8. To decide whether “a” or “an” should precede an acronym or initialism, pronounce the first syllable of the acronym. “A” should precede a consonant sound; “an” should precede a vowel sound.

**Vowel Sounds**

An ACRS meeting (“ay”)

An SER update (“es”)

An NRC office (“en”)

**Consonant Sounds**

A FEMA decision (“fee”)

A LOCA occurred (“low”)

A UFO (“yew”)

(See [CMOS 10.9](#))

9. Use the definite article (the) before an organization’s name when it is used as a noun (subject or object). Do the same if an abbreviation is used in place of the name, except when it is an acronym and not an initialism. Do not use the definite article when the name or the abbreviation is used as a modifier, but recognize that an article may be needed for the word that is modified.

- She has worked at the NRC for over 30 years.
- NRC laptops should never be left unattended in a public area.
- An NRC laptop should never be left unattended in a public area.
- The NRC Chairman testified before the oversight committee.
- NATO is an alliance of 30 countries from North America and Europe.

(See [CMOS 5.70 \[articles\]](#), [CMOS 5.71 \[the definite article\]](#), [CMOS 5.76 \[effect of article on meaning\]](#) [CMOS 10.9 \[articles before acronyms of entities\]](#))

### 3 CAPITALIZATION

Capitalize the first word of a sentence, the pronoun I, and proper names. When in doubt, do not capitalize. For example, if a term could be either a proper name or a description (e.g., the department of engineering, nuclear power plant, or memorandum of understanding), use lowercase.

(See [CMOS 5.4 \[nouns generally\]](#), [CMOS 5.5 \[common nouns\]](#), [CMOS 5.6 \[proper nouns\]](#))

1. Capitalize civil, religious, military, and professional titles if they precede a personal name. Use lowercase if the title follows the name except for titles of great eminence, including heads of state, assistant heads of state, heads of governmental units, and royal rulers. Do not capitalize general references to titles. Likewise, capitalize specific names of organizations but not general references to them.

- President George Washington (*and also*—the President King Bhumibol Adulyadej; the King of Thailand; His Royal Highness)
- Governors Richardson and Lingle (*and also*—The Governors will meet later.)
- U.S. Senator Daniel Inouye (*but*—Daniel Inouye, senator; the senator)
- The staff in Region IV (*but*—the regional office)
- Judge Mia Jones (*but*—Mia Jones, the judge)

(See [CMOS 8.19 \[titles/offices\]](#), [CMOS 8.20 \[exceptions\]](#), [CMOS 8.22 \[civil titles\]](#), [CMOS 8.23 \[sovereigns\]](#), [CMOS 8.24 \[military\]](#))

2. For NRC titles, follow the above guidance, but you may capitalize titles of branch chief and above (when using the title before or after the staff member's name). Exceptions may also be called for in other contexts for reasons of courtesy or diplomacy. Do not capitalize general references to most titles. Note also that once a title has been given, it need not be repeated each time a staff or person's name is mentioned.

- NRC Senior Health Physicist Ana Lee (*but*—two NRC health physicists)
- Deputy Director Ryan Yamada (*and also*—Ryan Yamada, Deputy Director)
- NRC Director of Office of Administration, Jennifer Golder (*and also*—Jennifer Golder, Director of the Office of Administration)
- Capitalize Commission or Commissioners when referring to the collegial head of the NRC as a group and Chairman or Commissioner when referring to the Chairman or a member of the Commission individually.
- The Chairman requests a response by Friday and expects the Commission to discuss the issue Monday morning.

(See [CMOS 8.20 \[exceptions\]](#))

3. Capitalize formal or accepted titles of policies, acts, and similar documents; use lowercase when they are generic or not complete.

- the Bill of Rights
- the United States (or U.S.) Constitution; the Constitution (normally capitalized when referring to the U.S. Constitution)
- Article VII; the article
- the NRC's Principles of Good Regulation; demonstrate principles of good regulation

- the due process clause
  - the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993; the 1993 act
- (See [CMOS 8.80](#))

4. Capitalize a well-known short form of a specific proper name.

- Congress (U.S. Congress, *but*—congressional action, congressional staff)
- the President (of any country)
- the District (District of Columbia)
- the Capitol (in the District)
- the Agency (for U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *but*—the agency for U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission and all other organizations that do not have “Agency” in the name of the organization)
- the Office (U.S. Government Accountability Office, *but*—the office for all other offices, including NRC internal offices)

(See [CMOS 8.62](#))

5. Capitalize the following governmental organizations. This is a departure from *Chicago*. For NRC style, these terms are capitalized.

- Federal
- Federal Government
- State (*but*—do not capitalize “local”)
- Nation as a synonym for United States as in “10 percent of the Nation’s energy supply” (*but*—“nation” for general references such as “a nation devoted to prosperity”)
- Federal, State, and local responders
- the Tribe; Tribal officials (the NRC capitalizes “Tribal” to signify a sovereign entity)

6. Lowercase (and spell out) words like *chapter*, *appendix*, *table*, and *figure* when referencing these elements of a document. See “[Citing Federal Register Information](#)” for exceptions.

- Additional information appears in appendix K.
- See table 4 in chapter 3.
- The staff details recommendations in section 7.

(See [CMOS 8.180](#), [CMOS 3.50](#) [table numbers/text references])

7. Do not capitalize a common noun followed by a letter or number identifying a component of a nuclear power plant.

- train A
- valve PRV-22

8. Do not capitalize document types unless followed by a number or letter referring to a specific document.
- regulatory guide (*but*—Regulatory Guide 1.18)
  - management directive (*but*—Management Directive 4.1, “Accounting Policies and Practices”)
  - inspection manual chapter (*but*—Inspection Manual Chapter 4150)
9. Capitalize the first letter of the symbol for an element. Do not capitalize the spelled-out name for the element or isotope.
- Na                      sodium
  - NaCl                  sodium chloride
  - deuterium

(See [CMOS 8.149](#))

10. Capitalize a trade name.

- Xerox
- Halogen
- Plexiglas
- Vu-Graph
- Zircaloy (*but*—zirconium)

(See [CMOS 5.6](#))

11. Capitalize a descriptive term that denotes a geographic region (definite region or locality) or feature used as a proper name.

- the Midwest
- the Continental Divide
- the East Coast
- Deep South
- Western Europe
- Gulf States (*but*—gulf coast)

(See [CMOS 8.47](#), [CMOS 8.54](#) [[generic terms](#)])

12. Do not capitalize a descriptive term used as a geographic direction or a position that is not a proper name.

- northerly, northern
- north, south, east, west
- eastern seaboard

(See [CMOS 8.46](#), [CMOS 8.47](#) [[regions](#)])

**13. Capitalize months, but not seasons.**

- May, October
- spring, autumn
- spring 2007 (*not*—Spring 2007)

(See [CMOS 8.88](#))

**14. Generally, capitalize the first and last words of titles and subtitles. Also capitalize all major words in titles and subtitles (nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and some conjunctions). Lowercase the articles “the,” “a,” and “an,” as well as coordinating conjunctions: “and,” “but,” “for,” “or,” “nor,” “yet,” and “so.” Also lowercase “as” and “to” (when a preposition or as part of an infinitive). Lowercase prepositions regardless of length unless they are used adjectivally or adverbially (*up* in *Look Up*, *on* in *The On Button*). There are very few exceptions; consult *Chicago* if there is any question.**

- Secrets of the Past: Nuclear Energy Applications in Art
- The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1982
- How to Write, Speak, and Think More Effectively
- Creating Energy Sources for the Future
- *A Guidebook to Nuclear Reactors*
- “Handbook of Nuclear Safeguards Measurements Methods”

(See [CMOS 8.159](#), [CMOS 14.87](#) [capitalization of titles of cited works])

**15. When referencing Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* in NRC documents (not in *Federal Register* notices), use the capitalization style in paragraph 14 above for titles of parts (most are in uppercase in the regulations themselves), and use sentence style capitalization for titles of sections (only the first letter is capitalized except in certain instances and the rest of the title is lower case). Enclose both the title of the part and title of the section in quotation marks.**

- Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) Part 52, “Licenses, Certifications, and Approvals for Nuclear Power Plants,” contains the relevant regulations. [if CFR has not yet been defined]
- The requirements in 10 CFR 50.91, “Notice for public comment; State consultation,” apply in this case. [if CFR has been defined]
- Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* 50.4, “Written communications,” should be consulted. [if CFR has not been defined and is not used again]

(See [CMOS 8.159](#), [CMOS 8.158](#) [sentence style punctuation])

**16. Capitalize hyphenated words by the same rules you would use if the words were not hyphenated.**

- Commissioner-elect Jones
- high-level waste
- “A Study of Proposed High-Level Waste Repositories”

(See [CMOS 8.161](#) [hyphenated compounds in a title])



**17.** Do not capitalize the names of systems or programs at nuclear facilities. (Even if licensee documents capitalize common nouns, the NRC lowercases these terms.)

- residual heat removal system
- emergency core cooling system
- control room
- reactor building
- fire protection program



## 4 COMPOUND TERMS AND UNIT MODIFIERS

A compound term can appear in one of three forms: (1) open (e.g., nuclear power plant, mill tailings site), (2) closed (e.g., rulemaking, runoff), and (3) hyphenated (e.g., full-scale simulation, fitness-for-duty program). Although there are rules to compounding terms, there are also many exceptions. Modern English is moving toward a general trend of closing compounds unless doing so causes confusion. For example, the modifier on-line is now online, and cyber security is now cybersecurity.

CMOS chapter 7 provides information on this topic. Chapter 6 of the *GPO Style Manual* presents general rules for compounding words. Chapter 7 of the *GPO Style Manual* contains 6,000 compound words in their correct open, closed, or hyphenated form. (Note: There may be some differences between *Chicago* and the *GPO Style Manual*.)

Compound terms that modify nouns are called unit modifiers. Those that precede nouns are typically hyphenated. Those that follow the nouns they modify are typically not hyphenated.

- an NRC-sponsored study (*but*—a study sponsored by the NRC)
- defense-in-depth philosophy (*but*—due to defense in depth)
- handled on a case-by-case basis (*but*—handled case by case)
- in design-basis accidents (*but*—the design basis)
- a safety-related component (*but*—the component is safety related)
- onsite exposures (*but*—exposures on site)

Use hyphens carefully with unit modifiers because their placement can cause misreading. For example, depending on the usage of the words, each of the following phrases or sentences is correct.

- a biological-waste management system
- a biological waste-management system

Tables 1 and 2 provide detailed guidance on the use of hyphens with unit modifiers.

1. Hyphenate unit modifiers used as adjectives and adverbs that precede a noun. Some types and examples follow:

**Table 1 Hyphenation of Unit Modifiers**

Type	Example
Modifier plus present participle	far-reaching effects hard-working staff fear-producing accident thought-provoking analysis

**Table 1 Hyphenation of Unit Modifiers (cont.)**

Type	Example
Modifier plus past participle	safety-related activities coal-fired plants performance-based incentives well-defined plan much-acclaimed study long-lived isotope
Multiple-word modifier	not-in-my-backyard attitude easy-to-read document loss-of-coolant accident boiling-water reactor pressurized-water reactor nozzle-to-pipe weld
Suspended modifier (i.e., use of a unit common to a series of unit modifiers)	industry- and agency-sponsored studies long- and short-term goals 8-, 9-, and 10-hour days pre- and post-accident (note that these would normally be closed, but when in a series with a suspended modifier, the hyphen would be used)
Unit modifiers in which one unit is capitalized	PDR-available documents NRC-prepared report
Unit modifiers that include numbers (see also section 5)	18-inch-diameter pipe six-person team two-shift operation the 33-meter distance ( <i>but</i> —the 33 m distance [no hyphen when a number is with an abbreviation])
Number + percent (noun and adjective forms unhyphenated open except between ranges)	60 percent a 5 percent raise a 10–20 percent increase
A prefix before a proper noun, capitalized abbreviation, or number	non-Federal anti-American pre-Jurassic pre-NRC regulatory agency post-2001 security measures
A few adjective-noun unit modifiers	high-level waste low-pressure injection light-water reactor non-light-water reactor safety-related component non-safety-related component

(See [CMOS 7.85](#), [CMOS 7.89 \[hyphenation guide\]](#), [CMOS Q & A on the prefix “non”](#))

2. Do not hyphenate unit modifiers ending in *-ly*, as well as certain other modifiers. Some types and examples follow:

**Table 2 Nonhyphenation of Certain Unit Modifiers**

Type	Example
Modifier ending in <i>ly</i>	poorly managed plant effectively managed branch
Foreign phrases used as unit modifiers	ad hoc meeting ad hominem argument in vitro tissue culture in situ hybridization
Three-word unit modifiers whose first two words are adverbs	very well defined procedures unusually well maintained design basis
Noun formed from a one-syllable verb and adverb	makeup heatup cooldown startup shutdown

(See [CMOS 7.86](#))

3. There are certain words that have various usages with or without hyphens that are often misused:
- shutdown (noun) and shut down (verb)
  - follow-up (adjective and noun) and follow up (verb)
  - inservice (adjective (no longer use a hyphen)) (example: inservice inspector) and in service (example: the component is in service)
4. Close up most prefixes, but be aware of many exceptions. Use a hyphen to avoid mispronunciation or confusion. Some types and examples follow in table 3.

**Table 3 Prefixes**

Type	Example
Prefixes	multiplant prelicensing semiannual biweekly nondistinctive overpressure
Use a hyphen before a proper noun, capitalized abbreviation, or number	pre-Columbian artifacts pre-2001 security measures post-USSR

**Table 3 Prefixes (cont.)**

Type	Example
Use a hyphen with prefixes to avoid doubling a vowel or tripling a consonant, except after <i>co</i> , <i>de</i> , <i>pre</i> , and <i>re</i> . Also use a hyphen to avoid mispronunciation or ambiguity.	anti-inflammatory gull-like coowner colocated deenergize re-creation vs. recreation multi-ply vs. multiply pre-position vs. preposition co-op un-ionized vs. unionized

(See [CMOS 7.81](#))

5. Close most cases of *-wide* and *-making* used as a suffix.
- agencywide (*but*—NRC-wide because it is a proper noun)
  - industrywide
  - worldwide
  - rulemaking
  - policymaking
  - governmentwide
  - decision-making

(See [CMOS 7.89](#))

6. Usually, do not hyphenate chemical and physical terms except for chemical formulas.
- boric acid solution
  - carbon monoxide gas
  - equivalent uranium content
  - hydrogen ion activity
  - ground water (including as a modifier, as in “ground water protection”)
  - Cr-Ni-Mo
  - uranium-235 or U-235

(See [CMOS 8.149](#), [CMOS 7.89](#))

## 5 NUMBERS

1. Spell out numbers one through nine and use numerals for a single number of 10 or greater.
  - Four reactor licensees reported seven events.
  - The crew replaced four pipes, six valves, and nine gears in record time.
  - There were 70 similar documents.
  - *Not*—The crew replaced four (4) pipes, six (6) valves, and nine (9) gears in record time.

(See [CMOS 9.3](#))

2. When two or more related numbers appear in a sentence and one of them is 10 or more, use a numeral for each number.
  - The inspectors found fractured pipes in four plants: 6 in Fermi, 10 in Watts Bar, 2 in Monticello, and 4 in Susquehanna.
  - The NRC received comments from 13 utilities, 18 public interest groups, 3 unions, 6 utility organizations, and 2 interested persons.

(See [CMOS 9.7](#))

3. Spell out a number that begins a sentence, and spell out related numbers at the beginning of a sentence separated by no more than three words. Alternatively, revise the sentence to avoid beginning the sentence with a number. In the third example below, assume that the author has already defined Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) Part 20, “Standards for Protection against Radiation.”
  - Twenty families face possible evacuation.
  - Seventy or, perhaps, eighty square miles were affected by the aftershock. (*or*—The aftershock affected 70 or 80 square miles. (*but*—Eight acres of the 12 square miles affected by the aftershock were within the site boundary.)
  - As required by 10 CFR Part 20, radiation protection plans for certain facilities. (*but*—do not begin a sentence with “10 CFR Part 20 requires...”)

(See [CMOS 9.5](#))

4. Use numerals to express a unit of measurement, including time or money. This usage does not affect other numerical expressions in a sentence.
  - 8 years
  - 6 cm diameter pipe
  - 2 meters

(See [CMOS 9.7 \[consistency\]](#), [CMOS 9.16 \[numerals with abbreviations and symbols\]](#))

5. In text, define unit abbreviations or symbols on first appearance and thereafter use the abbreviation or symbol. In tables and illustrations, use unit abbreviations or symbols without definition, unless the abbreviation or symbol is unique to the table, in which case define it in a note to the table or illustration.

**Table 4 Tables and Figures**

Text (First Usage)	Tables and Illustrations
3 kilometers (km)	3 km
12 centimeters (cm)	12 cm
3 feet to 6 feet (ft.)	3'–6' *
12 inches (in.)	12" **
8 inches by 12 inches (in.)	8" x 12"
1,500 pounds per square inch (psi)	1,500 psi
33 percent (%)***	33%
3 kilograms (kg)	3 kg
1.8 grams (g)	1.8 g
1½ revolutions per minute (r/min)	1½ r/min
100 degrees Celsius (°C)	100°C ****
<p>* Note that the symbol ' is <b>prime</b> (Unicode character 2032), not the apostrophe.</p> <p>** Note that the symbol " is double prime (Unicode character 2033), not the closing double quotation mark.</p> <p>*** See CMOS 9.18, "Percentages."</p> <p>**** Note that the symbol ° is the degree (Unicode character 00B0), not the ring above diacritic.</p>	

(See CMOS 9.15, CMOS 9.16 [abbreviations and symbols], CMOS 9.18 [percentages], CMOS 10.49 [miscellaneous technical abbreviations], CMOS 10.64 [periods with abbreviations of U.S. measure])

(Note: The NRC differs from *Chicago* and does not add a space between numeral and %.)

6. Spell out indefinite numerical expressions. Numbers preceded by "about," "nearly," "around," and "approximately" are not considered indefinite.
  - the early seventies (*but*—nearly the 1970s)
  - midforties (*but*—around 1945)
  - seemingly a hundred and one reasons (*but*—he cited about 10 reasons)
  - between two and three hundred

(See CMOS 9.4 [hundreds, thousands])

7. An ordinal number expresses degree or sequence. Apply the general rules for numbers in this section to ordinal numbers.
  - The accident rate for the fourth quarter suggested that the training had been effective.
  - Surprisingly, the 19th and 20th years of plant operation produced the highest income.
  - The *Federal Register* notice was published on March 27. (*not*—March 27<sup>th</sup>)

(See CMOS 9.6)



8. When two numbers appear in sequence, use a numeral for one and spell out the other.
- The inspector examined twelve 12-inch-diameter pipes.
  - The fold-out page consisted of eleven 2-inch columns of numerals.
9. Use numerals in all mathematical expressions.
- multiplied by 4
  - a factor of 9
10. Spell out a fraction standing alone, a fraction followed by “of a” or “of an,” and a fraction approximation.
- three-fourths of a mile
  - seven-eighths of an inch
  - The water on three-fourths of the site was contaminated.
  - The team leader has reviewed nearly three-fourths of the inspection report.
- (See [CMOS 9.14 \[simple fraction\]](#), [CMOS 9.15 \[whole number plus fraction\]](#))
11. For a spelled-out fraction, use a hyphen between the numerator and denominator. However, omit the hyphen between the numerator and denominator when a hyphen already appears in either or both.
- three-fifths
  - six thirty-fifths
  - twenty-one thirty-fifths
  - twenty-three thirtieths
  - two one-thousandths
- (See [CMOS 9.14](#))
12. Use numerals for a fraction in a unit modifier.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch width
  - $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile radius
13. Use numerals when combining whole numbers and fractions. Do not hyphenate.
- $2\frac{1}{2}$  times as large
  - $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide
- (See [CMOS 9.15](#), [CMOS 12.45 \[mathematics fractions in text\]](#))
14. Use numerals for all decimals.
- 0.5 mL
  - 0.25 inch
  - 1.5 yd
- (See [CMOS 9.19](#))

15. Use a decimal point for monetary amounts that include cents, but not for even dollar amounts.
- 0.5 cent
  - 75 cents
  - \$150.10
  - \$150
- (See CMOS 9.20)
16. For quantities of less than one, use a zero before the decimal point unless the quantity could never reach one, such as the caliber of a gun. Use a zero after the decimal point if the zero is followed by other nonzero numbers or if it is a significant number. Do not use a decimal place followed by a zero after a whole number (unless required for precision).
- 0.5 part (*but*—.44 caliber)
  - 5.04
  - 5.003 (*but*—5)
  - 45 (*not*—45.0)
- (See CMOS 9.19)
17. Use subscripts to indicate the base for a number system and the number of atoms of an element in a molecule.
- 258
  - H<sub>2</sub>
- (See CMOS 8.149, CMOS 12.36 [mathematical])
18. Use superscripts for exponents and to indicate the mass number of an isotope.
- 2<sup>5</sup>
  - <sup>235</sup>U (*but*—uranium-235 in documents for general readership)
- (See CMOS 12.36, CMOS 12.37 [complex mathematical])
19. Generally, do not use the calculator or computer printout abbreviation for an exponent in text or tables; instead, use the superscript. Use of computer printout abbreviations is acceptable for computer codes. If you must use the computer printout abbreviation, apply it throughout the document. Do not switch between the computer printout abbreviation and superscripts. Note that negative exponents must use a nonbreaking hyphen (Ctrl+Shift+- or 0060).
- 8<sup>3</sup> (*not*—8\*\*3 or 8^3)
  - 8×10<sup>3</sup> (*not*—8E3)
  - 8×10<sup>-3</sup> (*not*—8E-3)
- (See CMOS 12.36, CMOS 6.121 [nonbreaking space])

**20.** Use commas every three places starting at the right to separate numbers over three digits (for numbers containing four or more digits).

- There were 5,000 comments on the proposed rule.
- There were 50,000 responses to the questionnaire.
- There were 3,000 responses to the first questionnaire and 15,000 to the second.

**Table**

---

5,000  
50,000  
1,000,000

(See [CMOS 9.54](#))

**21.** To aid comprehension and for typographic appearance, spell out million or billion (tables and figures may use M and B, as in \$12M).

- \$12 million
- \$1.25 billion
- \$5 million to \$10 million
- 4.2 billion years
- population of 2.8 million

(See [CMOS 9.8](#))

**22.** Use the percent symbol in tables, graphs, and figures. Otherwise, spell out percent in the text.

- The office had expended 80 percent of its budget by midyear.
- Of the 103 reactors, 75 percent had replaced at least one steam generator after 10 years.
- The price rose 12, 15, and 19 percent. (*not*—The price rose 12 percent, 15 percent, and 19 percent.)

(See [CMOS 3.82](#), [CMOS 9.18](#) [percentage in nontechnical text; % in scientific and statistical copy])

**23.** When writing about a range of numbers, give the full digits. Use an en dash to separate numbers in a range.

- pages 25–28 (*not*—pages 25–8)
- pages 1260–1268 (*not*—pages 1260–68, and *not*—pages 1260–8)
- days 104–107 (*not*—days 104–7, and *not*—days 104–07)
- from fiscal years 2006–2007 (*not*—from fiscal years 2006–07, and *not*—from fiscal years 2006–7)
- January 2–9, 11, and 13–15 and March 5–9, 26, and 30, 2007
- March 6 to April 15, 1990 (*not*—March 6, 1990, to April 15, 1990)

(See [CMOS 6.75](#), [CMOS 9.62](#), [CMOS 9.61](#) [abbreviate/condense inclusive numbers])



## 6 PUNCTUATION

See [CMOS chapter 6](#) for a complete overview of punctuation rules.

1. Use a serial (or Oxford) comma after each member of a series of three or more words, letters, numerals, phrases, or clauses.
  - footnotes, references, and bibliographies
  - between A, B, or C
  - neither in 1999, 2001, nor 2007
  - in the morning, in the afternoon, but not in the evening
  - The section leader wrote the proposal, the branch chief reviewed it, and the division director signed it.(See [CMOS 6.19](#))
2. Change the usual commas in a series to semicolons if multiple commas occur within the elements of the series. However, use a comma rather than a semicolon if the major item groups are separated by numbers (e.g., (1)).
  - After assessing a situation, the NRC may order a licensee to continue, curtail, or expand operations; ensure compliance with security and safeguards programs; and maintain associated notes, documents, and records of these emergency actions.
  - After assessing a situation, the NRC may order a licensee to (1) continue, curtail, or expand operations, (2) ensure compliance with security and safeguards programs, and (3) maintain associated notes, documents, and records of these emergency actions.(See [CMOS 6.60](#))
3. Use a comma with an introductory dependent clause. A dependent clause is generally introduced by a subordinating conjunction such as “if,” “because,” “when,” or “until.”
  - If we receive the requested information in a timely manner, we will meet our schedule.(See [CMOS 6.24](#))
4. Use a comma after an introductory adverbial phrase if a misreading is likely; otherwise, a comma is generally optional. But do not use a comma to set off an adverbial phrase that introduces an inverted sentence. Shorter adverbial phrases are less likely to warrant a comma than longer ones.
  - After struggling with the problem, he decided to consult experts.
  - Before moving on to my next location, I would like to meet with you.
  - Round the corner came the inspector.
  - In 1946 Congress created the Atomic Energy Commission. (*or—In 1946, Congress created the Atomic Energy Commission.*)(See [CMOS 6.31](#), [CMOS 6.33 \[introductory phrases\]](#))

5. Use a comma before an independent clause quoted as dialogue or from text and introduced with *said*, *replied*, *wrote*, and similar words.
- He said, “The tube has been welded.”
  - The inspector noted, “The licensee has addressed all outstanding issues.”
- (See CMOS 6.40)
6. Use a comma or commas to set off a title when it could be considered nonessential (nonrestrictive). Otherwise, omit the comma or commas.
- In a white paper, “Approaches to Enhancing Safety,” staff members outline their position.
  - The white paper “Approaches to Enhancing Safety” outlines the staff’s position.
- (See CMOS 6.41)
7. Use a comma before and after an appositive (an explanatory equivalent) of another word or phrase if it is nonrestrictive—that is, if it can be omitted without obscuring the identity of the noun to which it refers. If the word or phrase is restrictive—that is, it provides (or may provide) essential information about the noun (or nouns) to which it refers—no commas should appear.
- Nishi Mackin, president of TRCO, met with the Chairman.
  - The American National Standards Institute has published a more recent standard, ANSI Z39.18–187, “Scientific and Technical Reports: Organization, Preparation, and Production.”
- (See CMOS 6.28)
8. Use a comma before and after the year when written in the order of month, day, and year.
- The March 27, 1988, memorandum responded to the questions. (*or*—The memorandum, dated March 27, 1988, responded to the questions.)
  - On March 27, 1988, he attended the conference.
- (See CMOS 5.83)
9. Do not use a comma in a two-element date or a three-element date written in the order of day, month, and year.
- March 27
  - March 2021 (*not*—March, 2021)
  - 27 March 2021 (military usage)
10. Only use “1st,” “2nd,” “25th” when placing the day before the month (the 1st of January; the 25th of August) (*not*—January 1st or August 25th)
- (See CMOS 6.38)
11. Use a comma before and after the State or country when citing the city and State or city and country in the text.
- The meeting is in Chicago, Illinois, on April 4, 2008, at 3 p.m.
  - A conference in Paris, France, would cost more than one in Paris, Texas.

- Do not use a comma between the State and the ZIP code in an address.
- Bethesda, MD 20014

(See [CMOS 6.39](#))

**12.** Omit the comma before and after II, III, IV, etc., in a name. Commas are not required before and after “Jr.,” “Sr.,” “Inc.,” and “Ltd.” (Some individuals or companies choose to include the comma, and the NRC can follow their style at its discretion.)

- John Francis Kipp III (*but*—King, Martin Luther, Jr., when name is inverted and when inverted in indexing)
- The staff will meet with Chem-Nuclear Systems, Inc., on September 5, 1988.
- We know that Time Inc. produced the book.
- Ganesh Gritz Jr. chaired the meeting. (*but*—“Ganesh Gritz, Jr., chaired the meeting” would also be acceptable)

(See [CMOS 6.43 \[Jr., Sr.\]](#), [CMOS 6.44 \[Inc., Ltd.\]](#), [CMOS 16.41 \[inverted name; indexes\]](#))

**13.** Use a comma between qualifying words if the word “and” could replace the comma.

- An old, degraded generator tube (*but*—an old generator tube)

(See [CMOS 6.36](#))

**14.** Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction when it joins two independent clauses (complete sentences). The comma is optional when the independent clauses are very short.

- The agency received the application in October 2007, but the staff did not approve the terms until January 2009.
- I plan to arrive at the site on Tuesday, and I am scheduled to begin the inspection on Wednesday.
- Close your eyes and make a wish.

(See [CMOS 6.22](#))

**15.** Use a comma to set off nonrestrictive words, phrases, or clauses that could be omitted without changing the meaning of the sentence.

- The final rule, which was published on December 13, became effective on January 12.
- Members of the public, including those from the eastern districts, attended the hearing.

(See [CMOS 6.25 \[dependent clause\]](#), [CMOS 6.27 \[that, which\]](#), [CMOS 6.29 \[descriptive phrase\]](#))

**16.** Use a comma after “**however**,” including at the beginning of a sentence, unless “however” is used conditionally. Consider using “but” to begin a sentence instead of “however,” which is more effectively used within a sentence to emphasize the word or phrase that precedes it. For purposes of flow, not of grammar, many highly accomplished writers shun the sentence-starting “however” as a contrasting word. Yet the word is fine in that position in the sense “in whatever way” (not followed by a comma).

- However that may be, we have now made our decision.
- Soon, however, they attended the training.
- However, the documents were declared timely.

- Today, however, he continues to smoke.
- But I would still like to discuss the topic.
- However much he spoke, he never seemed to get to the point.

(See [CMOS 6.49](#))

**17.** Use a semicolon to separate closely related or contrasting statements. Use one space after a semicolon.

- He agrees; I do not.

**18.** Use a semicolon before a conjunctive adverb (e.g., then, however, thus, hence, indeed, accordingly, besides, and therefore) joining independent clauses.

- I attended the meeting; however, I had to leave before it ended.
- He had doubts about the public hearing; indeed, it was pure chaos.

(See [CMOS 6.57](#))

**19.** Use a period at the end of a sentence. Between sentences, use a single space.

(See [CMOS 6.12](#), [CMOS 2.9 \[single-space after period between sentences\]](#))

**20.** Use a period after items in a list if each item is a complete sentence.

- She must return on Friday. The following is her itinerary:
  1. Monday, she flies to New York.
  2. Tuesday, she chairs the conference.
  3. Wednesday, she conducts a hearing.
  4. Thursday, she addresses the council.

(See [CMOS 6.130 \[vertical list\]](#))

**21.** Use a colon after a complete clause to introduce a list, whether or not the list is within a sentence. Use one space after a colon before text.

- Greg Emes was responsible for the following:
  1. basic research
  2. confirmatory research
  3. written results
- The judges consider three factors: taste, texture, and aesthetic appeal.

(See [CMOS 6.61](#), [CMOS 2.9 \[spacing\]](#), [CMOS 6.7 \[one space after colon\]](#))

**22.** Use a colon after a formal salutation.

- Dear Chairman Hanson:
- Dear Diane LeBoulle:
- Dear Senator McCain:

**23.** Use a colon to introduce a quotation in block form (a long quotation).

(See [CMOS 13.10](#))



- 24.** Do not put quotation marks at the beginning or end of long quotations in block form. Indentation is enough to indicate that long passages are quotes. Indent both the right and left margins 0.5 inch from the preceding text. Normally use block indent for quoted text over five lines.

Section 1.2 of NUREG-0544, Revision 5, points out how abbreviations can make their way into everyday speech:

The need to type quickly when instant messaging or communicating on the Internet also introduced many new abbreviations that have spilled out into everyday language. For example, lol started out as a way to write “laugh out loud” in electronic communications, but now some people will say “lol” in speech instead of actually laughing. New abbreviations can crop up very quickly and enter everyday speech.

(See [CMOS 13.10](#), [CMOS 13.31 \[quotation marks in block quotations\]](#))

- 25.** Integrate short quotations within the sentence. If there are several quotations of varying length close together, avoiding block indentation may make reading easier.

(See [CMOS 13.9](#))

- 26.** When a quotation forms a syntactical part of the surrounding sentence, no comma or other mark of punctuation is needed to introduce it, though punctuation may be required for other reasons.

- The supervisor said she was “very glad” the tube has been welded.
- She said that she would “prefer not to comment.”

(See [CMOS 13.15](#), [CMOS 6.40](#), [CMOS 5.200](#))

- 27.** To determine whether to capitalize the first letter of material quoted in midsentence, consider its syntactical relation to the rest of the sentence. If the quotation is integral, one may lowercase the first letter, regardless of its case in the original. If the quotation has a more remote syntactical relation to the rest of the sentence, the initial letter is typically capitalized.

- The head of the agency directed staff to “continue working remotely until further notice.”
- His motto “All hands on deck” should be taken seriously.

(See [CMOS 13.19](#))

- 28.** Use an em dash to mark an abrupt change in thought. There are no spaces between the em dash and the text on either side.

- Provide several publications—in addition to your resume—to highlight your qualifications.

(See [CMOS 6.75](#), [CMOS 6.85](#))

- 29.** Use em dashes to replace commas around an interrupting element with heavy internal punctuation.
- The group—engineers, managers, and administrators—toured the facility.
- (See [CMOS 6.85](#), [CMOS 6.88](#), [CMOS 6.87](#), [CMOS 6.75 \[hyphens and dashes compared\]](#))
- 30.** Use hyphens for NRC documents that use abbreviations, numbers, or both.
- NUREG-0544
  - SRM-SECY-20-0032
  - COMSECY-14-0015
- 31.** Use an en dash to indicate ranges of numbers, letters, or periods of time. (In Microsoft Word, the keyboard shortcut is **Ctrl+Minus** sign. Using the toolbar, insert an en dash by clicking on **Insert**, choosing **Symbol**, clicking on the **More Symbols** tab, and choosing the en dash.)
- For several years (2003–2006), the company has downsized its staff.
  - The planned September–December trip never happened.
  - From January 21–March 5, 2008, the licensee closed the plant for substantial repairs.
- (See [CMOS 6.78](#))
- 32.** Use parentheses to show explanatory or statistical information (important matter not intended to be part of the main statement and not a grammatical element of the sentence). Punctuate a sentence with parentheses the same as a sentence without parentheses. Do not precede an opening parenthesis with a comma.
- The inspector visited three of the four regions (I, III, and IV).
  - Before leaving the site (late Friday afternoon), he submitted his report.
  - The high-level waste regulation (10 CFR Part 60) establishes the requirements for site characterization of a geologic repository. (The U.S. Department of Energy will be the only applicant to use the part.)
- (See [CMOS 6.95](#), [CMOS 6.97](#), [CMOS 6.98](#), [CMOS 3.55 \[in table titles\]](#))
- 33.** Use brackets within parentheses or parentheses within parentheses to nest information. Brackets are mainly used to add information that is not from the original writer; it does not form a part of the text around it. Also, use brackets to indicate words you have inserted into a direct quotation.
- Please review the applicable international standard (Nuclear Power Standard 6.5 [NP-STD-6.5]).
  - “Some time last night [the] idea came to me,” said Mr. Pai.
  - He has not reached the annual whole-body limit for workers (50 millisieverts [mSv]).
- (See [CMOS 6.97](#), [CMOS 6.99](#), [CMOS 13.7](#), [CMOS 6.101](#))

34. Place a period or comma inside the closing quotation mark.
- He said, “The project is due today.”
  - The center is offering three courses today: “MS Outlook,” “Reactor Core Concepts,” and “Web Design 3.”
  - “Training ends early today,” the instructor said.
- (See CMOS 6.9)
35. Place a question mark, exclamation point, colon, or semicolon outside the closing quotation mark (unless it is part of the quoted material).
- We hired the most qualified environmental policy analyst from the “Presidential Management Fellows Program”; we did not realize he lacked motivation.
  - Have you seen my copy of NUREG-1379, “NRC Editorial Style Guide”?
  - *but*—I recommend you read the article “Nuclear Energy: A Way to A Greener Future?”
- (See CMOS 6.10 [colons, semicolons], CMOS 6.70 [question mark], CMOS 6.74 [exclamation point])
36. Use italics for emphasis, including first usage of key terms. When adding emphasis in quoted text, include “[italics added]” or “[emphasis added]” directly after the italicized material.
- The bill was *not* paid.
  - The two chief tactics of this group, *obstructionism* and *misinformation*, require careful analysis.
- (See CMOS 7.50, CMOS 7.56 [key terms], CMOS 13.62 [“italics added”])
37. The slash signifies alternatives (“and,” “or,” or both) but is often ambiguous. Use slashes in tables and graphs for brevity; otherwise, avoid using slashes, especially if you really mean either “and” or “or” but not both. Avoid writing “and/or.” The slash is also used for alternative spellings or names. Occasionally a slash can include the sense of “and” while still conveying a sense of alternatives. In most cases, a hyphen is the better choice for “and” (e.g., inside-outside facility).
- Notify your supervisor if you will be late or absent. (*not*—Notify your supervisor if you will be late and/or absent. *not*—Notify your supervisor if you will be late/absent.)
  - The center serves clients who are elderly, disabled, or both. (*not*—The center serves clients who are elderly/disabled.)
- (See CMOS 6.106, CMOS 6.113 [slashes and line breaks])
38. Use a slash to join multiple-word unit modifiers. Add a nonbreaking space before the slash and a space after the slash when one or more of the terms is a compound term. For single word modifiers, no space is needed.
- A joint U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission / U.S. Department of Energy initiative
  - a joint NRC/DOE initiative
- (See CMOS 6.106)

**39.** Use a slash to indicate “per” for quantities.

- 60 km/h
- 11 pills/day

(See [CMOS 6.109](#))

**40.** Use italics for foreign words and phrases that are not well known to English speakers. Do not italicize commonly used foreign words, including scholarly Latin. Do not italicize foreign proper nouns.

- *Belgique c’est chic* was his personal motto.
- An earthquake hit the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa Nuclear Power Plant in Niigata Prefecture.
- She did not seem sorry about eating all the foie gras.
- “Schadenfreude” means taking joy in the misfortune of others.
- *ibid.*, *et al.*, *e.g.*, *i.e.*, *in vitro*, *in vivo*, *ibid*, *de facto*

**41.** Italicize the titles of freestanding works and use quotation marks around the titles of subsections of freestanding works.

(See [CMOS 8.2](#))

**42.** To show possession, add an apostrophe and an “s” for most singular nouns. For plural nouns (except irregular plurals, like “men,” that do not end in “s”), add an apostrophe only.

- Cameron’s policy
- Phyllis’s plant (also—her plant)
- U.S. Congress’s history
- Dr. Seuss’s hat
- The many plants’ operations

(See [CMOS 6.116](#), [CMOS 7.20 \[plural\]](#), [CMOS 5.20 \[genitive case\]](#), [CMOS 7.16 \[possessive form of most nouns\]](#), [CMOS 7.18 \[possessive of words ending in s\]](#))

**43.** Use lists to organize text. For short lists, run the list into the text (unless you are writing codified text or the text requires prominence). Completely enclose numbers or letters in parentheses. Use a colon only if the list is preceded by a complete clause.

- He had three resolutions: (1) to learn French, (2) to pass the French proficiency exam, and (3) to find a job in Brussels, Belgium.
- The NRC considers (1) safety, (2) security, and (3) the environment.

(See [CMOS 6.127 \[general list principles\]](#), [CMOS 6.128 \[run-in vs. vertical lists\]](#))

**44.** For longer lists, set the list vertically. Precede the list with a complete sentence, followed by a colon. If it is not possible to use a complete sentence, use an em dash instead of a colon. Use numbers for sequential list items or list items you will refer to later by number. Use bullets for random list items.

- 45.** If the list items are not complete sentences, begin with a lowercase letter (unless a proper noun) and do not use punctuation at the end. Always use parallel sentence construction for lists.

The working group is making progress with the following goals:

- searching for a director with government experience
- reorganizing top management into three primary areas
- bidding out contracts on printing
- redrafting the mission statement for emphasis on public accountability

(See CMOS 6.130, CMOS 6.131 [vertical lists punctuated as sentence])



## 7 COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND WRITING

This section provides information related to computer technology terms and writing.

1. If you are writing a document for a nontechnical audience (such as a document for public comment), aim for a grade 9 to 12 reading level. Microsoft Word can automatically check the reading level of your document with a formula that uses the average number of syllables per word and the average number of words per sentence.
  - Go to **File** and click **Options** and then **Proofing**. Then choose the **Spelling and Grammar** tab. Check the **Check grammar with spelling box**. Check the **Show readability statistics box**. Click **OK**.
  - Run a **normal** spell check. At the end, you will see a measurement of your document's readability.
2. Capitalize basic alphabet keys, all the named keys (e.g., **Ctrl**, **Shift**, **Alt**), and menu items (e.g., **File**, **Save**, **Print**). The font should be bold for names of buttons, icons, lists, menus, and tabs; commands on menus, toolbars, and ribbons; dialog box options and titles; etc.
  - To run a spell check, go to **Review**; then choose **Spelling & Grammar**.
  - A keyboard shortcut for copying text is **Ctrl+C**.
  - A keyboard shortcut for pasting is **Ctrl+V**.(See [CMOS 7.77, Microsoft Writing Style Guide](#))
3. Lowercase technology-related words unless they are trademarked or otherwise constitute the proper name of an organization. For information on how to compound technology-related words, see section 4, "Compound Terms and Unit Modifiers."
  - internet
  - intranet
  - web-related issues (adjective form is still hyphenated)
  - webcasting
  - web broadcasting
  - web page
  - website
  - blog
  - Wi-Fi(See [CMOS 7.80](#), [CMOS 14.205 \[websites, blogs, and social media defined\]](#))
4. Spelling conventions for technology-related words continue to evolve. Below are currently accepted spellings of some commonly used terms. For guidance on capitalizing technology-related words, see section 3, "Capitalization."
  - cyberattack
  - cybersecure
  - cybersecurity
  - cyberskills

- cyberspace
- cyber professionals
- cyber threat
- database
- email
- online

(See [CMOS chapter 7 \[compounds\]](#))

5. Normally capitalize the names of all computer codes (specific applications, programs, or apps); capitalization can usually reflect the usage displayed by the software or the device itself. Capitalize the names of computer languages and software consistent with their trade names. If the code is an acronym, spell out the full name the first time it appears in a document.
  - code: MESORAD, CPLUME, MELCORE
  - language: Python, Perl, Fortran
  - software: Adobe Acrobat Professional, Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)

(See [CMOS 7.76](#), [CMOS 8.155](#), [Microsoft Writing Style Guide](#))

6. Generally, do not display URLs except for documents that are likely to be printed (correspondence, etc.) and normally add a URL as a footnote. For documents normally viewed online, link the URL to the document you are referencing (the readers can open the hyperlink if desired). Break URLs in printed works after a colon or double slash; before or after an equals sign or an ampersand; or before a single slash, a period, or any other punctuation or symbol. Break URLs that contain hyphens before the hyphen. Include https:// (or https:// as appropriate) before the URL.

(See [CMOS 7.46](#))



## 8 INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Words have the ability to bring people together, but they can also create distance or miscommunication. Recognizing this potential, inclusive language uses expressions and terms that are likely to be perceived either as neutral or welcoming by everyone, regardless of sex, gender, race, color, religion, or age. You can use the writing tips and resources below to help people from diverse backgrounds feel more welcome—and thus more willing to listen to and receive your message—and to foster precise, high-quality work.

This guidance reflects current understanding and may be updated as the field evolves.

### 1. Tips for Making Writing More Inclusive

- Use clear, direct language instead of colloquial terms.
- Use language preferred by the group or individual, when possible.
- When in doubt, use general, more inclusive language (see table 1 below for examples).
- Use *they*, *them*, and *their* as singular pronouns, or reword a passage to avoid using gendered personal pronouns (e.g., he, she, his, hers). *They*, *them*, and *their* are inclusive of all people and help writers avoid making assumptions about gender. Merriam-Webster notes that *they* has been in consistent use as a singular pronoun since the late 1300s.
- For salutations, instead of presuming Mr. or Ms., address the letter by using the person's full name (Dear Rebecca George or Dear Michael Mortgasen).
- Avoid terms that contribute to stigmas around disabilities: blind spot, tone deaf, crazy, crippled, paralyzed.
- When referring to a person's race or ethnicity, use adjectives, not nouns (e.g., a Hispanic person).
- Use adjectival forms (e.g., older adults) or nouns with descriptive phrases (e.g., individuals living in poverty) rather than labels (the elderly, the poor).

**Table 5 Inclusive Language Suggested Alternatives**

Instead of	Consider
husband or wife	spouse or partner
mother or father	parent
elderly	older person, older adult, or senior
blacklist or whitelist	blocklist/denylist/refused or passlist/allowlist/permitted
master or slave (e.g., in reference to computer hard drives)	primary/main/leader or secondary/replica/follower
Manmade	caused by humans, artificial, or manufactured

**Table 5 Inclusive Language Suggested Alternatives (cont.)**

<b>Instead of</b>	<b>Consider</b>
guys	people, everyone, folks, all
crippled, paralyzed	frozen by, stopped by, completely stuck
tone deaf	inappropriate, offensive, oblivious
blind spot	area of weakness, lack of knowledge, understanding gap

## **2. Inclusive Language Resources**

- [SBCR Initiative on Gender Neutral Language](#)

In 2021, the NRC Office of Small Business and Civil Rights launched a writing initiative to become gender neutral in its correspondence and presentations. Gender identity is internal to the individual. Using gender-neutral language is more inclusive to and understanding of nonbinary individuals and avoids making assumptions about a person's gender.

- [National Institute of Standards and Technology Guide](#)
- [General Services Administration Guide](#)
- [American Psychological Association's General Principles for Reducing Bias](#)

## 9 PLAIN LANGUAGE

The Plain Language Action and Information Network (PLAIN) was conceived by the National Partnership for Reinventing Government. The goal was to create a Government that “works better, costs less, and gets results.” For more in-depth guidance on using plain language, see the following resources:

- [Plain Writing at the NRC](#)
- [Federal Plain Language Guidelines, Revision 1, May 2011](#)
- [NRC Writing Class](#)
- [Plainlanguage.gov](#)

Simple language is easier to read and is often more accurate. Give the correct level of detail that your audience needs. Do not inundate a nontechnical reader with technical details. For documents meant for public comment, aim for a high school reading level. To check reading level in Microsoft Word, use the [readability statistics function](#).

### Rules for Writing in Plain Language

#### 1. Follow these general tips:

- Use reader-oriented writing. Write for your audience.
- Keep it conversational. When possible, write as you would speak.
- Make your document visually appealing. Present your text in a way that highlights the main points.

#### 2. Use the active voice.

The active voice tells who is supposed to do what. It is explicit and direct, assigning a clear agent to an action.

- *Active*—The licensee installed a new steam generator.
- *Passive*—A new steam generator was installed.
- *Active*—The staff held a conference call with the BWR Owners Group.
- *Passive*—A conference call was held with the BWR Owners Group.

The passive voice may be appropriate when it doesn't matter who is doing the action:

- *Acceptable Passive*—Taking photographs is forbidden in this secure area.
- *Active*—Malcolm A. McDuffy, Chief, Division of Security, forbids the taking of photographs in this secure area.

#### 3. Write in short sentences and short paragraphs.

Express only one idea in each sentence. Short sentences are better for conveying complex information. They break the information up into smaller, easy-to-process units. If your sentence is more than 20 words long, try to break it into two or more separate sentences if

possible. The more technical the topic, the shorter the sentences should be to aid in reader comprehension. (See [The Elements of Plain Language](#).)

- *Long*: Associated with amending 10 CFR 50.44, a conference call was held with the BWR Owners Group (BWROG) with the purpose of exploring possible coordination between the staff's activities and related efforts currently being pursued by the BWROG.
- *Short*: The NRC staff and the BWR Owners Group held a conference call to discuss coordinating their activities related to the NRC's amendment of 10 CFR 50.44.

Short paragraphs break up material into easily understood segments and are visually more appealing. They also allow you to insert more informative headings in your material.

Use as few words as possible. Simple language is often more accurate. (See [Simple Words and Phrases](#) from Plainlanguage.gov).

4. Avoid legalisms. Even if you are writing a legal document, use simple, everyday words. Avoid the following vague legalistic terms:
  - aforementioned
  - hereby
  - herein
  - hereinafter
  - therein
5. Avoid confusion by observing the following.
  - Use consistent terms throughout the document.
    - If you start with Reactor Oversight Process, do not switch to reactor oversight program.
    - If you begin by calling it an assessment, do not switch to evaluation, analysis, or study.
  - Unbundle strings of five or more nouns.
    - *Write*—procedures to protect the quality of surface water (*not*—surface water quality protection procedures)
    - *Write*—the threshold value at which the primary coolant must be sampled (*not*—primary coolant sampling requirement threshold value)
  - Make sure pronouns have clear antecedents. In the following example, "it" could refer to safety margin, measure, or design.
    - *Vague*—Safety margin is a measure of the conservatism employed in a design to ensure that it will work.
    - *Clear*—Safety margin is a measure of the conservatism employed in a design to ensure that the design will work.
  - Avoid technical terms that only a specialist would understand unless you are writing for a purely technical audience. If you must use the technical term, add a few words to explain the meaning.
    - *Technical*—The printing specialist is reviewing the blueines.

- *Plain Language*—The printing specialist is reviewing a proof of the publication that is printed in blue ink.
  - *Plain Language with Explanation*—The printing specialist is reviewing a proof of the publication known as “the bluelines” because it is printed in blue ink.
6. Use the pronouns I, we, and you to speak directly to the reader. Especially in correspondence, this establishes an informal tone. More formal third-person usage is often used in formal writing, such as in technical reports. The same approach should be used consistently throughout the document.
- I am responding to your letter of April 2, 2000, about the use of potassium iodide to reduce the uptake of radioiodine in the event of a nuclear accident.
  - Avoid using the royal “we” (the use of a plural pronoun when a singular pronoun should be used).
7. Use bullets, lists, tables, and graphics for visual variety. Shorter lines and more white space on a page give the reader’s eye a rest from dense blocks of text. A list is easier to read than running text. Use numerical lists if the items have an order of importance or if your introduction to the list identifies a specific number of items, as in this example.
- The management of mining and milling residues, such as tailings and waste rock, is also outside the scope of this publication. However, the publication covers the decommissioning of facilities and equipment for surface industrial extraction associated with mining and milling. Fuel cycle facilities pose the following four types of potential hazards:
    - (1) criticality
    - (2) chemical hazards
    - (3) radiological hazards
    - (4) fires and explosions



## 10 WORD USAGE

The following pairs of words are frequently misused or confused. (See [CMOS 5.250 \[good usage v. common usage\]](#))

### **accept/except**

To accept is to receive, agree to, or consider proper, right, or true. As a verb, to except means leave out or exclude; as a preposition, it means excluding.

- You must accept the responsibility that goes with the appointment.
- We agreed on everything except the schedule.

### **adapt/adopt**

To adapt is to adjust or make suitable. To adopt is to accept or make one's own.

- He will adapt to the motion of the sea in a few days.
- I will adopt your agenda for the meeting.

### **advice/advise**

Advice is a noun and advise is a verb.

- My advice is to sign the contract immediately.
- I advise you to sign the contract immediately.

### **affect/effect**

Effect is often misused for the verb affect, which means to have an effect on or to influence. To effect is to bring about.

- The decisions of the public utility commission affect all State utilities.
- These policy changes had a good effect on staff morale.

### **alternate/alternative**

An alternate is a substitute, an alternative is a choice between two or more possibilities. As an adjective, alternate means "by turns" or "every other."

- He appointed Arthur as the alternate.
- The inspector had no alternative to shutting down the plant.

### **among/between**

Use between for two persons or things; use among for three or more. Among indicates undefined or collective relationships. Between indicates one-to-one relationships or for more than two objects, if multiple on-to-one relationships are understood from context (e.g., trade between members of the European Union).

- This discussion is between you and me.
- The three technicians discussed the test results among themselves.

**assure/ensure**

To assure is to set a person's mind to rest and is used to address people. To ensure is to make certain.

- I assure you that the documents will arrive on schedule!
- Adhering to this maintenance schedule will ensure proper operation of the system.

**due to/because of**

Due to is an adjectival prepositional phrase. Because of is an adverbial prepositional phrase. Only use "due to" to modify a noun or after a form of the verb to be.

- The delay was due to an automobile accident.
- Because of the delay, the schedule was changed.

**farther/further**

Use farther for geographical distance and further in more abstract senses.

- He moved 2 kilometers (km) farther down the road. His first office was only 1 km away.
- She must study further to achieve mastery of the subject.

**fewer/less**

Use fewer for countable quantities; use less for qualities or quantities that cannot be counted individually. Also use less for time and money.

- Fewer people attend the meeting each year.
- Less activity than predicted was visible around Jupiter's moon.

**principal/principle**

As a noun, principal is a person of high authority or an initial deposit of money. As an adjective, principal means "first" (in importance or degree). A principle is a basic truth, rule, or standard.

- The principal speaker was the Director of NRR.
- We follow the NRC Principles of Good Regulation.

**prior to/before**

Prior is an adjective. Do not use "prior to" as a preposition. Use "before" or "until."

- The agreement signed today replaces the prior agreement.
- The report arrived before the letter.

**must/may/may not/should/shall/will**

In regulations, "must" indicates a requirement, "may" an option, and "may not" a prohibition. In guidance such as regulatory guides, "should" is often used for recommendations. In keeping with [Plainlanguage.gov guidelines](https://www.plainlanguage.gov/guidelines/), do not use "shall" in place of "must" and do not use "will" in place of "must" or "may."

- The licensee must check the operation of reusable collection systems each month.
- The program plan must describe the licensee's procedures.



- The licensee may submit the report by email.
- A licensee may not administer that dose to humans.
- The licensee should carry out these drills before the actual test.

**that/which**

Use the relative pronoun “that” to begin restrictive clauses—clauses that provide information that is essential to understanding the intended meaning of the sentence. Do not use commas to set off restrictive clauses from the rest of the sentence. Nonrestrictive clauses—clauses that can be omitted without changing the meaning of the sentence or obscuring the identity of the noun to which they refer—are usually introduced by “which” and are set off from the rest of the sentence by commas.

- Training on a simulator ensures a degree of competence that cannot be learned otherwise.
- She walked to the warehouse, which is a mile away, to pick up the reports.



## 11 FOOTNOTES AND CREDIT LINES

Use footnotes to supply explanatory material or information that would interrupt the flow of ideas in the text. Use table or figure notes to clarify or elaborate on the data in the table or figure.

1. Place a footnote on the same page or under the same column as its reference.

- The Advisory Committee on the Medical Uses of Isotopes (ACMUI) advises the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) on policy and technical issues that arise in the regulation of the medical uses of radioactive material in diagnosis and therapy.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The ACMUI membership includes health care professionals from various disciplines.

(See CMOS 2.22)

2. Place a footnote reference (i.e., normally a superscript number) applicable only to information in parentheses or brackets inside the closing parenthesis or bracket.

- The position closed April 4, 2009, without a suitable applicant chosen. (Six engineers applied.<sup>1</sup>)

(See CMOS 14.26)

3. Place a footnote reference outside all punctuation except the dash, and do not use a space between the punctuation and the footnote reference.

- The trip from the site to the airport\*\*—about 60 miles—was slow and tiring.

(See CMOS 14.26)

4. Separate a footnote reference from the word preceding it by a thin space unless it is preceded by a punctuation mark (e.g., a period, comma, quotation mark).

- The NRC\* regulates this nuclear waste, and its container bears a classification label.

5. Separate footnote references occurring together by a comma and thin space.

- This topic was discussed in the previous three meetings.<sup>1, 2, 3</sup>

6. Place footnotes to a table or figure, which are handled independently from footnotes to text, immediately under the table or figure. If a figure has both a legend and footnotes, the legend is usually placed below or to the side of the table or figure.

(See CMOS 3.76, CMOS 3.7 [captions, legends, keys, and labels])

7. Use a symbol or letter rather than a number for a table or figure note reference if a number could be confused with the content of the table or figure.

(See CMOS 3.79)

8. In a table, place a table note reference to the right of a column of text or symbols and to the left of a column of figures.

Category	No. of associated reports
Personnel radiation exposures.....	39
Lost, abandoned, and stolen material.....	*81
Leaking sources.....	**15
.....	
Other*** .....	67
<b>Total</b>	<b>303</b>
* An NRRER database record may be associated with more than one category of event.	
** These numbers would be significantly higher if all lost or leaking static elimination devices had been reported (see Section 2.1.1.3).	
*** Other includes categories such as medical, transportation, and miscellaneous.	

9. Place a credit or source line for a table or figure, which identifies where the data were obtained, directly under and flush left with the last note. For a figure or table without notes, place the source line directly under and flush left with the title. Source lines do not end in periods.

**Figure 4.3 Chernobyl Data Evaluation of Power vs. Time During Core Destruction Phase (Sheron, 1986)**

Source: Soviet analysis provided in figure 4 of USSR, 1986

(See CMOS 4.102)

## 12 REFERENCES AND CITATIONS

### 1. Purpose

A reference gives credit to an author for the information used in a document and directs the reader to the source of the information. NRC authors must provide enough information in each reference citation to enable the reader to obtain the referenced document from a location accessible to the public. Reference lists only include documents cited in the main text (appendices may have their own reference lists as they should be able to stand alone). Any related references that are not cited in the text could be included in a bibliography.

### 2. Availability

Include sources that are publicly available in a list of references. Do not include, for example, private communications, predecisional documents, technical notes, or minutes of a meeting. Avoid using a classified document, safeguards information, controlled unclassified information, or proprietary document as a reference unless it is the only source of the information cited. If you must use such a document as a reference, state the following, as appropriate, after its citation in the list of references: (classified report, not publicly available) or (proprietary information, not publicly available).

The author of a document is responsible for ensuring that each reference is accurate and that each document referenced is publicly available, unless otherwise indicated.

The NRC publishes an availability notice on the inside front cover of its NUREG reports. This notice directs the reader to sources for obtaining publicly available NRC documents and most codes and standards referenced in NRC reports.

The availability statements cover appropriate sources for most references that would be included in NRC documents other than NUREG-series reports.

### 3. Placement

For most documents, place the list of references in a separate section immediately after the text.

If there are too few references to call for a list, consider using footnotes as opposed to placing reference citations in parentheses directly in the text.

### 4. Legal Citations

Statutory material and court decisions are usually cited in the text or footnotes to a document rather than in a list of references. For detailed guidance on citing legal materials, consult with the NRC's Office of the General Counsel Legal Research Center or *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation*, which is available from the Legal Research Center and most public libraries.

## 5. Listing and Identifying References

- Most reference lists include the following information in the order shown for each document cited, with the components separated by commas:
  - Author—List the authoring individual (last name first), agency, corporation, or association.
  - Title—Italicize the title of a book and enclose the title of a journal article or the chapter of a book in quotation marks. Place the title of a journal article before the italicized name of a journal. Enclose the title of a technical report, a regulatory guide, and an industry code or standard in quotation marks.
  - Volume, if needed, or report number
  - Publisher and location
  - Page number
  - Date

## 6. Listing by Category of Documents

For a NUREG-series report that has an availability notice on the inside front cover, identify the references in the text parenthetically or directly as part of a sentence, and list the references by category, alphabetically, and, as appropriate, sequentially by number. (See [NUREG-0650, Revision 2, "Preparing NUREG-Series Publications,"](#) for more information on NUREG guidance.)

### Listing References

- Categorize the references by name of author or type of document (e.g., correspondence, codes and standards).
- Under the category for industry codes and standards, alphabetize the subcategories (e.g., ANS, IEEE) and then list the individual references sequentially by code or standard number. Place this category last in the list of references.
- For the first document listed in each category, give all the components of information for a reference except the publisher and location for documents covered by the availability notice, and for each subsequent document, give only its alphanumeric designator, title, and date, in that order.
- List the references alphabetically or, as appropriate, sequentially by number.
- List a single author or the first author, if more than one, by last name, first initial, middle initial, if available. List subsequent authors by first initial, middle initial, last name. For more than three authors, follow the first author by et al.

### Identifying References in the Text

- Identify a reference in the text so that it is easy to find—in parentheses by an alphanumeric designator or some other descriptive information, or directly in a sentence. Be consistent with the chosen approach within a given document.
  - (NUREG-0800)
  - (NRC Bulletin 89-11)

- (ML080180332) *but*—define Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. for the first reference.
- (5 U.S.C. §§ 553, 555)
  - ❖ Good cause exists under 5 U.S.C. § 553(d) to dispense with the usual 30-day delay in the effective date of the final rule.
  - ❖ This final rule does not contain information collection requirements and, therefore, is not subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.).
- (Smith, 1987)
- The evaluation (Smith and Jones, 1987) showed that...
- The report by Smith and Jones (1987)...
- Smith and Jones (1987) reported...
- Identify a reference parenthetically in the text using Arabic numerals if the document is using a numbered reference list. You may abbreviate the word “Reference” as in (Ref. 1) or (Refs. 3–8). If part of the text itself, spell it out: Reference 1 describes the experiment.
- Identify a reference in the text in the same way in which it appears in the list of references. For example, (Smith, 1987) should appear in the list of references under Smith’s name rather than under the number of Smith’s report.
- Identify multiple documents written by one author first by date, and then alphabetically by lowercase letter: (Smith, 1987), (Smith, 1988a), (Smith, 1988b).
- Cite a particular page, chapter, figure, table, or equation in the text rather than in the list of references, if possible.

## 7. Listing Sequentially by Number

For a document in which the references are numbered, give all the components of information for each reference (see item 5), and list the references in the same order that they appear in the text. Identify the references in the text parenthetically by number.

The NRC discourages the use of numbered references in long documents. A long document may have hundreds of references and any change in the text could require extensive renumbering of the references. NRC documents often must be prepared and published within a short turnaround time to coincide with licensing actions and are often changed as a result of multiple regulatory reviews. These conditions can result in last-minute renumbering of references. In a long document, use a more stable method of referencing such as (Author, Year). This guidance does not apply to correspondence.

### Listing References

- List the references in the same order that the information referenced appears in the text (i.e., sequentially by number).
- Order the components of information appropriate to the references.

- List all authors by last name first, then first name, and then middle initial if available. For documents with more than three authors, list the first author only, followed by “et al.”

## **8. Cross-References**

- To cross-reference, direct the reader to another section of the same document by using an in-text citation. However, avoid vague, nonspecific cross-references such as “see passages on high-level waste in this document” or “see above.”
- Cite the cross-reference in the same form as the entry cross-referenced. For example, if “section 3” is cross-referenced, write “(see section 3)” (*not*—“(see section III)”).

## **9. Guidance That Is Periodically Revised**

For regulatory guides and other guidance that is revised periodically, generally do not give dates and revisions.

- If you want the reader to always reference the current revision, do not give a revision number, issue date, or ADAMS accession number.
- When referring to regulatory guides in safety evaluations and other licensing documents, be sure to identify the revision number(s) where it is important to the agency’s decision to have the revision number listed (e.g., where the statements made are based on a specific version, or where a licensee used a specific version to support its application).
- For draft guides, give the alphanumeric task designator and the revision number for the proposed revision to avoid confusion among multiple proposed revisions.

## **10. Sample Reference Lists**

NUREG-0650 provides detailed information on reference lists in NRC documents.



## 13 CITING FEDERAL REGISTER INFORMATION

The Office of the Federal Register (OFR) requires that rulemakings, petitions for rulemakings, and general notices submitted for publication in the *Federal Register* comply with its format requirements. Consult the [OFR Document Drafting Handbook](#) guidance on preparing and processing *Federal Register* notices. The OFR Document Drafting Handbook instructs authors to use the [GPO Style Manual](#) for punctuation, capitalization, and other style.

### 1. Resource Information

#### General Notices

The Office of the General Counsel's Legal Research Center processes general notices. Email your general *Federal Register* notices to [Notice Publish Resource](#) for processing and preparation for digital signature. Consult the following links for additional information:

- [Legal Research Center](#)
- [Legal Research Center Contacts](#)
- [Federal Register Notice Program](#)

#### Rulemaking Notices

The [Rulemaking Center of Expertise](#) in the Division of Rulemaking, Environmental, and Financial Support in the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards processes rulemaking notices. Email your rulemaking *Federal Register* notices to [Rulemaking Resource](#) for processing and preparation for digital signature. Consult the following links to additional information:

- [The NRC Rulemaker](#)
- [Rulemaking Drafting Tools and Templates](#)
- [Rulemaking Action Statements and Templates](#)

### 2. Citing the *Federal Register*

Italicize *Federal Register*.

When citing a part of the *Federal Register* in text, use the following format: 54 FR 33168; August 11, 1989:

- The basis for the NRC's occupational chemical toxicity limits for uranium is given in an amendment to 10 CFR Part 20 (39 FR 13671; April 16, 1974) and is based on the threshold limit value.
- On August 28, 2007 (72 FR 49352), the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) published a final rule revising the provision.

### 3. Referencing 10 CFR in Non-*Federal Register* Documents

	To cite 10 CFR	To cite a part of 10 CFR	To cite a section of 10 CFR	To cite a paragraph of 10 CFR
<b>If 10 CFR has not yet been defined</b>	Title 10 of the <i>Code of Federal Regulations</i> (10 CFR)	Title 10 of the <i>Code of Federal Regulations</i> (10 CFR) Part 50, "Part Title"	Title 10 of the <i>Code of Federal Regulations</i> (10 CFR) Section 50.1, "Section title"	Title 10 of the <i>Code of Federal Regulations</i> (10 CFR) 39.15(a)(1)
<b>If 10 CFR has been defined previously but the part or section title has not yet been given</b>	10 CFR	10 CFR Part 50, "Part Title"  (Use title case for part title.)	10 CFR 50.4, "Section title,"  or  Section 50.34, "Section title," of 10 CFR ( <i>when a citation begins a sentence</i> )  (Use sentence case for section title.)	10 CFR 39.15(a)(1) <i>or</i>  Paragraph 39.15(a)(1) ( <i>when the citation begins a sentence</i> )
<b>If 10 CFR and the title of part or section have been defined previously</b>	N/A	10 CFR Part 50	10 CFR 50.4	10 CFR 39.15(a)(1)(iii)(H)

## 14 TOOLS AND REFERENCES

### NRC Links

#### Glossary of Terms Public Web Page

<https://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/basic-ref/glossary.html>

#### NUREG/BR-0053, "United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission Regulations Handbook

<https://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/webSearch2/main.jsp?AccessionNumber=ML052720461>

#### NUREG-0544, Revision 5, "Collection of Abbreviations"

<https://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/webSearch2/main.jsp?AccessionNumber=ML17004A106>

#### NUREG-0650, Revision 2, "Preparing NUREG-Series Publications"

<https://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/webSearch2/main.jsp?AccessionNumber=ML041050294>

#### NUREG-1350, Volume 33, "Information Digest, 2021–2022"

<https://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/nuregs/staff/sr1350/>

#### PerfectIt Nuclepedia Page

<https://nuclepedia.usalearning.gov/index.php?title=PerfectIt>

#### Plain Language Pointers

<https://drupal.nrc.gov/sites/default/files/comm-plainlanguage.pdf>

#### Plain Writing at the NRC Public Web Page

<https://www.nrc.gov/public-involve/open/plain-writing.html>

#### The NRC Rulemaker Sharepoint Site

<https://usnrc.sharepoint.com/teams/NMSS-The-NRC-Rulemaker>

### External Links

#### Federal Plain Language Guidelines, March 2011, Revision 1, May 2011

<https://www.plainlanguage.gov/media/FederalPLGuidelines.pdf>

#### GPO Style Manual 2016

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-STYLEMANUAL-2016/pdf/GPO-STYLEMANUAL-2016.pdf>

#### Microsoft Writing Style Guide

<https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/style-guide/welcome/>

#### Office of the Federal Register Document Drafting Handbook

<https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/write/handbook/>

## External Links (cont.)

[plainlanguage.gov](https://www.plainlanguage.gov)

<https://www.plainlanguage.gov/guidelines/>

[The Chicago Manual of Style Online](https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html)

<https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>

## External Suggestions

American Chemical Society, *American Chemical Society Style Guide*, 3rd Edition, Washington, DC, 2006

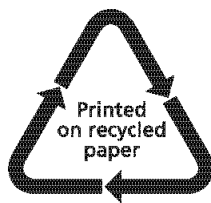
American National Standards Institute, "Scientific and Technical Reports—Organization, Preparation, and Production," ANSI Z39.18–1987, New York, NY

*Scientific Style and Format: The CSE Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers*, 8th Edition, Council of Science Editors and the University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois, and London, 2014

*The Associated Press Stylebook*, 55th Edition, 2020

*Webster's Third New International Dictionary*

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