

APSU Writing Center
APA 7th Edition Style Abbreviations

Abbreviations

- An abbreviation is a shortened form of a word or phrase.
- On the first use, write out the full term followed by the abbreviation in parentheses. After that, use the abbreviation consistently.

Abbreviation Rules

1. Plural Forms

- Add “s” (no apostrophe) to form the plural of most abbreviations.
 - **Examples:** CDs, URLs, PhDs
- Do not add an “s” to abbreviations for units of measurement.
 - **Examples:** 5 cm (not 5 cms) or 10 kg (not 10 kgs)

2. Periods in Abbreviations

- Do not use periods in abbreviations that are written in all capital letters.
 - **Examples:** APA, HTML, FBI
- Use periods in proper names that are conventionally written with them.
 - **Example:** F. Scott Fitzgerald
- Use periods when abbreviating United States as an adjective.
 - **Examples:** U.S. Army and U.S. President
- Use a period when abbreviating inch.
 - **Example:** in.

3. Use of “et al.”

- Use the abbreviation et al. (meaning “and others”) in both parenthetical and narrative citations.
 - **Parenthetical citation:** (Pak et al., 2020)
 - **Narrative citation:** Pak et al. (2020) examined...

APSU Writing Center
APA 7th Edition Style Abbreviations

4. Units of Measurement

- Use the abbreviated form with a numeral.
 - **Examples:** 80 mL, 25 km, and 5 hr
- Spell out the unity of measurement without a numeral.
 - **Examples:** measured in kilometers and recorded in milliliters
- Do not add an “s” to abbreviated units.
 - **Example:** 10 cm (not 10 cms)

5. Temperature

- Place the abbreviation immediately after the degree symbol.
 - **Examples:** 40°F and 40°C

6. Time

- Use the following abbreviations with numerals:
 - hr (hour)
 - min (minute)

7. Dates

- Do not abbreviate days, weeks, months, or years in running text.
 - **Correct Examples:** January 5, 2025, three weeks, and four years

8. Citations

- Use the following abbreviations within citations:
 - **ed.** → edition
 - **Rev. ed.** → revised edition
 - **2nd ed.** → second Edition
 - **Ed. or Eds.** → editor(s)
 - **n.d.** → no date
 - **p. or pp.** → page(s)
 - **Vol. or Vols.** → volume(s)
 - **No.** → number
 - **Pt.** → part
 - **Tech. Rep.** → technical report

APSU Writing Center
APA 7th Edition Style Abbreviations

Practice Plural Forms of Abbreviations

- Rewrite each abbreviation in its correct plural form.

Add “s” with no apostrophe:

1. CD
2. URL
3. PhD
4. DVD
5. CEO
6. PDF

Practice Rewriting Sentences with Abbreviations

- Rewrite the sentences below correcting the incorrect plural abbreviation.

Incorrect: She bought three CD’s.

Corrected:

Incorrect: The lab measured 15 cms of wire.

Corrected:

Incorrect: The company hired two CEO’s.

Corrected:

Incorrect: The recipe calls for 250 mls of water.

Corrected:

Incorrect: She ran 10 kms yesterday.

Corrected:

Incorrect: The temperature dropped 5 degrees F’s overnight.

Corrected:



APSU Writing Center

References

American Psychological Association. (2022). APA Style abbreviations guide.

<https://apastyle.apa.org/instructional aids/abbreviations-guide.pdf>

Purdue Owl Writing Lab. (2022). *Abbreviations*. Purdue University.

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/apa_abbreviations.html