

## Alan Rogers Writing Style Guide

### 1. NUMBERS

#### General

In general write out in full 'one' up to and including 'ten'; use numerals for 11 and up.

A cat has nine lives.

There were chairs for 13 people.

There are two swimming pools.

The site has 120 pitches.

Exceptions:

a. Avoid starting a sentence with a numeral.

Twelve pitches have drainage. Not: 22 pitches have drainage.

b. Use numerals for numbers one up to ten when a number above ten is in the same or in an adjacent sentence:

With the completion of improvements, 4 blocks have showers for disabled visitors while 12 have washbasins only.

c. Use numerals for number spans involving numbers over ten:

Children 7 to 12 (or 2-7) are admitted free.

d. Use numerals for information given in decimals and for percentages:

Drive north 3.7 kilometres (xx miles).

A discount of 5% is given.

e. Use numerals in expressing measurements:

height, weight, length, width, latitude, longitude,

degrees of temperature, sums of money, population figures.

f. Use numerals for street numbers in addresses.

#### Ordinal numbers

To rank, write out first, second, third .... up to and including tenth. Starting with 11th, use the numeral and st. nd. rd. or th.

A fourth swimming pool. It is the third largest site. In its 14th season.

Exceptions:

a. For centuries always use figures: the 15th century AD.

b. For dynasties, spell out the number if 100 or less: the Eighteenth Dynasty.

c. If sentence parts or adjacent sentences contain ordinals above and below 11, and they apply to the same general category, use figures throughout. The club runners came in 4th, 5th and 14th place.

### 2. ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

#### Addresses

Always use figures for street numbers and spell out street, road, boulevard, etc.

e.g. 7 Cheyenne Street

Style addresses in the style of the country being written about: 8 rue de Crion, 3405 Paris.

In addresses, the native spelling for towns and cities should be used rather than the English variation: Beethovenstrasse 67, 60325 München (not Munich).

#### Telephone numbers

Do not include international dialling codes. (explanation of the relevant International and area codes is included in Country introductions).

Always include the area code - as dialled from within the country concerned.

Style according to the style of the country being written about: 23.24.25.26. 223/3456

### 3. MONEY

Use numerals except at the beginning of a sentence:

The pool charge is £2. Two pounds is the charge for the pool.

Use a decimal for currency if pence (or equivalent) are included anywhere in the paragraph:

Per pitch £5.00; electricity £2.50.

Use commas for figures of a thousand or more: £1,245

Most prices are quoted in Euros (please use the symbol € and use a comma as the separator, e.g. € 10,05). Where other currencies remain, please use the local currency using the following abbreviation for the monetary unit:

Britain	£	Hungary	Forint	Poland	Zlts.	Sweden	Skr.
Czech	Kcs.	Norway	Nkr.	Slovakia	Sks.	Switz.	Sfr.

### 4. TIME/DATES

**Clock time;** Quote in figures using the 24 hr clock: 06.00-08.00 hrs, 17.00-21.00 hrs.

**Ages:** For ages use the same rules as for other numbers; i.e. spell out numbers from zero to ten, use figures from 11 up: A six month old puppy; the three day war; she is 14 years old.

Also use figures for generalised ages: Most people retire in their 60s.

As with other numbers, if the same sentence includes numbers both below and above 11 occurring together and referring to parallel things, use figures for all:

His three sons are 5, 9 and 11 years old.

**Figures vs. words:** With time spell numbers from zero to ten, use figures from 11 up: a five minute wait; two hours ahead of schedule; the 15th day.

**Days:** Days of the week may be spelled out in full or abbreviated as follows: Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri, Sat and Sun. It is acceptable to use the en dash: The shop is open Mon - Thurs.

**Months:** Where appropriate names of months may be abbreviated to three letters: i.e. Jan, Feb, March, April, May, June, July, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov and Dec.

**Years:** In general use figures to designate specific years: 1923, 1987

Decades are also given in figures: the 1950s. The en dash may be used in date spans: 1952 - 1984

**Date format:** Dates are written in 'day month year format', with no commas separating the elements: 20 December 1982 was her birthday. School breaks up on 27 July.

**Date spans:** It is acceptable to use the en dash in text and essential under the 'Open' heading: Open: 1 May - 30 October.

Campsites are categorised as 'open all year' if they are open for at least 10 months of the year. They should be described under the 'Open:' heading as: Open: all year except 1 Jan - 28 Feb.

## 5. MEASUREMENTS

Measurements are given in the units of the country being written about, i.e. for Britain in miles, yards, etc. and for Ireland, France and the remainder of Europe, in the metric form (kilometres, metres, etc). Be consistent and do not mix the two forms.

Abbreviate units of measurement as follows:

metres	m.	kilometres	km.	square metres	sq.m.	hectare	ha.
Yards	yds.	foot/feet	ft.	inch(es)	ins.	miles/acres	<i>in full</i>
Hours	hrs.	minutes	mins.	seconds	Secs.	ampere(s)	A.
latitude	lat.	longitude	long.			ordnance survey grid reference	O.S.Gr:

## 6. PLACE NAMES

### Countries

Names of countries appear in English style: Italy, Switzerland, Germany, etc.

### Regions

The Britain and France guides are divided by administrative areas, i.e. counties (Cornwall, Yorkshire), tourist areas (Highlands and Islands) or French départements (Vendée, Gard).

The Europe guide is divided mostly by geographical areas, e.g. north, southwest. Where the native word is used, it is normally one which would be well understood by a British reader, e.g. Costa Blanca, Algarve. Within the text it is acceptable to use a well-known English version, e.g. Bavaria.

### Major cities and towns

Native place names should be used in the title line as follows but where there is a well known English version it may be included: Wien/Vienna, München/Munich, Roma/Rome

Once identified, the native form may be dropped in the general text (but not in the Directions section).

### Smaller towns/villages

As smaller towns and villages do not generally have English versions, native spelling is used. However, where there are alternatives locally, both may be used as follows: Leifers/Laives, Bozen/Bolzano

### Names of nature sites, monuments, bridges, etc.

The English version of a name may be used where there is an accepted and commonly understood English version: The Loire Valley, Eiffel Tower, Bridge of Sighs

Otherwise, the native name is used even if a direct literal translation of every element is possible: Côtes de Granit Rose, not The Rose Granite Coast

(Addresses are always provided in the native style of the country being written about).

### Street names

In the text names should always be in the native style: The statue is on the Via Dante.

## 7. STANDARD ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS

With a variety of writers we do need to standardise some of the more commonly used words. Some examples of terms we have adopted are:

Use park in Britain to mean campsite (unless they use the word site themselves).

Use site or campsite in the rest of Europe, not camp.

Caravan holiday home to mean (in Britain) static, mobile home, permanent, etc.

Motorhome meaning motorcaravan, motorvan, camper, campervan, motor caravan, etc.

American Motorhome or 5<sup>th</sup> wheeler is acceptable for the large, American type units.

Caravanning is correct but Caravanning may of course be used in site names where appropriate

Where appropriate we describe toilets (or WCs) as British or Turkish style (not continental).

We use: chemical disposal point, waste water point, motorhome service point

'Super pitch' is a trade name - instead use fully serviced and describe.

Facilities for disabled people is correct - not disabled facilities (do they need repair?)

Playground, campsite, southwest (etc), dishwashing and washbasin are used without hyphens.

Children's playground is correct, not childrens'.

We spell dryers with a `y`, barbecues with a `c` and surprise (etc) with a `s` not a `z`.

## 8. GOOD ENGLISH

Please give some thought to the following taken from 'Correct English' by B A Phythian (Hodder and Stoughton)

### Common errors

For example:

**comprise of** is incorrect; the 'of' is superfluous (the complex comprises three swimming pools)

**different from** is correct (not different than or different to)

**essential** should be regarded as an absolute; either something is essential or it is not.

**unique** means without equal; it is an absolute; there can be no degree of uniqueness.

**superior to**, not superior than

**neither .. nor**, not neither .. or

### Wrongly used words

For example:

**majority** does not mean almost all; 51% is a majority.

**plethora** means an unhealthy excess; abundance is better.

**optimum** means most favourable, not maximum.

**approximate** means near to the actual; **approximately** means nearly exactly; avoid using either to mean roughly.

**doubtless, no doubt, undoubtedly** mean without doubt, and should not be used to mean probably.

## Unnecessary words

The pruning of such unnecessary words will allow the main sense of sentences to stand out.

**a. Meaningless intensification:** a handy example is the over-use of the word very: I am very sorry, very grateful, very upset, very tired. The use of very is to emphasise, not to add to the meaning but its use has become so habitual that it has almost become meaningless. Having lost its force, very has been supplemented by other intensifying adverbs (really, terribly, awfully, extremely, exceptionally, considerably). If any words can be omitted without changing the sense, omit them.

**b. Prepositional elaboration:** is a preference for prepositional phrases when single words suffice:

He phoned in connection with . . . (about)

Prices change in relation to the season . . . (with)

Payments in respect of overtime . . . (for)

I am writing with reference to . . . (about)

In the vicinity of . . . (near)

**c. Dignity words:** are long words which are felt to be more striking than shorter ones with an identical meaning but are probably unnecessary:

commencement (start) adjacent to (near) terminate (end)

requirement (need) initiate (begin) reside (live)

**d. Tautology:** is needless repetition.

For example, as requisite means something required and necessary means required, to describe something as a necessary requisite is tautological.

Likewise: unexpected surprise, final completion, new innovation.

Further examples: actual adds nothing to in actual fact; check up on means check;

currently is high-sounding for now; miss out on means miss; at a time when is long-winded for when;

whether or not means whether.

## Tired words

Are best avoided for fresh, effective writing. For example:

**a. Clichés:** in this day and age; last but not least; few and far between.

**b. Conventional modifiers:** sadly lacking; bitterly disappointed; marked contrast.

**c. Vogue words:** catalyst; credibility gap; in-depth; arguably.

Plus is a fashionable alternative for and

Relative to or relating to may often be replaced by about or in.

To all intents and purposes means virtually.

Not to put too fine a point on it means frankly

The cost involved will be means the cost will be

**d. Over-used words:** have from over-use lost their force.

They include: definitely, hopefully, nice, involve, ongoing, situation, significantly