



Writing Style Guide

August 2025

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Introduction

The *Writing Style Guide (WSG)* contains styles and standards for all types of writing at HPE.

Although it's the primary resource for writing standards, the WSG doesn't cover every matter of style that might arise, so it should be used along with any particular guidelines a group might have. Only basic formatting suggestions are included and are not intended to override group-specific format guidelines.

HPE Brand Central

Assets, guidelines, and templates for communicating our brand appropriately are on [HPE Brand Central](#). For narrative, voice, and other writing-related topics, see the [Verbal identity](#) section.

Writing channel

Join the [#writing-at-hpe](#) channel on Slack to suggest improvements for the WSG, ask questions about writing at HPE, and share your knowledge.

General writing tips

Good writing is clear, direct, informative, and simple. Remember these important rules of style when writing and revising your content.

Be clear. Write simply what you need to communicate. If a sentence becomes long and confusing, divide it to make shorter and clearer ones, or use a list.

Be concise. Write only what you need to communicate. Remove unnecessary words from your sentences and unnecessary sentences from your paragraphs. Do not use two or three words where one will suffice.

Concise: You need three tools for this procedure.

Wordy: There are three tools that you will need in order to perform this procedure.

Be consistent. Inconsistencies in style, format, and use of terms are usually obvious to the reader and are often confusing. Inconsistencies can create doubt over the accuracy of the information and can result in the loss of credibility.

Use specific, definite language. Write exactly what you need to communicate. Choose precise words over vague ones and include the details that matter.

Specific: You might lose your data if you do not back up your hard drive.

Vague: A major problem might result if you fail to take precautionary measures.

Use the active voice. For proper emphasis on what a sentence is about, use the active voice primarily. The active voice is concise and direct. It places emphasis on the subject performing the action. The passive voice is wordy and indirect. It places emphasis on the object receiving the action. (Good writing includes both active and passive voice.)

Active: Select **Close** to complete the operation.

Passive: The operation will be completed when you select **Close**.

Put statements in positive form. Negative statements are comparable to using the passive voice. Positive statements are comparable to using the active voice. To create positive statements, remove the word *not* from your sentences when possible.

Positive: She ignored the warning.

Negative: She did not pay any attention to the warning.

Use parallel structure. Elements that are alike in function should be alike in construction. For clarity and

flow, use parallel structure (the same grammatical form) in headings and lists. The items in the following example are all sentence fragments beginning with an adverb.

Example

In this issue, you'll learn about:

- What's changing
- How to get prepared
- Where you can find more information

Structure sentences with subordination. Subordinate the less important idea to the main idea in a sentence. This structure can help the reader understand what information is more important.

Instead of: The system is a high-performance system and has eight processors.

Write: The high-performance system has eight processors.

Structure paragraphs with unity. For unity and coherence, a paragraph should deal with a single topic. The sentences should tie together and contribute directly to the subject of the paragraph.

Writing for a global audience

Regardless of whether your content will be translated into other languages, write for a global audience to accommodate ESL readers.

Things to do

- Use clear and concise wording.
- Use consistent terminology.
- Use literal language instead of figurative language.
- When you have the choice of using a word with a single meaning or a word with multiple meanings, choose the word with a single meaning.
- Use short, common words. However, if a longer word conveys the meaning more precisely, use the longer word.
- Write simple sentences rather than compound sentences.
- Separate text into short paragraphs.
- Use strong, active verbs to create direct, concise sentences.
- Consider where graphics could be used to present information visually instead of having text-only content.
- To help distinguish between nouns and verbs, use articles (a, an, the) in sentence fragments in lists, tables, and graphics.
- Label content with appropriate headings and subheadings for easy identification.
- Use American English spellings rather than British English.
- Instead of writing dates with all numerals, spell out or abbreviate the month.

Things to avoid

- Jargon and slang

- Idioms and figures of speech
- Humor
- Complex verb forms
 - Instead of:** Review X *by going* to Y site and *clicking* Z.
 - Write:** To review X, *go* to Y site and *click* Z.
- Using nouns as verbs or verbs as nouns
- Region-specific content

Style, grammar, and punctuation guidelines

Most of the links in this major section are internal to the document. For links to additional resources, see [Other resources](#).

24x7, 24/7

Use a lowercase x or a slash without spaces. Do not use 24 by 7.

A, an

Use “a” with a word that begins with a consonant sound. Use “an” with a word that begins with a vowel sound.

Examples: a desk, an office

See also: [“A” and “an” with acronyms](#); [“A” and “an” with the company name](#)

Abbreviations

An abbreviation is a shortened form of a word or phrase that replaces the word or phrase. Use only common, accepted abbreviations. Do not create your own abbreviations just to keep from repeating long words or phrases.

Common abbreviations are acceptable in examples, graphics, footnotes, and tables, particularly when space is limited.

Do not begin a sentence with an abbreviation.

Table 1: Common abbreviations

Term	Abbreviation
Approximately	Approx.
Company	Co.
Corporation	Corp.
Department	Dept.
Division	Div.
Edition or editor	Ed.
Established	Est.
Incorporated	Inc.
Management	Mgmt.
Manufacturing	Mfg.
Miscellaneous	Misc.
Quarter	Qtr.
Revision or revised	Rev.

See also: [Latin abbreviations](#)

Plurals of abbreviations

Plural forms of common abbreviations include the following:

- Month: mo. (singular), mos. (plural)
- Number: no. (singular), nos. (plural)
- Page: p. (singular), pp. (plural)

Ability, capability, capacity

Ability refers to a person's skill or talent. *Capability* refers to an ability or potential ability of a person or thing. *Capacity* is the ability to contain something, or an amount that can be contained (it can also mean duty or role).

Examples

Her ability to come up with creative solutions is impressive.

The new version of the system adds many capabilities.

A person's capacity for learning is limitless.

Above, below

Avoid using *above* or *below* when referring to other content. Use specific cross-references whenever possible (example: See Table 3). If you can't make specific cross-references, use *previous* and *following* rather than *above* and *below*.

See also: [Cross-references within a document](#)

Absolute terms

Question the use of absolute terms, such as *all*, *never*, and *none*. In certain instances, their use is valid. However, when even one possible exception exists, do not use an absolute term.

Academic degrees

Use title case for specific degrees and lowercase for degrees in general.

Example: She has a Bachelor of Arts degree and intends to get a master's degree.

For academic degree abbreviations, omit the periods.

Examples: Master of Arts (MA), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

For the plural form, omit the apostrophe.

Examples: MAs, PhDs

Accept, except

Accept means to receive or agree with. *Except* means to exclude.

Accessibility

Although accessible writing is about including persons with disabilities, everyone benefits—in particular, ESL readers and those using a mobile device or needing to quickly scan content.

The following guidelines cover only the basics, so use them as a starting point for developing a mindset that will infuse accessibility in your writing and content design. Some of the guidelines are repetitive with

others in this guide because accessible writing is primarily about good writing.

- Use language that is clear, simple, and concise.
- Write primarily in the active voice.
- Avoid run-on sentences, optimally using no more than 25 words.
- Format content to make it easy to read and scan, using:
 - Short paragraphs, containing a single idea and typically two to four sentences each
 - Headings to clearly identify chunks of content
 - Font sizes and weight to show content hierarchy
 - Bulleted or numbered lists that are grammatically parallel and similar in length
- Don't rely solely on colors or shapes to convey information.
 - **Instead of:** Click the green rectangle.
 - **Write:** Click the Register button.
 - **Instead of:** The highest participation rate by a team is shown in blue.
 - **Write:** The chart shows the highest participation rate by a team at 74%.
- Avoid directional language.
 - **Instead of:** Select from the options on the left.
 - **Write:** Select from these options: (list of options).
 - **Instead of:** The chart below shows the top revenue generators.
 - **Write:** The following chart shows the top revenue generators.
- Use descriptive links, clearly specifying the action, item, or destination
 - **Instead of:** Visit the site to find out who won.
 - **Write:** Visit the site to find out who won.
- Never use “click here” as a link. In addition to being nondescriptive, not all users will perform the action with a mouse or touchscreen.
- Use black text on light backgrounds and white text on dark backgrounds for sufficient color contrast.

When developing content in Microsoft apps, use the Accessibility Checker (on the Review tab) to check and fix issues. In the accessibility options, you can select to keep the checker running while you work.

Alternative (alt) text

Whatever content you include graphically, include it textually as well using alt text.

- Describe images in detail so that people using a screen reader could imagine what they look like.
 - **Instead of:** Person on a train
 - **Write:** Young professional woman using a mobile device while commuting on a train
- For a chart or graph, include all the data in the alt text so everyone has the information.
- Carefully check the alt text for typos.
- When possible, use text captions below images in addition to alt text.

- When writing instructions or describing a process, be sure that any screenshots, arrows, or other visual indicators include alt text to convey the information.

To add alt text in Microsoft apps, right-click the graphic and select **Edit Alt Text**. For something like a colorful background without objects or text, select **Mark as decorative**.

Acronyms

An acronym is a word formed from the initial letter or letters of each word or major word in a compound term. The word *acronym* is also used for an abbreviation formed with initial letters, that is, an *initialism*.

Use only approved, legitimate acronyms. Do not create your own just to keep from repeating long phrases. Avoid overusing acronyms.

Do not define an acronym in a title, heading, or caption. On the first use of the acronym in body text, write out the full term, followed by the acronym in parentheses. Then use the acronym on subsequent references.

In a long document, you might choose to occasionally redefine an acronym to aid comprehension, for example, at the beginning of a new section or subsection.

If your content has a glossary, include all acronyms in the glossary. Some authoring systems link from the acronym to the definition in the glossary, in which case the definition is not needed in the body text.

Exceptions to defining acronyms

It's unnecessary to define acronyms that are well known to the target audience. For example, you likely wouldn't define FTE when writing to HR professionals or IRS when writing to a US audience. In such cases, the context is ample to identify the acronym.

See [Appendix A](#) for a list of technical acronyms that don't require definition for most technical audiences. Some of these acronyms don't require definition for any audience, such as DVD.

For an internal audience, consider whether an acronym might be unknown to new HPE team members.

In all cases, carefully consider your target audience when deciding whether to define an acronym.

Capitalization of acronyms

In general, use uppercase for acronyms.

Examples: ASCII, POST, RAM

The exceptions are acronyms in which the accepted usage combines uppercase and lowercase.

Examples: iLO (integrated Lights Out), iSCSI (integrated Small Computer System Interface)

If the definition for an acronym is a proper noun, use title case (initial caps) for the definition.

Example: When you power on the computer, the system runs the Power-On Self-Test (POST).

If the definition for an acronym is a common noun, use lowercase for the definition.

Example: Use your personal identification number (PIN) to access your account.

Use the same case for acronyms regardless of where they appear.

Plural and possessive forms of acronyms

Form the plural of an acronym by adding a lowercase s.

Examples: DIMMs, WANs, DVDs, MP3s

Use an apostrophe with an acronym only to create the possessive form.

Examples: the CEO's agenda, the IRS's policy

If you define an acronym in its plural form, don't redefine it when using the singular form.

Example: Subject matter experts (SMEs) are members of the project team. Each SME will be assigned specific content areas to review.

“A” and “an” with acronyms

Use “a” before an acronym that’s read as a word and begins with a consonant sound.

Example: A SWOT analysis

Use “an” before an acronym that’s read as individual letters and begins with a vowel sound.

Example: An MBA in leadership

Active voice

See: [Voice](#)

Addresses

In body text, spell out suffixes for street names, even those commonly used.

Example: We have facilities at 321 Main Street and 514 Mills Road.

Street name suffixes may be abbreviated in tables, a list of addresses, and informal communications.

Examples: 321 Main St., 514 Mills Rd., 58 Grand Ave., 24 Green Blvd., 1967 Penny Ln.

Note: For US addresses, you may use both a post office box number and a street address. However, mail will be delivered to the address line immediately above the city and state.

See also: [Comma, place names](#); [State names \(US\)](#)

Adjectives

Avoid long strings of adjectives, which might lead to misinterpretation or be difficult to follow. As a general rule, use a maximum of three adjectives before a noun.

Instead of: This includes our first-of-its-kind science-based supply chain management program.

Write: This includes our supply chain management program, the first of its kind based on science.

See also: [Comma, coordinate adjectives](#); [Comma, cumulative adjectives](#); [Hyphen](#)

Advice, advise

Advice is a noun. *Advise* is a verb meaning to give advice to. It also means to inform.

Affect, effect

Affect is commonly a verb, and *effect* is commonly a noun. When you *affect* (influence) something, it produces an *effect* (a result).

Example

The news might *affect* the team’s morale.

The news had an *effect* on the team’s morale.

In the less common verb form, *effect* means “to bring about.”

Example: News can *effect* change by inspiring people to act.

AI, GenAI

For many audiences, the initialism AI can be used without definition. When defining it, write the spelled-out term in lowercase: artificial intelligence (AI).

The short version of generative AI is GenAI. Again, consider your target audience when deciding whether to define it on the first mention.

Alert text

Alert text appears outside a normal paragraph for emphasis. Each type of alert has a specific use.

- **DANGER:** Indicates a hazardous situation that, if not avoided, **will** result in death or serious injury. This text is to be limited to the most extreme situations. Call out the hazard, injury, and steps to avoid it.
- **WARNING:** Indicates a hazardous situation that, if not avoided, **could** result in death or serious injury. Call out the hazard or consequence and how to avoid it.
- **CAUTION:** Indicates a hazardous situation that, if not avoided, **could** result in minor or moderate injury, loss of data, data corruption, or an application outage. Call out the hazard or consequence and steps to avoid it.
- **IMPORTANT:** Provides essential information to explain a concept or to complete a task.
- **NOTE:** Contains additional information to emphasize or supplement important points of the main text. Information in a note should not add value to the preceding text; if it does, use an important alert instead.
- **TIP:** Provides helpful hints for completing a task. Do not use a tip to give essential information. A tip might provide an alternative method for completing the task that precedes it.

When writing alert text, be direct and brief. Use the instructional second person (the “understood you” construction), active voice, and present tense whenever possible.

When writing danger, warning, and caution alerts, clearly state the nature of the hazard, the consequences of not avoiding the hazard, and the method for avoiding it.

Alert placement

Put danger, warning, and caution alerts before the procedural step that involves the potential for bodily harm or equipment damage. This reduces the chance that the user will perform the step without realizing the possible consequence. Other types of alerts can appear before or after the related text, depending on the context.

Avoid information overload. If alerts include too many items and sections contain too many alerts, look at reorganizing the content.

If more than one alert is included in the same place, position the alerts in the following order:

1. DANGER
2. WARNING
3. CAUTION
4. IMPORTANT
5. NOTE or TIP

Alert style

For the alert heading, use uppercase bold and 6-pt line spacing before, 8-pt line spacing after. For the text that follows, use sentence case, no bold, and 6-pt line spacing after. The following examples show the approved icons and colors.



DANGER


Indicates a hazardous situation that, if not avoided, will result in death or serious injury. This text is to be limited to the most extreme situations. Call out the hazard, injury, and steps to avoid it.



WARNING

Indicates a hazardous situation that, if not avoided, could result in death or serious injury. Call out the hazard or consequence and the steps to avoid it.

Color for Danger and Warning alerts

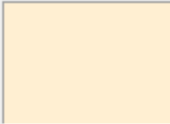
	Hue: <input type="text" value="0"/>	Red: <input type="text" value="254"/>
	Sat: <input type="text" value="228"/>	Green: <input type="text" value="217"/>
Color Solid	Lum: <input type="text" value="222"/>	Blue: <input type="text" value="217"/>



CAUTION

Indicates a hazardous situation that, if not avoided, could result in minor or moderate injury, loss of data, data corruption, or an application outage. Call out the hazard or consequence and the steps to avoid it.

Color for Caution alerts

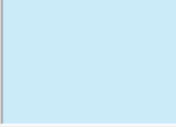
	Hue: <input type="text" value="26"/>	Red: <input type="text" value="255"/>
	Sat: <input type="text" value="240"/>	Green: <input type="text" value="239"/>
Color Solid	Lum: <input type="text" value="219"/>	Blue: <input type="text" value="210"/>



IMPORTANT

Provides essential information to explain a concept or complete a task.

Color for Important alerts

	Hue: <input type="text" value="132"/>	Red: <input type="text" value="204"/>
	Sat: <input type="text" value="189"/>	Green: <input type="text" value="235"/>
Color Solid	Lum: <input type="text" value="213"/>	Blue: <input type="text" value="249"/>



NOTE

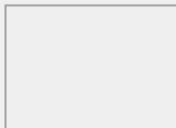
Contains additional information to emphasize or supplement important points. Information in a Note alert should not add value to the preceding text; if it does, use an Important alert instead.



TIP

Provides helpful hints for completing a task. Do not use a Tip for essential information.

Color for Notes and Tips

	Hue: <input type="text" value="160"/>	Red: <input type="text" value="239"/>
	Sat: <input type="text" value="0"/>	Green: <input type="text" value="239"/>
Color Solid	Lum: <input type="text" value="225"/>	Blue: <input type="text" value="239"/>

All, all of

Use *all* with a common noun and *all of* with a personal pronoun.

Example

All the settings have defaults.

All of his files are listed in the directory.

Alphabetization

To list items in alphabetical order, use the automatic sort feature of your app. When alphabetizing manually, use the letter-by-letter method.

Example

Log on

Log out

Logging in

Alphabetize acronyms and abbreviations according to their shortened form, not as they would appear in the list if spelled out.

When a continuous list is in a table, alphabetize the items vertically from one column to the next.

Example

Adjectives	Conjunctions	Prepositions
Adverbs	Interjections	Pronouns
Articles	Nouns	Verbs

When alphabetizing a list of mixed information types, use this order:

1. Special characters (symbols), without spelling them out
2. Numerals, in ascending order
3. Words, in alphabetical order

Alphabetical order in localized content

If the content will be translated, consider whether an alphabetical list is really needed. The content will lose its alphabetical order when translated and will have to be resorted.

See also: [Glossaries](#); [Indexes](#)

Among, between

Use *between* when writing about distinct, separate items. Use *among* when writing in generalities about collective groups.

Examples

The table lists the differences *between* rack, tower, and blade servers.

The servers are *among* the highest rated in the industry.

Major differences exist *between* English, Arabic, Mandarin, and Polish.

She could choose only one language class from *among* the dozens offered.

Amount, number

Use *amount* to reference items that are not ordinarily counted.

Example: The amount of information was staggering.

Use *number* to refer to items that are usually counted.

Example: The number of attendees was surprising.

Ampersand (&)

Use an ampersand for the word *and* in these instances:

- Proper nouns that use an ampersand, such as trademarked names, program names, and organization names
- Internal org names at HPE
- Job titles, for example, VP & General Manager
- Where space is extremely limited, such as a graphic label

And/or

Avoid using *and/or* in a sentence. It is preferable—unless the result is cumbersome—to rewrite the sentence or to use the two choices followed by *or both*.

Correct: Use a file specification, logical name, or both.

Less correct: Use a file specification and/or logical name.

In tables and graphics, use *and/or* if needed to conserve space.

See also: [Slash](#)

Angle brackets (< >)

Use the term *angle brackets* to refer to the symbols < >. When referring to the individual angle brackets, use the terms *left angle bracket* (<) and *right angle bracket* (>).

Use the > and < symbols in tables to indicate *greater than* and *less than*. Always put a space between the angle bracket and the value. In body text, write out *less than* and *greater than*.

In writing about XML programming, these symbols are often referred to as *opening* and *closing triangular brackets*.

For bit notation in technical reference guides, use angle brackets to enclose bit values and bit fields.

Examples: < 7 >, < 15..12 >

You can use the right angle bracket (>) when writing a system prompt (C:>).

Avoid using the right angle bracket (>) in command sequences. Instead, consider using the Symbol font right arrow symbol (→).

See also: [Greater than \(>\)](#); [Less than \(<\)](#); [Arrow symbol](#)

Anthropomorphization, personification

Do not attribute personal qualities to inanimate objects. For example, computers do not *think*, *believe*, *assume*, or *let*.

Correct: After 30 minutes of inactivity, the system logs you out.

Incorrect: After 30 minutes of inactivity, the system assumes you are finished and logs you out.

Any more, anymore

Use *any more* as an adjective phrase meaning “any additional.”

Example: We don’t need any more meetings.

Use *anymore* as an adverb meaning “any longer.”

Example: We don’t need this meeting anymore.

Any one, anyone

Use *any one* to refer to a single thing or person.

Example: Can any one of the team members lead the meeting?

Use *anyone* as a general reference.

Example: Does anyone know when the next meeting will be?

Apostrophes

Apostrophes, HPE

See: Hewlett Packard Enterprise name

Apostrophes, possessive case

For singular and plural nouns not ending in the letter *s*, use an apostrophe and an *s*.

Examples: one person's opinion, the women's conference

For singular nouns ending in *s*, use an apostrophe and an *s*.

Example: the boss's birthday, the stylus's design

For plural nouns ending in *s*, use only an apostrophe.

Examples: two of the writers' knowledge, the Joneses' house

To show joint possession, use an apostrophe with the last noun.

Example: Saul, Jesse, and Skylar's shared meeting space

To show individual possession, make both nouns possessive.

Example: Saul's and Skylar's differing perspectives

Possessive case of names ending in *s*

If the possessive form is typically pronounced with an extra *s*, use an apostrophe and an *s*.

Example: Travis's role (most people would say "tra-vis-iz")

If the possessive form is not typically pronounced with an extra *s*, use only an apostrophe.

Example: Ulysses' companions (most people would not say "u-ly-ses-iz")

Possessive case of indefinite pronouns

For indefinite pronouns, use an apostrophe and the letter *s*.

Examples: someone's book, anyone's guess, no one's wish, everyone's duty

Do not use an apostrophe to form the possessive form of personal, relative, and interrogative pronouns.

Examples: hers, his, its, mine, ours, theirs, whose, your, yours

Apostrophes, product names

Do not use an apostrophe to form the possessive of a product, program, or service name.

Correct: HPE ProLiant Gen10 Plus servers bring more computer power, memory, and storage capacity.

Incorrect: HPE's ProLiant Gen10 Plus servers bring more computer power, memory, and storage capacity.

Appears

The word *appears* is an intransitive verb and does not require an object. Use *appears* to describe a window or dialog box opening.

Correct: When the process ends, a message appears.

Incorrect: When the process ends, a message displays.

The word *displays* is a transitive verb and requires an object.

See also: **Displays**

Appendix, appendixes

Use the plural *appendixes*, not *appendices*.

See also: **Appendixes**

Arrow symbol

To indicate a succession of commands, consider using the Symbol font arrow (→), character code 174, with a space before and after the arrow. It is also acceptable to use words for a succession of commands.

Examples

Click Start → Control Panel → Device Manager.

Click Start, then Control Panel, and then Device Manager.

Articles (a, an, the)

Include articles in complete sentences and sentence fragments, regardless of where the text appears. Most languages emphasize articles more than English does. Articles help to distinguish between nouns and verbs.

Correct: Insert a space before the symbol.

Incorrect: Insert space before symbol

Avoid using articles at the beginning of titles, headings, lists, and graphic captions.

Correct: Minimum system requirements

Incorrect: The minimum system requirements

Use the article *a* before a word that begins with a consonant sound. Use *an* before a word that begins with a vowel sound, including words that begin with the sounds *ef*, *el*, *em*, *en*, *ar*, *es*, *uh*, *oo*, and *eks*.

Examples: a closed window, an active window

Use the article *a* before an acronym that is read as a word and begins with a consonant sound. Use *an* before an acronym that is read as individual letters and begins with a vowel sound.

Examples: a SAN solution, an SD-WAN leader

As, like

The conjunction *as* means “in the same way that.” The preposition *like* means “similar to.” Use *as* if what follows includes a verb. Use *like* if what follows is a noun, pronoun, or noun phrase.

Examples

She, *as* all good writers *do*, uses proper grammar in emails. (verb)

She, *like* all good *writers*, uses proper grammar in emails. (noun)

To aid global readers, avoid using the word *as* to be a synonym for the conjunctions *because* and *while*.

Correct: Because this social media group is inactive, it will be deleted.

Incorrect: As this social media group is inactive, it will be deleted.

Correct: While the virus scan runs, you can continue working.

Incorrect: As the virus scan runs, you can continue working.

As a service

When writing as-a-service terms in a sentence, use lowercase for “service” and “everything.”

Examples

Deliver an offering as a service

Offering everything as a service

In abbreviations, represent “service” and “everything” with an initial cap.

Examples: aaS, EaaS

Use hyphens only when an aaS term is used as an adjective before a noun.

Example: An as-a-service offering

Assure, ensure, insure

See: [Ensure, insure, assure](#)

Asterisk placement

In a sentence, place an asterisk (*) used as a reference mark:

- Before an em dash
- After all other punctuation marks

Note: Don't use an asterisk with a footnote just to draw attention to the note. Use one only if the footnote refers to body text marked with an asterisk.

Backup, back up

As a noun or adjective, *backup* is one word. As a verb, *back up* is two words.

Examples

Use the backup to replicate data after failure. (noun)

Use the backup CD to restore the database server. (adjective)

Back up your data before logging out. (verb)

Because of, due to, since

Use *because of* as a preposition to indicate cause.

Example: The system is fast because of its disk caching capability.

Due to means caused by or resulting from. Use *due to* only after a form of the verb *to be*.

Example: The system problems are due to a network issue.

The word *since* can refer to either time or cause. For clarity, use *since* to indicate time and *because* to indicate cause.

Examples

The interface hasn't changed much since 2014.

The interface should be familiar because it hasn't changed much.

Bit notation

Use angle brackets to enclose bit values and bit fields.

Examples: < 7 >, < 15..12 >

Bold

See: [Emphasis](#)

Boot, reboot

When writing for a technical audience, use *boot* and *reboot*. When writing for a nontechnical audience, use *start* and *restart*.

Braces ({ })

Use the term *braces*, not *curly braces*, to refer to these symbols: { }. When referring to individual braces, use the terms *left brace* ({) and *right brace* (}).

In syntax diagrams using brackets and braces, braces indicate that at least one of the enclosed elements is required.

Brackets ([])

Use the term *brackets*, not *square brackets*, to refer to these symbols: []. When referring to the individual brackets, use the terms *left bracket* ([) and *right bracket* (]).

In syntax diagrams using brackets and braces, brackets indicate that all the enclosed elements are optional.

In body text, avoid constructions that require the use of brackets. Parenthetical information should be enclosed in parentheses. However, if a parenthetical statement is embedded within a parenthetical statement, use parentheses for the outer set of marks and brackets for the inner set of marks.

Example: Press the Standby button. (This feature shuts off subsystems that have been idle for more than 10 minutes [the default setting]).

Follow the same punctuation rules for brackets as for parentheses.

- If brackets enclose a sentence, place the period inside the right bracket.
- If brackets enclose a phrase that ends a sentence, place the period outside the right bracket.

See also: [Angle brackets \(< >\)](#); [Parentheses](#)

Bulleted lists

See: [Unordered \(bulleted\) lists](#)

Buttons and switches

When referring to buttons on a pointing device, use the term *mouse buttons* to differentiate from on-screen control buttons.

In a simple user interface, do not refer to a button on the screen by name (for example, click the **OK** button). Instead, refer to the label (for example, click **OK**). However, in complex user interfaces with many different types of targets, include the class of the object.

Use lowercase letters for buttons that are not labeled on the screen (for example, the minimize button).

When referring to hardware:

- Specify the type of button, such as an on/off switch or a mouse button.
- Refer to a key on the keyboard as a key, not as a button.
- Refer to a button on the front panel as a button.

By using, with

Avoid using the word *with* to mean “by using.” It is ambiguous and makes translation more difficult.

Instead of: Select part of the picture with the dotted rectangle selection tool.

Write: Select part of the picture by using the dotted rectangle selection tool.

Can, may, might

Use *can* to mean ability, *may* to mean permission, and *might* to mean possibility.

See also: [Word choice](#)

Capitalization

To summarize the capitalization style at HPE:

- Use **sentence case** for most text, including headlines, subtitles, headings, subheads, buttons, listed items, tables, labels, captions, and secondary webpage titles.
- Use **title case** for the title of an event, program, or website and for all proper nouns.
- Avoid using **uppercase** in body copy, which affects readability and can be interpreted as “shouting.”

Just remember to write most things as you would a sentence—capitalizing only the first letter of the first word and the first letter of proper nouns.

Note: Uppercase is used with the HPE Graphik XX Condensed font, so keep that in mind as you read through this section. For all the details about fonts, see [Typography](#) on HPE Brand Central.

Case descriptions

- **Title Case** (also known as initial caps)—The first letter of each word is capitalized except the following words unless they are the first or last word in a title:
 - Articles: a, an, the
 - Short conjunctions: and, as, but, if, or, nor
 - Short prepositions: at, by, for, in, of, off, on, out, to, up

Note: Be sure to use initial caps for short verbs, such as: are, be, can, do, get, go, is, see

- **Sentence case**—The first letter of the first word is capitalized, and the first letter of proper nouns are capitalized.
- **UPPERCASE**—All letters are capitalized.
- **lowercase**—All letters are lowercase.
- **CamelCase**—The first letter of each word or abbreviation in a closed compound is capitalized (for

example, DreamColor). In some instances, the first letter is lowercase (for example, iTunes).

Capitalizing alert titles and text

See: [Alert style and symbol](#)

Capitalizing commands

In the case of command lines, confirm whether the command parser is case-sensitive. For case-sensitive parsers, match the case of the command; for case-insensitive parsers, use lowercase.

Capitalizing cross-references to documents and sections

When referring to a document by its complete title, retain the case. Use lowercase for generic references to documents.

Example

See the HPE Sizer for Microsoft Lync Server User Guide. (complete title using title case)

See the user guide for more information. (generic reference)

When referencing a sentence-case item within a sentence, set it apart with quotes, unless it's a hyperlink.

Example: For a list of helpful links, see “Other resources.”

Capitalizing document elements

Use title case for specific document elements, such as the following:

- Appendix A
- Chapter 2
- Example 1-1
- Figure 2-3
- Section 5.2
- Table 4

When referring to a nonspecific document element, use lowercase, for example:

- the next chapter
- the following example

Capitalizing GUI elements

Use the same capitalization as shown in the user interface. Do not capitalize the type of item (such as pane, button, menu, dialog box, or window).

Example: Paste the URL in the Insert Hyperlink dialog box.

Capitalizing headings and captions

For headings and captions, use sentence case—initial cap the first word and any proper nouns.

Example: Web-based training sessions for Human Resources

Capitalizing index entries

Use lowercase for index entries unless they are proper nouns.

See also: [Indexes](#)

Capitalizing job titles and roles

In body text, use lowercase if the job title follows a person's name and use title case if the job title precedes a person's name.

Examples

Miguel Perez, marketing director of XYZ Inc., is the guest speaker.

The guest speaker is Marketing Director Miguel Perez of XYZ Inc.

When the job title stands alone, such as in an email signature or on a business card, use title case.

Example

Miguel Perez
Marketing Director
XYZ Inc.

For job or project roles in a sentence, use lowercase.

Examples: project leader, sponsor, executive sponsor, program manager, lab engineer, sales specialist, business partner

Capitalizing list items

Use sentence case for all list items, including single words and sentence fragments.

Example

- Uses less energy
- Reduces complexity

If you use a colon or an em dash to set off a description from a term, use sentence case for the description.

Example

- **Personal**—Anyone can change settings at this level.
- **Administrative**—Portal administrators can change settings at this level.

Capitalizing news headlines

Use sentence case for the headlines of articles, press releases, and blog posts. Or, if using the HPE Graphik XX Condensed font, use uppercase. Learn more on the [Typography](#) page of Brand Central.

Capitalizing product names

See: [Product names](#)

Capitalizing proper nouns

A proper noun is the name of a particular person, place, or thing. Use title case for proper nouns wherever they occur.

Example

Announcing the new *Tech Con* mobile app (headline)

The new *Tech Con* mobile app is available in the Apple and Google stores. (sentence)

Do not capitalize common nouns to add emphasis or importance.

Correct: The webinar is for new people leaders.

Incorrect: The webinar is for new People Leaders.

See also: **Capitalization of acronyms**

Capitalizing titles

Use title case for the title of an event, program, or website. For document titles, you may choose between title case and sentence case.

Be sure to use initial caps for short verbs in title case, such as *are, be, can, do, get, go, is, see*. Do not use initial caps for these short words, unless they are the first or last word in the title:

- Articles: a, an, the
- Conjunctions: and, as, but, if, or, nor
- Prepositions: at, by, for, in, of, off, on, out, to, up

Hyphenated terms in title case

For hyphenated terms in title case, use initial caps for all words, except articles or short conjunctions and prepositions.

Examples: Community Well-Being, On-the-Job Learning

Captions

A table caption (heading) is placed above a table. A figure (graphic) caption is placed below a figure.

Caution text

See: **Alert text**

Choose

See: **Select**

Citing references

When you make a specific claim in marketing collateral—whether it’s about an HPE product, solution, service, or capability as a company—you must substantiate the claim with a specific reference. Do not use vague references, such as “based on HPE internal testing.”

For an internal study, include the benchmarking parameters, location, and date. For example:

Claim: Increase performance by 90%¹.

Substantiation: ¹Benchmarking and tests done with equivalent storage products in a controlled environment. HPE Labs, Palo Alto, California, January 2015.

For a report or study from an external source, such as IDC, Gartner, or Forrester, include the title, source, and publication date. For example:

Claim: Reduce power consumption by 50%¹.

Substantiation: ¹“Understanding the server landscape across medium-high performance servers.” Gartner, December 2015.

Use relevant and current citations. If a reference is more than two years old, ask the business to provide current details.

Citing titles

See: Cross-references

Click, press, tap

Use the term *click* for selecting an object on a screen such as a button or a link. Use *select* when there is a choice of options such as on a menu.

For specific actions, use the following terms:

- **Click**—Pressing and releasing a pointing device
- **Press**—Using keys on a keyboard (instead of *push* or *hit*)
- **Tap**—Selecting an item on a touch-screen device

Do not use the word *on* after *click*, *press*, or *tap*.

Correct: Click the **Submit** button.

Incorrect: Click on the **Submit** button.

See also: Double-click, double-tap; Drag, drag-and-drop; Mouse; Select

Click here, click to

Do not create links that say “here,” “click here,” or “click to [action].”

First, it’s unnecessary to tell people what to do with a link. Second, a link should be descriptive—usually specifying an action, item, or destination—and therefore easy to identify.

Finally, links stand out visually in body text, and generic “click here” text isn’t what should be highlighted. It’s especially unsightly when a paragraph contains multiple links.

Instead of: To access the image library, click here. If you have any download issues, click here.

Write: Access the image library. If you have any download issues, contact us.

See also: Links; URLs

Close, open

Use the verbs *close* and *open* in reference to applications, databases, files, dialog boxes, and windows. *Close* is the preferred Microsoft Windows term. Use the term associated with an application if it differs from *close*.

Do not use *shut down* or *terminate* in place of *close*.

Correct: Close the application. (Microsoft)

Correct: Quit the application.

Incorrect: Shut down the application.

UNIX and Linux content (and other command-line environments) might require terminology other than

open and close.

Cloud

Use lowercase for generic terms and title case for proper nouns.

Example: HPE Cloud Service Automation brokers and manages private cloud, public cloud, and traditional IT services.

Colon

Use only one space after a colon in body text.

When to use a colon

- To introduce a list, either in a paragraph or vertical list

Example

Templates are available for two apps: PowerPoint and InDesign.

Templates are available for these apps:

- PowerPoint
- InDesign
- After an inline heading (see “Colons with headings” below)

- To introduce a command

Example: To list all processes currently running, use the ps command: `$ ps -ef`

- To show a proportion or ratio
- In video run-times (for example, 05:23)
- To refer to drives and devices, depending on the operating system (for example, the C: prompt)

Example: Use the 16:9 template rather than the 4:3 template.

When not to use a colon

- After a **verb** or **preposition** in body text

Correct: The access levels to choose from *are* owner, administrator, and visitor.

Incorrect: The access levels to choose from *are:* owner, administrator, and visitor.

- In place of a period at the end of a sentence that introduces an example, graphic, or table

Correct: After completing step 3, the following screen appears.

Incorrect: After completing step 3, the following screen appears:

Colons with headings

Do not include a colon after a stand-alone heading, only after an inline heading. For example:

Audience

All team members in Sales and HR

Audience: All team members in Sales and HR

Comma

A comma marks a pause or separates elements in a sentence. It provides the smallest interruption in continuity of thought or sentence structure.

Remember that commas are used to aid the reader. As a general rule, add commas where they are needed to communicate a thought clearly.

A misplaced or omitted comma can make a sentence ambiguous or even alter the meaning.

Example

Most of the time, *travelers* worry about their luggage.

Most of the *time travelers* worry about their luggage.

Comma, compound predicates

A compound predicate tells two or more things about a subject without repeating the subject. Do not use a comma if a compound predicate contains only two verbs.

Correct: The speaker is engaging and has a pleasant voice.

Incorrect: The speaker is engaging, and has a pleasant voice.

Comma, compound sentences

A compound sentence contains two or more independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction. The coordinating conjunctions are *and*, *but*, *or*, *nor*, *for*, *so*, and *yet*.

Use a comma before the conjunction unless the clauses are short and closely related.

Examples

Save the file and close the program.

The main menu displays five options, and the submenus provide selections for those options.

See also: [Conjunctions](#)

Comma, conditional clauses

Use a comma after a conditional clause at the beginning of a sentence.

Correct: If the issue persists, restart your computer.

Incorrect: If the issue persists restart your computer.

Comma, contrasting and interrupting expressions

To set off a contrasting or interrupting expression, use one or more commas depending on the sentence structure.

Examples

The service event involved software, not hardware.

Loosen, but do not remove, the seven retaining screws.

Comma, coordinate adjectives (independent modifiers)

Coordinate adjectives separately modify the noun that follows. Because they're independent, they can be listed in any order. Use a comma between coordinate adjectives.

Example

The case has a *smooth, glossy* finish.

The case has a *glossy, smooth* finish.

When in doubt, consider whether the word *and* could be used in place of the comma. If it could, the comma is correct.

Comma, cumulative adjectives (unit modifiers)

Cumulative adjectives are two or more adjectives that build on one another and together modify a noun. Their order cannot be changed without changing the meaning.

If the word *and* could not be used between the adjectives, do not use commas.

Example: The case has a *metallic navy blue* finish.

Comma, introductory and transitional expressions

Use a comma after an introductory or transitional expression at the beginning of a sentence.

Examples

To replace the system board, see the instructions in the service guide.

As a result, the memory devices have a longer time to decode memory cycles.

Use commas to set off transitional words or phrases in the middle of a sentence.

Example: This three-year warranty, however, does not apply to the monitor.

When a transitional word joins two complete clauses, use a semicolon before the word and a comma after it. Alternatively, divide the clauses into two sentences.

Example

The URLs will change next month; therefore, you'll need to update your links.

The URLs will change next month. Therefore, you'll need to update your links.

Table 2: Common transitional words and phrases

• Also	• In conclusion	• Moreover
• As a result	• In fact	• Next
• Consequently	• In general	• Nevertheless
• For example	• In the meantime	• Of course
• However	• Instead	• Therefore
• In addition	• Likewise	• To summarize

Comma, names and job titles

Use a comma between a person's name and job title only when the title follows the name, not when it precedes it.

Example

The scheduled speaker is Anjali Patel, chief technology officer.

The scheduled speaker is Chief Technology Officer Anjali Patel.

Note: The placement of the title affects not only the punctuation but the capitalization as well.

See also: **Capitalizing job titles and roles**

Comma, names with a suffix

When a person's name has a suffix, do not include a comma unless the name is listed with the last name first.

Examples

Joe C. Smith Jr.

Joe C. Smith III

Smith, Joe C., Jr.

Smith, Joe C., III

Comma, nonrestrictive appositives

An appositive is a noun or noun phrase that renames or further describes another noun beside it. A nonrestrictive appositive does not contain essential information.

Use commas to set off nonrestrictive appositives.

Examples

The first board, *the disk controller*, supports up to six separate hard drives.

For more information about options, see Chapter 5, *“Expanding your system.”*

Nonrestrictive appositives are sometimes introduced by the word *or*.

Example: Such semaphores are often called mutual exclusion semaphores, *or mutexes*.

Comma, numbers

HPE follows the common style of using commas with numbers 10,000 and above. A comma is not used for 1000 through 9000.

Comma, place names

Use a comma to separate a city from a state.

Example: HPE's headquarters are in Spring, Texas.

If a city and state or country appears at the beginning or middle of a sentence, use a comma after the state or country.

Examples

The event will be held in Miami, Florida, for senior leaders.

Erskine, Scotland, is the site of our manufacturing plant in Europe.

Comma, preventing misinterpretation

Use commas where needed to prevent misinterpretation.

Correct: X replaces A, and B and C are added together.

Incorrect: X replaces A and B and C are added together.

Sometimes, the better alternative is to rewrite the sentence.

Comma, quotation marks

Place a comma inside the closing quotation mark unless the quotation marks are part of a literal string.

Examples

An error message, “Invalid User,” is displayed when access is denied.

The symbol can have one of the following values: ABST, “ABST”, or %ABST.

Comma, restrictive and nonrestrictive elements

Restrictive modifiers and clauses are essential to the meaning of the sentence—without them, the meaning would be different. They are often introduced with *that* (not *which*). Commas are not used with restrictive elements.

Example: A presentation that has 50 slides cannot be delivered in an hour.

Nonrestrictive modifiers and clauses supply additional information—without them, although there would be less information, the basic meaning would be the same. They are often introduced with *which* (not *that*). Commas are used with nonrestrictive elements.

Example: Jaivon’s presentation, which he worked on all week, has 50 slides.

See also: [That, which](#)

Comma, series

Place a comma before the conjunction (usually *and* or *or*) in a series of three or more items. Commonly known as the serial comma or the Oxford comma, it adds clarity and consistency.

Examples

You’ll find templates, job aids, and other resources to guide you.

The information can be submitted in Word, PowerPoint, or Excel.

If any item in a series has internal commas, use semicolons to separate the items.

Example: See Table 3-1 for steps 1, 2, and 3; Table 3-2 for the parts list; and Table 3-3 for commands.

Commands

For commands in body text and titles:

- Use the verb *enter* rather than *type* when introducing a command.
- Use command names only as nouns or adjectives. Do not use command names as verbs.
- Retain the case for all case-sensitive commands, unless used within a title.
- Do not begin a sentence with the name of a command if the name begins with a lowercase letter.
- Set a command apart using bold text or the MS Consolas monospaced font, for example: Enter the `lpr` command.
- Place long commands on a separate line. Do not add a period at the end of the command.

Example

Enter the following command:

```
vgexport -s -p -m /tmp/vg_shared.map vg_shared
```

- When writing about UNIX and Linux systems and applications, follow the appropriate conventions for

the user community:

- Use the verb *launch* to describe a persistent application.
- Use the verb *execute* for commands that return immediately to the command line.

See also: **Close, open**; **Arrow symbol**

Company name

“Hewlett Packard Enterprise” is our legal entity brand name, but we lead with “HPE” in our communications.

Do not use the following names for HPE:

- HP Enterprise (no such company)
- Hewlett Packard (without Enterprise), unless speaking about the history of the company or with special approval from the global brand team

For more guidelines, see **Corporate brand considerations** on HPE Brand Central.

See also: **Product names**

Possessive form of HPE

Do not use the possessive form with our products and services.

Correct: HPE ProLiant servers

Incorrect: HPE’s ProLiant servers

Use the possessive form only in reference to the company.

Example: Every team member contributes to HPE’s success.

If the possessive form of the full brand name sounds awkward, restructure the sentence without the possessive form. For example:

Instead of: Hewlett Packard Enterprise’s promise to customers is “Together we propel your business further.”

Write: The Hewlett Packard Enterprise promise to customers is “Together we propel your business further.”

Hyphens with the company name

Do not add a hyphen to the company name by using it in a compound adjective or with a prefix.

Correct: The server has several applications specific to HPE.

Incorrect: HPE-specific applications are installed on the server.

Correct: If you encounter an error condition, remove all components not manufactured by HPE (or remove all third-party components).

Incorrect: If you encounter an error condition, remove all non-HPE components.

Note: If a sentence reads better with the company name in a compound adjective, just omit the hyphen. For example: Use the HPE branded templates.

See also: **Pan-HPE**

“A” and “an” with the company name

Use “a” with Hewlett Packard Enterprise because it begins with a consonant sound (hyü). Use “an” with HPE because it begins with a vowel sound (āch).

Examples

An HPE product

A Hewlett Packard Enterprise company

Compared to, compared with

Use *compared to* when describing a similarity between things.

Example: She compared leading the project *to* walking through quicksand.

Use *compared with* when contrasting similarities and differences.

Example: He compared HPE Helion *with* our competitors’ cloud technology.

Compose, comprise

Compose means to make up. *Comprise* means to be made up of. Do not use the phrase *comprised of*.

The parts compose the whole; the whole comprises the parts; the whole is composed of the parts.

Conciseness

See: [Wordiness](#)

Confidentiality

Internal Use Only, Confidential, and Private are the labels used to mark internal-only data. For more information, see [Guidelines for Labeling Information Assets](#).

Conjunctions

Conjunctions are words that join two or more words, phrases, or clauses.

In conversational writing, it’s acceptable to start a sentence with a coordinating conjunction: *and*, *but*, *for*, *nor*, *or*, *yet*. This helps to create shorter sentences, which aids online reading, and gives readers a pause between two points.

Example: The day is about cultivating the spirit of giving throughout the year. And it’s about celebrating our incredible reach as a global team.

Conjunctions, ambiguous

Do not use conjunctions such as *and* and *or* ambiguously, which can cause misinterpretation.

Example: You can respond to the message by entering EXIT, which causes an error condition, and a branch to the EOF label specified in the ACCEPT statement.

Possible misinterpretation: You can respond to the message both by entering EXIT, which causes an EOF error condition, and by branching to the EOF label specified in the ACCEPT statement.

Intended meaning: You can respond to the message by entering EXIT, which causes an EOF error condition. The EOF error condition causes a branch to the EOF label if one is specified in the ACCEPT statement.

Consistency of terms

Use consistent terminology. Always refer to the same object with the same term. For example, do not write *system reset* in one part of a document and *warm boot* in another.

Continual, continuous

Use *continual* to mean repeated at frequent intervals. Use *continuous* to mean uninterrupted.

Contractions

Contractions are informal and conversational. Use contractions only where informality is acceptable, such as in communications and marketing material.

Example: *Here's* an exciting opportunity for everyone *who's* interested in stretch assignments.

Although HPE Brand Marketing encourages informal language, it's important to consider your audience and subject matter.

In technical documentation, contractions are acceptable only in a direct quote and in the commonly used heading "What's new." Do not use contractions in formal writing such as legal documents and proposals.

See also: [Writing tone](#)

Cross-references

Cross-references are useful only when they point to relevant material. Always indicate the nature of the material being referenced.

Use *see* instead of *refer to*. In a sentence, begin with a description of what can be found at the referenced location. A short sentence, however, may begin with *see*.

Examples

For descriptions of the configurable jumpers, see Chapter 4, "System board jumpers."

See the QuickSpecs for details.

Cross-references to other documents

When cross-referencing other documents, capitalize the title as it appears in the referenced document. Include the document part number if one is available. Put the title in italics.

Example: For more information, see the *HPE ProLiant MicroServer Reference Guide*.

Before linking to an online document, consider the life cycle of the document and stability of the webpage.

When referring to a document generically, use lowercase.

Example: See the user guide that came with your product.

For references to specific content in other documents, use only the document title. Do not include a chapter or page number, section title, or heading since these often change from one version to the next.

Cross-references within a document

For references to text in the same document:

- If your app doesn't support automated references, use quotation marks with the name of a chapter, section, appendix, or other section.

Example: See Chapter 3, "Storage options."

- Do not use quotation marks for a reference identified only with a number or letter.

Example: For a short list, see Chapter 3. For the complete list, see Appendix B.

- Do not include page numbers in a cross-reference if not done automatically by your app.
- Avoid the words *above*, *below*, *earlier*, or *later* as pointers to information. Be specific when referencing another chapter, section, graphic, table, or appendix.

Cross-references in glossaries

Use *See* if you are not supplying a definition for the current entry and you are referring the reader to another term that is similar to the one you are defining.

Example: See disk cache, cache memory

Use *See* to refer from an acronym to the spelled-out form or from the spelled-out form to the acronym.

Example: Certified Systems Engineer. See CSE

Use *See also* if you are supplying a definition in the entry and you also want the reader to refer to another glossary entry.

Example: Timesharing. A method of allocating computer time in which each process gets an equal amount of time in turn. See *also* real-time processing

Cross-references in indexes

Use *see* when referring the reader to another term in the index.

Example: memory modules. See DIMMs

Use *see* to cross-reference a synonym.

Example: thumb drive. See flash drive

Use *see also* to refer to a related index entry.

Example: error codes, 14. See *also* error messages

Ctrl-x, Ctrl+x

See: **Keys pressed simultaneously**

Culture

See: **Life Inside the Element**

Currency

Use numerals with a symbol for currency, whether isolated or in a sentence.

Examples: \$250, £500, €200

For thousands, use all numerals or abbreviate *thousand* with an uppercase *K*. Do not insert a space between the numeral and the abbreviation.

Examples: \$350,000, \$350K

For millions and above, use a mixture of numerals and spelled-out or abbreviated numbers.

Examples: \$3 million, \$3M

For the dollar monetary unit, include the country abbreviation for non-US currency.

Examples: CAD\$500, Mex\$6000, NZ\$600

For standard codes for international currencies, see the [International Organization for Standardization \(ISO 4217\)](#).

Cyber terms

Common cyber terms are typically one word.

Examples: cyberattack, cybercafé, cybercitizen, cybercrime, cybercriminal, cybersafety, cybersecurity, cyberspace, cyberthreat

When in doubt, consult the [Merriam-Webster](#) dictionary. If a term isn't listed as one word, write it as two words.

You can also search for recently used cyber terms on HPE.com. Terms often written as two words on our external site currently include: cyber defense, cyber recovery, cyber resilience.

When a cyber term is part of a proper noun, write it however it appears in the name.

Example: Institute for Cyber Security at UTSA

Danger alert

See: [Alert text](#)

Dashes

The two types of dashes are the em dash (—), which is the long one, and the en dash (–), which is the short one. A hyphen (-) is not a dash and should never be used as one.

Em dash

Use em dashes—without a space before or after—in the following instances:

- To provide a longer pause than a comma indicates

Example: Review the examples for voice and style—not for technical accuracy.

- To set apart a phrase from surrounding text for clarity

Example: We added two paid holidays—a company holiday and a floating holiday of your choosing—for 13 total per year.

- To separate a list item from its run-in discussion as an alternative to using colons

Example

The table includes the following columns:

- **Status**—Displays icons that show if a migration succeeded or failed
- **Time**—Lists the date and time of the migration step

When en dashes are used for bullets, consider using colons instead of em dashes to separate the text.

Example

The table includes the following columns:

- **Status:** Displays icons that show if a migration succeeded or failed
- **Time:** Lists the date and time of the migration step

En dash

Use an en dash in the following instances:

- In a range of numbers or time frames
Examples: 10–20 characters, July–August
- In a negative number
Example: –30°C
- As a subtraction (minus) sign with a space before and after the dash
Example: °C = (°F – 32) x 5/9

When a compound adjective includes an item made up of multiple words, use an en dash instead of a hyphen, as in these examples:

- **Hyphen:** The award-winning team members live out our culture beliefs.
- **En dash:** The Culture Award–winning team members put our beliefs into action.

An en dash is also used to express conflict, direction, or connection between groups or concepts, as in these examples:

- **Conflict:** The stop–start debate continues on the planning team.
- **Direction:** Their customer visits followed an east–west trajectory.
- **Connection:** The events took place in the Spring–Woodlands–Conroe area.

Do not use an en dash in code or command lines. Use a hyphen so the user can copy and paste the code or command.

See also: [Hyphen](#); [Numbers, ranges](#)

Data, datum

Use the term *data* for both singular and plural forms with the singular verb form. Do not use *datum*.

Example: The data collected from the surveys is combined.

Data center

Write *data center* as two words, except when it appears as one word in a product or service name.

Example: The data center is closing in November.

Exception example: HPE Datacenter Care

Dates

For all audiences, use the *Month Day Year* format, for example May 1, 2025.

Day

In a date, the day is read and spoken as an ordinal number, but it is written as a cardinal number.

Correct: June 11, 2025

Incorrect: June 11th, 2025

Note: An ordinal number would only be used with the word *day* (for example, the 11th day of June) or if the month is excluded (for example, on Monday, the 11th).

Month and year

When writing the month and year without the day, do not use a comma. In a date, a comma is used only to distinguish between two sets of numerals.

Correct: July 2025

Incorrect: July, 2025

Always use four digits for the year. If the year is obvious, it can be omitted in most instances.

Example: Join us this Friday, December 15, to celebrate.

For month abbreviations, use three characters and no period: Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec.

Date ranges

Use an en dash to indicate a range of dates. If the range is within the same month, do not include spaces with the dash. If the range spans different months, include a space before and after the dash.

Examples: August 5–6; January 8 – February 12

Dates within a sentence

When writing the full date within a sentence, include a comma after the year.

Example: The event will be on March 3, 2025, in Madrid.

When writing the month and year only, do not include a comma unless the date is in an introductory clause.

Examples

The event will be held in March 2025 at the new site.

In March 2025, the event will be held at the new site.

To ensure that the day and month stay together on the same line, insert a nonbreaking space between them.

Numeric dates

Do not use numeric dates for a global audience. Spelling out the month avoids misinterpretation.

Numeric dates are acceptable when writing informally for a US audience.

Example: 10/1/2025

In a list, you might want to use precede one-digit months and days with a zero to keep them uniform.

Example

04/07/2025

09/25/2025

12/01/2025

Degrees of an angle

Use the degree symbol (°) to refer to degrees of an angle.

Correct: Pulling out the feet on the keyboard base angles the keyboard an extra 15°.

Incorrect: Pulling out the feet on the keyboard base angles the keyboard an extra 15 degrees.

Degrees of temperature

Use the degree symbol (°) in a specific temperature, for example: 25°C (68°F). Do not insert a space between the numeral and the degree symbol.

Do not use the symbol without a numeral.

Correct: The temperatures are measured in degrees Celsius.

Incorrect: The temperatures are measured in °C.

Detail, amount of

Focus on including need-to-know information rather than nice-to-know information.

For example, if your objective is to explain how to install a memory board, do not provide a functional description of the board. Instead, give the installation instructions and include helpful details.

The following example lacks helpful detail:

Example: Locate option slot 2 on the left side of the system unit.

Adding the statement, “Positioning yourself in front of the system unit,” immediately orients the reader:

Example: Positioning yourself in front of the system unit, locate option slot 2 on the left side of the unit.

Dialog box

Identify a dialog box as such on the first usage. In subsequent references, you may drop the term *dialog box*.

Example

In the Word Options dialog box, select **Display**. (first)

In Word Options, select **Customize Ribbon**. (subsequent)

Dialog, dialogue

Use *dialog* only in the term *dialog box*, which refers to communication between a user and a system.

Use *dialogue* in reference to a conversation between people or between entities representing people (for example, a dialogue between two companies).

Displays

The verb *displays* is a transitive verb and requires an object.

Correct: The application displays the confirmation message.

Incorrect: The confirmation message displays.

Use the verb form *is displayed* to describe the invocation of a window or dialog box. Alternatively, use the word *appears*, which would put the statement in the active voice.

Examples

The Open Style dialog box is displayed.

The Open Style dialog box appears.

See also: [Active voice](#); [Appears](#)

Double-click, double-tap

Use the term *double-click* to describe quickly pressing and releasing a mouse button twice without moving the mouse. Use the term *double-tap* to describe tapping a touch screen twice to select an item.

See also: [Click, press, tap](#)

Drag, drag-and-drop

Use the term *drag* to describe moving an object across a computer screen using a tool such as a mouse. Do not write *click and drag*.

Example: Drag the folder to the desktop.

Use *drag-and-drop* as an adjective, not as a verb.

Example: You can attach files using the drag-and-drop method.

See also: [Click, press, tap](#)

Drop-down, pull-down

The term *drop-down* is used as an adjective only, not a noun. The term is always hyphenated.

Example: Select your printer from the drop-down list.

Do not use the term *pull-down*.

Due to, because of, since

See: [Because of, due to, since](#)

e-terms

- Write *email* without a hyphen.
- Hyphenate other e-terms and use a lowercase e, even when written in title case.

Examples: e-business, e-commerce, e-Business Continues to Grow

- Avoid using an e-term at the beginning of a sentence.
- If an e-term is a proper noun, maintain the style it uses.
- Avoid using camel case for generic e-terms, for example: eBusiness.

Either/or, neither/nor

When you list two alternatives in a format that includes *or*, you can insert *either* at the beginning of the list so the reader knows to expect an alternative.

Example: Copy the file either to a different folder or to an encrypted USB drive.

Follow the same format if you are using the *neither/nor* format.

Example: Neither file A nor file B should be removed from the SharePoint site.

Use *either/or* and *neither/nor* only to specify two options.

Correct: Either a or b

Incorrect: Either a or b or c

To avoid having to rewrite the sentence if the number of alternatives changes, avoid *either/or* and *neither/nor* constructions.

Ellipsis

Avoid using an ellipsis (...) to indicate a pause unless you are writing a script. Use ellipses in a code example, in a number series, or in a quote to represent an omission.

See also: [Ellipsis in a series of numbers](#)

Elusive, illusive

Elusive means not easily grasped or defined. *Illusive* means imaginary.

Emphasis (highlighting)

The styles approved by the Global Brand team for emphasizing text are *italics* and **bold**. Choose either style, not both, for the same text.

Examples

Back up your hard drive *before* beginning the next operation.

After deleting the partition, you **cannot recover the data** it contained.

Use emphasis sparingly, or it will lose its effect.

All caps should not be used to emphasize words within a sentence, which can be interpreted as “shouting.”

Avoid emphasizing words like *no*, *not*, *always*, *must*, and *never* (see also: [Absolute terms](#)).

Italics

Use italicized text in these instances:

- When referring to a book or document by its complete title
- For the name of a publication, such as *CRN Magazine*
- To indicate a replaceable path or term in a command

Example: Execute `http://hostname.domain:8088/login.htm`

- To identify a letter as a letter and a word as a word (quotation marks being another option)

Example: Use a lowercase *p* to abbreviate the word *page*.

Bold

Use bold text in these instances:

- For strong emphasis of a word or phrase
- For actions in a procedure (for example, click **OK**)
- To differentiate listed items from their description (optional)

Employees, team members

In most cases, refer to HPE employees as *team members*. The term *employee* is used where legally required or recommended, most notably within HR.

See also: [Managers, people leaders](#)

End notes

Avoid using end notes. Use footnotes instead.

End user, end-user

Use *end user* as a noun and *end-user* as an adjective.

Examples

End users are responsible for registering their products. (noun)

Product registration is an end-user responsibility. (adjective)

In most cases, the shorter term *user* is a better choice.

Ensure, insure, assure

Ensure means to guarantee, or to make certain.

Example: To ensure the highest quality, schedule weekly inspections.

Instead of using *ensure* to mean make certain, use *be sure* or *make sure* to aid in translation.

Examples

Be sure to record the serial number.

Make sure you have your passport.

Insure means to cover with insurance.

Example: You should insure your property against theft.

Assure means to convince someone of something.

Example: I assure you that we will meet the deadline.

IMPORTANT: In some contexts, *assure* or *ensure* could establish a guarantee or be legally binding, so use these terms carefully.

Enter

Use *enter* to instruct users to perform the following actions:

- Issue commands from the keyboard.

Example: Enter the command to restart your computer.

- Insert text into fields or on the command line.

Example: Enter your password at the password prompt.

Examples

Good examples are an effective way to illustrate or reinforce information. Follow these guidelines when writing examples:

- Create examples that are simple and straightforward.
- Avoid illustrating multiple points in one example when several examples would be more effective.

- Describe any restrictions or exceptions to what the example is illustrating.
- Avoid using culture-specific references. Never use national, racial, religious, sexist, or other stereotypes in examples.
- Use fictional names, addresses, and phone numbers. In North America, the phone numbers 555-0100 through 555-0199 are reserved for fictional references to phone numbers.

Exclamation point

Do not use an exclamation point as end punctuation in technical writing.

In other types of writing, use exclamation points sparingly. Avoid two exclamatory statements in a row, and never use double exclamation points.

Farther, further

Farther refers to physical distance. *Further* means additional, continued, or to a greater degree.

Fewer, less

See: [Less, fewer](#)

Figures

See: [Graphics](#)

Fiscal reference

When referring to the fiscal year, the preferred format is FY22. When including the quarter, the preferred format is Q3 FY22. For a reference to a fiscal year half, the preferred format is 1H FY22.

Footnotes

A footnote is an explanatory note placed at the bottom of a page or an object such as a table. Two types of reference marks signal the presence of footnotes—symbols (such as the asterisk) or superscript numerals (alternatively, superscript letters).

Use the following guidelines when creating footnotes:

- Include important or essential information in the body text, not in a footnote.
- When two footnotes apply to the same text, use two reference marks separated by a comma.
- Place the reference mark in the body text as follows:

- After a period if the footnote applies to the entire sentence
- Before a period if the footnote applies only to the last phrase of the sentence

Note: Preferably, restructure the sentence so the referenced phrase is at the beginning.

- After a semicolon or comma
- Before a dash or colon
- After a closing parenthesis if the footnote relates to the preceding text as well as the parenthetical text
- Before a closing parenthesis if the footnote relates only to the parenthetical text

See also: [Table notes and footnotes](#)

Gender-neutral language

See: [Inclusive language](#)

Glossary and glossary entries

See: [Glossaries](#)

Greater than (>)

In tables, use the right angle bracket (>) to signify greater than when referring to quantities and measurements. Put a space between the angle bracket and the number it refers to.

Example: > 20

In body text, do not use the angle bracket. Instead, write out *greater than*.

See also: [Less than \(<\)](#); [Angle brackets \(< >\)](#)

Headlines and headings

Use sentence case for all headlines and headings, as well as subtitles, subheads, table headings, etc.

The only end punctuation would be a question mark or exclamation point. Periods are used only if two separate statements are included, such as in a headline like “Build relationships. Be well.”

Use a colon at the end of an inline heading only, never at the end of a stand-alone heading.

Example

Audience: All team members and various external audiences

Audience

All team members and various external audiences

Healthcare

One word is the preferred form for *healthcare*.

Help

When referring to help files or a help screen, use the same capitalization used by the interface.

Use a capital *H* when the word *Help* follows the name of a product or when writing about an object labeled on the screen.

Examples

If you still have questions, see Microsoft Help.

To get help on a particular topic, select from the Help menu.

Home page

Write *home page* as two words.

Hot key

See: [Keys pressed simultaneously](#)

HPE logo

As the keystone of the our brand identity and one of our most important pieces of intellectual property, the HPE logo must be protected through proper use. See [HPE Brand Central](#) for guidelines.

Hyperconverged

Write *hyperconverged* as one word.

Hyphen

A hyphen (-) can be used to join the separate parts of a compound word. A compound word is made up of two or more words that express a single idea. Compound words can be permanent or temporary.

Permanent compounds are always hyphenated and shown with hyphens in dictionaries. If you're unsure whether a term is a permanent compound, consult [Merriam-Webster](#).

Temporary compounds are words used together for a specific purpose and are hyphenated when needed, usually to prevent ambiguity.

Example

English-language learners (people who are learning English)

English language learners (English people who are learning languages)

Compounds made up of a single letter and a noun or participle are hyphenated.

Examples: x-axis, s-register, d-type, y-shaped

Hyphen, compound adjectives

A temporary compound adjective is hyphenated before but not after a noun.

Example

The website has a state-of-the-art design.

The website design is state of the art.

A permanent compound adjective is hyphenated before and after a noun.

Example

We have a cost-effective solution.

Our solution is cost-effective.

Omit the hyphen if the first word in a compound adjective is an adverb ending in *ly*.

Examples: a highly recommended procedure, a generally accepted practice

Omit the hyphen if the first word in a compound adjective is a comparative or superlative, such as *more*, *less*, *most*, or *least*.

Examples: a more recent version, a less desirable option, the most popular sites, the least experienced person

If an item in the compound adjective is made up of multiple words, use an en dash instead of a hyphen.

Hyphen, HPE

See: [Hyphens with the company name](#)

Hyphen, numbers

Do not use a hyphen to form a compound adjective containing a numeral and a unit of measurement.

Example: The 1 GB hard drive provides a 150 Mb/s data transfer rate with an average access time of less than 100 ms.

When writing fractions, use a hyphen to separate the numerator from the denominator.

Example: One-third of the space is reserved.

See also: **Numbers, ranges**

Hyphen, prefixes

Generally, compounds formed with prefixes or combining forms are not hyphenated.

Examples: nonissue, preinstalled, rerouted, subsection, multiprocessor

When the same vowel ends the prefix and begins the root word, a hyphen is sometimes but not always used, so check **Merriam-Webster** for correct usage.

Example: de-emphasize, reenergize

In the following cases, use a hyphen:

- To avoid ambiguity between similar words with different meanings

Examples: pre-position, preposition; re-treat, retreat; re-creation, recreation; sub-version, subversion

- Before a capitalized word or a numeral

Examples: sub-Saharan, pre-2000

- Before a hyphenated term used as an adjective

Example: non-hot-plug device

- When prefixes are isolated from the root word (suspensive hyphen)

Example: pre- and post-test

See also: **Multi-**

Hyphen, spellcheckers

Incorrect hyphen use is rarely flagged by spellcheckers. For example, if you use hyphens in the following words that should not be hyphenated, they probably will not be flagged: biweekly, coworker, midyear, multinational, nonessential, presubmit, reenergize, semimonthly, submenu.

If, whether

If denotes possibility and means “in the event that.” It is also used to introduce a condition.

Whether is used with alternatives and introduces a noun clause. Use *whether* when the use of *if* would result in ambiguity. In most cases, the alternative “or not” is implied and should be omitted.

Correct: *If* the server crashes, the warranty will cover the damages.

Incorrect: Determine *if* the server is under warranty.

Correct: Let Janice know *whether* Lee is attending the seminar.

Incorrect: Let Janice know *if* Lee is attending the seminar.

Important notes

See: [Alert text](#)

In to, into

Into implies movement from the outside to the inside. For example, you do not log *into* a system; you log *in to* a system.

Inclusive language

A core behavior of HPE's belief in being a force for good is being unconditionally inclusive, and language plays a big part. We must be considerate of all people in our writing, making sure the language is free of discrimination, unconscious bias, and stereotypes. In general:

- **Avoid making assumptions.** Be careful not to assume anyone's race, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, marital or family relationships, etc.
- **Avoid slang, idioms, and figures of speech.** Some commonly used phrases can be offensive, as well as unclear to a global audience. So unless you're 100% sure that a phrase is inclusive and globally understood, research its origin and usage before deciding whether to use it.

Examples: Call a spade a spade, circle the wagons, hold down the fort, long time no see, mumbo jumbo, no can do, paddy wagon, peanut gallery, sold down the river, tipping point

Use the following list as a general guide in replacing terms to make language inclusive. Every potentially insensitive or offensive term would be impossible to include, so the list contains some of the more commonly used terms. In some cases, the most appropriate replacement term will depend on context.

Table 3: Inclusive terms

Instead of	Write this	Or this
Abort	Terminate	End, close, stop
Black box	Closed box	Hidden data, closed and proprietary components
Black box (adj)	Opaque	Hidden, invisible
Black Friday	Cyber Friday	
Black hole, blackholed	abyss, dropped without notification	
Black mark	Discredit	Blemish, censure
Black market	Illicit market	Illegal market, shadow economy
Blackball	Exclude	Reject
Black-hat hacker	Unethical hacker	Computer criminal, malicious hacker
Blacklist, blacklisted	Deny list, denied	Block list, exclude list, excluded
Cakewalk	Easy	A cinch
Crazy	(Depends on context)	Baffling, bizarre, hectic, chaotic, ridiculous, unreasonable, unusual, wild, etc.
Cripple	Disable	Impede, slow down, immobilize
Disabled, handicapped	Person with a disability	

Instead of	Write this	Or this
Dummy value	Placeholder value	Sample value
Elderly	Older	
Enslaved	Controlled	Taken over
Execute (technical context)	Run	Start
Grandfathering, grandfather clause, grandfathered	Legacy, legacy clause, exempted	Acquired rights clause
Gray list	Provisional list	
Gray market	Unofficial market	Unauthorized distribution channel
Gyp	Cheat	Defraud, swindle
Hangs	Stops responding	
Kill	Terminate	End, close, stop
Master-slave*	Primary-secondary	Conductor-member, leader-follower, primary-replica, source-replica, coordinator-worker, writer-reader, parent-helper, active-standby
Mobility master	Mobility conductor	
Sanity check	Verification check	Quick check
Senior citizens	Older adults	
Senior moment	Memory lapse	Absentmindedness
Slave away	Work very hard	Toil, labor
Third-world countries	Developing nations	
White box (adj)	Clear	Viewed, visible
White list, whitelisted	Allow list, allowed	Safe list, approved
White-glove	Premiere service/support	Full-service, top-level, personalized
White-hat hacker	Ethical hacker	

**Master* is acceptable when used with educational degrees and proficiency levels in external programs.

Gender language

For indefinite pronouns, use a plural pronoun instead of gender-specific language.

Correct: Applicants will be notified if *their* submissions are accepted.

Incorrect: Each applicant will be notified if *his or her* submission is accepted.

Use a plural pronoun even if the subject is singular.

Examples

The first person to respond will be asked if *they* want to be the leader.

If another person asks to attend, kindly tell *them* all the seats are filled.

Each participant must provide *their* own materials.

Use gender-specific language only when definite pronouns are required, such as in a fictitious scenario.

Example: Ozzie was pleased with his presentation, but he was disappointed that his leader was unable to attend. How might he share his achievement with her?

Table 4: Gender-neutral terms

Instead of	Write
Businessman/woman	Business professional, businessperson
Chairman/woman	Chair, chairperson
Freshman	First-year student
Husband, wife	Spouse, partner
Mankind	Humanity, people
Man-made	Manufactured, synthetic
Manpower	Workforce, personnel, staff
Mans	Operates, staffs
Mother, father	Parent
Opposite sex	Different sex
Salesman/woman	Salesperson, sales representative, sales rep
Sexual preference/identity	Sexual orientation

Race and ethnicity

Both “race” and “ethnicity” are social constructs used to categorize and describe groups. Race defines someone by their skin color and other attributes. Ethnicity often refers to nationality, religion, language, and culture.

Black and African American

Although preference varies among people in the US, Black is typically the more appropriate term. It describes race more broadly, whereas African American refers to a specific ethnic group of Black people. You might use “Black and African American” in global writing. Always write Black with an initial cap in references to race.

Hispanic and Latino

Hispanic refers to native speakers of Spanish or people who have Spanish-speaking ancestry. For people of Latin American origin or ancestry, Latino/Latina are most commonly used and preferred, although Latinx is sometimes used in the US.

Because preference varies from person to person, include both where appropriate, for example: Hispanic and Latino team members.

Asian

Asian can refer to Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, and people who are descended from countries in the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent. Desi refers to people whose cultural and ethnic identity are related to the Indian subcontinent and the diaspora.

Be specific when possible. For example, when referring to team members from South Korea, instead of writing “Asian” use “South Korean.” You might refer to the “Asian community” or to “Asian team members,” but don’t use “Asians” by itself.

Minorities

Avoid these terms: minorities, marginalized communities, disadvantaged communities, or communities of color. Instead, be specific about the group you're referencing, for example: students in need, the Latino community in L.A., indigenous peoples in Australia.

Other inclusive language guidelines

Disabilities

Use the term "people with disabilities." Don't use: disabled, differently abled, special needs, or retarded. Use "learning disabilities," not "learning differences."

Don't describe a person with a disability as: a victim, stricken, poor, or unfortunate. Include mention of a person's disability only if it's critical to the context.

LGBTQ+

Use the LGBTQ+ acronym, which stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer. The plus sign indicates inclusion of everyone in the gender and sexually expansive community.

When writing about a transgender individual, be sure to use their correct name and pronouns, not those of their previously identified gender. If you are unsure of someone's preferred pronouns, ask.

For LGBTQ+ terminology, see the [GLAAD Media Reference Guide](#).

Veterans

Don't assume or imply whether a veteran has been involved in direct combat or warfare.

Retired members of the U.S. armed forces may continue to use their rank socially. If you're unsure about the use of a rank or title, ask the veteran for their preference. Capitalize a military rank when used as a formal title before a veteran's name.

Scenarios

When writing a fictitious scenario, use names that reflect different cultures, and avoid stereotypes in job roles.

Disclaimers

The following disclaimers are recommended for external HPE portals and product documentation.

Level 1: Portals

Hewlett Packard Enterprise believes in being unconditionally inclusive. Efforts to replace noninclusive terms in our active products are ongoing.

Level 2: General statement for documentation front matter

Hewlett Packard Enterprise believes in being unconditionally inclusive. Terms in this document that are recognized as offensive or noninclusive are used only for consistency with the product. When the product is updated to remove the terms, this document will also be updated.

Level 3: Note within documentation where the noninclusive term first occurs

Note: Hewlett Packard Enterprise believes in being unconditionally inclusive. This topic contains the term *<insert term here>*, which is recognized as offensive or noninclusive and is used only for consistency with the product. When the product is updated to remove the term, this topic will also be updated.

Inclusive images

Select images and audio for your content that reflect inclusion.

- Show diversity as much as possible, using images that reflect a wide mix of people (race, gender, age, etc.) in different environments.
- Look for images that showcase a range of skin tones across demographics, not just races.
- When using audio, try to include multiple and diverse accents.
- Avoid stereotypes, for example:
 - Don't always show male doctors and female nurses
 - In content about mental health, don't always show sad-looking people or women.
- Focus on faces. For example, when representing people with disabilities, frame the person instead of their disability by focusing on their face, not things like hearing aids or wheelchairs.
- Don't represent a group using a stereotypical symbol, for example, a sombrero to represent Latino culture or high heels to represent women.
- Make sure images accurately reflect the content. Avoid mistakes like using a Japanese versus Chinese pagoda by verifying the image with someone from that culture.

Indexes and index entries

See: [Indexes](#)

Insure, ensure, assure

See: [Ensure, insure, assure](#)

Internet

Write *internet* in lowercase.

Italics

See: [Emphasis](#)

Its, it's

The word *its* is the possessive form of the pronoun *it*. The word *it's* is a contraction for *it is* and *it has*.

See also: [Apostrophes, possessive case of indefinite pronouns; Contractions](#)

Jargon

Jargon is informal terminology used by a particular group that might not be understood by others. For example, an engineer might use "hood ornament" to mean the label on a system unit mass storage device cage.

Avoid jargon, especially in writing for a global audience. When translated, jargon could take on a negative, misleading, or inaccurate meaning.

If you feel that certain jargon is appropriate for your audience, put the term in quotation marks on the first use. Consider including the more standard term in parentheses.

Examples

The latches are the “fall-through” type.

The website is “404-compliant” (has been completely removed from the internet).

See also: **Slang**

Keys

When instructing the reader which key to press, use the name of the key followed by the word *key* on the first use. Thereafter, you can use just the name of the key. Spell the name as it appears on the key.

Example

Press the Enter key. (first use)

Press Enter. (subsequent use)

Use the verb *press* when referring to keys. Do not use *depress* or *hit*.

Example: Press the Esc key.

Use lowercase words for keys not labeled on the keyboard.

Example: Press the spacebar at the end of the URL.

For keys represented by a symbol, use lowercase words followed by the symbol in parentheses. When keys are in a list, put the symbol first and the word in parentheses.

Example: Precede the command name with an ampersand (&).

Do not use the name of a key as a verb.

Correct: Press the Tab key to move to the next column.

Incorrect: Tab to the next column.

Match the case for user-defined keys.

Example: Press the key you have defined as APPEND.

See also: **Press, press and hold**

Keys pressed simultaneously

When writing about keys pressed simultaneously, use the appropriate symbol for the environment you are documenting:

- + (plus sign) in a Microsoft Windows environment
- – (minus sign) in a UNIX environment
- – (minus sign) in a Linux environment
- / (forward slash) in an OpenVMS environment

In a mixed environment, choose one method and use it consistently.

If you use a structured authoring system, mark up the combination of keys using the key combination markup. Do not insert a symbol between keys.

Latin abbreviations

Common Latin abbreviations may be used at the writer’s discretion.

Table 5: Common Latin abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning	Comma use
etc.	and so forth	always preceded by a comma
e.g.	for example	always followed by a comma
i.e.	that is	always followed by a comma

Examples

All the objects in our solar system (planets, asteroids, etc.) orbit the sun.

The rocky planets (e.g., Mercury) are closest to the sun.

The rocky planets (i.e., Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars) are closest to the sun.

For less common Latin abbreviations, it's preferable to write out the English equivalent.

Table 6: English equivalent for Latin abbreviations

Instead of:	Consider:
ca.	about, approximately
et al.	and others
cf.	compare
viz.	namely
ibid.	the same

See also: **Table 7: Preferred plural for Latin nouns**

Less than (<)

In tables, use the left angle bracket (<) to signify *less than* when referring to quantities and measurements. Put a space between the angle bracket and the number.

Example: < 20

In body text, do not use the angle bracket. Instead, write out *less than*.

Example: The 2 GB hard drive has an average access time of less than 200 ms.

See also: **Angle brackets (< >); Greater than (>)**

Less, fewer

Use *less* for singular nouns and *fewer* for plural nouns.

Example: less writing, fewer words

Time, money, distance, and weight are single units, so they use *less*.

Examples

I'll have the slides done in less than 4 hours.

We have less than \$10,000 in the travel budget.

The campus is less than 50 miles from my home.

The component weighs less than 2 lb.

Life Inside the Element

The expression of HPE's culture is "Life Inside the Element." Always spell it out and use initial caps except for the word *the*.

To find information on the language used to describe the beliefs and behaviors associated with our culture, see [Life Inside the Element](#).

Like, as

See: [As, like](#)

Links

Unless you're writing for print, link descriptive text rather than web or email addresses.

Instead of: If you have questions, please email us at cdockers@hpe.com.

Write: If you have questions, please [contact us](#).

In a sentence, link the text that's most important. Readers shouldn't have to go past the link to find out what it's for and then back up to click it.

Instead of: [See](#) the myITsupport article on how to upgrade Windows.

Write: See the myITsupport article on [how to upgrade Windows](#).

Avoid linking an excessive amount of text. In most cases, only the main word or words should be linked, not entire sentences.

Instead of: [Register for the webcast and presubmit your questions](#).

Write: [Register for the webcast](#) and presubmit your questions.

See also: [Click here, click to; URLs](#)

Lists

Use lists to clarify, emphasize, and organize information. Lists improve visual impact and enhance comprehension.

Items in a list can be ordered or unordered. Lists can be within a paragraph, in vertical form, or in a table.

One item does not constitute a list, so a list should contain at least two items.

Parallel structure in lists

Because items in a list are alike in function, make them parallel in construction. For all items in a list, follow these guidelines:

- Begin with the same part of speech, such as beginning each item with a noun or a verb.
- Use the same verb tense (past, present, or future).
- Write in a consistent voice (active or passive).
- Use the same grammatical form, such as all complete sentences or all noun phrases.
- Use consistent punctuation for each list.
- Make list items similar in length where possible.

Correct

To minimize the file size of a presentation:

- Delete extra sets of slide masters.
- Remove unnecessary backup slides.
- Save photos as pictures and reinsert them.

Incorrect

To minimize the file size of a presentation, delete:

- Extra sets of slide masters
- Unnecessary backup slides
- Consider saving all the photos as pictures and reinserting them.

Inline (embedded) lists

An inline list is a list of items within a sentence. Keep inline lists simple, or use a vertical list instead.

Use a colon or an em dash before an inline list. Lowercase the first item unless it's a proper noun.

Example: Decide which level of access is needed: owner, administrator, or visitor.

Do not use a colon or em dash when a verb or preposition precedes an inline list.

Example: The access levels to choose from *are* owner, administrator, and visitor.

Separate items in an inline list with commas. If any of the items contain commas, separate them with semicolons.

Example: The new site has what you need—a session calendar; recordings, slides, and handouts from previous sessions; and a discussion board.

For steps or options containing more than a few words, precede each item with a numeral or lowercase letter in parentheses. Do not include a period.

Example: If you encounter a problem, you can (a) consult the troubleshooting guide, (b) chat with an agent online, or (c) email your authorized service provider.

See also: **Comma, series; Semicolon**

Vertical lists

Vertical lists are preferable to inline lists in many cases because they are quicker to comprehend.

Use concise wording for the items in a list. Except for complete sentences, avoid beginning the items with articles (a, an, the).

Example

You'll find the following resources:

- Onboarding guidelines
- Training calendar
- List of regional contacts

Capitalization of vertical lists

Capitalize the first letter of the first word in each item, even if the items are incomplete sentences. If a listed item begins with a numeral, treat the numeral as the first word and do not capitalize the word that follows it. Retain the case for items that are case-sensitive.

Example

These items are attached:

- Image files
- 10 design options
- iTunes media

Lead-in text for vertical lists

For content that will be translated, lead-in text should be in the form of a complete sentence. Otherwise, a sentence fragment is acceptable. In most cases, end the lead-in text with a colon.

Example

The new system has the following major benefits:

- Intuitive interface
- Advanced search functionality

If a heading sufficiently identifies the content in the vertical list, it is unnecessary to include lead-in text. For example:

Required courses

- Presenting Data Visually
- Presenting Visual Messages to Executives

See also: **Procedure lead-in text**

Unordered (bulleted) lists

Use an unordered list, commonly called a bulleted list, when the sequence of the items has no significance.

Use the appropriate style for bullet levels provided by your application or template.

Note: Bullets are generally used for the first level, but because examples are indented in this guide, the first level in a bulleted example uses second-level formatting.

Subordination of items in a list

Minimize the number of levels because readers quickly get lost in hierarchies. Lists should not have more than two levels in most cases.

Example

Choose from the following image resources:

- Iconography
 - Marketing icons
 - Technical icons
- Illustrations
- Photography

Ordered (numbered) lists

Use an ordered list to show the following types of information:

- Sequence of events
- Order of importance

Ordering a list numerically is preferred to alphabetically because alphabetic items have to be reordered if the content is translated.

See also: **Procedure**

Punctuation in vertical lists

Use a period after complete sentences in listed items. Do not use a period if the items are single words, phrases, or sentence fragments.

Use consistent punctuation within a list. Avoid combining both fragments and sentences in a list.

Correct

An SMP Universal migration requires the following components:

- **Application station**—Computer from which the migration is set up and performed
- **Source server**—Physical source server to be migrated
- **Destination server**—Physical server to which the source server is migrated

Incorrect

An SMP Universal migration requires the following components:

- **Application station**—Computer from which the migration is set up and performed. For more information about requirements, see the user guide.
- **Source server**—Physical source server to be migrated
- **Destination server**—Physical server to which the source server is migrated

If you cannot avoid combining fragments and sentences, end all items in the list with a period.

Do not connect listed items with conjunctions or commas.

Correct

A course module contains three components:

- Objectives
- Topics
- Learning check

Incorrect

A course module contains three components:

- Objectives,
- Topics, and
- Learning check

Logon, login, logoff, logout

When writing about Microsoft Windows operating systems, use two words when you use log on (or log off) as a verb. Use one word when you use logon (or logoff) as a noun or adjective.

When writing about HPE CloudSystem, UNIX, Linux, and OpenVMS operating systems, use two words when you use *log in* (or *log out*) as a verb. Use one word when you use *login* (or *logout*) as a noun or adjective.

In a multi-OS environment, choose one set of terms and use it consistently.

Examples

Log in to the system as administrator and add a user.

Use your administrator login and change the configuration settings.

Managers, people leaders

In most cases, refer to people managers at HPE as *people leaders* or *leaders*. The term *manager* is used where legally required or recommended, most notably within HR.

See also: [Employees, team members](#)

May, might, can

See: [Can, may, might](#)

Media, medium

Use *media* for both singular and plural forms with the singular verb form. Do not use *medium*.

Correct: Her preferred *media* is a smartphone app.

Incorrect: Her preferred *medium* is a smartphone app.

Correct: The *media*, which *includes* two CDs and a DVD, *is* packaged in protective material.

Incorrect: The *media*, which *include* two CDs and a DVD, *are* packaged in protective material.

See also: [Verbs](#)

Menus

Use the verb *select* rather than *choose* when selecting from a menu.

Match the capitalization on the menu or menu items. The term *menu* is lowercase.

Example: From the File menu, select **Print**.

Metric and US measurements

If providing both metric and US measurements, provide the metric measurement first, followed by the US measurement in parentheses.

Might

See: [Can, may, might](#)

Modifiers

Place modifiers carefully; their position affects the meaning of a sentence.

Example

The program *only* reads the SYSTAT file but does not process it.

The program reads *only* the SYSTAT file, not the other configuration files.

Unnecessary modifiers

Avoid unnecessary or indefinite modifiers. For example, you can usually omit the following modifiers

without loss of meaning:

- Actively
- Actually
- Appropriate
- Associated
- Basically
- Currently
- Existing
- Fairly
- Just
- Much
- Properly
- Quite
- Rather
- Really
- Several
- Simply
- Suitable
- Very

Modifier strings

Before a noun, avoid a long string of modifiers or nouns used as adjectives.

Table 7: Examples of rewriting a long string of nouns

Instead of	Write
<i>System service entry point</i> descriptions	Entry point descriptions for system services
<i>Access control list entry structure</i> definitions	Structure definitions for entries in an access control list

Dangling modifiers

A dangling modifier occurs when the subject being modified does not appear in the sentence. Because the modifier is without a subject, it is considered to be “dangling.”

Correct: After tallying the scores, Jack announced the winner.

Incorrect: After tallying the scores, the winner was announced.

Money

See: [Currency](#)

More than, over

To avoid translation issues, use *more than* to denote quantity instead of using *over*, which can also denote position.

Instead of: She has *more than* five years of experience in healthcare.

Write: She has *over* five years of experience in healthcare.

Mouse

A *mouse* is a single pointing device. The plural is *mice*.

See also: [Pointing device](#)

Multi-

Derived from the independent word *multiple*, *multi-* is a combining form—a form of a word that appears only as part of another word.

Examples: multicloud, multicolor, multifunction, multilevel, multimedia, multitask

A hyphen is used only when *multi-* is combined with a word beginning with “i,” for example, multi-industry.

See also: [Hyphen, prefixes](#)

n, lowercase

See: [Variables and placeholders](#)

Neither, nor

See: [Either/or, neither/nor](#)

Nor, or

See: [And/or; Either/or, neither/nor](#)

Notes, notice alerts

See: [Alert text](#)

Nouns, singular and plural forms

Use a singular noun form instead of a plural noun form whenever possible.

Correct: To install a DIMM, perform the following steps.

Incorrect: To install DIMMs, perform the following steps.

Using nouns as verbs

Be careful not to use nouns as verbs, such as “office at home” to mean “work at home,” which is known as “verbing.” This can be especially problematic for ESL readers and translators.

Instances of verbing, however, can become so common over time that dictionaries begin including the verb form. To confirm whether a noun has been updated to include the verb form, consult [Merriam-Webster](#).

Numbers

Use numerals for the following:

- Numbers in units of measurement
- Cardinal and ordinal numbers 10 or greater

Examples: 10, 10th, 22, 22nd, 91, 91st

- References to specific numbered items

Examples: Figure 1, step 4, slot 3, page 7

For numbers that would normally be spelled out, you may use numerals in the following instances:

- In tables and graphics with limited space
- On slides and webpages to aid readability because numerals stand out more

See also: [Amount, number](#); [Comma, numbers](#); [Hyphen, numbers](#); [Units of measurement](#)

When to spell out numbers

Spell out numbers for the following:

- The numbers one through nine, including ordinals such as first, second, and third (except, if you choose, in tables and graphics with limited space or on slides and webpages)
- A number that begins a sentence, unless it is a unit of measurement—which always uses numerals, making it preferable to restructure the sentence so it does not begin with a numeral
- An approximate number (for example, almost one million readers)

See also: **Zero**; **Plurals of spelled-out numbers**

Mixing numerals and spelled-out numbers

If one number in a category requires a numeral, use numerals for all numbers in that category.

Example: from 8 to 10 hours (not from eight to 10 hours)

When two numbers in separate categories appear together, use a numeral for one and spell out the other one. If space is limited, use numerals for both and enclose the first one in parentheses

Examples: twelve 4 ft cables, (12) 4 ft cables

Negative numbers

Use an en dash instead of a hyphen for negative numbers.

Correct: –14 °F

Incorrect: -14 °F

Numbers, ranges

When giving a range of numbers, use the word *to* or *through*, or use an en dash without spaces.

Examples

He attended college from 2018 to 2022.

See pages 3 through 8 for more information.

The meeting is 3–5 p.m. on Monday.

Rows 47–59 have been revised.

When giving a range of numbers containing a negative number, use the word *to* instead of an en dash.

Correct: –14 °F to 131 °F

Incorrect: –14 °F–131 °F

To avoid ambiguity in a range that includes or excludes the end points of the range, use mathematical symbols such as \geq (greater than or equal to) and \leq (less than or equal to).

Example: 53 Hz \leq frequency < 82 Hz

Numbers in a series

In a series, repeat the abbreviation or symbol for a unit of measurement.

Examples

1200 MHz, 1400 MHz, or 1600 MHz

10% to 50%

In a range of years, use four-digit numerals.

Correct: 2007–2009

Incorrect: 2007–09, 2007 to 09

Decimal numbers

Place a 0 before decimal fractions of less than 1, as in 0.25.

Align columns of decimal fractions on the decimal point.

Example

Units sold	Unit price
500	\$0.50
27	\$4.75

Be consistent in decimal precision. Add trailing zeros if the other numbers are the same precision.

Correct: 0.100, 0.343, 0.750

Incorrect: 0.1, 0.343, 0.75

See also: [Fractions](#)

Double numbering

Do not use a numeral to repeat a spelled-out number, unless required in a legal document.

Correct: Remove the three screws from the rear panel.

Incorrect: Remove the three (3) screws from the rear panel.

Ellipsis in a series of numbers

In a horizontal series, insert the ellipsis symbol (using Unicode *U+2026* or the entity `…`). Include any required commas and mathematical signs both before and after the ellipsis. Use a space between the number and the ellipsis symbol, unless there is additional punctuation.

Examples

1 ... 8

1, 2, 3,...

In a vertical series, use three vertically aligned periods.

Example

003h

.

.

.

0050h

In a bit notation series, use only two periods and no leading or trailing spaces.

Example: <7..4>

Exponents

Indicate the exponent (power) of a number with a superscript numeral, as in 23³. Place the exponent inside end punctuation.

Fractions

Write fractions as decimals rather than using a numerator and denominator.

Correct: The new processor is 3.5 times faster than its predecessor.

Incorrect: The new processor is 3½ times faster than its predecessor.

Use numerals for fractions used with a unit of measurement.

Example: Slide the system cover toward you about 1.3 cm (0.5 inch).

Spell out fractions not used with a unit of measurement. Insert a hyphen between the numerator and denominator.

Example: Tightening clockwise, give the screw three-quarters of a turn.

Generic numbers

See: [Variables and placeholders](#)

Hexadecimal numbers

Use a lowercase *h* after hexadecimal numbers.

Examples: 2FAh, 3FFh

Page numbers

Use the automated page numbering of your app. For the style and placement of page numbers, follow the approved template for your material.

Percentages

See: [Percent symbol \(%\)](#)

Plurals of spelled-out numbers

The plurals of spelled-out numbers are formed like the plurals of other nouns.

Examples: twenties, sixes, sevens

The plurals of numerals are formed by adding a lowercase *s*.

Correct: the 1990s

Incorrect: the 1990's

Use words to express the plural of *zero* and *one*.

Example: a string of zeros and ones

Punctuating numbers

See: [Comma, numbers](#); [Phone numbers](#); [Units of measurement](#)

Thousands

A comma is unnecessary for rounded thousands, which read better without a comma. For example: *4,500* would typically be read as *4 thousand*, *5 hundred* and *4500* as *45 hundred*.

On, onto, upon

Onto implies movement from one place to another. For example, you do not install software *onto* a

system; you install software *on* a system.

In most instances, use *on* instead of *upon*, for example, *based on*, *built on*, and *dependent on*.

On-premises, on-prem

When referring to a physical location, use the term *on-premises*, not *on-premise*. The singular *premise* has a different meaning.

Always hyphenate *on-premises* (think of it as a synonym for *on-site*).

Example: The new cloud solution solves some of the issues with the on-premises application.

When writing about on-premises IT, Global Brand has approved the use of *on-prem IT* for Marketing communications. Consider your audience when deciding whether to use the shortened term for other types of writing, especially if the content will be translated.

Only

Place the adverb *only* as close as possible to the word or phrase it modifies.

Example

I only can meet with you at 1:30 today. (Possible misinterpretation: The only thing I can do is meet with you at 1:30 today.)

I can meet with you today only at 1:30. (Accurate interpretation: 1:30 is the only time I can meet with you today.)

Be careful of how you use *only* with HPE products, solutions, and services because it can imply a false negative or limitation.

Instead of: HPE OneView only supports a repository on the appliance itself.

Write: HPE OneView supports an on-appliance repository.

Only may be used with our products, solutions, and services strictly in a positive context.

Example: Technicians can install and set up one of the servers in only 30 minutes.

Open, close

See: [Close, open](#)

Parallel structure of elements

When coordinating two or more elements in a sentence, state them in the same grammatical form.

Examples

A technical writer must be articulate and logical. (This sentence contains two parallel and coordinate adjectives.)

Log in to the site, edit your profile, and save the changes. (This sentence contains three coordinate and parallel predicates, each consisting of a verb and direct object.)

In the following incorrect example, both *plug* and *unplug* are modified by *into*, which creates an unparallel and inaccurate structure. A parallel structure that includes the preposition *from* eliminates the problem.

Correct: Never plug the keyboard into or *unplug* it *from* the system unit unless the power is off.

Incorrect: Never plug or *unplug* your keyboard *into* the system unit unless the power is off.

If you introduce information in one structure, do not change the structure in midstream. In the following incorrect example, the first sentence uses an *and* construction, but the second sentence uses a *with*

construction. Using *and* or preferably *with* in both sentences creates a parallel structure.

Correct: The 1 GB hard drive provides a data transfer rate *with* an average access time of 100 ms. The 2 GB hard drive provides a transfer rate *with* an average access time of 200 ms.

Less correct: The 1 GB hard drive provides a data transfer rate *and* an average access time of 100 ms. The 2 GB hard drive provides a transfer rate *with* an average access time of 200 ms.

See also: [Parallel structure in lists](#)

Pan-HPE

Do not modify HPE with *pan-* to mean “all HPE” or “across HPE.” A hyphen should never be added to the company name, and *pan* is unnecessary. Writing the company name by itself implies all or across the company.

See also: [Hyphens with the company name](#)

Parentheses

Use parentheses to enclose text that gives incidental or extra information.

Example: The recommended books are available on Amazon.com (print and digital versions).

Use parentheses sparingly. If the information is essential to the meaning of the sentence, do not enclose it in parentheses.

Place ending punctuation inside the closing parenthesis when the parenthetical statement is a complete, stand-alone sentence.

Example: (For more information, see Appendix B.)

Place ending punctuation outside the closing parenthesis when the parenthetical statement is a short sentence or sentence fragment enclosed in a longer sentence.

Examples

Running the application requires additional memory (64 MB is preinstalled).

Connect the signal cable to the hard drive (Figure 3-12).

When nesting a parenthetical phrase inside another parenthetical phrase, use parentheses for the outer set of marks and brackets for the inner set of marks.

Example: Press the Standby button. (This feature shuts off subsystems that have been idle for more than 10 minutes [the default setting]).

Parenthetical s for plurals

See: [Plural forms](#)

Part numbers

See: [Serial numbers and part numbers](#)

Passive voice

See: [Voice](#)

Path, directory, and file names

When referring to a path, retain the case used in the interface.

Example: `/_layouts/OneHP/Newsfeed.aspx`

Use *root* or *root (/)* rather than a stand-alone slash (`/`) to indicate a root directory in body text.

Correct: Only the system administrator can modify the root directory.

Incorrect: Only the system administrator can modify the `/` directory.

Use an initial period when referring to a file suffix used conventionally.

Correct: File names ending with “.c” are interpreted as C source programs.

Incorrect: File names ending with “c” are interpreted as C source programs.

Percent symbol (%)

For percentages, use numerals and the percent symbol. Spell out percentages only if they begin a sentence.

Example

The article received a five-star rating from 80% of the readers. (preferred)

Eighty percent of the readers gave the article a five-star rating.

Period

Use a period to indicate the end of a declarative or imperative sentence. Include only one space after a period.

Do not use periods at the end of listed items if the items are sentence fragments.

Example

How long have you been in your current position?

- Less than one year
- One to five years
- More than five years

If the list contains both fragments and complete sentences, use periods after all items.

See also: [**Punctuation in vertical lists**](#); [**Using quotation marks with other punctuation**](#)

Person

When writing instructions for a procedure, write directly to the user. Refer to the user as *you* (second person) rather than as *the user* (third person). The subject *you* is understood and need not be written. Use *you* sparingly.

Correct: To bypass the menus, enter a Fastpath in the Command field and press Enter. (implied second person)

Incorrect: The user may bypass the menus by entering a Fastpath in the Command line and pressing Enter. (third person)

When describing a process, use third person to explain who is performing the action.

Example: The customer calls the service department. An operator logs the complaint.

Personification, anthropomorphization

See: [**Anthropomorphization, personification**](#)

Phone numbers

Avoid using phone numbers, which are country specific and can require frequent updates. In examples and graphics, do not use phone numbers that you know are real. In the United States, numbers using 555-01xx are reserved for fictional examples.

Examples: 713-555-0110, 1-800-555-0110

If you use the country code, delete the hyphens.

Example: +49 7031 145 7000

Please

When writing instructions or procedures, do not include the word *please*.

Plural forms

For the preferred spelling of singular and plural forms of common words, consult the [Merriam-Webster](#) dictionary.

In general, form the plurals of single and multiple letters, numerals, and acronyms by adding a lowercase s. Do not use an apostrophe to form plurals.

Examples: LANs, 4s, OEMs, 1990s

A symbol has no plural form. To refer to the plural form of a symbol, use the name of the symbol.

Correct: Enter three slashes.

Incorrect: Enter three /'s.

Do not use an s in parentheses to indicate a plural alternative to a noun. It is understood that the plural form of a noun (such as files) includes the singular form (file).

Correct: Select the files you want to modify.

Incorrect: Select the file(s) you want to modify.

If it is necessary to stress, for example, that an operation can be performed on one file or more than one file, use the phrase *file or files*.

Some nouns originating from foreign languages, especially Latin, have two acceptable plural forms—the original plural and a plural formed after English usage. In such cases, use the following forms.

Table 8: Preferred plural for Latin nouns

Singular	Preferred plural
Addendum	Addenda
Antenna	Antennas
Apparatus	Apparatuses
Appendix	Appendixes
Automaton	Automatons
Criterion	Criteria
Curriculum	Curricula
Formula	Formulas
Index	Indexes (part of a document)

Singular	Preferred plural
Index	Indices (signs in algebra)
Matrix	Matrixes (general use)
Matrix	Matrices (mathematics)
Memorandum	Memoranda

See also: [Data, datum](#); [Media, medium](#); [Latin abbreviations](#); [Plurals of abbreviations](#)

Pointing device

Use *pointing device* unless you are describing a specific device, such as a mouse or a trackpad.

When referring to the use of buttons on a pointing device, use the verbs *click*, *double-click*, *right-click*, and *center-click*. Do not use *click on*.

Example: Right-click the object and select **Format**.

See also: [Mouse](#)

Positive, negative phrasing

Choose positive phrasing rather than negative whenever possible. Positive statements are more concise, easier to understand, and easier to translate.

Instead of: She did not pay any attention to the warning.

Write: She ignored the warning.

Possessives

In general, form the possessive of a singular noun by adding an apostrophe s. When the plural noun ends in s, form the possessive by adding an apostrophe only.

Examples: a team member's response (singular), the team members' responses (plural)

See also: [Apostrophes](#)

Prepositions

It is acceptable to end a sentence with a preposition. Remember Winston Churchill's classic example of what can otherwise occur: "That is the sort of English up with which I will not put."

Example

It depends on which item you are referring to. (less formal)

It depends on the item to which you are referring. (formal)

Do not use unnecessary prepositions.

Correct: Where is the meeting?

Incorrect: Where is the meeting at?

Press, press and hold

The term *press* means to push down a key or button. Use *press* in this context instead of the verbs *strike*, *punch*, *depress*, or *hit*.

Correct: To restart your system, press **Ctrl+Alt+Delete**.

Incorrect: To move to the next field, hit the **Tab** key.

Do not use *press and hold* to describe mouse actions.

See also: **Click, press, tap**

Previous, following

Use specific cross-references whenever possible (for example: See Table 3). Use *previous* and *following* rather than *above* and *below* when specific cross-references can't be used. *Previous* and *following* are also appropriate in procedures containing several illustrations.

Procedure

Use clear, simple language when writing procedures. Test the steps for accuracy; then have someone else test the steps to ensure that they are easy to follow.

Include only the information required to perform the steps, especially for a simple procedure.

For a complex procedure, begin with an explanatory paragraph. Include any helpful cross-references or graphics to illustrate complicated steps. If a step calls for a decision, consider whether an explanation would be helpful following the step.

A procedure generally consists of a heading, lead-in text (optional), and one or more steps.

Procedure heading

The heading states the purpose of the procedure. Headings are frequently written as gerund phrases or infinitive phrases.

Examples

Editing your profile

To edit your profile

If the heading sufficiently describes the procedure, you may eliminate the lead-in text.

Procedure lead-in text

Lead-in text is a short introductory statement about what the procedure will accomplish. It can be a sentence fragment or a complete sentence.

Examples

To disable a device:

To run the TEST utility, complete the following steps:

Procedure steps

Write individual steps as separate, imperative statements. Use second person, active voice, and parallel structure.

Begin each step with a numeral followed by a period. If the result of the action is included, left align it below the step and don't number it. If a note follows a procedure, left align it with the numerals.

Example

To run the TEST utility, complete the following steps:

1. Insert the Diagnostics disk into drive A.
2. Power on or restart the computer.

The Diagnostics menu appears.

3. Select the option to test or inspect the computer.
The Test or Inspect Computer menu appears.
4. Select the option to test the computer.

Note: This utility does not detect all expansion boards not manufactured by HPE.

When finalizing your content, check that all step numbers are sequential.

Procedure substeps

To aid comprehension, group related steps into substeps under a heading and brief explanation. Number the headings so it is obvious they are substeps.

If several actions are necessary to perform one major step in a procedure, embed the substeps and mark each with a letter in alphabetical order.

Example

1. Remove the PCI riser cage:
 - a) Loosen the captive screw on the front end of the PCI riser cage.
 - b) Loosen the thumbscrew on the rear end of the PCI riser cage.
 - c) Grasp the PCI riser cage at the touch points and lift it out of the chassis.

Combining short steps

Short steps that are closely connected are often combined. Consider the complexity of the action when deciding whether to combine or separate steps. Both of the following examples are acceptable.

Example

1. Put the keyboard onto the plasma display, and slide the keyboard latches outward to the locked position.

Example

1. Put the keyboard onto the plasma display.
2. Slide the keyboard latches outward to the locked position.

When short steps that are closely connected have only a few words, combine them in one step and omit the comma before *and*.

Example

1. Select an option and click **OK**.

One-step procedure

Format a one-step procedure the same way as a multistep procedure, except with a bullet instead of a numeral.

Example

To close the pop-up window:

- Click the X in the top right corner.

Presenting alternative steps in a procedure

Clearly identify the options when there is a choice of steps or choice of ways to perform a step.

For choices within one step, use a bulleted list for the options.

Example

To move or copy text:

1. Select the text you want to move or copy.
2. Do one of the following:
 - To move the selection, select **Cut**.
 - To copy the selection, select **Copy**.
3. Position the insertion point in the new location and click **Paste**.

Branching paths within a procedure

Use caution when writing complex procedures that require multiple options or alternatives to the basic steps. Directing the reader to bypass the optional portions can be confusing. It is usually preferable to repeat the entire procedure within each optional section.

Optional steps in a procedure

To indicate that a step is optional, add the word *Optional* in parentheses before the step. Begin the step with an explanation of why it would be performed.

Example

1. (Optional) If you require remote access to the HPE Management Agents, set your password and determine your trust mode.

Conditional phrases in a step

Begin the step with a frame of reference or required condition (*if, after, when*).

Correct: After the startup completes, log in to Windows with your domain administrator account.

Incorrect: Log in to Windows with your domain administrator account after the startup completes.

Example

1. If you are not on the View Templates screen, navigate to it.
2. On the View Templates screen, click **Tools → VSE Management**.

See also: [Comma, introductory and transitional expressions](#)

Disassembly or reassembly procedure

When describing a disassembly or reassembly procedure, orient the reader to the computer so you can use *left* or *right* and *front* or *back* for directions.

Example: When viewed from the back of the server, the drive bays are numbered from left to right.

Procedure examples

Example 1

1. Click **Start** and select **All Programs → Preinstall Features → ProLiant Support Pack**.
2. In the left column, expand the **All Configurable Components** directory.
3. (Optional) If you require remote access to the HPE Management Agents, set your password and determine your trust mode.

4. Right-click **Management Agents for Windows**.
5. From the list, select **Configure**.
6. Scroll to the Administrator Password section; then enter and reenter your password.
7. To enable trusted relationships with HPE Systems Insight Manager servers, at the Trust Relationship screen, select either **All**, **Name**, or **Certificate**.
8. Depending on the mode selected, enter information consisting of trusted server names or the base64-encoded trust certificate.
9. Click **Save**.
10. To install only the HPE Management Agents, click the other components to clear them and press the **Delete** key. Additional HPE management tools can be installed at this time by leaving components selected for installation.
11. To install the currently selected components, click **Install**. The Management Agents are installed using the password you set.

Example 2

Procedure 1 – Rename a provisioning template

1. If you are not on the **Provisioning: View Templates** screen, navigate to it.
 - a. On the upper blue menu bar, select **Tools → VSE Management**.
The VSE System tab is displayed.
 - b. On the lower gray menu bar, select **Tools → Provisioning → View Provision Templates**.
The Provisioning: View Templates screen is displayed.
2. Click the radio button preceding the name of the template you want to rename.
The row containing the template name is highlighted to indicate selection.
3. On the lower menu bar, select **Modify → Rename Provision Template**.
The Provisioning: Rename Template screen is displayed.
4. Modify the contents of the **Template Name** field to create a unique short identifier.
5. Click the **[Rename]** button.
The Provisioning: View Templates screen is displayed.

Process

A process is a series of actions or events that produces a result. Write a process in third person, active voice.

Example

1. The customer calls the support center.
2. The interactive voice response system routes the call.
3. A support center representative assists the customer.

Product names

“HPE” must be consistently used in all product and service offering names: HPE + Brand Name (*as appropriate*) + Type + Descriptive Language.

- Putting HPE at the forefront of all of our names drives brand equity into our HPE brand by reinforcing the HPE association with each of our offerings.
- When a name is developed, it is important to use it in full (with HPE in front) with no abbreviations, so

we don't have multiple versions of the same offering, unnecessarily causing confusion.

To avoid overusing a product name, intersperse references with a generic term such as the *platform*, *server*, *system*, *software*, or *service*.

Retaining “HPE” in product names

Retain “HPE” in product names, even when two products are used together.

Correct: HPE Application Modernization Services and HPE Client Virtualization Transformation Services

Incorrect: HPE Application Modernization and Client Virtualization Transformation Services

Using product names in a heading or headline

All uses of a product or service name need to be in full—no abbreviations. If space is limited in a heading or headline, consider one of these workarounds:

- Remove any generic copy, leaving only the fully approved product name.
- Use generic copy for the heading or headline, possibly with the full product name as a subhead or subtitle.

Referring to products by the model number

Some of our products have a model number, which is usually alphanumeric. For those particular names, you may reference only the alphanumeric model number after the product name has been used in full. This means that second mentions in the same piece of communication may use only the model number. It's an option, not a requirement.

Example

First mention: HPE ProLiant Compute XD680

Second mention: XD680*

*A descriptor in lowercase may accompany the model number in the second mention (e.g., XD680 server/series).

Note: Reference to a model number is not considered an abbreviation because it is not truncating language or creating acronyms for multiple words.

Capitalizing product names

Use title case for product names. If a generic descriptor is added at the end of a product name, such as *server*, *system*, *software*, or *service*, use lowercase for the descriptor. This rule applies to both individual products and product families.

Example

HPE ProLiant Compute DL380 server

HPE ProLiant Compute DL380 server series

Use lowercase for references to a product using only the descriptor.

Example: the server

Referring to version numbers in product names

Avoid referring to product version numbers unless you are citing a product name. If the reference is not generic, write the version exactly as it appears in the product name.

Use *earlier* and *later* to describe a range of versions.

Correct: Version 4.0 or later

Incorrect: Version 4.+

Use an x to identify sub-versions of products, such as Version 4.x.

More info on product names

See the [naming guidelines](#) on HPE Brand Central.

Prompts

Use an article when referring to a prompt.

Examples

The CON> prompt indicates that...

Enter NO at the asterisk (*) prompt.

Some systems have user-definable prompts. For example, the system might use a dollar sign as the default prompt, but users can change it. In this case, use the default value for the system prompt in examples unless you are discussing how to change the system prompt.

In body text, refer to the system prompt rather than the specific symbol.

Some products use unique prompts that are abbreviations of the product names, such as DTM or DTR. Do not use these names to refer to the products, unless doing so is a longstanding convention, such as with FTP.

In multiplatform content, use the same product prompt across all platforms unless a platform indicator is part of the prompt.

Examples should always show the system prompt. In examples, use the following techniques:

- Create separate examples for each platform. Do not segregate the examples (such as in an appendix). Rather, integrate them into the flow of the text. Within a series of examples dealing with a single topic, use the same prompt.
- Whenever possible, alternate examples from the various platforms, using an equal number from each. This method is particularly useful when the examples demonstrate a concept and platform-specific details do not interfere with the understanding of the concept.

Pronouns

A pronoun takes the place of a noun in a sentence. Put a pronoun as close as possible to the noun it replaces, which is its antecedent.

Correct: When the *presenters* (antecedent) arrive, *they* (pronoun) should be greeted by the event coordinators.

Incorrect: The *presenters* (antecedent) should be greeted by the event coordinators when *they* (pronoun) arrive.

A pronoun should agree in number with its antecedent—both should be singular or plural.

Example: The *managers* will have to forfeit some of *their* capital equipment.

The exception is a plural pronoun with a singular noun to avoid using *his or her*.

Example: When *a person* takes the poll, *they* will see the results update instantly.

If a pronoun has more than one possible antecedent, repeat the noun instead.

Correct: You must create a *tablespace*, assign a *quota*, and set *the tablespace* as the default.

Incorrect: You must create a *tablespace*, assign a *quota*, and set *it* as the default.

When referring to customers, use personal pronouns such as *who* and *they*. When referring to businesses, companies, and organizations, use pronouns such as *it* and *that*.

Examples

Customers who must reduce costs will not upgrade *their* equipment every year.

A company that must reduce costs will not upgrade *its* equipment every year.

See also: [Apostrophe, possessive case of indefinite pronouns](#); [Gender language](#); [LGBTQ+](#)

Pronoun, verb agreement

The following pronouns always require a singular verb: another, each, either, every, neither, one.

Example: Neither is correct.

The following pronouns always require a plural verb: both, few, many, others, several.

Example: Both are correct.

Compound pronouns made with *any*, *every*, *some*, and *no* require a singular verb, such as *anybody*, *everything*, *someone*, *nobody*, *nothing*, and *no one*.

The indefinite pronouns *all*, *any*, *none*, and *some* are either singular or plural, depending on the context.

Examples

Some of the money is allocated to a central fund.

Some of the documents are kept in a locked cabinet.

See also: [Verbs](#)

Pull-down

See: [Drop-down, pull-down](#)

Question mark

Use a question mark to end direct questions, but not indirect questions.

Examples

Does their company need a corporate university? (direct)

She asked if their company needs a corporate university. (indirect)

See also: [Using quotation marks with other punctuation](#)

Quotation marks

Use quotation marks to indicate a short direct quotation or literal response.

Example: We do things “the HPE way.”

Use quotation marks to set off words that are used differently from their normal meaning.

Example: When learners are inattentive, instructors suspect them of being “tourists”—in class only to get away from their jobs.

If your application doesn’t support automated references, use quotation marks with the name of a

chapter, section, appendix, or other section in a document.

Examples

For information about installing CEMM, see Chapter 4, “Configuring your system.”

For the list of acronyms and abbreviations, see Appendix A, “Acronym list.”

Terms that are introduced with phrases *referred to as*, *known as*, or *also known as* should be enclosed in quotation marks.

Example: Using a combination of keys at the same time is sometimes referred to as “multiple keystroking.”

If a single word is introduced with the word *term* or *word*, enclose the word in quotation marks or use italics.

Example: Include the word “optional” if the step is not required.

Do not use quotation marks in the following instances:

- For adding emphasis to text. Use bold or italics instead.
- If the text is hyperlinked and is not a direct quote. The link style is sufficient to set apart the text.

Block quotations

When quoting a long passage, also known as a “block quotation,” indent the text rather than enclosing it with quotation marks.

Single quotation marks

Use single quotation marks (‘’) only when reproducing code examples or, as in the following example, when nesting quotation marks.

Example: As he said in the email, “Going back to ‘what used to be’ isn’t possible.”

Quotation marks with other punctuation

For closing quotation marks:

- Periods and commas go inside.

Examples

For more examples, see page 6, “Concise wording.”

See page 6, “Concise wording,” for more examples.

- Periods and commas go outside only with literal strings in technical writing.

Examples

The symbol can have the value “ABST”.

The symbol can have one of the following values: ABST, “ABST”, or %ABST.

- Colons and semicolons go outside.

Examples

Remember the attributes of the “four Cs of writing”: clear, concise, conversational, compelling.

Except when referring to a passage of time, avoid the term “since”; use “because” instead.

- Question marks go inside in they are part of the quote, outside if they apply to the entire sentence.

Examples

The following message is displayed: “Are you sure you want to delete the file?”

Does the screen display this message: “Press the delete key to remove the file”?

If a quotation at the end of a sentence includes a question mark, no other closing punctuation is needed.

Correct: The final learning check is, “What is the standard dictionary at HPE?”

Incorrect: The final learning check is, “What is the standard dictionary at HPE?”.

Refer to

Avoid using *refer to* for cross-references. *See* and *see also* are the preferred terms.

See also: [Cross-references](#)

Racially insensitive terms

See: [Inclusive language](#)

Reset

The term *reset* means to change a value or to set it again. Because the term has taken on several related meanings in computer parlance, use it carefully in technical writing. Communicate clearly the following basic points:

- The type of reset (for example, hard reset, soft reset, clear-all reset)

Note: Use the same terminology used by the software or firmware the reset applies to. If multiple types of resets are in the environment you are describing, consider defining them in a glossary.

- What the reset does (for example, clear all memory, restore to default values)
- When it might be appropriate to use the reset (for example, system locked up, keyboard input garbled)
- How to initiate the reset (for example, key sequence, menu options)
- How to tell when the reset is completed (for example, system message, system behavior)

See, see also

See and *see also* are the preferred forms for cross-references. Do not use *refer to*.

See also: [Cross-references](#)

Select

Use the term *select* to mean choosing among options on a screen. Use *click* for a single object.

Example: Select a course title and click the **Enroll** button.

Use the term *select* to designate information (files, text, or graphics) that will be manipulated in a subsequent operation.

Example: Select the text you want to copy from file A to file B.

See also: [Click, press, tap](#)

Semicolon

Use a semicolon when items in a series use internal punctuation.

Example: Classes will be offered in Houston, Texas; Mississauga, Ontario; and Beijing, China.

A semicolon may be used to join closely related independent clauses in the following instances (instead of using separate sentences):

- When the independent clauses are not joined by a conjunction

Example: No business is immune to cybercrime; defend yours against attacks.

- When an adverb is used transitionally between independent clauses, such as *however*, *then*, or *therefore*

Example: No business is immune to cybercrime; however, yours can be defended against attacks.

Do not use semicolons to join closely related steps in procedures. Short, simple sentences are easier to follow.

Sentences

Write sentences that are clear, concise, and simple. Having too much information in one sentence can make it difficult to comprehend and necessitate rereading. The more complex a topic is, the simpler the sentences should be to explain it.

Vary the length of your sentences for a more readable style.

Instead of: Our partners asked for more training at the event. So we're offering an unprecedented amount this year. Partners can choose from 38 courses. That's four times more training than before.

Write: Our partners asked for more training at the event, so we're offering an unprecedented amount this year—38 courses. That's four times more training than before.

See also: **Person**; **Positive, negative phrasing**; **Voice**

Serial numbers and part numbers

Refer to each element of a serial number or part number as a character, not as a digit. Many serial numbers and part numbers contain both numerals and letters.

When referring to a range of serial numbers, use the terms *higher* and *lower*. Do not use *earlier* and *later*.

Example: The new shipping date applies to serial number 6823123456 and lower.

Setup, set up

Write *setup* as one word when used as a noun or an adjective.

Examples

Check the computer setup. (noun)

The setup file installs the software. (adjective)

Write *set up* as two words when used as a verb.

Example: Set up the controller first.

Should

Avoid using the auxiliary verb *should* because its meaning is often ambiguous.

Correct

Periodically delete temp files to free system resources.

The console prompt is displayed after completion of the configuration process.

Incorrect

You should periodically delete temp files to free system resources.

The console prompt should be displayed after the configuration process finishes.

Sometimes *should* cannot be replaced by a simple imperative. The meaning might be to advise or recommend that the user carry out an action. You might use “We recommend ...” or just begin the sentence with the action word.

Use the verbal auxiliary *should* primarily to express a recommendation or probability.

Examples

You should reconsider my offer to help while I have some free time. (recommendation)

Although I scheduled 30 minutes, our meeting should take less time. (probability)

Do not use a passive statement containing *should* when an imperative statement is appropriate.

Instead of: You should save your work before closing the app.

Write: Save your work before closing the app.

Shutdown, shut down

Write *shutdown* as one word when used as a noun or an adjective.

Example

Check the computer shutdown. (noun)

The shutdown directory contains code that needs to be executed. (adjective)

Write *shut down* as two words when used as a verb.

Example: Shut down the controller first.

Since

See: **Because of, due to, since**

Slang

Slang consists of informal words and expressions. This can include coinages, figures of speech, and randomly changed words. Slang is more common in speech than in writing.

Typically restricted to a particular context or group of people, slang can be misunderstood by or offensive to a broader audience. Avoid using slang in your writing.

Instead of: He aced the exam.

Write: He scored 100 on the exam.

See also: **Jargon**

Slash

For smoother reading, avoid using a slash in body text to replace *and* or *or*.

Instead of: Our guest is a writer/philanthropist.

Write: Our guest is a writer and philanthropist.

If an adjective before two words joined by a slash doesn't apply to both words, clearly separate the words.

Instead of: Our guest is a motivational speaker/comedian.

Write: Our guest is a motivational speaker and a comedian.

Do not use spaces with a slash between two single words. Use spaces if the text before or after the slash contains multiple words.

Examples

In the May/June timeframe

During late May / early June

For all leaders / team members

Avoid using the phrase *and/or*. Instead, clearly write out the meaning.

Instead of: Use A and/or B.

Write: Use A or B or both.

Use a slash with recognized compounds that indicate alternatives.

Examples: input/output (I/O), read/write

Use a slash to indicate division with units of measurement.

Example: 150 Mb/s

Do not use write *him/her* or *s/he*.

Spaces

Use only one space between sentences and after colons. Two spaces might appear together only in a code example.

Spelling

Make it a habit to run spell-check before releasing a document. You might also set your application to check spelling as you type. However, you still need to carefully proofread your document because spell-checkers can miss the following types of errors:

- Homophones such as *through* versus *threw*
- Words spelled correctly but used incorrectly, such as *contact* instead of *contract*
- Words not in the application's dictionary
- Non-American spellings

If a word can be spelled more than one way, use the preferred (first) spelling in **Merriam-Webster**.

Use anglicized plural forms rather than Latin plural forms unless the anglicized form is not accepted by the dictionary. For example, the preferred plural of *index* is the anglicized plural *indexes*, not the Latin plural *indices*.

When writing for a global audience, use American rather than British spellings.

Correct: Authorized, canceled, center, color, labeled, labor, organization, program

Incorrect: Authorised, cancelled, centre, colour, labelled, labour, organisation, programme

See also: **Table 7: Preferred plural for Latin nouns**

Split infinitives

In general, avoid splitting an infinitive (*to* plus a verb).

Instead of: To successfully submit your idea, follow these steps.

Write: To submit your idea successfully, follow these steps.

In some situations, however, splitting an infinitive improves the flow of the sentence.

Examples

Adjust the settings to best meet your needs.

It takes courage to boldly go where no one has gone before.

Standards

Use the term *standard* carefully; it might imply legal and contractual obligations. Also, take care in referring to levels of standards support. Certain terms, such as *conformance* and *certification*, have explicit meanings as defined by a standard or an authoritative body.

When referring to standards, include the standards body (such as ISO) and the full title of the standard, including the number.

Note the following guidelines for using HPE standards:

- Most HPE standards are for internal use only and are marked with one of the proprietary information labels. Do not mention HPE standards in technical documents for external use.
- Releasing an HPE standard to a partner requires the permission of the standard owner and a nondisclosure agreement signed by the partner.

See also: [HPE standards](#)

Start, restart

See: [Boot, reboot](#)

State names (US)

Spell out the names of states in body text. The exception is Washington, DC, which is a district rather than a state.

Using postal abbreviations for states is acceptable in tables, a list of addresses, and informal writing.

When a city and state appear at the beginning or in the middle of a sentence, put a comma after the state as well as before it.

Example: The event will be held in Las Vegas, Nevada, sometime next spring.

Subject-verb agreement

See: [Verbs](#)

Subordinate clauses

A subordinate clause introduces an idea that is less important than the idea given in the independent clause in a sentence. The following example begins with a subordinate clause.

Example: Because of budget restrictions, we can't attend out-of-town conferences.

Subordination can also be achieved by using infinitives or participial phrases.

Example

To disable this feature, set the switch... (infinitive)

Positioning the tool on the left, raise... (participial phrase)

Switches and buttons

See: [Buttons and switches](#)

Symbols and icons

Use the following guidelines for symbols and icons:

- Be consistent in your use of symbols and icons in diagrams and charts.
- Use symbols that are widely accepted.
- Use icons per the [Illustrations and icons](#) page of HPE Brand Central.
- Be consistent in how you refer to symbols and icons throughout your content.
- Write out the names of symbols in body text, and enclose the symbol in parentheses.

Example: The dollar sign (\$) is the default prompt.

- When referring to an icon that appears on a user interface, include the name or description of the function and, if needed, a picture of the icon.
- Spell out the name of a symbol to form its plural.

Correct: Enter three slashes.

Incorrect: Enter three /'s.

- For units of measurement in a series, repeat the symbol or abbreviation after each item:

Examples: 3°C to 5°C; 10% to 50%; 128 GB, 256 GB, or 512 GB

System prompt

See: [Prompts](#)

Tables

A well-designed table is an effective means of presenting detailed information in a parallel format. Lengthy paragraphs can be condensed into a concise table to make the information more accessible.

Follow these guidelines:

- Design the table with a clear objective in mind.
- Write clear, concise column headings to label information.
- Keep all table text concise.
- Use the same grammatical construction within each column.
- Use sentence case and consistent punctuation for all table text.
- Confine the table to a single page if possible.

Use a brief sentence to introduce the table, unless the heading, table title, or context accurately describes the table. An introduction sets the context for users and also enables screen readers to interpret online

content.

Formal tables have a number and a title and are listed in the table of contents.

Table titles

- Make table titles concise and descriptive.
- Use a phrase rather than a complete sentence.
- Use sentence-case capitalization for the title.
- Avoid starting table titles with articles (*a*, *an*, *the*).

Column headings in tables

Clearly identify the data in each column with a concise heading. Use parallel structure for headings.

In a table of measurements, where the units are consistent within a column, include the unit in the column heading instead of repeating it in every row.

For tables that exceed one page, repeat the column headings on subsequent pages.

Table body

- Express all column entries in a consistent manner.
 - Grammatical construction
 - Syntax (words, phrases, or sentences)
 - Verb tense
 - Voice
 - Punctuation
 - Case (sentence case)
- Keep column entries brief. Remove superfluous words or repetitive phrases, unless needed for clarification in translation.
- Allow ample white space between columns.
- Align a column of numbers vertically on the decimal points and commas.
- Align mathematical operating signs vertically (such as +, ×, and =).
- Leave a cell empty if it is intentionally blank and the meaning is clear. If the meaning is unclear, use *n/a*, *not applicable*, *none*, or something similar. Be consistent within the table.
- Never use ditto marks in a cell. Repeat the information.

Table notes and footnotes

Table notes supply additional information about the table as a whole. Position table notes immediately after the table.

Footnotes apply to specific entries in the table. Position table footnotes immediately after the table or after the table note (if there is one). Use the following guidelines for footnotes:

- Place reference marks immediately after the referenced item in column headers and in any part of the table body, but not in the table number or title.
- For a single footnote, use an asterisk (*).

- When more than one footnote is necessary, use superscript numbers (1, 2, 3) or superscript lowercase letters (a, b, c). Letters are preferable if your table contains many numbers.
- If writing in a plain text file without superscript, use (1), (2), (3) or (a), (b), (c).
- The same footnote reference mark may be used on two or more elements if the corresponding footnote applies to all of them.

Table numbering

If your page numbers include a chapter number, use the same format for your table numbers.

Example: Table 8-1

Table references

When referring to a numbered table, use an initial cap for the word *Table*.

Examples

See Table 3 for metric equivalents.

Convert the measurements to metric units (Table 3).

Use lowercase when the table reference does not include a number.

Example: The metric conversions are listed in the following table.

Tables in translated content

When formatting tables for content that will be translated, consider that translated text might require more space than the original.

Tap

See: **Click, press, tap**

Tense

Write in the present tense unless the context requires the use of past or future tense.

Correct: This chapter *provides* an overview of the product installation.

Incorrect: This chapter *will provide* an overview of the product installation.

In procedures, present tense gives a sense of immediacy because the users are performing a step at the same time they are reading it.

Text alignment

Use left alignment for body text. Do not use justified alignment, which creates gaps of white space and impedes reading.

Center alignment on slides or webpages may be used only for a small amount of text. Entire paragraphs should not be centered because it makes reading more cumbersome.

That

Use *that* to introduce a noun clause that acts as the direct object.

Correct: Before opening the access panel, verify that power is completely removed.

Incorrect: Before opening the access panel, verify power is completely removed.

That, which

Use *that* for a restrictive clause—one that is essential to the meaning of the text. If you were to omit the clause, the text wouldn't make sense.

Example: The dates *that conflict with holidays* should be eliminated first.

Use *which* for a nonrestrictive clause—one that contains nonessential information. If you were to omit the clause, the text would still make sense. Use commas with nonrestrictive clauses.

Example: The dates in red, *which conflict with holidays*, should be eliminated first.

That, who

Use *that* when referring to things and *who* when referring to people.

Correct: Minyi is a leader who inspires her team.

Incorrect: Minyi is a leader that inspires her team.

When referring to a team, use *that*.

Example: The team that has the highest participation will be rewarded.

See also: [**Who, whom**](#)

Then

Then cannot be used to join two independent clauses. Use one of the following constructions when *then* introduces an independent clause.

Example

Plug the AC power cord into the computer, and then plug the cord into an AC outlet.

Plug the AC power cord into the computer. Then plug the cord into an AC outlet.

Plug the AC power cord into the computer; then plug the cord into an AC outlet.

Use a comma preceding *then* when it introduces a dependent clause.

Example: The login process requests your user name, then your password.

In a sentence that uses the *if/then* construction, omit *then* before the second clause.

Example: If US customary units of measurement are used, they are put in parentheses after the metric units.

They, them, their

To maintain gender neutrality, use the plural pronouns *they*, *them*, and *their* with a singular subject.

Examples

The first person to respond will be asked if they want to be the leader.

If another person asks to attend, kindly tell them all the seats are filled.

Each participant must provide their own materials.

This

The word *this* is a demonstrative adjective. Always use a noun with *this*.

Correct: This feature allows you to interface with any device.

Incorrect: This allows you to interface with any device.

Time

Write *a.m.* and *p.m.* in lowercase with periods. Use time period abbreviations for specific times only.

Correct: The meeting is at 2:30 p.m.

Incorrect: The meeting is in the p.m.

For a time on the hour, the minutes may be omitted (:00).

Example: The meeting is at 3 p.m.

In a list of varying times, however, include the minutes in all so the text lines up better.

Example

7:00 a.m. Registration

7:30 a.m. Breakfast

8:00 a.m. Announcements

8:15 a.m. Session 1

Time zones

Although you may spell out time zones, abbreviations are preferred, especially in informal writing or where space is limited.

Examples

10 a.m. CT (preferred)

10 a.m. Central Time

If the target audience spans multiple time zones, you might decide to include another time zone separated by a slash, a vertical bar (pipe symbol), or parentheses.

Examples

10 a.m. PT / 1 p.m. ET

10 a.m. PT | 1 p.m. ET

10 a.m. PT (1 p.m. ET)

For a global audience, use CT. You might choose to include the GMT conversion.

Example: 10 a.m. CT / 4 p.m. GMT

Do not use time adjustments such as CST (standard time) or CDT (daylight time).

Time ranges

Use an en dash without spaces in a range of time.

Example: 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

In a sentence, if you precede the time range with *from* or *between*, it's preferable to use a corresponding word instead of a dash.

Examples

Chat agents are available from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. PT.

You can chat online between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. PT.

If a time range is in the same time period, include a.m. or p.m. only at the end.

Example: 10:30–11:30 a.m.

For times on the hour, the minutes (:00) may be omitted.

Examples: 2–3 p.m., 2–2:30 p.m.

Noon and midnight

Use *noon* instead of 12 p.m. and *midnight* instead of 12 a.m. Do not include the number 12 with the word (as in 12 noon).

Examples

Lunch is from noon to 1:30 p.m.

The system will be offline from 7 p.m. until midnight.

When *noon* is used in a stand-alone time range, write it with an initial cap.

Examples: Noon–1 p.m., 11:30 a.m.–Noon

Tips

See: [Alert text](#)

Trainings/learnings

Regardless of popular trends, the terms *trainings* and *learnings* are grammatically incorrect.

When used as nouns, *training* and *learning* have no plural because they are mass (uncountable) nouns.

Correct: The training will be scheduled soon.

Incorrect: The trainings will be scheduled soon.

The adjective form of *training* and *learning* should always be followed by a noun.

Correct: Several training sessions will be scheduled.

Incorrect: Several trainings will be scheduled.

Transitions

A transition is a connection between ideas. It can be a word, phrase, clause, sentence, or paragraph. Clear and precise transitions are important for coherence.

Transitions can indicate support for previous statements, contradiction to previous ideas, or cause-and-effect relationships.

In the following example, the transition *because they* is better than the transition *and are* because it indicates more clearly the cause-and-effect relationship between the noun and the action.

Instead of: Some keystroke functions are referred to as “multiple keystrokes” *and are* invoked by pressing two or more keys simultaneously.

Write: Some keystroke functions are referred to as “multiple keystrokes” *because they* are invoked by pressing two or more keys simultaneously.

Units of measurement

Use metric units of measurement and unit symbols for all quantities, except when a specialized market or technology requires a different set of units. See the [Guide for the Use of the International System of Units \(SI\)](#).

When US customary units of measurement are included, put them in parentheses after the metric units.

Examples: 5 kg (11 lb), 25°C (68°F)

When converting units, use the same level of precision for both units.

Examples: 3.0 m (9.8 ft), 3 m (10 ft)

Use numerals, not words, to express numbers with units of measurement. Treat bits and bytes as units of measurement that have no unit symbol.

Correct: 5 mm, 2 bits

Incorrect: five millimeters, two bits

Use the same symbol for both plural and singular units of measurement. For example, cm = centimeter and centimeters.

Do not include a period with a unit of measurement symbol.

Spaces in units of measurement

- Insert a space between the number and the unit symbol, even when used as an adjective.
Example: Experience the industry-leading performance of 12 Gb SAS SSDs.
- If a product name includes a unit of measurement without a space, don't insert one.
- If a unit of measurement appears at the end of a line, insert a nonbreaking space between the number and the unit symbol to keep them together.
- Do not insert a space between the number and the unit symbol for degrees of temperature (°C, °F) or degrees, minutes, and seconds of angle (° ' ").

Examples: 27°C, 70°F, 37°, 15', 32"

Dimensions and units of measurement

- Use a lowercase x to express dimensional relationships.
- Include a space before and after the x.
- Include the unit of measurement after each number.
- Use the same unit of measurement in a series of dimensions.

Correct: 45 mm x 51 mm x 320 mm

Incorrect

45 mm by 51 mm by 320 mm (uses the word *by*)

45mmx51mmx320mm (no spaces)

45 x 51 x 320 mm (unit after the last number only)

4.5 cm x 51 mm x 0.32 m (different units)

URLs

For clickable links in online documents, use linked text instead of linked URLs. A URL should appear in lieu of linked text only in a print document or an online document intended for printing.

If a sentence ends with a URL, include a period, but be sure that the period is not part of the clickable link. Alternatively, put the URL on a separate line without a period.

See also: [Links](#); [Click here, click to](#)

User name / username

Write *user name* as two words except when describing a label in an interface that uses it as one word.

Example: Enter your user name in the Username field.

Variables and placeholders

The following guidelines apply to placeholders in *text*, not mathematical variables.

- Use a lowercase *x* to represent a replaceable letter, number, or combination of letters and numbers.

Example: Enter the product number xxxxxx. (For product numbers like nc6200)

- Use a lowercase *n* to represent an indefinite number.

Example: At the menu prompt, enter a choice from 1 to *n*, where *n* is the highest number you can enter, depending on the menu you are using.

Verbs

Verbs must agree with their subjects in person and number. Singular subjects take singular verbs and plural subjects take plural verbs.

Correct: The *options* for your health care plan *allow* you to choose what’s best for your family.

Incorrect: The *options* for your health care plan *allows* you to choose what’s best for your family.

If the subjects differ in number or person, place the plural subject last and use a plural verb.

Examples

If the *DVD* or the *CDs* *are* unavailable, download the files from the website.

When your *leader* or *colleagues* *give* you recognition, you feel appreciated.

Use a singular or plural verb after a collective noun, depending on the intended meaning.

Examples

The *number* of attendees *has* increased.

A number of *servers* *are* installed as one system.

Any parenthetical text following the subject is ignored when determining if a singular or plural verb should be used. Because parentheses are for nonessential information, avoid this construction.

Example: The image *file* (and other attachments) *exceeds* the message limit size.

Table 9: When to use a singular or plural verb

Guidelines	Examples
When singular and plural subjects are joined by <i>either/or</i> or <i>neither/nor</i> , use a verb that agrees with the subject closest to the verb.	Neither the message nor the <i>documents</i> <i>were</i> reviewed.
When two or more singular subjects are joined by <i>or</i> or <i>nor</i> , use a singular verb.	The video or transcript <i>needs</i> to be provided.
When two or more subjects are joined by <i>and</i> , use a plural verb.	The writer and editor <i>disagree</i> .
When a plural modifier follows a singular subject, use a singular	The <i>list</i> of words <i>has</i> been updated.

Guidelines	Examples
verb.	
After a singular pronoun such as <i>each</i> , use a singular verb.	Each of these methods <i>is</i> reliable.
If plural parenthetical text follows a singular subject, use a singular verb.	My PC (along with the accessories) <i>was</i> lost in transit.

See also: [Pronoun, verb agreement](#)

Versions

See: [Referring to version numbers in product names](#)

Very

Instead of using the adverb *very*, which is an indefinite intensifier, consider a single, more precise word.

Table 10: Single words in place of *very* terms

Instead of	Consider
Very big	Huge
Very excited	Thrilled
Very good	Great
Very important	Crucial
Very short	Brief
Very sure	Certain
Very willing	Eager

Voice

Use primarily the active voice. It is direct and concise, whereas the passive voice is indirect and wordy. Because passive voice is sometimes more appropriate and sentence variety is important, good writing will have a combination of active and passive voice.

Active voice

In the active voice, the subject is doing the action. This puts the emphasis on the subject.

Active: HPE security features (*subject*) protect (*verb*) your information (*object*).

Passive: Your information (*object*) can be protected (*verb*) by HPE security features (*subject*).

Use the active voice in procedural writing. Tell the reader what to do instead of describing what can be done.

Active: Press **Enter** to display the next screen.

Passive: The next screen is displayed by pressing **Enter**.

Passive voice

In the passive voice, the subject is being acted upon. This puts the emphasis on the object rather than the subject.

Review your content for the following passive voice constructions and consider rewriting them in the active voice.

Table 11: Rewriting passive voice constructions in the active voice

Passive voice	Example	Suggested rewrite
Prepositional phrases beginning with <i>by</i>	You can learn more by reading the full article.	Read the full article to learn more.
Forms of the verb <i>to be</i>	The support manual can be downloaded from hpe.com.	Download the support manual from hpe.com.
Noun forms of verbs	Verification of the data is performed next.	Next, verify the data.
Expletive constructions such as <i>there are</i>	There are two options for you to choose from.	You can choose from two options.

Warning text

See: [Alert text](#)

Warranties

Product warranties vary by country. Some countries, for example, are legally required to have specific warranty periods. Because warranty information is country specific, avoid including it in your content.

Web, website, webpage

Write *web*, *website*, and *webpage* as one word in lowercase. For a specific webpage, such as a *home page*, use two words.

When, where, while

Use *when*, *where*, and *while* carefully. *When* can imply time or dependency, *where* can imply place or conditionality, and *while* can imply time or contrast.

Examples

Please let me know *when* the meeting starts. (time)

When you have a global team, it's difficult to have on-site meetings. (dependency)

Where are we going for lunch? (place)

Companies *where* employees are valued have a high retention rate. (conditionality)

While you are waiting, you can listen to the podcast on your mobile device. (time)

While I appreciate your effort, the result was unsuccessful. (contrast)

To avoid translation errors, use *while* only to imply time.

Instead of: *While* you can keep working during the backup process, your system will be slower.

Write: *Although* you can keep working during the backup process, your system will be slower.

Whether

See: [If, whether](#)

Which

See: That, which

While

See: When, where, while

Who, whom

Use *who* when referring to he, she, or they. Use *whom* when referring to him, her, or them.

Window

Capitalize the name of a window as it appears on the screen, but don't capitalize the term *window*.

Example: Click **OK**. The Registry Editor window opens.

With, by using

See: By using, with

Word choice

In writing for a global audience, when you have the choice of using a word with a single meaning or a word with multiple meanings, choose the word with a single meaning.

Table 12: Words with a single meaning to replace words with multiple meanings

Instead of	Use
As, since	Because
Hard	Difficult
May	Might, could
Once	After, when
Right	Correct
Over	More than
Roughly	Approximately
While	Although

Choose simple words over more complicated ones, except in cases where a more complicated word conveys the meaning more precisely.

Table 13: Simple words to replace more complicated words

Instead of	Consider
Accomplish	Do
Additionally	Also
Consequently	So
Currently	Now

Instead of	Consider
Demonstrate	Show
Erroneous	Wrong
Expediently	Quickly
Facilitate	Assist, help
Initiate	Start
Modify, modifications	Change, changes
Terminate, discontinue	End, stop
Utilize, employ, utilization	Use, usage

Wordiness

Be as concise as possible while providing all the necessary information. Short sentences are easier to read and comprehend.

Consider how the concise examples below say the same thing as their wordy counterparts, except much quicker and clearer.

Wordy: In order to keep distractions to a minimum, we ask that you please put your cell phone on mute. (19)

Concise: To minimize distractions, please mute your phone. (7 words)

Wordy: Please register to confirm your attendance at this exclusive invitation-only event as soon as possible as space is limited. (20 words)

Concise: Space is limited for this exclusive event, so register soon. (10 words)

Wordy: If you experience the inability to access the intranet for a period of time in excess of one hour, it is recommended that you call or email IT at your earliest convenience. (32 words)

Concise: If you are without intranet access for more than an hour, contact IT. (13 words)

Redundant wording

Examine your writing for two words used together that mean the same thing.

Table 14: Single words to replace redundant words

Redundant	Single
Add additional/more	Add
Alternative options	Options
Assemble/collaborate together	Assemble, collaborate
Basic fundamentals	Fundamentals
Brief overview/summary	Overview, summary
Close proximity	Proximity
End result	Result
Final outcome	Outcome

Redundant	Single
Free gift	Gift
Future/go-forward plan	Plan
Joint collaboration	Collaboration
Merge together	Merge
Necessary requirements	Requirements
Past experience/history	Experience, history
Plan ahead	Plan
Reply/respond back	Reply, respond
Return/revert back	Return, revert
Unexpected surprise	Surprise

Single words instead of multiple

In most cases, use a single word rather than multiple words when the meaning is the same.

Table 15: Single words to replace multiple words

Multiple	Single
A large number of	Many
At this point in time	Currently
At a later time	Later
Due to the fact that	Because
Each and every day	Daily
From time to time	Occasionally
Has a requirement for	Needs
Has the ability to	Can
In addition to	And
In order to	To
In the event that	If
In the near future	Soon
Is equipped with	Has
Make a revision to	Revise
Make an attempt	Try
Most of the time	Usually
Not very often	Rarely
Over and over again	Repeatedly
Prior to	Before

Multiple	Single
Provides the ability to	Allows, enables
Send an email to	Email
Take into account	Consider

Workstream

Write *workstream* as one word.

X symbol

Use a lowercase “x” as the symbol for *times* and *by*.

Examples: 63x faster, 8x10 image

Zero

Use the word *zero* instead of the numeral *0* in body text, except in the following instances:

- In a table
- In a range of numbers
Example: The command accepts from 0 to 17 arguments.
- When giving a specific value
Example: The smallest value permitted is 0.

Place a zero before decimal fractions of less than 1.

Example: Sales increased 0.5% this month.

Use the correct spelling:

- Zero, zeros (nouns)
- Zeroes, zeroed (verbs)

Graphics

For assets and guidelines related to photos, icons, and illustrations, see [HPE Brand Central](#).

See also: [Alternative \(alt\) text](#); [Inclusive images](#)

Using text in a graphic

Create graphics that are primarily pictorial, not textual. This can help readers absorb the meaning quicker and can circumvent two issues:

- Translation costs more when graphics have to be changed.
- Visually impaired readers can be hindered by graphical text.

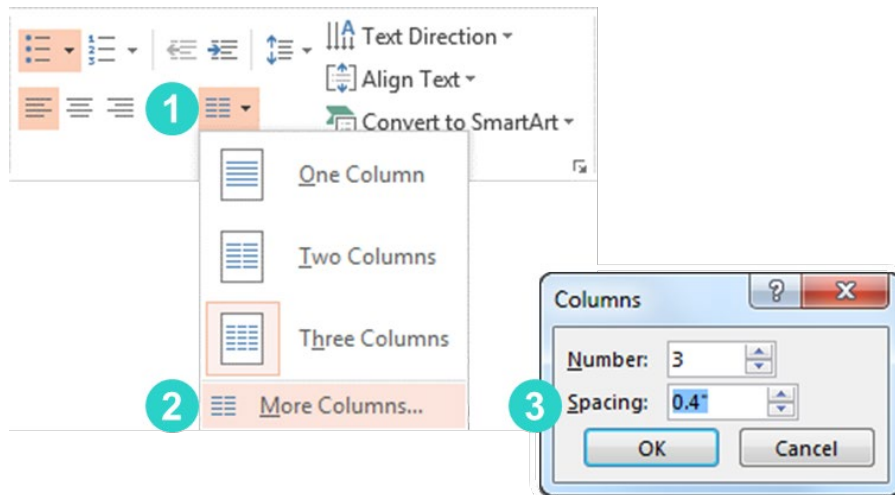
Whenever possible, use plain text outside of a graphic. If you must use graphical text:

- Anticipate how the text might expand when translated and design the graphic accordingly, such as not placing text in boxes.
- For online graphics, include all the text verbatim in alt text to aid accessibility.

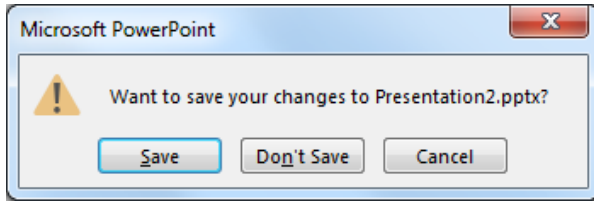
Screen captures

Use a screen capture when helpful for instructions. Don't use a screen capture just to show what a dialog box looks like if the information can be clearly described in text. Multiple screen captures with no added value needlessly increase the file size and the cost of translation.

Example of a useful screen capture



Example of an unnecessary screen capture



If an entire screen shot isn't needed or doesn't fit, crop it accordingly. If part of the text isn't legible, zoom in and crop the desired portion of the screen.

Graphics in technical writing

Graphics, also referred to as figures, can increase the reader's understanding of a topic and help to break up long passages of text. Graphics can also enhance text by showing:

- Spatial relationships among physical units, such as a hardware configuration
- Sequence of tasks in a procedure, such as an installation flow diagram
- Results of interactions or activities, such as the sequence of events that result from using a particular command

Use graphics in technical writing to illustrate hardware, concepts, relationships, activities, and procedures described in text.

Guidelines for technical graphics

In addition to the preceding guidelines for graphics in general, following are some guidelines for technical graphics:

- Have a clear objective in mind. What idea do you want to clarify? What procedure do you want to show? What relationship or interaction do you want to depict?
- Indicate the orientation of a hardware graphic as the front, rear, top, or bottom view.
- Size each graphic to fit on a single page.
- Index graphics according to topic.
- Use minimal or no footnotes for graphics; adequately describe the graphic in the body text.

Detail

Keep graphics as simple as possible without sacrificing meaning or context. A graphic should highlight only the items being described. Excessive detail is distracting and confusing.

When using graphics from another source, delete any details, such as numbers, that do not apply to the text being illustrated. By focusing on a specific part of a graphic and deleting the area surrounding it, the graphic can be reused in other content.

Numbering

Formal graphics have a numbered reference and a caption. Number the graphics sequentially according to your naming convention.

Examples

Figure 1: Front panel components

Figure 4-1: Thumbscrews on the rear panel

Informal (inline) graphics are placed within the body text and have a caption only.

Captions

Include a caption for all technical graphics.

- Write concise, descriptive captions that are not complete sentences.
- Use sentence case.
- Do not end a caption with a period.
- Do not label a figure by what it is, such as a chart, diagram, or illustration.

Correct: Figure 1: Front panel components

Incorrect: Figure 1: Diagram of front panel components

- If a figure points out a single part on a device, begin the caption with the name of the part, but do not include an article before the name.

Correct: Figure 4-1: Thumbscrews on the rear panel

Incorrect: Figure 4-1: The thumbscrews on the rear panel

Incorrect: Figure 4-1: Location of the thumbscrews on the rear panel

- If a figure demonstrates a user action, begin the caption with a verb form that describes the action.

Example

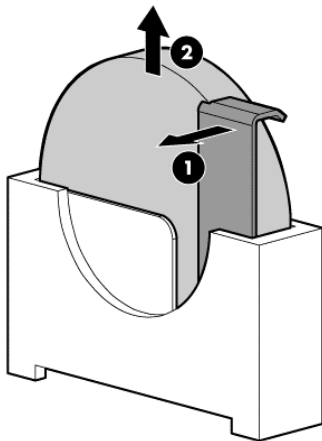


Figure 8: Removing the battery

Introducing a graphic

Introduce a graphic in the text preceding it. The exception is when multiple related graphics, often close together, would create repetitive and unnecessary references.

Write *figure* with an initial cap only when referring to a specific figure number.

Examples

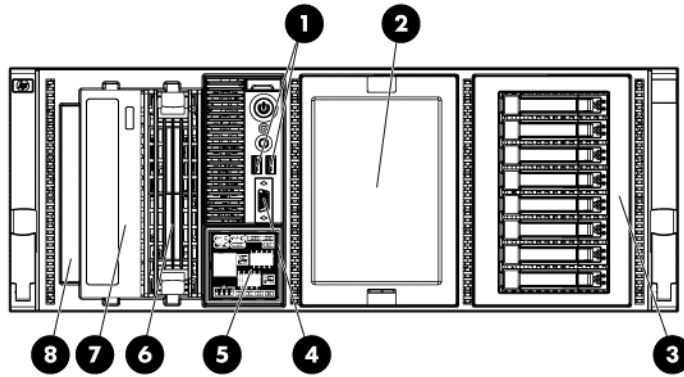
The location of the hard drive is shown in Figure 3.

The following figures demonstrate each step of the assembly procedure.

Callouts and labels

Figure callouts and other labels within figures identify or explain content

For hardware graphics, use numbered callouts with a table or legend instead of using graphical text, as in the following example. This reduces translation costs because the graphic doesn't have to be re-created.



Item	Description
1	USB connectors (2)
2	Drive cage blank
3	SAS/SATA drives (8)
4	Front video connector (rack model only)
5	Systems Insight Display
6	Removable media bay
7	DVD-ROM drive
8	Optical drive blank

Figure 2: Front panel components

Appendixes

An appendix is a section of extra information after the main content. To determine if information belongs in an appendix, consider the following questions:

- Does the information disrupt the flow of text and affect the reader's comprehension? Long tables or graphs that might bury an idea and create confusion are better placed in an appendix.
- Is the information essential to understanding a concept or instruction? If so, it should remain in the main content to avoid cross-referencing.
- Does the information provide further clarification or helpful information? If not, it's probably unnecessary to include it anywhere.
- Is the information in the appendix closely connected to and referenced in the text? If not, it might be unnecessary to include it in the main document. An alternative is to reference the information source.

Guidelines for appendixes

- List appendixes in the table of contents.
- Place appendixes after the last section or chapter.
- If your document includes an index:
 - Place the appendixes before the index.
 - Be sure to index information contained in the appendixes.
- Place appendixes in the order they are referred to in the main content.
- Use sequential lettering (A, B, C, etc.) to identify appendixes. If you have only one appendix, either give it no letter or use *Appendix A*.
- For documents with chapter-oriented paging, use the following style for the appendixes:
 - Appendix-oriented paging (A-2, A-3, etc.).
 - Appendix-oriented numbering for tables and figures.
- Do not include cross-references in an appendix to the main content.
- Include an introductory paragraph in an appendix to describe its contents. The following example shows an instance where this would be optional.

Example: The title is “Appendix A: Regional contacts,” and the appendix consists of a table with column headings that clearly identify the content.

Glossaries

Consider having a glossary if your content is lengthy and contains many unfamiliar terms, abbreviations, and acronyms.

Place the glossary after the main content. If you have other back matter, follow this order:

1. Appendix
2. Glossary
3. Index

List the glossary in the table of contents. Do not index glossary entries.

Use sentence case for both the glossary term and its definition. Separate them with an em dash (no spaces) or a colon (one space after). End each definition with a period.

Example: Back matter—The pages at the end of a book following the main part.

Otherwise, use a table for the glossary, putting the terms and definitions in separate columns.

Glossary definitions

Like definitions in a dictionary, use a clearly worded phrase to define a glossary term. Do not repeat the term in the defining phrase.

Example: Fiscal year—The time period for a company's financial reporting.

Optionally, add one or more complete sentences to clarify or expound on the definition.

Example: Fiscal year—The time period for a company's financial reporting. HPE's fiscal year begins on November 1 and ends on October 31.

Definitions of nouns

Begin the definition of a singular noun with an article (*a, an, the*).

Example: Appendix—A section of extra information after the main content.

Definitions of verbs

Begin the definition of a verb with an infinitive (the word *to* plus the verb).

Correct: Reimage—To restore data to a hard disk from a disk image.

Incorrect: Reimage—Restoring data to a hard disk from a disk image.

Definitions of adjectives

Begin the definition of an adjective with a phrase such as *refers to, pertains to, or has to do with*.

Example: Drop-down—Refers to a menu that is opened by the user.

Definitions of acronyms

Include two entries for each acronym. One entry contains the spelled-out term, the acronym in parentheses, and the definition. The other entry contains the acronym with a cross-reference to the definition.

Example

Learning management system (LMS)—A learner environment providing access to training with search, registration, and transcript capability.

LMS—See Learning management system.

Terms with two meanings

If a term has two distinct meanings, number the entries, putting the most common usage first. It might be helpful to include an example after each definition.

Cross-references in a glossary

Use cross-references to direct readers to other terms in the glossary.

- Use *See* to refer to the glossary entry containing the definition.
- Use *See also* to refer to a related glossary entry.

You can also use cross-references to help show similarities and differences between terms.

- Use *Synonymous with* to refer to a synonym of the term you are defining.
- Use *Contrast with* to refer to an antonym of the term you are defining.

Indexes

An index is a systematic topical analysis, alphabetically arranged. It is a reader's most important map for locating information in a random-access manner.

Index length

Index length depends on the length of the document and the complexity of the content. The ratio of document size to index size should be approximately 10:1. This assumes the document is primarily text. For example, if the body of a document is 300 pages, the index should be about 30 pages.

However, a manual that is extremely technical might require a larger index to achieve adequate coverage and cross-referencing. A manual that is primarily illustrations and little text might have a shorter index.

Index editing

After you generate an index, edit the contents for consistency. Whenever possible, edit the index field codes in your documents and generate the index again rather than editing the index manually.

Anytime you update the document, be sure to edit the index for entries needing to be corrected, added, or omitted.

Capitalizing index entries

Index entries are lowercase, except for proper nouns and acronyms.

Examples

deduplication

StoreOnce

VSAs

Plural noun entries

Use the plural form of a noun when more than one type is mentioned in the main content.

Example

connectors

 keyboard

 illustrated, 14

 specifications, 14

mouse

 illustrated, 18

 specifications, 18

Subentries

Use subentries when an item has four or more references. Keep subentries as short as possible. Use up to two levels of subentries, for a total of three levels.

Correct

files

- creating, 4
- saving
 - as ASCII text, 9
 - as RTF, 9
 - to different drive, 11

Incorrect

files

- creating, 4
- saving, as ASCII text, 9
- saving, as RTF, 9
- saving, to different drive, 11

Use a key word or phrase to begin the first-level entry. Include a description if necessary, but be sure to invert the word order so the key word is presented first.

Example: interrupts, printer

Subentries should bear a logical relationship to the first-level entry. Both levels should be joined to make sense grammatically and semantically.

Example

switches

- function location, 23
- settings, 42
- for video graphics controller, 44

Sort order for entries

Index entries are sorted automatically in a specific order controlled by your application. The default order for Microsoft Word is:

1. Special characters (symbols)
2. Numerals
3. Uppercase letters
4. Lowercase letters
5. Word-by-word and numeral-by-numeral (for example, 15 GB before 7 GB)

If you must generate an index manually, use the same order as above.

Acronyms in an index

Commonly used acronyms that are not defined in the document are not defined in the index.

Example

DIMMs

- configuring, 7
- installing, 9

For acronyms that are defined in the document, include the acronym and the spelled-out term with a cross-reference.

Example

FC-AL See Fibre Channel Arbitrated Loop

Fibre Channel Arbitrated Loop (FC-AL)

defined, 5

specifications, 7

Dual listings in an index

Some terms need to be included twice. For example, interrupts can be referred to by number or by function. In a technical reference guide index, interrupts should be listed by ascending number and also alphabetically by function.

Cross-referencing will not work in this situation because the interrupt number and its function are not synonymous, but are two ways of referring to the same piece of information.

Example

interrupts, printer

IRQ3, 102

IRQ7, 34

IRQ8, 49

IRQ3, 102

IRQ7, 34

IRQ8, 49

Page references in an index

When a term is subdivided, include page numbers only for the subentries.

Correct

cache memory controller

bus operation, 19, 42

description, 15, 23

memory cache, 15, 25, 34

specifications, 72

Incorrect

cache memory controller, 15, 19, 23, 25, 34, 42, 72

When you cross-reference generic and specific terms, include the page numbers only for the specific terms.

Example

M

monitor. See video graphics color monitor, video graphics monochrome monitor

V

video graphics color monitor, 15, 62

video graphics monochrome monitor, 16, 63

If a discussion of an indexed term covers more than one page, you can provide either the first page or the range of pages with an en dash between.

Example

cache memory, 67

cache memory, 67–83

See and See *also* cross-references

Thorough cross-referencing makes an index more useful to the reader and reduces entries. Use cross-references to direct the reader to:

- Synonyms
- Entries alphabetized under a different letter
- Related entries

Use sentence case and italics for *See* and *See also*. Do not end *See* and *See also* references with periods in an index.

Example: pointer, 90. *See also* pointing device

See

Use the *See* cross-reference for synonyms and for entries found under a different letter.

Use the most familiar version of the term as the primary entry and put page references with that term. Use *See* to refer to the accepted term.

Example: image deployment. *See* deployment

See also

Use *See also* to refer to a related entry. The current entry must contain at least one page reference.

Examples

error codes, 25. *See also* error messages

Kickstart file, 57, 58. *See also* installation configuration file

Other resources

HPE standards

- [HPE Brand Central](#)
- [HPE Legal, Security & Business Resilience](#)
 - [Labeling Information Assets](#)
 - [Trademarks](#)
 - [Copyrights](#)

External writing and editing resources

- [Merriam-Webster dictionary](#)
- [The Chicago Manual of Style](#)
(some links require a subscription)
- [The Elements of Style](#)
- [The Purdue Online Writing Lab](#)
- [Metric conversion calculator](#)

International standards

- [International Organization for Standardization](#)
- [The International System of Units](#)
 - [Guide for the Use of the International System of Units \(SI\)](#)

Appendix A: Technical acronyms that do not require definition

The acronyms in this inexhaustive list don't require definition for most technical audiences, and some of the acronyms don't require definition for any audience, such as DVD. Carefully consider your target audience when deciding whether to define an acronym.

Acronym	Definition
AD	Active Directory
AES	Advanced Encryption Standard
ANSI	American National Standards Institute
ASCII	American Standard Code for Information Interchange
ASIC	Application-Specific Integrated Circuit
ATA	Advanced Technology Attachment
BIOS	Basic Input/Output System
CAD	computer-aided design
CCITT	Comité Consultatif International de Télégraphique et Téléphonique
CD	compact disc
CD-R	compact disc-recordable
CD-RW	compact disc-rewritable
CIFS	common Internet file system
CIM	Common Interface Model, Common Information Model
CLI	command line interface
CMOS	complementary metal-oxide semiconductor
CORBA	Common Object Request Broker Architecture
CPU	central processing unit
CVE	Common Vulnerabilities and Exposures
DAR encryption	Data at Rest encryption
DDR	Double Data Rate
DES	Data Encryption Standard
DHCP	Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol
DLT	digital linear tape
DIMM	Dual In-line Memory Module
DRAM	dynamic random access memory
DVD	digital versatile disk, digital video disk
ECC	Error Correction Code
EDI	electronic data interchange
EIA	Electronic Industries Alliance

Acronym	Definition
EISA	Extended Industry Standard Architecture
EPROM	erasable programmable read-only memory
EULA	End-User License Agreement
FAQ	frequently asked questions
FC	Fibre Channel
FIFO	first in, first out
FTP	File Transfer Protocol
GIF	Graphics Interface Format
GPU	graphics processing unit
GUI	graphical user interface
HBA	host bus adapter
HDD	hard disk drive
HDMI	High-Definition Multimedia Interface
HTML	Hypertext Markup Language
HTTP	Hypertext Transfer Protocol
ICMP	Internet Control Message Protocol
IEEE	Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers
I/O	input/output
IOPS	<u>input/output operations per second</u>
IP	Internet Protocol
ISA	Industry Standard Architecture
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
IRQ	Interrupt Request
ISDN	Integrated Services Digital Network
ISP	Internet Service Provider
IT	Information Technology
ITIL	Information Technology Infrastructure Library
ITU-T	International Telecommunications Union – Telecom
JPEG	Joint Photographic Experts Group
JSON	JavaScript Object Notation
JTAG	Joint Test Action Group
KVM	keyboard video mouse
LAN	local area network
LCD	liquid crystal display
LED	light emitting diode

Acronym	Definition
LDAP	Lightweight Directory Access Protocol
LFF	large form factor
LIFO	last in, first out
MAC address	Media Access Control Address
MBR	Master Boot Record
MIME	Multipurpose Internet Mail Extension
MIS	Management Information System
MPEG	Moving Pictures Experts Group
NAS	network attached storage
NEC	National Electric Code
NEMA	National Electrical Manufacturers Association
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
NFS	Network File System
NIC	network interface card
NTFS	New Technology File System
NVMe	non-volatile memory express
NVRAM	non-volatile random access memory
ODBC	Open Database Connectivity
OEM	original equipment manufacturer
OLAP	online analytical processing
OLE	Object Linking and Embedding
OLTP	online transaction processing
OS	operating system
OSF	Open Software Foundation
OSI	Open System Interconnection
PBX	Private Branch Exchange
PC	personal computer
PCI	peripheral component interconnect
PCIe	peripheral component interconnect express
PCI-X	peripheral component interconnect extended
PCMCIA	Personal Computer Memory Card International Association
PDF	portable document format
PNG	portable network graphic
POST	Power-On Self-Test
PROM	programmable read-only memory

Acronym	Definition
PXE	preboot execution environment
RAID	Redundant Array of Inexpensive Disks
RAM	random access memory
RDP	Remote Desktop Protocol
RGB	red green blue
RISC	reduced instruction set computer
ROM	read-only memory
RPM	revolutions per minute
SAN	storage area network
SATA	Serial Advanced Technology Attachment
SCSI	small computer system interface
SDK	software development kit
SFF	small form factor
SFP	small form-factor pluggable
SMTP	Simple Mail Transfer Protocol
SNA	Systems Network Architecture
SNMP	Simple Network Management Protocol
SPOF	single point of failure
SQL	Structured Query Language
SRAM	static random access memory
SSD	solid state disk
SSL	Secure Sockets Layer
SVGA	super video graphics array
TCP	Transmission Control Protocol
TCP/IP	Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol
TIFF	Tag Image File Format
TLS	Transport Layer Security
UI	user interface
URL	Uniform Resource Locator
USB	Universal Serial Bus
VAR	value-added reseller
VDI	Virtual Desktop Infrastructure
VGA	video graphics array
VLAN	virtual local area network
VLSI	very large-scale integration

Acronym	Definition
WAN	wide area network
WBEM	Web-Based Enterprise Management
WLAN	wireless local area network
WMI	Windows Management Instrumentation
WWAN	wireless wide area network
WWN	World Wide Name
XML	Extensible Markup Language
XSL	Extensible Stylesheet Language
XSL-FO	XSL-Formatting Objects