



## Writing Numbers

Although usage varies, most people spell out numbers that can be expressed in one or two words and use figures for other numbers:

### Words

over two pounds

six million dollars

after thirty-one years

eighty-three people

### Figures

after 126 days

only \$31.50

6,381 bushels

4.78 liters

**Here are some examples of specific situations.**

### Days and Years

December 12, 1965 or 12 December 1965

A.D. 1066

in 1900

in 1971-72 or in 1971-1972

the eighties, the twentieth century

the 1980's or the 1980s

### Time of Day

8:00 A.M. (or) a.m. (or) eight o'clock in the morning

4:30 P.M. (or) p.m. (or) half-past four in the afternoon

### Addresses

16 Tenth Street

350 West 114 Street

### Identification Numbers

Room 8

Channel 18

Interstate 65

Henry VIII

## **Page and Division of Books and Plays**

page 30

chapter 6

in act 3, scene 2 (or) in Act III, Scene ii

## **Decimals and Percentages**

a 2.7 average

13 1/4 percent

.037 metric ton

## **Large Round Numbers**

four billion dollars (or) \$4 billion

16,500,000 (or) 16.5 million

## **Notes on Usage**

### ***Repeat numbers in legal or commercial writing.***

The bill will not exceed one hundred (100) dollars.

### ***Numbers in series and statistics should be consistent.***

two apples, six oranges, and three bananas

**NOT:** two apples, 6 oranges, and 3 bananas

115 feet by 90 feet (or) 115' x 90'

scores of 25-6 (or) scores of 25 to 6

The vote was 9 in favor and 5 opposed

### ***Write out numbers beginning sentences.***

Six percent of the group failed.

**NOT:** 6% of the group failed.

### ***Use a combination of figures and words for numbers when such a combination will keep your writing clear.***

Unclear: The club celebrated the birthdays of 6 90-year-olds who were born in the city. (may cause the reader to read '690' as one number.) Clearer: The club celebrated the birthdays of six 90-year-olds who were born in the city.