

## Writing Numbers in Scientific and Technical Writing

### SPELL OUT NUMBERS BETWEEN ZERO AND NINE:

Spell out numbers between zero and nine.

*Only eight people attended the meeting today. My father has three sisters.*

Exceptions to this rule:

- Use numerals when grouping a number between zero and nine with a larger number.  
*Only 8 out of 40 people attended the meeting today.*
- Use figures when writing a precise measurement or mathematical function.  
*4 cm; 7%*

### USE NUMERALS FOR NUMBERS 10 AND UP:

*This event was last held 23 days ago.*

*There were 542 people in attendance at the hockey game.*

Exceptions to this rule:

- Spell out the number when it begins a sentence.  
*Forty-eight out of seventy people voted for the bylaw.*  
*Two hundred forty-six people are in the Science program.*

### OTHER RULES

#### Use numerals in the following situations:

- Decimals (*5.33; 10.25*)
- Divisions of books (*Chapter 3; pages 43-90*)
- Addresses (*11 Maple Lane*)
- Specific dates (word form is acceptable if the date is between one and nine)  
(*January 23, 2009; the 15th of May*)

#### Spell out numbers in the following situations:

- Indefinite amounts (*millions of people; over one billion*)
- General dates (*the Sixties; the fifteenth century*)

#### Either numerals or words can be used in the following situations:

- Fractions: If fractions are greater than one, use numerals. If they are less than one, spell them out  
(*1 ½, 2 ¾; two-thirds, nine-tenths*)
- Time of day (*6:00 A.M., 5:30 P.M., 12:02; six o'clock, five-thirty, half past five*)

#### Combinations of numerals and words may be used in the following situation:

- Very large numbers (*66 hundred, 7 thousand, 203 million, 1 billion, 5 dozen*)

## Writing Numbers in Humanities and Business Letters

### FOR NUMBERS EXPRESSIBLE IN ONE OR TWO WORDS:

Spell out numbers that can be written in two words or less.

*There were seventy-eight people at the meeting today.*

*My father has three sisters.*

*She won the election by five thousand votes.*

Exception to this rule:

- Use numerals when grouping a written number with a number that uses numerals.

*Only 78 out of 526 people attended the meeting today.*

### FOR NUMBERS EXPRESSIBLE IN MORE THAN TWO WORDS:

Numerals are used for all numbers that are expressed in three or more words.

*There will be 125 people working in this department.*

*The building should measure to 23.5 metres in height.*

Exception to this rule:

- Spell out the number when it begins a sentence.

*Forty-eight out of seventy people voted for the bylaw.*

*Three thousand five hundred people are registered in Arts programs at Saint Mary's.*

### OTHER RULES:

#### Use numerals in the following situations:

- Decimals (5.33; 6.28)
- Divisions of books/plays (*Chapter 3; pages 43-90; Act 3*)
- Addresses (*11 Maple Lane*)

#### Spell out numbers in the following situations:

- Indefinite (non-specific) amounts (*millions of people; over one billion*)
- General dates (*the Sixties; the fifteenth century*)

#### Either numerals or words can be used in the following situations:

- Fractions. If fractions are greater than one, use numerals. If less than one, use words.  
(*1 ½; 2 ¾; two-thirds; nine-tenths*)
- Dates (*January 23, 2009; the twenty-third of January, 2009*)
- Time of day (*6:00 A.M.; 5:30 P.M.; 12:02; six o'clock, five-thirty, half past five*)

#### Combinations of numerals and words may be used in the following situation:

- Very large numbers (*66 hundred; 7 thousand; 203 million; 1 billion*)