
International Standard



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Documentation — Rules for the abbreviation of title words and titles of publications

Documentation — Règles pour l'abréviation des mots dans les titres et des titres des publications

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work.

Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for approval before their acceptance as International Standards by the ISO Council. They are approved in accordance with ISO procedures requiring at least 75 % approval by the member bodies voting.

International Standard ISO 4 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 46, *Documentation*.

ISO 4 was first published in 1972. This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition, of which it constitutes a technical revision.

The List of Serial Title Word Abbreviations mentioned in clause 1 is regarded as a companion to and should be used in conjunction with this International Standard.

Documentation — Rules for the abbreviation of title words and titles of publications

0 Introduction

The rules contained herein are applicable to the abbreviation of the titles of serial publications of all types and, if appropriate, of non-serial publications. They are intended to guide and assist authors, editors, librarians, and others working in various fields of information transfer in preparing unambiguous abbreviations for the titles of publications cited for example in footnotes, references and bibliographies. Such citations include those produced by abstracting and indexing services, lists of references accompanying articles, and public or private files where document identification is a concern.

Owing to the large number of different serial and non-serial publications subject to reference by abbreviated citation, the many different languages in which they are published, the different ways of recording them and the widely diversified intellectual backgrounds of persons using title abbreviations, it is not possible to set down rules that will in every instance assure unassisted reconstruction of the original titles of the publications cited in abbreviated form. As one way to facilitate this identification, authors and editors who make extensive use of title abbreviations in their publications are encouraged and urged to make available to their readers, at frequent intervals, lists of the abbreviated titles they use, with corresponding equivalent unabbreviated titles.

The basic philosophy presented in this International Standard is that each title should have its own unique abbreviation. This is to be achieved through application of the rules this International Standard provides in conjunction with a list of standardized title word abbreviations. It is recognized that for international information exchange an international system for the establishment of unique title abbreviations of serial publications is also necessary. By this arrangement no two titles will have identical abbreviations, nor will a single abbreviation represent more than one title.

1 Scope and field of application

This International Standard gives rules for abbreviating titles of serial and, if appropriate, non-serial publications in the Italic, Germanic, Balto-Slavonic, Hellenic, Uralo-Altai languages. This International Standard also serves as the basis for the establishment of title word abbreviations entered into the List of Serial Title Word Abbreviations.¹⁾

2 References

ISO 9, *Documentation — Transliteration of Slavic Cyrillic characters into Latin characters.*²⁾

ISO 843, *Documentation — Transliteration of Greek characters into Latin characters.*³⁾

3 Definitions

3.1 acronym: A word formed by the initial letter or letters of each of the successive parts or major parts of a compound term.

3.2 artificial word: A word created for a special purpose and not normally found in dictionaries.

3.3 compound word: A word whose component parts are themselves words, combining forms or affixes.

3.4 contraction: A shortening of a word, syllable, or word group by omission of letters.

3.5 corporate body: Organization or group of persons identified by a particular name.

3.6 generic term: A term in a title that indicates the kind and/or frequency of a publication such as: *abhandlungen, annales, berichte, bulletin, cahiers, annual report, comptes rendus, proceedings, yearbook, etc.*

3.7 qualifying element: An element added to an abbreviated title to make the abbreviated title unique.

3.8 section title: A title specific to a subdivision of a publication. The subdivision may additionally be designated by a number or letter.

3.9 serial: A publication, in print or in non-print form, issued in successive parts, usually having numerical or chronological

1) This list is published jointly by ISO and the International Centre of ISDS, 20, rue Bachaumont, 75002 Paris.

2) At present at the stage of draft. (Revision of ISO/R 9-1968.)

3) At present at the stage of draft. (Revision of ISO/R 843-1968.)

designations, and intended to be continued indefinitely. Serials include periodicals, newspapers, annuals (reports, yearbooks, directories, etc.), journals, memoirs, proceedings, transactions, etc. of societies, and monographic series.

NOTE — It should be noted that this definition does not include works produced in successive parts for a period predetermined as finite, and that it allows the inclusion of unnumbered series.

3.10 title: A word, phrase, character, or group of characters which appear in the work and serve to name and identify it.

3.11 truncation: A shortening of a word by the omission of two or more continuous letters at the end.

4 Rules for word abbreviations

4.1 Methods

The recommended method of abbreviation is by truncation.

Example:

literature : lit.

Words are also abbreviated by contraction according to language practice.

Examples:

Zeitung : Ztg.

könyvtár : kv.

Abbreviation to a single letter is limited to very frequently used generic words.

Example:

Journal : J.

Whether the method of abbreviation is truncation or contraction, at least two letters shall be dropped from the word to be abbreviated. Words from which only a single letter would be dropped are not abbreviated.

A full stop (period) should be used to indicate an abbreviation, and is required after all word abbreviations.

4.2 Diacritic marks

Diacritic marks should be retained in the word abbreviations. For languages where an alternative spelling without diacritics is also possible this alternative may be used instead (see also 4.8).

Example:

Überwachungs- : Überwach.

Ueberwach.

4.3 Artificial words

Artificial words shall be retained as they appear on the publication.

Examples:

diamat

chemtech

4.4 Plurals, other inflected forms and derivatives

4.4.1 Plurals

An abbreviation for the singular form of a word shall also be used for the plural form, as long as the orthography of the abbreviation is the same for both the plural and the singular forms.

Examples:

importation : import.

importations : import.

Jahrbuch : Jahrb.

Jahrbücher : Jahrb.

When the method of abbreviation is contraction and if the orthography of the word changes in the plural form, the abbreviation of the plural form may be different from the singular form.

Example:

country : ctry.

countries : ctries.

The plural form of a word may be abbreviated even when the singular form is not abbreviated, provided that more than one letter would be dropped.

Example:

child not abbreviated

children abbreviated as child.

4.4.2 Other inflected forms

An abbreviation shall be used for all inflected forms of a word.

Example:

promyšlennost' : prom.

promyšlennosti : prom.

promyšlennostej : prom.

4.4.3 Derivatives

If orthographic changes in the derivative form change the part of the word retained as an abbreviation, the abbreviation for the derivative form should be different from that of the root form.

Example:

Scotland: Scotl.
Scottish : Scott.

If the orthographic changes do not affect the abbreviation for the derivative form, the abbreviation for the derivative and root forms should be the same.

Examples:

physics : phys.
physical : phys.
organization : organ.
organisé : organ.

The derivative of a word may be abbreviated even when the root form is not abbreviated.

Example:

Gefahr not abbreviated
gefährlich abbreviated as gefährl.

A derivative of a word which has acquired a different meaning or a different morphological structure should have a different abbreviation.

Example:

psychic- : psych.
psycholog- : psychol.

4.5 Appended article

In some languages the definite article is attached to the word. The same abbreviation should be used for the word with an appended article or without one.

Example:

bibliotek : bibl.
biblioteket : bibl.

4.6 Unrelated words

Unrelated words shall have different abbreviations.

Example:

ind. correct for : industry, industrial
incorrect for : Indian, Indiana
indigency, indigo

4.7 Compound words

Each component of a compound word should be abbreviated.

The abbreviation of each component should be followed by a full stop (period) without a space. However, full stops (periods) with the exception of the last one may be omitted if required by national practice.

Examples:

Forschungstechnologie: Forsch.technol.
gazdaságstatisztika : gazdstat.
hydrogeology : hydrogeol.

Hyphens appearing in compound words shall be retained.

Examples:

technisch-industriell : tech.-ind.
Bio-acoustics : Bio-acoust.

4.8 Transliteration

Words appearing in Cyrillic and Greek alphabets may be transliterated according to ISO 9 and ISO 843 for the purpose of international communication. Diacritics occurring in the transliterated word, shall be retained in the abbreviation.

Examples:

upēresia : upēr.
sučasnij : sučas.

4.9 Substitution of characters

The abbreviation of a word should not contain any characters not present in the word itself.

Examples:

premier
correct : prem.
incorrect: 1er

5 Rules for title abbreviation

5.1 Word order

The order of the abbreviated words should follow the order of the words as they appear in the title.

5.2 Single word titles

Titles consisting of a single word, exclusive of an article or preposition, shall not be abbreviated.

If the title consists of one word followed by a generic term denoting a part, section, series or supplement, the title shall not be abbreviated while the generic term may be abbreviated.

Example:

complete title : Medicina. Supplement

abbreviated title: Medicina, Suppl.

5.3 Articles, conjunctions and prepositions

Articles, conjunctions and prepositions shall be omitted from title abbreviations with the exception of prepositions and articles that are integral parts of personal names, place names or technical terms like "in vivo" and "in vitro", or where the structure of the language or national practice prevent these words from being omitted.

Examples:

The New Hungarian Quarterly : New Hung. Q.

Los Alamos Life Science Symposium: Los Alamos Life Sci. Symp.

Prepositions occurring in the beginning of a title should be retained.

Examples:

Vom SIH für Sie : Vom SIH Sie

Vom Wasser : Vom Wasser

Za Wolność i Lud : Za Wol. Lud.

5.4 Acronyms, groups of initials, letter designators

An acronym or group of initials or letter designators in a title are retained in the abbreviated title.

Example:

AEG Mitteilungen: AEG Mitt.

5.5 Capitalization

Capitalize the first letter of the first element of the abbreviation. For the remainder of the abbreviation capitalize all letters, the first letter of each element, or none, or according to national practice.

Examples:

Archives of internal medicine: Arch. intern. med.

Arch. Intern. Med.

Arch. intern. Med.

ARCH. INTERN. MED.

5.6 Punctuation

The punctuation which occurs in the full title should be retained in the abbreviated title with the exception of commas and full stops (periods); commas should be omitted in the abbreviated title and full stops replaced by commas. Full stops should only be used to indicate an abbreviation.

Examples:

Acta mineralogica, petrografica : Acta mineral. petrogr.

Soviet Physics. Technical Physics: Sov. Phys., Tech. Phys.

5.7 Special characters and symbols

Special characters or symbols appearing in the original title should be retained unchanged in the title abbreviation.

Examples:

Full title : Metall-Reinigung + Vorbehandlung

Abbreviated title: Met.-Reinig. + Vorbehandl.

Full title : New 4 π B-Multiwire Proportional Counter for the 4 π B-Y Coincidence Measurement

Abbreviated title: New 4 π B-Multiwire Proportional Counter 4 π B-Y Coincidence Meas.

5.8 Distinction and clarification

Identical abbreviated titles should be distinguished by adding a qualifying element in parentheses: place (town), place and date, edition, or if these are not sufficient other qualifying information. The qualifying element may be abbreviated.

Examples:

Full titles: Expériences et innovations en éducation

Experiencias e innovaciones en educación

Experiments and innovations in education

Abbreviated titles: Exp. innov. educ. (Ed. fr.)

Exp. innov. educ. (Ed. esp.)

Exp. innov. educ. (Engl. ed.)

5.9 Sections and series

When a serial publication appears in more than one section or series distinguished by a number, letter or section title, the distinguished features shall be included in the abbreviation. Abbreviations of generic words such as Part, Section, Series, etc. need to be retained in the title abbreviation only if they are required for identification purposes.