



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

# FAOSTYLE

## English

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# 1. ABOUT FAOSTYLE

## 1.1 \_\_\_\_ WHAT IS FAOSTYLE?

FAOSTYLE is FAO's style guide. It should be applied to all FAO publications and documents to ensure clarity and consistency. We also recommend using FAOSTYLE for web content. FAOSTYLE is available in FAO's six official languages.

## 1.2 \_\_\_\_ WHO SHOULD USE FAOSTYLE?

All FAO staff, consultants and contractors involved in writing, reviewing, editing, translating or proofreading FAO information products should refer to FAOSTYLE. Use of FAOSTYLE should be included in the terms of reference (TORs) for all authoring, translation, editorial and proofreading contracts. Standard TORs for editorial contracts can be found here.

## 1.3 \_\_\_\_ WHAT IF I NEED INFORMATION THAT IS NOT COVERED IN FAOSTYLE?

For editorial issues not addressed in FAOSTYLE, please refer to Annex 2 Online resources. Please note that some of the links referred to throughout this document and in Annex 2 are internal documents. If you are an external editor and require access to any of these resources, please ask your hiring manager. For further information on questions such as copyright, content development and marketing, please refer to Publishing at FAO – Strategy and guidance. In the case of any contradiction between the content of FAOSTYLE and *Publishing at FAO – Strategy and guidance* (published June 2017), please refer to this edition of FAOSTYLE as the more recent document.

## 1.4 \_\_\_\_ WHAT'S NEW?

Since the last update of FAOSTYLE in 2017, the following major changes have been made:

- General spelling rules have been outlined.
- Correct examples within the main text are shown in blue and incorrect or discouraged examples are shown in red.
- The expressions EU 27 and EU 25 have been changed to include a hyphen: EU-27, EU-25.
- The recommended word list from 2014's FAOSTYLE has been reintroduced and updated.
- Support for using the Names of countries and territories (NOCS) web page has been revised.
- There are now two distinct systems to cite references in documents. One is the author–date system with a references list, previously referred to as Harvard style, which was outlined in the 2017 edition of FAOSTYLE. The other is an endnotes system, already in use in several flagships.
  - » Reference list templates for each of the two systems have been simplified and modified to acknowledge FAO's digital-first approach. For example, the phrase **also available at** prior to the URL has been removed; more emphasis has been put on the definitive source; FAO sources are no longer treated differently than non-FAO sources; and the punctuation has been simplified.
  - » FAOSTYLE now provides more comprehensive citation examples with more diverse source types.

- CSL (citation style language) for bibliographic software Zotero and Mendeley has been amended to streamline their use, reflecting the changes made to FAO citation style.

## 2. SPELLING

### 2.1 \_\_ GENERAL SPELLING RULES

FAO applies the following spelling rules:

- words ending in **-re/-er**  
prefer **-re**: **centre, calibre, theatre**
- words ending in **-our/-or**  
prefer **-our**: **colour, labour, behaviour**
- words ending in **-ence/-ense**  
prefer **-ence** (for nouns): **defence, offence, licence** (but spell the verb **to license**)
- words ending in **-l** and followed by a suffix  
prefer **-ll** (not **-l**): **traveller, counselled, modelling**
- words ending in **-ize/-ise**  
prefer **-ize**: **organize, realize, theorize**
- words ending in **-yse/-yze**  
prefer **-yse**: **analyse, catalyse, paralyse**

Exceptions to these rules include:

- words that appear in proper names (e.g. **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development** or **Center for Global Development**); and
- quoted material, which should appear as originally written.

When in doubt about the correct spelling to use, refer to **Annex 3 Recommended word list**. This list is not comprehensive, so for words not included in this list, use the first spelling listed in the **Oxford English Dictionary (OED)**.

Aim for consistency. Where alternative spellings and terms are available, ensure that usage is consistent within the same work.

### 2.2 \_\_ DEFAULT LANGUAGE ON MICROSOFT WORD

Ensure that the default language for your document is set to *English (United Kingdom)* by selecting it in the status bar at the bottom of the page, or in the toolbar by selecting Review → Language → Set Proofing Language.

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## 3. PUNCTUATION

### 3.1 \_\_\_ APOSTROPHES

Apostrophes have two functions: to denote possession, e.g. the singular **a reader's letter** (the letter of a reader) and the plural **readers' letters** (the letters of more than one reader); and to indicate a contraction, e.g. **We're unable to meet the deadline** (contraction of **We are**). In general, minimize the use of contractions.

Note the distinction between **it's** (contraction of **it is**) and **its** (genitive), e.g. **It's an important document**, but **its importance is relative**.

Apostrophes are not used when referring to plurals, including numbers and letters, e.g. **the 1960s**, not **the 1960's** and **straight As**, not **straight A's**.

### 3.2 \_\_\_ BRACKETS AND PARENTHESES

Parentheses are often used to include less important text in a sentence or to enclose descriptive information.

When only part of a sentence is enclosed in parentheses, punctuation is placed outside (**as in this example**). (**When a complete sentence is enclosed in parentheses, its punctuation is also enclosed, as in this example.**)

Use square brackets within parentheses (**like this [not parentheses within parentheses]**). Exceptions can be made where there is good justification.

In quotations, use square brackets for editorial additions, e.g. **[sic]** to indicate an error in a quotation.

### 3.3 \_\_\_ COLONS

A colon is used to introduce a list, definition, explanation or quotation. It is usually followed by a lower case letter, e.g. **The programme draws on a range of materials: handbooks and worksheets, posters, notebooks, videos and games, and other teaching materials**. However, an initial capital letter is used when a colon is followed by a complete sentence, e.g. **Land-use planning can be summarized by the following questions: What is the present situation? Is change desirable?**

A colon is recommended to separate elements of a title (or subtitle), i.e. **Trees, forests and land use in drylands: the first global assessment**. When separating two parts of a title (or subtitle), the first word following the colon should be lower case, unless both parts of the title are full sentences, in which case the first word following the colon should be capitalized.

### 3.4 \_\_\_ COMMAS

A comma may separate two independent clauses before a conjunction, e.g. **The sector is largely based in the United States of America, but its reach is global**.

A comma is used after an introductory phrase or word, e.g. **However, they are under no legal obligation to use the revenue received for environmental protection.**

Commas may set off complementary information, e.g. **A United Nations Resolution adopted in September 2015, *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, includes several indicators for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).**

Do not use a comma:

- after **i.e.** and **e.g.**;
- before opening parentheses; or
- before **and** in short lists, e.g. **sheep, goats and oxen.**

A comma may be used in lists before the final **and** to avoid ambiguity, e.g. **The unit was responsible for overall management, research and development, and marketing.** It may also be used where a sentence comprises a complex series of phrases, e.g. **Ensure that the participants receive the training material in advance, have time to prepare their responses, and have access to relevant resources.**

### 3.5 \_\_\_\_ ELLIPSES

When using an ellipsis to indicate an omission in text **...** do not put spaces between the full stops. There should be a space on either side of the ellipsis unless immediately followed by a punctuation mark. Word will format it into a symbol by default, and this default version is correct.

An ellipsis is needed at the end of a quotation if it is a complex statement that does not finish with its original punctuation. A concluding full stop may be added to the ellipsis if appropriate in the context **....** An ellipsis is not needed at the start of a quotation or at the end of a short fragment that is in running text. Use an ellipsis if omitting text in the middle of a quote.

### 3.6 \_\_\_\_ EN-DASHES

An en-dash (–) is longer than a hyphen (-) and can be used in a pair to set off an element that is not part of the main sentence, or alone to add a phrase elaborating on what has gone before.

FAO does not use the longer em-dash (—).

To insert the en-dash, press CTRL+MINUS on the numeric keypad (or ALT+MINUS on Mac) or select the en-dash from under Insert → Symbol. Do not use double hyphens (--) to denote an en-dash.

Paired, parenthetical en-dashes have a space on either side, e.g. **Unemployment in rural areas – home to 94 percent of the poor – has been reduced.** Ideally, they should not be used more than once per paragraph.

An unspaced en-dash is used:

- between words of equal weight (**South–South cooperation, rice–fish farming**);
- for relationships (**dose–response curve, cost–benefit analysis**) when the first part of a compound does not modify the second part;
- for a range of values (**pp. 1–20**);



- for a range of dates (**1987–1993**; **2011–2015**) – see also [Section 8.4 Dates](#); and
- when separating a subtitle from a title (*Trees, forests and land use in drylands: the first global assessment – Full report*). Note that the subtitle should always begin with a capital letter.

### 3.7 \_\_\_\_ FULL STOPS

Use full stops:

- with **a.m.**, **p.m.**, **e.g.** and **i.e.**; and
- in abbreviations such as **ed.**, **et al.**, **Inc.**, **No.**, **p.**, **pp.**, and **vol.**

Do not use full stops:

- after people's titles and qualifications, e.g. **Dr.**, **MSc** and **PhD**;
- in initialisms and acronyms, e.g. **FAO**, **ILO** and **GDP**;
- after abbreviations of units of measurement, e.g. **12 kg** and **30 m**;
- after a heading or the title of a figure, table or box; or
- in contractions where the last letter is the same as that of the original word, e.g. **Ltd** (Limited), and plural contractions, e.g. **eds** (editors) and **vols** (volumes).

### 3.8 \_\_\_\_ HYPHENS

Avoid overuse of hyphens. For general usage, consult the Hyphenation guide of the [Chicago Manual of Style](#).

Turn off the automatic word-break hyphenation function in Word by selecting Layout → Hyphenation → None. At the layout stage, you may need to adjust the hyphenation settings in Adobe InDesign, especially for pages with several columns of text.

Some notes:

- Never use two hyphens together instead of an en-dash.
- Hyphens can be used to break words in justified text, i.e. for wrapping.
- However, never use hyphens to break names of people or places unless the hyphen is part of the name, e.g. **Victoria**, not **Vic-toria**.
- Use a non-breaking space (Alt/Ctrl+Shift+Space, or Option+Space for Macintosh) or a non-breaking hyphen (Alt/Ctrl+Shift+Minus, or Command+Shift+Minus for Macintosh) to avoid ending a line of text with a hyphen.
- With proper nouns, use upper case for all major hyphenated words, e.g. **European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease**.
- Most compound adjectives should be hyphenated when they qualify a noun, e.g. **long-term planning**, but **plan for the long term**; **over-the-counter medicine**, but **the medicine was bought over the counter**.
- Adverbs not ending in **-ly** can be followed by a hyphen when used together with an adjective to modify a noun, e.g. **the problem was well known**, but **a well-known problem**.

- No hyphen should be used after an adverb ending in **-ly**, e.g. **a radically changed situation**.
- Use hyphens for clarity when describing ages, amounts or lengths of time. Compare: **15-year-old fish** (fish that are 15 years old) with **15 year-old fish** (15 fish that are all one year old). **A 15-kg bag of wheat, a three-year plan**.
- Separate a prefix from a date with a hyphen, e.g. **pre-2000**.
- Use hyphens for numeric plurals in a list, e.g. **two-, three- or fourfold**.
- Do not use hyphens in phrasal verbs, e.g. **reserves began to build up, but the build-up was considerable**.
- Words beginning with prefixes are written as one word, with the following exceptions:
  - » when the meaning can be misinterpreted, e.g. **re-form** (form again), but **reform** (change to a better state);
  - » when the prefix ends and the base word begins with certain vowel combinations, leading to potential confusion, e.g. **pre-eminent**;
  - » when the prefixes **non-**, **ex-** and **self-** are used to make a compound, e.g. **non-contributory**, **ex-directory**, **self-discipline**; or
  - » when the base word is capitalized, is a number, or is an abbreviation, e.g. **pro-European**, **post-1970**, **pre-UCS trial**.

### 3.9 \_\_\_\_ LISTS

Be consistent throughout the document with list formatting and grammar.

Always follow the opening sentence or sentence fragment with a colon, and always use:

- a bullet point to indicate each item in a vertical list;
- the same style of bullet for all unordered lists;
- the same numerical and letter hierarchy for complex lists (avoid mixing numbers and bullets in sublists); and
- consistent punctuation and grammar.

#### 3.9.1 Examples

The following examples may be used as general guidelines for vertical lists. Note that these guidelines apply regardless of whether the introductory part of the list is a full sentence or a sentence fragment.

For lists with very short entries (one or two words), the list items are lower case (except if proper nouns) and no punctuation follows the items.

**Available audiovisual equipment includes:**

- **radios**
- **televisions**
- **cameras**

For lists with longer, more complex entries, the list items are lower case (except if proper nouns) and end with a semicolon. The penultimate item ends with a semicolon followed by **and**, and the last item ends with a full stop.

**A variety of audiovisual equipment is available to staff members, including:**

- radios, for communicating between locations;
- televisions, for screening content; **and**
- cameras, for recording events.

When every item in the list is a complete sentence, items must be in sentence case and end with a full stop.

**Any staff members wishing to borrow audiovisual equipment must follow a set of rules:**

- The necessary equipment should be requested from suppliers.
- All staff should provide a budget code for each request.
- Account for any borrowed equipment.

#### 3.9.2 Numbered lists

Use numbered lists when a specific sequence is dictated to facilitate subsequent cross-referencing, e.g. **see point 12**, or because the preceding text makes specific mention of a ranking or number of entries, e.g. **There are 15 reasons why you should offer your support**.

### 3.10 \_\_ NOTE PUNCTUATION (FOOTNOTES AND ENDNOTES)

The note number should be placed at the end of the sentence after the terminal punctuation, with no space following the full stop. **This is an example.<sup>1</sup>** Note that French and Spanish are formatted differently.

Where used within a sentence, the note number should go at the end of the clause after any punctuation. **The process failed to respect the standard procedure,<sup>2</sup> which explains the extreme values.**

Although the general rule is to place the note number after punctuation, the exception is where the number comes after the word preceding an **en-dash<sup>3</sup>** – as shown here.

When more than one reference needs to be inserted, use a comma followed by a space to separate the numbers. **... according to recent reports.<sup>128, 129</sup>**

If both a footnote and an endnote need to be inserted in the same place, put the footnote reference first and the endnote reference second, with a comma and space between the two. **This is an example.<sup>iv, 5</sup>**

Note that the endnote numbers or letters should be superscript within the text. In the Notes section, the numbers may be superscript or not, as long as they are consistent throughout the document. The text of the note itself should start with an initial capital letter and end with a full stop.

Footnotes, however, should be superscript both within the text and in the footnote section at the bottom of the page.

See also **9.2.2 Endnote system (in-text)** for additional information on formatting and setting up endnote citations for referencing.

### 3.11 \_\_ QUOTATION MARKS

Punctuation should be included within the quotation marks “if it is part of the original material!” but if it is not part of the quote, it should be “outside the quote”.

“Where the quotation is a grammatically complete sentence, starting with a capital letter, the full stop lies within the closing quotation marks.”

Quotation marks should be used only for direct quotes and scare quotes (expressions that are colloquial, ironic or purposely use non-standard language). Scare quotes should be used rarely.

Always use double quotation marks (") rather than single quotation marks (') unless there is a quote within a quote, e.g. Baresi (1998, p. 72) reports that “farmers complain about ‘unofficial’ agents.”

When a quotation is three lines or longer, indent the quotation and do not use quotation marks.

### 3.12 \_\_ SEMICOLONS

Semicolons are used to separate independent clauses that have different subjects and are not connected by a conjunction. A semicolon is followed by an initial lower case letter.

In long sentences comprising a series of complex clauses, at least one of which contains a comma, semicolons may replace commas, e.g. The meeting covered IT, human resources and capacity building; reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting and proposed amendments to the agenda; and explored concerns raised by the participants in relation to the new information-sharing platform and software upgrades.

### 3.13 \_\_ SLASHES

The slash / should generally be avoided in running text. When used, there should be no space before or after the slash.

Try to rephrase any sentences that have been written with and/or, which may cause confusion and problems in translation.

Acceptable uses of the slash include:

- for mutually exclusive alternatives such as yes/no or pass/fail, particularly in tables or forms;
- to denote periods such as academic and fiscal years, e.g. the 2008/09 financial year or the Australian summer of 2009/10; and
- to indicate “per” between units of measurement and values, e.g. 12 mg/kg.

### 3.14 \_\_ SPACES

Leave only one space after the full stop between sentences.

Use a non-breaking space between numbers and units, for figure and table numbers (e.g. between Figure and 1 in Figure 1), between title and name, after e.g. and i.e., and in other similar cases.

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## 4. TERMINOLOGY AND NAMES

The main reference for FAO terminology is the [FAO Term Portal](#), which should be consulted in case of any doubt. Please see below for some recurrent style questions.

### 4.1 \_\_\_ FAO-RELATED TERMINOLOGY

The full name of FAO is the [Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations](#). Note that when indicating the acronym, [FAO](#) is placed in parentheses at the end of the full name, not after the word [Organization](#).

The abbreviation is [FAO](#), not [the FAO](#) and not [F.A.O.](#), e.g. [In 1951, FAO moved its headquarters to Rome](#). The abbreviation [FAO of the UN](#) is tolerated for some media purposes but should generally be avoided. Other common mistakes to avoid are the use of [Agricultural](#) or [Organisation](#).

Write [an FAO regulation](#) (not [a FAO regulation](#)).

[FAO](#), following an initial mention, may subsequently be referred to as [the Organization](#), using an initial capital, e.g. [The Organization has regional offices around the globe](#). In the same way, [the FAO Conference](#), after it has been mentioned in full, may subsequently be referred to as [the Conference](#).

[FAO headquarters](#) does not take a capital [h](#). Do not use the initialism [HQ](#).

Hyphens are used in [Director-General](#) and [Assistant Director-General](#).

### 4.2 \_\_\_ NAMES

#### 4.2.1 Country names and other toponyms

All documents must follow the [NOCS](#) and [M49](#) standards for naming countries, territories and regions (NOCS also stores ISO codes for country names and currencies). The designations used in the NOCS system follow UN practice and may differ from popular use. Within the main text of a publication, use the short version of the country name. NOCS full names are reserved for formal documents, such as official agreements.

Pay attention to sensitive political issues. Use caution statements and [FAO's standard disclaimers](#). Maps must be checked carefully before publication. Consult [the map guidance folder](#) for source files, guidance and special disclaimers..

FAO has 197 Members, comprising 194 Member Nations, one Member Organization (the European Union) and two Associate Members (the Faroe Islands and Tokelau). According to the [Basic Texts](#), it is appropriate to refer to [Members](#) or [Member Nations](#). [Members](#), [Member Nations](#), [Member Organizations](#) and [Associate Members](#) should all be capitalized when referring to FAO Members.

The [European Union](#) is treated the same as a country (because it is an FAO Member). Do not abbreviate it as [the EU](#), although expressions such as [EU-27](#) and [EU-25](#) are acceptable if their meaning is clarified; also, [EU-27 and Great Britain](#) may be used after [United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#) has been written out once (see [Section 4.2.2 Official names of countries](#)). [EU](#) can be used as an adjective if spelled out at first mention.

### 4.2.2 Official names of countries

Countries such as **the Netherlands** and **the United States of America** are collective singular nouns and thus always take singular verbs.

In general, countries and regions with names that include common nouns, such as **island(s)**, **kingdom** and **republic**, should be preceded by the definite article **the** in a sentence, e.g. **the Marshall Islands**. If a country name includes **the** (whether the article precedes it or follows it in brackets in NOCS), the article must be used, e.g. **Syrian Arab Republic (the)** (as listed in NOCS) should be written as **the Syrian Arab Republic**.

#### Some exceptions

**The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland** may be shortened to **the United Kingdom** in text, tables and charts after appearing spelled out once in full in the main text of the document. This exception does not extend to titles, title pages, signatures or when the country name is required in full.

The use of **UK** and **USA** in lieu of the short name is permitted in bibliographic lists only.

**US**, **UK** and **EU** may be used as adjectives, such as **US exports**.

If a country adjective is not known, the recommended format is to use the short name provided by NOCS, e.g. **legislation of Taiwan Province of China**.

FAO refers to **Palestine** whereas the UN refers to **the State of Palestine**.

#### Country names in sentences, titles and figures

Pay particular attention to the following countries for which the designation must be carefully followed:

NOCS SHORT NAME	USE OF THE NOCS SHORT NAME IN A SENTENCE OR A TITLE	NOCS SHORT NAME FOR LISTS AND TABLES (USE ALSO FOR MAPS, CHARTS AND GRAPHS)
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	the Plurinational State of Bolivia	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)
Bahamas (the)	the Bahamas	Bahamas
Congo (the)	the Congo	Congo
Democratic Republic of the Congo (the)	the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Democratic Republic of the Congo
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	the Islamic Republic of Iran	Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Sudan (the)	the Sudan	Sudan
United Republic of Tanzania (the)	the United Republic of Tanzania	United Republic of Tanzania

**Note:** Alphabetize country names by the short name for lists and tables.

**The Holy See**, not **the Vatican**, has Permanent Observer status at FAO.

Use **Near East** rather than **Middle East** unless the latter is specifically required.

### 4.2.3 Titles and proper names

Follow individuals' expressed preference on how to mention their names. As the surname is the first element in certain nationalities' names, the order should not be inverted. Note that Spanish and Portuguese names often include two or more surnames.

When referring to an individual, generally use the person's surname only (or given name and surname if there is a justification for both).<sup>i</sup> For **Director-General Qu Dongyu**, the given name and surname should always be used together. Note that in official documentation (but not in publications), the whole surname should be capitalized: **QU**.

It is generally not necessary to use honorifics or titles, such as **Professor** and **Dr.**

Alphabetization of names (for reference sections and indexes):

- *Chinese and Vietnamese names*: alphabetize according to the first (family) name, e.g. **Kim Thanh, C.**
- *Arabic names*: the particles **Al** and **El** are not used when alphabetizing reference lists and indexes, e.g. **Al-Hamadan** is listed under **H** and not under **A**, so it would be **Hamadan, S.A. Al.**
- *Burmese names*: move the honorific (**U**, **Naw**, **Saw**) to the end before alphabetizing.
- *Spanish surnames*: where there are two surnames, alphabetize according to the first surname (e.g. **Ángel Martínez Espinosa** is listed under **Martínez Espinosa, A.**).
- *Portuguese names*: where there are two or more surnames, the entry is alphabetized according to the last surname. Words like **Filho**, **Junior**, **Neto** and **Sobrinho** are treated as part of the last surname: **Paulino Ricardo do Rosario Gomes Filho** is alphabetized under **Gomes**, and written as **Gomes Filho, P. R. do Rosario**.
- *Particles*: **Van**, **von**, **de**, etc. are used for the alphabetical ordering of the list, e.g. **de María** is listed under **D** and not under **M**.

### 4.2.4 Scientific names

Use italics (see also **Section 7.1 Italics**) to indicate genera, species and subspecies (e.g. ***Oryza sativa***, ***Cucurbita* spp.**), but not for higher levels of taxonomic classification (e.g. **Brassicaceae**). Note that modifiers to species' names (e.g. **var.**, **spp.**) and species authorities (e.g. **Rubus L.**) are not italicized.

As guidance only, the *IPPC style guide* suggests: "Upon first mention of a species, the common name is given first, followed by the scientific name, authority, order and family (e.g. 'Mediterranean fruit fly (Medfly) *Ceratitis capitata* (Wiedemann) (Diptera: Tephritidae)'). For subsequent mentions, the common name is used."<sup>1</sup> It is most important to be consistent throughout the document.

Where scientific names appear as part of italicized titles, they must be presented in roman.

<sup>i</sup> Some exceptions are permitted for more informal content, such as magazines or web stories.

## 4.3 FOREIGN LANGUAGES

### 4.3.1 Language consistency

If a document is bilingual, 100 percent of the content must be available in both languages, i.e. an annex cannot appear in only one of the two languages. If a document is in a single language, the entire text must be in that language. A translated version should include the complete translation of the original text. Some exceptions may be made for meeting reports that include lengthy lists as annexes.

### 4.3.2 Foreign words and phrases

Foreign words and phrases that have been adopted by the English language should not be italicized, e.g. **ad hoc**, **de facto** and **per capita** (see also [Section 7.1 Italics](#)).

Avoid writing a quote or word directly in a foreign language. If it is necessary, provide a translation in parentheses.

Use official translations of titles of publications, major events, organizations and so on. Where no official translation exists, a translation may be made.

When reproducing foreign words, include the diacritical marks that are placed above or beneath certain letters and that change their sound.

### 4.3.3 Foreign titles and proper names

Foreign proper nouns, people's names, company names and names of currencies are not italicized.

### 4.3.4 Transliteration

Only transliterate Cyrillic, Arabic, Chinese or other scripts into Latin characters when no official translation exists. Transliteration tables may be consulted at the [Library of Congress website](#).

## 5. ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations (short forms of words, e.g. **Dr**, **vol.**), including acronyms (initial letters of words pronounced as a word, e.g. **NATO**) and initialisms (initial letters of words pronounced individually, e.g. **SMS**), should be used where they improve readability, but do not litter the text with them.

At first mention, the phrase or word should be written out, followed by the abbreviation in parentheses, e.g. **the World Health Organization (WHO)**. It may then be used alone, e.g. **According to a WHO spokesperson ...**

Abbreviations may be used for complex words or phrases that appear more than three times in one document. An abbreviation may also be used without spelling it out at first mention in a document if the abbreviated form is commonly used and readily identifiable (e.g. **HIV**). Abbreviations should not be used for simple two-word phrases (e.g. **public relations**). Avoid using abbreviations that are not pre-existing.

Abbreviations are usually defined as singular, so the plural form needs to be marked (**SDG**, **SDGs**). If the expression is consistently used in the plural sense, then the plural may be chosen for the definition of the



initialism, e.g. **trees outside forests (TOF)**. The preferred option is to define in the singular and aim to use the singular form in text to avoid awkward plural forms of the acronym.

Where an abbreviation is used for common nouns (as opposed to proper nouns), the expanded form will not usually need initial capitals, hence **gross domestic product (GDP)**.

Abbreviations need not be written out in component documents (annexes, appendixes, etc.) when already written out in the main text of the document. However, if parts of a publication are likely to be read separately (such as the preliminary pages and main text or independent chapters), consider writing out the acronym upon first mention in each of the parts concerned.

Note that abbreviations are used more often in English than in many other languages, and that in some languages they are translated to the original full text.

In documents intended for external target audiences, do not use acronyms that are used only within the Organization, e.g. for divisions, offices and units.

With the exceptions of **FAO** and **COVID-19**, avoid using acronyms in the titles and headings of publications. Depending on the target audience, it may be acceptable in some rare cases to use an acronym or initialism in a title (for example, **SDGs** in an internal publication).

Avoid beginning sentences with an abbreviation, initialism or acronym. **FAO** and **COVID-19** are exceptions.

Acronyms and initialisms do not take full stops (e.g. **NATO**, not **N.A.T.O.** and **FAO**, not **F.A.O.**). Most other abbreviations do take full stops (e.g. **max.**), except for units of measurement (e.g. **kg** or **ml**) and contractions (**don't**). See also [Section 3.7 Full stops](#).

Avoid overusing the abbreviations **e.g.**, **i.e.** and **etc.** in the main text. These can be replaced with **that is**, **in other words**, **for example**, **such as** and **and so on**, if needed at all. An exception may be made for manuals. Abbreviations are acceptable in footnotes, parentheses, lists, tables, boxes and figures.

If you use numerous abbreviations and acronyms, list them in a separate section (**Abbreviations and acronyms**) in alphabetical order in the preliminary pages (generally placed after **Acknowledgements**). Abbreviations should follow the same capitalization used in the text. Avoid the use of abbreviations such as **op. cit.**, **loc. cit.**, **ibid.** and **cf.** in footnotes or endnotes.

Use the [FAO Term Portal](#) to check acronyms.

## 6. CAPITALIZATION

Avoid excessive use of capital letters in text. It is not usually necessary to capitalize common nouns. For example, rather than **the Committees and the Working Groups**, write **the committees and the working groups**.

Titles and headings have specific rules:

- In headings, subheadings, captions and book titles, use sentence case, i.e. capitals only for the initial letter of the phrase and any proper names. It is also possible to use all upper case

for these titles. If the title is based on a conference, workshop, government programme, project name or journal whose title was capitalized, retain the capitalization. Journal names should also be italicized.

- Capitalize the initial letter of the first word, the final word and major words of series titles, including journal titles, e.g. **FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Circular**.

Capitals are used to distinguish the specific from the generic or non-specific:

- Use capital letters when naming a specific body, e.g. **The Government of France ruled that ...** but not in general references, e.g. **All participating governments were asked to comment on the ruling.**
- Organizations, committees, universities, laws, treaties, governments and so on take initial capitals when the full title is given, but not when referred to subsequently without the full title, even if specific, e.g. **The Government of Malawi has stated that the policy is being drafted. The goal of the policy is to give the government more control, according to the minister.** See **Section 4.1 FAO-related terminology** for the only exceptions to this rule. Refer to FAO Term Portal to find the correct names of FAO offices and representation, for example **Subregional Office for Eastern Africa** or **FAO Representation in Mozambique**.
- For geographical and political designations use upper case only if part of the official name. For example, the word **state** takes a lower case initial when referring generally to the institution or to nations or divisions of a nation; it takes a capital **S** when a specific state is named, e.g. **State of Andhra Pradesh**, but **state-owned enterprise**.
- For formal or job titles, use upper case only if used before a person's name or directly following the name and separated by a comma, e.g. **Prime Minister Anderson** or **Jennifer Smith, Director of Communications, spoke to the press**. Use lower case when a title is separated from the person's name, e.g. **The president then appointed his cabinet** or **The physician, who also acts as president of the board, called out officials ....**
- Use initial capitals for historical eras and events (**the First World War**), declarations and conventions when the full title is given.
- Names of stars and planets (e.g. **the Sun, the Earth**, etc.) should be capitalized where treated as proper nouns. Where **earth** is used to refer to ground or soil, the word is not capitalized.
- Names of the seasons are not capitalized. Note that seasons should not generally be used to specify dates, as they vary according to the hemisphere, although exceptions may be made, e.g. for training materials aimed at a specific country or region. As a season, use **autumn**, not **fall**.
- Capitalization of brand and trade names should reflect the registered version of the name, such as **YouTube** and **InDesign**.

For regions, capitalize when part of a proper name or political grouping, e.g. **the representatives of Southeast Asia, the Near East and Eastern Europe**, but not for a generic geographical grouping, e.g. **a species common across eastern Europe**.

Adjectives derived from these names are also capitalized. In proper nouns, use capital letters for all principal hyphenated words, e.g. **European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease**. Do not capitalize, however, where a hyphen is part of a prefixed word, e.g. **sub-Saharan Africa**.

Names of Indigenous Peoples and ethnic and national groups take an initial capital and are not italicized, e.g. **the San people**.

When referring to specific tabular or graphic elements in a text, use a capital letter for tables and figures, e.g. **see Table 1.3**. When referring to more than one tabular or graphic element, give each its full title: e.g. **As shown in Figure 2 and Figure 3**. Note that capitals are not used when the term is used in a general sense, e.g. **The tables show a trend of ....**

Do not use capital letters when referring to **arabic numerals**, **roman type** or **roman numerals**.

The first word after a colon should be capitalized only if it is a proper noun or introduces a sentence.

If a quotation fragment is used in a sentence, an upper case or lower case letter in the original quotation may be altered to suit its position in the new sentence.

## 7. ITALICS, BOLD AND UNDERLINING

### 7.1 \_\_\_\_ ITALICS

Italic font is used for:

- emphasis, as sparingly as possible (when the body text is in italics, roman type should be used for emphasis);
- book and journal titles in all languages (titles of chapters and articles are not italicized); titles of paintings and sculptures in all languages; plays, films and radio and television programmes in all languages; and names of ships (prefixes such as SS or HMS are not italicized);
- mathematical variables, e.g.  $2x + 3p$ ;
- the names of legal cases or judgments: e.g. *State of Wyoming v. Jameson*;
- the indication of genera, species and subspecies (see also [Section 4.2.4 Scientific names](#)); and
- some foreign words and phrases. Note that not all foreign words and phrases are italicized; see [Section 4.3.2 Foreign words and phrases](#) for more information.

### 7.2 \_\_\_\_ BOLD

Authors' names may be in bold in reference lists and in the text under figures, maps and boxes. This is optional, provided it is consistent throughout the document. (See [Section 9 Notes and referencing](#).)

In the text, avoid bold unless there is a clear purpose, such as emphasis.

### 7.3 \_\_\_\_ UNDERLINING

Avoid underlining unless it is necessary to highlight hyperlinks within the text where it would not otherwise be obvious. URLs in reference and notes lists should not be underlined, even if hyperlinked.

## 8. NUMBERS, UNITS, TIME AND DATES

### 8.1 NUMBERS

Always use arabic numerals for dates, time, percentages, money, measurements, ages, ratios and scales.

Numbers from one to ten inclusive are written in text as words, whereas numbers from 11 upward are written as numerals, with the following exceptions:

- Spell out any number that begins a sentence, e.g. **Fifteen** people were present.
- Use numerals where a number accompanies a unit, e.g. **5 cm**, **7 percent**, **USD 2**.
- Use numerals when numbers from both groups are used consecutively, e.g. **The number of replies varied, ranging between 2 and 12 per group.**
- For units of time, applying the rule can be at the discretion of the writer, as long as it is consistent throughout the document (**5 days** or **five days**).

For decimals:

- Use a point (a full stop, not a comma), e.g. **14.36**.
- Use a zero before the decimal point for numbers smaller than 1, e.g. **0.23**.
- Use the plural for any decimal number above 1.0, e.g. **1.5 days**.

For large values:

- Use spaces, not full stops or commas, to denote thousands, etc. (e.g. **10 000**; **125 500**). Use non-breaking spaces to avoid number divisions at the end of lines (press CTRL+SHIFT+SPACEBAR, or ALT+SHIFT+SPACEBAR for Macintosh). It is acceptable to write **1000** through **9999** with no space where a space would look awkward (particularly in titles or headings) and when it is not specifically compared with another number in the thousands or higher, where the space would be required, e.g. **between 5 000 and 10 000**. Use caution with numbers that could be confused for years (e.g. **1990**).
- Do not use spaces for years (e.g. **2007**) or page numbers (e.g. **p. 1402**).
- For millions, use numerals separated by non-breaking spaces (e.g. **150 324 399**) unless the last six numerals are zeroes, in which case express these digits as **million** (e.g. **150 000 000** should be written as **150 million**). The same principle holds for billions, trillions, etc. Note: Data are in general reported to three significant figures.
- FAO uses the short scale for billions and trillions: **1 billion** = a thousand million or 1 000 000 000 ( $10^9$ ); **1 trillion** = a million million or 1 000 000 000 000 ( $10^{12}$ ), etc. Be wary of similar terms in other languages, such as *milliard* ( $10^9$ ) used in French or *millión* ( $10^6$ ) used in Spanish.

Write fractions in words rather than numbers, using a hyphen, e.g. **one-third**.

Avoid the use of roman numerals except in established terminology, e.g. **Type II error**.

Where possible, write out ordinal numbers in full, e.g. **the Thirteenth Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries**. Where it is necessary to use numerals, do not use superscript for the ordinal indicator, e.g. **the 13th Session**, not **the 13<sup>th</sup> Session**.

Avoid the use of adverbial ordinal numbers (**firstly**, **secondly**, **thirdly**, etc.), as subsequent numbers sound awkward. Replace these with **first**, **second**, **third**, etc.

For telephone numbers, be consistent in the use of parentheses and spaces. The recommended style is: **(+39) 06 57057051**.

To refer to a specific page: **p. 40**. To refer to a range: **pp. 40–42**. To refer to the total number of pages in a publication: **120 pp**.

## 8.2 UNITS

Use the **International System of Units** (metric system) with equivalents in parentheses if necessary.

In general, use **tonnes** (equal to 1000 kg), not **tons** (2240 lbs or approximately 1016 kg). A **tonne** is sometimes referred to in the United States of America as a **metric ton**, but always use the word **tonne**. For shipping, **tons** may however be appropriate.

A **shipping ton** is used to measure the volume of freight, equivalent to 40 cubic feet (1.1 m<sup>3</sup>) in the United States of America, or 42 cubic feet (1.2 m<sup>3</sup>) in the United Kingdom.

Always give temperature in Celsius, not Fahrenheit, e.g. **35.5 °C**.

### Common units

UNIT	SYMBOL
metre	m
square metre	m <sup>2</sup>
cubic metre	m <sup>3</sup>
micron	μ
litre	l, L
gram	g
tonne	t
second	s
degree Celsius	°C
degree absolute	K
kilocalorie	kcal
hour	h

Source: Adapted from Bureau International des Poids et Mesures. 2019. *The International System of Units (SI)*. Cited 1 October 2021. <https://www.bipm.org/documents/20126/41483022/SI-Brochure-9-EN.pdf/2d2b50bf-f2b4-9661-f402-5f9d66e4b507>

Do not use punctuation or letter spacing in such units as **cm**, **mm**, **g**, **ha**, **°C**. Note, however, that there should always be a non-breaking space between the number and the unit, e.g. **3 cm**, **70 g**, **37 °C**.

Do not use the plural for symbols or abbreviations of units (e.g. **7 kg**, not **7 kgs**). To indicate “per”, use / as in **3 m/s** (rather than **3 m s<sup>-1</sup>**).

Avoid combinations of three units such as: **Production is 25 tonnes/ha/year**. Prefer: **Annual production is 25 tonnes/ha**.

In series of measurements, use the symbol each time: **10 cm, 20 cm and 50 cm**, not **10, 20 and 50 cm**.

Correct ways of writing latitude and longitude include: **10°30' north**; **90° west**; **the zone from 10° to 40° north**. Use the abbreviations **N**, **E**, **W** and **S** only in tables. For minutes and seconds of latitude or longitude (**41°16'40" south**) a straight apostrophe and straight quotation mark may be used rather than the prime symbol.

Treat unit symbols as abbreviations and spell out the full name once or include in the list of abbreviations if your reader may not immediately understand the reference.

### 8.3 \_\_\_\_ PERCENTAGES

Use **percent** (never **per cent**) rather than the symbol **%** in text, e.g. **Exports increased by 16 percent in the last quarter**. In tables and figures, use the symbol with no space between the number and the symbol, e.g. **16%**.

### 8.4 \_\_\_\_ DATES

Write dates in this order: **Monday, 16 October 2000** (with no comma between the month and the year). Do not use ordinal numbers such as **3rd**, **4th**, **5th** for dates (e.g. **1 January**, not **1st January**).

Avoid starting a sentence with a year, but if unavoidable it must be spelled out: **Nineteen ninety-eight was not a leap year**. Do not use apostrophes in decades, e.g. **1990s**, not **1990's**. Do not abbreviate years, e.g. **1990**, not **'90**. Decades are referred to in complete numerals (e.g. **the 1990s**; not **the nineties**, **the '90s** or **the 90s**).

Do not use the en-dash to denote a range of values or dates with the constructions **from ... to** or **between ... and**, e.g. **from 1970 to 1987**, not **from 1970–1987**. However, it is possible to use the en-dash for a range of dates or values without using **from** or **between**, e.g. **The 1970–1987 period was ....**

A standard range of dates (**2015–2025**; **from 2015 to 2025**) implies the whole period from the beginning of 2015 to the end of 2025 inclusive, whereas **2015/16** implies one crop or fiscal year of 12 months starting in 2015 and ending in 2016. Note that, when used in tables, multi-year ranges or averages may take a hyphen to denote the three-year period and an en-dash between the two sets, e.g. **1997-99–2015-17**.

Centuries should be written out in full, e.g. **the twenty-first century**, not **the 21st century**.

Where necessary to avoid confusion, use **BCE** (before Common Era) or **CE** (Common Era) for dates, placing the abbreviation after the year (e.g. **1000 BCE**).

## 8.5 TIME

The use of the 24-hour system is preferred, e.g. **08.00**, **13.30**. When it is necessary to use the 12-hour system, use full stops as follows: e.g. **8 a.m.**, **1.30 p.m.** Be consistent.

Use a non-breaking space between the number and the unit (press CTRL+SHIFT+SPACEBAR, or OPTION+SHIFT+SPACEBAR for Macintosh).

When referring to time zones, prefer **UTC +** or **-**. For example, **The meeting will be held at 17.00 (UTC +6)**.

## 8.6 CURRENCIES

Rather than the currency symbol (which sometimes fails to convert across different software programs), use the ISO currency code as given in NOCS, with a non-breaking space between the abbreviation and the amount, e.g. **USD 700 000** rather than **US\$700,000** and **EUR 800 000** rather than **€800,000**.

For amounts of less than one unit of currency, use a zero followed by a decimal point (i.e. **USD 0.20** rather than **20 cents**).

To facilitate comparison of amounts in different currencies within a text, try to give an indicative equivalent in USD, or provide an exchange rate (either in a footnote or following the list of abbreviations and acronyms). The exchange rate equivalent should be that valid at the date referenced, rather than the exchange rate at the time of writing or editing.

## 8.7 MATHEMATICS AND EQUATIONS

Relational and operational signs have a space on either side of them (e.g. **3 + 2 = 5**). Use the multiplication sign **×** (found in Word under Insert – Symbol), not lower case letter **x**.

Use Word Equation Editor in Microsoft Word to set out equations.

Symbols used for variables, including Greek characters, should be italicized.

In chemical formulae, use subscript (indicating molecules), e.g. **CO<sub>2</sub>**. Only use **CO2** where it is impossible to use a subscript. (Superscript indicates atomic charge, as in **Ba<sup>2+</sup>**.)

# 9. NOTES AND REFERENCING

Proper referencing of all source material is important for the credibility of FAO publications and to avoid inadvertent plagiarism.

FAO has developed its own reference styles. These styles share some elements but nevertheless differ from the most common referencing systems (APA, Chicago, Harvard, MLA).

Two systems for sourcing information in FAO documents are permitted. Each has a unique way of citing a source within the text and providing a full reference entry for each reference at the end of the document.

Only one system may be used within the same document:

1. an author–date style with a list of references
2. an endnote system

### Quick guide: How to apply the author–date and endnote referencing systems (and informational notes) to each part of a publication

	PRELIMINARY PAGES	MAIN TEXT	END MATTER	BOXES	FIGURES (INCLUDING MAPS) AND TABLES
<b>References</b> <i>Does not include photo credits.</i>	<b>Footnotes</b> <i>These sources will not be duplicated in a references or notes list.</i>	<b>Choose author–date or endnote system.</b>	Begin end matter with a section titled <b>References</b> (if using the <b>author–date system</b> ) or <b>Notes</b> (if using the <b>endnote system</b> ).  Annexes or appendixes, which follow the list of references, should <b>maintain the system applied to the main text</b> even though their sources may precede them in the reference list.	For a single source, add <b>Source:</b> below the box and any notes, and insert the full source.  For multiple sources, merge the sources with the notes (see below) using the same system.	Insert <b>Source:</b> below the figure (or table) and any notes and include the <b>full</b> source.
<b>Informational notes (not references)</b>	<b>Footnotes</b>	<b>Footnotes</b> Restart footnote numbering	<b>Footnotes</b> Restart footnote numbering.	Insert <b>Notes:</b> immediately below the box and include all notes related to the box.	Insert <b>Notes:</b> immediately below the figure or table and include all notes related to the figure or table.
Suggested numbering systems	1,2,3 ... (combine sources and informational notes)	<b>Endnotes</b> 1,2,3 ... <b>Footnotes</b> 1,2,3 ..., i,ii,iii ..., or a,b,c ... <sup>a</sup>	Restart endnote numbering with the first page of content following the list of references and create a relevant subtitle, such as “End matter” or “Annexes”.	For the notes, use a unique numbering system not already in use in the main text (a,b,c ...).  Restart for each new box.	For the notes, use a unique numbering system not already in use in the main text (a,b,c ...).  Restart for each new figure or table.

**Notes:** <sup>a</sup> If using the author–date system for references, use arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc.) for footnotes. If using the endnote system, use arabic numerals for endnotes and either roman numerals (i, ii, iii, etc.) or letters (a, b, c, etc.) for footnotes. If using letters and there are more than 26 footnotes, continue with aa, ab, ac, and subsequently aaa, aab, aac.

## 9.1 — NOTES

There are different kinds of notes.

FAO publications use footnotes in the main text (never in headings) to provide additional information for the reader, not to reference source material. Footnotes in preliminary pages may, however, include bibliographic sources.

Endnotes are used for referencing content in the main text and end matter.

Notes are used for boxes, figures (including maps) and tables to provide extra information to the reader and sometimes to include sources for the material.



When using the author–date referencing system, the footnote numbering style is flexible and may use arabic or roman numerals or letters.

However, consider future translations when deciding what numbering system to use, as letters may be impractical when translating to a language using a different script.

Avoid the use of abbreviations such as *op. cit.*, *loc. cit.*, *ibid.* and *cf.* in footnotes or endnotes.

## 9.2 CITING WORKS WITHIN FAO DOCUMENTS

### 9.2.1 Author–date (in-text)

For in-text references, the author’s name is followed by the year of publication of the work cited, e.g. [This point has been demonstrated in a recent report \(Costa and Gilles, 2016\)](#). It is not necessary to indicate the page number unless text is quoted. For sourcing quoted text, see [Section 9.2.3 Direct quotes \(both systems\)](#).

Use [and](#) between the last two author names with no comma. Do not use the ampersand (&). Use a semicolon between different sources unless they are from the same author.

Unless a specific or unique system is in place, in-text references should be organized alphabetically, chronologically, in order of presentation, or in order of importance and should be consistent within the document.

In-text references should be presented as follows:

- one work, one author:  
[as demonstrated by Sanders \(2008\)](#) or [as it has been demonstrated \(Sanders, 2008\)](#)
- one work, up to three authors:  
[according to a recent report \(Sanders, Cohen and Bolbol, 2010\)](#)
- one work, more than three authors:  
[as stated in a recent survey \(Sanders et al., 2011\)](#)
- more than one work by different authors:  
[as various studies demonstrate \(Sanders, 2008; Murguía, 2010\)](#) or [as various studies demonstrate \(Sanders, 2008; Murguía, 2010; Bekele et al., 2007\)](#)
- more than one work by the same author:  
[\(Sanders, 2009a, 2009b\)](#)
- different authors with the same surname:  
[\(Sanders, J., 2009; Sanders, B., 1999\)](#)
- edited works:  
[\(Sanders, ed., 2008\)](#) or [according to Sanders \(ed., 2008\)](#)
- when referring to a source cited within another source (indirect reference, or secondary source), refer to the one you consulted, not the original:  
[as demonstrated by Sanders \(cited in Murguía, 2008\)](#)

- as an exception, when referring to a single idea that cites more than three sources, use a footnote to list each of the sources:  
<sup>66</sup> See Australia, 1982; Azerbaijan, 1995; Jamaica, 1947; South Africa, 2008; and Thailand, 1973.
- do not cite personal communications in the bibliography, only in the text, using parentheses:  
 (R. Wright, personal communication, 2000)

### 9.2.2 Endnote system (in-text)

In this system, each source is associated with one number.

The endnote numbering starts at the beginning of the main text and restarts for end matter. For large books, an exception may be made to allow numbering to restart for each major section of the book. If footnotes are used in conjunction with this system, use roman numerals or lower case letters to indicate the footnotes in order to distinguish them from the endnote numbering.

When referencing more than one source for a single idea, cite sources separated by a comma and a space, e.g. according to recent reports. <sup>2, 129, 400</sup>

See also 3.10 Note punctuation (endnotes and footnotes).

### 9.2.3 Direct quotes (both systems)

Enclose the quoted material in double quotation marks:

- Author–date: McKinsey and Company (2009, p. 9) state that “in forestry and agriculture, both costs and investments are relatively low.”
- Endnote: McKinsey and Company (p. 9) state that “in forestry and agriculture, both costs and investments are relatively low.”<sup>2</sup>

For any text of three or more lines, use block quotations with the reference at the end. These are introduced by a colon and indented, e.g.:

- Author–date:

As stated in the document:

Ensuring food security and nutrition at the household and global levels requires investing in nutrition-sensitive agriculture, protecting women’s rights and improving their social and nutritional status (FAO, 2011, p. 3).

- Endnote:

As stated in the document, p. 3:

Ensuring food security and nutrition at the household and global levels requires investing in nutrition-sensitive agriculture, protecting women’s rights and improving their social and nutritional status.<sup>4</sup>

Quotations should follow the presentation (italics, bold, capitals, underline, etc.) of the original. Do not apply FAOSTYLE to the quoted matter unless the quote was from a spoken source.

### 9.3 BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The section containing bibliographic information for the sources cited in the main text and end matter of the document immediately follows the main text as the first part of the end matter. A long book, or one with a list of sources unique to each chapter may have a Notes or References section at the end of each chapter or section. (Avoid this if many of the references appear in multiple chapters and would be repeated often.) Include each chapter's reference list in the table of contents.

Remember that sources for boxes, figures and tables are placed in full directly under the item. Unless that source is referred to in the text itself, it will not appear in the list of references or notes.

Regardless of which system is used, FAO (unlike some other publishers) applies the same order of elements and formatting of the full bibliographic source. The basic format for both systems is as follows:

**Author. Year. Title. Place, Publisher.**

#### 9.3.1 Author–date (References)

In this system, the full sources are listed alphabetically by author under the title **References**. The heading **Bibliography** may be used in place of **References**, but only if the list also contains sources not directly cited in the text, such as further reading items (see *Publishing at FAO – Strategy and Guidance* for further information). Note that there are different rules in French and Spanish.

The list is alphabetical by author's surname; then by co-authors' surnames (independent of the number of co-authors); then chronologically in ascending order by publication date (oldest first, e.g. 2019 before 2021). Where there are two or more titles by the same author in the same year, distinguish the sources from each other by using **a**, **b**, **c**, etc. as necessary after the year. The lettering is determined by the order in which the works are first cited in the text, the first work mentioned being assigned the letter **a**, e.g.

2008**a**. Example:

**FAO. 2019. ...**

**FAO. 2020. ...**

**WHO. 2020**a**. ...**

**WHO. 2020**b**. ...**

#### 9.3.2 Endnotes (Notes)

In this system, the list appears at the beginning of the end matter and is in numerical order (ordered by the appearance of the source in the text). The list falls under the section title **Notes**. If needed, add a **Further reading** section immediately after **Notes** to accommodate sources not directly referenced in the text.

This list follows the order of appearance in the main text:

1. **WHO. 2020. ...**

2. **FAO. 2020. ...**

3. **FAO. 2019. ...**

4. **WHO. 2020. ...**

## 9.4 WRITING OR GENERATING BIBLIOGRAPHIC LISTS

- If using acronyms, rather than spelling out the full name of all corporate authors and publishers: 1) ensure that these acronyms are included in the list of abbreviations and acronyms at the start of the document, and 2) organize the list of sources alphabetically based on their acronyms, placing the acronym first, followed by the full title in parentheses the first time it appears in the list, whether as corporate author or publisher, e.g.:

**WHO (World Health Organization).** 2017. *(first use)*

**WHO.** 2020. *(second use)*

- For works with more than ten authors, only the first seven must be listed; the rest may optionally be truncated using *et al.*
- Use the ampersand (&) between the names of the last two authors in the bibliography, e.g.: **Sanders, Cohen & Bolbol.** 2010 ... *(bibliography)*
- Titles of books, journals, papers and periodicals are italicized, including titles in foreign languages. Titles of articles, presentations and chapters are not italicized.
- Titles of publications use sentence case whereas meetings, official days and years, projects and conferences are given initial capitalization.
- Bold can be used (optionally) for author names only: **Munro, G.R.** 2010. *From drain to ....*
- The city and country of publication come before the publisher, e.g. **Montreal, Canada, ICAO.** When the city is the capital, the country is omitted, e.g. **Ankara, FAO.**
- **United States of America** and **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland** may be abbreviated to **USA** and **UK** in reference lists. Omit other geographical or administrative details, i.e. no county/state/province/district with the exception of **Washington, DC.**
- If multiple locations are provided, format as location *per* publisher (e.g. **Rome, FAO and Quebec City, Canada, CINE**). Otherwise, format as usual (e.g. **Cairo, FAO, CIRAD & CIHEAM**).
- Publications that have not yet been published at the time of writing, but will be, should be cited as **forthcoming**. Thus:

**(Brandt, forthcoming)** *(in-text citation)*

**Brandt, S. (forthcoming).** *Title ... (reference list)*

- When possible, provide the Digital Object Identifier (DOI) as a URL access. If there is no DOI, provide (in order of preference) a shortened URL or the full URL. URLs should be lower case, with no underline and no angled brackets < >. Do not use **http://** unless there is no **www** in the address. Do not use **/** at the end of a URL.
- In the bibliographic list, use either the full titles of the journals or their abbreviated titles in all entries (be consistent). Abbreviated titles should use the standard abbreviation for the journals. There are lists of **journal abbreviations** available online, generally grouped by sector.
- The bibliographic list may be broken into subsections if helpful to the reader, especially in the case of complex, heavily referenced documents.

- When referencing a web page that is contained within a website, indicate the name of the website after the title of the cited piece starting with "In:", e.g. **World Bank. 2019. Understanding poverty. In: *The World Bank*. Washington, DC. Cited 3 April 2019. [www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview](http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview)**
- For static (non-changing) sources such as PDFs and DOIs, omitting a cited date is permitted.
- When creating an English language version of a document, put all words in the bibliographic entries that are not copied directly from the work, such as **Cited**, in English. **ACF. 2020. *Suivi – Veille pastorale – COVID-19*. Cited 10 December 2020. [https:// ... .com](https://...)**



#### **BEST PRACTICE for the translation of sources:**

- When the language of the publication and a source are not the same, updating the source to a corresponding full version in the language of the publication is the best possible solution.
- If only a translated summary is available, cite the full original source and add the title of the summary (in parentheses) following the title.
- If no translation exists, at least in the cases where a different alphabet is used, such as Arabic, Russian or Chinese, provide a translated title [in square brackets] following the original language title, e.g. **Sổ tay hỏi đáp về thực hành tốt và an toàn sinh học trong chăn nuôi vịt, ngan (vịt xiêm) bố mẹ quy mô vừa và nhỏ [Questions and answers handbook for good management practices and biosecurity in small- and medium-scale parent ducks/ Muscovy ducks farming].**

## **9.5 \_\_\_\_ FORMATTING OF CITATIONS AND BIBLIOGRAPHIC LISTS**

### **9.5.1 Manual formatting**

If you intend to input reference entries manually, please refer to Section 9.6 Examples of bibliographic style.

### **9.5.2 Automatic formatting**

Bibliographic software, such as EndNote, Mendeley, RefWorks and Zotero, can facilitate the generation of citations and bibliographic entries. Such tools save time and remove the drudgery from formatting citations and generating bibliographies. FAO bibliographic style in Citation Style Language (CSL)<sup>ii</sup> is available for use with Mendeley and Zotero. For guidance, see Annex 1 Installing reference management software for citations in FAOSTYLE.

<sup>ii</sup> OCCC is especially grateful to Bin Liu, Nutrition and Food Systems Officer (ESN), for creating, testing and amending the CSL version of the FAO citation style.

In addition, the FAO Library has licensing arrangements for EndNote, with FAOSTYLE citations. If you prefer to use EndNote, please contact the FAO Library.

With video tutorials available, even beginners can start using these tools within minutes to input records either manually (completing standard fields such as author, title and year) or automatically (using metadata from web pages and PDFs). The records can be downloaded as necessary in the form of reference entries already formatted in FAO bibliographic style. The records will remain in a master file (or can be grouped in appropriate subfolders) for use in future publications. They can be exported and shared with other colleagues. In this way, a unit can compile a large master file of citation entries.

Although software tools can capture most elements required for citations, it may be necessary to make some manual edits.

## 9.6 \_\_\_\_ EXAMPLES OF BIBLIOGRAPHIC STYLE

General templates are provided below, followed by example lists.

### 9.6.1 Templates for bibliographic entries

Standard publication entry, online <i>Preferred for FAO documents</i>	[ <b>Author</b> ]. [Year of publication]. [ <i>Publication title</i> ]. [Series title]. [Place of publication], [Publisher]. [DOI (or PDF URL)]
Standard publication entry, where no digital access exists	[ <b>Author</b> ]. [Year of publication]. [ <i>Publication title</i> ]. [Series title]. [Place of publication], [Publisher].
Website or page	[ <b>Author</b> ]. [Year of publication (or year accessed if year of publication is not known)]. [ <i>Web page title</i> ]. Text by [Surname, Initials]. In: [ <i>Website identity</i> ]. [Place of publication], [publisher]. Cited [date accessed]. [URL]
Database	[ <b>Author</b> ]. [Reference year (or year accessed if reference year is not known)]. [Database title]. In: [ <i>Website identity</i> ]. [Physical site location]. Cited [date accessed]. [URL]
Legal case	[ <i>Name v. Name</i> ], [Volume Source Page (Court date)].
Legal instrument (binding or non-binding)	[ <i>Name</i> ]. Adopted: [Agency], [Place], [date]. [Any important amendments]. [Official Gazette issue].
Legislation	[Country, region, etc.]. [ <i>Title of legislation</i> ], [codes], [year].

Replace the information in the square brackets leaving the text and punctuation as is. Note that some items are not required if not applicable, e.g. the author of a web page, place of publication, the agency that adopted a legal instrument.

## 9.6.2 Sample reference lists (author–date system)

Example 1: Standard list, titled "References"

REFERENCES	FORMAT, COMMENTS
<b>Adger, W.M., Agrawala, S., Mirza, M.M.Q., Conde, C., O'Brien, K., Pulhin, J., Pulwarly, R., Smit, B. &amp; Takahashi, K.</b> 2007. Assessment of adaptation practices, options, constraints and capacity. In: M.L. Parry, O.F. Canziani, J.P. Palutikof, C.E. Hansan & P.J. van der Linden, eds. <i>Climate change 2007: Impacts, adaptation and vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change</i> , pp. 719–743. Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press.	Book section or chapter
<b>Allison, E. &amp; McBride, R.</b> 2003. Education reform for improved natural resource management: Fisheries and aquaculture in Bangladeshi Universities. <i>Society and Natural Resources</i> , 16(3): 249–263.	Journal article
<b>Bartley, D.M. &amp; Leber, K.M.</b> , eds. 2004. <i>Marine ranching</i> . FAO Fisheries Technical Paper No. 429. Rome, FAO.	Series title
<b>FAO.</b> (forthcoming). <i>Fruit and vegetables – your dietary essentials. The International Year of Fruits and Vegetables, 2021, background paper</i> . Rome. <a href="https://doi.org/10.4060/cb2395en">https://doi.org/10.4060/cb2395en</a>	Document supporting an international year or flagship
<b>FAO.</b> 2017. <i>Global Forum for Food and Agriculture 2017</i> [audio recording]. Rome. Cited 15 February 2017. <a href="http://fao.org/news/audio-video/detail-audio/en/?dyna_fef[uid]=12012&amp;uid=12012">fao.org/news/audio-video/detail-audio/en/?dyna_fef[uid]=12012&amp;uid=12012</a>	Audio recording
<b>FAO.</b> 2011. Geographic information – introduction. In: <i>FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department</i> . Rome. Cited 15 February 2017. <a href="http://fao.org/fishery/geoinfo/en">fao.org/fishery/geoinfo/en</a>	Web page
<b>FAO.</b> 2008. <i>Technical guidelines on aquaculture certification</i> . Committee on Fisheries. Fourth Session of the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, Puerto Varas, Chile, 6–10 October 2008. <a href="ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/meeting/014/ai770e.pdf">ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/meeting/014/ai770e.pdf</a>	PDF or monograph with series title
<b>Giel, T., Bijman, J. &amp; Oorthuizen, J.</b> 2007. <i>Producer organisations and market chains</i> [CD-ROM]. Wageningen, Netherlands, Agri-Profocus.	CD ROM or DVD
<b>Glanz, J. &amp; Armendariz, A.</b> 2017. Years of ethics charges, but star cancer researcher gets a pass. <i>The New York Times</i> , 8 March 2017. New York, USA. Cited 1 March 2021. <a href="http://nytimes.com/2017/03/08/science/cancer-carlo-croce.html">nytimes.com/2017/03/08/science/cancer-carlo-croce.html</a>	Newspaper article
<b>IMO (International Maritime Organization).</b> 2017. IMO. London. Cited 15 February 2017. <a href="http://www.imo.org">www.imo.org</a>	Website (main page)
<b>Pingault, N., Roshetko, J.M. and Meybeck, A.</b> , eds. 2021. <i>Asia-Pacific Forest Sector Outlook: Innovative forestry for a sustainable future – Youth contributions from Asia and the Pacific</i> . Bogor, CIFOR and Rome, FAO.	Multiple publishers in different locations
<b>Tung, D.X.</b> 2005. Smallholder poultry production in Vietnam: Marketing characteristics and strategies. Conference presentation at Does Poultry Reduce Poverty? A Need for Rethinking the Approaches, 30–31 August 2005. Copenhagen, Network for Smallholder Poultry Development.	Conference presentation
<b>UN Geospatial.</b> 2020a. BND_A_CTY [Shapefile]. New York, USA, UN.	Shapefile
<b>UN Geospatial.</b> 2020b. Map of the World. In: <i>United Nations</i> . New York, USA, UN. Cited 25 November 2021. <a href="http://un.org/geospatial/file/3420/download?token=bZe9T819">un.org/geospatial/file/3420/download?token=bZe9T819</a>	Web page
<b>World Bank.</b> 2010a. <i>World Development Report 2010. Development and climate change</i> . Washington, DC.	Author with more than one work in the same year
<b>World Bank.</b> 2010b. <i>Economics of adaptation to climate change. Synthesis report</i> . Washington, DC.	

**Example 2:** Works cited and further reading list for author–date system, titled "Bibliography"

This example includes subsections and legal sources.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY****LITERATURE**

<b>Baltzer, K. &amp; Hansen, H.</b> 2011. <i>Agricultural input subsidies in sub-Saharan Africa. Evaluation study.</i> DANIDA. Internal document. <a href="https://oecd.org/derec/49231998.pdf">oecd.org/derec/49231998.pdf</a>	Internal document or paper
<b>CESCR.</b> 2000. <i>General Comment No. 14. The right to the highest attainable standard of health (Art 12 of the Covenant).</i> UN Doc. E/C.12/2000/4, 11 August 2000. Cited 15 June 2021. <a href="https://refworld.org/docid/4538838d0.html">refworld.org/docid/4538838d0.html</a>	Document in a named series or collection; html link requires cited date
<b>Chirwa, D. M. &amp; Chenwi, L.,</b> eds. 2016. <i>The protection of economic, social and cultural rights in Africa: International, regional and national perspectives.</i> Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press.	Book
<b>Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor.</b> 2008. <i>Making the law work for everyone.</i> Vol. 1. Report of Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor. New York, USA, Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor & UNDP.	Book in a named series or collection
<b>World Bank.</b> 2019. Understanding poverty. In: <i>The World Bank.</i> Washington, DC. Cited 3 April 2019. <a href="https://worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview">worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview</a>	Web page

**LEGAL REFERENCES****Legal instruments (binding)**

*African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.* Adopted: Nairobi, 27 June 1981. CAB/LEG/67/3 rev. 5, 21 International Legal Materials 58.

*Treaty of Rome (Treaty establishing the European Economic Community).* Adopted: Rome, 25 March 1957.

**Legal instruments (non-binding)**

*Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.* Adopted: United Nations General Assembly, 25 September 2015. UNGA A/RES/70/1.

*United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).* Adopted: United Nations General Assembly, 13 September 2007. UNGA A/RES/61/295.

**Cases**

*Ashgar Leghari v. Federation of Pakistan.* Lahore High Court, W.P. No. 25501/2015. September 2015.

*State of the Netherlands v. Urgenda Foundation.* District Court of The Hague, April 2015. The Supreme Court rejected an appeal on 20 December 2019.

**Legislation**

**Iran (Islamic Republic of).** *Law on Agricultural Labour*, 1974.

**Kenya.** *Microfinance Act*, Cap 493D, 2012.



## 9.6.3 Endnotes system sample list, titled "Notes"

NOTES	FORMAT, COMMENTS
1. <b>FAO.</b> 2021. FAOSTAT: Crops. In: <i>FAO</i> . Rome. Cited 1 March 2021. <a href="http://fao.org/faostat/en/#data/QC">fao.org/faostat/en/#data/QC</a>	Database
2. <b>Kuhlein, H.V., Erasmus, B. &amp; Spigelski, D.</b> 2009. <i>Indigenous peoples' food systems: The many dimensions of culture, diversity and environment for nutrition and health</i> . Rome, FAO and Quebec, Canada, CINE (Centre for Indigenous Peoples' Nutrition and Environment). <a href="ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/012/i0370e/i0370e00.pdf">ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/012/i0370e/i0370e00.pdf</a>	Published document or book stored on FTP
3. <b>FAO.</b> 2016. <i>The State of Food and Agriculture 2016. Climate change, agriculture and food security</i> [Kindle edition]. Rome. Cited 15 April 2021. <a href="http://fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/faoweb/e-books/SOFA_2016/SOFA_2016_EN.mobi">fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/faoweb/e-books/SOFA_2016/SOFA_2016_EN.mobi</a>	E-book, Kindle edition
4. <b>FAO, IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development) &amp; WFP (World Food Programme).</b> 2015. <i>The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2015. Meeting the 2015 international hunger targets: taking stock of uneven progress</i> . Rome, FAO. <a href="http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4646e.pdf">www.fao.org/3/a-i4646e.pdf</a>	Book
5. <b>Graham, J., Amos, B. &amp; Plumptre, T.</b> 2003. <i>Principles for good governance in the 21st Century</i> . Policy Brief No. 15. Ottawa, Institute on Governance.	Series publication
6. <b>FAO.</b> 2017. <i>PPR kills endangered Mongolian antelope for the first time</i> [video]. Cited 15 February 2017. <a href="http://fao.org/news/audio-video/detail-video/en/?dyna_feff[uid]=12032&amp;uid=12032">fao.org/news/audio-video/detail-video/en/?dyna_feff[uid]=12032&amp;uid=12032</a>	Video
7. <b>World Bank.</b> 2010. <i>Economics of adaptation to climate change</i> . Synthesis report. Washington, DC.	Report
8. <b>Arnason, R.</b> 1984. Efficient harvesting of fish stocks: The case of the Icelandic demersal fisheries. Vancouver, Canada, University of British Columbia. PhD dissertation.	Thesis or dissertation

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> IPPC Secretariat. (forthcoming). *IPPC style guide*. Rome, FAO on behalf of the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention.

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# ANNEX 1

## INSTALLING REFERENCE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE FOR CITATIONS IN FAOSTYLE

### ENDNOTE

The FAO David Lubin Memorial Library provides [detailed instructions](#) for creating an EndNote account, installing the Word plug-in and using FAO citation style.

### MENDELEY AND ZOTERO

How to install Mendeley or Zotero:

1. From FAO headquarters or an FAO laptop, open FAO Application Catalog in Internet Explorer and search for "Mendeley" or "Zotero". If using a personal computer, FAO Application Catalog is not accessible, so you must download directly from [Mendeley](#) or [Zotero](#).
2. Follow the instructions in the download wizard to install the software. *Note:* First-time running of Mendeley requires registration and log-in. Registration to Zotero is recommended but not required.
3. To format citations automatically in FAOSTYLE, you also need to install the **Word add-in**, **browser connector** and **FAO Citation Style**. Complete the following steps using Google Chrome.

#### — For Mendeley

- **Word add-in:**

1. When you have finished installing Mendeley, a pop-up window will appear that shows two boxes: Reference manager (which will already read "Installed") and Citation plug-in for Microsoft Word. Click "Install now". Make sure Word and Outlook are closed.
2. The pop-up window will update to read "Installed".
3. To confirm, open Word. Mendeley should appear under the References tab as Insert Citation.

- **Connector for Chrome:**

1. From the menu: Tools → Install Web Importer.
2. A web page will appear in the browser. Follow the instructions.

- **Install FAO Citation Style:**

1. From the Mendeley menu: View → Citation Style → More Styles.
2. Choose "Get More Styles" tab.
3. Input "Food and" in the search bar. "Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations" should appear.
4. Select the style. Click "Use this style" button on the right.
5. "Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations" should appear in the "View → Citation Style → More Styles → Installed" tab.

Help guides and video tutorials are available: <https://www.mendeley.com/guides>

— **For Zotero**

- **Word add-in:**

1. The Word add-in should be installed automatically. Go to Tools → Add-ons. "Zotero Word for Windows Integration" should appear in the list of extensions with a button "disable" next to it.
2. To confirm, open Word. A new Zotero tab should appear in the ribbon.

- **Connector for Chrome:**

1. From the menu: Tools → Install Browser Connector.
2. A web page will appear in the browser. Follow the instructions.

- **Install FAO Citation Style:**

1. From the Zotero menu: Edit → Preferences.
2. Click "Cite" button. The "Styles" tab should be open by default.
3. Click "Get additional styles" link on bottom left of the "Style Manager" frame. It will take you to the [Zotero Style Repository](#).
4. Input "FAO" in the search bar.
5. Click the link "Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations" to download the style file.
6. "Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations" should appear in the Style Manager window. Click OK.

Help guides and video tutorials are available: [https://www.zotero.org/support/screencast\\_tutorials](https://www.zotero.org/support/screencast_tutorials)

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## ANNEX 2 ONLINE RESOURCES

For issues not addressed in *FAOSTYLE* or *Publishing at FAO – Strategy and Guidance*, please use the below resources.

Please note that some of the links below are internal documents. If you are an external editor and require access to any of these resources, please ask your hiring manager.

### Spelling and word usage

Oxford English Dictionary

Lexico

### Terminology

FAO Term Portal – collection that includes terms and definitions related to the various topics covered by FAO (agricultural sciences, nutrition, biotechnology, fisheries, forestry and food security, to name a few) in all official FAO languages (plus Italian and Latin for taxonomies)

UNTERM – the United Nations terminology database

IATE – the terminology database of the European Union

AGROVOC – the FAO thesaurus serves as a controlled vocabulary for indexing publications and datasets in agricultural science and technology

### Style matters

FAOSTYLE in Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian, Spanish

Chicago Manual of Style

United Nations Editorial Manual

International Plant Protection Convention style guide (new edition forthcoming in 2022)

Time zone abbreviations

### Language resources

Library of Congress transliteration tables

### Country names and geographical designations

NOCS – Names of countries and territories database

M49 – Standard country or area codes for statistical use

Maps in FAO documents – Cheat sheet on correct map usage

## ANNEX 3 RECOMMENDED WORD LIST

For general spelling rules, please see [Section 2.1 General spelling rules](#).

### A

**above-mentioned**

**accommodation** *not* accommodations

**acknowledgement** *not* acknowledgment

**addendum**, pl. **addenda** *not* italicized

**ad hoc** *not* italicized

**ad lib** *not* italicized

**advertise**

**advice** (n.), **advise** (v.)

**adviser** *not* advisor, *but note* **advisory**

**affect** (v.) to have an effect on, cf. **effect**

**afforestation** where previous land type or use  
was *not* forestry

**affranchise**

**aflatoxin**

**African swine fever** *not* African Swine Fever

**after-care**, **after-effect**

**afterwards** (adv.) *not* afterward

**ageing**

**age group**

**agenda**, pl. **agendas**

**agribusiness**

**agriculturist** *not* agriculturalist

**agrifood**

**agro-** compounds closed up except before i, e.g.  
agroecology, agroecosystem, agro-industry,  
agroforestry, agrometeorology, agrosilvicultural,  
agrosilvipastoral

**air-dried** (adj.), **air-dry** (v.)

**airtight**

**alfalfa** *not* Alfalfa

**alga**, pl. **algae**

**alkaline**, **alkalinization**

**alley cropping**

**all-season** (adj.)

**alternate(ly)** by turns, **alternative(ly)** presenting  
a choice between alternatives. An alternate  
method is one to be used every second time;  
an alternative method is one that can be  
chosen instead of some other method.

**aluminium** *not* aluminum

**amid** *not* amidst

**amino acid**

**among** *not* amongst

**analogue** *not* analog

**analyse** *not* analyze

**antenatal**

**antenna**, pl. **antennae** (zool.), **antennas** (aerials)

**anthelmintic**

**anti-erosion**

**antinutrient**, **antinutritional**, **antipollution**

**appendix**, pl. **appendices** (books), **appendixes**  
(anat. or zool.)

**aquaculture**, **aquaculturist**

Arabian Gulf *avoid*; use **Persian Gulf**

**armyworm**

**artefact** *not* artifact

**artisan** (n.), **artisanal** (adj.)

**Asia and the Pacific**

**assist** + in + gerund or noun *not* assist + inf.,  
e.g. They assist in training the farmers

**asylum-seekers**

**audiocassette**, **audiotape**, **audiovisual**

Australasia *avoid*; use **Oceania**

**autumn** *not* fall; lower case

**axle-hole**

**axletree**

**B****Bachelor of Arts degree (BA)****Bachelor of Science degree (BSc)****backcross** (n., v.), **backlog****back-reef****backscatter** (radar term)**backup** (n., adj.), **back up** (v.)**backward** (adj.), **backwards** (adv.)**band-saw****bandwidth****baseline****basis**, pl. **bases****Bedouin****beehive****beekeeper**, **beekeeping****beeswax****behaviour** *not* behavior**benchmark****benefited**, **benefiting****berseem** (fodder crop) *not* capitalized**better production, better nutrition, a better environment, a better life (four betters)****biannual** twice a year**biennial** every second year**biennium**, pl. **biennia** period of two years**bilateral****billion** 1 thousand millions**bimonthly** twice a month or every two months –  
best to specify**bio-** compounds closed up, except before some  
vowels, e.g. bio-available, bio-assay, *but*  
bioelectricity, bioenergy**biological diversity** or **biodiversity** follow  
author's use**birth date****birthplace****birth rate, birth weight****bivalve****biweekly** twice a week or every two weeks –  
best to specify**black gram****blackleg** (sheep and cattle disease)**black tongue** (disease of dogs)**bluetongue** (disease of sheep)**boatbuilder, boatbuilding, boatmaker,**  
**boatmaking, boatyard****boll-rot****boll weevil****bollworm****bookkeeping****borehole****boro****bottle-feed, bottle-feeding****bottleneck****breadbasket****breadfruit****breakdown** (n.), **break down** (v.)**breakthrough** (n.), **break through** (v.)**breastfed, breastfeed, breastfeeding****breastmilk****briquette, briquetting****broad bean** *preferred to* fava bean**broadleaf** (n.)**broadleaved****brood fish, brood hen****broodstock****brush fire****Brussels sprouts****bud rot****bud-take****budwood****buffalo**, pl. **buffaloes****buildup** (n.), **build up** (v.)**built-in** (adj.), **built-up** (adj.)**bureau**, pl. **bureaus****burn, burnt** (past participle)**buses, busing** *not* busses, bussing**bushfire****bushmeat****butterfat****bycatch****by-law**

**bypass****by-product****byte** (computer term)**C****cacao virus****cadastral, cadastre****calibre** *not* caliber

calorie *avoid*; use **kilocalorie** (abbrev. **kcal**) –  
 when not used as a measure, **food energy**  
 preferred, e.g. Groundnuts can contribute food  
 energy to a diet, *not* Groundnuts can contribute  
 calories ...

**camel-hair****can, canning** *or* **tin, tinning** (be consistent)**cantaloupe****capacity building** (n.), **capacity-building** (adj.)**carryover** (n., adj.), **carry over** (v.)**case study****cash crop** (n., v.)**cash flow****cashew nut****castor seed** *preferred to* castor bean**catalogue** *not* catalog**cattle** herd of cattle, e.g. 12 head of cattle, *not*  
12 cattle**cattle breeder, cattle feed, cattle hide** (*but*  
**cowhide**), **cattle owner**, *but* **cattle-ranching**

**Celsius, centigrade** (abbrev. **C**) two names for the  
 same system of measuring temperature. Always  
 use Celsius, *not* Fahrenheit. The formulae for  
 converting from Fahrenheit to centigrade and  
 vice versa are:  $F = [(9 \times C) \div 5] + 32$ ;  $C = 5(F - 32) \div 9$ . Note that temperatures are  
 written with a non-breaking space between the  
 number and the unit, e.g. 35 °C

**central** capitalize when part of a proper name  
 of a recognized place or region, e.g. Central  
 America, Central African Republic; lower case  
 when it refers to direction or geographical  
 division (the central part of an area), e.g.  
 central Africa, central Europe

**centre** (n., v.) *not* center**centrepiece****cf.** (abbrev.) compare**chainsaw****chalkboard****changeover** (n.), **change over** (v.)**channelled, channelling****check dam****checklist****checkup** (n.), **check** (v.)**cheese-maker, cheese-making****cheque** *not* check (mode of payment)**chickpea****child-bearing** (adj.)**childbirth****child care****chilli, chillies** *or* **chili, chilies** follow author's use**clamorous****clamour****classmate, classroom****clayey**

**clear-cutting** (n.), **clear-cut** (adj.) evident,  
**clear-cut** (v.) to cut all trees in a stand

**clear-eyed****clearfell, clearfelling****clear-headed****clearinghouse****clear-out** (n.), **clear out** (v.)**clear-sighted****climate change** (n.), **climate-change** (adj.)**climate-smart****clipboard****clone selection** *not* clonal selection**co-** most compounds closed up, *but note***co-author, co-chair, co-investor, co-worker****coal mining****coco** name of a palm tree, **coconut** seed of the  
palm tree**cocoa bean** *not* cacao bean**cold chain, cold store, cold storage**

**colour, discolour, colourable**, *but note*  
**coloration** and **decoloration**



**colourless**  
**combated, combating**  
**commodity group price**  
**complement** something that completes, enhances or improves  
**compliment** expression of praise  
**comprise** *not* comprised of, e.g. the strategy comprises three elements  
**computer terms** many ordinary English words have a specific computer sense, e.g. access (v.), add-in (n., adj.), database, data file, debug, format (formatting, formatter), hard copy, hard code, hard-wired, input (v.), log on (v.), online, offline, program (programming, programmer), real time (n.), real-time (adj.)  
**connection** *not* connexion  
**cont.** (abbrev.) continued  
**continual** going on for a long time, recurring at intervals, seeming never to come to an end  
**continuous** uninterrupted  
**convenor** *not* convener  
**cooperate, cooperation, cooperative**  
**co-opt**  
**coordinate, coordination**  
 corn *use* **maize, grain** or **cereal**, depending on the particular case, *but* **corn on the cob, sweet corn**  
**cornerstone**  
**corrigendum**, pl. **corrigenda**  
**cost-effectiveness** (n.), **cost-effective** (adj.), **cost effective** (adv.)  
**cost-of-illness** (adj.)  
**cottonseed, cottonseed oil**  
**council** (n.) administrative body  
**councillor** council member  
**counsel** (n., v.) advice, to advise  
**counsellor** adviser  
**counter-** compounds closed up, e.g. counteract, counterpart, counterproductive  
**country-level** (adj.)  
**COVID-19**  
**cowhide, cowpea**

**cow's milk** as opposed to breastmilk; **cow milk** as a commodity (also **goat milk**)  
**crisis**, pl. **crises**  
**criss-cross**  
**criterion**, pl. **criteria**  
**cropland**  
**cross-breed** (n., v.), **cross-breeding, cross-bred** (adj.)  
**cross-check, cross-fertilization, cross-pollination, cross-reference, cross-section**  
**curriculum**, pl. **curricula**  
**cutback** (n.), **cut back** (v.)  
**cutoff** (n.), **cut off** (v.)

## D

**data** may be plural or singular (be consistent).  
 The rarely found **datum** (as in datum line) is always singular  
**data bank, database, data file, dataset, data sheet**  
**date-palm**  
**day care** (n., adj.)  
**day labourer**  
**day length** (n.)  
**daylight, daytime**  
**day-to-day** (adj.), *but* **from day to day**  
**death rate**  
**debug** (computer term)  
**decision-maker, decision-making** (n., adj.)  
**deep-freeze, deep-frozen**  
**deep-sea fishing**  
**de facto** *not* italicized  
**defence** *not* defense  
**deflection** *not* deflexion  
**deforest, deforestation**  
**deleafing**  
**demand-driven** (adj.)  
**dendro-energy** wood-based energy  
**dependant** (n.), **dependent** (adj.)  
 despatch *use* **dispatch**  
**desert locust** *not* Desert Locust

**developing countries** *not* Third World or underdeveloped countries

**deworm**

**dialogue** *not* dialog

**diametre** *not* diameter

**diamondback moth**

**dieback** (n.), **die back** (v.)

**digester**, e.g. biogas digester

**dipnet**

**disc** (all uses except computers, *see* disk)

**discreet** restrained in speech and behaviour

**discrete** individually distinct, separate

**disk** (computers only)

**doctorate** (PhD)

**double-duty**

**downtime**, **downtrend**, **downturn**

**downward** (adj.), **downwards** (adv.)

**draught** for traction (as in draught animals)

**drawback** (n.), **draw back** (v.)

**drier** (n., adj.) or **dryer** (n.) follow author's use

**driftnet**

**drinking water**

**drop-off** (n.), **drop off** (v.)

**dry farming** (n.), **dry farm** (v.)

**dry land** (n.), **dryland** (adj.)

**dry rot**

**due** and **owing** avoid unless used as financial terms. It is better to substitute **result from**, **because**, etc., e.g. Crop failure resulted from drought, or The crops failed because of drought

**dyke** *not* dike

## E

**earthwork**

**East Coast fever**

**east**, **eastern** capitalized when part of a proper name or political grouping, e.g. East Africa, Eastern Europe (political), Near East, Far East, Eastern customs, Eastern Hemisphere; lower case for direction or geographical

grouping, e.g. eastern Africa, eastern Europe (geographical)

**eastward** (adj.), **eastwards** (adv.)

**echograph**

**echo sounder**, **echo sounding**

**eco-** compounds closed up, e.g. ecoclimate, *but note* eco-friendly (adj.)

**e-commerce**

**economic** relating to the science of economics or the economy in general, **economical**, characterized by thrift or representing good value for money

**effect** (v.), *not* effectuate; to bring about; not to be confused with **affect**

**e-learning**, *but note* **FAO elearning Academy**

**email**, *not* e-mail

**empanel**, **empanelled**

**end use**, **end user**

**end-point**

**end product**

**energy-dense** (adj.)

**energy-sufficient diet**

**enquire**, **enquiry** *not* inquire, inquiry

**enrol**, **enrolled**, **enrolment**

**ensilage**, **silage** silage is the product of the process of ensilage

**ensure** to make sure, not to be used for **insure**

**equalled**, **equalling**

**equator**, **equatorial** lower case except as part of an official proper name, e.g. Equatorial Current, *but* equatorial Africa. See also central, east, north, south, west

**erodible**

**erratum**, pl. **errata**

*et al.* italicized

**etc.** not italicized

*et seq.* italicized

**evapotranspiration**

*ex ante* italicized

**explant**

*ex post*, *ex post facto* italicized

**ex situ** italicized

**extra-** compounds closed up, except when followed by “a” or a proper noun, e.g. extra-atmospheric, extra-Community trade

## F

**fact sheet**

**falloff** (n.)

**fan-leaf**

**farm gate**

**farmhand, farmhouse, farmland**

**farm worker**

**farmyard**

**farther, further** use farther for literal distances, further for everything else, e.g. We must travel two kilometres farther. I can go no further with this project.

**fast food** (n.) **fastfood** (adj.)

**feedback, feedlot**

**feedgrain(s)** and **feedstuffs** for animal consumption, **foodgrains** and **foodstuffs** for human consumption

**fermenter**

**ferruginous**, *not* ferrugineous

**fewer** use for countable items, **less** for amounts, e.g. fewer cows, less milk

**fibre**

**fibreboard, fibreglass**

**fieldbook**

**field guide**

**field test** (n.), **field-test** (v.)

**field trial**

**fieldwork, field worker**

**filmstrip**

**filter paper**

**fine tuning** (n.), **fine-tune** (v.)

**finfish(es)**

**finger millet**

**firebreak**

**fire crew**

**firefighter**

firewood *avoid*; use **fuelwood**

First World *avoid*; use **industrialized countries** **first, second**, etc. *not* firstly, secondly, etc.

**first aid, first-aid kit**

**first-hand, second-hand, third-hand** ... (adj.), *but* **at first hand**

**first-rate** (adj.)

**fish**, pl. **fish** unless referring to more than one species of fish

**fish culture**

**fish farm, fish farming, fish farmer**

**fisher**, *not* fisherman

**fishing gear, fishing tackle**

**fish-liver oil**

**fishmeal, fishnet**

**fish oil, fish pond, fish seed, fish stocks**

**flip chart**

**floodgate, floodplain, floodwall, floodwater**

**flood tide**

**flow chart**

**focused, focuses, focusing**

**foetal**

**-fold** compounds closed up, e.g. twofold, twentyfold

**follow-up** (adj., n), **follow up** (v.)

**food balance sheet (FBS)**

**food-based dietary guidelines (FBDGs)**

**food-borne**

**food crops** *not* foodcrops

**food for work** (n.), **food-for-work** (adj.)

**foodgrain(s)** (for human consumption), **feedgrain(s)** (for animal consumption)

**food insecure** (n.); **food-insecure** (adj.)

**food-processing** (adj.)

**food security**

**foodstuff(s), feedstuff(s)** as above

**foot-and-mouth disease** (abbrev. **FMD**)

**forego** to precede, *but* **forgo** to go without

**forestland**

**forest tree**

**forklift**

**format**, **formatted**, **formatting**, **formatter**  
**formula**, pl. **formulae** (math., chem.) *but*  
**formulas** (methods)  
**forum**, pl. **fora**  
**foreword** (of book)  
**forward** (adj., v.), **forwards** (adv.)  
**-free** compounds hyphenated, e.g. disease-free,  
 germ-free  
**freeze-dried**, **freeze-drier**, **freeze-dry**  
**freshwater** (n., adj.)  
**front-of-pack** (adj.)  
**fruit fly**  
**fruit-set** (n.), **set fruit** (v.)  
**fruit-tree**  
**fuelwood** *not* firewood  
**fulfil**, **fulfillable**, **fulfilled**, **fulfiller**, **fulfilling**,  
**fulfilment**  
**full-cost** (adj.)  
**full-scale** (adj.), *but* **at full scale**  
**full time** (n., adv.) **full-time** (adj.),  
**fundraiser** (n.), **fundraising** (n., adj.) *but* **raise**  
**funds** (v.)  
**further** *see* **farther**

## G

**gene bank**, **gene flow**, **gene pool**  
**geoprobe**, **geothermic**  
**germ cell**, **germ line**  
**germplasm**  
**gigabyte** (abbrev. **GB**) (computer term)  
**gillnet**  
**glycerine** *not* glycerin  
**goatskin**  
**grainfed**  
**gram** (abbrev. **g**) *not* gramme  
**grassroots** (n., adj.)  
**gravelled**  
**green belt**, **green revolution**  
**greenhouse** *not* glasshouse  
**greenhouse gas (GHG)**  
**grey** *not* gray

**groundcover**  
**groundnut** (*Apios americana*); peanut or  
 common groundnut (*Arachis hypogaea*)  
**ground rent**  
**groundwater**, **groundwork**  
*guestimate* *avoid*; **guess** or **estimate** preferred  
**guidebook**, **guidelines**  
**guinea fowl**, **guinea pig**

## H

**handbook**  
**hand-delivered**  
**handicraft** (n.), **handcraft** (v.)  
**hand in hand**, *but* **Hand-in-Hand Initiative**  
**handline** (fishing term)  
**handout**  
**hand-pollination** (n.), **hand-pollinate** (v.)  
**handsaw**  
**hand sprayer** (n.), **hand-spray** (v.)  
**hand tools**, **hand weeding**  
**hardback**  
**hardcover**  
**hardpan** (soil term)  
**hard-wired** (computer term)  
**hazelnut**  
**headquarters** *not* HQ  
**health care**  
**health services** *not* healthcare services  
**heartwood**  
**heat-resistant**  
**heavy-duty** (adj.)  
**hectare** (abbrev. **ha**)  
**herder** *not* herdsman  
**herdowner**  
**heterogeneous** composed of parts of different  
 kinds; mixed  
**heterogenous** having origin in an outside source  
**high-yielding varieties** (abbrev. **HYVs**)  
**hillside**, **hilltop**  
**historic**, **historical** *not* interchangeable. A historic  
 event (NB *not* an historic event) is one that

makes history, even if recent; a historical event is one that occurred in the past and has been recorded by historians

**home care**

**homegrown, homemade**

**home page**

**homespun**

**homogeneous** consisting of parts of the same kind

**homogenous** corresponding in structure because of common origin

**honey bee**

**honeycomb, honeydew**

**honorary, honour, honourable**

**hoof, pl. hooves**

**-hopper** compounds closed up, e.g. grasshopper, leafhopper, planthopper, ricehopper

**horticulturist**

**households**

**hydro-** compounds closed up

## I

**ibid.** not italicized

**idem** not italicized

**i.e.** not italicized, not followed by a comma

**ill-** hyphenate compounds used as adjectives, e.g. ill-gotten, ill-natured, ill-omened

**immunoassay**

**impact** (n.), should not be used as a verb

**imperilled**

**imprest** fund or account

**inbred, inbreeding**

**inbuilt**

**income-earning** (adj.)

**in-country**

**in-depth**

**index, pl. indexes** (books), **indices** (when technical or statistical)

**Indigenous Peoples** capitalize both words

**infra-axillary**

**infrared** (adj.)

**infrastructure**

**in-house**

**innovate**

**inoculate**

inquire, inquiry use **enquire, enquiry**

**in-service**

***in situ*** italicized

**install, installation, instalment**

**instil**

**insure** for insurance policies only (cf. **ensure**)

***in vitro*** italicized

***in vivo*** italicized

**inter-** compounds closed up, e.g. interaction, interconnectivity, intercountry, interdepartmental, intergenerational, intergovernmental, interregional, interrelated, intersectoral (preferred to cross-sectoral), intertemporal, *but note* inter-country

***inter alia*** italicized

**intern** (n., v.) *not* interne

**internet**

**intra-** compounds closed up, except before a vowel, *but note* intra-country

**intranet**

**inward** (adj.), **inwards** (adv.)

## J

**Jr** (abbrev.) not preceded by a comma and not followed by a full stop, e.g. John Jones Jr

**judgement** (judgment [law] – a judge or court's formal ruling)

## K

**kat** *not* khat or qat; an evergreen shrub of the Near East

**kharif** summer growing season in parts of Near East and South Asia

**kilobyte** (abbrev. **KB**), computer term

**kilocalorie** (abbrev. **kcal**) preferred to calorie as a measure of food energy

**kilogram** (abbrev. **kg**) *not* kilogramme

**kilometre** (abbrev. **km**) *not* kilometer

**knowledgeable**

**kumquat** *not* cumquat

## L

**labelled, labelling**

**laborious**

**labour**

**labour force**

**labour-intensive**

**labourer**

***laissez-passer*** italicized

**lakh** *not* lac (Anglo-Indian term meaning one hundred thousand, used for rupees)

**lambskin, lambswool**

**landfill, landform**

**landholder, landholding**

**landlocked**, *but note* Land Locked Developing Countries

**landmark**

**landmass, landmine**

**landowner, landownership**

**land-poor**

**landrace, landslide**

**land use, land-use planning**

**large scale** (n.), **large-scale** (adj.)

lastly *avoid*

**layout** (n.), **lay out** (v.)

**lead** (n., pres. v.), **led** (past, past part.)

**lead time**

**leaf blight, leaf curl**

**leafhopper, leafminer**

**leaf roll**

**leaf spot disease, leaf spotting**

**learned** *not* learnt

**leaseholder**

**least-cost** (adj.)

**least developed countries** (abbrev. **LDCs**)

**lend** (v.), *but* **loan** (n.)

**liaise**

**licence** (n.), **license** (v.)

**licensee, licensor**

**life cycle** (n.), **life-cycle** (adj.).

**lifelong**

**life-saving**

**lifespan**

**lifestyle, lifetime**

**-like** compounds usually hyphenated, e.g. business-like, *but note* **lifelike**

**line drawing**

**liquefaction, liquefy**

**litchi** *not* lichee, lychee, lichi

**litre** *not* liter

**live weight** (n.)

**log-on** (adj.), **log on** (v.)

**longhorn**

**long-lasting**

**longline**

**longstanding** (adj.)

**long term** (n.), **long-term** (adj.)

**lookout** (n.)

**loose-leaf** (adj.)

**lower-bound** (adj.)

**lower-middle-income** (adj.)

**lowest-cost** (adj.)

## M

**MA** Master of Arts

**M&E** (abbrev.) monitoring and evaluation

**macro-** all compounds closed up, e.g. macroeconomic

**maize meal, maize oil**

**mango, pl. mangoes**

**Masai** *or* **Maasai** follow author's use

**marketplace**

**mark-up** (n.)

**mass media**

**Master of Arts**, *but* **master's degree**  
e.g. MA, MSc degree

**maximum, pl. maxima**

**meagre** *not* meager

**mealybug**

**medical terms** use lower case for names of diseases, syndromes, tests, etc., except for proper names contained therein (Hodgkin's disease, Wasserman test). Names of diseases deriving from infectious organisms should be lower case and roman, e.g. trichinosis

**medium term** (n.), **medium-term** (adj.)

**megabyte** (abbrev. **MB**)

Member Countries *avoid* with reference to FAO

**Member Nations**

**Members** as in FAO Members

Member States *avoid* with reference to FAO

**memorandum**, pl. **memoranda**

**merchandise** (n., v.)

**meter** object that measures, **metre** unit of measure

**micro-** compounds usually closed up, e.g. microeconomics

**mid-** compounds: mid-1980s, mid-year, mid-point, mid-term, *but* midday, midnight, midsummer, midway, midweek

**middle age** (n.), **middle-aged** (adj.)

Middle East *use* **Near East** (except in MINEADEP and other cases when specifically required)

middle-sized *use* **medium-sized**

middleman *use* **intermediary**

**midway** (n., adj.)

**millennium**, pl. **millennia**

**mini-** compounds closed up, e.g. minibus, minicassette

**minimum**, pl. **minima**

**misadvice** (n.), **misadvise** (v.)

**mollusc** *not* mollusk

**mono-** compounds closed up except when followed by a vowel, e.g. mono-unsaturated

**mortise** *not* mortice

**mosquito-borne**

**motorcycle**, **motorcyclist**

**motor-driven**

**motor nerve**, **motor spirit**, **motor vehicle**

**mould** (n., v.) *not* mold

**mould-board**

**moulder**

**moulding**

**moult** (v.) *not* molt

**movable**

**Mr**, **Mrs**, **Ms** not followed by a full stop

**MSc** Master of Science

**mucus** (n.), **mucous** (adj.)

**multi-** compounds closed up unless followed by "i", e.g. multi-institutional

multinational *see* **transnational**

**mung bean**

**Muslim** *not* Moslem

## N

**nationwide**

**net-buyers** (n.)

**newsletter**

**night-time**

**non-** compounds usually hyphenated, *but note* **nonconformity**

**no one**

**north**, **northeast**, **northeastern**, **northern**

capitalized when part of a proper name or political grouping, e.g. North Atlantic, North Africa, Northern Hemisphere; lower case for direction or geographical grouping, e.g. northern Africa

**north temperate zone**

**northward** (adj.), **northwards** (adv.)

**northwest**, **northwestern** *see* **north**, *but note* North-West Frontier Province, Pakistan

**notebook**

**noticeable**

**no-till** (adj.) **farming**

**nutrient-adequate** (adj.)

**nutrient-dense** (adj.)

**nutrition adequate diet**

**nutrition-poor** (adj.)

**nutrition-sensitive** (adj.)

**nutritious foods**

**nut-tree**

## O

**ochre**  
**odoriferous**  
**odorous, odour, odourless**  
**off-farm**  
**offence** *but note* **offensive**  
**offline**  
**off-season**  
**offset, offshoot, offshore**  
**offsite**  
**off-type** non-standard plant variety  
**oilcake, oilmeal**  
**oil palm**  
**oilseed**  
**on-farm** (adj.)  
**ongoing** (adj.) no hyphen  
**online**  
**onshore**  
**onsite**  
**onward** (adj.), **onwards** (adv.)  
**op cit.** not italicized  
**organize, organization with 'z'** unless part of a name that uses 's', e.g. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development  
**orient** *not* orientate  
**out-** compounds closed up  
**outside** *not* outside of  
**outward** (adj.), **outwards** (adv.)  
**over-** compounds usually closed up  
**owing** *see* **due**

## P

**paddy rice**  
**paddy field**  
**palm oil**  
**pan-** if the second part of the compound is lower case, close up, e.g. pantheism; otherwise hyphenate, e.g. pan-American, pan-Germanism, pan-Hellenic, pan-Slavism  
**papaw** use for *Asimina triloba* only  
**papaya** use for *Carica papaya* only

## paperback

**para-** compounds closed up  
**parallel, paralleled**  
**particle board**  
**part-time** (adj.), **part time** (adv.)  
**pastureland**  
**payoff** (n.)  
**peacekeeping**  
**peanut** use for *Arachis hypogaea* only, otherwise **groundnut**  
**peatmoss**  
**pedagogue**  
**per annum** not italicized  
**per capita** preferred to per caput; not italicized  
**percent** *not* per cent; use % only in tabular matter, e.g. 3% (no space)  
**per diem** not italicized  
**peri-urban**  
 Persian *avoid*; **Iranian** or **of the Islamic Republic of Iran** preferred  
**Persian Gulf** standard geographical designation for the body of water lying between the Arabian Peninsula and the Islamic Republic of Iran; however, in documents, publications or statements emanating from a Member Government or intergovernmental organization, the original designation should be retained  
**person-day**  
**per-unit** (adj.)  
**Petri dish**  
**PhD** Doctor of Philosophy  
**phosphorus** (n.) the element, **phosphorous** (adj.) containing phosphorus  
**photo-** compounds closed up, e.g. photoelectric, photocopier (n.), photocopy (n., v.)  
**phyto-** compounds closed up  
**piece rate** (n.), **piece-rate** (adj.)  
**piecework**  
**pigeon pea**  
**pig meat**  
**pigskin**



**pigsty**, (pl.) **pigsties**  
**pimento**, (pl.) **pimentos**  
**pipeline**  
**pisciculture**  
**plant- and animal-sourced** (adj.)  
**plant-based** (adj.)  
**plant-forward** (adj.)  
**planthopper**  
**plateau**, pl. **plateaus** *not* plateaux  
**plough** *not* plow  
**pod borer**  
**polycymaker, policymaking**  
**poly-** compounds closed up, e.g. polyunsaturated  
**polyethylene** *not* polythene  
**post-** compounds usually closed up except where confusion might arise, e.g. **post-harvest** or when followed by “t”, e.g. post-translational  
**power-saw**  
**p.** referring to one specific page, **pp.** referring to a series of pages, e.g. p. 40, pp. 40–42  
**practice** (n.), **practise** (v.)  
**pre-** compounds closed up except where confusion might arise, e.g. pre-empt, pre-set, pre-test, pre-war  
**prescribe** to recommend or impose a practice, etc.  
**pretence** *not* pretense  
**prevalence**  
**preventive** *not* preventative  
**price fixing**  
**prima facie** *not* italicized  
**printout** (n.), **print out** (v.)  
**print run**  
**privilege**  
**proactive**  
**problematic** *not* problematical  
**pro forma**  
**program, programmer** (computer terms)  
**programme** for all non-computer uses (except where part of a proper name)  
**-proof** compounds usually closed up *but note* acid-proof, failure-proof, gas-proof

**propel, propeller**  
**prophecy** (n.), **prophecy** (v.)  
**prorate**  
**proscribe** to prevent or ban a practice, etc.  
**protein-rich** (adj.)  
**proved** has (been) proved, *but* **proven** ability or case  
**prototype**  
**provitamin A**  
**pure-bred** (n., adj.)  
**purse seine** (n.), **purse-seine** (v.)

### Q

**quasi** avoid where possible; if necessary to use, hyphenate, e.g. quasi-official

### R

**R&D** (abbrev.) research and development  
**rabi** winter growing season in parts of Near East and South Asia (opposite of **kharif**)  
**rachis**, pl. **rachides**  
**rainfall, rainfed**  
**rainforest**  
**rainstorm, rainwater**  
**-raising** compounds hyphenated, e.g. cattle-raising  
**rangeland**  
**rapeseed oil**  
**re-** compounds closed up except when followed by “e” or where necessary to distinguish meaning, e.g. re-count, re-sort, re-cover, re-form  
**real time** (n.), **real-time** (adj.)  
**record-keeping**  
**recur, recurrence** *not* reoccur or reoccurrence  
**reduced impact logging** *not* reduced-impact logging  
**reforestation** *not* reafforestation  
**regime** no accent  
**regrettable**  
**religions, religious groups** capitalize the names of religions, churches and religious groups, but do not capitalize the word church

(or order, movement, heresy, etc.), e.g. the Roman Catholic church; for places of worship, capitalize the word church, temple, mosque, etc. only if it is part of the name of the building or place

**remote sensing**

**revoke** *but* **revocable**

**rigour, rigorous**

**ringbark** (v.)

**ring spot**

**riverbed**

**riverbank, riverside**

**roadside**

**root crop**

**root-knot nematode**

**root rot**

**rootstock**

**round table** (n.), **round-table** (adj.)

**roundwood**

**rumour** *not* rumor

**runoff**

**ryegrass**

## S

**Sahara** the Sahara, *not* the Sahara Desert

**Sahel, the**

**Sahelian zone**

**saltbush**

**salt-lick**

**saltwater** (n., adj.)

**sandbank**

**sand dune**

**sandstorm**

**sapwood**

**savannah** *not* savanna

**sawdust, sawlogs, sawmill**

**sawntimber, sawnwood**

**sawpit, sawtimber**

**sceptical**, *not* skeptical

**schoolbooks**

**schoolchildren**

**school-leaver, school-leaving**

**schoolteacher**

**scoop net**

**sea bed, sea floor, sea freight, sea level**

**sea-moss**

**sea wall**

**seawater**

**Second World War** *not* World War II

**sectoral** *not* sectorial

**seed bank, seed bed**

**seed-borne, seed-coat**

**seed lot**

**self-** compounds all hyphenated

**serosurveillance**

**setback** (n.), **set back** (v.)

**sewing machine**

**shade house** *not* shadehouse

**sharecropper, sharecropping**

**sheep meat, sheep pox**

**sheepskin**

**shelf-life**

**shelterbelt**

**shortfall**

**shorthorn**

**short-lived**

**short term** (n.), **short-term** (adj.)

**short wave** (n.), **short-wave** (adj.)

**shutdown** (n.), **shut-down** (adj.), **shut down** (v.)

**side-effect**

**sideline**

**silage, ensilage** silage is the product of the process of ensilage

**silkworm**

**silvi-** compounds closed up unless followed by a vowel

**sirocco**, pl. **siroccos**

**sizeable**

**siphon** *not* syphon

**skilful** *not* skillful

**skimmed milk, skim milk** follow author's use

**-skin** compounds closed up, e.g. goatskin

**slaughterhouse**  
**slowdown** (n.), **slow down** (v.)  
**smallholder**, **smallholding**  
**small scale** (n.), **small-scale** (adj.)  
**smoulder** *not* smolder  
**social costs** (not societal costs)  
**socio-** compounds usually closed up  
**socioeconomic**  
**sociometric**, **sociometry**  
**soft cover**  
**soil-borne**  
soja bean *avoid*; use **soybean**  
**south**, **southeast**, **southeastern**, **southern**  
capitalized when part of a proper name or political grouping, e.g. South America, South Temperate Zone, Southeast Asia, Southern Hemisphere; lower case for Europe  
**southward** (adj.), **southwards** (adv.)  
**southwest**, **southwestern** *see* **south**  
**soybean** *not* soyabean or soja bean  
**speciality** *not* specialty  
**spectre** *not* specter  
**spelled** preferred to spelt  
**spillover** (n.), **spill over** (v.)  
**spreadsheet**  
**St** *not* St. (contraction for Saint)  
**stall-feed**, **stall-feeding**  
**stalk borer**  
**standby** (n.), **stand by** (v.)  
**staple-based diet**  
**staple food**  
**starting-point**  
**state** lower case when referring generally to nations or divisions of a nation; upper case when a specific state is named, e.g. State of New York; *but* state-owned enterprise, head of state  
**statewide**  
**stationary** *not* moving; **stationery** paper, pens, etc.  
**status quo** *not* italicized  
**stem borer**, **stem rot**  
**stockbreeder**

**stock owners**  
**stockpile**  
**stone-fruit**  
**stopgap**  
**storehouse**, **storeroom**  
**storey**, pl. **storeys** preferred spelling for floor(s) of a building  
**stratum**, pl. **strata**  
**sub-** compounds closed up unless followed by "b", e.g. **sub-basin**; *note* **sub-Saharan**  
**subject matter**  
**sugar beet** (n.), **sugar-beet** (adj.)  
**sugar cane** (n.), **sugar-cane** (adj.)  
**sugar-gum**  
**sugar refinery**  
**sugar-sweetened beverages**  
**sun-dried** (adj.), **sun dry** (v.)  
**sunflower seed** (n.), **sunflower-seed** (adj.)  
**supersede** *never* supercede  
**supply-driven**  
**symposium**, pl. **symposia**  
**synthesis**, pl. **syntheses**  
syphon *use* **siphon**  
**system-wide**

## T

**takeoff** (n.), **take off** (v.)  
**takeover** (n.), **take over** (v.)  
**tap-root**, **tap-water**  
**tape recorder** (n.), **tape-record** (v.)  
**target** (v.), **targeted** (past part.)  
**taskforce**  
**teamwork**  
**testcross** (n., v.)  
**test run**  
**test-tube**  
**thiamine** *not* thiamin  
Third World *use* **developing countries**  
**tick-borne**  
**timberland**, **timberline**  
**time frame**, **time lag**, **time limit**

**time-saving**  
**timescale, time series**  
**timetable**  
**tiro** *not* tyro  
**titration, titre**  
**tobacco**, pl. **tobaccos**  
**tonne** refers to metric tonne; avoid ton unless referring to shipping vessel tons  
**top-down** (adj.)  
**top-dressing** (n.), **top-dress** (v.)  
**top-graft**  
**topsoil**  
**totalled, totalling**  
**towards**, *not* toward  
**tradable**  
**trade-off**  
**trafficking, trafficker**  
**trans-** compounds closed up  
**transferring**  
**transhumance**  
**transnational** the correct word for a corporation that operates across international boundaries is transnational, *not* multinational, which implies ownership by more than one nationality  
**transship, transshipment**  
**travelled, traveller**  
**trawl-line**  
**trawl-net**  
**treatise**  
**tree fruit, tree line**  
**trifurcate**  
**tri-junction**  
**troubleshoot, troubleshooter**  
**trypanoprophylactic**, *not* trypano-preventive  
**trypanosomosis**, *not* trypanosomiasis  
**trypanotolerance, trypanotolerant**  
**tsetse fly**  
**tubewell**  
**turnaround**  
**turnover**  
**tyre** (n.) *not* tire

## U

**ultra-** compounds generally closed up, e.g. **ultrasonic, ultraviolet**  
**under-** compounds generally closed up unless followed by "r", e.g. **under-represented**  
**understorey**  
**underway**  
**update** (n.), **up-to-date** (adv.), *but* **bring up to date** (v.)  
**upgrade, upland**  
**up-river**  
**uproot, uprooted**  
**upward** (adj.), **upwards** (adv.)  
**usable** *not* useable

## V

**value added** (n.), **value-added** (adj.)  
**vaporific, vaporiform, vaporimeter**  
**vaporize**  
**vaporous, vapour** *not* vapor  
**vapour burner**  
**vector-borne**  
**vein banding, vein clearing**  
**veldt**  
**versus** (abbrev. **vs**) *not* italicized; (abbrev. **v.** for legal cases) italicized  
**veterinarian**  
**vice versa** *not* italicized  
**vicuña**, *not* vicuna  
**video camera**  
**videocassette**  
**video display**  
**video recorder**  
**videotape**  
**Viet Nam** *but* **Vietnamese**  
**viewfinder**  
**viewpoint**  
**vigorous, vigour**

## W

**wadi** *not* italicized  
**wage-earner**

**-ward** (adj.), **-wards** (adv.), e.g. an upward movement, moving upwards

**Washington, DC**

**wastewater**

**waterbird, waterbody**

**water-borne**

**water buffalo**

**watercourse, waterfall**

**water-flea**

**waterfowl**

**water-hole**

**water level**

**waterline**

**watermark**

**watermelon**

**water-power**

**waterproof**

**water-soluble**

**water supply**

**water table**

**watertight**

**water-tower**

**waterway**

**water-weed**

**wavelength**

**webworm**

**website**

**weed-killer**

**weekday, weekend**

**well-being**

**wellwater**

**west, western** capitalized when part of a proper name or political grouping, e.g. the West, West Africa, Western Europe (political), Western Hemisphere, Western world; lower case for direction or geographical grouping, e.g. western Africa, western Europe (geographical)

**wetlands**

**while** *not* whilst

**whiteboard, whitefly**

**wholemeal**

**-wide** compounds: close up worldwide,

countrywide, nationwide; hyphenate economy-wide, island-wide, organization-wide, system-wide

**wide-ranging, wide-reaching**

**widescale** (adj.), *but on a wide scale*

**widespread**

**wildland, wildlife**

**windbreak** (n.)

**wind-row**

**-wise** compounds – avoid except in words such as clockwise

**-wood** compounds closed up, e.g. brushwood, budwood, cordwood, fuelwood, hardwood, sawnwood

**wood ash**

**woodcutter, woodfuel, woodlot**

**wood stove**

**woodwork**

**woollen** *not* woolen

**workday, workbench, workforce, workload**

**worker** *not* workman

**workplace**

**workplan**

**workroom, worksheet, workshop**

**work site**

**workstation, worktable**

**worldwide**

**World Wide Web**

## Y

**yearbook**

**year-end** (adj.), **year-long** (adj.), **year-round** (adj.)

**yoghurt**

## Z

**zeros** *not* zeroes

The objective of having a house style is to ensure clarity and consistency across all FAO publications. This updated edition of *FAOSTYLE: English* covers matters such as punctuation, units, spelling and references.

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