
ILCA Style Guidelines for Written Professional Resources

These guidelines, developed by ILCA’s Professional Resources Committee, are for ILCA professional documents written in English. For anything not mentioned here, refer to the AMA (American Medical Association) Manual of Style. All references need to be in AMA format <<http://www.lib.jmu.edu/citation/amaguide.pdf>>.

PREFERRED USAGE

antifungal (no hyphen)

artificial nipple or **bottle teat** (not “bottle nipple”)

breastfeeding-friendly (not capitalized when used generically)

Baby-Friendly designated (not “certified,” no trademark)

Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, or **BFHI** after first use (all capitalized, no trademark)

birth weight (two words)

bottle feeding (as an adjective use “bottle-fed”)

breast pump (two words)

breastfeeding (not “nursing”)

breast milk (two words); use of “human milk” is preferred; “mother’s own milk” or “expressed milk” may be used

candida infection (thrush), if “candida infection” is used also use “thrush.”

cesarean birth or **cesarean section** (lower case, not “C-section” and not spelled “caesarean”)

cup feeding (as an adjective use “cup-fed”)

dysphoric milk ejection reflex, or **d-MER** after first use

expressing (not “pumping”)

expressed milk (not “pumped milk”)

finger feeding (as an adjective use “finger-fed”)

formula-fed (hyphenate adjectives)

healthcare (one word) (see reference: <http://grammarist.com/spelling/healthcare/>)

human milk (preferred over “breast milk”)

human milk substitute (use of “formula” is acceptable; use “breastmilk substitute (BMS)” only if part of a legal document; avoid “artificial baby milk”)

IBCLC (not “LC”)

infant (rather than “baby”)

International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes (spell out in full when first mentioned), or **International Code** after first use (not “The Code” or “WHO Code”)

JHL (italicize)

lactation consultant (lowercase); use of “International Board Certified Lactation Consultant® (IBCLC®)” is preferred

La Leche League, or **LLL** after first use (not “the League”)

latch (not “attachment” or “latch-on” when used as a noun) (e.g., The baby had a good latch.)

late preterm infant (not “near term infant”)

lip-tie (hyphenate)

low birth weight (noun) (e.g., Her second baby had a low birth weight.)

low-birth-weight (adjective) (e.g., Low-birth-weight babies require closer observation.); use of “small for gestational age” is preferred

mastitis (rather than “breast infection”)

mother (not “mom” or “mum”)

mother-infant or **mother-infant dyad** (not “mother-baby”)

milk ejection (not “letdown”)

milk ejection reflex, or **MER** after first use

milk expression (not “pumping”)

pacifier (dummy); if “pacifier” is used, also use “dummy”

physician (not “doctor”)

plugged duct (not “clogged duct”)

preterm (not “premature”)

professional nurse or **registered nurse**, or **RN** after first use (not “nurse”)

relactation (no hyphen)

rooming-in (hyphenate)

skin-to-skin (adjective) (e.g., Skin-to-skin care is recommended for all newborns.)

skin to skin (verb) (e.g., Her baby was put skin to skin shortly after the birth.)
small for gestational age, or **SGA** after first use (preferred over “low-birth-weight”)
syringe feeding (as an adjective use “syringe-fed”)

tongue-tie (hyphenate) or ankyloglossia

Web-based (capital W; hyphenated)
website (lowercase; one word)

ABBREVIATIONS (or not)

Academic Degrees, Certifications, and Honors:

Academic degrees are abbreviated in bylines and texts when used with a full name (e.g., Lucy A. Smith, IBCLC, PhD).

Academic degrees can be used alone in certain circumstances (e.g., Lucy is an IBCLC and holds a PhD in biology.).

Acronyms and Registration Marks

At first mention in the text, use full name with the abbreviation following immediately in parentheses. Use the registration mark ® the first time the name is used. Avoid introducing an abbreviation in a subheading or beginning a sentence with an abbreviation.

Examples:

Fellows of ILCA (FILCA)

International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners® (IBLCE®), then IBLCE

International Board Certified Lactation Consultant® (IBCLC®), then IBCLC

International Lactation Consultant Association® (ILCA®), then ILCA

International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes, then International Code (not “the Code” or “WHO Code”)

Day of the Week, Months, Eras: These should not be abbreviated.

Names/Titles

Titles of persons are abbreviated only when they **precede the full name** (e.g., Prof. L.A. Smith). There are periods after the initials, with no space between.

Spell out titles when they precede the surname alone, are used at the beginning of a sentence, or are used after a name (in which case title is not capitalized) (e.g., Professor Smith; Lucy Ann Smith, professor of biology).

The title Dr. should be used only after the specified academic degree has been mentioned and only with the surname (e.g., After receiving her PhD in Lactation, Dr. Smith started work at McGill University.).

Places

At first mention in the text, the name of a state, territory, province, or country should be spelled out when it follows the name of a city (e.g., Montreal, Quebec; Melbourne, Australia).

Names of cities, states, countries, territories, possessions, provinces, and countries should be spelled out in full when they stand alone.

Abbreviations such as US and UK (with no periods) can be used as modifiers only when they precede the word they are modifying, and should be spelled out in all other contexts (e.g., UK hospitals; hospitals in the United Kingdom).

NUMBERS

Do not spell out numbers

(in scientific writing, numerals are used to express numbers in most circumstances)

- After designators – write “day 8”, “case 4”, “treatment protocol 5”.
- When writing out specific percentages (e.g., A 5% incidence (95% confidence interval, 1%-9%) was reported).
- When denoting age, measures of time, money or temperature:

Examples:

The mother brought in her 8-month-old baby.

Her sore nipples lasted for the first 2 weeks.

The mother’s temperature was 38.7C (101.7F)?

Spell out numbers

At the beginning of a sentence, title, subtitle, heading (but write numbers as numerals elsewhere in the sentence):

Examples:

One in 3 mothers
Four in 100 babies
Twenty-seven percent to 30% of patients
Twenty-first century mothers

That are common fractions (these are expressed as hyphenated words).

Examples: one-fourth or two-thirds

When used as pronouns. (e.g. Usually, at least ten show up for the breastfeeding class.)

Ordinal numerals

Ordinals “first” through “ninth” should be spelled out (e.g., the second baby, her fifth son)

Ordinals greater than “ninth” are written in numerical form, except at the beginning of a sentence. (e.g. She is the 10th mother to deliver today.)

If a sentence contains two or more ordinals and one of them is greater than “ninth,” then all should be expressed in numerical form. (e.g., the 8th and 13th hospitals on the list)

Numbers of four or more digits

There should be no commas in units of 1000 to 9999

For larger numbers, use commas to separate (e.g., 10,000, 142,225)

TITLES/SUBTITLES

Italicize titles of all stand-alone documents (books, journals, position papers, information sheets)

Examples:

Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergencies

Journal of Human Lactation

Clinical Guidelines for the Establishment of Exclusive Breastfeeding

Capitalization of Words in Titles/Subtitles

Use capitals for most words except for prepositions (**regardless of length—this is different than what the AMA recommends**), coordinating conjunctions, or articles, unless they are the first word in the title.

Common words that are **NOT** capitalized: a, an, the, and, of, or, with, among, to, in, from, on

Capitalize all major words, verbs (including linking verbs), nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and pronouns (including short words such as Not, Be, Go, Do, Am, Is).

Hyphenated Compounds

When a capitalized word is a hyphenated compound, capitalize both words.

Examples: Community-Based; Baby-Friendly

Do not capitalize the second part of a hyphenated compound if either word is a prefix or suffix or if both parts constitute a single word.

Examples:

Anti-inflammatory

Long-term

Follow-up

Part-time

Laid-back