

Writing Numbers

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

Written out:

Over two pounds
Four million dollars
Thirty-one years ago
Fifty people came

Figures:

After 126 days
Only \$31.50
4.78 liters

The most important thing to remember when writing numbers is clarity for the reader.

- Numbers in series should be consistent:
Two apples, six oranges, and three bananas
The vote was 9 in favor and 6 against
- Write out numbers beginning sentences:
Six percent of the group failed.
- Use a combination of figures and words for numbers when such a combination will keep your writing clear:
There were five 13-year-olds in the foster home.

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