ee publishers

General Style Guide

The below style guide is meant to achieve **consistency** in style and layout across all EE Publishers' publications. While most of the below guidelines are based on common and accepted practices of South African English, it is not an authority on English usage and grammar.

Please read this guide in relation to each publication's author's guide (Energize, EngineerIT, PositionIT, Vector) which outlines the type and format of articles and also contains article templates with formatting instructions.

Authors are advised to set their word processor's default dictionary to UK English – in Microsoft Word this setting is typically found under the Tools menu bar, then the selecting Language option.

(Latest revision: June 2018)

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Common errors

Incorrect usage of: its and it's
Incorrect usage of the apostrophe in plural and possessive nouns: UPSs, UPS's, UPS', UPSs'
Not leaving a space between number and units
Splitting of a number and its units on separate lines
Splitting of phone or fax numbers on separate lines
Splitting of large numbers or currency values on separate lines
Leaving out brackets for city code of local phone numbers
Use of brackets in international phone numbers
Leaving out the hyphen in phone or fax numbers
Capitalisation of company names
Capitalisation in titles of articles
Capitalisation of product and brand names
Excessive use of trademarks, brand and company names
Use of company form (e.g. Pty Ltd)
Incorrect date format
Incorrect time format
Use of common titles of people's names
Use of company names in titles of articles
Capitalisation in job descriptions
Use of copyright and trademark symbols: ©, ® and ™
Omission of full stop in titles: Dr and Prof.
Omission of full stops in the abbreviations: i.e., e.g. and etc.
Use of b/s or bits per sec instead of bps
Incorrect use of the abbreviations AC, DC and rms
Incorrect case in unit scaling factors (K instead of k, m instead of M, M instead of m)
Loss of symbols such as µ, Ω, €, £, ¥, ºC, ºK
Use of the word degrees C instead or degrees K instead of ºC or ºK
Use of the word percent instead of the % symbol
Use of decimal point instead of decimal comma
Use of comma as a number separator in large numbers
Omission of hyphen after the number when using the words: million or billion
Use of imperial units
Incorrect use of subscripts and superscripts, their positioning, relative sizing and capitalisation
Failure to use the MS Word Equation Editor
Failure to explain acronyms at first usage

Acronyms

Acronyms can help avoid the repetition of long phrases or names but should be written in full at first use in an article. Thereafter use the acronym only. Acronyms of organisations that are phonetically sounded or in common usage may capitalise the first letter and then lower case for the remaining letters e.g. Eskom, Icasa, Nersa.

Apostrophe, plurals and possessives

An apostrophe in a word can denote:
- dropping of a letter, e.g. it is → it's; do not → don't
- possessive singular noun, e.g. the computer's RAM, as in the RAM belonging to the computer
- possessive plural noun, e.g. the resistors' colour, as in the colour of to the resistors

A noun ending in "s", without any apostrophe, is usually a simple plural noun, e.g. resistors, as in more than one resistor.

Capitalisation

- Capitalise the first letter of the sentence and the first letter of proper nouns in the sentence (titles, first names, surnames, place names, countries, etc.)
- Capitalise only the first letter of the article title and the first letter of proper nouns in the title.
- Avoid full capitalisation for effect of company names, product names, brand names, etc., unless this is really the correct usage (e.g. use Wika Instruments and not WIKA Instruments; use ABB and not Abb).
- For EE Publishers brands, use EngineerIT, Energize, Vector and PositionIT.
- Avoid capital letters in a job description (e.g. use Thabo Mbeki, president of South Africa, and not Thabo Mbeki, President of South Africa). See above regarding capitalised abbreviations of certain job descriptions.
- Use a capital letter for titles (e.g. use President Thabo Mbeki and not president Thabo Mbeki; use Minister Alec Erwin, and not minister Alec Erwin)

See also "*Company-, brand-, product names and trademarks*" and "*Titles, names and job descriptions*"

Company-, brand-, product names and trademarks

Company names, brand names, product names and trademarks need to be used with discretion and not repetitively. Use a company name, brand name, product name and/or trademark only once in an article where necessary, and thereafter use the words: the company, the system, the product, the unit, etc., instead.

Avoid:
- The use of lower case for promotional effect, e.g. do not use "the dti", instead use "the DTI"; also avoid capitalisation of words or names in an article for promotional effect – use capitalisation only when really part of the company name e.g. ABB, ALSTOM.

- Using the business form after the company name (e.g. do not use Ltd; (Pty) Ltd; Inc.; cc; Pvt, Plc, Gmbh, etc.)
- Company names, brand names, product names and trademarks in the title unless it is a vital part of the story (e.g. "ABB wins big contract" is not acceptable; "ABB acquires Siemens" is acceptable).
- Using the copyright, trademark or registered trademark symbols (©,™, ®) symbols where possible.
- The use of company boiler plates in articles – these are only acceptable in paid advertorials

See also "*Sales and promotional hype*" and "*Capitalisation*"

Date

Date format: Day Month Year, e.g. 25 May 2004

Email addresses

Email format: chris.yelland@ee.co.za (print), chris.yelland@ee.co.za (online)
Use lower case throughout, and do not split email addresses over two lines.

Numerical and currency values

- In general, the numbers one to twelve, when not used in a scientific way, and when no units or decimal comma is involved, should be typed out as a word, e.g. three apples, not 3 apples; twelve apostles, not 12 apostles.
- Use a decimal comma and not a decimal point, e.g. use 15,3 and not 15.3.
- For legibility of large numbers, use a space and not a comma as a separator between every three digits before the decimal comma, e.g. 12 000,13 and not 12,000.13.
- Do not split a number over two lines.
- No space to be used between greater than/less than sign and unit, eg. ≥100 and not ≥ 100.
- Shorten very large or very small numbers with several zeros:
  - In non-scientific text, use the words million or billion with a hyphen between the number and word, e.g. 23,6-million and not 23 600 000.
  - In scientific text, use the exponential form, e.g. use $2,36 \times 10^7$ and not 23 600 000; or $2, 36 \times 10^{-7}$ and not 0,000 000 236.

The above guidelines also apply to currency values. In addition:
- In general, use South African Rand as currency (R).
- Use the currency symbol, followed immediately by the number, e.g. R124,36 and not R 124,36
- Do not include the two digits after the decimal comma if these are zeros (e.g. use R23 and not R23,00)
- Where cents are involved, always use a decimal comma and not a decimal point or hyphen.

See also "*Measurements*" and "*Unit scaling prefixes*"

Mathematics and equations

- The use of mathematics and equations on our journals is common and requires attention to ensure these are both mathematically and aesthetically correct.
- Pay attention to mathematical symbols, subscripts, superscripts, italics, spacing, relative sizing of symbols and equation numbering to ensure the equations look consistent, in proportion and professional.
- To get the aesthetic part right, use the basic equation editor in Microsoft Word (Insert/Object/ME Equation 3.0). This equation editor is very easy to use and can cope with almost any equation in our journals. Where necessary, request assistance from EE Publishers' design department.
- An example of a perfectly proportioned, complex mathematical formula, prepared in the basic MS Word equation editor is shown here:

$$y = \int_{x=0}^{\infty} \sum_{n=1}^{100} \sqrt[3]{\left[\frac{n^{4\omega-1}}{n-2}\right]} \frac{x^3-3}{x^2-2x+1} dx$$

Measurements: SI metric units

Use SI metric units. Standard International (SI) metric units are used almost universally in scientific, technical and engineering circles throughout the world, and have been adopted by South Africa several years ago. The older Imperial units (pounds, miles, yards, feet, inches) must be avoided wherever possible.

Exception: screen sizes, measured in inches (")

The details below cover the vast majority of the usage of SI metric units in EE Publishers' publications. The relevant SABS standard can also be consulted.

- Except where indicated below, always use a character space between a number and its units, e.g. 66 kV, not 66kV.
- Do not leave a space between a number and its units for º, ºC, ºF, ºK and %, e.g. 33,4ºC, not 33,4 ºC;
- Do not split a number and its units over two lines.
- Always use the abbreviation of the unit and its associated scaling prefix, e.g. 100 km, not 100 kilometres; 25 Ω, not 25 ohms.

See also "*Numerical and currency values*"

Unit scaling prefixes

Use unit scaling prefixes to scale a unit values where necessary. This also shortens very large or very small numbers, and avoids the exponential notation in most cases. E.g. 1000 m = 1 km; 10 Mbps = 10 000 000 bps; 2 µs = 0,000 002 s.

Abbreviation	Short for	Scaling factor	Exponent
p	pico	1/1 000 000 000 000	10^{-12}
n	nano	1/1 000 000 000	10^{-9}
µ	micro	1/1 000 000	10^{-6}
m	milli	1/1000	10^{-3}
c	centi	1/100	10^{-2}
d	deci	1/10	10^{-1}
D	deca	10	10^{1}
H	hecto	100	10^{2}
k	kilo	1 000	10^{3}
M	mega	1 000 000	10^{6}
G	giga	1 000 000 000	10^{9}
T	tera	1 000 000 000 000	10^{12}

Common units in our journals

Abbreviation	Short for	Measurement	Common usage
V	volts	Voltage	µV, mV, V, kV
A	amps	Current	µA, mA, A, kA
Ω	ohms	Resistance	µΩ, mΩ, Ω, kΩ MΩ
Hz	hertz	Frequency	Hz, kHz, MHz, GHz
J	joules	Energy	mJ, J, kJ
C	coulombs	Electrical charge	pC
Wh	watt hours	Electrical energy	Wh, kWh, MWh, GWh
F	farads	Capacitance	nF, pF, µF, mF, F
H	henries	Inductance	µH, mH, H
m	metres	Distance	µm, mm, cm, m, km
m^2	square metres	Area	mm^2, cm^2, m^2, km^2
g	grams	Mass	µg, mg, g, kg
W	watts	Active power	mW, W, kW, MW
var	reactive volt-amps	Reactive power	var, kvar, Mvar
VA	volt-amps	Apparent power	VA, kVA, MVA
s	seconds	Time	µs, ms, s
min	minutes	Time	m
h	hours	Time	h
l	litres	Volume	ml, l, kl, Hl
m^3	cubic metres	Volume	m^3
º	degrees	Angular rotation	º
rad	radian	Angular rotation	rad
ºC	degrees Centigrade	Temperature	ºC
ºF	degrees Fahrenheit	Temperature	ºF
ºK	degrees Kelvin	Temperature	ºK
bps	bits per second	Transmission rate	bps, kbps, Mbps, Gbps
B	bytes	Memory size	B, kB, MB, GB, TB
ms^{-1} or m/s	metres per second	Speed	ms^{-1}, m/s
km/h	kilometres per hour	Speed	km/h
rpm	revs per minute	Angular speed	rpm
rad/s or s^{-1}	radians per second	Angular speed	rad/s, s^{-1}

Common Greek symbols

Σ	(capital) sigma
Φ	(capital) phi
Ω	(capital) omega
Δ	(capital) delta
α	alpha
β	beta
γ	gamma
δ	delta
η	eta
θ	theta
λ	lambda
μ	mu
ν	nu
π	pi
ρ	rho
σ	sigma
τ	tau
ϕ	phi
ψ	psi
ω	omega

Common technical abbreviations and symbols

%	percent
∞	infinity
≈	approximately equal to
≠	not equal to
=	equal to
<	less than
>	greater than
≤	less than or equal to
≥	greater than or equal to
AC	alternating current
DC	direct current
rms	root mean square
*	asterisk or multiply by
·	multiply by
x	multiply by
/	slash or divide by
÷	divide by
+	plus
-	minus
±	plus minus
&	and
@	at

Phone numbers

Phone number format: Tel 011 659-0504 or Tel +44 1 4340-1254

Avoid the use of international phone numbers, use email address instead. However, where used, international phone numbers should include the plus sign, followed immediately by the country code, then a space, then the city code without the preceding zero, then a space, then the phone number with a hyphen in the right place

Quotations

First person quotes may be used in industry news and opinion articles but should be avoided in other articles.

Referencing and citation

Please use the IEEE referencing style (IEEE Editorial Style Manual). This citation tool might also be useful: http://www.citethisforme.com/ieee)

Ideas, processes, results, and wording from original authors and sources should be attributed. Neglecting to acknowledge a source could constitute plagiarism, a breach of professional conduct which could result in ethical and legal consequences. Citations and references are usually most applicable to technical articles.

See also the *Technical article template* for the relevant publication's *Author's Guide* linked on p1.

Time

Use 24-hour format, e.g. 11h25, or 14h30

Titles, names and job descriptions

Use the higher titles (as an abbreviation), e.g. Dr and Prof. (not Doctor, Professor) and avoid the common Mr, Mrs, Ms or Miss titles.
Apply titles with current conventions – i.e. if a title ends in a different letter to the full word, use a full stop (e.g. Prof.), if not (e.g. Dr), then do not use a full stop.
In the first use of a name in an article, use the higher title (where applicable), first name and surname and thereafter just the higher title (where applicable) and surname (e.g. use Chris Yelland at first usage and thereafter just Yelland; use Prof. Duncan Baker at first and thereafter just Prof. Baker)
Where used without a first name, surnames such as Van der Merwe or De Beer should start with a capital letter. But where used with a first name, the first letter of these surnames should not start with a capital letter e.g. us Jan de Beer, not Jan De Beer.
Avoid capital letters in a job description, e.g. use Thabo Mbeki, president of South Africa, and not Thabo Mbeki, President of South Africa; But use a capital letter for titles, e.g. use President Thabo Mbeki and not president Thabo Mbeki.
Where possible use the abbreviations of common job descriptions such as CEO for chief executive officer, e.g. Chris Yelland, MD of EE Publishers and not Chris Yelland, managing director of EE Publishers.

Sales and promotional hype

- In technical articles, overt and blatantly self-serving promotional content of a sales and marketing nature is not acceptable; Company, project, product and event news items can be of a dignified promotional nature.
- Promotional overstatement, hyperbole, hype and questionable claims needs to be removed, e.g. "revolutionary", "best in the world", "fastest in the world", "cheapest on the market", "most technically advanced".
- Repetition and overstatement of benefits, claims, and sales and marketing hype must be edited out and avoided, including repetitious use of company names, brand names, product names and trademarks.

See also *Author's Guides* and "*Company-, brand-, product names and trademarks*".

Website addresses

Website format: www.ee.co.za

Use lowercase throughout and underline in print; link the address online.
Do not split website addresses over two lines in print unless this is unavoidable.
Links may be included in industry news and technical articles but should in general be avoided in news items.
Avoid the use of website addresses in the contact details below articles.

Word list

- big data, not Big Data
- datasets, rather than data sets
- easy to use / easy-to-use: The app is easy to use; it is an easy-to-use app.
- "internet", "extranet', "intranet" should not be treated as proper nouns and should therefore not start with a capital letter.
- meter is a measuring instrument, e.g. an electricity meter, "metre" is a unit of length or distance, e.g. one metre or 1 m.
- POPI Act, not PoPI Act nor POPIA
- Tiff (not TIFF) files
- vs, not versus nor vs.