
ILCA Style Guidelines for Written Professional Resources

The *ILCA Style Guidelines for Written Professional Resources* are for International Lactation Consultant Association® (ILCA®) professional documents written in English. For any style issues not mentioned here, please refer to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition*. All references must be in American Psychological Association (APA) format.

The *ILCA Style Guidelines for Written Professional Resources* is not for use for submissions to the *Journal of Human Lactation (JHL)*. The *Manuscript Submission Guidelines: Journal of Human Lactation* must be used for submissions to the *JHL* and can be found [here](#).

The *ILCA Style Guidelines for Written Professional Resources* is a dynamic document that will be updated periodically as part of ILCA's implementation of the [Strategic Map](#). This implementation includes increasingly addressing issues of diversity and equity. We welcome your [feedback](#) on this evolving document.

This update of the guidelines: 1) addresses the changes from AMA to APA format, 2) addresses the different spelling of words that are specific to British English versus U.S. English, and 3) begins incorporating gender inclusive language.

BRITISH ENGLISH VERSUS U.S. ENGLISH

When sole authors submit a document for publication by ILCA, their use of spellings specific to either British English or U.S. English will be maintained. Prior to jointly submitting a co-authored document for publication by ILCA, co-authors must gain consensus on whether spellings specific to either British English or U.S. English will be used; their consensus will be maintained when the document is published by ILCA.

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)

breast/chest pump (preferred over “breast pump”)

breastfeeding (not “nursing,” when referring solely to a breastfeeding mother or a parent of any gender who prefers this term)

breastfeeding/chestfeeding (preferred over “breastfeeding” when referring to parents of any gender directly feeding at the breast/chest)

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

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

caesarean birth or **caesarean section** (**British English:** lower case, not “C-section”)

cesarean birth or **cesarean section** (**U.S. English:** lower case, not “C-section”)

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

chestfeeding (not chest-feeding)

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

expressing (not “pumping”)

expressed milk (not “pumped milk”)

father (not an informal alternative such as “dad,” “da,” or “papa”)

father–infant or **father–infant dyad**, with a dash (not “father–baby”)

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

formula-fed (hyphenate adjectives)

health care (two words)

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)

Journal of Human Lactation (italicize)

lactation consultant (lowercase; never “LC”); 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 an informal alternative such as “mom,” “mum,” or “papa”)

mother–infant or **mother–infant dyad**, with a dash (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”

parent–infant or **parent–infant dyad**, with a dash (not “parent–baby”)

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)

Web site (uppercase; two words)

ABBREVIATIONS (or not)

Academic Degrees, Certifications, and Honors

Academic degrees are abbreviated in the text 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.).



Titles and degrees should not be included in the byline.

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.

Use superscript for ®.

Capitalize trade and brand names of drugs, equipment, and food.

Avoid introducing an abbreviation in a subheading or beginning a sentence with an abbreviation.

Examples:

Fellows of ILCA (FILCA), then 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 (International Code), then International Code (not “the Code” or “WHO Code”)

To use an abbreviation, the term must be used 4 or more times in the text.

Day of the Week, Months, Years, Eras

These should not be abbreviated.

Names/Titles

For initials, there are periods after the initials, with spaces between them (e.g., L. A. Smith).

Spell out titles and do not capitalize if used after a name (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. If a state name appears with a city, they are abbreviated without periods (e.g., Washington, DC).

Abbreviations such as U.S. and U.K. (with no spaces between the period and the letter) 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., U.K. hospitals; hospitals in the United Kingdom).

NUMBERS

Do not spell out numbers in these cases

(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.

His sore nipples lasted for the first 2 weeks.

The parent’s temperature was 38.7C (101.7F).

Spell out numbers in these cases

They are less than 10 (except in mathematical functions, quantities, percentages, ratios, or percentiles).

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

Examples:

One in 10 mothers

Four in 100 babies

Twenty-seven percent to 30% of patients

Twenty-first century parents

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, his fifth son)

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

Numbers of four or more digits

There should be commas between three digits in units of 1,000 or more (e.g., 1,000; 9,999; 2,091,050).

Exceptions include page numbers, binary digits, and degrees of temperature, which do not take commas.

Plurals of numbers

Add s without an apostrophe (e.g., 1950s).

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

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

The first word or the title (and any subtitles/subheadings) should be capitalized.

Do not use capitals for prepositions (**regardless of length—this is different than what the APA recommends**), coordinating conjunctions, or articles, unless they are the first word in the title or subtitle/subheading.

Common words that are **NOT** capitalized: a, an, and, the, and, of, nor, or, with, among, to, in, from, on

Hyphenated Compounds

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



Examples:
Baby-Friendly
Community-Based
Long-Term
Part-Time