The

DIGITAL
STYLE
GUIDE

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Preface

The Digital Style Guide is a complete guide to style for creating technical user information that conforms to Digital guidelines. Digital Equipment Corporation developed these guidelines to meet several needs:

*   The information development groups within Digital needed a single primary source for style guidelines to ensure consistency within a distributed, heterogeneous environment. Over the years, different groups had developed different style guidelines to ensure consistency within certain product groups. However, the increased integration and complexity of the information environment requires consistency across all the corporation's technical information.

*   The industry move towards open systems means increased sharing of information with other companies, standards bodies, and so on, which increases the need for standardization. Digital recognized the need to provide its partners with style guidelines to promote consistency across all shared information. Adherence to the style guide helps to ensure that your technical information is consistent with Digital's user information in style, organization, and terminology.

These guidelines address topics of particular concern to Digital's information community over the years. A group of experts representing different organizations developed the guidelines using style guides existing within the company as well as standard reference works.

Use this guide as your authority on Digital style. If the information you need is not in this guide, then check the following sources:

*   *The Chicago Manual of Style*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, latest edition.

*   *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*. Springfield, MA: G. & C. Merriam, latest edition (for example, *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*).

- Skillin, Marjorie E. *Words into Type*. Third edition. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1974.

- Strunk, William, Jr. and E.B. White. *The Elements of Style*. NY: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1979.

This guide contains information relevant to internationalization and translation. For a detailed discussion of these topics, see the following books:

- Corporate User Publications Group. *Digital Guide to Developing International Software*. Bedford, MA: Digital Press, 1991.

- Jones, Scott, Cynthia Kennelly, Claudia Mueller, Marcia Sweezey, Bill Thomas, and Lydia Velez. *Developing International User Information*. Bedford, MA: Digital Press, 1992.

The guide also contains guidelines specific to publications developed for multiple platforms, the combination of hardware, operating, and windowing systems.

This guide is intended to be used in conjunction with *The Digital Technical Documentation Handbook*, which describes the process of creating technical user information at Digital and provides techniques for developing high-quality information. *The Digital Technical Documentation Handbook* is available through Digital Press.

Audience

This guide has two major audiences:

- The technical publications community of Digital Equipment Corporation

- Third-party partners of Digital, other Digital customers, and those working with open systems

In addition, universities and colleges may use these guidelines as a case study in standardization within a company.

Structure of This Guide

The style guide is divided into three parts and an index.

- Part I summarizes the major points of good technical style.

- Part II discusses a wide variety of style topics, arranged alphabetically.

- Part III lists symbols, abbreviations and acronyms, and other terms commonly used in Digital technical information.

- The index is a reference to the terms and topics in Part I and Part II. The index also contains entries for the terms in Part III with usage notes.

Conventions

This book uses the following conventions:

Conventions

Convention	Description
...	Horizontal ellipsis points indicate the omission of material from an example. The information is omitted because it is not important to the topic being discussed.
:	Vertical ellipsis points indicate the omission of information from an example or command format. The information is omitted because it is not important to the topic being discussed.
italic type	Italic type sets off references to terms used as or singled out as terms and indicates the complete titles of manuals. In the index, italic type also signals cross-references.
boldface type	Boldface type indicates topics discussed elsewhere in the text.
`monospace type`	Monospace type sets off examples.
dashes	In examples, a hyphen indicates both a hyphen and an en dash, and two hyphens indicate an em dash. For example:
	The length does not change -- even if the line spacing changes.
	The version number is 4.2-1.
	In text, – signifies an en dash, and — signifies an em dash.
nn nnn.nnn nn	A space character separates groups of 3 digits in numerals with 5 or more digits. For example, *10 000* equals *ten thousand*.

n.nn	A period in numerals signals the decimal point indicator. For example, *1.75* equals *one and three-fourths*.
Open VMS™ systems	Refers to OpenVMS AXP systems and OpenVMS VAX™ systems unless otherwise specified.

This guide also uses the following terms:

multiplatform documentation	A documentation set containing at least one book developed for use on more than one platform
multiplatform product	A product that has very similar versions for more than one platform

Acknowledgments

We could not have developed these guidelines without the work of many individuals who identified issues over the years, debated them, and created the style guidelines that are the basis of this book. Many people volunteered their time over and above their regular work because they knew that helping to ensure consistency was the right thing to do. Such labors of love were often unrecognized. Unfortunately, the number of people who made such contributions is too large for individual recognition here. However, we realize the debt we owe and thank all of you.

We would also like to thank Fern Reiss, who, as the initial project leader, coordinated the work that began this book. Thanks also go to the management of the different groups for allowing us to devote the time needed to this project.

Part I

Overview of Basic Style Elements

This part summarizes the major points of good technical style:

- Organizing material clearly
- Creating readable sentences
- Choosing effective words

Good technical writing is no different from good expository prose. It is clear, concise, and accurate. Part II is an alphabetic reference to guidelines for particular style topics. This part is an overview of the elements of effective writing:

- Organizing material clearly

- Creating readable sentences

- Choosing effective words

Following all the guidelines cannot ensure that your information is a model of clarity and vitality. However, it can ensure that you think about the relationship between your material, your audience, and the language you use; that careful thought is the key to effective writing.

1 Organizing Your Information

Knowing your audience and your purpose determines how you organize your information. The quality of the organization depends on how well you plan your material and keep to that plan.

But organization means more than writing an outline for a book and following the outline. It also means thinking about each module or paragraph of information.

- Have a clear topic for each paragraph, and keep to a single topic within each paragraph.

- State the topic early in the paragraph.

- Know what you are trying to do in each paragraph and section, and follow a rhetorical pattern that fits the purpose. For example, in giving directions, place information in the order that the user must follow. In analyzing an operation, start with the whole and then discuss the parts.

- Use transitional words and phrases to connect sentences within a paragraph. These connections show the user how the information is related.

- Summarize difficult concepts for emphasis.

Think before you write. Know what you want to say in each sentence and paragraph before you write it.

2 Creating Readable Sentences

Writing for a technical audience is no excuse for unclear, overly complex sentences. You can use simple sentence structures and straightforward language for the most complex topics.

What does simple sentence structure mean? There are many studies of the effect of sentence and word length on readability. Different experts have proposed different measures of readability, and other studies have disputed the results. However, the length and complexity of your sentences clearly can affect the readability of your text. The longer your sentences are, the more ideas the user must absorb.

Use the following guidelines to reduce sentence complexity:

- Use the present tense of verbs.

- Use the active voice of verbs whenever possible. Use the passive voice when the subject is unknown, unimportant, or assumed.

- Use the imperative mood for procedures.

- Use vertical lists for procedures with multiple steps.

- Use declarative sentences in the pattern subject-verb-complement for statements of fact. This pattern is particularly important for long sentences so that the relationship between sentence elements is clear to the user.

- Use parallelism to make long sentences clearer.

- Use tables and figures to enhance text or instead of text.

- Be aware of the average length of your sentences. You do not have to count each word in each sentence, but examine your sentences as you write or read. If your sentences are consistently over 25 words, you may be using too complex a style. You can then ask your reviewers to look at the style or do simple usability tests to ensure that users can use the information.

However, do not confuse simplicity with simplistic writing; do not patronize your audience. Avoid using a conversational tone in your documentation. Do not use words such as *actually, basically, easy, simply,* and *just*. Although they may seem to make the text more friendly, these words indicate a subjective judgment and are often meaningless.

3 Choosing Effective Words

Poor choice of words can sabotage the best of ideas. Technical information is often made more complex than needed because of:

- Weak or abstract words

- Redundancy

- Deadwood

Use the following guidelines to avoid verbosity:

- Do not use long strings of adjectives. They are difficult to follow and may lead to misinterpretation.

- Place modifiers carefully to ensure the precise meaning of a sentence.

- Avoid unnecessary modifiers. For example, you can usually omit the following modifiers without a loss of meaning:

actively	actual	appropriate
associated	currently	existing
fairly	much	properly
quite	rather	several
simply	suitable	very

- Avoid words and phrases that add nothing to the meaning of your sentence. For example, the italicized words are redundant in the following phrases:

  absolutely essential
  few *in number*
  adequate *enough*
  advance planning
  fuse *together*

The following list shows complex phrases that you can shorten:

Complex	Simple
a large proportion of	many
all of the	all
are designed to be	are
at the rate of	at
at the present time	now

Complex	Simple
by means of	by
despite the fact that	although
for a period of	for
for the most part	mainly
in an area where	where
in an effort to	to
in conjunction with	with
in order to	to
involve the use of	use
it is clear that	clearly
prior to	before

- Use simple words instead of complex words. For example:

Complex	Simple
additional	added
assistance	aid, help
commence	start, begin
demonstrate	show
employ	use
illustrate	show
initial	first
initiate	start, begin
locate	find
provide	give
terminate	end, finish
utilize	use

Complex words sometimes give the most precise meaning. But if a simple word is just as precise, then use it.

Part II

Style Elements from A to Z

This part is an alphabetic reference to guidelines for particular style topics.

abbreviations and acronyms

An abbreviation is a shortened form of a word or phrase that replaces the word or phrase. For example, *ft* is the abbreviation for *foot*, and *r/min* is the abbreviation for *revolutions per minute*. An acronym is a word formed from the initial letters or syllables of a compound term and can be pronounced as a word; in contrast, abbreviations are formed from a set of letters and usually can be pronounced only as separate letters. For example, contrast the acronym *COBOL* with the abbreviation *CPU*.

Use the following guidelines for abbreviations and acronyms:

- Use abbreviations and acronyms carefully. They are easy to misinterpret and can thus cause problems in translation. In addition, users may encounter an abbreviation or acronym after its definition and must then search through previous pages or screens to find the meaning.

  Avoid creating new abbreviations or acronyms. They may have negative connotations in different languages.

- The first time you use an abbreviation or acronym in text, spell out the name and follow it with the abbreviation or acronym in parentheses. For example:

  ```
  The account number you are given is called a project-programmer
  number (PPN).
  ```

  Define acronyms in the glossary.

  However, if an acronym or abbreviation is a trademark, do not spell out the name. See **trademarks and service marks** for more information.

- Many product names are acronyms for longer phrases that describe the product. The derivation of the acronym may be of little importance to the user, or the acronym may be so commonly used that its expansion is unnecessary, such as BASIC® or FORTRAN. In this case, omit the descriptive definition.

- Abbreviations and acronyms are acceptable in examples, figures, footnotes, and tables provided that you have explained them fully in the preceding text.

- Do not use abbreviations in chapter and section titles. Use acronyms in chapter and section titles carefully. When you use an acronym in a title, define it in the text that follows. In later occurrences, use the acronym.

- Do not begin a sentence with an abbreviation. You may use acronyms to start sentences if you have explained them fully in the preceding text.

abbreviations and acronyms

- Do not use the abbreviations of Latin expressions such as *e.g., etc.*

- Form plurals of abbreviations and acronyms by adding a lowercase *s*. For example:

  ```
  ACLs      OEMs      PCs      ROMs
  ```

  Plural abbreviations of units of measurement are exceptions to this guideline. Singular and plural abbreviations of units of measurement are identical.

  ```
  1 lb       10 lb
  1 h        20 h
  1 km        4 km
  ```

- The abbreviation *K* can mean either 1024 (a binary thousand) or the kelvin temperature unit. The difference between these two uses of K is usually clear in context.

  ```
  For proper operation, a superconducting board with 256K bytes of
  memory must be cooled to a temperature of 5 K.
  ```

  International standards require the use of lowercase *k* as the abbreviation for *kilo*, a metric thousand (1000).

- Use the following abbreviations:

Term	Abbreviation
Kilobyte	kB (k = metric multiplier)
	nK bytes (K = binary multiplier)
Megabit	Mb
Megabyte	MB

- In most cases, insert a space between a number and an abbreviation. For example:

  ```
  35 mm      6 kHz      6 ft      5 K (temperature)
  ```

  However, if *K* (*kilo-*), *M* (*mega-*), or *G* (*giga-*) represents a binary multiplier (2^{10}, 2^{20}, or 2^{30}), place the abbreviation with the number. For example:

  ```
  A 256K byte memory module
  ```

  ```
  A 4M bit memory chip
  ```

If k, M, or G represents a metric multiplier, place the abbreviation with the unit of measurement. For example:

```
A 300 kB disk drive (300 000 bytes)

A 10 Mb/s Ethernet (10 million bits)
```

- Do not use periods with abbreviations for units of measurement. If the abbreviation may be confused with another word (for example, *in* for *inch*), do not use the abbreviation.

- Spell acronyms without periods or intervening spaces.

- Use the accepted spelling for acronyms. Most acronyms use uppercase letters, but some, particularly product names, may use a mix of upper- and lowercase letters.

- Do not capitalize the letters of the acronym in the spelled-out version unless their capitalization is required.

  Use

  ```
  data exchange control (DXC)
  format output specification instance (FOSI)
  Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE)
  ```

  Do not use

  ```
  Data eXchange Control (DXC)
  Format Output Specification Instance (FOSI)
  ```

- When using abbreviations or symbols in a series with three or more items, place the abbreviation or symbol for a unit of measurement at the end of the series. For example:

  ```
  1200, 1400, or 1600 MHz
  ```

- If there are only two items in a series, repeat the abbreviation or symbol for a unit of measurement. For example:

  ```
  3°C to 5°C
  10 ft by 12 ft
  ```

- When specifying product requirements, use the metric units first, followed by the U.S. equivalent in parentheses. For example:

Binding Method	Recommended Gutter
Unbound books inserted into vinyl binders	19.1 mm (3/4 inch)
Bound books that will not be drilled for insertion onto the rings in vinyl binders	15.9 mm (5/8 inch)

- Avoid examples that require an alphabetically ordered list of abbreviations or acronyms to convey meaning.

abbreviations and acronyms

Do not use

```
The following abbreviations are used to refer to color in the
mechanical drawings:
BLK   black
BLU   blue
BRZ   bronze
BRN   brown
GY    gray
GRN   green
```

This type of list can cause translation difficulties because the translated list elements will probably not be in alphabetical order. If you cannot avoid using an alphabetically ordered list, include a comment in the source file indicating the purpose of the example so that the translators can design an example that is appropriate for their country.

• Do not use acronyms or abbreviations as verbs.

Use

```
You can move the bit with the MOV command.
```

Do not use

```
You can MOV the bit to. . . .
```

See also **Latin expressions, measurement, units of**, and **trademarks and service marks**, as well as Part III.

---

above and below

Do not use *above* and *below, earlier, preceding,* or *later* as pointers to information in text. Where possible, use specific cross-references, as in *See Table 3–1.* If you cannot make specific cross-references, use *previous* and *following.*

See also **cross-references**.

addresses

Do not use addresses for service or support organizations in your documentation. This information must be updated frequently and is usually valid only in the originating country. If the document is distributed in other countries, the information is usually not correct for those countries.

If a funder requires this information, isolate the material by including it in a separate document, such as a reference card, or in an appendix. In the source file, indicate the purpose of the information so that the distributing organization can change the information if needed.

adjectives, strings of

Do not use long strings of adjectives. A string of adjectives is difficult to follow and may lead to misinterpretation. The following sentence becomes clearer (and the hyphenation problem disappears) with the use of a wider variety of parts of speech:

Use

```
Four constants partition the range of the function; these
constants depend on data type.
```

Do not use

```
Four data-type-dependent constants partition the range of the function.
```

Avoid using the words *easy*, *just*, *simply*, *very*, and so on, which are often empty modifiers.

See also **modifiers**.

affect and effect

Affect as a verb means to influence, change, or have an effect on. For example:

```
Even minor changes affect the performance of the database.
```

Effect as a verb means to cause to happen or bring about. For example:

```
To effect even minor changes on the database, you. . . .
```

Avoid using *effect* as a verb in technical documentation.

affect and effect

Effect as a noun means the result of some action. For example:

```
Even minor changes have an effect on the performance of the
database.
```

alphabetizing

This section gives guidelines for the following topics:

- Alphabetizing methods
- Lists and tables
- Glossaries and indexes

Alphabetizing Methods

There are two methods of alphabetizing:

- Letter-by-letter alphabetizing

  Alphabetize each word of an entry up to the first comma, colon, or period. Ignore spaces and hyphens. The following list uses letter-by-letter alphabetizing:

  ```
  check in
  checklist
  check mark
  check off
  checkpoint
  ```

- Word-by-word alphabetizing

  Alphabetize each word of an entry up to the first space. Ignore hyphens. The following list uses word-by-word alphabetizing:

  ```
  check in
  check mark
  check off
  checklist
  checkpoint
  ```

Digital prefers letter-by-letter alphabetizing.

Lists and Tables

Use the following guidelines for alphabetizing items in lists and tables:

- Be careful when using examples that require an alphabetically ordered list or table to convey meaning. These examples may cause translation difficulties because the translated list or table elements will probably not be in the same alphabetical order as the original elements. If you use an alphabetically ordered list or table, include a comment in the source file

indicating the purpose of the list or table so that the translators can design an example that is appropriate for their country.

In some cases, alphabetized lists may be easier for users to refer to, such as long lists of arguments, commands, keywords, qualifiers, and so forth.

- Alphabetize items in multiple columns horizontally, as follows:

```
a      b      c
d      e      f
```

Alphabetizing horizontally eliminates page-break problems.

- Alphabetize acronyms according to their shortened form.

- Alphabetize symbols as though they were spelled out.

```
& (ampersand)
@ (at)
% (percent)
```

Glossaries and Indexes

Use the following guidelines for alphabetizing glossary and index entries:

- Use the same method of alphabetizing in the index and the glossary, preferably letter-by-letter. Your text-formatting tool may determine the method.

- Index symbols both as symbols, at the beginning of the index, and under the name of the symbol. For example:

```
& (ampersand), 3-9

A
Ambiguity, deleting, 1-6, 4-11
Ampersand (&), 3-9
Articles, 3-2
```

If the text formatting tool cannot place symbols at the beginning of the index, index the symbols under their names.

- Place numeric primary entries at the top of the index, before the alphabetic entries, if the text-formatting tool allows it. For example, the primary entry *64-bit* should go before any of the alphabetic entries, as follows:

```
64-bit, 5-12

A
Access control, 1-5
Application generator, 2-6, 2-9, 2-10
```

alphabetizing

Put all numeric entries in ascending numeric order. For example:

```
070R disk, 1-1
32-bit, 1-1
64-bit, 1-2
```

If the formatting tool cannot place numeric entries before alphabetic entries, then treat the numeric entries as if the numbers were spelled out. For example:

Phrase	Alphabetize as:
070R disk	Zero seven zero R
32-bit	Thirty-two bit
1957 (the year)	Nineteen fifty-seven

among and between

Among shows a relationship involving more than two items. For example:

```
The table lists some of the most commonly used conventions among
publications groups at Digital.
```

Between shows a relationship involving two or more items as long as the items are considered separately. *Between* is followed either by a plural (*between modules*, *between developers*) or by two expressions joined by *and* (not by *or* or *to*). For example:

```
We were able to resolve the issue between the writer and developer.
```

```
What is the difference between VAX BASIC™, BASIC-PLUS, and BASIC-PLUS-2?
```

Be careful in determining how many items there are. For example:

```
The user must choose between read and write and batch
update operations.
```

Here, *read and write* is one item, not two.

and/or construction

Use the *and/or* construction sparingly. It is preferable to rewrite the sentence entirely or to use the two choices followed by *or both*.

Use

```
Use a file specification, logical name, or both.
```

Do not use

```
Use a file specification and/or logical name.
```

However, using the *and/or* construction may be preferable if rewriting would result in a cumbersome sentence.

angle brackets (< >)

Use the following guidelines for angle brackets:

- Use the term *angle brackets* to refer to the symbols < >. When referring to the individual angle brackets, use the terms *left angle bracket* (<) and *right angle bracket* (>).

- In mathematical references, the angle brackets are called the *less than* (<) and *greater than* (>) symbols.

- Angle brackets are also used individually as redirection symbols in shell commands.

See also **braces ({ })**, **brackets ([ ])**, **conventions table**, and **parentheses**.

anthropomorphism

Generally, do not use human attributes to discuss software and hardware. For example, avoid using verbs such as *think* and *assume* to describe functions of the software.

However, you can discuss a product's performing an action, particularly if such a construction avoids the overuse of the passive voice.

anthropomorphism

Use

```
The TEAMDATA™ software adds the SALESPERSON columns to the CUSTOMER
table only temporarily. When you exit from the CUSTOMER table,
TEAMDATA deletes the SALESPERSON columns, even if you use the EXIT
SAVE command.
```

Do not use

```
You are prompted for each piece of information the application needs.
Information indicating the type of input expected is also shown. Some
default values are supplied. If you press Tab and Return, the application
assumes you want the default.
```

appendixes

Appendixes contain reference material or material that supplements information in the text. They are not necessary in all manuals; they are most often needed when the subject matter is complex.

Appendixes contain material such as the following:

- Error messages.

- Tables, graphs, and lists that are long or not integral to the text.

- Long programming examples. (See **examples** for further information on extended programming examples.)

- Contracts and questionnaires.

- Bibliographies.

- Algorithms, equations, calculations, or raw data.

- Schematics, turn-page art, or fold-out art.

- Case histories.

- Detailed descriptions of equipment or procedures when the text contains only a general or overall description.

- Country-specific data that can be substituted in various translations, such as electrical current specifications or sales and support information. You can also include this information on a separate card. See *Developing International User Information* for more information.

Use the following guidelines when deciding whether information belongs in an appendix or text:

- Does the information disrupt the flow of text and thus affect the user's comprehension? For example, long tables or graphs may bury an idea and confuse the user; this information is better placed in an appendix.

- Is the information essential to understanding a concept or instruction? If so, it should remain in the text. For example, information that a user needs to start using the product belongs in the text, not in an appendix.

- Does the user really need this supplementary information? If the information gives further clarification or help to the user, then include it in an appendix. However, if it consists only of miscellaneous information that does not fit into the text, do not include the information.

- Is the information in the appendix closely connected to the text and, thus, referenced in the text? If not, it is not worth including in the manual. An alternative to putting the information in an appendix is to refer to the manuals where the user can find the information.

Use the following guidelines for appendixes:

- List the appendixes in the table of contents.

- Refer to the appendixes in the preface (usually in the section on document structure).

- For each appendix, provide an introductory paragraph that describes its contents; this is particularly important for online books.

- To give context for the information in the appendixes, refer to each appendix at least once in the text.

- Be sure to index the information in the appendixes.

- Avoid or minimize cross-referencing to the text from an appendix. The user has been sent to the appendix by a cross-reference in the text and should not be sent back to the text from the appendix.

Placement and Format

Use the following guidelines for the placement and format of appendixes:

- Place appendixes in the back matter after the last section or chapter of the manual. Appendixes begin on a right-hand page unless the document design or production considerations dictate otherwise.

  Place the appendixes in the same order in which they are referred to in text.

appendixes

- Use sequential lettering (A, B, C, and so on) to identify each appendix. For example:

  ```
  Appendix A  Managing the System
  Appendix B  Notes on the EXPORT Command
  ```

  If there is only one appendix in the document, you can either give it no letter or use Appendix A.

- If the rest of the document uses chapter-oriented paging, use chapter-oriented paging in the appendixes (page A–2, A–3, and so on), and use chapter-oriented numbering for tables, figures, and examples.

  If the document uses sequential page numbering in the text, continue the sequence of page numbers and of tables, figures, and examples in the appendixes.

See also **chapter and section titles**, **cross-references**, **examples**, **figures**, **lists**, **paging**, **sections**, and **tables**.

---

articles

Use *a* before a word that begins with a consonant sound. Use *an* before a word that begins with a vowel sound; this includes words that begin with the sounds *ef, aitch, el, em, en, ar, es, uh, oo,* and *eks*.

For example:

```
an active window       a closed window
an equivalence name    a print processor
an effort              a form definition
an LQP                 a letter-quality printer
an umlaut              a usage mode
```

---

as

Use the following guidelines for the term *as*:

- Do not use *as* as a synonym for the conjunctions *because* and *while*.

  Use

  ```
  Because the software must reorder all the columns in the table, the
  operation takes several seconds to finish.
  ```

  ```
  While the software is searching the buffer, the word "Working"
  is displayed on the screen.
  ```

Do not use

```
As the software must reorder all the columns in the table, the
operation takes several seconds to finish.
```
```
As the software is searching the buffer, the word "Working"
is displayed on the screen.
```

- Do not confuse the conjunction *as* with the preposition *like*. *As* introduces clauses, and *like* introduces phrases. For example:

```
If the system cannot execute a command as you requested,
it displays an error message.
```
```
Capitalize sentences in flowcharts like sentences in text.
```

braces ({ })

Use the term *braces*, not the term *curly braces*, to refer to the symbols { }. When referring to the individual braces, use the terms *left brace* ({) and *right brace* (}).

In syntax diagrams using brackets and braces, braces indicate that at least one of the enclosed elements is required.

See also **angle brackets (< >)**, **brackets ([ ])**, **conventions table**, and **parentheses**.

brackets ([ ])

Use the term *brackets*, not the term *square brackets*, to refer to the symbols [ ]. When referring to the individual brackets, use the terms *left bracket* ([) and *right bracket* (]).

In Syntax

In syntax diagrams using brackets and braces, brackets indicate that all the enclosed elements are optional.

In Text

- If you cannot avoid nested parenthetical remarks, use brackets for the inner remark and parentheses for the outer remark.

- If brackets enclose a sentence, place the period inside the right bracket.

brackets ([ ])

- If brackets enclose a phrase that ends a sentence, place the period outside the right bracket.

See also **angle brackets (< >)**, **braces ({ })**, **conventions table**, and **parentheses**.

buttons and switches

Use the following guidelines when referring to buttons and switches:

- In the DECwindows™ environment, buttons are onscreen controls that let users choose actions or operations and set states. You can use the names of buttons as either nouns or adjectives, but be consistent. For example, the following phrases are both valid:

  ```
  Click on Continue.
  ```

  ```
  Click on the Continue button.
  ```

- Use initial capital letters for the names of buttons that are labeled on the screen (for example, *the Continue button*). Use lowercase letters for buttons that are not labeled on the screen (for example, *the minimize button*).

- When referring to hardware, specify the type of button, such as an *On/Off switch* or a *mouse button*.

- Always refer to a key on the keyboard as a *key*, not as a *button*.

See also **keys** and **pointing devices**.

capitalization

Consult Part III for the correct capitalization of terms. If the term you are using is not included in that list, refer to *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*. For more information on product names, ask your legal representative about correct usage.

This section gives capitalization guidelines for the following topics:

- Titles and captions
- Cross-references
- Product names and versions
- Commands and statements

- File names
- Keys
- Objects on the screen
- Text
- Lists
- Register names
- References to Digital Equipment Corporation
- Help concepts
- Art
- Other items

Titles and Captions

Use the following guidelines for capitalizing the titles of books, chapters, sections, examples, figures, and tables:

- Retain the correct case in all titles. For example:

  Use

  `Using the dxdb Debugger`

  Do not use

  `Using the Dxdb Debugger`

- Avoid beginning titles with words whose first character is lowercase.

- Use initial capital letters for the following words in titles:

  - All elements of a hyphenated term (except articles, coordinating conjunctions, prepositions with four or fewer characters, and case-sensitive commands). For example:

    ```
    Single-Call Subroutine
    Search-and-Replace
    ```

  - Nouns.

  - Pronouns (including relative pronouns). For example:

    ```
    View Domains That Combine Fields
    ```

  - Adjectives.

  - Verbs.

  - Adverbs.

  - Subordinating conjunctions. For example:

    ```
    Determining Whether a Symbol Exists
    ```

  - Prepositions with five or more characters. (Exception: when you use *with* and *without* in the same header, they should both have initial capital letters.)

  - Prepositions with fewer than five characters, if they are part of a verb. For example:

    ```
    Setting Up and Logging In
    ```

  - The last word of a title, even if it is normally in lowercase. The exception to this is case-sensitive words, which retain their case in titles.

- Use lowercase letters for the following words in titles:

  - Articles.

  - Coordinating conjunctions.

  - The word *to* in infinitives.

  - Prepositions with four or fewer characters. (Exception: when you use *with* and *without* in the same title, they should both have initial capital letters.)

- Use uppercase letters for abbreviations in a title, even if they are normally have lowercase letters. For example:

  ```
  Figure 3-2 shows a dc regulator.
  ```

  Figure 3-2: DC Regulator

Cross-References

Use the following guidelines for cross-references:

- Follow the guidelines for capitalizing titles when you refer to the title of an appendix, chapter, book, and so on.

  Use an initial capital letter for the manual part when you refer to an appendix, chapter, example, figure, section, or table by number. For example:

  ```
  See Section 3.1.
  Table 4-2 describes the five possible types of map output.
  ```

- Use lowercase letters to refer to steps, slots, sectors, options, levels, lines, and columns, even when they are followed by a number. For example:

```
Refer to line 3 of the program.
Refer to Table 4-2, column 3.
Repeat steps 2 and 3.
```

Product Names and Versions

Use the following guidelines when referring to products:

- Retain the correct case when referring to product names. For example:

  Use

  ```
  ALL-IN-1™ software, DECforms™ software
  ```

  Do not use

  ```
  ALL-in-1 software, DECForms software
  ```

- When describing a product version number, use *Version*, not *V*. For example, use *Version 4.0*. Do not use *V4.0*, *V.4.0*, or *V. 4.0*.

Commands and Statements

Use the following guidelines when referring to commands, statements, and their component parts:

- Retain the correct case for case-sensitive commands, path names, and functions. For example:

```
% login
# makedev lta16
% cd /usr/staff/r2/kafka
```

  Use uppercase letters for instruction mnemonics, acronyms, literal elements of program statements, commands, and command qualifiers and switches unless they are case sensitive. For example:

```
ASCII     LOGIN
OEM       OPEN
READ
```

  However, for multiplatform documentation, be aware that some of your platforms may be case sensitive but others are not. In defining conventions to be used across all platforms, you may decide, for example, to use lowercase for command elements and program statements unless uppercase or mixed case is a command requirement.

capitalization

- Use lowercase letters for variable elements of program statements or commands. For example:

  ```
  argument
  variable
  command line
  ```

- Use uppercase letters for logical operators (Boolean operators). For example:

  ```
  AND
  OR
  NOT
  ```

  The only exception is references to the Ada language, which uses lowercase logical operators.

File Names

Use uppercase letters for the names of files unless they are case sensitive. For example:

```
JAN91_SALES.DAT
```

However, for multiplatform documentation, you may decide to use lowercase unless uppercase or mixed case is a requirement.

Keys

Use the following guidelines when referring to keys:

- Use initial capital letters for key names that are labeled on the keyboard. For example:

  ```
  Press Return.
  ```

  ```
  Press Next Screen.
  ```

- Use lowercase letters for keys that are not labeled on the keyboard, such as the space bar.

See also **keys**.

Objects

Use the following guidelines for capitalizing objects on the screen:

- Use initial capital letters for the names of DECwindows objects capitalized on the screen; if an object is not labeled on the screen, normal capitalization guidelines apply. For example:

  ```
  The Clear menu item deletes the current selection.
  To reduce a window to an icon, click on the minimize button.
  ```

- Use lowercase letters for the names of DECwindows objects on the screen that are not labeled. For example:

  ```
  To reduce a window to an icon, click on the minimize
  button.
  ```

  ```
  The work area is the portion of the main window in which users
  perform most of their application-related work.
  ```

- Use initial capital letters for the name of a menu; use lowercase letters for the word *menu*. For example:

  ```
  The File menu contains file manipulation functions, such as creating,
  saving, or printing a file.
  ```

Text

Use the following guidelines for capitalization in text:

- Begin each sentence with an initial capital letter.

- Do not begin sentences with words whose first character is lowercase. For example:

  Use

  ```
  The ls command gives you a list of files in your current
  directory.
  ```

  ```
  The windows and menus of dxdb contain all the commands that you
  need during a typical debugging session.
  ```

  Do not use

  ```
  ls gives you a list of files...
  ```

  ```
  dxdb's windows and menus contain all the commands that you need during
  a typical debugging session.
  ```

Lists

Generally, use an initial capital letter for the first word of every element in a vertical list, whether it is in text, a table, or an example. Retain the case if the elements are case sensitive or must match portions of code. For example, the list elements in the following example are case sensitive:

```
Three commands let you replace characters:
```

```
o r
```

```
o R
```

```
o ~ (tilde character)
```

Register Names

Use the following guidelines for references to register names, bit names, signal line names, and transaction names:

- Use initial capital letters for specific register names, bit names, and so on.

- Use lowercase letters for generic register names, bit names, and so on.

References to Digital Equipment Corporation

Use the following capitalization guidelines when referring to Digital Equipment Corporation:

- Use initial capital letters for the word *Digital* and the phrase *Digital Equipment Corporation*.

- Use uppercase letters for the word *Digital* when referring to the DIGITAL logo.

See also **Digital** and **trademarks and service marks**.

Help

Use the following guidelines in referring to various help concepts:

- Use initial capital letters for each word in a conceptual Help topic. For example, VAX DATATRIEVE™ Help lists the conceptual topics *New_Features* and *Synonyms*.

- Use lowercase letters when you write about the concept of online help or when you write about an object that is not labeled on the DECwindows screen. Refer to the following list for terms that require lowercase letters:

  ```
  context-sensitive help
  help information
  help library
  help system
  help utility
  online help
  to get help
  ```

- Use capital *H* when the word *Help* follows the name of a product or when you write about an object that is labeled on the screen. Refer to the following list for terms that require initial capital letters:

  ```
  DECwindows Help
  DECwindows Help System
  Help key
  Help menu
  Help topic
  Help window
  To get help on a particular topic, choose the Help menu item.
  ```

- Except for case-sensitive systems, use uppercase letters when you write about a specific command or qualifier. For example:

```
the HELP command
the /HELP qualifier
```

  For multiplatform systems, however, you may decide to use lowercase for commands and qualifiers unless uppercase or mixed case is a command requirement. See **commands** and **qualifiers** for more information on commands and qualifiers.

Art

Use the capitalization guidelines for titles and captions for most text in art. Exceptions are as follows:

- Sentences or phrases used in flowcharts. These are capitalized like a standard sentence in text.

- Labels in data structures. In general, follow the capitalization as designated by the programmer, but data structures within a document should be capitalized in a consistent manner. C is the only language that is case sensitive.

  Data structures may use initial capital letters or underscores to separate words. For example:

```
DwtResourceFoo
```

```
DWT_RESOURCE_FOO
```

See also **figures**.

Other Items

Use the following guidelines when referring to these items:

- Use small capital letters for the abbreviations A.M. and P.M.. If your system cannot produce small capital letters, use the forms *a.m.* and *p.m.*

- Use lowercase letters for generic hardware and software items without model number, type number, or other specific identification. For example:

```
terminal
assembler
computer
breakpoint switch
```

  In many cases, also use lowercase letters with these items even with a specific model number, type number, and so on, unless the generic term is part of the item's name. For example, refer to a *VT340*™ *terminal* or a *VAX 8500*™ *computer system*, but refer to the *Digital Electronic Store*,^{SM} where *Store* is part of the name of the service.

capitalization

- Use initial capital letters with professional titles when they are used as part of a person's name and precede the name, for example, *President Olsen.*

  However, if the professional title is used as an appositive, follows the person's name, or is used alone instead of the person's name, use a lowercase letter with the title. For example:

  ```
  Digital president Ken Olsen
  Ken Olsen, the president of Digital Equipment Corporation
  the president of the corporation
  ```

  The exception to this rule is the use of professional titles in acknowledgments and lists of contributors. In these cases, use initial capital letters for professional titles even though the titles follow the names. For example:

  ```
  The authors are also indebted to Laurel Rice, Senior Consultant.
  ```

cautions, notes, and warnings

Choose the type of notice (caution, note, or warning) appropriate for the information you are providing.

- A caution contains information that the user needs to know to avoid damaging the software or hardware. For example:

  ```
  Caution:
  The VMSKITBLD BUILD and COMMON options initialize the target disk,
  deleting all of its previous contents.
  ```

- A note contains information that might be of special importance to the user. For example:

  ```
  Note:
  Once a database is converted to a current version, you cannot use that
  database file with an earlier version of VAX Rdb/VMS™ software.
  ```

- A warning contains information that is essential to people's safety. For example:

  ```
  Warning:
  To avoid electrocution, unplug the machine before removing the back panel.
  ```

Check with your product manager and legal representative about additional wording required by any standards your product must follow, for example, standards for safety signs and labels.

chapter and section titles

Use the following guidelines when creating chapter and section titles:

- Write chapter and section titles so that they specifically describe the information contained in the text unit. For example, the following chapter titles are more specific than the generic title *Interprocess Communication*:

  ```
  Interprocess Communication Concepts
  Interprocess Communication on an OpenVMS System
  ```

- Particularly for task-oriented information, use chapter and section titles that describe tasks. Use either noun or gerund phrases for chapter titles. For example:

  ```
  Installation Procedures
  ```

  ```
  Installing the Terminal Server
  ```

- Create section headings that describe tasks at a more detailed level than a chapter title. Such headings are usually gerunds and are enhanced by the use of conditions that point to the purpose or method of the task. For example:

  ```
  Displaying Queue Status with the QSHOW Command
  ```

  ```
  Securing Your System by Quitting the Session
  ```

  Phrases like *Printing a Document* or *Sending a Mail Message* help to emphasize the task-oriented nature of the information and help users find the information they need to complete a task.

- Keep chapter and section titles concise but accurate. If the title seems uncomfortably long, one or both of the following may be true:

  - The title is too detailed. Pare down the title so that it cues the user to the information without giving specifics.

  - The chapter or section theme is too narrow. Reevaluate the structure of the document. Would the chapter information be more appropriate as a section or sections within another chapter? Is there a larger theme within the document that encompasses this topic?

  Long titles may become even longer, and thus more cumbersome, after translation. This is an added reason for keeping titles concise.

chapter and section titles

- Set up and follow a consistent structure throughout the document. Use similar structures for similar topics. For example:

  9.1 Creating a Simple Text Widget
  9.2 Customizing a Simple Text Widget
  9.3 Associating Callbacks with a Simple Text Widget

- Avoid starting chapter and section titles with articles (*a, an, the*).

- Do not end chapter or section titles with periods.

See also **capitalization, chapters, cross-references**, and **sections**.

chapters

Chapters are major logical divisions of text in a document. Chapters are subdivided into sections, which discuss subtopics of the chapter topic. Logical groupings of chapters may be collected into parts. For example, a management guide that addresses concepts and procedures may group certain chapters into a part called Concepts and other chapters into a part called Procedures.

This section gives guidelines for the placement and format of chapters and for designing and organization information into chapters .

Placement and Format
Each chapter begins on a right-hand page unless the document design or production considerations dictate otherwise. In most technical documents, chapters have a number and title. However, in some types of documents, such as a manual for an inexperienced PC user, it may be appropriate not to number the chapters. Whether they are numbered or unnumbered, chapter titles are always listed in the table of contents.

If your document contains only one chapter, you can either give it no chapter number or use Chapter 1.

Design Guidelines
Consider the following guidelines when designing and organizing your material into chapters:

- Consider the organizing principle of the document, separating material by either task or function. Such a separation is a basic tenet for modular documentation. In modular documentation, all information relevant to a particular task or operation is placed within a single section or chapter. This approach eases maintenance; for example, if certain functions are removed from the product, deleting the information is less difficult. In addition, if the documentation is localized for another market, you can

quickly rearrange chapters without detracting from the integrity of the document. For example, you can delete selected chapters if the functions they address are not included in the local version of the product.

For more information on modularity, see the chapter on designing user information in *The Digital Technical Documentation Handbook*.

- Place information that is directly and essentially pertinent to the document theme in chapters. Place supplementary and related information in appendixes.

- For each chapter, follow the chapter title with an introductory paragraph that briefly describes the chapter contents. This chapter introduction can be a springboard for finding information in the sections that follow. For each chapter introduction, consider including an unnumbered list of the major topics discussed in the chapter.

- Depending on the nature of the document, the first chapter should introduce or give an overview of the document's subject matter. An introductory chapter is useful for such documents as user guides, programming guides, reference manuals, and system management guides. An introductory chapter may be less useful in short documents or documents such as installation manuals and other procedural manuals.

  It may be helpful to write the introductory chapter after the other chapters.

  The following are guidelines for writing an introductory chapter:

  - State the purpose of the product described in the document. What need is it intended to meet? What problems does it solve?

  - Summarize the basic concepts underlying the product.

  - Avoid making the introduction so general that the user loses focus and context for the subject matter. The introduction should introduce only the subject matter of the particular document.

  - Do not use *Introduction* as the title of the introductory chapter; the title is too vague. Use a title that describes the contents of the chapter. For example:

    ```
    Overview of Networking Models
    What Is a Relational Database?
    ```

- Separate country-specific information from information that is appropriate for an international audience. Examples of country-specific information include references to the time of day to call for service or support and local telephone numbers and addresses. Because such information usually varies

by country, it is best to place such information in a separate reference card or in an appendix.

See also **appendixes, chapter and section titles, paging, part pages**, and **sections**.

choose and select

The terms for designating certain types of DECwindows operations are sometimes misused. Use the following guidelines:

- Use the term *choose* to mean picking an operation by clicking on a control, a menu name, or a menu item. For example:

  `Choose the Extend menu item from the Customize menu.`

  Use *choose* for active objects.

- Use the term *select* to designate information, either text or graphics, that will be the object of a subsequent operation. For example:

  `Select the text that you want to copy from file A to file B.`

  Use *select* with files, text, and graphic objects.

See also **enter, press**, and **type**.

click and click on

In the DECwindows environment, the term *click* means to press and release a mouse button, as in *Click MB1*.

The term *click on* means to press and release a mouse button when the pointer is positioned on an active object. Use *click on* for operations and selections you make with a pointing device.

See also **double click, drag**, and **mouse**.

close and open

Use the verbs *close* and *open* to refer to databases, files, and windows.

Use *cancel*, *display*, *dismiss*, and *remove* with dialog boxes. Do not use *shut down* or *terminate* in place of *close*.

colons

A colon directs the user's attention to whatever follows it: a list, a definition, an instruction, or important additional information. Use the following guidelines for colons:

- Use a colon when you use *for example*, *the following*, *follows*, or *as follows* to lead into a formula, line of code, or vertical list. For example:

  ```
  The following changes have been made:

  o Databases can be verified on line.

  o Database backups can be verified at the page, segment, and set
    levels.
  ```

- Use a colon at the end of a sentence introducing a list if that sentence is incomplete without the items in the list or if the items are incomplete sentences. For example:

  ```
  Your system contains three elements:

  o Video screen

  o Keyboard

  o Printer
  ```

- Do not use a colon at the end of a lead-in sentence to a formal example, figure, or table; use a period. For example:

  Use

  ```
  Figure 3-4 is a diagram of the PARTS database.
  ```

  Do not use

  ```
  Figure 3-4 is a diagram of the PARTS database:
  ```

- Do not use a colon when referring to drives and device names if the colon is at the end of the sentence. Rewrite your sentence if this happens.

colons

> *Use*
>
> ```
> Copy the file to the C: drive.
> ```
>
> *Do not use*
>
> ```
> Copy the file to drive C:.
> ```

- Never use a colon after any form of the verb *to be*. For example:

  ```
  The excluded file types are
  ```

  ```
  .BAS
  .COB
  .DAT
  ```

  But

  ```
  These file types are excluded:
  ```

  ```
  .BAS
  .COB
  .DAT
  ```

---

color, references to

Particular colors are associated with different emotions or meanings in different cultures. In the United Kingdom, a red ribbon is sometimes used to designate the best or first in a class; in the United States, a blue ribbon serves the same purpose.

If you refer to color in examples, include a comment in the source file indicating the purpose of the example so that the translators can design an example that is appropriate for their country.

See also **emphasis**.

---

commands

Use the following guidelines for commands in text and titles:

- Use the verb *enter* rather than *type* when introducing a command.

  ```
  Enter the lpr command.
  ```

- Use command names only as nouns or adjectives. Do not use command names as verbs.

Use

```
To remove the files, use the rm command.
When you log out, the screen darkens.
```

Do not use

```
You are finished after you have rm'ed your files.
When you LOGOUT, the screen darkens.
```

- Retain the case for all case-sensitive commands, including commands in chapter and section titles. For example:

4.1 Using the dxdb Debugger

```
The ULTRIX™ equivalent to the OpenVMS CREATE filename
command is cat < filename.
```

Use uppercase letters when you refer to a command or command qualifier that is not case sensitive.

```
the /HELP qualifier
```

However, for multiplatform documentation, be aware that some of your platforms may be case sensitive but others are not. In defining conventions to be used across all platform, you may decide, for example, to use lowercase for command names unless uppercase or mixed case is a command requirement.

- Do not begin a sentence with the name of a command, command option, program, utility, file, directory, or other name if the name begins with a lowercase letter. See also **options** and **qualifiers**.

Use

```
The pwd command prints your working directory.
The -z option lets you specify the page length.
```

Do not use

```
pwd prints your working directory.
Pwd prints your working directory.
-z lets you specify the page length.
```

- Do not refer to an ULTRIX command's reference page as if it were the command name itself. Instead, explicitly refer the user to the reference page.

Use

```
You can use uucpsetup to add the modem.  See uucpsetup(8)
for more information.
```

commands

Do not use

```
You can use uucpsetup(8) to add the modem.
```

- Do not use quotation marks with command names.

Use

```
Enter the lpr command.
```

Do not use

```
Enter the command "lpr."
```

- Italicize variables used with commands if they are used in syntax statements or in text.

Use

```
LSEDIT file-spec
```

Do not use

```
LSEDIT file-spec
```

See also **capitalization** and **help**.

---

commas

A comma marks a pause or separation of elements in a sentence. The following sections give guidelines for using commas in different contexts:

- In simple sentences
- In compound sentences
- With nonrestrictive and restrictive modifiers
- With introductory clauses and phrases
- In transitional phrases and with conjunctive adverbs
- To prevent misinterpretation
- In a series
- With quotation marks

In Simple Sentences

A simple sentence contains only one independent clause. Do not use a comma before the conjunction in a simple sentence that contains a compound predicate. For example:

```
The XYZ command requires a file specification and takes no qualifiers.
```

In Compound Sentences

A compound sentence contains two or more independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction. Put a comma before the conjunction unless the clauses are short and closely related. For example:

```
The system prints an error message, but you can continue processing the
file.
```

```
Close the file and print the report.
```

With Nonrestrictive and Restrictive Modifiers

- A restrictive modifier is essential to the identification of the item modified. Do not use commas to set off a restrictive modifier from the word it modifies. For example:

  ```
  Table 6-1 describes the hardware that you need to complete your system.
  ```

- A nonrestrictive modifier provides additional information that is not essential to the identification of the item modified. Use commas to set off a nonrestrictive modifier. For example:

  ```
  Table 6-1, which covers workstations, describes the hardware you need.
  ```

- Use commas to set off contrasting and opposing expressions within sentences. For example:

  ```
  He changed the software, not the hardware.
  ```

See also **that and which** for more information on restrictive and nonrestrictive modifiers.

With Introductory Clauses and Phrases

Place a comma after an introductory clause or long introductory phrase unless it immediately precedes and forms part of the verb. For example:

```
In such cases, an error message is displayed at the bottom of the screen.
```

```
To specify an output device, enter a name in the command line.
```

```
When you log out of the system at the end of the day, do not turn
off the system.
```

In Transitional Phrases and with Conjunctive Adverbs

- Transitional phrases usually read better if followed by a comma or set off by commas. Transitional phrases include the following:

    As a result
    For example
    In addition
    In fact
    Namely
    That is

    For example:

    ```
    In addition, spell terms the same way in text and figures.
    ```

    ```
    Make your examples true examples, that is, without variables.
    ```

- Generally, set off conjunctive adverbs such as *however* and *therefore* with commas or with a preceding semicolon and following comma. For example:

    ```
    The installation is now complete; however, you should check your
    SYSGEN parameters to avoid running out of memory.
    ```

To Prevent Misinterpretation

Be careful not to leave out commas that are needed to prevent misreading a phrase. For example, the comma in the following sentence is needed to avoid the interpretation *X replaces A and B*:

```
X replaces A, and B and C are added.
```

In the following sentence, the comma is necessary to show the relationship between the introductory phrase and the subject:

```
Wherever needed, clarifications have been given.
```

In many cases, the best alternative is to rewrite the sentence.

Original

```
The application searches the table that contains the sums and
modifies the data.
```

Using Comma to Prevent Misreading

```
The application searches the table that contains the sums, and modifies
the data.
```

Revising the Sentence

```
The application searches the table containing the sums and modifies
the data.
```

In a Series

- In a series of three or more elements, separate the elements with commas. For example:

  ```
  The database file header includes information about the database
  root, the storage area, and the snapshot files.
  ```

- In a series of three or more elements connected by *and* and *or*, place commas carefully to express exact meaning. For example:

  ```
  The database interface performs read-only, read and write, and
  batch-update transactions on any data selected by the user.
  ```

- If the elements in a series have internal commas, separate the elements with semicolons. For example:

  ```
  See Table 1 for EDT™, EVE, and TPU commands; Table 2 for library
  commands; and Table 3 for navigation commands.
  ```

- Separate two or more adjectives with commas if each modifies the noun. For example:

  ```
  He had difficulty maintaining the obscure, complex code.
  ```

- If the first adjective modifies the idea expressed by the combination of the second adjective and the noun, do not use a comma. For example:

  ```
  He had difficulty maintaining the complex assembly code.
  ```

With Quotation Marks

Place a comma inside close quotation marks unless the quotation marks are part of a literal string. For example:

```
An error message, "Invalid User Identification Code (UIC)," is
displayed if an account number for the UIC includes an 8 or 9.
```

```
The symbol can have one of the following values:  ABST, "ABST",
or %ABST.
```

---

conjunctions, ambiguous

Use the following guidelines with coordinating conjunctions:

- Do not use conjunctions such as *and* and *or* ambiguously. Ambiguous usage can cause misinterpretation.

Original Text

```
You can respond to the message by entering EXIT, which causes
an error condition, and a branch to the EOF label
specified in the ACCEPT statement.
```

Possible Misinterpretation

```
You can respond to the message both by entering EXIT, which causes
an EOF error condition, and by branching to the EOF label
specified in the ACCEPT statement.
```

Intended Meaning

```
You can respond to the message by entering EXIT, which causes
an EOF error condition.  The EOF error condition, in turn,
causes a branch to the EOF label if one is specified in the
ACCEPT statement.
```

- Do not use a comma before *or* in *either/or* constructions unless *or* introduces an independent clause.

  Use

  ```
  A process can choose either to read messages of only a certain
  type or to read the accumulated messages in type order rather
  than send order.
  ```

  Do not use

  ```
  A process can choose either to read messages of only a certain
  type, or to read the accumulated messages in type order rather
  than send order.
  ```

- Words or phrases used as appositives are sometimes introduced by *or*. Use a comma to set off these nonrestrictive appositives when they describe a noun. For example, the following sentence indicates that *mutex* is another word for *mutual exclusion semaphores*:

  ```
  Such semaphores are often called mutual exclusion semaphores,
  or mutexes.
  ```

contractions

Do not use contractions in technical documentation. Contractions are informal and conversational and should be used only in contexts in which informality is acceptable.

conventions table

Documentation conventions are special terms, symbols, and fonts used in a document to indicate certain actions, emphasis, repetition, or omissions. The conventions are listed in a table in the conventions section of the preface.

Conventions must be used consistently throughout a manual and throughout manuals in a documentation set. Choosing documentation conventions carefully and using them appropriately and consistently increases the usability of your manuals.

Table 1 lists some of the most commonly used conventions among publications groups at Digital.

The convention descriptions specify the standard meaning of each convention. Tailor the material in Table 1 to meet the needs of the product and the document:

- Include the conventions that meet the needs of the product.

- Delete or modify the conventions that do not meet the needs of the product.

- Add any conventions that are specific to the product.

For example, if your system commands are case sensitive, modify the conventions about uppercase and lowercase letters.

A documentation team can construct its own conventions when existing conventions do not meet the needs of the product. There are no special guidelines or approval processes except to use common sense. The team should develop the conventions as a group and then use them consistently.

conventions table

Table 1 Documentation Conventions

Convention	Description
Ctrl/x	Ctrl/x indicates that you hold down the Ctrl key while you press another key or mouse button (indicated here by x).
PFn	PFn indicates that you press the key labeled PFn on the numeric keypad, where n is 1, 2, 3, or 4.
x	A lowercase italic x indicates the generic use of a letter. For example, xxx indicates any combination of three alphabetic characters.
n	A lowercase italic n indicates the generic use of a number. For example, 19nn indicates a 4-digit number in which the last 2 digits are unknown.
PF1 x	The key sequence PF1 x indicates that you press and release PF1, and then you press and release another key or mouse button (indicated here by x).
Return	A key name enclosed in a box indicates that you press that key.
{ }	In format descriptions, braces indicate required elements. You must choose one of the elements.
[ ]	In format descriptions, brackets indicate optional elements. You can choose none, one, or all of the options. (Brackets are not optional, however, in the syntax of a directory name in an OpenVMS file specification.)
( )	In format descriptions, parentheses delimit the parameter or argument list.
" "	Quotation marks enclose system messages that are specified in text.
. . .	In format descriptions, horizontal ellipsis points indicate one of the following:

- An item that is repeated

- An omission, such as additional optional arguments

- Additional parameters, values, or other information that you can enter

Table 1 (Cont.) Documentation Conventions

Convention	Description
. . .	Vertical ellipsis points indicate the omission of information from an example or command format. The information is omitted because it is not important to the topic being discussed.
italic type	Italic type emphasizes important information, indicates variables, and indicates complete titles of manuals.
boldface type	Boldface type in examples indicates user input. Boldface type in text indicates the first instance of terms defined either in the text, in the glossary, or both.
color	In examples, text in color indicates user input (for hardcopy documents).
mouse	The term *mouse* refers to any pointing device, such as a mouse, a puck, or a stylus.
MB1, MB2, MB3	MB1 indicates the left mouse button. MB2 indicates the middle mouse button. MB3 indicates the right mouse button. (Users can redefine the mouse buttons.)
PB1, PB2, PB3, PB4	PB1, PB2, PB3, and PB4 indicate buttons on the puck.
SB1, SB2	SB1 and SB2 indicate buttons on the stylus.
nn nnn.nnn nn	A space character separates groups of 3 digits in numerals with 5 or more digits. For example, *10 000* equals *ten thousand*.
n.nn	A period in numerals signals the decimal point indicator. For example, *1.75* equals *one and three-fourths*.
UPPERCASE	Words in uppercase indicate a command, the name of a file, or an abbreviation for a system privilege.
lowercase	In format descriptions, words in lowercase indicate parameters or arguments to be specified by the user.

copyright page

Copyrights are legal rights to exclusive publication, sale, or distribution of products. All Digital documents are copyrighted. In Digital manuals, the copyright notices are printed on the back of the title page, which is called the *copyright page*.

Figure 1 shows a sample copyright page for a software manual.

The copyright page contains some or all of the following information:

- Date of publication (month and year)

- Revision history
  Inclusion of the revision history on the copyright page may vary from group to group. You can place the revision history in the upper right corner of the text page or directly above the publication date. Check with your group for specific information on the placement, content, and format of the revision history.

- Copyright notice
  The copyright notice is a required component of all Digital publications. The notice must include the following elements:

  - The copyright symbol (©)
    If your system cannot produce the copyright symbol and you must use *(c)*, also include the word *Copyright*:

    Copyright (c)

  - The owner

  - The printing dates
    The Digital Law Department recommends that the copyright notice include dates for the first release and the current release.

  - The line *All Rights Reserved*

Figure 1 Sample Copyright Page

The figure shows a sample copyright page with labeled callouts:

- **Publication Date and Revision History** →
  First Printing, December 1989
  Revised, December 1990

- **Corporate Disclaimers** →
  The information in this document is subject to change without notice and should not be construed as a commitment by Digital Equipment Corporation. Digital Equipment Corporation assumes no responsibility for any errors that may appear in this document.

  Possession, use, duplication, or dissemination of the software described in this documentation is authorized only pursuant to a valid written license from Digital or the third–party owner of the software copyright.

  No responsibility is assumed for the use or reliability of software on equipment that is not supplied by Digital Equipment Corporation.

- **Copyright Notice** →
  Copyright © Digital Equipment Corporation 1989, 1990.

  All Rights Reserved.

- **Pointer to Reader's Comments Form** →
  The postpaid Reader's Comments forms at the end of this document request your critical evaluation to assist in preparing future documentation.

- **Digital Trademarks** →
  ULTRIX, ULTRIX Worksystem Software, VAX, VMS, and the DIGITAL logo are trademarks of Digital Equipment Corporation.

- **Third–Party Trademarks** →
  UNIX is a registered trademark of UNIX System Laboratories, Inc.

- **Group–Specific Information** →
  This document was prepared using VAX DOCUMENT, Version 1.2

Thus, the basic format of the copyright notice is

```
©   Owner   Dates
All Rights Reserved.
```

or

```
Copyright (c)   Owner   Dates
All Rights Reserved.
```

For example:

```
© Digital Equipment Corporation 1990, 1992
All Rights Reserved.
```

- Various disclaimers or licensing information

  The type and number of disclaimers needed depend·on the type of information in the manual and your company's requirements. Check with your legal representative about required disclaimers. For example, information describing hardware may require special disclaimers depending on the type of information and the countries in which the information is used. The following is an example of a disclaimer that may be needed for such a manual; check with your product manager and legal representative about the correct use:

```
NOTE: This equipment has been tested and found to comply with the
limits for a Class A digital device, pursuant to Part 15 of the
FCC rules. These limits are designed to provide reasonable
protection against harmful interference when the equipment is
operated in a commercial environment. This equipment generates,
uses, and can radiate radio frequency energy and, if not installed
and used in accordance with the instruction manual, may cause
harmful interference to radio communications. Operation of this
equipment in a residential area is likely to cause harmful
interference, in which case the user will be required to correct
the interference at the user's own expense.
```

- Company trademarks list

  Include an alphabetical list of your company's trademarks that are used in the document. Be sure that the trademarks list for particular books or products is kept up to date. For more specific information about how to treat trademarks in documentation and for sources of trademark information, see **trademarks and service marks**.

  In addition, check with your group and legal representative about the proper format of the trademarks list; for example, at this time, the Digital Law Department strongly recommends the use of a paragraph format rather than a tabular format.

- Third-party trademarks list (if applicable)

  Some groups use text footnotes to indicate third-party trademarks (that is, trademarks not owned by your company). This practice is acceptable for documents without a copyright page. However, if your document has a copyright page, indicate third-party trademarks on that page. Using the copyright page to indicate third-party trademarks also reduces the visual clutter on your text pages. See **trademarks and service marks** for more information on referring to third-party trademarks.

- Pointer to Reader's Comments form (if applicable)

- Instructions on how to order documentation

  Placement of this information varies from group to group. Some publications groups, for example, print a separate page containing this information as part of the back matter. Consult your editor or production group. Note that the order information may not be included for online documentation.

- Any other group-specific identifying information

  The copyright page may also contain group-specific information such as the following:

  - The text-processing tool used to produce the information

  - The groups responsible for the design, composition, printing, and binding

  - Library cataloging information

  Discuss with the team what group-specific information is required on the copyright page.

In some rare cases, proprietary technical information is made available to external sources. In that case, you may have to add to the copyright page legends restricting or limiting rights to the proprietary information. Work with your legal representative to choose the correct legend.

See also **security issues** and **trademarks and service marks**.

cross-references

Cross-references are not useful unless they point to relevant material. Always indicate the nature of the material to be referred to. For example:

Use

```
Section 9.4 explains how to specify an edit string for a date field.
See Chapter 18 for more information on specifying date and time values.
```

Do not use

```
See Chapter 18.
```

This section gives guidelines for the following types of cross-references:

- To manual parts

- To reference pages

cross-references

- To figures, tables, and examples

It also provides guidelines for the format of cross-references.

Manual Parts

- References to manuals

  - Make cross-references to manuals by manual title. For a complete title, use italics.

  - In multiplatform documentation, use a generic cross-reference to platform-dependent manuals unless you are specifying only one manual. For example:

    Use

    ```
    See the platform-specific user guide for more information on parameters.
    ```

    Do not use

    ```
    See the DECproduct on MS-DOS® Systems User Guide, the DECproduct
    on OpenVMS Systems User Guide, or the DECproduct on ULTRIX
    Systems User Guide for more information on parameters.
    ```

  - Do not use order numbers, because they change frequently. Order numbers also pose problems for localized products.

- References to text in the same manual

  - If sections are numbered, make cross-references to text in the same manual by chapter number, appendix letter, or section number. Use the smallest section number that applies to the text you want to refer to.

    ```
    See Section 1.3.5 for information about invoking LSE.
    Appendix A contains an alphabetical listing of error messages.
    See Section B.1 for a comparison of spreadsheet functions.
    ```

  - When you refer to an appendix, chapter, example, figure, section, or table by number, use an initial capital letter for the manual part. (Exceptions are references to steps, slots, sectors, options, levels, lines, and columns.) For example:

    ```
    See Chapter 2.
    Refer to Table 4-2, column 3.
    See Appendix A.
    See step 1.
    ```

  - If sections are unnumbered, refer to the title of the section and the chapter number or appendix letter. For example:

    ```
    See the section titled DECwindows Interface to VAX Notes™ in Chapter 3.
    Refer to the Unsupported Functions section in Appendix B.
    ```

However, if your material is volatile and the titles may change, refer to the content of the section rather than the title. For example:

`Refer to the section on unsupported functions in Appendix B.`

Include an index entry for the topic so the users can find the information.

- Refer to text under second- and third-level headings as sections, not as subsections.

- Do not use page numbers when making cross-references.

• References to text in other manuals

Do not refer to a specific chapter, appendix, or section number in another book, even if the book is in your documentation set. Chapter and section numbers and titles often change from one version to the next. Refer only to the book title.

Reference Pages

Do not use the cross-reference to an ULTRIX reference page as if it were the command name itself. Explicitly refer the user to the reference page unless doing so creates unnecessary repetition.

Use

`Use uucpsetup to add the modem. See uucpsetup(8) for more
information.`

Do not use

`Use uucpsetup(8) to add the modem.`

Figures, Tables, and Examples

• Refer to each figure, table, and example in the text *before* the figure, table, or example occurs.

• The figure, table, or example should follow its first reference in text as closely as possible.

• If the figure, table, or example has a number, include only the number in the text reference; it is not necessary to include the title.

cross-references

Formats

- Cross-references can occur within a sentence, stand alone as complete sentences, or occur in parentheses as either complete or incomplete sentences. For example:

  The Help screen shows the VAX Notes keypad (see Figure 1-1).

  Chapter 7 contains a detailed discussion of VAX Notes with DECwindows.

  The DECterm window is displayed. (See Chapter 3 for information about DECterm windows.)

  Use the Menu dialog box buttons (listed in Table 3-1) to save your settings.

- Do not use the words *above, below, earlier, preceding,* or *later* as pointers to information in text; this usage makes future revisions of the manual more difficult. Instead, be specific when you point a user to another section, figure, formal example, table, chapter, or appendix. You may use the words *previous* and *following* when referring to an informal example, table, figure, or list. (Variants of *following,* such as *follows,* are also correct in this case.)

See also **capitalization** and **chapter and section titles**.

Ctrl/*x*

Use the convention Ctrl/*x* (lowercase italic x) when you refer to pressing the Ctrl key and a generic letter key simultaneously. Use the convention Ctrl/X (capital X) when you refer to pressing the Ctrl key and the X key simultaneously.

See also **keys**.

dashes

There are two types of dashes, em dashes and en dashes. Em dashes are so called because they are as wide as an uppercase *M.* Em dashes are sometimes called dashes. En dashes are half the width of an em dash. En dashes are sometimes called minus signs.

Your text formatting tool determines the coding you use to produce em and en dashes. This tool may also determine whether the output includes a blank character space on either side of the em dash.

Use em dashes (—) in the following situations:

- To interrupt a sentence with a phrase or clause. For example:

  ```
  The specified form length does not change -- even if the line
  spacing changes.
  ```

- To separate a list element from its run-in discussion. For example:

  ```
  COMPILE -- The COMPILE command compiles the contents of a buffer.
  ```

Use en dashes (–) in the following situations:

- Product names such as ALL–IN–1 software, MS–DOS operating system.

- Digital order numbers of the 2–5–2 form, such as AA–HG41B-TE.

- Version numbers such as OpenVMS VAX operating system, Version 5.2–1.

- Ranges of numbers in figures and tables.

- Chapter-oriented page numbers and element numbers such as page 3–23, Figure 3–1, Example 5–5.

- Minus signs in text or in syntax.

- ULTRIX command options that start with a minus sign. Do not refer to this character as a *hyphen* in your documentation.

data

Use *data* for both singular and plural forms with the singular verb form. For example:

```
The data is copied from one table to another.
```

dates

The format for dates varies from country to country. For example, the date January 4, 1989 may also be formatted as 1989-01-04 in Denmark, 4.1.89 in Italy, 89-01-04 in Sweden, and 1/4/89 in the United States.

dates

Use the following guidelines for dates:

Examples and Explanatory Text

- In examples and the text describing those examples, use the format generated by the application you are discussing.

- Include a comment in the source file indicating the purpose of the example so that the translators can design an example that is appropriate for their country.

All Other Text

- Use the date format appropriate for your country. For example, in the United States, use the following:

  ```
  December 13, 1990 is the day when review comments are due.
  ```

  ```
  December 1990 is the date of publication.
  ```

- Spell out the month in all references to dates.

- Do not abbreviate the year (for example, use *1990*; do not use *90* or *'90*).

DEC

Use the term *DEC*™ only as part of a trademark. Do not use the term *DEC* to refer to Digital Equipment Corporation.

See also **Digital**.

DECwindows objects

A DECwindows object is anything that is displayed on a screen, such as a box, button, menu, control, region, icon, and so on. Use the following guidelines when you refer to objects:

- Capitalize the name of the object as it is displayed on the screen. If an object is not labeled, normal capitalization guidelines apply.

- Include the ellipsis points (...) when they are displayed on the screen. For example:

  ```
  The Open... menu item displays the file selection dialog box.
  ```

- Use the full name of a dialog box the first time you refer to it in text. Thereafter, you can use the short form. For example:

  ```
  The Print dialog box is displayed.  To close the dialog box without
  making any changes, click on Dismiss.
  ```

- Do not use the names of objects as verbs.

  Use

  ```
  To reverse the effects of your previous operation, choose the Undo menu item.
  ```

  Do not use

  ```
  To Undo the effects of your previous operation, . . .
  ```

- Do not put quotation marks around items designated as objects.

- Use the verbs *display* and *remove* to refer to a dialog box.

  ```
  The Open Style... dialog box is displayed.
  The dialog box is removed from the screen.
  ```

- Use the verbs *open* and *close* to refer to windows.

  ```
  To open the Chart Parts window...
  To close the Chart window...
  ```

---

dialog boxes

Use the full name of a dialog box the first time you refer to it in text. After you state the full name, you can use the short form.

Use the verbs *display* and *remove* to refer to a dialog box.

```
The Open Style... dialog box is displayed.
The dialog box is removed from the screen.
```

See also **close and open**.

Digital

Use the following rules when referring to Digital Equipment Corporation. These are legal restrictions required to protect corporate trademarks and must be followed.

- Use all capital letters (*DIGITAL*) to refer to the DIGITAL logo. For example:

  The DIGITAL logo must be printed on the cover of the handbook.

- Do not use the DIGITAL logo as a graphic element within a sentence.

- Do not place the DIGITAL logo as a graphic element on the copyright page. Instead, use the phrase *the DIGITAL logo* at the end of the list of Digital trademarks. For example:

  ALL-IN-1, DECforms, OpenVMS, ULTRIX, VMS, and the DIGITAL logo are trademarks of Digital Equipment Corporation.

- *DEC* is appropriate only as part of a trademark for a Digital product. Do not use the term *DEC* to refer to Digital Equipment Corporation.

See also **trademarks and service marks**.

display

Use the following guidelines for the word *display*:

- The verb *display* requires an object.

  Use

  The system displays a response.

  Do not use

  The system response displays on the screen.

- Use the verbs *display* and *remove* to refer to a dialog box.

  The Open Style... dialog box is displayed.
  The dialog box is removed from the screen.

double click

Use the term *double click* to tell the user to press and release a mouse button twice quickly without moving the mouse.

See also **click and click on**.

drag

Use the term *drag* to press and hold a mouse button, move the mouse, and then release the button when the pointer is in the position you want.

See also **click and click on**.

ellipsis points

The following sections give guidelines for using ellipsis points in these contexts:

- In text
- In examples
- In syntax

Text

Use the following guidelines for ellipsis points in text:

- When describing objects in text, include the ellipsis points if they are part of the object on the screen. For example:

  `The Open... menu item displays the file selection dialog box.`

- Use three dots (...) to show material omitted within a sentence. For example:

  Original

  ```
  The graphic designer needs to work with the rest of the documentation
  team from the beginning of the project so that the designer can
  give the best advice about the tools to be used and the types of
  figures that are needed.
  ```

ellipsis points

Excerpt

```
The graphic designer needs to work with . . . the documentation
team . . . [to] give the best advice about the tools to be
used and the types of figures that are needed.
```

- Use four dots (. ...) to mark the omission of the following items:
  - The end of a quoted sentence that ends with a period
  - A full sentence or more
  - A full paragraph or more

For example:

Original

```
Note that you can use other qualifiers and the to-list parameter on
the FORWARD command line instead of responding to the prompts. For
example, the following command line (issued while you are reading
note 3.4) accomplishes the same thing as the preceding example and
suppresses the Send to: prompt and the Subject: prompt:
```

Excerpt

```
Note that you can use other qualifiers and the to-list parameter
on the FORWARD command line. . . . For example, the following
command line accomplishes the same thing as the preceding example...:
```

- If the original sentence ends with a question mark or exclamation point, end the excerpt with the question mark or exclamation point and then the ellipsis points. For example:

Original

```
Is the information in the appendix closely connected to the text and,
thus, referenced in the text?
```

Excerpt

```
Is the information in the appendix closely connected to the text?...
```

- Use other punctuation marks with ellipsis points if their use clarifies the meaning of the material or clarifies what was omitted. For example:

Original

```
Keep your figures as simple as possible without sacrificing meaning or
context; convey only the information that the user needs to know.
If possible, keep figures to a single page or, for online viewing, a
single screen so that users do not have to scroll horizontally or
vertically to see the figure.
```

Excerpt

```
Keep your figures as simple as possible . . .  ; convey only the
information that the user needs to know. If possible, keep figures
to a single page or, for online viewing, a single screen. . . .
```

Examples

In code examples, vertical or horizontal ellipsis points indicate an omission of information. For example:

```
$ SHOW QUEUE

    .

    .

    .

Batch queue BABEL_BATCH, on BABEL::
Batch queue BABEL_FAST, on BABEL::
```

Syntax

In syntax using brackets and braces, vertical or horizontal ellipsis points indicate items that can be repeated. For example:

```
/CLASSES = (class-name [, . . .  ])
```

emphasis

There are a variety of ways to emphasize terms and phrases. Common methods include:

- Font changes for headings and captions

- Boldface type for new terms or the main entry in an index

- Italic type (or underlining if italic type is unavailable) for references to words used as words or for highlighting terms

- Quotation marks for material taken from another source or for special uses of terms

- Multiple colors for user input or differences between systems

- Shading to distinguish extensions to standards

- Small capital letters for subheadings or captions

Your text-formatting tool may determine the options available to you. Whatever methods you use, be consistent.

emphasis

The following conventions are recommended:

- Use boldface type when you introduce a term in text, particularly when the term is included in the glossary. For example:

  A **template file** is an OpenVMS command procedure that executes
  a noninteractive test. It then compares the current results with the
  expected results in the **benchmark file.**

- Use one of several methods to indicate user input in examples. Possible options for printed documentation include the following:

  - Boldface type

  - Second color

    Because printing in a second color may be expensive, many country teams choose not to use second color for user input in localized information. Do not make the information so dependent on added color that localization becomes impossible. Identify the text to be shown in added color so that the country teams can prepare other ways to emphasize user input.

- Use italics in the following circumstances:

  - To indicate a variable.

  - To emphasize a term or phrase. For example:

    Functions can be either nonprivileged or privileged. This section
    discusses *nonprivileged* functions. Section 3.1.2
    discusses *privileged* functions.

  - To refer to complete titles of documentation items. For example:

    Each field is described in the *OpenVMS Record Management
    Services Manual.*

- Do not overuse italics for emphasis in text. In most cases there is no reason to emphasize words like *no*, *not always*, and *never*.

  Use

  If the machine is not broken, do not try to fix it.

  You must always begin a new line with a dollar sign ($).

  Do not use

  If the machine is not broken, *do not* try to fix it.

  You must *always* begin a new line with a dollar sign ($).

- In most cases, set off system messages from text. For example:

  The procedure displays the following messages:

  ```
  %BACKUP-I-STARTVERIFY, starting verification pass
  %BACKUP-W-INCFILTAK, incomplete file attribute data . . .
  ```

  If you do specify system messages in text, use quotation marks:

  ```
  An error message, "Invalid User Identification Code (UIC)," is
  displayed if an account number for the UIC includes an 8 or 9.
  ```

- Avoid using quotation marks for first use of a term or for emphasis.

ensure and insure

Ensure means to make sure, certain, or safe. For example:

```
Ensure that the device is hooked up correctly.
```

Insure implies that you are providing insurance on or for something. For example:

```
Insure the package before you mail it.
```

enter

Use *enter* to instruct users to perform the following actions:

- Issuing commands from the keyboard.

  ```
  Enter PRINT at the DCL prompt.
  ```

- Inserting text into fields.

  ```
  Enter your last name in the Username field.
  ```

- Responding to prompts.

  ```
  Enter your password at the password: prompt.
  ```

- Entering text and pressing keys in sequence. For example:

  ```
  Enter the following command line:
  $ DELETE/CONFIRM MYOLDFILES.*;* Return
  ```

Do not use *enter* to indicate the startup of an application.

Use

```
Start the XYZ application.
```

enter

Do not use

`Enter the XYZ application.`

See also **choose and select**, **press**, and **type**.

---

examples

An example is a text component that illustrates or clarifies a point made in the text. Examples differ from figures in that examples are primarily textual while figures are primarily graphic.

Examples are usually set off from the main text spatially, typographically, or graphically (or by a combination of these methods).

This section gives:

- General guidelines for creating examples
- Guidelines specific to multiplatform documentation
- Guidelines specific to formal examples, including placement, numbering, and titles
- Guidelines specific to informal examples

General Guidelines

Use the following general guidelines to create clear and effective examples:

- Be liberal in your use of examples, especially for procedural and tutorial material. Good examples are one of the most effective ways of reinforcing ideas and procedures. Extensive use of examples can make it easier for the customer to use the product.

- Create examples that are simple and straightforward. Try not to show too many concepts or operations in one example. Ask yourself whether the user might benefit more from several examples.

- If your example uses abbreviations or acronyms, be sure to define them in the text preceding the example.

- Make your examples "true" examples. That is, avoid using variables within the example. For instance, for sample command lines, first show a format line with the syntax of the command. Then give an example of the command input, substituting sample values for the variables. A good model to follow is to show the syntax line in a different typeface from the example.

Use

Enter the QDELETE command in the following format:

QDELETE/ENTRY=*entry-number* *queue-name*

The following example deletes entry 68 from the queue called ZK34$LN03_1:

$ QDELETE/ENTRY=68 ZK34$LN03_1

Do not use

If you want to delete a print job from the print queue, enter
the following command line:

$ QDELETE/ENTRY=*entry-number* *queue-name*

- In general, avoid breaking examples and continuing them on the next page. However, if you must break an example, do so at a logical point that causes minimal disruption to the flow and, therefore, the user's comprehension.

- Use names that represent a wide range of cultures as well as both genders. Look through a telephone directory for ideas, but keep the names fictional. Similarly, do not use telephone numbers or street addresses that you know are real.

- For security, do not use the names of system accounts and passwords. It is not a security issue to use the names of real systems or nodes. However, edit node and user information out of session log files and screen-captured material so that you do not use a real node name with a known directory specification or account on that node.

- Clearly define the purpose of the example in the text preceding it.

- Where appropriate, note any restrictions or exceptions to what the example is illustrating.

- Avoid using culture-specific references in examples. Express your examples in terms that are culturally neutral and that are applicable internationally (for example, booking airline tickets or scheduling meetings). Consider the following:

  - Do not draw analogies with sports or events that are known in only one country. Use international games instead (for example, Olympic games).

  - Avoid references to colors because some colors have different connotations in different parts of the world. See **color, references to** for more information.

  - Do not refer to business practices that vary from country to country (for example, banking, taxation, accounting).

examples

— Do not attempt to give your examples an international flavor by using foreign words or terms gratuitously. You may need to use foreign words to show how a product can be used internationally. For example, the following portion of code is part of a discussion on translating a product's user interface:

```
$ DTR32
VAX DATATRIEVE V5.0               ----+      From the Message File:
Digital Abfrage und Report System +---- SIGNON Informational
Tippe HILFE fuer Hilfe            ----+      Message from DTRMSGS.MSG

DTR> ZEIGE BEREICHE  <-- Declare Synonym ZEIGE for SHOW
                         Declare Synonym BEREICHE for DOMAINS
              .
              .
              .
```

— Never refer to national, racial, religious, sexist, or alternative lifestyle stereotypes.

— Avoid puns, metaphors, and similes.

Multiplatform Examples

Use the following guidelines when creating examples for multiplatform documentation:

• Treat all platforms equally. Use one of the following techniques when examples include platform-specific information (such as system prompts or file names):

— Include examples for all of the supported platforms (if the platform-specific information is the focus of the example).

— Alternate examples from the various platforms by using an equal number from each. This method is particularly useful when the examples demonstrate a concept and platform-specific details do not interfere with the understanding of the concept. For example, when illustrating how to open a file using a file selection box on DECwindows, the exact syntax for file names on each platform is not significant, and you can use an example from any of the platforms.

   If the product supports more than two platforms, however, you may want to confine specific screen captures to platform-specific parts of the documentation set.

• Whenever possible, use generic pictures for screen examples instead of screen captures.

- Avoid using screen displays that show lists of files and file specifications that differ from platform to platform.

- Avoid using illustrations of dialog boxes that contain lists of files.

- If you do not need to show an entire screen, consider showing only the parts that are relevant to the discussion in text. For example:
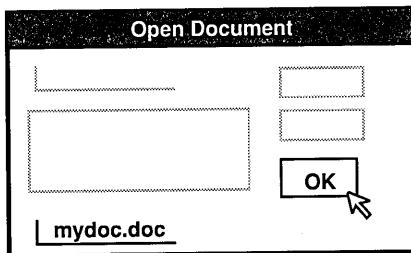
- If a screen example contains a file specification, use generic text where the file specification would appear. For example:
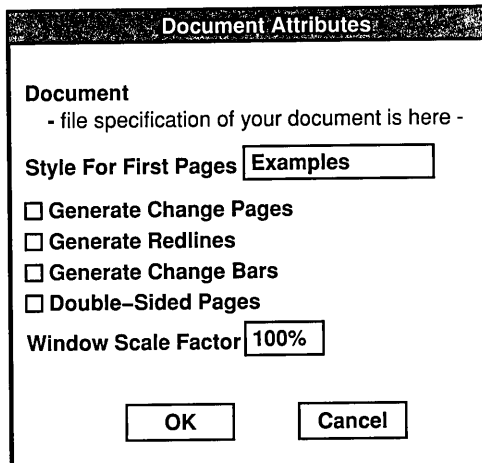
Formal Examples

Formal examples differ from informal examples in appearance, placement, and prominence. Formal examples have a number (such as Example 1–1, Example 1–2) and a title and are listed in the table of contents. In addition, such examples are usually

- Positioned apart from the reference in the text (see the section on formal example placement) and from the surrounding related text

- Visually set off from the surrounding text (for example, with top and bottom rules)

- Longer than informal examples

- Displayed in a separate window for online viewing

The following materials are appropriate as formal examples:

- Programming examples. (However, consider placing exceptionally long programming examples in an appendix or on the software kit.)

- Sample screen displays, such as those showing entry of a command line and the resulting screen output, or the screen output alone.

- Tutorial exercises or worksheets. (Depending on the nature and structure of your document, these may also be more appropriate in an appendix.)

Consider presenting an example formally if the material has one or more of the following characteristics:

- The example's usefulness is enhanced by listing the example in the table of contents.

- The example is very long or disrupts the text flow.

- The example does not lose effectiveness if separated from the text (for instance, if the example is on the page facing its reference in text).

Formal Example Placement: Introduce every formal example in text so that the user can correlate the text with the example. Ideally, place the example reference before the example and no more than one page from the example.

In most cases, refer to the example by number only and not by the example title. For example:

```
Example 15-3 shows how to define and use a view containing a subset
of fields.
```

If the examples in the document are not numbered, refer to the example by its title, using the following formats:

```
The following example, Comparing and Searching for Date Values,
shows some techniques you can use with dates.
```

```
The example titled Comparing and Searching for Date Values shows
some techniques you can use with dates.
```

Formal Example Numbering: In general, number the examples in your document according to the type of document and the numbering scheme of the pages.

Most documents written for a technical audience are divided into numbered chapters with chapter-oriented paging (page 3–4, page A–9, and so on). If the document is divided into chapters and uses chapter-oriented paging, then use chapter-oriented numbering for examples, as follows:

Example 3–6   The sixth example in Chapter 3

Example 4–1   The first example in Chapter 4

Example D–1   The first example in Appendix D

Some manuals, such as those intended for more general audiences and marketing-oriented documents, are not divided into chapters or use sequential paging throughout the document. For such documents, number the examples consecutively from beginning to end (Example 1, Example 2, and so on).

Formal Example Titles: Use the following guidelines for creating effective example titles:

- Make example titles concise and descriptive.

- Make sure the title is clear and that it matches the example content.

- Capitalize example titles using the guidelines for chapter and section titles. See **capitalization**.

- Do not end an example title with a period.

- Avoid starting example titles with articles (*a, an, the*).

- If a long example continues onto another page, repeat the example number and title exactly as on the first page. Follow the example number with a designation such as "(Cont.)" to indicate clearly that this is a continuation of the example. For example:

  ```
  Example 8-1 (Cont.) Domains and Tables in Sample Personnel System
  ```

  The specific designation you use depends on the accepted group style or format.

examples

The placement of the example number and title depends on the document format used in your group.

Informal Examples

Informal examples differ from formal examples in that they are more closely integrated into the running text. Informal examples do not have a number or title and are not listed in the table of contents. In addition, such examples are usually

- Brief

- Integrated into the text flow

- Important to understanding the text at the point where the example is introduced (such as a command example)

- Not displayed in a separate window for online viewing

The following are appropriate as informal examples:

- Sample command lines or command sequences

- Short screen displays

- Short, discrete portions of software installation dialogue

When creating informal examples, do not interrupt a sentence with an example and then complete the sentence after the example.

Use

```
If you enter the following command, the editor creates a journal file:
$ EDIT/JOURNAL PHONES.DAT
```

Do not use

```
If you enter
$ EDIT/JOURNAL PHONES.DAT
the editor creates a journal file.
```

fewer and less

Use *fewer* when you are referring to countable items. For example:

```
There are fewer restrictions on job types in the latest version.
```

Use *less* when you are referring to noncountable items or when you are discussing something in terms of size or degree. For example:

```
This system needs less memory to do the same number of tasks.
```

figures

A figure is a graphic illustration of a concept, relationship, activity, or procedure that is described in text. A figure can be a drawing, chart, graph, photograph, or other pictorial element. The judicious use of figures can enhance the user's understanding of the subject matter. By breaking up long passages of text, figures can also reduce the fatigue of reading and therefore increase comprehension.

You can use figures to reflect a real situation or to present possibilities by way of example. Figures can enhance text in several ways:

- By showing spatial relationships among physical units (such as a hardware configuration)

- By showing abstract relationships among software components (such as file storage and retrieval or layers of an architecture)

- By showing the sequence of tasks in a procedure (such as an installation flow diagram or the steps for installing a printer)

- By showing the results of interactions or activities (such as the sequence of events that result from using a particular command)

This section gives guidelines in the following areas:

- General information on creating figures

- Figure placement

- Figure numbering

- Figure captions

- Figure callouts

- Internationalization

- Capitalization
- Figure legends
- Figure footnotes

For information on screen displays used as examples, see **examples**.

General Guidelines

Use the following general guidelines when creating figures:

- Create your figures with a clear objective in mind. What idea do you want to clarify? What procedure do you want to show? What relationship or interaction do you want to depict?

- Be sure your figures are primarily pictorial, not textual. A user should be able to absorb the meaning or context of a figure without doing a lot of reading. Where possible, limit the text in figures to identifying labels for parts of the figure and to brief clarifications of the processes being shown. Figure 2 shows a figure that is primarily textual.

Figure 2   Textual Representation of Concepts

REMEMBER:
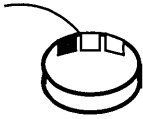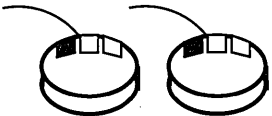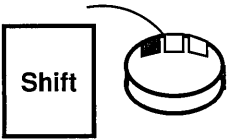
- To select an entry in the list and cancel any existing selections, click MB1 on the entry.

- To expand an entry, double-click MB1 on the entry.

- To select an entry in addition to any existing selections, press and hold the shift key, then click MB1 on the entry.   **Shift**

Figure 3 is a more graphic representation of the material presented in Figure 2.

figures

Figure 3 Graphic Representation of Concepts
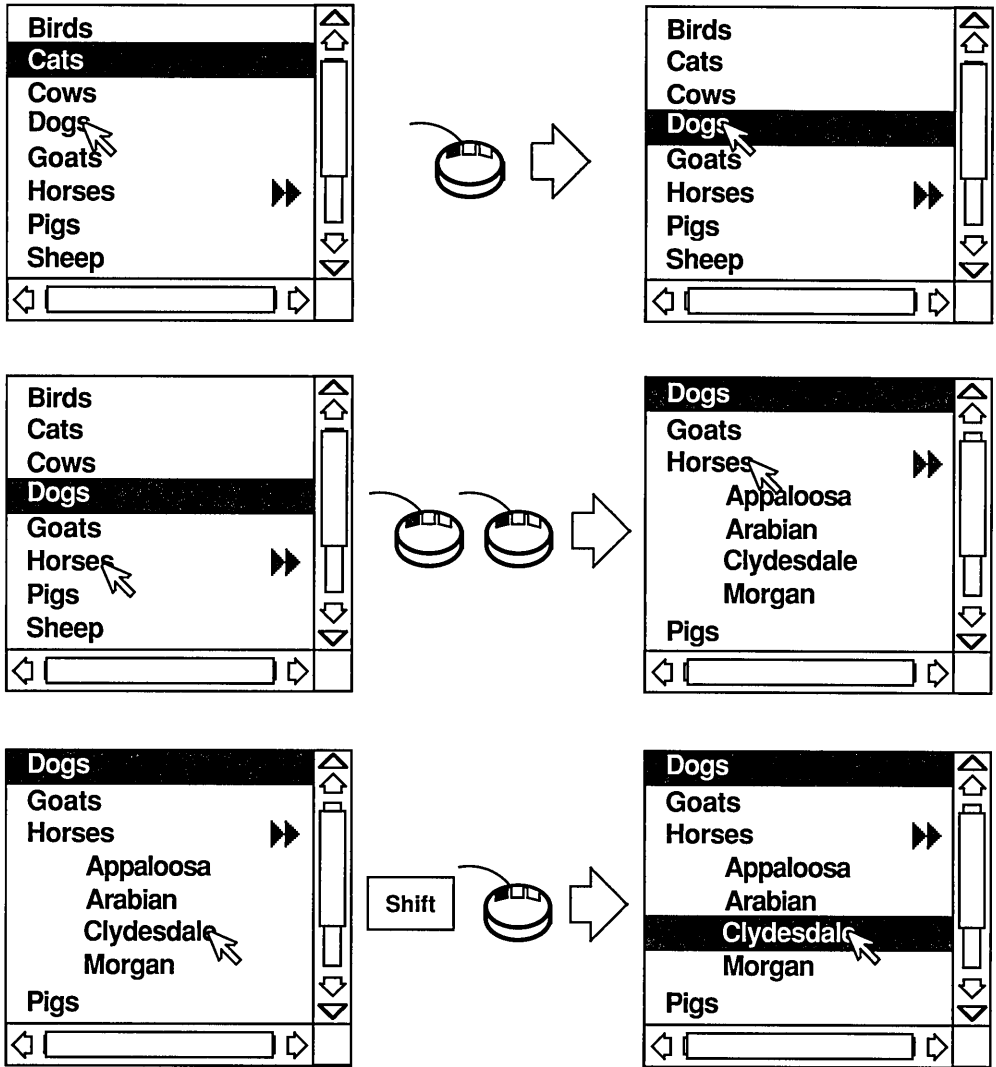
- Reuse illustrations whenever possible to save time and effort.
- Consider how the figure will look on line. Detail that is legible on paper may be hard to read on line because of the low resolution on most screens.

- Keep your figures as simple as possible without sacrificing meaning or context; convey only the information that the user needs to know. If your figure is getting very large or very detailed, you may be trying to show too much. Create a series of figures that build on a single idea.

- If possible, keep figures to a single page or, for online viewing, a single screen so that users do not have to scroll horizontally or vertically to see the figure. However, if you must break a figure, do so at a logical point that causes minimal disruption to the flow and, therefore, the user's comprehension. If possible, place such a figure on a left-hand page and continue it on the facing right-hand page.

- Decide whether figures should be formal or informal. Formal figures have captions and symbolic names and are listed in the table of contents. When viewed online, formal figures are displayed in a pop-up window.

  Informal figures are unnumbered and uncaptioned, and they are not listed in the table of contents. Informal figures are part of the text and are not displayed in a pop-up window in online documents.

  For more information on online documents, see the chapter on online information in *The Digital Technical Documentation Handbook*.

- Clearly introduce every formal (numbered and captioned) figure in text (see the section on figure placement).

- Be sure that the content of your figures matches the text. Use the same terminology, nomenclature, and abbreviations in text and figures. In addition, spell terms the same way in text and figures.

- Be sure that your figures match reality (such as the appearance and packaging of hardware).

- Your audience may be culturally diverse. Avoid culture-specific representations in figures, such as modes of dress and gender roles. Do not use humor in illustrations. Humor is both personal and culture specific and, in some cases, can be offensive or confusing.

- Anticipate the ways an illustration can change when text is translated. Figure 4 shows how the callout text in a figure expands when the text is translated from English to Dutch.

Figure 4 Effect of Translation on Figures
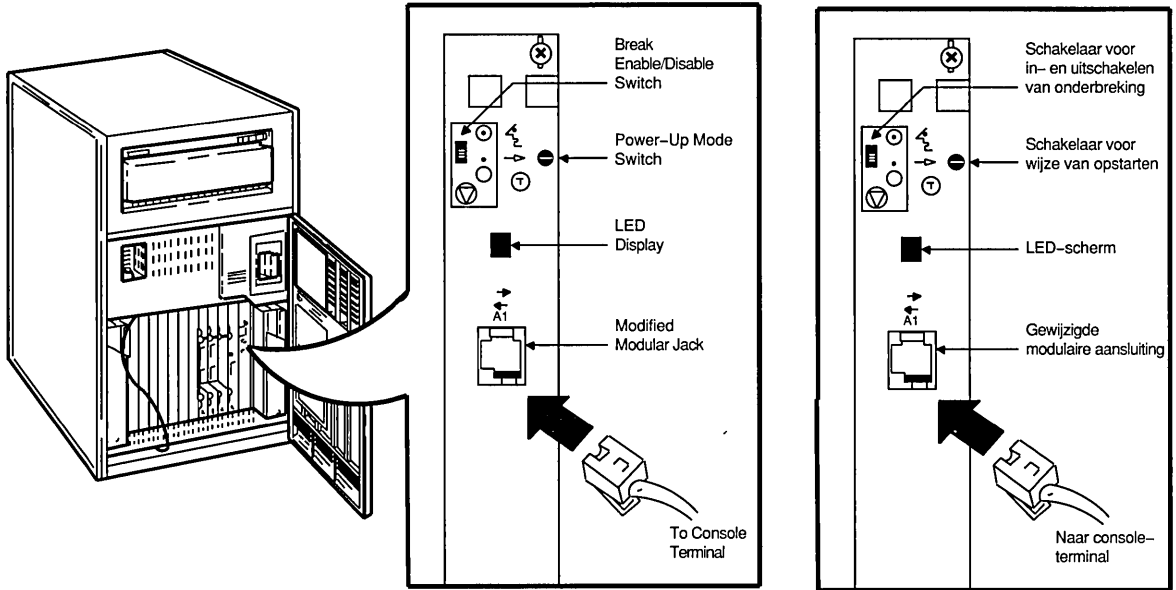
ZK-6517-GE

Figure Placement

Introduce every formal figure in text so that the user can relate the text to the figure. Place the figure reference before the figure occurs and no more than one page from the figure.

In general, refer to the figure by number only and not by the figure caption unless the figures in your document are not numbered. For example:

Figure 3-7 shows the coexistence of OSI and proprietary
capabilities in the DNA™ Phase V model.

If you must refer to a figure by its caption, use the following format:

The following figure, DNA Phase V Layers, shows the
coexistence of OSI and the proprietary capabilities in the
DNA Phase V model.

Figure Numbering

In general, number the figures in your document according to the type of document and the numbering scheme of the pages.

Most documents written for a technical audience are divided into numbered chapters with chapter-oriented paging (page 3–4, page A–9, and so on). If the document is divided into chapters and uses chapter-oriented paging, then use chapter-oriented numbering for figures, as follows:

Figure 3–6   The sixth figure in Chapter 3

Figure 4–1   The first figure in Chapter 4

Figure D–1   The first figure in Appendix D

Some manuals, such as those intended for more general audiences and marketing-oriented documents, are not divided into chapters or use sequential paging throughout the document. For such documents, number the figures consecutively from beginning to end (Figure 1, Figure 2, and so on). In some marketing documents, figures are not numbered at all and may not have captions.

Figure Captions

Use the following guidelines for creating effective figure captions:

- Make figure captions concise and descriptive.

- Avoid calling the figure by what it is — that is, a chart, a diagram, an illustration, and so on. Such constructions are obvious and add unnecessary verbiage to the figure caption.

  Use

  ```
  Selection of Transport Protocols
  ```

  Do not use

  ```
  Diagram Showing Selection of Transport Protocols
  ```

- Capitalize figure captions using the guidelines for chapter and section titles. See **capitalization**.

- Do not end a figure caption with a period.

- Avoid starting figure captions with articles (*a, an, the*).

- If a long figure continues onto another page, repeat the figure number and caption exactly as on the first page. Follow the figure number with a designation such as "(Cont.)" to indicate clearly that this is a continuation of the figure. For example:

  ```
  Figure 12-5 (Cont.) Procedure for Determining Hardware Problems
  ```

The specific designation you use depends on the accepted group style or format.

The placement of the figure number and caption depends on the document format used in your group.

Figure Callouts and Labels

Figure callouts and other labels within figures identify the figure's components and symbols. You can use general designations (such as *Node, Disk, Application,* and so on) or specific product or component names (such as *ULTRIX System*, *9-Pin Adapter* and so on) to identify parts of the illustration.

Callouts can also be symbols (typically numbers) placed near figure elements that require identification or special explanation outside the figure.

Consider the placement of callouts so that users can read them on line without scrolling or resizing the window.

Figure 5 shows the use of callouts in a figure.

Figure 5 Callouts in Figures
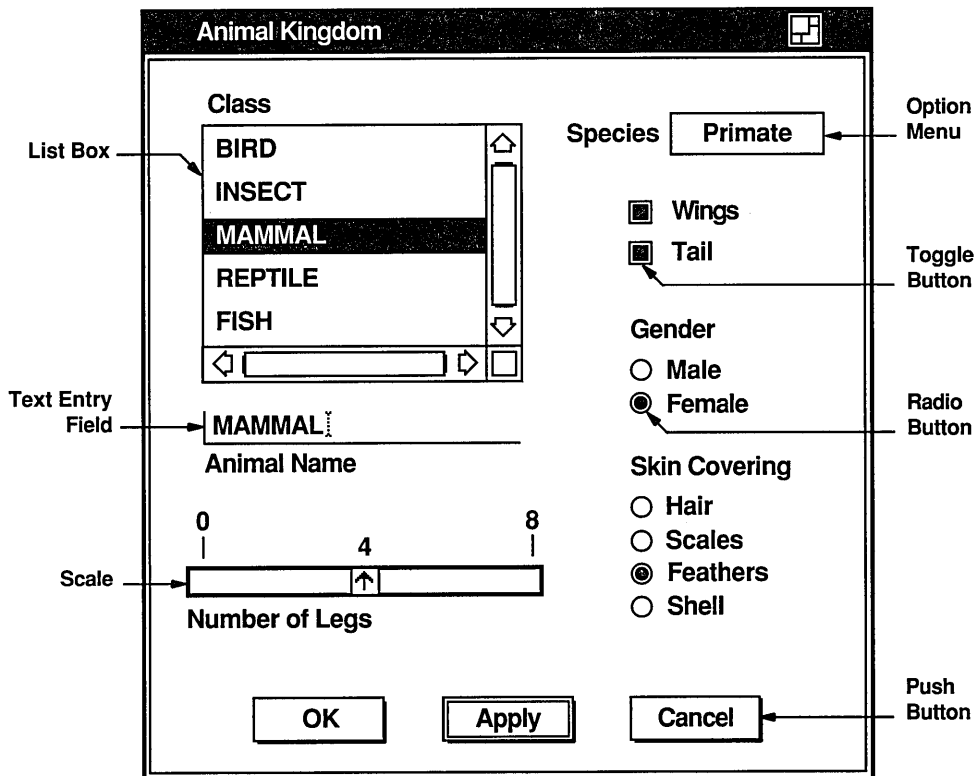
Internationalization

Text may change if the product is localized and, if the document is translated, text expands significantly. In general, keep text physically separate from the graphics by following these guidelines:

- Use overlays to separate text from graphics.

- Avoid enclosing text within boxes.

- Do not place labels too close together.

- Do not break enclosed portions of figures with arrow lines or other pointers.

- Avoid abbreviating figure labels.

Capitalization

Use initial capitalization for most text used in art, following the capitalization guidelines for titles and captions. (See **capitalization**.) Exceptions are as follows:

- Capitalize sentences or phrases in flowcharts like a standard sentence in text.

- For labels in data structures, follow the capitalization designated by the programmer but be consistent within a document. C is the only language that is case sensitive.

  You can use initial capital letters or underscores to separate words. For example:

  ```
  DwtResourceFoo
  ```

  ```
  DWT_RESOURCE_FOO
  ```

Figure Legends

Figure legends are brief explanations of symbols, expressions, or other elements in a figure that the user may not understand or remember. The legend accompanies the figure, is part of the figure file (for online art), and falls within the figure's boundaries. Figure 6 shows a sample figure that uses a legend.

Figure 6   Figure with Legend

TAY-0032-AD
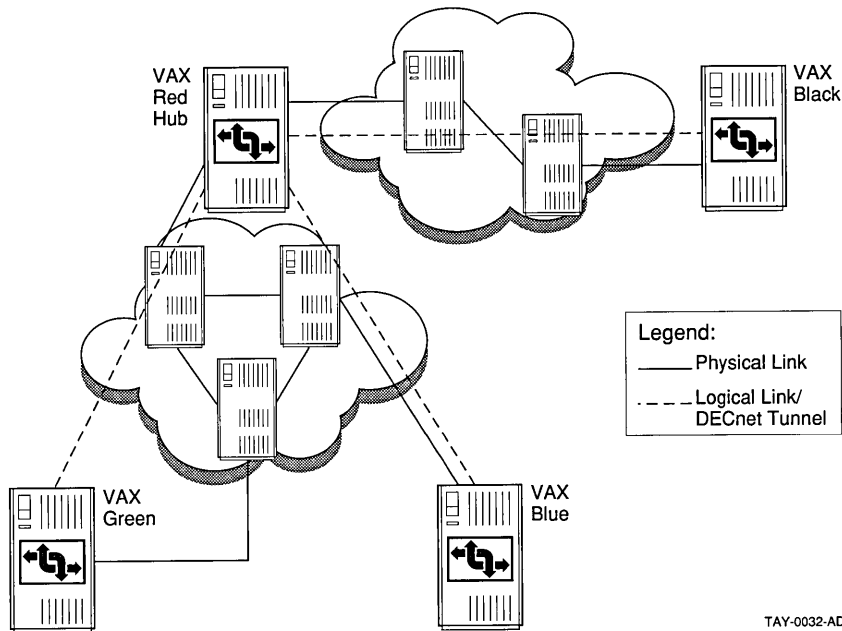
Precede the legend with the label *Legend* or *Key*, according to group style.

If many figures require the same or a similar legend, you can avoid repetition by including a general key to graphic symbols and expressions at the beginning of the chapter or the document. However, a user may find it easier to have the legend accompany each figure rather than continually turning back to the common legend or, for online documents, keeping a separate window open.

Figure Footnotes

If possible, keep figure footnotes to a minimum. Remember that figures are primarily graphic and pictorial, not textual. Wherever possible, rely on the accompanying text to give general explanatory, clarifying, or conditional information to the figure. Figure 7 shows the use of footnotes in a figure.

figures

Figure 7 Footnotes in Figures

FONTS AND FONT SOFTWARE STRATEGY

1 = *Funded*
2 = *Not yet funded*
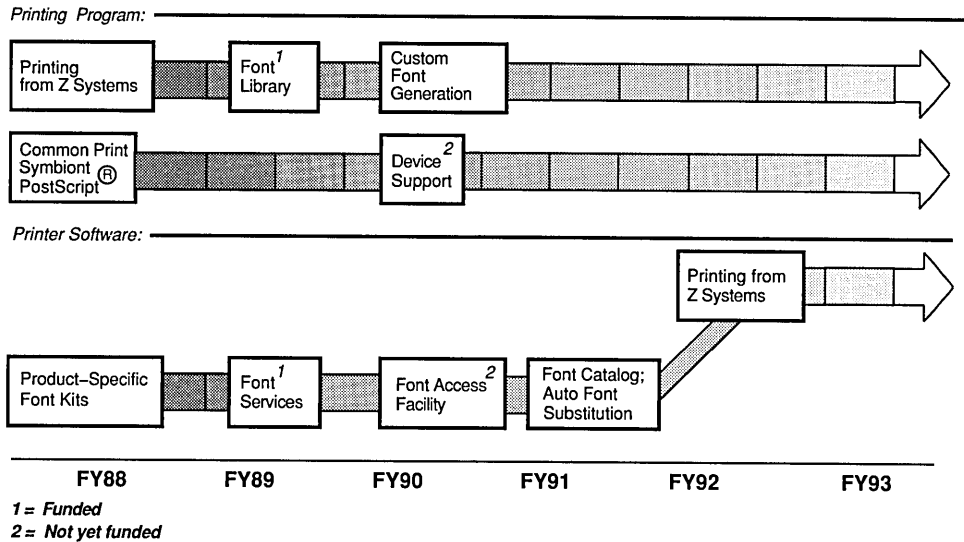
See also **symbols and icons**.

---

file specifications

Operating systems specify files and their locations in different ways. Terminology also varies. For example:

- On OpenVMS systems, the term *file specification* fully describes the location of a file, including its node, device, directory, file name, file type, and version number, as in the following:

    `BARVEL::USER3:[ORTIZ]STRATEGY_DOC.PS;3`

- On ULTRIX, OS/2®, DOS, and Macintosh® systems, the term *path name*[1] describes the directory routes traversed to find a specific file, as in the following:

    `/usr/users/huynh/memos/mgt-memo`

---

[1] ULTRIX information uses the term *pathname*.

ULTRIX path names are case sensitive; OS/2, DOS, and Macintosh path names are not case sensitive.

- On OpenVMS systems, the term *file name* implies the name of the file and the file type and possibly the version number. On DOS systems, however, the file name can have a file type but not a version.

In discussing files, use the term *file name* when the content of the file is important, not its location. However, when location is important, identify the location for all relevant operating systems and use the term appropriate for the system.

This section gives further details for specifying files on ULTRIX and OpenVMS systems and provides guidelines for specifying files in multiplatform documentation.

For ULTRIX Systems

- Retain the correct case throughout the path name. For example:

  `gyro:/usr/users/jane/report.Feb.90`

- Do not end path names with a slash (/).

- Use the word *root* rather than a standalone slash (/) to indicate the root directory in text.

  Use

  `Change to the root directory and type ls.`

  Do not use

  `Change to the / directory and type ls.`

- Use initial periods when referring to file extensions (the ULTRIX term for file suffixes).

  Use

  `File names ending with .c are interpreted`
  `as C source programs.`

  Do not use

  `File names ending with c are interpreted`
  `as C source programs.`

- If punctuation characters (such as periods) are part of the file name or path name, set off the file name from the text when its appearance in a sentence

might be confusing. For example:

```
The files are in the /usr/spool/uucp directory and
have names beginning with the following characters:
STST.
```

For OpenVMS Systems

- Use uppercase letters for all elements of the file specification. For example:

```
FRNALD::DISK$1:[DAVIS.WORK]REPORT.LIS
```

- Do not use a colon when referring to drives and device names if the colon is at the end of the sentence. Rewrite your sentence if this happens.

  Use

  ```
  Copy the file to the C: drive.
  ```

  Do not use

  ```
  Copy the file to drive C:.
  ```

- Use initial periods when referring to a file type (the OpenVMS term for a file suffix).

  Use

  ```
  Type or print the .LIS file to see a list of your errors.
  ```

  Do not use

  ```
  Type or print the LIS file to see a list of your errors.
  ```

For Multiplatform Documentation

Because different platforms treat file specifications in different ways and use different terminology, plan your strategy for referring to file specifications early in the project, and discuss it with the technical team.

- File specifications or path names on some systems may be case sensitive. You may decide to use lowercase unless uppercase or mixed case is a requirement.

- Different platforms use different names for file suffixes, which generally identify a class of files that have the same use or characteristics. You may decide to use a more generic term, such as *file suffix* or *file extension*, instead of a term like *file type*.

  In representing file suffixes, use a period before the suffix to provide a

visual cue for the users. For example:

```
If you omit the file specification, the object file defaults to
the name of the first source file, with a file suffix of .obj.
```

- Be careful when using file names and suffixes in examples. Some platforms restrict file names to eight characters and file suffixes to three characters. If possible, keep file names within these guidelines even if it is not a restriction on current platforms. Using these guidelines will facilitate the move to future platforms without having to rewrite.

footnotes

A footnote is an explanatory note placed at the bottom of a page or a text element, such as a table. A footnote is composed of a reference mark that signals the presence of the footnote and the body of the footnote. For example:

```
¹dwt is the abbreviation for pennyweight.
```

Use footnotes only to present information that supports but is not essential to the main discussion and that seems out of context elsewhere, such as definitions of abbreviations or explanations of symbology.

Although the format of footnotes (spacing, margins, and so on) is determined by group style and the production method you use, the following sections contain guidelines for those elements of formatting you can control.

There are two types of reference marks used with footnotes: superscript numbers and symbols.

Use superscript numbers to signal footnotes in text.

Use the following symbols to signal footnotes in tables. *The Chicago Manual of Style* recommends using the symbols in the following order:

*	Asterisk
†	Dagger
‡	Double dagger
§	Section mark
‖	Parallel
#	Number sign

If a table requires more than six symbols, you can double the symbols, for example: **, ††, ‡‡, and so on.

The following sections discuss the different types of footnotes:

- Text footnotes
- Table footnotes

Text Footnotes

Use the following guidelines for creating appropriate text footnotes:

- If the information is important or essential, include it in the text. Do not put it in a footnote.
- If the information is extraneous, consider omitting it altogether.
- Do not use footnotes to refer to other sections of your document or other documents.
- Use a superscript number in text to refer to a footnote. Place the number after the key word in the text and use the same number with the footnote itself.

  If necessary, place the superscript number after any punctuation mark except a dash, a colon, or a close parenthesis if the reference relates to information within the parentheses. Place the superscript number before these marks.

- Number footnotes sequentially for each chapter.

Table Footnotes

Use the following guidelines for creating table footnotes:

- Place the reference symbol immediately after the referenced item.

  Place reference marks in column headers and in any part of the table body but not in the table number or title.

- If the table has a bottom rule, place table footnotes below the rule. Do not put a box around the footnote, and do not add a line above it.
- If the table continues onto another page, use the same reference symbol for each new page where the footnote is used. Position the footnote below the table on the page where it is referenced.

See also **figures**, **tables**, and **trademarks and service marks**.

foreword

A foreword is a statement by someone other than the writer. It is rare in Digital documents.

A foreword is brief — usually from two to four pages long. The name of the author of the foreword is usually at the end of the foreword text, sometimes along with the date and place of its writing. See *The Chicago Manual of Style* for more information about forewords.

Placement

Place the foreword after the table of contents and before the preface. The foreword begins on a right-hand page.

gender-neutral language

Use gender-neutral language to support the equality of all persons regardless of gender and to avoid reinforcing stereotypes. Use the following guidelines:

- Do not use masculine and feminine pronouns. If possible, use the second person or a plural form to avoid the problem.

  Use

  ```
  Users can keep their documents in the file cabinet.
  Keep your documents in the file cabinet.
  ```

  Do not use

  ```
  The user can keep his documents in the file cabinet.
  The user can keep his or her documents in the file cabinet.
  S/he can keep her/his documents in the file cabinet.
  ```

- If you must use a singular pronoun to refer to a person performing a particular job (for example, in a case study), do not use stereotypical job classifications. For example, do not assume that a secretary or a nurse is female while a manager or doctor is male.

  Some people vary references to a user, using *he* in some places and *she* in others. However, this approach may lead to choppy writing or even confusion, and some people find it offensively obvious.

gender-neutral language

- Use neutral job titles. Do not use titles incorporating the feminine suffixes *-ess*, *-trix*, *-ine*, and *-ette*. For example:

  Use

  ```
  executor
  manager
  salesperson, salespeople, the sales force
  supervisor
  ```

  Do not use

  ```
  executrix
  manageress
  salesman
  foreman
  ```

- Do not use gender-specific words to represent all humans. For example:

  Use

  ```
  work hours
  worker, employee
  humanity, humankind
  human resources, work force, staff
  ```

  Do not use

  ```
  man-hours
  workman, workwoman
  mankind
  manpower
  ```

glossary

A glossary is a series of definitions of company-specific, technical, or application-specific terms whose meanings may not be familiar to the user.

A glossary entry consists of a term and its definition. The definition consists of:

- A phrase describing the term and explaining how it is used. End this phrase with a period.

- An optional sentence or sentences further clarifying the meaning.

For example:

```
distribution list
A file that contains a list of user names. You use a distribution
list to automatically address a message to each user name in the
file.
```

This section gives guidelines for the placement and format of the glossary and glossary entries.

The Digital Technical Documentation Handbook contains guidelines for developing effective glossaries.

Placement

Use the following guidelines for the placement of the glossary:

- Place the glossary in the back matter, after the appendixes and before the index.

- List the glossary in the table of contents.

- Refer to the glossary in the preface (usually in the section on document structure).

- Briefly introduce the glossary; this is particularly important for online books.

- Do not index glossary entries unless the glossary is the only place where the terms are used. For example, users may be familiar with a certain term used by another vendor. Digital information uses another term for the same concept but includes a reference to the other vendor's term in the glossary. In this case, it is appropriate to index the other vendor's term with a cross-reference to the Digital term.

Format

Use the following guidelines in formatting the glossary and glossary entries:

- Use boldface type when you introduce a term in text that is also defined in the glossary. For example:

  ```
  Text:

  The domain associates a data file with a record
  definition.

  Glossary:

  domain
  A data structure that . . .
  ```

- Begin the glossary on a right-hand page. Format the glossary title in the same manner as a chapter or appendix title. See **chapter and section titles**.

glossary

- If the document uses chapter-oriented paging, use Glossary–1, Glossary–2, and so on to paginate the glossary. If the document uses sequential page numbering, continue the sequence in the glossary.

- Capitalize glossary terms the same way in the text and in the glossary. For example:

  ```
  Text:

  The domain associates a data file with a record
  definition. Use the Application Design Tool to. . . .


  Glossary:

  Application Design Tool
  A querying device that helps . . .

  domain
  A data structure that . . .
  ```

- Use the same method of alphabetizing in the glossary and the index, either letter-by-letter or word-by-word. See **alphabetizing** for a discussion of the methods. Digital prefers letter-by-letter alphabetizing.

- If you can control the format of the glossary entries, left-justify each term and use boldface type for the term. For example:

  ```
  spreadsheet
  A storage format that organizes data in cells and . . .
  ```

- Present all definitions in parallel grammatical form. Use a phrase beginning with *A*, *An*, or *The* to begin the definition of a singular noun or verb. For example:

  ```
  application
  A set of procedures that performs a task or function.

  logging in
  The identification of a user to the operating system.
  ```

  When you define an adjective, begin the definition with a phrase like *Pertaining to*. For example:

  ```
  synchronous
  Pertaining to related events in which all changes occur simultaneously.
  ```

- If a term has multiple definitions, separate the definitions with a semicolon if the definitions are close in meaning. For example:

  ```
  node
  An end-point of a branch in a network; a computer system in a network.
  ```

If the definitions are not closely related, number each definition. For example:

source
(1) The point of entry of data in a network. (2) A data terminal installation that enters data into a connected channel.

- Use the following format to refer to an acronym:

UAF
User authorization file. A file containing an entry for every user that the system manager authorizes to gain access to the system.

user authorization file (UAF)
See UAF.

- Use the following format to refer to a related term:

timesharing
A method of allocating computer time in which each process gets an equal amount of time in turn. *See also* real-time processing.

You may use the phrase *Compare with* instead of *See also*.

- Use the following format to refer to a term that is opposite or different, yet related, in meaning to the term defined:

input
Information that is introduced into a program for use in processing. *Contrast with* output.

- If you can control the format of glossary entries, typographically distinguish cross-referenced terms from the cross-references themselves. Use italic type for the cross-references (*See*, *See also*, and so on) and either boldface type or the regular text type for the cross-referenced term.

Use

See also real-time processing.

Or

See also **real-time processing.**

Do not use

See also real-time processing.

However, if the cross-referenced term is in italics, use the regular text type for the cross-reference. For example:

See also *DEC STD 073-4 Documentation Film Mastering.*

glossary

To avoid a proliferation of typeface changes, use boldface type only in explicit cross-references. Do not use boldface type for glossary terms that are used in the definitions of other glossary terms. For example:

Use

```
auto-selection
An operation in which users select an object by moving the location
cursor to that object using the navigation keys; no further action is
needed to select that object.
```

See also **location cursor, navigation key, selection.**

Do not use

```
auto-selection
An operation in which users select an object by moving the location
cursor to that object using the navigation keys; no further action is
needed to select that object.
```

See also **location cursor, navigation key, selection.**

grab

Do not use *grab* in end-user documentation. Use only in programming documentation. For example:

```
The GRAB POINTER routine grabs control of the pointer
when the conditions specified in the routine have been met.
```

half-title page

A half-title page usually gives only the title of the document without any of the other material that appears on the full title page. Half-title pages are rarely used in Digital product documents.

See *The Chicago Manual of Style* for more information about half-title pages.

Placement and Format

The half-title page is a right-hand page and is the first page after the cover. Place the document title in approximately the same position on the half-title page as on the full title page. The following left-hand page is usually blank, but it may also contain information about the series to which the document belongs or the list of contributors. The half-title page has no printed page number.

See also **title page.**

help

Use the following guidelines when referring to various help concepts:

- Use lowercase letters when you write about the concept of online help or when you write about an object that is not labeled on the DECwindows screen. Refer to the following list for terms that require lowercase letters:

  ```
  context-sensitive help
  help information
  help library
  help system
  help utility
  online help
  to get help
  ```

- Use capital *H* when the word *Help* follows the name of a product or when you write about an object that is labeled on the screen. Refer to the following list for terms that require initial capital letters:

  ```
  DECwindows Help
  DECwindows Help System
  Help key
  Help menu
  Help topic
  Help window
  To get help on a particular topic, choose the Help menu item.
  ```

  Use the terms *DECwindows Help Widget* and *DECwindows Help System* in programming documentation only.

- Except for case-sensitive systems, use uppercase letters when you write about a specific command or qualifier. For example:

  ```
  the HELP command
  the /HELP qualifier
  ```

- Do not use *Help frame*; use *Help topic*.

See also **capitalization**, **commands**, and **qualifiers**.

hyphens

Follow the spellings in Part III of this guide and in *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*. For words that are not in those sources, this section gives guidelines for using hyphens in different contexts:

- Compounds

- Numbers

- Prefixes

- Suffixes

Compounds

Use the following guidelines for hyphenating compounds:

- Adjectival compound

  Hyphenate an adjectival compound if it begins with any of the following prefixes:

all-	all-inclusive code
cross-	cross-referenced listing
double-	double-precision data
half-	half-written code
high-	high-performance system
low-	low-level error
quasi-	quasi-official document
self-	self-indexing program

  There are a few exceptions, such as *crossbred, crosshatched, halfway, highborn*, and *lowbred*.

- Adjective and noun used as an adjective

  This is considered an open compound. Do not hyphenate an adjective and noun used as an adjective if both parts have all uppercase letters. For example:

  the ANSI COBOL standard

- Adjectival phrase

  Hyphenate an adjectival phrase when it precedes the noun it modifies. For example:

  State-of-the-art design is a major objective in the plan.

- Adverb/adjective compound

  This is considered an open compound. Do not hyphenate an adverb /adjective compound in which the adverb cannot be misread as a simple adjective that modifies the noun. For example:

  ```
  less frequently used utility
  most significant bit
  ```

- Adverb ending in *-ly*

  Do not hyphenate a compound that is made up of an adverb that ends in *-ly* followed by a participle or adjective. For example:

  ```
  a frequently used utility
  a highly complex program
  ```

Numbers

Use the following guidelines for hyphenating numbers:

- Hyphenate a fraction written as words. For example:

  ```
  three-fourths
  one and one-half
  one-third
  ```

- In tables and figures, use an en dash (if your system can) to indicate a range of numbers, such as *12–20* or *ASCII range 161–254*.

- Use a hyphen between a number and word combined to form a unit modifier. For example:

  ```
  6-byte field
  ```

  The exception is unit modifiers formed with *percent*. For example:

  ```
  a 20 percent increase
  ```

Prefixes

Use the following guidelines for hyphenating words formed with prefixes:

- Use a hyphen when the root word begins with the same vowel with which the prefix ends. For example:

anti-	anti-integration
de-	de-emphasize
intra-	intra-application
multi-	multi-industry

semi-   semi-indirect
ultra-   ultra-ambitious

The exception is *re-*, which is spelled solid (without a hyphen) even when the root word begins with an *e*, as in *reedit, reentrant*.

- Hyphenate prefixed words if the root element uses all uppercase letters or an initial capital letter or if the root element is a number expressed as a numeral or a hyphenated compound. For example:

```
non-direct-vector    pre-200 series
```

- Hyphenate noun compounds where *ex-* means *former*, as in *ex-president*, but spell the prefix solid where *ex-* means *out of*, as in *excommunicate*.

- Hyphenate compounds where *pro-* means *favoring*, as in *pro-democracy*. Spell the prefix solid where *pro-* means *before* or *forward*, as in *propel*.

- Spell *auto-* solid, but note that there are some exceptions that are specific to Digital. See Part III for these exceptions.

- Hyphenate prefixes when they are isolated from their root elements, as in *pre- and postinstallation*.

- Do not use a hyphen with the following prefixes:

ante-	antecedent	*bi-*	bidirectional
bio-	biophysical	*by-*	bypass
circum-	circumnavigate	*co-*	coexist
counter-	countermand	*dis-*	disassemble
electro-	electromagnetic	*extra-*	extracurricular
hydro-	hydroelectric	*hyper-*	hyperarid
hypo-	hypocenter	*in-*	inactive
infra-	infrared	*inter-*	interrecord
intra-	intrastate	*macro-*	macrograph
mal-	malformed	*micro-*	microprocessor
mid-	midrange	*mini-*	minicomputer
mis-	miscalculate	*non-*	nonexistent
over-	overlay	*para-*	paralanguage
post-	postinstallation	*pre-*	preassembler
pseudo-	pseudodevice	*re-*	reedit

retro-	retrofit	*sub-*	subprogram
super-	superset	*supra-*	supramolecular
tele-	telescope	*trans-*	transmission
tri-	triglyceride	*un-*	unconditional
under-	underflow	*uni-*	uniprocessor

- Avoid using a prefix with hyphenated or compound words. Rewrite the sentence without the compound term. For example:

  Use

  ```
  banks that do not use computers

  a device that is not file oriented
  ```

  Do not use

  ```
  non-computer-using banks

  non-file-oriented device
  ```

Suffixes

Most suffixes are spelled solid (without a hyphen) in adjective and noun compounds, as in *writeoff, rapierlike, corporatewide*. There are some exceptions:

- Compounds formed with the suffixes *-dependent* and *-specific* are hyphenated as adjectives but open as predicate adjectives. For example:

  ```
  The procedure is site dependent.
  The site-dependent procedure. . . .

  Do not use examples that are culture specific.
  Avoid culture-specific examples. . . .
  ```

- Hyphenate noun compounds formed with *-elect* unless the position named is more than one word. For example:

  ```
  supervisor-elect      project leader elect
  ```

- Hyphenate adjective compounds formed from a number plus *-odd*, as in *500-odd words*.

- Hyphenate adjective compounds formed from a numeral plus *-fold*. For example:

  ```
  80-fold      threefold
  ```

hyphens

- Spell adjective compounds formed with the suffix *-like* solid except for compounds derived from proper nouns, compounds that end in *ll*, and compounds formed from multiple words. For example:

```
English-like
cell-like
```

if and whether

If introduces a clause of condition. *Whether*, used with *or* in formal usage, introduces alternatives. For example:

Use

```
If the red light is off, the system is not on line.
```

```
The system manager decides whether they should use the line printer or
the laser printer.
```

Do not use

```
The system manager decides if they should use the line printer or the
laser printer.
```

The use of *or not* with *whether* is usually implied. For example:

```
The system manager decides whether [or not] they should use the
new printer.
```

index

An index is an alphabetical listing of the topics and subtopics discussed in a book with cross-references to relevant information. Its purpose is to help users find the information contained in the book.

An index entry has the following parts:

- A *primary entry*, which indicates the topic

- A *secondary entry*, which specifies or clarifies the particular aspect of the topic

- A *locator*, which indicates the location of the information in the book

For example:

```
Device names ◄─────────────── Primary Entry
  controller designation, 3–2 ┐
  device codes, 3–4           ├─ Secondary Entries
  unit numbers, 3–2 ↘         ┘
                    └───────── Locator
```
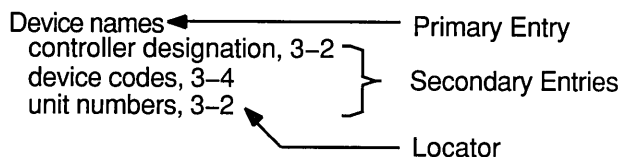
Index entries may also contain cross-references that direct users to the right topic or closely related topics.

For example:

```
Disks
  See System disks, User disks
  ↖
   └──────────── Cross–Reference
```
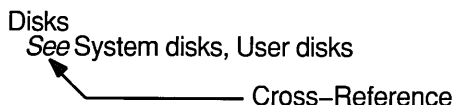
This section gives guidelines for the placement and format of the index and index entries. *The Digital Technical Documentation Handbook* contains guidelines for developing effective indexes.

Placement

Use the following guidelines for the placement of the index:

- Place the index in the back matter, after the appendixes and glossary. In Digital technical documents, the index is generally the last element of the back matter except for any user survey or feedback sheets.

- List the index in the table of contents. The index entry comes after the entries for chapters, appendixes, and the glossary and before the lists of figures, tables, and examples.

- Refer to the index in the preface (usually in the section on document structure).

Format

Use the following guidelines in formatting the index and index entries:

- Begin the index on a right-hand page. Format the index title in the same manner as a chapter or appendix title. See **chapter and section titles**.

- If the document uses chapter-oriented paging, use Index–1, Index–2, and so on to paginate the index. If the document uses sequential page numbering, continue the sequence in the index.

index

- Your text-formatting tool may control the format of the index. If possible, format the index as a two-column list with alphabetic guide letters distinguished typographically or spatially. Indent secondary entries and cross-references.

- Unless a word is in all uppercase or is case sensitive, use an initial capital letter for the primary entry in the index. If a primary entry has more than one word, use an initial capital letter only for the first word unless the term is a proper noun. For example:

  Use

  ```
  Distributed File System, 3-3    (proper noun)
  MAIL command, 5-4
  ```

  Do not use

  ```
  Distributed file system, 3-3    (proper noun)
  Mail command, 5-4
  ```

- Use *See* cross-references only for entries that have no locator. Use *See also* cross-references to refer users to information in addition to that in the index entry.

  For example:

  ```
  Contents
     See Table of Contents

  Copyright notices, 2-30
     See also Copyright page
     internal documents, 2-32
  ```

- Use an initial capital letter for the word *See* in cross-references. For example:

  ```
  File protection
     See Object protection

  Terminals
     See also Workstations
     described, 3-1
  ```

- If a term uses lowercase letters in text, do not capitalize the term in a secondary entry. For example:

  ```
  Variables, 3-4, 3-9
     hyphenating, 3-7
     italicizing, 3-4
  ```

- Italicize the words *See* and *See also* in cross-references. Do not italicize the cross-referenced terms.

Use

```
File protection
  See Object protection
```

Do not use

```
File protection
 See Object Protection
```

```
File protection
 See Object Protection
```

However, if the cross-referenced term is already in italics, use the regular typeface for the cross-reference. For example:

Use

```
Choose, 2-20
 See also Enter
```

Do not use

```
Choose, 2-20
 See also Enter
```

- Use the same method of alphabetizing in the index and the glossary, either letter-by-letter or word-by-word. Digital prefers letter-by-letter alphabetizing, but your text-formatting tool may determine the method.

- Index symbols both as symbols, at the beginning of the index, and under the name of the symbol. For example:

```
& (ampersand), 3-9

A
Ambiguity, deleting, 1-6, 4-11
Ampersand (&), 3-9
Articles, 3-2
```

If the text formatting tool cannot place symbols at the beginning of the index, index the symbols under their names.

- Place numeric primary entries before the alphabetic entries if the text-formatting tool allows it. For example, the primary entry *64-bit* should go before any of the alphabetic entries, as follows:

```
64-bit, 5-12

A
Access control, 1-5
Application generators, 2-6, 2-9, 2-10
```

Put all numeric entries in ascending numeric order. For example:

```
070R disk, 1-1
32-bit, 1-1
64-bit, 1-2
```

If the formatting tool cannot place numeric entries before alphabetic entries, then treat the numeric entries as if the numbers were spelled out. For example:

Phrase	Alphabetize as:
070R disk	Zero seven zero R
32-bit	Thirty-two bit
1957 (the year)	Nineteen fifty-seven

- Generally index abbreviations and acronyms under the abbreviation or acronym. Provide a cross-reference at the full term. For example:

```
Access control lists
  See ACLs
ACLs, 3-5, 3-8, 3-9
```

However, if the full term is more commonly used, index the full term and use a cross-reference at the abbreviation or acronym.

See also **alphabetizing**.

internationalization

You can find information relevant to internationalization and translation in the individual entries throughout this guide. Follow these guidelines whether or not your information will be translated. For a detailed discussion of internationalization and translation issues, see the *Digital Guide to Developing International Software* and *Developing International User Information*.

its

The word *its* is the possessive pronoun of *it*. Use *its* when you are referring to the possessive of a third-person, singular, neuter pronoun.

```
The program is large, so its execution time is long.
```

```
Because the disk is very sensitive, its protective envelope
is lead-coated.
```

The word *it's* is a contraction for *it is*. Digital style discourages the use of contractions; use *it is*.

jargon

Avoid jargon unless it is technical terminology that is either accepted within the industry or is defined appropriately in your manual.

Use

```
Word-processing activities are menu driven.
```

The term *menu driven* is acceptable jargon.

Do not use

```
Toggle in the following routine.
```

Toggle in is not acceptable jargon.

See also **slang**.

keyboards

A variety of terminals and keyboards are in use around the world. Functions bound to particular keys in the U.S. version of a product may be bound to entirely different keys for products that are localized for other countries. Use the following guidelines when documenting keyboards:

- Select a default keyboard to document, and develop a method for providing information about alternative keyboards.

- Put as much keyboard information on line as possible. It is easier to modify keyboard information that is presented on line than it is to modify hardcopy information.

keyboards

- Use *function names* rather than *key cap names* when documenting software applications.

---

keys

The four basic components of the keyboard (for Digital's 200- and 300-series terminals and for workstations) are the keyboard keys, the numeric keypad, the editing keypad, and the function keys (F1 to F20).

Use the generic term *keypad* only after you have identified the type of keypad to which you are referring. For example:

```
You can use the DEFINE/KEY command to define your numeric keypad
keys, editing keypad keys, and function keys (F1 to F20).
```

If your system software provides a distinctive font for key names in text, use it. This helps to differentiate between key names and commands.

This section gives:

- General guidelines
- Numeric keypad guidelines
- Function key guidelines
- Guidelines for referring to multiple keys

General Guidelines

Use the following guidelines when you refer to keys on any keyboard:

- Use the verb *press* when referring to keys. Do not use the verbs *strike*, *punch*, *depress*, or *hit*.

- Refer to keys on the keyboard as *keys*, never as *buttons*.

- Use initial capital letters for the name of a key if the key is labeled on the keyboard. (This rule includes keyboards that use all capital letters.) The following shows the names of labeled keys:

Compose Character	Ctrl	Do	Enter
Find	Help	Insert Here	Lock
Next Screen	Prev Screen	Remove	Return
Select	Set-Up	Shift	Tab

- If your system is not case sensitive, use a capital letter when referring to a specific letter key, whether as a single key or in a simultaneous or sequential action. For example:

  `The W key        Ctrl/C        PF1 Ctrl/K`

- Use lowercase letters when the key to which you are referring is not labeled on the keyboard or has a symbol (such as ↑ or ,) for a label. The following shows the names of unlabeled keys:

ampersand key	apostrophe key	asterisk key
at sign key	backslash key	circumflex key
close parenthesis key	colon key	comma key
delete key	dollar sign key	down arrow key
equal sign key	exclamation point key	hyphen key
left angle bracket key	left arrow key	left brace key
left bracket key	number sign key	open parenthesis key
percent sign key	period key	plus sign key
question mark key	quotation marks key	right angle bracket key
right arrow key	right brace key	right bracket key
semicolon key	slash key	space bar
tilde key	underscore key	up arrow key
vertical bar key		

  Exceptions to this rule are as follows:

  - Use uppercase letters for the GOLD key (PF1 on the numeric keypad).
  - Use initial capital letters if the key name is the first word in a table column or list item.

- You may use the name of keys labeled on the keyboard as either adjectives or nouns. For example:

  `Press the Help key to get help on the EVE editor.`

  `Press Return after you enter the INSTALL command.`

  Be consistent in your use.

- Be consistent in your use of boxed key symbols in examples, tables, text, and so on. Identify how the document refers to keys in the conventions section of the preface.

keys

- Use a lowercase italic n to refer to a generic number key; use a lowercase italic x to refer to a generic letter key.

  See also **n** and **x**.

- Use uppercase letters for user-defined keys. For example:

  ```
  Press the key you have defined as APPEND.
  ```

Numeric Keypad

- When referring to a numbered key on the numeric keypad, use the uppercase letters KP and the number of the key. For example:

  ```
  Press KP2 to issue the NEXT TOPIC command and
  KP5 to issue the BACK TOPIC command.
  ```

- When referring to a numeric keypad key that is labeled with a symbol, use the following:

  keypad comma   keypad minus   keypad period

Function Keys

- When referring to function keys, use the uppercase letter F and the appropriate number. For example:

  ```
  You can use the DEFINE/KEY command to define the F19 and
  F20 keys on your keyboard.
  ```

- For the programming function keys on the numeric keypad, use the uppercase letters PF and the appropriate number.

Multiple Keys

- When you want the user to press keys simultaneously, use a slash between the key names. For example:

  ```
  Ctrl/A      Ctrl/C      Ctrl/W
  ```

  In this case, the user holds down the Ctrl key while pressing another key.

- When you want the user to press keys in a sequence, use a space between the key names. For example:

  ```
  GOLD KP7
  PF1 KP5
  PF1 Ctrl/D
  GOLD ↑
  ```

- In code examples, use two boxed keys in a row when you want the user to press two keys sequentially. For example:

  PF1 W

See also **buttons and switches, enter, keyboards**, and **type**.

Latin expressions

Do not use Latin expressions in technical documentation. *Versus, vice versa, per*, and *via* are the only exceptions; they are commonly used in technical documentation. In general, substitute one of the corresponding English translations:

Latin Abbreviation	Latin Expression	English
ca.	circa	about, approximately
cf.	confer	compare
e.g.	exempli gratia	for instance, for example
et al.	et alia	and others
etc.	et cetera	and so forth, and so on
i.e.	id est	that is
viz.	videlicet	namely

lists

Lists help to clarify, emphasize, and organize information. A well-formatted list can improve the visual impact of a document and can enhance the user's comprehension. The content of a list can be procedural, as in a list of sequential tasks, or categorical, as in a list of parts or items.

This section gives guidelines for:

• Creating vertical lists

• Punctuating vertical lists

• Creating embedded lists

For information about internationalization considerations for sorting and aligning lists, see *Developing International User Information*.

Guidelines for Creating Vertical Lists

Use the following guidelines when creating vertical lists (display lists):

- Include a short introduction to each list to put the information in context.

- Capitalize the first letter of each list element unless the list elements must match portions of code or are case sensitive.

- Use parallel verb tenses and parallel grammatical constructions for all list items.

- Begin each list item with the same part of speech. For example, in a procedural list (a list of sequential tasks), begin each item with a verb.

  The exception is if the list item is qualified in some way. For example:

  ```
  Use the following guidelines for creating appendixes:

  o List the appendixes in the table of contents.

  o Refer to the appendixes in the preface.

  o For each appendix, provide an introductory paragraph.
  ```

- Use the same voice and punctuation for each list item.

- Where possible, make all list items similar in length.

- Avoid mixing complete and incomplete sentences in a list.

- In general, left-justify all list items. For nested lists (lists within lists), left-justify nested items on the appropriate indention.

- Do not continue an introductory sentence after a list.

- Do not connect list items with conjunctions, such as *and*, or commas.

  Use

  ```
  The system prints the following information:

  o Strings in the program

  o Pending I/O requests

  o The source program
  ```

  Do not use

  ```
  The system prints the following information:

  o Strings in the program,

  o Pending I/O requests, and

  o The source program
  ```

- Use a numbered list for a procedure or for elements that refer to numbered items in text. Using numbered lists is particularly important for task-oriented documentation, which helps the user accomplish tasks and procedures. For example:

  ```
  Use the following steps to install the software:

  1. Log in to the system manager's account.

  2. Invoke VMSINSTAL.

  3. Respond to the warning messages and the backup question.

  4. Mount the distribution media.

  5. Select the installation options.

  6. Check for successful execution of the IVP.
  ```

- Use an unnumbered list to show items of similar importance and items that do not follow a sequence. If you choose to set off the list items with special characters, use bullets first, then dashes, then asterisks. For example:

  ```
  o
  o
    -
    -
      *
      *
  ```

  For some lists, you may choose not to use any special character to set off the items. Restrict your use of this approach to lists having only one level.

- When appropriate, use a nested list (a list within a list) to break down a complex idea or procedure into its simpler, component parts.

- Indent nested list items according to the design and production method used in your publications group.

- Avoid using more than three nested levels in a list.

- For nested sequential lists, use numerals first, then letters, then numerals followed by a close parenthesis. For example:

  ```
  1.
  2.
  3.
    a.
    b.
    c.
      1)
      2)
      3)
  ```

If your text-formatting system cannot produce this style, use the following
format:

```
1.
2.
3.
   a.
   b.
   c.
      1.
      2.
      3.
```

- For lists that contain both nonsequential and sequential material, use
  bullets, dashes, and asterisks for nonsequential items; use numerals,
  letters, and numerals followed by a close parenthesis (if possible) for
  sequential items. This type of list may contain up to three levels. For
  example:

```
1.
   o
   o
2.
   a.
   b.
      1)
      2)
3.
   o
      a.
      b.
   o
```

Punctuating Vertical Lists

Use the following guidelines when punctuating vertical lists:

Colons:

- Use a colon after a sentence introducing a vertical list if the sentence
  contains *as follows* or *the following*, or the like. For example:

```
The price increase affects the following items:

o Nails

o Screws

o Hammers
```

- Use a colon if an introductory sentence or clause is incomplete without the items in the list. For example:

  ```
  To save an existing card file:

  1. Choose Save from the File menu.

  2. Delete any text in the text-entry field and enter this file's
     new name.

  3. Click on the OK button.
  ```

- Use a colon at the end of an introductory sentence if the list items are incomplete sentences. For example:

  ```
  Your system consists of three elements:

  o  A video screen

  o  A keyboard

  o  A printer
  ```

- If another sentence follows the sentence that introduces a list, do not put a colon after the second sentence. Follow that sentence with a period instead. For example:

  ```
  The following functional specifications define DNA protocols.
  All implementations of DECnet™ adhere to
  these protocols.

  o  DECnet DNA General Description

  o  Network Services Protocol Functional Specification

  o  Maintenance Operation Protocol Functional Specification

        .
        .
        .
  ```

Periods:

- Place a period after each list element if one of the elements contains one or more complete sentences. For example:

  ```
  Each of the examples does the following:

  o  Declares the parameters and the global symbol names.

  o  Checks the return status for the value LIB$_INPSTRTRU.  If this
     value is returned, you know that more than 30 characters were
     entered at the terminal and that the extra characters were removed.
  ```

- Do not use periods at the ends of list elements if each list element is a phrase or word. For example:

```
The system consists of the following parts:

o  Memory management option

o  Disk and controller

o  Double-density diskette and controller
```

- If possible, handle unusual combinations of phrases and sentences as follows:

```
Your system consists of two parts:

o  The monitor

   The monitor is similar to a television screen.  You see
   everything on the monitor that you type on the keyboard.

o  The keyboard

   The keyboard is similar to a typewriter keyboard; however, in
   addition to the usual numbers and letters, it has other keys
   that you can use to tell your system what to do.
```

In this example, where the explanation of each bulleted item falls in a separate paragraph from the list item, treat the list items as you would any other series of phrases; that is, do not use periods.

If, however, the descriptions immediately follow the phrases, then use a period. For example:

```
o  The monitor.  The monitor is similar to. . . .

o  The keyboard.  The keyboard is similar to. . . .
```

In this case, you can also use an em dash. For example:

```
o  The monitor -- The monitor is similar to a. . . .

o  The keyboard -- The keyboard is similar to a. . . .
```

Embedded Lists

Embedded lists are lists of items that are included in the body of the text in paragraph form.

In general, use vertical lists rather than embedded lists because they are easier to read. The following example shows an embedded list that is hard to read

because the entries are long:

```
Translation of the name argument proceeds in the following
manner:  (1) CEF$ is prefixed to the current name string and the
result is subjective logical name translation.  (2) If the result
is a logical name, step 1 is repeated until translation does not
succeed or until the number of translations performed exceeds the
number specified by the SYSGEN parameter LNM$C_MAXDEPTH.  (3) The
CEF$ prefix is stripped from the current name string that could not be
translated.  This current string is the cluster-name.
```

Compare the same information presented as a vertical list. Note that the list has greater visual impact in this format.

```
Translation of the name argument proceeds in the following
manner:
```

1. CEF$ is prefixed to the current name string and the result is
   subjective logical name translation.

2. If the result is a logical name, step 1 is repeated until
   translation does not succeed or until the number of
   translations performed exceeds the number specified by the SYSGEN
   parameter LNM$C_MAXDEPTH.

3. The CEF$ prefix is stripped from the current name string that
   could not be translated. This current string is the
   cluster-name.

If you must embed a list within a paragraph, use the following guidelines:

- Restrict the use of embedded lists to lists that contain only a few short items. For example:

  ```
  SORT arranges files by the following processes:  record, tag,
  address, and indexed.
  ```

- Capitalize the first word of the list only if the accepted rule for capitalization applies. (See **capitalization**.)

- Enumerate list items by enclosing numerals or lowercase letters in parentheses. Do not place a period after either the numeral or the close parenthesis. For example:

  ```
  If you encounter a problem with the hardware, you can (a) try to
  fix it yourself, (b) call your Digital Customer Service
  representative, or (c) order a new unit.
  ```

- Separate list items with commas, semicolons, or periods according to accepted rules for punctuating a series of words, phrases, or clauses.´

- Do not use special characters to set off list items in running text. In the following example, the preferred method is to use a simple two-column

table:

Use

The debugger provides the following predefined displays by default:

§ A source display named "SRC"
† An output display named "OUT"
‡ A prompt display named "PROMPT"

　·
　·
　·

Do not use

The debugger provides the following predefined displays by default:
§ a source display named "SRC"; † an output display named "OUT";
‡ a prompt display named "PROMPT"; . . .

See also **procedures**.

---

measurement, units of

A unit of measurement is a precisely defined quantity, such as a length, weight, volume, or capacity; it can also be a quantity that has a precise meaning within a specific environment. For example, the term *bit* has a precise meaning in computer terminology although its meaning is imprecise in general usage. Spell out the words *inch*, *inches*, *foot*, and *feet* in text. In tables, examples, figures, and footnotes, you can use the abbreviations *in* and *ft*. Do not use the symbols for inches (") or feet (').

Units of measurement that are frequently used in technical manuals include the following:

bit	block	byte
degree	digit	hour
longword	minute	nanosecond
pound	quadword	record
second	volt	watt
week	year	

For example:

The installation procedure takes approximately 15 minutes.
Set the impedance switch to 75 ohms.
The file takes up 30 blocks.
The last 2 bits are reserved.

This section gives the following information:

- General guidelines for units of measurement
- Guidelines for referring to temperatures

General Guidelines

Use the following general guidelines when using units of measurement:

- Use numbers as numerals with units of measurement and time. For example:

  ```
  2 bits      3 hours      5 millimeters
  ```

- In most cases, insert a space between a number and an abbreviation. For example:

  ```
  35 mm     6 kHz      6 ft      5 K (temperature)
  ```

  However, if *K* (*kilo-*), *M* (*mega-*), or *G* (*giga-*) represents a binary multiplier (2^{10}, 2^{20}, or 2^{30}), place the abbreviation with the number. For example:

  ```
  A 256K byte memory module
  ```

  ```
  A 4M bit memory chip
  ```

  If *k*, *M*, or *G* represents a metric multiplier, place the abbreviation with the unit of measurement. For example:

  ```
  A 300 kB disk drive (300 000 bytes)
  ```

  ```
  A 10 Mb/s Ethernet (10 million bits)
  ```

- Do not insert a space between a number and a symbol. For example:

  ```
  85%
  75°F
  ```

- When a compound composed of a number and a unit of measurement modifies an adjective or noun, it is called a *unit modifier*. Hyphenate unit modifiers. For example:

  ```
  a 1- to 6-block limit
  a 9-volt charge
  a 3-minute wait
  ```

- Software manuals often use measurements concerning bits, bytes, lines, records, and blocks. Hardware manuals, installation guides, and site setup guides often give information on the height, length, width, and weight of products. Provide these measurements in metric units and unit symbols.

When specifying product requirements:

— Use the metric units first, followed by the U.S. equivalent in parentheses. For example:

```
Binding Method                                Recommended Gutter

Unbound books inserted into vinyl binders     19.1 mm (3/4 inch)

Bound books that will not be drilled for      15.9 mm (5/8 inch)
insertion onto the rings in vinyl binders
```

— Include comments in the source file indicating to the translators which units of measurement are used. If the document is localized, the translator knows which units of measurement were used. For example:

```
<comment>
TRANSLATOR: This document uses metric measurements followed by the U.S.
equivalent in parentheses.
<endcomment>

<p>
Set the density of the tape to 63 rows/mm (1600 bits/in).
```

— Make sure that the precision of a converted measurement reflects the precision of the original measurement. For example:

```
The data is from a body scan that is 3.05 meters (10.00 feet).
```

— In manuals that discuss magnetic tape, include both metric and American measurements. The following table shows equivalent metric and American measurements:

American	Metric
1/8 in	12.7 mm
200 bits/in	8.0 rows/mm
800 bits/in	32.0 rows/mm
1600 bits/in	63.0 rows/mm
6250 bits/in	246.0 rows/mm

Temperature References

Use the following guidelines when referring to temperatures:

• In user information, use the temperature scale (for example, celsius, fahrenheit, or kelvin) used in the technical specification for the product. If the specification does not clearly state which Digital or industry standards it is following, ask the engineering project leader for that information.

Make sure that temperature references can be changed easily. For example, during localization, a country may need to change temperatures in degrees fahrenheit to degrees celsius because of local laws. To make such a change easier, isolate the physical descriptions, including the temperature references, into a single section of the information. If that is not possible, provide comments in the source file indicating to the translators where the temperature references occur and the purpose of each example.

- Use *K* as the abbreviation for kelvin.

- Use the term *degrees celsius* instead of *degrees centigrade*.

See also **abbreviations and acronyms** and **numbers**.

media and medium

Use *media* for both singular and plural forms with the singular verb form. For example:

```
If your media consists of only one volume, mount that volume and
proceed to step 2.
```

```
If your media consists of two or more volumes, mount those volumes
and proceed to step 3.
```

```
The media is packaged in protective material.
```

menus

Use the following guidelines when discussing menus:

- Use the verb *choose* rather than *select* when picking an operation from a menu.

- Use initial capital letters for the name of a menu; the term *menu* is all lowercase.

---

modifiers

Use the following guidelines for modifiers:

- Place modifiers carefully; their position affects the meaning of a sentence. For example:

  ```
  The program only reads the SYSTAT file.
  The program reads only the SYSTAT file.
  ```

  The first sentence implies that the program reads the SYSTAT file but does not process it. The second sentence implies that the program reads the SYSTAT file and no other file.

- Make sure that a phrase or clause is not a dangling modifier.

  Use

  ```
  To indicate that a statement is to be continued, end the line by pressing
  the F13 instead of Return.

  To continue a statement, end the line. . . .
  ```

  These sentences make it clear that the user, not the line, is the subject of the verb *indicate*.

  Do not use

  ```
  To indicate that a statement is to be continued, the line
  is terminated with F13 instead of Return.
  ```

  In this faulty sentence, the line seems to be the actor indicating that the statement is to be continued.

- Avoid unnecessary or indefinite modifiers. For example, you can usually omit the following modifiers without loss of meaning:

actively	actual	appropriate
associated	currently	existing
fairly	much	properly
quite	rather	several
simply	suitable	very

- Do not use long strings of modifiers. For example:

Use	Do not use
Entry point descriptions for system services	System service entry point descriptions
Structure definitions for entries in an access control list	Access control list entry structure definitions
The AFC11 analog-to-digital converter provides the following features:	The AFC11 is a flexible, high-performance, multichannel analog-to-digital converter...
Multichannel capability. With AFC11, you can. . . .	
High performance. The AFC11 increases the. . . .	
Flexibility. You can use the AFC11 in several. . . .	

In the original version of this example, the modifiers *flexible* and *high-performance* are too abstract to enhance the user's knowledge. The revision not only eliminates the string of modifiers but also clarifies the information.

See also **that and which**.

money

Monetary values are country specific. Use the following guidelines when discussing monetary values:

- Avoid reference to monetary values of products or services in user documents.

- If you use monetary values in examples, include a comment in the source file indicating the purpose of the example. If the document is localized, the translator can design an appropriate example using local currency symbols

money

or values. For example:

```
<COMMENT>
TRANSLATOR:  This use of the pound sign is necessary to
show the function of the SET CURRENCY SIGN statement.
Change the pound sign to the local currency symbol.
<ENDCOMMENT>
<CODE_EXAMPLE>
SQL> !
SQL> ! The SET CURRENCY SIGN statement specifies the
SQL> ! currency indicator to be displayed in output. This
SQL> ! example changes the indicator to the British pound sign, £:
SQL> !
SQL> SET CURRENCY SIGN "£"
SQL> SELECT SALARY_AMOUNT FROM SALARY_HISTORY;
 SALARY_AMOUNT
       £26291.00
       £51712.00
       £26291.00
          .
          .
          .

<ENDCODE_EXAMPLE>
```

mouse

Mouse is acceptable as a generic name for a pointing device if you do not need to distinguish between the different types of pointing devices and if *mouse* is defined in the conventions section of your manual.

See also **pointing devices**.

n

Use a lowercase italic *n* to refer to a generic number or numeric variable.

```
For example, 19nn indicates a 4-digit number in which
the last 2 digits are unknown.
```

```
At the menu prompt, enter a choice from 1 to n, where
n is the highest number you can enter, depending on the
menu you are using.
```

If a variable can be either numeric or alphabetic, use *x*. For example:

```
Enter the apartment number: xxxxx
```

The user may then enter values such as *611E* or *8–4*.

See also *x*.

---

numbers

This section gives guidelines on the following topics:

- Decimal fractions
- Fractions
- Generic numbers
- Numbers written as numerals
- Numbers written as words
- Plurals of numbers
- Punctuating numbers
- Ranges of numbers
- Radix indicators
- Exponents

Decimal Fractions

Use the following guidelines for decimal fractions:

- Place a zero before decimal fractions of less than 1. For example:

  ```
  0.25
  ```

- Align columns of decimal fractions on the decimal point. Right-justify all other columns of numbers. For example:

  ```
  Units Sold     Unit Price
     500           $0.50
      27           $4.75
       1           $0.33
  ```

- The precision of numbers (the number of significant digits) depends on the requirements of the specification and the precision of the measurement tool. For example, the following measurements both equal one-half inch, but the increasing precision is significant:

  ```
  0.5     inch plywood
  0.500   inch steel plate
  ```

Check with your technical sources about the accuracy of measurements; questions about precision rarely arise in software or hardware information, but they occur often in mechanical drawings.

Where feasible without affecting the accuracy of the measurements, maintain consistency in decimal precision in lists, figures, and drawings. Add one or more trailing zeros, if necessary, to achieve consistency. For example:

Use

```
0.100
0.343
0.750
```

Do not use

```
.1
.343
.75
```

Fractions

Use the following guidelines when writing fractions:

- Hyphenate a fraction used as a word. For example:

  ```
  three-fourths
  one and one-half
  one-third
  ```

- Write a fraction as a numeral when it is used with an integer. Do not use a hyphen between the integer and the fraction. For example:

  ```
  1½
  ```

  If your system cannot create a typeset fraction (such as), use a space to separate the fraction from the integer. For example:

  ```
  3 1/4
  ```

- Write a fraction as a numeral when it is part of a unit modifier. For example:

  ```
  1/2-inch margins
  ```

- Write a fraction as a numeral when it is in a series of numbers. For example:

  ```
  1, 7, 3/4, 8
  ```

Generic Numbers

Use a lowercase italic *n* to refer to a generic number. For example, 19*nn* indicates a 4-digit number in which the last 2 digits are unknown.

However, if a variable may be either alphabetic or numeric, use a lowercase italic *x*. For example:

```
Enter the apartment number: xxxxx
```

The user may then enter values such as *611E* or *8–4*.

Numbers Written as Numerals

Use numbers as numerals in text in the following cases:

- If the number is 10 or more and does not begin a sentence. For example:

  ```
  This system supports 10 peripheral devices.
  This program reports 15 system errors.
  Twenty-four committees are working on that problem.
  ```

- In a group of two or more numbers within a sentence when at least one of the numbers is 10 or more. For example:

  ```
  3 nodes, 7 directories, 15 files
  ```

- With units of measurement and time. For example:

  ```
  2 bits          7 blocks        4 bytes
  5 degrees       5 digits        3 hours
  1 longword      2 minutes       9 nanoseconds
  7 pounds        4 quadwords     5 records
  8 seconds       9 volts         2 watts
  3 weeks         5 years
  ```

- For memory descriptions. For example:

  ```
  1 gigabyte = 1 GB
  A 256K byte memory module
  ```

- For a decimal fraction, even if it is less than 10. For example:

  ```
  5.5%
  ```

- For a number that represents a value. For example:

  ```
  The value of K changes. . . . Therefore, if K is 4, after the next
  iteration, K is 8.
  ```

- For a number containing a fraction. For example:

  ```
  3½ days
  ```

numbers

- To identify objects by number. For example:

  ```
  bits 0 and 1      Chapter 4
  column 1          Section 3.2.2
  loop 4            line 9
  register 1        page 3
  a value of 0      steps 3 and 4
  ```

- In a unit modifier, that is, a compound formed of a number and a unit of measurement that together modify an adjective or a noun. For example:

  ```
  3-millimeter margin
  8-bit setting
  ```

- If the number precedes an abbreviation or symbol. For example:

  ```
  8%
  9°F
  2 kg
  ```

Numbers Written as Words

Use numbers as words in the following cases:

- If the number is the first element of a sentence or heading. For example:

  ```
  Twelve terminals can operate at the same time.
  Twenty-four committees are working on that problem.
  Thirty commands and 14 qualifiers were listed.
  ```

- If the number is less than 100 and precedes a unit modifier that contains a number written as a numeral. For example:

  ```
  Three longwords contain twelve 8-bit bytes.
  ```

  But:

  ```
  A block contains 512 8-bit bytes.
  ```

- If the number is used in expressions of complement. For example:

  ```
  The program calculates the two's complement of the number.
  ```

- If the number is zero, unless the information is in a table, you are giving a range of numbers, or you are giving a specific value. For example:

  ```
  If the number begins with zero, add a decimal point.
  ```

  But:

  ```
  Supply a 0 as the third argument.
  The name can be from 0 to 4 quadwords long.
  ```

- The number is an ordinal number, such as *first*, *second*, or *third*.

Plurals of Numbers

Form the plural of a number written as a numeral by adding a lowercase *s*. For example:

```
4s      10s      1920s      10 000s
```

Punctuating Numbers

Use the following guidelines when punctuating numbers:

- Use spaces in whole decimal numbers that contain 5 or more digits. For example:

  ```
  9000      10 000      1 253 000
  ```

  Identify the use of the space in the documentation conventions section of the preface.

- Use spaces in decimal fractions that contain 5 or more digits after the decimal point indicator. For example:

  ```
  0.0456      0.045 632
  ```

  Identify the use of the space in the conventions section of the preface.

- The symbol for a decimal point varies from country to country. A common European practice is to use a comma, while a period is the appropriate symbol in the United States.

  Use the symbol prevalent in your country, explain its use in the documentation conventions section of the preface, and include a comment in the source files letting the translators know what symbol is used in the document.

- Punctuate serial numbers and order numbers as defined by the owner of the number, for example, *ISBN 1–55558–022–X*.

- Do not use spaces in binary, octal, hexadecimal, or 4-digit decimal numbers. For example:

  ```
  0001111010101110
  4000
  ```

- Hyphenate unit modifiers. For example:

  ```
  a 1- to 6-block limit
  a 9-volt charge
  a 3-minute wait
  ```

- Hyphenate a fraction written as a word. For example:

  ```
  three-fourths
  ```

numbers

- In most cases, insert a space between a number and an abbreviation. For example:

  `35 mm     6 kHz     6 ft     5 K (temperature)`

  However, see **measurement, units of** for the rules for binary and metric multipliers.

- Do not leave a space between a number and a symbol. For example:

Degrees celsius	`20°C`
Degrees fahrenheit	`85°F`
Degrees, minutes, and seconds of an angle	`57°13'44.8"`
Percent	`9%`

  See Part III for more information on symbols. See also **telephone numbers**.

Ranges of Numbers

Use the following guidelines when handling numbers that span a range:

- Use *to* in discussing ranges of numbers. For example:

  `one to three characters`
  `three to eight files`

- In tables and figures, use an en dash (if your system can) to indicate a range of numbers, such as *ASCII range 161–254*. Do not put spaces around the en dash.

- In a series of three or more items, place the abbreviation or symbol for a unit of measurement at the end of the series. For example:

  `1200, 1400, or 1600 MHz`

- In a series of only two items, repeat the abbreviation or symbol for a unit of measurement. For example:

  `3°C to 5°C`
  `10% to 50%`

- Use full years in ranges.

  Use

  `1980 to 1989`

  Do not use

  `1980-89`
  `1980 to 89`

- Use the word *to*, instead of an en dash, when the range is preceded by the word *from*.

  Use

  ```
  He attended college from 1966 to 1979.
  ```

  Do not use

  ```
  He attended college from 1966-1979.
  ```

Radix Indicators

Use the following guidelines for radix indicators:

- Indicate the radix of a number expressed as a numeral by subscript ($_2$, $_8$, $_{10}$, or $_{16}$) if your production system can, for example, 23_{10}.

- If your system cannot produce subscripts, write the radix either as a word enclosed in parentheses or as a numeral enclosed in parentheses, with no space between the numeral and the parenthesis. For example:

  ```
  23(decimal)
  23(10)
  ```

  Describe the convention you use in the documentation conventions section of the preface.

- If the radix is already in parentheses, separate the number and its radix with a space. For example:

  ```
  63 (77 octal) task numbers
  ```

- If the radix of a number is part of a unit modifier, hyphenate it as either *number(radix)-* or *number*$_{\text{radix}}$-. For example:

  ```
  30(decimal)-byte buffer       3010-byte buffer
  ```

- Do not use a decimal point as a radix indicator in text.

Exponents

Use the following guidelines for indicating mathematical exponents:

- Indicate the exponent or power of a number expressed as a numeral by a superscript if your production system can, for example, 23^{10}.

- If your system cannot produce superscripts, use either a circumflex or an uppercase E before the exponent. For example:

  ```
  2^10       2E10
  ```

  Describe the convention you use in the documentation conventions section of the preface.

See also **measurement, units of.**

options

Use the following guidelines for ULTRIX options:

- Most options start with a minus sign. Use an en dash (–) for the minus sign. Do not refer to this character as a *hyphen*.

- Do not start a sentence or a title with an option.

  Use

  The -z option lets you specify the page length.

  Do not use

  -z lets you specify the page length.

However, for multiplatform documentation, be aware that some of your platforms may be case sensitive but others are not. In defining conventions to be used across all platforms, you may decide, for example, to use lowercase for options unless uppercase or mixed case is a command requirement. In addition, the term *option* may be platform specific, and you may decide to use a more generic term, such as *switch*.

See also **commands** and **qualifiers**.

order numbers

Use the following guidelines with order numbers:

- Do not include document order numbers in the preface or the body of a manual. Instead, include order numbers in a separate document or reference card or in an appendix (so that the numbers can be changed easily for other countries). You can also advise the user to contact a sales representative for information.

- Use en dashes to separate the parts of a Digital order number, as in *AA–HG42B–TE*. When using the order numbers of other companies, follow the practice of those companies.

See also **part numbers**.

paging

There are two types of paging methods:

- Chapter-oriented paging

  Chapter-oriented paging uses a pair of numbers or letters to indicate sequential paging within a chapter or appendix rather than within a document as a whole. The first element of the pair represents the chapter or appendix, and the second element of the pair represents the page number within the chapter or appendix. For example:

Page 3–4	The fourth page in Chapter 3
Page A–2	The second page in Appendix A
Page CD–9	The ninth page in the command dictionary section, designated CD

  Most Digital technical information uses chapter-oriented paging.

- Sequential paging

  Sequential paging uses consecutive numbering (1 to 125, for example) throughout a document.

The type of paging you use is largely a matter of *house style*. Much technical information within Digital uses chapter-oriented paging to ease updating. In addition, in material that is not read from cover to cover, chapter-oriented paging may help orient users to their location. Within Digital, sequential paging is often used for short documents and marketing material.

Whether a document uses chapter-oriented or sequential paging, paginate the front matter separately using lowercase roman numerals. (The front matter is any material before the body text, such as the half-title page, title page, copyright page, table of contents, foreword, and preface.)

See also **appendixes**, **glossary**, and **index**.

---

parentheses

Use the following guidelines for parentheses:

- Use parentheses to enclose material that gives additional, detachable information. For example:

  ```
  Begin a symbol name with a letter (a to z), an underscore, or
  a dollar sign. Your personal name can be any string with up to 63
  characters (including spaces).
  ```

- Enclose ending punctuation within parentheses if the punctuation pertains to the parenthetical statement. Do not enclose it if it does not pertain to the parenthetical statement. For example:

  ```
  (For details on loading a database, see the VAX DBMS™ Database
  Load/Unload Guide.)
  ```

  ```
  The subprograms do not require use of the terminal on the lower
  portion of the module (called the event terminal).
  ```

- For parenthetical statements that are short sentences, you can omit ending punctuation if they are enclosed in a longer sentence. For example:

  ```
  The linker does not process the contents of input files (this
  includes program sections) until pass 1.
  ```

See also **braces ({ })** and **brackets ([ ])**.

---

part numbers

Sometimes the term *part number* refers to an internal inventory number for an item that is part of a kit. A customer cannot order the individual item, only the kit.

In contrast, an *order number* always refers to a number that a customer can use to order the individual item.

See also **order numbers**.

part pages

A document may contain logical divisions, or parts, that are larger than individual chapters or appendixes. The chapters or appendixes within a part contain related information. For example, a management guide that addresses concepts and procedures may group certain chapters into a part called Concepts and other chapters into a part called Procedures. However, do not use only one part within a document. If there is no further logical division of material, parts are unnecessary.

Each part begins with a part page. Use the following guidelines for the placement and format of part pages:

- A part page is a right-hand page placed before the first chapter within the part.

- Use sequential numbers for each part within the document (Part 1, Part 2 or Part I, Part II, and so on). Your text-formatting system may control whether the part numbers use arabic or roman numerals.

- Select a title for each part that describes the topic common to the information within the part. For example:

  ```
  Part I    Getting Started
  Part II   Setting Up a Database
  Part III  Data Retrieval and Maintenance
     .
     .
     .
  ```

- The part page may also contain text that summarizes the material contained in the part or a table of contents for the part. Part pages sometimes contain information road maps that show users how the information in the part relates to other information.

- The reverse side of a part page is often blank but may contain a continuation of the contents from the part page or an information road map.

- Part pages and their reverse pages do not have printed page numbers. In documents with chapter-oriented paging, part pages are not counted in the page numbering at all because each chapter or appendix begins with page 1. In documents with sequential numbering, the part page and its reverse

part pages

are counted in paging but their numbers are not printed. For example:

Page	Position
52	Last page in Part II.
53	Part page for Part III. The page number is not printed.
54	Reverse of part page. The page number is not printed.
55	First page of text in Part III.

- List the parts in the table of contents but without page numbers. For example:

patents

A patent grants to the owner the right to make, use, or sell products for a determined length of time. A patent may apply in one country or many countries. Patent information and regulations vary by country.

periods

The rules for using periods are discussed in other sections. See the following topics for specific information:

- **abbreviations and acronyms**
- **chapter and section titles**
- **file specifications**
- **lists**

- **numbers**
- **parentheses**
- **quotation marks**

---

plurals

Consult Part III as your first guide for correct plurals. For the preferred spelling of singular and plural forms of common words, consult *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*. Otherwise, use the following guidelines:

- Generally, form the plurals of single and multiple letters, numerals, or acronyms by adding a lowercase *s*. For example:

```
ACLs      OEMs
4s        PCs
1920s     REIs
```

  The exception is the use of lowercase letters as nouns. In such cases, form the plural with an apostrophe and a lowercase *s*. For example:

```
a's    s's    x's    y's
```

- A symbol has no plural form. To refer to the plural form of a symbol, use the name of the symbol.

  Use

```
Enter three slashes (///).
```

  Do not use

```
Enter three /'s.
```

- Singular and plural abbreviations of units of measurement are identical. For example:

```
1 lb       10 lb
1 h        20 h
1 km        4 km
```

- Do not enclose an *s* in parentheses (*(s)*) to form plurals. It is understood that the plural form of a noun (such as *files*) includes the singular form (*file*). For example:

  Use

```
When you modify files, do not specify a version number for the output file.
```

plurals

Do not use

```
Select the file(s) that you want the command to act on.
```

If it is necessary to stress, for example, that an operation can be performed on both one file and more than one file, use the phrase *file or files*.

- Some nouns from foreign languages (especially Latin expressions) have two acceptable plural forms: the original plural and a plural formed after English usage. In such cases, use the following forms:

Singular	Preferred Plural
antenna	antennas
apparatus	apparatuses
appendix	appendixes
automaton	automatons
criterion	criteria
curriculum	curricula
formula	formulas
index	indexes (part of a document)
index	indices (signs in algebra)
matrix	matrixes (general use)
matrix	matrices (mathematics)
memorandum	memoranda
prospectus	prospectuses

It is common in technical writing to use *data* with a singular verb form and not to use the term *datum* at all. This practice has wide acceptance. For example:

```
The data is transferred along parallel lines.
```

For most documentation, it is also acceptable to use *media* as both the singular and the plural form with the singular verb form.

```
The media is shipped separately from the documentation.
```

pointing devices

Use the following guidelines when you refer to a pointing device. (For more information, see Part III.)
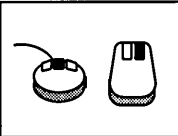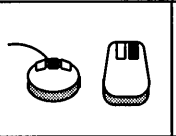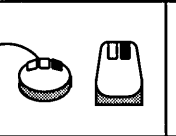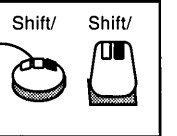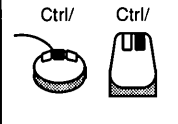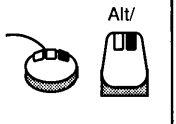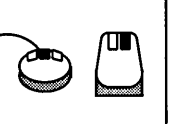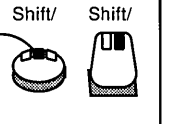
- Use MB1, MB2, and MB3 when you refer to the mouse buttons.

- Use PB1, PB2, PB3, and PB4 when you refer to the puck buttons.

- Use SB1 and SB2 when you refer to the stylus buttons.

- You can use the term *mouse* to refer to any pointing device, such as a mouse, a puck, or a stylus; however, if you use *mouse* as a generic term, you must define the usage in the conventions. For information about appropriate wording for this convention, see **conventions table**.

- Different platforms may define different pointing device buttons for the same action. In multiplatform documentation, you may want to rename the pointing device buttons to focus on actions rather than refer to specific button names (MB1, PB2, and so on). Define the actions in the preface, the appropriate chapter, or even on a reference card. As Table 2 and Figure 8 show, using graphics or a table presents the information clearly.

Table 2 Multiplatform Pointing Device Conventions in Tabular Form

Function	Platform A	All Other Platforms
Move selected objects	MB1	MB1
Duplicate selected objects	MB2	Ctrl/MB2
Stretch and resize selected objects	MB3	MB2
Display pop-up menus	MB2	MB3

pointing devices

Figure 8 Multiplatform Pointing Device Conventions in Graphic Form

	Duplicate	Display Pop–Up	Resize	Proportional Resize
Platform A	(mouse) (mouse)	(mouse) (mouse)	(mouse) (mouse)	Shift/ Shift/ (mouse) (mouse)
All Other Platforms	Ctrl/ Ctrl/ (mouse) (mouse)	Alt/ (mouse) (mouse)	(mouse) (mouse)	Shift/ Shift/ (mouse) (mouse)

- Refer to buttons on a pointing device as *mouse buttons, puck buttons, stylus buttons,* or *pointing device buttons* (or MB1, PB1, and so forth). To avoid confusion between pointing device buttons and buttons as on-screen controls, never refer to pointing device buttons as just *buttons.* If it does not matter what pointing device is used, current documentation uses *mouse button* as the generic term.

- Always refer to a button on the screen as a *button* or *push button,* not a *screen button.* For example:

  `Use your mouse to click on any push button.`

  If you are specifying a particular button, use the full button name. For example:

  `Click on the OK button.`

  You can use the name of particular buttons as either adjectives or nouns. For example:

  `Click on the OK button.`

  `Click on OK.`

  Be consistent in your use.

- Use the verbs *click on, double click on, drag, press, press and hold,* and *release* when referring to the use of buttons on a pointing device.

For example:

```
To move from one Calendar display to another, double click on the
appropriate item in the current display.
```

```
Click on the OK button.
```

- Use the verbs *grab*, *down click*, and *up click* in programming documentation only. For example:

```
GRAB POINTER grabs control of the pointer when the conditions
specified in the routine have been met and a pointer input event is
generated.
```

- Use the verb *choose* to mean picking an operation by clicking on a control, menu name, or menu item. For example:

```
Choose Save from the File menu.
```

Use *choose* for active objects.

- Use the verb *select* to designate information, either text or graphics, that will be the object of a subsequent operation or operations. For example:

```
Select the text that you want to copy from file A to file B.
```

Use *select* with files, text, and graphic objects.

- Use the verb *click on* when you refer to controls on the screen. For example:

```
Click on the help icon.
```

See also **click and click on**, **double click**, **drag**, **press**, and **press and hold**.

---

possessives

Use the following guidelines for forming possessives:

- In general, form the possessive of singular nouns by adding an apostrophe and *s*. Form the possessive of plural nouns by adding an apostrophe. For example:

```
   Singular                     Plural
disk  ===>   disk's      disks   ===>   disks'
```

- Ease of pronunciation determines exceptions to the general rule for the use of *'s*. If a singular noun ends in an *es* or *ez* sound, the spelling of the possessive depends on whether the syllable added by *'s* makes the word

possessives

awkward to pronounce. For example:

```
database's structure    conscience' sake
Jones's files           Ramses' tomb
```

The exceptions occur most often with proper names. For example, most sources note the following two special forms:

```
Jesus' commandments    Moses' laws
```

In addition, singular names ending with the sound *eez* use only an apostrophe to form the possessive, as in *Aristophanes' plays*.

If you are not sure about the form to use, revise the sentence. For example:

```
Hopkins' (Hopkins's?) poetry    ===>    The poetry of Hopkins

Hopkins' (Hopkins's?) memo      ===>    The memo written by Hopkins
```

preface

For most documents, the first important text division after the table of contents is the preface. The preface summarizes the purpose, organization, content, and approach of the manual. The preface also advises the user on how to use the manual. Although this text element is usually called *Preface*, the title can vary, depending on the needs of the document.

The purpose of a preface differs from that of an introduction. An introduction gives the user information that is essential to understanding the subject of the manual. It is often a separate chapter in the document. Some short documents, such as release notes and master indexes, may not need a preface or an introduction.

Depending on the purpose and complexity of the document, the preface may contain some or all of the following topics. The order of the topics and the topic headings may vary, depending on the document's needs and on group guidelines.

- Document description

  A brief (often no more than a sentence or two), general statement of the content of the manual. The document description always comes first in the preface and, therefore, receives no section heading.

- Purpose of the document

  The purpose section briefly states the overall goals of the manual (for example, to teach or instruct, to describe or explain, or to introduce). It may also indicate specific tasks or procedures that the user can perform

using the information in the manual, such as writing a program, designing a system, maintaining files, or operating a terminal.

- Audience description

  The audience description describes the audience for whom the document is written. This section may mention technical knowledge (such as training in a specific programming language) or technical experience (such as familiarity with a particular operating system or device) that the user should have to use the manual effectively. It may also define the level of expertise or the primary professional responsibilities that the user should have, such as managing the system, creating application programs, and so on.

- Structure of the manual

  The structure section lists and briefly describes the text divisions — parts, chapters, and appendixes — of the manual. The documentation team should discuss how to organize and express the content of this section.

- Additional reading

  The additional reading section lists and describes documents that may help the user understand and use the manual (and, therefore, the product it describes) more effectively.

  It may be useful to make finer distinctions for this topic. For example, you may make separate sections for Associated Documents, which pertain directly to the topic and may even be part of the manual's documentation set, and for Related Documents, to which the user can turn for supplemental information.

  Be sure to point out any documents that contain information that the user must read before using the manual.

- Changes to the product

  The changes section briefly describes the ways in which this version of the product is different from the previous version, including differences in the product documentation. This section is not meant to be an exhaustive list, but it may include, for example, the five most important new features. Depending on the complexity of the product, this section may be a separate section in the front matter, at the same level as the Preface. For some large and complex products, a separate New Features manual may be appropriate.

- Special instructions

  Special instructions highlight particular ways of using or finding information in the manual. For example, this section may refer certain groups of users to particular parts of the manual that would be especially valuable for them. Alternatively, it may instruct the user on the best way to find specific information quickly, based on the structure and organization of the manual. This section may also suggest a sequence in which to read parts, chapters, or sections that could enhance the user's understanding of the material.

  Some documents include an information road map that uses illustrations to orient the user, to suggest a useful information path, and to point to specific information. A map can refer to the parts of a single document or to a set of information, including the online help and online tutorials. If such a graphic representation is useful, the team should discuss its placement in the document. For example, the team may decide to repeat the map on part pages. For further information on this option, see also **part pages.**

- Documentation conventions

  The conventions section lists and explains terms, symbols, and fonts used in a document to indicate certain actions, emphasis, repetition, or omission.

  For more information about conventions, see also **conventions table.**

Placement and Format

The preface begins on a right-hand page, immediately following the table of contents. Use lowercase roman numerals to number the preface pages.

prepositions

It is perfectly acceptable to end a sentence with a preposition. Remember Winston Churchill's classic example of what can otherwise occur:

`That is the sort of English up with which I will not put.`

However, avoid the following awkward uses:

- Unnecessary prepositions. For example:

  `Where is the room at?`

- Double prepositions. For example:

  `Y, on which the value of X depends on, cannot be null.`

See also **as** and **capitalization.**

press

The term *press* means to push down a mouse button or a key. Always use *press* when referring to keys or mouse buttons. Do not use the verbs *strike, punch, depress,* or *hit.*

See also **choose and select, enter** and **type**.

press and hold

The term *press and hold* means to push down a mouse button and keep it down while moving the mouse.

previous and following

Do not use *above* and *below, earlier, preceding,* or *later* as pointers to information in text. Where possible, use specific cross-references, as in *See Table 3–1.* If you cannot make specific cross-references, use *previous* and *following.*

procedures

Use the following guidelines when documenting procedures:

- Use lists for procedures with multiple steps. Introduce the list with a short phrase, and begin each step in the procedure with a verb. For example:

  To save an existing card file:

  1. Choose Save from the File menu.

  2. Delete any text in the text-entry field, and enter the file's new name.

  3. Press Return or click on the OK button.

procedures

- Separate information about the results or implications of a procedure from the individual steps. For example:

  ```
  To move a window:
  ```

  ```
  1. Place the pointer on the DECterm title bar.
  ```

  ```
     You can place the pointer anywhere except on a button.
  ```

  ```
  2. Press and hold MB1.
  ```

  ```
     A dotted outline of the window appears on the screen.
     If you move the mouse, the dotted line moves accordingly.
  ```

  ```
  3. Drag the dotted line to a new location and release MB1.
  ```

  ```
     The window is now in its new position.
  ```

- Use a paragraph for single-step procedures. For example:

  ```
  To cancel the search operation, click on the Dismiss button.
  ```

  ```
  To cancel a move operation while you are dragging the
  dotted line outline, click any other mouse button
  before releasing MB1.
  ```

- Whenever possible, place instructions for canceling an operation immediately after the instructions for accomplishing the operation.

- When you refer to starting an application or a product, use the term for the specific operation the user must perform (*run, invoke, click on*). For example:

  ```
  To copy information from the Notepad to the Terminal Emulator:
  ```

  ```
  1. Click on the Notepad icon.
  ```

  ```
  2. Select the information you want to copy to the
     Terminal Emulator.
        .
        .
        .
  ```

  In other words, if the procedure is using the Notepad for the first time, use *run* or *invoke*. If the user must expand on an icon, use *click on*.

- You may also use a more graphic way of telling users to perform multiple actions, particularly making choices from menus or submenus.

For example:

```
To delete redlined text:

1. Select the portion of the document from which you want to
   delete the redlined text.

   If there is no select region, DECwrite™ removes all redlined
   text.

2. Choose Edit --> Revision Control --> Delete All Redlined Text.
```

Identify the use of the character in the documentation conventions section of the preface.

See also **click and click on**, **enter**, and **lists**.

---

product names

Use only announced product names in documentation. Do not mention unannounced products; do not use internal code names for products.

If you are uncertain about the correct form of a product name, ask the product manager or your legal representative about correct usage.

See also **trademarks and service marks**.

---

prompts

Use the following guidelines when referring to prompts:

- Use an article when you refer to a prompt. For example:

  ```
  The CON> prompt indicates that. . . .

  Enter NO at the asterisk (*) prompt.
  ```

- Some systems have user-definable prompts. For example, the system may use a dollar sign ($) as the default prompt, but users can change the system prompt to whatever they want. In these cases, define in the documentation conventions the symbol to be used for the system prompt in text and examples. In text, try to refer to *the system prompt* rather than the specific symbol.

- Some products use unique prompts that are abbreviations of the product names, such as *DTM* or *DTR*. Do not use these names to refer to the products.

prompts

- In multiplatform documentation, use the same product prompt across all platforms. For a truly portable product, the issue of prompts should not be a significant problem. If they are a problem, the product team needs to examine whether the product is truly portable.

  Avoid showing system prompts to reduce the need to show redundant examples or information. If you do need to show the system prompt in examples and the prompts vary by platform, use one of the following techniques:

  - Create separate examples for each platform. Do not segregate the examples (such as in an appendix). Rather, integrate them into the flow of the text.

  - Alternate examples from the various platforms by using an equal number from each. This method is particularly useful when the examples demonstrate a concept and platform-specific details do not interfere with the understanding of the concept.

  - Define a generic symbol or word to use as prompt across platforms. Include the prompt in the conventions section of the preface.

pronouns

Use the following guidelines for pronouns:

- Make sure the pronoun agrees in number with its antecedent. For example:

  ```
  Both managers will have to forfeit some of their capital equipment.
  ```

- Avoid ambiguous pronouns. Repeat the noun rather than use a pronoun if a pronoun has more than one possible antecedent.

  Use

  ```
  The title bar on the window is highlighted to indicate that the
  window is active.
  ```

  ```
  Remove the diskette from its holder; then place the diskette
  in the disk drive.
  ```

  Do not use

  ```
  The title bar on the window is highlighted to indicate that
  it is active.
  ```

  ```
  Remove the diskette from its holder; then place it in the
  disk drive.
  ```

- Do not use the first-person singular or plural form.

  Use

  `Digital recommends...`

  Do not use

  `We recommend...`

- Use the following guidelines for indefinite pronouns:

  - The following pronouns are always singular:

another	each	either
every	neither	one

  - Compound pronouns made with *any, every, some,* and *no* are also singular, as in *anybody, everything, someone, nobody, nothing, no one,* and so on.

  - The following pronouns are always plural:

both	few	many
others	several	

  - The indefinite pronouns *all, any, none,* and *some* are either singular or plural, depending on the context. For example, the antecedents of the pronoun *some* in the following sentences determine the number of the pronoun.

    `The money was allocated to different departments; some was kept in a central fund. [Some of it was. . . . ]`

    `The disks are in the computer room; some are labeled. [Some of them are. . . . ]`

  - When the word *each* follows a plural subject, the verb remains plural. For example:

    `The departments each have their own system managers.`

See also **gender-neutral language**.

---

qualifiers

Use the following guidelines for OpenVMS qualifiers:

- Precede a qualifier name with a slash (/).

- Use uppercase letters for a command qualifier that is not case sensitive.

- Do not begin a sentence with a qualifier.

For example:

```
The /NOLOG qualifier closes the current log file but does not open
a new one.
```

However, for multiplatform documentation, be aware that some of your platforms may be case sensitive but others are not. In defining conventions to be used across all platforms, you may decide, for example, to use lowercase for qualifiers unless uppercase or mixed case is a command requirement. In addition, the term *qualifier* may be platform specific, and you may decide to use a more generic term, such as *switch*.

See also **commands** and **options**.

---

quotation marks

This section contains the following information:

- General guidelines for using quotation marks

- Guidelines for using single quotation marks

- Guidelines for using quotation marks with other punctuation marks

General Guidelines

Use the following guidelines for quotation marks:

- If your output device differentiates between open and close quotation marks (" "), use them in text. Within code examples, use the quotation marks key (") on your keyboard to indicate quotation marks.

- When documents are localized, the open and close quotation marks may be changed to other characters, depending on local practice. If your text formatting system uses specific commands for these characters (such as <QUOTE>), the translators can easily change the characters. If your system does not use such commands, include comments in your source files that identify the use of the quotation characters for the translators.

- Use quotation marks to indicate a short direct quotation or literal response *within text.* For example:

  ```
  The system received good ratings: "Four times the performance of
  a VAX-11/780™ computer system."
  ```

- Use quotation marks to set off system messages specified in text. For example:

  ```
  The system displays the error message "DBM-%Database not ready" if
  you have not readied the database before fetching a record.
  ```

- When quoting a long passage (also known as a *block quotation*), set off the material and do not enclose it with quotation marks. For example:

  ```
  Producing International Products -- User Information
  Handbook notes the importance of developing an international
  awareness:

      As Digital's presence in international markets grows, the
      audience for the user information you prepare grows also.
      Your work will almost certainly be read, viewed, or heard
      by people of cultures other than your own. With this larger
      and more culturally diverse audience comes new responsibilities
      and challenges for you as an information provider. You must
      carefully avoid lexical, grammatical, and organizational
      practices that can render the information you provide
      difficult to understand for nonnative English speakers.

  The first step. . . .
  ```

- Do not put quotation marks around command names, file names, or user responses within text, or around syntax statements. However, use quotation marks within syntax as required. For example:

  ```
  Notes> SET PROFILE/PERSONAL_NAME="John Q. Noter"
  ```

- Do not use quotation marks to lend emphasis to a word or phrase. See **emphasis** for information on emphasizing words and phrases in text.

Single Quotation Marks

Do not use a single quotation mark where quotation marks are required grammatically.

Punctuation with Quotation Marks

Use the following guidelines when using quotation marks with other punctuation marks:

- Place a period inside the close quotation mark at the end of a sentence,

except where the quotation mark is part of a literal string. For example:

```
The rules governing the transfer of data are called "protocols."
```

```
The COBOL literal is "LOGGING OUT ON".
```

Note that this is the practice in the United States. Follow the rules for your country.

- If it is required by context, place the comma inside the close quotation mark, unless the quotation marks are part of a literal string. For example:

```
An error message, "Invalid User Identification Code (UIC)," is
displayed if an account number for the UIC includes an 8 or 9.
```

```
The symbol can have one of the following values: ABST, "ABST", or %ABST.
```

- Place a semicolon outside the close quotation mark. For example:

```
When referring to keys, use the term "press"; never use "hit."
```

- Place a question mark inside the close quotation mark if the question mark is part of the quotation. Otherwise, place the question mark outside the close quotation mark. For example:

```
If you forget the closing angle bracket, the system displays
the message "Is this a tag without a closing angle bracket?"
```

```
Have you read Soderston's article called "The Usability Edit:
A New Level"?
```

---

sections

Sections are logical divisions of text that discuss subtopics of the chapter topic. Create sections that are sufficiently discrete in scope and content so that they can be reorganized, changed, moved, or eliminated without detracting from surrounding sections.

Use the following guidelines when creating sections:

- Repeat all important section title information; do not assume that the user has read the section title.

  Use

  ```
  4.3 Creating Source, Intermediate, and Final Files
  ```

  ```
  To create source, intermediate, and final files, . . .
  ```

Do not use

4.3 Creating Source, Intermediate, and Final Files

`To create these files, . . .`

- Avoid using more than three section levels. For example:

2.1 Section Level One

2.1.1 Section Level Two

2.1.1.1 Section Level Three

The use of more than three levels is awkward both in text and in the table of contents, and users may get confused by too many levels and sublevels.

If you must use a fourth section level, do not number it. Instead, set it off typographically from its associated text. Depending on your text-formatting tool, the fourth-level section title may not be included in the table of contents. In the following example, the fourth-level section title is in boldface type, with its associated text beginning on the next line:

3.13.2.2 Looking at Indexes

`The following examples show how two of the qualifiers already`
`described can alter the appearance of an index.`

Index Produced by Defaults

`The first example shows. . . .`

- If you use a hierarchical organization, make sure you have more than one subsection for each major section. Usually it is not logical to divide a topic into only one subtopic. For example, if you have a level of 2.1 followed by 2.1.1 and then 2.2, it would be better to incorporate the material in 2.1.1 into 2.1 and eliminate the second level. For example:

Use

2.4 Interactive Mail Utility

`The Mail Utility lets you send, receive, and manipulate messages by using`
`either the keyboard to enter commands or the default MAIL keypad.`

`Enter MAIL commands in response to the MAIL prompt.`

   .
   .
   .

2.5 MAIL Keypad

sections

Do not use

2.4 Interactive Mail Utility

The Mail Utility lets you send, receive, and manipulate messages by using either the keyboard to enter commands or the default MAIL keypad.

2.4.1 MAIL Commands

Enter MAIL commands in response to the MAIL prompt.

.

.

.

2.5 MAIL Keypad

- Whenever possible, be sure to follow each first-level section title with an introduction to the material that follows. Make sure you have text separating one section title from the next section title. For example:

Use

5.1 Using the Installation Verification Procedure (IVP)

This section explains. . . .

5.1.1 Verifying the Installation

The IVP uses. . . .

Do not use

5.1 Using the Installation Verification Procedure (IVP)

5.1.1 Verifying the Installation

The IVP uses. . . .

See also **chapter and section titles**.

security issues

Names and Node Names in Text

Use the following guidelines when using names and node names in text, figures, examples, and so on:

- Use names that represent a wide range of cultures as well as both genders. Look through a telephone directory for ideas, but keep the names fictional.

- Similarly, do not use telephone numbers or street addresses that you know are real.

- Do not use the names of system accounts and passwords. It is not a security issue to use the names of real systems or nodes. However, edit node and user information out of session log files and screen-captured material so that you do not use a real node name with a known directory specification or account on that node.

Proprietary Information

Proprietary information must be labeled to prevent unauthorized or inadvertent disclosure that could detrimentally affect the operation of the company. Check with your legal representative about guidelines to mark, distribute, and copy proprietary information.

See also **copyright page**.

---

semicolons

Use the following guidelines for semicolons:

- Use a semicolon instead of a comma and conjunction to join closely related independent sentences or clauses. For example:

  ```
  VAX Notes automatically assigns the next available number to your topic;
  VAX Notes does not reuse numbers of deleted topics.
  ```

  ```
  The first IF command compares two integers; the second IF command
  compares two strings.
  ```

- Use a semicolon when items in a series are long and complex or use internal punctuation. For example:

  ```
  The standard directory listing consists of the following columns:
  the file name, including the file type; the file length expressed
  in blocks; and the date of creation.
  ```

- If the number of items embedded in a series is large, consider using a vertical list of these items rather than an embedded list.

  Use

  ```
  This chapter includes information about the following file types:
       o .COM, a command procedure
       o .DAT, a data file
       o .DIS, a distribution list for MAIL
       o .EDT, a startup command file for the EDT editor
       o .EXE, an executable program image file
  ```

semicolons

Do not use

This chapter includes information about the following file types: COM, a
command procedure; DAT, a data file; DIS, a distribution list for MAIL;
EDT, a startup command file for the EDT editor; and EXE, an executable
program image file.

should

Avoid using the verb *should* because its meaning is often ambiguous. For
example:

Use

Delete the intermediate files after you process your files.

When writing description files, inspect all your source code
files for. . . .

You must enter the arguments in the order given.

You might also consider writing a command procedure to compress files.

Do not use

You should delete the intermediate files after you process your file.

When writing description files, you should inspect all your source
code files for. . . .

You should enter the arguments in the order given.

You should consider writing a command procedure to compress your files.

Sometimes *should* cannot be replaced by a simple imperative. The meaning
may be to advise or recommend that the user carry out an action. The
following phrases are preferred:

Digital recommends. . . .
It is recommended that. . . .
If compliance with [X] is important, then [action].

See also **verbs**.

since and because

The word *since* is ambiguous. It can either refer to time or mean *for the reason that*. To avoid this ambiguity, limit the use of *since* to matters of time. Use *because* to mean *for the reason that*. For example:

```
Because the power failed, the systems need to be rebooted.
```

```
The interface has not changed since 1983.
```

slang

Avoid the use of slang in documentation.

Use	Do Not Use
Vertical bar	Pipe
Exclamation point	Bang, baseball bat
Asterisk	Star

See also **jargon**.

standards

Use the term *standard* carefully; the term may imply legal and contractual obligations. You should also take care in referring to levels of standards support; there is a world of difference between supporting certain standards activities (supporting a group by participation) and supporting a standard itself. In addition, certain terms (such as *conformance* and *certification*) have explicit meaings, which may be defined by a standard or an authoritative body.

Formal standards (also known as *de jure* standards) are developed by a formal, authorized, standards-developing organization, such as the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). ISO includes the member-country bodies, such as ANSI in the United States, AFNOR in France, BSI in the United Kingdom, and so on. ISO also includes authorized user and professional organizations, such as the IEEE, and regional bodies such as CEN/CENELEC and ECMA. ISO-authorized standards are also known as

international standards, while individual country standards, such as ANSI standards, are known as national standards.

In contrast:

- **Specifications** are developed through a cooperative, vendor-independent process. Examples of specifications are the *X/Open™ Portability Guide*, the Open Software Foundation™ Application Environment Specification, and the X Consortium's X Window System specification.

  There are also *single-vendor specifications* such as the Digital CDA™ architecture specification or the AT&T® System V™ Interface Definition specification.

  Specifications developed by a consortium are usually more independent than specific vendors' products because the specifications are defined through broad participation by interested parties. Specifications are not formal standards, however, because they are not developed by authorized standards bodies and carry the trademarks of their respective developing organizations.

- An **implementation** is a product that vendors make available to provide certain capabilities. Products may conform to standards, but they are not themselves standards.

  The Digital DECwindows product is an example of an implementation.

Some specifications and implementations may also be called *de facto* standards. *De facto standard* is a term applied to an independently created product or system that captures a large market share and that other providers tend to emulate, copy, or use.

Work with your product team and legal representatives if you need further information about the standards that your product must follow, such as the latest version, distribution restrictions, and, ultimately, the impact on the user information.

support services

Not all products and versions of products are available in all countries. Order numbers and services also vary by country. For example, one country may offer an integrated service delivery, combining hardware and software support; however, not all countries may offer such a service. To avoid documentation that is specific to only one country, refer to the following sales and support services in an appendix or in a separate reference card:

- Accessories and supplies

- Basic service

- Carry-in service

- DECmailer^{SM}

- DECservice^{SM}

- Hot lines

- Installation support

- Per-call service

- Support centers

symbols and icons

A symbol is a graphic that stands for or suggests something else. For example, a figure depicting a computer system may use a rectangle as a symbol for the CPU. You can use symbols to represent physical objects (such as computer terminals, printers, and communications lines), software (such as interfaces), or flow (such as the path of information). There are also symbols that stand for units of measurement, such as the symbol ° for *degree*.

Symbols are often widely accepted and can be part of an industry standard. Because symbols are often abstract, they are a shorthand way of expressing an idea or an object, but users may not understand their meaning without some explanation.

An icon is a simplified pictorial representation of an idea, a situation, or an object. For example, a clock face is often used to mean *wait*. Icons are used most frequently in information that describes user interfaces.

symbols and icons

Use the following guidelines for symbols and icons:

- Do not use the same icon or symbol to mean different things in different parts of the document or documentation set.

- Avoid creating a different symbol for every component of an illustration. Sometimes context (including callouts) is enough to convey the meaning, especially if a figure is becoming cluttered.

- Avoid creating culture-specific icons. Use international icons if they are available.

- Do not create icons and symbols that conflict with ones that are already widely accepted. Develop icons and symbols within a corporate strategy.

- Test icons and symbols to ensure that they are meaningful in all countries.

- Do not incorporate text into icons. However, it is acceptable (and often necessary) to use a callout with a symbol.

- Write out the name of named symbols in text and enclose the symbol in parentheses. You may use the symbol in tables and code examples.

  `The dollar sign ($) is the default DCL prompt.`

- A symbol has no plural form. Spell out the name of the symbol to form the plural.

  Use

  `Enter three slashes (///).`

  Do not use

  `Enter three /'s.`

- Use the following guidelines for symbols representing units of measurement:

  - If there are only two items in a series, repeat the symbol for a unit of measurement. For example:

    ```
    3°C to 5°C
    10% to 50%
    ```

  - If there are more than two items in a series, place the abbreviation or symbol for a unit of measurement at the end of the series. For example:

    ```
    1200, 1400, or 1600 MHz
    ```

  - Do not insert a space between a number and the symbol it modifies. For example:

    ```
    85%    5°F
    ```

For more information on symbols, see also **abbreviations and acronyms, footnotes, keys, numbers**, and the symbols table in Part III.

---

table of contents

The table of contents lists the elements of a document that the user needs to find, along with their starting page numbers. Make sure that all titles in the table of contents exactly match the titles in text. Also make sure that all page numbers are accurate.

In Digital documents, the table of contents (usually called *Contents*) lists the following text components, as appropriate for the book:

- Preface

    Do not list the sections of the preface unless the document has a special requirement for this.

- Parts

    List parts by number and title, if any; do not list a page number.

- Chapters

    List chapters by number and title.

- Sections

    List all formal sections by number (if applicable) and title.

- Appendixes

    List all formal appendix sections by number (if applicable) and title.

- Glossary

- Index

- Examples

- Figures

- Tables

Check with your group about including other elements in the table of contents.

Page numbers for the contents pages themselves are usually lowercase roman numerals.

Placement

The table of contents always begins on a right-hand page. It is placed after the copyright page.

tables

A well-designed table is an effective means of presenting large amounts of detailed information.

The following example shows how you can condense a cumbersome paragraph into a concise table, thereby making the information more accessible to the user.

Use

There are five possible types of map output. Each type requires a specific LINK command qualifier, as shown in Table 10-3.

Table 10-3 Types of Image Maps

Command	Type of Map Produced
LINK/MAP/BRIEF	Brief map
LINK/MAP	Default map
LINK/MAP/CROSS_REFERENCE	Default map with a symbol cross-reference
LINK/MAP/FULL	Full map)
LINK/MAP/FULL/CROSS_REFERENCE	Full map with a symbol cross-reference

Do not use

There are five possible types of map output, and each type requires a specific LINK command qualifier, as follows: LINK/MAP/BRIEF produces a brief map; LINK/MAP produces a default map; LINK/MAP/CROSS_REFERENCE produces a default map with a symbol cross-reference; LINK/MAP/FULL produces a full map; and LINK/MAP/FULL/CROSS_REFERENCE produces a full map with a symbol cross-reference.

This section gives guidelines for the following topics:

- General information for designing tables
- Table placement
- Table numbering
- Table titles
- Column headings
- Stub columns

- Table body

- Table footnotes

Your authoring tool and production method affect the layout and design of tables; work with your publishing group to make the most effective use of tables.

General Guidelines

Use the following general guidelines when creating tables:

- Design the table with a clear objective in mind.

- Be sure your tables are really tables (that is, that they function as a matrix and show relationships between categories) and are not vertical lists in table format.

- Keep entries brief.

- Confine the table to a single page, if possible. For unusually large amounts of information, create a series of similar or related tables. However, do not artificially separate material that is logically connected. Use the table titles as a guide; if there are three tables with the same title, either the material logically belongs together or the table titles do not sufficiently distinguish the material in the tables.

- Spell terms in tables the same as they are spelled in text.

Table Placement

Introduce every formal table in text so that the user can relate the text to the table. Formal tables have a number (such as Table 1–1, Table 1–2) and a title and are listed in the table of contents. In general, refer to the table by number only and not by table title unless the tables in your document are not numbered. For example:

`Table 1-1 lists and describes the five possible types of map output.`

If you must refer to a table by its title, use the following forms:

`The following table, Map Output Types, lists the different types of map output.`

`See the table titled Map Output Types in Chapter 3.`

`See the table in Chapter 3 listing the different types of map output.`

Table Numbering

In general, number the tables in your document according to the type of document and the numbering scheme of the pages.

Most documents that are written for a technical audience are divided into numbered chapters with chapter-oriented paging (page 3–4, page A–9, and so on). If the document is divided into chapters and uses chapter-oriented paging, then use chapter-oriented numbering for tables, as follows:

Table 3–6   The sixth table in Chapter 3
Table 4–1   The first table in Chapter 4
Table D–1   The first table in Appendix D

Some manuals, such as those intended for more general audiences and marketing-oriented documents, are not divided into chapters or use sequential paging throughout the document. For such documents, number the tables consecutively from beginning to end (Table 1, Table 2, and so on). In some marketing documents, tables are not numbered at all and may not have titles.

Table Titles

Use the following guidelines for creating effective table titles:

- Make table titles concise and descriptive.

- Capitalize table titles using the guidelines for chapter and section titles. See **capitalization**.

- Do not end a table title with a period.

- Avoid starting table titles with articles (*a, an, the*).

- If a long table continues onto another page, repeat the table number and caption exactly as on the first page. Follow the table number with a designation such as "(Cont.)" to indicate clearly that this is a continuation of the table. For example:

  `Table 1-6 (Cont.)  Standard ASCII 7-Bit Code`

  The specific designation you use depends on the accepted group style or format.

The placement of the table number and title depends on the document format used in your group.

Column Headings

Column headings categorize and organize the information in a table. Use a column heading for each column, unless the table is a simple one. If possible, limit your table to two levels of column headings, as shown in Table 3. Make column headings short and direct.

Capitalization in Headings: Use the same style for capitalizing column headings as for capitalizing table titles. See **capitalization**.

Abbreviations and Units of Measure in Headings: Use the following guidelines for handling abbreviations and units of measure in tables:

- Do not define abbreviations within tables; instead, define an abbreviation in a footnote to the table.

- In general, place abbreviations and units of measurement (such as *ft*, *m*, *bytes*) after the last word of the column heading.

- Be consistent in the use of abbreviations throughout a document. If you abbreviate a word or unit of measurement in one table, do so throughout the document. Similarly, specify (and abbreviate) units of measurement in all tables that need them, not just in some.

Table 3 shows the use of abbreviated units of measurement in a table.

Table 3   Abbreviated Units of Measurement in a Table

Standard or Optional Equipment Items	Dimensions			
	Height cm (in)	Width cm (in)	Length cm (in)	Weight kg (lb)
Acoustic coupler	7.6 (3.0)	18.9 (7.5)	30.4 (12.0)	2.72 (6.0)
Standard panel rack	26.3 (10.5)	35.0 (14.0)	50.0 (20.0)	38.38 (17.4)
Power supply	12.0 (4.8)	21.5 (8.6)	40.8 (16.3)	55.15 (25.0)

Note that the abbreviations for inches (in) and pounds (lb) are in parentheses, but the metric abbreviations (cm, kg) are not. Because of the way the values in the columns are presented (metric measurement first, U.S. measurement following in parentheses), the format of the header is created to match that of the values in the columns.

Stub Column

The stub column is the leftmost column of a table. It lists the items about which the table columns give information.

One way to improve the logic and clarity of a table is by switching the stub entries with the column headings. Table 4 shows a table with only two stub entries and numerous column headings. Table 5 presents the same information with the stub entries and column headings switched so that the user refers first to the type of computer system and then to the information about it.

Table 4   Poor Table Structure

Items	Computer				
	PDP–11/40™	**PDP–11/34™**	**PDP–11/03™**	**PDP–11/60™**	**PDP–11/55™**
Memory Requirement	32K	24K	8K	32K	128K
Number of Terminals	2	2	1	5	5

Table 5   Improved Table Structure

Computer	Memory Requirement (K)	Numbers of Terminals
PDP–11/40	32	2
PDP–11/34	24	2
PDP–11/03	8	1
PDP–11/60	32	5
PDP–11/55	128	5

Table Body

The body of the table consists of all information below the column headings and to the right of the stub column.

Use the following guidelines for expressing information in the table body:

- Make sure your tables have at least two columns (most tables have more than two). Be aware of the number of columns you are creating, especially if your table contains text. Narrow columns can create hyphenation problems, particularly for text that is translated.

- Be consistent in the way you express column entries.

  - Use parallel verb tenses and grammatical construction within each column.

  - Begin each column entry with the same part of speech, if possible.

  - Use the same syntactic form (that is, words, phrases, or sentences) for all column entries.

  - Use the same voice and punctuation for each column entry.

- Avoid numbering column entries (that is, avoid creating a numbered list within the table) unless the numbers have some meaning in the context of the table.

- Keep column entries brief. Remove superfluous words, such as unnecessary articles (*a, an, the*) or repetitive phrases that can be combined with others or placed elsewhere (such as in a column heading). You do not need to use complete sentences, but be consistent in style within the table.

- Use an initial capital letter for the first word of each entry unless product or other style conventions dictate otherwise.

- Allow an equal and comfortable (easily readable) amount of space between columns. Approximately three to five characters of space is considered appropriate.

- Your text-formatting tool and production method may determine whether column entries are centered under the column headings or flush left. In general, if all items are short, center the information under the column headings; otherwise, place the information flush left.

  If possible, align numbers that contain decimal points on the decimal point and right-justify whole numbers. For example:

```
  5.30     53
  0.45    245
 34.00    434
523.35   6256
```

Table Footnotes

Position table footnotes immediately below the bottom table rule if the table has one. For more information on table footnotes, see **footnotes**.

---

telephone numbers

Telephone numbers need to be updated frequently and are country specific. Use the following guidelines when mentioning telephone numbers:

- Do not include telephone numbers for service or support in the text sections of the book. If this information must accompany user documents, place it in an appendix or in a separate reference card.

- If support telephone numbers are necessary, then list all appropriate worldwide numbers (not just the local numbers).

telephone numbers

- Do not use telephone numbers that you know are real in examples, figures, and so on. In particular, do not link real telephone numbers with the names of real people. Look through a telephone directory for ideas, but keep names and numbers fictional.

See the *Digital Guide to Developing International Software* and *Developing International User Information* for information on telephone number formats and referring to telephone numbers.

that and which

Use *that* for a restrictive clause; use *which* for a nonrestrictive clause. A restrictive clause is essential to the identification of the item modified. A nonrestrictive clause is set off by punctuation and provides added information that is not essential to the identification of the item modified. For example:

```
Chapter 2 explains the considerations that affect schema design.
```

```
This chapter explains nonprivileged functions, which are available
to all system users.
```

In the first sentence, the restrictive clause is the only clue to the specific considerations explained in Chapter 2. The chapter discusses only those considerations relating to schema design.

In the second sentence, the noun *functions* has already been clarified by the adjective *nonprivileged*. The information that all users can use the functions is helpful, but it is not needed to identify which functions are discussed.

A simple example sometimes helps to show the difference between these types of modifiers. Consider the following sentences:

```
Files that contain errors should be deleted.
```

```
Files, which contain errors, should be deleted.
```

The first sentence uses a restrictive modifier and says that only faulty files should be deleted. Because of the nonrestrictive modifier, the second sentence states that all files should be deleted.

time

Use the following guidelines when referring to time:

- A.M. and *a.m.* and P.M. and *p.m.* are the abbreviations for *ante meridiem* and *post meridiem*. A.M. refers to the time between midnight and noon, while P.M. refers to the time between noon and midnight. If your system cannot produce small capital letters, use the lowercase forms *a.m.* and *p.m.*

- A.M. and P.M. refer to exact times only.

  Use

  ```
  The meeting is at 3:00 p.m.
  ```

  Do not use

  ```
  The meeting is in the p.m.
  ```

- If you use the word *o'clock*, spell out the time. For example:

  ```
  The meeting is at three o'clock.
  ```

  If you use the words *noon* or *midnight*, do not include the word *twelve*. It is redundant.

  ```
  The train arrived at noon.
  ```

- If you use the 24-hour system, use a number in the *nnnn* format followed by the word *hours*.

  ```
  The meeting is at 1500 hours.
  ```

- Information on the time of day for services and support is country or area specific. Place material containing this information in an appendix or in a separate reference card.

- Spell *time zone* as two words.

- For text or displays that indicate the time zone, use one of the following:

  - The full name of the time zone. For example, use central European time or eastern standard time.

  - The degree of variance from Greenwich mean time. For example, Austria uses Greenwich mean time plus 1 hour.

- Do not use the abbreviations for time zones. For example, do not use CET, PST, or EST. They are often ambiguous.

title page

For most documents, the title page is the first major required text component after the cover that identifies the manual to the user. Figure 9 shows a sample title page.

Figure 9 Sample Title Page

DECproduct

User's Guide

Order Number ——▶ Order Number: AA–Annnx–TE

Date of ——▶ December 1990
Publication

Abstract ——▶ This guide contains step–by–step instructions that show you how to use DECproduct to create user interfaces for your applications.

Revision ——▶ Revision/Update Information: This is a new document.
Information

Software ——▶ Operating System and Version: ULTRIX Worksystem Software
Version   Version 2.1 or later
Numbers
                 Software Version: DECproduct Version 1.0

Company ——▶ Digital Equipment Corporation
Address   Maynard, Massachusetts

In general, the title page gives the following information about a technical document:

- Book title

- Order number or part number

- Date of publication (month and year)

  The date of publication is the month and year in which the document is *released* for manufacturing or *delivered* for manufacturing. Because of possible schedule changes and differences in the length of the manufacturing cycle, the date of publication may not be the same month and year in which the document is printed nor the date when the document is first shipped to customers.

- Brief description of content

  The description, or *abstract*, should be no more than a sentence or two stating the topic of the document and, if appropriate, its intended audience.

- Revision/update information

  Revision and update information tells the user whether the manual is new or revised and which manual, if any, it supersedes. Ask your colleagues for specific information about how your group handles this item.

  For multiplatform documents, consider whether revision/update information is needed and, if so, if it may be better placed in another location, such as project release notes. Because a multiplatform document may replace several product-specific documents, listing the revision/update information on the title page would be cumbersome. In addition, listing documents for specific platforms may also confuse the customers interested in one platform only.

- Version number (if applicable)

  Version numbers apply to software product documentation only; you can omit this item from the title pages of hardware documents. You may list the version number of the product being documented, the operating system on which it runs, and other required or optional products with which it runs.

  For multiplatform documents, do not include the names and versions of operating systems on the title page. Omitting this information gives you more flexibility to add platforms without rewriting.

- Other product-related information as required (consult your writing supervisor)

- Company name and corporate address

  The corporate address that your group prints on the title page may not match that of all other groups in the company. However, this information is most likely built into the title page template for your group, and you do not need to be concerned with changing it.

Placement and Format

If a document does not contain a half-title page, then the title page is the first page after the cover. The title page must begin on a right-hand page. The following left-hand page should be the copyright page. The title page has no printed page number.

For information on coding front matter for online documents, see the documentation for your authoring tool. The bibliography in *The Digital Technical Documentation Handbook* contains some suggested resources.

trademarks and service marks

Trademarks are symbols, designs, words, or combinations of those items used by manufacturers to distinguish their products from those of competitors. For example, the DECwindows mark is a Digital trademark for a user interface.

Service marks are symbols, designs, words, or combinations of those items used by service providers to distinguish their services from the services provided by other companies. For example, the DECsite^{SM} mark is a Digital service mark for maintenance services.

Trademarks and service marks are protected by law; the use of these marks for products or services is legally restricted to the owner.

This section discusses trademark practices according to U.S. law. Check with your legal representative for information specific to your country. Table 6 lists the symbols indicating trademark status and the meaning of each symbol. For the remainder of this section, the word *trademark* refers to both trademarks and service marks.

Table 6 Symbols Indicating Trademark Status

Symbol	Meaning
®	The trademark is registered with the United States Patent and Trademark Office.
SM	A service mark. The owner has applied for registration for the service.
TM	The trademark owner has applied for registration, but the trademark is not yet registered.
	In some cases, the ™ symbol indicates that the trademark owner is relying on common law rights, automatic legal protection obtained through the continued use of the trademark in commerce.

Trademarks must be used properly, or trademark rights may be forfeited. If consumers begin to treat a trademark as a reference to a general type of product or service, there is a risk that the trademark may become generic and no longer identify the goods or services of one manufacturer. If a trademark becomes generic, it loses its trademark status. *Aspirin, escalator, kerosene,* and *zipper* are examples of trademarks that have become generic.

This section gives guidelines for the following topics:

* Word trademarks, including guidelines for using Digital and third-party trademarks

* Design trademarks

* Sources of trademark information

Word Trademarks

This section contains general guidelines for all word trademarks, Digital or third-party, and guidelines specific to Digital trademarks.

General Guidelines: Use the following guidelines for all word trademarks:

* Write all trademarks of Digital and other companies exactly. For example:

  ```
  The DECwindows Desktop Applications Guide was produced
  with the VAX DOCUMENT™ electronic publishing system.
  ```

  In this example, the DECwindows mark is spelled correctly, not listed as *DecWindows* or *DECWindows*. The trademark for the publishing system is used correctly, not listed as *DOCUMENT*.

  Do not spell out the full name of a trademarked abbreviation or acronym; this weakens or may destroy the status of the trademark.

trademarks and service marks

Use

```
The CDA architecture provides. . . .
Digital's CDA architecture is. . . .
```

Do not use

```
The CDA (Compound Document Architecture) software provides. . . .
Digital's Compound Document Architecture (CDA) provides. . . .
```

- Use a trademark as an adjective.

  Use

  ```
  The customer purchased a VAX 8500 computer system.
  ```

  Do not use

  ```
  The customer purchased a VAX 8500.
  ```

  The generic noun following the trademark is often part of the phrase from which the trademark is derived, as in *VAX ACMS*™ *management system* or *CDA architecture*.

  Use a trademark with a generic noun at the first use in text and as often thereafter without making the text monotonous.

  You may also use other appropriate nouns with trademarks, depending on the concepts being described. For example, it is appropriate to use the terms *OpenVMS system services* and *DATATRIEVE*™ *keyword* when describing those concepts.

- Do not use trademarks as verbs.

  Use

  ```
  Use the DECmail™ utility to send the file.
  ```

  Do not use

  ```
  DECmail the file.
  ```

- Trademarks are not nouns; do not form plurals or possessives with trademarked names.

  Use

  ```
  The VAX instruction set is complicated.
  You can use VAX computers in a cluster.
  ```

  Do not use

  ```
  The VAX's instruction set is complicated.
  You can use VAXes in a cluster.
  ```

However, you can use a trade name as a possessive or in hyphenated expressions. (A trade name is a name by which a legal entity, such as a corporation or partnership, does business or is known to the public, suppliers, and creditors. A corporation's trade name is usually identical to the corporate name.) For example, the following phrases are permissible:

```
Digital's newest products
Digital-supplied software
Digital-private escape sequence
```

- Use consistent spelling and capitalization for trademarks. Do not hyphenate a trademark (unless the hyphen is part of the mark), and do not split a trademark over two lines.

- Do not use a trademark in a hyphenated expression, such as *ULTRIX-based system*.

- Identify third-party trademarks referred to in a document. Digital's policy is to identify only those third-party trademarks that are pending registration (™) or registered (®).

  For documents with copyright pages:

  – List the trademarks and their owners on the copyright page below the list of Digital trademarks. For example:

    ```
    Macintosh is a registered trademark of Apple Computer, Inc.
    ```

  – Combine multiple trademarks owned by the same company into a single sentence. For example:

    ```
    ProductA and ProductB are trademarks and ProductC and ProductD are
    registered trademarks of the KCS Corporation.
    ```

  – At the first use of the trademark in text (in the preface or chapters), place the trademark status symbol at the upper right of the trademark. For example:

    ```
    The Motif® interface. . . .
    ```

  For documents without copyright pages:

  At the first use of the trademark in text (in the preface or chapters), footnote third-party trademarks, using the trademark status symbol as the footnote reference mark. For example:

  POSTSCRIPT® fonts can be used for tables.

  ®POSTSCRIPT is a registered trademark of Adobe Systems Incorporated.

Guidelines for Digital Trademarks: Use the following guidelines for Digital word trademarks:

- Identify only those Digital trademarks used in a document. If the document is part of a set, you may use the same list of Digital trademarks for each book in the set as long as no trademarks are missing. All Digital trademarks are designated by either *TM* or *SM*.

  For documents with copyright pages:

  - List the trademarks alphabetically in a paragraph, and include the phrase *and the DIGITAL logo* at the end of the paragraph. For example:

    ```
    OpenVMS, ULTRIX, VAX, VMS, and the DIGITAL logo are trademarks of
    Digital Equipment Corporation.
    ```

  - At the first use of the trademark in text (in the preface or chapters), place the trademark status symbol at the upper right of the trademark. For example:

    ```
    For example, VAX DATATRIEVE™ Help lists the conceptual
    topics "New_Features" and "Synonyms."
    ```

  For documents without copyright pages:

  At the first use of the trademark in text (in the preface or chapters), footnote the Digital trademark, using the trademark status symbol as the footnote reference mark. If your system cannot do this, use a regular text footnote. For example, this is the first mention of the DEC PHIGS™ graphics software in text. If this document did not have a copyright page, the footnote would be the proper way to indicate the ownership of the trademark.

- Do not combine Digital trademarks with those of another company; this weakens the trademarks of both companies. For example, do not refer to a *DECstation™/UNIX® workstation.*

- Do not combine Digital trademarks (such as *VAX/OpenVMS systems*); this weakens both trademarks. For example, use *OpenVMS VAX* instead.

- Use all uppercase letters for references to the DIGITAL logo.

- Do not use the term *DEC* to refer to the company. The term *DEC* is appropriate only as part of a trademark for a Digital product, as in *DECforms software.*

See also **Digital**.

™ DEC PHIGS is a trademark of Digital Equipment Corporation.

Design Trademarks

Use the following guidelines with design trademarks or logos:

- Always reproduce the graphic form of a trademark precisely. For example, always reproduce the DIGITAL logo with its seven lowercase letters each within a rectangular box.

- If color is included as part of a trademark, always use the color consistently.

- Use the appropriate symbol to indicate the status of a trademark. Table 6 lists the valid trademark symbols.

- Never use the graphic outline of a design trademark for messages or illustrations.

- Never use a graphic element in a sentence.

Sources of Trademark Information

Trademark information, like any technical information, may change frequently. If you do not have an updated list of trademarks, ask your product manager or legal representative to get the correct information. Note that trademark status information varies by country. Groups responsible for localizing documents for use outside the United States must check with their legal representatives for local trademark status information. For further information about trademark searches, see *The Digital Technical Documentation Handbook*.

translation

You can find information relevant to internationalization and translation in the individual entries throughout this guide. Follow these guidelines whether or not your information will be translated. For a detailed discussion of and suggestions for creating an international product, see the *Digital Guide to Developing International Software* and *Developing International User Information*.

---

type

Use *type* for the operation of typing text:

`Type your mail message.`

In general, use *enter* for commands and for combinations of typing text and pressing keys.

See also **choose and select, enter** and **press**.

ULTRIX and UNIX systems

Follow these guidelines when referring to ULTRIX and UNIX operating systems:

- The term *ULTRIX* is a Digital trademark. The term *UNIX* is a registered trademark of UNIX System Laboratories, Inc.

- Do not refer to the ULTRIX system as a UNIX system. However, you can use phrases such as the following:

  `The ULTRIX operating system is a licensed derivative of UNIX software.`

  `The ULTRIX system is compatible with UNIX software.`

- Because there are multiple UNIX operating systems, do not refer to *the UNIX operating system*. It is appropriate to use the collective phrase *UNIX operating systems* when referring to multiple implementations. When referring to one of the systems developed by UNIX Systems Laboratories, Inc., be specific about the release.

See also **trademarks and service marks**.

---

verbs

This section gives guidelines for the following topics:

- Mood
- Tense
- Agreement
- Voice

- Transitive and intransitive verbs
- Auxiliary verbs

Mood

- Use the indicative mood for statements of fact. For example:

  ```
  The Install Utility is a system management tool.
  ```

- Use the imperative mood for procedures and for referring users to manuals, text, figures, tables, and examples. For example:

  ```
  Follow the steps outlined in Section 5.1.
  Enter your user name and password.
  Use string comparison operators to compare character strings.
  See Table 5-1 for a list of module records.
  ```

Tense

- Use verbs in the present tense. For example:

  ```
  The first access control entry (ACE) provides the greatest amount of file
  access.
  ```

- Sometimes the context requires the use of the past or future tense. For example:

  ```
  If your product was installed with support for a forms product, you
  can run the Forms User Environment Test Package to test the forms
  interface.
  ```

  ```
  If you use the qualifier /AFTER=1700, your job will be printed after
  5:00 p.m.
  ```

Agreement

Verbs must agree with their subjects in person and number.

- Use a singular or a plural verb after a collective noun, depending on the intended meaning. For example:

  ```
  The number of faulty disks has decreased.
  A number of multilevel phrases are processed as one keyword.
  ```

- Use a singular verb after a singular subject that is followed by a plural modifier. For example:

  ```
  The table of commands has been revised.
  ```

- Use a singular verb after a singular pronoun, such as *either*, *neither*, and *each*. For example:

  ```
  Each of these methods is reliable.
  ```

- When singular and plural subjects are connected by *either/or* or *neither/nor*, the verb should agree with the nearer subject. For example:

  ```
  Neither the software nor the manuals are available.
  ```

- Use a singular verb after a singular subject followed by a parenthetical term or phrase. For example:

  ```
  The hardware, along with the manuals, was shipped on schedule.
  ```

Voice

In active voice, the subject is the doer of the action. Using the active voice emphasizes who or what the agent of an action is or how something comes about.

Use

```
A READ statement assigns to the listed variables the values
obtained from a DATA statement.
```

```
The user should retain the data in a readily accessible media. . . .
```

Do not use

```
A READ statement is used to assign to the listed variables
those values that are obtained from a DATA statement.
```

```
It is commonly required to retain the final data in a readily
accessible media. . . .
```

In passive voice, the subject is the object or receiver of the action. Using the passive voice emphasizes the result of an action and gives less emphasis to the agent of the causative action. Use the active voice whenever possible. Use the passive voice when the doer of the action is unknown, unimportant, or assumed.

Use

```
The prompt is displayed.
```

Do not use

```
The screen displays the prompt.
```

Transitive and Intransitive Verbs

- Transitive verbs require an object to complete their meaning. For example:

  ```
  The program demonstrates the use of variables.
  ```

  ```
  The system runs the programs.
  ```

Intransitive verbs do not require objects. For example:

`The statement ends with a period.`

`The system runs constantly.`

- The active verb *complete* requires an object.

Use

`The program completes its routines.`

Do not use

`The program completes.`

- The verb *display* requires an object.

Use

`The application displays the XYZ menu.`

`The XYZ menu is displayed.`

Do not use

`The XYZ menu displays.`

Auxiliary Verbs

Use auxiliary verbs such as *can*, *may*, and *might* carefully because their meanings in English are ambiguous. In common usage, both *may* and *can* are used to indicate possibility or probability. For example:

`Your manual may be translated.`

In other cases, *may* implies permission, whereas *can* implies ability. For example:

`You can run the program by pressing the Return key.`

`You may turn the system off after you log out.`

This ambiguity can cause misinterpretation. Avoid this problem by using the imperative.

Original Text

`No initial value may be specified.`

Possible Misinterpretation and Translation

`You may not specify an initial value.`

Intended Meaning

`Do not specify an initial value.`

verbs

Use the following meanings for these auxiliary verbs:

Verb	Meaning
Can	Ability or capability
May	Possibility
Might	Lesser possibility
Should	Implied obligation

Note that there are other auxiliary verbs, such as *would*, that are not generally used in technical documentation.

See also **should**.

version numbers

Use either *lower* and *higher* or *earlier* and *later* to refer to a product version number.

When describing a product version number, use *Version*, not *V*. For example, use *Version 4.0*. Do not use *V4.0*, *V.4.0*, or *V. 4.0*.

warranties

Product warranties vary by country. Some countries, for example, are legally required to have specific warranty periods.

Because warranty information is country specific, avoid including it in documentation.

Warranty information is often legally required by local regulations. Software products in particular often have an official product description. Work with the product manager to include the warranty information in an addendum to that description.

when, where, while

Do not use *when*, *where*, and *while* to mean *in contrast to* or *in comparison to*. Their misuse is ambiguous and may cause translation errors.

Use

```
Enter a string.  Do not enter a numeric value.
```

Do not use

```
The program required a string while you supplied a numeric value.
```

where clauses (in examples)

Where clauses are sometimes used to identify values or variables in syntax examples. If you must use this format, always use a colon with the word *where*. For example:

```
To turn on the static asynchronous lines for dialup sessions, run
the Network Control Program (NCP) and enter the following commands:
```

```
$ RUN SYS$SYSTEM: NCP
NCP> DEFINE LINE dev-c-u STATE ON RECEIVE BUFFERS 4-
_LINE SPEED baud-rate
NCP> DEFINE CIRCUIT dev-c-u STATE ON
NCP> EXIT
```

```
where:
```

baud-rate is the speed at which the line sends and receives data.

dev is the first two letters of the device name.

x

Use the following guidelines for *x*:

- Use a lowercase italic *x* to refer to a generic letter. Also use *x* if a variable may be either alphabetic or numeric. For example:

  ```
  Enter the apartment number: xxxxx
  ```

  The user may then enter values such as *611E* or *8–4*.

- Do not use *x* in place of *by* when describing measurements.

Use

```
An A4 page measures 210 mm by 297 mm (8 1/4 in by 11 3/4 in).
```

Do not use

```
An A4 page measures 210 mm x 297 mm (8 1/4 in x 11 3/4 in).
```

See also **n**.

zero

Use the word *zero* instead of the numeral unless any of the following conditions exist:

- The information is in a table.
- You are giving a range of numbers.
- You are giving a specific value.

For example:

```
Place a zero before decimal fractions of less than 1.
The command accepts from 0 to 17 arguments.
The smallest value permitted is 0.
```

See also **numbers**.

Part III

Quick Word Lookup

This part is a quick reference guide to symbols, terms, abbreviations, and acronyms frequently used or referred to in Digital technical information. It is divided into two sections:

- Use Section 4 to check the names of special symbols and characters. Some entries contain brief usage notes and references to relevant sections in Part II.

- Use Section 5 to check the spelling, capitalization, and hyphenation of terms.

Entries with usage notes are also indexed for increased accessibility.

4 Symbols

Table 7 lists the special symbols and characters used in Digital technical information and discusses their use.

Table 7 Symbols

Symbol	Remarks
´ (acute accent)	
& (ampersand)	
< > (angle brackets)	Individually, the symbols are called *left angle bracket* and *right angle bracket* or, when used in mathematical expressions, *less than* and *greater than* symbols. Angle brackets are also used individually as redirection symbols in shell commands. See also **angle brackets (< >)** in Part II for more information on using angle brackets.
' (apostrophe)	A pair of these characters (´ ´) is called single quotation marks, a term that should be used only when a pair is being used to mark the beginning and end of quoted material; otherwise, use the term *apostrophe*. See also **plurals**, **possessives**, and **quotation marks** in Part II for more information on using apostrophes and quotation marks.
* (asterisk)	
@ (at sign)	
\ (backslash)	
{ } (braces)	Individually, the symbols are called *left brace* and *right brace*. See **braces ({ })** in Part II for more information on using braces.
[ ] (brackets)	Individually, the symbols are called *left bracket* and *right bracket*. Do not use the term *square brackets*. See **brackets ([ ])** in Part II for more information on using brackets.

Table 7 (Cont.) Symbols

Symbol	Remarks
^ (circumflex)	Called a *caret* in COBOL. See **keys** and **numbers** in Part II for more information on the circumflex character.
: (colon)	See **colons** in Part II for more information on using colons.
, (comma)	See **commas** in Part II for more information on using commas.
† (dagger)	
— (dash or em dash)	See **dashes** in Part II for more information on using dashes.
Δ (delta)	Deltas are sometimes used to indicate blank spaces in code or command strings.
$ (dollar sign)	This is called a *currency sign* in COBOL.
‡ (double dagger)	
↓ (down arrow)	*Down arrow* is both the adjective and noun form.
– (en dash or minus sign)	See **dashes** in Part II for more information on using dashes.
= (equal sign)	Do not use the term *equals sign*.
! (exclamation point)	Do not use the term *exclamation mark*.
` (grave accent)	
. . . (horizontal ellipsis points)	See **conventions table** and **ellipsis points** in Part II for more information on using ellipsis points.
- (hyphen)	See **hyphens** and **trademarks and service marks** in Part II for more information on using hyphens.
← (left arrow)	Use *left arrow* instead of *back arrow*. *Left arrow* is both the adjective and noun form.
– (minus sign or en dash)	See **dashes** in Part II for more information on using dashes.

Table 7 (Cont.) Symbols

Symbol	Remarks
# (number sign)	Do not use the term *crosshatch*, *hash mark*, *hatch mark*, or *pound sign* to refer to this symbol.
‖ (parallel symbol)	
( ) (parentheses)	Individually, the symbols are called *open parenthesis* and *close parenthesis*. See Part II for more information on using parentheses.
% (percent sign)	
. (period)	May also be used as a decimal point indicator in some countries. See Part II for more information on using periods and on decimal point indicators.
+ (plus sign)	
? (question mark)	
" (quotation mark)	A pair of these characters (" ") is called quotation marks. Do not use the term *quote marks* or *quotes*. See **quotation marks** in Part II for more information on using quotation marks. See also ' (apostrophe).
→ (right arrow)	*Right arrow* is both the adjective and noun form.
§ (section symbol)	
; (semicolon)	See Part II for more information on using semicolons.
/ (slash)	
(space)	
~ (tilde)	
¨ (umlaut)	
_ (underscore)	
↑ (up arrow)	*Up arrow* is both the adjective and noun form.
I (vertical bar)	Do not use the term *pipe* for this character.

Table 7 (Cont.) Symbols

Symbol	Remarks
. . . **(vertical ellipsis points)**	See **conventions table** and **ellipsis points** in Part II for more information on using ellipsis points.

5 Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Terms

Table 8 contains an alphabetical list of terms, abbreviations, and acronyms frequently used or referred to in Digital technical information. Word list entries are listed in boldface type. Parts of speech are given in brackets after terms if the part of speech is necessary to understanding how the word is treated. This list does not include product names. For information about the correct use of company or third-party trademarks, check with your product manager or legal representative. For more information on trademark searches, see **trademarks and service marks** in Part II.

Table 8 Word List

Term	Comments
2D	Spell out *two-dimensional*.
3D	Spell out *three-dimensional*.
4GL	Fourth-generation language.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
A	
ABD (ancillary control process buffer descriptor)	
abort	Avoid. Use *end abnormally* or similar terms.
ac (alternating current)	
ACB (attribute control block)	
access control entry (ACE)	Also access control list entry.
access control list (ACL)	
access control privileges	Use all capital letters for the full name of a particular privilege, with the abbreviation in parentheses, for example, GLOBAL_DELETE (G).
access mode	
ACE (access control entry, access control list entry)	
ACF (configuration control block)	
ACL (access control list)	
ACP (ancillary control process)	
active form	
active insertion point	Do not use the term *current insertion point*.
active window	
A/D (analog-to-digital) [adj]	
adapter	Do not use the term *adaptor*.
ADB (application database)	
add-on [n]	
addressable	
Advanced Projects Agency Network (ARPANET)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	A
after-image journal (AIJ), after-image journaling	
agenda [n sing, pl]	Use as both a singular and plural noun; the verb form depends on the context. For example, both these sentences are correct: "Their agenda were different." "Her agenda was different from mine."
AIB (ancillary control process I/O buffer packet)	
AIJ (after-image journal)	
air-condition [v], **air conditioner** [n], **air-conditioning** [n]	
air-cool [v], **air-cooled** [adj], **air cooling** [n]	
airflow	
algorithm	
alias	
Allen wrench	
allow	Do not use the term *allow for*.
allow mode	
all right [adj, adv]	Do not use the term *alright*.
alphabetic, alphabetical [adj]	Use *alphabetic* to contrast with *numeric*. Use *alphabetical* to describe an ordering scheme: *alphabetical order*.
alphanumeric [adj]	
alphanumeric directory	Do not use. Use the term *named directory*.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
A	
alternate	Use to mean one after the other or every other. Use the term *alternative* to describe another choice, one instead of another.
alternating current (ac)	
alternative	Use to describe another choice, one instead of another. Use the term *alternate* to mean one after the other or every other one.
Alt key	
A.M.	Use small capital letters for the abbreviation. If your system cannot produce small capital letters, use *a.m.* See **time** in Part II for more information on time expressions.
American National Standards Institute (ANSI)	
American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII)	
analog	
analog-to-digital (A/D) [adj]	
ancestor	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
ancillary control process (ACP)	
ancillary control process buffer descriptor (ABD)	
ancillary control process I/O buffer packet (AIB)	
ancillary control process queue header block (AQB)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
A	

AND logical operator

angle bracket prompt

ANSI (American National Standards Institute)

ANSI-compliant

answerback [adj]

ante- — Do not hyphenate prefix in most cases. See **hyphens** in Part II for more information on using hyphens with prefixes.

anti- — Do not hyphenate prefix in most cases. See **hyphens** in Part II for more information on using hyphens with prefixes.

antialiasing

anytime [adv], **any time** [n phrase]

AP (argument pointer)

API (application programming interface)

apparatus, apparatuses

appendixes [n pl] — Use *appendixes* instead of *appendices*.

application database (ADB)

application designer

application execution controller

application manager

application programmer

application programming services

application title

applications programming

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
A	
AQB (ancillary control process queue header block)	
argument pointer (AP)	
ARPANET (Advanced Projects Agency Network)	
arrow key	Name of a key marked with an arrow on the keyboard. See **keys** in Part II and Table 7 for more information on keys, key names, and symbols.
ASB (asynchronous context block)	
ASCII (American Standard Code for Information Interchange)	
ASMP (asynchronous multiprocessing)	
assembler directive	
assembly language	
ASTLVL (asynchronous system trap level)	
asymmetric multiprocessing (ASMP)	
asynchronous call	
asynchronous context block (ASB)	
asynchronous system trap	
asynchronous system trap level (ASTLVL)	
atom	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	A
attribute control block (ACB)	
audiodisc	
audiovisual	
audit trail	
author	Do not use as a verb. Use *write*.
auto-	Do not hyphenate the prefix in most cases (for example, *autodecrement*, *autoincrement*, *autowrap*). However, there are some exceptions specific to Digital: *auto-repeat*, *auto-wraparound*.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	B
Bachman diagram	
back arrow	Use *left arrow*.
backed up [pred adj], **backed-up** [adj]	
backframe	
background	For DECwindows products, use this term alone only when it has already been defined as *screen background* or *window background*.
backing store	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
backlink	
back order [n, v], **backorder** [adj]	
back panel [n]	
backplane [n]	
backplane interconnect	
backspace [n, v]	
backtranslate [v]	
back up [v], **backup** [n, adj]	For example, *backup set*.
Backus-Naur Form	
backward	Do not use *backwards*.
backward compatibility [n], **backward-compatible** [adj]	
bad block	
bandwidth	
bar code	
bar code reader	
bar code scanner	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
B	

baseband network

base kit

base level

baseline [n, adj]

base page

base page determination file

baseplate

batch job

batch processing

baud [n sing & pl, adj] — The term *baud* refers to a transmission rate (usually bits per second). Therefore, the term *baud rate* is sometimes considered redundant. However, *baud rate* is widely used in the industry and is an acceptable term.

BDB (buffer descriptor block)

BDP (buffered data path)

before-image journal, before-image journaling

beginning of file (BOF)

beginning-of-tape (BOT)

benchmark, benchmarking

Berg connector

Berkeley Internet Name Domain (BIND)

Berkeley Standard Distribution (BSD)

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
B	
bi-	Do not hyphenate prefix in most cases. See **hyphens** in Part II for more information on using hyphens with prefixes.
BIL (Indented Bills Report)	
bill of materials (BOM)	Use all lowercase letters if not part of the title of a BOM. Use initial capital letters (Bill of Materials) if it is part of the title of a BOM.
binary [adj]	
binary synchronous communication (BSC)	
BIND (Berkeley Internet Name Domain)	
bio-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
bit field	
bit gravity	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
bitmap [n, adj]	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
bit mask	
bits/in, bits/inch	Use the abbreviation *bits/inch* or *bits/in* instead of *bpi*.
bits/p, bits/pixel	Use the abbreviation *bits/p* or *bits/pixel* instead of *bpp*.
bits per inch (bits/in, bits/inch)	Use the abbreviation *bits/inch* or *bits/in* instead of *bpi*.
bits per pixel (bits/p)	Use the abbreviation *bits/p* or *bits/pixel* instead of *bpp*.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
B	

Term	Comments
bit plane	
bit vector	
block cursor	Do not use for DECwindows products. Use *cursor*.
block mode [n], **block-mode** [adj]	
block-shaped cursor	Do not use for DECwindows products. Use *cursor*.
block step	
boilerplate	
boldface	Use instead of *bold*, *bolded*, or *bolding* when describing a type style.
BOM (bill of materials)	
Boolean [adj]	Do not use as a noun.
Boolean expression, boolean-expression [syntax]	
Boolean operator	
boot, bootstrap [v], **bootable** [adj]	*Boot* is short for *bootstrap*. Use *bootable* instead of *bootstrappable*. If ease of translation is a concern, do not use *boot* or its variants; use *start up* or *initialize* instead.
boot block	
BOT (beginning-of-tape)	
bottommost	
Bourne shell	
bpi	Do not use. Use *bits per inch*, *bits/in*, or *bits/inch*.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
B	
bpp	Do not use. Use *bits per pixel*, *bits/p*, or *bits/pixel*.
break-in [n, adj]	
breakpoint [n, adj]	
breakthrough [adj]	
broadband network	
broadcast message	
BSC (binary synchronous communication)	
BSD (Berkeley Standard Distribution)	
buffer descriptor block (BDB)	
buffered data path (BDP)	
bugcheck	Do not use. Use *machine check*.
build operation	
buildup [n], **build up** [v]	
built-in [n, adj]	
bus [n sing], **buses** [n pl]	When referring to a specific bus, use lowercase letters for the word *bus*, as in *BI™ bus*, *DDI™ bus*, *extended LSI–11™ bus*, or *SBI™ bus*.
button	When referring to hardware, specify the type of button, such as an *ON/OFF switch* or a *mouse button*.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
B	
button binding	.
button box	
button event	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
by-	Do not hyphenate prefix in most cases. See the dictionary for exceptions, such as *by-product*.
byte count	
byte order	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
C	
ca.	Do not use. Use *about* or *approximately*.
cache [n, adj, v], **cached, caches, caching** [v], **caching** [n]	
CAD (computer-aided design)	
CAD/CAM (computer-aided design/computer-aided manufacturing)	
callback	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
calling program	
call interface	Use lowercase letters for the generic sense. Use initial capital letters when referring to a specific product facility like the *VAX DATATRIEVE Call Interface*.
call out [v], **callout** [n]	
CALS (Computer-Aided Acquisition and Logistics Support)	
CAM (computer-aided manufacturing)	
camera-ready copy (CRC)	
cancel, canceling, canceled, cancellation	
cancelable	Use only as an ACMS keyword.
candidate key	
cannot	Do not use *can not*.
capacitance	
capacitor	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
C	
capacity	Use for volumes and amounts; use *ability* and *capability* for what can be done. People have abilities, not capacities.
capstan	
card cage	
card reader	
carriage return	An ASCII character (12_8), not the *Return key*. Referred to as a *line-end character* or *new-line character* in some documentation.
carriage-return/line-feed combination	The two ASCII characters output by the Return key.
Cartesian product	
cartridge	A plastic container for a disk or a tape.
cascade button	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
cascading menu	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation. In end-user documentation, use *submenu*.
CASE (computer-aided software engineering)	
case sensitive [pred adj], **case-sensitive** [adj]	
case value, case-value [syntax]	
cassette	Equivalent to *tape cassette*.
catalog, cataloged, cataloging	
catchall	
catch up [v], **catchup** [n, adj]	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
C	
cathode-ray tube (CRT)	
caution box	
CBI (computer-based instruction)	
CCB (channel control block)	
CCITT (International Telegraph and Telephone Consultative Committee)	An international standards body.
CD (compact disc)	
CDDB (class driver data block)	
CD–ROM (compact disc read-only memory)	Digital was using the acronym *CDROM* but is now using *CD–ROM* to match the usage of the term in standards ISO/IEC 10149, *Information Technology — Data Interchange on Read-Only 120 mm Optical Data Disks (CD–ROM)* and ISO 9660, *Information Processing — Volume and File Structure of CD–ROM for Information Interchange.*
CDRP (class driver request packet)	
central processing unit (CPU)	
central processing unit to memory interconnect (CMI)	
cf.	Do not use. Use *compare.*
CF (current frame)	
changeable	
change menus	
changeover	
channel control block (CCB)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
C	

channel request block (CRB)

character-cell [adj]

character string, character-string [syntax]

check in [v], **checkin** [n, adj]

checklist

check mark

check off [v], **checkoff** [n, adj]

check out [v], **checkout** [n, adj]

checkpoint, checkpointing

checkpoint/restart

checksum [n, adj]

check up [v], **checkup** [n, adj]

child group

child window — For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.

chipset

chording — Do not use. Instead, specify the particular operation the user must perform.

CIM (computer-integrated manufacturing)

circa — Do not use. Use *about* or *approximately*.

circuit board

circuit breaker

circum- — Do not hyphenate prefix.

class driver data block (CDDB)

class driver request packet (CDRP)

Table 8 (Cont.)   Word List

Term	Comments
C	

class name [n], **class-name** [adj]

clean up [v], **cleanup** [n, adj]

CLI (command language interpreter)

click [v] — See **click and click on** and **double click** in Part II for more information on the terms *click*, *click on*, and *double-click*.

click-and-drag — Do not use. Use *drag*.

click on [v] — See **click and click on** and **double click** in Part II for more information on the terms *click*, *click on*, and *double-click*.

click rate

client

client area

client control

client/server computing

clipboard — In DECwindows products, do not use the term *paste buffer* instead of *clipboard*.

clipping region

closed loop [n], **closed-loop** [adj]

closed user group

clusterwide [adj]

CMI (central processing unit to memory interconnect)

C-mode — Do not use. Use *compatibility mode*.

CMOS (complementary metal-oxide semiconductor)

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
C	
CMP (compatibility mode bit)	
CNC (computer numerical control)	
co-	Do not hyphenate the prefix.
CODASYL (Conference on Data Systems Languages)	
CODASYL-compliant	
code string, code-string [syntax]	
collating sequence	Do not use *collation sequence*.
colormap	Use only in DECwindows programming documentation.
color selection box	
column header	
command [n, adj]	Avoid using as a verb. When used with the name of a particular command, the word *command* is in all lowercase. For example: *the lpr command*, *the PRINT command*. See also Part II for more information on **commands**.
command area	Do not use in DECwindows documentation. Use *command box*.
command box	Use *command box* instead of *command area* or *command region* in DECwindows documentation.
command button	Do not use in DECwindows documentation. Use *push button*.
command file	Do not use. Use *command procedure*.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
C	
command interpreter	Also called *command line interpreter* or *shell*.
command item	
command language interpreter (CLI)	Also called *command interpreter*, *command line interpreter*.
command line	
command line interface	Do not use to refer to a nonwindowing interface. Use *keyboard user interface*.
command line interpreter (CLI)	Also called *command interpreter*, *command language interpreter*.
command procedure	Use *command procedure* instead of *command procedure file*, *command file*, or *indirect command file*.
command process	
command region	Do not use in DECwindows documentation. Use *command box*.
comment [n]	Avoid using as a verb, as in "You can comment your programs." A preferable alternative is to use the phrase *add comments*.
comment character	
communications [n, adj]	Use the plural noun to refer to a system or means of sending messages.
compact disc (CD)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
C	
compact disc read-only memory (CD–ROM)	Digital was using the acronym *CDROM* but is now using *CD–ROM* to match the usage of the term in standards ISO/IEC 10149, *Information Technology — Data Interchange on Read-Only 120 mm Optical Data Disks (CD–ROM)* and ISO 9660, *Information Processing — Volume and File Structure of CD–ROM for Information Interchange.*
compare	Use *compare with* to stress differences; for example: "Compare last year's sales with this year's." Use *compare to* to stress similarities; for example, "Compare teal to aqua."
compatibility mode	Do not use *C-mode.*
compatibility mode bit (CMP)	
compile time [n], **compile-time** [adj]	
composite character	Use *composite character* instead of *dead key character.*
compound object	
compute-bound [adj]	
compute-power [adj]	
computer-aided design (CAD)	
computer-aided manufacturing (CAM)	
computer-aided software engineering (CASE)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
C	
computer-based instruction (CBI)	Use lowercase letters when referring to the concept of computer-based instruction. If the term is used as part of a course title, use the rules for capitalizing titles.
computer-integrated manufacturing (CIM)	
computer interconnect (CI)	
computer numerical control (CNC)	
compute state [n]	
concentrator	
concurrency	
conditional instruction	
conditional request	
Conference on Data Systems Languages (CODASYL)	
configuration control block (ACF)	
connect time	
connect-to-interrupt [adj]	
console diskette drive	
console medium	
console-mode prompt	
console storage device	
console tape cartridge drive	
console terminal	Use *console terminal* or *console subsystem* instead of *system console*.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	C
containment	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
content [n sing], **contents** [n pl]	Use the singular to refer to the main substance or nature of what is contained, as in the content of a chapter. Use the plural to refer to the collection of items contained, as in the table of contents in a book.
content-based retrieval	
contents-of operator	
context sensitive [pred adj], **context-sensitive** [adj]	
context variable	
continual	Use to mean recurring with interruptions. Use *continuous* to mean occurring without interruption.
continuation character	
continuation page	
continuous	Use to mean occurring without interruption. Use *continual* to mean recurring with interruptions.
continuous-form paper	Use *continuous-form paper* instead of *fanfold paper*.
control and status register (CSR)	Use *control and status register* instead of *control status register* or *control/status register*.
control field	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
C	
control keys	Generic term for function keys that use the key labeled Ctrl; use Ctrl/*x* when referring to pressing the Ctrl key and a generic letter simultaneously. See also **keys** in Part II for more information on key names and conventions for key sequences.
control panel	
control region (P1)	
control region base register (P1BR)	
control region length register (P1LR)	
control region page table (P1PT)	
coprocessor	
copy-on-reference [adj]	
copy protect [v], **copy protected** [pred adj], **copy-protected** [adj]	
core memory	Do not use to mean *physical memory*.
coresident overlay routines	
coroutine	
correspond	Use *correspond to* to mean *to match* or *go with*. Use *correspond with* to mean communicating by electronic or physical messages.
counter-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
counsel, counseled, counseling, counselor	
country specific [pred adj], **country-specific** [adj]	
courseware	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
C	
CPU (central processing unit)	
CPU ID	
crash	Do not use. Use *system failure* or a similar term.
crash dump [n]	
CRB (channel request block)	
CRC (camera-ready copy)	
criteria [n pl], **criterion** [n sing]	
cross-	In general, hyphenate most adjective compounds with *cross-*. Nouns with *cross-* may be spelled as one word (solid or hyphenated) or two words. Consult a dictionary.
cross brace	
cross-check [n, v]	
crosscurrent	
cross-examine	
cross hair [n], **cross-hair** [adj]	
crosshatch [n, v], **cross-hatching** [n]	
cross operation	
cross product [n], **cross-product** [adj]	
cross-refer [v]	Do not use. Use the term *refer to* or, less acceptable, *cross-reference*.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
C	
cross-reference [n, adj]	Avoid using as a verb unless you are using the specific technical meaning, where *cross-referencing* means to locate instances of a variable or other element in source code. Preferably, use the verb *refer to*.
cross-reference listing	
cross section [n], **cross-section** [v], **cross-sectional** [adj]	
cross talk [n]	
CRT (cathode-ray tube)	
Ctrl/x	Use Ctrl/x when referring to pressing the Ctrl key and a generic letter simultaneously. See also **keys** in Part II for more information on key names and conventions for key sequences.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	C
currency indicator	
current	For DECwindows products, do not use *current* instead of *active*, as in *active insertion point*.
current frame (CF)	
current slide	
current state	
curricula [n pl], **curriculum** [n sing]	
cursor	For DECwindows products, use *cursor* with the keyboard interface and *pointer* with the mouse interface. Do not use *block cursor* or *block-shaped cursor*. There are also different types of cursors: insertion cursors, location cursors, overstrike cursors, and text cursors.
cut off [v], **cutoff** [n, adj]	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
D	

D/A (digital-to-analog)

daemon

daisy chain [n], **daisy-chain** [adj]

daisy wheel [n], **daisy-wheel** [adj]

DARPA (Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency)

data [n sing & pl] — Use with a singular verb.

database

database administrator (DBA)

database handle

database journaling

database key (dbkey) — It is acceptable to use *dbkey* in regular text after spelling out the term at first use.

database management system (DBMS) — A generic term.

database recovery process (DBR)

data bus

data definition control block (DDCB)

data definition language (DDL)

data entry phase

data file

datagram

data item

data item occurrence

data item type

data link

data manipulation language (DML)

data path

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
D	
Data Phone®	A registered trademark of American Telephone and Telegraph Company.
data security erase (DSE)	
data set	
data set ready (DSR) modem line	
Data Set Reference (DSR)	
data space	
data storage directives	
data terminal ready (DTR)	
data type [n], **data-type** [syntax]	
data value	
data word	
daughterboard	
DBA (database administrator)	
DBCS (database control system)	
DBE (double-bit error)	
dbkey (database key)	It is acceptable to use *dbkey* in regular text after spelling out the term at first use.
DBMS (database management system)	An abbreviation for the generic term.
DBR (database recovery process)	
dc (direct current)	
DCL (DIGITAL Command Language)	
DCL server, DCL server image, DCL server process	
DCL tables	
dc power	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
D	

Term	Comments
DDB (device data block)	
DDCB (data definition control block)	
DDL (data definition language)	
DDP (direct data path)	
de-	Do not hyphenate prefix unless the root word begins with the letter *e* (for example, *de-emphasize*).
dead key character	Do not use. Use *composite character*.
deadlock	
debug [v], **debugging** [adj]	
debugger	Use lowercase unless used in a title or as part of the complete name of a software component, for example, *the OpenVMS Delta/Xdelta Debugger*.
debugger symbol table (DST)	
DEC	Do not use except as part of a trademark (except in the term *DEC Multinational character set*). Use *Digital Equipment Corporation* or *Digital* to refer to the company.
decimal overflow trap enable bit in PSW (DV)	
decision making [n, pred adj], **decision-making** [adj]	
DEC Multinational character set	
default dictionary directory	
default directory	Do not use *login UFD*.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
D	

deferred (indirect) addressing

delete access

Delete key — Spell out the key name. Do not use the term *DEL*. See also **keys** in Part II for more information on key names.

demand-zero [adj]

dependence [n sing], **dependences** [n pl]

dependency [n sing], **dependencies** [n pl]

-dependent [adj, suffix] — Hyphenate an adjective compound formed with the suffix *-dependent* only when it precedes what it modifies. For example, use *site-dependent procedure* but *the procedure is site dependent.*

depress — Do not use *depress* for the action of pressing a key. Use *press.*

depth — For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.

depth-cueing

desire — Do not use *desire*. Use *want.*

descriptor

desktop [adj]

detail lines

device data block (DDB)

device dependent [pred adj], **device-dependent** [adj]

device independent [pred adj], **device-independent** [adj]

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
D	
device lock	
device name	Usually refers to the software device; use *hardware device name* if that is what is meant.
D-floating	
diagnostic utility protocol (DUP)	
dial in [v], **dial-in** [adj]	Use *dial in to*, not *dial into*.
dialog	Spelling is particular to DECwindows products. *Dialogue* is the preferred spelling in *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*.
dialog box	
dialog item	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation. For end-user documentation, use *menu item*.
dialogue	This is the preferred spelling in *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*. DECwindows products use the spelling *dialog* for items such as *dialog box*.
dial out [v], **dial-out** [adj]	
dial up [v], **dialup** [adj]	
dictionary directory	
dictionary object	
different	Use *different from* except when a clause follows, as in "The tool's behavior is different than it was two weeks ago."

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	D
Digital	The abbreviation for Digital Equipment Corporation. Do not use *DEC* except as part of a trademark (such as *DECwrite software*). Use *DIGITAL* for the DIGITAL logo.
DIGITAL Command Language (DCL)	
Digital Equipment Corporation (Digital)	See **Digital**.
DIGITAL logo	Use all capital letters for the word *DIGITAL* and all lowercase letters for the word *logo*. Do not use the graphic symbol for the logo in text.
Digital-private escape sequence	
DIGITAL Storage Architecture (DSA)	
Digital-supplied	Used in reference to drivers and sometimes other software; contrast with *user-supplied* and *user-written*.
digital-to-analog (D/A) [adj]	
dim [v]	For DECwindows products, use *dim* instead of *gray* to indicate giving an object a faded appearance.
dimmed [adj]	Use *dimmed* instead of *grayed out* for DECwindows products.
direct access [n phrase], **direct-access** [adj]	
direct color	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
direct current (dc)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
D	
direct data path (DDP)	
direct memory access (DMA)	Use *direct memory access* from the perspective of the device; use *nonprocessor request* from the perspective of the processor.
DIP switch	Do not use *dual inline package switch*.
directory hierarchy	
dis-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
disc	Use *disc* when referring to a *compact disc*. In other contexts, use *disk*.
discontiguous selection	For DECwindows products, use instead of *discontinuous selection*.
discontinuous selection	Do not use in DECwindows documentation. Use *discontiguous selection*.
disk	Use *disk* instead of *disc* except when referring to a *compact disc*.
diskette	The qualifiers *floppy* and *flexible* are not needed, because *diskette* has come to mean a floppy diskette.
disk pack	
disk-resident [adj]	
dismount	Do not use *demount*.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
D	
display	The verb *display* requires an object. Do not say "The sample menu displays." Instead, recast the sentence; for example: "The system displays the sample menu." "The sample menu is displayed."
Display Only field	
dissociate	Do not use *disassociate*.
DMA (direct memory access)	
DML (data manipulation language)	
documentation set	Use *documentation set* or *information set* to refer to the collection of technical documents, other printed material, and online information that provides information for the users of a product. Do not use *doc set* or *document set*.
document type definition (DTD)	
DOP (drawing operation primitive)	
dot matrix	
dots per centimeter (dots/c, dots/centimeter)	Use the abbreviation *dots / centimeter* or *dots / c* instead of *dpc*.
dots per inch (dots/in, dots/inch)	Use the abbreviation *dots / inch* or *dots / in* instead of *dpi*.
DOS (disk operating system)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	D
double-	Hyphenate adjective compounds with *double-* (for example, *double-precision floating-point data*). Noun compounds are usually two words (for example *double entry, double time*), and verb compounds are usually hyphenated (for example, *double-time*). Consult this word list or a dictionary for specific terms.
double-bit error (DBE)	
double check [n], **double-check** [v], **double-checking**	
double click (n, v) **double-click** (adj)	
double-sided [adj]	
down-	Do not hyphenate prefix in most cases.
-down	Do not hyphenate suffix.
down arrow [n, adj]	
down click [n], **down-click** [adj]	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
down click [v]	Do not use. Use *press*.
down line [pred adj], **downline** [adj]	
downline load	
down load [pred adj], **download** [v, adj]	
down time	
dpc	Do not use as the abbreviation for *dots per centimeter*. Use *dots/c* or *dots/centimeter*.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
D	
dpi	Do not use as the abbreviation for *dots per inch*. Use *dots/in* or *dots/inch*.
DPT (driver prologue table)	
DR32 status longword (DSL)	
DRAM (dynamic random-access memory)	
drawable [n]	For DECwindows products, use only as a noun and use only in programming documentation.
drawing operation primitive (DOP)	
drive	Use lowercase letters even when the word appears before a drive number, as in *drive 1*.
driver dispatch table	
driver prologue table (DPT)	
drop-down menu	Do not use. Use *pull-down menu*.
drop shadow	
drop ship [v]	
DSA (DIGITAL Storage Architecture)	
DSE (data security erase)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
D	
DSL (DR32 status longword)	
DST (debugger symbol table)	
DTD (document type definition)	
DTR (data terminal ready)	
dual-cabinet [adj]	
dual-diskette drive	
dual-height [adj]	
dual inline package switch	Do not use. Use *DIP switch*.
dual processor [n], **dual-processor** [adj]	
DUP (diagnostic utility protocol)	
duplex	
DV (decimal overflow trap enable bit in PSW)	
DYNAMIC allocation	
dynamic random-access memory (DRAM)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
E	

easy to use [pred adj], **easy-to-use** [adj]

EAE (extended arithmetic element)

EBCDIC (Extended Binary Coded Decimal Interchange Code)

ECB (exit control block)

ECC (error correction code)

ECCU (error correction code uncorrectable)

echo, echoed, echoing, echoes [v], **echo, echoes** [n sing & pl]

ECO (engineering change order)

EDI (Electronic Data Interchange)

edit string, edit-string [syntax]

E-floating

EFN (event flag number)

e.g. — Do not use. Use *for instance* or *for example.*

EIR (error information register)

-elect — Hyphenate noun compounds unless the position named is more than one word (*supervisor-elect, project leader elect*).

electro- — Do not hyphenate prefix.

elementary field description statement

end-of-buffer (EOB) [n, adj]

end-of-file (EOF) [n, adj]

end-of-line (EOL) [n, adj]

end-of-tape (EOT) [n, adj]

end-of-volume (EOV) [n, adj]

end point [n], **end-point** [adj]

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	E
end user [n], **end-user** [adj]	
engineering change order (ECO)	
English-like syntax	
enter	You *enter* a command; you *type* text; you *press* keys. See **choose and select, enter, press,** and **type** in in Part II for more information.
entitled	Do not use in place of the word *titled*, as in "See the section titled DECwindows Interface to VAX Notes. . . . "
EOB (end-of-buffer)	
EOF (end-of-file)	
EOL (end-of-line)	
EOT (end-of-tape)	
EOV (end-of-volume)	
epilogue	Use *epilogue* instead of *epilog* except for RMS. Be consistent within a document, and be sure to match the spelling of *epilogue* and *prologue*.
equivalence name	
error correction code (ECC)	
error correction code uncorrectable (ECCU)	
error information register (EIR)	
error log [n], **error-logging** [adj]	
Escape key	
escape sequence [n phrase], **escape-sequence** [adj]	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
E	
ESP (executive-mode stack pointer)	
ESR (exception service routine)	
et al.	Do not use. Use *and others*.
etc.	Do not use the Latin expressions *etc.* or *et cetera*. Use *and so on* or *and so forth*.
Ethernet	Is not a trademark.
even-	Hyphenate adjective compounds with *even-*, for example, *even-numbered*.
event flag	
event flag number (EFN)	
event log [n], **event-logging** [adj]	
event mask	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
event propagation	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
event source	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
event synchronization	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
ex-	Hyphenate noun compounds where *ex-* means *former*, as in *ex-president*, but do not hyphenate the prefix where *ex-* means *out of*, as in *excommunicate*.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
E	

exception handling [n],
exception-handling [adj]

exception service routine (ESR)

exchange step

exclusive-OR [n, adj]

executive access

execution controller

executive mode [n], **executive-mode** [adj]

executive-mode stack pointer (ESP)

executive-size paper

exit control block (ECB)

explicit mapping

export file

Term	Comments
exposure event	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
extendable	*Extendable* is the preferred term to mean *able to be extended*.
extend access [n]	
extended QIO processor (XQP)	
extensible	*Extendable* is the preferred term to mean *able to be extended*.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
F	
F11ACP (Files–11 ancillary control process)	
FAB (file access block)	
facedown [adv]	
faceup [adv]	
fail over [v], **failover** [n, adj]	A Digital-specific term; define at first use.
FAL (file access listener)	
fall back [v], **fallback** [n, adj]	
fanfold paper	Do not use. Use *continuous-form paper*.
FAO (formatted ASCII output)	
farther	Use *farther* to refer to physical distance. Use *further* to refer to time or quantity.
fast mapping [n], **fast-mapping** [adj]	
FCB (file control block)	
FCO (field change order)	
FCS (file control system)	
FDT (function decision table)	
feed back [v], **feedback** [n, adj]	
F-floating	
FIB (file information block)	
fiber-optic [adj], **fiber optics** [n]	
FID (file identification number)	
field attribute	
field change order (FCO)	
field constant	
field description statement	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	F
field identifier	
field name, field-name [syntax]	
field picture	
field test	
field tree	
field validator	
FIFO (first-in/first-out)	
file access block (FAB)	
file access listener (FAL)	
file cabinet	Use lowercase letters when used generically. When referring to a component of an electronic office, use initial capital letters.
file control block (FCB)	
file control processor (FCP)	
file control system (FCS)	
file extension	Use in ULTRIX documentation; use *file type* in OpenVMS documentation. In multiplatform documentation, decide on a generic term. See **file specifications** in Part II for more information on referring to file specifications.
file header block	
file header label	
file identification number (FID)	
file identifier	Also called file ID.
file information block (FIB)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
F	
file name [n, adj], **filename** [syntax]	
Files–11 ancillary control process block (F11ACP)	
Files–11 On-Disk Structure Level 1 (or 2)	Use initial capital letters unless not used in full form, for example, *structure level 1*. Use to replace *Files–11 Structure Level 1 (or 2)* and *On-Disk Structure Level 1 (or 2)*.
file selection box	
file server	
file specification, **file-spec** [syntax]	Do not use *filespec* or *file-spec* in text. See **file specifications** in Part II for more information on referring to file specifications.
file-structured, non-file-structured [adj], **file structure** [n]	
file structure owner	
file type [n, adj]	Use *file type* instead of *file extension* for OpenVMS products. Use *file extension* in ULTRIX documentation. In multiplatform documentation, decide on a generic term. See **file specifications** in Part II for more information on referring to file specifications.
fill-rate [adj]	
fine-tune [v]	
finger-tighten [v]	
firmware	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
F	

firsthand

first-in/first-out (FIFO) [adj]

first part (of an instruction) done (FPD)

fixed disk [n], **fixed-disk** [adj]

fixed-length [adj]

fixed point [n], **fixed-point** [adj]

flag page

flat-head screw

flexible diskette — Do not use. Use *diskette*.

flip chart

flip-flop [n]

floating decimal point

floating point [n], **floating-point** [adj] — As in *single-precision floating-point data, double-precision floating-point data*.

floating underflow trap enable bit in PSW (FU)

floppy diskette — Do not use the terms *floppy* or *floppy diskette*. Use *diskette*.

flowchart

focus window

-fold — Do not hyphenate suffix except when used with a numeral, for example, *threefold, 50-fold*.

follow on [v], **follow-on** [n, adj]

follow through [v], **follow-through** [n, adj]

follow up [v], **follow-up** [n, adj]

font attribute selection box

font-dependent

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
F	

foot pound

foot stand

foreign key

foreground

fork list

fork lock

formatted ASCII output (FAO)

formatted output specification (FOSI)

form definition

form editor	Use *form editor*, not *forms editor*.
form feed [n], **form-feed** [adj]	Example: *form-feed character*.
form field [n], **form-field** [adj]	Example: *form-field attribute*.

formwide attributes

FOSI (formatted output specification)

fourth-generation language (4GL)

FP (frame pointer)

FPD (first part [of an instruction] done)

frame buffer [n], frame-buffer [adj]

frame pointer (FP)

free-page list

free space

FRU (field-replacable unit)

FU (floating underflow trap enable bit in PSW)

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
F	
full-duplex [adj]	
full path name	
fullword	
function	When used with the name of a particular function, the word *function* is all lowercase. For example: the FN$COS function.
functionality	Do not use. Refer to *new features* rather than *new functionality*.
function decision table (FDT)	
further	Use *further* to refer to time or quantity. Use *farther* to refer to physical distance.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	G
gateway	
GB (gigabyte)	See **abbreviations and acronyms** and **measurement, units of** in Part II for information on abbreviations and measurements.
GC, GContext	Abbreviation for *graphics context*. Use only in DECwindows programming documentation.
GCR (group code recording)	
G-floating	
ghost image	Do not use in place of *dimmed*.
GID (group ID)	Do not use *group id*.
gigabyte (GB)	See **abbreviations and acronyms** and **measurement, units of** in Part II for information on abbreviations and measurements.
given name, given-name [syntax]	
GKS (Graphical Kernel System)	A generic implementation.
global aggregate	
global search-and-replace	
global section	An area of physical memory that can be shared by multiple user processes. Global sections should not be confused with shared memory. See also **shared memory**.
global selection	
global symbol table (GST)	
globbing	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
G	
glyph	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
GOLD key	
go-to-page	
go-to-ruler	
graph description file	
graphic, graphics [n sing, pl]	Use *graphic* to refer to a product of graphic art, such as a drawing or sketch. Use *graphics* to refer to (a) the graphic media, (b) more than one picture, or (c) the process by which a computer system displays graphics.
graphic, graphics [adj]	Use *graphic* instead of *graphical*. Use *graphic* to indicate something written or drawn, as in a "graphic symbol" or "graphic representation". Use *graphics* to refer to more process-oriented items, such as *graphics terminal, graphics output file*.
Graphical Kernel System (GKS)	A generic implementation.
graphics accelerator	
graphics context	Use in DECwindows products to indicate the data structure that contains information needed for graphic output. For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
graphics coprocessor	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	G
graphics output file	
graphics terminal	Use *graphics terminal*; do not use *graphical terminal*.
gray [v]	Do not use as a verb. Use *dim* instead.
gray [adj]	Use *gray* to refer to the color.
grayed out [adj]	Do not use. Use *dimmed*.
gray scale	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
grey	Use *gray* to refer to the color.
group code recording (GCR)	
group data item occurrence	
group data item type	
group field	
group ID (GID)	Do not use *group id*.
group number	The *g* in *[g,m]*. This number is in octal format.
group record array	
groupware	
group workspace	
GST (global symbol table)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
H	
half-	Hyphenate an adjective compound if it begins with *half-*, as in *half-written*. Check the dictionary for exceptions.
half byte [n], **half-byte** [adj]	
half-duplex [adj]	
halftone [n, adj]	
halfword [n]	
half-protected	
hand-held [adj]	
handset	
hand-tighten	
handwritten	
hang up [v], **hangup** [n]	
hard copy [n], **hardcopy** [adj]	
hard error	Do not use *solid error*.
hard link	
hardware PCB	The term *PCB* alone (without *hardware*) refers to a software process control block.
hardwire, hardwired	
help	See **help** in Part II for more information on the terms relating to help.
help pointer	Use *help pointer* instead of *help select pointer*.
Hesiod name server (Hesiod)	
hexadecimal	
hex-head [adj]	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
H	

Term	Comments
hex nut	
hexword	
H-floating	
high-	In most cases, hyphenate adjective compounds with *high-*.
high-level [adj]	
high-order [adj]	
high-voltage power supply assembly (HVPSA)	
high-water mark	
hinge pin	
history list	
hit	Do not use *hit* for the action of pressing a key. Use *press*.
hit test [n], **hit-test** [adj]	
hold-down plate	
hold-screen [adj]	
horizontal pane pointer	
host name [n], **host-name** [syntax]	
host system	
hotspot	
HSC™ controller	
human readable [pred adj], **human-readable** [adj]	Avoid this awkward phrase, which is most likely a back formation from *machine-readable*.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
H	
HVPSA (high-voltage power supply assembly)	
hydro-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
hyper-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
hypo-	Do not hyphenate prefix.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
I	
I-beam cursor	Do not use. Use *insertion cursor*.
ICB (interrupt control block)	
icon	
icon area	Do not use. Use *icon box*.
icon box	Use *icon box* instead of *icon area*.
iconic	Do not use. Use *graphic*, as in *graphic menu*.
iconicize	Do not use *iconicize, iconify,* or *iconize*. Use the term *minimize*.
iconify	Do not use *iconicize, iconify,* or *iconize*. Use the term *minimize*.
iconize	Do not use *iconicize, iconify,* or *iconize*. Use the term *minimize*.
icon region	
IDB (interrupt dispatch block)	
identification (ID)	
idle-time [adj]	
i.e.	Do not use. Use *that is*.
IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers)	
IFAB (internal file access block)	
image section	
immediate-mode addressing	
impure code	Do not use. Use *non-reentrant code*.
in-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
inactive insertion point	
inactive pointer	
inactive window	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
I	
inch-pounds	
in-circuit [adj]	
inclusive-OR [n, adj]	Also *OR*.
increment [n]	Do not use as a verb.
Indented Bills Report (BIL)	
in depth [adv], **in-depth** [adj]	
index-deferred addressing	
indexed form array	
indexed sequential access mode (ISAM)	
indexes [n pl]	Use *indexes* instead of *indices* to discuss book indexes.
index key, index-key [syntax]	
index node	
index sort	
index subentry	
index window	
indices	Use *indices*, not *indexes*, to discuss algebraic signs and arrays. Use *indexes* to discuss book indexes.
industry-standard [adj]	
information provider	
in house [pred adj, adv], **in-house** [adj]	
initialization procedure	
initialize [v]	If ease of translation is a concern, use *initialize* or *start up* instead of *boot* or its variants.
inline [adj]	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	I
input [n]	Do not use as a verb. Use *enter* or *type*.
input focus	
input-only [adj]	Hyphenate this adjective compound except in the special DECwindows use of an *InputOnly window*.
InputOnly window	Use only in DECwindows programming documentation.
input/output (I/O) [n, adj]	If appropriate to the audience, spell out at first use. COBOL uses both *I/O* and *I-O* as abbreviations.
InputOutput window	Use only in DECwindows programming documentation.
insertion cursor	
insertion point	
insertion pointer	
Installation Verification Procedure (IVP)	
installed area	
Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE)	
integer overflow trap enable bit in PSW (IV)	
interchangeable	
internal file access block (IFAB)	
internal-memory [adj]	As in *internal-memory read, internal-memory reference, internal-memory write.*
internal processor register (IPR)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
I	

Term	Comments
International Organization for Standardization (ISO)	
Internet Protocol (IP)	
interrecord gap (IRG)	
interrupt [n, v]	
interrupt-acknowledge [adj]	As in *interrupt-acknowledge level, interrupt-acknowledge transaction.*
interrupt control block (ICB)	
interrupt dispatch block (IDB)	Use *interrupt dispatch block* instead of *interrupt data block.*
interrupt-driven [adj]	
interruptible	
interrupt priority level (IPL)	
interrupt-request signal	
interrupt service routine (ISR)	
interrupt stack (IS)	
interrupt stack pointer (ISP)	
interrupt transfer vector block (VEC)	
interrupt vector address	
intra-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
in use [pred adj], **in-use** [adj]	
invoke	Use *invoke* when you refer to calling a utility, for example, "To invoke the Install Utility, enter the following command. . . . "

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
I	
I/O (input/output) [n, adj]	If appropriate to the audience, spell out at first use. COBOL uses both *I/O* and *I-O* as abbreviations.
I/O request packet (IRP)	
I/O request packet extension (IRPE)	
IOSB (I/O status block)	
I/O-space [adj]	As in *I/O-space assignment*, *I/O-space byte masks*.
I/O status block (IOSB)	
I/O-write data	
IP (Internet Protocol)	
IPL (interrupt priority level)	
IPR (internal processor register)	
IRG (interrecord gap)	
IRP (I/O request packet)	
IRPE (I/O request packet extension)	
IS (interrupt stack)	
ISAM file	*Indexed file* is preferable.
ISO/OSI (International Organization for Standardization/Open System Interconnect)	
ISP (interrupt stack pointer)	
ISR (interrupt service routine)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
I	
issue	Do not use *issue a command*. Use *enter* to mean issuing a command from the keyboard. Use *choose* to designate an operation from a menu. See **choose and select, enter,** and **type** in Part II for more information.
IV (integer overflow trap enable bit in PSW)	
IVP (Installation Verification Procedure)	
-ize	Do not use *-ize* as a suffix to create new verbs from nouns. For example, do not use *iconize*.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
J	
JIT (Just-in-Time inventory system)	
job controller	
job name [n], **job-name** [syntax]	
job search list	
job separation pages	
job status word	
jobwide	
join operation	
journal [n, v], **journaling**	
journal file	
joystick	
judgment	
Julian date	
jumper [n]	Do not use as a verb.
junction record	
Just-in-Time inventory system (JIT)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
K	
k	The value 1000 (metric thousand). See **abbreviations and acronyms** and **measurement, units of** in Part II for more information on abbreviations and measurements.
K	The value 1024 (binary thousand), as in 64 K. Also the abbreviation for the kelvin temperature unit. See **abbreviations and acronyms** and **measurement, units of** in Part II for more information on abbreviations and measurements.
kB (kilobyte)	Use this abbreviation if k represents a metric multiplier. If K represents a binary multiplier, use K *bytes*. See **abbreviations and acronyms** and **measurement, units of** in Part II for information on abbreviations and measurements.
keeplist	
kept session	
kernel	Not *kernal*.
kernel mode [n], **kernel-mode** [adj]	
kernel-mode stack pointer (KSP)	
keyboard [n]	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
K	
keyboard user interface	Use instead of *command line interface* to refer to a nonwindowing interface.
keycap	
keyclick	
key field	
keylock	
key name	
keypad	
key storage table	
keystroke	
keyswitch	
key value	
keyword [n, adj]	
keyword/page matching pair	
kHz (kilohertz)	
kilobyte (kB)	Use *n kB* if *k* represents a metric multiplier. If *K* represents a binary multiplier, use *nK bytes*. See **abbreviations and acronyms** and **measurement, units of** in Part II for more information on abbreviations and measurements.
kilohertz (kHz)	
kilowatt (kW)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
K	

Korn shell

KSP (kernel-mode stack pointer)

kW (kilowatt) — If you must use an abbreviation to refer to thousands of words, do not use *kW*. Use the convention *n*K words or *n*K-word.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
L	

label, labeled, labeling

laboratory peripheral accelerator (LPA11-K)

LAN (local area network)

language dependent [pred adj],
language-dependent [adj]

language sensitive [pred adj],
language-sensitive [adj]

language-mode selection knob

LAN server

large-scale [adj]

large-scale integration (LSI)

laserdisc [n]

laser printer [n, adj]

last-in/first-out (LIFO) [adj]

LAT™ terminal server

lay out [v], **layout** [n]

LBN (logical block number)

lead-in [n, adj]

leading edge [pred adj], **leading-edge** [adj]

least recently used (LRU)

least significant bit (LSB)

Term	Comments
left-hand	Do not use *left-hand margin.* Use *left margin.*
left-justified [adj, pred adj], **left-justify** [v]	
left margin	Use *left margin* instead of *left-hand margin.*
leftmost	
legal-size paper	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
L	
letter-quality printer (LQP)	
level-1 cache	
library [n]	Do not use as a verb.
life cycle	Use as two words, not one word.
LIFO (last-in/first-out)	
lightpen [n, adj]	
-like	In general, do not hyphenate the suffix in adjective compounds except for compounds derived from proper nouns, compounds that end in *ll*, and compounds formed from multiple words.
line-end character	See **carriage return**.
line feed [n], **line-feed** [adj]	
line index	
line-oriented [adj]	
line printer [n, adj]	
linkable image	Do not use. Use *shareable image*.
linker	Use lowercase unless used in a title or as part of the complete name of a software component, for example, *the OpenVMS Linker*.
link time [n], **link-time** [adj]	
list box	
listing	Preferred over *printout*, but be sensitive to what your users are used to from another environment.
load-image file	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
L	
local area interconnect	
local area network (LAN)	
Local Area VAXcluster™	
location cursor	Do not use *selection cursor*.
locknut [n]	
logged in [pred adj], **logged-in** [adj]	
logical block number (LBN)	
logical device name	
logical name [n, adj]	
logical operator	
logical OR	Do not hyphenate.
logical unit number (LUN)	
log file	
log in [v], **login** [n, adj]	Use *log in* instead of *log into* or *log on*. Examples: *log in to the system, login UIC, login text, at login*.
log off	Do not use. Use *log out*.
log on	Do not use. Use *log in*.
log out [v], **logout** [n, adj]	Use *log out* instead of *log off* or *logoff*.
long-term journaling	Same as *after-image journaling*.
longword	
look ahead [v], **look-ahead** [n, adj]	
lookaside [adj]	
look up [v], **lookup** [n, adj]	
loopback [n, adj]	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
L	
low-	In most cases, hyphenate adjective compounds spelled with *low-*.
lowercase [n, adj]	Spell as one word, not two words.
low-order [adj]	
low-voltage power supply assembly (LVPSA)	
LPA11-K (laboratory peripheral accelerator)	
LQP (letter-quality printer)	
LRU (least recently used)	
LSI (large-scale integration)	
LUN (logical unit number)	
LVPSA (low-voltage power supply assembly)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
M	
machine check	Do not use *bug check*.
machine language [n], **machine-language** [adj]	
macro	Statement that requests the language processor to execute a predefined set of instructions (also called a *macroinstruction*). Use the noun *macro* with care; usually macro definition is meant. There are also different types of macros.
macro call	
macrocode	
macrodiagnostic [n, adj]	
macroinstruction	Statement that requests the language processor to execute a predefined set of instructions (also called a *macro*). Use the noun *macro* with care; usually macro definition is meant. There are also different types of macros.
magnetic tape	Use *magnetic tape* instead of *magtape*. Does not include DECtape™ tapes.
magnetic tape ancillary control process (MTACP)	
magnetic tape volume list (MVL)	
mailbox	
mainframe	
main keyboard	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
M	
main memory	Use *main memory* instead of *physical memory*.
main menu	
main window	
mal-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
manpage	Do not use *manpage*, *man page*, or *manual page*. Use *reference page* to refer to the online help for systems derived from the UNIX operating system.
manufacturer-detected bad sector file (MDBSF)	
Manufacturing Automation Protocol (MAP)	
MAP (Manufacturing Automation Protocol)	
mapping	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
map register	Use *map register* instead of *mapping register*.
map to	
mark up [v], **markup** [n, adj]	
MASSBUS™ adapter (MBA)	
mass storage [n]	
master file directory (MFD)	
Material Requirements Planning (MRP)	
matrix, matrixes	Use *matrixes* as the plural for *matrix* except when the term is used in its mathematical sense. In that case, use *matrices*.
maximum record number (MRN)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
M	
Mb (megabit)	See **abbreviations and acronyms** and **measurement, units of** in Part II for information on abbreviations and measurements.
MB (megabyte)	See **abbreviations and acronyms** and **measurement, units of** in Part II for information on abbreviations and measurements.
MB1, MB2, MB3, ..., MBn	Mouse button 1, mouse button 2, mouse button 3, mouse button n.
MBA (MASSBUS adapter)	
MBC (multiblock count)	
MBF (multibuffer count)	
M-bus	
M-bus arbitration error	
M-bus-interface logic	
M-bus-monitoring logic	
MBZ (must be zero)	
MCR (monitor console routine)	
MDB (menu database)	
MDBSF (manufacturer-detected bad sector file)	
mean-time-between-failures (MTBF)	
mean-time-to-repair (MTTR)	
media [n sing & pl]	Use *media* for both the singular and plural forms with a singular verb.

Table 8 (Cont.)   Word List

Term	Comments
M	
megabit (Mb)	See **abbreviations and acronyms** and **measurement, units of** in Part II for more information on abbreviations and measurements.
megabyte (MB)	See **abbreviations and acronyms** and **measurement, units of** in Part II for more information on abbreviations and measurements.
megahertz (MHz)	
member number	The *m* in *[g,m]*. This number is in octal format.
member record, member record type	
memory mapping enable (MME)	
memory-read [adj]	As in *memory-read data, memory-read transaction.*
memory-resident [adj]	
memory-shared [adj]	As in *memory-shared clean read, memory-shared write-through.*
memory-space [adj]	As in *memory-space address, memory-space read, memory-space reference.*
memory-unshared [adj]	As in *memory-unshared read, memory-unshared write-through.*
memory-write transaction	
menu	See **DECwindows objects** and **menus** in Part II for more information.
menu bar	
menu database (MDB)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
M	

menu item

menu name

menu page

menu path

message box

message file

meta- — Do not hyphenate prefix unless root word begins with the letter *a*.

metacharacter

metadata

metafile

metalanguage

MFD (master file directory)

MHz (megahertz)

microcode

mid- — Do not hyphenate prefix.

mileage

military network (MILNET)

MILNET (military network)

mini- — Do not hyphenate prefix, for example, *minicomputer*, *minikeyboard*, *minikeypad*.

MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology)

MME (memory mapping enable)

mnemonic

MNT (module name table)

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
M	
modal dialog box	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
mode	Use the term *mode* in lowercase unless it appears with an initial capital letter on the screen. Use initial capital letters for the name of the mode except for *PASSALL mode*.
modeless dialog box	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
modeling	
modem	
modified-page list	
modifier keys	
modify access	Also *read/write access*.
module name table (MNT)	
monitor	
monitor console routine (MCR)	
monochrome	In DECwindows usage, a special case of black and white in which there are only two colormap entries. In this sense, use only in DECwindows programming documentation.
most significant bit (MSB)	Note that *MSB®* is also a registered trademark of Apple Computer, Inc.
motherboard	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
M	
mouse	See **conventions table, mouse,** and **pointing devices** in Part II for more information on pointing devices.
mouse button	After you define the buttons in text, use *MB1*, *MB2*, and so on.
mouse pointer	Do not use. Use *pointer*.
mouse speed	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation. In end-user documentation, use *pointer speed*.
MRN (maximum record number)	
MRP, MRP II (Materials Requirement Planning)	
MSCP™ protocol	
MTACP (magnetic tape ancillary control process)	
MTBF (mean-time-between-failures)	
MTTR (mean-time-to-repair)	
multiclick	Do not use. Use *multiple clicks* or *a series of clicks*, or specify the number of clicks required for the task.
multicolumn document	
multinational character set	Use for generic character sets only; use *DEC Multinational character set* when referring to that specific character set.
multiple-address message	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	M
multiple-step task	
multiport memory unit	MA780; a device whose memory can be shared by multiple VAX processors.
multithreaded backup	
multithreaded restore	
must be zero (MBZ)	
mutex semaphore	Equivalent to *mutual exclusion semaphore*; the short form is preferred.
mutual exclusion semaphore	*Mutex semaphore* is the preferred term.
MVL (magnetic tape volume list)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
N	
NAM (name block)	
name block (NAM)	
named data	
named directory	Use *named directory* instead of *alphanumeric directory*.
NAND logical operator	
NAS (Network Application Support)	
National Computer Security Center (NCSC)	
navigate [v]	Transitive verb, as in *navigate the menu*. You do not *navigate through* a menu.
NCSC (National Computer Security Center)	
needlenose [adj]	
NETACP (network ancillary control process)	
network address, network-address [syntax]	
network ancillary control process (NETACP)	
Network Application Support (NAS)	
network management listener (NML)	
network services protocol (NSP)	
new line [n], **new-line**	Sometimes used as term for the carriage-return character.
NFS®	Do not use as an abbreviation for *non-file-structured*. The abbreviation *NFS* is a registered trademark of Sun Microsystems, Inc.
NML (network management listener)	
no-	In most cases, hyphenate prefix. The noun *no echo*, a terminal characteristic, is an exception.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
N	
node name, node-name [syntax]	
non-	Do not hyphenate prefix in most cases. See **hyphens** in Part II for more information on hyphenating prefixes.
non-file-structured	Do not use the abbreviation *NFS*, which is a registered trademark of Sun Microsystems, Inc.
nonprocessor request (NPR)	Synonym for *direct memory access* (DMA). Use *NPR* from the perspective of the processor, *DMA* from the perspective of the device.
non-reentrant code	Use *non-reentrant code* instead of *impure code*.
non-return-to-zero-inverted (NRZI)	
nonsingular set type	
nonvolatile random-access memory (NVRAM)	
nonzero	
no-op	
NOR logical operator	
NOT logical operator	
no-restore mode	
NPR (nonprocessor request)	
NRZI (non-return-to-zero-inverted)	
NSP (network services protocol)	
numeric [adj]	Use *numeric* instead of *numerical*.
NVRAM (nonvolatile random-access memory)	

Table 8 (Cont.)   Word List

Term	Comments
	O
object	For DECwindows products, use *object* instead of *screen object*.
object code	
object file	
object library	
object module	
object module library	
object rights block (ORB)	
object selection	
object text insertion pointer	Do not use. Use *insertion cursor* or *cursor*.
object-time system (OTS)	
obscure	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
obsolete [adj]	Do not use as a verb.
occlude	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
occur, occurring, occurred, occurrence	
octaword	
ODA/ODIF (Office Document Architecture/Office Document Interchange Format)	
odd-	Hyphenate adjective compounds with *odd-*, for example, *odd-numbered*.
-odd	Hyphenate adjective compounds with *-odd*, as in *20-odd*.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	O
off-	Do not hyphenate prefix in most cases, but check dictionary for exceptions, for example, *off-peak*.
-off	Do not hyphenate suffix, for example *cutoff, writeoff.*
Office Document Architecture/Office Document Interchange Format (ODA/ODIF)	
off line [pred adj, adv], **offline** [adj]	Examples: *an offline device, the device is off line, put the device off line.*
offload [v]	A specialized word often used incorrectly for *unload.*
offset [n, adj, v]	
ohmic [adj]	
on-	Do not hyphenate prefix in most cases.
-on	Do not hyphenate suffix in most cases. Check dictionary for particular words.
On-Disk Structure Level 1 (or 2)	Always precede with *Files–11.*
one's complement	
on line [pred adj, adv], **online** [adj]	
online help	See **help**.
on marker	Do not use. Use *toggle button.*
ON/OFF switch	
on-screen [adj]	
on site [pred adj, adv], **on-site** [adj]	
opcode	
OPCOM (operator communication process)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
O	
operating system	Do not capitalize, even with the name of an operating system, for example, *ULTRIX operating system, OpenVMS VAX operating system*.
operator command	
operator communication process (OPCOM)	
operator terminal	
option	In ULTRIX systems, an option is like an OpenVMS qualifier, as in *the -z option*. The word *option* may also be used more generically, as in a reference to a *menu option* or a numbered option (*option 4*). Use lowercase for the word *option* in these cases.
option box	For DECwindows products, do not use in place of *Options menu*. An option box is a dialog box control that displays a set of items from which users can choose. An Options menu is a standard menu that lets users customize various aspects of the application.
OR logical operator	
ORB (operator rights block)	
orient [v]	Do not use *orientate*.
OS (output specification)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
O	

Term	Comments
OTS (object-time system)	
out-	Generally do not hyphenate prefix.
-out	Do not hyphenate suffix.
out-of-band AST	
output specification (OS)	
over-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
overlapping windows	
overlay [n, v], **overlaid** [adj]	Not *overlayed*.
overlay structure [n], **overlay-structured** [adj]	
overstrike cursor	
overvoltage [n]	
owner record type	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
P	

Term	Comments
P0 (program region)	
P0BR (program region base register)	
P0LR (program region length register)	
P0PT (program region page table)	
P1 (control region)	
P1BR (control region base register)	
P1LR (control region length register)	
P1PT (control region page table)	
packet	Do not capitalize the adjective preceding *packet*, for example, *send packet*.
page action request	
page break	
page cache size	
page coordinate system	
page-end mark	
page frame number (PFN)	
page frame number mapping (PFN mapping)	
page header	
page key prefix	
page table entry (PTE)	
paging file	Not *page file*.
pane	For DECwindows products, do not use as a noun or verb. Use *window pane* (noun) and *divide* (verb).
paper-low condition	
paper-out condition	
paper tape	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	P
para-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
parameter-passing [adj]	
parent window	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
parity [n, adj]	
partition control block (PCB)	
PASSALL mode	Exception to the rule for using initial capital letters for the name of a mode.
password	
password protect [v], **password protected** [pred adj], **password-protected** [adj]	
paste area	
paste buffer	In DECwindows documents, do not use *paste buffer* instead of *clipboard*.
paste up [v], **pasteup** [n, adj]	
path block (PB)	
path-down [n]	
path-loading [n]	
path name [n], **path-name** [syntax]	ULTRIX information uses the term *pathname*.
PB (path block)	
PB1, PB2, PB3, PB4, ..., PB*n*	Puck button 1, puck button 2, puck button 3, puck button 4, puck button *n*.
PC (program counter)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
P	
PCB (process control block, partition control block, printed circuit board)	
PCBB (process control block register)	
PDAF (Personal Document Attributes File)	
PE (phase-encoded) [adj]	
peak time [n], **peak-time** [adj]	
peak-to-peak [adj]	
pending delete	
per	Latin expression meaning *through*, *by means of*, *by*, or *for*. *Per* is acceptable in technical documentation. However, use a slash (/) instead of the letter *p* in abbreviations for units of measurement. For example, use *bits/in* instead of *bpi*.
performance monitor enable bit in PCB (PME)	
Peripheral Interchange Program (PIP)	
permanent virtual circuit	
Personal Document Attributes File (PDAF)	
PFN (page frame number)	
PFN mapping (page frame number mapping)	
phase encoded (PE) [pred adj], **phase-encoded** [adj]	
PHD (process header)	
PHIGS (Programmer's Hierarchical Interactive Graphics System)	A generic implementation.
Phillips screwdriver	
photoarray [n, adj]	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	P
photodiode [n]	
photosensitive [adj]	
phototransistor [n]	
physical address space	
physical memory	Do not use. Use *main memory*.
pickup roller	
picture-phone	
PID (process ID)	Do not use *process id*.
pin-feed [adj]	
PIP	Peripheral Interchange Program.
pipe [v]	Describes the transfer of data between applications on a shell command line. Do not use *pipe* for the vertical bar (I) character.
pipelining	
pixel	
pixel value	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
pixmap	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
placeholder	
plane, plane mask	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	P
P.M.	Use small capital letters for the abbreviation. If your system cannot produce small capital letters, use *p.m.* See **time** in Part II for more information on time expressions.
PME (performance monitor enable bit in PCB)	
point [v]	Do not use when referring to the pointer. Use *position the cursor.*
point-and-click	Do not use. Use *click.*
pointer cursor	Do not use. Use *pointer.*
POINTER data type	
pointer event	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
pointer speed	Use *pointer speed* instead of *mouse speed* in DECwindows end-user documentation.
pointing device	Examples: mouse, puck, stylus, and so on. See **conventions table, mouse,** and **pointing devices** in Part II for information on referring to pointing devices.
point-to-point [adj]	
pool-resident [adj]	
pop up [v], **pop-up** [adj]	
pop-up dialog box	Do not use. Use *dialog box.*
pop-up menu	
position-dependent code, position-independent code	Do not use *PIC* and *non-PIC.*

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
P	
POSIX (Portable Operating System Interface)	A standard for operating system interfaces. See **standards** in Part II for more information on industry standards.
post-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
postinstallation	
postmortem [n, adj]	
postpartum [n, adj]	
POSTSCRIPT	A registered trademark of Adobe Systems, Inc. The small capital letters are part of the official trademark, but if you cannot reproduce them on your device, use *PostScript*.
power down [v]	Do not use. Use phrasing such as *turn off the power* or *turn off the system*.
power failure	
power switch	
power up	Do not use. Use phrasing such as *turn on the system* or *turn on the power*.
pre-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
precompiler	
prefetch	
preinstallation	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	P
press	Use *press* when referring to keys or mouse buttons. Do not use *strike*, *punch*, *depress*, or *hit*. See **choose and select**, **enter**, **press**, and **type** in Part II for more information.
preventive	Do not use *preventative*.
primary key	
primary selector	
print [v]	Do not use *print out*.
print box	
printed-circuit board (PCB)	
printed-wiring board (PWB)	
printhead [n]	
print job	
print list [n], **print-list** [syntax]	
printout [n]	*Listing* is preferred, but be sensitive to what your users are used to reading.
print out [v]	Do not use. Use *print*.
print processor	
print queue	
print server	Generic term.
PRINTSERVER™	Digital's POSTSCRIPT printer. The small capital letters are part of the official trademark, but if you cannot reproduce them on your device, use PrintServer.
PRINTSERVER Supporting Host	
print set	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
P	
print spooler	
print symbiont	
print wheel	
PRK (program request key)	
pro-	Do not hyphenate prefix when it means *before* or *forward*, for example, *propel*. Hyphenate prefix when it means *favoring*, for example, *pro-democracy*.
procedure	Use lowercase letters for the term *procedure* unless it appears with an initial capital letter on the screen. Use initial capital letters for the name of the procedure.
procedure object library	
procedure server	
procedure server image	
procedure server process	
procedure server transfer module	
process	Reword to avoid the possessive forms *process's*, *process'*, and *processes'*.
process control block (PCB)	Refers to a software PCB. See also **hardware PCB**.
process control block base register (PCBB)	
process header (PHD)	
process identification (PID)	Also *process ID*; do not use *process id*.
processing step	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
P	

Term	Comments
processor status longword (PSL)	
processor status word (PSW)	
program counter (PC)	
program interface	Use lowercase unless it is a specific product name, as in the *VAX CDD/Plus™ Program Interface*.
programmable read-only memory (PROM)	
Programmer's Hierarchical Interactive Graphics System (PHIGS)	A generic implementation.
program region (P0)	
program region base register (P0BR)	
program region length register (P0LR)	
program region page table (P0PT)	
program request key (PRK)	
program section [n]	Do not use *p-sect*, *PSECT*, or *.PSECT* (a MACRO directive) as nouns if you mean *program section*; however, because various forms of *PSECT* (*.PSECT, PSECT*, and so on) are used as keywords, you may use them in such forms as *the .PSECT directive*.
prologue	Use *prologue* instead of *prolog* except for RMS. Be consistent within a document, and be sure to match the spelling of *prolog[ue]* and *epilog[ue]*.
PROM (programmable read-only memory)	
prompting expression	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	P
property	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
prospectus, prospectuses [n sing, pl]	
pseudocode	
pseudocolor	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
pseudodevice	
pseudoterminal	Do not use *pseudotty* or *pseudoTTY*.
PSL (processor status longword)	
PSW (processor status word)	
PTE (page table entry)	
puck	See **conventions table, mouse,** and **pointing devices** in Part II for information on references to pointing devices.
pull-down menu	Use *pull-down menu* instead of *drop-down menu*.
pull-right menu	Do not use. Use *submenu*.
punch	Do not use *punch* when referring to keys or mouse buttons. Use *press*.
pure code	Use *reentrant code* instead of *pure code*.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
P	
push button [n], **push-button** [adj]	Use *push button* instead of *command button* or *screen button* in DECwindows documentation.
push-down list	
push-to-back button	
Q	
QAR (Quality Assurance Report)	
quad-height [adj]	
quadprocessor [n]	
quadword	
qualifier	
Quality Assurance Report (QAR)	
quarter turn [n], **quarter-turn** [adj]	
query header [n], **query-header** [syntax]	
query name [n], **query-name** [syntax]	
queue, queued, queuing	
queue name [n]	
queue optimization	
quiet point	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
R	
Rn **(0,1,2...)**	R0, R1, and so on are register names. Do not use *register Rn*.
RAB (record access block)	
rack mount [v], **rackmount** [n, adj]	
radio, radio-	Do not hyphenate as a prefix (for example, *radiography*), but spell open when it is used as an adjective (for example, *radio spectrum*).
radio button	
radio icon	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
radio indicator	Do not use *radio indicator* in place of *radio button*.
radio item	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation. For DECwindows end-user documents, use *menu item*.
Radix–50	Not *Rad50*, *RAD50*, or *Rad-50*. Examples: *Radix–50 character set*, *Radix–50 format*. See also **numbers** in Part II for more information on radix indicators.
RAM (random-access memory)	
ramping	
random access [n], **random-access** [adj]	
random-access memory (RAM)	
rasterops [n]	
raster scan	
RBN (replacement block number)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
R	
RCL (ready channel list)	
RCW (record control word)	
RDA (request descriptor array)	
Rdb	*Rdb* alone stands for relational database.
read access	
read-ahead [adj]	
read-enable [n, adj]	
read in [v], **read-in** [n]	
read-interlocked transaction	
read-only [adj]	
read-only memory (ROM)	
read out [v], **read-out** [n]	
read-protect [v], **read-protected** [adj]	
read/write [adj]	
read/write access [n]	Also *modify access.*
ready channel list (RCL)	
real time [n], **real-time** [adj]	Do not use *time-critical.*
reboot, rebootstrap [v]	*See* **boot**.
receive-only mode	
record access block (RAB)	
record control word (RCW)	
record definition	
record file address (RFA)	
record keeping [n], **record-keeping** [adj]	
record locking [n], **record-locking** [adj]	
record occurrence	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
R	
record selection expression (RSE, RSEs) [n], **rse** [syntax]	
record stream	
record type	
recovery journal, recovery journaling	
recovery unit journal (RUJ), recovery unit journaling	
recur, recurs	Do not use *reoccur*.
reduction operation	
reentrant code	Use *reentrant code* instead of *pure code*.
reentry	Do not hyphenate.
refer [v], **reference** [n]	The preferred verb is *refer*, although *reference* is gaining some acceptance as a verb. See also **cross-reference**.
reference page	Do not use *manpage*, *man page*, or *manual page* to refer to the online help for systems derived from the UNIX operating system.
reflexive join	
region of interest (ROI)	
relative path name	Use *relative path name* instead of *partial path name*.
relative point mode	
relative volume number (RVN)	
relative volume table (RVT)	
release [v]	Use the verb *release* instead of *up click*.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
R	
REMACP (remote I/O ancillary control process)	
remote I/O ACP (REMACP)	
remote page	
remote procedure call	Use the acronym *RPC* to refer only to the software, not to the calls themselves. Use the acronym only as an adjective, for example, *RPC client*.
remote server	This term is always lowercase.
reoccur	Do not use. Use *recur*.
report specification	
request call	
request descriptor array (RDA)	
requester	
request instructions	
request library definition	
request library file (RLB)	
request library instruction	
resize button	Do not use *resize icon*.
resize pointer	
response identifier (RSPID)	
restart [n, v, adj]	
restart parameter block (RPB)	
restore	Do not use *undelete*.
restriction clause	
retro-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
RFA (record file address)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
R	
RGB values	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
right arrow [n, adj]	
right-hand [adj]	Use *right margin* instead of *right-hand margin*.
right-justified [adj, pred adj], **right-justify** [v]	
right margin	Use *right margin* instead of *right-hand margin*.
rightmost	
RISC (reduced instruction set computing)	
rise time [n]	
RLB (request library file)	
roll back [v], **rollback** [n, adj]	
roll-fed [adj]	
roll forward [v], **rollforward** [n, adj]	
roll up [v], **rollup** [n, adj]	
ROM (read-only memory)	
root	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
root dictionary directory	
root directory	In ULTRIX documents, use the word *root* rather than a slash (/) to indicate the root directory in text.
root menu	Do not use. Use *workspace menu*.
root virtual block number	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
R	
root window	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
round-robin [adj]	
RPB (restart parameter block)	
RPC (remote procedure call)	Use the acronym *RPC* to refer only to the software, not to the calls themselves. Use the acronym only as an adjective, for example, *RPC client*.
RSE (record selection expression), RSEs [pl]	
RSPID (response identifier)	
RST (run-time symbol table)	
RTL (run-time library)	
RUJ (recovery unit journal)	
runaway [adj]	
run down [v], **rundown** [n, adj]	
run time [n], **run-time** [adj]	
run-time library (RTL)	Use lowercase for referring to a generic run-time library. Use initial capital letters for referring to a specific run-time library, such as VAX FORTRAN™ Run-Time Library.
run-time only kit	
run-time symbol table (RST)	
run unit [n], **run-unit** [adj]	
RVN (relative volume number)	
RVT (relative volume table)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
S	
sales force	
salesperson, salespeople	
saved answer file	
saved system	
save image [n], **save-image** [adj]	
save set [n], **save-set** [adj]	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
save-set specifier	
SB (system block)	
SB1, SB2, ..., SBn	Stylus button 1, stylus button 2, stylus button 3, stylus button n.
SBR (system base register)	
scanline, scanline order	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
SCATTERED set option	
scatter-gather map	
SCB (system control block)	
SCBB (system control block base register)	
schema, schemas	
schema data definition entry	
scratch pad	
screen	Use *screen* instead of *terminal screen*. Use lowercase to describe a particular screen number, as in *screen 4*.
screen button	Do not use. Use *button* or *push button*, or use the full button name, as in *Cancel button*.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
S	
screen object	Do not use. Use *object*.
screwdriver	
script	
scroll bar	
scrolled form array	
scroll region	
SCS (system communication services)	
SDAF (Shared Document Attributes File)	
SDBSF (software-detected bad sector file)	
secondary index data record (SIDR)	
secondary pool	
sector	Use lowercase letters when describing a particular sector, as in *sector 4*.
security schema	
selection cursor	Do not use. Use *location cursor*.
select pointer	
self-	Hyphenate adjective and noun compounds formed with the prefix *self-*, for example, *self-test*.
semantics [n sing]	Takes a singular verb.
serial line [n, adj]	
server	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
server administrator	
server context	Also *server process context*.
server grabbing	Use only in DECwindows programming documentation.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
S	

Term	Comments
server process context	Also *server context*.
sesqui-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
set occurrence	
set type	
set up [v], **setup** [n, adj]	
Set-Up key	
SGML (Standard Generalized Markup Language)	
shareable [adj]	
shareable image	Do not use *linkable image*. A shareable image resides on disk, not in memory, and is a means of conserving disk space. See also **shared image**.
shared device	
Shared Document Attributes File (SDAF)	
shared image	A shared image is installed so that multiple users in a system can share the memory pages where an image is loaded. See also **shareable image**.
shared memory	Memory that can be shared by multiple VAX processors; see also **multiport memory unit**.
shock-mounting [adj]	
shop-floor manager	
short circuit [n], **short-circuit** [v]	
shortcut	
shrink to an icon [v]	Do not use. Use *minimize*.
shrink-to-icon button	Do not use. Use *minimize button*.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
S	
shrinkwrap [n, v]	
short-term journaling	
shuffleable [adj]	Avoid using.
shut down [v], **shutdown** [n, adj]	
sibling window	Use only in DECwindows programming documentation.
SID (system identification register)	
SIDR (secondary index data record)	
signal, signaled, signaling	
sign off [v], **signoff** [n, adj]	Use *log out, logout* to refer to the process of quitting access to the system. *Sign off* and *signoff* are appropriate for referring to the process of formal approval, as in *final signoff review* of a book.
sign on [v], **signon** [n, adj]	Use *log in, login* to refer to the process of gaining access to the system.
SIMM (single inline memory module)	
simple record array	
simplex	
sine wave	
single-	Hyphenate adjective compounds with *single-*, for example, *single-precision floating-point data*, *single-address message*.
single-bit error (SBE)	
single inline memory module (SIMM)	
single pulse [n]	
single step [n]	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
S	
singular set	Use **SYSTEM-owned set.**
SIRR (software interrupt request register)	
SISR (software interrupt summary register)	
site specific [pred adj], **site-specific** [adj]	
SIXBIT code	
sixel	
size-sensitive switches	
slider [n]	
slot	Use lowercase letters when describing a particular slot, as in *slot 2.*
SLP (Source Language Input Program)	
SLR (system length register)	
smooth shading [n], **smooth-shading** [adj]	
SMP (symmetrical multiprocessing)	
soft error	
software-detected bad sector file (SDBSF)	
software interrupt request register (SIRR)	
software interrupt summary register (SISR)	
Software Performance Report (SPR)	
Software Product Description (SPD)	
solid-state [adj]	
sorted set	
sort key [n], **sort-key** [syntax]	
sort list [n], **sort-list** [syntax]	
source code [n], **source-code** [adj]	
SP (stack pointer)	
space bar	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
S	

SPD (Software Product Description)

SPDL (Standard Page Description Language)

-specific [adj, suffix]	Hyphenate suffix when used as an adjective, as in *site-specific procedure.* Spell open when used as a predicate adjective, as in *the procedure is site specific.*

spin lock

spool (shared peripheral operations on line)

spreadsheet [n, adj]

SPR (Software Performance Report)

SPT (system page table)

SPTE (system page table entry)

SSP (supervisor-mode stack pointer)

SST (synchronous system trap)

stacking order	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.

stack pointer (SP)

standalone [adj]

standard error

standard input

standard output

Standard Page Description Language (SPDL)

start up [v], **startup** [n, adj]	If ease of translation is a concern, use *start up* or *initialize* instead of *boot* or its variants.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	S
static color	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
status area	Use *status area* instead of *status region*.
status region	Do not use. Use *status area*.
step action	
step-and-repeat [adj]	
step by step [pred adj], step-by-step [adj]	
stepping arrow	
step label	
step procedure	
step work	
stop bit [n], stop-bit [adj]	
storage schema	
storage schema data definition entry	
store-and-forward [adj]	
storyboard	
strike	Do not use *strike* for the action of pressing a key. Use *press*.
strikeover [adj, n]	
strike through [v], strike-through [n, adj]	
string descriptor	
structured visual navigation (SVN)	Do not use *SVN*. Use *structured visual navigation box*, *hierarchical list box* but only in DECwindows programming documentation.
stylus	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	S
sub-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
subarea	Use *subarea* instead of *subregion*.
submenu	Use *submenu* instead of *pull-right menu*. In DECwindows end-user documentation, use *submenu* instead of *cascading menu*.
submenu icon	
submenu item	Do not use. Use *menu item*.
subregion	Do not use in place of *subarea* or *work area*.
subschema, subschemas	
subschema data definition entry	
subscript [n, adj]	See **numbers** in Part II for more information on using subscripts.
substitution directive	
subwindow	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
super-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
superblock	
superuser	
supervisor mode [n], supervisor-mode [adj]	
supervisor-mode stack pointer (SSP)	
supporting host [n, adj]	
supra-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
SVA (system virtual address)	
SVAPTE (system virtual address of page table entry)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
S	
SVN (Structured Visual Navigation)	Do not use *SVN*. Use *structured visual navigation box, hierarchical list box* but only in DECwindows programming documentation.
swapping file	Do not use *swap file*.
switch hook character	
switchpack	
symbol definition file	
symmetric multiprocessing (SMP)	
synchronous call	
synchronous system trap (SST)	
SYSGEN [n, adj]	Do not use *SYSGEN* or *sysgen* as a verb. SYSGEN is the name of the OpenVMS utility that controls the process of system generation; use the term for this program only. Use the term *system generation* otherwise.
system administrator	See **capitalization** in Part II for information on capitalizing job titles.
system base register (SBR)	
system block (SB)	
system communication services (SCS)	
system console	Do not use. Use *console terminal.*
system control block (SCB)	
system control block base register (SCBB)	
system diskette	
system failure	Do not use *crash.*

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
S	
system generation [n]	Do not use *SYSGEN* or *sysgen* as a verb.
system identification register (SID)	
system length register (SLR)	
system manager	See **capitalization** in Part II for information on capitalizing job titles.
system name privilege	
SYSTEM-owned set	
system page table (SPT)	
system page table entry (SPTE)	
system service, system services	
system virtual address (SVA)	
system virtual address of page table entry (SVAPTE)	
systemwide	
system workspace	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	T
tab	Do not use *Tab key* if you mean the tab character.
Tab key	
tab mark	
tabletop	
tab position	
tabular selection	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
tag-parity error	
tag sort [n]	
tag variable	
take up [v], **take-up** [adj]	
tape cassette	
target system	The system for which a function (for example SYSGEN) is intended; not to be confused with the host system, on which the function is performed.
task build [n, v], **task-build** [adj]	
task group	
task group database (TDB)	
task image [n], **task-image** [adj]	
task instance	
task I/O	
task name [n], **task-name** [adj]	
task selection string	
task submitter	
task workspace	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
T	
TCP/IP (Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol)	
TDB (task group database)	
TDE (Two-Dimensional Editor)	
tear-off menu	
tele-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
teletypewriter	A generic term for a printing terminal; not a trademark.
tenant record	
terminal	Do not use *TTY, tty* except as device names.
terminal control subsystem	
terminal model	Refers to the model name or number, such as VT100,™ ASR33, VT420.™ Contrast with **terminal type**.
terminal server	
terminal subsystem controller	
terminal type	Refers to the software type, such as a virtual terminal or a host terminal. Contrast with **terminal model**.
termination procedure	
text cursor	Use only when you need to distinguish between the location cursor and the insertion and overstrike cursors. Otherwise, use *cursor*.
text-entry field	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	T
text insertion cursor	Do not use for DECwindows products. Use *insertion cursor*.
text insertion pointer	
text overstrike cursor	Do not use for DECwindows products. Use *overstrike cursor*.
text processing [n], text-processing [adj]	
thermal noise	
third-party [adj]	
throughput	
thumb nut [n]	
tie line [n]	
tie wrap [n]	
tile, tiling [v]	
tiled windows	
time-critical	Do not use. Use *real-time*.
time-division multiplexing	
time frame	
time-multiplexed, time-multiplexes	
time-of-day clock	
time-of-year [adj]	
time out [v], timeout [n, adj]	
timer queue element (TQE)	Not *timer queue entry*.
time share [v], timesharing [n, adj]	
time-stamp [v], time-stamping [n, adj]	
time zone	
title bar	
TMSCP™ protocol	
toggle (v)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
T	

Term	Comments
toggle button	
toggle indicator	
toggle item	
token link	
Token Ring	
toolkit	Use lowercase letters for the generic term. Use an initial capital to refer to a product-specific toolkit. For DECwindows products, use the term *Toolkit* only in programming documentation.
top-level [adj]	
topmost	
TQE (timer queue element)	
traceback [n]	
tracepoint [n]	
trade in [v], **trade-in** [n]	
trademark	See **trademarks and service marks** in Part II for more information.
trade name	
trade off [v], **trade-off** [n]	
trans-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
translation string [n], **translation-string** [syntax]	
translator	
tree structure [n], **tree-structured** [adj]	
tri-	Do not hyphenate prefix.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	T
troubleshoot, troubleshooting	
true color	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
tty, **TTY**	Do not use *tty* or *TTY* except as device names. Use *terminal*.
tuple	
turnaround [n, adj]	
turn nut	
turnkey [adj]	
twisted-pair [adj], **twisted pairs** [n]	
two's complement	
type	You *type* text. You *enter* a command. You *press* a key. See **choose and select, enter, press**, and **type** in Part II for more information on these terms.
type-ahead [adj]	
typeface	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
U	
UAF (user authorization file)	
UBA (UNIBUS™ adapter)	
UBI (UNIBUS interface)	
UCB (unit control block)	
UDK (user-defined key)	
UDP (User Datagram Protocol)	
UEL (user entry list)	
UETP™ test package	
UFD (user file directory)	
UIC (user identification code)	
UID (user ID)	Do not use *user id*.
UIS (User Interface Services)	
ultra-	Do not hyphenate prefix unless root word begins with *a*, for example, *ultra-ambitious*.
ultra-high-performance	
un-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
unary	
undelete	Do not use. Use *restore*.
under-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
underflow	
underline [v]	Use *underline* as a verb. Use *underscore* for the character.
underrun	
underscore (_)	Use *underscore* for the name of the character. Use *underline* for the verb.
under way	

(continued on next page)

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
U	
undo [v], **Undo** [adj]	Do not confuse the general verb *undo* with the DECwindows operation that reverses the effect of the last operation performed. Do not use the name of the menu item *Undo* as a noun or verb.
uni-	Do not hyphenate prefix.
UNIBUS adapter (UBA)	
UNIBUS interface (UBI)	
uniprocessor [n]	
unique product identifier (UPID)	
unit control block (UCB)	
up arrow [n, adj]	
up click (n), **up-click** (adj)	Use only in DECwindows programming documentation. Do not use *up click* as a verb. Use *release*.
update [n, v, adj]	
UPID (unique product identifier)	
up line [pred adj], **upline** [adj]	
up load [pred adj], **upload** [v, adj]	
uppercase [n, adj]	Spell as one word, not two words.
up time [n]	The term is acceptable in OpenVMS documents. In other documentation, a phrase such as *when your system is running* is preferred.
up to date [pred adj], **up-to-date** [adj]	
URM (UNIBUS Run Mask)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
U	
U.S.	Spell out *United States* except as an adjective. Use periods with the abbreviation.
usable	
usage mode	
user authorization file (UAF)	
user-controlled partition	
user-customized option	
User Datagram Protocol (UDP)	
user-defined [adj]	
user-defined key (UDK)	
user definition file	
user entry list (UEL)	
user file directory (UFD)	
user friendly [pred adj], **user-friendly** [adj]	
user ID (UID)	Do not use *user id*.
user identification code (UIC)	
user-installable	
User Interface Services (UIS)	
user mode [n], **user-mode** [adj]	
user-mode stack pointer (USP)	
user name, user-name [syntax]	Use *username prompt* when referring to the OpenVMS prompt.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
U	

user profile
user-supplied
user work area (UWA)
user workspace
user-written [adj]
USP (user-mode stack pointer)
UWA (user work area)

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
V	
VA (virtual address)	
value expression [n], **value-expression, value-expr** [syntax]	
variable-length [adj, syntax]	
variable-length bit field (VBF)	
variable-length with fixed-length control field (VFC) record format	
VBF (variable-length bit field)	
VBN (virtual block number)	
VCB (volume control block)	
VDT (video display terminal)	
VEC (interrupt transfer vector block)	
vector	
versus	Do not use the abbreviation *vs. Versus* is acceptable in technical documentation.
vertical format control (VFC)	
vertical pane pointer	
very large-scale integration (VLSI)	
via	Latin expression meaning *by means of* or *through. Via* is acceptable in technical documentation.
vice versa	Latin expression meaning *conversely* or, literally, *the position being changed. Vice versa* is acceptable in technical documentation.
VID (visual identification label)	
video attribute	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
V	

Term	Comments
video device controller	
videodisc	
video display terminal (VDT)	
video tape [n], **videotape** [v]	
video terminal	
videotex	Do not use *videotext* or *video text* when referring to videotex applications.
viewable	For DECwindows products, use only in programming documentation.
view domain	
view mode symbol	Do not use *hidden character*.
viewport	
virtual address (VA)	
virtual block number (VBN)	
virtual page number (VPN)	
visual identification label (VID)	
viz.	Do not use. Use *namely*.
VLSI (very large-scale integration)	
volume accessibility field	
volume control block (VCB)	
volume identifier	
volume label	
VPN (virtual page number)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	W
wait pointer	
wake up [v], **wake-up** [adj]	
wall mount [v], **wallmount** [adj]	
WAN (wide area network)	
wand [n]	Do not use as a verb.
watchpoint [n]	
waveform [n]	
wavelength [n]	
WCB (window control block)	
WCS (writable control store)	
WDCS (writable diagnostic control store)	
well-	Hyphenate adjective compounds before nouns unless the expression is modified, for example, *well-known language* but *very well known scientist.* When the compound follows the noun, do not hyphenate: "The code is well documented."
white noise	
white space	Do not use in DECwindows documentation. Use *space*.
wide-	Generally hyphenate prefix. Check dictionary for particular words.
-wide	Do not hyphenate suffix unless the compound is long and cumbersome.
wide area network (WAN)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
W	

Term	Comments
widget	Use only in DECwindows programming documentation.
wildcard [n, adj]	
Winchester [adj]	As in Winchester disk.
window control block (WCB)	
window gravity	Use only in DECwindows programming documentation.
window hierarchy	Use only in DECwindows programming documentation.
window manager	
window pane	For DECwindows products, do not use *pane*. Use *window pane* as a noun and *divide* as a verb.
window stack	
wing nut	
wireframe	
wirewrap	
-wise	Generally do not hyphenate suffix. Do not use suffix indiscriminately to form new phrases.
word list menu	
word processing [n], **word-processing** [adj]	
word slide	
word wrap [n], **word-wrap** [adj]	
word-wrap indent	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
	W
work-	Generally do not hyphenate prefix (for example, *workaround, workbook, workspace*), but there are some exceptions, for example, *work force*. In general, while the noun form is two words, the corresponding adjective form is moving towards one word, as in the adjective form *workforce*.
work area	Use *work area* instead of *subregion* or *work region*.
workbench	
work box	Do not use in DECwindows documentation. Use *work area*.
work flow [n], **workflow** [adj]	
work group	
working set [n, adj]	
work-in-process (WIP)	
work-in-progress box	
work load [n], **workload** [adj]	
workspace	
workspace symbol module	
workstation	
world access [n]	
worldwide	
wraparound [n, adj]	
writable	Do not use *writeable*.
writable control store (WCS)	
writable diagnostic control store (WDCS)	

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
W	

write access [n]
write-allocate [v]
write-back [v]
write-behind [v, adj]
write-check [v, adj], **write-checking**
write-enable [n, v, adj]
write-lock [v], **write-locked** [adj]
write-only [adj]
write-protect [v], **write-protected** [adj]
write-through
write-unlock transaction

X	

Term	Comments
x, y	Use italics and lowercase for coordinates.
x-**axis**	
x-**coordinate**	
XON/XOFF control	
XON/XOFF protocol	
XQB (extended QIO processor)	
XYFormat	Use only in DECwindows programming documentation.

Y	

Term	Comments
y-**axis**	
y-**coordinate**	
y, x	Use italics and lowercase for coordinates.

Table 8 (Cont.) Word List

Term	Comments
Z	
zero [n sing], **zeros** [n pl], **zero(es), (ed)** [v]	See **zero** in Part II for more information on using *zero* and the numeral 0.
zero-length [adj]	
ZFormat	Use only in DECwindows programming documentation.

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