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Robert Lerner

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Introduction

This document provides basic style guidelines for statisticians, researchers, project officers, writers, editors, contractors, and others who prepare and review reports and other publications for the public. The primary purposes of the style guide are to maintain consistency, correctness, and appropriateness regarding stylistic conventions, grammar, usage, and other areas related to producing publications; to inform users of policy and preferences in these areas; and to support compliance with the *NCES Statistical Standards* (NCES 2003–601).

The software standard of the U.S. Department of Education for information presentation is the Microsoft Office Suite, including Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. Therefore, a number of elements in this style guide have been tailored to use of this software. Also, Microsoft Word tips appear throughout the document and are marked, in the margin, by a **WTip** logo.

This guide draws heavily on the 1999 edition of the *OERI Publications Guide*. It also includes new and updated material and incorporates NCES directives about the areas covered. Other sources that were consulted include the following:

NCES Statistical Standards

United States Government Printing Office Style Manual, 2000 edition

The Chicago Manual of Style, 15th edition

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, fifth edition

When readers are directed to two or more of these resources for additional guidance on a section of this style guide, the first-named resource is the preferred one. To access a named resource if you are online, click on the underlined part of the reference (e.g., “[standard 5-4](#),” or “[chapter 6](#)”). Full web addresses are included in appendix D of this style guide.

This guide includes the following sections:

Abbreviations and Acronyms	Numbers and Rounding
Acknowledgments	Pagination
Capitalization	Plurals
Compound Words	Printing and Binding Regulations
Copyright	Punctuation
Cross-References	Race and Ethnicity
Definitions	References
Errata Sheets	Survey Titles
Figures	Table of Contents
Footnotes	Tables
Heading Styles and Levels	Titles
Internet Terminology	Word Usage
Italic Letters as Statistical Symbols	Year Spans
Lists	

In addition, appendixes provide the following resources:

- Appendix A. Abbreviations List: Organizations, Agencies, Surveys, and Terms
- Appendix B. Abbreviations List: States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Outlying Areas, and Freely Associated States
- Appendix C. Abbreviations List: Countries (Partial List) and Canadian Provinces and Territories
- Appendix D. Web Links to Standards, Style Manuals and Guidelines, and Dictionary
- Appendix E. Microsoft Word Shortcuts and Styles Feature
- Appendix F. Guidance for Producing Figures in Excel That Meet NCES Standards
- Appendix G. Guidance for Producing Tables in Excel That Meet NCES Standards
- Appendix H. Index

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Abbreviations are short forms of words or phrases used primarily to save space. They occur most frequently in technical writing, statistical material, tables, and notes. They may or may not use all capital letters, and they may or may not end with a period (e.g., Jr., Ph.D., MD, IES). Acronyms are simply abbreviations that are pronounced like words. Use standard and easily understood abbreviations, when possible, and be consistent throughout a document.

In a Microsoft Word document, to ensure that an abbreviated title (e.g., Rep.) is not separated from the name that follows it when the name falls at the end of a line, hold down the Ctrl and Shift keys as you enter the space after the title.



See appendixes A through C for the following lists of abbreviations (including acronyms): appendix A for organizations, agencies, surveys, and terms; appendix B for states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, outlying areas, and freely associated states; and appendix C for countries (partial list) and Canadian provinces and territories.

Spell out on first occurrence

Spell out the phrase to be abbreviated and follow it with the abbreviation in parentheses. Thereafter, use the abbreviation, eliminating the article in front of the abbreviation where possible.

Examples: Information provided by the Common Core of Data (CCD) includes the number of students and full-time-equivalent (FTE) teachers . . .

The National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88) followed a cohort of 1988 eighth-graders through the year 2000. Because NELS:88 followed the cohort for 12 years, . . .

[Do not repeat a word that is in an abbreviation unless it would make sense with the abbreviation spelled out (e.g., “The NELS:88 study” is redundant).]

Repeat in major sections

In long works, repeat the full phrase (and the abbreviation) at the beginning of major sections of text and each appendix.

Match articles to the abbreviation

If you must precede an abbreviation with an article, use the one that works with the abbreviation, not the one required by the spelled-out form.

Examples: “an NCES report,” *not* “a NCES report”
“an NCEE report,” *not* “a NCEE report”

Use the article that sounds right with the pronunciation of the abbreviation, which may be either letter by letter, or as a word.

Examples: “an NSOPF brochure” (pronounced N sof)
“a NPSAS brochure” (pronounced nip sass)

Note apostrophe, plural, and possessive usage

Make all-capital abbreviations plural by adding lowercase “s” alone.

Example: LEAs, *not* LEA’s

Generally use an apostrophe and an *s* to form the plural of an abbreviation that has two periods or that includes both capital and lowercase letters (Ph.D.’s); and generally add an *s* before the period in an abbreviation that has one period (vols., eds.).

When you use an abbreviation as a modifier, as in the following example, it is not necessarily a possessive form and generally does not require an apostrophe.

Examples: IES grants, *not* IES’ grants *or* IES’s grants
NCES surveys, *not* NCES’ surveys *or* NCES’s surveys

Use fiscal year (FY) abbreviation; AY and SY are optional

Spell out fiscal year at first use (use lowercase), followed by the abbreviation in parentheses. Thereafter, use the shortened version.

Example: Data are provided for fiscal year (FY) 1999, FY 2000, and FY 01. Many changes occurred between FY 99 and FY 01.

The shortened version uses two digits for all years except 2000.

If you choose to use the academic year (AY) and school year (SY) abbreviations, first introduce them, as explained for FY. With AY and SY, use six digits (e.g., AY 1997–98) except for AY 1999–2000.

For more details about year-span usage with FY, AY, and SY, see the Year Spans section of this style guide.

Outlying area and freely associated state abbreviations—not used in text

Spell out the names of these entities in text and, whenever possible, in table stubs. If abbreviations must be used in tables, define them in the table notes for each table that contains them.

Outlying areas include the following:

American Samoa	AS
Guam	GU
Northern Mariana Islands (Commonwealth of the)	MP
U.S. Virgin Islands	VI

Freely associated states include the following:

Federated States of Micronesia	FM
Marshall Islands (Republic of the)	MH
Palau (Republic of)	PW

(These groupings are listed in part C [the part that relates to NCES] of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, which established the Institute of Education Sciences. Since 1990, none of the entities listed above has been officially termed a *territory*. In part C of the cited legislation, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is grouped with the 50 states and the District of Columbia. For example, the part of the law that mandates NCES to report on “the percentage of teachers who are highly qualified in each State” directs that NCES only must do so for the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.)

State, DC, PR, and directional abbreviations—not used in text

See appendix B of this style guide for a list of the two-letter Postal Service abbreviations for states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

Spell out the names of these entities in text and, if possible, in table stubs. If abbreviations must be used in tables, define them—or state that standard Postal Service abbreviations are used—in the notes for each table that contains them.

In addresses, use two-letter Postal Service abbreviations for states (TX, VA), the District of Columbia (DC), and Puerto Rico (PR). Do not use periods with directional abbreviations, such as NW and its counterparts.

Foreign country and Canadian province abbreviations—not used in text

See appendix C of this style guide for abbreviations of foreign countries (partial list) and of Canadian provinces and territories. These abbreviations are never used in text but may be used in tables when necessary. If abbreviations are used in tables, they must be defined in the notes to each table that contains them.

United States: Spell out as noun, abbreviate as adjective

Spell out United States when used as a noun; abbreviate it when used as an adjective.

Example: He emigrated to the United States and became a citizen; as a U.S. citizen, . . .

[Do not add a space between the two letters.]

Department of Defense schools

The Department of Defense is abbreviated as DoD (note the lowercase “o”). On first occurrence of the term, spell it out and give the abbreviation in parentheses: Department of Defense (DoD).

The official DoD titles and abbreviations for the separate overseas and domestic components of the DoD education system for dependents are as follows:

DoDDS — Department of Defense Dependents Schools [the overseas schools]

DDESS — Department of Defense Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools [in the United States]

Since the above abbreviations are not easily remembered and are not entirely self-explanatory, you are encouraged to use the following forms instead to refer to the two principal components of the DoD education system for dependents:

DoD schools (overseas)

DoD schools (domestic)

Use consistent terminology throughout your document. When an abbreviation such as DoD is used in a table, define it in the table footnotes if it is not already defined in a table stub.

When referring, in text, to all of the DoD schools for dependents, first clarify that you are referring to all of these schools, both overseas and domestic. If you wish to use a shorter phrase thereafter, you may add “(DoD schools)” in parentheses and subsequently use the shortened form. (In the following examples, note lowercase.)

Examples:

First use: Department of Defense overseas and domestic schools for dependents
(DoD schools)

Subsequent use: DoD schools

First use, no subsequent use: Department of Defense (DoD) dependents schools
(overseas and domestic)

Define abbreviations in tables

Define abbreviations used in tables in the notes at the bottom of the tables. For more guidance on table notes, see [appendix C](#) of the *NCES Statistical Standards*, 2002 edition, and the Tables section of this style guide.

For guidance on abbreviations not specified in this section, see the rules and extensive examples in the *United States Government Printing Office Style Manual* (2000 edition), [chapter 9](#). If you don't find the guidance you need there, see *The Chicago Manual of Style* (15th edition), chapter 15.

Acknowledgments

Names of authors, whether NCES staff or outside authors, and their affiliations appear on the title page (in NCES publications, names follow the month and year). Acknowledgments for contributions other than authorship by both Department of Education staff and outside contributors may be placed on the acknowledgments page. Also include on the acknowledgments page the affiliations of all named contributors. Keep this page brief, but be sure to identify major contributors to the content—e.g., internal and external reviewers, including NCES staff and contractor staff, the contracting officer, and the IES action editor—and to the artistic design of the publication.

Omit formal titles such as Mr., Mrs., and Dr.

Capitalization

Use capitalization to give distinction, importance, and emphasis to words only when and where it is warranted.

Titles and headings

The titles and types of headings referred to in this subsection are as follows:

- Title – title of report or other publication; title of chapter or equivalent main division
- H1 heading – main heading level under title
- H2 heading – heading level under H1
- H3 heading – heading level under H2 (usually run in at the beginning of a paragraph)

Note that your publication does not have to use all of these levels of headings. For example, some publications use only titles and H1 headings, and many publications do not use H3 headings. See the Heading Styles and Levels section later in this style guide for more about appropriate styles to use in differentiating levels.

The table of contents generally includes two or three levels of heading. See the Table of Contents section later in this style guide for guidance on creating your contents page(s) automatically.

Capitalize most words in titles and higher level headings

In full or short titles of books, periodicals, series of publications, annual reports, and historic documents—and in chapter/report/article titles, H1 headings, and H2 headings—capitalize the following:

- the first word and all important words (e.g., nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives);
- prepositions and conjunctions of four letters or more (e.g., from, with); and
- the second element of a hyphenated compound if it would be capitalized standing alone (e.g., Degree-Granting, College-Bound); the sole exception is the second element of a compound numeral (e.g., Twenty-third).

Note that some publications may have designs that vary somewhat from the above. For example, the H2 headings may capitalize only the first word and proper names. If the style does vary from that described here, be sure it is consistent for each heading level throughout your document.

Do not capitalize the following unless they begin a title, subtitle, or heading:

- the articles *a*, *an*, and *the*;
- the prepositions *at*, *by*, *for*, *in*, *of*, *on*, *to*, and *up*;
- the conjunctions *and*, *as*, *but*, *if*, *or*, and *nor*; and
- the word *to* as part of an infinitive (e.g., Collecting Data to Make a Difference...).

Use “sentence-style” capitalization in lower level headings

In H3 headings (the lowest level), as in sentences, capitalize only the first word and proper nouns (names, states, etc.).

In-text capitalization

This subsection describes and gives examples of three categories of capitalization in text (proper names, traditional usage, and specified style). Examples of terms commonly used in NCES reports are given in the list at the end of this subsection. For a much more extensive capitalization list, see [chapter 4](#) of the *United States Government Printing Office Style Manual*, 2000 edition.

Capitalize proper names

A proper name is the formal name of a specific person, place, program, study, survey, geographic area, or other entity. Capitalize proper names wherever they appear.

Examples: National Academy of Sciences, National School Lunch Program, Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Lake Michigan, January, Vermont, England, Mary Jones

Lowercase “figure,” “chapter,” “appendix,” etc., unless full title given

Lowercase and spell out “figure,” “chapter,” “table,” and “appendix” in text, even when combined with a number indicating sequence (e.g., figure 3). However, if the full title is given, the word *figure* is considered a proper name and is capitalized (e.g., “Figure 1. Percentage of students enrolled in grades 1–12, by public and private school type: 1993, 1996, and 1999”).

Capitalize per traditional usage and specified style

Some words or phrases are capitalized according to traditional usage or specified style.

Traditional usage: Old Dominion (for Virginia), Great Depression, Third World, Eastern Europe, the East (section of the United States), Bluegrass region

Specified style: Black, White (racial designations); *but* fall, spring, etc. (seasons)

Refer to this list of commonly used terms**Capitalize**

Advanced Placement (AP) courses

Black, White (and other racial/ethnic categories)

the East (*but* east coast)

English as a Second Language (ESL)

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

National School Lunch Program

United States of America (*but* the nation, a nation, national, the government, federal government, federally)

Washington State (*but* state of Washington)

Western Hemisphere (*but* western United States, western Pennsylvania)

Do not capitalize

algebra I (and other subjects of study)
computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI)
Department of Defense overseas and domestic schools
English language learners (ELL)
figure 3 (if no title given)
limited-English-proficient (LEP) students
winter (and other seasons)

Table and figure titles

For capitalization in table and figure titles, see the sample titles in the Figures and Tables sections of this guide. If you need additional guidance, see the *NCES Statistical Standards* (2000 edition), [appendix C](#) (NCES Guidelines for Tabular Presentations).

For guidance on capitalization not specified in this section, see the rules and extensive examples in the *United States Government Printing Office Style Manual* (2000 edition), [chapters 3 and 4](#). If you do not find the guidance you need there, see the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (fifth edition), pp. 94–99.

Compound Words

Compound words are written either solid (closed up), open (with a space between words), or hyphenated.

Hyphens not always needed

Use restraint in forming hyphenated compounds of words used in normal, familiar sequence. For example, do not hyphenate “per capita expenditure,” “per pupil expenditures,” “high school students,” or “elementary school grade.” For more about the use of hyphens with compounds, see the rest of this section.

Comparatives usually not followed by hyphen

Do not use a hyphen in a two-word modifier, the first word of which is a comparative or superlative.

Examples: better paying jobs; higher level degree; best known teacher; higher performing students
but
good-paying jobs; high-level degree; well-known teacher; high-performing students

Exception: For uniformity of style in a sentence, you may hyphenate a comparative or superlative when using it in juxtaposition with a hyphenated compound (e.g., “The performance of middle-performing eighth-graders declined, while that of the highest-performing eighth-graders improved.”).

“ly” words not followed by hyphen

Do not use a hyphen in a two-word modifier the first word of which is an adverb ending in “ly.”

Examples: unusually high percentage; federally funded program; scientifically based research; statistically significant effects

Unit modifiers versus predicate adjectives

A unit modifier immediately precedes the word modified, whereas a compound predicate adjective follows the word modified. In most cases, compounds that are hyphenated when used as unit modifiers are open (with a space instead of a hyphen) when used as predicate adjectives.

Examples: well-qualified teacher; hard-of-hearing students; far-reaching effects
but
the teacher is well qualified; the students are hard of hearing; the effects are far reaching

Prefixes and suffixes closed up

Close up prefixes and suffixes to base words, except where the base word is capitalized (non-Hispanic, pre-World War II) or ambiguity is possible (preposition or pre-position; resort or resort). Also, use a hyphen with the prefixes *ex*, *quasi*, and *self* (ex-governor, quasi-academic, self-educated).

Make the following one word (e.g., coworker):

A compound beginning with

co
de
extra
in (see exceptions in “List of compound words” below)
inter
intra
multi
non (see exceptions below)
post
pre
pro
re
under

A compound ending with

like
maker
making
over
person
wide
wise
work

When “non” takes a hyphen

As with other prefixes and as noted above, use a hyphen after “non” if it joins a capitalized word (e.g., non-English).

Also use a hyphen after “non” when the “non” modifies a modifier that is itself hyphenated (e.g., doctorate-granting):

Example: non-doctorate-granting institution

One way to make sense of and remember this rule is to realize that “non-doctorate-granting institution” means “not a doctorate-granting institution”; in contrast, “nondoctorate-granting institution” implies “an institution that grants nondoctorates.”

Double vowels often separated by hyphen

Except after the short prefixes *co*, *de*, *pre*, *pro*, and *re*, which are generally printed solid (closed up), use a hyphen to avoid doubling a vowel (e.g., semi-independent) or tripling a consonant (e.g., shell-like). You may always hyphenate when necessary to avoid misunderstanding (e.g., cooperative, *but* co-op, *not* coop).

List of Compound Words

n = noun

u.m. = unit modifier (a compound that precedes the word it modifies, e.g., “school-level” in “school-level statistics” and “afterschool” in “afterschool programs”)

v = verb

If the part of speech is not specified below, the form listed is to be used in all cases.

achievement-level (u.m.)*	midsized (u.m.)
afterschool (u.m.)	multistep
at-risk students	nonfederal
base-year (u.m.)	nongovernment
child care	nonresponse
coursetaking	ongoing
cutoff (n, u.m.)	online
database	out-of-school (u.m.)
dataset	part-time (u.m.)
day-to-day (u.m.)	per pupil (u.m.)
day care	policymaker
decisionmaker	policymaking
decisionmaking	poorly defined task
elementary-level (u.m.)*	postsecondary
extracurricular	preschool
first-generation students	problem solving (n)
first-grader	problem-solving (u.m.)
first-time (u.m.)	public school student
follow-up (n, u.m.)	record keeping (n)
full-time (u.m.)	school-age children
governmentwide	school-based (u.m.)
grade point average	school-level (u.m.)*
homework	socioeconomic
highly praised teacher	state-of-the-art (u.m.)
homeschooling	subject-matter (u.m.)
homeschooled (u.m.)	teenage
in-depth (u.m.)	textbook
in-field (u.m.)	time frame
in field (teaching in field)	white-collar
in-service (u.m.)	workforce
low-income (u.m.)	workplace
mid-level (u.m.)*	
mid-1990s	
midpoint	

*“Level” is preceded by a hyphen when it is part of a two-word modifier (for example, state-, district-, and school-level data), except when the first word is a comparative or superlative (higher level class, highest level class).

For guidance not covered in this section, see the rules and examples in the *United States Government Printing Office Style Manual* (2000 edition), [chapters 6 and 7](#). If your question is not answered there, use an up-to-date dictionary to identify compound words that are now printed solid.

Copyright

Generally, manuscripts written by federal employees as part of their duties are in the public domain and are not covered by the copyright law. However, manuscripts written by contractors or grantees supported by U.S. government funds can be copyrighted with written permission from the government provided the government’s right to use the material is protected.

Cross-References (within section you are in and to other parts of document)

Cross-references in text direct the reader to (1) related information in the section you are in (e.g., figures, tables, and footnotes) or (2) other parts of the document (e.g., appendixes, chapters or sections, or sources in the reference list). Cross-references should not be used unless they are clear and useful.

Cite in order (items within the section)

When referring to figures, tables, and footnotes for the first time in the section you are in, always cite them consecutively (e.g., the second-mentioned figure is figure 2). If they have gotten out of order during rewriting, renumber or reletter them to keep the text references consecutive for each category. (For information on numbering or lettering tables and figures to indicate their order, see the Figures section of this style guide, under “Figure identifiers are different in different parts of report,” and the *NCES Statistical Standards*, [appendix C](#).)

Verify agreement

Verify that referenced tables, figures, footnotes, and appendixes show what the text says they show.

Verify that text references to sources in the reference list agree with the information (authors and date) in the list. (For information on formatting and referring to a reference list, see the References section of this style guide.)

Lowercase references (if full title not given)

Lowercase “table,” “figure,” “chapter,” and “appendix” when referring to them in the text, even when they include a number or letter indicating sequence. Capitalize them, however, if they begin a sentence or include the complete title of the item (e.g., “see Table 1. Public elementary and secondary schools in the United States: 1999–2000”).

Place appropriately in sentence

You may enclose a reference to a table or figure in parentheses at the end of the sentence in which its data are first mentioned.

Example: The greatest percentage increases were reported for 15- to 19-year-olds (table B).

You may also refer to a table or figure after the first mention of its data when it does not apply to the rest of the sentence.

Example: About 34 percent of women were able to get jobs in their fields of study in the first year after graduation (table 1), while 66 percent of male graduates got such jobs (table 2).

Refer to other parts of your document by title, not page number

When referring the reader to another part of your report, avoid giving a page number. Instead, give the chapter/section number (if there is one), the title, or both. Page numbers inserted in text are a frequent cause of errors in published documents. It is easy to overlook changes in page numbers that occur during report development, and adequate checking is very time-consuming.

Examples: See chapter 4; see appendix B (Methodology); see the Data Sources section, later in this chapter; see “Titles have special capitalization rules” in the Figures section

Definitions

Make sure all technical terms that are not defined fully in text are clearly defined in an appendix, technical notes section, glossary, or footnote. If there are numerous definitions, consolidate them in a glossary of definitions. In the glossary, alphabetize the terms. Do not capitalize the initial letter of a listing unless it would be capitalized in text. Lowercase or uppercase the listings as appropriate (as they would appear midsentence in text), to indicate correct style to the reader.

In tables, define terms in table notes. Tables should stand alone, without reference to other parts of the report.

Errata Sheets

For guidance on preparing errata sheets, see [standard 7-3-3](#) (under Release and Dissemination of Reports and Data Products) of the *NCES Statistical Standards*.

NCES will arrange for the errata sheet to be distributed to recipients of the publication/product—that is, those who may have received it through the Department’s publication fulfillment center (ED Pubs) or through the GPO sales program. NCES must notify GPO to discontinue sales temporarily until NCES sends them enough copies of the errata sheet to be inserted in their current sales stock.

Figures

For more detailed guidance on figures than this overview contains, see [standard 5-4](#) (Tabular and Graphic Presentations) of the *NCES Statistical Standards*. Also, for details on figure notes, see the Tables section of this style guide and [appendix C](#) of the *NCES Statistical Standards*. For guidance on producing figures in Excel that meet the NCES standards, see appendix F of this style guide.

Figures should have an identifier and title

Figures in NCES reports should have an identifier (e.g., figure A, figure 1, or figure A-1) and a title. Note the punctuation that follows the identifier: Use a period and two “n” spaces between the number/letter of the figure identifier and the first word of the title. If the figure title following the identifier runs more than one line, indent each additional line of the title so that it aligns with the first letter of the title in the first line. (See sample figures in this Figures section.)

Figure identifiers are different in different parts of report

In executive summaries, use letters for figure identifiers, and letter the figures in alphabetical order (e.g., figure A, figure B). In the main body of reports, number figures consecutively (e.g., figure 1, figure 2). In appendixes, figure identifiers include both the letter of the appendix and a consecutive number (e.g., in appendix A: figure A-1, figure A-2).

Titles have special capitalization rules

In figure titles, capitalize only the first word, proper names, and the word following a colon.

Example: Figure 1. Percentage of public elementary and secondary staff, by type:
School year 2001–02

All of the rules for figure titles are the same as those for table titles; for more information, see the *NCES Statistical Standards*, [appendix C](#) (NCES Guidelines for Tabular Presentations).

Titles not footnoted

In a figure title, avoid using a superscript number referring to a footnote. Instead, put the information in a general note (i.e., the “NOTE”).

Scales must match

Display the entire increment that the highest value falls in; for example, if the highest value is 146 and the scale is in increments of 10, the upper limit should be at least 150.

NCES standard 5-4-4, #4: Use consistent scales with consistent spacing when presenting similar units of measurement.

For all figures with comparable units, use the same scale throughout a report (e.g., 0–10 percent should be the same size in all comparable figures; \$0–\$5,000 should be the same size in all comparable figures). Further, all scales showing comparable units should use the same scale increments (e.g., 10 percent increments in all rather than 10 percent in some and 5 percent in others; \$500 increments in all rather than \$500 in some and \$400 in others).

Scale breaks should be clearly visible

NCES standard 5-4-4, #5: With the exception of time-series, continuous scales should start with 0 or the minimum value of the scale. If used, scale breaks should be clearly visible.

Labels and legends should be horizontal

Make text horizontal in labels and legends (see sample figures in this section). Capitalize the same way as in the figure title (see above). Box the legends if boxing will help the reader.

On the horizontal (x) axis, if labels abut or overlap, remove every other one (when possible), and lengthen the tick marks for the remaining labels. When it is not possible to remove every other label, put the alternate labels at a lower level than the others, to retain all labels while keeping them horizontal.

Tick marks should be outside the axis

Place tick marks outside the axis. Center scale numbers on the tick marks they identify. (See sample line graph below.)

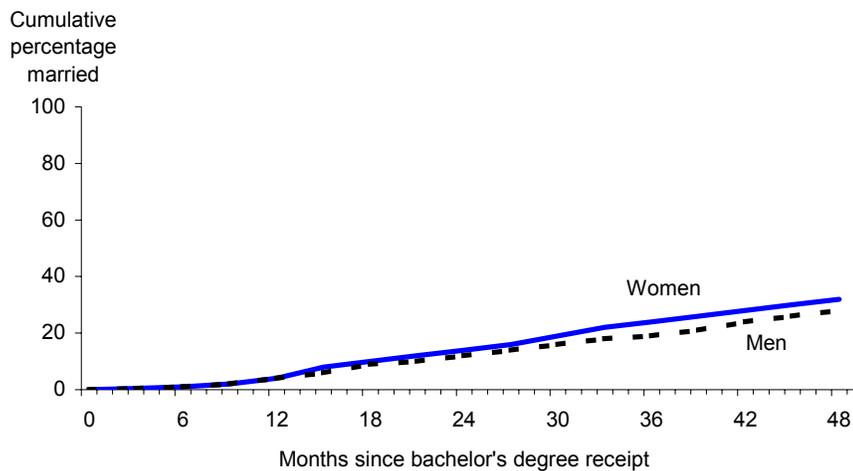
If your data points are not at equal intervals of time (e.g., you have data for 1992, 1994, and 1998), place your axis labels at proportional intervals (e.g., show twice as much space between 1994 and 1998 as between 1992 and 1994). Label only the years with data points.

On the horizontal (x) axis, include a tick mark for every point for which you have data; omit tick marks where you do not have data.

Line graphs should use distinctive lines and avoid legends

On line graphs, avoid geometric figures (squares, diamonds, etc.) placed on lines to distinguish them from one another. Instead, use lines that are dotted, dashed, or of various thicknesses. Even if the lines are printed in multiple colors or shades, the line styles or patterns must be distinctive when photocopied in black and white.

Figure B. Among 1992–93 bachelor's degree recipients who at the time of graduation had never been married, cumulative percentage married each month, by gender: 1993–97

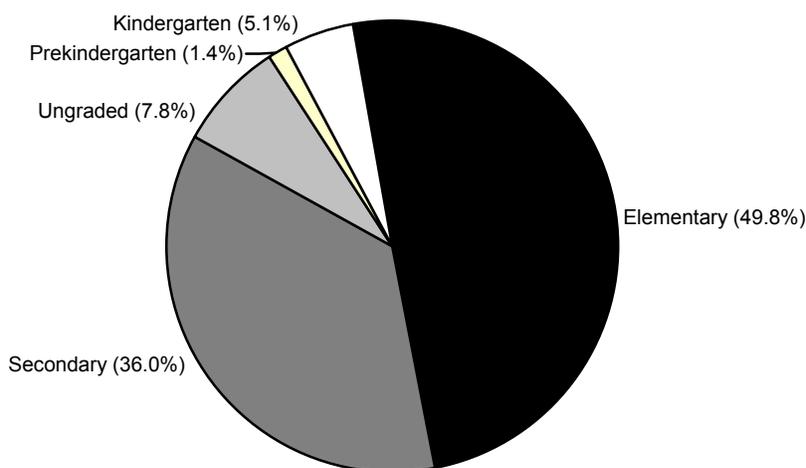


SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1993 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study, “Second Follow-up” (B&B:93/97), Data Analysis System.

Pie charts have labels outside the wedges

Place labels outside wedges. Do not draw a line from label to wedge unless the wedge arc is smaller than the type height. Wedges should be easily differentiated and legible when photocopied or printed in black and white (see sample pie chart below).

Figure 2. Percentage of public elementary and secondary teachers, by level of instruction: School year 2001–02



NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "State Nonfiscal Survey of Public Elementary/Secondary Education," 2001–02.

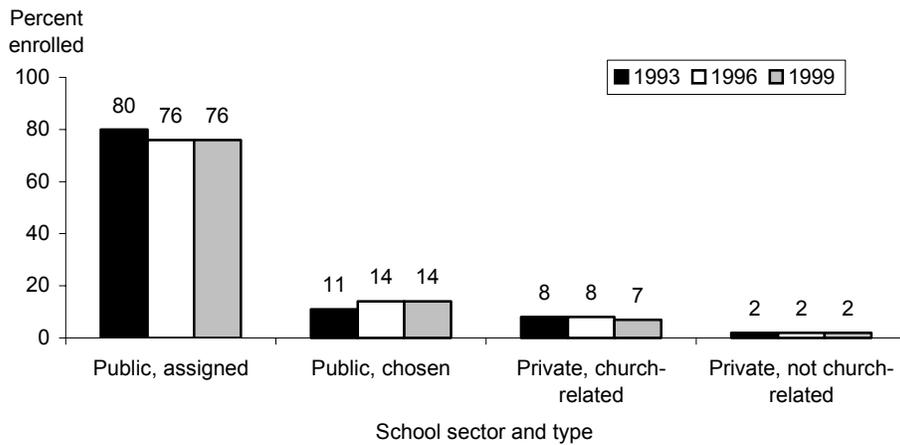
Bar charts have data labels, may have legends

If a bar chart includes a legend or other reference, the items identified in the legend (e.g., bar colors or patterns) should be in the same order as they are in the bars.

Bars should be easily differentiated when photocopied or printed in black and white (see sample bar chart below).

Label each bar to show the data represented, rounded to the nearest whole number (e.g., 76 for a bar representing 76.2 percent—see sample bar chart below).

Figure A. Percentage of students enrolled in grades 1–12, by public and private school type: 1993, 1996, and 1999



NOTE: Includes homeschooled students enrolled in public or private schools for 9 or more hours per week. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, School Readiness Survey of the 1993 National Household Education Surveys Program (SR-NHES:1993); School Safety and Discipline Survey of the 1993 National Household Education Surveys Program (SS&D-NHES:1993); Parent and Family Involvement in Education/Civic Involvement Survey of the 1996 National Household Education Surveys Program (PFI/CI-NHES:1996); and Parent Survey of the 1999 National Household Education Surveys Program (Parent-NHES:1999).

Footnotes

Notes provide comments on and additional information relevant to the main text. When the information appears at the bottom of the page, the notes are called *footnotes*. When the notes appear all together at the end of chapters or at the end of the complete report, they are called *endnotes*. In NCES reports, footnotes are preferred.

Note: NCES style calls for providing full documentation of bibliographic sources in a reference list, rather than in footnotes. To document your sources, include parenthetical references (author and date) in the text and full documentation in the reference list. For more information, see the References section of this style guide.

For guidance on table notes, see the Tables section of this style guide and the following two parts of the *NCES Statistical Standards*: NCES [standard 5-4](#) (Tabular and Graphic Presentations) and [appendix C](#) (NCES Guidelines for Tabular Presentations).

Limit the number and length

Use footnotes sparingly. Use them only for material relevant to the discussion (for example, a definition or an explanation of some anomaly in the data collection).

Keep footnotes short.

Integrate

Check closely to see if all the footnotes are necessary. Integrate them into the text when appropriate.

Consolidate

If there are numerous footnotes containing definitions, consolidate them in a separate glossary of definitions.

Place on same page where referenced

Place each footnote at the bottom of the same page (and same column, if possible) on which it is referenced (i.e., use footnotes rather than endnotes). Use endnotes only as a last resort, when the number or size of notes makes footnote placement difficult. (*But* to avoid this necessity, follow the advice given above, under “Limit the number and length,” “Integrate,” and “Consolidate.”)

Place superscripts after adjacent punctuation

Place superscript numerals that refer to notes after any adjacent punctuation in a sentence (except a dash).

Example: The second net tuition measure takes into account all grants—federal, state, institutional, and other.¹

Place the superscript numeral earlier in a sentence if it does not apply to the entire sentence.

Example: About half (53 percent)⁴ of the 10 percent of schools lending laptop computers reported that students could borrow them for 1 week or more.

Use Arabic numerals and number consecutively

In text, use Arabic numeral superscripts to refer to footnotes.

The preferred style is to number footnotes consecutively throughout the main body of a report (instead of numbering separately in each chapter or section). However, footnotes in the executive summary and in each appendix are numbered separately from those in the main body of the report (so these parts of the report can stand alone); footnote numbering for the executive summary, the main body of the report, and each appendix starts with the numeral 1. Although renumbering footnotes (starting with 1) in each chapter is discouraged, it is acceptable in a long work with many notes.

Endnotes are discouraged; if they are used, however, begin numbering them with the numeral 1 in each new chapter.

Use asterisk for single footnote in text (see different rules for tables)

If there is only one footnote in the main body of the entire report (or in the entire executive summary or appendix), use an asterisk (*) instead of a number. This rule does not apply to tables, however, where the asterisk has a special meaning. For symbols used in table notes and for the prescribed order of various types of table notes, see the Tables section of this style guide. For more about table notes, see the *NCES Statistical Standards*, [appendix C](#) (NCES Guidelines for Tabular Presentations).

Separate adjacent superscripts

At times, more than one superscript may be attached to a word. Separate two or more superscripts attached to the same word with commas (e.g.,^{2,3}). If you have more than two consecutive superscripts, use an “en” dash (e.g.,⁴⁻⁶). (For how to make an en dash in Microsoft Word, see appendix E [next to last example] of this style guide.)

Place legal citations in text and, if desired, in footnotes

Following is guidance on citing federal statutes, regulations, and administrative notices.

Federal statute

In a text citation for a federal statute, give the popular or official name of the act and the year of the act. To provide a print or electronic source, so the reader may access the statute cited, include the additional information in a footnote or, if you prefer, in the text.

A citation to the *U.S. Code* (U.S.C.), the *U.S. Code Annotated* (U.S.C.A.), or the *U.S. Code Service* (U.S.C.S.) is preferred for federal legislation, because it is easier to retrieve the law with such information than with a Public Law citation. When citing these code volumes, generally give the

number and section of the volume and, in parentheses, the year the volume was published. (This publication year may be different from the year of the act.)

Example of citation to the U.S. Code (U.S.C.):

Text citation: National Education Statistics Act of 1994 *or* National Education Statistics Act (1994)

Footnote (or expanded text citation):

National Education Statistics Act of 1994, 20 U.S.C. § 9001 et seq. (2002)

(To create a section symbol [§] in Microsoft Word, press Alt plus 0167 [on the numbers pad at far right].)



Note that the *U.S. Code* is published every 6 years; the last year of publication was 2002. Thus, for example, the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, which established the Institute of Education Sciences, has not yet been codified. However, it is scheduled to appear at 20 U.S.C. § 9511. (See the Public Law and web citations to this Act below.)

If a law has not yet been codified (published in one of the code sources named above), it can be cited as a session law by giving its Public Law (P.L.) number and section, plus the “Stat.” volume number and page number (“Stat.” is the abbreviation for *United States Statutes at Large*, which is the official compilation of uncodified session laws). Finally, give the year (in parentheses) the volume was published.

Examples of citation to a Public Law:

Text citation: No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 *or* No Child Left Behind Act (2001)

Footnote (or expanded text citation):

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, P.L. 107-110, 115 Stat. 1425 (2002)

Text citation: Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 *or* Education Sciences Reform Act (2002)

Footnote (or expanded text citation):

Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, P.L. 107-279, 116 Stat. 1940 (2002)

You may include a web source after any print source information, by adding a comma and “retrieved [date] from [web address, or URL].” If the print source information is unknown, you may give a web source only.

Example of a citation to the Web:

Text citation: Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 *or* Education Sciences Reform Act (2002)

Footnote (or expanded text citation):

Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, retrieved February 25, 2004, from www.ed.gov/policy/rschstat/leg/PL107-279.pdf

Federal regulation

If a final regulation has already been codified in the *Code of Federal Regulations* (C.F.R.), that is the preferred citation.

Example of citation to the C.F.R.:

Text citation: Teacher Quality Enhancement Grants Program

Footnote (or expanded text citation):

Teacher Quality Enhancement Grants Program, 34 C.F.R. § 611 (2003)

If a final regulation has not yet been codified in the C.F.R., cite to the *Federal Register*. (In a *Federal Register* citation, the number after “Fed. Reg.” is the page number.)

Example of citation to the Federal Register:

Text citation: Teacher Quality Enhancement Grants Program

Footnote (or expanded text citation):

Teacher Quality Enhancement Grants Program, 65 Fed. Reg. 1780 (Jan. 12, 2000) (to be codified at 34 C.F.R. § 611)

Administrative notice

Administrative notices are not codified in the C.F.R. Cite them to the *Federal Register*. The citation will look like the one above, but without the last parenthetical referring to the C.F.R.

The following example is a citation for a National Assessment Governing Board notice of request for comments.

Example:

Text citation: National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) Notice of Request for Comments (May 20, 1999)

Footnote (or expanded text citation):

NAGB Notice of Request for Comments, 64 Fed. Reg. 27,520 (May 20, 1999)

If you need additional guidance on styling legal citations, refer to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, commonly called the APA manual (but confine the citations to text and footnotes). Also, you may find it helpful to search the legislation, statutes, or regulations themselves for additional information or quotations. To do so, go to the GPO gateway site, <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/index.html>, and browse the “GPO Access Resources by Branch” section. Search engines and extensive search tips are provided overall and within each subsection.

For other guidance on footnotes not specified in this section, see the rules and extensive examples in the *United States Government Printing Office Style Manual* (2000 edition), [chapter 15](#).

Heading Styles and Levels

Titles and heading levels

The titles and headings referred to in this section are as follows:

- Title – title of report or other publication; title of chapter or equivalent main division
- H1 heading – main heading level under title
- H2 heading – heading level under H1
- H3 heading – heading level under H2 (usually run in at the beginning of a paragraph)

Capitalize per guidelines

See the Capitalization section of this style guide and the two sample heading schemes below for guidance on capitalizing titles and headings.

Make sure each level is consistent and easily distinguishable

Make sure to use a consistent style to identify each level of heading. Ensure that the titles and the H1, H2, and H3 headings differ enough so that the reader readily sees the differences and the hierarchy. Differences can be indicated by

- placement of headings (e.g., centered, left-justified, run-in);
- size and type of font (e.g., large to small; boldface or italic; same type of font as text or different font);
- capitalization style (higher levels of headings capitalize all important words, while H3s—and in some designs, H2s—capitalize only the first word and proper nouns); or
- a combination of these differences.

Below are two examples of acceptable heading schemes.

Sample scheme 1

In this sample NAEP scheme, center and boldface titles and H1 headings; flush left and boldface H2 headings; and, for H3 headings, italicize and run in at the beginning of a paragraph. A run-in head should end with a period. An example of sample scheme 1 follows:

[Title]* 2. Arts Education in Public Elementary Schools**[H1]* Availability and Characteristics of Arts Education Programs in Public Elementary Schools*****[H2]* Characteristics of Music Instruction**

[H3] *Time devoted to instruction.* Among the 94 percent of regular public schools that offered music instruction, students in 6 percent of schools had music classes every day (table 2). Students had music classes three or four times a week in . . .

Sample scheme 2

In this sample scheme, set flush left and boldface titles, H1 headings, and H2 headings, differentiating them by type size. Italicize H3 headings and, in this scheme, place them on a separate line (like the other headings), rather than running them in at the beginning of paragraphs. An example of this scheme follows:

[Title] Executive Summary**[H1] Results for Student Subgroups****[H2] Use of Computers****[H3] *Grades 4, 8, and 12***

Students at grades 4, 8, and 12 who used the Internet or CD-ROM materials ...

If submitting for typesetting/desktopting, designate heading levels

When submitting an electronic document (Microsoft Word file) for typesetting/desktopting, also submit a hard-copy printout. In addition, either

- use H1, H2, and H3 as the names of the Styles that you use to format your headings in the file; or
- indicate H1, H2, and H3 headings on the printout of the document by writing the circled designations in the margin.

By using the Styles feature of Microsoft Word when entering your headings, you can ensure the all-important consistency of each heading level. That is, all H1 headings are the same size, style, and font, and all H2 headings are the same size, style, and font. Consistency of heading levels, and correct assignment of levels to your headings, helps maintain the logic of your report organization and flow.

For how to use the Styles feature of Microsoft Word to ensure consistency in headings at different levels, see appendix E (Microsoft Word Shortcuts and Styles Feature) of this style guide.

Hyphens

Refer to the Compound Words and Punctuation sections

For guidance on the use of hyphens, refer to the Compound Words and Punctuation sections of this style guide.

Use this Microsoft Word shortcut to prevent end-of-line break at hyphen

When you do not want a hyphenated term to break if it falls at the end of a line, hold down the Ctrl and Shift keys as you enter the hyphen.



Internet and Other Technical Terminology

The purpose of these guidelines is to maintain consistency in usage of the developing and ever-changing language of internet terminology. Because current style manuals lack established rules in this area, NCES authors should refer to these guidelines when using internet terminology.

Internet and other technical terminology usage

In text, use the following forms (note cap or lowercase; one word or more; hyphen or no hyphen) for internet-related and other technical terms (*but* cap all of the terms at the beginning of a sentence). For additional guidance, see the NCES web standards.

CD-ROM	intranet
database, dataset, <i>but</i> data file	LISTSERV*
disk (for compact disk)	online
e-mail	pdf (portable document format)
ftp (file transfer protocol)	printout
home page	the Web (short for the World Wide Web)
html (hypertext markup language)	web address, web browser, web page, <i>but</i> website, webmaster
http (hypertext transfer protocol)	World Wide Web
the Internet, <i>but</i> internet application	URL (Uniform Resource Locator)

*LISTSERV is a trademarked, proprietary term; unless you know that is what is being used, you should use “electronic mailing list” rather than the more commonly used “list serve.”

Internet and e-mail addresses (see Punctuation section)

See “Addresses (internet and e-mail)”—in the Punctuation section of this style guide—for the style to use for these addresses.

Italic Letters as Statistical Symbols

Italicize letters used as statistical symbols. Examples include the following (leave a space before and after operations signs, such as =, −, and <):

<i>t</i> test	$a/b = c/d$	<i>r</i>
<i>z</i> test	$p < .05$	$M = 8.19, SD = 7.12$
<i>F</i> test	<i>SEM</i>	$N = 3,270$
$F(1,53) = 10.03$	<i>SE</i>	$t = 2.39$
$RRF^{\times} = F/I - V^{\times}$		

For additional guidance, see the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (fifth edition), pp. 101 and 138–144. (Appendix D of this style guide lists a web address for an APA website, which provides style tips and other information but does not allow you to browse the *Publication Manual*.)

Lists

In general, lists are used for emphasis when discussing key points in a publication. For the most part, lists follow the same rules of punctuation that would apply in a sentence, except that semicolons rather than commas often are used to separate items.

Numbers are used only if needed

Do not number items in lists unless those numbers are referred to later in the text or are present to establish a sequence. If used, however, numbers in lists should be followed by a period and a space (click on the numbered list in the formatting toolbar of Microsoft Word for a standardized, acceptable style).



Example: To develop a bulleted list, do the following in order:

1. Write the information as one or more sentences; then divide the material into a series of list items.

2. Determine the type of punctuation needed for fragments or complete sentences.
3. Place a medium-size bullet in front of each item (click on the bullet list in the formatting toolbar of Microsoft Word for a standardized, acceptable style); avoid the use of stars, asterisks, or other distracting symbols.
4. Review the list, making sure that the items are parallel in construction.

Bullets are used in most cases

In most cases, use bullets in lists, following the rules of punctuation for a sentence, except that semicolons rather than commas are often used to separate items.

Example: Bulleted lists are used

- to organize thoughts;
- to give the eye a break; and
- to highlight salient points.

General rules apply to both bulleted and numbered lists

Note that certain other rules apply to lists, as follows:

- Use a colon only when a complete sentence (often containing “the following” or “as follows”) introduces the list, as in this example.
- Do not use a colon or other punctuation to introduce a list when the listed items complete the introductory phrase, as in the example above, under “Bullets are used in most cases.”
- If the items form a list of fragments, as in the example under “Bullets are used in most cases,” they begin with a lowercase letter; they are punctuated with semicolons; the next to the last item ends with “and”; and the final item ends with a period, just as a sentence would.
- If, on the other hand, each item forms a complete sentence, as in this example, each begins with a capital letter and ends with a period.

Parentheses are used only with list numbers integrated into text

When a numbered list is integrated into the text (not set out, or displayed, as in the above examples), parentheses surround the numbers.

Example: The goals are (1) to communicate clearly and logically, and (2) to comply with specified style.

(Parentheses are also used at a low level of a structured outline, after numbers and letters followed by a period have been used.)

Numbers and Rounding

Use the following as a general guide.

Numbers: Using words or numerals

Units of time and measurement, including percentage

Use Arabic numerals for units of time and measurement, including distance, percentages, proportions, decimals, degrees, area, weight, age, and mathematical expressions.

Examples: 10:00 a.m.; 5 miles; 12 months; 9 days; 8 percent; 6-year study, 18- to 25-year-olds

General use

Use Arabic numerals for numbers 10 or greater. Spell out numbers under 10 unless they are units of time or measurement, including distance, percentages, proportions, decimals, degrees, area, weight, age, and mathematical expressions, or are part of a series in which one of the numbers is 10 or greater. The same rules apply to ordinals. (Note, however, that if cardinal and ordinal numbers appear in the same sentence, they are not considered part of the same series in terms of deciding whether to spell them out or use Arabic numerals. *Cardinal numbers* are numbers used in simple counting, such as 1, 2, and 12; *ordinal numbers* are numbers designating the place of an item in an ordered sequence, e.g., 1st, 2nd, and 12th.)

Examples: Of the books selected, two were fiction and five were nonfiction.

Of the books selected, 2 were fiction and 13 were nonfiction.

History was taught in the second, fourth, and sixth periods.

The groups included 2, 8, and 12 students, respectively.

The 2nd, 6th, 8th, 12th, and 14th students were accepted.

The report was the fifth in a series of 12.

In 1996, some 300 teachers left the profession. [See *note* below.]

Note: Avoid using only a comma to separate two numbers that are not part of a series (e.g., insert a word before the second number in “In 1996, 300 teachers...”).

Exceptions to the general-use rules:

Each school had eleven 10th grades.

[The purpose of the above exception is to aid clarity and readability, by not juxtaposing the two numerals (11 10th). Also spell out numbers of less than 100 that precede a compound modifier containing a figure (e.g., twelve 6-inch guns).]

An exception may also be made to the general rule when there is a strong rationale for doing so. For example, if a report discusses the 6th, 8th, and 10th grades throughout, the general rule would call for “sixth” and “eighth” to be spelled out except when they appear in conjunction with “10th.” However, it might distract the reader to continually switch back and forth between the numeric and spelled-out forms from sentence to sentence or paragraph to paragraph. In such a case, the authors would be justified in picking one form to follow throughout. Be consistent in your use of the selected style.

Use superscript in ordinals with numerals: Use the Microsoft Word default style for ordinals—e.g., use 1st and 9th, not 1st and 9th, when using numerals. If your setting is not in default mode, do the following to return to the default: Click Insert, AutoText, and then AutoText again. Select the AutoFormat As You Type tab. In the “Replace” list, click to insert a check mark by the “Ordinals (1st) with superscript” listing. Click OK.



Sentence/heading beginnings

Write out years and numbers, including percentages, that begin a sentence or heading—or recast the sentence or heading.

Examples: Twelve people attended the meeting.

Two sophomores, 3 juniors, and 12 seniors responded to the survey.

Eight percent did not complete the questionnaire.

The year 1997 was a watershed in Europe.

Three-Year Limit for Grants [heading]

There were 20 fourth-graders in each grade 4 classroom.

Millions and billions

Write out *million* and *billion* but keep the accompanying numerals.

Examples: The population of the United States is more than 280 million.

The project cost \$4.5 billion.

Decades

Do not use an apostrophe in *1990s*. Write out abbreviated decade references, such as *the eighties* (*not* the '80s or the 80's).

Examples: The 1950s were a time of great economic expansion.

During the nineties, boom times made everyone forget the cyclical nature of the economy.

Other examples

1st- through 12th-grade students

2 feet

3 credit hours

4 semester hours

1 month, 9 days

17-year-olds

nine students

two groups

three pages

first grade

grade 4

14 ninth-graders

chapter 1

Rounding: Different types of data, different contexts***In general***

A rounded value must be obtained from the original figure available, *not* from a series of roundings (e.g., 7.1748 can be 7.175 or 7.17 or 7.2 or 7 but *not* 7.18).

If the first digit to be dropped is less than 5, the last retained digit is not changed. If the first digit to be dropped is greater than or equal to 5, the last retained digit is increased by 1.

Examples: 6.1273 is rounded to 6.127

6.6888 is rounded to 6.69

5.4518 is rounded to 5.5

All tables

Sums of column or row totals must be derived using unrounded numbers, with appropriate rounding of the total after its derivation.

Include the following note in all tables that should logically sum to either 100 percent or a numeric total:

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

Number of decimal places to be reported

Standard 5-3-5, #1–6: Before rounding numbers for publication, a decision must be made about the appropriate number of decimal places to be reported using the following rules:

1. Percentages appearing in text must be rounded to whole numbers unless small differences require finer breakdowns. Summary tables must be rounded to no more than one decimal place.
2. Percentages appearing in reference and methodological tables must be rounded to no more than two decimal places except in certain methodological tables where finer breakdowns may be necessary.
3. Standard errors must be rounded to one decimal place more than the estimates for which they are computed.
4. Universe data may be reported unrounded. Sample survey data must be rounded.
5. A measured zero in a universe survey (i.e., none of something) must always appear in a table or a figure as 0. If rounding is used in a universe survey, numbers that round to zero must be represented in tables and figures by the symbol #.
6. When dealing with small values in sample surveys, zero and numbers that round to zero must be represented in tables and figures by the symbol #.

For additional information on rounding, see the *NCES Statistical Standards*, [standard 5-3](#). For more detailed guidance on the presentation of numbers in tables, see [appendix C](#) of the *NCES Statistical Standards*. For guidance on numbers that is not specified in this section or in the referenced sections of the *Standards*, see the rules and examples on the treatment of numbers in text in the *United States Government Printing Office Style Manual* (2000 edition), [chapter 12](#).

Pagination

Front matter: Use lowercase Roman numerals

Generally number with lowercase Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv, . . .) pages of the front matter of a report. (Use the following order for front matter sections included in your document: the title page, boilerplate on the back of the title page, executive summary or highlights page(s), foreword, acknowledgments, table of contents, and the lists of tables and figures.) Page numbers for the title page (i) and the back of the title page (ii) do not appear on the printed page.

Main body of report: Use Arabic numerals

Use consecutive Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, . . .) to number the pages in the main body of reports.

Appendixes: In long reports, use alphanumeric page numbering

If a report is relatively short (say, 100 pages or shorter), you may wish to use consecutive page numbering with Arabic numerals throughout the report, including appendixes. For longer reports, however, separate alphanumeric numbering of each appendix helps orient the reader. Appendix A pages would be numbered A-1, A-2, A-3, etc.; appendix B pages would be numbered B-1, B-2, B-3, etc.

Positioning of page numbers

Be consistent in the positioning of page numbers in your document. Regardless of the orientation of individual pages, all page numbers should be either (1) on the outside of pages (i.e., on the right side of the page on odd-numbered pages and on the left side on even-numbered pages) or (2) at the bottom center. Generally place page numbers at the bottom of pages (in the footer); however, if it better suits your document, you may place outside numbers (i.e., those that alternate between the left and right side) at the top of pages (in the header).

Positioning at the outside of pages is helpful when a document's purpose makes it likely that readers will be frequently looking for specific page numbers.

Plurals

Below are words that have alternative plural forms. To ensure consistency in NCES publications, the list shows the singular form first, followed by the plural form preferred by NCES:

addendum, addenda	matrix, matrices
appendix, appendixes [parts of document]	memorandum, memoranda
compendium, compendia	referendum, referendums
consortium, consortia	symposium, symposia
criterion, criteria	
curriculum, curricula	
datum, data [always use plural verb with data]	
formula, formulas	
index, indexes [indices for scientific material or mathematical expressions]	

Do not use an apostrophe in plurals for dates (1990s) or in abbreviations (ABCs), except when it adds clarity (A's and B's) or when an abbreviation has two or more periods or includes both capital and lowercase letters (Ph.D.'s). Write out abbreviated decade references, such as *the eighties*; do not use *the 80's* or *the 80s*.

Printing and Binding Regulations

Title 44 of the United States Code governs printing by federal agencies. When a department uses appropriated funds to create information for publication, the printing and binding of that information is subject to the provisions of sections 103 and 501 of title 44, United States Code, and it shall not be made available to a private publisher for initial publication without the prior approval of the congressional Joint Committee on Printing.

Federal printing and binding regulations direct that any job, whether printed or photocopied, that exceeds 5,000 copies of any one page or 25,000 impressions in total of multiple pages must be sent out for bid and printed via contract through the Government Printing Office (GPO). These limits cover black and white copy only. For color copying, the limit is 250 copies of one page only. Any quantity under these limits is not deemed to be printing primarily or substantially for a government department or agency and is not bound by these restrictions. *Exception:* The GPO printing requirement does not apply to certain categories of internal or administrative printing, such as forms and instructional materials necessary to be used by contractors to respond to the terms of contracts.

Printing through GPO puts the material in the public domain and ensures that the material is distributed through the Federal Depository Libraries. These libraries—many of which are college, university, and academic law libraries—serve as the public's primary source of free access to the published information of the federal government.

Punctuation

Punctuation is used to provide clarity and smooth transitions in printed reports.

Addresses (internet and e-mail)

In electronic addresses designating web sites on the Internet (Uniform Resource Locators, or URLs), list the entire address on a single line, if possible. Break after slashes and punctuation, if necessary to break; *but* never break addresses at hyphens, and never introduce hyphens into addresses.

URLs begin with an abbreviation of the protocol used to deliver the electronic material to readers. The most common are *http* (hypertext transfer protocol) and *ftp* (file transfer protocol). The protocol is followed by a colon, double forward slash, and then the publisher's domain name. Components following the domain name represent the path to the resource. These components are separated from the domain name and from each other by single forward slashes.

Highlight addresses by underlining them. This happens automatically in Microsoft Word, the standard for the Education Department.

Examples: internet—<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch>
e-mail—john.doe@ed.gov

If an address comes at the end of a sentence, include a period to end the sentence (do not underline the period if it is not part of the address).

Addresses (postal) and telephone numbers

In postal addresses, do not use a comma before NW and its counterparts. Use hyphens in zip codes and telephone numbers.

Examples: 555 New Jersey Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20006
(202) 502-7300 *or* 202-502-7300 (be consistent in your document)
P.O. Box 1398
Jessup, MD 20794-1398
1 (877) 433-7827 *or* 1-877-433-7827 (be consistent in your document)

Apostrophe

To form the possessive of singular nouns, including those that end in *s* (boss), add an apostrophe and an *s*. To form the possessive of plural nouns ending in *s* (bosses), add an apostrophe only. Some irregular plurals (women) form the possessive by adding both an apostrophe and an *s*.

Examples: boss's, bosses'
citizen's, citizens'
datum's, data's
IES's; NCES's (but note that when you use an abbreviation as a modifier, it is not necessarily a possessive form and generally does not require an apostrophe, e.g., "IES grants" and "NCES surveys")
woman's, women's
one parent's education, both parents' education, one student's nationality

As also explained above in the Plurals section, do not use an apostrophe in plurals for dates (1990s) or in abbreviations (ABCs), except when it adds clarity (A's and B's) or when an abbreviation has two or more periods or includes both capital and lowercase letters (Ph.D.'s). Write out abbreviated decade references, such as *the eighties*; do not use *the 80s* or *the 80's*.

Comma

Use a final (serial) comma preceding “and” at the end of a series.

Example: The survey included responses from students, teachers, and administrators.

For placement of commas with quotation marks, see “Quotation marks,” later in this section.

Dashes

The em dash (—) and en dash (–) differ in length. Each has its own uses.

Em dash

In printed publications, use an em dash (—) in place of two hyphens (--) to indicate a break in thought in the copy, or for emphasis. Do not leave a space between an em dash and the words that precede and follow it. Do not use em dashes where commas will suffice.

Example: Instructional faculty were asked about their use of various methods—lecture, seminar, lab, and fieldwork—as primary teaching methods in their classes.

To get an em dash (—) in *Microsoft Word*, do one of the following:



- Leaving no space after a word, insert two hyphens and continue typing; the hyphens convert to an em dash.
- While holding down the Ctrl and Alt keys, press the minus key at top right of the numbers pad.
- Select Insert, then Symbol, then Special Characters; select the em dash and Insert.

En dash

An en dash (–) is often used in number spans (e.g., in place of “through” in dates, ages, and times) but should never be used with the prepositions “from” or “between.”

Examples: My high school years, 1994–97, were interesting times. (*or* My high school years, from 1994 through 1997, were interesting times.)

Twelve percent of students ages 12–18 reported . . . (*or* Twelve percent of students ages 12 through 18 reported . . .)

Note: If you use “between,” you must use “and.” If you use “from,” you must use “through” or “to.” Never substitute an en dash in these cases.

Examples: Between 1994 and 1997, . . . (*not* Between 1994–97, . . .)

From June to September 2003, . . . (*not* From June–September 2003, . . .)

Use an en dash, not a hyphen, to indicate a time period (such as a school year) that includes parts of two successive calendar years.

Examples: This report presents data for school year 1996–97.

This report presents data for academic years 1996–97 through 2000–01.

For more about academic, fiscal, and school years, see the Year Spans section of this style guide.

To get an en dash (–) in Microsoft Word, do one of the following:



- While holding down the Ctrl key, press the minus key at top right of the numbers pad.
- Leaving a space after a number, insert one hyphen and continue typing; the hyphen converts to an en dash. (You must go back and delete the space that you left after the number.)
- Select Insert, then Symbol, then Special Characters; select the en dash.

Hyphen

The most frequent use of the hyphen (-) is to connect elements of compound words, particularly if those words are used as unit modifiers (u.m.).

Examples: 12-year-old students

12-year-olds (*but* 12 years old)

12- through 24-year-old students (*not* 12–24-year old students)

2- and 4-year institutions

less-than-4-year institutions

4-year-and-above institutions (but may use “4-year and above” when used without “institutions” in stub columns or as column head)

post-master’s certificate

eighth-grader

evidence-based intervention

multiple-choice questions

two-thirds

For more about the use of hyphens in compounds, see the Compound Words section of this style guide.

Quotation marks

Put commas and final periods inside quotation marks; put other punctuation marks outside quotation marks, unless they are part of the quotation.

Examples: This practice, often referred to as “tuition discounting,” has grown rapidly in recent years.

Answers to this question were scored on three levels: evidence of “Full Comprehension,” evidence of “Partial or Surface Comprehension,” or evidence of “Little or No Comprehension.”

Why call it a “gentleman’s agreement”?

Be consistent in your use of quotation marks. Use double quotation marks (“ . . .”) for quotes and to report direct speech. Use single quotation marks (‘ . . .’) for a quote within a quote or a quote within direct speech.

Always use curly quotation marks (“ . . .”), called smart quotes, rather than straight marks (‘ and ’), which are used to denote feet and inches. In Microsoft Word, if you are not getting smart quotation marks, go to your toolbar and select Format, then Autoformat, then Options, and check to replace straight quotes with smart quotes.



Do not use quotation marks to emphasize words. If special emphasis is needed and cannot be achieved by rewording, it can be accomplished by using—sparingly— italicized words or em dashes.

Similarly, words in text and headings should not be underlined or made all caps for emphasis. Using boldface in text for emphasis is discouraged; but in rare instances when italics or em dashes do not achieve the necessary emphasis, boldface may be used sparingly.

Slash

Use the slash (or solidus) as a substitute for “per,” in fractions, and to indicate alternatives/alternative word forms.

Examples: pupil/teacher ratio
race/ethnicity

Avoid using “and/or.” Choose either “and” or “or,” or else recast the sentence; a construction that uses “, or both” is often appropriate.

Example: Such organizations offer services designed to meet the needs of children, their parents, or both.

For guidance not covered in this section, see the rules and examples on the treatment of punctuation in text in the *United States Government Printing Office Style Manual* (2000 edition), [chapter 8](#).

Race and Ethnicity

Refer to [standard 1-5](#) (Defining Race and Ethnicity Data) of the *NCES Statistical Standards* for guidance on reporting on race and ethnicity.

The NCES standard is based on guidance issued in October 1997 by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for racial and ethnic designations. Changes announced at that time were to be adopted by all federal agencies no later than January 1, 2003. NCES has been implementing the changes as appropriate for the timing of individual surveys.

Reporting categories

Major changes from the old standards include (1) the ability to choose one or more than one race among the five race categories listed below, and (2) the split of the category “Asian or Pacific Islander” into two categories, “Asian” and “Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.”

The single-race categories to be used are as follows:

- White
- Black or African American
- Asian
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

Ethnic categories to be used are as follows:

- Hispanic or Latino
- Not Hispanic or Latino

[Appendix A](#) (Race and Ethnicity) of the *NCES Statistical Standards* presents the five single-race categories, along with all combinations that can be formed using these race categories, a “No Race Specified or Refused” designation, and the “Hispanic or Latino” or “Not Hispanic or Latino” ethnic categories. For example, a respondent could report a three-race combination of White,

Black or African American, and Asian, along with “Not Hispanic or Latino” ethnicity.

The following abbreviated names may be used in text, tables, or figures; if they are used, however, a footnote should provide the full designation represented by the abbreviated name:

American Indian (instead of American Indian or Alaska Native)
Black (instead of Black or African American)
Pacific Islander (instead of Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander)
Hispanic (instead of Hispanic or Latino)

Minimal reporting categories

Refer to [standard 1-5-4](#) of the *NCES Statistical Standards* for a list and definitions of the desired minimal categories to be used when reporting data on race and ethnicity. This standard also provides guidance on what to do if there are not enough cases in any individual category or if several categories cannot be shown.

Race distinctions

In cases where the standard minimal reporting categories are considered inappropriate for particular programs or regions—and you need collective descriptions to make summary distinctions—you may use “White,” “Black,” and “All Other Races”; or “White” and either “Black and Other Races” or “All Other Races.” (References to “Black” in this paragraph assume that you have defined the term as a shortened version of the category “Black or African American.”)

The terms “non-White” and “colored” are not acceptable as racial/ethnic designations when reporting data. As an alternative in general discussion, you may use “races other than White” or similar phrases when appropriate.

Be aware that members of races that are in the minority nationally are, in fact, the majority in many contexts. When reporting on such contexts—e.g., urban districts where Blacks or Hispanics are the majority—do not refer to those groups as minorities or to Whites as the majority.

Ethnicity

Reporting categories on ethnicity may be limited to Hispanic (defined as a shortened version of “Hispanic or Latino”) and non-Hispanic. Reporting categories may include the following: White, Hispanic; White, non-Hispanic; Black, Hispanic; and Black, non-Hispanic. They may also include a breakdown of Hispanic, e.g., Mexican American, Cuban, Puerto Rican, and Other.

When reporting categories are Black, White, and Hispanic, add a note indicating that Hispanics may be of any race. This note alerts the reader to a possible overlap in the data.

If “Black” and “White” are used to mean “Black, non-Hispanic” and “White, non-Hispanic,” add a note to clarify that fact.

Other origins

When presenting data on other origins (for example, English, German, and French), use the designation “Ethnic origin” and include it in tables and table titles.

References

The following paragraph is a policy statement about appropriate sources to use in reports when supporting statements of fact. The rest of this References section provides style guidelines to be followed when citing sources in text or listing them in your report’s reference list.

Cite appropriate sources when supporting statements of fact

All statements of fact in reports must be supported directly either by data presented in the report or by a citation to the research literature. Such citations must be to refereed, peer-reviewed journals; to books published by companies known for their academic rigor; or to acceptable government reports. A list called “Refereed Journals in Education: An Almost-complete List” may be found at <http://www.millersv.edu/~curricul/Refereed.htm>. If the journal you are citing is not on the list, please use the Internet to find that journal’s instructions to authors, to verify its refereed status. Another website lists journals in the EBSCO database and indicates which are refereed. This very long list may be found at <http://www.epnet.com/academic/acasearchprem.asp>.

Within your text, use brief, parenthetical references

When you refer to other publications within your text, place authors’ names and publication dates in parentheses, with no punctuation between them. Key them to a *reference list* at the end of your publication.

examples:

<i>One work by one author:</i>		<i>Principles illustrated</i>
(Duncan 1997) <i>or</i> In contrast, Duncan (1997) found that . . .		If possible, cite the name of individual author(s) instead of just an organization name.
(National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future 1996)		Cite an organization only if the work cannot be ascribed to individual authors.
(National Council for the Social Studies [NCSS] 1994) <i>or</i> Curriculum standards developed by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS 1994) provide examples of...		For the first mention of an organization that will be referred to again, define the acronym.
(NCSS 1996)		If you previously defined the acronym, no need to write out the entire name.
(Myers in press) ← (Phyfe forthcoming) ←	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"> <i>non-NCES</i> pub, accepted for publication, but not yet printed </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"> <i>NCES pub</i>, not yet released </div>	If a publication has not yet been printed or released, do not include the year. <i>Exception:</i> If an NCES pub has already gone to the printer or is available on the Web, include the year of release.
(Duncan 1997, p. 82)		When referencing a quotation or other <i>very specific</i> piece of information within a publication, include the page number.
(K. W. Schaie—personal communication, September 28, 1993) <i>or</i> Bill Joyner verified the information about his school in a telephone interview (March 20, 1993).		For personal communications—letters, memos, e-mail, phone conversations, etc.—include the initials or first name of the communicator and as exact a date as possible. Personal communications are <i>not</i> included in the reference list.
<i>One work by multiple authors:</i>		
two authors with page reference	(Celebuski and Farris 1998) (Celebuski and Farris 1998, p. 71)	
three authors with page reference	(Haney, Madaus, and Kreitzer 1987) (Haney, Madaus, and Kreitzer 1987, p. 80)	
four or more authors with page reference	(Choy et al. 1993) (Choy et al. 1993, p. 48)	

Multiple works within the same parentheses:

none of the works have page references	(Kolstad 1990, 1992) ← multiple works by single author (Choy et al. 1993; Henke et al. 1997) (Berkner and Chavez 1997; U.S. Department of Education 1997) (Herman, Aschbacher, and Winters 1992; Koretz et al. 1994; Wiggins 1993) ← works by different authors are ordered alphabetically by name of first author
one or more works have page references	(Celebuski and Farris 1998; Wirt et al. 1998, p. 45) ← (Burstein et al. 1995, p. 36; Marshal, Fuhr, and Day 1994, p. 12)

Works that have identical author(s) and year of publication:

within the same parentheses	(Smith 1995a, 1995b, 1995c)
in separate references	(Pepperburg and Funk in press–a) (Pepperburg and Funk in press–b)

At the end of your publication, provide a detailed reference list

The reference list documents all sources that you referred to in the text and allows readers to locate these sources. *Prepare each entry carefully, making sure that it is accurate and complete.* Arrange the entries in alphabetical order by author name. If more than one entry has the same author(s), arrange the entries by year of publication, with the earliest year first. *For details on arranging the list, see the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (fifth edition).*

General notes:

- For a multiple-author work, **list all authors**; do *not* use “et al.” in a reference list.
- For an NCES publication, **do not include a project officer** who is not an author; always **include the NCES number** (in parentheses after the title, before the period).
- For works that have **identical author(s) and year of publication**, add lowercase letters immediately after the date and alphabetize by title:

Ingersoll, R. (1995a). *An Agenda . . .*

Ingersoll, R. (1995b). *Teacher Supply . . .*
- Per NCES style, capitalize most words in the title, including prepositions with four or more letters.

Basic elements of individual entries:Periodical:

Author, A.A., Author, B.B., Author, C.C., and Author, D.D. (1994). Title of Article. *Title of Periodical*, *nn*(*n*): *nnn*–*nnn*. ← pages

← volume ← issue

Nonperiodical:

Author, A.A., Author, B.B., Author, C.C., and Author, D.D. (1994). *Title of Publication*. Location: Publisher or printer (e.g., GPO).

Part of nonperiodical (e.g., chapter of book):

Author, A.A., and Author, B.B. (1994). Title of Chapter. In A. Editor and B. Editor (Eds.), *Title of Book* (pp. nnn–nnn). Location: Publisher or printer (e.g., GPO).

Use an en dash (slightly longer than a hyphen) to indicate a page range. In MS Word, insert the en dash by holding down the Ctrl key, then pressing the “minus sign” on the number pad.

<i>NCES publications:</i>	<i>Notes</i>
<p><u>Standard pub. published and available through GPO:</u> Henke, R.R., Choy, S.P., Chen, X., Geis, S., Alt, M.N., and Broughman, S.P. (1997). <i>America’s Teachers: Profile of a Profession: 1993–94</i> (NCES 97–460). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.</p>	<p>In the NCES number, use an en dash to separate the year from the specific number. For pubs released in 1998 or earlier, use a two-digit year. For pubs released in 1999 or later, include all four digits of the year.</p> <p>Sample NCES numbers: 93–152 and 98–306; <i>but</i> 1999–104, 2000–585, and 2004-013</p>
<p><u>NCES pub available on the Web only:</u> See “Works on the Internet,” below.</p>	
<p><u>NCES pub that is <i>not</i> available through GPO:</u> Bare, J., and Meek, A. (1998). <i>Internet Access in Public Schools</i> (NCES 98–031). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.</p>	<p>For the following types of NCES pubs, cite National Center for Education Statistics as the publisher, as shown in the example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Issue Brief ▪ Statistics in Brief • E.D. TAB ▪ Highlights Brochures <p>These types of publications cannot be purchased through GPO.</p>
<p><u>Individual article within edited NCES pub:</u> Goldhaber, D., and Brewer, D. (1997). Evaluating the Effect of Teacher Degree Level on Educational Performance. In W. Fowler (Ed.), <i>Developments in School Finance, 1996</i> (NCES 97–535) (pp. 199–208). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.</p>	<p>If a work forms part of another publication—i.e., is not separately published—its title is neither italicized nor in quotation marks.</p>
<p><u>NCES pub not yet released or sent to printer:</u> Allen, N.L., Carlson, J.E., and Zelenak, C.A. (forthcoming). <i>The NAEP 1996 Technical Report</i> (NCES 1999–452). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.</p>	<p>If an NCES publication has neither been released nor sent to the printer, use the word “forthcoming” instead of a date.</p> <p>If a pub has been released on the Web but not yet sent to the printer, include the year of release. If a pub has been sent to the printer but not yet released in any medium, use the projected year of release.</p>
<p><u>NCES pub with commission as author:</u> National Forum on Education Statistics, Technology in Schools Task Force. (2002). <i>Technology in Schools: Suggestions, Tools, and Guidelines for Assessing Technology in Elementary and Secondary Education</i> (NCES 2003–313). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.</p>	<p>NCES sometimes publishes reports authored by commissions or forums that include large numbers of individuals from many different organizations.</p> <p>If a work is the product of a group and individual authors cannot be identified, cite the group as the author.</p>

<u>Joint product of NCES and another government agency:</u>	Individual authors are usually listed. In addition to the NCES number, the pub number from the other agency is also included if available. In this case, NCES and BJS are listed as the publishers because the publication was not available from GPO. If the publication were available through GPO, then GPO would be listed as the publisher.
Chandler, K.A., Chapman, C.D., Rand, M.R., and Taylor, B.M. (1998). <i>Students' Reports of School Crime: 1989 and 1995</i> (NCES 98-241/NCJ-169607). U.S. Departments of Education and Justice. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics and Bureau of Justice Statistics.	

<i>U.S. government publications (non-NCES)</i>	<i>Notes</i>
<u>Individuals identified as authors:</u> Myers, D., and Dynarski, M. (2003). <i>Random Assignment in Program Evaluation and Intervention Research: Questions and Answers</i> (NCEE 2003-5000). U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Kindermann, C., Lynch, J., and Cantor, D. (1997). <i>Effects of the Redesign on Victimization Estimates</i> (NCJ 164381). U.S. Department of Justice. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.	Cite individual authors if possible. Cite the agency's pub number if available. Cite GPO as publisher if available from GPO. If you're not sure about GPO availability and GPO is not cited anywhere on the publication's inside front cover, then cite the agency as publisher.
<u>Commission as author (or as author and publisher):</u> The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills. (1991). <i>What Work Requires of Schools: A SCANS Report for America 2000</i> . Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor. National Commission on the Cost of Higher Education. (1998). <i>Straight Talk on the Cost of Higher Education</i> . Washington, DC: Author.	Whenever the author and publisher are identical, use the word "Author" as the publisher.
<u>Department as author:</u> U.S. Department of Education. (1998). <i>Goals 2000: Reforming Education to Improve Student Achievement</i> . Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.	

<i>Nongovernment publications</i>	<i>Notes</i>
<u>Standard book or published report:</u> Lewis, A. (1989). <i>Wolves at the Schoolhouse Door: An Investigation of the Condition of Public School Buildings</i> . Washington, DC: Education Writers Association.	
<u>Journal article:</u> Shavelson, R.J., Baxter, G.P., and Gao, X. (1993). Sampling Variability of Performance Assessments. <i>Journal of Educational Measurement</i> , 30(3): 215-232.	Always include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the volume number (italicized), and ▪ the issue number (in parens, no italics).
<u>Pub with editor(s) instead of author(s):</u> Wilson, H. (Ed.). (1997). <i>Punishment as an Educational Tool</i> . Montreal, Canada: Albemarle Leafnotes.	Use the same format as for a pub with author(s), but insert "(Ed.)" after a single editor's name or "(Eds.)" after multiple editors' names.

<p><u>Article within edited pub:</u></p> <p>Haertel, E. (1991). New Forms of Teacher Assessment. In G. Grant and S. Smith (Eds.), <i>Review of Research in Education</i> (pp. 329–347). Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.</p>	
<p><u>Newspaper article:</u></p> <p>Ravitch, D. (1998, August 10). Lesson Plan for Teachers. <i>The Washington Post</i>, p. A17.</p>	<p>Include the day of publication to identify the issue.</p>

<i>Works on the Internet</i>	<i>Notes</i>
<p><u>NCES pub available on the Web only:</u></p> <p>Knapp, L.G., Kelly, J.E., Whitmore, R.W., Wu, S., and Gallego, L.M. (2003). <i>Postsecondary Institutions in the United States: Fall 2001 and Degrees and Other Awards Conferred: 2000–01</i> (NCES 2003–158). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved December 15, 2003, from http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch.</p>	
<p><u>Report available on the Web:</u></p> <p>United States Sentencing Commission. (n.d.) <i>1997 Sourcebook of Federal Sentencing Statistics</i>. Retrieved April 30, 2003, from http://www.ussc.gov/annrpt/1997/sbtoc97.htm.</p>	<p>If no report date is available, put “(n.d.)” (for “no date”) after the author/agency name.</p>
<p><u>Speech available on the Web:</u></p> <p>Riley, R. (1998, September 15). <i>The Challenge for America: A High Quality Teacher in Every Classroom</i>. Annual Back to School Address to the National Press Club by the U.S. Secretary of Education. Retrieved April 30, 2003, from http://www.ed.gov/Speeches/980915.html.</p>	<p>If you must break the internet address (URL), do so after a slash or before a period. Be sure your word-processing program does not insert a hyphen.</p>
<p><u>Journal article available on the Web:</u></p> <p>[All of the usual journal citation information.] Retrieved April XX, 200X, from http://www.xxx.xxx/xxx/xxxx.</p>	

<i>Some special types of reference-list entries</i>	<i>Notes</i>
<p><u>Accepted for publication but not yet published (non-NCES):</u></p> <p>Ingersoll, R. (in press). Teacher Assessment and Evaluation. In D. Levinson, P. Cookson, and A. Sadovnik (Eds.), <i>Education and Sociology: An Encyclopedia</i>. Washington, DC: Garland Press.</p>	<p>If a non-NCES work has not yet been published, use the phrase “in press” instead of a date. Do not include page numbers for part of a larger work. For a journal article that has not yet been published, do not include the date, volume, or issue number.</p> <p>Note: For an NCES publication that has not yet been released, use the word “forthcoming” instead of a date. However, if the pub has been sent to the printer before being released, you may use the projected year of release.</p>

<p><u>Unpublished paper presented at a meeting:</u></p> <p>Truegrin, R.P. (1997, April). <i>Why Kids Stay in School</i>. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Los Angeles, CA.</p>	
<p><u>Specific edition of book:</u></p> <p>Cohen, E. (1994). <i>Designing Groupwork: Strategies for the Heterogeneous Classroom</i> (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.</p>	
<p><u>Publication available from Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC):</u></p> <p>Bailey, T., and Merritt, D. (1995). <i>Making Sense of Industry-Based Skill Standards</i>. Berkeley, CA: National Center for Research in Vocational Education. (ERIC ED389897)</p>	<p>Put the ERIC document number in parentheses at the end of the entry, as shown.</p>

In publisher location, omit state or country name for internationally known cities

Follow the traditional practice of omitting a state abbreviation or country name for the following publisher locations, which are well known internationally as publishing centers:

Baltimore	New York	Amsterdam	Paris
Boston	Philadelphia	Jerusalem	Rome
Chicago	San Francisco	London	Stockholm
Los Angeles		Milan	Tokyo
		Moscow	Vienna

For Suggested Citation, use the style outlined in this References section

The Suggested Citation, which appears on the boilerplate page on the back of a report's title page, should comply with the standard style outlined above. *Exception:* It is safest to cite NCES as the source, since you can't be sure, at this point, whether the report will be available through GPO. Similarly, you generally can't be sure it will be a web-only publication. Citing NCES is always safe.

If authors are listed on the title page, they should be listed first in the citation. The Project Officer is not included unless he or she is also an author of the report.

Example: **Suggested Citation**

Adelman, C., Daniel, B., and Berkovits, I. (2003). *Postsecondary Attainment, Attendance, Curriculum, and Performance: Selected Results From the NELS:88/2000 Postsecondary Education Transcript Study (PETS), 2000* (NCES 2003-394). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

- The authors and Project Officer of the above report are listed on the title page of the report as follows:

Clifford Adelman
Institute of Education Sciences

Bruce Daniel
Pinkerton

Ilona Berkovits
National Center for Education Statistics

Jeffrey Owings
Project Officer
National Center for Education Statistics

- *If the Project Officer had been listed in two places on the report title page—with the authors and as the Project Officer—his name would have been included as one of the authors in the Suggestion Citation. In this case, the report title page would look as follows:*

Clifford Adelman
Institute of Education Sciences

Bruce Daniel
Pinkerton

Ilona Berkovits
Jeffrey Owings
National Center for Education Statistics

Jeffrey Owings
Project Officer
National Center for Education Statistics

For guidance on legal citations, which NCES does not put in the reference list, see the Footnotes section of this style guide.
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Survey Titles

In the titles of major surveys and their subsurveys, capitalize the important words. For more details, see “Titles and headings” in the Capitalization section of this style guide.

Do not enclose major survey titles in quotation marks. When citing a major survey and one of its subsurveys, put quotation marks around the subsurvey title only. In source notes for tables and figures, always cite the major survey first, followed by the subsurvey.

Following are some representative survey citations for source notes. Note, however, that some surveys are cited differently. To comply with NCES style for the names, acronyms, and years of specific surveys, refer to the *NCES Statistical Standards*, [appendix D](#) (Survey Titles), which lists all surveys, their waves and components (or subsurveys), and the preferred style for each. Also, for your convenience, the abbreviations and titles of surveys—but not of subsurveys—are included (and asterisked) in the abbreviations list in appendix A of this style guide.

Examples:

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1997 Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, “Fall Enrollment Survey” (IPEDS-EF:97).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall 2001. [For the year 2000 and after, the IPEDS survey is not broken into subject-matter components.]

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88/92), “Second Follow-up, Parent Survey, 1992.”

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1995–96 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:96). [For 1999–2000, the acronym is NPSAS:2000.]

Table of Contents (automatic generation)

Generally, use two or three levels of heading in your table of contents (TOC). To create a TOC automatically in Microsoft Word, do the following.



First, assign styles to headings

Use the Styles feature of Word to assign specific heading levels and styles to your document’s headings. To do this, select the heading level of interest from the pull-down window that appears at the top and to the left on your screen (in addition to heading styles, the pull-down window lists other styles, such as “Normal” and “Default Paragraph Font”). Note that each heading level has an already assigned style (e.g., 16 pt, left-aligned for Heading 1). After selecting the level in the list, type your heading in your document; or, if you already have typed your heading, highlight it or put your cursor in it and then select the desired heading level. (If you want to modify a heading style

before applying it to your headings, select Format on your toolbar and click Style. In the Style box, select the heading level that you want to modify—e.g., Heading 2—and then click Modify. In the Modify Style box that appears, click Format at the bottom of the box, and then click the attribute [e.g., font] you want to change. Click OK after changing each attribute you wish to modify.)

Second, generate the table of contents

To then generate your TOC, follow these steps:

1. Click where you want to insert the TOC in your document. (The TOC should follow the front matter sections, including executive summary or highlights page(s), foreword, and acknowledgments, but should precede the lists of figures and tables.)
2. Select Insert from your toolbar, click Index and Tables, and then select the Table of Contents tab.
3. Before you click OK, while still in the Index and Tables box, do two things:
 - a. Use the Formats dropdown window at bottom left to view style options for the contents page and select the one you want.
 - b. If you want a different number of heading levels in your TOC from that shown in the Print Preview window, click the “Show levels” up or down arrow to select the number of heading levels that you want displayed in your TOC
4. Finally, click OK in the Index and Tables dialog box. Your TOC will be inserted where you indicated in the first step above.

To learn more, or to resolve any problems you encounter, consult the Help feature on your toolbar.

Tables

For detailed guidance on producing NCES tables, see the *NCES Statistical Standards*, [appendix C](#) (NCES Guidelines for Tabular Presentations). For guidance on producing tables in Excel that meet the NCES standards, see appendix G of this style guide.

Tables should have an identifier and title

Tables in NCES reports should have an identifier (e.g., table A, table 1, or table A-1) and a title. Note the punctuation that follows the identifier: Use a period and two “n” spaces between the number/letter of the table identifier and the first word of the title. If the table title following the identifier runs more than one line, indent each additional line so that it aligns with the first letter of the title in the first line (see sample table below).

Table identifiers are different in different parts of report

In the main body of a report, use consecutive Arabic numerals for table identifiers (table 1, table 2, etc.). In executive summaries, use letters for table identifiers, and letter the tables in alphabetical order (table A, table B, etc.). In appendixes, table identifiers include both the letter of the appendix and a consecutive number (e.g., in appendix A: table A-1, table A-2, etc.).

Sample table illustrates many NCES guidelines

The following is a sample table illustrating many of the NCES guidelines for tables.

Table 6. Number of public high school completers, by state: School year 1999–2000

State	High school completers			
	Total	Diploma recipients	Other high school completers	High school equivalency recipients ¹
U.S.	—	2,546,102	41,638 ²	—
Alabama	43,459	37,819	2,535	3,105
Alaska	7,968	6,615	53	1,300
Arizona	—	38,304	375	†
·				
·				
·				
Wyoming	—	6,462	27	—

— Not available.

† Not applicable, no equivalency program.

¹ Includes recipients age 19 or younger, except in Minnesota, where they are age 20 or younger.

² Total other high school completers does not include New Hampshire, New Jersey, Washington, and Wisconsin.

NOTE: High school completer categories may include students not included in 12th-grade membership.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "State Nonfiscal Survey of Public Elementary/Secondary Education," 2000–01.

In the body of tables, place footnote symbols/numbers to the right of column numbers—and flush right in empty cells

With columns of numbers: Keep all numbers aligned on the decimal. Symbols or superscript numbers referring to footnotes that are attached to numbers appear to the right of numbers (i.e., sticking out to the right of the right-aligned numbers).

In empty cells: Align footnote symbols/numbers on the right in empty cells. Use parentheses *only* around superscript *numbers* in empty cells. Do not use parentheses with symbols.

In titles, do not use superscript numbers that refer to footnotes

In table titles, as in figure titles, do not use a superscript number referring to a footnote. Instead, put the information in a general note (i.e., the “NOTE”).

Table notes follow prescribed order; symbols have special meanings

Use the following order in presenting table notes:

1. *Special (symbol) notes* are always listed first. The specific order to be used in listing the different symbols in table notes is shown below, under “*Special (symbol) notes and use of zero.*”
2. *Reference (numbered) notes* come after the special notes.
3. *The general “NOTE”* comes next.
4. *The “SOURCE” note* comes last.

The remainder of this subsection provides more information about using these types of table notes, including the specific order of special (symbol) notes, the associated labels to be used, and their meanings. The source of these guidelines is [appendix C](#) of the *NCES Statistical Standards*.

Special (symbol) notes and use of zero

Special notes are listed first, in the specific order shown below (include those that are relevant to your table). In table notes, include the relevant symbols followed by their associated labels. The symbols and labels always have the meanings shown on the right below; if necessary, additional explanatory notes may be added to the end of relevant notes, after the standard label.

Symbols are used in appropriate cells in the body of tables and do not require parentheses. In tables, an asterisk is used *only* to represent statistical significance ($p < 0.05$), as shown in the following list:

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Label</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
—	Not available.	Data were not collected or not reported
†	Not applicable.	Category does not exist
#	Rounds to zero.	The estimate rounds to zero
!	Interpret data with caution.	Estimates are unstable
‡	Reporting standards not met.	Did not meet reporting standard
*	$p < 0.05$.	Significance level

To obtain a dagger and a double dagger in Microsoft Word, do the following:

Dagger (†): Alt 0134 (Hold down the Alt key while typing 0134 on the numeric key pad at the right of your keyboard.)

Double dagger (‡): Alt 0135 (Hold down the Alt key while typing 0135 on the numeric key pad at the right of your keyboard.)



Observe these special rules in the use of zero:

- A zero should not be used when a value rounds to zero; the # symbol should be used instead.
- A measured zero in a *universe survey* (i.e., none of something) must always appear in a table or a figure as 0. If rounding is used in a universe survey, numbers that round to zero must be represented in tables and figures by the symbol #. [This paragraph is verbatim from standard 5-3-5 of the *NCES Statistical Standards*.]

In tables of universe data, when the value in a cell is a measured zero, match the number of zeros used after the decimal to the number of decimal places being reported in the column. For example, use 0.0 in a cell when the column is reporting values to one decimal place and the value in the cell is zero. Similarly, use 0.000 if the column is reporting values to three decimal places and the value in the cell is zero. Use a single zero (0) if the column is reporting whole numbers and the value in the cell is zero.

- Zeros should never appear in tables of *sample survey* data. When dealing with small values in sample surveys, zero and numbers that round to zero must be represented in tables and figures by the symbol #. [The previous sentence is verbatim from standard 5-3-5 of the *NCES Statistical Standards*.]

Reference (numbered) notes

Reference notes, or numbered notes that refer to specific parts of the table, come after the special notes. The superscript numbers keyed to parts of the table are placed to the right of the word, heading, or data for which the note provides more information. If a superscript number referring

to a reference note stands alone in a cell, enclose it in parentheses. The order to follow in numbering reference footnotes within a table is from left to right, line by line, top to bottom.

General note

The general “NOTE” comes after any special notes and reference notes. The general note qualifies, describes, or explains the whole table or easily identified parts of it. This note can include several types of information in different sentences. It can define abbreviations. When relevant, it is used to provide the statement, “Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.”

Source note

The “SOURCE” note comes last. For guidance on the correct format for source notes, see [standard 5-4-5](#) in the *NCES Statistical Standards*, as well as [appendix C](#) of the *Standards*. Also see four examples of source notes in the Survey Titles section of this style guide.

Detailed guidance is available on several additional topics

[Appendix C](#) of the *NCES Statistical Standards* provides detailed guidance on

- the three basic types of tables (summary, reference, methodological) and their placement;
- format types for tables (single-page tables with portrait orientation are preferred);
- table titles (identifiers, wording, placement, continuations);
- boxheads (parts of the boxhead, wording and punctuation, sequence of columns, spacing in column heads, units of measurement in column heads, column numbers or letters, breaking and hyphenating words);
- the table stub (organization, indentation, vertical spacing, wording and punctuation, leaders, line numbers, continuations);
- the body (units of measurement; spanners; decimals, zeros, and dollar and percent signs; placement of figures in column; arrangement of figures for ease of comparison);
- notes to tables (headnotes; special, reference, general, and source notes; the placement and style of referent symbols or numbers in cells, and the order of table notes); and
- sizing a table (pruning, internal revision, spacing reduction, font reduction).

Titles

For sample figure/table titles, see the Figures and the Tables sections of this style guide. For more detailed guidance on figure/table titles, see the *NCES Statistical Standards*, [appendix C](#) (Guidelines for Tabular Presentations).

For guidance on the styles and levels of report titles and headings, see the Heading Styles and Levels section of this style guide. For specific guidance on survey titles, see the *NCES Statistical Standards*, [appendix D](#) (Survey Titles), as well as the Survey Titles section of this style guide.

Word Usage

Correct usage enhances readability, credibility, and clarity. This section includes words and phrases that are often used incorrectly. Some guidelines follow:

Affect, Effect

To *affect* something is to influence it or cause a change in it. To *effect* something is to produce it or accomplish it. An *effect* (n) is a result, accomplishment, or product.

Examples: His infectious laugh affected the mood in the room.
The program positively affected students' test scores.
The effect of the program was higher test scores.

And/Or

Try to avoid the use of *and/or*. This usually can be accomplished by simple rewording.

Example: Grant aid was available for programs offering before-school activities or after-school activities, or both.

not

Grant aid was available for programs offering before-school activities and/or after-school activities.

Between, Among

In general, when two persons or things are involved, what happens is *between* them. When more than two are involved, it happens *among* them. An exception is when the action in a group is clearly *between* two persons at a time, or *between* subgroups of two.

Examples: The interactions between the two systems were well documented.

The cash award was distributed among the class.

Discussions between the United States, Britain, and France continued after the conference. [bilateral discussions]

Bi-, Semi-

As detailed below, the words *biweekly* and *bimonthly* both have conflicting dictionary definitions and are subject to misunderstanding. Therefore, it is recommended that you use, instead, terms such as “every 2 weeks” or “every 2 months.” *Semi-*, in contrast, has a consistent meaning (see the last paragraph of this subsection).

Biweekly, as a noun, usually means a publication issued every 2 weeks but can also mean a publication issued semiweekly (twice a week). As an adjective, biweekly also has two conflicting meanings: (1) occurring every 2 weeks, and (2) occurring twice a week.

Bimonthly is commonly used to mean occurring every 2 months; however, it also has a conflicting meaning: occurring twice a month.

Biannual means occurring twice a year. *Biennial*, however, means occurring every 2 years or lasting for 2 years.

Semi-, in relation to time periods, means occurring halfway through the period. For example, *semimonthly* means occurring twice a month; *semiweekly* means occurring twice a week; and *semiannual* means occurring twice a year.

Complement, Compliment

The common usage of *to complement* is to complete or add to in a positive or constructive way.

Example: The second article complements the first, giving a balanced overview of the survey.

The usual meaning of *to compliment* is to pay a compliment to, i.e., to express esteem, respect, or admiration.

Example: The agency complimented the authors for their definitive overview of the literature as of January 2003.

Composed of, *not* Comprised of

Do not use “comprised of.” *Comprise* means encompass, include, or contain. Since “comprise” is frequently misused and can be misinterpreted, you are encouraged to avoid using it. Use the following types of alternatives:

Examples: The United States is composed of 50 states
The United States is made up of 50 states.
The school choice category consists primarily of programs that . . .

Contractions

Do not use contractions in reports.

Examples: Use “is not” instead of “isn’t”
Use “do not” instead of “don’t”

Data

The word *data* always takes a plural verb (e.g., “the data are from three sources”).

Degrees

When referring to academic degrees in tables, figures, and text heads, use these forms: doctor’s, master’s, bachelor’s, and associate’s. To allow for variety of expression in text, however, the following may also be used there: doctoral (adjective), doctorate (noun), and baccalaureate (noun).

Different from, *not* Different than

Use “different from.”

Education, Educational

The word *education*, generally used as a noun (e.g., a college education), may also be used as an adjective. In general, use *education* when you mean “about education,” “having to do with education,” or “governing education.”

Examples: This education workshop is held twice a year.
The commentary was of particular interest to education researchers and policymakers.
Accurate data is critical to the formulation of education policy.
This report compares the American education system with education systems in other countries.
The presentation focuses on recent education reform efforts.
These indicators explore education equity for girls and women—

that is, the extent to which males and females have access to the same educational opportunities.

The word *educational* (an adjective) is often used when referring to something that provides education or is instructive.

Examples: Add this to the packet of educational materials.
The workshop was a highly educational experience.

The word *educational* also is often used when referring to something that results from education.

Examples: This report examines the educational gains made by Black students in recent years.
A number of indicators shed light on the educational status of Hispanics in the United States.
The study examined the educational attainment of 25- to 29-year-olds.
The goal of the program is to track the educational achievement of students in selected schools.

A final note: Use the word *education* rather than *educational* when your meaning might be misconstrued if you did not. For example, “education statistics” clearly means “statistics about education,” whereas “educational statistics” could mean “statistics that are educational”—that is, virtually all accurate statistics.

Fewer, Less than

Use *fewer* when referring to a number of different items. Use *less than* when referring to a quantity.

Examples: There were fewer students in the class than a decade earlier.
There are three fewer floors in the building than originally planned; as a result, there is less floor space overall.
Only one state had expenditures of less than \$4,500 per pupil. [The \$4,500 is considered an amount of money, rather than a number of discrete items.]

First person

Avoid using *I*. Avoid using *we* when referring to NCES offices or authors, except in acknowledgments and forewords.

He or she

Avoid using *he or she* when possible. Instead, use plural nouns and then plural pronouns for reference.

Example: Teachers and their students . . . *instead of*
The teacher and his or her students . . .

i.e., e.g.

In text, always place *i.e.* and *e.g.* and the accompanying phrase in parentheses. Always use a comma after *i.e.* and *e.g.*

Use *i.e.* when you mean “that is.” Use *e.g.* when you mean “for example.”

Examples: Put these abbreviations in parentheses (*i.e.*, like this).
Use a noun (*e.g.*, book) in that example.

Number of (singular or plural verb?)

As the subject of a sentence, “number of” can take either a singular or plural verb, depending on the context. As a general rule, “a number of” takes a plural verb and “the number of” takes a singular verb.

Examples: A number of arrests were reported near the school over the weekend.
The number of arrests near the school has risen steadily over the past 5 years.

You may also focus on which noun governs the verb, given the sense of the sentence. In the first example, the arrests are what were reported; in the second example, the number is what has risen.

Percentage, Percent, Share

Preferred usage is as follows: use *percentage* when no specific number is mentioned; use *percent* when a number is given.

Examples: A small percentage of the class participated.
They found that 12 percent of the class participated.
Figure 2. Percentage of public elementary and secondary teachers, by level of instruction: School year 2001–02

In a bar chart, use *Percent* above an axis marked with specific percentages. Also use *Percent*, as appropriate, in the heading of a column showing specific percentages.

If, for some reason, you deviate from the preferred usage, be consistent within your report.

Always use *percentage* in the phrases *percentage distribution* and *percentage point*. Avoid use of the word *share* when you mean percent or percentage.

Spell out percent in text, headings, tables, and all figures except pie charts, unless space limits you to using “%.”

Sex, Gender

NCES divisions differ on which term they prefer to use in their reports. Each division should select the preferred term and use it consistently.

Voice (active or passive)

In general, the active voice is preferable to the passive voice. The active voice sounds stronger, crisper, and more direct.

Example: NCES implemented the program [active]
is usually preferable to
The program was implemented by NCES [passive]

Which, That

In general, use *which* to introduce a nondefining or parenthetical clause (one that is not essential to the meaning of the sentence); use *that* to introduce a limiting or defining clause (one that is a necessary part of the sentence). Always use a comma before *which*.

Examples: The course, which is required for graduation, is a favorite among sophomores.

Of the listed courses, the course that is required for graduation is the most popular among sophomores.

Who, Whom; Who, That

Use *who* when the person is the subject of the sentence or clause; use *whom* when the person is the object of the sentence or clause.

Examples: The percentages of children ages 5–17 who spoke English and no other language ranged from 13 percent to 97 percent in the 100 largest school districts in 2000.

Whom does she suspect?

Also, use *who* when referring to persons; use *that* when referring to things or organizations.

Examples: The curriculum is designed primarily for students who are beyond the compulsory age for high school.

It was the student-teacher committee that drafted the text.

Word forms/Spelling

Use shortened forms for words with variant spelling:

Examples: totaled, *not* totalled judgment, *not* judgement
leveled, *not* levelled acknowledgments, *not* acknowledgements
catalog, *not* catalogue

If unsure, check the spelling list and rules in the *United States Government Printing Office Style Manual* (2000 edition), [chapter 5](#). For words not in the GPO manual, refer to *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (used by the Government Printing Office as a guide). *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* is also a useful guide; the examples given above, which are in the GPO manual, all reflect the first, or preferred, spelling listed in *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*.

Year Spans

Express years in text or titles in the following ways:

1997 [calendar year]

1996–97 *or* 1996 through 1997 [span of calendar years]

1999–2000 *or* 1999 through 2000 [span of calendar years]

2000–01 *or* 2000 through 2001 [span of calendar years]

1996 and 1997 [two distinct calendar years]

fall 1997 *or* fall of 1997 [specific point in year]

fiscal year (FY) 1997 [at first use in text; use FY abbreviation after defining it, as discussed below]

FY 96 through FY 97 [for use in text after defining, as discussed below]

academic year 1996–97 [same for school year]

academic years 1990–91 through 1996–97 [same for school years]

Use en dashes instead of hyphens between years. (In Microsoft Word, you can get an en dash by pressing Ctrl plus the minus key at right top of the numbers pad at the far right of your keyboard.)



In the body of tables, use “School year ending” as a stub or column head. You can then use single (i.e., nondashed) years under that head.

In text, lowercase and spell out “fiscal year” at first use and add the abbreviation in parentheses (FY). Do the same with “academic year” and “school year,” if you choose to use the abbreviations AY and SY. Thereafter, use the abbreviation followed by a space and the appropriate year. With FY, two digits are used for all years except 2000. With AY and SY, use six digits (except for 1999–2000) with an en dash. Examples follow:

<u>First use</u>	<u>Subsequent use</u>
fiscal year (FY) 1997	FY 97
fiscal year (FY) 2000	FY 2000
fiscal year (FY) 1997 through FY 2001	FY 97 through FY 01
academic year (AY) 1997–98 [if you decide to use this optional abbreviation]	AY 1997–98
school year (SY) 1994–95 through SY 1998–99 [if you decide to use this optional abbreviation]	SY 1994–95 through SY 1998–99

Appendixes

Appendix A. Abbreviations List: Organizations, Agencies, Surveys, and Terms

Appendix B. Abbreviations List: States, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Outlying Areas, and Freely Associated States

Appendix C. Abbreviations List: Countries (Partial List) and Canadian Provinces and Territories

Appendix D. Web Links to Standards, Style Manuals and Guidelines, and Dictionary

Appendix E. Microsoft Word Shortcuts and Styles Feature

Appendix F. Guidance for Producing Figures in Excel That Meet NCES Standards

Appendix G. Guidance for Producing Tables in Excel That Meet NCES Standards

Appendix H. Index

Appendix A. Abbreviations List: Organizations, Agencies, Surveys, and Terms

AAAS American Association for the Advancement of Science
AAC Association of American Colleges
AACD American Association for Counseling and Development
AACCC American Association of Community Colleges
AACRAO American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Administrative Officers
AACTE American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
AACU Association of American Colleges and Universities
AAHE American Association for Higher Education
AAPPT American Association of Physics Teachers
AASA American Association of School Administrators
AASCU American Association of State Colleges and Universities
AAU Association of American Universities
AAUP American Association of University Professors
ACE American Council on Education
ACT American College Testing Program [definition no longer used; use “ACT” alone]
AECT Association for Educational Communications and Technology
AEL Appalachian Educational Laboratory
AEFA American Education Finance Association
AERA American Educational Research Association
AFT American Federation of Teachers
AGB Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges
AIR Association for Institutional Research
ALA American Library Association
ALL Adult Literacy and Lifeskills
ALS Academic Libraries Survey*
AMS American Mathematical Society
AP Advanced Placement [courses]
ASA American Sociological Association; American Statistical Association
ASBO Association of School Business Officials
AY academic year
B&B Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study*
BJS Bureau of Justice Statistics
BLS Bureau of Labor Statistics
BOTA Board on Testing and Assessment [part of NRC]
BPS Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study*
BRT Business Roundtable
CAPE Council for American Private Education
CAPI computer-assisted personal interviewing
CASAS Quality Assessment and Accountability Systems
CATI computer-assisted telephone interviewing
CBE Council for Basic Education
CCA Career College Association
CCD Common Core of Data*

CCSSO Council of Chief State School Officers
 CDN closing date notice
 CEBP Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy
 CEC Council for Exceptional Children
 CEG Council for Excellence in Government
 CGCS Council of the Great City Schools
 CGS Council of Graduate Schools
 CIP Classification of Instructional Programs
 CivEd 1999 Civic Education Study*
 COFHE Consortium on Financing Higher Education
 COOL College Opportunities On-Line
 CP Capitol Place
 CPB Corporation for Public Broadcasting
 CPRE Consortium for Policy Research in Education
 CPS Current Population Survey*
 CRESST Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing
 CRS Congressional Research Service
 CSG Council of State Governments
 CUPA College and University Personnel Association
 DAS Data Analysis System
 DASOL Data Analysis System On-Line
 DDESS Department of Defense Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools [in the United States]
 DoD Department of Defense
 DoDDS Department of Defense Dependents Schools [the overseas schools]
 DOVE Data on Vocational Education
 ECB Electronic Code Book
 ECLS-B Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Birth Cohort*
 ECLS-K Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998–99*
 ECS Education Commission of the States
 ED U.S. Department of Education
 ESL English as a Second Language
 ERIC Educational Resources Information Center
 ESRA Education Sciences Reform Act
 ETS Educational Testing Service
 EWA Education Writers Association
 FCSM Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology
 FICE Federal Interagency Committee on Education
 FIPS Federal Information Processing Standards
 FRSS Fast Response Survey System*
 FTE full-time-equivalent
 FY fiscal year
 GAO General Accounting Office
 GEPA General Education Provisions Act
 GPO Government Printing Office
 GRE Graduate Record Examinations
 HBCUs Historically Black Colleges and Universities
 HEGIS Higher Education General Information Survey*

HS&B High School and Beyond Longitudinal Study*
 HSIs Hispanic Serving Institutions
 HSTS High School Transcript Study*
 IAEP International Assessment of Education Progress
 IALS International Adult Literacy Survey
 IEA International Association for Evaluation of Educational Achievement
 IEL Institute for Educational Leadership
 IEP Individualized Education Program
 IES Institute of Education Sciences
 IPEDS Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System*
 IRA International Reading Association
 LAB Northeast and Islands Laboratory at Brown University
 LAN local area network
 LEA local education agency
 LEP limited English proficiency; limited-English-proficient
 McREL Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory
 NAAL National Assessment of Adult Literacy*
 NAB National Alliance of Business
 NABE National Association for Bilingual Education
 NABSE National Alliance of Black School Educators
 NACAC National Association of College Admission Counselors
 NACCAS National Accrediting Commission of Cosmetology Arts and Sciences
 NACME National Advisory Council on Minorities in Engineering
 NACUBO National Association of College and University Business Officers
 NAEP National Assessment of Educational Progress*
 NAESP National Association of Elementary School Principals
 NAGB National Assessment Governing Board
 NAICU National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
 NAIS National Association of Independent Schools
 NALS National Adult Literacy Survey*
 NAPE National Association of Partners in Education
 NAS National Academy of Sciences
 NASBE National Association of State Boards of Education
 NASDC New American Schools Development Corporation
 NASDSE National Association of State Directors of Special Education
 NASFAA National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
 NASULGC National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges
 NASSP National Association of Secondary School Principals
 NBES National Board for Education Sciences
 NCAA National Collegiate Athletic Association
 NCATE National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education
 NCEA National Catholic Educational Association
 NCEDL National Center for Early Development and Learning
 NCEE National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance; National
 Commission on Excellence in Education
 NCER National Center for Education Research
 NCES National Center for Education Statistics
 NCHEMS National Center for Higher Education Management Systems

NCLB No Child Left Behind Act
 NCLIS National Commission on Libraries and Information Science
 NCREL North Central Regional Educational Laboratory
 NCRVE National Center for Research in Vocational Education
 NCSL National Conference of State Legislatures
 NCSS National Council for the Social Studies
 NCTE National Council of Teachers of English
 NCTM National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
 NCVS National Crime Victimization Survey
 NEA National Education Association
 NEDRC National Education Data Research Center
 NEH National Endowment for the Humanities
 NELLS:88 National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988*
 NFP notice of final priorities
 NGA National Governors Association
 NHES National Household Education Surveys Program*
 NLE National Library of Education
 NLS:72 National Longitudinal Study of the High School Class of 1972*
 NMSA National Middle School Association
 NPEC National Postsecondary Education Cooperative
 NPSAS National Postsecondary Student Aid Study*
 NRC National Research Council
 NSBA National School Boards Association
 NSF National Science Foundation
 NSoFaS National Study of Faculty and Students
 NSOPF National Study of Postsecondary Faculty*
 NWREL Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
 OBEMLA Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs [name changed; see
 OELA below]
 OCLC Online Computer Library Center
 OCR Office for Civil Rights
 OECD Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
 OELA Office of English Language Acquisition
 OERI Office of Educational Research and Improvement [replaced by Institute of Education
 Sciences (IES)]
 OESE Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
 OMB Office of Management and Budget
 OPE Office of Postsecondary Education
 OSEP Office of Special Education Programs
 OSERS Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
 PEQIS Postsecondary Education Quick Information System*
 PIRLS 2001 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study*
 PISA Program for International Student Assessment*
 PLS Public Libraries Survey*
 PREL Pacific Region Educational Laboratory
 PSS Private School Universe Survey*
 RBS Research for Better Schools
 RCG Recent College Graduates Study*

RLIN Research Libraries Information Network
 SASS Schools and Staffing Survey*
 SAT Scholastic Assessment Test
 SBIR Small Business Innovation Research Program
 SCS School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey [in this case, SCS represents only “School Crime Supplement”]*
 SDDDB School District Data Book
 SEA state education agency
 SED Survey of Earned Doctorates Awarded in the United States [in this case, SED represents only “Survey of Earned Doctorates”]
 SEDL Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
 SHEEO State Higher Education Executive Officers
 SIPP Survey of Income Program Participation
 SOICCs State Occupational Information Coordinating Committees
 SSOCS School Survey on Crime and Safety*
 STDS Survey of Teacher Demand and Shortage
 StLA State Library Agencies Survey*
 STW school-to-work
 TESOL Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
 TFS Teacher Follow-up Survey*
 TIMSS Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study [this is the current title of TIMSS; in earlier reports, the 1995 study is referred to as the Third International Mathematics and Science Study, and the 1999 study is referred to as TIMSS-R (which stands for TIMSS-Repeat), but these terms are no longer used]
 TRP Technical Review Panel
 UNCF United Negro College Fund
 WICHE Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education
 WWC What Works Clearinghouse

*Asterisked items are surveys. For names of survey components and waves, see the *NCES Statistical Standards*, [appendix D](#) (Survey Titles).

Appendix B. Abbreviations List: States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Outlying Areas, and Freely Associated States

1. States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico*

Alabama	AL	Montana	MT
Alaska	AK	Nebraska	NE
Arizona	AZ	Nevada	NV
Arkansas	AR	New Hampshire	NH
California	CA	New Jersey	NJ
Colorado	CO	New Mexico	NM
Connecticut	CT	New York	NY
Delaware	DE	North Carolina	NC
District of Columbia	DC	North Dakota	ND
Florida	FL	Ohio	OH
Georgia	GA	Oklahoma	OK
Hawaii	HI	Oregon	OR
Idaho	ID	Pennsylvania	PA
Illinois	IL	Puerto Rico (Commonwealth of)	PR
Indiana	IN	Rhode Island	RI
Iowa	IA	South Carolina	SC
Kansas	KS	South Dakota	SD
Kentucky	KY	Tennessee	TN
Louisiana	LA	Texas	TX
Maine	ME	Utah	UT
Maryland	MD	Vermont	VT
Massachusetts	MA	Virginia	VA
Michigan	MI	Washington	WA
Minnesota	MN	West Virginia	WV
Mississippi	MS	Wisconsin	WI
Missouri	MO	Wyoming	WY

2. Outlying areas*

American Samoa	AS
Guam	GU
Northern Mariana Islands (Commonwealth of the)	MP
U.S. Virgin Islands	VI

3. Freely associated States*

Federated States of Micronesia	FM
Marshall Islands (Republic of the)	MH
Palau (Republic of)	PW

*These groupings are listed in part C (the part that relates to NCES) of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, which established the Institute of Education Sciences. Since 1990, none of the entities listed above has been officially termed a *territory*. In part C of the cited legislation, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is grouped with the 50 states and the District of Columbia. For example, the part of the law that mandates NCES to report on “the percentage of teachers who are highly qualified in each State” directs that NCES only must do so for the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

(For those preparing maps that include abbreviations for Department of Defense schools, the official DoD titles and abbreviations for the separate overseas and domestic components of the DoD education system for dependents are as follows:

DoDDS — Department of Defense Dependents Schools [the overseas schools]
DDESS — Department of Defense Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools
[in the United States]

For additional guidance on the use—and avoidance—of abbreviations for DoD schools, see the “Department of Defense schools” subsection of Abbreviations and Acronyms in this style guide.)

Appendix C. Abbreviations List: Countries (Partial List) and Canadian Provinces and Territories

In text, avoid the use of abbreviations of the names of foreign countries and of Canadian provinces and territories. Avoid the use of these abbreviations in tables also, if possible. If it is necessary to use abbreviations in tables, define them in the table notes.

1. Countries

The following two-letter and three-letter abbreviations for countries and Hong Kong are from Codes for the Representation of Names of Countries (ISO 3166), prepared by the International Organization for Standardization and adopted in the United States as FIPS 104-1, American National Standard Codes for the Representation of Names of Countries, Dependencies, and Areas of Special Sovereignty for Information Interchange. The list shown below includes only countries that have participated in NCES surveys. To access ISO 3166 abbreviations for additional countries, go to <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/appendix/appendix-d.html>.

The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) uses the three-letter abbreviations, which are often easier to understand than the shorter version. In the interest of standardization, if you find it necessary to use country abbreviations in tables and have not adopted the two-letter form, you are encouraged to use three-letter rather than two-letter abbreviations.

<u>Country</u>	<u>Abbreviations</u>	
Albania	ALB	AL
Argentina	ARG	AR
Australia	AUS	AU
Austria	AUT	AT
Belgium	BEL	BE
Bermuda	BMU	BM
Brazil	BRA	BR
Canada	CAN	CA
Chile	CHL	CL
China	CHN	CN
Czech Republic	CZE	CZ
Denmark	DNK	DK
Finland	FIN	FI
France	FRA	FR
Germany	DEU	DE

APPENDIX C. ABBREVIATIONS LIST: COUNTRIES (PARTIAL LIST) AND CANADIAN PROVINCES AND TERRITORIES

<u>Country</u>	<u>Abbreviations</u>	
Greece	GRC	GR
Hong Kong SAR*	HKG	HK
Hungary	HUN	HU
Iceland	ISL	IS
Indonesia	IDN	ID
Iran	IRN	IR
Ireland	IRL	IE
Israel	ISR	IL
Italy	ITA	IT
Japan	JPN	JP
Korea, Republic of	KOR	KR
Latvia	LVA	LV
Liechtenstein	LIE	LI
Lithuania	LTU	LT
Luxembourg	LUX	LU
Macao	MAC	MO
Macedonia, Republic of	MKD	MK
Mexico	MEX	MX
Netherlands	NLD	NL
New Zealand	NZL	NZ
Norway	NOR	NO
Peru	PER	PE
Poland	POL	PL
Portugal	PRT	PT
Romania	ROM	RO
Russian Federation	RUS	RU
Serbia and Montenegro (Yugoslavia)**	YUG	YU
Slovak Republic	SVK	SK
Spain	ESP	ES

<u>Country</u>	<u>Abbreviation</u>	
Sweden	SWE	SE
Switzerland	CHE	CH
Thailand	THA	TH
Tunisia	TUN	TN
Turkey	TUR	TR
United Kingdom	GBR	GB
United States	USA	US
Uruguay	URY	UY

*Hong Kong is a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of the People’s Republic of China.

**Explain in your table notes if only the Serbia Republic participated in a survey.

2. Canadian Provinces and Territories

AB	Alberta
BC	British Columbia
MB	Manitoba
NB	New Brunswick
NF	Newfoundland
NS	Nova Scotia
NT	Northwest Territories
ON	Ontario
PE	Prince Edward Island
QC	Quebec
SK	Saskatchewan
YT	Yukon Territory

Appendix D. Web Links to Standards, Style Manuals and Guidelines, and Dictionary

NCES Statistical Standards (NCES 2003–601)
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch> [enter 2003601]

United States Government Printing Office Style Manual
<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/stylemanual/browse.html>

Merriam-Webster Dictionary and Thesaurus
<http://www.m-w.com>

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association [cannot browse the manual, but can access certain information such as style tips]
<http://www.apastyle.org>

The Chicago Manual of Style
<http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org> [cannot browse the manual, but can access style tips]

Common Mistakes and Tricky Choices
<http://englishplus.com/grammar/mistcont.htm>

Appendix E. Microsoft Word Shortcuts and Styles Feature

To access a range of Microsoft Word shortcut lists, do the following in Word:

1. Select Help.
2. In the menu that appears, click on Microsoft Word Help.
3. In the “Type your question” window, space a couple of times, type “shortcut,” and click on “Search” (a list of shortcut topics appears).
4. To access a range of special-topic lists, choose “Keyboard shortcuts” and then select the list you want (selecting “Common shortcut keys” and then “Quick reference to some common shortcut keys” causes the list shown below to appear).
5. Explore the other listings to find any kind of shortcut help you are seeking.

Quick reference to some common shortcut keys

<u>Press</u>	<u>To</u>
CTRL+SHIFT+SPACEBAR	Create a nonbreaking space
CTRL+SHIFT+HYPHEN	Create a nonbreaking hyphen
CTRL+B	Make letters bold
CTRL+I	Make letters italic
CTRL+U	Make letters underline
CTRL+SHIFT+<	Decrease font size
CTRL+SHIFT+>	Increase font size
CTRL+Q	Remove paragraph formatting
CTRL+SPACEBAR	Remove character formatting
CTRL+C	Copy the selected text or object
CTRL+X	Cut the selected text or object
CTRL+V	Paste text or an object
CTRL+Z	Undo the last action
CTRL+Y	Redo the last action

Below are additional useful shortcuts:

<u>Press</u>	<u>To</u>
CTRL+(minus key on the numbers pad at far right of keyboard)	Obtain an en dash (–)
CTRL+ALT+(minus key on the numbers pad at far right)	Obtain an em dash (—)
ALT + 0167 (on the numbers pad at far right)	Obtain a § symbol

How to use the Styles feature

Assign styles to different parts of your document

Use the Styles feature of Word to assign styles to different parts of your document. This feature allows you to automatically apply a desired set of formatting attributes (such as font, type size, alignment, indents, and spacing) to text, so that you do not have to manually format each part of your document. For example, to assign a style to a heading, select the heading level of interest from the pull-down window that appears at the top and to the left on your screen (in addition to heading styles, the pull-down window lists other styles, such as “Normal” and “Default Paragraph Font”). After selecting the heading level from the list, type your heading in your document; or, if you already have typed your heading, highlight it or put your cursor in it and then select the desired heading level. The formatting of that heading level is automatically applied to your heading.

Do this to modify a style

Using Styles makes it easy to change formatting in your document. For example, if you decide to change the font and type size of one of your heading levels, you can simply modify the style for that heading level, instead of reformatting each of the individual headings.

To modify a style, select Format on your toolbar and click Style. In the Style box, select the style that you want to modify—e.g., Heading 2—and then click Modify. In the Modify Style box that appears, click Format at the bottom of the box, and then click the attribute (e.g., font) you want to change. Click OK after changing each attribute you wish to modify.

When you are done, click Apply. The modified formatting will be applied to all the text to which you have assigned that style.

Appendix F. Guidance for Producing Figures in Excel That Meet NCES Standards

This appendix is meant to serve as a guide for anyone preparing figures for NCES reports in Microsoft Excel. The first pages of this appendix provide a quick overview of the basic elements in most NCES figures and an explanation of how to add a chart with NCES formatting to your Excel program's choice of Chart Types. The next section provides a guide for selecting colors and line styles for printing figures that require multiple colors or line styles. The subsequent pages demonstrate what Excel's default settings produce for seven basic chart types and what NCES standards for these figures require. Each chart type is accompanied by a list of the modifications needed to make the default example meet NCES standards (and how to do the most complicated modifications in Excel). This guide assumes a working knowledge of Excel and does not explain every step involved in creating figures. For basic information, refer to an Excel user's guide.

All figures need the following elements:

1. Title

Rules for figure titles are the same as those for table titles. For these rules refer to the Style Guide under Figures and to the *NCES Statistical Standards*, [appendix C](#) (NCES Guidelines for Tabular Presentations). Also refer to appendix G of this style guide.

In particular note that titles need

- (a) a hanging indent inserted if the title runs more than one line and there is a figure indicator (e.g., Figure 2);
- (b) capitalization of only the first word of the title and subtitle (which follows a colon and indicates where or the timeframe, or both) and any proper nouns (e.g., Percentage of foreign students studying in the United States: Various years, 1990–2003); and
- (c) the elements describing how the data are classified (e.g., by control of school, age, and sex of students) in the same order as labeled in the chart area and in the legend.

2. Labeled axes

All axes need to be labeled horizontally, with the same capitalization rule that applies to titles.

If there is not room on the x axis for all labels to fit without overlapping, remove every other one (when possible), and lengthen the tick marks for the remaining labels. When this is not possible, put every other label at a lower level than the others, to retain all labels while keeping the text running horizontal.

3. Proper scaling

All figures with comparable units must use the same scale throughout a report (e.g., 0–10 should be the same size in all comparable figures). Also, scales showing comparable units should use the same scale increments (e.g., 10 percent increments in all rather than 10 percent in some and 5 percent in others).

3. Proper scaling—Continued

To get figures to print with consistent scales in Excel (or after being inserted into a Word document) you need to create an object (e.g., a text box) the same height as you want your y axis to be in all your figures. Then you need to size each figure manually by dragging and eyeballing the chart size. There is no way to set the size automatically. Also it is not always possible to make the y axis in all figures the same height because objects in Excel figures cannot be offset from Excel's underlying grid.

Except in time-series figures, all figures should have continuous scales starting at 0 or the minimum value on the scale. If a scale break is used, it should be clearly marked (usually with a pair of diagonal lines or a squiggly line).

4. Legends or labeled data

All figures must have either a legend (presenting a key to the colors and line styles used to distinguish data) or labels next to each data line or data area. The text for legends and labels should run horizontally. When possible, use labels instead of a legend.

5. Source

All figures must properly identify the source of the displayed data. For rules on how to present sources, refer to the Survey Titles section of this style guide, [standard 5-4-5](#), and p. 187 of [appendix C](#) of the *NCES Statistical Standards*.

Some figures may also need the following:

6. Tick marks

If tick marks are needed, place them outside the axis. Tick marks on the x axis must match data points; omit tick marks where you do not have data. Center scale numbers on the tick marks they identify.

If your data points are not at equal intervals of time (e.g., you have data for 1992, 1994, and 1998), place your axis labels at proportional intervals (i.e., show twice as much space between 1994 and 1998 as between 1992 and 1994). Label the years with data points.

7. Notes

For a guide to preparing a general note, refer to the Tables section of this style guide and to [appendix C](#) of the *NCES Statistical Standards*, p. 186.

8. Reference notes

For a guide to inserting reference (numbered) notes, refer to the Tables section of this style guide and to [appendix C](#) of the *NCES Statistical Standards*, p. 186.

9. Special notes

For a guide to inserting special (symbol) notes, refer to the Tables section of the style guide and to [appendix C](#) of the *NCES Statistical Standards*, p. 185.

10. Multiple colors and line styles for readers to distinguish data lines, bars, or areas

For guidance on selecting colors and line styles, see the Color and Line Guide on the next page.

Adding a chart with custom formatting to your Excel program's choice of Chart Types

Excel's Chart Wizard, which you use to create charts, allows you to choose the type of chart you would like to create from two lists of chart types: Standard Types and Custom Types. When you select one of the preset chart types from either of these lists, Excel automatically creates a chart with its default settings for the background color, borders, font size, style of gridlines and data labels, etc. Many of these default settings need to be changed to create a chart that conforms with NCES standards. The rest of this appendix describes how to make these changes manually. However, if you are creating many charts that are the same or quite similar, you may want Excel to remember all the manual changes you make to your first chart's settings so that they can be applied to all the other new charts you will create.

To have Excel remember the settings from a chart you have made or from a chart you have downloaded, right-click anywhere on the chart area and select **Chart Type**. Then click on the tab labeled "Custom Types," go to "Select from" in the bottom left, and select "User-defined." This will bring up a list of chart types that includes Excel's default. It will also make a button labeled "Add" appear at the bottom of the dialog box. Click on the Add button. Excel will prompt you to enter in a name for your chart type settings. Enter a descriptive name (e.g., Standard NCES bar graph), not something that will be hard to interpret months later (e.g., Tom's settings). After you click OK, your new chart type will appear in the list of user-defined custom chart types. You can then select your custom chart type whenever you want to create a new chart with your saved settings or whenever you want to apply those saved settings to a previously made chart.

If you often create charts like those that appear in this appendix, you can download this appendix as an Excel file by clicking on this link [<http://nces.ed.gov/statprog/styleguide/excel/appendixF.xls>] and add each of the correctly formatted chart types in this appendix as a user-defined custom chart type in your version of Excel.

Color and Line Guide

The following suggestions for color combinations and line styles are meant to make it easier to select colors that will reproduce with clear contrast in black and white photocopies of figures created in Excel. They are not required color combinations or line styles.

To distinguish among colors, the Standard Microsoft Color Palette is presented below with each column identified by a letter and each row numbered. Printing out this page on a regular black and white printer will also provide you with a guide to how these colors print as gray tones.

Standard Microsoft Excel Color Palette

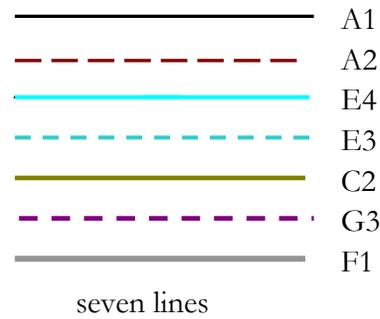
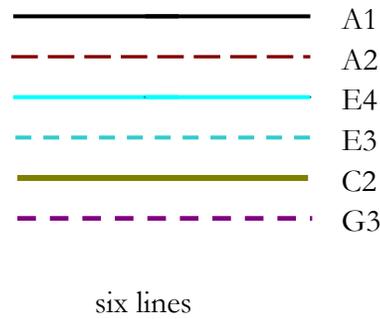
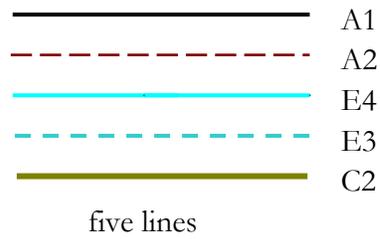
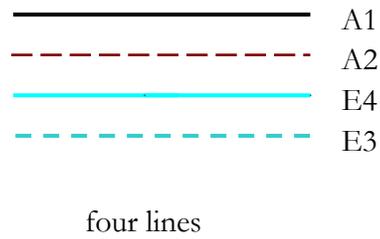
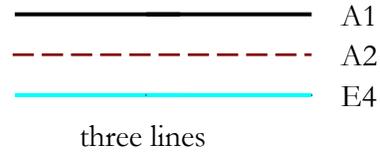
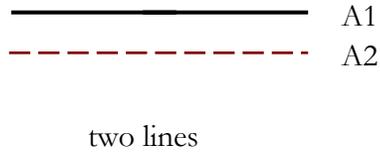
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								

Suggested color combinations for bar and area charts that need

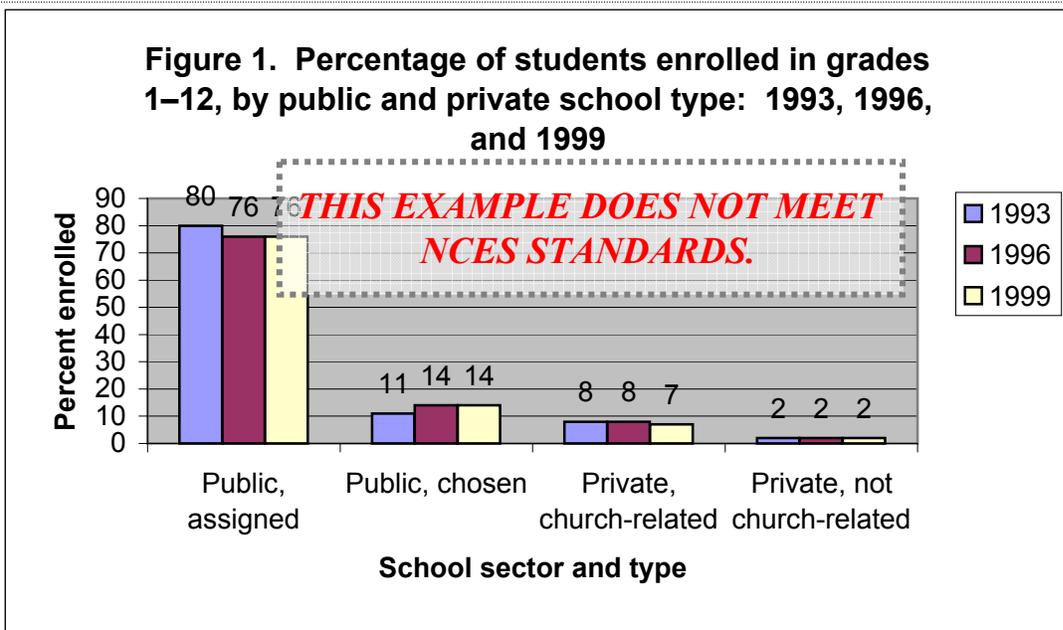
A1	C5	A1	H5	H4
two colors		three colors		
A1	H5	A1	H5	E5
C2	B5	D2	E3	
four colors		five colors		

Color and Line Guide–Continued

Suggested colors and line styles for lines charts that need



Excel default settings for figure:

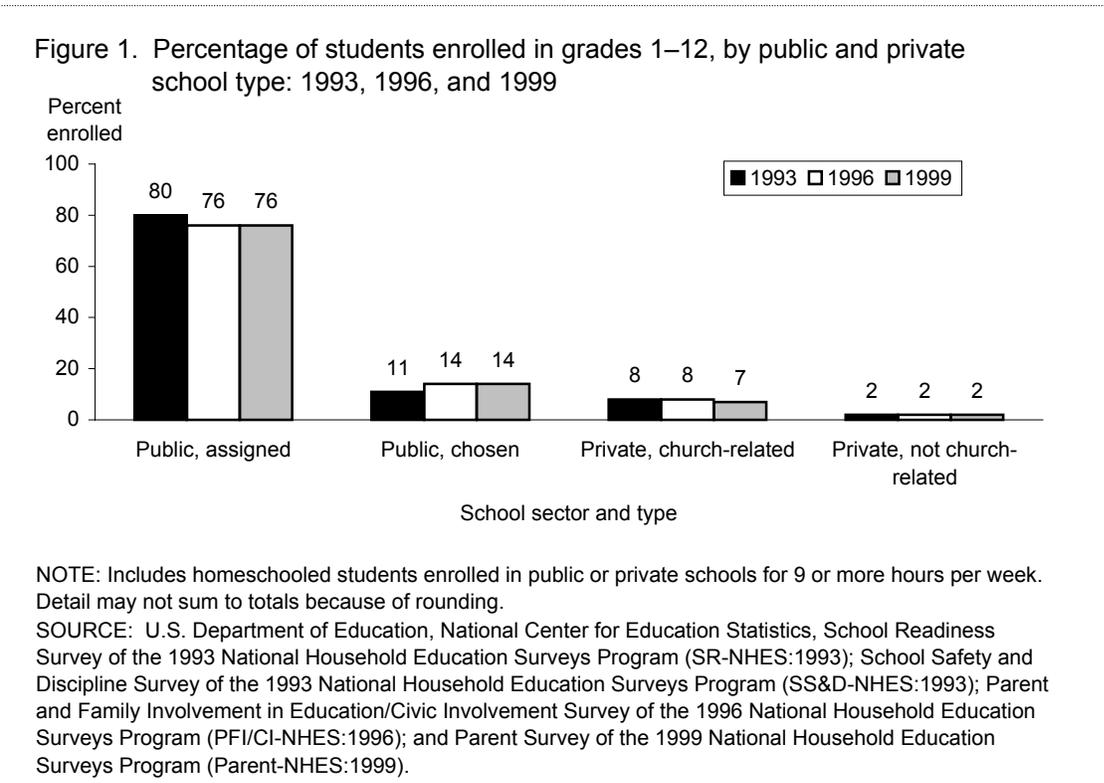


Default Settings

NOTE: Includes homeschooled students enrolled in public or private schools for 9 or more hours per week. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, School Readiness Survey of the 1993 National Household Education Surveys Program (SR-NHES:1993); School Safety and Discipline Survey of the 1993 National Household Education Surveys Program (SS&D-NHES:1993); Parent and Family Involvement in Education/Civic Involvement Survey of the 1996 National Household Education Surveys Program (PFI/CI-NHES:1996); and Parent Survey of the 1999 National Household Education Surveys Program (Parent-NHES:1999).

Excel figure with manual formatting to meet NCES standards:



Formatted Correctly

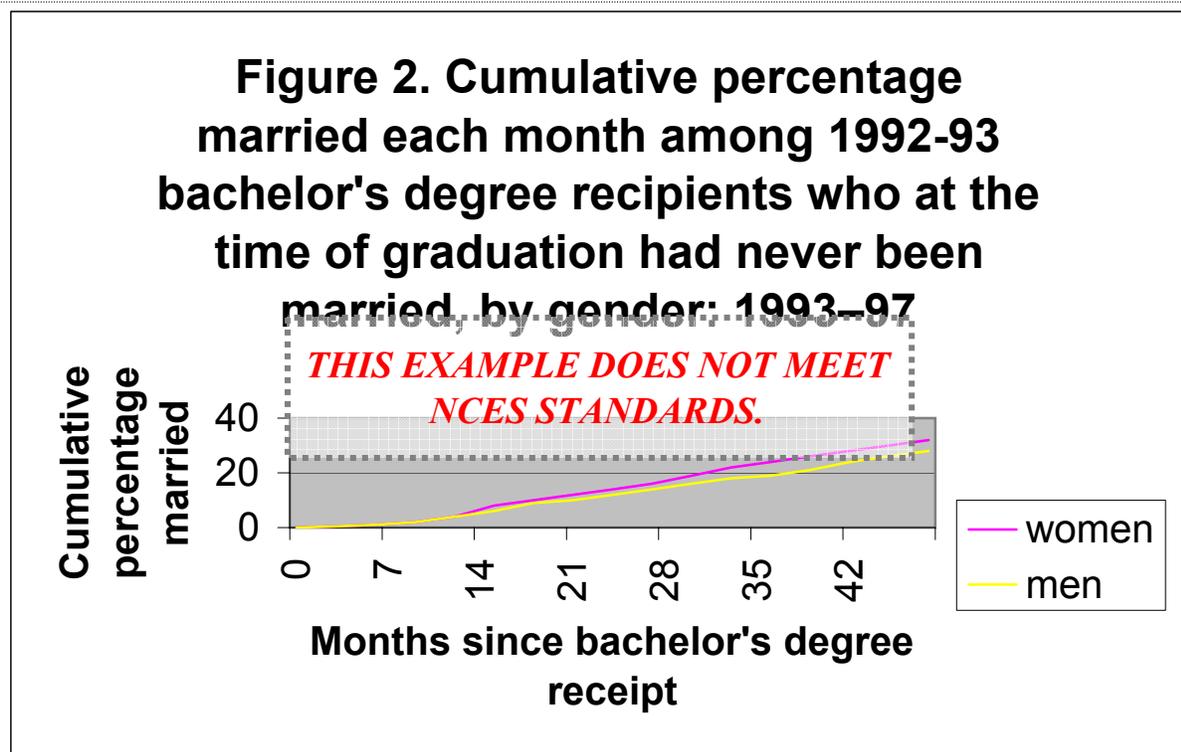
NOTE: Includes homeschooled students enrolled in public or private schools for 9 or more hours per week. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, School Readiness Survey of the 1993 National Household Education Surveys Program (SR-NHES:1993); School Safety and Discipline Survey of the 1993 National Household Education Surveys Program (SS&D-NHES:1993); Parent and Family Involvement in Education/Civic Involvement Survey of the 1996 National Household Education Surveys Program (PFI/CI-NHES:1996); and Parent Survey of the 1999 National Household Education Surveys Program (Parent-NHES:1999).

Manual formatting steps:

1. Enter the title either into a text box or into a merged cell across the top of the chart so that the title can be stretched across the figure precisely (otherwise the title's width on the page and the number of characters in the title may be arbitrarily constrained). Text boxes can be made by clicking on the text box icon in the Drawing toolbar and dragging your activated cursor to the desired size. If necessary, set the text box's background fill color to white and make sure it has no border (right-click on the text box so the **Format Text Box** dialog box comes up and, under the **Colors and Lines** tab, set the Color under Fill to white and under Line to "No Line"). For guidance on creating hanging indents in titles, see appendix G, guideline C.
2. Rescale the y axis (vertical axis) to 100 (right-click on y axis, **Format Axis**, under **Scale** set **Maximum** and **Minimum** appropriately).
3. Transform the y axis label to read horizontally (right-click on the label, **Format Axis Title**, under **Alignment** set the **Orientation** to 0 degrees), size correctly, take off bold, and place at the top of the axis.
4. Turn off the background border and color (right-click inside the graph, **Format Plot Area**, under **Patterns** set both **Border** and **Background** to none).
5. Turn off the background grid lines (right-click inside the graph, **Chart Options**, under **Gridlines** deselect any marked boxes).
6. Turn off the box around the figure (right-click along the edge of the figure, **Format Chart Area**, under **Patterns** set **Border** to none).
7. Set all the fonts to the same size except the title (which should be slightly larger) (right-click along the edge of the figure, **Format Chart Area**, under **Font** set **Size** accordingly; then right-click on title text box, **Format Text Box**, under **Font** set **Size** slightly larger than that used in the rest of the chart).
8. Delete the tick marks on the x axis (right-click on the x axis, **Format Axis**, under **Patterns** make sure the **Major tick mark type** and **Minor tick mark type** are both set to none).
9. Resize the figure so it is proportionately sized (right-click inside the graph, click and drag any of the corner boxes to resize the chart area), and place the legend so it is easier to read. Note that by dragging the corners of the legend you can expand it vertically or horizontally and the contents will adjust accordingly to the space available.
10. Adjust the color of the bars (right-click on each bar one at a time, **Format Data Series**, under **Patterns** set the **Area** color selection as desired.) For help with color choices, refer to the Color and Line Guide in this appendix.

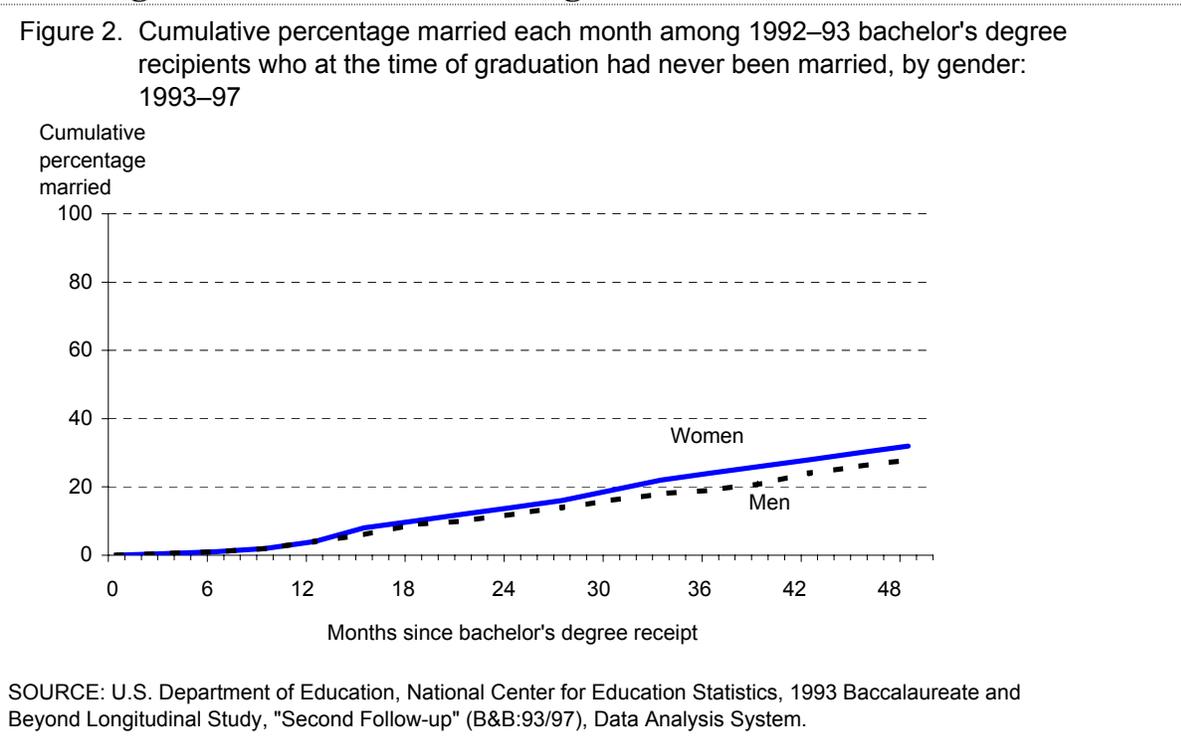
Excel default settings for figure:



Default Settings

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1993 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study, "Second Follow-up" (B&B:93/97), Data Analysis System.

Excel figure with manual formatting to meet NCES standards:



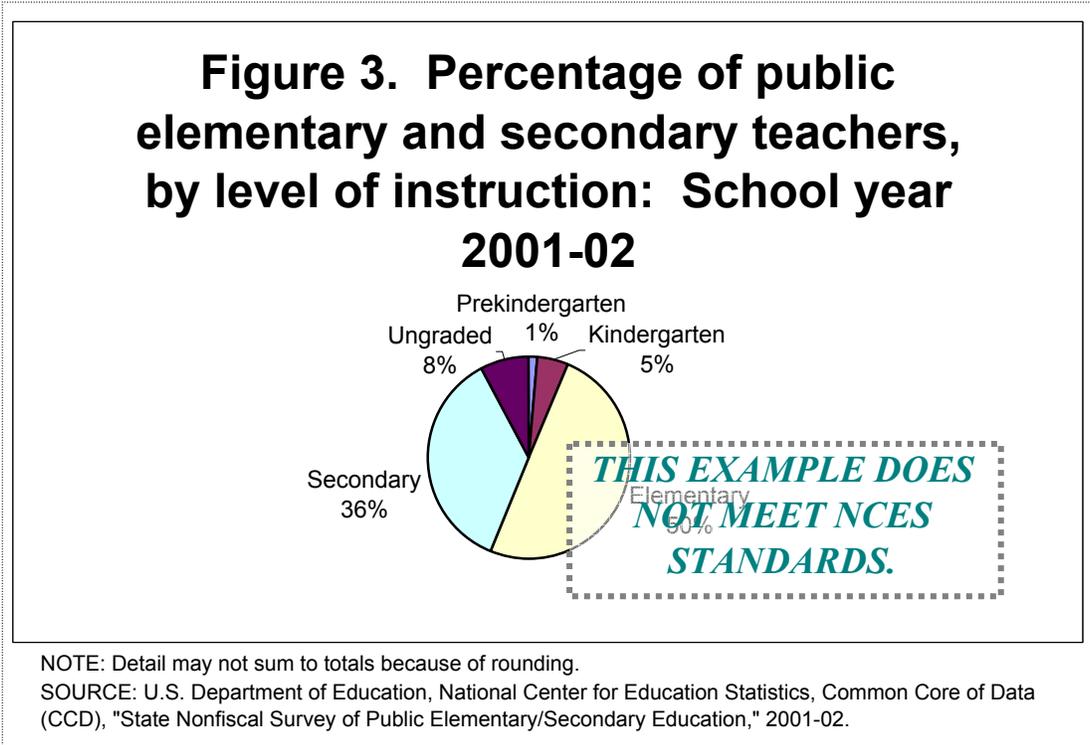
Formatted Correctly

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1993 Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study, "Second Follow-up" (B&B:93/97), Data Analysis System.

Manual formatting steps:

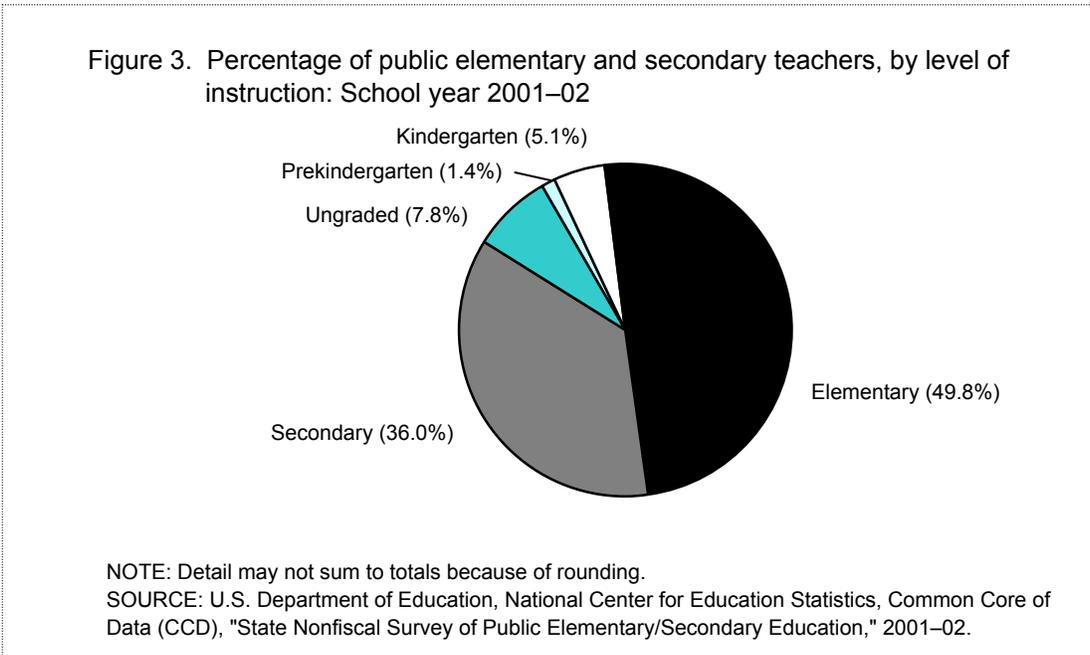
1. Enter the title either into a text box or into a merged cell across the top of the chart so that the title can be stretched across the figure precisely (otherwise the title's width on the page and the number of characters in the title may be arbitrarily constrained). Text boxes can be made by clicking on the text box icon in the Drawing toolbar and dragging your activated cursor to the desired size. If necessary, set the text box's background fill color to white and make sure it has no border (right-click on the text box so the **Format Text Box** dialog box comes up and, under the **Colors and Lines** tab, set the Color under Fill to white and under Line to "No Line"). For guidance on creating hanging indents in titles, see appendix G, guideline C.
2. Rescale the y axis to 100 (right-click on y axis, **Format Axis**, under **Scale** set **Maximum** and **Minimum** appropriately).
3. Transform the y axis title to read horizontally (right-click on the label, **Format Axis Title**, under **Alignment** set the **Orientation** to 0 degrees); transform the x axis labels to read horizontally (right-click on the x axis, **Format Axis**, under **Alignment** set the **Orientation** to 0 degrees); size x and y axes titles correctly; place the y axis title at the top of the y axis; and center the x axis title below the x axis.
4. Turn off the box around the graph and the background color (right-click inside the graph, **Format Plot Area**, under **Patterns** set **Border** and **Background** both to none).
5. Change the background gridlines (right-click on any gridline, **Format Gridlines**, under **Patterns** select appropriate choices).
6. Turn off the box around the figure (right-click along the edge of the figure, **Format Chart Area**, under **Patterns** set **Border** to none).
7. Set all the fonts to the same size except the title (which should be slightly larger) (right-click along the edge of the figure, **Format Chart Area**, under **Font** set **Size** accordingly; then right-click on title text box, **Format Text Box**, under **Font** set **Size** slightly larger than that used in the rest of the chart).
8. Resize the figure so it is proportionately sized (right-click inside the graph, click and drag any of the corner boxes to resize the chart area).
9. Delete the legend and place text boxes with the labels next to the datalines.
10. Create text boxes for the x axis labels (see step 1 on how to create text boxes) so the labels can be centered (manually) on the major tick marks. (Excel by default places x axis labels flush left with the major tick marks.) Note that after you have positioned the labels where they appear to be centered, you need to check the Print Preview to see how they will print. Text boxes often print differently than they appear on screen; fussing is usually required to get them positioned correctly.
11. Adjust the color, style, and width of the datalines so they contrast clearly (right-click on each dataline, **Format Data Series**, under **Patterns** adjust accordingly). For help with color choices, refer to the Color and Line Guide in this appendix.

Excel default settings for figure:



Default Settings

Excel figure with manual formatting to meet NCES standards:

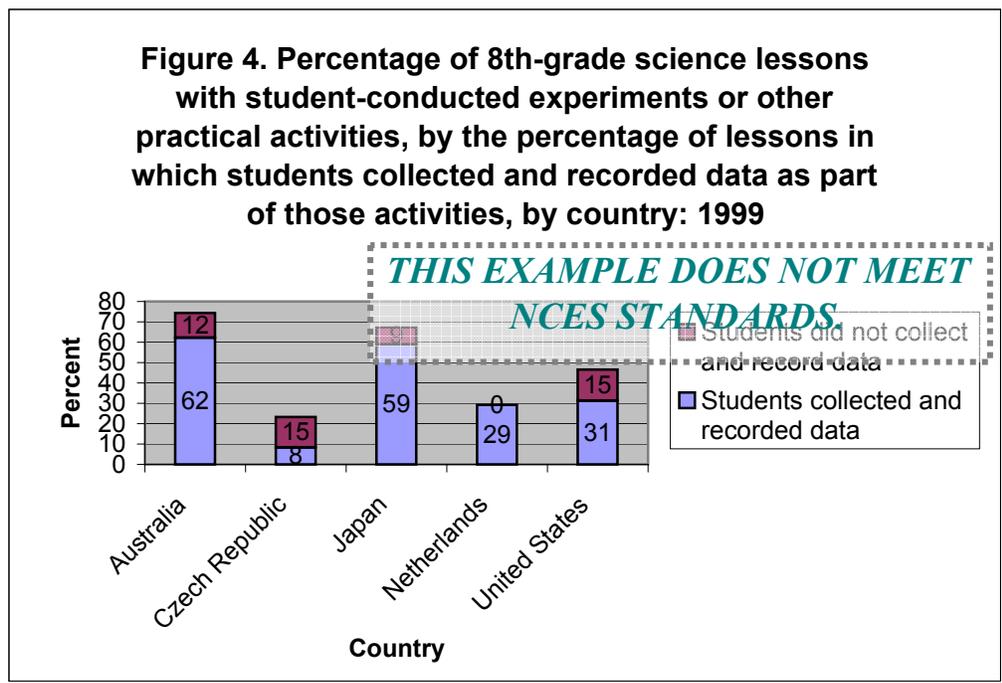


Formatted Correctly

Manual formatting steps:

1. Enter the title either into a text box or into a merged cell across the top of the chart so that the title can be stretched across the figure precisely (otherwise the title's width on the page and the number of characters in the title may be arbitrarily constrained). Text boxes can be made by clicking on the text box icon in the Drawing toolbar and dragging your activated cursor to the desired size. If necessary, set the text box's background fill color to white and make sure it has no border (right-click on the text box so the **Format Text Box** dialog box comes up and, under the **Colors and Lines** tab, set the Color under Fill to white and under Line to "No Line"). For guidance on creating hanging indents in titles, see appendix G, guideline C.
2. If you want percentages rounded to one decimal place or placed in parentheses (or both), turn off the automatic data labels so the percentages can be inserted along with the labels in text boxes (right-click next to chart, **Chart Options**, under **Data Labels** deselect all options under "Label Contains"). Insert each label and its corresponding percentage in a text box to round to the first decimal place.
3. Set all the fonts to the same size except the title (which should be slightly larger) (right-click along the edge of the figure, **Format Chart Area**, under **Font** set **Size** accordingly; then right-click on title text box, **Format Text Box**, under **Font** set **Size** slightly larger than that used in the rest of the chart).
4. Resize the figure so it is proportionately sized (right-click inside the graph, click and drag any of the corner boxes to resize the chart area) and center it (left-click in the plot area and drag the graph to the center).
5. Insert a small line to connect the Prekindergarten label with its pie "piece." (Note that Excel by default draws lines, but it chooses to draw in different lines than may make the most sense. This feature was turned off in step 2 when all data label options were deselected. However, if you want to keep the automatic labels but not the default "leader" lines, they can be turned off by right-clicking next to the chart, **Chart Options**, under **Data Labels** deselect show leader lines.)
6. Adjust the color of the pie "pieces" so they contrast clearly (right-click on each piece, **Format Data Point**, under **Patterns** adjust in accordance with the Color and Line Guide).
7. Rotate the entire pie chart to the orientation that seems best (right-click on the pie, **Format Data Series**, under **Options** adjust the **Angle of first slice** accordingly).

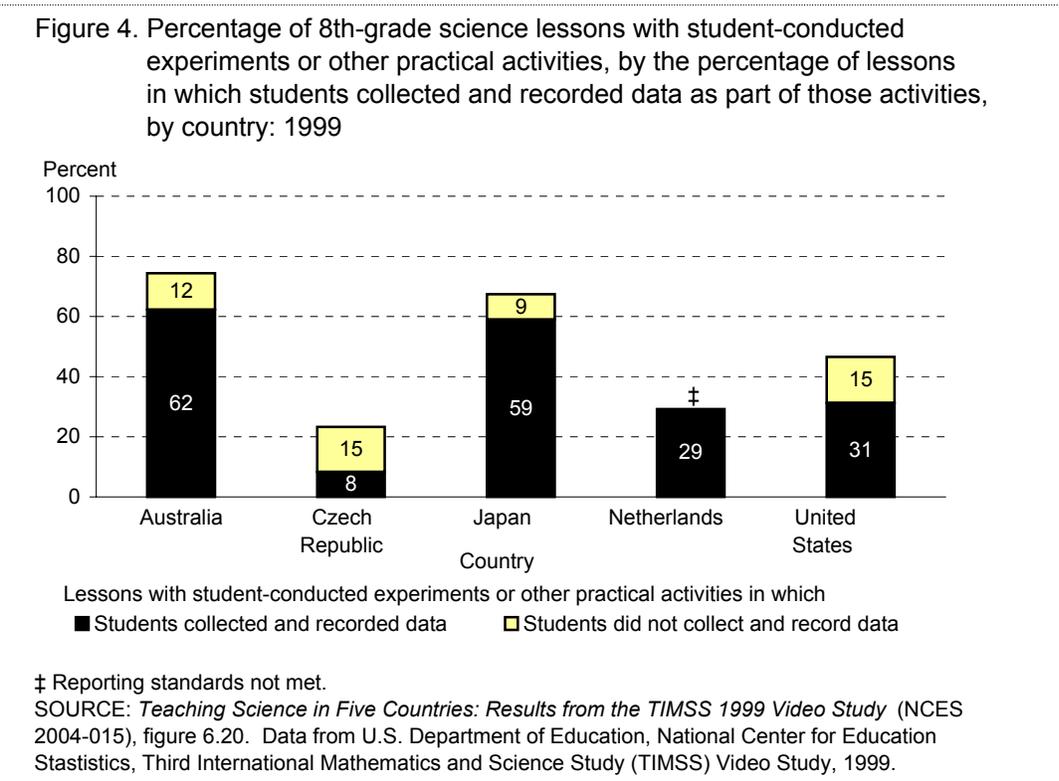
Excel default settings for figure without figure identifier:



Default Settings

SOURCE: *Teaching Science in Five Countries: Results from the TIMSS 1999 Video Study* (NCES 2004-015), figure 6.20. Data from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) Video Study, 1999.

Excel figure with manual formatting to meet NCES standards:

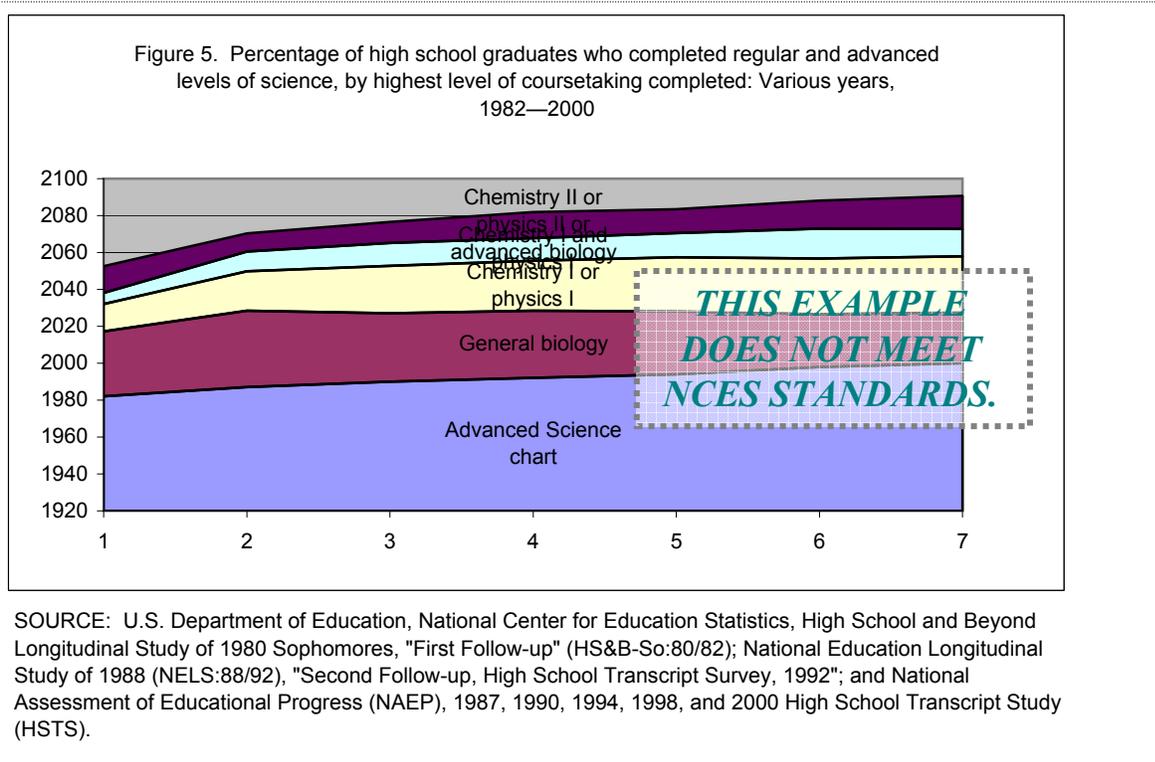


Formatted Correctly

Manual formatting steps:

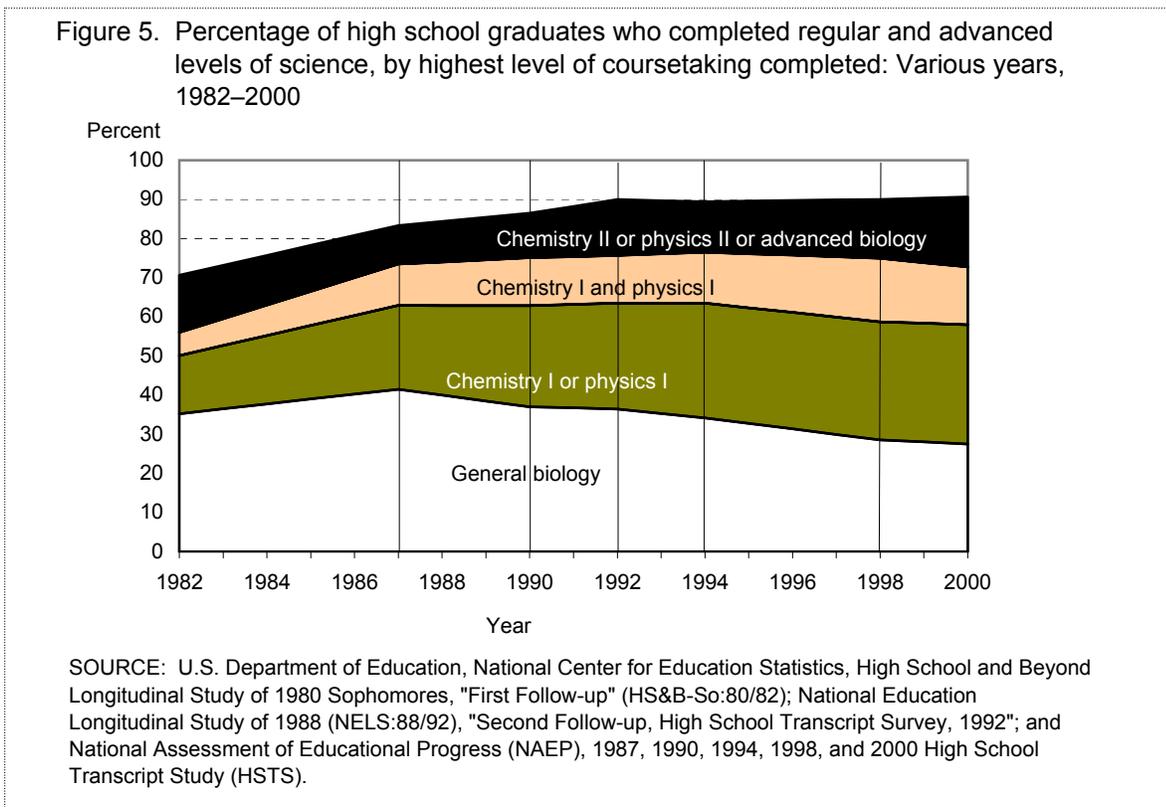
1. Enter the title either into a text box or into a merged cell across the top of the chart so that the title can be stretched across the figure precisely (otherwise the title's width on the page and the number of characters in the title may be arbitrarily constrained). Text boxes can be made by clicking on the text box icon in the Drawing toolbar and dragging your activated cursor to the desired size. If necessary, set the text box's background fill color to white and make sure it has no border (right-click on the text box so the **Format Text Box** dialog box comes up and, under the **Colors and Lines** tab, set the Color under Fill to white and under Line to "No Line"). For guidance on creating hanging indents in titles, see appendix G, guideline C.
2. Rescale the y axis to 100 (right-click on y axis, **Format Axis**, under **Scale** set **Maximum** and **Minimum** appropriately).
3. Transform the y axis title to read horizontally (right-click on the label, **Format Axis Title**, under **Alignment** set the **Orientation** to 0 degrees); transform the x axis labels to read horizontally (right-click on the x axis, **Format Axis**, under **Alignment** set the **Orientation** to 0 degrees); take off bold and size the x and y axis titles correctly; place the y axis title at the top of the y axis; and center the x axis title below the x axis.
4. Turn off the box around the graph and the background color (right-click inside the graph, **Format Plot Area**, under **Patterns** set **Border** and **Background** both to none).
5. Change the background gridlines (right-click on any gridline, **Format Gridlines**, under **Patterns** select appropriate choices).
6. Turn off the box around the figure (right-click along the edge of the figure, **Format Chart Area**, under **Patterns** set **Border** to none).
7. Set all the fonts to the same size except the title (which should be slightly larger) (right-click along the edge of the figure, **Format Chart Area**, under **Font** set **Size** accordingly; then right-click on title text box, **Format Text Box**, under **Font** set **Size** slightly larger than that used in the rest of the chart).
8. Resize the figure so it is proportionately sized (right-click inside the graph, click and drag any of the corner boxes to resize the chart area).
9. Adjust the color, style, and width of the bars so they contrast clearly (right-click on each dataline, **Format Data Series**, under **Patterns** adjust accordingly). For help with color choices, refer to the Color and Line Guide in this appendix.
10. Insert the "‡" symbol in a text box above Netherlands' bar to explain why there are no data reported. (See step 1 on how to create a text box.) Select and delete the original data label of "0" if need be. *Make sure there is a special note for the symbol placed before the SOURCE.*
11. Insert "Lessons with student-conducted experiments or other practical activities in which" in a text box above the legend for clarity. (See step 1 on how to create a text box.)
12. Delete the tick marks on the x axis (right-click on the x axis, **Format Axis**, under **Patterns** make sure the **Major tick mark type** and **Minor tick mark type** are both set to none).

Excel default settings for figure after setting font size:



Default Settings

Excel figure with manual formatting to meet NCES standards:

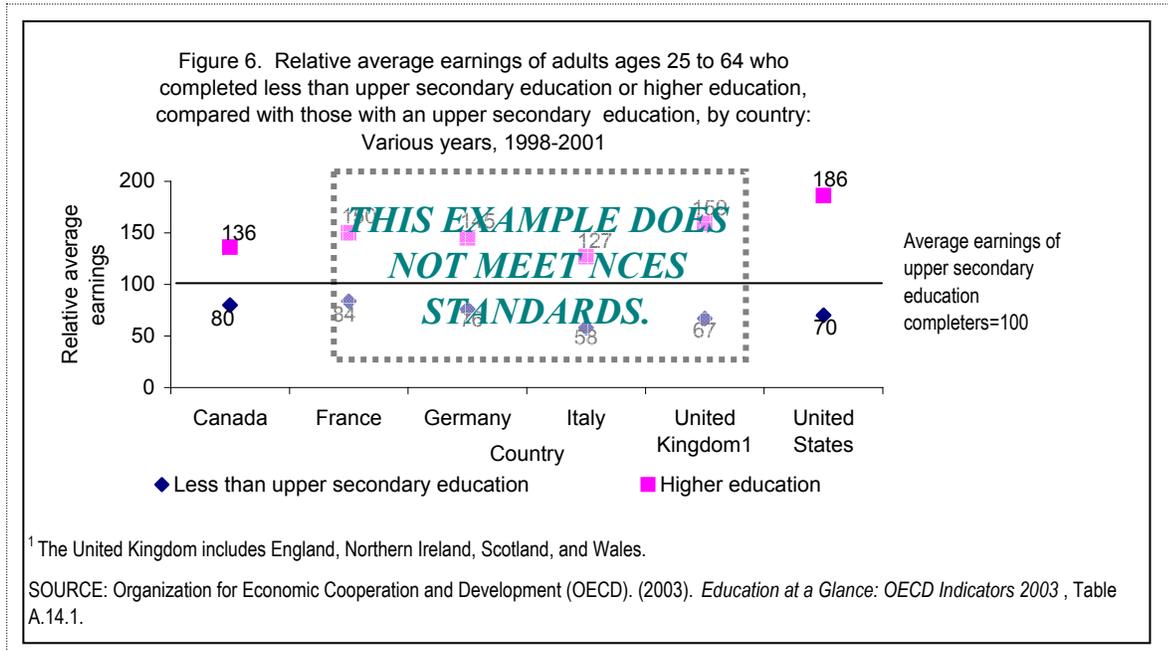


Formatted Correctly

Manual formatting steps:

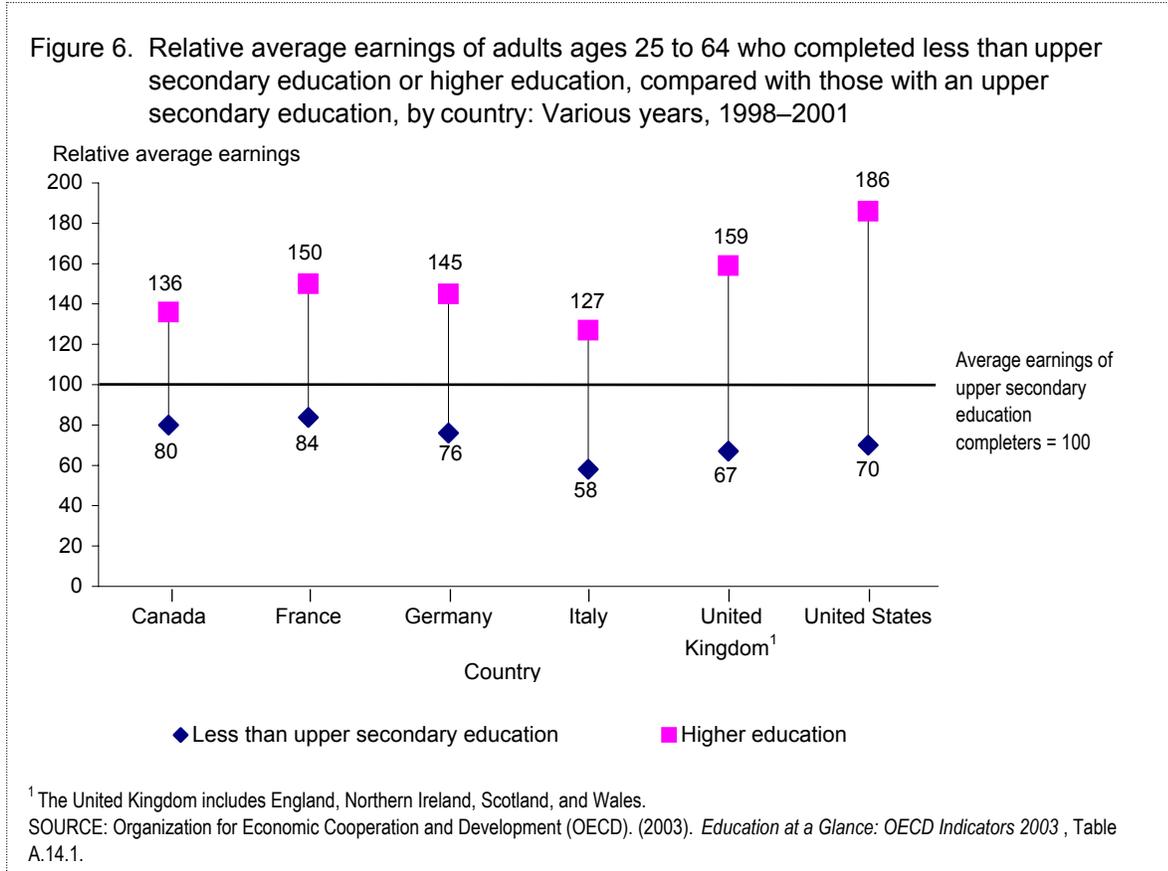
1. Enter the title either into a text box or into a merged cell across the top of the chart so that the title can be stretched across the figure precisely (otherwise the title's width on the page and the number of characters in the title may be arbitrarily constrained). Text boxes can be made by clicking on the text box icon in the Drawing toolbar and dragging your activated cursor to the desired size. If necessary, set the text box's background fill color to white and make sure it has no border (right-click on the text box so the **Format Text Box** dialog box comes up and, under the **Colors and Lines** tab, set the Color under Fill to white and under Line to "No Line"). For guidance on creating hanging indents in titles, see appendix G, guideline C.
2. Delete the category "Advanced Science Chart" (right-click on chart, **Source Data, Series**, select category and click remove) and set the x axis labels to report years (not a category number) (under **Source Data**, in the box to the right of "Category (X) axis labels" enter the correct range for the x axis labels—i.e., the cell range for the years).
3. Correct the improper spacing on the x axis between years by inserting a column in the source data field for each missing year and entering the following formula in each cell between columns with data: $(\text{value for year A}) + (\text{inserted year} - \text{year A}) * [(\text{value for year B}) - (\text{value for year A})] / \text{year B} - \text{year A}$. Note that the "inserted year – year A" equals 1 in the first inserted column, 2 in the next, etc. The denominator, year B – year A, is the number of years between year A and year B. *(If you download the electronic version of this appendix, you can see the sample source data field above, starting in cell Y3. The link to download this appendix is on page 81 of the introduction.)*
4. Correct the overlapping and bunched up data labels in the chart by copying and pasting the data labels that are too long to fit on a single line in Excel's (default) fixed-size data label boxes into manually created text boxes. (See step 1 on how to create text boxes.) Position them accordingly (make sure to check the Print Preview to see how they will print; fussing is usually required to get them spaced suitably).
5. Enter the y axis title and the x axis title into separate text boxes (see step 1 on how to create text boxes); size the x and y axis titles correctly; place the y axis title at the top of the y axis; and center the x axis title below the x axis.
6. Turn off the box around the graph and the background color (right-click inside the graph, **Format Plot Area**, under **Patterns** set **Border** and **Background** both to none).
7. Change the background gridlines (right-click on any gridline, **Format Gridlines**, under **Patterns** select appropriate choices).
8. Turn off the box around the figure (right-click along the edge of the figure, **Format Chart Area**, under **Patterns** set **Border** to none).
9. Set all the fonts to the same size except the title (which should be slightly larger) (right-click along the edge of the figure, **Format Chart Area**, under **Font** set **Size** accordingly; then right-click on title text box, **Format Text Box**, under **Font** set **Size** slightly larger than that used in the rest of the chart).
10. Resize the figure so it is proportionately sized (right-click inside the graph, click and drag any of the corner boxes to resize the chart area).
11. Adjust the color of the data areas so they contrast clearly (right-click on each data area, **Format Data Series**, under **Patterns** adjust accordingly). For help with color choices, refer to the Color and Line Guide in this appendix.

Excel default settings for figure after setting font size and inserting average earnings line:



Default Settings

Excel figure with manual formatting to meet NCES standards:

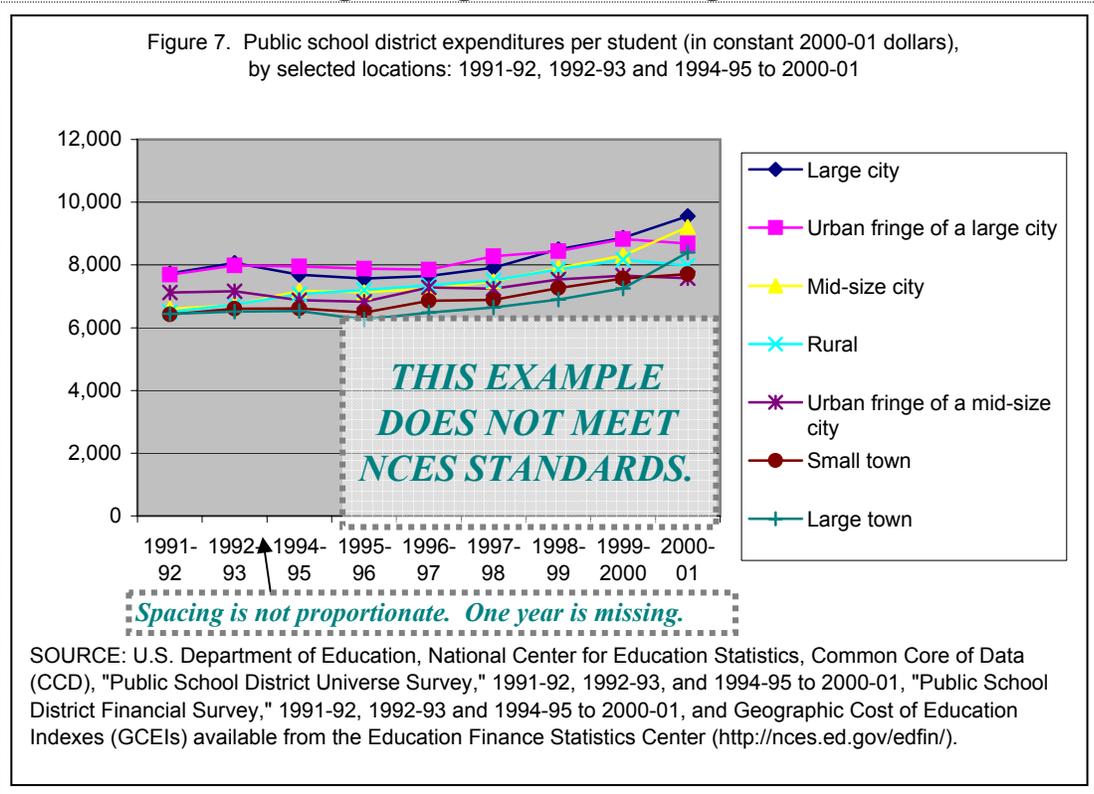


Formatted Correctly

Manual formatting steps:

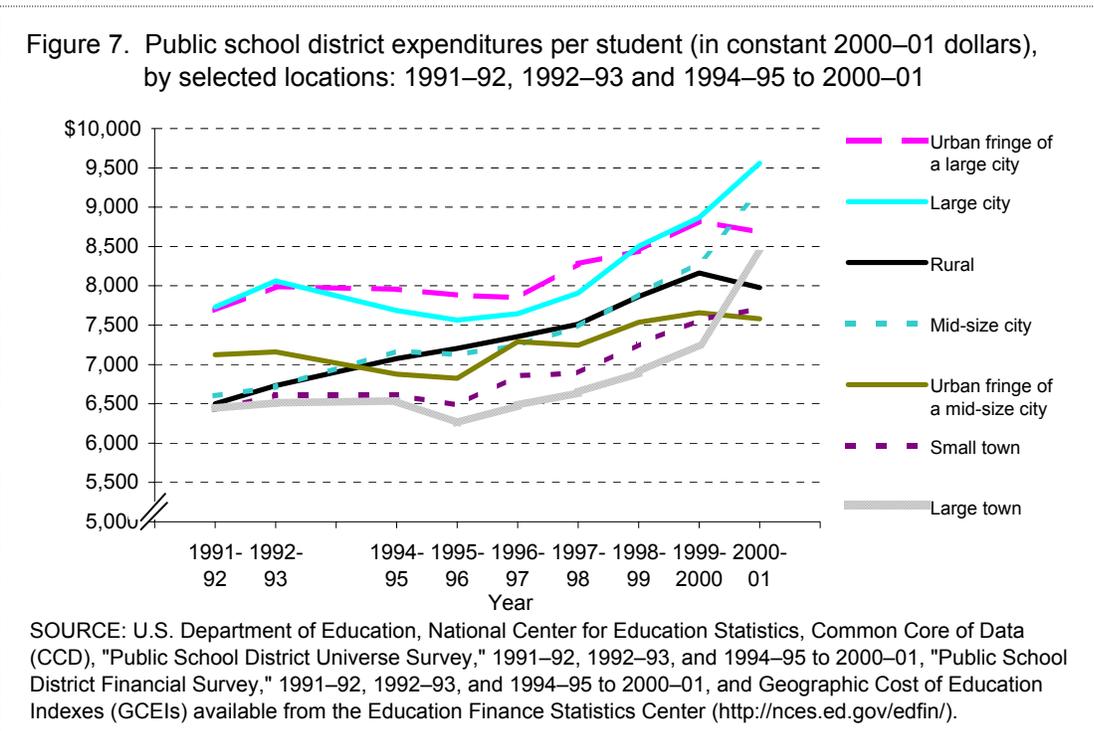
1. Enter the title either into a text box or into a merged cell across the top of the chart so that the title can be stretched across the figure precisely (otherwise the title's width on the page and the number of characters in the title may be arbitrarily constrained). Text boxes can be made by clicking on the text box icon in the Drawing toolbar and dragging your activated cursor to the desired size. If necessary, set the text box's background fill color to white and make sure it has no border (right-click on the text box so the **Format Text Box** dialog box comes up and, under the **Colors and Lines** tab, set the Color under Fill to white and under Line to "No Line"). For guidance on creating hanging indents in titles, see appendix G, guideline C.
2. Rescale the y axis to 200 (right-click on y axis, **Format Axis**, under **Scale** set **Maximum** and **Minimum** appropriately).
3. Transform the y axis title to read horizontally (right-click on the label, **Format Axis Title**, under **Alignment** set the **Orientation** to 0 degrees), size correctly, and place at the top of the axis.
4. Turn off the background color (right-click inside the graph, **Format Plot Area**, under **Patterns** set **Background** to none).
5. Insert a manually drawn horizontal line crossing the y axis at 100. Use the Line shape on the drawing toolbar, and then select and move line as necessary.
6. Set all the fonts to the same size except the title (which should be slightly larger) (right-click along the edge of the figure, **Format Chart Area**, under **Font** set **Size** accordingly; then right-click on title text box, **Format Text Box**, under **Font** set **Size** slightly larger than that used in the rest of the chart).
7. Resize the figure so it is proportionately sized (right-click inside the graph, click and drag any of the corner boxes to resize the chart area).
8. Adjust the color, style, and width of the datapoints so they are easy to distinguish (right-click on any point in each data series, **Format Data Series**, under **Patterns** adjust Marker accordingly).
9. Turn on lines to connect data points (right-click on any point in either data series, **Format Data Series**, under **Options** check High-low lines).
10. Insert a text box over United Kingdom that replicates the label but with a superscripted footnote.
11. Place tick marks under data points. First, turn on minor tick marks on the x axis (right-click on the x axis, **Format Axis**, under **Patterns** set **Minor tick mark type** as outside). Next, manually create tick marks. Set the zoom to 200% so you can be more precise with your lines. Go to "Lines" under AutoShapes on the Drawing toolbar, and select a straight line. Drag your activated cursor to draw a short line on top of the first minor tick mark. Copy and paste the line and use the arrow keys to move it on top of the second minor tick mark. Repeat the last step until you have a tick mark under every data point. Set the zoom back to normal. Use the Print Preview to see how the tick marks print; fussing is usually required to get them placed corrected as they do not usually print as they appear on the screen. When all tick marks are placed correctly, delete all the automatic tick marks on the x axis (right-click on the x axis, **Format Axis**, under **Patterns** make sure the **Major tick mark type** and **Minor tick mark type** are both set to none).

Excel default settings for figure after setting font size:



Default Settings

Excel figure with manual formatting to meet NCES standards:



Formatted Correctly

Manual formatting steps:

1. Enter the title either into a text box or into a merged cell across the top of the chart so that the title can be stretched across the figure precisely (otherwise the title's width on the page and the number of characters in the title may be arbitrarily constrained). Text boxes can be made by clicking on the text box icon in the Drawing toolbar and dragging your activated cursor to the desired size. If necessary, set the text box's background fill color to white and make sure it has no border (right-click on the text box so the **Format Text Box** dialog box comes up and, under the **Colors and Lines** tab, set the Color under Fill to white and under Line to "No Line"). For guidance on creating hanging indents in titles, see appendix G, guideline C.
2. Rescale the y axis to start at 5,000 (right-click on y axis, **Format Axis**, under **Scale** set **Minimum** to 5000).
3. Add a "\$" sign to the highest value in the y axis by inserting a text box with "\$10,000" over the "10,000" label on the y axis. See step 1 on how to make a text box with a white background and without a border to mask out the y axis label.
4. Insert a zero (in a text box) over the lowest value in the y axis (5,000) and insert a line break symbol or squiggly line to indicate a break in the axis scale.
(To insert a line break or squiggly line, first insert a "break" in the axis by creating a small white text box without a border (see step 1) and pasting it over the axis. To create a line break, go to "Lines" under AutoShapes on the Drawing toolbar, and select a straight line. Drag your activated cursor to draw a diagonal line and copy it. Note that copied elements in a chart often appear at the top left-hand corner of the chart. Drag the copy to pair it with the original line. Align both lines with the white text box so they appear to cross at the top and bottom of the whitedout break. To create a squiggly line, go to "Lines" under AutoShapes on the Drawing toolbar, and select a curvy line. Drag your activated cursor to draw a squiggly line and align it with the whitedout break.)
5. Turn off the background color (right-click inside the graph, **Format Plot Area**, under **Patterns** set **Background** to none).
6. Set all the fonts to the same size except the title (which should be slightly larger) (right-click along the edge of the figure, **Format Chart Area**, under **Font** set **Size** accordingly; then right-click on title text box, **Format Text Box**, under **Font** set **Size** slightly larger than that used in the rest of the chart).
7. Resize the figure so it is proportionately sized (right-click inside the graph, click and drag any of the corner boxes to resize the chart area).
8. Correct the improper spacing on the x axis by inserting a column in the source data field where the missing year of data should be. *(If you download the electronic version of this appendix, you can see the sample source data field above, starting in cell M15. The link to download this appendix is on page 81 of the introduction.)*
9. Fill in the gaps in the lines (i.e., in the plotted data series) by setting chart to interpolate data. (Click on the chart so boxes appear in each corner and midway on each side, under **Tools** on the menu bar select **Options**, under **Chart** select to plot empty cells as interpolated).
10. Adjust the color, style, and width of the datalines so they are easy to distinguish (right-click on any point in each data series, **Format Data Series**, under **Patterns** adjust accordingly). For help with color choices, refer to the Color and Line Guide in this appendix.

Appendix G. Guidance for Producing Tables in Excel That Meet NCES Standards

This appendix has been prepared to assist anyone preparing tables for NCES reports in Microsoft Excel. The point of this guide is not to recapitulate everything in the *NCES Statistical Standards* about preparing tables, but to show how to create tables in Excel that meet the standards.

This guide is divided into five sections that mirror the major parts of all tables: title, boxheads, table stubs, table body, and bottom of the table or notes. Within each of these sections, NCES's tabular rules and guidelines are presented. (The order of presentation only loosely follows the organization of the NCES tabular guide.) Each rule and guideline is identified by a letter or letter and number for easy reference (and to avoid any confusion with the numbering system used in the NCES standards).

Throughout this guide, examples are provided to allow users to see how particular requirements of the NCES standards can be done in Excel. Some of these examples have text boxes and arrows that label parts or point out particular features that are correct or incorrect. All common errors are labeled as such, and the labels describing these errors are in italics.

Ideally, users will download this guide as an Excel file so that they can click on the various examples to see how different cells have been formatted or created, and so they can copy formatting or formulas. To download this appendix, click on this link [<http://nces.ed.gov/statprog/styleguide/excel/appendixG.xls>].

TITLES

A What to include in the title

All titles should be unique and should state (1) what data are presented in the table, (2) how the data are classified, (3) where the data apply, and (4) what the time frame for the data is.

- A1 **What** Define the basic content and general limits of the group or subgroup that are shown in the table. Generally titles begin with either “Number of...”, “Percentage of...”, or “Percentage distribution of...” If a table presents only counts (e.g., number of students enrolled), then “Number of” can be dropped (in this example the title can simply begin “Enrollment...”).
- A2 **How classified** Include information detailing breakouts of data: e.g., by control of school, by age and sex of students, etc. NOTE: This information should appear in a particular order—first describing the column headers from left to right, then top to bottom; then describing the stub (from top to bottom, if there are sub-stubs). See sample title for table 2 below (in C).
- A3 **Where** Make sure users are aware if the data apply to a particular country, the nation as a whole, or some geographic or political subdivision: e.g., “OECD nations”, “Japan and the United States”, “Central cities”, etc.
- A4 **When** Include information making the time frame explicit: e.g., “2000”, “Fall 2002”, “Academic year 1998-99”, “Various years, 1950–2000”.

B Spacing in titles

- B1 Before the actual title, insert the table identifier (i.e., a table number, letter, or letter and number) and a period followed by two “n” spaces, then start the title.

Table 1. Fall enrollment in degree-granting institutions, by institution: 2001

- B2 Insert a blank row like this under the title with a border line under the blank row. (The border line can be thick or thin.)

C How to deal with long titles

If a title will not fit on one line, make sure that the first word of every other line is aligned with the first word of the title on the first line. The easiest way to do this is to hit Alt + Enter at the end of each line and insert the table identifier again at the start of the next line, setting the font color of the table identifier to white so it appears as if a hanging indent has been inserted into the title. (Click on the title below to see one way this can be done.)

APPENDIX G. GUIDANCE FOR PRODUCING TABLES IN EXCEL THAT MEET NCES STANDARDS

Table 2. Associate degrees conferred by degree-granting historically Black colleges and universities, by race/ethnicity, major field of study, and sex of student: 2001-02

Major field of study and sex of student	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian or Pacific Islander	American Indian	Race unknown	Associate degrees from HBCUs as a percent of total	
								Total	Black

Note how the order of the information in the title telling users “how classified” corresponds to the sample boxhead here. See A2 above for the rule on the order.

D How to deal with multipage table titles

D1 For each page after the first page, repeat the table identifier and the full table title, with “—Continued” added. For example,

Table 3. Percentage of associate degrees conferred by degree-granting historically Black colleges and universities, by race/ethnicity, major field of study, and sex of student: 2001-02—Continued

Note the difference in usage of the “en” dash and “em” dash here. For the school year (2001–02) or span of multiple years, use an “en” dash. For a span of years (e.g., 1970–2004) use an “en” dash. Before “Continued” use an “em” dash. See W2 for how to insert these special characters.

D2 Note that there are different rules for dealing with double-page-spread tables. Refer to [appendix C](#) of the *NCES Statistical Standards*, p. 169.

E Formatting rules for titles

- E1 Start with the topic (i.e., the What, see A1) of the table, followed by a comma and then the “by” list (i.e., the How classified information, see A2).
- E2 End the title with a colon followed by the Where information, if any, and the data year(s). (For details on year spans, refer to [appendix C](#) of the *NCES Statistical Standards*, p. 172.)
- E3 Capitalize only the first word, proper nouns, and the word following the colon.
- E4 Avoid footnoting a title; use a general note (i.e., NOTE) instead.

BOXHEADS

Boxheads consist of multiple headers: a stub header or stubhead, column heads, and spanner heads that classify, describe, or qualify the columns to which they refer. See sample boxhead for table 4 below.

Table 4. Full- and part-time student enrollment in public schools, by sex and state: Fall 2000										
State or other area	Full-time students					Part-time students				
	All students	Number			Percent female	Total	Number			Percent female
		Total	Men	Women			Total	Men	Women	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

Labels below the table: Stubhead (points to column 1), Column heads (points to columns 2-5), Spanners (points to columns 6-7), Column number (points to column 8).

F General formatting for all headers

- F1 All header types should be in normal font (not bold). (There is no single required font.)
- F2 Capitalize only the first letter of the first word in each column head and the first letter of proper nouns.

G Formatting differences among headers

- G1 Stubhead should be left flush and should describe, define, or amplify the table stubs or stub captions.
- G2 Spanners (headers that span more than one column) should be centered horizontally.
- G3 Column heads should be right flush and should read horizontally. If you need to hyphenate a word and have word wrap turned on, insert your hyphen and hit Alt + Enter to insert a hard return. If you do not have word wrap turned on, you can put the text into two cells.
- G4 All column heads of the same level should be on the same line.

Incorrect:

All students	Full-time students			Percent female
Total	Men	Women	Total	Percent female

This column head needs to be vertically centered or on the same line as Total.

This column head needs to be on the same line as Total, Men, and Women because it is at the same organizational level.

- G5 If there is a “Total” column, it should appear to the left of the columns it sums.
- G6 If there is a column with derived numbers (e.g., averages, ratios, percentages, etc.), it should appear to the right of the columns with the base data.
- G7 Take care with race/ethnicity column heads; refer to [standard 1-5](#) of the *NCES Statistical Standards* on what labels to use (pp. 28–29).

APPENDIX G. GUIDANCE FOR PRODUCING TABLES IN EXCEL THAT MEET NCES STANDARDS

H Column numbers

- H1 Column numbers, if used, should be flush left under the stubhead and right flush for all other columns. They should not be in bold.
- H2 Column numbers can be inserted as numbers without parentheses (as in the sample boxhead for table 4 above) or with parentheses and without a line above them (as in the sample boxhead for table 5 below).

I Placing lines around and in a boxhead

- I1 Horizontal lines should be above and below the entire boxhead to set it off from the title and the table body. The thickness of these lines may vary from report to report, but should be consistent within a single report. These lines are inserted using the border line options under **Cell Format**.
- I2 Horizontal lines need to be put under the entirety of each spanner to indicate which column heads the spanner refers to.
- I2a A space between adjacent spanners (such as in the sample boxhead for table 4 above) can be created by inserting an extra column between the two spanners. This column provides space for a cell with the border lines turned off to separate the two horizontal spanner lines.
- I3 A vertical line should not separate the stubhead and the first column head unless vertical lines are used throughout the boxhead to separate spanners and column heads.
- I4 Vertical lines should be used between spanners or column heads if spaces are not inserted between spanners, as explained in I2a. The sample boxhead for table 5 below provides an example of vertical lines between all headers. Note that care must be taken to make sure that the lines do not touch the text or impair the legibility of any of the headers.
- I5 Always check how boxheads appear using print preview and after printing out the table. Boxheads do not always print as they appear on the screen.

Make sure that all lines are complete and inserted consistently throughout a boxhead.

Table 5. Title 1st line									
Institution (1)	State (2)	2000				2001			
		Total (3)	Under-graduate (4)	Grad-uate (5)	First professi (6)	Total (7)	Under-graduate (8)	Grad-uate (9)	First professi (10)

Common errors:

- Line below spanner
- Lines between column heads and between spanners because no space inserted
- Line above and below boxhead
- Make sure words are not truncated like this.
- Make sure all borders are complete (this is incorrect).

TABLE STUBS

Table stubs (or row labels) appear in the first column of a table and describe the data appearing in that particular row. A table may have several different types of stubs: a grand total, a subtotal for a major group, a subtotal for a subgroup, and/or a total for an item or characteristic.

J Placement

- J1 All stubs should be formatted flush left. (Text must be flush left in order for indent to work.)
- J2 Place grand totals at the top of the column stub. Organize all the items in a stub in a logical sequence. Some typical sequences are alphabetical, geographical, chronological, numerical, etc. Sometimes the arrangement of items may fall into two or more such sequences (e.g., major geographic area by size and alphabetic within major geographic areas).
- J2a Years: Stub entries consisting entirely of years are centered in the area allotted to the stub. Convention requires year entries showing trends to be chronological, running sequentially from earliest to latest.

K Indentation

- K1 Each type of stub is indented a different number of spaces depending on the number of other different types of stubs appearing in the table, such as in the example below. The rules for how many spaces to indent are explained below in the discussion of each type of stub.

Stubhead	Teacher characteristic	Indented spaces
Total	Total	5
Major group	Elementary school teachers	0
Subgroup 1	Teaching in public schools	2
Subgroup 2	Sex	4
Item (or characteristic)	Male	6
Item (or characteristic)	Female	6

- K2 For the total: If the stub includes another level or subordinated group, indent the total three “n” spaces (two clicks on the “Increase Indent” icon on the formatting toolbar). Indent five “n” spaces (three clicks on the “Increase Indent” icon on the formatting toolbar) if there are two or more levels of subordination (as in the above example).
- K2a If the first line of a table is Total, the stub should be indented. If there is not room to set it off with a blank row underneath it, the whole row should be in bold (as in the example below).
- K2b In tables with rulings (border lines), there should be a border line under the data in the total row but NOT under the label “Total”.

Stub header	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Total	†	9,524	8,745	966	10	655	635	20
Item 1	AL	222	242					
Item 2			48					
Item 3		84	98					

No line under “Total”. (This is correct.)

Total line in bold without a blank row below only when needed for table to fit on page. See L1 for preferred spacing.

K Indentation—Continued

- K3 For a major group: Always start the stub at the left margin (i.e., do not indent the first line).
- K4 For subgroups: Indent two additional spaces for each subsequent level of subordination (e.g., a total of four spaces for the third level group and six spaces for the fourth level).
- K5 For overrun lines: Indent any overrun lines three “n” spaces for major or subgroup labels. [An “overrun line” refers to any line of text for a stub caption that is too long to fit on one line and needs to “run over” onto a second line.] See the example of an overrun line at the bottom of the first page in the sample stub below.
- K6 For continuation lines: When a category with subcategory listings breaks over to another page all superior categories should be repeated, with the word “—Continued.” Subcategory listings should be indented the same on all pages. For example:

First page	Next page
<pre> Foreign languages French Spanish Other foreign languages Social sciences U.S. history World history Other history: Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Greek history..... </pre>	<pre> Social sciences—Continued Other history—Continued Oriental history Local history Geography Government studies Current events Other </pre>

L Vertical spacing

- L1 Normal vertical spacing (i.e., normal spacing between rows) in the stub leaves a blank line between the total and the first group caption, between group captions, and between a subordinate series and a following superior group caption (e.g., between the last item of a minor group series and the major group caption just below). See example on next page.
- L2 When available vertical space is tight, reduce the height of blank lines or remove all blank lines between stub captions and then bold total and all major group (subtotal) captions. See for example the sample under K2b.
- L3 It is customary to leave a blank row between every 5 items when a stub has more than 10 items under a single category (e.g., states, institutions). See example on next page.

State	Total direct general expenditures [in millions]
(1)	(2)
United States	\$1,398,533
Alabama	20,119
Alaska	7,131
Arizona	20,302
Arkansas	10,662
California	180,875
Colorado	20,068
Connecticut	19,688
Delaware	4,483
District of Columbia	4,630
Florida	71,631

← Blank row to set off total from the first group of captions.

← Blank row to break long list of items into groups of five.

M Leaders

- M1 Leaders are rows of periods connecting the last word of a stub caption with the first data column when there is a wide space between the two. Leaders are optional.
- M2 Make sure that leaders begin after one space after the end of the row label and go all the way to the end of the cell as in the example above. Unlike in Word, leaders must be entered by hand in Excel.

N Repeated stubs in multipage tables

- N1 For tables that run more than one page, copy and insert the stub on the next page. Do *not* use the “columns to repeat at left” option under **Page Setup** and **Sheet** in Excel, as this will not give you the correct title since you need to insert “—Continued” (see D1).
- N2 For a table with a double-page spread, the table stub should be repeated on the right side of the right-hand page. Line numbers may be substituted for the right-hand stub if space is tight.

O Line numbers

Insert line numbers for reference for tables with a large number of entries in the stub or to avoid repeating an entire stub in the right-hand side of a double-page spread. (For more information see [appendix C](#) of the *NCES Statistical Standards*, pp. 180–181.)

TABLE BODY

P Columns and rows

- P1 Vertical border lines may be inserted to divide data columns. They are optional. However, if they are used, space the entered data so they do not touch the vertical border lines (as in the example below). There also should be no line along the left-hand side or the right-hand side of the table.
- P2 Use the indent button to indent stubs that should be indented (do not use the space bar as it will not always be consistent).

Agriculture	341	35	281	1	1	0	20	3
Men	147	20	113	1	—	0	11	2
Women	194	15	168	—	1	0	9	1

Q Cells

- Q1 Insert data or a symbol flush right in every cell.
- Q1a For numerical entries, if the flush right icon does not make the contents of the cell flush right correctly, then select cells, under Format on the menu bar, select Cells, then the Number tab, and select “Number” from the Category menu on the left, and choose either “-1234.10” or “(1234.10)” as appropriate from the Negative numbers menu on the right.

** If you can't get this to work, use the format paint brush to copy formatting from a table with correctly formatted cells.*

- Q2 No cells should be left blank in a table.
 - When no data apply in a category, insert into the cell: † ← Be sure to make flush right
 - When no data are available, insert into the cell: — ← Be sure to make flush right
 - Don't insert the dash in Courier New, or you get: -

**See section W for details on how to insert the special symbols.*

R Footnote callouts

- R1 When you need to insert a footnote callout in Excel, it should be superscripted (highlight the number and go to **Format Cells**, under **Font** select superscript). The cleanest and most legible footnotes print in Verdana. If your rows are close, use font size 8 to avoid having them clipped at the top.

- R2 If the footnote is for a label, just insert the footnote callout at the end of the label, as in the following example:

Undesignated fields ¹
--

- R3 If the footnote is for a number in a cell, insert the footnote callout in a separate column (as is done below), so that the number (not the footnote callout) remains decimally aligned with the other numbers in the column.

194.5 ³
(4)

- R4 If a numbered footnote callout stands alone in a cell, put it in parentheses: e.g.,

- R5 The order for numbering footnote callouts is left to right within a line, then down, as in the example below.

- R5a Note that spanners come above all column heads, so they must be numbered first (see the example below).

Teacher	All	Elementary teachers ¹		
characteristic ²	teachers ³	All	Public	Private ⁴
Total	100.0	76.7	79.0	21.0
Sex ⁵				
Male	53.7 ⁶	44.9	48.2	32.4
Female	46.4	55.1	51.8	67.6

Common errors:

Total	†	23500	845	737	0	†
A&M University	AL	94	45	49		†
Alabama State	AL	#####	459	688		†
Bishop College	AL	0	178 ⁽¹⁾			†
C.A. Fredd State	AL	163	163			†

S Decimals and zeros

- S1 All figures in a table that are reported in the same unit of measurement should present data carried out to the same decimal place. (Use **Format Cells** under **Number** to set the decimal place.)
- S2 In order to place a zero in a cell, the measure must actually be zero based on universe data. It is expressed as a single zero without a decimal point, if all other numbers in the column are rounded to whole numbers. If the other numbers in the column are carried out to some decimal place, carry out the zero the same number of decimal places (e.g., 0.0 or 0.00).
- S3 If the column consists entirely of whole numbers, do not use decimal points.
- S4 Figures of value less than 1 have a zero to the left of the decimal point (e.g., 0.7) unless the number cannot be greater than 1 (e.g., levels of statistical significance, proportions, correlations). To enter figures with a value less than 1 without a zero, enter the figure as text (i.e., type a ' before the numeral or format the cell so the Number Category is “Text.”

T Rounding

- T1 In text and summary tables, round percentages to no more than one decimal place, round four and five digit numbers to hundreds, and round six digit numbers and over to thousands. (For details on the rules for reference and methodology tables, refer to [standard 5-3](#) of the *NCES Statistical Standards*, p. 168.)
- T2 The best way to round numbers in an Excel table is to enter the unrounded data outside the print area and to enter the formula '=ROUND ([cell with unrounded data], -[the number of digits from the ones place you want the data rounded to])' in the table cell. Thus to round to the thousands place, enter -3. See the example below.

Formula in cell reads =ROUND(H77,-3)	Table excerpt		Outside the print area	
	2,000	45,000	2328	45389
	348,000	354,000	347865	354354

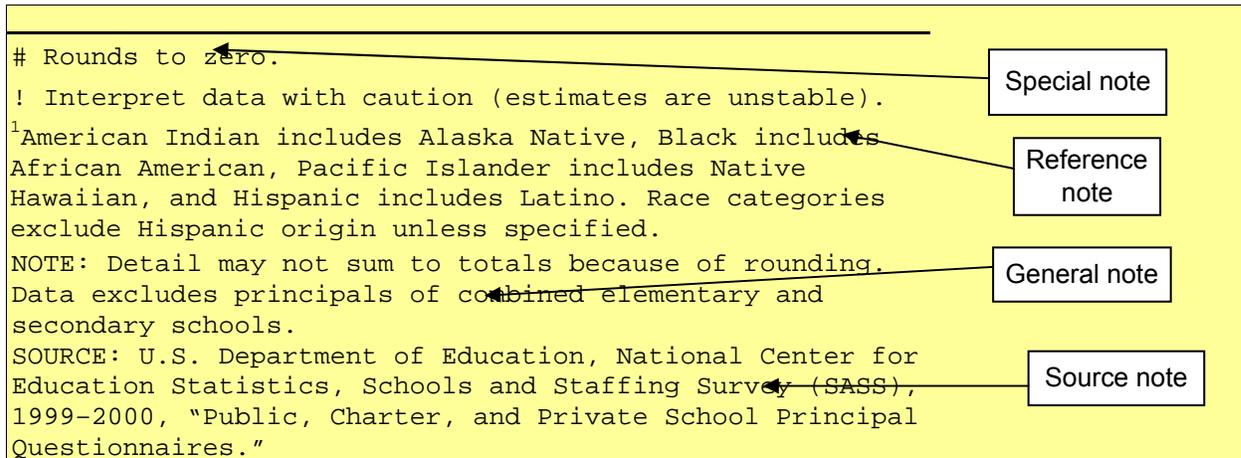
U Symbols

- U1 When all the figures in a column pertain to money, the first figure in the column should be preceded by a dollar sign (\$). None of the other figures in the column should have a dollar sign.
- U2 A percent sign (%) should not follow figures in the field. Instead, write out the word “percent” wherever it is needed in a title, spanner, stub, column head, footnote, note, etc.

BOTTOM OF THE TABLE

V Organization

V1 The sections of notes at the bottom of the table go in the following order: special (symbol) notes, reference (numbered) notes, general note, and source note.



V2 There should be no extra (blank) row under the last line of data and the first line of notes, or between any special notes, footnotes, the NOTE, and/or the SOURCE.

V3 Each note and source at the bottom of a table should be inserted in its own row but in only one row with cells under the width of the table merged and word wrap turned on. (Avoid entering the note and source into cells in multiple rows.) Make sure the entirety of the text appears when the table prints and that there are no unnecessary blank lines (always check for this in Print Preview before printing).

W Special notes

W1 When special notes are used they should be listed in the following order:

- Not available.
- † Not applicable.
- # Rounds to zero.
- ! Interpret data with caution.
- ‡ Reporting standards not met.
- * p<0.05

W2 The symbols for these special characters can either be copied and pasted from Microsoft Word or entered using the following key strokes:

- Hold down the Alt key and type on the numerical keypad 0150 to get – (en dash).
- Hold down the Alt key and type on the numerical keypad 0151 to get — (em dash).
- Hold down the Alt key and type on the numerical keypad 0134 to get †.
- Hold down the Alt key and type on the numerical keypad 0135 to get ‡.

**Note that if you are using a laptop without a separate numerical keypad, you will need to turn on the Numbers Lock and enter the numerals using the keyboard's alternative numerical keypad (not the numbers across the top of the keyboard). Typically on the alternative numerical keypad 1, 2, and 3 correspond with the keys J, K, and L, respectively.*

APPENDIX G. GUIDANCE FOR PRODUCING TABLES IN EXCEL THAT MEET NCES STANDARDS

X Reference (numbered) notes

Footnote numbers should be superscripted and match their corresponding footnote callout in the body of the table in terms of size and font. Insert a space between the number and the first character of the footnote. For example:

¹ Hinds Community College, Utica Campus reported 152 degrees but not by field of study.

Y General note

Y1 Not all tables need a general note. For those tables that do, capitalize NOTE and put a colon after it to indicate a general note.

Y2

If there are any race/ethnicity labels used in the table, insert the following text in the NOTE:

NOTE: American Indian includes Alaska Native, Black includes African American, Pacific Islander includes Native Hawaiian, and Hispanic includes Latino. Racial categories exclude Hispanic origin.

**If the text above is not appropriate for a particular table (e.g., the category Other is used instead of American Indian and Pacific Islanders), adjust this text accordingly. For further guidance on phrasing this note, see [appendix C](#) of the NCES Statistical Standards, pp. 31–32.*

Y3 If there are percentage distributions or data that should sum to totals, insert the following text in the NOTE:

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

Z Source

Every table needs a source note, which begins with SOURCE in capitals and a colon. The source note should cite the report, relevant survey(s) or subsurvey(s), data reference year, file version number, department name, and agency name. Here are some common examples:

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall 2002.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD) surveys. (This table was prepared April 2002.)

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 1992, 1994, 1998, 2000, 2002, and 2003 Reading Assessments.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public, Charter, and Private School Questionnaires," 1999–2000.

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AA Multipage table notes

The end of each page preceding the last page of a multipage table should carry a note advising the reader to “See notes at end of table.” The notes for a multipage table appear on the last page only.

Asian or Pacific Islander.....	8	1	0
American Indian	1	0	0
Nonresident alien	47	72	27
See notes at end of table.			

Example of the bottom of the first page of a multipage table.

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