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# INTERNATIONAL STANDARD



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INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR STANDARDIZATION • МЕЖДУНАРОДНАЯ ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯ ПО СТАНДАРТИЗАЦИИ • ORGANISATION INTERNATIONALE DE NORMALISATION

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## Documentation — International code for the abbreviation of titles of periodicals

First edition — 1972-03-15

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ISO 4:1972

<https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/84f0c724-23c2-4a94-bb5d-e8db06ba049a/iso-4-1972>

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UDC 05 : 655.535.2 : 003.83

Ref. No. : ISO 4-1972 (E)

Descriptors : abbreviations, documents, periodicals, titles.

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## FOREWORD

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards institutes (ISO Member Bodies). The work of developing International Standards is carried out through ISO Technical Committees. Every Member Body interested in a subject for which a Technical Committee has been set up has the right to be represented on that Committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work.

Draft International Standards adopted by the Technical Committees are circulated to the Member Bodies for approval before their acceptance as International Standards by the ISO Council.

International Standard ISO 4 (originally draft No. 1278) was drawn up by Technical Committee ISO/TC 46, *Documentation*.

It was approved in July 1971 by the Member Bodies of the following countries:

Belgium	Ireland	ISO 4:1972 South Africa, Rep. of
Czechoslovakia	Israel	standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/8-f0c724-23c2-4a94-bb5d- e8db0ba149a/iso-4-1972
Denmark	Italy	Sweden
France	Japan	Switzerland
Germany	Netherlands	Thailand
Hungary	New Zealand	United Kingdom
India	Poland	U.S.A.
Iran	Romania	

The Member Body of the following country expressed disapproval of the document on technical grounds:

Portugal

This International Standard cancels and replaces ISO Recommendation R 4-1953.

The rules contained herein are applicable to the abbreviation of the titles of serial publications of all types and of many non-serial publications including monographs and proceedings of meetings. They are intended to guide and assist authors, editors, librarians, and others working in various areas of information transfer activity in preparing unique, unambiguous abbreviations within a specific frame of reference for the titles of publications cited in footnotes, references, and bibliographies. Such citations include abstracting and/or indexing services, lists of references accompanying articles, and public or private files wherever document identification is a concern.

Owing to the hundreds of thousands of different serial and non-serial publications subject to reference by abbreviated citation, the scores of different languages in which these publications are printed, the variant forms of recording the titles of these publications, and the widely diversified intellectual backgrounds of persons using title abbreviations, it is not possible to set down rules that will in every instance assure unassisted reconstruction of the original title of the publications cited in abbreviated form. As one way to facilitate this identification, authors and editors who make extensive use of title abbreviations in their publications are encouraged and urged to make available to their readers, at frequent intervals, lists of the abbreviated titles they use with corresponding equivalent unabbreviated titles.

The basic philosophy presented in this International Standard is that each title should have its own unequivocal abbreviation. This is achieved through application of the rules it provides in conjunction with a list of standardized title word abbreviations. By this procedure no two titles will have identical abbreviations, nor will a single abbreviation represent more than one title.

In order for this International Standard to be used effectively, lists of standard abbreviations for words found in serial and non-serial titles must be readily available (see ISO/R 833 and ANSI/Z 39).

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# Documentation — International code for the abbreviation of titles of periodicals

## 1 SCOPE

This International Standard is intended to serve as a guide for the creation of title abbreviations for both serial and non-serial publications. It is to be regarded as indicating the shortest form permitted.

It is not intended to serve as a guide for establishing corporate author or title entries.

## 2 FIELD OF APPLICATION

2.1 The rules given in this International Standard are applicable for establishing title abbreviations for serial publications and can be applied to title or corporate author entries as entered in library records.

### EXAMPLE :

Complete title : Bulletin of the Canadian Geological Society

Abbreviated as it appears on the piece :

Bull. Can. Geol. Soc.

Abbreviated as entered in library records :

Can. Geol. Soc., Bull.

2.2 These rules also apply to the abbreviation of titles of non-serial publications, including monographs and proceedings of meetings. They may apply, if required, to corporate and conference names in isolation.

## 3 DEFINITIONS

3.1 **acronym** : A word formed from the initial letter or letters of each of the successive parts or major parts of a compound term.

3.2 **compound word** : A word whose component parts are themselves words, combining forms, or affixes.

3.3 **contraction** : A shortening of a word, syllable, or word group by omission of an internal letter or letters.

3.4 **corporate author** : The organization or group of persons chiefly responsible for the creation of the intellectual or artistic content of a work.

3.5 **corporate name** : The name of the organization referred to as the corporate author.

3.6 **generic word (or term)** : A word or phrase describing a type of publication, for example, Annual Report, Journal, Proceedings, etc.; or a type of organization, for example, Faculty of Medicine, Institute, Society, etc.

3.7 **monograph** : A term used herein to refer to a systematic and complete treatise on a particular subject, including volumes issued serially by a university or a society. There may be more than one monograph in a volume.

3.8 **periodical** : A serial appearing or intended to appear indefinitely at regular or stated intervals, generally more frequently than annually, each issue of which normally contains separate articles, stories, or other writings. Newspapers disseminating general news, and the proceedings, papers, or other publications of corporate bodies primarily related to their meetings are not included in this term.

3.9 **secondary title** : A word or phrase added to a main title to distinguish a separate section. The section may be additionally designated by number or letter.

3.10 **serial** : A publication issued in successive parts bearing numerical or chronological designations and intended to be continued indefinitely. Serials include periodicals, newspapers and annuals (reports, yearbooks, etc.); the journals, memoirs, proceedings, transactions, etc. of societies; and numbered monographic series.

3.11 **subtitle** : An explanatory phrase added to the main title.

3.12 **title** : As used herein, the word "title" refers to the name of the publication which is to be abbreviated, whether a serial or not. The name may be considered as it appears on the cover, on the title page, on pages contained within the publication or on the spine; or as the name may be entered in library records; for example, the title word(s) either preceded or followed by the name of the corporate author responsible for the publication.

3.13 **truncation** : A shortening of a word by omission of letters at the end.

## 4 RULES

### 4.1 Word abbreviations

#### 4.1.1 Method

4.1.1.1 The recommended method of abbreviating is by truncation, i.e., to drop a continuous group (at least two) of

the final letters of the word. Words consisting of a single syllable or of five or fewer letters shall not be abbreviated unless they are articles, conjunctions and prepositions or frequently used generic words and occur in ISO/R 833.

**4.1.1.2** Abbreviation by contraction, i.e. by omitting internal letters, is restricted to words cited in ISO/R 833.

**4.1.1.3** A word is not to be abbreviated to a single initial letter unless such an abbreviation occurs in ISO/R 833.

**4.1.2 Word order**

The order of word abbreviation shall follow without omission the order of the words as they appear in the title entry chosen, except that :

**4.1.2.1** Long titles and long corporate names may be shortened provided that the title remains identifiable and its position in a comprehensive alphabetical list is not altered thereby.

**4.1.2.2** Subtitles are omitted.

**4.1.3 Single word titles**

Titles consisting of a single word, exclusive of an article, are never abbreviated. (Rules for differentiating between identical single word titles are given in 4.2.2.)

**4.1.4 Articles, conjunctions, and prepositions**

Articles, conjunctions and prepositions are generally omitted from title abbreviations unless their retention, in abbreviated form according to established practice, aids the identification of the title being abbreviated.

Archiv für Philosophie — Arch f Phil  
Archives of Philosophy — Arch of Phil

**4.1.4.1** When a preposition occurs as the initial word of the title, it is retained in the abbreviation.

EXAMPLE :

Correct : Vom Wasser  
Incorrect : Wasser

**4.1.4.2** The inclusion of an ampersand (&) for "and" or its equivalent in any language may add clarity to the title abbreviation.

EXAMPLE :

Complete Titles : Journal of Mathematics and Physics  
Journal of Mathematical Physics  
Abbreviated Titles : J. Math. & Phys.  
J. Math. Phys.

**4.1.5 Capitalization**

Capitalize the first letter of the first element of the abbreviation. For the remainder of the abbreviation capitalize all letters, the first letter of each element, or none, according to established practice.

EXAMPLE :

Correct :

Archives of Internal Medicine — Arch Intern Med  
— ARCH INTERN MED  
Archiv für klinische Medizin — Arch klin Med  
Archives de Médecine navale — Arch Med nav  
Archivos de medicina interna — Arch med intern

Incorrect :

Archivos de medicina interna — arch med intern

**4.1.6 Punctuation**

**4.1.6.1 Period**

Either a period (full stop) and a space or a space alone may be used between title word abbreviations. Unless the use of periods is given up entirely, a period is required after all word abbreviations, even if the final letter of the word is retained.

EXAMPLES :

Canadian Pharmacy Journal  
Correct : Can. pharm. j.  
Can Pharm J  
Can pharm j  
CAN. PHARM. J.  
CAN PHARM J

Deutsche Schwesternzeitung

Correct : Dtsch. Schwesternztg.  
Dtsch Schwesternztg  
Incorrect : Dtsch. Schwesternztg

**4.1.6.2 Comma**

**4.1.6.2.1** In the abbreviation of a corporate author entry, a comma is to be used to separate the main corporate unit from its subordinate and the generic title word or words from the corporate author. If the word order of the abbreviation follows the word order of the original title, the commas shall not be used.

**4.1.6.2.2** A comma should be used to separate the abbreviation of the main title from the abbreviation of a section, series, or a secondary title (see also 4.2.4).

EXAMPLE :

Complete Title : Memoirs of the Faculty of Science,  
Kyushu University, Series D.  
Abbreviated Title : Mem. Fac. Sci., Kyushu Univ.,  
Ser. D.

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#### 4.1.6.3 Other punctuation

Other punctuation may be used if it adds clarity.

#### 4.1.7 Diacritical marks

Diacritical marks may be omitted from title abbreviations. If omitted, the spelling should not be modified to indicate their presence in the original title. If, however, it is decided to modify the spelling of words containing diacritical marks, this practice must be clearly indicated in detail to the users of the abbreviations concerned.

#### 4.1.8 Symbols

Symbols appearing in the original title shall be retained unchanged in the title abbreviation.

EXAMPLE :

Complete Title : Metall-Reinigung + Vorbehandlung

Abbreviated Title : Metall-Reinig. + Vorbehandl.

#### 4.1.9 Plurals

An abbreviation for the singular form of a word is also to be used for the plural form, except when a plural must be indicated to avoid misinterpretation of the abbreviation.

In such cases, the last letter of the plural form is added to the abbreviation of the singular form.

Plural endings are retained in abbreviated words.

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#### 4.1.10 Compound words

Abbreviate the final element only of a compound word, unless hyphenation occurs; in such a case, abbreviate each element affected, according to ISO/R 833, retaining the hyphen and leaving no space after the internal period(s).

EXAMPLE : Non-hyphenated compound word

Nachrichtenblatt

Correct : Nachrichtenbl.

Incorrect : Nachr-bl.

EXAMPLE : Hyphenated compound word

Technisch-industrielle Rundschau

Correct : Tech.-ind. Rundsch.

Incorrect : Tech. Ind. Rundsch.

Technisch-ind. Rundsch.

Techind. Rundsch.

## 4.2 Distinction and clarification

### 4.2.1 Word abbreviations

4.2.1.1 The same abbreviation is not to be used for unrelated words,

EXAMPLE : Ind.

Correct for : Industry or Industrial, but

Incorrect for : Indian, Indiana, Indigency or Indigo;

except in instances where as the result of common usage the same abbreviation stands for two unrelated words *and* those words form part of a personal or place name.

EXAMPLES :

Complete Titles : Wall Street Journal

Saint Louis Quarterly

Abbreviated Titles : Wall St. J.

St. Louis Q.

4.2.1.2 Different abbreviations are not permitted for the same word.

EXAMPLE : International

Correct : Int.

Incorrect : Intern.

### 4.2.2 Title abbreviations

4.2.2.1 Distinguish between identical title abbreviations, or clarify short and potentially ambiguous title abbreviations, by giving the place of publication abbreviated in parentheses after the title abbreviation. The place of publication may be the name of a country, a political subdivision of a country (for example, state, province, district, department), or a city, as appears most suitable in the circumstances. Preference should normally be given to the larger over the smaller unit, except where the same title abbreviation occurs for titles issued in the same larger unit; in such a case, the most specific place should be used.

EXAMPLE :

Annales de Physique

Correct : Ann. Phys. (Fr.)

Incorrect : Ann. Phys.

Annals of Physics

Correct : Ann. Phys. (US)

4.2.2.2 Use the name of the organization responsible for the content of the publication, abbreviated according to the rules of this International Standard, instead of the place as the added identifier, if the place name does not distinguish between conflicting abbreviations, or if the organization name appears to be more suitable for added identification.

**4.2.2.3** Do not distinguish between identical title abbreviations by the use or non-use of capitalization or punctuation, or by leaving certain titles or words unabbreviated when abbreviations for the words concerned occur in ISO/R 833.

**4.2.3** *Acronyms, Group initials, Letter designators*

An acronym or group of initials or letter designators in a title is to remain intact in the abbreviated form of the title and should always be capitalized throughout. Where such an acronym or group represents the name of an organization, and distinction or clarification of the title abbreviation is required, establish the meaning of the acronym or group, abbreviate according to the rules of this International Standard, and append to the title in parentheses as in 4.2.2.2.

EXAMPLE :

AEG Mitteilungen (Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft)

Correct : AEG Mitt. (Allg. Elek. Ges.)

Incorrect : AEG (Allg. Elek. Ges.) Mitt.

The above rule need not apply in the case of names of organizations widely understood by their acronyms, initials or letter designators.

**4.2.4** *Sections and series*

When a publication appears in more than one section or series distinguished by name, number, or letter, include the distinguishing feature in the abbreviation. Abbreviations of generic words such as Part, Section, Series, etc., need not be retained in the title abbreviation if they are not required for identification purposes.

EXAMPLES :

Annales Scientifiques de l'Université de Besançon, Géologie

Correct : Ann. Sci. Univ. Besançon, Géol.

Incorrect : Ann. Sci. Univ. Besançon

Annales Scientifiques de l'Université de Besançon, Physique

Correct : Ann. Sci. Univ. Besançon, Phys.

Incorrect : Ann. Sci. Univ. Besançon

Journal of Botany, Section A

Correct : J. Bot., A

J. Bot., Sect. A

Incorrect : J. Bot.

Journal of Botany, Section B

Correct : J. Bot., B

J. Bot., Sect. B

Incorrect : J. Bot.

An abbreviation for a secondary title is not required in addition to that of the main title, where the section concerned is distinguished by number or letter.

EXAMPLE :

Complete Title : Journal of Polymer Science, Part A-1  
Polymer Chemistry

Abbreviated Title : J. Polym. Sci., A-1

**4.2.5** *Different editions*

When a publication appears in more than one edition, each with an identical title abbreviation, a suitable distinguishing phrase, abbreviated according to the rules of this International Standard, is appended in parentheses to the title abbreviation.

EXAMPLE :

Impact, Science et Société (French Edition)

Impact of Science on Society (English Edition)

Correct : Impact Sci. Soc. (Fr. Ed.)

Impact Sci Soc (Engl Ed)

Incorrect : Impact Sci Soc

Impact Sci. Soc.

**4.2.6** *Personal names in a title*

When the title of the publication contains the name of a person, that name is retained in full in the abbreviation, and all the other words of the title are abbreviated according to the rules of this International Standard. Use of the family name and a generic term is not sufficient in the title abbreviation; the abbreviation must be based on the whole title.

EXAMPLE :

Robert A. Welch Foundation Research Bulletin

Correct : Robert A. Welch Found. Res. Bull.

Incorrect : Welch Found. Res. Bull.

Found. Res. Bull.

**4.3** *Transliteration*

Titles printed in non-Roman alphabets are transliterated into Roman characters according to the relevant documents listed below, and then abbreviated according to the rules of this International Standard.

**REFERENCES**

- 1) ISO/R 9, *International system for the transliteration of Slavic Cyrillic characters.*
- 2) ISO/R 233, *International system for the transliteration of Arabic characters.*
- 3) ISO/R 259, *Transliteration of Hebrew.*
- 4) ISO/R 833, *Abbreviations of generic names in titles of periodicals.* (Revision in preparation.)
- 5) ISO/R 843, *International system for the transliteration of Greek characters into Latin characters.*
- 6) ANSI/Z 39 : National Clearinghouse for Periodical Title Word Abbreviations (NCPTWA), *Word abbreviation list.*



## INTERNATIONAL STANDARD ISO 4

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## ERRATUM

### *Front cover*

In the list of descriptors, correct the spelling of "abbreviations".

### *Page 2*

Clause 4.1.5, second sentence : Insert the word "or" before "according".

### *Page 3*

Clause 4.1.9, final paragraph : Amend "abbreviated" to read "unabbreviated".

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