



**International  
Standard**

**ISO 24495-3**

**Plain language —**

**Part 3:  
Science writing**

*Langage clair et simple —  
Partie 3: Rédaction scientifique*

**First edition  
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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established 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. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

ISO draws attention to the possibility that the implementation of this document may involve the use of (a) patent(s). ISO takes no position concerning the evidence, validity or applicability of any claimed patent rights in respect thereof. As of the date of publication of this document, ISO had not received notice of (a) patent(s) which may be required to implement this document. However, implementers are cautioned that this may not represent the latest information, which may be obtained from the patent database available at [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents). ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see [www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 37, *Language and terminology*.

A list of all parts in the ISO 24495 series can be found on the ISO website.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at [www.iso.org/members.html](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

## Introduction

Science needs to be open to all, and one of the roadblocks to that goal is dense and highly specialized writing. If the public has access to scientific information that they can read, understand and use, they will gain more trust in science and be better informed citizens.

This document provides guidelines to help authors make scientific information accessible and useful to wide and varied groups of readers. These guidelines are based on evidence from research about how people understand written language. These guidelines are intended to help authors meet the following goals:

- empower those who contribute to science, communicate science and read about science;
- improve comprehension and accessibility for readers of scientific information while maintaining accuracy and precision;
- enable readers to increase their scientific literacy so they are better able to read, understand and use scientific information;
- encourage engagement with science among broad public readership;
- create documents that foster dialogue with readers on current scientific issues;
- promote communicating science responsibly and ethically.

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# Plain language —

## Part 3: Science writing

### 1 Scope

This document establishes governing principles and guidelines for plain science writing. It builds upon the foundation for plain language established in ISO 24495-1. It is organized according to the four principles presented in ISO 24495-1.

This document focuses on science writing: writing about scientific subjects that is intended for readers with varying education levels, backgrounds and interests. These readers can range from young students to decision-makers in industry and government.

This document does not explicitly address scientific writing. Such writing is found in scientific journal articles or academic documents, where experts write for others in their fields of specialization. However, it is possible that other experts do not work in precisely the same field as the author and prefer reading documents that follow plain language guidance. The principles found in this guidance and in ISO 24495-1 can help any author who seeks to create a plain language document.

This document applies to printed or digital information that is primarily in the form of text and images. This document applies to most written languages.

### 2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

### 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>

#### 3.1 author

individual or organization who develops or helps develop documents

Note 1 to entry: The definition of author herein differs from that of author in scientific writing of journal articles or books, where ethical rules determine who gets credit and legal principles determine who holds copyright.

EXAMPLE Writers, content developers or managers, editors, information architects or designers, information developers or managers, legislative drafters, public relations officers, technical writers, translators, UX (user experience) writers, writing project managers.

[SOURCE: ISO 24495-1:2023, 3.4, modified — Note to entry added and “professional writers” replaced with “writers” in the example.]