

9. Dates and time

Dates

Always write dates in the following order, with no commas: day, month (spell out in full), year.

15 April 1998

(Reminder: **1#March/2015** where # is a hard space and / is a normal space).

Avoid starting a sentence with a year (or other number), but if you have to do so, it should be spelled out:

Nineteen ninety-eight was not a leap year

but: **In 1998, the ...**

Twenty years had passed

but: **The 20-year cycle was impressive.**

Ages and centuries

A person's age or a century may be expressed in numbers:

She was 20; the 18th century; 20th century writers; an 18-year-old; the number of 15-19 year-olds in the population; for 15-19 year-old people

Seasons

Avoid reference to seasons, unless the text relates specifically to the weather. "The spring of 1998" does not mean the same period in all countries; however, "the second quarter of 1998" applies in both the northern and southern hemispheres.

Time periods

- Use figures for decades: **the 1990s** (no apostrophe).
- Time periods should be provided in full in main publication titles only: **OECD Factbook 2011-2012**.
- In OECD texts, a period of two or more years should be consistently simplified, except when there is a century change: **Prices were stable over 1990-97, but rose moderately in 1998-2001**.

- NOTE >** The period "2001-03" is usually taken to mean "from the start of 2001 to the end of 2003"; however, because readers unfamiliar with that convention may read "2001-03" as two years rather than three, try to specify elsewhere the number of years covered: **The 1995-98 average was 8 trillion bushels a day although output dropped at the end of the four-year period**.
- To indicate a period overlapping two calendar years, such as a fiscal, marketing or academic year, use a slash: **1998/99**.
 - If you refer to a quarter, please use the following format: **Q1 2003**.
 - A range is written as follows: **Q1 2003-Q2 2010**.



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