Campus Academic Resource Program
Latin Terms and Abbreviations

The following is a list of the most common Latin abbreviations and other abbreviations you may find in your academic career. We use abbreviations in order to save space and to signal particular things to the reader.

All major style guides (MLA, APA, and Chicago) agree that Latin abbreviations should not be used within the body of a paper and should be limited to footnotes, endnotes, figures, and other places outside the main body of the text. There is one exception however: APA style permits the use of et al. and v. within the body of a text (“Latin Terms and Abbreviations”, UNC Writing Center).

Latin Terms and Abbreviations Used with Examples:

e.g.

- **Definition:** Latin abbreviation for: *exempli gratia* meaning “for the sake of example” or you may read it as “for example.”
- **Example:**
  - Correct: Do you have any jewelry I can have (e.g. rings, necklaces) for the dance?
  - Incorrect: Do you have any jewelry I can have (e.g. rings, necklaces, earrings, or anklets) for the dance?
    - This example is incorrect because we listed all the potential pieces of jewelry that you could possibly want for the dance. When using e.g., you only want to give one or two examples.
- In general, use e.g. for one or few of many potential examples, therefore the examples themselves would not be able to replace the word in the sentence.

i.e.

- **Definition:** Latin abbreviation for: *id est* meaning “that is,” you may think of it as similar to an equal (=) sign.
- **Example:**
  - Correct: They sell many animals, (i.e. birds, mice, cats, and snakes) at the pet store.
    *Same sentence without i.e.:* They sell birds, mice, cats, and snakes at the pet store.
  - Incorrect: They sell many animals, (i.e. birds) at the pet store.
    - This example is incorrect because “birds” is not equivalent to “many animals.” Birds are just one of many animals. Therefore, e.g. would be more appropriate.
- In general, use i.e. if you can replace the word in the sentence with the examples listed after i.e.

ex. or EX.

- **Definition:** Not a Latin abbreviation, but a commonly used abbreviation for the word “example.” You may see this more often outside of the main body of the text, or in worksheets.
Latin Terms and Abbreviations in Citations/Bibliographies:

**passim**

- **Definition:**
  - Latin for: “here,” “there,” or “throughout.” In a bibliography, it is used to show that the specific piece of information occurs throughout a text.
- **Example:**
- Use passim only if the idea reoccurs in the text, and there is no way to pin the idea to a single page in the text.

**et al.**

- **Definition:**
  - Latin abbreviation for: *et alii* meaning “and other people.” Common in APA papers, *et al.* is used for citations that are published by:
    - Three, four, or five authors: If you have a text written by three, four, or five authors, you may write the first author’s last name and place *et al.* after. However, the first time you introduce the text you will need to name all of the authors.
    - Six or more authors: You will not need to name all of the authors the first time you introduce the text. You may use *et al.* the first time you introduce the text and every time you refer to the text afterward.
- **Example:** *(Cornell, James, Sun, Kerry, & Harlow, 1993) ➔ (Cornell et al., 1993)*

**ibid**

- **Definition:**
  - Latin abbreviation for: *ibidem* meaning “in the same place.” It is used to cite the same source and the same page number, and it may be used in text or in end notes or footnotes.
- **Example:** In footnotes:
  1. James 47.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Ibid.

**id.**

- **Definition:**
  - Latin abbreviation for: *idem* meaning “the same person.” It is similar to *ibid*, but used to denote the same author with a different page number.
- **Example:** In footnotes:
  1. James 22.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Id., 37.

In these footnotes, *ibid* tells us that our second citation is from the same author and the same page number. The third citation tells us that the information is coming from the same author but a different page number.
Other Helpful Latin Terms and Abbreviations:

N.B.
- **Definition:**
  - Latin abbreviation for: *nota bene* meaning “note well or pay attention.” **N.B. is the only abbreviation on this worksheet that must be capitalized.** Used in footnotes or endnotes, N.B. denotes a piece of information that is important to a particular idea in the text yet not vital enough to include in the paper itself.
- **Example:**
  - N.B.: Data was collected by multiple researchers with potential varying viewpoints.

sic
- **Definition:**
  - Latin abbreviation for: *sic erat scriptum* meaning “thus it was written.” Sic denotes that the word/sentence as it appears in your paper is as it appears in the original quotation/text.
- **Example:** “I didn’t know there [sic] family was from Kentucky.”
  - In this case, the author used the wrong “there.” In this situation, you would want to use “their,” but since it is a part of the original quotation, and you cannot correct it for the author, you can put [sic] next to it.
  - In general, sic is used when an original quote has an error made by the author.

vs.
- **Definition:**
  - Abbreviation for: *versus* meaning “against.” It is used for something like a match or fight.
- **Example:** Tyson vs. Holyfield

v.
- **Definition:**
  - Abbreviation for: *versus.* This abbreviation is specific to court cases.
- **Example:** Jones v. Smith

viz.
- **Definition:**
  - Latin abbreviation for: *videlicet* meaning “it is permitted to see” or “namely” or “that is to say.” Similar to i.e., viz. is used to give a more precise example.
- **Example:** This novel is dedicated to my family, viz. my mother, father, sister, and brother.

sc.
- **Definition:**
  - Latin abbreviation for: *scilicet* meaning “as if to say.” Similar to viz., it is also used to give a more precise example than i.e.
- **Example:** This novel is dedicated to my friends, sc. Johnny and Jane.

circa
- **Definition:**
  - Latin for: “around or approximately.”
- **Example:** This album was released circa 1990.
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**cf.**
- **Definition:**
  - Latin abbreviation for: *conferre* meaning “compare.” In general, it is used in endnotes or footnotes to give an alternative or counter argument(s) to the reader.
- **Example:** Jones 2011, Dawns 2008; cf. on fingerprinting Lannister 1983.

**etc.**
- **Definition:**
  - Latin abbreviation for: *et cetera* meaning “and others” or “and the rest.” You will usually encounter etc. at the end of a list that is incomplete. This is generally used if the list could continue for a long time. Etc. signals to the listener or reader that the list continues.
- **Example:** We have oodles of fruits for sale: peaches, apples, oranges, etc.

**References**

[http://www.rose-hulman.edu/~martland/Citationguide.pdf](http://www.rose-hulman.edu/~martland/Citationguide.pdf)