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Latin Words in Scholarly Writing

Whether you are writing about physics, education, or literature, you will likely use Latin words in your article. In this module we will show you how to:

1. Use the most common Latin abbreviations in your writing.
2. Use whole Latin words in your writing.
3. Pronounce certain Latin words and abbreviations

1. etc.

1. This is an abbreviation of “et cetera”
2. Pronounced et₁ set·ə·ə
3. This means “and so forth.”
4. Never write “and etc” because “et” already means “and.”

Example 1: Using “etc.”

There are many winter cover crops to choose from (e.g. alfalfa, vetches, triticale, etc.), and as long as you plant one your soil will become much more nutrient rich for the following season.

2. “i.e.,” “e.g.” or “viz.”?

1. Often “i.e.” is used to precede a list of examples, but this is incorrect. i.e. more closely means “in essence” or “that is.”
2. Use i.e. to rephrase or define the statement immediately preceding it.
3. “i. e” is an abbreviation for *id est*, pronounced ɪd ˈɛst

Example 2: Using “i.e.”

Incorrect: Many everyday items use gears; i.e. bicycles, clocks, and cars.

Corrected: Many everyday items use gears; i.e. bicycles, clocks, and cars all use gears to create motion.

4. **e.g.**, the abbreviation for the Latin words *exempli gratia*, means “for example.” So, use it to precede examples.
5. *exempli gratia* is pronounced ɪɡˈzɛmplaɪ ˈgrɑːtɪɑː

Example 3: Using “e.g.”

Many everyday items use gears (e.g. bicycles, clocks, and cars).

6. **viz.** is a less commonly used Latin abbreviation for *videlicet*, and it means “namely.” You would use this to precede a list of examples that are a part of the whole you just mentioned.
7. Pronounced vi-del-uh-sit

Example 4: Using “viz”

Regardless of one’s opinion of Michael Moore’s controversial films, viz. *Fahrenheit*

911 and *Sicko*, it cannot be denied that they brought important issues to light in the U.S.

3. [sic]

1. The full version of this Latin phrase is *sic erat scriptum*, meaning “thus as it was written.”
2. Use *sic* within brackets to denote a typo in an original work that you are quoting.

Example 5: Using “sic”

The children enjoyed writing their favorite nursery rhymes and songs. For example, Joseph wrote, “Mary had a little **lam [sic]**, its fleece was white as snow.”

“lam” is an incorrect spelling for “lamb,” so by writing “sic” after it you can let the reader know that you did not make the typo.

4. cf.

1. This means “compare with.”
2. Use it to compare what you say with another example.
3. Cf. is an abbreviation for *conferre*.

Example 6: Use of “cf.”

Copernicus’s heliocentric model of the universe was an unwelcome shock to the populace (cf. the predominating geocentric model of the time that was taught by the Christian church).

5. q.v.

1. This means “which see.”
2. An abbreviation of *quod vide*
3. Use q.v. to refer to another reference or example.

Example 7: Use of “q. V.”

The Shroud of Turin was believed to date between 1260 and 1390 A.D., but new evidence once again opens the possibility of it dating more closely to Jesus’s crucifixion (q.v. Casabianca’s (2011) discussion on the various hypotheses).

6. vs. or v.

1. These both represent *verses*, which means “in the direction.” It is commonly used in English to mean “against.”

Example 8

The food science lab conducted an experiment where they compared the flavor of milk at 5°C vs. 10°C. Milk at 10°C was preferred among 80% of participants.

7. Id. and Ead.

1. Id. is an abbreviation for “Idem”(a masculine or neutral word) and Ead. is an abbreviation for “eadem” (a feminine word). Some reference styles will permit you to use this abbreviation for two sequential sources by the same author.

Example 9: Using “Id.”

Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York, New York: Continuum

International Publishing Group, 1972. **Id.** *Education for Critical Consciousness* (M. B. Ramos, Trans.). New York: Seabury, 1973.

8. N.B.

1. An abbreviation for *Nota bene*
2. Pronounced ˈnoʊtə ˈbɛnɛɪ
3. This means “note well.”

Example 10: Using “N.B.”

N.B. the dialectical nature of Hegel’s writing. This is one of the most identifiable and recurring aspects of his work.

9. Ibid

1. Short for *ibidem*, which means “in the same place.”
2. Pronounced ˈi-bə-ɪ dem
3. Use it as a citation or footnote to indicate the reference is the same as the previous citation.
4. Add the page number if it is different from the previous citation. See this explanation in the University of Wisconsin’s Writer’s Handbook.

Example 11: Using “Ibid”

The credibility of Maxwell’s discovery of the microscopic man in 1999 is doubted by the larger scientific community, and dubbed as an “outrageously trite and embarrassing act of non-science” (Carver, 2002 p. 290). In fact, many accuse Maxwell of completely fabricating the images and paying others to substantiate his

claims (**ibid.**).

The second sentence refers to the same author so we include *ibid.* The citation comes from the same page as the previous citation so no page number is needed.

10. How to use full Latin words

1. Put them in italics
 - a. *in situ/ex situ*
 - b. *in vivo*
 - c. *in vitro*
 - d. *a priori*
 - e. *circa* (sometimes abbreviated c, c., ca, or ca.)
 - f. Latin names of organisms

Example 12: Put full Latin words in italics

The researchers coded the transcripts using *a priori* codes and emergent codes.

Ursus americanus, the American black bear, is not as aggressive as most residents believe.

Sources and Additional Resources:

1. UNC Writing Center: Latin Terms and Abbreviations
2. The Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois, 2011. Powerpoint
3. APA Blog: Latin Abbreviations for APA Style
4. Common Latin Abbreviations used in Research
5. American Journal Experts: Proper Usage of Latin Terms