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Forward Slash (Virgule, Solidus)

Cheryl Iverson

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The forward slash is used to represent per, and, or or and to divide material (eg, numerator and denominator in fractions; month, day, and year in dates [only in tables and figures]; lines of poetry). It may also be used in URLs (see , Manuscript Preparation).When 2 terms are of equal weight in an expression and and is implied between them to express this equivalence, the forward slash can be retained.The diagnosis and initial treatment/diagnostic planning were recorded. If the approval process raises concerns among the researchers or the ethics committee/IRB members, the author may want to explain the resolution

Used to Express Equivalence or Duality

Cheryl Iverson

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When 2 terms are of equal weight in an expression and and is implied between them to express this equivalence, the forward slash can be retained.The diagnosis and initial treatment/diagnostic planning were recorded. If the approval process raises concerns among the researchers or the ethics committee/IRB members, the author may want to explain the resolution of these issues.When the question of duality arises in the he/she construction, change the slash construction when the gender is to be specified; substitute the word or for the forward slash or, preferably, rephrase to be gender neutral.Dr Kate Wolf and Dr Rob Cox agreed

Used to Mean per

Cheryl Iverson

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In the “per” construction, use a forward slash only when (1) the construction involves units of measure (including time) and (2) at least 1 element includes a specific numerical

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quantity and (3) the element immediately adjacent on each side is either a specific numerical quantity or a unit of measure. In such cases, the units of measure should be abbreviated in accordance with , Abbreviations, Units of Measure. (See also , Numbers and Percentages, Forms of Numbers, Reporting Proportions and Percentages.)The hemoglobin level was 14 g/dL. The CD4+ cell count was 200/µL. Blood volume was 80 mL/kg of body weight.

In Dates

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Use the forward slash in dates only in tables and figures to save space (month/day/year) (see , Visual Presentation of Data, Tables, Punctuation). Avoid this presentation of dates in the text.

In Equations

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In equations that are set on line and run into the text rather than centered and set off (see , Mathematical Composition, Stacked vs Unstacked), use the forward slash to separate numerator and denominator.The “stacked” fraction y=r1+r2p1-p2 is written as y = (r1 + r2)/(p1 - p2).Note that when the slash is used for this purpose, parentheses and brackets must often be added to avoid ambiguity.

In Ratios

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Although a forward slash may be used to express a ratio (eg, the male/female [M/F] ratio was 2/1), JAMA and the Archives Journals recommend use of a colon to express ratios involving numbers or abbreviations (the Apo B:Apo A-I ratio was 2:1) and the word to to express ratios involving words (the male to female ratio). (See , Colon, Numbers.)

In Phonetics, Poetry

Cheryl Iverson

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The forward slash is also used to set off phonemes and phonetic transcription and to divide run-in lines of poetry./d/ as in dog …cold-breathed earth/earth of the slumbering and liquid trees/earth of the mountains misty-topped.

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