

One vs 1 Quiz

by Laura King, MA, MFA, ELS

For generally accepted usage, such as idiomatic expressions, numbers are spelled out. *One* frequently appears in running text without referring to a quantity per se and may appear awkward if expressed as a numeral. When *one* may be replaced by *a* or *a single* without changing the meaning, the word *one* rather than the numeral is usually appropriate. However, applying this guideline can be difficult. Therefore, the following guidelines are offered to assist the editor in determining whether to use one or 1.

1. When no other numerals appear in the sentence and no particular emphasis is being placed on counting, use the word one.
2. When the emphasis is on counting (even if no denominator or other numerals appear in the sentence), use the numeral 1.
3. When a specific denominator appears in the sentence, use the numeral 1.

Directions: Edit the following sentences for the correct use of one vs 1. Refer to section §18.2.3, Accepted Usage of the *AMA Manual of Style*, which provides an explanation of the style rule and usage examples. Remember that even experienced editors may differ on whether one or 1 is appropriate for the context. The answers given in this quiz are based on the views of a small group of JAMA Network editors, who recognize that other choices might be defensible.

1. The ethmoid bone is *one or 1* of the bones that form the medial orbital wall.
2. There is extensive literature on the discovery of the clinical utility of the deep tendon reflexes on the *one or 1* hand and on the development of 19th-century experimental neuro-physiologic concepts and early scientific concepts of reflexology on the other.
3. The physician listed only *one or 1* of a number of symptoms the patient was experiencing.

4. Only *one or 1* case of AIDS was reported in 2008 in the urban assisted living center.

5. Cystic fibrosis affects *one or 1* in 3000 people.

6. In the published article, *one or 1* of the authors revealed that she worked for a pharmaceutical company.

7. We studied 37 patients with multiple endocrine neoplasia type 1 who underwent *one or 1* or more surgical procedures from January 1, 1973, to April 30, 2004.

8. Current recommendations for the surgical treatment of multiple endocrine neoplasia type 1–associated hyperparathyroidism include subtotal parathyroidectomy, in which all or part of *one or 1* parathyroid gland is left in the neck.

9. The frontal bone features 2 foramina, *one or 1* above each orbit or eye socket.

10. Correction of the aesthetically short nose is *one or 1* of the most challenging problems in facial plastic surgery.

