

# ICT-IDOT Report Style Guide

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Adhere to the guidelines of these resources in the following order:

1. [Federal Highway Administration](#)
2. [Chicago Manual of Style](#), 17th edition
3. [Merriam Webster](#)

For example, if guidance from the Federal Highway Administration conflicts with the *Chicago Manual of Style*, then FHWA's guidance takes precedence.

## Abbreviations

- Limit abbreviations to terms used five times or more within an article or chapter (CMS [10.3](#)).
- Spell out abbreviations upon first occurrence (CMS [10.3](#)).
- Capitalize spelled-out words of an abbreviation only if they are proper nouns (CMS [10.6](#)).
- Spell out the full names of US states in running text (CMS [10.27](#)).

## Citations

- Use any consistent citation style. (ICT prefers APA or Chicago's author-date system.)
- Cite all in-text citations in the reference list, and vice versa.
- Include DOIs in the reference list when possible. Format DOIs as a hyperlink (<https://doi.org/>).

## Equations

- Encourage authors to use Math ML—rather than LaTeX—to generate equations, as it is screen reader friendly.

## Hyphenation

- Consult CMOS's hyphenation guide for advice on hyphenation (CMS [7.89](#)).
- Hyphenate words that could be misread (e.g., re-creation/recreation) or phrases where ambiguity may occur (CMS [7.84](#)).

## Miscellaneous

- Change non-US spellings to US spellings, including units of measurement (CMS [8.152](#)).
- Use either the long or short name for US highways, as long as it is consistent throughout the document (e.g., Interstate 90 versus I-90) (CMS [9.50](#)).
- List the report title in title case—not all caps—on the title and technical documentation pages.
- Capitalize keywords and separate them by a comma.
- Lowercase the names of laws, theories, chemical elements etc., except for proper nouns (CMS [8.148](#), [8.149](#))
- Use “United States” rather than “America.”
- Use US not U.S.
- Use a comma and no periods in running text when using Washington, DC (CMS [FAQ](#))

## Numbers

- Use Chicago's alternative number rule: only spell out numbers under nine or those at the beginning of a sentence (CMS [9.3](#)).
- Express large or complex fractions as numeric decimal fractions (e.g., a mean of 0.73) (CMS [9.19](#)).
- Set fractions in text with a slash (CMS [12.45](#)), even simple fractions (a departure from CMS [9.14](#)).

- Omit periods in technical abbreviations (e.g., 5 ft) except for inches (CMS [10.64](#)).
- Do not change the technical abbreviation to plural (e.g., 5 yds) (CMS [10.65](#)).
- Encourage authors to provide SI (metric) measurements with equivalent US measurements in parentheses.

#### **Punctuation**

- Use the oxford comma (CMS [6.19](#))
- Follow Chicago’s usage of the hyphen (-), en dash (–), and em dash (—) (CMS [6.75](#)).

#### **Section 508**

- Use the term “presents” rather than “shows” when referring to tables or figures. For example, Figure 1 presents...
- Avoid red and green color combinations in figures, instead use orange and blue or red and blue.
- Refer to [Penn State’s](#) guidelines for creating accessible equations.
- Follow [WebAim’s](#) guidelines for writing alternative text per Section 508’s recommendation.

#### **Symbols**

- Use the minus sign (–) (U+2212) when making a negative sign for negative numbers.
- Use the % symbol with a number, not “percent” (CMS [9.18](#))
- Repeat the abbreviation or symbol if it is closed up to the number but not if it is separated (e.g., 25%–50%) (CMS [9.17](#)).
- Use the prime and double prime symbols rather than a single or double quotation mark (e.g., 3’6” not 3’6”).
- Do not add a space between numbers and symbols such as the degree symbol and percent sign (CMS [10.58](#)).
- Use a dollar sign only when it is clear that the author is referring to US dollars. Add [International Organization for Standardization](#)’s three-letter currency codes when “\$” may refer to non-US currencies (e.g., USD, CAD) (CMS [9.21](#)).

# ICT-IDOT Report Terminology

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## Terminology

- a RAP [not “an RAP”]
- air-blast cleaning
- back-calculation
- baghouse fines
- Bailey method
- base course mix
- binder-grade bumping
- bulk specific gravity
- decision-making [noun and adjective forms hyphenated]
- direct-shear testing device
- glassy (or glass) transition temperature
- ground-penetrating radar
- hot-mix asphalt (HMA)
- ICT not the ICT
- in situ + noun [unhyphenated, see CMS [7.89](#), non-English phrases]
- life cycle + noun [unhyphenated, recognized as open compound in Merriam Webster]
- life cycle cost analysis [unhyphenated, recognized as open compound in Merriam Webster]
- McLeod’s limiting stiffness criteria
- nonpolymer-modified HMA
- PG 58-22 [note spacing and hyphen]
- Portland cement
- reclaimed asphalt pavement (RAP)
- recycled asphalt shingles (RAS)
- shrinkage-reducing admixture
- small cell + noun [hyphenated to prevent ambiguity]
- stand-alone [when used as an adjective]
- state of the art [unhyphenated unless used as a phrasal adjective]
- state of the practice [unhyphenated unless used as a phrasal adjective]
- SuperPave
- SuperPave Gyratory Compactor
- warm-mix asphalt (WMA)
- Waveform
- wearing course mix
- wearing-surface layer
- wheel-tracking test [or, if author prefers, it’s okay to use wheel-track test]