

## APPENDIX 2.1 WRITING STYLE GUIDELINES

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Source: Herr, N. and J. Cunningham. (1999) *Hands-On Chemistry Activities with Real-Life Applications*. West Nyack, New York, The Center for Applied Research in Education. (ISBN 0-87628-262-1). 638 pages.

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**SI UNITS:** *Le Système International des Unités* (SI) is an internationally recognized system of measurement adopted in 1960 by the General Conference of Weights and Measures. Scientists are encouraged to express all measurements in SI units so colleagues around the world can interpret them readily.

**Fundamental SI Units:** A fundamental unit is one that can not be expressed in simpler terms. It is defined by a physical standard of measurement. The seven fundamental quantities and their SI units are as follows:

<i>quantity</i>	<i>unit</i>	<i>symbol</i>
length	meter	m
mass	kilogram	kg
time	second	s
temperature	kelvin	K
amount	mole	mol
charge	coulomb	C
luminous intensity	candela	cd

**Derived SI Units:** A derived unit is one that can be expressed in terms of fundamental units. Volume, for example, is expressed in length cubed, and velocity is expressed in length (distance) per time. Appendix 1 lists the seven fundamental SI units and a variety of derived SI units expressed in terms of these fundamental units.

### CAPITALIZATION:

**Unit names:** When written in full, all units begin with a lower case letter.

Correct: kelvin, farad, newton, joule, hertz, degree

Incorrect: Kelvin, Farad, Newton, Joule, Hertz, Degree

**Symbol:** The first letter in a unit symbol is uppercase when the unit name is derived from a person's name. The following is a list of units that are named after famous scientists. Note that the unit name is not capitalized, but the unit symbol is.

ampere	A	André Ampère: discovered basic principles of electrodynamics.
coulomb	C	Charles Coulomb: discovered law of force between charged bodies.
farad	F	Michael Faraday: pioneered research in electricity and magnetism.
henry	H	Joseph Henry: discovered electromagnetic induction and self-induction.
hertz	Hz	Heinrich Hertz: discovered radio waves.
joule	J	James Joule: pioneered research in thermodynamics.
kelvin	K	William Thomson (AKA Lord Kelvin): developed absolute temperature scale.
newton	N	Isaac Newton: pioneered work in calculus, optics and gravitation.
ohm	Ω	Georg Ohm: discovered relationship between current, voltage, and resistance.
pascal	Pa	Blaise Pascal: discovered basic principles of hydrostatics.

tesla	T	Nicola Tesla: developed AC motor and high voltage transformers.
volt	V	Allesandro Volta: invented first battery.
watt	W	James Watt: developed the steam engine as a practical power source.
weber	Wb	Wilhelm Weber: performed early research in electricity and magnetism.

The following units are not named after people, and therefore their symbols are not capitalized: meter, m; kilogram, kg; second, s; mole, mol; candle, cd; lux, lx; degree, °.

**Prefixes:** The symbols for all prefixes representing factors less than one million are never capitalized (a,f,p,n,μ,m,c,d,da,h,k). The symbols representing factors greater than or equal to a million are always capitalized (M,G,T,P,E).

**PERIODS:** Periods are never used after a symbol, except at the end of a sentence.

**DECIMALS:** For numbers less than 1, a zero is written before the decimal point.

Correct: 0.03256 0.5234  
 Incorrect: .03256 .5234

**COMPOUND UNITS:** A centered dot is used to indicate that a unit is the product of two or more units.

Correct: N·m kg·m/s<sup>2</sup>  
 Incorrect: Nm kgm/s<sup>2</sup>

**DIFFERENTIATING QUANTITY SYMBOLS AND UNIT SYMBOLS:** By convention, quantity symbols are italicized but unit symbols are not. Quantity symbols represent a physical quantity such as time, mass and length, while unit symbols represent specific measures of those quantities, such as seconds, kilograms, and meters.

Quantity symbols <i>(italicized)</i>	Unit symbols <i>(not italicized)</i>
time, <i>t</i>	seconds, s
mass, <i>m</i>	kilograms, kg
length, <i>l</i>	meter, m
heat, <i>Q</i>	joule, J