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Latin abbreviations

A long period of time Latin a universal academic language in Europe. But French Revolution changed cultural life. From the 18th century scientists started using their mother languages to write books, articles or dissertations. Latin fell out of use but many Latin abbreviations continued to be used in all languages as universal ones.

Despite the fact that Latin is not the international language, some the most popular words and abbreviations can still be found in writings. Some of these ones are very common. They are even seen in non-academic writings.

Why should everyone know Latin abbreviations?

Of course, it is acceptable to use the phrases of your mother language instead of Latin abbreviations. But there is a solid reason why these abbreviations continue to be used today. There is a lot of meaning in a nutshell. It takes less time and efforts to write e.g. than “for example” or “например.” As an option, using Latin abbreviations correctly can make your writing sound more scholarly. Your essay or dissertation will seem to be as good as Brodsky’s poems.

Now, I would like to present you the most common of them.

The first is “etc.” Et cetera [et'setɹə] – and so on, and so far. Literally, it means “and other things.” Due to it, you shouldn’t use it when you speak about people. It is used at the end of a list to indicate that there are more elements to it than the list doesn’t become too long.

e.g. To study foreign languages has a lot of advantages such as expansion of outlook, reading original books, watching original films, communicating with foreigners, learning new modern phrases to seem more intellectual etc.

The next is “e.g.” Exempli gratia [ɪg,zɛmplɪ'grɛɪʃə] – for example. Presents an example (as opposed to an explanation).

e.g. While learning English people have some common troubles, e.g. laziness, lacking motivation, desire to be a normal in whatever it is you are doing.

You shouldn’t confuse “e.g.” with “i.e.” id est [ɪd'est] – literally, precisely, it is. It presents an explanation (as opposed to an example).

e.g. The movie is only for adults, i.e. people over 18.

If you write letters even once you must know such Latin abbreviation such as “P.S.” Post scriptum [ˌpɒst'skrɪptum] – after what has been written. Used to indicate additions to a text after the signature of a letter.

e.g. Sincerely,

John Smith.

P.S. Tell mother I say hello!

Every doctor or patient knows the abbreviation “stat.” Statim [ˈsta:tɪm] – immediately. Often used in medical contexts.

e.g. That patient needs attention, stat.!

The most known Latin abbreviation among schoolchildren is “vs.” Versus [ˈvɜ:səs] – against, compared to, as opposed to.

e.g. The most sensational rap battle was Oxxxymiron vs. Slava KPSS.

The abbreviation which is usually used to indicate dates approximately is “c., ca., ca or cca”. Circa [ˈsɜ:kə] – around, approximately.

e.g. The antique clock is from c.1900.

The next is “cf.” Confer [kənˈfɜː] is the imperative of the Latin verb conferre. It is used in citations.

e.g. These results were similar to those obtained using different techniques (cf. Wilson, 1999 and Ansmann, 1992).

“C.V.” Curriculum vitae – [kəˈrɪkjʊləmvi:tai] – course of life. Latin abbreviation “C.V.” or “CV” is used when people mean a document containing a summary or listing of relevant job experience and education.

e.g. Some employers require that your C.V. was no longer than one page.

“A.D.” Anno Domini – [ˌænoʊˈdɒmɪni] – in the year of the Lord. The AD is the Christian calendar era, and BC denote years before the start of the epoch.

e.g. The building of the Roman Colosseum began between 73-75 A.D. and was almost completed in 79AD when Vespasian died.

Summing up, having a clear understanding of the meanings and usage of Latin abbreviations is essential. There is a strong case for understanding the functions and forms of these abbreviations to help people correctly interpret the texts they are reading. Moreover, the Latin abbreviations are common used in published books, journal articles or other academic material.

Even if you decide that you don't want to use Latin abbreviations in your own writing, you're still going to encounter them in other texts. Knowing what these abbreviations mean and how they are used is crucial to understanding and interpreting these works.