

Writing numbers

Large numbers should be read in groups of hundreds. Note that after a number, hundred, thousand, million and billion have no -s.

Two hundred (NOT Two hundreds)

He is worth ten billion. (NOT He is worth ten billions.)

If there is no number before these words, we usually use their plural forms. Of is also used.

He is worth billions of dollars.

In British English, we use and before the tens in a number.

240 - Two hundred and forty

In American English, and can be dropped.

350 - Three hundred and fifty OR Three hundred fifty

6,374 - Six thousand three hundred and seventy four

In writing, large numbers are usually divided into groups of three with commas. Note that full stops are not used in this way.

5,385 (NOT 53,85) (NOT 5.385)

Commas are not used in years and they can be left out in four-digit numbers.

She was born in 1972. (NOT She was born in 1,972.)

3874 OR 3,874

We can say *a hundred* or *one hundred*, *a thousand* or *one thousand*.

Few people manage to live for a hundred years.

You have to give me one thousand dollars.

Billion and million

A million is a thousand thousand. It has got 6 zeroes. In American English, a billion is a thousand million. In British English, too, a billion is now a thousand million. However, in British English, a billion used to be a million million.