



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
INSPECTOR GENERAL

STYLE TIPS AND STANDARDS
REFERENCE

4th Edition, September 2021



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Record of Changes

Date	Type of Change	Description
Sept. 2017	N/A	1st Edition
Oct. 2018	Updated introductory section and format changes.	2nd Edition
Jan. 2021	Format and style updates. Addition of Appendix A: Links to relevant and helpful websites, Appendix B: Common Report/Document Errors, Appendix C: Applicable Army Record Information System (ARIMS) Record Numbers, Appendix D: Marking Documents Controlled Unclassified Information, and Annex: "Interim Guidance on marking Inspector General (IG) Records and other work products as Controlled Unclassified Information."	3rd Edition
Sept. 2021	Updated references and added footnotes for clarity.	4th Edition

I. Department of the Army Inspector General Writing Style and Preferred Usage

Purpose. Whether a one-page memorandum or a multi-page report, written products originating from the Department of the Army Inspector General (DAIG)¹ must adhere to the Army's standards of clarity, consistency, accuracy, and grammatical correctness. While this document is not a comprehensive guide, the DAIG Style Tips and Standards Reference provides guidance on Army and inspector general (IG) writing style, formatting, plain language, grammar, punctuation, report templates, and other tips to ensure DAIG products meet Army standards.

When preparing a DAIG document, the assumption is that the audience for that document will reside within the Army. Thus, DAIG authors will principally follow Army writing style guidance and policy (see below). However, as long as it possible to do so without contravening Army policy, DAIG authors will also incorporate Department of Defense (DOD)² writing style guidance and policy into their documents. This guide is written with this in mind, and it is intended to be a 'one stop' reference for *most* DAIG writing-style questions. If this guide does not provide specific guidance, writers should consult, in order, HQDA Policy Notice 25-52 (Staff Action Process and Correspondence Policies); Army Regulation (AR) 25-50 (Preparing and Managing Correspondence); DA Pamphlet 25-40 (Army Publishing Program Procedures); the U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual, 2016 edition; and the Chicago Manual of Style. DAIG editors will continually revise and update this reference as Army Executive Communications and Control and senior Army leaders provide additional style guidance.

References.³

1. DA Pamphlet 25-40 (Army Publishing Program Procedures).
2. Department of Defense Manual 5110.04-M-V1, "DOD Manual for Written Material: Correspondence Management."
3. Department of Defense Inspector General Style Tips for All Reports, February 2020.
4. U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual.
5. AR 25-50 (Preparing and Managing Correspondence), 10 October 2020.
6. AR 25-30 (Army Publishing Program), 14 June 2021.

¹ Per AR 20-1 para. 1-9d/e, "The USAIGA is a field operating agency of the OTIG. The agency comprises operational and support divisions that perform the IG functions on behalf of the SECARMY and CSA and the overall Department of the Army. The term DAIG is used when referring to both the OTIG and USAIGA as one entity."

² While, the Department of Defense uses the lowercase 'o' in their initialism, (DoD); the Army uses all caps, (DOD).

³ Per updated AR 25-50, "When referencing publications, only include the number and title (for example, AR 25-50 (Pre-paring and Managing Correspondence)). In policy correspondence, referencing basic directives by the number and title prevents the correspondence from having to be revised and republished when one of the references is updated. Use the date of the directive when a specific version is being referenced and be prepared to provide a copy.

7. ⁴HQDA Policy Notice 25-52 (Staff Action Process and Correspondence Policies), 4 October 2021.

Questions, Assistance, and Suggestions.

To submit style questions, request assistance with a document, or suggest improvements to this guide, please email the DAIG Editorial Team at usarmy.pentagon.hqda-otig.list.tmt-saig-editor@army.mil.

⁴ (Supersedes DA MEMO 25-52) supplements AR 25–50 and provides Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), its field operating agencies and support agencies, and any Army element's staff action officers with guidance for preparing, coordinating, and submitting correspondence to the Secretary of the Army (SECARMY), Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA), Under Secretary of the Army (USA), Vice Chief of Staff of the Army (VCSA), and other staff offices and agencies within HQDA.

II. Style

A. Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Initialisms

An abbreviation is the shortened form of words that represent the whole word, while an acronym contains a set of initial letters from a phrase that usually forms another word. Initialisms are a series of initial words or phrases that form an abbreviation but are not pronounced as a word. (See Table 1. for examples)⁵

1. Do not:

- a. Use the shortened forms of words in the body of the publication, to include tables and figures. For example, do not use ‘thru,’ ‘ASAP,’ or ‘avn’ in a narrative; instead, spell out ‘through,’ ‘as soon as possible,’ and ‘aviation.’
- b. Use initialisms in headings, titles, or subject lines.⁶
- c. Use an initialism to represent more than one term in a single publication. For example, if a publication uses both “infrared” and “information requirement,” “IR” can only represent one of these terms; the other must always be written out when used.
- d. Use a new acronym/initialism when another is commonly used throughout the Army. For example, do not use “private motor vehicle (PMV)” instead of privately owned vehicle (POV).
- e. Use periods with initialisms (The exceptions are a.m., p.m., and U.S. (when used as a modifier (as in U.S. Central Command))).
- f. Show the full form of an initialism again after it is introduced in the text, except in headings and titles, titles of tables and figures, the glossary, proper names, or when the complete phrase forms a part of another longer phrase that is also a formally defined term (Exception: Within inspection reports, recommendations written in the “Recommendations Table” must be written verbatim in the corresponding finding section within the body of the report.)

2. Do:

- a. Use “for example” for e.g.; “that is” for i.e.; and “versus,” or “instead of,” or “opposed to” for vs.

⁵ Per HQDA Policy 25-52, “Written material longer than two pages will either not use acronyms or will include a comprehensive alphabetized glossary as the last tab of the package. Written material includes information and action memorandums, read-ahead packages, and written briefings or slide presentations.”

⁶ Per revised AR 25-50, “Use only one subject and write the subject in 10 words or less, if possible. Avoid using abbreviations in the subject line; however, if the subject needs more than 10 words, limit the number of words by using commonly recognized authorized acronyms (for example, DA, DOD, FY, and HQDA). If the subject is more than one line, begin the second line flush with the left margin (see fig 2 – 13).”

- b. Use “the” routinely in front of an initialism that can stand alone. (For example, use “the” in front of initialisms that function as modifiers for the noun that follows it; the DAIG inspection team)⁷
- c. Use the correct indefinite article (*a* or *an*) with each acronym or initialism. In other words, the indefinite article is determined by the sound of the first letter of the word after the article. For consonant sounds, use ‘a.’ For vowel sounds, use ‘an.’ For example, *a FRAGO*, but *an EXORD*.
- d. Use the following abbreviations without spelling out: ‘St.’ as in ‘St. Louis’ or ‘St. Paul;’ ‘No.’ for ‘number’ when preceding a report number. However, always spell out “Fort,” as in Fort Irwin.
- e. Spell out United States as a noun. (For example, Treasurer of the United States. In the United States, 55.7 percent of registered voters cast a ballot in the 2016 election.)
- f. Spell out an acronym or initialism on first reference, followed by usage of acronym or initialism for all other references.
- g. To form the plural of a numbered reference, put the “s” on the end of the word and not the number. For example, DA Forms 31 (not ‘DA Form 31s’).

Table 1-Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Initialisms

Abbreviation	Acronym	Initialism
Dr.: Doctor	Scuba: self-contained underwater breathing apparatus	HQDA: Headquarters, Department of the Army
St.: Street	Radar: radio detection and ranging	DAIG: Department of the Army Inspector General
Mr.: Mister	NASA: The National Aeronautics and Space Administration	DOD: Department of Defense
	FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Agency	TIG: The Inspector General

B. Army word usage and Jargon

1. Capitalize “Soldiers,” “Family(ies),” and “Civilian(s)” in internal Army documents.
2. Do not use the term “rank” for Civilians; use the term “grade” instead.

⁷ Use of “the” with initialisms: It is appropriate to use “the” before “Department of the Army Inspector General (DAIG)” and “Department of Defense Inspector General (DODIG),” when first spelled out, regardless of where it occurs in a sentence. However, on subsequent references, only use “the” before the initialism if it serves as a modifier of the word after it. For example, ‘the DAIG inspection team.’

3. In formal writing, it is correct to write “Company E” rather than “E Company,” “Echo Company,” or “Easy Company.”⁸
4. Armies are numbered in series beginning with “First” (for example, First Army, Eighth Army). Corps are numbered in series beginning with Roman numeral “I” (for example, I Corps, XVIII Airborne Corps). Divisions; brigades (except those designated as divisional brigades); regiments; groups; battalions; squadrons; separate companies, troops, batteries, platoons, and detachments; and other separate units are numbered in series within a branch, beginning with “1st” (for example, 1st Infantry Division, 2d Field Artillery Regiment, 3d Transportation Battalion, 4th Medical Detachment). Combined arms brigades and brigade combat teams that are designated as divisional brigades will normally be numbered in series within the division beginning with “1st” (for example, 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division). Non-combined arms brigades that are designated as divisional brigades will be named based on their branch or function (for example, Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division; Sustainment Brigade, 3d Infantry Division). U.S. Army unit designations use the ordinal number abbreviations “2d” and “3d,” **not “2nd” or “3rd”** (for example, 2d Infantry Division, 703d Support Battalion).⁹

C. Block Quotations

1. Indent a direct quotation of more than four lines, using 10-point type and 1-inch indentation from the left and right margin. Do not use quotation marks at the beginning or end.
2. Begin the block quotation that completes the introductory sentence with a lowercase letter.
3. Do not use an ellipsis (...) before a block quotation, as the lowercase signifies the middle of a sentence.
4. Use bracketed lowercase [c] to signify that the original quote had started a sentence.
5. Do not use an ellipsis at the end of a block quotation that makes a complete sentence.

D. Bulleted Lists

1. Consider using bulleted lists throughout the report, and especially in the finding paragraph to highlight key points.

⁸ See para. 2-3, Army Regulation (AR) 220-5 (Designation, Classification, and Change in Status of Units), 22 August 2019.

⁹ See para 2-3, AR 220-5.

2. Keep at least two lines of bulleted items together with the introductory sentence. Also, keep at least two single-line bulleted items together at the top and bottom of a page.
3. Generally, indent the first bullet or sub-bullet one-quarter inch more than the first line of the preceding text. Make primary bullets solid black circles and sub-bullets hollow circles.
4. For bullets that are complete sentences, begin each bulleted item with a capital letter and end with a period. The lead-in to the bulleted list must be a complete sentence and end with a period.
5. For bullets that are incomplete sentences:
 - a. use lowercase for the first letter of each bullet,
 - b. end each bullet, except the last one, with a comma,
 - c. insert an “and” on the next to last item, and
 - d. end the last bullet with a period.
6. Each bullet listed must flow from and complete the lead-in sentence. The lead-in sentence can be either a complete sentence or a sentence fragment. In either case, end the lead-in sentence with a colon.

E. Numerals

1. Use digits (10, 11, 12...) for a number of 10 or more, except if it starts a sentence. Try to avoid beginning sentences with numbers. When two or more numbers appear in a sentence and 1 of them is 10 or larger, use digits for both.
2. Do not give digits in parentheses following a spelled-out number except in legal documents (for legal documents only, use this format: five (5) dollars or ten dollars (\$10)).
3. Spell out a number less than 10 except when used with fractions or decimals: 3 ½ cans, 2 ½ times, or 2.5 times.
4. Always express units of measurement, time, percent, or money as digits; their use does not affect the use of numbers for other numerical expressions in the sentence.
5. Age: 6 years old; 52 years, 10 months, 6 days; a 3-year-old; at the age of 27 (years implied).
6. Clock time: Use military time for Army and DOD documents (0700, 1345, etc.).

7. Dates: 9/11; June 2018 (not June, 2018); June 29, 2018 (not June 29th, 2018); March 6 to April 15, 2019 (not March 6, 2019, to April 15, 2019); May, June, and July 2014 (but June and July 2014); 15 April 2017; 15–17 April 2017; 16 June–27 August 2019 (military). Express dates on memorandums in the following formats: 1 January 2013 or 1 Jan 13. The four digits for the year will be used only when the month is spelled out or date stamps abbreviated months and the four-digit year. Be consistent with the date style used on a document.
8. Referring to two or more consecutive years (fiscal year, consecutive years, or a continuous period) use 1900–11, 1906–38, 1931–32, 1875–79, but at change of century, use 1995–2014 (use 2000–2001 to avoid 2000–01).
9. Referring to two or more years that are not continuous, use a comma: 1875, 1879.
10. Do not use an en dash in place of “to” in a “from...to” expression of dates or times. (For example, from 2002 to 2009, not from 2002–2009.)
11. Phone numbers: Do not place the area code in parenthesis; instead, use the en dash. (For example, 703–545–1006.)
12. Fiscal year: FY 2010 or FY10; 3 fiscal years; third fiscal year.
13. Money: \$3.65, 74 cents apiece, 0.5 cent, but two pennies, three quarters.
14. Percentage: 12 percent; 5 percentage points (Never use ‘%’ in figures and tables).
15. Unit modifiers: 5-day week; 8-year-old wine, 8-hour day, 10-foot pole, a 5-percent increase, 20th-century progress, but two-story house, five-member board, \$20 million airfield.
16. Capitalize numbers if spelled out as part of a name: Air Force One, Charles the First, Committee of One Hundred, Twenty-third Census.
17. Hyphenate the elements of compound numbers from twenty-one to ninety-nine and in adjective compounds with a numerical first element: twenty-one, twenty-first, 6-footer, 6-foot-11-inch man, 24-inch ruler, 3-week vacation, 10-minute delay, two-sided question, but, one hundred twenty-one, 100-odd, foursome, threescore, second grade children.
18. Do not hyphenate a modifier consisting of a possessive noun preceded by a numeral: 1 month’s layoff, 1 week’s pay, 2 hours’ work, 3 weeks’ vacation, 1 minutes’ delay.

F. Proper Nouns

1. A proper noun has two distinctive features: it names a specific (usually a one-of-a-kind) item, and it begins with a capital letter no matter where it occurs in a sentence.
2. A common noun or adjective forming an essential part of a proper name is capitalized; however, the common noun used alone as a substitute for the name of a place or thing is not capitalized.
3. A descriptive term used to denote mere direction or position is not a proper name and is not capitalized.
 - a. north, south, east, and west;
 - b. northerly, northern, northward;
 - c. eastern, occidental;
 - d. northern Virginia;
 - e. southern California; but
 - f. East Germany, West Germany.
4. The names of calendar divisions (March, April, May, etc.) are capitalized, seasons are not (fall, winter, spring, summer).
5. Capitalize “Finding,” and “Recommendation,” when used with the reference number or letter to refer to elements of reports.
6. DOD-and Army-specific capitalization
 - a. Use uppercase for actual titles of military operations and Combatant Commands: Operation FREEDOM’S SENTINEL, Operation INHERENT RESOLVE, USSOUTHCOM, and USARCENT.
 - b. Capitalize Nation, Union, Administration, Confederation, Commonwealth, and Members only if used as part of proper names; however, Nation is always capitalized when referring to the United States.
 - c. Federal and Government when referring to the United States.
 - d. Military Service(s) when referring to the U.S. Military (but “total force” and “military” are lowercase).
 - e. Lowercase military ranks when used without proper nouns.
 - f. DOD-specific: Military Establishment, Armed Forces, All-Volunteer Force, but armed services.
 - g. Army-specific: the Army, the Infantry, 81st Regiment, Army Establishment, and the Army Band. (Not capitalized: army shoe, Grant’s army, the brigade, the corps, the regiment, infantryman, etc.

- h. General of the Army(ies): United States only, Supreme Allied Commander; Admiral Michael Mullen; Chairman; Joint Chiefs of Staff; Chief of Staff; but commanding general, general (military title standing alone).
- i. Military Installations: all States of the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, and freely associated states are abbreviated following any capitalized geographic term including: Fort, Proving Ground, Airbase, Barracks, etc. (For example, 'Fort Bragg, NC')

Table 2-Military Installation References	
First reference	Subsequent reference
Buckley Air Force Base (AFB), CO	Buckley AFB
Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, DC	Fort McNair
Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, Washington, DC	Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling

G. Referring to The Inspector General (DOD and Army)

1. The DOD inspector general refers to a person. The proper abbreviation for this person is DOD IG.
2. The Inspector General refers to a person. The proper abbreviation is TIG. Do not write “the TIG,” as it is redundant.
3. The Department of the Army Inspector General refers to the organization. The proper abbreviation is DAIG.
4. Do not capitalize “the” before “Office of Inspector General” or “Department of the Army Inspector General,” unless it begins a sentence.

H. Plain Language

The *Plain Writing Act of 2010* requires Federal agencies to use clear Government communication that the public can understand and use.

This includes:

1. Writing in a more natural, conversational style to keep readers interested and help readers grasp concepts more quickly and avoid misinterpretation.
2. Using short, simple, easy-to-understand words and sentences.
3. Avoiding weak constructions such as “There are,” “There is,” or “It is.”

4. **Writing for the average reader**—not the subject-matter experts, the lawyers, or senior-level management.
5. Using active voice to make your message more compelling and clear; avoid passive voice.
6. Using short sentences, paragraphs, and sections, which helps your reader navigate the material.
7. Using the simplest tense possible, which makes your writing clear and strong. Use simple past tense whenever possible. (For example, “We issued a report every quarter,” not “We have issued a report every quarter.”)
8. Omitting excess words. Challenging every word—do you need it? Pronouns, active voice, and base verbs help eliminate excess words. Omitting unnecessary modifiers. (For example, in “This information is really critical,” you do not need “really.”)
9. Using concrete, familiar words. You do not impress people by using “governmentalese” (for example, instead of “utilize,” say “use”).
10. Defining (and limiting) initialisms, acronyms and abbreviations.
11. Avoiding jargon, foreign terms, and legal terms. If such terms must be used, ensure an adequate definition of the term is included on first reference.
12. Avoiding noun strings. (See Section III D for examples)
13. Using “will” to express a requirement of action. Do not use the superlative voice “shall.”
14. Placing words carefully within a sentence. This is as important as organizing your document effectively. Keeping subject, verb, and object close together. Placing modifiers correctly; ask yourself whether you mean, “We want only the best” or “We only want the best.”
15. Using lists and tables. You can shorten and clarify complex material by using lists and tables. These features give your document more “white space”, making it more appealing to the reader.
16. Using parallel structure. Parallel structure helps readers take in information by presenting it in a consistent, parallel way.
 - a. Parts of sentence or a paragraph are parallel if each part has the same grammatical construction and part of speech.
 - b. Use parallel structure for lists and similar information.

Table 3-Plain Language

Rather than	Use
commence	begin
in the absence of	without
utilize	use
lengthy	long
facilitates	make(s) possible, expedite(s), promote(s)
in lieu of	instead of/in place of
in order to	to
prior to	before

III. Grammar

A. Active versus Passive Voice

1. With active voice, the subject is the actor; with passive voice, the subject of the sentence becomes the object. Normal English sentence structure follows the SUBJECT-VERB-OBJECT pattern, or “who does what to whom.”
2. Active voice improves the flow and readability of a sentence; passive voice is generally wordy and often requires the reader to reread the sentence to understand who did what.
3. Exception: It is okay to use passive voice in the following instances: when the object receiving an action is the important part of the sentence—especially in scientific and legal contexts, when the subject is unknown, or when the subject is distracting or irrelevant.

Table 4-Active versus Passive Voice

Active	Passive
The inspection team recommended specific corrective actions.	Specific corrective actions were recommended by the inspection team.
The clerk opened the mail.	The mail was opened by the clerk.
The chairman announced the merger at the meeting.	The merger was announced by the chairman at the meeting.
Delegates from each organization attended the meeting.	The meeting was attended by delegates from each organization.

B. Dangling Participles and Misplaced Modifiers

1. Dangling participles: A dangling participle occurs when a sentence begins with a clause that contains a participle (verb ending in “ing”), and the following dependent clause does not begin with the subject that is doing the action of the–ing verb.
2. Misplaced Modifiers: To avoid misplaced modifiers, keep words as close as possible to the words they modify and make sure the sentence is not only grammatical, but also logical. (See Table below).
3. Limiting modifiers—such as “only,” “almost,” and “just”—should be placed in front of the words they modify.

Table 5-Dangling Participles Examples

Rather than	Use
After showing my ID badge to the guard, the gate opened.	After I showed my ID badge to the guard, the gate opened.
Deciding to join the Army, the recruiter enthusiastically shook my hand.	After I decided to join the Army, the recruiter enthusiastically shook my hand.
After accepting the position, the personnel office offered the complainant a GS-12 position.	After the complainant accepted the position, the personnel office offered him a GS-12 position.

C. Fragments and Run-ons

1. Fragments: Lack a subject and verb; a dependent clause fragment has a subject and a verb, but it still needs an independent clause to be a sentence. (Example: Because John hurried.)
2. Run-on: Two sentences fused together without punctuation. (Example: I am an inspector general I inspect Army cybersecurity.)

D. Noun Strings

Noun Strings are a groups of nouns “sandwiched” together. Readability suffers when three words that are ordinarily separate nouns follow in succession. Once you get past three, the string becomes unbearable. Technically, clustering nouns turns all but the last noun into adjectives. However, many users will think they’ve found the noun when they’re still reading adjectives, and will become confused.

Table 6-Modifying Noun Strings

Noun String	Modified Noun String
Material replacement alternatives	Alternatives for material replacement
Increased high cost area allowances	Increased allowances for high cost areas
Draft laboratory animal rights protection regulations	Draft regulations to protect the rights of laboratory animals

E. Punctuation

1. Apostrophes

- a. Use for possessive and plural possessive nouns.
- b. Do not use to form the plural of a word or abbreviation.
- c. Add an apostrophe and 's' when the noun ends in 's.' (For example, "Mr. Jones's assessment did not agree with Mr. Smith's.")
- d. Joint possession is indicated by placing an apostrophe on the last element of a series; however, individual or alternative possession requires the use of an apostrophe on each element of a series. (For example, "Brown and Nelson's store," "editor's or proofreader's opinion,")

2. Colons

- a. Use before a final clause that extends or amplifies the preceding matter. (For example, "Give up conveniences; do not demand special privileges; do not stop work: these are necessary while at war.")
- b. To introduce formally any matter that forms a complete sentence, question, or quotation. (For example, "The following question came up for discussion: What policy should we adopt?" "There are three factors, as follows: First, military preparation; second, industrial mobilization; and third, manpower.")
- c. In business emails, salutations should end with a colon. (For example, Dear Mr. Smith:)
- d. Never used after a preposition. (For example, "At the meeting we will vote on: organization day and leave policy" is incorrect.)

3. Commas

- a. Used to separate two words or figures that might otherwise be misunderstood. For example,
 - (1). Instead of hundreds, thousands came.
 - (2). Instead of 20, 50 came.

- (3). December 7, 1941.
 - (4). In 2003, we dismissed 400 cases.
 - (5). To John, Smith was very nice.
 - b. To indicate the omission of a word or words. (For example, “Then we had much; now, nothing.”)
 - c. After each series of qualifying words. For example: short, swift streams; but short tributary streams.
 - d. Between an introductory modifying phrase and the subject modified. (For example, “Beset by the enemy, they retreated.”)
 - e. Before and after Jr., Sr., Esq., Ph.D., Inc., etc.
 - f. To set off parenthetical words, phrases, or clauses. (For example, “Mr. Jefferson, who was then Secretary of State, favored the location of the National Capital at Washington.”)
 - g. To set off words and phrases in opposition or in contrast. (For example, “Mr. Green, the lawyer, spoke for his defense.” “James Roosevelt, Democrat, of California.”)
 - h. When listing a series of three or more items, use a comma after the second to last item. (Also known as the Oxford comma)
 - i. To separate phrases and clauses in coordinate series. (For example, “Management disagreed with recommendation one, proposed corrective actions for recommendation two, and did not respond to recommendation three.”)
 - j. After “and,” “or,” “nor,” “for,” “so,” and “but,” when these conjunctions join two independent clauses.
 - k. When using the terms “including” or “such as,” use a comma before and after the phrase they initiate. (For example, “The Air Force took corrective actions, including those recommended by the OIG, and continued to improve its cyber defenses.” “The Army has taken many steps, such as improving communications within the Navy, to resolve the report recommendations.”)
4. En Dash, Em Dash, and Hyphen
- a. En dash (–): An en dash is a mid-sized dash (longer than a hyphen but shorter than an em dash) that is mostly used to show ranges in numbers and dates. It can also be used for clarity in forming complex compound adjectives. *(To insert an en dash in Word, hold down Alt and type 0150.)*
 - b. Em dash (—): An em dash sets off a word or clause and adds emphasis. *(To insert an em dash in Word, hold down Alt and type 0151)*

- c. Hyphen (-): A hyphen forms hyphenated words, links prefixes to words, indicates word breaks, and is used in numbers. It not only unites, but also separates the component words and thus facilitates understanding, aids readability, and ensures correct pronunciation.

Table 7-En Dash, Em Dash, and Hyphen Examples

En dash (–)	Em dash (—)	Hyphen (-)
<p>Expresses a period of time: 2005–2008, January–June, Monday–Friday</p> <p>Indicate a range of numbers: \$5–\$20, August 1–15</p> <p>Names with numbers: 5–20 for bonds</p> <p>Telephone numbers: 703–345–1006</p> <p>Separation for office symbols: DACS–ZDV–ECC</p> <p>Figures and Capital Letters: S–2; DCS, G–3/5/7; J–4; 6–A; DC–14; I–95; 4–H</p>	<p>Shows a break in a sentence: Please call my supervisor—Mr. Taylor—on Friday.</p> <p>Instead of commas or parentheses if meaning clarified: Freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, freedom from fear—these are the fundamentals of moral world order.</p>	<p>Joins adjective, adverb, noun, past participle, present participle to form compound adjectives: An English-speaking country. A twenty-story building. Well-known writer. Good-looking person</p> <p>Used to join two nouns to form a verb: Color-code Double-click</p> <p>Hyphenated nouns: Mother-in-law Editor-in-chief Dry-cleaning</p> <p>Used in words beginning with prefixes: Co-worker Ex-boyfriend Post-mortem Pre-intermediate Sub-category</p> <p>When writing out the numbers twenty-one to ninety-nine, we use a hyphen between the tens and units number. Other numbers don't require a hyphen. Twenty-two Eighty-six million Twenty-four thousand</p>

5. Ellipses

- a. Use ellipses (three periods) to show that words or sentences have been omitted from quoted material. An exception for not using an ellipsis is at the beginning, end, and mid-sentence of pull quotes, unless the quote is from a person's actual statement. In these cases, you may use an ellipsis mid-sentence to indicate omitted text.

6. Italics

- a. Use for titles, magazines, books, journals, and other periodicals or to add emphasis.
- b. Use for the names of individual ships, vessels, aircraft, and spacecraft. Do not use italics for missiles or rockets.

7. Parentheses

- a. Used to set off matter not intended to be part of the main statement or not a grammatical element of the sentence, yet important enough to be included.
- b. Also used for referencing of Army regulations and pamphlets. (See Table 9)

8. Periods. Use at the end of declarative sentences and abbreviations (not acronyms or initialisms).

9. Pronouns

- a. Must agree with the nouns they stand for. Remember that a component, organization, or agency is an "it," not a "they."
- b. Do not indicate a plural pronoun with (s).
- c. Avoid using him/her. Instead, use the plural "they" if it fits. Keep pronouns close to the nouns they modify.
- d. "None" can be a singular pronoun if it's referring to "not one" or "no part," but it also can be plural when referring to "not any."
- e. "Each" is an indefinite pronoun; in formal writing indefinite pronouns take a singular verb.
- f. "Either/neither," "anyone," "anybody," "everyone," "everybody," "nobody," "someone," and "somebody" always take singular verbs.

Table 8-Pronoun Usage Examples

Rather than	Use
The Air Force provided <i>their</i> response to our report.	The Air Force provided <i>its</i> response to our report.
The Air Force officials provided <i>its</i> response to our report.	The Air Force officials provided <i>their</i> responses to our report.
We determined that the agency did not comply with <i>their</i> regulations.	We determined that the agency did not comply with <i>its</i> regulations.
Management <i>are</i> required to provide <i>their</i> comments.	Management <i>is</i> required to provide its comments.

10. Quotation Marks

- a. Use to enclose direct quotations and titles of brochures, reports, directives, instructions, manuals, and public laws (See Table 9 below). Also, use quotation marks to enclose MILCON project titles (Project P-068T, “Bachelor Enlisted Quarters”).
- b. When a comma or period is used at the end of a phrase or sentence in quotation marks, put the comma, semicolon, or period *inside* the last quotation mark. Placement of other punctuation at the end of a quote depends on whether the punctuation is part of the quote.
- c. Be sure to use “smart” (curly) quote marks; material you import from the internet is likely to contain straight quote marks that you’ll need to fix by deleting BOTH straight quotes and reentering quote marks first on the left and then on the right.
- d. Colons and semicolons go outside quotation marks unless they fall within quoted material.
- e. Do not use quotation marks to enclose names of newspapers, books, or magazines, or a block quotation.

11. Semicolons

- a. Use to separate items containing commas, unless it is obvious where the divisions lie.
- b. In general, do not use a semicolon if the clause that follows cannot stand alone as a separate sentence. You can usually use a comma in this instance.
- c. May also be used to link two sentences; linking two sentences with a comma is an error, also called a comma splice. (Note: “However,” “therefore,” and “indeed” are adverbs, not a conjunction (such as “but”), and is thus preceded by a semicolon and not a comma.)
- d. Never use a semicolon and a coordinating conjunction such as “and,” “so,” and “but,” to join two clauses—this is the job of the comma.

- e. You may use semicolons instead of commas to separate items in a series if the items contain commas or other punctuation, or if the items are very long or complex. However, when possible, use bullets to present long or complex items in a series. (Example: The DLA initiatives do not satisfy the recommendation; we are therefore redirecting the recommendation to the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer, DOD.)

F. Subject-Verb Agreement

1. Pay attention to subject-verb agreement when a prepositional phrase that includes a noun sits between the subject and verb.
2. Make sure the verb agrees with the subject, not the noun in the prepositional phrase.
 - a. Incorrect: DOD instruction requires DOD organizations to implement a comprehensive system of internal controls that provide reasonable assurance.
 - b. Correct: DOD instruction requires DOD organizations to implement a comprehensive system of internal controls that provides reasonable assurance.

G. “Which” Versus “That” and “Who” Versus “That”

1. “Which” is used to introduce nonrestrictive (nonessential) clauses. A nonrestrictive clause provides additional information, but does not restrict the meaning of the material it modifies. A nonrestrictive clause could be removed from the sentence without changing the meaning of the sentence. (For example, “Government computer systems, which use smart cards, are more secure.” All Government computer systems are more secure; the fact they use smart cards is extra, non-essential information.)
2. “That” is used to introduce a restrictive clause. A restrictive clause is essential to the meaning of the sentence and is not set off by punctuation. (For example, “The Joint Service Provider office that is located in the Taylor Building is responsible for network support for the Inspections Directorate.” There could be another Office of the Secretary of Defense at a different location, but this sentence restricts it to only the office at the Pentagon.)
3. “Who” versus “That”: Use “who” when referring to people and “that” when referring to animals and inanimate objects.
 - a. Incorrect: The training is for commanders THAT have been at their unit for less than six months.
 - b. Correct: The training is for commanders WHO have been at their unit for less than six months.
 - c. Correct: The military police have dogs THAT are trained to detect explosives and illegal drugs.

IV. Citing References

Per AR 25-50, list references in the first paragraph of the correspondence. (Enclose copies of references that are not readily available to the addressee(s) or list an Army Knowledge Online (AKO) or public website link that is accessible to all agencies on the distribution list. List and number references in the order they are mentioned in the correspondence. However, when references are not included in the body of the correspondence, number, and list them in order of precedence and ascending date order in the first paragraph.

Table 9-Citing References

<u>Publication</u>	<u>Sample full reference</u> <i>(in lists and in paragraph 1 of a memorandum)</i>	<u>Sample abbreviated reference</u> <i>(body text)</i>
Public Law	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, Public Law No. 91-190, Section 103, 83 Statute 852, 853 (1970).	Section 103, NEPA of 1969.
Code of Federal Regulations	Section 1, Part 49, Title 32, Code of Federal Regulations	32 CFR 49.1
Executive Order	Executive Order 11490, Section 211, Title 3, Code of Federal Regulations	EO 11490, 3 CFR 12
Executive Proclamation	Presidential Proclamation, 3632, Section 12, Title 3, Code of Federal Regulations	Pres Proc 3632, 3 CFR 12
Federal Register	Volume 33, Federal Register, p. 5495	33 FR 5495
Manual for Courts-Martial	Manual for Courts-Martial, United States, Part IV, paragraph 84 (2012)	Part IV, paragraph 84, MCM, 2012
Opinions of the Attorney General	Volume 9, Opinions of the Attorney General, 1859, p. 371	9 Op Atty Gen 371 (1859)
Uniform Code of Military Justice	Article 31 (a), Uniform Code of Military Justice	UCMJ, Art. 31(a)
U.S. Code	Title 10, United States Code	10 USC
	Section 101, Title 10, United States Code	10 USC 101
	Title 10, United States Code, Chapter 1606	10 USC Chapter 1606

Department of the Army Inspector General Style Tips and Standards Reference

U.S. Revised Statutes	Section 298, Revised Statutes (Section 118, Title 31, United States Code)	RS 298, 31 USC 118
Army Directive	Army Directive (AD) 2020-04 (Enhanced Interim Financial Support).	AD 2020-04
Army Regulation	Army Regulation (AR) 25-50 (Preparing and Managing Correspondence).	AR 25-50
Department of the Army Pamphlet	Department of the Army (DA) Pamphlet 25-40 (Army Publishing Program Procedures).	DA PAM 25-40
Department of the Army Memorandum	HQ USAR, AFRC–ZA memorandum (Training for Army Materiel Command Personnel), 20 February 2020.	HQ USAR, AFRC–ZA memo
Letter	Office of the General Counsel, SAGC letter (subject—if used), 31 March 2020.	
Email	HQ TRADOC, ATPL–TDD–OR, [full name] email (Correspondence Memorandum), 3 January 2020.	
Department of Defense Directive	Department of Defense (DOD) Directive 5106.01, “Inspector General of the Department of Defense,” 20 April 2012.	DODD 5106.01
Department of Defense Instruction	Department of Defense Instruction 7600.02, “Audit Policies,” 27 April 2017.	DODI 7600.02
Forms	Department of the Army (DA) Form 260 (Request for Publishing-DA Administrative Publications).	DA Form 260

Note: Cite the overall publication where the information can be found. For example, if the referenced information is located in paragraph 2-2 of AR 25-30, cite only AR 25-30.

When only one directive, instruction, or regulation is mentioned in a report, you can use the short form without formally establishing it. (Only capitalize “directive,” “instruction,” and “regulation” when used with a specific numbered reference.)

Appendix A. Useful Links

- The Army Inspector General Portal (IG Only):
https://army.deps.mil/army/cmds/HQDA_SAIG/USAIGAExternalSite/SitePages/The%20Army%20Inspector%20General%20Portal.aspx
- USAIGA Intranet (USAIGA IG only):
https://army.deps.mil/army/cmds/HQDA_SAIG/USAIGAExternalSite/SitePages/USAIGA%20IntraNet.aspx
- Inspections Directorate Integration Group SharePoint Portal (internal)/Most up-to-date Templates (USAIGA IG only):
https://army.deps.mil/army/cmds/HQDA_SAIG/USAIGAExternalSite/SitePages/Division%20Page%20-%20DIG.aspx
- Executive Communications and Control:
<https://csa.army.pentagon.mil/ecc/sitepages/home.aspx>
- Army Publishing Directorate:
<https://armypubs.army.mil/>
- Plain Language: <https://www.plainlanguage.gov>
- Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) Links:
 - DOD CUI site, <https://dodcui.com/>
 - The DOD CUI Registry, <https://dodcui.com/dod-cui-registry>
- Applicable Army Records Information Management System:
<https://www.arims.army.mil/ARIMS/RRSA/BucketsXWalk.aspx>.

Appendix B. Common Report/Document Errors

- Ensure the number of findings and associated recommendations is the same in reports and all associated memorandums.
- **Narrative** (body text): Avoid conversational language, such as ‘got,’ ‘fix,’ ‘actually.’ (Visit <https://www.plainlanguage.gov/> for more examples.)
- **Tone**: Avoid terms of criticism such as ‘only’ (“1 of 12 units completed the training,” not “only 1 of 12 units completed the training”), ‘failed,’ ‘wrong,’ etc. Remember, the purpose of USAIGA reports is to state objective facts and propose recommendations without implied criticism or finger-pointing.
- **Staff sections**: When writing the names of numbered staff sections (S–2, G–3/5/7, J–6, etc.), please use en dashes (ALT+0150).
- **AMC**: Army Materiel Command (not ‘Material’)
- **Use**, not ‘utilize.’ Utilize is over-used.
- **U.S.**: When spelling out the name of an organization containing the abbreviation “U.S.” (such as U.S. Army, U.S. Northern Command), ensure periods are used.
- **Dates with single digits**: Do not add a zero before a single-digit date. For example, 1 February 2020, not 01 February 2020.
- Ensure there is **one space** between the punctuation and the text that immediately follows it for colons and periods. For commas and semicolons, place **one space** between the punctuation and the text that immediately follows it.
- **Capitalization**: Over-capitalization is quite common. Please refer to Chapter II, Section F (Page 10).
- **Fort**: Always spell it out. Do not use the abbreviations ‘FT’ or ‘Ft.’
- **Numbers and math**:
 - Double-check all math equations (such as ‘3 of 10 (30 percent)’).
 - Ensure numbers/stats within the Executive Summary and Methodology match what is in the Summary. (For example: If the Methodology section says 89 people were interviewed, it must indicate 89 in the Summary as well.) Ensure the number of Findings and Recommendations matches the contents of the report.
- **Overuse of ‘that’**: Rather than “Establish a new policy that addresses Army requirements for barracks maintenance,” say, “Establish a new policy addressing Army requirements for barracks maintenance.”
- **Formatting**: All body type within our reports and memorandums is Arial, 12pt, regular, single-spaced. Varying line spacing (some single, some 1.08 lines, sometimes other) within body text paragraphs has been a frequent issue.¹⁰

¹⁰ Arial, 10pt, for text in tables.

- **References:** Please ensure references such as Army regulations, U.S. Code, DOD instructions, and the like are cited according to Chapter IV of this document.
- **Do not use auto hyperlinks.**
- Watch out for “**dumb**” **quotes**: If you copy and paste text from another document (especially PDFs), ensure the unformatted, uncurved quotes are replaced with re-keyed new quotes, to maintain the correct font. (Example: "text" vs. “text”)
- Per the October 2020 revision of AR 25-50, “Do not divide a paragraph of three lines or fewer between pages. At least two lines of the divided paragraph must appear on each page. Include at least two words on each page of any sentence that has been divided between pages. Do not hyphenate a word between pages. Do not type the authority line and the signature block on the continuation page without at least two lines of the last paragraph. If, however, the last paragraph or subparagraph has only one line, it may be placed alone on the continuation page with the authority line and signature block. Center the page number approximately 1-inch from the bottom of the page.”

Appendix C. Applicable Army Records Information Management System (ARIMS) Record Numbers

The revised AR 25-50 requires agencies to place ARIMS record numbers after the office symbol on memorandums (one space after the office symbol in parentheses). (Example: AAHS–RD (RN 25-50a), see also Figure D below).¹¹

****Note:** It is the author’s or originator’s responsibility to determine and apply appropriate record numbers *before* they prepare them for editorial review.¹²

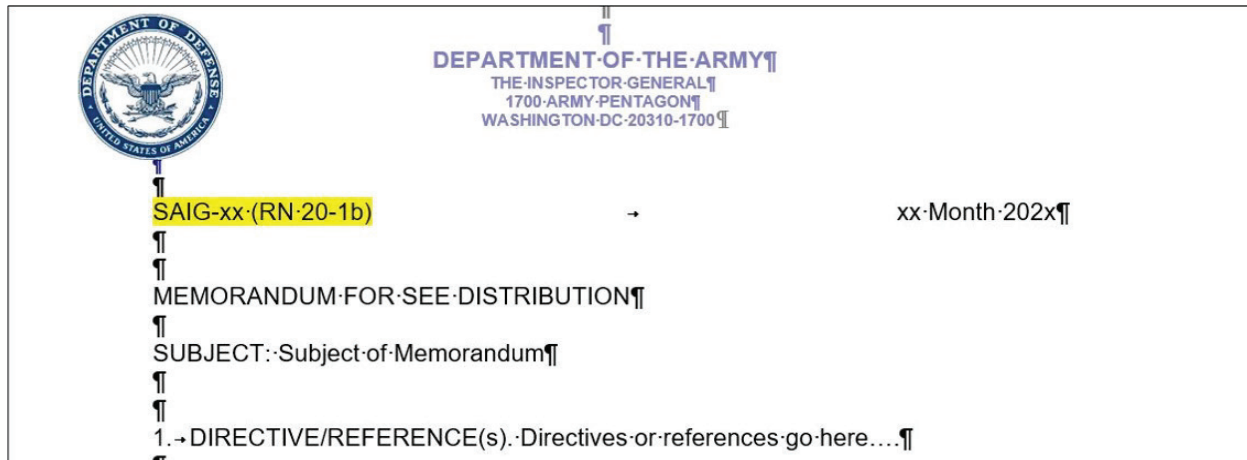


Figure D-Placement of Records Number in Memorandums

IG documents¹³ fall under two record series, 800 (administration) and 1000 (legal). The following tables further define the two record series, associated record numbers, and length of record retention (duration).¹⁴

Table 10-ACRS Record Series 800 (Administration)

Record Number	Record Description	Example(s)	Duration
1-201a	Information related to reviewing, controlling, coordinating, and consolidating planned inspections, surveys, and visits. Included are notifications of impending visits, requests for authority to make visits,	Inspection, survey, and staff visit coordination files obtained/prepared by the office developing these documents (e.g. detailed inspection plan,	6 years

¹¹ Additionally, place SAIG–xx (RN 20-1b) in the header of each subsequent page.

¹² Per HQDA Policy 25-52, “As an exception to AR 25 – 50, only those HQDA offices that use office symbols on their correspondence will place the appropriate ARIMS record number one space after the office symbol, in parentheses on memorandums (for example, AAHS – RD (25-50a)). Follow Army recordkeeping requirements according to AR 25 – 400 – 2.”

¹³ Most HQDA inspection reports (special and compliance based) will be marked 20-1f.

¹⁴ To ascertain record numbers for non-IG related documents, please visit <https://www.arims.army.mil/ARIMS/RRSA/BucketsXWalk.aspx>.

	itineraries, approvals, requests for changes, and related information.	subject matter expert requests, inspection directives).	
1-201b1	Information relating to the conduct of command and staff inspections. Included are the retained copy of the report sent to the inspected activity, supporting information essential to and filed with the report, correspondence from the inspected activity indicating corrective action taken, information accumulated in staff offices that furnished members for the inspection team, and similar information.	Command Inspection Program (Department of the Army (DA) and Major Army Command (MACOM) HQ). Information obtained by the office performing inspection: inspection report	Permanent
1-201b2	Information relating to the conduct of command and staff inspections at DA and MACOM HQ. Included are the retained copy of the report sent to the inspected activity, supporting information essential to and filed with the report, correspondence from the inspected activity indicating corrective action taken, information accumulated in staff offices that furnished members for the inspection team, and similar information.	Command Inspection Program (DA and MACOM HQ). Information accumulated in staff offices, by members of the team.	2 years
1-201b3	Information relating to the conduct of command and staff inspections at DA and MACOM HQ. Included are the retained copy of the report sent to the inspected activity, supporting information essential to and filed with the report, correspondence from the inspected activity indicating corrective action taken, information accumulated in staff offices that furnished members for the inspection team, and similar information.	Information/documents from the office inspected (e.g., security logs from stakeholder).	6 years
1-201c	Information accumulated as a result of a command or staff inspection (not DA or MACOM HQ). Included are reports of inspections, correspondence directing corrective action, correspondence replying to these instructions, and similar information.	Non-DA or MACOM HQ reports of inspections (not DAIG applicable), corrective action correspondence, corrective action plans, etc.	6 years
1-201d	Information accumulated because of staff visits (free inspections) or an inspection other than a command or Inspector General inspection, generally	Organizational Inspection Program (not DAIG applicable)	6 years

	conducted by staff representatives who are responsible for the functional area being inspected, to ensure compliance with established policy, provide assistance, or to assess the ability of an organization to perform its assigned mission.		
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Table 11-ACRS Record Series 1000 (Legal)

Record Number	Description	Example(s)	Duration
20	Routine comments on regulations, directives, or other publications submitted to office with chief responsibility; routine or general requests for information and replies; reference copies of records maintained by action officers and offices of record; informal reports with related information; general recommendations and suggestions with all types of transmittals; information received requiring no action; cards, listings, indexes, or other items which are created solely to facilitate or control work; and other transactions of a general, routine, and administrative nature. (This does not include instruction files. See file numbers 25-30i1, 25-30i2, 25-30q1 or 25-30q2.)	General assistance, inspections, investigations, and follow-up correspondence files.	2 years
20-1a	Inspection conducted and information accumulated by Field IGs. Included are inspection reports and related information pertaining to annual, general, procurement, special, technical proficiency, and Federal recognition inspections directed by the command, and similar files pertaining to inspections.	Field IG inspection reports	3 years
20-1b	IG investigations, inquiries, assistance, and inspection reports that are likely to attract high public and/or Congressional Committee or sub-committee interest, or that are deemed to be of historical significance by The Inspector General (TIG) and all information accumulated by IGs at Division HQs or higher in a combat environment.	IG investigations, inquiries, and inspection reports deemed historical significance by The Inspector General (TIG) and all information accumulated by IGs at Division HQs or higher in a combat environment (i.e., Inspection reports on Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention(SHARP),	Permanent

		Suicide Prevention, and Equal Opportunity)	
20-1e	IG investigations and inquiries involving non-senior officials at time of investigation/inquiry completed in which all allegations were unsubstantiated, and Assistance cases.	(<u>Non-senior official</u>) complete, unsubstantiated IG investigations and inquiries.	3 years
20-1f	IG inspections conducted and information accumulated by HQDA. Included are inspection reports and related information pertaining to annual general, procurement, special, nuclear surety, intelligence oversight, and Federal recognition inspections made of or conducted by HQDA.	*HQDA inspection reports as described.	30 years
20-1h	The Office of The Inspector General (OTIG) is the primary location for case files containing substantiated allegations and related information. Case files contain investigative reports such as preliminary inquiries and reports of investigation (ROI), and computer indices. ROIs include the authority for the investigation/inquiry, matters investigations, narratives, summaries/excerpts of testimony given by witnesses, and appended exhibits that may include supporting documents, documentary evidence, summaries of interviews or transcript of verbatim testimony, or other investigative information. Administrative documents include those that guide or facilitate investigative/inquiry activities in the cases and provide the opening, transfer, or closing data for the cases. Computer indices contain the names/subjects of the investigation/inquiry, opening and closing dates, function codes reflecting the type of allegations and codes designating their status and determination, brief synopsis of allegations and their disposition, brief summaries of allegations, case notes, locations of the investigations/inquiries, and the assigned case numbers.	ROIs	30 years

<p>20-1i</p>	<p>IG investigations and inquiries in which all allegations against senior officials were unsubstantiated. Case files contain investigative reports such as preliminary inquiries and reports of investigation (ROI), and computer indices. ROIs include the authority for the investigation/inquiry, matters investigations, narratives, summaries/excerpts of testimony given by witnesses, and appended exhibits that may include supporting documents, documentary evidence, summaries of interviews or transcript of verbatim testimony, or other investigative information. Administrative documents include those that guide or facilitate investigative/inquiry activities in the cases and provide the opening, transfer, or closing data for the cases. Computer indices contain the names/subjects of the investigation/inquiry, opening and closing dates, function codes reflecting the type of allegations and codes designating their status and determination, brief synopsis of allegations and their disposition, brief summaries of allegations, case notes, locations of the investigations/inquiries, and the assigned case numbers.</p>	<p>Unsubstantiated <u>senior official</u> IG investigations and inquiries</p>	<p>15 years</p>
<p>20-1k</p>	<p>Policies, procedures, and results of IG post- and pre-board screens. IG records are screened at the direction of the Secretary of the Army for adverse information regarding personnel selected for certain selection boards, including colonel promotion and command, lieutenant colonel command, command sergeant major, recruiter, drill sergeant, IG nominations, and those involving senior officials.</p>	<p>IG-post-and pre-board screens, IG nomination packets.</p>	<p>6 years</p>

Appendix D. Marking Documents as Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI)

CUI is defined as, “a categorical designation that refers to unclassified information that does not meet the standards for national security classification pursuant to Reference (c) [Executive Order 13526, “Classified National Security Information,” December 29, 2009], but requires protection from unauthorized disclosure, special handling safeguards, or prescribed limits on exchange or dissemination pursuant to and consistent with law, regulations, or Government-wide policy. The designation CUI replaces the term ‘sensitive but unclassified.’”

The figure below illustrates the process for CUI determination. Please note that it is the responsibility of the document originator to properly make this determination and fill out the CUI designation indicator if required.

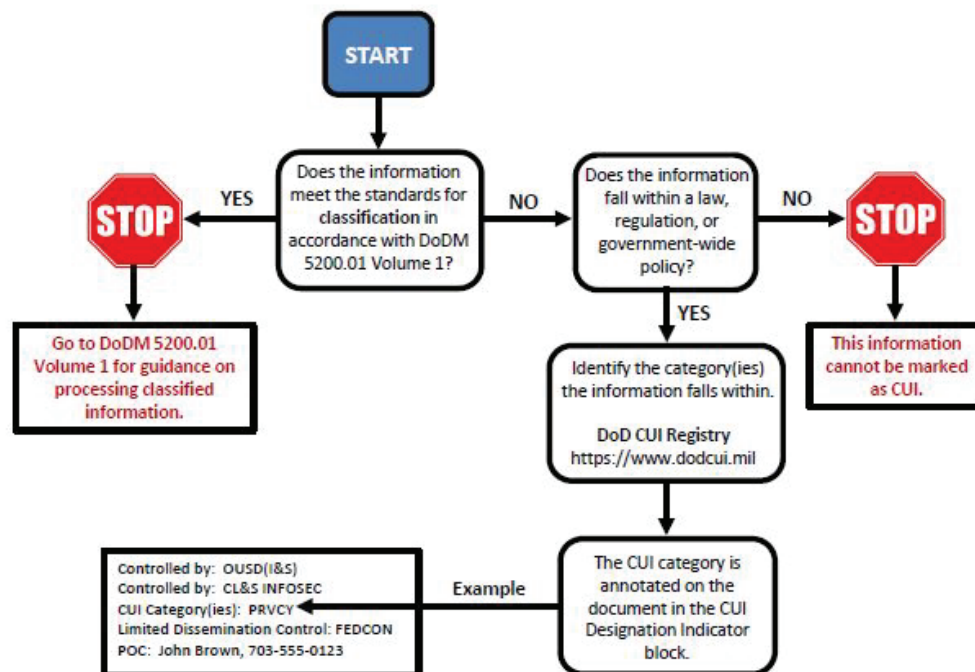


Figure C1-Process for CUI Determination, per DOD, “Controlled Unclassified Information Markings,” 04 November 2020¹⁵.

¹⁵ Visit <https://www.dodcui.mil/Home/Desktop-Aids/> for more desktop aids.

Documents marked CUI must provide the marking in the header and footer of the document and the designation indicator must be annotated on the first page or cover of all documents containing CUI. See below for an example.

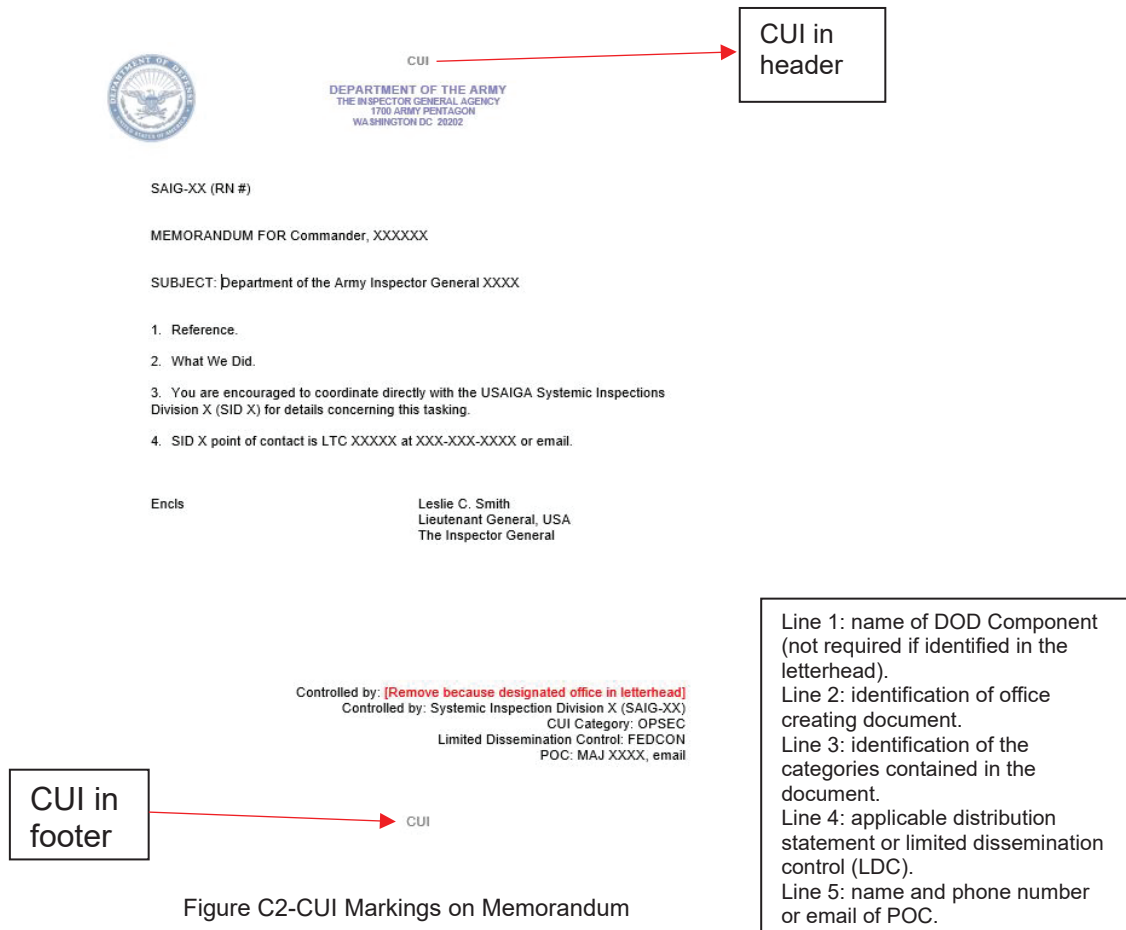


Figure C2-CUI Markings on Memorandum

Useful CUI Links:

- DOD CUI site, <https://dodcui.com/>
- The DOD CUI Registry, <https://dodcui.com/dod-cui-registry>

For SAIG’s Interim Guidance on CUI, see the following Annex, “Interim Guidance on marking Inspector General (IG) Records and other work products as Controlled Unclassified Information.”

