

# Reviews of Modern Physics Style Guide

## XIV. ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Abbreviations and acronyms should be kept to a minimum in articles written for *Reviews of Modern Physics*. Use only a handful of the best known or most widely used, keeping in mind that a broad audience including physicists from other subfields will be reading the article and should not be forced to learn a code at the same time. Here are a few guidelines to keep in mind.

- (1) Define all abbreviations and acronyms the first time you use them.
- (2) Do not use an acronym as the subject of a sentence, even though it has been previously defined or is well known. For example, replace “CDWs provide . . .” with “Charge-density waves provide . . .”
- (3) Generally it is unnecessary and distracting to assign a special acronym to a paper, using the initials of its co-authors, and it may be seen as a bid for attention if one is citing one’s own work. Only classic papers that are already widely known by such acronyms justify this treatment. A simple citation of the form Smith *et al.* (1997) is less obtrusive than four or five capital letters and takes very little additional effort to type.
- (4) When using an abbreviation of a proper name as a superscript or subscript, retain the initial capital letter:  $E_{Coul}$  or  $E_C$  for Coulomb.
- (5) Do not use multiletter abbreviations as mathematical variables. Use the conventional symbol instead, e.g.,  $E_k$  or  $T$ , not  $KE$  for kinetic energy. An exception is the Reynolds number, conventionally written  $Re$ .
- (6) Avoid “abbreviations” that have more syllables than the original term, e.g., FW (four syllables) for framework.