



Gengo Style Guide

Rules and preferences
for translating with Gengo

(British English)

GENGO STYLE GUIDE

This style guide offers rules and preferences for translating into British English with Gengo. The 'rules' section contains rules that must be followed in all written texts. When reviewing translations, if we spot a segment that does not adhere to a particular point outlined in this section, we will mark this segment as an error. This will affect the score for that job and thus affect the translator's overall score.

The 'preferences' section contains our preferred choices for certain elements of writing where two or more equally grammatically-correct options exist. If a translation is found not to follow the guidelines in this section, we will make note of it in your review, but we will not mark this as an error, meaning that it will not affect your score.

Please remember that the written standards for British and American English vary somewhat. If you are not used to writing in British English, please pay particular attention to these differences when reviewing this guide.

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1. RULES

When reviewing a translation, if we find that the text breaks one of the rules in this section, we will mark that segment as an error. This will affect the translator's overall score. Please take some time to brush up on these basics and make sure you have a firm grasp of these rules.

1.1. VOCABULARY

Differences between British and American Vocabulary

Ensure that you use British English vocabulary. While it is not possible to provide an exhaustive list here, a few common examples of differences between British and American vocabulary are shown below. If you are unsure, consult an authoritative online dictionary such as the Oxford Dictionary (<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/>).

British English	American English Equivalent
anticlockwise	counterclockwise
bonnet (of a car)	hood
car park	parking lot
cinema	movie theater
driving licence	driver's license
flat	apartment
ground floor (of a building)	first floor
lift	elevator
lorry	truck
motorway	freeway
pavement	sidewalk
petrol	gas; gasoline
postcode	zip code
queue	line
railway	railroad
wardrobe	closet
windscreen	windshield

1.2. SPELLING

Differences between British and American Spelling

There are a number of differences in spelling between British and American English. In order to ensure you are using the correct spelling, we suggest you use a British English spell checker in your web browser and/or office software. The main areas of divergence between British and American spelling are listed below.

-our, -or

Words ending in an unstressed *-or* in American English are usually spelled *-our* in British English.

British English	American English Equivalent
colour	color
honour	honor
neighbour	neighbor
rumour	rumor

-re, -er

In British English, words of French, Latin, or Greek origin ending *-er* are often spelled with the ending *-re*. This is particularly common for words ending *-bre (-ber)* or *-tre (-ter)*.

British English	American English Equivalent
centre	center
fibre	fiber
theatre	theater
spectre	specter

-ise, -ize

Words ending *-ize* in American English are usually spelled with an *-ise* ending in British English. However, the *-ize* ending is also acceptable in British English.

British English	American English Equivalent
democratisation <i>or</i> democratization	democratization
organise <i>or</i> organize	organize
realise <i>or</i> realize	realize
specialise <i>or</i> specialize	specialize

-yse, -yze

Words ending *-yze* in American English are spelled with an *-yse* ending in British English.

British English	American English Equivalent
analyse	analyze
catalyse	catalyze

-ogue, -og

British English generally uses the *-ogue* ending, while American English often uses the ending *-og*.

British English	American English Equivalent
catalogue	catalog <i>or</i> catalogue
dialogue	dialog <i>or</i> dialogue

Words ending in vowel plus /

In British English, words ending in a vowel plus / double the / when adding endings that begin with a vowel.

British English	American English Equivalent
fuelled	fueled
travelled	traveled

Double vowels

British English uses the double vowels *ae* or *oe* in some words that are spelled with an *e* in American English.

British English	American English Equivalent
leukaemia	leukemia
foetus	fetus

1.3. PUNCTUATION

* Please note: Punctuation usage can differ between languages. Use the most appropriate punctuation when translating into English as the original source material may contain language-specific punctuation or symbols. Even where punctuation symbols are used in both source language and English, do not automatically copy the punctuation that is found in the source text, as it may not be the most appropriate choice in English. Please also remember that there are a number of differences in punctuation use between British and American English. You should pay particular attention to these differences if you are not used to writing in British English.

Full Stop

- Use a full stop (.) at the end of each sentence. Each full stop should be followed by a single space.
 - Example: This is an example. Please follow this format.
- When parentheses are used to enclose an independent sentence, the full stop belongs inside the parentheses.
 - Example: Bob was excited to buy his girlfriend flowers for her birthday. (He has never done this before.)

Question Mark

- Do not use question marks in indirect speech.
 - Example: The manager asked when the delegation would arrive.

Exclamation Mark

- Exclamation marks are usually to be avoided in formal contexts.

Comma

- Use a comma at the end of a list of items to differentiate between words and word groups.
 - Example: 'She told an improbable story about her father, a shoe thief and a mango farmer.' (Father is both footwear filcher and tropical fruit grower)
 - Example: 'She told an improbable story about her father, a shoe thief, and a mango farmer.' (Story is about three different people)
- Use a comma to separate two adjectives, or if the word 'and' can be inserted.
 - Example: I bought my niece a big, furry polar bear stuffed animal.
 - Example: He bought an expensive luxury car. ('expensive and luxury car' does not make sense, so a comma cannot be used.)
- Use a comma at the end of the words etc., i.e., and e.g.
 - Example: Today, my great-grandfather became a centenarian, i.e., he had his 100th birthday.
 - Example: I enjoy all types of Japanese food (e.g., sushi, tempura, soba noodles).
- Use a comma after a thousands separator for numbers above 999.
 - Example: 3,000 (*not* 3000)

Semicolon

- Use a semicolon to connect two independent clauses.
 - Example: There are 30 pages to the proposal; don't get discouraged.
- Use a semicolon for a list of items that contain internal punctuation.
 - Example: We travelled to Shrewsbury, Shropshire; Chester, Cheshire; and Hereford, Herefordshire.
- Use a semicolon if adverbs (then, however, thus, hence, indeed, accordingly, besides, therefore) are used to transition from one independent clause to another
 - Example: The health care bill finally passed; yet the debate continues.

Colon

- Use a colon when listing items
 - Example: Please confirm the following: the date, name and number of guests who will be attending.

Dash

- Use an em dash (—) when there is a sudden change in thought or an abrupt end to a sentence.
 - Making an em dash on a Mac: hold down on shift + option and press hyphen (-)

- o Making an em dash on a PC: hold down on the alt key and type 0151
- o Example: He made it his mission—his one and only mission—to tell them about what happened.
- Use an en dash (–) when denoting a range of values (such as dates, times, or numbers) or when establishing a relationship between two words.
 - o Making an en dash on a Mac: hold down on option + hyphen
 - o Making an en dash on a PC: hold down on alt and type 0150
 - o Example: Ages 18–21, patient–doctor relationship

Quotation Marks

- British English uses single quotation marks (' ') when quoting spoken words.
 - o Example: She asked him, 'Can you stop by the shop on your way home?' (*not* "Can you stop by the shop on your way home?")
 - o Example: Many believe the law was passed for 'political' reasons and not for 'social' reasons. (*not* Many believe the law was passed for "political" reasons and not for "social" reasons.)
- Use double quotation marks (" ") only when there are quotes within quotes.
 - o Example: Bob explained, 'I wanted to play music but then Sally said, "No way!"'
- Punctuation should be placed inside the quotation mark when it is a part of the quoted material. However, unlike American English, punctuation should always be placed outside the quotation mark when it is not a part of the quoted material. In the first two examples, the punctuation is a part of the quoted material, and therefore belongs inside the quotation mark. However, in the last two examples, the punctuation is not part of the quoted material, and therefore belongs outside the quotation mark.
 - o Example: Gandhi once said, 'An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind.' (*not* Gandhi once said, 'An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind'.)
 - o Example: 'Hello, Bob, how are you?' asked Bill. (*not* 'Hello, Bob, how are you'? asked Bill.)
 - o Example: Can you explain the quote, 'An eye for an eye'? (*not* Can you explain the quote, 'An eye for an eye?')
 - o Example: I can never remember how to spell 'Czechoslovakia'. (*not* I can never remember how to spell 'Czechoslovakia'.)

Apostrophes

- There are two situations in which apostrophes are used:
 - o To mark possession.
 - Example: David's car [singular]
 - Example: Bess's drill [singular ending in s]
 - Example: children's playground [plural noun]
 - Example: footballers' wives [plural ending in s]

- o To mark where a letter or letters have been missed out.
 - Example: don't=> do not
 - Example: can't=> cannot
- o Note that 'it's' belongs to the second type. Do not use 'it's' for a possessive.
 - Example: it's => it is

Parentheses and Brackets

- Parentheses (also called round brackets) are mainly used when including information that isn't essential to the main meaning of the sentence.
 - o Example: Ben Nevis (in the Grampians) is the highest mountain in Scotland.
- Brackets (also called square brackets) are mainly used to enclose words that were added by someone other than the original speaker or writer, normally in order to clarify meaning.
 - o Example: He [the teacher] scolded the pupil.
- If a whole sentence is enclosed in parentheses or brackets, the punctuation belonging to that sentence should come within the parentheses or brackets, too.
 - o Example: She wore a green dress that evening. (Her sister wore a red dress.)

Ellipsis

- Ellipsis in English is always marked by three dots. If the ellipsis comes at the end of a sentence do not add a fourth full stop. There should be no space before other sentence-end punctuation marks.
 - o Example: He reached for his knife...
 - o Example: Is that ... a pineapple?!

1.4. GRAMMAR

Nouns

- In British English, collective nouns may be singular or plural.
 - o Example: The team are playing tonight *or* The team is playing tonight.

Verbs

- Irregular forms of the past tense and past participle of certain verbs are frequently encountered in British English (e.g. dreamt, learnt, spelt, spoilt).
 - o Example: I learnt the hard way. ('I learned the hard way' is also acceptable).

- The past participle *gotten* is never used in British English (use *got* instead).
 - Example: He has got a lot taller since I last saw him. (*not* He has gotten a lot taller since I last saw him).
- British English normally uses the present perfect tense to talk about an event in the recent past.
 - Example: I've just arrived home (*not* I just arrived home).
- British English sometimes uses the auxiliary verb *shall* to express the future.
 - Example: Shall we go now?

Prepositions

- Prepositions should not be omitted before dates in British English.
 - Example: He resigned on Thursday. (*not* He resigned Thursday).
- Use *from...to* rather than *through*:
 - Example: The offer is valid from January to March. (*not* The offer is valid January through March).

Compound words

- Avoid hyphenating nouns where possible and make compound words either with or without a space.
 - Example: Eye shadow (*not* eye-shadow)
 - Example: Breakdown (*not* break-down)
- Use a hyphen to clarify meaning.
 - Example: Man-eating shark vs. man eating shark

A vs. An

- The pronunciation of the word dictates whether you use a or an, not whether first letter of the word is a vowel or consonant.
- Use 'a' for the following: pronounced *h*, long *u* (or *eu*), and the word one
 - Example: a utopia, a horse

Capitalisation

- Capitalise a person's title if it precedes their name, and use lowercase if the title follows the name.
 - Example: President Barack Obama vs. Barack Obama, the president
- Capitalise names of languages and nationalities.
 - Example: the English language, German-speaking customers, Japanese students
- Capitalise names and shortened/abbreviated names of government, non-government and business positions and offices.
 - Example: United States Supreme Court vs. Supreme Court, Chief Executive Officer vs. CEO
- Capitalise the first word of a quotation.

- o Example: She asked him, 'Can you stop by the shop on your way home?'

Numbers

- Numbers 0 - 9 should be written out. Numbers larger than 9 should be left in their numeric form. Please note that a comma is used for whole numbers over a thousand. Numbers over one million should be shortened and written with a decimal point.
 - o Example: Sally has two brothers and one sister.
 - o Example: Google employs over 10,000 people.
 - o Example: The company's revenue exceeded £3.5 billion this year. (*not* £3,500,000,000)
- To maintain consistency, if numbers both smaller and larger than 9 are used in the same sentence, all numbers should be written in their numeric form.
 - o Example: They have 4 dogs, 8 cats, 24 fishes and 3 frogs. (*not* They have four dogs, eight cats, 24 fishes and three frogs.)

Currency

- Leave numbers in their numerical form and use a currency symbol instead of writing out the currency name. Also, include the country of origin if the currency is used in multiple countries.
 - o Example: US\$1,000 (*not* 1,000 US Dollars)
 - o Example: ¥1,000 (*not* 1,000 yen)

Proper Nouns

- How a proper noun is translated depends on the information being transmitted. The deciding factor is how translating the proper noun affects the reader's ability to identify the specific place/thing being referenced.
 - o Example: Herr Tiger Smith -> Mr. Tiger Smith
 - o Example: Krankenhaus Waldfriede -> Waldfriede Hospital
 - o Example: Göltzschtalbrücke -> Göltzschtal Bridge
 - o Example: Römerstraße 7, Köln -> Römerstraße 7, Cologne
 - o Example: 淡水河 -> Danshui River

 - o Example: 台大醫院 -> National Taiwan University Hospital

2. PREFERENCES

This section contains our preferences for certain rules where more than one grammatically-correct option exists. If a segment in a translation does not follow the

guidelines in this section, we will make note of it in the review, but we will not mark this as an error, meaning that it will not affect the translator score. Please remember that you should still be familiar with these guidelines and work on incorporating them into your writing.

2.1. GRAMMAR

Comma

- The Oxford (or serial) comma is not mandated in British English unless it is necessary to remove ambiguity.
 - Example: We bought bananas, apples and oranges.

Italics vs. Quotations

- If possible, use italics for titles of published books, periodicals, movies, television programs, plays and names of ships, submarines, aircrafts, spacecrafts and satellites.
 - Example: We saw a performance of *As You Like It* on our cruise aboard the *Grand Princess*.
- If possible, use quotations for titles of works that are published within larger works, and italicize the larger works.
 - Example: He referenced the article 'California Voters Back Election Overhaul', which appeared in this week's *New York Times*.
- If possible, use italics for foreign words and phrases, unless they are commonly used. (Some commonly used foreign words include: *ibid.*, *et al.*, etc.)
 - Example: He felt he'd captured the *Zeitgeist* in his work.

Capitalisation

- Only capitalise the first letter of headlines.
 - Example: Section A: A brief introduction to our company

Time/Date

- The 12-hour system should be used in most cases. However, the 24-hour clock is preferred in timetables or where space is restricted.
 - Example: 3:00 p.m. or 15:00
- Dates should be written as Day, Month, Year. The ordinal suffix should be omitted.
 - Example: 7 June 2010 (*not* 7th June 2010 or June 7th, 2010)

2.2. STYLISTIC

Abbreviations and Contractions

- Avoid abbreviating words or using contractions unless necessary to maintain the original style of the text. Depending on how informal the original source text is, abbreviations and contractions are allowed. If in doubt, ask the customer which they prefer.
 - Example: Street (*not* St.)
 - Example: Cannot (*not* can't)
 - Example: It is (*not* it's)

Informal vs. Formal/Business Writing Style

- Translations should accurately reflect the original source text in meaning but also in writing style. Depending on the context, an informal writing style (which exaggerates certain words or letters and/or uses slang) is acceptable. Translators must use their best judgment when choosing a writing style. If in doubt, ask the customer which they prefer.
 - Informal writing style
 - Example: I REALLY enjoyed the Lady Gaga concert. You shoulda come with us!!!
 - Formal writing style
 - Example: I would like to express my disappointment in not being able to attend the event with you.

2.3. FORMATTING

Format - General

- The general structure and use of paragraph breaks or line breaks (regardless of whether it is a text or file-based translation) should perfectly follow and match the original source material.
 - Example: If the original source text has 3 paragraphs, the translation should as well.
 - Example: Do not turn a list into a paragraph, or vice versa.
- Use the most appropriate punctuation when translating into English, as the original source material may contain language-specific punctuation or symbols.
 - Example: 5分待ちました。。。 would be translated into English as: It has been 5 *minutes*... (no Japanese '。。。' marks)

Text-based Translations

- Translation text boxes on the Gengo website do not support HTML, therefore font type, size, colour and style consistency are inapplicable.

File-based Translations

- Use the same font type, size and colour as the original source text.
- Maintain the appropriate font styles (bold, italic, underline) as the original source text.
- A translation may be longer than the source text, and create formatting issues.

Translators are expected to make a reasonable effort to maintain a presentable document, but they are not responsible for complex formatting work within a document.