

image not found or type unknown



All our lives we are surrounded by numbers. We count money, weight, years or months, hours and minutes, meters, and kilometers. For all these measurements we need to use in our speech numerals. Unfortunately, not everyone knows which numeral to use, how to spell it, and which symbols to use. I suppose that it is necessary to know how to pronounce and use numerals correctly.

So, what is a numeral ? A numeral is a figure, a letter, a word representing a number. Numerals function as nouns and adjectives. In a sentence, a numeral can serve as a subject, attribute, object, predicative complement, or adverbial modifier. They may be divided into two major types: cardinal and ordinal numerals.

Cardinal numerals indicate number, quantity, or amount and are used in counting. In formal nontechnical texts, numbers from one to one hundred, round numbers, and any numbers that can be expressed in one or two words are usually spelled out, that is, written out in words. In less formal texts, as a general rule, numbers from one to ten should be spelled out, and figures can be used for numbers above ten. Numbers at the beginning of the sentence should be written out in words. If you need to use figures, restructure your sentence. Numerals used in the same function in a sentence are usually written either as words or as figures.

Ordinal numerals indicate order, that is, the order of things in a series. Ordinal numbers do not indicate quantity as cardinal numbers do. Ordinal numbers attribute to a position or place of an object's standing. They are written as first, second, third, or in numerals, as 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, etc. Normally, they are indicated by "th," or sometimes by "nd" or "st." Generally, ordinal numerals are used as adjectives and stand before nouns. An ordinal numeral is usually preceded by the definite article "the".

When calculations are said aloud, the verb is generally used in the singular, for example, "two plus two is four; two plus two equals four; two plus two makes four". The verb "to equal" in this case is a little more formal than the verbs "to be", "to make".

To sum up, numbers are an essential part of our lives. In conclusion, I would like to say that it is important to know how to pronounce and use numerals correctly. Pronunciation is the most important and difficult problem that non-native English speakers have to face when studying English. The key to confidence with numbers in English is to practice using them as often as possible.