

University of Houston Clear Lake

WRITING CENTER

Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Style and Template Tip Sheet

What is IEEE?

IEEE, pronounced "Eye-triple-E," stands for the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. The organization was founded in 1884, when electricity began to be a significant force in human society.

As the world's largest technical professional organization, with membership totaling over 400,000, IEEE has long been composed of engineers, scientists, and allied professionals. These include computer scientists, software developers, information technology (IT) professionals, physicists, medical doctors, and many others, in addition to IEEE's electrical and electronics engineering core. For this reason, the organization no longer goes by its full name, except on legal business documents, and is referred to simply as IEEE.

Writing your paper using an IEEE template

If you are a software, electronics, or electrical engineering student, your professor will likely expect you to use an IEEE template in order to write your paper. This is quite different from using MLA or APA style. Please check with your professor regarding the type of template they want you to use.

Your template serves two purposes:

- To correctly format your document—**after** you have finished writing it and gathering and creating all your graphic files.
- To provide advice regarding style and formatting.

For spelling reference, IEEE uses *The Merriam-Webster Dictionary*. For guidance on grammar and usage not included in your template's style guide, consult *The Chicago Manual of Style*, published by University of Chicago Press.

What if I'm not using an IEEE template?

It is possible, however, that your professor might want you to use MLA, APA, or Chicago style in writing your paper. If that is true, you can gain help in using any of these styles by (1) reading UHCL's tip sheets on these subjects, which can be accessed here: <https://www.uhcl.edu/writing-center/tip-sheets/>, and (2) looking at PURDUE OWL's online help—including sample papers for MLA and APA style, which can be accessed here: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html.

Make sure you download the correct IEEE template

First, confirm that you have the correct template for your paper size. This template has been tailored for output on U.S.-letter paper size. Occasionally in the United States, you might use a British-style paper size. This would be A4-size paper. If you are using A4-size paper, please close the U.S. paper size file and download the file formatted for A4-size paper.

Second, confirm with your professor whether they want you to download a template appropriate for a conference, a journal, or a magazine. You can find these templates here: <https://ieeauthorcenter.ieee.org>.

Before you format your paper

Before you begin to format your paper, first write and save the content as a separate text file. Complete all content and organizational editing **before** formatting using the template.

Keep your text and graphic files separate until after the text has been formatted and styled using the template.

Do not use hard tabs, and limit use of hard returns to only one return at the end of a paragraph.

Do not add any kind of pagination anywhere in the paper.

Do not number text heads—the template will do that for you.

When you format your paper

The template will format your paper and style the text **after you have finished writing and editing your paper and your graphics in another file**. Keep a copy of your original file(s).

The Writing Center recommends that you use the IEEE template in MS Word. This will give you flexibility should you need to edit your paper after you have flowed it into the template. Avoid using LaTeX if you have not learned it well.

All margins, column widths, line spaces, and text fonts are prescribed in the template; please do not alter them. You may note peculiarities. For example, the head margin in most IEEE templates measures proportionately more than is customary. This measurement and others are deliberate, using specifications that anticipate your paper as one part of an entire proceedings or publication, and not as an independent document. It is important **not** to revise any of the current designations. **Remember to remove all the IEEE instruction wording in the template once you have finished formatting your paper.**

This tip sheet uses some wording taken directly from the IEEE website.