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A numeral is a figure, a symbol, a word (or their combinations) representing a number. It denotes the number of objects, their number, and also the order when counting objects. There are **cardinal** and **ordinal numbers**.

- I have **two** apples.
- There are **twenty-five** pencils in the box.
- I’ve already asked him **three** times.

**Cardinal numerals**

We use **cardinal numbers** to **count** or to say **how many of something** there are.

- **Five** plums.
- **Forty** cars.
- **One million** dollars.
- I ate **ten** apples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cardinal Numerals</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 One</td>
<td>2 Two</td>
<td>3 Three</td>
<td>4 Four</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Five</td>
<td>6 Six</td>
<td>7 Seven</td>
<td>8 Eight</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 Nine</td>
<td>10 Ten</td>
<td>11 Eleven</td>
<td>12 Twelve</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 Thirteen</td>
<td>14 Fourteen</td>
<td>15 Fifteen</td>
<td>16 Sixteen</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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### Compound Numerals

Numbers consisting of two words, from 21-99 should be hyphenated.

- We invited twenty-five people to the dinner.

For higher numerals, we can add ‘and’ between the second last word and the final word.

- He requested nine hundred and ten plates.
- Where did you get all four hundred and fifty-five of these?

When saying large cardinal numerals we don’t add ‘-s’ to the words ‘hundred’, ‘thousand’ and ‘million’:

- There are two hundred eight (208) pupils in our school.
- There are five thousand eight hundred thirty (5,830) kilometers between New-York and Paris.

To avoid misunderstandings with certain similar-sounding cardinal numerals, always
stress the correct syllable when pronouncing them.

- Thirteen (13) → Thirty (30)
- Fourteen (14) → Forty (40)
- Fifteen (15) → Fifty (50)
- Sixteen (16) → Sixty (60)
- Seventeen (17) → Seventy (70)
- Eighteen (18) → Eighty (80)
- Nineteen (19) → Ninety (90)

Watch this video and find out about small and big numbers:

**Ordinal numbers**

We use **ordinal numerals** to express position or rank of something in a **sequential order** of size, chronology, importance, etc.

- The first song was beautiful, but the second was rather dull.
- The thousandth passenger received a reward.
- Abraham Lincoln was the 16th president of the United States.
- He came in fourth (4th) in the race.

**Spelling of ordinal numbers**

We can write ordinal numbers in two ways – a numerical form or in written, word form.

In the **numerical form**, we add the suffix ‘-th’ to most ordinal numbers. However, 1, 2, and 3, have special suffixes: ‘-st’ (first), ‘-nd’ (second), and ‘-rd’ (third).

- 1st
- 2nd
- 3rd
- 4th
- 5th
The **written form** follows the same rules except we add the suffixes to the word.

- *First*
- *Second*
- *Third*
- *Fourth*
- *Fifth*
- *Sixth*
- *Tenth*
- *Fifteenth*
  - *Twentieth* (note the change in spelling from ‘y’ to ‘ie’)
  - *Twenty-first* (note the hyphen is still necessary)

In some cases, the spelling of the numeral is modified to accommodate the suffix:

- *one* - *first*
- *two* - *second*
- *three* - *third*
- *five* - *fifth*
- *eight* - *eighth*
- *nine* - *ninth*
- *twelve* - *twelfth*

Additionally, for **cardinal numbers** ending in ‘-y’ we change it to ‘-ie’ in ordinal numbers:

- *twenty* - *twentieth*
- *forty* - *fortieth*
- *sixty* - *sixtieth*
In compound numerals ‘-th’ is added to the last word.

- *one million* - *one-millionth*
- *two hundred* - *two-hundredth*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ordinal Numerals</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st numeral</td>
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In this video, you’ll learn how to use ordinal and cardinal numbers:

See also:
Numerals: Dates and Time