

# Numbers in English

The cardinal numbers (one, two, three, etc.) are adjectives referring to quantity, and the ordinal numbers (first, second, third, etc.) refer to distribution.

Test your knowledge

<b>Number</b>	<b>Cardinal</b>	<b>Ordinal</b>
1	one	first
2	two	second
3	three	third
4	four	fourth
5	five	fifth
6	six	sixth
7	seven	seventh
8	eight	eighth

<b>Number</b>	<b>Cardinal</b>	<b>Ordinal</b>
9	nine	ninth
10	ten	tenth
11	eleven	eleventh
12	twelve	twelfth
13	thirteen	thirteenth
14	fourteen	fourteenth
15	fifteen	fifteenth
16	sixteen	sixteenth
17	seventeen	seventeenth
18	eighteen	eighteenth

<b>Number</b>	<b>Cardinal</b>	<b>Ordinal</b>
19	nineteen	nineteenth
20	twenty	twentieth
21	twenty-one	twenty-first
22	twenty-two	twenty-second
23	twenty-three	twenty-third
24	twenty-four	twenty-fourth
25	twenty-five	twenty-fifth
26	twenty-six	twenty-sixth
27	twenty-seven	twenty-seventh
28	twenty-eight	twenty-eighth

<b>Number</b>	<b>Cardinal</b>	<b>Ordinal</b>
29	twenty-nine	twenty-ninth
30	thirty	thirtieth
31	thirty-one	thirty-first
40	forty	fortieth
50	fifty	fiftieth
60	sixty	sixtieth
70	seventy	seventieth
80	eighty	eightieth
90	ninety	ninetieth
100	one hundred	hundredth

<b>Number</b>	<b>Cardinal</b>	<b>Ordinal</b>
500	five hundred	five hundredth
1,000	one thousand	thousandth
1,500	one thousand five hundred, or fifteen hundred	one thousand five hundredth
100,000	one hundred thousand	hundred thousandth
1,000,000	one million	millionth

### **Examples**

- There are **twenty-five** people in the room. ( cardinal number)
- He went to Algiers for the **third** time this year. ( ordinal number)

## **Reading decimals**

Read decimals aloud in English by pronouncing the decimal point as "point", then read each digit individually. Money is not read this way.

<b>Written</b>	<b>Said</b>
0.5	point five

<b>Written</b>	<b>Said</b>
0.25	point two five
0.73	point seven three
0.05	point zero five
0.6529	point six five two nine
2.95	two point nine five

## Reading fractions

Read fractions using the cardinal number for the numerator and the ordinal number for the denominator, making the ordinal number plural if the numerator is larger than 1. This applies to all numbers except for the number 2, which is read "half" when it is the denominator, and "halves" if there is more than one.

<b>Written</b>	<b>Said</b>
$1/3$	one third
$3/4$	three fourths
$5/6$	five sixths
$1/2$	one half

<b>Written</b>	<b>Said</b>
3/2	three halves

## Pronouncing percentages

Percentages are easy to read aloud in English. Just say the number and then add the word "percent".

<b>Written</b>	<b>Pronounced</b>
5%	five percent
25%	twenty-five percent
36.25%	thirty-six point two five percent
100%	one hundred percent
400%	four hundred percent

## Pronouncing measurements

Just read out the number, followed by the unit of measurement, which will often be abbreviated in the written form.

<b>Written</b>	<b>Spoken</b>
60m	sixty meters
25km/h	twenty-five kilometers per hour
2L	two liters

## Pronouncing years

Reading years in English is relatively complicated. In general, when the year is a four digit number, read the first two digits as a whole number, then the second two digits as another whole number. There are a few exceptions to this rule. Years that are within the first 100 years of a new millenium can be read as whole numbers even though they have four digits, or they can be read as two two-digit numbers. Millennia are always read as whole numbers because they would be difficult to pronounce otherwise. New centuries are read as whole numbers of hundreds. We do not use the word "thousand", at least not for reading years within the past 1000 years.

Years that have just three digits can be read as a three digit number, or as a one digit number followed by a two-digit number. Years that are a two digit number are read as a whole number. You can precede any year by the words "the year" to make your meaning clear, and this is common for two and three digit years. Years before the year 0 are followed by BC, pronounced as two letters of the alphabet.

Interestingly, these rules apply to reading street addresses as well.

<b>Written</b>	<b>Spoken</b>
2014	twenty fourteen or two thousand fourteen



<b>Written</b>	<b>Spoken</b>
2008	two thousand eight
2000	two thousand
1944	nineteen forty-four
1908	nineteen o eight
1900	nineteen hundred
1600	sixteen hundred
1256	twelve fifty-six
1006	ten o six
866	eight hundred sixty-six or eight sixty-six
25	twenty-five

## How to say 0

There are several ways to pronounce the number 0, used in different contexts. Unfortunately, usage varies between different English-speaking countries. These pronunciations apply to American English.

Pronunciation	Usage
zero	Used to read the number by itself, in reading decimals, percentages, and phone numbers, and in some fixed expressions.
o (the letter name)	Used to read years, addresses, times and temperatures
nil	Used to report sports scores
nought	Not used in the USA

### Examples

Written	Said
$3.04+2.02=5.06$	Three point zero four plus two point zero two makes five point zero six.
There is a 0% chance of rain.	There is a zero percent chance of rain.

<b>Written</b>	<b>Said</b>
The temperature is -20°C.	The temperature is twenty degrees below zero.
You can reach me at 0171 390 1062.	You can reach me at zero one seven one, three nine zero, one zero six two
I live at 4604 Smith Street.	I live at forty-six o four Smith Street
He became king in 1409.	He became king in fourteen o nine.
I waited until 4:05.	I waited until four o five.
The score was 4-0.	The score was four nil.

Test your knowledge