

1 Spelling and special treatment of words

1.1 Spelling authority

The authorities for spelling in the Department's English texts are *The Canadian Oxford Dictionary* (2004) and the *Gage Canadian Dictionary* (2000).

Where a dictionary shows more than one spelling for a word, select the first entry.

Consistency in spelling requires careful attention. If the publication you are preparing is long and contains many specialized terms, it may be useful to prepare a list of recurring words and terms for quick reference.

If you enable the spell-check feature on your word-processing software, you can add new terms or amend default entries according to departmental style. It is also useful to set the spell-check feature (in WordPerfect, under Tools > Language > Settings) to "English-Canada."

1.2 Departmental spelling preferences

Canadian spelling is a hybrid of British and U.S. spelling patterns. In general, it is departmental practice to use:

- "-our" not "-or" in words such as labour, honour, neighbour
- "-re" not "-er" in words such as centre, fibre
- "-t" not "-tt" in words such as benefited, targeted
- "-ll" not "-l" in words such as travelled, signalled, equalled (but note "unparalleled")

The choice of spelling style for a particular publication is often determined by the type of publication, the intended audience and the subject matter.

The words listed here are current departmental recommendations that may differ from the spellings given in the dictionary:

acknowledgment (not acknowledgement)

addendum, addenda

adviser (not advisor)

aging (not ageing)

al Qaeda

analyzes (verb), analyses (plural noun)

anemia (not anaemia)

anti-personnel mines (not anti-personnel landmines)

anti-terrorism

appendix, appendices

behaviour (not behavior)

benefited (not benefitted)