## Abbreviations and their Meaning in the

## English Language

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## Introduction

In this essay we will explore the big world of small words. Technically, abbreviations are not words, but in modern life they have become so common it seems strange to call them otherwise. So first thing after the introduction I will give their definition and a brief historical note, after which we will proceed to the types of abbreviations by grammar and, further, use. This will lead us to the рассуждения and conclusion.

## Abbreviation: Definition

## What is an abbreviation? The word comes from the [Latin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin) brevis, meaning “short”, which also gave us the word “brief”, meaning “short” as well.

|  |
| --- |
| Latin brevis → abbreviation |
| English brief=short → shorting → shrinking |

## This makes an abbreviation a shrunken, or shortened form of a [word](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Word) or [phrase](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phrase). Usually, but not always, it consists of a letter or group of letters taken from the word or phrase. For example, the word abbreviation can itself be represented by the abbreviations abbr., abbrv. or abbrev.

## In strict analysis, abbreviations should not be confused with [contractions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Contraction_(grammar)) or [acronyms](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acronym_and_initialism) (including initialisms), with which they share some [semantic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semantic) and [phonetic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phonetic) functions, though all three are connoted by the term "abbreviation" in loose parlance. However, normally acronyms are regarded as a subgroup of abbreviations (e.g. by the Council of Science Editors).

## In the process of communication words and word-groups can be shortened. The causes of shortening can be linguistic and extra-linguistic. Extra-linguistic causes are the changes in the life of people. In Modern English many new abbreviations, acronyms, initials and blends are formed because of the fascinatingly and frighteningly increasing tempo of life. More and more

## information must be given in the shortest possible time.

## There are also linguistic causes of abbreviating words and word-groups, such as the demand of rhythm, which is satisfied in English by monosyllabic words. When borrowings from other languages are assimilated in English they are ‘adapted’ and shortened. Here we have modification of form on the basis of analogy, e.g. the Latin borrowing «fanaticus» has been shortened to “fan” on the analogy with native words: man, pan, tan etc.

## History

## Abbreviation has been used as long as phonetic script existed, in some senses actually being more common in early literacy, where spelling out a whole word was often avoided, due to the expense of ink and paper, not to mention the writer’s effort. initial letters were most commonly used to represent words in specific application. In Greece and Rome, the reduction of words to single letters was still normal, but not default.

## An increase in literacy has, historically, sometimes spawned a trend toward abbreviation. The standardization of English in the 15th through 17th centuries too included such a growth in the use of abbreviation. At first, abbreviations were sometimes represented with various suspension signs, not only periodically. For example, specific phoneme sets like "er" were dropped from words and replaced with ɔ, like "mastɔ" instead of "master" or exacɔbate instead of "exacerbate". While this seems trivial, it was symptomatic of an attempt by people manually reproducing academic texts to reduce their copy time. Here is an example from the Oxford University Register, 1503 with the words with use of suspension signs highlighted:

## Mastɔ subwardenɔ y ɔmēde me to you. And wherɔ y wrot to you the last wyke that y trouyde itt good to differrɔ thelectionɔ ovɔ to quīdenaɔ tinitatis y have be thougħt me synɔ that itt woll be thenɔ a bowte mydsomɔ.

## As we can see, almost half of the text is yellow. But this was not a popular enough measure to survive through the whole age of manuscripts. Obviously it not only reduces the copying time, but also increases the reading time.

## Much later, in the 1830s in the United States, starting with Boston, abbreviation became a [fad](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fad). The abbreviation fad began in Boston in the summer of 1838 and spread to New York and New Orleans in 1839. It spread through the United states, the globally popular term [OK](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OK) generally credited as a remnant of its influence. These two well-known letters will be more thoroughly discussed later.

## The telegraph, of course, immensely increased the use of abbreviations and disposal of punctuation points and sometimes even vowels out of economy. In the history of abbreviating punctuation points got the worst, for their lack rarely changes the meaning of phrases. Further throughout history we can see more examples of punctuation abuse.

## After [World War II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II), the British greatly reduced their use of the full stop and other punctuation points after abbreviations in at least semi-formal writing, while the Americans more readily kept such use until more recently, and still maintain it more than Britons. The classic example, considered by their American counterparts quite curious, was the maintenance of the internal comma in a British organization of secret agents called the "[Special Operations, Executive](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special_Operations,_Executive)" — "S.O.,E" — which is not found in histories written after about 1960.

## But before that, many Britons were more scrupulous at maintaining the French form. In [French](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_language), the period only follows an abbreviation if the last letter in the abbreviation is not the last letter of its antecedent: "M." is the abbreviation for "monsieur" while "Mme" is that for "madame". Like many other cross-[channel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_Channel) linguistic acquisitions, many Britons readily took this up and followed this rule themselves, while the Americans took a simpler rule and applied it rigorously.

## Over the years, however, the lack of convention in some style guides has made it difficult to determine which two-word abbreviations should be abbreviated with periods and which should not. The U.S. media tend to use periods in two-word abbreviations like United States (U.S.), but not personal computer (PC) or television (TV). Many British publications have gradually done away with the use of periods in abbreviations completely.

## Minimization of punctuation in typewritten matter became economically desirable in the 1960s and 1970s for the many users of carbon-film [ribbons](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IBM_Selectric_typewriter#Ribbons), since a period or comma consumed the same length of non-reusable expensive ribbon as a capital letter, undoubtedly more important.

## Widespread use of electronic communication through [mobile phones](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mobile_phone#Mobile_phones_in_society) and [the Internet](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet#Social_impact) during the [1990s](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1990s) allowed for a marked rise in colloquial abbreviation. This was due largely to increasing popularity of textual communication services such as [instant-](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Instant_messaging) and [text messaging](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Text_messaging). [SMS](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Short_Message_Service) for instance supports message lengths of 160 characters at most (using the [GSM 03.38](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GSM_03.38) character set). This brevity gave rise to an informal abbreviation scheme sometimes called [Textese](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SMS_language" \o "SMS language), with which 10% or more of the words in a typical SMS message are abbreviated. More recently [Twitter](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twitter), a popular [social network service](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_network_service), began driving abbreviation use with 140 character message limits.

## OK

## Of course, I could not help but research this, probably, most trivial but mysterious abbreviation, as I promised earlier. People from different countries constantly use it in their speech, short messages, e-mails, but know so little about it. Despite the fact that the origin of OK was conclusively established 30 years ago, few etymological dictionaries, even recent ones, give it accurately. On the contrary, some persist in giving equal time to explanations that have been discredited for decades.

## Eric Partridge, in Origins (1983), says OK derives from the OK Club, which supported Martin "Old Kinderhook" Van Buren in 1840. That isn't wrong, but it's only half the story. William and Mary Morris, in the Morris Dictionary of Word and Phrase Origins (1977), mention the OK Club and give several other theories as well, including the off-the-wall idea that OK comes from "Aux Cayes," a port in Haiti noted for its rum. They imply the matter is still shrouded in mystery.

## The etymology of OK was masterfully explained by the Columbia University professor Allen Walker Read in a series of articles in the journal American Speech in 1963 and 1964. The letters, not to keep you guessing, stand for "oll korrect." They're the result of the mentioned fad for comical abbreviations that flourished in the late 1830s and 1840s. Read buttressed his arguments with hundreds of citations from newspapers and other documents of the period. The Boston newspapers began referring satirically to the local swells as OFM, "our first men," and used expressions like NG, "no go," GT, "gone to Texas," and SP, "small potatoes." Many of the abbreviated expressions were exaggerated misspellings, a stock in trade of the humorists of the day. One predecessor of OK was OW, "oll wright," and there was also KY, "know yuse," KG, "know go," and NS, "nuff said". Most of these acronyms enjoyed only a brief popularity. But OK was an exception, no doubt because it came in so handy. It first found its way into print in Boston in March of 1839 and soon became widespread among the hipper element.

## It didn't really enter the language at large, however, until 1840. That's when Democratic supporters of Martin Van Buren adopted it as the name of their political club, giving OK a double meaning. ("Old Kinderhook" was a native of Kinderhook, New York.)

## OK became the warcry of Tammany hooligans in New York while beating up their opponents. It was mentioned in newspaper stories around the country.

## Van Buren's opponents tried to turn the phrase against him, saying that it had originated with Van Buren's allegedly illiterate predecessor, Andrew Jackson, a story that has survived to this day. They also devoted considerable energy to coming up with unflattering interpretations, e.g., "Out of Kash, Out of Kredit, and Out of Klothes."

## Newspaper editors and publicists around the country delighted in coming up with even sillier interpretations-- Oll Killed, Orfully Konfused, Often Kontradicts, etc.--so that by the time the campaign was over the expression had taken firm root nationwide.

## As time went on, though, people forgot about the abbreviation fad and Old Kinderhook and began manufacturing their own etymologies. Here's a sampling:

## 1. It's a derivative of the Choctaw Indian affirmative "okeh." Andrew Jackson, who figures in many stories about OK, is said to have introduced the word to the white man.

## 2. Another Jackson story has it that he used to mark OK for "oll korrect" on court documents. In the one example of this that was actually unearthed, however, the OK was found actually to be OR, for "order recorded," a common courthouse abbreviation.

## 3. It was a telegraphic signal meaning "open key," that is, ready to receive. Others say OK was used for "all right" because A and R had already been appropriated for other purposes. Big problem with this theory: the first telegraph message was transmitted in 1844, five years after OK appeared.

## 4. It stands for O. Kendall & Sons, a supplier of army biscuits that stamped its initials on its product.

## 5. It comes from Aux Cayes, already discussed. A variant is that it comes from the French au quai, "to the dock," said of cotton that had been approved for loading on a ship.

## 6. It stands for Obediah Kelly, a railroad freight agent, who used to mark his initials on documents to indicate all was in order.

## 7. It comes from the Greek Olla Kalla, "all good."

## 8. A German general who fought on the side of the Americans in the Revolutionary War used to sign documents OK for Ober-Kommando.

## Types of Abbreviations

## There are two main types of shortenings: graphical and lexical. Lower is the classification according to Pr. Dubenez and his Lexicology of the Modern English Language

## Graphical abbreviations

## These are the result of shortening of words and word-groups only in written speech while orally the corresponding full forms are used. They are used for the economy of space and effort in writing.

## The oldest group of graphical abbreviations in English is of Latin origin. In Russian this type of abbreviation is not typical. In these abbreviations in the spelling Latin words are shortened, while orally the corresponding English equivalents are pronounced in the full form,e.g. for example (Latin exampli gratia), a.m. - in the morning (ante meridiem), No - number (numero), p.a. - a year (per annum), d - penny (dinarius), lb - pound (libra), i. e. - that is (id est) etc.

## Some graphical abbreviations of Latin origin have different English equivalents in different contexts, e.g. p.m. can be pronounced «in the afternoon» (post meridiem) and «after death» (post mortem).

## There are also graphical abbreviations of native origin, where in the spelling we have abbreviations of words and word-groups of the corresponding English equivalents in the full form. We have several semantic groups of them :

## *a) days of the week, e.g. Mon - Monday, Tue - Tuesday etc*

## *b) names of months, e.g. Apr - April, Aug - August etc.*

## *c) names of counties in UK, e.g. Yorks - Yorkshire, Berks –*

## *Berkshire etc*

## *d) names of states in USA, e.g. Ala - Alabama, Alas - Alaska*

## *etc.*

## *e) names of address, e.g. Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr. etc.*

## *f) military ranks, e.g. capt. -captain, col. - colonel, sgt –*

## *sergeant etc.*

## *g) scientific degrees, e.g. B.A. - Bachelor of Arts, D.M. –*

## *Doctor of Medicine . ( Sometimes in scientific degrees we have*

## *abbreviations of Latin origin, e.g., M.B. - Medicinae*

## *Baccalaurus).*

## h) units of time, length, weight, e.g. f. / ft -foot/feet, sec. - second, in. -inch, mg. - milligram etc.

## The reading of some graphical abbreviations depends on the context, e.g. «m» can be read as: male, married, masculine, metre, mile, million, minute, «l.p.» can be read as long-playing, low pressure.

## Initial abbreviations

## Initialisms are the bordering case between graphical and lexical abbreviations. When they appear in the language, as a rule, to denote some new offices they are closer to graphical abbreviations because orally full forms are used, e.g. J.V. - joint venture. When they are used for some duration of time they acquire the shortened form of pronouncing and become closer to lexical abbreviations, e.g. BBC is as a rule pronounced in the shortened form.

## In some cases the translation of initialisms is next to impossible without using special dictionaries. Initialisms are denoted in different ways. Very often they are expressed in the way they are pronounced in the language of their origin, e.g. ANZUS (Australia, New Zealand, United States) is given in Russian as АНЗУС, SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks) was for a long time used in Russian as СОЛТ, now a translation variant is used (ОСВ -Договор об ограничении стратегических вооружений). This type of initialisms borrowed into other languages is preferable, e.g. UFO - НЛО, CП - JV etc.

## There are three types of initialisms in English:

## *a) initialisms with alphabetical reading, such as UK, BUP, CND etc*

## *b) initialisms which are read as if they are words, e.g. UNESCO, UNO,*

## *NATO etc.*

## *c) initialisms which coincide with English words in their sound form,*

## *such initialisms are called acronyms, e.g. CLASS (Computor-based*

## *Laboratory for Automated School System).*

## *Some scientists unite groups b) and c) into one group which they call*

## *acronyms.*

## *Some initialisms can form new words in which they act as root*

## *morphemes by different ways of wordbuilding:*

## *a) affixation, e.g. AWALism, ex-rafer, ex- POW, to waafize,*

## *AIDSophobia etc.*

## *b) conversion, e.g. to raff, to fly IFR (Instrument Flight Rules),*

## *c) composition, e.g. STOLport, USAFman etc.*

## d) there are also compound-shortened words where the first component is an initial abbreviation with the alphabetical reading and the second one is a complete word, e.g. A-bomb, U-pronunciation, V–day / B-day etc. In some cases the first component is a complete word and the second component is an initial abbreviation with the alphabetical pronunciation, e.g. Three -Ds (Three dimensions).

## Abbreviations of words

## Abbreviation of words consists in clipping a part of a word. As a result we get a new lexical unit where either the lexical meaning or the style is different form the full form of the word. In such cases as »fantasy» and «fancy», «fence» and «defence» we have different lexical meanings. In such cases as «laboratory» and «lab», we have different styles.

## Abbreviation does not change the part-of-speech meaning, as we have it in the case of conversion or affixation, it produces words belonging to the same part of speech as the primary word, e.g. prof is a noun and professor is also a noun. Mostly nouns undergo abbreviation, but we can also meet abbreviation of verbs, such as to rev from to revolve, to tab from to tabulate etc. But mostly abbreviated forms of verbs are formed by means of conversion from abbreviated nouns, e.g. to taxi, to vac etc. Adjectives can be abbreviated but they are mostly used in school slang and are combined with suffixation, e.g. comfy, dilly, mizzy etc. As a rule pronouns, numerals, interjections. conjunctions are not abbreviated. The exceptions are: fif (fifteen), teen-ager, in one’s teens (apheresis from numerals from 13 to 19).

## Lexical abbreviations are classified according to the part of the word which is clipped. Mostly the end of the word is clipped, because the beginning of the word in most cases is the root and expresses the lexical meaning of the word. This type of abbreviation is called apocope. Here we can mention a group of words ending in «o», such as disco (dicotheque), expo (exposition), intro (introduction) and many others. On the analogy with these words there developed in Modern English a number of words where «o» is added as a kind of a suffix to the shortened form of the word, e.g. combo (combination) - небольшой эстрадный ансамбль, Afro (African) -прическа под африканца etc. In other cases the beginning of the word is clipped. In such cases we have apheresis , e.g. chute (parachute), varsity (university), copter (helicopter) , thuse (enthuse) etc. Sometimes the middle of the word is clipped, e.g. mart (market), fanzine (fan magazine) maths (mathematics). Such abbreviations are called syncope. Sometimes we have a combination of apocope with apheresis, when the beginning and the end of the word are clipped, e.g. tec (detective), van (avanguard) etc.

## Sometimes shortening influences the spelling of the word, e.g. «c» can be substituted by «k» before «e» to preserve pronunciation, e.g. mike (microphone), Coke (coca-cola) etc. The same rule works in the following cases: fax( facsimile), teck (technical college), trank (tranquilizer) etc. The final consonants in the shortened forms are substituded by letters characteristic of native English words.

## Different Use of Abbreviations

There is a variety of areas, where abbreviations are commonly used. Or, to be more accurate, the use of abbreviations in our language can be divided on several general areas. Lower we will more or less discuss every area.

Medical abbreviations

In medicine a rich amount of abbreviations of both Latin and English origin is frequently used. They can be roughly divided into three groups: prescription abbreviations, healthcare acronyms and abbreviations for medical organizations and personnel.

Medical Abbreviations

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|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Healthcare | Medical org. & personnel | Prescriptions |
| ER *emergency room* SAMPLE *symptoms,*  *allergies, medications,*  *past history, last meal,*  *events leading up to* OAA *old age assistance* | AA *anonymous alcoholics*  DDS *doctor of dental surgery*  WHO *world health organization*  IFMSA *international federation of medical students' associations* | a.c. *ante cibum / before meals*  inj. *injectio / injection* aq *aqua / water*  b.d./b.i.d.  *bis in die / twice a day* |

## Though saving time and paper, some medical abbreviations caused mistakes, sometimes fatal. So In May 2005, The Joint Commission presented its “do not use” list of abbreviations. The list was originally created in 2004 by The Joint Commission as part of the requirements for meeting National Patient Safety Goal Requirement 2B (Standardize a list of abbreviations, acronyms and symbols that are not to be used throughout the organization). Participants at the November 2004 National Summit on Medical Abbreviations supported the “do not use” list. Summit conclusions were posted on the Joint Commission website for public comment. During the four-week comment period, the Joint Commission received 5,227 responses, including 15,485 comments. More than 80 percent of the respondents supported the creation and adoption of a “do not use” list. However, the field was less supportive of additions to the list.

The Do-Not-Use List

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Do not use | Potential problem | Use instead |
| *U (unit)* | *Mistaken for “0” (zero), the number “4” (four) or “cc”* | *unit* |
| *IU (International Unit)* | *Mistaken for IV (intravenous) or the number 10 (ten)* | *International Unit* |
| *Q.D., QD, q.d., qd (daily) Q.O.D., QOD, q.o.d, qod (every other day)* | *Mistaken for each other. Period after the Q mistaken for "I" and the "O" mistaken for "I" (q.i.d. is four times a day dosing)* | *daily every other day* |
| *Trailing zero (X.0 mg) Lack of leading zero (.X mg)* | *Decimal point is missed* | *X mg 0.X mg* |
| *MS* | *Can mean morphine sulfate or magnesium sulfate* | *morphine sulfate* |
| *MSO4 and MgSO4* | *Confused for one another* | *morphine sulfate and magnesium sulfate* |

## Academic & Science

Abbreviations are common in all sciences – mathematics, psychology, chemistry, physics, history etc. For example, the well known B.C. – before Christ, or 3D for three dimensional. They are also used to identify academic degrees like A.B. and A.M. for Artium Baccalaureaus and Artium Magister, or MBBS for Bachelor of Medicine / Bachelor of Surgery. There are also acronyms representing various sciences, for example, HFA (Humanities and Fine Arts) or HIST, which stands simply for History.

Business & Governmental

The governmental institute is obviously quite fond of various abbreviations, acronyms and initialisms. The former Soviet Union, and, of course, the United States, for example are more frequently referred to as the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. Inner governmental structures give us a variety of abbreviations, some simple, like LA for Los Angeles, some strange and irrational for the uninitiated, like A-2, standing for Intelligence Staff section of U.S. Army Air Corps., Established 1940. Most governmental organizations are widely known as abbreviations, from FBI to UN. This helps save time and keep the documents clean of long appellations.

Computing

In the world of high technologies there is no place for long terms – all is chopped up and re-composed into acronyms as short as possible. Lower is a rough example of computing abbreviations’ classification.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Assembly | DOC | File Extensions | Hardware | Security | Software |
| ABA  *Add B to A* | CLS *Clear*  *the Screen* | BMP *Bitmap Graphics* | CNTRL  *Control* | ACF *Access Control File* | CDR *Compact Disk Rec.* |
| VRC  *Very Rapid Coding* | XCOPY *Selectively Copy File Gr*. | GIB *Chart / Graph-in-Box* | EPON *Ethernet passive optical network* | TPL *Trusted Product Lists* | AAC *Advanced Audio Compression* |
| Unix | Databases | Drivers | Networking | Telecom | General |
| mv  *move* | EF  *Existing File* | Me *Microsoft Windows 4.9* | 4-W  *Four Wire* | DC *Disconnected* | @  *at* |
| cat *concentrate* | ACC *Attribute Collection Context* | PDL *Page Description Language* | CNET *Computer Network* | 3G *Third Generation MCS\** | BC *Basic Calculator* |

\*Mobile Communication System

**Acronyms**

Acronyms and initialisms are abbreviations that are formed using the initial components in a phrase or name. These components may be individual letters, as in CEO, or parts of words, as in Benelux. There is no universal agreement on the precise definition of the various terms, nor on written usage. While popular in recent English, such abbreviations have historical use in English as well as other languages. As a type of word formation process, acronyms and initialisms are viewed as a subtype of blending.

While the word abbreviation refers to any shortened form of a word or a phrase, some have used initialism or alphabetism to refer to an abbreviation formed simply from, and used simply as, a string of initials. In 1943, Bell Laboratories coined the termacronym as the name for a word created from the first letters of each word in a series of words. The terms initialism and alphabetism are neither widely used nor widely known. The termacronym is widely used to describe any abbreviation formed from initial letters.

Most dictionaries define acronym to mean "a word" in its original sense, while some include a secondary indication of usage, attributing to acronym the same meaning as that of initialisms. According to the primary definition found in most dictionaries, examples of acronyms would include NATO, scuba, and radar, while examples of initialisms would include FBI and HTML. There is no agreement on what to call abbreviations whose pronunciation involves the combination of letter names and words, such as JPEG and MS-DOS.

There is also some disagreement as to what to call abbreviations that some speakers pronounce as letters and others pronounce as a word. For example, the terms URL and IRA can be pronounced as individual letters or as a single word. Such constructions, however—regardless of how they are pronounced—if formed from initials, may be identified as initialisms without controversy.

The term for the word-by-word reconstruction of an acronym or initialism is an expansion.

## Comparing a few mentioned examples of each type

* Pronounced as a word, containing only initial letters
  + AIDS: acquired immune deficiency syndrome
  + ASBO: Anti-Social Behaviour Order
  + NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization
  + Scuba: self-contained underwater breathing apparatus
* Pronounced as a word, containing non-initial letters
  + Amphetamine: alpha-methyl-phenethylamine
  + Gestapo: Geheime Staatspolizei (secret state police)
  + Interpol: International Criminal Police Organization
  + Radar: radio detection and ranging
* Pronounced as a word or names of letters, depending on speaker or context
  + FAQ: Frequently asked questions
  + IRA: When used for Individual Retirement Account, can be pronounced as letters or as a word
  + SQL: Structured Query Language.
* Pronounced as a combination of names of letters and a word
  + CD-ROM: Compact Disc read-only memory
  + IUPAC: International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry
  + JPEG: Joint Photographic Experts Group
  + SFMOMA: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
* Pronounced only as the names of letters
  + BBC: British Broadcasting Corporation
  + DNA: deoxyribonucleic acid
  + USA: United States of America
* Pronounced as the names of letters but with a shortcut
  + AAA:
    - (triple A) American Automobile Association; abdominal aortic aneurysm; anti-aircraft artillery
    - (three As) Amateur Athletic Association
  + IEEE: (I triple E) Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers
  + NAACP: (N double A C P) National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
  + NCAA: (N C double A or N C two A or N C A A) National Collegiate Athletic Association
* Shortcut incorporated into name
  + 3M: (three M) originally Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company
  + E³: (E three) Electronic Entertainment Exposition
  + W3C: (W three C) World Wide Web Consortium
  + C4ISTAR: (C four I star) Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition, and Reconnaissance
* Multi-layered acronyms
  + NAC Breda: (Dutch football club) NOAD ADVENDO Combinatie ("NOAD ADVENDO Combination"), formed by the 1912 merger of two clubs, NOAD (Nooit Opgeven Altijd Doorgaan "Never give up, always persevere") and ADVENDO (Aangenaam Door Vermaak En Nuttig Door Ontspanning "Pleasant for its entertainment and useful for its relaxation") from Breda
  + GAIM: GTK+ AOL Instant Messenger, i.e. GIMP Tool Kit America OnLine Instant Messenger, i.e. GNU Image Manipulation Program Tool Kit America OnLine Instant Messenger,i.e. GNU's Not Unix Image Manipulation Program Tool Kit America OnLine Instant Messenger
  + PAC-3: PATRIOT Advanced Capability 3 i.e., Phased Array Tracking RADAR Intercept on Target i.e., RAdio Detection And Ranging
  + VHDL: VHSIC hardware description language, where VHSIC stands for very-high-speed integrated circuit.
  + VDL: VHF Data Link, where VHF stands for very high frequency.
* Recursive acronyms, in which the abbreviation refers to itself in the expression for which it stands:
  + GNU: GNU's not Unix!
  + LAME: LAME Ain't an MP3 Encoder
  + PHP: PHP hypertext pre-processor (formerly personal home page)
  + These may go through multiple layers before the self-reference is found:
    - HURD: HIRD of Unix-replacing daemons, where "HIRD" stands for "HURD of interfaces representing depth"
* Pseudo-acronyms consisting of a sequence of characters which, when pronounced as intended, resemble the sounds of other words:
  + CQ: "Seek you", a code used by radio operators.
  + FX: "effects", sometimes used in photo and video editing software; otherwise foreign exchange and currencies.
  + ICQ: "I seek you"
  + IOU: "I owe you"
  + K9: "Canine"
  + Q8: "Kuwait"
* Initialisms whose last word is a noun, but which are sometimes used as adjectives and the final noun stated separately (almost always redundantly; see RAS syndrome)
  + ATM machine: automated teller machine machine
  + HIV virus: human immunodeficiency virus virus
  + IPPT test: Individual Physical Proficiency Test test
  + MAC Code : migration authorization code code
  + PIN number: personal identification number number
  + UPC code: Universal Product Code code
  + HSA account: health savings account account

Initialisms were used in Rome before the Christian era. For example, the official name for the Roman Empire, and the Republic before it, was abbreviated as SPQR (Senatus Populusque Romanus).

The early Christians in Rome used the image of a fish as a symbol for Jesus in part because of an acronym—fish in Greek is ΙΧΘΥΣ (ichthys), which was said to stand for Iesous CHristos THeou Uios Soter: Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior. Evidence of this interpretation dates from the 2nd and 3rd centuries and is preserved in the catacombs of Rome. And for centuries, the Church has used the inscription INRI over the crucifix, which stands for the Latin Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum ("Jesus the Nazarene, King of the Jews").

**Netspeak**

Approximately 30 million people world-wide use the Internet and online services daily. The Net is growing exponentially in all areas, and a rapidly increasing number of people are finding themselves working and playing on the Internet. The people on the Net are not all rocket scientists and computer programmers; they're graphic designers, teachers, students, artists, musicians, and your next door neighbors. What these diverse groups of people have in common is their language. The Net community exists and thrives because of effective written communication, as on the net all you have available to express yourself are typewritten words. If you cannot express yourself well in written language, you either learn more effective ways of communicating, or get lost in the shuffle.   
  
"Netspeak" is evolving on a national and international level. The technological vocabulary once used only by computer programmers and elite computer manipulators called "Hackers," has spread to all users of computer networks. The language is currently spoken by people on the Internet, and is rapidly spilling over into advertising and business. The words "online," "network," and "surf the net" are occurring  
more and more frequently in our newspapers and on television. If you're like most Americans, you're feeling bombarded by Netspeak. Television advertisers, newspapers, and international businesses have jumped on the "Information Superhighway" bandwagon, making the Net more accessible to large numbers of not-entirely-technically-oriented people. As a result, technological vocabulary is entering into non-technological communication. For example, even the archaic UNIX command "grep," (an acronym meaning Get REpeated Pattern) is becoming more widely accepted as a synonym of "search" in everyday communication. There is a great amount of witty and not so witty abbreviations used by people worldwide daily, like the almost legendary LOL & ROFL for Laughing Out Loud and Rolling On Floor Laughing. Is this making our vocabulary richer or damaging it?

**Conclusion**

In the era of great speeds abbreviations are not just a part of our speech. They have become a substitute to our language, which no longer looks like a living creature, but like a cyborg, with a laser eye and steel hands. Long, ‘proper’ names of various things died out with monarchy, hats and carriages. Now we rule over ourselves, don’t spend time dressing up and cover great distances in hours. It seems as if humanity is trying to surmount time itself. We save time on talking and writing not because we have to till the land, but just because we need more time to save. Abbreviations are a great example of how man turns something harmless and useful into a weapon.

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