

Editorial Graphics and Publishing Services

Is It a Number or a Numeral?

A number is an abstract concept. A numeral is a symbol used to express that number. For example, how would you explain or express the number “five”? You would use a numeral—5 or V.

A **number** is **an idea or concept** that is used to refer to amounts of things.

A **numeral** is **the symbol** of a number. Different numeral symbols include—

Arabic numerals (1, 3, 5) and

Roman numerals (I, III, V)

The words **number** and **numeral** are sometimes used interchangeably in conversation these days. However, this tip will help you use each word in the right context when you write.

Answer to a question submitted by Christine Rogewitz. (*Thank you Christine!*)