



# **ELECTRONIC NAMING CONVENTIONS GUIDE**

Public Archives and Records Office  
Government of Prince Edward Island  
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# Electronic Naming Conventions Guide

## What are electronic naming conventions?

Electronic naming conventions are standard rules applied to **all electronic files and folder names** that facilitate the storage and retrieval of electronic records.

## Benefits

These standards will ensure that files and folders are organized logically and consistently on shared drives. Electronic files will be easier to store and retrieve with the application of electronic naming standards. Search time will be diminished as files are more easily distinguished from one another and storage space will increase as duplicate items are eliminated. These naming standards also eliminate many of the issues associated with migrating electronic files to new applications and systems.

## Formats

**Dates:** YYYYMMDD: 20180125; 2018 (calendar year); 20172018 (fiscal year).

*Note:* Depending on the task or transaction, the date may be placed at the beginning or end of a file name. Date first will usually be appropriate for tasks/events that are time specific and recurring. Event first will usually be appropriate for tasks/events that are infrequent, but regularly recurring.

**Symbols and Spacing:** Do **not** use empty spaces, hyphens, underscores, or ~ @ \ / ? : & ; # . \$ \* | %

**CamelCase:** Capitalize the first letter of each new word or abbreviation.

**Names:** Format using surname, followed by one or two identifying initials: Adam James Doe becomes DoeAJ

**Omissions:** Do **not** use unnecessary words that are excluded from searches: and, the, if, but, so, for (except for when meaning is lost with omission of these words)

**Abbreviations:** Abbreviations should be three letters (with some exceptions). Please see *File Type Abbreviations* and *Extended Abbreviations*.

**Versioning:** Version numbers will be formatted with a V followed by a number, e.g. V01 (numbers 1-9 are to be formatted as V01, V02, V03, etc.)

## Best Practices

- Avoid redundancies in file names and file paths.
- Ensure the file name accurately describes the file's content.
- Keep file names short, but meaningful; maximum length for file names is 26 characters.
- Always ensure the "File Extension" is included in the document title (i.e. .docx, .pdf, .pptx, etc.).

## Format Examples

**Dates:** YYYYMMDD: 20180125; 2018 (calendar year); 20172018 (fiscal year). Depending on the business task or transaction, the date may be placed at the beginning or end of a file name.

Correct	Incorrect
20180301WebStats.rtf	WebStats20180301.rtf WebStatsMar12018.rtf

Web statistics would be collected on a recurring basis, so putting date first would enable faster retrieval.

**Symbols and Spacing:** Do **not** use empty spaces, hyphens, underscores, or ~ @ \ / ? : & ; # . \$ \* |

Correct	Incorrect
DoeJ20180301.docx FantasticFour.jpeg	Doe,Jane,2018-03-01.docx "Fantastic" Four.jpeg

**CamelCase:** Capitalize the first letter of each new word or abbreviation.

Correct	Incorrect
BudgetRpt.pdf RiskManagement.rtf	Budget report.pdf Risk-management.rtf

**Names:** Format using surname, followed by two identifying initials: Adam James Doe becomes DoeAJ

Correct	Incorrect
DoeAJ20180301.rtf	AdamJDoe20180301.rtf

**Omissions:** Do **not** use unnecessary words that are excluded from searches: and, the, if, but, so, for (except for when meaning is lost with omission of these words)

Correct	Incorrect
StaffFundCmt.docx BigTallCmt.docx	The Staff Fund Committee.docx The_Big_And_Tall_Committee.docx

**Versioning:** Version numbers will be formatted with a V followed by a number, e.g. V01 (numbers 1-9 are to be formatted as V01, V02, V03, etc.): BudgetRptV05

Correct	Incorrect
OrgChartV022018.pdf DestructionPolV03Dft.rtf DestructionPolV04Fin.rtf	Org_Chart_2018_v2.pdf DestructionPolicyDraft_v3.rtf DestructionPolicyFinal_v4.rtf

**Avoid redundancies in file names and pathways:**

Correct	Incorrect
/.../Courts/20180301Min.docx	/.../Courts/20180301CourtMin.docx

## Searching for Files

To search for files that use CamelCase, add the asterisk wildcard character (\*) at the beginning of the key term(s) in the Windows search documents bar.

Example:

